

Mastering Mounting



by
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Trends for 2006

Last month's column covered some of the most frequently asked questions of the past year. Because there are so many questions and issues, this column continues on from there.

The biggest trend for 2006 surrounds the handling and framing of digital prints. There are also some interesting new products in mounting, vintage posters, two-sided lamination, and photos mounted on the smoothest substrates that deserve a look in this issue.



Photo 1: The Mini Mounter MM/225 is a newly released motorized, affordable cold roller machine with variable speed automatic or foot control, adjustable silicone rollers, forward and reverse gears, 25" wide, that adjusts to mounts up to 1" thickness from the Print Mount Company.

New Bienfang Boards

This past fall new products geared to address digital heat sensitivities abounded. Bienfang released two new products: Bienfang Step 150 and Bienfang Bright White Foam Board. Step 150 is Bienfang's newest version of their Single Step line of products. It continues to bond at the low temperature of 150°F in 15 seconds and is available in $\frac{3}{16}$ " both white and black. Its new feature is a smoother surface well suited to photographs. Bright White Acid-Free Foam is a $\frac{3}{16}$ " bleached white surface paper on Bienfang's current foam center that should be perfect for digital printing.

New Rollers and Adhesives for Digitals

Both Drytac and the Print Mount Company have new equipment and new products designed to meet the growing mounting needs of heat-sensitive digitals. The Mini-Mounter MM/225 is a motorized roll mounter/laminator from Print Mount with variable speed foot control, silicone rollers, forward and reverse gears that is 25" wide, adjusts to 1" thick substrates, and will mount cold pressure-sensitive materials (Photo 1).

The JetMounter cold mount laminators from Drytac are a full line of cold-mount laminators with silicone rollers, tension clutches, and all-steel construction (Photo 2). They are available in 26", 43", and 53" wide variable-speed mod-



Photo 2: The JetMounter JM26 is one of a new series of 26", 43" or 53" cold mount laminators from Drytac with electric speed drive, silicone rollers, tension clutches (on JM43 and JM53), and all steel construction, which adjust to mount $\frac{1}{2}$ " board substrate thickness. Also shown here is their new line of high tack pressure-sensitive boards.

els. There's also an economical 25" manual model. All these will adjust to mount 1/2" thick board substrates.

Both companies have also released new high tack pressure-sensitive mount boards. Print Mount offers high tack pressure-sensitive adhesive on 3/16" foam board, while Drytac went all out with high tack pressure-sensitive applied to 3/16" black Gatorfoam, 3/16" white Foam Board, 2mm black Polystyrene, and 1/8" Masonite. The Masonite is available up to 32" x 40" while the others are limited to 24" x 36" at this time. All these pressure-sensitive boards can be mounted manually with a weight, with a cold vacuum frame, or with roller laminators.

New Wet Glue Machines

It appears that the Gluefast Company has decided to give the long-standing industry wet glue machine company Pot Devin a run for its money. Their wet adhesive systems include three machines: the Senator Topside Coater, which handles bonding to boards up to 3/8" thick and 42" wide, with variable speed; the Colonel Electric Gluer for mount boards up to 3/8" thick in 20" and 32" widths; and the Adjutant Label/Laminating Press, which will bond print to flexible (paper, cloth, leather) or rigid (wood, metal, composite) substrates up to 1 1/2" thick (Photo 3).

The Senator can also apply an acrylic surface coating to mounted open edition prints and photos to create a canvas appearance, which is popular today.

Flattening Rolled Prints

Since more independent companies are getting into producing (printing) their own on-demand digital art, the problem with rolled images is more prevalent than ever. Honestly, if an art print won't lie flat, it probably has the body weight of a poster and can lose much of the high-end art appeal. Even though this may just be a marketing thing, a solution was needed. A few years back Don Dressler of Glastonbury Design rose to the occasion by developing the D-Roller, a device to take the curl out of roll papers used in fine art production.

Besides de-curling production prints, the De-Roller also works on images rolled for shipping tubes. The De-

Roller (Photo 4) has now been brought into the framing industry by Bienfang. There are three sizes available from 25" to 70" wide. Prints usually flatten in seconds, but it could take a few minutes for some tightly rolled or heavy weight papers to flatten. They may also require rolling from both ends to complete the process. It really does magically take the rolled memory out of digitals.

As an artist, I had been very excited about the prospect of flattening previously rolled unpainted high-end art papers, but I discovered that the De-Roller's flattening abilities seem to work with the actual inks or surface coatings of digital papers to make the paper lie flat.

When I attempted to flatten plain rolled art papers of assorted natural contents and weights, it did not have the same flattening effect. That only goes to show that products should be used in the way they are originally intended.

Heat Set Japanese Tissue Support

New from Neschen is Filmoplast R, a thin Japanese tissue with a heat-set activated adhesive designed to be used as a reinforcement and an acid buffer with brittle, potentially acidic papers like newspapers. It may be applied with a tacking or household iron or in a dry mount press at 200°F (80°C) for two minutes°

(Photo 5). It is designed to help wick away and neutralize damaging acids from an original document by bonding it to the verso side of an original. It is safe for long-term preservation of all valuable paper items. Unlike spray de-acidifiers, it will not saturate porous paper, which often makes the paper rather translucent.

Vintage Posters

It appears collecting vintage posters by consumers has reached an all-time high. Some are replicas of actual pieces from an era. Though these may cost hundreds of dollars, they are not nearly as valuable as the antique originals they replicate. It's part of the Retro design trend and today's fascination with the simplicity of earlier times.

These vintage pieces of history have become a source of frustration for framers. Many older posters



Photo 3: The Senator topside coater (center back) from Gluefast applies adhesive as well as being capable of coating the mounted art surface with acrylic sealers and textures. The Colonel electric gluer (right) evenly coats the artwork to be manually placed onto the substrate.

may have already been mounted or relined to a thin linen or canvas sheet to help hold degrading pieces together for framing. When framing one of these items, you should first try to determine the original mounting method. Perhaps it was traditionally mounted to linen with wet glue or starch paste using a relining vacuum system similar to today's cold vacuum presses but designed to draw air through tiny holes in the

diaphragm to evenly and slowly dry the wet adhesive.

Closely examine the edges of the poster to determine the mounting process used. Wet paste will have saturated the fibers and be dull. Heat-activated adhesive film (like Bienfang Fusion) will be shiny, and tissues will show the carrier liner. It could very well have been mounted by a heat-activated adhesive covered product like Chartex

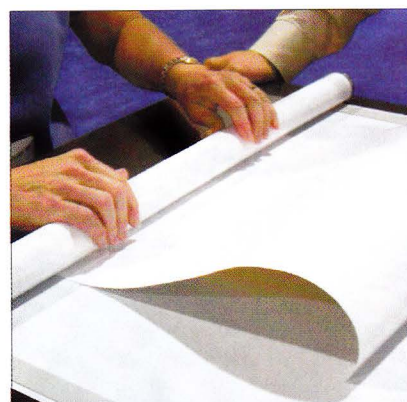


Photo 4: Paper art is commonly rolled (image in) when shipped in a mailing tube as seen here. Bienfang's De-Roller magically flattens rolled art for ease of mounting regardless of wet, spray, p-s, or dry mounting, by greatly simplifying the struggle with curled artwork and posters, or by attempting to flatten by other methods.



Photo 5: Filmoplast R is a thin Japanese tissue with a heat set activated adhesive. The unmounted tissue roll (left) is glossy on the adhesive side and matte on verso side. The article on the right was dry mounted at 200°F for two minutes to the backside of the article to neutralize acids and extend the lives of the documents.

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by Seal Products, a great white linen fabric (now discontinued) used in the 1980s and '90s to back maps, school charts, and deteriorating documents for the military.

John Davis is the owner of Poster Mountain in North Hollywood (818-982-1058) who specializes in the archival repair and bonding of these large-scale vintage images. John bonds them to linen or canvas using wheat starch to hold them together and make

them easier to handle. Framers can then mount them to foam board for final framing.

If you wish to simply wet, spray, pressure-sensitive, or dry mount posters, that option is a judgment call between you and your client. Consider the original value of the poster, the anticipated increase in its value over time, where it is to be hung, and the nature of the client. Only you will know what should be done with

this—treat it like a museum original or a mass-produced look-alike?

Two-sided Lamination

The question of how to mount a two-sided, permanently encapsulated map or chart constantly comes up. Many times I have read that low- and medium-tack pressure-sensitives will hold these in place just fine—particularly when the verso side has been sanded. Wrong. They may hold for a while, but as

soon as temperature and humidity get to the adhesive or they dry out, they will fail. It's important to understand why they fail. It isn't the adhesive itself; it's the choice of adhesive for the particular project that fails.

The polyester that seals both sides of an encapsulated porous paper is not the least bit porous, making it impossible for any adhesive to absorb into the polyester to hold the chart to the substrate. Therefore, the adhesive can logically only hold as long as the adhesive tackifiers between the chart and the substrate remain sticky. The less aggressive the tackifiers are, the shorter the hold duration. The more aggressive the tackifiers are, the longer hold duration. So if a pressure-sensitive is your adhesive of choice, which is common, then it stands to reason that a high tack pressure-sensitive would be best. And with the new high-tack pressure sensitive boards just released by Drytac and Print Mount along with their roller machines, there's no excuse not to be able to stick encapsulated works down effectively and have them hold until you retire.

And finally, remember: It's January, so see I'll you at West Coast Art & Frame Show in Las Vegas. ■

Chris A. Paschke, CPF, GCF, Mounting Editor, owns Designs Ink in Tehachapi, CA, featuring commercial custom framing, fine art/graphic design, and industry consulting. Specializing in mounting, matting, design creativity, and fine art, she works with industry leaders and has taught for the National Conference. She has written two books on mounting: "The Mounting and Laminating Handbook" (now in its second edition) and "Creative Mounting, Wrapping, and Laminating." She can be contacted at www.designsinkart.com.

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