

MAKE YOUR OWN SHORT RUN FULL COLOR T-SHIRTS

by Dave Weiss

Who wouldn't love to have their own original art reproduced on a t-shirt. In the old days this was a pretty big hassle. First you had to create the design, then separate the colors and unless you were working with a pretty advanced company you had to limit yourself to four to six colors (in some cases, less). You usually had to order two dozen or more and with all the set-up fees, screen charges, etc. shirts got very expensive and short runs were almost impossible.

Now this is not a condemnation of the local shop, I have had the privilege of working with several fine ones over the years both as an artist and as a customer. But we folks in youth ministry usually have to do things with a minimum of overhead. I have found a service that can help.

The service is called Cafe Press. You can find them on the web at www.cafepress.com. Basically this is how it works. You go to their web site and set up a store on their site by following the simple instructions provided. The cost, free! Then you upload your designs in either a jpg or png file again following their simple instructions. The cost, free!

Formatting your design to a png or jpg is a very easy process. With most scanning/photoediting/graphics software, it is as simple as clicking on "save as" and selecting your desired format. Also make sure to size your illustration to the sizes accepted for the various items.

Once the design(s) are uploaded, it is a simple matter of selecting the items you want to put in your store and where you want to place the designs on the item. They feature a number

of shirts, hats, boxer shorts, mugs and mousepads as well as seasonal items. Once you have created all your items, set the mark-up on each item, or sell them at cost, the choice is yours. Then you open for business by publicizing the link to your store on your web site as well as all your printed material. All your customers have to do is go to the site and order the items with their credit card. Turn around

takes a few days as opposed to several weeks in the old days. They handle and ship the orders with the shipping charges picked up by the customer. Your store is open 24/7/365 and there is no overhead. Store owners can also access the store and pay for items at cost.

No color separation is necessary and your colors are unlimited. Be as creative as you want. The finished shirts look very

bright and colorful and wash well. The base price on a T-shirt is \$13.99, which is a great price when you consider that everything to this point has been free and that the minimum order is one item.

If you are making a lot of pieces or are using only a few colors in your design, or if you want colored or black shirts your local shop may still be the better deal, but for experimental pieces and short runs, this is an ideal way to go.

A.M.O.K even has a shop (priced at cost incidentally) you can see it at:

<http://www.cafepress.com/amokarts>.

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AN A.M.O.K. RESOURCE

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