



GRAVOGRAPH NEW HERMES

Quality Control

Carpenters and woodworkers have an old saying: “Measure twice, cut once.” The same theory could be applied to manufacturing signs. Check everything twice before you press the “Go” button on the machine. Remember, the machine will do exactly what you tell it to do, which isn’t necessarily what you meant; computers are not yet capable of reading minds.

Before you send the job to the engraving table:

1. Take a look at the sign as it appears on the screen. Is everything where it should be? Are the various elements centered, or left justified, uniformly? Does any text need kerning adjustment? Is the spelling correct?
2. Do you have the correct cutter in the spindle? Are the depth and Z set correctly?
3. Check your engraving settings. Does the origin setting on the screen match the actual origin of the machine? Are the speed, depth, dwell, and other settings appropriate for the material you are engraving?
4. Is the material in the correct spot on the table? Is it the correct material? Are there any flaws in the material that will make the finished sign useless?

If everything looks good, start engraving. Make one sign, from start to finish, and check it against the customer’s specifications. Some customers may ask for one finished sign as a proof before beginning production; even if they don’t, make the first sign a proof for yourself. Measure to make sure things are where they should be; machine settings can drift, and can easily be adjusted back to “in spec.”

Most of the time, if the first sign is good, the rest of them will be, too. However, don’t make this assumption! Anyone can mistype a word or misalign a part, so don’t assume you’re immune. Check your work carefully; if possible, have someone else proof read your signs for you. What one pair of eyes may miss, another may catch. On a long

production run, check every 10th or 20th sign to make sure the machine settings are still accurate.

Don't be in a hurry! A quality product, finished later, is of far higher value than a poor product, finished now. And it takes much longer to correct mistakes than to not make them in the first place. Even if a job is a "rush," take the time to ensure it only has to be done once. Plan your time according to a fair estimate of how long a job will take, and don't let anyone rush you into making a mistake.

Always be alert and looking for errors. From the time you create a file to the time you pack the finished sign for shipping, you should constantly be checking for mistakes and problems. If you don't feel right about something, it usually isn't right, so go back and check it again.