OPPORTUNITY POCKET GUIDE:
Apparel Decoration

THE APPAREL DECORATION OPPORTUNITY

Apparel decorators use printing technologies to add logos, graphics, images or other decorative elements to clothing items, fabric, or any other wearable item. Typically, decorators work with pre-made blank apparel items, but may also print on fabric, which is then cut and sewn to produce a final product.

Getting started in apparel decoration doesn't require a large investment and it can be a great source of revenue.

MARKET SIZE

According to Grand View Research, the size of the global decorated apparel market was $23.06 billion in 2021 and is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.8% from 2022 to 2030.

TYPES OF DECORATED APPAREL

Apparel decorators embellish a variety of apparel products, including:

- T-Shirts and sweatshirts
- Athletic clothing
- Workwear (polo and dress shirts)
- Uniforms
- Hats, caps, and headbands
- Accessories (i.e., gloves, socks)

KEY USER MARKETS

Decorated apparel is a nearly universal product type across all industries, and has great revenue potential. However, there are key markets that drive trends:

- Sportswear
- Lifestyle Brands
- Concerts/Live Events
- Corporate/Government Entities

ENTRY INTO THE SEGMENT

The market has low entry barriers as initial investment to offer apparel decoration can range from $10,000 to $250,000 and beyond, depending on a startup business's scope, scale, and equipment requirements.

DECORATING METHODS

- Screen printing is the most cost-effective solution for high-volume runs, and produces high-quality, durable, and vibrant prints on common substrates.
- Direct to garment (DTG) is a process that prints designs directly onto fabric and is ideal for short to medium run orders with variable art jobs.
- Heat applied garment printing encompasses multiple technologies from heat transfer applications to dye sublimation printing. Each has its unique advantages and disadvantages.
- Embroidery involves stitching designs on textiles and garments. Embroidered apparel products are commonly found in corporate apparel, luxury brands, and sports gear.

SUBSTRATES/MATERIALS

Decorated apparel can be produced on a wide variety of materials including cotton, polyester, cotton/polyester blends, rayon, Lycra, spandex, and other natural and synthetic fibers. Whether using finished blanks or roll fabric, the composition of the material is a key factor in how the garment can be embellished.

FINISHING

Finishing is a broad category that can include adding tags, quality inspection, pressing, folding finished apparel, packaging products, and shipping.

BEST PRACTICE TIPS

- Start with existing clients. Review client lists and determine if they have a need for decorated apparel or could benefit from selling it.
- Determine expected volume and investigate equipment options based on it.
- Learn the distinct advantages of each application method.

- Use the resources of associations serving decorated apparel.
- Read/Subscribe to apparel decoration industry publications, including *Apparelist* (www.apparelist.com).
- Visit decorated apparel suppliers at the PRINTING United Expo.

LEARN MORE ON THE SHOW FLOOR*

*List may not include all related exhibitors. For a full list, download the PRINTING United Expo mobile app.

About Apparel Decorating
- PRINTING United Apparel Zone — C8915
- PRINTING United Future State Theater — C11330

Equipment
Screen Printing
- Brown Manufacturing Group — C10019, C8025
- GSG — C7724, C7925
- Lawson Screen & Digital Products — C7630
- Nazdar SourceOne — C6425
- M&R Printing Equipment — C6918
- ROQ US — C9707
- Vastex — C1011

Heat Applied Graphics
- Advanced Color Solutions — C11511
- Advanced Innovative Technologies — C10707
- B-FLEX America — C7530
- Chemica US — C8738
- FOREVER GmbH — C10737
- Howard Custom Transfers, Inc. — C11317
- Imaging Supplies Warehouse — C9711
- Melco International — C10515
- Siser North America — C7918
- STAHLS — C8724
- Tubelite Company — C10115

Sublimation
- Advanced Color Solutions — C11511
- Advanced Innovative Technologies — C10707
- EFI — C8107
- Grimco Inc. — C6434
- Imaging Supplies Warehouse — C9711
- IT Supplies — C6935
- Epson America — C7730
- GSG — C7724
- Kornit Digital — C7507
- Nazdar SourceOne — C6425
- Mimaki USA — C8123
- Roland DGA Corporation — C8930
- Optimum Digital USA — C8911
- PremEx Solutions — C10518
- Tubelite Company — C10115

Embroidery
- Hirsch Solutions — C7112
- MEEVO — N1171
- Melco International — C10515
- Midsouth Digitizing — C9732
- Ricoma Embroidery Machines — C9107

Direct-to-Garment
- Aeoon North America — C8518
- Brother International — C7107
- ECore Printing — C11011
- Epson America — C7730
- Image Armor/i-Group Technologies — C10307
- Kornit Digital — C7507
- Lawson Screen & Digital Products — C7630
- OmniPrint — C6930, N2020
- OvalJet — C9518
- POLYPRINT USA — C11137
- Ricoh DTG — C6431

Direct Transfer Film
- B-Flex America — C7530
- DTF2U — C11212
- OmniPrint — C6930, N2020
- STAHLS — C8724
- Sunmicrotek — C8548

Substrates
Blank Apparel
- Allmade Apparel — C10410
- Alphabroder/Prime Line — C10718
- BELLA+CANVAS — C11118
- Citadel Brands/AWDis — C8814
- Delta Apparel — C9126
- EG-Pro — C11535
- Greentex America — C10337
- Image Armor/i-Group Technologies LLC — C10307
- Lane Seven Apparel — C9311
- Liberty Bags — C11111
- Los Angeles Apparel — C11515
- Next Level Apparel — C11526
- Otto International — C8815
- SanMar — C9510
- Terry Town — C9735
- Threadfast Apparel — C10917

Roll Fabric/Textiles
- Carr Textile Corp. — C10909
- Fisher Textiles — C9530
- TVF — C9326
- Yarrington Mills — C9917