Elements for Good Embroidery

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There are no quick fixes, for quality embroidery... the secret is to prevent problems in the first place.

Decorated Apparel Industry: Breakdown by Type of Embellishment

- Direct Embroidery: 31.5%
- Applique: 2.5%
- Emblems & Patch: 3.0%
- Other: (Please specify)
Decorated Apparel Industry: Embroidery vs. Screen Print for Embellishment

- T-shirts
- Polo/Sport shirts
- Sweatshirts/pants
- Bags/totes
- Headwear/caps
- Outerwear
- Accessories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-shirts</th>
<th>Screen print</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polo/Sport shirts</td>
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<td>Sweatshirts/pants</td>
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Suitable for all markets - From the Runway

To the Raceway – and everything in between

- Fashion
- Emblems & Badges
- Work wear
- Corporate wear
- Uniforms
- Sports teams
- Local organizations & events
- Automotive & Marine
Advantages of Embroidery

- Perceived as having greater value; polo shirts vs. t-shirts
- Durable; stands up to washing and drying
- Small detail and lettering is possible
- Small logos have greater clarity

Advantages of Embroidery, continued

- Appropriate for all fabrics (piqué, terry, athleisure, etc.)
- Can be applied to all styles of caps & headwear
- Enables white to be used on any fabric
- Additional colors can be added at little to no extra charge
- Longevity

Advantages of Embroidery, continued

- Visible interest through mixing types of threads
- Environmentally friendly thread
- 3D effect on caps
- Polyester threads hold up to commercial laundering
- Metallic as an option to add sparkle
Drawbacks of Embroidery

- Lighter weight fabrics may be overpowered by large design
- Large design can be heavy and bulky
- Large designs are more expensive to produce
- May require a longer lead time
- There are more supplies needed: thread, backing, bobbins, needles, digitizing
- Without adequate skill, results could suffer

Exploding some myths about embroidery

- It’s more expensive than print
- It will never look as detailed as print
- Threads will always bleed or fade
- Small lettering cannot be achieved
- Metallics are difficult to use

Recognize the bad, to ensure a good result

Puckering  Sunken Stitches
Poor Lettering  Poor Registration
Distortion  Poor tension
No underlay
What causes Puckering around Embroidery?

Puckering consists of ripples surrounding the stitched design caused by:

- Incorrect hooping
- A hoop that is too big for the design
- The quality of the fabric is too fine for the embroidered design
- Backing is too thin to stabilize the embroidery
- Too many stitches in the design
- Once puckering occurs, the garment is usually beyond repair

Distortion

This should be a perfect circle but with all the fill stitches going from left to right and no allowances made, you end up with an egg shape.

Poor Lettering

Anthony Tavern Painter & Decorator
The top sample has little or no underlay stitches beneath the lettering, as a result the embroidery disappears into the knitwear and is very unclear. In the bottom sample, fill stitches in the same color as the fabric is used beneath the letters, resulting in clear and readable lettering. Proper underlay is necessary for all threads, even very fine ones and necessary for all fabrics.
Poor Registration

Too many stitches was one cause for this design to be out of registration.

In the first example, you see too many stitches, wrong underlay and the wrong stabilizer result in puckering and shaky lines. The second version still has too many stitches, however there is marked improvement.

Achieve the best results through

- Good Communication
- Good Apparel Choice
- Good Art Work
- Good Digitizing
- Good Components
- Good Partnering
Good Communication

The more you know, the easier it will be to design a good embroidery solution

- What is the purpose of the embroidery project?
- What kind of functionality is required?
- Is there a price point that needs to be met?
- Is there a timeline that needs to be met?
- Is the client open to your suggestions?

The more you know, the easier it will be to design a good embroidery solution.

Questions to ask:
- Time element – is there a rush charge?
- Edit fees – additional or included?
- Archiving service – for when you need a few more?
- Sewn sample provided?
- Know what your digitizer needs to know, by understanding the process!

- Size & placement
- Application
- Color(s)
- Specialty threads

Know embroidery’s limitations – there aren’t many, but know when to say no!

Digitizing Fees
- Cost per 1,000 stitches
- Complexity of the design
- Flat fee

Embroidery Fees
- Size of embroidery shop
- Per piece
- Stitch count
- Minimum orders
- Specialty threads
- Special services
Good Apparel Choice

Choose an apparel solution with the following in mind:

- Types of apparel needed for the project—caps, flats, bags etc.
- Type of fabric to be used: pique knit, wicking, fleece, woven...
- Location(s) of the embroidery
- The quantities that are required
- All caps are not created equal!
  Which kind does your embroiderer favor?
- Have good, better and best options

Good Apparel Choice - Types of Fabric

- Denim
- Pique Knit
- Wovens
- Performance
- Fleece
- Knit
- Corduroy

Remember, the digitized design must be adjusted to suit the fabric.

Good Apparel Choice - Chart of International Care Symbols

Your client needs to know how to care for their embroidered garments

International symbols will inform them about:

- Wash
- Bleach
- Drying
- Iron
- Dry Clean

It is important that the threads used have the same care instructions.
Good Art Work - From Vector Art to Embroidery

In order to achieve accurate representation of the customer’s image, you’ll need to:

- Eliminate complex elements
- Keep it simple
- Loose thin lines and impossibly small details
- Have the customer review and approve
- Agree on color choices at the beginning

Good Art Work - Matching to Pantone® Colors

A good digitizer:

- Understands and compensates for the fabric
- Understand and compensates for the embroidery placement.
- Minimize the layers of stitching
- Minimize the trims
- Uses proper density for sufficient thread coverage
- Determines if and how much underlay is necessary
**Good Digitizing - The importance of underlay**

Underlay is the name for the stitching you don’t see!

Required for various reasons:
- To stabilize fabric and backing to reduce movement
- To lift stitching off the fabric, creating a raise appearance
- To hold down fibres from coming through the stitching.
- To provide something for stitches to hold on to
- Using more or less underlay will affect the overall appearance

**Good Components**

- Proper choice of thread: rayon, polyester or metallic
- #60 weight thread for fine detail & small text
- Quality backing to support embroidery
- Strive for balance of fabric and embroidery
- Water soluble topping on fabrics with pile
- Quality thread improves production and run time

**Good Components**

*Threads – so many to choose from...*
Good Components

WHICH TYPE OF THREAD: Rayon or Polyester?

RAYON
- Wood cellulose from plants or trees, renewable/environmentally friendly
- Perfect for today’s popular performance wear garments
- Natural high lustre, soft hand
- Colorfast to 203 degrees F. wash water
- Flexible & soft, runs smoothly on machines

POLYESTER
- Man-made fiber
- For heavy duty washing – chef's whites, athletic shirts, etc.
- Recommended for stonewash, chlorine & commercial laundering
- Compatible with laundering of heavily soiled work wear

Rayon and Polyester #60

Finer than 40 weight, 60 weight is ideal for small letters and fine detail.

Frosted Matt #40

The industry’s only matte finish embroidery thread.
- Pure, clear colors
- Can withstand sun’s UV rays
- Extremely soft effect & velvet feel
- Perfect for small lettering & detail
Good Components

Fire-Resistant #40

Before

Use when flame resistance is required for safety.

Flame Resistant polyester mesh fibers have a melting point of 450°F to 460°F.

Can be used for infant and children's wear.

Use in fire fighting suits and turnout coats.

Complete your flame resistant embroidery with Fire Fighter embroidery thread and Fire Fighter embroidery bobbins.

AFTER

Good Components

Metallics are available in a range of thicknesses and styles. Metallics are ideal for embroidery on fashion, sportswear, home decor and promotional products.

Glow-in-the-Dark #40

Good Components

Good Components
Improves embroidery on towels, fleece or pique knits.
A must for use with small text, adds stability and height to the stitching.

**Good Components**

Water Soluble Topping

Hoop on top of the garment to prevent stitches and embroidery details from sinking into the fabric.

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