

FlexiBrass® and FlexiColor® Engraving Tips

Engraving FlexiBrass® & FlexiColor® Materials

Applications

Rowmark's FlexiBrass and FlexiColor materials are considered "thin-gauge" materials. Because of the extreme versatility of these products, engravers are given many opportunities to broaden their product offering. Applications include personal identification,



industrial marking, labels, plaques and plates. Letting your imagination wander will help you to find many exciting applications for these materials. Applications include bookmarks, bottle labels, bookplates, business cards, trophies, and signage. As an added bonus FlexiBrass and FlexiColor can also be embossed, screen printed, hot stamped, pad printed and even sand blasted.

What makes this product special is that it is thinner and more flexible than traditional engraving stock. FlexiBrass and FlexiColor is a micro-surfaced material on a .020" core layer. The cap is very thin permitting fine detailed engraving or lasering with minimal residue. The Flexi product line can be engraved using traditional rotary engravers as well as laser engraving systems. In fact, the cap layer is so thin that these materials can be either cut by a carbide cutter or burnished using traditional methods. These features offer a great deal of flexibility for engravers that do not want to keep an excessive amount of inventory on hand, but need the option of switching between marking processes.

Advantages of using FlexiBrass and FlexiColor over Coated Brass

- These thin-gauge materials are attractive, flexible, and easy to manage.

- Engravers are often familiar with the pitfalls of working with coated brass. Coated brass can be easily scratched, may tarnish over time, weighs a considerable amount, and can become permanently damaged if bent. Bending damage often occurs when brass is attached to the engraving table using tape. During the process of lifting the sheet the brass bends. Often the brass gets a bend that, despite your best efforts to remove it, will show when mounted.
- FlexiBrass and FlexiColor are safer to use, as opposed to the sharp edges of metal materials. In addition, the cost of shipping large quantities of metal products is expensive given the significant weight of brass. FlexiBrass and FlexiColor weigh significantly less than metal choices.
- FlexiBrass materials come in the standard black over gold (brass), in either a matte or gloss finish and can easily replace traditional brass in virtually all applications. The complete product line offers a broad range of interesting colors with brushed and patterned surfaces that can spice up any trophy or plaque.

Tools

To engrave Flexi materials, it is recommended that you try burnishing first since depth control of rotary engraving may be more critical in your specific application. Burnishing is faster in many cases and can allow larger letter heights than deep cutting with a carbide tool in many applications. There's also less clean up when burnishing and no chip removal system is necessary.

Start with a flat engraving area or put down a sacrificial surface using a piece of scrap engraving stock. Then tape your material down from the top. This will eliminate any engraving voids due to an uneven surface on your engraving bed. After you become more confident with the material, you can switch to rotary cutting. Any standard FLX rotary carbide tool will do the job. Nothing special is required when rotary cutting; however, it's recommended that a vacuum system be used.

Technique

If you plan to rotary cut, you need to realize that since the material is thinner than you may have worked with before, and that using a nose cone and proper depth control is important. First, zero the cutter. Then follow the instructions on proper cutting depth. A cutting depth of .001"- .003" will expose the core color in the Flexi line. If you ever have the need to cut a very intricate logo with lots of detail, you will appreciate the fact that a fine line can be achieved on this material. Almost anything that's done with regular engraving stock can be done with the Flexi line of lightweight materials.