

Instrument Customization Hits the Right Note with Customers

Blue Dragon's laser engraver introduced them to the profitability of mandolin and other musical instrument customization.

From hammer dulcimers to pick guards to acoustic and electric mandolins, Blue Dragon LLC, has created a name for itself by offering custom instrument engraving to customers all over the map.



In business since 2005, the company started by offering customization on more traditional items such as glassware, coasters and gunstocks, but recently Blue Dragon owners Peter Gnauck and his son Trevor have branched out into the world of instrument engraving, and they've created several stunning pieces along the way.

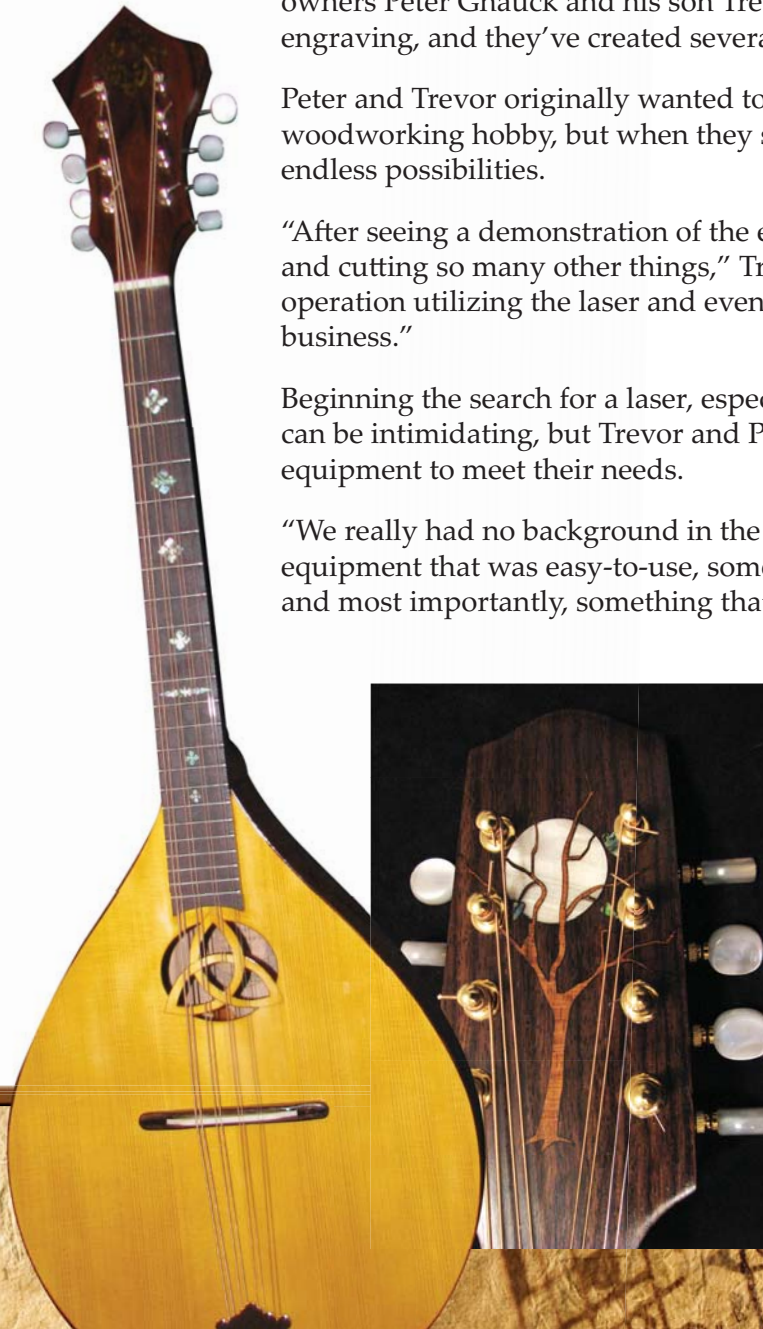
Peter and Trevor originally wanted to purchase laser engraving equipment to accent Peter's woodworking hobby, but when they saw a laser system in action, they began to envision endless possibilities.

"After seeing a demonstration of the equipment, we quickly saw the potential for engraving and cutting so many other things," Trevor said. "We were certain we could start a part-time operation utilizing the laser and eventually turn it into a full-time laser engraving and cutting business."

Beginning the search for a laser, especially with little previous knowledge of what to look for can be intimidating, but Trevor and Peter began the research process to determine the best equipment to meet their needs.

"We really had no background in the industry," said Trevor, "but we knew we needed equipment that was easy-to-use, something that wouldn't take forever to get up and running, and most importantly, something that was going to produce the very best results.

"We performed a lot of research on different laser manufacturers, but after meeting with another Epilog owner, learning how easy-to-use the equipment is, discovering how many materials it could work with, and actually seeing the engraving and cutting results, there was just no doubt Epilog was the best system to meet our needs."





While concentrating on getting their business up and running, Blue Dragon began experimenting with other products and materials that would help them expand their product offerings. Their venture into musical instrument engraving began with a single mandolin.

“It started with an acoustic mandolin,” Trevor tells us, “and with the help of the Epilog system, we actually built the whole thing from scratch.

“Knowing what the Epilog equipment was capable of, we decided to use the laser to aid in both cutting pieces for the mandolin, as well as creating some very intricate inlay work,” Trevor said. “We also used the laser to cut the sound hole and head plate, fret board, back of the neck and the body of the mandolin. On subsequent mandolins we have also used it to mark for the frets and cut the top and back plates of the body. Our Epilog system is truly vital for nearly all the work we do on musical instruments.”

With such spectacular results, Blue Dragon has high hopes for future instrument engravings.

“So far we have used the laser for an acoustic mandolin, three electric mandolins, two octave mandolins, pick guards, and a hammer dulcimer,” Trevor explains. “We hope in the future to provide services for other instrument makers and collectors, or just music fans wanting to make their instruments as unique as they are.”

While instrument engraving is only part of the product line Blue Dragon offers, Trevor tells us the Epilog equipment is paramount in all that they do.

“Our Epilog system has allowed us to work on a wide variety of materials, and has enabled us to do everything from very unique and intricate designs on instruments to more traditional engravings on champagne glasses, coffee mugs and other gift items.”

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