

START YOUR OWN RUBBER STAMP BUSINESS

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Rubber stamps are one of the necessities of a mail order business. You need to have at least a rubber stamp with your name and address on it, not only for envelopes, but also for commission circulars and ad sheets that you co-publish. Other rubber stamps you may want to have on hand are ones that say, in large block letters, things like "SPECIAL!!!," "ORDER NOW!," etc. If you read ad sheet and mail order publications, you may see dealers selling rubber stamps. How are they doing this?

There are three ways to sell rubber stamps. The first, and easiest, is to act as a broker for a rubber stamp producer. This is similar to being a printing broker, outlined in an earlier report in this series. Contact a stamp maker in your area, and outline your plans for selling rubber stamps by mail. Explain that this will add business for him that he wouldn't otherwise get. The stamp maker should offer a commission to you (or free stamps) for taking orders. Then, advertise your stamp-making business in ad sheets and other publications that mail-order dealers regularly read. When you receive an order, take your commission off the top and forward the rest with the order to the stamp maker.

The second way is to produce the stamps yourself. This is something you can set up in your basement or a spare room. Spread the word around the printers in your area that you are looking for used rubber stamp making equipment. If you can, find someone who is currently in the business who is thinking of getting out. Learn the process from them, and you can probably get good terms on the equipment.

The third way can be done if you have a computer and laser printer, or access to one. There is a company called Grantham's Polly Stamp (418 Central Avenue, East Grand Forks, MN 56721 218-773-0331) that sells a machine called the Polly-Stamp. This machine makes rubber stamps from your laser printed artwork. Anything you can print on your laser printer can be made into a stamp in 20 minutes. It uses a light sensitive rubber-like liquid resin and is very easy to use. As of this time (July 1994), a new unit costs \$1095, but you can get a good refurbished unit for under \$500.

Rubber stamps are a vital tool for mail order dealers. If you offer this service, you will greatly expand your customer base. Be sure to send your latest and best offers with the customer's stamp, and you'll get even more orders.

