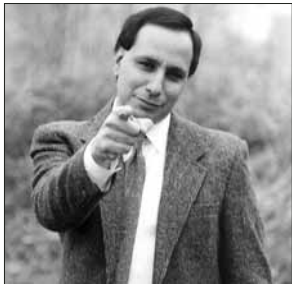


The Guerrilla Framer



by
Paul Cascio

There's Gold in Your Stockroom! The Ins and "Out" of Inventory Management

Would you keep cash in a mattress? Probably not. Yet many framers unconsciously bury hundreds or even thousands of dollars of frame moulding and other materials in their stockroom where it may never again see the light of day.

How much money is stashed away in your stockroom? Chances are it's a lot, especially if you've been in business for several years or longer. Not surprisingly, inventory control is one of the most neglected aspects of frame shop management.

Knowing what to buy, when to buy it, how to store it, how to track it and how to use it can improve your cash flow, reduce production bottlenecks and increase profits. This is especially true if you buy length moulding instead of chops.

When it comes to inventory management (IM), it's been my observation that framers tend toward a position at one end of the spectrum or the other. Some framers become pathological about inventory control. At any given moment,

they can tell to the nearest inch how much of any particular moulding is in stock, know exactly where to find it, and perhaps even the day it was purchased. For them, micro-managing their inventory is a passion. Saving and tracking each scrap of matboard, glass, and frame moulding is their obsession.

Any other framers fall to the opposite extreme, choosing to ignore inventory control almost completely. This results in wasted materials, unnecessary ordering, reduced profits, stockroom clutter, and feeling claustrophobic as your workspace gradually shrinks around you.

Now in the interest of fair disclosure, I

have to confess that I've been a full-fledged card-carrying member of this latter category. That is, until a few years ago when I finally saw the light. Actually, it was more a case of my shop becoming so cluttered that I couldn't even find the light switch. With sudden revelation, it occurred to me that I had a stockroom full of gold—silver, black, and mahogany too—waiting to be mined. And I do

*Knowing what to buy,
when to buy,
and how to store
and track materials
can increase your
profits.*

mean mined, since most of it was buried waist deep.

I decided that my staff and I would take whatever time was needed to organize the entire moulding inventory by style and color. Painful as it was for a pack-rat like me, it was also decided to dispose of orphan moulding, and those that were warped, scratched, or in some other way damaged. As a result, approximately 20% of the long lost moulding that was discarded turned into ready-made frames or was given to my employees for their personal use. The remaining inventory was catalogued and became the basis of an "Inventory Reduction Sale."

The payoff was immediate. The sale was not only highly

profitable (since all of the materials had been paid for), but it also helped to further reduce clutter, creating more workspace and a more comfortable working environment.

It also got me into the habit of being more aware of my inventory, which was much easier now that mouldings were better organized. Before ordering materials, I could now easily check new orders against the current inventory. This took but a few seconds because now I was more conscious of the materials on hand. It was also helpful in those instances where a customer needed rush service. I was able to sell from stock rather than ordering materials for every order.

During the first two months after overhauling the backroom, my weekly orders for framing materials dropped by more than 50% and short-term profits nearly doubled. I even got a phone call from a few of my suppliers who noticed the drop in my order volume.

I'm not a believer in micro-managing my business. My philosophy generally is to worry about the steak and not the sizzle, however taking the time to organize my moulding inventory paid off handsomely. It was like getting a long overdue bonus.

Why not give yourself a bonus too? It'll be worth the time and effort—guaranteed. ■

Available from



The Mounting and Laminating Handbook

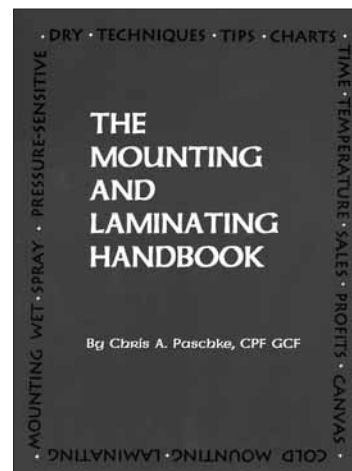
by Chris A. Paschke, CPF, GCF

This manual is the most complete and comprehensive of its kind. Designed as a technical reference book geared to both beginners and seasoned veterans alike, it is a complete source for basic techniques, hands-on procedures, applications, and tips. Topics include heat mounting, cold mounting, laminating, and creative mounting and laminating techniques.

160 pages

Item No. B543

\$19.95



Name _____
Company _____
Street _____
City and State _____
Zip _____
Phone _____
Signature _____

Check Visa/MasterCard
Card Number: _____
Expiration: _____
Include \$4.50 for shipping

Mail or fax to: PFM PubCo., P.O. Box 102, Morganville, NJ 07751. FAX: 732-536-5761.