

Brother's dual-embroidment trickles down to end users, too, including Chicago-area entrepreneur Rebecca Wilson, who is using Brother's embroidery and sewing technology in her Riverside, IL, basement to build her online business empire, one luggage tag at a time.

Wilson's year-old company, yourbagtag.com, creates sturdy, colorful luggage tags personalized with embroidery or monogramming. After just one year of marketing her creation online, she's filling orders for 150 to 300 tags per month and shipping all over the United States.



Her tags are a big hit with travelers who want highly visible identification for their luggage, but she's also produced tags for marching bands and sports teams and as party favors, wedding shower gifts and even place cards at a retirement dinner where the ID tags inside the cards were personalized with calligraphy for each guest. All tag sales come from the

yourbagtag.com site, which was created and is managed by her husband, Steve Wilson, who is a professional web designer and marketing expert.

Wilson, a veteran seamstress, has actually been sewing for profit for several years, making fleece jackets, hats and mittens from her own designs and embellishing them with a Brother home embroidery machine. Most of her products were sold on the craft show circuit in her home locale, where she was already well known for her innovative work, when she visited a local sewing

dealer four years ago and saw the then-new Brother PR-600.

"I walked into the sewing machine center and said, 'Oh my gosh! I have to have that machine!'" Wilson recalled.



It gave me the ability to have a higher speed and the option of six threads at a cost that was workable for a tiny little business." The machine's multi-needle embroidery abilities really enhanced her fleece products, and her sewing business continued to grow.

Then, about a year ago, one of Wilson's friends brought her a piece of ribbon with an initial embroidered on it. It was a "luggage identifier," explained Wilson, designed to be attached to suitcases for easy identification in a crowd.

"I said, 'I'm going to improve on it,'" she recalled. "It stimulated us to design a luggage tag." The all-fabric tags are fashioned from sections of grosgrain ribbon that are embroidered, folded and grommeted into their final tag form, including a secure pocket sized to hold a business card or a heavy-duty blank address card that Wilson provides. She uses a Brother sewing machine to complete construction on the tags.

Business has been so good that Wilson just bought a Brother PR-600II machine, this time from John Scarsella's Harlem Avenue Sewing Center, in Illinois, to expand her production capabilities.

Although Wilson was well on her way to success with her embroidered tags business, she said she welcomed Scarsella's insight and attention, particularly when it came to solving a technical problem stemming from her use of invisible thread.

"He picked up on what I was doing and knew just what to suggest," Wilson said. "I felt like he cared about me and took the time...that personal touch, you know?"

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