

Badges introduce many to 2 suburban companies

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Who hasn't stuck one of those "Hello My Name Is" badges on their lapel at one time or another? Or forgotten to take one off, only to realize it hours after leaving an event?

Then you may very well have Graphix Products Inc. of West Chicago and C-Line Products of Mount Prospect to blame.

Graphix Products has printed the quirky introduction badges for C-Line Products for nearly 30 years, cranking out more than 60 million of them last year.

"It's just one of those things that is always there and you never think about how they are made," said Jason Tews, vice president of marketing for family-owned Graphix Products.

The contract was the company's first when it was founded in 1971, Tews said, forming the foundation of a successful printing business that now counts Motorola and Kraft among its clients.

C-Line Products founder Elmer Krumwiede may not have

been the first with the sticky badge idea, but it was new to him when his wife complained about having to pin a name badge through her blouse at a convention in the 1960's.

The company, whose emphasis is on page protectors and other plastic products, later found that Graphix Products could produce the stickers more efficiently. Instead of C-Line printing then on one press and die cutting them separately, Graphix has a press that does it all.

C-Line Executive Vice President Skip Robertson admits they are a "silly little product," but they sell them all over North America, accounting for between 5 and 10 percent of annual company sales.



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