



**GRAVOTECH**  
EXPRESSION OF THINGS

# ERBOOK

## Personalization

Commercial strategies to develop sales





# GRAVOTECH

EXPRESSION OF THINGS

Initiated in the luxury goods industry, product customization is a widespread practice. It is used by the biggest brands in the luxury sector.

Do you have a boutique with one or more physical and online points of sale? Are you looking to differentiate your offering? Then this ebook is for you.

## Gravotech expert: Martin ROTH



Market manager for more than 5 years, Martin is the Personalization and Signage specialist for the Gravotech Group. Thanks to his team of product managers, he transforms field trends and customer needs into specifications to guide the development of future products.

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VIDEO



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# The trend towards ultra-personalization



The **personalization of products** is a trend that has become commonplace, thanks to the development of customization options. The goal? To be able to **commemorate an occasion**, an **event**, a **moment** or to create a **unique message** to develop emotions with the personalized product.

This practice, borrowed from the luxury sector, is based on consumers' desire for uniqueness. The idea is simple: to enable customers to enjoy a unique experience by taking part in the **co-creation of a personalized product**.

In addition to customization, we are now talking about hyper-personalization (or ultra-personalization): a process that applies to all aspects of commerce (digital and physical). The aim is to offer a key differentiator with the advantage of increasing the source of revenue by 10 to 25% and ensuring customer satisfaction.

«According to estimates (2022) by McKinsey, **ultra-personalization** could generate up to €800bn in additional value in the retail sector - equivalent to around a quarter of retail sales in Europe.<sup>a</sup>»

<sup>a</sup>Experts 2022] Ultra-customization: competitive advantage today, survival tomorrow



## OVERVIEW OF CUSTOMIZABLE PRODUCTS

Some of the best-known customizable items include clothing (t-shirts, sweaters, etc.), shoes, bags and many everyday accessories:



pens



mugs



pencil cases



notebooks



reusable water bottles

But that doesn't mean we're leaving out the gifts and other presents:

- liquor bottles,
- drinking glasses,
- cutting boards,
- product packaging,
- condiment pots,
- candles,
- fragrances,
- knives...

Those objects are just ideas of personalized gifts, you just have to find the right message. The list doesn't end with these few examples: remember that all objects can be personalized using different techniques.

# Different personalization techniques



## SCREEN PRINTING, EMBROIDERY & ENGRAVING OVERVIEW

### Screen printing



**Screen printing** is a printing technique that uses a screen to transfer ink onto a surface. It can be used on a wide variety of materials such as fabric, plastic, glass, metal and wood.

With this method, a **wide range of colors** can be used, which comes in handy for eye-catching designs.



But screen printing is not without its disadvantages. It can quickly become **expensive** for small quantities and the equipment set-up time is not suitable for fast production runs. It is not particularly well suited for color gradations. Another disadvantage of screen printing is that it is not durable as it tends to fade over time. It does not resist to abrasion and scratches; it also tends to peel off over time.

### Embroidery

**Embroidery** is considered to be a textile art, involving the creation of patterns or designs on fabric. It can be done on a **wide range of materials** - but mainly textiles (linen, leather, cotton, etc.). This technique also allows **very complex designs** to be created with great precision and many colors to be used.



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Unfortunately, an embroidery machine is **expensive** and operating costs can raise the cost of manufacturing a textile product. The size of the embroidery and the complexity of the design can also be a challenge. Embroidery is **not a very durable** technique. It will deteriorate over time (threads coming loose or colors fade).

### Sublimation

This is a technique of personalization by **printing followed by heat transfer**. It offers an unlimited range of colors and can be used on objects of all shapes (not just flat products). Sublimation is also **scratch-resistant** and dishwasher-proof.



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However, for this technique to be effective, the surface to be personalized must contain a **layer of polymer**. Without this, the color cannot adhere. And since not all materials can be personalized, the cost of "sublimatable" products is **generally higher**.

This technique works in two stages: printing the transfer and applying the transfer by heating. Unfortunately, the total time required for this personalization is **quite long**.

### UV printing

UV printing is based on the use of a **UV-curing ink** that reacts to UV light and hardens the ink, enabling the creation of patterns and designs on a variety of materials.



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It offers a number of advantages :

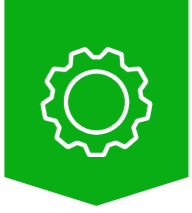
- **high print quality** ;
- vivid colors ;
- smooth finish ;
- a versatility that includes a wide range of materials.

Its **speed** is also a major asset, with instant curing reducing production times.



Nevertheless, this technique has a number of limitations:

- the **high cost** of the equipment ;
- the need for regular machine maintenance ;
- the required compatibility of materials with UV curing ;
- the **complexity of the process**, requiring specific training and expertise to guarantee optimum results.



## Engraving

**Engraving** is an accessible technique, both in terms of price and ease of use. It consists of creating a permanent mark on the surface of a material using a laser or mechanical machine. It **resists wear** and **tear** and does not fade over time. The high quality appearance will add elegance, enhancing the perceived value of the personalized item.

Engraving is one of the most environmentally-friendly ways of personalizing a product, with no added ink or products containing solvents. It can be applied to a wide variety of materials :



wood



glass



metal



plastic



leather

Discover our application pages

Engraving machines are capable of reproducing designs, logos and text with **great precision**, whatever the complexity and detail of the marking.

If you compare product customization techniques, it's easy to see that engraving has a number of advantages:

- High-end appearance that adds a certain value to the product;
- Sustainability;
- versatility of materials to be engraved;
- versatility of designs and details.

What are the limits? According to the product material or the technology used, engraving does not offer colors but can be contrasted when using the laser technology. However, the marking will therefore be of a uniform color unless a colored fill product is added. [Silver/golden wax](#) or [paint for metal, glass and plastic](#) is common.





# Personalized in-store engraving : an asset for the customer experience

## PERSONALIZED ITEMS BOOST FOOT TRAFFIC IN SHOPS

Since shops reopened following the health crisis, getting consumers to come to the point of sale has become a real challenge. In January 2022, the **foot traffic in retail shops** was **down by 28%<sup>b</sup>**.



To attract consumers to their shops, brands now need to **offer a unique customer experience** impossible to find on the web or elsewhere, with customer entertainment at the heart of the experience. At a time when online sales sites are on the rise with almost immediate delivery methods, the majority of customers who take the time to visit a shop are looking for a special experience: games, tests and a special welcome in line with the brand.

The personalization of objects based on engraving technologies is therefore the ideal in-store solution for creating experiences that will attract customers to physical shops.

By taking part in the choice of personalization and engraving themselves, customers benefit from a **shopping experience**. They become involved in the personalization of products, rather than spectators. They create a unique connection with the brand and the product they want to buy that they will not find anywhere else. In-store engraving is also a form of entertainment, with an engraving machine at the center of attention, making nearby customers want to experience it for themselves.

<sup>b</sup>Source: Retail: long-term decline in store traffic

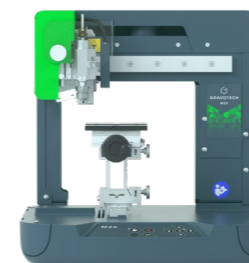


The **possibilities for personalization** are almost endless. For example, you just finished engraving a bottle of perfume or a candle? Give your customer the choice of adding a gold color to the inside of the engraving.  
Note: **90%** of customers who see someone else's item engraved will also want to personalize their purchase.

## Create in-store entertainment

It is now essential to have a machine that stages the engraving to the product to be personalized.

M20  
Rotary  
technology



WeLase™  
Laser  
technology



The M20 and WeLase™ have been designed with this in mind. With their glass fronts, these machines are ideal for showcasing a product in a shop or at an event.



Dedicace™ software

But don't overlook the software part, which is also important. It allows to facilitate the machine to be used by the shop personnel without the need of training. Plus, certain accessories such as the Dedicace tablet allows the engraving of drawings and handwritten text.



## A MACHINE TO MATCH THE AMBIENCE OF YOUR SHOP

An **engraving machine** can be installed in the back of the shop if you do not wish to personalize the products in front of your customers, or if the personalization requires other post-engraving actions, such as polishing jewelry, for example.

But you can also use it in-store to **assert your identity** and **associate** it with your brand image.

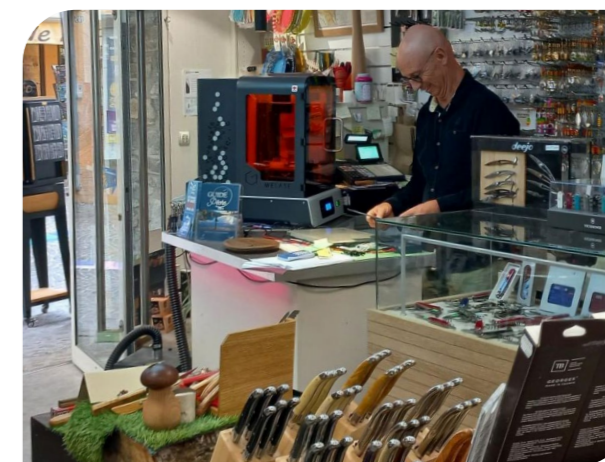
There are three possible scenarios, depending on the environment desired by the brand.

- The creative experience is **highlighted** for customers with product customization on a tablet or paper catalogue (the machine is in the back room).
- The machine is positioned in the shop and visible to the customer: he or she takes part in the creation of the engraving on a tablet or physical medium and sees the machine in action.
- The **mystery is kept**, and the customization is done out of sight, which is quite common in luxury boutiques.



If you want to give your shop an artisanal feel, you can choose a mechanical machine with a **traditional and authentic style**. For a more **innovative image**, you can opt for a laser machine. In any case, it is not only about typing a text and start engraving, you need to take into account the product, its material, the desired effect, the budget and the working environment.

Please note : As well as adding to the ambience of the shop, the way the engraving looks contributes to the brand's image. For example, engraving with a **mechanical machine will give a more traditional, even up-market impression**. Conversely, engraving with a **laser machine will give a more modern look**, reflecting a **more contemporary brand identity**.





# Customizing items on an e-commerce site : a solution for differentiation

## OFFER A COMPREHENSIVE AND REASSURING ONLINE COURSE

To implement **personalization** on your website, you need a simple, intuitive interface to make the customer journey as smooth as possible.

**Previewing these products on an e-commerce site** allows you to simulate the engraving applied to customizable products, with the different fonts or icons available. This is an **important reassurance** for customers, which can also encourage them to buy, they can see what the engraving will look like on the product. It also allows them to play with the possibilities and enjoy a richer experience than that of a customer who has just come to buy an item. For optimum rendering, it is possible to add a 3D configurator to this preview, giving a 360° view of customised objects. This function allows customers to see what their product will look like, and thus encourages them to buy.

Please note: Gravotech does not provide this service, but our software can interface with these developments.

We can define 2 categories of online business here:



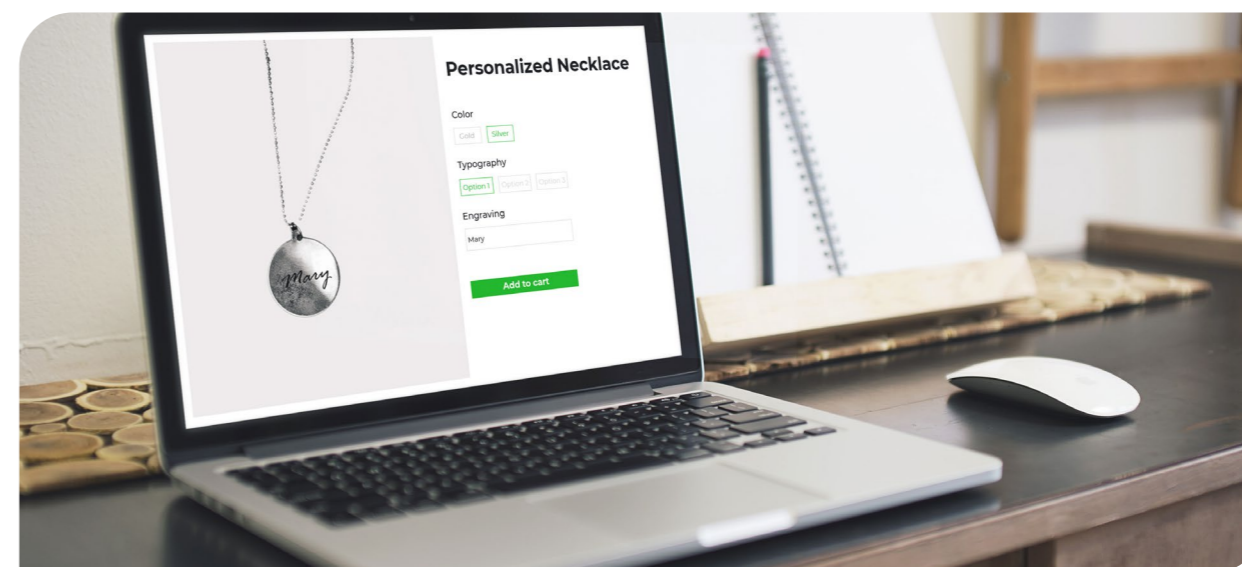
**Products designed to be personalized:** these are generally not sold unless they are engraved. **Their purchase price is low**, but their value is multiplied by 5 to 10 once the object has been personalized

**High-value products on which engraving can be added as an option** : the aim is to further increase the value perceived by the customer. These products can be sold without engraving, but the addition of engraving can **increase the selling price** or switch the customer to a product that will be more beneficial to you.



Gravotech's solutions can be easily adapted to these different product categories.

## BRING ENTERTAINMENT TO YOUR SITE



The fun aspect of visualization is a factor to be taken into account in an online shop. Before making their choice, customers can spend time on the site, looking at the **different possible combinations for personalizing the object**.

Customization can then be achieved :

- by a personalized engraving, with a personal text, typography or logo/drawing
- by establishing tailor-made criteria.

In addition to the preview, the site can be enhanced with a photo library or customer reviews.





## CUSTOMIZATION CAN BOOST YOUR REVENUE WITHOUT CHANGING YOUR PRODUCT PORTFOLIO

Hyper-customization can also increase your revenues.



**+ 20 %**

A consumer will be prepared to pay **20 %<sup>c</sup> more for a personalized product.**





**1 in 5**


1 person in 5<sup>d</sup> would potentially be interested in this additional offer.

So you can **increase your profitability** by focusing your sales on **higher-margin products.**

As far as online shops are concerned:

 **59 %<sup>e</sup> of marketing professionals** have a **positive return on investment** after launching a personalization service.

 In general, engraving is not offered free of charge; it is an **additional service for which there is a surcharge.** In other cases, you can also “offer” it under certain conditions, such as a **minimum average shopping basket**, or for a **limited-time event** (end-of-year celebrations, Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day, etc.).<sup>f</sup>

 Of the **61 % of marketing professionals** who are convinced of the **importance of personalization**, 51% do not know how to implement it.

For brands selling products online, the main challenge is to **stand out from the competition.** Faced with the many players on the Internet, they need to adapt and offer a competitive edge to a highly volatile customer base. Personalized engraving offers an opportunity to stand out from the crowd by offering **a unique experience**, making it possible to offer **a new range that is attractive** to customers.



Sources :  
<sup>c</sup>- Etude Deloitte : The Deloitte Consumer Review Made-to-order: The rise of mass personnalisation  
<sup>d</sup>- Etude Deloitte : The Deloitte Consumer Review Made-to-order: The rise of mass personnalisation  
<sup>e</sup>- Etude Invesp : Online Shopping Personalization – Statistics and Trends  
<sup>f</sup>- Etude Invesp : Online Shopping Personalization – Statistics and Trends

# Customized items build an attractive offer



## THE ADVANTAGES OF PERSONALIZED OBJECTS

- propose **an attractive offer** for some of your products using engraving
- **raise awareness** and **enhance the company's brand image**
- **create a new collection**, with new items or based on existing products, dedicated to engraving
- **highlight the product**, increasing its value by adding an aesthetic touch.

In all cases, the aim is to **trigger the act of purchase** and **increase your customers' average spend** by offering engraving in addition to selling products. You have several options:

- **charge for personalization** in addition to the price of the product as an extra service
- **offer engraving in the selling price** on specific products (new collection, high-profit product, large perfume bottle, etc.)
- **offer personalized engraving on special occasions** (Valentine's Day, Christmas, Father's/Mother's Day, birth, etc.) and adapt the engraving by adding themed emoticons.

These different choices will enable you to provide your customers with an extra level of satisfaction, and maintain a close relationship with them.

## DIVERSIFICATION TO BOOST YOUR INCOME

**Do you already have a signage business and you are looking to diversify your activity to increase your income ?**

Personalizing products with a low purchase price such as pens, photo frames, glasses, mugs, pet medals can considerably increase your sales! By buying these types of objects, then engraving them with your laser machine, you can resell them for **4 to 10 times their purchase price**.

Therefore, you can launch **a personalization business for private individuals** by offering personalized gifts, which are particularly popular during the **holiday season**. Personalized items with name, first name, quotation, message, or date **add significant value**.

**You want to go one step further and offer a BtoB personalization service?**

Personalized corporate gifts are given during events like business anniversaries or Christmas parties. They can also be branded with their corporate identity for product launches or trade shows.



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# Conclusion

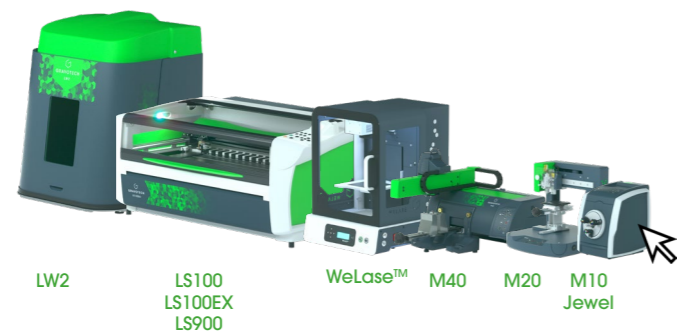


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Consumers are keen on personalized objects. Engraving is therefore an **attractive solution for boosting your sales**, both in physical shops and online. You can offer a captivating experience **to attract customers in-store** and build loyalty by creating **a unique connection with your brand**, and easily differentiate yourself from the competition. You don't need to redo your product offering, or carry out extensive work to find or design new models.

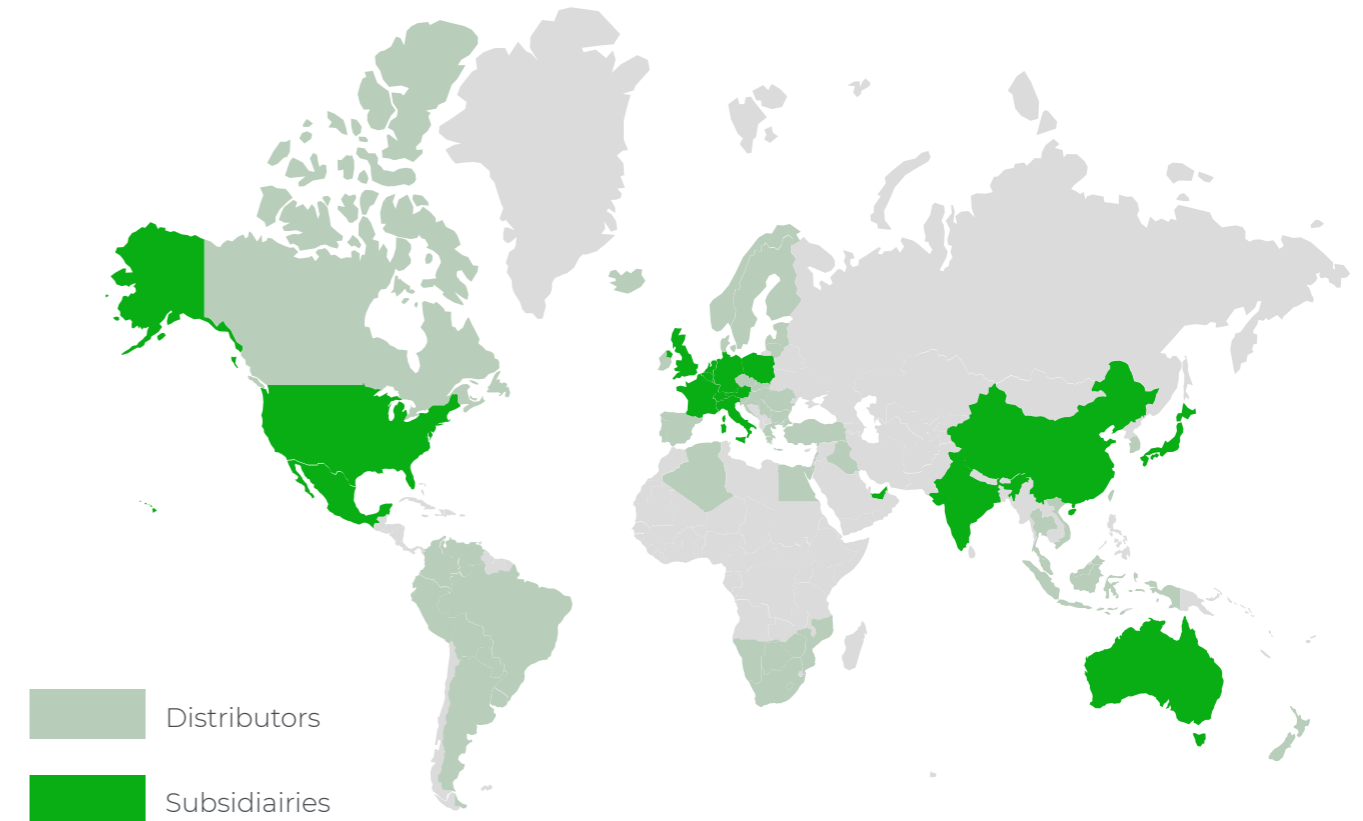
Relayed on social networks, **personalized products can help you develop your image** and reach new customers. For all these reasons, personalized engraving is a great way to increase your **average shopping basket**, keep up with market trends and expectations, and boost sales and product awareness. **But which technology is right for you?**



Discover our personalization machines



Gravotech, leader in permanent marking solutions



**+ 85**

85 years of expertise



**+ 60 000**

clients



**+ 85 %**

of sales from exports



**77**

countries

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