

iTOOLco and Enterprise Print Group: Partners in Productivity

Ready when you are!

AT A GLANCE

Enterprise Print Group's lean labeling solutions helped iTOOLco become more efficient in their equipment labeling process. This boosted productivity throughout the company, as well as saved time and money.



In many industries, labels play an absolutely critical role throughout the lifespan of a product. Not only are labels tasked with identifying and decorating various items, they can also serve mission-critical functions, such as listing ingredients, providing crucial instructions, and even informing product users of imminent danger.

The electrical tool industry is one that requires labels to excel in both form and function. These labels must be 100% accurate and they must last the entire lifetime of the tool. Faulty labeling in this space can result in devastating consequences.

ITOOLCO

iTOOLco is a Clinton, TN-based research and development company with a unique approach that has it leading the way in the electrical tool industry with groundbreaking designs. Founded in 2001 by inventors David and Michael Jordan, iTOOLco has developed and patented countless innovative products, pushing the envelope of what can be done to improve the lives of electricians and distribution partners alike. The company has been awarded prestigious accolades, including numerous NECA Showstopper Awards for its work in the electrical field. iTOOLco is dedicated to creating the highest quality products – right here in the USA – which are backed by a 6-year warranty.

With real world experience as electrical contractors, the brothers have a deep understanding of the kind of quality, time-saving tools electricians depend on for doing the job right. Over the years, iTOOLco has revolutionized the wire pulling market with the introduction of the first ever 12,000 lb. puller – the Cannon 12K, with built-in reverse, as well as their Cordless Cannon 3K & 6K (the first on the market of each, respectively). Capable of reaching areas where power may not be available, these pullers allow users to achieve the same amount of power, without worrying where it will come from. Also known for their Gear Punch, which includes lifetime replacement on draw studs, tray rollers, numerous material handling solutions and more, iTOOLco ensures that no matter the job, there is a solution.

One thing that all iTOOLco products have in common is stringent labeling requirements, where tools and tool parts must be labeled in such a way as to remainin compliance. Also, due to the custom- nature of iTOOLco's product offerings, these labels are often one- of-a-kind, and they're typically needed quickly in order to get products to market in a timely manner.

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ENTERPRISE PRINT GROUP

Enterprise Print Group (EPG), also located in Tennessee, has a lot in common with iTOOLco. Both companies set themselves apart from the competition by combining cutting-edge technology, personalized concierge-style customer service and a business philosophy steeped in always finding a way to overcome any and all client challenges.

As a pressure sensitive label manufacturer that specializes in serving clients in several industrial end-use markets where speed and compliance are extremely important, EPG has a strong understanding of iTOOLco's unique labeling needs. In addition to industrial and electrical equipment, EPG produces labels for appliances, outdoor power equipment, medical applications, logistics and more. Any label application with compliance requirements, such as satisfying UL specifications, is right in EPG's wheelhouse.



PRODUCTIVITY PARTNERS

With their respective strengths and needs lined up, EPG and iTOOLco make for great partners. The nature of iTOOLco's business model lends itself to distinct labeling challenges – a variety of compliance labels are required for the various custom-built tools the company manufacturers. And, they typically need these labels "just-in-time."

> *Proper labeling of equipment is vital for our company, from providing safety instructions and warnings to general branding. Labeling of the product provides our customers with an easy way to grow their knowledge on how to properly use our equipment.*
>
> **- Calvin Jordan, iTOOLco Marketing Director**

For iTOOLco, keeping track of where its labels came from was something that had become problematic, as they were being sourced from multiple suppliers. "With various labels for the same products coming from different sources, it became challenging making sure we were ordering all of the labels for a product when needed," Jordan recalls.

"Before our partnership with EPG, we were mainly acquiring labels through online vendors – whichever we could find that could produce the labels quickly. Getting labels reprinted could be challenging, though. While most of these label suppliers keep a catalog of what you have ordered, but they aren't organized, so you wind up spending a good amount of time hunting for the label, especially when you have a couple of hundred," explains Jordan, adding, "Also, the quality of the labels was always inconsistent, without setting a standard material, background color, or lamination style – there are a lot of variables that change from label to label."

This is where EPG enters the picture as an important iTOOLco partner and problem-solver. The label manufacturer has invested in the latest cutting-edge technologies that facilitate supplying labels quickly, without any hold-ups for on-the-fly changes.



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Investments in digital printing and high-speed laser finishing allow EPG to manufacture and deliver custom labels the very same day the order's been placed – even labels in the most intricate of shapes and sizes. In fact, these technologies, along with EPG's Lean Labeling and Art-to-Part workflows, allow for customer savings in both cost and waste.

Kirk Icuss, EPG's president and founder, describes the advantages of these two initiatives and what led to them becoming a key part of the label manufacturer's cost-savings and concierge-style service model. He says, "It has never made any sense to me that a customer's production line using hundreds of components – sometimes sourced all around the world – could be negatively impacted by a five-cent label. Our Art-to-Part process, which we've refined over 20 years, enables us to create and ship labels that our customer needs within days or even hours, as required. Our production lines have been built to move from a pdf to a digital press and then directly through the laser cutter and out the door. The entire process is a continuous flow, resulting in the highest quality parts in exact quantities."

Icuss points out how iTOOLco is the perfect example of how a customer partner can benefit by EPG's process. "The last thing an innovative, customer-centric manufacturer like iTOOLco needs is suppliers that don't think the same way they do. In our case, we rallied around the opportunity to help iTOOLco meet their customers' needs. We are very proud of what they do and of what they allow us to do for them. They rely on us, and we won't let them down," he says.

EPG has been a tremendous help to iTOOLco in expediting its entire labeling process. Jordan says, "Our employees used to have to bring out multiple rolls for a single item, they now simply tear off one sheet and complete the labeling for that entire product. This saves an incredible amount of time and can allow us to label several products in a day when work orders call for it, without having to hunt down labels. They've also been very helpful in recommending better types of labels, standardizing methods, and when we have to complete projects in a rush."

The sheets Jordan refers to are also known as "kits" at EPG. Typically, pressure sensitive labels are supplied on a roll, but EPG has perfected the "kitting" process which is a tremendous boon to iTOOLco.

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>
> ***Kirk Icuss***
> ***President/Founder EPG***

THE LABEL KIT DIFFERENCE

"Building label kits has been part of our business for years," Icuss says. "Typically, a manufacturer will use a variety of different labels on a product, and most of the time, those labels are purchased on individual rolls."

In the case of iTOOLco, depending on the product, they would have up to 20 different label rolls for the product. EPG's custom label kit solution allowed those labels to be grouped, arranged, printed, and cut into sets of 20 on a continuous roll. That's right - 20 labels per sheet, then the sheets are put into one roll. So instead of finding and sending 20 different label rolls to the production line, they can now send the exact number of kits needed for a product that day, reducing time and waste as well as rework through the simplified process.

Jordan says, "The label kits have been a huge help to us, and I would recommend any company to look into the kitting process. The amount of time it saves is truly astonishing."



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For EPG and iTOOLco, it's all about partnership. "For us, the partnership approach to doing business is about looking out for each other and helping when you can," Jordan adds. "Our strong relationship with EPG has allowed us to have a better point of contact for our needs, as well as having a group of people who are familiar with us and what we have done in the past, so producing new labels and reordering product is so much easier than it had been. When it comes to the label kits we now have, all of them have a part number, so we can simply reorder that kit, saving tons of time."

The partnership between EPG and iTOOLco is beyond transactional, as well. EPG provides a personal touch – a part of its business model that lends itself to custom, personalized customer service. Jordan notes, "Everyone at EPG is very friendly, making it feel easy to reach out with new project ideas, changes or needs. They are always very responsive and do their best to keep materials in stock, accessible, and of a certain quality that keeps our product looking the best it can."

For iTOOLco and EPG, the plan is to continue working together into the future, as both companies evolve and invest in themselves.

Jordan concludes, "As we continue to grow in the electrical market as well as utility markets and others, our label needs will only grow. With more complex products being added to our lineup, ensuring proper labeling and safety guidelines will continue to be crucial to ours and our customers' success. Having a company close by that understands this growth and is willing and able to aid in that growth wherever it can is extremely helpful, and it takes one more thing off our plate of worries."

WHO WE ARE

For over 30 years, Enterprise Print Group in Knoxville, TN, has delivered value-added labeling solutions to a variety of industries. We are a family-owned and run business that strives to meet the changing needs of today's manufacturing environment by investing in technology and materials that allow us to deliver exactly what our customers need, when they need it.

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SOLUTIONS

Enterprise Print Group is proud to offer peace of mind by delivering the labels you need when you need them.
As we like to say, ready when you are!

Custom Label Kits

Compliance in Labels

Fast Shipping and Delivery

BENEFITS

1. **Simplified labeling process**
   One sheet = one label set - the math is simple. No more hauling 10+ rolls of labels over for one product.
2. **Reduced waste**
   EPG's labels are made with high-quality, durable materials to withstand the test of time.
3. **Increased Uptime**
   Ready when you are - and we mean it. When you need it, we'll get it to you fast.