

NEWS



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NEWS FOR THE MEMORIAL INDUSTRY

TRADEX 2021



Tradex, the event hosted by NAMM, was due to be held at Warwickshire Exhibition Centre on the Thursday the 16th and Friday the 17th September. Unfortunately due to the potential impact from Covid it has been officially postponed. They are now looking forward to hosting the event in 2022 after consultation with the trade and exhibitors...

Whilst we could have put together a fantastic display within 4-5 weeks it's much harder for granite wholesalers to achieve the same results, particularly given the issues over supply at the moment (more on that later). So it's the right decision given the continuing circumstances and I'm sure the show will come back bigger and stronger next year.

We delayed our Open Days last year and whilst we would love to see you all here this year, the current situation in Lancashire means we will not be opening our doors this autumn. We do have other plans though - more on that later too...

DELAYS

The most talked about subject when customers place orders with

us is the availability of stock, both consumables and granite. In much the same way as a crash on the M6 can disrupt traffic in a large surrounding area, the after effect of the Evergreen container ship that run aground in Suez are still being felt across the world...



Couple that with the impact Covid is having on production and we're set for problems with supply chains that could continue for the foreseeable future as we go in to the peak period. In our memorial business we are already giving customers the shocking news that orders for new memorials not currently in stock might not be completed in time for Christmas! We obviously hope to fit memorials well in advance of the holiday period but we'd rather set expectations now rather than face those difficult calls in December.

We've tried to ensure that all of our stock is available, by ordering more, sooner, but inevitably, there have been shortages. An Anchor tape order, for example, would usually take about 4-6 weeks to arrive here at The Blast Shop. Recent orders have taken over 3 months! We will always try and keep everyone going as best we can so to ensure everyone

continues to have stock of "at risk" products we will restrict sales of these product lines if we foresee an issue on the horizon. We appreciate your continued support and patience with this policy.

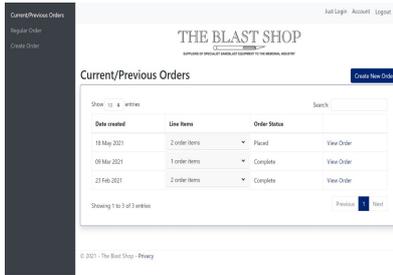
FACEBOOK LIVE

Rather than risking an open day and potentially having to cancel it again, we will be live and interactive on Facebook over the coming weeks and months. Our company Facebook page is regularly updated and we have a growing MemorialDesignerUK group, so we decided to use that as a platform rather than YouTube. The first session was on 25th June, showcasing our brilliant one man WIMAG mobile gantry system. If you missed it then it is available on "catchup" so you can see why we've sold so many of these gantries this year.

Later in the summer we will focus on the Futura Automatic cabinet and dustless blasting. If you're not following us on Facebook, or not a big social media fan, please give it a shot. Once you get past the photo's of pets and last night's dinner, it can be an excellent and rewarding resource of new and exciting information.



NEW ORDERING SYSTEM



Our new online ordering system is now live!

You can find the secure site here:

<https://tinyurl.com/52dabzy4>

or by clicking the link on theblastshop.co.uk. You'll need an account so contact Lee to set up login details etc. Our online ordering system knows about your previous orders and will present you with a custom list of products you have used in the past. If you need a different product or have a problem you are trying to get around then we still want to talk to you to ensure that the products you buy are the ones we would use ourselves.

Finally, you can also set-up repeat orders, you'll get a reminder a week before the delivery is due to ship allowing you to review and amend the order if necessary.

SERVICING

We are happy to announce the full resumption of our machinery maintenance and servicing schedule.

Steve has already carried out multiple services all over the UK, and is fully booked-up for the next few weeks so if you would like to take advantage of our professional servicing to ensure that your machinery is performing at peak levels, please contact us soon. Demand is likely to rise over the next few months as we near our busy period; especially given the circumstances over the last year and the potential for disruption in the future.

Servicing usually takes around 3 hours and is charged at £195 for the first 3 hours, then £50 for

each hour after that. There is a "callout" charge, however, we always endeavour to split service calls with multiple clients wherever possible in the same locality, meaning that you directly benefit from savings on the mileage charge and any overnight stay if required.

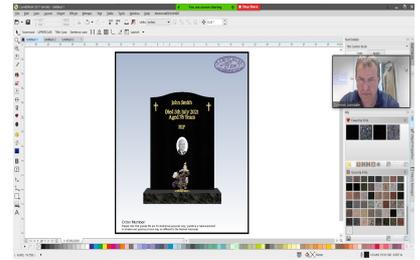
There are a number of key benefits to regular servicing, with less downtime and better performing sandblasters. One of the other less well known benefits is we also offer a discount on spare parts for those who are wise enough to have regular servicing, either annually, or biennially.



PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Even during the global pandemic we are constantly looking for new products that will help us (and you) out. We helped Anchor develop their T226 in the 1990's to compete with the influx of PVC stencil tapes that occurred at that time. T226 is still their most popular rubber tape in the UK and Europe with annual sales at a 5 year high despite the effects of the global pandemic. Like a lot of our customers, we often use this tape as an overblast tape when we need something that can mould itself around the edges of memorials or for protecting statues or porcelain photos from the blasting process. So we were pleased when we saw that Anchor have taken the T226 and produced it in a 2 inch wide roll to match other Overblast tapes. Priced at around £11 per roll it is more expensive than your regular, fabric based, overblast tapes but it is designed to take a direct blast, sticks like the proverbial to a blanket and is more convenient than cutting down a wider roll of the T226.

ZOOM DEMOS



The global pandemic has had a profound impact on the way we do business and communicate with our customers and suppliers. Some of these new methods will stay with us for good, our Zoom demonstrations for Memorial Designer in particular continue to be a huge success.

Dominic has been showcasing the software's capabilities and user friendliness and orders continue to flood in. A lot of the support for MDUK is available on our YouTube channel (search for theblastshopofficial), we've also recently uploaded a video testimonial where Dominic and a recent convert, Craig, have a chat about why he started using MDUK and what it's done for his business. Contact Dominic to arrange your Zoom demo or old fashioned personal visit if you would prefer.

FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

We've been considering going completely digital with future newsletters – This will save on paper and lessen the overall carbon footprint, but if you still want a paper version then let us know, we wouldn't want you to miss out!

PRICES

As you are probably aware, shipping rates and raw material costs have shot up over the past few months and we will unfortunately have to now revisit some of our pricing. Expect unavoidable increases to tapes, grit, containers and fixings. We hope to reduce any price increases once things have settled down.