

# ULTIMATE GUIDE

FOR HANDCRAFTED AWARDS



**HANDMADE  
ARTISANAL VS.  
UNINSPIRED WIDGET**

How handcrafted  
awards are made

**EMPLOYEE  
RECOGNITION GIFTS**

Do they really matter?

**FREE SUBSCRIPTION  
AND OUR  
TOP 7 BLOG POSTS**

To help you create  
your next award

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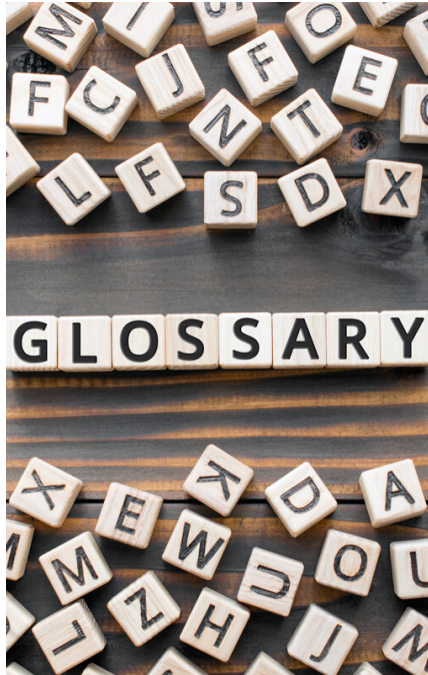
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Every Term You Will Need

## Welcome

Clearmount has been in business for 57 years, and the past 30 plus years it has been owned by the Plummer family. We've learned a lot

throughout the years, but our eagerness and passion for customizing recognition and awards have only gotten stronger. In a few short months, COVID had radically changed our workforces, and we all need to adjust to the new normal. We want to help answer the question: how do we keep our employees engaged and focused? Welcome to your Ultimate Guide for Handcrafted Awards.

# EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION GIFTS

## Do they really matter?

### 83%

SAID RECOGNITION FOR CONTRIBUTIONS ARE MORE FULFILLING THAN ANY MONETARY REWARD OR GIFT

### 6 in 10

EMPLOYED AMERICANS SAY THEY ARE MORE MOTIVATED BY RECOGNITION THAN THEY ARE MONEY

### 93%

OF RESPONDENTS EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO BE RECOGNISED AT LEAST ONCE EACH BUSINESS QUARTER

### IT SAVES YOU MONEY

STUDIES ESTIMATE THAT WHEN A BUSINESS REPLACES A SALARIED EMPLOYEE, IT CAN COSTS BETWEEN 6 TO 9 MONTHS' SALARY ON AVERAGE.



Studies show that employees who don't receive praise and feel disengaged have high turnover rates, decreased empowerment, poor team skills and unsatisfactory job performance.

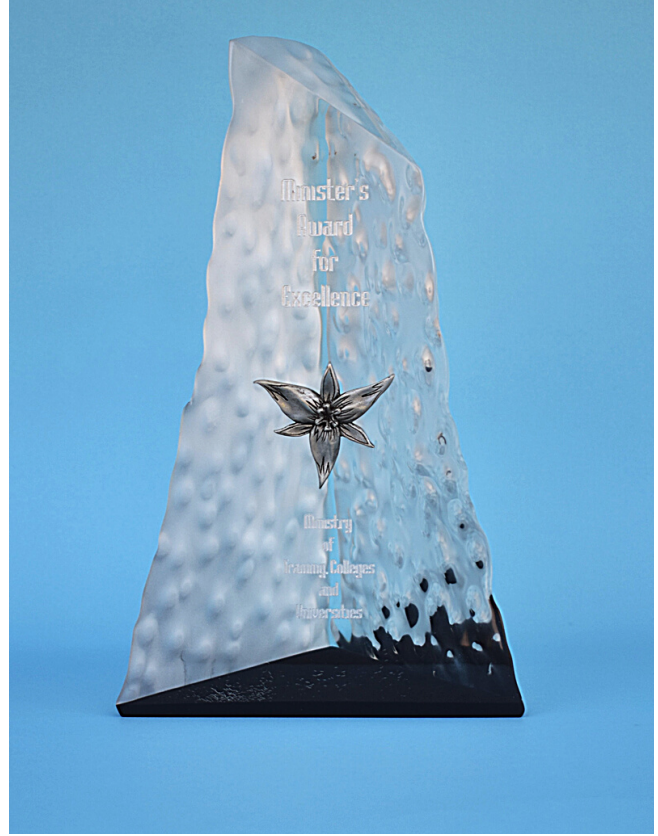
### IT MAKES YOU LOOK GOOD

87% OF STARBUCKS BRAND AFFINITY IS DRIVEN BY THE WAY THE COMPANY TREATS ITS EMPLOYEES,

### 75%

OF EMPLOYEES WHO RECEIVE FAVOURABLE FEEDBACK AND RECOGNITION EXPRESS JOB SATISFACTION.

# CLEARMOUNT AWARDS

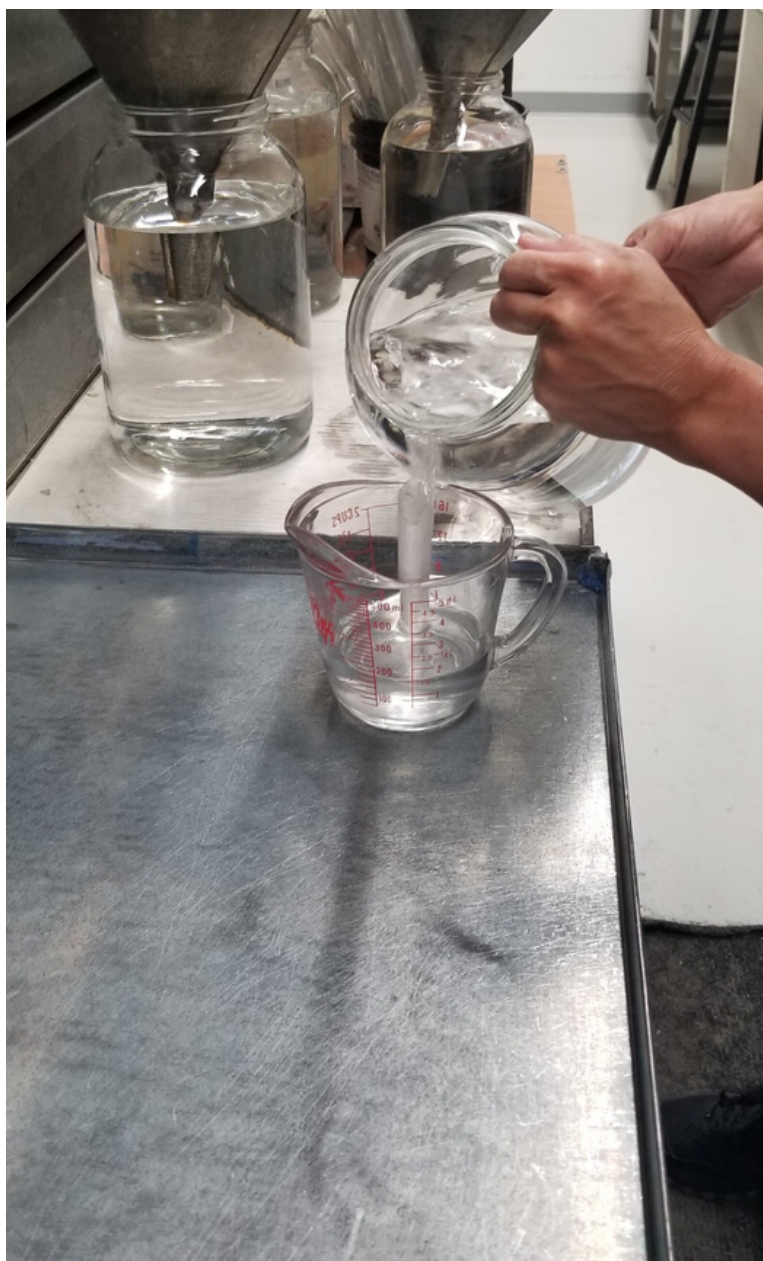






# HOW AWARDS ARE HANDCRAFTED

HANDMADE ARTISANAL VS.  
UNINSPIRED WIDGET



## 1 Casting

Two ingredients, acrylic resin powder and monomer, a crystal clear liquid are mixed. The result is a thick, opaque liquid. After, this mixture is hand-poured into moulds and allowed to harden partially. Objects and logos are embedded by hand onto the acrylic layer. A second layer is hand-poured over the embedded object and the acrylic is allowed to harden again.

Did you know, multi-levels of embedments are challenging? Made by hand, each layer hardens into an opaque milky white layer. It becomes more difficult to centre objects on multiple levels. This adds to the handcrafted quality of each piece.



# 2

## Curing

Once all of the custom pieces have been cast and hardened they are ready for the Autoclave, a large oven where the moulds are placed under heat and pressure.

We have custom moulds designed and manufactured to craft a customized acrylic piece.

The heat cures and the pressure squeezes out the air bubbles to bring it to its crystal clear appearance. This curing process can take ten or more hours. All acrylic parts are cast oversized to allow for shrinkage, which can vary.





# 3

## Cutting

In this stage, the award starts to take shape. After coming out of Autoclave oven, as a raw casting, our artisans will cut and shape by hand into the custom sizes and shapes that identify each piece as being uniquely yours.

Our artisans take great pride in each step of the

process when crafting acrylic. They make sure that every customer receives the highest quality handmade custom awards we can produce.

The awards are then removed from their moulds and sent directly to cutting and sanding



# 4

## Sanding

Our team sands your pieces to make them more uniform in size. Our sanding method uses coarse to fine grit belts, to get rid of the rough parts in the curing process.

As with any handmade item, there can be minor variations and flaws, and this process smoothes out imperfections. We aim to have our awards as consistent as possible despite their handcrafted nature. It's also a popular finishing technique for some of our customers. Our artisans will regularly create, per the clients' instructions, a rough edge or bottom.



Next, we polish by hand. We make a rough buff to remove all sanding lines and any left-over impurities, to highlight the clarity and lustre of the acrylic.

Each piece is inspected individually for a glossy finish.

We consider all of our pieces as customized art pieces.

# 5

## Buffing

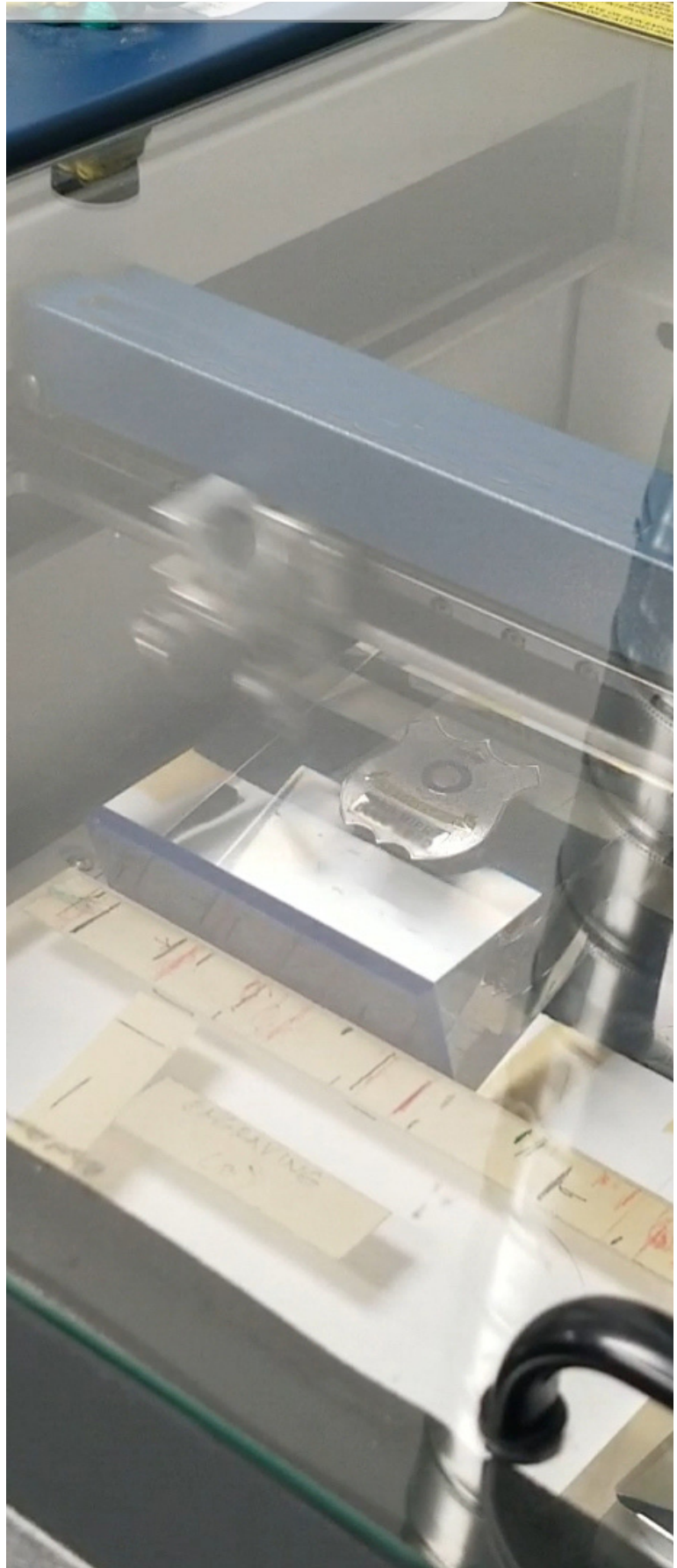
# 6

## Finishing

After the buffing process, the awards are ready for the final touches. They may go through laser engraving, digital print, colour filling or countless other finishes done by hand on-site.

Translucent coloured tint or custom opaque colours can be applied to all of just a portion of your award. Laser engraving may be colour filled for contrast or, left without fill for a white frosted look.

You can also combine laser engraved background details and embed colour imprints for depth.





# 7

## Assembly

In this final stage, the awards or recognition pieces are cleaned and visually inspected. These one-of-a-kind awards are not widgets but labour intensive, hand-crafted gifts and awards. After they pass inspection, they are bagged, boxed and shipped around the world.

To assist brands and corporations in recognizing and honouring their employees and clients with the perfect award that captures the moment forever.

In choosing a medium that is so versatile and an award idea that presents an unparalleled opportunity to be unique and customize with whatever you can think of, you are choosing non-conforming pieces.



# CLEARMOUNT A-LIST TEAM

The process of taking acrylic and carefully customizing and finally turning into an art piece is a skill. Our artisans are fully aware that these pieces are a testament to the recipient's hard work and outstanding performance that they deserve to be recognized. For this reason, our team has immense consideration and pride throughout this crafting process.

# DON'T EMBED THESE ITEMS WE TRIED

“Are you able to embed.....” is often the way many of our conversations start when working on custom awards. And when it comes to embedding items into acrylic, there aren't many things we haven't tried.



When we try new ideas, it comes out of the autoclave working we are thrilled. When it doesn't work, we are ready to put in the effort to come up with solutions that help resolve not only the immediate problem for our clients but also for the next project that comes along. Over the years, we have embedded so many items,

Some of the characteristics of items likely to not embed well: soft, moist, food, oily, large sharp metal edges, most plastics, certain inks, paper that is too thin. It's sometimes even better when we can't embed a client's product and have to be creative to come up with a solution that looks like we did,



## Nabisco Brands

A large cookie company wanted to embed one of its famous cookies as an award. It was moist, full of sugar, had a soft centre – generally unsuitable for an acrylic embedment. But, we were willing to try! We tried and as we predicted it would, after being mixed with Lucite, and put under pressure and heat. It came out crushed, browned and not looking like a cookie anymore. However, we did not just give up. We brainstormed solutions so the client could still achieve their vision for the award. The solution we offered was to create a cookie made out of other materials to mimic the famous cookie. The client had the custom award that they wanted.



## Petrobras

For one distributor, her client wanted their salt embedded as a custom Lucite VIP Gift. The front piece of the paperweight was embedded with their logo cut out of red cast Lucite and a printed acetate with the company info. We then created a back piece that had a cavity that allowed us to fill it with the client's salt. This was where it got a little tricky as you could not overfill or you could not glue the two pieces together as the client didn't want the salt to crush. The cavity has a little room to allow the salt to move around, but not too much room. It was an exercise of patience and detail, but it was worth it in the end as the end client was happy. For the first time, the client had their product "embedded" in a custom Lucite award that they could give to visiting VIP guests.



# GLOSSARY

## Acetate

a clear film that is spot colour printed for embedment into a cast acrylic item, resulting in a floating graphic effect.

## Bevel

an angled finish edge to an acrylic piece, usually at 45 degrees.

## Colour Tint

a translucent colour effect in all or part of an acrylic item.

## Embedment

any object (customer product, paper, acetate, medals, etc) that will be cast into an acrylic item.

## Faceted

an irregular angled bevel along the edge of a shape creating many triangular surface facets.

## Finding

a small cast metal object, figurine or model that in our case is usually used as an embedment.

## Grannex

Clearmount created solid coloured acrylic material featuring a granite-like mottled colouration in several stock colourways.

## Ice Look

an irregular finish mimicking an ice surface, may be had with a clear polish or sandblasted.

## Laser-Engraving/Etching

etching a design or text onto the surface of acrylic.

## Lucite

the highest quality form of acrylic

## Opaque Colour

a solid (non-see-through) effect in all or part of an acrylic item. Can be specifically colour-matched.

## Personalize

to add a specific person's name to an award.

## Printed Matter

any printed 2D material (i.e. paper stock or acetate) that is being cast into an acrylic piece.

## Sandblasting

a process that creates a frosted translucent surface finish.





## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q.** Where is your product manufactured?

Our entire line of products is manufactured at our factory in Toronto, Canada

**Q.** Why use Lucite rather than glass or crystal?

Lucite is the highest-grade form of acrylic and has an optical quality close to crystal. Embedments of client's products or of most items can only occur with Lucite. By using Lucite you get a more unique and custom corporate gifts and awards. There are design limitations with glass.

**Q.** Who can supply an article for embedment?

We encourage the customer to incorporate their products as much as possible in creating their custom trophies and corporate gifts. In the case of printed matter, (i.e. graphics or copy on paper stock), we prefer source this ourselves to ensure that the correct processes are followed which allows us to produce a product that will embed without loss of image quality.



**Q.** Are the pieces in the website the only way it can be made?

No. Items shown are examples of how our products can be designed and decorated. We work with you to design and create an exclusive custom award that recognizes and rewards the recipient's achievements or to act as a remembrance of a special event. With our products, just about anything is possible!

**Q.** Do you laser-engage just Lucite?

No. We can also laser-engage onto any smooth, non-metallic surface.

**Q.** Do you ship to the US and other countries?

Yes! We can drop ship on your behalf as well.





# TOP 7 BLOG POSTS TO HELP CREATE YOUR NEXT AWARD

## Employee Recognition thoughtful and unique gifts

You can make your design fun and unique and it doesn't have to be complex. But whatever you do, don't be thoughtless about it! Simplicity is not a bad thing, but thoughtlessness is. Get your Employee Recognition Gifts program jump started take a peek at some of our favourites.



## Planning Ahead employee recognition gifts and awards programs

The point of presenting employee recognition gifts / awards is for organizations to recognize countless criteria that they wish to nurture within their corporate culture.



## Case Studies

How Clearmount helped our customers overcome their challenges and achieve their objectives.





## Clearmount's Memorable Pieces

### The Cork Edition

An amazing personal gift designed by our V.P. Kate for her sister Gillian. It's a column piece with corks, collected during her sisters' wedding planning, angled throughout with her family speeches engraved on three sides. We love doing this one of a kind projects.

## Retirement Gifts

### 4 unique ideas

Retirement gift options are personal and, although appreciated, some don't acknowledge the personal contribution to the organization. A retirement gift doesn't have to be serious, but can be fun and creative.



## Make Recognition

### a part of your Safety Program

How do we create a safe work environment and how do we keep our employees engaged and focused?



## Recognition Awards

### for Valued Service Personnel

Some important individuals keep our communities safe and secure – from police officers and firefighters to military personnel and community volunteers. These strong and valued members of our society should be thanked and recognized for all their hard work.

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