

Machine Embroidery Digitizing

Machine embroidery digitizing is an art form. Using digitizing software, a skilled embroidery digitizer transforms an image or text to stitches, creating the image in a file format an embroidery machine can read.

That's a fine definition but the reality is somewhat more involved.

Just as typing words into a word processor does not make one an author, being able to open digitizing software on a computer does not make the operator an embroidery digitizer. Embroidery digitizing is not a click-the-button-and-sit-back process.



Digitizing an image for embroidery requires an artist's ability to see the big picture and the smallest of details. Experienced embroidery digitizers mentally dissect each image, breaking it out into sections and layers, noting how each section relates to the others, how the colors blend and merge and how the shadows play with the light to create the mood or atmosphere the image evokes.

Then the digitizer utilizes the software's tools to separate those sections for redrawing or resizing, stitching in underlay and overlay threads, assigning stitching sequences, using thread to apply shading, and colorizing. The design is reassembled to create that original impression, as much as is possible, in thread and it is ready for its first sew out.

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Written by Administrator

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Sometimes digitizing an image to thread is often not possible nor feasible. Thread is three dimensional; it is not oil paint or digital pixels. An embroidery digitizer must have an artist's creativity and problem-solving skills. A digitizer's canvas is the computer monitor, the keyboard and mouse are the brushes and the embroidery digitizer's pallet is the embroidery software.



But the embroider's canvas is the fabric, her brushes are the machine, needles and thread and her pallet is the program produced by the digitizer. The machine is only a robot awaiting instructions and then doing precisely what it is told to do in the order it is told to do it. Ruling out mechanical problems or operator error, if a pattern does not sew out correctly it is not the machine or embroider's fault.

So the digitizer's work is not confined to a computer screen. Knowledge of fabric types and the push-pull factor of each is also required. The embroidery digitizer also needs to know about needles, thread, and stabilizers and, perhaps most importantly, must creatively expand the 'boundaries' of machine embroidery.

A professional embroidery digitizer's attitude is: "Nothing is impossible!"

And that is what makes machine embroidery digitizing so darn much fun!

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A visual guide to embroidery digitizing.



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