



By Shopping Locally, You Help Strengthen Your Community!

# Maumee Uptown Business Spotlight



Brothers Kevin (left) and Scott Sterns own and operate Always Promoting, a local business that features more than 500,000 products to help promote a company, event, organization or outing.

MIRROR PHOTOS BY NANCY GAGNET



Using a computerized embroidery machine, monograms and company logos are applied to a variety of apparel items.

## Always Promoting Offers A Full Range Of Promotional Items

BY NANCY GAGNET  
MIRROR REPORTER

More than 500,000 products are available on the market to help promote a company, event, organization or outing.

In fact, a business logo can be printed on just about anything, said Scott Sterns, the co-owner of Always Promoting.

"You could literally put your logo on a rock – essentially, you could put your name on it," he said.

He has seen companies put logos on the bottoms of flip-flops, "so when they walk along the sand, the business name is printed in the sand like ads," he laughed.

In 1989, after graduating from The Ohio State University, Scott saw a niche on the apparel side of the advertising business. He invested in an embroidery machine and soon built his business as a subcontractor for larger companies that specialized in promoting businesses and athletic teams.

"We jumped right into the computerized embroidery world," he said.

For 10 years, business was steady; then a major shift in customer demand forced him to change his business model from production to sales. To keep his company afloat, he joined the national franchise Adventures in Advertising, which gave him greater buying power.

"That was a godsend," he



All sorts of products can be branded to promote a business or event.

said. "It allowed our customers to be able to buy at a better cost and it gave us greater security."

Eventually, he hired sales reps and re-built his company as a one-stop shop offering promotional items.

Throughout the course of running the business, the name and location also went through a series of changes. Initially it began as S&S Embroidery, then changed to S&S Sportswear, S&Z Sportswear and Logo Source. The business location also changed from its first space in downtown Rossford to the Buttergilt Building in uptown Maumee, then to

offices on Central Avenue and Lance Point Road. In 2003, the business moved to its current location at 127 W. Wayne St.

In 1998, Scott also formed a joint venture with his brother, Kevin Sterns, making him an equal partner.

"It's been a fun business," said Kevin. "It's about building relationships with customers and vendors."

Today the staff includes embroidery manager Jane Rork and sales associates Dick Ansara, Mitch Kauh, Ed Perry and Maria Christov.

Relying on repeat and referral business, the compa-

ny has multiple loyal customers throughout the Northwest Ohio region.

For Kevin, being able to put a face with a business is central when it comes to customer service, especially when competing with companies that sell promotional items online.

"We can back our products, so if there is a problem we can solve it face to face," he said.

Scott said that having a number of various customers also helps to keep the business sound.

"We try to have a large customer base from several diverse industries," he said.

other items that also frequently sell include pens, golf balls, trophies, awards, signage and decals.

The current trend in sportswear is clothing made of a moisture-wicking fabric, a polyester blend designed to pull moisture away from the skin.

The company also recently invested in a new printing machine, which can print full-color graphics on items – including glass, leather and plastic – up to 2 inches thick.

"I enjoy the diversity of the business – no two days are ever the same," said Scott. "I work with all types of customers – from a mom ordering Girl Scout T-shirts to a bank ordering hundreds of items – I think it makes it interesting."

More information about Always Promoting can be found on its website, [www.alwayspromoting.com](http://www.alwayspromoting.com), or by calling (419) 891-1112.

### Uptown Update

THE LATEST NEWS IN UPTOWN MAUMEE

**MUBA Hosts Monthly Membership Meetings**  
Maumee Uptown Business Association (MUBA) membership meetings are open to all MUBA members. The meetings take place on the first Tuesday of each month from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

In June, the meeting will take place at Tailored Real Estate Services, 511 Gibbs St.

**Maumee Food Truck Fridays Begin In June**  
Food Truck Fridays will start on Friday, June 3 at East Wayne and Conant streets from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.