A complete makeover with CorelDRAW® 12 Graphics Suite helps Toronto pub grow its business

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>
> **Oliver Lutkiewicz**
> **Owner**
> **The Yellow Griffin**

the | **yellow griffin** | pub

best burgers on bloor

When business owner Oliver Lutkiewicz decided to give his downtown Toronto pub, the Yellow Griffin, a makeover with a new menu, new storefront and new flyers, he didn't want to pay a design firm a ton of money to do it. He knew what he wanted, and decided to design the new collateral himself. Armed with an updated marketing strategy and CorelDRAW Graphics Suite 12 he was able to quickly design all the pieces and successfully launch the new look of his pub.

The Yellow Griffin Pub is a bustling restaurant & pub in the Bloor Street West Village in downtown Toronto. The owner, Oliver Lutkiewicz, works as an economist in the federal government in Ottawa and runs the family business with his mom, Maria Lutkiewicz, and seven employees. Oliver travels to Toronto every weekend to catch up on what's going on, and help out on busy Fridays and Saturdays.

"We've operated The Yellow Griffin for about 5 years and decided to update the front of the building and all our marketing materials in an attempt to re-brand the pub with a more upscale and modern look," explains Oliver Lutkiewicz.

Before the recent update, The Yellow Griffin Pub was a well-run restaurant, but not a very focused operation from a brand perspective. Several different versions of the logo could be found on the storefront sign, menus, glasses, and flyers etc. The marketing messages were created ad hoc for each piece, and there was no cohesive marketing plan in place.

"We needed a tighter marketing strategy to adapt to the new face of Bloor Street West," says Oliver Lutkiewicz. "That's when we came up with a new consistent look, a new storefront, a revamped menu, new staff shirts etc. We also introduced our new tagline, *the best burgers on bloor*, with thirty-five different and innovative burgers on the menu."

"I don't have a background in graphic design, but I knew pretty much what kind of look I was going for", says Oliver Lutkiewicz. "The name The Yellow Griffin is established in the Bloor Street West Village and I wanted to keep the essential image of a Griffin in the logo, but I also wanted to create an updated version of the brand where all the pieces

spoke with one voice. A unified approach where we used the same fonts, the same colors and the same modern look and feel."

As a relative newcomer to digital design software, Oliver needed a program that was easy enough to use, yet had enough power to let even a novice create professional-looking designs.

"I picked up a copy of CorelDRAW and started to play around with it," he recollects. "I quickly got the basic concepts of how to add text, shapes and images, and I put together a flyer for our 80's night in no time. I was particularly pleased to notice how easy it was to add a copy of the logo in the background and reduce the opacity to a watermark."

Every week, Oliver travels between his work in Ottawa and the restaurant in Toronto by train. The benefit of traveling the 450 kilometers each way by train quickly became evident, as it gave him over four hours, twice a week, to work on the new marketing material on his laptop.

"A key aspect of this project was to update the front of the restaurant with a new awning and I came up with an idea in CorelDRAW that worked really well. I had all the measurements ready and entered the correct size in a new DRAW document. It couldn't be easier. I worked with Roberts Awnings & Signs here in Toronto to create the new canvas awning over the front entrance and the final result looks great."

Most sign-makers are prepared to handle native .CDR files in their workflow, so Oliver sent them the original DRAW file, with all text converted to curves to avoid any potential font issues.

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The new menu was also created from scratch in CorelDRAW. Managing the text layout in a comprehensive menu featuring 35 burgers with detailed descriptions of the ingredients, two-dozen side orders, desserts and kids items, can be a daunting task. By using the Paragraph Style Editor in CorelDRAW 12, a user can define all aspects of text properties, such as typeface, size, leading, indent, alignment etc, and save the Style in the Style list. By simply updating the style guide, all the paragraphs in the document will be updated automatically. This makes it easy to see what the menu would look like in a different font without having to update each paragraph separately.

"In the old days I used to do flyers in Microsoft® Word and Excel, so the new materials look absolutely incredible in comparison. Our new look has received quite a bit of attention in the neighborhood, and it's only been two weeks since we launched."

According to Oliver, one of the reasons this project has been successful is that it's so easy to reuse all the basic materials in CorelDRAW for different documents. They've standardized on certain colors and fonts for the different pieces, and all materials look like they're part of the same family. The logo is a resolution independent vector file, which means it can be used on everything from 2x2-inch coasters to a 20-foot banner without losing quality.

"CorelDRAW has been the creative hub for this makeover, and we couldn't be more pleased," says Oliver Lutkiewicz.

Does the new menu live up to the tagline *the best burgers on bloor*?

"Absolutely. No question about it. I haven't tried all thirty-five yet, but yesterday I had a Hickory Stick and I got so excited it took me well over an hour to calm down. Man, those caramelized onions are delicious!"

One of the most concrete signs that the Yellow Griffin facelift has had an impact in the Bloor Street West Village, is that the competition is taking notice.

"We're in direct competition with five or six other pubs in the neighborhood and I noticed that the chefs from the other places were in here four days in a row last week. I guess they're trying to figure out what we've been up to, and copy our marketing strategy," he says and laughs.

Note: The Griffin is a mythological creature with the head and wings of an eagle, and the body and legs of a lion.

Before

After