

Products

On the Flip Side

Get extra mileage out of promotional programs with reversible apparel.

By Tonia Kimbrough

Who doesn't like a two-for-one special? That's exactly what you get with reversible apparel. When a garment gives recipients the option to wear it inside out for a totally different vibe, there's an opportunity for a logo to be seen more frequently. The trick is to choose apparel that can be imprinted on both the interior and exterior or that has contrasting color combinations.

A new reversible T-shirt from Independent Trading Co. allows the wearer to create a new look with a simple flip. Made of 6.5-ounce 60% cotton/40% polyester, this men's style (IND21RT) is made of 40 singles fine jersey for an extra-soft hand. One side is a solid color with double-needle stitching at the sleeve and bottom hem; the other is a classic ringer with a contrasting color at the rib-neck opening and reverse cover-stitching at the sleeve and bottom hem.

Another way to achieve a different look in a single garment is to have completely different fabrics for the interior and exterior of the garment. The Port Authority reversible nylon and fleece vest (J749) from SanMar (*asi/84863*) does. This sporty vest features a water-resistant Terra-Tek nylon on one side and a wind-resistant, anti-pill fleece on the other. Not only does the look differ from side to side, so does the performance. Depending on the weather, the wearer can choose which fabric is best for the climate.



▲ This reversible Port Authority vest (J749) from SanMar (*asi/84863*) features water-resistant nylon on one side and wind-resistant fleece on the other.



◀ This cotton-poly T-shirt (IND21RT) is reversible, with a solid color on one side and ringer on the other. Available from Independent Trading Co. (*asi/57668*).

When it comes to imprinting, talk with your supplier about options or check the product spec sheet. Embroidery expert Drew Coufal of Sew & Sew Embroidery explains that some reversible apparel is designed to be embroidered on both sides without stitching all the way through. The garment might have a flap on one side or a hidden "embroidery pocket" that can be accessed to stitch logos independent of each side.

"Some shops will up-charge

for hidden access pockets because of the additional time and labor to run items through, which can take longer than hooping via standard methods," Coufal says.

The Port Authority vest is a good example of a garment with multiple access points. Shelly Renning, general merchandise manager for SanMar, explains that it has a pocket on one side and a flange on the other, which allows for easy decoration. The one caveat is that heat-applied

and screen-printed graphics are not recommended for the nylon side, particularly in the golden-rod/black color combination.

T-shirts, however, such as the reversible style from Independent, can be screen printed with success on either side of the garment. Talk with your decorator about the ink and process best suited for the fabric. An exceptionally soft, fine-gauge fabric might be best decorated with a water-based ink so that the imprint doesn't feel stiff.