

New business brings hand-printing specialists to Norfolk

By *Hillary Smith* on July 28, 2016

Southsidedaily.com is your source for free local news and information in Virginia Beach



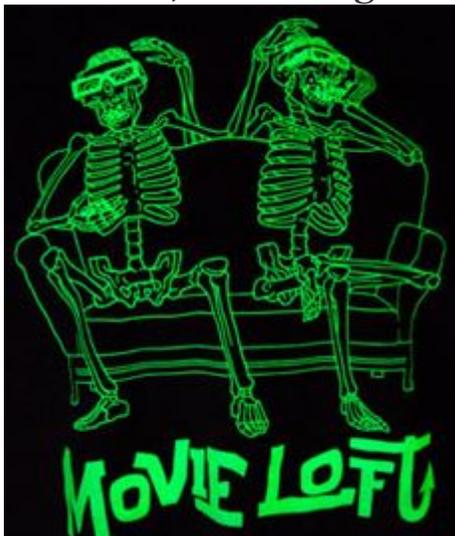
433 Granby St., Norfolk, VA (Courtesy of Prince Ink Co.)

A new Norfolk screen-printing business, The Prince Ink Co., will print on anything that's flat and holds still. Including tortillas.

Prince Ink will celebrate a grand opening at 433 Granby St. Friday with music, free prints and live painting by Igor Acord, a Virginia Beach sign artist. The business specializes in T-shirts, but also prints on products such as bags, footballs and playing cards. It has even printed hot sauce onto tortillas.

“It’s gonna be nice to be able to show everyone what we’ve been up to,” Matt Wallace, the owner, said in a phone interview.

Prince Ink is run by brothers Matt and Dustin Wallace and Chris Gundry. The trio launched the screen-printing operation in 2011, but they have been printing designs, logos and messages onto products for more than a decade. In December 2015, Prince Ink received a grant from Norfolk’s [Vibrant Spaces](#). A project of the Downtown Norfolk Council and Grow, a digital agency, Vibrant Spaces helps street-level businesses in downtown Norfolk, according to Downtown Norfolk’s website. The grant reduces Prince Ink’s rent by 50 percent for two years and awarded the company \$20,000. The grant also covered some of the build-out costs, according to Matt Wallace.



(Courtesy of Prince Ink Co.)

“That’s the only way we would have been able to do it here, it’s a super good opportunity,” he said.

Matt Wallace began screen printing eight years ago in his bedroom closet. The technique involves the photographic transfer of an image onto fabric, which is known as a screen. He exposed the images with a floodlight and washed the screens in his shower. He has gone from completing a couple dozen prints a month as a side project to printing around 200 items a day now.



(Courtesy of Prince Ink Co.)

One main difference from Prince Ink’s previous location in Hampton is the type of retail products it will offer. For the first time since its launch, Prince Ink will sell its clients’ products in the store, along with its own printed clothing and other items. Virginia Beach-based North End Bag Co. will have bags in the store for purchase.

Prince Ink offers special features, such as glow-in-the-dark ink and foil printing on garments. Its website notes the company’s willingness to go beyond the mundane: “We print on paper and other less typical surfaces. We especially love taking on projects that other printers won’t deal with.”

Prince Ink has gone off the grid during the past few months,

while transitioning from its previous location to its new 2,400 square-foot space. Wallace believes Norfolk will be a good spot to reach his target demographic.

“We kind of cater to artistic people who are design-oriented and care about craftsmanship,” Wallace said. This audience aligns well with Norfolk residents he’s met so far, he said. The company is seeking one or two retail associates and plans to employ a couple of sales representatives once the business is more established.

Dustin Wallace said he is more than ready for the opening. “I’m definitely excited,” he said. “We’ve put a lot of blood, sweat and tears into this. We just want to make sure all the details are polished – but I’m ready.”