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Contact: Dana Dorsheimer
Warschawski
410.367.2700 ext. 119
dana.dorsheimer@warschawski.com

T-SHIRT TURNS 100: CUSTOMINK CELEBRATES *Invites Americans to T-Party*

Tysons Corner, VA – March 26, 2013 – Since 1913, the t-shirt as we know it first appeared as standard-issue gear within the U.S. Navy, the iconic garment has become an essential part of the American wardrobe and identity. CustomInk, the “design online” custom t-shirt company, today announced a national celebration of the 100th birthday of the t-shirt. The campaign includes a survey and conversations with Americans about their beloved tees, a t-shirt birthday webpage (www.tshirtbirthday.com), social media activity and, launching this summer, an augmented reali-TEE app.

“No doubt the t-shirt has a special place in fashion history,” said CustomInk’s co-founder & president, Marc Katz. “But t-shirts are unlike any other item of clothing. They have this incredible power to bring us together and tell our story. That’s why we cherish them and why they stand the test of time. It’s also why we do what we do at CustomInk and why we’re inviting America to recognize and celebrate a century of t-shirts.”

America’s Love Affair with the T-Shirt

T-shirts are indeed part of the fabric of American society. CustomInk recently commissioned a survey of 1,000 representative Americans over the age of 18 that revealed:

- 95% of Americans wear t-shirts
- 89% of t-shirt wearing Americans put on a tee at least once a week

We are personally attached to our t-shirts.

- Nearly 9 in every 10 Americans (87%) own at least one t-shirt they refuse to “trash” because of a sentimental attachment. In fact, on average, they have 13 t-shirts they hold onto for that reason. Most commonly, these shirts are from a group of which they were a member, or shirts commemorating a major event.
- 76% of Americans report they would have a stronger emotional connection with a shirt that they or someone they knew custom-designed, versus a shirt that was mass-produced.

These statistics are not surprising to Dr. Jennifer Baumgartner, clinical psychologist and author of *You Are What You Wear*.

“Customized apparel is a way of expressing ourselves in a world where so much is mass-marketed. We want to be unique,” Baumgartner commented. “At the same time, wearing a

shirt custom made for your group is an identifier that you are part of the same clan. Throughout history, humans have dressed alike to indicate a bond. Much like tribal costumes or coats of arms, custom t-shirts give people a sense of belonging.”

Baumgartner also notes that it is human nature to infuse a t-shirt with emotional significance. “We’re more likely to bond with others when we share an emotional event with them. T-shirts from groups or occasions become a concrete representation of that emotion. We infuse a spirit of a memory or time in our lives to an inanimate object.”

A Birthday Celebration

Given the significance of the t-shirt in American society, CustomInk has planned a fitting celebration. Birthday activities from now through the end of the summer include:

- An interactive birthday website www.tshirtbirthday.com on which guests can celebrate the life of the t-shirt by browsing:
 - A timeline of major milestones in the history of the t-shirt, from its transition from underwear to outerwear, to the first political tee, the tie die craze and more.
 - CustomInk’s gallery of the 100 most iconic t-shirts of all time (premiering in late April)
 - T-shirt trivia
 - Video messages from t-shirt loving Americans (online this spring)
 - CustomInk’s design lab, in which they can design and order their own custom t-shirts
- A campaign to fundraise for our troops, honoring the military origins of the t-shirt and our country’s service men and women. Each month between now and the summer, CustomInk will feature a limited-edition, custom-designed t-shirt representing each branch of our military – designed by service members. Proceeds from the sale of the shirts will benefit the Yellow Ribbon Fund, Inc., which supports members of our armed forces recovering at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and their families. The first featured t-shirt, representing the U.S. Navy, is available from now through the end of April, and was designed by Captain David Tarantino – a Navy doctor who earned the Navy Marine Corps Medal for his heroic actions at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. His t-shirt can be purchased at <http://campaign.customink.com/navy>.
- Social media contests and fun
 - Shirt-sharing: What t-shirt stole your heart? Share and hashtag pics (#TTurns100) and your t-shirt love stories.
 - Weekly contests, in which followers can test their t-shirt knowledge and win special prizes
 - An opportunity to vote on the top 100 iconic t-shirts of all time
- An Augmented Reali-TEE App
 - Coming this summer to great American landmarks around the country, the app will allow the public to design the perfect custom tee to outfit famous statues.
- Special offer on custom t-shirts for birthday celebrations from now until 9/30/2013. Design a custom t-shirt for a birthday celebration and use voucher: CELEBRATE at checkout to receive a free “Happy Birthday to Me” tee with purchase (on a six shirt minimum order).

To take part in the festivities, t-shirt lovers should visit www.tshirtbirthday.com, where they can follow the fun on social media and receive campaign updates.

About CustomInk (www.customink.com)

Founded in 2000 and headquartered in Northern Virginia, CustomInk is the leader in “design online” custom t-shirts for groups and occasions. CustomInk’s innovative online Design Lab offers customers a huge selection of art and fonts, including offerings from the renowned design firms of Charles S. Anderson™ and House Industries™, as well as the option to upload their own artwork. Customers also enjoy free expert support from CustomInk’s acclaimed “T-shirt Ambassadors” and professional artists. The company’s exacting standards for design and print quality underscore its commitment to perfection. Recognized nationally for its rapid growth and workplace excellence, CustomInk is committed to its core values of the Golden Rule, ownership and innovation. To learn more, visit www.customink.com/our_story/ or call 800-293-4232.

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