

Laser Lakes Success Story with OneLaser Hydra 16 Laser Machine

Laser Lakes increased production speed, engraving precision, and business growth using the OneLaser Hydra 16 system.

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[OneLaser](#) today shared the customer success story of Laser Lakes, a Minnesota-based laser engraving business founded by maker and entrepreneur Nate Dittmar, whose transition to the OneLaser [Hydra 16](#) significantly increased production output, product quality, and operational efficiency.

As demand for personalized products and custom laser engraving continues to expand across North America, many small businesses are searching for scalable production tools capable of supporting both creativity and long-term growth. For Laser Lakes, the move to the Hydra 16 represented a major operational shift that transformed both workflow capacity and business performance.

Laser Lakes specializes in custom laser-engraved products inspired by Minnesota culture, local identity, and handcrafted design. According to Dittmar, the business focuses heavily on community values and supporting local retail partnerships while maintaining consistent product quality and fast turnaround times.

"Minnesota culture is about community," said Dittmar. "People give each other space, but when someone needs help, people step in. That sense of supporting each other carries into how we run our business and how we work with our customers and retail partners."



Nate Dittmar, founder of Laser Lakes.



Laser Lakes uses the Hydra 16 for wooden map, acrylic, signs, ornaments, and custom gifts.

A typical production day at Laser Lakes involves managing customer communication, coordinating wholesale orders, and fulfilling custom engraving projects for local retailers and gift shops. One of the company's growing retail partners, Lotus Lakes Gifts, regularly places repeat orders for Minnesota-themed ornaments and custom products produced using the Hydra 16.



The Hydra Series streamlines workflows while delivering consistent engraving quality.

According to Dittmar, production efficiency became increasingly important as customer demand continued to grow. Before adopting the Hydra 16, Laser Lakes relied on a smaller 130W laser system from another manufacturer. While functional, the previous setup struggled with consistency and reliability, leading to slower workflows, repeated production runs, and limitations in engraving detail.

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Nate Dittmar

That changed after integrating the OneLaser Hydra 16 into the company's production environment.

"My output, workflow, and income have all increased dramatically since getting the OneLaser Hydra 16," said Dittmar. "It now takes me about two days to make the same amount of product that previously took about a week. The quality is significantly better, and I can achieve much finer engraving detail and cleaner cutting than I

could before."

Dittmar also noted that the investment quickly produced measurable business results. "This laser paid for itself multiple times over within just a few months," he explained. "Last year our business doubled compared to the previous year, and this year we're on track to at least double again."

The OneLaser Hydra 16 is designed as a [high precision laser engraver for businesses](#) and professional workshops requiring both production-scale cutting power and advanced engraving capability. The system combines a 150W CO₂ glass tube with a 38W RF metal tube, allowing users to switch between high-speed cutting and ultra-fine engraving within the same machine. For Laser Lakes, the dual-laser configuration was one of the major deciding factors during the purchasing process.

"The dual-laser system immediately stood out," Dittmar said. "Having RF and glass tube capability in the same machine gave me flexibility that I hadn't seen elsewhere. It opened up opportunities for both production work and fine-detail engraving without needing multiple

systems."

Another factor that influenced the decision was OneLaser's customer-focused approach during the evaluation process. According to Dittmar, he approached several laser manufacturers with a production file that was critical to his workflow and asked them to test the project for realistic timing and output expectations.

"OneLaser was the company willing to actually run the file and show me the real-world results," he said. "That confidence and transparency mattered a lot. It demonstrated that they understood what production businesses actually need."

The Hydra 16 features a large 62.99-inch by 39.37-inch working area with pass-through functionality, making it suitable for oversized materials, furniture components, signage, and high-volume production applications. The system also includes motorized autofocus, integrated air assist, LightBurn compatibility, and a 5MP alignment camera for precise artwork positioning. For businesses focused on operational efficiency, the Hydra Series was developed to streamline workflows while maintaining consistent engraving quality across a wide range of materials. Laser Lakes uses the Hydra 16 for cutting and engraving wood, acrylic, layered products, ornaments, signage, and custom gift items. Dittmar said the machine's stability and build quality have been particularly important during long production runs.

"The build quality and reliability are the best I've experienced in a laser system," he explained. "The machine feels extremely solid, and there are thoughtful design details throughout the system that improve the production experience. I'm fully confident this machine will continue performing reliably for years."

Dittmar also highlighted the responsiveness of the OneLaser support team during onboarding and production setup.

"I've had immediate support whenever I had a technical question," he said. "The experience has been professional and helpful every time."

The positive experience ultimately led Laser Lakes to invest in an additional OneLaser system as the company expanded operations.

"I believed in the machine enough to buy a second OneLaser," Dittmar said. "We even placed one in the hands of someone completely new to laser engraving, and they were able to learn quickly and start producing successfully."

The story of Laser Lakes reflects a larger trend within the laser engraving industry, where small businesses increasingly require production-capable systems that combine reliability, workflow efficiency, and scalability. As customized products, localized manufacturing, and small-batch production continue to grow in popularity, many businesses are investing in professional-grade laser engravers capable of supporting both creative flexibility and operational growth. Industry demand for personalized products across ecommerce, retail gifting, signage, décor, and branded merchandise has also increased the need for machines that can maintain consistent quality during high-volume production. Systems such as the Hydra 16 are helping businesses reduce downtime, improve production speed, and expand material capabilities without sacrificing precision.

In addition to machine development, OneLaser continues expanding educational resources, customer support programs, workflow tutorials, and maker-focused content intended to help both experienced operators and first-time laser users improve productivity and business growth.

About OneLaser

OneLaser is a USA-based company specializing in advanced laser engraving and cutting machines for makers, small businesses, educators, and professional workshops.

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