Awards.com Publishes Guide to Award Engraving Lead Times Ahead of Year-End Ceremonies

A new Awards.com guide breaks down custom award turnaround stage by stage and reports that proof approval, not production, is where most timelines slip.



Crystal Awards and Glass Plaques

BOCA RATON, FL, UNITED STATES, September 22, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Awards.com has published a guide to custom award engraving lead times, breaking a typical order into 4 stages and reporting that most delays occur during customer proof approval rather than in production.

The guide, "How Long Does Award Engraving Take? Lead Times and Rush," sets out the standard timeline for a custom engraved award. Artwork and setup come first, followed by a proof returned in 1 to 3 days, about 6 days of production after the customer approves that proof, and then transit. On a straightforward order that totals roughly 2 weeks from order date to delivery.

> Give yourself time to review the proof. Order awards 3 weeks out and a misspelled name costs you 10 minutes to catch so you aren't out 3 weeks and the cost of a replacement."
>
> *Vincent Nero, CRP, VP of Sales & Service at Awards.com*

According to the guide, the stage buyers most often underestimate is their own review. Proofs frequently sit unapproved while the person authorized to sign off is traveling or in meetings, which adds days that buyers did not plan for. The guide recommends naming a single person who can approve a proof without scheduling a meeting.

"The timeline rarely breaks in the factory," said Vincent Nero, CRP, VP of Sales & Service at Awards.com. "It breaks in the approval process, while a proof sits in somebody's inbox for a

week. Give yourself time to review the proof. Order awards 3 weeks out and a misspelled name costs you 10 minutes to catch so you aren't out 3 weeks and the cost of a replacement."



Awards.com Recognition Awards and Plaques

The guide also compares how long different decoration methods take. Laser engraving is the quickest: a single surface pass at over 1,000 dots per inch that handles photographic detail. Deep sandblast etching, the method the company uses on crystal and glass, adds a mask stage and carves a frosted mark that does not fade or peel. Color fill adds a hand-painted pass for each color, from about $10 per color per award. Subsurface 3D crystal engraving, in which a pinpoint laser fractures microscopic dots inside optic crystal, requires art preparation before cutting and carries a custom art fee from about $100.

For organizations planning December ceremonies, the guide recommends ordering by early November for standard engraved pieces and by late October for awards requiring 3D crystal art or multi-color fill. It suggests working backwards from the event date, subtracting transit, production, proof time, and internal approval time in turn.

November and December are the busiest ordering period in the awards category, since most companies schedule recognition events at the end of the calendar year. The guide lists 3 practices that reduce exposure to that period: finalizing the recipient list before ordering, supplying print-ready vector artwork rather than low-resolution images, and consolidating proof approval to one decision maker.

Awards.com designs, engraves, and decorates in-house rather than reselling, with engraving, logo, and setup included at no charge and no order minimum. Shipping worldwide, fulfillment runs from warehouses across the country, with main facilities in Illinois, New York, and Toronto. The company has operated since 1985.

The complete guide is available on the company's website.

About Awards.com
For over 40 years, our team has helped organizations recognize great work. Awards.com is the online source for custom awards and trophies, focused on corporate recognition, employee awards, and years of service recognition. We design and engrave crystal, glass, acrylic, and plaque awards, with free engraving, a free proof before production, and no order minimum, so buyers can order a single piece or an entire program. Learn more at Awards.com.

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