

# ENTREPRENEUR OR MASOCHIST

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## A CONVERSATION WITH MITCH REAUME

One of the quickest ways to understand Mitch Reaume, the man printing for some of the most-loved small businesses throughout the Midwest, is to hear him talk about how thin the line is between entrepreneurship and masochism.

"I've always said it is a pretty fine line between being an entrepreneur and a self-punishing masochist. Walking that fine line alongside other people whose small businesses I care about and believe in is a pretty fun thing to wake up for every morning.

"I know what it's like to pour everything into a small business and have it succeed, or have it flop. At the end of the day, the ones making that roll of the dice are just my people and who I want to spend my time working hard for. Every one of these people could so easily make more money tucking their skills into some huge corporation but, for reasons beyond just money, choose not to."

And that pretty much sums up Mitch and his company, Twin Cities Print. This company is best described as a small-business engine working tirelessly behind the scenes to bring custom apparel, drinkware and candles to every type of small company and organization you can think of — from coffee shops, restaurants and retail brands and stores, to nonprofits and churches and wealth management companies, to landscaping crews, and everything in between.

Twin Cities Print has found its niche as the thread connecting many of the Midwest's small businesses to each other, making the "six degrees of separation" idea a reality. Six degrees of separation is the idea that all people are six or fewer social connections away from each other, and in the little, gritty world that is the Midwest's small-business community, Mitch and his team are one that most have some sort of connection to.

For all of the connections and businesses he's proud to work with, he's not the most public or self-promoting business owner you'll find; this is partially due to his open distaste of what the internet has done to the definition of entrepreneurship.

"One of the hardest things, in my opinion, about being an entrepreneur is finding the right people to admire.

"Unpopular opinion: The internet has kind of ruined the title of 'entrepreneur.' It has made it more a celebration of wealth, vanity and materialism than a celebration of community and character or generosity and grit.

"I think that's honestly where a lot of my love for the small-business community has come in for me personally. It has met a need of my own in providing a firsthand glimpse of role models within the world of entrepreneurship — rather than following XYZ internet celebrity, who is deemed a success for reasons that get them into an *Inc.* or *Fortune* publication that I end up having no access to.

"I've got a list of business owners that I admire from the up-close look I get into the way they run their businesses and worlds. And rather than read about them, I can just call them or grab a beer with them. Lives like Nikki & Anna, Brad, Michael, Dan, Becky, Todd, Mark, Peter, Lauren, Megan, Sarah, Lee, Joe & Steven, Emily and so many more. Names that don't mean anything to the people reading this, but that mean everything to me in the constant learning I get from them and defining what entrepreneurship really looks and feels like."

For small businesses looking to make a splash and grow in 2024, it's 80% about finding the right people along the way, 10% luck ... and the rest can get chalked up to hard work and good ideas. There are a ton of unknowns to roadmapping what it looks like for every business to make it to the next step. But we know firsthand that there's a long, long list of small businesses out there that pretty quickly attest there isn't a resource or print shop that has worked harder for them and their small business than Twin Cities Print — albeit behind the reins of its quirky owner.

If you twist Mitch's arm to get him to talk about the things he's most proud of as a company, you'll hear one of two things: The fact that most of the customers they get the privilege of supporting and printing for become customers for life — not because they're the biggest or shiniest or particularly impressive by many measures, but for the simple reason that they are really, really good at what they do, and they genuinely care about their people. Most of their folks tend to pick up on those two truths over the years, and become friends and customers for the long haul.

For these reasons we applaud Mitch and the light he brings to both businesses and people. As Minnesotans, we're lucky to have someone champion the small-business community of makers and doers. Because it makes all the difference.

[TwinCitiesPrint.com](https://TwinCitiesPrint.com)



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