



Great Scott!

By Scott Goodman

Scott Goodman, owner of Sewing Machine Warehouse & Kneedle.com has been servicing the sewing public since 1976.

Abracadabra

"Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

- Arthur C. Clark

Digitizing software is magical and amazes me. The ability to analyze a graphic image or photograph and convert that image to a sequential stitch-file seems like magic.

When it comes to embroidery, it's still a Windows world. Embroidery software is expensive to produce and written for a global market. As *Apple* adopters increase in quantity, more options will become available. While *Apple* has a sizable part of the U.S. market, globally it barely makes a peep. The consolation for Mac owners is the low-cost availability of "good-enough" PC computers that can be dedicated for embroidery use.

Entry-level embroiderers will often start with a lettering, editing or sizing module; then, add more programs as their skills and budget increase. This can be an expensive option. Modules do not always work and play well with others. Brand idiosyncrasies, with their varying interfaces, can make for a very confusing experience. Digitizing suites are efficient and contain important functionality in one program, with a consistent user interface.

When comparing embroidery software, you will find more commonalities than differences. Manual punching, Auto-punch (digitizing), lettering, sizing, combining, and arraying are features that most programs have in common. Some come bundled with graphic software, like CorelDraw, that can help fix problematic artwork. User interfaces vary. Many

powerful programs still use functional, but older looking interfaces. Other programs sport a more modern interface.

While software may seem expensive to the hobbyist, professional digitizers might invest \$10,000 or more in their toolbox of graphic and digitizing, and utility programs.

Here is a break-down of what is available.

Solve a problem.

Utility programs include sizing, lettering, small lettering, combining, viewing, organizing, positioning, transferring, and density adjusting. These programs usually offer more than one problem-solving function in a moderately-priced program.

Let's make stuff.

Programs that create, would include auto-punch, photo-stitch, quilt functions, word-art, and appliqué functions that can output the shape to your favorite digital cutter. Side note: The term auto-punch calls back to the days when paper punch-tape was the medium of choice for controlling commercial embroidery machines.

If only my design looked like this...

Editing programs add basic utility functions, with the ability to modify your designs. You can copy, paste, or remove design elements. You can array elements along a path or geometric shape. Adding or removing color stops can change an existing design in dramatic ways. Some programs in this category offer basic digitizing or auto-punch capabilities.

I want it all.

Great Scott! is a suite guy, (pun intended). Embroidery suites have all of the important functions in one program. While each brand offers unique functions, they share many features in common. You can expect manual or auto-digitizing, design editing, lettering with proven built-in fonts or TrueType font conversion, sizing, multi-hooping, combining, arraying, photo stitch, shapes, monograms, format import/export, viewing, splitting, and more.

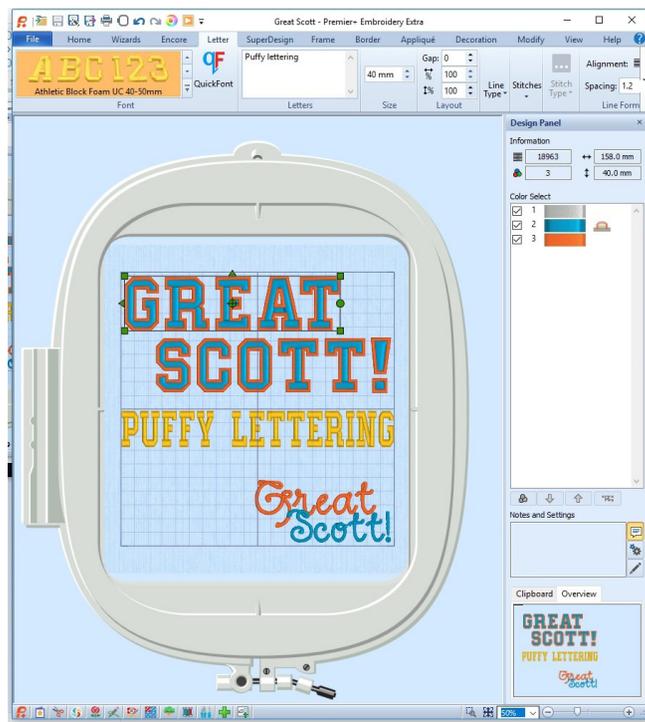
Some offer puffy lettering, fill customization, motif stitch customization, name drop, and multi-media, combining embroidery with printed images. Some can create knockdown stitches for fluffy or napped fabrics, and direct cutwork needles to make holes, adding elegance and interest to your projects.

Mac programs include *TruEmbroidery3*, and **Brother MacBroidery Embroidery Lettering Software**. **Baby Lock EmbroideryWorks Everyday** and *Advanced* are the hermaphrodites of the embroidery world, operating on both PC and Mac OS. Coming soon, **BERNINA Toolbox**, available in four modules: *Editing*, *Lettering Basic*, *Lettering* and *Monogram*, or purchase *Bundle* and have it all. Toolbox modules will run on PC and Mac. An added bonus— access to **BERNINA Cloud**.

Speaking of the “cloud”, more companies are offering cloud solutions for design storage., including **Baby Lock EmbroideryWorks everyday**, *Airstitch Edition* and **Brother BES Lettering 4 Dream Edition**.

Coming soon...watch for **Inspired by Dime Vintage Embroidery Software**. This novel program allows you to sew with “rope”! *Vintage Embroidery Software* is a new program that lets you create and sew out embroidery designs with heavy15 weight thread for a chunky, hand-embroidered look.

Looking to the not-so-immediate future? Watch for virtualization. This means that the software does not reside on your computer, but on a cloud computer. You will access the program through a browser, with a PC, Mac, tablet...whatever. **Brother** already has a head



Pfaff's Premier+



Bernina's Bernina Toolbox

start on cloud-based programs with their *Scan 'N Cut* system. Several creative and design functions are accessed with *Scan 'N Cut Canvas*.

Using an *iPhone* or *iPad*? **Janome** features *AcuDesign*, enabling you to view, import, edit, recolor, and more. The optional lettering module adds a dozen fonts. When finished creating or editing, you can transmit the design to your compatible machine or wireless flash device, via WiFi.

Sometimes your best choice is within your brand's ecosystem. Brand specific features may be unlocked when using software within the same family.

The most important feature is the support of your local dealer. Factory trained sales associates will listen to your needs and desires, matching you with the right program that addresses your needs and ability. Training, on-line or face-to-face, is critical to your understanding, enjoyment and productivity. Your dealer has the staff to support software training.

Here are some resources:

Baby Lock *BabyLock.com Palette, Designer's Gallery, EmbroideryWorks*

Bernina *Bernina.com Bernina Embroidery Software, Bernina Toolbox.*

BriTon Leap *Embrilliance.com Enthusiast, Essentials, AlphaTricks, Density Repair Kit*

Brother *BrotherSews.com PEdesign, BES Embroidery Lettering, Simply Appliqué, MacBroidery*

Dime *InspiredByDime.com Perfect Embroidery Professional, My Quilt Embellisher, My Quilt Planner, My Block Piecer, Word Art in Stitches, My Emoji Stitches, Vintage Embroidery Software, Perfect Stitch Viewer*

Husqvarna Viking *HusqvarnaViking.com Premier+ series, TruEmbroidery 3*

Janome *Janome.com Digitizer, AcuDesign, AcuSetter*

Pfaff *Pfaff.com Premier+ series, TruEmbroidery 3*

Wilcom *Wilcom.com Embroidery Studio programs, Hatch programs*

Want to share an amazing creation? Or, just want to share? I am always there for you! Group hug, everyone! GreatScott@kneedle.com or [facebook.com/GreatScottSews](https://www.facebook.com/GreatScottSews)