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 Issue: April 14, 2025



Angel Buttons – a Disability-Owned Business Providing Quality Made in America Promotional Buttons with Hundreds of Variations that Bring Joy while helping to Get Your Message Out



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Interview conducted by:
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CEOCFO: Mr. D’Arcangelo, what is the concept behind the company?

Mr. D’Arcangelo: Angel Buttons bring joy. We started the company because my mission in life is to improve our human condition. Brining a smile to someone’s face...bringing them a small amount of joy when they receive their shiny new button helps us fulfill that mission. The business started out of necessity to reach decision makers for our other business Arc Angel Communications LLC. We were using the buttons to start conversations with people to try to sell our Arc Angel Communications services. Email is difficult and you cannot just call C-Suite executives unexpected and the whole nature of how you contact people business-to-business has changed. So, I had these button machines that we had used for our public relations services and what I did and still do is draw up a short two-line letter and print a button that I think the CEO or CFO would like, and I mail it to them. I get a decent call-back from that. It is not 100% or anything but I hear back from people. That happened enough times where they told us they could not use our consulting services, but they wanted us to make them five hundred buttons for a tradeshow.



Never wanting to turn down a job, I was like "ok." That situation played out enough times that I said to myself, "hey, we have something here." Then I built a website behind it. I then got an opportunity to get our buttons listed on Walmart

Marketplace (Walmart.com) and then got a Golden Ticket from Walmart, we then got an offer. So, the buttons turned into a thing. We have been putting some air into it, and we are trying to make sure that people have quality Made in America options for their promotional products. We made it a priority that our buttons were verified as Made in the USA. Also, we are a disability-owned business enterprise, so we are the only button manufacturer that can say both of those things. Therefore, we have a unique niche, and we are trying to capitalize on it and provide people superior quality products.

CEO CFO: *How important is Made in the USA, today?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: It is important to me, and it is important to others. You get what you pay for and if you want the cheapest thing, we may not be your best alternative. However, if you want the best quality, then we are among your best choices and we want to compete for your button and promotional items business. Yes, it is buttons, but we also manufacture magnets, keychains, and all those promotional items that our presses can turn out.

CEO CFO: *What makes it so high-quality?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: Our products are made in America, and the steel is made in America. Our buttons are 100% steel construction, and even the paper we source is Made in America. We make high-quality products by hand and our 100% Customer satisfaction Warranty ensures that they are going to be a keepsake for years to come. Yes, you wear it once or twice during an event, but it is a keepsake. What we focus on is making them memorable and collectible. Each of our buttons tells a story and brings joy.

“At the end of the day our products are keepsakes, they are mementos. Yes, our products help to get your message out, but they also tell a story, and most importantly, bring Joy and evoke positive emotions. So, you want your brand associated with something that is positive, upbeat, and brings joy, which is what we are all about.” David D’Arcangelo

CEO CFO: *What are some of the challenges when making a small-run product and looking at using high-quality products such as steel?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: We are in a wonderful place because some of the other companies might not take a small job, but we will make you one button if that is what you want. If you go to our website angelbuttons.com, you can see the pricing there. There is truth in our pricing. It is not like when you get to the check-out page the price becomes different because of all the varied factors. We have no hidden fees. The only variable that changes is the shipping costs and people understand that the weight of the package and location of where it is being sent are factors that are outside of our control. Other than that, we have truth in pricing, we can do small jobs, and we will do custom jobs. We have both stock items and customized items. We will do both.

CEO CFO: *How are you reaching out to spread the word about Angel Buttons?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: We are doing it traditional ways with direct mail, we are doing traditional email marketing on a limited basis, social media, and a lot of word-of-mouth. People are finding quality in their jobs. They like our mission of Made in America. They like the fact that we are a disability-owned enterprise. Most importantly, they like our product. They like our design which is a quality product with all kinds of different variations. All our reviews are five-star reviews. We have a lot of reviews. Do not believe me, believe our customers, they like our products.

CEO CFO: *How do you decide on the look?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: It is purposeful. It started as a play on my last name D’Arcangelo and that is how Arc Angel Communications started. We spun Angel Buttons out of Arc Angel Communications. I am a positive person; we are positive people here. We believe in goodness, we believe in good values and what better way to personify that than to say, “Angel Buttons bring joy.” That is what we are trying to emphasize here. Angel Buttons are positive designs.

At the end of the day our products are keepsakes, they are mementos. Yes, our products help to get your message out, but they also tell a story, and most importantly, bring Joy and evoke positive emotions. So, you want your brand associated with something that is positive, upbeat, and brings joy, which is what we are all about.

CEO CFO: *Would you tell us about Arc Angel Communications?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: What we are trying to do there is leverage my years of experience working in public policy and working to improve our human condition. Arc Angel Communications seeks to work with large organizations that are interested with being more inclusive to people with disabilities. Organizations that want to learn how to improve access to opportunities for people with disabilities should contact Arc Angel Communications. Better inclusion could be through improving employment outcomes of people with disabilities, mentoring them, interning them, or providing access to opportunities in the supply chain and procurement.

It is the whole gamut of improving access to opportunities for people with disabilities. There is a business case for it. I have a podcast/vlog cast called Save As: ABILITY, which talks all about disability employment and that is an offshoot of Arc Angel Communications.

CEOCFO: *How is that changing over time and what improvements or setbacks are you seeing?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: I am a positive person, so I choose to focus on the upside. The US Census Bureau has been keeping data since 2008. Many people are surprised by that. Only since 2008, have we been keeping detailed data on people with disabilities and labor force employment and all that. Since then, we have seen the situation for people with disabilities improve but there is still a large chasm both in terms of the labor force participation rate and the unemployment rate.

Unfortunately, the labor force participation rate among people with disabilities indicates that around two-thirds of all working-age people with disabilities are not in the labor force. Think of that, two-thirds of all working-age people with disabilities are not in the labor force. That is a real issue that we must contend with as a nation. We are failing people with disabilities; we are failing industry and that is unacceptable to me, and it keeps me up at night. I am trying to change things by getting more people into the labor force, and once they are in the labor force, getting them employed.

There is also a significant gap in the unemployment rate for people with disabilities. It is double that of people without disabilities. We have challenges there and those are long-standing challenges. I do see it improving. I see organizations understanding that the business case to engage with people with disabilities is there. I just made a series of LinkedIn posts about that if you want to check it out on my LinkedIn page. I see it improving modestly but we still have a way to go and that is what I am trying to do through Arc Angel Communications.

CEOCFO: *How much of a setback was COVID?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: COVID impacted everybody, both people with and without disabilities. The data indicates that there was even a slight improvement in the disability community. I rely on my colleagues over at the University of New Hampshire. They run End Tide, which is responsible for reporting the unemployment data for people with disabilities, and they do that the first Friday of every month through their relief. They also compile the Disabilities Statistics Compendium.

From talking with them and the researchers, it seems like being able to work remotely helped many in the disability community because traditionally there have been barriers to employment with transportation and things like that. If you can work remotely, you are removing a barrier. The improvements are very modest, we are talking about a small percentage, but I like any improvement, so we will celebrate that, but we still have a way to go.

CEOCFO: *You mentioned you have manufacturing capabilities; how much can you accommodate if you start to get larger orders and attract major attention can you ramp up quickly?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: Yes, I think we can. We have scaled well. We started with three modest machines. We now have about ten different machines, and we have more on order. We have the capacity, and we can fulfill orders of any size. From a few buttons to hundreds and even tens of thousands of buttons and promotional products. Our typical job is about four or five hundred buttons, but we have done large jobs and small jobs...we can fulfill any order.

We are doing a job now that is three thousand buttons for a large non-profit; they are doing a charity walk. We will take those as well because we have the capacity. As we branch out and go towards retail, we also have packaging capacity where these are collectors' items at a point because we have limited additions. We have artists, holograms with numbers, packages with UPC, and retail environments. We are doing both. So, we can even do private label branding, really whatever the customer wants.

CEOCFO: *What do you offer that is getting the most attention in terms of style, and what do you offer that people have not recognized, that you think looks good and is impressive?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: I have gotten so many comments from people they appreciate that we are still low-tech if you will, in that we are making our buttons and designing all of them here. Do we use AI in certain aspects? Yes maybe, and if the customer wants it, we will do that, we will do whatever the customer wants. However, for the most part, we are creating these very traditionally, using the Button Building software, using existing clip art, using drawings that we produce and texts that we produce and stuff like that. I think people value that and see that the design is positive design and bright, with quality steel buttons. It presents well.

Our buttons come off as a nice, finished product. We can make them into assorted sizes and shapes and back styles so they can be made into keychains, magnets, compact mirrors for people, and all kinds of different things.

CEOCFO: *So, there are endless possibilities?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: There are a lot of different variations. On our Walmart Market Place store, we have like 390 different variations up there with twenty-five different button styles, but between the sizes and the back styles, you have a lot of different combinations there.

CEOCFO: *There are lots of companies and new ideas to look at, why pay attention to Angel Buttons, and why pay attention to Arc Angel Communications?*

Mr. D’Arcangelo: If you want positivity and real quality, then you should consider us because that is what we provide. We provide a Made in America product that is very well done. I think access to opportunity for people with disabilities matters. What prevails overall is our product is a superior product that stands out. It is well designed and people like it.

We have a 100% satisfaction guarantee. As of now, all the reviews that we have are five stars. Everybody is completely satisfied, and we aim to please.

