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## About The Wallets

There are little things in your world that make you who you are. Your creativity, your adventures, your accomplishments, your family, your pets and things that set you apart from all the rest. Each time you pull out your ThinFolio wallet, you can see that special piece of your world peek out.

Maybe you're like we used to be, and you haven't given much thought to your wallet. It's probably some standard-issue black or brown wallet made out of leather or with some corporate logo. Probably your wallet is functional, but not exactly a source of excitement in your life. Mark and Anna Abramson want to change that.

ThinFolio handcraft wallets here in Sausalito, California. Each of our wallets feature personal images selected by its future owner. As a result, our fully customized wallets have been a source of joy for every single person we have made one for. Now that we know we can scale our production and make one-off custom wallets on a grand scale, we'd like to share this experience with everyone.

The wallet we make for you will be entirely personalized and will celebrate what's important to you. You won't have to reach for that cell phone to show off your pictures – they'll be all over your wallet. You chose your shoes for comfort, you chose your shirts for style, why can't your wallet be both functional and a celebration of your personal expression?

We'd like to make, just for you, from the ground up and here in the U.S. of A., a slim, full-featured bi-fold that will resist the elements, stand up to heavy use, and most importantly, make you happy every single day. How? We will custom print your wallet with your images and hand-sew it, personalizing it with pictures of the most important people and things in your life. Every time you take it out – whether to dig something out of it or to show it off – it will make you happy.

We have tested every single element of our production and the equipment and materials we will use to make your ThinFolio wallet, to ensure that we can quickly put a fully-customized, hand-made wallet into the hands of anyone in the world that wants one. Our process is both fully repeatable and scalable – meaning that we will be able to deliver the same quality results with an order of one wallet for one person or thousands of unique wallets for thousands of customers. Every ThinFolio wallet features each customer's unique images. We will individually print, cut and sew each and every wallet we make here in the San Francisco Bay Area of California.

ThinFolio is taking the “boring old wallet” and transforming it into a product that will be a unique source of joy for each and every person who supports us. In our personal experience and the experience of the friends and family for whom we’ve made our wallets, they add a noticeable element of delight to people’s lives, each and every day.

ThinFolio wallets are perfect gifts for the “difficult to buy for” people in your life.” What do you get for someone who seems to have everything? Something that they can completely personalize with the things they love.

## **About Anna & Mark**

“Before we met, Mark was hand making and sewing wallets for his friends just for fun. Somebody showed me one and told me the story and I thought, “Wow, I want to meet that guy,” said Anna Abramson, co-founder of ThinFolio. Little did Mark know that his wallet-making hobby would lead him to his future wife and be the starting point for a new company.

Fast forward to their wedding planning and the couple decided to use homemade wallets as their wedding invitations. “That was a foolish idea,” laughed Mark. “The effort of making over 70 wallets by hand nearly killed us.” Anna weighed in: “It took more than one hundred hours of our time, but somehow we actually survived it all and still got married.”

Mark and Anna also made bamboo cutting boards for their wedding guests from scratch, laminated personalized, conversation-starting name tags on their laminator for each of their 74 guests, and built and upholstered 24 benches the day prior to their wedding.

What doesn’t kill your relationship makes it stronger. Fast forward another 5 years and Mark and Anna, now relocated to the Bay Area and parents to a 2 year-old and a 5-month old, are turning their handcrafted, custom-printed wallets into a business. “You send us photographs – of your kids, your pets, your pastimes – and we make you a wallet,” Mark said. “How cool is that?”

Mark and Anna are launching a Kickstarter campaign to expand their production to a bigger scale. “Our friends and family have had so much fun with their wallets, we want to give everyone the chance to enjoy them,” Mark said.

Both Mark and Anna have a tendency to jump into projects with two feet. When Mark left home for college, the aquarium he left behind was so large his parents had to donate it to a university. An avid bicycle racer, Mark joined USA Cycling, bike racing’s Olympic governing body and ultimately became its president and currently serves as vice chairman of the board. Concerned that their cycling friends were not receiving high quality medical care for cycling-specific injuries, Anna and Mark founded Medicine of Cycling, an organization that identifies and disseminates health-care best practices for common cycling accidents such as concussions and collarbone breaks.

All this while Anna pursues her career as a full-time physician, Mark runs his software business and they raise two young children.

“Our desire to turn this into a business probably comes from the same place as a lot of other entrepreneurs’ ideas,” said Mark. “Dissatisfaction with products already out there, a life-changing event that caused us to rethink how we were spending our working time – in our case, our kids’ arrival – and a belief that a full night’s sleep and collecting a steady paycheck are over-rated.” “It didn’t hurt that people who received some of our first fully-custom wallets were just elated,” added Anna.

Shortly after they announced to their friends the possible start of their business, Mark and Anna received their first order for 400 wallets. “I was really excited and immediately called Anna. From Anna’s perspective the big problem was that our youngest child was 2 weeks old at a time and I had 6 days to deliver the wallets,” said Mark. “It meant both of us took turns wearing our newborn daughter, die cutting and sewing, and we cranked out this first order together.”

“I see all roads leading me to this place, optimally prepared to tackle a challenge I have looked forward to for years,” said Mark. “People may wonder what can possibly be so exciting about making wallets. Well, here’s this great, tangible product that allows me to use my creativity, my high tech software background, and some really cool tools.”

If you order a ThinFolio wallet it will be made for you by Mark, Anna and their growing team. Mark is an experienced software developer and entrepreneur, who started sewing wallets over a decade ago. Now, with the help of new customers, what was initially a project limited to friends and family may become a sustainable business and a source of joy everyone who has a Thin Folio wallet in their pocket.

“I finally impressed my father-in-law when I gave him a wallet with his grand-kids on it; every better, I know he uses it every single day,” concluded Mark.

## **About ThinFolio, The Company**

“My mother is an artist and my dad is an engineer, so my family has a history of making stuff ourselves,” said Mark Abramson, co-founder of ThinFolio. “When my store-bought wallet came apart, I made a new one out of used postal envelopes. Then I refined the design with dozens of prototypes on the sewing machine my mom gave me until I found the perfect balance of size and function.”

“My friends saw the first one and wanted one too,” Mark continued. “Making them was a tedious process since I was literally hand-cutting every part with an x-acto and creasing with an empty ballpoint pen, especially since I’m kind of a perfectionist. So only my closest friends and those who really appreciated my creative endeavors got one.”

“We kept making small runs here and there every few years when we wanted to iterate the design. I’ve always wanted to custom print on the wallets and my software company specializes in supply chain management and mass customization. I spoke with more than one hundred printing companies in the Bay Area,” Mark recalled. “And I prototyped with over 40 different materials — including one made from limestone fiber — to make sure the specific materials are perfect for this application.”

“As soon as we mastered the difficult printing process, our first wallets were made with photos of our kids. These actually helped me to gain the approval of my father-in-law. Then I made a wallet for our neighbor with pictures of her dog, then our friends’ kids. Word got out and all of a sudden, I got an order for 400 wallets for the MuleSoft summit series,” said Mark. “This was 2 weeks after our second daughter was born,” interjected Anna. “We knew we were onto something when we got the same happy, shocked and awed look from this customer as we get from our friends,” said Mark. Anna and Mark have since produced custom wallets for clients like GitHub, Balsamiq and Lean Startup Machine.

Crowdfunding websites like Kickstarter are helping entrepreneurs like Mark and Anna make the leap from an idea to a sustainable business.

“We need to purchase computer-controlled industrial sewing machines, some cutting equipment and some finishing machinery,” said Mark. “It’s important to us to make these by hand, right here just north of San Francisco,” said Anna. “Being here in the Bay Area allows us to take advantage of local industry experts like DODOcase and Rickshaw Bags.”

Keeping track of a handful of fully custom-built-to-order products is straightforward with a little organization. Dozens is a challenge. Hundreds is virtually impossible ... unless you have spent the last decade building software systems for the apparel industry that are tailor-made to custom manufacturing processes, like Mark has. Everything from how a customer uploads their photos to making sure the right order goes in the right envelope is easy to do in small quantities, but hard when daily order volume may reach the hundreds if not thousands. “My experience building and running software systems to help with everything from order entry to fulfillment is ThinFolio’s foundation for ensuring that every one of our customers will be delighted not just with their wallet, but by the entire ThinFolio experience,” said Mark.