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Sign Update welcomes news and information relating to new and improved products for possible coverage within the news and review pages. Sign Update however accepts no obligation to provide coverage or return unsolicited products which are sent to it.

Sign Update is always delighted to receive correspondence hints and tips for articles which should be sent in the first instance in outline form, together with the author's name and address. Manuscripts, photographs and other materials will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped address envelope. No responsibility is accepted for any unsolicited materials. Sign Update takes every effort to ensure the accuracy of the contents of the magazine and takes all reasonable care in accepting advertisements for publication, but makes no representation as to their accuracy or quality.

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The nitty gritty

Making a striking looking sign is all well and good, but it's of no use (and can be dangerous) if not installed properly and at the right angle/position to get the best effect. Using the right tools and products is essential to make sure the sign is displayed optimally, and will withstand the elements or a challenging location. Just ask Tara Signs, who in the last issue explained how they erected a HSBC sign on top of the fifth tallest building in London. The completed sign is five metres high and 30 metres long, and there is a sign on each face of the building. It took six months to install, as they had to do numerous tests on it as well as a 'dummy' install on a lower floor. Our feature looks at what fixtures and fittings are available for signmakers and gets some tips about application.

It seems that everyone is talking about textiles and soft signage, so we've dedicated six pages to explore the machines, fabrics and accessories that are making this area so popular and lucrative for businesses. We also bring you some highlights from Heimtextil, the international trade fair for home and contract textiles, which took place in Germany in January; specifically products from Epson and Mimaki that produce stunning effects.

Elsewhere, read about the world's largest digital flatbed printer (it's in the Guiness book of records!) on page 12. On page 16 AXYZ explain how they are able to produce one-off bespoke CNC routers for their exacting customers. And a story that struck a chord, a sign making business doing their bit for charity, on page 60.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Twitter for fun, job adverts, news and views. Next issue will be the mighty Sign and Digital UK 2015 exhibition one; so deep breath, register, and start planning what to look out for!

Till the next time... Kathryn



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Professional sign fixing products from Indasol

Indasol understand the importance of using the right product first time every time and are 'well versed' in the range of different materials encountered by the sign maker. Not only the materials for making the signs, but also the many varied surfaces they have to fix to.

So their range of specialist fixing adhesives, tapes, foams and UHB structural products offer the sign installer 100 per cent confidence in every fixing, according to the

A spokesperson said: "Every installation can be very different, for example fixing a Di Bond sign to a brick wall may sound simple enough, but use the wrong product and it could be a disaster. That's why we formulated SIGNBONDER - The one for all adhesive.

"The same is true for mounting a directional or traffic sign, using a cheap UHB copy or general purpose foam is a mistake. And as such our UHB range has been enhanced over the years to include a range of thicknesses and colours to suit every need."

Whilst using the right product is imperative, they say that so is making sure the surfaces are clean and dry. They have a range of specialist cleaners and primers designed to make installation perfect onto any surface.



Indasol's many years of experience means they have all the products for a 'perfect' installation.

SIGNBONDER is the exception as this product can work straight onto wet surfaces, which 'saves time and money'.

Some installations are a lot simpler and their general purpose sign fixing tapes, adhesives and foams are ideal for these jobs. Such as nameplates to doors and walls, and foamex to walls.

According to the company, they are happy to provide free of charge on site technical advice, their free sign focused booklet and assist you every step of the way to make sure your installation is 'perfect first time, every time'.

www.indasol.co.uk

New HP Light Fabric

HP has introduced a new 100 per cent knitted polyester fabric for HP Latex Printers that is wrinkle-resistant, soft to the touch and features an excellent colour gamut for a range of high-profile display applications, according to the company.

The new HP Light Fabric has been tested for harmful substances and is certified according to the Oeko-Tex Standard 1001. It is REACH-compliant, to provide 'confidence that the material poses no health risks when used as intended'. The fabric is

An 'excellent' alternative to PVC for banners and displays



flame-retardant to B1, M1, and NFPA 701 standards.

HP Light Fabric allows print shops to produce 'economical, lightweight, high-quality' banners and display for special events, retail displays and exhibits.

HP says its fabric is crease and wrinkle-resistant; as well as rub and scratch resistant, so print shops can 'have greater confidence' in the final application when they pack and ship their fabric displays.

An 'excellent' alternative to PVC for banners and displays, HP Light Fabric is available in 42-, 54-, and 60-inch widths.

www.HPLFMedia.com. www.hp.com



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Spandex launches ImagePerfect StreetApp

Spandex, who supply many products to the sign, architectural and display industries, has expanded its range of ImagePerfect materials with the launch of a new self-adhesive outdoor media product, IP2555 StreetApp.

ImagePerfect StreetApp is a white, textured, scuff-resistant print medium with a non-slip surface. It has been designed for digital printing on large format inkjet printers using eco solvent and solvent, as well as UVcurable and latex inks.

Our commitment is to provide customers with the widest range of products to create vibrant and captivating digitally printed work on virtually any exterior or interior surface.

ImagePerfect StreetApp has been developed for 'challenging' external surfaces such as asphalt, tarmac, pavements and concrete. Thanks to the product's adhesive technology, it is also suitable for application on carpet and wooden flooring, according to the company. ImagePerfect StreetApp offers a 'high level' of resistance to scratches and cracking and an inherent non-slip surface, without the need for additional lamination.



ImagePerfect StreetApp has been developed for 'challenging' external surfaces such as asphalt, tarmac, pavements and concrete.

This latest addition to the ImagePerfect digital media range allows for high levels of print quality with a large colour gamut, delivering 'colourful images perfect for outdoor applications such as promotional graphics in sports arenas, race tracks and car parks'.

Spandex's Category Manager, Steve Jacques said: "Our commitment is to provide customers with the widest range of products to create vibrant and captivating digitally printed work on virtually any exterior or interior surface.

"ImagePerfect StreetApp is the latest addition to our digital range, which now comprises over 160 products. StreetApp is a great addition to the portfolio and opens the door to a host of new visual communication opportunities. We're seeing more and more Spandex customers producing outdoor branding for sports, hospitality and leisure events and looking to create maximum impact with floor graphics. With StreetApp, we can now give them a substrate they can rely on to create stand-out pieces of work for this type of event, produced to withstand the hard wear and tear typical of these demanding graphic installations."

www.spandex.com.

New range of sign making and vehicle wrapping accessories from ADS

Amari Digital Supplies (ADS) has introduced a full range of application tools and accessories for customers in the sign making and vehicle wrapping sectors.

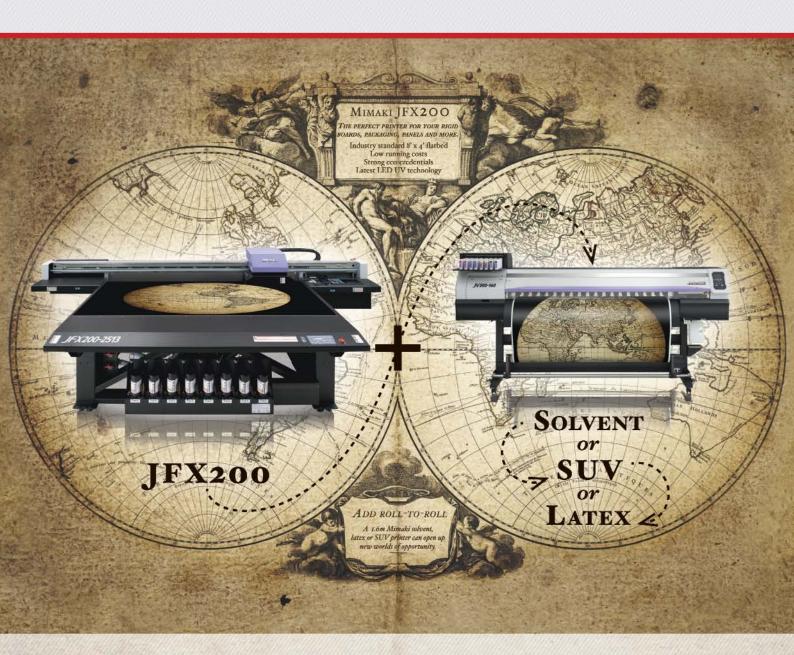
The range comprises SOTT application tools and surface cleaning agents such as the Blue Max window squeegee and performance handle, and the HeatMaster heat gun. The former is described as the 'ultimate solution' for wet applications involving heavier-duty films, such as those used for safety signs, solar window graphics and laminated digital prints. While the latter is 'idea'l for vehicle wrapping and window tinting applications. The Right Off adhesive remover will remove adhesive residue in two minutes, according to ADS. As well as eliminate environmental pollutants such as grease, grime and tar.

The range also includes four types of knife-less tapes. The first of these will improve material conformability around vehicle bumpers, door handles and mirrors. While the second option is 'excellent' for vehicle striping by allowing stretching and redirection of the material being applied. The third option is for the application of perforated window films. The fourth option, Total Seal, is a 'fast and easy' solution to edge sealing problems in vinyl applications. It comprises a clear acrylic lacquer containing UV-blocking agents that dries in around 10 minutes after application.



New application tools and cleaning agents for sign makers and vehicle wrappers.

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New products from Praxis

Praxis, specialists in large format graphics, have three new products. The first is Praxis Manifest, an exterior banner system that the company says is 'innovative'.

Like its interior counterpart, Mono, Manifest has been developed to make sure that only the graphics get noticed, not the structure that supports it. Manifest's 'clever' design features a simple two-part rail which captures the top and bottom edges of the graphic, keeping it in tension by an adjustment mechanism.

Manifest works well in any architectural setting; the rails can be powder coated in any RAL colour to match the exterior and surroundings. The components are machined from 316 grade stainless steel to give a long outdoor life.

Graphics can be printed on a range of fabrics, including solid PVC for 'striking' image quality and Mesh 3124, which is ideal for exposed situations as air can pass through it. As with all our products, Praxis use the latest in digital print technology to 'reproduce any design faithfully'.

Manifest offers a number of options for installation. It can be wall-mounted as standard and single or double projecting if the supporting wall is structurally sound. Projecting banners can go up to 1.5m in width.

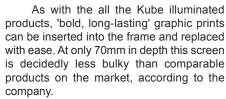
A post-mounted banner option with either a centre or side post is also available as are banners up to 1.5m wide x 5m high.

Following on from the huge success of Kube illuminated, Praxis have expanded and enhanced their range of illuminated graphic products with the launch of the Kube illuminated double-sided screen.

Following on from the huge success of Kube illuminated, Praxis have expanded and enhanced their range of illuminated graphic products with the launch of the Kube illuminated double-sided screen.



Kube illuminated slimline



The frame design reflects light right up to the edge, to make sure that the graphic on each side is equally bright and evenly lit. This product can be used a free standing screen, ceiling hung or wall projecting. Sizes can go up to 2000mm high x 1500mm wide.

As with all Kube illuminated products, long-lasting LED lighting uses less energy and generates less heat than conventional illumination, says Praxis.

They've also introduced Kube illuminated slimline. While the standard Kube illuminated frame 59 is ideal for many settings. their clients' asked if they can make a thinner version. So the Kube illuminated slimline combines 'bold, bright graphics with a sleek 20mm frame'.



Praxis Manifest.

.....Continued on page 12

What's on your easymount.?



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New products from Praxis

As with standard Kube illuminated, the slimline frame ensures that graphic prints are easy to insert and update. 'Unfluctuating' illumination is achieved using a patented 8mm thick clear acrylic LED Light Sheet. A 3D matrix machined into the sheet carries and transmits light evenly across the whole surface.

Kube illuminated slimline uses less energy than conventional illuminated products; 70 per cent less than T5 fluorescents and 30 per cent less than CCFL. The illumination runs cool to the touch and offers a long life span; up to 50,000 hours or 11 years, running 12 hours

Kube illuminated slimline uses less energy than conventional illuminated products.





Kube illuminated slimline sizes start at A4 (210mm x 297mm) and go up to 1500mm x 3000mm.

www.praxislimited.co.uk

World's largest digital flatbed printer, the Dip-Tech AR18000, driven by SAi's print-to-finish production software

SA International (SAi) has announced that its award-winning print-to-finish production software has been bundled with the world's largest digital flatbed printer, the Dip-Tech AR18000 digital ceramic in-glass printer.

Dip-Tech has set a new world record for printer size with the AR18000; an achievement officially recognised by Guinness World Records in the category 'largest digital flatbed printer'.

The Dip-Tech printer is 18m (59ft) long - more than double the length of Dip-Tech's next-longest printer. It can print a single pane of glass with a total area of up to 64m2 (688.89ft2). Typical applications of digital ceramic printing include color-printed architectural glass for exterior projects, as well interior usage and transportation glass.

Covering pre-flight to production, SAi's

PDF-based PixelBlaster is an end-to-end software that is designed to 'reduce bottlenecks, streamline workflows and increase profitability for users'. SAi and Dip-Tech al-

ready enjoy an established collaboration, which saw SAi develop the exclusive Pixel-Blaster Dip-Tech Edition software to specifically address certain characteristics and challenges of Dip-Tech's inglass printers.

As Dip-Tech's technology uses naturally pigmented ink and therefore doesn't use the CMYK colour set (instead using orange, red, blue, green, black and white, as well as any required special spot color), PixelBlaster is used to match the designer or architect's CMYK files into language the Dip-Tech printers understand.



The Dip-Tech AS18000 flatbed printer is 18m long.

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Scuff Guard over-laminate film

Drytac Europe, an international manufacturer of self-adhesive materials for the print, label and industrial markets, has announced the immediate availability of Drytac Scuff Guard over-laminate film.

Drytac Scuff Guard is a 150µ (6 mil) textured PVC protective over-laminate film with a matte finish that offers 'good scuff resistance for all types of printed graphics'. Applications include the over-lamination of short term indoor floor graphics courtesy of Scuff Guard's R10 anti-slip rating.

It is also recommended for the protection of indoor graphics applications that are likely to have a high level of surface contact, such as posters, exhibition and POP displays in high traffic areas, according to the company. The textured matte finish provides a non-glare finish which is 'ideal' for applications such as trade show graphics when lighting conditions cannot be controlled.

So confident is Drytac of the new Scuff Guard film that - combined with Drytac FloorTac printable vinyl for floor graphics - the film has a warranty for six months when used in high traffic indoor areas.



Scuff Guard film protects all types of printed graphics from damage.

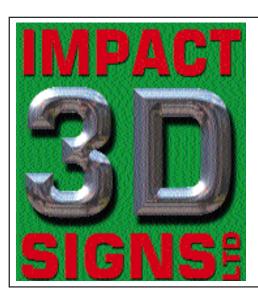
On the latest introduction to Drytac's ever-expanding range of products, Steve Broad, Sales Director for Drytac Europe, said: "Scuff Guard is a great addition to our Floor Graphic range of anti-slip films and the product's name spells out exactly what it is.

I have seen so many apparently antislip floor graphic films on the market that mark or scratch easily and simply don't do the job. So I am genuinely pleased to announce the launch of Drytac's hard-wearing and reliable Scuff Guard film."

So confident is Drytac of the new Scuff Guard film that - combined with Drytac FloorTac printable vinyl for floor graphics - the film is has a warranty for six months when used in high traffic indoor

Drytac's range of films and adhesives is exclusively distributed throughout the UK and Ireland by Antalis.

www.antalis.co.uk www.drytac.co.uk



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AXYZ offers choice of 366,918 standard machine configurations

According to AXYZ, manufacturers today are constantly looking for suppliers of products that offer a winning combination of high productivity and profitability. For example, in the sign and graphics and digital printing industries that operate in a particularly competitive climate, supplying a limited range of CNC routers is 'no longer acceptable'. So AXYZ International has developed an advanced manufacturing facility that is capable of producing 'distinctive one-off bespoke machines as fast as other manufacturers can build standard off-the-shelf machines'.

A particular strength of AXYZ International is its ability to offer machine configurations that will accommodate virtually any specific manufacturing requirement

AXYZ International understands that each industry requires a choice of machine options that offer multiple processing areas and routing head configurations to accommodate multiple different applications.







The company is now able to deliver a 'staggering' 366,918 standard machine configurations to enable all of its customers, regardless of the industry in which they operate, to have the best possible platform for 'business development and higher

For the sign and graphics and digital printing industries, AXYZ International mostly supply the AXYZ 4000 and 6000 series of machines. These have a choice of processing widths that will accommodate virtually any sheet material used in these industries. They typically include an expanded automatic tool change (ATC) facility, Automatic Camera Registration (AVS) system and one or more knife cutting heads.

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AXYZ offers choice of 366,918 standard machine configurations

For plastic fabricators, the choice of machine is usually the 6000 series, which accommodates standard sheet sizes. And they can also include the latest helical drive and servo drive options that deliver the 'smoothest and most precise motion for optimum accuracy and finest cut quality'. Popular with plastic fabricators is the Pacer-branded heavy-duty routing solutions, which are renowned for their inherent strength and robust construction and which eliminate machine vibrations that can lead to imperfect cutting, says AXYZ.

For customers needing to process large volumes of aluminium composite materials (ACM), a material widely used in the sign manufacturing and architectural cladding industries, the most appropriate machine is the 5000 series.





Triple Head with Drill.

These provide the necessary extra-long (up to 12 metres) material processing length and triple routing heads that are designed to enable pendulum processing for continuous machine operation and maximum throughput speed. Dedicated design and programming software and a host of optional machine enhancements enable 'ultimate configurability in high-volume production'.

A particular strength of AXYZ International is its ability to offer machine configurations that will accommodate virtually any specific manufacturing requirement, says the company. These configurations incorporate both standard and optional production tools; different processing areas; and cutting head options to enable materials of virtually any length and width to be processed. These options include a choice of single or dual gantries, each offering two carriages incorporating up to three cutting heads in any combination of router and knife tools and automatic tool change functions.

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FIXTURES & FITTINGS

An up close look at fixtures and fittings

When it comes to selecting the best products for installation, there are a number of solutions available on the market. As an increasing number of sign makers make the lateral move into retail and POS signage and graphics, Jemima Codrington uncovers some of the best fixtures and fittings, along with application tips and advice.

CJ Retail Solutions is an award-winning company that has been specialising in the installation and maintenance of retail displays since 1995. When it comes to the successful installation of retail signage, having an expert consultant involved from the outset can be crucial to the project's success, says Operations Director Colin Chapman.

"The success of an in-store marketing campaign can depend significantly on the types of fixtures and fittings used by sign makers," he says. "They need to be durable and good quality, and they also need to enhance the signage rather than detract from it." According to Colin, another key factor is how easy they are to install. By taking advice from an expert from the outset rather than involving them later on when it comes to the installation, these and other important considerations can be addressed to ensure that any potential issues are avoided, and therefore do not have the opportunity to negatively impact a campaign's success.

For some sign makers, seeking advice specifically on fixtures and fittings is something done after the sign has been developed, if at all. According to Colin, sign makers can be doing themselves and the client a disservice, by missing out on what is often valuable insight into the in-store environment, retailer estates, the practical logistical aspects involved in delivering a POS campaign and the demands placed on signage when installed. "This insight can boost the success of a project, and also avoid costly and time consuming mistakes," he says.

How working together early on can help

Especially where retail and POS signage is concerned, there are many factors to take into consideration before selecting fixtures and fittings for adequate installation.

Keeping the graphics clear, and choosing fixtures that both support and enhance the signage is a couple. Opting for something that works well in the given retail environment, taking into considerations things like lighting and space issues, is another. "What looks good at the prototype stage for example may not necessarily translate well into a real life store setting," says Colin. "It may also not comply with guidelines and rules governing in-store signage set out by the retailer in question or meet Health & Safety requirements, and that is even before you consider whether the fixtures and fittings that have been chosen will perform under retail conditions."

Installation companies can provide a unique view into which fittings solution will support the easiest and therefore most cost effective installation, and even provide different quotes based on different solutions. They will also be able to look at the project from a logistical perspective, where sign makers may be focussed on design. For example, will a solution be straightforward to transport and get into stores without disrupting trading? If the fixtures do not allow for fast, unobtrusive installation, this can disrupt the client's business, for which there will be further cost implications.



Colin Chapman, Operations Director at CJ Retail Solutions.

Working in partnership with an installation specialist from an early stage means that minor changes can be made to a solution that can potentially have a big impact on the value for money provided to clients. "We have seen instances where just a small tweak to a design has enabled nearly twice as many units to be fitted into a van - representing a huge transport cost saving," says Colin. "When it comes to any in-store campaign, the best approach is to plan ahead to get ahead, and consider how it will be implemented right from the beginning".

www.cjretailsolutions.co.uk

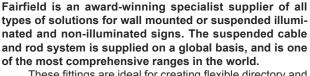


Having an installation expert involved early on in the project can reduce the risk of problems.



CJ Retail Solutions provides the full mix of retail solutions and field marketing services to retailers, including Aldi.

LED Light Pockets™ installed with Microtrack. Each pair of cables is individually fused so if one display has a fault, the rest remain illuminated.



These fittings are ideal for creating flexible directory and way-finding signage, along with branding signage with a mixture of permanent signage and acrylic pockets for frequently changing signs. Fairfield also supplies top quality sign supports made from solid brass or aluminium.

Perhaps one of the best-known products are the LED Light Pockets™, fittings that allow companies to easily illuminate a graphic or sign. Owing to the popularity and versatility of this system, new this year from Fairfield Displays is the latest version of Microtrack, which has been designed to simplify the installation of multiple LED Light Pockets. "This aluminium profile has positive and negative connections powered via a single track, allowing for multiple suspended LED Light Pockets™ to be installed using just one power supply," says Janice Fairfield, Marketing Director at Fairfield Displays & Lighting. "This is a huge advantage for the end client, as it keeps all the wiring extremely neat and tidy, requiring a single electrical socket for a power-pack of up to 200 watts, and it also reduces the drilling time and gives the client more freedom in the position of the fixings."







A look at group wall mounts from Fairfield Displays shows the range and quality of fixings, seen here in Satin Chrome.

Things to consider when selecting fixtures and fittings

According to Janice, whenever working with illuminated signage, sign makers should be acutely aware of how the power supply will impact the fixtures or fittings required for installation.

When working with signs that require electrical power, it is vital that everything in the chain understands how the electricity gets to every element of the sign," she says. In addition to the electrics, considering the weight of the installation will also play a large part in determining what is used. "You have to gather the correct information from site and from the client before deciding on the design of the fixture," she says. "A common error by sign companies is to buy small cheap sign supports that do not allow a large screen to go into the fitting. The result - and you see this all over the country - is that the sign pulls the fixing out of the wall as it is not secure enough."

While selecting the right fittings is important, Janice affirms that it good quality doesn't have to mean expensive. "It is definitely possible to create highly attractive, durable signage at a competitive price with a little imagination," she says. "Make sure to use quality fixings as this will save time at the point of installation and help it look good for many years. Simple things like checking the wall types and measuring accurately is imperative, even making sure the fitter has the correct screws can make the difference between a professional job and a botched job."

Following the success of the LED Light Pockets™, and the Signware product range launched in the early part of 2014, Fairfield plans to launch a range of new range of products targeted towards the signage sector this year. The new range of illuminated signage products will be unveiled at Sign & Digital UK in March 2015.

www.fairfielddisplays.co.uk

FIXTURES & FITTINGS

An up close look at fixtures and fittings

For signage or graphics applications that require seemingly "invisible" fixtures or fittings, the magnIQ system makes an interesting - and somewhat revolutionary alternative. The system developed by display solutions experts Rare Basic is unlike most conventional wall systems. It utilizes magnetic panels to hold weights of up to 25kg, providing sign makers and installation companies with a very different option altogether.

"We feel the 'product' should always be the hero — not the fixture or fitting," says Chloe Briggs, PR & Marketing, Rare Basic. "Many fixtures can be overshadowing particularly when used to display small items like jewellery in retail settings. 'magnlQ' is invisible & is impossible to photograph, so clients are not aware of it in store installations." The system relies on metal back-panels to "power" the wall, which can be covered with anything from posters and print graphics to fabrics and soft signage. Owing to the discreet set-up of the system, the magnlQ is ideal for applications in which the end-user

does not want any visible fixtures or fittings. "Not only is the magnIQ system perfectly suited to displays, it's also a perfect solution across other sectors," adds Chloe.

"The system is ideal for any client that is looking to have invisible or unobtrusive fittings installed"

Companies such as the Body Shop have utilised the magnIQ since it's development over seven years ago, and the system remains popular with retailers owing to it's impressive load-bearing capabilities. Top Shop Oxford Circus, despite several refits, are still using magnIQ after 5 years. Rare Basic are also implementing the system into another notable establishment, the Victoria and Albert Museum. "We are currently work-

ing with them to create totally invisible holders for prints," reveals Chloe. "At the moment, these are screwed to the wall with conventional fixtures, which have to be constantly filled & re-painted after closing hours. With the magnIQ, their cost savings will be huge."

From retailers to museums, a number of establishments are turning to Rare Basic, and the magnIQ system has as such been installed anywhere from universities to offices. "The system is ideal for any client that is looking to have invisible or unobtrusive fittings installed," says Chloe. It can make a great choice for soft signage retail applications especially. "We have clients that use peel-away graphics on the magnetic board, so that they can just take them off and replace them as they need to without having to worry about unscrewing and reinstating any fittings," says Chloe. "This means the system is ideal for any retailers that have a need to change interior graphics frequently."

www.magniq.com



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PRODUCT Choice

Digital Plus - first with new Anapurna M3200i RTR

Leeds based Digital Plus is the first company in the UK to install Agfa's new super wide, super fast Anapurna M3200i RTR with Asanti workflow.

The directors of this graphic display company flew to FESPA Munich last year to pick up another award to add to its trophy cabinet and to look at upgrading its existing two roll-to-roll printers. Whilst exploring the exhibition floor, they saw the new Anapurna M3200i on the Agfa stand and were 'immediately impressed with the quality and speed' of the machine.

"To be honest, we hadn't realized how far Agfa had come in display graphics. The other machines we looked at were either too expensive, too slow or the quality was not to the standard we required. The Anapurna M3200i is also very competitively priced to enable us to achieve a good return on our investment," says Chris Stringwell, Director, Digital Plus.

Digital Plus was founded in 1999 and a couple of years ago invested in its own modern premises in Leeds. The company has around 20 staff and provides a complete imaging and nationwide survey and installation service. It does a range of indoor and outdoor display assignments for a varied client base that includes many 'household' names in the beauty and fashion markets. As well as building societies, utility companies, property developers, shopping centres, travel companies, museums and local authorities.

To be honest, we hadn't realized how far Agfa had come in display graphics. The other machines we looked at were either too expensive, too slow or the quality was not to the standard we required. The Anapurna M3200i is also very competitively priced to enable us to achieve a good return on our investment.



"With the Anapurna M3200i we took up the dual roll option, which enables us to print two 1.5m rolls simultaneously. We also considered going down the latex route but the productivity cannot match UV. The image quality of the printer is fantastic and very durable despite a very thin layer of ink. In fact, Agfa inks are the best we have used. You can crunch up a sheet of printed material and there's no sign of the ink cracking or flaking. Over the coming months we are also very keen to maximize the potential of Agfa's Asanti workflow," says Owen Russell, Director, Digital Plus.

Both the directors of the company spent many years working in photographic labs, so colour reproduction is second nature to them. With this kind of expertise Digital Plus has built a reputation for quality and service, which is endorsed by many of its customers. This is clearly a company with a focus on building for the future and Agfa plans to be a major partner in its success.







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PRODUCT Choice

Rocket Graphics 'shoots for the stars' with third Mimaki

Rocket Graphics, a long-standing Mimaki customer, has added a third JV33-160 to its print capacity as it 'gears up for further expansion'.

Rocket Graphics produces a wide range of large format digital production of branding and signage for events, exhibitions and retail. Production director, Phil Eames said: "We work hard here at Rocket. We have many jobs with a 24 hour turnaround and we run our printers continuously, day and night. Our Mimaki JV33s are a real asset in this sense as they feature an Uninterrupted Ink Supply System (UISS). This allows switching between two cartridges of the same colour automatically, giving us long unattended print runs overnight. It doubles our productivity without doubling our staffing costs, which makes great business sense."

Rocket's team has a 'fluid and flexible approach to how it operates and embraces the challenges of working with diverse customers'. Getting a high profile print contract in the USA prompted Rocket's investment in a third Mimaki JV33.

"We added a third Mimaki to our portfolio in order for us to complete a large job in America, where we printed graphics for a very large sector of the exhibition," says Phil.

"We sent a team of installers out there to ensure a smooth transition from production to display and we even shipped one of our Mimaki JV33's along too in case there were any last-minute changes to be made. We like to go the extra mile for our customers, and the Mimaki certainly went the extra mile with us!"

We like to go the extra mile for our customers, and the Mimaki certainly went the extra mile with us!

Granthams Graphic Technology supplied and installed Rocket Graphics' JV33 and provided support in shipping the printer to the USA and back as part of the campaign. General manager, Kirsty Reader said: "We have supplied Rocket Graphics with several Mimaki printers and have been their



consumables partner for some time, so it's natural to want to assist them wherever we can. They have great vision and are attracting some big contracts and we wanted to share our knowledge and expertise of the printing industry - and Mimaki printers more specifically, to help them get the best out of their business."

www.rocketgraphicsltd.co.uk www.granthamsgt.co.uk www.hybridservices.co.uk



A third Mimaki JV33 has been installed at Rocket Graphics.

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PRODUCT Choice

Signs & Labels Hereford opens up new markets with Mimaki JFX200-2513

Signs & Labels Hereford Ltd. has recently bought a new Mimaki JFX200-2513 from Stanford Marsh Group Graphics (SMGG) to 'open up new markets thanks to its ability to print onto materials from mirrors to wood'.

Founded in 1999, Signs & Labels Hereford has 'grown organically from small beginnings to become one of the leading suppliers of signs and displays within the Hereford area'. Success has been 'built on hard work and a commitment to provide a quality service to clients, combined with a continued investment in the very latest digital print technology'.

The new printer has been invaluable as it reduces our production time significantly, negating the mounting of vinyl onto rigid substrates, and enables us to target new markets.

The company supplies a wide range of solutions for the sign and display market, such as all types of signage and banners, pop-up displays as well as a full vehicle livery service. Up until recently, Signs & Labels Hereford was producing all of its output on a Roland SOLJET Pro 4 XR-640 large format print and cut machine.

Earlier in 2014, the company started the search for a new printer to sit alongside

the Roland machine and help to expand their business. Having reviewed all the options available in the market, the company settled on the latest addition to Mimaki's family of UV LED flatbed printers, the JFX200-2513, which 'delivers unparalleled

Of particular interest, according to the company, are the LED lamps on the Mimaki machine which are not only cheaper to run than traditional UV lamps but also give off less heat, helping to reduce media warping on substrates such as Corex.

Signs & Labels Hereford contacted Mimaki for a list of approved resellers and, having spoken to a number of them, chose SMGG. John Hughes, Director at Hereford Signs & Labels said: "Steve Guest and the team from SMGG showed the most enthusiasm: not only were they extremely helpful on the phone, they also took the time to come out and visit our business on many occasions to do site surveys and establish a comprehensive understanding of our requirements."

The JFX200 is an 'affordable, high-performance flatbed UV LED printer with excellent build quality. It delivers a highly desirable combination of quality, speed and value and its flatbed format means that it is ideally suited to the production of rigid display boards, packaging and exhibition panels'. John said: "The JFX200-2513 is an incredibly robust and flexible machine and enables us to print 8ft x 4ft sheets up to 50mm thick - at an entry-level price.

"The new printer has been invaluable as it reduces our production time significantly, negating the mounting of vinyl onto rigid substrates, and enables us to target new markets.'

Government grant

The price of the new printer was reduced further when SMGG supported Signs & Labels Hereford in liaising with Hereford & Worcester Council. The council awards a number of grants to local businesses to aid with expansion and SMGG and Signs & Labels Hereford managed to secure a £10,000 business development payment towards the machine's cost.

John said: "The Mimaki printer has opened up many new opportunities for us as we've been able to print on a wider variety of materials, from mirrors through to metals, plastics and wood.

"All of these first class signage and display solutions are being created and manufactured in our premises in Hereford and delivered to our customers in the local area. "We will continue to grow the business by investing in the very latest equipment to ensure we continue to meet and exceed our customers' requirements. As a result of the company's exceptional service, we will certainly look to work with SMGG to meet these needs."

www.smgg.co.uk. www.signslabelshereford.co.uk



Trip the Lightbar fantastic!

Isle of Wight-based print shop, DNN Signs has been trading for around 11 years. Damon Larter, Managing Director explains the choices they've made to grow and develop the business.

"We started with a 610mm plotter, doing a few vans and signs for friends and family. We were doing a couple of jobs a week and news spread through word of mouth. After around three to four years, we were in a position to go full time and invested in a cheap Rockhopper printer. It took a day to print a banner, but it was a worthwhile introduction into the digital side of signage. After spending an hour a day getting the printer ready every morning to do its job, we invested in a Valuejet 1604 and a Summa D160 SE. Now, seven to eight years later we have introduced the Lightbar UV640Plus printer to our arsenal along with a Rolls Roller, the closest we could get to a flatbed printer at a third of the price.



We had been using Colorific inks in our Valuejet 1604 when we were emailed with information on the Lightbar. We spoke about converting our machine but then thought as it was eight years old we should really look at upgrading. Obviously no one likes to part with money, never mind wasting it. We had such great experience with our Valuejet as it had never put a foot wrong with easy maintenance, so we were hesitant in making a decision.

We went to the NEC Sign Show to look at a range of printers. Some time after the show when new funds were available, we visited the Selectech show rooms to spend some time printing ourselves and getting a feel for the machine.

After a thousand questions, and every one of them answered, the selling point was taking a print home that we had printed and rolled up earlier that morning and walked on as a further test for durability. We had it in our shop applied to dibond, and everyone that came in commented on it. The inks are more expensive than our previous machine by almost double, but we are finding that the machine uses less ink, therefore decreasing the gap.

Because we are in a high street location, we are asked all the time for jobs to be printed for collection same or next day. With the Lightbar, this is always possible and we charge a premium for the service. The Valuejet was a very large machine but the Roland fits into a smaller area and has double capacity inks. We looked into Latex as well but were told by numerous people that Latex takes a while to start up and warm up, and the electricity bill would be sky high. We also do not laminate signs anymore due to the increased durability. The great thing about the Lightbar UV640Plus is that we can produce items same day. This impresses most customers and is talked about. We are a business that has survived on word of mouth so we feel that this will be an asset for when we start to advertise. We have definitely seen an increase in our repeat custom, as the quality of our work has been increased along with the speed of service.

Our workload is comfortable, which is great news as we do no advertising other than a Facebook page. The Lightbar has been an asset to our company and is an economical way to get into UV printing. We took around a year to choose the right machine and we have not been disappointed. Hopefully this year we can push the sales and see where we can go.'



www.metamark.co.uk

PRODUCT Choice

Your Print Partner goes 'super-wide' with Mimaki

Your Print Partner recently bought a new Mimaki printer as a result of 'increased demand and an ever expanding product range'.

Your Print Partner has been digitally printing banners, flags and outdoor branding products since 2012 when they purchased their first Mimaki direct-to-textile printer. They were originally a print management company. Today the company uses nine 'stateof-the-art' print machines, including PVC printers and CAD cutters, with their range of products having grown to over 200 different items, many of which are printed in-house.

Due to their success, the company decided to invest in a new Mimaki JV5-320DS dye sublimation printer, capable of printing on 3.2m wide rolls of fabric. As well as 'improving efficiency, decreasing set up times and reducing fabric wastage', the new printer 'optimises the potential for new product development'. And it brings the company's annual print capacity up to 250,000m².

Managing Director of Your Print Partner, Stuart Maclaren said: "This is a really exciting development for our business. One of our most popular products is Feather Flags, which you might typically see at sporting events or on car forecourts. With the new Mimaki, now the largest in our building, we have the potential to print more than 1,000 additional flags every week. This really opens up many more new opportunities for us and enables us to compete on much larger tenders."



Your Print Partner has been supported throughout the purchase and installation by its Mimaki reseller, R A Smart of Bollington, Cheshire. Magnus Mighall, of R A Smart said: "We've had the pleasure of working with Stuart and his team for a number of years and it's been a delight to see how the business has flourished. Clearly their new investment has shown a real confidence in the peerless performance of Mimaki equipment."

Due to their success, the company decided to invest in a new Mimaki JV5-320DS dye sublimation printer, capable of printing on 3.2m wide rolls of fabric.



Your Print Partner's Stuart Maclaren with the company's new Mimaki JV5-320DS.

The team at Your Print Partner has been developing a new range of display products for release early in the New Year. All are intended to be produced on the new JV5-320DS printer, utilising its 'super-wide' print capacity to create large-scale graphics for exhibitions and trade shows. "Images, specifications and prices for the new product range will be revealed on our website very soon." says Maclaren.

"The sheer capability of the new Mimaki makes it a key element of our growth strategy and as a result of the increased capacity it brings to the company, we expect to create five new jobs over the winter period in our pre-print, sales and customer service departments.'



PRODUCT Choice

Océ Arizona technology 'cements its role'

ARC-UK, the UK arm of the world's biggest reprographics company, is 'on a mission to quadruple turnover in the next two years' and has invested in Océ Arizona technology from Canon to 'drive growth in the retail sector' specifically.

The purchase of the Océ Arizona 460 GT comes as part of a £2 million investment in the UK business following continued growth in its large format colour business, which has become 'well established' over the last six years.

"This is the second Arizona we have installed in the last 18 months, joining an Arizona 480 XT to increase our production capacity as we continue to win new business and diversify our offering in retail," said John Snell, Managing Director, ARC-UK. "Our escalation plans in the UK have already seen us increase headcount from 26 to 100 in an 18 month period, as well as expand into new 14,000ft2 premises in central London.

"The capabilities of Arizona technology are, in my mind, unsurpassed, particularly in the production of high quality display graphics where customers are increasingly requesting decorative elements such as white ink and varnishing. Also having the

The Océ Arizona 460 GT – part of the award winning Océ Arizona range of wide format printers - produces 'near-photographic' image quality on both rigid and flexible media up to 1.25m x 2.5m

roll-feed option on both machines enhances their capability and enables us to be more versatile with medias for our clients," says John.

ARC-UK has gone from a £3 million business in early 2013 to a £10 million operation today through both acquisition and organic growth. The company anticipates a similar increase again over the next two years.

"Previously, ARC has been well recognised internationally for producing monochrome technical documents for the AEC, financial and legal sectors, but now is the time to really show what we can do with colour," added Snell. "Established clients in the retail sector like to see new suppliers coming into the market with fresh ideas and that is what we are doing. A recent project saw our installation teams erecting a 23 x 10m wall, printed on an Arizona, overnight at the Bullring shopping centre in Birmingham; quite an eye catcher!'

"We did look at other machines for our display graphics work, but I have been a fan of Arizona technology since I took delivery of my first one more than five years ago. It's no surprise that I opted for the technology that has never let me down to date, hence why we are already considering further investments in Arizona technology in 2015," says John.

The Océ Arizona 460 GT - part of the award winning Océ Arizona range of wide format printers - produces 'near-photographic' image quality on both rigid and flexible media up to 1.25m x 2.5m. With six independent ink channels and Océ VariaDot imaging technology, it offers varnish capabilities with spot and flood gloss effects and white ink to print on coloured media at up to 32.8m² per hour.

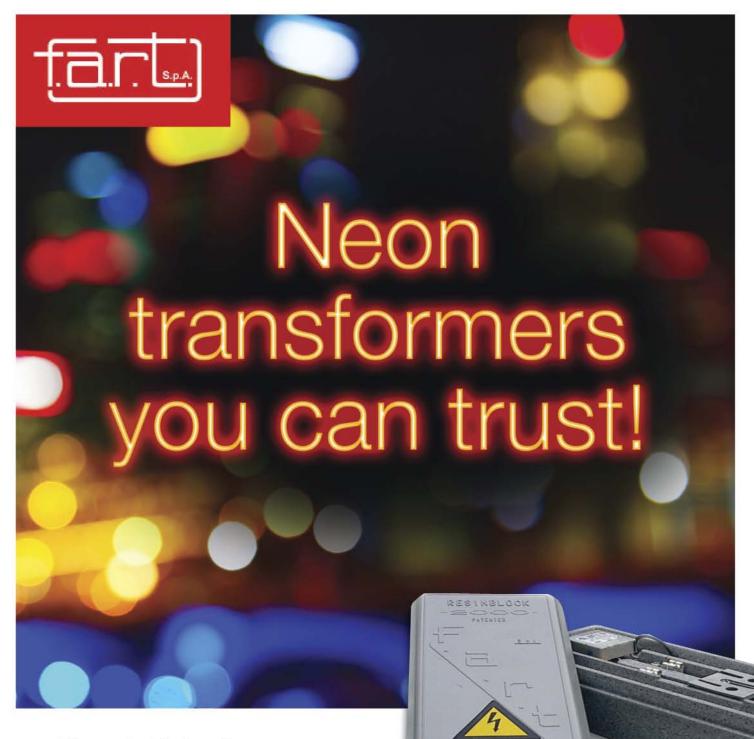
"As well as robust and reliable equipment, Canon is also able to offer unrivalled service and support," says John. "During a period of rapid business growth this is something we need to rely on and thankfully we have a technology partner in Canon that we know is always on hand."

Duncan Smith, Wide Format Printing Group Director, Canon UK, said: "ARC-UK ran one of the busiest Arizonas in the country, so it's great to see that when an increase in capacity was needed they again turned to Canon for a solution. The growth this company has seen is astounding and it's great to be part of that success story."



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MADE IN ITALY

SOFT SIGNAGE Feature

How sign makers can expand into soft signage

Banners, flags, lightboxes and even tents - the soft signage available today is more varied than ever. Jemima Codrington spoke with experts in the field to find out what's new, and how sign makers can make the most of it in their installations this year.

Gala Tents offers full printing services across a range of soft signage substrates, including onto their most popular item, printed gazebos.

"The printed gazebos and banners are perfect for market traders, businesses, exhibitions and councils, as the soft textile is really easy to print but also completely transportable," says Glen Robinson, Printing Manager. "That's why we're very fond of soft signage, because it's a lot more accessible than any other form of printing for our customers. We've seen a large growth in the number of applications that soft signage items are used for over the past few years too; not only are market traders and caterers purchasing these kind of goods, but public sector and local authorities are also investing a lot into this kind of branding." Glen adds that soft signage is particularly popular with these sectors, as the businesses within them often tend to have temporary or short-term signage needs. When it comes to attending events, exhibitions and festivals, pop-up signage solutions such as gazebos are lightweight, portable, and a fantastic way to attract attention.

In addition to gazebos, Gala Tents offer full exhibition and branding packs, including anything from banner flags to t-shirts to printed poly/PVC structures. New this year,



the branding packs are the result of an investment in machinery that enables the team to complete more complex pieces involving dye sublimation. "We've noticed there seems to be a lot more demand for dye sublimation products with HD images than ever before," says Glen, "and we're also seeing a major growth in the exhibition sector, as most soft signage products are easy to transport and are very lightweight." Also new are bespoke wallpaper designs, which Glen notes have been popular with exhibitors and offices alike, as it enables companies to have their own brand logo on a feature wall.

"Measure twice, press once"

In just a short time, Gala Tents has become a go-to name in the soft signage industry, creating successful jobs for clients including Argos, Lego, Go Outdoors, The National Lottery, Vets4Pets, Premier Inn and Skechers.

These companies chose soft signage because the flags, banners and printed gazebos were able to offer fantastic vibrant branding solutions, whilst taking only five minutes to erect. Part of Gala Tents' rapid rise to success lies, according to Glen, with the preparation. A huge amount of prep goes into each job, from the initial client consultation to the fabric selection, design and the pre-press treatment of the material. Even simple things like spell-checks and doublechecking measurements are done numerous times to prevent costly, time-consuming mistakes. "We always say – 'measure twice, press once'," he reveals. "Check your design more than once, and get someone else to check it if you can."

Glen also points to the importance of basic organisation, and keeping work surfaces clean at all times to expedite print times. One area that is especially important,



Printed gazebos are one of Gala Tents most popular items.

particularly where large-scale soft signage projects like gazebos and tents are concerned, is material selection. "Always invest in good quality fabric. The printing you do could be the best thing in the world, made with the most expensive machinery, but if your material is poor, it will lower the quality of the product. Make sure there are no creases in your material to begin with - you could even iron your items and press the seams for a high quality finish."

www.galatent.co.uk



High profile clients such as Lego enlisted Gala Tents to design their Halloween gazebo.

GiraffePress has been in the large format industry since 2009, with founder Jason Giraffe bringing over thirty years of experience in the printing industry to the table. Although the company's main line of work is the production of banners, they have examined different avenues of soft signage in recent years.

'Our main work is banners, although we do a lot of other work in exhibition stands," says Jason. Their Centro modular systems were especially popular throughout 2014. With this system, aluminium posts can house graphics stretched throughout, making them ideal "pop-up" soft signage for things like exhibitions and shows. With modular systems, additional panels can be added in as the need arises. Coloured acrylic post caps and accessories can be integrated to complete the look, and ensure all aspects of the signage are consistent where branding is concerned.

Since the team put in a large format UV machine, GiraffePress has been able to print onto virtually any media substrate up to a millimeter thick. The investment has also enabled Jason's team to produce several banners with spot varnishing, products he says have "gone down really well" with clients. Another sector that they have explored is that of outdoor soft signage. When coffee house Coffee Village wanted something that would enclose the outdoor seating area whilst simultaneously offering some additional branding, Jason set out to come up with a cost-effective solution. His first attempt at creating café barriers was met with praise from the client. "These barriers work as a windbreak, but also add extra advertising on top of window decals." he explains. "From a client's perspective, they are easy to put up, and easy to take down at night for storage without being an expensive permanent fixture or fitting.

For customers, the barriers create almost a sense of being inside, outside."



Centro stands remained popular in 2014, allowing companies to add as much or as little soft signage as they need (a stand seen here is half complete).

How to excel with each soft signage brief

According to Jason, utilising your expertise as a sign manufacturer can help provide a higher quality of service, and better the chances of repeat business.

He notes that all too often, sign makers will respond to email gueries with a guote without doing any further research into the specifications of what the job really entails. "The general public may see something they like, and want the same thing for their business, but it may not in fact be the best thing for their business," he explains.

.....Continued on page 36



SOFT SIGNAGE Feature

How sign makers can expand into soft signage

"I'm a great believer in ringing a client, not just working off an email. Ask the questions to find out more information, and you may be able to suggest something they haven't thought of." Especially where pop-up banners and exhibition stands are concerned, Jason recommends asking clients about the space they have for things like storing the rolled-up signage when it's not in use, as well as how they plan on transporting it to shows or exhibitions. "Clients don't know how much things weigh, or don't think about things like transport," he says. "Little questions like that can provide a higher level of service, and can allow you to suggest something that best fits the description of their needs."

www.giraffebanners.co.uk



The completed Centro stand with all fabric panels filled in.

2014 was a busy and productive year for Signs Express Ltd., who sought to actively promote their existing soft signage offerings to clients, as well as to introduce some new ones. Among the new products is wallpaper, a type of large-scale soft signage solution that has already been implemented in some impressive applications.

"The interest in wall coverings is growing, and the products available from our supply chain are getting easier to install," says Rebecca Dack, Marketing & PR Manager, Signs Express Ltd. "Designers and clients really like the idea of large graphic areas, especially in large offices where motivational messages can be used alongside large graphics to help inspire staff. This area of our business has significantly increased in the past year and is only set to continue as the trend for customer and staff engagement through soft signage grows."



Large wall coverings seen in the new Waters Wilmslow building, installed by Signs Express (Manchester) have been met with acclaim.



Corporate clients are utilising wallpaper soft signage to inspire staff (seen here with an installation by Signs Express Grantham).

This wallpaper was utilised by Signs Express (Manchester) to create large wall coverings in the prestigious new Waters Wilmslow building. This international PLC wanted to add the finishing touches to public and office areas, and so large wall spaces were fitted with one-piece wallpaper, printed digitally with intense close up images. The project took two years to finish, and Signs Express (Manchester) worked alongside designer Helen Hampson-Smith to achieve these interior wall displays.

For the first time ever, Signs Express held a national promotion in April 2014 for freestanding flags. Although not traditionally one of their core products, the flags were well received by customers, especially as the promotion showcased the variety of shapes and sizes just ahead of spring/summer. "It is not traditionally one of our core products so it was a useful tool to help boost awareness,"says Rebecca, adding that the promotion is likely to run again this year.

.....Continued on page 38

NEW!

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media that everyone's talking about. VION digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically duly digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically dean white face with a heavy duly digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically duly digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically duly digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically duly digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically duly digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically digital print media offers a five year, polymeric printing film solution that has been specifically digital printing film solution that has been specifica

designed for the UK market. The range features a high quality clean white face a high quality clean white face designed for the UK market and layflat. YION is exclusive to William Smith. For more information and a printed sample pack please call 01833 694707.

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SOFT SIGNAGE Feature

The key to managing client expectations

Rebecca recommends asking thorough questions to determine what the client wants out of their signage installation.

This will help determine whether things like freestanding banners, wall-mount products or flags are best suited to the project. "A key question is the customer's expectation to the longevity of the soft signage," says Rebecca. "How long is the campaign? Where and when this will be installed? This is what will determine the material and methods used."

Where wall coverings are concerned, things like the paint and surface of the wall can impact the adhesion and smoothness of the finished result, and impact the product specification chosen for the wall coverings, whether it be vinyl material or polyester fabric. Outdoors, for things like free-moving flags, the anchor points need to be correct to ensure secure fixing and to avoid uneven wear and tear. "Before you do anything, make sure to ask the customer if they have the necessary permissions to install the signage if it's being fitting outside," advises Rebecca.

www.signsexpress.co.uk



Wall coverings on display in a Punter Southall Group building, installed by Signs Express (Gateshead).

The Spirit-TEX Fabric System from Spirit Displays Limited combines all the benefits of an aluminium-textile graphic system, without the restrictions complications that sign makers may have encountered with this kind of application in the past.

With the system, sign makers can create round shapes, apply angles, and develop even polygonal shapes with ease. It also reguires little in the way of specialty finishing. eliminating the need for stitching altogether, as the Spirit-TEX gripper allows for the edges to be neatly aligned and tucked into

The Spirit-TEX gripper eliminates the need for complicated stitching or finishing.

the frame with no additional tools required.

The system has proved immensely popular, and came about after Company Director Hadley Weight examined the current state of the soft signage market. "We noticed that it was particularly skewed towards dye sublimation - so much so that generally speaking, only companies that had dye-sub printers and finishing facilities had access to it," he says. "When we looked at designing Spirit-TEX, we set about to make the installation of the graphics easier, without necessarily requiring very accurate finishing on the edging of the banners, and allowing companies to use a wider range of materials and print methods."

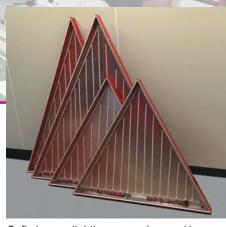
In developing the Spirit-TEX product range, Spirit Displays has opened the market up to more than just those with dye-sub facilities, something that is hugely beneficial to sign makers as the demand for soft signage increases. Although soft signage has been around for a number of years, the market is growing substantially as Hadley notes that an increasing number of clients are switching from acrylic or PVC across to soft signage, especially in the retail space. "Some of the traditional retail brands, particularly in cosmetics for example, still really like that high-gloss element to their displays, so they're a lot slower to adapt," he says. "Other retailers in fashion and larger department stores for example, are moving across much faster."

One of the reasons soft signage is a popular choice in retail has to do with lighting. Banners, as opposed to acrylic boards for example, providing a crisp, matte finish. In establishments with a lot of display, ambient and spot lighting, this can be incredibly advantageous, as it eliminates glare and reflection from the graphic. "In all, it offers a more modern, matte, softer look," affirms Hadley.

The future is "bright" for soft signage

With new illuminated options, sign makers can create vibrant, lit soft signage that can be of interest to retailers, hospitality establishments and many other businesses.

Exhibition light boxes can be created in either a mounted or freestanding design, which can be beneficial to exhibitors across



Soft signage lightboxes can be used in many applications, such as retail.

numerous sectors. In order to make the most out of illuminated soft signage, Hadley recommends noting the colour of the environment and the sign itself, as some work better than others. "For white backgrounds, any illumination inconsistencies will be very obvious, but you wouldn't necessarily notice if you had a full colour print," he says.

But in addition to offering the best in new lighting, soft signage panels can be used to improve acoustics. In accordance with Part E of the Building Regulations (2003), school buildings must have sound absorbing materials installed to reduce noise and better the acoustics (and therefore learning environments) in classrooms. To reduce reverb, patterned fabric panels have been used in many schools, and sign makers can create these with ease utilising the Spirit-TEX tensioning system.

To improve lighting, reduce sound or simply to convey messaging, soft signage has a myriad of uses. In 2015, now more sign makers than ever can move into this market with products in the Spirit-TEX product line.

www.spirit-displays.com

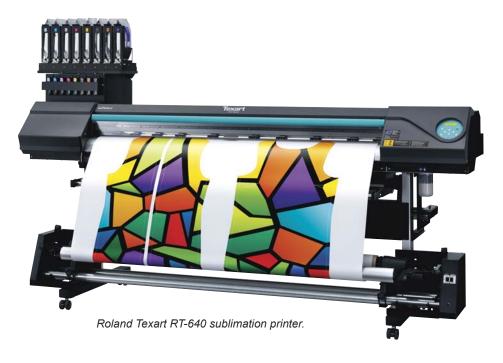


For sign makers looking to create a wide range of soft signage, including banners, flags, promotional apparel and textiles, POS and interior décor products, the new Texart RT-640 from Roland DG is now available.

The Light Cyan and Light Magenta provide subtle gradations and beautiful skin tones.

Launched late last year, the 64-inch dye sublimation transfer printer is an ideal solution for a market that demands the ultimate in creativity, colour vibrancy and flexibility.

.....Continued on page 62



SOFT SIGNAGE Feature

How sign makers can expand into soft signage

"This new printer enables you to add value to your business through a wide range of profitable applications," says Mark Elvidge, Print Product Manager Roland DG (UK) Ltd. "The RT-640 offers all the reliability, functionality and production performance Roland DG machines have become internationally renowned for to a sector of the industry that continues to grow and develop year after year."

The Texart is available in either four- or eight-colour ink configurations, and features innovative print control technology and a choice of powerful RIP software whilst incorporating a host of technological advancements. These advances optimise sublimation transfer output, whilst minimising running costs. Variable droplet technology when used in combination with new Roland Texart dye sublimation ink produces bold, vibrant colours and rich strong blacks, as well as subtle gradations and fine details.

Available with a choice of two professional RIPs, the Texart RT-640 offers sign makers versatility along with easy and intuitive operation.



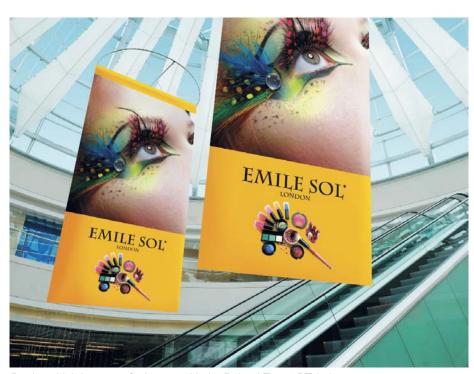
Produce stunning interior decor items with the Roland Texart RT-640.

The addition of Orange and Violet inks has increased the colour gamut, enabling sign makers to print reds, oranges, deep blues and purples. The Light Cyan and Light Magenta provide subtle gradations and beautiful skin tones.

The printer will be on display at the Printwear & Promotion taking place this month at the NEC Birmingham, where visitors can get an up-close look at the latest print head technology from Roland DG. Using this technology, the Texart RT-640 is capable of printing up to seven different droplet sizes for smooth gradations and dense colour. A newly designed Feed Adjuster, combined with a more powerful fan and an included take-up system, ensures added stability for high-speed printing up to 32.6m² per hour. With the new Roland Ink Switching System™, users can load a fresh pouch from its bulk ink system without stopping the printer when in 4 colour mode.

Available with a choice of two professional RIPs, the Texart RT-640 offers sign makers versatility along with easy and intuitive operation.

www.rolanddg.co.uk/RT-640



Produce high impact soft signage with the Roland Texart RT-640.



Create high fashion items with the Roland Texart RT-640

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Heimtextil

Some highlights from Heimtextil show, which took place in Frankfurt in January 2015

Epson teams with up and coming textile designer to print cushion covers 'to-order'

Epson showed how it has transformed the oil paintings by artist Bryony Benge-Abbott into a range of soft furnishings using the innovative range of SureColor inkjet printers.

Every day during the show, Bryony showed how 'easy' it is to print cotton cushion covers in minutes using the Epson SureColor SC-F2000 direct-to-fabric table-top printer.

"Epson SureColor technology has given me the freedom to explore new ways to produce a variety of décor products that I would never have thought possible before," says Bryony.

"My designs are inspired by nature and incorporate rich colours with delicate motifs and it's very important they transfer onto textiles and other substrates exactly as I created them. Using Epson SureColor printers I can experiment with different media to create high quality wallpaper and textiles for curtains, cushions, and upholstery. The ability to print relatively small batches of a particular design means that I can produce exactly what I

need, when I need it and print to order very easily. I can test my designs and react to changing market trends, without the danger of holding unwanted stock. I used to think digital print technology was only for large organisations. But Epson has developed printers that give small design businesses like mine the power to take my designs in many new creative directions. There really seems to be no limits"

Richard Barrow, Senior Product Manager, Epson Europe, says: "Our inkjet technology is designed to give textile designers and producers the ultimate in quality, flexibility, and reliability and all at an affordable price. We offer a range of printer and inks giving a choice of solutions to suit specific applications and productivity requirements from low-volume entry level use to high-volume, professional use."

www.epson.eu/ www.bloomingbryonydesigns.com



Bryony Benge-Abbot turns her designs into textiles in 'minutes'.



The DMIx© digital colour communication standard.

Epson also teamed up with DMI, the German Fashion Institute, to show textile designers and producers how they can create, proof and digitally print their textile colours all the way from mood board to the final product using Spring-Summer 2016 trend colours.

DMI produces trend colour cards which are used by over 600 companies around the world to plan their seasonal interior and fashion collections. In association with Epson and Color Digital, DMI has digitised these colour cards and developed DMIx©. an innovative digital colour communication standard which allows designers to precisely identify, match and reproduce colours at all points of the supply chain; from first designs to finished textiles and promotional materials.

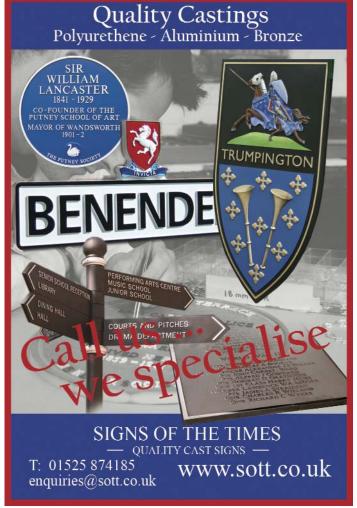
DMI showed the complete DMIx work flow from capturing an original design; viewing it on screen; outputting a proof on an Epson Stylus Pro 4900 printer; and producing the final textiles with an Epson SureColor SC-F7100 dye sublimation printer.

EPSON Epson SureColor SC-F, SureColor SC-T and SureColor SC-S inkjet printers enable almost 'limitless' design possibilities across the home and contract décor industry. These printers provide designers with an 'easy-touse and affordable way' to bring their ideas and inspiration to life with 'greater control, flexibility and unsurpassable quality'. "We strongly believe that all parts of the value chain across the textile industry will need to become increasingly digital," says Gerd Willschütz, Director, DMI. "Our aim is to work with leading hardware and software partners such as Epson and Color Digital to streamline the complete design-to-production work flow with solutions that maximise colour quality and consistency and significantly cut lead

The Epson booth at Heimtextil.



times in this very competitive market."



Heimtextil

Mimaki showcases digital textile and wallpaper solutions

"Huge technological advancements have brought about a major leap in the quality of digitally printed textiles. And with the ability to produce samples, short run and custom textiles much more cost effectively, the digital proposition is becoming increasingly attractive to designers, retailers and marketers. Many major retailers are using digitally printed textiles to differentiate themselves by producing really eye-catching limited edition pieces," says Mike Horsten, General Manager Marketing EMEA at Mimaki Europe.

"These digital print technology developments open up some really exciting market opportunities for designers throughout the industry, and I believe that this really is just the start of a revolution in the sector," says Mike.

Mimaki is Gold Sponsor of the European Digital Textile Conference where Mike discussed "Why the home textile sector will switch to digital".

He said: "The home textile sector is just one of many expanding creative and commercial opportunities offered by digital printing."

Mimaki, which is distributed in the UK and Ireland by Hybrid Services Ltd, demonstrated a number of solutions 'dedicated' to textile production. These ranged from the Mimaki TS500-1800 which is ideal for producing furnishing fabrics as well as sportswear, T-shirts and apparel; to the Mimaki TX500-1800DS with its ability to print on polyester-based materials, and other fabrics. The JV300-160 dye sublimation printer is suitable for everything from garment marking to fashion, with the JV400-160LX delivering high-quality latex print for wallpaper applications with its six-colour printing for a broader colour gamut.



Mimaki showed what it printers can do with textiles.





Gideon Oberson's designs are 'brought to life' by the roll-to-roll Kornit Allegro.

Gideon Oberson DESIGN

Kornit Allegro and Gideon Oberson combine talents to show the 'power of customisation'

Kornit Digital and renowned designer Gideon Oberson showcased the partnership opportunities between creativity and digital textile printing.

A colourful tropical environment was presented, produced on the high speed roll-to-roll Kornit Allegro onto a variety of fabrics in limitless lengths.

Gideon Oberson's work represents a 'strong example' of the move by designers to incorporate greener, cost-effective practices within the development of their fabric designs in a streamlined process. His enthusiasm and design skills have combined to bring Kornit Digital the ultimate in creativity by integrating his own strong experiences of vision, perception and colour.

"Strolling through the tropical lands of Costa Rica, I discovered an incredible variety of strong colour, sound and fragrance," says Gideon.

"Inspired by these three elements, I created a vivid environment — but my ideas really came to life thanks to the amazing colour gamut and versatility of the Kornit Allegro"

Kornit Digital's NeoPigmentTM process, used in all of their digital textile printing solutions, brings advantages that 'not only generate high standards, authentic feel and superior quality, but also enables the versatility demanded today in terms of shorter runs and personalisation'.

The Kornit Allegro is the only true digital solution for textile printing, says the company. Unlike alternative digital production technologies the need for all external process steps, such as pre-treatment and post treatment, have been removed. With textile production available in a completely dry single step solution, digital fabric printing is returning to western countries. This, they say, is because all former issues such as end-to-end costs, pollution, regulations, health and safety, and space can be addressed.

"The decision by Kornit Digital to participate at Heimtextil 2015 is confirmation of the company's increasing penetration into the industrial and domestic printing arenas," says Wilfried Kampe, Managing Director of Kornit Digital Europe.

"We are already the leading developer and manufacturer of direct-to-garment printers worldwide, and the same highly successful NeoPigment process is the key to Kornit's 1.8m wide Allegro. It is a true standalone roll-to-roll system that prints direct onto a broad variety of fabrics with vivid results, accurate colours, an excellent hand and good durability."

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PROJECT News

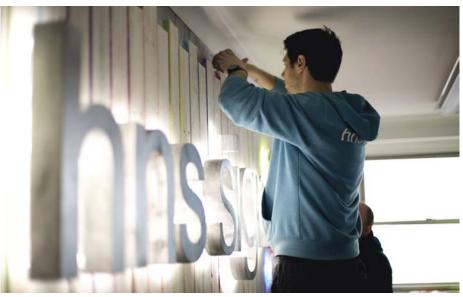
A lovely office sign caught our eye, so we asked Michelle Henry from HNS to tell us about their project:

"We love to do something different and with this one we took our inspiration from a café in Wellington, New Zealand. They had a bar made from mahogany wood with mahogany timbers bolted onto it. The side of these were painted in bright colours. We loved that the colours were not obvious head on and that they only became obvious from the side view.

Like many other sign companies, we seem to collect pallets and have often talked about recycling them in the form of a sign. But getting customers excited about using this material is a hard sell. So we decided to make one for ourselves and our customers love it! It has been shared on Facebook and been received well on Twitter. We have already had a couple of enquiries for something similar.

Raph, our graphic designer came up with the design. He used our colours from the logo to paint the sides of the timbers and we painted the fronts white and then distressed them. We felt that it had to have a rough and ready look but still feel clean to keep with our brand. We also wanted this to apply to the letters. We get frustrated with everyone wanting squared signs - it is so boring! So we decided to use an unconventional shape and believe that this adds to the wow factor.

Sean fabricated the letters on the CNC and used as many offcuts of 20mm foam as he could to manufacture them. It took a little longer this way, but it reduced our waste. One layer was hollowed out so that we could fit the LED's which we bought from Perspex Distribution. We then laser cut offcuts of 3mm clear acrylic (also from Perspex) to form the halo.



Securing the sign to the timbers.



The sign from an angle.



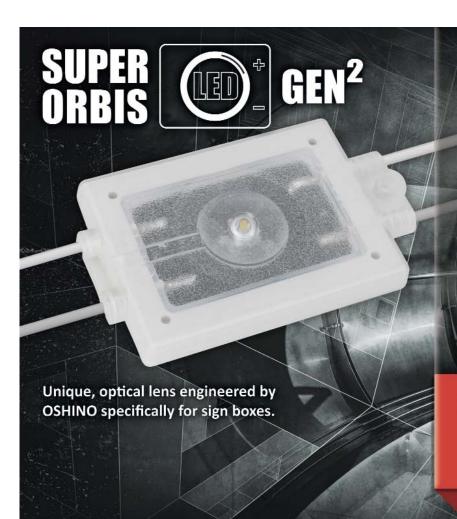
Job done!

Bart and Chriss then had the fun job of bonding the different layers of the letters together, priming and sanding them back. We then added a thin layer of filler to the surface and sides of the letter to give it a bit of texture. We wanted the letters to look old and felt that a smooth surface would lessen this. Chriss and Bart then sprayed the letters silver. Once this had dried, we used a black spray-paint to age the finish.

The timbers were secured using two lengths on aluminium angle. Due to the sign being over 3m in length, it was brought upstairs in two sections with the letters already attached and

Again, we used angle to secure it to the wall of our office."

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PROJECT News

Solar powered lighting wins for The Gibraltar Bus Company

Techtrolec, one of Gibraltar's most 'successful' electrical contractors and Zeta Specialist Lighting have delivered an eco-saving and cost efficient lighting solution for The Gibraltar Bus Company. Zeta's Solar Shelter Lighting Kit has been rolled out at bus stops that did not have appropriate lighting, to improve passenger comfort and safety.

The Gibraltar Bus Company conducted a competitive tender process to supply lighting for 56 bus stops across the Isthmus. The Government of Gibraltar, which wholly owns The Gibraltar Bus Company is 'committed to reducing its carbon footprint and as such the brief was to propose a low carbon, environmentally friendly solution'.

Techtrolec was successful in securing the contract after recommending Zeta's energy saving and emission-free Solar Shelter Lighting Kit. Office Manager Dee Curran said: "I don't believe we were the cheapest provider but the product offered by Zeta provided us with a huge competitive edge. It is a bespoke solar powered lighting solution for bus shelters."



It is a bespoke solar powered lighting solution for bus shelters.

A specially manufactured, vandal resistant, solar panel is attached to the roof of the shelter to harness the sun's energy

throughout the day. The solar energy charges the in-built long life maintenance free batteries, which power high intensity LEDs to illuminate the shelters from dusk till

The system maintains a constant low level of illumination until a passenger enters the shelter and activates the built in Passive Infra-Red technology (PIR). The light levels gently increase and remain fully activated until the passenger leaves the immediate

Adrian Dennis, Zeta's Sales and Marketing Director said: "The overall environmental impact of a solar powered scheme is much lower than one which utilises electricity. For The Gibraltar Bus Company, benefits included the fact that installation was much faster and easier and, as there was no requirement to connect to a mains supply, the CO2 emissions associated with laying cabling and putting an infrastructure in place were also completely avoided.

"In addition, with solar power, ongoing running costs are zero; there are no additional energy bills to pay.'

Hon Neil Costa MP, Minister for Tourism. Commercial Affairs. Public Transport and the Port said: "As outlined in my budget speech to Parliament earlier this year, I am delighted to see these enhancements to bus stops come to fruition. Not only does this fall in line with Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar's eco-friendly drive, but it will also offer an added sense of security inside our bus stops in the darker hours of the day."



About Zeta Specialist Lighting

Part of the Zeta Group, Zeta Specialist Lighting is a UK-based developer and manufacturer of LED and solar powered lighting systems. The company designs, develops and manufactures intelligent, robust and reliable engineered products suited to a wide range of applications. From LED solutions that lower energy bills and carbon emissions for customers across the world, including custom luminaires for street lighting, amenity lighting, signage and LED commercial lighting solutions; to the design and manufacture of complete solar lighting solutions.

www.zetaled.co.uk



LumeJet prints deliver in the 'ultimate test'

The London School of Photography unveiled the winners of the 2014 LSP Awards Photography Competition in December. Alessia Francesca Muoio was unveiled as the overall winner at a ceremony in the ME Hotel in Central London.

Part of the prize packages for all winners and runners up was LumeJet prints or a photobook of their work. Debbie Castro, Director of Training, London School of Photography & Professional Photographer said: "As photographers, the print is our ultimate test. With this in mind, I am extremely particular in the execution and final outcome. The paper used, the finishing, the faithful translation of details and depth, are all vital ingredients.

"LumeJet has exceeded my expectations, my vision of what was possible. I am truly amazed. The colours are so intense and vibrant, with an almost 3-D effect that inevitably grabs your attention, embracing your experience to new emotional heights.

'To date, LumeJet is the best print and photo quality that I have ever seen in the market. Competitively priced and most of all, effectively beautiful."

The competition was run in partnership with the National Theatre's hit production of The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, by Mark Haddon. Entrants were asked to submit photographs inspired by the theme "Curious London". The entries were divided into four categories: "Curious People", "Curious Pets", "Curious Places" and "Curious Underground". Photographers could enter up to 10 photographs into each category.

After seeing all the prize winners Lume-Jet CEO, Paul Anson said: "The standard of the entries was amazing, both in technical quality and artistic interpretation of a challenging topic. As a company we are delighted to contribute to the development of these hugely talented photographers.'

While LumeJet technology is based on the silver halide process the company has developed much more in the traditional print sector. However, the ultra-high quality output of the LumeJet is increasingly being sought after by professional photographers who work at the top end of the market.

Award winning celebrity and fashion

photographer, Ki Price, is convinced it is the way forward. "LumeJet quality printing is what the world of photography has been waiting for. This is the whole reason that camera manufacturers have been making such high end cameras such as the Canon 5DMk3 and Nikon D810. Only the LumeJet can produce the quality of print needed to properly showcase this new cutting edge camera technology. The bar has been raised by this new level of print quality and high end photographers like me are understandably excited at the possibilities for our work."



Alessia Francesca Muoio won the LumeJet photography competition inspired by the theme 'Curious London'.







PROJECT News

Sovereign Signs secures contract with Formula One Autocentres

Sovereign Signs has secured a prestigious contract, which involves the manufacture, supply and installation of signage and branding to 15 Formula One Autocentres.

The Hull-based signage manufacturer has agreed the deal to provide large scale Flexface and fabricated fascia signage; external branding and service signs; as well as a package of internal branding elements such as unique graphic walls, TV housing units, health & safety and service message signage for the autocentres, which are based across the UK.

Our experience across the UK's fast-fit, garage and automotive sectors is extensive and allowed us to offer firm commitments on timescales, commerciality and our wider sign services provision.

The deal comes after Sovereign completed a number of signage projects for the autocentre 'giants' over the last few years.

Sovereign Signs Senior Project Manager lain McKenzie said: "We have worked with Formula One Autocentres previously and were delighted to gain their invitation to tender for 2014/15 branch expansion requirements.



"Our experience across the UK's fastfit, garage and automotive sectors is extensive and allowed us to offer firm commitments on timescales, commerciality and our wider sign services provision.

"It is always great to work with a growing and forward thinking client who is prepared to push the accepted boundaries of their industry a little. In situations like this our mix of experience, people, technical abilities and proactive approach goes a long way."

Formula One Autocentres, which is celebrating its 40th year in business this year, is one of the UK's largest independent autocentre chains, operating from more than 70 branches and employing more than 500 highly-trained staff.

Working directly with Formula One and its Project Managers, Bradley Mason LLP, Sovereign Signs will provide each fast-fit garage property is unique in style, size and shape.

The garages will also be given brand consistency through the application of strong common features, mirroring Formula One Autocentre's desire to 'provide sleek and modern environments for their customers and staff alike'.

A spokesperson for Formula One Autocentres said: "Sovereign's dedicated management of our account and individual projects was a key difference when we came to appraising tender submissions.

'Outside of the all-important price aspects, Sovereign offered a dedicated team which we felt could provide consistency throughout this important expansion period.

"When we coupled this with their wide experience of our specific sector we knew we had the right signage partner on-board."

Sovereign Signs Managing Director Ian Jones said: "This contract award from Formula One Autocentres is testimony to the hard work of the whole team at Sovereign.

"lain's drive and commitment to providing a winning pitch and tender submission, followed up with practical delivery has once again shone through."

Sovereign Signs is part of Strata Holdings Group, which is also the parent company of Ark Interiors and Pearlgreen Engineering.





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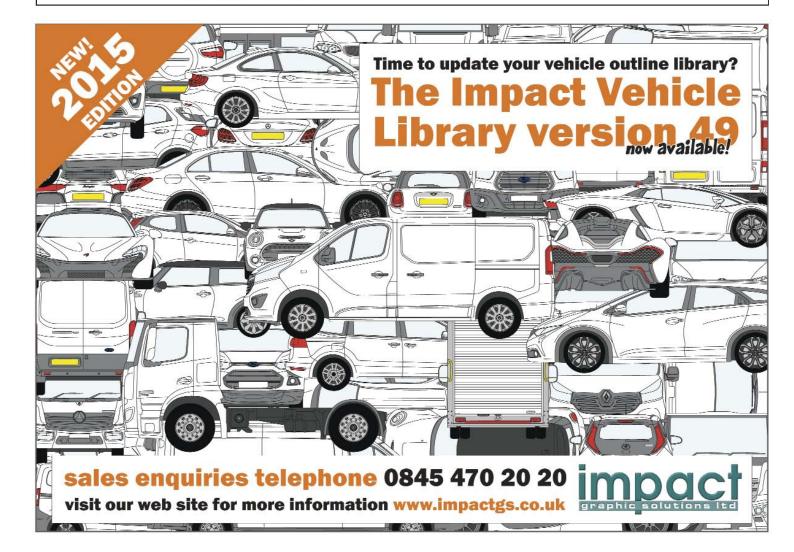
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PROJECT News

Whistles

Whistles clothing brand first contacted W&Co in 2013 to supply retail displays to their new flagship store on Dover Street in Mayfair, London. FabriLite Slim LED light boxes were selected for their ultra slim design and 'premium quality' build to complement the flagship store's 'sleek and minimalist' decor.

Since also successfully supplying tension fabric LED light boxes to stores within Glasgow and Birmingham Bullring, Whistles approached W&Co to help fit-out their brand new store in St Pancras International Station.

Working closely with Whistles and their store designers, CJF Designs, to 'establish a clear and concise understanding of all their requirements and objectives for the new store', W&Co supplied a number of large format FabriLite LED light boxes to both the womenswear and menswear departments.

One particularly large format light box, situated behind the cash desk, covered an area of over 4 x 3 metres. Due to the size, these large format light boxes were manufactured in several parts and assembled on site.



One of the main advantages of tension fabric systems is that one seamless printed graphic can be stretched across the entire face of the complete light box to create 'high impact' visual effects with edge-to-edge display graphics.

The St Pancras store was launched in mid September to coincide with the London Fashion Week SS15 event. Store Development and Facilities Co-ordinator Chloë Hines said: "I just wanted to say a big thank you for the work you have done on St Pancras. Everyone in the office is talking about it and lots of people are planning to visit tomorrow for the SS15 event for London Fashion Week."

W&Co said they were looking forward to working with Whistles again in 2015 to fit out their UK and International sites.

Allen Signs gets hired by Lord Sugar's Apprentice

Signmaker and vehicle livery specialist Allen Signs has branded a London black cab on behalf of inventor and former winner of The Apprentice, Tom Pellereau.

Aventom, a company founded by Lord Sugar and Tom, who won BBC TV's The Apprentice in 2011, has launched two new products to be added to The Stylfile collection.

Allen Signs worked closely with the company to produce a design which they applied to the side of a London taxi to promote the Stylfile Mani-Cab campaign.

Glen Merryweather, Sales and Marketing Manager at Allen Signs, said: "It's not every day you get the opportunity to work with high-profile clients like Aventom.

"It was a pleasure helping to develop and complete this project and seeing the images of the taxi on social media has been an added bonus."

Stylfile, a range of nail files designed with a unique curved shape that follows the natural shape of the nail, is the latest of Tom's inventions. As part of the Mani-Cab campaign, which launched in London in December, members of the public who spotted the branded taxi could swap their old nail files in exchange for the two new Stylfile products and a free taxi ride.

Tom Pellereau said: "The Mani-Cab is my way of thanking the British people for their support and allowing them to try my latest inventions - the new Stylfile Infuse and ManiPro.



As part of the Mani-Cab campaign, which launched in London in December, members of the public who spotted the branded taxi could swap their old nail files in exchange for the two new Stylfile products and a free taxi ride.

"Allen Signs did an awesome job and really captured the idea I had for the Mani-Cab."

Kat Digby, Production Manager at Aventom, said: "I am very pleased with the quality of work that Allen Signs produced. The printed artwork looked brilliant especially when it was applied on the black cab.

"I worked closely with Glen on the project, and he was extremely helpful, responsive and thorough. I would definitely consider working with Allen Signs on projects in the future and recommend them to others.'

www.allen-signs.co.uk



'Slam dunk' for Basketball England headquarters

A new training facility for the rising stars of England's basketball teams has recently opened in Sheffield. Basketball England, the governing body for basketball in England, have moved their offices to the facility which offers World class athletes a key training environment. A part of the English Institute of Sport building, local sign makers, Signs Express (Sheffield), were 'delighted' to add the finishing touches with signage across all areas of the facility.

A 'striking' 3D result was achieved by using individually cut pieces mounted onto a circular substrate.

With the logo comprising of the strapline 'BE inspired' used below two red lion heads, Signs Express said it was important to perfectly recreate the organisation's emblem throughout the signage requirements.

A 'striking' 3D result was achieved by using individually cut pieces mounted onto a circular substrate, which was fixed directly to the main reception area. Individually cut lettering spelling 'Basketball England' was installed directly above the entrance doors.

Large areas of wall space followed the basketball theme, with direct to wall prints showing a 'lay up', a person scoring a bas-



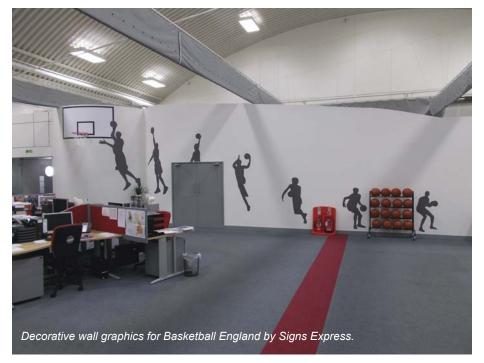
ket, in motion across the full length of the wall. The Basketball England emblem was also recreated using vinyl fixed to the wall in office areas.

A large scale recreation of the Basketball England logo was fitted to the meeting room area.

Steve Morris, owner of Signs Express (Sheffield), said: "This was a great project to work on and we are delighted with the finished results. The contrasting vinyl against plain walls works brilliantly and the whole facility is a great addition to Sheffield. The logo lends itself perfectly to 3D recreation so we were very happy to provide this as an option for the reception signage. Providing the right first impression to visitors is essential and helps create the right training and development atmosphere.'

Basketball England has participated in international basketball for over 60 years and is a proud and committed member of FIBA Europe. At any given point in time, England is represented by as many as 10 national basketball teams from U16, U18 and U20 through to the full Senior squads.

Huw Morgan, Basketball England Chief Executive, said: "Our new offices here in the fantastic facility of the EIS building are a vast space and so Signs Express (Sheffield) have worked very closely with us to get the exact look and feel of the organisation. As a newly re-branded organisation, as well as sitting alongside some other incredible sports in this building, the branding of this office was of paramount importance. We have had nothing but great feedback from the staff, board and visitor and we thank Signs Express for their work in making the offices look so impressive, professional and stylish."



www.signsexpress.co.uk

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Zeta kicks off 2015 with 'bumper order book'

Zeta Specialist Lighting, who develop and manufacture solar powered and LED lighting systems has a 'packed order book'. According to the company they achieved a record monthly turnover for January 2015 that is 500 per cent up on the previous year.

Recent new business wins include fitting energy-efficient LEDs into the subways in Leeds, Burnley and Nottingham city centres; a retro-fit of over 1,000 bollards in Nottingham which are now illuminated with solar-powered LEDs; and equipping Bellisha

Beacon poles across Leeds city centre with energy and eco-saving LEDs. The company is also working on a number of other projects with the Local Authorities in all three cities.

In 2014, their 25th year in business, they invested £3.5 million in its infrastructure and people, a move designed to 'support an aggressive growth plan which is targeting a five-fold increase in size in three years'.

The investment enabled the company to make substantial improvements to its Bicester head office, including building a new LED production facility. Zeta also recruited an additional 11 staff across its customer service, marketing, sales and production departments, appointed a new management accountant and technical lighting designer, and has plans in place that will see a further 20 jobs created this year.

Sales and Marketing Director Adrian Dennis said: "At the start of last year, we had a clear strategic plan for growth and a commitment to establishing an even stronger presence within commercial, retail and industrial settings, as well as driving our expansion into new sectors and new markets.

"As a team we have secured some significant successes within both existing markets and in new areas such as education and sign making for example."

www.zetaled.co.uk



Zeta's new research and production facility.

A 'new window of opportunity'

William Smith has been appointed UK Master Distributor for 3M's Solar and Safety Film business, with effect from 1 January 2015.

"We're delighted to announce this appointment," says David Cox, European Market Manager for 3M Renewable Energy Division. "As a leading trade supplier of innovative products to the signage and digital print markets across the UK, with experienced and knowledgeable staff, William Smith is ideally placed to distribute 3M's portfolio of solar and safety film products.

"Since patenting the first solar reflective window film in 1966, 3M has continued to push boundaries in energy conservation, solar protection, comfort, safety and security by delivering technological advancements in glazing enhancement to buildings, vehicles and their occupants," he said.

Established in 1832, William Smith now offers one of the largest and most comprehensive ranges of signmaking materials in the UK, with most materials being available ex-stock.

William Smith General Manager, Stuart Taylor said: "We are proud to represent 3M's Renewable Energy Division with a focus on solar and safety window films. It means that there is now a single point of contact for these high quality specialist products "

William Smith will be distributing all Solar Control, Safety and Security, and Automotive Window film ranges, including a number of products not previously available to UK customers.

'3M customers who already qualify will remain 3M Certified Window Film Dealers and will continue to be able to offer the 3M Warranty," David says. "In addition, leads and samples will continue to be provided through William Smith."

Stuart said: "our staff will be fully trained with a thorough knowledge of the materials and will be able to offer advice and back-up to customers."

www.williamsmith.co.uk





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Mobile messaging helps Stocksigns stay connected

The latest scrolling LED signs from Messagemaker have 'demonstrated their versatility' as a mobile messaging solution for parent company Stocksigns, one of the UK's largest providers of safety signs. Providing a link between factory and office staff, the electronic signs are used to keep everyone up to date with the latest sales and product news, as well as relay safety messages.

Since its introduction, the TwittLED range of rolling ticker displays has 'attracted a lot of interest from the market for its versatility and ease of use'. With the functionality and speed of Twitter, the signs can be set to stream instant messages from a mobile phone or tablet with open access; or run on a closed loop as an in-company messaging system.

For Stocksigns, the immediate messaging facility has been beneficial for keeping in touch with employees, with TwittLED signs installed in both factory floor and office areas. In the factory, the signs are used for a range of purposes, says Jo Godden of Stocksigns:

"The signs provide a quick way to keep factory staff up to date with progress on new production developments. For example dur-



There are TwittLED signs on the factory floor and the office areas.

ing the testing phase of a new large format printer, we have recently introduced, and to alert staff on large projects and contract wins. Visible to anyone in the factory, the signs also allow us to relay important safety messages on activities in the area, such as any building works being carried out and upcoming fire alarm tests.'

A second sign in the sales office is set to receive Twitter feeds, relaying company news as it is posted and also direct news from

events such as exhibitions. The TwittLED signs also allow Stocksigns to post news of big sales successes and top achievers.

Jo says: "Having the freedom to update messages remotely enables us to respond quickly and to keep in touch when we are out and about from the office. We have had the system in place since it was first developed and it's been a great success."

www.messagemaker.co.uk

SIGN News

CSI Manufacturing announces YPS as new North East of England partner

CSI has appointed Your Print Specialists (YPS) as its new strategic partner. YPS now handle sales and service for Epilog laser and Vision engravers on behalf of CSI in the North East of England.

Established in 2009, YPS currently offers a range of digital printing technologies from wide format solvent and aqueous printers to UV direct-to-substrate printers along with associated consumables. The company has a 'highly experienced' team of engineers offering advice and technical support on printer hardware and software as well as test and demonstration facilities. YPS's 'full service' approach to business has earned it a reputation as a major player in the industry and the new partnership with CSI will further expand the products and services it can offer its customers, according to the company.

"Building on the back of 2014 - which was a record breaking year for CSI – we are delighted to welcome YPS as part of the team for 2015 and what this partnership will mean for our current and future customers. We are confident that with the YPS service-led pedigree and reputation for quality, this collaboration will only enhance our customers' experience in this region," says Matt Kirwan, Managing Director at CSI.

Epilog laser engravers offer high quality marking solutions onto a range of materials, providing new revenue streams for businesses seeking to target the personalisation and bespoke giftware markets. With a wide selection of products to choose from within the CO2 and Fibermark ranges, there are Epilog laser engravers in a variety of sizes and to suit any budget.

Vision has been manufacturing computerised engraving and routing systems for more than 30 years. The success of their engravers and CNC routers is a 'direct result of a reputation for longlasting, high-quality machines'. The product line includes a variety of versatile machines to meet a range of budget requirements and applications, from small-format and speciality engravers to heavy-duty, large format engravers and CNC routers.

"As part of our growth strategy we were keen to find a range of products that would dovetail easily into our core business and complement the capabilities of our printing systems," says Garry Brown, Managing Director at YPS. "The marking and cutting products that CSI offer have proved to be a perfect fit. In Epilog and Vision, we are thrilled to be adding another two premium brands to our portfolio and look forward to developing the business with our new partners."

www.yourprintspecialists.co.uk www.csiuk-epilog.co.uk



Managing Director for YPS, Garry Brown shakes hands with CSI Manufacturing's Anthony Carrick, alongside Paul Shorton from YPS.

New Year, new brochure, new products



A new brochure from Nova, specialists in aluminium signage systems, called 'Solutions from Nova', is available after they added new products to their range last year. The A5 brochure provides a comprehensive guide to all the aluminium systems available from Nova, such as full colour photographs, product codes, technical information and cross section drawings. They have also included a handy notes page at the back of the book for you to keep all that 'need to know' information in one place!

For your copy contact Gary or Lisa in the Sales Team: sales@nova-aluminium.com

You can download a copy from their website: www.nova-aluminium.com



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SIGN News

Signs Express awards

The annual Signs Express convention and sign awards took place in November 2014, which celebrated the company's 25th anniversary. Welcoming franchisees from their 70 centres across the UK and Ireland, the group said the convention was a huge success, celebrating past achievements and looking towards the future.

In a change to usual proceedings, the company's annual best sign awards were voted for by the franchisees themselves, making this a 'true reflection of the franchisees talent'. In addition to the sign awards, which celebrate projects the centres have completed, the franchisee awards are judged by the directors at Signs Express headquarters.

With record numbers of entries this year, competition was tough for the much coveted award winner places. The first award of the night went to Signs Express (Glasgow) in the Best Vehicle Graphics category for their work with Clyde Properties. The graphics feature the distinctive skyline of Glasgow, contrasted against a white background.. Next up was the Best individual sign award which was presented to Signs Express (Lancaster) for the sign they provided for specialist joinery company Lignify. The sign was constructed from built up stainless steel letters with flexi LED for halo illumination.

The award for the Best Sign Project category was Signs Express (Grantham's) work for AVG Technologies. The company were looking for something a 'little different and lively to fit in with their corporate ethos'. The Grantham sign makers provided everything from window graphics, to wall signs, to car park signage.

The last sign award of the night was a category designed specifically for this year,



Franchisee Lee Eaton getting his award from Signs Express directors.

the 'Outer Space' award. Franchisees were asked to enter a project or sign which was that little bit different to the norm. The winning entry came from Signs Express (Basildon) whose work for Turkish Airlines project, which can be seen at Heathrow airport, 'wowed voters with its originality and A large globe structure made from 16 individual pieces was suspended by a 7.5t steel plinth, with a massive 6.5m diameter.

Following the sign awards, the evening moved on to the franchisee awards. The first award for 'Rising Star' was presented to Signs Express (Chester). The Special Achievement award was presented to Signs Express (Harlow). The last award of the night was the 'much coveted' Franchisee of the

Year award which went to Lee Eaton and his team at Signs Express (Manchester). Lee's story for 2014 is one of new contracts, high growth and investment in new equipment. He has also expanded the unit to accommodate the new equipment and built a much needed office. They've had to recruit additional staff to cope with demand.

Signs Express Managing Director, Craig Brown, said: "This year has been one of the best for the network and the convention was a fantastic time to celebrate and reflect not just on this year, but on the last 25 years, as well as looking to the future. I'd also like to congratulate the winners and finalists of the awards, all of whom have produced some fantastic work over the year. Here's to 2015 and beyond!"

Firm's charity initiative 'turns signage into smiles'

A Worcester company's New Year initiative is helping to generate valuable funds for a city - based organisation supporting children with disabilities.

Family owned CitySigns, who are based at Ball Mill Top Business Park in Hallow, have pledged to donate £10 to New Hope for every vehicle livery completed in 2015.

Joint partner Darren Wilkins said: "We decided to make New Hope our chosen charity as it plays a vital role in our community by providing children with a safe and stimulating environment to learn and develop as well as fun days out.

"As vehicle livery is the biggest aspect of our signage and printing business we thought this would be an excellent way to raise funds. Hopefully it will give our new and existing customers the feel good factor too."

New Hope founder Jean Wilson said: "The support of local companies such as CitySigns is invaluable to us. The money raised through their generous donations will go towards days out and associated travel costs."

To support CitySigns' initiative, phone 01905 640007 or email darrenwilkins@citysigns.co.uk



CitySigns joint partners Darren and Deanne Wilkins with New Hope mascot Emily the Elephant and founder Jean Wilson.

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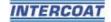
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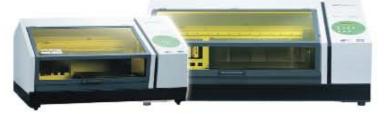




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SIGN News

Kommerling appoints new sales executive

Kommerling UK has announced the appointment of Neil MacWatters, formerly of 3M, to the role of Sales Executive, South. Neil will be responsible for identifying and building business for Kommerling's expanding range of sealants, adhesives and tapes in the automotive, manufacturing and industrial sectors.

Neil said; "Kommerling is a proven market leader and this new role provides me the opportunity to develop my key account management skills whilst also offering these industry sectors access to some of the highest quality products currently available.

One area where I think there is real scope for development is with the signage industry; we are surrounded by signs all day every day and they all require safe and secure fixing."

Koemmerling Chemische Fabrik GmbH is an international manufacturer of high-quality adhesives and sealants. Its European headquarters and extensive research and development facilities are in Pirmasens, Germany and it has a network of subsidiaries, sales offices and sales partners, in more than 80 different countries.

www.kommerlinguk.com



Applelec kick start 2015 with four new recruits



Applelec have hired four new employees across their sales, accounts and production departments due to 'substantial expansion and a want to further develop and improve customer relationships and company performance'. The appointment of two new business development managers for Applelec's lighting division allows the company to inspire architectural, interior and lighting design practices in using LED Light Sheet whilst maintaining great relationships with their current clients across the country.

Sandi Moolman joins as business development manager, focusing on the South of England. James Earle joins in a newly created business development manager role which sees him rep-

resenting Applelec throughout the North of England.

The latest recruit to join the production department is Adam Smith in the position of production

Angela Charge has been selected for the role of administration assistant and will be a 'crucial cog in the Applelec machine' as she deals with customer enquiries and assists the accounts department.

Applelec's managing director lan Drinkwater: "Our new employees are essential to ensure that Applelec continues to offer customer service at the highest each new member contributes to this whether it be aking the initial enquiry phone call to ensuring the product is delivered on time."

Appointment of CEO

Xaar plc, the inkjet printing technology group based in Cambridge have appointed a new Chief Executive Officer.

Following an extensive international search process, the Company is pleased to announce that Dr Doug Edwards will join the Board as Chief Executive Officer with immediate effect.

As announced in March 2014, Ian Dinwoodie will retire from the Company in 2015 after serving as CEO since 2003.

Doug joins the Company from Kodak (Eastman Kodak Company) where most recently he was President, Digital Printing and Enterprise and has been a member of the Executive Board since 2006. He started his career in the UK in a variety of technical

roles with Ilford Limited, ICI, Zeneca and International Paper before moving to the US 14 years ago with Kodak Polychrome Graphics (a joint venture company between Sun Chemical Corporation and Kodak).

Phil Lawler, Chairman said: "I would like to express my thanks to lan for his significant contribution to Xaar since joining the Company in 2001. Following a thorough international search I am delighted to welcome Doug to Xaar. His appointment will strengthen the board, providing the experience necessary to lead the Company through its next stage of development."

Doug said: "It is a privilege to be asked to lead Xaar through this next phase of the Company's development."

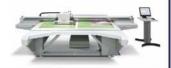




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Knowledge of cutting software and setting of CNC router. We are very busy dynamic Point of sale and display manufacturer however skills in sign making would accommodate this role.

This role would require overtime and unsociable hours and enthusiastic approach.

The package will be according to experience and knowledge.

Phone in confidence: 07710 655070 or 01268 726258 Scott Clarke, Fraser Display, Unit 1 Ryder Way, Wollaston Industrial Estate, Basildon, Essex, SS13 1 QH

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Self-confident and highly motivated, you must have proven experience in selling bespoke signage products at all levels.

This position is based in the North West, with no defined territory in order to achieve sales turnover objectives.

Key responsibilities include:

- Identify opportunities, generate your own prospects and secure new business.
- Generate interest in the company and the range of products and services.
- Conceptualize and translate ideas through to finished product

- Professional presentation and excellent communication skills.
- The ability to work under your own initiative as well as part of a team
- Good planning and time management skills
- Natural flair for new business development

For further information please contact:

Richard Swarbrick, Plasmet Trade Signs, Barton Moss Road, Eccles, Manchester M30 7RL Telephone: 0161 707 3141

Or send CV by email to rswarbrick@plasmetsigns.co.uk

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BannerSHOP specialises in large format digital printing with products such as, roll ups, PVC banners, exhibition displays, wind flags. We have offices in HK, Australia, UK, Malaysia & Singapore and are currently recruiting for two roles for our UK branch to participate and contribute to building the foundations for our next phase of growth.

We are currently located in Slough, but moving in mid-2015 along cross-rail (Reading, Maidenhead).

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- · Manage After sales warranty claims: record, resolve, report
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EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

- · Experience in large format digital printing / exhibition & POS displays industry is a must
- · Experience in running production dept (large format digital printer & finishing stations)

PRODUCTION MANAGER

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

- · Managing the day to day production operation of the company from schedule, print, and finish to dispatch
- · Lead, supervise & motivate a production team of three
- · Manage all production consumables
- · Ensure all jobs are being dispatched on time each day at company acceptable standard
- · Manage & maintain good relationship with suppliers
- · Be responsible for all production related warranty claims (resolve & prevent).
- · Handle overseas shipment, manage warehouse with regular stock take
- Regular maintenance and up keep of all machinery and equipment

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

- · Must have 5+ years in running production department in the large format digital printing industry
- · Experience in operating HP XLJET, Mutoh eco-solvent & dye ink printers
- · Experience in operating welding machine, eyelet machine, high frequency machine

Attractive salaries are available to the right applicants. If either of these roles are of interest to you, please submit your CV to: joseph.luk@bshk.com.hk













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Graphics Installer

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Applicants should be open to working overtime on projects, which is essential to the role.

The position will also require an element of in-house production where necessary, working from our Potters Bar office.

Applicants should be open to learning new skills and techniques, applying themselves to new and challenging installation methods and be health and safety conscious.

Applicants should hold a full UK driving license. Experience with solar films, etched films and cut vinyl would be beneficial, but not essential. Good time keeping essential.

Contract Estimating Assistant

An office based role primarily consisting of estimating and quoting new projects. Tendering for projects with the biggest contractors in the country, this role is different every day and will see the successful applicant explore new products and suppliers on behalf of the company

The role will also include processing contracts for secured projects.

Working from our Potters Bar office where all facilities are catered for with excellent links to road and rail.

Applicants must be willing to learn new skills, be able to work to tight deadlines and have a strong ability to prioritise their work.

Some experience in Microsoft Excel would be preferable but not essential.

Likewise, experience in estimating or graphics would be beneficial.

Workshop Junior

A workshop based role which involves the production of graphics for installation. This role includes hands-on production, working on CAD software, liaising with suppliers and archiving work efficiently. You will be based at our Potters Bar workshop and you will spend most days on your feet around the workbench.

Applicants should be good with their hands and work sensibly and safely with tools.

There will be some requirement to work on site from time to time and lots of overtime available.

Applicants should be pro-active, have an eye for detail and the ability to follow instructions closely A keenness for computers, specifically Apple Mac, is preferable, but experience is not essential.

For more information, or to submit your CV, please email: careers@adambourn.co.uk

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VACANCY - Business Development Executive

Voodoo DesignWorks Ltd. A rapidly expanding sign company who are intensely graphic design driven and customer focused. Our heavy leaning towards graphic design has been a key factor in winning and retaining clients over our competition.

We have a vacancy for a Business Development Executive. To do this job well, you'll need excellent sales and negotiation skills, be target driven/goal oriented, have good interpersonal skills and be able to build good rapport, work with a high degree of accuracy and take an organised approach.

Please see the job description detailed below:-

Business Development Executive: Selling bespoke signage, internal and external, retail, office and wayfinding. Covering whole of the UK. This is not necessarily a head-office based role so national applicants are encouraged.

- Targeted to deliver sales through new business and existing client accounts
- Self-generate leads and assist Directors in marketing strategy
- Maintain and deliver sales margin.
- Accurately survey projects to enable the company to provide complete design and sales signage proposals for all signage types
- Have a thorough understanding of materials, fabrication and installation methods is essential, in order to understand client briefs and maximise opportunities, revenue and margins
- Work with design team to consistently deliver quality client proposals.
- Contribute to team effort by working co-operatively with all departments.

Skills/Qualifications: 3+ years of interior and exterior signage sales experience required along with a proven track record.

Salary: £Competitive dependant on experience

Bonus/Commission: £ To be advised on application

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The Ideal candidate should have experience in both the production and installation of all kinds of digital graphics, enjoy working in the graphics industry and want to progress within the company.

Responsibilities include:

Operation of our Solvent, Latex & UV printers Laminating prints, Finishing banners

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Clean driving licence essential

Salary: negotiable and dependent upon experience

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Customer Sales Representatives Surbiton / Kingston

Knowledge of print/signage and materials would be beneficial but not crucial.



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Printer/Fitter

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making industry. The ideal applicant should possess experience with design, print and rip software. They must also have a strong desire to work on their own initiative as well as working within a close-knit team. In return they will be given the opportunity to be involved with a rapidly growing company offering excellent career prospects.

Key responsibilities include:

- Operation of pc, cutters, and printers (UV, Solvent and aqueous) Involvement in design layouts
- Laying up vinyl and digital print
- Laminating
 Ensuring that goods are produced efficiently and of high quality
- Must have ability to communicate at all levels, especially with staff and clients
- Fitting experience an advantage
- Possess a full driving license

Running of the machines/software below:

- UV flatbed, Mimaki, Canon Vinyl cutters
- Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop
- Laminator

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Applicants should hold a full UK driving license.

Skilled Account/Sales manager

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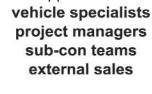
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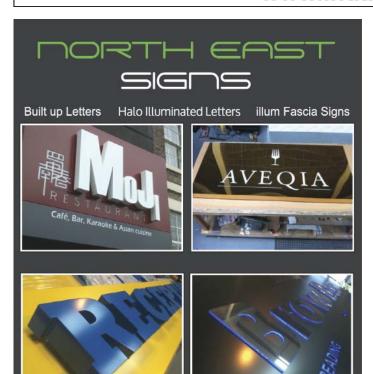
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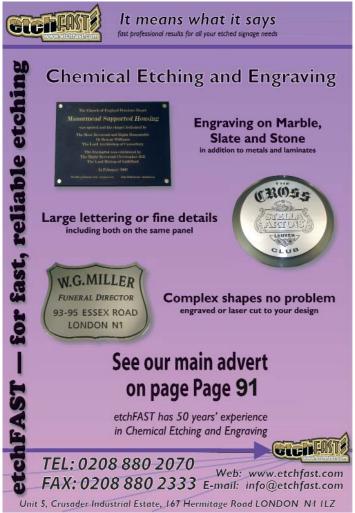


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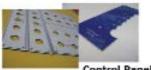






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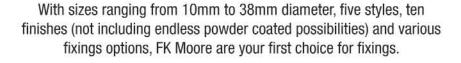


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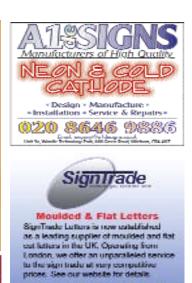
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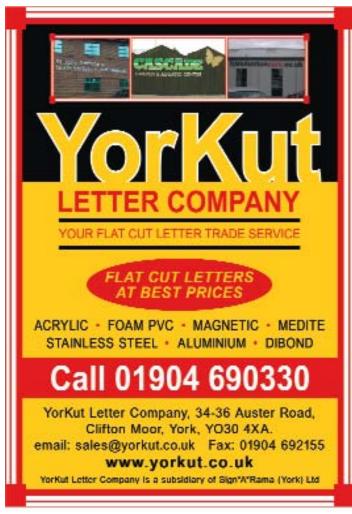
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