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www.signupdate.co.uk Allens Orchard, Chipping Warden, Banbury, Oxon, OX17 1LX.

CONTENTS

5	Welcome page
6	Product news and updates
26	Chemical Etching feature
34	Profile: Kings Plastics
38	Product Choice Who's using what and signage solutions
16	Cast signage feature
54	Comment: SAi
56	Project news Sign and graphic display companies showcase their work
66	Special report: Atalis
67	Sign news Events, business and enterprise, and people in the industry
77	Classifieds Job vacancies Businesses and equipment for sale
35	Buyers Guide

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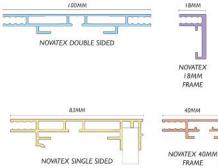
FABRIC DISPLAYS

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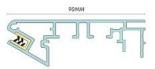
NOVATEX

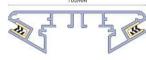
NovaTex ticks all the boxes for displaying the vibrant graphics available when using textile signage. The range of profiles are good for housing images up to 3m square and are all constructed with a screw free appearance. All use the 'passive wedge' method for self-tensioning offering frameless stunning visuals.



NOVADISPLAY

NovaDisplay works with a gripper system which removes the need for any face preparation. Images are pushed into its channel using the installation tool provided giving wrinkle free images every time. The system's 'soft nose' design gives a friendlier visual of the display box and is constructed with a screw free appearance. At 90mm the single sided option can be surfaced mounted whilst the double sided profile at 100mm allows for both free standing and hanging applications.



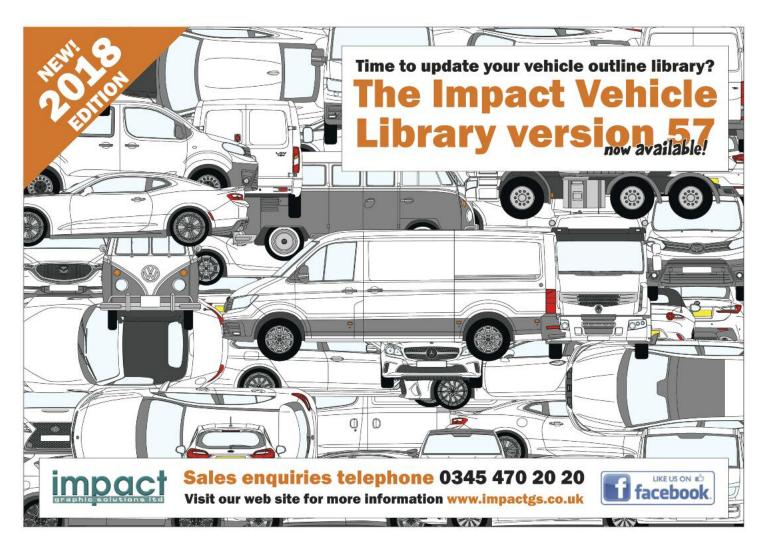


NOVADISPLAY SINGLE SIDED NOVADISPLAY DOUBLE SIDED

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WELCOME Page

Fond farewell

After four interesting years as editor of this magazine it's time to move on, so this is my last. I've learnt so much and during my time working in this industry, I've come to appreciate the amazing skills and creativity of those working in it. I confess I'll never understand the more technical aspects no matter how many stand tours at shows I did! But it's clear how much innovation, research and development goes into new or updated products to help signmakers and printers achieve such impressive work.

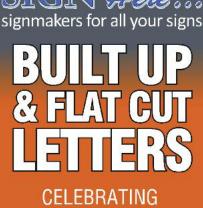
Some highlights include my first SDUK show, soon after starting on the magazine; a trip to Amsterdam courtesy of FESPA; a fascinating tour of the Mercedes Formula 1 factory thanks to Epson; and hearing about all the charities that are supported by businesses in the industry. I've particularly enjoyed reading about the projects that we've featured in Sign Update; many of which have won awards in the UK and internationally.

In this issue we bring you two features; one that examines chemical etching and another looks at cast signage. There are also pieces from Kings Plastic, SAi and Antalis, commenting on their specialist subjects. In sign news we bring you all the winners from the BSGA Awards, and details of what to expect at some of the major sign shows in the first part of the year, plus lots of other news.

I wish you all the best for 2018.

Kathryn







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New product from ASLAN

ASLAN recently launched EtchedBoard Dryapply ASLAN EBL 300, a glass decoration film that is unique in the market, says the company. The new PVCfilm with an etched glass look offers

two-in-one functionality. In addition to creating decorative privacy screen solutions, it can also be used for presentation and communication purposes, thanks to its dry wipe finish.



This new self-adhesive film has two functions, as it can be written on and provide privacy

The film's specially developed surface is suitable for all popular whiteboard markers. Writing can be wiped off with a dry microfibre cloth, without leaving any shadows or ghosting. Glass surfaces in offices, meeting rooms, doctors' surgeries and hospitals coated with this translucent glass decoration film get an additional use, as it can be written on any time you like, as often as you like.

To ensure fast and bubble-free dry application even on large areas, the selfadhesive film comes with ASLAN Dryapply technology. This means bubbles can be wiped out with ease through very fine air release channels. Perfectly suited for cutting plotters, the glass decoration film can be customised and cut to any shape and size. The 80 µm thick, polymeric softened self-adhesive film is suited for long-term applications, yet can be removed even after several years.

The new specialty film is available in rolls of 50 metres x 1.37 metres.

www.ASLAN-Schwarz.com.

New diamond polishing machine to give acrylic the edge

Awltech, who supply flame/diamond polishing, heat-bending and edgebevelling solutions to the sign and display and plastics fabrication industries, has a new diamond polishing machine. Called the AMI-c, it has been developed primarily for the edge-finishing of acrylic and its plastic derivatives that are used extensively by these industries.

Available in a choice of two models with respective processing lengths of 2.1 and 3.1m, both machines will polish material up to a thickness of 120mm at 90 degrees and up to a thickness of 80mm at 45 degrees. Both machines will also polish bevels at up to 60 degrees.

The AMI-c diamond polishing machine has a number of new performance-enhancing features, optional processing tools and benefits. These include, as options: a tilting front stop that enables bevelled multiple sheets of material to be stacked and polished in a continuous cycle; and an integrated mop-like polisher that removes any film marks, scuffs and other surface imperfections before the material is

removed from the machine. The AMI-c machine provides Ethernet connectivity to allow remote access to online technical support and help.

A range of diamond polishing tools is also available to accommodate different types of material and to provide a choice of

matt. A brochure with full technical specifications and video links to enable access to machine demonstrations can also be provided on request using the info@awltech.co.uk address.

www.awltech.co.uk



Awltech's new AMI-c diamond polishing machine used to finish edges

24-26 April 2018, Halls 17-18, NEC, Birmingham gndigital SIGNAGE I PRINT I DISPLAY I DÉCOR I DESIGN CREATIVITY BROUGHT

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Networked digital menu boards

Crystal Display Systems LTD (CDS) have launched the new networked digital menu boards with free network subscription.

"Everything you need from one supplier with cost-effective network package using our award winning MysignagePortal.com, says the company. It comes with a oneyear free subscription and template library.

Key advantages and features for this display are its integrated android network media player, to connect via Wi-Fi or the cable all-in-one package. There is a choice screens sizes, such as 32", 43", 50" & 55".

The display is manufactured from commercial grade components and 450cd LCD panels for 24/7 constant use.

The menu boards are so easy to install as they require mains power to connect as well as easy to use pre-designed templates to help customers get started.

The narrow bezel of these displays makes it easier to place them side by side giving the impression of a virtually seamless display, thanks to their thinner edges and superior image precision.

"The product line also has all the usual benefits of the rest of the range including updates over the internet, portrait or landscape, multiscreen synchronisation perfect for menus above the counter and simple USB plug and play updates if needed instead of using the internet option. Also including an eco-power timer-



powering off in times of non-usage, scrolling text message; so can have a live feed on the screen with rolling text and integrated speakers if audio is needed," says a spokesperson.

They come with a three-year warranty and lifetime of help and technical support.

crystaldisplay.com/products/revolutionarynetwork-digital-menu-boards/ info@crystal-display.com





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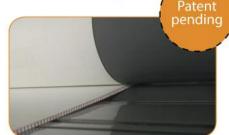




Front mandrel swings-out for easier loading of vinyl



Rear mandrel swings-out for easier loading of laminate



Patented pneumatic rollers 'float' down and will not crush soft materials like Correx® & foam boards.

The award-winning Easymount Air finishes all wide format applications, with one of the most advanced concepts ever seen in a wide format laminator.

Pneumatic air pressure controls the laminating rollers, allowing you to mount and laminate with incredible accuracy and speed. Rollers can be locked in place at the exact thickness of the board to prevent crushing the front edge and giving rollers a longer life. The roller 'floats' down to sit on the board without damage.

The revolutionary Easymount Air features 30mm mounting thickness for even more applications and runs at up to 10m per minute, over 50% faster than most other wide format laminating systems.

- Patented 'floating' rollers up to 50% faster when mounting to boards, compared to traditional wide format systems
- · Easy set-up
- Intelligent pneumatic technology sets height & pressure automatically
- Runs up to 10 metres a minute
- NEW Swing-out arms for easier loading of laminate and vinyl
- Up to 30mm mounting thickness







Drytac WipeErase Clear overlaminate film

Drytac has announced the global availability of WipeErase™ Clear overlaminating film for the creation of bespoke dry-erase boards.

Drytac WipeErase Clear is a 3mil/75µ durable clear PET film with a gloss, hard coat finish and pressure-sensitive acrylic adhesive. WipeErase Clear enables print service providers to quickly and easily create custom-printed, removable, high quality, dry erase graphics that stick to virtually any smooth surface. It is compatible with solvent, UV and latex printing technologies, and can be cleanly

Applications include dry erase or planning boards, menu boards, signage, conference room walls and retail displays.

WipeErase Clear also possesses excellent anti-graffiti qualities, as well as resistance to scratches, abrasions, water, solvents, stains and chemicals, says the company. This full chemical- and scratchresistance prevents ghosting, and the premium dry erase laminate means even permanent marker can be quickly and easily removed with the use of rubbing alcohol.

Thanks to its wipe-clean laminate, WipeErase Clear is also ideal for the protection of printed graphics within environments such as children's bedrooms, education establishments, daycare centres and hospitals, as well as restaurants and pubs.



Drytac WipeErase Clear is a clear PET film with a gloss, hard coat finish and pressuresensitive acrylic adhesive, which can be used for menu boards, signage and retail displays

Shaun Holdom, Global Product Manager at Drytac, said: "WipeErase Clear enables PSPs to turn any graphic into a dry erase board, and its applications are nearly endless. It offers a writing surface that is built to last and includes a 10-year warranty guaranteeing its clean-erase properties. Additionally, thanks to its antigraffiti qualities, it can be used to protect graphics within high traffic areas."

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

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

CADlink's latest software for Brother™ GTX direct to garment printer

Digital Factory Apparel Brother Edition™ maximizes the exceptional throughput capabilities, as well as the "high-fidelity" colour output that the newly released Brother™ GTX printer is designed for, says CADlink.

The custom print driver, as well as specially created colour profile sets for white, black and coloured garments, are all available in the Digital Factory Apparel Brother Edition™ Version 3 software product. The software extends colour gamut and is able to reproduce a much greater colour range than standard print drivers.

"Digital Factory Apparel Brother Edition™ is much more than RIP software", says

Michael Chramtchenko, CADlink Technology Director of Marketing. "No other RIP software product or driver-based print solution offers such advanced colour management controls as well as preproduction workflow and image preparation tools. Most importantly, these tools can all be found in a single, easy-touse package that addresses all of the production requirements that $\mathsf{Brother}^\mathsf{TM}$ DTG printer users may have."

The software has an assortment of production automation features including the ink and time saving "knock me out" tools that automatically remove specific design colours that match garment colours, which eliminates the need for ink to be printed in those areas. Also included is advanced handling of white ink management. This not only saves a great deal on white ink costs, but also increases the image print quality and feel. Users can also select and create predefined print queues that are based on colour or type of garment, resolution requirements as well as preferred colour printing requirements: realistic or vibrant.

Existing Digital Factory Apparel users can add on the new GTX printer package for a small fee.

www.cadlink.com/index.php/en/digitalfactory-apparel-brother-edition

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The NEW ATACAM range of Laser Cutters includes models for both metalic and non-metalic materials. They are equiped with co2 laser tubes, which can be used for cutting metalsheet such as carbon steel, stainless steel and non-metalic materials such as acrylic, MDF, plywood, etc.

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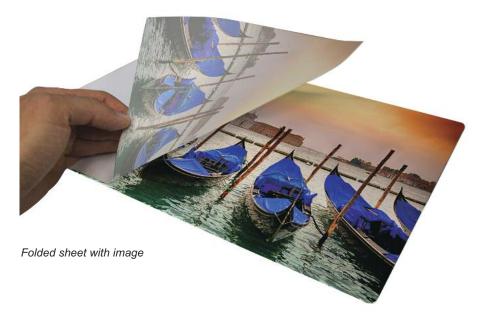


The Magic Touch become exclusive distributors for Duraluxe

The Magic Touch, under its Dye SubMagic sublimation brand has been appointed exclusive distributors for the UK and Ireland for Duraluxe™ HD metal. This unique HD powder coated aluminium product offers UV resistance together with anti-graffiti properties, to deliver "innovation for full colour outdoor signage as never seen before".

Traditionally, full colour transfer decoration of aluminium panels printed using any sublimation ink has not been suitable or acceptable for outdoor use due to poor durability against the effects of UV, graffiti and weathering.

The Magic Touch, in partnership with the manufacturer Decoral Inc., involved in powder coating technology for the past 30 years, introduce Duraluxe™ a new "double" coating process to the aluminium sublimation panels. The blank panels are printed in full colour using sublimation ink transfers and a suitable professional transfer heat press. The finished product comes with a certified minimum five-year guarantee for use outdoors.



Printed aluminium panels have proved popular for indoor use and are commonly manufactured using various liquid coating technologies, says the company. But the market for outdoor signage demands certified UV protection which with liquid coatings has not been possible.

After extensive research and development at Decoral's Lab facility in Florida, USA, combined with certified accelerated weather testing to the ISO 11664-4 standard, Duraluxe™ has secured fiveyear outdoor minimum guarantee. The panels also offer anti-graffiti qualities against inks and sprays.

The aluminium panels are 1.2mm thick, available in various standard sizes up to 2.4m with HD imaging quality together with outdoor, scratch and chemical resistance. The unique patented "double" powder coating process also enables the panels to be trimmed and shaped easily avoiding any flaking or sharp edges.

The Duraluxe™ panels are compatible with most recognised sublimation ink brands including Sawgrass, Jtec, Kiian, Sensient, STS and Epson.

"Duraluxe™ takes aluminium sublimation panels to the next level with high-definition colours specifically designed to withstand years of exposure to sunlight and severe weather. Only Duraluxe™ sublimation panels combine the scratch-resistance and durability of powder coating with the depth and colour vibrancy of multi-layer imaging. Add to that, the patented antigraffiti formulations and you get the most 'Powderful' outdoor sublimation panels available on the planet," says a spokesperson.



Park signage

sales@themagictouch.co.uk

Perspex Distribution see the attraction of Multishield magnetic steel composite panels

Multishield, the only UK produced steel composite sheet, has extended its range to include both a digital coating and a new whiteboard coating, available from Perspex Distribution.

Its galvanised steel skin makes the panels magnetically receptive, which greatly increases the scope of possible applications for sign makers and printers using the material, says the company.

The double-sided product is available in either a digital/digital finish, or a digital/whiteboard coating meaning that whiteboard products can be produced without requiring additional processes and lamination. The digital coating also helps to produce vibrant colourfast prints.



Hoardings made from Multishield

The same Kent factory is now able to produce the strong and rigid galvanised steel composite panel, Multishield

Available in a 3mm and 6mm thickness, the panels have a polyethylene core between a 0.25mm galvanised steel sheets surface load bearing rigidity and panels that are easily fabricated.

The versatile benefits make the product suitable for exhibition graphics, hoarding panels, signage and outdoor advertising.

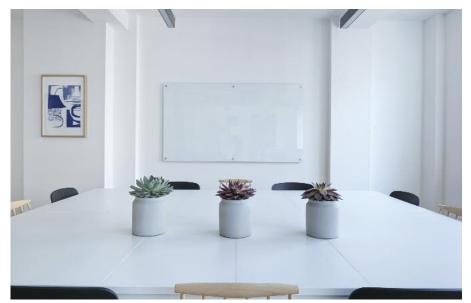
Signmakers and printers will be familiar with Alupanel aluminium composite manufactured by Multipanel UK, which is



Production of Multishield

the only UK produced ACM and widely used in signage, hoarding and POS. The same Kent factory is now able to produce the strong and rigid galvanised steel composite panel, Multishield.

Request free samples: www.perspex.co.uk/multishield.



Multishield Whiteboard



Nine new 3M Series 1080 wrap colours available at William Smith

Trade supplier to the sign and graphics industry, William Smith, adds a new range of coloured wrap films to its 3M Wrap Film Series 1080 collection.

They will stock nine new 3M colours in series 1080, in addition to the already existing 98. They are available in a range of finishes, such as Gloss Blue Fire, Gloss Glacier Grey, Gloss Light Green, Gloss Galaxy Black, Satin Flip Ghost Pearl, Satin Key West, Matrix Black, Shadow Black and Dead Matte Black.

Using 3M™ Controltac™ and 3M™ Comply™ technology, series 1080 minimises the initial contact area of the adhesive and permits the applicator to reposition the film during application, allowing for easier installation, with nonvisible air release channels for virtually no air bubbles.

With long-term durability designed for solid colour vehicle detailing, decoration and full wraps without the need of additional graphic protection, the range offers customers the opportunity to create a truly distinctive look for bonnets, roofs, boot lids, bumpers, door panels, racing stripes, exterior mirror covers, or the entire vehicle.

"The latest colours to the 3M Wrap Film Series 1080, stamps our commitment to supplying the UK with the best coloured wrap films available on the market," says Chris Bradley, Head of Marketing at William Smith Group 1832.

"With a 90-micron dual cast film providing just the right amount of rigidity with no application tape, our customers can look forward to increasing the design possibilities for any vehicle wrap."

Sold in 1524mm roll widths, allowing almost any section of a vehicle to be wrapped without seams, the films provide "excellent" opacity to hide high contrast surfaces and an additional resistance

against petrol spillage and atmospheric influences.

The latest colour additions to the ever-growing range of industry leading materials can be ordered as full, part, or customer slit rolls with same day despatch available on all orders made before 6pm

info@williamsmith.co.uk





For samples and product information: www.perspex.co.uk/multishield



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Wallpen colours the world using Xaar technology

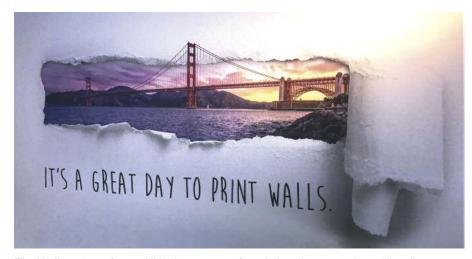
An innovative and highly practical solution that uses inkjet technology from Xaar to create designs on indoor and outdoor walls has been launched in Germany by Wallpen GmbH. The Wallpen printer is a patented, mobile, large format UV printer system for printing pictures and graphics direct to walls and vertical surfaces. It prints in brilliant, durable and highdefinition colours directly onto a wide variety of substrates such as plaster, wallpaper, wood, stone, plastic, tiles, glass, metal and concrete.

Following extensive market research, the Wallpen printer was developed over two years and is underpinned by 15 patents, enabling the creation of a unique and highperformance printer. Incorporating a fourcolour Xaar 128 print bar, the Wallpen printer uses a rigid and lightweight aluminium structure to print the image. At the same time, it scans across the surface using a laser to adjust for surface imperfections and undulations. Therefore, the printer automatically and continuously adjusts the print arm for any changes in the surface of the substrate onto which it prints.

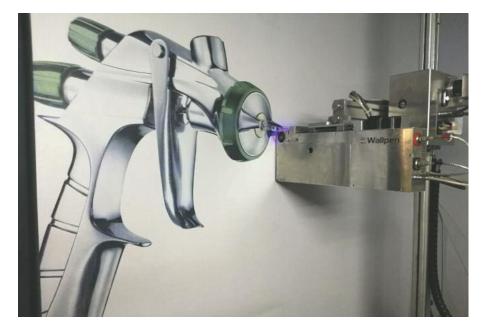
Able to create colourful designs on walls up to almost four metres high, with no limit to the printable width, the Wallpen printer can cover up to four square metres per hour at a resolution of 370 x 600 DPI. It is compact, fits in a mid-size car, can be easily transported and can be set up by one person in just five minutes.

This product is the idea of Wallpen Managing Director Andreas Schmidt, who specially developed the vertical printer to have a wide range of possible applications. These include printing eyecatching designs onto vertical surfaces in public spaces like shopping malls; bringing colour to hospitals and other municipal buildings; and creating displays on museum or office corridor walls. The Wallpen printer is of interest to painters, decorators and interior designers, as well as sign makers, advertising agencies and graphic designers.





The Wallpen large format UV printer system for printing pictures and graphics direct to walls and vertical surfaces; two examples of walls printed by the Wallpen



"Since the launch, we've had a great deal of interest in the printer from a wide variety of industries, and sales are already looking very healthy," says Andreas. "The Xaar 128 printheads are central to our product because of their ability to jet UV ink, and also because they can be easily incorporated into a small and lightweight printhead unit. As a consequence, Xaar technology is playing a major role in the Wallpen printer's success."

The Xaar 128 has long been recognised as the leading 17mm piezoelectric dropon-demand printhead for the wide-format graphics sector, and is ideal for applications such as printing graphics on a range of surfaces, as well as outdoor and indoor signage. Light and powerful, it is also particularly suited to applications where printhead weight and size are important considerations - a key part of its relevance to the Wallpen printer.

www.wallpen.com









William Smith expands print wrap film range

William Smith, who supply products to the sign and graphics industry, has added four print wrap films to its ever-growing range.

The Barnard Castle-based company, which is part of William Smith Group 1832, will stock 3M™'s extended range of IJ180mC Print Wrap Films; and Avery Dennison's PVC-free wrap film series MPI 1405 EA RS.

New additions to the IJ180mC Print Wrap Film range include low-surface energy (SE), ultra-removable (UR) and stainless steel (SLS) options that are set to provide graphic manufacturers and installers with high-performance products, customised for unique applications.

The IJ180mC-10SLS film has the muscle to adhere to stainless steel vehicles, including: tankers, refrigerated trucks and food trucks; with the IJ180mC-10UR film suited to bus wraps, trailers and box trucks; and the IJ180mC-10LSE films ideal for caravans, ATV's and motocross hikes

These three new additions to the IJ180mC range are backed by the 3M™ MCS™ Warranty and 3M™ Performance Guarantee. They feature the benefits of Comply™ Adhesive with micro technology, which allows users to remove trapped air easily without leaving visible air channels.

Following the latest trends of end-user demand for non-PVC films, Avery Dennison has launched its MPI 1405 EA RS film, which provides a sustainable solution suitable for both vehicle wrapping and outdoor architecture applications on cement, brick and concrete surfaces.

The PVC-free film, which has excellent 3D conformability, can be quickly and easily installed over complex curves and deep recesses, thanks to Easy Apply RS technology. This eliminates wrinkles and bubbles and provides a high gloss finish.

"We're delighted to be able to offer our customers these print wrap films," says William Smith's Head of Marketing, Chris Bradley.



"3M™ and Avery Dennison both have an excellent reputation for creating great print wrap films and we are very excited to be able to have these in our portfolio."

The new 3M™ IJ180mC Print Wrap Films and Avery Dennison's MPI 1405 EARS PVC-free film series are available to order now from William Smith. For further information, phone 01833 690305.







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Product supply changes

Insight Sign Systems have announced that from 1 November 2017 the Spectra Multi Signcase System, established in 1971, will be under the ownership of our long-term suppliers Stock Displays.

Production will be moved from Glasgow to their new 20,000 sq ft production facility at Doncaster, where they have more facilities, to allow them to continue to produce all the high-quality range of Spectra signcases, poster cases and Speedflex cases. They will use the same

quality extrusions and pricing, combined with as smooth a change over as possible for all existing clients.

Insight will continue trading but only supply Highlight and Halo-Light LED lighting. They will be looking for a buyer for the "Wayfinder" trade mark along with copyright in a wide range of past profiles associated with the name.

Contact sales@stockdisplays.co.uk/ / www.stockdisplays.co.uk

For any Spectra products such as sign cases, poster cases, Speedflex cases, Alu-Face cases, Speedfab frames.

Contact sales@insightsignsystems.com www.insightsignsystems.com For any Highlight, Halo light and Wayfinder products. Deliveries will be even faster now with full production concentrated on just two products, says Insight.

www.stockdisplays.co.uk







Squid takes window covering to a new level

Squid self-adhesive fabric, designed for covering glass of any type, shape or size, delivers a "new innovation" for window screening with ergonomic values. The luxury finish can be digitally printed or applied as a natural fabric, with both effects offering one-way vision for privacy. The patented material is easy to install, with no fixtures or fittings needed, says supplier CMYUK.

This is a totally unique material and provides a fantastic new look for the window, retail and décor markets, allowing digital printers to offer a brand-new concept to their clients

Squid's innovative fabric, the result of a new and advanced production technique, is moisture and heat resistant, and easy to



tailor to exact specifications. Its minimalist style means it complements all types of architecture. And by keeping a lot of the sun's heat out, withstanding extreme humidity and being breathable, it's the ideal solution for windows exposed to strong sunshine.

Johan Bonner, Director at Squid, said: "At FESPA this year, more than once we heard professionals say that Squid was, for them, the most innovative print medium they had encountered in years. The look, feel and endless creative possibilities sets it into a new category of applications."



In a time when environmental issues gain attention, having an attractive and versatile material that blocks heat from the sun ticks a very large box, says the company. Squid can be used on large glazed office interiors, flat skylights, sliding windows, glass roofs or conservatories and glass partitions; and unlike plastic counterparts, you can use Squid on HR++(+) and high-performance glass, too. It comes as an unprinted solution securing privacy and solar protection for the B2C and B2B window decoration markets: installation can be DIY or done by a professional.

The printability of this high-quality substrate presents substantial commercial and marketing possibilities: retailers are



able to print designs onto the fabric, creating unique shop window displays. With a current trend of giving offices a more contemporary feel, Squid fits the bill perfectly, and while it sticks to windows indefinitely, it can be removed easily without leaving unsightly residue.

Available in five colours (Chalk, Bone, Oak, Ash and Rock), Squid's "style, versatility and simplicity have made it a big hit in the interior design and architectural markets, breathing new life into homes, offices and public facilities worldwide".

CMYUK is the exclusive distributor of Squid in the UK and Ireland. "This is a totally unique material and provides a fantastic new look for the window, retail and décor markets, allowing digital printers to offer a brand-new concept to their clients." says Michael Crook, Commercial Director at CMYUK. He continues: "Squid was primarily developed for window decoration, however during development, it was discovered that it applied perfectly to walls and other flat surfaces too, due to the very lightweight textile and innovative adhesive, opening up even more possibilities such as exhibition and conference graphics, retail displays and DIY décor projects."

www.squid.be www.cmyuk.com



Social media for the signage industry www.fittingnetwork.com











01795 427888







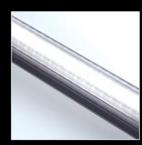


The new Multi Bracket is double slotted allowing the fitter to orientate the back plate fixing position from horizontal to vertical in an instant.





Smart new cast end caps with rear entry cable glands tidy and conceal unsightly cables from view.



Behind Ecolux Mini's

90° magnifying lens, the superb 1650 lumen 14.4W per metre LEDs deliver a punch to sign fascias and an unrivalled performance of even illumination.



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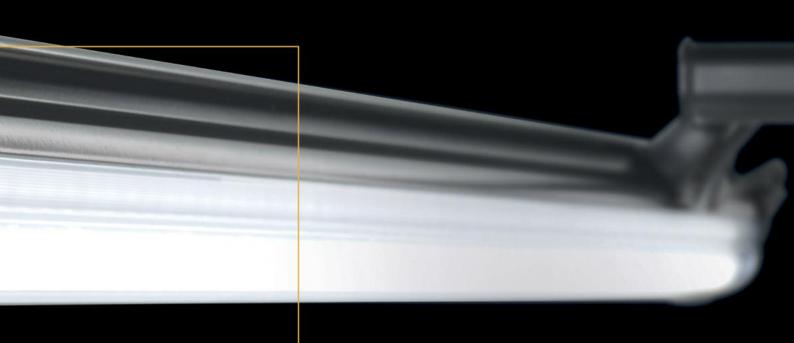
portlandlighting.co.uk





The all new Ecolux Mini

The evolution of LED sign lighting has arrived.





The clip fix uses a clever and unique spring clip fixing captive in the channel at the rear of the sign light. The clip slides and springs over a retaining nipple on the bracket fixing.



The new sleek and stylish 45mm casing is the slimmest available in the UK with integral drivers.





3M's new decorative glass patterns

Glass is an essential component in the design of today's building interiors and office spaces, says 3M. It brings transparency, light and brightness to work and leisure environments. It also allows interior designers to "push the boundaries of their creative thinking". But when working to a budget, it's sometimes hard to find solutions to creative ideas that use traditional decorative glass finishes such as etched, sandblasted or textured.

That's where 3M can help.

They have worked with interior designers and contractors over a number of years to develop a range of high quality films that mimic the aesthetics of natural and synthetic materials at a fraction of the cost: 3M Fasara Glass Finishes. Made from durable, flexible and removable polyester materials, these films are quick and easy to install to a variety of glass substrates and can be applied on-site with little or no business downtime. They are easy to clean and reduce glare while blocking out 99 per cent of UV light.

"We work closely with the international design community to create new and exciting, on-trend patterns," says Boris Hartig, Portfolio & Channel Manager, 3M Window Films & Architectural Markets. "Later this year we will be launching 33 new designs, whilst expanding four of our most popular finishes to a width of 60

inches. This gives us a total range of over 100 glass finishes, each inspired by the differing requirements of our customers."

New pattern categories include:

Fabric: addresses differing space requirements, from smaller fine weaves to larger, raw textures. They are also introducing a more sophisticated palette of metallic and pearl hues.

Natural: celebrates the 'beautiful imperfections' of nature and the artisan crafts.

String: described as 'relaxed, soothing and subtle', this pattern delivers uncomplicated elegance to your environment.

Geometric: created for those seeking a classic or modern theme, this pattern has both a feel of nostalgia as well as reflecting the growing influence of technology.

Gradation: adds subtlety and distinction to your space and is perfect for areas where you need high level light but complete privacy.

"We have also added new colours to the existing white, black, mirror and silver," says Boris. "These colours include champagne gold, pearl white, a more



brilliant silver and for the first time a transparent grey 'smoke'."

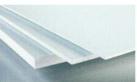
3M Fasara Glass Finishes are ideal for screening conference rooms, lobbies, waiting rooms and glass partitions, bringing privacy and contemporary styling to your space, says the company.

www.3M.co.uk/innovativefinishes



For digital and screen printers, signage makers, exhibition stand builders, POS/POP and promotional and merchandising applications OMAPRII Digital Grade Foam PVC sheet from Blackburns

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- Fine-celled structure
- Excellent, reliable print qualities Flame retardant
- Simple to process
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- 100% recyclable



Thanks to its fine-celled foam structure, even surface and brilliant white colour, KömaPrint from Blackburns, is perfect for digital and

The rigid yet lightweight material with a highly stabilised composition is moisture-resistant and suited for use both indoors and out. Excellent printing properties and ease of processing make it the ideal material for signs, displays, banners, lettering, store point-of-sale and shop window decorations.

Blackburns supplies a wide range of substrates for digital printing applications including aluminium composite Digital Grade sheet and Fluted Polypropylene.

Visit: blackburnsmetals.com











CHEMICAL Etching

Complex designs crafted in metal

Chemical etching is probably best known for indoor wayfinding in hotels and apartment blocks or for traditional plaques and signs outside solicitors or accountants. Many sign companies turn away potentially profitable enquiries for labels, but labels are basically small signs. Etched commemorative plates have been placed on some of the highest mountains in the world and even at the bottom of the sea. Permanently etching graphics into high quality stainless steel is one of the most durable sign products you can find and because it is regarded as a high-end product, it can be very profitable.

Specialist supplier to the industry Multitechnic, made the decision to become a dedicated trade-only manufacturer in order to provide a super-efficient service to its customers.

Managing director Colin Edge explains the processes involved: "the graphics are recessed into a metal surface, usually stainless steel or brass but occasionally into less common metals such as copper or bronze. Very similar to engraving, it is sometimes called chemical engraving but unlike mechanical engraving which uses a cutter to chip away at one little detail at a time, chemical etching uses acids to etch the whole design into the metal surface in one go.

"The worst thing that we could possibly do is to turn people away or give a shoddy service because we are too busy so we set about changing every little part of the company to be ridiculously efficient"

"You may come across requests for laser etching into metals; a common misunderstanding as laser etching does not work on metals but rather on materials that burn such as wood or plastics, the laser burning away tiny dots of material to create an image".



To etch a sign you must first use a film to create a stencil on the metal surface

High definition image

Metals such as stainless steel and brass do not burn. A powerful laser will melt metals to cut right through but cannot produce a decoratively etched surface. If somebody specifies laser etching of metals, what they have in mind is the sort of design that is produced by chemical etching, a high definition image that is cut into the surface of the metal.

However, cutting the design into the surface of metal sheet is only part of the process.

"Most signs require colour in the design and that usually means using paint," explains Colin. "This is where it is necessary to understand how chemical etching works in order to understand how to design etched metal signage. Chemical etching involves making holes in the metal surface then putting paint inside them. Simple designs such as etched text are easy: you etch the text, put in some paint, job done. By using some clever masking and mixing effects, a real expert can reproduce even very complex logos with colours overlapping and fading into each other but there are limits. You cannot for instance etch and fill a colour photograph into metal. If in doubt, talk to an expert before committing to complex designs.

Understanding the chemistry

Setting up to make your own chemically etched signs is more complex than most people realise. Buying an etching machine is only a small part of the project as many

sign companies have found out the hard way. In addition to an etching machine, which is really just a plastic box with a pump and a heater which sprays hot acids onto your piece of metal, you need the technology to make the etching stencil. Basic designs can be etched using vinyl but it is very limiting.

"To reproduce the finer detail and small text that chemical etching is renowned for, you need a photographic stencil of some sort, either applied directly to the metal or indirectly by screen printing," says Colin. "To make this, of course, you need the equipment to make high quality photographic films.

"Before you even begin to set up an etching line, you will need to understand quite a lot of chemistry. Different metals require different conditions. Some metals require post-etch treatments to clean up the etched surface, or your paint adhesion will be poor. Etching aluminium, for example, can be very tricky, and if you get it wrong you will quickly produce huge amounts of choking and dangerous fumes. You need to monitor the condition of your etching acids, something that requires a bit of experience and unless you know what you are doing, the results will be poor quality with a rejection rate that will wipe out any potential profit."

Paint filling skills

Obviously, you need to be able to cut your signs but few sign makers are set up to cut metals such as stainless steel. Even drilling of stainless steel is not as easy as

many think, requiring a good quality machine and the right bits. The big hurdle for most people is paint filling as you need to apply paint into a shallow hole without affecting the top surface, which could be something easily marked such as mirror polished stainless steel.

"Bear in mind that the acidic etching solution eats sideways under the stencil as well as down into the metal so if you etch deep enough to make the filling easy, your image becomes a blurred mess," explains Colin.

As with any other process, chemical etching brings its own requirements for health & safety and the environment. The acid requires regular replacement so you need to dispose of the used acid, which if you are responsible means having it taken away to be recycled, and this is quite costly. If you start washing off large amounts of acid down the drain as rinse water, you will need water treatment equipment. The acids themselves are quite easy to deal with for the purposes of health & safety, but the acidic vapours given off during the process are incredibly corrosive to metals and will easily destroy other equipment, so ideally you need a dedicated and ventilated etching room.

Dedicated specialist

Because of the above, most sign companies use a dedicated specialist to supply their etched signs. Very few sign companies have a need for chemical etching all the time anyway so when you do, instead of cranking up your own production line which may not have been used for days or even weeks, it is easier, and almost certainly more profitable, to fire off the instructions to a specialist, then get on with something else.

Trade only

Multitechnic has taken this philosophy to its theoretical extreme by becoming a specialist trade-only supplier to the sign industry. "We are the only manufacturer of chemically etched signs who will deal only with sign trade customers", says Colin. "We will not deal with end-users or architects, are set up to take finished artwork and instructions, and put them straight into production.

"We decided a long time ago that dealing with end users as well as trade customers would never be workable," explains Colin. "You simply can't give an ideal service to both and you end up competing with your own customers so you can't be trusted. We therefore took the decision to become dedicated trade-only manufacturers. What our customers needed from us was a very rapid service, as good as anything they could do in-house."

This brought a unique set of challenges to Multitechnic and they ended up using the philosophy of a busy restaurant as their business model. If a lot of customers turn up at the same time, you need a kitchen that will serve up a lot of food very quickly, all to the right quality, nobody having to wait.

"The worst thing that we could possibly do is to turn people away or give a shoddy service because we are too busy, so we set about changing every little part of the company to be ridiculously efficient," says Colin. "For example, in the office we do all quotes straight away, we never allow them to build up because it creates more work if you do. It becomes less efficient because customers waste your time and their own chasing up their quote and that isn't a good service; it is wasted time."

There is more to offering a trade service for chemically etched signs than just making them guickly. Larger projects bring their own challenges. Steve Aynsley is the director responsible for production and when larger jobs land, he wants to know how the customer needs to receive the job before it is even started.

"Our bigger jobs involve buildings like hotels, large apartment blocks or even cruise ships," says Steve. "It is vital to plan how these jobs are put through production so that they come out packed in the right order for delivery to the right part of the building, ready for the fitters. We can even send out each package with instructions for the fitters."

Chemical etching seems to attract extremes of very large or very small projects. If an architect or designer decides that their big new building project will be fitted out with etched stainless steel signs, then that is likely to involve hundreds or possibly thousands of etched plates, from small individual door numbers to floor directories. The next job could involve just a few plates for a small office or just one opening plaque. The only thing that these jobs will have in common is urgency, and in that way, chemical etching is just the same as everything else in the sign industry.

www.multitechnic.co.uk



Etched satin stainless steel with airbrushed highlight in the logo



Chemical etching can reproduce fine detail that would be very expensive to engrave

CHEMICAL Etching

Salt and car paint for a perfect finish

Founded in 1989 in Forfar, Angus, Sign Industries specialises in chemical etching onto brass, bronze and stainless steel, to suit the unique requirements of each of its customers from local government to engineering and oil companies.

"The process starts with cutting the metal and we have a fairly large guillotine for cutting squares or oblongs," says director Jordan Law, "If we need an unusual shape we send it out to a laser or water jet cutter to get that done so any shape is possible.

"We then cover the back side of the metal with vinyl and make a mask with the pictures or legend on it; this is placed on the front of the metal which has been polished and finished by the supplier where the letters and images are then picked out, any part of the sheet which has not been masked will etch.



The work piece is then placed on runners to go through the plant; the company uses a ferric chloride etch solution, which is acidic due to the etching process. The metal usually has two passes to get the depth needed but that can depend on the material being used. Stainless steel is harder than bronze so it takes a little more time to work.

"By etching the metal, it means we can cover a bigger area with more text whereas mechanical engraving onto stainless steel is very time-consuming and much more expensive"



"By etching the metal, it means we can cover a bigger area with more text whereas mechanical engraving onto stainless steel is very time-consuming and much more expensive," says Jordan.

"It then gets cleaned with the mask still on and progresses to the paint shed. We use a 2-pack car paint to give longevity, using as many colours as required but they all have to be applied separately and we must have a thin divide of metal between the colours or they'll mix together. It is only then that the vinyl is removed."

The final job is polishing and packing for delivery using a carrier who gives next day delivery to most parts of Great Britain.

Large-scale panels

"The benefit of our machine is its capability to handle large-scale panels," says Jordan. "We have recently completed a set of custom sized panels for lift doors; the material was not available off-the-shelf at the size required so had to be sourced directly from the mill.

"In this instance, the client opted for reverse etched bronze; this is where we etch the background away to leave the image in relief. The bronze is normally aged with the image polished up, depending on the customers' requirements. Samples were produced to give the customer as many options as possible."

Supplying to the trade

The largest part of Sign Industries business involves supplying to trade customers; and has been very important since they started etching in 1994.

"We are in the quality end of the market and built up a good client base of steady reliable companies who may do the small stuff in-house and come to us for large runs or large pieces," explains Jordan. "Our trade services include etching stainless 316 up to 4 metres X 1.5 metres and mirror polish stainless steel, brass, bronze and copper.

"In addition, we make backing frames in dark and light mahogany, supply any type of fixing, tidy up or lay out artwork; despatch under plain wrapper or a customer's own label; and offer a 10-day turnaround."

www.signindustries.com



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CHEMICAL Etching

Computer controlled machinery keeps costs down

Leading commercial and industrial engraving specialist, Brunel Engraving Company has enhanced its offer to trade customers with a significant investment in state of the art engraving and print technology.

"This investment enables us to provide a reliable and competitive trade service at highly competitive prices," explains managing director Martyn Wright.

The North Somerset based company which provides bespoke engraving services for local, national and overseas customers, has spent over £75,000 on upgrading its technology and expanding the premises over the past two years with the installation of a wide format sublimation printer, flat bed UV printer and a chemical etching machine along with associated equipment.

The technologically advanced machinery, used for producing printed metal labels, name plates and exterior signs, allows the company to undertake sophisticated operations and to tackle the most complicated procedures with a quick turnaround, increased production levels and improved overall quality.

Strong position

"We are currently producing over 40,000 nameplates, plaques, labels and trophies per year", says Martyn, a qualified engineer who established Brunel Engraving over 23 years ago.

"Our investment in the very latest computer controlled machinery places us in a very strong position to provide a full trade engraving service to sign makers and trophy shops at very competitive prices. It means we can meet a whole host of engraving needs from nameplates, plaques and our Slatz range of office signage, through to badges and labels."

Brunel Engraving combined its retail outlet and workshop in modern 5,000 square foot premises at Clevedon in 2010. The relocation brought the company's offices, workshop and design facility together, improving efficiency and accommodating its expansion plans; 18 full-time staff are currently employed at the site.

Demand for complex signs

The company's work is in evidence throughout the country from signs and plaques in offices, hospitals and schools, to inscriptions on trophies and awards.

"We aim to support and work in partnership with our trade customers. providing them with a convenient, reliable, hassle-free service at a realistic price and enabling them to offer a full service to their own clients"

"There will always be a place for traditional engraving but the market is moving toward more complicated signs and name plates with an increased use of colour and therefore a need for print and etched plaques," concludes Martyn.

"Our investment in advanced technology gives us the capability to offer all of these products to our trade clients. We aim to support and work in partnership with our trade customers, providing them with a convenient, reliable, hassle-free service at a realistic price and enabling them, in turn, to offer a full service to their own clients."

Hallmark of quality

Brunel Engraving has completed over 300 engravings on the plinth of John Atyeo's statue at Bristol City's Ashton Gate ground. The life-size bronze statue, which cost £70,000, celebrates the most prolific striker in Bristol City's history and was funded by Bristol City Supporters' Club and Trust. As part of the fundraising scheme, donors had the opportunity to buy a name plaque on the plinth. Brunel Engraving was approached by the Trust to advise on how best to display the inscriptions on the round plinth of the statue, the appropriate material to use and the design and size of the inscriptions, which the company would engrave for maximum longevity.



Brunel's suggestion to feature continuous strips around the plinth enabled twice as many names to be included as was originally intended

"We approached Brunel Engraving to undertake the engraving work as we were particularly impressed by the inscriptions the company had completed at the base of the Isis sculpture in London's Hyde Park", explains John Darch, a member of the board of the Bristol City Supporters Club &

"Our original idea was to feature several individual engraved plates but Brunel's suggestion to feature continuous strips around the plinth enabled us to include twice as many names as we had originally intended. We liked the stainless steel material which the

company recommended and were very pleased with the finished quality of the inscriptions."

Martyn Wright explains what made this job special: "We were delighted to have been involved in this high profile commemorative work for Bristol City Supporters' Club & Trust. The continuous deeply engraved scripts flow well around the plinth of the statue and the depth of each engraving and quality of the material used will preserve the integrity and endurance of this fine statue".

www.brunelengraving.co.uk



The life-size bronze statue celebrates the most prolific striker in Bristol City's history.

Like having your own etching department

Trade Etching Direct was founded in 2012 in Corby, Northamptonshire by managing director Anthony Dullaghan. Drawing on his experience in the etching industry, Anthony has devised etching techniques for customers around the world, working in Europe and the USA with leading etching companies.

"The company has grown quickly and, having outgrown the original premises, we recently moved into a 3300sq ft unit with an expanded workforce of six people," says Anthony.

Guitar scratch plate: 1mm thick nickel chemically milled with design etched and paint filled

Trade Etching Direct has increased production output four-fold with the introduction of three fully automatic etching lines supplied by Masteretch services. Anthony explains why his customers are so important to the company's success: "We attribute our growth to our dedication to our customers' needs and believe that constant innovation in etching techniques will keep us at the forefront of our industry".

"We can offer a production time of just 30 minutes, depending on sign criteria and delivery/collection"

Meeting deadlines

Meeting deadlines is one of the key requirements for business success in the sign making industry but one that presents numerous challenges.

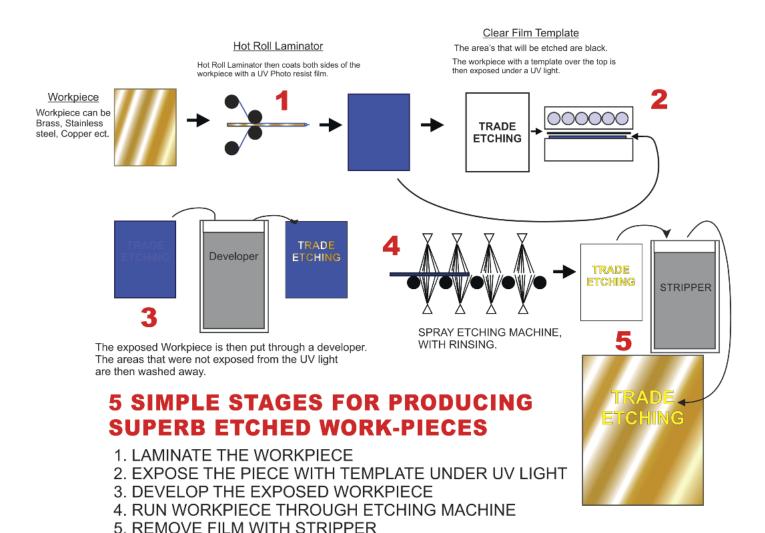
"We strive to meet almost any deadlines set," says Anthony. "We can offer a production time of as little as just 30 minutes (depending on sign criteria and delivery/collection). In the past we have manufactured and delivered signs to central London to be installed on the same day.



"The company currently offers etched signage up to 4m x 2m but sometimes this size can be quite complex to produce which of course, translates to a higher cost for the end user. As of February 2018, installation of a new custom built Masteretch machine will allow us to produce some of the biggest etched signs in the country at very competitive prices; it will also allow the process to be automated - again, speeding up turnaround".

.....Continued on page 32

CHEMICAL Etching



Chemical milling process

Trade Etching Direct utilises photochemical milling or photo etching which is a chemical milling process used to fabricate sheet



metal components using a photoresist and etchants to corrosively machine away selected areas. This process emerged in the 1960s as an offshoot of the printed circuit board industry. Photo etching can produce highly complex parts with very fine detail - both accurately and economically.

"Etching is the process of using acid to dissolve the unprotected parts of a metal surface to create a design in the metal; we can etch complex logos, photographs, designs and patterns to the highest standard for all of our customers", concludes Anthony.

www.tradeetching.com



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Kings plastics have been making signs since 1947. Mark Underhill, who is the grandson of one of the founders, runs it today.

Martin Hinchliffe spoke to Will Stapleton, LED Sales Consultant for Kings Plastics, about their work and products over the past 70 years.

MH: What forms the core of your work?

WS: The core of our work is supplying signage to the sign trade as well as directly to businesses both locally and nationally. We supply a wide range of signage including flat cut and built up letters, sign trays, lightboxes, sign frames, illuminated signage as well as our specialist product edgelit signs.

MH: How do you produce your acrylic letters?

WS: We've been producing acrylic letters in house for a number of years and we find that our handmade built up acrylic letters are still incredibly popular with the sign trade especially when they're illuminated. As trends in the industry are constantly changing, we're always trying to find ways of creating something different for our customers which is why we've introduced our new slimline Halo Illuminated Opal Acrylic Letters. These are made from either 15mm or 20mm opal acrylic which is routed to shape and fitted with Kings LEDs. Finally, the letters are faced with vinyl and fitted on locators creating a bright and consistent halo illumination. These are suitable for internal and external use and provide another alternative to built up acrylic letters.



David, our specialist in acrylic built-up letters, getting the returns just the right shape for the white acrylic face to be added - all done by hand

MH: What else do you produce?

WS: One of our best-selling products is our Edgelit Signs, a product we've been producing for a number of years. We have put a lot of time and effort into carefully selecting the materials we use to make them to ensure they are the best they can be. We supply three variations of our own Edgelit extrusions fitted with our Kings LEDs to illuminate the engraved acrylic panels. Our edgelits provided a simple yet effective alternative for internal illuminated signage where a lightbox, for example, would be too bulky and a lot of work goes into making them stand out.

MH: What about sheet materials?

WS: Kings also operates as a sheet supplier to many other companies in the signage industry as well as maintenance and building companies. We offer a cut to size service with a whole fabrication department dedicated to providing edge polishing, heat bending and gluing services to create all manner of fabricated items including display cases, POS units and more.

MH: What equipment do you use?

WS: We use a wide variety of equipment here at Kings, but our key pieces of equipment have to be our two CNC routers and our laser cutter/engraver. These machines allow us to create all our signage such as our built up letters and Edgelit signs.

MH: What about the LEDs you supply?

WS: Kings LED is our range of LED products that we sell and use in our own work. A full list of our range of LEDs and Edgelit products is available on our online shop www.kingsofledsandthings.co.uk. As an LED supplier it's important to keep up with all the latest LED products which is why last year we introduced our Kings LED Flexi-Ribbon. This is a specially shaped LED ribbon designed to be able to bend around corners and follow shapes making it a crucial component in most of our illuminated signage, as well as our new Halo Illuminated Opal Acrylic Letters.



A demonstration board showing a selection of LED modules and LED ribbons

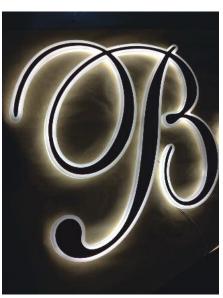


This new product features our Kings LED Flexi-ribbon which thanks to its design can create a constant halo of light around the whole perimeter of any letter or shape. This provides a more cost effective and time saving solution to building up smaller more fiddly fonts and shapes. In the New Year we will be launching more new LED products such as fairground LED bulbs in

a variety of colours for use in Marques Letters and Lightbox surrounds as well as our own LED Flexi-Neon. A more cost effective and durable alternative to traditional neon, Kings LED Flexi-Neon will be available in a number of colours and suitable for both internal and external applications. With retro very much coming back into trend we felt that LED Neon and



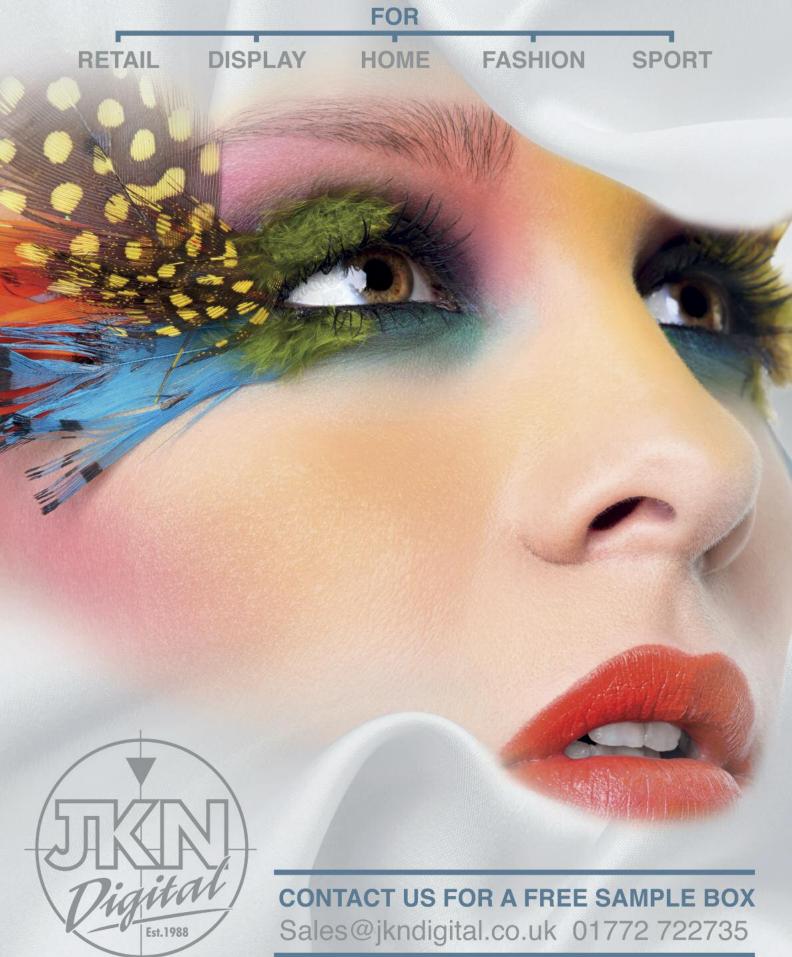
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Fairground LED Bulbs would be ideal products to supply to our customers in the new year so they too can keep up with the current signage trends.

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PRODUCT Choice

Button fix success on Corian® stand

CDUK, the UK and Ireland distributor of Corian®, used the speed and flexible nature of Button-fix Type 1 Bonded fastenings to assemble its exhibition stand at the Surface Design Show 2017. With the fixes attached at the time of fabrication, the 8m2 stand could be quickly erected on-site without using any measurement tools. Corian® is the original solid surface that you can thermoform, engrave, or backlight.

When exhibiting at industry events, like most companies, CDUK has limited time to assemble its stand. With several Corian® based demonstration units and the entire MDF stand clad with Corian® for the show. CDUK sought an alternative fixing solution that would be quicker than using traditional

Mark Horsman, Workshop Manager at CDUK said: "When the Button-fix Type 1 Bonded was launched, we trialled the fastener in our training room using its removable functionality to create a wall of panels showcasing the year's colour trends in Corian®.

"We were very impressed as the Button-fix fastening allows us to easily update the wall as new trends come through. When we were considering how we could improve the exhibition experience for our set up team, Button-fix instantly came to mind."

The Button-fix Type 1 Bonded presents an invisible and durable solution, ideal for where screw fixing to a panel is not possible or would impede the project's overall finish.



Consisting of a flat faced fix and a counterpart button, the fix is securely attached to the panel whilst the button is attached to the adjoining structure.

It is rebated into the panel using a multi-jig to provide a flush finish or simply surface mounted to the panel to ensure a narrow gap. The fix is attached to the panel using an adhesive or for lightweight panels, a fix pad. Completed offsite prior to arriving at the exhibition, CDUK found the pre-build element of Button-fix fasteners a useful time saver when assembling the stand.

Mark said: "As the fixes were pre-installed, when we arrived to set up the stand we only needed to use the red Button marker to mark the Button's correct location and then screw them on. There was no need to use pencils and rulers, which saved valuable time and meant three of us could quickly and easily assemble the stand."

Using more than 100 Type 1 Bonded fasteners to complete the 8m2 stand, the unique fixing solution saved a significant amount of time, which would have traditionally been spent marking out locations for screws or split batons.

When installed the two components are brought together, producing an audible 'click' to notify the installer that the fastening is secure.

Julie Freedman, Head of Sales and Marketing at Button-fix, said: "Exhibition stands are a great application for demonstrating Button-fix fasteners' speed and versatility. Easily installed with a reduced number of tools, Button-fix fasteners allow for a quick assembly.

"Most importantly, for CDUK and all companies who exhibit at shows regularly, the Button-fix range ensures a quick and simple disassembly with no resulting damage - allowing both the stand and fasteners to be used again."

Having used the innovative fastening product first-hand, CDUK has recently become a stockist of the Button-fix range. Gary Baker, Managing Director of CDUK said: "At CDUK we're always on the lookout for innovative solutions that help make the working lives of our fabricator customers easier. Button-fix™ is a highquality solution that fixes Corian® panels simply and securely. We're delighted to be able to bring this solution to the solid surface industry."

button-fix.com/ or follow @ButtonfixUK on Twitter.

www.cdukltd.co.uk



Icon Graphics installs UK's first Durst Rho P10 250HS Plus

Icon Graphics Limited has completed installation of the UK's first Rho P10 250HS PLUS 6C + W inkjet printer from Durst, the manufacturer of advanced digital production technologies.

The Buckinghamshire-based large format digital print, sign and direct-to-media specialist works with the UK's largest design agencies and many high profile blue chip companies.

Neville Tosar, Director, expects to achieve a return on investment over the next couple of years. He said: "We wanted a solution that would elevate our production quality. We did not want something that just did more of the same. We wanted to future-proof the business and for us the Durst Rho P10 250HS PLUS was the best option."

The decision making process took a few months: "We did our due diligence. We began looking around at the end of last year," he said. "We went to see Durst's Lienz manufacturing facility in Austria. It really is an impressive site. We saw the

systems being built from their component parts. We liked the build quality and the production results. We made a few customers visits as well.'

"The Durst Rho P10 250HS PLUS is a fast machine that is also easy to set up and includes ink saving capabilities that reduce costs. Job turnaround is much faster as a result of the LED Pin curing and there is greater substrate flexibility. The different production modes enable greater productions capabilities.

"It improves our offering and will more than double production capacity. It shows we are investing in our customers and that we are safeguarding the quality of our production well into the future."

Peter Bray, Managing Director of Durst UK and Ireland, said: "With ever more attention being placed on high quality graphics on all kinds of substrates and papers, Icon Graphics has taken a quantum leap' forward with this investment. The news is bound to create further interest in our market-leading P10

The compact and robust print machines for industrial production are designed for non-stop printing with minimum downtime, so they provide the highest production efficiency and reliability

systems that have become a byword for productivity and efficiency. The Durst P10s are commented upon so favourably by our customers and their own customers both here in the UK and further afield."

The Durst Rho P10 250HS PLUS combines speed and quality to print on the widest range of rigid and roll media. Equipped with the latest Durst Quadro Array 10 print head technology, these systems achieve a print quality of 1000dpi without loss of speed. This also applies to the use of light colours. The compact and robust print machines for industrial production are designed for non-stop printing with minimum downtime, so they provide the highest production efficiency and reliability.

It delivers consistent quality on a variety of advertising and promotional materials, such as indoor- and outdoor signage and POS/POP materials to small and mediumsized packaging and backlit applications for luxury goods.

www.durst-group.com.



The Durst Rho P10 250HS Plus inkjet printer

PRODUCT Choice

Fine Cut forges ahead with **UK's first Impala LED installation**

Speciality printer Fine Cut is the first UK print service provider to invest in the new swissQprint Impala LED printer, supplied and installed by Spandex, the exclusive UK distributor for swissQprint.

The new 2.5 × 2 metre printer, configured for six colours (CMYK, LC, LM) plus white, primer and varnish, is already in operation at the company's production site in Lancing, West Sussex. It is used to produce a broad range of precision industrial applications for clients in the medical, automotive, marine and agricultural sectors, as well as more conventional signage and graphics work.

The Impala LED has replaced Fine Cut's original swissQprint Impala UV printer, which had been in service since early 2012 when the company started large format digital print production. The opportunity to transition to LED curing was the primary driver for Fine Cut's decision this year to upgrade to the next generation printer.

Digital print manager Simon Tourle said: "While the original Impala exceeded all our expectations of digital output quality, UV curing still presented limitations for high precision work on more challenging substrates, due to the media distortion caused by the high temperature curing process.'

Installed by Spandex UK in October 2017, Simon said the new printer "hit the ground running". The Fine Cut team quickly got to grips with the new model, which is now running non-stop for eight to nine hours a day, with split shifts when necessary to cope with volume peaks.



The commercial impact of the latest investment has been felt immediately. "The new Impala LED has delivered a noticeable step up in speed, thanks to acceleration of the printing process itself and the LED curing, which removes the need for warm-up and cool-down cycles between jobs", says Simon. "Our flatbed productivity has more than doubled."

The premium output quality from the swissQprint Impala has been the decisive factor in Fine Cut's transition from its heritage in screen printing to digital. According to Simon, the team kept an eye on developments from the early days of digital wide format technology. But until the launch of the first generation Impala in 2010, they had not seen a digital flatbed solution that met their exacting standards for colour accuracy and consistency. They were stunned by the quality of printed

samples from the Impala. An impression that was reinforced by a visit to the swissQprint manufacturing plant in Switzerland where they were shown the wide range of print possibilities that could be achieved with the press.

Fine Cut found that the swissQprint Impala could actually surpass the quality achievable with the screen process. enabling them to achieve photographic quality prints on virtually any substrate including many that were historically screen printed. "Our clients absolutely appreciate the exceptional quality we can deliver with this digital press" says Simon.

Alongside its digital production solutions, Fine Cut maintains a strong screen line-up for printing true metallic and conductive inks. With a diverse base of prestige customers, Fine Cut values the versatility to print on an array of materials and handle a range of bespoke requirements. The original Impala printer enabled new, custom applications that would have been uneconomical or impossible with screen; now the Impala with LED curing opens up many more potential new avenues.

"As a business, we've always invested to stay at the forefront of the industrial print sector with a clear focus on high quality results realised by our technology choices," says Simon. "We're driven by the wish to be able to respond to any client brief, however challenging. We like to say that we can print anything on anything and with the Impala, we certainly can."

www.spandex.co.uk www.finecut.co.uk



Allen Signs invests in cutting-edge technology

Signage, vehicle livery and print business Allen Signs has invested £90,000 in a new machine as part of an ambitious strategy for growth.

The Protek Unico TT digital cutter and router is the latest addition to the firm's print and production facility based at its premises in North Hykeham near Lincoln.

Manufactured in Italy, it is unique because it is a print-finishing digital cutter and production router in one. It is capable of powering its way through a range of rigid materials such as cardboard, plywood and even metal, as well as engraving into plastics and metals.

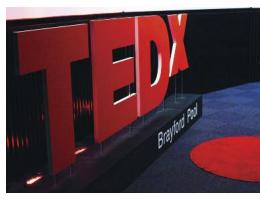
At the start of the year, the family-run business spent £100,000 on a new EFI H1625 LED flatbed printer, which can print on almost any material. This latest investment is the second stage of a threepart plan.

Managing Director David Allen said: "When we decided to take the plunge and install the new printer we always knew it would only form part of the story, and that the investment would only really pay off if we added a more up-to-date digital cutter.

"The Protek Unico TT has really impressed me as it can cut extremely clean edges on nearly every material we've thrown at it, even giving an almost flame polished edge to acrylics. It also has two knife bays and a camera meaning anything we print can be seamlessly contour cut or creased if necessary.

"As a business, we are committed to investing in new technology as well as the training and development of our staff, so we can continue to improve the range and quality of our products and services.

"Our investment has already paid off as we're now entering new markets and doing more exhibition and branding work which we hope to continue to build on. When clients approach us, we can now specify a wider range of materials and create more innovative and eye-catching designs.



One of the results from their latest investment in equipment

"Previously there were certain jobs which we couldn't compete on price-wise but now we're able to be much more costeffective."

As well as investing in new equipment, Allen Signs has also taken on more staff with the latest recruit being Michael Gray, to the install team.



PRODUCT Choice

Wrap Cube is first UK company to use 3M's reflective wrapping film

Spandex has made the first UK delivery of the new 3M 780mC reflective wrap film to vehicle wrap company, Wrap Cube. They have been 3M's sole approved wrapping company in London since 2008, offers premium wraps for luxury vehicles and high end fleets.

On the strength of Spandex and Wrap Cube's 10-year relationship, Spandex previewed the 780mC wrap film with the team ahead of the product's official UK launch. Mark Whiffen, Installation Manager at Wrap Cube said: "After initially testing the 780mC wrap film at SEMA in Las Vegas in 2016, we've been anticipating its availability in the UK. It is the first reflective film of its kind, so we were eager to work with it. Previously reflective films have only been suitable for flat surfaces. In contrast, the new 3M 780mC allows us to wrap and apply a reflective film to the vehicle, transforming the complete appearance of the vehicle at night."

He said: "The reflective wrap film is perfect for fleet vehicles as it is a plain white film, allowing companies to customise the appearance. We can print any colour, design or image onto the film. During the day it looks like a normal premium vehicle wrap, but at night it lights up because of its reflective properties."

Within a week of testing 3M 780mC, Wrap Cube invited two of its commercial transport customers, NJB Recycling and PRS Distribution, to see the film in action and received confirmed orders the same day. Mark said: "For these customers, reflective wrap on the lorry cab is a sound investment as it allows them to be seen



clearly day and night, when previously only aspects of the cabs would have been seen at night."

Wrap Cube has already wrapped four contracted lorries for NJB Recycling and is in the process of wrapping two for PRS Distribution, with a waiting list of additional customers keen to use the reflective film.

3M 780mC is a white wrappable retroreflective vinyl designed for vehicles, trucks and trailers. The vinyl is manufactured with microComply™ adhesive that ensures efficient bubble-free installation and easier removal and has an expected performance graphic life cycle of nine years.

Mark said: "From what we've seen so far and from the early demand we have from current commercial fleet customers to move to the reflective wrap, it looks as though this new vinyl will be a very popular addition to the portfolio."

Leon Watson, Spandex UK General Manager said: "As a supplier, we aim to add value to our customers by understanding their business and highlighting innovations that we believe can help them gain competitor advantage in the marketplace. There is continuous innovation in the wrap sector and we are delighted to see customers using this to develop their businesses."

www.spandex.com / www.wrapcube.co.uk









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PRODUCT Choice

FRA selects Zeta LED technology to light the way at Westgate Oxford

Wayfinding consultants FRA, selected Zeta Specialist Lighting's UK designed and manufactured Light Guide Panel to deliver "optimum" illumination for new wayfinding signage at the £440 million Westgate Oxford retail and leisure destination.

The Westgate Oxford development is anchored by a John Lewis flagship store and has over 100 retail units and a garden roof terrace with restaurants and cafes. As specialists in their field, FRA designed a wayfinding scheme designed to capture visitors at all entry points to the 800,000 sq. ft. open shopping centre, which comprises a series of streets, spaces and squares.

By analysing and mapping journeys, FRA plotted the optimum location for each of the 11 800mm x 3000mm full-size totems and five smaller totems measuring 500mm x 2400mm, which guide shoppers through horizontal and vertical routes. It includes centre directories and finger points at key decision nodes. To ensure the signage quality was consistent and seamless throughout the development, FRA worked closely with specialist signage companies, IS Group and Ascot Signs.

Each LGP is made from the highest quality acrylic and features a unique grid pattern specifically designed to deliver shadow free illumination and uniform light distribution, ensuring optimum performance



Wayfinding totem at Westgate Shopping Centre, lit by Zeta's Light Guide Panel

For FRA, key criteria included ensuring the signage was effective and user-focussed, the information contained succinct and consistent, and that the overall design reflected the brand ethos. The ability to illuminate the totems to enable visitors to read information at all times was an important factor. They turned to LED and solar lighting specialist Zeta for a costeffective, energy-efficient solution.

Zeta's Light Guide Panel (LGP) is a flexible, space saving and easy to install solution to deliver optimum illumination across a variety of signage applications. Each LGP is made from the highest quality acrylic and features a unique grid pattern specifically designed to deliver shadow free illumination and uniform light distribution, ensuring optimum performance.

The Zeta Light Guide Panel features an ultra-slim profile starting from just 6mm, is available in bespoke sizes and comes with single or double-sided options.

www.zetaled.co.uk

A family business at home with Roland DG

Nutmeg Studio was initially founded as Nutmeg Wallart in 1999, when Adele MacKinnon and her husband invested some of their savings and wedding gift money to buy a Roland CAMM-1 GR-640 vinyl cutter and an Apple Mac computer, to offer printed graphics to local businesses.

Adele MacKinnon said: "After leaving college I initially worked for a couple of signage companies, finally settling at Technical Signs in Watford where I met my husband. I left work to have my first child and began to work freelance, with my husband cold-calling high street businesses every Friday to source me work!"

Adele and her family then moved to Bedfordshire and – with the arrival of their second child - the Roland DG machine became virtually redundant as she focused on raising her young family. The Roland DG cutter was put in the loft for a number of years and Adele contemplated selling it.

In September 2010, as the pressures of raising a young family eased, Nutmeg Studio was resurrected. Adele said: "We dug the cutter out of the loft after many

years in retirement and it still worked perfectly! I used the Roland DG CAMM-1 product for vinyl graphics to decorate my daughter's bedroom with personalised wall stickers. Friends and family saw these and encouraged me to sell them online, which I did initially via eBay."

A friend of Adele's let her know about notonthhighstreet.com, a retailer of quirky, cool and top-quality products made by independent craftspeople. She said: "I subsequently sent in three examples of my work, and to my surprise was accepted as one of their suppliers. I began expanding my range of wall stickers and other companies began to stock them - from small independent retailers to the likes of QVC."

For the past three years, Adele and her small team have been based in a studio in Milton Keynes designing and manufacturing an extensive range of wall art stickers for a wide variety of businesses, including a brand stocked by John Lewis.

Sales have increased at a rate of 50 per cent year on year and have enabled Adele to invest in new equipment. Nutmeg



Studio bought the Roland VersaCAMM SP-300i eco-solvent inkjet printer/cutter in March 2015, alongside a Hotronix Auto Open Clam heat press, which led to the expansion of the product line with the addition of full-colour wall stickers and graphics, and printed apparel.

The company now offers a broad range of printed and personalised products to businesses and end-users alike - one of the most popular products being iPhone charger. When the stickers where marketed online, the response was amazing, and the iPhone charger stickers became Nutmeg's best-selling product to

Adele said: "Buying the VersaCAMM was a life saver when it came to the iPhone stickers as initially we were cutting the names out of vinyl and weeding them. With the addition of the VersaCAMM SP-300i, we were able to print and cut them seamlessly, reducing production time considerably."

On working with Roland DG technology, Adele says: "Having worked with Roland DG machines for many years, they are reliable machines that deliver quality results. The technology is simple to use, and we are always confident in the quality of the end result."

Having recently attended the Roland DG Academy Intermediate Digital Print course at the company's Clevedon headquarters, Adele has been further inspired. She said: "I am now working on a range of off-theshelf retail window graphics and will be investing in new Roland DG technology as I continue to expand Nutmeg Studio's product offerings."

nutmegwallartstickers.co.uk www.rolanddg.co.uk



Sculptural signs create 3D impact

Cast signage can take many forms but sculpting traditional coats of arms, insignia, emblems and nameplates are still very much in demand in this digital age. We asked some of the leading players about their approach to a process that involves a lot of hand crafting and finishing.

Founded in 1983 in Keynsham, near Bristol, Bryan Rawlings Design has built up a reputation as a leading sculptor of three-dimensional insignia and emblems

"In my area of sculptural signage I specialise in the complex and subtle shapes and wide range of sizes that suit modelling or carving by hand," explains Bryan. "Having interpreted the customer's artwork - perhaps a logo, trademark or coat of arms - in sculptural form, the next job is to produce it in a durable, usable form, often intricately hand-coloured and reproduced in various quantities. Often the most cost-effective method is to mould in glass reinforced plastic (GRP) but fortunately I have the option of casting processes that offer other possibilities and benefits."

So what does the metal casting process involve in order to produce such complex pieces?

"We usually work with aluminium alloy using the sand-casting process," explains Rawlings. "In this case, my job is to turn my original sculptural emblem (sometimes modelled in clay, carved from foam or any process creating the exact shape that I want to achieve) into a good quality casting pattern. While modelling I check there are no undercuts and that all returns

One of the raw aluminium alloy castings used for the UAE project

have adequate angle of draught to come cleanly out of a one-piece mould. Then I make a GRP negative mould; from this moulding a GRP positive, at both stages checking for minor undercuts or irregularities correcting them by filling and filing. I then work on the 'hard' GRP pattern, building up the back to a smooth surface with as regular a thickness as

"In some places I create bosses suitable to drill and tap for attachment of fixings. I sand the edge flat, checking on a good board that it is perfectly true and finally coat the pattern front and back with foundry paint which is made specially for painting sand casting patterns; it produces a good, smooth surface which releases very cleanly from the sand mold.

Foundry casting

The actual casting work is put out to an "excellent small, specialist foundry", which means Bryan can discuss his requirements with a "true craftsman" who will carry out all the processes himself and advise on matters like the best thickness for the hollow backed pattern to give the best flow of metal for a flawless surface.

"You can make a casting of sorts by just sticking a pattern on a flat board but that inevitably produces a much cruder, heavier flat-backed casting and after all the hours spent getting the sculptural work just right it seems a shame to 'spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar'," says Bryan.



Artwork supplied by UAE – which proved quite a challenge to interpret in 3-D

These cast alloy versions are particularly good for gates, railings and locations that often require good vandal resistance. They are also popular with customers who are willing to pay a bit extra for a substantial traditional material and craft process, such as a project Bryan recently completed which involved making five cast emblems of the United Arab Emirates for their London Embassy.

"My client is so pleased with the result that they have asked me to quote for batches of 12 or 24 for their other embassies," says Bryan.

"You can make a casting of sorts by just sticking a pattern on a flat board but that inevitably produces a much cruder, heavier flat-backed casting and after all the hours spent getting the sculptural work just right it seems a shame to 'spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar' "

Resin casting

Polyurethane resin casting provides the opportunity to make 'undercut' patterns. The key difference is making a flexible silicone rubber mold from the original pattern. The liquid rubber is brushed carefully onto the surface of the pattern to ensure that it gets into every detail without trapping air pockets and then, depending on size, either poured or built up in layers to make a thick skin, supported with a GRP shell.

"Flexibility of the mold means that I can make a much more deeply sculptural 'inthe-round' design," explains Bryan. "Polyurethane resin has low viscosity when poured, picking up every detail and is extremely tough when cured, giving me the freedom to model fine, intricate details and scrollwork without the risk of bits snapping off. "

Once the mold has been made, quantities can be molded much more quickly and cheaply than GRP, so the process is ideal for branding chains of pubs or restaurants, for example. Many special finishes such as cold-cast metal work very well with rubber mold casting as well as with GRP and all three processes are good for detailed hand-painted finishes.

Master pattern

To get the very best quality of shaping and detail, Bryan adds a further stage to the process, turning the first casting into a 'master' pattern.

"I sand, file and fill this hard resin pattern to a very high quality of finish and use it to make another rubber 'production' mold. I use the master to make further molds to

produce larger quantities if necessary. Unlike metal casting, all the processes for silicone rubber/polyurethane resin production are 'in house'."

GRP is important because it is a low cost, versatile, durable, weather-proof material that you can make into almost any shape and any size but the combination of the three options mean that Bryan and his team can produce sculptural signage suitable for virtually any application.

www.bryanrawlings.com



UAE emblem: Pattern in progress

Explaining undercuts, returns and draught - with a tomato!

If you squash a tomato hard onto a board so that only half of it stays intact, you could make a hard mold from it by pouring plaster over it. When the plaster has hardened you could press soft clay into the shape left by the tomato and pull it out and the clay would be in the shape of a squashed tomato (because there are no undercuts).

If you take a tomato and carefully glue it onto a board so that it stays intact, you could still make the plaster mold and press clay into it but you couldn't pull the clay impression out of the small hole without destroying it (because there are undercuts). If you take the tomato you have carefully glued onto the board and pour catalysed liquid silicone rubber over it, the rubber will cure to make a flexible mold and you could then pour plaster into it.

When it has set hard, you could peel the flexible mould off and the plaster would be in the shape of a tomato stuck to a board. Unlike the model of the squashed tomato, you could put your fingers around the model of the glued-on tomato almost back to where it touches the board. Where your fingertips disappear around the back of the tomato model, they are going into the undercuts, which would stop the shape from coming out of a rigid mold.

If you want to make that whole tomato shape come out of a rigid mold you could fill in the undercuts with clay, for example, so that there are straight sides (returns) going back from the widest part of the tomato to the board. Then the modified tomato shape could be molded using a rigid mold... in theory, if everything is perfect!

In practice I would make things easier by angling the returns out slightly (the draught). In an exaggerated form you can see it in jelly molds; if the sides were straight instead of sloping outward it would be very difficult to get the jelly out without breaking it.



Traditional skills meet modern materials

Designer, manufacturer and supplier of signs and decorative panels for over 35 years, Signs of the Times has built up a large portfolio of clients in all fields. From an original range of cast polyurethane signs, the company expanded into cast bronze, aluminium and glass reinforced plastic (GRP) as well as engraved brass, bronze, slate, granite and perspex, cast and cut-out letters to any size.

"We like to think that we pioneered professional sign casting in polyurethane in this country, says managing director Lyndie Lothian. "Polyurethane is used for many different applications but in the

"There are computer aided methods that can be considerably quicker if there is a huge amount of text but we can get a much crisper and more pleasing sign if we take the time to set the letters individually"



Painting heraldic signs requires and understanding of heraldry to ensure historical accuracy.

automotive industry it is still often employed to make patterns for engines and other car parts. Signs of the Times experimented with it and found that this almost inert material was excellent for casting into different molds and strong enough to fix to freestanding posts.

"Small signs and very large signs (3m long) were possible and we found that the paint solvents etched into the material make for excellent adhesion. In the early days, all the signs we made were cast in

sand just as the aluminium and bronze signs are today. After casting, the material was cured and then sandblasted to remove any sand sticking to the surface. Polyurethane is also excellent glue!

"Today there are many different molding materials we can use depending upon the amount of detail we want to achieve and the number of signs we want to make out of each mold. The two-part polyurethane is mixed by machine, poured into the mold and left to cure."

Hand-finishing

Some of the work carried out by the company requires painstaking manual effort and attention to detail.

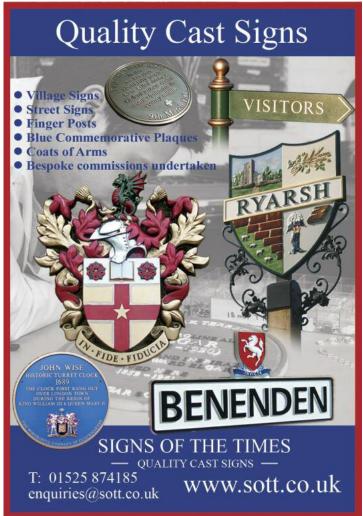
"Pattern making is still something we do mostly by hand," explains Lyndie. "We use engraving and routing machines for the finer detail but still prefer to set our letters by hand. It is not the only way to do this; there are computer aided methods that can be considerably quicker if there is a huge amount of text but we find that we can get a much crisper and more pleasing sign if we take the time to set ('pasting up') the letters individually. Animals, birds, trees and flowers are sculpted in various materials by our artists while inanimate churches or trains, for example, are modeled by our pattern maker using fret saws and chisels to make authentic reproductions of the customer's requests."

.....Continued on page 50



A sand-cast sign that has cured and been taken out of the sand box: the surface sand is being removed before the whole sign is sand blasted clean.







CAST Signage

Of course, once modeled, there is still much work to be done to complete the job and painting the various types of signs calls for a number of different skills.

Foundry metal casting

In a foundry, metals are cast in shapes by melting them at very high temperatures into liquid. This is then poured into molds and left to solidify as it cools. The mold material (casting) is then removed from the work piece.

For a village centre sign it can take several days to paint the detail that is required while heraldic work requires an understanding of heraldry (coats of arms, insignia, etc). Knowing the styles and colours that make them historically accurate demands extensive research. In addition, the letters are hand painted on the flat surfaces that requires a steady hand to get a good cover of paint without dribbles!

"Our customers come to us because we specialise in hand finished quality cast signs with detail in relief," concludes Lyndie. "Whether this is a village sign which reinforces a community's past and present identity or a simple house sign, we think there will always be a market for good quality cast signs.

www.signsofthetimes.co.uk



Signs of the Times can get a much crisper and more pleasing sign if they take the time to set the letters individually

Keeping traditional processes alive

Casting signs for businesses, councils and private clients, Signcast has updated its pattern-making process over the years to reduce time and production costs to ensure they can offer an affordable range of high quality specialist signs.

Produced from individual artwork agreed before pattern-making commences, each customer creates a personal, unique design to suit their particular project. Signcast offers traditional pattern-making skills for more intricate and detailed work where required and produces many exquisite cast signs in solid bronze, brass, polished aluminium and iron.

"Having many years of experience in the metal casting (foundry) industry and now working closely with one of the UK's leading architectural foundries in the West Midlands, our plaques are made to adorn buildings for many years," explains director Kerry Styles.

Historical blue plaques

Over the years Signcast has developed a way in which to produce solid cast metal blue plaques that is both more cost effective and cuts production time. The historical building plaques are both high



Cast bronze plagues have a hand-produced antique patinated finish and hand polished lettering

Cast iron artifacts date back to the 5th century BC and were discovered by archaeologists in China. They have stood the test of time for both resilience and practicality. Over the years cast iron has been used in ancient China for warfare, agriculture and architecture.

During the 15th century cast iron was utilised for artillery in France and in England during the Reformation. The first cast iron bridge was built during the 1770s by Abraham Derby III and is known as The Iron Bridge.

quality and completely bespoke, being made to the customer's requirements regarding size, layout, font style, fixings and any emblems or specified company

Historical building plaques are produced mainly in blue but also in red, green or even polished aluminum or cast in bronze where required; bronze plaques are mainly cast by Signcast to create war memorials or other commemorative plagues.

Signcast has produced many blue plaques to commemorate persons of renown including one placed on the football ground at West Bromwich Albion and another celebrating the work of the Desperate Dan comic author, depicting hand-painted Korky the Cat and Desperate Dan characters.

The company was commissioned by the BBC to produce a series of commemorative plaques that were handed out each week in their series Black And British.

Authentically produced

Each solid cast metal sign is authentically produced using time-honored skills and craftsmanship. The production team at Signcast have always been involved in the foundry industry having started their training as apprentices in the 1970s and then moving on to running a foundry, manufacturing industrial components through the 1990s. Their expertise in casting metal is now being used to create



Signcasts' expertise in casting metal is now being used to create beautiful works of art in the form of signs

beautiful works of art in the form of cast metal signs and keeping close contact with all stages of production.

"Signcast can assist you with your cast sign project from the beginning stages through to the final product," says Kerry. "Keeping close contact regarding the

"If the existing metal is fine below the old paint they can be finished; if corroded a little, sometimes we can still use the existing plaque as a pattern and re-cast a new one from it"

production process at all times, there is always someone on hand to talk to about the finer details and options available for your cast signage."

Refurbished plaques

A further service offered by the company is the refurbishment of old metal signs. The plaques are sand blasted to remove old debris and paint, then cleaned and finally powder coated and painted.

"If the existing metal is fine below the old paint they can be finished; if they are corroded a little sometimes we can still use the existing plaque as a pattern and recast a new one from it. Brass and bronze plagues are blasted and then patinated to 'age' the background and repolished and waxed."

High quality cast signage

Signcast takes great care to produce cast metal signs that are both practical and beautiful, says Kerry. Each sign is carefully manufactured to exacting standards while still keeping the authenticity of age old cast metal signs including cast iron street signs, commemorative plaques and bespoke house signs.

"Cast iron is sometimes used in place of cast aluminum, however the benefits of cast aluminum are more often chosen as the metal still has the authentic look of original cast iron signs. Each cast aluminum or iron sign is coated with a tough weatherproof powder coating and then the raised lettering is hand-painted in house by our talented artists."

Cast bronze plaques have a handproduced antique patinated finish and hand polished lettering; the signs are finally waxed by hand to offer some protection as they patinate further once they are exposed to the atmosphere.



The parting powder is applied to the pattern so that the sand doesn't stick when the top half of the mold is produced in sand

www.signcast.co.uk

Height

Colours*

203mm

9.00

5.80

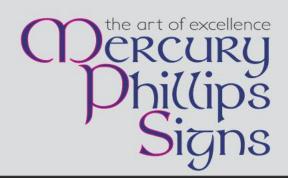
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12.50





£18 + VAT minimum charge + carriage

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5mm	1.30	1.65	1.80	2.30	2.90	3.50	3.95	5.40	6.45	7.50	8.75	10.00	12.00	14.50	16.74	18.00	23.50	30.00	45.00	62.00
10mm	2.50	2.80	3.70	4.60	5.75	7.35	8.55	12.00	13.00	15.75	18.50	21.50	24.50	28.50	32.00	36.00	50.00	73.00	94.00	130.00
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3mm	0.75	1.06	1.12	1.20	1.30	1.51	1.90	2.30	2.60	2.90	3.73	4.60	5.20	5.60	6.70	7.90	10.50	16.50	19.00	22.50
5mm	0.95	1.25	1.55	1.90	2.30	2.70	3.10	3.40	3.95	4.50	5.62	6.60	7.50	8.00	9.30	10.60	16.50	22.50	25.00	28.50
10mm	1.70	1.90	2.60	3.60	4.20	4.85	5.95	6.92	7.90	8.80	10.60	12.60	15.00	16.50	18.50	21.50	26.00	30.00	45.50	56.00
19mm	2.80	3.80	4.40	4.80	6.40	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.70	14.90	16.00	18.50	21.50	23.80	25.80	29.00	37.00	40.00	53.50	84.50
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Mirror	2.50	2.90	4.00	5.00	6.50	8.00	9.00	11.00	13.50	16.00	17.50	20.00	23.50	26.50	28.00	32.50	38.00	47.50	51.00	96.50
Brushed	1.85	2.20	2.80	3.50	4.00	4.90	5.90	7.00	8.50	10.00	11.50	13.00	16.00	17.50	19.50	22.00	29.00	39.00	49.00	67.50
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3mm	3.20	4.20	4.8	30	5.90	6.80	7.60	8.	50	9.70	10.85	12.5	0 13	1.95	17.90	21.40	29.9	0 42	2.00	66.00
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COMMENT

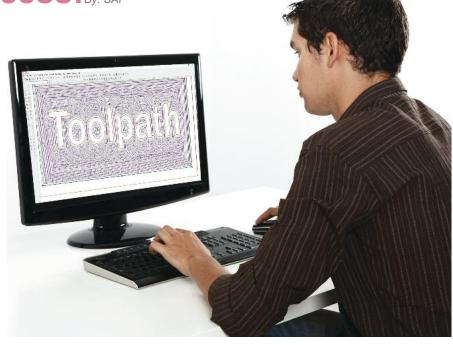
RIPped for success! By: SAI

At the beginning of the digital age, the RIP was the premier tool of printers and repro houses. Today, output devices take centrestage along with file-sharing, remote access and cloud storage applications. But RIPs still matter – a lot –and print quality depends upon it. In this feature, Radisa Peric, Flexi Product Manager at SAi, looks at what wide-format print providers and signmakers should consider when choosing a RIP. Clearly, one size doesn't fit all...

There are many excellent RIP software packages from leading suppliers bundled with printers, and this kind of purchase is a good way of ensuring compatibility. But if you're a wide-format print provider or signmaker seeking to invest in new RIP software, it's worth looking beyond the headlines and the price tag. One important thing to remember is that this is a business decision as well as a technical one. So ask yourself, what is your business' USP? Fast and cheap; top quality in everything; or somewhere in between? Do you need to consider the ability to add more printers or a cutter in the foreseeable future? All of these factors should influence your buying decision.



SAi MyCloud Mobile App - Apple Watch



+EnRoute for Flexi

So it is worth doing your homework and researching the software itself: do you know who made the RIP bundled with the printer? Is it branded and supported, or generic and anonymous? What's the track record of the supplier?

Knowing the origin of your RIP software will inform your decision. If it's proprietary to the wide-format printer supplier, find out as much as you can about support, upgradeability, scalability and flexibility. If this proves difficult, should you trust your business with it? How will you handle a colour management problem? Where will you go for support? If the manufacturer is 10,000 miles away, where do you think the software supplier is?

Making sure that the right level of back-up support is in place should be paramount. Support teams don't exist just to fix unexpected problems; though how fast and how well they do it is extremely important. They can provide expert knowledge in configuration, workflow efficiency, information on industry trends, application and product advice as well as business development consultancy. A good software reseller will want to build a relationship, not just send you some

software and move on to the next sale. Learning about the support offered before investing should be high on your check list; and if you really love the printer, find out if it will run RIP software from a supplier you are familiar with.

Future-proofing for long-term business growth

To support long term success, it's also worth considering your specific business needs to ensure that the RIP software package offers the features, versatility and flexibility that allows your business to grow. As any golfer will tell you, to play the sport well, you need more than just a nine iron. Look for the tools that you need to do the job effectively. Check also for things that you may require in the future: how easy is it to add new devices? Take for example, our industry-renowned Flexi software - it offers a comprehensive suite of tools to deliver wide-format print providers and signmakers maximum versatility. Are there applications missing that you may need? Alternatively, you may not need a lot of bells and whistles; in which case a more basic, but robust, RIP will be more costeffective. But double-check its upgradability and support!

With more and more work done remotely, it is important for managers to be able to view progress reports and collaborate in multiple locations. In this instance, a cloud-enabled RIP software that offers safe job storage and collaboration of sign design might make sense. Further supporting the need for doing business on the road, solutions, like our own SAi Cloud mobile app, provide managers access to Job Reports and valuable production trends from virtually anywhere, allowing them to keep them in control of their business.

Ultimately you want RIP software that seamlessly integrates into your business, so it makes sense to explore the options that will support most of your equipment. For example, if you do a lot of banners, and have more than one printer and perhaps a cutter, you may need a RIP software that can combine these functions and drive all your devices. It will simplify your operation, streamline workflow and minimise training.

Taking that a step further, maintaining your competitive edge is increasingly about differentiating your application offerings from the competition. Requests for the

new and novel will only increase. Demands for specialist materials, colours and formats will keep the pressure on your production team. High on the list of growing trends is sign production using CNC machining. Some RIP software packages for signmakers now offer this capability. For example, the new SAi +EnRoute for Flexi is one that dramatically simplifies file clean-up and toolpath preparation of 2D or 2.5D Flexi design files for CNC output. Making CNC sign production (2D, 2.5D or 3D) part of your offering and promoting it to your customers is an opportunity well worth exploring before deciding on a RIP package.

Understanding the 'sweet spot' of wideformat RIP software packages will help you decide on the best one for your business. It should correspond closely to the type of work you do in terms of speed, quality, functionality and output requirements. If price were no object, what would you buy? Try to find something as close to that as possible. Remember, good enough today just might not be good enough in six months' time.

What can typically be a major investment for some companies, it's worth

remembering that there are now alternatives to the 'traditional' purchasing model. Perhaps your individual needs lend themselves more to payment via monthly subscription - a cost-effective alternative that represents a small revenue expense rather than a large capital cost. Some of the best options available offer subscription periods of as little as one month for maximum flexibility and value. They provide subscribers with all the latest features to ensure they are always using the best and latest software available. This is a huge benefit, as running software that is always up to date overcomes the problem of having to continually upgrade, which is imperative to ensuring your business remains competitive. Failure to do so means that you are potentially giving your competitors down the street some serious advantages if they have the latest features that make their production more efficient.

As I've hopefully conveyed, RIP software remains an important consideration and can have a long-term effect on your operation. Making the right choice will enable you to get the most from your hardware, and from your business.



SAi MyCloud Mobile App



PROJECT News

CMYUK gives local charity a UTACK makeover

The Shrewsbury Food Hub recently acquired a brand-new depot, enabling the charity to double the amount of free surplus food it supplies to local community groups. Also being used as a training base to expand the model across Shropshire, the new hub was perfect in size, but plain

Local business CMYUK, independent suppliers of wide-format printers, cutters and materials, offered to decorate it for them with custom-made wallpaper showing the journey that surplus food takes, and reflecting the charity's core values.

Set up in 2016, the Food Hub collects surplus food from supermarkets and shares it among 32 community groups.

Fitted by another local firm, Shelley Signs, everything was rushed through, designed and installed in time for the launch in early

Robin East, Group Director at CMYUK, said: "It's been a pleasure helping Katy and the team at the Food Hub. They now have a much brighter environment for the volunteers to work in. I wish them all the best."



CMYUK's own brand, UTACK, was used to decorate the walls. The thin and woven self-adhesive polyester fabric is easy to print and install, and removes without damage or residue.

Katy Anderson, co-founder of the Shrewsbury Food Hub said "It's been so heartwarming to have CMYUK come forward and offer so much time and all of the materials for free. The place has been completely transformed. It's the first thing people mention when they come in and it gives our volunteers a really cheery environment to do their sorting in. We cannot thank them enough."

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HNS signs secretly transform pub for TV launch event

Sketch Events, PR and events company, approached HNS Signs to transform Birmingham pub The Bull's Head into The Garrison, the headquarters in BBC's Peaky Blinders. They had just five days to plan, manufacture and install the new signage discreetly, which needed to be authentic yet not compromise the original, existing signage of The Bull's Head.

Unlike other pub signs, the temporary, yet safe, secure and authentic sign was 17 metres long. It was devised using a folded aluminium composite tray that folded around the building. It was fitted the morning of the PR event, and HNS Signs had to sign an NDA to ensure the details of the PR event remained a secret until the day itself. The sign was installed in sections and secured using a hook and loop system along the top and bottom, to make sure no damage was done to the original signage.

From the very first call, Sam and his team were cordial, helpful, and managed to arrange what we needed in a very short time frame



The stars of the show at the launch event

HNS Signs were also asked to develop a projecting sign which was hung from The Bull's Head's existing brackets.

Following the launch event of The Peaky Blinders, the infamous pub needed to change back to The Bulls Head, which required a quick turnaround from the HNS Team. They made sure the Bull's Head signage was clear, visible and free from damage in the shortest period possible.

Lisa De Salis, Sketch Events, said: "We used HNS Signs for a local job in Birmingham without ever having used them before. From the very first call, Sam and his team were cordial, helpful, and managed to arrange what we needed in a very short time frame. They ensured that the temporary signs we needed to be built to re-brand a pub were installed securely; without having to fix into or compromise the pubs existing signs which was a prerequisite of the job."



The Bull's Head transformed into The Garrison Pub

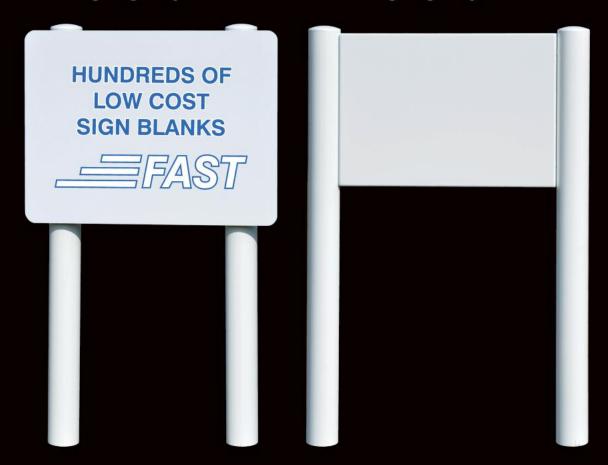


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PROJECT News

PressOn wraps the fastest racing car again

PressOn, the large format digital printing company based in Kent, have worked again with the team behind the world's fastest and most advanced racing car, BLOODHOUND SSC. This time they wrapped the tail fin as it hit speeds of 210mph on its first public trial run at Newquay Airport in Cornwall.



The BLOODHOUND SSC is designed to not only go faster than the speed of sound but up to speeds of 1,000mph, covering a mile in just 3.6 seconds. The tail fin provides a vital part of the supersonic car, providing stability that can withstand the use of both a jet and a rocket to produce more than 135,00bhp.

Following stress and load testing of the fin prior to trials, PressOn wrapped the fin in Avery MPI1104EA cast white vinyl, using their HP Latex 570. The design featured the names of 36,110 people who have sponsored and contributed to the creation of the BLOODHOUND SSC.

PressOn's MD, Nigel Webster said: "Working with the Bloodhound team again has been an honour for PressOn. To see the fin; a vital, expensive and fragile part of the design of the Bloodhound, wrapped in vinyl that was printed and fitted by our team has been amazing."

Following their successful trial run, the BLOODHOUND team have gathered enough data and are currently working on the next stages of development and planning for the next World Land Speed Record attempt in South Africa in 2019.





(Two images, credit: Stefan Marjoram Other images, credit: PressOn)





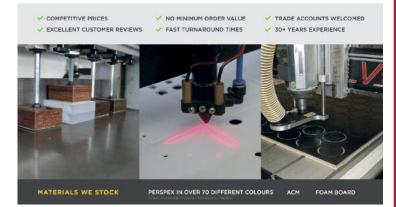


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PROJECT News

Mission Motorsport's poppy car leads remembrance drive

Mission Motorsport has been transforming the lives of injured military personnel since it began in March 2012. Its motto is 'Race, Retrain, Recover'. The organisation provides respite, rehabilitation, vocational support and training to those affected by military operations within the framework of motorsport.

The organisation is run by veterans, serving officers and motorsport professionals and has been appointed as the Combined Services' official providers of adaptive motorsport. It seeks wherever possible to merge the activities of the disabled and those in need with able bodied servicemen and women.



Mission Motorsport's livery department supports the charity by wrapping and maintaining the appearance of all fleet vehicles and race cars. This provides training and job opportunities to wounded, injured and sick servicemen and women. It also does commercial wrapping and livery projects to employ staff in-house.

The charity has a strong relationship with Jaguar Land Rover and was given the opportunity to design and wrap two Jaquar F-Types to help raise the profile of this year's Poppy Appeal. One to tour the UK en route to Mission Motorsport's Race of Remembrance. And one which was affixed 50ft in the air to the outer wall of the Jaguar Castle Bromwich site, known for its use during WWII to build Spitfires and Lancaster Bombers.

Designed, printed and installed by Mission Motorsport's livery team, the wrap design featured large red poppies on a grey background and contained the words of John McCrae's 'In Flanders Fields' poem. Both car wraps were printed by Roland DG TrueVIS SG-540 printer / cutters on 3M 780Mc polar reflective vinyl wrap material at the organisation's purpose-built facility in Oxfordshire.

The first Poppy Car functioned as the safety car and became the centrepiece of the 2017 Race of Remembrance. Commemorating the sacrifices made by service personnel and their families, the twelve-hour endurance race was held on the weekend of 11 November at the Anglesey circuit.



The installation of the second Poppy Car wrap was a more complex process as the Jaguar was mounted 50ft in the air and had to be wrapped in situ. Chris Read, Livery Manager for Mission Motorsport said: "We were required to work at height in a double-storey scaffold behind a screen, yet still exposed to the elements!"

James Cameron, CEO of Mission Motorsport, said: "The F-Type mounted on the wall of the Castle Bromwich plant was 50 feet up and visible from the M6. It heralded the work of the plant which was built to make Spitfires in World War II. Our Livery team did an amazing job with this commission. They have all been profoundly affected by their military service and that depth of feeling is echoed in their

"They led on every aspect of the project, from concept to delivery. The stunning poppy design changes in the light, thanks to the pioneering use of polar reflective material printed on the Roland DG printer. It is a world class piece of livery design, but it is not just an exercise in press relations; it celebrates the 26 wounded, injured and sick who have entered second careers with Jaguar Land Rover through Mission Motorsport's placement scheme."

www.missionmotorsport.org www.rolanddg.com/en www.rolanddg.co.uk







New signage for Ted Baker

Ted Baker, the designer retailer, recently announced double-digit growth and unveiled two new store designs in Bicester and Oxford.

The stores, which are hailed as Ted Baker villages are uniquely designed by an internal design team who "go the extra mile" when choosing suppliers and products to represent the brand. Wanting something bespoke, procurement team looked for signage and interiors expert, and thanks to recent award wins, found HNS Signs.

After a number of discussions, HNS Signs were initially tasked with a hand-painted chalk board style menu board sign, and a traditional pub sign for Ted Baker's Bicester village. But they impressed the team so much, they instantly ordered three more signs.

To give the wall a touch of sparkle, we applied silver leaf to the 'baby' and dotted silver leaf sparingly to the white swirls to create a glitzy finish

The original plan was to use a vinyl stencil, and water down signwriters paint for the chalkboard menus, to give a worn chalkboard look. But after discovering that masking tape was taking the wall back to plaster, they had to use a trace. It took almost five hours to mark each board with a further seven to signwrite and finish, as some of the text was just 2mm high! Accuracy and attention to detail was a must and called upon HNS Signs expert skills and techniques using 15 different sable brushes and fitches to apply black paint to get the exact look Ted Baker wanted.



The pub signs were made using ply for the board and a pine frame.

The Sock and Lobster sign was sign painted and designed to look a little worn. To add a little extra character and luxury they finished the board with 22 karat gold leaf. Life's a Stitch sign was also sign painted and designed to look antique, so they stained the face with spray paint and varnish to complete the vintage look.

Post Office and Blooming marvellous had raised letters which were CNC cut from MDF and wet sprayed to colour. The background detail was sign painted and the letters were bonded with wood glue.

The lead interior design team commented they never realised such crafts existed until they came across HNS Signs. It was only natural they then asked HNS Signs to work on their second store in the programme of works.

The Oxford store needed some luxurious finishes for their changing rooms, and after viewing Bicester and work done for Budweiser, the design team asked HNS Signs to work on their changing rooms and the main wall space in the store.

Working with the Ted Baker's own store fit out suppliers, their approach was staggered with two days on site one week and a long day the following. They explain:

"The main store wall, the focal point of the store had a texted and rough finish and needed a different approach. We couldn't pounce or paper trace this, so we had to gut out the letters of the plan and use a stencil. The textured surface also ruled out the use of sable brushes, and we had to use finches and apply our skillset for hand finishing even more so.

To give the wall a touch of sparkle, we applied silver leaf to the 'baby' and dotted silver leaf sparingly to the white swirls to create a glitzy finish. This took an entire day, but was worth it.

To support the designer's store refresh and roll out programme, we offered a couple of cost-saving options for Up Shirt Creek by using a vinyl stencil. The Disabled Changing Room was sign painted using OneShot paint and used masonry paint for the background colour to add the distressed look.'





PROJECT News

Iconic bus station revamp is heading in the right direction

A Preston-based company is making and delivering 1,500 signs for the £23.3 million refurbishment and redevelopment of the city's iconic bus station.

Signs Express (Central Lancashire) has been appointed by main contractor Conlon Construction to deliver all the signage for the refurbished Grade II-listed building. And that includes going back to the future! The work includes re-creating the original sign designs, by the architects and engineers at Building Design Partnership and Ove Arup & Partners, which were installed when the bus station was first opened in the late 1960s.

The first-stage of the contract to improve the bus station concourse has already been completed, and handed over to Lancashire County Council by Conlon as part of the wider development project.

Delivering all 1,500 signs will take the design and manufacturing teams at Signs Express, which operates from its Rough Hey headquarters, 12 months to deliver.

The bus station work is just one of a number of projects Signs Express is delivering for large-scale construction and regeneration projects across the North West. Ben Hall, director at Signs Express, said: "As a Preston company we are very proud to have been appointed to this important regeneration project for the city.

"The work we have been carrying out has also been fascinating as the regeneration project includes restoring a lot of the bus station to its original 1960s look, including the signs and the distinctive numbers on each original bus bay.

"We're spending a lot of time getting that look right. The bus station is a very special and distinctive building and requires this special approach. The result will be fantastic.'

The bus station revamp is part of a wider regeneration of the area and includes the creation of a public square and a youth zone. The building is hailed as an iconic example of Brutalist architecture.

Peter Carroll, project manager for Conlon, said: "The team at Signs Express have been proactive in finding solutions to match the existing signage as the building is listed and has English Heritage status."

Signs Express and its 15-strong workforce designs, produces and installs a full range of signage for its growing client base, and is owned and run by father and son team Stephen and Ben Hall.







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SPECIAL Feature

Who said going green would cost the Earth?

With an increasing focus on the environmental footprint of companies, retailers face real pressure to ensure they meet industry targets, without impacting on their own business models. Here Chris Green, Head of Channel for Visual Communications at Antalis, highlights the requirements facing retailers and how recyclable visual communications media can assist in improving environmental performance and reducing costs.

In 2008, retailers in the UK agreed voluntary targets for reducing waste as part of the 'A Better Retailing Climate' (ABRC) initiative. These collective environmental impact targets included the ambitious goal of sending less than one percent of their waste direct to landfill by 2020.

So far, the response from retailers has been incredible with the proportion of waste sent to landfill decreasing from 43 percent in 2005, to just 4 percent in 2016, demonstrating that the 2020 target is more than achievable.

This reduction in waste is not only good from an ecological point of view, by improving a company's environmental impact, it can deliver a positive economic impact for businesses as well, as every tonne sent to landfill costs retailers on average £120 in tax and gate fees.

For retailers, there is a specific waste reduction challenge due to the fast moving, cyclical nature of the business. It's inevitable that signs and displays are going to change frequently, which results in a considerable amount of visual communications materials being created each year. Taking into account the volume of materials required, this inherent part of the retail environment creates a significant waste which can come at a cost.

Through careful selection of the right product, which delivers the correct properties for application such as printability, dimensional stability, recyclability and sustainability, retailers can negate the costly charges of waste and, in some instances, even create a revenue stream.

At Antalis, we recognise that we have an important role to play, both in running our business in a responsible way, and providing products, services and information that help our customers become more sustainable. This has resulted in us investing in a number of product ranges that help our customers



meet their environmental requirements, specifically those with high volume visual communication needs.

Priplak®, for instance, is ideal for retailers who have a high turnover of signage. A strong yet flexible plastic polypropylene sheet, Priplak offers high performance while being environmentally sound - it is constructed from a plastic free from halogens, chlorine and plastifiers, such as phthalates. Further adding to its green credentials, it can also be recycled many times without any significant change in its physical properties and the Priplak R100 range is actually made from 100 per cent recycled post-industrial polypropylene. What's also great about it is once finished, it can be recycled, or burnt or added to landfill, without any risk of toxic substances harming the environment or people's health.

Another display material product retailers can use to reduce visual communications waste and cost is DISPA®; a sign and display board perfect for short-term, indoor displays, which offers an ideal ecological position. A 100 per cent cellulose fibre product, DISPA is made by 3A composites with unique embossed internal layers which ensure maximum stability and flatness while being 100 per cent recyclable FSC-certified paper. It's smooth, bright-white printable surface is a quality robust alternative to plastic products, allowing retailers to maximise both the environmental and financial benefits of recycling.

The nature of the industry which retailers operate in ensures that there will always be a level of waste, and while the ABRC initiative continues to deliver success, we still have a role to play in improving our environmental impact. By switching to ecologically-friendly, recyclable products, retailers can decrease their sign and display landfill waste, saving money and the environment, and putting the industry in the right place to meet the 2020 target.

www.antalis.co.uk.





Applelec joins Made in Britain network of manufacturers

Applelec has become a member of Made in Britain, joining the growing community of companies promoting British manufacturing.

As a manufacturer of bespoke fabricated signage and display systems, alongside products such as LED Light Sheet, Applelec has experienced strong growth over the last five years and views joining the scheme as part of a wider strategy for continuing growth both in the UK and internationally.

Joining the network means Applelec is able to use the registered Made in Britain marque on literature, websites, packaging and products. As a trade supplier, this benefit will be passed to Applelec's

customers who will begin to see the MiB marque featured on the labelling of certain products bought from Applelec.

For products such as Applelec's LED Light Sheet, which has seen increased competition from poorly constructed, imported light panel products, the use of the marque will help ensure the product is recognised as being British-made.

lan Drinkwater, Applelec managing director said: "We are proud to be a British manufacturer and with increasing orders coming from Europe and the Middle East in recent years, we have experienced confidence in the quality of British manufacturing. We wanted a clear way to highlight that Applelec is a British



Applelec's premises in Bradford, home to their 80 members of staff

MADE IN BRITAIN



manufacturer to potential customers around the world as well as to other UK businesses."

John Pearce, Made in Britain CEO, said: "We'll be working with Applelec to support their provenance marketing both internally and to all their B2B stakeholders as they grow the business at home and abroad."

Applelec recently relocated all manufacturing operations to the 6.3 acre Wharfedale Business Park in Bradford, which has been undergoing development by Applelec since its purchase in 2015. The company currently employs 80 members of staff.

Self-adhesive film specialist launches new website

ASLAN, Schwarz GmbH & Co. KG, who manufacture self-adhesive films for specialist applications, have redesigned their website.

Visitors and customers from a wide variety of industries will find an updated and "consistently user-oriented concept" at www.ASLAN-Schwarz.com. From the start, the focus was on making it even easier for visitors to find suitable selfadhesive products and alternative options that are 'Made in Germany', says the company.

Strong emphasis was placed on a clear and neat presentation, both in terms of design and navigation and with a view to the product portfolio, says ASLAN. In addition to a streamlined layout, the new site concept is geared towards "intuitive handling, enabling users to find the

required self-adhesive solution or obtain information about ASLAN's wide portfolio in just a few clicks, even without any prior product knowledge".

A new product finder feature allows visitors to identify the right self-adhesive film for their specific requirements, not only by product group, but also sorted by application or industry.



BSGA Awards spotlight outstanding work of UK sign industry in 2017

The British sign industry celebrated another year of outstanding work at its annual awards ceremony, organised by the BSGA (British Sign and Graphics Association) and held at the Athena Centre on 9 November.

The awards, open to any UK-based signrelated business, are designed to demonstrate the abilities and creativity of signmakers across the industry. A total of 15 signmaker awards were presented, ranging from Young Signmaker of the Year, through Architectural, Illuminated and Craftsman Awards, to Awards for vehicle wrapping, major roll-outs and retail signage.

Over 250 separate projects were entered for the awards and the standard throughout was high. The judges singled out a number for special mention, including the work by HNS Signs at The Arcadian in Birmingham; Signs Now for its massive Hilton Heart of House roll-out; John Anthony Signs for its delivery of a huge project at Astana Airport in Kazakhstan; DMA Signs for its recordbreaking building wrap at Birmingham University; and Signbox for its stylish work at the Dakota office building, New Scotland Yard and Alpha Bank.

But, after a lot of deliberation, the judges awarded the Sign of the Year to isGroup for its outstanding work, in association with Applelec, at Storyhouse in Chester. The signs were a stylish part of a £37 million transformation of the 1930s art deco building to create a new cultural centre in the city. The award was presented by joint main sponsors Signfab UK and GE.

Presented for the first time this year, the Décor Award, sponsored by Metamark, demonstrated the increasingly diverse work of UK signmakers who are using signmaking skills and materials to enhance the interiors of all types of building. The award, which was won by Signbox for its work at the London HQ of Alpha Bank, is new, it still attracted the largest entry of any category.

The Wayfinding Award was also different this year. It was run as a collaborative

effort between the BSGA and the Sign Design Society (SDS) and was judged by a separate specialist panel convened by the SDS. This year's award went to London-based Populous Activate for its wayfinding scheme for the Groupama Stadium, home to Olympique Lyonnaise.

"The awards are now a firm fixture in the sign industry calendar," says David Catanach, Director of the BSGA, "The event provides the one occasion in the year when the whole industry comes together in a relaxed and convivial atmosphere and where the focus is entirely on the work of signmakers.

"The BSGA would like to thank all the sponsors for their support. We believe that the awards play a vital role in the industry by casting the spotlight on the real work of signmakers. However, without the support of the sponsors, the awards simply would not happen."

ray@britishsignawards.org www.britishsignawards.org





The Award Winners

Architectural Sign of the Year sponsored by Blackburns Metals

Winner: Signbox for Dakota Building, **Brooklands**

Highly Commended: Signbox for New Scotland Yard

W&Co for HKX

Commercial Vehicle Graphics sponsored by William Smith

Winner Apogee Print for DTE

Highly Commmended Paul Turner Signwriters for Harrison Turner

PVL UK Ltd for Connect 2

The Construction Award sponsored by Signfab UK

Winner: John Anthony Signs for Astana T2

Highly Commended: Widd Signs for Rushden Lakes

Signs Express (Manchester) for CityLabs

The Craftsman Award sponsored by Trade Etching Direct

Winner: SIGNCO

Highly Commended: HNS Signs for The Arcadian

Graffiti Design for New Scotland Yard

The Décor Award sponsored by Metamark

Winner: Signbox for Alpha Bank

Highly Commended: Contract Sign Systems - Euston Station

Ditital Tyger - Hogarths and The Crown

Illuminated Sign of the Year sponsored by Complete Sign Illumination

Winner: isGroup for Storyhouse

Highly Commended: Signbox for New Scotland Yard

Glyphics Ltd for Workspace

W&Co for Swiss Lacks

The Innovation Award sponsored by Epson

Winner: HNS Signs for The Arcadian

Highly Commended: Spectrum Signs

for I-door signage W&Co for HKX

Leisure Industry Award sponsored by JMH Digital

Winner: Print Sauce Ltd for Tiny Rebel

Highly Commended: Castleton Sign for Scarpetta and Oddsocks

Retail Signage Award sponsored by Pyramid Display **Materials**

Winner: Castleton Signs for The Lounge

Highly Commended: John Anthony Signs for Seat, White City

Innovate Signs for JD Sports

Roll-out Programme of the Year sponsored by Nationwide Platforms

Winner: Signs Now for Hilton Heart of

Highly Commended: Innovate Signs for JD

Sports

Castleton Signs for Associated British

Small Signmaker of the Year supported by SignLink

Winner: Lavastar Signs

Highly Commended: SIGNCO

Apogee Print

Wide Format Project of the Year sponsored by Soyang Europe

Winner: DMA Signs for University of

Birmingham Library Wrap

Highly Commended: Digital Tyger for

Hogarths

N1 Visual Solutions for YMCA Gym

Wrap of the Year – sponsored by Amari

Winner: RGVA for 'Convoy'

Highly Commended: Eyecatching Signs

for Harley Harlequin

Slam Signs for Josh Price Racing

Wayfinding Award - supported by the Sign Design Society

Winner: Populous Activate for Groupama

Stadium, Lyon

Highly Commended: Maynard Design for

Paddington Portable Event Signs

dn&co for Here East

Product of the Year - supported by SignDirectons Online

Winner: Button-Fix

Highly Commended: NeonLux by Applelec

Mimaki 3D UJ 3D printer



SIGN News

BSGA training

The British Sign and Graphics Association (BSGA) has launched a major new training incentive for both new and existing members.

The Association is underwriting part of the cost to participate in the 'Make it Happen' education course run by sign consultant Sam Armstrong.

'Make it Happen' is a BSGA member and has been receiving great reviews for its one-day education course, which is designed to "deliver more information about sign making in a few hours than any sign company will normally deal with over a full month".

"It's a great starting point for anyone who is new to sign making but, equally, has proved a great refresher course for experienced signmakers," says BSGA Director David Catanach.

David Allen, Director of Lincoln and Nottingham-based Allen Signs, decided to attend after two members of team recommended it.

"I've been in the industry for a few years, but there are always things to learn and new processes or ways of thinking to hear about. I'd recommend the course to everyone in our industry, either to gain insights if you're new to the trade or to refresh the knowledge you have if you are an experienced signmaker."

The BSGA incentive provides new members with two free places on the



Sam Armstrong (centre right) with delegates to a recent Make It Happen training course

course, which normally costs £150.00 per person, plus a £50.00 contribution per delegate for up to six more staff during the first year.

Existing members of the association can also benefit from the incentive. "The BSGA will contribute £50.00 per delegate for up to eight members of staff each year for full and affiliate members," says David.

"If new members take up the whole allocation they will benefit to the tune of £600.00 and it could be worth £400.00 a year to existing members, year on year. The only stipulation is that fees or fee arrangements must be up to date to qualify for the deal."

Typically, the subjects covered in a course will include flat cut letters, fixings, built-up letters, illuminated letters, panels, stencil cut panels, lightboxes, hanging and projecting signs, totems and engraving and printing, plus hints and

Sam Armstrong said that during the 16 years she spent working with a sign fabricator it became apparent there was very little support or training in the field of fabricated and illuminated signs. The Make it Happen Training Course is designed to help fill the gap.

www.bsga.co.uk www.makeih.co.uk

Atlantic launch website

Atlantic Tech Services recently launched their new e-commerce and extended sign and digital machinery, inks and printer consumable products website.

Earlier this year Atlantic were appointed the UK distributor for AZON Printers. This new site, for the first time, includes the specifications and details on the complete range of AZON UV, direct to garment and direct to substrate printers; plus a number of selected videos of these printers in production.

Atlantic have also included the new RICOH Ri3000 and Ri6000 textile printers to complement the success that the company has had with the RICOH L4100

Series latex printers. The site also includes the Neolt trimmers, vertical cutters, welders and Neolt and Easymount Laminators; together with the Graphtec plotters/cutters.

Online ordering is an increasing demand, and the new easy to use online ordering system will increase the flexibility and times available for customers can place orders. Customers will also be able to speed up the process and time taken to prepare an order by calling up previous orders, then repeating that order as a new order for inks and or consumables.

www.atlantic-ts.com





Calling all entries to the FESPA awards 2018

Print service providers looking to showcase the best of their print and signmaking talents have just under one month left to enter the FESPA Awards 2018.

The FESPA Awards is an independent print industry awards programme that celebrates the achievements and exceptional work created by print service providers (PSPs) and sign-makers worldwide.

There are 14 categories:

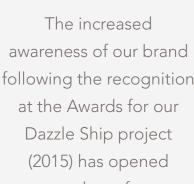
- · Point of purchase products printing on paper & board, sponsored by efi
- · Point of purchase products printed on all types of plastics
- · Posters, single sheets and multi-sheets
- · Original serigraphies and giclees and fine art reproductions
- · Decals, printed labels, fleet marking, window decals etc
- Special effect
- · Special effect on t-shirts and other garments
- T-shirts and other garments
- · Roll-to-roll printed textile
- · Glass, ceramic, metal and wood products
- · Printing on 3D products
- · Non-printed signage
- Functional
- Young star for entrants aged 15 25 working as a junior employee or student in any print related discipline

Each category can be entered using four processes: digital printing only, screen printing only, mixed techniques and nonprinted.

Outside the 14 categories, there are two other awards, which cannot be entered directly.

The People's Choice Award is selected from all award entries by FESPA's online community. Entries will be hosted in an online gallery between the 5 February and 5 March 2018 for public voting.

at the Awards for our Dazzle Ship project (2015) has opened many doors for us





The Best in Show Award is chosen from all categories, with the awards judges selecting the most outstanding overall

UK company, PressOn, has been a FESPA Awards winner in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Andy Wilson, Joint Managing Director, said: "Winning a FESPA Award has boosted our credibility and visibility, both internally with staff and externally. It has had a big effect on staff morale. When we carry out prestigious projects such as wrapping buildings, we sometimes take for granted the impact of our work. Winning this prize shows true recognition from industry peers and reinforces the quality of our work."

Andy said: "The increased awareness of our brand following the recognition at the Awards for our Dazzle Ship project (2015) has opened many doors for us. We'd estimate around 40 per cent of the new contacts we have made since 2015 stem directly from links made at FESPA 2015 and the FESPA Awards.'

The deadline to enter the Awards is Friday 26 January 2018. The entries will then be shortlisted by the Awards Judges and showcased at FESPA 2018 Global Print Expo in Berlin, Germany from 15 to 18 May 2018. Award winners will be announced at the FESPA Gala Night which will take place on Wednesday 16 May 2018, during FESPA 2018.

www.fespaawards.com





"Wrap Like a King" Challenge winners announced

Avery Dennison Graphics Solutions announced that Lei'd Low by Nick Caminiti was named the King of the Wrap World in the "Wrap Like a King" Challenge at the 2017 SEMA Show in Las Vegas. Nick, car wrap installer at Exotic Graphix from Australia, competed against 159 other installers from 19 countries to earn the title for 2017.

"Winning a second Wrap Like a King title in a row is an incredible feeling, and we're truly honoured," says Nick. "We knew the field would be gunning for our team after our success last year, but we put in the work and came out on top against a really accomplished field."

Nick used Avery Dennison® Supreme Wrapping™ Film Diamond Silver and MPI 1105 with DOL 6460 overlaminate to complete his 'Lei'd Low' entry, creating a Hawaiian surf theme for a 1963 Volkswagen Beetle. The entry features three-dimensional, embossed wood effects created with vinyl film, and a fully templated vinyl wrap inspired by 1960's paint jobs. Also included were a wrapped steering wheel, a holographic visor and custom offset wheels.

'Regional Wrap Kings' have also been named by Avery Dennison, along with the 'Continent Wrap Kings' from North America, Europe, North Asia and Australia and New Zealand. The 2017 Challenge judges include Justin Pate, Molly Waters, Myles Kovacs, Peter Wright, Jun Kinoshita, Stefan Ude, Anders Prates and Jurriaan de Vries.



The winning entry by Nick Caminiti

"All of the region and continent winning wraps in 2017 took extraordinary skill, so the ultimate king had to be decided by a very slim margin," says Peter Wright, Wrap Like a King judge and technical marketing manager, Avery Dennison Graphics Solutions, Australia/New Zealand. "The craftsmanship that we saw from the entirety of this year's field was the most impressive yet, and our expectations will only continue to grow with the number of talented installers there are across the world."

Winners were chosen based on criteria of visual transformation (difference between the before and after pictures submitted),

quality and skill level of installation, overall public look and appeal and uniqueness of the design.

Nick's prize package included a threenight stay in Las Vegas to attend the SEMA show, a Race Ramp and Wrap more. He will also receive a \$1,000 cash prize, a King of the Wrap World trophy and almost \$1,000 worth of marketing support from Avery Dennison. The entire King of the Wrap World extended prize package is valued at almost \$5,000.

The following vehicle graphics installers were chosen as Continent Wrap Kings:

- North America Because 'Merica! by PG NOLA
- Europe Polizei Rusty Design by Wrapstyle Denmark
- North Asia Camo Flage the ROOCAT by Type B Custom Decal
- Australia & New Zealand Lei'd Low by Exotic Graphix

Each won a \$3,200 prize pack, including \$500 in gift vouchers, two free rolls of Supreme Wrapping Film and a 67" Race Ramp.

www.wraplikeaking.com/eu



Europe's winner: Polizei Rusty Design by Wrapstyle Denmark



AXYZ to hold first 2018 Open Day in London

AXYZ International will hold its first 2018 Open Day event in north London on 24 January. The Royal Air Force Museum, situated on the former Hendon Aerodrome site in Grahame Park Way, Edgware, London NW9 5LL, will again be the chosen venue. The event will run from 10am to 4pm and refreshments will be available throughout the day.

The Open Day will provide AXYZ International with the opportunity to formally introduce to existing and potential new customers recently upgraded machines; tooling options and online spare parts; accessories; and consumables resources. Application specialists will be on hand throughout the day to answer questions, as well as members of the AXYZ International CNCRoutershop division to discuss product training and technical support requirements.

The new kiss-cut knife option expands the functionality of AXYZ CNC routers by enabling the processing of a much wider range of materials

The main focus of the event will be the upgraded AXYZ Trident hybrid CNC machine that now offers a faster, stronger and smarter solution by comparison with the original models. This will be supplemented by an AXYZ series router and new productivity options. These include a new kiss-cut knife unit, a new high-speed router spindle and an expanded ATC (Automatic Tool Change) facility.

The Trident machine incorporates a triplehead configuration featuring a CNC routing spindle with oscillating and tangential knife-cutting units. These are interchangeable to enable the processing



of frequently problematical thin materials such as vinyl, cardboard and paper and thicker and heavier materials such as aluminium and other non-ferrous metals, ACM (Aluminium Composite Material), acrylic and foamed boards.

The new 8.7HP, 40,000rpm HDS spindle is said to represent the next step in highspeed machine processing, enabling routing/cutting at two to three times faster than when using a standard spindle, and with no compromise on the quality of the edge finish on the materials processed. This makes the HDS spindle ideal for the machining of woods, plastics and nonferrous metals.

The new kiss-cut knife option expands the functionality of AXYZ CNC routers by

enabling the processing of a much wider range of materials. Special adapters will allow the knife to be fitted into most of the commonly used routing/cutting spindles and tangential knife tools.

The new ATC facility will feature a choice of 10 or 14 tool stations and will complement the existing seven- and 21station options. These have now been upgraded with improved mechanics and drive motors.

To reserve a place at the AXYZ Open Day and for more information, e-mail enquiries@axyz.co.uk or phone Janine Roberts, Marketing Administrator at AXYZ International, on 0115 975 8100.



Discover the latest garment decoration equipment at Printwear & Promotion LIVE!

Printwear & Promotion LIVE! 2018 is on track to be the biggest show to date, with over 150 stands and more than 20 new exhibitors providing inspiration and solutions for visitors.

Tony Gardner, event director, said: "The show is now recognised as an annual launch pad for new equipment and once again the event will not disappoint. With over 40 stands featuring decoration kit and many first showings, visitors will be able to witness the latest technology in action and see ways to improve garment decoration production.'

Several new embroidery products will debut at the show. Midwest Machinery is a sole agent for Happy Japan with more than 30 years' experience in delivering embroidery equipment. The company will be displaying the new range of Type 3 embroidery machines, including the recently launched 12 head. There will also be a selection of other equipment on show, such as a new high-speed 15 colour single head machine and a new hot tip appliqué cutter.

Printwear **L**/**e &promotion**

HALLS 17 & 18. NEC. BIRMINGHAM. 21 - 23 JANUARY 2018

ETC Supplies will showcase the bestselling magnetic Mighty Hoops, Durkee EZ Framing device and a range of new embroidery frames, framing tables and tools to keep machinery in its best condition. The embroidery sector will also feature products from Madeira and the new Brother PR series from GS UK.

SWF Embroidery Machines (YES Ltd) will showcase and demonstrate the new KS series, the fastest embroidery machine on the market. Michelle Reece, marketing manager at YES Ltd said: "We are twice as excited about this year's show as we will be exhibiting our wide range of products on two facing stands, with SWF, Ricoma and Spangle on stand H22. This will enable us to separate our brands and

allow visitors to focus on their specific industry with our sales and technical team on board to offer support and advice."

On Resolute's DTG stand, visitors will be able to witness the new R-Jet5i in action. The printer's predecessor, the R-Jet5, has sold over a thousand units across the UK and Europe, so this new and improved model will "wow visitors with a modern print engine".

For 2018. Printwear & Promotion LIVE! has moved to the bigger Halls 17 and 18 at the NEC in Birmingham and will take place from Sunday 21 January to Tuesday 23 January. Save the dates!

www.printwearandpromotionlive.co.uk





Sign & Digital UK announces increase in exhibitor presence for 2018

Sign & Digital UK (SDUK) will return to the NEC, Birmingham with an increased presence from well-known brands. Roland DG, CMYUK, Spandex, Antalis, Epson, Ultima Displays, Your Print Partner and Very Displays are amongst those confirmed to be expanding their stands at the 2018 show.

The exhibition, taking place 24 to 26 April 2018, will also welcome many first-time exhibitors. Companies include: Rimex Metals, ATAKSOFT Computer & Software, QCR Recycling Equipment, Ashby Trade Sign Supplies, Longier UK, U-Marq, Modular Grid Signs.com, ATA Engineering Processes, Pureimage, Bakker Magnetics and Streetwise Digital.

Other exhibitors already confirmed to exhibit at SDUK include Amaya Sales UK, Granthams, D&K Europe, Graphtec, Signmaster Systems, Colourbyte, Maxicam, AG/CAD DYSS, ITC, GPT, AXYZ International, printMax, Trotec Laser and Your Print Specialists. Blackman & White, GDL, Leopold, Vivid Laminating,



Novachrome, Jetrix, Complete CNC Solutions, Grafityp, QPS, Signgeer and Lion Picture Framing Supplies are also set to exhibit.

Rudi Blackett, Sign & Digital UK portfolio director said: "We are thrilled that such a large number of exhibitors return to us annually. To have many of those increase their presence at SDUK 2018 is testament to the show's continued role in bringing the industry together to do business. We are also delighted to welcome the growing number of new exhibitors that have booked for the show from a wide spectrum of industry sectors.

"As the market's leading annual national event, we feel great responsibility to always deliver outstanding shows. We have recently conducted an extensive research campaign to gain greater insight into our visitor profile and their needs. Our plans for the 2018 event include the addition of some exciting new show features, which will be announced in the coming weeks."

Sign & Digital UK will take place at the NEC, Birmingham from 24 to 26 April 2018 and is free to attend for visitors.

signanddigitaluk@fav-house.com.

FASTSIGNS CEO opens new franchise

FASTSIGNS global CEO Catherine Monson officially opened the network's new Leicester franchise as part of a tour of UK centres.

Catherine flew in from the US to attend the FASTSIGNS UK annual convention and visit some of the company's biggest success stories of 2017.

Accompanied by FASTSIGNS UK managing director John Davies, Catherine travelled to Leicester to officially cut the ribbon at the new centre and meet Leicester franchisee Nyemachi Atanda and family, along with the centre's sales and production teams.

Catherine said: "I jumped at the chance to visit Leicester. Since their inspirational premier league, Leicester has experienced significant growth. There's been a huge influx of business in the area and it's a natural choice for Nyemachi and her family to set up the new franchise here. There's an energy and passion in the city, as well as a thriving local economy and infrastructure, which I believe are some of the core elements needed for business success.

"I'm thrilled to welcome Leicester and Nyemachi to the FASTSIGNS family."

Prior to the official opening, FASTSIGNS Leicester has been providing signage solutions to the city since October. Nyemachi says she was delighted to receive such a high-profile visitor in the first two months of trading. She said:

"When you join such a big company, you don't expect one-on-one time with the CEO. She spent time looking around the new centre, talking to staff and finding out more about Leicester."

FASTSIGNS Leicester becomes the 22nd member of the UK franchise network.

www.fastsigns.co.uk



Catherine Monson, CEO of FASTSIGNS, with the team from their newest franchise in Leicester



Roland DG Creative Centre experience day hailed a success

Roland DG UK recently invited customers to its Creative Centre Experience Day. Held on 1 November in the centre in Clevedon, the free-to-attend event showcased 50 ways to make money with Roland DG technology. It also highlighted how companies could boost their profits by targeting emerging and often-untapped

The day showcased the "power and potential" of Roland DG technology and demonstrated how it can bring new ideas and applications to life. Visitors were able to freely explore the Creative

UV printing was a big draw on the day, with many people attending specifically to discover more about the latest products and developments for UV print production

the



inspirational hub of Roland DG UK, and attend educational sessions scheduled throughout the day.

Joe Wigzell, Roland DG UK's Academy and Creative Centre Manager, was available to answer questions about the printers on display, and offer tips on how to get the best results from Roland DG technology. Roland DG's Academy's enlightening workshops and tutorials also took place focusing on all aspects of print: from hardware and software updates through to the very latest applications. These courses enabled customers to learn more about Roland DG products and how to get the best out of them - from the design process through print production to finishing.

Feedback from attendees has been positive, with all stating that they would be keen to further explore the opportunities and applications opened up by Roland DG technology. Visitors also highlighted the informative and relaxed nature of the event and confirmed that their attendance had been very much worthwhile.

UV printing was a big draw on the day, with many people attending specifically to discover more about the latest products and developments for UV print production. In particular the new Roland DG VersaUV S-Series, which served as the centre piece of the day's live UV printing demonstration.

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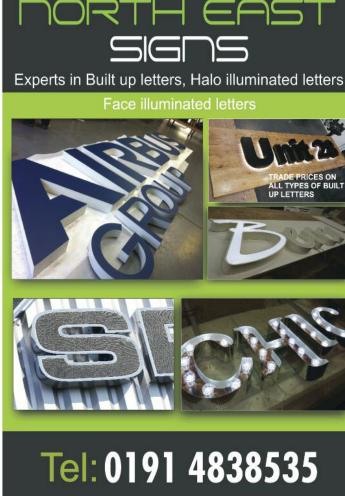


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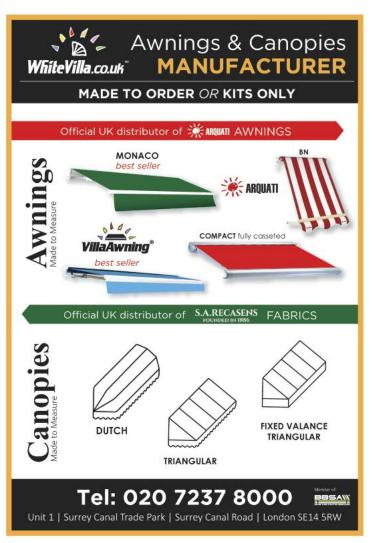




















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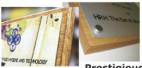


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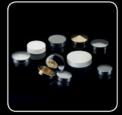
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SIGNWAVES

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