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for the sign and display industry.

See pages 56-57

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“Having looked at other tables we felt the build quality far exceeded what was on the offer on the market”

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“The accuracy of the application is very consistent even across hundreds of 8 x 4 boards”

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WELCOME Page

signs² signs

It's time to take sustainability seriously

I'm very excited to welcome you to this issue of Sign Update. This is my first as editor and also the first that has been designed and laid out by Ollie. I hope you enjoy it!

One thing we are definitely seeing more of are stories about sustainability. Our new product section is full of companies announcing certifications for green credentials, PVC-free media, recyclable media and even, for the first time, a biodegradable print media. This is great news for all of us, because it really is time for a consolidated, industry-wide focus on protecting our planet and its resources.

This summer we have seen unprecedented temperatures in the UK and Europe. The time for action has arrived and we all need to play our part. I would love to hear more about what you are doing to improve your carbon footprint. How are you adapting your products and services and are you finding your own customers supporting your efforts?

For this issue, we have a comprehensive 20-page report on flatbed printing. There are some fantastic new products available to suit a range of business sizes and budgets and we have tried to cover them as many as possible for you.

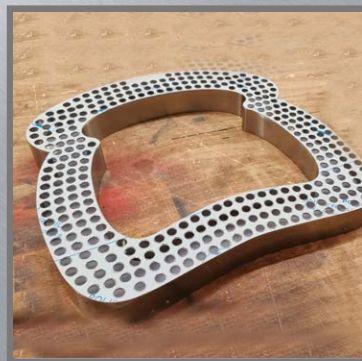
We are also looking at the more traditional sign technologies of built-up letters and illumination. I even had a go at fabricating a 3D letter myself at a Make it Happen Boot Camp, which you can read about in the feature.

There is also lots more. Please check out the special report on the Fish Town exhibition on page 14. This story shows the power of black and white imagery, in a stunning and evocative photographic case study by Steve Thornton.

We also have an exclusive interview with Soyang and Josero, a review of FESPA, a first look at the new branding for Sign & Digital UK and a report on the upcoming UK Graphic Awards.

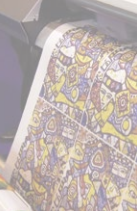
Happy signing!

Jack



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New sustainable digital print wrap film from Avery Dennison

Avery Dennison continues to make all the right moves with the launch of its latest vehicle wrap product. SP 1504 Easy Apply is a premium digital print film being introduced as part of the ever-expanding sustainable print portfolio.

SP 1504 EA is PVC-free and designed to provide a more environmentally friendly option while still maintaining the same standard of performance, excellent printability, and high conformability as other alternatives. The film is free of chlorine, phthalates and other halogens, which greatly reduces volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

SP 1504 EA is easily repositionable due to Avery Dennison's Easy Apply technology and low initial tack, meaning fewer hands are needed to complete a full wrap.

Suitable for use indoors and outdoors, SP 1504 EA can be used for a wide range of applications, including custom designs for private vehicles and branded fleet wrapping, as well as interior or exterior signage. To protect the design, it is highly recommended to overlaminate with a clear, PVC-free overlamine such as the DOL 6460 Gloss.

Other key benefits and features include the film's superb 3D conformability when wrapping demanding vehicles and fleet projects; air-egress technology to help eliminate wrinkles and bubbles; and outstanding image quality on a wide range of printers using (eco-) solvent, latex or UV inks. The film also boasts up to 10 years unprinted, and 6 years printed outdoor durability for vertical applications.

The film is covered by ICS Performance Guarantee for end-user peace of mind.

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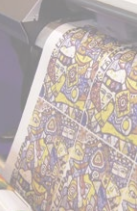
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Dorotape enhances sustainability range

Responding to industry questions about recyclability and feedback concerning the use of harmful chlorinated plastic PVC, Dorotape has expanded its range of environmentally friendly media from leading German manufacturer ASLAN.

According to Michael Ingram, Director at Dorotape, "This is the start of a long-term initiative that launches with the introduction of five self-adhesive films, all made from up to 70% post-consumer recycled polyester content, which is equivalent to 120 recycled 1.5L PET bottles."

ASLAN DRP18 transparent gloss film is a digitally printable material for both Latex and UV curable inks. "The optically clear polyester face film is made using 70 percent recycled content and benefits from a removable adhesive that can be applied wet if required, making this the ultimate environmentally friendly choice for storefront window graphics, instore displays and office and showroom partitions," he adds.

Ingram continues, "Also, for Latex and UV curable inks, ASLAN DRL19 is a printable white polyester film made with a 30 percent recycled content. This film features a specially designed Dry-Apply adhesive, which makes it quick and simple to install, eliminates bubbles and is easy to remove. ASLAN SRL 19 gloss laminate is the perfect match to protect the print and is made using 70 percent recycled polyester content. The adhesion level of this laminate makes it suitable for UV



Double-sided metallisation makes this film perfect for use on glass, acrylic and other transparent substrates

curable printed graphics and the two-part sustainable solution has fifty percent content made from recycled plastic bottles."

For those projects requiring something more eye-catching, the ASLAN CRA31 is a digitally printable metallised film available in both Silver and Gold with a semi-gloss finish. The post-consumer recycled plastic content is an impressive 70 percent and like the other products in the range, the ASLAN CRA31 is coated with a more environmentally-friendly adhesive. Printable using UV curable & Latex inks, these films can also be used as a CAD-cut

film and the double-sided metallisation makes them perfect for use on glass, acrylic and other transparent substrates.

"The ground-breaking environmental credentials of the range improve even further as all these films are coated with a solvent-free, water-based adhesive. They all offer a high level of dimensional stability so will not shrink over time and are suitable for internal and external use with an outdoor durability of up to 3 years onto smooth, flat surfaces," he says.

The two printable films, DRL19 and DRP18 are both flame-retardant according to Euroclass DIN EN 13501-1 and are suited for more sustainable digital printing in public areas, such as airports, train and bus transit hubs, schools and universities as well as shopping centres.

In conclusion, Michael Ingram adds, "Backing up their commitment of offering top-class sustainable self-adhesive products into the UK signage and graphics sector, ASLAN have produced a 'Material Comparison Guide'. This details the advantages and disadvantages of different plastics, measuring various factors such as fossil fuel consumption, CO2 emissions as well as efficient recycling options. The guide is available on request from Dorotape. Dorotape are proud to have been awarded Gold Distributor status for the ASLAN range in the UK and have stocks on the shelves ready to go."

www.dorotape.co.uk



ASLAN DRL 19 features a specially designed Dry-Apply adhesive which allows for quick and easy installation without any bubbles and offers excellent removability

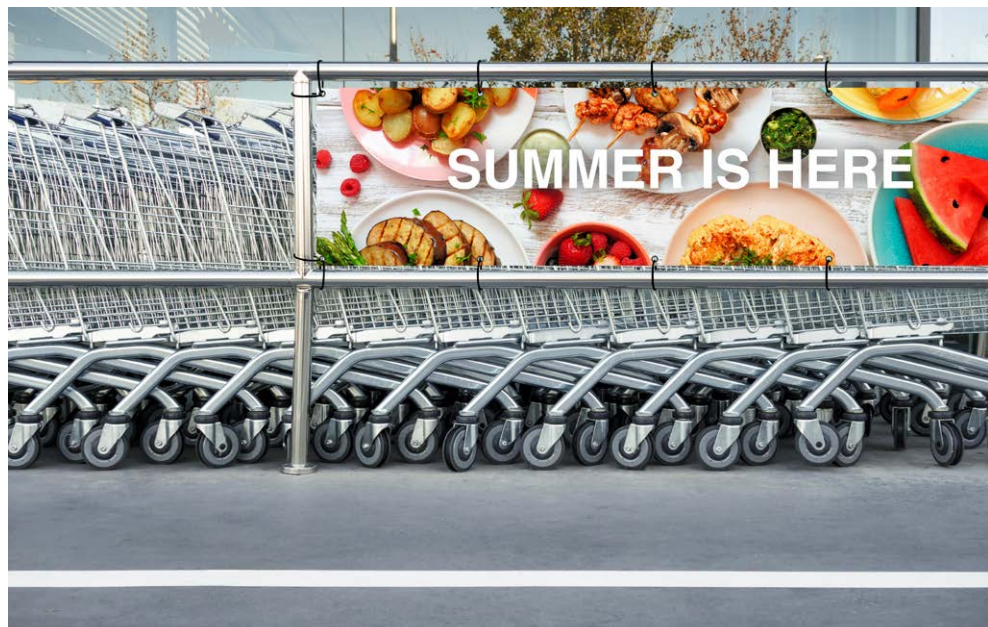
Innotech wins the race to develop the UK's first biodegradable print media

Innotech Digital & Display has launched the industry's first fully biodegradable print media. Once discarded and disposed of via the residual waste stream, Envirotech BIO250 PVC Free Biodegradable Print Media Grey Back 250g/m² FR EN13501 will decompose within 9-12 months.

Made from 100% natural fibres, the Envirotech BIO250 print media is robust, and can be printed on Latex, UV-C or Solvent machines. There is no compromise for printed display quality or durability, which is up to 2 years, but it breaks down quickly when in the right compostable conditions.

Until now, most print materials have no choice but to end up in landfill sites. This means many thousands of square metres of media simply adding to the global pollution crisis. Innotech's unique Envirotech BIO250 print media gives the display print industry a practical and effective opportunity to make a real difference to the planet.

Derek Shedden, National Sales Manager for the UK says, "This is a massive breakthrough for our industry. The pressure has been on all of us that make up the print industry to do something about our impact on the environment, and this is a massive stride in the right direction!"



Initially, this material is available in 2.2m and 3.15m widths. It's ideal for a whole host of applications such as, short term campaign banners, wall coverings, roller banners, stretched frame canvases and exhibition backdrops. In Innotech's own Eco Impact Score Tool, the product rates B, which is among the highest of all ecologically friendly materials on the market.

Shedden continues, "Whilst we understand the ultimate goal is closed-loop recycling at end of life. However, with the limited infrastructure currently available, this is the obvious solution in the meantime, especially where recovery can be difficult across multiple locations."

www.innotechdigital.com

The paw-fect sign for dog-friendly businesses

BDH Tullford's new pavement sign is a great way for dog-friendly businesses to encourage dog owners and their pets to paws and unwind.

We've always had a soft spot for our canine friends here in the UK, but dog ownership has risen to new heights since the coronavirus pandemic. According to the Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA), the UK dog population now sits at a staggering 13 million, up from an already sizeable 7.6 million in 2010. For businesses, opening up their doors to dog owners and their furry friends offers a great opportunity to increase sales.

To help local dog-friendly restaurants, cafés, pubs and shops show that they welcome dogs, Norwich-based point-of-

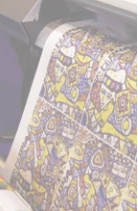
sale experts BDH Tullford, has designed an eye-catching pavement sign with a built-in water bowl. It's perfect for attracting the attention of dog owners while they're out and about with their dogs. When the pup stops to enjoy a much-needed drink on a warm day, their owners can be enticed inside by the sign's messaging, where they can get some refreshment of their own. On a crowded high street, this can really help a business to stand out from its competitors.

Each sign is easy to assemble for minimum fuss and comes with all fixings.

It costs just £85(+VAT) including delivery.

www.bdandh.co.uk





PRODUCT News

A box of magic to boost your winter sales

Did you know that from September to December, average signage order values can typically go up by around 35%? Why? Because nights draw in and clients want to be seen!

With advertising consents currently taking anywhere up to 10 weeks, now is 100% the time to start promoting illuminated signage to customers.

With the help of the Make it Happen sample case to 'Stand Out' and grab attention, one client visit resulted in someone walking away with a single order worth £26k.

If you are interested in finding out more about the 'Stand Out' case, which contains up to 9 types of illuminated signs, including RGB colour change, a RAL chart, and transparent vinyl swatches - visit the Make it Happen website and blog.

Get your orders in quick, though! Cases take three weeks to manufacture, and you won't want to miss out on a boost to your end-of-year sales.

www.makeih.co.uk



New Eco Calculator from Kavalan



The Kavalan Eco Calculator provides environmental impact comparisons between Kavalan materials and other PVC banners and textiles.

The calculator provides comparison data for five of the most common environmental impacts: global warming; water consumption; human carcinogens; PM2.5 and fossil fuel scarcity; as well as the chosen material's top 5 impact reductions. These impacts will be presented in a raw data format and easy-to-understand equivalent human impact numbers.

The raw data figures originate from the original Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs) provided by SGS. The equivalent impact numbers are derived from data collected by the UN, WHO, airlines, car manufacturers and the tobacco industry, in conjunction with the raw SGS data. It also provides a statement of WtE clean energy produced, and the equivalent CO2 emission reductions derived from data collected from Google Flights.

Rob Karpenko, Kavalan's European Director of Sales, says, "The Kavalan Eco Calculator also delivers data and insights into exactly how a switch to Kavalan can positively effect the health of people and the planet. It measures overall reduction on human health impact, environmental impact, and resource consumption for the user's chosen Kavalan product and quantity. Kavalan products are measured against 18 key environmental impacts, and the latest iteration of the Eco Calculator presents users with the top 5 reductions garnered by their chosen Kavalan product."

For now the Kavalan Eco Calculator is only available to authorised Kavalan distributors. Printers and end users are encouraged to contact their nearest distributor for more information.

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Viking has it taped with launch of new application service

Viking Industrial has launched a new tape application service. The leading UK tapes, adhesives and sealants distribution specialist has successfully adapted its in-house stable of Enimac adhesive tape application machines to provide an additional bolt-on facility.

The first contract to add double-sided tape to 21,000 flat pack cardboard boxes for a West Midlands-based print and packaging group on behalf of a multinational retail sector customer has been successfully completed.

In addition, Viking has undertaken a further contract to apply an anti-slip tape to one side of a Correx surface, with a double-sided tape to the reverse, which is being used by another client for protecting stairs in new builds in the construction sector.

Early interest is said to be encouraging, according to Viking's Technical Manager Craig Smith, who explains, "The tape application service is quick, accurate and extremely cost-effective. We have the ability to apply up to 1,000 pieces per hour and have identified significant potential to roll out the service to other customers across the UK printing, sign and contract packaging sectors."

Meanwhile, Viking continues to market potential sales of state-of-the-art Enimac machines across a multi-application end-user market after sealing a UK-wide distribution partnership with the Italian-based manufacturer late last year.

An in-house demonstration suite of the Enimac range remains in operation at Viking's headquarters in Keighley, West Yorkshire, with full details of both the

machines and product ranges posted at www.vikingtapes.co.uk



Viking Industrial's conversion manager Darren Milner with one of the Enimac adhesive tape appliance machines.

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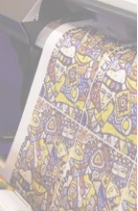


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YPS to distribute new Moditech EWS Flatbed Laminators

Your Print Specialists (YPS) is the exclusive UK distributor of Moditech's EWS 5th Generation Flatbed Laminators. These machines are uniquely designed to be perfectly aligned with the real-life, practical demands of large format print service providers and sign-makers.

EWS stands for the Electronic Work Station. They have been designed to be the most user-friendly and ergonomic workstations available anywhere in the industry. The benefits of these ergonomics can be seen in the positive impact they have on employee well-being and efficiency, which in turn helps increase efficiency, productivity and profitability.

Georgia Brown, Managing Director of YPS, says, "This really is a very special product and one that we are proud to be able to offer to our customers. Everything about the design of this machine is aimed at improving the overall user experience. It is elegant, safe and incredibly user-friendly. This machine will be an asset to any business - appreciated by staff, customers and the business owners."

Jørn Olsen, Business Development Manager, Moditech, says, "The Moditech EWS is now ready for global distribution and we are looking for the right distributors to support us in our key territories. We met Georgia and the YPS team at FESPA

and felt they would be an ideal company to work with in the UK. They were looking for a product like ours to complement their range of large format printing solutions and we feel very confident they will provide the right level of support and commitment we are looking for in an exclusive country partner."

He continues, "YPS has an excellent reputation in the industry for their products and customer service and this is very important to us. They have the passion and commitment to promote the Moditech EWS in the right way and to demonstrate the considerable operational, efficiency and ergonomic benefits the system can offer."

The Moditech EWS features include an electronically pressurised roller that makes it possible to work anywhere on the table. This means users don't have to stretch to reach areas in the middle of the table, they don't have to use supporting posts during lamination and there is much less likelihood of damaging the sign material. With the table being fully electronic, it therefore doesn't need a compressor.

"Every Moditech EWS is pre-assembled, which means it can easily fit through a normal door to get into your workshop. Each table is packed vertically to a width of 78cm - so they can be transported and

installed easily. Delivery through narrow passages and doorways is easy with the packed width of just 78cm. Even if you have a relatively small unit, thanks to the EWS workstation, a new applicator table is not out of reach due to size restrictions," adds Georgia.



Unrivalled Ergonomics

Just about everything on the EWS is adjustable. The EWS table surface tilts up to 25 degrees to ensure a comfortable working position, which is a huge benefit when working with large format prints and boards. The table height control is motorised so it is very easy to adjust it into the most comfortable position for all operators. There are also built-in wheels that are controlled electronically to make the machine easy to move, but also easy to fix in place for added safety.

"The ergonomic design of the EWS seems to have thought of everything to ensure a fantastic user experience and maximum productivity," adds Georgia. "As well as all the electronic movement that make this the most comfortable machine to use, there are hidden shelves and other handy additions that users will find makes working a lot easier and more intuitive. The workstation also has a foldable glidebeam that adds further working space when handling even larger materials."

Georgia Brown concludes, "As soon as we saw this product we knew we wanted to offer it to our customers. It is a beautifully and expertly designed product that will have a positive impact on many areas of our customers' businesses. From the quality of work and reduction of waste to the overall health and wellbeing of operators. This is a very special product and we can't wait to show it to our customers."

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THE FALL OF FISH TOWN

THE STORY OF A LOST INDUSTRY BROUGHT TO LIFE WITH EPSON MONOCHROMATIC PRINTING

Grimsby is synonymous with the fishing industry. In the incredible Fish Town collection, photographer Steve Thornton has captured the way of life in the fishing port prior to changes in EU health and safety laws in 1990. He then returned in 2020 as the UK left the EU to document the change.

In 2020, the Grimsby Fish Port has become a high-tech, multi-billion pound global seafood trading port. There is none of the hustle and bustle of daily filleting, storing and trading. But the areas where all this happened up until 30 years ago remain mostly untouched. *Continued on next page...*



“Prior to the laws coming in, the fishing docks was a bustling, thriving industrial ‘town within a town’. 30 years on, there are no people and no soul.”

***-Steve Thornton,
Photographer***





THE FALL OF FISH TOWN

"Prior to the laws coming in, the fishing docks was a bustling, thriving industrial 'town within a town'. 30 years on, there are no people and no soul," says photographer, Steve Thornton.

It is this incredible transformation that Steve has captured. When the photographs were exhibited at the Humber Gallery in Grimsby in July, it had a huge emotional impact on the community.

This is an important collection of images that captures history in the making and provides eternal memories of a relatively recently lost way of life.

The relationship between Steve and Epson started with a chance meeting at the Photography Show with Epson's Business Manager - Commercial & Industrial, Nick White, himself a keen photographer with an interest in coastal life.

"I was absolutely fascinated by this project," says Nick. "All my life I have lived by the coast and I used to go out with fishermen a lot (despite being allergic to fish!). Epson has a long tradition of supporting artists and photographers and I really wanted us to provide Steve with everything he needed to ensure the success of the project."

Steve purchased an Epson P-900 A2 printer and has reproduced all the prints himself on Epson PhotoPaper 300gsm. "There is no skill required to use an Epson printer. Just connect it and press print. But the results are stunning!" says Steve.

Nick adds, "Epson uses K3 inks, which includes three densities of black ink. This means our monochrome reproductions are absolutely spot on."

Steve agrees, "What I see on my screen is exactly what comes out of the printer. This means I can produce digitally printed images that look like traditional analogue. This is perfect for this collection, much of which is set in what looks as much like 60 years ago as 30."

Epson also provided Steve with 64" prints for the collection from their head office in Hemel. "It is amazing to think that a 35mm photo could be blown up to 2 metres without any loss in image quality. The Epson truly is a stunning printer," concludes Steve.

www.epson.co.uk
www.stevethornton.co.uk



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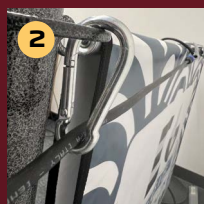


How the Hospitality Barrier Light works

The scheme here shows 9 x 1500mm barriers with a 1000mm gangway. We can advise you on the right combination of equipment to suit your venue perfectly.



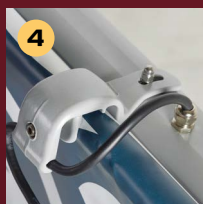
1 Wall box with feed link cable to first barrier



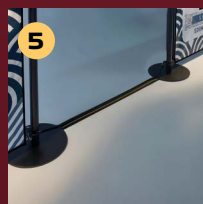
2 4mm carabina clip cable management



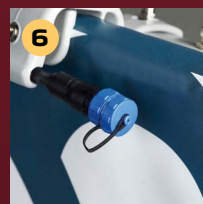
3 Link cable available in various lengths



4 Cable tidy slot on rear of bracket



5 Gangway entrance with floor cable protector



6 End cable waterproof dust cap

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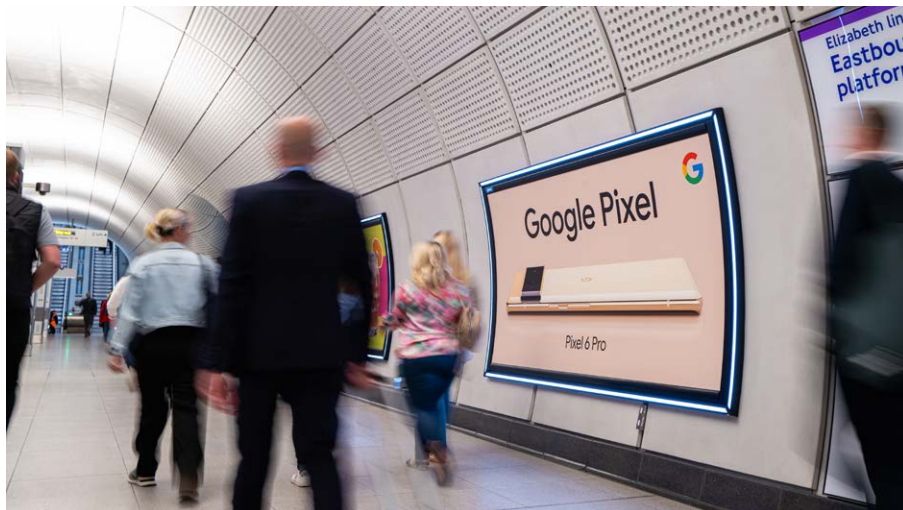


New Elizabeth line launches with 12-sheet Halo Media

Thousands of passengers have now had their first taste of the new Elizabeth line since it opened on 24th May. They also got their first sight of new 12-sheet Halo Media Panels manufactured by Newmarket-based graphic display specialist arken P-O-P International.

The Halo Panels, created for outdoor advertising company, Global, provide a compelling 'unmissable' opportunity for brands, agencies and advertisers looking for a canvas to truly stand out and, will eventually, reach up to an estimated 170 million passengers who are expected to use the line each year by 2026. With nine brand new stations, the Elizabeth line is the most significant addition to London's transport network in decades.

Arken P-O-P International business development director Paul Smart comments, "To partner with Global and TfL on this landmark project is a proud moment for everyone here at arken – particularly in this special Jubilee year. Manufacturing media panels of this style and size presented many complex challenges – requiring a high-level of engineering expertise. The success of the solution also required close collaboration between our creative design team, engineering and development teams, outdoor media company Global, and TfL. With such a technical project, it was essential to ensure the strict safety regulations were met, without compromising the desire for a premium passenger-side media solution."



Global's head of engineering and product, John Skelton, adds, "The design and technical expertise for this work is considerable. Providing an agile solution allowed for manageable deliveries to individual locations and movement of components on site. We could also continue to present the brand identity and offer clients impactful, consistent advertising across the Elizabeth line stations."

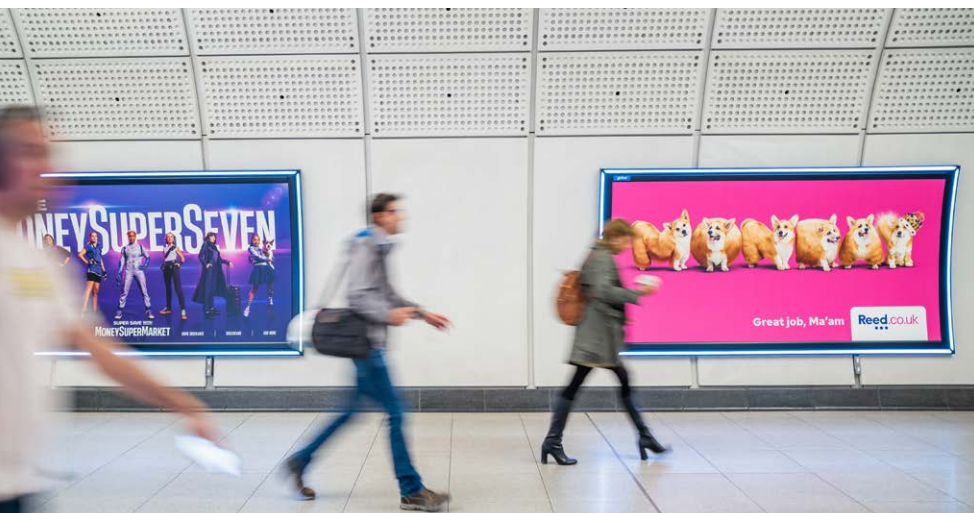
The 12-Sheet Halo Media Panels feature curved and flat toughened glass, printed opal diffusers, and 6000 kelvin white LED illumination to create impact. They were produced with an aluminium back panel to allow for non-toxic dry-posting application and aluminium Ultragrip top and bottom sections to retain printed images. They also have updateable LED lighting and integral power supplies.



The Halo Panels were designed, technically developed, and manufactured by arken P-O-P International to suit varying diameter tunnels and flat walls in passenger tunnels within all stations along the Elizabeth line. Each tunnel was digitally measured, ensuring the media panels were produced to the exact dimensions, with only a 10mm tolerance. This data was then translated by arken's development and engineering teams who produced a bespoke Media Panel solution for every passenger tunnel in the stations.

Due to tunnel access restrictions, the Halo panels were designed to be produced and constructed such that it could be carried by hand via the escalators to the tunnel for assembly and installation.

www.arken-pop.com
www.global.com



5m EFI VUTEk to increase volume for CoverUp



Dublin-based print services provider, CoverUp, has invested in a new EFI VUTEk Q5r printer. The 5m UV LED printer has been purchased from CMYUK to enhance production capabilities thanks to improved quality, higher speed and significantly increased volume throughput.

CoverUp's Operations Director, Anthony Byrne says, "It will open up new business for us because we can do everything quicker; that's what we're really pushing for - an increase in volume."

The EFI VUTEk V5r is a 5m UV LED printer that will provide CoverUp with a more versatile printing solution because of the wide range of application capabilities it offers. This includes double-sided printing, textiles, and more.

Finisher

CoverUp started out in 1976 as a manufacturer and finisher of exterior PVC and canvas coverings for machinery, vehicles, boats and industrial plants. By the mid 80s the company extended into banner finishing, but it was not until 2005 that it moved into digital printing.

These days the company offers a wide variety of applications, including dye-sublimated textiles for soft signage, through to rigid signage, flags, banners, and building wraps. It operates from two sites in the Dublin region – Sandyford and Clondalkin – and employs 16 staff.

"We mostly deal with the trade. Small companies all over Ireland including Northern Ireland. They're happy for us to do their printing and send it out by courier the next day," says Anthony.

The business has grown to become one of the largest finishers of large banners and building wraps in the whole of Ireland. "Because we started off manufacturing large covers, we had a head start from a finishing point of view and that's just continued," he says.

CMYUK & EFI

CoverUp is no stranger to the VUTEk brand of EFI printers. It was the first in the world to purchase the VUTEk FabriVU 340i back in 2018 when it was looking to replace its M-Tex printers. "The FabriVU 340i was the best we could find on the market at the time for direct printing and inline direct fixation. We bought it from CMYUK and then just continued buying materials from them," says Anthony.

"We didn't want to go down the paper transfer route because that's not the market we're in. We get called up and asked if we can print a banner for next day delivery. Printing the roll and then putting it through a heat press wasn't the way for us," he says.

Prior to the purchase of the VUTEk Q5r, CoverUp had established a trusted relationship with CMYUK for its materials supply, so when it came to purchasing a new UV printer, there was never any doubt about where to go.

"CMYUK has been an excellent support for us. Joel Willcock [CMYUK Materials Commercial Director] had visited us a couple of times and so when we were having awful problems with our then materials supplier, we decided to give CMYUK a trial. Brett Platt [Textiles Business Manager] came over and profiled CMYUK's textiles for the FabriVU, transforming our operation and understanding of dye-sublimation. Likewise, once the Q5r printer was installed, Amira Bouchiba [CMYUK's Academy Manager] did the same for our new UV capabilities – making us far more efficient by streamlining our workflow processes. All of this has been key to our success in production," says Anthony.

Recognising its versatility, CoverUp has been experimenting with printing UV images for lightboxes and blackout for display in addition to its traditional digital dye sublimation output.

Anthony concludes, "The Q5r has instantly had an impact on production. It's really going to help us do what we do now but even better. It'll bring in additional business and we can maximise its potential for our clients. PVC, canvas, Artex, vinyl and backlit – anything that's possible to print – that's what we'll be doing."

www.cmyuk.com
www.coverup.ie

Buses you can't miss

Edinburgh-based Gordana Graphics has used its HP Latex 700 to produce stunning graphics for five local sightseeing buses in Scotland.

The family-owned vehicle livery and branding specialist was founded this year by Tracey Shanks and her partner Scott Macpherson. Their aim was to deliver high-quality vehicle branding services to a wide range of clients.

Tracey has extensive experience fitting graphics to buses and this expertise was instrumental in Gordana Graphics being awarded its first job as a fully operational business in March of this year by Lothian Buses. Gordana Graphics worked closely with the Lothian in-house graphic design team to produce interior and exterior vinyl for five Edinburgh Bus Tour sightseeing buses.

The project was focused on the new 'Cobbles' Tour', which offers tourists the opportunity to see the sights around Edinburgh from an open top bus. As the tours are targeted at families with younger children, each of the wraps was required to feature a colourful, friendly design, complete with 'Cobbles' the Scotty dog mascot.

Gordana Graphics used its HP Latex 700, which was purchased from HP reseller Perfect Colours and installed in March of this year to support the business with its launch and produce all of the graphics for the project, including the large-scale exterior graphics and the smaller prints for the inside of each bus.



Gordana Graphics uses HP Latex 700 to produce graphics for five local sightseeing buses in Scotland. Photo credit: Keith McGillivray

Each of the buses required between 60m and 70m of graphics for the exterior wrap, but as Tracey explained, the HP Latex 700 was able to handle this with ease, producing extremely high-quality prints.

"The print quality of the HP Latex 700 is beautiful; there was a lot of yellow on the Cobbles buses but there was zero banding," said Tracey, who serves as Director of Operations at Gordana Graphics. "It was a lovely solid print that was set at an eight-pass, so we were really pleased with the final results.

"I've worked with HP Latex printers for a number of years now and I always find them easy to work with as they are so user-friendly. From changing the ink cartridges or printheads to loading material, HP always has the end user in mind."

Tracey added that the environmentally friendly nature of the HP Latex printer delivered added value for the team at Lothian Buses. HP Latex printers run on water-based HP Latex inks, which deliver a significantly more eco-conscious print than UV, eco-solvent or solvent inks.

"More businesses are increasingly looking for an

eco-friendlier approach, especially in the public transport bus sector, where a large proportion of companies are investing heavily in electric or hydrogen buses," Tracey continues. "Having water-based inks and the option of PVC-free films shows these companies we are investing and trying to do our bit for the planet."

Production of the graphics took around one week to print, laminate and cut out on a Kala 1650-65 laminator, Summa 160 S2 Class T Series Opos CAM cutter and RollsRoller Flatbed applicator. A team of four then fitted the wraps over a period of seven days.

"Lothian Buses were absolutely delighted with the finished article and, from what I hear, the public liked them too," Tracey adds. "The HP Latex 700 played a major role in the success of the project.

"For me, the benefits of the printer – setting aside how great the print quality is – include that it doesn't take up too much space and that the maintenance is so easy, as the operator can easily replace the printheads without the need of an engineer.

"I would highly recommend the HP Latex 700!"

www.gordanagraphics.co.uk
www.hp.co.uk



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Model shown: Mimaki CJV330-160

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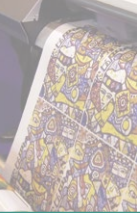
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Flatbed Printing

RAISING THE BAR



AGAIN

With the introduction of the eagerly anticipated **Mimaki JFX600-2513** high production flatbed printer to the UK and Irish market, it's an exciting time in the sign and display market. It's also a great opportunity to reflect on how Mimaki has got here, through its enviable track record of delivering innovative, large format flatbeds.



Martin Southworth, Reseller Account Manager at Hybrid Services Ltd tells us about the Mimaki's credentials in flatbed printing.

Mimaki showed its first big flatbed printer at IPEX 2006. At that time it was quite a departure for the company who was best known for its ground breaking textile, solvent and aqueous models. With a pioneering small format UV printer launched a year or two prior, Mimaki already had some traction in the sector, rapidly gaining a reputation for exceptionally high print quality at a time where UV printer output was not renowned for its high definition.

Subsequent years delivered generation after generation of advancements across every aspect of the technology. Consistently upping the productivity, quality and ease of use with each launch, a pivotal and comparatively recent release was the JFX200-2513. This 8' x 4' LED UV cure flatbed swiftly became the biggest selling model on the market.

A pioneer of LED UV technology, Mimaki has built its UV flatbed and roll-to-roll ranges around the cold cure lamp technology for well over a decade. With considerable environmental, production and cost saving benefits, what is now considered the norm was developed extensively by Mimaki at a time when almost every other manufacturer persisted with expensive and unwieldy metal halide

2.5D print produced on the Mimaki JFX200-2513EX LED UV flatbed printer



lamps. Just one example of Mimaki's forward-thinking approach to product design, we now see the Japanese manufacturer embracing 'Industry 4.0' with significant focus on robotics, automation and other technologies designed to reduce manual intervention, maximise productivity and minimise wasted time and materials.

With the new JFX600-2513 capable of printing an 8' x 4' board in under a minute, the productivity pinch points cease to be the print element. This is why the focus from Mimaki is on investigating other areas of the process, such as communicating with loading and unloading robotics. Headline speeds aren't the only reason for the interest and excitement around the new JFX600 though; with an unrivalled ink range, its suitability for almost every conceivable UV printing application is guaranteed, with 5 different levels of flexible inks available for the new model.

In real world terms, this means the optimum ink can be specified to suit a print company's target work. For businesses focussed on rigid signage, the durable and scratch resistant LH100 ink may be most suitable, whereas a business specialising in printing onto more pliable substrates would benefit from an ink such as Mimaki's LUS-150 option, which contains a high degree of flexibility.

The ability to choose not just inks, but bed size and productivity requirements means Mimaki's comprehensive flatbed range (that extends from A3 models right up to 10' x 5' solutions) offers an unparalleled choice. Businesses can specify the most appropriate system for their needs that's still scalable and flexible enough to adapt as they evolve. The arrival of the new JFX600 gives us a very special solution at the sharp end of the range. The technology found on the new high-production model rapidly cascades down to the rest of the line-up, with the A3 and A2 UJFs sporting features found on previous high end industrial solutions.

We're looking forward to raising the flatbed printing bar again with the new JFX600. This headline solution, along with the extensive options across the Mimaki range offer impressive, sector-defining features, production and creativity; providing businesses with industry-proven flatbed technology that's capable of elevating any company's print output.

Product Highlight: Mimaki JFX200-2513EX

Renowned for its high quality of output and the creative potential it offers, the Mimaki JFX200-2513EX is the 8' x 4' flatbed printer of choice. Mimaki's most popular grand format flatbed utilises a combination of white, clear and process inks to print to a vast array of rigid substrates using LED UV curing technology. Its 2.5m x 1.3m print area maximises the potential for printing to standard 8' x 4' boards, and with a head gap of 50mm, it is capable of printing to a wide variety of materials.



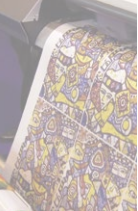
The best-selling Mimaki JFX200-2513EX flatbed printer

An impressive feature set includes several of Mimaki's Core Technologies – proprietary innovations designed to deliver optimum print quality and usability with the minimum user intervention. These comprise the integration of its NCU and NRS systems for automatically detecting and resolving nozzle firing issues and the company's MAPS system that, through the use of an advanced algorithm, prints optimum gradation patterns on each pass.

The JFX200-2513EX incorporates an innovative 2.5D Emboss Print mode, enabling multiple layers of ink to be printed to add a textured effect to the print – adding creative, tactile finishes that combine colour and smooth, raised surfaces. Whether used artistically to stylise a creative piece of work, or to add important information to signage such as Braille characters, it offers significant added value.

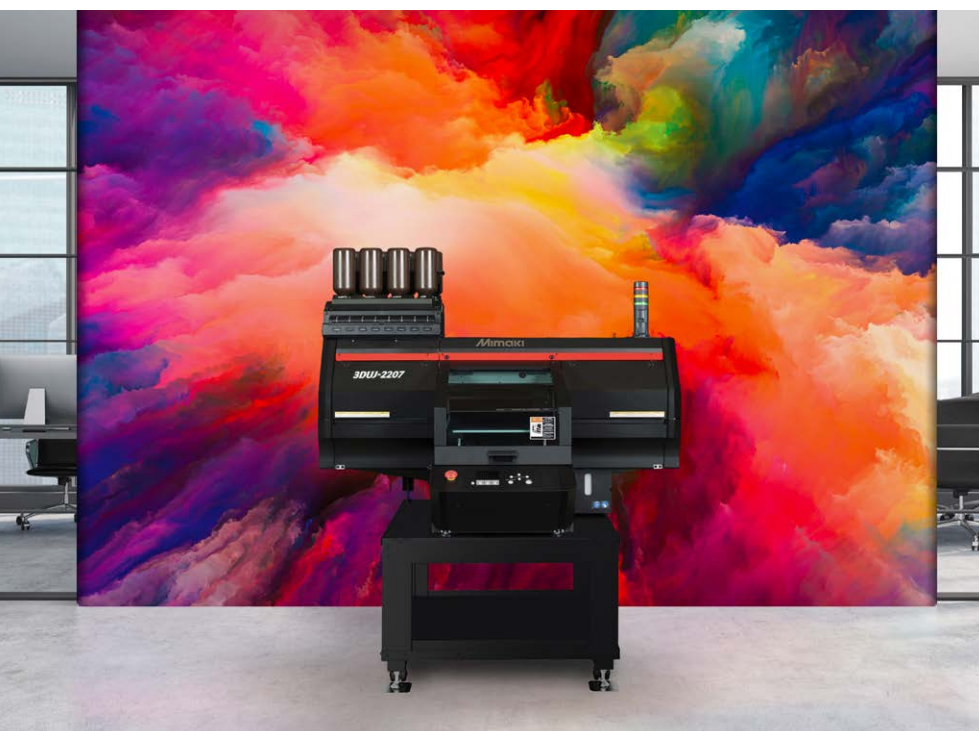
With white and clear ink options, the JFX200-2513EX can produce vibrant, impactful graphics on coloured and clear substrates, offering great flexibility, and a choice of ink sets ensures that almost any material can be printed to. Finally, it's possible to print using a primer that enables ink to key to even the most demanding of substrates, extending the printer's capabilities even further.

www.hybridservices.co.uk
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Flatbed Printing

RA Smart leads on Flatbed 3D printing



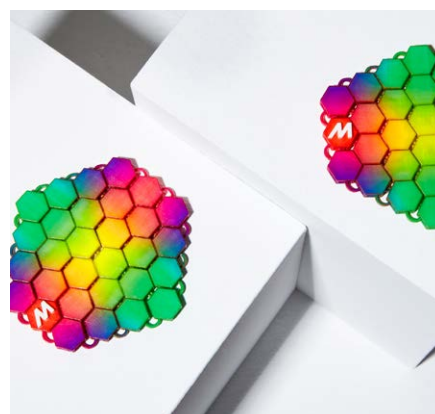
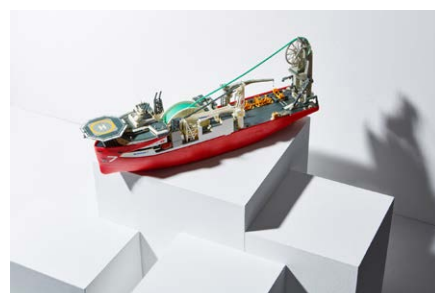
Whilst it has been around for quite some time, 3D printing may not be the first thing you think of when discussing flatbed printers. However, Mimaki's ever expanding range of cutting-edge machines means they are now more capable and affordable than ever before. With the capacity to print in full colour, as well as mix in clear ink to create varying levels of transparency, the possibilities are vast and the range is quickly grabbing the attention of users in a variety of industries.

In particular, it's the new Mimaki 3DUJ-2207 that is drawing a lot of attention. This compact unit, with a maximum modelling size of 203mm x 203mm x 76mm comes in at just under £35,000. That's an attractive price point for a machine that can print more than 10 million colours – the highest in the 3D printing industry. Plus, thanks to Mimaki's heritage in the 2D printing market, the 3DUJ-2207 also supports ICC profiles for accurate colour matching and predictable results.

Adam Booth, Partner at RA Smart, says, "Drawing further on their expertise in 2D inkjet printing, Mimaki's 3D offering can produce complex designs with incredible levels of detail. Their unique waveform control and high-precision jetting technology means that the 3DUJ-2207 can enter markets where accuracy is critical, such as medical research and architecture as well as prototyping and even gaming."

He adds, "The printer uses a water-soluble support material during the object formation process, which doesn't need to be scraped off. This means it's easy to remove the material without damaging the object and allows users to easily create complex and delicate designs."

Due to the compact design of the 3DUJ-2207, it can fit comfortably into most establishments – even when space is at a premium. It only requires 2.0 x 2.3m of space to operate and has a low noise level, so the 3DUJ-2207 is suitable for most office environments. However, if you need something bigger then there's always the opportunity to scale up to the bigger 3DUJ-553, which can print in full colour at approximately 50 x 50 x



30cm – a larger maximum bed size than most comparable 3D printers!

The benefits of 3D printing can be immense.

Adopters of the technology are able to measure this in a variety of ways, depending on their application. Sure, there is the typical business model of printing a product to then sell, however, unlike with 2D printing, which isn't representative of the larger marketplace. 3D print can also generate an ROI based on the samples and prototypes it can create. For example, architectural firms can generate new business by demoing accurately scaled down representations of their projects to show clients.

Adam Booth concludes, "Signage companies can also offer 'value added' sculptures to compliment exhibition stands and help their work stand out from the crowd. Furthermore, the scope of use for educational establishments – whether it be medical, engineering or even design departments is huge."

If you'd like to learn more about the exciting opportunities that await in the 3 dimensional world of print then contact RA Smart (Large Format).

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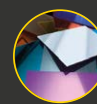
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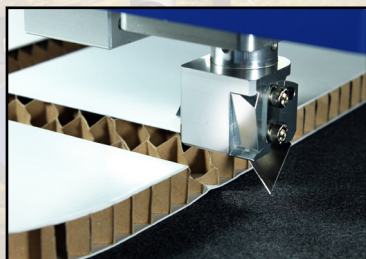
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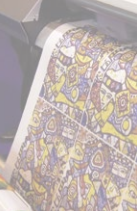
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Flatbed Printing

Roland flatbed printers make their mark

The concept of flatbed printing has been around for quite some time. More than 200 years ago, the first cylinder flatbed press, powered by steam, was invented in Germany by Friedrich Koenig and Andreas Bauer. The flatbed printers, more typical of what we see today, first emerged in the 1990s. Since then, they have evolved into machines which are renowned for the versatility they provide.

Capable of delivering high-quality graphics onto a vast range of flexible and rigid objects and substrates, from metal, plastic and board to wood, canvas, vinyl and paper, flatbed printers play a key role in creating personalised objects, signs and graphics, and packaging proofs.

Crucially, in today's tough economic climate, they provide important cost-saving opportunities and shorter time-to-market in many instances.

Francisco Lozano, Product Manager – UV & Cutters at Roland DG, says, “Roland DG’s VersaUV LEC2 S-Series represents the latest in flatbed printer innovation. Comprising four flatbed models to fit a range of configurations, environments, and requirements, the S-Series is the ideal next step for existing users of benchtop UV printers or as an upgrade for existing users – in other words, businesses looking to enter the world of UV printing or those with more ‘industrial-scale’ requirements.”

Demonstrating real-world impact

The S-Series has stood up to the most meticulous eyes for detail. Take the case of Walter Zerla. A renowned professional Italian photographer boasting an outstanding career in advertising, fashion, and design both in his home country and abroad, he sought to print his photographs directly onto new materials to open up a new world of artistic experimentation.

Quickly fascinated by the UV printing sphere, he evaluated several flatbed printer brands and opted for the Roland VersaUV LEC2-640S-F300, to expand on the range of applications to include backlit prints, large-format canvases, decorative panels, and glowing lamps – products which have proven popular additions to the interiors of offices, showrooms, hotel rooms and trade fair exhibitions.

Zerla also explored the option of printing and reproducing his photographs of water effects on plexiglass, and most impressed by the S-Series’ high-fidelity colour reproduction, level of detail and colourimetry.

Lozano adds, “Another key feature of the S-Series is the ability to print onto objects up to 200mm in height or thickness. What’s more, the new Distance print mode to print on objects having non-flat surface (up to 8 mm distance), or objects with sphere and cylindrical shapes.”

This has proven invaluable to Italian clockmaker Progetti Ltd, owned by Gian Paolo. Recently, the firm’s growth ambitions were being stifled by a lack of an in-house solution to print on thicker objects, with key processes having to be outsourced. This hindered the business from a quality control perspective and ate into its margins.

After visiting Roland DG in Acquaviva Picena, Paolo discovered the potential of Roland DG’s flatbed printers, opting for the VersaUV LEC2-640S-F200. Since installing the machine, Progetti Ltd can now print directly onto glass, wood, stone, marble, and terracotta tiles, empowering the company’s versatility to enter its next growth phase.

Francisco Lozano concludes, “Flatbed printing continues to unlock artistic and creative potential across various businesses. Many have highly bespoke needs, which is why Roland DG can offer tailored versions of the S-Series on request to those who need alternative bed lengths or even a belt printer option. Businesses seeking versatility, fast turnarounds and unparalleled quality need look no further than today’s highly innovative pool of flatbed printers.”

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Walter Zerla

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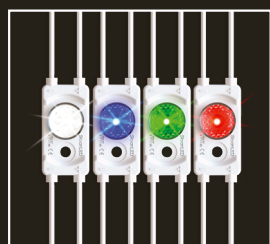
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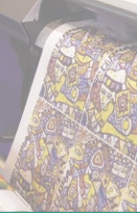


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Flatbed Printing

Enter the Matrix with Vivid

Flatbed printing is not all about the printers. You might also need a print finishing system that can deliver lamination and other effects.

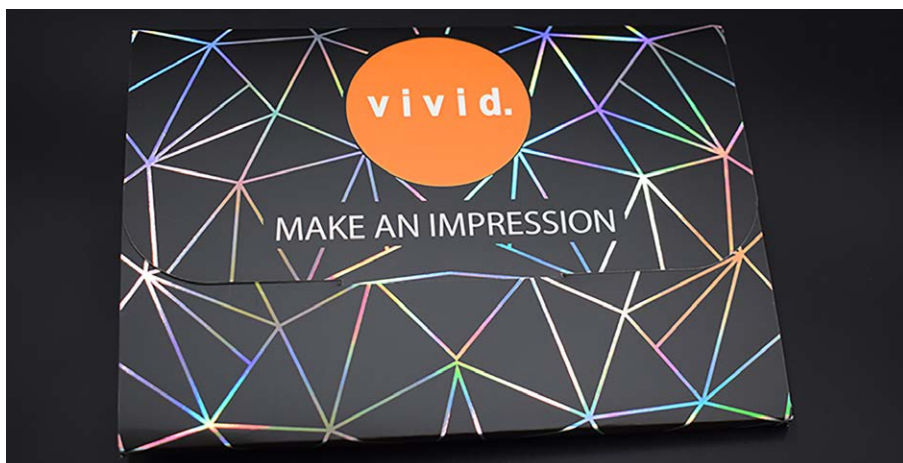
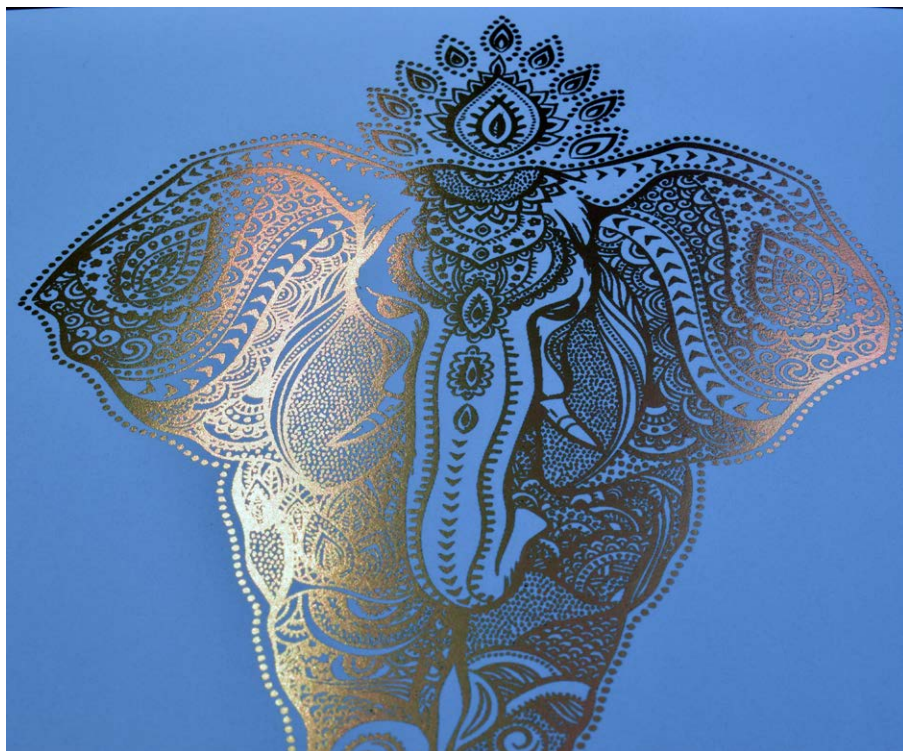
Michael Conti, Marketing Manager for Vivid Laminating Technologies Ltd, says, "Vivid are Europe's leading designers and manufacturers of lamination, foil and spot UV effect solutions and print finishing systems of the highest quality. All designed to protect, enhance, finish or embellish your print reliably and cost-effectively. By listening to our customers' requirements and constantly improving our systems, we've been leading the world of lamination, foil and print finishing technologies with the most innovative solutions in the marketplace."

He continues, "The award-winning Matrix OPP roll film laminators are designed by Vivid, and manufactured using the most durable, high-quality parts. A selection of both single and double-sided thermal laminating systems enables businesses to bring print finishing in-house and reduce spend on outsourcing, which we know can be costly."

Print that has been laminated or had a foil or spot UV type effect applied will attract more attention than print without. Lamination enhances and protects printed materials, whilst foils and effects add perceived value. In the past some of these processes were only economically viable for large print runs but with the Matrix, this is no longer the case. The Matrix enables lamination and embellishments of short-run digital print simply and economically.

The Matrix is designed for on-demand lamination, foiling and spot UV type effects. The process is straightforward and stunning special effects are easily achievable without complex set-up or origination dyes. Laminates and effects can be applied in minutes for just pennies per page but add significant value.

"Designed as a modular system the Matrix can be added to as your business grows. For example, you could add an Omni-Flow deep pile automatic feeder, which can be retrofitted to all Matrix Pneumatic and Duplex models. Pneumatic rollers and precise temperature control on the Matrix mean that jobs will run consistently from start-to-finish and can be repeated reliably at a later date, minimising waste on each job and saving money. The Matrix allows a printer to offer economical services in-house that might otherwise have to be outsourced with cost and time implications," concludes Michael Conti.





INTRODUCTION TO MATRIX

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Available in English, French, German, Spanish and Italian. The exclusive patented multi-lingual control panel is user friendly and easy to get to grips with.

A SPECIALIST IN LAMINATING

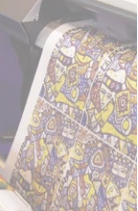
Matrix Pneumatic, Duplex and Standard models are all designed and built as specialist laminating systems. A high-performance steel roller enables rapid production without compromising on results.

ANTI-CURL TECHNOLOGY

Our unique anti-curl technology, in sync with the control panel, ensures that whatever you laminate – a menu, a book cover or a sheet of business cards – comes out flat with no curl or uplift.

www.vivid-online.com





Flatbed Printing



The complete flatbed solution

Trading for over 25 years, Showlite has earned a reputation for being one of the most trustworthy and professional event and exhibition contractors in the industry. The company has a head office in Andover, a manufacturing base just outside Pontypool, and satellite offices in Birmingham and London.

Showlite places a strong emphasis on design and creativity, employing a team of experienced designers, artworkers and print/finishers. The company supplies bespoke solutions as well as its own established modular designs. Drawing on these skills and resources allows the company to cater for all budgets and the most demanding briefs.

In early 2020, Showlite moved its manufacturing base from Newport to Pontypool, just up the road. The brand new 11-bay building offered vastly improved facilities and the timing of the move, just as the Covid lockdown began, created a unique opportunity. The team at Showlite had time to analyse and adjust the layout of the new building to accommodate current manufacturing requirements and plan investment in new methods of production to streamline the business.

Up until the 2020 move, Showlite had outsourced all its print requirements, but bringing digital printing in-house was high on the agenda. When a decision was made to create a new printing department, Operations Manager Eddy Jayne and Head of Design Craig Bryant were tasked with going out to the marketplace to explore the best fit for Showlite. The decision to invest in a new digital facility meant that an entire department would literally be built around the proposed new machinery. After careful consideration, a large format, high speed Jetrix LXi7 LED flatbed digital printer was ordered. The next step was to look at a finishing solution for the materials printed on the Jetrix.

Creating new revenue streams

Craig used his experience of CAD/CAM and knowledge of the print world, as well as online research and industry publications to draw up a shortlist of digital cutter providers. When Craig compared his findings with Eddy, one name stood out... DYSS, the digital cutter range offered by AG/CAD. Craig explains "In a previous job I had experience using a cutter supplied by AG/CAD, and so already had confidence in the products and backup offered by the company."



The DYSS X7-1630T creates perfectly vertical straight edges, which is required where multiple printed panels of Foamex are butted together to create a larger, seamless panel

A demonstration was carried out at AG/CAD on the DYSS X5 and DYSS X7 digital cutters. Both ranges of machine use a similar zero-backlash drive system for accurate finishing, but the X7 adds a routing capability. Although Showlite currently only processes 3mm Foam PVC, which can be knife-cut on either the X5 or X7, the decision was made to futureproof the cutting facility by specifying a router.

"I could see so many possibilities, not only for a more efficient and precise workflow but also new products and revenue streams," says Craig.

The DYSS X7-1630T with its two tangentially controlled tool slots and high-precision, high-frequency router was the standout investment option. A 1600 x 3050mm bed allowed for 10 x 5' sheet finishing and married up well with the Jetrix printer. The modular exhibition stands supplied by Showlite consist of an aluminium frame, plug & play electrics and tailored 3mm foam PVC panels. The panels can be supplied with creative, graphic-rich print all now produced on the new digital printer and cutter. The combination of the Jetrix LXi7 and the DYSS X7 allow for a high level of production, with all order requirements being fulfilled within a single shift.

Craig explains about the DYSS X7 installation. "AG/CAD supplied training tailored to our business and in two days we were able to complete our workflow from print to pack. The machine itself is equally as impressive and far beyond what I expected."

All the cutting tools you need

At Showlite, the DYSS X7 is equipped with tangential knife tools (TKT) to cut the foam PVC material. Tungsten carbide blades are used for longevity and accuracy. The production team utilise the versatility of the two-tool head, with a standard heavy-duty blade in one tool slot, and a second tool with a specialised blade. The first tool is used for general high-speed cutting, while the second tool is specifically designed to create a perfectly vertical straight edge, which is required where multiple printed panels of Foamex are butted together to create a larger, seamless panel.

An added benefit of the investment in the new building, facilities, and digital equipment at Showlite is that it has attracted new staff keen to enhance their careers in a committed, forward-thinking and expanding business. Experience gained from new employees in the department has led the company to explore alternative materials for exhibition stands, furniture and sustainable products.

A 1600 x 3050mm bed allows for 10 x 5' sheet finishing, which marries up well with the Jetrix printer

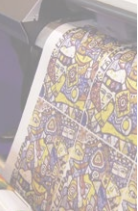
Sustainable media

Paper-based honeycomb board is an excellent sustainable material that can be offered as an alternative to conventional foam PVC. A strong, structural material with an excellent print surface, honeycomb can be finished using the DYSS X7. The reciprocating knife tool (RKT) makes easy work of cutting even the toughest fibreboard materials. The addition of the XVT V-cutting tool means that thicker honeycomb and other materials that are difficult or impossible to crease can be mitre folded. As with all DYSS machines, additional tooling can easily be added later as new materials/markets are identified.

The investment in the digital facility at Showlite has contributed to efficiency throughout the business. Craig concludes, "We have experienced significant time and cost savings throughout the operation, and now have full in-house quality management. The DYSS X7-1630T installation has reduced lead times, improved efficiency and provides the potential to expand the product range on offer to our exclusive customer base. The market-leading build quality and expandable versatility of the DYSS X7, mean that Showlite will reap the benefits from the investment in DYSS for decades to come."

www.agcad.co.uk





Flatbed Printing

Fujifilm's Blueprint for success

Print technology has come a long way over the past few decades, with digital inkjet growing from a little-known, niche technology in the 1990s to almost completely replacing screen printing 20 years on. With levels of speed and quality we couldn't have imagined at the turn of the millennium, inkjet now dominates the sign and display market.

In more recent years, technological advancements have slowed down – to the point of plateauing – because the speed and quality widely available is the best it's ever been. More on that later though.

Kevin Jenner, European Marketing Manager, Fujifilm Wide Format Inkjet Systems, says, "Going forward, I think we'll see more of a focus on making printing technology more sustainable. The machines themselves may not be quicker or faster, but they'll use less energy and perhaps print with – and on – more environmentally friendly materials."

He continues, "Additionally, I anticipate that machines will be made with more recyclable parts. Instead of buying an entirely new printer when the user wants to improve and enhance their production lines, they might only need to upgrade or replace relevant parts of the machine."

Thinking back to printing technology being the 'best it's ever been' - consumers today don't necessarily want all the bells and whistles because they are often expensive and they may not need them. What they require are robust, reliable and versatile machines that are suitable for a range of jobs; delivering speed and quality in a cost-effective manner.

The need for printing businesses to adapt and make best use of versatile machines across a range of printing applications has become even more apparent during and since the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Three years ago, Fujifilm went back to the drawing board to define a 'new blueprint for wide format'. Completely redesigned from the ground up, the resulting new Acuity machines – released from 2021

onwards – offer maximum quality and productivity, ease-of-use and ROI," adds Jenner.

The Acuity Prime L

The Acuity Prime L was launched at FESPA 2022 earlier this year. The flatbed press, a larger version of the Acuity Prime 20 and Acuity Prime 30 (released in 2021), offers high quality printing on a range of rigid and flexible media, across a maximum print area of 3200mm x 2000mm and at a headline print speed of 202m²/hr.

"Offering high quality printing on both rigid and flexible media, the versatile, large format Acuity Prime L is helping print businesses to overcome the challenges of the current market landscape," he says, adding, "The Acuity Prime L is easy to operate, produces high quality results at high speed, features six vacuum zones and 16 media location pins. Additionally, it has the ability to print side-by-side jobs with its dual zone function, for maximum flexibility."

Uvijet HM – an ink system formulated specifically for the Acuity Prime series – provides excellent adhesion to a broad range of substrates while also producing a wide colour gamut. The ink range is optimised to produce high quality, vibrant images day-in, day-out.

In addition, a new jettable primer improves adhesion further for particularly challenging substrates. This removes the need for the offline pre-treatment of substrates before printing, saving time and money.

Available with up to seven ink

channels (CMYK, plus white, clear and primer) the Acuity Prime L with Uvijet HM offers the ultimate versatility and value by providing the flexibility for print businesses to customise it to their own needs.

Kevin Jenner concludes, "Ultimately, as with the other presses in Fujifilm's new Acuity range, the Acuity Prime L is built upon the company's knowledge and expertise, while at the same time offering unbeatable standards of performance, exceptional value, superb versatility and ease-of-use. Not to mention the best ROI available on the market."

www.fujifilm.co.uk



Kevin Jenner, European Marketing Manager at Fujifilm



Liyu flatbed is a hidden gem

One of the newer manufacturers of flatbed printers that is having a significant impact on the market is Liyu UK with its Platinum KC LED UV flatbed solutions. It is designed for print and signage professionals looking to upgrade their wide-format operations.

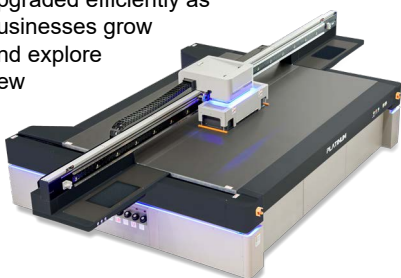
"We just couldn't believe the difference in speed and quality with the Platinum KC2512," says Liyu customer Pixart in Huddersfield. "The whole transition of removing our old machine and installing the new one was quick and simple."

Eddie Tucker, Managing Director, Liyu UK, explains, "The Liyu Platinum is available in two sizes, the KC2512 and KC3020. These are built with a choice of printheads from Konica Minolta or Ricoh Gen6, so outstanding quality is guaranteed. With print resolution of up to 2880dpi, speeds that can reach 200m²/h thanks to a beltless linear drive as standard, and an eight-colour configuration, this sleekly designed UV flatbed is rapidly gaining traction among UK printers and sign-makers. As businesses in all sectors aim to work with print and signage partners that help them meet sustainability targets, they can be safe in the knowledge that Platinum UV printing inks are now GREENGUARD Gold certified, a prestigious certification granted to products that meet some of the world's most rigorous chemical emissions standards."

He continues, "You could describe the Platinum KC as a 'hidden gem' in the UK flatbed market, but it won't be for long. Customers that visit us in our showroom to see it in action are blown away by the speed, quality, and performance, and the variety of substrates it can handle effortlessly. I'm not sure who loves it more – the customers or the engineers!"

Fast and adaptable

For a sizeable and super-fast piece of flatbed equipment, Tucker says the Platinum KC is remarkably adaptable to individual operations, and can be upgraded efficiently as businesses grow and explore new



"The Platinum KC really shines when it comes to its substrate capabilities"

applications. "Intelligent design and expert engineering means that the basic hardware allows for the simple addition of more printheads, so users can increase print speeds with ease."

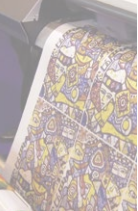
Tucker continues: "The KC doesn't just sharpen your competitive edge, it makes production a breeze, with powerful upgrades including the maskless vacuum, reverse vacuum for floating heavy materials when removing jobs from the bed, and electronic vacuum zoning." Users will also find media pop up pins are a standard feature for fast media positioning, along with an impressive 100mm print depth. "At Liyu we believe that high-performance equipment shouldn't automatically mean hefty running costs," adds Tucker. "Our customers can attest to how affordable it is to run compared with similar solutions."

Liyu UK customer go cre8, printers and sign-makers in Liverpool, can certainly back this up. Joint owners Darryn Kennerly and Paul Lin comment, "After doing extensive research for our next flatbed printer, we decided on the Platinum KC2512 with varnish. What a superb choice, and so cheap to run. We do a lot of fine artwork as well as high production boards, this ticks all the boxes for us. The maskless vacuum is so powerful, which is ideal for awkward cardboard."

Beyond dealing with cardboard challenges, the Platinum KC really shines when it comes to its substrate capabilities, printing on leather and imitation leather, wood, glass, adhesive vinyl, plexiglass, dibond, fibre board, canvas, MDF, PVC, ceramic and more. Peter Wilson, Managing Director of LWC Printworks in Liverpool, opted for the larger KC3020 flatbed, commenting, "It's phenomenal in quality and speed. I didn't know this type of flatbed was available at such a good price! We would highly recommend one."

The Platinum range also consists of the Platinum QCut, a high precision, flexible and automated cutter equipped with intelligent conveyor, a double beam cutting system, automatic camera registration and the capacity to reach speeds of up to 1.5m/s. The intuitive system facilitates a highly adaptable workflow, helping wide-format print and signage businesses to eliminate finishing bottlenecks, dramatically reduce errors, and make quick and meticulous adjustments to production. Users of the Platinum KC flatbed machine can benefit from pairing the wide-format workhorse with the razor-sharp accuracy of the QCut. "What a machine - hopefully next year I'll add a Platinum Cutter to my KC flatbed," says Andrew Dodd, Managing Director, Design and Personalise, Burscough.

www.liyu-uk.com



Flatbed Printing

Finding the right flatbed solution for your business

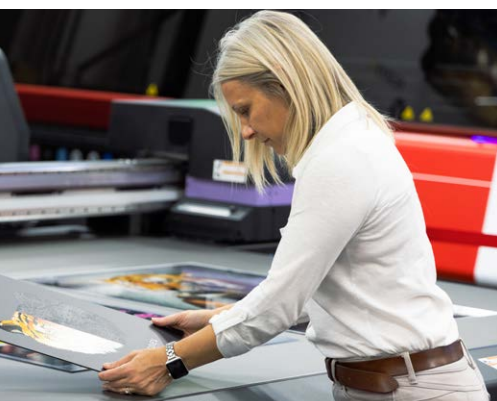
Flatbed printing represents a big investment for sign and graphics companies. It's a huge decision requiring careful planning and research. There is much more to consider than just the printer, so working with a partner that can help and support you through the process is critical.

One such company is CMYUK, which supplies production equipment and roll-to-roll material for the small, wide, and super-wide format digital printing industry. It represents leading global manufacturers, many exclusively providing start-ups, SMEs, and multi-facility enterprises, with the best tools and products across all digital printing technologies and applications.

In terms of flatbed technology, the Mimaki JFX 200-2513 EX is one of CMYUK's most popular printers. It has sold hundreds of this mid-market model and is the largest UV partner for Hybrid Services, Mimaki's exclusive distributor in the UK and Ireland.



"[The Mimaki JFX200-2513EX] is an all-round get-out-of-free-jail-card,"
Sue Hayward, Sales Director at CMYUK



Robin East, Group Commercial Director at CMYUK

"Our business has a world class complimentary equipment portfolio as we understand that our customers require a wide range of solutions for a variety of applications. In the seven years that we have been selling Mimaki technology, we have developed a polished infrastructure that is excellent at installing, training, and supporting our customers with these printer platforms," says Robin East, CMYUK Group Commercial Director.

Mimaki – a market stalwart

The JFX 200-2513 EX offers a raft of benefits. The sheer versatility of this 8 x 4' bed-sized printer is very impressive. Competitively-priced it also has a 13-amp power source, so has low energy requirements. It can be configured in a range of options: 4-colour with White, 4-Colour with White & Clear, or 4-Colour with White, Clear, and Primer.

Testament to the sheer application versatility of this printer, the JFX offers three types of ink – hard, semiflexible, and flexible. The ink type is designated at install but can be swapped out by an engineer later, if so required. This flatbed utilises Ricoh Gen 5 print heads that guarantee high quality output, but where this machine racks up star ratings is its reliability.

"We often receive feedback that this printer does exactly what it says on the tin. It's an easy-to-use workhorse that keeps delivering. It's used across the whole market spectrum from smaller sign-makers through to larger national producers. The dedicated vacuum bed means it can

handle materials that can be tricky for hybrid printers. It's an all-round get-out-of-free-jail-card," says Sue Hayward, CMYUK's Sales Director (Equipment).

Natural partnering with Kongsberg

This flatbed is very often paired with a Kongsberg digital cutting table creating a powerful and effective print solution.

"If you started from scratch and bought a JFX 200 and a Kongsberg together, that's a business in a box. You can go from origination to printing and finishing, producing a product that is ready to sell. It doesn't need lamination either because of the durability of UV.

"Customers take comfort in purchasing this combination because they can produce their display graphics applications using everyday materials such as Dibond, acrylic and FSD cardboard, for example. However, this powerful duo creates unusual applications thanks to the Mimaki's ink layering abilities and the Kongsberg's modular build that allows new tools to be added as and when required," says Robin.

This highly successful pairing requires a relatively low-level of capital investment and TCO. It also demonstrates CMYUK's unique value, a single entity that delivers the best global digital printing solutions in concert with a range of finishing solutions, materials, and ancillary services – delivering an unmatched implementation process.

www.cmyuk.com

PDQ loves its Gibson flatbed

PDQ Printing Services of Morley, Leeds has installed a Gibson GT-F3020 LED-UV flatbed printer, supplied by SOS (Service Offset Supplies). Proprietor Alison Blyth says the new machine has primarily been purchased in order to meet a growing demand for the production of outdoor signs - especially for fairground clients, which the Gibson will print directly to Corex board.

"We were outsourcing this work, but the volumes became such that we saw the logic of bringing production in-house," she says. "We underwent a major reorganisation and some structural changes to the building to accommodate the machine, but it's already proving worthwhile, not just in meeting existing demand but in attracting new orders."

"We knew we wanted to produce 10ft by 6ft sheets, whereas most flatbeds run 8ft by 4ft," says Alison. "We approached some major suppliers for info, but were disappointed with the response. It was a huge contrast with SOS, who we have known for many years as our litho plate supplier. When we asked them if they sold flatbeds they immediately gave us a quote, some samples and all the information we needed. This helped us to be confident about the support we will get from them, which is important especially if you're going for a new market."

The Gibson machine has a maximum print area of 3.1m x 2m, Ricoh Gen6 print heads and uses LED-UV curing. The ink train runs on a magnetic linear motor for reduced friction and maintenance. "It's fast, it's accurate and it's easy to use. We estimate we can produce as many as 200 boards every day."

Alison Blyth has owned and run PDQ throughout its 30 year history. Its roots are in litho, and the company still runs a four colour SRA2 and a two colour B3 press, but also offers a full range of services including digital and wide format. "We do everything from labels and variable data through to high quality promotional work, and our customers are local, national and even international. We just got our first order from Latvia! Our new business is by word of mouth, we work hard and always focus on personal service."

It's a winning philosophy – PDQ has recently taken on new staff and has

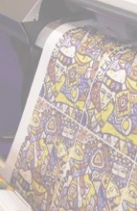


doubled output compared to pre-pandemic levels.

PDQ has longstanding connections to the funfair industry as a result of family connections, says Alison Blyth. "My father was an engineer with a passion for restoring antique fairground rides, most famously the 'Moon Rocket' which was revolutionary when first built in the 1930s and is now working at The Dingles Fairground Museum in Devon."

www.serviceoffsetsupplies.co.uk
www.pdqprinters.co.uk





Flatbed Printing

Taking the risk out of growing your business

Erskine Stewart, Managing Director of swissQprint UK, in discussion with Sign Update, explores the growing advantages of LED UV flatbed printers for businesses, helping them make the right choice in enhancing material compatibility, flexibility, and ease of production, whilst managing costs and profitability.

There are a host of considerations that feed into print service providers' decision-making processes when they are looking to add to - or upgrade - their in-house capabilities. Owners and operators need to balance requirements in terms of material versatility, flexibility, ease of use, productivity, up-front investment, and the ongoing costs of ownership, which makes the decision-making process complex.

Too often, final choices need to contain an element of compromise, juggling, say, financial outlay with performance and productivity. However, the latest ranges of LED UV flatbed printers have significantly simplified this for print service providers. New developments within the



technology continue to extend the capabilities of UV flatbed printing so that today, choosing the right flatbed printer from the outset can prevent firms from having to make unnecessary concessions.

Boundless media possibilities

The use of LED UV curing with minimal heat emission provides instantly dry results, which when combined with the benefits of flatbed machines, opens up opportunities for printing on virtually any rigid or flexible substrate. Plastics, fabrics, acrylics, cardboard, wood, and metals can all be

printed with ease, at speed and with exceptional quality. Erskine adds, "At swissQprint we are continually learning from our customers about new media applications that our equipment can handle, allowing them to explore new industries and sectors."

In addition, the range of UV inks available continues to grow, with options including orange, neon, white, varnish, primers, and inks for specific applications like glass, further adding to the array of materials and finishes that can be considered.

Versatility

Increasingly, owners are looking to maximise productivity from their equipment, seeking out machinery that can serve a variety of operations. Developments in flatbed technology have seen the provision of machines that can be adapted from pure flatbed operation to roll to roll usage. In addition, swissQprint's new Kudu is a prime example of this added flexibility and output, with ten colour channels available to configure, and a top speed of 300 sqm/h. This one machine can serve a variety of production requirements, producing high volume output without limiting quality or the choice of colours, white, varnish or neon.

Profitability

The impressive combination of increased productivity, reliability, and flexibility of flatbed machinery is delivering an array of benefits to users. Reductions in waste, service requirements, operator time and errors, as well as enhanced output speeds, all contribute to reduced ownership costs and, in turn, improved competitiveness.

More and more, print businesses are considering the financial impact of a machine's 'total cost of ownership,' rather than merely the original purchase price. Any perceived savings by investing in a lower-priced printer are often misleading due to the potential lack of reliability and ease of service, higher ongoing service costs, low productivity, and inflexibility.

Erskine comments: "As with so many areas of business, the mantra of 'buy it right, buy it once' is becoming increasingly prevalent, and our commitment to delivering Swiss-built quality and exemplary local service support ensures that owners can rely on an excellent return on investment through reduced downtime, improved productivity and extended working life."

Quality

With the latest print head technology and technical sophistication driving output resolutions up to 1350 dpi, UV flatbed printing is now delivering results very comparable in some instances to offset printing, again opening new markets, and providing new areas of competitiveness for users.



Reliability

High productivity and quality results are, of course, just one part of the equation for firms considering an investment in flatbed technology. Being able to rely on equipment that can deliver all day, every day, for extended periods, contributes hugely to the overall cost of ownership.

User-friendly operation

Improving the efficiency of operations is another key element in the drive for enhanced output and selecting machinery that has been developed with a focus on ease of operation is essential to the decision-making process when assessing any new equipment.

Selecting a machine produced with efficient print room operation in mind, providing intuitive, 'smart' systems and simple processes, will exponentially enhance both productivity and workforce contentment.

For instance, the ability of operators to convert, quickly and easily, from flatbed to roll-to-roll production and at speed, ensures that set up times and downtime are minimised, delivering more production and less preparation.

Similarly, innovations such as swissQprint's Tip Switch Vacuum system - 256 vacuum segments, which can be switched on and off individually and instantly with just the touch of a finger - saves time, effort, and the need for masking.

Choosing a machine designed and built with real-life operational flexibility at its core, will deliver dividends in terms of productivity, efficiency and, ultimately, profitability.

Innovation

The flatbed industry is making constant progress in the development of ever more practical and effective solutions to the real-life demands and requirements of today's large format sector, with new and creative features and enhancements.

Erskine comments: "At swissQprint we listen to our customers constantly, and their feedback informs every part of our development process. Our latest flatbed printers, including the Kudu and Generation 4, are prime examples of this learning process. They combine all

the latest print head technology with increased productivity and enhanced modularity, to enable our customers to identify exactly the right machine to meet both current and future needs."

Green credentials

Today, more than ever, the environmental impact of any new equipment features strongly on the list of priorities for print service providers looking to update or upgrade their plant list.

Flatbed digital printing offers an intrinsically more environmentally friendly option when compared with other print processes, reducing indoor air pollution and minimising ink wastage. In addition, because the UV inks contain no solvents and are cured using LED lamps, printers can use inks free of volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

Improving energy efficiency forms a critical and integral part of print businesses' sustainable strategies. LED lamps, controlled vacuums, and a lack of requirements for ventilation all deliver high energy efficiency, and swissQprint has taken this one step further and received ISO accreditation for their energy efficiency.

Further environmental benefits of direct digital printing can be achieved by the elimination of the use of release liners, solvents, and lamination. Since no silkscreens or printing plates are required, flatbed printing also allows for the production of shorter runs of signs at a low cost.



Stewart adds: "swissQprint's Greentech technology is committed to providing high customer benefit and environmental protection in equal measure. From low carbon footprints in production and short supply chains for parts, to short and minimal maintenance schedules, the use of low energy LED lamps and VOC-free inks that are Greenguard Gold certified, we do all we can to ensure the environmental impact of our machinery is as small as possible."

In conclusion, given the extraordinary growth in capabilities, flexibility, reliability, and cost-effectiveness of flatbed printers available in today's market, increasingly, the true answer to the question; "Why would you consider using - or upgrading your presses to - flatbed?" is "Why would you consider anything else?"

www.swissqprint.com



Flatbed Printing

Complete flatbed solutions from Josero

Leading wide-format technology supplier Josero offers wide-format flatbed printing equipment from Mimaki and Agfa, as well as pre-loved flatbed printers from a range of leading manufacturers. "We often see customers who are expanding their businesses or looking into new opportunities coming to us to discuss flatbeds," explains Sarah Winterbottom, Group Sales Director, Josero and Soyang Europe. "Choosing the right solution can open the doors to a more diverse range of creative applications, higher profit margins, and more sustainable, streamlined wide-format production."

Josero's proven recipe of high-performance equipment and exceptional technical consultancy and support led Bolton-based plastic fabrication specialist Fabriplas to their door, as they planned a brand-new venture, which would see them enter new print markets and expand their application capabilities. Having used solely roll-to-roll technology at Fabriplas, Director Jonathan Marsden was looking for a flatbed to help target new opportunities for the evolving business.

"Even though we've got wide-format experience in terms of roll-to-roll, the flatbeds are an entirely different beast," Marsden explains. "We needed a supplier partner that could really help us develop our flatbed printing. Mimaki seemed to

offer the best solution at an affordable price. It was soon clear that Josero, and a Mimaki JFX200-2513, was the best option for us, allowing us to break into new markets and with the support we need along the way."

The high-performance Mimaki JFX200-2513 flatbed is an entry-level machine that boasts user and environmental friendliness, with an ability to accommodate a wide variety of customer requirements. With the capacity to print onto media up to 50 mm thick as well as uneven media, the JFX200-2513's high weather and friction resistance makes it well-suited to outdoor applications. Other production uses include wall displays, furniture, specialist signage, and display cases.

Marsden continues, "In terms of speeding up our processes, it has been fantastic. We previously printed on to vinyl and then applied to the substrate with no direct printing, so our operation is much more efficient. The machine hasn't stopped since it's been installed! We've already



been talking about purchasing a potential new piece of equipment. It goes without saying that we'll definitely be using Josero again for all our wide-format requirements."

The Mimaki JFX200-2513 EX is a flatbed successor to the original Mimaki JFX200-2513, taking added value to the next level, with its "2.5D Texture Maker" that enables effortless production of smooth semi-stereoscopic 2.5D data, creating an enticing haptic, textured feel, ideal for interior materials with printed bricks and woodgrain textures.

It also ups the productivity stakes; print speed in white-simultaneous printing has improved 200% of the conventional model, as well as higher-grade productivity realised by adding the new print mode. With speeds of up to 25 sq/m per hour, a wide range of inks including white and clear, as well as its ability to create 2.5D textured print, the LED-UV machine is ideal for producing creative applications to tight deadlines.

One Josero customer that took advantage of the enhancements on offer with the JFX200-2513EX is lenticular print specialist Lentico. Having acquired plastic card manufacturer Plastic Data Card in 2020, they were looking for new kit to keep up with the significantly increased demand.

Lentico Director Robin Sumner explains, "Now that we have the Mimaki installed, we are noticing an improved difference in quality compared with our previous equipment. When our clients see the



artwork produced on the new kit, they experience that 'wow' factor."

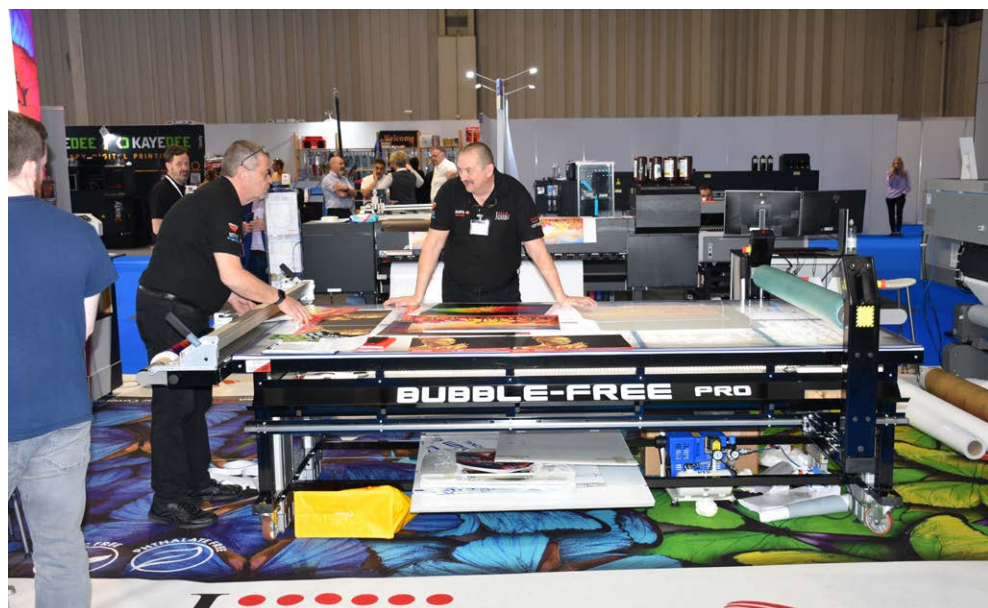
He continues, "We did view competitors to the Mimaki, but in our opinion it was the market leader in terms of output quality and flexible advantage. We went out looking for a machine that would do us a really good job on lenticular print, and the Mimaki does that very well for us, but also includes additional features which will allow us to open doors and provide more services."

"Having the ability to diversify is more important than ever, and I think the Mimaki gives us a couple of extra strings to our bow that we wouldn't have had with the previous wide-format printer. The 2.5D elements are allowing us to experiment and present our customers with an additional value proposition, informing our clients that we can also produce their lenticular artwork in 2.5D. We're adding a few other finishing touches, and will be able to give clients a sparkling finish that no one else can provide. It's certainly opening doors for us."

Sumner testifies to the quick return on investment the right piece of flatbed equipment can provide, "The Mimaki is already getting potential clients excited. We sent out samples to some key retailers and we have been able to meet their requirements immediately, whereas two months ago we may have had to turn that work down. It's great to be able to say that we now have the technology to produce at the highest possible standards, we can say to a customer with a very tight deadline, that we can certainly fulfil that order. We can certainly say it was a wise investment, and it has brought a smile to our faces much quicker than we anticipated!"

Josero also supplies the Agfa Anapurna FB2540i LED UV, a high-speed, UV-curable inkjet system with a moving gantry flatbed that is ideal for handling rigid materials such as Foamex, Correx, Dibond, and acrylic. "The FB2540i is an incredible example of a high-productivity, highly flexible flatbed solution," explains Josero's Winterbottom. "Printers and signmakers that are looking for a machine that will help them save time and money as well as adding value to customer products are in good hands with this Agfa flatbed."

The engine's vacuum bed design facilitates highly accurate and reliable dot placement, air-cooled 16 watt/cm²



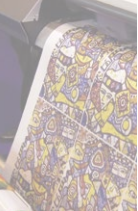
UV LED lamps, automated retractable media register pins, and an ionisation bar mounted on each side of the carriage removes electrostatic loads on the substrate, ensuring optimum ink droplet control. The six colour plus white configuration with 13 picolitre printheads and high-density colour printing function allows for bright, intense prints that can deliver a significant competitive advantage.

Josero also supplies flatbed cutting systems from Summa and Comagrav. The versatile Summa F Series makes for streamlined kiss cuts, through cuts, creasing, and routing with rigid and flexible substrates, thanks to its optical camera marking system and pneumatically driven conveyor belt.

Comagrav's belt-equipped flatbed digital cutting table boasts pneumatic and Electronic Oscillation tools, 60,000RPM spindles, multi zone bed and water-cooled routing. With a maximum media width of 3.4m and maximum table length of up to 5.5m, the Comagrav is suited to a wide range of applications.

Sarah Winterbottom concludes, "Another popular addition to Josero's portfolio is the BubbleFree flatbed applicator table, which makes mounting and laminating a breeze, allowing a single operator to mount and laminate a wide range of materials in rapid time whilst eliminating the risk of bubbles or creases."

www.josero.com



Flatbed Printing

Vanguard aiming for success

Vanguard Europe has set its sights on becoming a leader in the digital flatbed and UV production entry- and mid-level markets by replicating sales successes of its parent company. It aims to utilise the global expertise of its resellers, distributors and other partners, as well as growing opportunities for staff and customers.

A subsidiary of Vanguard Digital Printing Systems Corp, of Lawrenceville, Georgia, USA, producing 200 systems a year, the company provides digital flatbed printing systems across growth sectors including signage, decoration, corporate, industrial and packaging.

Vanguard Europe is based adjacent to the headquarters of Durst Group in Brixen, Italy, from where it coordinates a distribution and service network through resellers, distributors, and other partners across Europe. Vanguard has been part of the Durst Group since 2020.

FESPA 2022 was the setting for a first public showing in Europe for the VR6D-HS and VK300D-HS UV flatbed machines covering the mid-and high end-range performance spectrum. They feature an attractive price/performance ratio and can cover a wide range of applications thanks to their modular design and various ink configurations.

Built on the multi award-winning VK300D series - winner of the Specialty Graphic Imaging Association's (SGIA) Product of the Year for four consecutive years - this fully featured flatbed incorporates a high-speed electromagnetic drive system that propels the carriage at speeds of up to 1.8m per second for 60 boards an hour.

FESPA was also the stage to announce ArtSystems as the UK & Ireland official partner for Vanguard Digital Printing Systems. The agreement between Durst UK & Ireland and ArtSystems, the specialist UK & Ireland distributor, covers distribution, service, ink supply and sales support. ArtSystems will be working with a selected reseller channel providing a UK-based demonstration centre for resellers to bring their users to see the speed and quality of the Vanguard range.

Yiannis Apostolidis, Business Development Director of Vanguard Europe, says, "Formed seven years ago when only one printer was produced in the first 12 months, we have had an incredible transformation. Vanguard is now producing over 200 machines a year, and we are

determined to replicate that success in Europe, especially with new products coming on board in the future."

Flatbed volumes quadruple for Screenbolaget

Changing market requirements and a need for fast job turnarounds with high volume digital production were crucial in a decision to invest in new flatbed systems by Screenbolaget AB, one of Sweden's major suppliers of profile advertising and action marketing products.

Screenbolaget, which has its roots in screen printing, invested in a Vanguard multi award-winning VK300D-HS series high production LED UV flatbed printer with 10 printheads.

"Until this summer around 90% of our work was roll-to-roll and 10% was flatbed," says Patrick Nermark, CEO of Screenbolaget. "But flatbed volumes quadrupled going into the Swedish elections in September, and I expect will still be at least double after the elections.

"We could not have taken on all this extra work without investing in a Vanguard machine through our partner Marabu, with whom we have a very long and strong relationship. The VK300D series has been a revolution. It is at least five times faster than our old machine and we are expecting the new machine, once delivered, to be 6-8 times faster."



"In the past if we had received an order for, say 50 boards as an example, it was so slow. But now with the right tools, which also includes latest cutting technology, we have a lot more opportunities in the flatbed markets."

Mr Nermark adds, "Vanguard has an excellent reputation, state-of-the-art printer and heads and is a rigid, stable machine with a huge volume capacity. We are really pleased with our investment. However, we didn't make our final decision until we had evaluated the market thoroughly."

Screenbolaget, a £10 million-turnover company organically growing by around 7% a year, employs 42 staff in Stockholm. The Vanguard is the fifth machine it has purchased through Marabu.

www.vanguarddigital.com



'Five times faster production': Screenbolaget Production Manager Oscar Lagerstedt with the Vanguard VK300D-HS LED UV series flatbed printer

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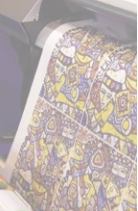
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Trade Service



Flatbed Printing

Delivering more applications with new Epson flatbed



Print Service Providers are under increasing pressure to produce a wider range of applications more flexibly and profitably. To meet this, and other market demands, Epson says the SureColor SC-V7000 was developed to allow sign and display makers to expand their portfolio of products.

"Epson's first UV large format printer offers exceptional image quality and the flexibility to print on a wide range of media," says Rob Weissenberger, Account Manager, Epson UK. It was developed for printing eye-catching retail and outdoor signage, window displays, hoarding panels, packaging, promotional goods, and décor products. It manages a versatile range of applications, which enables companies to expand their product offering and deliver consistently high-quality results. It features Epson's unique UltraChrome UV ink configuration, including red, grey, white and varnish."

Versatility is key for Sign Design

It was the SC-V7000's versatility that proved convincing in Sign Design GB's decision to choose technology to bring a range of services inhouse, enhance production capacity and explore further application opportunities.

Established in 2009, the Tees Valley signage solution specialist works with the construction, retail, education,

manufacturing, transport and medical industries. It chose the system to enable greater control over quality consistency, reduce turnaround times and eliminate additional costs.

Ben Kennedy, Commercial Director, explains, "We were subcontracting about £80,000 to £100,000 of direct to substrate work a year. We decided it was time to bring that inhouse so we could ensure consistency, reduce turnaround times, cut our carbon footprint and also develop that part of the business. Now we have additional capacity and the ability to offer some unique products. We can promote these services more widely, confident in the knowledge we can deliver. We can also explore other application possibilities, run samples, and show clients what is possible."

He continues, "We looked at what was on the market and chose the Epson system for two reasons. First, ease of use was very important. We wanted something that was operator friendly and not too complicated to use. Despite its specialist features there is no need for specialist training and we already have four people confident in running it."

The Epson SureColor SC-V7000 flatbed printer was supplied by Perfect Colours and Ben says, "The second reason we chose the Epson was because of the support from Perfect Colours. We have

bought a number of solutions from them over the years and they are always very helpful. They provide the right level of technical help and it is good to know they are there even if we don't need them."

The system has been in for just a couple of weeks and Ben says, "There have been no problems at all. It is working very well and we have been running it every day. It will enable us to continue to grow in the direct to substrate sector and develop a more complete and versatile offering for our clients. It will also enable us to employ another apprentice in this area of the business."

Darren Walker, Regional Director, Perfect Colours, adds, "After undertaking a review Sign Design GB took the considered decision to drive operational growth by investing in Epson technology. It did this knowing it could access ongoing support if it was ever needed. We were delighted to help them make the best investment choice for their requirements and look forward to continuing their journey with them."

He concludes, "By now completing the work inhouse we can improve our margins and ensure quality consistency."

www.epson.co.uk
www.perfectcolours.co.uk
www.signdesigngb.co.uk

Time to adopt sustainable options with InkTec

No-one can escape the overall global sentiment that in every aspect of our lives we need to be seeking environmentally sustainable options. Unsurprisingly this is equally being reflected in the wide format arena. Which is why the technology that LED flatbed printers can deliver are at the forefront of meeting these demands. Requiring no warm-up time, generating no heat and, ultimately in some instances, using up to 35% less energy than traditional method printers, they are proving an attractive proposition for many print providers. Particularly as rising energy costs show no signs of abating in the near future.



Equally many printing businesses are also looking to broaden their opportunities for increased revenue. And this is where they are stepping into the arena of wide-format for the first time. The combination of lower running costs with extended lamp lifetime obviously makes LED printing appealing. This sits alongside less heat being generated, which means an even wider range of rigid media can be printed on without the risk of deformation, melting or curling. The LED process also brings a new edge to standard flat colour printing, providing a broader array of different printing techniques, which equally deliver increased revenue.

How does the JETRIX LED-UV answer this demand?

With a variety of different flatbed sizes, the JETRIX LED-UV printer range is designed to appeal to a spectrum of printer needs. Whether it is the JETRIX LXi6 or LXi7 with their 2.5m x 1.3m and 2.5m x 3.0m wide flatbeds respectively or the larger LXi8 with a 3.2m wide flatbed. These good all-round machines can print on a maximum substrate thickness of 100mm and are equally capable of printing on Foamex PVC, acrylic, glass or any other rigid media. All have been specifically developed using the skills and expertise of South Korean engineering to deliver high production speeds and optimal printing results. Combined with lower running costs, extended lamp lifetime of 20k hours

they create the best combination of superb printing quality and high productivity.

Time is money...which is why the user-friendly GUI software focuses on creating a system that simplifies, optimises and automates as many steps as possible. This includes the ability to 'drag and print' and have pre-set media file formats stored, so pieces regularly printed don't require setting up each time. It also leads to minimum media wastage being created, which in turn reduces unnecessary costs both on unusable media, but also on cost of removal of discarded pieces.

Driven by InkTec's specially formulated UV inks using the highest quality pigment grades, the JETRIX LXi Flatbed Printers all offer wide colour gamut, high colour vibrancy and fast ink curing, to extend a customer's printing capabilities. The printers can also be filled on the fly to reduce the need to pause projects. In addition, the cost-saving in ink use is significant.

As Ben Woodruff, Head of JETRIX UK Sales says, "By directing energy more efficiently and reducing the overall power consumption, the total cost of ownership over its lifetime makes any of the JETRIX LXi LED-UV Flatbed Printers a realistic and affordable option. This is all wrapped up with the added reassurance of all the design, technology and precision familiar with South Korean engineering and the active support that we at InkTec offer."

Customer View

"Some regular jobs such as printing on glass to then be backlit used to take 40 minutes, now this sort of project is taking just 9 minutes. In fact, a recent job printing on Corex, which we were proud to have managed to get down to 10 minutes; is now slashed to 2½ minutes with these new JETRIX printers." - Screentec

"We were previously running four latex printers which were causing no-end of print quality issues. Now we can produce jobs much quicker and at a consistent quality and we haven't had to reprint any jobs. The JETRIX LXiR320 now does the work of four of our previous ones, whilst using less than half of the ink." - Display Wizard

www.inktec-europe.com





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£20 + VAT minimum charge + carriage

Height	75mm	100mm	125mm	150mm	175mm	200mm	225mm	250mm	275mm	300mm	350mm	400mm	450mm	500mm	550mm	600mm	700mm	800mm	900mm	1200mm
3mm	1.11	1.39	1.54	1.82	2.17	2.89	3.63	3.87	4.50	5.43	8.24	8.93	10.04	11.30	13.81	15.99	21.34	32.09	48.33	56.32
5mm	1.48	1.88	2.22	2.74	3.44	4.18	5.11	6.55	7.78	9.05	10.55	12.07	14.48	17.50	20.20	21.73	28.37	28.60	54.30	69.93
10mm	2.70	3.23	4.27	5.30	6.61	8.46	10.14	14.22	15.40	18.67	21.38	25.49	29.04	33.78	37.92	42.66	59.26	86.53	111.41	144.00

FOAM PVC (All available colours - 10mm & 19mm available in white only)

£20 + VAT minimum charge + carriage

Height	75mm	100mm	125mm	150mm	175mm	200mm	225mm	250mm	275mm	300mm	350mm	400mm	450mm	500mm	550mm	600mm	700mm	800mm	900mm	1200mm
3mm	1.22	1.78	1.87	2.13	2.19	2.54	3.20	3.86	4.36	4.87	6.27	7.72	8.74	9.40	11.26	13.27	12.63	22.71	31.91	36.34
5mm	1.28	1.76	2.18	2.67	3.22	3.79	4.34	4.78	5.55	6.32	7.88	9.25	10.53	11.22	13.04	14.87	23.15	31.57	35.07	38.45
10mm	1.62	1.88	2.57	3.55	4.15	4.79	5.88	6.84	7.81	8.69	10.47	12.45	14.82	16.30	18.28	21.24	25.69	29.64	44.95	53.20
19mm	2.66	3.75	4.35	4.74	6.33	7.41	8.89	10.37	12.55	14.73	15.81	18.47	21.24	23.51	25.49	28.65	36.56	39.52	52.86	80.29

3mm ALUMINIUM COMPOSITE (Dibond, Alupanel)

£20 + VAT minimum charge + carriage

Height	75mm	100mm	125mm	150mm	175mm	200mm	225mm	250mm	275mm	300mm	350mm	400mm	450mm	500mm	550mm	600mm	700mm	800mm	900mm	1200mm
Coloured	1.83	2.36	2.94	3.47	4.10	5.29	6.46	7.74	8.92	9.91	12.05	13.50	16.44	18.79	19.96	24.06	28.77	41.30	54.02	73.98
Mirror (silver)	2.45	3.08	4.27	5.34	6.94	8.54	9.60	11.74	14.41	17.08	18.68	21.35	25.08	28.29	29.89	34.69	40.57	50.70	54.44	103.01
Mirror (gold)	2.70	3.38	4.69	5.87	7.63	9.40	10.56	12.92	15.86	18.79	20.55	23.48	27.59	31.12	32.88	38.16	44.82	55.77	59.88	113.31
Brushed	2.03	2.56	3.33	4.15	4.83	5.91	7.13	8.45	10.26	12.07	13.89	15.69	19.32	21.13	23.55	26.56	34.25	47.08	59.16	81.50

MILL FINISH ALUMINIUM (Comes in its raw form ready for coating)

£20 + VAT minimum charge + carriage

Height	50mm	75mm	100mm	125mm	150mm	175mm	200mm	225mm	250mm	275mm	300mm	375mm	425mm	500mm	600mm	700mm
2mm	3.12	4.36	4.94	6.60	7.46	8.33	9.41	10.85	12.06	13.25	14.65	18.19	21.58	30.88	41.33	53.61
3mm	3.65	5.07	5.80	7.13	8.22	9.19	10.27	11.72	13.11	15.11	16.66	21.62	25.86	36.13	50.75	75.24
5mm	3.99	5.57	6.65	7.98	8.94	10.27	11.61	13.53	15.58	17.95	20.24	26.19	30.21	42.00	58.21	81.62

EXTERIOR MDF

£20 + VAT minimum charge + carriage

Height	50mm	75mm	100mm	125mm	150mm	175mm	200mm	225mm	250mm	275mm	300mm	375mm	425mm	500mm	600mm	700mm
6mm	0.55	1.05	1.83	1.82	2.70	2.84	3.30	3.94	4.54	5.39	6.89	9.73	11.22	12.72	17.92	45.39
12mm		1.81	2.12	2.95	4.24	4.89	5.69	6.40	7.63	9.58	10.48	12.17	14.47	17.56	19.70	59.80
18mm		2.57	3.25	4.24	5.29	6.43	7.93	8.88	11.02	12.72	15.16	17.36	21.19	22.85	29.88	89.40

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Height	152mm	203mm	254mm	305mm	380mm	457mm	610mm
Colours*	7.12	10.70	16.82	18.39	24.94	29.56	51.91

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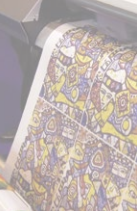
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Built Up Lettering

Making a big impact

Making built-up letters is a true craft and one that only ever improves with experience. With more than 30 years in the industry, Kevin Washbourne, Managing Director of Impact 3D Signs, has gained a massive amount of expertise and knowledge.

"We believe our craftsmanship by hand has served us very well and certainly keeps us one step ahead of many others in our industry. Our reputation has been built on hand-crafting superior quality signage that is practical, meets specific branding specifications and is also beautiful and eye-catching."

A good example of the company's skill was a Rimex rosy gold sign they recently manufactured for a luxury lingerie company, that was simply stunning.

"Throughout the years we have seen the industry change dramatically. Machines are increasingly being brought in to replace some of the manufacturing processes, and selected properly, these can have a very positive effect on what we can offer to customers. For example, traditionally we would have used a bandsaw to cut the letter face, but now we use a CNC machine or laser," says Kevin.

A great LOAD

He continues, "We feel that machine built-up letters may have an advantage when it comes to a standard roll-out and production basis, but they are very limited and not able to meet the specific demands of a truly bespoke service. LOAD is an example of a hand-crafted bevelled letter, which a machine simply can not replicate. The bevelled letter was popular when I first started the company, and like so many trends, they have come around again and we have produced a lot of these letters recently. We have also seen them being adapted. I have seen some being oversized up to 1 metre tall and hanging from the ceiling by poles, particularly in trendy restaurants, and they are a striking internal feature."

Using highly skilled craftsmanship, Impact 3D Signs has continually been able to adapt to the latest ideas and trends. "Working with the latest materials by hand, allows us to achieve a highly skilled finish and we are able to learn and 'get a feel' of what the material is capable of. This allows us to achieve the bespoke signage our customers require," he adds.

Roy Luther, General Manager of Impact 3D Signs, comments, "The latest trend the designers are using appears to be mixing the higher end materials i.e Rimex with the more industrial looking materials we use, like Corten rusted steel. Each material needs a different set of skills and knowledge to produce."



Built-up letters create classic, professional signage

Impact has also seen a growing trend for fairground letters, especially since lockdown ended and events were allowed to start up again. "We used to produce a standard size, 5ft and cream colour for mainly weddings," says Kevin, adding, "Now the designers are experimenting more and adapting to the younger generation needs and customer base. We have now produced built up letters (and hashtags!) that can be used with selfies. These are oversized letters that can be interacted with by the end user. We have been able to adapt them to be fixed on the latest trend moss/flower walls, allowing selfies to be taken in front of them."

In conclusion, Kevin Washbourne says, "We design and manufacture our own specialist clear acrylic bases, so they can be free standing and set up indoors or outside, without taking any focus away from the letters themselves. More recently we have been asked for a system to make different size letters stackable, which we can also achieve. Even though the fairground letters have a vintage feel, they can appeal to the younger generation as 'fun elements'. RGB led's, coloured cabochon bulbs, neon, and a mixture of the latest paint finishes, can be added to them so they stand out in selfies. We see lots of this being posted on Instagram today and they really do deliver a WOW factor!"

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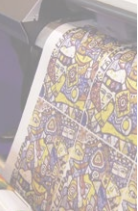


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Built Up Lettering

Lemon Signs brings foam to the party

There is more than one way to create a 3D letter. While not new, built-up letters and logos made out of alternative foam-like materials, such as XPS (Styrofoam) or HDU, are still an unexplored potential solution for many sign specifiers. Lemon Signs has been producing 3D letters using these materials since 2015 and have developed a vast array of methods and solutions to take advantages of the many benefits these materials can offer.

Martin Lemiesz, Managing Director of Lemon Signs, explains, "Usually when you talk about foam, people think you are referring to soft, non-durable materials. This would be correct in most cases, but not when talking about XPS foam - also known as Styrofoam. This material is widely used in buildings because it can actually carry the weight of concrete slabs poured on top of it! We even parked our van on top of our letters (see pic below) and whilst they might deform slightly depending on the shape of them, they would never implode or squash flat under the weight. You couldn't say the same for metal built-ups."

HDU is newer to the market and is even stronger. Martin says, "We are rapidly gaining experience of using HDU and are building our portfolio of projects. The material itself is more expensive and is only being imported by a small number of companies in the UK, but we expect it to become more competitively priced and popular in the future. We use our CNC router to carve out letters and shapes from it."

The van example is great for showing the strength of foam built-up letters and this demonstrates that they can be safely used on the outside of buildings. They are guaranteed to last for many years and can be regularly repainted to prolong their service.

Martin continues, "We use a variety of finishes when we create these letters, including resin coating to minimise the results of impact damage on the letters. In our opinion this is the only drawback of this material. It is their job to look good, but they can be chipped and damaged during transportation, installation or even once installed. It is particularly important for signage that needs to be seen close up."



Foam benefits

Styrofoam and HDU letters have a host of benefits over traditional built-up letter fabrication methods. "Foam letters are much more lightweight, which allows them to be fitted using adhesive only. Even if the worst should happen and the letter falls off the wall, because they are so light and have no sharp edges, there is virtually no chance for an injury," adds Martin.

He continues, "The light weight of these products also helps when it comes to transporting really large letters. Although it should be said that lighter letters can be a disadvantage when used as a free-standing prop as they can be easily blown away or tipped over unlike ones made of heavier materials. Lemon Signs has developed a system of baseplates that pre-space the set and allow for use of castors, ground spikes or mounting using



screws or nuts and bolts to eliminate the risk of the letters changing their location

Martin concludes, "XPS and HDU letters can also save in cost and time when it comes to producing the letters. We can achieve smaller details with this process and we can combine this with multilayers and endless finishes to create a hugely broad range of solutions for our customers. We can even build in LED modules for face or halo illumination. Foam is a durable, versatile and great value alternative solution for 3D built-up letters."

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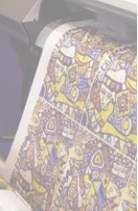
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Built Up Lettering

Make it Happen with specialist training

Sometimes it is necessary to roll up your sleeves and really get your hands dirty if you want to learn a new skill. So when I spoke to Sam Armstrong of Make it Happen to ask for her view specifically on letter fabrication, I was delighted to accept an invitation to a Signage Bootcamp so I could have a go for myself.

I wasn't really sure what I was letting myself in for, but I have to say it was a really fun and informative day and I came away with a built-up letter that I had forged from raw materials (under the watchful and often critical eye of Neil!). My skills were such that I am not going to be threatening any local sign-makers any time soon, but it was eye-opening to see what is involved in the process of fabricating built-up letters.

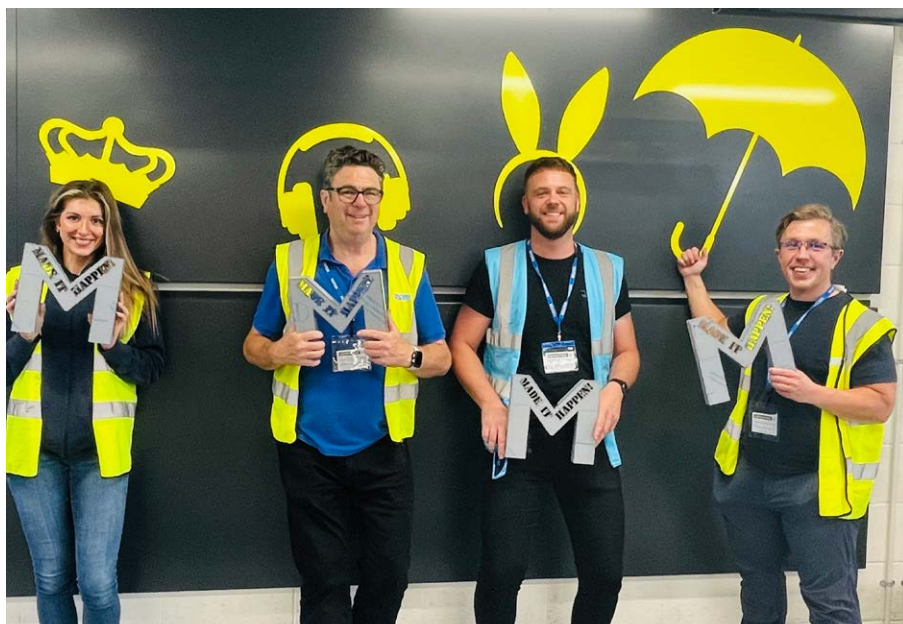
The Signage Bootcamp workshop aims to bring together corporations, companies and individuals to learn, discuss and share knowledge and ideas to benefit their businesses. The course is suitable for estimators, project managers, sales, marketing, designers and production staff of all levels. What was really good about the course was that it was just as useful for newcomers to the trade as it was for the seasoned professionals.

Great feedback

Sharing the course with me was Alan Simpson of Minuteman Press in Paisley and Dan Todd of OrangeQuarter. They also attended the second part of the course which focused on sales and business development.

Dan said, "After attending the Make It Happen Frontline workshop, I've come away with so much invaluable knowledge and whole a new perspective of how to run certain parts of my business. As this training is fully tailored towards the signage industry, I knew this course was a must for me! Sam takes great care to listen to each participant and the individual journeys they've been on so far."

Dan has been in the business for 15 years and recently started his own company. "I went into this training with an open mind and came away with a brand-new angle on how to approach leads as a signage consultant, not just a typical 'salesman'. Having explained where the tweaks can be made within your business from someone who has more than 20 years' experience



Holly, me, Dan and Alan showing off our handiwork.

in this industry is refreshing and very valuable. The Make It Happen Frontline course is a must - no matter what your business experience level!"

Alan said, "After recently attended this training, I can honestly say it's the best investment you can make in your sign business. You will make the course fee back many times over."

For me, the key take-out was that as sign-makers, it is in your power to really help customers choose the right sign for their requirements. They may have a vision, but they will often need help understanding what is possible, what the limitations are and how various products can be combined to achieve the finish they are looking for.

It is also a great opportunity to spend time with others in your industry and share experiences and knowledge with them. The training was held at SignFab's premises in Leicester and it was fascinating to take a tour of the facility to see the amazing work in progress – from small shop signs to massive retail park monoliths.

To find out more about the Make it Happen Boot Camps, visit www.makeih.co.uk



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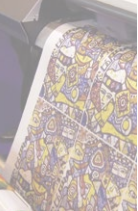
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What to consider when looking for a new sign fitter

When it's time to start a new project, building a team of full-time employees, freelancers, and sign installation contractors is the first step. Tackling a task like this is often not easy, but it should not be tedious either.



*Yaryna Finyak,
content writer, Vism*

Having the right team in place can be helpful in terms of cost, quality, and efficiency, so everyone – you, as an installation project manager, your company, and the client, can benefit greatly from bringing in the right people for the job.

In this article, you'll find a list of qualities to consider when selecting a signage and graphics installer. It's a combination of hard and soft skills that can help you quickly locate the best fit for the job. That way, you can be certain that you will establish the best collaboration possible with your team and achieve the desired results set by your client.

So - What are the qualities to look for in the candidates joining your installation team?

Communication

Open communication enforces a culture of trust by sharing information quickly and freely, which helps build strong relationships within the team. Because even the best sign installers can occasionally face unforeseen circumstances, handling such communication is essential to ensure smooth collaboration. Ask how they would

communicate factors that might shift the delivery date of your new graphics installation.

When working multiple jobs simultaneously, proper communication helps you to know how each team is progressing. You should be familiar with the project's milestones as well as be updated on its progress. It's the proactive approach to communication that helps to showcase the signage installer's dedication and ease of working.

Reliability & time-management

The installation date is set for a reason; it's one of the factors that clients use to define the success of a job. It's also your responsibility, as an installation manager, to provide all the resources and ensure that you and your installation team meet the deadline and deliver the installed signage according to the client's needs. In the selection process, ask how they prioritise their tasks, as well as balance the quality and submission of the job on time.

A signage installer should be on the same page – keep in mind the deadline and know its importance. So while you focus on growing your business and closing new deals, you know they are doing their job, and completion photos will pop up in your inbox on time. In addition, one of the ways to improve the sign-off stage is to implement workflow management software, which allows you to get photos from installers and share them with customers immediately.

Quality

The selection process of freelance vinyl graphics installers and sub-contractors often leaves installation managers vulnerable to skill gaps and work quality. They usually spend little time checking for necessary qualifications and skill sets of graphics and signage installers for a specific project. On the other hand, the hiring process of an in-house sign fitter can be more rigorous and precise.

It's helpful to establish a set of criteria for a potential candidate considering work scope, project duration, and performance expectations. Do the interview, ask for examples of previous vinyl wrap installations or architectural signage, and consider giving them a test job first.

Sacrificing quality, even for a discount, makes you more vulnerable to paying what you saved, or more, to fix a poorly-completed job.

Certificates & training

When it comes to hard skills, customers want to know that they can rely on your business. Thus, installers should possess the necessary training, certificates, and safety badges to ensure that clients can trust your team. Therefore, remember to look for the installer certifications (CSCS, IPAF, PASMA) required for your project. For example, many clients now insist that graphics be installed by Blue CSCS cardholders, which requires the sign fitters to receive additional training.

Conclusion

The journey of finding the right freelance or full-time signage and graphics installer is not easy, but taking into consideration the qualities mentioned above will help you facilitate this process and establish long-term relationships.

To find freelance installers or subcontracting companies – check out www.signageinstallations.com



Outsourcing to fuel your growth

Subcontracting or outsourcing isn't anything new to sign-makers. Ever since joining the industry just over a decade ago, and I suspect for many years beforehand, specialist trade manufacturers and subcontract installers have been working hard behind the scenes to create and install beautiful signage for businesses of all shapes and sizes.



Adam Davies - Founder of COG Studios

Our current challenge

At the time of writing, we find ourselves in a challenging situation, not just as an industry but as a country. Not only are we facing the prospect of a looming recession, but we're also seeing increasing costs for goods and services. There is an unbalanced employment market where the volume of jobs advertised outnumber the supply of candidates significantly.

Traditionally this would be a time where everyone starts to become incredibly risk averse, they baton down the hatches, look to weather the storm and pick up the pieces afterwards. However, a question I constantly ask myself as a business owner; is that the only option available?

I started my business at the beginning of the year, and I'd be lying through my teeth if I said the thought of all this negativity hasn't hampered me at times - it's only natural. When this inevitably

happens, I have to remind myself that some of the most successful and well-known companies of the 21st century were founded in the last global recession. Opportunities therefore clearly exist to grow in similar circumstances, we just need to be smart about how we go about it.

Is outsourcing a viable solution?

I come back to my point regarding outsourcing manufacture and installation, why do we do this already and what are the benefits?

Well, some companies might use it for all their manufacturing and installation requirements and be incredible successful doing so. Others may only do it to cope with peaks in demand they can't produce themselves and some may already have diverse in-house departments, but they may need a specialist skill or product to be outsourced; think traditional glass neon or abseil installation crews.

The benefits? Well they are simply huge. You can offer products to your clients that you otherwise wouldn't be able to, and open doors to whole new opportunities. If needed, you could manufacture hundreds of signs quickly to meet a key client deadline, and then mobilise countless installation crews across the country to install them all simultaneously. You can have all of this while having fixed costs, limited risk and opening huge opportunities to grow even in the most daunting situations.

Now I can't lie and say there are no negatives to outsourcing. The lack of

control on quality or timescales is often one cited by people as a reason to invest in-house instead, and that's okay. I'm a huge advocate of expanding the number of people coming into the industry to be trained in all manner of skills, but in my opinion, outsourcing is a great way to cope with peaks in demand, experiment with new opportunities, deliver huge projects and to scale your business in a way that is sustainable and commercially viable.

Expanding your outsourcing opportunities

Now you might be thinking, I already do all this so how can I fuel my growth further?

Well, if you want to stick with the normal route, you could find additional manufacturing partners and subcontract installation crews to increase your capabilities, but there are also new companies and service offerings that could help transform your business even further.

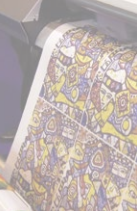
I should know, my business is one of them; COG Studio specialises in supporting sign makers to enhance their design departments, but there are also companies starting to offer things such as industry specific marketing support, freelance project management, business development and more.

So, are you going to keep doing the same thing and hope for growth, or could you take advantage of these opportunities to fuel the growth of your business in normal and the challenging times ahead?

www.wearecog.co.uk

COG Studio





A sign of the times: The changing role of the materials supplier

By Andrew Millward, General Manager, Righton Blackburns Centre

Sign-makers are well aware of the need to consider the requirements for a given application to ensure that the best solution is achieved. Interior or exterior, what is the sign's intended purpose, what look is the client going for and what is the budget? All these factors and more need to be considered to arrive at the optimum result in terms of aesthetics, performance and functionality.

Similar consideration should also be given to the materials from which the sign will be produced and, importantly, the company that will be supplying those materials. It is not just the simple question of metallic or non-metallic substrate. How different materials perform in terms of lifespan, what are the fabrication options, is it available finished or in kit-form and what are the delivery timescales are all important considerations, not to mention the sheer range of differing materials that are available.

Talk to the supplier

Some might perceive those who supply materials to the sign industry as just a stockist whose role it is to simply provide whatever material is specified. But things have moved on. Suppliers can be an invaluable source of information, particularly those with specific product expertise and years of experience. There are the standard metals and plastics that are used extensively, but what about some of the more specialist materials, those which a sign-maker may be unaware of and for which an experienced materials supplier has particular knowledge of and access to?

Even for those materials which would be considered standard, there are benefits to discussing the options. Stainless steel, brass and aluminium are just some of the metals used in sign manufacture, aluminium being the most popular with its lightweight, non-corrosive qualities making it suited to external signage, as well as indoor. But, if a sign-maker is talking to a local authority, for example, proposing stainless steel as an alternative to aluminium for a traffic sign project, then liaising with the supplier to identify the materials' respective characteristics and properties could prove invaluable. Stainless steel may appear





to allow them to be easily slotted together giving an infinite range of shapes and sizes to meet customer demands.

More than a stockist

Moving on from the materials and fabrication, another factor to consider when choosing a supplier is service and support. Continuity of supply, particularly in these challenging times when materials are proving more difficult to source, can be the difference between successfully fulfilling a project and letting down a customer. Those suppliers who work with the leading materials manufacturers and who deal in significant quantities of metals and plastics on a daily basis are more likely to be able to secure reliable supply chains (often with next day delivery), as well as being able to draw on the expertise of major brands.

to be the higher cost option in terms of upfront costs but with lifecycle costing being increasingly adopted, having the facts and figures from the materials supplier relating to the longevity of stainless steel could provide evidence of cost savings over the longer term.

Fabrication

The processing capabilities available from a materials supplier can also be an important factor in the selection process. Companies are available which offer a comprehensive range of sign components and 'semi-fabrication' options, enabling sign makers to choose between buying individual components such as aluminium composite, aluminium painted sheet, rails or posts as separate items, or in kit form, with bespoke fabrication to a customer's finished requirements.

CNC routers provide the capability to produce flat cut shapes and letters in a range of materials. Aluminium and stainless steel are popular options, along with the various aluminium composite materials (ACMs) available on the market, comprising an outer skin of aluminium with a core of foam, plastic and/or polymer. Acrylics, polycarbonate, PETg and PVC foam all have their respective advantages

and, importantly disadvantages. Buying material from a knowledgeable supplier, with real experience of the sign industry, can help to ensure that the solution best meets the needs of a given application.

At Righton Blackburns we have added a third Tekcel CNC Router to complement our existing machines. This has enabled us to increase capacity and reduce lead times, as well as providing the facility to cut specific and bespoke sizes, fret work lettering and shapes to meet customers' individual requirements. We are able to set up our routers to cut chamfered edges, semi polished edges (acrylic, polycarbonate, PETg) and drilled holes (machine bed size 4000mm x 2000mm), offering the flexibility to cover a wide range of sign designs.

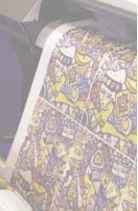
In-house cutting and fabrication services can also allow the production of a range of sign tray designs, along with bespoke lettering. These can be fret cut or recessed, making them ideal for back-lit designs. Attention should be paid to the performance of sign trays, with return joins usually folded corners and internal web plates to achieve the required strength and ensure a watertight finish. Trays can typically be produced in multiple pieces and supplied with 'male and female' joins

Experience in supplying for safety-critical applications can also be a consideration in certain projects, while those suppliers who operate to ISO9001 standards offer the peace of mind that their processes are of consistent quality and independently audited. For sign makers operating on a national basis, a network of service centres strategically located throughout the UK can prove particularly useful.

A materials supplier can be an invaluable ally. Those who simply see them as a stockist supplying metals and plastics to order are missing out on a wealth of experience and expertise that can add real value to a sign making business.

www.rightonblackburns.co.uk





Banner hemming – What method is best?

*Kieran Dallow, Marketing Manager,
Innotech Digital*

Banners are a great way to grab attention. They're effective yet inexpensive, simple to print and install, and come in a wide range of sizes and strengths. But to ensure your banner's punchy message or eye-catching design lasts as long as required by your customer, it needs a durable, professional finish.

Why hem a banner?

Hemming a banner reinforces its structure, the same reason why clothes are hemmed. Otherwise, outdoor banners can quickly suffer damage – rips and ragged edges – from wind, rain and UV light. As well as preventing tear-out, hemming improves a banner's structural integrity for a flatter hang, and an overall improved appearance. Designs are sharper and the message clearer.

It's important to use the best process and tools for each job. Methods for hemming and finishing banners include taping, gluing, sewing and welding.

Taping and Glueing

Double-sided adhesive tape is inexpensive and effective, making it popular for hemming banners. As well as the tape itself, a large table and long steel rule are required to get a straight edge while folding the hem over – little equipment, and some manual effort.

Types of double-sided tape include the cheaper 'Toffee' rubber adhesive tape, which sticks well but tends to melt in warmer temperatures, and acrylic/polyester tape which is more expensive but lasts longer. These latter tapes offer high tack plus UV and solvent resistance, so are typically worth the extra cost. They also incur fewer sticky obstructions when inserting poles into the hem for extra rigidity.



Banner stiffening tape, also known as banner hemming tape, is one-sided adhesive tape applied to banner edges to reinforce them without having to fold over the material. This can take less time and effort compared to double-sided tape, but edges won't have the same longevity.

Another option is hook and loop tape, featuring a strong adhesive backing for application onto the banner vinyl, and hooks and loops to keep the hem together. Just like Velcro shoe fastenings, this tape offers strength and rigidity combined with adjustability.

Glueing banners requires minimal equipment and cost. The glue is applied with a brush to the banner edges, which are folded over manually and pressed with a roller. Cheap but tricky and potentially messy, professionals typically overlook glue in favour of tape.

Sewing and Welding

Sewing is a fast and reliable way to finish hems on fabric or mesh banners. You can sew a wider hem to insert rods, with no adhesive residue to worry about. However, this method requires an industrial sewing machine, something not every business has to hand.

Welding banner hems also requires an industrial machine – but could be a good investment depending on workload. Once the operator has folded the hem to the correct width and fed it into the machine, the rest is drawn through and sealed automatically, leaving a tidy edge.

High frequency, or radio frequency, welding combines pressure with energy from an electromagnetic field to weld materials together. The amount of energy and tooling can be changed depending on requirements, and two or more layers of vinyl can be bonded at once.

Hot air welding blends heat, pressure and speed to create strong, flat bonds. Hot air (or hot wedge) welding machines can produce pole pockets and overlaps as well as hems, reducing material handling overall – explaining the popularity for applications that need image alignment, like building wraps.

A third banner welding method is impulse welding. Energy is pulsed through two elements, one either side of the seam, to create heat; liquid is then flushed through to cool the bars to reduce wrinkling. This produces strong seams and sharp edges, but is compatible with fewer materials than other methods.

Welding PVC-free banner material has proven to be challenging, owing to its composition. However, some Envirotech banners from Innotech can be welded, and some newer welding machines are shown to have good results with PVC-free media. Given the increasing interest in more environmentally friendly signage material, welding technology may well improve in line with demand.

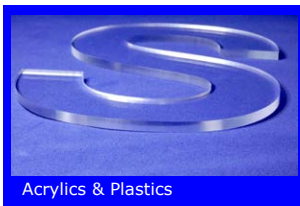
What is the best banner hemming method?

Naturally, the best banner hemming method depends on the task: the material and its weight, size and composition; the application itself; the expected duration of the installation; the budget and available equipment.

Glueing and taping are the most cost-effective, and sign businesses can achieve professional results with time and skill. Sewing and welding machines are faster and easier, but with a greater financial outlay. To decide, consider your current banner demand and workflow, and experiment – perhaps taking a supplier's equipment for a test drive.

www.innotechdigital.com

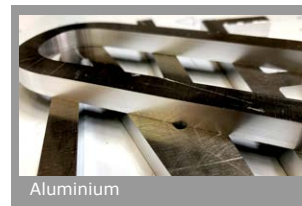
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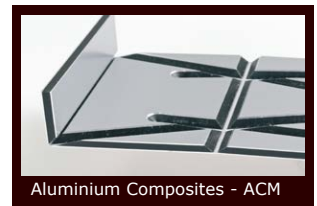
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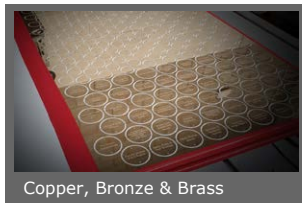
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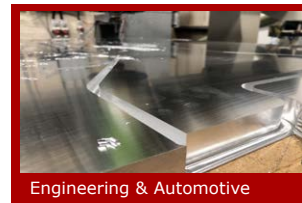
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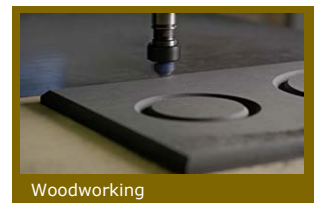
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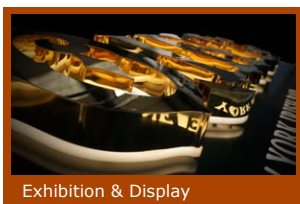
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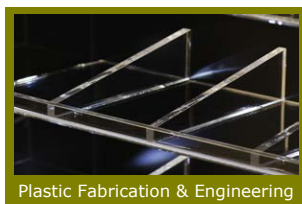
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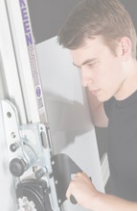
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Illumination

Absen LED wall drives rebranding event

Absen provided almost 2000 square meters of its PL2.5 LED panels to form the backdrop of Alexander Dennis Ltd's two day event.

Event solution specialists, Tapestry Events, were tasked with creating an impactful and modern backdrop design to reflect the new brand identity of renowned eco-bus company, Alexander Dennis Limited.

Tapestry Events, which has delivered a variety of events for the bus company for over two decades, had a clear understanding of the client's vision and high expectations for this project. The events specialist chose Absen because of a long and positive history with the

manufacturer, having fitted a large PL2.5 LED wall at its HQ in Scotland.

"We opted for Absen because its products represent quality and excellence," says Gary Winters, senior production lead at Tapestry Events. "The value, services and support network has been long established between us, which is important given the high value investment we made acquiring almost 200 square meters of PL2.5 tiles."

Sustainable evolution

Global leader in the design and manufacture of double decker buses, Alexander Dennis has turned its attention towards sustainability, boasting an industry leading

range of low and zero emission buses and coaches that currently operate globally – its vision is to lead the evolution of sustainable on-road mass transportation and mobility.

The two-day, hybrid event, held at De Vere Wokefield Estate, UK, was an opportunity for Alexander Dennis to launch its new brand identity and to communicate the future plans for the company

In-person guests were able to view the impressive 27m x 3.5m PL2.5 LED wall, displaying specially designed content, whilst those who could not attend in-person were invited to view a global live stream of the various presentations, as well as being able to participate in live polls and Q&A sessions.



The PL2.5 LED, part of Absen's award winning Polaris range, was chosen for this project as it features 1200 nit brightness, UltraBlack Technology and a refresh rate of 3840 Hz - with 2.5mm pixel pitch making it an ideal solution for displaying vivid content to those both in the room and online.

Winters attributes an easy build in the run up to the event to the lightweight and user-friendly panels, "The PL2.5 panels are small, lightweight and easily connected together, with a magnetic auto-lock/auto-eject function, which ensured that the tiles went together easily...the entire build was very straightforward – and the results were outstanding!"

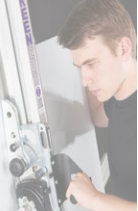
The LED wall was driven using AV Stumpfl's PIXERA media server, with Barco servers in place for screen management. All the content displayed was created at 10,800 x 1400 pixels by the Tapestry Events in-house studio team.

Feedback from two day event was extremely positive, with Jacqueline Anderson, Group marketing director at Alexander Dennis saying that it was one of the best conference they have ever held, "The feedback has been fantastic, the whole team is bursting with pride, positivity and passion for the next chapter in ADL's journey! Being able to convey our strategy in such a polished and professional manner made it even more engaging."

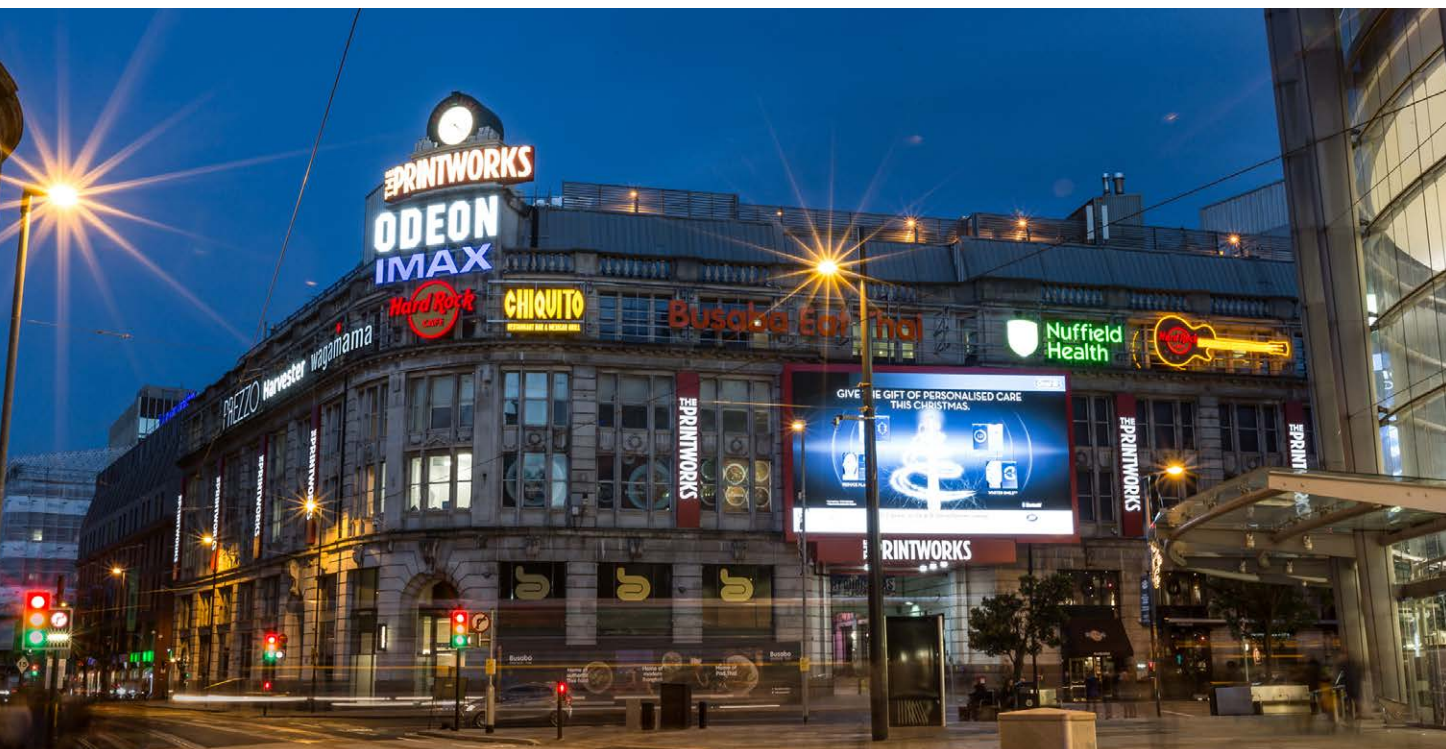
Absen European brand and marketing director, Jess Golding, believes the technological advances in Absen LED will continue to keep the company ahead of the curve when it comes to impressive applications such as the ADL event, "It's a pleasure to have been a part of such an important and successful event for this global company, and I'm continually impressed by how people use Absen LED to make their creative visions become reality."

www.absen-europe.com





Illumination



Helping your sign to shine

Typically, in the signage community, low-cost modules have long been coveted due to their brightness and price points. This instant gratification may do the job initially, however, this is at the expense of reliability and efficacy, as the electrical energy is turned into heat, rather than light, causing considerably higher energy consumption costs over its lifespan, as well as leaving modules prone to failing and fading sooner than expected.

Michael Crotch, Head of Signage Division for Applelec, says, "Applelec has spent almost 30 years specialising in manufacturing built-up illuminated letters, utilising our lighting expertise. We partner with companies such as SloanLED, who match our values of innovation and excellence, to ensure we supply quality and reliable products that do your customers' brands justice."

He continues, "We have learnt over the years that quality components and advanced technology are crucial to maintaining the brightness and look of the brand, preventing expensive call out repair costs, which become particularly troublesome if installations are in high, or difficult to access, locations. In these situations, having confidence in your sign and illumination is key to truly giving your customers the best brand and experience possible."

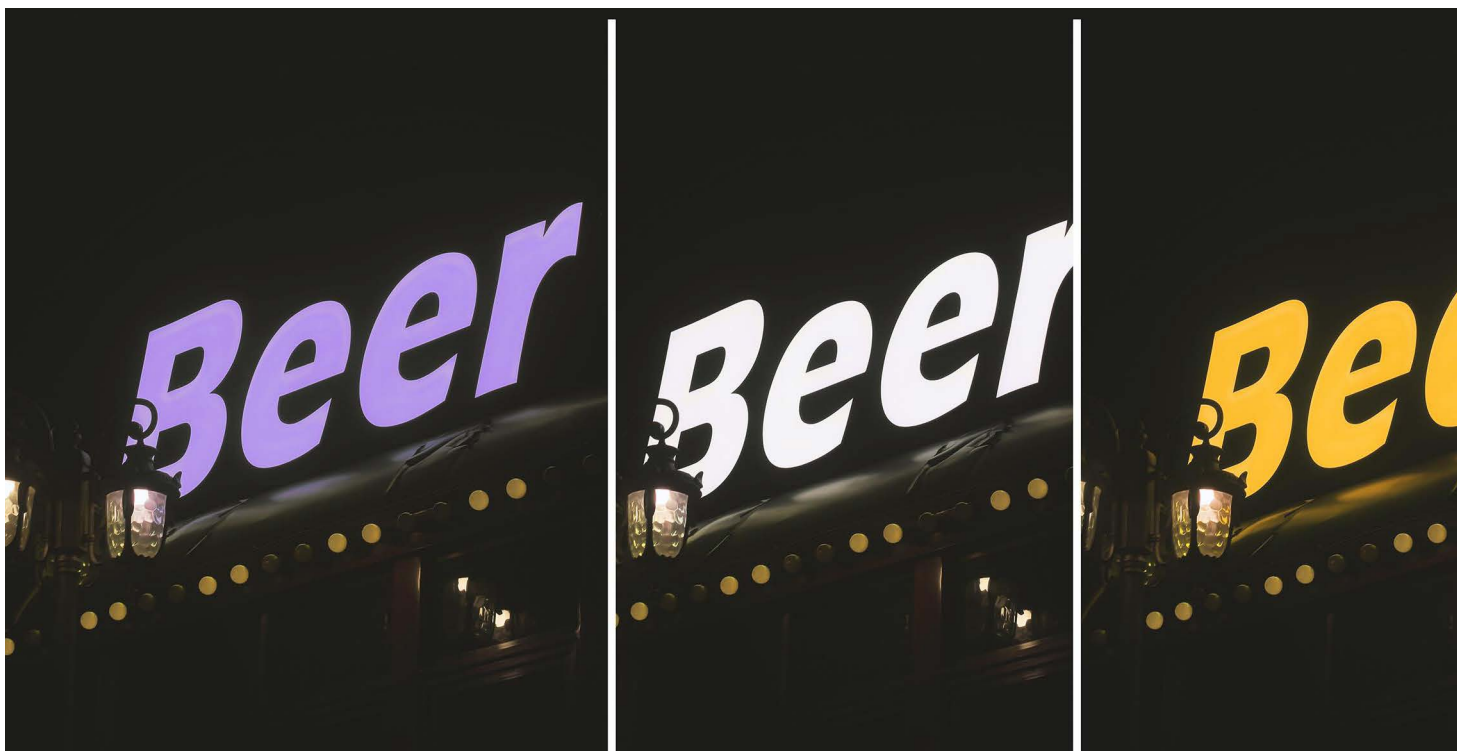
Low-cost, high performance, VL4

SloanLED's recently expanded VL4 family are game changers in the low-cost LED market, offering quality, brightness, efficacy, and longevity in an affordable series of modules, perfect for built-up illuminated letters, and now available in a complete family of module sizes, RGBW colours and colour temperatures.

Despite being SloanLED's low-cost solution, the everyday VL4 has one of the best warranties in the business with an impressive 10-year product and 5-year labour assist warranty, giving you confidence in the longevity of this solution. Its improved optics and 160° radiation pattern, shatters expectations with wide, uniform illumination and class-leading light output and efficacy.

"With a lifetime rating of over 54,000 hours and improved weather protection, passing SloanLED's proprietary rain, salt fog tests and accelerated life tests (some of the harshest in the industry), you can be assured that these modules are built to last. What's more, it's CRL tape technology speeds up installation by 30% and its great circuit design provides greater efficiency and reliability compared to other low-cost systems. The versatility within the VL4 range, offers solutions for a wide variety of built-up letters," adds Michael.





"We have learnt over the years that quality components and advanced technology are crucial to maintaining the brightness and look of the brand"

The widest colour range available

He continues, "The SloanLED's spectrum RGBW module is the most efficient and powerful RGBW LED lighting solution across the spectrum. Delivering the power and reliability you've come to expect from SloanLED whilst achieving the widest colour range and the brightest whites not often possible in a basic RGB module. Ideal for built-up letters 102-200mm deep, this module has excellent thermal management for greater safety and with a 10-year labour assisted warranty, it is more reliable than ever."

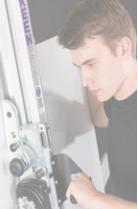
Lighting the way to a more sustainable future

Michael concludes, "A staple component in our recently developed eco-friendly built-up illuminated letters, the SloanLED Prism 24v, are the industry leaders on lumens per watt and its high output capabilities, creates luminance levels far brighter than anything possible with typical LEDs,

avoiding wasted materials and reducing energy usage, without compromising on illumination. Matched by its 10-year warranty, you can be sure this highly energy efficient LED is perfect for the more eco conscious customer."

www.applelecsign.co.uk





Illumination

Light up your business with an LED logo sign

Businesses require good lighting for various purposes. It is crucial to create the best environment for employees and customers for everyone's comfort and productivity.

"Good lighting reduces stress and energises employees," says Eric Smith of Echo Neon. "It helps prevent eye strain and migraines. Bad lighting can make the workers tired and demotivated."

Of course, good lighting is also helpful for attracting more customers. Different products can be highlighted using the best

lighting. "Good lighting is essential for businesses like retail stores, hotels, cafes, restaurants, etc. Lighting helps to add lights and colours to the business location for decorative and information purposes," he adds.

Many businesses use decorative lighting to highlight specific areas. The use of neon signs is also increasing for business decoration and advertisement. Neon lights are famous for their attractive, colourful, and exciting style. However, these days, modern LED neon signs are ideal for businesses.

LED Logo Neon Sign

Sign-makers can design custom neon signs for their customers using imagination and creativity to produce custom LED signs with vinyl graphics. Eric adds, "You can pick any font, colour, and size for your cost-effective custom business sign. You can create custom neon signs for business logos and install them inside or outside for an attractive, eye-catching sign."

A custom LED logo neon sign is made from LED lights, PVC tubing, and an acrylic backboard. This can be created in any colour and size of your choice and you can add any message to the sign. These signs are compatible with remote control so you can adjust the brightness easily. They are also shock-resistant and water-resistant so they can withstand harsh weather conditions. "Most importantly, LED custom neon signs are energy efficient and cheaper than the traditional glass neon signs," concludes Eric.

www.echoneon.co.uk



Spectron LED: Quality counts!

LED modules are a popular LED lighting source in the signage industry, frequently used to illuminate channel letters, lightboxes and trough lights.

Rapid and ongoing improvements in technology can often make it difficult to choose the right module - one that has a great lumen output, produces no shadowing or hot spots, and has a long lifespan.

"At first glance, it may seem like there is very little difference between the unbranded and branded module; but over time the build quality will become more apparent," says Ivan Lew, Managing Director of Spectron LED. "Quality modules have a consistency of colour and less light depreciation over time."

He continues, "They generally feature high quality chips and a resistor that only provides power that is well below the LED chip capabilities. This allows the module to run efficiently, without using too much power."

Spectron LED is an LED specialist who supply and install mood lighting for Retail, Restaurants, Home, Personal and Bespoke Projects. The company has been around since the inception of low energy LED into the light source revolution.

Modules using lower quality chips rely on more power to make them brighter. This

generates more heat, which degrades the LEDs. "Cheaper brands also require a more powerful driver and are therefore more costly to run. As an analogy, think of a car that only drives at 56mph compared to one that drives at full speed all the time," adds Lew.

Improving LED effects

There are a few things you can do to improve the effect of the LED on built-up letters. Firstly, it is important to paint the inside of letters white before installing the LED as the reflection produces a more even spread of light and reduces hot spots. Also, using more modules than necessary should be avoided; consider using just enough to produce the desired brightness.

More LEDs will use more power and cost more to run. If you are using the correct modules it should not be necessary to overload a sign with modules to achieve a great lumen output. It is also important to allow for heat dissipation. A metal backing sheet works well as a heat sink. It may also be helpful to prime the surface of your sign before installing the LEDs because constant heat may cause the adhesive tape on the modules to come away.

Generally, there is little that can go wrong when using LEDs and whatever type you use they should give years of trouble-free

service. Very cheap modules that use a small resistor to increase the brightness of the modules should be avoided, as they will decrease the lifespan of the modules, as mentioned above, and after a few months the brightness and consistency of colour may depreciate dramatically.

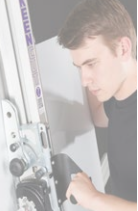
A faulty or poor driver can also cause LED failure, so it is important to choose a good quality power supply with the correct voltage and power. Most driver's manufacturers expect you to allow for 20% headroom, so it is good practice to only use 80% of a driver's stated power unless otherwise stated.

Lew says, "With Spectron's waterproof drivers it is possible to use 100% of the stated power output and they include a 7 year warranty - a great fit and forget option!"

One common issue when fitting a driver is the connection of the LED driver. The outer sleeve should be stripped first to expose the conductor. Ivan Lew concludes, "You should avoid forcing the screw to cut through the sleeve to make a connection as this will only achieve a partial connection. The driver may work for a while, but a bad connection over time will cause failure or worse, an electrical fire."

www.ledsignsandlighting.co.uk





Illumination

Perspex is ideal for a variety of LED illuminated letters

Built-up letters offer the most striking signage found on every high street. They are increasingly being used for exterior architectural signs creating contemporary built up letters to establish a perfect first contact with business visitors.

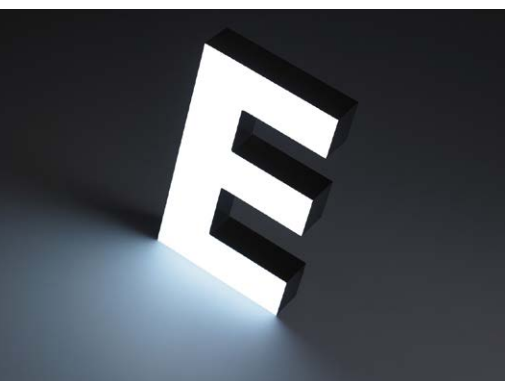
Luke Martyn, Marketing Director at Perspex Distribution Ltd, explains, "Due to its enormous variety of colours and textures, many of which are optimised for LED illumination, Perspex® acrylic has long been the preferred material for sign-makers fabricating illuminated built-up letters."

Manufactured in Lancashire since the 1930's, Perspex® acrylic's developments have always followed trends in sign design. This has been evident through the creation of new colours and the support of greater performance following technical advancements, such as LED lighting.

Investment in attractive, long-standing built-up letters is a wise investment for many businesses as they serve to generate sales and clients and make their business stand out from the crowd on a busy high street or retail park. Brightly lit, contemporary block letters are frequently utilised due to the growing trend for thin, modern typeface and branding. The 1T77 grade of the Perspex® Spectrum LED was created especially for this application and is offered in opal thicknesses of 15mm, 20mm, or 30mm.

Simple to make

Sign-makers simply use a CNC machine to create a channel within the letter and then place LED modules or flexible LED strip inside the block letter and produce an even distribution of light.



Optimal colour performance is achieved in both transmitted and reflected light. This enables solid raised letters to be illuminated with improved diffusion of light within leaner designs and elimination of LED 'hotspots'. In addition to the thicker 1T77, the Perspex Spectrum LED range is also 12 colours are produced for the Perspex® Spectrum LED line.

Perspex® Secret Sign is another well-liked option for signage designers searching for something a little different. When not illuminated, Secret Sign is completely black creating a matt finish in daylight. However, when backlit it transforms into the colour of the illuminated LED. PERSPEX® Secret Sign's surface has a fine matt texture, making it a contemporary, minimalistic daytime sign that will come to life at night.

New sustainable Perspex

Luke continues, "With the ongoing desire for sustainable signage, sign-makers have been excited to learn about the launch of PERSPEX®re, our first range of 100% recycled Perspex® cast acrylic sheets. PERSPEX®re meets the growing demand from sign and display companies for recycled substrates with a long lifespan."

A range of commonly ordered colours are currently held in stock including PERSPEX®re clear, opal, dense white and black sheets. Manufactured with the same 10 year external warranty as standard Perspex® acrylic, it is another option for built up letters where a greener material is specified.

"As with all Perspex® acrylic ranges, a bespoke colour matching service is available enabling customers to order recycled Perspex® acrylic in any colour. PDL carries a wide selection of LED modules and flexible strips for sign manufacturers in addition to our substrates for built-up letters. With their newly created S+ series, BaltLED's LED modules provide more brightness per module while requiring fewer units per sign. As a result, labour costs and sign production time are lowered without compromising quality," he says.

Each module also includes a quick application "finger lift" backing to save time applying the modules' adhesive tape, developed in response to feedback from sign producers.

LED Neon

"We have also seen tremendous growth and client demand in our LED Neon lighting range since adding it to our lighting range. LED Neon offers the typical neon styling in a flexible LED system that is easy to cut, shape, and install. With a flawlessly uniform light output, the device enables sign makers and designers to create modern, catchy slogans, branding, or interior design," adds Luke.

"Our LED Neon10 can be manipulated to produce intricate shapes, even in cramped locations, because of its thin profile and silicone enclosure. For greatest precision, the 8mm wide choice offers cutting increments that are only 10mm apart, while the 4mm wide option is one of the market's most adaptable options."

Another recent innovation for strip LED users is COB LED strip. This strip, which stands for Chip On Board, avoids the dot effect frequently present in normal LED strip and offers a more continuous source of light. "We invite sign makers who are curious about COB LEDs to get in touch with us to talk about our expanding selection of choices," he says.

When picking the proper LED product, sign-makers will always be discerning about their product selection, placing dependability, performance, and cost effectiveness at the top of any list. However, one aspect that is frequently disregarded is the service level from suppliers. The advantage sign-makers have over their rivals is their product expertise, experience, and after-sales support, because this means they will make sure they are using the right amount of the right product to meet their customer needs.

Luke concludes, "At Perspex Distribution, we have a team of LED product managers and LED experts inside our branches that make sure we satisfy our customers' demands by providing services like free LED layout services to guarantee all orders are placed as effectively as possible. For the past 9 years, we have been developing a wide variety of LED lighting products to fulfil the demands of the UK sign and display market. As of right now, our selection includes LED Modules, LED Strips, Light Sheet Panels, LED Neon, and a wide variety of accessories, such as power supply and control gear."



Case Study: Harrison's Signs

York-based Harrison's Signs produced a stunning illuminated hanging sign for a local restaurant seeking to boost their presence to passing trade.



Combining Perspex® Spectrum LED 1T77 with S-Led Flexible LEDs from Perspex Distribution to create a crisp, contemporary design.

The block letters were CNC cut using 30mm thick Perspex® acrylic to help create a modern, deep sign. The benefit of the Spectrum LED range is that it is specially formulated to give optimised colour performance with LEDs without spotting.

The sign was illuminated using our S-LED range designed with a flexible PCB board to enable them to be curved around corners without the need to use connectors. The signage was finished off by being pre-mounted to a fabricated aluminium frame work to be suspended in the restaurant window.

www.perspex.co.uk

WonderWindow



Brighton based Recreative Signs delivers a notable landmark-scale window mural by The Postman at Noel Gallagher's North London Studio.

A chance meeting between two people with a shared interest in street-art in 2018 gave impetus to the birth of The Postman. They may today be known by many names, and lots, or all, are aliases. They're private individuals, who work anonymously together and with a growing circle of friends known as The Postman Collective.

Music and pop culture permeate The Postman's works and it's out there and on the streets if you want to see it. Positive and inclusive in nature, the works are not museum pieces and they'll fade away given time. They're transient to the extent The Postman's fans seek them out before they disappear.

The Postman's medium is complex sharing elements drawn from photography, spray-paint, stencils of various types and collage. What you might infer is that any medium used with the support of another has the

legs and capacity to be taken further than any element unaided. You'd be right. The Postman's work is distinctive and individual in the extreme. The Postman collaborates in a big way with other artists, including notable photographers, and so continually expands its knowledge and repertoire.

Much of The Postman's work exists in homage to their heroes and is celebrated in enduring form in works that are acquired and collected whereas their work on the streets is free for all to enjoy and is never for sale. They also accept commissions to produce individual works formed around their ideology and medium. One of the most recent came from fan and collector, former Oasis frontman, Noel Gallagher.

Noel made contact with The Postman looking for an exterior mural design for his North London Studio. The work was to be rooted in The Postman's distinctive look and feel and centre around images of Noel's heroes including, among others, John Lennon and David Bowie. The Postman delivered a work that again succeeds in practically signing itself and yet is very clearly a wonderful and evocative one-off.

Delivering the physical manifestation of the work involved rather more durable media than is the norm for The Postman's needs and applications, and Brighton Based Recreative Signs responded to the request to produce it having been introduced along the word-of-mouth communications network.

"The files we were sent were massive," said Recreative's Richard Earley "they comprised many layers and it took a bit of effort to reconcile them into something ready to print." The Recreative team decided to proof the job on Metamark MD5 laminated with its matching gloss laminate MetaGuard MG-700. The result was spot-on in terms of fidelity and definition but, at Richard's urging, didn't make the cut. It was felt that the gloss introduced a feel not evident in The Postman's other exterior works which are often paper-based and thus matt. One more proof later, this time on HP Latex Printed Metamark MD5 laminated with MetaGuard MG-700 in matt, and approval to proceed was given.

The Recreative team, in the shape of Richard and Ryan Earley, arrived bright and early at Noel Gallagher's studio to apply the finished work and first delivered a meticulous cleaning to the glazing ahead of application. The total of seventeen panes took about two hours to fit. Noel and his daughter, Anais, along with The Postman were there to document the occasion and see the mural installed.

The MD5 mural will, thanks to the digital print medium last longer than most of The Postman's street-art works. If and when it does retire though, the mural can claim a life beyond the one it enjoys gracing the studio windows. Metamark will retrieve it and recycle its content through the MetaStream process turning it into a useful article that can itself be recycled time and time again. That said, it's quite possible that a few scraps of it could find a way into a memento for Recreative Signs to display.

Richard Earley and the team at Recreative Signs are no strangers to pushing hard on artistic boundaries. The company has built a reputation for producing notable signage in self-coloured materials, primarily Metamark M7. Its wanderings into the realms of print though show that the company is a well-rounded producer and its application skills are much in evidence too.

www.recreativesigns.co.uk
www.metamark.co.uk



Photography:
Dave J Hogan



*We could have used an advert,
instead let this video do the **talking.***

innovatecapture[®] 

vivid.

Mint Installs pave the way in PPF

In a recent interview with Mint Installs we spoke to Max Smith-Halvorsen (Marketing & Business Manager) about Mint Installs and their preferred cutter plotter supplier Graphtec GB.

Based in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire and employing 5 permanent and 2 freelancers, Mint Installs is a PPF (Paint Protection Film) company for the automotive industry (primarily for cars and motor bikes) and is proud to be an Xpel, Gtechniq and Carpro accredited business. The company was recently established by Paul Slade (Director) and his business partner, David Shoubridge (Senior Installer) in May 2021 and is quickly establishing itself as one of the leading PPF Installation businesses in the UK. Whilst specialising in Paint Protection Film and Detailing, they also offer a selection of other services including detailing, ceramic coatings, machine polishing, wrapping and wheel refurbishment.

"PPF is a process that is designed to provide you with the peace of mind that you need on the open road, keeping your vehicle's surfaces safe from gravel, oils, bug acids, bird droppings as well as stopping paint chips before they start. PPF is hydrophobic and therefore easily cleaned - even jet washable. We are one of the few companies that ensure all possible edges are wrapped, making the film virtually invisible. Lifting and delamination are a thing of the past with Xpel film. Xpel's Edge Seal Technology ensures film stays stuck and keeps surfaces protected from contaminants. PPF produces a finish where the cars look better than when they came out of the show room". Max explained.

The Xpel system called DAP (Design Access Programme), provides the film and patterns for almost all makes and models of cars. These are cut out using the Graphtec FC9000 cutting plotter "in our opinion the industry standard for this type of work. The quality of the cuts are second to none and provides a sharp, accurate pattern cut for the car panels, - especially important for our wrap all edges' approach". Said Max

The FC9000 provides one of the highest performance capabilities currently available. This is due to the addition of production-enhancing features and comes as standard with a new barcode reader for continuous cut capabilities. Available in four different sizes the 75, 100, 140 and 160cm models that cut material widths of 762, 1,067, 1,372 and 1,626mm



respectively. With a maximum cutting speed of 1,485mm/sec and a cutting force of 600gf (5.88N), the FC9000 is considered to have reached a new level for high-end cutting, involving a much wider range of sign and graphics and digital printing media in varying thicknesses. The FC9000 has an optional media take-up spool that will increase the efficiency of roll-to-roll work undertaken by digital print specialists and the new auto panning function which prevents skewing of longer lengths of material to be cut by automatically splitting the job into smaller sections for guaranteed precise sequential cutting.

The FC9000 is supplied with the latest Version 8 of Graphtec's proprietary ARMS (Advanced Registration Mark Sensing) system for radically enhanced media tracking and cutting accuracy. It is also supplied as standard with Graphtec Pro Studio or optional Pro Studio Plus and Cutting Master 4 design and production software, with the latter available as a plug-in option for integration with other

popular software programs such as Adobe Illustrator and CorelDRAW. The machine also meets all relevant CE safety standards and comes with a three-year performance warranty and starts at £3,695.00 – £9,245.00.

When asked what sets your company apart from the competition? Max explained "We strive for customer service and protection hence the name. We keep the customer up-to-date with the process via a WhatsApp group so they can see the progress of their vehicle by sending them images. It's the personal touch that counts. We simply achieve this by ensuring that no car leaves our workshop without looking perfect - and we mean perfect. We expect the same from our suppliers and with Graphtec, the service we have received has been second to none. The peace of mind knowing that there is technical support at all times is invaluable to any production company and I certainly wouldn't hesitate to recommend them".

www.graphtecgb.co.uk

Phototex with anti-microbial coating for dementia-friendly graphics

Landor UK and Radwraps Wall Graphics Systems have created dementia-friendly wall graphics designed to provide a therapeutic and nostalgic environment for dementia patients.

They are using Phototex self-adhesive fabric to provide complete graphics solutions that can be installed with minimal disruption to carers, patients and residents. The prints are then coated with Landor's ColourShield liquid laminate with anti-microbial coating, which adds greater durability and image quality and is Certified ISO 22196 offering 99% protection from harmful germs and bacteria.

In a major report on dementia in the UK by the Alzheimers Society, there are currently more than 900,000 people in the UK living with dementia. 1 in 14 people over 65 have dementia, increasing to 1 in 6 for over 80s. Although there is not currently a cure for dementia, healthcare facilities, such as hospitals and residential care homes, can support the wellbeing and safety of their patients and residents by creating a comforting environment using appropriate graphics and imagery.

"The benefits of dementia-friendly signage and environments are well documented and proven to be a huge benefit to patients and carers. Not only do they provide a soothing environment, they also inspire positive conversations with carers, friends and family through nostalgic memories initiated by the graphics," says James Maddocks, Director at Radwraps.

He continues, "It is critically important that when we install graphics into care homes and hospitals that it causes minimal disruption. When the images need to be changed, Phototex is also very easy to remove and replace, which again minimises disruption for the care setting and residents. Landor Phototex is absolutely the perfect product for this application because it is incredibly quick and easy to install and remove. It also has no smell, leaves no residue and never damages the surfaces when it is removed. It can be applied to just about any surface, including walls, doors, floors and ceilings and to cap it all, it is fully recyclable."

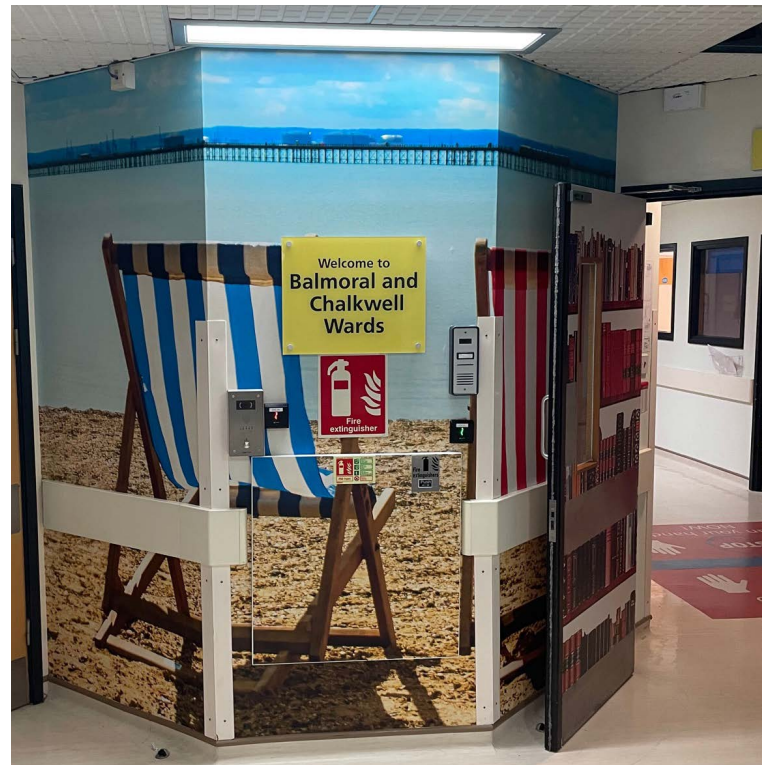
The graphics are coated with Landor ColourShield anti-microbial to protect the image from day-to-day exposure and

damage as well as providing ISO 22196 certified protection from 99% of harmful germs and bacteria. "Landor's Phototex self-adhesive fabric with ColourShield anti-microbial liquid laminate coating provides a complete graphics solution that is effective and safe for patients, residents and carers."

Derric Landor, Managing Director of Landor UK, says, "This is the perfect application for Landor. Phototex is unlike any other fabric as it will never leave a residue when removed. It delivers a fully recyclable print solution that looks great and can be installed quickly and easily and can then be removed just as easily and with no damage. In addition, our anti-microbial coating solution is easy to apply and enhances the prints while also providing protection from most harmful germs and bacteria, which is essential in healthcare environments. Radwraps delivers a fantastic and important service to people with dementia and we are delighted to support them."

James adds, "Patients and residents with dementia have most likely grown up in the area and will probably have visited locations of natural beauty many times. We use local images of beauty, which can invoke long term memory and provide talking points. The scenes also look serene and provide a calming environment to help patients and residents feel safe."

He concludes, "We are so pleased to be working with Landor to deliver these solutions because their products are so perfect for the application. Phototex is a dream to work with. Easy to install and when you peel it from the walls it's like it was never there. The Anti-Microbial coating is also very easy to apply and



although it provides great protection, you wouldn't know it was there. These are fantastic products for an application that provides comfort and support for thousands of people."

www.landoruk.com
www.radwraps.co.uk

A SHOW TO REMEMBER





So after all the excitement and hard work. After all the preparations and the build-up. How do the organisers feel FESPA 22 went?

We asked Head of FESPA Global Print Expo, Michael Ryan, "Not just for us, but also for everyone at the show, there was a feeling of how great it was to get back together again. The vibe and the buzz during the event was excellent and there was an overwhelming feeling of joy to be back doing what we all love to do."

He continues, "Even before it started there was the excitement of everybody setting up. The likes of Durst and Fujifilm who were launching some really big machines at the show, along with everyone else busily getting stands ready for visitors. People were visibly happy and this created an incredible atmosphere throughout the event and helped to make it a huge success for everyone involved."

Exhibitors we have spoken to have said they are very happy with the results they got from the show. Mike agrees and says he has heard much the same from people he has been speaking to, "It's been so long since we had an event like this and the feedback I have had from exhibitors have been extremely positive. They were particularly pleased with the quality and enthusiasm of the visitors. They are telling me this was a high-quality audience with people there who were serious buyers, ready to do business and invest in the future."

Mike and the team were also pleased with how their special features were received, "There are always those nervous times before a show, because you are so keen for everything to go well. I am delighted to say everything came together superbly."



The Sustainability Spotlight brought together an incredible line of speakers in a fantastic theatre setting. HP did a great job managing the presentations and this was definitely one of the most popular highlights of the show."

He adds, "There was some great content from people who might not normally be at a show like ours but have so much to offer in terms of valuable information about how to be more sustainable in the future. I am delighted to say these are available now at our web site."

There was also the World Wrap Masters, which was won by Ivan Tenchev from Bulgaria. "It was amazing to see contestants from all around the world come to this event, which was really hotly contested. We also had our first woman finalist with Denmark's Maria Terp Holt coming third, which is a great achievement," says Mike.

He continues, "We also had Club FESPA, which unites FESPA associations from across the world. It was great to see all the secretaries of these groups meeting up and being together again for the first time in years."

Plans for Future Events

After the excitement of the show itself, FESPA was keen to get on and announce not just 2023's show – but also 2024. "We'll be back in Munich next year and then onto Amsterdam in 2024. It's fantastic to announce this now and give everyone plenty of time to plan and prepare. We will also be bringing back our Sportswear Pro event at Amsterdam."

It's still a busy time for the FESPA team between shows and Mike is excited by the rate that stands are being re-booked. "The amount of re-bookings an event receives is a real confirmation of how successful the show has been and I am delighted to say we have lots of exhibitors already book their stands for next year. We also hope to see companies from those countries, particularly in Asia, that are still struggling with the virus and so couldn't join is this time."

A final bit of exciting news for the UK comes in the form of the UK and Ireland leg of the World Wrap Masters, which takes place at Silverstone in April 2023. "We are going to have a big event to launch next year's Wrap Masters at Silverstone, with workshops and lots of other activities to support this qualification round. As well as this, keep a watch on our web site and socials for other events leading up to FESPA 2023 in Munich," he concludes.

www.fespa.com

Soyang Europe, Fujifilm and Josero – An incredible journey



Sarah Winterbottom, Group Sales Director

Two of the biggest stories of the year have both had Soyang Europe slap bang in the middle of them. Back in May, just before FESPA in Berlin, we had the announcement that Fujifilm had formed a comprehensive partnership with Soyang to distribute the Acuity Ultra R2 in the UK market. This was followed barely a week later with the news that Soyang Europe had acquired Josero.

We asked Soyang Europe's Managing Director, Mark Mashiter, how these deals came about, "I was invited to Fujifilm to have a look at their new Acuity Range, mainly to discuss applications with them and what materials they would like for their demo centre in Broadstairs. They requested to some of our large format accounts, particularly those customers 3.2 and 5 metre media, to help them understand our market a better. Having seen several of our clients, they then asked if we would be interested in distributing the product!"

That was quite a jump. How did Mark respond? "Our thing is media. That is what we do and that is what we are very good at. This of course means we have great relationships with key players in the market from all sides, including the machinery, but doesn't mean we have the skills, resources and infrastructure to be a hardware sales company. We needed something more to be able to sell machinery. We don't have engineers and we don't have the technical know-how. However, the fresh

approach that was being communicated from Fujifilm filled us with confidence that in their ability to bring machines to market and we felt there was definitely an opportunity there for us, so we looked into it in more depth."

And this was the point where a great solution began to take shape. Mark continues, "It soon became clear that this would be the best way to gain that technical know-how was to acquire it rather than try and build it. This is when the discussions really started

with Josero. They are very well known, established and respected within the industry and they have a great reputation for service."

He continues, "Initially there were some concerns with what response we might get, particularly if there was any kind of crossover with the existing manufacturers that Josero were working with. But at the end of the day, the Fujifilm offering is all in the very wide market, which is not an area they were previously into, so it was actually a really good fit. Our companies are very complementary and we can see many positives to come from the relationship."

Mark went on to explain how current customers of both Soyang and Josero are set to benefit, "For Soyang's customers in the grand format arena we are a valued supplier because we hold a massive range

of stock and we can deliver next day on a lot of materials. We have a lot of trust from customers and we feel that bringing Fujifilm to them would generate the same levels of trust as well. We perform on media so why wouldn't we perform on machinery?"

He adds, "And of course for Josero's customers, there is the opportunity to move into the grander format. There are big opportunities for them to trade up machines and also for their sales team now to sell Soyang materials at very competitive pricing. We are doing demonstrations at Fujifilm with customers who are looking at capital investments and we've already managed to secure an installation of a 5 metre machine."

Sarah Winterbottom is now Group Sales Director at Soyang Europe/Josero and she says, "As our customers win more contracts and build their own business, we are now able to work with us to move into even larger machines. It's great to have worked with companies who started off with us with a 1.6m machine, not sure if it is the right move for them and so on, and then to look at the now investing in a 3.2m machine for a business that has really taken off. This relationship means we can continue the journey with our customers."

Sarah concludes, "The future looks really positive for both businesses. The relationship makes absolute perfect sense and is really a marriage made in heaven. Josero has all the expertise of selling hardware and Soyang are one of the best for media. By bringing the two together and it can only be positive for everybody."

www.soyang.co.uk
www.josero.com



All 92 English football clubs in a single shirt

Roland DG has created the nation's first football shirt featuring the colours of the top 92 clubs in England and Wales.

In celebration of the start of the new football season - kicking off the weekend of 30th July and Saturday 6th August respectively - the nation's first '92 Club' shirt has been designed by concept kit designer Andy Slater, AKA Xztals. Featuring a combination of over 100 unique colours from each team, this one-of-a-kind football shirt perfectly showcases the colour precision and accuracy of the Texart XT-640 printer.

Developed specifically for dye-sublimation transfer printing, the Texart XT-640 is a next generation machine that delivers outstanding print quality and speed on long print runs. Promising unrivalled colour quality with 7-droplet technology, the printer also offers 4-colour high-speed printing or 8-colour printing for a wider colour gamut and smooth colour gradients.

Stephen Davis, EMEA Marketing Director at Roland DG commented, "Launched in time for the highly anticipated 22/23 season and during a very memorable year for football, it is the perfect way to highlight the capabilities of the Texart XT-640, which is specifically designed to provide super quality with vibrant colour technology for sportswear, sports apparel and sport accessory manufacturers".

Concept kit designer Andy Slater has amassed over 45,000 social media

followers and is known for his creativity when it comes to creating sports apparel. Born and based in Manchester, a city known worldwide for its football heritage, Andy has previously worked with top UK brands and organisations such as BBC Sport and PlayStation, creating concept kits ahead of sporting events and tournaments.

Andy commented, "I was incredibly excited to be asked to work on such a creative project with Roland DG to showcase the company's vast printing colour capabilities. The design is inspired by a style I've adapted over time, taking iconic vintage shirts and putting a modern twist on them".

The Texart XT-640 is aimed at sportswear apparel and accessories print houses and soft signage manufacturers looking to create high-volume sportswear, fashion, soft signage, interior decoration, promotional merchandise and much more.

"The XT-640's advanced print control technology produces stunning sharp image quality and brilliant vivid colour", continues Stephen Davis. "For maximum production, it delivers fine detail and superb contrast at impressive print speeds."

www.rolanddg.eu



Premier acquires Zulu Packaging

Lamination film specialists Zulu Packaging Limited has been acquired by Premier Paper Group. Zulu Packaging provides products for a wide range of lamination and packaging film requirements, including, flexible packaging films for direct food contact, lamination films for carton producers and a stock range of lamination films for commercial print.

Michael Beever, Managing Director commented on the acquisition, "I am delighted to welcome Zulu Packaging to Premier. Lamination films are sold very successfully

in many countries across the wider OVOL Japan Pulp & Paper group and we have used this experience and expertise to identify opportunities to further expand our product offer to existing and new customers. Many of our existing commercial print customers can now source their lamination film requirements from Premier with an extensive range of films available from stock that can be delivered with their paper order. It will also allow us to provide packaging converters with a greater choice of products that complements our expanding carton and graphical board business."

"From a business perspective the acquisition makes good sense. The synergies that can be achieved, particularly in the area of stockholding and distribution, means that we can offer an enhanced service with very few incremental costs and this additional range of products provides greater choice and convenience for our customers." He added.

www.paper.co.uk



Make It Happen expands its team and services

Make it Happen Signage Consultancy has recently recruited a new member to the team. Aimee Davies, was previously a project manager and joins Founder Sam Armstrong and Director Katie Asken as their Brand Consultant and Sustainability Lead.

Aimee has recent experience in the fabricated signage and large format print industry and started her earlier career as a product marketing manager. Aimee comments, "When I was in my 20s, I was launching new products, training a large specification sales force, and designing promotional marketing materials and sales tools. I then adapted those skills when I began supporting business leaders and start-ups with creative services."

Through her recent project management work with architects, interior designers, and high-street brands, Aimee saw an increase in requests for green credentials. Aimee comments, "I realised that it wouldn't be long before universities and local authorities started to have similar commitments towards sustainability. I wondered how

ready the signage industry was and if there were structures in place to help shift a move towards greener practices."

Aimee is passionate about sustainability and believes that filling gaps in knowledge and showcasing greener signage options is needed. In addition, she is keen to promote this as a new growth area to savvy business owners and help them to target a new era of discerning buyers.

Aimee comments, "My hope is that there will be a tipping point where demand from end users for greener solutions leads to economies of scale coming into force. With future generations being passionate about the planet and their buying choices, perhaps that isn't as far away as it once felt."

Sam Armstrong, founder of Make it Happen, comments, "When I met Aimee, I was impressed by her ideas, energy, and appetite for learning. I was blown away by her drive to inspire more sustainable thinking within the industry. When Aimee approached me with a vision for a host of new workshops and support services, I

knew there was no way I could miss that opportunity."

Aimee concludes, "It feels great to use my creative skills again and do so within an industry I've grown to love."

www.makeih.co.uk



Katie, Sam and Aimee make a great team

SignFab promotions

SignFab has promoted Chris Helm and Jordy Hodgson to Sales Office Managers. The newly appointed roles will see them jointly oversee workflow within the sales office, aiming to improve office efficiencies and the SignFab experience further.

Customers will continue to benefit from having a dedicated account manager accompany them through the inquiry, order and manufacture process and provide them with supportive aftercare and backup. These recent changes will see SignFab and their customers gain from the combined experience of not just one, but two office managers.

Collectively Chris and Jordy have been working at SignFab for over 20 years. Their promotion recognises the unique experience and skills they bring to the business as individuals and now as a management team. In addition, the department is to expand further to improve the service given.

www.signfab.co.uk



Chris and Jordy are promoted to jointly oversee workflow at SignFab

CSCS cards free for apprentices

Last month we had a bit of good news for sign companies that have staff on apprenticeship schemes and who also work or need access to construction sites. CSCS cards are now being issued free of charge to apprentices who apply for them, and the application process is being simplified.

Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) is the leading skills certification scheme within the UK construction industry. CSCS cards provide proof that individuals working on construction sites have the appropriate training and qualifications for the job they do on site. By ensuring the workforce are appropriately qualified the card plays its part in improving standards and safety on UK construction sites.

Employers and the wider industry are being reminded of the importance of ensuring those on, or about to enter, apprenticeships are using the appropriate CSCS card – specifically the Apprentice Card. Feedback from the industry confirms many employers are either not aware of the Apprentice card or they are put off applying for it by lengthy apprenticeship registration processes. This leads to many opting for the Labourer card instead.

In recognition of this issue and in advance of the new academic year, CSCS is simplifying the application process and removing the cost of Apprentice cards. This means that as of now, all Apprentice cards will be issued free of charge.

Alan O'Neile, Head of Communications at CSCS said, "The Provisional card is valid for six months, cannot be renewed and requires the completion of the CITB Health, safety, and environment test, which can be transferred across to the Apprentice card. When enrolled onto the apprenticeship the Apprentice will move off the Provisional card and onto the Apprentice card free of charge."

The Provisional card does not require the applicant to achieve a Level 1 award (as per the Labourer card), thereby reducing time and costs for both the employer and the new entrant.

Alan O'Neile continued, "The Provisional card option also gives employers and new entrants a six-month window to decide if the apprenticeship is right for them."

www.cscs.uk.com/apprentice



Analysis - Why is this good news for Signmakers?

*By Craig Brown,
CEO ISA-UK*

Andrew Evans from Walsall College was kind enough to highlight the CSCS card changes to ISA-UK. Andrew has been heavily involved with the signmaking NVQ syllabus and training for many years and was keen to make sure the industry were aware that apprentices can apply for CSCS Apprentice Card at no cost to themselves or the business they work for.

Whilst the cards serve as a general recognition of the skill set of the holder, many in our sector don't like the card because experience gained over years of working in the trade are no longer being taken into account and the only way to get a card is via an NVQ or an apprenticeship.

For an older or more mature operative, who is working full time in the trade, the time and cost of doing an NVQ is not a very attractive option and puts up a barrier that is hard to overcome.

There is a case of chicken and egg in play here. Many colleges have backed away from providing NVQs in sign-making because of the lack of sign-makers taking up the potential qualification. Often this is because they are not prepared to give up the time and money to do the training.

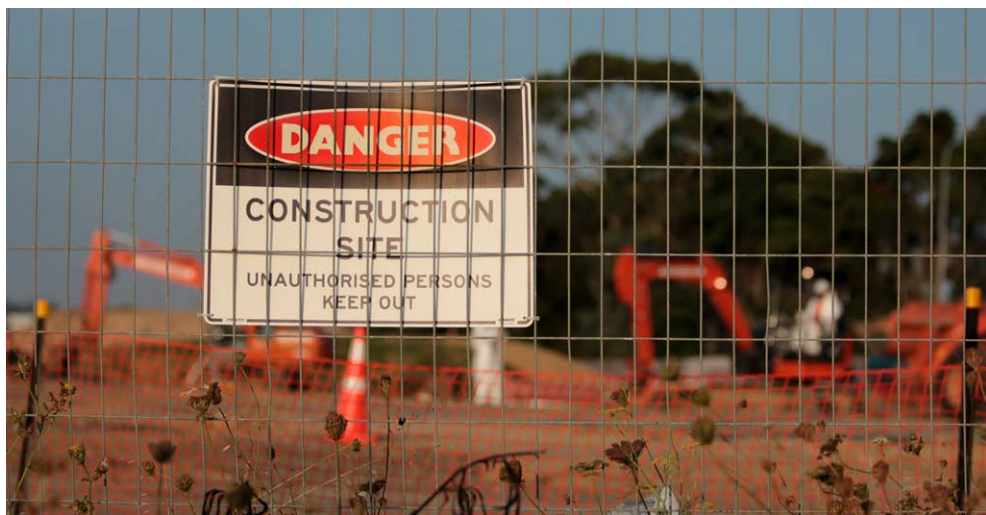
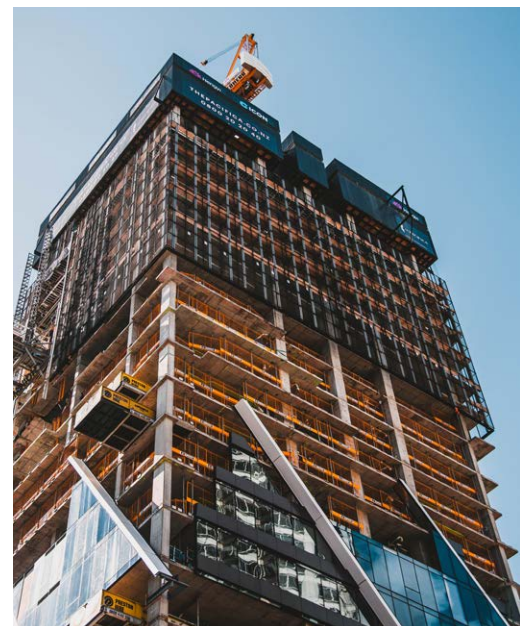
Many are smaller businesses and they feel it simply is not practical or affordable

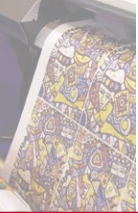
for them. But it means the opportunities for young people getting into the trade are potentially diminishing as they don't see a career path that offers a qualification at any point on their journey to full employment.

Thanks to this announcement, apprentices are now able to gain the card free of charge and with very little bureaucracy, as well as providing a stepping stone to getting more qualified sign-makers on to construction sites.

This could also be the encouragement the industry needs to get new people into the trade and into proper training. It's one less barrier to overcome.

www.uksigns.org





SDUK back for 2023 with a new look

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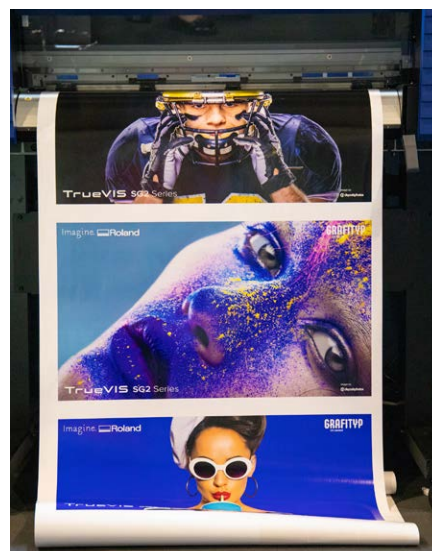


After a really great show earlier this year, Sign & Digital UK (SDUK) has announced the launch of its 2023 show, with bold new branding that reflects the innovative and creative nature of the sector. Jenny Matthews, event director for SDUK tells us more...

Sign & Digital is the 'must-attend' event for everyone involved in our industry. We are told repeatedly by visitors and exhibitors that SDUK is where they expect to do real business. There is a range of special features and services that provide essential advice and learning for business owners to maximise revenues from the opportunities new and existing market sectors provide.

With over 30 years of heritage as a national trade show, SDUK evolves each year to offer the best value to our exhibitors and showcase the very latest advances in technologies and applications for our visitors. After getting through the extreme challenges of recent years, we felt the time was right to evolve the branding and introduce a new fresh and modern look for SDUK. We also have lot plans to make sure the continues to meet the business needs of the industry.

We've invested heavily in market research and have created an SDUK Working Group to make sure we have our finger on the industry's pulse. Feedback from 2022 has been phenomenal but we're



not standing still - our visitors want to see a broader range of exhibitors and more learning opportunities, so we've developed more reasons to exhibit by introducing an innovative new exhibiting format that lowers costs; cutting-edge lead capture technology and new show and marketing packages to deliver increased return on investment.

SDUK Explains will be back for 2023 focusing on the biggest challenges facing the sector. We're working with our SDUK Working Group to identify the challenges keeping them awake at night, and creating a programme of expert advice, case studies, and additional solution sessions from our exhibitors.

Visitors also asked for better networking opportunities and we're working hard on some innovative and fun new ways to do this to ensure SDUK remains an unrivalled meeting place for the signage, display, and print industry. There are so many business opportunities for exhibitors and visitors alike. We will be working very closely with Sign Update leading up the show, so watch this space for all the updates!

www.signuk.com



UK Graphic Awards is bigger and better for 2022

After a hugely successful inaugural event last year, the 2022 UK Graphic Awards is aiming for even more this year. Taking place on October 5th at the Hilton Deansgate in Manchester, this event has rapidly taken an important place in the graphics industry's calendar.

This year there are more categories and greater opportunities for businesses of all sizes to be recognised for their most creative and visually impactful projects. There is also the chance to focus on sustainability and overall commitment to their customers.

Founder Dan Tyler said, "The response to the second event has been brilliant. We have been incredibly encouraged by the volume and quality of the entries, which demonstrate the fantastic resilience, creativity and capabilities of our wonderful industry. We are all looking forward to the Awards night, which is a great opportunity to celebrate everything that is good about the people, businesses and innovations in the sign and graphics market."

An opportunity to celebrate creativity and craft

The UK Graphic Awards has quickly established itself as the event of the year in the UK wide-format print industry's calendar. After bringing the industry back together for the first time in almost 2 years last September, attendees and sponsors praised the high energy, celebratory event and the focus on recognising the most creative and impactful work from across the industry.

Paul Fitch, Head of Inkjet at AGFA UK & Ireland, who are sponsoring the event's Best in Show award for a second consecutive year said, "Last year was a fantastic event to celebrate the sign & display market, an industry that Agfa are fully committed to. Wide-format companies are producing some of the most innovative & creative work in the print industry and deserve the recognition that these awards bring. Agfa's continued commitment to the UK Graphics Awards shows our support for this market and the importance of an event like this."

Visit www.ukgraphicawards.com for more information on shortlisted nominees and on how to attend the event.



Karis Copp, Izabella Ivanovici and Sarah Winterbottom enjoying a pre-show drink in front of the sponsors' board



Magnus Mighall of RA Smart, who sponsored the Event and Exhibition Project of the Year, presenting the 2021 award to IntoPrint Digital

swissQprint Sustainability showcase for large format printing

Key industry players are coming together at swissQprint's UK headquarters to demonstrate a more affordable, sustainable approach to workflow and print & cut technology in the drive towards net zero.

swissQprint has engaged with Zund, Antalis and Compass Business Finance to show production leaders and decision makers in digital printing, signage, and packaging how to achieve a more effective and sustainable print production process to meet clients' environmental needs, in the one-day events being held on 27th and 28th September 2022.

Hosted at swissQprint's UK headquarters in Bracknell, each group of guests will explore sustainability issues across the production process, including reducing energy consumption, minimising waste, and using environmentally friendly materials in their printing.

swissQprint's industry leading flatbed printer, the Nyala 4, will be on display for visitors to evaluate, together with Zund's market leading versatile S3 L-1600 Swiss built precision digital cutter, designed to reduce waste through its efficient hardware and advanced nesting software. Members of both companies will be on hand to answer questions and demonstrate the machines' performance.

Dean Ashworth, Sales and Marketing Director at Zund UK said: "At this important event, we want to showcase the wider possibilities for sustainable manufacturing in the print and packaging industry, through the use of our highly versatile hardware and software solutions that are customisable to every bespoke



production process."

In addition, UK leader in papers, packaging, and visual communication distribution, Antalis, will showcase key products from their expanding range of sustainable materials for large format print applications. Their Green Star System™ rates products from zero to five stars based upon material make-up and recyclability at end of life, making eco-responsible choices much easier to navigate.

Print and packaging finance experts Compass Business Finance will provide in-depth analyses of ways in which today's print service suppliers can achieve a more effective and sustainable production process.

Throughout the day, seminars will address a wide variety of industry subjects, giving delegates the chance to

identify key opportunities for improving the sustainability of their production, from equipment and workflow choices to materials and effective financing and access to government loans.

Ersine Stewart, Managing Director of swissQprint, is excited at the prospect of hosting this event: "It is not often that print service providers get the chance to address so many elements of their business at one event, and swissQprint is proud to assemble such a wealth of experience in one place. Truly, this will be a 'one-stop shop' for discussing all things sustainable and we look forward to meeting both new and existing contacts from across the industry."

Limited free places on the Sustainability Showcase Open Days on the 27th or 28th September can be booked online at: www.sustainability-showcase.eventbrite.co.uk

Graphtec GB launches new podcast

If you're looking for a new Podcast to listen to then search for The Cutting Matters Podcast on all major Podcast providers or subscribe to Graphtec GB's YouTube channel where you can also watch it.

Graphtec GB is a leading digital cutting equipment and digital design software supplier. Cutting Matters Podcast Host, Alastair Evans, says, "We have launched

the podcast to help our customers and partners to stay up to date with all of the latest product and industry news as well as in depth discussions on the products that we sell. We also talk about how you can use our products to improve and grow your business. There is also some casual chit-chat, a bit of banter between me and Ellen, games and a generally educational whilst chilled out vibe."

Instagram: [@thecuttingmatterspodcast](https://www.instagram.com/thecuttingmatterspodcast)



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Working from home, you will be covering an area within a two-hour radius. Occasionally you may be called upon to support projects outside of your area where an overnight allowance plus accommodation will be provided.

You should have at least two years' experience in the application of wrapped digital images, cut vinyl graphics and chevrons. A Full UK Driving License with no more than 3 points is required. We will provide a modern equipped company vehicle, uniform, PPE and a safe working environment.

The successful candidate will be honest, self-motivated, have good communication skills, be flexible enough to placate the varying needs of our clients and to support neighbouring colleagues.

An exceptional package awaits successful candidates including a competitive salary, occasional overtime, work based pension, company vehicle, and iPad. Please email CV's to chris@grsfleetgraphics.com



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Working from home, you will be covering an area within a two-hour radius. Occasionally you may be called upon to support projects outside of your area where an overnight allowance plus accommodation will be provided.

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An exceptional package awaits successful candidates including a competitive salary, occasional overtime, work based pension, company vehicle, and iPad. Please email CV's to chris@grsfleetgraphics.com

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The role involves travelling nationally installing signs and graphics for many well known high street, grocery and bespoke brands. Previous experience and a practical mind, as always, are essential.

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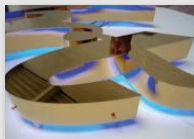
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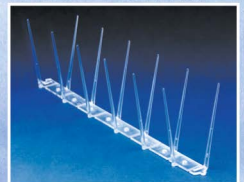


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ChromaForm; the NEW generation of Chrome effect letters. We now offer a complete range of ChromaForm Letters for a 7 day turnaround not available anywhere else. We can also supply and fit LED lights to the ChromaForm range of letters for an even better effect. Ring Susan or Lesley for details and samples.

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Tel: 01442 264411

sales@ataeng.com

www.ataeng.com

The Atacama range of CNC routers and Lasers offers a wide variety of options from 3 axis machines and 4 axis Routers and Metal and Non Metal Cutting CNC Lasers.

COAT OF ARMS

WARD SIGNS

**Maze House, Maze Street, Barton
Hill, Bristol BS5 9TE**

Tel: 0117 955 3385

info@ward-signs.co.uk

www.ward-signs.co.uk

Wards of Bristol Specialise in manufacture, restoration and accurate reproduction of historic and modern coats of arms. We are able to produce from originals, information from heraldic associations, or even from a photograph. Check our website for recent projects.

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Tel: 01603 666699

sales@mercuryphillips.co.uk

www.mercuryphillipsigns.co.uk
Manufacturers of plaques in stainless steel, brass and aluminium, chemically or machine engraved, colour filled to your choice. Logos and text from artwork supplied.

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**78 Venture Point West, Even Road,
Liverpool, L24 9PB**

Tel: 0151 4862 821

kim@photocast.co.uk

www.photocast.co.uk

Photocast Products Ltd is a Liverpool based designer and specialist manufacturer of etched zinc and cast bronze interpretive, decorative, architectural plaques and signage for both internal and external usages, alongside aluminium, bronze and zinc memorial plaques that can include photographs, clip arts and motifs as well as personalised messages and wording.

WARD SIGNS

**Maze House, Maze Street, Barton
Hill, Bristol BS5 9TE**

Tel: 0117 955 3385

info@ward-signs.co.uk

www.ward-signs.co.uk

Wards of Bristol have produced countless cast metal commemorative blue plaques, but also specialise in traditional bronze plaques and custom 3D hand crafted plaques, which are hand painted to depict scenes of historical events, places and figures.

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Specialise in manufacturing signs to the trade with over 40 years' experience in the signage industry. 3D Built up letters, Flat cut letters, Projecting Signs, Facia Signs, and Illuminated Light Boxes. All work undertaken in house. Competitive prices and prompt service.

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Tel: 01932 769 962

hello@screenspace.live

www.screenspace.live

Screenspace is built around a small low-cost device that when plugged into any screen or TV, can in 5 minutes, turn that screen into a smart digital sign, capable of displaying your customers own adverts that can contain text, images or videos. When the device is connected to Wi-Fi these adverts can be scheduled, edited or updated instantly and sent to a screen, anywhere in the world.

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Blueprint Signs & Garments offers a professional signage production and installation service throughout the Channel Islands, fully qualified crews based in Jersey completely cover all of the Channel Islands inclusive of Guernsey, Sark, Herm and Alderney.

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www.ledsignsandlighting.co.uk

Specialist trade suppliers of premium quality, stainless steel 3D built-up letters and logos with face, edge-lit or halo LED illumination. Hand finished. Inside letters are painted white and LED light sources will be provided and fitted. No minimum height of letters. Choice of mirror or brushed finish. Spray painting to any RAL colour FOC. Approximately 10 day turnaround. Very competitive prices.

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Get that sort after neon look with all the advantages of modern signage. Robust, easy to install, low voltage & safe to touch, LED Neon removes all the risks associated with traditional neon signs without compromising on look & quality. Available to the TRADE signage industry, our LED neon styles range from fun to sophisticated & offer the perfect alternative to traditional neon.

LED WINDOW DISPLAYS

ISPI TRADE LTD

Unit 3.3 Strathclyde Business Park,

19 Starling Way, Bellshill ML4 3PU

Tel: 0141 764 1600

sales@ispitrade.com

www.ispitrade.com

iSpi Trade is the UK's premier supplier of LED window display solutions. With A4, A3 and A2 size options in portrait or landscape, we can supply fully configured kits which are designed to match your windows specifications, plus we provide single panels, accessories and replacement parts, all at low trade prices.

SPECTRON LED LTD

102 Chapel Walks, Chapel Street,

Salford, M3 5DW

Tel: 0161 263 8828

sales@spectronled.co.uk

www.ledsignsandlighting.co.uk

Specialist LED lighting supplier offering a wide range of commercial grade LED components, signage & POS display systems including battery or mains powered LED Illuminated A-Boards (A1 single or double-sided); Aluminium Light Panels; Glass Fronted Pockets with cable kit. Trade prices, technical support and same day despatch available.

LIGHT BOXES & LIGHTING

APPLELEC

Unit 1, Wharfedale Business Park,

Shetcliffe Lane, Bradford BD4 9RW

Tel: 01274 774477

sales@applelec.co.uk

www.applelec.co.uk

TRADE suppliers of fabricated and extruded light boxes, custom made to client design requirements. From flat faced and curved styles, to LED illumination and colour changing modules, a definitive range of light box products are available. Applelec LED Light Sheet is regularly used to create ultra slim light boxes with bright, even illumination at a depth of just 25mm.

MAGNETIC MATERIAL

BISBELL MAGNETIC

PRODUCTS LTD.

Hillfield Lane, Stretton, Burton on

Trent, Staffs DE13 0BN

Tel: 01283 531000

sales@bisbellmagnets.com

www.bisbellmagnets.com

The UK's widest range of digitally printable wide format magnetic and ferro sheet (up to 1524mm wide). Maxmag vehicle grade magnetic materials available in white, plain or adhesive backed - by roll or cut to your specific requirements. Also available dry-wipe sheets, magnetic chalk boards, window graphics, neo magnets, vehicle roof magnets and a full range of magnetic and steel tape.

MAGNETIC SOLUTIONS LTD

Brooklands Business Park, Leigh

Street, Sheffield S9 2PR

Tel: 0114 2422211

sales@magnetic-solutions-ltd.co.uk

www.magnetic-solutions-ltd.co.uk

Part of the Sanders Group, Europe's largest combined supplier of magnetic & ferro sheet materials including wide format, PVC FREE magnetic (1370mm) and ferrous media (1600mm). Also available, retail POS graphic materials, magnetic flooring, neo magnets, sign grippers and magnetic tape with a range of adhesive finishes to suit your requirements. We can provide the solutions.

MOULDED & FABRICATED PLASTICS

MERCURY & PHILLIPS SIGNS

51-59 Waterworks Road, Norwich

NR2 4DA

Tel: 01603 666699

sales@mercuryphillips.co.uk

www.mercuryphillipssigns.co.uk

Suppliers of moulded acrylic pans and logos up to 2800mm x 1500mm and other types of press and vacuum forming in PVC and HIPS. Specialists in fabricated plastics for POS displays with full screen print, graphics and CNC routing capabilities.

PROJECT PLASTICS LTD

7 Grange Way Business Park,

Whitehill Industrial Estate,

Colchester CO2 8HF

Tel: 01206 868696

sales@projectplastics.co.uk

www.projectplastics.co.uk

Manufacturers of acrylic domes and shapes, tubes, point of sale displays and showcases. Bespoke plastic fabrication. 3mt x 2mt CNC router, diamond edge polishing, 3mt x 2mt moulding oven for oven forming, vacuum forming and laser cutting. Plastic cut to size service.

MOULDED LETTERS

MERCURY & PHILLIPS SIGNS

51/59 Waterworks Rd. Norwich NR2

4DA

Tel: 01603 666699

sales@mercuryphillips.co.uk

www.mercuryphillipssigns.co.uk

Moulded letters and logos in all standard Perspex colours and UV stabilised gold and silver acrylics, in 8 standard sizes, bespoke sizes available on application. Press, vacuum and blow moulded pans, in acrylic and petg also available.

SIGNTRADE LETTERS LTD

225 Long Lane, Finchley London

N3 2RL

Tel: 08085 456700

sales@signtrade.co.uk

www.signtrade.co.uk

Moulded letters are our speciality with stock of 20 fonts 8 letter heights in coloured Perspex and 1000's of flat cut letters as well. Your own font or logo is made by our own toolmakers. With over 60 years of experience to call on.

WARD SIGNS

Maze House, Maze Street, Barton

Hill, Bristol BS5 9TE

Tel: 0117 955 3385

info@ward-signs.co.uk

www.ward-signs.co.uk

Having patented the original method of making cast resin letters, Wards of Bristol can manufacture and supply resin lettering to the highest standard. Our stock patterns for resin letters are a cost effective method of achieving the same styles as traditional bronze and aluminium (which we also cast in house) but we can also make custom designed patterns for letters and logos for all your needs.

NEON MANUFACTURERS (TRADE)

A1DESIGNS

4 Sandy Lane North, Wallington,

Surrey SM6 8JX

Tel: 020 8646 9886

enquiry@a1designs.co.uk

www.a1designs.co.uk

Neon & Cold Cathode Manufacturers to the Trade. Fast turnaround & Delivery, Quick repair service. Installation, Fault diagnosis, Repairs & Maintenance. Confidential Service. All neon accessories, Transformers, Cable, Tube supports etc.

AVENUE SIGNS LTD

216-222 Luton Road, Chatham, Kent

ME4 5BS

Tel: 01634 841300

info@avenuesigns.co.uk

www.avenuesigns.co.uk

Full computerised design service neon, cold cathode and LED lighting. Fully qualified installation engineers, fault diagnosis, fast repair service. Complete sign service from vinyl through to acrylic to polished stainless steel to transformer and neon accessory supplies.

NEON REPLACEMENT LETTERS

SPECTRON LED LTD

102 Chapel Walks, Chapel Street,

Salford, M3 5DW

Tel: 0161 263 8828

sales@spectronled.co.uk

www.ledsignsandlighting.co.uk

Specialist trade suppliers of premium quality faux neon & neon flex letters/logos illuminated with premium grade LEDs. Hand finished with high gloss polishing/matt finish & optional serviceable back. Suitable for internal/external use. Letter edges can be spray painted to any RAL. LEDs included. Our led neon signs are custom made by hand in-house. Approx. 10 day lead time. Competitively priced.

NOTICE BOARDS - LOCKABLE/ EXTERIOR

SIGNSCAPE AND SIGNCONEX

Pear Tree Works, Bath Road, Upper

Langford, Bristol BS40 5DJ

Tel: 01934 852 888

contactus@signscape.co.uk

www.sasl.co.uk

We're a leading sign trade manufacturer providing services in notice boards and information display products since 1973. All products are made to order as we specialise in tailoring solutions to suit each client, location, and application. Our exterior notice board options include wall, rail, post and stand mountings, mains/solar illumination, and custom graphics.

PLASTIC SHEETS

BRETT MARTIN PLASTIC SHEETS

24 Roughfort Road, Mallusk, Co

Antrim BT36 4RB

Tel: 028 9084 9999

semifinished@brettmartin.com

www.brettmartin.com

Brett Martin is a leading manufacturer of plastic sheet products for signage, interior design, shop outfitting, POS displays and fabrication. Products include Foamalux, the extensive foam PVC range in bright White, Satin and Gloss colours and an environmentally friendly Recycled material in addition to Polycarbonate, PVC, Acrylic, aPET, PETg and Styrene sheet.

RIGHTON BLACKBURNS LTD

Building 38, Second Avenue, The Pensnett Estate, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 7UE

Tel: 01384 276400

sales@rblimited.co.uk

www.rightonblackburns.co.uk

UK distributor of Polycasa Crylux Cast & Crylon extruded sheet acrylic. Available in a wide range of clear, opals, colours and special finishes. Also stocked: Alucobest aluminium composite sheet, Marlon solid polycarbonate, PET-G, SAN, polystyrene, hygienic cladding, rigid PVC and fixing accessories, sign post systems, aluminium sheet and extrusions.

TELEGAN PRESSED PRODUCTS LTD.

South Strand, Lawford, Manningtree, Essex CO11 1UP

Tel: 01206 803 580

sales@teleganpressedproducts.com

www.teleganpressedproducts.com

Leading manufacturer of plate pressed PVC sheet offering equivalents to Darvic, Pacton and Cobex under our trade name TELBEX. We also manufacture VYNALAST™ engraving laminate. A comprehensive range of photoluminescent boards and self adhesive vinyl is available in PSPA class B and Class C to order.

PROJECTING SIGNS

APPLELEC

Unit 1, Wharfedale Business Park, Shetcliffe Lane, Bradford BD4 9RW

Tel: 01274 774477

sales@applelec.co.uk

www.applelec.co.uk

Trusted TRADE suppliers of projecting signs. Manufactured inhouse with branding to one or both sides of the sign face & a variety of illumination & fixings options are available. When combined with our award-winning LED Light Sheet, a double-sided projecting sign can begin at a super slim 60mm. Trough light illumination is also available, so get in touch with our experienced team to find out more.

IRON DESIGN

37A Douglas Rd., Poole, BH12 2AU

Tel: 01202 463573

enquiries@ironsigns.com

www.ironsigns.com

Leading trade suppliers of high quality traditional and contemporary projecting signs and brackets, offering a large range of brackets, panels and lights off the shelf, as well as a comprehensive bespoke service. Competitive prices and next day service. Please visit our website or phone for a brochure.

REFLECTIVE VINYL/TAPES

ATC LTD

Unit 3C Buckley Road Industrial Estate, 2 Buckley Road, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 9EF

Tel: 01706 633043

sales@apptape.co.uk

www.apptape.co.uk

Suppliers of Micro prismatic reflective tapes (3m, Avery, Reflexite) and glass bead reflective vinyl for use on emergency vehicles (police cars & chapter 8 legislation etc) also HGV markings as per EC 104. We stock Conspicuity tape manufactured by Reflexite and Avery which are some of the most reflective materials available on the market. Chapter 8 chevron kits also available.

SIGN TRADE SUPPLIES LTD

Britannia House, Granville Road, Maidstone, Kent ME14 2BJ

Tel: 01622 689 410

www.signtradesupplies.co.uk

Supplying a variety of sign making supplies nationwide including aluminium signs posts, post clips, fixings, vinyl and tools. We have a large UK stock of Image Perfect vinyl, sign fixings and aluminium extrusions ready for same day despatch. We also provide trade manufacturing service including diamond edge polished acrylic, flat cut acrylic lettering, sign trays and more.

ROUTER CUTTERS/ PLOTTER BLADES

ATA ENGINEERING PRODUCTS LTD

ATA House, Unit B, Boundry Way, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 7SS

Tel: 01442 264411

sales@ataeng.com

www.ataeng.com

Extensive range of high quality solid carbide, PCD, carbide tipped and HSS cutters manufactured by ONSRUD CUTTER offer routing solutions for most types of material.

EDWARD MATHIAS & CO

PO BOX 121, Frodsham, Cheshire, WA6 1AA

Tel: 01928 739 799

info@edwardmathias.com

www.edwardmathias.com

Specialist manufacturers/suppliers of tungsten carbide plotter blades and router cutters. We don't just sell blades, we are the UK's leading manufacturer. Note - we have no connection with any other company who sell or re-sharpen blades.

LKH PRECISION TOOLS

Unit 15a, Cowlairst, Nottingham, NG5 9RA

Tel: 0115 666 0060

enquiry@lkhtools.co.uk

www.lkhtools.co.uk

UK distributors of Crown Norge, offering the highest quality CNC routing and engraving tooling. Tooling specialist for aluminium, plastics, acrylics, PVC, foams, ACM/Dibond brass, MDF, plywood, and woods. Maximise production, quality and optimisation with our range of training and consultancy services. Authorised UK reseller for Vectric software with training available upon request.

SCREEN PRINTING

DARTFORD ENGRAVING & SCREENPRINTING LTD

Unit 4 Power Works Industrial

Estate, Slade green Road, Erith, Kent

DA8 2HY

Tel: 01322 340 194

mail@desp.co.uk

www.desp.co.uk

DESP has been trading for over 55 years. Screenprinting, anodic printing, correx boards, stickers, overlays, signs, chemical etching, engraving processes also covered (ALL CARRIED OUT INHOUSE), including artwork. So whether its a 1 off or 1,000s off, we can offer a quick competitive turnaround.

FIRST SIGNS & LABELS LTD

Unit 1, Raynham Close, Raynham Rd

Ind Estate, Raynham Road, Bishops

Stortford, Herts, CM23 5JP

Tel: 01279 467999

sales@firstsignsandlabels.co.uk

www.firstsignsandlabels.co.uk

We specialise in high quality screen printing. We are suited to meet print requirements onto many substrates. We have finishing capabilities with die cutting and CNC routing. We offer a fast and efficient service, should you require 1 off's or larger run's give our team a call.

MERCURY & PHILLIPS SIGNS

51/59 Waterworks Rd. Norwich NR2 4DA

Tel: 01603 666699

sales@mercuryphillips.co.uk

www.mercuryphillipssigns.co.uk

High quality screen printing to all types of rigid and flexible base materials ie. self-adhesive vinyl, paper, plastic and metal. From single to full colour and small or large runs.

SHEET MATERIALS

RIGHTON BLACKBURNS LTD

Building 38, Second Avenue, The Pensnett Estate, Kingswinford, West

Midlands DY6 7UE

Tel: 01384 276400

sales@rblimited.co.uk

www.rightonblackburns.co.uk

UK distributor of Polycasa Crylux Cast & Crylon extruded sheet acrylic Available in a wide range of clear, opals, colours and special finishes. Also stocked: Alucobest aluminium composite sheet, Marlon solid polycarbonate, PET-G, SAN, polystyrene, hygienic cladding, rigid PVC and fixing accessories, sign post systems, aluminium sheet and extrusions.

TELEGAN PRESSED PRODUCTS LTD.

South Strand, Lawford, Manningtree, Essex CO11 1UP

Tel: 01206 803580

sales@teleganpressedproducts.com

www.teleganpressedproducts.com

Leading manufacturer of plate pressed PVC sheet offering equivalents to Darvic, Pacton and Cobex under our trade name TELBEX. We also manufacture VYNALAST™ engraving laminate. A comprehensive range of photoluminescent boards and self adhesive vinyl is available in PSPA class B and Class C to order.

TROTEC

9 Didcot Way, Boldon Business Park, Boldon Colliery, NE35 9PD

Tel: 0191 580 1184

materials@troteclaser.co.uk

www.troteclaser.co.uk

Trotec's UK warehouse is fully stocked with engraving materials available with cut-to-size and next day delivery. As well as a range of laminate, acrylic, metal and wood sheets, we also supply a range of engraving consumables such as marking pastes and accessories including mounting devices and braille beads.

VISIONS IN PLASTICS

Unit 3, Delta Court (Robin Hood Airport), Auckley, Doncaster, DN9 3GN

Tel: 01302 775920

sales@visionsinplastics.co.uk

www.visionsinplastics.co.uk

Stocks of Mirrored Extruded Acrylic in clear, 19 colours, See-Thru, Two sided, Anti Scatch, Anti Fog. Mirrored Polycarbonate, Petg and Polystyrene. Non mirrored sheet in Acrylic, ABS, Polycarbonate, Polystyrene and PVC Foam.

SIGN & DISPLAY SYSTEMS

VISION LIGHTING LTD

Unit 1 Wortley Moor Lane, Leeds, LS12 4JD

Tel: 0113 279 9745

sales@vision-lighting.co.uk

www.vision-lighting.co.uk

Vision Lighting's Signtrim aluminium sign frame extrusion is ideal for fabricating sign frames for non-illuminated sign panels 5 to 6mm in thickness. Signtrim is widely used on convenience stores to create external displays where window graphics are note possible. Signtrim can be supplied in mill finish or painted to the required RAL colour on a short lead time.

SIGN LOCATORS

F. K. MOORE LTD

5 Wilton Road, Haine Industrial Park, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 5HD.

Tel: 01843 593 440

enquiries@fkmoore.com

www.fkmoore.com

British manufacturers of screw type Brass Sign Locators, Wall Fixing Standoffs and stockists of Nylon Locators for the Sign and Shopfitting Industries. As well as other shopfitting, we also manufacture Coverhead Screws, either Flat, Dome, Conical or Mushroom shape in various finishes.

SIGN POSTS & FIXINGS

SIGN TRADE SUPPLIES LTD

Britannia House, Granville Road,
Maidstone, Kent ME14 2BJ
Tel: 01622 689 410

www.signtradesupplies.co.uk
Supplying a variety of sign making supplies nationwide including aluminium signs posts, post clips, fixings, vinyl and tools. We have a large UK stock of Image Perfect vinyl, sign fixings and aluminium extrusions ready for same day despatch. We also provide trade manufacturing service including diamond edge polished acrylic, flat cut acrylic lettering, sign trays and more.

SIGN SUPPORT SYSTEMS

ISPI TRADE LTD

Unit 3.3 Strathclyde Business Park,
19 Starling Way, Bellshill ML4 3PU
Tel: 0141 764 1600

sales@ispitrade.com
www.ispitrade.com
I-SPI Trade supplier of sign support systems. Our range includes wall mounts, cable & rod display systems, screw covers, LED lighting and much more all at THE REAL TRADE PRICE. Massive stocks and next day delivery. See our products on our web site or give Stephen or Sean a call for a brochure.

SHOPKIT GROUP LTD

Unit 3 Swanstons Road, Great
Yarmouth, Norfolk NR30 3NQ
Tel: 01923 818 282

www.shopkit.com/brochures/
Shopkit manufactures a wide range of sign support systems in our UK FACTORY, offering COMPETITIVE PRICES on quality products, working in different metal finishes with an ONLINE SHOP with next day delivery and quick lead times on CUSTOM ITEMS. Products include project fixings & sign standoffs, banner systems, rod signage supports & cable signage systems all for both interior & exterior use.

SIGN SURVEYOR

PB WILLIAMS SIGN SURVEYOR

48 Durlay Rd, Aintree L9 9AW
Tel: 07885 486 182

We specialise in sign surveying to the trade, with over 35 years of experience as a sign fitter/manufacturer. I was contracted to large companies in the north west, and country wide. I am based in Merseyside and have PASMA, IPAF/PAL & CSCS qualifications and will travel UK and Europe. For further details please contact the above number or email.

SIGN TRADE SUPPLIERS

APPLELEC

Unit 1, Wharfedale Business Park,
Shetcliffe Lane, Bradford BD4 9RW
Tel: 01274 774477
sales@applelec.co.uk

www.applelec.co.uk
As confidential signage TRADE only suppliers, Applelec have the vision, experience & craftsmanship to help bring your project to life. Our in-house manufacturing facilities allow us to offer a vast array of signage & LED lighting options as well as respond to your needs without compromising on quality. Whilst our knowledgeable sales & production teams are there to support you all the way.

DISCOUNT DISPLAYS

31-35 Wortley Road, Croydon CR0
3EB

Tel: 0844 800 1020
sales@discountdisplays.co.uk
www.discountdisplays.co.uk
Discount Displays are UK based experts in all things display and signage. As well as a huge range of hardware for exhibitions, events and retail, we also specialise in large format print solutions. We are able to offer super low trade prices on a variety of printed signage, all produced in-house using high quality inks and materials. Visit our website for more information and to view our full range

SIGN TRADE SUPPLIES LTD

Britannia House, Granville Road,
Maidstone, Kent ME14 2BJ
Tel: 01622 689 410

www.signtradesupplies.co.uk
Supplying a variety of sign making supplies nationwide including aluminium signs posts, post clips, fixings, vinyl and tools. We have a large UK stock of Image Perfect vinyl, sign fixings and aluminium extrusions ready for same day despatch. We also provide trade manufacturing service including diamond edge polished acrylic, flat cut acrylic lettering, sign trays and more.

SIGNSCAPE AND SIGNCONEX

Pear Tree Works, Bath Road, Upper
Langford, Bristol BS40 5DJ
Tel: 01934 852888

contactus@signscape.co.uk
www.sasl.co.uk
We're a leading sign trade manufacturer providing services in letter boards since 1973. Our products are made to order and are tailored to suit your specific branding and display location requirements. We offer a wide choice of design styles, frames, colours, and branding options, to ensure your message communicated is consistent and engaging. Contact us for a free consult.

SMITH TRADE SIGNAGE

Grove Works, Barnard Castle, Co
Durham, DL12 8JG
Tel: 01833 694700

info@smith-signdisplay.co.uk
www.smith-signdisplay.co.uk
Part of William Smith Group 1832, we are a leading trade-only manufacturer of Commercial and CE Marked Traffic Signage, plus Chapter 8 Chevron Kits.

SPECIALITY FILMS

ATC LTD

Unit 3C Buckley Road Industrial
Estate, 2 Buckley Road, Rochdale,
Lancashire OL12 9EF
Tel: 01706 633043
sales@aptape.co.uk

www.aptape.co.uk
Suppliers of various speciality films including Etch glass, Reflective, Fluorescent, Reflexite daybrite, Reflexite prismatic reflective, Hi intensity reflective, Photoluminescent, Cast metallics, 2yr Fluorescent, Gemstone metallics, Multi lens, Transparent colours, Checker plate, Mirror colours, Prismatic colours, Glitter colours, Brushed aluminium silver and gold.

MACTAC UK LTD

Room 232, Victory House, 400
Pavilion Drive, Northampton
Business Park, Northampton NN4
7PA

Tel: 01604 644697
www.mactacgraphics.eu
Mactac is a global manufacturer of many different PVC, PET, PP and PE self-adhesive films. Specialities include etched films, fluorescents, phosphorescents, mirror films, rear projection films, erasable films and textured laminates – all designed to complement and enhance your creative talent.

TRADITIONAL SIGNWRITERS/ GILDERS

ART DESIGN SIGN

Swindon, Wiltshire
Tel: 07495 778 631
sarahlouise0405@gmail.com

www.artdesignsign.co.uk
Sarah at Art Design Sign is a Traditional Signwriter and Artist. Services include: Traditional hand painted lettering and artwork, Pub and Restaurant Signage, Chalk boards, Gilded lettering, Menus, Vehicle Livery, Wall Art and Lettering, Logo Recreation, Restoration Projects, Original Artwork and Event Signage. Free Quotes available, please contact to discuss your needs.

TRANSFER PAPERS/HEAT PRESSES

THE MAGIC TOUCH

Unit 4, Apex Business Centre,
Boscombe Road, Dunstable LU5 4SB
Tel: 01582 671 444

sales@themagictouch.co.uk
www.themagictouch.co.uk
Manufacturers of Transfer Papers and Materials used in conjunction with Laser Printers and Copiers (toner based) for full colour image transfer onto T-Shirts, Caps, Polo's, Mugs, Mousemats etc. Plus Magicut® film for use with Plotter/Cutter for heat transfer.

TRAY SIGNS

APPLELEC

Unit 1, Wharfedale Business Park,
Shetcliffe Lane, Bradford BD4 9RW
Tel: 01274 774477
sales@applelec.co.uk

www.applelec.co.uk
Manufactured inhouse for the TRADE signage industry, Applelec can create all styles of trays & fascia signs according to design specification. Available in metal or Dibond, trays can be flat face, curved or a bespoke shape. Back trays can be accessorised in a variety of ways with the addition of built-up, flat cut or vinyl letters & logos as well as LED illumination.

ILLUMEX

Wigan, WN1 3AB
Tel: 01942 243 341
Hello@illumex.co.uk

www.illumex.co.uk
Producing bespoke tray signs for the trade in both solid aluminium and alupanel composite, trays can be supplied as blanks or complete with an array of lettering and illumination options. We offer national delivery along with project services such as installation and graphic design. Always ensuring exceptional levels of service along with quality of products to match.

TROUGH LIGHTING

SPECTRON LED LTD

102 Chapel Walks, Chapel Street,
Salford, M3 5DW
Tel: 0161 263 8828

sales@spectronled.co.uk
www.ledsignsandlighting.co.uk
Designed & manufactured by LED and Sign specialists, Spectron LED, the LUMENLINEAR trough light is our best-selling product. It has been designed with the signmaker in mind; fast to install, easy to maintain, long lifespan, aesthetic & sturdy. Troughs are made to order; any size or Lead time is typically 1 day. Very competitive prices and 5 year warranty included.

VISION LIGHTING LTD

Unit 1 Wortley Moor Lane, Leeds,
LS12 4JD
Tel: 0113 279 9745

sales@vision-lighting.co.uk
www.vision-lighting.co.uk
Vision Lighting is a leading supplier of LED sign lighting products including Nanolight, a slim, modern trough light, unrivalled in brightness and efficiency. Nanolight is the most waterproof trough light available in the UK, rated IP66. We guarantee quality with high quality components, a 5 year parts warranty and our ISO 9001, UKAS accredited certification for Quality Management.

VINYL & GRAPHIC INSTALLATIONS

VISUAL GROUP

Hunt Lane, Doncaster, South
Yorkshire DN5 9SH
Tel: 01302 800 250
sales@visual-group.co.uk
visual-group.co.uk

Our highly skilled craftsmen with over 30 years' experience within the industry, use traditional and modern manufacturing techniques with the latest technologies on hand. Visual Group can offer a variety of materials for creative office wall graphics to informative branded interior signage. We can create anything from vinyl window graphics to flat cut letters with LED Illumination plus much more.

VINYL SUPPLIES

APA (UK) LTD

Unit 10 Capital Ind. Est., Crabtree
Manorway South, Belvedere, Kent,
DA17 6BJ

Tel: 020 8311 4400
apauk@apaspa.com
www.apaspa.com

One of Europe's main vinyl manufacturing companies supplying own brand self-adhesive plotter vinyl and Digital Print media. Plotter vinyls from short-term up to 10 years including Truck, Cast, Vehicle Wrapping, Frost-effect, Solar, Reflective and an extensive range of Print material for UV, Solvent and Dye/Pigment inks, all application aids are available.

ATC LTD

Unit 3C Buckley Road Industrial
Estate, 2 Buckley Road, Rochdale,
Lancashire OL12 9EF

Tel: 01706 633043
sales@apptape.co.uk
www.apptape.co.uk

Distributors of Ritrama UK's full range of signmaking vinyls including their complete portfolio of Digital Films. We also have available a full range of signmaking vinyls manufactured in the UK by KPMF. We stock a range of application tapes from R Tape USA and various Digital Media manufactured by LG Hausys. Discounts available on credit card payments.

AVERY DENNISON

Nelson Way, Cramlington, NE23 1JR
Tel: 01670 59 2095

graphics.averydennison.eu
Avery Dennison is a leading manufacturer of high-performance self-adhesive materials, for vehicle and building graphics – including digital, cut and screen applications. We innovate constantly to make graphics exciting and easy to install. Decades of know-how and the latest technologies (e.g. Easy Apply Technology and Supreme Wrapping Film) help you to transform your ideas into impactful messages.

CREATIVE FILMS

3 Acorn Enterprise Centre, Hoo Farm
Industrial Estate, Kidderminster
DY11 7RA

Tel: 01562 747 000
sales@creativefilms.co.uk
www.creativefilms.co.uk
We stock an unusual range of sign vinyl rolls. Specializing in unusual and striking special effect films, including: Glitter Film, Many textured metal effect films such as coarse brush and diamond plate, Sequins and various holographic effects, Mirror (chrome) film, Mozaic films and more. Available in our standard 20 colours. Ask for samples.

GRAFITYP UK LTD

Grafitack House, 103 Mariner,
Tamworth, Staffordshire B79 7UL
Tel: 01827 300500

www.grafityp.co.uk
Grafityp is a leading manufacturer and supplier of self-adhesive sign making vinyl, wrapping/decorating vinyl, digital printing vinyl/films and overlaminates. We manufacture films for a vast array of applications, which include interior decor, signage, etched window, fluorescent to vehicle graphics. Grafityp is leading the way with an excellent range of PVC FREE Films.

GREENSTIK MATERIALS LTD (GM CRAFTS)

Unit 9 Lancaster Road, Carnaby
Industrial Estate, Carnaby,
Bridlington, East Yorkshire, YO15
3QY

Tel: 01262 602 222
sales@gmcrafts.co.uk
www.gmcrafts.co.uk
One of the UK's Largest selections of self adhesive vinyl & heat transfer vinyl. Also supplying Graphtec CE7000 plotters, custom printing available on self-adhesive and heat transfer vinyl plus other medias.

MACTAC UK LTD

Room 232, Victory House, 400
Pavilion Drive, Northampton
Business Park, Northampton NN4
7PA

Tel: 01604 644697
www.mactacgraphics.eu
Mactac is a global manufacturer of self-adhesive films designed to bring out your talent. Our highly innovative printing and marking products transform interior decoration, commercial architecture, signage and visual communications – for applications that include buildings, windows, point of sale, vehicles and boats. Mactac solutions are used by some of the world's most prestigious brands.

MDP SUPPLIES

Unit 1 Magazine Point, Riverbank
Road, Bromborough, Wirral, CH62
3JP

Tel: 0151 272 1234
www.mdpsupplies.co.uk
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TRADE suppliers of curved or flat-faced way-finding and aluminium display systems with directories incorporating wall mounted, projecting and totem signs. Poster display frames with a snap side profile to allow for easy interchange of inserts and an exterior light box series is available. Please contact our friendly team for more information.

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sales@icesigns.co.uk
www.icesigns.co.uk
Suppliers of internal and external wayfinding and directory systems to DDA (1995) guidelines if required.

SIGNSCAPE AND SIGNCONEX

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Hunt Lane, Doncaster, South
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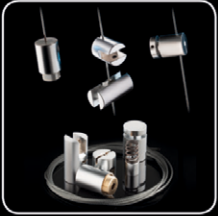
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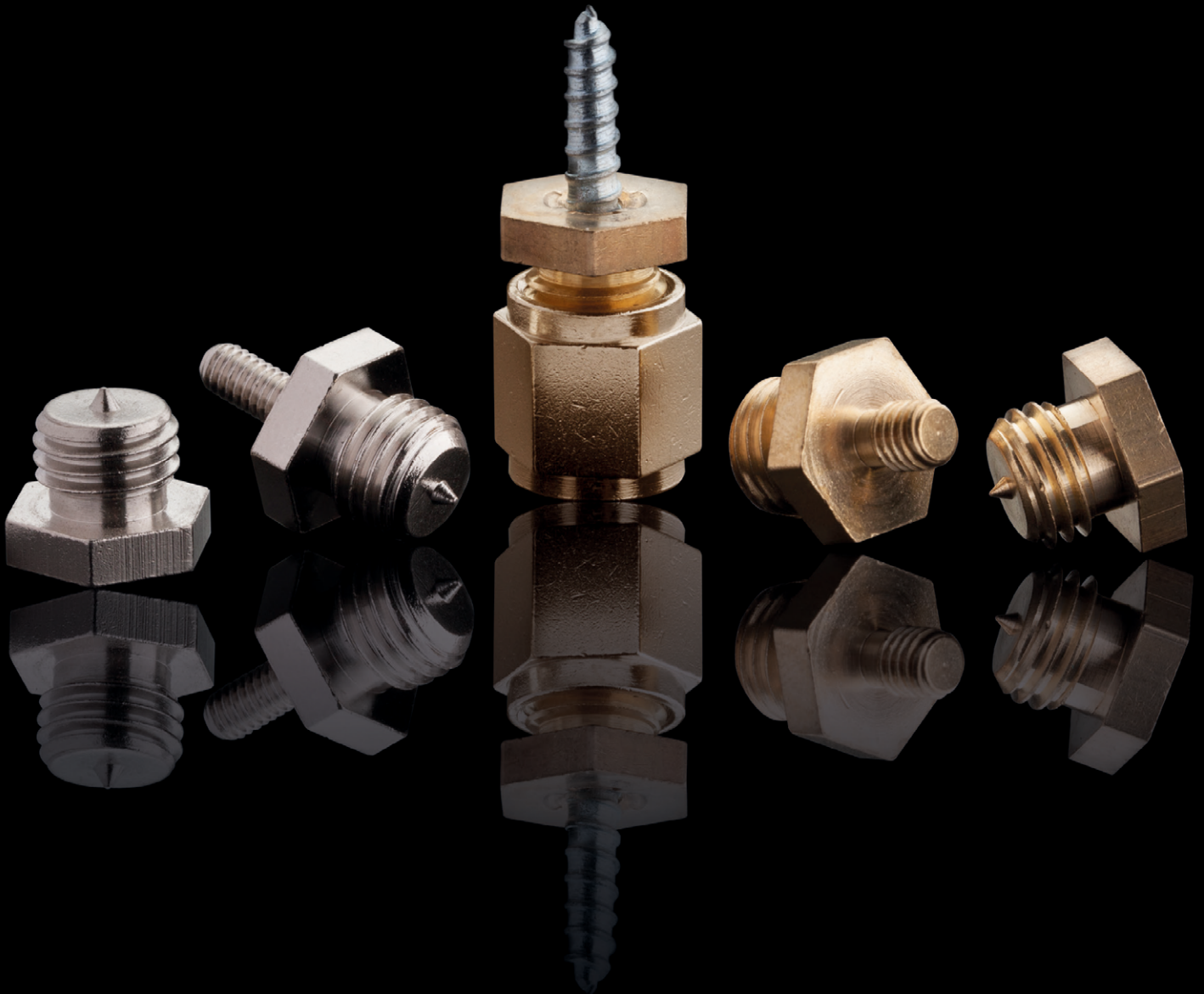
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