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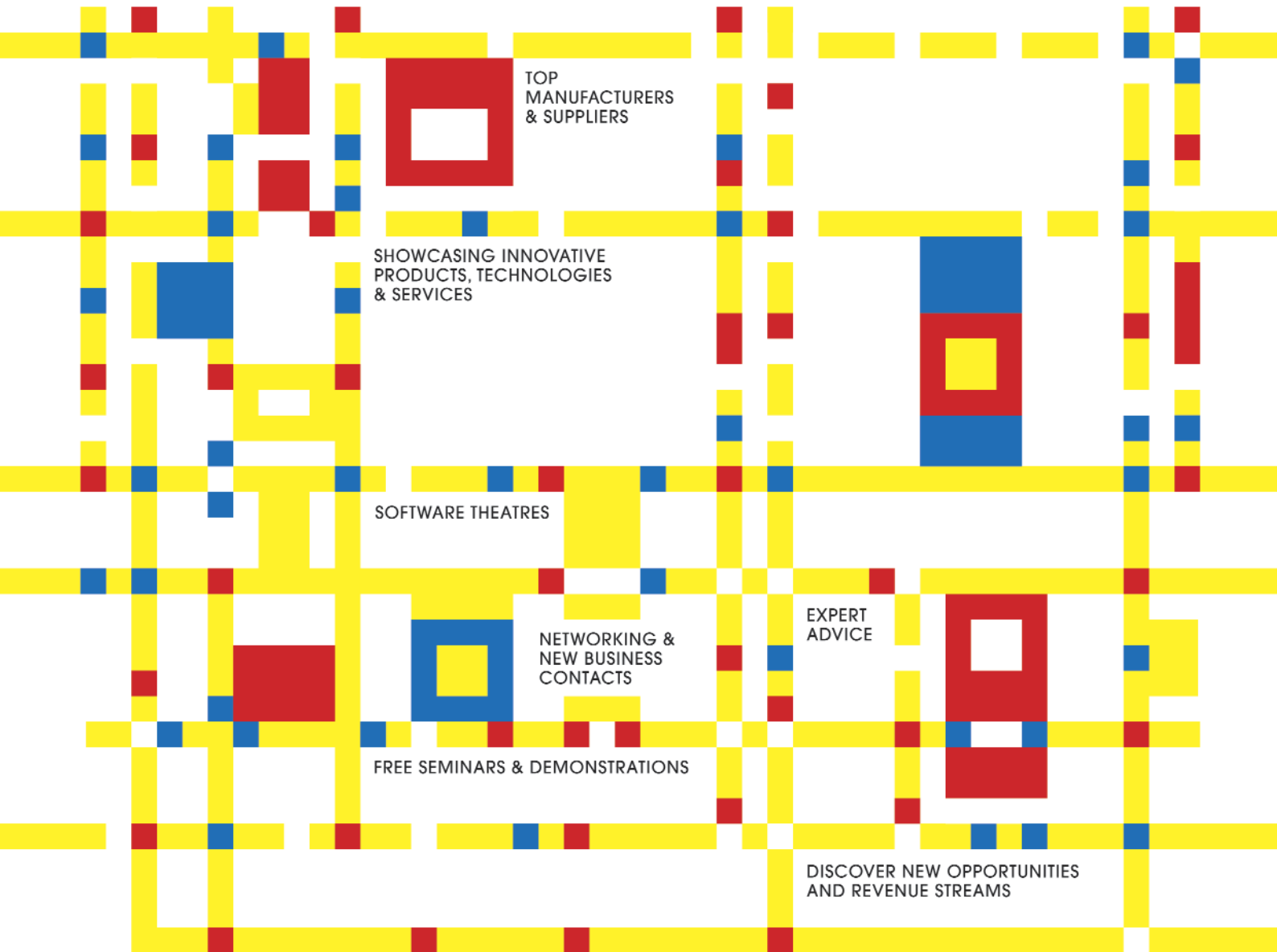
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# WELCOME *Page*

## Happy 2015!

Hopefully you are reading this feeling rested and ready to charge ahead with the new year? To get you into the mood, read what you can expect from signage software this year, and about those companies providing new programmes to help your business thrive. Because of signmakers diversifying more than ever, companies such as Clarity are developing software that can also help you manage and grow your business. Choosing which software you use is incredibly important so you really need to look at what you need it to do, and what equipment you use.

When choosing ink, it's also not so straightforward, so don't miss our inks feature. It takes a close look at the issues to consider, such as performance, colour reproduction and even environmental impact. Of course with the rise of alternative inks, there is also the question of cost and value for money.

We promised coverage of the BSGA awards so find out all the winners on page 72 and maybe get inspired to enter the next awards. And talking of inspiration, the Sign and Digital UK show is earlier than normal this year. It will be held at the end of March in Birmingham. According to the organisers the floor space has been increased three times because of high demand from exhibitors. A lot of businesses use the show to research all the equipment and products out there, then make decisions soon after (or even at the event!) We'll be doing a special exhibition issue closer to the time, with everything you can expect.

Hope to see you there!

Till the next time,

Kathryn



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## i-Sub Digital to bring new Agfa Anapurna M2500i to UK

i-Sub Digital will distribute the new Agfa Anapurna M2500i in the UK from January 2015, following its worldwide launch at SGIA 2014 in Las Vegas recently.

The newest release from the Agfa Anapurna i-series, the M2500i 2.5m-wide UV inkjet printer is designed for high-volume workloads. Its optional board feeder allows up to five boards to be printed in parallel to multiply productivity. While the system also offers roll-to-roll and roll-to-sheet printing for rigid and flexible media.

"We're pleased to be bringing the Agfa Anapurna M2500i to our customers after its global debut in the USA,"



*The newest release from the Agfa Anapurna i-series, the M2500i 2.5m-wide UV inkjet printer.*

The Agfa Anapurna M2500i uses Konica Minolta print-heads to print six colours plus white at a maximum resolution of 1,440 x 720dpi and speeds of up to 115sqm/hr. It's suitable for indoor and outdoor displays, but also 'ideal' for small personalised items, fine art, backlit applications and interior décor.

"We're pleased to be bringing the Agfa Anapurna M2500i to our customers after its global debut in the USA," says i-Sub Digital Director Andy Spreag. "It's a hard-working machine that will definitely appeal to sign and display companies who need a printer

that will handle bread and butter work quickly and efficiently; while offering potential new revenue through a wide variety of other print products."

[info@i-subdigital.com](mailto:info@i-subdigital.com)



*The printer is mostly suitable for indoor and outdoor displays.*

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## Light reducing and security films

APA, who make adhesive films, have launched the 'innovative and exclusive' Solar and Safety adhesive films.

SOLAR line is made up of car window film and window film. Car window film vinyl is made specifically for car windows and thanks to their reflective power, guarantee 'more comfort'. Aslan say this is because the films reduce the excessive internal overheating; creates privacy while at the same time, gives a more glamorous and sophisticated touch.

Films have been granted approval according to EU regulations.

Window film vinyl was created for building applications on glass and shop windows, to 'reduce heat transmission that prevent

excessive interior overheating'. They company says they also protect exposed goods from premature ageing due to the UV rays as well as improves and the aesthetics. Window film is available also in the mirror version.

The film makes the glass 'more secure', holding splinters and fragments in case of breakage or breach.



The Safety film helps protect glass against breakages.



Window film helps prevent 'excessive interior overheating'.

The need to increase protection inspired APA to create the SAFETY line, for glass and shop windows. The 'ultra' transparent self-adhesive vinyl with security approved in class 2B2 according to the EU regulation. The film makes the glass 'more secure', holding splinters and fragments in case of breakage or breach.

[www.apaspa.com](http://www.apaspa.com)

## QPS adds UV-curable protective coating to its product range

Quality Print Services (QPS) has added Nazdar's Nazkote RA2000 UV-curable protective coating to its range of solutions for wide-format print providers.

For use in roller coat UV-curing liquid laminators, such as the Burkle, Nazkote RA2000 UV POP Liquid Lamination Clear adheres to most pressure-sensitive vinyls, coated paper, coated cardstock and a variety of rigid materials. It 'vastly improves' the outdoor durability of UV digitally printed

graphics by physically protecting them from abrasion and the effects of UV degradation and colour fading.

Nazkote RA2000 is 'fast-curing, shows excellent clarity and also adds abrasion resistance to coated graphics'. When applied to durable substrates at a cured film thickness of 10+ microns, RA2000 can provide up to 30 months of protection outdoors, according to QPS.

QPS's Managing Director Chris Bailey

said: "Nazdar's RA2000 liquid laminate is designed to extend the life of outdoor graphics without compromising quality or clarity in any way. Traditionally screen varnishes have been used which can have a tendency to give a colour cast to the finished graphic. The RA2000 is a true laminate and maintains the colour integrity of the original graphic."

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## For the 'creative, busy and forgetful'!

ASLAN's new product is premium-quality blackboard film for chalk and liquid chalk. The Premium Blackboard ASLAN BB 910 can be written on over and over again, even with liquid chalk, and still keeps its flawless appearance.



As the only self-adhesive film on the market, the film can be written on without leaving any ghosting or shadows when removing the writing. They say it is the perfect choice for applications in restaurants, cafés, schools, offices or private households, where changing writings are daily routine.

The blackboard film for long-term applications is 'extremely' scratch-proof and resistant to solvents. It can be cut into any desired size or form. An 'easy application onto any smooth surface, indoors and outdoors, is guaranteed'.

[www.ASLAN-schwarz.com](http://www.ASLAN-schwarz.com)

## ORAFOL launches new material for vehicle marking

ORAFOL recently launched a new flexible marking film for vehicles. The material is an upgraded version of the company's former fluorescent lime/red chevron film. Not only does the new microprismatic reflective material provide 'outstanding' visibility properties for the user, it also provides great benefits for the applicators.

Dr. Sylvia Lucht, Sales and Marketing Director for ORAFOL's Reflective Solutions Division said: "With this new material we have really focused on providing a flexible material, which will make it easy to work with for the applicators, without

any compromise on visibility. With this new material you get outstanding reflective and fluorescent properties by both day and night; easy rear end chevron application as the material is pre-printed; and easy handling of the material during the application process."

This new more flexible ORALITE® film does not need any edge sealing, and it also conforms to slightly curved vehicle shapes. The material is approved to TPESC B 13233.

[www.orafol.com](http://www.orafol.com)



The new ORALITE® VC 612 Chevron has 'excellent' flexibility for curved surfaces.

# Sagetech Launch their KF Range of vertical panel saws

British saw manufacturer Sagetech Limited has launched a new comprehensive range of vertical panel saws under its Koolkut brand. Incorporating the same 'robust' frame method of construction as their well respected Koolkut KK range, the new KF machines have been designed for manufacture using the latest CAD/CAM laser technology to give 'high precision, reduced manufacturing costs, and even more attractive pricing'.

The new KF machines have been designed for manufacture using the latest CAD/CAM laser technology to give high precision, reduced manufacturing costs, and even more attractive pricing.

Each machine comes complete with a powerful Festool TS75 saw motor, which can be removed and used as a stand-alone unit in seconds. Or replaced with an optional floating head router for constant depth grooving and rebating. Sagetech selected these motors based on their proven track record of 'high reliability and long service performance', with the added benefit that Festool now provide free three-year service and warranty support.

Whether cutting along the length of the sheet or across its width, the action is 'easy', with the change from one mode to the other done in two or three seconds. Like the other Sagetech machines, the KF units work with the advanced European style design where the saw head moves in either direction. The work piece remain static, which offers great advantages when handling either very thin flexible sheets or particularly heavy sheets, which do not need to be moved during the cutting process.

The KF is an important advancement on Sagetech's ZM range, in that the saw

head can be adjusted with its smooth built-in plunge mechanism to bring it in close proximity to the work piece, providing 'very good' dust collection. This feature can also be beneficial when cutting brittle materials which, if allowed to 'chatter', can result in damage to the work piece. This feature, combined with the inbuilt variable motor speed control, provides the user with 'great flexibility' to achieve the optimum cutting speeds for a wide range of materials.

Depth of cut can be easily adjusted to enable users to apply a sacrificial backing board with extended life, making for good cut quality, especially with thin or flexible materials.

Depth of cut can be easily adjusted to enable users to apply a sacrificial backing board with extended life, making for good cut quality, especially with thin or flexible materials.

The new KF range of vertical saws from Sagetech.



The machines have a comprehensive set of measures and stops in both metric and imperial scales, and they include a removable mid height platform to facilitate the cutting of smaller pieces. The use of constant tension springs to provide a neutral balance of the saw head up and down the column has resulted in a valuable cost saving, which is reflected in the machine's pricing, according to the company.

The KF range is available in three sizes: 8' x 4' (2.5 x 1.25 M), 10' x 5' (3.1 x 1.6 M), and the jumbo/large plastic sizes (3.1 x 2.1 M). These machines are anticipated to be particularly attractive to users such as Signmakers who want a machine with greater capability than Sagetech's ZM range. As well as woodworkers who are working with particularly heavy sheets.

[www.sagetech.co.uk](http://www.sagetech.co.uk)

# PRODUCT News

## Longier wide-format printers make UK debut

Quality Print Services (QPS) has introduced the Longier range of LED cured UV printers to the UK market.

Longier print systems feature the very latest long-life, cool-cure, LED UV technology for leading energy efficiency, speeds of up to 70sqm/hr, white ink as standard plus varnish and spot colours, and many special features such as an oversized board printing option.

The Longier range is a result of UK design refinement and is supported by a team of experienced, UK-based technical engineers, who offer a 'credible and affordable alternative' to established names in the wide-format arena.



Each Longier printer will come supplied with Nazdar 'top-quality inks for outstanding print consistency, adhesion, colour saturation and price'.

"We're excited to introduce Longier flatbed printers to the UK market for the first time," says QPS Managing Director Chris Bailey. "The brand is a real competitor against our industry's more recognised names and with Nazdar inks ready-installed it offers exceptional quality and cost savings.

"Longier machines are solidly built, efficient and reliable so are ideal for any sign-maker or display company looking to replace or expand their equipment. In fact, we'd like to invite businesses to test the Longier printer at the UK demonstration suite to put the range through its paces using their own files on their own substrates."

[www.qualityprintservices.com](http://www.qualityprintservices.com)

### The UK Longier range currently comprises five new LED UV printers:

- The Longier Hunter FP 3750: a 2,500 x 1,450mm flatbed printer
- The Longier Hunter FR 3750: a 2,500 x 1,450mm printer with roll-to-roll option
- The Longier Hunter FR 4650: a 3,200 x 1,450mm printer with roll-to-roll option
- The Longier Hunter FP 6000: a 2,000 x 3,000mm flatbed printer
- The Longier Hunter FP 900: a 1,000 x 900mm flatbed printer

## Perfect Colours takes on the HP Latex 3000

The 3.2m wide HP Latex 3000, with dual-roll capability, is a 'major step up in productivity for sign and graphics companies', says Perfect Colours who recently added it to their portfolio.

The HP Latex 3000 has a six-colour ink-set, embedded spectrophotometer and

latex optimiser, with a 12pl droplet size. This helps to to produce 'fine-quality graphics which stand up easily to the close inspection expected from indoor applications'.

This sort of job can expect to print at 77sq m/hour, while banner and other exte-

rior work can attain 120sq m/hour, creating 'efficiency for businesses looking to satisfy large volumes'. The Latex 3000 can reach a maximum speed of 180sq m/hour but can process two 1.6m rolls at once.

Although lamination can be applied immediately after printing, many users skip this step, thanks to its 'excellent' scratch resistance, which compares like-for-like with hard solvent on PVC banner or self-adhesive vinyl. According to the company, it performs superbly on heat-sensitive materials and textiles, with an optional ink collector providing access to 'untapped markets' via new substrates, such as unlined mesh, scrim, voile or flag.

"It makes total sense for Perfect Colours to provide the Latex 3000, not only for our ever-expanding base of HP Latex users in the UK but also those hungry for a high-productivity alternative in roll-to-roll," says Jon Telling, sales director. "In line with our other recent portfolio additions and our dedication to service, we're confident that Perfect Colours now provides the most comprehensive range of graphics production options in the country."



At 3.2m, the Latex 3000 from HP now sits at the top end of Perfect Colours's wide-format range

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## Composite site safety signs

Spectrum Industrial, who specialise in the design and manufacture of signs and safety products, has a range of composite site safety signs for use on renovation projects, building sites and construction sites.

With numerous dangers found on busy modern sites, it has become harder for safety managers and business owners to effectively highlight relevant safety procedures and working methods which are now covered by EU legislation, says the company.

Spectrum Industrial's product manager, Antony Garlick said: "Our composite site safety signs have been specifically designed to provide a good level of basic and relevant safety information on one sign, in a clear and concise way.

"In addition, Spectrum Industrial offers the opportunity to create bespoke signs to include company logos if required. This enables companies to easily demonstrate their h & s commitment to clients, workers and the general public."

Companies looking to distribute the Composite Safety sign can benefit from a special promotional offer which gives them free point of sale when ordering 10 composite signs.

[www.spectrum-industrial.co.uk](http://www.spectrum-industrial.co.uk)



*Spectrum Industrial's new composite safety sign.*

## Adhesive vinyl for HP latex printers can 'help reduce environmental impact'

HP updates its economical intermediate adhesive vinyl for large-format printing to help 'meet rigorous environmental standards and provide better image quality'.

Their latest innovation in inkjet printing materials optimised for HP Latex printers is HP Permanent Gloss Adhesive Vinyl and HP

Permanent Matte Adhesive Vinyl. The updated vinyls have a permanent adhesive to provide 'environmental advantages and are economical'.

The new vinyl is REACH-compliant<sup>1</sup>, a regulation the European Union adopted to improve the protection of human health and

the environment. Print service providers have an alternative vinyl that offers environmental advantages at a lower cost, according to the company.

Ideal for a wide range of indoor and outdoor applications, from event signage to retail displays, HP Permanent Gloss Adhesive Vinyl and HP Permanent Matte Adhesive Vinyl provide a 'wide colour gamut and excellent ink saturation to deliver vibrant, long-lasting images'. The new vinyls are also highly opaque to provide a 'high-quality finished look'.

The thicker release liner is more stable and is designed to avoid bubbling and wrinkling during production. The increased thickness also makes prints 'easy to handle and install'.

HP Permanent Matte Adhesive Vinyl has a semi-matte finish, and is ideal for environments where glare is an issue. The matte and gloss versions also provide outdoor display permanence of three years un-laminated and up to five years laminated.

The new vinyls are available in 30, 36, 42, 54 and 60-inch widths.

[www.globalBMG.com/hp](http://www.globalBMG.com/hp)



*HP matte adhesive vinyl are 'ideal' for outdoor displays where glare is an issue.*

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# PRODUCT News

## Caldera creates new version, V10

The 10th edition of Caldera's 'feature packed' printer control software will 'liberate today's print houses through productivity, connectivity and modernity', the French developer claims. V10 doubles previous average RIP speeds to provide printers of all sizes and types with the 'independence to print what they wish without having to sacrifice speed or complexity'.

V10 uses smart algorithmic processing, APPE 3.3 and new remote management capabilities. It allows users to streamline their screen to focus only on live tasks, while icons and markers have been standardised throughout in a modern style. Caldera's use of HTML5 provides cross-platform, cross-OS support for remote management via new module VisualRemote, which provides different levels of off-site access to operators.

"In the latest version of Caldera, we

have considered at length the way companies deploy their RIP, both now and also over the course of the product's lifetime," says Caldera's Chief Technical Officer, Frédéric Soulier. "V10 marries new usability concepts with major advances in raw speed, making it, we believe, the RIP of choice for this exciting era of applications development within and outside the graphic arts."

In line with customer polling, other features include: production overview tool PrintBoard, becomes an intrinsic element of the RIP. This allows users to see job and production status at a glance through a web-based application and extend its use into the realm of remote monitoring. Smaller features have been reallocated within the RIP; grommets and eyelets can be added to artwork from within the Print module. While advanced wall graphics visualisation is accessible through a new

Tiling+ module. Update notifications have been gathered in a single area and are automated, to make sure that critical updates 'reach the user rapidly'. Profiles can be accessed from within a new library directly within EasyMedia.

Version 10 integrates various successful modules within its interface. Contour Nesting and Tex&Repeat, which transfer printers' skills into the textile, wallpaper, ceramics, glass, wood and CAD areas, are embedded within the RIP.

"Finally, ink-jet technology is starting to realise its full potential," says Joseph Merqui, Chief Executive Officer, Caldera. "We can now print to more surfaces, in more situations, than ever before. The most exciting areas of print are those yet to be brought to life, but the technology required to create them starts here. For our users, that is with V10 of Caldera."

## GMG releases ColorProof 5.6

GMG, who develop and supply 'high-end color management software solutions', has released GMG ColorProof 5.6, the latest version of their their award-winning proofing software.

"With the popular adoption of optically brightened papers, a problem arose. The papers improved image appearance and tended to be cost-effective to purchase. However, they were out of conformance with proofing standards. Users will find that GMG has conducted a lot of research and testing into helping customers who print with optically brightened media to achieve colour consistency," says Birgit Plautz, GMG Director Business Unit, Graphic Arts. "We have

also added features to connect and work even better with prepress-workflows, and operate more efficiently with RIPs and printers."

Most significant for proofing accuracy is the new GMG solution for optically brightened media. Until recently, measuring devices and the light in viewing booths had not been subject to any standards regarding how they measured or illuminated print media that contains optical brightening agents (OBAs) to increase the 'whiteness'. With the recent revisions of those ISO norms and eventually the updated ISO 12647-2:2013 several changes have been made to address the colour matching problems caused by OBA enhanced media.

It also has new features to make it work more efficiently with workflows and in multiple-site operations. And they have made it easier to operate centralised colour management that oversees multiple locations or remote sites. ColorProof 5.6 can also re-assign jobs to different printers for continuous productivity. The new option has been integrated to automatically move pending jobs from one printer to another compatible printer in case the current printer cannot print (for example, because it has run out of ink or paper). This eliminates a backlog of files that are waiting for the printer to be attended to.



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## New profiles for LED illumination added to the Spirit-TEX Fabric System

Spirit Displays, who make textile tensioning systems, has announced the latest additions to its Spirit-TEX range. The four new profiles at various depths provide some new and 'exciting' opportunities for illuminated applications. These include a 27mm frame which incorporates an acrylic LED panel and an edge-illuminated 120mm double-sided frame.

"Soft-signage has taken off in the last few years and we have found massive uptake in the retail sector for illuminated versions," says Hadley Weight, Director at Spirit Displays.

The new profiles expand the range to cover the most common depths of profile at 65mm and 100mm, both of which can be LED illuminated. Spirit Displays has also developed a range of LEDs with their suppliers to work 'perfectly' with their light-boxes and ensure even illumination. The 27mm profile is built up around an acrylic LED panel, making it one of the slimmest illuminated solutions available in the market.

"We have demonstrated our ability to consistently and evenly illuminate our boxes, even mainly white backgrounds, without any shadows or drop-off at the edges," says Hadley.

The new 120mm profile is commonly being used in visual merchandising to create double-sided displays for retail windows. These can be freestanding on steel foot-plates, fixed to the floor or hung from cable systems. It is also used to build wall panels for exhibitions, conference sets and events. These can be either supplied as light-boxes or non-illuminated versions.

Spirit-TEX was developed in 2012 to address the 'challenging' sizing and finishing



*Spirit tex gripper:  
The unique TEX-Gripper extrusion.*

issues around soft-signage. The key element of the Spirit-TEX system is the unique TEX-Gripper extrusion that eliminates the need for stitching silicone to the edges of the polyester fabrics. A tool is used to push the fabric into the TEX-gripper which locks it in place. Spirit-TEX has also been successfully tested for compatibility with dye-sublimation, UV-curable and latex printing methods, to make it one of the most versatile fabric display options on the market. These two important features open this lucrative soft-signage market to many smaller printing and sign companies, who may not be able to invest in specialist, dedicated machinery and staff.

With Spirit-TEX Gripper it also allows much larger textile graphics to be tensioned. An 18 x 3m (59 x 9'10") frame has already been successfully installed at London department store Selfridges. This textile tensioning system, which has a patent pending, is still fully compatible with industry standard 14 x 3mm silicone-finished fabrics by removing the TEX-gripper extrusion. This further adds to the versatility offered by the Spirit-TEX fabric system.

The full range of profiles comprises options for front or back lighting and single or double sided display. The frames can hang, or be wall-mounted or free-standing. Spirit-TEX systems, manufactured in the UK, are available to the trade only in stock profiles and flat-pack kits, or fully fabricated with LED lighting in the case of light boxes. The aluminium profiles are available in silver anodised, and black and white power-coated versions are all from stock.

Hadley said: "In 2014, we have invested in computerised cutting and CNC machines to increase productivity and accuracy of our production. This has improved turn-around times and gives us scope to look at more complex bespoke manufactured products. At Spirit Displays we are not content to settle for a standard catalogue of products.

"The industry has been crying out for a simple, flexible display solution for light-weight fabrics, and we have been listening. We are proud to be the first to respond to this demand with Spirit-TEX and we are confident that it will become the most popular product of its kind on the market."



*Exhibition lightbox photo: The new range can be LED illuminated and are designed for even illumination.*

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## MACtac sign making films from ADS to be REACH-compliant



ADS will supply swatches that will include their current and new colours.

Amari Digital Supplies (ADS), who stock and distribute MACtac self-coloured sign making films, has announced changes to the colours. These are mainly yellow, orange, red, green, grey and metallic of the 9800, 8900, 8300 and 9700 Pro series of films as well as those in the Sublime offering within the MACtac Tuning Film Series. These changes are due to the new REACH (European Regulation for Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) directive that will come into force in January 2015.

Since the REACH requirement relates only to the manufacturing process, it is still permissible to use currently stocked and/or supplied MACtac materials. But from January 2015, all MACtac products supplied by ADS will be fully compliant with the new requirement.

The selected new colours will be as close as possible, or 'hardly noticeable', to those they will replace. And ADS will supply MACtac colour cards and fan swatches that will include both the current and new colours. The names currently in use will be retained but the product codes will change due to the importance of not mixing current and new colours for the same application.

Since 15 June 2014, all MACtac products have been free of any heavy metals-based pigments and so already fully compliant with the new REACH regulation, according to the company.

www.amaridigitalsupplies.com

# MULTITECHNIC Feature

## Cheap isn't cheerful

Colin Edge of sign-trade supplier **Multi-technic Ltd** looks at why a job that went wrong could teach us all a lesson about how we advise customers, and how we should always try to sell them the right quality of sign for their requirements.

"A customer recently asked for some advice about some stainless steel cut-out letters that he had installed just over a year ago. His customer had complained that they were rusting, and the photos that he emailed over were not pretty. He just wanted an independent opinion before talking to his supplier.

It turns out that the letters were made from 304 grade stainless steel, which a lot of people think is good enough for outdoor use in the UK as long as not too near the sea. Well these are 20 miles from the sea and they prove that cheaper grades of stainless steel are at best a gamble for outdoor signs here in Blighty. We live on a fairly small island, nowhere in Britain is more than 70 miles from the sea, and as our weather comes swirling in across the oceans from all directions, for the purposes of metal corrosion the whole of the UK has to be considered to be coastal.

This is particularly important for stainless steel signage, as sea air causes what is known as tea staining; what looks like isolated spots of rust which then spread unsightly stains across the surface of the metal. When your customer chooses stainless steel for his sign, he expects it to remain stainless. And if it starts looking rusty you have a lia-

bility time bomb ticking away unless you have explained the options to your customer very clearly.

Now to be fair, my customer took advice from his cut-out letter supplier that 304 would be okay for outdoor use, and to be fair to the supplier, he was only acting on what his metal supplier had said. This isn't the first time that I have heard of this problem, and I doubt that it will be the last. It will be an expensive lesson for all concerned.

We only use 316 marine grade stainless steel because the small cost saving from using a cheaper grade simply isn't worth it. We were therefore surprised a few years ago to receive a complaint from a customer that one of our etched stainless steel signs was rusting. He sent over a photo, it looked pretty awful, and it took a bit of trawling through our records before we worked out that we hadn't actually made that sign. It turned out that somebody else had ordered it from a different supplier, if my memory serves me right this was because it was £3 cheaper. Trying to save a couple of quid on the job turned out to be an expensive decision as they had to buy a replacement from us and make a long journey to site to fit it.

So what should you do to avoid this sort of potentially expensive situation? That decision is easy for our sort of work. Etched signs are looked at closely and any staining will be immediately obvious. Also, most of our cost is labour rather than material so it is a 'no brainer', we only use 316 grade. For cut-out letters the material cost is more sig-

nificant, but even so the difference in finished price between 316 grade or cheaper grades is fairly small.

I spoke to Kevin Washbourne at Impact 3D Signs as I know that like us, he only uses 316 grade stainless steels, even for indoor use. His view is very clear, it simply isn't worth keeping cheaper grades in stock. The cost of keeping the two types on the premises and identifying them separately wipes out any potential cost saving, and all it takes is for one mistake for part of a job to be made from the wrong material and he would face a potentially huge liability.

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If you have to cope with competitors always trying to beat you on price, then you have to steer your customers more in the direction of quality, and show that the cheap option is false economy.

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That is the point of view from two trade manufacturers, but we are both selling to professional sign companies who have the background knowledge to make informed decisions. Selling to end users is not so straightforward. If you decide to quote everything on 316 grade without saying why, then you will simply make yourself look expensive compared to a competitor who is happy to quote for 304 grade and keep quiet about it. You need to explain why the cheap option could be a false economy.

There is no single answer as to how you should approach this when selling to your customers. Some sign companies have a blanket policy of only quoting for the best materials no matter if vinyl, stainless steel, or anything else. They set their stall out as a high quality outfit because that suits their customer base. That is not so easy if you have to compete with other sign companies where price is all they want people to be interested in.

.....Continued on page 24



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# MULTITECHNIC Feature

## Cheap isn't cheerful

If you have to cope with competitors always trying to beat you on price, then you have to steer your customers more in the direction of quality, and show that the cheap option is false economy. Have the right tools to hand, the right sales talk to explain why the cheaper job is cheap for a reason, a page on your website to show them the folly of cutting costs.

There will always be somebody who will beat you on price, but you know that what they offer is going to look pretty tatty in a year or so.

There will always be some customers who only want the cheapest, and because they will hammer you into the ground to be 50p cheaper than the sign company next door, you will never make money from them anyway. Most people however are open to a bit of advice, and if you have the right sales angle to steer them towards a better quality job, you will also make them suspicious of other sign companies that are perhaps too cheap, and too cheap for all the wrong reasons.



The same principle applies to every aspect of selling signs, from vehicle graphics to wayfinding. There will always be somebody who will beat you on price, but you know that what they offer is going to look pretty tatty in a year or so. Your job is to explain that effectively to your customer. If you get that right then you will get the job, you will make a fair profit from the job, and you will also sleep better at night."

Colin Edge is Managing Director of Multitechnic Ltd, manufacturers of chemically etched signs.

[www.multitechnic.co.uk](http://www.multitechnic.co.uk)

Kevin Washbourne is Managing Director of Impact 3D Signs, manufacturers of flat-cut and built up-letters.

[www.impact3dsigns.co.uk](http://www.impact3dsigns.co.uk)

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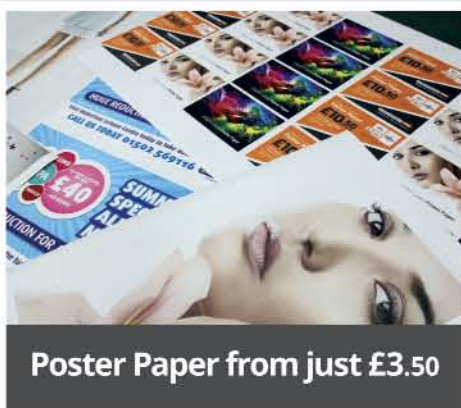
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# INKS Feature

## How new ink technologies are shaping the signage sector

*From issues of performance and accurate colour reproduction to environmental impact, OEM versus third party, there are many considerations to contend with when selecting ink. Jemima Codrington found out more about what ink distributors and manufacturers are doing to make the case for each different choice available.*

2014 was a busy year for Josero, with three new ink launches taking place throughout the year. Among them were inks from Triangle designed for use with Epson SureColor printers, a new ink for Mimaki printers, and inks for use with the line of Roland SOLJET PRO4 printers.

"All our inks are chemically and colour compatible with the OEM," reveals Loic Delor, Managing Director of Josero. "A few years ago, when you changed inks, you had to re-profile or do a flush to avoid any issues, but you don't have to do that anymore. You can just plug in one cartridge alongside the OEM and when that empties, you can swap to the other ink."

In a bid to introduce sign makers to the new, easier way of switching inks, Josero spent much of the year giving customers a free cartridge to try alongside the OEM. Rather than explaining the quality of the inks and assuring customers that they were comparable with the OEM, Josero have enabled sign makers to try for themselves, seeing first-hand that there is no damage to the machine and that colour reproduction is of a high enough standard. It's a strategy that has led to a huge amount of success, and seen more and more sign makers moving into the realm of third-party inks.



*There were numerous new ink product launches at Josero last year.*

According to Loic, UV curable inks have played a large part in moving the ink and printing industries forward. The lower curing temperatures and consequent faster drying times are just a couple of reasons an increasing number of sign makers are opting for UV inks to use in conjunction with LED lights. "The main technology that has revolutionised inks in recent years, however, is latex," he says. "When it first came out, it was a bit of a difficult ink to handle through

the machine, requiring a lot of drying power. The compatibility between the ink and the media was difficult to find, as there weren't many substrates suited to this type of ink, and these inks were in the early stages of development." As manufacturers adapted to meet the demand, the technology has improved, allowing sign makers to use latex printers and inks with a much wider range of media. "Now, the power needed to dry the inks has probably been cut in half," says Loic.

### Choosing latex and eco-solvent versus UV inks

From the colour gamut to cost efficiency, scope of jobs, drying times and sustainability – there are a myriad of things to consider when selecting an ink type.

As sign makers continue to make lateral movements into other sectors and undertake more than just traditional signage, getting the choice right to find ink that can produce a high-quality finish across a wide range of substrates is another factor to think about. When choosing eco-solvent or latex inks, Loic advises sign makers to think primarily about colour reproduction, price and service provided by the manufacturer or reseller. "The main thing is keeping the quality consistent, as if you have to change inks half way through a job or when conducting repeat jobs, the print will not come out the same way unless ink is a good match, which can cost sign makers business," he says.



*Josero carries inks for use with the Ricoh Pro L4000 series.*

With UV inks, a wide colour gamut and adhesion is a crucial factor. In some cases, the OEM is not necessarily the best ink for the job. "With some of the VUTEk printers, our (Triangle) ink will perform better than the OEM." He points to the H/QS series as an example, as the inks from Josero tend to provide better scratch durability and adhesion, along with a wider colour gamut than the OEM inks. The materials being used for

the job will also play a part in determining the best ink fit. For sign makers that print onto products such as aluminum composites like Dibond, choosing ink with excellent adhesion is of paramount importance, as lower grade composite panels may not hold the ink as well.

[www.josero.com](http://www.josero.com)



Loic Delor,  
Managing Director, Josero.

**A sign industry supplier based in Kings Hill, Kent, AIT Shiraz Ltd offers a range of third party solvent inks. Roger Ward, Managing Director, AIT Shiraz Ltd., believes that the market for solvent inks will remain strong for many years as retired machines exchange hands to new users who seek both minimal capital outlay and lower on-going overheads.**

"The printing community needs to reduce their costs to stay competitive and I believe we can help them with our range of products and services," he says. Roger notes that traditionally, customers have opted for solvent printers, and that there have been a number of advances with solvent technology in terms of odour and safety.

"These low cost products are ideal for short-run, low-cost advertising. Sensible use of third party solvent inks can also help keep costs to a minimum."

AIT Shiraz offer the ColorSolve range of solvent inks for printers such as the Mimaki JV3 and JV33. Roger comments that third party solvent inks are now as good if not better than their OEM counterparts. "ColorSolve inks are manufactured in Europe to ISO 9001 standards, and have been successfully used at over 200 sites in the UK." These inks are colour matched to the OEM inks, and can be swapped into machines as the originals expire. Roger notes that the quality of the inks is on par with if not better than the OEMs, adding that the inks have

appeared on client jobs across a range of applications including coaches for the Olympics and Commonwealth Games, as well as store graphics in major retail outlets like Sports Direct and USC.

### **The importance of watching the warranty**

When machines are out of warranty, Roger believes that many UK sign makers make a financial mistake by remaining loyal to the printer manufacture. This is a phenomenon less witnessed in countries like the US, where users are naturally more cost-conscious and are used to fixing problems locally.

....Continued on page 30



AIT Shiraz Ltd carries inks to be used with the Mimaki JV33, pictured.

# INKS Feature

## How new ink technologies are shaping the signage sector

.....Continued from page 29

"Once a machine is out of warranty, the distributor's argument for sticking with OEM inks wears rather thin. By contrast we can reduce ink bills by up to 40 per cent, provide field service support if necessary and offer genuine replacement parts at the half the cost".

In order to keep handling costs to a minimum, inks can be ordered online from AIT's website and shipped the same day from a central UK distribution company. This added value as a supplier is, according to Roger, a key consideration for sign makers when choosing ink. AIT not only supplies a quality product, but also offers technical support by way of colour profiling, telephone and on-site repairs in a comprehensive "JetCare" package. Roger continues, "Whilst the key advantage over OEM ink is the reduced cost, we support our users with UK based engineers and there are cost savings in this area too, especially on spare parts."

[www.applied-image.com](http://www.applied-image.com)



CMYK inks from AIT Shiraz Ltd.

### Nazdar manufactures a comprehensive selection of UV, water-based, and solvent-based wide-format digital, screen-printing, and flexographic inks.

Printers in the Point of Purchase (POP), Banner, Sign, and Textile decorating markets among many others primarily use Nazdar inks. The company has recently launched two initiatives that have been immensely popular with customers. The first is Nazdar Ink Answers, through which questions regarding inks, whether it be digital, Screen or Flexo can be emailed to the team

of ink experts, who will respond with the appropriate answer. The second is the "free cartridge program", an initiative that enables current users of OEM cartridges to try Nazdar alternative inks to evaluate the product first hand for free.

"Switching to alternative inks from the OEM's inks seems like a really big risk, but if you do a little homework to select a well known and strong industry partner, you will enjoy excellent savings without sacrificing production quality or output," says James MacDonald, Vice President of Marketing for

Nazdar Ink Technologies. "Make sure that you are choosing the right ink supplier and do not buy on price alone." When it comes to areas of the ink industry that saw biggest growth in 2014, James points to UV/LED curing inks. Nazdar has developed excellent UV/LED curing Digital Inkjet, Screen Printing, and Flexographic inks in anticipation of an increased growth in this area in 2015. There are a number of primary benefits for UV/LED ink products, as James points out. "There is a reduction in heat in the curing process, thus reducing heat-related issues with substrates," he says. "There's also reduced energy consumption to run the lamp system along with reduced energy consumption by eliminating air displacement required to cool mercury vapour lamps. No ozone is produced, and there is consequently no regulatory need for venting." Other benefits include a reduction in environmental/disposal issues related to lamps containing mercury, no need to wait for the lamps to warm up or cool down, and an estimated 3 year ROI in converting to LED curing based on energy savings, bulb replacement/disposal, and reflector replacement.

While there is plenty to be said in the case for UV inks, there are some other important considerations sign makers should bear in mind when choosing the right inks for the jobs at hand.

.....Continued on page 32



Nazdar 202 Series Inks were demonstrated on a Roland SolJet Pro 4 XF-640 printer at FESPA.



# INKS Feature

## How new ink technologies are shaping the signage sector

.....Continued from page 30

For wide-format digital inkjet equipment the primary considerations are as follows:

- Are you using the OEM inks and is your machine still under warranty? Yes or No?
- If yes, is your ink consumption large enough that the cost savings of using alternative inks is worth any associated risks? Alternative inks can be as much as 30% lower than OEM inks, so run the numbers when making your decision.
- Choosing the right ink supplier is key to maintaining print and printer reliability by eliminating printing press inkjet head or ink-train damage caused by poor quality inks, press production downtime due to poor ink performance, and out of gamut prints due to unmatched OEM colour. A good alternative ink supplier should also offer technical support and an ink warranty. If not using OEM inks or the machine is out of warranty, then James recommends sign makers should seek the best value by considering these questions:
  - Is the ink supplier a worthy/trusted partner?
  - Does their product match the OEM's inks exactly in terms of printing performance and durability, colour reproduction and consistency?
  - Is the Ink supplier/manufacturer's warranty sufficient, and does the ink supplier/manufacturer provide the best combination of product, service, and price?



A UV/LED curing unit in action.

For UV Flatbed digital inkjet equipment the primary considerations are a slightly different. James recommends analysing the number of special applications and substrates that might be used before contacting alternative ink suppliers for a recommendation. Selecting a supplier that has an ink technician readily available to ensure the safe and swift conversion from your current inks is also recommended. Nazdar has technicians travelling worldwide to ensure smooth ink transition for large volume users.

### How Nazdar inks helped Kirkby Signs go mobile

Liverpool-based Kirkby Signs enlisted Nazdar products to wrap their fleet of so-called ad-vans.

"We're bridging a gap with the new ad vans," says Terry Furlong, Owner of Kirkby Signs. "It's a low-cost option that enables small companies to try mobile advertising, which they could never have dreamt of trying before." Kirkby Signs prints bespoke banners for the vans, which are then hired out to small local businesses at an affordable rate, enabling anyone from sofa retailers to local restaurants and car boot sale organisers to hire them. The banners have been printed using Nazdar 202 Series digital inks, developed specifically for Roland Soljet Pro4 XF-640 and XR-640 and Roland VersaCamm VSi wide-format printers. The products were officially launched at FESPA last year, and are colour-matched to Roland Eco-Sol Max 2 inks. They also offer outstanding alcohol, scratch and rub resistance.

For Terry, the choice to use Nazdar 202 Series digital inks, supplied in the UK by Quality Print Services (QPS), was one that paid off. "Initially I wouldn't risk anything other than OEM inks on the first Roland because of the cost of the printer," he says, "but Chris Bailey from QPS gave really good advice so I tried Nazdar and found no difference at all – and I'm saving money. I'm not as frightened to try full-colour jobs now because the ink costs so much less; I'm printing more elaborate and better designs."



Liverpool-based Kirkby Signs used Nazdar 202 Series Inks.

[www.nazdar.com](http://www.nazdar.com) / [www.kirkbysigns.com](http://www.kirkbysigns.com)



**Mimaki has the widest range of inks in the industry, with an ink for virtually every application, according to John de la Roche, national sales manager for Sign & Graphics at Hybrid Services Ltd.**

With white, solvent and UV inks, flexible and clear UV options, new SUV as well as white and metallic solvent and eco solvent inks available, Mimaki has a range of products suited to the ever-evolving signage industry. "For the Mimaki UJF-3042FX small format printer, I think there are about 21 different ink combinations!" says John. Available from UK distributor Hybrid, Mimaki inks are designed to provide superior colour reproduction with a fast drying time. Another important factor Mimaki takes into consideration when developing its product range is the all-important environmental one.

As sign makers take greater strides to reduce their carbon footprints, Mimaki is one of many companies working to create environmentally-responsible inks that don't compromise on quality. This has included the creation and development of eco-solvent through to latex and SUV inks to reflect what



*The eagerly awaited SS21 silver ink will be available in the UK market imminently.*

John describes as the "green, eco-conscious environment we live in." He does add that with greener products can sometimes come a trade off in performance, which can vary. In some cases, that that trade off might be

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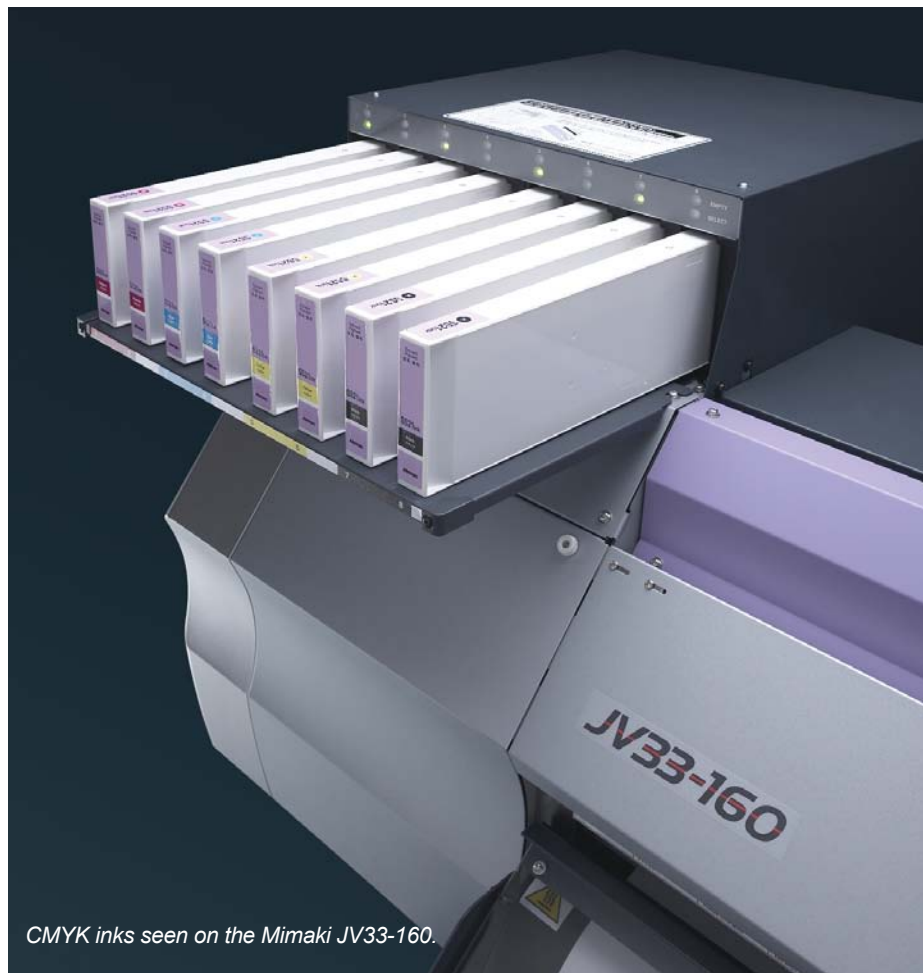
*"The future is looking very bright for Mimaki, as we have a very strong product line up for 2015"*

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durability, other times it might be the vibrancy of print. In order to provide the signage and graphic industries with the best of both worlds, Mimaki is constantly looking at ways to improve both the environmental impact and performance of inks.

2015 is poised to be a year of huge expansion for Mimaki with 10 different machines currently being launched. A new range of print and cut machines is set to provide sign makers with a slew of new hardware from which to choose, and of course, there is new ink to match. The SS21 silver ink will be available in the UK imminently, and has been developed in response to demand from the packaging and print industries. For sign makers, silver ink can make a creative addition to POS graphics and signage. "The future is looking very bright for Mimaki, as we have a very strong product line up for 2015," says John. "With all the new machines that are coming, we will probably have the widest range of technologies available this year."

[www.hybridservices.co.uk](http://www.hybridservices.co.uk)



*CMYK inks seen on the Mimaki JV33-160.*

# PRODUCT Choice

## Flying high with a DYSS X7 Digital Cutter

In the past five years Pure Point of Sale Ltd has seen its 'sales and growth soar'. Started by two long term friends, Russell Murch and Liam Gibbs, Managing Director and Sales Director respectively they first bought a Roalnd printer on Ebay which they ran from a conservatory. Today their 20,000 sq ft premises and 20 staff enable them to continue to invest in state of the art equipment, such as their new DYSS X7-3216 Digital Cutter from AG/CAD that arrived at the end of October 2014.

According to the company, their success comes from a partnership that combines Russell's background in the print production industry and Liam's experience as a retail designer specialising in POS/POP fixtures and fittings with the likes of Tesco, Homebase, and George. Pure supplies all of George's 400+ UK outlets as well as many of the company's international franchise partners.

The selection of the DYSS was initially made out of necessity, they say. The company is growing year-on-year and it needed a high-speed cutting machine to underpin its growth. The Lutterworth-based company already had an KM626A cutting table from AG/CAD but it was struggling to keep up with increased production demands. The machine also only had the capacity for knife cutting, which limited the range of materials that could be processed. In the early days, knife cutting and creasing cardboard freestanding display units (FSDUs),

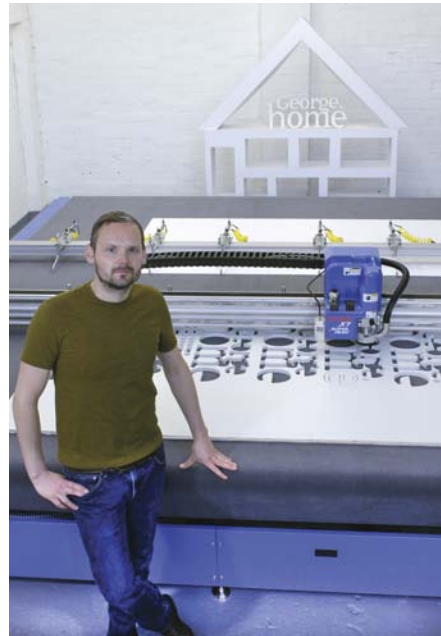
in-store POS and window displays meant this machine was sufficient. But as the company has grown and invested in superwide digital print equipment, it has expanded the product ranges it handles for its blue chip clients. This has created a requirement for increased capacity and the ability to process more varied substrates.

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Despite only being installed a few weeks, we can already see the huge cost benefits of installing the DYSS

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Liam said: "As our reputation for quality POS products has become more established, our customers are entrusting us with a more diverse workload that is now reaching into the design and production of semi-permanent and permanent POS displays. Historically we've cut cardboard, thin Foamex (rigid PVC) and displayboard, but as we have moved into the semi and permanent display sector, we are cutting DIBOND, Acrylic, wood, aluminium and thick Foamex up to 20mm. A knife cutting machine was never going to cut these tougher materials, so we wanted a digital production cutter with the option of a high



Liam Gibbs with the DYSS digital cutter.

powered routing tool as well as knife and creasing tools. For some time, these jobs have been subcontracted out to suppliers; buying the DYSS has eliminated this reliance on external sources."

As Pure has grown, so has its plant list and this also includes a two year old EFI VUTEK QS3200 printer with a 3.2m width flatbed and roll to roll capability. Printing up to 3.2m wide caused a cutting issue for Pure, as it couldn't fit 3.2m width jobs on its original cutting table. By installing a DYSS X7 flatbed digital cutter with a 3.2m wide by 1.6m cutting capacity along with a rear sheet feeder and roll unwinder, a production flow has been created. So large print jobs can be transferred straight from the VUTEK to the DYSS. With a plant list that will shortly include a HP Scitex FB7600 printer with a 3.2m by 1.6m flatbed, the DYSS will comfortably accommodate the output from both machines. At Pure's request AG/CAD also customised the rear sheet feeder to allow 3 sheets of board to be loaded and processed at once for optimum productivity.

"Despite only being installed a few weeks, we can already see the huge cost benefits of installing the DYSS, whilst the ability to bring more work in-house has improved our lead-times, process reliability and workflow. We are delighted with the benefits the X7 machine has brought in a few short weeks and undoubtedly we'll continue to benefit immensely as time progresses," says Liam.



The superhead router cutting 19mm foamex.

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# PRODUCT Choice

## Echo Studios chooses Fujifilm's Acuity Advance Select UV flatbed

Design and production house, Echo Studios, is the latest company to invest in the Fujifilm Acuity Advance Select UV flatbed printer. The printer is already helping to nurture the company's ambition to branch out into different markets.

Echo Studios first saw the Fujifilm Acuity Advance Select UV at FESPA Digital 2014. Creative Director, Dan Johnson, said: "We went to the show to look at a different machine and almost stumbled on the Acuity Advance. As soon as we saw the device and the fantastic quality and range of applications it can deliver, we were ready to buy on the spot."

Established in 1994 as an art working studio, Echo has been a production house for the past 18 years specialising in the luxury brands market as well as the high end museum and exhibition sector. The company's recent relocation to a 25,000 sq ft. facility in Surbiton, London, means it is now able to offer a full service of creative design and art-working, print production and installation. Since the Acuity Advance Select UV was installed at the end of July, the benefits the printer has delivered have already become apparent. Dan said: "The Acuity Advance delivers incredible quality print, and allows us to produce applications we weren't



able to create previously. The spot UV varnish means we can now print prototypes of exceptional quality, whilst the device's accurate drop placement gives us scope to produce much more detailed layered prints."

Dan said: "We've already had great feedback from existing clients, and have ac-

tually won new business that we previously wouldn't have pitched for – all because of the Acuity Advance Select. I don't know what we ever did without it."

[www.fujifilm.eu](http://www.fujifilm.eu)

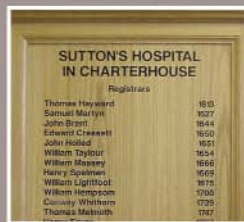
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SNM2 SMART NOZZLE MAPPING

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DDP Dynamic Dot Printing Technology

DDP controls and optimizes dot size and dot density to make consistently rich bold glossy colours with fine details. DDP also facilitates high density printing without any speed loss, ideal for backlighting.

Smart Pass SP4

SP4 controls ink flow and mixing to generate the ideal dot size for each print - resulting in a superior quality image. This makes the printer perfect for both, high-quality indoor and long-life outdoor applications and effectively eliminates banding without any loss in quality.

SKINK

Due to its viscosity, this high performance, high density, eco-solvent ink can achieve sharp, clear and bright prints even on backlit in a single pass, making the ink consumption considerably less than its competitors keeping ink costs low. Even at high speed, outstanding image quality is maintained with low odour and 3+ years of outdoor durability without lamination.

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## ColorPainter M-64s Wins Award

### Best in class at Viscom 2014



The jury justified its decision as, since its introduction to the market, the ColorPainter M-64s inkjet printer has become a popular best-seller for indoor and outdoor applications with a high level of customer satisfaction. Especially the possibility for "unattended printing", made possible through simple operation via social networks, such as Twitter, were just as impressive as the print speed.

The very successful high-performance ColorPainter M-64s took Viscom by storm, covering the markets demands for short turn around, just-in-time requirements, shorter runs and low running costs. With M-64s' maximum print speed of 66.5 m<sup>2</sup>/h, user-friendly technology and the new Eco Ink "SX" it provides indoor and outdoor compatible print results that make it fast - precise and reliable. Seiko Instruments' unique imaging technologies such as Smart Pass 4, Dynamic Dot Printing and M-64s' new automatic optical calibration function allow anybody to print excellent image quality on PVC even at 33.1 m<sup>2</sup>/h.

Seiko also showcased the new ColorPainter H2P which impressed visitors with its faster setup times, maximum print width of 104 inch, ink reservoirs of 8 litre per colour - CMYK - and reduced ink costs of less the £/m<sup>2</sup> 1.00 (new VX ink). Integrating the Smart Pass Technology 3 with Dynamic Dot Printing Technology, the

ColorPainter H2-104s/H2-74s prints higher quality images while maintaining the high print speed of its predecessor. The fastest print mode achieves 50sqm/h in 8-colour mode and 100sqm/h in 4 colour mode. The printer is best suited for large format banners and high volume printing in short turnaround times.

Also on show was the smallest of the league, the ColorPainter W-54s with its unique Neon ink. Available in yellow and pink, the Neon ink is the first solvent-based fluorescent ink in the world and have been developed for use on the ColorPainter W series wide-format printers. These two colours can be printed not only as spot colours, but also as composite colours with CMYK.

As the car-wrapping sector finds Seiko Instrument's ColorPainter W series especially impressive, the company sponsored this year's 'European Wrap Star' contest, where car-wrapping specialists from all over the world competed for victory during the three days of Viscom.

The full Seiko ColorPainter range can be viewed at Signmaster Systems HQ in Shropshire.



telephone: 01948 662 669

email: email@signmaster.co.uk

website: www.signmaster.co.uk

# PRODUCT Choice

## Genix invests in UK's first MTEX 5032Pro textile printer

London-based Genix has invested in the first MTEX 5032Pro direct-to-textile digital printer to be installed in the UK. The 'only fabric printer with a 3.2m capability inside the M25 corridor'.

Genix provide print, creative and project management solutions. Its roots lie within the print industry and over the past 25 years have 'evolved and developed into a truly adaptable creative resource, supplying content to the market via numerous channels'.

"We are constantly striving to embrace new technologies and ideas and see continuation of this process as key to our future success," said Genix Sales Director Andrew LeMaire.

"That's where the MTEX 5032Pro comes in. Soft imaging was the last wide format print technique that we didn't have in our stable. We have UV but it isn't the same; with the MTEX the material still feels like fabric without the stiffness of the UV, which simply lays the ink on the surface.

"We knew the way forward a while ago but hadn't been able to take this step until now as we needed to upgrade the size and

accessibility of our production area."

Genix had been housed in an 8,500 square feet basement location in Soho. But in April they expanded into a new production centre in Tottenham Hale with creative, project managers and client services run from their Audley House base in the centre of London.

"Without the move we wouldn't have been able to bring in a machine the size of the MTEX 5032Pro. And even in the bigger premises the relatively small footprint of this particular machine was one of the reasons that influenced the purchase," says Andrew.

"We wanted to expand our range with other new printing processes as well as textile, and we've also recently invested in a Latex printer.

"We originally saw the MTEX at Sign UK then went to FESPA specifically to have a better look. What swung it was the footprint being smaller thanks to the in-built calendar unit that we couldn't get elsewhere. Even in our new premises space is at a premium."

With the MTEX the team can start proofing the colour as soon as the material

"Soft signage is a real growth area and this machine will allow Genix to print graphics up to 3.2m wide to any length needed for both the exhibition and retail market," said Stewart Bell, MD of MTEX Technologies.

starts coming through the calendar unit, whereas with a second unit they would have to print the job and then test it.

"Experience has taught us that the tensioning of the material when webbed for printing is crucial, and once it's loaded up you don't really want to be disturbing it," says Andrew.

[www.mtex.eu](http://www.mtex.eu)  
[www.genix.co.uk](http://www.genix.co.uk)



*With the MTEX 5032Pro the team can start colour proofing as soon as the material starts coming through the calendar unit.*



Trust.

## Sign D Sign 'go the distance' with new Mimaki

Sign D Sign invested in a Mimaki CJV30-160 from local reseller Dennis D Evans last summer, which 'immediately became an integral part of their printing setup'.

The company is owned and run by Albert Watson and assisted by studio manager Glenn MacPherson. Together they have grown the company from traditional signage in its infancy, through to more modern means covering all aspects of design, manufacture and installation. "We've got a long and strong business relationship with Dennis D Evans," says Glen. "We trust their advice and have been delighted with the positive impact the Mimaki CJV30 has had on our services. We are very proud of our reputation for looking after our customers and ensuring we deliver a first-class service and we've seen customers returning time and time again on the basis of what we're producing on the CJV30."

In the company's Belfast based premises they produce work for some large brands and high street names. They also house grand-format cutting equipment, laminators and other finishing hardware and an in-house metal workshop. Glen says: "Here at Sign D Sign we look after things. We have always invested in good quality equipment and then taken the time to maintain it, so we always get the best output possible and the machines just keep on going. Mimaki's build quality fits with this ethos and we know we can rely on the CJV30 to go the distance for us."

The Mimaki CJV30 series is an integrated printer/cutter that provides high quality printing onto a broad range of substrates and a seamless transition through to cutting vinyl. Available in four sizes, ranging from a compact 60cm up to 1.6m, it is compatible with eco-solvent, solvent and dye-sublimation inksets.

[www.signdsign.biz](http://www.signdsign.biz)  
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*Sign D Sign's Albert Watson and Glenn MacPherson with the company's new Mimaki CJV30.*



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# PRODUCT Choice

## Parkins Interiors buys HP Latex 360 printer from SMGG

Having originally created its output on a Canon machine, the company decided to upgrade to the HP Latex 360 from Stanford Marsh Group Graphics (SMGG) in August 2014 to 'boost its productivity and expand its offering'.

Somerset-based Parkins Interiors was founded in 2010 by Chris and Rachael Parkins who have a 'keen sense' of interior design and a passion for innovative and stylish products'. The company employs six people and supplies wall stickers and accessories geared towards the domestic market.

Thanks to its 'green' credentials, the HP Latex 360's printed output can enter post-production without any lengthy out-gassing period and creates a healthier production environment.

Crafted to order from premium quality matt finish vinyl, the expansive range of products can be used to decorate any interior environment, particularly popular in children's bedroom décor.



Parkins Interiors range is particularly popular in children's rooms.



The HP Latex 360 creates a 'healthier' production environment.

Chris Parkins, co-founder of Parkins Interiors said: "I found SMGG online whilst searching for a solution to our printing needs. Much of our work involves the creation of stickers for children's rooms and therefore eco-solvent was out of the question due to the long gassing out process and the solvent elements of the ink.

"Similarly, aqueous printers were not up to the challenge as the prints were not durable and would not stand up to sticky fingers. We wanted a printer which could produce durable, scratch-resistant prints that would stand up to toddlers! We needed an alternative solution and SMGG came up with the amazing new HP Latex range."

Parkins Interiors prints onto self-adhesive vinyl to produce wall stickers, while developing a mural and wallpaper range with a view to selling the products wholesale to other retailers. By running HP Latex inks the company can take advantage of 'extra durability, media diversity and quality'.

"What's great is the print is suitable for outdoor applications, which gives our business greater opportunities in the future," says Chris. "There is also a huge range of suitable media for these inks and the print quality is far greater than the equivalent eco-solvent or solvent printers."

Chris says: "SMGG have been great throughout the whole process. From the initial advice from Steve Guest, who wholeheartedly stood behind the product, to the demonstration of the equipment, through to installation and software demonstration. It was refreshing to encounter a sales representative with such enthusiasm for the product and this carried a lot of weight in our final decision to purchase.

"Plus, on an ongoing basis, the company is always happy to take my calls and offer suggestions. We eventually see ourselves purchasing a second HP Latex printer and have already invested in two further vinyl cutters from SMGG to keep up with demand."

[www.parkinsinteriors.com](http://www.parkinsinteriors.com)  
[www.parkinsinteriors.com](http://www.parkinsinteriors.com)  
[www.smgg.co.uk](http://www.smgg.co.uk)

A man with a beard is playing a cello. The scene is dark, with glowing purple lines and light trails around the instrument and the player's hands, creating a sense of motion and energy. The text is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

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# PRODUCT Choice

## ‘Horizon scanning’ by Introscan points to investment in HP Latex

Glasgow-based wide format printer Introscan has been constantly ‘horizon scanning’ for new technologies over the past 12 years for the opportunities they bring.

Recently, this led the company to buy a new HP Latex 360 with Onyx Rip from City and West End Solutions (CWE). With many trade clients, Introscan know they need to ‘remain ahead of the pack, and on the cutting edge of wide format printing’.

Ian Penman started his career as an ‘early adopter’ of new print technologies when he set up the company more than a decade ago as an image setting service for printers. He quickly saw that the need wouldn’t always be there and decided to evolve the company with large format printing as the way forward.

He initially invested in a Roland that could (and still does) print positives for screen printers as well as posters.

The company then moved on to HP, buying a HP 5000 around eight years ago and shortly afterwards upgraded to a HP 5500 for greater speed. And when John de-

cidated to expand into the outdoor market he upgraded once again to the HP Z6100.

The timing of the recent move to HP Latex was decided by an improvement in the technology matched with the residual value of the Z6100.

“I decided to upgrade to the HP Latex 360 while I could still get good money for the Z6100 on the second hand market – it’s still a great machine,” explained Ian.

“I had looked at Latex previously with CWE but the image at the time was too soft. With the new machines the image is harder and the optimising system means you get output that is sharper and just as robust as that from UV machines.

“I believe that with today’s green agenda UV printers will eventually be banned for environmental reasons. We’ve already had clients asking about environmental certifications, who want a non-solvent product.”

Graham De Kock, CWE commercial director said: “The new latex inks offer durability with superior scratch resistance on vinyl

and banner and enhanced quality and performance on a wide range of media.

“They are odourless, free from HAPS and you don’t need special ventilation in production areas. This makes Latex printing the best option for places like schools, restaurants and hospitals where high environmental standards must be met.”

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“Manufacturers are producing machines that go faster and faster, but you have to ask yourself whether the volume of work is there.”

---

The HP Latex 360 was installed in the company’s premises in Govan on 15 September, and it went in with no problems. Using the Onyx RIP the company now has the advantage of printing two sided, something they had had to outsource in the past. “In today’s market it’s important to keep as much work in house as you can, and the new technologies are making that possible. With this new printer we can continue producing the staples; posters, pop ups, pull ups and A-boards, whilst diversifying into outdoor applications.

“We’re also now looking at working more with temporary textiles and soft signage in the future, and the next time an order for flags comes in we’ll give it a go.

“Manufacturers are producing machines that go faster and faster, but you have to ask yourself whether the volume of work is there. The quality is also pretty much up there where you need it now, so is it a revolution rather than evolution that we need to take the wide format industry to the next level? Over to you,” says Ian.

[www.cwesolutions.co.uk](http://www.cwesolutions.co.uk)



*Introscan have been looking out for new opportunities since they started 12 years ago, and are set to continue to diversify their range.*

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# PRODUCT Choice

## Display Signs looks to expand its team to meet customer demand

Uxbridge-based Display Signs is expanding its team to help manage more orders since investing in a HP FB700; a HP Latex 360; and a Summa F Series cutter from City and West End Solutions.

"We're now looking for top notch, experienced people to join our sales, design and production teams and we're also interested in taking on a graduate who's at the start of their career," said Alan Kelvey.

The expansion to Display Signs' 25-strong workforce is needed to support the growth seen since it bought the Summa cutter and the Latex 360 this year and the FB700 two years ago.

"We've had a long standing relationship with CWE Solutions and have confidence in both their advice and after sales service. Now we have these printers integrated into our system we can use them to make just about any type of sign, banner or display."

Display Signs was established in the mid-1970s by Alan and his wife Jane. Their work ranges from retail schemes and construction signage to large format digital imaging for blue chip companies.

"We have historically used Seiko solvent printers but have introduced the UV and Latex printers as they offer greater flexibility and don't require a gassing-off period, further reducing production time.

"With the FB700, printing direct to board with UV curable ink is a real plus, as Correx, foam PVC and composites are great for construction signage. With the UV printer we can also now print onto frosted films for windows without solvent-related softening, and even print in white.

"The HP Latex 360 is fast and the product can be taken off the machine and then either laminated or cut on the Summa straight away."

He said: "We consider the market stable enough for investment but only if the equipment will produce a return in either saved time or an increased product range.

"In business it is all about having the best production methods so you can give the customer a product at the right price and most importantly on time. Our new machines have increased our potential productivity to such a level that we now need more staff to help us meet client demand.

"We asked CWE to work with us to create and supply a completely integrated system, including the PCs and Caldera RIP, that would work seamlessly together in our new print and cut facility," says Alan.

"Back in the day we had six signwriters all painting in a row, and an eight foot sign-board would take about ten days and five coats of paint. We can now make a similar sign in about 45 minutes from start to finish.

"There are so many opportunities now and all kinds of roles to fill; I'd be happy to talk to anyone interested in joining our team."

[www.cwesolutions.co.uk](http://www.cwesolutions.co.uk)  
[www.displaysigns.net](http://www.displaysigns.net)



Senior designer Daniela Phillips testing out some wall vinyl prints, being produced on the HP Latex 360 and the Summa F Series Cutter.

**HIGHLIGHT<sup>®</sup>** MK5



## THE BRIGHTEST, MOST EFFICIENT LED TROUGH LIGHT AVAILABLE

Highlight is available in three LED configurations, to suit different requirements of brightness and economy. All three benefit from a controlled beam angle, directing light down the sign face without the requirement for tilting or angling the lighting unit.

	<b>BRIGHTNESS</b>	<b>EFFICACY</b>	<b>CONSUMPTION</b>
Hyperbright	2,024 lm/m	120 lm/W	16.8 W/m
Superbright	1,410 lm/m	127 lm/W	11 W/m
Ecobright	1,040 lm/m	127 lm/W	8.2 W/m

Insight were the innovators of extruded aluminium trough lighting over 30 years ago, so you can feel secure, combined with a five year warranty on LEDs. Costs start at just £16 per foot.

# PRODUCT Choice

## GBM Group's investment in Screen Truepress Jet W3200UV

GBM Group, Manchester has bought a Screen Truepress Jet W3200UV HS high-speed flat-bed printer to 'boost' its Manchester-based production facilities. The impact on its business has been immediate from the start, according to the company.

"The Truepress Jet's ability to deliver superb quality results using six-colours plus white at a blistering 150 sqm/hr has allowed us to offer our blue-chip retail and brand clients a very competitive and fast turn-around service," says GBM Sales Director, Simon Higginbottom. "In the past we specialised in short-run jobs, but the Truepress Jet now gives us the ability to also handle medium-to-long run quality POS jobs to very tight deadlines.

"The retail sector refreshes POS displays more often than ever before and it's not unusual for an order to come in at 3pm which is needed in-store the following day," says Simon. "A recent job that would have taken us four days before we had the Truepress Jet, took only four hours! This one printer has tripled our capacity overnight and

we have already won significant new business as a direct result."

GBM produce display and POS graphics for the retail, exhibition and museum sectors, as well as digital wallpaper and fabric graphics. The Truepress Jet's versatility has led GBM to undertake some unusual work such as 10,600 beer mats printed in only three hours!

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A joint development between Screen and its subsidiary company Inca Digital, the Truepress Jet is a six colour plus white device designed to meet the 'demands' of the POS, signage and decor markets today. It has the ability to print onto a wide range of rigid and flexible media up to 3.2 x 1.6m in size and up to a maximum 50mm thickness.

Before choosing the Truepress Jet W3200UV HS, GBM researched all similar printers currently available. "While we found some printers that could deliver identical quality, nothing came near to the productivity of the Truepress," says Simon. The Truepress Jet joins GBM's existing Océ Arizona 350 XT and a 3.2m Vutek QS used primarily for roll-fed work.

The Truepress Jet W3200UV HS (for "High Speed") is Screen's latest wide format printer that combines their 'renowned quality with outstanding 150sqm/hr productivity'.

"It delivers high-definition, wide-colour gamut print quality with excellent resistance to the bending and cutting of a variety of print substrates. The printer enables flexibility for added-value applications such as lenticular and multi-layer print at an even faster print throughput. The multi-layer function enables sophisticated front and back overprinting up to eight layers, to produce quality backlit and variable day/night graphics," says the company.



Simon Higginbottom, GBM Sales Director, with the Truepress Jet W3200UV HS printer.



## Signage specialist invests in Riverside waste baler

Specialists trade sign and graphics installation company Mida Sign Services has invested in a new waste baler from Riverside Waste Machinery, for its print and graphics department.

The Ashton under Lyne Company was filling up to twelve 240 litre receptacles with packaging waste every day, costing the firm £1200 a year in two larger 1100 litre bin collections. But Mida no longer needs the 1100 litre bins, thanks to its investment in an vertical waste baler.

This compact baling press, which was commissioned in October, transforms all of Mida's cardboard, paper and other packaging waste, into manageable 75kg bales. This volume reduction strategy has evident financial benefits, plus the site is now much tidier with no waste storage headaches.

When considering the reason for the investment, Mida's owner Mike Smith said: "As a business we strive to become ever-more efficient, so procuring a waste baler had been on our minds for some time. However, when we visited one of our peers in North Yorkshire, and saw the benefits they were experiencing thanks to a

Riverside waste baler, this encouraged us to invest in our own recycling solution sooner rather than later.

"The RWM75 is incredibly easy to use, and is already a hit with the guys in our team. What's more, it will have paid for itself in less than two years, even if we consider the 1100 litre bin collection savings alone."

Whilst Riverside offers a variety of flexible finance options, this successful business has chosen to purchase the baler outright. Mike said: "The price was very reasonable, and the robustness of Riverside's products and customer service came highly recommended. To buy the asset, rather than rent it, therefore made perfect sense."

Riverside's managing director Jonathan Oldfield said: "Mida Sign Services is a very well-established yet innovative business, always looking to the future in terms of the products they provide to their own customers. To be able to advise them on a waste handling solution – tailored to their needs and designed to help them work even smarter – is exactly what our consultancy expertise is here for!"

[sales@wastemachinery.co.uk](mailto:sales@wastemachinery.co.uk)



## Mida Sign Services invests in the Summa F12 flatbed cutter

A few months ago Mida Sign Services decided to invest in a flatbed cutter to expand the range of services they could offer. After buying a Bubble Free Applicator from Josero in 2013, the Mida Sign Services team had built a good relationship with Loic Delor, the

Managing Director of Josero and had come to trust his advice. So they were very pleased to discover that Josero sold flatbed cutters too! Loic introduced them to the Summa F12 Flatbed cutter, and it seemed to do everything other cutters such as the Zund did, but it was substantially cheaper.

Jimmy Jarvis, Operations Manager at Mida Sign Services said: "We couldn't see why the other flatbed cutters were so much more expensive. Coupled with the fact that we trusted Loic, the Summa flatbed cutter seemed the obvious choice."

The Mida Sign Services team use the flatbed cutter virtually everyday. Having had it for a few months, they keep on discovering other uses for it. Since its installation it has never 'missed a beat' and has helped increase production turnover.

Jimmy said: "Our clients have been asking us to produce a much wider variety of

work for them and as a specialised one stop trade supplier we like to keep as much in house as possible. The new cutter has allowed us to offer a much greater range of printed and cut products whilst keeping the costs down to a minimum. We used it to cut vinyl the other day, to compare it with our Mimaki plotter and we were so impressed that we immediately purchased a Summa plotter to use for Vinyl cutting!"

Mida Sign Services say they have been delighted with the service they received from Josero, and their experience with the Bubble Free was one of the biggest reasons they bought the flatbed cutter from them too. Art Systems who are the sole distributor for this product in the UK handled the installation and training, with Josero liaising on the technical support.

Loic Delor, Managing Director of Josero said: "Mida Sign Services are a valued customer and we're aware that they are constantly on the lookout for the latest technology to improve their services. The Summa flatbed cutter ticked all the boxes for them, as well as the cutting options it also has a routing module for an even larger range of applications."



Loic Delor from Josero (middle) with the team from Mida Sign Services with the Summa flatbed cutter.

# PRODUCT Choice

## Small format reseller enters wide format printing market

Citydocs Group, a specialist in document and workflow solutions has partnered with Willow Graphics, a large format imaging company.

CityDocs, the authorised reseller for brands such as Canon, Ricoh and Sharp, was introduced to JETRIX by their new channel partner, Perfect Colours. CityDocs chose JETRIX by InkTec as the sole supplier of UV-flatbed digital printers to Willow Graphics.

Willow Graphics specialises in large format imaging using small format detailing for live events; experiential marketing; interiors and exteriors; retail; fine art and museums; and the movie industry. With production facilities in London, Manchester and Leeds, it has clients such as Marks and Spencer.

Peter Lawson, Managing Director of Willow Graphics, said: "We set up Willow Graphics to offer a range of high quality printing services. We can print to any scale from Lego bricks to heights of 100mm and in a single piece up to 3 metres x 2.5 metres.

We therefore needed printing technology that could reliably produce high class prints with the utmost precision, and JETRIX KX7-D was the obvious choice. The JETRIX can print on to pretty much any material or surface; all in incredible detail."

The JETRIX award winning range of UV-flatbed digital printers are used for indoor, outdoor, fine art and industrial applications. They print directly on any substrate replacing the 'expense and time spent printing and sticking expensive materials'. And they use a special UV ink to produce a 'superior' finish and to give strong adhesion to traditionally difficult to print substrates. The printer's advanced flat-bed printing platform with a strong vacuum and auto power adjustment system for stable printing means it can print in fine detail, with 'extreme accuracy' even at speeds of up to 55 square metres per hour.

"We're delighted to be the chosen partner of Willow Graphics," said Ben Woodruff, UK sales manager of InkTec Europe. "Willow Graphics works on very exciting,

JETRIX partners with over 40 printers in the UK and has seen a 15 per cent increase in turnover over the last 12 months thanks to a growing customer base and continuous product development.

unique and innovative projects, so to be their sole printing solutions provider is real testament to how versatile and advanced the JETRIX range is. We look forward to continuing to support Willow Graphics as the company grow."

[www.inktec.com](http://www.inktec.com)



*Damian Smith, General Manager at WG (left) with Ben Woodruff from JETRIX.*

# White magic and imagination – a 'Surefire' way to success!

An OKI device has certainly 'opened up new horizons' for Surrey-based Surefire Print and Design. Although the company remains a 'one-stop shop' for local businesses needing anything from business cards to banners, thanks to the OKI C711WT, it also lists film crews, fashion models and motor-racing companies among its clients.

According to the company there are many reasons for this new direction; the skills and experience of the team for one. But on the technical side, it is all down to one main factor: the ability of the device to print with white toner.

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Surefire's founder and managing director Simon Garrett is certain of the impact of this advance. "We have made the decision to stay small, but for any company aiming to expand, I think this printer could help increase turnover by at least 20 per cent," he says.

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Garrett founded Surefire in 2008. He had just sold a large, high turnover print shop as the recession began to bite. Reluctant to waste his many years of print experience, he set up the new venture with the idea of keeping it small. Instead of focusing on growth they would concentrate on the quality of their work and on providing the best possible customer service.

The business began by focusing on large format printing such as posters and banners. A few years ago, one of Surefire's customers asked if they could produce printed mugs and iPhone cases. "We went down the dye sublimation route originally – and we still do a lot of this," says Garrett. "However, we then began to consider mugs

with a matt finish."

He saw an advert in a printing magazine for OKI specialist partner, TheMagicTouch, experts in image transfer paper and applications. The team suggested the OKI C711WT – an innovative LED printer that, for the first time, includes white toner in the CMY colour process. This enables the decoration of dark coloured substrates such as mugs and other products including diaries and phone covers.

But the C711WT was about to do far more than just print mugs. "We don't do them at all now," says Garrett. "Somehow it sparked off far more ideas and we realised we could print and bond onto almost anything using the transfer paper supplied by TheMagicTouch and the OKI printer.

"Everybody does T-shirts but we've been more ambitious. We've particularly worked hard on perfecting our work on leather. We've found a way to get the print to sink into the leather and this has meant printing, not just on iPhone and iPad cases and bags, but also on leather jackets."

"Most people assume that you can only print on flat items," says Garrett. "But if you know what you are doing, you can print on virtually anything. In my opinion, the OKI printer gives you that freedom, and it's enabling us to differentiate ourselves as a business. I've been in the industry for



Surefire print on leather jackets as well as a range of products using their OKI printer.



30 years and in my opinion there isn't another machine on the market that would do what we wanted it to in this way."

Garrett stresses that the printed jackets are not a huge part of Surefire's overall business as they are usually single orders. "But they get our name out there and enables us to offer other things that traditional printers would never consider."

He believes very strongly that these days, printers need to diversify in this way to compensate for changes in the industry due to the increasing use of electronic marketing materials and communications. "Printers such as the C711WT offer a tremendous opportunity. At the moment, there are no plans to expand Surefire, but if we did need to do so, this would be the way forward," he says.

[www.themagictouch.co.uk](http://www.themagictouch.co.uk)

# PRODUCT Choice

## Horizon leads the way with the first Mimaki JV300 in Ireland

As the first company in Ireland to install the recently launched Mimaki JV300 solvent digital inkjet printer; Horizon Digital Print is embracing this neat, compact addition to its otherwise sizeable large-format production line. And they are 'positive about the surge in productivity shown in the few weeks since its arrival'.

Originally opened in the city centre in 1986 as a pre-press operation, the company has witnessed many changes to the industry over the last 30 years and embraced the opportunities each leap in technology has given them.

We've been running the JV300 in four-colour mode because it runs at tremendous speed this way.

With two purpose-built sites on the Phoenix Industrial Estate in Dublin, over 60 employees and a 24-hour shift rota in operation to manage its substantial workload, Horizon offers a holistic service from design to print through to installation. Its vast capacity is made possible by an array of grand-format digital production presses. According to the company, the formula for their success is 'excellent quality, short lead times and reasonable prices'.

The new kid on the block, not just for Horizon but for the Republic of Ireland, is the cutting-edge Mimaki JV300-160 which at first glance looks dwarfed by the other hardware on site. But in true 'David and Goliath form', this 1.6m solvent printer is not only holding its own, but proving itself by holding the fort, as digital manager, Kenneth Kavanagh says: "What we're loving about the JV300 is that it gets on with the job, quietly and unattended, freeing up manpower to be used with the bigger machines. Even better is that we are finding the speed and quality it brings is allowing us to divert an increasing number of jobs away from larger machines and over to the JV300, so it has been running continuously since it

was installed. There has been a definite increase in productivity since it came on board and it's low maintenance too."

Supplied by the Reprocentre Group, the Mimaki JV300 Series is compatible with both solvent and dye-sublimation ink sets with a top speed of over 105m<sup>2</sup>/h, and is available in both 1.3m and 1.6m widths. It has a staggered dual print-head system which, coupled with variable ink dots and large ink drops means 'excellent' quality is maintained at high speed.

Kenneth says: "We've been running the JV300 in four-colour mode because it runs at tremendous speed this way. What is really impressive is that we are getting the same colour gamut on the JV300 that, on our previous eco-solvent printer, we'd previously only achieved in six-colour mode. It's enabling a very noticeable increase in productivity but without having to compromise on print quality, which is perfect for the volume of outdoor advertising we produce."

[www.horizondigitalprint.com](http://www.horizondigitalprint.com)  
[www.reprocentre.ie](http://www.reprocentre.ie)  
[www.hybridservices.ie](http://www.hybridservices.ie)



Horizon's production manager, Paul Oragano with the Mimaki JV300.

# Flag Print Shows which 'way the wind blows' in textile printing

When it comes to navigating the world of wide-format textile printing, Flag Print certainly knows which way the wind is blowing, according to the company.

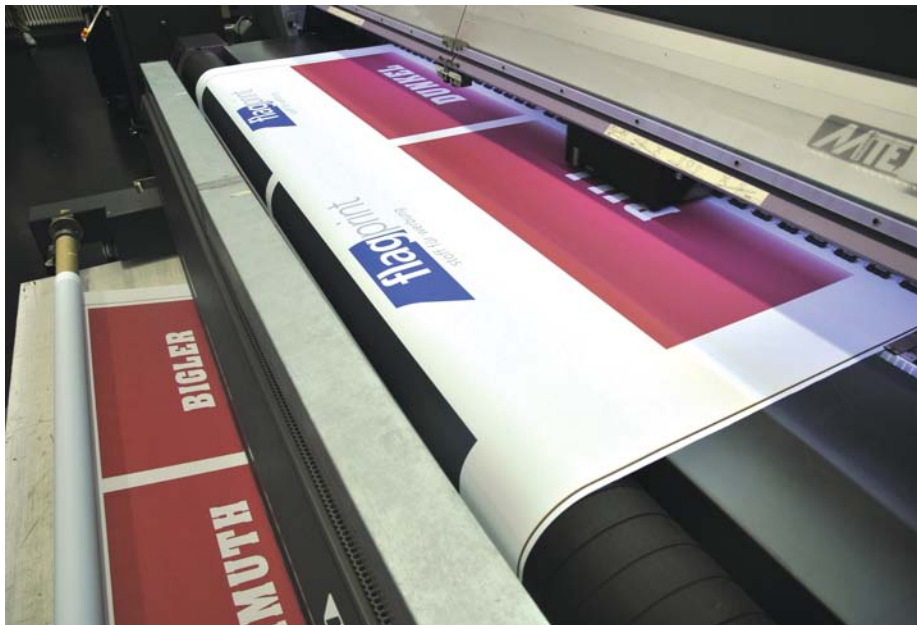
When the firm decided to expand into the lucrative 3.2m wide market in 2012, they chose the MTEX 3200, giving them the 'flexibility to meet ever more demanding digital textile print needs'.

Flag Print, which has specialised in textile printing for 15 years, produces a range of applications such as flags, mobile banners, point of sale, people management and visitor barriers, and exhibition display systems including counters, columns, umbrellas and lightboxes.

"Before investing in the MTEX at the end of 2012 we had only been able to print up to 2.5m wide, and we wanted to be able to create larger pieces with a better finish," said Sales and Marketing Director Marc Brawand.

"Our customers are increasingly looking for more innovation and creative displays. With the wider direct-to-textile print capacity we now have increased capability for solutions such as exhibition displays, mega posters and building wraps.

"In the exhibition market, customers are making increasing use of aluminium frame systems with fabric panels which are easier to transport and don't break. Lightboxes are also becoming increasingly popular, and we needed to go to the bigger sizes without needing to stitch panels together.



*MTEX subsequently launched its 5032Pro at FESPA London in 2013 and the company recently announced a further two machines at VISCOM 2014: the MTEX Vision and MTEX Blue.*

When something really unique is called for, we have the answer and we will keep the flag flying for direct-to-textile printing for many years to come.

"We had seen the MTEX 3200 at FESPA and went to VISCOM for a closer look. We were very impressed not just the quality of the machine and its output, but also with MTEX Technical Director Marco Sousa's understanding of how we could use the machine to innovate for our clients."

The water-based inks are odourless and the output can be used both indoors and outdoors with vivid colour and durability, which are all key benefits for Flag Print's customers.

Flag Print is no stranger to the unusual, having created bespoke casino table layouts, dog coats, home textiles and rickshaw roofs. With both screenprint and 3.2m wide digital printing in its stable, the company can now create unique display and flag solutions to virtually any size and specification.

"Our 12-strong team has the passion, the resilience and creativity to deliver on every customer's needs. When something really unique is called for, we have the answer and we will keep the flag flying for direct-to-textile printing for many years to come," says Marc.

[www.mtex.eu](http://www.mtex.eu)  
[www.flagprint.ch](http://www.flagprint.ch)



*Flag Print operator Marco Glauser with the MTEX 3200.*

# SOFTWARE Feature

## What 2015 holds for signage software

With a number of new releases for RIP, design, and MIS software set to hit the market this year, Jemima Codrington takes a look back at the advances the signage sector has already seen, along with what can be expected from leading software providers in 2015.

In addition to RIP and design software, sign makers often find themselves in need of products that can help efficiently manage their business and production, according to Emerson Welch, Marketing Manager, Clarity Software.

Recognising a demand from sign makers and a gap in the market, Clarity Software has created productivity software known as Management Information System (MIS) software, designed to help medium-sized sign making businesses that are looking to grow and expand. "Our software is a business-wide software suite, enabling sign makers to run their businesses more efficiently, and to increase sales and help the business grow," explains Emerson. "It encompasses things such as marketing campaigning and contact management, and it's heavily specific to the sign industry with features for estimating and quoting, fabricating and manufacturing built-in."

Clarity Professional MIS software provides an end-to-end solution, from the first point of contact through to order generation to production and delivery. It then links to industry-leading accounting systems such as Sage and QuickBooks for easy invoicing and bookkeeping. As a great deal of time can be spent out on the field assessing jobs and installing signs, Clarity recognised the need for software that can help sign makers work on



Clarity fits the workflow needs of sign and graphics businesses perfectly thanks to its tailored quoting, order processing and manufacturing, linking to Sage and QuickBooks for accounts.

the move. The result is a new cloud-based product, designed for use with PCs, tablets and smartphone devices, to help business owners do exactly that.

Clarity Go works in tandem with the Clarity Professional system, and was born from both customer feedback and market research. "People can work on the move, quote on the go and overall provide a higher level of service to customers," says Emerson. With things like the Clarity Proof of Delivery (POD) software, sign makers can track the delivery and installation of a job from an app on their iPhone or android device whilst out on site. They can even have customers

sign off on the job using a touch screen, and the document can be sent back to the office to finalise the order right away.

### Evolving signage sector, evolving signage software

One of the reasons Clarity have developed such advanced software is in response to the evolving signage market.

"We have seen a demand for more overarching software as sign makers diversify their business," says Emerson. "Sign makers aren't just making signs anymore; they're creating wide format graphics, display and POS graphics, and are moving into lateral industries. Products and services that may have previously been outsourced are now being handled in-house, and that's where they need software like ours to enable them to take those risks with the confidence that they are going to stay on top of their costs."

When it comes to rolling out such new software, Emerson advises companies to tackle it in stages. Buying a large new system and trying to implement it straight away can lead to a wealth of issues and frustration, which is why Clarity encourages sign makers to work on internal adoption from staff first to get everyone on board and using it successfully. From there, different components can be added in, such as more powerful quoting tools, something more purchase-order based, and then additions for goods, stock, manufacturing techniques and production. "Trying to do too much, too soon can have the opposite to the desired effect," says Emerson, "whereas implementing in stages can mean the return on investment is much better overall."



Sign makers can handle a wealth of business-related tasks with Clarity Professional MIS software.

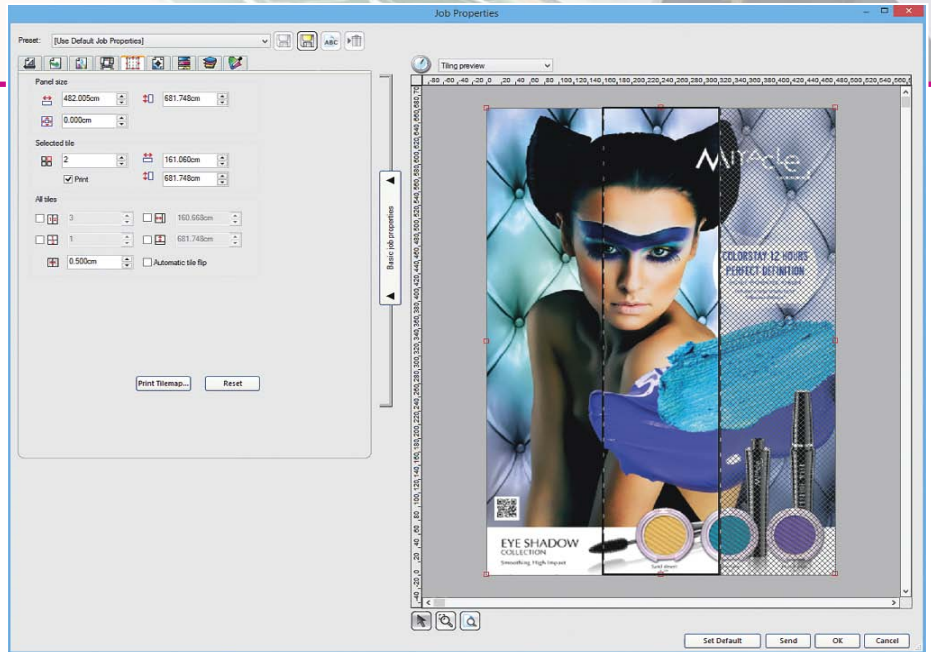
[www.claritygo.com](http://www.claritygo.com)

**SAi International (SAi) is a global leader in providing complete, professional software solutions from design to production for the signmaking, digital printing, screen-printing and CNC machining industries.**

The software provider reached a double milestone last year upon the landmark sale of their millionth software solution, while also marking 25 years in operation. "Our SAi Flexi software ranks as the world's number one for signmaking, while SAi PhotoPRINT is found on more wide-format printers than any other RIP. In addition, SAi is one of the leaders in the CNC machining market with our EnRoute CAD/CAM software," says Jurgen Verhulst, Application Specialist Signmaking Products, SA.

SAi has a loyal and well-distributed network of resellers around the world, including Graphtec GB in the UK. As of last year, full versions of SAi's industry-acclaimed Flexi and Flexi Design software can be acquired by monthly subscriptions and downloaded from the cloud through Graphtec GB. Flexi represents the complete solution for printing, cutting and combined print-and-cut applications. The software will drive up to five printers and cutters simultaneously, as well as offering a host of production tool options, including the latest SP6 update.

The latest Flexi sign making software from SAi debuted at Sign & Digital UK 2014, and remains a popular RIP solution for customers of Graphtec GB. To extend the capabilities of the SAi Flexi software, Graphtec GB has now made available the new Flexi SP6 update that provides integrated finishing tools to enable faster job processing and improved workflow. With these new tools,



*Interactive and automated tiling, as seen on the SAi FlexiPRINT HP Basic Edition.*

users of the software can reduce the time it takes to finish pop-up signs and displays and hanging banners, thereby adding value, boosting productivity and thus profitability. With the SP6 update, it is now possible to add grommet, fold and stitch marks and bleeds to banner production. By integrating these functions in the Flexi RIP, the design stage of the workflow is eliminated, making it much faster and more cost-effective to produce pop-up signs that require bleeds or pole-hanging banners that need fold areas. Complicated mirror and duplicate bleeds can also be accommodated with ease. It is estimated that time savings in the cost of producing each individual banner can be as high as 15 minutes, whilst the accuracy of the finished product is also greatly enhanced.

## A new era for RIP software

The team at SAi have noticed an increased use of the cloud when it comes to the software sector as a whole, along with RIP software becoming more of a front-end solution, delivering increased functionality with additional productivity features, and job preparation at the pre-printing stage.

When selecting RIP software, Jurgen recommends that signmakers go for something that allows them to do more within the same application, while also integrating easily with other hardware like a CNC router or large format cutter, for example. "As a signmaker, if you are granted the versatility to undertake a range of tasks through one single software application and have that software operate in conjunction with your printer, router and cutter, then you enjoy a seamless and fluid throughput," he says. "Jobs get done faster and more easily and you're ready to start the next one quicker, so you and your customers are smiling."

According to Jurgen, some software packages, while seemingly stacked with features, only concentrate on getting a job printed, which limits its overall capability. SAi FlexiSIGN-Pro software offers a complete all-in-one solution for design and output of vinyl cut and digital print graphics. As such, it maximises productivity by linking the whole signmaking workflow - from the front-end design, job preparation, editing, vectorisation and RIPping to vinyl cutting, printing and print-and-cut. Even creation of custom ICC profiles and integration to CNC machining software for 3D signs is achievable.

....Continued on page 56



*SAi Flexi software is available from Graphtec GB.*

# SOFTWARE Feature

## What 2015 holds for signage software

"From what our own users tell us, it's definitely worth remembering that not all RIP software is created equal," says Jurgen, adding that regardless of the output quality, substrate capability or size of a wide format printer, if the steps in the RIP software are slowing things down and creating bottlenecks in production workflow, then it will add time and money to print jobs. The same can be said of cutting devices. "I would suggest that these users take a close look at what's available on the market and consider investing in a feature-rich

software package that offers a multitude of in-built, performance-enhancing attributes to maximise design and production," he says. "Make sure you consider the workflow, especially when you're running several machines – a couple of large format printers, a router and cutter, for example. Don't get too constrained by time and budget to invest in a software solution that could streamline your production. By doing so, you enhance workflow, increase throughput and reduce lead-times by getting jobs out the door much faster."

Products like the SAi PixelBlaster PDF-based print-to-finish solution enable sign makers to balance workloads to accommodate demand levels and equipment availability, thereby reducing bottlenecks and increasing profitability. This means that jobs can easily be switched between different printers – while still maintaining colour consistency – during peak periods or in the event of a printer malfunction.

[www.graphtecgb.co.uk](http://www.graphtecgb.co.uk) / [www.thinksai.com](http://www.thinksai.com)



*KeyedIn Manufacturing – Sign Edition is a web-based fully-integrated MIS software solution for sign makers.*

**Developed exclusively for the sign manufacturing industry, KeyedIn® Manufacturing - Sign Edition is a fully web-based business management sign software application that allows sign shops to take charge of their entire enterprises. From estimating and production to scheduling and installation – with fully-integrated financial management and accounting tools.**

Sign manufacturers can boost their performance with greater throughput, shorter lead times and faster shipping, and improve their financial management with streamlined finan-

cial reporting and optimised cash management. The software also allows for a faster quoting process, faster estimate and sales order times, improved communications between customers, vendors and employees, as well as lean inventory management techniques.

In order to better meet the needs of sign makers, KeyedIn Solutions established a Customer Advisory Board for their signage software at the start of 2014. Customers met with the software provider on a quarterly basis to share feedback, and demonstrate practical applications of the software on sig-

nage jobs. Using this feedback, the team has strived to improve upon the products available to better serve their client base. "Our development team released several new features throughout 2014, and KeyedIn Manufacturing – Sign Edition is preparing for four releases to take place in 2015 that will highlight several new features relating to project management, estimating, shipping, and production," reveals Debbie Breemeersch, Director of Marketing, Manufacturing at KeyedIn Solutions.

*.....Continued on page 58*



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William Smith  
established 1832

# SOFTWARE Feature

## What 2015 holds for signage software

"KeyedIn Solutions continues to leverage that our product is delivered via the cloud (SaaS, also known as software as a service). This is a key advantage to our customers in that they can access KeyedIn Manufacturing – Sign Edition virtually from anywhere."

### The importance of picking appropriate software

According to Debbie, the biggest mistake a company can make when buying an ERP software package is not having a clear definition of their needs and processes, and the desired outcome of its implementation.

"It is important to define and document internal business processes before starting the selection process," she says, adding that sign companies should also steer clear of being "sold" a system because it looks 'cool' or uses up to date technology, as it may come to light later that it will not support sign makers in achieving their desired outcomes. "A properly implemented ERP system is one of the most impactful investments a company can make" she adds. "ERP solutions get everyone reading the same book on what they need to do, and when to do it, and the advent of Cloud-based solutions also allows for access to information outside the four walls of your organisation using any web enabled device."

Debbie's top tips for software selection:

- Is the application truly a cloud deployed application (not just hosted) which affords maintenance free use and instant upgrade capability?
- Does the software adequately support your current and desired business processes?
- Will it allow elimination of manually prepared reports and lists currently used to manage your company?
- Is it easy to learn? Does the provider supply user training? How is it delivered? Does the provider offer project management guidance, training, and support?
- Does the provider offer process improvement/change management consultation?
- Is the system Closed Loop, or Self Auditing, meaning all transactions lead to another within the system, culminating in final accounting transactions that can be followed through an audit trail within the system?
- Does the system providing good value for money spent?

[www.keyedin.com](http://www.keyedin.com)



A screenshot of a report generated by KeyedIn® Manufacturing- Sign Edition software.



The software provides a plethora of user-friendly features.

### The full ONYX Graphics product line includes ONYX Thrive™ workflow software and ONYX ProductionHouse™, ONYX PosterShop® and ONYX RIPCenter™ RIP software.

ONYX has two separate lines of software of interest to sign makers, one being the classic RIP range, aimed primarily at small to medium-size sign shops and print



Matt Littler, Territory Manager W & N Europe, Israel, ONYX Graphics.



ONYX Thrive™ software's Remote Job Editor.

providers where there are between one to four wide format printers being used. "Then we have the Thrive range, which is aimed at larger sign manufacturers, or those using very fast, modern printers," says Matt Littler, ONYX Graphics. Thrive is an integrated workflow solution, built using Adobe PDF

Print Engine Technology with a built-in normalizer, so that whatever file type is submitted is automatically converted to the Adobe file format. This means that everything is rendered in a completely consistent way. The second-side of the software means that it is a network-based solution; this allows larger



print shops to assign the same license to multiple different workstations. "The traditional structure is one RIP, one printer, one workstation, whereas the solution from ONYX is completely freely assignable," says Matt.

ONYX has software aimed at anything from the smaller end of the sign shop market up through medium-sized businesses and large industrial facilities.

Matt points to the software's ability to get the most out of the colour rendition in terms of accuracy, along with providing the best effect on low gamut materials, as reasons sign makers may wish to utilise it. "With our most recent release, ONYX Thrive 11.1, there is also an integrated print-and-cut workflow, through which people can cut using the software directly out of Adobe Illustrator," he adds.



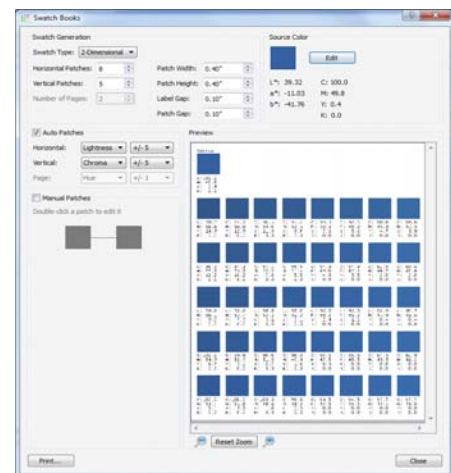
Award-winning software from ONYX has user-friendly features

## A look at ICC Profiles

A quality RIP workflow can increase productivity by up to 30 per cent and increase ink savings up to 20 per cent – if used correctly and efficiently.

Ensuring accurate colour printing through ICC profiles is one way to make the most out of each and every job, and reduce ink wastage in mistakes. Matt notes that while ICC profiles may seem complicated, they are in fact a straightforward solution. "It is in essence a little look-up table that your RIP uses to correct the colours to your desired output from a given printer, substrate and ink combination. It uses it to ensure the correct colours come out the other end, 'correct' being what you want them to be."

ONYX software products from PosterShop upwards have an ICC Profile generation module built in. In order to use it, sign makers require a spectrophotometer. Some printers will have these built in, but stand-alone products are also available. "You print out five little charts in total, and it's a case of printing, scanning them in with the spectro, and building your profiles in as little as half an hour," says Matt. The ONYX Profile Generation module is simple, easy and automated with the ONYX Print > Read > Next workflow. Powerful tools are also available to control and fine-tune advanced colour profiles. "Provided there are no major changes to the printing conditions (such as drastic alterations in room temperature), you should



An example of a swatch book.



ONYX PosterShop wide format RIP software, and ONYX Thrive workflow software.

be able to create near-perfect colour rendition," he says.

ICC profiles can be particularly useful where specialty inks are concerned. In order to help with accurate colour profiles, ONYX have created a swatch book in collaboration with Color Concepts in the Netherlands, similar to a Pantone swatch book. When a sign maker visits a customer that wants to print something in a metallic colour for example, they can present the swatch book so the client can get a better visual than one rendered on screen, and the software will ensure the print is an exact match. In order to help sign makers with generating ICC profiles, along with utilising other aspects of the software, ONYX has support available in the form of an ONYXTV YouTube channel featuring how-to videos, and other multi-language training resources.

[www.onyxgfx.com](http://www.onyxgfx.com)

.....Continued on page 60

# SOFTWARE Feature

## What 2015 holds for signage software

Mimaki RasterLink Pro RIP software has been a staple product in the signage and graphics markets for years. The most recent edition was launched in 2014, and now comes standard with all Mimaki machines.

The RasterLink Pro 6 RIP software has impressive 16-bit rendering, double that of more commonly found 8-bit rendering, which allows for smooth skin tones and graduations. Put otherwise, the software tackles graduation in 16 stages as opposed to 8, meaning the tone and colour reproduction overall is much smoother and more accurate. The software reads and writes numerous different file types, can drive up to four printers at once, can tackle spot colour reproduction and comes with printable colour charts. "It's a very sophisticated, feature-rich piece of software that is included as part of the printer package, and it really does give you full control over the printer," says John de la Roche, national sales manager for Sign & Graphics at Hybrid Services Ltd.



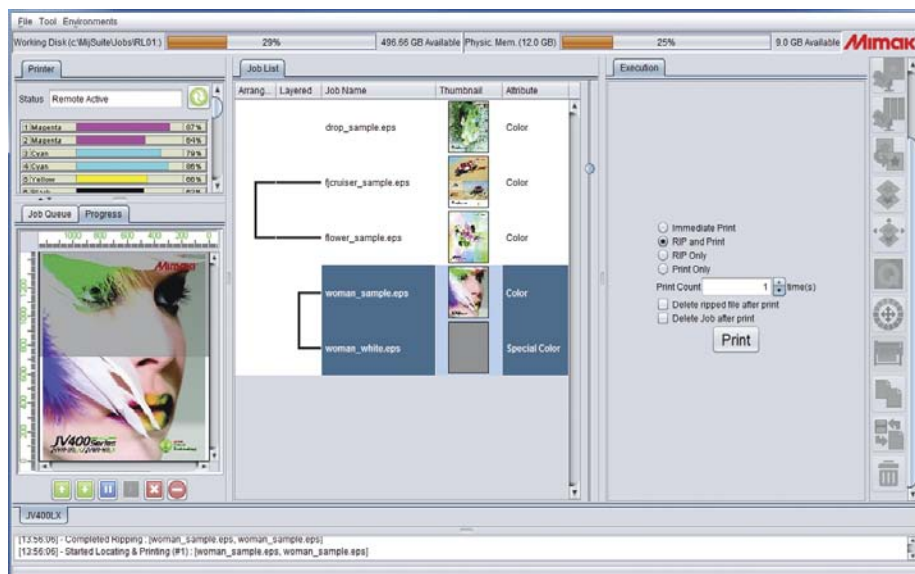
The initial stages of a job conducted using Mimaki RasterLink.

It also features new input profiles to express vivid, yet natural, high-impact colours, along with numerous time-saving customisation options. The accurate crop feature al-

lows registration marks to be added, enabling a smooth transition from print through to cut, and all information is consolidated within one screen, giving a complete process overview. The software is available from Hybrid Services Ltd, Mimaki's exclusive UK and Irish distributor. The RIP is PC-based only, and not compatible with Mac, but that is not the case with their software for print and cut machines, Mimaki FineCut 8.

Mimaki FineCut is a plug-in for Adobe Illustrator or CorelDRAW, usable with both PC and Mac software. According to John, the software playing field has been somewhat leveled in recent years, as the Mac no longer has a substantial lead over other operating systems. "Where once there was a clear distinction between Mac operated software and indeed Mac systems overall, now that gap has closed," he says. "Ten or fifteen years ago, there was a bit more mystery and uncertainty surrounding printing and software. As the market has evolved, it's become a lot easier for the end-user to use this software and have better control of things like workflow and colour management."

[www.hybridservices.co.uk](http://www.hybridservices.co.uk)



The job ready for execution.

## Final thoughts....

Roger Ward of AIT emphasises the value of RIP support which, he explains, encompasses prompt telephone access and remote connection to UK-based engineers, along with help with ongoing software releases and colour profiles. "Certainly it's good to know that there's someone at the end of the phone that can help out when jobs aren't straightforward. But once you become proficient at handling tasks, is ongoing sup-

port really such an issue? Simply put, yes. When a business invests in a professional RIP like Shiraz, ongoing support is essential.

The nature of imaging technology in general, which ironically many perceive as a problem, is that it is constantly changing, being improved and being revised. In particular the language of file formats is being updated, new descriptions are being added to the language to better describe certain as-

pects of images, like transparencies and graduations. And, believe it or not, the RIP also needs to be updated to address these changes to the language! With digital file formats, digital printers, new media and inks, computers and operating systems, we are dealing with a moving target, and in an ever-changing environment it is important therefore to keep up to date with all aspects of this technology, including the RIP."

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<b>3mm</b>	0.70	1.10	2.03	2.74	4.00	5.50	6.31	7.25	8.02	9.19	10.66	14.76	21.63	30.34	38.32	42.28
<b>5mm</b>	1.19	1.80	3.00	4.77	6.79	7.88	9.13	11.02	12.40	13.65	15.03	20.95	25.24	33.32	45.85	58.43
<b>10mm</b>	2.34	2.92	5.84	9.30	11.69	14.95	17.55	20.87	23.45	25.73	29.28	40.50	49.44	54.56	84.98	107.82

**FOAM PVC** (all available colours - 10mm & 19mm available in white only) no minimum order

Height	100mm	150mm	200mm	250mm	300mm	350mm	400mm	450mm	500mm	550mm	600mm	700mm	750mm	800mm	900mm	1200mm
<b>3mm</b>	0.72	1.00	1.39	2.13	2.70	3.48	3.83	4.81	5.09	6.14	7.06	9.02	12.88	15.45	17.51	19.00
<b>5mm</b>	1.06	1.74	2.34	3.14	4.52	5.12	5.75	6.53	7.10	8.62	9.38	12.68	17.00	21.12	25.24	26.50
<b>10mm</b>	1.47	3.07	4.38	6.40	8.10	9.11	10.79	12.90	14.84	17.20	19.62	25.69	35.02	41.42	47.38	49.95
<b>19mm</b>	3.20	4.22	7.45	9.70	13.65	14.26	16.68	18.42	20.71	22.94	24.98	30.20	47.38	55.11	61.80	67.90

**3mm ALUMINIUM COMPOSITE** (Dibond, Alupanel) no minimum order

Height	100mm	150mm	200mm	250mm	300mm	350mm	400mm	450mm	500mm	550mm	600mm	700mm	750mm	800mm	900mm	1200mm
<b>Colours</b>	1.69	2.34	4.02	5.57	7.00	7.83	9.25	11.26	13.80	15.47	17.00	20.98	24.10	28.10	36.00	50.59
<b>Mirror</b>	2.38	4.86	6.79	9.32	13.77	14.83	17.31	19.70	23.13	25.00	28.12	34.94	36.10	41.50	51.00	82.21
<b>Brushed</b>	1.96	3.28	4.39	6.12	8.83	9.85	11.15	13.16	15.28	16.77	19.08	23.61	26.10	31.50	39.00	56.92

**MILL FINISH ALUMINIUM** (Comes in its raw form ready for coating) no minimum order

Height	50mm	75mm	100mm	125mm	150mm	175mm	200mm	225mm	250mm	275mm	300mm	375mm	425mm	500mm	600mm	700mm
<b>2mm</b>	2.88	3.68	4.38	5.56	6.18	6.95	7.73	9.01	10.04	11.07	12.10	15.19	18.28	23.43	30.64	41.97
<b>3mm</b>	2.85	3.56	4.40	5.46	6.07	6.96	7.86	9.10	10.27	11.72	13.26	17.34	20.77	26.40	35.06	56.65
<b>5mm</b>	3.36	4.20	5.20	6.44	7.17	8.22	9.26	10.74	12.40	14.25	16.00	21.00	24.64	31.23	41.36	63.86

**EXTERIOR MDF**

Height	50mm	75mm	100mm	125mm	150mm	175mm	200mm	225mm	250mm	275mm	300mm	375mm	425mm	500mm	600mm	1200mm
<b>6mm</b>	0.36	0.82	1.18	1.60	2.40	2.55	2.95	3.70	4.27	5.09	6.60	9.30	10.70	12.10	14.20	43.16
<b>12mm</b>	0.88	1.52	1.88	2.76	3.85	4.52	5.30	6.12	7.29	9.12	10.00	11.60	13.70	16.80	18.82	57.23
<b>18mm</b>	1.55	2.40	2.91	4.00	4.95	6.05	7.50	8.40	10.60	12.10	14.50	16.60	20.21	21.80	28.50	85.36

Options Add 15% for locators and layout Add 30% for Cladded fascia drawing

**MOULDED ACRYLIC LETTERING** (Including locators and paper template) \* including gold and silver

Height	152mm	203mm	254mm	305mm	380mm	457mm	610mm
<b>Colours*</b>	4.45	6.98	10.92	12.40	16.40	20.80	34.90

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## YR Store chooses Epson SureColor for custom t-shirt printing at Selfridges, Oxford Street

Print specialist YR Store, in collaboration with Japanese streetwear brand A BATHING APE®, launched a pop-up within Selfridges, Oxford Street. It offered customers the chance to design their own personalised t-shirts using Epson SureColor direct-to-garment printers.

The YR x A BATHING APE® installation offered a 'once in a lifetime opportunity for consumers to delve into the iconic BAPE® pattern archives to create their own customised unisex premium t-shirts for adults and children'.

The t-shirt designs were printed in-store while customers waited, using Epson's SureColor SC-F2000 direct-to-garment printer. Featuring Epson's durable TFP printhead, the SC-F2000 is capable of printing a single white t-shirt in 27 seconds. So production is quick without sacrificing print quality. The printer is also 'easy to use and operate by just one person'.

Using Epson's UltraChrome DG Ink, the SureColor SC-F2000 produces 'outstanding images with vibrant colours, intense blacks, sharp contours and smooth gradations'. The printed area on the fabric remains 'soft yet hard wearing'. And its 'excellent light- and wash-fastness, as well as its stretch resistance, makes it the ideal choice for t-shirt applications'.

"Bespoke and customisation are key to our brand's identity and this collaboration with such a respected streetwear brand like BAPE® allowed us to offer our customers something completely different," says YR Store Creative Director Tim Williams. "Working with Epson technology means we can provide the highest quality product in super-fast time, offering customers a great retail experience and their own unique garment – a collector's item even."



All t-shirts are made of BAPE® white super-fine cotton and came with a choice of twelve iconic BAPE® camo patterns, colours, letters and numbers.

## Wayfinding for London Gateway Park

DP World London Gateway, one of the world's largest marine terminal operators has appointed CCD Design and Ergonomics to develop the wayfinding strategy, sign design and location planning for the London Gateway Park.

DP World London Gateway consists of a Logistic Park, one of the largest in Europe, and a deep sea container Port, with two berths now fully operational and an additional four berths still to be developed. It provides a port centric solution, to 'improve the efficiency of supply chains' for shippers and cargo owners.

The wayfinding strategy being developed will be flexible to deal with the use of static or dynamic signage and also the use of technology to inform visitors of the best route to their destination.

Chris Girling, CCD's Head of Wayfinding said: "We are developing a strategy that will enable the Logistic Park to operate efficiently; moving vehicles and people around the site easily. The development of an effective wayfinding and signage scheme is a critical element of ensuring minimum travel time between points on the site and guiding staff and visitors around a very large site. The scale and complexity of the site make getting this right even more important for the success of the project."

Nicholas Orbell of DP World London Gateway, said: "This is a transformative project, the success of which will be felt across the UK. The phased opening of the park means that we have asked CCD to consider a strategy that can be adapted to deal with the growth and change that will happen to both the port and distribution park sites over a number of years. One of the key



DP World London Gateway logistics park and port is one of the largest in Europe.

considerations is to ensure that vehicles can move between the port and the park as easily as possible. CCD's design will enable us to manage and update the wayfinding scheme as additional buildings and other developments occur."

[www.ccd.org.uk](http://www.ccd.org.uk)  
[www.londongateway.com/logistics-park](http://www.londongateway.com/logistics-park)  
[www.londongateway.com/the-port](http://www.londongateway.com/the-port)





## Artist keeps the faith with Epson

A piece of contemporary art has been commissioned and installed in St Michael's Church, Camden. Measuring more than 60 m2, the large-scale artwork has been produced by artist Maciej Urbanek and printed using an Epson large format printer and media.

The project has been a 'huge undertaking' for the artist but an important one as St Michael's is not just a place for worship but also acts as a meeting place and hub for the local community. Commissioned by Father Philip North, Team Rector of the Parish of Old St Pancras, and funded by John Booth Charitable Foundation, the piece titled

'HS' is made of sculpted bin bags that have been photographed and digitally reworked to create a focal point within the church.

A graduate of Goldsmiths College and the Royal Academy of Arts, Maciej is currently photography tutor at the Royal Academy Schools, while still developing his art practice producing large-scale printed works. He has used Epson materials and equipment within the RA Schools' Epson Digital Media Suite since he was a student so knows the technology well.

"Once I had secured funding for the project I contacted Epson who readily agreed to help by offering me the use of their print facility at Hemel Hempstead," says Maciej.

"I didn't want to print the work in strips because then I have long vertical cuts going through the work and the eye is really drawn to them. I wanted to print the work in elements that would be cut along the lines within the image. Not only does this keep the look of the original artwork but another advantage is that I can install the work easily, putting it together piece by piece – like a giant puzzle."

Maciej divided the work into 27 large pieces which were then printed on Epson Ultrasmooth Fine Art paper using an Epson Stylus Pro 11880 printer. "Having used Epson technology for a few years I know exactly what to expect and the combination of printer, media and inks produces the highest quality finish – it's fine art," says Maciej.

The 64-inch Stylus Pro 11880 is the 'perfect' printer for fine art and photography; it's exceptionally fast and produces superb, long-lasting results. Using Epson UltraChrome K3 ink with Vivid Magenta it



reproduces consistent stunning, photo-realistic images and is ideal for colour and black and white prints. The Micro Piezo TFP print head technology features 360 micro-fine nozzles per colour, delivering sharp, grain-free images at ultra-high speed.

It took 24 hours to print the 27 pieces and a further three days to install. "Epson were so helpful in providing their expertise, help and support, not to mention their time, in order to make the production of this artwork possible," says Maciej. "I'm delighted with the finished piece. It creates a fantastic focal point as you enter the church and I hope that the whole community can come together and enjoy it for the next couple of years."



## Epson helps Handcross Primary School 'look back in time'

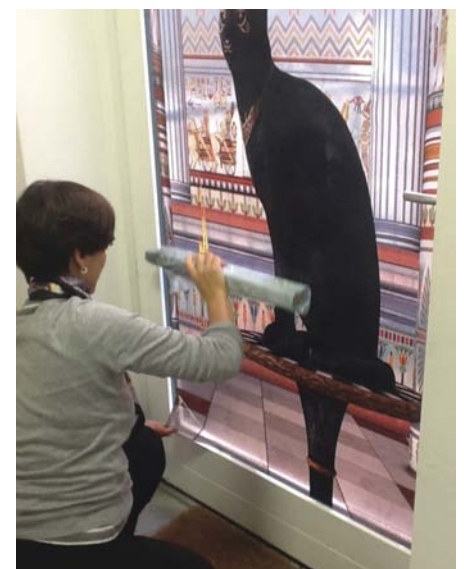
When Melony Rocque-Hewitt took over her newly-built Year 3 classroom at Handcross Primary School in West Sussex she faced the challenge of creating artwork for its many windows. She turned to Epson who helped her transform the room with 'stunning' Egyptian window graphics.

"My new classroom is part of a new several hundred thousand pound extension. Large and bright it has a wall that is basically all glass," says Melony. "As I have a background in large-format graphics and printing, I knew that window graphics would not only make my classroom unusually striking, but the images would also provide a perfect backdrop to the learning experience."

The window graphics were printed onto high-performance self-adhesive vinyl using Epson's 64-inch SureColor SC-S70600

wide-format printer. The combination of Epson's UltraChrome GSX ink-set and proven Micro Piezo TFP printheads ensure that 'the vivid colours, solid whites and metallic effects were of the highest quality and clarity and long lasting'. Besides featuring CMYK, light magenta, light cyan, light black and orange, the 10-colour SC-S70600 supports white and metallic ink simultaneously. The GSX inks are hard wearing, odourless and nickel-free, so 'perfectly' suited to the application within the classroom.

"The window graphics form a great backdrop to the children's own mummified cats, scarab beetles and papyrus paper," says Melony. "Our next topic is the Stone Age and I've already got an idea of what I want my glass display to look like. It's just a case of making it happen!"



Melony mounting her window graphics in the classroom.

## Flutterbyes Christmas Popup Shop

W&Co installed temporary signage and graphics to create 'big impact for low cost and short term use' when they fitted out Flutterbyes's new Christmas pop up shop in Bluewater.

Using the same style of custom signage design installed at the Lakeside store, the Flutterbyes fascia sign was hung in the store window and suspended from the ceiling as a temporary solution. But it also allows the sign to be reused permanently at a later date. Built-up 3D halo illuminated letters were mounted to a vinyl decorated sign tray.

Vinyl graphics were applied to the external panels on the side of the store, while cut vinyl Christmas slogans were applied

throughout the interior. To maintain a strong brand identity, Flutterbyes utilised the same colour palette and style of decor used in existing stores. They exchanged their trademark butterfly motifs for snowflakes and baubles to suit the Christmas theme of the pop up store.

Subtle snowflake-shaped window manifestations were produced from cut frosted vinyl and applied the glass to complement the range of products in the window as well as the fascia signage.

Using self-adhesive vinyl throughout the store was ideal for Flutterbyes's temporary space as they were able to achieve the desired effect while having the advantage of



Flutterbyes's Christmas themed pop up shop in Bluewater.

being able to easily remove the graphics after Christmas. All the self adhesive vinyl and digital wallpaper were produced in-house utilising W&Co's new large format latex printer.

For this project W&Co produced a number of digital 3D renders and worked closely with the client to establish a 'clear and concise understanding' of all their requirements. And also enabled them to have their designs approved by the Bluewater centre management prior to installation, which took place on site out of hours to meet their Saturday store opening deadline.

## The one and only 'Christmas' airline

Christmas is the time of year where air traffic peaks. Millions of people will be flying home for Christmas, to enjoy the holidays with family and friends, says Orafol.

As one of Europe's leading airlines, Air Berlin has this year gone 'all in as the one and only Christmas airline, with planes beautifully decorated to really set passengers in the right Christmas mood!'

ORAFOL Europe GmbH are the manufacturers behind the graphic material, which has been applied to the Air Berlin 'Christmas' aeroplanes. Dr. Bernd Görig, ORAFOL's Director of EHSQ Management, says: "We introduced the ORAJET® Aircraft Graphic Film some time ago, and the material is showing superb performance in the field. We are really happy and proud

that Air Berlin has chosen the ORAFOL material for this very special seasonal celebration." The ORAJET® 3967AC Aircraft Graphic Film is made with a perforated structure, making it very conformable in the application process.

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## What a beauty!

A new full colour graphic LED display has been installed at entertainment venue, the Hawth Theatre in Crawley, ahead of a busy winter programme that includes this year's pantomime.

The new sign, situated on a main roundabout on the turn-off to the theatre, replaces an older LED sign which had reached the end of its operating life after many years of service. Advances in technology, along with volume production have seen the price of LED display solutions come down in recent years. This makes them an effective and competitive solution for entertainment venues, says the company. For the Hawth Theatre, a key attraction in replacing the sign was upgrading from a single colour text sign to a full colour graphic display without any additional cost.

The software provided with the sign enables the theatre to upload new content directly which means the display can rapidly be updated to include new items. The ability to programme in a series of messages enables the theatre to maintain a rolling calendar of current and future events.

Based on Messagemaker's new Imposa III model, the 768 mm x 768mm sign is only 4mm in depth and provides a weather-proof display with bright LEDs ensuring high visibility in all light conditions.

The theatre opted for Messagemaker's rental option which offers a flexible solution for entertainment venues whose revenue may vary according to their programmes and seasonal influences.

Theatre Manager, Steve Crane, said: "The rental option was an attractive proposition for us as an investment which offered a quick return. For less than the cost of a single additional ticket sale per day, the theatre now has access to a bigger screen with high impact and improved recall. We are hopeful of achieving a significant uplift in ticket sales this season thanks to the new sign.



The new sign outside the Hawth Theatre uses a LED display from Messagemaker.

"The display is a tremendous improvement on our previous system. Technology advances not only mean we can make full use of colour to attract attention but being programmable, it is much more versatile for us as well as saving us money by not having to print a new banner for each individual show."

Set in a 38 acre wooded site, The Hawth offers a diverse programmes of arts and performance with over 350 performances and events a year, attracting upwards of 170,00 customers each year. It plays host

to artists, musicians, dancers and performers from around the world. The theatre is also regularly hired by both local and national businesses and arts organisations as a venue for conferences, exhibitions and events.

It runs corporate events and conferences, so with the new programmable sign, staff are able to personalise the display to welcome guests and clients when they approach the venue.

[www.messagemaker.co.uk](http://www.messagemaker.co.uk)

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# DI-NOC films from 3M in Post Office refurbishment

3M DI-NOC Architectural Finishes are a range of special effect self-adhesive vinyl films that precisely replicate the appearance of traditional materials. They were developed by 3M as a cost-effective design solution for interior and exterior new building construction and/or refurbishment projects. Available in over 700 distinctive formats, the finishes 'faithfully' reproduce the look, feel and decorative effect of a wide range of materials such as wood, metal, marble, leather, carbon fibre, stone and stucco.

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Once applied, the films are very easy to maintain in a 'pristine' condition without the need for harsh chemical cleaning agents.

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One example of how these finishes can be used to refresh and refurbish worn or outdated fixtures and fittings, has been their use in a major refurbishment programme by the Post Office. It was implemented by corporate signage specialist Sign 2000.

The work carried out was part of the Post Office Network Transformation Project involving 6,500 main and local outlets. According to Sign 2000's New Business Director, Steve Spackman: "The particular appeal of 3M DI-NOC Architectural Finishes was that it was possible, at a relatively low cost, to refurbish all of the service counters at these sites rather than having to meet the high cost of replacement, thereby enabling savings to be made by the Post Office."

Based on current statistics, the predicted total volume of DI-NOC to be used will be in the region of 5,000 metres. Steve said: "This is probably one of the largest applications of DI-NOC carried out so far in the UK, chosen for the product's suitability for high-end refurbishment projects combined with the cost-effectiveness, versatility and durability provided by this remarkable 3M product."

DI-NOC also offers other benefits, 'not least of which is the ease with which the films can be applied and purposely removed as required'. Central to this ability is the integral

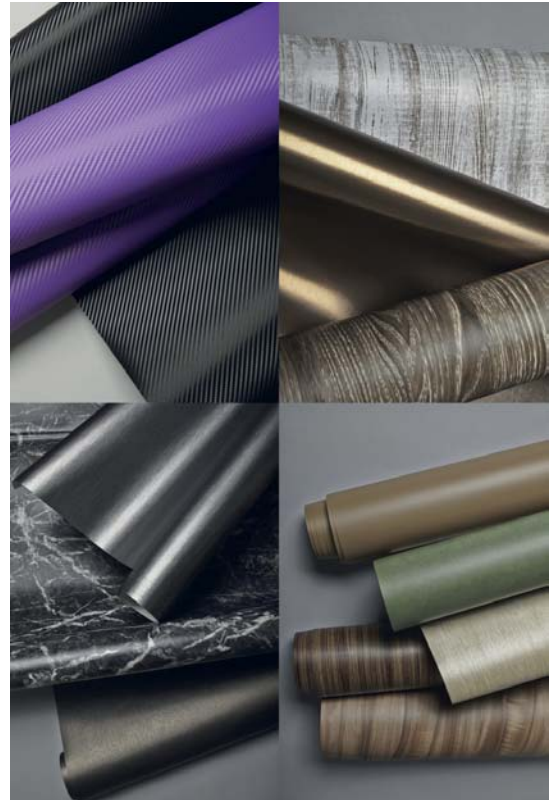
3M Comply Adhesive. This enables 'fast and accurate' positioning of the film and, once pressure is applied, the release of trapped air via tiny channels incorporated in the adhesive to ensure bubble-free results and a smooth finish.

Once applied, the films are very easy to maintain in a 'pristine' condition without the need for harsh chemical cleaning agents. They are also highly durable, being resistant to smoke and other pollutants, the ingress of water and dirt, impact wear, abrasion and mould. The films have been tested to meet IMO flammability requirements and carry a Class O + 1 rating.

Available in 12, 25 or 50-metre rolls, the lightweight high tech, tough, multi-layered films offer 12-year durability on indoor and five-year durability on outdoor applications.

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[www.3M.co.uk](http://www.3M.co.uk)  
[www.sign2000.co.uk](http://www.sign2000.co.uk)



*Using 3M DI-NOC Architectural Finishes, the Post Office were able to make savings in all their branches.*

## World Class Globe for Global Airline

As the third busiest airport in the World, Heathrow Airport was the 'ideal location to showcase Turkish Airlines worldwide coverage through an iconic structure'. Signs Express (Basildon) was on hand to help provide the finishing touches on what was to become their largest project yet.

Turkish Airlines flies to over 98 countries and 200 locations, the most of any airline in the world. So they were looking for a 'memorable representation of the leading brand for the high profile location'.

A large globe structure was made from 16 individual pieces and once put together, was suspended by a 7.5t steel plinth, with a 'massive' 6.5m diameter. Working in partnership with Fab Media, who organised all of the ground works, Signs Express (Basildon) applied graphics to each piece, to signify the longitude and latitude points of the World.

Owner, Tony Surface, said: "Each piece of the globe is literally the size of a house and so the sheer scale of the graphics was something we had never undertaken before. It was very important to ensure the all the

lines would align once they put the globe together at Heathrow Airport. Thankfully our attention to detail paid off as each segment's graphics perfectly matched the other."

Signs Express (Basildon) was also called on to add detailing to the five Boeing 777 planes which adorn the globe. Each aeroplane has over a 2m wingspan and needed to faithfully represent the branding of Turkish Airlines.

Installed surrounding the globe is lettering spelling a number of the destinations available to fly via Turkish Airlines which was also completed by Signs Express (Basildon). Illuminated for maximum night time visibility, passengers coming into the airport see high profile destinations available from Heathrow. And incoming visitors then see a different set of destinations when they are leaving the airport terminal.



*The entire project took over 3500 man hours to complete and will be 'seen by millions in the years to come'.*

Tony said: "We were really excited to work on a project of this magnitude and seeing the finished effect of the structure now it is fully installed gives me great pride in the work undertaken by my team."

Signs Express (Basildon) was also on hand to provide large scale advertising hoardings with full colour digital printed graphics, which curved around the installation area.

## A sign for the top of the fifth tallest building in London!

Tara Signs recently completed one of its most 'daring and challenging' projects to date. The HSBC European Headquarters at Canary Wharf was a 'huge, one off' project that required them to design, manufacture and assist in the installation of the iconic logo on top of the fifth tallest building in London and 34th tallest in Europe.

The completed sign on each face of the building stands at an impressive five metres high and 30 metres long. In total there is over four miles of LED Lighting running through the signage. The face of the lettering was manufactured using specially formulated LED enhancing Polycarbonate with face applied black 3M Contra Vision film. This enabled the letters to be black during the day and illuminated bright white at night. The encasing structure was made from aluminium



to be durable to handle the elements it would face, being so high in London's skyline.

Due to the size of the sign, a trial installation was done on a lower level of the building using the letter H and part of the logo in order to get the lighting levels right. All the letters were manufactured in their West Sussex factory and transported in smaller sections to London. There they had to be passed through the windows on the 40th floor of the building in order to be installed. Vigorous performance testing was done by the team at the West Sussex

factory to make sure that the signage was able to tolerate the most adverse weather conditions; wind tunnels to wrecking balls were used to test the durability of the sign.

The sheer size of the sign may be underestimated from the ground, however with a typical London bus over half a metre shorter in height and a third of the size in length, you get a clearer picture of their size. From start to finish the project took just under two years to complete, with only six months of that being installation time. Now completed the sign has its place among the London skyline and can be seen for miles. It is a project we can be proud of, says Tara Signs.





# Leeds Beckett University signage lights up in time for new term



*The sign can be seen across the city at night.*

With a six-week timescale, A D Bell Sign Systems have created new signage for Leeds Beckett University using face illuminated built-up metal letters from Applelec.

Changing its name from Leeds Metropolitan University to Leeds Beckett University, the new signage was installed to coincide with the first day of enrolment of the new intake of 10,000 first year students on in September 2014.

The built-up letters have been constructed in a rim and return style with white opal acrylic faces lit with SloanLED VL Plus modules. The brief from Leeds Beckett Uni-

versity was to create impactful signage with a classic, timeless feel. This was to reflect the 190-year history of the university which traces its origins back to the Leeds Mechanics Institute established in the city in 1824.

With simple white illumination and a subtle colour template, the sign's desired impact is achieved due to the sheer scale of each letter which exceeds 1.5m in height. Powder coated in silver, and with large white faces, the signage is equally effective when non-illuminated during daylight hours as it is after nightfall once the letters are lit. After dark, the signage can be seen glowing across the city.

Simon Bell of A D Bell said: "As one of our biggest jobs this year, we're delighted with the results of this latest collaboration with Applelec. The signage precisely mirrors the artwork we created meaning our customer was suitably impressed with a sign that met all expectations at a crucial time for Leeds Beckett University."

In signs as large as this, each letter requires its own power supply. These power supplies are fed back to two purpose-built wiring enclosures, where each letter is clearly labelled to aid future maintenance and repair work. Featuring built-up back-trays, each letter was secured to the building façade using a chemical resin anchor.

Michael Crotch, Applelec sales advisor, said: "It's great to see our latest large format lettering job making such an impact. As a trade supplier, we are always ready to provide advice on wiring and fixing methods for our products; in this case the use of wiring enclosures."

A D Bell Sign Systems are the fixed signage contractor for Leeds Beckett University and will be working on many more projects in coming months as the university continues to refresh its sign and display systems.

## About Applelec

Established in 1998, Applelec is renowned for the manufacture of fabricated signage and display systems along with groundbreaking lighting products, such as the award-winning LED Light Sheet. Applelec has created bespoke sign, display and lighting solutions for the world's leading brands and small local businesses alike, but as a confidential trade supplier, most of this work is completed in secrecy. With two busy factories in West Yorkshire, Applelec is proud to have built a reputation as a company that can always find a solution.

[www.applelec.co.uk](http://www.applelec.co.uk)



*Each letter exceeds 1.5m in height.*

# BSGA Awards

## Over 250 entries enter the inaugural BSGA Awards



The trophies for the event were made by Trade Etching Direct Ltd

The awards attracted over 250 entries across 13 categories, which were accompanied by over 750 images and half a dozen videos. They received support, in the form of sponsorship from 13 of the industry's leading businesses; and climaxed at a gala awards ceremony attended by over 320 people at Villa Park in Birmingham at the end of October.

"It's the highest profile event organised by the BSGA for many years and it exceeded all our expectations," said David Dyke, Association President. "We felt that the industry needed an awards scheme that had real meaning and value and that the BSGA, as the organisation that represents the interests of the industry and constantly presses for

higher achievement in terms of both creativity and quality, was the right organisation to manage it.

"The response, in terms of support from the sponsors and the level of interest among sign businesses has been fantastic. We've started something that will, hopefully, continue for many years to come."

"The award categories were created to reflect every facet of modern signmaking, from hand-crafted signs to those which incorporate the very latest technology," said David Catanach, Director of the BSGA. "Every category was competitive, but we were delighted that the 'Small Signmaker of the Year', open only to businesses employing between one and five

people, was the most competitive, with over 40 entries.

"The panel of judges faced an unenviable task but, to make things absolutely fair, the identity of every entrant was carefully redacted from every submission. The judges based their decisions purely on the written submissions and images supplied.

"The awards were open to every sign business in the UK and most entries did, in fact, come from companies who are not members. We hope that the awards will serve to highlight the role of the BSGA in representing and supporting the industry and that business that entered the awards will now consider it worth joining the association to support the important work we do."







## Congratulations to all the winners!

### Sign of the year

Presented by Corporate Sponsor 3M  
Winner: Sign of the Times for  
'The Heinz 57 Wall'

### Retail Sign Award

Sponsored by Complete CNC Solutions  
Winner: ASG (Essex) for  
'The Perfectionists' Cafe'

### Illuminated Sign Award

Sponsored by Vink Lighting Solutions  
Winner: Castleton Signs for  
'Scottish Gas Edinburgh'

### Vehicle Graphics Award

Sponsored by William Smith  
Winner: Allen Signs for  
'Billy Branston Bus'

### Roll-out Programme award

Sponsored by Nationwide Platforms  
Winner: Absolute SG for 'Worldpay'

### Small Signmaker Award

Sponsored by Metamark  
Winner: Goodwin&Goodwin for  
'Illuminated projects'

### Wide Format Project Award

Sponsored by Soyang Europe  
Winner: Adam Bourn Creative for  
'One Commercial Street'

### The Sign Construction Award

Sponsored by 3M Tapes and Adhesives  
Winner: Trade Signs UK for 'ITV'

### The Innovation Award

Sponsored by Epson  
Winner: Signbox for  
'StepJockey Smart Signs'

### Digital Signage Award

Sponsored by Vink Digital Signage  
Winner: Image Technique for  
'The View from the Shard'

### The Craftsman Award

Sponsored by Trade Etching Direct  
Winner: HNS Signs for  
'Penny Blacks'

### Architectural Sign Award

Sponsored by Foamalux  
Winner: Harrisons Sign for  
'Nestle'

### Interior Sign Award

Sponsored by Decordirections.co.uk  
Winner: Castleton Signs for  
'NHS Dean Street'

### Wayfinding Scheme Award

Winner: Cobal Sign Systems for  
'The Library of Birmingham'

### Sign Product Award

Sponsored by Signs Express  
Winner: The Zeta Bespoke Solar Signage Kit

Details of the winning projects are available at: [www.britishsignawards.org](http://www.britishsignawards.org)



## US multinational media company plans 'major expansion' in Scotland

Signarama, which has 950 franchises in 50 countries, intends to establish new enterprises in Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee and Perth.

The major multi-national business already has a successful franchise in Edinburgh and is actively seeking either existing sign business owners or new entrants to the sector to take the brand into Scotland's other major cities.

Signarama UK, has made it clear that the business will be looking for exceptional candidates to promote the company's industry-leading offering in Scotland. "We will not be giving this chance to just anyone," they said.

Signarama was founded in New York in 1986 and has grown exponentially by rolling out an 'attractive and lucrative franchising model'. Franchisees benefit from a comprehensive training programme, full marketing support, local field support, trained experts and mentors, according to the company.

Signarama offers a turn-key solution for entrepreneurs who want to build a solid business and future for themselves while maintaining a balanced quality of life, according to the company. Vince Cvijanovic, an existing franchisee, said: "Signarama has the tools to help you identify the customers, products, and practices that are the most profitable."

Signarama UK said: "We have identified Scotland as a new growth area for the brand and we are excited about the possibilities.

"Franchisees may be those looking to get into the signage and branding industry from scratch; marketing organisations who wish to expand into signage and printing or independent signage; or printing companies who have hit a glass ceiling and, through investing in a Signarama franchise, could grow their business to the next level."

[www.signarama.co.uk](http://www.signarama.co.uk)



## Discover a 'world of signage' at Sign Expo

European Sign Expo 2015 will take place next year from 18 to 22 May 2015 at Koelnmesse, Cologne, Germany alongside FESPA 2015.



The third edition of European Sign Expo offers signmakers and signage buyers a 'focused environment to explore new horizons in non-printed signage'. The 2015 event will also help visitors discover the future of signage, including digital signage, through its Ask the Experts feature.

The 2015 show will be 20 per cent bigger than the 2014 event in Munich in terms of floor space. Visitors to the show will meet with leading names from the European sign industry who will bring the latest developments in equipment; software; signage materials and systems; fittings and fixtures; channel lettering; illuminated signage; dimensional signage; and engraving and etching.

Ask the Experts is a dedicated networking hub where visitors and exhibitors can meet with the industry 'leading lights', attend daily panel discussions and debate a wide range of topics focused around digital signage.

Roz McGuinness, Divisional Director, FESPA, says: "While the exhibits at European Sign Expo will focus predominantly on conventional non-printed signage, our Ask the Experts feature will concentrate on digital signage and will provide inspirational and practical support for anybody interested in

digital signage or looking to expand their business into this area."

Roz said: "Printers and signmakers are realising that it doesn't have to be an 'either or' market, but that printed and digital signage can, and do, complement each other. 40 per cent of visitors to FESPA Digital and European Sign Expo 2014 stated that digital signage and live media was the key area of focus they'd like to see more of at FESPA events"

The last European Sign Expo took place alongside FESPA Digital 2014 from 20-23 May 2014 in Munich, Germany. Over the four days, 4385 unique visitors attended European Sign Expo specifically, with 80 per cent travelling from outside of Germany. Roz said: "When we launched European Sign Expo in 2013 our aim was to provide signmakers with valuable insights into the full spectrum of signage possibilities. With two editions of the show now behind us, we've developed the event, taking on board feedback from exhibitors and visitors, to shape a targeted event for the industry."

[www.europeansignexpo.com](http://www.europeansignexpo.com)



## Allen Signs opens its doors to university graduate

Signmaker and vehicle livery specialist Allen Signs has recruited its first ever graduate employee 'fresh' out of university.

Dean Newcombe (21) joined Allen Signs, which has offices in Lincoln and Nottingham, in July to kick-start his career as a graphic designer after impressing the company with his final-year university project.

"We spotted Dean's potential when he brought in his project and asked us to help him apply his design onto a blank skateboard," said Glen Merryweather, Sales and Marketing Manager at Allen Signs.

"At the same time he asked if we were taking on any staff. It was perfecting timing, as we were in discussions about expanding the business and hiring a designer!"

Dean said: "I'm very grateful to Allen Signs for giving me this great opportunity. I feel very privileged as it isn't easy getting a job within your chosen career straight out of university."

Dean is responsible for creating design concepts and preparing visuals for planning applications. Since starting at Allen Signs he has worked on a number of branding projects for companies such as Docusave and Coco Tanning and Beauty.

"I'm really enjoying the fast-paced nature of working in a company in comparison to university, where you spend weeks doing research before coming up with the final idea," he said.



Dean Newcombe.

"It's extremely fulfilling being given a brief by a client and seeing my designs come to life on a fascia or a van."

Dean studied at Central Technology and Sports College in his home town of Grantham, where he was inspired to become a graphic designer by his teacher. After finishing secondary school

he studied a two-year BTEC National Diploma in Graphic Design at Grantham College before attending the University of Lincoln.

Dean graduated in September 2014 with a BA (Hons) in Graphic Design.

[www.allen-signs.co.uk](http://www.allen-signs.co.uk)

## XYZ open day

XYZ International held two open days during November. These were widely acknowledged by those who attended to have been of 'enormous value' to determine which of the available routing, cutting and printing solutions best suited their specific production requirements.

Two Royal Air Force Museum sites were chosen for the events due to their strategic locations, and provided an interesting additional visitor attraction to the technologies being demonstrated. At both venues, they showcased examples from the XYZ and Pacer ranges as well as promoted the supporting CNCRouterShop online division. Machines featured included a heavy-duty Pacer 4008 and XYZ 4010 routing options, both of which are renowned for their 'reliability when used in intensive production environments and for their value-for-money investment quality'.

End user feedback from the two open days confirmed the continuing huge appeal of XYZ International, both as a supplier

of high-performance CNC routing solutions and as a resource for technical knowledge and customer support.

Peter Lightfoot of Lyndhurst Plastic Fabrication (LPF) said: "In the last 10 years, we have invested in two XYZ CNC routers and are about to invest in a third machine to further enhance our production capabilities through new hardware and software upgrades that are now available. Both of the original machines have proved to be typical workhorse solutions, with the ongoing technical support provided by XYZ International second to none."

Keith Lines of J H Lines said: "We have two 3000 x 2000mm XYZ routers in operation, both of which we have found to be very reliable and value-for-money investments. Whenever we have needed machine maintenance help, the staff at XYZ International have been highly proficient and helpful"

[www.axyz.com](http://www.axyz.com)



The XYZ team at the open day.

## Flying the flag for Fife!

Sign Plus Ltd based at Dalgety Bay has just been awarded two Ministry of Defence contracts with a combined value in excess of £5 million to manufacture and supply marine flags, ensigns, pennants, signs and labels.

These major contracts were won on price after a rigorous tendering process involving 13 competitor companies, and will mean an increase in personnel numbers. The company has already begun further recruitment, they say.

Commenting on the success a company spokesman said that this was a hugely significant win, the largest contract so far undertaken. And it underpins the continuing growth of the company which has doubled

its personnel numbers in recent years. It was also emphasised that this is not just great news for Dalgety Bay and Fife but, with the bulk of the contracted items being produced in partnership with key suppliers in the UK, it's also good news for UK manufacturing industry.

Sign Plus already hold the BAE contract to supply safety signage for the two QE Class aircraft carriers under construction at Rosyth dockyard and await the outcome of a number of other significant contracts with major clients.

[gordon@signplus.co.uk](mailto:gordon@signplus.co.uk)  
[ken@signplus.co.uk](mailto:ken@signplus.co.uk)



## Study shows low-cost measures can have big impact on safety

A new study revealing Britain's most improved roads shows how low-cost measures can have a significant impact on safety.

The Road Safety Foundation discovered better-quality signage, upgraded markings and improved delineation helped reduce fatal and serious crashes on stretches of the network by 80 per cent.



*Upgraded signs offer safety boost.*

It found such simple improvements scheduled alongside routine maintenance can also create 'staggering' savings. And David Skinner, of Rennicks UK, is hoping more local authorities get the message.

He said: "The Road Safety Foundation report illustrates the dramatic results that can be achieved with simple methods.

"The vast majority of routes which have improved most in terms of accident statistics have been subject to upgrades on signage and road markings.

"It shows that by taking relatively inexpensive measures, authorities could significantly enhance safety."

The study, entitled 'How Safe Are You On Britain's Roads?', maps accidents across the network to identify routes which pose the greatest risk.

It also uses historical data to create a list of the 'most improved' roads and provide details of initiatives taken to achieve the results.

Mr Skinner added: "Better delineation is another simple and cost-effective way to improve safety on our highways.

"Our range of solar-powered LED studs provide much-improved visibility and have been shown to be far more effective than traditional methods.

"Indeed, a recent project reduced the number of reported accidents on a main route by 100 per cent."

Rennicks UK provides 'industry-leading solutions and innovative products' to cus-

A recent project reduced the number of reported accidents on a main route by 100 per cent

tomers such as local authorities and the Highways Agency.

The company's Nikkalite® retroreflective material has been shown to provide highly durable, bright and clear traffic signage, offering 'superior' visibility in the darkest and most adverse weather conditions.

Rennicks supply a wide choice of fully compliant microprismatic and glass bead sheeting suitable for a variety of applications along with protective overlay films such as Nikkalite® Dewtect dew resistant and anti-graffiti films which can help reduce whole-life costs in terms of maintenance.

The company also supplies a range of fully compliant intelligent traffic solutions such as variable message signs and solar road studs shown to be far more effective than traditional methods of delineation.

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## INCA expands Cambridge support facilities

Inca Digital has 'responded to the increased world interest in its wide-format flatbed digital inkjet printers' with a major expansion at its Cambridge, UK headquarters. Investment in their dedicated Training and Validation Centre 'enhances Inca's ability to support its customers and distributors'. It also, according to the company, offers an expanded business development resource and aids their strategy to develop its inkjet technology for a variety of industrial applications.

The new facilities and investment in further research and development space, increase Inca's capability by more than 20 per cent.

The purpose-designed training and validation centre provides a range of Inca hardware and software. Key functions include pre-dispatch validation of Inca's major product lines, the Inca Onset printers, sold exclusively and globally by Fujifilm; and the Truepress Jet W3200UV series, sold through Screen Holdings. Other functions include providing training to customers and distributors, more extensive testing of new features, and the evaluation of new substrates.



*Inside the training centre.*



*The Inca team outside their new training and validation centre in Cambridge.*

Inca has also expanded its industrial capabilities with the formation of a Business Development team, headed up by Mr Johnny Otani and Dr Jim Taylor. Previously business development manager of Xennia's ink consultancy group, Dr Taylor earlier co-founded the Cambridge-based software development consultancy Cametrics. He said:

"This is a great time to be joining Inca because there are so many exciting opportunities opening up for the company's innovative inkjet technology, especially in the wider and multi-faceted industrial sector. I'm looking forward to helping Inca identify new applications not only for our existing models, but also developing new 'added-value' solutions for new markets."

"These announcements are further evidence that Inca Digital keeps going from strength to strength," says John Mills, CEO, Inca Digital.

## BSGA fights to decriminalise planning breaches

The British Sign and Graphics Association (BSGA) is opposing a proposal from Rushmoor District Council to limit the colours that can be used for signs.

"The problem is that if they get this type of proposal through, sign makers may be faced with criminal proceedings if they fall foul of the regulation. It seems ridiculous that a minor infringement of an unnecessary planning regulation could mean that a sign maker ends up with a fine and a criminal record," said David Catanach, Director of the BSGA.

"It is for this reason that the BSGA is fighting on two fronts; the first to try to make

sure that local planners don't get away with imposing unwarranted regulations. And the second to get the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to decriminalise the control of outdoor advertising, which includes signage.

"We want the law changed to make it impossible for signmakers to get a criminal record before they have the opportunity to respond via an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

"We need to demonstrate to government that the present law is disproportionate and should be changed. It may sound far-fetched but there was a case recently where

a boy had to remove a pirate flag from his garden playhouse, under the threat of legal action and a criminal record for him or his guardian, because the local planners considered the flag an illegal advertisement.

"It's stupid, but it could happen to any of us. We need to make as strong a case as possible to Government for a change in the law and we need more examples of over-zealous planners trying to impose their will by threatening legal action. If anyone has stories, even anecdotal, please send them to [planning@bsga.co.uk](mailto:planning@bsga.co.uk) to add to the evidence we are presenting to government to demonstrate and support our case."



## New Josero facility

Josero has completed its new demonstration facility at its head office in Cambridge. A new mezzanine floor has been installed in the 2,500 sq ft premises, which they relocated to five years ago, to 'increase its capacity and house new equipment'.

Since Josero moved to the site, they have expanded their product range that includes a variety of finishing equipment, such as the Summa and Graphtec cutters; Trimarco cutters; Kala Laminators; and the Bubble Free Applicator to complement its range of Triangle Inks; Ergosoft Rip soft-

ware; and Soyang printable materials.

The demonstration room will feature a range of printers and finishing equipment such as the Ricoh L4100 Latex Printer and the Bubble Free Applicator.

Having recently been appointed as an approved Ricoh wide format dealer, it will feature the L4100 with its latex advantages for non-degassing, pantone matching and white ink capabilities. This machine is 'proving popular' and Josero say they have already had several enquiries since becoming a dealer.

Loic Delor, Managing Director of Josero, said: "Partnering with world renowned market leaders such as Ricoh is a true endorsement of our position in the UK market. Since the company's inception in 2003 we have been building our profile by developing strong relationships with key players in the wide format sector. Having become the master distributors for Triangle Inks in the UK and Ireland in 2009, we've also established powerful associations with many manufacturers such as Bubble Free, Graphtec, Kala, Summa and Ergosoft."

One of Josero's 'most successful' products, the Bubble Free Applicator will also feature in the demonstration room. Launched at Sign and Digital UK in 2013, there are over 25 installations in the UK. The 'quality and versatility of this machine has proved incredibly popular with many UK printing companies'.

Loic said: "We plan to host a range of open days and training days, utilising the skills and knowledge of our team, and demonstrating the wide range of equipment we have. We believe this will strengthen our position in the market considerably."

[www.josero.com](http://www.josero.com)



## A crowdfunded printer and printhead manufacturer

LumeJet, the British print technology 'innovator', aims to be the first crowd funded digital printing machine and print head manufacturer. And in an unprecedented move, are saying to the print industry, 'come on in!'

Paul Anson, Lumejet's CEO said: "Our ultra-high quality range of printers is a key part of our business, but we are also working on a printhead offering 50 times more output. We have proven our UV printhead in the lab for digital lithographic applications and are investigating new photosensitive coating technologies for volume applications."

"Whilst we will always protect client and partner confidentiality, even from shareholders, we have a list of major names in the industry we are talking to, or are working with us on a range of breakthrough printing applications. The applications include a variety of projects such as volume on-demand inkless packaging printing. And the manufacture of printed electronic components such as flexible displays, plastic logic components and low cost sensors."

LumeJet has launched on the Crowdbnk platform and is looking for an investment of £2m which will give the new in-

vestors a 20 per cent equity. Members of the public, angel investors and anybody from the print industry can register to become an investor. Anson, who was also a co-founder at Inca Digital Printers, said: "I spend a lot of my time trying to explain to investors, normally involved in Internet businesses, biotech and software, that the print industry is massive, diverse, and full of opportunity all over the globe. Then it occurred to me; the people that know this already are in the print industry and our culture is one of openness and collaboration. Let's let everybody and anybody be a part of building a new print technology business financially as well as commercially."

LumeJet has raised around £8m to date, mostly from private individuals and publicly backed institutions. They presented at Buckingham Palace and No 10 Downing Street this year, when they were selected as one of the 10 most promising digital companies in Britain. They welcome investors interested in investing anything from £5k to £500k in its current £2m round, and aims to make new offers in 2015 to shareholders that get involved now.



Paul Anson, the CEO of Lumejet.

Founder, Dr Trevor Elworthy, said: "To think big, you have to think differently these days. This funding round is all just the start of our plans and we are offering the people of print the chance to be owners and enablers of something massive and exciting, on the same terms as current investors. We think differently, unconstrained by the shackles of big corporation, never following the herd – we are just warming up!"

## Two awards for Rennicks

Two projects, which could 'set the blueprint for a fresh approach to road safety' have led to a double celebration for Rennicks, a high-ways technology company.

Rennicks landed the title of Road Marking Project of the Year for using solar-powered active road stud technology in Scotland. And the company also won an ITS Excellence award after providing the largest solar-powered variable message signs for the inter-urban motorway network in Ireland.

Group managing director Michael Flanagan says the prestigious industry prizes are rich reward for the company's intelligent approach. He said: "We are looking to make big strides in the world of intelligent traffic solutions (ITS) so these awards are a great boost to everyone involved.

"Intelligent thinking is at the core of our business and this success is a clear illustration that we're on the right track."

Innovative LED Active Studs provided

by Rennicks UK made a big impact in Scotland, where a local authority became the first in the country to install the technology on a major route. Incidents on a stretch of the A719 in East Ayrshire have since been reduced by 100 per cent. The SR-15 units use LED and solar technology to create delineation shown to be far more effective than traditional retroreflective road studs.

Road safety expert Alan Vass, of the Ayrshire Roads Alliance, said such dramatic results could prompt a new approach to highway markings across the country. The scheme was named Road Project of the Year at the Highways Magazine Excellence Awards.

Rennicks won the ITS Ireland award after supplying the National Roads Authority with three 5.1 x 3.6m fixed solar-powered full matrix signs capable of remote communication and control. The company's latest solar technology means this is the first time such a solution has been possible on rural sections of the country's road network, where there has been limited access to electricity supplies.

The signs, which deliver VMS capability in almost any location, were installed as part of a pilot project at strategic locations on the M7, M8 and M11 in Ireland.



George Lee, national director of the Road Safety Marking Association, presents the Road Safety Marking Project of the Year Award to the team at Rennicks and East Ayrshire Roads Alliance.

## The future of neon signs is safe – at least until 2020

Following negotiations with the Council of Europe, the British Sign and Graphics Association (BSGA), together with colleagues from the European Sign Federation (ESF), has secured an exemption that will benefit the UK sign industry and manufacturers of neon signs.

European legislators had intended to include HLDT (handcrafted linear discharge tubes) – better known as neon – within the scope of new RoHS regulations. This would have limited the amount of mercury that could be used and effectively restricted the colour of neon signs to just red.

The exemption means that neon signs can continue to be made, subject to a maximum of 80mg of mercury being used. This means that neon sign makers can continue to produce a wide pallet of colours and supply their customers' needs without fear of breaking European law.

Mike Hall, Chairman of the BSGA Technical Committee, is extremely pleased that

the industry has been listened to. "If we had failed to win the exemption, it could possibly have rung the death knell for neon signs," he said.

"Dealing with the Council of Europe was never going to be a straight forward. However, we had an extremely good case and, with perseverance, we managed to get through to them and gain the necessary backing."

The exemption will serve the sign industry until 2020.

"It is widely known that under the Minamata Convention the use of mercury will be banned entirely by the year 2020," says Mike. "However, now that we have this exemption in place, we have a good argument to get it extended beyond 2020".

"Neon is a small but key

part of our industry and it needs protection. We must continue work to see that there are controls in place across the industry to ensure correct processing, that the correct amount of mercury is used to produce eco-quality neon, and that lamps perform correctly."





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## InkTec appoints Perfect Colours

Perfect Colours will supply InkTec's popular, fine-art quality Jetrix flat-bed printers in the UK following a recent agreement between the two companies. The British reseller's portfolio will include all machines in the Korean-made range, which feature a variety of production-orientated innovations. Such as edge-to-edge and intelligent layer printing to roll options and anti-crash head systems.

The Jetrix range is positioned to 'help

sign and graphics print houses transition into flat-bed work' and 'develop from there to high-speed production'. But according to the company, even at entry level there is no compromise on quality. From the compact 1.2 x 1.2m KX3 to the flagship 2.5 x 3.06m KX7, each machine in the range offers a six picolitre drop size. As well as the 'ability to print onto a practically unlimited selection of materials, up to 100mm thick, at photo-

graphic quality'. These facets allow owners to 'extend into lucrative value-adding areas of work, including fine art, point-of-sale and outdoor advertising'.

Jon Telling, sales director, said: "Many wide-format companies have held back from capital investment over the last few years, choosing instead to wait for advanced technologies that can help bring them into new production areas.

"The Jetrix range represents exactly that, and Perfect Colours's support-led approach means that customers can be assured they'll see return on investment in little to no time. We're proud to have been appointed to the InkTec channel and look forward to explaining the virtues of this exciting range to customers."

Ben Woodruff, sales manager for Jetrix UK, said: "We have known of Perfect Colours for some time and have admired the way they've grown their business and their product range over the last few years. The Jetrix series of UV-curable printers will fit perfectly within that portfolio.

"Perfect Colours has a strong consolidated marketing strategy and, with their highly-trained and customer-focused sales team, I believe the company will help us grow the developing Jetrix install base in the UK. And help us maintain our current position as Europe's fastest growing brand of UV-curable flat-beds."



## Messagemaker launch new website

Messagemaker has developed a new dedicated microsite for LED traffic and road signs. Aimed at those working in the transport and highways engineering sectors, facilities managers and those responsible for workplace transport safety, the new site provides information on the diverse range of LED traffic sign solutions now available.

From permanent signs to portable and solar powered options, the site provides useful information to help determine the right solution for you, according to the company. The range includes vehicle activated signs (VAS), traffic information signs (VMS) and mobile variable message signs.

The range also includes the innovative DIA signs. This new range

of VMS/VAS matrix displays allow messages to be customised to suit individual locations and requirements. The range includes permanently-sited and mobile sign solutions and can be configured to show different messages or graphics to suit the individual speed zone or hazard and local driving behaviour. The 'versatile' programmable matrix allows any symbol or graphic to be included.

As LED specialists, Messagemaker works with engineers, planners, contractors and site managers to meet all sizes and types of project requirement, including bespoke requirements and challenging site conditions.

[www.mmtrafficsigns.co.uk](http://www.mmtrafficsigns.co.uk)

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- Signs for use

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# Mimaki gets Viscom Best of 2014 Award

Viscom recently presented Mimaki with a "Best of 2014 Award" in the Large Format Printing category for two of their printers: the JFX200-2513 and the UJV500-160 LED UV printers.

The award is another 2014 'highlight' following the pair of European Digital Press Association (EDP) awards received at FESPA Digital 2014 for the Mimaki JFX200-2513 wide format printer and Kebab option for selected models in the small format UJF Series.

"Clearly the judges could not decide between the large format solution and the entry level model and so picked both," says Mike Horsten, General Manager Marketing EMEA, Mimaki Europe. "These newly-launched and market responsive solutions demonstrate perfectly how new technology can be readily adopted to support existing market segments or help businesses embrace new opportunities. They were our key focus at the Viscom show and the award clearly demonstrates we were spot-on with this decision. Viscom 2014 has been an excellent show for the Mimaki team in terms of sales leads and customer care. Winning the Viscom Best of 2014 Award is the cherry on the cake."

The JFX200-2513 offers a choice of LED UV curing inks, including white and clear, and prints on many substrates. Hybrid's national sales manager, industrial products, Stuart Cole said: "The Mimaki



Mike Horsten (GM Marketing EMEA) with Mimaki's LFP Best of 2014 awards at Viscom 2014.

JFX200 is proving to be a hugely successful solution. It's easy to operate, has a compact footprint and maximizes productivity by using industry standard-sized media. The accolade from Viscom for this and the UJV500 is a great plaudit for us all."

Similar to the JFX200, energy-saving

LED-UV curing with long-lasting LED-UV units is just one feature of the Mimaki UJV500-160. It also offers fast throughput, cost-effective and environmentally friendly curing, and 3M MCS warranted inks. The availability of white inks for roll-to-roll printing further 'enhances the possibilities'.

# Zünd innovations on Discovery Channel

Zünd digital cutting solutions have been featured on the Discovery Channel's Innovations with Ed Begley, Jr. The science and technology-focused series dedicated part of its recent episode to Zünd's cutting systems and the range of applications they can be used for.

Introduced by actor Ed Begley Jr and featuring interviews with representatives from Zünd America Inc. and Zünd Systemtechnik AG, the programme travelled from the USA to Switzerland to see how the machines are built and configured for each individual customer for use many industries. Such as the sign and display and packaging sectors, the technical textile, fabric and leather markets, and the automotive and aerospace fields. The cutting systems are even used for awnings, windsurfing sails and hot air balloons.

The show's behind-the-scenes approach also demonstrated the 'ease of use' offered by Zünd systems and the ability to reconfigure them for new materials and markets thanks to their modular construction. As one interviewee notes, customers often purchase a Zünd cutter with



the intention of processing one type of material before realising its potential in new markets.

"Advancements in science and technology continue to revolutionise the way we live," says Robert Sikich, Producer for the series. "We look forward to educating our viewers on these exciting breakthroughs."

Peter Giddings, Sales Director at Zünd UK, said: "As the programme's narrator said, Zünd is 'literally on the cutting edge', so it's fantastic to bring the technology to a wider audience on Innovations with Ed Begley, Jr.

"We've recently re-opened our St Albans demonstration centre so viewers interested in seeing the Zünd systems featured on the Discovery Channel can see them in the flesh and find out how they can be tailor-made to meet specific needs."

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## 'Discover Your Universe of Print' at FESPA Global Expo

The 2015 Global Expo moves to Cologne, Germany for the first time, running for five days from Monday 18 to Friday 22 May 2015. The event is set to occupy 62,500m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space in the new north halls of KoelnMesse, making it the largest FESPA Global Expo of all time.

The FESPA 2015 campaign's space exploration theme emphasises the 'galaxy of growth opportunities that exist for printers, if they take time to look beyond the day-to-day running of their business'. The message is that the possibilities for print service providers are 'infinite', and that FESPA is a 'launch pad for new products, while enabling and encouraging exploration and discovery'.

FESPA Divisional Director Roz McGuinness said: "With no other interna-

tional print event in 2015, FESPA in Cologne will offer visitors the most comprehensive constellation of print and related technologies. At our last FESPA Global Expo in London in 2013, we invited our community to 'Fly FESPA', and over 22000 printers, signmakers and print specifiers 'flew' with us. For 2015, we're taking the mode of transport to another level, along with the event itself, which will certainly be the most extensive event FESPA has ever staged."

As in 2013, the visitor will find FESPA 2015 structured around three key zones – FESPA Screen, FESPA Digital and FESPA Fabric, each represented by its own planet on the website and other campaign collateral. The 'planet' device will be used to help visitors navigate at the show in May.



FESPA 2015's educational programme for visitors will be the most 'extensive' yet, designed to support printers to 'make critical decisions about the direction of their business'. The event will also give visitors the option to join other satellite events under the same roof, such as the co-located European Sign Expo, with its focus on physical, non-printed signage.

[www.fespa.com](http://www.fespa.com)

## Explore a world that isn't just 'flat'

Hybrid Services Ltd, Mimaki's exclusive distributor for the UK and Ireland, is encouraging potential grand format flatbed investors to 'think a little more creatively by exploring the benefits of pairing the new JFX200 LED UV flatbed printer with selected Mimaki 1.6m solvent, latex or SUV roll-to-roll printers'.

The JFX200 delivers a 'highly desirable' combination of quality, speed and value and its flatbed format means that it is 'ideally suited' to the production of rigid display boards, packaging and exhibition panels. Mimaki roll-to-roll printers on the other hand produce complementary flexible graphics such as banners, posters and vehicle liveries in high volumes and using a choice of ink types. Combined with each other, the solution delivers more than the sum of its parts, according to the company.

National sales manager – industrial products for Hybrid, Stuart Cole says: "Mimaki is in the unique position of being able to offer a solution that delivers all the benefits of each machine with the workflow and software synergies found when dealing with one manufacturer. With both machines running in tandem; production print houses and sign and graphics professionals can meet the



*Mimaki's JFX200 and JV300 is already proving a popular and productive combination with customers.*



wide and varied demands of individual customers with ease, as well as generating new revenue streams.

"The productivity gains of running two machines plus the ability to tap into the state of the art features of two dedicated printing powerhouses should serve our customers perfectly."

Hybrid's unique package offer provides the opportunity to pair the 8' x 4' flatbed JFX200-2513, which features low running costs, latest LED UV technology and great eco credentials with a choice of selected 1.6m Mimaki solvent, latex or SUV roll-to-roll printers including the new JV300.

"With two different types of wide format print technology in their arsenal; professional sign and graphics producers now have the opportunity to expand their business horizons by meeting customer demands ever more effectively, with better productivity and profitability as the ultimate prize," says Cole.

[www.hybridservices.co.uk](http://www.hybridservices.co.uk)

# Sign maker completes apprenticeship with 'great success'

Applelec's warehouse operative Sam Lumb has developed his sign making career by completing a one-year apprenticeship in sign making at Leeds College of Building.

The part-time course, which was the last of its kind to be held at Leeds College of Building, covered six modules such as self-adhesive materials, sign-making software, vinyl plotter and graphic printer training. A key element of the course was training on self-adhesive materials and their application, with projects focusing on choosing the correct adhesive and method of application.

Ian Drinkwater, Applelec managing director, said: "We are always looking to develop the skills of our staff and believe it is important to help young people as they enter the signage industry. Sam has begun his career with us and we hope through this apprenticeship and further training he will have a long and prosperous career with Applelec."

Although segments of the course followed traditional teaching methods through tutor lessons and practical training, there were also numerous coursework based projects. These saw the students following a brief which was hypothetically set by existing companies. For example a project where students had to use the Sign Lab programme to complete a brief set by Coca-Cola. These types of projects enabled the students to understand the importance of fol-



Sam Lumb, Applelec signmaking apprentice who has just finished his course at Leeds College of Building.

lowing specific brand guidelines in terms of size restrictions and colour palettes.

One course module involved Sam presenting work which he had completed whilst employed at Applelec. Sam submitted a portfolio of photographs and descriptions showing him completing projects at every stage of the sign making process, which also showed his use of correct health and safety equipment.

Sam Lumb said: "The skills I have learnt and developed during the course at Leeds will no doubt prove invaluable throughout my career in the signage industry. My improved practical skills combined with my developed ability to follow briefs and work to time frames has aided my work at Applelec since completing the course."

[www.applelec.co.uk](http://www.applelec.co.uk)

## Stanford Marsh Group's success validated by triple award win

Stanford Marsh Group (SMG) has received three awards: two from HP and one from Canon, in recognition of its 'success within

the wide format print sector'.

SMG Director Adrian Painter picked up the HP awards at HP's Partner Conference in London where they won both the HP Designjet UK&I FY14 Market Share Contributor of the year. And the HP Designjet UK&I FY14 Technical Partner of the year.

The Market Share Contributor award 'confirms' that SMG shipped more HP Designjet printers in terms of volume than any other UK vendor in 2014. Whilst the HP Technical Partner of the Year award was given in recognition of Stanford Marsh having sold more Designjet T-series machines than any other vendor this year.

Matthew Perkins, Co-Director of SMG, accepted an award on the same date verifying the company's UK Premier Partner status 2014 / 2015 for Canon Wide Format solutions. The award was presented in Istanbul, Turkey, by Mr Miyano, Managing Director of Canon Wide Format Europe, and certifies Stanford Marsh as one of only 18 Canon Premier Partners across Europe.

On the three new awards, Adrian Painter said: "These awards demonstrate the breadth of our product range and the structure of our business which allows us to support multiple brands without compromise. We have won successive awards from HP over several years and we continue to develop our working relationship with both HP and Canon."

[www.smgg.co.uk](http://www.smgg.co.uk)



## A meaningful approach to sustainability is key to sign industry's success

Craig Brown, managing director of Signs Express, is calling for the sign industry to take a meaningful approach to sustainability. As the economy continues to recover from recession Craig believes it's critical for the industry to take a closer look at what clients want and need.

As Signs Express marks its 25th anniversary Craig reflects on how the signage industry has changed over the past 30 years and looks forward to the future of 'a very strange industry'.

"There's little doubt in my mind that signage is a strange industry," says Craig Brown. "Like most traditionally artisan businesses, technology has revolutionised signage in the last 30 years. However our business is virtually unrecognisable from when we opened our doors in 1989. A result of this revolution is that many of our original contemporaries are no longer around and have been replaced by sign companies that have a totally different ethos.

"When Signs Express launched in 1989 computers were just starting to make their mark in the sign making world and we fully embraced this new technology. Signage had been an industry full of skilled artists and artisans; quotes could take two weeks to produce and customers

were used to waiting weeks for a sign to be delivered. We made it our mission to deliver quotes within days if not hours: whilst that doesn't seem particularly radical today, in the late '80s it was a dramatic step-change."

Technology is one of the most visible changes in the sign industry, according to Craig. "30 years ago, when costly, but primitive computers started to become an essential part of sign production, you could identify a company by its fonts. That's because companies such as Signs Express only had access to a handful of different fonts because they were so expensive to buy or rent.

Although falling prices in technology have allowed the signage industry to progress rapidly, it also creates multiple challenges for the industry. "Inexpensive production equipment is readily available, and some small businesses are, sadly, willing to use pirated software to produce signs of a lesser quality," says Craig. "These products offer a cheap alternative for some customers but pull business away from legitimate and professional companies."

"Pre-recession there had been a growing demand from customers for signs that were produced in an environmentally friendly

There are many ways that signage businesses of all sizes can operate to minimise their environmental impact.

manner. Customers wanted to know the source of each component of the sign they were purchasing to ensure they were 'green,' he says. "It was interesting to see that during the recession this desire for evidence of environmentally responsible sourcing and practices dropped off dramatically. Customers were still concerned by service and price, but the green agenda became less of a factor in the decision making process."

"There are many ways that signage businesses of all sizes can operate to minimise their environmental impact," says Craig, "but we have to think about the meaning of the word sustainability: it's all about creating ways of doing business that can benefit us, our customers and our environment for a long time into the future."

In order to help protect the signage industry, Craig has held the position of President of the British Signs and Graphics Association twice and remains a member of the board. Craig feels that being involved with the association is important for any signage company to act as a voice for all signage businesses regardless of size.

Signs Express aims to grow to 100 branches in the next eight years, at a rate of seven or eight new branches opening each year. There are still a number of key territories available and Signs Express has enquiries 'constantly flooding in'.

[www.signsexpress.co.uk](http://www.signsexpress.co.uk)



Craig Brown (left) with Ken Venables from Signs Express (Norwich)



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[www.signupdate.co.uk/gdscsh](http://www.signupdate.co.uk/gdscsh)

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[www.signupdate.co.uk/smwj](http://www.signupdate.co.uk/smwj)

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Graphica Display is a large format printing company that specialises in large format graphics and signage. We are looking for a junior artworker with key knowledge of the trade to join our ever growing team.

#### Required Skills

- ▶ Good working knowledge of large format printing and Rips
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#### Key Attributes

- ▶ Great eye for detail
- ▶ Well organised
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## GRAPHICA DISPLAY.CO.UK

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Salary representative of position.

Graphica Display is a large format printing company that specialises in large format graphics. We are looking for a Finishing Operative who would benefit by having key knowledge of the large format trade to join our ever growing team, however this is not essential.

#### Required Skills

- ▶ Experience in mounting preferred, but training will be provided
- ▶ Great working ethic
- ▶ Laminating, finishing, cutting and preparing graphics and signage

#### Key Attributes

- ▶ Great eye for detail
- ▶ Willing to learn

Please send a covering letter of why you believe you will be a great asset to Graphica Display and CV to [rob@graphicadisplay.co.uk](mailto:rob@graphicadisplay.co.uk)



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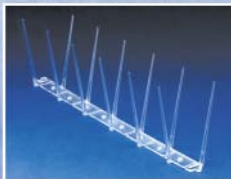
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Sign Industries is one of the UK's leading sign making manufacturers, offering a broad range of memorial and commemorative plaques in many varying styles using the finest materials such as bronze, brass, stainless steel and wood. You can now create your own custom plaques and nameplates and order them directly from our website.

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**Fax: 0117 955 7518**  
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**Fax: 0845 1 30 70 80**

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ThyssenKrupp Materials are stockists of Plastics and Aluminium for the Sign industry. Experienced staff and an extensive product range give customers the flexibility to cover all requirements. Products include Oroglas Cast Acrylic, Marlon Polycarbonates, Marcryl Extruded Acrylic, Forex Foam PVC, Dibond and Etalbond Aluminium Composite, Bayer Petg and Quinn Products.

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Manufacturers of all types of polystyrene cut letters, graphics & 3-dimensional models. Virtually any logo, graphic or shape can be cut in polystyrene. Especially useful for short term exhibition, conference or promotional use (All polystyrene has a fire retardant additive). Polystyrene can be faced with vinyl or inkjet prints. Fitting service nationwide. Established 1976.

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info@arken-pop.com  
www.arken-pop.com  
arken provide a comprehensive range of quality poster displays for both internal and external use including, poster frames, poster cases, light boxes, and pavement signs. Products are available off the shelf, can be customised to a specific size or colour or can be expertly designed to meet your individual brief. All our products are manufactured at our factory in the UK.

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Poster Cases and Poster Holders for all commercial and retail applications. Our extensive ex stock range includes snap frames, lockable poster cases, outdoor notice boards. Call our sales team or order online - apply for your Trade Login for reseller pricing.

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sales@insightsignsystems.com  
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Insight is a trade only manufacturer, offering a made to measure service, with in-house powder coating. A wide range of options is available for displaying posters and transparencies (panels not included), including back-lit or non-illuminated, wall mounted or free standing etc. Hinged opening front provides access for maintenance. Rubber gaskets and slam locks provide security. Suitable for outdoor use.

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Serving the Sign Trade for over 40 years, we are a leading manufacturer of modular sign systems, notice boards & information displays. Our Avenue poster case provides high quality yet affordable, external poster display. Sizes from A4-A0, in wall, post, and rail mounted versions, with headers and sign panel options. We also manufacture illuminated menu cases for hotel and restaurant settings.

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Tennants UK is one of the UK's largest manufacturers of temporary road signs and distribute economy grade Zintec road signs through to BS EN 12899-1 specified permanent signs. Many years have been spent working closely with leading Traffic Management and construction companies enabling Tennants UK to cater to their every need, including metal frames, cones, barriers, lamps & sign design software.

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**Fax: 01604 491909**

[www.paperlinx.co.uk](http://www.paperlinx.co.uk)

Through our nationwide branch network, PaperlinX offer a next day delivery for full sheets and cut panels of a wide range of sign materials - acrylic, foam PVC, polycarbonate, PET, PETG, PVC, aluminium composite, engraving laminates and mirrors. We also supply sign frames and cases, pre-made banners and pavement signs.

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**Fax: 0121 344 4558**

[marketing@righton.co.uk](mailto:marketing@righton.co.uk)

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**Fax: 01934 852 816**

[sales@signscape.co.uk](mailto:sales@signscape.co.uk)

[www.signscape.co.uk](http://www.signscape.co.uk)

Serving the Sign Trade for over 40 years, we are a leading manufacturer of modular sign and display systems, notice boards & other information displays. Our 6 major sign systems are used and combined, to create a wide range of sign display solutions, including full signage schemes. With all products made to order, we specialise in tailoring solutions to suit each client, location and application.

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**Fax: 0141 774 6653**

[sales@insightsignsystems.com](mailto:sales@insightsignsystems.com)

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Insight is a trade only manufacturer, offering a made to measure service, with in-house powder coating. A wide range of aluminium signcases are available, ready to accept acrylic panels, with several trim styles to choose from, and various options including hinged opening fronts, gas strut assisted opening, stand-off brackets etc.

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[www.e-signfittings.co.uk](http://www.e-signfittings.co.uk)

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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.

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**Tel: 01743 465531**

**Fax: 01743 465532**

[sales@midwestdisplays.co.uk](mailto:sales@midwestdisplays.co.uk)

[www.MidWestDisplays.co.uk](http://www.MidWestDisplays.co.uk)

Mid West Displays stock a wide range of sign support systems. We also stock wall mounts, snap frames, mirror screws, cable/rod suspended systems, lighting, poster pockets and many more. We are pleased to be working with the highest quality materials at competitive prices.

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Brownings is one of the largest, TRADE ONLY suppliers of signage products in the UK. We manufacture poster frames, menu cases, slimlocks, signtrim, troughlights, acrylic-faced light boxes, flexfaced signage and now our new Texsign frames for internal use. Any size or quantity, from 1 off to multiple rollouts. We are happy to supply as lengths of extrusion, in kit form or as made-up signs.

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We manufacture poster frames, menu cases, slimlocks, signtrim, troughlights, acrylic-faced light boxes, flexfaced signage and now our new Texsign frames for internal use. Frames range from a 17mm "retro" extrusion to a 180mm deep double-sided application. The profiles can accept a digitally-printed image by way of a rubber keder attached to the edges of the print and can be changed in seconds.

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<b>Measurements</b>			
Socket Width	8mm		
Socket Length	10mm	Overall Standoff	11.5mm

Medium	100	500	1000
Sockets Only	£9.00	£31.25	£53.80
<b>Measurements</b>			
Socket Width	11mm		
Socket Length	13mm	Overall Standoff	16mm

Large	100	500	1000
Sockets Only	£12.50	£48.75	£85.00
<b>Measurements</b>			
Socket Width	20mm		
Socket Length	23mm	Overall Standoff	25mm



Colour Range	
Red	Cream
Orange	Yellow
Light Blue	Dark Blue
Light Green	Dark Green
Silver	Gold



SNAPFIX is UV stable frost resistant and able to withstand global temperature variations and comes with a **lifetime guarantee**

Small	250	500	1000
Complete Fixing	£21.00	£35.00	£66.00
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<b>Measurements</b>			
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Socket Width	8mm	Stud ball Dia	5.4mm
Stud base Dia	8mm	Overall Standoff	11.5mm

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Complete Fixing	£25.00	£41.00	£75.00
Sockets Only (Black or White)	£18.00	£25.00	£43.00
Studs Only	£19.00	£29.00	£46.00
<b>Measurements</b>			
Socket Length	13mm		
Socket Width	11mm	Stud ball Dia	8mm
Stud base Dia	15mm	Overall Standoff	16mm

Large	250	500	1,000
Complete Fixing	£38.00	£66.00	£110.00
Sockets Only (Black or White)	£25.00	£39.00	£68.00
Studs Only	£27.00	£42.00	£70.00
<b>Measurements</b>			
Socket Length	23mm		
Socket Width	20mm	Stud ball Dia	11mm
Stud base Dia	20mm	Overall Standoff	25mm

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Internal Thread	M5
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Socket Length	8mm
Overall Standoff	11.5mm

Medium	100
Brass	£26.00
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<b>Measurements</b>	
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Internal Thread	M8
Stud base Dia	11mm
Socket Length	9.5mm
Overall Standoff	13.5mm

Large	100
Brass	£33.00
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Internal Thread	M10
Stud base Dia	15mm
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Overall Standoff	13.5mm

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