

SIGN AFRICA

JOURNAL FOR THE VISUAL COMMUNICATION INDUSTRIES

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COVER STORY 18



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REASONS TO SWITCH TO DIGITAL FINISHING SOLUTIONS



26

KEEPING AHEAD OF INDUSTRY TRENDS IN SIGNAGE AND GRAPHICS



29

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HOT NEW PRODUCTS

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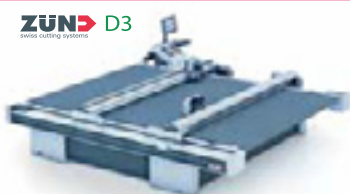
THE BENEFITS OF ACRYLIC PRINTING FOR LARGE FORMAT PRINTERS

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EDITOR'S NOTE

BY MEGGAN MCCARTHY, EDITOR

Visitors to the Graphics, Print & Sign Live Demo Expo, taking place from 5-7 October 2021, can discover innovative technology and product demonstrations of the latest equipment, media and substrates that have been launched since the last flagship expo in 2019. Be inspired to start your own business or diversify your existing business with the latest products. The event is sponsored by Platinum Sponsors Roland and Stixo Signage Supplies and is supported by media partners Sign Africa, Africa Print and Modern Marketing. We look forward to seeing you at the show!

Other features in this issue:

Much like the walls that surround them and the floor underneath, countertops are a blank canvas and offer all sort of opportunities when it comes to placing graphics. Be it generating new sales, improving brand awareness, providing information or promoting products, countertop graphics can be an extremely valuable marketing asset.

Acrylic printing is one sector that should be on every large format printer's list when considering new opportunities for increasing revenue. As a sector, it has been bucking the trend and has experienced a boom over the past year, with some printers who offer this application seeing an unprecedented influx of orders. Commonly used for photographic prints and signage, the pandemic has influenced a drastic shift towards creating acrylic splashback panels too.

Print can be impactful and a powerful storyteller, but how can we prove these facts to the print buyers who can benefit most? Mathew Faulkner, EMEA senior marketing manager, professional print, Canon Europe, spoke with experts from different parts of the print industry to bring a practical toolkit of examples to prove print's value.

While technology advances are driving many of these changes, other influences such as customer demand, increased use of personalisation, digitisation and 3D, as well as an orientation towards being more service-oriented, are all driving the industry to be innovative and cutting edge. Ultimately, companies in this industry are well-established, and poised to expand rapidly if they can capitalise on the right trends at the right opportunity.

With 3D printing making an impact on the digitalisation of manufacturing and the disruption of industries, the study found that AM is playing a significant role in enabling this transition. According to the study, which analysed key digital manufacturing trends among leading industrial parts manufacturers in Europe, 96% of respondents agreed that AM helps them to get products to market faster, with 100% of respondents recognising the importance of increasingly digitising their production workflows with the ability to produce parts on demand as the biggest driver of this behaviour.

Does moving to digital finishing mean substituting quality over quantity? No, it does not. What it means is that you – and your customers – can now benefit from efficiency, quality and importantly, safety. Now is the time to invest in the technology and tools that can unlock your potential and take your business to the next level, ensuring you can not only overcome the challenges faced today, but to also prepare for the needs of tomorrow.

Whatever you chose to focus on as your life's work has to be a lifetime commitment and takes work and a relentless attitude. It is essential for everyone during a crisis to show sincere interest in every single customer as an individual, to thank them for any purchases and invite him or her to return. Customer service is treating customers like houseguests or good friends. Make sure things are right and they will remember, tell their friends about your company and more specifically – about you.

Signing off

Meggan McCarthy

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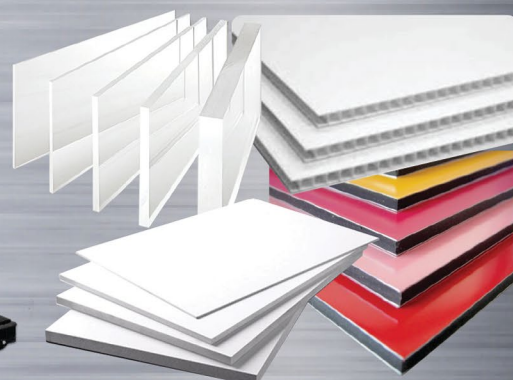
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HOT NEW PRODUCTS

CADLink SignLab 10

Creating digitally printed, vinyl cut, and print/cut signs and graphics is easy with SignLab. Functioning as a vector and bitmap design and production platform, SignLab allows users to drive multiple job queues with output to most printers, cutters, and hybrid print/cut devices. www.colorscreens.co.za



Epson Print Heads

The T3200-U3 ('T3200') enables simultaneous, high-quality, four-colour CMYK printing at high speed from a single print head. Furthermore, incorporating a heater in the print head makes printing possible even with highly viscous UV ink, and thus can provide an optimal digital printing environment, especially for printing, signage and product packages. It equips printers with the ability to deliver outstanding print quality in four-colour CMYK from a single print head. www.epson.co.za



Neschen Book Protection Film

Like filmolux® libre organic, filmolux® soft organic is made of bio-based polyethylene obtained from the renewable raw material sugar cane. Sugar cane is a versatile and rapidly renewable plant that can be used, for example, as a clean source of energy or as a raw material for the production of book protection film. It is REACH-compliant and therefore also APEO and BPA-free, and it can be easily bonded to all smooth surfaces.

www.neschen.de/en



GLM 64UV UV Printing Machine

The A2 desktop inkjet printer features high throughput, standard dual-UV LED lamps, one litre bulk ink, four colours (CMYK) as well as white and varnish colours that offer ideal printing quality for short to medium runs and on-demand printing. The machine can handle maximum 200mm high objects, has a 600mm x 400mm print area, comes with a user friendly LCD control panel to access the UV printer's special features and has a long working life span. www.gencotechlasermarking.co.za



Roland Vinyl Cutters

The GR2-640/540 (162.5 and 137.1cm /64" and 54") vinyl cutters provide an ideal balance between affordable pricing and superior cutting performance and are designed to integrate seamlessly with large format inkjet printers. With a maximum cutting speed of 1530mm/s, a maximum downforce of 600gf and smooth media feeding, the GR2 series achieves the precision cutting quality and high-volume productivity required by professional users. www.rolanddg.co.za



GLM P180 Eco Solvent Printer

The printer prints a maximum width of 1800mm with a printing speed of 15 square metres per hour and is upgradable to 28 square metres per hour. The unit comes with a one litre bulk inking system to decrease ink costs and a media drying system. The media dryer can dry different printing materials and constantly controls the temperature of the material on which it is printed.

www.gencotechlasermarking.co.za



Mimaki Printers

The JFX600-2513 and the JFX550-2513 build on the success of the JFX500-2131 large format UV inkjet printer, launched in 2012. The range of media these new models support, thanks to Mimaki's seventh-generation UV print technology, opens up the door for a myriad of applications, including large-scale decoration, sign displays and interior materials.

www.gsw.co.za



Chemical Transfer Print On Shirts

Uprint have announced the world's first chemical transfer print onto shirts, using a modified digital laser printer. Uprint have been working tirelessly on this new method to print onto light garments: a combination of a cold press, a unique chemical and the company's new Marine A paper. The prints are so resilient and stretchy, that you can even print onto white socks and white beanies.

www.uprintsa.co.za



CGS ORIS Proofing Papers

The new PearlPROOF Classic and PearlPROOF Premium OBA papers stand out with superior coating uniformity based on a special coating technology. They are characterised by reduced amounts of optical brightener, an extra coating layer as well as a special base paper, and ideal colour consistency. Besides that, all other positive and well-known parameters of CGS ORIS proofing papers remain constant, like the huge colour gamut, odourlessness or smooth satin surface.

www.digitalview.co.za

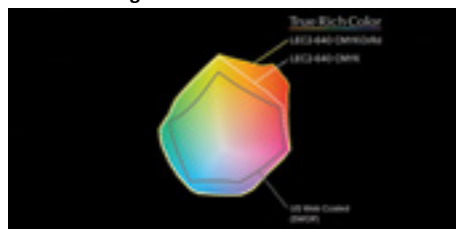


HOT NEW PRODUCTS

Roland Inks And Extension Table

EUV5 Orange and Red UV-curable inks are ideal for use in the VersaUV LEC2 series. In addition to CMYK, Clear, White and Primer, EUV5 UV ink now supports new Orange and Red inks as process colours. CMYK + Orange + Red expands the colour gamut by approximately 20%. With the addition of the new ET-64 extension table, the LEC2-640 can conveniently handle up to B1-size paper stocks for prototyping and mock-up production of small food, medicine and cosmetics packaging and more.

www.rolanddg.co.za



Contra Vision Performance Film

Performance Black Perforated Film is applied to the outside surface of the built-up channel letters. During the day, when it is not backlit, the sign appears black. When the sign is backlit at night, it takes on the colour of the translucent sign face used. The film in 20% transparency is a black on black perforated film intended for the production of dual-colour backlit signage. The company recommends this film to be used for medium-term, large-scale backlit external signage where close viewing is not required. www.midcomp.co.za



Fujifilm Wide Format Solutions

The Acuity Ultra R2 is a completely redesigned and significantly improved version of the Acuity Ultra, which itself set a new standard for superwide print production when it was launched in 2018. The Acuity Prime is an entirely new, mid-range flatbed that offers unmatched ease-of-use and print ROI. Both new printers take advantage of Fujifilm's renowned UV inkjet ink, manufactured in the UK in the company's multi-award winning factory.

www.fujifilmgraphicsystems.co.za



Trotec Q400 Laser

The laser cutter sets new standards by combining all the Trotec virtues users need for efficient laser cutting. With a working area of 1030 x 630mm and laser power of up to 100 watts, the Q400 cuts and engraves a wide variety of materials, such as: acrylic and wood (cut up to 15mm), textiles, paper or cardboard for signs, handicraft items, models or decorative items. The Q Series is a reliable laser for production. www.troteclaser.co.za



Expanded Supreme Wrapping Film Portfolio

See the impact of different kinds of light on Gloss Metallic Mystery Black and Gloss Metallic Mysterious Indigo, and marvel at the shifting iridescent shades of ColorFlow Gloss Hidden Forest and Gloss Metallic Pride Prismatic Grey. The films deliver excellent conformability around curves and recesses. Easy Apply™ RS adhesive technology makes application simple and fast and the films are easily removable, even after long-term use.

www.averydennison.com



NUtec Diamond D10-GF-MS21

The range is low smell and provides ideal outdoor durability as well as exceptional abrasion and chemical resistance. The new additional colour options for the Diamond eco-solvent alternative ink range are designed for Mimaki® SS21 printing. The ink range is now being offered with Orange and Light Black ink options, in addition to the standard 6 colour inkset of CMYK, Light Cyan and Light Magenta. www.nutecdigital.com



Canon Arizona 135 GT Flatbed Printer

Designed for outstanding productivity and application versatility, the easy-to-use printer produces exceptional image quality. This is thanks to its VariaDot greyscale printing technology, which uses advanced drop size selection techniques to deliver photo-realistic images. The flatbed printer offers sign makers, print service providers and offset and screen printers, among others, a smart technology investment to fulfil new business opportunities. www.canon.co.za



GCC LaserPro X500III

The product is a smart choice for laser cutting and engraving – providing high power wattage for quality cutting and outstanding throughput. Adding one 1.6X beam expander to the solution is key to achieve the uniformity of line width and spot size. The carriage design has been upgraded to elevate the quality. The vector and cutting quality is further enhanced thanks to an advanced mechanical system, helping users expand market share and meet customers' expectations.

www.gencotechlasermarking.co.za



SEF Atomic Sparkle

The best of two worlds, the heat transfer product sparkles and shimmers like glitter, but it is just as easy to cut and weed as FlexCut. Advantages: cutting blade does not wear out that quickly; no more glitter coming off – pollution free; lighter and more flexible than glitter; has a soft touch surface and it can be overlaid. It is PU water-based and suitable for cotton, polyester and blended fabrics and machine washing at 60°C.

www.rexxscreendigital.co.za



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SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS

South African Business Uses Drytac Film For Striking Wall Graphics

Family-owned sign and display business SignMax printed a colourful and calming design onto Drytac ReTac Smooth 75 using its HP Latex 335 printer, before installing the graphics at the facility to give the inside of the building a completely new feel.

The company used the polymeric PVC film to produce a series of eye-catching interior wall graphics, bringing elements of the natural world into an indoor environment.

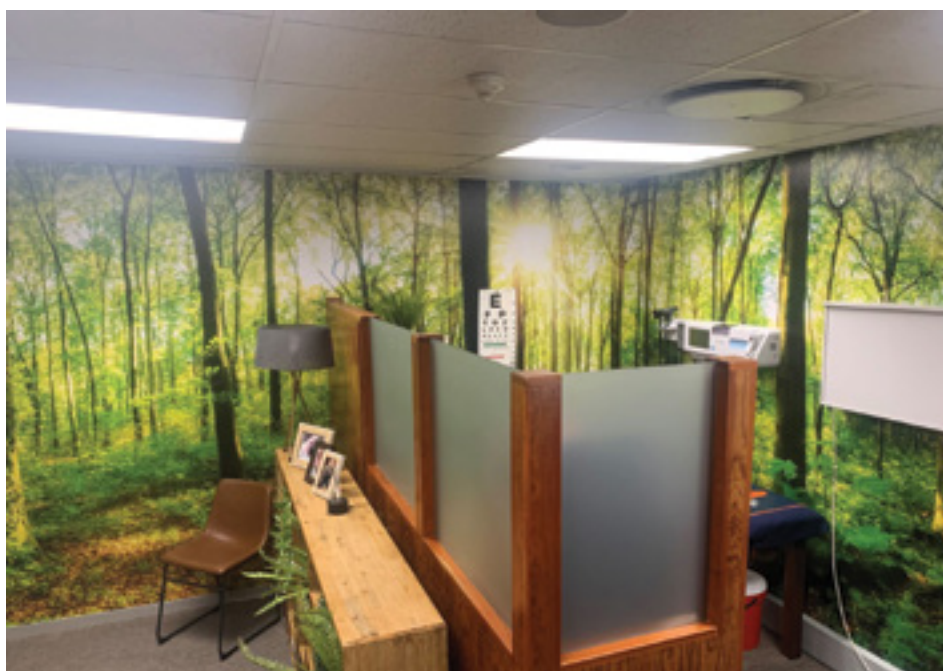
The company – founded by Theo Vermaak in 1987 and now managed by his son NJ – was tasked with producing a design that created a natural and calming atmosphere for visitors to its client, local neurosurgeon Dr. Francois van Niekerk.

SignMax only started using Drytac shortly before the project, but its success with these materials in other recent pieces of work led it to select Drytac ReTac Smooth 75, which was recommended by the team at Drytac's exclusive dealer in South Africa, Midcomp.

'We have only recently started using Drytac materials, but we are very excited to start using Drytac products more on future projects,' SignMax Managing Director NJ Vermaak said.

'ReTac Smooth 75 is a great product and prints come out looking awesome when combined with our HP Latex 335. Our clients are also impressed with the fact that the product can be removed when not needed anymore, with no damage to the applied surface.'

Such has been the success of SignMax's use of Drytac materials that the company is now exploring how the products can help it expand into new areas, in particular the wallpaper segment of the interior design market.



'As with most companies in business during the Covid-19 pandemic and coping with the subsequent lockdowns, we've had to be proactive and put new products to market,' Vermaak said. 'Using Drytac ReTac Smooth 75 means that we can offer our clients a new product we can trust, giving us confidence to enter a market that we have not yet explored.'

Aside from wallpapers, SignMax has also begun to explore other areas such as floor and counter-top graphics, as well as architectural films. 'The prospects for this market are looking great and we are excited and positive about future projects,'

Vermaak said. 'By combining Drytac films with our HP Latex printers, we are able to print vivid colours quickly, at a high quality, which is ideal for the decorative and retail market.'

Vermaak also commended the team at Midcomp for their advice and support. He concluded, 'Midcomp have been a pleasure to work with from day one. From purchasing printers, to ordering materials, they are a reputable team. Everyone within the team is helpful and friendly and they always offer great customer service.'

www.midcomp.co.za



Display products

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SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS CONTINUED

Epson Opens First-Ever Local Warehouse Facility



The new Epson warehouse facility, located at Ashworth Logistics Park in Longlake, will reduce costs for distributors, who can now have products delivered straight to their warehouses. The warehouse currently houses 80% of Epson's product range, but the team aims to have it fully stocked with a complete selection of products by early 2022.

Its first-ever local warehouse facility in Linbro Park is set to cut delivery times to distributors from more than a month to a week. 'This is a milestone achievement for Epson and a huge leap forward in improving our logistics infrastructure. We were

previously only able to deliver stock in six to seven weeks, but now we can do so in just six to seven days,' said Timothy Thomas, national sales manager at Epson South Africa.

Epson has further enhanced its customer service offering by opening a dedicated large format printer (LFP) showroom in Linbro Park that showcases existing and upcoming commercial LFP ranges, including photo, signage, technical design, textile, sublimation and direct-to-garment printers.

With LFP being a highly technical and specialist industry, the new showroom emulates industrial

environments, allowing channel partners and customers to experience Epson's products first-hand. The showroom can also be used for active demonstrations and to host training sessions for end-users, dealers and distributors.

'We envision our new warehouse and LFP showroom to be welcoming environments where customers and distributors can interact with our products, and where our partners can optimise their and our growth stories,' added Thomas.

www.epson.co.za

Colorscreen Announces Rebranding

Colorscreen has unveiled a refreshed brand identity. The rebranding shows the evolution of the company since its founding in 1980.

While this is a significant change, the company's core beliefs have not changed. Colorscreen has poured its heart and soul into creating a new image that would depict who it is as a company.

Colorscreen's MD, Hans W. Vogt (now well into his retirement), who started the business in 1980 and is still active in the company, shares the excitement in reaching a milestone by exiting the old look and bringing in the new.



www.colorsreen.co.za

Midcomp Installs First HP Latex 700W In South Africa

Midcomp has installed the first HP Latex 700W in South Africa at Fineline Design, a business that specialises in a multitude of services that include banners and flags, signage, stickers, posters, canvas and wallpaper, POS displays and design. The company also has a vehicle wrapping division known as Wrap Vehicles.

The machine allows users to print white without complexity, deliver vivid colours at high speed, get striking contrast using pure blacks, and expect sharp 4-point text, while retaining the renowned features of HP Latex printers.

The company initially outsourced its printing before buying from Midcomp over the years. Fineline Design Managing Director Manny De Souza, who is always on the lookout for new machinery every four to five years, explained that the machine was bought after conducting much research, adding the need for an innovation that prints white ink.

'We can get the same results as we would with a flatbed printer,' he said, explaining the machine's ability to reverse print onto vinyl, put down white ink and apply onto Perspex. He praised the speed of the machine, the lower running costs as well as the advantage of white ink. An advantage of white ink includes the ability to print white onto solid black cast vinyl, which create artistic wraps for vehicles.

'The ink is way more robust, from a scratch-resistant point of view, and that is without the overcoat. The machine has overcoat as well. The colour gamut is way higher, so the machine gives you a higher ink yield, or vibrancy,' said De Souza.



Manny De Souza, Fineline Design.

De Souza also emphasised the loading system, as well as the curing system, compared to the older models. He also said the print head size of the machine is bigger and has more nozzles: 'It's the fastest, most productive machine I have.'

He expects the company's fleet branding area of the business to grow thanks to the overcoat feature. With three layers of overcoat, there is no need to laminate – another cost-saving aspect.

De Souza said the service from Midcomp was great, that the installation went well and that the minor issues that were experienced were sorted out quickly: 'I have known Midcomp for a very long time and they have always helped me where they can,' he said, adding that Midcomp often phone Fineline Design to ensure everything is running smoothly.

www.midcomp.co.za and
www.finelinedesign.co.za

Neschen Coating Searching For Distributors In South Africa

Neschen Coating GmbH is looking for partners in South Africa as well as in other Sub-Saharan regions. The international company is renowned for modern self-adhesive media and coating solutions for a variety of applications.

These range from book protection and repair films to graphic media and industrial coatings. The company manufactures materials for visual communication, from easy dot® technology and over double-sided mounting films, to digitally printable wallpapers and interior

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SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS CONTINUED

Vic Bay Apparel Grows On-Demand Operation With Kornit Digital DTG Technology

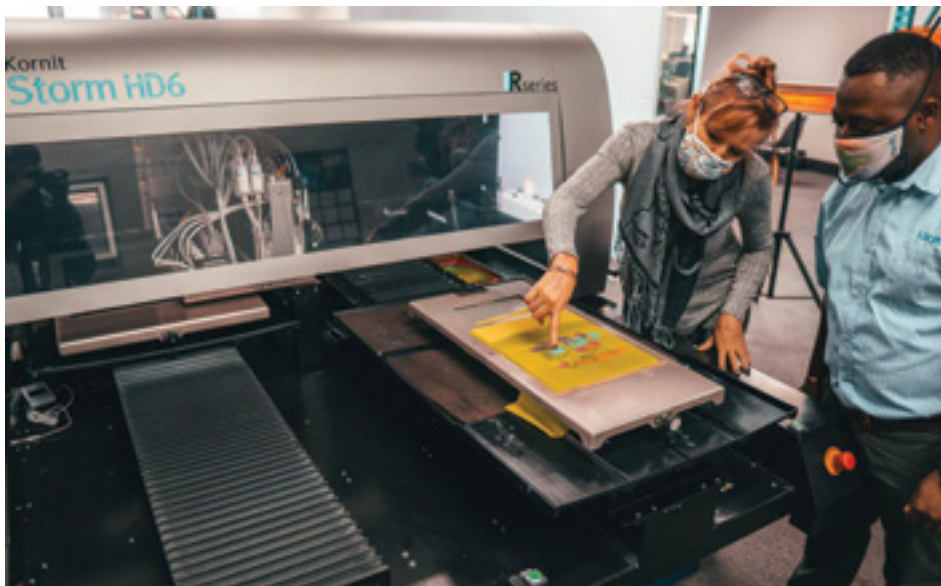
After researching available options, Vic Bay Apparel chose to implement Kornit Digital's direct-to-garment (DTG) technology, which presented reliability and a secure supply of consumables in the long term.

Based in Johannesburg and in other major centres in South Africa, Vic Bay has been a manufacturer, supplier and wholesaler of basic T-shirts and golf shirts for 25 years, supplying blank apparel to decorators and resellers of promotional clothing. They predominantly service resellers in the tourism, workwear, printing, embroidery and advertising markets.

According to Vic Bay Johannesburg's managing director, Mike Shiller, the growing demand for small orders and multi-colour designs was a poor match for traditional screen printing, a challenge that ultimately led them to consider DTG production.

'I bought our first DTG printer from (South African distributor) Rexx Screen & Digital Supplies, and since then I have purchased two additional Kornits,' said Shiller. 'Our latest is a Kornit Storm HD6 that incorporates the latest full RGB full-colour printing in 1200dpi density, which offers our clients a photorealistic print on garments.'

According to Shiller, the systems have enabled his business to scale and meet new challenges, demands and opportunities. When Covid-19 disrupted the market suddenly, he saw businesses with a strong web-based operation weathering



the storm more effectively than others, and Vic Bay responded by launching a new site dedicated to B2B order management, offering enterprise customers the versatility they would need.

'We are now one of the first truly online print-on-demand drop shippers servicing the print and embroidery community in South Africa, and have seen a dramatic increase in volumes month-over-month since introducing this new web-based

operation,' he said.

'I would certainly recommend Kornit as the best DTG print system available,' said Shiller. 'It's a true testament to their capabilities that some of the largest and most diverse producers worldwide have turned to Kornit for their online businesses and only use Kornit to imprint apparel.'

www.rexxscreendigital.co.za and www.vicbay.co.za

Midcomp Installs Latex Machine At Vehicle Wrapping Business

Mint Wrapworks, a specialist in vehicle and fleet branding, has purchased a HP Latex 560 from Midcomp. The printer allows users to address production peaks in-house, get vivid, consistent image quality throughout the life of the printer, and with quick loading and automatic maintenance, they can respond fast and keep costs low.

Mint Wrapworks director Mathew Wilkinson, who was previously using a HP Latex 280 printer needed something faster. 'The biggest benefit to running a HP latex machine in the vehicle branding industry is by far the minimal curing times. This enables us to speed up the whole production process. The new machine assists my business in every way possible and it is cheaper to run on power than my old three phase machine.' He also said that the new loading system assists in making the loading



and offloading substrates even quicker than before.

With the HP 560, the company can comfortably wrap a vehicle with a print that has been produced at one third of the time that it took another solvent machine that they were also using to do.

Another advantage of moving from solvent to latex entails no smell or hazardous fumes coming from the latex ink, which is healthier for print operators. The ink is Green Guard Gold certified and the demand for that is becoming more prevalent across all industries, which makes HP latex PSP's adaptive to end user needs.

According to Wilkinson, the machine could open

up the market for fabric wallpaper and printed pigments vinyl, which was previously only possible on a UV printer or with silkscreen methods, 'We could venture into other markets such as fabric printing, etc. but I'm currently focused only on the vehicle branding industry, as that is my passion.'

The company uses Midcomp's Pay Per Use (PPU) system, a comprehensive and customised programme that supports the HP Latex 300 and 500 series printers and ensures that users pay a fixed 'per square metre' charge for the square metres they print. 'We haven't printed a lot since we have received our machine, but it is great to know there is always consignment stock on hand. The biggest benefit will come when the machine needs to have

its service maintenance intervals, as these are expensive,' said Wilkinson. 'With PPU, these service maintenance kits are included in the square metre cost. This avoids large amounts of cash outlays, as you never know what situation you will be in. Cost per square metre is cheaper on the PPU than my cost per square metre on my previous generation or printers.'

Wilkinson is also impressed with Midcomp's service: 'Midcomp's service is always great. They are always on the ball and willing to help.'

www.midcomp.co.za and
www.mintwrapworks.com

Exion Corp Finalises Sales Of CNC Router And Channel Letter Bending Machine

Exion Corp recently announced that it finalised the sale of a Black Rhino CNC router and V3 semi-automatic channel letter bending machine to Romano Group.

'We are excited to announce that we finalised the sale of both our Black Rhino CNC router (tailor-made to accommodate Romano's needs) and our V3 channel letter machine.

We value the trust the company has placed in our support and expertise and look forward to a long-lasting relationship,' said Jay Kim, Managing Director of Exion Corp.

'I am keenly anticipating the outcome of Romano's investment. Given his past performance, the key to his success has been the fast turnaround time in producing superior quality signage. I firmly believe that the introduction of our machines will greatly enhance his capabilities.'

After a three-year break, Romano Group is back in the signage industry. Under the experienced leadership of CEO Alexi Romano, and together with his motivated team of professionals, Romano Group aims to once again be a major player in the industry.

'The Black Rhino router is an affordable, robust and high-performance CNC machine that will enable us to cut and groove ACM, acrylic, aluminium or timber large area sheets (2030 x 3050mm). The semi-automatic letter bending machine will enable us to fabricate 3D channel letters at a pace of less than 15 minutes a letter,' said Romano.

'We will use the machines to supply cladding, display, shopfitting and signage products to end-user clients in our target market, such as those in the banking, fuel, motor, leisure and retail industries.' Romano concluded by saying that he found Exion's service exceptionally helpful and technically mindful.

www.exion.co.za and www.romano.co.za



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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Kornit Digital Offering High-Value Decorative And Functional Textile Applications With Voxel8 Acquisition



Kornit Digital has acquired Voxel8, expanding its additive manufacturing technology portfolio for the next generation of sustainable on-demand textile production.

The advanced 3D technology will enable the deployment of unique, high-value decorative and functional applications for leading global brands.

Voxel8's advanced additive manufacturing technology for textiles allows for digital fabrication of functional features with zonal control of material properties, in addition to using high-performance elastomers adhering to inkjet technology.

'Voxel8's innovative technologies and talent will help us accelerate the execution of our 4.0 strategy to digitise sustainable, on-demand textile production,' said Ronen Samuel, Kornit Digital Chief Executive Officer. 'With this advanced and proven 3D technology, we will disrupt the business of fashion, empowering completely new creative decorative concepts and never-before-seen functional textile applications, while exploring new

lucrative opportunities in the functional apparel and footwear markets.'

'By integrating Voxel8's technology into Kornit's product roadmap, we will be able to transform numerous market segments and verticals, accelerating our collective visions and technology advancements,' said Kobi Mann, Kornit Digital Chief Technology Officer. 'Voxel8 offers direct 3D print-on-part capabilities, advanced design software that can be easily integrated with any production floor software workflow, and versatile chemistry enabling on-the-fly formulation of high-performance elastomers to change the material properties of the resulting printed structures by multiple orders of magnitude. This means reflective, high-density, silicone and metallics, as well as compression elements for sports and therapeutics, protection elements like cushioning and impact resistance, and functionality applications like anti-slip, waterproofing and other qualities combining form and function that are key to Kornit's vision of digitising production in every conceivable manner.'

'Voxel8's innovative and sustainable technology — tested by some of the world's leading global fashion and footwear brands such as Hush Puppies, which is part of Wolverine Worldwide, enables the digital creation of unique decorative and functional applications, while eliminating time and waste from the manufacturing process,' said Fred von Gottberg, Voxel8's President and Chief Executive Officer.

'Voxel8 shares Kornit's vision of transforming the textile industry and couldn't be more excited to be part of the journey to build the operating system of sustainable fashion on demand. We look forward to working together to embed Voxel8's technology into Kornit's customer offerings, which will collectively provide endless possibilities of enhanced applications and solutions.'

www.rexxscreendigital.co.za

EFI Wide Format Printer Expands Business's Capabilities



Prior to installing an EFI Pro 16h UV LED wide format printer manufactured by EFI, printing

rigid substrate jobs was a multistep process at AlphaGraphics Portsmouth, involving a roll-to-roll machine and the manual mounting of printed sheets to boards.

Looking to grow its large format business among growing post-Covid market demand, the AlphaGraphics franchise invested in the Pro 16h printer. Purchased from authorised EFI dealer Nazdar SourceOne®, the hybrid roll-to-roll/flatbed inkjet printer bolsters the services that the premier marketing and printing shop offers to its local clients operating in a wide range of vertical markets, including food, medical manufacturing, real estate, government and education.

Co-owners Chris Carrier and Chris Oberg purchased the business in October 2019 and brought the AlphaGraphics franchise brand to the previously independent shop. Carrier and Oberg brought a vision with them to grow the business and had the idea to invest in a hybrid machine that could bring more efficiency and greater variety and capabilities than what the shop's existing roll-to-roll printers offered. 'We have a philosophy of continuous improvement when it comes to sales and operations,' said Oberg.

Working closely with their Nazdar sales contact, Carrier and Oberg researched the EFI printer and were impressed with its performance. Strategically designed with a comprehensive package of features to assure the lowest total cost of ownership, superior image quality and an ability to handle a wide range of substrates, the Pro 16h printer promised a growth in possibilities that Carrier and Oberg were looking for. 'We try and push our customers toward creative thinking, but people equate creativity with higher costs,' said Oberg. 'The Pro 16h gives us the ability to push creative boundaries at a lower cost.'

The availability of local service from the EFI display graphics operations located a short distance from AlphaGraphics Portsmouth — and valuable input and feedback from a network of other AlphaGraphics owners — helped convince Oberg and Carrier of their decision. 'We are active in our network of other AlphaGraphics owners who use a lot of different flatbeds,' said Carrier. 'There was a large contingency of owners who were glad they went with EFI and said they would make the same choice if they had to go back.'

The duo is also able to bounce ideas off their AlphaGraphics colleagues, who are experienced with the same printer and handle similar customer projects. 'Having that additional network of support goes a long way,' Carrier said.

www.gsw.co.za

SwissQprint Showcasing Neon Inks And Roll-To-Roll Printers



swissQprint is showcasing its latest developments, including its neon inks for UV printing that enable eye-catching signage and event applications.

Also to be presented is the speed model of the Karibu roll to roll printer for high productivity, as well as the option for automatic, double-sided roll to roll printing for the Karibu model range.

swissQprint and its international sales partners will be exhibiting at FESPA Global Print Expo in Amsterdam from 12-15 October 2021. The company said it is very much looking forward to meeting the community and exchanging ideas.

www.sign-tronic.co.za

Large Format Specialist Invests In Kongsberg Finishing Solution



Global Imaging has invested in a new Kongsberg C64 table.

With Ontario-based large format specialist Global Imaging servicing a growing number of customers and handling more projects, the company said the investment in Kongsberg digital finishing solutions would help increase throughput speed and boost productivity at the production stage.

Global Imaging has made a significant investment in Kongsberg digital finishing solutions. The designer, printer and manufacturer of bespoke Point of Purchase displays has invested in a new Kongsberg C64 table complete with automated board feeder and stacker.

'At Global Imaging, we are embracing the fact that advances in technology and materials mean that the only limiting factor to creativity is how far your own imagination can take you,' said Gerald Maister, Vice President of Global Imaging. 'The digital revolution has led to a creative revolution, giving us the freedom to work in large scale formats even for one-off custom orders. With this latest investment, we are increasing our own capabilities to deliver against the most creative designs and fulfil the imagination potential of our designers and customers.'

'Our in-house design team prides itself on delivering the impactful displays our customers want and we believe their imagination deserves an equally imaginative approach to digital printing and display fabrication,' said Maister. 'The C64 enables us to deliver the very best finish to make our customers' visions a reality, while the investment in the automated feeder stacker ensures that we can achieve more in less time. The underside camera alone, which takes away the manual processes of checking each sheet and calculating registration marks, will save us up to 30 minutes on each job.'

Global Imaging took advantage of the wide array of specialist tooling available for the C64, adding the Kongsberg High Frequency Vibracut Knife Tool, which, with its powerful motor, is ideal for cutting heavily recycled board at efficient speeds, as well as the Rigid Material Knife Tool that excels at everything from lightweight detailed work to cutting heavy rigid board like plastic foamed 3mm PVC.

'The C64 delivers the highest levels of performance,' said Vince Tuccitto, Kongsberg PCS Territory Sales Manager for eastern Canada. 'With its state-of-the-art, rock-solid engineering and aerospace technology, it combines a steel tabletop with aluminium honeycomb core, a rack and pinion drive system and dynamic table mapping to deliver the greatest cutting accuracy and consistency. With the addition of the optional tooling combination, the team can manufacture large displays quickly

and easily while being confident in achieving the best quality of final print and cut.'

www.kongsbergsystems.com

Zünd UK Achieves Environmental Management Certification



ISO 14001:2015 is the environmental management standard that provides an international framework to help organisations minimise their impact on the environment and comply with environmental laws and regulations.

Zünd UK is proud to announce that the business has achieved the certification as part of their work towards continuous environmental improvement.

Louise McCord, Operations, Quality and HR Manager at Zünd UK said, 'As a company that operates all over the UK, we strive to limit the environmental impact of our activities and use our resources sparingly. We try to balance economic, environmental and social responsibilities in everything we do, and to have achieved certification within a few months of deciding to apply for accreditation was an achievement the whole team can be proud of. This gives us and our customers the reassurance that the processes we follow at all times take account of our environmental responsibilities.'

Recent initiatives from Zünd UK include the use of the VYN app, a SmartVideoNotes data application designed to capture and share information from the field, which can then be analysed and reviewed remotely to enable tracking and logging of actionable next steps, based on AI-driven outcomes. The use of the VYN App plays a key part in helping Zünd UK to reduce the company's overall carbon footprint by taking company vehicles off the road for pre-installation site surveys or on-site support call-outs.

The company has also invested in a new fleet of vehicles that meets the Euro 6 emissions standards.



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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Euro 6 is the name given to a set of limits for harmful exhaust emissions produced by any vehicle powered by petrol or diesel engines. Nicki Kay, Managing Director at Zünd UK said, 'We are also in the process of installing multiple Electric Vehicle charge points at our St Albans, UK head office in anticipation of the mass migration to electric powered travel.'

www.midcomp.co.za

Metamark Vinyl Used In Tea Branding Project



Metamark MD5, a high performance grade polymeric calendered self-adhesive vinyl for printers using a whole range of inks, was used in another branding project. Tea company Clipper wanted to elevate its visible presence at the point of sale and beyond in cafés.

Thanks to some creative work by the Vertiworks team and Clipper, the idea has now seen the light of day and is attracting grateful tea aficionados to Jimmy's, a well known and much loved local café.

Framed posters promote Clipper's tea in a very Dorset-like context, highly personalised to the county's distinctive geography. The cuppa occupies the subject foreground against a backdrop suggesting rolling green bisected at the horizon and transitioning into a blue sky dotted with gulls. The posters are framed in rustic wood and occupy various sites at Jimmy's. Branded awnings complete the ensemble and it all does a wonderful job of extending the brand's reach beyond traditional point of sale in the café's interior.

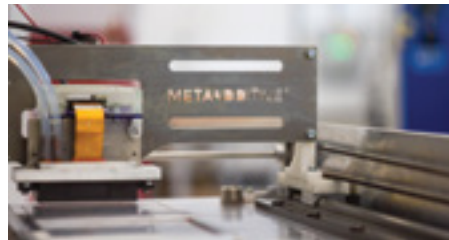
The intention is to create hyper-local, bespoke campaigns along the same lines on a much more widely distributed basis. Digital print as provisioned by the team at Vertiworks is of course ideal for such an application. Vertiworks can economically produce promotional print, personalised to geography and application, in quantities of one and up. Vertiworks also has a well proven project-management expertise, so keeping track of the campaigning as it hits significant scale is a given.

The printed graphics produced by Vertiworks and used to brand Jimmy's were made using Matt laminated Metamark MD5. MD5 has become something of a staple with Vertiworks, and its MD-Class credentials will really help with the Clipper project. The product is consistent from roll to roll and batch to batch, and, coupled with Vertiworks' accomplished print management and production skills, will yield results that tightly adhere to a very well-managed brand specification.

Living as we do in an age where pressing a button results in a print issuing from a wide format printer, it is easy to forget that a great deal of operational expertise and technical capability actually underpin the successful delivery of a project with corners as widely distributed as Clipper's. Those elements are founded on experience and a conscientious approach to business, neither of which submit to automation.

www.sytech.co.za

Xaar Printhead Chosen For Additive Manufacturing



The collaborative approach between Xaar and Meta Additive began last year, after Meta Additive had experienced difficulties sourcing printheads with sufficient capability to deliver the performance they required.

Following a meeting with Xaar and Meta Additive's CTO, Kate Black, despite lockdown conditions, a Xaar 1003 printhead had been selected and supplied in under four weeks, and the application was up and running immediately. The reliability and performance of Xaar's printheads are proving key for Meta Additive as they revolutionise additive manufacturing in volume metal and ceramic 3D printing (M3DP).

The wide operating window and unique technologies within the Xaar 1003 printhead enabled Meta Additive to use a variety of fluids that had previously been seen as too difficult to jet. Xaar's printhead architecture and unique TF Technology, High Laydown Technology and High Viscosity capability, in conjunction with the technical support from Xaar's Advanced

Applications and Technologies Group, helped Meta Additive move beyond the conventional limits of inkjet printing.

'After initially finding it impossible to gain access to a sufficiently capable printhead, the arrival of Xaar's 1003 product, with its unique technologies and ability to handle a wide range of fluids, was a game-changer for our development process,' said Black. 'With the remarkable performance and operating window of the Xaar 1003, and Xaar's willingness to engage in open, truly two-way collaboration and development, we have seen the partnership deliver unprecedented progress and genuine innovation in the M3DP field.'

The award of a R24 million (£1.2 million) Innovate UK SMART grant will build on this development as Meta Additive and Xaar work with The Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC) and Epivalence to achieve metal 3D-printing of multi-materials at scale. Mike Seal, Xaar's Head of Advanced Applications, Technologies and Fluids said, 'Our work with Meta Additive and its binder jetting innovation is as creative as it is relevant to today's evolving manufacturing environment and above all demonstrates the role that inkjet technology and collaboration between forward-thinking businesses is playing in pushing the boundaries of inkjet.'

www.xaar.com

Marabu Group Expands Its Textile Printing Footprint With ICON Inks Acquisition



The purchase of ICON Inks allows Marabu to expand its addressable segments to include textile printing, increase its international footprint, extend its product portfolio and further strengthen customer service and centricity.

'We have high hopes for this acquisition,' stated Jon Bultemeyer, Executive Vice President, Business Unit Screen and Pad Printing Inks. 'We are always looking to identify segments with strong future prospects. Until recently, our focus had consciously not included textiles. But the market environment is very dynamic and it is important that our business is broadly based.'

Textile printing remains one of the largest global screen printing segments. ICON Inks is a leading brand and this acquisition gives us access to new markets and new skills. ICON Inks has a high profile in Asia and is a valuable addition to our existing Marabu ink offering. By expanding our product portfolio, we are now able to offer screen printing inks for textiles, in addition to our pad printing solutions.'

In 2020, Marabu launched its pioneering Maqua® Pad MAP ink. This premium-quality solution is the world's first water-based pad printing ink. ICON Inks products are an ideal addition to the existing portfolio and will help Marabu extend its focus on water-based products and expand its textile printing footprint. As Bultemeyer said, 'Textile printing is an exciting field for us. Inks vary by type, depending on the use case. They can be based on water, solvent, plastisol or silicone.'

Current ICON Inks products are employed by many leading manufacturers, predominantly in Asia. Marabu will initially continue to offer the existing portfolio unchanged, so ICON Inks customers can be sure of consistently reliable quality. Marabu plans to make the product offering global.

www.marabu-inks.com

Agfa UV LED Inkjet System Expands Production Capabilities

Customers of GSP, a provider of high-impact visual



Paul DeGolyer and Elaine Scrima, GSP Retail with Thomas Kinney, Agfa.

solutions for the retail market, will benefit from the Jeti Tauro H3300 UHS' cutting-edge technology. The UV LED system is 30% faster than its predecessors and combines industry-leading print quality with versatility and productivity. This ultra-high-speed Jeti Tauro H3300 UHS features an automated unloader for semi-automation.

GSP is expanding their production capabilities with the addition of the first Jeti Tauro H3300 UHS LED system in the U.S. The company delivers in-store marketing programmes to more than 70,000 nationwide retail locations from its four G7-certified print facilities.

'Our partnership with GSP continues to flourish with the installation of the Jeti Tauro H3300 UHS,' stated Deborah Hutcheson, director of strategic business development and distribution at Agfa Corporation North America. 'This historical milestone marks the 12th Agfa press established

across GSP's multiple locations, culminating in the first-ever Jeti Tauro H3300 UHS with semi-automation.'

'Choosing to add this technology to our portfolio illustrates the partnership between our two companies,' said Elaine Scrima, GSP vice president of operations. 'Our ability to grow and enhance our customer-facing offerings is predicated by our vendors growing with us. The Agfa Jeti Tauro H3300 UHS is an important part of our growth strategy. We are excited to be the first U.S. based Agfa partner to utilise this technology.'

Nicknamed 'The Beast', the latest Jeti Tauro H3300 UHS UV LED inkjet engine prints media up to 3.3m wide in four or six colours at speeds up to 600 sqm/h. Ruggedly built and fit for 24/7 heavy-duty workloads, the Jeti Tauro H3300 UHS is a versatile LED system that can print on rigid and roll media at top quality with the lowest ink consumption. It is well-suited for corrugated cardboard package printing with extended vacuum zones and media guides.

Characterised by a wide colour gamut and high colour vibrancy, Agfa's GREENGUARD Gold certified Anuvia UV LED inks provide patented 'Thin Ink Layer' technology, resulting in the lowest ink consumption on the market. Asanti workflow software powers the Jeti Tauro H3300 UHS controlling and automating the entire printing process.

www.agfa.com

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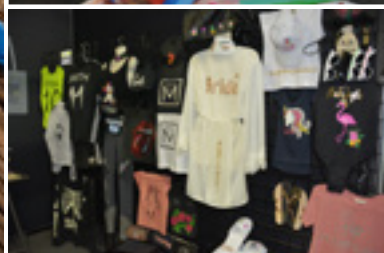
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THE BENEFITS OF ACRYLIC PRINTING

FOR LARGE FORMAT PRINTERS

BY MARK SOLLMAN, MIMAKI EUROPE

As businesses weather this uncertain time, many look to expand their offering. Acrylic printing is one sector that should be on every large format printer's list when considering new opportunities for increasing revenue.

As businesses weather this uncertain time, many look to expand their offering. Acrylic printing is one sector that should be on every large format printer's list when considering new opportunities for increasing revenue.

As a sector, it has been bucking the trend and has experienced a boom over the past year, with some printers who offer this application seeing an unprecedented influx of orders. Commonly used for photographic prints and signage, the pandemic has influenced a drastic shift towards creating acrylic splashback panels too.

What is it about acrylic printing that makes it so appealing?

1. Moving into new markets: Covid-19 has pushed many companies to reassess their business and consider whether they need to invest in new technology or expand into new sectors. Adding acrylic printing opens up a new array of interior and exterior applications. Printers can also expand their portfolio of customisable products with acrylic, with the technology allowing for affordable and cost effective short runs.
2. Look inside and outside for applications: as more people are confined indoors, there has been a significant uptake in interior decorating applications, which acrylic excels at, with varying possibilities for customisable prints. However, acrylic is a material that can easily work for both indoor and outdoor applications, with the durability to create long-lasting outdoor signs and graphics. Protective applications are another key area for acrylic, as many businesses request acrylic splashback panels and personalised food covers.



Acrylic is highly versatile and can be easily printed and lasered for various applications.

3. A medium that allows for creativity: acrylic is incredibly versatile, with the ability to be bent and lasered. This gives users the opportunity to work with it, cut into it and print on it for their desired outcome. It is also possible to print on transparent and slanted surfaces and on a variety of thicknesses (2.5cm up to 76.2cm/1 inch up to 30 inches). Additionally, printing both on the back and front of transparent surfaces allows the user to create immersive layered designs.
4. Photographic quality – acrylic printing has long been renowned for its high-quality results. The technology offers a variety of compatible inks to achieve different effects or increase colour accuracy. White ink is a standout example when it comes to acrylic printing. In fact, using sand-blasted acrylic on one side further heightens the intensity of the ink. 🔄

Acrylic splashback panels.

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REASONS TO SWITCH TO DIGITAL FINISHING SOLUTIONS

BY FRANK ADEGEEST, KONGSBERG VP



Historically, hand finishing was always seen as a sign of quality – and is still seen as such in many markets. But in today's demanding, fast-paced world of sign, display and even packaging, demand means that the care and attention of hand finishing is not sustainable for a business with its sights set on a strong future.

So, does moving to digital finishing mean substituting quality over quantity? No, it does not. What it means is that you – and your customers – can now benefit from efficiency, quality and importantly, safety. Now is the time to invest in the technology and tools that can unlock your potential and take your business to the next level, ensuring you can not only overcome the challenges faced today, but to also prepare for the needs of tomorrow.

Overcoming hurdles to meet today's challenges

Customer demand for increased accuracy, consistency and efficiency – needs which had already grown considerably due to shifting consumer trends – has dramatically increased in the wake of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. You are now facing pressure for better printing and finishing for both in-store applications, where innovative POS displays and retail-ready packaging are used to attract consumer attention, and in the booming e-commerce market where quality packaging is helping to improve the consumer experience and build brand equity.

The industry has also witnessed an increasing call for shorter runs among these same e-commerce brands, a result of further demand for more personalised packaging, and – as many countries of the world begin re-opening to consumers – a returning demand for more regional and localised in-store marketing campaigns.

Many digital printers, particularly smaller businesses, have previously faced considerable hurdles when looking to invest in in-house digital finishing solutions, which can help meet the challenges of today. But now, things have changed.

Innovation is the key for success today, and tomorrow

Necessity might well be seen as the mother of invention, but customer needs are undoubtedly what drives innovation. While businesses like yours might historically have been required to house an array of equipment across your shop floor to handle a range of different materials, applications or finishes, did you know that technological advances mean that previous obstacles, such as a lack of space or prohibitive costs, are no longer the issues they once were? Today,

many of these tasks can all be handled with just a single device.

Robust, industrial devices that deliver reliability, consistency and maximise productivity have addressed today's key pain points, while simultaneously removing the obstacles which have, until now, prevented many businesses from investing in their own digital finishing equipment.

A tool for every task, and every design idea

As brands seek to capture market share with standout POS and packaging designs, how is a small business supposed to cope with the continued development of new substrates? Having the right tools to handle these new processes manually is simply unrealistic, but thankfully the advances in digital tooling technology have kept pace.

While the challenge for tool developers has been to ensure they meet the objective of delivering the highest quality performance at the most reasonable cost, the gains to your business are manifold. Not only do you benefit from new tools developed to achieve specific tasks, such as an innovative new enhancement in knife blades or entirely new router bits, but these same advances also deliver new freedoms and boost creativity in design.

With increased demand for more environmentally friendly and potentially lower-grade materials, the ability to work with new, different substrates empowers you with the freedom to design innovative creations that had previously been impossible to manufacture, and therefore pointless to conceive. This shift provides the double advantage of delivering against customer demand for innovative new product design, while protecting you against prohibitive cost implications.

All of this means the solution is clear – an investment in digital finishing may previously have required lots of space and significant investment, but today there is more choice available to small businesses who realise the time has come to switch their mindset and business to digital finishing. 🔄

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THINK CREATIVELY ABOUT HOW TO USE COUNTERTOP GRAPHICS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE



BY SHAUN HOLDOM, DRYTAC

Countertops are the point where a business will have one of its first interactions with its customers. They are prominent features in many locations including retail, restaurants, bars, gyms, medical settings, hotels, schools and more, and present an incredibly unique way of connecting with people.

When it comes to capturing the attention of – and interacting with – people in today's fast-paced world, retailers, brands and other settings need to think creatively and consider how to best use their environment to their advantage.

Have your customers thought about counters to interact with people?

Much like the walls that surround them and the floor underneath, countertops are a blank canvas and offer all sort of opportunities when it comes to placing



graphics. Be it generating new sales, improving brand awareness, providing information or promoting products, countertop graphics can be an extremely valuable marketing asset.

While these graphics may be used by many brands for decoration and raising awareness, there is also the potential to add useful functionality to further boost interaction with people.

Take for example a fast-food restaurant counter, here, graphics could be installed to display a menu and highlight special offers on food, as well as instructing customers how to order their food online via a printed, scannable QR code integrated into the design.

Then there are customer service desks in settings such as shopping malls. Graphics placed on these countertops could feature a map of the shopping centre as well as a QR code that the consumer could scan to access an online version of that same mall map.

In education, students could scan a QR code that takes them to a digital learning portal that allows them to access more materials online. These are just a few examples, but the possibilities for countertop graphics are seemingly endless. By working with your customers, you can come up with all sorts of unique and thought-provoking ideas that could add a whole new dimension to marketing and branding strategies.

Adhesive technology means that countertop graphics will not slide when installed. This offers a significant advantage over traditional printed mats that often slip and slide over the counter, causing issues for the consumer and brand alike. There are also a range of permanent and removable options, suitable for either short-term or longer-term installations.

Have your customers thought about counters to interact with people?

While your customers will almost certainly be aware of the advantages of window, wall and floor graphics, they may not have thought about using their counters to interact with people. The addition of graphics to countertops offers all sorts of benefits in many environments. 📌

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SPEEDING UP DIGITALISATION

WITH ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING AND 3D PRINTING

BY HP



A new study by HP, in partnership with 3dbpm Research, shows that 3D printing and additive manufacturing (AM) are increasingly gaining traction. Sustainability, reliability and flexibility are contributing to this.

With 3D printing making an impact on the digitalisation of manufacturing and the disruption of industries, the study found that AM is playing a significant role in enabling this transition. According to the study, which analysed key digital manufacturing trends among leading industrial parts manufacturers in Europe, 96% of respondents agreed that AM helps them to get products to market faster, with 100% of respondents recognising the importance of increasingly digitising their production workflows with the ability to produce parts on

demand as the biggest driver of this behaviour.

In addition, it was discovered that 63% of European parts manufacturers who took part in the survey will invest from R1,7 million (€100,000) to over R17 million (€1 million) in digitalisation over the next 12 months, as the power of this agile ecosystem and technological capabilities are proving themselves in the most demanding of circumstances.

Additive manufacturing helps them
get a product to market faster

96%

of respondents agree that additive
manufacturing helps them get a
product to market faster



The HP AM Trends in EMEA Report dissects the motivations and investment strategies of manufacturers across five key European markets: France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Benelux and the United Kingdom. Led by 3dpbm, a sample of industrial parts manufacturers of varying sizes and across a broad range of specialisations were independently surveyed.

The study examines how firms that have already implemented digital and AM manufacturing processes for the production of industrial parts perceive the benefits of pursuing such a strategy, and to what extent they expect the macrotrend to continue to accelerate in the short and medium-term.

'A digital transformation of manufacturing is underway,' said Guayente Sanmartin, Global Head and General Manager, HP 3D Printing Multi Jet Fusion Business. 'The leading companies of the future will be those that harness the power of software, data, AI, and digital manufacturing to reinvent and personalise customer products and experiences.'

Sustainable impact

The report indicated that sustainability has an influence on the decision to digitalise manufacturing workflows, with 61% of respondents agreeing that it is a relevant factor driver behind digitalisation. In addition, 91% noted that the ability to produce parts on demand was an important benefit, with a further 79% of those surveyed believing that additive manufacturing helps them deal with production challenges – such as the ability to adapt to fluctuating demand.

'The advanced capabilities of 3D printing are creating entirely new opportunities for disruption across industries and with a far more environmentally sustainable approach, which is a significant driver for manufacturers today,' added Sanmartin. '3D printing and its intrinsically flexible nature empowers a more circular economy.'

Digital transformation

The report reveals that AM operates as a key opportunity in the digitalisation of industrial manufacturing processes, with digitalisation considered a necessity for the near entirety of manufacturing processes by a large majority of survey respondents (96%).

The use of AM in industrial parts manufacturing was reported as key to producing more cost-effective components, as well as making better products at faster speeds. UK and German industrial parts manufacturers interviewed are planning the most significant investments in digitalisation and additive manufacturing, with 50% of British and 40% of German respondents saying they intend to spend more than R17 million (€1 million) over the next five years.

Other findings revealed that 83% of survey respondents use AM for the actual production of components and tools to make commercial products, with half of them (52%) already making complete finished products, which is the final frontier of AM.

'3D printing is no longer exclusive to tools and small volumes of parts,' said Stijn Paridaens, CEO of Digital Manufacturing service bureau ZiggZagg. 'It is having a much bigger impact for our customers and it is why we are investing in 3D as the primary manufacturing offering for our customers. We believe HP Multi Jet Fusion Technology is the leading industrial technology to enable us to go from small series productions to medium and, in some cases, even large production of up to 200,000 final parts.'

This report builds on the findings of HP's Digital Manufacturing Trend Report published in October 2020, providing a more extensive analysis of key drivers, investment strategies and country specific trends within Europe.

Highlights of HP's AM Trends in EMEA Report include:

European industrial parts manufacturers agree on urgent need for increased digitalisation

- 100% of respondents recognise the importance of increasingly digitalising their production workflows.
- 70% of respondents said that the primary driver for digitalising manufacturing workflows is the ability to produce parts on demand.

- 61% of respondents stated that sustainability is relevant or very relevant to increasingly digitalise their manufacturing workflows.


Industrial tooling disruption underway with AM

- Over 95% of respondents indicated that AM is a relevant technology for digitalisation in their current manufacturing workflows.
- 91% of respondents said that they use additive manufacturing to make industrial tools (including jigs, fixtures and moulds). These tools are used to produce more parts via non-additive processes. Other relevant types of parts include EOAT and automation system components.
- 52% of respondents use AM for making complete finished products

AM improves part functionality and production flexibility

- 96% of respondents say that additive manufacturing helps them get a product to market faster.
- 91% of respondents indicated that the ability to produce parts on demand is a key benefit of 3D printing.
- 79% of respondents said that additive manufacturing helped them deal with production challenges related to Covid-19.

European industrial parts manufacturers are confident on the future growth of additive manufacturing

- Over 95% of respondents expect the use of additive manufacturing to continue to grow.
- 83% of respondents are likely to invest in expanding their digital manufacturing capabilities in the next 12 months. For 65% of them, this investment will include additive manufacturing.
- 92% of respondents are likely to invest in expanding their digital manufacturing capabilities in the next five years. For 77% of them, this investment will include additive manufacturing. 

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KEEPING AHEAD OF INDUSTRY TRENDS

IN SIGNAGE AND GRAPHICS

BY GERBER TECHNOLOGY

While it would be easy to bypass some trends in signage, in order to be competitive, it is important that even the smallest trends are not overlooked.

In recent years, technology has advanced at lightning speed, which has necessitated the overhaul of a number of industries, including the commercial printing industry. This industry niche is cross-cutting, and those providing signage and graphics are likely to experience the same technological evolutions as companies try to position themselves strategically in order to maximise revenue.

While technology advances are driving many of these changes, other influences such as customer demand, increased use of personalisation, digitisation and 3D, as well as an orientation towards being more service-oriented, are all driving the industry to be innovative and cutting edge.

Important to recognise in the industry's overall rapid growth:

- Printed packaging is expected to be 68% (up from 64%), and exceed \$812 billion by the end of the year.
- The average yearly growth has been at 8% annually, and 95% of businesses are expecting expansion over the next 12 months.
- Only 18% of companies are entirely analogue, and 65.4% are now offering graphic design services, with 64.9% also offering POP/display advertising.
- Furthermore, the competition is particularly stiff in this industry, with 72.2% of companies having been in business for over twenty years, meaning that they are well-established and have a deep customer base.

Ultimately, companies in this industry are well-established, and poised to expand rapidly if they can capitalise on the right trends at the right opportunity.

1. The need to pivot PPE production

This past year has highlighted the ability of the graphics and signage industry to quickly pivot with the dramatic changes brought on by Covid-19. Some companies recognised the need early on for PPE, and realised they were in a position to transition their production lines to help, since the equipment and processing structures were very similar. This enabled many to be able to make sneeze guards, social distancing signs and other equipment for hospitals and businesses in need and decrease the burden on the PPE supply chain at the time. Furthermore, it helped communities recognise the utility of these companies, create more customers and form another revenue stream for businesses. By being agile and innovative, the industry was able to make lemonade from lemons, and keep business going despite very challenging times.

2. Personalisation is a must-have

Another avenue to pursue in the near future could be to address the increased

demands of customers for personalisation. While many printing services are already inherently personal, many businesses have taken to offering more personal approaches to the way they deliver their product — such as individualised design and layout services. The drawback to this approach is that it can eat up more time (and potentially expense), but the payoff comes from improved and deepened relationships, as well as long-term loyalty. Another way to provide personalised services is to improve digitisation technologies, which allow the customer to scan, store and access their documents with ease. This is typically an easier modification to services that can be made, and pays off in dividends with the customer.

3. Customers prioritise convenience

Improve customer retention, such as by offering printing on-the-go services. This is a technological innovation that allows customers to order prints from their smartphones, and can greatly improve customer satisfaction and overall experience. This takes advantage of the Internet of Things (IoT), which can help by connecting products together to facilitate ease-of-use. The downside of course being that it can involve significant investments to upgrade and improve a company's technology, but oftentimes it will pay off in dividends.

4. Minimalism is in

Other customer trends include a focus on minimalism, which means companies will need to ensure that they avoid complex and extensive designs for their customers. Sustainability is important to customers. With this generation often driven by social issues, launching eco-friendly initiatives is increasingly important. And research shows that the details of environmental initiatives might be less important. Companies who are not including this as a consideration will be the ones that many consumers will avoid, in lieu of doing business with companies that are at least demonstrating some level of commitment to better sustainability practices.

Ultimately, it comes down to adapting practices wherever possible to provide more personalised services that meet the immediate needs of the customer. Improving technology so that customers can connect to printing services, have more control over the personalisation of products and designs, as well as by providing 3D printing and adjusting design practices towards minimalism, will all contribute to an improved customer experience. This coupled with an eye towards sustainability can help position companies in this space towards the front, and stay ahead of the technological innovation curve that is critical within this space. 🔄

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SUSTAINING PERFORMANCE AND OFFERING GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICE

DURING A CRISIS

BY JOHN TSCHOHL, SERVICE QUALITY INSTITUTE

Many people respond to a crisis by being overwhelmed by stress, which turns to fear. It is easy to be afraid when you have a crisis situation, but if you remain brave, everyone around you will be too, and together you will be able to turn anything around.

Life in the dynamic and unpredictable business world means that sometimes things will not go according to plan. When a business, country or world is in crisis, it is easy to become trapped beneath a mountain of problems but, in order to succeed, individuals must be motivated and be able to sustain performance during a crisis and times of stress.

Whatever you chose to focus on as your life's work has to be a lifetime commitment and takes work and a relentless attitude. It is essential for everyone during a crisis to show sincere interest in every single customer as an individual, to thank them for any purchases and invite him or her to return. Customer service is treating customers like houseguests or good friends. Make sure things are right and they will remember, tell their friends about your company and more specifically – about you. Money is the by-product of a relentless commitment to awesome customer service.

What is involved in relentless commitment?

1. It is staying positive

Many people believe that the true grit of a person is tested during times of crisis, whether it be personal crisis or a crisis in the economy. Performance under stress can show how quick witted or level headed a person is, or on the contrary, it can show where their weaknesses lie. It's important that you always keep your wits about you and stay cool in difficult situations. 'It is not the critic who counts. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena,' – Theodore Roosevelt.

2. It is facing difficulties

To reach for success and to overcome hardships or failures, we have to strive for the best we can be in every aspect of our lives, including how we feel about ourselves, and how we treat others. If we are willing to try, to get back up after falling and we take advantage of opportunities, those bad moments can be nothing but a footnote in our success story.

3. It is focusing

It is focusing on the lost art of customer service. The truth is, we all have a

small window to make a great impression. The first impression you give your customers might be your only impression so make it count. Take the thirty second customer interactions and turn them into something that was worth your time and theirs. Customers are walking into your business willingly – it's your job to make sure they want to come back even during tough times.

4. It is not being consumed by difficult times

You may not be able to quickly rebound from a global crisis, but do not let it consume you. From rejection to workplace mistakes, everyone has experienced that all-too-familiar gut-wrenching numbness. The great paradox is that the people who enjoy the most successes often endure the greatest hardships.

5. It is not stopping

Do not let anything stop you, there is always something you can do. William Wrigley Jr. was a soap and baking powder salesman in the 1890's and he always offered free gum to all of his clients. With his career as a salesman taking a turn for the worst, he noticed one thing that forever changed his life: people loved the gum he gave away more than the products he was actually selling. It was that one creative insight that got him through that difficult time and made him a monumental success. It takes hard work. Sitting still is easy. Make sure you look at all aspects of your life and make some changes.

When you can improve your ability to navigate the difficult times, you not only live a happier life, but you also grow as a person. And always keep in mind that the name of the game during any crisis is always awesome customer service.

John Tschohl is a professional speaker, trainer, and consultant. He is the President and founder of Service Quality Institute with operations in over 40 countries. He is considered to be one of the foremost authorities on service strategy, success, empowerment and customer service.

JOHN TSCHOHL
www.johntschohl.com



PROVING PRINT'S IMPACT

AND VALUE TO BUYERS

By Matthew Wood

Print can be impactful and a powerful storyteller, but how can we prove these facts to the print buyers who can benefit most? Mathew Faulkner, EMEA senior marketing manager, professional print, Canon Europe, spoke with experts from different parts of the print industry to bring a practical toolkit of examples to prove print's value.

According to Faulkner, print is perceived as slow, inflexible and above all difficult to target and track. One in three marketers Canon spoke to have little or no way of measuring the success of their print campaign.

In a webinar hosted during Canon's Make It Event: Future of Digital Print Industry, Canon asked Canon Ascent Programme mentors for their thoughts. Jacky Hobson, UP marketing, said that the conversation needs to be less about cost and driving down the price than ROI, and that we need to look at examples and best practices: 'I think the marketer is very interested in the ROI and that is how we should be phrasing the conversation.'


Hobson said it is important to identify the tools that demonstrate the ROI of print. A good example she cited was QR codes, as they can quantify the number of scans or 'hits', as well as when and where they were scanned. It is a tool that works for all businesses, large or small.

Richard Mayer, Be Focused, said that we need to identify what print offers, that print is more tangible and that digital is less personal as there is a screen between people. With print it is the touch, smell and feel, and important to note is that brands use sense. He also emphasised that print adds value to digital when combined and integrated with it. Mayer stated that print plus digital uplifts the amount of response: 'We can use print at the forefront, or we can actually use print as a supporting mechanism.'

He also said that businesses need to ask customers why they do not buy print, then isolate those reasons. It could be about cost, the difficulty to track results or even the time for results to come back, as well as the difficulty in setting up print campaigns.

Print is not actually difficult to measure and track, mostly because of QR codes, as well as augmented reality. Even posters can integrate technology that can track who is walking past and looking at them. By showing customers just how much engagement can be measured, print businesses can show the value of print.

Mayer said that it is about investment and quantity (from a measurement point of view), over quality. He also mentioned that direct mail can be reinforced through identifying consumer behaviour through digital mediums.

Hobson said a good example she's seen of how print can be very effective is direct mail, with a QR code, that linked to an animation with a specific call to action, which could only be accessed through the print medium itself. None of the engagements were attributed to social media or email. 

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THE GRAPHICS SECTOR HAS A CHANCE TO UP ITS GAME

IN CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

BY LAUREL BRUNNER, VERDIGRIS PROJECT

The idea behind the UN's Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance is ultimately to increase investment in climate change mitigation efforts across industries. The Alliance is good news.

For the majority of firms in the graphics business this will basically be a very big yawn. But as consolidation continues apace in the printing and publishing industries, especially as the pandemic bites deeper, large companies looking for large investments should take heed.

The Alliance has called on asset managers – people who make investments in big companies – to collaborate. The organisation sits on top of some \$5 trillion and has committed to move all of these investments to investments with net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. The goal is to reduce risk for 'market segments that for now do not have the appropriate risk-return profile'.

The good news is in the 'for now' bit, but the bad news is that the graphics industry's 'risk-return profile' as it relates to climate change mitigation is definitely not yet robust.

This will impact business economics in the printing and publishing sectors, because asset managers will be selective about how they prioritise investments. This includes printing companies, their suppliers and manufacturers. As investment companies such as OpenGate Capital and Black Rock move more aggressively into this industry, we can expect greater sensitivities to meeting the Alliance's interests.

UN's Environmental Programme Finance Initiative Head Eric Usher said, 'The accelerating climate crisis... means it is now even more imperative that blended capital is delivered in a climate-smart and net-zero-compatible manner.' Members of the Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance are now working with a select number of asset managers to develop packages that support the project's

initiatives and that fit the needs of institutional investors. These are expected to range between \$300 million and \$500 million and will be open to Alliance members and non-members. How this will affect an industry being hammered by the pandemic is not certain. What is certain is that when the money people get involved, change is inevitable. The graphics sector has a chance to up its game in climate change mitigation and to thrive.

This article was produced by the Verdigris Project, an industry initiative intended to raise awareness of print's positive environmental impact. Verdigris is supported by: Agfa Graphics (www.Agfa.com), Digital Dots (www.digitaldots.org), EFI (www.efi.com), FESPA (www.fespa.com), HP (www.hp.com), Kodak (www.Kodak.com/go/sustainability), Practical Publishing (www.practicalpublishing.co.za), Ricoh (www.ricoh.com), Splash PR (www.splashpr.co.uk), Unity Publishing (<http://unity-publishing.co.uk>) and Xeikon (www.xeikon.com).

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Visit www.printingsa.org/services/training for more information.

Response to recent unrest

Dr Abdool Majid Mahomed, CEO of Printing SA, noted with deep concern the unprecedented series of events resulting in malls, factories and warehouses being looted, vandalised and in some cases being burnt in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.

'We empathise with our member companies who had to shut down either for the short or long term due to security concerns – losing production at a time when the economy can ill afford it. Printing SA



is here to help, service and advise in whichever way possible. Please contact your chamber managers to assist with any labour and HR matters that have arisen as a result of this turmoil. Thank you, may peace prevail, and recovery efforts be successful.'

Printing SA also supports The South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SACCI's) statement on violence on roads, looting of businesses and damage to property. SACCI condemns this in the strongest terms.

New member of staff

Printing SA is proud to welcome Anele Pendule Mgwebi, who has joined and replaces Asisipho Diya, on a two-month long contract appointment.

Mgwebi is an aspiring professional accountant with a B.tech in Internal Auditing from Unisa. She has been working as a financial management supervisor for three years for an accounting firm in Mthatha. Mgwebi enjoys events planning, nature

excursions and spending time with her family. She has fallen in love with the accounting profession and plans to further her studies in auditing. She has been working predominantly in the accounting office and would like to advance her career within the business sector. She has also come to enjoy the varied challenges of the accounting office.

Graphics, Print & Sign Live Demo Expo

Printing SA represent the interests of the printing, packaging, branding, creative design, marketing and communications industries. They ensure the industry is sustainable and that all stakeholders and, in particular, its members prosper.

They will have a stand at the Graphics, Print & Sign Live Demo Expo, taking place from 5-7 October 2021 at Emperors Palace Convention Centre, Centre Court. Anyone is welcome to ask Printing SA representatives questions about their various services. Register online at: www.graphicsprintsign.com

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FOR SALE

TITAN JET 30 AUG

R55,000. Titan Jet with PC. In brand new condition, dx7 head. Errol Bellas +27 82 813 9917 Benoni

ROLAND VP540 29 AUG

R95,000. Roland VP540 1370mm wide print and cut. Great machine, money maker and trusted brand. Reason for selling: I've upgraded. Shaun +27 82 906 6231 George

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY 28 AUG

Looking for a partner to help with a sign business that is already running. Needs to be hands on, preferably with an interest in the field. Helderberg based would be ideal. You need your own vehicle. I have over 30 years experience in the signage industry. Howard Austen +27 64 284 4059 Helderberg

HP LATEX 335, VINYL CUTTER AND MORE 25 AUG

R225,000. HP 335 Latex 1.6m wide (10 months old) – still under warranty. Vinyl cutter 1.3m wide. i5 computer and screen. Large UPS. Multiple rolls of media, including PVC, vinyl, canvas, paper and fabric, heat gun and more. Justin +27 (0) 87 822 1232 Johannesburg

MIMAKI CJV150-130 15 AUG

I'm selling my Mimaki printer that

was used as a backup for my Roland. R129,500. Willem Cloete +27 81 713 7114 Paarl

MIMAKI JV33-160 13 AUG

R110,000. 1.6m dye sub printer with bulk feed set-up. Working daily. Well maintained and serviced machine. In excellent working condition. Julian Robert +27 82 325 1234 Durban

MIMAKI CJV 150-130 12 AUG

R110,000 O.N.C.O. Excellent condition. Errol Bellas +27 82 813 9917 Johannesburg

ROLAND SC545EX 5 AUG

R65,000 (neg). Print and cut. In good condition. 1.3m wide. Ridhwaan +27 83 338 7409 Durban

MIMAKI CJV30-130BS 3 AUG

R115,000. 1370mm print and cut. Automatic take up unit. Brand new DX5 print head with dampers and caps. Includes Rasterlink software. Transportation can be arranged. Akil +27 83 698 6445 Durban

ROLAND VS640 2 AUG

R100,000. Roland Versa Camm print and cut. Steve +27 79 065 3261 Johannesburg

MIMAKI JV33-160 SS 30 JULY

R85,000. In perfect condition. Comes with latest Raster link. A real bargain

at R85,000. Must be seen. New print-head in machine. Errol Bellas +27 82 813 9917 Johannesburg

GALAXY NEPTUNE HEAT PRESS 29 JULY

R5500. 40 x 50cm. Mint condition (used). Delivery/courier excluded. Natasha van Eeden +27 82 497 6560 George

ELECTRONIC SCREEN PRINTER AND DRYING TUNNEL 29 JULY

R70,000. 10 colour electronic screen printer and curing tunnel. Must be collected. AB +27 (0) 83 270 9845 Johannesburg

COLD ROLL LAMINATOR 29 JULY

1.6m wide. R25,000. Only two years old, seldom used. Still like new. For collection in Durban. Rowan +27 31) 303 2127 Durban

ROLAND SP 540V 29 JULY

R55,000. Roland SP540 V print and cut 1.3m. We still use this machine every day and it is in excellent working condition. Brand new Y/M print head installed in Dec 2019. Would suggest replacing B/C printhead. For collection in Durban. Rowan +27 31) 303 2127 Durban

VP 540 28 JULY

R105,000. Imtiaz +27 (0) 82 786 3245

Stanger

SIGNAGE EQUIPMENT 27 JULY

R250,000. Roland Versa Cam 540I cut and print with take up roll and Nubis vacuum bulking system. Heat press with all fittings. Epson bulk sublimation printer with bulk inks. Canon 635 colour laser printer. T-shirt screen printing machine. 1.5 x 2.8 weeding table and much more. Robert +27 (0) 81 327 6940 Amanzimtoti

MIMAKI PRINTERS 26 JULY

Various Mimaki printers for sale, call me for quotes. Errol +27 (0) 82 813 9917 Benoni

ROLAND VP 540V 26 JULY

R98,000 onco. Excellent condition. Errol +27 (0) 82 813 9917 Benoni

SEMI AUTOMATIC T-SHIRT PRINTING MACHINE 20 JULY

R180,000. 5 colour Hebbekker s-line screen printing machine. Philip +27 (0) 82 450 4408 Johannesburg

MIMAKI JVS 19 JULY

R35,000 onco. Selling for spares. Complete machine. Philip +27 (0) 82 450 4408 Edenvale

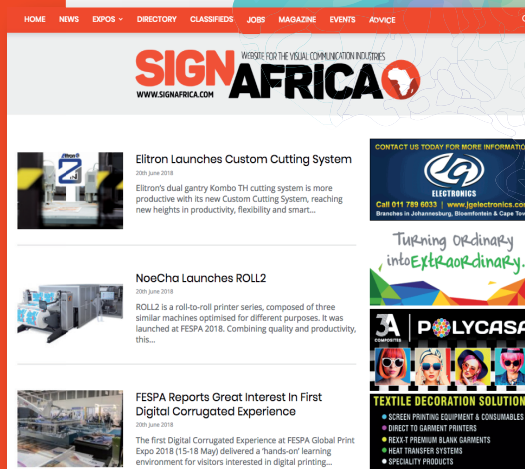
MIMAKI UVJ55-320 13 JULY

R800,000. Almost brand new. Less than a year old with 1387 hours printing time. The 3.2m wide LED-UV inkjet

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MIMAKI PRINTERS 9 JULY
R150,000. Mimaki CJV30-160 and CJV150-75. No nozzles. Missing heads. In great condition. Reason for sale is we've upgraded. CJV30-160: R95,000. CJV150-75: R65,000. Or both for R150,000.
Cristen +27 (0) 66 290 1620
Pretoria

HP Z2100 FOR SPARES 6 JULY
R5000. I am desperate to move my HP Z2100 44" photo printer. It will no longer start up and may only be good for spares. This printer goes with 1 x HP C9404A, 1 x HP C9452A and 1 x C9448A in their boxes.
Mahmood +27 (0) 83 238 8544
Durban

EPSON R3000 A3+ PRINTER 2 JULY
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R2950.
Manesh Bridgmohun +27 (0) 79 713 1963
Randburg

WANTED

SPECTROMETER X-RITE I1 OR OTHER 27 AUG
Looking for a Spectrometer from X-rite, i1 or another for scanning in test charts and creating printer profiles. If you have one you would like to give away or sell please get in touch with me.
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Northriding

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JOBS OFFERED

SIGNAGE ALL ROUNDER 24 AUG
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sunwaysigns@mweb.co.za
Boksburg

FREELANCE SALES REPS 24 AUG
Large format digital printing company looking for freelance sales reps to work on a commission based structure. Own transport, cellphone, laptop and customer base would be beneficial.
Marketing Mogul info@mymogul.co.za
Gauteng

DEBTORS AND CREDITORS CLERK 16 AUG
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carlosm@jotta.co.za
Gauteng

SALES CONSULTANT 12 AUG
Responsibilities: conducting one-on-one presentations with clients; conducting sales related admin; weekly reports and feedback; servicing existing clients by providing exceptional customer service on a consistent basis and following up on any outstanding queries.
lucy@signs4sa.co.za/kevin@signs4sa.co.za
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ACCOUNT MANAGER 11 AUG
Responsibilities: identifying new business opportunities; create and maintain your own sales pipeline and operate as the main relationship manager with your clients. Minimum one year's sales

experience. Own car and cellphone required.
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Gauteng

EXTERNAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE 10 AUG
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KwaZulu-Natal

VEHICLE WRAP INSTALLER 30 JULY
Experienced vehicle wrap installer needed.
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designs@wrap-my-ride.co.za
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beukesliezl65@gmail.com
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FABRICATOR, INSTALLATION AND CHANNEL LETTERS 20 AUG
I have over 20 years experience in the signage industry. Vinyl Applicator, tinting, LED's.
Dicky Moore +27 72 962 8116
Gauteng

SCREEN PRINTER, APPLICATOR AND INSTALLER 16 AUG
I can also do welding of frames. I don't mind working overtime and over the weekends. I also like to learn from others.
John +27 64 644 7647
Pretoria

DTP OPERATOR/ SCREENPRINTER 16 AUG
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Gauteng

GRAPHIC DESIGNER AND MANAGER 4 AUG
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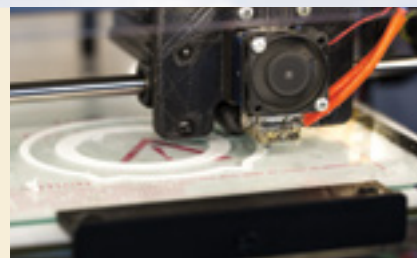
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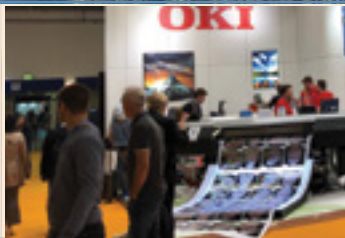
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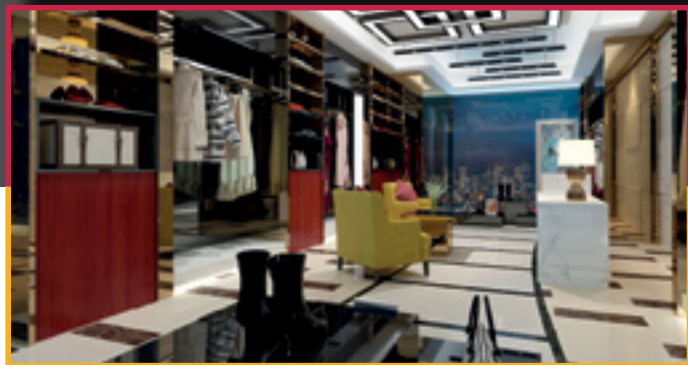
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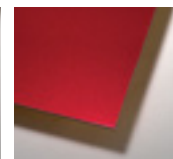
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GLOSS



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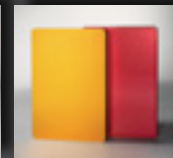
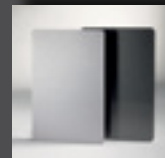


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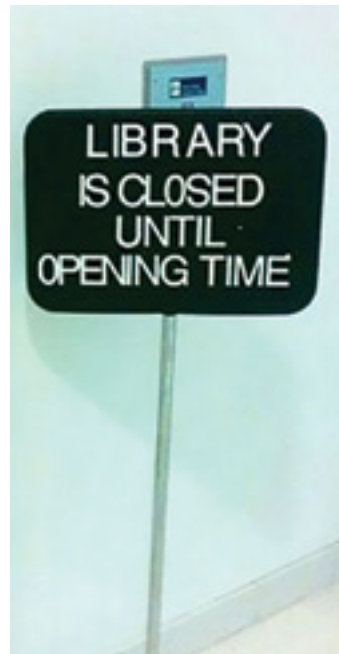
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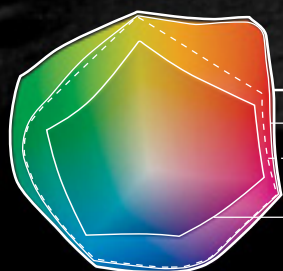
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