

BIG PICTURE

THE BUSINESS OF WIDE FORMAT

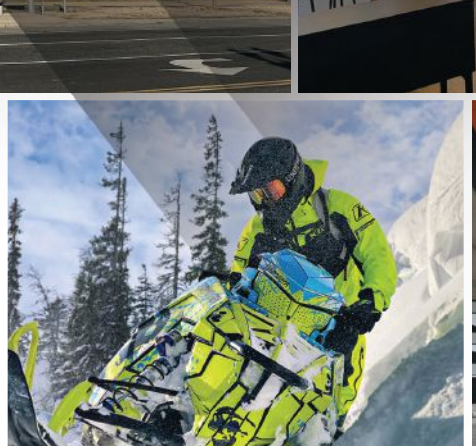
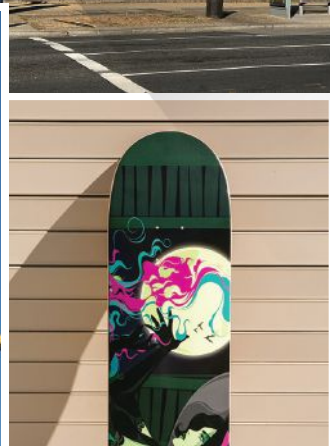


BIG PICTURE

BEST OF

WIDE FORMAT

AWARDS



Atchley Graphics

bluemedia

BPGraphics

Deviant Ink

ER2 Image Group

Ink Monstr

Ink Wrapz

Premier Graphics

Real Color Design

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Signageworld

Westmount Signs



Acuity Ultra R2

The new blueprint for superwide format

With a track record of pioneering innovations, Fujifilm has helped thousands of sign and display printers transform their businesses. But in a world where change is constant, three years ago we decided to go back to the drawing board to define a new blueprint for UV inkjet print performance.

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The new range of Acuity printers designed and developed by Fujifilm.

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Acuity



IT'S TIME FOR PRINTERIOR WINDOW FILMS

No more use of standard and boring privacy films

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spacetailorglobal@gmail.com

MEET SPACE TAILOR AT EXHIBITIONS



ISA - Veilish (Booth No. 2115) / SPACETAILOR (Booth No. 2151)

heimtextil 

Heimtextil (Booth 4.0-A57)

 **FESPA**

Fespa Berlin 2022 (hall 3.2, booth C-12)

CONTENTS

BIG PRODUCTS

13 LATEST RELEASES
Mutoh ValueJet 1628MH HY printer, EFI Nozomi Single-Pass inkjet presses, Beaver Paper Beaver Boards, and more.

14 PRODUCT FOCUS
Textile and dye sub printers hold the key to an emerging market, and make shipping and installing easier for PSPs.

SPECIAL FEATURE

34 Hiring and Retaining the Next Generation
Hiring and, more importantly, retaining good employees is now more important than ever. Brian Adam analyzes the current employment landscape.



38 Digital Textile Printing as an Artistic Medium
Digital textile printing has evolved into an important artistic medium. New creative opportunities are right around the corner.

BIG BUSINESS

50 LINE TIME
Can I pause for a moment?
Learn when to use the above phrase in a business discussion.

PAGE 20 / THE BIG STORY

BIG PICTURE BEST OF WIDE FORMAT AWARDS

THE 2022

BEST OF WIDE FORMAT AWARDS

BEST OF WIDE FORMAT AWARDS

The 2022 Best of Wide Format Award winners have been selected. Check out the winning installations that left indelible marks on society throughout the last year. Find out how the PSPs executed their projects to perfection and see what products were used for the jobs.

50 BRAINSTORM
Synchronized Vacations
You'd be surprised at what happens when your team takes their PTO all at once.



53 TRUE TALES
Under the Category of Bizarre
A newly minted store's employees walk all over a PSP.

53 DO YOU OR DON'T YOU
Do you advertise locally?
The Brain Squad weighs in on whether it pays to advertise in local media.

53 WOULD A COULDA
Why can't they just accept that we know what we're doing?

56 BLUEPRINT
WrapStar Pro owner Kristin Lanzarone's DIY mindset has led her on a path to success.



ON THE COVER: The 12 winning projects from the fourth annual *Big Picture* awards.

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Where you'll find even more images, insight, and inspiration.

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ALSO INSIDE

4 EDITOR'S NOTE

8 CALENDAR

10 WIDE ANGLE

44 BENCHMARKS

48 TIP SHEET

54 AD INDEX

COLUMNISTS

50 MARTY MCGHIE

51 JIM DITTMER

52 ANDREW WITKIN

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Industrial Dye Sublimation Printers



Production Heat Presses



Finishing Solutions





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SMART TIPS FROM THIS ISSUE

1. Need ideas for creative, out-of-this-world applications? Check out the 12 winning Best of Wide Format Awards for printspiration. (*The Big Story*, page 20)
2. Eliminate dumb rules. This will help you in retaining your Next Gen employees. (*Special Feature*, page 36)
3. Break down color-to-lightfastness, color-to-washfastness, and crocking when archiving prints. (*Special Feature*, page 38)
4. When attempting to land a large client, don't only focus on cost. Make sure you showcase all you can offer that differentiates you from competition. (*Big Business*, page 49)

BACK TO BUSINESS

Our first major US industry tradeshow since 2019 is here.

Can you believe it? By the time you read this edition, you could be packing your suitcase, hopping on a plane, or walking the show floor at the ISA Sign Expo in Atlanta. If you can't make it, you're constantly checking @bigpicturemag on Instagram for updates, right?

We haven't been to a major, industry-specific tradeshow since Printing United in 2019. 2019! Will we know what to do? What to say? As someone who's attended a few conferences and tradeshows for the screen printing space, the answer is yes. It's just like riding a bike.

But just in case your in-person event nerves are in high gear, we asked our Brain Squad to share their advice for attending the show in five or fewer words.

Wade Neff says "Pack light. Talk to everyone."

Rob Matthews says to bring sneakers, a phone charger, and an empty backpack.

And my personal favorite from Katrin Tobler: "Show how awesome you are."

A tip from me? Don't forget to bring something (print or digital) that will

allow people to contact you post-show. (Yes, I broke the five or fewer rule, but hey, it was my rule to begin within.) I'm currently attending the Wallcoverings Association's Annual Meeting and I forgot my business cards! Rookie move.

A few more tips:

→ Stop by the *Big Picture* booth #2449.

→ Attend my session with Eric Zimmerman, Keypoint Intelligence, to learn the results of the 2022 Wide Format Application and Utilization survey on Wednesday, April 4 at 1:45 p.m.

→ Celebrate the winners of the 2022 Best of Wide Format Awards, Wednesday, May 4 at 4 p.m.

I can't wait to catch up and witness the new technology and trends wide-format has to offer.

Adrienne Palmer

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📱 @Adrienne_BigPic

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→ I love being part of this crew. You make me think every month and completing your surveys always makes me sit back and reflect on how very much we're doing and innovating... in many cases with other printers we met via one of your many initiatives. Working with you is a delight. **Barbara Allen, Fresh Artists, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

→ This survey makes me stop and think. The ability to contribute, even in any small way, will help us grow the industry. **Kristi Duvall, The Boxmaker, Kent, Washington**

→ A true honor! **Ryan Clark, Direct Edge, Anaheim, California**

→ Good to see feedback from others. **Tim Roe, Outspoken Signs, Marietta, Georgia**

→ Happy 1 year!! :) I love being a part of the Brain Squad and part of the Editorial Advisory Board. I love being involved within our industry. **Kristin Scribner,**

Wrapstar Pro, Sacramento, California

→ It has been fun and now that I see the format, I can gather info for the input. **Linda Fong, Fastsigns Oakland; Fastsigns Hayward, Oakland, California**

→ I enjoy hearing how others are doing, especially because we haven't really had a tradeshow in a few years. **Michael Greenwald, NextPage, Kansas City, Missouri**

→ Fantastic!!! **Jon Sherman, Flavor Paper, Brooklyn, New York**

→ The monthly questions push me to think deeper about our business and how we handle customers and projects. It has started many discussions at our company. Love it! **Drew Veach, CorpColor, Wyoming, Michigan**

→ Interesting and thought provoking at times. Especially when there is a need to filter

what you really want to say, transforming it into an apolitical, non-confrontational, statement. **Brian Hite, Image Options, Foothill Ranch, California**

→ Enjoy providing input and reading others input. **David Kaiser, Digtipe Design, Tualatin, Oregon**

→ *Big Picture* is a super read and having participation from those of us in the trenches each and every day makes it more real. Hearing from manufacturers is critical, but ground level reality is always a bit different. I like hearing and learning from my peers. **Jim White, Go Graphix, East Longmeadow, Massachusetts**

→ I appreciate the open-ness of the group and enjoy your articles. It definitely brings us together in a non-stressful way. **Diana Herrera, Associated Photo & Imaging, Hialeah, Florida**

→ I love learning from other members. Such a great diverse group of people. **Carmen Rad, CR&A Custom, Los Angeles, California**

→ It's good... highly endorse. Thanks for including me. **Stan Lucas, DCG One, Seattle, Washington**

→ Very rewarding to see our quotes with credits in print. Thank you. **Malcom Gieske, IDWraps.com/Identity Group, Slatington, Pennsylvania**

→ At first, I didn't think much about it, but interestingly enough, I now look forward to

the "B.S." It allows me to express my thoughts and feelings. Keep up the great work!" – **Tommy Melendez, Master Graphix NYC, Bronx, New York**

→ I think any time you can share ideas it's a positive. Participating in and reading about what others are doing sparks creativity and innovation. **Elaine Scrima, GSP Companies, Clearwater, Florida**

→ I enjoy hearing anecdotes from others in the industry and appreciate the learning! **Gina Kazmerski, Image 360 Woodbury, Woodbury, Minnesota**

→ Really good and interesting to have good minds talking about our industry! **Michael Sanders, Digital Bias Textile Consulting, Hermosa Beach, California**

→ Love being a part of the Brain Squad. Sharing ideas, concerns, and triumphs to expand our industry is the only way to keep rising to the challenges of our ever-changing industry and market. I value all of the feedback I have read over the year from our industry partners.

Thank you for creating the Brain Squad and thank you, Squad, for all the great insight. **Carol Yeager, MY Prints, Los Angeles, California**

→ Awesome! The more information gathered about our industry the better. Companies like ours can only benefit from your work, so thank you! **Tom Radz, AZPRO, Avondale, Arizona**

Join the Brain Squad at bigpicturemag.com/brainsquad

✉ **REACH OUT!**
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JV330-130

Part of the new 330 Series, the JV330-130 offers commercial level workflows and quality for high demand print businesses. Capable of producing a wide range of sign & graphic applications including durable banners, signs, posters, and more for internal and external use.

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MAY BIG DATES

4 It's the first day of the **ISA Sign Expo** and the **2022 Best of Wide Format Awards ceremony**. Raise a glass to our winners at the *Big Picture* booth #2449 at 4 p.m. EDT. See you there!



7 The **Kentucky Derby** leads bars and restaurants around the country, not just in Louisville, to host watch parties for the annual horse race. What types of unique graphics can you offer to make their festivities stand out?

10 Does your office look like a tornado just spun through? On **National Clean Up Your Room Day**, spend an hour decluttering, organizing, and sanitizing your space.

31 Experts recommend keeping

sound levels between 60 and 85 decibels to minimize ear damage. On **National Save Your Hearing Day**, look at your headphone audio levels. If you're constantly rocking out above 85, you might want to take it down a few notches.

MANAGER'S TO-DO LIST FOR MAY

“Getting online is our main focus and goal right now. We experienced some setbacks, but learned a lot in the process. Adding marketing support is also in the works.”



Carol Yeager
MY PRINTS,
LOS ANGELES

WEEK 1

MAY 1-7

MANAGEMENT If summer is a busy period for your business, ramp up cross training and don't forget to lock in vacation requests. (We gave you this tip in April, but a second reminder is always helpful.)

CUSTOMER SERVICE Begin training your team to give first-time customers a “tour” of your business. It's a good way to break the ice and make newcomers feel welcome. Also establish a new whenever-possible rule: Sales associates must walk customers who have made purchases (that don't require your installation team) to the door and thank them for coming.

WEEK 2

MAY 8-14

COMMUNICATIONS If you haven't already, set up a group

chat in Skype, Slack, Line, or some other messaging app to keep your team informed about upcoming meetings, promotions running that day, people who have called in sick, etc.

LEGAL Check with your attorney to see if you need to update your staff manual or policies to make sure they're legally enforceable. Workers are holding business owners to higher standards when it comes to their rights compared to even a few years ago.

WEEK 3

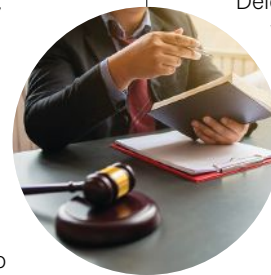
MAY 15-21

SALES With staff, create a list of the top 10 customer objections and develop responses for each one. Write them up and post to your internal blog or just print the list out for all staff to keep and memorize.

MANAGEMENT If your typical response to handling day-to-day affairs is, “Let me take care

of it,” then try this experiment: For the next two weeks, free up two hours a day just to manage.

Delegate some admin work, drop less important meetings, and spend the extra time giving more guidance to your team. You may find the extra productivity far outweighs your “lost” hours.



WEEK 4

MAY 22-28

SEO In 2021, 20 percent of Internet searches were voice-based. Think about tailoring your SEO for voice search. On the Internet, a user might type “wide-format printers in Schaumburg,” while to a virtual assistant they might say, “What's a good wide-format printer in Schaumburg?”

FURNISHINGS Need any new office furniture or fixtures? Now's a good time to pick some up – showrooms are making room for new lines that come out in August.

MONTHLY PROJECT

IT'S TIME TO SPEED UP YOUR WEBSITE

Web users have become increasingly intolerant of slow loading websites. In fact, 53 percent of people abandon

mobile websites if they take longer than three seconds to load. Here are two big tips for improving the loading speed of your website:

1. Optimize image sizes and formats. Images that are too large, not sized properly, or are

formatted incorrectly increase the amount of time it takes for the browser to render the images on screen. For the web, it's recommended you keep each image file size to 100

kilobytes and give your images explicit width and height attributes. A helpful tool for com-

pressing and resizing images is Squoosh, which allows you to compress, resize, and reformat images without sacrificing image quality.

2. Use third-party scripts sparingly. This includes things like embedded videos, analytics,

or Javascript code, as well as too many social media buttons. Additionally, turn off autoplay for any videos on your page. The best way to avoid slowing because of these third-party elements is to use them sparingly and focusing on the ones that are absolutely necessary.

Customizable Wall Media for Museums, Lobbies, Seasonal Installations, and More

ADHESIVE-BACKED WALL MEDIA PRESTOTEX is ideal for permanently or temporarily adding design or branding to a space. The versatile, wide-format media can be installed on any smooth surface and has been used in lobbies, museums, restaurants, seasonal marketing campaigns, tradeshows, and more. PrestoTex can be used to cover an entire wall, a specific area, or as contour cut decals.

The digital print media is a completely customizable polyester wall fabric backed by a peel-and-stick adhesive that will not grow, shrink, curl, or rip over time. The peel-and-stick adhesive backing makes installation quick and easy, with only a small squeegee and ladder needed. Removal is a breeze if you only need a temporary wallcovering, seasonal marketing installation, or want to change the design.

PrestoTex is opaque and thick, made of premium polyester, perfect for covering wall imperfections. It's available in two thickness variations – 10-mil and 17-mil – thicker than competing brands offering only 7-mil. White is the most popular media color variant, but PrestoTex is also available in deep gold, gold iridescent, and silver, which can add shine and sheen to any project.

PrestoTex is fabricated as a safe, non-toxic media, without PVC, lead, or phthalates. In addition, the wide-format media is compatible with UV, eco-solvent, latex, and solvent inks to create bright, bold designs, large-



Artwork: Caren Goldstein from Concept Factory Design. Photo: Eileen Tognini Design. Location: Lincoln Square Apartments

scale black-and-white photo reprints, and everything in between.

PrestoTex is made in the USA. All orders placed in the 48 contiguous US states ship free, direct from the Pennsylvania-based manufacturer.

PRESTOTEX
PRINT MEDIA

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wall media for
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removable
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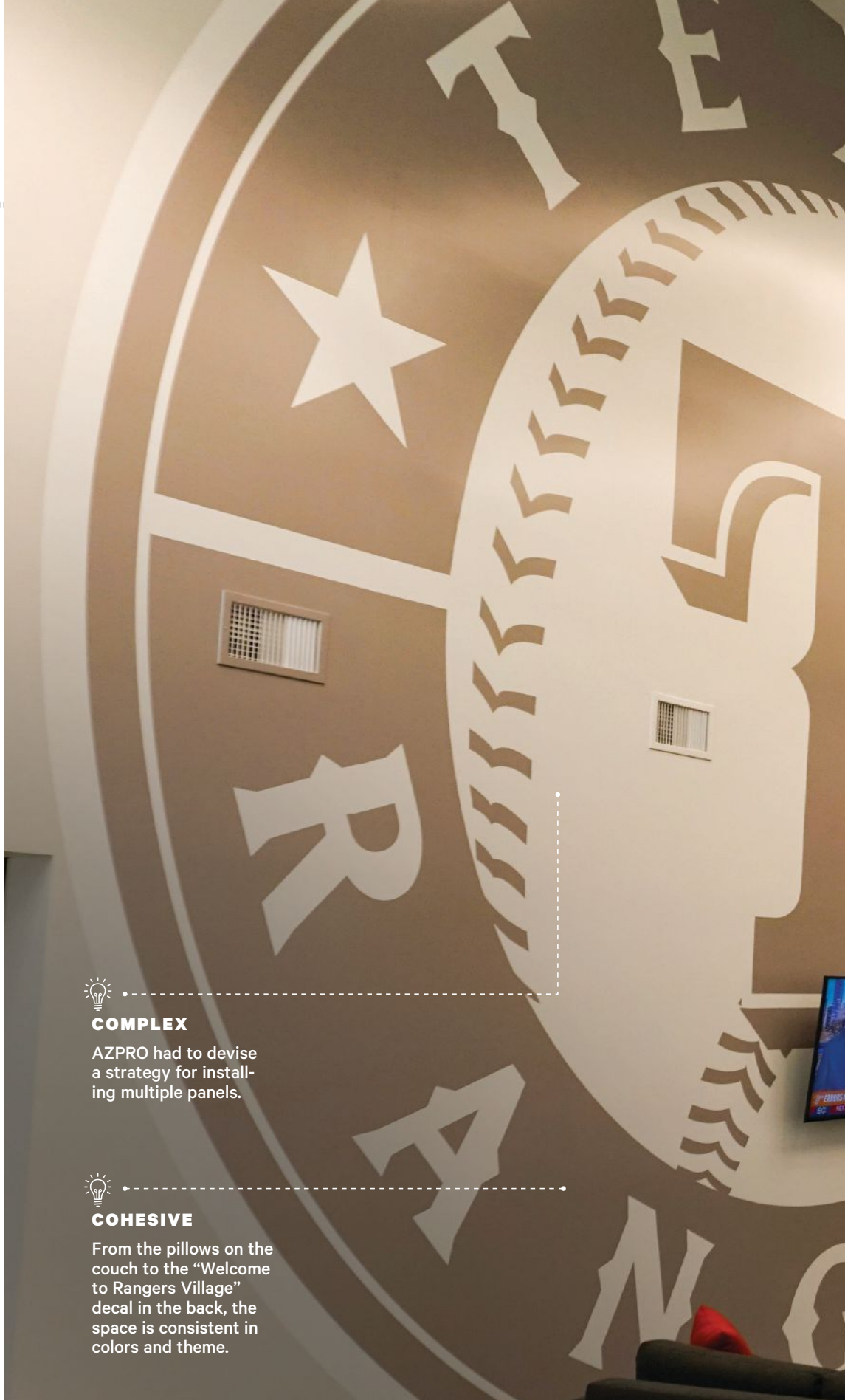
WideAngle

SPRING LOADED

AZPRO gave the Texas Rangers' Spring Training facility a striking makeover.

BY ALEX MARCHESCHI

AZPRO in Avondale, Arizona, gave the Texas Rangers Spring Training Facility in Surprise, Arizona, a facelift as they wrapped the walls of "The Village," the residence hall where the players stay. AZPRO used an HP Latex 570 printer for the entire installation. The massive greyscale Rangers logo was printed onto 3M IJ180Cv3-10 Gloss White Controltac vinyl with 3M 8520 Scotchcal matte overlamine. "The lobby wall was very large and required a number of panels and a lift to complete," says Tom Radz, marketing specialist, AZPRO. The end result was an extremely uniform, tight look that left the Rangers excited about their new digs.



COMPLEX

AZPRO had to devise a strategy for installing multiple panels.



COHESIVE

From the pillows on the couch to the "Welcome to Rangers Village" decal in the back, the space is consistent in colors and theme.



CUSTOMIZED

- AZPRO listened to the Rangers, who wanted a strongly branded look.

TREND ALERT

TEXTILES FOR SIGN AND GRAPHICS

Interest in textiles for sign and graphics continues to rise. As the demand for outdoor events and dining spaces increases, the need for advertising and customization to stand apart from competition grows, as well. High-quality textiles allow printers to produce stunning high-definition graphics that are rich in color on fabric and ultimately provides an upscale, luxurious appearance in outdoor environments.

Why choose textiles over hard signage substrates?

Textiles are a better option for many reasons. They are lighter in weight and easier to install, allowing for a quicker sign change for short-term outdoor events. Their lightweight properties also allow for easier and more cost-effective shipping.

Printer Compatibility

Printers love the versatility that textiles provide across different markets and industries, not just the sign and graphics industry. They can print different textiles with the same dye sublimation equipment for apparel, home décor, and soft signage for advertising. TVF offers a variety of printable textiles that are compatible with direct disperse, dye sublimation, UV, and latex printing.

TVF's 8.4-ounce Deko-TEX 7048SUN is a heavyweight polyester fabric engineered specifically for high-performance in outdoor applications. This warp knit fabric features coatings specially formulated for direct print capabilities, light diffusion, and waterproof performance. This outdoor display textile also features an enhanced ant-fungicide treatment as an additional protection



layer. Deko-TEX 7048SUN is flame resistant, REACH compliant, and OEKOTEX Standard 100 Certified. Outdoor applications for TVF's Deko-TEX 7048SUN include but are not limited to tents, awnings, canopies, umbrellas, and outdoor advertising banners.



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7048SUN

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Flexible

Has the capability to print on roll or rigid media using multi-purpose inks in up to eight colors.

Durable

Designed with a built-in head strike prevention sensor, which protects the printhead from collisions with the media.

Adjustable

Equipped with a blower heater with adjustable temperature and air pressure.



JET SET

Mutoh ValueJet 1628MH Hybrid Printer
MUTOH

Mutoh has launched its ValueJet 1628MH hybrid printer, which uses MP31 multi-purpose inks in up to eight colors, including CMYKx2 and CMYKWhWh.

The new hybrid printer features several upgrades over its predecessor. An enhanced built-in circulation system for white and magenta inks provides improved color stability and consistency, the company says in a release. Additionally, a new custom roller selection

function offers assorted media compatibility and the ability to set each pressure roller independently for various types of substrates.

The VJ-1628MH is a direct replacement for the VJ-1627MH. Other features of the new model include an automatic media height adjustment mechanism and a media retainer, providing proper positioning of media for output. mutoh.com

TEXTILE AND DYE SUB PRINTERS

TO DYE FOR

Thanks to digital print, your textile options have expanded from polyester, blends, and transfers to natural fibers such as silks, cottons, linens, wool, rayon, and other fabrics. Not only can you print soft signage – one of the easiest ways to transform a space – you can also enter the interior décor market with printed couch cushions, pillowcases, curtains, and more. Don't forget the lower price of shipping compared to rigid materials. Check out the printer offerings below. Could they help build your business, cut down on shipping costs, and alleviate installation issues?



Kornit Digital Presto Max Textile Printer
KORNIT

Kornit Digital has launched the 70.8-in. Presto Max digital textile printer designed for sustainable on-demand production of apparel, home décor, and textile goods, the company reports. The single-step, direct-to-fabric press is engineered to print white ink on dark fabrics and utilizes XDi technology to output decorative effects such as threadless embroidery, high-density prints, vinyl, screen transfer, and more. The Presto Max is compatible with natural fabrics, synthetics, and blends and offers minimized environmental footprint through its use of water-based NeoPigment Robusto ink, CO2-neutral

design, Eco-Passport certification, and GOTS approval. Additional features include Kornit QualiSet smart autonomous calibration, axial unwinding system with adjustable fabric width and tension mechanisms, high-precision adhesive belt conveyer system, production insights via Kornit Konnect, compatibility with the KornitX global fulfillment ecosystem and Kornit EcoFactory, and more. kornit.com



EFI Reggiani Hyper Textile Printer
EFI

EFI has revealed the Reggiani Hyper Scanning Textile Printer, available in widths of 70.9 in., 94.5 in., and 118.1 in. The press is engineered to reach print speeds up to 42.7 linear ft/min in two-pass production mode and is compatible with knitted and woven fabrics including cotton, polyester, polyamide, silk, viscose, blends, wool, and more. Applications include apparel, home textiles, sportswear and footwear, and more. Seventy-two recirculating printheads offer 600-dpi res. and full variable drop size while an auto-calibrating continuous ink recirculation system reduces maintenance, according to the company.

Additional features include:

- A double bridge for added stability and accuracy
- A variety of printing modes capable of imaging solid colors, geometric patterns, fine lines, deep blacks, smooth gradients, and more
- Kevlar conveyor belt with embedded magnetic device for adhesive application and longitudinal belt movement control
- Ability for integration with Industry 4.0 projects
- Fabric and take-up options including an oscillating brace for folding, a small roll winder up to 15.8 in., or a big roll winder up to 63 in.
- Industrial dryer with symmetrical ventilation and high-efficiency exhaust capacity. efi.com

Mosaica Group Industrial Dye Sub Press
MOSAICA

The Mosaica Group has expanded its Panthera digital dye sublimation printer line with the addition of Panthera JR. The 74.8-in. model offers four i3200 Epson printheads with printhead controller for added precision and print quality, anti-crash system on the carriage, advanced remote-control panel and touchscreen operation, and roll-to-roll feeding system, the company reports. Reaching print speeds of 1900 sq ft/hr, the Panthera JR is designed to print on transfer paper or direct to fabric. printmosaica.com

→ CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



Top speed of 2906 ft²/h

Direct to textile or on transfer paper

Single-operator control

Vibrant colors

Low ink consumption

AVINCI CX3200

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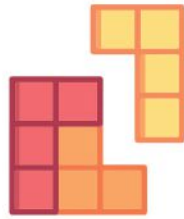
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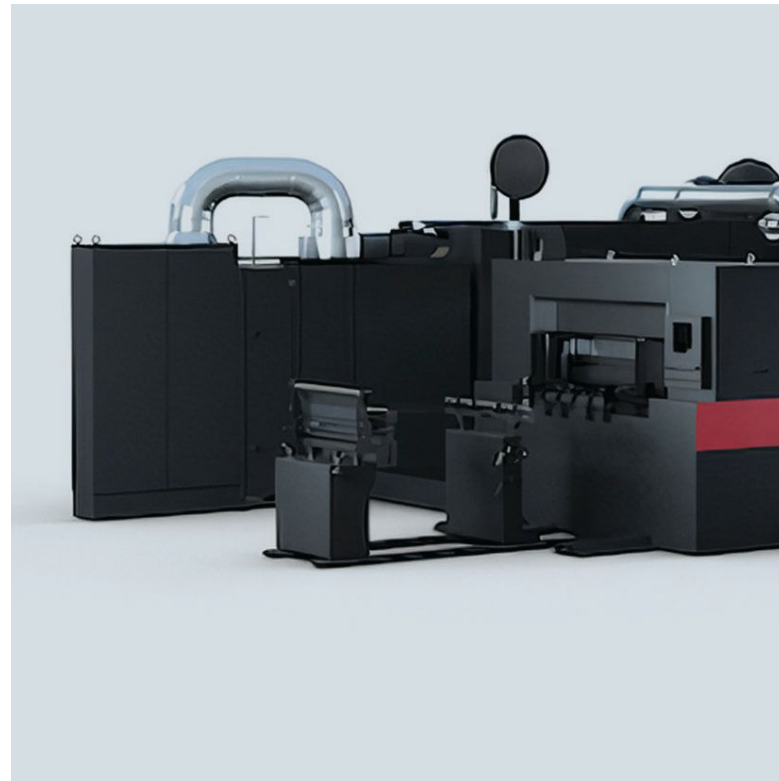
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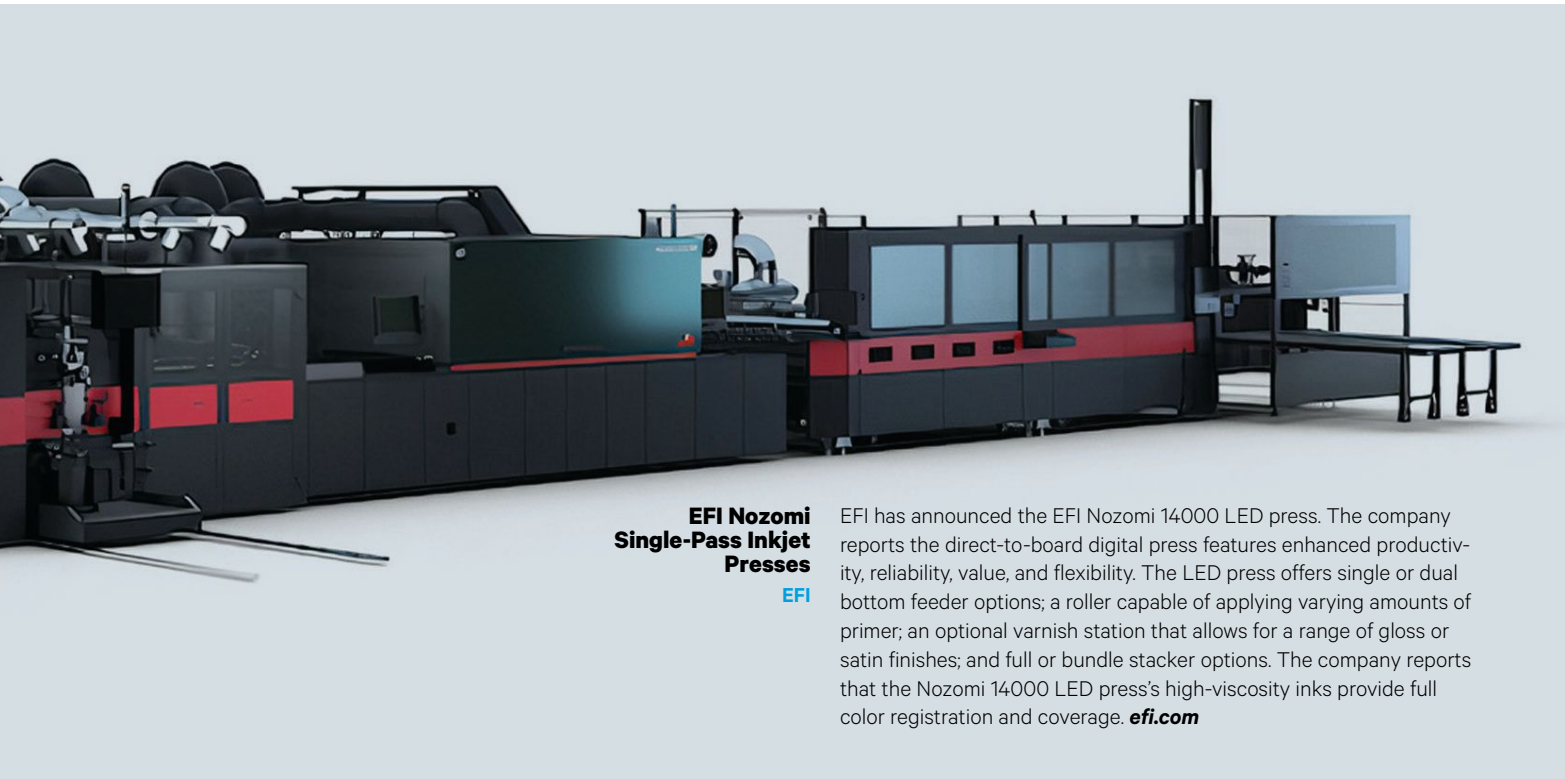
→ FROM PAGE 14



Esko Release 22.03

ESKO

Esko has launched Esko Release 22.03, which includes a host of new features, such as: next generation Color Preflight with Automation Engine and ArtPro+; assembly instructions with ArtiosCAD; native Apple Silicon support for ArtPro+; DeskPack and Studio ArtPro+ Digital Edition for digital print workflows; and Improved WebCenter user experience and reporting. New reporting tools in Automation Engine and updated business analytics in WebCenter can also help identify new efficiencies and eradicate waste, according to the company. esko.com



**EFI Nozomi
Single-Pass Inkjet
Presses**

EFI

EFI has announced the EFI Nozomi 14000 LED press. The company reports the direct-to-board digital press features enhanced productivity, reliability, value, and flexibility. The LED press offers single or dual bottom feeder options; a roller capable of applying varying amounts of primer; an optional varnish station that allows for a range of gloss or satin finishes; and full or bundle stacker options. The company reports that the Nozomi 14000 LED press's high-viscosity inks provide full color registration and coverage. efi.com

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Beaver Paper Beaver Boards

BEAVER PAPER

Beaver Paper Group has introduced the Beaver Boards line of sustainable, printable display boards. The boards are produced from natural, renewable resources and specifically designed for digital printing, the company reports. Intended uses include P-O-S signage, hanging display, and interior design or free-standing display units. Beaver Boards are compatible with the following printing processes: offset printing, UV digital, and silk screen printing. beaverpaper.com



Sun Chemical FSR Edible Inkjet Inks
SUN CHEMICAL

Sun Chemical has launched FSR Edible Inkjet Inks, developed to meet the specific needs of the food industry and verified for printing directly onto food including baked goods. The inks are compliant with the highest levels of quality and safety regulations, the company reports. The technology is also suitable for pharmaceutical and nutraceutical markets such as printing on pills and capsules. The FSR range of inks has been developed to conform to FDA and EU legislation. sunchemical.com

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FOURTH ANNUAL

BEST OF WIDE FORMAT AWARDS

Big Picture recognizes 12 remarkable wide-format digital print projects.

By Kelsey Johnson, Alex Marcheschi, and Adrienne Palmer

In partnership with ISA and sponsored by Durst, FujiFilm, and Roland, *Big Picture* is honored to announce the winners of the fourth annual Best of Wide Format Awards. The awards honor the most creative, innovative, and inspiring large-format digital print projects in our field. Winning projects demonstrate how today's print service providers push the boundaries of wide-format digital print. Congratulations to the 12 winners of the 2022 Best of Wide Format Awards! Join us in person at the ISA Sign Expo, Wednesday, April 4, at 4 p.m. EDT in our booth #2449 as we recognize the winning PSPs.

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Home of the Golden Bears

SCHOOL SPIRIT AWAKENS THANKS TO ATCHLEY GRAPHICS' WIDE-FORMAT TAKEOVER.

AFTER TWO YEARS of construction, Upper Arlington High School students started the 2021 to 2022 school year at a brand-new, state-of-the-art facility near Columbus, Ohio. Students were greeted with exciting features such as 400,000 square feet of learning space, advanced science labs, a new performing arts center, and a schoolwide environmental

branding output, installed by local print shop Atchley Graphics.

Despite challenges, like tight timeframes, fast-paced schedules, and COVID-related product shortages, school spirit and Golden Bear pride runs rampant throughout the new facilities with multi-surface branding, including wall wraps, banners, dimensional

PRINT SHOP

ATCHLEY GRAPHICS

atchleygraphics.com

LOCATION

Columbus, Ohio

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

HP Latex 570 and 365 printers, EFI Pro 32r+ superwide LED UV printer, DreamScape Suede wall-covering, 3M IJ180Cv3 Controltac graphic film, 3M IJ35C Scotchcal graphic film, 3M IJ8624 Scotchcal graphic film, 3M 8520 matte laminate, Kapco Embossed KJ5 vinyl laminate, GBC Titan 1264 laminator, GFP 563TH-4R roll laminator, Summa Flatbed FC1832, and Summa Roll S2T160-2E

signage, displays, and more. “The project encompassed large areas of the new high school, not only [on] the walls, but [in] a wide variety of areas, environments, and surfaces,” says Derek Atchley, CEO/founder, Atchley Graphics. “All areas had to be cohesive and tie in with every other area in terms of media, color, and finish, from small items and signs to grand-format wallcoverings.”

For the wide-format digital print media and signage portions of the brand identity experience, Atchley Graphics utilized several HP Latex and EFI UV inkjet presses to image media from DreamScape and 3M, finishing with laminate coatings, two wide-format laminators, and two cutters.



The Big Game

BLUEMEDIA WOWS WITH PRINTED GRAPHICS, CUSTOM-BUILT BRANDING ELEMENTS, AND LIVE EVENT ACTIVATIONS FOR SUPER BOWL LVI.

FOR THE EIGHTH consecutive year, bluemedia was hired by the NFL to print and install graphics for Super Bowl LVI at the SoFi Stadium in LA and in locales across the city, including LAX, Los Angeles Rams and Cincinnati Bengals team hotels and practice facilities, the Los Angeles Convention Center (home of the NFL Experience Center), and the SBLVI Media Center. If that wasn't enough, the Tempe, Arizona-based team also handled the graphics for Super Bowl sponsors Anheuser-Busch and Marriott Hotels.

SoFi Stadium's architectural

design features did not allow bluemedia to cover the space in graphics like at other Super Bowl games. "To solve for this, we were able to identify high-profile locations throughout the exterior of the stadium where we installed SBLVI branded graphics that really enhanced the sense of arrival for fans," says R.J. Orr, EVP and partner, bluemedia. One such element were the massive columns that help support the canopy at the stadium's main entrance on its south side. "At 15 x 75 feet, the columns provided the perfect surface from a branding standpoint. Given their

PRINT SHOP
BLUEMEDIA
bluemedia.com

LOCATION
Los Angeles

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES
Durst Rhotex 325 direct-to-textile digital printer, Durst 312r Plus large-format roll-to-roll printer, HP Latex 3500 printer, EFI Vutek LX3 Pro LED printer, EFI Vutek GS5500LXr Pro printer, adhesive back vinyl, black back fabric, perforated vinyl, jersey mesh fence fabric, and Zünd G3 digital flatbed cutter/routers

unique shape and size, the columns really captured your attention. And with the addition of graphics featuring players from both teams, they became an ideal location for fans taking keepsake photos. We were also tasked with producing and installing graphics for the stadium's perimeter fence line. At previous Super Bowls, fencing ran approximately five miles, but at SoFi it covered a whopping 10 miles."

The most significant challenge was timing. "For only the second time in NFL history, this year's Super Bowl stadium was also the host venue for the NFC Championship game just two weeks earlier," says Orr, which meant work couldn't start until that game was over vs. an entire month in advance. "All of that work needed to be compressed into two weeks and, in many instances, we couldn't begin our work until other vendors completed theirs. The solution was to work overtime and with a larger team to get the stadium ready for the game." bluemedia successfully completed the entire job by 11 p.m. the night before the game.

A particular point of pride for bluemedia was the "quality, color, and clarity of our printed graphics," says Orr.



Scan the QR code to watch the highlights of the graphic takeover.



Draw the Curtain

BPGRAPHICS MAKES HISTORY IN THE CAPITAL CITY.

PRINT SHOP
BPGRAPHICS
bpgraphics.com

LOCATION
Washington, D.C.

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES
Durst Rho 500R press,
Duratex Premium
9-ounce mesh, Miller
Weldmaster T112 hot air
welder, nylon braided
rope, HP Latex 3600
press, and 3M 40C self-
adhesive vinyl

TAKE A STROLL through Washington, D.C.'s National Mall and you may see sights such as the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument, the Tidal Basin reservoir's famous blossoming cherry trees, perhaps hundreds of people attending a demonstration or celebration, and Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden of international modern and contemporary art. In the fall of 2021, passersby were also greeted by the biggest single work ever displayed at the Hirshhorn: a four-story, 861-foot-long building wrap.

As the Hirshhorn Museum began extensive exterior renovations on its unique drum-shaped facade with months of unsightly scaffolding ex-

pected, the museum commissioned Swiss artist Nicolas Party to create his largest artwork to date, "Draw the Curtain." Phoenix-based BPGraphics was tasked with bringing the 360-degree digitally collaged pastel painting to life.

The shop printed 123 panels of Duratex Premium 9-ounce mesh using its family of Durst Rho 500R presses and then used one of their Miller Weldmaster T112 hot air welders to weld twisted nylon rope into the perimeter of each mesh, creating an embedded keder edge. A unique track system, designed by Sail Systems, was attached to the exterior of the scaffolding surrounding the entire building. The keder edges of each mesh panel were then slid into

the channels of each track.

Not wanting the face of the Sail Systems bare metal track to be exposed and break up the artwork, BPGraphics printed 3M 40C self-adhesive graphics on their HP Latex 3600 presses to fill in the missing image between each mesh panel and create a seamless canvas. The graphics – all told, the length of two football fields – turned a construction site into an art installation depicting famous faces peeking out from behind curtains from art history.

"Taking the artist's image and breaking it down into variable bay widths was the most unique challenge," says Dave Stuedemann, senior account director, BPGraphics. "It was critical that the calculations for material stretch and finishing specifications would result in the left and right sides meeting perfectly to create a continuous image. We were glad to be a part of this *monumental* project."



Scan the QR code to
watch the graphics being
installed in the track.



Snow All Out

DEVIANT INK SETS A SNOWMOBILE TEAM APART FROM THE PACK USING THEIR CUSTOM DESIGN TECHNOLOGY.

PRINT SHOP
DEVIANT INK
deviantink.com

LOCATION
Rexburg, Idaho

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES
Roland DG TrueVis VG2-540 54-inch wide-format printer/cutter and Substance Incorporated 6-mil vinyl

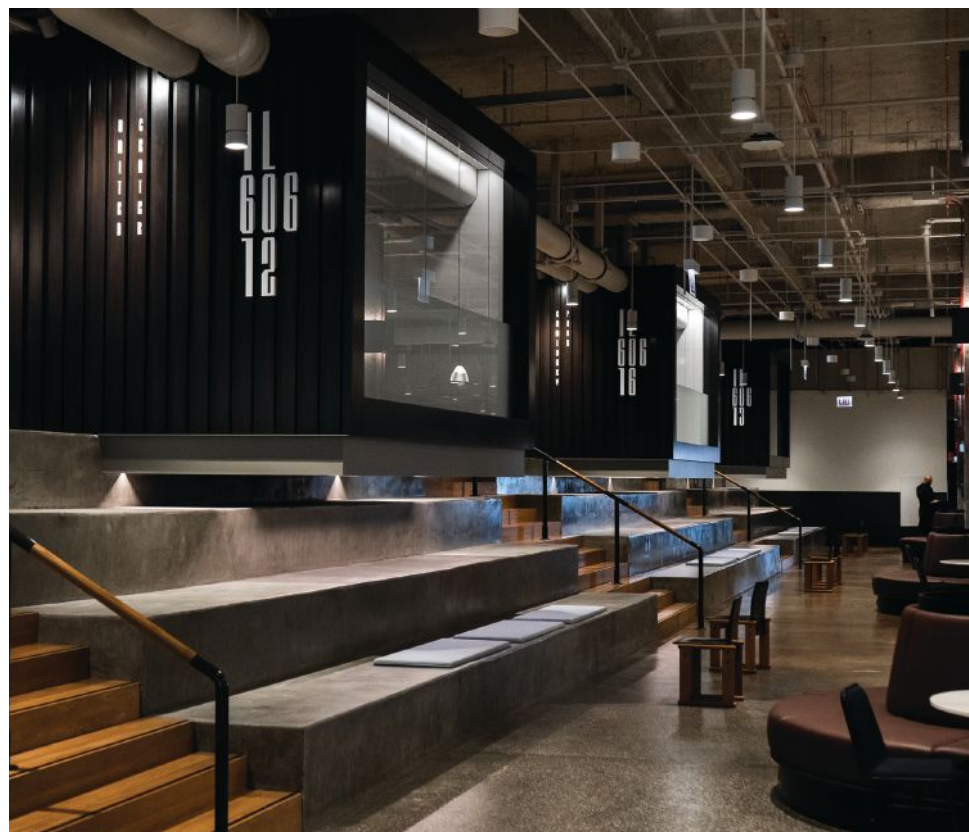
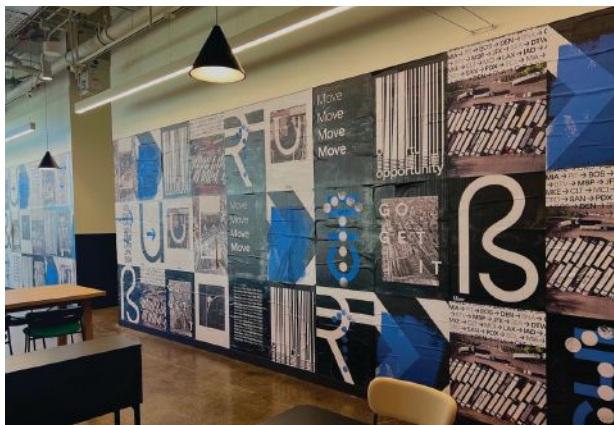
SINCE THE METEORIC rise of the X Games and the subsequent video game craze in the early 2000s, snowmobiles have become a part of American pop culture. You're already cool if you're on a snowmobile, so why not take it to the next level and do it in style? Deviant Ink gave the Swedish riding team Unknown Crew a series of four custom snowmobile wraps so they could hit the slopes with a fresh makeover. In fact, each of these designs was created by a different member of the Unknown Crew using Deviant Ink's online design tool. The total square footage of each wrap is approximately 40 square feet.

For Deviant Ink, the biggest challenge came in making sure there was some element of uniformity to

the designs of the wraps, while still maintaining the custom look of each different sled. The design team was able to achieve this after a process of trial and error, finally landing on designs that were unique, yet cohesive. The team used a Roland DG TrueVis VG2-540 54-inch wide-format printer/cutter to print all of

the wraps onto Substance Incorporated 6-mil vinyl. Deviant Ink was especially proud of this job as it utilized their online design template to perfection. They've been creating a library of original designs since 2016 and its effectiveness has been a great boost for the shop.





Uber-Cool

FROM POST OFFICE TO OFFICE SPACE, ER2 IMAGE GROUP COMPLETES MAJOR BRANDING ENDEAVOR.

BUILT IN 1921, the historic Old Chicago Main Post Office has undergone several transformations overlooking the Chicago Loop. With the rise of the mail-order industry, the Classical-influenced Art Deco structure underwent a colossal expansion in 1932, with up to 19 million pieces of mail passing through daily in its heyday. That hustle and bustle eventually died down when the building sat vacant for nearly 20 years starting in the late '90s, getting brief use during the filming of “Batman Begins,” “The Dark Knight,” and “Transformers: Dark of the Moon,” before being renovated and reopened for multi-use office and event space in 2019.

Perhaps the most drastic transformation? Environmental graphics for Uber’s 461,000-square-foot space spanning three floors created by Hanover Park, Illinois-based ER2 Image Group. Between the complexity of the ask, partner quality expectations, and supply chain and pandemic-related issues, transforming the office space was one of the most challenging projects in the shop’s history – but also one of the most beautiful spaces executed in managing director of Applied Surfaces, a division of ER2 Image Group, Jason Dillas’ career.

ER2 Image created myriad bespoke branding using the shop’s EFI

PRINT SHOP
ER2 IMAGE GROUP
er2image.com

LOCATION
Chicago

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES
EFI Vutek h5 UV LED hybrid flatbed/roll-to-roll printers, Direct Color Systems 1800s UV LED tactile printer, Direct Color Systems UV53-DTS tactile printer, DreamScape Satara Pearl and Terralon Smooth digital wallcoverings, 3M Scotchcal 7725SE Dusted Crystal Graphic Film, 3M Controltac Graphic Film IJ160 window films, Lintec Window Film, HP Poster Paper (wheat paste), 3Form Chromas resin panel, Richlite paper-based composite material, Zünd routers, laser cutter, and engraver

Vutek h5 presses, Direct Color Systems 1800s UV LED tactile printer, Direct Color Systems UV 53-DTS tactile printer, CNC, Zünd routers, and laser cutter and engraver. Highlights include wallcoverings, window films, and vinyl graphics, printed wheat-paste murals, acrylic and recycled aluminum letters and logos, custom neon and backlit applications, a tailored main feature wall leveraging 3Form resin material, a 200-foot truck mirror feature wall with more than 3600 semitruck mirrors, Richlite ADA and wayfinding signage, a low-VOC custom-painted security walkway, and a 20-foot-diameter cylindrical staircase with custom neon messaging encased in a large-scale two-way mirror.

“This project, in my opinion, has pushed the environmental graphics design world forward,” says Dillas. “I’m grateful we were able to give this beautiful building its voice back. It has a lot to say.”

Let It Gogh

INK MONSTR TRANSFORMS THE EXTERIOR TENT OF THE IMMERSIVE VAN GOGH EXHIBIT.

PRINT SHOP
INK MONSTR
inkmonstr.com

LOCATION
Denver

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES
HP Latex 800W printer, 3M IJ180CV3 cast vinyl film, 3M 8518 Scotchcal gloss overlamine, and Seal 62 Pro S laminator



Scan the QR code to watch the highlights of the tent takeover.



“THIS JOB WAS borderline impossible,” says Ink Monstr CEO Jon White. “Others were asked if it could be done, and they said ‘No’ without venturing to see if it indeed could be done. Countless hours of consulting, surveying, and strategizing went into bringing this wrap to life.”

Ink Monstr was called upon to transform the exterior tent that covers the entrance to the Immersive Van Gogh Exhibit in Denver. The tent has an elevation apex of 36 feet

from the bottom of the tent to the spire, is on a tilted axis at 78 degrees, and required 10,000 square feet of graphics and 161 panels, “making for a very complex substrate to reach, let alone wrap,” says White.

It took the Ink Monstr team three days to survey the site. “Because of the design of the tent, there was no accessible weight/load bearing point for installation teams to access and, as such, the entire project was installed from lifts,” says White. They rented the largest boom lift they could, but even that brought its own set of issues. “The boom lift blew a hydraulic line while our install team was at elevation installing over the tent, causing the bucket to start dropping elevation,” says White. “Fortunately, they were able to navigate the bucket away from the

tent prior to any structure damage being done.”

Ink Monstr had the tent pressure washed and bathed in alcohol prior to installation. “That alone was a two-day process to prepare for installation,” he says. “It’s a tent/membrane structure. This is not installing on a building or wall; there is give and you must be cognizant of how much heat and pressure are being used to install the wrap.” Installation – in the snow and ice – took eight days to complete and nearly two and a half weeks to finish.

“This piece is truly iconic,” says White. “A Van Gogh sunflower everyone driving into Denver from the south and away from Denver (if heading north) cannot miss.” The wrap is passed by 250,000-plus vehicles every day.



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Pioneering Print

INK WRAPZ REVAMPS A LAMBORGHINI HURACAN FOR REPEAT CLIENT.

THERE ARE SOME clients PSPs never hear from again, and there are others that come back pushing the envelope of what digital print can do. Ink Wrapz customers tend to fall into the latter category. After the success of a “Mario Kart Bowser” vehicle wrap with 3D spikes, Eddie Hall, a return client, challenged Ink Wrapz to do something else that had never been done before: Turn a 2018 Lamborghini Huracan into wide-format vehicle wrap art with layered wraps, hand-applied ink, ceramic coating work, and more.

In three weeks, the Ink Wrapz

team put in 250 hours of design, prep, production, and installation. “At the time of conception, we still had only a theory that this could even be possible,” says Brandon Barnett, owner, Ink Wrapz. “We documented the whole process as we did our R&D to source the right materials and establish the techniques and processes required for the end result.”

After templating each body panel (some with multiple layers) in the exact shape of the car to make the design fit perfectly, the shop utilized its HP Latex 335 press to image 3M IJ180 Controltac graphic film with

PRINT SHOP
INK WRAPZ
inkwrapz.com

LOCATION
Tulsa, Oklahoma

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES
HP Latex 335 printer, 3M Wrap Film Series 1080-G364 Gloss Fiery Orange film, Orafol Oracal 651 Intermediate Calendered vinyl, 3M IJ180 Controltac graphic film, 3M Scotchcal Gloss Overlaminant 8518, Graphtec FC9000-160 vinyl cutter, 65-inch Royal Sovereign RSC-1651CLTW cold roll laminator, TransferRite Ultra Clear 1310 Medium Tack Transfer Tape, and 3M Knifeless Tape

3M Scotchcal Gloss Overlaminant 8518, finishing with a Graphtec FC9000-160 vinyl cutter and Royal Sovereign RSC-1651CLTW cold roll laminator. Ink Wrapz installed four layers of material: Orafol Oracal 651 vinyl for a “multilayer embossing” effect and 3M 1080 Gloss Fiery Orange for the color change, using TransferRite Ultra Clear 1310 Medium Tack Transfer Tape and 3M Knifeless Tape to template each art panel to fit the car – installing each layer separately. A final challenge was hand-applying and distressing raw ink with a variety of materials. “We were still working on the final details at 3 a.m. the night before the 30-plus-person photo shoot with celebrity Danny Boy O’Connor from House of Pain onsite,” says Barnett. “We feel this project represents wide format in a way that is innovative, creative, and exciting.”

Street Art

PREMIER GRAPHICS PRINTS AND INSTALLS A SERIES OF COLORFUL GRAPHICS FOR A FUTURISTIC ART INSTALLATION.

PREMIER GRAPHICS made artist Jessica Angel's vision a reality, mixing colorful graphics with augmented reality (AR) to "extend" the Cambie Street Bridge into a 19,000-square-foot public art installation for the Vancouver Biennale exhibition.

Angel's design featured a two-dimensional vinyl mural that wrapped the pedestrian walkway, supporting columns, and underside of the bridge.

"The process consisted of the testing of many materials, and of course balancing a budget that was already stretched thin," says Taylor Sellinger, partner and general manager, Premier Graphics. "We needed to fit the client's budget with a material that was likely to last 18 to 24 months and meet the slip-resistance requirements for the safety of the public."

Premier Graphics used Drytac Polar Grip white polymeric self-adhesive film for the printed film parts of the installation, Drytac Interlam Pro Emyertex PVC overlaminating film for the floor graphics, and Drytac Interlam Pro Matte

pressure-sensitive overlaminating film for the pillars and ceiling. Graphics were printed on the company's HP Latex R1000 Plus printer; material was supplied by ND Graphics.

Passersby were encouraged to

download the Vancouver Biennale app for free and hold up their phones while walking through the walkway. Doing this created a whole new dimension, transforming parts of the installation.

"The virtual reality experience developed is amazing when paired with the graphics," says Sellinger.

PRINT SHOP

PREMIER GRAPHICS
premiergr.com

LOCATION

Vancouver, British Columbia

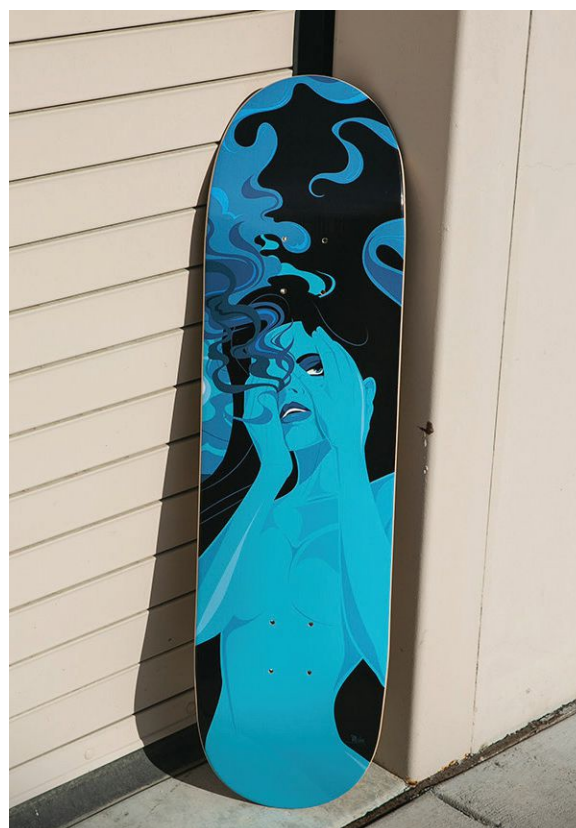
TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

HP Latex R1000 Plus printer, Drytac Polar Grip white polymeric self-adhesive film, Drytac Interlam Pro Emyertex monomeric soft calendared PVC laminating film, and Drytac Interlam Pro Matte pressure-sensitive overlaminating film



Scan to watch a video of the installation.





Decked Out

REAL COLOR DESIGN CREATES ONE-OF-A-KIND POP CULTURE ART ON SKATEBOARDS.

SKATEBOARDERS HAVE been customizing their skate decks since the sport was first invented in the 1950s in California. Skateboarding involves extreme amounts of ingenuity, so it comes as no surprise that Real Color Design was able to create these gnarly pieces of art. The custom decks were created for the Sideshow Collectibles' Art Print Program, dedicated to creating premium fine art prints for pop culture enthusiasts. For this event, Real Color Design developed a new way of printing on skate decks using aqueous and resin printers, as opposed to traditional methods like screen printing or UV transfers.

The shop used their Epson SureColor P20000 large-format inkjet printer to print the limited-edition art on their desired media: 7-ply Canadian Maple Street Skateboard Decks. The most difficult element of the install involved the Real Color Design team finding the ideal

ink balance to not oversaturate the material but still produce consistent, reliable color. After some trial sessions and brainstorming, Real Color Design figured out the minimum amount of ink necessary to achieve the details and vibrancy required to produce fine art skate decks. After that, things started rolling and the premium art made the jump to the event.

PRINT SHOP

REAL COLOR DESIGN
realcolordesign.com

LOCATION

Torrance, California

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

Epson SureColor P20000 64-inch large-format inkjet printer, Epson SureColor R5070 64-inch Roll-to-Roll Resin Signage printer, and 7-ply Canadian Maple Skate skateboard decks



An Eye for It

SCREAMING IMAGES
AFFIXES A PRINTED
EYE PATCH ON A
SPHINX.

LAS VEGAS IS the land of extravagance. In the famous vacation destination, you can find the shiniest, brightest, and biggest versions of just about anything... even an eye patch. Screaming Images is a Vegas branding staple as their touch seems to be on just about anything that requires signage in the city. When Luxor Casino wanted to brand their famous 100-foot-tall Sphinx with a Las Vegas Raiders eye patch, they knew exactly who to call. Believe it or not, the Luxor's Sphinx is about twice the size of the original in Egypt, so the PSP came prepared for a gigantic project.

To print the massive eye patch with the famous NFL team's logo emblazoned on it, Screaming Images

used an EFI Vutek GS5000r printer to print onto 9-ounce Ultraflex UltraMesh Supreme mesh banner material. The eye patch was installed prior to the Raiders' first game and remained on the Sphinx for the duration of the NFL season. The uniqueness of this installation is what sets it apart from the competition, but it's not the first time Screaming Images has won a Best of Wide Format Award for a large Raiders-themed installation. Just last year, they dressed the 150-foot-tall Statue of Liberty outside the New York-New York Hotel and Casino in a custom silver and black jersey (bigpicturemag.com/statueofliberty). What will they do next?

PRINT SHOP

SCREAMING IMAGES

screamingimages.net

LOCATION

Las Vegas

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

EFI Vutek GS5000R printer and a 9-ounce Ultraflex UltraMesh Supreme mesh banner material

Right on Track

SIGNAGEWORLD WRAPS TRAIN FOR
THE GHAN EXPEDITION.



Scan the QR code to watch
more of the train wrap
project.



PRINT SHOP
SIGNAGEWORLD
signageworld.com.au

LOCATION
Adelaide, Australia

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES
HP 360 Latex printer,
HP 560 Latex printer,
3M Scotchcal Graphic
Film IJ40, 3M Envision
Gloss Wrap Overlamine
8548G, and Clear Focus
One-Way Vision Film

VEHICLE WRAPS ARE pretty standard in the world of wide format. Who doesn't want a moving billboard promoting their brand? But what about a train wrap? Now that's something you don't see every day. Signageworld in Adelaide, Australia, created a high-speed work of art for Journey Beyond Rail's famed train "The Ghan." The Ghan Expedition is a legendary train journey that goes through the heart of Australia, from Adelaide to Darwin. Journey Beyond Rail wanted to give the train a special look for the launch of Parrtjima, a light festival put on by the Northern Territory Indigenous Arts Festival, and it would also mark the first trip of the season for The Ghan.

Signageworld supplied visual mock-ups and a rendering for Journey Beyond Rail after receiving the artwork – "Crossroads" by artist Chantelle Mulladad – in various vector files. After the design was approved, the installation took 250 hours and used around 2500 square feet of

printed media. The installation process was carried out over two weeks with a team of four at the Rail First Islington workshop in Adelaide. The application was done indoors and undercover in a secure facility to ensure the project was under wraps prior to the unveiling. The team at Signageworld used an HP 360 Latex printer and an HP 560 Latex printer for the project. The wrap for the body of the train was printed onto 3M Scotchcal Graphic Film IJ40 and finished with 3M Envision Gloss Wrap Overlamine 8548G. The window graphics were printed on Clear Focus One-Way Vision to guarantee the passengers still had great views out of the windows.

"Working with the complex profile of the train carriages was the biggest challenge of the project," says



Derek Michalanney, managing director, Signageworld. "Our team used their expertise to ensure perfect application of the material. Also, there was limited time to complete the wrap from start to finish given "The Ghan's" strict timetable and the short time periods when it can be out of service." Although it was difficult, Signageworld was able to keep the project a secret until it was time for its debut, and at no point did the project go off the rails!

History Is Not Forgotten

WESTMOUNT SIGNS
ADORNS MODERN
BUILDING WITH GRAPHICS
THAT REFLECT ITS PAST.

ZEHR LEVESQUE, the developer of a new condominium building in downtown Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, needed exterior graphics to represent the heritage of the previous building on the site, which was part of Kitchener's famous garment factories. They called upon Westmount Signs who then collaborated with local artist Stephanie Scott.

"This design for the Garment Street development in downtown Kitchener is a playful interpretation of clothing manufacturing," says Scott. "It is made up of scraps and remnants that are created as a by-product of the garment construction process. It features an assortment of notions, such as loose thread, buttons, metal rings, zippers, bobbins, and lace. These are scattered amongst fabric scraps of all different colors and textures. The organic composition contrasts with the geometric lines of the building, and the blank pieces of the design encourage the viewer to fill in the gaps with their own imagination."

"The artist's unique designs incorporated a wide range of color, and we were able to match even the many shades of red and orange perfectly with the wide color gamut available on our Roland DG TrueVis VG2 printer," says Tim Bezner, owner, Westmount Signs. "The design really helped bring this contemporary building into harmony with the area's history."

With a winter storm fast approaching, the installation window was rapidly closing. "It was in November, and we were in a race

against time to install the graphics before the onset of winter weather," says Bezner. "In fact, our installers had to deal with strong wind gusts, rain, and snow during installation. The major challenge for this job was simply performing the installation in a busy downtown location. Fortu-

nately, our staff is very experienced, and we have the proper equipment to handle an installation of this scale." The graphics – totaling 662 square feet – were installed using an Elliott M43 HighReach aerial work platform and standard vinyl installation tools.



PRINT SHOP

WESTMOUNT SIGNS
westmountsigns.com

LOCATION

Kitchener, Ontario

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

Roland DG TrueVis VG2 series wide-format digital printer/cutter, Avery Dennison DOL 1460Z gloss cast laminate, Avery Dennison MPI 1105 SuperCast LTR Easy Apply RS with matching cast laminate, and painted aluminum composite panels as part of the construction of the building

HIRING AND RETAINING THE NEXT GENERATION

By Brian Adam
PRESIDENT,
OLYMPUS GROUP

THE SEEMINGLY EVER-CHANGING EMPLOYMENT LANDSCAPE REQUIRES FLEXIBILITY AND INTENTIONALITY.

Move over Millennials. Gen Z is the newest age group to begin entering the workforce. Last I checked, “Z” was the final letter in the alphabet. Given we are out of letters, what does this mean for the next generation’s name? Turns out, it’s Generation Alpha. I guess we’re going with Greek letters moving

forward, which could mean the naming of generations and COVID variants could be on an awkward crash course.

If you’re like me, it’s hard – if not impossible – to hire people today. The combination of the labor shortage and economic growth means you will take Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, or Gen Z – anyone, *anyone* who is willing to work and contribute. Many experts, much smarter than I, are predicting this labor shortage will be around for years to come. So, what can we do to hire and retain the next generation as well as help fill some of the labor gaps we’re experiencing? Let’s go ahead and define the “Next Generation” as Millennials and Gen Z. As a


43-year-old, I’m selfishly lumping anyone younger than me into this Next Generation category.

There isn’t one definitive authority on generational definitions, but Wikipedia is always an easy, semi-accurate go-to. Here’s how it breaks down generations:

- Baby Boomers: 1946-1964
- Generation X: 1965-1980
- Millennials: 1981-1996
- Generation Z: 1997-2012
- Generation Alpha: 2012 - now

The oldest individual in Generation Alpha is only 9 years old, so let’s hold off on hiring that group for now. Instead, we’ll discuss Millennials and Generation Z – the Next Generation of employees.

IS THE NEXT GENERATION THAT DIFFERENT FROM BOOMERS/ GEN X?

 believe generations have more similarities than differences and are more alike than we think. Take the Next Generation for example. Most of these individuals want the following from their employer:

- To be given interesting work to do
- To be empowered to make decisions
- To be rewarded on the basis of their performance
- To be given the chance to develop, grow, and advance
- To have their opinions and feedback heard
- To know how they're doing
- To be paid fairly and offered meaningful benefits
- To find purpose and meaning in their work

Is this list really that different from Baby Boomers or Gen Xers? Who would not want

interesting work, to be empowered, to be rewarded, to be paid fairly, or to have the opportunity to advance and be heard? When it comes to management and engaging employees, best practices apply consistently to all generations.

How is the Next Generation different?

While the Next Generation shares many similarities to other generations, there are a couple of differences that are important to note. If we can understand them and address them, it can have a significant impact on our ability to recruit and retain the Next Generation.

1. The Next Generation is not afraid to change jobs. Treat them poorly or disrespect them, and they will be on Indeed, Handshake, LinkedIn, or any

other job posting site, sharing their resume within the hour. Over the past year, one in five employees changed jobs. That number jumps to one in four for Millennials and one in three for Gen Zers. Impatience coupled with lots of job opportunities is leading to what some experts have termed “The Great Resignation” – the world in which we are currently living.

2. The Next Generation wants work with a purpose. We all want purpose in what we do, but the Next Generation is far less likely to work for only a paycheck. They want a company and their role within the company to mean something and to stand for the greater good. They are passionate about social issues, climate change, civic engagement, and giving back. Companies that embrace and promote this are far more likely to retain the Next Generation.

3. The Next Generation values different benefits and perks.

Boomers placed a high value on lifestyle perks such as health insurance, paid vacation, and retirement plans. The Next Generation value perks that offer them greater flexibility and benefits related to children and education like student loan repayment, childcare reimbursement, and paid training/continuing education classes. The Next Generation is also far more likely to leave a company for a perk than any Boomers or Gen Xers.

4. The Next Generation wants flexibility in when and where they work.

According to a recent Gallup survey, 50 percent of the Next Generation say they would switch to a job that allows them to work part-time and 37 percent would switch to a job that allows them to work off-site part of the time. As printers, this is tough to manage because our employees are often required to physically be at the office to run our equipment. So, I'd consider unique options: Four to 10-hour days, job shares, or more flexibility with benefits like purchasing a week of PTO.

How do we get the Next Generation excited about and engaged in the print industry?

Let's face it, print isn't exactly the sexiest industry on the planet. We're not developing flying cars, the latest tech gadget, or the next renewable energy source. We're putting ink down onto a variety of materials and often working on the same types of projects every single day. Don't get me wrong, I love and take a ton a pride in what we do – printers create some amazing things – but we have some work convincing any age group the print industry can make for an exciting career.

TIPS FOR ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION

You might be thinking “OK, Brian. I get it. The Next Generation is important. But what do we do about it?” Here are a collection of tips to help you engage:

→ **Dumb Rules - Ask your employees if your rules are unnecessary.** A great question to ask your team members is if you have any dumb rules. No one wants dumb rules to control their actions or behaviors. One of the best ways to disengage the Next Generation is to use the phrases “That’s the way we do it around here,” “That’s how it’s always been done,” or “In my day, nobody let me get away with that.” Make sure those phrases are removed from your team’s vocabulary.

→ **Practice Meritocracy - Reward performance over seniority.** The Next Generation can be impatient and are not scared to switch jobs. Make sure you’re rewarding employees based on performance. At Olympus, we believe we are a team, not a family. We reward top performers and replace mediocre perform-

ers. We treat people fairly, not equally. I believe this resonates with the Next Generation who, at times, can be a tad bit impatient but understand and place value in results. You can recognize tenure – if someone has been with you for 20-plus years, that’s a big deal – but you should promote and reward performance. The better employee should get the promotion and the bigger raise regardless of tenure.

→ **Don’t Skimp on the Praise.** Growing up in a society of instant gratification, the Next Generation is used to receiving feedback instantly. If someone is doing a good job, tell them exactly that and make sure to do it right now. A little positive reinforcement can go a long way. Even in today’s hyper-competitive job market where wages are going up, the number one reason an employee quits is not pay but lack of recognition from their manager.

→ **Benefits - Understand what your employees value.** Ask your team members what benefits they value, ask them if there were any benefits they wish you offered. The Next Generation is

not scared to leave for a company that offers better perks. Focus on PTO, flexibility, and freedom over 401ks and fancy titles. Better yet, have a conversation with your team.

→ **Deliver Regular Feedback.** The traditional annual performance review is dead. The Next Generation wants constant feedback on if they’re meeting expectations. (It’s also particularly important to ensure you have clearly set expectations in the first place). Set up regular check-in meetings (or weekly 1:1s) and be honest. If they’re not performing well, tell them. If they’re crushing it, tell them.

→ **Treat them as Individuals (and do not call them Millennials or Gen Zers).** The Next Generation values their individuality and don’t like to be stereotyped into a large group. Mass personalization is taking off due to the Next Generation’s





Make sure you're rewarding employees based on performance."

desire to be an individual and be treated differently. Attempt to offer "mass personalization" where you work such as flexible start times, choose your own benefit packages, etc.

→ **Offer Unique Training Opportunities.** The Next Generation has an ardent desire for personal growth and development. Try offering untraditional training opportunities including mentorships, job shadowing, or (this was new to me) peer coaching. Few efforts are more valued by Gen Z than peer coaching programs. It's more effective for a peer to encourage another peer, like they have through years of schooling, than for a supervisor to micro-manage.

I am by no means an expert on generations. I do, however, believe if you put a couple of these tips to practice, the Next Generation where you work will be a more engaged group.

One of the best things about the Next Generation is they like to talk about and share their experiences online. They share their job experiences on Glassdoor and talk about their employers on social media. If you can get a little momentum engaging the Next Generation at your company, it could open the floodgates for other motivated individuals to want to join your team. Who wouldn't want to create a desirable place to work?

COMPANY CULTURE

Creating a desired workplace culture is a major part of the hiring and retaining process. It's based on a strongly held and widely shared set of beliefs that are supported by strategy and structure. "Define your culture (be real), articulate your culture (clearly), live your culture (daily), show your employees you care," says Adam. We asked our Brain Squad: "What are our tips for building a better company culture?" Here's what they have to say:

→ Creating team leadership that is accountable for better company culture. We meet twice a month and discuss how to move the needle forward and to make the company a friendly, open place for all to achieve greatness. **Christine Walsh, Alpha Graphics, Baltimore, Maryland**

→ Communicate the values clearly to everyone and live them out boldly with passion. **Drew Veach, CorpColor, Wyoming, Michigan**

→ Nothing beats regular 1-on-1 meetings with staffers for creating and maintaining a culture of accountability and employee appreciation. Making the time for it as teams grow is incredibly difficult, but the ROI makes it worth it. **Wade Neff, Strategic Factory, Owings Mills, Maryland**

→ Company culture has to start at the top and be lived out each day. **Tim Roe, Outspoken Signs, Marietta, Georgia**

→ We are a flat management model. Staff (team) of six, meeting regularly, and inviting all team members to input in most

brainstorming and design charettes. The team is encouraged to be ambassadors for Fresh Artists with both corporate art clients and all art teacher constituents. First thing all applicants are given is our Vision and Values Statement so they understand from the start that this is a mission-driven nonprofit social business. So far, so great. The team understands why they are here and that their actions and energy matters to the children we serve. **Barbara Chandler Allen, Fresh Artists, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

→ Find people who love to both learn and share. We avoid a lot of errors by having design and production teams that are cross trained and have experience in both departments. **Rob Matthews, M3, Greensboro, North Carolina**

→ We review our company values with all new hires and do the same during quarterly performance reviews. Consistent reminders get tiring for management but are necessary. **Jim White, Go Graphix, East Longmeadow, Massachusetts**

→ It's mostly about treating customers right and treating employees like internal customers. There needs to be consistency throughout the organiza-

tion. **Peter Brunner, Full Sail Graphics & Marketing, Huntington Beach, California**

→ I emphasize on having a clean and safe environment. Both physically and emotionally. **Diana Herrera, Associated Photo & Imaging, Hialeah, Florida**

→ Create a team atmosphere. Everyone has a say, everyone has an opinion. **Kelly Mank, Time4Printing, Windham, Maine**

→ Shared goals, providing the right tools to get the job done, fostering open communication and teamwork. **Gina Kazmerski, Image360 Woodbury, Woodbury, Minnesota**

→ Work hard, have fun, leave the world a more beautiful place. **Jon Sherman, Flavor Paper, Brooklyn, New York**

→ All employees have demonstrated above and beyond commitment to our Mission Statement; this is our culture. We are a visual marketing communications company passionate about producing large-format representations of our clients' brands. Our clients seek, and we provide them, a professional business relationship based on trust, competitive pricing, attention to detail, and personal service. We are the best in what we do. Seeing clients be more successful with

products we produce provides us a great sense of pride in our workmanship. **David Kaiser, Digitype Design, Tualatin, Oregon**

→ The best solution provider for all things accessibility and wayfinding related with signage while working on continuous improvements in how we manufacture. Reduce waste and moving toward more sustainable substrates and media that still fulfills the requirements of long-term and short-term needs of the client. We pride ourselves in being a local business, employing a diverse team who all have a vested interest in our community and supporting our local small business colleagues. **Linda Fong, Fastsigns Oakland; Fastsigns Hayward, Oakland, California**

→ Cultivate the right people who will take care of your business, and don't allow the wrong mindsets to enter your team (hire ever so carefully.) **Malcolm Gieske, IDWraps.com / Identity Group, Slatington, Pennsylvania**

"This is a big topic that we could probably talk about for hours," says Gary Schellerer. Head to bigpicturemag.com/culture to see how ER2 Image Group builds company culture.



DIGITAL TEXTILE PRINTING AS AN ARTISTIC MEDIUM

AND WHAT ARCHIVAL
PRINTING MEANS
TO OUR INDUSTRY.

BY KATHRYN SANDERS

Though our trade is rarely viewed through this lens, digital textile printing is an artistic medium. That may be an atypical way to look at digital printing, especially if you're an advertising-focused PSP, but it's high time we look at – or rather respect – this technology as more than a service or commodity. Digital textile printing is a way to create.

In truth, the “digital textile printing as art” viewpoint has some serious resistance in our industry – and don't get me wrong; I understand why. Since our discipline's conception, engineers, dyers, printers, and manufacturing experts have been focused on sell-

ing the technology, making it accessible, and innovating the machinery and ink chemistry. Several decades in, with multiple industries from fashion to advertising having adopted the technology, we're bound for a shift – one that takes the focus away from selling and pivots toward artistic innovation.

Our color management experts and substrate engineers have done a fantastic job teaching us how to hit Coca-Cola red and develop tightly constructed, optic white fabrics that ensure vibrancy and print clarity. We've got a bulletproof formula that's made digital textile printing fundamentals comprehensive and accessible. Once mastered though, we have the unique





PHOTO BY: RIO CHANTEL

opportunity to lean out of that formula – or, in some cases, break it altogether.

It may seem obvious or insignificant if you're working with digital printing technology on a daily basis, but let's not forget our industry is underground and misunderstood to most. Even for those who have a working knowledge of digital printing, it can be difficult to see how revolutionary the technology can be for other industries. If you're comparing digital textile printing to digital desktop paper printing, the similarities are straightforward. However, if you compare digital textile printing to analog textile printing (i.e. rotary screen or flatbed printing), an entirely

new workflow and creative toolkit becomes unlocked.

Sometimes the advantages and innovations can get lost on us in the printing industry, but when we're in the position to introduce it to other industries – from fashion and interior design to the visual arts – it's a game-changer.

|||||

The Digital Advantages We (May) Take for Granted

SCALE

Let's start with what seems like a simple digital advantage: the ability to change scale at the touch of a button. Think about

it. In traditional textile production (which still accounts for the majority of textile printing production today) changing the scale of a design – whether slight or dramatic – requires a new set of screens to be engraved. Depending on the number of colors in the design, the design could need up to approximately 16 screens costing anywhere from \$300 to \$1000 per screen. That doesn't even include machine setup fees or minimum order requirements that usually hover between 1000 and 3000 yards.

Playing with scale – layering it or integrating different design scales into one project – is a big deal. Imagine a hospitality project where the drapery, wall-

coverings, and upholstery can all feature the same motif. Our ability to alter the scale (drapery typically leans towards a larger repeat size, for example) is paramount. Add the ability to easily integrate multiple colorways and all of a sudden you've created a design impossible without digital technology. For artists and designers, this is the golden ticket.

AFFORDABILITY & ACCESSIBILITY

Analog textile printing can be cost prohibitive and digital processes make it affordable, attainable, and accessible. Prototyping alone (even if you're going into analog production overseas) becomes much easier and less risky. In my experience,





one of the greatest delights and honors of being in the digital textile printing industry is introducing the technology to artists and designers. Illustrating a new way for them to create and innovate never gets old, and I doubt it ever will.

UNLIMITED COLOR GAMUT

On the topic of color, having a virtually unlimited gamut is the pièce de résistance. It's pretty self-explanatory, I know, but let's make sure we never lose sight of the fact this has changed design across the board. We may know this fact like the back of our hands, but many companies and brands still haven't delved into the technology and integrated a larger color gamut into their designs. It's never a bad thing to highlight this digital printing technology virtue, especially with new customers.

INTEGRATING PHOTOGRAPHS OR PHOTOGRAPHIC ELEMENTS

Building on the fact that our color gamut is limitless, the ability to print photographs is truly cutting edge. Even

↑ Ravens by Erika Peterman exemplifies how digital printing has transformative qualities for both the photographs and space. Printed on sheer polyester and achieving approximately 85 percent print-through, the fluidity of the lightweight textile allows the photos to exist in a brand new way.

“
There's bountiful creativity on the horizon for our industry...”

with the most sophisticated screen systems, like Galvano screens, printing photographs is an impossibility. Though arguably still in its infancy, digitally printing photographs on textiles is an extraordinary capability, which is why we've seen so many companies and print shops focus their entire business model around this print product.

Of course, it can be as simple (and consistently awe-inspiring) to print photographs on textiles, but the next compelling design evolution of the technology is to incorporate photographic elements into both repeat and placement prints. Textile designers, contemporary artists, and pattern makers

have the opportunity to create something authentically new and original. It's a true blend of new school and old school design techniques.

When we add the abilities to experiment with scale, utilize an unlimited color gamut, print photographs and photographic elements together – with little-to-no barrier to entry from a cost or MOQ perspective – it equals a brand new artistic medium.

Digital Textile Printing as an Artistic Medium

It's an exciting opportunity and time in our industry to move our focus from utility to creative



↓ Erika Peterman's *Bison*, printed here on a Two-Tone Square Weave, melds the power of the image with the geometric construction and texture of the fabric. It's not that the art is printed onto a substrate, but rather the photo printed on this fabric becomes the art.



potential. I hypothesize every artistic medium hit (or is in the process of hitting) that conflux at some point. For example, kiln technology may have been around since roughly 3000 B.C. but it took years before ceramic vessels were quite literally valued or designed as vessels for art – or as art.

Printmaking and fiber art – both globally recognized art forms – dance around our industry and technology. In fact, we've got a great curtain for them to look behind. Digital textile print technology allows for bold originality and can function as a discipline of its own. It's so much more than a tool for visual communication. It can evoke emotion, too.

I understand that looking through this lens may feel foreign, especially because most

of our industry content is built for machinery technicians and printers. But I can most certainly guarantee that some of your clients (or future clients) have this mindset and are looking to you to be their creative collaborator, perhaps even their technical muse. It's only a matter of time before artists start identifying as digital textile printmakers (you included).

Archival Qualities in Digital Textile Printing

When working with fine artists, especially visual artists, you're bound to get the question, "What is the archival quality of this process or ink?" I know I field this question from contemporary artists regularly. In fact, it may be the most critical ques-

tion a prospective artist can ask you because it could make or break how (or if) they move forward with the technology.

Questions about archival quality can be tricky to answer, especially if you're working with multiple print technologies and ink sets. In my opinion and experience, we must address this question from several angles.

What are artists really asking when they question archival quality? Typically, they're asking about permanence. Translate that to digital textile print industry

lingo and they're asking about color-to-lightfastness, color-to-washfastness, and crocking – even if they're not familiar with those terms.

It's important to break down color-to-lightfastness, color-to-washfastness, and crocking on every level. Starting with ink analysis, explain low energy vs high energy dyes and pigments. If you're using the dye-sublimation process, it's more important to discuss potential issues with color-to-lightfastness, while the conversation on digital pigment printing on natural fibers should focus on its possible color-to-washfastness or crocking limitations. Of course, the conversations will be specific to your print platform, ink type, and textile combination(s).

However, the conversation

doesn't stop at inks, dyes, and pigments. It's imperative to dig into textile types, constructions, and finishes, too, as they all can impact the print's archival quality, or life span.

Concentrating on textile durability, specifically abrasion resistance, is a great place to start. When analyzing specific fabrics, contact your fabric suppliers to see if they've conducted abrasion testing such as the Wyzenbeek or Martindale methods. (If they haven't, you can independently send fabrics out to textile labs for testing. Always consult AATCC standards for guidance.) If the fabric surpasses approximately 50,000 cycles, it's safe to say its content and construction are high performing.

As for textile finishes, this is where it can get really interesting. Though not compatible with all digital textile printing methods, printing on a fabric with performance finishes, such as a stain and soil release or C6 durable water repel, can make all the difference in how we classify a project's archival quality. These types of finishes make the print and fabric essentially waterproof. If the goal is permanence, that's about as good as you can get.

Creativity to Come

There's bountiful creativity on the horizon for our industry and I feel confident saying we're just at the tip of the iceberg. I'm consistently surprised and blown away by digital textile printing's promise and dynamism.

It's a privilege to be a part of these emerging conversations in digital textile printing. I can't wait for more people to enter our industry with new perspectives, experiences, and stories to further innovate this artistic medium.

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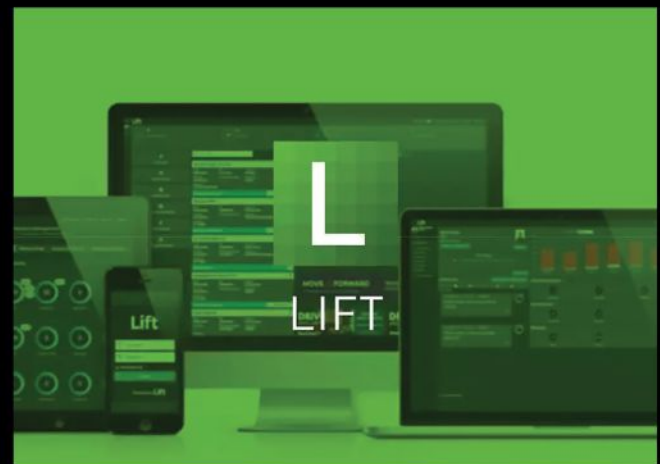
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TRUCK YEAH!

When wrapped right, food trucks can become the talk of the town.

BY ALEX MARCHESCHI

Food trucks almost always bring joy to a situation. Has anyone ever seen a meal on wheels and been upset? Don't think so. That's why PSPs take such pride in these installs. Not just because the client deserves the best work possible, but because you're equipping a business owner with their most important branding device. A food truck's wrap is nearly as important as the food coming out of the kitchen, or drinks coming out of the tap. Check out these impressive wraps that took these food trucks to the next level.



PALMER SIGNS
Roseville, California

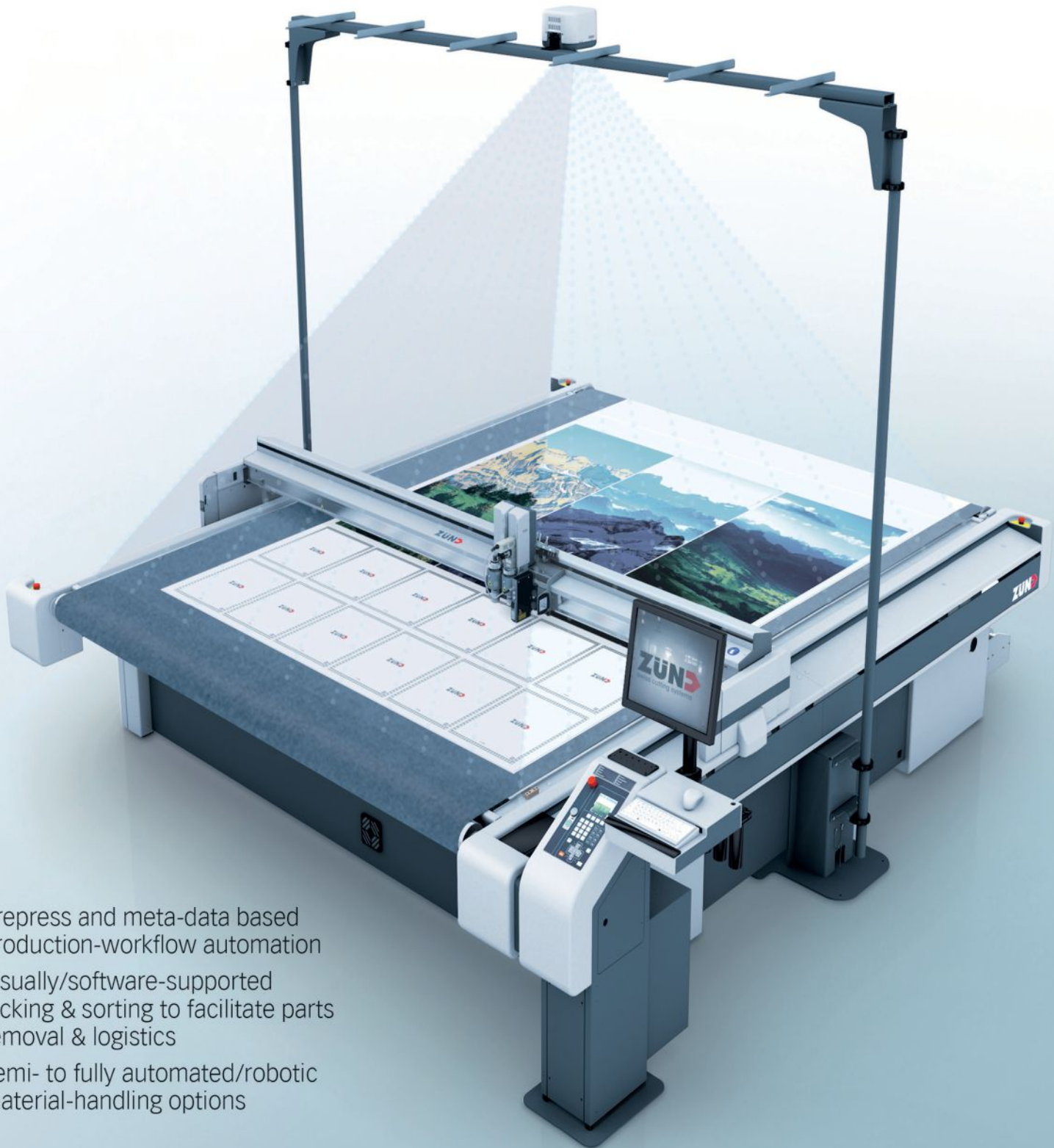
Palmer Signs outfitted Pink Martini's rolling kitchen and bar with a wrap worthy of their exciting brand. After conducting virtual meetings with Kyle Oliver, owner of Pink Martini, Palmer Signs understood the core purpose of the design: to bring fun to the party. To make the magic happen, Palmer Signs used their HP Latex 800 printer onto 3M Controltac Graphic Film IJ180 and finished it with 3M 8518 Scotchcal Overlaminate.

TIP: Add depth to the design. Palmer Signs included more than 30 hidden images in the wrap by playing with different textures.

→ CONTINUED ON PAGE 46

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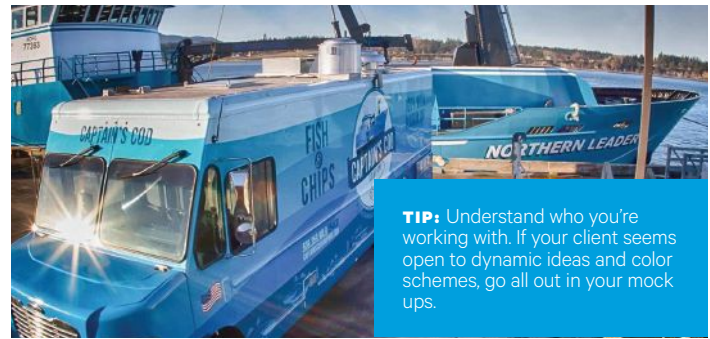
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→ FROM PAGE 44

PREMIER GRAPHICS

Richmond, British Columbia, Canada
Premier Graphics gave Captain's Cod Company's food truck a pristine new look so the famous fish and chips cooks could serve their customers in style. The fish fryers needed a wrap to match their high standards – they only serve 100-percent Wild Alaskan Cod. They got it with this beautiful blue wrap that perfectly encapsulates their brand. To print the wrap, Premier Graphics used an HP Latex R1000 printer onto 3M Controltac Graphic Film IJ180 and finished it with 3M 8518 Scotchcal Overlaminates.



TIP: Understand who you're working with. If your client seems open to dynamic ideas and color schemes, go all out in your mock ups.



CREATIVE COLOR
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Northbound Smokehouse Brewpub is a popular Minneapolis restaurant. Its food truck makes special appearances for catering events in the Twin Cities. In order to make the connection between restaurant and food truck, the vehicle wrap needed brand consistency. To complete this job, Creative Color used an HP Latex 280 printer onto 3M Controltac Graphic Film IJ180 with 3M 8518 Scotchcal Overlaminates. Now, the Brewpub can hit the road and expand its presence at corporate events and large gatherings.

TIP: Don't be afraid to pitch food truck ideas to local restaurants. They may need that initial push to get into the game, and you could gain a long-term client.

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TIP SHEET

FRESH IDEAS TO BETTER YOUR BUSINESS

HELP DESK

GET ON THE FLOOR



Ever feel like your desk is caving in on you? That you have dozens of papers, reports, books, and folders coming from all directions, reducing your actual workspace to the size of a Post-It Note? If so, marketing consultant Scott Ginsburg suggests going back to your student days and working on the floor. Says Ginsburg: "It works wonders for enhancing your creativity, especially from a visual standpoint. First, you'll have plenty of room to spread out your materials. This will help you more effectively solve problems, come up with new ideas, and brainstorm because you'll see all of the elements involved."

PERSONAL SPACE

Create A Shrine

Need a pick-me-up? Jim Krause, author of *Creative Sparks*, sug-

gests creating a small "personal shrine" in your office space. Include things that are important and relevant to you: A book that taught you something, a few trinkets, a picture or two, and anything else that inspires you. Spend a moment each day in quiet thought with your shrine. Use it to get yourself into the zone for another day of wow-ing customers.

STRATEGY

Good Citizens

If you refer to potential customers as "prospects" or "targets," marketer Seth Godin urges you to stop because "marketing-centric terms" don't reflect the way power has shifted in the marketplace, he says. Instead, call them "citizens." "When you stop calling people 'targets' or 'prospects,' and start calling them 'guests' or 'citizens,'

you can't help but become a little more humble and a little more respectful," he writes on his blog. "Try it, it works."

CLIENTS

Glamour Shots

Suggest a photoshoot for corporate clients who are looking to add printed graphics to their headquarters. Susanne Andrey, direc-

tor of inspiration at Infuse Ideas, says her customers are often willing to do a photoshoot specifically for the imagery that will grace their walls. "I find I can do more creative things at the corporate level, and we have better assets to work with," she says. "In retail, they only need it for five months so they would just take anything. But in architectural interiors, they ask you to have more longevity and beauty and something that is more finished."

MARKETING

Get Noticed

Keith Ferrazzi, author of *Never Eat Alone*, won't be sending you a holiday card this year. He concentrates his energies on birthdays. Why? Hundreds of businesses send holiday cards to their clients. Few send birthday cards. If you've got a limited marketing budget, consider skipping the end of the year celebratory messages. Instead, try handwriting birthday cards to your best customers.

MANAGEMENT

The Decision Hour

Once a week, spend an hour making choices. A lot of items masquerading as "things you have to work on" are really decisions you need to make, notes Steve Chandler in his book *Time Warrior*. Many can be made instantly; the notion that you need to gather more information is often merely avoidance. Make it a game: Challenge yourself to make as many decisions as you can in an hour and see how many items you can nuke from your list. It's weirdly energizing, he says.

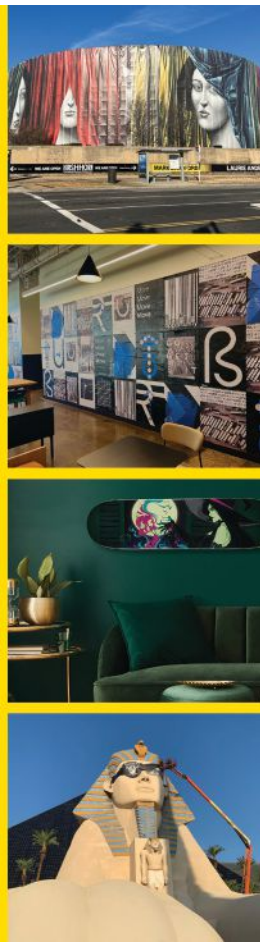




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BUSINESS + MANAGEMENT BY MARTY MCGHIE

BUILDING EFFECTIVE TEAMS

As a manager, it's on you to embolden your employees.

Building effective teams in the workplace is a constant challenge for managers. Too often they face unnecessary stress and burn out because they haven't developed a strong team to help them deal with day-to-day problems. Lacking the strength and support of a solid team will probably require you to solve all of those issues yourself. But as you build effective teams to support you, both your performance as a manager and your level of happiness will undoubtedly raise to a much higher level. Here are four key elements to assist you in building effective teams.

Strong Personnel - Begin by analyzing your existing staff members to determine if you have the right personnel to develop the team you need. Please note I use the word "develop" meaning this is a process. You probably don't have all team members functioning in a highly productive manner quite yet. But don't let that stop you. Identify employees who are motivated to become better at their jobs.. Then,

you can work and improve together as a team to accomplish your goals.

Open Communication - An important step in developing effective teams is to establish an environment where open communication is embraced. Building a group with open communication means that both you and your staff are completely comfortable sharing 100-percent honest feedback with each other, whether that be good or bad. Of course, giving negative feedback to a fellow team member or to your manager is difficult. However, when you're willing to accept healthy criticism in a positive way and they see you making meaningful changes, communication channels will open for your entire team.

Clear Expectations - All too often managers fail to set and communicate clear expectations. In fact, employee polls often indicate they have a much foggier idea of what's expected of them than managers may think. At times, we don't do a good



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job of helping our team members understand individual expectations nor do we share our team or company expectations. One idea here might be to create a mini-mission statement of what you and your department would like to accomplish within a given time-period. That may be for the year, or the quarter, or maybe just the current month. It could be something very simple like cutting reworks by 10 percent. The point is, when you share, then frequently revisit your mini-mission statement, everyone will understand the expectation and will align their behavior to accomplish the goals.

Pathways to Growth - One of the most important measures of an employee's job satisfaction is whether they can see a path of growth within the company. When I promote people in our organization to any kind of management position, one of my first instructions is to have them identify and begin training their replacement. As you might imagine, that comment is often met with confusion and apprehension. However, I then explain the only way for them to progress to the next level is to help ensure they can be replaced. Providing opportunities for growth and assisting your employees in that process is critical when developing effective teams. You want your employees to be "all-in." The only way to help them commit is to provide them with a viable pathway to growth.

BRAIN STORM

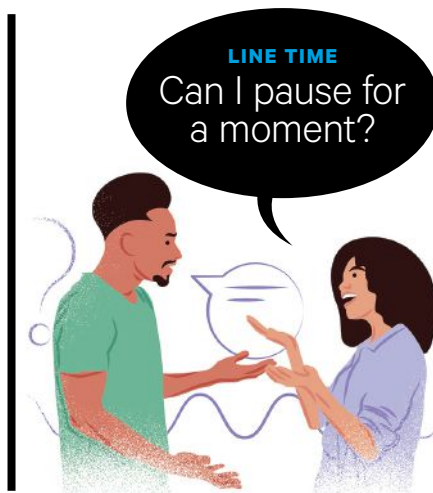
SYNCHRONIZED VACATIONS



A RECENT STUDY by health researchers at Uppsala University found that when Swedes take time off, antidepressant prescriptions go down. They also found the more people vacationed at the same time, the greater the rate at which those prescriptions decreased. It's not hard to guess why synchronized time off is so powerful; if the workplace is deserted while you're trying to relax, you're spared anxious thoughts about tasks piling up or inboxes filling. The take-away? Think about closing the office and production floor for a week and telling everyone to go forget about work. Your staff and you really will come back fully restored.

LINE TIME

Can I pause for a moment?



WHEN TO USE IT: If a conversation or negotiation is getting out of control, use this phrase to refocus on agreement. When people feel threatened, they tend to focus exclusively on areas of disagreement.

WHY? It's remarkable to see parties who agree on 90 percent of an issue obsess over and even magnify the 10 percent they disagree about. You can profoundly change the tone of a conversation by stopping this pathological divisiveness with a request to pause. Then deliberately, slowly, and sincerely, you can enumerate common interests, beliefs, or histories.

SOURCE: Joseph Grenny, *Harvard Business Review*

OUTSIDE THE GAMUT BY JIM DITTMER

HOW TO LAND A HUGE CLIENT

Nine tips for bidding large jobs.

You've probably heard of the term "whale" in reference to a job that's larger than your average sale or client. Most PSPs dream of catching these giant contracts. But how do you go about doing it? Here are my nine key steps toward bringing home the big one.



JIM DITTMER is the owner of JDA Creative Color in Gresham, Oregon, and a member of the *Big Picture* Brain Squad.

1) Nothing beats a top-of-the-line reputation. When past and present clients give you a sterling recommendation to potential clients, you have advanced a couple rungs on the ladder of success.

2) Don't sell strictly on price. Make sure you emphasize what, besides competitive price, you offer that sets you apart. This can be something as basic as free delivery or as complex as training or free consulting on a project.

3) Make sure you understand what the needs of the potential client really are. Do they already have an adequate size digital file, or will they need one? Do they need help in finishing or installing the final piece? Do they need proofing?

4) Get to know the people who are involved in the potential project. Ask if you can present your proposal to the team involved in making the final decision.

5) Make sure you can answer all the potential client's questions *and* explain why you're the best solution.

6) Remember, your operation and theirs need to become a team, working to create a successful project. The client needs to know you're "invested" in the success of this project specifically and their enterprise in general. So, learn something about what they do. Ask for a tour of their facilities. Check out their website... care-

fully. Learn everything you can.

7) Be confident. Assume you *will* be working together. Not in an arrogant way, but as if they've already decided to work you.

8) If they decide to use another supplier, don't feel hurt, embarrassed, or betrayed. Chances are

there were other factors involved that you were unaware of. It's imperative you find out what led them to your competition. Make sure you speak with your contact and do a very friendly debriefing. Explain that you're simply wanting to find out why your proposal wasn't accepted and what the competition had that you didn't. You aren't trying to talk them into changing their minds; you're trying to elicit very valuable information, so be as friendly as you possibly can. Explain that you really would like to work with them in the future. Then, take that information to heart and figure out how you can implement your own (but better!) version of it.

9) Stay in touch with as many of the decision makers of the client's company as you can. Call regularly to see if there's anything you can assist them with. Don't be a pest, but don't be a stranger either. Email them articles they may find interesting. Ask if you can put them on your company's newsletter list. Tell them about the latest, greatest innovations in your common interests. Let them know how you're implementing the innovation so that it could benefit them in future projects. Remember Seth Godin's wonderful advice "Share don't Shill." People won't pay attention if your interactions are simply ads for your company. But if you give them something valuable, they will look forward to your every email. Next time, that big project is going to be yours.

ASK BIG PICTURE



What's the best way to remove glitter from the carpet?

▶ There's no way around it – this is a job that ends with you on your knees. To be sure, start with a vacuum cleaner, going over and over the area. But sooner or later, you'll have to get up close with the floor. Members of sister publication *INSTORE's* Brain Squad suggest using a lint brush or roller, or getting imaginative with something that does a similar job, such as a balloon, sticky tape, or masking tape wrapped around your hand (sticky side out, of course) or even a wet paper towel. Then, methodically pat the glitter with your hand.

What are some ways my shop can be more socially responsible?

▶ Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a self-regulating business model that helps a company be socially accountable to itself, its stakeholders, and the public. Initiatives include philanthropic efforts, sustainability campaigns, diversity and labor practices, and supporting and/or creating volunteer programs. The Bernard Group, a visual merchandising company, completed the following initiatives. Considering doing something similar in your business.

ENVIRONMENT

Created a sophisticated recycling system, which has greatly increased the efficiency, material type, and amount being recycled. In 2019, they

recycled 69 percent of their total waste.

WORKPLACE

Conducted quarterly all-employee town halls hosted by the CEO, created a bonus plan that rewards each employee based on the company's annual performance, and launched LinkedIn Learning, free to all employees to help them develop personally and professionally.

COMMUNITY

Hosted a clothing drive for "Dress For Success," sponsored the St. Jude Red Carpet for Hope 2019 Gala benefitting St. Jude Hospital, and led a company volunteer food packing event.

My neighbor asked me if I'll take on his 16-year-old son as an unpaid intern this summer to give him some experience. What are the legal ramifications?

▶ The Labor Department's Wage and Hour Division has specific criteria governing unpaid intern programs. Among them:

- ➊ The internship is for the benefit of the student.
- ➋ The employer derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern.
- ➌ The intern cannot be guaranteed a job at the conclusion of the training period.
- ➍ If those conditions are not met, the intern is considered an employee and is entitled to minimum wage and overtime pay.

→ CONTINUED ON PAGE 52

→ FROM PAGE 51

What should I do if I have reason to doubt an employee's account vs a customer's account of what happened to their prints?

▶ Go full Columbo. Be polite and conversational, but also persistent. Ask for fine details and keep bombarding the person with open-ended questions that require them to expand on their story. Requests for fine-grain particulars and story embellishments ratchet up the person's "cognitive load," psychologist Edward Geiselman told the *New York Times* recently in a story about how interrogators work. Throw in an unexpected request – like illustrating events with a pencil and paper, or retelling the story starting at the end – and a liar's account will begin to break down. Spending the mental processing power needed to keep a story straight, Geiselman says, "essentially puts them at the edge of their ability to function cognitively." Because of this, people fabricating a story often show physical signs of thinking hard, such as blinking less and gesturing less, on top of being generally evasive and eager to change the topic. Things not to do: Interpret nervousness as a sign of untruthfulness (it's actually a bad indicator), verbalize any unfounded allegations, rush off to the police with your suspicions, and no evidence – they'll just turn you away.

My sales team seems oddly unmotivated. Any ideas?

▶ The standard advice to deal with such overwhelming situations is to do one thing at a time: Pick one small, well-defined task for your staff and tell them to focus on that only until it's complete, then move on to the next. Once they feel they're making some progress, the outlook changes, and

from everything feeling hopeless, there arises motivating possibility. Find small, constructive things your staff can do and try to set aside the apocalyptic visions.

Apart from telling them to talk less, how do I get my staff to become better listeners?

▶ Robin Dreeke, a former head of the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Program, says the secret lies in an appreciation that good listening is more than simply shutting up. "Listening is having nothing to say. There's a difference there. If you just shut up, it means you're still thinking about what you want to say. You're just not saying it," he writes in *It's Not All About Me: The Top Ten Techniques For Building Quick Rapport With Anyone*. The reason is your staff can tell you're not focused on what they're saying. Instead, Dreeke suggests, do this: "As soon as you have that story or thought you want to share, toss it. Consciously tell yourself, 'I am not going to say it.' All you should be doing is asking yourself, 'What idea or thought that they mentioned do I find fascinating and want to explore?'" Get your staff to take such an approach in their interactions with customers, and the results could potentially be revolutionary. No sales pitches. Just responding to what customers are telling them. That's listening.



STICKY BRANDING BY ANDREW WITKIN

STAY EVERGREEN

How to keep your marketing fresh in every season.



ANDREW WITKIN is the founder and CEO of StickerYou, a global, e-commerce leader in custom-printed, die-cut products that empowers consumers and businesses to create high-quality materials for personal expression, marketing, and packaging.

For more than a century, New York's trendiest department stores have fiercely competed by creating elaborate window displays that showcase their seasonal collections. These street-level exhibits were once so popular that shoppers would literally wait overnight in anticipation of the displays being revealed, and they received national media coverage. In the process, window dressers became celebrities in their own right, and luminaries such as Salvador Dalí and Jasper Johns were hired to create displays to add glitz and star power. In 1961, Andy Warhol's over-the-top display at Bonwit Teller garnered massive press attention and launched him to global fame.

SEASONAL MARKETING TODAY

So, what does this all look like in an era where department stores are no longer the dominant trendsetters and e-commerce rules the roost? As it turns out, while the retail landscape has changed over the last several decades, effectively showcasing seasonal merchandise in a way that resonates with consumers still matters. Companies need to find ways to leverage design based on seasonal trends to appeal to shoppers. This doesn't need to be as elaborate as a Bloomingdale's window display. Simply changing graphics in stores or even on product packages to reflect the time of year can be highly effective. Many brands begin to roll out Christmas-themed merchandise in November, and it's not uncommon to see spring-themed products beginning in March.

A great example of this can be found in Washington, D.C., which is famous for its Japanese cherry blossoms. The anticipation leading up to the first flowers last for nearly a month (there are even live

webcams trained on the trees' branches), and thousands of local merchants work this into their spring branding. It's a pretty good bet that if you fly into D.C., the airport gift shop will have a full range of cherry blossom shirts, keychains, and other souvenirs from February through May.

This may sound expensive and difficult to execute, but the reality is that merchants can customize their displays and packaging without having to break the bank or spend six months preparing. Stickers, signs, and decals are easy to design and get onto shelves

in literally a few days. In the past, it may have taken months to do this, but advances in digital design tools and fast printing technologies have dramatically cut the cycle from months to days. This not only gives brands incredible flexibility, but it also cuts costs because they don't have to carry excess inventory. After all, no one wants a warehouse full of Christmas designs in September.

One of the best ways for savvy merchants to stay ahead of seasonal trends is with sticker rolls and custom die-cut labels that not only tap into relevant design elements (think snowflakes for winter or beach-themed images for summer) but allow them to create unique identities and experiment. These can be used as a fast and affordable way to integrate new themes, colors, and messaging into packaging, from shipping labels to bags and boxes. Physical marketing like postcards, mailers, and thank you notes equipped with coupon codes are a great way to make a statement while measuring campaign metrics. Whether brands want to make slight modifications or test an overhaul, on-theme customization can differentiate brands and create a more memorable visual presence and customer experience.

DO YOU OR DON'T YOU

DO YOU ADVERTISE
LOCALLY (NEWSPAPER, RADIO,
BILLBOARDS, ETC.)?

We have been referral based for 50 years.
Christine Walsh, Alpha Graphics, Baltimore, Maryland

NO 88%

▶ Advertising to the public does not target the correct audience for our business. *Ryan Clark, Direct Edge, Anaheim, California*

▶ Unfortunately, our local newspaper and radio spots don't generate any business for us. I handle social media, but being short staffed and extra busy, it's been hard to keep up on advertising! *Stephanie Wise, Print Express, Torrington, Wyoming*

▶ The clients we seek are on a national level or wholesale. *David Kaiser, DigiType Design, Tualatin, Oregon*



David Kaiser

▶ Our services are very specialized, so a mass advertisement would not be cost efficient. We use online ads, community interaction, and SEO to advertise. And, of course, we rely heavily on word of mouth to promote our business. *Jim Dittmer, JDA Creative Color, Gresham, Oregon*

YES 12%

▶ We advertise locally, but it's typically via trade with the media partner. We'll produce signage for events or company vehicles in exchange for airtime, ad



Wade Neff

placement, etc. *Rob Matthews, M3, Greensboro, North Carolina*

▶ Occasionally we have done radio advertising, but prefer to do online spend where results

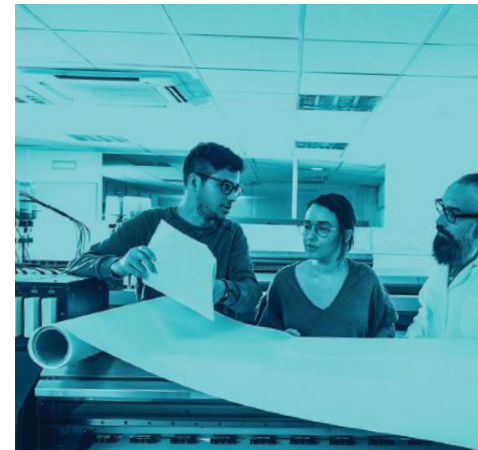
are easier to track. *Wade Neff, Strategic Factory, Owings Mills, Maryland*

▶ We regularly advertise in our regional business news publication. *Jim White, Go Graphix, East Longmeadow, Massachusetts*



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Things you wanted to say to frustrating clients, but didn't.

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A BRAND BUILT A STORE, and due to the inexperienced associates of the principal designer, they were running behind schedule for their grand opening. Multiple types, sizes, and styles of graphics were produced and installations scheduled. Installers arrived at the scheduled time, but the site was far from ready. Installers, knowing they had a responsibility to the customer, did their best to clean a large area and layout the graphics for installation. The associates began walking all over the graphics, damaging many panels, and when asked by the installers to not walk across the graphics, they began profanely stating "Do you know who I am?" and demanding the installation crews leave the location. P.S. This was one day before opening. It was a challenge getting the crews to return to complete the project. No one should speak so disrespectfully to the tradespeople going above and beyond to provide a great brand experience. At the end of the day, the install was completed on time, and we are now working with the client to prevent future occurrences of such poor behavior. *Brian Hite, Image Options, Foothill Ranch, California*

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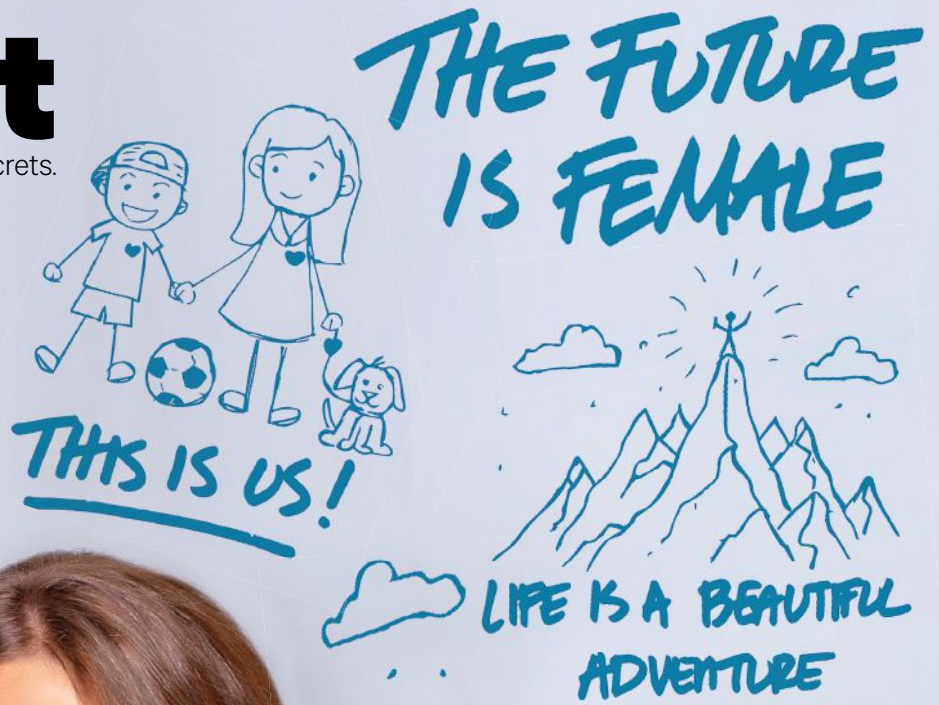
KRISTIN LANZARONE

OWNER/OPERATOR, WRAPSTAR PRO, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

When Lanzarone started WrapStar Pro, she had no professional wrap training. She grew her business by teaching herself. So, it comes as no surprise she has a DIY mindset. "I like to build things and do construction projects," she says.

Lanzarone's a single mom to almost 10-year-old Velocé and an eight-month-old Frenchie, Nyah. She's adventurous and loves the outdoors. "I work out often to stay healthy and fit." Her favorite activities are hiking, backpacking, "glamping" in her travel trailer, cycling, boating, wake surfing, playing coed soccer, gardening, and ocean fishing. She completed one of her bucket list items last year: climbing Half Dome at Yosemite National Park. Next up? Summiting a 14-mile mountain peak. She also wants to finish reading the Bible. "It's a personal goal for me to accomplish," she says. Lanzarone attends church every Sunday, either in person or online. "I love to be involved with community projects, Bible studies, and giving back locally."

Whether she's working in her business, working out, or working for the community, Lanzarone is listening to music. Last year, she spent 110,529 minutes on Spotify. "That's more than 99 percent of other listeners in the US," she says. She listened to 914 different artists and 73 different genres, including dance pop, worship, country road, pop rap, and gangster rap. "Totally sums up who I am!"





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