

sign

September 2014 - No.140

directions

On the razzle dazzle

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Sign Directions Hotline:

If you would like the contact details of any of the companies featured in this issue of Sign Directions, please ring

Tel: 01623 882398 for full company information, or alternatively, e-mail signdirections@btconnect.com for a response by return.

Coming Next:

The next issue of Sign Directions will be the October/November issue which will be published during the first half of November and cover the British Sign Awards



Publisher/Managing Editor

Val Hirst Tel: 01623 882398
e-mail: signdirections@btconnect.com

Deputy Editor

Mike Connolly Tel: 01306 898415
e-mail: themc@btinternet.com

Contributing Editor

Mark Godden Tel: 07717 885325
e-mail: mark.godden@me.com

Art Editor

Hina Mistry Tel: 07773 319465
e-mail: freshlysqueezeideas@gmail.com

Contributors

Zinnia Cordell
Alicia Fairlie

Cover Photography

Courtesy of Contra Vision.
Photographs taken by Fiona Hanson

Head Office & Data Base Management

Trinity Creative Ltd.
Unit 1B Melrose Nurseries
Longland Lane, Farnsfield, Newark
Nottingham NG22 8HD

Tel: 01623 882398
e-mail: signdirections@btconnect.com

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Introduction

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The Signmakers Signmaker

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setting the **scene**

I'm writing this on the day of the Scottish Referendum and everyone agrees that the result will be too close to call. However, whether the Yeahs or the Nays win, I predict that we are in for a very bumpy ride indeed, with months of continual wrangling, ill feeling and tears and that'll just be David Cameron!

We all know though, that if it's the 'Yes' voters who emerge victorious, it will be just like a very acrimonious divorce with huge rows about money and someone still whining on about the unfair division of the CDs years later. And if the so-called silent majority do actually come out on the side of the 'Nos' then it will be almost as bad. Like a married couple who've decided to stay together for the sake of the children, but who are planning to make each other very miserable indeed for the next 20 years or so, or until one of them decides to do the decent thing and dies.

Whilst I do have some sympathy with the Scots and their desire to rid themselves of the rule of Westminster – well, let's face it, we'd all like to do that, wouldn't we? – I'm amazed that so many of them have actually voiced their support for a thuggish little man who has all of the charisma of a dead ferret and that woman who will persist on wearing the dead cat on her head. I suppose that it's really down to the fact that today's politicians, of all hues, are such a dreary and depressing bunch that actually, sluggy Salmond and the equally odious and toad like Farage seem like fairly reasonable blokes by comparison. And if you doubt me, just ask yourselves this: If the General election took place now, who would you vote for? Would it be call me Dave and his motley collection of Tory toffs, or Adenoidal Ed and the rabble without a cause? Tough one huh? And as for Cleggy and co – well, let's not even go there!

But let's not dwell too long on something that will be done and dusted by the time you read this and turn our minds to a more constructive vote,

that of the judges who will soon be selecting the winners of the British Sign Awards. This newly launched event, will reach its conclusion at a special awards ceremony to be held in the Holte Suite at Aston Villa FC on Thursday 30th October. Following a sumptuous four-course lunch, Bob 'The Cat' Bevan, who is highly rated as one of the UK's best after dinner speakers, will present 13 awards. With tickets sensibly priced at just £55.00 each, the British Sign Awards offers a perfect opportunity for signmakers to meet, greet and network, without having to spend too long away from their work. For further information on how to obtain a ticket turn to page 26 or, simply visit www.britishsignawards.org.

With the economy allegedly on the up, now might be a good time for sign companies to consider taking on new staff. Conversely, with the job market more buoyant than it's been for the last six years, it's also a good time to be job-hunting too. Whichever of these options applies to you, visit www.signdirectionsonline.co.uk/job-search where you can either advertise your vacancy completely free of charge, or, alternatively, peruse the selection of opportunities on offer.

And if you think that this is no more than a cynical ploy to get people to visit our website – you're right! It is!

This month's cover story 'On the Razzle Dazzle!' on pages 28-29, heralds the beginning of this month's feature, which showcases special effects and some of the methods, equipment and materials required to achieve them, while on page 26, Complete CNC reveals how signmakers can use its new Protek range of CNC routers to help them achieve a truly cutting

edge. The latest crop of decorative projects is highlighted on pages 44-45 and on pages 38-39 you can discover why two sign companies have something to celebrate. On page 50, this month's Last Word sees Mark Godden questioning our compulsion to be on call 24/7 and elsewhere, you'll find all of our regular features.

And now comes the really, really difficult bit. Some of you will already know that Maurice Hoare, our much-missed former Advertising Manager, sadly died while on holiday in France at the end of July. In the Sign Directions office we are still coming to terms with the shock and I know from the huge response that we received when his death was announced that his many friends within the industry are still mourning him too. On page 8, you'll find my own tribute to Maurice, who was a close friend of some 20 years standing, a piece that I never expected to have to write.

You'll understand then, why we are dedicating this issue of the magazine to Maurice in memory of his very valuable contribution, not only to Sign Directions, but also to the wider industry and why I'd also like to assure Maurice's wife Fran and his children Jenny, Becky and Mike, that they remain

in our thoughts as they come to terms with their loss and that Maurice will continue to live on in the hearts and minds of everyone who knew him.



Val Hirst – Editor

Email: signdirections@btconnect.com

Twitter: @Valthemaghad

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Make a bid for United

The Manchester United Foundation's 'United for UNICEF' partnership yesterday launched a new fundraising drive with the support of Epson Europe.

Manchester United's Old Trafford stadium was the venue for an exclusive 'for-one-day-only' photography exhibition celebrating 15 years of United for UNICEF and, to mark the occasion, Sir Alex Ferguson unveiled his personal selection of 15 photographs highlighting memorable events during those 15 years. A selection of these images, which were signed by Sir Alex after being printed on an Epson Stylus Pro

9900 large-format printer, are now being auctioned online to raise money for United for UNICEF's programme supporting vulnerable children in Vietnam.

The 508 mm x 768 mm images, printed on 300gsm media, can be viewed and bid for at www.united4unicef.org.

United for UNICEF started in 1999 and is the longest-running partnership of its kind between a sporting organisation and a global children's organisation. To date it has raised over £3 million and protected over 3.4 million children worldwide from



violence, abuse and exploitation. All the money raised by auctioning Sir Alex's chosen images will be invested in Vietnam, where more than four million children are estimated to be at risk, living on the streets, working in hazardous conditions, or in conflict with the law.

"We are proud to have been asked to

help promote such a great cause," commented Mary McNulty, Epson Europe, "and we hope that the excellent print quality achievable with the Stylus Pro 9900 will add real value to what is a uniquely exclusive limited edition."

For further information visit: www.epson.eu ■

The Sage becomes a screen

At the beginning of September, the Newcastle Gateshead Quayside and the River Tyne was transformed into a giant outdoor arena for the Great North Run Million Opening Ceremony, which marked the official countdown to the one-millionth runner crossing the finishing line at this prestigious annual sporting event.

The spectacular ceremony, which featured live performances from local hero and Dire Straits' legend Mark Knopfler, Sting, the Unthanks and Chase and Status, was a multi-media spectacular, with fireworks, animations, giant sculptures, plus video mapping onto the iconic Sage building, a concert venue and centre of musical education that is located on the south bank of the River Tyne. In order to transform the Sage into a suitable surface for video projection, it was wrapped in Contra Vision. This enabled it to be transformed into a giant video screen, which accurately mirrored all of the excitement of the evening,



while also enabling the building's interior life to continue uninterrupted during the run-up to the event.

AAA Signs was commissioned to oversee the project and also to produce and install the Contra Vision, something that proved particularly challenging, as each of the Sage's windows is differently sized. Accordingly, the Gateshead-based signmaker purchased pre-



packed kits from William Smith, a Contra vision distributor and also its supplier of choice.

Happily, the work was completed in time to help showcase the set pieces designed by Jon Bausor, a specially commissioned film and animation by BAFTA award-winning artist Tal Rosner, music composed

by Ivor Novello-winning Dan Jones and performed by Northern Sinfonia, and performances by hundreds of volunteers who were choreographed by Nathan Curry.

For further information visit: www.aaaasigns.co.uk www.contravision.com and www.williamsmith.co.uk ■

news

Appointments

The Dublin-based equipment and materials supplier **Sign+Digital** has recently appointed **Richard Collins** to spearhead its launch into the UK market.

Richard, a former signmaker himself, will use the company's Creative Cruiser to deliver the first orders for sign supplies to businesses based in Birmingham and the surrounding areas, whilst also enabling them to access a wealth of educational and training materials, including everything from videos and demonstrations, to colourful catalogues

Although the Creative Cruiser's home territory will remain in the Midlands, sign and display producers from all over the UK are invited to pay the company a visit and take full advantage of the resources on offer. **To register interest, visit: www.signanddigital.co.uk/creative-cruiser.**

Sihl Direct UK has appointed **Kelvin Furniss** as its Regional Sales Representative for the Midlands area. Kelvin brings 30 years sales experience from within the sign and display sectors and joins the UK sales team from Paperlinx.



Stanford Marsh Group Graphics (SMGG) has appointed **Bob Stevenson** to boost the sales of consumables to the sign and graphics sectors. In his new role, Bob will be responsible for managing and boosting the sales of graphics consumables, inks and media within London and the South East of England.



Bob has previously worked for Spandex, CWE Solutions and Perfect Colours in roles where he gained useful industry experience through selling wide format media, sign products, printers, laminators, RIPs and consumables.



From left to right: Mr. N. Hayakawa, Arthur Vanhoutte, Mr. A. Kotake, Mr. H. Aoki

Mutoh Belgium has announced the appointment **Akio Kotake** as Managing Director. He takes over from **Arthur Vanhoutte** who has been leading Mutoh's Belgian operation for the past 24 years and who now becomes a senior consultant for the Mutoh group.

As newly appointed Managing Director and General Manager of Mutoh Belgium, Akio Kotake will oversee all of the company's sales, sales support, and after-sales

service activities for its wide format printing and sign cutting equipment in the Belgian operation's sales area. He joined the Mutoh Group in 2011 as General Manager, International Management Division at Mutoh Holdings in Japan and has been involved in Mutoh's European business since 2012 as Managing Director of Mutoh Deutschland GmbH.



The DISQ Group, a leading display and exhibition membership body, has named Alfa Display's Managing Director **Luke Facey** as its new chairman, replacing **Philippe Jeffery** of Promotor Industries International, who has completed his two-year term as chairman, but will continue to play an active role within the DISQ Group.

Luke Facey, who has strong links with the Event Supplier and Services Association (ESSA), will play an integral part in helping the DISQ Group to become one of the industry's main sounding boards for trade-only clients, and will also help to maintain the group's international expansion.

He brings with him more than 20 years of knowledge of, and experience in, the exhibition industry, having manufactured the Premier pop-up system for Scan Display and taken on a variety of different roles, ranging from sales and customer service, to initiating new branches in America, before he joined Alfa Display as Managing Director in 2003.



Esko, a Danaher company, has made two executive appointments. In his new role as Senior Vice President, **Udo Panenka**, who joined Danaher in 2008, since when he has held a number of executive positions, will have responsibility for the global Esko sales, service and marketing organisation. He replaces **Christian Korte**, who is leaving Esko to pursue other career opportunities.



Jon Giardina has been appointed as Vice President Americas, and will lead the Esko organisations in North and Latin America. After joining Danaher in 2006, he has filled key sales, marketing and general management roles, most recently serving as Vice President & General Manager for Danaher's Dynapar and West/PMA businesses. He replaces **Tony Wiley**, who previously managed Esko's business in the Americas. ■



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Obituary

Maurice Hoare

17.11.1945 – 29.7.2014

As some readers may already know, Maurice Hoare the former Advertising Manager of Sign Directions died suddenly from a heart attack on the 29th July. Here, Val Hirst pays her own tribute to a well-known and much-loved industry figure.



Over the 20 odd years that we knew each other, Maurice became one of my closest sign industry friends, even though on the face of it, our first meeting wasn't a particularly auspicious one. Miller Freeman had just taken over the sign show – or Sign UK as it was known in 1993 – from ExpoConsult and Maurice was introduced as the new Exhibition Manager. As is my wont, I can remember being rather sniffy about him and ExpoConsult's outgoing manager assuring me that, actually, he was the best out of a rather rum bunch. What I didn't realise then, but quickly came to appreciate, was that Maurice was absolutely the best of any bunch you care to name.

What I also didn't realise at that time was that Maurice and the sign industry would prove to be a natural fit – quite simply he loved it and, just as importantly, the industry loved Maurice. Following his first stint at Sign UK when he unapologetically took the show by the scruff of the neck and transformed it into the vibrant and industry representative event that it remains today, he went on to take charge of various other shows, but

when he had the opportunity to return to Sign UK in 2001, following its acquisition by Faversham House Group, he grabbed it with alacrity.

Fortunately for me, I persuaded him to join me at Sign Directions in 2004 and thence began a whole new chapter in the magazine's history, one where every working day began with a phone call from Maurice when he'd provide a delightful commentary on the antics of the birds and other wildlife that frequented his back garden in Mold. Eventually, he would proclaim that he was off to make himself 'a nice cup of tea' before he began his series of 'lovely chats' with people in the industry that others might classify as advertisers, but who Maurice genuinely regarded as his friends.

He'd usually ring me several times more during the course of the day to relate little nuggets of news. Sometimes, if I was very busy, he'd receive a very snappy response, but to his great credit however foul I was, he never took offence, never snapped back and his own cheerful demeanour never faltered.

He loved his job, because he loved people and to him, there was no greater

pleasure than to chat to them, either on the phone or in person. He had a great knack for making everyone he came into contact with – young old, male or female, managing director or office junior – feel that they were important and that what they thought, felt and said really mattered to him – and it did! He had a natural warmth and immense sweetness of spirit that people really responded to. It's a rare gift and one that is greatly underrated. In all the years I knew him, Maurice never said a bad word about anyone. If someone really upset him, he'd simply refer to them as 'old ugly pump' for a while, but it wouldn't be long before he'd be earnestly assuring me that 'they're alright in their own way!' and normal service would soon be resumed.

Although Maurice retired four years ago, we continued to keep in regular touch and he'd always be there to dispense sound advice and wise counsel, while also providing updates on the numerous holidays he'd either completed or was planning and his wide range of outdoor activities. He had rediscovered his great passion for cycling and this year his eagerly anticipated holiday was a cycling tour in France, with his wife Fran, which is

where he died on 29th July. It is some small comfort to know that his sudden death was mercifully swift and it is unlikely that he knew anything about it.

Fittingly, for a man who loved everything about the great outdoors, Maurice's last resting place is a woodland burial site overlooking the River Mersey. On the day of his funeral, which was attended by so many of his friends and former workmates that it was, quite literally standing room only, his children gave a lovely eulogy, when they shared their memories of him as a proud and loving dad. Then, as we followed the coffin up the hill to his grave, the sky, which had been grey and overcast, cleared and the sun came out – it seemed wholly appropriate. Once again, Maurice had brought the sunshine.

It's very telling that I've never been able to fill the vacancy Maurice left and, since he was, quite definitely, one of a kind, I doubt that I'll ever be able to find anyone else quite like him. So in memory of a truly good person and a wonderful friend and colleague, I'm dedicating this issue of the magazine to him. I only hope that he would have liked it! ■

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2014 FIFA World Cup | Hartlebury Trading Estate | Millbrook Garden Centre

new projects



▶ Leading UK stockist and distributor of **MACTac** graphics materials, **Amari Digital Supplies (ADS)** and London-based large-format print specialist **Onward Display** collaborated in a high-profile exterior graphics promotion using the **2014 FIFA World Cup**

competition in Brazil as its central theme. The brilliantly conceived subtle design, created by Onward Display using MACTac premium-quality materials supplied by ADS, became an eye-catching feature at the company's three London stores, including the main facility

in Margaret Street in the West End.

Onward Display is a primary customer of ADS, based on a successful business relationship spanning 10 years, which has included extensive use of MACTac materials. These have featured in a number of similarly prestigious graphic promotions in a variety of industrial and commercial sectors on behalf of some of the UK's leading brands, such as Capital Radio, Virgin, Arcadia Group, Hobbs, Liberty, Heals and Levi.

For the FIFA World Cup graphics promotion at its Margaret Street store, Onward Display used the eco-solvent-printable MACTac WW100 and UV-printable JT5817PUV One-Way Vision media to wrap the exterior of the building with a single cohesive design. WW100 was used to

wrap the painted and tiled surfaces and associated brickwork on the building's frontage and the perforated One-Way Vision media for the glazed areas. In addition, a printed eight by four feet OSB board was mounted to the wall.

The visual impact of the FIFA World Cup graphic led to impromptu photo shoots for independent fashion brands, a dramatically increased footfall resulting in new business possibilities for Onward Display and the opportunity to showcase the creative and technical capabilities provided by the company in conjunction with the versatility and reliability of the products supplied by ADS.

For further information visit:
www.onwarddisplay.com and
www.amaridigitalsupplies.com ■



▲ A recent change of ownership that prompted a full rebrand of **Hartlebury Trading Estate**, which extends over 200 acres in a parkland setting and comprises a total floor area in excess of 1.45 million sq. ft, enabled **Zeta Specialist Lighting** to demonstrate the efficacy of its embedded LED panel.



Design agency **Kubiak Creative**, working in partnership with **NM Signs**, was commissioned to create a new identity with a fresh and modern design, which was used to span all of Hartlebury's marketing collateral including the on-site signage. The eye-catching hoop design that forms part of the new logo is a prominent feature of

the two, six-metre high aluminium totems that grace the site's entrance. In order to ensure that the signs were equally appealing, both during the hours of daylight and at night, NM Signs selected the Zeta embedded LED panel, which as well as providing the requisite level of brightness also features excellent energy saving

properties. At just 3.5mm deep, waterproof and available in bespoke sizes for ease of fitting, it is the perfect lighting choice for totem signs

For further information visit:
www.thezetagroup.com ■



▲ When **Signal UK** asked sign system specialist **Nova** to help with a garden centre project, the Bristol-based company was only too happy to assist.

Signal UK originally requested the provision of a folded composite tray measuring 7200 x 1400mm, but Nova suggested that its **Novaskin** frame would actually provide a more

effective and cost efficient alternative. Initially, Signal UK was doubtful about using new materials on a project that required a fast turnaround and especially one where the installation site was located directly behind the garden centre's lovingly tended rose garden. However the Signal UK team was soon reassured when it viewed a step-by-step power

point display that demonstrated the ease with which the skin could be fitted. And if that wasn't persuasion enough, Signal UK was further encouraged by the fact that it would also enjoy a 40 percent cost saving too!

Millbrook Garden Centre was delighted with the neat, professional appearance of the

new advertising sign and Signal UK was equally pleased with its ease of installation, while both companies enjoyed the reduced cost, thus ensuring an excellent result all ways round!

For further information visit:
www.signal-uk.co.uk and
www.nova-aluminium.com ■

Supplier News

PrintMAX becomes a Hybrid reseller

Mimaki's exclusive UK and Irish distributor, Hybrid Services has announced a new partnership with wide format printer supplier, PrintMAX which has joined its specialist reseller network.

Commenting on this move, Stuart Cole, National Sales Manager – industrial Products at Hybrid, said: "The pre and post sales service that PrintMAX offers to its clients is highly regarded and we feel that with the company's 20 plus years of experience and knowledge of the sign and display sectors, it will be able to add real value to the Mimaki brand."

Michael Bolton, Managing Director of PrintMAX said: "We pride ourselves on 'exceeding expectation' and are consistently looking for ways to evolve. By taking on the Mimaki range we are able to align ourselves with some fantastic products that will further enhance our customers' opportunity for profitability, by providing the capability for them to print wider widths with the more industrial scale machines."

For further information visit: www.hybridservices.co.uk



From left to right: Hybrid's John de la Roche, PrintMax's Michael Bolton, Hybrid's Stuart Cole and PrintMax's Christ Martin

Axyz hosts two more Open Days

Building on the success of its previous single-day event, AXYZ International will be holding two further Open Days on 5th and 19th November.

These will take place at two Royal Air Force Museum sites, the first of which is situated near Wolverhampton to accommodate customers from the North and Midlands and the second in North London to facilitate customers located in the South East. Choice of the RAF sites proved extremely popular in the past, not only because of their regional accessibility but also because

they provide the opportunity for visitors to view a galaxy of interesting RAF artefacts in addition to the routing technology on show.

At both venues, AXYZ International will showcase its latest products and accessories and conduct demonstrations to highlight the versatility and business enhancement capabilities of both. Key products to be featured will be a heavy-duty Pacer 4008 and a AXYZ 4010 router that incorporates a routing spindle, 7G ATC (Automatic Tool Change) facility, a knife and compatible AVS (XYZ Vision

System) that greatly enhance the accuracy and versatility of the machine in a host of disparate applications.



There will also be a dedicated AXYZ CNCRouterShop section featuring the latest tooling, spare parts and associated services that accommodate not only CNC routing, engraving and cutting systems supplied by AXYZ International but also virtually any of those provided by other manufacturers,

regardless of type and country of origin.

For further information and to book a time and date on which to visit, contact Janine Roberts on Tel: 01902 375600, e-mail enquiries@axyz.com or visit www.axyz.com

Anchor Magnets attracts cash

Anchor Magnets has recently invested more than £250,000 into the business, following an unprecedented growth in turnover.

The company, which specialises in the production of a range of printable magnetic media for use in retail, promotional and other signage applications, has expanded

its machining capacity and also implemented a new integrated management system.

Having achieved an all-time high turnover result for the first half of 2014, it has now tripled its conversion and cutting capacity for sheet magnetic material and also plans to further expand the machining capabilities for its

extrusion plant.

Managing Director, Warren

Turner, commented: "We have seen healthy growth across the business and this has created a need for targeted capital investment so that we can plan for and better manage



further growth.

For further information visit: www.anchormagnets.com



3M supports BSGA British Sign Awards



Demonstrating a strong commitment to promoting the skills and creativity of the UK sign and graphics industry, 3M has agreed to be the Corporate Sponsor of the inaugural BSGA British Sign Awards 2014, the winners of which will be announced at a special ceremony and lunch to be held on 30th October in the Holte Suite at Aston Villa Football Club in Birmingham.

Further 3M support for the British Sign Awards has also been given through 3M's additional sponsorship of the Sign Construction Award category. This is just one of 14 categories open to any UK signmaker that has produced work of which it is especially proud and which will be judged by an independent panel of experts from within the industry. Sponsorship by 3M of the Sign

Construction Award category is singularly appropriate in view of the company's innovative signmaking and sign fixing solutions. Products familiar to most signmakers include 3M VHB Tapes, Next Generation Structural Acrylic Adhesives, Double Sided Tapes, Laminating Adhesives and Dual Lock Fastening Systems.

Further extending 3M's involvement in the BSGA British Sign Awards will be William Smith, the company's largest materials stockist and distributor in the UK, which will be sponsoring the Vehicle Graphics of the Year Award category.

Further information on the BSGA British Sign Awards can be found on page 22 and at www.britishsignawards.org. For further information on 3M visit: www.3m.co.uk/graphic.solutions. ■

Grafityp's textile workshops are back

Grafityp UK, working in conjunction with textile film manufacturer Siser, will be hosting another round of its popular Textile Workshop Seminars on the 22nd and 23rd October 2014.

The seminars are designed to provide attendees with the opportunity to see all of the Grafflex garment transfer materials, including printable films, in one place with manufacturers on hand to provide any advice and information they require. They will also be able to see demonstrations of the Roland range of print and cut machines, plus the extensive range of Grafityp heat transfer presses and vinyl cutting equipment including the GCC RX, Jaguar, Puma and Expert plotters, which are suitable for cutting the Grafityp range of CAD cut films.

The Textile Workshop seminars will be held at Grafityp's Tamworth-based headquarters



and lunch, together with secure parking will also be provided.

For more information or to reserve a place, contact Grafityp on Tel: 01827 300500 or e-mail sales@grafityp.co.uk

For further information visit: www.grafityp.co.uk ■

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Supplier News

Plaudits for one amazing machine!

ArtSystems and its partner Summa have been nominated for a prestigious Royal Television Society Midlands Centre Award. In the Best Promotional Programme category in respect of ArtSystems' new ten-minute video, 'One Amazing Machine', which showcases Summa's flagship F Series Flatbed Pro Cutter.

The Royal Television Society Awards ceremony, which will take place on Thursday 30th October at the National Motorcycle Museum, is designed to recognise production excellence and creativity in programmes intended either for general or specialised audiences, that are made either for corporate purposes or retail/mail order sale.

Summa is a world leader in the manufacture of vinyl cutting and imaging equipment and the short film effectively captures the efficacy of its F Series cutter, which is often described as the most versatile flatbed cutting system bar none. The video, which has received excellent customer feedback, enables potential customers to quickly appreciate all of the machines' key benefits and how



they could be successfully used to enhance their own applications.

For further information visit: www.artsystems.co.uk

On Track to Deliver Results

Mimaki has formed an exciting new technical partnership with the Caterham F1 Team, which sees the company becoming the team's official technical graphics supplier.

As a result, all Formula One communication, vehicle graphics and



visuals for the Caterham F1 Team will in future be printed and cut using Mimaki's range of solutions.

Commenting on this development, Manfredi Ravetto, Team Principal of the Caterham F1 Team, said: "Whether on the track or projecting our image across various media, our team is focused on achieving results, which is why we selected a technical partner that could match our own high engineering standards."

Mike Horsten, General Manager



Marketing EMEA for Mimaki Europe, who is also very enthusiastic about the new partnership, said: "Formula One is all about precision, flexibility, quality and success; characteristics we also associate with every print and cut solution we offer. We feel honored and privileged to be able to demonstrate

the scope and flexibility of our latest printing and cutting solutions, the output of which will be highly visible in the pits and paddock areas of race tracks around the world."

For further information visit: www.hybridservices.co.uk

They wrapped and they won!

3M has announced the winners in its prize draw for the 3M Commercial Graphics 'Wrap and Win with NASCAR' promotion. The main prize, in what has now become a major feature of the UK sign and graphics industry calendar, went to Kate and Russell Joyce, partners in Chelmsford, Essex-based Joyce Design.

The design and print company's primary business focus is on the automotive market to which it provides a wide range of vehicle wrapping and graphics solutions based on 3M products supplied by 3M's largest UK stockist and distributor, William Smith of Barnard Castle, County Durham.

In a high-octane experience of a lifetime, Kate and Russell enjoyed an all-expenses-paid trip to the 2014 NASCAR (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) event held in Los Angeles.

In addition to praising the excellent hospitality shown by 3M personnel during the trip, Russell Joyce commented: "Over the years, we have come to recognise 3M products as the best and their use has given us the confidence to move our business forward, secure in the knowledge that as well as being totally reliable, the materials are supported by the most comprehensive performance warranty currently available."

Russell Joyce also paid special tribute to William Smith saying: "William Smith continues to be, a constant source of technical support and advice on materials specification."

On the visit to the NASCAR event itself, Russell Joyce concluded: "It was simply amazing. The trip was packed with surprise attractions, not least of which was the video camera and laptop that 3M supplied for us to film the event. It also included VIP access to the NASCAR race, where we met with many celebrities, including the 3M-sponsored NASCAR racing team and its contracted driver, plus many other attractions that



formed part of the 3M hospitality."

Included in the 3M qualifying sign and graphics products were the flagship Controltac Graphic Film IJ380, Controltac Graphic Film Series IJ180Cv3 and the latest PVC-free Envision Print Wrap Film 480Cv3.

For further information on 3M graphic solutions, visit www.3m.co.uk/graphicsolutions and for further information on the services provided by Joyce Design visit www.joycedesign.co.uk

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Spandex has extended its portfolio of POS products to include new LED display and textile tensioning systems, as well as cost effective additions to the Roll Up and Pavement Sign



ranges. All products are now in stock and are available for next-day delivery.

The full range comprises LED & Illuminated Signs, including LED backlit snap frames, double sided suspended systems, waterproof cases and newly introduced back and edge-lit acrylic and magnetic frames. In addition, the company's popular

range of Roll Up and POP Up Systems includes economy, mid-term, premium and double sided roll up options, as well as complete curved pop up kits that are suitable for use in a wide variety of applications.

Spandex also offers a range of accessories and specialist materials that are specifically designed to complement the display range.



For further information and a copy of the Spandex Display Systems Product Guide Tel: 0800 77 26 33 or visit: www.spandex.co.uk

Meet the Predator

Innotech Digital and Display has recently launched seven new additions to its popular roller banner series, including the Predator.

Available in widths of 60cm, 80cm, 85cm, 100cm, 120cm, 150cm and 200cm, the Predator offers a graphic height of two metres. Robustly constructed and featuring an attractive graphite finished cassette, it has a versatile snap clip rail that makes it easy to insert the graphic,



while the supporting pole socket brace to the rear of the cassette and the steel plate to the chassis ensure greater support and durability.

The Predator is designed to build on the proven platform of reliability and value for money offered by the new wider widths in the Innotech economy range and is thus a very welcome addition to Innotech's portable roller banner portfolio.

The Predator Roller Banners, which are packed in padded bags and are individually boxed for maximum



flexibility feature in Innotech's Summer 2014 Platinum Book, which is now available free of charge. Simply contact Innotech on **Tel: 01530 512 731 or e-mail sales@innotechdigital.com**

For further information visit: www.innotech.com



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Equipment & Material

Giving it large!

TheMagicTouch has launched a new XL transfer paper measuring 220mm x 440mm, which is designed to bridge the gap between A3 and A4 and can be used in conjunction with selected A4 OKI printers.

Originally developed by TheMagicTouch with CPM (non-textile) transfer paper for use by customers

producing full colour decoration for binders, folders and notebooks who required full edge to edge transfer when using A4 printer models, the XL size proved to be so popular that it is now available for use on the OKI TTC3.1, for transfer onto light textiles and the WoW7.7 for transfer onto dark textiles.

For further information visit: www.themagictouch.co.uk ■



A winning combination

Following a collaboration with Verseidag Indutex, a market leader in the provision of coated fabrics and technical textiles, Orafol has now introduced a new material that is a combination of ORACAL 8500 and 8800 and Seemee II and IV, for use in the production of premium backlit banner signs.

The system uses the translucent films from ORAFOL in combination with the flexible translucent Seemee substrates from Verseidag to provide a material that offers exceptional UV resistance and general durability. In addition, it has also been certified according to DIN 4102 B1 for fire resistance.

For further information visit: www.orafol.com ■



The Brick has landed

Metamark's latest 'Brick', a sizable materials swatch that contains a sample of every Metamark material a modern sign and graphics company needs for virtually any sign or display related application, is available now.

Despite the increasing popularity of digital media, Metamark still offers a full range of coloured vinyls, which includes all of the colour variations required to produce subtle and powerful work in the medium. They are available in matt, and gloss options, plus speciality finishes.

The coloured SignVinyl range also

includes a generous sub-set of translucent variations that are especially suitable for use when producing backlit signs as they facilitate the provision of clear and even illumination.

In addition, there is a large selection of hard-to-find speciality materials, such as those that feature metallic polish or carbon fibre effects, together with safety colours, chalk-board media and much more besides.

Window effect films are also well represented, with Metamark offering many variations on the etch and frosted effects theme.



Metamark holds full stocks of everything featured within The Brick, for same day despatch.

To obtain The Brick, simply e-mail a request to sales@metamark.co.uk

To open an account with Metamark, visit www.metamark.co.uk and click the 'Got a minute, Open an Account' button to fill in a simple application form. ■

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Equipment & Material

Envisioning Domino's image

Offering a high sustainability edge, 3M's Envision Translucent Films Series 3730 has already enabled pizza franchise giant Domino's to make huge savings in running costs at its U.S. franchisor outlets.



3M Envision Translucent Films are described as an industry breakthrough, being reputedly the first graphic films to optimise LED technology and enabling sign and graphics producers to achieve maximum brightness whilst using fewer light sources. As a result, power consumption and overall running costs have been greatly reduced whilst enhancing the visual definition and brightness of the signs and displays due to the films' high light transmission capabilities.

Available in standard and customised colours and in an inkjet-printable format, Envision 3730 Translucent Films featured prominently in a recent overhaul of the brand image of and signage for Domino's Pizza. Using the LED-enabled films, the company's management team found a way to bring down the cost of channel, monument and pylon signs by as much as \$200 per sign. As the changes have been implemented at each store, franchisees are reported to have been pleasantly surprised at the low cost of the new signs and the fact that they are



also reducing on-going operational costs too. They have also been equally impressed with the performance of the Envision films, describing the signs incorporating the new films as cleaner and crisper by comparison with those they had replaced.

With around 1,100 independent franchisees in the U.S., the Domino's management team set out to find signage materials that would deliver both value and performance and discovered that the new 3M Envision

Translucent Films enabled them to reduce the number of LED modules required whilst also creating a brighter finished product.

With all of the U.S. stores set to upgrade their signs over the next four years, Domino's is making 3M Envision Translucent Films a key element in the service it provides franchisees.

For further information visit: www.3m.co.uk/graphicsolutions

An even wider choice

The new VION range from William Smith, which further extends the company's digital materials portfolio to provide signmakers with a wider choice of quality materials, has already received an enthusiastic response.



Three ranges are currently available. VION Digital Series VP5000 is a gloss white five-year polymeric calendered digital printing film available in both clear and grey adhesive options. Its high quality clean white face film delivers excellent printability, whilst the grey adhesive option provides excellent hiding power. The heavy-duty

170gsm double-sided PE coated liner offers excellent lay flat qualities on all printing platforms.

VION Digital Series VL5000 is a transparent polymeric calendered overlamine with a clear permanent adhesive, designed for use with Series VP5000 to protect and extend the life of printed graphics. The overlamines are available in a choice of gloss or matt finishes.



VION Series VC5500 is a five-year clear etch polymeric calendered window film, with a permanent pressure-sensitive adhesive. Its clean face film provides exceptional results when used for internal or external window graphic applications and internally illuminated displays. The 170gsm double-sided PE coated liner offers excellent stability and lay-flat properties during cutting, weeding and storage, while the solvent-

based transparent adhesive facilitates both wet and dry applications.

The VION is available from William Smith ex-stock, with same day despatch provided on orders received up to 6.00pm.

For further information visit: www.vionfilms.co.uk and www.williamsmith.co.uk



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yet be so
much more
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*Data validated vs 3M™ Sectra™ Translucent Graphic Film Series 3530

3M

A stand out event!

The presentation ceremony for the inaugural BSGA-organised British Sign Awards, which will take place in the Holte Suite at Villa Park, Birmingham on October 30th, has all the makings of a truly memorable event.

David Catanach, Director of the BSGA explained: "We decided to hold our first awards event at lunchtime, in order to keep both the costs and the time commitment required to a minimum and to make the event accessible to as many people as possible.

"However, we also want to make the awards a stand-out event in the sign industry calendar and we think we've got the balance just about right."

The awards ceremony will be hosted by Bob 'The Cat' Bevan MBE, one of the UK's most popular after dinner speakers, whose work this year has continued to receive rave reviews, with cricketer Graham Gooch claiming that Bob's turn at his Foundation Dinner last May, "...made a fantastic contribution to the evening's success" and Ian Lovett, Chairman at Middlesex CCC, adding

that: "Bob was brilliant and captured the mood precisely!"

David Catanach continued: "Bob will get the show on the road after lunch and will be MC for the awards and we are sure that, on both counts, he'll bring an extra dimension to the proceedings."

There will be additional entertainment in the form of the Josh Schofield Quartet, a group of talented young musicians from the Birmingham Conservatoire, who will provide a musical reception for guests as they arrive and will continue to play while lunch is served.

In addition, there will be demonstrations and displays from the companies who have supported the event through their sponsorship.

However, the highlight of the event will,



Bob 'The Cat' Bevan

of course, be the presentation of the awards. David reported: "Thanks to the support of the sponsors, we are able to present awards in no fewer than 13 signmaker categories, with an additional award for the sign product of the year and a final accolade for the sign of the year."

At the time of going to press, attendance at the awards event stands at 300, but some tickets are still available. Priced at £55.00 each (or £450.00 for a table for 10) they can be ordered via the awards website at www.britishsignawards.org or over the phone at: Tel: 01623 883797 or Tel: 0845 3383016. ■

Trophies with a difference

The trophies which will be presented to winners of this year's British Sign Awards will be extra special, thanks to the involvement of one of the sponsors, Corby-based Trade Etching Direct (TED).

TED Managing Director, Anthony Dullaghan, came forward with the suggestion that the company should use its expertise with metals, etching and engraving to produce a series of crafted, bespoke trophies that signmakers would be delighted to receive and display.

He said: "The organisers came up with an initial visual of what they would like and, based on this image, we've been working on the prototype. It's looking good and we are confident we will be able to deliver something very special."

Sponsors make it all possible



The inaugural BSGA-organised British Sign Awards has made a major impact in its first year and its success is down to the support and involvement of the sponsoring companies.

David Dyke, President of the BSGA said "We would like to thank all the sponsors for their involvement and support. **3M** led the way by agreeing to be the corporate sponsor for the awards, and was joined by **3M Tapes and Adhesives, Complete CNC**

Solutions, Decordirections, Epson, Foamalux, Metamark, Nationwide Platforms, Signs Express, Soyang Europe, Trade Etching Direct, Vink, and William Smith.

"They have made it possible for us to launch an industry awards scheme that has real meaning and value and which we hope will continue to grow in stature during the coming years."

For further information visit: www.britishsignawards.org

Fine Dining in Birmingham

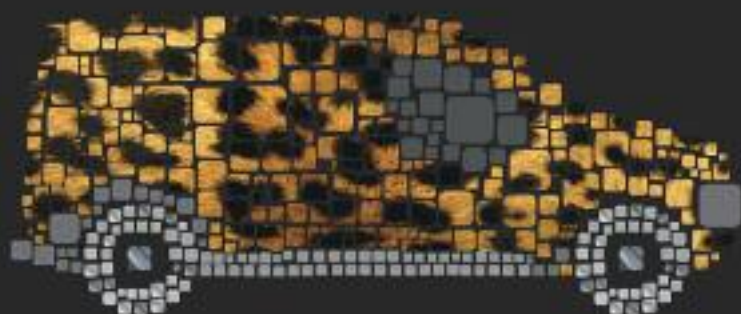
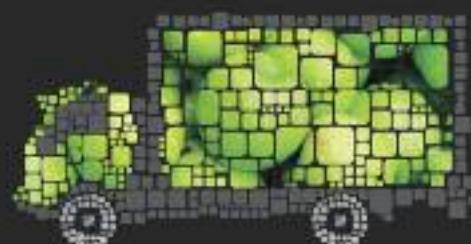
Aston Villa is, surprisingly, rated in the top three venues in Birmingham for fine dining, and the club's award-winning chefs are planning a superb four-course luncheon for the British Sign Awards.

"We chose Villa Park as the venue for a number of reasons," said Ray Hirst, one of the event organisers, "and chief amongst them was the standard of the food. Aston Villa has won an excellent reputation for its catering and we are sure that everyone who attends is in for treat."



Villa Park is also ideally located in the centre of the country, just five minutes from Junction six on the M6 and clearly signposted, thus making travel for guests relatively easy. On-site car parking, adjacent to the Holte Suite, is available for all visitors.

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impact & inspiration



▲ Global design agency **Gensler** sought the assistance of **Cobal Signs**, when it wanted to transform the client meeting rooms and a reception area within its European headquarters in Aldgate, London.

The arresting design features full-



height, three-dimensional lettering and digitally printed manifestations that help to reinforce the company's corporate identity and reflect the client services that it offers.

In the first instance, Cobal Signs produced initial samples and mock-ups for Gensler to approve, before producing the signage, which comprised full-height lettering, depicting each of Gensler's disciplines, crafted from

pre-formed and lacquered MDF. In addition, digitally printed manifestations were also used to decorate the reception area and meeting rooms, with each word being individually designed to echo the five core disciplines of Gensler's operation, which cover architecture, interiors, design, planning and consulting.

In addition to the large-scale manifestations, small type quotes, culled from various



creative luminaries, were also peppered around the larger wall graphics to provide further chance engagements with the text.

For further information visit:
www.gensler.com and
www.cobal.co.uk ■



▲ Specialist print and media supplier and **Fujifilm** reseller, **PSW**, has recently revamped its Studley-based headquarters with an array of colourful images printed on an extensive range of **Euromedia** materials.

PSW undertook the makeover to

demonstrate the full potential of Fujifilm's Euromedia range and to promote the creative applications that it can help to achieve, using 12 rolls of Euromedia substrates, to decorate both the internal and external areas of the building. Among them, the high-performance self-adhesive Power



Vinyl was applied on the walls in the reception area to create an eye-catching and welcoming environment. It was also used on the stairs in conjunction with FloorGraphics, a textured protective PVC film laminate, to provide an eye-catching and unconventional look. At the top of the stairs, Brick Vinyl, a self-adhesive film particularly suitable for use in short-term applications on vertical surfaces, was adopted to create a fascinating image featuring waterfalls. Additional architectural elements of the



building, such as doors, were covered with a polyester textile featuring a high quality, non-reflective surface like StickyTex.

For further information visit:
www.psw.co.uk and
www.fuji.co.uk ■



► The name **Linda Farrow** is synonymous in the fashion world with luxury designer sunglasses and, since its inception in 1970, the Linda Farrow brand of luxury eyewear has been widely acclaimed by stylish Londoners and the international jet set.

So when designing the Linda Farrow 'shop within a shop' for **Selfridges** in London and other retail outlets in China, it was very important that the store décor lived up to the exclusivity of the brand.

In view of the fact that Linda Farrow has recently collaborated with the brand **3.1 Phillip Lim**, for whom it designed a set of sunglasses that included both blue and red revo lenses, part of the display used **Doro**



Tape's strikingly individual **Aurora** and **Andromeda** colour change films that feature a highly polished mirror finish and, in the case of Aurora, change colour from deep magenta to ocean blue and from fire red to emerald green for Andromeda.

For further information visit:
www.dorotape.co.uk

For more detailed versions of these articles and further photographs, together with all décor relevant news, visit:
www.decordirections.co.uk ■



▲ With the famous **Pantheon** building located in the Latin quarter of Paris being restored this summer, **JCDecaux Advertising** and the Parisian municipal team in charge of events collaborated to develop and install more than 3000 m² of printed canvas on both the inside and outside of the building.

The project was sponsored by the **Centre des Monuments Nationaux**, which invited the famous contemporary and internationally renowned artist, **JR**, to produce a design that accurately reflected the spiritual and historical values of the Pantheon.

The finished artwork comprises more than 5000 portraits, which were taken of visitors to nine national monuments, or uploaded to the project's website earlier this year. The finished installation took

more than eight months to complete, from conception to final realisation.

French print company **BS2i**, using its **Agfa Anapurna M2500** large-format printer, under the direction of JR himself, printed both the canvas walls and the floor.

The interior installation, which covers the dome, the cupola, and the floor of the Pantheon, will remain in place until the 5th October 2014, whilst the external artwork will be exposed until the restoration of the Pantheon's upper parts is completed.

For further information on BS2i visit: www.bs2i.fr . **For further information on Agfa Graphics, visit:** www.agfa.com

The cutting edge

'Edge' is a word that has suffered from overuse of late, but Mark Godden argues that it can be appropriately used to describe the benefits conferred by the latest addition to Complete CNC Solutions' range of cnc routers.



However, according to Julian, the new Protek line delivers something different and leaves a very individual set of fingerprints on the output it touches, delivering the quality that maintains, cut



edges of a quality that leaves anyone who has an appreciation of routing and cutting's finer points awestruck.

The output delivered by the two Protek machines features such smooth and artefact-free edges that they look as though they're the product of an additional finishing stage or two, but they're not. Output comes off the router bed in a highly finished state that really needs to be seen and touched in order to be fully appreciated. But Julian simply describes it as 'remarkable!'

He continues: "Edge quality is a reflection of every single system component and its interplay with the systems' advanced controllers. Moving a cutter around a shape involves precise control of the given machine's axis. Typically, output bears some kind of witness mark that shows control being interpolated or passed from one axis to another. Some minor but significant deviation from the ordained path is usually seen in the form of an equally minor mark that interrupts an otherwise obvious cut-continuation – but not in the case of the Protek systems. To see anything at all, other than an incredible edge, involves the kind of greatly magnified scrutiny that's normally reserved for digital print. It really is that good."

The term 'Having an edge', infers a sharply-honed advantage, something that often sees the competition lost for a response; something that may seem small but that confers a big strategic or tactical advantage and that has major implications.

And now, thanks to Complete CNC Solutions' UK launch of the Italian-manufactured Protek line of routing and cutting production systems, the word 'edge' is about to get the most strenuous workout it's had for years.

Complete CNC Solutions is, of course, no stranger to routers and cutting systems, having represented the UK interests of the Tekcel range for many years. That's a relationship that will continue to grow, according to Julian Sage, Managing Director of Complete CNC Solutions, who explained: "We've introduced the Protek line to help us deliver a solution for some of the new markets we're pursuing and also to help move progressive businesses operating in the sign and allied industries into new application areas. Our Tekcel line remains the defining foundation of what's now a whole family of systems and it continues to represent a critical component of our product map for the future."

The systems also bristle with neat touches. The usual plumbers' nightmare of duct-work serving zoned vacuum beds is notably missing. Instead, all vacuum services are routed through the massively stiff chassis elements. And if you are thinking that it has to be welded perfectly to protect against leaks, you're right. It does and it is!

Features abound and the options list is impressive too. Flat beds are taken for granted and so too are signmaking materials that are anything but flat. Variation in material thickness can be sensed if needed and the Z-Axis will step in and actively compensate to deliver clean, evenly weighted engraved lines to complement those flawlessly finished edges.

In addition, Complete CNC Solutions is building in a whole package of its own support and training offerings to help turn what are obviously two very capable systems into production powerhouses that deliver the goods.

Julian concluded: "Whether it's companies that are just embarking on the learning curve with rigid materials, or those who are already handling a large print-cut workload, we're ready for business with a system that caters for their individual needs and with this in mind, we are planning a series of open days and road shows so that sign and display companies can see the machines in action. And I can promise that they won't be disappointed!"

The good news evidently continues at a more practical level too, as both the multifunctional Unico TT model, with its standard knife cutting capability, and the more modestly specified Unico, are capable of maintaining incredible turns of speed while delivering this exemplary quality.

Julian insists that powerful spindles, spinning at mind-blowing speeds and tenacious material hold-down systems that secure even the most awkwardly shaped work-pieces, challenge conventional physical limits. He said: "Prodigious quantities of cutting waste are the product of such dragster-like performance, but it's all dealt with by a really effective removal system that leaves the bed, and the work, clean and ready for action, ensuring that quality output, and lots of it, can be produced quickly, cleanly and with minimal operator intervention."

He went on to observe: "The engineering quality of the Protek line is a thing of real beauty. Everything is well conceived and flawlessly executed. Over-dimensioned helical rack-and-pinion power a brushless-servo drive governed by a Mitsubishi Controller System. It's all run behind proprietary firmware and a very user-friendly operator console."

For further information visit: www.biesse.co.uk. To request a demonstration e-mail: info@biesse.co.uk ■



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Discover more at 3M Commercial Graphics Division www.3M.co.uk/graphicsolutions



Bringing balance to high speed machining

For manufacturers now running their plotter and router machines at spindle speeds upwards of 60,000rpm, Industrial Tooling Corporation (ITC) has extended its portfolio of Clearcut single fluted cutters to offer a 'balanced' range that can run at high speeds.

When used in conjunction with the latest generation of routing machines supplied by AG CAD, Esko and Zund, all of which now feature a spindle speed that is more than double the previous industry norm, ITC's new Clearcut range guarantees exceptional surface finishes and chip clearance.

While the use of two flute cutting tools is naturally balanced and minimises harmonic effects, and excessive noise and helps to reduce spindle stress and vibration, chip evacuation is often poor when they are run at high speeds on acrylic and similarly soft materials. To this end, the Clearcut range has been extended to provide a fully balanced cutter that can run at higher spindle speeds to deliver surface edges that eliminate the requirement for flame or hand finishing operations.

Automatically balanced during the grinding process, the Clearcut range has been vigorously tested with all popular

brands of routing machines and has achieved consistently excellent results and significant productivity gains.

In common with all the tools in the Clearcut range, the balanced series, which is manufactured from an ultra wear resistant micro grain carbide, will soon be available in diameters of two, three, four, five and six millimetres, with an overall length ranging from 40 to 75mm and an optimised length of cut from seven to 26mm, depending upon the overall length.

For further information visit: www.itc-ltd.co.uk



Price reductions for the CE6000-40

Due to the favourable exchange rate between the Japanese yen and sterling, Graphtec GB has been able to offer a massive 25 per cent reduction in the price of its popular Graphtec CE6000-40 plotter/cutter, effectively reducing the price of the machine from £745.00 + VAT to £595.00 + VAT.

With the addition only of a relatively low-cost heat press, the CE6000-40 thus provides the perfect introduction to the potentially lucrative printwear market and enables sign and graphics

companies to create vital additional revenue streams, without the need for heavy investment in new production equipment.

Manufactured in Japan by Graphtec Corporation and available under licence in the UK from Graphtec GB, the CE6000 series of plotter/cutter will handle a vast range of materials, including flex, flock, vinyl, rhinestone and various fabrics, as well as accommodating an equally wide range of print-and-cut applications, including those involving text as small as three millimetres in



height. This capability is attributable to Graphtec's proprietary ARMS (Advanced Registration Mark System) facility that enables the precise plotting and cutting of materials that might otherwise have proved problematical.

For further information visit: www.graphtecgb.co.uk



An ace performer

Ash & Lacy, a manufacturer of building cladding solutions that are based on the aluminium and aluminium composite sheet that are frequently used to support signage and associated architectural features, has completely automated the process of detailing and programming standard panels by using the PANELBuilder combined CNC router and software system from XYZ International.

Now, instead of having to create panels one by one, Ash & Lacy can mass-produce them using the XYZ system and, since a typical requirement in a single contract is for up to 1,500 4.3 x 1.5-metre aluminium

or ACM panels, the company has realised huge savings in production time and overall manufacturing costs.

Mathew Day, Product Engineer at Ash & Lacy, commented: "We use the PANELBuilder system for all standard panels and the pendulum machining capability of the combined router and software has proved critical to increasing output and productivity by reducing downtime to an absolute minimum. It enables the machine bed to be divided into two virtual zones, so that a sheet can be processed on one zone while the operator removes waste material and loads a new sheet ready for processing in another. As well as being a complete

CAD/CAM solution incorporating all of the functionality needed for high-volume production, the open architecture of the system means it can be readily used with other CAD systems to create unusual shapes and sizes."

These are a frequent requirement in the sign industry for corporate ID and logo manifestations based on aluminium and ACM materials.

Robert Marshall, Vice President Market Development at XYZ International, added: "The PANELBuilder is a dedicated one process, one solution system created for the niche cladding market, but can also be used successfully by sign companies

specialising in the production of corporate identity signage where large volumes of aluminium and ACM sheet materials are used. The system has been configured to accommodate the precise needs of individual manufacturers, with integrated parametric templates enabling users to simply choose the required sheet sizes and quantities and with the dedicated software automatically programming and producing the finished cut panels."

For further information visit: www.axyz.com www.panelbuilder.net and www.ashandlacy.com

Unveiling MonoFab

Roland DG has introduced the MonoFab series, including the company's first 3D additive rapid prototyping machine, the ARM-10, and a new 3D subtractive prototyping and manufacturing machine, the SRM-20.

These two new machines represent the culmination of over 25 years of experience in 3D milling and are the company's first foray into 3D printing. By combining the merits of each device, users can select the best method for their individual workflow every step of the way, from inspiration to production without limiting their creative vision.

The ARM-10 3D printer, which is ideal

for quickly checking a design in the initial stage of prototyping or modelling a complex shape, incorporates a stereo-lithography process with a UV-LED projection system. The ARM-10 builds models by sequentially curing layers of resin from a liquid resin vat. Simultaneous production of multiple objects can thus be accomplished within the same work area, reducing modelling time when compared to methods where lasers expose specific areas. Roland's imageCure resin becomes semi-transparent when cured and post-processing procedures, such as support removal and polishing are easily accommodated. By adopting a

suspended build system, resin consumption is minimised.

The evolutionary SRM-20 desktop milling machine incorporates several innovative subtractive rapid prototyping (SRP) features to meet the needs of a new era. The SRM-20's strengths lie in providing outstanding accuracy and smooth finished surfaces.

With its new milling spindle, collet, circuit board and firmware, the SRM-20 delivers maximum speed and precision while retaining a compact desktop size. The SRM-20 can mill a variety of non-proprietary materials

typically used for prototyping, including modelling board, acrylic, ABS, wood and modelling wax, making it possible to check the weight and feel of models using the same material properties as the final production.

An interlocked full cover prevents dust from escaping during milling for safe operation and a clean environment.

In order to provide users with ultimate peace of mind, both the ARM-10 and SRM-20 come complete with a one year UK RolandCare warranty.

For further information visit: www.rolanddg.co.uk/monofab ■



monoFab
ARM-10



monoFab
SRM-20

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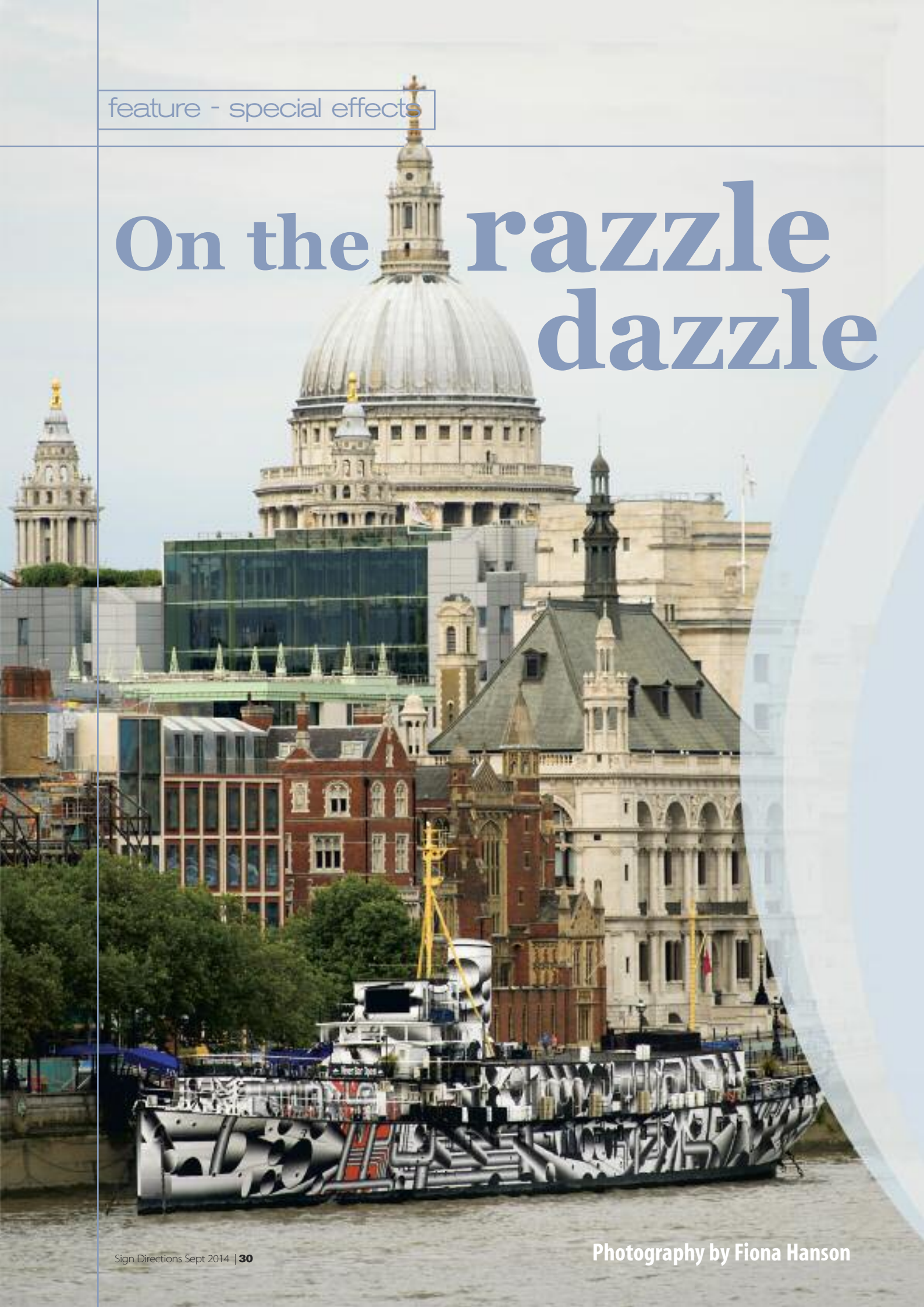
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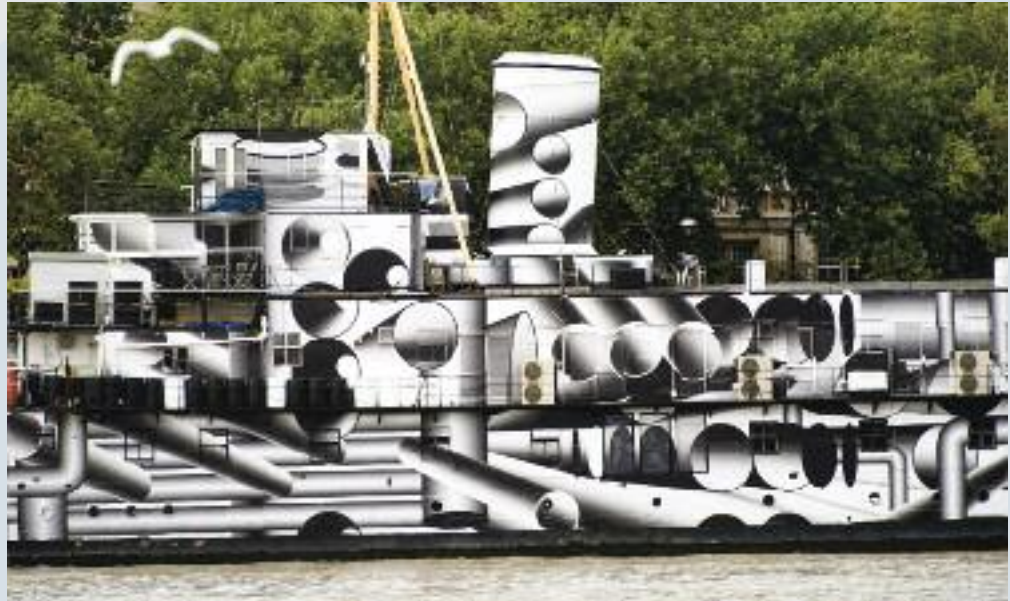


feature - special effects

On the razzle dazzle



This month Mike Connolly looks at some of the ways in which special effects can be used to help sign and display companies to visually enhance their sign and graphic output, whilst also enabling them to add extra value.



Contra Vision has been used as part of the 14-18 NOW special commissions programme to mark the centenary of World War One, when it helped to transform a WW1 warship, a floating venue moored on the Thames, back into a wartime 'Dazzle' ship. 2,400 merchant ships and warships were dazzle camouflaged, typically plying the Atlantic in convoy with wartime supplies

HMS President, now a conference venue, floating bar and restaurant moored at Victoria Embankment in London was once HMS Saxifrage, an anti-submarine warship, completed in 1918 and one of the last three surviving warships of the Royal Navy built during WW1.

As part of the nationwide commemorations of the beginning of WW1, the ship has been covered in Dazzle graphics. Dazzle patterns were the first attempt to camouflage warships, not by offering concealment but by using complex patterns of geometric shapes in contrasting colours that interrupted and intersected each other. This made it

difficult for an enemy to estimate the range, speed and direction of a target.

The ship has been transformed by leading German artist Tobias Rehberger, who covered it entirely in a 'dazzle' camouflage print. Tobias commented, "Dazzle painting to me perfectly represents the idea of 'not seeing something' as these camouflage patterns were designed to hide objects."

Dazzle has an interesting artistic history. Picasso claimed the cubists invented it and now HMS President has been 'wrapped' with self-adhesive material printed by Rochester-based large format digital printer PressOn, using Contra Vision Performance perforated material on the windows to provide a modern version of how an original 'Dazzle' ship might have looked. The large picture windows, which were added to the ship when it became a floating venue, provided the perfect vehicle for applying Contra Vision see-through graphics, which enabled the whole ship to be covered by the 'dazzle' design.

This is also an excellent example of



how Contra Vision can be imaginatively used to enhance artistic projects, something Contra Vision is keen to promote. Roland Hill, the company's Chairman and Managing Director, sits on the board of the Liverpool Biennial and there is also a Dazzle ship moored in Albert Dock in Liverpool to link the WW1 Centenary with the Liverpool Biennial and some of the events happening nationwide.

The project was co-commissioned by 14-18 NOW, the WW1 Centenary Art Commissions and Liverpool Biennial in

association with University of the Arts London Chelsea College of Arts, HMS President (1918) and Tate Liverpool, in partnership with Merseyside Maritime Museum, supported by the National Lottery through Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Dazzle Ship London is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Goethe-Institut London.

For further information visit: www.contravision.com

Box it up

Launched at this year's VM & Display Show held at the Business Design Centre in London, the new Ledge 105 light box from Unibox features the latest edge-lighting technology, which makes it possible to create sophisticated light boxes that contain an easily re-configurable magnetic display solution.

The Ledge 105 light box was subsequently installed at the flagship Portobello Dock store of Tom Dixon, a British design brand that embraces a wide range of iconic lighting and furniture products. The company's inspired designs are now elegantly displayed on bespoke laser-cut shelving attached to the Ledge 105 invisible magnetic display system.

Exhibition Design Manager at Tom Dixon, Nikki Talbot commented: "The Ledge 105 works as a sophisticated and functional retail solution that combines



luminosity and a luminous graphic backdrop with adjustable shelving through which we merchandise our products." Managing Director at Unibox, Nick Wraith, who was on-site at the Tom Dixon installation, added: "Ledge 105 is our latest product development demonstrating our light box and fabric tensioning capabilities. The system is much larger than the prototypes demonstrated at the VM & Display Show and the shelves are wider, thus challenging the strength of the magnets and highlighting the flexibility of the Ledge 105 light box."

For further information visit: www.unibox.co.uk



Combining innovation and creativity

With innovation being a key factor in helping sign and display companies produce output with a difference, EFI reports that its digital printing offerings are enabling these companies to carry out work that was once the province of screenprinters.

The inks used by EFI across its range of printers include formulations that enable specialist jobs to be undertaken which hitherto were not possible without digital printing. For example, the VUTEK GS Pro-TF wide-format machine now simplifies thermoforming, with the ink enabling outstanding elongation characteristics with excellent adhesion and post-draw opacity so that unusually shaped 3D work can be undertaken.

Likewise, EFI's LED printers, including the new low-cost H1625 flatbed and roll-to-roll model, means that for a modest investment it is possible to reap the benefits of the company's 'cool cure'



technology and work with materials that are not suitable for use with conventional UV-curing technology. This means it is now possible to print direct to ultra-thin, complex surfaced media that has a tendency to 'buckle' under the heat of traditional UV lamps.

The already established VUTEK GS2000LX Pro and wider GS3250LX Pro printers combined with the latest and larger GS5500LXr Pro printer have given a huge boost to EFI's LED technology. It has also enabled users to discover unusual applications on non-typical materials and heat-



sensitive surfaces and to thus extend the range of services they can offer customers.

A good example has been Bristol-based Artworks Solutions that is said to have taken its fabrication and printing expertise into a new dimension with the help of a VUTEK GS3250 printer. As an architectural specialist, the company has harnessed its versatility and creative abilities to

generate a wide range of textures and effects, with the VUTEK printer being especially effective in printing direct to glass, a material that is in huge demand for exterior and interior design projects in which the combination of light, texture and quality printing have produced visually stunning results.

For further information visit: www.efi.com

Maximising the creative potential

Great looking special effects can find a beginning in lots of places these days thanks to the versatility of modern media and print-based imaging technologies. However, one company that is rediscovering that a creative imagination is the best source is Manchester-based Gatley Signs and its Wrap-Zone division.

Andy Johnson recently acquired Gatley Signs and one of his immediate priorities was strengthening his creative team and building the base of skills the company can use to help distinguish its offerings.

Recent years have changed what's possible in terms of sign and graphics production to an extent that few might have imagined and placing that potential in creative hands has helped

to further develop markets for imaginatively designed output.

Metamark recognised some time ago that the converging sign and print markets were looking for a fusion of the durability expected of signing media and the capacity to resolve the higher orders of resolution and detail required by those with a greater expectation of print quality. From that analysis, the company designed and manufactured its MD-Class media range, home of MD5, which is regarded by many as being the industry's digital flagship.

The team at Gatley Signs turned to Metamark's MD-Class product to produce a range of graphics promoting its own special effect capabilities. The images used draw on deep Photoshop expertise and deliver a range of arresting effects, which when used in balance



with the subjects, make the point, but without exploiting Photoshop's talents to an extent considered gratuitous.

The designs were printed on MD-Class media using a Roland VersaCMM printer. The combination delivers the tonal range and resolution needed to challenge more conventional photographic. Photoshop can display gamut warnings but they would not be greatly exercised thanks to the MD-Class media having very generous ink limits and thus being able to resolve an extensive range of colour.

Gatley Signs intends to flex its creative muscle and is placing a greater emphasis on vehicle wraps. Wraps, of course, have become a mainstream production staple so that the broader differentiation can now come from design as much as from the wrap itself. With a considerable palette of effects, including printed textures that can be wholly digitally originated, ink on the right material will help take the company much further than a simple reliance on material variations.

For further information visit: www.metamark.co.uk



Promoting Peaky Blinders

The versatility of self-adhesive rear projection films from ASLAN was ably demonstrated through a

video installation that formed part of four TV commercials recently screened on Australian BBC, to

promote the BBC2 television series, Peaky Blinders.



The efficacy of the ASLAN RP35 rear projection film was perfectly demonstrated when a multitude of large-sized projections were screened onto the film. Despite the intricacy of the application, the images are sharp and crisp and the repetitions are equal without any shadowing and the projections can be clearly seen when viewing them from different angles. Further, the highly translucent surface

of the film ensures brilliant reproduction of pictures, videos and graphic displays, even when viewed in bright light.

To view the video visit: <http://creativity-online.com/work/bbc-first-whats-next-peaky-blinders/35929>. For further information visit: www.ASLAN-schwarz.com

A touch of silver

From a hardware perspective, Mimaki printers, cutters and consumables available in the UK from Hybrid Services provide a host of creative options. However, it is through the availability of a range of compatible ink technologies that it is possible to create a vast range of special effects, with Metallic, White and Latex inks being the most widely used for this purpose.

Since the arrival of Mimaki's eco-solvent Silver ink option, combined with standard process colours, printers have been able to create stunning and eye-catching tones in bronze, titanium, copper or gold. This particular ink is compatible with Mimaki JV33 and CJV30 roll-fed printers used typically for applications such as vehicle wraps and decals.

Whether used with the Metallic ink



option, or simply in conjunction with standard process colours, the addition of the White ink option is significant. Printing to clear materials backed up with an in-register white overlay adds opacity to the colours to enable sharp and high definition results. This is particularly noticeable when producing



window graphics or acrylic photo blocks that would otherwise lose depth. Furthermore, white ink can create striking images when printed onto coloured substrates whilst imparting incredible vibrancy to colours when used as an underlay on non-white materials.

The latest Latex ink range accommodates the increasingly

popular area of customised wallpaper production. In conjunction with the Mimaki JV400LX printer, Latex inks can be used to print sumptuous wall coverings, enabling sign and graphics producers to engage effectively with the interior décor market and therefore attract new high-end customers.

For further information visit: www.hybridservices.co.uk

Eye-catching 3D effects



A new light box from W & Co incorporates a novel form of 3D imaging technology where objects appear to physically float in front of the screen to create the illusion that the viewer can actually touch them.

Using the light box, promotional material can be viewed at a distance of up to 30 metres and at an angle of 40 degrees from the centre point, without

loss of image definition or diminishment of the 3D effect. The system opens up a host of new possibilities for merchandisers and brand promoters, bringing to life graphics and special lighting effects using 3D technology and enhancing the environment in which the light boxes are located. Typically, these include hotel and business reception areas, airport lounges, museums, exhibitions and



public buildings.

For further information visit: www.w-co.co.uk



Light control

According to LED signage specialist Applelec, there are many different takes on how to achieve special effects. The company is currently focussing on the use of control systems to achieve the best special effects by programming its LED-illuminated signs to react to the environments in which they are installed.

Now being used in selective new projects is the company's DimX sensor that enables a sign to react to ambient light levels by dimming or brightening the LED

modules in accordance with user preferences. The sensor features three distinct programming options to suit different location or environmental requirements.

The first option works by dimming the LED modules during hours of daylight and then gradually increasing the level of brightness during the night. The second option enables full brightness during daylight hours where maximum visibility is required, for example, in a retail environment and then gradually reduces the intensity of light as nighttime sets in.



The third option is designed to save energy costs and reduce night time light pollution by making the level of illumination commensurate with the

gradual reduction in ambient light.

For further information visit: www.applelec.co.uk ■

Wrapping it up

With its GrafiWrap range of self-adhesive films, GrafiTyp enables superb special effects to be achieved, primarily on vehicles but also on signage. The films can also be used to transform furniture and fittings.

Key products in the GrafiWrap range include textured films that impart depth to designs, carbon fibre films that are particularly suited to partial vehicle wraps and, in particular, car bumpers and mirrors and leather-effect films that can be used on both car interiors and exteriors. Other popular options include Army Camouflage, Flock-effect and Art Deco films, with the latter being particularly suited to the

decoration/wrapping of furniture or white goods.

Films in the GrafiWrap range are available in a wide choice of colours and with either a high-gloss or matte finish. GrafiWrap printable media is available with various design features and lifetime expectancies, contingent upon the nature of the application.

For further information, visit www.grafityp.co.uk ■



A plethora of options

From the latest versions of the popular VersaCAMM print & cut range of machines, through to the high-performance workhorse SOLJET PRO4 XR-640 and the VersaUV LEJ-640F and VersaUV LEJ-640 UV wide-format printers, Roland DG has been foremost in the development of printing and cutting solutions that place special effects at the heart of their production capabilities.

The latest addition to Roland DG's pioneering print & cut range, the VersaCAMM VS-I series, is described as the perfect solution for the production of special effects. Available in a choice of three widths, the printers offer both White ink and Metallic ink printing capabilities, in addition to Roland's renowned print & cut functionality, in a single machine.

The SOLJET PRO4 XR-640 combines the latest-generation printhead technology and the new Eco-Sol Max 2 inks that are available in nine colours. It prints on a wide range of substrates at accelerated



speeds of up to 49 metres/hour. The VersaUV LEJ-640 is Roland's first wide-format printer that accepts both roll and sheet-fed media. The printer is ideal for the production of 3D customised patterns and embossed effects, making it ideal for brand promotions. The VersaUV LEJ-640F sets a high standard in flatbed printing, being capable of printing CMYK + White inks onto both flexible and rigid substrates up to 150mm in height.

All Roland machines are supplied with the company's VersaWorks RIP software as standard, thus making it easy to achieve rich colours and special effects across multiple applications, and is supported by



a huge library of different colour formats and the Roland Colour System for spot-colour matching.

For further information visit: www.rolanddg.co.uk

Every surface covered

Using its now familiar slogan, printable media specialist Soyang Europe has a wealth of creative options when it comes to special effects.



Two key products that are said to have generated considerable interest are the new G-Floor material that Soyang claims will change traditional perceptions of what is possible in the field of customised flooring and AlumiGraphics, a 100 per cent recyclable pliable aluminium foil that can be applied to walkways, brick walls and paved surfaces. This material won the prestigious 'Product of the Year' award given by the SGIA.

G-Floor is a high-density, clear, flexible PVC flooring substrate that can be custom printed on the underside using

either UV- or solvent-based inks on a grand-format printer. Its creative benefits over traditional flooring materials are said to be significant in terms of application times and cost. The material can be rolled out in a matter of minutes, while the 'flat' memory capability means it can be walked on almost immediately. Print technology enables a wide range of textures to be created, including natural wood grain and stone effects, as well as photographic images.

The image is printed beneath the media, enabling the thick wear layer to



protect the integrity of the graphic and making G-Floor hygienic, easily installed and repositioned as well as offering an excellent load-bearing capacity.

Ideal for both interior and exterior applications, printable AlumiGraphics adheres to virtually any surface and requires no over-lamination. The product is available with two different

surface finishes: 'smooth' for interior and exterior wall surfaces, such as brick, stucco, concrete or tiled walls and 'grip' that features a slip-resistant reflective surface that is ideal for external flooring applications involving concrete, asphalt or paving.

For further information visit: www.soyang.co.uk

Tempting choices

As the UK's largest stockist and distributor of 3M sign and graphics materials, trade-only supplier William Smith offers a host of special effect films.

These range from etched glass-effect and window decorative films through to films developed for LED technology optimisation and Dichroic and DI-NOC films that have become a popular choice of architects and interior designers due to their outstanding décor capabilities.

Etched glass-effect and window decorative films developed by 3M are suitable for application to flat transparent surfaces, such as internal glass partitions, windows, glazed doors and internally illuminated displays. They can be used to create a wide choice of special effects that effectively replicate at a comparatively low cost traditional mechanical or acid etching on glass surfaces.

The optically clear graphic printing film 3M 8150 enables visually striking special effects to be created for applications in which a high level of transparency is required on unprinted areas of the glass substrate. 3M Textured Wall Film IJ8624 has been designed for the production of photographic-quality images that can be applied to textured or slightly curved surfaces as diverse as brick, breeze block, tiles and cement. The film can be used to convert both interior and exterior surfaces that would otherwise appear dull and uninteresting into eye-catching special effect manifestations or advertisements.

Developed to optimise LED lighting technology used in signs and displays are the new 3M Envision 3730 Translucent and Diffuser Films and 3M 3635-100 Light Enhancement Films (LEF), both of which dramatically reduce the number of LED modules required without compromising the level of illumination. Envision 3730 Diffuser Film is available with two levels of light transmission (50 and 60 percent) to manage illumination more efficiently, while the Translucent Film is available in both standard and



customised colours and in an inkjet-printable format.

The main characteristic of dichroic glass is an ability to provide both transmitted colour and a completely different reflective colour that shifts and shimmers contingent upon the angle of viewing. Use of the glass can inspire freedom of expression and creativity, but it can also add a considerable cost to any architectural project. With 3M Dichroic Film, however, the same effects can be achieved but at a fraction of the cost.

3M Dichroic Film is available in Chill and Blaze colours for application to glass, plastic or acrylic surfaces as a visual opaque or decorative graphic. The Chill version shifts colours from the transmitted cool tones of blue, magenta and yellow to the reflective colours of gold and blue. The Blaze version shifts colours from the warm tones of cyan, blue and magenta to red and gold. The environment, lighting, viewing angle and mounting surface colour, all influence the colours seen by the viewer from either side of the glass surface.

Depending on the application, users of the film can opt for the DF-Chill and DF-Blaze film-only version or the DF-A Chill and DF-A Blaze version that can also be printed in order to incorporate logos and special effects. Whereas these two products are recommended for use only



on plastic or acrylic surfaces, the third product in the range (DF-PA Chill and DF-PA Blaze) can be used on any smooth glass surface. This film is not printable and includes a pressure-sensitive adhesive.

Available in a vast range of different colours and patterns, DI-NOC from 3M is a high-quality self-adhesive laminate film that can be applied to a wide range of commonly used substrates to replicate the appearance of, for example, wood grain, stone, stucco, metal, leather and

carbon fibre but at a fraction of the cost. The films, which have been tested to meet IMO flammability requirements, are made from flexible cast PVC and incorporate 3M's renowned Comply Adhesive Technology. This eliminates familiar application problems such as stretching, bubbling and crazing of the film through the presence of grid-like channels in the adhesive that enable air to escape during application of the film. DI-NOC is also water- and weather-resistant and easy to maintain and to purposely remove as required.

For further information visit: www.williamsmith.co.uk



Adding a distinctive look

Amari Digital Supplies (ADS) offers a wide range of special effect materials that enable a truly distinctive appearance to be added to signs and displays.

The materials include the latest offerings from MACtac, for which ADS is a major UK distributor and R Tape with its range of metallic vinyl options and a complementary metal-effect film that will be marketed under the company's own brand.

The R Tape VinylEfx range of mirror-effect printable vinyl materials will provide users with a competitive edge by facilitating amazing decorative effects that will transform ordinary printed output into extraordinary eye-catching alternatives and add value for end users. The range is available in a choice of finishes that includes double-sided Metallic, Smooth Silver, Matte Silver and Brushed Silver and single-sided Smooth Gold, all of which can be converted by the most popular current printing technologies, including Latex, solvent and UV.



The new ADS own-brand double-sided gold-effect film will further complement these vinyl materials. A high-gloss polyester film, it will impart an exclusive optical value to signs, advertising, logos and lettering.

Amari Digital Supplies has also added a new Deco Canvas variant to augment the existing Satin and Mural products in the MACtac Deco range of wall coverings. These inkjet-printable



materials are best applied to smooth flat surfaces in multiple interior applications that include, for example, conference suites, reception areas, hotel interiors, exhibition stand backdrops and retail refurbishment to introduce a host of individual and eye-catching effects.

The company has also added PERMAfrost, a premium-grade PVC laminate with an ice crystal structure, to the PERMAfun range of special effect over-laminate films. The range already includes Crystal Gloss, Brushed Metal, Coarse Grain Wood, Fine Grain Wood

and Leather-effect formats. Due to its textured surface, PERMAfrost is slip-resistant and rated to R10 in DIN 51130. It can therefore be used effectively for indoor floor applications.

In a further recent product development at ADS, a new bubble-free version (798-01BF) has been added to the MACtac MACal Glass Décor range of materials.

For further information visit: www.amaridigitalsupplies.com www.soyang.co.uk

Increasing safety awareness

When the latest Ariel Atom 3.5R motorbike/motorcar made an appearance at this year's Emergency Services Show in Birmingham, it was seen wrapped in the VC 612 Flexbright highly reflective police livery film supplied by ORAFOL.

The Ariel Atom 3-5R trike-like car (no doors, or windows but delivering maximum speed) was used in the latest safety awareness campaign for Safer Rider. Police Sergeant Andy Parsons, who fronts the UK Safer Rider campaign, commented: "In the UK, motorcyclists make up just one per cent of total road traffic but account for nearly 20 per cent of all road

deaths. They are around 35 times more likely to be killed in a traffic collision than someone in a car. We really want to create awareness in order to see these numbers reduced."

It was for this reason the Ariel Atom 3.5R police vehicle, complete with the VC 612 livery film, came to be on the ORAFOL stand at the Emergency Services Show. The highly conformable, high-performance reflective film is available in silver, green, blue, red, yellow and fluorescent lime and orange colours and is particularly suited to wrapping difficult curved vehicle shapes. Because of its highly flexible construction, it is ideal for application



onto motorbikes. The film is easy to cut and apply, requires no edge-sealing and withstands the effects of power washing. It also comes with an extensive warranty and meets the UK

CAST (formerly PSDB) specifications.

For further information visit: www.orafol.com

Dallying with the dome

The PolyDrop doming system supplied by Graphtec GB, facilitates the creation of brilliant three-dimensional special effects on signs.

Furthermore, when using the system in combination with a Graphtec plotter/cutter and a relatively low-cost heat press, sign and display companies also have a fast and cost-effective route to the potentially lucrative printwear and promotional products sector where there is a huge demand for special effects.

The PolyDrop doming system dispenses specially developed polyurethane resins and hardeners to a wide range of signmaking substrates. These include acrylic, polycarbonate, aluminium and aluminium composite materials and vinyl, in addition to fabrics and textiles used for soft signage applications. The Text Drop feature of the system uses a thermo-adhesive film onto which an image is printed, cut out and then domed with a choice of resin, including a special glitter-effect option, using an industry-standard heat press to speed up the doming process.

Polyurethane resins are extremely flexible in application and provide a high level of resistance to pollutants, abrasion and UV degradation. They are also completely safe to handle and are available in a range of different



grades to suit specific applications.

The PolyDrop system is very easy to operate and requires no special training or user skills. It is supplied with a start-up kit that includes manual and automatic feed functions, polyurethane doming resins and hardeners and a special liquid dispenser.

For further information visit: www.graphtecgb.co.uk



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The latest addition to the company's in-house services is a digital printing facility, which delivers high quality prints at competitive prices.

that they can discuss their projects and see first hand the facilities and resources we have to offer."

Sygnnet also specialises in the illumination of signs and even has its own in-house LED company, LED Solutions, which is a UK distributor for Daehan LED and also supplies LED modules that use Samsung and Seoul Semiconductor LED chips that come complete with a five-year guarantee.

The company has recently further expanded its sales and estimating staff and has also recruited Wezley Siddons to help deal with the increased business it has enjoyed since the start of the year. Wezley, who previously worked in a customer service based role within the banking industry, fully appreciates the importance of being customer focused, something which Sygnnet regards as vital to its success

As well as being able to offer customers expert advice as to the most appropriate source of illumination for their specific projects, whether it be LED modules, flexible strips, light panels, cabouchon bulbs or trough lights, LED Solutions also inspects all illuminated signs before they leave the factory to ensure that they are functioning correctly and emit the requisite level of brightness.

As a trade-only supplier, the company treats its client's work with the upmost confidentiality, while also aiming to deliver good quality products and reliable lead times. It also prides itself on the level of client support it offers, especially on the rare occasions when there is a problem post installation. Gary reported: "We offer a 12 month manufacturer's guarantee with all of our signs and endeavour to support our clients with any issues that may arise. We like to regard ourselves as an extension of the client's own team and aim to help them win as much work as possible by providing expert manufacturing advice so that they can present their clients with the best possible solutions."

Sygnnet Signs is celebrating the milestone of its 40th anniversary this year, during which time the

undiminished desire to become the leading signmaker in the UK, coupled with our programme of constant reinvestment and the fact that we are consistently striving to provide the highest quality products."

Leicester based signmaker and trade-only supplier has experienced consistent growth thanks to its policy of investing in the latest technology and the dedication of its 40-strong skilled workforce.

Conveniently located in Leicester's city centre, Sygnnet Signs specialises in the manufacture of multi sign roll-out programmes for a wide variety of UK sign and display companies, fabricating all signs in-house and offering specific departments which deal with each area of the manufacturing process, from concept through to final delivery.

The company, which was first established in 1974, by Mick Iley, specialises in the metal fabrication of signs and continues to build on its enviable reputation for producing signage that is not only safely and securely installed, but which is also aesthetically appealing too.

Production Director Kevin Newton commented: "Collectively, we can offer a vast amount of in-house expertise when it comes to fabrication and operate stringent quality control throughout each stage of the manufacturing process. What's more, we are very versatile – we can produce anything and everything sign-related, from built up and flat cut letters, through to projection signs, fret-cut panels, back trays, totem and monolith signs, light boxes and last but not least, panel and post systems!"

Managing Director Gary Iley, who has now taken over from his father, admits that the company has faced some challenging times during the past decade, but adds that it is very proud to have reached the landmark of its 40th anniversary. He said: "I believe the reason for our longevity is our

Luke Dalton, the group's Marketing Co-ordinator observed: "We work alongside Sygnnet to ensure that its clients achieve the vibrant and eye catching illumination that their signs deserve. We also have the expertise to program and install a wide variety of advanced LED systems into signs and displays, so that Sygnnet can successfully fulfil any lighting brief, however technically complex the requirements."

He concludes: "The fact that we have been established since 1974 should speak for itself and reassure our clients that they can totally rely on us to do our best at all times. With any luck and a fair wind, we hope to still be here in another 40 years, providing everything that signmakers need to guarantee their success!"

The sales team at Sygnnet can also call upon a wealth of expertise, in terms of both sales and manufacturing. The majority of sales staff have acquired hands-on experience of the production process at some point in their career and are thus well placed to offer reliable and constructive technical advice to their clients.

For further information contact Sygnnet Signs direct on Tel: 0116 262 6288 and chat to one of its friendly sales team or, alternatively, visit its recently revamped website at: www.sygnet-signs.com ■

Sales Director Chas Perry said: "Our sales team provides our clients with a 'best way approach' to sign fabrication and we regularly invite clients to visit us so

Half a century of success!



Palmer Publicity Services, the Lancashire based large format print and design specialist, recently celebrated its 25th anniversary and commemorated the event with a party, for both customers and suppliers, at its Preston-based headquarters.

A second-generation family business that was originally formed by Noel and Lesley Palmer back in 1989, PPS has more recently benefitted from the arrival of their daughter, Katie, who joined the business in 2011 and became a director earlier this year.

The anniversary celebration provided an excellent opportunity for customers to see, at first hand, the extra capabilities offered by the company's two new HP latex printers, a 64" Latex 360 and a 2.5m wide Latex L28500, which it purchased from Perfect Colours. These were installed the week prior to the party, together with a new Summa ST 160 cutter, which was also supplied by Perfect Colours. These new machines further expand the PPS equipment portfolio, which includes an Agfa Anapurna UV flatbed and various HP Z series models and replace its old roll-to-roll solvent printers.

PPS has continually re-invented itself over the last 25 years and currently services the needs of numerous blue chip companies, local authorities and educational establishments throughout the UK, specialising in the production of custom design and print, as well as high quality exhibition graphics, bespoke signage and retail POS.

The party, which was attended by over 90 customers and suppliers, offered an afternoon of fine wine, food, music and entertainment, plus casino games and, in



addition, all attendees were invited to sign a specially created 25-year message wall. Further attractions included Magnum's special Marc de Champagne 25-year anniversary ice cream and a splendid party cake that replicated the company's first Mac computer. However, the piece de resistance was undoubtedly a specially designed derivative of Noel Palmer's favourite cocktail, which is known locally as the 'Noeljito!'

For further information visit: www.palmerpublicity.co.uk ■

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More machines from Mimaki



Mimaki used the occasion of Viscom Paris to launch the CJV300 series print & cut machine, the first of a series of new products it plans to unveil this autumn.

The CJV300 is an integrated print and cut machine, which is available in 1.3 and 1.6m widths, to provide simultaneous printing and cutting operations with best-in-class print speeds of up to 105.9m² per hour. Its two newly developed staggered printheads deliver high-resolution printing, whilst continuous registration mark detection facilitates the uninterrupted cutting of an entire roll of media. Additionally, the registration

marks produced on the CJV300 are zero-margin, thus reducing costly media consumption.

The launch of the CJV300 coincides with the availability of Mimaki's SS21 silver ink, which will offer added value to manufacturers in the sticker, labelling, and print packaging sectors. This complements the SS21 orange and light black inks introduced earlier this year and also enables users to create metallic images in no less than 648 different colours, with a silver underlay.

The brightness of the SS21 silver ink is

1.67 times greater than that of conventional silver inks, to deliver outstanding mirror effect results. Compatible for use with all printers using SS21 inks, it will enable print companies to print dazzling finishes.

Mimaki plans to introduce two further machines at Viscom Italy in October, the Mimaki JV150 inkjet printer and its integrated counterpart, the CJV150, which offer print speeds of up to 56.2m² per hour and will be commercially available next spring.

For further information visit: www.hybridservices.co.uk

Better value than ever

Mimaki has reduced the price of its UJF-3042HG A3 flatbed LED UV printer to just £24,995 + VAT. with immediate effect.

The 'high gap' version of Mimaki's range of small format printers facilitates the direct printing of objects up to 150mm thick, thus making it ideal for use in the promotional products, bespoke gift and manufacturing sectors.

Featuring opaque white inks, clear

varnish and a jettable primer, together with a full set of vibrant process inks, the Mimaki UJF-3042HG delivers high quality, photographic print onto almost any substrate. With the ability to print directly to plastic, metal, glass, wood and other rigid substrates using its low energy, cool



curing LED UV technology, the opportunities to imprint solid objects are almost limitless.

In addition, users can also elect to use a Mimaki manufactured bolt on unit, which is known as 'the kebab' and offers the ability to print around the circumference of cylindrical objects, thus enabling the printer to be successfully used for packaging prototypes and proofs and/or a wide range of decorative products, such as candles, vases, bottles and cans.

For further information visit: www.hybridservices.co.uk

Try an MTEX

MTEX Technologies has announced that its Derbyshire-based Demonstration Centre, which has been established in order to enable sign and print companies to familiarise themselves with the benefits of MTEX digital textile printers, now features two new demonstration machines.

The 1.8 metres wide MTEX 1800 is aimed at medium sized display graphic and home textile producers that want a machine that will print

dedicated textiles with punchy colours. It has speeds of up to 48sqm per hour and incorporates a two-litre bulk ink system to facilitate continuous printing.

A second generation version of the 3.2 metre wide MTEX 5032, the MTEX 5032Pro is a direct-to-textile printer with integrated fixation unit, which can be used to produce a wide variety of applications, including soft signage, interior displays and home textiles and offers speeds of up to 58sqm per hour. In order to facilitate



the needs of different fabrics, MTEX has developed an electro-pneumatic feeding system that helps to prevent errors occurring during the print process. The feed and take up system is also designed to handle bigger and

heavier rolls of material and once again features a bulk ink system to facilitate continuous printing.

For further information visit: mtex.eu/

Small but mighty

Perfect Colours has launched an inventive new campaign to demonstrate how, with the HP Latex L310, even the smallest sign and display producers can augment their businesses without draining their coffers.

The initiative invites companies in the sector to test-drive the L310 and experience first-hand the creative and economic potential of this 'Small But Mighty' engine.

The campaign will demonstrate that size does not determine strength, comparing the Latex L310 with smaller creatures from the animal kingdom, which nevertheless exhibit exceptional abilities. The L310's throughput makes it industrious like the ant, while its output is durable and versatile, like the

rhinoceros beetle; it can also enable smaller businesses to pack a powerful punch, like the pistol shrimp, and speed away successfully with sizeable jobs, like the eagle. To provide a living example of this, James Deacon, the one-man signmaking force behind Bigger Stickers, will document his experience with the Latex L310 in a candid blog, *Walking On The Wild Side*.

Jon Telling, Sales Director at Perfect Colours explained: "Our industry is packed with smaller, but highly creative businesses, which are producing astounding graphics for an array of clients, including major brands and retailers. At Perfect Colours, we recognise that in order to deliver that work successfully, it is vital that companies have the right machine. The Small But Mighty campaign was

created to illustrate that the LX310 can help them do just that – and that a little can, indeed, go a very long way!"

He continued: "The HP Latex L310 is a formidable machine; it has the potential to elevate a business without doing too much damage to the financials. But we don't want our customers just to take our word for it: we want them to experience it for themselves."

At just £10,000, the HP Latex L310 combines power efficiency, minimal maintenance and the environmental credentials for which it is renowned. With a small footprint and front-loading facility, the 1.2m machine caters to businesses with limited



floorpace, while also providing low energy consumption, running off two, traditional three-pin plugs and powering up in only two minutes. Supplied complete with the easy-to-use SAI FlexiPrint RIP and offering simplified colour management, the L310 delivers a top print speed of 48sq m/hour, or 1,200dpi output in quality mode.

Customers are invited to engage with the campaign through the website – www.smallbutmighty.co.uk – and to apply for a free two-week trial period with the HP Latex L310.

For further information visit: www.perfectcolours.com ■

Here comes the JV300!



Following in the footsteps of the original JV3 and the more recent JV33, the highly anticipated Mimaki JV300 is now available from Hybrid Services, Mimaki's UK and Irish distributor.

With a top speed of over 105m² per hour, coupled with a starting price of just £17,995, which includes inks, RIP software, powered take-up and a two year warranty, the JV300 is available in both 1.3m and 1.6m print widths. It can be used in conjunction with Mimaki's SS21 solvent ink, which is

available in nine colours, including white, light black and orange, or as a dye sublimation printer to deliver fashion garments, sportswear, furnishings or point of sale onto polyester fabrics. In either case, users will benefit from a combination of cutting edge features, high volume production and ease of use.

For further information or to book a demonstration of the JV300 visit: www.jv300.co.uk or contact Hybrid's product team on Tel: 01270 501900 ■

The Vybrant way to sign



Following its preview at FESPA Digital earlier this year, and its formal introduction at Viscom Paris, Fujifilm's new Vybrant F1600 large format printer is now commercially available.

Targeted specifically at the sign sector, the Vybrant is a new 1.6m roll-to-roll printer that features Fujifilm's patented FUZE hybrid UV Ink technology, which improves the efficiency and performance achievable within a large format production environment. The UV ink component results in a durable film for high scratch resistance, while a low ink build offers increased flexibility in terms of handling and finishing. Thanks to the UV curing capability, no degassing time is required, and substrates

can thus be finished and shipped immediately after printing.

The Vybrant F1600 is a four-colour machine with a productivity of up to 18m²/hour and guarantees adhesion to a wide range of substrates. It is ideal for printing vinyl, or any other flexible material, to create indoor or outdoor applications where durability and fast turnaround times are key. The combination of UV chemistry with an eco-solvent carrier offers vivid colour reproduction, resulting in a smooth glossy print.

For further information visit: www.fujifilm.eu/eu/products/graphic-systems ■

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This month, **Mark Godden** considers the challenges that come with being

On call 24/7



I don't envy many people but I'll admit to having an admiration of sorts for those blessed with the ability to flick a switch and turn off. I think you know the type and maybe even conform - fly/flop/ sunglasses-on, everything other than the wide blue-horizon tuned out - well and truly on holiday. I've never been able to do that.

I think I've only ever taken two proper holidays in my whole life, excluding an expedition to the USA to Disneyland, which I've erased with years of therapy. The better of the two was a chug around the Stourport Ring on a rented canal boat, and the runner up was a week in Minorca that I can't actually remember much about.

More recently, I attempted a cycle ride along the Canal-du-Midi, which only lasted a few days but, if I'm honest, the intent was all wrong there. As high as any priority I'd set for comfort, personal safety or nutrition, was the ability to communicate. I don't mean just a mobile phone; it was more a mobile office and the means to keep it all powered and operational. So, for the few days I was out in the open, I was fully in contact with everything I might have left my desk to get away from. That looks like odd behaviour and I'm not going to defend it - it is.

The point to be made here is that we appear these days to be living in what you might call an always-on world. Anyone out there who's looking for you, or more to the point, what you sell or what you do, has so many options available that if they flick your particular switch and the light doesn't come on as expected they can go elsewhere. Creating balance in such a world is difficult and it's not just about work/life balance either.

It was put to me the other day that relying wholly on the ultimate always-on backstop - a website - to take care of all customer facing communication was a tactic with the potential to cause real hurt. I really empathise with that point of view. Would you want your business to piss anyone off to the extent that you're irked when you're

trawling a website looking for any evidence that somewhere behind it might be a human you can speak to? I doubt that you would. Would you want your business to be seen as something hiding away from customers behind a list of FAQs that can probably take care of the questions you have? No.

The always-on world is one thing but it places a real burden of expectation on businesses looking to keep interest alive in what you might call passing trade. It's not quite good enough these days to keep people waiting for answers. It's not good enough being there but not being able to be found. If you're at the centre of the fortunes of a small business, you have to be practically ubiquitous - good or bad, you can be.

Real questions hang out there in the mid distance asking to what extent do you want to make yourself available to the world? Apple's new Apple Watch lets those whom you permit, and who can't reach you by phone, to quite literally get your attention by tapping you on the wrist. Now, you may look at the face of the watch and see something like "I love you" immortalised over the top of a throbbing heart. Equally though, it could be telling you - CYAN INK LOW! Do you want it to?

Presiding over all this information demanding your attention, things like IFTTT - If This Then That - let you handle events according to recipes that you set up so, if the CYAN INK is indeed LOW - you can divert the message to another device that'll wake up someone else in ever-more inventive / cool / sinister ways.

I sense a simmering resentment

developing against the whole always-on condition. We have on the one hand those 'shun the wheel' Neanderthals who have a reflex-like rejection of anything of practical value that's not made of wood, and on the other those who see such pervasive intrusion as representing one more means of grinding the edge off what amounts to leading a good life. I know people who struggle with the decision to turn off work-based mobile phones at weekends because of the signal it sends when they do. That's because you can't mark the end of a day in conventional terms any longer.

I'd like to leave that whole matter hanging there perhaps with a word that sends an appeal. However you decide to waste, invest or proportion your time, do it according to values as much as needs. You have to because you don't know how much of it you have.

I leave the page this month, having made that appeal, under a cloud I'm afraid.

I've lost a friend and if you're a sign and graphics producer, supplier to the industry or, of all things, a UK-based cyclist, then you've lost a friend too. As you may have heard, or read elsewhere, Maurice Hoare died while on holiday in France with his wife, Fran.

Maurice will be known to many of you as the really nice guy who managed Sign Directions' advertising until his retirement four years ago. And, if we wind the clock back a few years further still, you'd have met him if you'd considered exhibiting at Sign & Digital UK. I'm sure that anyone, in whatever capacity, who had dealings

with Maurice, would agree that the world's lost one of its decent blokes. He was one of those guys without a side to him, and a man utterly devoid of a bone in his body that was other than well intentioned.

One of the passions Maurice pursued was cycling. Formidably fit and very capable on two wheels, he was an active member of Sustrans, the Bristol-based charity that's responsible for expanding the UK traffic-free cycle network.

I lived in Bristol for quite a while and the Bristol to Bath cycle path was a regular Sunday haunt for my mates and me. I have Maurice and his Sustrans colleagues to thank for the continuing expansion of such priceless routes. Maurice and I were talking about the path and how it was wonderful to cycle along it and he told me that Sustrans could build a network of such traffic-free routes connecting all the major cities in the UK for less than the cost of widening a couple of miles of the M25. I've never forgotten that.

So, Maurice has gone but he's not forgotten and, sad though we are, we have to come out from under that cloud, up there, earlier in the page and get on with our allotted time. I'll even permit myself a smile when I consider that when Maurice died he was doing what he loved - cycling. He just laid down his bike under the sun in France and there his chapter ended.

Oh, and he liked a proper pint, too. And no, he didn't have an Apple Watch!

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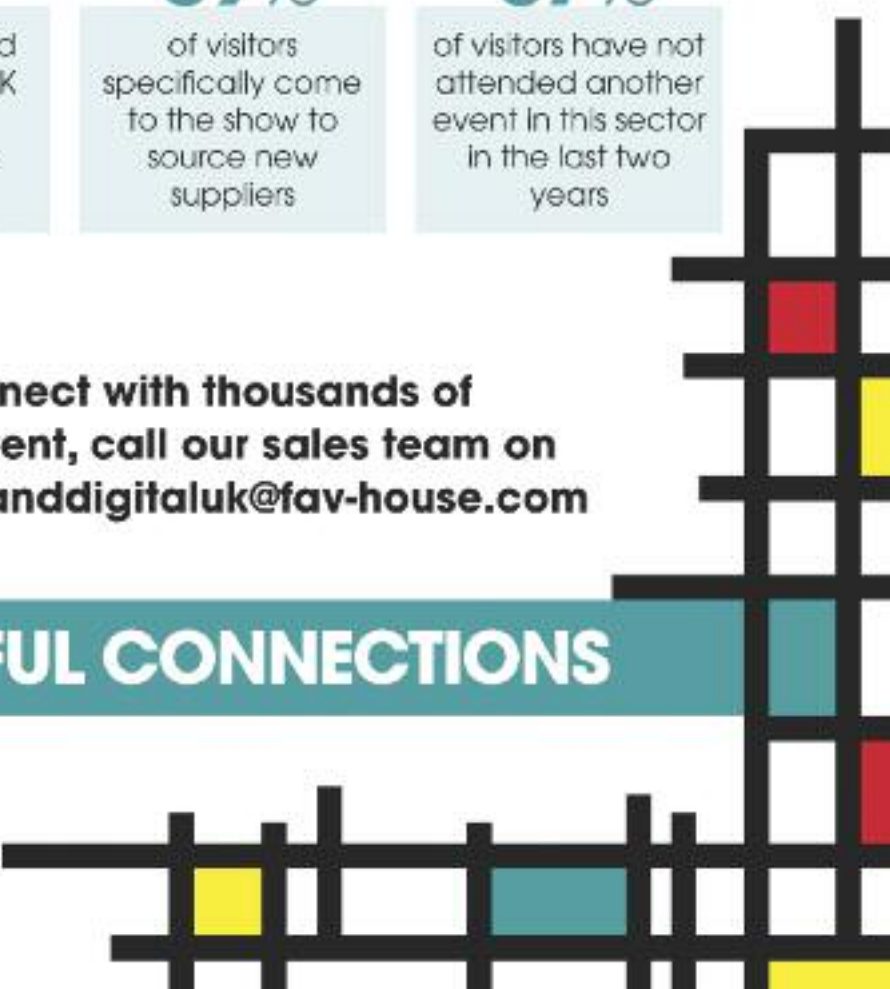
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