

SIGN AFRICA

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WORLD FIRST PRINT PROFIT PPU *GRO*



TURN
 TO PAGE
 28

Midcomp has launched the world's first Pay Per Use system for entry level and low volume production printers that includes all of the printer consumables (excluding media) and service costs and also includes the cost of the printing equipment. With PPUGRO, PPU stands for Pay Per Use and GRO reflects the company promise: Catalyst for Growth.

COVER STORY PAGE 28



PATTERN COATING SCIENCE IS KEY TO PRINTABLE SELF-ADHESIVE PRODUCTS



THE INCREASING VALUE OF AUTOMATION IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY



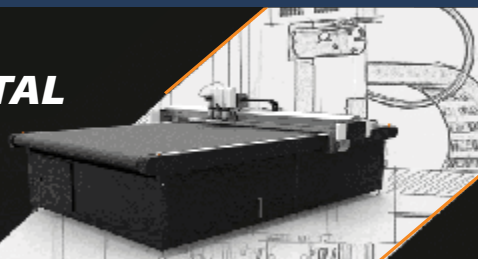
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Being strategically located in the heart of Johannesburg, STIXO offers a free delivery service for orders in the Gauteng region (conditions apply). We deliver nationwide through our freight partners and are able to facilitate export sales.



CONTENTS

JULY/AUG 2022

ISSUE 119

REGULARS

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------|----|--------------------|
| 6 | HOT NEW PRODUCTS | 22 | INTERNATIONAL NEWS |
| 9 | SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS | | |

COVER STORY

- 28** **WORLD FIRST PRINT PROFIT PPUGRO**
BY MIDCOMP
Midcomp has launched the world's first Pay Per Use system for entry level and low volume production printers that includes all of the printer consumables (excluding media) and service costs and also includes the cost of the printing equipment. With PPUGRO, PPU stands for Pay Per Use and GRO reflects the company promise: Catalyst for Growth.

FEATURES

- 30** **PATTERN COATING SCIENCE IS KEY TO PRINTABLE SELF-ADHESIVE PRODUCTS**
BY PHIL WEBSTER, EMEA AT DRYTAC
Adhesives are absolutely critical to the success of applications across a range of sectors. Simply put, if you get this choice wrong, then you put the entire project in jeopardy and run the risk of undoing your hard work earlier on in the process, thus costing you valuable time, money and, potentially, repeat business.
- 31** **THE INCREASING VALUE OF AUTOMATION IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY**
BY MARK SOLLMAN, PRODUCT MANAGER EMEA, MIMAKI EUROPE
Automation poses huge benefits for the printing industry across all sectors. An automated workflow allows for a more optimised production flow, from reducing the waste produced to the time needed to manually adjust settings, which all leads to significantly shorter delivery times.
- 32** **THE POWER OF 3D HOLOGRAPHIC SIGNAGE**
BY JEFF BARNES, LIGHT FIELD LAB
Taking inspiration from popular sci-fi movies, some of today's manufacturers are expanding the capabilities of video wall technology, and by proxy, the future use cases of digital signage.
- 33** **SIGN AFRICA CAPE TOWN EXPO HAILED A SUCCESS**
BY MATTHEW WOOD, SIGN AFRICA
The successful Sign Africa Cape Town expo, held from 18-19 May at the CTICC, attracted 1140 visitors from around Western Cape, Northern Cape and Namibia. The event was well received by visitors and exhibitors alike. The event was sponsored by Platinum sponsors Roland DG South Africa and Stixo Signage Supplies.
- 36** **GEAR UP FOR BUSINESS IN THE GRAPHICS, PRINT AND SIGN INDUSTRY**
BY MEGGAN MCCARTHY
Explore new products and business opportunities in the world of graphics, signage, digital printing, branding, T-shirt printing, mug printing, vehicle graphics, laser engraving, binding equipment, digital packaging solutions, wide format printing and more at the Graphics, Print and Sign Expo, taking place from 14-16 September at the Gallagher Convention Centre.
- 38** **AUTOMATED COLOUR MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING AFFECT THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF PRINT**
BY LAUREL BRUNNER, VERDIGRIS PROJECT
According to Laurel Brunner, writing for the Verdigris project, workflow automation, whereby data flows to a plate or press seamlessly and with minimal human intervention, still fills too many printers with fear.

DEPARTMENTS

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|----|--------------------------------|
| 39 | BUSINESS CARDS | 44 | IT'S A WRAP |
| 40 | PRINTING SA NEWS | 45 | CALENDAR OF EVENTS |
| 42 | CLASSIFIEDS-BUY & SELL-JOBS | 47 | DIRECTORY OF SERVICE PROVIDERS |
| 43 | SUBSCRIPTION | 50 | BACK PAGE |



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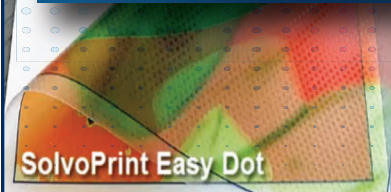
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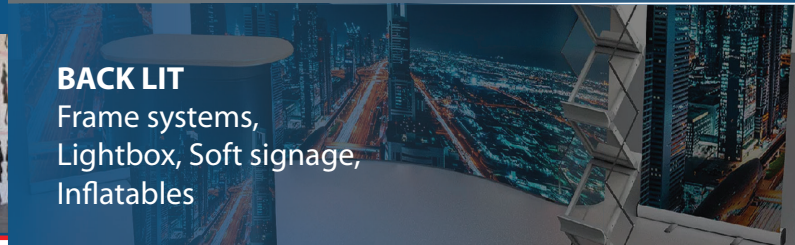
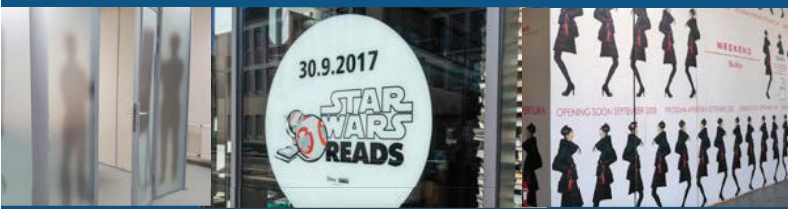
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Flag pole systems, Telescopic, Sharkfin, pop ups
Block-out lining for double sided flags



FRONT LIT / DISPLAY
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EDITOR'S NOTE

BY MEGGAN MCCARTHY, EDITOR

We are already halfway through the year and gearing up for the Graphics, Print and Sign Johannesburg expo, taking place from 14-16 September at Gallagher Convention Centre. Sign Africa is a proud media partner of the event.

Our front cover focuses on Midcomp, which has launched the world's first Pay Per Use system for entry level and low volume production printers that includes all of the printer consumables (excluding media) and service costs and also includes the cost of the printing equipment. With PPUGRO, PPU stands for Pay Per Use and GRO reflects the company promise: Catalyst for Growth.

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Adhesives are absolutely critical to the success of applications across a range of sectors. Simply put, if you get this choice wrong, then you put the entire project in jeopardy and run the risk of undoing your hard work earlier on in the process, thus costing you valuable time, money and, potentially, repeat business. To make sure you avoid this, before commencing a project that requires an adhesive solution, no matter what industry you are working in, you should take a look at the products available to you on the market.

Automation poses huge benefits for the printing industry across all sectors. An automated workflow allows for a more optimised production flow, from reducing the waste produced to the time needed to manually adjust settings, which all leads to significantly shorter delivery times. Not only does it allow for printers to improve their current production processes, but it also allows for them to open up to new projects and clientele that they may not have been able to cater for.

Digital signage technology is constantly evolving, presenting new opportunities for the world of business to meet ever-changing consumer needs. Gartner predicts that 25% of people will spend at least one hour per day in the metaverse by 2026. Whether that's for work, shopping, education or entertainment, AR, VR and mixed reality experiences are poised to be more accessible than ever, prompting consumers to expect digital signage experiences that engage them without breaking their state of immersion.



It is with great sadness that we inform you of a huge loss to our industry. Friskie Booysen, owner and founder of Sheetco, passed away on Saturday, 7 May. Our deepest condolences go to his loved ones, family, friends and colleagues at Sheetco. Friskie is survived by his wife Susan and his children Frederik and Annolien.

Signing off
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HOT NEW PRODUCTS

ONYX 22

The wide format RIP and print workflow software introduces a new drag-and-drop user experience for file management and Quick Set automation, smart job submission from design to print, artwork placement controls for flatbed and DTG printing, and easy-to-use tools for everyday automation. It also introduces colour tools for increased colour output accuracy and a new ONYX Colour Reference Library to easily match colour for any printer. www.graficomp.co.za



Artrix PRO

The digital textile printing solution improves productivity by reducing downtime and helps maintain stable operation with minimal maintenance. It is an ideal choice for companies looking to move into digital printing as well as more experienced companies wanting to improve productivity to expand their businesses. It incorporates performance and usability to meet the needs of the fast fashion and home deco textile market for flexibility and sustainability. www.dgen.com



Caldera PrimeCenter Version 2.0

Users are now able to update their PrimeCenter to version 2.0 and benefit from a revamped user experience designed to ease file preparation while increasing production efficiency. Highlights of this new version include a brand-new user interface, a range of flexible fix ups for file preparation, faster nesting, and a recipe queue for enhanced automation. Additionally, OS support has been expanded to include Windows 11 and macOS Monterey. www.midcomp.co.za



HEXIS Self-Adhesive Film Range

Specially developed to protect the largest of surfaces, especially a car bonnet, BFWIDE is very easy to install. With its 180-µm thickness, users no longer have to worry about scratches. DFENCEXTRM is developed to protect the most frequently damaged surfaces, including four wheel drive or service vehicles. BodyfenceXM has a matte finish combined with X technology. It comes in small and large widths. The advantage of the small width is no more material waste. www.hexis-graphics.com



Direct To Film Ink

GO TransferMate Direct To Film (DTF) ink is available in five colours: cyan, magenta, yellow, black and white. This ink was developed for the latest TFP printheads from EPSON® which are branded as i3200, i1600 and i800. Although the washability of the images is good with any film or powder, the longevity and scrub resistance are far better when the company's TransferMate Inks are combined with its TransferMate Powder and Film. www.graphicson.com



SloanLED Prism12

The new Prism12 exceeds expectations in channel letter and sign box applications 75-200mm (3-8 inches) deep with a new patented asymmetrical gradient micro-prism (ASGM) lens design for the widest, most even spread of light and up to 25% wider stroke spacing. Top-tier LEDs deliver incredible efficacy up to 135 lm/W and increased loading capacity up 20% over the previous generation. Prism12 also features double-sided perforated tape with SloanLED'S CRL one-piece release liner, which reduces installation time by up to 30%. www.perspex.co.za



GCC Elevation Flatbed UV Printer

The new generation flatbed UV printer, JF-2418UV, has an attractive new look, high throughput, reliable and stable printing quality, user-friendly interface and unique functions including tactile printing ability, high gap printing function and cold foil sleeking capability. The machine features a 60.9 x 45.72cm (B3+) working area with maximum depth 29.9cm thick object, CMYK with white and varnish colour, and dual UV-LED lamps that offer users unparalleled print quality with uncompromised productivity. www.gencotechlasermarking.co.za



Durst Expanded Digital Textile Presses

This intuitive cloud-based platform features an up-to-date status on each colour measurement device including certification, warranty and Service Care Plans, a map of device locations, monthly calibration reports, live updates and tracking for service requests, as well as access to past service records. It provides real-time insights into colour measurement device health. www.durst-group.com



EFI Reggiani EcoTERRA Pigment Solution

The eco-friendly, all-in-one pigment inline printing and finishing solution drives efficiency and sustainability in industrial digital textile printing. The all-in-one solution for water-based pigment printing requires no ancillary equipment for pre and post-treatment. Its patent-pending technology gives customers a distinct competitive advantage, dramatically cutting energy and water consumption in the overall process for a more sustainable direct-to-fabric printing experience. www.efi.com



HOT NEW PRODUCTS

eXact 2 Colour Measurement Device

The device connects to a full ecosystem of software tools, including InkFormulation Software, ColorCert™ Suite, for print quality control, PantoneLIVE™ digital colour libraries, NetProfiler® for device optimisation, and the new X-Rite Link fleet management platform for real-time insight into device performance.

It is a next-generation non-contact handheld spectrophotometer designed to bring the ink, print and packaging workflow together in one device.

www.digitalview.co.za



Grafityp Printable Films

Omega-Skinz Printables have a unique ink absorption, which creates more colour depth. The colours are more outspoken and each design gets a big wow factor. The metallic pigments in the film remain visible through the print, so users get a chic look instead of an ordinary 'sticker effect'. Moreover, image details are clearly visible thanks to the good printing properties. They can be used for any print job; whether it is a special design or just a commercial print on a company car.

www.grafityp.com



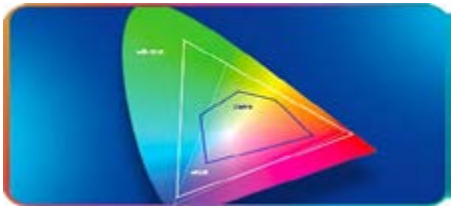
SwissQprint Kudu

Kudu is a 3.2 x 2 metre high-end UV LED printer that complements the existing flatbed range, Nyala, Impala and Oryx. At its maximum productivity of 300 square metres per hour, the UV printer delivers convincingly high output quality. It incorporates the latest printhead technology, with an addressable resolution of up to 1350dpi. It is the first SwissQprint model to feature ten colour channels, which further increases application diversity. Users configure the channels according to their needs, and may adapt the configuration later. www.sign-tronic.co.za



Adobe PDF Print Engine 6

The product is optimised and updated to take full advantage of the latest system hardware and imaging science. The new colour features in version 6 will accelerate the adoption of spectral colours by brand owners, and increase market traction for single-inkset production workflows, driving both digital and analogue presses. Prepress operators can leverage and precisely control the full colour palette available on press, for vivid and accurate reproduction of corporate brand colours, graphics and images. www.adobe.com



SwissQprint Solution For Printing On Glass

The mechanical solution has been designed for an efficient, clean process, supplemented by an ink set for optimum adhesion. A pivoting alignment edge with five steplessly adjustable horizontal stops ensures precise positioning of glass panels on the print bed. The latter is covered by special protective paper that is air-permeable. So the vacuum holds down the media but the paper retains ink printed in the bleed margin. The print bed stays clean, and with the roll to roll option the operator advances the paper at the touch of a button. This means short set-up times between jobs. www.sign-tronic.co.za



Updated Zünd Mind software Suite

The suite makes Zünd digital cutting workflows for leather and textile applications easier, more efficient and more profitable. First and foremost is the improved UI, which is now even more intuitive and enables deeper integration with MIS data and production workflows and with additional tools specific to textile processing. It also opens up new possibilities in the exchange of data with third-party suppliers. With Version 5.3, MindGest now supports scan-to-stock and scan-to-order workflows. www.midcomp.co.za



Enfocus Switch Automation Software Update

Switch now allows Node.js script expression (with version 16 support) as well as native JSON support, ensuring simple integration with modern RESTful APIs. Many other new features have been added to the Refresh job info element, enabling users to define the flow stage and up to five custom fields. Several tweaks streamline the existing Switch experience, such as single line text with variables, optional larger thumbnails and customisable fields, and an overhauled UX in the client module.

www.enfocus.com

ENFOCUS

Fujifilm Acuity Prime L Flatbed

Offering a maximum print area of 3200mm x 2000mm and a headline print speed of 202sqm/hr, the Acuity Prime L is easy to operate and produces high quality results at high speed. It features six vacuum zones and 16 media location pins, as well as the ability to print side by side jobs with its dual zone function, for maximum flexibility. Uvijet HM, an ink system formulated specifically for the Acuity Prime series, provides excellent adhesion to a broad range of substrates while also producing a wide colour gamut. www.fujifilmgraphicsystems.co.za



LoopPET Metal ASLAN CRA 31 Film

The film has a glossy surface that enables high-quality prints with latex and UV curing inks. It is not only PVC-free but also has a water-based adhesive. This self-adhesive metal effect film is made from recycled polyester (at least 70%) that has been shredded and cleaned. It is suitable both as a plottable and printable metal effect film and can be applied to all smooth surfaces. What's more, the superb metal effect on the silver and gold versions is visible on both sides (double-sided), making them ideal for bonding to transparent surfaces such as glass or acrylic. www.aslanfolien.de/en/



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SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS

Falcon SA Announce New Corporate Identity And Digital Product Brochure

Falcon SA has refreshed their corporate identity and has released their digital signage and graphics products brochure. The brochure aims to give customers a comprehensive overview of Falcon's extensive signage and graphic product range with full specs, product descriptions and product applications. The brochure will give readers new ideas about products they may not have heard or even thought of. The layout is also very user friendly. It can be downloaded here: <https://bit.ly/3upaVs1>

'The South African signage industry is indicative of where we are as a country, because it reflects when the economy is boosting on certain platforms and where private and government initiatives are driven. It talks to the people, and Falcon SA is

proud to be a major industry player supplying the manufacturers. However, the trading environment is difficult as it sways between price driven, short-term solutions and quality renowned brands,' said Thomas Smith, Regional Sales Manager: Gauteng, Falcon SA.

'This has impacted our procurement decisions as we try and navigate these solutions, to be 'in-stock, on-time and price relevant', which has led to streamlining our processes. There is also a need to empower the entrepreneur and the launch of our corporate identity, along with our technical brochure, speaks to bridging this gap.'

www.falconsa.com



Unicam Showcased Router

Unicam CNC South Africa exhibited its Skorpio (Mark 4) table top style router at the Sign Africa expo in Cape Town, which took place from 18-19 May 2022 at the CTICC.

The latest model comes with a 1250 x 1250 cutting area (half-sheet) and can cut up to 150mm above the table. The 2kW air-cooled spindle is capable of cutting any light work on wood, composites, aluminium, and non-ferrous metals. With a cutting speed of 3m/minute, it is suited for small to medium production. Unicam has a wide range of routers like the Skorpio desktop all the way to a moving table 5 Axis system capable of machining a life size copy of a car. One of the company's latest additions is a shaping CNC router that can machine curved parts or can produce, for instance, surfboards.



Sign Africa Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

www.unicam.co.za

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SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS CONTINUED

Minuteman Press Franchises Sponsor Ocean Race

As sponsors of the 2022 Minuteman Press Vasco da Gama Ocean Race, which ran from Durban to East London, Minuteman Press Pinetown, owned by Anthony Bingham, and Minuteman Press Umhlanga, owned by Danie Snyman, were able to showcase their extensive printing and promotional capabilities.

The annual event began with a Saturday 21 May gala dinner, before the start of the race on 22 May. The first Vasco da Gama race was held in 1968. Banners and flags promoting the event had been placed by Point Yacht Club the weekend before the race start time. The largest such banner was on the gangplank down to the main dock.

Minuteman Press in Pinetown and Umhlanga also provided branded apparel and bags stocked with promotional items to the racers. For the pre-race dinner in Durban, Minuteman Press produced all of the printing, including dinner menus and branded water bottles with custom labels.

Bingham, who has owned Minuteman Press in Pinetown for over 20 years, shared his excitement as co-sponsor for the 2022 Minuteman Press Vasco da Gama Ocean Race. He said, 'This huge event has provided us with an ideal opportunity to showcase our products. Everything we provided for the Vasco da Gama Ocean Race, such as apparel, promotional products, large format printed items and digitally printed items, are items that we sell and produce for our clients. We couldn't ask for better brand exposure and our hard work in putting this all together has certainly paid off. No matter where you looked, our branding was everywhere, including on the water.'



www.minuteman.com/za/

Stixo Signage Supplies Exhibited Digital Media, Display Systems And More

Platinum sponsor Stixo Signage Supplies exhibited its extensive range of products that make the company renowned as a one-stop signage and branding supplier at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo.

Visitors saw various solutions at Stixo's stand, including large format digital media, display systems, substrate rigid sheets, corporate gift blanks, signage accessories and more.

The company has also launched its impressive range of Aluminium Composite Panels 'ACM' and 'ACM-Lite' to the Southern African market and beyond. Within the construction and signage industries, the popularity of Aluminium Composite Panels has increased over the past few years. Its uses have grown under the cover of energy efficiency, affordable pricing and construction possibilities. These materials are designed for ventilated façades, as well as their renovation or rehabilitation. The aluminium composite panel has the ability to transform, making it a versatile material that can be used for the construction of risky and creative designs. It is ideal for the construction of areas of the façade that would be impossible with other materials. There are also endless possibilities of what can be achieved with Stixo's ACM Lite range, which suits the needs of the signage industry.

Further great news to the advertising, building, manufacturing and furniture industries is the



simultaneous launch of the STX Foam Board range. Stixo Signage Supplies endeavours to always live up to its name as a one stop signage supplies outlet, and this has been further achieved with its complete range of Foam Board, ranging from 2mm to 20mm thickness and various sheet sizes to suit all customers' needs.

The ACM, ACM Lite and STX Foam Board ranges are

names that customers can start getting very used to when they need to rely on a quality product and one which will be readily available in an array of finishes, sizes and different coloured sheets.

Sign Africa Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

www.stixo.co.za

Roland DG Showcased Wide Format Solutions And More

Sign Africa Platinum expo sponsor Roland DG South Africa exhibited its wide format innovations at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo.

The VersaUV LEF2-200 50.8cm (20 inch) benchtop UV flatbed printer builds upon the capabilities of Roland's previous VersaUV benchtop flatbeds. The LEF2-200 inherits the VersaUV LEF series' renowned ability to print amazing full-colour graphics and unique textures, including premium finishes such as simulated embossing, onto a vast array of materials and objects up to 100mm (3.94 inch) thick.

The VersaUV LEC2-300 delivers unmatched versatility on demand with the vibrant richness and lifelike quality of UV printing together with sharp, precision contour cutting. It is the ideal solution for one-off and short-run production of custom labels, decals, prototypes and one-of-a-kind personalised items with a premium-look on a wide variety of media.

The new TrueVis SG3-540 features up to four colours of ink. Whether you're looking for a device to grow your sign and graphics business with a wide variety of large format graphics, or you need to get a head start in graphics customisation with an easily affordable solution, the SG3 series offers you premium results on so many profitable applications.

The new TrueVis VG3-540 models features up to eight colours of ink. The professional's choice for building brand consistency, building the highest quality print output. Building confidence in your business, the VG3 is designed for passionate professionals like you, who need quality, dependability, and versatility to achieve new levels of success.

The CAMM-1 GR2 series of large format cutting



plotters from Roland DG is built to fit seamlessly with your print-then-cut workflow and deliver fast, flawless results from day one. The new GR2-640 162.5cm vinyl cutters provides an ideal balance between affordable pricing and superior cutting performance and is designed to integrate seamlessly with large format inkjet printers.

The Roland CAMM-1 GS-24 desktop cutter is the next level of precision and efficiency. With a completely redesigned cutting carriage and blade holder, the GS-24 offers perfect stability, up to 10x overlap cutting and down force of up to 350 grams so that users can cut like never before even on thick, dense substrates.

The ultimate hobby and small decal machines for offices, schools, restaurants and stores, STIKA desktop cutters produce colourful POP displays,

labels, iron-ons and more. Creating custom vinyl graphics has never been faster or more affordable. The Roland stand featured the SV-12 models.

The DE-3 desktop engraver is the result of over 30 years of innovation in engraving technology, delivering impressive versatility and fast, user-friendly automated production. With laser-pointing technology, ethernet connectivity, automatic depth regulation and other intelligent features, the DE-3 is the ideal turnkey engraving solution for producing precise text and graphics onto a huge range of materials and objects.

Sign Africa Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

www.rolanddg.co.za

Alto Tatto Showcased Heat Transfer Vinyl

Alto Tatto showcased its new generation heat transfer vinyl (HTV) imported from Italy at the Sign Africa expo in Cape Town, held from from 18-19 May at the CTICC.

Creative applications on T-shirts, jeans and jackets, as well as the company's heat press, were on display.

The heat transfer vinyl comes in a range pre-cut convenient sizes, fitting into a user's cutter of choice.

The range includes matte smooth colours, as well as a glitter range with textures. These products are available from local Cape Town distributors Biz in Box.

The Sign Africa expo in Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

marco@altotatto.co.za and www.bizinbox.co.za



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SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS CONTINUED

Allrich Exhibited Specialty Vinyls And Acrylic Bending Machine



Allrich exhibited the ABM1300, which can soften and bend acrylic, Plexiglas, PVC, PC, ABS, PP and more, at the Sign Africa expo in Cape Town, which took place from 18-19 May 2022 at the CTICC in Hall 1. The machine also includes a water pump and water tube.

The machine is widely used in school technical courses, building models, decoration engineering, display cases, market shelves, advertising light boxes and artware making. It is small and portable and can be used anywhere.

Creative, versatile and durable, Super Clear Vinyl can be used to create designs on glass in every conceivable marketing and branding environment. It can be applied to glass without compromising light transmission or clarity.

Unprinted areas remain completely transparent, while printed areas can be transparent, translucent or even completely opaque. This, coupled with high resolution colour printing, gives designers and artists a whole new canvas, or 'glass', on which to create arresting graphics that transcend the usual profile cut frosted vinyl and simple window vinyl.

Applications include branded, retail, hospitality and corporate environments, where there are glass doors, walls, partitions, windows or skylights.

One Way Vision vinyl for UV printing is a perforated window graphics sign film that features punched holes on self-adhesive materials, using pinhole imaging principles. The structure of this film is a

two-layer ink absorption liner. For general one-layer liner, the holes will be easily blocked by the UV ink during printing by a UV printer, thus it will lose the vision function. Based on a two-layer liner, UV ink can be absorbed by the liner, so it can be printed on by UV printers.

Steel gazebos are a popular choice due to their affordability and efficient and hassle-free form of advertising for outdoor events such as sports days or corporate functions. These lightweight gazebos are an ideal branding solution, are fully collapsible, easy to set up and functional as they provide shelter with their water-resistant canvas canopy. Due to their easy set-up, they are perfect for trade shows and golf day events.

Allrich have relaunched their steel gazebo range in both 2m and 3m sizes, and they are now available in options for premium heavyweight steel gazebos and budget steel gazebos. The company implement a large variety of different design and assembly techniques to ensure the product features high quality, durability and affordability, and stock a large gazebo range with options for every budget and application, from 2m x 2m gazebos to 6m x 3m heavy duty deluxe aluminium gazebos.

Other products include: promotion counter; zig-zag brochure holder; wall banner and director's chairs. Sign Africa Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

www.allrich-sa.co.za

Uprint Demonstrated The Uprint System And DTF System



Uprint demonstrated how its Uprint total solution can print full colour with brilliant whites on any item imaginable, be it stainless steel, sports balls, beer glasses, wood, pens, clothing, caps, bags, ceramics, plastic and many more items at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo.

Each system is unique, and the range includes the chemical transfer system, laser DTF system, inkjet DTF system and heat transfer system.

These systems are ideal for starting a business from home or adding value to an existing business, with no messy inks.

Sign Africa Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

www.uprintsa.co.za

Chemosol Showcased Sublimation Solutions, Heat Presses And More

Chemosol exhibited a range of sublimation and printing solutions at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo, held from 18-19 May 2022 at the CTICC.

Users can significantly reduce downtime and minimise the risk of errors with user-friendly, colour-coded 140ml ink bottles. With both the SC-F500 and SC-F501, users can replenish the ink while printing. Because of its compact size, the SC-F100 is the ideal choice where space is limited, such as on shop counters. Its small A4-sized footprint is especially suitable for start-up and smaller businesses. Paper size: A4. Ink: four colours (CMYK).

The SC-F500 and SC-F501 printers have easy to use touch panels and allow users to easily access all the operational information they need using the intuitive touchscreen, even while wearing gloves. Its anti-dust design prevents dust getting into the printer, avoiding misprints from nozzle clogging and reducing time-consuming cleaning cycles, even in dusty environments.

The CY-G2 heat press features include a teflon coated aluminium heat plate, silicone pad, working pressure adjuster, as well as pastime and temperature controller.

The CY-M022 single mug press is lightweight and portable, for use at malls, flea markets, shows and more and features fully digital 2-in-1 temperature and time control. It has easy pressure adjustment, a solid steel welded framework, digital control and easy to adjust pressure. The 8-in-1 multifunction combo heat press machine



features advanced 2-in-1 temperature/time control which is safer, more accurate and practical. The heating plate and working face are constructed with pure aluminium, which tends to not twist easily under pressure and provides a longer product lifetime than those made of metal. It can apply transfers and images to T-shirts, garments, bags,

mouse pads, jigsaw puzzles, ceramic tiles, mugs, plates and caps.

Sign Africa Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

www.chemosol.co.za

Graficomp Exhibited Print, Cutting And Software Solutions



Graficomp showcased its print, cutting and software solutions at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo, which took place from 18-19 May 2022 at the CTICC.

Users can grow with high-value jobs and sharpen their sustainability edge with the HP Latex 700 printer. Deliver vivid colours at high speed and get striking contrast using pure blacks and choose from a wide application range covering banners/textiles/poster paper, canvas, wallpaper and vinyl.

Users can expand into wider applications with the 162.5cm (64 inch) HP Latex vinyl cutter, featuring 158cm (62.2 inch) maximum cut width and 54kg

cutting weight.

Combined with dynamic print label capabilities, Onyx 21 delivers innovative tools for print shop branding with flexibility to connect to existing business tools.

The company also showed samples of white ink applications from the latest HP Latex 700W/800W series.

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www.graficomp.co.za



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SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS CONTINUED

Thunderbolt Solutions' Digital Inkjet Roadshow Highlights Industry Trends

Thunderbolt Solutions' Digital Inkjet Roadshow presented the extensive benefits of digital printing to the market, allowing visitors from printing companies the ability to gain firsthand insight into Thunderbolt's suite of digital inkjet printing solutions. The roadshow took place in Johannesburg on 9 and 10 May at the Wanderers Club, Durban on 11 May at Mount Edgecombe Country Club and Cape Town on 12 and 13 May at King David Mowbray Golf Club.

International speakers addressed industry trends:

Edi Venturin: Regional Business Manager, Agfa

Venturin outlined inkjet in a wide format context, and said that inkjet machines are capable of running at lower costs. Agfa offer complete inkjet printing systems, saving costs with innovative calculation. 'We have machines, software and inks – all perfectly matched,' said Venturin. The company's thin ink layer technology ensures less ink wastage than competitors, with some being 80% less. Their aim is to achieve the same quality with different machines of different sizes and speeds. Some options are also field upgradable. The company do use other companies' printheads, but have their own ink and software. 'The synergy between inks, hardware, software and services make our inkjet solutions unique.'

'For inkjet, in wide format we are seeing growth in corrugated packaging. In high-end, high-speed machines, there is also a move toward industrial applications. Inkjet opens up new opportunities for print that were not possible before, such as bespoke short runs and specialties. These applications require lower costs, lower stock and faster access to market, in contrast to screen printing and offset, which require much more time.'

Gareth Wheeldon: Sales Executive, Komori UK

Wheeldon said that inkjet is already transforming the way that a number of sectors of industry serve their customers, and that they are having to reassess their production capabilities: 'There is enthusiasm, especially with book printers; they don't want large inventories. There is a strong desire for short-run packaging and there's also a wider colour gamut with inkjet inks than with offset four colour, which meets all the requirements for packaging.' He also said that inkjet is perfectly suited for fast turnaround times, and added that inkjet is not about to replace offset, but that the two just happen to complement one another, and that working in parallel, they enable a well managed company to meet the demands of customers.

Wheeldon outlined Komori's extensive portfolio of machines and consumables, with a strong emphasis on the company's flagship Impremia IS29 digital

inkjet printing system, which features a wide range of applications such as book printing and short-run packaging. A wide substrate choice, low energy consumption and compact design are some of the machine's key aspects.

He added that LED curing allows for excellent adhesion, hence the ability to print on paper, board, plastic and more. Folders, slitters and coating units can be added. Seamless workflow for batch processes, wider colour gamuts, calculation of ink consumption and automatic software updates were also taken into consideration upon the machine's development. Wheeldon listed benefits such as quality, substrate choice, instant curing and low maintenance, as well as less need for sensitive parts and components within the machines that are susceptible to wear and tear, all of which he said are reasons to choose Komori.

Bui Burke: Senior VP Sales, Screen Europe

Burke mentioned that inkjet trends are much the same in Africa as they are globally, although Africa lags slightly behind. 'The trend is toward inkjet, be it with labels, commercial print or packaging.' He also said inkjet is replacing toner and conventional presses, as well as flexo presses. 'Inkjet allows users to order what they need, when they need it. It is easy to use.'

Burke outlined Screen's high speed continuous devices and constant investment in new equipment, with a strong emphasis on quality, speed, reliability, wider applications, lower running costs and the ability to print on a wider range of substrates. The company's SC Ink (coated stock ink) is unique, as well their SC + inks, which feature high densities, so less ink is needed, producing higher vibrancy and more scuff resistance.

Burke said while Screen don't manufacture ink and printheads, they have the know-how of the best printhead and ink combination, where as little ink as possible is used. He added that Screen are committed to inkjet, an area in which they want to move forward. Their innovative NIR drying equipment (drying ink before it hits the paper) and power management features in their machine portfolio also make them unique.

Deon Wepener: Expert Production Print Solutions, Kyocera Europe

Wepener said that while Kyocera's specialty is inkjet heads that are well known in the industry, they decided to take these printheads and place them into their own platform, out of which the flagship cut-sheet inkjet device, the TASKalfa Pro 150000C, was borne. He added that Screen, for example, uses some of their printheads.

The TASKalfa Pro 150000C ensures a lower power



Edi Venturin, Regional Business Manager, Agfa.

consumption, and is simple and straightforward, with fewer components. The software also calculates the right amount of ink. If a punch hole is detected, the printheads won't apply ink – an ideal savings aspect. Paper companies like Mondi have optimised their products for such inkjet devices, which equates to massive cost savings. Different ink drop sizes (or multi-drop size technology) allow for smoother prints. Some of the trends in inkjet technology, as far as the company is concerned, include educational books and training manuals (mostly Africa), although in Europe transactional applications are a good fit, as well as different colour reading books, which are specifically well-suited for the TASKalfa. 'Inkjet is constantly growing, so it is perfect for where something new is needed,' said Wepener.

Gavin van Rensburg, Regional Manager, Western Province, Thunderbolt Solutions, said, 'The drivers in inkjet are much lower maintenance compared to previous xerography based technology.' Another advantage of inkjet, he said, is consistency of operations from start to finish, as well as the ability to print on different substrates. He said that inkjet is on the increase, adding that South Africa is lagging behind due to reasons such as Covid-19, but that prices are coming down and the range of substrates is increasing all the time.

www.thunderbolt.co.za

Midcomp Installs Another HP Latex Solution With White Ink

Midcomp has installed an HP Latex 700W at Fotomax, a family run photographic print shop in Durban. The machine was purchased during the Sign Africa Durban expo which was held in March.

The HP Latex 700W allows users to print white without complexity, deliver vivid colours at high speed, get striking contrast using pure blacks, and expect sharp 4-point text, while retaining the

renowned features of HP Latex printers. The printer provides a wide application range covering banners, textiles, poster paper, canvas, wallpaper and vinyl.

Fotomax's service offerings include short digital print runs, customised wallpapers, branding for agencies, printing onto acrylics for interiors and signage for the property market. The company is renowned for its attention to detail, quality and turnaround times. The company also had an HP Latex 335 and HP Latex 26500.

Fotomax's manager, Wayne Fowles, said, 'The machine has benefited us by relieving the workload off another machine, which allows us to improve on turnaround times and productivity.' He described 2021 as a difficult time for the company, making a loss on account of the looting in KwaZulu-Natal.

'I was running my vinyl jobs on our flatbed machine, which has white ink as well, and outsourcing the wall vinyl/wallpaper jobs. Rebuilding the business again, this was a workaround, but as orders increased, I needed to get a roll to roll printer.' The company opted for the HP Latex 700W.

'Having had two latex printers previously, I am sold on the machines and technology. The printer prints fast enough for us when it comes to finishing off or trimming.' Fowles reported good service from Midcomp and was pleased that they had a unit in stock.



The Fotomax team: Richard Matanzima, Freddy Ngongo, Melissa Korb, Saadia Shaik, Teez Mullah, Wayne Fowles and Miresheene Chetty, with Midcomp's Divan Van Vuuren (second left) and Rhamon Bernstein (far right).

www.midcomp.co.za and
www.fotomax.co.za

Kolok Showcased Vinyls, Films And Inks

Kolok exhibited its range of vinyls, films and inks at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo. The company showcased its extensive range of different textured wallpapers, as well as its Stingray and Jay range of digital print media, encompassing paper, self-adhesive vinyl, PVC, canvas, etc.

Hexis range: Skintac vehicle wrap films; Bodyfence vehicle protection films; Suptac polymeric vinyl for signs; Ecotac and Microtac monomeric vinyl for signs; Purezone antimicrobial film for protecting

surfaces from bacteria and Covid-19 and Sandblast for window decoration.

NuTec ink range: Emerald eco-solvent ink for Roland and Mimaki; Aquamarine for dye sublimation and Topaz solvent inks.

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www.kolokgs.co.za



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SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS CONTINUED

Graphix Supply World Highlighted Mimaki Printing Solutions

Graphix Supply World exhibited its Mimaki range of solutions and more at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo, which took place from 18-19 May.

The JV100-160 adopts the recently developed, fast drying eco solvent ink, which reduces graininess and allows for fine details even when printing images with high volumes of ink. Additionally, this new CS250 eco-solvent ink has superior scratch resistance and outdoor durability that allows printers to create a multitude of applications, whether they are for indoor or outdoor use.

The high performance TS100-160 dye sublimation printer has a maximum speed of up to 70sqm per hour and features low ink cost, minimal maintenance and precision Japanese engineering. It is designed to produce a wide range of materials and applications, including fashion, soft signage, home and interior, sportswear, promotional products and more.

The UJV100-160 brings together cost effective technology with the flexibility and versatility to deliver faster output than ever before. It is designed to produce a wide range of material like vehicle wrapping, outdoor and indoor signage, banners, posters and many more.

The CFL-605RT supports material sizes up to A2 extra and has a variety of functions including eccentric, tangential, and reciprocating cuttings and creasing. It is designed with Mimaki's well-established technology, and supports on-demand production by multiple functions, including cutting and creasing. The CFL-605RT delivers efficient sample and package production.



The CG130 SR III features a best-in-class cutting pressure of 500g for a wider range of materials; plot start/end, error/warning message, Continuous Crop Mark Detection for precise stickers and seals, and more.

The UJF-6042 solution features increased productivity and ease of use, choice of rigid or flexible inks, with up to 9 colours including white, clear and prime.

The JFX200 printer delivers unparalleled results to expand the potential for professional sign and digital graphics companies. A choice of inks, including white and clear, offers unlimited creative opportunities, with the capability to print to a wide range of substrates.

The CJV150 series printers add cut-and-print capability for signage or textile applications. CJV150 Series models feature advanced piezo head technology.

The Kongsberg X24 Edge cutting table delivers the tried and tested Kongsberg recipe of productivity and flexibility, combined with best-in-class reliability. What's more, the Kongsberg X24 Edge can be equipped for any application, without any compromise on performance.

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www.gsw.co.za

Exion Corp Showcased 3D Channel Letter Printing Solutions



Exion Corp showcased the latest versions of its 3D printers, exclusively designed for channel letters, at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo.

There are two printing sizes of the BlackRhino 3D printers, the bigger one is 780 x 780mm x 60mm, and the smaller one is 580mm x 580mm x 60mm. Both use drop-on-demand technology. The company have established that the minimum printing size must be 550mm x 550mm. The print material, otherwise known as filament, is made up polylactic acid (or polylactide).

Its first 3D printer was introduced in 2016, but due to various challenges, the company was not confident to give it the Exion stamp of approval. Exion Corp is now proud to release these products after working through its own trials and errors.

'There are still limitations in plastic in that it still takes a lot of time, but with letters of about 200mm to 300mm, you can get good results using these 3D printers,' said Exion Corp MD, Jay Kim.

'Even though there is great 3D software such as Fusion 360, it is not easy for beginners to learn, or in the case of small business sign makers, they simply do not have the time, and the price is also a burden. We have built-in software that can easily create 3D letters with files from CorelDRAW or Illustrator, making it easy for anyone to access,' explained Cedric Pillay, COO at Exion Corp.

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www.exion.co.za

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SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS CONTINUED

Trotec Laser South Africa Displayed Laser Solution

Trotec showcased its Q400 laser solution at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo. The laser cutter sets new standards by combining all the Trotec virtues users need for efficient laser cutting. With a working area of 1030 x 630mm and laser power of up to 100 watts, the Q400 cuts and engraves a wide variety of materials, such as: acrylic and wood (cut up to 15mm), textiles, paper or cardboard for signs, handicraft items, models or decorative items.

Trotec core technology such as the InPack Technology, JobControl® laser software, the CeramiCore® laser source and the innovative motion planning OptiMotion enable fast, efficient and intuitive work with the laser.

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The Q Series is a reliable laser for production.

www.troteclaser.co.za



Curv Showcased Signage Solutions

Curv Signage exhibited its signage solutions at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo, which took place from 18-19 May 2022.

manufactured locally. The company's product range includes: door signs, projection signs, slider signs, wall frame signs, directory signs, lightbox signs, suspended signs and table stand signs.

The company manufacture a complete range of signage kits for all sign writers. Their Curv kits come flat-packed and ready for quick and easy installation. These kits are supplied with all the required fasteners and trims to create modern signage. These signs are designed and

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www.curvsignage.co.za



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Rexx Screen & Digital Supplies Demonstrated Direct To Film Solutions

Rexx Screen & Digital Supplies demonstrated its A3 sheetfed direct to film (DTF) solution at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo.

The new Rexx DTF systems are easy to use and are available from entry level A3 size through to automatic 30cm and 60cm wide roll-to-roll solutions, allowing anyone to cost-effectively create a digitally printed transfer, which can be applied to a vast range of products and textiles.

These include: cotton, polyester, nylon, spandex, leather and many more via a heatpress. Added to this, users can achieve incredible opacity even though it is a thin, soft and flexible film. The wash durability is outstanding and proven with industry standard wash tests.

The printing ink system is water-based. It is digitally printed onto a special PET film after which there is the application of a powder PU adhesive, creating an amazingly bright, soft and durable transfer. The ease of use and incredibly economical consumable costs that these systems exhibit gives it many advantages over paper-based laser systems and many other existing solutions. The systems allow users to start an affordable and professional branding business from home.

Visitors could see the following show specials:
A3 DTF bundle special, with choice of humidifier;



cutting plotters such as the VicSign HL-630 (stand and software included), VicSign HWX with optical eye (stand and software included) and Q3 hobby cutter; as well as heat presses: manual heat press, magnetic auto open, dual plate auto open, cap press, magnetic auto open with slide and mug press. Also on show was their SEF Heat Transfer

Film range, offering the ultimate in soft stretchable PU films.

Sign Africa Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

www.rexxscreendigital.co.za

JG Electronics Exhibited Sublimation And Vinyl Solutions

JG Electronics (JGE) showcased its latest vinyl cutters, heat transfer vinyls and desktop printers designed for sublimation at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo.

The Silhouette CAMEO® 4 Pro is the largest and fastest electronic cutting machine in its class, and is the big brother of the Silhouette® Cameo 4. The software is easy to use; is versatile with

three different blade options; has a punching tool and sketch pens; an auto set blade which is set to the correct depth by the software according to the substrate being cut; automatic cutting tool detection; 610mm cutting width and maximum cutting length of 61cm with a cutting mat and 3m without (20m if the software is upgraded).

With scan and cut/print and cut features standard, it supports USB and Bluetooth, is Mac and PC compatible and also includes a built-in roll feeder for rolls up to 3m long. The Cameo 4 series allows users to create projects with precision.

JGE also exhibited the latest Sawgrass SG500, a desktop printer designed for sublimation. With low start-up and running costs, users can create customised products with vibrant HD images, quickly, easily and profitably. It features a compact footprint and rugged reliability.

In addition to design improvements such as a single roll-bar, the SG500 is more energy-efficient, prints with higher resolution and offers Wi-Fi connectivity. JGE also exhibited its Muggit heat transfer vinyls.

Sign Africa Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

www.jgelectronics.com



SIGN INDUSTRY NEWS CONTINUED

Midcomp Exhibited Print And Cut Solution With White Ink And Print Media

Midcomp showcased its HP Latex 700W print and cut solution, as well as print media from the Midcomp Consumables division, at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo.

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

With the HP Latex 64 Plus Cutting Solution, users can enable new applications and growth for business by enhancing their HP Latex printers with a unique print and cut workflow. Easily integrate this cutter/RIP solution and get accurate high-speed cutting and cut throughs.

Midcomp representatives were also available to explain the benefits of the company's 'Pay Per Use' (PPU) comprehensive and customised programme, created by Midcomp, which helps accurately calculate a company's costs per square metre, which ensures peace of mind that if something goes wrong with a machine, it can be fixed without having a huge bill to deal with.

Sign Africa Cape Town was sponsored by Roland and Stixo.

www.midcomp.co.za



IPlastics Exhibited Signage Materials At Sign Africa Cape Town Expo

IPlastics showcased signage solutions such as the LayFlat Anti-Curl banner, gazebo, wall banner and more at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo, held at the CTICC from 18-19 May.

The company also discussed its wide range of offerings with visitors, including: digital printable vinyl, acrylic sheeting, aluminium composite panel, PVC foam board, laser engraving material, mirror acrylic, PVC banner material and acrylic tubes.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Metamark Wrapping Media And Overlaminates Used To Wrap Barrels



Metamark's MetaWrap MD-X Cylinder Cast digital wrapping media with Blockout 'MetaScape' System as well as Metaguard MG-X Cylinder Cast digital wrapping overlaminates were used in a project different to the typical vehicle wrapping or wall graphic applications.

A call to Indigo Graphics came from an events and experiential company, Beach Graphics. The job involved turning about 40 reclaimed 'oil drums' or 'barrels' into branded pedestal bases. The idea was that the branded bases would tour planned locations, set up with parasols atop them, and serve as tables while the attending audience enjoyed the client's product.

Beach Graphics knew exactly what they wanted in terms of design, and so the data was supplied to Lee Skinner and the Indigo Graphics team to do their stuff. After the customary tweaking to scale and fit the design elements, Indigo's Roland Eco-Solvent printer was loaded up with MetaWrap MD-X and print production began. The barrels were bright blue and so the branding needed to be total coverage. Some of the subjects had a bit of battle-rash like dents and so on but, broadly speaking, were application-ready.

Once laminated with MetaGuard MG-X, the print was cut to size and the hands-on bit could commence. Skinner admitted that the first couple of barrels exercised the application team a bit. Once the team had a few done and hit a rhythm, the job went well.

www.sytech.co.za

Zünd Cutter Enables Processing Of Wide Material Range

CDO Routing Solutions purchased a Zünd G3 L-3200, which allows them to process a variety of materials with sheet sizes up to 3200mm wide.

Based in the Midlands near Droitwich, CDO Routing Solutions provide a high-quality cutting and routing

service to many industries. Chris Jones, Owner of CDO Routing said, 'We have over 17 years of experience and knowledge, working with most materials that are suitable for cutting or routing.'

Jones decided to look at new machinery for his business. He wanted something that was versatile for many different applications. He knew from previous experience the endless possibilities and reliability the Zünd cutters offer. Jones explained, 'Having worked with Zünd cutters in the past and their reputable position in the graphics industry, it was a no-brainer to enquire.'

Jones booked a demonstration at Zünd HQ in St Albans, Hertfordshire, and took material samples with him for test cuts. Jones said, 'Having visited the Zünd state-of-the-art demonstration suite, I was impressed with the capabilities and added value the Zünd cutter could offer my business. I could see Zünd UK supporting the growth of my business and the technical knowledge from their staff assured me that Zünd was the best choice for my business.' Reflecting on his purchase, Jones said, 'We can now



process a wide range of materials including acrylic, foam, vinyl, wood, paper, rubber, leather, textiles, plastics, aluminium, cardboard and composites for prototypes, one-offs or large batch productions. We have invested in the Zünd technology to make sure we guarantee the highest quality finishes and products for our customers. Our new Zünd cutter allows our cutting processes to be consistent, repeatable and to the tightest of tolerances.'

www.midcomp.co.za

Fujifilm Wide Format Printer Enhances Business's Operations

Fujifilm's Acuity Prime 30 is the latest addition to Tech:art's portfolio of printers. Tech:art, based in Trofarello, Italy and founded in 2002, is a full service print service provider offering their B2B and B2C customers support from prepress, through to design, prototyping, packaging and logistics.

Davide Salvo, CEO and General Manager at Tech:art

said, 'When the machine was first installed, there were some final calibrations to sort, but we just couldn't wait to use it so we started running production jobs anyway. We were instantly impressed. The productivity of the machine is far beyond what we had expected and exceeds any other machine we have seen before in a similar price bracket.'

'We were very impressed by how easy it is to use and the outstanding print quality and productivity it offers. This, along with our confidence in Fujifilm as a brand, ultimately led to the investment decision. We are typically using the machine for interior design applications such as wood, Plexiglas, glass and metal as well as signage. We were previously using a competitor machine, but it was proving impossible to print with the quality and speed that we now can achieve with the Acuity Prime 30.'

'Our customers place very specific high demands on us. They require high quality and fast turnaround times, and more recently, they request work that requires the use of special primers, varnishes and white inks. With the Acuity Prime 30, we have been able to meet such demands and many of our customers have already provided positive feedback on the print quality and the wide colour gamut it offers. They have also been impressed by the strong ink adhesion and the wide range of materials that can be used. In fact, with the addition of this machine, we have been able to acquire new customers. Looking ahead, I see customisation as a major trend within the market this year and I am confident the Acuity Prime will enable us to meet such demands.'

'Aside from the technical benefits, we were also very impressed with the sleek, attractive, user-friendly design. I would not hesitate to recommend the Acuity Prime 30, it has made our business significantly more profitable due to the combination of its high speed and lower ink consumption.'

Kevin Jenner, European Marketing Manager for Wide Format Inkjet Systems at Fujifilm Europe said, 'The Acuity Prime 30 is one of the most innovative printers that forms part of Fujifilm's



strategy to create 'the new blueprint for wide format', resetting expectations relating to price/performance, versatility, value and ease-of-use. We are delighted to see that Tech:art has experienced this first hand and has already noticed significant enhancements to their business since investing in this machine. We look forward to seeing how this continues to develop throughout our partnership.'

www.fujifilmgraphicsystems.co.za

Xaar Opens New Technology Centre



Based at Campus Solna in Stockholm, and at nearly 400sqm, Xaar's new Technology Centre in Sweden is twice the size of the previous facility and houses a state-of-the-art laboratory with new equipment, offices and meeting spaces for engineers, scientists and visitors to work within. The expansion provides Xaar with the ideal environment for its continuous research into the transformative potential of inkjet technologies and opportunities.

Xaar's new Technology Centre in Sweden was officially opened by CEO John Mills at a ceremony held along with COO Graham Tweedale and members of Xaar's Advanced Applications and Technologies team.

Xaar's base in Sweden has played a key role in its R&D projects for many years, as well as supporting customers in the development and use of inkjet technologies. From their new site, the team will continue to work closely across both internal and external projects, liaising with manufacturers, fluid formulators and specialist printer makers to help bring new processes to market using Xaar's printheads and technologies across numerous markets.

On opening the new Technology Centre, John Mills, said; 'As an inkjet innovator it is essential that we continue to invest in developing the latest technologies and applications, and I am delighted to open our new centre of excellence in Sweden as part of this strategy.'

'The unrivalled expertise and knowledge of our team, combined with these state-of-the-art facilities, will be invaluable in supporting our collaborative growth and focus on developing opportunities for inkjet.'

www.xaar.com

Summa Acquires Print Finishing Equipment Business

Summa has acquired Valiani to strengthen its

position as a leading manufacturer in print finishing equipment. The merged business will continue as before and will complement each other to offer customers an even broader range of cutting solutions.

Valiani, with its headquarters in Certaldo, Florence, Italy, is a developer and manufacturer of small to medium sized, highly reliable flatbed cutters with a worldwide distribution network. Moreover, Valiani has an extensive history in the picture framing industry and is a pioneer in converting this market to digital solutions: designing and cutting matboard and offering passepartout tools for bevel cuts. Their innovative approach has ensured the company to grow into other markets as well. The recent Omnia auto feed die cutting machine is a unique automated solution for the corrugated and folding carton market, whereas the brand new Integra offers an appealing finishing product for the sign and display market.

Nico Valiani, CEO and son of Franco, founder of the company, is enthusiastic, 'In the recent years we have renewed our complete portfolio with a wider range of solutions. Now, this is starting to pay off with a significant growth. However, I know there is still a lot more potential. Therefore, my family and I are convinced that being part of the Summa group will accelerate our growth and give our customers much more possibilities. We are staying true to our values: being customer focused and offering high-quality solutions.'

'Since the negotiations started, my appreciation for the Valiani company and its products has grown more and more', said Geert Pierloot, Managing Director at Summa. 'The organisation with lean manufacturing production lines in the Certaldo, ISO certified, plant is a true example for the industry. I look forward to working together with Valiani and his team. In this merger, I see an absolute win-win as it combines the strengths of both companies. While we can help accelerating Valiani's growth, our portfolio can be expanded with Valiani's solutions and more markets can be served.'

'Our product ranges are extremely complementary', added Christof Van Driessche, Chief Commercial officer at Summa. 'Although the most popular and attractively priced Summa F1612 flatbed table has a small and unique footprint, there are still a lot of customers looking at smaller and more affordable, but reliable solutions. Therefore, the merger is an exciting step and meets Summa's ambition to increase its presence in other markets and strengthen our position into the packaging market.'



Both companies will continue to operate under their current company names and with the actual management teams in place.

www.summa.com

Agfa Customer Expands Business With LED Hybrid Solution



Denis Rau, Die Keure.

The wide format hybrid Anapurna LED series is a perfect fit for sign shops, digital printers, photo labs and mid-size graphic screen printers that want to combine board and roll-to-roll print jobs. Belgium based company Die Keure recently invested in an Anapurna H2500i LED hybrid printer.

Die Keure has been around since 1942 and is active in offset, digital, screen printing and finishing. They operate Agfa's Avalon N8-90 platesetter with the Arkana smart processor and Energy Elite Eco printing plates, all powered by Agfa's Apogee workflow.

Initially specialising in government printing, the company has gradually evolved into a print publishing house with an emphasis on educational, legal and business economics publications. In addition, Die Keure also enjoys worldwide recognition for producing high-quality art publications for renowned art galleries and museums, as well as top-quality magazines and other printed matter.

What is less known, however, is that Die Keure also has an extensive large format printing department, where they carry out the most diverse assignments in both screen and digital printing. Denis Rau, large format manager, added, 'Years ago, a loyal customer asked if we could also print stickers for them, and we purchased a screen printing installation. If you have such a machine, you can also do other things with it, such as improving book covers, and that's how the ball started rolling. Today we have a production hall of 2500sqm and we have further evolved from one screen printing device to digital printing, as well as finishing with a Zünd cutting solution. We recently purchased a fully automatic screen printing press, because screen printing is still the best solution for some applications.'

However, Die Keure soon realised that there were also opportunities for digital printing in addition to screen printing. Rau explained. 'When the same customer then asked whether we could also make POS and other promotional material, the step to digital was easily made. We acquired the first Anapurna about 15 years ago. In the meantime, we are on our fourth machine with the new Anapurna H2500i LED, so that says something about the confidence we have in both Agfa and the equipment. It is again a hybrid solution, with

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

which we can print on rigid substrates as well as roll media. We are on our fourth Anapurna, which shows our confidence in Agfa and the printers.'

The Anapurna is mainly used for small runs of self-adhesives and other promotional material. Rau said, 'Special items are no problem for us. For example, we helped plate manufacturer Unilin in the promotion of a new type of MDF board, whereby we printed, milled and sent personalised samples to all architects in Belgium. We mainly rely on quality, fast service and word of mouth, because we don't have a sales team, but our large format department still runs in two shifts.'

To conclude, Rau said the following about the Anapurna and Agfa, 'The Anapurna printers are robust production machines that do what they are supposed to do. But as with all equipment, sometimes things go wrong and it is good to know that you can count on Agfa's top service. They have a team of good technicians, and if there happens to be a problem, it gets solved very quickly. For us, that is worth gold.'

www.agfa.com

Roland DG Printer Used For Ceiling Painting Reproduction



Roland DG's LEC2 series of wide format printers/cutters offer unmatched production capabilities, including creating unique special 3D effects using UV ink and contour cutting printed images on demand.

Roland DG Corporation has cooperated on a high-resolution digital reproduction of Katsushika Hokusai's Phoenix Glaring in All Directions ceiling painting, which will be shown in the 'Digital x Hokusai' special exhibition organised by Nippon Telegraph and Telephone East Corporation (NTT East) and planned and managed by NTT ArtTechnology Corporation. The artwork is currently featured in the main hall of Gansho-in Temple in Obuse, Nagano Prefecture. Ukiyo-e master Hokusai, who passed away at the age of 90, painted this work in his final years, and it is said to be the largest painting of its kind (5.5m in depth x 6.3m in width). The high-resolution digital reproduction was exhibited as the centrepiece of

the 'Digital x Hokusai' interactive art exhibition to be held from June 2, 2022 in Tokyo, Japan.

The digitalisation of this painting and the production of a high-resolution digital reproduction were conducted as a part of the 'Distributed Digital Museum' promoted by NTT East and NTT ArtTechnology. The ceiling painting was digitalized by Ars Techne Corporation., a partner of NTT ArtTechnology, using its patented technology DTIP, a high-definition three-dimensional texture image processing technology. Ars Techne estimated and restored incomplete painting areas and performed multilayer processing for each texture. Based on this high-precision data, which amounted to approximately 30 billion pixels, Roland DG output the image in its original size by using a UV inkjet printer.

Kohei Tanabe, President, Representative Director of Roland DG said, 'Our LEC2-640 UV inkjet printer was used to print the reproduction of the original painting. This project required not only a wide colour gamut and accurate colour reproduction, but also the need to faithfully reproduce the texture of the paint and the brushwork done by hand, the brilliance of the gold leaf, and the reflections of the oil and smoke ink, which is a unique highlight of this work. The expressive power of our UV inkjet printer, which is capable of printing special effects, was indispensable in this process.'

Manabu Kunieda, President and CEO of NTT ArtTechnology said, 'We are very pleased with the results of the high-definition digital reproduction. We were able to reproduce the vivid colors and elaborate techniques used in the Phoenix Glaring in All Directions, and especially the way the ceiling painting shines under certain conditions that were discovered during the digitalisation process. By utilising digital technology, we can now view artwork that previously could only be seen on site, in an environment that is accessible to all, regardless of space, distance, or time. This will not only protect valuable cultural assets, but also open up new possibilities for the enjoyment of culture and the arts and will lead to an interaction among people and regional revitalisation.'

www.rolanddg.co.za

Kongsberg Signs Deals To Install Digital Finishing Tables

MJ Global has signed a deal with Kongsberg Precision Cutting Systems (PCS) to install the modular Kongsberg X22 at its Noida facility. 'MJ Global specialises in offering folding carton, corrugated, and rigid box solutions to the market, which means we need a versatile and accurate machine that can finish various substrates,' said Ramit Bhatnagar, Chief Operating Officer of MJ

Global. 'Increasing demands for samples by the brand owners and ever shortening turnaround times are factors that affect our daily business, and that's why we were looking for a solution like this Kongsberg table.'

'With the X22, we'll be able to produce samples instantly, securing faster approval from our customers and improving efficiency and productivity. While the machine can be used to fulfil the short run demands of certain strategic customers, the table is so versatile that it can also finish a wide range of substrates, giving us the opportunity to expand our portfolio into other segments and helping us diversify.' Rafiq Shaikh, Kongsberg PCS Sales Leader said, 'We're delighted to have completed another deal with MJ Global at Printpack (India). With seamless integration with CAD, the X22 will deliver more creative freedom as the company continues to lead the way in producing innovative packaging designs.'

Shaikh said the Kongsberg X22 acquired by MJ Global offers speed, power and flexibility to handle a wide variety of materials and can easily be upgraded as a business grows. 'The deal includes the Kongsberg PowerHead tool,' said Shaikh. 'This tool excels on heavy duty material such as honeycomb boards, triple wall and recycled board, and was specifically tailored to meet the customer's needs.'

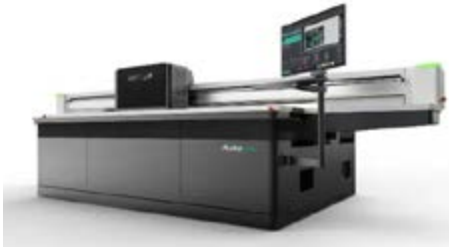


Rafiq Shaikh, Kongsberg PCS; Rajiv Bhatnagar, MJ Global with sons Rohan and Ramit Bhatnagar and Prakash Boppa, Kongsberg PCS.

The Printpack event also saw Kongsberg PCS ink a deal for the X20 with award-winning print and packaging solutions provider Pragati Offset, based in Hyderabad. 'Pragati is a one-stop shop that delivers quality print jobs from structural design to production and distribution,' said Shaikh. 'Having the entire operation in-house ensures tight control over quality and faster turnaround. The Kongsberg X20 helps improve productivity, efficiency and customer satisfaction for rigid and folding carton converters. The power, performance and versatility of this digital cutting table means the team at Pragati can tackle any job and bring designs to life.'

www.gsw.co.za

Fujifilm Wide Format Printers Win Design Award



Acuity Prime and Acuity Ultra R2 wide format printers have now achieved the product design award trifecta, with the iF Design awards the latest to recognise them.

The iF Design Award is one of the world's most prestigious design awards, signifying good design for consumers and the design community since 1953.

An independent jury of international design experts meets to determine award-winning designs, based on a set of objective screening standards. This year's award winners were celebrated in May at the iF Design Award Night 2022 at Friedrichstadt-Palast in Berlin.

Fujifilm's Kevin Jenner commented, 'With FESPA nearly upon us, we're delighted these machines have received yet another design endorsement. The enthusiasm of the jury panels at all three awards is matched by the early feedback we're getting from our customers. Good design is not just how something looks, it's about how well it works and how easy it is to use. We've worked extremely hard on the design for these products and on all measures this range is proving that we've got it right.'

www.fujifilmgraphicsystems.co.za

Drytac Media Used To Produce POS And Window Graphics In World-Four Footwear Project



Leeds-based Imageco linked up with footwear brand Dr. Martens to create a range of indoor and outdoor graphics for its new test and learn concept store in London. Imageco used Drytac SpotOn SynTac and ViziPrint Deco + to produce a range of striking Point of Sale (POS) and window graphics for the store.

All of the graphics were printed using Imageco's HP Latex 800W printer, with its eco-friendly water-

based inks. Imageco was introduced to Dr. Martens by Syn Retail, a local design agency and existing client of Imageco that works with a host of global brands across retail and activations. Syn Retail had been working with Dr. Martens for some time, so when the shoe brand was seeking to create a new test and learn store, Syn Retail recommended Imageco to produce the graphics.

Imageco, which holds the key ISO 14001 environmental standard, leapt at the chance to work with Dr. Martens on the sustainable brief. Armed with its deep knowledge of eco-friendly print solutions, Imageco identified two Drytac products as the best solutions for the project. SpotOn SynTac, a PVC-free polypropylene wall graphic media, was used to produce exterior graphics for the front of the store to cover up work during its refurbishment. As SpotOn SynTac does not require any lamination and is easy to both apply and remove after use, it was ideal for the short-term graphics.

Imageco also selected ViziPrint Deco +, a high-quality clear window film, for the production of interior graphics for the store windows. ViziPrint Deco + delivered a high-quality print and allowed natural light to pass through into the store, while the product also met the strict sustainable criteria for the job. On the usability of the Drytac solutions, Imageco Managing Director Nathan Swinson-Bullough said, 'We have been working with Drytac products for some time now. Following the success of this project – and in particular the quality of the final prints and how easy we found the media to work with – this amount of use is about to be elevated.'

Imageco deployed its HP Latex 800W printer, supplied by Perfect Colours, to produce all the graphics for the project. This, Swinson-Bullough said, allowed the company to deliver an even more sustainable service to Dr. Martens. Imageco was one of the first UK customers to install the HP Latex 800W printer, back in January 2021. The printer offers a suite of features, including the whitest white ink that does not yellow over time, enabling print businesses to produce neater outlines and add more contrast.

www.midcomp.co.za

Durst Presented Large Format Printing Systems And Software Solutions In Berlin



With the new introduction of the Durst P5 500, Durst is once again setting the benchmark in the top class of digital large format printing.

Durst is also boosting the productivity of the existing P5 UV-LED series to a new performance level with the new Double 4 technology. In addition, new Vanguard LFP printing systems celebrated their European premiere at FESPA.

Durst is further expanding its P5 platform and opening up the superwide format with a printing width of 5.25m. The P5 500 LED printing system uses powerful Ricoh print heads and the overall system is designed for efficient and unattended production. In addition to CMYK, another four colour channels are available – for example for light colours (c, m, k), white or varnish. Media handling plays a key role in ensuring productivity even in this dimension. For this purpose, Durst offers roll support for loading and changing media. The rolls can be processed in single, dual and triple mode, in dual mode even asymmetrically. Double-sided printing is achieved via exact front and back registration. Durst offers additional options for finishing, these include knives for horizontal and vertical cutting.

'With the Durst P5 500, Durst once again demonstrates its full focus on the reliability of its own printing systems for unattended production processes. With the integration of Durst Workflow Software and the introduction of new functionalities, we are also achieving a significant increase in efficiency,' said Andrea Riccardi, Head of Product Management, Durst Group. 'The field test is extremely successful, so we will deliver the first printing systems in the last quarter of 2022.'

With Durst P5 Double 4, Durst presents an interesting further development for new and existing customers. A second CMYK print head row is optionally installed in the P5 UV printing systems, enabling double the productivity to be achieved. The option is available on the P5 350/HS and P5 210/HS. Vanguard, with its printing systems for signage, decoration, business equipment, industry and packaging, has been part of the Durst Group since 2020.

The European branch at the Brixen site, in a building adjacent to the Durst headquarters with over 5000sqm of factory space, will leverage technical and administrative synergies between the two companies. The physical proximity offers customers the advantage that all current printing systems from the Durst Group's overall portfolio can be viewed and tested. Two flatbed printers from Vanguard's product range were on show at FESPA 2022. The VR6D-HS and VK300D-HS cover the mid-range performance spectrum. They feature an attractive price/performance ratio and can cover a wide range of applications thanks to their modular design and various ink configurations.

With the presentation of the Durst TAU RSC platform, Durst also presented its customers with a possible portfolio expansion in the direction of label and flexible packaging printing. 'The pandemic has once again shown how important it is to position oneself as broadly as possible as a service provider. The production of labels or flexible packaging offers this potential for our LFP customers,' said Christian Harder, Vice President Sales, Durst Group.

www.durst-group.com



WORLD FIRST

We lead, others would love to follow

PRINT • PROFIT • PPUGRQ

HP Latex 335
Print & Cut

FROM* **R44.43**
per m²



HP Latex 315
Print & Cut

FROM* **R43.31**
per m²



HP Latex 700

FROM* **R41.44**
per m²

PPUGRQ INCLUDES

PRINTING & FINISHING SYSTEM

- RIP Software
- Printer Consumables (excluding media)
- Production access to the Midcomp Innovation Hub
- Spare Parts
- Labour
- Travel*

HP Latex 800W

FROM* **R40.96**
per m²



HP Latex 700W
Print & Cut

FROM* **R44.01**
per m²



HP Stitch S500
with Heatpress

FROM* **R25.84**
per m²

Above is a basic selection of hardware available on this programme. More options are available upon request.
*Ts & Cs apply



WORLD FIRST

PRINT

PROFIT

PPU *GRO*

Midcomp has launched the world's first Pay Per Use system for entry level and low volume production printers that includes all of the printer consumables (excluding media) and service costs and also includes the cost of the printing equipment. With PPU GRO, PPU stands for Pay Per Use and GRO reflects the company promise: Catalyst for Growth.

The programme enables companies to focus on making money from their printing systems while Midcomp focuses on enabling their customers' business with the best technology available. Instead of spending time focusing on the asset (printing system), users should rather focus on what profit the asset can generate for their business.

Midcomp first introduced their Pay Per Use (PPU) programme three years ago. Under this programme, they cover all HP Latex printer consumables* and service costs into a fixed cost per square metre.

Under their PPU contract, it is one invoice per month and one payment per month, it is that simple. There are no purchase orders required per delivery of consumables* or service, it is all covered under the contract. In high print volume cases, they will issue consignment stock so that there is no lead time to receive consumables*. Accompanying the invoice is a detailed list of all the print jobs a user performed on the printer in the preceding month.

Midcomp customer feedback about the PPU programme:

'In the print industry, sometimes calculating the costs can be difficult, as sometimes you can get a print that is filled with ink, and sometimes there is hardly any ink used, but the PPU programme has made it simple for us to accurately work out costs. Due to my distance, Midcomp has allowed me to keep a set of inks and printheads, so my printer is never offline and can always continue printing. Midcomp truly has paid attention to all my needs,' said Mohammed Sheth, Director at Navii.

'The unique PPU option that we took when we bought the printer gives you such peace of mind that you do not have to worry about ink, service charges, repairs and parts,' said Print Corp owners Charlene and JP Pretorius.

'The biggest benefit (of the PPU system) will come when our machine needs to have its service maintenance intervals, as these are expensive. With PPU, these service maintenance kits are included in the square metre cost. This avoids large amounts of cash outlays, as you never know what situation you will be in. Cost per square metre is cheaper on the PPU than my cost per square metre on my previous generation of printers,' said Mathew Wilkinson, director at Mint Wrapworks.

The biggest advantage of HP Latex printers that allows Midcomp to create such a predictable scenario is that the printhead is a consumables* item and changed on a regular basis by a printer operator, unlike competitive printers where the printhead is a very expensive spare part that needs a qualified engineer to install or change.

The printhead is the most crucial element in any digital printing system because its condition determines print quality. So three, four or five-year-old printers that have been on Midcomp's PPU programme will print like a brand new printer because Midcomp is contractually obliged to keep the printer in an 'as new' condition. This programme is hugely popular because of the certainty of print cost, with no guess work on the cost of printing a job. There is no need to see the artwork before determining the print cost.

The roll out of the PPU programme was an interesting journey for Midcomp and their customers. The majority of the early adopters of this programme were the company's, and their competitors', existing customers.

Why would this be? They were certainly vindicated in their beliefs early on in the programme as to just how disruptive it is for a print shop to be faced with an unexpected, poorly timed, and mostly inexplicably expensive breakdown of their printer.

- Unexpected because it always happens when a customer least expects it, Murphy makes sure of that.
- Poorly timed because it tends to happen when a customer is relying most on the printer to finish that super important client print job.
- Inexplicably expensive because most manufacturers today favour component assembly swap out rather than discreet component swap or repair. Not too many printer engineers move around with an oscilloscope to diagnose errors to the individual components. It is quicker and easier to change an entire component assembly and unfortunately the customer bears that cost.

First time HP Latex printer owners tended to see a different value chain in the PPU programme. Midcomp's Innovation Hub has an enviable array of equipment, including a range of 1.6m wide HP Latex printers and HP Latex

print and cut solutions; 3.2m wide roll to roll printers; flatbed printers; dye sublimation printers and heat presses; pigment ink printers for cotton printing; an industrial digital Zünd cutter for cutting flexible and rigid media; laminating equipment and an object printer. This facility and the equipment therein is used primarily as a demonstration and testing environment but also acts as a disaster recovery and an excess capacity service to their PPU and PPUGRO customers. So an investment in an HP Latex printer on PPU or PPUGRO with Midcomp, or conversion of an existing HP Latex printer onto PPU, grants customers access to this R15 million facility.

When starting a new printing venture or deciding to in-source print work, it is comforting to know that a customer can start small and rely on Midcomp to plug the gap for them when they either incur machine downtime or they run out of capacity to finish the last minute rush jobs that tend to rule their lives.



INTRODUCING PPUGRO

The most frequently asked question from Midcomp's existing, and potential, PPU customers is somewhat obvious: 'Can your PPU programme also include the printing system?'

Fair question, but think about it. Midcomp's existing PPU system does not impose any minimum printing volume. If a user doesn't print, they are not using printer consumables* or services, so it is a no win, no lose situation for both Midcomp and the customer. Under this programme, it is OK to have some very low volume print months. At the end of the day, a user only pays for the print they actually produce.

Now try including the cost of a printing system into that equation. How does Midcomp achieve a recovery on the cost of the printing system if a user prints minimal, or no quantity even if just for one month? The inevitable discussion of minimum print volumes arises. From Midcomp's extensive research and discussions with customers, minimum print volumes per se are inherently unpopular. The pressure on Midcomp was to find another way to recover the capital cost into a PPU structure.

This led to the launch of the world-first PPUGRO. In this way, Midcomp is taking things to the next level as part of their aim to always innovate to make their customers' lives simpler and better. How did they achieve this? Instead of a fixed minimum charge, they now offer a tiered, or variable, cost per square metre based on the volume actually printed in the month to be billed or invoiced.

The more a user prints, the less they pay per square metre. The less they print, the more they pay per square metre. But now a customer's printer (and cutter/heat press if applicable) and RIP software plus all printer consumables* and service costs are covered under this tiered rate system.

An example: an HP Latex 315 print and cut system, which includes an HP Latex 315 printer (1.37m wide), an HP 1.4m vinyl cutter, SAI RIP software, all printer consumables*, spare parts, labour and travel as well as production access to Midcomp's Innovation Hub, is as little as R44 per square metre.

The PPUGRO solution means Midcomp will install a printing system at a customer's premises and simply charge them a predetermined variable rate per square metre that the customer prints. At the end of every month, a customer

will be sent a spreadsheet detailing the jobs they have printed in that month as well as the total square metres printed. Midcomp applies the variable rate per square metre and sends a customer one invoice.

For a customer to qualify for this programme, certain criteria apply. A customer's geographical location, their company size and turnover and their financial position will all affect their eligibility. The application would be subject to credit approval. Their partner in this venture, like Midcomp, see the profit generating potential for the printing equipment in the right hands, so approvals of applications for PPUGRO would inevitably be more likely than in the case of a straight rental application.

Welcome to the new world. Think about this: iTunes and CD sales are dead but Apple Music is thriving. Why should users be limited to the selection of music they happen to have in their library? Apple Music allows users to listen to what they want, when they want. Shifting to a 'usage' model is a global and cross generational trend. Research reveals that in the USA, 70% of adults use subscription services, up from 50% a few years ago. One also needs to quickly realise that when one's revenue, and therefore profitability, is tied to usage and uptimes, one cannot afford downtime. Midcomp's Innovation Hub should significantly enhance a customer's uptimes.

Now customers have a printer supplier in Midcomp that uniquely understands how they can focus on maximising profitability. While others will pay lip service to that, Midcomp puts their money where their mouth is by maintaining a fully staffed R15 million production facility that is available to their PPU and PPUGRO customers to ensure every job a customer undertakes gets done right and on time. Their 13 factory trained engineers not only keep abreast of the latest industrial printing and finishing technology but also lead the industry with the best skills and expertise in colour management and production workflow. Every aspect of Midcomp's business is geared towards enabling their customers' success and growth.

*Excluding media.



MIDCOMP
+27 11 789 1222
sales@midcomp.co.za
www.midcomp.co.za

PATTERN COATING SCIENCE

IS KEY TO PRINTABLE SELF-ADHESIVE PRODUCTS



BY PHIL WEBSTER, HEAD OF INDUSTRIAL SALES, EMEA AT DRYTAC

Adhesives are absolutely critical to the success of applications across a range of sectors. Simply put, if you get this choice wrong, then you put the entire project in jeopardy and run the risk of undoing your hard work earlier on in the process, thus costing you valuable time, money and, potentially, repeat business.

To make sure you avoid this, before commencing a project that requires an adhesive solution, no matter what industry you are working in, you should take a look at the products available to you on the market.

A great starting place would be media with pressure sensitive adhesive; this type of adhesive offers a reliable way of keeping your application in place for as long as required. Be it medical, label, filtration or even construction applications, this will give you and your client peace of mind.

There are three core pressure sensitive adhesive technologies to choose from: water-based, solvent-based and hot melt. All of these options offer properties that make them better suited to certain jobs, whether that is a certified durable label or a double-sided technical tape.

For this reason, it is key to check all the criteria with your supplier to ensure that you are matched with the right product that will meet the relevant requirements for your application.

A pattern coating process to apply adhesive in dots, lines or various differing shapes to offer maximum performance to customers.

The core benefits of this pattern coating process include the flexibility available to users, whereby the dot size, spacing frequency, thickness and overall coat weight can be tailored to each customers' specifications, thus delivering a solution unique to their requirements.


Low adhesive coverage also enables permeable materials to be laminated and

remain breathable, improving the overall performance of the application, while high moisture vapour transmission rates are also possible using this technique.

Another advantage of pattern coating is the reduced consumption of adhesive products. Coverage can be as low as 15%, which will significantly lessen the amount of adhesive that customers need to complete a project, helping them save on material costs.

Materials with pattern coated adhesive are also incredibly easy to apply to a wide range of surfaces, without trapping air underneath. The specially developed process allows air to escape between the patterned adhesive, thus removing one of the most common issues when it comes to applying products.

Pattern coating is available across both water-based and solvent-based adhesives, meaning there are a variety of options for users, especially those that are seeking more planet-friendly materials for their work, with water-based technology achieving a more eco-conscious solution.

This pattern coating is key to a specific range of printable, self-adhesive products, which are designed for easy application to walls, floors and windows. Upon application, the dot pattern allows air to flow through the spaces between the adhesive dots without creating bubbles. The graphics can be applied – using the dry method – and removed, without the need to get professional installers involved. 

www.midcomp.co.za

THE INCREASING VALUE OF AUTOMATION

IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY

BY MARK SOLLMAN, PRODUCT MANAGER EMEA, MIMAKI EUROPE

Automation poses huge benefits for the printing industry across all sectors. An automated workflow allows for a more optimised production flow, from reducing the waste produced to the time needed to manually adjust settings, which all leads to significantly shorter delivery times.

Not only does it allow for printers to improve their current production processes, but it also allows for them to open up to new projects and clientele that they may not have been able to cater for.

Shorter runtimes are seen as a bottleneck for many printers, requiring individual time and management that they just can't spare. However, with automation it is much easier to manage these projects with just a few tweaks to the workflow.

All sectors, from automotive to aerospace to printing are entering into a new era coined 'Industry 4.0', representative of a more streamlined approach to production by utilising state of the art technologies to keep up with the increase in demand. The printing industry has focused in on one aspect of Industry 4.0 in particular, 'automation', to better connect printing technology and allow for a more seamless transition from when a customer places an order to its delivery. With its clear long-term benefits, this change is already happening in the industry. In Keypoint Intelligence's Software Investment Outlook 2020-21, researchers found that more companies were investing in automation in these past two years, particularly to fulfil the large amount of smaller jobs (<https://bit.ly/3yn9XPq>).

On the factory floor

Delivery times are shortened even further if the printers are able to run all hours without constant supervision, thanks to remote monitoring and self-cleaning capabilities. With an increased total output, automation helps print service providers become more efficient, versatile and profitable businesses.

Industry-wide change

Looking outside of the immediate benefits on the factory floor, adoption of automation can impact the wider printing industry too. Working on the



production line is often perceived to be a more traditional, manual job, but incorporating automation gives the sector a more modern and technical air that could attract a whole array of new technologically minded people to join the industry.

Fully utilising a new technology requires a certain level of technical know-how, whether that is editing the machine device language, integrating printers onto the factory floor or troubleshooting, so having someone on the floor with this knowledge is incredibly beneficial. Companies can use this transitional period to train up their existing workforce to better monitor this process, which collectively equips the wider printing workforce with a brand new set of skills to increase workflow efficiency. While automated production lines can differ widely, manufacturers offer webinars, product guides and e-learning to help train up staff and the company with it.

Recognising the potential of this technology early on, companies have begun the shift to automated workflows. Equipment released is Industry 4.0 ready, meaning a range of machines, from cutters to printers, can be integrated into an automated workflow. Core technologies already enable aspects like quality checks and cleaning to happen automatically, allowing for 24/7 runtime without the need for regular intervention.

Are we looking at an automated future?

Full end-to-end automation is still in early stages, with remaining barriers for entry including the need for appropriately skilled staff to handle these new technologies and the implementation cost. But once overcome, there's a clear benefit for investing in automation to future proof and become a more financially astute business. 📈

www.gsw.co.za

THE POWER OF 3D HOLOGRAPHIC SIGNAGE

BY JEFF BARNES, LIGHT FIELD LAB

Taking inspiration from popular sci-fi movies, some of today's manufacturers are expanding the capabilities of video wall technology, and by proxy, the future use cases of digital signage.

Digital signage technology is constantly evolving, presenting new opportunities for the world of business to meet ever-changing consumer needs. Gartner predicts that 25% of people will spend at least one hour per day in the metaverse by 2026. Whether that's for work, shopping, education or entertainment, AR, VR and mixed reality experiences are poised to be more accessible than ever, prompting consumers to expect digital signage experiences that engage them without breaking their state of immersion.

Redefining what was previously thought impossible, companies like Light Field Lab are exploring ways to break through 2D flat-panel technology limitations with true 3D holographic display ecosystems. From immersive in-world retail storytelling to experiential signage that interacts with viewers, 3D holographic displays are poised to transform signage with new metaverse-like applications.

Metaverse-like retail-tainment merging physical and digital worlds

In recent years, efforts to pull consumers out of the home and back to the storefront or venue have resulted in unique brand activations and installations coined 'retail-tainment' opportunities. Aimed at turning the retail environment into a piece of storytelling content, 'experience' stores have become increasingly popular as an effective way to immerse customers in an interactive buying experience. High profile brands like Marvel have invested resources in experiences like Avenger's S.T.A.T.I.O.N., a retail experience store that pulls consumers out of reality and into a replica of its blockbuster movie set with interactive screens and movie props. When the short story ends, consumers run through the experience store where limited edition uniforms and merchandise are pushed as an attraction before returning to 'the real world'.

As we move closer to a 3D metaverse landscape, brands could animate in-store processes with 3D holographic technology, merging physical and digital worlds to create real-world experiences that engage and motivate people with more realistic projections of reality. Looking ahead, products could be displayed without even needing to host them on the show floor, replaced by free-standing, fully interactive digital 3D models. Imagine handling merchandise like, trying on a watch, a pair of earrings or a hat, without ever having to pull the physical item out of its packaging.

Metaverse-like digital signage, advertising and activations

Interactive signage has been at the forefront of digital advertising and signage. However, as today's flat panel manufacturers reach a ceiling for scaling display size, resolution and density to sufficient levels to support true 3D content, 2D displays are limited by how well they can immerse customers and engage their senses in new ways.

Select digital signage activations seen in Times Square or Shinjuku like Amazon's Wheel of Time launch and the Giant 3D Cat, have made clear attempts to break through the traditional 2D screen display and 'wow' crowds with new degrees of content immersion. While these activations are novel in their execution, the technologies employed do not project a true object in space that allows the human eye to focus on an image like it would in the real world. Along with some creative content design, these kinds of 2D displays look impressive from one distinctive vantage point. However, the illusion quickly reverts to traditional flat imagery when the viewer steps outside of the screen's forced perspective sweet spot.

The next generation of light field displays will allow audiences to realise more life-like imagery, volume and depth with a significantly wider field of view. 'Real images' as defined by optical physics can be recreated by a 3D holographic display with a massive number of viewing angles of the scene that change with point of view and location. When a holographic display allows you to see objects as you move your head in any direction, your brain tells you, 'this is real.'

In addition, future digital signage solutions must adapt to the spaces in which they are deployed in order to meet the communication needs of tomorrow's viewers. 3D holographic display technologies can change a space without the need for large-scale construction or intervention — enabling brands to cater to trends and purchasing habits in real-time. It's like Fast Fashion for signage, but without the environmental impact. Moreover, combining 3D holographic displays with haptics and sensory technology, will enable brands to leverage interactive capabilities of 3D holographic signage to power characters, objects and elements of a scene to literally jump out of a display.

Projecting the future of displays

As 3D holographic display technology continues to evolve, it poses a variety of benefits as integrators and brands adapt marketing to meet a future of metaverse-primed consumers. With technology like SolidLight, future 3D video wall experiences won't be illusions of perspective, but rather real-world digital characters and objects that reach beyond the screen with holographic realism and high-resolution scene information that changes depending on the viewing angle and location in ways that mimic the real world. The applications are limitless.

This article was originally published in Digital Signage Today. 

www.digitalsignagetoday.com

SIGN AFRICA CAPE TOWN EXPO

HAILED A SUCCESS

BY MATTHEW WOOD

The successful Sign Africa Cape Town expo, held from 18-19 May at the CTICC, attracted 1140 visitors from around Western Cape, Northern Cape and Namibia. The event was well received by visitors and exhibitors alike. The event was sponsored by Platinum sponsors Roland DG South Africa and Stixo Signage Supplies.

Judges visited each stand at the expo and judged the stands according to criteria based on design, staff friendliness and professionalism. The results are as follows:

Sign Africa Small Shell Scheme

Winner: Uprint Digital Direct. **Runner-up:** JG Electronics.

Sign Africa Small Floor Space

Winner: Fastsigns Africa (Exion Corp). **Runner-up:** Kolok.

Sign Africa Medium Shell Scheme

Winner: Midcomp. **Runner-up:** Chemosol.

Sign Africa Medium Floor Space

Winner: Stixo Signage Supplies. **Runner-up:** Speedwrap Challenge.

Sign Africa Large Floor Space

Winner: Graphix Supply World. **Runner-up:** Indisol.

Africa Print Small Floor Space

Winner: Graficom

Africa Print Small Shell Scheme

Winner: Kemtek

Africa Print Medium Floor Space

Winner: Printing SA

Africa Print Medium Shell Scheme

Winner: Riso Africa.



The popular Roland Speedwrap Challenge was also held at the Sign Africa Cape Town Expo. Contestants had to race against the clock to wrap a vehicle door to the best standards. This event was brought to you by platinum sponsor Roland, vinyl sponsors Grafiwrap (distributed by Maizey Plastics) and show sponsor Sign Africa.



Speedwrap MC Alex Jay with Gary Fortuin from GEM branding, winner of three rounds during day 2 of the Roland DG South Africa Speedwrap Challenge.

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Sign Africa is a proud media partner of this event, which is sponsored by Platinum sponsors Roland DG South Africa and Stixo Signage Supplies.

The opening up of the country and events industry means 2022 will see a bigger and better event than during the pandemic.

The exhibition delivers a wide array of products and technologies which can help you find new and inspiring ideas to gear up for business.

Roland Speedwrap Challenge

Contestants will race against the clock to wrap a vehicle door to the best standards. This event is brought to you by platinum sponsor Roland, vinyl sponsors Grafiwrap (distributed by Maizey Plastics) and show sponsor Sign Africa.



Falcon T-Shirt Design Competition

Prizes are up for grabs for entrants who submit the best original themed T-shirt design. Follow our social media pages for more details. The designs will be showcased at the expo.



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The grand prize includes a HEXA laser machine worth R120,000, plus great exposure for your business. Final judging will take place at the Graphics, Print and Sign Expo. Enter here: bit.ly/3AN6Eme



Visitors will have the opportunity to see live demonstrations of new technology, equipment and substrates, software, applications and more, all under one roof.

This is an opportunity for visitors to interact with product experts about how to streamline production for faster turnaround and cost savings. The show will take place 9am to 5pm daily. Entrance is free. To register, and for more information, see the website below.

To book a stand, contact: dyelan@practicalmedia.co.za

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AUTOMATED COLOUR MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

AFFECT THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF PRINT

LAUREL BRUNNER, VERDIGRIS PROJECT

According to Laurel Brunner, writing for the Verdigris project, workflow automation, whereby data flows to a plate or press seamlessly and with minimal human intervention, still fills too many printers with fear.

They are in the data business, and yet are reluctant to commit to technologies that ensure the data on a substrate is accurate. Printing companies have embraced digital processing early on and have expanded on the back of process control and automation. They understand that serving customers requires anticipation of changing needs.

Leading into the twilight zone of my career in the graphics industry has led me to some curious ponderings. Some of them, like the early days working with Apple and Adobe, have been shamelessly nostalgic. But others have been laced with deep frustration. The frustration comes from the fact that we haven't made faster progress to advance the industry, as it lumbers into the digital age. The stand out annoyances are automated colour management and recycling, both of which have a profound impact on the environmental impact of print.

Recycling is a much harder nut to crack than getting data onto a substrate, but the same principle applies. Recycling requires complex changes in raw material supply chains and anticipation of what is required to take used product and turn it into something new. The paper industry reprocesses a mixture of different types of printed products sourced from homes, factories, municipal facilities and elsewhere. There is no control whatsoever in the type of prints that make up these mixtures, so they are inevitably blends of materials printed using different printing methods from gravure and flexo to digital. This really shouldn't matter because processing technology for recycling should align with technical advances in print.

But for the pulp and paper industry it does matter. It matters a lot because the mix includes printed papers made up different compositions that needs new processing methods and the associated investment. Traditionally the mix has been mostly mechanical pulp fibres based on wood, but printing

technology advances mean the percentage woodfree pulp fibres is steadily increasing. Prints sent for recycling will not necessarily be deinkable using methods designed for mechanical pulp and old style offset printing. Such prints will generally fail the industry's favourite test for deinkability as outlined in ISO 21993. This document describes a deinking test method developed decades ago by INGEDE, an industry association for deinking.

The good news is that ISO is developing a document that describes another test method for mixtures of mechanical and wood free papers. This will far better reflect industry reality and hopefully encourage pulp and paper mill owners to invest in their own futures. The alternative is more waste paper being incinerated rather than recycled, something no one wants.

This article was produced by the Verdigris Project, an industry initiative intended to raise awareness of print's positive environmental impact. Verdigris is supported by: FESPA (www.fespa.com), Fujifilm (www.fujifilm.com/sustainability/), HP (www.hp.com), Kodak (www.kodak.com/go/sustainability), Practical Publishing (www.practicalpublishing.co.za), Miraclon (<https://miraclon.com>), Unity Publishing (<http://unity-publishing.co.uk>) and Xeikon (www.xeikon.com).

Verdigris



Laurel Brunner, Managing Director Digital Dots Limited,
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Printing SA Hosts HR Forum

The KwaZulu-Natal Chamber of Printing SA launched its first face-to-face HR Forum on 18 May 2022, after an extended break primarily owed to the pandemic. The thrust was to provide their valued members with the best tools to sharpen their People Management skills, as Printing SA understands this to be the heart of every business.

The forum was held at Urban Venue in Island Circle Office Park, with 27 members in attendance. The presenters were seasoned professionals that have been navigating the HR space for many years and have fast become experts in their spaces.

Angie Thompson, founder of Success Point Consulting, unpacked post-pandemic HR issues under the umbrella of how to navigate the HR space post-pandemic, and Rose Govender, Recruitment Manager at Pro-Talent Appointments, unearthed recruitment trends post-pandemic.

Both presenters covered content that equipped members with vital information to best structure and manage their human resources and to



ultimately develop a deep passion for their people. Members responded positively to the content that was presented and engaged in deeper conversations with the presenters and other members over light breakfast at the end. It was unanimous from



members in attendance that Printing SA should continue providing opportunities akin to further grow, preserve and support the printing, packaging, signage, visual communications and allied industries.

Printing SA Hosts Business Networking Forum At Africa Print Cape Town Expo

Printing SA's Business Networking Forum featured renowned UCT Liberty Institute of Strategic Marketing gurus Paul Egan (director) and Dr James Lappeman (head of projects), who discussed the challenges for brands in the post-Covid era. It was held on 18 May during the Sign Africa Cape Town expo at the CTICC.

The Institute has been busy speaking with consumers to better understand how and if attitudes and behaviours have shifted. This 45 minute presentation provided an outline of the wider consumer picture whilst also highlighting the challenges and potential opportunities for business and brands in the post-Covid era.

Egan and Lappeman lead the work at the UCT Liberty Institute of Strategic Marketing. Their work on South African consumer behaviour and marketing has been presented in local and international boardrooms across categories. Their work has also been published in international journals like the Journal of International Marketing,

the International Journal of Market Research and the European Business Review, to name a few. Their most recent textbook 'Marketing to South African Consumers' has had 55,000 downloads since its launch in 2021.

The forum was sponsored by platinum sponsors Fujifilm and Kyocera.



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Booyens

HP LATEX 335 WITH CUTTER

30 JUNE

R190,000. The printer is about 18 months old.

Jayson +27 79 504 7805

Ballito

DTF PRINTER

27 JUNE

Still sealed in crates. R240,000, neg. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I am forced to sell this brand new machine. Currently at customs clearance and still in crates awaiting release. Awaiting the red tape and delays due to storms in KZN. All import duties and taxes have been paid in full. Machine comes with a full one year warranty except on the printheads.

Pierre Hunt

+27 82 545 8068

Tzaneen

MIMAKI JV33-160

22 JUNE

1.6m wide dye sublimation printer. R40,000. Non working. Needs a head replacement. All other components are working 100%. Dye sublimation inks. Bulk feed system fitted.

Julian +27 82 325 1234

Durban

REFURBISHED ROLAND VS640 PRINT AND CUT

21 JUNE

R149,900, neg. Printer is in really great condition with printhead being replaced when printer was refurbished. Have all invoices from Roland agents of the work that was done. Printer is only serviced by Roland agents and only original eco-sol toners have been used.

Danny McIntosh

+27 82 324 1795

Pretoria

HANDTOP UV ROLL TO ROLL PRINTER

20 JUNE

Large format printer. R120,000. Good working condition. CMYK heads are printing. No White head. Has been removed. Machine has received technical support from Clear Solutions.

Derrick +27 21 531 7518

Western Cape

OKI PRO8432WT

20 JUNE

A3 white toner printer. R45,000. Like new. All colours still 95% full plus a spare white toner cartridge.

Butch Evans

butch.e54@gmail.com

Gauteng

CANON IPF5100

16 JUNE

R15,000.

Ildeko van Tonder

+27 73 200 7899

East Rand

CANON IPF8300

15 JUNE

R67,500. Spare printhead and 12 x 700ml ink cartridges included. Inks and printhead alone is worth R75,163 (price from Canon as at May 2022). Excellent quality printer for canvas prints and posters.

José

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Centurion

THREE MIMAKI JV33-160'S

9 JUNE

With bulk feed systems. R90k for all, neg. Machines have been standing since November as we upgraded to latex. Machines sold vootstoets. They were running perfectly but then not sure if heads may be blocked due to sitting.

Darren Courtenay

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Durban

HP LATEX 110

1 JUNE

R110,000. HP Latex 110 Large format printer. 1370mm width in excellent condition with 80% inks. Selling because we closed one of our branches.

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25 MAY

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28 JUNE

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3 JULY

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29 JUNE

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Gauteng

SIGNAGE ALL ROUNDER

28 JUNE

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sales@hashtagpro.co.za

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ESTIMATOR

27 JUNE

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gm@Zelus.co.za

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23 JUNE

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vasu@dynamitedigital.co.za

Gauteng

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

21 JUNE

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experience in DTP/graphic design.

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POSITION AVAILABLE 21 JUNE

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21 JUNE

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johnny@spstudio.co.za

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21 JUNE

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vinny@flashgroup.co.za

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16 JUNE

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sales@zenmark.co.za

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PRINTING SUPERVISOR

16 JUNE

Main responsibilities: calculate and schedule work for various printing systems, including Brother DTG GTXpro B (direct to garment printer), and DTF printer (digital transfer printing). Supervise and oversee the activities of the team. Develop, coach and counsel team members to meet/exceed goals and objectives. Proven experience with supervising others in a production environment is critical. Digital printing experience is essential.

sam.vanderwatt@jonssonworkwear.com

Gauteng

ROLL CHECKER

10 JUNE

Handle pressure; be prepared to work

shifts and overtime; be physically fit; have excellent vision. Previous print experience or similar environment is a must.
tyron@expandasign.net
KwaZulu-Natal

VEHICLE BRANDING VINYL APPLICATOR 8 JUNE

Looking for a skilled vehicle vinyl applicator to join our team. Experience in reflective application is a must and you will be required to do a practical test when you come for an interview.
Timothy +27 79 149 6373
timothy@angelokater.co.za
Gauteng

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andrew.miller@inlinesignservices.co.za
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admin@sunwaysigns.co.za
Gauteng

SIGNAGE ALL ROUNDER 3 JUNE

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thembinkosidube21@gmail.com
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Pretoria

ALL ROUNDER 13 JUNE

Experience as a: welder, driver, vehicle wrapper, installer and vinyl applicator. More than five years' experience in

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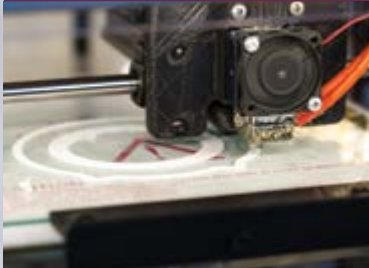
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graphics such as Contra Vision, sandblast, tints etc.
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Enny
MOBILE: +27 73 696 9344
E-M: taye_one@yahoo.ca

VINYL APPLICATOR
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Johannesburg
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E-M: sikholiwem@bostonbc.co.za

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Gauteng
Thabiso Monyobo
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Vinyl applicator, rigger and operator. Randburg
Nishal
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E-M: nishalm26@gmail.com

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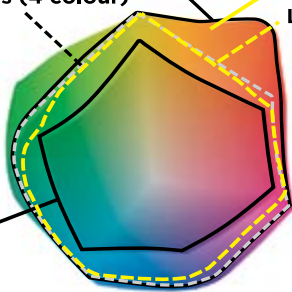


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