

cygnus

WIDE-FORMAT IMAGING

www.wide-formatimaging.com

PREMIER SOURCE FOR WIDE- AND GRAND-FORMAT IMAGING

JANUARY 2009

Building Excitement on a Grand Scale

Also in this issue: Aqueous Printer Update • Benefiting from Plan Rooms • Printer Review: Gandinnovations Jeti 3324 Aquajet

outdoor

Flamingo

Donny
& Marie

SKY
TAG

National Print Group recently wrapped the Flamingo Las Vegas with a giant portrait of Donny and Marie.

Building Wraps Continue to Generate Excitement on a Much Grander Scale

BY BILL SCHIFFNER

With the economy still in decline and the rates of television advertising going through the roof, more ad agencies and large corporations are looking at more affordable options to get their messages out the public. Many are utilizing the cityscapes in major urban areas as backdrops to help define the brands they market, promote upcoming events and roll out new products.

For advertising you literally can't turn off, nothing compares to a building wrap. An effective building wrap with an effective design can generate millions of impressions per year.

"The out of home industry continues to grow at a rate faster than most other media," states Stephen Freitas, CMO for the Outdoor Advertising Association of America. "This growth speaks to the continued increase in popularity of the outdoor medium such as building wraps. During a recession, advertisers are looking for value and out of home advertising provides outstanding 'bang for the buck' in the media industry."

Building wraps and wallsapes are not recommended for every wide-format output provider to offer. They require more time and effort. Producing and installing them can be a tricky business. There is only a small percentage of shops and professional installers across the country that have the expertise to know how printed grand-format materials need to be handled and what installation techniques work well in various codes and ordinances in various cities. In order to get a better handle on the building wrap business, *WFI* spoke with a number of experts in the field.

The Great Outdoors

"Building Wraps help increase brand awareness and are a great way to market products and events utilizing existing real-estate. They also have a dramatic effect that says WOW," says Gene Chambers, vice president of marketing and sales, Vision International in Salt Lake City, UT. "Advertising outdoors still remains one of the best ways to get a company's marketing message across. It has a much better cost per thousand than advertising on television."

outdoor

As for trends, Chambers is still seeing a lot of the usual traditional stuff being done but he points to emerging new marketers entering the picture.

"We just did an interesting campaign for The United Way called Live United. We wrapped four buildings in downtown Salt Lake City. It was more in the line of a public service message and it this was the first one of this magnitude for a non-profit company that we had done. Usually the car and phone companies with the big ad budgets go to this route."

He is also seeing more adhesives graphics being applied to windows "They are easier on the building and easier to install. We are doing more windows with adhesive graphics. Clear Focus has been our media of choice for window graphics. We like their Super VU products for our window wraps. It installs and comes off good and doesn't tear," Chambers explains.

Chances are if you've had the opportunity to go to the Super Bowl over the past few years, you've seen Vision's handiwork. As we spoke with Chambers his company was busy working on the graphics for Super Bowl XLIII in Tampa in February. Churning out that work will be the company's huge arsenal of printers the run the gamut from VUTEks, Rolands and Mimakis.

He says for Super Bowl 2009 they have about 600-700 art files to work with. From that they will produce more than 5,000-6,000 pieces overall, starting with the smallest pieces pressure-sensitive vinyl decals with the Super Bowl logo to grace doors and windows of the various Super Bowl sites, to grand format PVC-vinyl, mesh scoreboard trusses as well as

all the other signage that will grace downtown Tampa and Raymond James Stadium.

In addition to the Super Bowl work, Chambers reports that his overall sports graphics business booming. "We are seeing more advertising opportunities in sports venues all across the country. Sports and big graphics go hand in hand. We just did a job for the University of Kentucky's football stadium as well some work for the Philadelphia Eagles and Tennessee Titans and we are in the process of printing a number of big graphics for the Orange Bowl. Right now sports graphics are recession proof," he concludes.

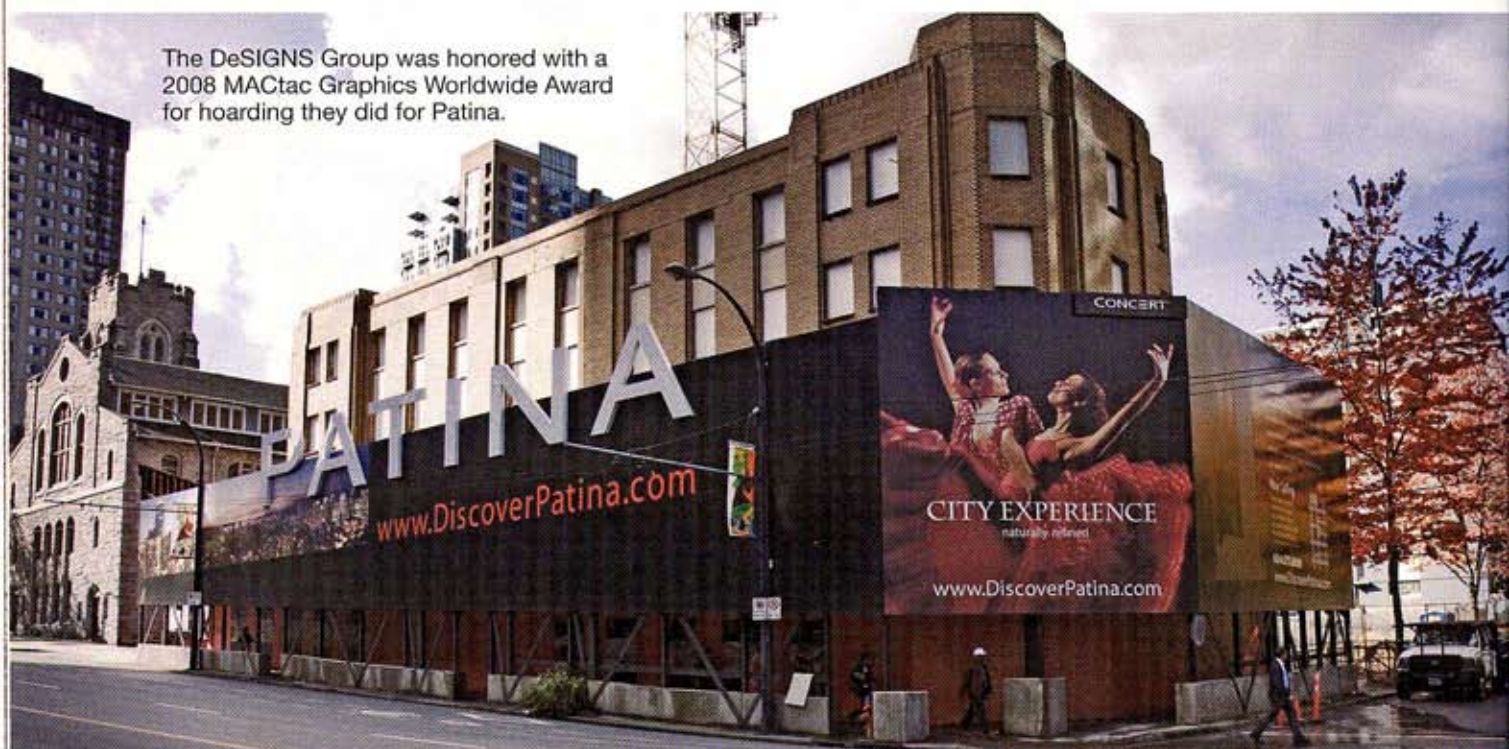
It you point to a building wrap on the Las Vegas Strip, its good possibility that the National Print Group had a hand in it. The wide-format printer now has over 400 employees with manufacturing facilities in Las Vegas, NV and Chattanooga, TN, and sales offices throughout the country working to project their client's message and images in the most compelling and memorable ways possible.

"We've been doing building wraps for 14 years, so we have plenty of experience with this type of product. We are constantly looking at new ways to push the envelope in this area," says Doug Newsom president.

"Outdoor is the one medium which is difficult to avoid and can provide advertisers with a great value for their dollars. With the state of the economy, the cost effectiveness of outdoor advertising has never been more cost effective. It's a very focused medium and you can't beat the great exposure it creates."

National Print Group's wrap expertise was on grand display this fall during the ISME show where they wrapped

The DeSIGNS Group was honored with a 2008 MACTac Graphics Worldwide Award for hoarding they did for Patina.



the Flamingo Las Vegas with a Donny and Marie portrait to promote their shows at the hotel. The 67,500-square-foot building wrap that features their famous smiles is creating a buzz from passersby.

"The Donny and Marie building wrap was a big hit. It's not only quickly becoming one of most photographed sites on the Strip, but I read in the local papers that fans are requesting room assignments that match Donny and Marie's teeth and eyes. Marie's toothy smile is about 8 feet high and five windows wide. And, that if the size of Donny's head was true to life, he would be more than 1,000 feet tall," Newsom laughs.

The Building Wears Parada

These monster signs are also showing up on downtown rehab projects and construction scaffolding. Wallscape have become one of the most attention getting and innovative forms of outdoor advertising and are often seen as a key feature in a strategically planned construction signage program.

Bob Pietila, president of San Francisco, based-Corporate Identity Systems, a division of St. Paul, MN-based Vomela, says his company is producing more construction work for the retail sector as stores retool or move into new locations. "We do a good amount of retail work and we are seeing more retail companies are looking for us to produce construction barricades on banner materials that can be reused by the contractor on another project. Many of these stores have the same contractor and construction companies. So it makes sense to reuse the wraps," reports Pietila.

One recent project that used this reusable banner wrap was for a Prada store in San Francisco that was being remodeled. Pietila's company produced a banner system and stretched it around a building that was being remodeled. The size of Prada wrap was 25x20 feet.

"The project involved a Prada store in San Francisco that we being redesigned. We a produced a reusable scaffolding system and tensioning system around the barricade. The client wanted the images to more high res because it we going to be in a high traffic area so we printed on our VUTEk 3360 ECs with eight pass and we used 3M inks for graffiti resistance. The banner

Vision International's sports business is really growing. Besides, doing all the signage for next month's Super Bowl, the company recently completed this wrap on the University of Kentucky's football stadium.

material was Seattle Textile Company 12oz Seatex Gloss and we used an ultrasonic welder to assemble. The sturdy inks really held up to the high traffic and the weather. They were able to use the system for about six months," Pietila recounts.

Wraps in the Great White North

DeSIGNS Group of Vancouver, BC, Canada is another company that is seeing new opportunities in the construction signage market. Their primary business area is the real estate market and they specialize in building wraps *continued on page 31*

Pietila's company produced a banner system and stretched it around this Prada store that was being remodeled in San Francisco.



Building Wraps

continued from page 17

called 'hoardings' which are essentially giant walls erected around construction sites of new buildings with full color digital graphics and text to promote the upcoming housing opportunities.

"We are mostly working in commercial real estate marketing but are looking at expand out into other areas," says Adam Krahn, graphic designer at DeSIGNS Group. "Despite the economy, the housing market in Vancouver is still pretty sound."

The company recently made headlines in the industry when one of their extremely large hoarding projects for their client Patina was honored with a 2008 MACtac Graphics Worldwide Award.

"The Patina wrap was designed by The Idea Partner and we fabricated their ideas and installed the project. All the printing was done on our two Roland SoliJet digital printers," adds Luis Wiechers, graphic designer at DeSIGNS Group.

"This project featured two main prerequisites: the images had to maintain color quality for the duration of the project, and the end-user needed to be able to overlay new images onto the existing graphics. The customer selected MACtac's IMAGin JT5828 Permanent as the obvious choice due to the product's opaque adhesive and 3-year outdoor durability. It was quite a challenging process, this building wrap was 150 feet long and 20 feet high and was completed in 4 foot by 10 foot sections within five days," Wiechers points out.

"It was full graphic that almost wrapped around the entire building. It was about 750 feet wide by 20 feet high and wrapped around a city block. By utilizing the MACtac media, it gave us the option to change out the panels to create the interest in the project as it was being constructed. We also used a MACtac overlamine to protect the graph-

ics from graffiti and scratching. The gloss really made the colors pop too," Krahn adds.

The Final Piece of the Puzzle

The installation of these building graphics is the critical and final step of the overall job. Many shops also have installation crews in house, but due to travel costs many will contract out those jobs in other cities. One company that is making a name for itself in the building wrap installation business is Brooklyn, NY-based Real Hit Media Installations. "We opened for business five years ago, mostly doing all kinds of vehicle wraps but then soon branched out into building wraps," says owner Shad Interigi. "So whether it's affixing straight vinyl graphics to vehicles, buildings and floors, and putting up point-of-purchase signage, static signs affixed to posts and banners suspended from buildings, we are doing it all."

Interigi says that it's tough for most companies to keep a staff of in-house installation personnel that can travel throughout the country. "If a graphics house has a national account and has to provide graphics all over the country, it usually has to look outside its own staff to perform the work in a reasonable period. That's where we come in. We are hired guns that get called into do all sorts of installations in usually short amounts of time."

He says that the advances in media technology are making more things possible that were unheard of a few years ago. "With building wraps anything goes these days. The evolution of media materials we are working with has given us the opportunity to change the canvas of the industry. Applying some jobs directly to brick and glass is allowing us to avoid working with cabling systems plus we are able to get wraps up quicker and taken down quicker as well. It also has allowed advertisers to take their creativity of their campaigns to the next level too. It's a very exciting time to be in this business." ♦