PVS In-Store Graphics started in 1991 as a vinyl sign shop, and has been at the forefront of the printing technology curve since inception. With digital equipment, over 25 employees, and a 40,000 square-foot facility, this full-service shop is on a steady growth path and is seen by clients as much more than a printing business. PVS works with some of the country’s top brands, many of which require regionalization or variations throughout their print runs.

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PVS In-Store Graphics Utilizes EFI’s VUTEk GS3250Lx to Take on Their Largest Project Yet

Challenge:

PVS In-Store Graphics rarely says “no” to a customer – that’s how they have kept such a loyal customer-base, and built a reputation as Portland’s go-to source for unique signage and displays. When one of their largest clients came to them with new ideas for a project, everyone had their doubts about its execution – even the client. The client, a major athletic shoe manufacturer, needed custom store graphics for 45 locations to promote the launch of a new shoe. Each location needed display graphics that included printed and assembled backdrops, vinyl window clings, shoe displays, printed and cut acrylics in the shape of the shoe – some of which needed to be backlit – and various other promotional pieces. To make matters even more difficult, PVS had to meet a turnaround of ten days to ensure that everything arrived in time for the overnight installation before the day of the shoe’s launch.
How was PVS able to meet the high expectations of an important customer within the accelerated timeframe?

Solution

What would have been a nightmare for other companies was a breeze for PVS, since they were the first to own an EFI™ VUTEk® GS3250Lx LED printer, even participating as a beta customer during the product’s launch. “The GS3250Lx LED printer has changed the way we work,” says Wes Shinn, Co-owner, PVS In-Store Graphics. “It’s an effortless production process, and it opened up a whole new range of opportunities that we can explore with our customers.”

EFI’s VUTEk GS3250Lx 3.2-meter UV-curing printer’s “Cool Cure” LED technology generates less heat and improved adhesion, so PVS can use a wider range of materials, including very thin styrene sheets that are less expensive to purchase and ship. The GS3250Lx printer produces high quality point-of-purchase graphics and runs at production-level speeds.

To complete their massive shoe-launch project, PVS ran their VUTEk GS3250Lx LED printer in 10-12 hour shifts for several days straight. They calculate that they printed about 180 sheets of foam-board, 60 or 70 sheets of PVC board, six or seven rolls of vinyl, plus four rolls of clear vinyl, and about 30 five-foot acrylic shoe displays. “I kept waiting for something to go wrong with the VUTEk GS3250Lx, but it never did,” says Nick Olson, Co-owner, PVS In-Store Graphics.

The 30 shoe graphics needed to be cut and smoothed, but rather than using a table cutter and sandpaper, PVS took an original approach. “To achieve a unique finished piece that really pops in the retail environment, we table-routed the

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pieces and machine-cut the edges with a radius, finishing it off with a torch to flame polish the rounded edges with a high gloss,” says Shinn.

About 25 of the acrylic shoes needed backlighting, which PVS built by hand with LED strip lights and a 12-volt power supply – another piece of creativity that keeps their clients coming back.

Results

“At the end of the project, we calculated that only about 30-40% of the work was actually print time; we needed the rest for assembly and shipping,” says Shinn. “The GS3250LX helped us meet the deadline by getting everything printed so quickly – other equipment just wouldn’t be able to handle the jobs the way the VUTEk does.”

So how big does a project have to be to qualify as PVS In-Store Graphics’ largest-ever job? “We had three FedEx trucks and two semi’s come on the first shipping afternoon to ship everything out, then we had three more days of shipments,” says Olson. “It was pretty unbelievable.”

But for PVS – the job isn’t over when the output ships. “For our projects, it’s never ‘out of shop, out of mind.’ We invest so much in each job to make sure our customers are happy,” says Shinn.

Ultimately the customer was pleased with the graphics and enlisted PVS to change the graphics halfway through the launch campaign – something that is typical in these types of store displays. Phase-two consisted of refreshing many of the graphic elements, changing the window displays, and converting many of the textured walls that they had created to flat walls.

Results:

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— Wes Shinn
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PVS In-Store Graphics
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