**Company Profile**
Pictographics was founded in 1994 in Las Vegas by the Miller family as a large format digital printing service bureau and has gained a reputation for innovation and reliability among its nationwide customer base. With nearly 40 employees, the company operates out of a 20,000 square foot facility and expects to generate nearly $7 million in revenue in 2007.

**Challenge**
For one of its large customers, Pictographics’ was producing five to 30 display graphics per year for 3,000 locations. The customer wanted to expand the relationship to 12,000 locations, and Pictographics was looking for a superwide format press with the speed and quality required to address this unique customer need.

**Solution**
An EFI customer since 1999, Pictographics turned to the company for help about the time the VUTEk QS3200 was being launched. When they saw the quality and speed delivered by this breakthrough product, they knew they had the answer.

**Results**
In addition to addressing the needs of one large customer, the extremely high quality delivered by the VUTEk QS3200 has allowed the company to migrate all of its poster printing to the press, freeing up a press that was formerly used heavily for poster printing to accommodate its growing dye sublimation printing business. The QS3200 has also allowed the company to take one more step toward a more environmentally friendly, solvent-free environment.
“With EFI’s national service footprint, good service is a given. It is something you simply don’t have to think about.”

— Craig Miller, Founder, Pictographics

Printing to Anything
In 1994, Craig Miller, his wife Susan Miller, and his daughter, Christy Miller Jeppesen were working in the developmental psychology and residential treatment field and looking for a change. Miller convinced his family to enter the wide format printing business; a dramatic departure from their careers at the time that he believed would be both fun and profitable. The Millers launched their business from their suburban Las Vegas home, where they operated it for three and a half years. As the business continued to grow, the family moved into a leased building, and ultimately built the facility Pictographics occupies today. With a 20,000 square foot facility and nearly 40 employees, Pictographics expects to grow to nearly $7 million in revenue in 2007. The company handles about 350 installations a year, or nearly one per day.

“Our business is impossible to characterize,” says Craig Miller, when talking about Pictographics. “When we first started, we were advised to choose one or two areas of specialization and become experts in those. But I am not that good at following direction, and we took a different route.” Instead, the Millers decided to do everything that was possible to do with wide format digital printing, and to do each type of application as though it were the only application they did. “As a result,” he adds, “the hallmark of our company is quality work, and even when we compete against specialists, we are as good as or better than they are.”

Far from taking all the credit for Pictographics’ success, Miller gives credit to the exceptional team the company has assembled. He adds, “Although it may be a bit counterintuitive, when you provide a wide array of services, you have to deal with a multitude of different variables and as a result, you end up with a smarter, more talented and more agile team of people. That’s exactly what happened at Pictographics.”

Pictographics had seven wide format printers using UV, solvent, and aqueous inks ranging from six feet to ten feet in width. They used these to produce a wide range of products on just about any type of material. Four of the dye-based printers were dedicated to fabric dye sublimation and a fifth was primarily used for printing posters. Miller says, “If I had it to do over again, I would name the company PTA, Print-to-Anything. The technology today is amazing, and we are printing on everything from garments to glass.”

Innovative Thinking Drives Success
Thirteen years ago posters were Pictographics’ primary product. Today, Pictographics produces thousands of digitally dyed race team uniforms, a complete line of interior decorating products, visual merchandising, POP, trade show and event graphics. Susan Miller, Chief Operations Officer, adds, “We want to take the vision of creative professionals and turn it into reality, even if we have to invent the process.”

The Millers are producing an innovative niche application for a large customer in the liquor industry that Craig declined to fully describe, but he said, “We were shipping from five to 30 graphics to 3,000 locations annually, and with 12,000 locations coming on line FY 2007/08. That meant we had to find a solution that would allow us to significantly step up both the speed and quality of our production.”
Pictographics had first done business with EFI in 1999. When this new requirement emerged, the Millers turned to EFI for a solution and learned about the VUTEk QS3200, which had recently been launched. A UV printer with high definition capability, the QS3200 offered a new level of speed and quality with its 3.2 meter width and ability to quickly convert from roll stock to rigid materials. “The QS3200 adds a new dimension to our business,” said Craig Miller. “Beyond our ability to address this expanded customer requirement, it has allowed us to migrate all of our high-resolution poster type printing to the QS3200 and dedicate our former poster press to our growing dye sublimation business.” He points out that the high definition quality the QS3200 produces passes the quality test even for display graphics that will be viewed at extremely close range.

One unique Pictographics project was a series of images for the ’07 NBA All Star event produced on Lexan for one of the sponsor hotels. Miller says, “Where our company shines is in working with brilliant artists and designers like those at Flying Colors of Berkley California. They have a vision of how they would like to decorate the venues; what effect they would like to achieve. It is gratifying to be invited to meetings early in the design process. We contribute insight and ideas based on evolving production methods and technologies. Together, we have created some unbelievable projects in a short time.” In the case of the NBA window-image, the white ink and saturated colors offered with the VUTEk QS3200 and EFI inks allow the production of a stained glass look that combines transparent, translucent and opaque properties. Miller adds, “It is very unusual to be able to combine all three of those properties from a single direct print process. This ability, along with its photographic image quality, is a significant differentiator of the QS3200.”

Partnering with Customers and Suppliers
Miller has also been very pleased with EFI service and support. He comments, “With EFI’s national service footprint, good service is a given. It is something you simply don’t have to think about.” Pictographics considers itself a partner with its customers, and Miller points out that in order to be a good customer partner, a company must have a good partnership with its suppliers. He adds, “We tend to have a close, mutually rewarding relationship with both our customers and suppliers, and EFI is clearly a valued partner that has helped us to advance our business.”
“Although the market has not been as sensitive to environmental issues as we would like, we believe that this will be a huge issue within the next five years, and we are delighted to work with EFI and other partners who help us stay ahead of the curve.”

— Craig Miller, Founder, Pictographics

Environmental Excellence
Pictographics is well on its way to becoming a solvent-free shop. Miller says, “We are very conscious of two things. First, we live on a fragile earth, and we don’t want to pollute it if we can find a way that is less harmful. Our other major consideration is our employees – we love them and we want them to be able to work in an environment that is as safe and pleasant as possible. The VUTEk QS3200 with its ability to produce lovely products on environmentally-friendly substrates advances us toward both of those goals.” The company is using substrates with as much post-consumer recycled content as possible, including a wall covering substrate that is 30% recycled content. “Not only that,” adds Miller, “but it is 100% recyclable when it is removed from the wall.”

The ability to print directly to rigid substrates also produces a more environmentally friendly product, according to Miller, who says, “By the time you use acrylic adhesives and polyester or PVC laminates on a recyclable substrate such as card stock, it is no longer recyclable. Printing directly to rigid substrates is not only more cost-effective and faster, but it is more likely to generate a recyclable end product. Although the market has not been as sensitive to environmental issues as we would like, we believe that this will be a huge issue within the next five years, and we are delighted to work with EFI and other partners who help us stay ahead of the curve.”