



## Typestries Sign & Design Grab Tourists' Attention

**Product Spotlight:**  
GERBER EDGE®  
**Typestries Sign & Design**  
**Manahawkin, NJ**

There are definite advantages and disadvantages to running a business geared toward tourists. Although virtually guaranteed an annual feeding frenzy of consumerism, you also have to weather seasonal lulls and fierce competition. Careful planning goes a long way toward the success of these businesses – everything from budgeting earnings to making sure the business has a high quality sign that stands out from the crowd—a sign that attracts attention even on busy streets with potential customers speeding by in cars.

Rick McDonough of Typestries Sign & Design well understands the needs of these local businesses. He, his fiancée, and two part-time employees operate a 1000-square foot, full service sign shop in the shoreline town of Manahawkin, NJ. Throngs of tourists are drawn to its beaches and to the gambling mecca of Atlantic City which is only 20 minutes away. The population of nearby Long Beach Island swells by thousands on any weekend during the summer months.



Four-color process

Although McDonough is new to the sign industry since 1996, he knew exactly what equipment would help him complete the most jobs in the least amount of time – and with consistent quality. Typestries Sign & Design relies on the GERBER EDGE® digital color printer, Gerber sign design and output software, and an HS15™ sprocket plotter – all from Gerber Scientific Products.

On the EDGE™, the shop can now produce in-house full color signs, short-run decals (even consecutively numbered), and jobs that would normally be sent out to a screen printer. Lettering three trucks, including fades and blends, takes a single day when airbrushing just one truck previously required a week; and small text is now quickly printed instead of tedious cutting and weeding.

"The EDGE allows me to really be profitable and to get a better quality fade or gradient blend for lettering vehicles and boats in less time. My productivity has increased two- or threefold," reported McDonough.



Four process colors plus one spot (gold)

He is especially impressed with the EDGE system because of what happened when he printed his first full color sign with it. The sign required eight 8-foot long panels for each side, and he was unsure of how the registration would work out. So on the first side, he printed each panel eight feet at a time and switched cartridges for

each panel.

On the second side, he inadvertently printed the whole side all in one length, switching cartridges only once. He recalled, "I was glad I did that because it proved that I could set the machine to print and know that it would run 64 feet, or even 100 feet, of vinyl with dead-on registration. Then I could go do other things while it printed."

This particular sign was for a jetski rental business. The eye-catching full color photo of jetskiers was almost sent to another shop to be output, but the EDGE arrived just in time to handle it. According to McDonough, it would have cost him \$600 - \$900, but he produced it in-house for a total expense of \$400 – garnering an extra \$400 in profit from the job.

"Everyone is so impressed with the full-color output," he observed. "The customer wasn't expecting such a high quality image. He didn't know it would stand out so well and be so effective. He told me right away that his rentals went way up after the new sign was installed."

McDonough is enjoying the benefits and capabilities offered by his Gerber equipment. He described the plotter's flexibility for cutting varied materials.



Scan of photo printed in four-color process.

"There is a night-and-day difference in how well the HS15plus cuts heavier materials like sandblast mask and reflective vinyl, and how my old plotter did it. The HS15plus adjusts the downward pressure so well. The tracking is much better; and it cuts the materials like butter, which saves me a whole lot of time. I wish I had this plotter sooner!"

The increased creativity afforded him by these Gerber products is a benefit he can pass on to his customers. For example, a Mercedes service center with Mercedes-trained mechanics opened nearby. However, a policy prohibited them from displaying the Mercedes symbol in a window or on a sign.

"The owner just asked us to spell out 'Mercedes' across the window in big letters," said McDonough. "I proposed to him that we actually take a full color photograph of a Mercedes and put that on his window. So now there is a three-foot high, eight-foot wide image of a car in his display window, and it's a lot more effective than just plain letters would have been."



Two spot colors for text, and four-color process for graphic.

In addition to securing the sign and window lettering job, the sign shop was also able to get extra work by making service decals to put under hoods and on doors.

According to McDonough, he is always looking for ways to keep the EDGE busy so it will continue to pay for itself.

"Every time I think of something that I know could help my customer out, I'll make maybe ten or 15 samples. Generally, people buy more after seeing the samples.

"In the two months that we've owned the EDGE, it has saved me money on five full-color jobs already. I really decided I wanted the EDGE when I saw what it could do at the Sign World trade show in Atlantic City. The examples of its output were so incredible I knew I had to have one."

Visit the Typestries Sign & Design web site at [www.typestries.com](http://www.typestries.com)

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