



A Fargo Sign Maker Discovers "All the Claims Gerber Made About the GerberCAT™ Cationic UV Inks Are True"

Jesse Liedberg of *Indigo Signworks* in Fargo, North Dakota has a bustling business in one of the coldest parts of the country. His work appears not just in North Dakota, but other states as well, so he goes to great lengths to ensure his graphic printers are up to the task of producing outdoor-durable signs that can stand up to the harsh environment in that part of the country. This is why he made sure he did extensive research when he bought his most recent printer, the Gerber Solara ion™.

"We looked at price, true flatbed capability, and especially how the inks performed, explained Liedberg. "We looked at other machines in the same price range as the Gerber Solara ion, but they were big, slow and bulky." Then Liedberg saw an article reprinted from *Digital Graphics Magazine* detailing what Gerber was trying to do with the development of the Gerber Solara ion and its specially formulated GerberCAT™ cationic UV inks and he was captivated. GerberCAT inks are made to work with the Gerber's Cold Fire Cure™ technology which cures inks at nearly room temperature, greatly expanding the list of compatible materials. "If Gerber could pull it off, it would be an amazing feat. It was a risk for Gerber being the first one, especially since others had tried similar technology and failed," said Liedberg.



At the ISA in Orlando, FL, Liedberg saw the Gerber Solara ion and heard the description of how Gerber made the leap in new technology directly from Gerber's engineers. "The Solara ion's biggest selling point was ink type," said Liedberg. "My belief was that I should primarily look at what the ink was doing, and the Solara ion's unique cationic formulation has attributes over and above solvent inks—it's just a better ink. All the claims Gerber made about the GerberCAT inks are true."

Liedberg also researched printers in the class above the Gerber Solara ion—hybrid machines with pinch rollers. Even though these machines were in the same price range as the Solara ion, Liedberg said, "They [hybrid machines] have higher labor costs and aren't so much different than solvent machines. The extra \$50,000 cost isn't worth what you get." Liedberg expanded on his thoughts, "Five years ago, print-to-material was enough in a printer, and you had to accept a certain amount of graininess. Now you can have a true flatbed high quality printer in a nice price range with good quality printing. That's a big deal."

Liedberg offers some insight into other advantages the Gerber Solara ion offers customers, “The Solara ion’s ability to print direct to media removes much of the labor required, and 70% of job costs in this field are labor. There’s no way we could have printed this amount of output for this cost on any other machine. And the price point was what we were looking for. The Gerber Solara ion was worth the wait.”

According to Liedberg, it was easy adding the Gerber Solara ion to his business. “The installation was flawless. The Onyx® software works perfectly with the machine—great for output, fast RIP capabilities—and two days after installation we were up and printing jobs. The Gerber Solara ion is very user-friendly.”

Liedberg and Indigo Signworks didn’t waste any time putting the Gerber Solara ion to good use. One of Liedberg’s first jobs was printing 80 sheets of Dibond™ for two out-of-state universities including some for outdoor applications like scoreboards and advertisements. Liedberg said, “We printed them with the Solara ion and cut them using the Gerber Sabre™ 48 router. We had no problems with ink chipping off during the routing.”



The GerberCAT cationic UV inks have three-year outdoor durability, they cure around room temperature. Liedberg commented, “The color is good. The GerberCAT inks grab better than other inks and have greater durability in general. I did abrasion and chemical tests and the Solara ion’s cationic UV inks hold up better than other brands. I am also happy with the generous flatbed proportions that allow me to print directly on large pieces of material.”

Liedberg wasn’t surprised the Gerber Solara ion has turned out to be just what he was looking for. He knows Gerber’s history of quality makes the investment a good decision. “I’ve had a Sabre for ten years, and it’s been great. In my circle of the industry, Gerber hasn’t been the cheapest, but they are certainly the most reliable. They are often first in new technology and their machines are like workhorses.” Liedberg continued, “The Gerber Solara ion has been a very profitable printer, even in the two weeks we’ve had it.” Liedberg knows he can look forward to many more years of profitability with the Gerber Solara ion in his business.

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