



## A Tinley Park, Illinois Family-Owned Sign Shop Fights the Slowing Economy with the Gerber Solara ion™

John Glaszer of *SignMasters* in Tinley Park, Illinois knows what a challenge a slow economy can present to a business. As a corporate accountant in the 1980's, he experienced the loss of his job as a result of the recession. Glaszer and his wife turned the unexpected setback into a new adventure and used the opportunity to start their own sign making business, which now employs their son, Jeff as well. The intervening years have seen their sign shop grow with the area, incorporating silk screening, sign making, vehicle graphics and more. While the recent downturn in the economy has caused many small businesses in the community to close their doors, the Glaszers are adding new services to keep their shop competitive and flexible. This is why they decided to expand their business with Gerber Scientific Products' new UV inkjet flatbed printer, the Gerber Solara ion™.



John Glaszer was already familiar with ink jet technology because he already owns a different brand digital printer, but his experience with that machine was a disappointment. Glaszer's son



Jeff shares that it was the Solara ion's new technology that interested them, "The UV lights in other machines burn out quickly and aren't as dependable as the Solara ion's, which uses lower temperatures to cure the ink. When we traveled to Advantage Signs in Schaumburg, Illinois to see a demonstration of the Solara ion, we were amazed. Even with the lower curing temperature, the jobs cured quickly, and were able to be used right away."

The price point impressed Glaszer as well, "The price was excellent for a family business like ours, and the print quality was as good as the higher-priced brands. We researched other brands, but they couldn't compete with the Gerber Solara ion. The others pulled the material through the machine, but the Solara ion's ability to keep the substrate stationary and move the print head over the material was for a better solution."

The Gerber Solara ion has opened up a whole new stream of revenue for SignMasters. Jeff Glaszer notes, "With our old machine, we had to turn jobs down if they needed to be printed via

roll-to-roll, or if they required substrates that were too thick. Now we can print much larger jobs and jobs using a wider variety of materials.” The Gerber Solara ion is already bringing SignMasters new clients—they have started making displays for major distributors for football season, as well as being able to print a billboard for a regional fast food chain. “We designed the billboard using artwork from their website. With Onyx® software’s tile program, all we had to do was print them directly on the MDO board and deliver the order. Within a half day, we turned out six 4'x8' sheets and they had them installed on the billboard next to the highway.”



The savings in labor can be seen in other jobs as well. Glaszer reveals, “We make metal towing signs for parking lots, and we don’t have to make and apply the graphic anymore. With our Solara ion, we can now print directly on the metal. This saves us so much time, we can spend more time with our customers or catch up on other work. We can load a job, press ‘print’ and go do something else.”

Glaszer’s enthusiasm about the Gerber Solara ion’s ease of use isn’t just because it makes jobs easier for him. “My mom is not that comfortable with computers, but the Solara ion is so user-friendly that even she can use it regularly. The Onyx software allows her to drag and drop, and once the designing is complete, all she has to do is press ‘print’ on the Solara ion, and the job starts. I can even have my 18-year old sister run jobs. In addition, the cleaning process is much simpler than other printers.”

Glaszer has also been impressed with the printer’s durability that he has experienced to date. “Sometimes we go a week using our Solara ion twenty-four hours a day, and the machine has been able to handle that workload for six months now. We don’t have the worry that we are going to accept a job and the machine will not work. With the clients we attract, we need to get the jobs done with reliability and speed, and the Solara ion allows us to do that.”

The Gerber Solara ion is such an asset, owner John Glaszer says when the time comes for the business to expand, “instead of buying an inkjet printer, I’ll disable one of my screen presses and buy another Solara ion.”

