



Good Horse Sense Strengthens Thorough-Graphic Signs

Product Spotlight:
Gerber SOLARA UV2

Thorough-Graphic Signs
Lexington, KY

“Competition drove me to it,” says John Cox, owner of Thorough-Graphic Signs, Inc. “I had a long-time customer that was getting better price quotes than I could give him with my current sign making technology. The customer was nice enough to give me a chance to meet the price, so I immediately started researching flat bed ink jet printers,” adds Cox.



Thorough-Graphic Signs, Inc., located in the horse capital of the United States – Lexington, KY, supplies large quantities of temporary and permanent signage to local businesses including large horse farms and race tracks. They produce all kinds of signage including vehicle graphics, three-dimensional company signs, and temporary pedigree placards. And it was some 800+ horse pedigree placards that Cox was determined to find a way to produce competitively.

“I looked at a couple of flat bed ink jet printers – the Gerber Solara™ UV2 and the MacDermid ColorSpan®,” explained Cox. “While the ColorSpan was somewhat faster, it was significantly more expensive. I originally bought the Solara because of the price,” says Cox, “but I haven't found the speed to be a big issue. I am not waiting for the printer to finish; I just load up the job and go do something else while it prints.”

Installing the Gerber Solara UV2 allowed Cox to remain competitive while creating a superior product. “The Solara UV2 produces jobs without the personnel labor associated with cut vinyl signs,” says Cox. “My employees who would normally be weeding, taping, adding alignment lines, applying cut vinyl text, and cleaning up the final sign are free to do something else – work on a different job or go do an installation.”

“Investing in the hybrid (flat-bed and roll-to-roll) UV printer made perfect sense when I looked to strengthen my established business,” says Cox. “Adding a Solara UV2 is like adding another employee – but without, benefits, workman's comp, and vacation time,” boasts Cox. “And the printer doesn't take sick time.”

The Solara's ability to print using six inks (cyan, yellow, magenta, black, green, and violet) lets Cox mimic virtually any sign blank color. "Previously I had to stock many different colors of poster board to produce my customer's horse pedigree signs. Now I stock white poster board and instantly print the color they want instead," comments Cox. "I can also match any PMS® (PANTONE MATCHING SYSTEM®) color required using the Solara's excellent process colors."

The size restriction of small width vinyl printers has also been removed with the large format Gerber Solara UV2. "We often have to print 4' x 4' charts of race winnings or enlarged catalog pages," says Cox. "In the past I had to create these on the Gerber EDGE® and piece them together – a labor intensive process. With the Solara UV2, I print the graphic right on the sign blank at a lower cost because I eliminate the tedious time spent aligning and applying the vinyl panels."

"While I have not formally calculated a return on my investment," states Cox, "the Solara UV2 has paid for itself so far. Recently I printed 22 signs valued at \$50.00 each in just one day using the Solara UV2. Subtracting the cost of the material, I still made a profit that almost equaled my monthly lease payment." Cox went on to say, "and with very little employee involvement other than setting up the sign blanks on the printer."

"I have only had the Gerber Solara a few months," says Cox, "but I can see that it will definitely open up new markets for me. So far I have been printing mostly on rigid substrates," he continues, "but the more I use the Solara UV2, the more possible applications I envision. Adding this printer to Thorough-Graphic Signs technology mix just made sense."

For more information on the capabilities and features of the Gerber Solara UV2, call Gerber Scientific Products at 800-222-7446 or visit www.gspinc.com. Contact your Gerber distributor to see a demonstration of the Gerber Solara UV2 in action.