



Jumping into Hybrid UV Inkjet Printing

Product Spotlight:
Gerber SOLARA UV2

Tracy Signs
Tracy, CA

The signmaking equipment market is growing rapidly with new wide format inkjet printers offered by many different suppliers. It can be difficult to decide which printer best fits your business. "I was looking for a flatbed printer to complement my current signmaking equipment" said Craig Yeszin of Tracy Signs in Tracy, CA.

"We already have several Gerber EDGE® thermal printers, a couple of Gerber enVision™ plotters, and an HP Designjet™ 9000 printer. It was time to look at a flatbed printer that would allow us to print right on the final substrate – and price was very important when evaluating the competition," adds Yeszin.



"We originally chose a Gerber Solara™ UV2 because of its competitive price point," said Yeszin, "but it is also very, very easy to use. It is easy to run the printer, easy to load the inks, and easy to setup the material" (up to 1/2" thick), Yeszin continued, "and there is virtually no maintenance unlike other inkjets I looked at."

The Gerber Solara UV2 comes complete with ready-made color profiles for many common signmaking substrates. "There was no steep learning curve with the Gerber Solara," observes Yeszin. "The profiles are already done. You just have to choose the correct one for the material you are using and you are ready to fly. We print on Coroplast™, Sintra®, acrylic for backlit signs, and aluminum sheet stock and have had excellent results with all of these substrates."

Not having to "baby-sit" the printer is a huge benefit when working in a busy sign shop. "There may be faster printers on the market," says Yeszin, "but I can set up the Gerber Solara, hit the start button, and walk away to work on a different job. When I come back it's done and in the mean time I have accomplished something else."

"We recently printed three text-intensive ice cream menu signs using the Gerber Solara UV2 in just under three hours. This would have taken us about a day and a half using traditional cut-vinyl methods," comments Yeszin. "All of that weeding of little letters and applying the text to

the sign blank was eliminated." Customers reap the benefits of faster turn around time and a more reasonably priced product. "Our customers don't really care how the sign is made; they just want a high quality sign at a reasonable cost," adds Yeszin. "Using the Gerber Solara, we make more profit by eliminating the labor to make a vinyl sign. This saves us lots of money, especially here in California where labor costs are high."

When evaluating inkjet printers, color was also a big factor for Tracy Signs. "I was concerned about the quality of red ink, as many printers have problems with that ink, but the red is fantastic on the Solara," comments Yeszin. "And the four-color process is awesome. Our other inkjet printer makes people's skin tones look 'bronzy', but with the Gerber Solara skin tones are much truer."

Tracy Signs uses OMEGA™ design software to create all their signage. The Matched Technology System™ of Gerber software and Gerber equipment yields superior color results. "What you see on the OMEGA screen is dead-on to what the Solara prints," boasts Yeszin. "When we need a PANTONE® match, we create an EDGE fill in OMEGA and assign a specific PANTONE color. When we output to the Solara the color matches the PANTONE MATCHING SYSTEM® book every time."

The Gerber Solara UV2 has also allowed Tracy Signs to gain U.S. government business that called for painted signs rather than vinyl. "Digital printing directly on the substrate flies right through the strict government restrictions," says Yeszin. "Previously we had to cut a mask with a plotter, apply it to the substrate, roll the paint on, and then remove the mask. Digital printing is much faster and way less labor intensive."

Tracy Signs of Tracy, CA is a busy and productive sign shop. Over the years Craig Yeszin has made several carefully chosen investments to make his business stronger and more profitable. The most recent investment in the Solara UV2 continues this successful trend. "The Gerber Solara UV2 is an excellent addition to our shop," comments Yeszin.

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.

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