



High Throughput and Even Higher Quality on EFI VUTEk h5 Printer Bring New Business to BrandVizion

FREMONT, Calif., Oct. 26, 2021 – Eleven years ago, the company formerly known as Signs Plus Visuals rebranded itself as BrandVizion and invested in an EFI™ VUTEk® UV inkjet superwide-format printer from [Electronics For Imaging](#), Inc. The investment paid off: Business skyrocketed, setting the Washington, D.C., metro area company on a growth track that would lead it to continued expansion offering premium-quality display graphics. Now, on the cusp of new growth opportunities, company Owner John McManus and his team at [BrandVizion](#) are embarking on new capabilities and versatility to grow with its latest investment, an EFI VUTEk [h5](#) hybrid flatbed/roll-to-roll UV LED superwide-format printer.

Kiley Gonzalez, president of the Chantilly, Virginia-based company, has high hopes for a printer that once again puts BrandVizion in a technology leadership position among local competitors. In the past, the company was one of the first and few in the area to operate high-end hybrid and flatbed inkjet printers. But, as other nearby businesses inevitably upgraded their technology, Gonzalez and her team at BrandVizion sought newer, leading-edge solutions – and were excited about the VUTEk h5 printer.

Size and speed were major factors in the decision to upgrade to the h5 model earlier this year. “The press operators love the new printer,” said Gonzalez. “If they had to complain about anything, it would be that the h5 is perhaps too fast.” In the past, she explained, a single operator would print jobs and then, when prints were completed, that same employee would take the job and handle required cutting or finishing tasks.

Now, jobs print so fast that a second employee takes prints over to begin cutting and finishing tasks while each job is running. Throughput for display graphics at BrandVizion has increased dramatically, so much so that BrandVizion was more than happy with the additional, efficient use of labor needed to complete much more work per shift.

Trade work is taking off

The machine also uses ink in a more sophisticated way, resulting in greater yield and less waste – both of which have enabled BrandVizion to be much more competitive with its wholesale pricing.

“There are a lot of sign tradesmen and brokers in our area who advertise sign and graphics production and turn to companies like ours for production,” Gonzalez explained. “We can get a lot more aggressive and ended up having to make a new price scale for those wholesale clients.”

Because of the savings in ink costs, the company now takes on business it once turned away. “Now,” said McManus, “we’re in that sweet spot where we can make money, offer a competitive price, and meet tight deadlines.”

The 126-inch-wide printer offers superior imaging in resolutions up to 1,200 dots per inch. The VUTEk h5 allows for eight-color printing or – using its extended-gamut four-color inks in a CMYKx2 configuration – delivers high-quality output at speeds up to 109 boards per hour. The printer’s UltraDrop™ Technology 7pL grayscale printheads feature true multi-drop addressability, high-definition print and crisp text quality with outstanding smoothness in shadows, gradients and transitions.

“Cool cure” UV LED imaging on the VUTEk h5 reduces the amount of energy needed for curing or drying compared with conventional UV or latex printers. Plus, BrandVizion can operate its new printer using thin or challenging substrates that cannot withstand the heat required with mercury-arc UV or latex printers.

BrandVizion’s clients are benefitting from the printer’s ability to deliver more efficient and effective display graphics. Gonzalez points to the example of a BrandVizion client that thought it would have to resort to having a hand-painted wall mural for a project, thinking the leafy, woodsy look of its logo would be too difficult to reproduce on a digital printer. BrandVizion, however, was able to faithfully recreate its client’s design at a fraction of the time and cost using multi-layer printing on the new VUTEk h5 printer.

“Layered printing is really where we want to hit because there’s a big market for interior wallpaper prints and decorative films,” Gonzalez said. “Before we got the new printer, we could print gradient films but had a really hard time figuring out how to set up the file, prepping it a certain way, and having it on certain settings.”

“On the VUTEk h5, we’ve been able to print custom gradient prints for multiple clients, which is a huge high-end product,” said McManus. “It’s a very luxurious, finished product that has helped us retain clients. Decorative films and wall murals are really what we plan to target with the new technology.”

VUTEk quality spurs ongoing growth

The new printer is the next step in success for the company, which has leveraged the premium quality possible with EFI VUTEk printers over the years. BrandVizion’s primary clients are construction and property management companies that rely on the company for wall murals, floor graphics and building wraps. The company’s ability to output high-impact color on dark print substrates

– something the company has always achieved by printing four-color graphics on top of the highly opaque white ink available for EFI VUTEk printers – gives BrandVizion an edge with discerning, “artsier” clients, according to Gonzalez.

“We’ve had clients bring in whole wall panels to print on for installing in a building on-site during construction,” she recalled. “A local eatery called the Lincoln Restaurant actually brought us its bathroom doors, which were metal and rusted looking, to print Abraham’s face on one and Mary Todd’s on the other.”

The company’s production manager and print operator, Myles Proseus and David Eberenz, have also leveraged this new technology to meet customers’ increasing requests for same- or next-day delivery by relying on its EFI VUTEk solutions. “As our customers’ level of expectation rise, we’re able to rise to the occasion because of our equipment investments,” Gonzalez said.

As with nearly every business, the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the printing industry hard, although social distancing messaging has provided a new source of revenue.

The VUTEk h5 has also helped lift the BrandVizion team’s spirits. “When you get a new piece of equipment, it creates a whole lot of buzz. Whenever our production guys go through training on new equipment, it builds confidence and gives us something to talk to clients about. It gives everyone in the shop a morale boost, especially coming off of the last year, which was tough,” said Gonzalez.

The printer acquisition provided an opportunity for BrandVizion to, as Gonzalez put it, “run lean, keep costs low, and keep moving.”

“In a competitive market, print businesses need robust solutions to bring greater value to their customers,” said Todd Zimmerman, vice president and general manager, Display Graphics EFI. “The high productivity, superior quality, and remarkable versatility the VUTEk h5 hybrid printer delivers bring important momentum to the work BrandVizion is doing to bolster its reputation as a top-tier signage and graphics provider.”

About EFI

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