EFI VUTEk printers
Case Study

Color Reflections Las Vegas wins new opportunities with EFI VUTEk printers

Color Reflections Las Vegas, a 65-employee shop located in Las Vegas, stays on top of customer needs, and for that effort the company has seen growth every single year of its 22-year history except one; EFI™ VUTEk® printers have been a part of that growth. Over the years, the company's management and staff have been pleased with the capabilities EFI VUTEk superwide-format printers deliver, and their clients in the gaming industry loved the quality and efficiency they received with their signage and banner orders. So what would cause such a successful company to replace every single printer at once and decide to venture into new markets?

Bringing in the best quality and versatility

"Up through 2015, the majority of our work used to come from the gaming industry," explains Color Reflections Las Vegas President/CEO Joe Castellano. "We have terrific gaming clients but that industry can be a very volatile, lower-margin business with many variables. We felt we needed to diversify. To do that, we needed the latest, best-quality products, and of course we turned to EFI."

So, over the past two years, Color Reflections Las Vegas has completely retooled to address new market opportunities. The company replaced a solvent dye-sublimation fabric printer with a 3.2-meter-wide EFI VUTEk FabriVU® 340 soft signage printer with aqueous sublimation inks. Castellano's customers get the advantages that make soft-signage a no-brainer in the exhibition/tradeshow market – high-value look and feel, lightweight, reusable signage that requires less in shipping, and fuel and drayage expenses. To keep up with the demand, the company also added a new heat press with a 20-inch drum.

Challenge:

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JOE CASTELLANO, PRESIDENT/CEO
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Color Reflections Las Vegas was established in 1995 as the first purely digital visual communications company. It was built with the specific goal of providing superior quality display graphics and supports businesses across the United States. It has a unique status as one of the few – or perhaps the only – large, owner-operated superwide-format digital printing companies in the country where upper management stays completely hands-on with every project. That close upper management and ownership involvement helps ensure high quality and excellent customer service for everything the company produces, including tradeshow graphics, experiential graphics, event banners, vehicle wraps, and many other applications.

Color Reflections Las Vegas credits its ongoing success to the close working relationship the company has with its customers. Each job, large or small, has guaranteed quality from dedicated print specialists who provide the highest level of customer service seven days a week, 365 days a year. The Color Reflections Las Vegas team gives its total commitment to ensuring every project is delivered on time with brilliant results for any application.

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Color Reflections Las Vegas also switched from traditional UV inkjet printing to energy-efficient "cool cure" LED printing with a 3.2-meter VUTEk LX3 Pro LED hybrid roll/flatbed printer for rigid-substrate work and a 5-meter VUTEk 5r printer for roll-to-roll jobs.

EFI Fiery® proServer digital front ends drive the new VUTEk printers while handling color management tasks. FASTRIP acceleration technology on the proServers allow for speedier processing.

New market opportunities abound

With the increased quality, versatility and productivity Color Reflections Las Vegas gained, the company is successfully capturing new work in three or four different industries. Now, the company wins high-end museum work and produces premium point-of-purchase signage and graphics for the retail market. As the sizable tradeshow market in Las Vegas and beyond transitions from vinyl signage and graphics to lightweight, reusable soft signage, Castellano and his team are busier than ever producing graphics works for large industry and corporate events.

Solution:

"Now, with this one piece of equipment – the VUTEk 5r – we can satisfy the event guys, the trade show guys, and the retailers who want high-end, up close and personal viewing quality, while still being able to print large quantities quickly."

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COLOR REFLECTIONS LAS VEGAS

The diversification beyond gaming industry work into new markets not only drives growth for the company, but also keeps Color Reflections Las Vegas from being overly reliant on just one industry, protecting the company from a downturn in any one sector.

Castellano knows that his company's ability to produce work at the next level of quality, combined with the versatility and speed his company has gained, set Color Reflections Las Vegas apart. "We have competitors who are good at any one specific area, such as fabric, or board, or roll-to-roll, but we can compete in all of them," he says.

The company's new VUTEk 5r LED printer, for example, gives the company a leg up in any number of applications. The 5r model, which prints up to 4,951 square feet per hour, has the highest resolution in its class and offers superior quality using EFI UltraDrop™ Technology 7-picoliter print heads. It also features an integrated production workflow that allows Color Reflections Las Vegas to do more work in less time with a complete set of value-added options, including an inline finishing system for all-in-one printing, x-cutting, slitting, and collecting.

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As good as the equipment is, though, the skill and hustle of the Color Reflections Las Vegas staff is an equally important differentiator. Their shop is open for two shifts, seven days per week year-round, and the entire facility, including the front office, is open 24/7 during tradeshow season.

Results:

"Even though EFI sells a lot of equipment in our neighborhood, they are probably the first vendor I've dealt with in my 30 years in the business that I can honestly say is on our side."

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Much of the company's work arrives over the Internet. The company has a project manager who only handles internet leads, and with that dedicated focus, it is common for Color Reflections Las Vegas to receive files at five or six in the evening, print them overnight, do a quality control check on the jobs in the morning, and ship the finished products out in the afternoon.

Color Reflections Las Vegas also has seven installers who are constantly out on the road. Their installation work is testament to the success in diversification. The installers handle everything from superwide-format building wraps to simple 8x10-inch framed employee-of-the-month awards mounted in corporate hallways.

There's yet another strong indicator of the company's strategically planned success – Color Reflections Las Vegas is likely to seek a larger building in the near future, expanding beyond the confines of its 25,000 square-foot facility.

Even with a change of that scale, one thing Castellano says will stay the same is the trust the company places in EFI technology. "Even though EFI sells a lot of equipment in our neighborhood, they are probably the first vendor I've dealt with in my 30 years in the business that I can honestly say is on our side," he says.

"They help us every step of the way. If we have a problem with a material, the ink won't stick, a fabric doesn't print direct well, or it doesn't transfer well, they are always right there ready with suggestions and comments. They are truly a partner to all of their customers."

EFI fuels success.

We develop breakthrough technologies for the manufacturing of signage, packaging, textiles, ceramic tiles, and personalized documents, with a wide range of printers, inks, digital front ends, and a comprehensive business and production workflow suite that transforms and streamlines the entire production process, increasing your competitiveness and boosting productivity. Visit www.efi.com or call 650-357-3500 for more information.

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