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2 Salt Lake firms designing Bowl decor Enormous vinyl wrap to drape Detroit building

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Deseret Morning News

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For the second straight year, two Utah companies will play an integral part in presenting America's most-watched annual athletic event — the Super Bowl.

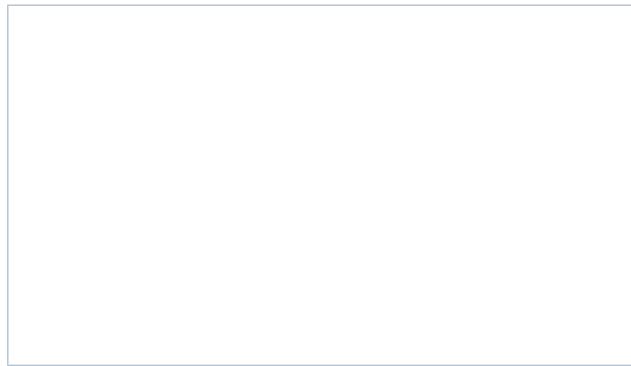
The National Football League on Thursday unveiled its plans for what is believed to be the biggest custom-shaped adhesive-backed vinyl building wrap ever installed, draping the NFL Headquarters for Super Bowl XL, the GM Renaissance Center in downtown Detroit.

But the building wrap is just the first of thousands of graphics slated to adorn Motor City in the weeks leading up to the big game, held Feb. 6 at Ford Field. In that time, five companies — led by Infinite Scale Design Group and Vision International, both based in Salt Lake City — will transform the nation's automotive capital, the home of Motown, into a football-frenzied Super Bowl city.

Infinite Scale, the design firm, and Vision International, a specialist in large digital printing, teamed together to present last year's Super Bowl, held in Jacksonville, Fla. Both say they're glad to be back and are determined to make the event's 40th anniversary something special.

"We did have a little bit of a running head start," said Gene Chambers, vice president at Vision International. "After doing it the previous year, we have our processes down pretty well, as to how we go from the creative process to design to printing and installation."

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But that's where the commonalities will end, Chambers said.

"We have unique challenges in Detroit because of the weather, and it being a cold weather Super Bowl rather than a warm weather Super Bowl," he said. "So we tried to find ways to brighten up the city, both with lighting and graphics."

Cameron Smith, principal and creative director with Infinite Scale, said the graphics will create a celebratory atmosphere — celebrating the city, the season and the event. Super Bowl XL does, in a way, hearken back to the experiences both companies gained during the 2002 Olympic Winter Games, when they worked together to create and produce the massive building wraps adorning Salt Lake City's metropolitan center and various venues.

STORY PHOTO

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Infinite Scale Design Group Please see Super Bowl on D11

An artist's drawing of the building wrap to be installed on the GM Renaissance Center in Detroit for Super Bowl XL.

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"Part of what we're doing is to celebrate winter, to celebrate the cold, in a way, just the way you would with the Olympics," Smith said. "People don't avoid the Olympics because it's cold. We want to embrace those people who are so die-hard.

"Even though this is an indoor stadium, it's still plenty cold, and you've got these people who are enduring the elements right along with the players. So you have this relationship that's sort of symbiotic. There's something unique about that, something special that you can really only get from a cold or rainy football game."

Both Infinite Scale and Vision International are keeping the specific design and thematic elements under wraps for now, except to say that they're working on more than 4,000 individual graphics for the event — for use at the stadium, the airport, team and media hotels, the Renaissance Center and practice fields.

"We're doing more in Detroit than we did in Jacksonville," Chambers said. "There will be more graphics up, more of everything. I think it'll look really good."

Brian McCarthy, the NFL's director of corporate communications, told the Deseret Morning News that the event organizers "had an excellent experience working with both companies last year."

"They truly grasp our values and vision of how we want the Super Bowl to be presented visually to the world," McCarthy said.

Though two years hardly makes a pattern, Smith said he hopes Super Bowl XL is but the second step in a long-term relationship with the NFL.

"One of the things we're proving is that even with multiple companies working together (on the project), we can do this thing," Smith said. "We're all specialists at what we do, and that's what makes it work. What we're hoping is that we're involved with this (event) for quite a while."

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