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Digital print service providers equipped with wide-format and superwide printing systems from NUR Macroprinters provide attention grabbing, large scale graphics for Olympic venues and surrounding locations

During the XIX Winter Olympics, the city of Salt Lake City, Utah provided a world-class venue in which athletes from around the world could exhibit their skills in front of huge live and even larger television audiences. Likewise, the Olympic venue and surrounding locales presented a unique opportunity for sponsoring companies to capitalize on the worldwide visibility the Games generated to promote their products and services.

Marketing experts know that using large-scale images produced on wide and superwide format digital printers is a proven way to attract attention to a brand. Larger than life digital prints are unmatched in their attention getting power. Additionally, graphics can add aesthetic value to otherwise unattractive structures.

Producing these graphics – ranging from shopping mall displays, wall murals, railing and pole banners to full scale building wraps – provided a welcome business opportunity for several NUR Macroprinters customers. These customers included Vision International of Salt Lake City, Utah; Design-to-Print, LLC of nearby St. George, Utah; and Fabric Images of Elgin, Illinois. The body of work they produced for this event demonstrates the flexibility and versatility of NUR Macroprinters’ products – both equipment and consumables – as well as the ingenuity and dedication to customer service and fast turnaround of the print service providers.

Vision International decorates extra large bleacher backs

Some of the most visible graphics at the Olympic games were the mesh coverings for the bleacher backs outside eight of the sporting venues including the medals plaza, the luge run, the ski jump, and the Rice-Eccles Olympic stadium where the opening and closing ceremonies were held. The Salt Lake City Olympic Committee’s “The Look of the Games” department



commissioned the graphics from Vision International of Salt Lake City who used its four NUR Blueboard™ HiQ+ superwide printing systems to tackle the project. Vision also printed an extra-large banner for the Olympic Sports Park and produced banners for several indoor venues.

Vision International's service offerings range from full image scanning, color manipulation and pre-press capabilities to proofing and final printing on a variety of printers including four state-of-the-art NUR Blueboard HiQ digital printing systems. Vision printed a total of almost 200,000 sq.ft. in about 55 pieces for the Olympics bleacher back project, representing over \$1 million in business for printing and installation. The company received the first of many pieces of final artwork for the project on January 7, 2002 and had all graphics printed and installed by Monday February 4th. The NUR Blueboard HiQ was selected as the printer of choice for all of these oversized graphics because of its productivity as well as its superb color consistency and repeatability. These attributes are essential when printing oversized graphics in sections to ensure that all of the sections match when sewn together and installed.

The eight different bleacher back graphics scenes were printed on the NUR Blueboard HiQ on a mesh

substrate in strips that were seamed together into larger pieces and then installed in strips at the individual venues. One example, an image of a ski jumper for the Utah Olympic Sports Park measured 105 ft. tall x 318 ft. wide. It was printed on individual mesh panels measuring 16 feet wide that were then seamed into panels measuring 32 ft. x 105 ft. Another graphic of a downhill ski racer measuring 54 ft. x 183 ft. wide was printed in a similar fashion.

According to Gene Chambers, VP Sales and Marketing at Vision International, seaming the panels, grommeting and installation – not digital printing – consumed the majority of the four-day production time.

Chambers added that when the company first began production of the graphics, the art directors responsible for the original images insisted on being present for press checks. After checking the first several jobs produced on the NUR Blueboards, the art directors abandoned the press check. They experienced, first-hand, the consistency of the NUR Blueboards and were confident in Vision's ability to do the job.

“One of the nicest things about the NUR Blueboards is that they're very consistent. That makes them great for producing giant wall pieces. It's one of their biggest advantages along with their speed. Using the Blueboards, the multiple pieces of a super-sized graphic consistently match from panel to panel.”

Design-to-Print meets an “Extreme” Challenge for Mountain Dew Ice Village

Exhibition events at the Olympics are used to showcase exciting, new, and often “extreme” sports, which, if they become popular enough, may become medal events in future years. For example, snowboarding was an exhibition sport in 1994 in Lillehammer and made its debut as a medal event in Nagano in 1998.

The Salt Lake City games were the showcase for yet another new extreme sport -snowboard sky jumping. For this event, Design-to-Print, a new NUR customer based in St. George, Utah faced and met the “extreme” challenge of providing 23,000 sq.ft. of exciting outdoor décor for the event, using their brand new NUR Salsa Ultima™ 5000 photorealistic superwide printer that had been installed just a week and a half prior to production!

Design-to-Print, originally a graphic design and prepress shop that now specializes in color applications of all kinds, including wide-format digital printing, produced the designs and color graphics for Salt Lake City-based Display Business, a display and exhibit company. Their clients were looking for maximum exposure for their dollar within a very tight turnaround time of just seven days. They also wanted very high, photorealistic quality images, as they knew the venue and its décor would be subject to intense scrutiny.



For one set of clients, Mountain Dew®, Sobe™, Sony PlayStation™ and Best Buy™, sponsors of the snowboard sky jumping event, Design-to-Print produced 41 flex face banners equaling roughly 10,000 sq. ft. of material, ranging in sizes from 2 ft. x 8 ft. to 10 ft. x 40 ft. for indoor and outdoor use at the Mountain Dew Ice Village. For another client, the Orbit café adjacent to the Mountain Dew Ice Village™ Design-to-Print printed 12,500 sq. feet of mesh graphics to wrap a 250 ft. x 50 ft. warehouse.

The first day and a half of the seven day total allotted to turn around the job were spent generating press-ready files, proofing and obtaining client sign off.

Says Josh Bevens, president of Design-to-Print:

“By the second day, we were ready to crank up the NUR Salsa Ultima 5000 and begin printing the 41 flex face banner graphics.

The machine was the best choice for the job because of its resolution -- 600 dpi for printing graphics suitable for close-up viewing, and because of its superwide, 16 foot output width.”

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On day four, while the banners were still printing, they began sewing and double stitching the edges of the banners for a durable, finished appearance. Grommets every six inches were also specified to hold the banners in position once installed.

The banner production run was completed on day five and the mesh material for the building wrap was color profiled prior to the beginning of production, which was completed by mid-day on day six. The mesh building wrap was printed in pieces of 15 ft. x 50 ft. Finishing consisted of nylon RF welded tape reinforced edges and grommets placed every two feet.

All of the graphics were then driven the four hours to Salt Lake City for installation at 8 a.m. on day 7. The installation was concluded in time for the Olympic opening ceremonies that evening.

The Mountain Dew Ice Village showcasing snowboard sky jumping was an Olympic success, and so was the extraordinary, round the clock effort put forth by Design-to-Print and its brand new NUR Salsa Ultima 5000.

Concludes Bevans, "This was our first production job with the machine so we were still 'working it in'. But we got great support from NUR's product manager and the NUR America customer support team. It proved to be a great, although exhausting, way to break in the new machine. And overall the job counted towards an 18-20% increase in revenues for the month!"

Fabric Images NUR FabriGraph printer takes credit for VISA® graphics

Fabric Images of Elgin, IL is another NUR customer whose expertise contributed to the overall look and feel of the Olympics in Salt Lake City. The company, which specializes in printing fabric banners for exhibits, retail displays, museums and outdoor advertising applications, prides itself in staying in step with the latest technologies and graphics services offerings. As a technology leader, Fabric Images was the first in North America to install a NUR FabriGraph™ DS3200 wide-format production inkjet printer designed specifically for textile applications.

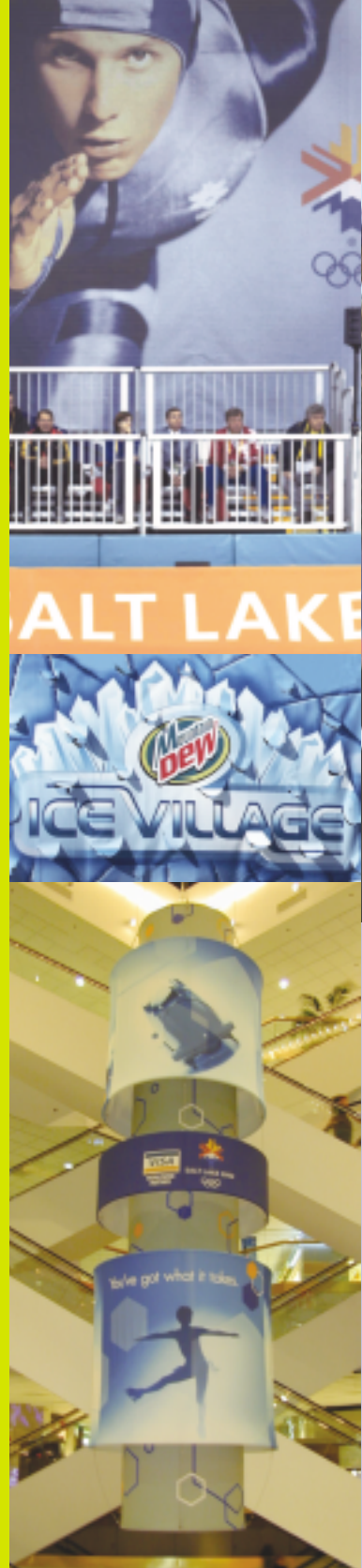
For the Salt Lake City Olympics, Fabric Images contracted with a West Coast-based display company, Digital Graphics, to produce graphics for VISA® using its NUR FabriGraph DS3200.

Although Fabric Images also owns several electrostatic printers, it elected to use the NUR FabriGraph for printing the majority of the VISA work for several reasons. Foremost, the customer wanted high quality and high resolution while ensuring consistent, smooth gradients across the breadth of the jobs. The customer also wanted the graphics to be as seamless as possible for aesthetics and to reduce finishing time, a specification that is well suited to the 10.5 ft. output width of the NUR FabriGraph DS3200.

The quality and print width of the NUR FabriGraph were particularly useful in printing the outdoor railing graphics for the VISA pavilion, which were mounted across the length of the building.

Consistency and color matching were also important for companion VISA banners that were printed on poplin and mounted double sided on the top of decorated poles.

Another unique application Fabric Images printed for VISA for the Games – a 24-foot tall circular display installed at a shopping mall – also took strong advantage of the NUR FabriGraph's quality and wide-format output attributes. The display consisted of an aluminum ring structure with three concentric rings stacked vertically around the circular core. All display components were covered in a seamless, stretchable fabric that showcased both the smooth gradients and the high resolution of the graphics themselves. The NUR FabriGraph printer, capable of delivering an apparent print resolution of up to 600 dpi on a wide variety of materials for close-up viewing, contributed to the overall high impact of this display.



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