

Opportunities in 3D Printing

WE CAUGHT UP with Avner Israeli, CEO of Massivit 3D, to hear more about how businesses in the large format/sign sector could potentially benefit from 3D printing. (Note: Massivit 3D offers the Massivit 1800 3D printer, which uses proprietary Gel Dispensing Printing and a unique printing gel, Dimengel.)

Sign Builder: Can you give us a quick overview of 3D printing?

Avner Israeli: Despite grabbing headlines among certain mainstream media in recent times, the technology has actually been around for about thirty years. Today it's firmly established among the world's foremost manufacturers across key sectors such as aerospace, automotive, and medical, as well as a plethora of others.

Within these sectors, 3D printing continues to make an impact, primarily for prototyping and short-run manufacturing

but also increasingly for end-use parts and production line tooling.

Is it only now becoming an overnight success?

Not exactly. 3D printing has evolved steadily over that period, widening the segments and markets it serves; but in recent times, it has really made a name for itself as a technology to revolutionize the way in which things are made. This can be attributed largely to much greater print speeds and ever-increasingly advanced materials.

This, coupled with progress in 3D modeling tools and other developments, is what enables it to serve different needs. As 3D printing is an additive process, it creates a very efficient and cost-effective alternative to traditional manufacturing methods.

Likewise, for the traditional printing



industry, 3D printing has the flexibility, speed, and price point to unlock new, creative opportunities and drive profitable growth for users.

The printing industry remains a difficult environment in which to operate, and the need for higher impact output than the next provider will be a perpetual goal. This is familiar ground for large format print providers, so the ability to differentiate your offering and enhance your applications gamut to customers will always stand you in good stead in the quest to maintain customers and win new ones.

Doesn't the 3D opportunity just make the next investment decision for large format print providers that bit harder?

I think it depends on the aspirations and strategic objectives of the individual business. A good number of your readers are already running successful, profitable companies, having found their "niche" offering to respective clients. That said, leaving one's comfort zone to explore and add new applications to your offering and "future-proof" business is always healthy and helps retain competitive edge.

To some extent, the 2D large format opportunity has already reached its peak, insofar as print speeds and output quality, as well as the range of projects that are achievable.

As a technology that has only just arrived in the graphic arts sector, the time is ripe to seize the day and take the lead by differentiating your service capabilities and adding a new dimension to your business.

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