



Advice for Choosing Backlit Films for Backlit Graphics and Displays

Although there are various options available for the production of signs and digital graphics, one particular area worth taking another look at is backlit graphics and displays. This is due in large part to the recent advancements that have been made in digital printing and media technologies, which have made it easier to produce high quality, cost-effective backlit graphics. Another major reason to refocus on backlit films is the large market opportunity that POS graphics brings with it.

Defined as an electronic display that incorporates a light source in back of a liquid-crystal or other electronic display to increase readability, backlit displays create a compelling visual effect through backlighting white or colored translucent graphics. Unlike many other applications, backlit displays enable the production of bright, vivid colors that highlight the product/service being sold, and grab the attention of potential buyers and customers.

Typically, the same customer base that buys outdoor banners also has a need for in-store POS graphics. The average selling price of POS applications like backlit displays is 75 percent greater than the average selling price per square foot of outdoor vinyl; not to mention they are more environmentally friendly. So it then becomes a matter of capitalizing on this opportunity by educating yourself about the various options and newest developments in the backlit display market.

Whether you're creating backlit products for aqueous, eco solvent, solvent and UV printing systems, there are a plethora of semi-opaque and clear film options available on the market today.

ABC's of Backlit Display Production

To choose the appropriate backlit film for producing graphics for light projection displays, sign shops should first consider four critical parameters: calculation (amount), location (where), application (how) and duration (longevity). This information will determine the best methodology for producing the graphic and determine the appropriate type of backlit film.

It is recommended that sign makers use matte to textured, lustre finishes for the construction of backlits, which are commonly imaged on polyester or polycarbonate-based films. Polycarbonates are reverse printed and then viewed through the backlit film or from the non-print side. Polyester films are available with a textured finish on the viewing side of the film.

Finishing

Once the backlit has been produced, it is critical to properly finish it. Regardless of the backlit film chosen, cold pressure laminates are recommended for backlit films. For outdoor backlit applications, lamination with encapsulation is the best way to ensure complete waterfastness. With semi opaque films, the use of a diffuser layer typically provided with lightbox will increase overall density to the image. Additionally, clear films require a diffuser layer to avoid hot spots.

ICC profiles are another critical element in obtaining quality output with backlit films, which are typically polyester-based materials.

For more information on backlit films from InteliCoat, call 1-800-628-8604 or email jchagnon@intelicoat.com. You may also view a clip from our Backlit Media and Applications webinar on the InteliCoatTech YouTube channel at <http://youtu.be/wBA3rHa7ZQo>.