



THE EXECUTIVE'S DAILY GREEN BRIEFING

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Signage Businesses Adopt Eco-Friendly Inks, Materials



Businesses that provide signage solutions and other promotional materials are now starting to use environmentally-friendly inks, along with recyclable materials, thanks in part to HP's latest eco-friendly printer products, to help cut ozone pollution and reduce landfill waste.

HP has unveiled a second printer to use its eco-friendly Latex Inks. The HP Designjet L25500, available in 42-inch and 60-inch widths, is more of an entry-level product compared to the DesignJet L65500 printer, which currently uses those inks. Both the Latex Inks and L65500 printer were introduced in 2008.

As an example, Caliber Signs, which owns a large-format HP Designjet L65500 printer, has already made the transition to the non-toxic, water-based ink, comprised of about 70 percent water and about 30 percent co-solvents for aqueous inks. Caliber Signs said it is the first Arizona company to produce ozone pollutant-free banners and other commercial materials for businesses. In addition, the company says its printer is solar-powered. See the company's video for more information.

The worldwide signage and display market for these printers is about a \$53-billion market in terms of page value, according to HP. The electronics giant says solvent-based ink, which has always carried some level of environmental consideration, has long been a standard for signage (particularly outdoor signage) applications.

HP now offers several alternatives that reduce environmental impact, including low-solvent inks and UV-curable inks. HP's Latex Inks are the newest solution for the market and offers image quality and durability comparable to solvent-based inks while eliminating many of the environmental considerations, according to the company.

Mike La Porte, vice president of business development at Caliber Signs, said the industry has been trying for years to remove the solvents that release dangerous chemicals into the air and environment, while still providing the rich vibrant color offered by solvent-based inks. In addition, the new method doesn't cost any more than ordinary solvent printing, La Porte said.

Caliber Signs is also using HP's new green materials — HDPE Reinforced Banner, HP DuPont Tyvek Banner, Heavy Textile Banner, Wrinkle free flag with liner and photo-realistic poster paper — that are totally recyclable. La Porte said HP through its Planet Partners Program will pay to ship the recyclable banners, flags and posters back to them so they can recycle the materials for things such as playground equipment.

HP is working to create recyclable materials for self-adhesives, films, mesh banners and front and backlit scrim banners.

Each green item that Caliber Signs creates, helps to reduce the 1.5-billion pounds of PVC banner materials HP estimates that was consumed and brought to landfills last year, LaPorte said.