

# Large-format printing

## Bringing print jobs in house provides flexibility, consistency

INTERVIEWED BY SUE OSTROWSKI

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, more companies are bringing their large-format printing in house, both to minimize outside contact and to print pandemic-related signage.

“Large-format flatbed printing allows companies greater flexibility and control, and the ability to print on any substrate up to 2 inches thick as organizations are repositioning their signage and changing their messaging,” says Lauren Hanna, director of sales at Blue Technologies Inc. “That allows for printing on glass, wood, coverings, textiles, packaging and labels, all with superior image quality.”

*Smart Business* spoke with Hanna about how bringing large-format printing in house can create more flexibility and consistency, and help with your organization’s branding.

### HOW CAN COMPANIES BENEFIT FROM BRINGING LARGE-FORMAT PRINTING IN HOUSE?

It gives them flexibility to print signage and other communications on materials that you can’t print with on traditional devices because they are too thick. And it gives you flexibility; you can print two signs or 200, and next week you can change it, and customize by location, sign, packaging or label. This allows for greater brand control and more ways to get your messaging out.

It also provides consistency by allowing them to take control over the printing process. With COVID-19, companies require instructional signage regarding masks and other requirements, and large-format printing allows them to create those signs in house and change them as necessary. Large-format printing allows for the printing of car wraps, yard signs, indoor and outdoor signage, repositionable signage and specialty media, among others, providing

**Lauren Hanna**  
Director of sales  
Blue Technologies Inc.

216.271.4800  
lhanna@btohio.com



**WEBSITE:** For more information, visit [btohio.com](http://btohio.com).

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greater flexibility in quantity and quality.

### HOW CAN LARGE-FORMAT PRINTING IMPROVE BRANDING?

More than ever, companies need to stand out, and having control over printing on packaging and labels can help them do that. For example, if a manufacturer is producing paint brushes but is outsourcing the printing of its labels, that can stall the process and increase the cost of the production. Bringing the printing in house not only increases control, it can drive more profit.

In addition, if there is an error, you’re not waiting until the labels — or other products — arrive to realize it. And it gives you more control on order size and the flexibility to change quickly. Organizations want to print smarter and are looking at where they can get the biggest bang for their buck.

### HOW ARE CHANGES IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR CHANGING THE PRINTING INDUSTRY?

Companies are selling more online, so they don’t necessarily need the same sales collateral as they did in the past. The sales collateral they need is evolving. But they do need packaging to match their online branding and tie it to their digital advertising, and if they are shipping, they have the opportunity to brand their packaging and labels.

With people spending less time in

stores, companies need to create labels that make their product stand out on the shelves. Large-format printing allows them to tweak and control the brand, while outsourcing packaging, labels, signage, etc., can cause limitations or create inconsistencies. Businesses need to think wider; there are a lot of opportunities to get your messaging out.

### HOW CAN AN ORGANIZATION GET STARTED?

Work with a professional partner that can help you explore the benefits to your business. Strategically work with a partner that can evaluate your signage, label and packaging print needs to create a customized solution that goes beyond the basics to encompass marketing, car wraps and other specialty media needs. Taking a deep dive with a trusted partner can show you where you can gain the biggest return on investment.

A lot of people are nervous when starting, but you don’t have to be an expert in printing solutions. The machines are very user friendly, and you’ll receive training.

Businesses need to be thinking not just about today, but about what the business is going to look like in six months, how they’re going to get their message out and how they’re going to get their product out. How are you preparing for whatever the new normal will look like? ●