

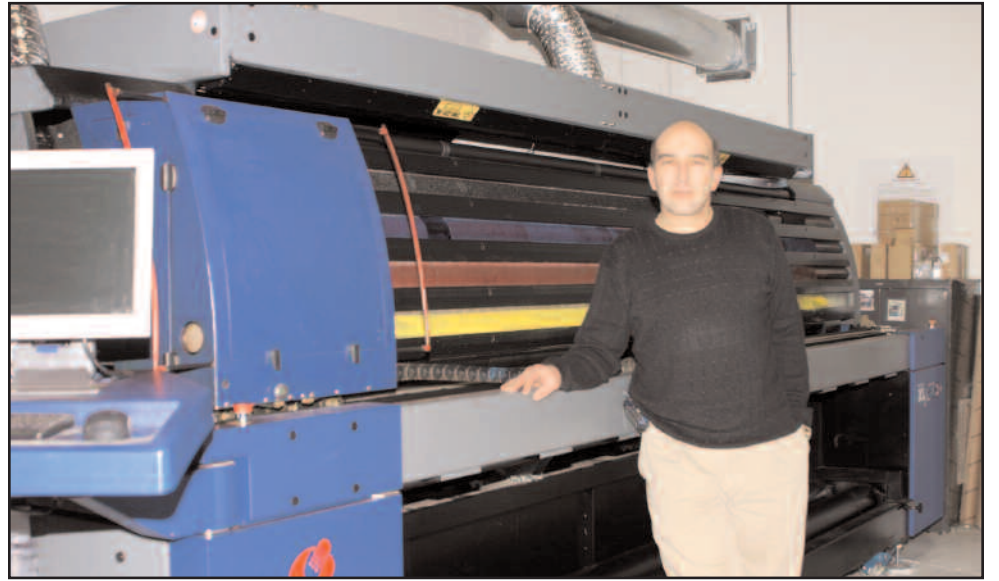


The Mirror Business Report



Ryan McPherson works on a project at CGS Imaging. The company has nine employees who produce banners, vehicle wraps, displays and other graphics for local and national clients.

MIRROR PHOTO BY NANCY GAGNET



Chuck Stranc, owner of CGS Imaging in Maumee, stands in front of the Scitex Vision XL Jet machine, which has the capability to produce ultralarge graphics. The company's clients include professional sporting events as well as large and small retailers.

MIRROR PHOTO BY NANCY GAGNET

Small Company Makes Huge Impact With Large-Format Graphics

BY NANCY GAGNET
MIRROR REPORTER

A young and rather small graphics company in Maumee has become an expert in doing it big — even huge in many cases.

CGS Imaging is a grand format printing company that specializes in superwide-format displays and graphic imaging. The work it produces can be seen virtually everywhere if you pay attention.

"You see large graphics every day, or ultralarge graphics, and don't really think

about it too much — it's just there" explained company owner Chuck Stranc.

CGS Imaging produces graphics that can be seen both locally and nationally on buildings, billboards, buses, cars and store windows among other locations. Its clients use the company for all types of large-format advertising as well as for trade shows and exhibits.

Stranc started the company two years ago after doing business with a graphic design firm that specialized in fleet graphics.

"I used to hire them all the time and I ended up buying the business," he said.

He repositioned the company toward digital imaging and in June 2005 purchased a Scitex Vision XL Jet machine, which has advanced printing capabilities.

The new machine enabled the company to service customers that it had previously been unable to reach, and made CGS one of only a few in Ohio with such capabilities.

Rick Bach of Iconic Creative Media in Detroit chose CGS over larger companies to promote the Motown Music Fest during Super Bowl XL week.

"(CGS is) a smaller company without a lot of excess overhead, so it can be competitively priced and when we're bringing deals to our clients, they're very price sensitive," Bach said.

CGS produced four mesh wall banners that measured 50 feet wide by 65 feet tall for the event. The banners hung on a parking garage in downtown Detroit.

In addition to price, Iconic also chose CGS because of the service.

"Chuck made sure everything was handled and done right and on time," Bach said.

According to Bach, CGS received the artwork for the project only three days before it went on display.

"He didn't get the artwork until Friday and we had the four banners up on the building by Monday afternoon, so that's really impressive," Bach said. "I don't think anybody else could have turned it around in that time."

Along with the Motown banners, CGS also produced 55 banners that hung on tents set up for Miller Beer super parties during the Super Bowl celebration week.

Stranc is pleased that his company was chosen over larger ones.



CGS Imaging creates eye-catching vehicle advertising for businesses such as Hawaiian Pools in Maumee. The company produces graphics and wraps for vehicles of all sizes, including cars, vans, buses and trucks.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CGS IMAGING

"We're really proud of the fact that we were able to land a lot of the work that we did in spite of the fact that some of the companies we were competing with are very large companies in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Atlanta," he said.

More recently CGS' attention has been focused on NASCAR and the biggest races that kick off the season, the Daytona 500 as well as Richmond Motor Speedway.

"We produce a lot of the winner circle backdrops," Stranc explained.

The backdrops range in size from 30 to 50 feet and feature a sponsor's logo. CGS is also producing track billboards and banners.

"We do miles of banners that go around fencing for a lot of the races," Stranc said.

CGS has also produced graphic work for the NHL at Nationwide Arena, home of the Columbus Blue Jackets and at Comerica Park, home of the Detroit Tigers baseball team.

In spite of the fact Stranc's business has become an intricate part of some major sporting events, he admits that he doesn't get any free perks with the work.

"I'd love to be able to go to

half of these events," he laughed.

Stranc's company also produces banners and signs for retailers.

"We produce thousands and thousands of banners that get shipped to fulfillment locations throughout the country," he said.

The banners are then used for displays at large retail centers such as Lowe's or Home Depot throughout the U.S.

Hawaiian Pools, based in Maumee, has used CGS extensively for advertising, especially for the graphics on its company trucks.

"We've literally gotten projects because of the advertising on our trucks," Matt Kerr of Hawaiian Pools said.

This spring Hawaiian Pools will begin a large project that it acquired from an advertisement on one of its vans that "the customer saw while he was sitting at a red light."

According to Kerr, the images produced by CGS have a huge impact on the consumer.

"For us it's really great because it gives that bigger company image, that really professional look," he said.

In addition to vehicle advertising, CGS has also produced yard signs and a win-

dow display for Hawaiian Pools.

Because much of the work that is done at CGS is automated through the high-speed printing equipment, there are nine employees at the shop. Besides producing the images, CGS is often involved with assembly and installation as well.

Stranc, a 25-year resident of Maumee, said he moved the business from Toledo to Maumee because he wanted to support his local community, and because the location at 720 Illinois Ave. across from Charlie's Dodge was perfect for conducting business.

"Logistically for us it's a no-brainer since we are doing business all over the Midwest and in some cases all over the country," he said. "For shipping or for traveling, we're right there at the turnpike interchange for travel, which makes it a great location."

With even bigger projects on the horizon, the young company seems to be off to a strong start.

"It's been fun and it's been a great learning experience and we're getting involved in really neat projects," Stranc said.

For more information, visit company's Web site at CGS-imaging.com



Large-scale banners advertise luxury apartments on the 1001 Woodward Building in Detroit. CGS Imaging of Maumee, which specializes in printing ultralarge graphics, produced the banners.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CGS IMAGING