

Making Wall Graphics Look Brilliant with Phototex Repositionable Wallcovering

Description

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A lot of our work comes from the motorsport industry, which, as you can probably guess, means everything we produce has to look twice as good as anything else to please our customersâ?? sponsors. After all, nobody in their right mind would sponsor a racing team that put poor-looking graphics on its cars!

We have two rules when printing for motorsport customers. First, whatever we print has to look amazing and have built-in â??sponsor appealâ??. Second, it has to handle really well when we apply it to the bodywork of their very expensive racing cars. But itâ??s not all about vehicle graphics. We also produce a broad range of wall and floor graphics for these teams and, historically, wall graphics have always been a challenge to get right. That is why we decided to give Phototex a go.

In a nutshell, Phototex is a self-adhesive, fabric-based wide-format print media that can be used to create short-term or permanent wall decor graphics, straight out of the box.

On first inspection, the material has quite a tight weave and texture, and a nice sheen, which makes for a great, even print finish. The surface is also â??tightâ?? enough for the ink to bed in rather than spread into the weave, which would almost certainly de-focus the print.

We ran the material through our OKI ColorPainter WS64 on a banner material profile, 8-pass run, and it worked perfectly with no banding. The artwork was a mixture of photographic images and vectors with fades and tints, all of which went down without a hitch. We then profiled the material and, to be honest, the difference was marginal, so a standard banner profile will work fine.

We produce quite a bit of wall art for the teamsâ?? offices and associated businesses, some of which we update a couple of times a year. That used to mean the headache of stripping self-adhesive from painted surfaces, which never ends well. With Phototex, those worries are gone.

We have used similar products in the past and found them difficult to print on successfully. This was mostly due to the depth of the weave, and the adhesives never seemed quite strong enough for slightly uneven or old surfaces. Nothing ruins your day like watching freshly fitted wall art slowly peel itself off the wall!

We found the adhesive on Phototex to be â??just rightâ??: the initial grab is not strong enough to cause positioning problems, but once fitted it stays in place. If you misalign a drop, simply lift it and reposition it as many times as needed. Trimming is a key consideration with this material, as we donâ??t like overlapped edges on wall art (we are finicky like that). Phototex cuts beautifully, with no stringy bits of material left hanging. It is also really good for contour cutting: we put a few pieces of artwork through the printer and then on to our Graphtec cutter, and it cut out the logos cleanly with no stringy leftovers. So it is extremely versatile as well.

What really makes this material stand out, though, is its dimensional stability: no distortion or stretching at all, however much you pull it. If a wall graphic aligns at the top, it will be bang on at the bottom too, and even a heavy ink load does not affect the stability. I also liked how easily the release liner comes away. Itâ??s a small thing, but it helps not to be fighting the material before you have even started fitting.

Phototex is a straightforward, easy-to-use product suited to a huge range of interior graphics applications. What you put up stays up for as long as it is required, and when it comes down it simply peels off without leaving any messy residue. As a graphics company, whether for permanent office wall art, changing retail promotional posters or short-term exhibition panels and promotions, we know we can rely on Phototex to get the job done.

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