

Businesses and organizations have long known the value of three-dimensional (3D or dimensional) signs, logos and letters. Beyond height and width, they include a measure of depth. With it, the shape, shadows and shading help 3D signage catch the eye in ways that flat, two-dimensional alternatives just can't match.

So, what can today's users expect from dimensional signs, logos and letters? We've "taken the pulse" of the industry to provide some ideas. Armed with this knowledge, you'll be empowered to make better decisions on the 3D options you may wish to apply to your store, restaurant, office or other facility.



#### APPLICATION OPTIONS

Three-dimensional signage is a natural go-to for storefronts and building sides. After all, it's a great way to call attention to your store, restaurant or other operation. But smart business owners aren't stopping there. The same stand-out qualities of 3D signs, logos and letters are now being applied to interior applications.

Today, 3D signs featuring company names and logos are making great first impressions in countless office building lobbies and corporate reception rooms. They can also be incorporated as attention-getting elements within other signage, such as building directories.

Other new applications are almost too many to mention, however you can see fresh and creative examples of dimensional signs, logos and letters on:

- > Grocery store end caps
- > Suspended trade show signs
- > Corporate "history" walls
- > Monument signs
- > And much, much more

#### LIGHTING CHOICES

While some opt to leave their dimensional signs unlighted, many others benefit from the advantages

of illumination. Lighting, of course, improves visibility at dawn, dusk and night. It also helps signage stand out during daylight hours on stormy or overcast days. What's more, lighted signage alerts passersby that, "Yes, we're open for business!"

Another reason to light a three-dimensional sign? When artfully applied on applications like storefronts or reception areas, illumination can dramatize a 3D sign's presentation or highlight selected elements within it.

Types of lighting for dimensional signs include:

- > **Back lighting**, most often with energy efficient LEDs (i.e., light-emitting diodes). If desired, back lighting can create a "halo" effect.
- > **Front lighting** through translucent panels on the front of dimensional signage from an internal lighting source.
- > **External lighting** from a nearby source of illumination such as a spotlight or overhead light.
- > **Retrofit lighting**, where a naturally lit dimensional sign is retroactively illuminated, usually with back lighting or external lighting.

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## MATERIAL SELECTIONS

If deciding to go with dimensional signs, logos and lettering, you'll have no shortage in materials from which to choose! Among the main types of 3D signs are:

- > **3D wood signs:** Often crafted from weather-resistant redwood or cedar, wood dimensional signs can be carved, engraved, routed or sandblasted. If left natural with a clear finish, they convey a rustic feel. Alternately, they can be readily painted.
- > **Plastic three-dimensional letters:** Offering depth and dimension at affordable prices, popular types of 3D plastic letters are cut acrylic, formed or injection-molded. You'll choose from a wide variety of colors, finishes, sizes and type fonts.
- > **Foam 3D letters:** Usually sandwiched and fronted by a hard-facing exterior to provide durability and a smooth surface, foam letters are a popular and economical option.
- > **Metal 3D letters:** The choice of many for their quality and durability, popular options include aluminum, brass, bronze, copper, steel and

stainless steel. Metal signage lends itself to attractive finishes. They can be brushed, painted, polished or even left intentionally rusty!

- > **Dimensional HDU signs:** 3D signs in high density urethane (HDU) foam offer much the same appeal of wood at a lower price, and with a material that's naturally waterproof. They can be fabricated to look like wood, or custom painted in any shade.
- > **Laminated dimensional signs:** With lamination, a thin layer of metal is applied to foam or plastic letters, graphics or logos. Users get the high-quality look and feel of metal, but with a substrate that's light and low in cost.

**A final word:** Don't be put off by all the options available to you with three-dimensional signs, logos and lettering. Instead, consider the choices as your opportunity to get a solution that meets your application and budget. Of course, your signage provider will be able to advise you on your best solution



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