



LED Case Studies and More

Voyeurism, LED-lamped signs and disruptive LEC -- not "D" -- panels.

By Darek Johnson

"The myth of a lone genius having a eureka moment that changes the world is indeed a myth. Most innovation is the result of long hours, building on the input of others. Ideas spawn from earlier ideas, bouncing from person to person and being reshaped as they go."

-- TED curator, Chris Anderson in Wired magazine's Film School, January 2011

Several months back, a reader criticized ST for presenting a "fluff" article, meaning the reader thought the pages offered little reading value. Truth is, the article presented several, LED-based, sign-design case studies, so readers, especially sign designers, could view and consider different shops' and designers' work.

Case studies also provide new ideas for signshop fabricators and technicians. And, they grant "bragging rights" to the sign-building shop and give prestige- status ammunition to its sales staff.

Viewing other's signs and case studies – voyeurism, loosely speaking, at other's design work – is a sign designer's way of life, just as artists and art students visit galleries and museums to see and study subjects and techniques.

--> ST has presented case studies for, oh, 105 years. ST Media Group Intl.'s sign-related, book catalog (www.bookstorestmediagroup.com), which lists many how-to books, also lists such case-study tomes as Sign Gallery Intl. and Sign Gallery 5, 6 and 7. Further, the list includes Rudi Stern's The New Let There be Neon case-study collection ("for designers, architects, sculptors and neon-sign designers and fabricators") and Dusty Sprengnagel's Neon World, which contains 350, full-color photos of beautifully designed, neon signs.

Here, we're presenting several design-related, solid-state-lighting case studies and a sidebar of interesting news reports.

Courtside signage first

ANC Sports Enterprises LCC (Purchase, NY), a provider of integrated, multimedia systems and sports-marketing services, announced the BNP Paribas Showdown (February 28, New York City's Madison Square Gardens) as the first professional, U.S. tennis event to feature LED-based signage around the court perimeter. The tennis exhibition was part of the United States Tennis Assn.'s (USTA) Tennis Night in America,

BNP Paribas, the eurozone's largest bank, by deposits, has offices in more than 80 countries. It employs more than 200,000 people.

Michael Hopkins, ANC's director of communications and marketing said the company had prepared six, 54 ft. (324 ft. total) sections of lineal, arrayed, LED (moving message) signage to line the tennis-court perimeter, but was informed on event day of layout changes needed to allow more TV camera access, which caused them to remove some portions of the sections.

Further complications occurred because of power-supply delays and, oddly, a change in the floor height. And, until show time, ANC's graphics and operations team worked on content revisions and uploaded changes to ANC's patent-pending, VisionSOFT operating system.

Busy day.

ANC's services comprise rotational and fixed visual displays, digital-media software and control systems, signage operation and maintenance, marketing consultation, graphic design, and print production, ANC's equipment resides in more than 20 of the National Basketball Association's (NBA) 30 venues. The company has a manufacturing relationship with Mitsubishi Electric Diamond Vision, a leader in HD LED technology.

Quizno's curvy, LED-lamped channel letters

This Quizno's out-of-sight portion – a matched-curve, opposite-wall, interior raceway -- added a design and installation challenge to Creative Sign Designs (Tampa) nifty, LED-lamped, channel-letter sign, installed at Tampa's East Gate shopping center's new Quizno's restaurant.

Creative's Rick Incorvia said, "Once the letters were flush mounted to the radius fascia, we mounted a matched-radius raceway on the inside of the open fascia -- to hide any electrical unsightliness."

The white, Plexiglas® acrylic faces are decorated with translucent vinyl. Using CorelDRAW® software, designer Vikki Klidis incorporated a white, 0.25-in. border (trap line) to add extra brightness to the faces.

Rick said the Quizno's owner had miscalculated the time needed to design, fabricate and install the sign. The shop built and installed the finished sign in 30 days. "We made sure the city would approve the design," he said, "and began fabrication while the permit approval was in process."

Mandi Wise, the shop's "permit queen," delivered the permit to the install crew, onsite, as they unloaded the truck.

Another disruptive-lighting technology?

The CeeLite® Light Emitting Capacitor (LEC) technology -- a flat, thin, flexible, impact-resistant, lightweight, cool-operating and energy-efficient light source -- spawns from CeeLite Technologies, LLC (Colmar, PA). The company says its LECs deliver flawless illumination with color accuracy for advertising, architectural and event use, as well as sign illumination and tradeshow exhibits. The product received Time magazine's Best Invention award, Electronics Products magazine's Products of the Year award and Buildings magazine's Editor's Choice award. You may have also seen it in Fast Company magazine's Widgets.

We Love story.

The "C" stands for a proprietary capacitor system that helps brighten the light panels.

The LEC technology comprises the LEC lighting panels and proprietary, LEC-inverter, power sources. The panels conform to flat or curved surfaces and will illuminate the surface itself or serve as backlighting for translucent graphics or film. The 1mm-thick panels come in standard sizes, up to 18 sq. ft. More interestingly, the panels are produced through a screenprinting process that deposits layers of electrodes, phosphors and dielectrics, which CeeLite protects with a transparent-laminate overlay.

LEC proprietary inverters, which operate with AC or DC power, are programmable, with proprietary software, to provide brightness control, fading and flashing. Further, the controls will coordinate and provide sequenced effects over multiple LEC panels.