

WIDE-FORMAT PRINTERS, INKS & MEDIA, LAMINATORS & CUTTERS, TONER PRINTERS



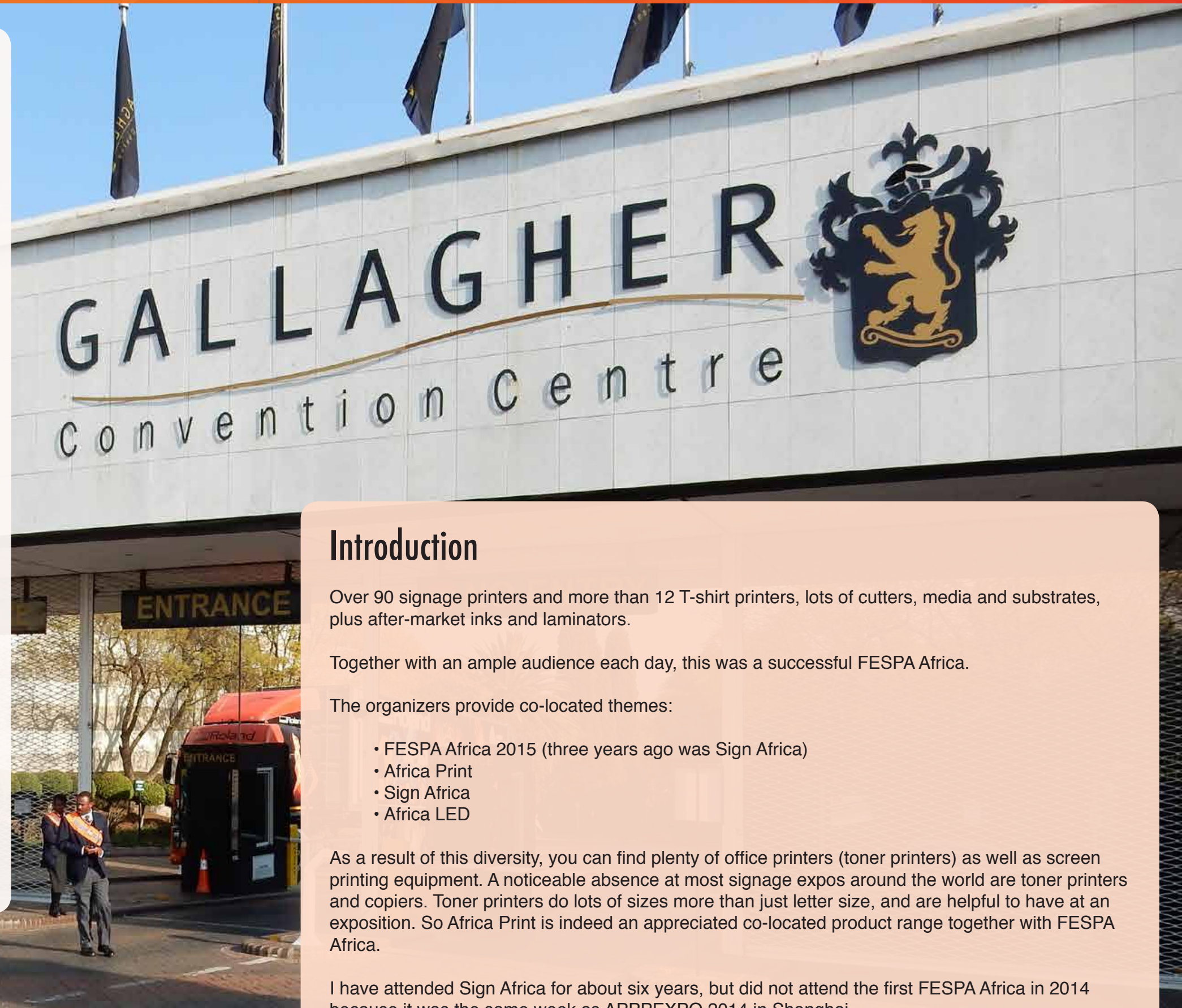
FESPA Africa 2015, Johannesburg

Nicholas Hellmuth
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Here is one of the two new printers for Africa market, available to inspect at FESPA Africa. The enthusiasm of Mike Horsten and Ronald van den Broek on why and how these printers were developed, designed, and manufactured, will hopefully be an eventual subject of future FLAAR Reports (when our team can get to an appropriate demo center).

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Introduction

Over 90 signage printers and more than 12 T-shirt printers, lots of cutters, media and substrates, plus after-market inks and laminators.

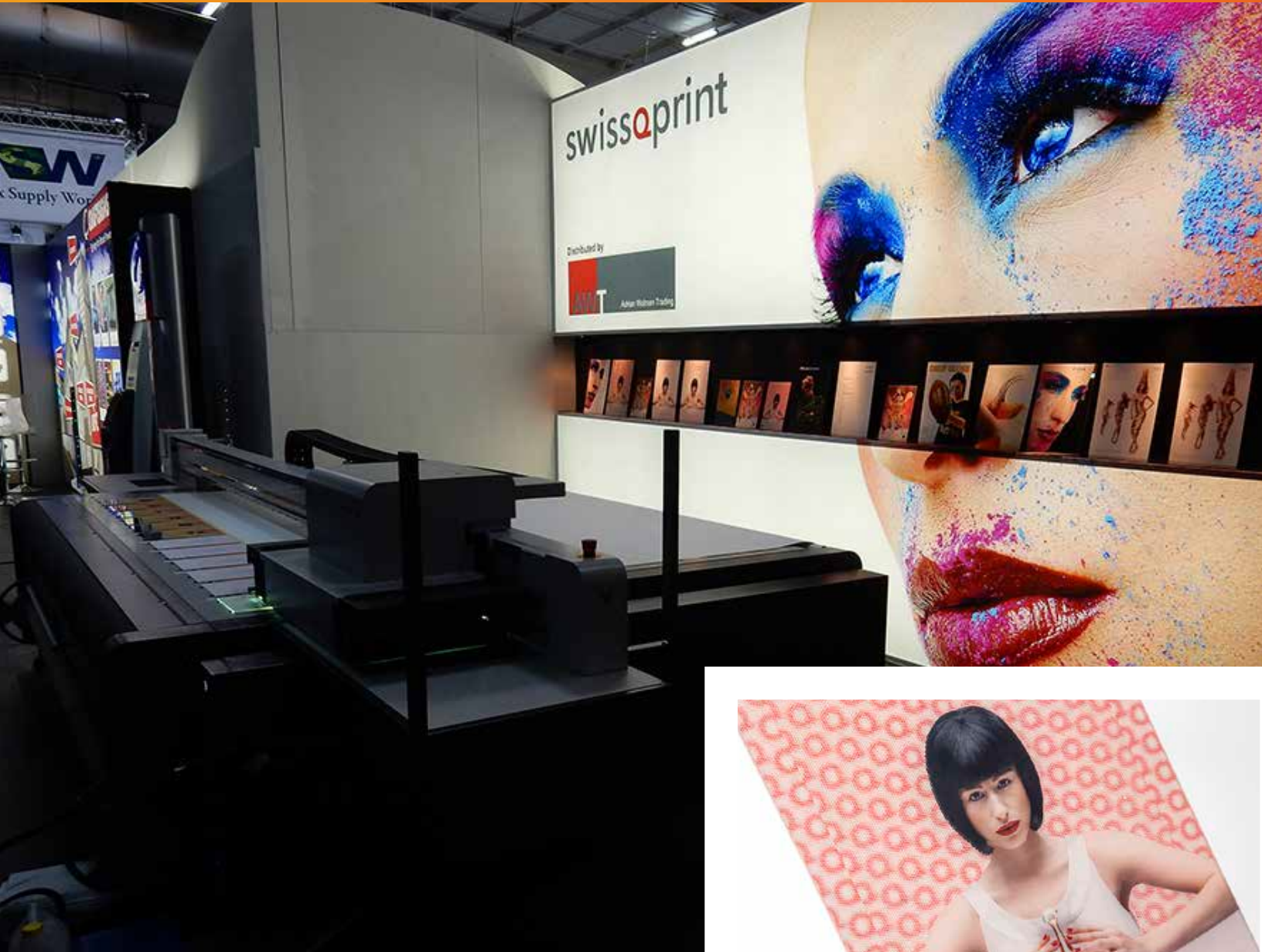
Together with an ample audience each day, this was a successful FESPA Africa.

The organizers provide co-located themes:

- FESPA Africa 2015 (three years ago was Sign Africa)
- Africa Print
- Sign Africa
- Africa LED

As a result of this diversity, you can find plenty of office printers (toner printers) as well as screen printing equipment. A noticeable absence at most signage expos around the world are toner printers and copiers. Toner printers do lots of sizes more than just letter size, and are helpful to have at an exposition. So Africa Print is indeed an appreciated co-located product range together with FESPA Africa.

I have attended Sign Africa for about six years, but did not attend the first FESPA Africa in 2014 because it was the same week as APPPEXPO 2014 in Shanghai.



SwissQprint booth area and its remarkable lenticular-like 3D software print sample. Very impressive layered 3D depth effect.

Most Innovative Flatbed UV-Cured Printer Output

The Swissqprint printer area displayed lenticular 3 dimensional depth prints using a special software. But on the Internet, when I Google this, all you get is pages with the same software names but not related to UV printers in general nor swissQprint in particular. Thus I appreciate the assistance of the organizers to put me in touch with swissQprint in Switzerland. They answered within 24 hours, sent me a link, and now the different names associated with this workflow are clearer. But the main point is that the lenticular output from the nyala2 printer was impressive.



What I missed

In past years, next to one of the Océ booths, there have always been exhibits of thermal vacuum formed objects. The most impressive were bathtubs. This is the only ink that can vacuum thermal-form to this depth.

I saw comparable exhibits almost every year at Sign Africa, the most impressive at Sign Africa 2013. But I did not notice any of this whatsoever. The only thermal forming machine (that I noticed in three days of hiking the aisles) was in the Fujifilm booth and was not related to the South African ink company (at least not stated to be related whatsoever).



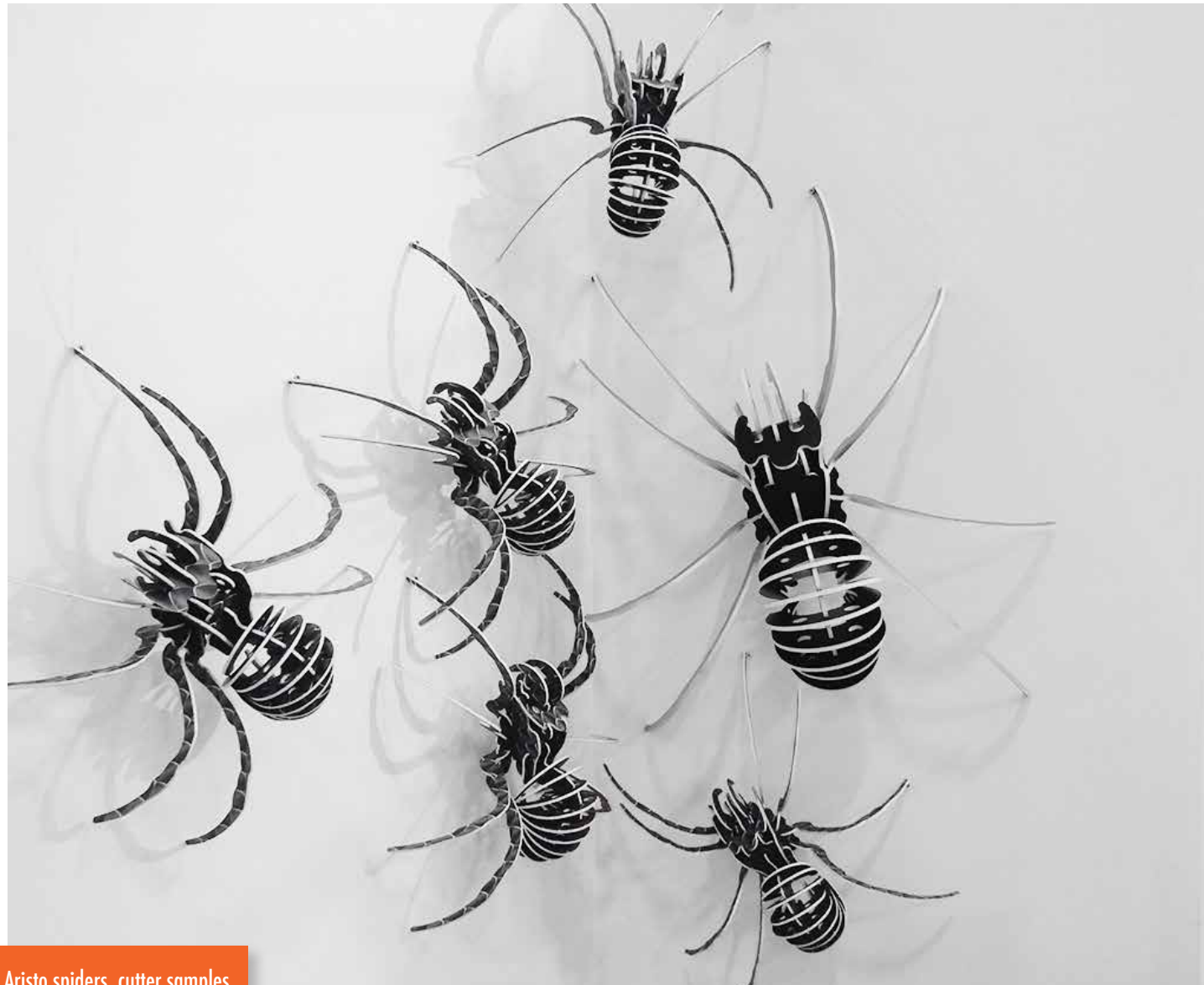
Fujifilm Acuity Advanced thermal vacuum formed sample. They had a full demo area: all the equipment to show everything, plus they were doing each step so you could see the entire process easily. Very nicely displayed with a patient and knowledgeable operator.

Most Decorative Flatbed Printer + Flatbed Cutter Products

Aristo cutter area of the kemtek booth had spiders everywhere. If you have Arachnophobia you would not be interested in giant spiders crawling up and down your wall. But the design was eye-catching.

I will admit that one reason I noticed the spiders is because I raise spiders in Guatemala (we also raise stingless bees (Meliponia), wasps (definitely have stingers but I can put my hand next to their nest and they never sting since they recognize I will never harm their hive), butterflies, and tailless whip scorpions inside or surrounding our six level office building).

Two of my lectures at Sign Africa were on 3D signage and the spiders will be an excellent example when we turn this lecture into a FLAAR Report in PDF format.



Aristo spiders, cutter samples



Printheads : a Crucial Component of all Printers

It is unfortunate that printheads are not (yet) a major aspect of discussion of the pros and cons of a printer. If you know printhead brands and models and technology, you can more easily select a more appropriate printer.

Each brand and model of printhead has pros and cons. No one brand or model is perfect. Indeed some brands use a technology which does not allow them to be used for most water-based inks.

Lots of Epson printheaded printers at FESPA Africa. Lots of Ricoh printheaded printers. These were clearly the two printhead brands which were by far the most common.

Not a single printer noticeable with any Xaar printheads. Much to my surprise, however, I did not notice many printers with Konica Minolta printheads through the Dilli rebranded as Agfa had KM heads. So KM heads were not absent, but Ricoh had substantially larger market share. This is the first expo in the world where there were more printers using Toshiba Tec heads than were using the impressive Konica Minolta printheads.

Only one printer with Dimatix Spectra printheads (Fujifilm Acuity LED 1600). Since Fujifilm owns Dimatix this one printer is no surprise.

Seiko printers were probably the only printer brand with Seiko printheads. (since the sole EFI printer on display had Toshiba Tec heads). Otherwise Toshiba Tec is only in Oce Arizona printers.

Was pleasantly surprised to find a printer with a Panasonic head (an innovative Mimaki printer, the Mimaki TS34-1800A). Mimaki is cleverly using several different printheads, depending on which is optimal for which ink, which price range, and which speed.



Mimaki Ts34-1800A using a Panasonic head

About six years Xaar hosted us at their world headquarters in the UK. Then from their Chinese office, their team took us to each Chinese printer factory which was using their heads.

This was helpful for us to understand the market share of Xaar heads in those years.

In subsequent years Xaar focused more on ceramic in-line printer printhead technology, so KM and Ricoh gained market share in solvent, UV, and textile printers. Thus we hope to be able to visit KM and Ricoh. And for Xaar, since the world market (and printhead technology) has changed so much in the last six years, we would enjoy visiting again.

Cute Booth Gifts



Roland had pretty little mascots. I would have enjoyed having a dozen to bring back to give to those FLAAR graphic designers and review editors who like these for themselves or their children.

But I did not feel it was appropriate for me to grab a dozen.

UV-Cured Printers

Lots of brands of UV-cured printers. Plus a range from basic entry-level roll-to-roll (MooTooM) through mid-range (EFI H1625) to a Durst Rho P10 160 printer (kemtek booth).

As already mentioned, the most unexpected technology was in the Swissqprint booth. Then there was a very impressive sample of raised-relief (deep raised ink) in one of the Canon-Oce booths. Fujifilm had handsome examples as well, with a wide range of UV-cured “raised relief” prints on their inside wall and outside wall.

The most diverse range of high raised relief samples was in the booth of Canon Oce (but without a tripod, the hand-taken photos were too shaky, so I can’t show them).

Mimaki showed a new UV-cured roll-to-roll printer, SIJ-320UV. Worth comparing its price and output to a 3.2 meter HP Latex printer. This is a comparison I would enjoy doing.

Fujifilm exhibited the impressive UVISTAR Pro-8 version of the Matan printer. I have been curious to know how the Fujifilm rebranding will continue, evolve, or change now that efi has bought Matan. In many parts of the world the Fujifilm dealer is the prime source, so by dropping Fujifilm this would drop sales potential somewhat. Plus, competition is always helpful.



Efi H1625 LED observed at Antalis booth



The exact same model, Efi H1625 LED observed at Xerox booth



Order it NOW

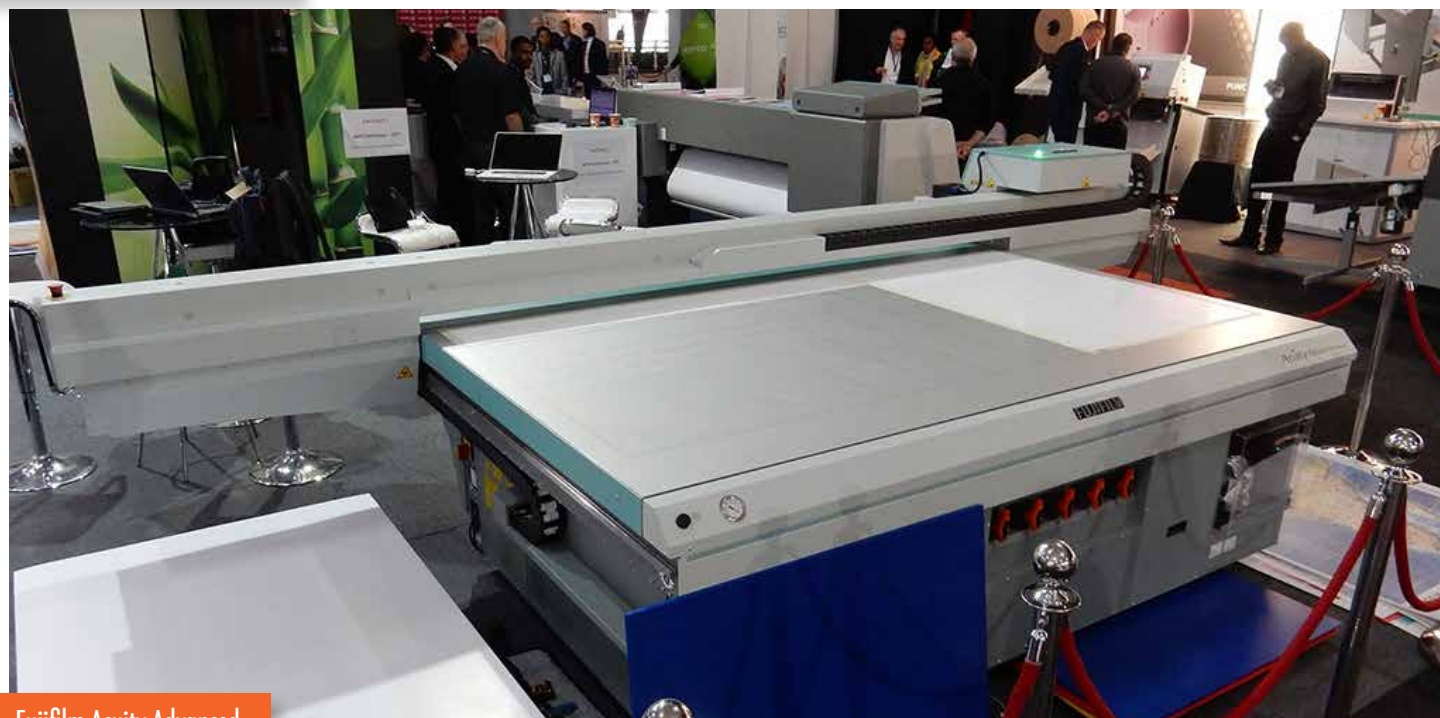
This raised relief report can be ordered by writing FrontDesk “at” FLAAR.org to be invoiced.



AGFA Anapurna M2050i



Allwin Combo at Digifab booth



Fujifilm Acuity Advanced



Mimaki UJF-3042FX at GSW booth

Solvent Printers

This is one of the few printer and signage expos anywhere in the world where there were more solvent printers than there were UV-cured printers. So this answers the question "Is solvent dead?" However (for UV fans) there were more UV-cured brands than solvent brands.

We list every brand and each model in the FLAAR TRENDS level reports.

Eco-solvent predominated; lite-solvent is still used by Seiko. And full-solvent is still available despite the health hazards.

An unanswered question is what will happen to Seiko II ColorPainter printers after OKI takes over. OKI was definitely #1 in entry-level T-shirt printers, but these are desktop printers.

We discuss the fallout from the Seiko-OKI news releases in our TRENDS level reports (available by writing FrontDesk "at" FLAAR.org to be invoiced.



AVANTI CX3200 observed at SHEETCO booth



Mimaki CJV30-160 at GSW booth



MooTooM MT-DH32S1



Roland VersaCAMM Print and Cut VS-540i

Latex Printers

HP has focused significant resources on their latex printers. The result is that print results today are definitely improved over the first generation circa 2008.

To check on this progress, we asked for access to an HP latex printer to do evaluation samples during the expo. We appreciate the assistance of Midcomp personnel and thank Sean Greer for taking care to have my test photographs printed on the HP latex and then cut on the nice Zünd cutter.

The HP latex ink print results were better than I had anticipated. Especially the color gamut was better than I expected. Color gamut in 2008 (project launch) was iffy at best and even years later was still "incomplete" color gamut. This is why my test prints at FESPA Africa 2015 were helpful to show me that the color gamut today in 2015 is wider with the new models and new ink chemistry.

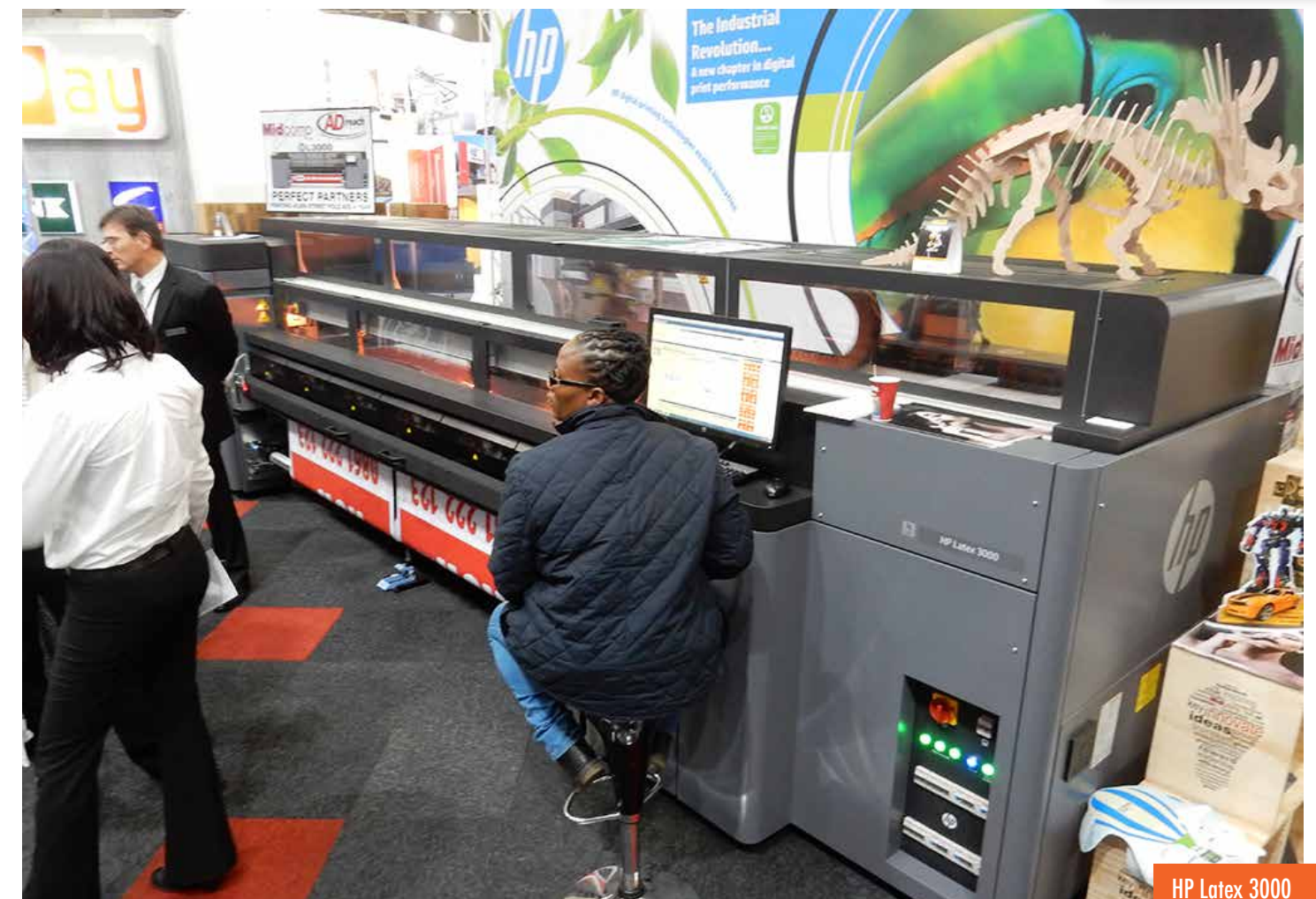
It would be interesting to do a test between HP latex ink color gamut and Mimaki latex ink color gamut.



Mimaki JV400-160LX



Nicholas on one side, Jean van Der Mescht and Sean Greer of Midcomp on the other side.



HP Latex 3000

Textile Printers

8 brands, 14 textile printers, 9 booths with textile printers, thus comparable to ISA and SGIA in USA. However all were entry-level; not many grand-format 3.2 meter signage machines.

Mimaki is clearly the leader in Japanese brands for textile printers. Plus, most important, they clearly have experience over years. So their new textile printers are not simply jerry-rigged solvent printers, or jerry-rigged water-based printers.

Also, certain printheads which are great for water-based, or solvent, or UV-cured, may not be ideal for textile inks. Mimaki has become a leader in offering a wider selection of printhead options.

In the Mimaki booth (GSW) it was helpful and informative to have several sit-down sessions with Ronald van den Broek, Key Account Manager, Sales & Marketing Department, Mimaki Europe (which covers Middle East, Africa, and Europe). He introduced me to an experienced demo room and printer person who is at the new Mimaki Turkey facility.

There were six roll-to-roll calendaring machines; this is more than at other signage or printer expos. This presence is a good example of the coverage of products by FESPA Africa, and why it would be useful for print shop or in-house printing teams from countries elsewhere in Africa to make a trip to FESPA Africa 2016 (in September; not in July any more).



Mimaki TSP 1800 at GSW booth



Roland Texart RT-640



Allwin E-180W at Digifab booth

T-Shirt Printers

Lots of T-Shirt printers. By far the major brand was OKI, rebranded under many different names (but all OKI toner printers).

Anajet, Brother, Epson, DTG Digital, VIPER2 (booth of National Screen and Digital Supplies) and Kornit (booth of rexx) were also present (these use printheads).

So for T-shirt printers, as good as ISA and SGIA in USA, especially since FESPA Africa also had major display of screen printers for mass-production of T-shirts.

OKI et al. are mainly for one-at-a-time T-shirt printing.



Anajet mPower mP5i



oki C711WT observed at the Magic Touch booth



Epson SureColor F2000 at CHEMOSOL booth



DTG Digital VIPER2 at nsds booth

Media & Inks

Most media and substrates were inside main booths, either a company such as Maizey which is focused 100% on media, or inside large printer distributor booths such as GSW and Midcomp.

3A Composites had a strong presence, both in their own corporate booth and their logo on the wall in printer distributor booth(s).

Same with Inks: not many separate ink booths other than TULIP and Jetbest. Nutec logically had the strongest after-market ink presence. What I can also say is that booth personnel in each of these companies were hospitable to having a visit in their booth from FLAAR Reports. We show all booths in our TRENDS level (since we have to keep the file size to this initial free report to a size which can easily be sent as an email attachment).

To see media and inks it is essential to attend APPPEXPO 2016 in Shanghai, 47 booths of inks and about 170 booths of media and substrates. Now you can see why FLAAR will blissfully skip DRUPA 2016: we enjoyed Drupa a decade ago, but to learn about inks, media, substrates, CNC routers, CO2 laser engravers, digital flatbed cutters and everything else, APPPEXPO in Shanghai is a greater experience than over-priced hotels room rates in Duesseldorf during Drupa.

Altogether there was plenty of media at FESPA Africa, almost all media was inside distributor booths more than in individual independent factory headquarter brand booths.



GSW booth



3A booth



Naisi booth



Falcon booth inks



JetBest ink distributor Hitech Graphics



Nutec booth



Tulip booth

Laminators

Although I did not notice any coaters, there were plenty of entry-level laminators, probably 90% of which were Made in China.

Coaters are UV-cured, very sophisticated, and allow a print shop to create special effects. One print shop owner, a friend of ours, said his coater was his "secret weapon." He said he won tons of signage business from competitors since none of his competitors had a professional size coater.



Ezee Applicator laminator



Laminator at Createx booth



Sea Keymark booth

Cutters: CNC Routers, CO2 Laser engravers, Flatbed

Lots of large-format flatbed cutters at FESPA Africa, of all technologies. But since the Zund cutter kindly offered to handle our test prints, we tested on the Zund G3 L-2500. We thank Sean at Midcomp for arranging this cutting.



Summa cutter at Midcomp booth



Esko CNC cutter at Clear Solutions stand



CNC cutting samples by Aristo



This is the capable model of Zund which cut the FLAAR photographs of Nicholas Hellmuth (printed courtesy of Midcomp on a HP Latex printer).

Cutters: CNC Routers, CO2 Laser engravers, Flatbed



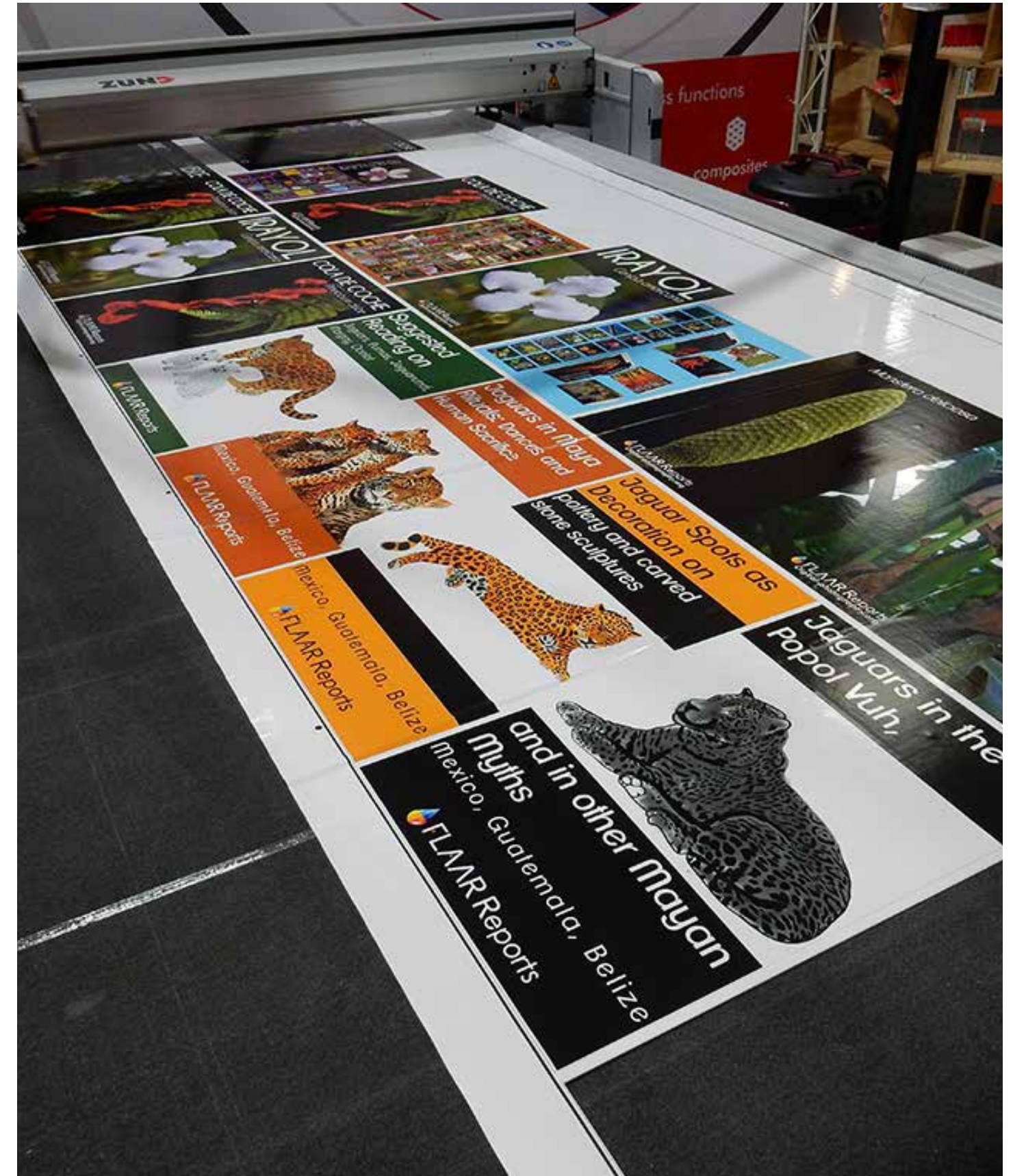
Here you can see that although the image sizes differ, yet the Swiss intelligence can cut any size, any shape, anywhere on the surface. Note also the close-up macro photo quality of these flowers (Passiflora quadrangularis, in the Mayan ethnobotanical garden of FLAAR, 1500 meters elevation, Guatemala).

We list every brand and model of XY digital flatbed cutters in our TRENDS edition. Plus there we show samples of the CNC routers and CO2 laser engravers from Chinese manufacturers.

Here you can see that the cutter did a perfect job even when images were placed closely together. And, even when the placement was random.



Here you can see that the cutter did a perfect job even when images were placed closely together. And, even when the placement was random.



Water-Based Printers

HP, Canon, and Epson still offer water-based printers. There are separate T (technical) models for CAD and GIS prints. HP used to focus on the fine art giclee market, but did not continue that focus (and did not even help upgrade the Z3200 giclee and photo printer they sent to FLAAR in past years for evaluation; so we donated it to a local museum).

Epson still works in the proofing market, but with so much offset printing going digital, fewer proofers are needed.

Epson had an Epson corporate booth. HP had two ample booths of two distributors. Canon water-based printers were primarily in the Canon-Oce booth. Actually there were more Canon wide-format printers here at FESPA Africa than at ISA or SGIA in USA.

The first FLAAR Reports evaluation was on an Encad 36" printer. After HP read that report (and noticed its effect on the market) they sent us an HP Designjet 2500cp. Then we had a five year evaluation and market research project and had dozens of HP, Canon, and two Mimaki printers, in-house, for evaluation.

But gradually water-based was replaced by eco-solvent systems, and by 2004 UV inkjet technology had improved dramatically from their beginnings in 1998-2000. But UV-cured printers are too large and expensive to ship them to us in-house, so we evaluate these at the factory demo room of those brands who request an evaluation project and FLAAR Report specifically on their printer. We are currently evaluating the iti flatbed printer; they flew us to San Francisco to evaluate this a week before FESPA Africa.



HP Designjet Z6600 observed at Graficomp booth

My favorite graphic designs for print samples



The sleepy, dumb looking lamb is to me more enjoyable a design than racing cars, hot motorcycles, or even hotter models such as Victoria's Secret. I like to see how a graphic designer creates the anthropomorphic "look" of the animal.



The recent MINIONS animated film was more enjoyable than the Sponge Bob animated film (when you are on a single flight for 15 hours you have to entertain yourself with something). And although I have a giant Sponge Bob sticker on my suitcase (so I can find it at the airports, since 85% of the suitcases are from similar Chinese factories), I found the MINIONS film enjoyable. RIO and RIO 2 have better stories, but for sure laughter, MINIONS is fun.

The expo was definitely well attended

Most expos are near vacant the first day, and near vacant the last day. FESPA Africa, Print Africa, etc were busy all three days. And the last day there were plenty of people the entire day.



Here you can see people lining up to get their VISITOR tags.

Expo size is healthy

The expo is large enough to have a healthy (and not starved) appearance. I noticed about three booths which I remember from two years ago were not present, but I also noticed that GSW had an even larger booth than in past years.



Sign Africa maps

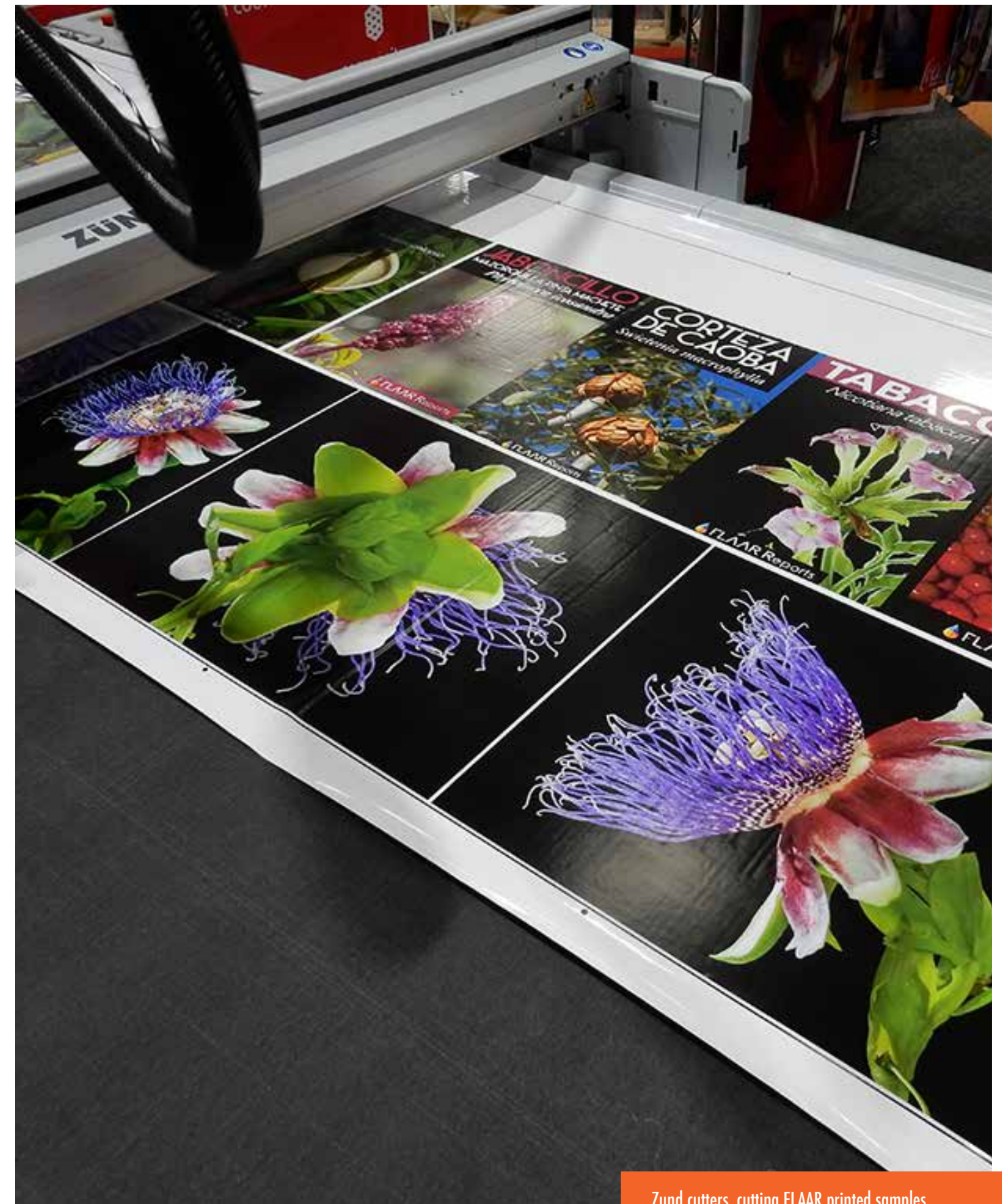
Evaluation by Test Printing

At each signage or printer expo that FLAAR attends, we are interested in testing one or more printers. Of course it is tough to make time to do this during a busy expo (but printing at an expo saves the cost of needing to be flown to a demo room of the printer brand).

I would have enjoyed testing Xerox, OKI, Canon Océ, Sharp and other offset printers (or inkjet), but I had to take notes on so many products that it was easier to ask to have printing samples done in the Midcomp booth. I appreciate Rob Makinson facilitating these print samples, and Sean Greer, Marketing and Innovation Hub Manager for accomplishing the prints (on HP Latex printer) and cutting (on capable Zünd flatbed cutter).



Our FLAAR team at Guatemala holding printed samples



Zünd cutters, cutting FLAAR printed samples

Distributors

Ink factories, media and substrate factories, printer manufacturers, (and cutter companies, laminator companies etc) ask FLAAR discretely for what distributors we recommend. It was noticeable that GSW had a really healthy sized booth (actually went past both side aisles to the other side of both those aisles).

Midcomp had a healthy booth with lots of products in each "wing". Antalis, Sign-Tronic, rexx, CHEMOSOL and a dozen other exhibitors had healthy booths. Since the owners and managers of GSW, Midcomp, Antalis and others know FLAAR for years, when I am in the aisle near their booths they tend to come out in the aisle to invite me in.

Plus to do print evaluations, this is realistic primarily when the owner of the exhibiting booth company knows FLAAR personally, especially when I see the South African key people at APPPEXPO in Shanghai and the main FESPA in Europe.

There are separate FLAAR Reports on the distributors of each country or world area. There have been a lot of changes in South Africa as several of the local distributors no longer exist; others have grown larger, and new distributors are also now exhibiting, or at least advertising in the key trade magazines of South Africa. A distributor who does not exhibit is not the kind of distributor that an ink factory, media or substrate factory, printer company, cutter company, or laminator company will want to know about.

So we prefer to focus on distributors which are large and successful enough to exhibit at FESPA Africa and its co-located topics.



Workshops

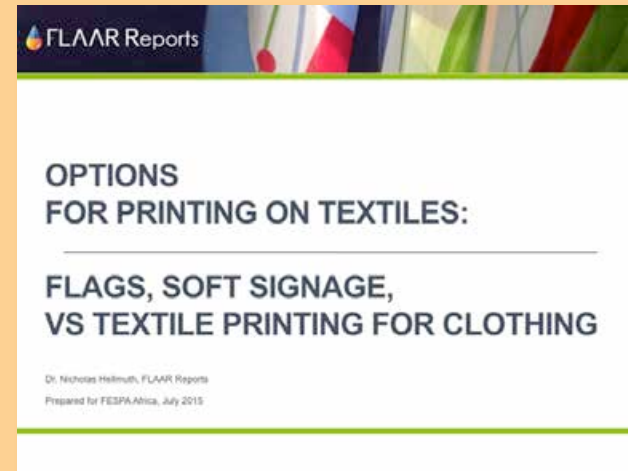
Charlie Taublieb, various personnel from NSDS, and Chemosol gave workshop presentations on T-shirt printing (screen printing). Taublieb gives his popular workshops at FESPA expos around the world, as well as at other printer trade shows.



Lectures & Debates

The lectures were informative topics. At too many other expos the “lectures” are mostly just PR releases by salesmen, or puff-and-fluff topics on “how to increase sales.”

FLAAR presented several topics in four time slots:



There was a DAILY DEBATE at noon each day. The first day internationally known screen-printing T-shirt specialist Charlie Taublieb was the Chair. The second day Dr Nicholas Hellmuth was chair, on TRENDS IN TEXTILE PRINTING. Panel members were

- Yasar Güvenen, the President of FESPA,
- Mike Horsten, the head of Mimaki Europe, Middle East and Africa, and the heads of two successful textile printing companies in South Africa:
- Leon Besaans, The Solutions Team (Fabric branding solutions)
- Orlando de Abreu, Managing Director of Tali Digital Branding Solutions.

I would also suggest a Panel Discussion & Debate on 3D Printing for FESPA 2016 (I expand this suggestion in my following section).

Trade Magazines and Trade Shows

No other trade shows had a booth at this event, but there were several booths of trade magazines. I show the one I know the best, to print MAGAZINE, Joju Adakanbi, Publisher (besides AFRICA PRINT magazine and Practical Publishing of the show organizers).



What would I like to see added?

More on color management. At the expo, other than Pantone booth and a spectrophotometer in the Midcomp booth, there was no “color management zone” as there is at SGIA in USA.

“Zones” other than T-shirt zones and vehicle wrap zones, tend to be abandoned during an expo.

Zones get tons of PR before an expo, and PR blasts during an expo; but the personnel either don't really get the audience to show up, or other than a giant banner there is nothing to seriously attract people into the zone area).

Empty and abandoned zones can be found at even the best expos. If this reality is recognized, steps can be taken to turn a zone around and make it popular.

I would also suggest a “3D Signage Zone”, and have our FLAAR 3D person, a university student, as a lively interactor person. She even has used drones to do 3D scanning of giant trees. Such a 3D zone should have examples of every single kind of 3D output, from 3D printers, rapid prototypers, to raised relief of Océ, thermal-formed of Fujifilm and efi VUTEK, to spider invasion of Aristo cutters (but I would suggest dinosaurs, furniture, motorcycles, since many people really do have Arachnophobia).

I would also like to suggest a display of each and every thick rigid media which labeled in tabulated comparative chart as to which kinds of material can be cut with CNC router, CO2 laser engraver, and digital XY flatbed cutter.

In past years VISCOM expos had nice applications displays (I used to attend each and every VISCOM: Spain, Paris, Germany, and Milano; but the Madrid expo disappeared (even Graphispag was larger); Milano collapsed to half size over three years). Paris is small but healthy; VISCOM in Germany has tough time to compete with FESPA and in 2016 with that's left of Drupa; but for local business (when FESPA is not in Germany), it is a valid expo to attend to meet your local German distributors.

In effect, I have not attended a single VISCOM in three years since we get invited and hosted to so many other expos, including being invited to lecture (such as at FESPA Africa).

But every expo has good features, and the applications areas of VISCOM many years ago were educational. So let's consider adding a “3D Signage Zone” to FESPA Africa 2016. FLAAR has been evaluating 3D printers for many years since the Hellmuth family background is architecture, and 3D printers are used to create architectural models. Plus our focus on flatbed UV-cured printers and cutters has long ago introduced us to honeycomb sandwich board.

I would also suggest a Panel Discussion & Debate on 3D Printing for FESPA 2016, which would conclude with a tour of the 3D Signage Zone. Such a Panel should have

- 3D rapid prototyper person
- 3D machine with actual printheads person
- Digital flatbed cutter person (head of Aristo would be good example)
- CNC router person
- CO2 laser engraver person
- Honeycomb Sandwich board person
- 3D software person

- CHAIR person (which I would volunteer for)

Could be divided into two noon sessions, first:

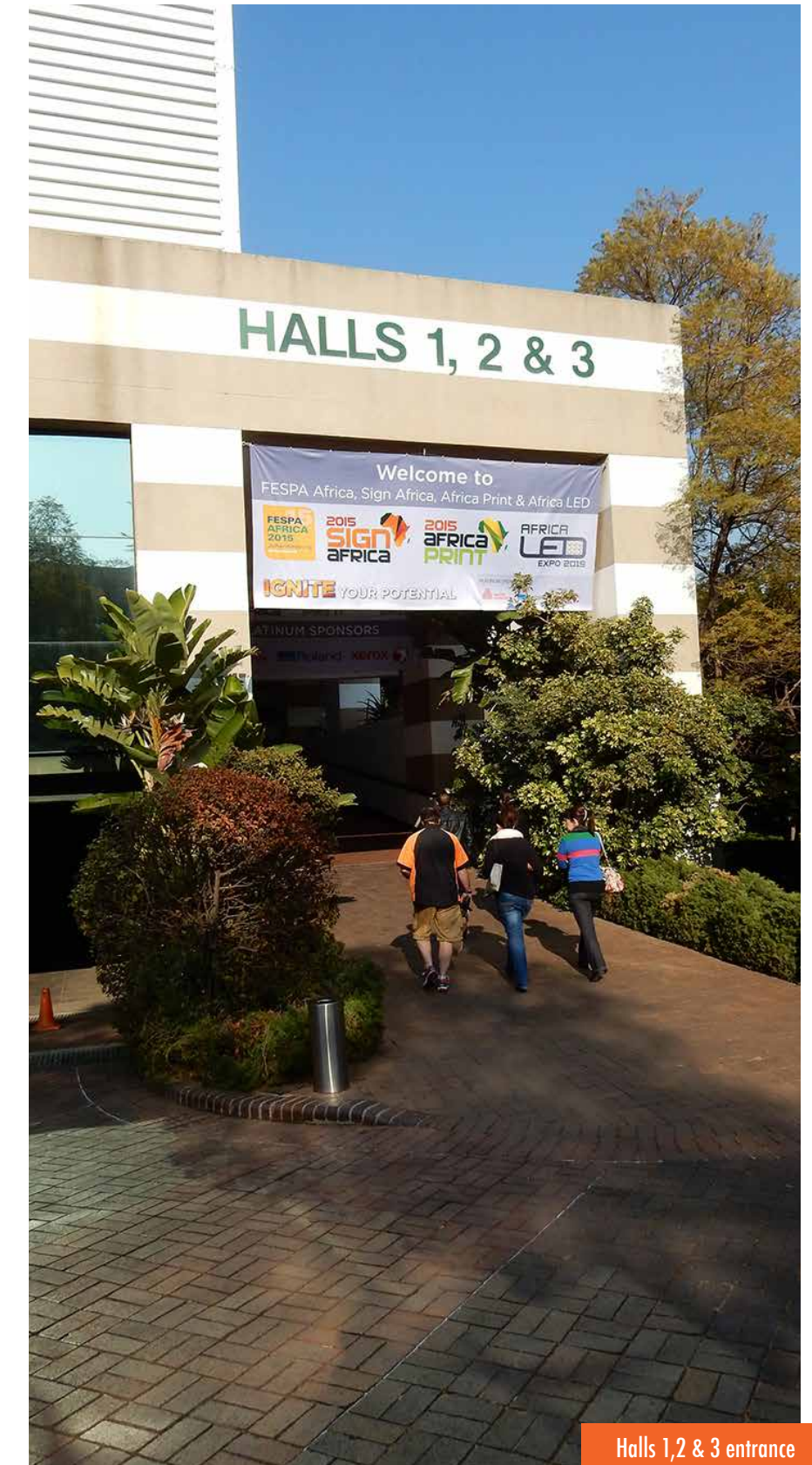
- Digital flatbed cutter person (head of Aristo would be good example)
- CNC router person
- CO2 laser engraver person
- Honeycomb Sandwich board person
- 3D software person (recommended from FLAAR)
- CHAIR person (which I would volunteer for)

And then another day

- 3D rapid prototyper person
- 3D machine with actual printheads person
- Raised-relief person (Océ or Fujifilm; I can suggest which)
- Thermo-formed (South Africa company who started with solvent)
- 3D software person (same person as in other session)
- CHAIR person (which I would volunteer for)

I realize this is more than the number of other Panel Discussion & Debates, but 3D is crucial.

And since the theoretical goal of switching from Sign Africa to FESPA Africa is to attract people from other countries, to do this it would be helpful to offer features not common in other expos (though I would not be surprised if my suggestions here are copied by other expos).



Halls 1,2 & 3 entrance

Venue: Gallagher Convention Center

Adequate parking was a help, especially since there was no metro or other noticeable public transportation.

Only small hotel(s) are nearby, a surprise, since this convention center has existed for many years. At the former venue of Sign Africa for many many years, in Sandton, the hotel location allowed you to easily walk to the expo center (only one block away). But the hotel where I was located was quiet, plenty good enough rooms, and had full breakfast.

Although I like being inside Johannesburg (so I can experience the city), many exhibitors had a hard time getting their trucks in and out of the congested Sandton area. And visitors often had a challenge finding parking space, since Sandton is filled with offices, hotels, and a shopping center. Benefit of Sandton was that you could select from dozens of good restaurants which were within easy walking distance. There are no restaurants within walking distance of Gallagher (but there are restaurants 20 minutes drive away).

Communication among the halls is definitely much easier at Gallagher. Two of the main halls are facing each other (at Sandton they were on different floors requiring lots of healthy walking between). At Gallagher Hall 1 is below but it takes only one short escalator down.

GSW cleverly illuminated their booth so that their entire (gigantic) booth area was fully lit. To save electricity the halls themselves are only mildly illuminated (with fluorescent lights of a normal low-ceiling office; not spotlights). A simple fluorescent light a mile up on the high ceiling is obviously incapable of lighting a booth adequately.



Gallagher Convention Centre map



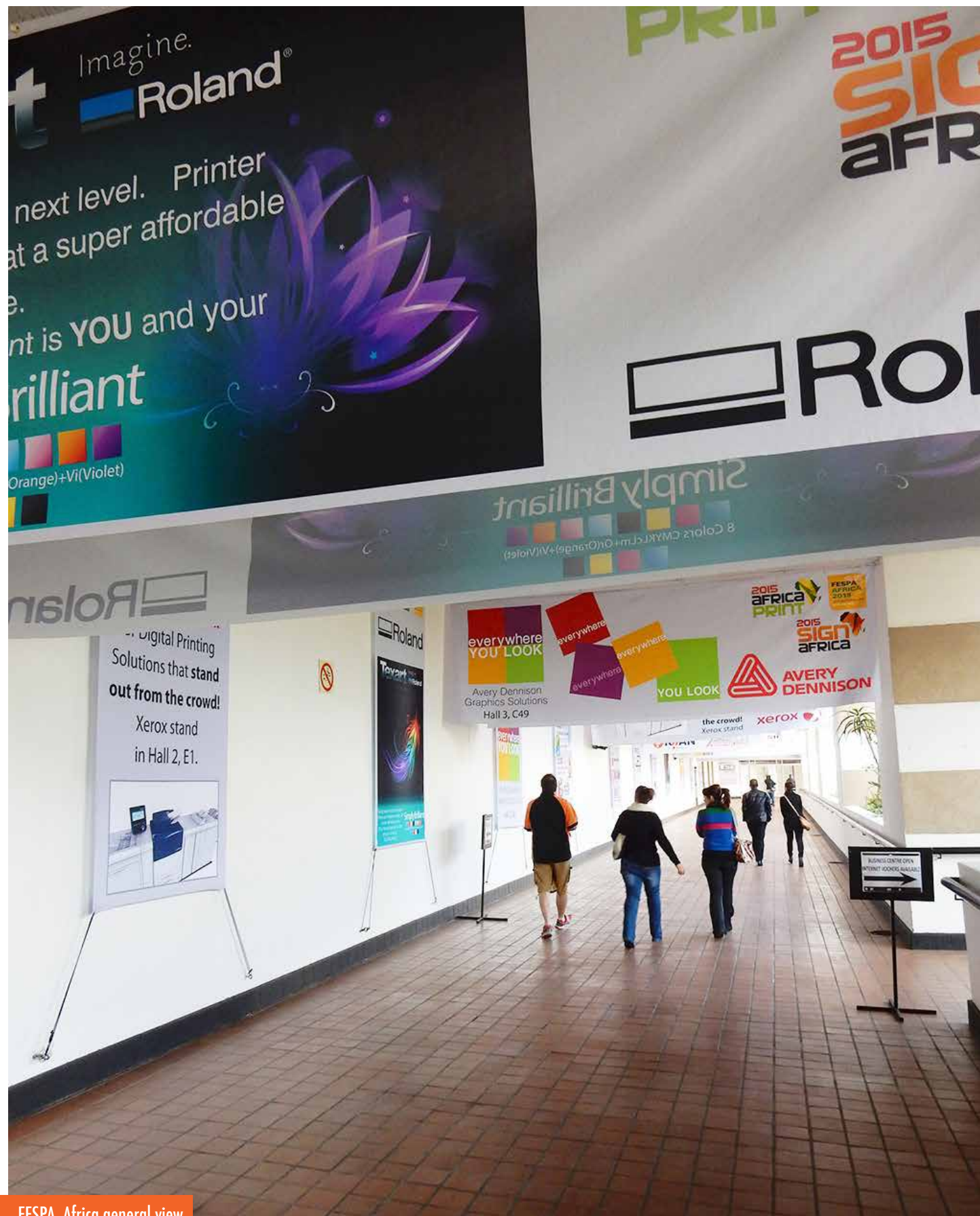
Gallagher Convention Centre entrance, FESPA Africa 2015

Location: Johannesburg

In actuality the expo center is between Johannesburg and Pretoria, so it is not inside any city. One of the largest shopping malls in southern Africa is under construction adjacent to one of the hotels (15 minutes drive away).

There are direct flights to Joburg from New York and from Atlanta. And from cities in Europe and Asia.

South Africa is of course a major world destination for wildlife safari, both for personal experience and for wildlife photography. I have never been on a safari since I came for years to Sign Africa and now to FESPA Africa by myself: a safari is something for a family or a romantic couple. But in the future I would definitely enjoy a safari experience.



FESPA Africa general view

Attending FESPA Africa 2016

FESPA Africa 2016 will be in early September. One immediate benefit is the expo area will be not as cold. Many people wore sweaters or jackets. I simply wore an extra thick outer shirt and a scarf and that was plenty to keep me warm all three days (second day was not as chilly).

Another benefit of the September dates is that July and August is sort of a multi-national holiday period, especially throughout Europe. If there are school holidays, meaning the children are at home, it is not as easy for parents to travel to South Africa to attend a trade show.

Another benefit of September date is that the July date conflicted with a major annual lecture program in Guatemala, which I had to miss in order to lecture at the printer expo in Johannesburg.



Here is a photo of the team of organizers of both the FESPA aspects and the Sign Africa, Print Africa aspects, plus two of the speakers (Taublieb and Hellmuth).

If you live outside South Africa ? Should you attend FESPA Africa 2016 ?

Yes, I live about as far away as you can calculate: a 15+ hour flight from USA; not counting the flights to get to that hub (so two days of travel if you count airport layovers).

Since a lot of people throughout Africa read the FLAAR Reports, I enjoy visiting with them while at the exposition. It is especially rewarding to give the lectures and then to speak with people in the lecture area about what new tips and suggestions were available via these lectures. Several times while I was out in the aisles, people who had earlier attended the lectures, came up to me to ask in which product booth could they find what I had spoken about.

So for 2016, I have several ideas for preparing Help Sheets to alert attendees to all the booths of specific categories.

What did I learn at FESPA Africa?

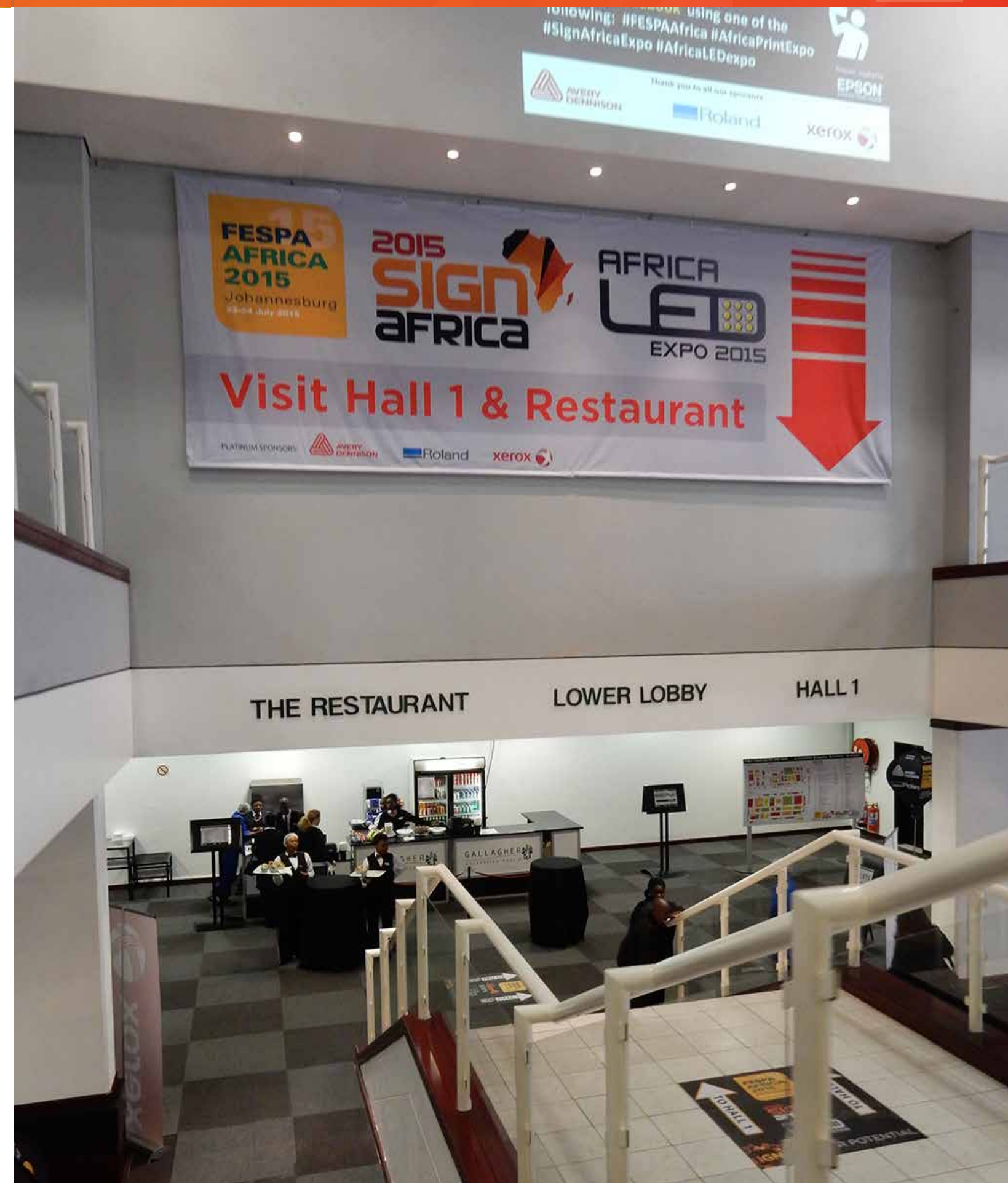
I had never noticed the innovative deep depth lenticular style 3D effects of Swissprint (since last year I was at the Shanghai expo, APPPEXPO 2014). This year was the first time I saw this combination of laydown chemistry, software, and printer technology.

There was also a UV-cured printer at FESPA Africa which has, to my knowledge, never been exhibited anywhere else in the world. The TRENDS level FLAAR Report shows this front, back, and side.

3D “printers” were readily available to inspect in four booths. In three of these the booth personnel were using them and could answer questions. In one booth the 3D “printers” were simply stuck in a row with zilch happening around them. But relatively speaking, there was definitely a good component of 3D technology at this expo (most or all were 3D rapid prototypers; not many used printheads).

Another benefit is that the full range of products is available (such as all major brands of T-shirt printers, and every colorant chemistry (toner, pigmented ink, dye sublimation). And several of the distributors for South Africa have relationships elsewhere in this continent. So attending FESPA Africa is a good preparation for seeing what you should consider obtaining for your own print shop in your own home country.

Besides, South Africa is a pleasant hospitable country, and you should allow yourself to be tempted to take a real safari before or after the expo.



3D Subscription

New Series of FLAAR Reports on 3D Printers, 3D Signage

Due to popular demand, we now have initiated a new series of FLAAR Reports on 3D topics. Here we show the first issues.

Cost is \$120 (via PayPal) for six months of reports (you receive all reports which are being issued in July through December 2015).

Already years ago, we were already doing 3D scanning and 3D printing

While a research professor Dr Nicholas Hellmuth and his team were initiating studies of 3D scanning and 3D printing many years ago. Cami Morales and Eduardo Sacayon handled the scanners. We have been inside R&D labs for two of the world's leading manufacturers of 3D printers.

Already we are using drones for 3D scans of (tropical jungle trees) taller than a 5-story apartment building.

The trunk of the ceiba tree can be taller than a 5-story apartment building. Ironically, when the tree reaches an age of 300 years, the entire trunk becomes hollow (eaten out by termites!).

Dr Nicholas has been raising Ceiba trees for over 40 years and we started using drones to do 3D imaging this year. Andrea is our current 3D imaging person. Cami is also still with us.

Acquire your 3D information, tips, and suggestions from FLAAR Reports today!

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If you wish Dr Nicholas Hellmuth to lecture in your home town, on 3D signage

We lecture in South Africa, Dubai, China: all around the world. Dr Nicholas can speak in Spanish, German, or English (of course you can have simultaneous translation to your local language).

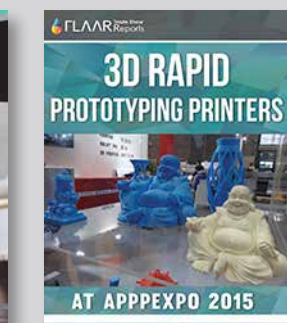
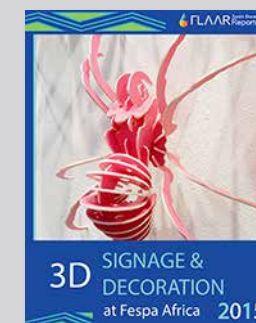
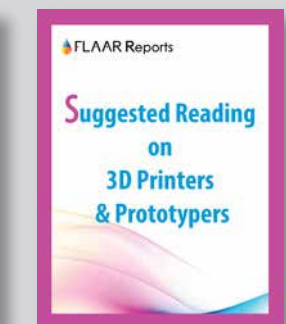
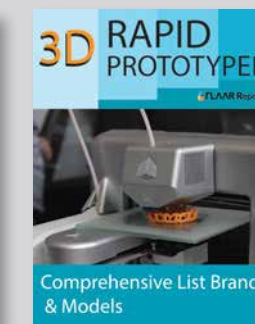
Provide round trip airfare, hotel, airport transfer plus a traditional speaker fee of \$2500 (since it takes an entire day to fly anywhere; another day to fly back; plus the day of the lecture: so a lecture involves being away from the office a minimum of three days.

Lecture can cover every single aspect of multi-dimensional printing and 3D signage.

Also can include examples using CO2 laser engravers, CNC routers, and even Robotic cutters creating life-sized statues. But mostly discusses 3D printers and how you can make 3D signage with printers you already have (you don't need to buy a new printer!).

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Textile Printing Subscription

So many people ask us about how, what, when, why to print on textiles, that we have organized a series of FLAAR Reports on textile printers and textile inks (and printable fabrics).

If you are a distributor, manufacturer, or other comparable company, if you buy each TRENDS level, one by one, all year, list price is about \$25,252. But if you prefer an annual subscription, there is about a 50% discount for you, so one complete year is \$12,000 and includes everything published for 12 months once you start your subscription (plus 50% discount on any textile reports from previous recent years).

Or, you can "test drive" any individual reports at list price, and then use this sum as a down payment on a full-year subscription later.

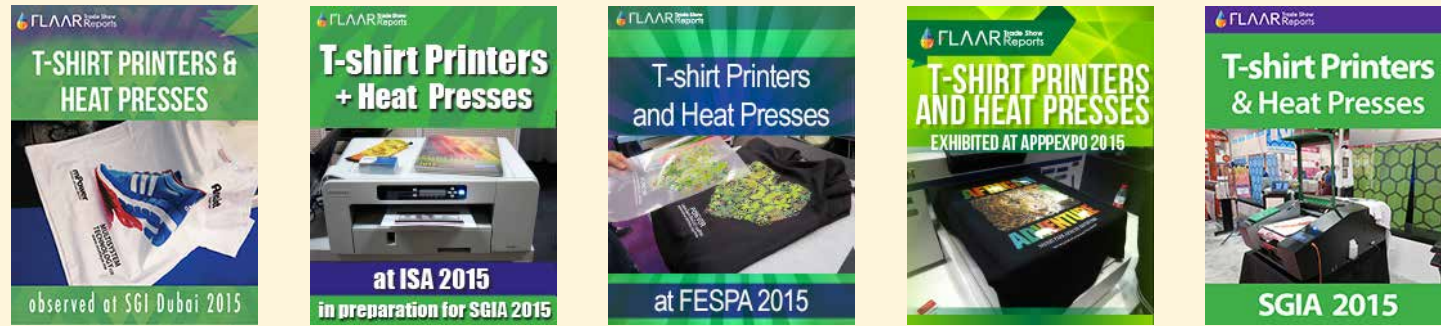
The full cost also includes consulting with textile people on the FLAAR team.

Plus, at any trade show (that we are attending), we can answer your questions in person.

Textile Printers



T-shirt Printers



T-shirt Printers



Finishing Equipment



Textile Inks, Fabrics and Transfer Paper



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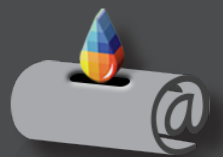


Nicholas Hellmuth

Join the over 1,300 wide-format inkjet, digital imaging, signage, and related individuals worldwide who are linked to FLAAR Reports.



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