

Producing soft signage

with EFI soft signage printing solutions

DATE OF ISSUE:
JANUARY, 2019

Hear that boom? The soft signage market is exploding!

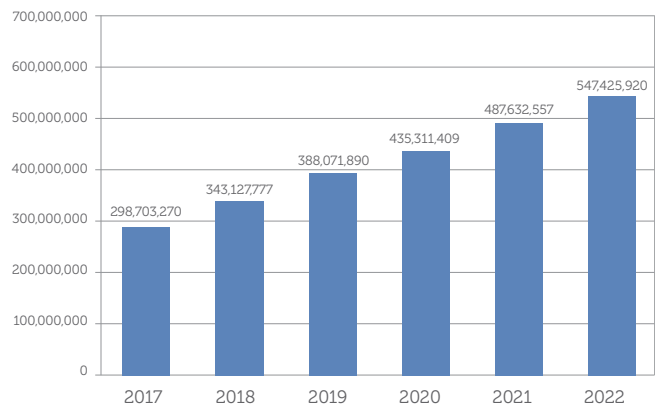
The soft signage market — defined as digitally printing display graphics direct or transfer to polyester-based textile media — is experiencing unprecedented growth. In fact, according to IT Strategies, the output of dye-sublimation digital soft signage printing is expected to enjoy an 6% CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) between 2017 and 2022.*

Move over vinyl, paper and PVC – soft signs are better

What's driving the growth of soft signage? Buyers. They think it's better for four key reasons:

- 1 Soft signage is reusable. Unlike vinyl and paper, it can be displayed, then folded up, stored, and shipped to another location to be displayed again; most can be washed and dried.
- 2 Soft signage textiles weigh less than vinyl and PVC. That makes shipping costs lower. It also makes installation faster and easier, reducing labor costs.
- 3 Soft signage has a higher-value look and feel to it as compared to vinyl and paper.
- 4 Soft signage has a better environmental footprint than vinyl or PVC.

Global Soft Signage Development Square Meters of Output



*Info provided by IT Strategies 2018



The five-meter wide EFI® VUTEk® FabriVU 520 digital fabric printer

Soft signage can be your strong competitive differentiator

You'll command higher prices and greater margins as you take command of your market with these applications:



- Banners
- Flags
- Backlit displays



- Indoor point-of-sale
- Outdoor displays
- Furnishing



- Event and fence graphics
- Theater backdrops
- Wall coverings

Everything customers are willing to pay a premium price for

Vivid colors. Excellent drape and feel. Longevity. No lingering smells or odors. These are the soft signage attributes that keep customers coming back for more.

A green solution for the environment — and your bottom line

Dye-sublimation digital printers are environmentally responsible — from their aqueous-based inks to their smaller footprint, less ink consumption, and lower energy usage. And because of the lightweight nature of soft signage, transportation is more efficient and delivery costs are lowered. All of this adds up lower costs for each high-margin job.

Make more profit with high value soft signage

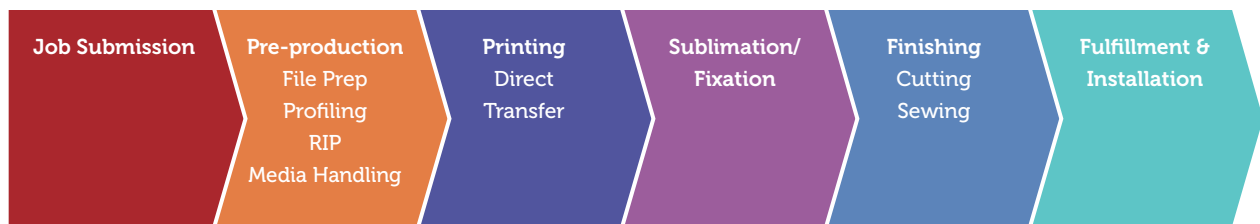
	\$ PER SQ FT	€ PER SQ MTR	£ PER SQ MTR
1.8M	\$3.00	€26.40	£23.80
3.2M	\$4.00	€35.10	£31.69
5.2M	\$10.00	€79.10	£71.41

Note: Prices above are for high value applications, such as POP and or backlit applications.

Thanks to our unique ink-recovery system, which circulates ink through the print heads and puts it back into the primary containers, we save you more than 95% of the ink lost in other systems on the market.

Go with the flow: Understanding the required equipment and processes

From job submission and color management to printing, cutting and sewing, there are new processes and equipment that you'll need to understand to produce soft signage applications. Let's explore some of the key components.



Order acquisition

EFI's eCommerce for Soft Signage streamlines the process of order entry through production and is designed specifically for soft signage and other fabric printing applications.



RIP and color management software

Creating consistent, quality color is likely the single most important thing you do as a print shop. For fabric printing, the wide assortment of surface textures and white points can seem more challenging than traditional print media, but the process is largely the same. Our Fiery® XF RIP software streamlines the process of building ICC profiles and provides power color management tools so you can keep delivering the high-quality products your customers expect.



Preparing and controlling your print environment

You will need to add water and drainage into your production process. Factors like controlling and measuring humidity, dew point and temperature, as well as maintaining a clean production environment, also need to be addressed to ensure your equipment stays up and running at optimum levels.



Textile substrates

Soft signage products are manufactured by printing images directly on or sublimating to polyester, canvas, flag and other polyester-blend fabrics. Please see the Resources section on the back cover for a sampling of textile and flag materials and suppliers.



Transfer papers

Sublimation experts will say that printing to transfer paper provides better quality since there is absolutely no ink wicking (absorption), making edge detail sharper. If image quality is of utmost importance for a job, printing to transfer paper will produce better quality than printing directly to fabric. Please see the Resources section on the back cover for a sampling of transfer papers and suppliers.



Direct-to-textile and transfer with dye-sublimation inks

Direct-to-textile printing allows deep penetration of the ink into, and saturation of, the fabric, and you also can benefit from the cost savings of not having to use a transfer paper. It's ideal for applications where a continuous length or ink penetration on the backside is required, such as for dimensionally long event and fence graphics, building wraps, and flags. With this process, waste is reduced because no transfer carrier paper is required.

Transfer printing is accomplished by printing direct to transfer paper and then using a calender to transfer the graphic to the final polyester material, resulting in high-quality, vibrant images with fine detail.

Because both processes have their advantages, it only makes sense to utilize soft signage printers that do both with an easy changeover.



Sublimation / Fixation

This transformation happens when microscopic particles of solid ink dyes are heated to the right temperature, changing them into a gas, and pressed with a fixation heat press or calender. When applied to the polyester surface, these dyes form a permanent bond by interacting within the subsurface of the fabric. The result is superb color saturation, sharply defined text and graphics, and long-lasting results.



Finishing

You may already own and be familiar with the use of cutting and sewing equipment. That same equipment is suitable for soft signage products. If not, you may have to purchase a cutter and industrial sewing machine and hire personnel to operate them.



Shipping

Textiles weigh less so shipping costs less. And it's easier, too, since finished graphics can be folded or rolled into smaller shipments without damaging the graphics.

UNLIKE COMPETITIVE SYSTEMS, OUR MEDIUM-VISCOSITY, HIGHER-CONCENTRATION INKS ARE EASIER TO DRY, BECAUSE THEY CONTAIN LESS WATER. THAT MEANS THEY BEHAVE PERFECTLY ON PAPER AS THIN AS 57 G/M².

Now is the perfect time to invest in your future

Today's digital dye-sublimation printers are better than ever and made to precisely fit your needs. Your future can be filled with the lucrative soft signage capability that commands hard profits.

EFI VUTEk FabriVU series

Designed to put you in the soft signage market fast. High-quality images. True production-level speeds.

Enter the world of profitable soft signage graphics printing with the EFI VUTEk FabriVU series of digital fabric printers. They offer everything you need to produce high-quality images at true production-level speeds — all while keeping your running cost low and profit opportunity high.

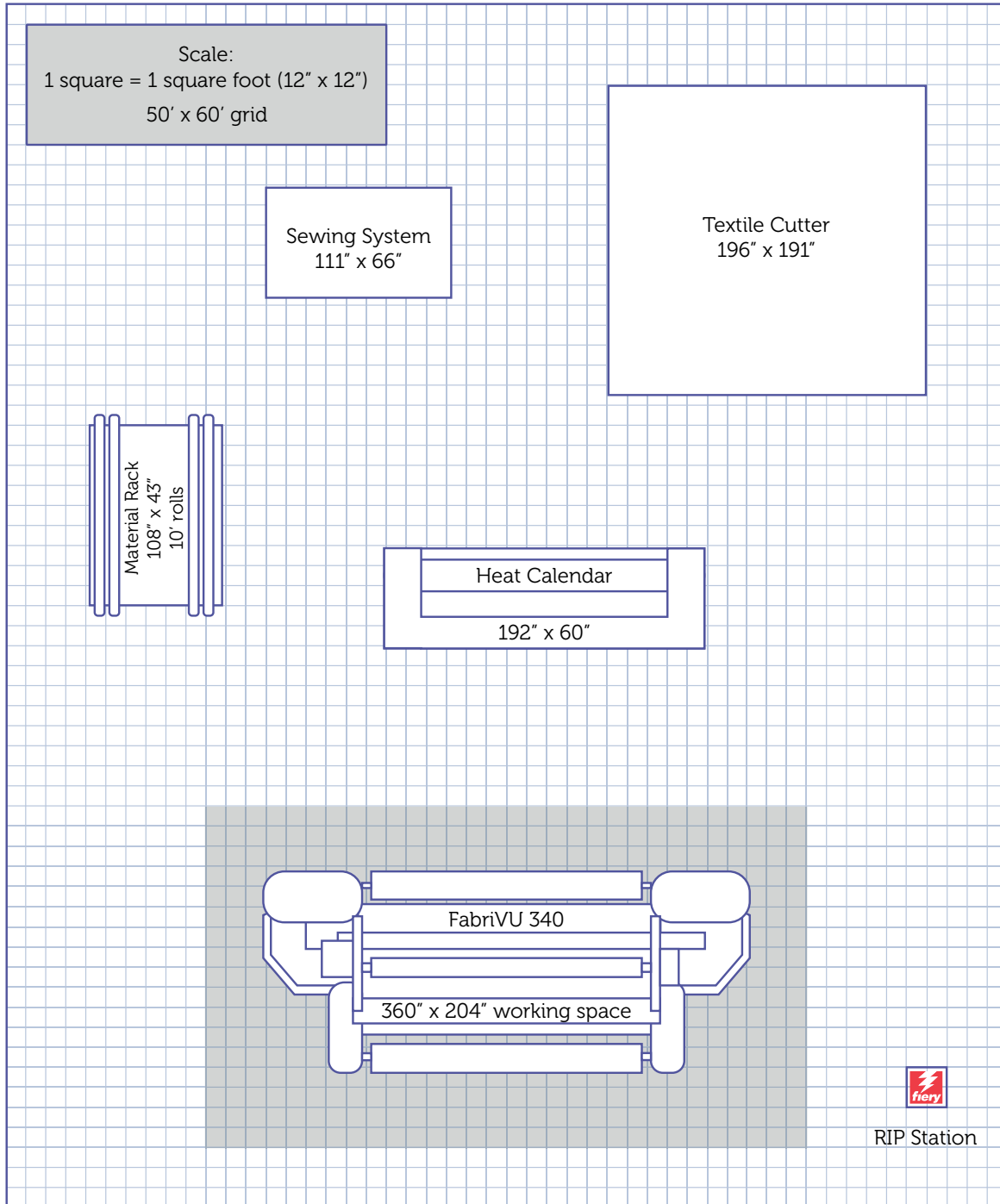
- Specifically designed for the soft signage market
- Industrial build and 24/7 operation for more jobs, and profits
- Two times the productivity of competitive models
- Unique features like ink recovery system
- Lowest cost per meter in its category
- Manage future substrates like lighter fabrics



EFI VUTEk FabriVU series' features at a glance:

	VUTEk FABRIVU 180	VUTEk FABRIVU 340	VUTEk FABRIVU 340i	VUTEk FABRIVU 520
Colors	CMYK	CMYK	CMYK	CMYK
Print width	70 in (180 cm)	133 in (340 cm)	133 in (340 cm)	133 in (340 cm)
Resolution	2400 dpi	2400 dpi	2400 dpi	2400 dpi
Max. productivity/hr	4,305 ft ² (400 m ²)	5,381 ft ² (500 m ²)	2,690 ft ² (250 m ²)	4,800 ft ² (446 m ²)
Inline Dryer	Heated platen	Heated platen	Heated platen	Heated platen

A floor plan for success



Suppliers

Transfer Papers

www.bergertextiles.com
www.coldenhove.com
www.beaverpaper.com
www.cham-group.com
www.spectrajet.com

Textile Materials

www.pongs.com
www.g-o-friedrich.com
www.fishertextiles.com
www.bergertextil.com

Heat Presses

www.klieverik.com
www.montiantonio.com

Rotary Cutters

www.zund.com
www.esko.com

Laser Cutting

www.MCTdigital.com
www.maticmachines.com

Sewing Equipment

www.maticmachines.com
www.weldmaster.com

EFI fuels success.

We develop breakthrough technologies for the manufacturing of signage, packaging, textiles, ceramic tiles, and personalized documents, with a wide range of printers, inks, digital front ends, and a comprehensive business and production workflow suite that transforms and streamlines the entire production process, increasing your competitiveness and boosting productivity. Visit www.efi.com or call 650-357-3500 for more information.



Nothing herein should be construed as a warranty in addition to the express warranty statement provided with EFI products and services.

The APPS logo, AutoCal, Auto-Count, Balance, BESTColor, BioVu, BioWare, ColorPASS, Colorproof, ColorWise, Command WorkStation, CopyNet, Cretachrom, Cretaprint, the Cretaprint logo, Cretaprinter, Cretaroller, Digital StoreFront, DocBuilder, DocBuilder Pro, DockNet, DocStream, DSPdesign Studio, Dynamic Wedge, EDOX, EFI, the EFI logo, Electronics For Imaging, Entrac, EPCount, EPPPhoto, EPRegister, EPStatus, Estimate, ExpressPay, FabriVU, Fast-4, Fiery, the Fiery logo, Fiery Driven, the Fiery Driven logo, Fiery JobFlow, Fiery JobMaster, Fiery Link, Fiery Navigator, Fiery Prints, the Fiery Prints logo, Fiery Spark, FreeForm, Hagen, Inkintensity, Inkware, LapNet, Logic, Metrix, MicroPress, MiniNet, Monarch, OneFlow, Pace, Pecas, Pecas Vision, PhotoXposure, PressVu, Printcafe, PrinterSite, PrintFlow, PrintMe, the PrintMe logo, PrintSmith, PrintSmith Site, PrintStream, Print to Win, Prograph, PSI, PSI Flexo, Radius, Remoteproof, RIPChips, RIP-While-Print, Screenproof, SendMe, Sincolor, Splash, Spot-On, TrackNet, UltraPress, UltraTex, UltraVu, UV Series 50, VisualCal, VUTEk, the VUTEk logo, and WebTools are trademarks of Electronics For Imaging, Inc. and/or its wholly owned subsidiaries in the U.S. and/or certain other countries.

All other terms and product names may be trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners, and are hereby acknowledged.