



## Unique Materials Enhance Imaging Possibilities

Finding an edge in today's competitive environment often means taking a chance on a new product. Two innovative materials that are opening market opportunities for specialty imagers are AlumaJet® from Horizons Imaging Systems Group and G-Floor Graphic™ from Better Life Technology. The following examples explore unique uses of each product.

### Printable Aluminum

Eleven years ago, Horizons Imaging Systems Group launched AlumaJet, an inkjet printable aluminum that delivers photographic quality images directly onto metal. But only recently has the product gained traction in the specialty imaging community — winning the 2012 SGIA Product of the Year Award in the rigid media category.

According to Product Manager Sam Wainer, the company is now seeing interest from photographic printers and sign shops looking to diversify their product reach. Wainer says that because of the higher perceived value of real metal, items printed on AlumaJet — such as business cards and promotional products — tend to command higher prices, look more valuable and are less likely to be discarded.

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Greg Gawlowski, a travel photographer whose work has been used by calendar, poster and magazine publishers throughout the country, wanted a distinctive way to display his work. He chose AlumaJet primarily because of the brilliance of the colors and detail of the images. Because AlumaJet also accepts standard photo-quality inks, it produces unmatched image quality.

Another customer, Lasting Commemoratives, utilized AlumaJet because the material is real metal. The company, which reproduces diplomas and newspaper articles, considered alternative "metal-looking" plastics, but opted for real metal because of its higher-perceived value.

Several architectural signage and design companies have also switched to AlumaJet for indoor way-finding signage. With AlumaJet's on-demand printing capability, office name tags, maps and other items that used to take weeks to print can now be prepared in one day.

### Floor Graphic

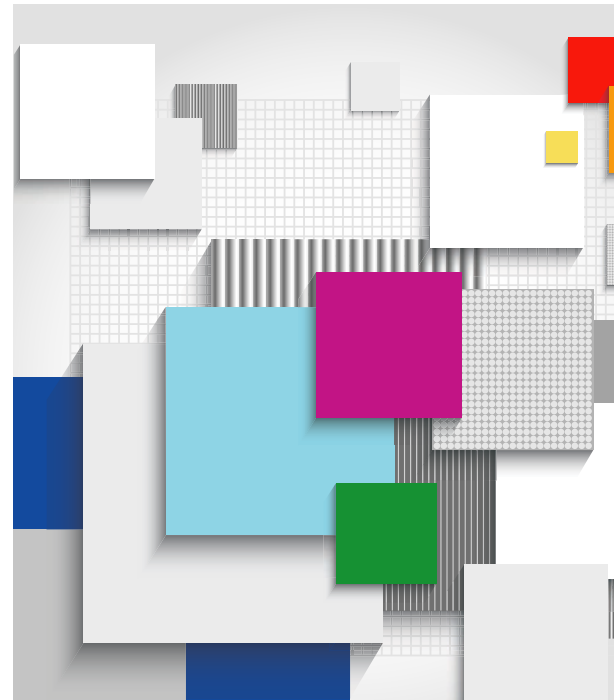
The new G-Floor Graphic™ media from Better Life Technology is also expanding conventional printing boundaries. Last year, a US architecture firm needed a media solution to display its entry at the International Architects Exhibition in Venice, Italy. The display contained more than 120 examples of projects done by architects and designers, and instead of showcasing it on the wall, the display was to be installed on the floor.

When selecting a media, many elements were considered, including:

- The three-month long exhibition
- Intense foot traffic
- Easy to clean, install and de-stall



Susan Veoni, SGIA



Greg Gawlowski's artwork printed on AlumaJet.

- Safety (non-skid)
- Print quality

With a long list of requirements, the designers quickly learned that traditional adhesive floor displays would not be an option, as adhesives would damage the floor tiles. They instead sought out the G-Floor Graphic, which is printed on the underside and backed with white so it is protected from foot traffic.

According to Better Life Technology, the display required



Way-finding sign printed with AlumaJet.

three rolls of flooring (8.5 feet wide and 34 feet long) for each room plus the rotunda, for a total of 15 rolls. Each roll had to be seamed and aligned with adjoining rolls as well as with the floor in adjacent rooms. And to ensure a smooth process, G-Floor representatives in the US talked non-professional installers in Italy through the install process by phone and Skype. Although the project was no small feat, the display was highly successful and earned an honorable mention by the exhibition.

These are just two product examples that are expanding market opportunities for specialty imagers. For a complete list of the latest substrates and media on the market, check out SGIA's online Find Equipment & Supplies resource at [SGIA.org](http://SGIA.org), Keyword: FindEquipment.

*Susan Veoni is SGIA's editorial associate and has been with the Association since 2009. She assists with a variety of marketing communications, including the SGIA Journal and Industry Ink e-newsletters, and covers the annual Expo.*



Venice Architecture Biennale display installed with G-Floor Graphic.