



Children from all around the world love animated films and picture books. Now they can have characters from their favourite fairy tales and stories in vivid colours on their bedroom walls or doors from Australian company Pro Touch Media printed on PVC-free, wallpaper, which has a lower environmental impact than PVC-containing alternatives.

In 2009 Pro Touch Media secured the license to design a range of door and wall murals using well-known characters from films and books for children's bedrooms – an idea owner Glenn Newell and his wife Angie came up with when deciding how to decorate their second child's nursery. "We were talking about how great it would be to cover the walls with wallpaper from favourite childhood stories, but we couldn't find a supplier, so we decided to produce our own," explains Newell from his office in Port Kennedy, south of Perth in Western Australia.

With a background in photography and design, Newell initially chose to outsource the printing of the wallpaper. At first they used PVC vinyl printed with solvent inks, "but the smell was too strong. We had to let the vinyl cure for several days and even then the door was noticeable for up to three weeks. When you are putting something like this on a child's bedroom wall you need to be very careful about the material and inks being used," says Newell.

The Ideal Solution – HP Latex Inks

Newell tested the prints on HP PVC-free Wall Paper using the HP Designjet L25500 Printer with HP Latex Inks. "After we ran trials on the door prints and installed them at home we knew we'd found the ideal solution for our murals. The fact that the inks are water-based and there is no strong odour from the prints means we can print and ship them out immediately," he says.

FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)-certified HP PVC-free Wall Paper contains 10 per cent recycled content. In addition, prints produced on HP PVC-free Wall Paper using HP Latex Inks are GREENGUARD Children & Schools CertifiedSM and meet AgBB criteria for health-related evaluation of VOC emissions of indoor building products.⁽¹⁾

Incredibly Easy to Use

As the business began to grow Newell decided to bring printing in-house. With no prior experience using a large format printer and "with the help of the great staff" at HP Channel Partner Artref in Perth, in October 2010 Pro Touch Media purchased an HP Designjet L25500 Printer.

"I've never operated a printer like this before, but it is very easy to use. I had an hour's training on it and I've printed nearly 1000 m² (10763 ft²) of wallpaper alone. I love this printer," says Newell.

At a glance

Industry sector:

Interior Design

Business name:

Pro Touch Media

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CHALLENGE

- Pro Touch Media wanted to produce odourless prints for the children's market
- The company needed a robust, economical printing solution designed with the environment in mind that could also reproduce vibrant colours and detailed graphics

SOLUTION

- The HP Designjet L25500 Printer with HP Latex Inks
- HP PVC-free Wall Paper

RESULTS

- Pro Touch Media under its Pro Art brand has grown the business 200 per cent and reduced its production costs by 50 per cent as a direct result of the purchase of the HP Designjet L25500 Printer with HP Latex Inks

Growth Business

"Since we installed the HP Designjet L25500 Printer we have been able to take full control of the production of our products," explains Newell. "We've sold hundreds of prints to the private sector, both wall murals and door murals. Our retail business is growing with retail outlets in Western Australia and now in Victoria with plans to expand into other Australian states."

He continued. "I would estimate our turnover has increased by 200 per cent and at the same time we've halved our production costs because the HP Latex Inks are very competitive".

Newell says in purchasing the printer "we have found unlimited applications, which have brought in new jobs from signage work to production work. We are getting jobs from the building industry and commercial work from many different sectors that we never expected to deal with or attract. We have also had some interest from international customers as well. Whereas our main focus is the children's range of wallpapers and door murals, the versatility of the HP printer has allowed us to expand our services with very little effort".

Print Pack and Send

Today, under its Pro Art brand, the company has over 230 mural designs available and the range continues to expand.

The speed at which Glenn and his team can print, pack and send the prints is a huge factor in the company's success. "When a customer orders a print from one of our retail outlets we guarantee delivery within seven days. We wouldn't be able to turnaround prints that quickly with a solvent printer because you have to let the prints de-gas, so speed to market is a major benefit with this printer because we can literally print, package and send without delay"

"Since we've had the HP Designjet L25500 Printer I've got a million ideas and applications for all these new products. It's been a real eye-opener buying the printer. I couldn't be happier."

— Glenn Newell, Pro Art.

Princess Margaret Children's Hospital Finding Nemo Mural

To kick off the business, Newell donated and installed a giant wall mural at the Princess Margaret Children's Hospital in Perth in 2010.

"We covered the wall in the Megazone area where the toddlers play. The wall is behind glass so it has the feel of an aquarium with the vibrant, bright coloured images of sea life. The kids have responded brilliantly to it," states Newell.

The installation spans 8.2 m x 3.3 m (27 ft x 11 ft). "It curves in and out and snakes its way along a corridor. It only took two of us to install it. The HP wallpaper is very easy to handle and you can pull it off and reposition it during installation, which is impossible to do with vinyl. It is essential that the media we print on is easy to apply as our target market for the wall and door murals is the general public," explains Newell. Since this installation the company has completed several larger murals the largest being 16.9 m x 2.55 m (55 ft x 8.4 ft).

From the initial installation Newell has fielded numerous enquiries for new work. "We have produced several other installations at the hospital and are getting enquiries from the commercial sector also. It's a very exciting time for the business and partnering with high profile brands like HP is of great benefit," he concludes.

1) HP PVC-free Wall Paper printed using HP Latex Inks is GREENGUARD Children & Schools CertifiedSM (see www.greenguard.org) and meets AgBB criteria for health-related evaluation of VOC emissions of indoor building products (see www.umweltbundesamt.de/produkte-e/bauprodukte/agbb.htm).

To learn more, visit www.hp.com/go/graphicarts

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Progressive Profitable Printing

