

What business owners need to know about **VEHICLE GRAPHICS**



Vehicle graphics are increasingly popular in recent years, and for good reason. Properly designed and deployed, they are extremely

effective at directing attention to your business. Marketing researchers have found them to be a much more affordable solution to reach a much wider audience than traditional print or broadcast advertising.

Reliably audited figures range from 30,000 to 70,000 impressions per day for individual vehicle wraps, according to a report entitled, "Measuring the Value of Vehicle Wraps" by ARD Ventures, a firm providing detailed market research and analysis for investors. Their data was derived from a study that compared the measured routes of GPS-linked vehicles with traffic density data from the Federal Highway Administration's advanced Highway Performance Monitoring System.

While there's no doubt that your business will benefit from adding vehicle wraps and graphics to your marketing mix, there are some common pitfalls that must be avoided if you want to get the most return on your investment.

Design considerations

The design is among the most important determinants of whether your vehicle graphics will achieve the results you seek. The design must reflect your company's image and marketing direction for the next three to five years. But an effective wrap design consists of much more than the art it will display. It must also accommodate the design parameters imposed by the environment in which it will be used, as well as physical considerations created by the contours, scale and physical projections of the vehicle. These variables must be addressed during the design process to assure that the wrap will perform properly throughout its intended service life.

The complexities of vehicle wrap design require the attention of professionals who are not only talented graphics artists, but also are knowledgeable about the required physical design parameters. Even if you have an excellent in-house graphics designer, it's important to work with a company that will collaborate with you to ensure that your design will function as it should. A word of caution here; be careful when dealing with companies that include "free design." Quality work by skilled designers takes time and time costs money. The cost of the design will be made up somewhere; possibly in the choice of cheaper materials that may not last for the full service life, or by shortcuts taken during installation that result in early adhesion failure.

Material choices

The environment in which a vehicle wrap will be used is as varied as the regions of our continent. A wrap that spends its service life in Seattle, Wash., will be exposed to sustained cool temperatures and many rainy days. A wrapped vehicle in Miami, Fla., will spend most of its time baking in semi-tropical heat and sunlight with a strong UV component. Other areas may have to deal with ice, snow, road salt and sub-zero temperatures. Not surprisingly, an array of materials has been developed to contend with these extremes, and everything in between. Making the right choice is another critical step along the way.

Professional installation and warranties

The manufacturers of materials for vehicle wraps regard correct installation so essential to the service life and performance of their products that they require them to be installed by professionally certified installers to qualify for warranties. Whether your sign company maintains installers on staff, or contracts for installation through a third party, it's important to verify that your graphics will be installed by technicians who have been certified by the manufacturer, or one of the professional associations recognized within the industry.

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Choose the right company

Carefully choose the company that will take on your wrap project. Ideally you want to work with a company that takes a collaborative approach to providing the solution you need. This is the most certain way to assure you will enjoy the benefits of a successful project. One of the best ways to begin vetting a company to provide your vehicle wraps is to take a look at their previous designs and projects. Can they provide you with a portfolio of successful projects completed for previous clients? What about references from among their vehicle wrap clients?

After establishing that the company is qualified to handle your project, it's time to start asking questions about the design considerations we've touched upon here. Ask many questions, and expect many questions in return. A collaborative wraps provider will be interested in learning a wide range of details about your company and its marketing plans in order to most efficiently provide the results you seek.

Keeping the communications channels open throughout the project will help assure your project is completed on time, in budget and up to your expectations.

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