



# WIDE-FORMAT IMAGING BEST OF THE BEST TOP SHOPS 2009

By Denise M. Gustavson

**2008** had to be one of the most challenging years for print providers. Between the credit crunch and the faltering economy, things just seem to go from bad to worse with 2009 shaping up to be an even tougher year.

This year's Top Shops were not immune and many saw an impact on their 2008 revenue figures. But, they are optimistic about the future of the industry and their business despite the sluggish economy. While growth expectations for 2009 are not ambitious, most have weathered similar storms and are well-prepared for the current situation.

The age of our companies averaged out a little under 25 years (24.92 years), with our oldest and youngest hailing from

Texas. Thomas Reprographics, based in Richardson, TX, was established in 1956, marking its 53rd year in 2009. Dallas-based XL Digital Graphics was the newest, established in 2003. This year's list includes 78 total locations (down from last year's 91), with 21 more planned for 2009—one less than the numbers from 2008. While most shops had only a handful of locations—ranging from one to five—Thomas Reprographics boasts 33.

The shops offer a range of services including digital printing technologies, installation services, warehousing and distribution services, and creative/design services, among others. As an average, 49.40 percent of the top shops' output is wide-format (36-96 inches in width), followed by grand-format (96-inches plus) at 23.36 percent, medium-format (24-35 inches) with 16.44 percent, and the remaining 7.8 percent in small-format, 14-inches and smaller documents.

While banners and signs (19.88 percent) make up the largest application on average for the shops, retail and POP displays (13.44 percent), engineering drawings (11.38 percent), exhibit and trade-show graphics (10.62 percent) are bringing in good share of revenue for these companies. Fleet and vehicle wraps (8.93 percent), billboards (8.69 percent), backlit graphics (6.74), posters (6.48 percent), fabric and textile printing (3.82), specialty graphics (3.32), and fine art applications (2.76 percent) round out the rest of the applications. But what's next?

## ECONOMICALLY SPEAKING

Without a doubt, the economy is foremost on everyone's minds and nearly all of our shops said it would be the biggest challenge for them going forward. But even though things look grim, many have a positive outlook for the future and are planning on investing in their businesses this year.

Flatbed printers were on the minds of many—some as new installs, others for additional

## TOP SHOPS 2009

Rank	Company	Location	Web Address
1.	Thomas Reprographics Inc.	Richardson, TX	<a href="http://www.thomasrepro.com">www.thomasrepro.com</a>
2.	Ferrari Color	Salt Lake City, UT	<a href="http://www.ferraricolor.com">www.ferraricolor.com</a>
3.	Crush Creative	Burbank, CA	<a href="http://www.crushcreative.com">www.crushcreative.com</a>
4.	GSG	New York, NY	<a href="http://www.gsgnyc.com">www.gsgnyc.com</a>
5.	Gigantic Color	Dallas, TX	<a href="http://www.giganticcolor.com">www.giganticcolor.com</a>
6.	Source One Digital	North Shores, MI	<a href="http://www.sourceonedigital.com">www.sourceonedigital.com</a>
7.	Perkinson Reprographics Inc.	Phoenix, AZ	<a href="http://www.pri.us">www.pri.us</a>
8.	Sharpe Images	Winston-Salem, NC	<a href="http://www.sharpeimages.com">www.sharpeimages.com</a>
9.	Pictura Graphics	Minneapolis, MN	<a href="http://www.picturagraphics.com">www.picturagraphics.com</a>
10.	Point Imaging	Hobart, IN	<a href="http://www.pointimaging.com">www.pointimaging.com</a>
11.	Image King Visual Solutions	New York, NY	<a href="http://www.imagekingvs.com">www.imagekingvs.com</a>
12.	Inkjet International	Dallas, TX	<a href="http://www.inkjetintl.com">www.inkjetintl.com</a>
13.	XL Digital Imaging LP	Dallas, TX	<a href="http://www.xldigital.com">www.xldigital.com</a>
14.	Mathison Co.	Fargo, ND	<a href="http://www.mathisons.com">www.mathisons.com</a>
15.	Bloomington Signs By Tomorrow	Bloomington, IL	<a href="http://www.bloomingtonsigns.com">www.bloomingtonsigns.com</a>
16.	Precision Color Digital Imaging	Las Vegas, NV	<a href="http://www.pcolorldi.com">www.pcolorldi.com</a>
17.	Vista Color Imaging Inc.	Cleveland, OH	<a href="http://www.vistacolorimaging.com">www.vistacolorimaging.com</a>
18.	Big Ink Display Graphics	Eagan, MN	<a href="http://www.inkbig.com">www.inkbig.com</a>
19.	MegaPrint Inc.	Plymouth, NH	<a href="http://www.megaprint.com">www.megaprint.com</a>
20.	Dimensional Silk Screen	San Diego, CA	<a href="http://www.dimensionalsilkscreen.com">www.dimensionalsilkscreen.com</a>
21.	Fast Signs	Antioch, TN	<a href="http://www.fastsigns.com/210">www.fastsigns.com/210</a>
22.	Academy Reprographics	Albuquerque, NM	<a href="http://www.acadrepro.com">www.acadrepro.com</a>
23.	Sealand Graphics	Bennington, VT	<a href="http://www.sealandgraphics.com">www.sealandgraphics.com</a>
24.	Solar Imaging	Gahanna, OH	<a href="http://www.solarimaging.com">www.solarimaging.com</a>
25.	Road Rage Designs	Spring Grove, IL	<a href="http://www.roadragedesigns.com">www.roadragedesigns.com</a>