



# SERVE IT UP **BIG**

Large-format inkjet opens new markets for printers

by NANCY CLARK

BEFORE LARGE-FORMAT inkjet, screen and commercial print shops did not consider each other competitors. Even when they delved into the same market—for example signage and display—they did not compete, but sliced up the market into distinct pieces. Litho handled the posters and point-of-purchase displays, and screen did signs and banners. Then inkjet came along and the technology—with its relatively low entry point—enabled both commercial and screen printers to go after the same pieces of the pie. Throw into the mix camera shops offering digital output services and new shops that specialize solely in large-format inkjet and you begin to see how the once orderly signage and display market is now anything but.

So as a commercial print shop owner, you have to ask yourself, is there any pie left for me? "Well, yes there's definitely more competitors," says Mike Robertson, president of the U.S.-based Specialty Graphic Imaging Association. "And yes inkjet is chipping away at traditional screen printing jobs, but the technology itself allows for a wider range of products to be produced. And players are re-slicing the pie in a different way. What's emerging is a high-end slice, and a mid-range and so forth."

To help you decide which slice or combination of slices to go after, *Graphic Monthly Canada* presents a segment-by-segment look at the inkjet signage and display market and at some of the players you'll be sharing that pie with.



“Trade work is not going to disappear. We’re specialists. We know what we’re doing.”  
—Larry Chan  
CEO, Beyond Digital Imaging