



JAMES BELL
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AGI

FOUR UNIQUE DIVISIONS:

1. Signage Solutions
2. Architectural Branding
3. Lighting & Maintenance
4. Innovative Solutions

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What's your sign? Is it Mercedes-Benz, Capital One, Hardee's or Hertz?

Meet James Bell of AGI, creators of some of the most iconic signs of our times.

What's in a sign? Whether on the outside of a building, inside retail environments or at the entry to a national park, brand signage writes the book of our everyday lives. It says, 'welcome in, you are among friends.' We recently sat down with James Bell, senior vice president of Sales & Marketing for AGI, one of the nation's leaders in architectural imaging. As a trendsetter for the industry, he gave us some insights on how to create immersive experiences with signage.

What facility branding trends are on the horizon for 2018?

Architectural branding defines both our urban and national experience. What would Times Square be without its towering signage? And think about Mount Rushmore; it's the nation's most famous example of architectural branding. At AGI we work with businesses and national agencies to deliver on their vision. Like all forms of media, ours is evolving. I see signage becoming more immersive and experiential. This is due in no small part to the breath of materials we can use, as well as the increasing flexibility offered by digital technology. Today a sign be a mini-movie, flashing from the brand to the message to the product.

Today signage can be anything from lighting to architectural features like entry portals/towers, trellis and light coves to the building itself. We create brand experiences that combine digital features with static graphic solutions.

What do you see for the future of retail?

Many retailers are melding physical environments with e-commerce strategies. So, brick-and-mortar retailers are finding ways to energize the experience in their stores. This delivers on consumer expectation for a shopper experience, and keeps the brick and mortars aligned with their online presence.

Can you share an example of how you work today?

Ford needed a unique brand experience for their new facility — one that was economical, true to the designer's intent and scalable globally. AGI worked alongside the designer and Ford architects to create low and high fidelity prototypes. We incorporated a mobile app that allowed dealers to change the

color of the product based on light fixtures. The Ford color palette was incorporated into the app and deployed, along with the product, across 1,250 locations, delivering a consistent image. AGI provided a customizable solution. Key to all the offerings implemented with the Ford Interiors was the ability to quickly prototype all product offerings in full scale in a short time frame. There challenges unique to developing products for global rollout, such as country specific compliance certifications. AGI's product is now approved on six continents. We have our own foreign-based manufacturing and project management support to meet the mission of clients like Ford.

Does AGI have a footprint outside the US?

One of our clients, PROlogis, develops commercial real estate throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia. Not too long ago, they went through a merger and had to rebrand the company with a consistent look across the globe. Turnaround time was a key factor. The AGI team came up with brand architecture and developed a signage family based on approved prototypes. In 18 months, we completed 2000 locations, from tarmac sites at JFK Airport and LAX to monument signs in Brazil, Mexico and Canada, as well as office signage in China.

How have materials changed over the years?

We are always innovating. Architectural signage has to accommodate the wear and tear from weather and the occasional bird nest. For example, ACM (Aluminum Composite Materials) gives designers, builders and architects more options. Our Series One system solution provides air and moisture management by combining lightweight, durable cladding that controls and redirects water outside your building.

What would your advice be to designers and architects who have won a large contract?

Consistency is critical. To win the trust of your clients, you need a single source of accountability. This goes from pre-construction meeting through close out and follow-up support. When you take an idea into a 3D design and then translate across both digital and architectural landscapes, the devil is in the details.

To learn more about AGI, visit <http://www.agisign.com>



Thinking beyond signs to build immersive brand experiences



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