



Three Important Benefits of Sign Prototypes for High-Rise Branding Projects

Designing signs for high-rise applications and attaching them to buildings is not a typical capability of the average sign company. Technically speaking, there are few sign companies in Virginia that can truly handle the full gamut of signage from vinyl hours on the glass entrance doors to the huge custom electric signs that brand the tops of towers across familiar city skylines of Northern Virginia, Richmond, Tidewater and Roanoke.

Holiday Signs provided the branding signage for the MeadWestvaco (MWV) Corporate Headquarters building located at 501 South Fifth Street, Richmond, Virginia. The building's striking design above the James River is signed with the corporate brand making the MWV building a noticeable and visually attractive addition to downtown Richmond. The project involved the design, manufacture and installation of MWV logos for three sides of the skyscraper viewed 24 hours a day.

Holiday Signs delivered considerable value to the customer by producing logo prototypes made during the course of this project. Using prototypes may seem like an unnecessary use of materials at first glance, but when considering large scale signage and costs of manufacture and installation of high-rise work, using prototypes only makes good sense.

There are three important benefits of using sign prototypes for high-rise applications:

- **Cost Reduction**
- **Resource Conservation**
- **Achievement of Best Possible Results**

Because of our experience with high-rise and other technically challenging projects, we know it's best to get it right on the ground and get a strong sense its going in the right direction with signage prototypes before committing to build the whole thing.

The MWV corporate philosophy embraces sustainability as part of their ethical business strategy and proactively partners with vendors driven by the same commitment to sustainability. MWV consciously took steps in reducing its carbon footprint by purchasing locally, and by using LED lighting for illumination. But perhaps the biggest sustainability aspect here was the agreement to utilize prototypes in the manufacturing cycle



Night-time view of the MeadWestvaco headquarters building, Richmond.

saving at least 50% in material, labor and fuel.

The MWV logo was designed by an independent design firm. The first prototype was made based on the original design specifications. After critically viewing the Gen 1 illuminated corporate logo from the ground, a team of senior executives immediately wanted it taken down and redesigned. Both the lighting and framework were redesigned and a new Gen 2 prototype was prepared. Before this could be approved for production, a third Gen 3 prototype was ordered because MWV re-designed their logo.

Without prototypes, it would have cost more than twice as much to achieve the same end results, and would have over-

used valuable resources that MWV is dedicated to conserve. Also, the prototypes helped make sure installation and future service costs were kept to a minimum. In this case, the design of channel letters for mounting on very expensive glass panels was coordinated with the architect and engineer to make sure the attached logos did not over-stress the glass or building structure. Without the use of prototypes, the customer would have incurred significant costs for the design, manufacture, installation and removal of the logos.

The completed corporate image was a big success! It fits the building and surrounding environment while making a lasting impression on the MeadWestvaco brand in Richmond!

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