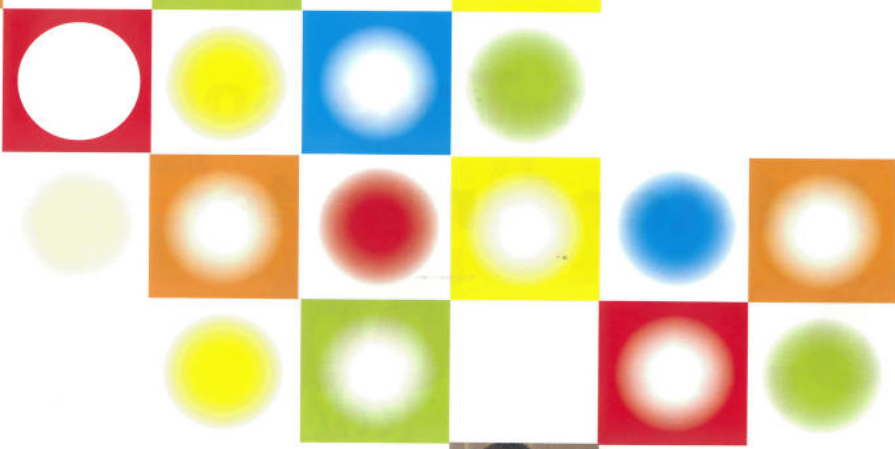


LED:



LED are coming

by Ivan Smith

Fremont Street, Las Vegas: scene of a five-block-long, hourly video show; a multimillion-fluorescent-bulb spectacular designed to compete with the renowned Strip around the corner.

Until recently.

The fluoros are no more – ripped out and replaced – at US\$17m expense – by 12.5 million LED lamps, providing 4.1 million pixels and nearly 17 million colours, endlessly rotating shows, live action and animation. It will also, not that it matters in Vegas, cost significantly less to maintain.

Heading deeper into the 21st century, there is every chance LEDs will be to the lighting and visual display industry what fibre optics promised to be, but wasn't.

The light-emitting diode has been in existence since the mid 1970s and available in three colours since the 1980s. Today, it is available in all the colours you want, at the brightness you want, for any use you want. And the price is dropping fast.

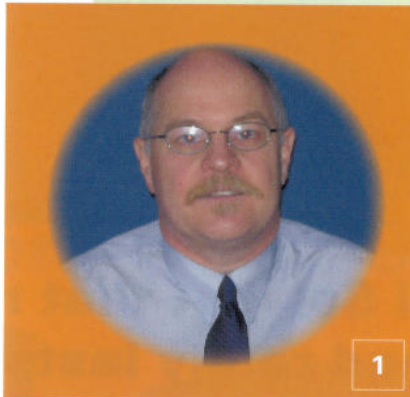
As a lighting medium, LED is now a viable alternative to white neon tubes or fluorescent lamps in retail areas, restaurants, nightclubs, cinema chains – and, progressively, living areas. It is also increasingly used in fixed signage and

architectural features – large and small – where previously neon would have been the first and only choice.

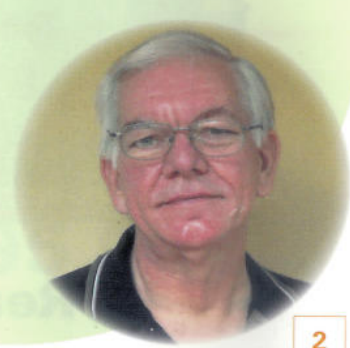
Such is the flexibility of the medium that LED's use in information display is equally – if not more – established. It is now very likely that a moving sign or advertisement, video wall display, scoreboard or airport information screen, from scrolling single-line alphanumeric displays to full-colour and even 3D, will use LED as its lighting source.

The applications of LED are mind-boggling and growing all the time: a projected three-dimensional image with a 120-degree view zone and several seconds of animation is closer to reality than science fiction. As Volker Rademacher, CEO at LSA Smartlite (which supplies the DuraLed LED system), says, "If I don't see a technological change every two weeks, I get concerned!"

For fixed signage, the industry medium that feels most under threat from LED is neon. Neon has been the medium of choice for signs for nearly a hundred years. There seems no doubt that LED will take some market share, but opinions obviously vary as to how much.



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1. Neil Uppington of Jefferson Bay Neon
2. Volker Rademacher of LSA Smartlite

LSA Smartlite on the move

LSA Smartlite, one of Australia's largest LED suppliers, recently moved into larger premises at 82 Ashmore Road, Bundall, Qld, having outgrown their previous premises. Smartlite now has a fully fitted showroom and demonstration area showing their range of LED strip lights and LED lights to suit a wide range of applications.

Smartlite works with and is a distributor of some the world's leading suppliers. They are a solution based company developing unique answers for their many clients, including sign companies. Many signmakers are now experiencing and understanding the value of using LED lights in signmaking.

Sign companies, architects, and all other interested parties are invited to visit the Smartlite showroom to witness the range of options available to help deliver sign and lighting solutions.

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