

# INDUSTRY TRENDS

The International Sign Association

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## ISA International Sign Expo 2017: A Recipe for Success

ikeGPS's Spike—an innovative tool that captures measurements with a smartphone or tablet—had only been available in the market a few months when Vanessa Bagnato attended her first ISA International Sign Expo.

That was 2015 and Bagnato, ikeGPS's vice president of product marketing and partner success for Spike, was there to meet potential partners, resellers and end users. "A lot of great things came out of that event," she said.

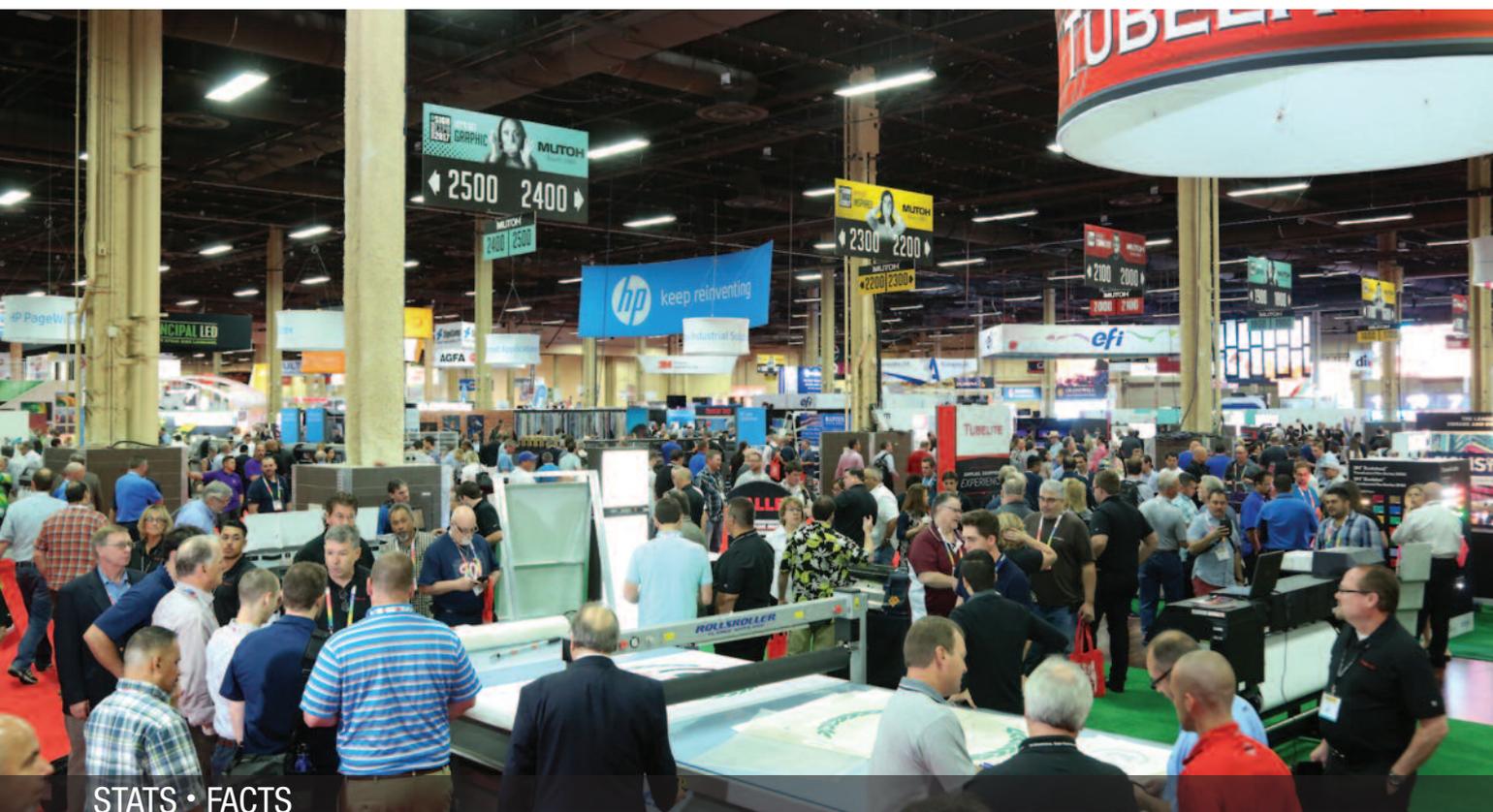
A year later, Spike was named the winner of the ISA Innovation Award for the most disruptive product. "That brought a lot of great buzz and attention," Vanessa said. "We had a very busy booth."

By 2017, Spike was no longer the new kid on the block and the challenge was how to make ISA International Sign Expo another blockbuster. "I wasn't sure if we could top 2016, but we did it; 2017 was our highest in terms of booth attendance and sales that resulted from the show."

The same held true for other exhibitors. John Kaufman showcased Canon's latest equipment and found that "there are a lot of people coming into these shows looking for new technologies and new ideas. This has allowed us to get the message out." Canon chose to offer hourly presentations, which helped to deliver "a consistent and clear message."

### Mark Your Calendars

*ISA International Sign Expo 2018 will be March 21-24, with the tradeshow floor open March 22-24, at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla. Registration will open this fall at [www.signexpo.org](http://www.signexpo.org).*



### STATS • FACTS

ISA International Sign Expo 2017 broke a number of records with nearly 20,500 participants and more than 600 exhibitors. Attendance at education events surpassed previous records by

That message is well received by the many attendees who come to ISA International Sign Expo looking for products, like Randy George of Allied Electric Sign and Awning in Salt Lake City, Utah. "It is an opportunity to look at equipment and compare brands and compare different functions and things like that. We need new equipment. In the last couple of years, we bought a new router, a new Accu-Bend, a new printer and trucks. We have been growing quickly, so this gives a great opportunity to find new equipment and meet the vendors here."

Exhibitors benefit well beyond the sales, by the connection with customers. It has helped ikeGPS learn more about the sign, graphics and visual communications industry and to develop relationships with potential partners. At ISA Sign Expo 2017, the company announced a partnership with SAI's Flexi software. The company also landed resellers in Europe and Costa Rica at the 2017 event.

But it is learning more about the industry and how customers use the device that has helped ikeGPS move forward. "We continue to take feedback from users and turn around new features specific to the sign industry that will make their workflows easier," Bagnato said.

It's a win for both exhibitors and customers, one that extends well beyond a few days in Las Vegas into a year-round business success story. | 

Three products that can transform operations for sign, graphics and visual communications companies were named top winners of the ISA Sign Expo 2017 Innovation Awards. The products were selected in three categories by a panel of industry experts.

The first-place winners:

- **Business Solutions/Software:** ONYX 12.1 from Onyx Graphics produces benchmark RIP and data transfer speeds, increasing productivity and profits. Users can avoid wasted sheet media with an intuitive user interface and visual nesting previews. An integrated G7 process improves gray color for output consistency across devices and applications.
- **Electronic and Traditional Signage:** Component Signage, Inc.'s Inciseon product line transforms neon with a lower voltage/more energy efficient product. Inciseon Skeletonized is made using common materials, but has extreme durability. Inciseon Integral embeds illumination directly into the substrate.
- **Print:** 3M™ Print Wrap Film IJ180mC-120, a printable metallic wrap film, gives vehicles a high-tech, attention-grabbing finish.

The winners were selected from numerous new and innovative products that will be introduced to the sign, graphics and visual communications industry during ISA International Sign Expo 2017. Attendees can see the full list of Innovation Awards nominees at [www.signexpo.org/innovations](http://www.signexpo.org/innovations).

## THE POWER of Connection

Seeing the latest products isn't the only benefit of ISA International Sign Expo. With nearly 20,500 attendees all in one place, powerful connections are also there for the asking.

Michelle Pedley, account manager, Sign Engineering Corp., was a member of the 2017 class of ISA Elite, a program which offers networking and education for up-and-coming sign, graphics and visual communications industry leaders. "I had heard such excellent stories from the previous members of the program and how a wonderful bond was created," she said. "It is hard to find people your age. Getting to talk out your work and all of your experiences, it's great to have that connection of people that understand. Hopefully, that will lead to long-lasting relationships."

Rachel Wolfgang, project manager at Poyant Signs, was a 2016 Elite member and has continued to grow her contacts in the industry. "I've gotten to meet a lot of new people across the country so it has been nice making new connections," she said. "ISA Sign Expo offers an opportunity to get to know the individuals who work in our industry, make connections and relationships with people that I can work with in the years to come. I do not think I could have made those same types of connections without coming to ISA Sign Expo."

