

WIDE-FORMAT WIZARDRY

The mere mention of the name makes books fly off shelves, movie seats fill up, and toys disappear from stores like, well, magic—Harry Potter. And this past summer, with the last installment of the book series released and another movie premiering, promotional material featuring the wizarding wunderkind was unavoidable. Manhattan-based Graphic Systems Group (GSG) jumped in on the action, producing Harry Potter displays for FAO Schwarz's flagship store in New York City. Producing wall murals and various P-O-P items, GSG virtually transformed an area of the toy store into a place that would make customers feel as if they had just been transported into Harry's bewitching world.

GSG was referred by FAO Schwarz to Warner Bros. Consumer Products, the actual client for the job. Warner Bros. granted GSG access to a library of images from the Harry Potter movies, which the shop used to create the design concepts and the initial graphics layout that were to "maintain the look and feel of the Harry Potter brand," says Ken Madsen, president of GSG. Images were re-worked in Photoshop and Illustrator, as well as in CAD. Using its HP Designjet 10000 and HP low-solvent ink, GSG output reduced-size proofs onto 3M Controltac Graphic Film. After the proofs were approved, the shop then output the final graphics using the same printer, media, and ink. Approximately 15 prints were output for the wall graphics, for a total of 300 square feet. Three 4 x 8-foot



banners were also output on scrim vinyl, again with the HP 10000. Final output time was approximately 24 hours.

In business since 1983, GSG operates out of a 35,000-square-foot facility. Madsen estimates that point-of-purchase projects make up 25% of the company's income, partly due to "the growing demand for theater-like imagery." These projects, he says, "allow GSG to find creative ways of transforming typical 2-D wide-format imagery into 3-D projects, incorporating robotics, lighting, and sound," for an end result that is nothing short of magic.

GRAPHIC SYSTEMS GROUP
www.gsgnyc.com