

Made in Cambridge

Visual Planet opens UK production facility to meet export demand



Worldwide demand for its state-of-the-art interactive Touch Screen Foils has prompted a move to a 6000sq ft manufacturing facility for Cambridge-based Visual Planet.

The company has over thirty touch screen re-sellers, across 17 different countries and report that 50% of their business now comes from outside the UK.

“Europe remains our most popular market,” explains Mike Cole, Commercial Director at Visual Planet. “But recently we’ve seen a huge rise in orders from the United States, Singapore, Korea and Australia.”

The new Cambridge facility will also enable further research and development of new interactive products, with a specially designed demonstration area to showcase the potential of their solutions.

Visual Planet was the brainchild of Vernon Spencer, an Internet pioneer and head of product development for Pipex - later UUNET - the UK’s first Internet service provider. He saw the potential of bringing the Internet to the high street by making shop windows touch sensitive. This enables potential customers to gain more information out-of-hours by interacting with a screen within the window display.

Mike Cole, his former colleague, soon joined him and together they have grown the business to become a world leader in interactive Touch Screen Foil. Cole continues: “Our touch screen technology is being integrated by our resellers into an array of different displays and applications, ranging from interactive glass, rear projection screens, LCD monitors and even interactive tables and walls”

The unique ability of Visual Planet’s touch technology to work through non metalised materials without requiring any external components, has made this product ideal for applications such as thru-window displays and large touch screens for reception displays.

Since starting up four years ago, Visual Planet have seen the market for their innovate products mature, as companies have woken up to the idea of becoming ‘interactive’ and improving the impact of their displays.

“As television goes digital and people can choose what to watch, advertisers will need to look for new ways to promote their products. We see a huge growth in interactive solutions which enable marketers to gain feedback from their potential customers and tailor their promotions accordingly.” Continues Cole.

As well as moving premises, Visual Planet has also taken on new production and sales staff to exploit the increasing interest in their products – the newest of which is the world’s first 100-inch reusable touch-screen ‘foil’.

“The foil can be rolled up and is easy to deliver worldwide. It’s then very easy to apply to a window or other non-metallic surfaces – giving you a huge space to reach your customers. The touch-screen works through the glass, so customers can use it at any time. It could really breath new life into high-streets at night!”

In the UK Visual Planet operates as a visual communications solution provider supplying a full a range of visual services to the corporate and public sector “By using our own technology in the UK we gain invaluable experience of the touch screen and visual communications market, which we can then share

with our resellers to help them develop their markets more quickly”

Why Cambridge? It’s just a great place to be – there are so many other amazing companies in the area and it’s an easy place for our national and international clients to come and visit us.”

Visual Planet’s new offices will be ...77 Shelford Road, Trumpington Cambridge CB2 2NB (address) from mid 14th June.

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For press information, please contact:

Rachel Holdsworth/Nick Holmes, Holdsworth Associates

Telephone: 01954 202789

E-mail: rachel@holdsworth-associates.co.uk.