

# Creating an attractive and safe play environment for children thanks to HP Latex Printing Technologies



## At a glance

**Industry:** Sign & Display, Wall covering

**Business names:** The City by Littlez

**Headquarters:** Singapore

**Websites:** thecity.com.sg



**Business names:** Procomp Printset

**Headquarters:** Singapore

**Websites:** procomp.com.sg



## Challenge

- Create an attractive education-focused play and discovery centre for kids.
- Use decorating materials and processes certified as having a lower impact on the environment, and enhance the family-friendly experience.
- Achieve high image quality and colour consistency for attractive new branding.
- Satisfy increasing customer demand for printed products that have a lower impact on the environment.
- Produce printed decoration with no odour.

## Solution

- Fast-drying HP Latex Inks printed on HP PVC-free Wall Paper with the HP Scitex LX850 Industrial Printer to create vibrant wall coverings.
- HP PVC-free Wall Paper printed using HP Latex Inks is GREENGUARD Children & Schools Certified<sup>SM</sup>.<sup>1</sup>

## Results

- The City by Littlez attracted more than 2,500 visitors in its first three months after opening, accelerating return on investment with the 10-day turnaround from design to inauguration thanks to HP Latex Inks on HP PVC-free Wall Paper.
- Water-based HP Latex Inks printed on HP PVC-free Wall Paper produce odourless wall decoration that requires only water to install. GREENGUARD Children & Schools Certified<sup>1</sup> prints provide an environment where children can safely learn and play.
- The use of water-based HP Latex Inks in the work environment requires no special ventilation,<sup>4</sup> simplifying work processes, and contributes to reducing the overall impact of printing compared to eco-solvent ink printing processes.
- Offered specialty applications with a higher margin thanks to the versatility of HP Latex Printing Technologies, while also satisfying increasing number of customers demanding products with a lower impact on the environment.

“We are preparing for the future thanks to HP Latex Printing Technologies. We can target new higher-margin markets such as public buildings like schools and hospitals, where customers are sensitive to using eco-solvent ink output.”

– Louis Lim, business development manager, Procomp Printset



The City by Littlez is a play and discovery centre with something unique. Everyday settings, such as a supermarket, a hairdresser's, street scenes and more have been attractively recreated to enhance children's educational experience through role play. Smadar Ron, designer and business partner at the The City by Littlez, created The City concept. “As a mother, I believed that all parents would welcome play areas with greater educational value for their children, rather than simply a space for climbing and running,” Smadar says. “I wanted an environment that looked fun and attractive. It obviously had to be safe for the kids, and it had to be durable, easy to clean and maintain,” she explains.

When Smadar heard about HP Latex Printing Technologies and attended a product demonstration by ProComp Printset in Singapore, she realised that she could meet her strict criteria by using water-based HP Latex Inks to print her own wallpaper designs on HP PVC-free Wall Paper. Reflecting the concept's resounding success with children and their families, The City, located in a shopping mall in Singapore, received more than 2,500 visitors in its first three months of business.

### Certified safety offers greater peace of mind

“I strongly believe in innovation, especially if it benefits the environment. The GREENGUARD Children & Schools certification<sup>1</sup> for HP Latex Inks on HP PVC-free Wall Paper not only offers peace of mind in terms of the safety we needed for our play area, but it is also an indication of the high quality of the products,” states Smadar.

Louis Lim, business development manager at the printer Procomp Printset in Singapore, explains that the certifications can also help sell their products. “The environmental certifications<sup>2, 3, 4</sup> that HP Latex Printing Technologies have achieved can be a key factor in the client's purchasing decision, particularly for large business accounts that show greater awareness of the impact of their business activities on the environment,” he says. “The certifications also offer opportunities to exploit new markets, such as schools, hospitals and interior decoration, where customers would have been wary of using eco-solvent prints.

“HP Latex Ink output is steadily replacing our eco-solvent ink output for a host of existing applications, such as outdoor banners or billboards with a high change rate, or POP displays in critical locations. Once our customers have seen the richness in colour and the range of colour gamut, most of them don't want to go back to the output from our eco-solvent machine. They are willing to pay a premium.”

Procomp Printset, invested in three HP Latex Printers in 2010, initially to test the technology on the market, a fourth in 2011 and added a fifth in 2012. The adoption of HP Latex Printing Technologies using water-based – and UL ECOLOGO Certified<sup>2</sup> – HP Latex Inks means that operators and finishers can also benefit from an improved work environment.

### Accelerating return on investment

“We had a period of grace in our rental agreement that was set aside for refurbishing the space. It was obviously extremely important that we exploit the grace period to the full extent to accelerate our return on investment. I had never designed wallpaper before but it was so simple. I sent the designs and ordered the job on a Thursday and took delivery on the Monday. It took two days to apply 400 m<sup>2</sup> (4,306 ft<sup>2</sup>) of wallpaper and there were no odours. It was applied to the walls using water. No glues were required. We opened for business on the following Monday,” adds Smadar.

“The City looks great and people love it. The kids don’t want to leave. The wallpaper is so attractive that we made the furniture and other furnishings white. The wallpaper is central to the atmosphere,”

– Smadar Ron, designer and co-owner, The City by Littlez



Louis highlights how HP Latex Printing Technologies simplify production processes. “Unlike eco-solvent ink prints that require drying time and degassing before they can be handled, finished and mounted, by using HP Latex Printing Technologies the wallpaper printed for The City was dry and odourless straight off the printer. Unlike eco-solvent prints, we didn’t need to laminate, which is an additional cost and extra time, plus you avoid the risk of error from additional steps in the finishing processes.”

Smadar confirms that the HP PVC-free Wall Paper is withstanding the extremely intense usage that any play area would experience. “We’re very busy but it’s pretty strong material and we clean it with a cloth. The colours remain bright and attractive,” she says.

### Uncompromising standards to achieve high quality

“With little kids running around, it was a concern that we made no compromises on quality. Eco-solvent ink printed on vinyl was not an option because it is solvent-based. We were concerned about possible odours and also about printing on vinyl. HP Latex Inks are water-based and HP’s wallpaper doesn’t even need glue to apply it,” explains Smadar. She also excluded off-the-shelf wallpaper. “If we had used commercial wallpaper, we would have had to adapt our concept to the wallpaper. Also, if you have to repair any damaged areas, will the wallpaper you initially used still be available or in

stock? With HP PVC-free Wall Paper we can simply print a strip, remove and replace the damaged strip using only water. Hand painting the location would not have offered the uniform consistency and professional standard required to create The City brand concept.”

### A brighter future all round

“The City looks great and people love it. The kids don’t want to leave. The wallpaper is so attractive that we made the furniture and other furnishings white. The wallpaper is central to the atmosphere,” states Smadar. She concluded, “For the future we are considering expansion to further locations. We are also looking at creating a product line based on The City theme and using HP Latex Printing Technologies, including personalised wallpapers that customers could choose.”

Louis confirms the success of Procomp Printset open house days that demonstrate the capabilities of HP Latex Printing Technologies to existing and potential customers. “There is a noticeable growth in demand for printed products created using processes with a lower environmental impact, especially in orders from larger business accounts. In such a short time, HP Latex Printing Technologies already represents 50 per cent of our large format printing business and it’s growing all the time,” he concludes.

- 1) HP PVC-free Wall Paper printed using HP Latex Inks is GREENGUARD Children & Schools Certified<sup>SM</sup> (see [www.greenguard.org](http://www.greenguard.org)) and meets AgBB criteria for health-related evaluation of VOC emissions of indoor building products (see [umweltbundesamt.de/produkte-e/bauprodukte/agbb.htm](http://umweltbundesamt.de/produkte-e/bauprodukte/agbb.htm)).
- 2) UL ECOLOGO Certification to UL 2801 demonstrates that an ink meets a range of stringent criteria related to human health and environmental considerations (see [ul.com/EL](http://ul.com/EL)).
- 3) Water-based HP Latex Inks are not classified as flammable or combustible liquids under the USDOT or international transportation regulations. Testing per the Pensky-Martins Closed Cup method demonstrated flash point greater than 110° C.
- 4) Special ventilation is not required to meet U.S. OSHA requirements on occupational exposure to VOCs from HP Latex Inks. Special ventilation equipment installation is at the discretion of the customer – no specific HP recommendation is intended. Customers should consult state and local requirements and regulations.

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4AA4-6874EEW, June 2013

