

Regulated Signage Does Not Mean Retrograde Signage

Posted on Sep 01, Posted by [Ashley Bray](#) Category

Required signage like ADA no longer has to clash with a building's theme thanks to advances in materials and processes.

I was going through my news alerts this morning, and I came across an article in the [Financial Times](#) that tackled the topic of buildings as brands. Often moving offices into a unique location helps companies better communicate and reflect their brand and its goals. It can also help to inspire creativity and attract a certain work set.

The downside to this practice is that the buildings can be historically protected and come with heritage-building restrictions. This means that any change—down to a doorknob replacement—has to get clearance first. Obviously, this can create timely and costly hurdles.

What was unexpected is that signage can be considered one of these hurdles. Many companies are surprised to find that despite their unique and historic choice of location, they still have to put up health and safety signage as dictated by laws such as the ADA.

That this should come as a surprise at all is a problem. It harkens back to the debate that signage companies should be involved in construction projects from the beginning stages—not as an afterthought.

Further, many companies think that required signage will clash with the look they are going for. But thanks to the many advances in signage materials and processes—such as photopolymer, thermoforming, etc.—the option to create signage that better fits a theme is a reality.

The bad rep that wayfinding, ADA, and other mandated signage still carries is unfair and uninformed. Required doesn't always mean lacking in aesthetics.

So what do you think? Is there a way to increase awareness of how far signage has come—particularly government-regulated signs like ADA?

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