



## BIGraphics Invests in BIG Finishing from Gerber

**Product Spotlight:**

Gerber M Series

**BIGraphics  
Nashua, NH**

Since 1996, BIGraphics, Inc. of Nashua, NH has been creating unique, large-format graphics and displays for customers of all kinds throughout New England. Describing themselves as a large-format, print service bureau and exhibit materials supplier, BIGraphics produces full-color, indoor and outdoor graphics of virtually unlimited size and shape.

“From its inception, BIGraphics has been partnering with companies that need printed graphics and displays,” explained David Merrick, president of BIGraphics. “Whether it is a marketing firm, ad agency, promotional company, event coordinator, or sign maker, BIGraphics meets their graphic needs both BIG and small. Even though our name implies large-format work, we do not limit ourselves to strictly oversized displays. From one-of-a-kind, mural-sized graphics, to intricate contour cutting of Point of Purchase displays, or short-run, custom-printed, corrugated boxes, BIGraphics handles it all.”

BIGraphics has always invested heavily in new technology so that they can keep pace with their creative customer’s demands,” stated Merrick. As an addition to their numerous wide-format color printers, they recently installed the M3000 Flatbed Cutting System from Gerber Scientific Products to take advantage of its automated, digital cutting of both rigid and flexible stock. “Investing in the M3000 added capacity to our finishing department without having to add staff,” explained Merrick. “Its production capacity is the equivalent of an additional staff member, so it allows us to generate more jobs with the same number of employees.”

The automation of the M Series Flatbed Cutting System alleviates the physical strain that cutting by hand can cause BIGraphic’s staff. “For instance, cutting ten 18" x 24" sheets by hand or with the wall mounted straight cutter is time consuming and in the end the person is physically tired,” commented Merrick. “Not only are the finishing results consistently accurate and the speed impressive, but installing an M Series cutter has made for a happier finishing staff at BIGraphics.”



Before purchasing the M3000, BIGraphics investigated the latest flatbed finishing equipment and found most to be prohibitively expensive, unattractive, or lacking in durability. Traditional routers, while heavy-duty, were judged to be too restrictive in terms of the materials they could cut for their steep price tag. When BIGraphics looked at the M Series Flatbed Cutting System they saw the winning combination of an attractive design, robust features, rugged construction, and an economical price. "Our M3000 Cutting System is a durable, reliable, attractive machine which features a 6' x 10' table that can accommodate our oversized graphics," commented Merrick, "and its versatile range of tools permits us to finish just about any of the commonly-used graphic substrates - all at a more reasonable price than comparable machines."

The M Series Flatbed Cutting System features a full complement of tools including pneumatic routing, oscillating knives, drag knives, and creasing wheels to finish most industry-standard materials. "The ability to cut all kinds of materials was a major factor in purchasing the M3000," said Merrick "Our varied customer base means that we are frequently cutting foamboard and Gatorfoam®, as well as plastics of all kinds including styrene, LEXAN®, and PVC. And, the M3000 is sturdy enough to handle the rigorous finishing requirements of Alupalite™ and Dibond®."

One of the biggest assets of the M Series finishing system is its ability to finish challenging materials with little or no mess. "Our shop maintains an 'office clean' environment so the M3000's ability to knife cut plastics like 6mm PVC is a really great," explained Merrick, "and the on-board vacuum system allows us to cut Alupalite or Dibond with virtually no mess. The M3000 eliminates the need to use a saw to cut these more difficult materials, which would consequently produce dust and debris in our otherwise clean environment."

BIGraphics also uses the M Series Finishing System to cut brittle PET lenticular plastics using its drag knife. "The M3000 does a great job on lenticular plastic and minimizes our breakage and redo rates," said Merrick. "We have been producing quite a bit of lenticular plastics display materials and the M3000 makes manufacturing them easy - even when contour cutting."

Perhaps even more important than the variety of materials that the M Series finishes is the T3 Tool Head System with automatic tool recognition. The T3 Tool Head System holds up to three tools at a time so that frequently-used tools are already installed when you need them. "The M Series software allows you to save material/tool profiles and recall them for fast and easy production of different materials without lengthy machine setup," said Merrick. "We just select the saved profile for that material and let the M3000 do its job."

The M Series Flatbed Cutting System has opened up new markets for BIGraphics. The finishing system comes with corrugated creasing and cutting tools, making it perfect for sample making and short-run production of boxes. "Our packaging partners engage us to produce one-of-a-kind samples or small quantities of custom-printed marketing pieces," explained Merrick. "The M3000 gives us the capability to do these types of jobs very quickly and extremely economically. It is a win-win situation for us and our clients."

An added benefit of the M3000 is the ability to create custom packaging for the graphic products created by BIGraphics. The M Series packaging software and box templates make it simple to scale boxes to virtually any size. This feature was an important consideration when evaluating flatbed cutting systems. "We have greatly reduced our own shipping costs by creating custom-sized shipping boxes using the M3000," described Merrick. "Each and every day we make one-up, custom boxes to fit what ever job needs to be shipped. Previously we purchased prefabricated boxes at \$4.00 to 5.00 per box, and now we buy 4' x 8' sheets of corrugated cardboard for roughly \$2.00, and quickly fabricate any box we need at a much lower cost. Plus, our custom boxes fit the contents perfectly and protect our products better." Merrick continued, "We have less damage and happier customers."

Complex contour cutting, short-run full-color boxes, marketing prototypes, and custom corrugated packaging - the M3000 can do all this and more. Its full complement of tools and ability to cut just about any substrate makes M Series Flatbed Cutting System an ideal finishing solution for today's graphic suppliers. "It is tremendously versatile and fits the needs of our business model perfectly," stated Merrick. "The M Series was an outstanding addition to BIGraphics."

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