

EuroShop 2020

design trends

Euroshop is considered the world's #1 retail trade fair. Taking place every three years in Düsseldorf, Germany, the event is a showcase for the latest trends in retail marketing and display – from exhibition stand design, shop fitting and store design, to lighting, flooring, digital signage and more.

EuroShop 2020 took place from 16 to 20 February, attracting 94 000 visitors and 2 300 exhibitors. South African exhibition, events and display specialist, Scan Display, was one of the exhibitors, returning for its sixth consecutive show.

Justin Hawes, managing director of Scan Display, said: "This is the biggest and best show of its kind. Not only is it a fantastic opportunity to gain business leads, but it also sets the tone for the exhibition stand industry in terms of what design trends are taking off and the direction in which we are moving."

Mr Hawes was able to identify the following five trends at the show:

1 AV has even greater prominence

"The technology for Audio Visual (AV) is incredibly advanced, which has made it the single most popular stand accessory," Mr Hawes said.

"Most exhibitors had screens, and for some these covered entire walls of their stands. On one exhibit, LED screens were used to create a virtual store.

"This is possible due to the improved resolution of LED screens, and because they are becoming increasingly affordable."

Screens are no longer limited to flat surfaces either and can be bent into curves and funnels – thanks in part to how thin they have become. Meanwhile another exciting new technology is transparent screens, which offer an extra layer of marketing to a display.

Mr Hawes added that moving visuals are not exclusively achieved by screens. The technology for holograms and projections has also improved, and both present interesting opportunities for stand builders.

"Typically, most projections I saw were directed onto textured surfaces or distorting materials like Perspex, which creates really interesting visual effects," Mr Hawes said. "This capitalises on what moving visuals do so well – catching and holding attention."



AV projection with no lighting.

2 Lighting is more versatile

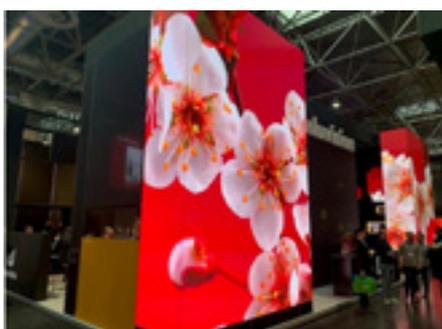
In a few instances, AV replaced the need for lighting on stands. However, where lighting was in use, it was clear that technological leaps have also been made in this field.

LEDs are effectively standard now, because of their improved display capabilities, durability and energy-saving properties.

They are also very versatile, and can be used for dispersed lighting effects (such as front or back lighting, and lightboxes) or more focused applications such as down lighting spotlights, shelf edging and even flexible LEDs for forming organic lines.



Flexible LED strip lighting.



The graphics are all LED screens, with eye-catching changing content.



Curved structure with coloured LED strip lighting.



Innovative lighting shapes.

5 Engaging experiences are the end goal



Life-like mannequins engaging visitors.

Lastly, Mr Hawes said that it is clear that the display industry is searching for new ways to engage with their customers: "Increasingly, people are finding the information they need online, quickly and easily. In retail, this has led to a spike in online shopping, forcing brick and mortar retailers to make their in-store experiences even more appealing. The same can be said for exhibitions and events, where there is pressure to deliver a meaningful and memorable experience so that your visitors have a reason to keep coming back."

Some of the popular tools being used to engage audiences and their senses included: eye-catching lighting, dynamic screens, interesting finishes and materials, and unusual product displays.

"The mannequin industry is doing this especially well; after very little innovation for years, they are now producing incredibly life-like mannequins," Mr Hawes added.

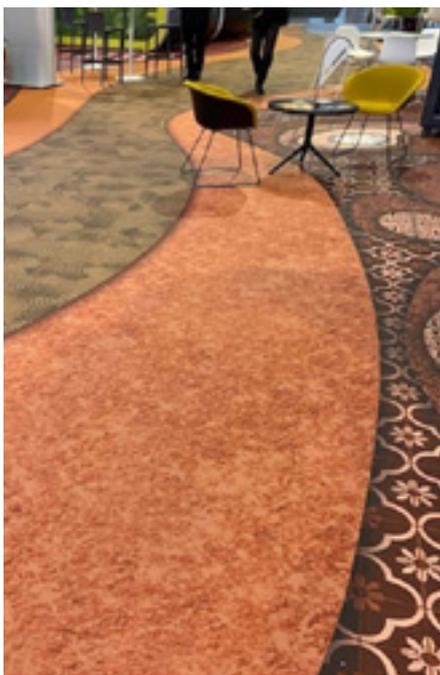
In conclusion, Mr Hawes added that it was clear at EuroShop 2020 that the world economy is currently struggling; "There were fewer stands than previously, and exhibitors appeared to be working with smaller budgets. For many exhibitors, I think this pushed them to be more creative, to up the ante and provide new design solutions that aren't constrained by a budget."

Who is Justin Hawes?

Justin Hawes established Scan Display, an exhibition, events and display company, in 1996. He is the company's managing director and has a wealth of industry expertise due to his involvement in various industry associations. These include the Exhibition & Event Association of Southern Africa (EXSA), where he served on the executive committee for six years, the Event Greening Forum (EGF) non-profit that promotes sustainable event practices and which he co-founded, and the International Federation of Exhibition & Event Services (IFES) where he is currently vice president.



The Scan Display team at EuroShop 2020.



Vinyl floor prints add texture and colour.

3 Textured surfaces are in

Mr Hawes said that another clear trend at EuroShop was the popularity of texture. The stands were all unique, but they consistently used texture to add drama and draw attention. This was achieved in a variety of ways:

- Projecting light and visuals onto interesting surfaces (as touched on in the first trend);
- The structural design of the stands often had 'layers', such as patterns cut out of stand walls or floating beams, both of which add depth and perspective;
- The type of materials being used on the stands, such as printed wallpaper, patterned carpets, marbled vinyl, laser cut shapes, as well as draped fabrics, or sheer fabrics that you can partly see through.



Signage explaining that products are made with renewable energy.

4 Sustainable design continues to grow

It's clear that many businesses are concerned about their environmental impact, and are looking for ways to operate more sustainably.

"In the past companies said they were green. Now they are saying *why* they are green," Mr Hawes added. Several exhibitors had included their company's environmental achievements on their stand's branding – from being made with renewable energy, to being plastic-free or low-carbon.

Mr Hawes added: "This trend extended to having a 'green' stand design aesthetic, such as using natural materials like raw wood, or including recyclable materials like cardboard and paper. Clever reuse ideas were also on show, with some exhibitors using their packing crates as part of the stand's furnishings. Greenery also featured prominently." As mentioned already, technology is increasingly energy efficient, which is another environmental benefit.



Chair made from shredded paper and used plastic.