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Are Graphics a Budget-Friendly Way to Boost Facility Aesthetics and Functionality?

By Adam Koppelman, SpeedPro Imaging Services Group | Apr 11, 2025

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Modern facilities serve as more than places to work, eat, or shop—they are reflections of an organization's identity, culture, and commitment to the well-being of its occupants. For facilities managers on tight budgets, achieving a dynamic, aesthetically pleasing, and functional space might seem challenging, but with the right strategies, it's entirely achievable.

By focusing on creative and unconventional strategic design elements, you can implement cost-effective improvements that make a positive impact without overextending resources. Drawing on insights from SpeedPro studio owners nationwide, this article shares practical tips and current trends for making facilities visually appealing while balancing practicality and budget.

Creating an Inviting Entryway: Floor Graphics, Custom Acrylics, and Elevator Wraps

The entryway of any facility is not just a passage, but an opportunity to make a memorable first impression. Wayne Arthur, owner of SpeedPro Boston Metrowest, shares how simple yet impactful upgrades, such as floor graphics, custom acrylics, and elevator wraps, can redefine the look and feel of a space with minimal downtime.



"Floor graphics can serve practical purposes like wayfinding while adding visual interest," he explains. "Especially for large organizations that are new to a building, we have found that the floor graphics are an exciting and surprising way to introduce them to the new space."

Types of design elements to consider include:

- **Wayfinding Floor Graphics:** Utilizing arrows, footprints, or directional symbols, they guide visitors through spaces, enhancing navigation, especially in large spaces.
- **3D Floor Graphics:** These designs create optical illusions, making floors appear as if they have depth or interactive elements. They can transform a simple floor into a captivating visual experience. Think of an elevator floor that appears like an elevator shaft.

- **Branded Floor Graphics:** Incorporating logos, slogans, or brand colors into floor designs reinforces brand identity and creates a cohesive visual experience—and you can even use them to welcome a new tenant.

For a longer-lasting effect, you can consider working with your vendor to provide an adhesive-backed vinyl with an epoxy overlayer, locking in the graphic, while achieving the proper slip resistance to ensure safety compliance.



Next, let's discuss the creative world of custom acrylics, which can be used to make one-of-a-kind artistic pieces for entryways. Custom acrylics offer versatility and durability, particularly for showcasing a company's culture, values, or accomplishments in a modern, engaging way. "Acrylic installations allow for a fresh approach to displaying artwork and branding, moving beyond traditional, simple framed posters or images," Arthur says.

For instance, custom acrylic can be used to create company timelines or sleek and modern displays that highlight key milestones, achievements, or the evolution of the business.

Finally, Arthur's last tip is about turning elevators into an opportunity for a quick but impactful upgrade by wrapping them in graphics. "Elevators are focal points, often the first impression guests have of a facility," he says. "A

well-designed wrap can set the tone, reinforcing brand identity or introducing a theme for the building. These wraps are highly customizable, from brand colors and logos to scenic or abstract designs." By using fire-compliant, durable materials, you can ensure the wraps withstand daily wear, and they are even available in finishes from high-quality printed vinyl to premium effects like wood grain or metallic accents.

A prime example of this concept in action came from a hotel client who had just refurbished their lobby, but the interior elevator wood grain laminate was dated. Replacing the panels would have required the elevator to be taken out of commission, with a week of work by certified elevator technicians, not to mention a hefty price tag and the disruption to guests. Instead, they were able to update the elevator with a custom faux wood grain finish at a fraction of the cost. Of the three elevator banks, only one was down at a time, during non-peak hours, for a total of just three hours—providing minimal disruption and big cost savings.

Joe Diana, owner of SpeedPro Cincinnati North, offers a range of budget-friendly options that deliver high impact, helping facilities achieve a polished and professional entryway on a modest budget. "Adding cut decals with company logos in lobbies or using dimensional letters behind reception desks can be visually impactful without breaking the bank," he explains. Diana emphasizes that these options are ideal for facilities aiming to create a professional appearance without a large investment.

For a more upscale look for slightly bigger budgets, he recommends illuminated dimensional letters with halo lighting. "Using materials like brushed aluminum or gold, combined with halo lighting, adds depth and sophistication," he explains. "This approach can make a memorable impression without a substantial renovation."

Bringing Privacy and Style to the Conference Room

One room that is so important, but often gets overlooked, is the conference room. It's a space where a lot of important work, creative brainstorming, and client meetings happen, so it deserves more attention.

Conference rooms often lack both privacy and style, but Diana offers solutions for addressing these issues effectively. "Conference rooms often feel like fishbowls, with everyone able to see in," he notes. "Using custom frosted glass patterns or incorporating the company logo into frosted vinyl can add both privacy and aesthetic value, making the space feel polished and cohesive." Customizable frosted designs add a modern touch while maintaining a sense of openness and light.

For an even bolder look, Diana recommends adding statement pieces like large wall murals, dimensional acrylic signs with standoffs, or branded wall wraps in common areas. "We're seeing a trend toward bright colors and upbeat wall wraps that give the space energy and make it feel inviting," he says. "These elements not only improve aesthetics but also create a more engaging environment for employees, which can positively impact morale."

He also sees a growing trend in using dimensional wall signage, such as branded acrylics with standoff hardware in conference rooms. These signs, he explains, add depth to a brand's logo or messaging, transforming blank walls into focal points. "We've done work for clients where we use large acrylic signs with standoffs to give the design some depth, and it really adds sophistication to the space."

To create seamless, cohesive designs, Diana advises facilities managers to consider a cohesive theme and avoid overcomplicating the design. "A few well-placed elements, like dimensional logos or frosted glass, can make a powerful statement without overwhelming the space," he concludes.

Many facilities are embracing interactive and experiential elements that captivate and engage visitors. According to Matt Polster, owner of SpeedPro Addison, experiential graphics and multimedia displays are gaining momentum in facility design. “From interactive LED displays to large 3D logos, these elements can truly transform a facility and make it memorable,” he explains. Polster notes that integrating technology with visual design opens up new possibilities for engagement, citing recent installations that used programmable LED-etched film to add a modern, dynamic element to a conference room. “This type of display not only offers a clean, sophisticated look but also aligns with sustainable design principles by using energy-efficient lighting.”

Polster further emphasizes that combining interactive media with traditional graphics creates a layered, engaging experience. “We’re seeing more interest in mixed-media installations—using vinyl, acrylic, and even suspended 3D elements,” he says. For one project, Polster worked with a client to create an LED-embedded display that shifted colors throughout the day, enhancing the environment’s ambiance and making the space feel more connected to the company’s identity.

As facilities managers approach experiential graphics, Polster advises them to keep an open mind. “Don’t limit your vision based on traditional methods,” he concludes. “Let your creative ideas flow and work closely with design experts to find solutions that bring those ideas to life.” This flexibility allows for unique, memorable spaces that stay cohesive with a facility’s identity and purpose.

Case Study: New Concepts for Living Achievement Center

Now that we’ve discussed easy ways to update spaces, I want to share a recent project that is a great example of how to create an immersive and fun environment. For New Concepts for Living’s (NCFL) new Achievement Center in Paramus, N.J., we were tasked with creating a “Town Square” room that would embody the community’s spirit. The murals featured familiar Paramus landmarks, from the serene Van Saun Park to bustling shopping centers on Routes 17 and 4, providing a sense of familiarity and local pride.

When NCFL first approached us about transforming their new Achievement Center they made their mission clear: to enrich the lives of adults with developmental disabilities through nurturing support, comfort, and community involvement. This new facility wasn’t just about aesthetics; it was about creating a welcoming space where individuals could feel at home, engage in meaningful activities, and experience a sense of belonging and pride in their surroundings.

To create the “Town Square” room that would reflect the heart of Paramus, they wanted to surround participants with scenes they might have encountered during family outings or community excursions, to reinforce NCFL’s commitment to fostering independence, growth, and inclusion.



To bring this vision to life, we worked closely with NCFL’s team, drawing on their expertise and insights about the population they serve. Starting with high-resolution images, we enhanced them using AI tools, ensuring the details remained crisp and colors stayed vibrant. Durability was also critical; every wall and window graphic needed to withstand daily use while maintaining a warm, welcoming atmosphere. For the windows, we chose materials that filter natural light gently, adding brightness without obstructing views—helping to create a space that feels calm, safe, and approachable.

This project underscores the importance of aligning visuals with an organization’s values. By weaving together strategic placement, cohesive branding, personal connections, and durable materials, we helped transform NCFL’s Achievement Center into a place that resonates with its community, uplifts those it serves, and embodies the organization’s caring spirit.

Final Recommendations for Facilities Managers

As facilities continue to evolve beyond mere functional spaces, thoughtful design choices can play a big role. By implementing these creative yet practical upgrades—from eye-catching entryway graphics to interactive, high-tech installations—facilities managers can shape environments that leave a lasting impression on everyone who steps through the door. Even if you are working within a modest budget, the strategies shared by our SpeedPro studio owners provide a roadmap for making facilities visually appealing, engaging, and true reflections of an organization’s identity.

With the right approach and a focus on both aesthetics and functionality, facilities managers can create spaces that not only serve their occupants’ needs but also inspire, uplift, and resonate with visitors and employees alike.

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