

Banner Stands - Versatile Displays for Many Situations

When it comes to versatility and low cost in trade show or portable point of purchase displays it is hard to beat the popular banner stand. These units come in various sizes from about 2 feet wide to 6 feet high to as large as 4 feet by 8 feet.

They can be used as stand alone displays for advertising a specific product, or they can be assembled in an array highlighting a number of different products. They can even be attached with magnetic strips to form a larger backdrop in multiples of 4 feet.

For example you can use three 4 foot by 8 foot banner stands together to form one continuous backdrop that is 12 feet wide by 8 feet high. There is no less expensive way to create this kind of backdrop.

** Print on a variety of materials

Most display shops can print graphics for banner stands on anything from super cheap paper (not recommended) to heavy duty vinyl. Graphics can be printed on a high resolution full color wide format ink jet, and then laminated with a low-glare coating that protects them at the same time as making them look impressively professional.

When designing graphics for banner stands most designers will use a dramatic product photograph over the entire background, and a simple headline or one or two word slogan to emphasize the product being promoted. An experienced display shop can print this sort of graphic with impressive quality.

When specifying the material, make sure it is rollable. Banner stands are usually disassembled after the show and rolled into a tube about four or five inches in diameter. So the graphic has to be flexible enough to roll this small without being damaged. Most laminated materials will work properly, but if the laminate is too thick you may have trouble rolling the graphic small enough to fit in the carrying tube.

** Alternative designs in banner stands

There are essentially three main display types commonly referred to as banner stands. The first, and most common, is the traditional banner stand which consists of a simple mounting piece at the top and bottom with a tension bar holding the two ends of the banner apart when it is up and running. The graphic usually clips into the top and bottom pieces, and with some models is removable in case you want to change graphics from time to time.

A second popular model is the "roll up" banner stand. This main component of this unit is the base which is a cannister about 4 inches square by the width of the display (usually 36" to 48".) The graphic is attached to a spring loaded retracting device inside the cannister. When you erect the display you simply pull the graphic out of the base and then attach a tension rod between the base and top frame piece (similar to the previous system).

When you are finished using it, you (carefully) remove the tension rod and let the graphic retract into the base.

Retractable displays are more expensive than other types of banner stands. They are also more prone to mechanical problems because of the retractable base. It is also more critical to print the graphic on just the right kind and thickness of material so the retracting mechanism works properly.

The third type of banner stand is called an "X banner". This unit uses a frame in the shape of an "X", held together at a hub in the middle (back) of the display. The "X" design gives you a tension rod at each corner of the display. The graphic has a grommet (reinforced hole) in each corner which fits over the tension rod.

This type of display has several advantages. First, the graphic itself is completely separate from the display hardware, so you can much more easily change graphics. Second, you can use less expensive vinyl for your graphic because it will be stretched taut from the corners by the tension bars.

Third, you can vary the size of your display by simply changing the shape of the "X". And, fourth, it has a more substantial appearance, and is less precarious. The "X" banner is also less expensive than the rollup type of display.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

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