



Signage for Schools & Educational Facilities

CASE STUDY

Signs & Lines have produced numerous examples of static and digital signage for education over the over the last 20 years and we're often asked what the most important factors to consider.

In the past, signs were often an afterthought to school design, and too often they still are.

In days gone by, when architects were not always friendly to signage, there was a tendency of style over substance. Architects typically wanted their building to look attractive, and were afraid that signage would be a distraction. Fast forward to the 21st century, government and building regulations and safety protocols now require public environments to follow strict guidelines to keep everyone as safe as possible. Sadly, the result can be that signs are then often put up in an uncoordinated and ad hoc manner, which, ironically, results in a sense of clutter that does detract from the aesthetics of the facility.

School signage should definitely be integrated into the planning and design process early, and should encompass brand reinforcement, wayfinding and regulatory, as well as specialty signs. New schools in Western Australia are thankfully being developed with a new focus on both style and substance – which is reassuring for the youth of today!



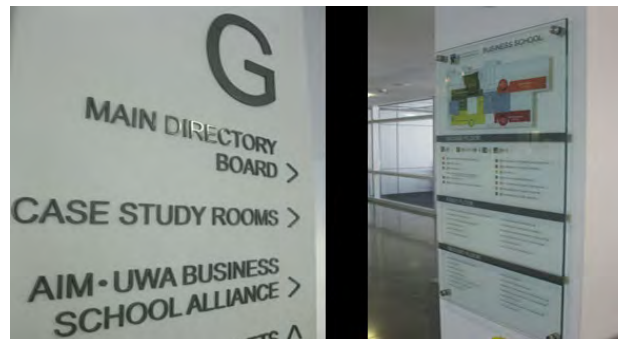
CASE STUDY

So what at the key facets of your school's signage strategy? How can well designed signage enhance both the student experience and the look and feel of your facility?

Making a Big Splash - What Signs are Important?

A clear 'identity' sign, whether on the side of the building or pylon signage on the ground, should be at key entrances of the school. The next most important visual element is the informational sign at the point of most road and foot traffic passing the school. Today's digital options are ideal for this type of signage as they are flexible, responsive to change and can announce all the upcoming events ranging from athletic games to club meetings, auctions, fundraisers and the like.

Messages can easily be expanded to allow the schools to get a point across about almost anything, security issues would be an example of how this highly responsive signage medium can inform to a wide audience.



Wayfinding & Information Signage

Perhaps the most important signage greeting the person entering the school is the directory or wayfinding information. This indicates the what? Where? How? Of the school. What? ie. a building, space, hall, canteen, medical centre... Where? Arrows and maps will help users find their way. How? How can I get there ie. walk, drive, cross, stairs, ramps etc.

Building & Room ID Signage

Finding your way to the destination is all very well, but in large campus or college environments where there are hundreds of rooms and corridors on multi-levels, clear and consistent signage labelling rooms and buildings is vital. Ideally the format, style, size and branding of this signage should be consistent throughout – accommodating colour or icons to assist the visual cues. Many schools we have worked in have compartmentalised buildings or zones using colours, for example the Architecture building and rooms would be colour coded blue and the Environmental Science department colour coded green.

Not all of the signs subject to change need to be high-tech. For instance, we work with many schools that select interchangeable products that will allow them to insert updated names on the room signage. Custom architectural sign suites are highly popular – be sure to contact us for details and examples of those that may suit your school or campus.



Statutory Signage

Tactile or braille signs are required for the visually impaired. There are many regulations that our team can advise on to ensure that the size, location, height and other compliance issues are met. In other words, it's important to make sure all of your signage is compliant before it is ordered and installed – Signs & Lines provide this advice during our consultations with you and will ensure your education facility meets all the legal requirements.

Amenities Signage

Directional signs will be needed to guide the students to restrooms, the canteen, the medical centre etc. This type of signage may be in the form of arrows along the walls or floor markers. Why not make it fun? We know that children especially relate to things that are visually stimulating and create a sense of fun. Signage does not have to be boring! Our creative team can design a suite of signage to engage with your audience – both big and small.

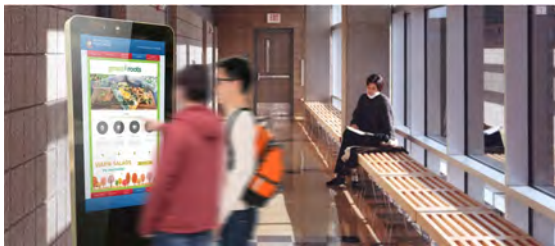


How to Engage with a Young Audience?

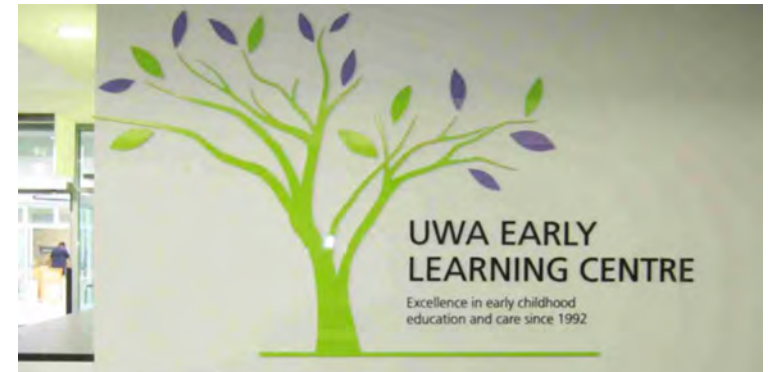
As with any marketing, you have to think about the audience and choose your sign strategies accordingly.

For instance, different types of signage are needed for high and low traffic areas. In a busy campus foyer, signage needs to be clear and stand out from the clutter of other posters, bulletin boards etc.

The colour of the signage is also important. Try to co-ordinate the sign colours to coordinate in an overall balanced and pleasing aesthetic effect. Similarly, tie the signage into the school brand colours and aim to harmonise the overall scheme. "Brand is extremely important," explains Mark Simmonds, Sales Rep at Signs & Lines. "You should aim to achieve a balance of floor decals all of the way to the large pylon and building signage, especially in the main auditorium."



Digital signage is becoming a key way to engage with the younger audience. "What we refer to as dynamic signage will be key to schools in the future", outlines Tim Webb from Yap!digital, "today's youngsters are so used to technology that they will expect to see information displayed in a bright, exciting format that incorporates everything they see on their ipads, phones and laptops". Signs & Lines have recently introduced digital signage at a number of education facilities in WA and beyond and see this as a key area of investment for schools in the near future. Feel free to talk to Tim about these projects.





Signs designed for Education

At a glance, the following projects are all examples of internal and external signage in schools, colleges, universities and early learning centres – see photographic examples throughout this Case Study.

- Atlantis Beach Baptist College - pylons
- St Mary MacKillop College – building, wayfinding & regulatory signage
- Scotch College – directional pylon signs
- Kennedy Baptist College – building signage
- St Brigid's College – entry statements
- University of Adelaide – interactive digital kiosks
- Murdoch University campus signage – wayfinding, map, carpark & door signage
- UWA – Campus, building, wayfinding, theatre, door & map signage
- Central Institute of Technology – wayfinding, pylon, building & statutory signage
- Atwell College – exterior signage
- Woodvale SHS – exterior signage
- Watercorp Early Learning Centre
- Ashdale Early Learning Centre
- UWA Early Learning Centre

Whether it be an early learning centre, a school or university campus, the need for a fabulous, yet functional, signage strategy is obvious. If you need inspiration, design assistance or help managing a new education related signage project, the team at Signs & Lines and Yap!digital can take your project from drab to fab! Our service includes preparing designs to show how to make the most of your signage, with the benefit of our team of signage pro's to guide you every step of the way.

Talk to the team today:

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