

# Before and after: Danthonia Designs

*Photos can sell the difference a sign can make*

By Joe McKernan

**H**and-carved and gilded signs are fairly rare in Australia. It is exciting to “pioneer” a concept here that has had such

proven success in other parts of the world. We know it is going to fly; it is just a matter of getting it off the ground.

One of our biggest challenges is to convince the new market of a need for a product they have never used before. Especially a product that costs significantly more than what they have paid for signs in the past.

In spite of warnings from some in the local industry that “people don’t pay that price around here,” we have found the opposite to be true. Once a client recognizes the added value of a dimensional sign, they are willing to invest. We have found a number of ways to communicate this value to potential clients. Our latest is the before-and-after presentation.

I first noticed the power of before-and-after photos in a *SignCraft* article showing the work of Gary Anderson [Before and after: 8 makeovers, March/April 2001]. Wow! Those pictures showed so clearly that you get what you pay for. The presentation itself was also well thought out with “before” shots in black and white and “after” shots in full color.

With a little planning and some careful photography, we have managed to put together a fairly convincing selection of our own. We



*Before*

*After:* Hand-carved gilded lettering on double-sided 39-by-47-in. sign. The panel is a sandwich of 22-lb. Sign-Foam [Sign Arts Products, 800-338-4499, www.signfoam.com] high-density urethane board with a PVC panel between. The hand-sculpted coffee mug and muffin add-on are 18-lb. HDU. The letters on the steel message board were custom cut from magnetic sheeting. The company logo is a sandblasted and gilded PVC add-on. The frame is a custom steel trolley with castors.



*Before*

*After:* Chip-carved gilded 18-lb. high-density urethane lettering on a 20-by-287-in. PVC backed panel. The hand-sculpted shoes are 18-lb. HDU. The 68-by-92-in. sign is attached to steel wrought-iron hangers.



Before

After: Pictorial was hand-sculpted Sign•Foam3® finished with Liquitex® artist acrylic. The 46-in. diameter sign is Sign•Foam3 laminated to a PVC backing and painted with low-sheen acrylic house paint. Lettering is 23k gold leaf.



Before

After: Hand-carved gilded lettering on 73-by-82-in. sign. The panel is a sandwich of 22-lb. high-density urethane board with a PVC panel between. The house structure is overlaid plywood attached to a steel post system. The hand sculpture is 18-lb. HDU, and magnetic sheeting covers No on the Vacancy sign.



Before

After: Hand-carved gilded lettering on 37-by-55-in. sign. The panel is a sandwich of 22-lb. high-density urethane board with a PVC panel between. The hand-sculpted bird is 18-lb. HDU. The 12-by-43-in. sign has hand-carved painted lettering. Both are attached to steel posts with chip-carved HDU post caps.

continued...

## We're using these photos to sell our work

Here's the before-and-after flyer we're sending to potential clients. We're also planning to add an in-depth section to our Web site. It's a great way to show what a dramatic difference a sign can make.—J.M.

**"You don't get  
a second chance  
to make a first impression."**



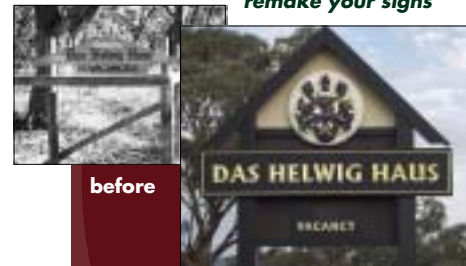
**For better or for worse,** personal judgments and purchasing decisions are often made "at first sight". Whether welcoming tourists to your town or potential clients to your place of business, why not let Danthonia help with the introductions!

Danthonia Designs offers you the very best in hand-carved and gilded signs. Our design consultants and skilled artisans work with you to create a delightful, high-return solution to your on-site marketing needs. If it's time to upgrade your sign, then turn to Danthonia Designs!

"Rural town shoe stores would not normally be regarded as a tourist attraction. But since we've put up our sign, I've noticed new customers coming into our store from Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, and the Hunter Valley!"

**Diane West**, owner, *Mayfair Shoes*, Inverell

**Let Danthonia Designs  
remake your signs**



before

after



Glen Innes Road • Inverell NSW 2360 • Tel: (02) 6723 2100  
W W W . D A N T H O N I A D E S I G N S . C O M . A U



*Before*

*After:* Hand-carved gilded lettering on 59-by-89-in. sign. The panel is a sandwich of 22-lb. high-density urethane board with a PVC panel between. The gilded logo is 18-lb. HDU.



*Before*

*After:* Hand-carved gilded lettering on 38-in.-diameter sign. The panel is a sandwich of 22-lb. high-density urethane board with a PVC panel between. The hand sculpture is 18-lb. HDU.

plan to keep adding new examples as time goes on. Right now we are mailing a before-and-after flyer to our potential clients, and will set up a more in-depth section on our Web site in the near future. •❧



Joe McKernan is business manager at Danthonia Designs, in Inverell, NSW. The company is a project of the Danthonia Bruderhof ([www.bruderhof.com.au](http://www.bruderhof.com.au)), a Christian intentional community. Besides serving end users in their market area, they design and/or fabricate handcrafted signs on a wholesale basis for sign shops in the USA and Australia. He can be reached at [joemck@danthoniadesigns.com.au](mailto:joemck@danthoniadesigns.com.au).

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