

Class 3i ~ Window signs

Advanced technology has revolutionised the window sign. The shop window can now be turned into a large TV screen without much effort. The company 3M for instance offers shop owners or advertising contractors the option of its Vikuiti rear projection film or rear projection screen. The Vikuiti film seems quite exciting. It is self-adhesive and can be applied to the inside of any shop window. It can also be cut to any shape. Both options are capable of displaying running video images, static images or dynamic text messaging. Currently a window area of up to 100 sq ft (± 9 m²) may be covered, but one may assume that with advancement in technology the maximum size may increase substantially in the near future.

Although such an electronic window display may add colour and brightness to any street scene, if repeated too often colour and brightness may soon turn into an information overdose with every second shop's digital window screaming for the onlooker's attention. Apart from a negative visual onslaught digital windows too close to the street may also have traffic safety implications by distracting the driver's attention, while it may also contribute to sound pollution. Digital window displays have all the possibility of getting out of control, especially with the prospect of an improvement in technology lowering the cost of such displays and putting it within the reach of almost every shop owner. A company like *WindowGain* has already realised the potential of this advertising medium and has come up with the idea of using empty retail space for displaying electronic window signs.

In order to manage the negative impact of animated and specifically electronic window signs the following conditions have been adopted in the Draft Revised SAMOAC (July 2008):

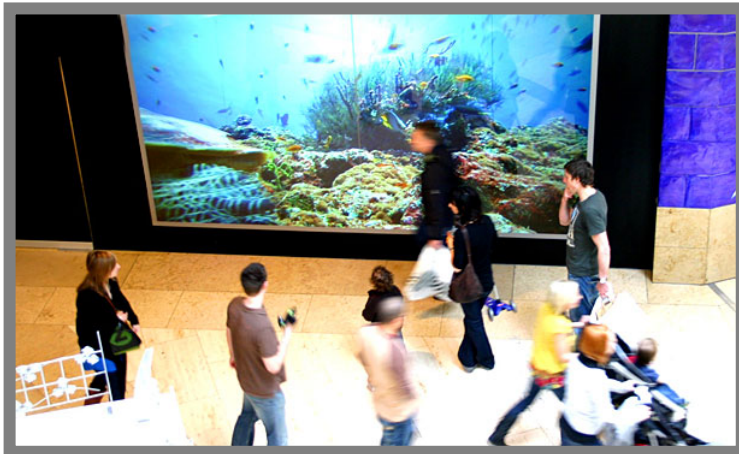
- All electronic signs larger than 1m² shall be subjected to a [SEA](#).
- Electronic window signs shall only be allowed in urban areas of partial and minimum control.
- The size of a permanent window sign is limited to 25% of the total ground floor window area of an enterprise in urban areas of partial control and 50% in urban areas of minimum control. However, if an enterprise has more than one large display window it still allows for quite a large digital sign.
- No electronic sign shall be aimed at passing motorists. This condition is quite subjective and may not solve the traffic safety problem. Focusing on minimum distances to be maintained between digital window signs and streets carrying motorised traffic may be a better way of approaching this problem. One might also consider limiting all electronic window signs larger than 1m² to pedestrian areas such as pedestrian streets or even to shopping centres which will place this sign type outside the scope of SAMOAC.

- Window signs shall be locality-bound and shall be aimed solely at the name and nature of the enterprise behind the window or at products and services provided by such an enterprise. This will limit the usefulness of digital window signs as an advertising medium and may lessen the possibility of digital sign proliferation.

It is not a clear-cut issue whether digital signs such as 3M's self-adhesive Vikuiti film pasted to the inside of shop windows or a rear projection screen forming part of a window display should be seen as a permanent window sign (Class 3i) or a temporary window sign ([Class 2gviii](#)).



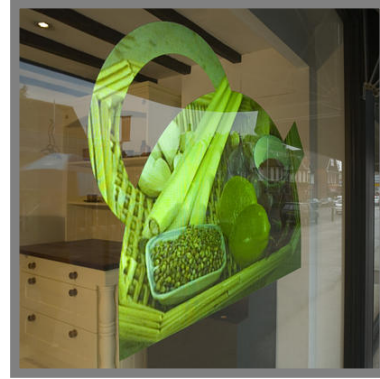
The shop window can now be turned into a large TV screen without much effort – 3M's Vikuiti digital window signs.



A number of window displays by *WindowGain* on *Vikuiti* film. You can now even read the news displayed on a shop window.

<http://www.windowgain.com>
<http://www.3m.com/uk/vikuiti>

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Vikuiti self-adhesive film can be cut to any form.

LED window signs.



LED window signs.



Ordinary window signs. According to the Draft Revised SAMOAC (July 2008) window signs shall not exceed 15% - 50% of the total window area of a shop depending on the area of control. The intent of this condition is to prevent shop signs from primarily being aimed at passing motorist and from overwhelming street scenes. However, it seems that instead of being used as display areas, there may be a need to cover shop windows in their totality in order to obtain privacy or to keep out the warm summer sun.