



# R Tape News & Views

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**More ways  
R Tape helps you  
and your business succeed...**



Here's just a sampling of the innovative products, methods, and technology R Tape uses to help graphics professionals do their jobs better and faster:



**Conform® Series with RLA® Release Liner Adhesion:** a revolution in application tape. Before the introduction of our Conform Series, application tapes did not adhere to the exposed release liner. To solve the problem, we had to formulate our own adhesive system — and literally design and build our own manufacturing equipment to fabricate the tape we knew would do the job.

Our proprietary Release Liner Adhesion technology, RLA, is formulated with just the right levels of tack. Optimized adhesion levels enhance the lift-and-release performance of cut vinyl lettering. Tapes with RLA lay flat — and stick to the exposed "difficult-to-stick-to" release liner — which prevents tapes from tunneling, wrinkling, and edge curling.

**The R Tape QA system at work.** A dedicated Quality Testing Laboratory subjects all incoming materials to rigorous testing protocols, ensuring that every product meets our stringent specifications and standards. The R Tape Quality Assurance Group monitors and documents incoming materials, production equipment, quality procedures, and all other factors influencing product quality.

If a production line is trending toward an out-of-specification condition, our trained operators take immediate corrective action, up to and including a line stoppage. Immediately we begin a problem-solving process, pulling in our experienced technical staff to return the line to target specification mode. All material is labeled with lot numbers which enable full traceability to operators, machine, and materials.



**Training.** We offer ongoing training classes to help you be as successful as you can be using our products. R Tape instructors know your business — and our products — inside and out. Our Training Manager is a published author and industry expert who is constantly gathering tips and information to help you run your business even better.

**FREE Graphics Newsletter!** Our customer newsletter R Tape is packed with tips and inside information for screen printers, sign makers, and digital printers. To request a free subscription, just e-mail us at [sales@rtape.com](mailto:sales@rtape.com). To get the most of our products, consult your nearest R Tape Distributor.

## WHAT'S NEW

At the end of October, several new pieces of literature will be available. These include a new corporate capabilities brochure, a product selection guide covering all R Tape product, the new Vinylefx swatch card and our Eclipse fan deck.

That's not all. Did you notice anything different about this month's newsletter? Take a close look at the R Tape logo. It's changed. Underneath the stylized "R", which many confused for a "K", we spelled out the company name "R Tape". Now there should be no confusion about who we are. If you need a copy of the logo for your literature and websites, give Laurie Richard, our inside sales manager a call.

## DIGIKNOW

One unique characteristic of our Vinylefx™ product is the deep embossing, which creates the 3D illusion in patterns, such as MultiLens® and Diamond Plate™. Deeply embossed patterns, however, can cause problems, when printing with thermal transfer

systems, such as the Gerber Edge®. Printing on films, which are not perfectly smooth, can result in flaking, in which there are voids in the printed image.

Art Schilling, spokesperson for Gerber Scientific, offers the following suggestions to surmount these printing challenges.

1. Prior to printing, wipe the Vinylefx™ film with a lint-free rag to remove any dust, which can cause voids in printing.
2. To ensure that the print head is absolutely clean, swab it down with an alcohol wipe.
3. Use the Gerber holographic profile for printing on Vinylefx™ films.
4. When you are in the output or quick plot mode, click on the 1,2,3 icon, which gives the print order. Then right click on the ribbon, and choose double print. By double printing the foil, hopefully you will fill in any voids which were missed in the first pass.
5. Before applying, DigiMask™ protective masking to the print, wait fifteen minutes to ensure that the resin adequately adheres to the Vinylefx™ film.
6. To improve the abrasion resistance and graffiti resistance of the graphic, clear coat or apply an Eclipse™ overlaminates over the printed Vinylefx™ film.

## UPCOMING TRADESHOWS

**SGIA Show**, Orlando, FL  
October 24 - 27  
Visit us at Booth #2046

**USSC SignWorld**, Atlantic City, NJ  
November 29 - December 1  
Visit us at Booths #429 and 529

## TIPS & TRICKS

### Using ProGrade™ Paint Mask For Gold Leaf

In my article in Sign Builder Illustrated on gilding, I explain how to use R Tape's ProGrade™ paint mask in the process. Here are the steps:

Before beginning work, clean the substrate just as you would before a vehicle graphics application. To layout the design, use R Tape's ProGrade™ paint mask vinyl, instead of blue fine line tape. You can draw or pounce your design directly onto the paint mask and then cut the film out with an Xacto® knife with a #11 blade.



*Above I am pouncing the pattern onto the paint mask.*

Sizing is the glue that bonds the leaf material to the substrate. Before using the sizing, strain it. Then add a few drops of lettering enamel to the size, otherwise, you may not see where the size is on the substrate. Before painting the sizing, resqueegee the paint mask to ensure that the edges of the ProGrade™ vinyl masking are securely in place so the size doesn't bleed underneath the film, resulting in a ragged edge. Of course, you can up the edges with a pinstripe.

After resqueegeeing the paint mask, the next step is to wipe down the open areas of the design not covered with the mask with a damp cellulose sponge.

To apply the size to use a stiff fitch. This stiffer brush does a better job of getting the size into any tight corners, and is better at brushing out any puddling. Use the size straight out of the can, never thinning it. For good adhesion of the gold leaf, you only need to apply a light coat of size.



*After cutting and weeding the paint mask, apply the size using a stiff fitch.*

After applying the size, you can remove the masking. In this removal process, be very careful that the masking does not touch the sizing. For this project we used 1-Shot Fast Size. Generally, it takes 40

minutes to a couple of hours, for the fast size to tack up enough to apply the gold leaf. Twenty minutes after applying the size, check for proper tack. Drag the back of your knuckle against the sizing. If you knuckle makes a squeaking sound, the sizing is ready for gilding.

Oils and sweat can tarnish the leaf material. Always wash your hands before working with gold leaf. Separating the leaves of loose gold leaf are sheets of tissue paper. Patent leaf is a gold leaf which has been stuck to the tissue paper backing. The backing aids in the transfer and application of the gold leaf to the sizing. Variegated leaf comes in loose form. This metal leaf material is thicker than real 23-karat gold leaf and you can pick it up with your hands. After the leaf is in place, use a soft brush to press the leaf into the size, taking extra care to work the edges. If you are working with the thicker composition leaf you can also use the heel of your hand to press the leaf material in place. After the sizing has completely dried, the metal leaf is permanently adhered to the substrate.



*After the gold leaf is applied brush away the excess with a soft brush.*

After applying the gold leaf to the sizing, use a soft fitch or a powder puff to sweep away the excess leaf. Wash away any residue of any remaining leaf with soapy water.

Using a special turning tool, you can impart an engine turn pattern into the gold leaf. Lightly press the tool into the gold leaf and give it a ¼ turn.



*Pinstriping puts the finishing touch on the job.*

After the job is complete, apply a clear coat to protect the gold leaf. As soon as the clear coat is dry, the job is ready for pinstriping.

Read the complete article in Jim Hingst's column, in *Sign Builder Illustrated*.