

Growth, while a good thing and a key goal for many businesses, brings its challenges. For **Elite Signs**, based in Lincolnshire in the UK, the issue of sheet material cutting loomed large among those challenges.

Established in 1998, the company originally cut Foamex and Dibond manually, with a blade and straight edge, buying sheet materials in cut to size.

This approach was fine while the business was small, but, as Nick Tinker, Elite's owner, explained, it fell short once the company began to grow. *"We grew by about a third in the course of one year. That revealed a number of issues demanding attention."*

There were three main issues. Studio work-flow needed to be smoothed and accelerated, off-cuts needed to be used instead of being thrown away, and Elite's ability to respond to rush orders needed improving. *"It came down to the need for greater flexibility and capacity,"* Nick observed.

To achieve that flexibility and capacity, Elite Signs needed to be able to cut sheet materials in house. With standard-sized sheets of common materials on hand and the ability to cut them as required, the company would no longer need to wait for their suppliers to deliver materials for each incoming order. Additionally, Elite would be able to make use of off cuts, turning what was previously waste into saleable products.

Speaking to Sagetech to find out more about the Koolkut KK, Nick found, *"There was plenty of detail, I was able to get all the information I needed to properly assess whether a Koolkut would be right for us. As a company they're open, approachable and non-pushy; really nice to deal with."*

Installed in early 2013 Elite Signs' Koolkut KK21 has become an indispensable part of Elite Signs' armoury. Running every day and on busy days, more or less continuously the Koolkut is used for dimensioning Foamex and Dibond, and trimming off-cuts to size for use in customer projects. The saw is also frequently used to trim off the bleed on finished signs. *"The quality of the cut edge is that good,"* said Nick.

The Koolkut's impact on the business has been substantial. It has markedly accelerated Elite's production process and improved flexibility in the studio. Nick's team can now cut materials when it's most convenient to do so, making productive use of what was previously down-time. The Koolkut has made same-day orders entirely practical. This is especially important as, as Nick commented, *"It's surprising how many customers place orders because they know we can deliver to a tight deadline. The Koolkut has given us enhanced speed and flexibility, and contributed to stronger profits. It paid for itself within the first year. It's an absolute essential in the studio, and great value for money!"*



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