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Sign of change

Sign company conversion to FastSigns means solid future ahead, owner says

BY PETER DAY
STAR EDITOR

Changes are any one of those colorful vehicle wraps, advertising flags, dynamic digital displays or even street sign waver banners around the valley come from HighTech Signs, which has become a trusted name in the local sign industry.

But recently the company, which is run by former U.S. Air Force photographer Dick Freeborg, has changed its name to FastSigns. And for good reason.

"It's a big deal to make this change," said Dick Freeborg, who started his company 18 years ago. "It's a computer change. It's a software change. It does a lot of things for us."

The most important thing it brings is security to Freeborg's family. Daughter Alison and son Scott work at the company's Victorville location.

"I turned 77 last week," said Freeborg whose business was given the Hesperia Chamber of Commerce "Business of the Year" award in 2009. "I was thinking about what kind of support do they need to keep them gainfully employed."

Last summer Freeborg was approached by FastSigns, an Australian-owned, Dallas-based sign franchise. Because of HighTech's success and reputation the company offered him a special opportunity to convert his company.

Alison met several members of the management team at an event in Long Beach, and the process was begun. A new sign was put on the front of the business, the lobby was reconfigured, computer software was upgraded and other changes were made.

The HighTech conversion was the first for FastSigns to offer financial incentives for independent sign shop owners.

"With this program, the financial assistance will help the independent owner move ahead during these tough economic times," said Mark Jameson, senior vice president of franchise development for FastSigns.

"If you're a 'Mom and Pop' operation you go about your day and hope there's



Dick Freeborg, left, with son Scott and daughter Alison, says changing to FastSigns is good for business all around. PHOTO BY PETER DAY



FastSigns offers many sign style choices, which customers can see in the lobby. PHOTO BY PETER DAY

something left at the end of the day," Freeborg added. "Joining FastSigns presents a great opportunity to take my business to the next level and provide support for my family-run business. It gives us a tremendous advantage over a ma and pa place."

FastSigns has more than 530 locations. HighTech

Sign's conversion officially will be completed in January.

The new FastSigns in Victorville can do the following types of signs:

Flags, menu boards, fine art prints, directories, yard signs, banners, vehicle graphics, decals, displays, exhibits, posters, labels, dimensional letters, win-

dow graphics, printing, traffic signs, facias, site signs, reader boards, banner stands, electrical signs, dynamic digital signs and more.

"I don't think anybody can compete with me price-wise unless they want to give it away," Freeborg said. "And I don't think it's smart to give it away."