



CASE HISTORY



Waking Up to a Good Night's Sleep

Vivid storefront display sells Select Comfort customers on unique mattress technology

Select Comfort Corporation, creator of the Sleep Number® bed, is waking up consumers to the importance of a good night's sleep. Select Comfort has outpaced its competitors in recent years with business growing at an annual rate of more than 30 percent. Part of the company's success story is a compelling in-store marketing campaign. Most recently, the company has tested a high-tech store-front display that captures the attention of mall traffic and piques enough curiosity to bring them inside the store.

"Our products are innovative, and we wanted an innovative display to match," said Pete Bills, senior director of sleep innovation, Select Comfort. "We also wanted an eye-catching technology outside the store to hint at the technology inside the store. Traditional displays using TV monitors didn't have the impact we were looking for."

Bills is responsible for developing unique ways to promote sleep and the technologies of Select Comfort. After extensive evaluation of existing projection technologies, including plasma and LCD, Bills chose a rear projection screen from 3M Optical Systems Division that is sleek, lightweight and eye-catching, even under bright mall lights.

The Vikuiti™ Rear Projection Screen is designed both to reject ambient light and to enhance light coming from the projector. The result is a high-contrast image visible from most angles and under normal lighting conditions. At Select Comfort stores in Seattle, Denver, Minneapolis, Atlanta, Philadelphia and New York, the Vikuiti screen is installed inside the front window and displays six or eight vignettes about sleep. The images are projected through a projector mounted on the ceiling about four feet behind the screen.

"The vignettes rolling across the screen are large and colorful," said Bills, "and the brand messages are consistent with our advertising. Customers who have seen the ads can make the connection to what they already know about us. And this is a striking way to interest those who haven't yet been exposed to our brand."



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Pete Bills
Senior director of sleep innovation
Select Comfort

Selling customers on sleep innovation

Founded in 1987, Select Comfort created a mattress that uses air chamber technology which distributes a person's weight more evenly and reduces pressure points. Because the Sleep Number bed looks a lot like an innerspring mattress on the outside, Bills sought new ways to educate consumers about the unique benefits of the bed's air chamber technology. He again utilized the Vikuiti rear projection screen from 3M to demonstrate Select Comfort's PressureMapSM Technology.

"When a customer is trying out a bed in the store, we use a computer interface to demonstrate how the Sleep Number bed reduces pressure points compared to a traditional inner spring mattress. This image is called a PressureMap. We project this graphic via the computer to the Vikuiti screen.

We then position a salesperson outside the store to explain to those watching what the PressureMap is and how the Sleep Number bed helps reduce uncomfortable pressure points and improve sleep. The PressureMap experience is a fun, free service that makes mattress shopping less confusing."

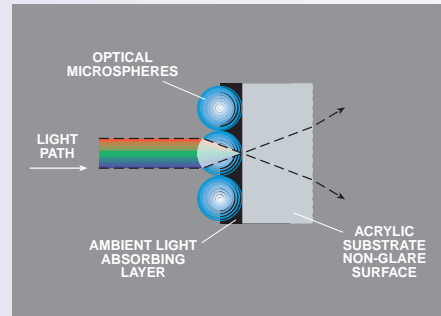
Most of the Select Comfort stores use a 60-inch diagonal screen in their projection system. The screens weigh about 15 pounds and are suspended from the ceiling via two lightweight cables. It's the screen's brightness that makes viewers take a second look.

Glass bead technology enhances image

The Vikuiti rear projection screen consists of three layers: a layer of optical microspheres, a light absorbing layer, and an acrylic layer with a non-glare surface. The layer facing the projector is coated with millions of optical microspheres, which focus the light so it exits at just one small point (see diagram). This layer refracts light from the projector. The black layer in the middle absorbs ambient light, which contributes to the high-contrast image and reduces screen glare. The projected light passes efficiently through this black absorbing layer and diffuses throughout the durable acrylic non-glare surface facing the viewer. This three-layer combination enhances brightness and contrast, and preserves rich colors and high resolution, even when the screen is viewed from the side.

"We tried plasma screens, but they had their own set of problems," said Bills. "And we thought it was too ordinary; people who see the screen in our stores are actually attracted to the screen itself. They want to know how it works. It's a media magnet that appeals to customers because of its high tech look. Plus, plasma was difficult to hang, and it can't be cut into interesting shapes the way a Vikuiti screen can be."

Adding that other rear projection screens didn't have the "wow factor" he was looking for, Bills looks forward to using the Vikuiti screen for future in-store merchandising applications. For consumers, that's a call that's fun to wake up to.



Millions of optical microspheres focus the light for a clear and bright image.



The Vikuiti™ rear projection screen from 3M is visible from most angles under normal lighting conditions.