



Quick bytes

● What are you going to do with your super new plasma screen after the World Cup? You could carry on showing sport, although the interest from your customers may not be so high. Or you could show silent MTV footage – which doesn't match the CD you're playing behind the bar.

Increasingly, though, pub operators are using their screens for real, money-making interactive media. As text and picture messaging technology develops, screens are proving effective marketing and communications tools, from displaying simple messages to running competitions and even database marketing.

Now Vidicom, one of the leaders in the field, is offering licensees a free trial of its latest software which brings digital signage, marketing and entertainment to your screens – all of it designed to make your business money.

Advertising on screen ensures your products and offers are seen by customers, while running text competitions and allowing companies to advertise will increase your revenue.



Gather a database of customers' mobile numbers and you can text promotions to increase footfall and profits at a fraction of the cost of mail marketing. To take advantage of the free trial call 0870 7606634 and ask for Sonya.

● Everybody remembers the scene from the original *Star Wars* where Princess Leia's plea for help comes in the form of a 3D hologram projected into mid-air by R2-D2. The film was made almost 30 years ago but scientists have only now come up with a way of reproducing the effect in the real world – enabling crowd-stopping marketing applications for pubs and bars.

Heliodisplay, devised by Betamins (pictured above), will project an image from an ordinary computer, DVD player or other source into what seems like thin air through a secret process of modified air.

Drinks giant Diageo has already used Heliodisplay as part of a promotional tour while other companies are looking to use it for virtual product displays in clubs and bars. And according to Betamins' co-founder, the aptly named Kenneth Siber, "your imagi-

nation is the only limitation on the ways it can be used." He adds: "If people see one of the displays it stops them in their tracks. It is a stunning way of showing new and high-value products to consumers."

Viewers can interact with the image floating in front of them using their fingers as a sort of computer mouse. The display also creates the illusion of being three-dimensional.

● OKI Printing Solutions has launched a range of colour printers aimed specifically at pubs and bars following research that suggests £9m of the £138m spent on printing by the hospitality industry is wasted – the equivalent of 100 million menus!

The company believes £7m of that could be saved by bringing out-sourced printing in-house, using printers to produce marketing and promotional materials such as posters, banners, business cards and flyers, as well as practical items including menus and coasters.

OKI's new-look C3000 and the C5000 series – the latter is pictured below – can print to photo-like quality on a variety of materials in a range of thicknesses including paperweights of up to 203gsm. It is even possible to print on waterproof media eliminating the need to laminate.

"The bar and hotel industry is currently missing a trick," says Chris Hopper, commercial manager at OKI Printing Solutions UK. "Bringing printing in-house means no more trips to the print shop, no more hand-written notices propped up on the bar, no more menus that don't include specials."

