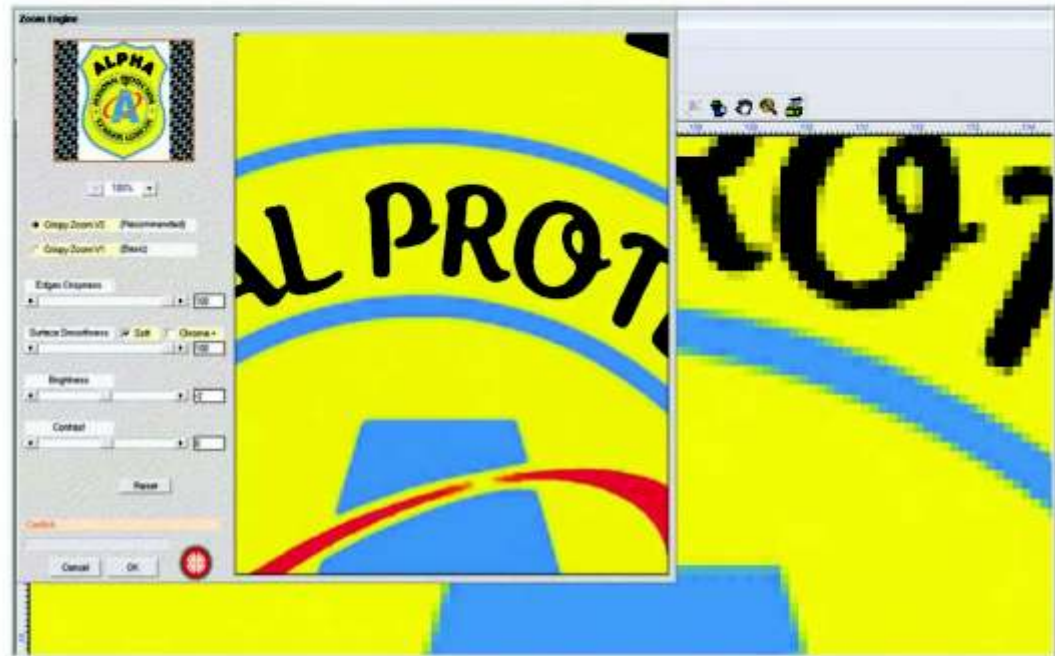


DESIGN *Tutorial*

Prepare To Vectorize Wizard

In so many cases the artwork supplied by the customer is not of a good enough quality for vectorization. The new "Prepare to Vectorize" tool in Signlab 8 will transform these low resolution images in to better quality files that will make digitizing a breeze, find out how it's done, in this step by step guide.



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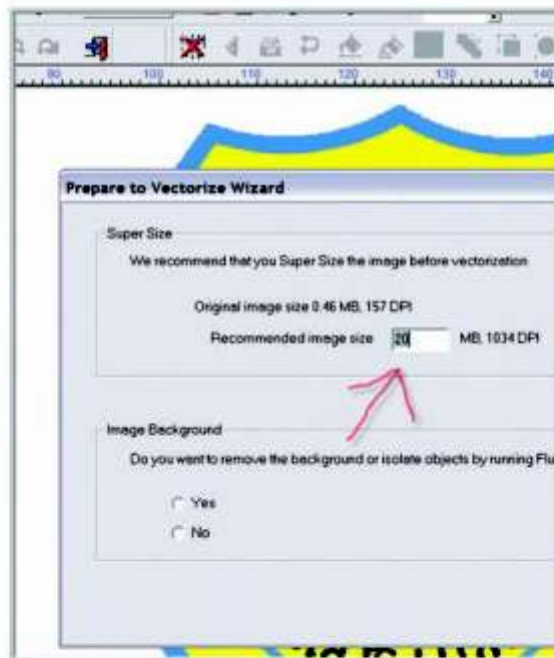
t. +44 (0) 1462 420222
 f. +44 (0) 1462 420111
 e. sales@cadlink.co.uk





01

The first task of digitising any colour logo is Postorisation and this is the process of identifying how many colours make up the design. When I click on Signlab's Posterisation tools tab, a message appears and asks if I would like to run the "prepare to vectorize wizard" so I am going to click "yes"



02

The first stage of this new feature is "Supersize" a great resampling feature that will dramatically improve the quality of our start image. The wizard will display the current image resolution and suggest a new image size; this can be changed if needed however I have found the default setting to work fine.



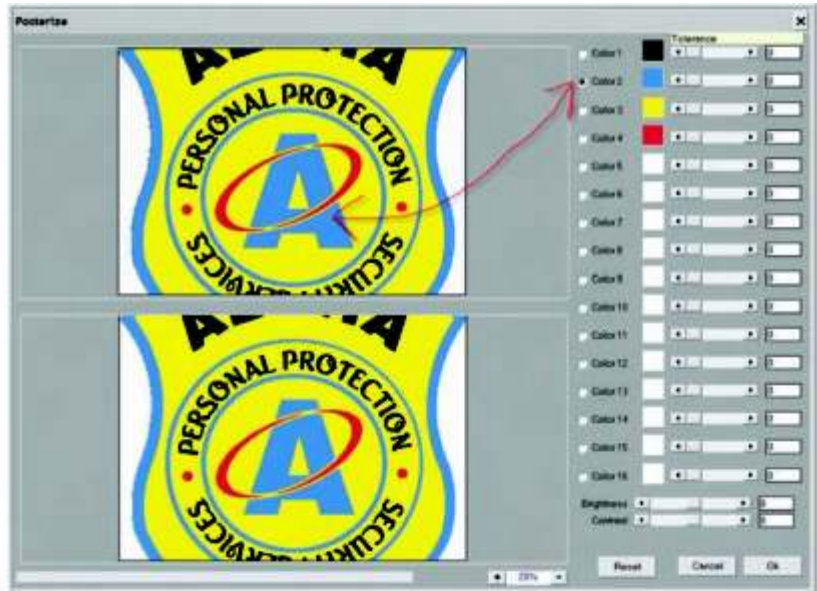
03

Next I am asked if I would like to run "Fluid Mask" Fluid Mask is another new plug-in that makes up part of this wizard and it's used for removing unwanted backgrounds from bitmap images. Its not needed for this example so I am going to select "no" but if you would like to know more information on Fluid Mask then check out the CADlink website or have a look at out tutorial on this topic in the March issue of Sign Update.



04

Next the image is displayed in the "Super Size Window" you will see the re-sampling take place in this image preview, and straight away it's clear to see just what a great job this new tool does. Most of the anti aliased pixels have been nicely cleaned up and to improve on these results further, I can make adjustments to the settings on the left. Different images will benefit from different settings but when using Super size for this kind of work, I recommend pushing the edge crispness up to its maximum, this will better define these edges and further reduce anti aliasing within the image, I am going to leave the rest of the settings as they are and click "ok"

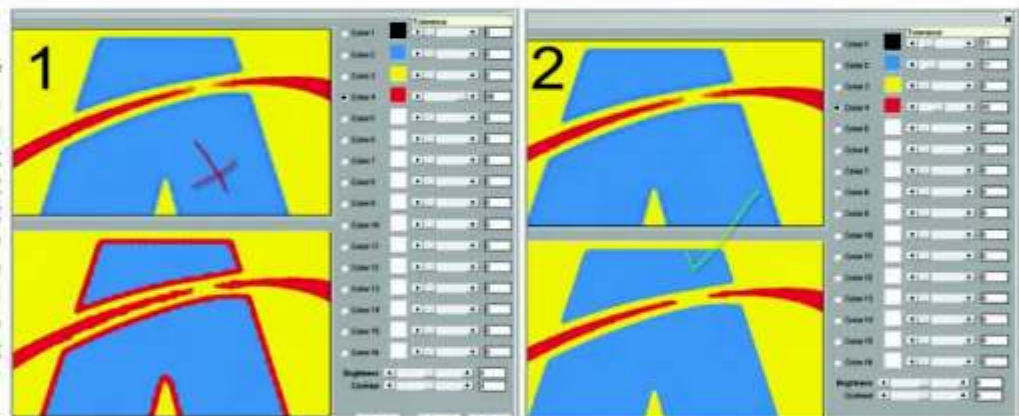


05

The image has now been moved to the new "Posterisation" interface. Posterisation is the process of identifying how many colors make up your image, in this example we have four. Colors are identified by simply clicking on them in the preview area. This process is repeated until all the colors in the design are identified. Look in the area down the right of the image where it says "Tolerance" each new Colour has a small white circle to the left of it, the blue Colour in this image is selected and this is noticeable because of the black dot within the small white circle. You must select this area before you identify a new Colour within the preview.

06

The final step is to adjust the tolerance of each Colour. The trick here is to adjust each colour so that all the details of the image are picked out but at the same time I don't want to increase any one colour too much so that it floods over in to another. In the first window you can see I have pushed the tolerance of the red too high and parts of the blue now have red on them. In the second window I have the tolerance set just right so that all the red detail is picked out without affecting any other colour.



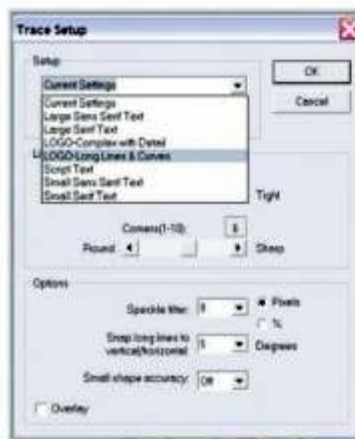
07

The image is now ready for vectorization in the regular way, in the smart bar at the top of the screen you will see the tools and options needed to do this, click on the "trace setup" tab to adjust the vectorization settings.



09

Once you have finished altering these settings, it's simply a case of clicking the Vectorize tab and Signlab will trace your bitmap.



08

The settings chosen here will ultimately affect the resulting vectored objects and they will need to be altered to suit the image you have. To start with you could select a pre set from the list and then make alterations to the other properties, as you use this tool set you will become familiar with how the settings you make, effect your results.



With the exception of a few nodes that needed correction, we were able to send this file to our vinyl cutter for production. The "Prepare to Vector Wizard" will save Signlab users time and money. Look out for the next issue of Sign Update in which we will be showing some great tips and tricks on using our powerful node editing tools.