

## Avoid Do-Overs on Your Channel Letters

You just heard those words that you dread. Your customer is calling saying the paint is chipping on their raceway. They emailed you a picture and everything. Low quality channel letter signs can come back to haunt you in several ways. You might have several “go backs” to the point where your profit is gone. It pays for you to know some of the most common “corner cutting” areas and how to spot them. At Sign Fab we strive to give our customers the quality signs they deserve, so let’s review a few things to determine if a channel letter sign is of good quality focusing mainly on the raceway and the vinyl being used.

If you are new to channel letters, raceways are an optional separate mounting structure. These are preferred by many people since it requires fewer mounting holes. Raceways have several potential quality issues if not made out of certain material, painted with the wrong kind of paint or if it has mounting brackets or not.



### Raceway Material

Often times a lower quality channel letter sign will involve a raceway that is manufactured from steel. Over time, if it’s installed in a humid or seaside location it can begin to rust. If it does rust and is then strained by the load it can tear or fall. We use aluminum for all of our raceways and aluminum is rust-free so there is no need to worry about what location you are putting it in.

### Extruded Raceways

Extruded raceways are our most popular choice of raceways. They are constructed of .125” aluminum and at this time are only available in 7”hx4.5”w x length required. Mounting brackets for this type of raceway are popular because they are adjustable unlike the fabricated raceways where the mounting brackets are fixed. Either way, mounting brackets make for easier installation.



**Fabricated Raceway**

Our fabricated raceways are constructed of .050 aluminum with 1" aluminum square tube framing which allow for great support to hold your sign up. The mounting brackets for fabricated raceways are not adjustable but are cut from .25" x 1.5" aluminum flat bars and placed every 5' or as needed to support the sign structure.



**Paint**

Sometimes low-quality channel letters involve a raceway painted with latex house paint. Obviously, this paint is not meant for this application and will eventually peel and/or fade. If latex house paint was used on your raceway it can cause not only peeling or fading but can cause a steel raceway to rust especially if it's in a damp environment.

We use high-quality paint from Matthews that is a 2 part polyurethane epoxy paint. This paint has unexcelled resistance to weather, dirt, pollutants, and abrasion and also can withstand chipping, color-fade, gloss loss and graffiti on interior and exterior surfaces and will keep your customer's raceway looking great for years.

**Vinyl**

Vinyl can be an area of concern on a lower quotation as well if they don't have the right vinyl on the sign. The vinyl we use can be added using 2447, 7328, or clear acrylic. We carry variety of name brand products including Arlon, 3M, Avery, Oracal, Calon and many others. These products allow us to provide you with as many color choices and material options as possible to create a high quality product that will last you for years.

The conclusion is: just because you can get something for a lower price, doesn't always mean it's of great quality, you'll end up paying for it in the end. Let your customer know that your professional sign proposal will not involve these quality issues when you buy from Sign Fab.