

## Low Quality Letters = MORE MONEY long term

Channel letters are classic, simple and affordable, if done right, with the proper quality materials. But you just heard those words that you dread. Your customer is calling saying the paint is chipping on their raceway and they just emailed you pictures. 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 materials.



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 - [Specifications](#)

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, rust starts to set in. If it does rust and is then strained by the load, it can tear or fall becoming a liability issue.

We use aluminum for all of our raceways. Aluminum is rust-free so there is no need to worry about what location you are putting in it.

### 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” H x 4.5” 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 Raceways

Our fabricated raceways are constructed of .050 aluminum with 1" aluminum square tube framing which allow for great support to hold up signs. 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 – [Click here](#) for paint colors

Sometime 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 can withstand chipping, color-fade, gloss loss and graffiti on interior and exterior surfaces and will keep your customers raceway looking great for years.

### Vinyl – [Click here](#) for vinyl colors

Vinyl can be an area of concern on a lower quotation as well if the right vinyl is not used. The vinyl we use can be added using 2447, 7328, or clear acrylic. We carry a wide 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 now, doesn't mean it's of great quality. You will end up paying more later. Let your customer know that your professional sign proposal will not involve these quality issues when you buy from Sign Fab.