

Understanding the Signage Process: Why It's More Than Just a Sign

Before a single bolt is drilled or a letter is illuminated, a sign project passes through numerous critical checkpoints. Each checkpoint serves a purpose: cities enforce zoning laws, landlords maintain design criteria, engineers verify structural integrity, and manufacturers coordinate lead times. This isn't bureaucracy. It's the foundation of a successful installation that protects your investment and ensures long-term performance.

A stylized illustration of a storefront for 'National Sign Team'. The storefront has a large, dark grey sign above the entrance with the company name in white. Below the sign is a glass entrance with a central double door and two side windows. Inside the store, there are potted plants, a ladder, and a sign hanging from the ceiling. The entire illustration is set against a light blue background with a grid pattern.

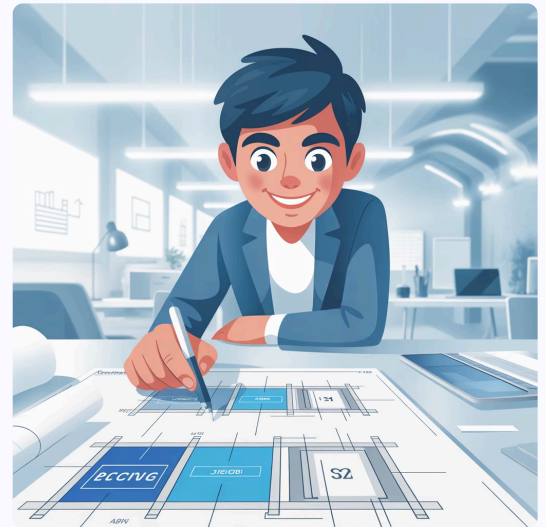
National Sign Team

The Hidden Complexity Behind Every Sign

Commercial signage projects involve far more complexity than most people realize. What appears to be a straightforward installation actually requires coordination across multiple disciplines, stakeholders, and regulatory bodies. Skipping steps or rushing approvals doesn't just create delays—it can lead to costly rework, failed inspections, or even signs that need to be completely removed and redesigned.

That's why managing approvals early and effectively is one of the most important parts of a successful sign program. When you work with National Sign Team, you're not just hiring a sign company—you're partnering with experienced project managers who understand how to navigate the intricate landscape of permits, landlord requirements, engineering specifications, and brand standards.

Every commercial sign involves a chain of stakeholders: property owners with aesthetic concerns, city officials enforcing codes, general contractors managing timelines, architects protecting design integrity, brand managers maintaining consistency, and vendors coordinating production. Without a central hub to manage all these moving parts, projects can quickly become fragmented and delayed.



Regulatory Compliance

Navigating zoning laws, building codes, and permit requirements across different jurisdictions



Stakeholder Coordination

Managing communication between property owners, city officials, contractors, and vendors



Investment Protection

Ensuring every approval is secured before work begins to avoid costly rework

National Sign Team's Role as Your Central Hub

At National Sign Team, we serve as the central hub of communication for your entire sign project. We make sure each party stays informed, each document is reviewed on time, and every approval is in place before the next phase begins. This isn't just about keeping the project on schedule—it's about protecting your investment from the preventable problems that plague poorly managed sign programs.

Our project management approach has been refined over years of executing complex, multi-site programs for national brands. We've learned that successful signage projects don't happen by accident—they result from meticulous planning, proactive communication, and rigorous attention to detail at every stage. When you partner with National Sign Team, you gain access to a team that understands not just signage, but the entire ecosystem that surrounds it.

01

Centralized Communication

Single point of contact eliminates confusion and keeps all stakeholders aligned

02

Document Management

Every drawing, approval, and revision is tracked and organized systematically

03

Proactive Problem-Solving

We anticipate issues before they become delays and present solutions immediately

04

Transparent Reporting

Regular updates ensure you always know your project's status and next steps

Client Testimonial: "Mike and I have worked together for a couple of years now. He is always in the know about manufacturing and delivery dates. He is very personable and easy to work with. I would recommend him for any of your signage needs." – Erin Robinette, Neiman Marcus

Our Proven Signage Lifecycle Process

Sign programs can be intimidating—especially when you're managing multiple locations or coordinating a rebrand across several states. That's why National Sign Team has developed a proven process that keeps everything organized and moving forward. We break the process into clear, manageable stages so nothing falls through the cracks.



Each stage builds on the previous one, creating a seamless progression from concept to completion. Our clients appreciate that they can focus on their business while we handle the complex details of bringing their signage vision to life.

Stage 1: Pre-Planning

Pre-planning is the foundation of every successful signage project. Before design or fabrication even begins, we work with you to gather essential site details and documentation. This critical phase ensures the project starts on a strong foundation.

During pre-planning, we conduct comprehensive research into local regulations, landlord requirements, and site-specific conditions. This groundwork prevents the most common causes of project delays: unanticipated permit requirements, landlord rejections, or design conflicts discovered too late in the process.



Client Provides

- Site address and location details
- Site plan and property boundaries
- Building elevations and dimensions
- Landlord contact information



NST Delivers

- Code Check (3 - 5 Days): Research local sign ordinances and permitting requirements
- Landlord Criteria Review: Evaluate lease agreements and sign guidelines
- Site Survey (5 Days): Collect field measurements, photos, and mounting details
- Brand Site/Design (5 Days): Align brand standards with site requirements
- Conceptual Drawings: Produce scaled visualizations

Why This Matters: Thorough pre-planning can reduce project timelines by 30% or more by eliminating rework and preventing approval delays. The investment in upfront research pays dividends throughout the entire project lifecycle.

Stage 2: Design Review and Client Approval

Once the conceptual drawings are ready, it's your turn to review and provide feedback. This collaborative stage is critical because it locks in design intent before any fabrication begins. A small change—like the size of a logo, the placement on a façade, or the color temperature of LED lighting—can have a major impact on permits, landlord approval, or fabrication timelines.

That's why we encourage thorough review at this stage. Our team provides detailed visualizations that show exactly how your sign will appear on the building, including scale references, lighting effects, and surrounding context. We want you to feel completely confident in the design before we proceed to engineering and pricing.



Client Review

Review conceptual drawings and provide mark-ups, comments, or requested changes



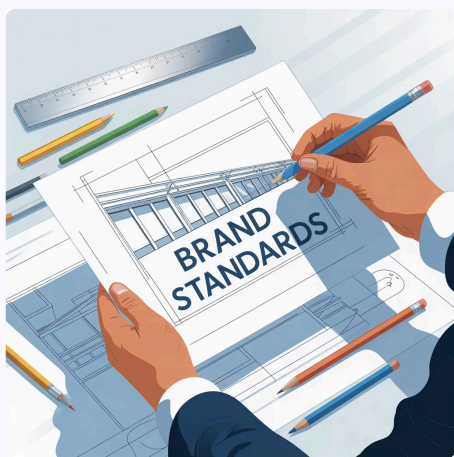
Revision Cycle

NST updates drawings based on feedback, ensuring all requirements are addressed



Final Approval

Client provides written approval, locking in design for pricing and permitting



Our team reviews every revision carefully, updating drawings as needed and confirming that all approvals are documented before moving forward. This documentation becomes part of your permanent project record, providing a clear trail of decisions and approvals that protects all parties.

We've found that clients who invest time in thorough design review save significant time and money later. Changes made at this stage cost nothing; changes made after fabrication begins can be extremely expensive and time-consuming.

Stage 3: Pricing, Engineering & Approvals

With final design approval in place, our project managers move into pricing and engineering—two critical steps that transform approved concepts into buildable, permitted projects. This stage requires technical expertise and knowledge to ensure your sign meets all requirements.

Transparent Pricing

Timeline: 3-5 Days

We provide detailed pricing based on the approved scope, materials, fabrication methods, and installation requirements.

Structural Engineering

Concurrent with Pricing

Licensed engineers complete wind load calculations and structural analysis to ensure your sign meets safety requirements.

Permit Package Preparation

Following Engineering

Our team prepares comprehensive permit packages with all necessary documents, drawings, and certifications.

The Dual Approval Process

Before any fabrication begins, we obtain two essential approvals that protect your investment and ensure legal compliance. These approvals happen in sequence, and we manage both processes on your behalf.

1

Landlord Approval

Your property owner must sign off on the design, materials, and installation method. We handle all submissions, follow-ups, and revisions to ensure your landlord's aesthetic and technical requirements are fully met.

2

City Permitting

Once landlord approval is secured, we submit your complete sign package to the appropriate city or county department for permit review. Permitting timelines vary by jurisdiction, but our nationwide experience helps us anticipate requirements.

Our clients appreciate that they don't have to chase signatures, decipher municipal code, or navigate bureaucratic processes. We handle it all, keeping you informed at every milestone.

Stage 4: Fabrication and Production Excellence

Once all approvals are secured, your project moves into fabrication—where precision craftsmanship transforms approved designs into physical reality. Our manufacturing partners use premium materials and cutting-edge techniques to create signage that meets the highest standards of quality and durability.

We don't just hand off your project to a manufacturer and wait. We actively track every milestone—from material procurement to LED testing—and keep you informed about progress and delivery schedules. This level of engagement ensures that production stays on schedule and any issues are addressed immediately.



Material Procurement

High-quality aluminum, acrylic, and LED components sourced from trusted suppliers



Precision Fabrication

CNC cutting, welding, and assembly performed by skilled craftsmen



LED Testing & QC

Every illuminated component tested for brightness, color consistency, and reliability



Packaging & Shipping

Professional crating and logistics coordination for safe delivery to your site

Communication Makes the Difference: "Mike is always in the know about manufacturing and delivery dates. He is very personable and easy to work with." This is the level of communication that defines National Sign Team—you're never left wondering about your project's status.

Stage 5: Installation and Quality Assurance

With fabrication complete, we coordinate professional installation—managing crews, equipment, site access, and safety protocols to ensure everything happens efficiently and without incident. Our installation teams are experienced professionals who understand not just signage, but also the complexities of working on active commercial properties.

Pre-Installation Coordination

We schedule installation at times that minimize disruption to your business operations, coordinate with property management for site access, arrange any necessary equipment like cranes or lifts, and ensure all safety requirements are met.

Professional Installation

Our certified installation teams follow engineered mounting plans precisely, make electrical connections according to code, and maintain clean, professional work practices throughout the process.

Quality Assurance Inspection

Before final handoff, we perform comprehensive inspection to verify proper illumination and electrical connection, confirm clean mounting and finish work, and ensure complete compliance with approved drawings and permits.

Project Closeout

Only when every detail is confirmed do we close out the project. You receive completion photos, warranty documentation, and all final permits and approvals for your records.



- ❏ **Our Commitment to Excellence:** Quality assurance isn't just a final checkbox—it's woven into every stage of our process. From initial code checks to final inspection, we maintain rigorous standards that ensure your signage performs flawlessly for years to come.

How Strategic Approval Management Protects Your Investment

Permits, landlord sign-offs, and engineering certifications exist for good reason—they protect the safety, appearance, and integrity of your signage. But they also create potential bottlenecks if not managed properly. By securing each approval in sequence and maintaining transparent communication throughout, National Sign Team keeps your project moving forward.



Avoiding Costly Delays

Projects that skip approval steps or rush through permitting almost always experience delays later.



Ensuring Brand Consistency

For national and franchise programs, approvals help maintain brand standards across hundreds of locations.



Building Confidence Through Communication

At National Sign Team, communication isn't an afterthought—it's the backbone of every project.

Your Partner for Signage Excellence

That's why so many of our clients stay with us for years—because we make the process transparent, predictable, and professionally managed from start to finish. When you partner with National Sign Team, you're not just getting signs—you're gaining a dedicated project management team that protects your investment, maintains your brand standards, and delivers results you can count on.

Ready to Start Your Next Signage Project?

Contact National Sign Team today to discuss how our proven process can bring your signage vision to life—on time, on budget, and with the professional excellence you deserve.

