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Create right image projections with custom gobos in theatrical applications by [Rob Kuron](#)

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Originally used on the film sets, a gobo is derived from the term "Goes before Optics"™ or "Go Before Optics". Placed in front of or slotted inside a lighting source, a gobo is used to control the shape of the light emitted by the projectors. If we take it a little further, a gobo is used in connection with projectors and simple light sources to create lighting scenes in theatrical applications. Likewise, Custom gobos may also be used for architectural lighting as well as in interior designing. They present an effective way to project a company logo on the wall or other features like projectors during professional presentations.

In the artificial environment, sometimes it becomes essential that the lighting equipment which is being used and the shape of light it emits over a particular space or object should be manipulated. In order to do so, a piece of material with patterned holes is used through which light passes is placed in the beam of light. This is done to allow only the desired "shape" or pattern through, while blocking the rest of the light, casting a specific shadow/light into the space.

Though the term "gobo" generally refers to any device which produces patterns of light and shadow or various pieces of equipment that go before a light source (such as a gobo arm or gobo head). The specific term itself also defines the device used in theatrical lighting applications because of the mandated placement of the device in 'the gate' or 'point of focus' between the light source and the lenses (or optics). This placement marks an essential component as it allows the focusing of the pattern or shape into a crisp, sharp edge (for logos, fine detail, architecture, etc) and also the softening the edges (breakup patterns, etc). On the film sets, custom gobos are also known as Flags and "cookies" which are placed in the beam of light post-optics do not have the option of such fine focus.

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Rob Kuron writes for gobos products & accessories, find his informative articles on metal gobo, a [custom gobos](#), glass gobo and make your celebrations more special with gobo products. For more information visit a <http://www.proaal.com/>.

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