

Five Keys to Driving Sales with Digital Signage

Location, context, engagement, integrity and management are critical to ensuring the success of digital signage.

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Digital signage can do many things for retailers, but what really matters is how screens can enhance the shopping experience while driving increased sales.

Roughly 60 percent of all purchasing decisions are made once people are in the store, and brands increasingly are seeing the power of getting the rich media they've used in broadcasting and online right into the aisles of stores and influencing what shoppers put in their carts and baskets.

Positioned carefully, and using engaging content and calls to action, digital screens in retail can have a dramatic impact on store numbers, with at least 15 percent boosts on promoted items now the accepted rule of thumb. Coupled with a tangible improvement in message compliance across a retail chain, it is now relatively easy to build a business argument showing the net sales contribution of

screen networks in retail outweigh the costs and effectively add to the bottom line.

But making those numbers happen is far from automatic. Developing a screen network for retail that delivers a return on the capital and operating investment takes solid planning and careful selection of the supporting technology.

It's a complicated mix of factors, but the core elements of an in-store digital media plan break down to location, context, engagement, integrity and measurement.

Location

The positions of screens in retail environments — from big box to fast food — are critical to driving sales and getting a return on the objectives and the investment. To have impact, the displays:

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- Must be fixed at or near eye-level, within normal sightlines and not high above
- Positioned where shoppers are naturally looking, and not on walls that shoppers whiz past
- Be large enough to get noticed in what can be busy visual environments.

There is considerable research available on shopping behavior, and the retailers who are using digital screens effectively have applied that information to optimize their networks and results. Their screens are not just suspended from ceilings so no one can tamper with them, or hung on wall space that was available. Smart retailers are putting the screens at the ends of aisles and at key decision points in their stores, and making those screens integral to the retail design, not just add-ons.

Context

Programming should always be contextually relevant to the immediate surroundings, and in retail, that means content and marketing messages that address the mindset of the consumer at that moment. When a soccer mom is in the health and beauty section of a large department store, she is not thinking about cooking tips or frozen food ... she's thinking about hair care and cosmetics.

The context gets even more granular, in that the profile of that soccer mom, and the other people coming into that retailer's health and beauty section, changes by time of day and week and by things such as geography and demographics. Hair care products that sell in stores where the shopper profile is predominantly African-American may differ from a store that has Asians as its dominant shopper



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base. The kinds of products that resonate with shoppers who are in the store during workdays may vary considerably from the interests of shoppers who come in on evenings and weekends.

Targeting media with that level of granularity across large retail chains — where the content mix could be different in each store — could prove massively complicated and time-consuming.

Determining the context

When choosing programming for digital signage, it's important to understand who will be seeing the content. Considerations include:

- Demographics of the store
- Dayparting
- Geography
- Seasonality

EnQii's EnGage software platform, for example, deals with this real-world complexity by using data to make intricate scheduling dynamic and precise, as well as highly efficient. Everything that factors into the mix of a retail network can be profiled with data attributes, including demographics, locations, goods sold, sales and inventory data, opening hours and external factors.

Engagement

Effective retail networks engage consumers, using calls to action in their messaging to influence purchases. That can be as simple as "Buy Yours Now!" or as complex as interactive screens and displays that respond to external triggers such as readers and sensors that entertain and educate shoppers.

When screens are at or near eye level, retailers and brands have an opportunity to engage shoppers directly and do much more than simply push brands and offers.

Existing technologies such as bar code readers and touch screen overlays allow users to look up information and drill down in the messaging system for deeper information, or bridge the gap between the screen and mobile devices. Emerging technologies such as augmented reality let shoppers visualize what interests them. For example, a shopper might hold up a sealed box, such as a toy, to a screen and see a dynamic visual overlay that shows what's inside and what the toy looks like fully assembled.

Integrity

Screen networks in retail are as important as all the other systems that support store operations. As retailers replace printed

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material with digital screens, there is an expectation that screens and underlying playback and server technology operate with extremely high levels of reliability and integrity.

If a fast-food restaurant converts its menu boards — which show what's on offer and pricing — to digital screens, they can't ever go down, or show error messages.

That requires a platform with rock-solid reliability at the server and player level, and device management that automates monitoring and provides full visibility and access to what's going on with a deployed network. Retailers expect a platform, such as EnQii EnGage, that can identify and remedy problems quickly and with minimal disruption.

Measurement

When the same spot in the same department in different regions generates very different sales results, those are clues the content may need to be tweaked for different demographics. When sales start to drop off on a promoted item, that's telling store operators the content might need to be refreshed.

An interactive station may be generating more activity for certain content elements, such as product explainers. That might trigger different thoughts about how to better market the product or service.

It's that combined data that allows retailers to begin to truly optimize the opportunity that in-store media offers.

About the sponsor: EnQii Group is a global leader in the use of innovative media, services and technologies for out-of-home digital media markets. It is a global organization with strong financial backing and drawing on a proven track record spanning 12 years. As a thought leader at the forefront of innovation, EnQii is committed to developing the digital out-of-home industry and driving a rich and exciting experience for its customers with full end-to-end solutions underpinned by the lowest total cost of ownership. To learn more about EnQii products and services, please visit www.enqii.com or call Stuart Armstrong at (212) 741-8575.