The signs are everywhere. Some of the most dynamic places in the world—like Times Square and the Las Vegas Strip—are known for their brightly colored digital billboards. Digital signage done right informs, entices, engages, and leaves an impression. Whether it’s your own employees or your customers, you want to grab your audience’s attention and hold it long enough to make a positive impact. Of course, we aren’t all able to have our digital signage wrap around buildings in one of the busiest cities in the world. There are proven ways, however, to make an impact in your own lobbies, cafeterias, walkways, or wherever your target audience spends time.

Experts predict the digital signage trend will grow into a $14.87 billion global market by 2020, so it is important to create a longterm plan now. This paper will help you create the right digital signage and content strategy for your company, no matter the size or audience. We’ll explain how the design and text can draw your audience to your message. And we’ll address how to develop and manage content for the long term so you can feel confident your digital signage will continue to forge new and valuable connections.

**Define Goals by Asking Questions**

Before planning the details of digital signage content, identify your goals and your target audience. Surveys are useful in identifying objectives. Then you can move forward to
explore the content and design principles that will support those objectives. Below are a few questions you’ll need to ask early in the process.

**Who is your target audience?**

Content is most effective when it’s tailored to your specific audience. Determine who you want to communicate with and what their needs and goals are. Once you’ve established what is important to your audience, you can align those needs with what you want to achieve with digital signage. Visitors and students may want a better way to find classes and offices on campus. Customers may be looking for a way to find information about new products. Employees might enjoy seeing corporate communications that share sales metrics, training opportunities, and social activities. Once you know, you can then think about how to provide that information in a way that’s good for your business.

**What are your goals?**

Once you’ve pinpointed your audience’s interests, you should identify your own goals to see where the two realms intersect. Are you trying to increase sales? Are you trying to become a brand name? Are you trying to keep employees engaged and excited? One you have clearly defined your goals, you can determine what content you can offer that will benefit both your audience and your organization, whether it be a corporate, education, healthcare, retail, hospitality, conference, or entertainment venue.

**What kind of content should you share?**

Digital signage is an excellent way to inform, build trust, promote products and services, and more. Here are some of the kinds of content to consider and how they may align with your goals:

- **Product info and promotions.** Increase sales by informing shoppers of exclusive in-store deals.
- **Events and activities.** Engage employees of large companies who want to learn about office parties and after-hours activities.
- **News and basic information.** Encourage people to look to the signage for time, weather, and other data so they will be drawn to the rest of your content.
- **Internal updates.** Boost morale by sharing updates about colleagues, contests, sales metrics, and important reminders.
- **Industry information.** Build your brand’s reputation by sharing fashion tips and trends at your retail store.
- **Interactive content.** Make your customers feel connected to your content by installing touch-screen or interactive displays. For example, digital readers may use facial recognition or mobile phone synchronization to offer personalized interactions; such technology is growing in popularity among the youngest shoppers.4

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**Why Digital Signage Makes an Impact**

- 83% of learning is done visually.
- 47% of viewers specifically recall seeing an ad on a digital display.
- Digital signage is more cost-effective than print for reaching big audiences.
- With digital signage you can show multiple screen items at once.

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3. Digital signage is more cost-effective than print for reaching big audiences.
4. With digital signage you can show multiple screen items at once.
How can viewers interact with digital signage?

Currently, some of the more common methods of interaction include customers scanning a QR code or sending a text message to receive coupons or maps or to sign up for events or email subscriptions with their smart devices. Some retailers engage customers by allowing them to participate in immersive gaming that fosters brand loyalty.

The popularity of digital signage is growing at such a rate that younger generations are beginning to expect it. A Motorola survey of shoppers showed those in Generation Y (also known as Millennials, ages 18-34) were more than twice as likely as Baby Boomers (ages 50-64) to be interested in interactive technology that recognizes them personally. Those same respondents were more than twice as likely as even Generation X (ages 35-49) shoppers to say they are interested in interactive mirrors that provide product information and allow them to send pictures to friends. But the possibilities extend well beyond the retail realm. Touch-screen wayfinding helps visitors easily navigate a facility or campus and find its representatives. Some organizations allow visitors to control displays with their phones. Consider how and where you expect your audience to be when they interact with the digital sign. Identify high-traffic and high-visibility locations to determine whether the displays should be large flat panels or integrated within podium-sized kiosks. Place displays in different locations to speak to the right audience type. Once you decide the kind of content you want to display, you will want to make sure it shines.

Define Goals by Asking Questions

Once you've answered all the questions above, you need to decide how to present your content. Digital signage is a waste if no one looks at it. Make content eyecatching, then...
make sure it flows to keep a viewer’s attention. Refresh content frequently to maintain audience interest. Clean digital signage will have all areas clearly laid out, with the main focus being the video.

**Catch their eye**

Digital signs are meant to be seen and often acted upon, so it is important to follow basic design guidelines, including:

- Keep it organized
- Keep it simple
- Use relevant, eye-catching graphics

Including features like time and weather means people will come to rely on digital signage for information. Creating effective signage is all about organizing your content based on the message you want to deliver. You will want to “zone” or place the content on the display according to a hierarchy of information. A simple rule of thumb: The largest item on the display should be the most important, with other zones sized according to their relative importance. The content—words and graphics—also needs to be easy to interact with and navigate. You have limited space to work with on a display screen, so don't clutter it with too much information. Keep the text simple but informative. Placing too many words on the screen creates text that is small and hard to read. The simplicity principle also goes for graphics and design. Clean, simple graphics help viewers identify (and engage with) each zone. Choose high-quality images that will render well on the display, and keep them moving. Content that remains on the screen too long can create a blind spot to passersby. The movement of images attracts eyes to the screen, but once you have their attention, you have about 10 seconds before they move on. Make the most of it.
Keep the content coming

Once you know your audience and your strategy for getting their attention, how do you keep that content fresh and engaging? That question leads to even more questions about how often content should be updated, who will be responsible, and more. The following table shows the breakdown of how responsibilities may be shared according to job function.

Get Help Designing Content

If you’re thinking of the above responsibilities in the context of your own staff, they can seem overwhelming. That’s where the expertise of a partner helps. AVI-SPL’s creative team can merge your organization’s identity, colors, fonts, and graphics into exciting, engaging digital signage content. Each custom design is specifically created for use in digital signage applications with proven color, contrast, and layouts. We offer a variety of content options for range of budgets. Expert design will use every inch of your screen to send a message. Our creative content team builds layouts that are attractive, reinforce your brand, and are easy to read. Data presented at the 2012 Digital Signage Business Conference also showed that digital signs obtain up to 10 times more eye contact than static signage. Our content team delivers signage ROI by providing relevant content.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES MAY INCLUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>System Administrator</td>
<td>• Maintain the digital signage&lt;br&gt;• Primary contact or primary owner of the solution&lt;br&gt;• Check media player health or any script errors&lt;br&gt;• Check software versions to make sure they are up to date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff</td>
<td>• Responsible for onsite media players&lt;br&gt;• Contact and work with the digital media solution provider to address troubleshooting and repairs&lt;br&gt;• Reporting issues with the local media players&lt;br&gt;• Confirm digital messaging operation and onsite point of contact for repairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Administrator/ Internal Assistance Provider</td>
<td>• Provide logs for specific media players&lt;br&gt;• Access to the media players, including remote access as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Template Designer</td>
<td>• Create content zones for images, video, tickers, widgets, and information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Author</td>
<td>• Create information or media to be approved and populated within the content zones on the template</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Approver</td>
<td>• Approve content for all media: copy, images and media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduler</td>
<td>• Schedule playlists and future content</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Studies show that digital signage produces better recall than other types of point-of-purchase displays. We can help deliver your content with memorable, vibrant graphics that make your message stick. AVI-SPL can keep fresh content flowing to your displays.

**Conclusion**

Done the right way, digital signage can help your company meet its objectives. As companies and organizations adopt digital signage, it is important that they know their end goals so they can see returns on their investments. Start by asking the right questions, developing a plan, then creating content that is visually appealing and easy to read. Finally, develop a strategy for continuing to create quality content for the long term, and consider enlisting the help of professionals.

To find out more about digital signage, contact AVI-SPL at our toll-free number 866-559-8197, email us at sales@avispl.com, or visit www.avispl.com.
About AVI-SPL

AVI-SPL is the world’s leading integrator of communication and collaboration solutions that support organizations of all types. Our certified engineers design, build, and integrate systems for video collaboration, digital signage, 3D visualization, AV distribution, and intelligent building control.

We also provide a wide range of remote and onsite support services, including cloud-based video conferencing.

We have nearly 40 offices across the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the UAE, as well as an international network of solution providers in 30 other countries.

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About the Sponsor

Samsung

For over 70 years, Samsung has been dedicated to making a better world through diverse businesses that today span advanced technology, semiconductors, skyscraper and plant construction, petrochemicals, fashion, medicine, finance, hotels, and more. Our flagship company, Samsung Electronics, leads the global market in high-tech electronics manufacturing and digital media.

Through innovative, reliable products and services; talented people; a responsible approach to business and global citizenship; and collaboration with our partners and customers, Samsung is taking the world in imaginative new directions.

About the Author

Rich Daugherty is AVI-SPL’s Digital Media Solutions Engineer. He has been creating and designing digital content for 18 years, working with companies of all sizes and industries. At AVI-SPL, Rich works with several different software applications to create an experience that suits the client—including touch-screen interactivity. Rich is skilled at training clients on the software and explaining the proper use of digital signage content.

Resources:

5. Ibid.