



DIGITAL SIGNAGE BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

ESTABLISHING BEST PRACTICES FOR SUCCESSFUL DEPLOYMENTS

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BEYOND SIGNAGE: LEXUS OF HUNTSVILLE

Digital Sales Tools for Upscale Dealership



As visitors enter the lobby of the new showroom, the dealership welcomes them with an impressive video array made up of four 50" commercial-grade Panasonic TH50PH11 plasmas.

By Jerry Gale

With the economy on the rebound, car dealers are looking for more creative ways to separate themselves from competitors. They may take a cue from Lexus of Huntsville, Alabama, which recently finished installation of an impressive new digital signage system in their remodeled showroom.

“We wanted technology that would not only sell more cars, but set our client apart,” said Chris Banks, Sales Manager of Huntsville-based AV integrator Quantum. About two years ago, Banks began meeting with the owner of the Huntsville Lexus dealership, who wanted a “technology package” to impress visitors to his soon-to-be remodeled showroom, but wasn’t sure of the details.

He was aiming high, however: he told Banks he needed a world class showroom to match the world-class ownership experience they provide to their customers. Banks settled on a state-of-the-art digital signage system that would establish his client as one of the nation’s premier Lexus dealerships.

Many auto dealerships install TVs in their waiting rooms

to keep customers occupied while their cars are being serviced. Banks knew that Lexus of Huntsville needed more, so he decided to start the customer experience with a bang. As visitors enter the lobby of the new showroom, the dealership welcomes them with an impressive video array made up of four 50" commercial-grade Panasonic TH50PH11 plasmas. Quantum Technologies also installed two JBL Control 25 speakers next to the array to provide impressive sound.

The video wall lets visitors know immediately they are walking into a showroom unlike any other. The dealership uses the full-feature digital signage software from Tightrope Media System to run eye-catching video content on this sign. Using the Tightrope software, Quantum programmers divided the lobby sign layout into four zones. The top half of the array rotates images of vehicles that are on sale, the bottom right quarter runs a Yahoo news and weather feed, and the bottom left quarter shows a cable TV channel. In a crawl zone along the bottom of the array, the dealership regularly adds text messages about promotions and events.

SUPPORTING THE SALES PROCESS

As impressive as the lobby video wall is, Banks felt it was not enough. To further support the sales process, he added three mobile digital signage carts that could be positioned in various places in the showroom, plus additional fixed signs in the showroom, service department waiting room and meeting rooms. Each mobile cart includes a 42" Panasonic TH42PH11 plasma monitor, a JBL Control 25 speaker and an Avocent MPX1500 wireless network extender, which allows a Tightrope player installed in a centralized rack to send content over the dealership's WiFi network. Quantum Technologies installers also mounted a fourth monitor with speaker and network extender on a wall in the showroom.

Dealer staff can easily move the carts next to cars on the show floor, so the signage system can explain their features and any special promotions. "Even though we have brochures on each car model," Stanley Baugh, Sales Manager at Lexus of Huntsville explained, "today's shoppers are more accustomed to getting information from a video screen. As customers wander the showroom, they get educated about the cars without pressure. In addition, when we announce a new model but don't yet



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The Service Department makes good use of the text scroll. They let people know when their car is ready, post messages for other visitors and

puters through any internet connection. The service manager especially likes how easy it is to use the computer on his desk to quickly add scroll



To increase the ease-of-use and conserve energy, an AMX control system is used to turn the digital signs on and off automatically at programmed times.

have a demo for people to drive, we can still sell that model by advertising it on one of the monitors. These signs are a big help in selling even during these difficult economic times."

Banks didn't forget about the service waiting room. Quantum technicians installed two Panasonic 50" monitors there, together with JBL ceiling speakers. Banks also divided these monitors into four zones. The top right rotates between the Lexus logo and the dealership logo, a Yahoo weather/news feed is shown along the right side of the screen, along the bottom is a text scroll and the remainder of the screen is a TV channel or video from a DVD player attached to each monitor.

ask trivia questions to keep people in the waiting room entertained.

The Quantum Technologies crew installed a Tightrope Carousel Server and seven Carousel 230 Players into a centralized equipment rack. They outfitted four of the players with wireless transmitters connecting them to the monitors in the showroom and used Cat5 connections for three others serving the lobby, waiting room and meeting rooms.

Baugh added that the ability to add content to the digital signage system from any computer is a significant benefit. "Both the service manager and I can add content and make changes from our office or from our home com-

puters through any internet connection. The service manager especially likes how easy it is to use the computer on his desk to quickly add scroll

messages announcing when a car is ready for pickup." To increase the ease-of-use and conserve energy, Quantum Technologies installed and programmed an AMX control system to turn the digital signs on automatically at 7:00AM and turn them off at 11:00PM. From a 12" AMX Modero touch panel, Baugh is able to adjust speaker volume and switch inputs between DVD and cable TV.

"When we remodeled this building, Baugh said, "we positioned it on the high end, adding wood and marble fixtures to accent the showroom. The digital signs add visual impact to make our dealership a unique auto shopping experience."