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eBook:

5 Things to Consider When Purchasing a Digital Display for Retail





In today's highly competitive and technology-driven business environment, retailers need the right tools to enhance customer experiences inside and outside the store. Digital display solutions, or "place-based media," are an increasingly prevalent and effective means of capturing attention, increasing brand awareness, and driving sales. A recent [study by Arbitron](#) found that 70% of American consumers recalled viewing a digital display in a public venue at least once in a month. That translates to about 181 million potential customers, and it's significantly higher than the number of people who had watched an Internet video during that period (43%) or who had a Facebook profile (41%).

The retail industry — including your peers and competitors — recognizes the potential of digital displays and are building them into their business plans. A [2016 report from Market Research](#) indicates that the global digital signage market is expected to reach \$27.34 billion in 2022, increasing from \$16.88 billion in 2015.

The market is growing at such a rate because digital displays really work. A [2015 Nielsen study](#) found that travelers who noticed digital billboards could recall specific ads up to 89% of the time. And in the Arbitron study, 19% of those who saw digital ads reported making an unplanned purchase as a result. In addition, an [InfoTrends study](#) showed retail digital displays led to a 32.8% increase in in-store traffic; 30% longer browsing time by customers; and a 29.5% increase in average purchase total.

If you are one of the many retailers exploring how digital displays can benefit your business, the next step is choosing the right display for your needs. Here are some factors to consider when navigating digital signage options.

1. What's the purpose of the digital display?

Digital displays are available in many forms and styles. To choose the right one, first define what you want to accomplish with the display. How will customers use it? What kind of content will it show? Your answers will influence design features, such as size, brightness, and resolution. Digital displays are versatile and can serve a wide range of functions, such as:

Attracting Attention

Digital signs catch the eyes of potential customers, particularly if the content is dynamic. A window display with videos or images and text with movement will draw more traffic than a static, sun-faded poster. Attractive displays can build your store brand image as well.

Supplying Information

Digital displays near the point of sale (POS) can promote specific items or product lines. Touchscreen kiosks can allow customers to browse your entire catalog, check inventory at other store locations, order online, or even sell cars in entirely digital show rooms.

Providing Entertainment

Customers sometimes encounter a wait in your stores. Digital displays give you options for improving those customer experiences. Digital displays can help manage checkout lines; keeping people occupied with videos about tips and trends, and thereby increasing customer satisfaction. Digital displays can also contribute to your brand image and store atmosphere in entertaining ways such as with scores and videos in a sporting goods store, or children's videos in toy stores.



Integrating With Other Media

Some digital displays can integrate with social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, or Snapchat, or with live TV or RSS feeds, both as sources of content and as points of engagement with shoppers.

Consider using digital displays with other solutions to create virtual makeover counters or virtual fitting rooms with interactive mirrors. Rent the Runway uses mirror displays in their NYC Flagship store to allow users to view various clothing styles and to mix and match with thousands of options not available in the store.

Once you have defined how you will use the digital display, you can work with a solution provider to find the models that have the features and functionality you need to successfully implement the right technology for your application.

2. Will your digital display be indoors or outdoors?

Another key consideration when choosing a digital display is whether it will be used indoors or outdoors. Environmental factors will influence the features you need to look for. Outdoor screens — sometimes called digital out-of-home (DOOH or OOH) displays — have to combat sunlight. Not only does visible sunlight wash out images, but ultraviolet and infrared rays can cause yellowing or graying of the screen over time and heat damage. These situations require a high-brightness display (up to 3,000 nits brightness) with a wide viewing angle for maximum effectiveness. A matte display is also useful for reducing glare and reflection in outdoor and semi-outdoor situations.



Related to brightness, you may also encounter the terms LED screen versus LCD screen. Both types actually use a liquid crystal display (LCD); the difference is in how they are lit — or more accurately, backlit. LCD monitors use cathode fluorescent bulbs, while LED monitors use light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs. LED displays use less power, last longer, and are thinner and lighter. LED-lit displays are now the only real choice. Direct view LED videowalls, in which LEDs are mounted directly on a panel and no liquid crystal is used, are also an option.

Outdoor displays also need tougher construction to resist dust/dirt and moisture (condensation or precipitation). Look for the display's ingress protection (IP) rating: The first digit refers to dust protection, on a scale of 0 (no protection) to 6 (total protection). The second digit refers to resistance to liquid, from 0 (none) to 8 (can survive submersion). A display rated IP56 or higher, for example, is basically weatherproof and will resist damage from dirt or dust and from rain or splashing water.



3. How many hours each day will it be in operation?

Another factor to consider is how many hours per day or week your digital signage will be in use. An in-store kiosk or wall display might only need to be on during regular store hours, while a billboard or window display might need to be durable enough for continual operation. If your digital sign will be running 24/7, look for one that is designed to avoid the need for constant maintenance such as cooling system filter changes.

4. What screen type, size, and resolution does the application require?

There are several screen types to choose from:

Standalones are single screens in various sizes, from POS displays to touchscreen kiosks and dressing room mirror displays.

Videowalls are larger displays with multiple connected panels, ideally calibrated for uniform color and brightness.

Touch Displays are displays with an embedded touch overlay that allow consumers to seamlessly navigate a range of relevant content without interference from surrounding light or environmental conditions.

The ideal screen size is going to depend on its function and location. Larger or outdoor spaces will benefit from larger displays or video walls for the greatest impact. You also need to consider the viewing distance — how far the customer is from the screen will influence both size and resolution. The longer the distance, the more effective a bigger screen will be. Closer distances can use smaller screens.

However, if viewers are closer to a larger screen, then higher resolution will be necessary to keep images and text sharp. At greater distances, differences in resolution are less noticeable. On small screens that are close to the viewer, resolution level is also less distinguishable.

Finally, consider your source content as well when choosing screen size and resolution. A smaller image stretched to fit a larger screen or a lower-res image on a high-res screen will look pixelated and blurred.



5. What kind of software integration is required?

How will you be transmitting digital content to your display screen? Do you need to connect the screen to a digital media player in the form of a stick for plug-and-play functionality, or is there a player built into the monitor? Some displays also allow wireless transmission of content from other devices. Make sure that your software, player, and screen are all compatible.

A Sign of Things to Come

Selecting the right digital signage options for your business will require some research and thought, but the effort is well worth making. Place-based media is a powerful tool for delivering targeted messages at the just right time that audiences will retain. You can use it to inform, entertain, advertise, and build brand awareness. You'll also build your customer base by drawing people in and providing positive, interactive experiences. Reach your audience most effectively — and profitably — with digital displays.

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