



Digital Signage **Advertising Revenue** for Campuses

DIGITAL SIGNAGE WHITE PAPER



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We're here to help! If you have any questions about your application or our products, please contact us at **800.572.4935** or **salesteam@visix.com**.

Creative Income

With today's digital signage (DS) solutions, you can reach your audience with a high volume of messages at a low cost. More and more college campuses are taking advantage of this medium for general communications, and many are starting to see the benefits of offsetting the purchase and operating costs by selling space on the screens.

Why not turn your messaging system into a profit center or budget balancer? Campuses can generate revenues by advertising cooperative partner products and services in a number of ways:

- Static messages
- Video commercials
- Long-term campaigns
- Daily specials
- Branded screen layouts

Colleges have a highly prized demographic for today's advertisers – 18 to 24 year olds. And if your content management software allows you to use daypart scheduling – being able to display messages during certain times on chosen days – ads can be targeted to specific student groups at the right time, in the right place. This makes your digital signs prime real estate for vendors.

Static Messages

These are basically like print ads – a single bulletin advertising the product or event but in a rotating playlist, so campuses can sell space to multiple advertisers at once. Advertisers can pay for location (which digital signs they wish to have their ad displayed on), frequency (once an hour, once a day) and even custom design (the college design team can design the ad).

Video Commercials

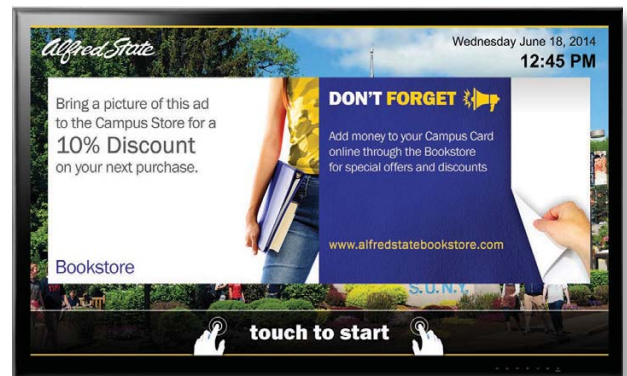
Adding movement and, in locations where appropriate, sound (see our whitepaper [Design Standards for Digital Signage Content](#) for advice on using audio) can capture students' attention as they move through busy campus spaces. Video ads also allow advertisers to create narratives, which are more memorable and can generate buzz in the student community.

Long-Term Campaigns

Combining stills with video over a longer period of time reinforces brand recognition and awareness, making the advertiser seem part of the fabric of campus life. Episodic narrative ad campaigns create excitement as students eagerly await the next part of the story, all the while being exposed to the brand.

Daily Specials

Advertisers can create a sense of urgency by offering one-day only offers, driving traffic to their shop, service or website as students rush to take advantage of the special. Or an advertiser can offer a different special each day, or once a week, combining the benefits of a long-term campaign with their daily special offer. This is also a great way for both the advertiser and the college to measure ROI immediately to see how effective the advertising is.



Branded Screen Layouts

This could be a branded frame that encloses other ads or television feeds on a digital sign – so while the students are watching their football team on the television, they are also being exposed to the brand. Using such layouts, advertisers can sponsor specific events that are relevant to their company, or choose to brand all content on a particular screen for a set period of time.

Potential Audiences

Students aren't the only audience for advertising on your campus DS system. Any visitors to your college – parents, conference members, visiting lecturers, athletes coming to play against your team (and their fans) – anyone and everyone who sets foot on your campus is a potential customer for your advertisers.

Also, don't forget faculty and staff. If you're using your DS for internal communications, you can reach out to your on-site audience with advertising that's specific to their needs and likings, too.

All of the advertising tools listed above are appropriate for any of these audiences. Just tailor your ad or campaign to the right demographic and preferences, and use your DS to show it off when and where they are on campus.

Potential Advertisers

It's easy to create a simple partner program that you can use to advertise industry or community partners. Develop guidelines for file types, sizes and content restrictions; as well as procedures for submission, approval and invoicing.

Consider the following sources of advertising income for your organization:

- Vendor partner ads featuring products, sale pricing or incentive programs
- Community businesses offering discounts to your employees or students
- Catering specials or local restaurants advertising lunch specials
- Bookstores offering coupons, sale items, or buy backs
- Branded merchandise and sporting equipment sales
- Loyalty program (grocery, hotel, rental car, etc.) registration drives
- Promotions for upcoming events, seminars or student clubs

By controlling the approval, scheduling and delivery of advertisements, your organization retains the exclusive rights to your audience's contact information. You can discourage spam email campaigns and truckloads of direct mail by transitioning those advertisers to your DS program.

Whether you realize a profit or are simply aiming to offset your communication costs – you'll be providing quality, controlled advertising to your audience.



Bookstore

Students don't just pop into the campus bookstore – they are usually there for a while, browsing, meeting people, getting things on their shopping list, waiting in line. This makes this a perfect place to grab their attention.

Special offers are especially effective in this environment. You can include discount codes on your DS messages to train your audience to check the screens often. One fun way to draw traffic is to use smartphone snaps. For example, the first 20 people to bring in a picture of the mascot on the screen get a free t-shirt.

Using unique discount codes or specific images for smartphone snaps in DS ads makes it easy for your advertiser to calculate the ROI on each promotion.

Advertise inside and outside the store to increase sales:

- Textbooks and study aids
- Electronics and supplies
- Branded clothing and accessories
- Buy-back deadlines

Catering

Food courts, cafés, on-site catering and local restaurants can post daily menus and specials throughout campus to drive traffic to their doors.

All catering vendors need to push certain items at certain times, whether they're launching a seasonal salad or trying to offload packages of cookies due to expire in 30 days. They may want to offer coupons or free items to entice students to visit them quickly and more often. Wording such promotions as limited-time offers, like daily specials, encourages people to act fast.

Most students will go to on-campus cafés and food areas frequently, making these spaces ideal for long-term campaigns and branded screen layouts.

Events

Campus events can really benefit from DS promotions, boosting both awareness and attendance.

Let student groups, local clubs, concert promoters and academic programs advertise their upcoming events on your screens with artist bios, ticket information and calendars.

The athletics department is a great potential revenue partner, as they'll want to announce upcoming games, advertise recruitment efforts and promote season ticket packages. Displays placed in sporting venues can drive point-of-purchase sales by grabbing the audience in the excitement of the moment.



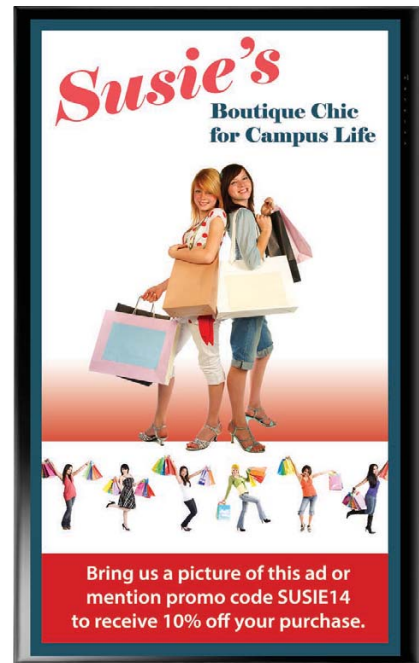
And don't forget about local events like festivals, elections, conferences and charity drives. DS messages like these can really help integrate your campus with your community.

Retailers

Local businesses are one of the great benefactors of having a college nearby. Students, staff, faculty and visitors drawn to the area by the campus already make up a large percentage of their business, so you can guarantee them a pre-qualified target audience.

Local stores who are running print and TV ads can easily turn these into DS content with very little effort. Or they can create, or have you create, special content targeting the students. For example, a café just up the road from the bookstore might have a limited-time discount on their new smoothies at the start of a semester. Knowing that most students will visit the bookstore at this time makes DS in that area a prime location for their ads. They can remind students about the café and advertise a smoothie special with a discount for holders of student cards, or people who take a smartphone snap, or use a QR tag to get a code from their website.

Also, don't assume all of your revenue has to come from small businesses or "mom and pops" outfits. Nationwide chains with a local stake may also be interested. Any business that is frequented by the students, or who wants to attract them, can benefit from using your DS. In fact, a business doesn't even need to have a local outlet – today's students have become accustomed to buying things online, so any business that might be interesting to the students can advertise on your screens.



Crunching the Numbers

Income can approximate classified ad rates, or rival premier magazine rates – it all depends on the size of your audience, the number of displays and the frequency of the ad. Monthly or weekly programs are popular for ease of billing.

DS advertising is flexible, and many options are available to advertisers. Do they want a limited run to promote a specific event or offer, or do they want a general increase in traffic? Is there only one specific group of people they want to target, or are they looking for a more general audience?

Things to consider when talking to advertisers:

- Audience volume (remember to include visitors)
- Number of displays
- Frequency of advertising

For example:

- Total building traffic (estimated daily): 800
- Total number of integrated displays: 6
- Ad runs per day: 10
- Average number of days of operation per month = assumed 20
- $800 \times 6 \times 10 \times 20 = 960,000$ Potential exposures!

Revenue from DS advertising, whether from on campus or off, can offset and even negate your purchase and operating costs. It can even turn into a profit-making enterprise that adds money back into the budget, allowing your campus to offer more services to your student body and staff.

Don't Just Take Our Word For It

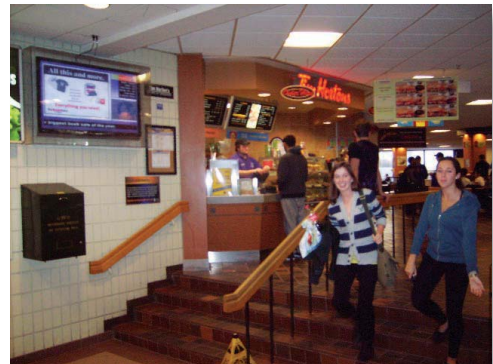
The Norris University Center at Northwestern University has created "NorrisTV" with Visix digital signage. Besides using it to broadcast their own content, Marketing Manager James McHaley offers advertising space to interested parties.

Space is sold in week-long blocks, running Monday morning through Sunday evening. University departments pay a small fee per block, while student organizations get a discount. "We try to extend goodwill to the students by letting them have a 50% discount," says McHaley. "Revenue has increased each quarter and we know how popular it is by the number of ads we receive."

The dynamic quality of digital communications, coupled with displays placed in high-traffic areas, make people want to get their ads on the screens. "It is definitely a unique way to advertise and it reinforces the other forms of publicity out there."

Western Retail Services at the University of Western Ontario, which has two bookstores, a computer store and a graphics service, has also turned their DS into a money-maker. By offering their vendors advertising spots on their system, WRS was able to recoup more than half of their total investment in just 12 months.

Carolyn Young, Communication Manager, explains, "Our vendors responded quite enthusiastically to the opportunity to advertise on the screens and that, to me, signifies that people respect the effectiveness of digital signage when it comes to getting the word out."



Want to learn more? Contact us at salesteam@visix.com.