



Great Digital Signage on **Day 1**

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**.

Start Strong

You want your digital signage launch to create a spectacle, and since the whole point of your digital signage system is to engage your audience, it needs to be right on Day 1.

If you launch your signage with poorly designed layouts or content, your viewers won't like it, or worse – they'll ignore it. You need to ensure that your screens look great, and that the content on them is relevant to your audience, so they immediately start relying on your signage an important, credible source for information.

Here are some basic best practices and quick tips to make sure you're successful right out of the gate.

Have a Champion

If you have a digital signage system, you know that keeping your content fresh and engaging is the primary goal. But who owns that content? Who decides on the strategy? Every organization needs a digital signage champion.

Most digital signage systems are researched and purchased by an IT Administrator. This makes perfect sense, since it's an infrastructure and networking issue. However, once it's installed, it's no longer really a facility issue – it's a communications issue.

Most organization assign content tasks to their marketing, communications or HR departments. Some schools allow student groups and department heads to contribute. But who pulls it all together to make sure you're showing the right content to the right people?

A digital signage champion is someone who thinks strategically, instead of tactical. They look at the system as an opportunity, not a challenge. They assemble people from your various teams to look at things like audience preferences, traffic patterns and content ideas, so you can create campaigns that show up on the right screens at the right time.

A digital signage champion is someone who can:

- Promote digital signage internally, so more people get involved
- Educate staff on your communication goals, specific to digital signage
- Explain user roles and responsibilities, so everyone knows what's expected
- Outline brand and content standards, so your screens always look their best
- Encourage best practices for content, workflows and publishing
- Train staff on calls to action, so every message prompts your audience to act
- Track ROI, and continually improve workflows and content strategies

In some cases, your champion can also work with the various vendors who installed your digital signage to keep staff abreast of the latest tools and tricks. Having one person stay on top of software updates, new publishing options (like web and smartphones), and the latest design trends lessens the burden on your overall staff and gives you an expert in digital communications.

Quick Tips

Keep your layout to
1-2 content zones and a ticker

Create **3 layouts**
& change them hourly

Start with a branded
or custom
theme pack

Show a maximum of
7 items in a playlist

Schedule each message
for no more than
7-12 seconds

Repeat messages
at least **10x daily**

Take the Training

Although your software may be easy to use, that doesn't mean that you'll be able to install an app and have digital signage in a few clicks. To choose which software features you want to use, and learn how to use them to their fullest potential, you'll need to know what you want to show and who is doing what on your digital signage system. Once you know this, you can choose the training options that are right for you and make sure the right people are signed up for the right courses.

And training isn't a one-time thing. Software is constantly being improved, and there are probably going to be some new features you don't know about, or aren't sure how to use, as apps get updated. Workflows also tend to get improved with updates, and that five-step work around that you've been using may now only need one step to accomplish the same ends. And you may now be able to do things you couldn't before, which might change whole aspects of how you create and deliver content to your screens.

So be sure to sign up with your digital signage software vendor to receive news about updates, and put training refreshers on the calendar for you and your team now, so you don't forget.

Get Some Help

Even though you want to get going quickly, there may be some things that have a longer learning curve. But you don't want to delay your launch, so consider getting some help at the beginning.

No good digital signage company is going to leave you all on your own. After they help set up your hardware and software, they'll likely offer other services you can take advantage of:

- Ask consultants to help you craft your digital signage launch strategy
- Find out if they can assist you in setting up user accounts and naming conventions
- Get some creative help with launch content, layouts or templates designed to match your brand
- Let experts configure more complex content like data-mapped text and artwork
- See if they can set up your event schedules on screens

From implementation to configuration and creative – seek out help to get online fast, incorporate best practices, realize a reliable return on your investment, and set you up for success in the long haul.

Layouts & Content Zones

Start with the screen layout. You don't want to overcrowd it with too many things, or leave the same layout on the screen all the time. You also want to make sure it looks beautiful.

Instead of showing a bunch of small content zones, keep your content big and prominent so your audience can easily read the information on the screens. If you have a lot of messages to show, do it through dayparting (which we discuss below) instead of trying to put it all on screen at once.

When people notice things changing on a screen, it draws their attention. Changing your layouts throughout the day is an easy way to create movement and keep your screens dynamic. We recommend three different layouts that rotate throughout the day.

You'll also want to make sure that your designs look great. An easy way to do this is to start with a branded or custom theme pack that includes a matching set of layouts, message backgrounds and templates, so all of the colors and fonts on the screen are coordinated to your brand.

Playlists & Scheduling

Each message you want to show goes into a playlist. You then assign different playlists to different content zones in your layouts. It's important that you "balance" your playlists for effective engagement.

Since your audience is usually on the move, you can't expect them to see every item in a 30-item playlist. As a matter of fact, the more items you put in a playlist, the lower the odds for each of ever being seen. Instead, keep your playlists small and show messages more frequently so they get as much exposure as possible. We recommend around seven messages in a playlist.

If you have a lot of messages you need to show, you can handle that with dayparting, changing layouts or showing different playlists on different screens throughout your facility. If it doesn't make sense to show safety tips in the lobby – don't. Just schedule that playlist to your production floor signs and use different content on your lobby welcome screens. Since you're already changing layouts throughout the day, you can use completely different playlists in each to keep the message reel shorter.

If you're limited to a single playlist that shows everywhere, then use dayparting. Dayparting lets you schedule a message for only a part of the day or specific days. You could have one playlist in the morning, one in the afternoon, and another before people take off for the evening commute. Or, you can show some messages on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and others on Tuesday and Thursday. Try to schedule the right messages for the right audience at the right time.

One great timesaver is to schedule auto-updating content like news feeds, weather and event schedules. These allow you to set up a message one time, and then the data is automatically pulled into that message as it updates from the source. This eases the burden on content creators, and ensures that you always have relevant, real-time info on your screens.

Anatomy of a Layout

A layout should draw the eye with stunning design, large content zones and animated tickers.

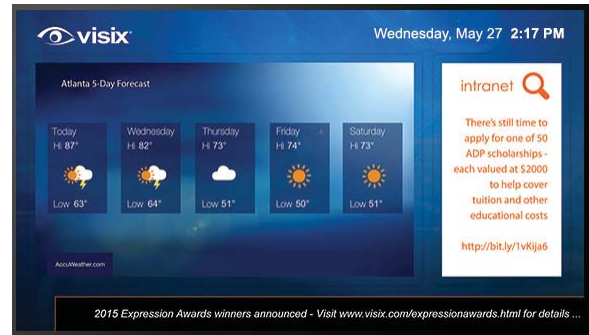


The Perfect Playlist

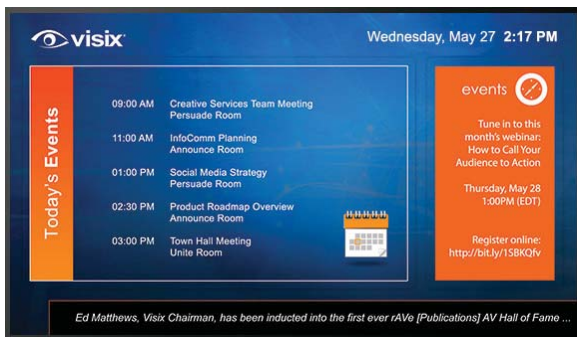
No matter what your industry or audience, these are the top six things every screen should show.



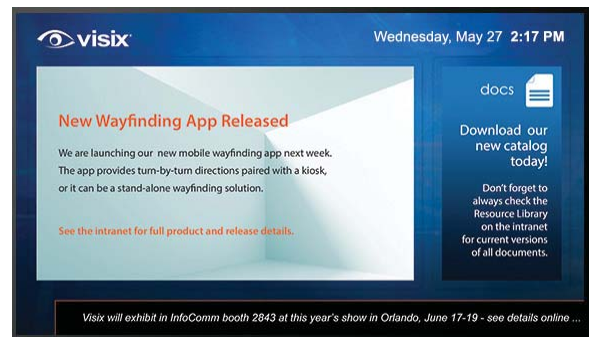
News



Weather



Events



Announcements



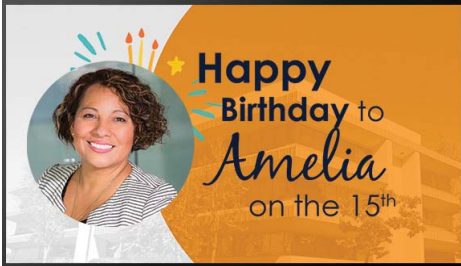
Video



Live Feeds

Popular Content

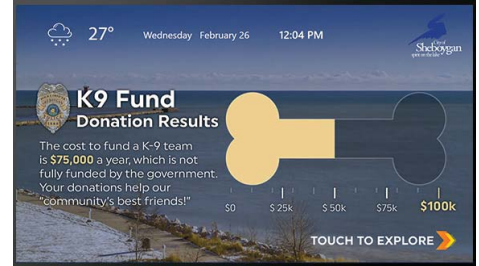
Here are a few more ideas for engaging content on your screens.



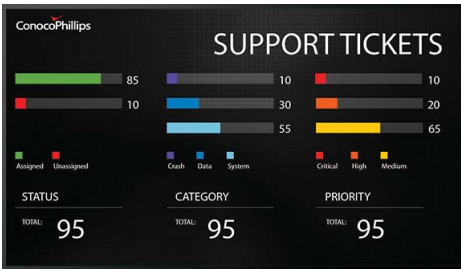
Birthdays & Anniversaries



Countdowns & Count-ups



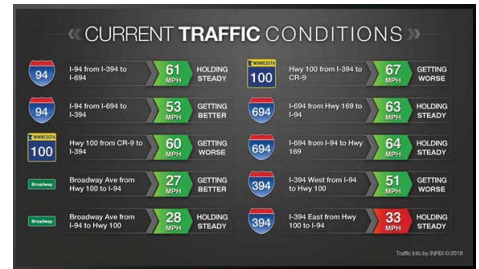
Fundraiser Progress



KPIs & Stats



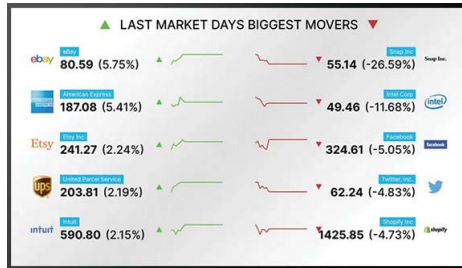
Wellness Tips



Traffic Updates



Quotes & Trivia



Stock Performance



Safety Reminders

More Resources

Click on the links below for more content and design tips:

- [White Paper: Step-by-Step Advice for Crafting Digital Signage Content](#)
- [White Paper: Design Standards for Digital Signage Content](#)
- [Digital Signage Done Right Podcast](#)
- [Visix Digital Signage Resources Library](#)

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