

Digital Signage Shifts to the Cloud

WHAT ROLE CAN DIGITAL SIGNAGE, a core component of many banks' in-branch marketing strategy, play in helping institutions cope with the unrelenting pressure on their bottom lines? Actually, quite a lot. The way that digital signage is implemented and managed is undergoing a dramatic transformation that gives bank marketers more capabilities, makes their jobs easier and helps them to fulfill the mandate to do more with less.

Let's begin by discussing the "less" part of the equation. Despite its advantages – better speed-to-market, lower cost to produce, target-marketing versatility and centralized control – many smaller institutions have been slow to adopt digital signage and many larger institutions have not fully rolled it out to all their branches. Why?

Because, until recently, digital signage has been a hardware-intensive, systems-oriented, infrastructure-dependent proposition with front-loaded expense in terms of equipment and software, time-consuming IT involvement, complicated installation and specialized field support. The good news is that's no longer the case.

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Hardware expense no longer an issue

The new generation of digital signage virtually eliminates hardware expense, has few if any infrastructure requirements, features simple "plug-in" installation and makes few demands on the time and involvement of IT staff. Now, all that banks need in order to deploy high-definition, fully dynamic video of exceptional quality is a solid-state digi-

tal signage receiver that fits in the palm of the hand and connects wirelessly to the cloud, where all the power of digital signage has been shifted.

This leaner, cloud-based solution can make budgets go further by delivering digital signage services to the same number of offices for less cost – or by using the same budget dollars to deliver service to more locations. And, for institutions with current digital signage systems that may be looking at thousands of dollars in upgrades due to expired Windows XP support or to simple obsolescence, cloud-based products provide an alternative.

Along with minimized equipment expense, cloud-based solutions can also provide savings in digital signage services. Rather than imposing the costs associated with supporting software and equipment at thousands of individual client endpoints, cloud-based solutions focus instead on maintaining a single, powerful, hosted network and distributing the cost to operate it to all the client's participating locations. This makes the economies of scale work to a bank's advantage.

Looking at the "more" side of the "do more with less" mandate, new cloud-based technologies are providing banks with more ways to engage the customer inside the branch by incorporating a range of live content options from the bank's own data sources or from media sources such as

RSS feeds. Content from favorite social media channels such as Twitter and YouTube can also be integrated along with continuously updated news and information from world-leading media sources selected to precisely match the demographics of the customers that visit the branch.

Bank marketers can orchestrate these content options with automatic updating, distribution and integration of the bank's product and service messages. This frees bank marketers to pursue their other responsibilities and makes in-branch service personnel more productive as well by adding value to the customer's experience that results in greater product awareness and customer-generated inquiries.

The paradigm shift that's occurring in the realm of digital signage can enable marketers to effectively manage costs, increase their productivity and engage their customers. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



DAN SNYDER is President and CEO of inLighten, Clarence, N.Y. The company provides digital signage and interactive kiosks. Website: www.inlighten.net.

