In-store digital signage: How content fills the screens

Retailers can manage content with the right software

Digital signage solutions are becoming increasingly popular in stores because their content informs and entertains customers and supports them in their purchase. As an eye-catcher, digital signage offers endless possibilities – but only if the content is carefully selected. Retailers are still intimidated by this aspect – though there are various content management solutions that support them in this process.

Nothing is worse than a screen in the shop window or in the store that either displays nothing or irrelevant content. "Many retailers still shy away from using digital signage solutions because they assume it is very complicated to provide and manage content," explains Sabine Hausauer of the Bütema AG. She adds that this is relatively easy to do with the right content management system.

Images can be uploaded by the retailer himself. Using a timeline, he can create special themed playlists and specify when and how long the images are meant to be displayed. This lets retailers manage what is shown during opening hours and when the store is closed for example.

Via software, content can also be directly linked to the inventory management system, where the stored product images can be separated by product categories and displayed on the digital signage monitors – of course only those images of products that are actually in stock. "This alone creates a dynamic impression. Retailers are able to respond to current trends or even the weather in a very flexible manner," adds Hausauer. This also virtually expands the sales floor, since retailers are able to offer products that are not available in the store but are available for delivery.

Hausauer adds that it is not very difficult to obtain adequate content to fill the screens for the fashion sector. "Every brand has an image pool available for use – material of ad campaigns, photo shoots or the like for example," she explains. Content can be managed from one central point for several branches. Even if it is very easy to use the system, users still need to take the time to select and upload content.

For the past year, medium-sized orthopedic shoemaker "Bär Schuhe" has been using Bütema software for various types and sizes of monitors in nine of its stores. The digital signage solutions were recently also installed in Braunschweig. The feedback from customers and especially employees has been positive. "The sales assistants see the benefit now that there is no longer the same poster hanging in the store for half a year for example, but the content is always changing, " says Hausauer. The benefit, especially in the shop windows, is that the decoration can be utilized along with the images on the screens. Especially in fashion, it is important to be able to quickly respond to trends with visual merchandising.

Digital signage XXL – Menswear store Hirmer in Munich

Naturally, there is also content for digital signage solutions that is in a class on its own. Everything is a little grander at the menswear store Hirmer in Munich for example: in perfect synergy with the elegant historic staircase, two giant video walls in the stairwell offer an impressive sight. 45 monitor screens span over five stories and show clips of the latest fashion trends and sequential art on the one hand plus video recordings that were specially filmed by an agency for moving images to fit the 52 feet (16 meters) high vertical screen format that features aerial images of Munich for example.

Software (in this case by "sedna presenter") also gives marketing associates at Hirmer the option to directly manage content. The 45 segments (each monitor is individually controlled by an output device with images in Full HD resolution) are also displayed as 45 segments and managed via drag and drop.

Needless to say, not every retailer has the resources to afford these types of expensive and sophisticated images for his store. Having said that, these digital elements are definitely a customer magnet. And especially if they can also be used interactively. After all, these modern shop elements also increasingly serve to connect the multiple sales channels of retailers. Customers at the brick-and-mortar store are also able to access products offered at the online store and get information about product availability and other products that can be combined with those items available at the store.

The new "Lagerhaus-Markt" in Lambach near Wels in Austria, which opened in March, features an interactive wall – composed of six screens – that displays tips pertaining to landscaping and gardening, customers can individually retrieve. Live broadcasts are also meant to take place at this venue.

No matter what type of application, whether minimalist or super-sized – the content needed to fill the screens always needs to be current and relevant. Numerous software solutions are able to help. In addition, full-service agencies offer support services ranging from installing the monitors to managing software all the way to maintenance. ▶

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> ## Digital Signage im Store: Wie die Inhalte auf die Screens kommen
>
> Digital Signage-Lösungen für den Shop werden immer beliebter. Aber nichts ist schlimmer als ein Screen, der keine relevanten Inhalte zeigt. Denn zum Blickfänger werden sie nur, wenn die Inhalte gut gewählt sind. Davor haben Einzelhändler Respekt – dabei gibt es diverse Content-Management-Lösungen, die sie dabei unterstützen.
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