

A BY-THE-NUMBERS APPROACH

TO IMPLEMENTING YOUR
DIGITAL SIGNAGE SOLUTION



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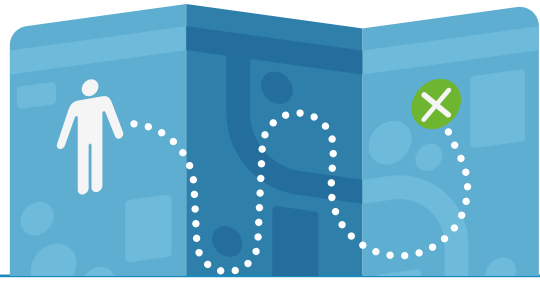
A By-the-Numbers Approach to Implementing Your Digital Signage Solution

Digital signage communicates with targeted audiences in a more dynamic and engaging way than other, more traditional media. And it's effective, too, significantly increasing brand awareness and adding sales and repeat business to the bottom line.

Like many new projects, however, getting started on your digital signage solution is half the battle. What should be at the top of your to-do list when you're implementing a solution? What comes next? What waits until the end? Check off these steps, in this order, and your program should get off to a roaring start.



First: planning



It will come as no surprise that planning comes first; it's the foundation of the technology and process decisions you'll make and the solution you'll implement.

1 Define your objectives.

What's your reason for using digital signage? How does it fit into your marketing program? It shouldn't be a one-off; rather, it should be an integral part of your overall marketing plan. This will help dictate how you use digital signage, where you place it, how your customers will engage with it and what kind of content will drive those objectives.

2 Understand your audiences and their expectations.

You no doubt have done market research and developed personas to define your customers. That due diligence applies when you create your digital signage, too. Sophisticated patrons of an upscale department store aren't going to expect the same type of signage as teenagers buying jeans at the mall.

3 Consider other marketing channels and how they need to work together to drive results.

You aren't implementing digital signage in a vacuum. Your signage is part of a promotional ecosystem that includes all sorts of other tactics, print, digital and otherwise. Branding, messaging and design need to be consistent and coordinated.

4 Define success.

What, specifically, does it look like for your company? Do you want to boost sales, enhance employee engagement, increase awareness or drive higher margin transactions? Once you determine the specific results you're looking for, you can drill down further to . . .

5 Define quantitative ways to measure success.

Measures can include POS analysis for sales uplift, facial recognition for attention tracking and even the good old customer survey.

6 Develop a media strategy and content design plan to guide your work.

The first five steps above make up your media strategy. The content design plan offers structure to your solution, ensures consistency in creative design, execution and philosophy and defines the type of messages that will deliver the best results. It takes into consideration your marketing seasons and campaigns and the environment in which the content will be seen.



When do I develop content for my digital signage?

Mostly at the end of the beginning phase and the beginning of the middle phase. However, as you consider your objectives, audiences and current marketing campaigns, it's natural to start thinking about what your signage should say. A few things to keep in mind as you noodle around with content:



- Digital signage doesn't replace static signage. With its flexibility and capabilities, it's a whole different animal and should be treated accordingly. It needs to fit your brand and dovetail with your other promotional tactics, not mimic them.
- At the same time, you want to be dynamic, but not distracting. Too much motion can be counterproductive.
- Also at the same time, practicality rules. If your words, graphics and videos are too esoteric and don't serve your purposes, you're wasting your investment. Your signage can be interesting and clear, too.
- Digital signage offers content possibilities not available in the print realm. One way to keep content fresh is to integrate data feeds from other systems and applications to offer information of interest to your audience. For example, displaying hot products based on real-time web sales can drive demand in-store.
- Organizations often underestimate the amount of time needed to create content for a digital signage solution. Giving thought to the human element of designing content and managing technology is critical to a successful deployment.

Next: establishing processes and choosing technology

Now that you have your roadmap, you can create processes to develop and manage content and select technology that will display your messages and make them sing.

7 Craft the content workflow process.

Development, review, approval and distribution of content is a critical component of a digital signage solution. It's important to have a roles-based process that defines and, when possible, automates work to ease the burden of content management on your resources. It also provides an approved audit trail with checks and balances to eliminate mistakes.

8 Develop a programming strategy.

While creating great content is critical, designing the strategy for how it plays is equally important. Strategies should be developed for each unique display location and need to account for purpose and location, desired results and the story you want to tell. Consider parameters around scheduling, playlisting, message length and frequency, content refresh and day parting.

9 Select the right hardware -

displays, media players, tablets, mobile, etc. - to support your strategy. It's easy to get sidetracked by the beautiful screens and displays available today. However, hardware decisions should be based on the goals of your digital signage program. Never let hardware dictate your solution; your objectives and applications should define your requirements.

10 Choose a content management system that works with your creative and programming strategies and applications.

This comes relatively late in the process - after you develop your content design and workflow processes, not before.



Finally: putting it all together

You're ready to roll (out) – once you run a pilot, take care of any glitches that testing ferrets out and make sure you can take care of issues that crop up later.

11 **Develop an implementation strategy that takes into account network design and installation of your solution.**

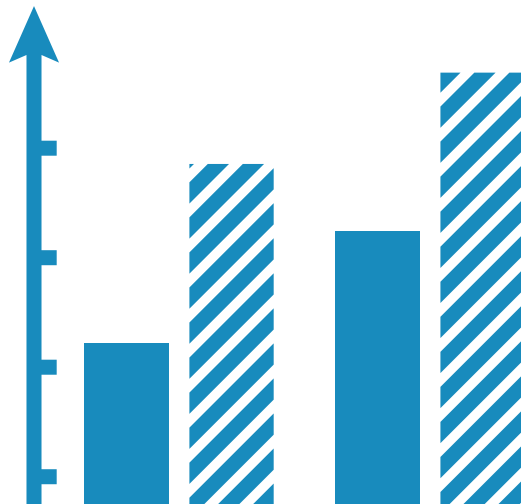
Detailed project management support and clear communication across your entire organization are essential. This is a key step to ensuring that all elements of your program are working together, and should include a pilot phase and thorough testing, adjusting and quality control.

13 **Create a technical support plan and implement a monitoring system.**

Screens, media players and networks sometimes fail. Advanced network monitoring systems can track the status of your solution and alert you if issues arise. Your support plan should consider both remote analysis and resolution and the need for feet on the street to troubleshoot and fix problems fast and replace equipment when necessary.

12 **Determine the level of management you want to take on.**

The number of resources it takes to manage your solution can vary quite a bit. The complexity of content management, the number of locations, the amount of local content insertion, the volume of content and the frequency of content updates all can impact the management required. While some organizations are equipped to manage everything on their own, others are better off outsourcing the heavy lifting to the pros.



How do I effectively test the solution in a pilot phase?

Pilots can be a great way to test the impact that a solution will have, but they need to come with some parameters. Successful pilots need to have a clear objective, defined timeframe, quantitative measure of success and firm go/no-go criteria. Also, it's important to understand that you're not testing whether or not the technology works. You're testing the impact that the solution (content, programming strategy and technology) has on delivering results.

About Us

Raising expectations for on-site digital signage experiences, we are Convergent, a Ballantyne Strong Company, with hundreds of thousands of locations deployed worldwide that are seen by millions every day.

We challenge clients to think differently about how they engage with their customers and employees and the technology they use to do it—from retail to healthcare, SMB to Fortune 1000, cinema to banking to QSR. We craft captivating and compelling turnkey solutions that increase brand awareness, turn consumers into customers and employees into brand ambassadors. And we handle it all—end-to-end—from strategy to implementation to unmatched technical support.

Our cloud-based digital media platform is transforming the industry. Its radical approach to content creation and management provides unlimited scalability, absolute reliability and lower deployment and management costs.

We are Convergent. And we are here to elevate your digital experiences.

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