

The Keys To Successfully Implementing Digital Signage

Industry pros reveal the best ways to transition from print to digital.

When a restaurant is ready to make the switch from print to digital signage, where should the team begin? With more vendors entering the space and near-limitless options for responsive and dynamic content, data collection, artificial intelligence, and payment integration, the choices can be overwhelming.

Before jumping head first into the world of digital signage, it's important for restaurant leaders to educate themselves. "The key first step for operators who are evaluating a commitment to digital solutions is to define their objectives and retain a knowledgeable expert to help them prepare a long-term strategy that will enable them to take advantage of both current and future capabilities," says Robert E. Creasy, vice president of business development at **DSA Phototech**.

Digital signage is much more complex than a single-point solution. Hardware, software, and creative content strategies must "play nice" together and have seamless integration in order to maximize ROI. "A true digital campaign includes all of the needed installation and implementation of the hardware to create a digital signage network, but also includes the content creation, delivery, and upkeep of that complete network," says Dave Moeglin, operating director for **SOAR, an LSI Solution**.

Douglas J. Watson, president and CEO of **The Howard Company** says planning is essential. "Potential buyers should inform themselves as much as possible regarding the multitude of hardware and content management solutions available, and really plan out an effective storyboard of the content and messages they wish to relay to their customers," he says.

Gary Hoover, sales engineer at **WAND**



"Moving to digital allows for the opportunity to create a compelling menuboard strategy that will increase sales margins and generate 10 times more eye contact."

Corporation, considers creative design one of the industry's biggest challenges. To that point, he suggests taking maximum advantage of digital menu technology from the outset.

"The technology will greatly impact your business when it comes to dayparting, inventory management, and controlling pricing and menu changes for mul-

tiples locations," he says. "Keep your goals and motivators at the forefront of your menu design. Are you looking to decrease the amount of time customers spend in line? Are you trying to influence their purchasing decisions? Moving to digital allows for the opportunity to create a compelling menuboard strategy that will increase sales margins and generate 10

See us at
**DSE Booth
2847**



Raising Expectations. Elevating Experiences.

SOAR® is a premier provider of turnkey digital signage solutions dedicated to creating engaging and memorable customer experiences in the restaurant industry. Advancing the art and science of digital signage for more than a decade, SOAR provides an end-to-end solution with the highest quality products and exclusive in-house content, implementation and support teams.

As part of the LSI Industries family, we are the single source for all your interior and exterior visual needs, including menu boards, custom décor and comprehensive drive-thru solutions designed to advance your brand.

Contact us today to discover our offerings or to schedule your custom consultation.

800.245.4624 • soar.lsi-industries.com



Advanced Digital Signage Solutions

an  Solution

times more eye contact.”

Instead of simply trying to re-create standard menus on a digital board, quick-service restaurants should design for digital using rich visual imagery, animated content, and videos to drive customer behavior. And remember, signage is not just for the front of the store or the drive thru; operators should consider a customer’s experience from a broad perspective. “Specifically with quick serves and digital signage,” says Brian Elles, director of product market for **Mood Media Solutions**, “it comes down to understanding the customer journey.”

In other words, the guest experience begins well before he or she steps up to the counter to place an order. “It starts in the parking lot,” Elles says. “What do they see in the entry or as they are walking to the counter to place their order? Really try to narrow down on each touchpoint, because each touchpoint is different.”

These touchpoints are perfect opportunities for ancillary sales. “Restaurants should animate their boards strategically to match their menu design, enhance guest experience, and promote their most profitable menu items,” Hoover says. “It may be as simple as animating their highest-margin items so the eye is drawn to them more quickly, or it might be as impactful as doing a full digital takeover—all boards suddenly displaying a special promotion or LTO—to highlight a product. When creative design is used properly, digital menuboard can positively influence one in five customers to purchase LTO items.”

Because digital signage allows brands to bring their menus to life with vivid, high-definition graphics and videos, it is a powerful suggestive selling tool. “In the drive thru, for example, restaurant brands can suggest turning an à la carte sandwich into a combo by showing the full meal in a new, dynamic way,” says Chris Mims, technical product manager at **SIGOM**. “With a static menuboard, you’re relying on the cashier to ask about the combo, or including a standard, ‘Do you want to make it a combo?’ on your menu. Now, you can show a bubbling soda and steaming fries.”

It’s easy—and fun—to get caught up

in the technological bells and whistles can offer, but remember, when it comes to successful digital signage implementation, hardware matters. “Choose the correct products that are designed specifically for digital signage, whether that is a commercial-grade display capable of operating 24 hours a day or a proper mounting system with all of the adjustments needed for proper installation, servicing, and of

especially at restaurants that offer breakfast, lunch, dinner, and fourth meal options,” says Jennifer Bissell, director of sales and marketing at **ITSENCLOSURES**. “Properly selected electronics should include solid state media player components and LCDs that are commercial-grade, producing 1,500 nits of brightness or greater to be viewed outdoors.”

Bissell says a site survey be completed



“Restaurants should animate their boards strategically to match their menu design, enhance guest experience, and promote their most profitable menu items.”

course, safety,” says Hal Truax, vice president of sales for **Crimson AV**.

This is an important consideration for a quick serve’s ROI on digital signage. “The hardware component of the installation represents between 50–70 percent of your initial expenditure,” says Doug Starr, executive vice president of marketing at **Allure**. “You’ll be repeating that expense too soon if you don’t get it right.”

An effective outdoor digital menu installation should have a media player, an all-weather enclosure, a commercial LCD screen, and creative content. “Consumer-grade electronics are simply not meant to operate for an extended period of time,

before any initial decisions are made.

“Considerations for cabling, power sources, and existing footer size and conditions are also extremely important to understand prior to installation of an outdoor digital menu system.”

The sheer variety of options within the digital signage industry can seem intimidating to those who are entering this market, but Brian McClimans, vice president of sales, Americas and APAC for **Peerless-AV** has some simple sage advice: “The most important thing for a quick serve to ask is, what is the right solution for my business? That will ensure true brand recognition and acceptance.”