

Sending a Message

Drive-thru menuboards can offer a better customer connection and convey a brand image

Many restaurant operators, accustomed to their static signage, might think it's working better than it really is. However, upgrading signage can offer customers a clearer message, enable rapid changes in current promotions, and improve upsell opportunities.

Peerless-AV, a Peerless Industries, Inc. company, is a leading designer, manufacturer, and distributor of audio-visual solutions. The company offers a sleek, modern, and cost-effective option especially suited for outdoor drive-thru use.

"The technology to upgrade your drive-thru signage exists and we have a solution with the quick-service operator in mind," says Brian McClimans, vice president of Global Business Development at Peerless-AV.

Peerless-AV's Outdoor Digital Menu Board with 47-inch Optically Bonded LCD Displays comes in one, two, or three panels. With optional topper and sidekicks for a blended static and digital approach, it can take the drive-thru application to the extreme by seamlessly changing content whenever and wherever. This fully sealed weatherproof display has a thermal management system and ambient lighting sensor that ensures content is being displayed without any unwanted interruptions in any weather condition. The unit offers a low operating cost, a thin profile, a modular design, and an easy two-man installation process.

In addition, the optically bonded LCD display reduces glare, allowing customers to easily read the display in any lighting conditions and improved off-access viewing.

"It really pops much better than a static menuboard," McClimans says.

McClimans says another advantage of upgrading technology is the increased ability to communicate with younger consumers.

"Today's youth are digitally driven, and quick-service restaurants need to communicate with them on their terms," McClimans says. "Business operators have to move to the next medium to appeal to customers who demand things that are quick and immediate."

Products exist that can support these needs, McClimans says, and many operators might be well advised to take advantage of new technology.

Helping the quick-service brand establish



and build customer satisfaction and loyalty is the strategy of **UniStructures Inc (usi)**.

"Our drive-thru solutions are the face of the brand to a huge percentage of their customers," says Robert Creasy, vice president of marketing and business development at USI. "We believe it is our responsibility to challenge the status quo and create custom solutions for each individual brand to promote their image and encourage their customers to return again and again."

Creasy says that by creating custom drive-thru solutions for each brand, UniStructures provides better value and higher ROI and enhances each customer experience far better than a manufacturer who simply sells the same off-the-shelf components to every brand they service.

"We believe our order point canopy is the lynchpin in the drive thru and can establish a brand image as well as any building signage on a the property," Creasy says.

The UniStructures drive-thru solution components include a pivoting clearance bar, pre-sell menu, pivoting canopy order point, full-service menuboards—either printed or digital—and a host of POP solutions. Higher-quality materials, custom extrusions, custom hinges, LED lighting, easier access to the menu translites, and powder coating in brand colors at no extra cost all drive the value of the UniStructures solutions beyond any competitive offerings, Creasy says.

"Taking the solution concept a step further, we design our interior and exterior menu enclosures so they are field convertible from static to digital,"

Creasy says. "We believe this protects the initial capital investment and provides a technology growth path for the location."

FLASHRIGHT provides suggestive sell displays that show a slow flashing dynamic message that grabs customers' attention and influences them to buy the featured offer at the point of purchase when they are most likely to make a buying decision. For example, it could read, "2 Pies for \$1," or "Fresh Baked Cookies 3 for \$1," or offer a promotion for a new product.

Offers featured on the suggestive sell displays have shown an average increase of 40 percent. FLASHRIGHT customers are seeing a significant bump in add-on and impulse sales after the displays are installed. In addition, there are many suppliers who have shown interest in participating in a co-opted program. The displays create a new dynamic spot in the drive thru to increase sales and profits. Restaurants and suppliers alike can offer promotions that will provide a significant lift in sales compared to other static merchandising materials. The program is a win-win for headquarters, franchisees, and suppliers alike. FLASHRIGHT Displays can be attached to any existing order confirmation screen or menuboard system; a standalone version is also available. The patent pending design of the display allows product inserts and surround panels to be easily interchangeable, and the offer can be updated in minutes. Custom graphics and colors are available from FLASHRIGHT, in addition to other marketing support.