



Specialty Foods Supermarket Chain Uses Digital Signage to Deliver Dynamic Messages to Customers

Challenge

An American supermarket chain wanted a quick and easy way to get on-the-fly messages to its customers. The company needed a way to inform customers about specials, share new recipes, and promote its DVD cooking series. The static boards and flyers were time consuming and costly to create and manage. Moreover, with the company's rapid expansion, it became cumbersome to keep consistent messaging across all stores. The digital solution had to be able to play a variety of images, Flash, and video content across multiple stores nationwide.

Solution

The supermarket chain turned to Black Box, a leader in IT solutions with top-notch technical and application engineering support, because Black Box could provide the company with a complete digital signage solution [digital signage media players, content management system (CMS), audio/video distribution, cabling, displays, etc.] and installation of the equipment and associated cabling. Black Box was also chosen because of its nationwide footprint as the company's stores span the U.S., Canada, and U.K.

Since the supermarket chain did not have any type of server equipment in the stores themselves, it chose the iCOMPEL digital signage solution with the virtual machine. And, the company was impressed with iCOMPEL's ability to assign content to like players whether in the same store or across multiple stores. This feature was very important to the supermarket since its content is departmentalized; having to schedule content at each store would be very time consuming.

Results

The initial installation took place at the company's headquarters in New Jersey and nearby stores with a virtual CMS and 34 media players.

The store owner wanted to keep the media players stored in the back storage room for security and easier maintenance. The installation included video extenders to use with existing CATx cabling to send content and video to the digital displays while keeping the media players in a secure location.

Running the digital signage content management software in a virtual environment allowed the company to manage all its digital signage media players remotely. This gave the company quick access to individual logs, schedules, content, and playlists to ensure its content is played at the right time, on the right screen, and in the right location.

Shortly after implementation the company saw improvements with customer engagement. The in-store signage played cooking shows that encouraged use of specific products. As the video attracted customers, the company began placing product displays near the digital signage with the showcased products. The company also saw a reduction in waste. Before digital signage the company would use traditional advertising to discount certain special buy items with limited shelf life. After implementing the digital displays, the company noticed more customers were taking advantage of the discounted items and fewer items had to be discarded.

Three years after the first install, the network now includes over 90 digital media players in over 30 US-based supermarkets. The scalable iCOMPEL solution enabled the company to add more media players to the system without any disruption.

Having used the system for over three years, the supermarket chain is pleased with the results and envisions also using the system for ad messaging. The reporting section within iCOMPEL enables the company to present its advertisers a reliable proof of play. If this is implemented, the company will see even more return on investment.