

Taking Digital Signage to Advertisers and Beyond

Ingram Micro | Digital Signage Division



Earlier this year, a Santa Cruz, Calif.-based print and online content producer, Times Publishing Group, Inc., made digital signage the next step in its content-delivery and creative services strategy. Read about the company's approach to digital signage, some of the challenges encountered and tips for success.

ENTRY TO DIGITAL SIGNAGE

Digital signage has always been on the minds of those at Times Publishing Group as a competitive differentiator. Courtney Shipman, Times Publishing director, digital signage division, describes her company's next steps: "There are several newspapers we view as competitors in our county, so we're always looking for ways to make ourselves stand out," says Courtney. "In February we connected with Ingram Micro and dove right into the medium. We figured out a way that made sense for us to manage and create content utilizing our existing resources — from our graphics team to our sales team on the publishing side. Both are very complementary to digital signage."

NEXT STEPS

Leaping ahead of the competition, Times Publishing Group took digital signage another step further. The company began consulting. "We established a network within the county and put signs in high-traffic areas like grocery stores, coffee shops, car dealerships and resorts," says Courtney. "Now we're selling the complete digital signage solution, as well as consulting and creative services, to customers outside of our local market, Santa Cruz County. Our offering includes digital signage hardware, content creation training and/or content management services."

WINNING OPPORTUNITIES

Since Times Publishing Group began offering its advertisers digital signage over the last three months, the company's seeing results. Courtney discusses some of the challenges. "It takes some time to have people plan this into their marketing and advertising budget. And the economy is really tight right now," says Courtney. "Nonetheless, we've had a lot of successes and continue to get advertisers every week."

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER VARS

Courtney has a few recommendations to those interested in adding digital signage to their line card. "People who sell digital signage really need to put a lot of thought into the placement of the screen and the type of content that they're going to display. Some people don't really understand that it requires a lot of resources to keep the screen content fresh," says Courtney. "And they need to talk about customer return on objectives (ROO)."

Courtney continues. "For example, we have a location in a coffee shop. They've had a sign up for four months and the owner says that he hasn't seen his sales increase. It's about helping owners understand that digital signage is a tool. The value's not just the sign but the content behind the sign," says

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Courtney. "It's a great opportunity for this coffee shop to target its customers with its own unique messaging. For a monthly cost that's less than a one-day print ad, the shop can present hyper-targeted messaging to people who are in the store and going to spend money. It really drives home the quality of the impressions."

GETTING INGRAM MICRO HELP

Courtney talks about the Ingram Micro resources she relies on for her digital signage needs. "We had a good opportunity with a medical foundation over in Palo Alto. I called Keven Yue, Ingram Micro's digital signage business development manager, and he put me in touch with the right vendors to round out a winning proposal," says Courtney. "The boot camps are really helpful, too. I gained a lot of perspective, knowledge and a vision from the first boot camp I attended. It was really eye-opening."

INGRAM MICRO'S DIGITAL SIGNAGE DIVISION

Ingram Micro's Digital Signage Division offers a unique ecosystem for digital signage vendors and service provider customers. Through the division, resellers can garner higher margins around solutions and services based on existing technologies that can be sourced through Ingram Micro. Ingram Micro Digital Signage Division's dedicated team provides service-provider customers with support, financing, leasing, training, sales and technical support resources. To learn more about the division, contact us at digitalsignagedivision@ingrammicro.com.

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