

Infocomm 2011 – Integrators are Engaging with Digital Signage

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June 2011*

Infocomm2011 held in Orlando mid June took a whole new hold on Digital Signage. The 4-day focus included a who's who list of industry-leading suppliers, integrators, analysts, editors, educators and end users.

Many AV/IT Integrators have held a circling pattern while Infocomm conferences have served as the forum for digital signage discussions with innovators such as Multi-media solutions, Nor-Com, Advanced AV, Digital Roads and USAV Group, but the clear indicator is that the AV Integration community is engaging.

Integrators and multi-media end users all “get” visual communications and most can integrate the current generation of digital signage technologies. Most are hurting from a declined, more competitive market for projectors and other AV products. Most are seeing their customers in corporate communications, education, hospitality, food services, health care, retail and other sectors adopting digital signage “right under their nose and without their involvement” noted a supplier.

Multiple conference and education elements included;

- Full-day DisplaySearch Digital Signage Conference
- Infocomm conference sessions focused on trends, content strategy, software selection and practical advice to integrators and end users
- A Realcomm session aimed at increasing the awareness of dynamic place-based media by architects and facility designers, planners and managers.
- A Digital Signage Showcase with demonstrations of common digital signage applications such as retail, staff communications, etc. The Showcase, which was managed by AV Integrator Multi-media Solutions, generated constant requests for additional information.
- The Showcase included a show floor theatre in which over 30 in-depth interviews, case studies and presentations arranged and moderated by Lyle Bunn were captured for online viewing from Infocomm.org

The winner of the NEC Best of Infocomm Award, through online and onsite voting and a judging panel of finalists, selected Peerless Industries for the grand prize of a \$25,000 charitable donation. Peerless has been a long-standing, strong and innovative part of the Digital Signage ecosystem.

All of the over 50 major digital signage suppliers that exhibited recorded record levels of interest and contact with the Audio/Visual – Information Technology Integrators and end users that attended.

Some themes resonated throughout education sessions and discussions.

“Collaboration” became a comfortably worn phrase on the recognition that no single supplier can meet all needs, and end users are seeking a closer project planning, supply and operational collaboration with prime suppliers.

“Visual is the language of commerce” and the recognition that visual communications is extremely effective when “done properly” gained ready agreement and wide consensus.

As almost 33,000 people focused on audio-visual at Infocomm, Sir Martin Sorrell, Founder and Chair of the WPP Group of over 120 marketing agency companies captured the essence of digital communications in an address in Caan, France. He said, “Digital vendors are media companies masquerading as technology companies. Digital vendors are creating and offering the new channels of communications to audiences”.

“Digital signage is not about technology, it is now about go-to-market know-how,” said Chris Connery Vice President PC and IT Display, DisplaySearch in forecasting 23+% growth in digital signage industry trends. This was echoed by others during the DisplaySearch Digital Signage Conference and during other Infocomm sessions.

Static signage and digital graphics supply is estimated at \$47 billion in North America, twice the size of AV/IT Integration. This supply sector is seeing its ability to deliver better daypart-ed, more demographically targeted communications capability to their customers, and are increasingly leading in the digital signage proposal to end users.

Some large static sign providers visited Infocomm. Static sign providers could benefit from technology supply from AV/IT integrators, and AV/IT integrators could benefit from the “content” creation and inherent customer base of static sign providers. Market forces are at work.

Infocomm 2011, on the calendar about halfway between other major [dynamic place-based media events](#) including Customer Engagement Technology World events and Digital Signage Expo, has served digital signage suppliers, integrators and end users very well! Put Infocomm 2012, June 9-15, 2012 in Las Vegas on your calendar and business plan.

Plan to attend [Digital Signage 2011](#) on July 21st – a virtual, on-your desktop event sponsored by Infocomm and Chaired by David Keene. This is the 3rd in the series of these popular and informative events.

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