

## **Retail Banking Report of Dynamic Signage Use Offers Insights and Lessons**

*By Lyle Bunn  
March 2011*

A new report titled “Digital Signage in Retail Financial Services” available from John Ryan, a global provider of large-scale managed digital merchandising networks for retail banking organizations, offers valuable insights.

The 58-page report summarizes surveys results from 167 large and mid-sized banks, including 44 in USA, 4 in Canada and 119 in Europe representing 137,000 branches in total. Marketing and retail executives from each bank were questioned in detail on Point-of-Sale (POS) strategies and their experiences and attitudes about digital signage.

The report is available for download from <http://johnryan.com/newsitem.html?n=0>

The report, interestingly, could reflect the experience and opinions of large end users in other customer-facing environments such as retail, food services, consumer services and patron communications that might be similarly surveyed.

In a report section titled “In their words,” current banking end users express optimism for dynamic signage and encourage those still contemplating its value to move forward. At the same time, they advise deeper planning in order to mitigate risks, improve the benefits realized and reduce costs, frustrations and surprises related to system operations.

Following are some of the survey findings;

Over 40% of banks using dynamic place-based media did not target the presentation of content to specific location, but presented the same content in all locations. Most respondents had little or no content targeting strategy. “Content” topped the list of operating frustrations while common obstacles to advancing projects included cost considerations and adequate planning. Other key findings include:

- Nearly half of banks had no formal system in place to measure results. Only 55% of the 48 North American banks surveyed measured results.
- The Marketing division led in the selection of the Content Management System (CMS) in less than half the respondent projects and in only 17% of respondent cases did Marketing and Information Technology divisions collaborate in system planning, design and selection.
- Of 167 banks surveyed, 108 are using or piloting some form of digital signage and another 28 intend to do so within the next 12 months. More than one-

third of current users have no plans to extend their pilot program further citing high capital costs and inability to prove ROI as the top two obstacles to further rollout.

- Banks' chief motivation for adopting digital signage is to increase revenue. Nonetheless. Among those that had formal systems in place to measure results, sales ranked third in importance after customer satisfaction on message recall.
- A range of content-related challenges were expressed with over 35% of respondents noting the greatest challenge being "the cost of content creation" followed closely by challenges in "the ease of use of the Content Management Software (CMS)".
- Only half of banks differentially target messaging by branch—mainly based on geographical distinction versus more sophisticated methods linked to branch profitability or customer segmentation.
- 41% of respondents noted they update content only monthly or less often. A further 14% update only every two weeks.

The John Ryan report of financial retail end users points to the high value of planning for the use of dynamic media as a very powerful communications device for location-based branding and merchandising. Dynamic signage brings inherent capabilities in message presentation and audience targeting that can be efficiently and economically executed when these are planned.

The report by John Ryan notes that "the adoption of digital signage is proceeding at a pace faster than the industry's ability to fully exploit its benefits" adding that "those with digital signage experience strongly encourage new adopters to take the time to do their homework—ideally, in a collaborative decision-making process involving both marketing and IT. Mastering the art and science of digital signage requires a full end-to-end understanding of each inter-related component of a network".

The report reflects the challenges experienced by providers of dynamic signage services to banks, and echoes the recommendations inherent in the report.

"Having worked with a number of financial institutions" says Stuart Kirkpatrick, President of Cineplex Business Solutions, "we have found that developing a focused content strategy can be challenging, and requires that the project have strong leadership and a clear mandate. Establishing measureable business objectives, developing a long term content and operational plan to achieve them is critical, yet often it's the most overlooked part of the planning process. It must be noted that this is not a one-time process - the communication and operational strategies must be reviewed and adjusted on an ongoing basis (minimum annually) to ensure the network is optimized to support changing business climates. Knowing this from the onset will ensure that the project is

set up for ongoing success.....plan as much as possible”.

Rod Tiede, President of Broadcast International that serves one of America’s largest banks, among others notes, “Using the unique capabilities of dynamic in-branch media must be planned and operationalized to assure the greatest benefits are realized. Effective use of a capable content management system is the key as this can maximize patron communications while minimizing costs”.

Retail banking is a very competitive business with significant business development challenges, which can be well served by dynamic signage. As is the case with the use of dynamic place-based signage in other customer-facing locations such as retail, food, health, hospitality and others, careful planning, smooth project execution and efficient network operations are the keys to success. “Fail to plan – plan to fail,” as is titled the short article by this author that appears near the end of this excellent John Ryan report.

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