



Data Call Technologies, Inc.

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DATA CALL DRIVES DIGITAL SIGNAGE

Branding, marketing and assisted selling drive the digital signage market—and Data Call Technologies' active content contributes to the most successful implementations.

What Is Digital Signage?

Plasma and LCD displays are rapidly replacing printed marketing materials such as signs and placards, as well as the old fashioned whiteboard, for product and corporate branding, marketing and assisted selling. The appeal of instantly updating product videos and promotional messages on one or a thousand remotely located displays is driving the adoption of this exciting marketing tool.

James Bickers, senior editor of Digital Signage Today magazine recently described digital signage as *“any form of business communication where a dynamic messaging device is used to take the place of, or supplement, other forms of messaging.”*¹

The key word in this definition of digital signage is “dynamic.” Digital signage presentations are typically comprised of repeating loops of information used to brand, market or sell the owner’s products and services. But once seen, this information becomes repetitive and the viewer tunes it out, resulting in low retention of the client’s message.

As digital signage comes of age, the “dynamic” characteristic of the presentation has taken center stage.

Digital Signage Comes of Age

Digital signage is coming of age and Data Call Technologies has been there from the start. Four years ago, a company wanting to take the digital signage plunge was faced with a myriad of hardware and software companies, all offering their own “vision” of what digital signage should be. They were given the tools of digital signage, but were left pretty much left to their own devices as to what to build. Those companies that took the early plunge

where then faced with the fact that no one had come before them to show the rights and wrongs, the dos and don’ts of content development. But, even at this early stage of the game, Data Call recognized that these pioneers of digital signage lacked a key component that would become an integral part of any successful implementation—active content.

In the years since those early “bleeding-edge” days of digital signage, the market has taken care of weeding out the weaker providers of hardware and software. Companies now have a clearer picture of what digital signage is, what is needed for a successful implementation and the best use of content space given their more-defined and attainable goals.

In the past two years, as the cost of platforms, supporting infrastructure and displays has fallen dramatically, digital signage has become more accessible to a wider range of companies. And those companies are realizing that the initial, one-time cost of getting into the game is far outweighed by the cost of staying in the game, in the form of ongoing content development.

As the cost of deployment decreased, companies began focusing on attention-grabbing content. Whether the goal of the presentation was product branding, marketing or assisted selling, content became king.

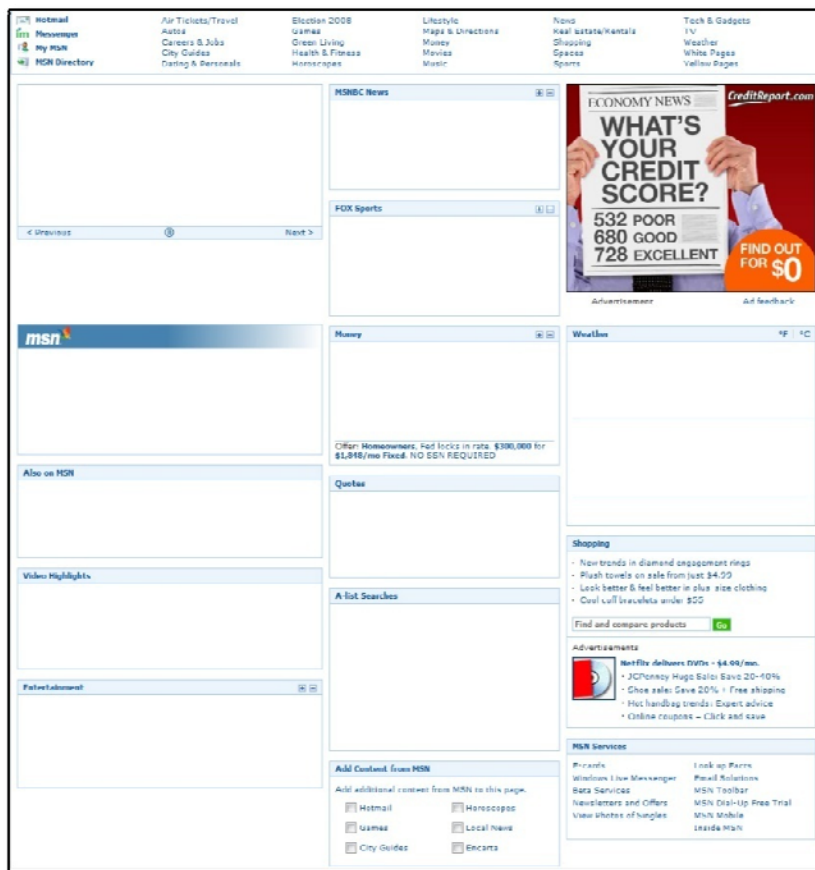
Active content is on everyone’s “needs” list because it is proven to draw customers to the core message and keep customers engaged throughout the presentation, And Data Call stands ready to serve this exploding market.

¹ *Digital Signage: The State of the Art and the Promise for the Next Five Years*, Published by NetWorld Alliance © 2008
www.networldalliance.com

The Need for Speed—Active Content

Active content is that part of a digital signage presentation that is constantly updated with timely and relevant information. For instance, a typical presentation may contain ten 15-second loops that provide the primary message of the presentation, but the active content, such as that provided by Data Call, is updated with new information throughout the day.

To draw a parallel to an Internet scenario, the MSN home page shown below has its active content removed, leaving only those items that are revenue generators.



As seen in this example, it is the active content that draws the viewers so that the advertisements can generate the revenue.

3M Digital Signage describes the importance of active content this way: *“Information that’s ignored is virtually no information at all. Information that’s out of date isn’t much good either. But the presence of a dynamic point of attention comprised of the latest news, sports, weather, entertainment - and your brand - is going to get noticed, even in the most congested environment.”*²

Those seeking to add active content to their digital signage presentations are advised to employ Data Call’s integrated content rather than shoehorning broadcast content into their digital signage presentation. According to a survey of 600 executives, only 5.3 percent believe entertainment has been the most successful use of digital signage so far, in

terms of value to the deploying business. As Digital Signage Today put it, *“Looks like those businesses hanging LCDs on the wall to show CNN or Bloomberg content might not be getting their money’s worth.”*³

However, by integrating Data Call’s active content alongside their presentations, companies can provide the entertainment content so necessary in dwell-time retention without disrupting the core message of the presentation. Information categories provided by Data Call include news, weather, sports, financial data and the latest traffic alerts. With such a broad range of offerings, companies have access to the active content they need, regardless of the market they are addressing.

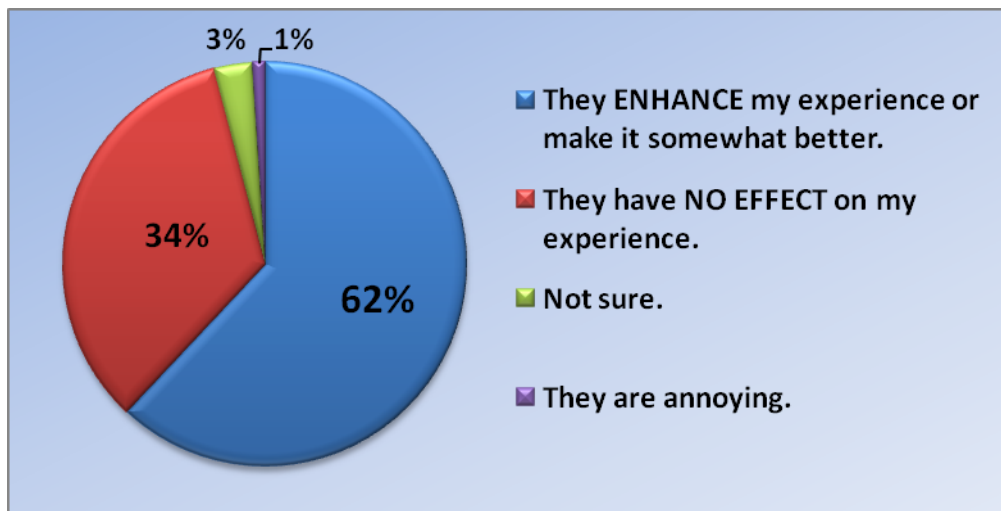
² www.3mdigitalsignage.com

³ *Digital Signage: The State of the Art and the Promise for the Next Five Years*, © 2008
www.networkdalliance.com

Data Call Opportunities

The opportunities for Data Call in the digital signage industry are countless. Digital Signage Today's survey of 600 industry executives found that 64 percent of respondents said they would outsource all or part of their content creation.⁴ Data Call stands ready as their outsourced provider of active content data. Whether it's general entertainment information (news, sports, stocks, etc.) or location-targeted active content (weather, traffic, etc), research is validating the long-held assumption—it is active content that draws viewers to digital signage and keeps them engaged throughout the presentation.

In late 2006, Arbitron conducted a survey of customers exposed to a digital signage implementation installed in a fast food walk-in chain. Integrated with the core presentation of the chain's brand message and third-party advertising, Data Call's active content contributed to 62 percent of those surveyed responding that the presentation enhanced their experience or made it somewhat better.⁵



As proof of this continuing growth potential, Data Call reported an incredible 778 percent increase in revenues in Q2 2008 versus the

⁴ *Digital Signage: The State of the Art and the Promise for the Next Five Years*, © 2008 www.networldalliance.com

⁵ *Arbitron Media Evaluation*, Diane Williams, Product Manager, Arbitron Inc.

same period in 2007.⁶ The word is getting out to the user community about what Data Call's active content is bringing to the digital signage party.

Over the past four years, Data Call has worked with the industry leaders in digital signage to develop the data formats and communication methods to allow Data Call's active content to be easily integrated into their hardware and software products.

The Stage is Set

The stage is set and the players are on their marks. The experience and lessons learned by both providers and implementers of digital signage are converging at that point where explosive growth in the industry can be realistically anticipated. Data Call is excited to be in the position they are, poised to leverage their expertise and relationships in the digital signage industry to bring its offerings to the

next level.

Already, Data Call is actively developing the next generation in digital signage content. Delivering active content video is an opportunity that is in the immediate future, as well as

implementation of interactive digital signage. Whether it is the use of radio frequency

⁶ Press Release: Data Call Technologies, Inc., *Data Call Technologies, Inc. Reports an Astounding 778 Percent Increase in Quarterly Revenues, and a 47 Percent Reduction in Quarterly Cash Expenditures*, May 22, 2008

identification (RFID) to delivery active content directly to customers via their cell phone or engaging the customer to create their own digital signage experience via text messaging, Data Call will be at the forefront of the *evolution* of digital signage—just as Data Call was at the forefront of the *revolution* of digital signage.

According to Pro AV Magazine, “Market research firm iSuppli, El Segundo, Calif., for instance, notes that in the third quarter of 2006, indoor digital signage alone surpassed conference rooms to become the largest revenue-generating segment of the display industry. Furthermore, it notes that the retail digital signage sector, generating some \$416 million in the fourth quarter of 2006, will be worth \$2.8 billion by 2011.”⁷

Data Call is poised to ride this explosive growth in digital signage not just as a service provider, but as a partner providing a key component to the most successful implementations of digital signage,

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Partners, Not Customers

Data Call’s approach to customer relations is to not accumulate customers, but to build partnerships. Each Data Call partner is as unique as the digital signage market they service—and each has their own requirements for active content.

In developing active content for digital signage, Data Call identified three factors that **had** to be addressed—reliability, objectivity and ease of implementation.

⁷ *Behind The Surge In Digital Signage*, PRO AV Magazine, John McKeon, May 1, 2007

To address the reliability requirement, Data Call opted to license information from the leaders news, weather, sports and financial data rather than “scrapping” information from the Internet (which can be illegal) or pulling RSS feeds (which may come and go at the provider’s whim).

Licensing data from these providers also satisfied the second requirement—objectivity. The Internet is as littered of slanted opinions and hidden agendas as there are users of the Internet, So arbitrarily allowing these “news” sources to go unchecked into Data Call’s active content was completely unacceptable.

Finally, the third requirement—ease of implementation—was address by both Data Call’s licensing of data and the method by

which it was disseminated to their partners.

Data Call understood that digital signage implementers had larger issues to tackle than the multitude of

licenses that would need to be managed and the varying formats of the source data to be dealt with if active content was obtained from multiple vendors. Data Call offers a “one stop shop” for all of their active content requirements covered by a single license.

Ease of implementation also would require that the multiple formats of all Data Call’s data providers be distilled into a single format. Because active content may be displayed in a multitude of ways (banners, tickers, scrolls or artistically integrated with the overall presentation), Data Call produced a set of common data layouts in the industry-standard XML (extensible markup language) format.

Many partners find these formats to be easily integrated into their products, but in several cases, Data Call has produced customized

data formats to the exact requirements of their partners. This customization ensures the highest level of reliable and ease of integration possible.

Go For Launch

The stage is set and the players are on their marks. Market demand, opportunity and technology converge at a single point in time, and Data Call is there. Digital signage platforms are evolving to meet mass market requirements, costs for hardware and software are falling to the point of becoming commodities and the markets for digital signage are clarifying through historical trial and error.

The industry of digital signage is poised for an explosion that will fulfill the prophecy of a \$2.8 billion industry by 2011. And Data Call is at the pivot of this explosion. Having endured the learning curves that all players in digital signage had to endure, Data Call is mature, capable and poised to become the “must have” component of the digital signage industry, with nothing less than the stars to shoot for.

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