

News and Views from our World of Dynamic Digital Signage

Reseller News

As the worldwide family of Wallflower Distributors and Resellers continues to grow we feature new members each month. We would like to welcome:

Helgi Mar Gislason from Blatton in Iceland who is specialising in Wallflower solutions for Fast Food outlets.

Star Resellers

This month our Gold Star award goes to Dynamic Display of Auckland who secured significant business including the Saatchi & Saatchi installation for Jay Jays in Australia, Petvets in Wellington and provided great assistance with Victoria University of Wellington.

A special mention to The Activate Group who continue to work their magic with display stands for Nokia in Singapore and Australia and Sony in Australia.

Videopro brought us the NZ Institute of Management and great assistance with our Skycity projects.

Geof Jones of Clikingo in the UK has become inspired and is bringing significant opportunities to us. Look out for next month's edition we forecast some spectacular news from him.

Thanks to Connect NZ for selling a solution to IAG Insurance to equip their new Head Office in Auckland.

Gen-i also sold Wallflower to Fonterra, (New Zealand's largest company), so congratulations to their team.

Functionality Spotlight

Wallflower continues to deliver more functionality than our competitors. Our first IPTV enabled network is being installed in Wellington. Wallflower TV allows industry standard format IPTV to be displayed blended with traditional Wallflower Media.

Wallflower includes powerful integration with Flash files. The combination of Flash based interactive content with Wallflower is unbeatable in terms of connectivity. Wallflower is able to communicate directly with Flash files using standard call instructions. This allows the Flash files to be controlled by Wallflower, the Wallflower Media to be controlled by flash and provides the most comprehensive interactive history and analytics available.

The Wallflower Graphics Editor. Originally developed for use by Air New Zealand for their customer disrupt advisory system, the Graphics Editor has proved a big hit with other users. As DDS is becoming more popular, users are expecting the highest quality messaging to be displayed. Simple scrolling text is no

longer acceptable for high quality installations. The problem of providing high quality messages that can be changed at short notice is a challenge. Wallflower solves this by allowing users to load graphic images and then map areas of the image to be overlaid with text. The font, colour and style can be stored. At the same time dropdown picking lists of valid entries can be stored and field validation details. When a user needs to create a message they simply bring in the stored mapped image, select the text to be automatically entered from the drop down list and type in any other required values. The finished graphic when displayed looks as if it was created specifically for that message. For Air New Zealand the possible combinations of airports, reasons for delays and times could generate thousands of combinations. Wallflower makes each message look as if it was individually created by a graphics designer.

Happy Birthday Health TV!

The Health TV network upgrade to Wallflower and extension has been in place for over a year now. During that time there have been no outages due to network or software failures. A 100% uptime cannot be bettered. Congratulations to Kordia and Origin IT for developing such a reliable and stable platform. Health TV is New Zealand's largest OOH network.

Our Take on the World of Digital Signage

The following comments are mainly our own perspective and may not agree with other suppliers to the market!

We all know the economic doom and gloom worldwide has had an effect on the DDS business. It is inevitable that some projects would be cancelled or deferred and that some resellers and suppliers would fall by the wayside. From our point of view the market is still buoyant. Of all the IT related sectors DDS is probably the least affected apart from some Web applications.

We are seeing continued expansion in the tertiary sector and also retailing applications. Retailers are continuing to look for new ways of attracting customers. DDS can provide new ways of getting their message across that may just bring in new visitors.

Interactivity is the name of the game now. Many pioneering displays such as projected window displays with through glass interactivity are now rolling out. We are seeing unprecedented interest in kiosks. Whether to simply display information, or to include product and service sales, kiosks are being installed everywhere.

One of the greatest growth areas is in way finding kiosks. Products such as Wallflower Navigator that can not only display route finding information but also targeted promotions are very popular. Mall operators, especially see an opportunity for selling advertising space on way finders to store owners.

The march of SAAS. There has been great growth in the SAAS sector of the market. Unfortunately there are many suppliers who offer solutions that are not true SAAS. SAAS should be a completely web based solution. There should be no need to install anything on the user PC. The ability to warehouse users' media and playing schedules in a central site does not make the solution SAAS. For true SAAS you only require a compatible web browser and internet connection to get underway.

SAAS products are ideal for those who require simple undemanding DDS. In many countries the cost and reliability of internet connections makes this approach suitable only for very lightweight users. Many of our users regularly schedule 15 or 20 gigabytes of media to be played on remote locations with each location having different media. To manage this using SAAS would require significant bandwidth and imposes a heavy load on the central servers if they are being shared with many other users.

Measuring ROI. This is always a thorny question we are asked every week by aspiring resellers and users. In some situations, especially retail, it is important to be able to justify expenditure on DDS. For advertising networks this can only be achieved by measuring before and after performance of campaigns. Unfortunately it tends to be a bit difficult to measure unless you actually put displays and media in place first ! There are many excellent White Papers on the subject that can be located fairly easily on the web.

Amongst applications we have experience of, the most dramatic ROI was for supermarket checkout displays. With correctly placed screens targeting those in the queue, not those actually at the checkout, promoting products that can be picked up at the checkout and adding directional sound to attract viewers we have observed up to 50% uplift of sales on some products and overall usually an 18% uplift.

DDS can show a significant ROI as a replacement for printed posters. Many organisations, especially banks, spend a lot on printing large posters, sending them to branches and then requiring staff to replace them. DDS offers the ability to change posters almost instantly. Significant cost savings can be made in months. As a bonus, changes in interest or exchange rates can be made quickly and easily.

In many cases the ROI for DDS is intangible. We have many Corporate clients who use displays for branding at reception areas and similar applications. Usually they report that the system enhances their corporate image and is a worthwhile investment.

Many of the experienced observers in the industry continue to attempt to compare DDS campaigns with conventional campaigns. This is often inappropriate. Campaigns supported by TVCs, billboards, print media are by their very nature difficult to adjust on the fly. TVCs can be changed mid flight in a campaign but this is very difficult at short notice. DDS offers a truly dynamic campaign environment. Analytics relating what was displayed with sales analysis can provide almost instant measures of effectiveness. A skilfully constructed campaign can then be adjusted at short notice. Effective advertising media can be promoted in rotation and less effective media demoted.

When it comes to measuring campaign effectiveness we will see more and more that Facial Recognition such as Wallflower Alive! will come to the forefront. If you can actually record the age group and gender of viewers coupled with their dwell time and include headcounts of all visitors, you have ideal statistics. These can then be analysed along with playlist history and compared with sales figures. The effectiveness of media in terms of the viewer population and dwell time can be measured. When this is compared with sales figures the advertiser not only knows what media was watched but also whether it resulted in sales uplift. A campaign may generate a lot of interest and viewer attention but if it does not result in increased sales it was probably not worthwhile!

ECO friendly 'Green Applications' are becoming a hot property. With Digital Signage it is difficult to dare to speak of our products as being 'Green'. Standing in front of a 46 inch LCD display espousing an energy saving message can be difficult. We are enthusiastic about using energy saving measures such as automatically turning off displays when no viewer is present. This can be easily achieved using proximity detectors, or for more sophisticated users, Facial Recognition. Just simply scheduling displays to turn off outside store or office opening hours makes a lot of sense. Relying on staff to turn off displays really does not work. Similarly allowing players to go into sleep or standby mode when not in use can save energy.

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