

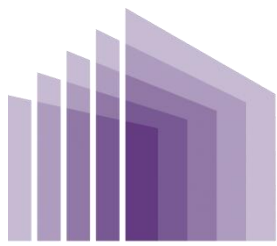
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YOUR DIGITAL SIGNAGE PREPARATION KIT

Part 4 – The Installation



For those who want to get it right from
the start



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If you're working under a tight deadline and planning to launch your digital signage project soon, but you're still not sure where to start, then this 4 part series is the resource for you.



Whether you are in the know or a novice in all things digital signage, this kit will provide you with the knowledge you need in order to plan your project correctly and deliver it on time and on budget.

By reading the series, you will:

Understand the subtleties of each element of the system- software, hardware, content and installation

Be able to avoid making common mistakes that can compromise the ROI of your project

Be able to measure the system's ROI based on your criteria of choice

How and when to use this kit

Speed up the research stage as you will know what type of products to be looking for

Decrease the risk of any unforeseen expenses and delays

Have the ability to offer your team an educational tool which will ensure that you can all use the technology.



The Installation

The 10 mistakes that could ruin your install

You invest too many resources into your digital signage install for seeing it fail lamentably, for reasons that could have been easily avoided. So here they are, mistakes easy to make but also easy to avoid.

1) Lack of preparation

If you're reading this, you're probably unthreatened by the peril of not planning your project thoroughly. The risk is higher for those that feel they know something about digital signage and invest straight away than for those that, understanding their limitations, try to learn as much as possible about the system before they implement it. Preparing your project properly will make it much easier to avoid unnecessary expenses and you may discover opportunities you didn't know existed before.

2) Skipping the testing stage

Cloud-based digital signage software products usually come with free trials to allow you to test them at zero costs with no obligations, while sometimes their on-premise counterparts involve some sort of training and demos from the vendor. If you are planning a digital signage project,



start by launching a pilot test to see what works and what doesn't before spending your entire budget and realise you've taken the wrong route.

3) Stale content

Digital signage is all about the timely communications. If you display the same information on a daily basis, you end up defying the purpose of the system and deterring people from considering it as a reliable source of information. [Read more about updating content here.](#)

The 10 mistakes that could ruin your install

4) Using a solution that will “lock you in”

You should be able to switch between software suppliers easily, without having to replace existing infrastructure. The offer should be flexible enough to allow you to change a piece of the puzzle without altering the entire thing. Check this aspect before committing.

5) Forgetting about support

Free or for a fee, support must be there when needed. Make sure the vendor or the reseller are able to provide a prompt reply when problems occur and clarify the costs involved for this service.

6) Not requesting training when you feel you need it

Understanding how to use the system allows you to maximise its utility and discover features that you probably didn't know about. The costs of misusing the system are much higher than the cost of training.



7) Choosing the wrong location for your screens

If they're not visible, they're not useful. Great locations are those where you have a “captive audience” with a longer dwell time, such as waiting rooms, reception desks, restaurants or lounges. After all, without an audience you can't deliver your message.

8) Not having clearly identified goals for your system

Arguably, before doing anything else you should determine what you want to achieve by using digital signage. Is your goal to enhance sales, informing staff more efficiently or are you attempting to streamline communications? Clarifying the system's purpose will make measuring its return on investment (ROI) much easier.

9) Not measuring the system's ROI

So you know what you want to achieve but you're either too busy or you may not be knowledgeable enough to track the results. Yet, it is instrumental that you know how well your project is faring in order to know what needs to be changed for it to fare even better.

Measuring the tangible effects of your digital signage system is not always a straightforward exercise but it's critical that you do it if you want to act based on data rather than guesswork.

10) Using SD cards and USB drives to run the network

[This method](#) will imply either mailing the hardware or travelling to each screen's location to refresh its content. Time-consuming and prone to human error (losing the USB drive, uploading the wrong content or forgetting about it altogether), this is an antiquated method of running a digital signage network, especially one in continuous expansion.

The 10 mistakes that could ruin your install



The operating system is
not the secret sauce...

The success of a digital signage project doesn't just simply depend on the operating system that you choose to use (Android vs. Windows) but also depends on the features that you require.

There has been a lot of hype around Android recently, as it has been described by many as a more cost effective alternative to Windows and thus a better option for digital signage. Android may be a potential cheaper offering, but being open source software it can be a challenge to some due to the number of different versions available. Our advice would be to look at your feature requirements, and choose an Android solution that has been thoroughly tested by the manufacturer and compare this with an similar offering running on Windows. Research the pro`s and con`s of both before making your choice.

Cost-effectiveness is the key advantage of Android digital signage solutions, but try not to be impressed or persuaded by suppliers who use this as the core selling point of their solution. Windows systems have been powering digital signage networks for many years and it is proven valuable to many companies. Don't use price alone to make your choice.

The operating system is not the secret sauce

There is no such a thing as a 100% reliable piece of computing equipment, be it running on Android or Windows. One operating system cannot be a complete guarantee for the long-term functionality of a particular device. It's a partnership with the hardware.

There have been both good and bad digital signage systems deployed on Windows and the same will no doubt happen with Android too. As mentioned above, the reliability and the implicit success of a digital signage solution depends much more on the preparation and testing that you have done beforehand. Research the right offering for you to ensure that you have a quality digital signage system.

The graphics card

Most mistakes actually occur during the configuration stage of your system.



Integrators choosing the latest graphics cards (or other peripheral) available should think about the pro's and cons. Those cards always come with the first version of the driver, which is often the most flawed one.

TIP: A wise thing to do is to buy one of the older models that come with older and better drivers that will allow your media device to perform well (for the non-techies, drivers make the connection between the graphics card/peripheral and the operating system of your media player).

The automatic reboots- disregarded yet important

Another factor affecting the reliability of a digital signage solution is represented by the presence, or lack of, automatic reboots. We advise **digitalsignage.NET** users to reboot their systems daily, choosing a time outside normal operating hours to avoid any disruptions (reboots serve to clear all the memory out to get rid of any memory leaks).

Embrace a zero-waste modus operandi

Another deployment aspect is making sure you do not leave the system running for longer than necessary.

The operating system is not the secret sauce



Image source: Wikimedia Commons

Ensuring screens aren't active when there is no audience saves vital electricity costs on powering the screens and any associated hardware. For example, if your target audience are workers in an office environment, power your screens during working hours but turn them off at night to save costs.

In digitalsignage.NET, you can set this up in the Player section, enabling the software to tell the players when to turn on and off so you don't have to remember to do it yourself.



Managing the set-up of your digital signage system is not an easy job. There are several aspects for you to consider. If you have any trouble with this, help is always at hand.

We're here to help. [Call or email us at any time](#) for a FREE consultation and we'd be happy to answer your questions.

If you need help with choosing the right hardware and installing it in your locations, our experienced partners can assist you with that. They know all about screens, media players, brackets and mounting displays and can take all the hassle of installing the system upon themselves.

[Check out the list of Partners we work with](#)



Conclusions

4 Things To Keep in Mind:

- Know your goals then choose the right technology
- Plan well to avoid expensive surprises
- Liaise with specialists to advise you
- Test and adjust
- Do the research before investing.

What next?

Thanks for downloading the digital signage preparation kit series and we hope you found it useful. We will keep you updated of any new resources and we look forward to working with you in the future.

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