

Bustling Transportation Hub Helps Inform, Direct, and Entertain Passengers with Dramatic New Interactive Signage



Challenge

- ▶ Improve informational and wayfinding signage at one of the nation's largest passenger railroad terminals.
- ▶ Fabricate signage tower and integrate beta touchscreen apps on a tight rollout deadline to capitalize on attention around the station's 75th anniversary.

Solution

- ▶ ViewSonic® CDP5560-TL 55" narrow bezel large format displays delivered the ideal features for this demanding installation: multi-touch functionality, 24/7 durability, high brightness, and sleek design.
- ▶ Coordinated efforts within the agency supported accelerated project development.
- ▶ Strong partnership support from ViewSonic and Cisco enabled rapid development and expedited hardware delivery to accomplish the task on time.

Results

- ▶ The Metro Information Tower was installed and performed beautifully for the station's anniversary event.
- ▶ Subsequent and ongoing content revisions continue to improve upon the interactive wayfinding and informational content.
- ▶ Enthusiasm and attention from the event bolstered plans for future integration of interactive signage throughout Metro's 100 stations.

Customer Profile

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is the transportation planner, coordinator, designer, builder, and operator for Los Angeles County. More than 9.6 million people – nearly one-third of California's residents – live, work, and play within Metro's 1,433-square-mile service area. Metro is dedicated to providing Los Angeles County with a world-class transportation system.

The Challenge

Union Station is the largest railroad passenger terminal in the Western United States. Serving more than 60,000 passengers a day, the station is the region's primary transit hub, connecting Southern California counties and providing access to Amtrak long distance trains, Amtrak California regional trains, Metrolink commuter trains, Metro Rail subway and light rail lines, plus bus service from Metro and other municipal operators. Greyhound's Bolt service, Megabus, and the LAX Flyaway also operate from the station.

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority purchased the iconic downtown LA station in 2011 and is working on a Master Plan to implement wide ranging improvements to the facility, with a primary focus on passenger service and satisfaction.

Jenna Hornstock, deputy executive officer, Countywide Planning & Development, New Mobility Regional Initiatives, was charged with overseeing design of the new environmental graphics package and identifying opportune places for integration of new technology. Part of the many-phased plan was an eye-catching 17-foot digital information tower to be installed in Union Station East.

"Our goal for the tower was to provide customer-facing information that would help visitors navigate more easily throughout the station," said Hornstock.

Concurrent with development of the new environmental graphics package, plans were being made to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the historic station's opening day. With a large number of participants expected, along with focused media attention, this event was identified as the ideal time to roll out the new information tower. The problem: the tower wasn't scheduled for completion this soon. Plus, the initial plan specified static LED screens. This occasion called for something more dynamic.

The Solution

Metro's IT Services had been investigating options for electronic digital signage since mid-2011, working closely with the Communications team on content development. A pilot featuring a ViewSonic EP5555 55" free-standing dual sided ePoster digital kiosk was receiving positive feedback, and the team had begun testing a touch-enabled ViewSonic EP5555T 55" free-standing ePoster digital kiosk, which was targeted to become an Interactive Station Guide for eventual use throughout Union Station and Metro's 100 or so other locations.

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Uses of Digital Signage in a Transportation Hub Environment

- ▶ Display train schedule, rail maps, and transportation information
- ▶ Provide interactive trip planning services
- ▶ Provide information on local destinations
- ▶ Display local events and news
- ▶ Promote special discounts for train riders
- ▶ Display emergency announcements

“We had been working with ViewSonic for many years. They are one of the largest display installations in our agency and we have a good track record with them,” said Quan. “Sure there are many other manufacturers out there, but we knew we could count on ViewSonic based on our history with them.”

— Nelson Quan, IT services configuration manager

“We worked closely with our reps at ViewSonic and Cisco and got the equipment to talk to each other nicely,” said Nelson Quan, IT services configuration manager. “Cisco mocked up the concept, with zones on the display – an advertising zone, interactive zone, a button bar for choosing different items, links to pages on our website, things like that.”

Quan’s team looked at competitive options for the displays, but ultimately chose the ViewSonic CDP5560-TL 55" narrow bezel large format displays to fill the critical interactive role on each of the four sides of the tower. With a robust four-camera optical touch system and 6-point multi-touch functionality, the CDP5560-TL displays offered the ideal combination of interactive capabilities, high brightness, and durability needed for the intense 24x7 operation that Metro’s application called for. Plus, Quan was confident that ViewSonic could meet their tight deadline.

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The Results

Dubbed the Metro Information Tower, the agency’s first foray into interactive display signage has been a resounding success. Unveiled at the 75th anniversary event, the Tower featured event-specific content including an interactive schedule of the day’s festivities, an interactive timeline of Union Station (one of the most popular features, according to Lan-Chi Lam, director of customer communications) and an Instagram feed that let visitors post photos of the event then see themselves on a large display. It also included the all-important prototype of the Interactive Station Guide.

Both a visual and functional focal point for the event, the Tower was very positively received. “The product works great. We turned it on and it worked perfectly,” said Hornstock. “The Tower definitely generated lots of excitement internally and with station riders.”

A permanent installation at Union Station, the Tower’s content has been updated since the anniversary to serve the needs of daily traffic, and includes transportation information, service alerts, interactive trip planning, information on local destinations, and more. Taking full advantage of the medium’s dynamic capabilities, Metro is continually assessing and fine-tuning the Tower’s messaging.

Enthusiasm for the benefits of dynamic signage is running high at Metro, and several initiatives are in various stages of planning or implementation, including internal wayfinding at Metro’s headquarters in addition to interactive kiosks and signage at Union Station and other Metro rail stations. Their initial goal? Lam would like to deploy interactive kiosks into 10 Metro stations within the next year, as Phase One of a Kiosk Pilot.

This document may contain forward-looking statements that reflect the Company’s expectations with regard to future events & product offerings. Actual events & product offering could differ significantly from those anticipated in this document.

For more information, contact ViewSonic Sales at SalesInfo@ViewSonic.com or visit www.ViewSonic.com

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