NEC Display Solutions
for Airports

Our world is becoming increasingly fast-paced, on-demand and interconnected. In order for organizations to compete, embracing digital display technology solutions is crucial. Perhaps no better example of this is the airport environment.

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Airports demand immediate access to up-to-date information and must be able to communicate it in real-time. But with so many options available, simply researching and deciding on the right digital signage solution can cost time and money.

Instead, you can take advantage of the knowledge and resources of NEC's experts, who are skilled at designing display systems that meet the unique needs of airports. Using this guide, you can prepare yourself with some common questions and issues to consider when starting a conversation about digital signage systems.

How do airports benefit from a digital signage system?

Gets travelers where they're going. Airports exist to get people from one point to another. Within the airport environment, flight information digital signage (FIDS) is crucial for keeping travelers updated with the very latest arrival and departure information. Displays located above ticket counters and strategically placed screens throughout the concourse ensure that airport visitors are always aware of their flight status.

Additionally, strategic display placement in heavy traffic areas such as the food court or main entrances can help communicate with your visitors—particularly those in search of basic information such as concourse store locations and services. Interactive components like touchscreen kiosks can be useful in wayfinding, and motion-activated screens can directly address passersby.

Generates additional revenue. Digital signage is an excellent way to leverage the stores and services located throughout airport concourses, as well as local hotels, restaurants and tourist attractions. Use full-screen advertising to drive customers to airport vendors. Or, maximize your ROI by integrating split or quarter-screen promotional messaging into informational and wayfinding displays.

The power of VUKUNET. NEC digital signage solutions go past hardware, software, strategy and support. NEC can also plug your signage solution into a network of advertisers that helps turn your airport equipment expenditure into ongoing revenue. NEC's VUKUNET is the universal ad platform that connects digital out-of-home networks with the largest grouping of ad agencies and advertisers in the country.

The automated system works with your existing Microsoft Windows-based content management system, making it easy to distribute full-screen ads—and generate income—across your network.

Displays that last. Airport environments can be particularly harsh on displays. Bright sunlight, extreme temperature swings, and 24/7/365 operation put digital displays to the ultimate performance test. NEC equipment is designed to meet and excel in these environments. Professional-grade construction and components ensure that NEC displays stand up to the challenges of airport environments with minimal downtime. This commitment to quality drives down the total cost of ownership and ensures that vital information is always on display.

See the difference. Digital signage solutions cannot deliver results if they do not produce a clear, readable image. While many consumer-grade products do not adhere to exact color standards, NEC professional-grade displays provide accurate color matching, ensuring that the images viewed are true to life and repeatable on any unit. This is crucial for wayfinding, but also for advertising, as advertisers take note of installations that do not reproduce their content as designed.

Help when you need it. Within the oftentimes spacious airport environment, it is important to know the operational status of your digital signage equipment. NEC displays are comprised of high-quality, professional-grade components, ensuring long life and maximum uptime. They also have full diagnostic capabilities to monitor the status of the display and alert you to potential problems. These diagnostics can be obtained via emails or RS-232 communications through the free NaViSet™ software supplied by NEC. Additionally, the software used in many of the digital signage systems can provide a comprehensive status of the display.

But in the event that a problem does occur, the NEC support team is always there to address the issue. An on-site service plan is available where an NEC technician will come to your location to remove and replace a defective display.

All NEC displays come standard with a limited three-year warranty. NEC also offers an extended warranty for up to five years of coverage. However, with NEC total digital display solutions, the concept of support extends past troubleshooting. Our experts also leverage their knowledge of digital signage across multiple verticals to ensure airports have access to the very latest techniques and technologies.

Networks that work. As mentioned before, airports are challenging environments for digital signage. Power and network drops are oftentimes located far from screen installations. NEC displays with open slot architecture enable an airport to add a PC to the unit that communicates with the network via a wireless technology. This means that only power needs to be brought to the display—communication occurs through the airport's wireless network or VPN wireless network. This facilitates display placement throughout the concourse.

Easy to install. Implementing digital signage solutions into airports can be difficult at best. NEC equipment is designed to both simplify and lower the total cost of installation. NEC displays have standard VESA mounting patterns and can be mounted in portrait or landscape without adversely affecting life expectancy of the unit. Additionally, the displays have an open slot architecture than can house a PC, CAT5 receiver, tuner or other types of modules—making the unit compact, easy to locate, easy to connect to and easy to operate.

Easy to use. An effective digital signage system is one that's easy to use. A system that doesn't allow for quick and efficient changes to configuration or content will go under-utilized. Through direct experience and by working with partners, NEC has learned what works and what doesn't. Some applications look good on paper, but are not scalable or are impossible to modify once implemented. NEC will help the airport in asking the tough implementation questions, helping differentiate cutting-edge solutions from those on the bleeding edge.

Apples to apples. One of the biggest differentiators between consumer-grade and professional-grade equipment is adherence to standardization. Professional-grade equipment is highly standardized, whereas consumer-grade equipment is not. Costly errors can occur when a custom enclosure or mounting arrangement is created for a display only to find that when it comes time to replace the equipment, the newer model no longer fits. NEC goes to great lengths to keep newer versions of its displays in the same footprint as preceding versions.

Initial concerns when considering a digital signage system:

How will we pay for this?

As is common with all enterprise-wide technology solutions, the largest concern is how funding will be secured for the initiative. NEC can offer financing options with attractive pricing, terms and delivery options.

Another challenge for budget decision-makers is not to focus too closely on initial cost differentials and forget to look at total costs over time. There are companies that offer low-cost digital signage deployments, but these savings are oftentimes accompanied by sub-standard equipment and services, so any initial savings are quickly lost due to equipment failure, high repair costs and lost advertising revenue. NEC professional-grade construction and components ensure that displays can withstand the rigors of airport environments with minimal downtime, driving down the total cost of ownership and providing long-term savings.

Thanks, we already have digital signage partners.

Airport environments represent a unique challenge to providing new digital signage solutions. Over the airport's lifetime, necessary digital signage technology, installation and services typically have been identified and acquired. This means two things: first, that some version of a digital signage solution is usually in place, and second, key decision-makers may have existing relationships with vendors not familiar with NEC. When this is the case, NEC adds value via the easy integration of NEC displays into the current airport construct. NEC airport vertical specialists can also leverage their knowledge of the latest advances in digital signage solutions, for airports as well as other markets, to ensure optimization of the system.

Which software is right for us?

Above all else, ensuring that passengers have easy access to flight and baggage information drives the use of digital signage within the airport environment. To that end, airport decision-makers must choose the right flight and baggage information software solutions.

NEC has strong relationships with many of the FIDS and baggage information digital signage (BIDS) software companies and can be a valued partner to the airport in their evaluation of the available systems. Many times NEC has provided airports with impartial information to help them make informed decisions.

Are there ways to monetize digital signage?

Many airports are exploring additional ways to increase revenue. Advertising is an excellent way to leverage digital signage as a revenue-generating device. To that end, NEC has introduced VUKUNET—an ad-serving platform that assists airports in reaching out to national advertisers and agencies. VUKUNET can support an airport's current marketing staff by enhancing their efforts in markets to which they typically do not have access. For example, most airport marketing staffs are tasked with bringing in advertising, yet they only have access to local advertisers. VUKUNET can complement these efforts by making the airport's ad space inventory available nationally.

I thought NEC only manufactures digital displays?

NEC not only offers the best displays in the market, but also has industry-leading, full turn-key digital signage solution capabilities. NEC has many years of designing, building and installing digital signage solutions and can fully assist any airport in this endeavor.

What are some general digital display solutions for airports?

Though some visual display companies may try to convince you otherwise, there is no single "out of the box" solution. Each airport has their own unique set of challenges and business goals, and there are multiple ways of achieving each one, simple or complex.

For smaller airports, streamlined, affordable digital signage solutions may be appropriate. For a system with more muscle, you can bulk up your network with software that offers full-time monitoring and auditing capabilities. Solutions can vary in complexity according to the size of your airport and budget. That's why it helps to have a system that meets your basic needs today, but is scalable to accommodate for tomorrow's growth.

Flight Information With Advertising

NEC digital displays can provide travelers with up-to-the-second updates on arrival/departure status throughout the terminal. At the same time, integrated advertising drives waiting passengers to concourse vendors and services.

Via VUKUNET, the displays also provide a forum for national advertisers eager to get the attention of travelers.

Baggage Claim Information With Advertising

NEC digital displays quickly and efficiently direct travelers to baggage pick-up in crowded airport environments. Integrated advertising can also direct visitors to local hotels, eateries and points of interest.

Video Walls

With a video wall composed of NEC digital displays, you'll make sure travelers get the information they need. Often deployed behind high-traffic ticket desks or in general concourse areas, video walls are an excellent way to display a wealth of travel and terminal information.

Beyond your hardware components, you'll also be deciding on a network solution to support your displays.

What are some qualifying questions to ask?

Current Equipment/Platform

Do you know what digital signage is?

What kind of signage do you currently use?

What kind of content is playing on your screens?

How big a part does digital signage play in your FIDS and marketing plan?

Are you currently working with a digital signage provider?

What existing assets would you like to redeploy? (Web, database, advertising, live feeds)

Budget

How much money do you spend per year on your marketing (static signs, ads)?

Has a budget been set aside for digital signage?

How many display panels would you require per terminal/gate area?

Usage

What are your intended goals with a digital signage system?

How will you use the technology? (Promote airport, ad sales, utilize for internal communications?)

Will you need to retrieve data and feedback from your patrons?

How often will you need to change content?

Does content need to adapt to slow and peak hours?

Integration

How quickly do you need to deploy?

Would you prefer start-to-finish project management or working with your own vendors?

What screen sizes do you have in mind?

Do you prefer wall- or ceiling-mounted screens?

Will additional electrical systems need to be installed to support equipment?

Are you required to work with an architect/facilities manager?

Operation

Who will be managing the system's day-to-day operation?

Who is responsible for content?

Network Requirements

Would you like high definition-quality playback?

Do you have high-quality videos and photos?

Are you interested in RSS news feeds that crawl across screen?

Do you need to show regular TV programming?

What kind of IT infrastructure do you currently have?

Do you currently have an IT department?

Do you use a WAN/LAN?

Do you currently have a wireless network?

Do you have any bandwidth restrictions?

Does your server need to reside inside your firewall?

Can the system reside within your network, or will it require a dedicated network?

What are the steps in creating a digital display solution?

| Project Kickoff | Project Deployment | Pilot Assessment | Ongoing Evaluation |

1. Project Kickoff

Your NEC representative will meet with the airport's key decision-makers to assess several factors— timeline, ROI model and budget. The rep also will determine what the baseline needs and expectations are for your digital signage system. In collaboration with manufacturing partners, NEC develops a tailored, end-to-end solution, which is reviewed and approved among all involved parties.

2. Project Deployment

NEC acts as a general contractor in placing orders with vendors, scheduling installations, securing insurance and finalizing any application/content requirements. A site survey is performed to determine the best placements for your digital signage—how traffic flows, key decision points, proper infrastructure, electrical issues—after which the first set of systems are shipped to your location. After testing and equipment inspection, your staff is trained and tutorials are created as needed.

3. Pilot Assessment

If you've chosen a pilot program, this is when you begin receiving feedback from customers, employees and advertisers. An ROI analysis is performed, and a timeline is created for additional deployments, as well as any enhancements to the current system. The effectiveness of the project is continually monitored, and when targeted results are achieved, your remaining locations move into the deployment stage.

4. Ongoing Evaluation

A maintenance plan can be built to fit your particular requirements and budget. An NEC representative can be available to provide support or help with troubleshooting the system.

Why NEC?

NEC understands that airports present a unique challenge when it comes to digital signage. Travelers rely on displays to quickly and accurately give them information in a crowded, fast-paced and sometimes stressful environment. This is why you need to find a solution that's powerful, reliable, easy to use and cost effective. This is why you need to turn to NEC.

With NEC, you're equipped with a total solutions package— from diagnostics and implementation to follow-up service and support. Through one point of contact, you have access to the highest quality technology, superior vendors, and an unrivaled industry-specific service team. No one is more committed to your needs, and no one else offers full complimentary consultations.

Unlike competitors, NEC doesn't just offer one solution that's either too big or too small for your airport. Instead, NEC cost-effectively maximizes your current system, equipping it with network capabilities that are ready to grow when you are. Evaluating your unique situation is an essential part of the NEC solution process, and helps ensure that you make the most of your investment.

Most importantly, NEC is an industry leader with a longstanding commitment to quality service, product and expertise. There is unparalleled value in working with a global household name—you can trust that you will be supported throughout the partnership.

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