NEC Display Solutions for the Healthcare Industry

In a world that's becoming increasingly fast-paced, on-demand and interconnected, going digital is a necessary transition for today's healthcare provider. But it's hard to know where to begin. With so many options and so many changes in the digital marketplace, researching and deciding on the right visual display solution costs you time and money in and of itself. Instead, you can take advantage of the knowledge and resources of NEC's healthcare industry experts, who are well equipped to tailor a display system designed specifically to meet the growing needs of the medical community. Now is the time to stand out from the competition with digital branding and engaging displays. Using this guide, you can prepare yourself with some common questions and issues to consider when starting a conversation about digital signage systems.

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How does a hospital benefit from a digital signage system?

Informs your employees. Bulletin board messages are all too often lost among the clutter. With digital signage, you're able to efficiently and effectively get important messages to your staff, whether it be emergency information or real-time weather and traffic conditions.

Informs your patients and visitors. Strategic placement in key gathering areas ensures your guests get updates on emergency information, special classes and services, chapel hours and other relevant information — without having to pick up reading materials or search the bulletins. Interactive components like touchscreen kiosks can be useful in wayfinding; if a patient or visitor gets lost among the maze of hallways, they can stop to print a map that illustrates how to get from A to B. Patients with visual or hearing impairment will have an easier time obtaining information without assistance.

Generates extra revenue. Digital signage can be a powerful way to advertise, whether you'd like to drive more traffic to the gift shop by reminding customers to buy flowers, or to promote fund-raising activities taking place during the month.

Decreases perceived wait time. Waiting rooms can be an wearisome experience for visitors, but you can help take their mind off things by giving them something to watch and interact with. You may choose to entertain them with TV access, but with display systems you also have the option of educating them about hospital-related events, or live feeds ranging from weather to sports scores.

Reinforces your brand image. Digital signage can power your brand with a consistent message while also elevating the overall visitor perception of your facilities. Patients and employees alike feel more confident with a hospital that's up-to-date on technology. In a high-stress environment, it helps to have a paperless, clutter-free atmosphere. Logos and their accompanying color palettes are presented in optimal, true form. The color and image accuracy of professional-grade LCD screens, combined with NEC's award-winning SpectraViewII™ technology, far surpasses the varying reproduction quality of printed signage. You're equipped with the flexibility of using photo images, movie files, or even relevant news feeds. Additionally, visitors will be able to interact with your brand using a digital medium on all sensory levels, enhancing the overall healthcare experience.

Saves on costs. Static posters and banners are costly to replace over time, especially if you want your content to remain relevant and interesting to your audiences. Going digital saves a step in the production process by moving straight from the design phase to live display; no more waiting on printed materials and paying extra for expedited shipping and insurance. By playing a slideshow of JPEG files or video clips in MPEG format, you're able to use common media formats and convey as many messages as you need on one screen, rather than facing the clutter of bulletins and brochures. To further help your budget, NEC offers its Total Trade™ replacement and recycling program, which updates your outdated technology equipment with the latest NEC displays. The trade includes regulatory-compliant removal of industrial waste and the paperwork process of verifying it — saving you not only unexpected costs but also time.

Helps reduce your environmental impact. Digital signage is an immediate solution to reducing your overall usage of paper, ink and plastics. NEC displays are not only recyclable, but contain less hazardous materials. In partnering with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), NEC has become very active in developing policies and guidelines to create a more environmentally conscious industry.

Reaches your network's full potential. Simply by using your hospital's wireless network, you can set up and control your entire display system from a single point of access — whether it's multiple screens on one floor or screens across several hospital branches. Program when your displays turn on and off according to peak hours. The system is also equipped with self-monitoring software to prevent black screens, checking for those in need of maintenance and automatically sending an e-mail to the support team.

Initial concerns when considering a digital signage system:

This will be too expensive. Financing options are available with attractive pricing, terms and delivery options. You could also consider entering an NEC-sponsored pilot program that tests how a potential system would work in a few of your key branches. In a pilot program, NEC absorbs part or all of the initial hardware, software and installation costs for the pilot location(s). Once the system has proved itself, NEC can help roll out the digital signage solution to the rest of the hospital network.

This will be too difficult. While a learning curve is expected, in-person and online tutorials are available to prepare your staff for the transition. Web logins make it easy for you to make changes from any location, while service support is available 24/7. NEC can bring coordinated deployment services to ensure deadlines are met, and if possible, with minimum impact on the hospital work environment. Your project management team will be able to move the effort forward from start to finish with periodic updates and installation status reports. NEC also serves as your liaison among union trades to coordinate the installation of electrical outlets, low voltage wiring and network infrastructure. Very minimal workload is asked of the hospital staff.

How would I keep content fresh? Your marketing department is currently using the same content creation tools as those used to "feed" the digital signage network. With digital signs, you can dynamically change the content, increasing the ROI on the same content. For hospitals without access to content assets, NEC can help create digital marketing messaging at a monthly fee. Templates can be created to custom-fit your branding guidelines and provide you with an even easier way to update information. It's important to realize that content can make or break your digital signage system, so a dedication to content renewal needs to be established early on.

There are too many options. Which do I choose? There are several scenarios to consider: is your display system customized and networked to offer the flexibility to grow with your hospital's needs, or does it only offer you a package deal that's good enough for today? Is it done through one point of contact, or are there several vendors to contract separately? Do they offer expertise specific to your industry, or are you their first healthcare customer? The easiest solution for any situation is to deal with a "one stop shop" like NEC, offering total customized solutions through one point of contact.

What are some general digital display solutions for hospitals?

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

If you're looking for a simple way to translate traditional signage into a digital medium, consider a basic flash memory-based media player (like an industrial DVD player). If you're intending to gain feedback and data from your patients and visitors, consider a networked kiosk. If you just want to create a "wow-factor" within a high-traffic area, consider a video wall to play live TV or marketing material. Solutions can vary in complexity according to the size of your facilities, budget and IT comfort level. That's why it helps to have a custom-built system that meets your basic needs today, but prepares you for tomorrow's growth.

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

A SaaS(ASP) Network is an external server that resides outside of your hospital's network. While you own the hardware, you only have to subscribe to the software. No maintenance is required on your part. Access is done through a browser-based user interface. SaaS/ASP is preferred when you have a tight timeline (one-day turnaround), a smaller budget, or have limited time and IT staff to handle day-to-day maintenance.

A LAN/WAN Network is an internal server that resides within your hospital's network and firewall. You own both the hardware and the software, allowing for complete customization (such as designing interactive kiosk data retrieval). Access is done through a browser-based user interface. LAN/WAN is preferred when your existing company network requires firewall protection, or when your displays demand more sophisticated software writing.

NEC Products Customized for the Medical Environment:

Diagnostic Imaging. The MultiSync MD Series offers grayscale, medical-grade,DICOM GSDF-calibrated displays ideal for X-rays and other radiology tests.

Review. The MultiSync 90 Series complement office information systems, computer tomography, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and soft-copy clinical viewing.

Information Display. The MultiSync Large-Screen LCD Series is ideal for operating room scheduling, emergency rooms, ambulatory services, lobbies, cafeterias, and other high-traffic patient areas.

Large-format Review. The Multeos Series pairs high-resolution displays with state-of-the-art technology that is flexible enough for digital signage and clinical review.

General Use. The MultiSync 70 Series is the perfect solution for everyday use in reception desks, nursing stations, and other basic office applications.

What are some general digital display solutions for hospitals?

Upfront costs are too high. NEC can offer the most basic systems, usually built around a simple flash-based media player (such as an industrial DVD player). These systems are networked so that more sophisticated components can be added later on when the dealer is ready.

IT department is overburdened. Many times the dealer's IT department will balk at the thought of a new networked system to maintain; fortunately, NEC offers 24/7 service, in-system maintenance checks and user-friendly tutorials within the software. Also, with a web-based model, multiple-user contribution is encouraged and facilitated, as access can be made through any browser. The marketing department is able control content on their own, and IT doesn't have to be bothered.

"TV and PowerPoint are good enough" attitude. This do-it-yourself approach actually adds more burden to the staff, more costs in installment and fails to meet the full potential of dynamic digital technology. There's so many ways to go wrong when transitioning into a digital signage system. Instead, learn from NEC's experience. Not only does NEC know what to do, but more importantly, what NOT to do.

What are some qualifying questions to ask?

Current Equipment/Platform

What kind of signage do you currently use?

What kind of content is on playing on your screens?

Do you know what digital signage is?

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

Are you currently working with a digital signage provider?

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 systems would you need per hospital branch?

Usage

What are your intended goals with a digital signage system?

How will you use the technology? (Promote sales or build your brand?)

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

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 did you have in mind?

Do you prefer wall- or ceiling-mounted screens?

Operation

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

Who is responsible for content?

Image Quality

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 the screen?

Do you need to show regular TV programming?

Network Requirements

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 key decision makers to assess several factors — timeline, ROI model, budget, and generally, what your 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, such as your marketing/PR team, IT staff and board members.

2. Project deployment. NEC acts as a general contractor in placing orders with vendors, scheduling installations, securing insurance, and finalizing any application/content requirements among your IT and marketing departments. A site survey is performed to determine the best placements for your digital signage — how foot traffic flows, key gathering points, proper infrastructure, electrical issues, etc. Upon final approval from the key decision makers, the first

set of systems are shipped to your location. After system installation, testing and equipment inspection, your staff is trained and tutorials are created as needed.

3. Pilot assessment. If you've chosen to go through with a pilot program, this is when you start receiving feedback from visitors and employees. 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 results are hitting targets, your remaining sites take the full move into deployment stage.

4. Ongoing evaluation. A maintenance plan is built to fit your particular needs and budget. Your NEC representative is continually in contact with you to provide any support or help with troubleshooting the system.

Why choose 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 current environment. Instead, NEC cost-effectively maximizes the system you start with, equipping it with network capabilities that are ready to grow when you are. Evaluating your unique situation is a hugely important part of the NEC solution process, and can 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, since you can trust that you will be taken care of throughout the lifetime of your digital signage system — and possibly beyond, as the relationship evolves at the rate of technological innovation.

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