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Your business data has a story to tell. 
Your audience is waiting. 
What’s holding you back? 
Your business is full of stories. Many of these stories are told every day through a variety of media by your marketers and sales people, and consumed by your customers and prospects.

But what about the stories that your business data has to tell? Are you sharing these stories on a daily basis with its consumers – your employees?

From sales and production trends to company announcements, the story your business data tells has real-time performance implications on your operations. But the effectiveness of the story relies on the what, when, where and how it is delivered. To extract, compile, analyze and present the data of your story in a memorable way – and in order to get the attention of your employees - you need an intelligent digital signage system.

Digital Signage as Influencer

From the dawn of civilization, and certainly as long as humans have used visual communication to convey complex ideas, humans have sought to influence each other’s feelings (through art) and behavior (through signs) by putting symbols and signs in front of each other. From the cave paintings at Lascaux or the earliest merchant signs in ancient Egypt, to modern day smartphone applications and digital signage, we’ve intuitively understood the quickest and most practical ways to the cerebral cortex is through our eyes.

As such, the core promise of digital signage networks for corporations is that information, when tailored for its audience and put in the right place, at the right time, influences the behavior of viewers.

From corporate operational decisions, such as which manufacturing line or call center agent needs immediate attention, to shopper purchasing decisions in a retail store, intelligent digital signage systems provide the data collection, analysis and display.. Of course, the data must be displayed in an attention-grabbing way, so that the data consumer can visualize, understand and adjust their behavior to complete the decision influence cycle. The results of that behavior, whether in a corporate or consumer environment, eventually feed back into the business dataset as inputs.
We call it Intelligent Digital Signage.
In industries as diverse as manufacturing, business services, healthcare, hospitality and retail, business leaders face challenges to reach their audiences with timely information so that their businesses can run as effectively and efficiently as possible. Many of today’s business leaders recognize the benefits of digital signage in employee (or visitor) facing corporate workplace and in consumer facing public locations for influencing both attitudes and behavior.

Twenty years ago, using screens and computers as “digital signs” was largely considered a luxury and reserved for one-off installations in high-end corporate lobbies (ego installs) or small scale networks of LED boards in factories and call centers. Today, with advances in software APIs, data collection and analysis tools, and after decades of Moore’s law and market forces applying downward pricing pressure on hardware and software manufacturers, Intelligent Digital Signage solutions are no longer a nice-to-have amenity but are affordable must-have tools for many businesses.

Intelligent Digital Signage system inputs range from data compiled from sophisticated enterprise resource management systems laden with linear equations and algorithms, to simpler (yet just as thoughtful) employee recognition announcements, safety notices, and company news.

Managing with Real-time Data
Most good business managers can probably tell you within 10–15% accuracy how their business operated last year, last quarter, last month, last week and maybe even yesterday. But how many can tell you how they operated in the last 15 minutes? Or are operating right now? Probably not many. And for many business managers in production environments, getting their hands on actual data means leaving the production area and pulling up a report or asking another employee to generate a report. By the time the report is generated, printed and reviewed, the data in the report is already old and manager must take the age into account. Imagine the gains in efficiency your manager could help realize if they and their employees had the right real-time data in front of them, instead of having to wait for a production meeting to exchange performance numbers. Wouldn’t decision making speed up?

The promise of a digital signage system and of business visualization is the ability to take that real-time data and display it in a meaningful way so as to influence behavior. By incorporating digital signage into their business processes, many companies benefit from real-time performance management (RTPM) and the ability to compress the time between an event occurring and the response to the event.

With Intelligent Digital Signage systems, employers provide employees real-time visibility into the state of their operations to aid front-line decision making.
To date, RTPM systems have been deployed widely by many thousands of businesses worldwide. One industry where RTPM has been embraced is contact centers — an industry whose livelihood is strongly dependent on smart front-line decision making and the productivity of individual workers. Early on, RTPM was an ideal fit for this industry, because the technologies at the heart of a contact center — phone switches, computer servers and other hardware — were simple to monitor for reporting purposes.

From a single phone switch, for example, it is possible for the reporting system to know the work status of each employee and monitor it over the course of a work day.

**Improving the Visitor/Customer/Guest Experience**

By definition, all businesses have customers. And no matter what the business, one of the chief concerns of business managers is to deliver service to ensure new customers become repeat customers, and refer new customers.

Take a large hospital setting for example. Hospital administrators concerned with raising patient (customer) and visitor satisfaction; ensuring safety for all visitors, patients and employees; and providing a comfortable atmosphere for family members and visitors realize the positive effects of proper signage in their buildings. From entertainment and education (waiting room TVs) to interactive wayfinding (kiosks, signs) to employee communications (flat-screen displays at nurses stations, staff cafeterias, elevators), administrators are faced with a complex set of message targets, content and recipients. Intelligent Digital Signage provides one platform to address all of these messaging goals.

Digital signage systems provide another medium for promoting high margin wellness center, spa and ambulatory care services to hospital visitors and staff alike.

**Engaging Employees**

Internal communicators often talk about improving employee engagement levels to reduce employee turnover, improve morale, and create more productive work environments. Companies with higher positive engagement levels consistently report lower turnover, fewer safety incidents, fewer quality incidents, less shrinkage and higher customer metrics (source: *Engagement at Work, Gallup*). Improving internal communication and fostering a culture of inclusion are at the heart of improving employee engagement.

Internal communicators utilize digital signage systems to improve and increase the communication between executives, management and employees. From displaying congratulatory or thank you messages between colleagues, to providing employees with up to date information on employee benefits, company news and updates and even company performance (stock quotes), Intelligent Digital Signage provides corporations with the means to lift employee engagement.
Increasing Productivity

Across multiple verticals, business leaders are continually challenged with producing more for less. For most there’s an obvious solution that can materially help them – intelligent digital signage.

In manufacturing or supply chain settings, keeping employees “on the same page” as management is crucial. Yet pulling line workers away from production to talk about goals can be costly and time consuming. Advanced digital signage systems capable of integrating with supply chain systems can surface critical data and put it in front of employees and workers at the right time and the right way to get immediate attention, whether on a large format display, desktop dashboard or a mobile device. This flexibility allows managers and workers alike to stay focused on production, but have the business metrics they need for decision making readily available. Clever users are using their systems to “gamify” the work – like the giant scoreboards at sporting events.

Contact center managers have long known the importance of managing from real-time agent stats such as calls in queue, calls on hold, average call time. Intelligent Digital Signage systems allow contact center managers to integrate and display these statistics along with customer specific information to more effectively respond to customer service inquiries.

Integrating Data Sources

Intelligent Digital Signage systems provide the capabilities to integrate with multiple disparate data sources, including a company’s existing systems, to aggregate high-value information and synthesize that information into meaningful graphics and display where it is needed the most – all in real time. In order to integrate successfully, system designers must consider database interoperability, video encoding and playback standards, visualization design and layout best practices for readability and impact.

The inputs that make up the visualizations may come from multiple sources and systems:

- ERP systems
  - Staff scheduling / resource utilization systems
  - Supply chain management software
  - Inventory systems
  - Process management systems
- Contact center systems
- Syndicated news, weather, sports feeds (RSS)
- External sources
- Vendor databases
- Web content
- News media
- Web forms

Feeding the Beast – Content Production Project Management

Today’s effective digital signage systems not only need the right data inputs and connections but also the corporation must have the intestinal fortitude to commit to “feeding the beast.” Successful digital signage networks typically rely on a clearly defined spectrum of content contributors, editors and publishers within an organization, who adhere to a content calendar designed around the organization’s communication needs for types and frequency of content updates.
For example, let’s return to the hospital setting again. The sources of information in hospitals include HR department (staff announcements), marketing department (customer messaging) and administration/operations (staff assignments). Integrating and displaying these sets of information into multiple display configurations for public (or internal) viewing takes (consumes) time, careful thought and resources.

How to Prove ROI?
Companies deploying digital signage networks typically derive return on investment in one of four main ways:

1. Productivity increases as a result of data visualization (manufacturing, supply chain, corporate)
2. Cost reduction realized in other communication or marketing media
3. Revenue generating activities directly related to the signs (advertising or sponsorship of content)
4. Sales uplift of items shown on screen

For example, in retail locations, networks may derive revenue from both paid advertisements (usually requiring large foot traffic, dwell time and associated gross rating points) and from in-store sales uplift on products or services advertised.

In manufacturing, productivity increases associated with displaying the right real-time (or near real-time) data often leads to huge incremental savings in both time and money. Digital signage with the right data can help keep production lines flowing smoothly and workers motivated, which can mean the difference in thousands of dollars a day in some cases.

One Platform for Multi-purpose Business Applications
Select the right platform and you end up with a system capable of supporting multiple business applications, and one that will help control costs and improve productivity through business visualizations.

An intelligent digital signage system provides the features to support a variety of business applications.

- Manufacturing plant dashboards and LED boards
- News, entertainment displays in corporate lobbies
- Contact center dashboards
- Retail point-of-purchase and store displays
- Employee communication displays

How to get started?
How can business leaders take advantage of the benefits promised by digital signage systems?

1. Pick the right partner. Select a digital signage partner with a future proof technology architecture that will support your needs today and be flexible
enough to grow with your needs in the future. An important consideration is to choose a vendor who has “been there before,” with established support systems, best practices, a competitive roadmap and a stable customer base.

2. **Aggregate, synthesize and display the right data.** Understanding what data to collect, making the systems connect (through APIs or middleware if necessary), aggregating the data and applying logic in order to display the correct data visualization, at the correct time and at the correct place (on the correct display), are critical. Choosing a partner with the experience and knowledge base to help guide you through the process is just as important.

3. **Design a content production plan to keep your displays fresh.** To be effective, digital signage must be fed – whether through automation or manual content programming – and careful thought given to the type of content, frequency of updates and designs used. Showing stale employee announcements or the wrong data mutes the effectiveness of your displays. Design your content plan with a partner who understands the nuances of building a successful communication strategy and make sure you allocate time and resources to measuring the effectiveness of your content and adjusting it on a regular basis.

**Summary**

For many companies looking to reduce costs, engage employees, improve productivity, and better communicate with their data consumers, Intelligent Digital Signage systems provide robust platforms for collecting, aggregating and displaying data in meaningful, actionable ways. Employees and consumers alike are challenged on a daily basis to sort through and synthesize a massive amount of information and decide upon the most relevant information to help them better navigate their tasks, jobs, and lives.

With Intelligent Digital Signage systems, businesses can craft their data into engaging and effective stories that their audiences want – and need – to see in order to be more effective, productive and ultimately profitable.

You can learn more about Intelligent Digital Signage by visiting [www.rmgnetworks.com/enterprise-solutions](http://www.rmgnetworks.com/enterprise-solutions) or by emailing [info@rmgnetworks.com](mailto:info@rmgnetworks.com).

**About RMG NETWORKS**

RMG NETWORKS (NASDAQ:RMGN) helps brands and organizations communicate more effectively using location-based video networks. The company connects brands with target audiences using video advertising networks comprised of over 200,000 display screens, reaching over 100 million consumers each month. The company also builds enterprise video networks that empower organizations to visualize critical data to better run their business. RMG Networks works with over 70% of the Fortune 100. The company is headquartered in Dallas, Texas, with offices in the United States, United Kingdom, China, India, Singapore, Brazil and the UAE. For more information, visit [www.rmgnetworks.com](http://www.rmgnetworks.com).