

Tips on Digital Signs

If your store is located on even a moderately-traveled road, it may be time to consider investing in a digital sign. If the store is located on a busy road and has the luxury of being situated at a corner or intersection with a traffic light, then a digital sign is a must.

Today's society is in love with digital screens. We have been trained to read digital signs. Think of how often you look at a screen in one day: televisions, PCs or laptops, digital tablets, phones, and even gas pumps are just a few. Unlike newspapers, magazines, TV, and radio stations, digital signs require neither subscriptions nor tuning in to read a message. Roadside digital signs play to all audiences. The amount of traffic that goes by your store simply equates to a better return on your sign investment.

Here are a few tips when considering the purchase of a digital road sign:

- **Offer time and temperature on your board.** Nearly everyone wants to know how late they are running and how hot or cold it is outside. Time and temperature trains people to look at your sign. Time and temperature is the main stay of all radio stations and is a must for your sign.
- **Keep it simple.** Special effects can distract people from reading your entire message.
- **Keep it brief.** All messages need to stay on long enough to be read and should be no more than nine words long. Studies suggest that drivers are comfortable reading up to nine words before feeling the need to revert their eyes back to the road. "Flu Shots" is more effective than "Flu Shots are now available, please come on in!"
- **Font choice is critical.** Stay away from italics and instead utilize easy-to-read fonts. The larger the font, the better.
- **Experiment with colors.** Contrast is crucial, such as light letters on a dark background or dark letters on a white background. In addition, stay away from rainbow colors. Your sign is best read when no more than two colors appear on the screen. Legibility is a must.
- **Change your messages every two weeks.** Create a three-month calendar laying out your digital content.
- **Train multiple people to operate your sign.** Do not put yourself in a position to have to wait for someone to come back from vacation to change your messages.
- **Keep your sign illuminated 24/7.**
- **Choose your messages wisely.** You are marketing to the masses. Do not wish people or employees happy birthday – send them best wishes in a card instead. At times, you can ask people to "drive



This sign's message is brief and easy-to-read.

safely” and enjoy the holiday, or congratulate the local schools and show community support. Offering a brief health tip is always a good idea.

- **Get in your car and view your sign.** Ask yourself: is the sign easy to read? Does the message stay on long enough? Is the message appropriate for the time of season?
- **Try an indoor digital sign near your waiting area.** You can create an inexpensive one with an older laptop.

It may be time to replace your old marquee road sign with its frustrating replaceable letters. Running out of letters just becomes an irritating game of Wheel of Fortune (“I would like to buy a vowel, Pat”). If you are still not convinced as to why you should give up your marquee sign for a digital sign:



Don't let this happen to your store. Look into investing in a digital sign instead.

-- Gabe Trahan, Senior Director of Store Operations and Marketing