



# HOW YOU SAY IT

## CONTENT THAT WORKS FOR THE AUDIENCE AND THE BUSINESS IS A VITAL ELEMENT OF THE SCREEN-MEDIA MIX

**G**etting the right message onto a screen is critical to the success of any digital-signage project. Companies can use the fanciest technology and the most expensive high-definition screens with perfect placement, but without the correct content, the investment of time and money will be lost. Define the core objectives of your project. Do you want visual content to sell, promote, inform, entertain or communicate something specific? It is essential that firms understand what they are trying to do before starting the project.

Understand your branding and define your branding guidelines to your graphical team. Integrating a completely new visual concept is daunting enough without complicating things; make it work with your business environment and promotional materials.

Always remember your audience and their dwell times. A four-minute loop may not work if your screens are positioned in an area with short dwell times. Remembering the audience also means making the content relevant – for example, a regular request is to include the news. But this may not be appropriate, as most news is bad news and may not be ideal in a business or retail environment.

Think about the type of look you want: is the content to fill the entire screen? Do you want split fields with multiple images and promotions running at the same time? Remember the display platform, too; content that is displayed in portrait mode will differ from landscape mode. If you are using digital content on a touchscreen platform it will need to entice the consumer to touch it.

It pays to keep things simple. Are you using content to inform consumers how to get a free music download or how to sign up for a free coupon? All of this needs to get across to the consumer instantly.

Think about aesthetics – it's not just about looking pretty, it's about effectiveness too. It's worth researching the Golden Ratio, a concept developed by Euclid which notes the natural points that the human eye is drawn to in a landscape image or screen. This is where the key messages should be positioned. Similarly, don't place your display platforms in a place where no one can see them. This may seem obvious, but often retailers get it wrong. Make the digital content visible and at the correct height. No-one walks around looking up at the sky.

Finally, make the content creative. Make sure that the content feeds

back to your initial objectives and test it over and over again. Content must not remain static; refresh it constantly and keep it relevant to the brand objectives.

### DIFFERENT STROKES

A look at how different users have approached content reveals some interesting clues to a successful strategy. Consider, for example, some of the clients of Mood Media Group ([www.moodmedia.com](http://www.moodmedia.com)), a company formed in 2006 by the merger of Mood Media and DMX Music – a major international content provider to the digital-signage market with more than 650 international brands in 110,000-plus commercial sites around the world, and a client roster that includes Virgin, BP, Vodafone, Proximus, Deichmann and Volkswagen.

Alongside its Toni&Guy TV project (see case study), the company has been working closely with HMV Group on its six new concept stores across the UK, where visual content has a very distinct purpose. In the HMV project, there are three visual areas in each store: the window display, the touchscreen points, and the visual loops among the merchandise.

According to the company, the purpose of content at HMV is to entice customers into the store, communicate offers on core products, and stimulate positive memories in the consumer, which will all have a positive effect on the retail experience and sales uplift. The essence of this approach is generating memorable content and using moving imagery to communicate key messages, whether it is dancing, feeling happy, iconic movies or even romance.

### KEY POINTS:

- Define objectives
- Define branding guidelines
- Consider dwell times
- Ensure relevance
- Keep it fresh
- Test, test, test

**CASE STUDY: TONI&GUY**

**TONI&GUY.TV**

With salons around the world, Toni&Guy is keen to get the communications mix just right, and has invested in its salon TV network to promote the values of the brand. Toni&Guy TV is an example of a brand that has a strong sense of itself.

The essence of this TV network is editorial focusing on fashion, trends, music and entertainment. Exclusive video content, first plays, artists' idents, specific playlists and graphical brilliance are just some of the new components that Mood Media adds to the channel.

Jamie Davies, creative director at Mood Media – himself an ex-indie singer – says he liaises regularly with all the record labels, the major independents and independent plugging companies to ensure the video content on the TV network is cutting-edge.

Mood Media builds music around the Toni&Guy content and brand adverts delivered by the branded-content agency FST. The music schedule, says the agency, complements the existing content, is designed to create an experience throughout the day and continues to evolve as the week develops.

The graphics team at Mood Media creates the branded idents and moving imagery clips that they add to the channel. Once the content is finalised, Mood Media sends all the files to a Toni&Guy partner for delivery.

The channel has become a fashion TV network with value content that more and more labels want to be a part of. Music labels already involved in this network include EMI, Mute and Mercury. In short, the content is working for Toni&Guy, its consumers and potential advertisers.

Over at the new Heathrow Terminal 5, meanwhile, the Giraffe restaurant chain has taken a different approach with its signage system, using a video wall of content. For this project, Mood Media says it worked closely with design agency Mercury and the Giraffe chain to animate the strong branding already used on print materials.

Most media professionals will be aware that static imagery and digital content are two entirely different disciplines, but in this deployment, having a strong brand identity helped to create good digital content, which includes animated corporate branding, world music videos, live clocks showing the time in world cities, stylised photography and film clips.

In France, meanwhile, newsagent chain SEDIFF has just rolled out Mood Media's signage content in around 400 of its stores. The content here is closely aligned to the actual merchandise on display and is dedicated to promoting the editorial content in the magazines on display.

According to the newsagent firm, a detailed independent research study on its project showed a sales uplift of 50 percent, giving the chain a solid return on its investment.

Also on the international front, electrical and hardware chain Rexel has a network of more than 1600 stores in 24 countries across Europe, North America and the Asia Pacific region. The chain is unusual in its customer profile as around 60 percent of its customers are tradespeople from the construction industries. And this, of course, has implications for content. Back in 2006 the chain approached Mood Media to develop a content system, with inxel TV being the result.

So far around 250 stores have been hooked up to the system. Content is a mixture of information on building trades, as well as promotional and branded content. The service also updates customers on the local traffic, news and weather, and carries special industry reports and entertainment.

What is also interesting about the deployment is that Mood Media acts as a media agency for Rexel, sourcing advertisers who want to promote themselves on inxel TV. As a consequence, Rexel's TV network is completely funded by advertisers.

Creating content from scratch for a signage network like this is no easy task, but with professional help, the process can be made a lot easier, and the timescales involved can be reduced. However simple or complex, the solution can help to create the impression of a modern, forward-thinking business, and these are essential requirements for engaging today's consumer.

