



CASE STUDY San Diego Chargers

Chargers' Fans Catch Game Day Action on Toshiba Digital Signage



Chargers Make a Lineup Change

In 2012, Chargers officials called an audible after meeting with Toshiba America Business Solutions executives, Bill Melo, Vice President of Marketing, Services and Solutions and Joe Contreras, Director, Product and Solutions Marketing to replace its previous digital signage provider and update their video display technology with Toshiba products.

"Considering our relationship with Bill and Joe and familiarity of Toshiba's emphasis on developing exceptional multifunction printers having been their customer for nearly a decade, there was already a high level of trust," said Chargers Vice President of Marketing Partnerships Denny O'Leary. "These elements virtually eliminated the vetting process since our relationship with the company was already so comfortable."

Although the meeting revolved around renewing the managed document services provider's sponsorship at Qualcomm Stadium, Toshiba executives asked about the effectiveness of the team's existing digital signage program. After being informed that all of the stadium's more than 800 video displays – located throughout executive suites, concession stands, restaurants and lounges at the 45 year-old stadium – sometimes freeze during game action, Melo and Contreras presented a solution for game day video display glitches and convinced the team to bench the previous digital signage provider.

Though known throughout the National Football League for its high-octane offenses – the San Diego Chargers were a bit behind the curve in offering its fans and sponsors the latest video display technology. Already burdened with one of the NFL's oldest stadiums, the team's digital signage system – which televises the game to about 70,000 fans throughout Qualcomm Stadium on game days – was nearly as archaic.



Toshiba's Chow Quarterbacks Successful Installation

Upon receiving the contract, Toshiba's Program Manager of Digital Signage, Irene Chow, was brought in to quarterback the assessment team. After analyzing the Chargers' video coverage, Chow immediately replaced 56 Chargers' legacy televisions with Toshiba large-screen, high-definition TVs. However, this was only one element of the solution.

Since the Chargers receive separate standard-definition and high-definition feeds from television networks for its game day coverage, the issue of the screens going blank was still a distinct possibility. Aside from eliminating the aggravating scenario of fans and sponsors looking at blank TV screens, other technical glitches still lingered.

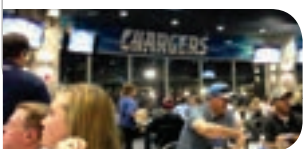
Because the previous video signage system was manually-operated and unstable in supporting concurrent analog and digital signals, the Chargers staff constantly had to reboot the system throughout a contest.

Coupled with the problem of constant interruptions while streaming live NFL game feeds, the team was unable to swap out any ad or statistical content streaming throughout Qualcomm Stadium before kick-off.

To solve these troublesome concerns, Chow partnered with New York-based ComQi to install two digital media players as well as the corresponding software to support the standard-definition and high-definition signals to flawlessly integrate all game day content to Qualcomm Stadium's video display network.

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-Denny O'Leary, Chargers Vice President of Marketing Partnerships





With the welcomed capability of seamlessly streaming both standard-definition and high-definition data within a newly-configured cloud environment, the team is now able to change content at a moment's notice before, during and after a game rather than having to rush over to the team's server room to complete this relatively simple task.

In addition to resolving the analog-digital streaming issue, the software further allows for the clear and concise layout of format banner advertisements, game footage and in-game and NFL leader board statistics on Qualcomm Stadium's vast array of video displays.

“Before Toshiba integrated its digital signage program, there were severe limitations on what I was able to do,” Chargers Marketing Partnership Coordinator Jennifer Stakiw said, who manages game day content. “All of these issues have now been resolved.”

Toshiba's comprehensive digital signage solution was tested and implemented within 60 days of the company's initial proposal. This was plenty of time to properly prepare and train the Chargers' marketing and technical staff for the kick-off of the team's initial exhibition game.

Chargers Receive Return on Investment

“Considering the limited timeframe Irene and her team were working under, they did an extraordinary job of ironing out all of the issues we had with our previous digital signage network,” O’Leary said.

“Toshiba’s digital signage solution outfits us with a dynamic and comprehensive solution for our array of video content needs – which has surpassed our expectations.”

As a result of the installation – the Chargers’ entire array of video displays have remained operational for every minute of every Chargers’ home game. The fix also pleases the ever-expanding number of fantasy football league participants as game statistics of other league-wide games are displayed prior and during the Chargers’ game action.

“Aside from providing our fan base with exciting game action, highlights and replays, we understand the burgeoning interest our fans have in following their fantasy football teams,” O’Leary added. “In light of this, we were cognizant of the added importance of making sure our digital signage network remained uninterrupted throughout game day.

“The relationship that we’ve developed over the last five years with Toshiba has been great and the company has further solidified that trust by outfitting us with an impressive digital signage system at an affordable price. Moreover because the display network has attained a 100 percent uptime, our sponsors are delighted and the return on our investment is evident.”

To insure the Chargers receive proper service and support, Chow and her colleague, Manny Sahu – Toshiba’s technical product manager – traverse the nearly 80 miles down Interstate 5 from their Irvine office to provide peace of mind to the Chargers’ marketing and technical staff during game days.

According to O’Leary, Toshiba’s superior technical support on game days affords the Chargers’ marketing department the opportunity to focus on other projects on game days knowing that the team’s digital signage program is in check.

Considering the success of the installation, the Chargers are exploring the possibility of streaming more content through the team’s digital signage network with the potential of adding more sponsors now a logical consideration.

