

## **Strategist explains pros and cons of retail digital signage**

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*Although in-store digital signage is one of the fastest growing communication and advertising mediums in today's retail market - possibly because it allows retailers and brand managers to talk directly to a responsive, captive audience - its full effect can only be realised if it's used correctly, according to Canadian retail strategist, Don Watt.*

According to Watt, many major Canadian and international retail chains are following and adopting the trend of translating static advertising and marketing messages into in-store networks that deliver real-time messages to shoppers.

### **Plan before implementation**

But Watt warns retailers to consider the strategy carefully before implementing a digital signage programme: "Retailers and public venues alike need to evaluate their individual situation and needs before moving ahead with a digital signage installation."

According to Watt, the message conveyed to the captive audience of customers in the store is often not beneficial, either to the customer or to the retailer.

### **Enhanced experiences**

Many digital signage programmes are designed by technology companies that have little background in the retail store environment, so the technology may be brilliant but the message sometimes remains unstructured, and lacking impact.

Retailers, marketers and brand managers should start, Watt suggests, by meeting known consumer needs, and by using digital signage to actually enhance their shopping experience rather than force-feeding them with irrelevant messages.

Watt's response to the problem has been to launch a new business unit called *Innovus* (a division of DW+Partners) that focuses on helping retailers find the right digital signage solution for their needs.

### **Business boosting**

With up to 75% of purchase decisions being made at the point of sale, Watt says that truly consumer-centred and carefully executed in-store communication is a powerful tool that can help retailers increase sales and productivity, and improve brand recall.

According to Graeme Spicer, director of retail strategy for DW+Partners, "Our solution-neutral position and retail expertise mean we can give retailers a clear evaluation and an understanding of the benefits to be gained from digital retail signage."