

SeeSaw Insights

November 2007

The newsletter that highlights innovation and trends in out-of-home digital media.

Retail Relevance: The In-Store Digital Signage Opportunity

by **Laura Davis Taylor, Founder and Principal of Retail Media Consulting**

As the digital signage industry continues to grow, it's finally settling in as a real (and rather competitive) player in the Out-of-Home (OOH) media category. The recent release of the OTX Digital Out-of-Home Media Awareness and Attitude Study offers solid support, as the ever-changing media landscape is continually branching into multiple sub-categories, many of them driven by technology, and emerging out-of-home platforms are seeing powerful consumer awareness and favorability.

One vertical within the digital signage industry that's held solid interest from the get-go is retail. Why? There are a few key drivers: people are in stores to buy, stores want to sell product, messages delivered at the point of purchase have a higher propensity to stimulate awareness and purchase response, all brands are struggling to provide more positive store experiences for their shoppers and the potential to reach people with helpful, rewarding messages that build trust is high.

While we often think of the behemoth retail brands regarding potential retail reach, it's important to remember that retail has multiple verticals that, when aggregated, have massive messaging potential: specialty (books, electronics, cosmetic, etc.), grocery, entertainment/video, quick service restaurants, coffee shops and other "gathering spots", services/repair venues and even the numerous small footprint shops appearing in travel destinations such as airports, train stations and other transportation outlets. The point is this is a highly targeted opportunity to connect with busy, mobile people—many with open minds and on a mission to buy.

What's working in-store?

For the years that we have been experimenting with in-store digital signage, there are many common questions that almost everyone asks. Most are related to content, screen placement, use of sound, length of messages and even how often to refresh messaging for maximum impact. The commonality of all questions comes down to this: how can I ensure that it works?

As we discuss at length in our new book on in-store digital media, Lighting Up the Aisle, effectiveness is not tied to a cookie cutter best practices that all retailer brands should follow. As with any other marketing and media challenges, the success factors can vary significantly based on a few things:

IN THIS EDITION

[Retail Relevance: The In-Store Digital Signage Opportunity](#)

[Effectively and Efficiently Reaching Holiday Shoppers](#)

[Interesting Holiday Shopper Facts](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

[AAAA 2008 Media Conference & Trade Show](#)

March 5th - 7th, 2008

[Digital Signage Expo 2008](#)

February 27 & 28, 2008

[More...](#)

FEATURED RESEARCH

[Digital Out-of-Home Media Awareness & Attitude Study 2007](#)

[Alternative Out-of-Home Media Forecast 2007-2011](#)

[Impacting the Customer Experience at a Bank Branch Through a Digital Communication Network](#)

[More...](#)

LIFE PATTERN MARKETING
A New Way to Reach People Out-of-Home

[DOWNLOAD WHITEPAPER](#)

FAST FACT

\$31.4b

Retail sales in billions of

1. The retailer's business challenges
2. The shopper's store experience challenges/desires
3. How the digital signage network supports positive impact for both

The answers for each brand and vertical are often unique and the keys to the necessary strategic insights reside with the brand's consumers, the corporate internal teams, the employees on the floor that interface daily with shoppers and the brands that are connecting with consumers both inside and outside of the retail store channel via various media touchpoints.

Most large brands are not openly sharing their results, but we as consultants are starting to see some similar patterns amongst the many camps that we talk to regarding best practices. A few worth noting:

- In store, more and more brands are seeing success if the content messages are short and sweet. Pundits such as Bill Gerba have helped coin the concept of "glance media" and are finding that 5 seconds is often the maximum spot length to grab someone. This is vastly different from the 15-30 second spots previously thought to be ideal.
- Video is not always the best content format so it should not be considered the de-facto standard. This is often confusing, as many folks refer to this signage as TV. It's not TV...it's a messaging media in a store and TV is just one type of execution for its use.
- It is sometimes easier to attract shoppers to an in-store digital message from far away than up close.
- "What's New" hot products and Seasonal items are typically drawing the highest attention from shoppers.
- The more helpful and relevant the content, the more likely the shopper will watch. The more they watch, the more they will potentially buy. Seems pretty simple but it's amazing how this concept is often not respected (or measured).

Seems pretty simple but it's amazing how this concept is often not respected (or measured).

Of the items above, we feel that none are more important than relevance. Whether the message is tied to general brand advertising for a non-endemic product that appeals to the shopper while they're in store going about their life or hard hitting merchandising to sell product on the shelves, it's got to be something that a busy, distracted consumer is going to perk up, notice and find valuable. If they don't not only will the message not generate that precious response, but it may detract from the store experience and relationship with the brand—not something any retailer or brand advertiser wants to do in today's highly competitive climate.

Platforms for strategic relevance in-store

As the sophistication of digital signage at retail continues to develop, we've opened the door to technology-based tools for shopper relevance. The industry has chattered for years about store level targeting, dayparting and contextual experiences via digital signs and we are now starting to provide all three (at least on a high level). The ultimate goal? Look at the Internet and you'll find the right inspiration.

dollars by the nation's department stores in December 2006.

Source: US Census Bureau

[More...](#)

SHARE INSIGHTS

[Subscribe](#)

[Send us feedback](#)

The Internet is relevance in action. The computer and the tools behind the curtain profile users and ensure that they are hit with the most relevant, impactful messages. Content is often auto-assimilated based on intelligent cookie data and, after years of perfection, integrated databases churn reporting data for campaign analysis and optimization.

In-store, this will eventually happen; we're on the road to creating it with in-store digital signage. Once real, it's far cry from the "Store TV" pitch, which was built on the dying media principles of capturing people by whatever means necessary. Rather than this antiquated "invasive interruption" approach with a message that may or may not be welcomed, it's one of "attract and engage relevantly" with messages that are embraced and acted upon freely.

This shift is backed up in the SeeSaw's research, where they've clearly found the digital signage has bankable stopping power that many find less annoying than other media. But we need to keep it this way!

The ultimate goal: in-store media trust

With any retail media plan, we must think contextually about the primary intent of each "media touch" in the home, in the shopper's life, in the store and at the shelf—all rooted in understanding people's typical Life Patterns. If we do this and we touch them at all points with messaging that adds value to their day and respects their experience, what we do is create consumer trust. And trust is the Holy Grail of "new media" thinking.

Done right, digital out of home, no matter where it is encountered, will be one of the most critical and powerful pieces of the media mix. In-store, where purchases are actually made, it will be a simple must-have. After all, doesn't all advertising have the ultimate intent of selling more product? Well, that's the ultimate intent of all stores and merchandising strategies as well.

If united in our strategic media approach, we as an industry have the opportunity to earn the respect and high ratings of shoppers, retailers and brand manufacturers alike and set the bar for the industry with the in-store digital messages we create. Let's come together and ensure that we create success with this exciting new media for all.

About the Author

Laura Davis Taylor is a Founder and [Principal of Retail Media Consulting](#). Laura is a 15-year Agency veteran with a diverse background in traditional advertising, brand planning, interactive marketing, digital signage, merchandising and retail/environmental design—all geared towards creating consumer-centric solutions for the business challenges of her clients.

[About SeeSaw Networks](#) | [Careers](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [RSS](#) 

Copyright © 2007 SeeSaw Networks, Inc. All Rights Reserved