

Furniture Chain’s Marketing and HR Departments Find Combined Digital Signage and Video Training Solution

After an early attempt at digital in-store signage using a PC-based system resulted in a myriad of problems, this furniture store chain deployed the Cisco Digital Media Suite (DMS), gaining a common, centrally manageable and programmable digital signage, Web-based video, and back office employee video training solution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
RETAIL FURNITURE CHAIN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31 retail stores in the Midwestern United States
BUSINESS CHALLENGE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find alternative to problematic PC-based in-store digital signage solution Deploy video training solution for store employees that would emulate YouTube features and functionality
NETWORK SOLUTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cisco Digital Media Suite for Retail
BUSINESS RESULTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deployed centrally-managed, network-based Cisco Digital Media Suite (DMS), allowing for more efficient management and faster and more customized content refresh Cost effectively leveraged the DMS solution to provide both live and on-demand back office training and communications to employees and a Web-based media function for the company Web site After initial trial, rolled out solutions to all stores, with plans to quadruple the number of screens

Business Challenge

Using DVDs to load furniture advertising content on in-store PCs connected to video monitors resulted in stale content due to infrequently updated DVDs. When the system encountered computer glitches, error messages would remain on the screens for days or weeks until a technician was dispatched to the stores to fix the problem.

The furniture store chain had originally seen the Cisco DMS several years before but had opted for a PC-based solution. Subsequent efforts by the Cisco sales team uncovered requirements within the marketing department—interested in more efficient and dynamic in-store and Web media—and the human resources department—looking for a better way to train staff than by distributing DVDs. By working with these different departments within the furniture company, Cisco was able to match diverse company requirements to features available with the newest generation of Cisco DMS.

Network Solution

After piloting the Cisco DMS solution in two stores, the company decided to deploy it in all 31 stores. A Cisco Digital Media Manager in the company’s data center provides a Web-based, centralized media management application that allows content managers to send out digital media playlists to the stores. Different content can be programmed for individual players and content can change based on date, time, or location.

In the stores, a Cisco Digital Media Player 4400G obtains content from the Cisco Digital Media Manager via a WAN connection and plays the content on a LCD screen. The company also purchased two additional components from Cisco to provide back office training and customer media for computers and mobile devices. The Cisco Show and Share application, part of DMS, and the Cisco Media Experience Engine (MXE). The Cisco Digital Media Manager maintains a repository of all video, for in-store signage and Web-based viewing, for both employees and customers.

“We were looking for a YouTube-like solution to train our store staff on new furniture,” says the company’s vice president of human resources. “The Cisco Show and Share application gives us that same functionality plus secure login, access to user-specific content, key word search, and many other features.”

Employees can view videos on new products, training programs, and even live Webcasts from company executives or guest speakers. Through the use of Microsoft Active Directory, the company can see what videos were viewed, by what stores, and when.

The Show and Share application has also made it possible for the creation and distribution of video content, both live and on-demand, to customers and prospects through the company’s Web site. The Cisco MXE enables the transcoding of video content, making the format appropriate for mobile devices so a salesperson on the phone with a customer can send a video link to the customer’s PC or phone to promote a particular product.

Business Results

Cisco DMS has proven its worth in the stores, in the back office, and over the Web. The furniture company is planning to increase the number of digital signs per store from one to four so that different content will promote different products in different areas of the stores. Cisco is also working with the company to integrate the Cisco DMS solution with touch screen kiosks, allowing customers to interact with the video library to obtain information on specific products while salespeople are busy serving others.

PRODUCT LIST

Digital Media Suite

- Cisco Digital Media Player 4400G
- Cisco Digital Media Manager
- Cisco Show and Share
- Cisco Media Experience Engine 3000

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Solutions for Retail, go to:

<https://www.cisco.com/web/strategy/retail/index.html>



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