

DIGITAL SIGNAGE

By Cynthia Wischart

The term “digital signage” never seemed quite right. Even as the industry used the phrase and we all understood what it meant, people always debated if there was a better way to describe the true potential. Of course, there are certainly times where electronic displays replace billboards or other public signage.

But as we’ve so often discussed, it’s more than “signage”, it’s a digital communication platform. As interactive displays fill our homes, cars, workplaces, and even our wardrobes, the digital signage ecosystem becomes even more relevant. With that in mind, let’s look at some developments in displays, players, signal distribution and software.

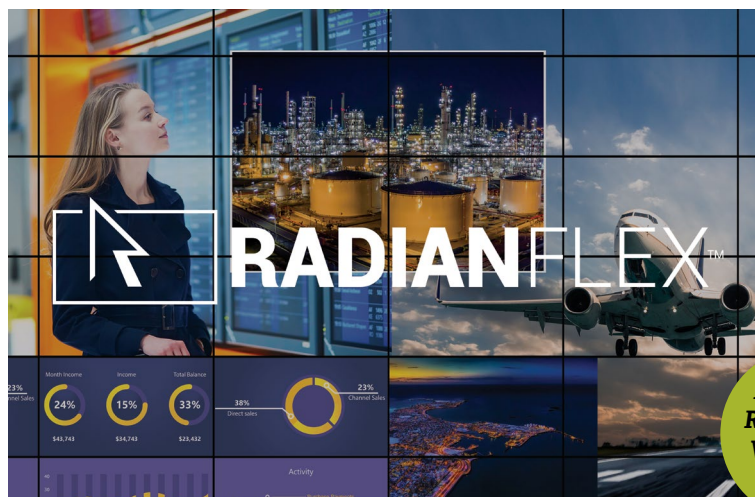


**AOPEN
Digital
Signage
Players**

AOPEN recently announced its new lineup of Digital Engine media players for commercial and enterprise solutions. The company says these Digital Engine media players are designed to deliver innovative three-, four- or six-screen solutions for QSR (quick-service restaurant) menu boards, video walls, digital advertisements and traffic/information displays. The **DE6340** second-generation 4-port digital signage player is the successor to the DE6140. The new player works with four-panel video walls and UHD menu boards. It’s AOPEN’s first AMD Ryzen embedded processor-based digital signage player with four 4K 60 Hz outputs and HDR support. This

continues AOPEN’s use of AMD products to power their digital signage solutions with 4K, rich content and other new technologies. AOPEN’s **DE6200** featuring AMD RX-421 embedded SoC steps up to solve the general lack of triple digital output solutions; it can deliver 4K promotional videos alongside

static information like menus and service information. The **DEV7610-X6** features an AMD E8860 GPU with six Mini DisplayPorts for multi-screen video wall solutions aimed at premium and corporate locations or critical operations such as control rooms. It features an aluminum front panel.



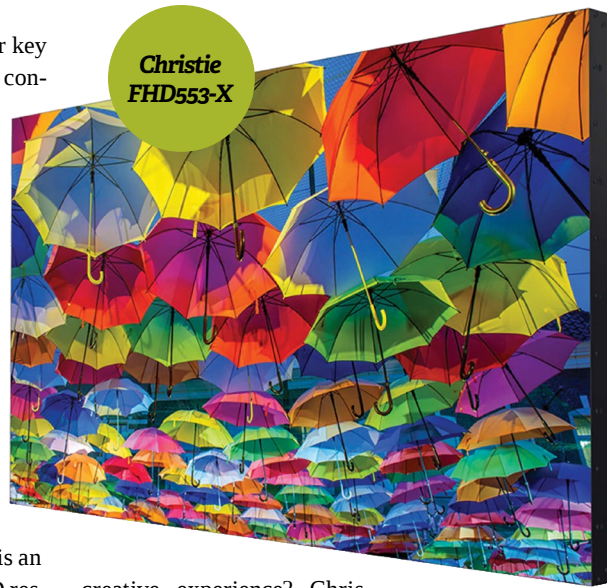
**Black Box
Radian Flex
Video Wall
Platform**

Black Box’s **Radian Flex Video Wall Platform** supports today’s standard of 4K 60fps video up to more than one billion pixels for a claim of limitless resolution—meaning it will also be 8K ready and beyond. To further future-proof the enterprise, there is no limit on the number of screens and endpoints that Radian Flex can display to. The solution also supports an unlimited number of inputs. Included SmartFrame technology that ensures optimal use of the video wall display area. This feature provides perfect picture quality and fit

to screen with minimal setup time. Other key features of Radian Flex include powerful content manipulation, schedule and restore capabilities, real-time control over displayed content, slide show and more. Radian Flex is offered in two suites: The Radian Flex Suite and the Radian FlexPro Suite. The Flex Suite is best fit for economic video wall installations that are not reliant on fail-safe operation. The FlexPro Suite includes dual controllers to ensure fail safe operation for mission-critical applications.

As we go to press, Christie has launched the newest member of the Ultra Series of LCD panels. The **FHD553-X** replaces the FHD552-X, and is an ultra-narrow bezel flat panel with full HD resolution, high pixel density and an LED-backlit screen. Suitable for indoor applications including corporate lobbies, boardrooms, museums, retail, sports venues, and more.

In addition to LCD displays, Christie's portfolio of digital signage solutions span from enormous large-format displays to flexible micro-tile and LED tile form factors to flexible and feature-rich projectors. Image processors such as Phoenix, Spyder, and Terra can be purpose-tailored to nearly any application, budget or network infrastructure up to SDVoE. There are many examples of what creative content producers can do with Christie's range of products, but what about



those who are newer to signage content and may not have the extensive

are interpreted for LED displays. The mounts feature keyhole mounting slots for easier wall attachment and offset display mounting to protect LED sides from friction. Customers can also use the mount's integrated plumb adjustment to correct wall imperfections. Chief built the mounts with a modular design, so customers can create a nearly endless variety of video wall configurations that are easy to specify and install. As a standard solution set, TiLED is stock-able and ready to ship when you need it – no custom lead times.

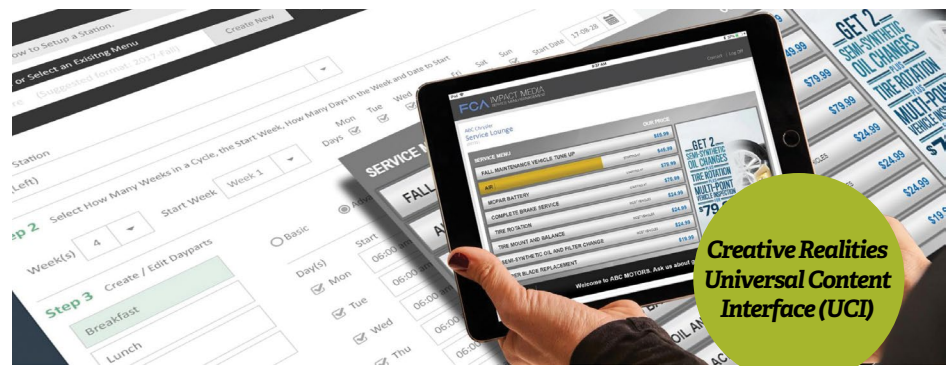
This year in some innovative additions to the ecosystem, DiGi Award winner Creative Realities **Universal Content Interface (UCI)** is a middleware platform that seamlessly connects unique and highly visual content management interfaces to the API of a content management platform. UCI is not a typical CMS—it is an interface to a CMS, an interface that speaks the language of the end user.

Also on the innovation front, Epson's unique, award-winning **LightScene** projector combines classy visuals with a robust content management that includes templates, effects, color filters, and customizable options—like the name suggests it's somewhere between a projector and a lighting instrument. Users can daisychain multiple LightScene projectors and utilize edge blending technology for versatile, impactful displays that just looked fresh in the year's tradeshow outings. A bright visual display system supports up to 2,000 lumens of color brightness and 2,000 lumens of white brightness.

For distribution, the Hall Research

creative experience? Christie's JumpStart may be the way in. It's a straightforward and robust content management solution for digital displays requiring up to six video inputs. Packaged with a media server, Christie JumpStart splits the difference between templating content creation and management and leaving enough room for creativity. For those who may think of Christie display and processing options as out of reach without high-end content chops, consider JumpStart as way to bridge that and start working in the Christie ecosystem. Particularly good with MicroTiles (instantly recognized) it supports nearly all the Christie signage displays.

In December Chief launched three mounts for its Tiled line—one each for Samsung, Absen, Unilumin LED displays—the three mounts can also work together to form a seamless video wall with any mix of the supported products from all of the manufacturers. With this line, familiar Chief benefits





Hall Research FHD264



Matrox MaeveX 6120

FHD264 is a family of HDMI-over-IP senders (encoders) and receivers (decoders) which distribute up to 64 Full-HD video signals to 250-plus displays on a 1Gb local area network (LAN). They also extend Serial RS-232 communications and IR remote signals. HDMI audio is extracted and available on a 3.5mm stereo jack on both the sender and the receiver. The FHD264-S sender provides local HDMI output. Fail-safe video routing is available through the receiver in case of a loss of video at the sender end. Each device provides a two-line front panel LCD that can be used to configure or monitor parameters such as IP settings, multicast group selection and assignment of device names. The RS-232 serial ports on each unit can be used in SoIP mode (Serial over IP). This allows third-party IP controllers to control peripheral equipment via RS-232. For example, if the RS-232 of a receiver is connected to a video projector, you can turn the projector on/off via telnet commands. All devices support IEEE 802.3af PoE (Power over Ethernet). When connected to a network switch with PoE, no additional power supply is needed. An optional power supply is included in the box.

It's not just manufacturers innovating in digital signage. Ingram Micro channel partners now have premier access to **Signage Valet**, a simple-to-use, fee-based, online tool that enables easy creation, editing and managing of digital signage content. Additionally, Ingram Micro is offering qualified channel partners a variety of pre- and post-build design services at no cost. These services can be used to create video walls, menu boards, kiosks, stadiums, sound and video, and more. These new content creation and design ser-



Epson LightScene projector

vices allow channel partners to own the life-cycle and customer experience from design creation to installation and ongoing service management. In other news, Ingram also named LG Pro AV/Digital Signage partner of the year for the second year in a row.

One of the most recent digital signage-



relevant announcements from Leyard and Planar wasn't a product but a new partnership with Lighthouse Technologies for the sports and entertainment markets. The two companies appeared together in December at the 2018 Baseball Winter Meetings to show off a range of sports venue signage and display solutions. Leyard and Planar's fine pitch LED and LCD offerings pair nicely with Lighthouse LED and more importantly with the deep relationships Lighthouse has in the market sectors with professional sports venues, Times Square, and major university and public facilities.

The Matrox **MaeveX 6120** delivers simultaneous dual 4K capture, stream, and record—with options to stream and record even more channels in different configurations—all on a standard one Gigabit Ethernet network. MaeveX 6120 features encoding capabilities that can deliver content to on-premises endpoints, to the cloud and inter-net services, and also



NEC Analytics Learning Platform (ALP)

record for later editing and viewing—all concurrently. Why does this matter to digital signage? Maevox 6120 presents an opportunity to stream multiple 4K content options to many on-site and/or multi-site endpoints from a single, standalone appliance.

NEC *Analytics Learning Platform* (ALP) is a complete platform including everything from consulting, software, hardware, cloud computing, customized software development, physical installation, software and hardware integration, integration into key content management platforms, and content creation capabilities. The platform also includes on-site, 24/7 service and maintenance, with hardware, software, and managed services support.

Late last year, Optoma announced it will unveil a new range of interactive flat panel



Optoma Creative Touch IFPD series

displays (IFPDs) at ISE 2019. The move signals that Optoma is no longer just a projection company, but a display company; more product



Peerless-AV Xtreme High Bright Outdoor Display



Packed with useful annotation tools, Optoma Creative Touch interactive flat panels combine 4K UHD resolution and 20-point multi-touch capabilities to make interactive collaboration easy in classrooms, lecture halls, boardrooms and other shared spaces.

Product features:

- 4K UHD resolution
- Up to 20-point multi-touch capabilities
- Ready-to-use whiteboard and annotation tools
- Blue Light Filter, anti-glare glass and wide viewing angle
- Plug and play compatibility with Windows, Mac and Chrome OS devices
- BYOD collaboration—wireless content sharing via iMirror and ScreenShare
- Built-in Cloud Drive with easy access to Google Drive and Microsoft OneDrive

Connect to an **interactive** world.

Introducing Optoma Creative Touch interactive flat panels.



Learn more about Optoma Creative Touch interactive flat panels at Optoma.com.

**Peerless-AV
Smart City
Kiosk**



announcements in that vein should come later this year. The new **Creative Touch IFPD** series will be available in 65", 75" and 86" formats and will have extensive connectivity with versatile plug and play compatibility with Windows, Mac and Chrome OS devices. They will offer wireless content sharing via iMirror and ScreenShare to encourage bring your own device (BYOD) collaboration.

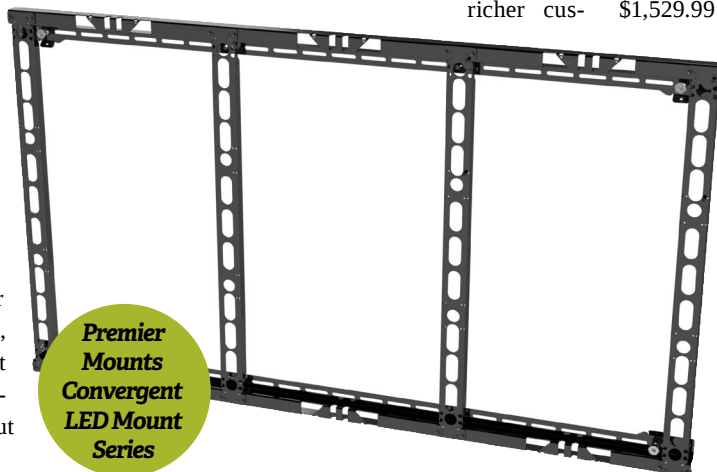
With a focus on functionality and aesthetics, Peerless-AV's **Smart City Kiosk** (KOP2549-XHB, KOP2555-XHB) is designed to be modern, approachable, practical, and endure the rigors of every-day use when unattended. The new all weather-rated solution is ideal for sharing community information, travel, and weather details, as well as wayfinding, advertising, entertainment, and more. Also from Peerless-AV, the **Xtreme High Bright Outdoor Display** incorporates a patented Dynamic Thermal Transfer system that allows the display to operate in extreme temperatures ranging from -31 degrees to 140 degrees. With the highest environmental rating in its class and a high TNI panel, the Xtreme High Bright Outdoor Display works especially well in direct sunlight without compromising the life of the panel or its color accuracy. Available in 43in., 49in., 55in., and 65in., the display features remote and local monitoring, 2500 nits of brightness, updated input panel/compartment and cord cover, IK10 rated impact resistant safety cover glass for protection against damage, completely sealed IP68 encasement to ward off any liquid or solid particle ingress, and IR control lockout

and button board lockout for secure installations. The Xtreme High Bright Outdoor Display is available now through Peerless-AV direct sales representatives and autho-rized distribution networks.

Premier Mounts' **Convergent LED Mount Series** brings an easy bracket system to LED mounts. Adjustability points across the mount tackles instances of extreme wall unevenness to ensure that no seams show throughout the video wall structure. Connector plates are easy to fasten both vertically and horizontally to build video walls of unlimited scalability

Sony's Pro BRAVIA displays are enhancing their flexibility and providing added value through the addition of a cloud-based **iRevo Digital Signage (iDS)** software installation, which works seamlessly with the BRAVIA's Android operating system, allowing the iDS App to install directly, eliminating the need for an additional external media player device. It also provides BRAVIA users with intuitive templates, interactive touch support, richer cus-

**Premier
Mounts
Convergent
LED Mount
Series**



**Sony iRevo
Digital Signage
(iDS) software**

tomization and the ability to publish from anywhere. The iRevo Author and Manage cloud apps interact with the iRevo Android application, which installs directly onto BRAVIA displays.

These cloud apps run on Amazon Web Services (AWS) Cloud and support a comprehensive list of input sources and content types for enhanced functionality. The iDS offering supports photos with animations, videos, music, documents, websites, widgets, RSS feeds and social media content, as well as content from sources that include network cameras, LAN services and live TV, making it easier to design, deploy and manage digital signage projects. Content, announcements and emergency messages can also be cast to BRAVIA displays via the iRevo iDS Cast mobile app for increased usability. The iRevo solution for Sony's BRAVIAs is regionally available now for all 2016, 2017 and current FWD and FW professional BRAVIA models, with the exception of FWD-48W650D, through a paid software license that retails for a suggested price of \$429.99 for a one-year subscription or \$1,529.99 for a five-year subscription.

Visix's beta version of their new **AxisTV Alert** software application gives customers time-saving workflows to deliver important updates and critical alerts across their digital signage system. Designed as a stand-alone platform, it can be used alongside any digital signage content management solution, including Visix's own AxisTV Signage Suite. The application is built around Common Alerting Protocol

Visix AxisTV Alert



West Pond MX-100 Personal TV Channel Creator



(CAP) standards, and easily integrates with popular third-party alerting suites like Aleratus and Rave Mobile Safety. The new product combines a central alert management application (AxisTV Alert) with playback software (AxisTV Siren) for an unlimited number of players, and can be used with both on-premise and hosted signage systems. AxisTV Alert uses asynchronous and multi-thread processing for high performance while consuming CAP messages from third-party mass notification vendors and rapidly communicating with media players running Siren. Messages can be important reminders or critical safety alerts, with users configuring standard fields like headline, description, instructions, contact and web link. Clients can also style their text messages with choices for font, color, style, background image and more, while the software automatically sizes message text to fit the display area on screen. Clients can have multiple messages running on the system at once, and can also override all screens for a select period of time. The beta version is available to all Visix clients, with the final product expected to launch in the first quarter of 2019.

The West Pond **MX-100 Personal TV Channel Creator** is a low cost, all-in-one, turnkey TV channel creation and distribution device that combines multiple streaming video sources, such as IP cameras, IPTV AV, pre-recorded TS files, and captured/encoded HD video into a single multi-program transport stream (MPTS). The resulting MPTS, which is compatible with US and international standards, is ready to view by one or all commercial and consumer TVs on a coax RF or IPTV network. The technology is applicable to facilities that wish to extend their TV

to enable multi-media signage on one or more dedicated public area TVs such as hotels, schools, universities, apartment buildings, health clubs, restaurants and pubs, senior living centers, churches, hospitals and more. To get a channel on the TV quickly, West Pond provides easy-to-use templates that simplify the creation of multimedia digital signage channels used to interleave advertisements

channel lineup or utilize the DTV network

with sporting events, promote hotel amenities, provide scheduled training videos, display live cameras, show the day's events and activities, welcome new guests and more. Templates can be customized without coding, just drop files in folders and select from lists. The MX-100 supports the FlexStream Device Manager (FlexDM) which allows users to remotely manage all of their FlexStream devices from any computer or smart phone. Priced at \$2,995 MSRP, the MX-100 is available now.

All Your FlexStream Smart Headends... Right At Your Fingertip

Create Custom Channels for In-House TV Networks

- Hotel amenities channel
- Resort attractions channel
- Stadium advertisements
- Senior living activities channel
- Public announcements & alerts
- Pub specials

Remotely manage from anywhere
Cloud based FlexDM™ on any
PC, tablet, or smartphone

Manage 1 or 100 locations
Anytime, anywhere



WEST POND
ENTERPRISES
www.westpond.com