Digital Signage for Transport: Samsung Expert Panel

From user experience to return on investment (ROI), our expert panel discuss the biggest talking points for digital signage and transport industries.

We have unique insights from Stephanie Gutnik (USA) - Vice President, Business Development at Broadsign, a cloud-based digital signage software solution provider, Tegan Worrall (Australia) - Creative & Marketing Manager at CV Media Signage, a digital and static signage supplier, Sandra Baer (USA and Europe) - President of Personal Cities, a smart cities strategy and implementation agency and Barry Frey (USA) - President & CEO of The Digital Place Based Advertising Association (DPAA).

The DOOH industry is expanding, with 16% growth predicted this year. Transport is a particular area of opportunity. Research has found that more than 2 in 3 public transport users would share a poster that was interesting or funny on social media, broadening DOOH’s reach beyond the transport hub. Beyond advertising, DOOH is of course also useful for practical applications such as wayfinding. With various applications, transport is a particularly important vertical for the market.

“Interactive outdoor signage has immense potential to change the digital out-of-home (DOOH) landscape,” says Chirag Shah, Digital Marketing & Analytics Team Lead at Samsung Display, “I am confident that over the next 2 years we will see more and more urban spaces and transport hubs adopt interactive digital signage.”

We spoke to experts from around the globe to hear their own thoughts on the challenges, opportunities and future of digital signage for transport.

**When it comes to digital signage for the transport industry, what is the most important challenge for you?**
Stephanie Gutnik:

We need to ensure that digital signage operators in transit are using software and hardware optimized for the transport segment vertical.

For example, given that some forms of transport networks are on the move, such as trains and buses, the content management system needs to offer robust geofencing capabilities so that location-based messaging is played appropriately.

Moreover, given that displays in this vertical are so highly viewed, secure systems are essential—preferably with SOC2 certification and emergency messaging capabilities.

“Innovation can be a challenge. It’s important to create and uncover different solutions that not only establish our clients as industry leaders but also position us as a change agent.”

Tegan Worrall (Australia), Creative & Marketing Manager at CV Media Signage

Sandra Baer:

The global urban population will reach 10 billion at the end of this century. According to the United Nations, 68% of the world’s population will be urban by 2050—up from 30% in 1950. The opportunity to embrace the increasing density and the demands of this transformation can only be realized through the integration of urban systems that create true engagement and coordination. Savvy city leaders are now preparing for a transportation future that enables travelers to be more informed, agile and mobile in their transportation decisions—one that leverages data to serve the constantly changing behaviors of urban dwellers.

The transport challenge is to truly understand what people want and then see the interdependence, the connections among travelers, transportation providers, public agencies and especially companies communicating to the public. Mobility for every resident and visitor and the digital signage that communicates transportation/transit options is a key element that needs to be coordinated across the urban ecosystem.
Barry Frey:

Now that screens have many of the properties that have grown digital advertising, we have seen our sector rise 13% globally year over year.

We see digital signage and transport communications as vibrant opportunities for cities, the advertising community and consumers/travelers. The opportunity and the challenge both rest in the ability to monetize these systems.

The great fuel for all growth of screen companies, hardware, software and municipalities is advertising. As more advertising shifts from other screens and devices to digital signage, it enables all sector participants to grow and enhance their business. We spend much of our time accelerating this shift for our member companies that include the whole digital signage, media, content, data and software ecosystem across the globe. Our challenge is making our members smart with best practices, tools, knowledge, systems and relationships to drive ad revenues outside the home.

**How does digital signage improve the user experience for transport users?**

Stephanie Gutnik:

Digital signage enables transit authorities to develop an instant and thorough communication with their passengers.

While viewing the next arriving train time is helpful, it is even more appreciated when reasons for delays can be provided in real time, along with suggestions for alternative routes.

Digital signage can make a user's trip more efficient via wayfinding and more fun by providing travelers with engaging content to learn from and interact with. The use of day-parting alone can assist brands in delivering insights and promotions to commuters, some adding social media for increased interactivity.
Tegan Worrall:

Digital signage has a number of capabilities in elevating user experience.

In the commuter and transport space, the key benefits for users include easy access to the information they need, clear directional wayfinding and real-time updates. Delivering accurate and timely information ensures that customers feel fully informed about where they are going and confident they will get where they need to be.

Touchscreens can be utilized for timely communications, real-time messaging and empowering customers to easily explore the options available to them. Increasingly, touch screen technology is being used to develop smart cities, with public places embracing the opportunity to integrate interactive capabilities into the built space.

Sandra Baer:

As the mobility landscape across cities changes, digital signage is a critical element connecting people in the urban environment. As a citizen embarks on their daily “journey”, access to mobility services—from trip planning to vehicle routing and parking, to sharing options, to booking and payment—is available on mobile websites and apps.

Today, the need for additional, real-time, location-based transportation information—for timely, “right here, right now” news is increasing. Useful visual information, through strategically placed signage, can transform and enhance the traveler’s experience. In addition, digital signage can keep people up to date on schedule changes and wait times. The best digital signage can also engage the users with current events and conditions, safety information, interesting programming and advertising that fits the travel experience.

The world’s smartest cities are constantly finding new ways to help people find their way around a city, improve their commute, feel safe in a city, find places to shop, eat and play, discover the city’s history, culture and the special attributes that make a city unique.
“In addition to all of the knowledge, information, safety and navigation provided, it is important in today's consumption-hungry environment to also enhance experiences with provided news, weather and entertainment. As many of our members provide this valuable content, it has been proven to attract viewership to these screens as well as advertising revenue.”

Barry Frey (USA), President & CEO, DPAA

**Within transportation, which segments or industries will benefit most from digital signage?**

**Stephanie Gutnik:**

Digital signage is already being implemented in ways that benefit travelers, communities and even the environment.

JCDecaux’s sustainable and smart bus shelters in Paris are a great example, offering a custom design suited to the area, real-time traffic information, USB ports and local advertising opportunities. Some even have solar panels and plant-covered roofs to boot.

**Tegan Worrall:**

Digital signage has a proven track record in many airports, car parks, train stations and bus stops, transforming the travel experience for users for the better.

Not only is digital signage helpful in managing and assisting customer flow and efficiencies, but it is also invaluable for staff and the efficient operations of the commuter and transport industry.

“Transit-oriented development and a better understanding of mobility around a city will benefit advertisers, retailers, real estate companies, data and payment companies. In fact, every business within the urban landscape from smarter transport/transit systems—one of the most effective ways to improve transit is through digital out of home signage.”

Sandra Baer (USA and Europe), President, Personal Cities
Barry Frey:

DPAA members own signage across all transportation systems and they are all vital. From trains to buses, airports to taxis, pedestrian mall areas to elevators, the screens and content all deliver benefits to cities, consumers and advertisers.

The key is making the content applicable to the environment and the audience. Of course, the relevance also provides that magic revenue fuel for all of this—advertising!

Can you give an example of an excellent digital signage used in the transport industry?

“During Cannes Lions 2018, McGarryBowen New York won a Silver Lion for their United Airlines campaign using taxi top displays to show the amount of time it would take to drive to Newark Airport instead of JFK.

Living in Manhattan and often flying via Newark, I believe this blend of real-time data and location was a smart way to alter New Yorkers' perceptions that JFK is closer than the United Airlines' hub.”

Stephanie Gutnik, Vice President, Business Development at Broadsign (USA)

Tegan Worrall:

In partnership with P2P Transport, CV Media & Signage recently developed Adflow, a mobile digital advertising platform. Adflow transforms the Australian static taxi advertising industry with an industry leading eye-catching, reliable and effective advertising medium. Versatile, dynamic and adaptable, Adflow’s geofencing capability allows advertisers to deliver tailored messages in real time as a taxi enters a certain location.
Sandra Baer:

In terms of US cities, Seattle and Pittsburgh are great examples of digital signage for transport.

With Pittsburgh, I’m particularly excited by their collaboration with TransitScreen who offers real-time displays of transport information. The PittSmartLiving initiative utilizes TransitScreen’s data feeds to help residents and visitors navigate the city, even when they are not in a transport hub. For example, in the lobby of the City-County Building, light rail arrival times for the nearby Steel Plaza station (and much more) are publicly displayed.

How can the transport industry measure return on investment (ROI) on digital signage?
Stephanie Gutnik:

Digital signage ROI objectives will vary depending on the venue and the participant.

If we are considering the transit authority, perhaps they hope to see a decrease in commuter complaints due to easier access to timely information. If it is an advertiser, they may wish to track multiple results such as store visits, sales lift and brand awareness. Often, retailers in transit hubs will advertise on the digital signage network given that a compelling message or promotion will drive travelers with dwell time to their venues.

Attention analytics solutions are highly applicable to the transport venue. Cameras installed into or near the displays anonymously measure viewable impressions of the screens, length of the viewing time, the demographics of the audience and even their emotions. This data enables dynamic content tailored to the groups in front of a screen, increasing time spent with messaging and campaign impact. It also provides real-time insights about effectiveness, so marketers can enhance their campaign as it runs. Grandi Stazioni's use of Quividi in Italian train stations is a good example.

Building on that, we can also use social media analytics to determine ROI from a social engagement perspective. For example, Exterion Media partnered with TINT to facilitate social media interaction in the London Underground for the World Wildlife Fund.

Tegan Worrall:

Calculating ROI and gaining a deeper understanding of customer or employee behavior is key to making the most of a digital signage investment.

Within the commute and transport industry, this can be measured through a range of indicators, including increased revenue or footfall, improved employee productivity, click-through rates on interactive screens or by measuring the customer's experience or attitude towards the company.

The implementation of smart wayfinding digital signs, for example, can lead to increased revenue. Company staff is able to focus on customer service and revenue generating activities instead of providing directions to customers.

Sandra Baer:

The smart city market opportunity is enhanced by strengthened information and communications technology.

Today, smart cities are increasingly leveraging connected sensors, cameras and analytics to create a better ROI.
This helps better coordinate the understanding of what people want and to truly listen to ‘all the voices’ in a city to find out what makes people happy in a place. What is it that makes people proud to live in a city? What assets does a city need to make it attractive, productive, economically vibrant—simply a great place to live, work and visit and, of course, use public transport in? With more information analyzed, we can discover the problems that a city or business can solve for transport users.

The advanced technology can drive stronger coordination within departments and across city agencies and community groups. Around transport, effective digital signage and video can improve traffic management, offer transit options and schedules, communicate public events and emergency situations.

Digital signage is also an ideal way to measure advertising value to businesses, providing important user characteristics to retailers/advertisers (detecting age, gender, behaviors, and emotions). This form of advertising also enables interaction with users and can improve the urban experience across a community, as well as sharing retail opportunities with visitors.

**Barry Frey:**

There are many data systems that DPAA Members provide to measure and also generate ROI. These include mobile device IDs, carrier data, visual recognition systems, audio detection and even Nielsen measurement.

Companies like GroundTruth, Quividi, AdMobilize, Tunity and others deliver the data needed. Additionally programmatic software systems like Broadsign Reach, Hivestack and others also help generate revenues.

**What future developments do you expect to see for the transport industry?**

**Stephanie Gutnik:**

Over the past year, the amount of discussion regarding autonomous vehicles has increased.

Digital signage networks, along with tech platforms and advertisers, are estimating what this will mean for audiences in transit and how to adapt in advance to ensure transport messaging retains, if not increases, its value to travelers.

**Tegan Worrall:**

The Australian OOH advertising segment is one of the fastest growing segments delivering 7% growth for 2017 and tipped to be worth more than $1 billion in 2018.

Digital OOH has become particularly attractive due to the ascendance of smart cities and explosion of location data, providing advertisers the opportunity to more effectively target and tailor their messages by being in the right location at the right time with the right message.
Another segment which is creating a wealth of opportunities is the development of smart cities. In Australia, Sydney Buses have commenced trialing digital bus stops through the use of e-ink signs. Linked to data from the Transport of NSW Open Data Team, the signs display real-time arrival time, capacity information, incident alert messages, planned disruptions due to construction and planned service changes for special events. The efficient performance of services in terms of punctuality and reliability has always been an issue in the transport sector. Providing real-time information allows commuters expectations to be effectively managed, which in turn assists in relieving their frustration.

Sandra Baer:

Exciting mobility trends in cities include data sharing, new transport technologies and data analytics. Smart signage really connects people to the city—what’s happening “right here, right now” is the mantra, whether it is local “news you can use”, upcoming events, traffic disruptions, ride sharing and scooter sharing locations, etc. As the urban ecosystem of players shares more data through data accessibility and open licenses, digital signage companies will be able to do a better job of serving the needs of advertisers and citizens.

The urban mobility scene is adopting new innovations—automated vehicles, automated aerial vehicles, drones and robotic delivery and all forms of micromobility—and these technologies will change the face of how we move and navigate a city.

Couple that with the burgeoning analytic capabilities—with sensors, cameras, IOT and machine learning, we can detect user gender, age, behavior. And as digital networks expand, more information about how people move around the city, where they shop, where they dine—all important information for the retail, transport, real estate development and the economic health and growth of the city.

Barry Frey:

I am very excited about the use of visual and audio recognition systems. By understanding the age, gender, mood and other aspects of people in front of the screen (all aggregated and anonymized data) plus vehicles in front of the screen, we can powerfully target and deliver to brands potent advertising solutions. Lamar Advertising delivered challenger ads when noticing cars that people were driving as one example of this.

“Today’s digital signage technology provides high brightness, high resolution and significantly lower power than earlier panels. Coupling this with recent digital and data innovations (such as location-based messaging, wayfinding and high-bandwidth data access) will dramatically improve the user experience across communities, particularly when using transport.”

Chirag Shah, Digital Marketing & Analytics Team Lead at Samsung Display
With new technologies supported by improved panels, there is a lot of potential for digital signage within the transport industry.

As Chirag Shah explains, its adoption will likely be sped up by influential events (such as sporting tournaments) and increased confidence in ROI: “When cities host global events, they have the opportunity to leverage this technology on a large scale—they can serve multiple languages and solve a number of crowd management functions with interactive digital signage. ROI is also very compelling and will turbo-charge the adoption.”

With urban living and smart cities on the rise, transport is a growth area that needs to be taken seriously and monitored closely by digital signage professionals. There will be challenges along the way but with increased accuracy of measurement and new use cases constantly emerging, the opportunity is certainly there.

For more expert insight from Sandra Baer, read our recent interview about smart cities identities, trends and challenges.