MOOD:MEDIA

# DIGITAL SIGNAGE BEST PRACTICES

Master the fundamentals to achieve maximum performance.

One of the great things about digital signage is that creating and managing content is incredibly easy – in some cases, almost too easy. If you're not careful (and if you don't bring some basic computer and design skills to the table), you can easily get carried away and create a total mess of content that doesn't drive the results your business needs. **If you're new to digital signage and prefer the DIY approach, here are some best practices to follow.**

# INTRO

Whatever you do, **DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP**. Without a clear content strategy in place, you're headed for trouble. Here are the essential questions to ask before you start to build out your content and visual playlists. With these questions answered, you'll have a clear understanding of what content you'll need, how you want it to rotate, and optimal update frequency.

# YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY

+ Who is your audience (who will be looking at the screens)?

+ Does your audience change throughout the day, week, month or seasonally?

+ What are the Top 3 objectives you want to accomplish with your digital signage?

+ Where are your screens located in your business? Where are they mounted and how far are they from your audience?

+ What is the dwell time exposure to your screens?

+ What are the Top 3 core messages you want to convey through your signage?

+ How do you want to convey your messages? (NOTE: Messages are not exclusive to copy - you can communicate and convey messages about your brand and the experience you are trying to create without text. For example, lifestyle images and animated art can impact how your viewers feel and complement the energy and mood you want to establish).

+ Who will be responsible for managing your content?

+ Do you have all of the resources you need?

+ The most effective messaging combines short text and simple images or graphics.

+ Create a visual hierarchy for your messaging. Make sure that the most important parts of your messages are the first things your audience sees.

+ Place pictures on the left and text on right. The brain is more efficient at processing left-aligned images.

+ Use brightness and color contrast to highlight items.

+ Using color and high contrast between the foreground and background can make content easier on the eyes.

+ Try to use standard aspect ratios (16:9) as much possible for your screen configurations. Doing so makes it easier to repurpose video and images from other marketing advertising mediums while reducing design and reformatting time.

# DESIGN & LAYOUT
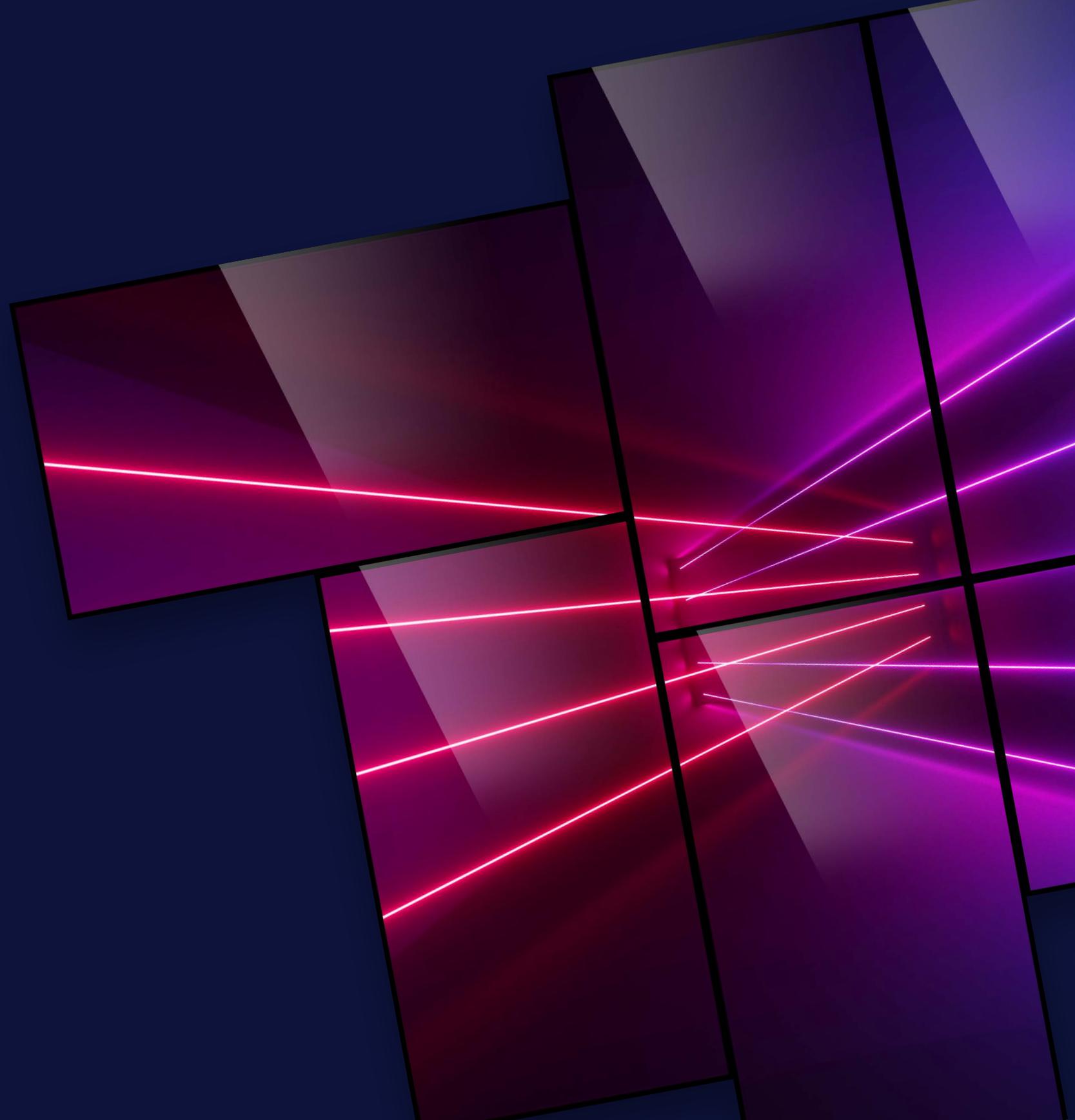
+ Always keep it simple.

+ Create single, strong and clear messages.

+ Use short phrases with large font sizes in **bold**.

+ Shorter words and phrases are easier to read – aim for phrases with 3-4 words. Keep in mind that a single word can draw a lot of attention.

+ Use strong action verbs in concise phrases with common language for easier comprehension by viewers.

+ Each screen should only contain one focused message.

+ It's ideal to break up longer thoughts into multiple sections – just be aware that your viewers may not have a chance to see every slide in a series.

+ Always include a call-to-action with each message.

# GENERAL COPY

+ Use sans serif-type fonts for the best legibility.

+ Keep your font sizes as large as possible, especially for your main messages.

+ The absolute smallest font size you should use is between 20-30 points, at a viewing distance of 10 feet.

+ A general rule of thumb is that your text should appear one inch taller for every 10 feet of distance between your customers and the screen.

# TEXT & FONTS

+ Adding motion can help attract more attention to your message.

+ Keep animation and motion simple. Being too heavy-handed with motion graphics can create a disorienting visual experience for your audience.

+ Add transitions between messages and segments to provide a visual cue that the content is new/changing.

+ Try to leave the main message static and add subtle motion to secondary elements on the screen.

# ANIMATION & MOTION

+ Know the average dwell time in the area around a specific screen and adjust the length of your messages accordingly. For example, if it takes customers six seconds to pass a screen, then they will probably only be able to read the screen for four seconds.

+ Exterior or street-facing screens should have very simple, bold and short messaging to attract attention, since customers are passing by quickly.

+ Screens at cash wraps or other waiting areas can have longer messaging since the dwell time is longer.

+ To test how long to keep your message on the screen, read it out loud. If you can read it out loud before it leaves the screen then your customers should be able to read and comprehend the message.

# MESSAGE/ SEGMENT LENGTH

+ Similar to the strategy for individual message length, the length of your entire playlist should be determined by where the screen is placed and the average dwell time of a customer in that area.

+ Repeat key messages in your digital signage often. Also consider using more than one segment to deliver the same message in a different design or wording.

# PLAYLIST LOOP LENGTH

+ Be sure to update content regularly - no less frequently than every 3 months. Otherwise, your regular viewers will ignore the screens.

  - **Trick:** create multiple layouts or versions of the same message in different looks.

+ Create a large library of "evergreen" content that can be swapped in and out often.

+ If you don't have a new message to display, you should change the appearance of the campaign to keep viewers engaged.

  - **Trick:** you can rearrange the components of the messaging or change the images and colors.

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# CONTENT UPDATE FREQUENCY

As we mentioned, with some basic computer and design skills, managing digital signage content is pretty simple, but you need to follow some best practices in order to avoid common mistakes. More importantly, doing so will help you make the most out of your digital signage.

**Need more info or some help? Contact us** for more information. All of our digital signage solutions come with full training and support, and we also offer professional content creation and management services.

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# CONCLUSION

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