

In-Store Media Enhances the Shopper Experience

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GROCERY DIVE

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In today's competitive grocery retail environment, providing an entertaining, educational and engaging in-store experience for shoppers has become more important than ever.

The adoption of online shopping accelerated during the pandemic, which is placing increased pressure on grocery retailers to drive traffic into their brick-and-mortar locations and create synergies between their digital and physical offerings.

Online grocery shopping, including delivery and store pickup, totaled about \$98 billion in 2021, growing about 2% as a share of overall grocery spending, according to the Brick Meets Click/ Mercatus Grocery Shopping Survey.¹ The research found that many of the behaviors that consumers adopted in the early days of the pandemic, such as buy-online, pickup-in-store (BOPIS), have continued to drive online sales growth.

In this environment, grocers need to ensure that they are optimizing the sales potential of their physical stores by providing a shopping destination that is both efficient and enjoyable.

¹ <https://www.brickmeetsclick.com/eshopper-emarket-report>



Although the pandemic influenced consumers' attitudes about some in-store experiences, research from Lightspeed/Mintel shows the importance that consumers place on education, entertainment and engagement. More than a third of consumers surveyed — 34% — said that before the pandemic they liked retail shopping experiences that allow them to learn something new, for example. In addition, 30% said they liked in-store experiences that allow them to get “hands-on” with digital technology, and 20% said they want to be entertained.

These attitudes reflect consumers' increasing perception of online and physical shopping as a blended “phygital” experience where they may start a shopping journey doing product research on a home computer, for example, and continue it in-store. Once in-store, their digital connectivity continues with the use of their mobile devices, including potential interactions with in-store technology via mobile apps, digital coupons and other online media.

Recent research found that 93% of retailers expect an increase in the use of mobile devices in stores by 2025, and 83% anticipate an increased amount of technology deployed in stores.²

² [Incisiv 2022 Connected Retail Experience Study](#)

“Consumers are so used to digital content and digital experiences that they expect it in almost all of their shopping experiences,” said John Sheehan, Global VP, Visual Product Marketing at Mood Media. “They can jump between those worlds with ease by simply using the device that they have in their pocket, or the computer when they are shopping at home.”

Consumers want to be provided with useful information while they shop, and they want to interact with the store while they are shopping, he said. This has created a demand for digital displays among both retailers and consumers.

“Digital signage and displays, and digital information, can no longer be a curiosity amongst grocers,” said Sheehan. “It’s a necessity.”

34%

CONSUMERS SAID THAT BEFORE THE PANDEMIC THEY LIKED RETAIL SHOPPING EXPERIENCES THAT ALLOW THEM TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW

THE EVOLVING ROLE OF DIGITAL SIGNAGE



SALAD

4.8 ★★★★★

Block kerry , Carrot , Corn , Tomato ,
Purple cabbage , Frillice iceberg

\$5.3

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Digital displays can be used to meet a wide range of consumer needs in the store, including menu boards, wayfinding and providing product information. They offer a dynamic, versatile messaging platform that offers numerous advantages over traditional static signage.

In addition to giving retailers the ability to change out their messaging at the push of a button, digital signage also drives cost savings from the decreased use of printed materials. Each digital display can carry dozens of different messages without the need for the time-consuming labor that would normally go into switching out posters or other static displays.

When used in the back of the house to provide training, education or entertainment for workers, digital signage can also become a tool for employee retention, further adding to the potential cost savings.

Perhaps the most obvious use for digital displays is in the prepared-foods area of the supermarket. Quick-service restaurants have embraced digital signage because of its ability to drive sales and the efficiencies it introduces in the form of instant menu changes.

Digital displays also have proven to be effective sales drivers when used as menu boards in grocers' prepared foods areas. In a 60-day case study³ at an Earth Fare supermarket in Charlotte, N.C., Mood Media found that its menu board installation drove a 10% increase in on-site food sales at the store's café.

The potential for digital displays in the grocery sector extends well beyond listings of menu items in the deli department, however. Increasingly, supermarket operators are using digital displays to help convey brand messaging, which could include reinforcing the retailer's positioning around value or customer service, or could involve corporate messaging around topics such as sustainability, for example. Digital displays can also work in tandem with audio broadcasts, so that messages in the two media reinforce each other.

Screen locations and formats have also evolved. Retailers lately have been interested in digital endcap and shelf-edge solutions, which utilize smaller screens and generally display information about the specific products displayed in those locations. In the case of endcaps, retailers can, for example, create a display for a specific product or category using a small display screen atop the endcap and LED displays along each of the shelf edges.

³ https://us.moodmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Earth_Fare_Case_Study.pdf

COMMON USES FOR DIGITAL DISPLAYS AT RETAIL

- **Menu boards in prepared foods areas**
- **Product promotions on endcaps and on-shelf**
- **Corporate branding messages throughout store**
- **Seasonal/event promotions**
- **Employee engagement/training/entertainment**

Source: Mood Media



Organic

CONTENT WITH A PURPOSE

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One of the most important trends emerging in digital displays is the customization of content for individual store locations, based on demographics, said Murray Dameron, Creative Director at Mood Media. This hyper-local content allows retailers to optimize their messaging for customers at each individual location.

Price-sensitive customers might see more messaging around value and special offers, for example, while customers in upscale areas might see more messaging around customer service. Messaging can also be tailored for each store around different times of day and different seasons to reflect different shopper segments and individual shopping occasions, such as holidays and other seasonal events.

In addition, Mood Media has been working with some retailers to tailor messages for different dayparts, so that some displays might be targeted to shoppers who typically visit the store in the mornings, for example, while other displays are designed for shoppers who visit in the afternoons.

Each digital screen should also have its own distinct objectives and content strategy, based on its location within the store, Sheehan noted.

PRICE-SENSITIVE CUSTOMERS MIGHT SEE MORE MESSAGING AROUND VALUE AND SPECIAL OFFERS, FOR EXAMPLE, WHILE CUSTOMERS IN UPSCALE AREAS MIGHT SEE MORE MESSAGING AROUND CUSTOMER SERVICE.



DIGITAL CONTENT TIPS

For example, a digital display that customers walk past at the store entrance probably should not carry a lengthy message about the retailer's sustainability efforts — that type of message would be better suited for a screen where the customer has a longer dwell time, such as in front of the deli counter or at the checkout.

Another trend that has gained traction during the pandemic has been the use of QR codes in digital displays. These scannable hyperlinks allow customers to download information to their phones or link to websites that offer additional information, such as recipes that feature specific products, for example, said Dameron.

“That’s creating some interaction, which is always good,” he said. “The customer can take that recipe or product information home with them, and take that experience with them.”

- **In general, keep messages short and direct**
- **Vary digital messages based on individual store demographics**
- **Change messages throughout the day based on shopper patterns**

Source: Mood Media



DIGITAL DISPLAYS AND ANALYTICS

Increasingly, digital displays are also tied into record-keeping and analytics, allowing retailers to evaluate sales volumes for specific products promoted on digital displays at certain times, for example, said Morgan van Baren, Global VP of Product Management & Delivery at Mood Media. Retailers and suppliers working together on product promotions can also measure the performance of digital ad displays against actual sales.

Digital displays can also be tied to inventory levels, so that promotions for certain items could be suspended if inventories fall below a certain level, for example, and could be reinstated when inventories are replenished. That's an especially important capability at a time when supply chains are challenged and product availability is fluctuating, van Baren said.

As retailers have grown more savvy about the value of data analytics in optimizing the shopping journey, they are incorporating display screens into their analyses, he said.



BACK-OF-HOUSE APPLICATIONS

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Retailers have also found that digital displays can be useful in employee communications, whether they are used for training, to convey information or simply to provide entertainment.

Retailers from apparel to grocery stores have put digital screens to work in back-of-house locations for these purposes, said Sheehan.

“This has been driven by the need to stay at the forefront of communicating with their employees — motivating them, encouraging them, rewarding them for the hard work they’re doing over the past two years,” he said.

Given the high costs involved in employee turnover, providing rewarding experiences for store-level workers has become even more important in today’s tight labor market.

“We have found that digital signage versions of training reduces the staff attrition rate considerably because they feel like they’re engaged,” said Sheehan, citing restaurant video training as an example. “Employees feel like the corporate office cares for them and is talking to them.”

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JOHN SHEEHAN

Global VP,
Visual Product Marketing at Mood Media



WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A DIGITAL DISPLAY SYSTEM



lettuce
morning glory
water mimosa
coriander
parsley

9\$

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Retailers considering the implementation of digital display systems should prepare to build in enough flexibility so that their capabilities can evolve over time as the retailer's needs evolve, van Baren suggested.

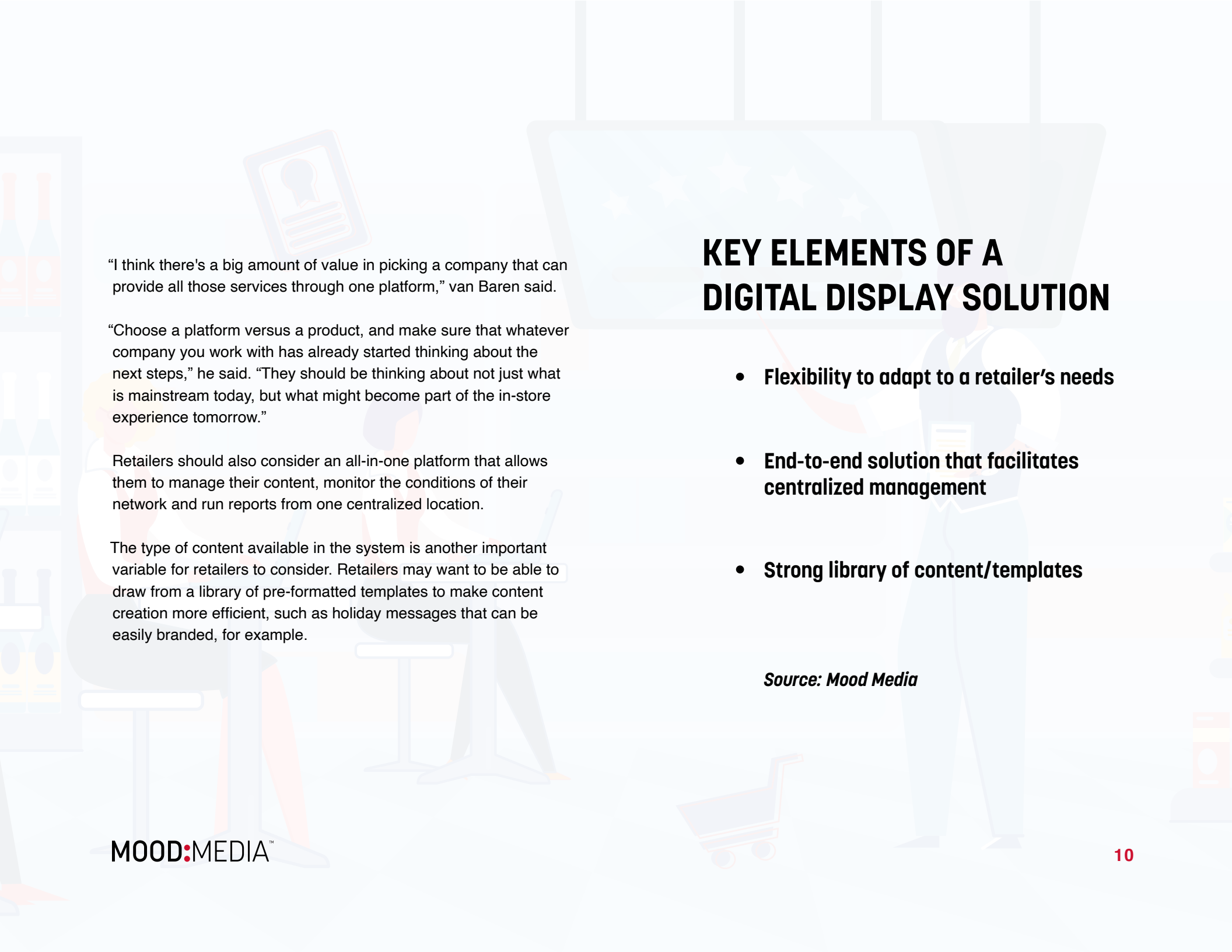
"When it comes to hardware, make sure you're picking a partner or a set of technologies that's fairly open and flexible," he said.

Retailers should consider that they will likely want to aggregate data from their digital display systems, and doing so with one single system will make that process much easier than attempting to aggregate data from multiple systems. The systems should also not only allow the input of data from third-party systems, but should work in the opposite direction as well, and allow third-party systems to access the display screen system's data.

"RETAILERS CONSIDERING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITAL DISPLAY SYSTEMS SHOULD PREPARE TO BUILD IN ENOUGH FLEXIBILITY SO THAT THEIR CAPABILITIES CAN EVOLVE OVER TIME AS THE RETAILER'S NEEDS EVOLVE"

MORGAN VAN BAREN

Global VP of Product Management
& Delivery at Mood Media



"I think there's a big amount of value in picking a company that can provide all those services through one platform," van Baren said.

"Choose a platform versus a product, and make sure that whatever company you work with has already started thinking about the next steps," he said. "They should be thinking about not just what is mainstream today, but what might become part of the in-store experience tomorrow."

Retailers should also consider an all-in-one platform that allows them to manage their content, monitor the conditions of their network and run reports from one centralized location.

The type of content available in the system is another important variable for retailers to consider. Retailers may want to be able to draw from a library of pre-formatted templates to make content creation more efficient, such as holiday messages that can be easily branded, for example.

KEY ELEMENTS OF A DIGITAL DISPLAY SOLUTION

- **Flexibility to adapt to a retailer's needs**
- **End-to-end solution that facilitates centralized management**
- **Strong library of content/templates**

Source: Mood Media

A man and a woman are looking at a smartphone together in a grocery store. The man is on the left, wearing a light-colored trench coat over a yellow shirt. The woman is on the right, wearing a dark sweater and a red watch. They are both looking down at the phone. In the background, there are shelves stocked with various products. The word "CONCLUSIONS" is written in large, white, bold letters across the middle of the image.

CONCLUSIONS

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As consumers embrace the melding of their online and physical shopping environments, retailers have the opportunity to enrich their shopping experience with the strategic use of digital display screens.

These technologies can be deployed to achieve multiple objectives throughout the store, from providing prices and calorie counts on menu boards to pitching products on endcaps and reinforcing corporate values on screens at the checkout. Their flexibility and ease of use give them clear advantages over the costly, static signage retailers have historically used to convey information in their stores.

In the back of the house, meanwhile, digital screens are providing information, training and entertainment to employees, aiding in retailers' efforts to attract, develop and retain good workers.

Mood Media and its Harmony Brand Experience Platform offer an all-in-one, end-to-end solution for digital display and audio systems that enable retailers to create engaging, informative and entertaining environments for customers and employees. The company has experience with video and audio systems in myriad venues across the U.S. and around the world.

Visit **Mood Media** to learn how to take your in-store experience to the next level.



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The World's leading in-store media solutions company
dedicated to elevating Customer Experiences.

studio / ID

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