

# The Future of Digital Signage and Advertising

## Four key trends that will redefine how a brand engages with its customers

A quick-service restaurant can enhance customer engagement, increase sales and boost its brand image by focusing marketing efforts on four trends in digital signage and advertising: self-service kiosks, free Wi-Fi via mobile hotspots, simplified digital menu boards and implementing data-driven technologies.

**1. Self-service/self-ordering via kiosk:** According to a [2016 survey](#) from the National Restaurant Association, 37 percent of restaurant operators consider the customer ordering process to be the most important area of development in the next five years. Over the next 18 to 24 months, quick-service restaurants will place a heavier focus on self-ordering at a digital kiosk. Self-ordering helps to simplify the ordering process for both customers and employees, decreases order errors, and customers like the sense of control over the order.

Businesses can capitalize on taking orders via a kiosk by upselling at the point of sale. Customers ordering digitally are [proven](#) to order more than if they interact with employees, and displaying targeted promotional items or meal add-ons on the kiosk screen will increase the amount they spend.

Businesses that utilize frequent-diner programs also can track customer buying habits via a kiosk, creating new opportunities to upsell and market



to current customers with promotions based on past purchases or a digital pop-up coupon to nudge them into an extra item.

**2. Mobile hotspots:** A surefire way to lure in customers is offering free Wi-Fi – with a catch, of course: A customer has to opt in, giving a business the opportunity to show them a 30-second video on the brand's offerings, or engage with the customer via device through pop-up promotions.

This allows a business to direct targeted marketing toward customers they know are already within their locations. Creating a mobile hotspot also helps amplify sales, because customers spend more time inside a location and may decide to make a second purchase while they browse the Internet – a cup of coffee or dessert, for example.

**3. Simplification:** Many quick-service restaurants are moving to more simplified menus in order to make their digital menu boards more effective.

Some brands in their second or third phase of using digital menu boards are learning from the past, and one of those lessons is that less can be more when dealing with digital menu boards. Whether they are deployed indoors or in a drive-thru, making it easy to read the menu and place orders is of paramount importance. The fewer items on a board, the easier it is to read,





which, especially in a drive-thru, helps route customers in and out faster.

Simplification helps with selling, too: By analyzing the best-selling items for each location, a quick-service restaurant can display the 50 most popular items on digital menu boards and use another display for daypart special items or flash limited time offers (LTOs).

Additionally, in preparation for the Food and Drug Administration mandate on providing calorie counts, which [goes into effect](#) in spring 2017, brands are paring down digital menus to account for the extra real estate this information will take up, and becoming more focused on what they choose to place on a digital board, based on data.

**4. Data-driven technologies:** Analytics will continue to play a part in quick-service restaurants as they fine-tune the timing of their promotions and advertising to target certain demographics through digital advertising campaigns to help increase sales. Analyzing the type of customers in a store during a given time of day or day of the week helps a business determine an audience's buying habits and lets it deliver more meaningful content on digital displays and menu boards.

Analytics also play into the self-ordering function of kiosks, as using

information stored on frequent-buyer accounts can help upsell items. [Fifty-three percent of restaurant operators](#) say they would implement predictive ordering if it was available, and the success of predictive ordering would be contingent on analyzing past orders based on individual customer, time of day and other factors.

Automatic menu-price adjustment based on demand is also desirable – [36 percent of restaurant operators](#) say they would implement it if available – and using digital menu boards would facilitate this technology. Coupled with back-end analytics to track when a pricing change would be beneficial, a digital menu board could be updated seamlessly and automatically, increasing sales and/or spend per check for a business.

One trend that will never go out of style is the push for more effective customer engagement. Using technologies like digital menu boards and kiosks in the ordering and advertising processes provides an additional level of engagement and boosts customer satisfaction, which will increase sales and bring in repeat business – keeping revenue trending upward.



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