

Case Study

Industry: Retail

The Ferney Group

The background

The Ferney Group is an established retail cooperative comprised of 67 independent hardware businesses, making it the largest purchasing organization in the Netherlands. With more than 150 outlets across the Netherlands and Belgium, Ferney is continuously looking for new, innovative marketing tools to enable each cooperative member to maximize its sales while keeping costs under control.

One of the latest marketing tools Ferney has pursued is digital signage. Specifically, the organization decided to install it in each of the stores, as part of a network that would include a central control platform as well as a report-back facility and the ability for content to be customized locally in each store.

The solution

The digital signage appliance chosen for this complex application is the integrated hardware/software appliance currently sold in the U.S. and elsewhere as the Black Box™ iCOMPEL™. The Ferney Group decided this network appliance was the best solution for its needs because of its scalability and its central control and local content customization (“ad-hoc”) capabilities.

The combination of these features enabled Ferney to implement the network solution it wanted. From a central control platform, the organization used the appliance’s preloaded design software to create eight screen layouts that would be distributed and shown on store screens according to a predetermined schedule.

However, Ferney also set it up so two of these layouts could be customized by the individual stores according to their unique needs. Each of these adaptable layouts have five zones, four of which are designated as “ad-hoc” zones that allow the independent businesses to tailor zone content to their local market requirements.

For instance, in some cases, a store may sell a different mobile phone than other stores in the network. To accommodate this, one of the screen layouts developed by Ferney enables the individual store to replace the type of mobile phone shown in the layout with one they actually sell.

The digital signage appliance has also given Ferney excellent feedback on how each store positions itself and which products are the most important to each store’s local market. Using the appliance’s central control reporting functionality, Ferney can receive this feedback and then produce a printed catalog with relevant content and product selection for a particular store.

The end result

With the edge over its retail competition, Ferney has achieved significant ROI since the installation of the digital signage appliance in its network of stores. This has even led to the Ferney recruiting three full-time staff members who maintain the smooth running of the digital signage network across all stores in the cooperative.