

Optimized Web Page Sample

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Wait Warping?

Have you had your wait warped lately? Would you even know if you had?

Wait warping is a term that could only have been invented by the advertising industry, home to unusual jargon like “bugs”, “tickers”, and “pods”. It refers to the creation of a *perception* of shorter wait times for customers. Wait warping is made possible by digital signage (a.k.a. narrowcasting), an effective and increasingly popular advertising medium that distracts customers from clockwatching as they wait for service.

Catching a Captive Audience

While digital signage has many uses – branding, point-of-purchase advertising, creating ambience – it has proven ideal for locations where the audience is truly captive. Whether they are riding the train to work or waiting in the dentist’s office, digital signs grab their attention and give them something to focus on besides the time they are spending or, depending on their perspective, wasting.

Consider the hallmarks of digital signage - video displays of relevant information and marketing messages combined with entertainment, or at least presented in an entertaining manner – and it becomes obvious how this technology has spawned the concept of wait warping. The appeal for businesses is obvious – make customers happy so they will come back time and again – and the applications span all manner of retail stores and professional offices:

- We’ve all endured long waits for medical appointments. Doctors and dentists are using digital signage to combine short, informative blurbs about their services with creative presentation to occupy patients while they wait.
- Putting their huge screens to work for them, movie theatres have long known the advantage of narrowcasting messages. Advertisements for concessions are interspersed with Hollywood gossip and trivia to engage viewers while they wait for the feature presentation.
- Hotels use digital signage networks near the registration desk to promote hotel services and local attractions to guests waiting to check in.

Tiger Lily Media

Phone: 416.824.5478

www.tigerlilymedia.ca

E-mail: crystal@tigerlilymedia.ca

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- Public transit has gotten into the digital narrowcasting game in a big way. Subway platforms and commuter trains are now home to small screens that present useful information to passengers. News feeds, weather forecasts, and sports scores draw eyeballs to the screens and the ads that are also displayed there.
- Talking about captive (and often confused) audiences, how about an airport? Airport authorities are beginning to realize that the potential of digital signs goes way beyond departures and arrivals information. Wayfinding, promotion of restaurants and stores in the airport, boarding instructions and restrictions - all can be communicated easily and effectively with digital signage.

Warping the Wait Works Wonders

We often hear about media saturation in today's world. With ads reaching people all day every day - even on staircases and elevators – you might suspect a certain level of advertising fatigue by the time an individual reaches the doctor's office or subway platform.

In fact, the reverse is true. Because digital signage is entertaining, and because it keeps people occupied while waiting, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Instead of resenting the messages, customers actually appreciate being given something to do while they wait. This positive feeling translates into a better customer experience and a greater likelihood of repeat business and higher sales.