Mvix

The Business Case for Visual Employee Communication: Digital Signage

CHAPTER 1

The State of Effective Employee Communication

CHAPTER 2

Impact of Effective Communication on Customer Experience

CHAPTER 3

Using Leaderboards to Enhance Communication

CHAPTER 4

Supercharging Communication with Gamification

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

CHAPTER 1

The State of Effective Employee Communication

Effective employee communication goes beyond sending emails and putting up posters around the office. As the demands placed on corporate workers continue to grow, communication between managers and employees has never been more important.

Gallup, a top public opinion research firm, reported that consistent communication in the workplace is connected to higher levels of engagement.

What exactly is employee engagement, who is an engaged employee and why is he/she so important?

According to Kevin Kruse, a professor of history at Princeton University:

"Employee engagement is the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals. This emotional commitment means engaged employees actually care about their work and their company. They don't work just for a paycheck, or just for the next promotion, but work on behalf of the organization's goals."

That is what engagement looks like. It's when employees feel valued, secure, supported, and respected.

Successful employee engagement is earned. Employers can't demand it, expect it or manipulate it by adjusting compensation. They have to earn it. Earning it involves moving employees along stages of awareness to understanding to acceptance and finally to commitment. Effective employee communication will move employees through the first three stages.

1.1. The Importance of Effective Employee Communication

Let's dig a little deeper into why effective employee communication is important.

When employees feel connected to their organizations, productivity skyrockets. According to a McKinsey Global Institute report, productivity is 20% to 25% higher in organizations with connected employees.

This can potentially account for an additional $900 billion to $1.3 trillion in additional revenue within the top four commercial sectors; consumer packaged goods, retail financial services, advanced manufacturing, and professional services.

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

"What if, and I know this sounds kooky, we communicated with the employees."

Lack of effective communication can be very costly. Poor communication leads to disengaged employees who, according to studies by the Queens School of Business and Gallup, have 37% higher absenteeism and 49% more accidents. Disengaged employees also take more sick days — 6.19 vs 2.69 for engaged ambassadors. These can be very costly in the way of lost productivity and reduced workplace morale.

Communication issues also produce high employee turnover. Poor communication can contribute to workplace stress which leads to an increase of almost 50% in voluntary turnover. Replacing these employees is costly — the Center for American Progress estimates that replacing a single employee costs approximately 20% of that employee's salary. In the healthcare industry alone, employee turnover creates an annual minimum loss of more than 5% of an organization's total operating budget.

Reducing these costs is a key benefit associated with effective employee communication efforts. This is critical in Corporate America where doing more with less is a standard operating procedure

1.2. Industry-Specific Needs

Effective employee communication is important across all market sectors, although some rely on it more than others. According to GetApp research, nearly half (43.4%) of small business owners think healthcare is the industry where employee communication is most important, followed by education, hospitality, retail, and the financial sector.
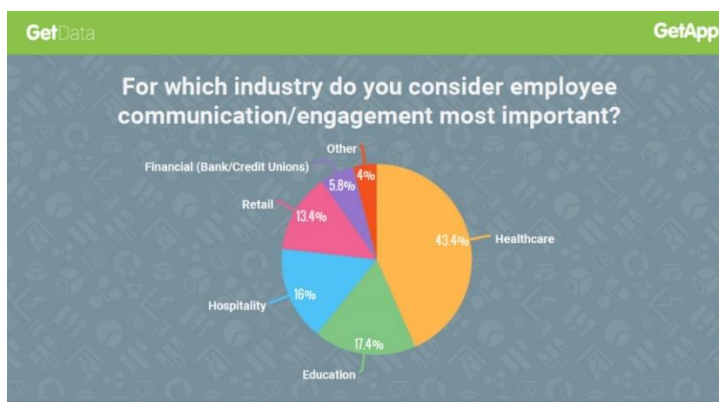
Communication breakdowns between caregivers almost always lead to worsened patient outcomes, including preventable medical errors that are estimated to cause 200,000 deaths each year. Bridging these communication gaps would improve the quality of care and hospital efficiency.

Effective communication is also extremely important in manufacturing plants. Most employ large numbers of people who need to collaborate over different shifts and locations. An error in just one section of the production process can be detrimental to the entire process. And remember that most employees in the manufacturing industry don't have access to standard communication tools like emails or phones. For this reason, the ability to communicate effectively and efficiently is very important. The more employees are aware of, the more empowered they are to make informed decisions.

Education is another sector where effective communication is needed. Professionals in this industry are tasked with educating and guiding young minds who are the future of the country. It's critical that communication between these employees is transparent, open, fast, easy and most important relevant.

1.3. Challenges in Effective Employee Communication

One of the biggest challenges of employee communication is getting employees' attention. Employees are being constantly hit by information from every source imaginable.

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

Their attention is being demanded by a myriad of content, most of which is distracting. Internal communicators want them to be aware of everything. But they are getting overwhelmed and drowning in information that's not helping them get better at their jobs.

The second problem is the channel themselves. Any one office will have multiple channels of communication: digital signage, email, phone, meetings, intranet, bulletin boards, podcasts, text etc. The problem here is that they are not cohesive. It's a classic case of multichannel communication instead of omnichannel communication. The transition from one channel to another is very clunky and distracting. There is also a lot of redundancy — some messages do not need to be communicated through all channels. And keeping the info updated can be a challenge. If one piece of information changes, multiple channels have to be updated separately. This can lead to employees automatically phasing out the repeated info/channel as "white noise," running the risk of missing important information that's needed in order to be productive.

The third challenge is the context of the information. Most times, the information is more directive than communicative. It focuses on the "what" rather than the "why." Communication needs to be informative rather than authoritative. It should show how a certain program, policy or procedure will make the employee and the company more successful.

Another challenge is the lag in communicators adapting to changing employees. Today's employees want to have a say. They want meaningful dialogue. They need to be listened to and to help shape what they find useful. They're also tech-savvy and heavy users of mobile and social media. Nearly two-thirds of Americans now use social networks, up from 7% when Pew Research Center began tracking social media usage a decade ago.

This shift in the way adults communicate in their personal lives has also changed how they expect to communicate within the workplace. But most organizations are slow to respond to these shifting communication needs. They are not nimble enough to give employees what they need, as fast as they need it.

1.4. Unique Opportunities for Effective Communication

Managers have realized that in order to be successful at engaging employees, they need to adopt an omnichannel communication strategy. This happy medium is a combination of face-to-face and digital channels. In this new omnichannel world, employers need to provide information in a continuous stream that employees can consume using the most appropriate method and devices for their situation.

In a series of blogs to follow, we will discuss how one of these digital channels, digital signage, is creating unique opportunities for employee communication and higher levels of engagement: chapter 2 explores leaderboards on digital signage displays.

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

CHAPTER ②

Impact of Effective Communication on Customer Experience

The customer experience hinges on the perception of professionalism and expertise, and nothing is more important to customer service satisfaction than properly trained employees, regardless of the industry. It's common for businesses to cut corners and rush employee training, but insufficient training is a quick road to both employee and customer frustration. Adversely, it's also common for companies to invest time and money into corporate training that's unsuccessful and a waste of resources. In both cases, the customer experience suffers.

Fortunately, training methods continue to evolve and technologies like digital signage are able to provide inroads for companies to improve employee communication and knowledge retention. If a company is willing to adapt, employee training is easier, smarter, and more effective than ever before. Whether a business is looking for a game-changer to revitalize training or simply wants to add an edge to an already established training program, digital signage integration is one way to turn things around. No matter the method, it's crucial to understand how employee training influences the customer experience.

2.1. The Importance of a Successful Training Strategy

The long-term benefits of a strong training program often exponentially outweigh time and money invested in developing and implementing that program. This holds true for new employee training as well as change-driven training meant to guide employees through internal policy shifts or the introduction of new technology. There really is no substitute for knowledgeable, committed, well-trained employees, and it's up to management to create an environment where employees can thrive during and after proper training.

Not only does training better prepare staff for day-to-day interactions with consumers, making employees capable and willing to go above and beyond expectations, but with the right training the entire customer experience is improved. Benefits of a good training program include but are not limited to:

1. **Market and Audience Familiarity** – The saying "knowledge is power" should be a customer experience mantra. The most satisfactory customer service experiences are fueled by an employee's familiarity with both the target audience and the ins and outs of the market, whatever it may be.

When employees have access to relevant expertise and information provided through proper training, they're better equipped to answer questions, resolve issues, and provide guidance to customers faster and with more efficiency. According to the Harvard Business Review, the impact of a positive customer experience is huge., and a happy customer is more likely to repeat business. What does this have to do with training? As mentioned, when employees are well-trained, they're able to elevate the customer experience and provide a level of quality that can often exceed customer expectations. As a bonus, when customers have a good service experience not only will they come back, they tend to tell their friends.

2. **Customer Satisfaction and Retention** – According to the Harvard Business Review, the impact of a positive customer experience is huge. Consumers spend as much as 140 percent more when the customer experience is a satisfying one, and a happy customer is more likely to repeat business. What does this have to do with training? As mentioned, when employees are well-trained, they're able to elevate the customer experience and provide a level of quality that can often exceed customer expectations. As a bonus, when customers have a good service experience not only will they come back, they tend to tell their friends.

3. **Increased Productivity** – Poorly trained staff members spend more time searching for information, have a higher probability of providing the wrong information, and can adversely affect the customer experience. The expertise and knowledge attained through smart training increases productivity by empowering employees with the know-how to solve problems and satisfy customers. An educated employee can quickly and easily resolve customer issues without sacrificing service quality. Simply put, well-trained employees are more productive.

Market and audience familiarity leads to increased productivity which in turn influences customer satisfaction and retention. Think of employee training as an equation that incorporates these elements, and it becomes easier to create an exemplary customer experience.


2.2. Tips to Strengthen Training for Efficiency and Accuracy

Internal auditing of a company's training programs and policies is a continuous way to influence the customer experience. Whether audits have a positive or negative effect on the customer experience depends on methods used and goals set. That's why it's so important to manage flaws and address concerns whenever a new training opening arises.

Strengthening training methods to improve efficiency and accuracy can mean investing in new resources, revising current strategies, and providing timely guidance through design. It's easier than it sounds, and here are a few tips for making the most of company training:

1. **Mixed Media Learning** - Humans are visual learners. Unfortunately, many training programs rely on manuals and videos that haven't been updated since they were created, and stale training material is boring. Sometimes, revitalizing a training program can be as easy as throwing out the old book, so to speak, and writing a new one. Successful training takes advantage of mixed media learning whenever possible. Digital signage solutions, face-to-face interaction, video, manuals, written scripts, and online resources can all contribute to unique training opportunities when implemented in a hands-on environment.

2. **Communication** - Communication is key when attempting to engage employees in new training methods, and failure to communicate can lead to a breakdown of employer/employee/customer relations. A sense of comfort and cohesion comes with an open channel of communication. If an employee has questions or concerns regarding company policy or customer service procedure, it's important that they feel comfortable communicating internally.

3. **Design and Timing** - Good timing leads to better training. Even the most impressive, technologically advanced training strategies can fail if not timed appropriately and designed to work in tandem with changes or new technology introductions. Although they're specifically referring to the restaurant industry, Fast Casual's advice to "conduct training when an improvement is being rolled out" and to "think of training in terms of continuous improvement" is a smart way to approach designing a new strategy or improving an existing one. Training is not a one-and-done practice, and it's vital to continue to modify and enhance training opportunities as they arise
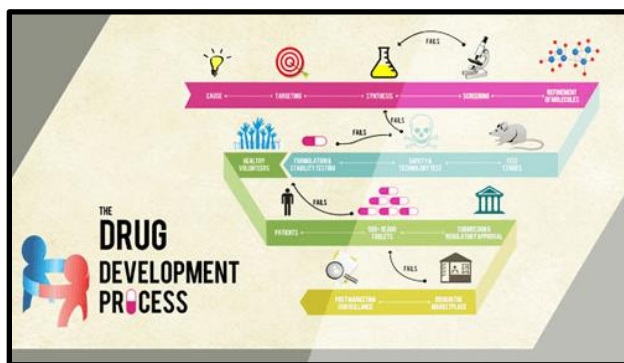
2.3. Winning Over Employees Means Winning Over Customers

If companies imagine employees as internal customers, the goal of any training session should be to "make the sale." Smart training strategies are a company's most effective means of instilling employee confidence in their own abilities as well as company priorities. Winning over employees means winning over customers in the long run. Well-trained employees are able to improve the overall customer experience, and the two will always go hand-in-hand.

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

CHAPTER 3

Using Leaderboards to Enhance Communication

In chapter 1, we discussed the current state of employee communication, the challenges facing both employees and employers and how digital channels are creating unique opportunities for employee communication.

In this chapter, we'll look at how one of these digital channels, leaderboards on digital signage displays, can enable effective communication and be used to engage employees.

In their simplest forms, leaderboards are a database of scoring data. They tap into our natural drive for recognition and status, providing a fantastic incentive for your employees. By publicly displaying ranking based on key performance indicators (KPIs) such as closed sales, businesses create an opportunity to build a competitive spirit and team unity. The leaderboards provide the right balance of teamwork and healthy competition.

Below are a few examples of leaderboards on digital signage screens and how they can influence the behaviors of employees:
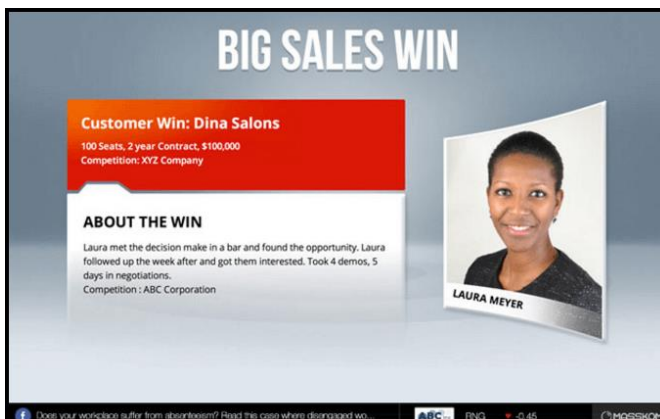
3.1. Sales Leaderboards

A sales leaderboard is the perfect outlet for sales reps who are naturally competitive and thrive off of peer recognition.

When publicly displayed on a digital signage screen, the sales leaderboard can drive productivity and healthy competition and build morale in the office. Top performing sales reps will be proud of their achievements, while remaining motivated to stay in the number one spot. Poor-performing reps will be motivated to be more aggressive and break into the top positions so that they can be publicly recognized on the team-wide leaderboard.

Sales leaderboards can deliver more than just rankings of new accounts, sales made or demos booked. Extra resources can be added to increase the value of the screens e.g a scrolling text ticker can be used to announce recently closed sales, serving as an effective reminder of past successes; a "New Deal" alert with sleek graphics and animation can take up the whole screen when a new account is closed.

Celebrating such wins publicly using powerful visual reinforcements is a surefire way to build motivation and morale.

With a sales leaderboard on digital signage screens, both employees and managers can know where they stand in an instant, providing ranking, motivation, and coaching opportunities.

3.2. Service Leaderboards

Motivated employees are big business, especially in the service industry.

Take a call center for example. Employees are sitting shoulder-to-shoulder in a windowless cubicle farm for hours chatting with customers who range from clueless to enraged, all while pushy supervisors are breathing down their necks. And the pay is not that great either. It's no wonder turnover at call centers is about 33% and can go as high as 70% at those with staff exceeding 1,000 agents.

It's workplaces such as these that can reap gigantic benefits from service leaderboards on digital signage screens.

When management is overburdened and managers are hard-pressed to engage employees through mentoring and team building, technology can make the task easier by creating new ways to facilitate collaboration, motivation and productivity.

Leaderboards in businesses in the service industry can show rankings for information such as outbound and inbound calls, closed tickets, time spent on tickets, email or Chat messages that have been responded to, support answers given on a public forum, badges earned etc.

When agents have real-time visibility into the quality of their work, their performance will improve. Service leaderboards on digital signage screens give your reps the fuel to not only push themselves to succeed, but to also collaborate to hit team goals.

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

They also encourage social interaction. Employees answering customer calls, chats, emails and tickets are often tethered to their headsets and/or computers. Human beings are social animals so this solitary work mode can produce disengaged employees and have negative effects on productivity.

Service leaderboards can help build new interactions and strengthen existing ones. Employees pitted against each other or against a different location will interact more and build quality relationships. This not only builds resilience, but the presence of work BFFs has been shown to improve engagement and productivity. Gallup reports that employees who report having a BFF at work were 35% more likely to report coworker commitment to quality.

3.3. Social Leaderboards

Social leaderboards identity influencers in a network: Who has the most Twitter followers or LinkedIn connections? Who is the top marketing blogger? How does our branch's twitter following compare to another?

The displays quickly became information hubs, one of the few places students could look to for quick access to up-to-date information.

The scoring allows businesses to see their overall performance as a social brand. This is an important metric to measure, especially in this age of the Internet of Things where social media is having a tremendous impact on our culture and business.

Social leaderboards also identify top players to emulate. They isolate leaders who are excelling and point employees to them for mentoring, guidance etc.

Just like with sales leaderboards, businesses can add resources to social leaderboards to increase their value. Marketing teams can take an influencer from the leaderboard and showcase them on the company blog to bring their audience to the company's site. They can also embed a QR code on the leaderboard for employees to download more info on the leaders.

3.4. Other Leaderboards on Digital Signage Screens

Leaderboards can be used to encourage participation in company philanthropic events. For instance, a company-wide food drive can include a leaderboard showing top contributors. Employees, departments or locations can be pitted against each other. This will encourage more people to participate, resulting in more giving.

They can also be used to encourage healthy lifestyles. For example, employees can share their fitbit information and have it publicly displayed to compare who is walking more, burning more calories, climbing more floors etc. This will motivate employees to be more active and have fun while they're doing it.

HR professionals can also use leaderboards to improve the quality of their recruiting pool. To encourage employee referrals, HR personnel can create a leaderboard ranking employees by how many referrals they make and rewarding the top performers.

This will encourage employees to refer more people; referred candidates are faster and cheaper to hire, will onboard faster and will stay at their job longer than a traditional hire.

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

CHAPTER 4

Power Up your Workplace with Gamification and Digital Signage

Gamification is a relatively new concept in the business world.
In this chapter, we'll look at how one of these digital channels, leaderboards on digital signage displays, can enable effective communication and be used to engage employees.
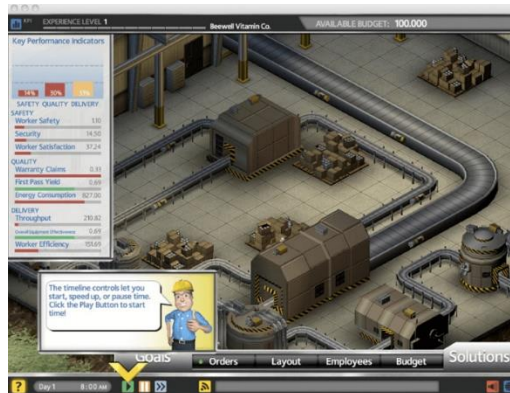

The concept involves applying game-like elements to a business process or strategy, with the goal of increased engagement from those who use it. It sounds out-of-the-box at first, but the results are unquestionable—A survey conducted by TalentLMS found 79 percent of participants agreed they would feel more productive and motivated if their learning environment was more like a game.

The strategy works because of our innate love for achievement, linear progression, and input/reward systems. As a result, many businesses have begun implementing gamification into the workplace, and the benefits of doing so are becoming abundantly clear.

4.1. Gamification in the Workplace

Research has been done on the effects of gaming elements on worker behavior. The researchers found that common gamification elements, like points, levels, or leaderboards were effective at promoting specific user behaviors in non-game contexts. And plenty of businesses are taking advantage—70% of Forbes Global 2000 companies are using gamification to boost staff engagement, revenue, and employee retention.

For example, plant engineering company Siemens Industry launched the gaming platform "Plantville" as way to drive brand awareness and educate consumers on plant management operations. Rather than simply providing instructional documents and videos (that would likely go unnoticed as they gathered dust), Plantville offered an immersive and interactive way for Siemens to reach its audience.

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

By applying a narrative to its processes, users could place themselves in the role of a plant manager and learn while in a fun setting. Leaderboards provided a sense of competition and achievement that accelerated the platform's usage. Each gaming element supported Siemens in its goals while simultaneously offering a unique experience for each user.

Of course, gamifying workflows can't be done behind closed doors. Gamification works best when the gaming elements are clear, visible, and distinct for all members of the organization. Elements like leaderboards, for example, have little meaning if nobody can see them. This brings us to another critical aspect of gamification—having the tools to display your game.

4.2. Combining Gamification and Digital Signage

Digital signage lets businesses communicate elements of gamification in visually striking and engaging ways that would be hard to visualize otherwise. Gamification relies on three tenants to be successful, all of which can be influenced by a clever digital signage strategy:

Motivation - Motivation drives behavior. Gamification can only succeed when external motivators (like points or badges) and internal motivators (like the sense of accomplishment we feel after completing a task) are balanced.

- *Including digital signage:* Digital screens are the perfect way to enhance motivation. With public leaderboards showcasing each employee's progress, users will be externally motivated to achieve more and not appear as the "weak link." For internal motivation, digital progress readouts offer an excellent barometer for work performance—the harder they work, the higher they'll reach. This simple input/reward system can greatly enhance self-efficacy and internal confidence about goal achievement.

Meaning - Gamification only works when employees actually care about the rewards on offer. Points might work fine for some, but others may find them meaningless. A better solution is to tie rewards into real-world results: charity donations, pay bonuses, or other incentives that inspire motivation.
Of course, gamifying workflows can't be done behind closed doors. Gamification works best when the gaming elements are clear, visible, and distinct for all members of the organization. Elements like leaderboards, for example, have little meaning if nobody can see them. This brings us to another critical aspect of gamification—having the tools to display your game.

- *Including digital signage:* Digital signage excels at visual representation. What better way to showcase the value of gamification rewards than regular updates on the rewards of each goal? Digital screens tied to computer networks are ideal for showcasing charts, graphs, and gauges that complement real-world results. This may include graphs of total money donated to charities or charts of cumulative bonus income distributed to "winning" employees.

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

Momentum - After engaging, gamified systems need to keep users engaged. The difficulty of each task must be proportionate to the reward, lest users get bored by challenges that are easy or frustrated by challenges that are too hard.

- *Including digital signage:* Though digital signage can't directly influence the difficulty of challenges, it has shown remarkable efficacy at grabbing and keeping user attention. Regularly updated leaderboards and goal breakdowns will help keep users engaged in the gamified system and give them something to check each day when they clock into work. This habitual reinforcement is a necessary part of keeping workers invested in an initiative.

4.3. Gamification and Digital Signage Displays

With the synergy between gamification and digital signage established, let's review a few more ways that digital screens can support game-like elements.

Visual Progress

As mentioned above, digital signage is a great way to visually display goal progress. There's a reason why fundraisers and charities like to show donation progress with line graphs and charts—visual representations help reinforce goals in people's minds and help solidify the value of their contributions.

These two factors greatly enhance involvement in user participation towards goals. According to the above report by TalentLMS, the two most preferred gamification strategies were progress based: level progression (30 percent) and a point/scoring system (27 percent).

Trends

Aside from just monitoring progress, digital signage can effectively show trends throughout your gamification process. When workers underperform one week, use digital displays to compare that week's performance to previous data. Knowing which areas are trending upward successfully and which need attention is a critical part of group-wide success with gamification practices.

Celebration

Celebrating achievements is the cornerstone of gamification. Employees work hard to reach milestones, and should be acknowledged for their efforts accordingly. Digital screens are great for this purpose. When a worker exceeds expectations or sets an exemplary performance, put their name in lights and give them a slide on your visual content display. Digital signage is ideal for promotion—including promoting your workers when they deserve it. This will intensify the feelings of success that workers already have, and motivate them to keep up the pace in the future.

Mvix

23475 Rock Haven Way, Suite 125
Sterling, VA 20166 (USA)
(P):866.310.4923
(F):866.614.3880
mvixdigitalsignage.com

4.4. Digital Signage Success

Digital signage has proven itself as an effective way to grab user attention, advertise, and support internal communication. Now, gamification can be added to the list.

Gamification and digital signage are two concepts that support each other in execution. Digital signage excels at visually representing data in convenient formats. Gamification involves engaging workers with different styles of initiatives and gathering data on their success. Like the two wings of an airplane, gamification and digital signage work well together to achieve an organization's overall goals. Combining the two strategies provides a business with a system of user engagement and constant visual feedback that contributes to stronger employee motivation, cooperation, and productivity across the board.

To learn about Mvix digital signage solutions: www.mvixdigitalsignage.com or

CALL 866.310.4923

About Mvix:

Founded in 2005, Mvix is a leading provider of cloud-based digital signage and multi-screen video wall solutions, including an enterprise content management system with dozens of dynamic content apps & widgets. The company provides turnkey solutions to multiple industries including foodservice, education, healthcare, hospitality, corporate offices, and manufacturing among others.

Since inception, Mvix's commitment to delivering innovative solutions has put the company at the forefront of the digital signage industry. In 2016, the company was ranked as one of the Top 25 Content Delivery Network Solutions Transforming Business and also one of the Top 10 Ad Management Software Solution Providers. In 2015, they were named one of Top 20 Most Promising Media and Entertainment Technology Solution Providers and in 2012, they were honored on the prestigious Inc. 5000 List of Fastest Growing Companies in America. Read more about Mvix Digital Signage Solutions: www.mvixdigitalsignage.com