ScreenCloud

Digital Signage in Retail

Everything you need to know to drive sales,
gain more business and communicate better
with customers.

In a digital world it would be easy to think that in-store experience is becoming less and less important. Yet studies show, this just isn't the case.

Consumer buying habits may be predictable but they, as humans, are not. Store owners and retailers, however large or small, need to be constantly driving innovation if they are to engage and make a connection.

Want to know one of the best ways to do this?

Digital signage.

The art of sharing content through screens is not new. We've had TV for a while, after all. But everywhere you look retailers aren't making the most of the opportunity. Screens sit blank and empty, or showing the same boring adroll on loop.

We're here to put an end to that.

In this guide we'll teach you everything you need to know about using digital signage to attract, entice and reward customers. To give them a visual way to learn more about your products, your message and the way in which you could transform their life.

Through five key chapters (plus a bonus one for the pros amongst us) you'll learn:

— Reasons why digital signage is an essential strategy move

— How to set up digital signage on any screen, in just three steps

— Using apps to make social media, video and image content sing

— How to roll out digital signage across multiple stores

— Real life use cases of digital signage in retail and why they work

— How to monetize your store's digital screens

We love helping retailers and store owners become the master of their digital screens. Let us know what you're doing on yours. We're always available for tips and advice at hello@screen.cloud or on Twitter @screencloud.

Contents

Digital signage benefits for retailers

Why do most retailers first turn to digital signage? It could be because a few screens have popped up in a competitor's window. Because someone at head office has said "hey we need to use digital screens". To save money or because someone in-store has realized the potential of using screens to drive traffic.

There are many ways to swing a cat, or hang a screen, as they say, but truth is, many don't realize the full potential of the medium.

Here are some of the reasons you can use to sell in your digital signage strategy, or to realize the true potential of what you're about to set up.

Drive traffic in

If we're starting at the beginning, then one key benefit of retail digital signage is its ability to drive people into your store. Originally, it was only your odd Hollister here or there that employed the power of digital window displays. Now, it's almost everyone. Our screen-obsessed world has been a big help. We're naturally drawn to screens, and they catch our attention. Statistics show that 8/10 customers have entered a store because of a digital sign catching their interest. That's a huge amount of shoppers who otherwise, may have walked right on by. Retail is one of the fastest growing areas adopting digital signage so to beat the competition; it's well worth getting set up early.

Increase purchasing decisions

Studies show that serving relevant information close to the point of purchase increases purchasing decisions. This is a great case for having digital screens set up throughout your store. A cleverly placed screen next to your sweaters, showing all of the information about where the material is from, how it's ethically sourced, what it feels like to wear and so on could make the difference between one purchase or two.

Repurpose social media content

In retail, social media is a huge way to influence and entice shoppers. But it isn't always easy. Creating effective social media content, rolling it out and getting people to "like" it can be difficult. With digital signage, it's easy to repurpose social media content and get it in front of your audience without other distractions.

Provide entertainment

According to a study by Urban Land Institute, 50% of millennial men and 70% of millennial women consider shopping a form of entertainment and something to share with friends and family. Digital signs are an obvious form of entertainment where you can share everything from social media to news, videos and dashboards. This feeds into the retailtainment trend and allows you to extend your brand throughout the store.

Increase digital presence

Retail brands invest heavily in their online digital presence but what about their in-store digital presence? It isn't enough to offer a website and a bricks-and-mortar store. Digital signage joins up the digital presence happening online and brings it into the physical environment.

Gain more sales

Digital signs are great big beacons that help tell your customers what to do and where to go. This helps increase sales as customers feel confident in their shopping decisions; the digital screen told them to, after all. Digital signage in retail can be used to direct customers to specific products, upsell items, provide wayfinding to toilets or help points and even give emergency information.

Make products more available

An Accenture study found that 92% of shoppers surveyed said real time product availability would influence where they shop. Digital screens are a great way to catalog items and respond to peaks and troughs of specific products.

Improve internal communications

Last but not least, you can also use digital signage to improve internal communications with staff. When you hand out a new health and safety manual how many staff members actually read it? They might sign the paper sure, but the important information that's going to keep them (and others) safe often gets missed. With digital screens, you can easily repeat this information in key areas such as employee break rooms, staff areas, store rooms and more. This gives employees multiple reference points and the chance to absorb ambient content in a more relaxed setting.

The practical bit: how to setup digital signage for your store

This chapter will help you uncover what you need to make a basic digital signage display.

In short: here's a simple guide on how to put your content onto your TV screen or monitor using ScreenCloud.

An Android TV or any screen with a HDMI port

Here's a common misconception. That you need an expensive smart screen or heavy-weight installation to get content up onto a TV screen or monitor. Not the case!

To set up your digital signage screen you need one of two things:

1. An Android TV

If you have an Android TV all you need to do is navigate to the Google Play Store, search "ScreenCloud" and download our app which looks like the below.

2. A screen with a HDMI port

—Google Play - (from your Android TV or tablet)

—Amazon App Store (if you're using the Amazon Fire TV Stick or another Amazon product)

—Chrome store (from desktop, Chromebox or the Chromebit)

—iOS app (for iPads, Macbooks and iPhones)

—Google Chromecast (download the remote player for Chromecast on Android and iOS)
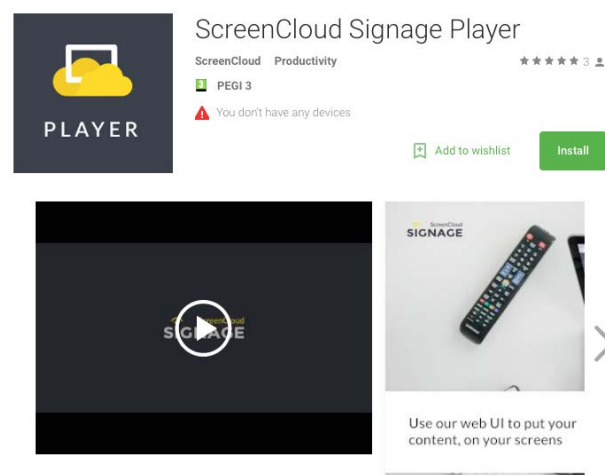
Once you've downloaded the ScreenCloud app on screen, you need to get it to 'talk' to your laptop or PC, so that you can add beautiful content from wherever you are. This is a simple, two-step process:

1. Launch the ScreenCloud app

On your TV screen, launch ScreenCloud and you'll see a pairing code which looks a little like the below.

2. Sign up at https://signage.screen.cloud
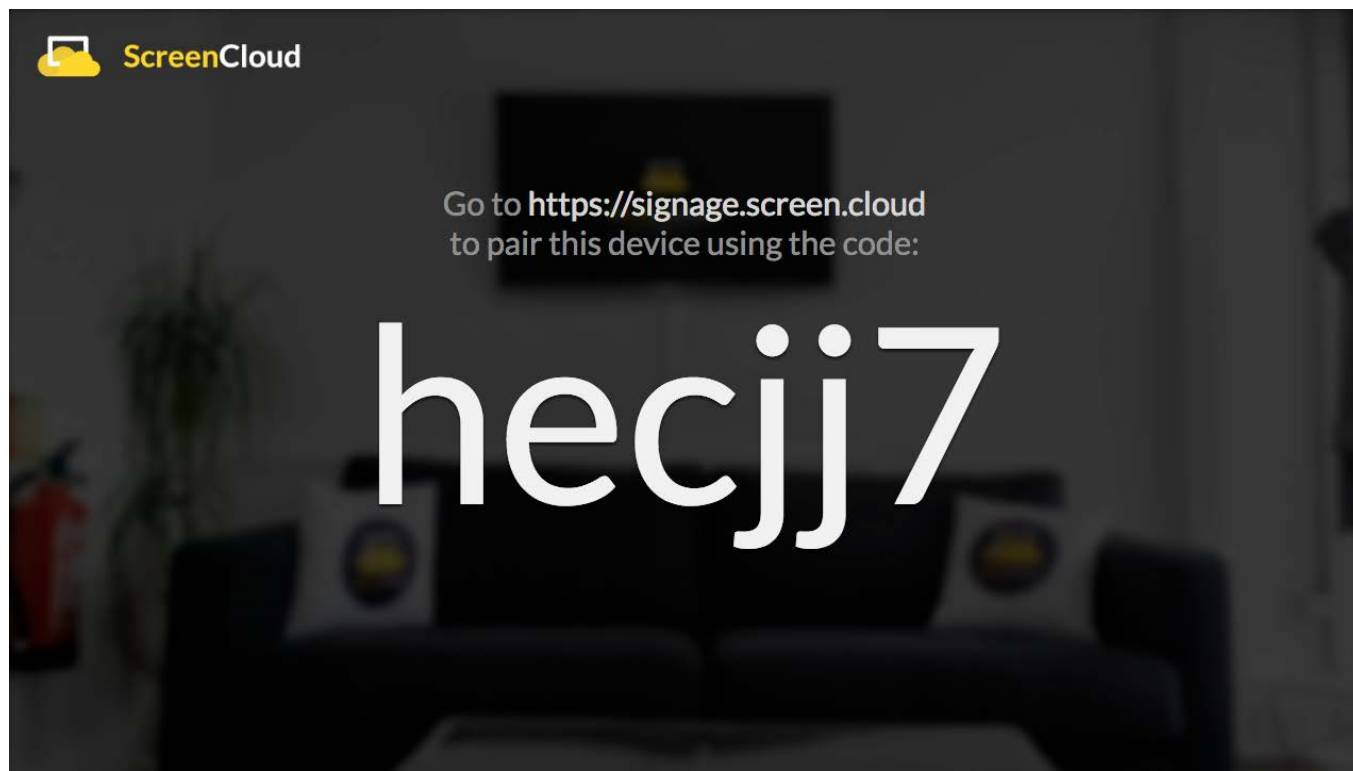
Now open your laptop or fire up your PC and head to https://signage.screen.cloud/. Here, you can set up a free trial or an account.

Once you're logged in, navigate to 'screens' on the left-hand menu and you'll see a setup like the below.
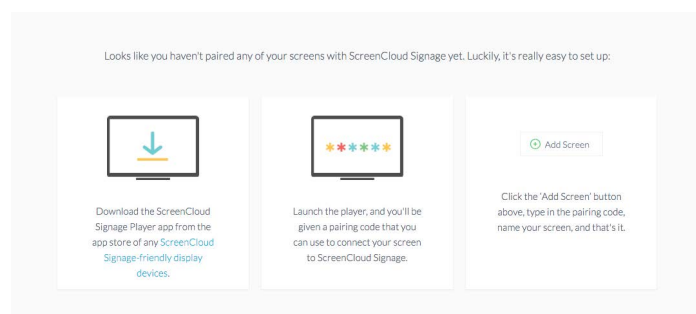
Hit "Add Screen" and enter the six-digit pairing code as well as a nice name for your screen.

That's it! You are setup, paired and now you can:

—Send any content to screen - text, images, videos, social media, whatever you like
—Manage your screen from anywhere
—Edit your screen content at any time you like
—Organize playlists and schedules for your screen
—Add more screens from anywhere

Simple!

ScreenCloud is insanely easy to setup. The entire process takes about five minutes to log on, add your content to the drag and drop playlists and get it up onto your screen. No IT managers, no marketing managers, no resellers. Just you, your laptop, tablet or phone and a TV screen.
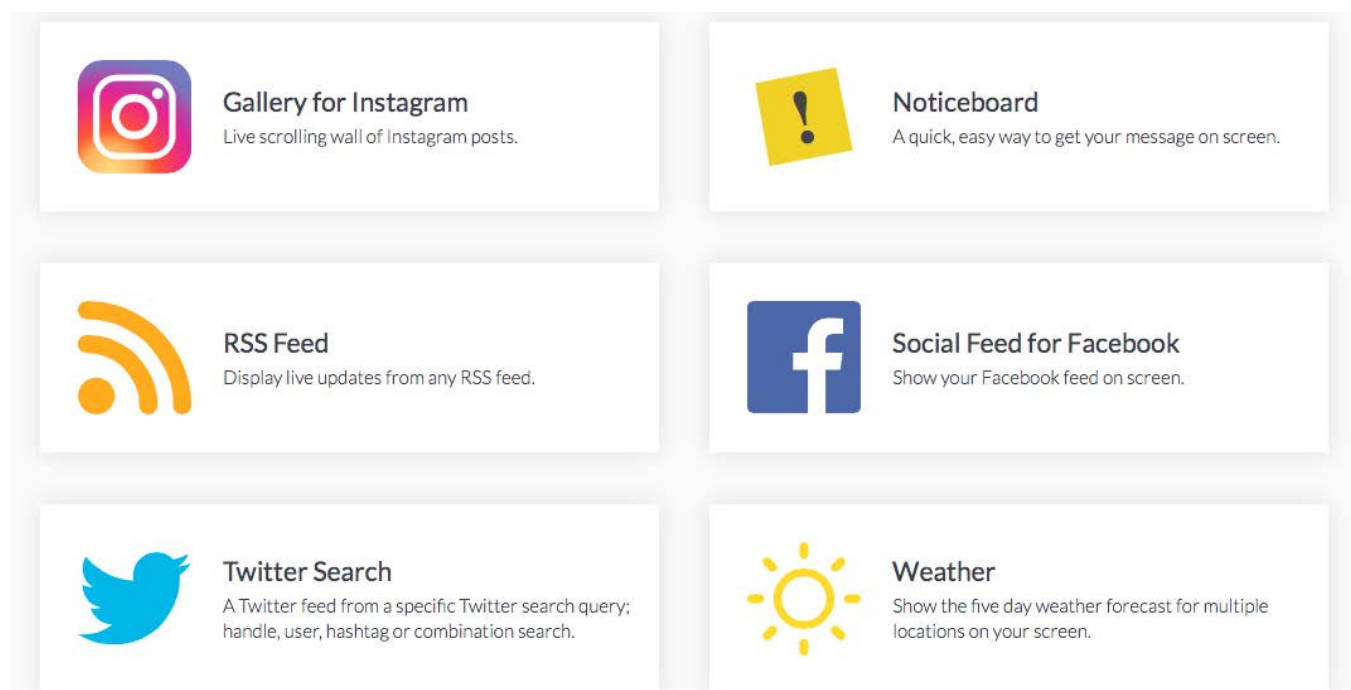
Using apps to make digital signage content creation easy

Digital signage displays should be two things: simple and beautiful. Achieve that and the rest will be easy. The truth is, you don't have to have a huge marketing department to create great content for your screens. You just need some apps that make content creation super easy.

Enter the ScreenCloud App Store.

When you sign up for a ScreenCloud account you get a whole ton of apps - for free! Added to your package for you to do with as you please.

There are over 50 of them hanging out in our App Store waiting for you to make use of them.

Gallery for Instagram
Live scrolling wall of Instagram posts.

Noticeboard
A quick, easy way to get your message on screen.

RSS Feed
Display live updates from any RSS feed.

Social Feed for Facebook
Show your Facebook feed on screen.

Twitter Search
A Twitter feed from a specific Twitter search query; handle, user, hashtag or combination search.

Weather
Show the five day weather forecast for multiple locations on your screen.

Some of the content displays you could create using these apps include:

Social media dashboards and apps

Some of the best digital signage content is born out of efforts that have already been spent elsewhere.

The most obvious is social media. If you invest your efforts in social media, why not use this to bring your digital screens to life too?

Social media walls can be anything from a Tweet wall, through to a complete live social dashboard that aggregates Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and any other channel where your customers are having conversations.

Best of all? They're super easy to set up and anyone can use them. From your local wine-and-cheese seller through to your Topshops and Targets of the world.

Gallery for Instagram

Create live scrolling social media walls of your latest Instagram posts through gallery for Instagram, filtered through a campaign hashtag or specific user account. Choose from light or dark themes and set up beautiful, image-based displays.
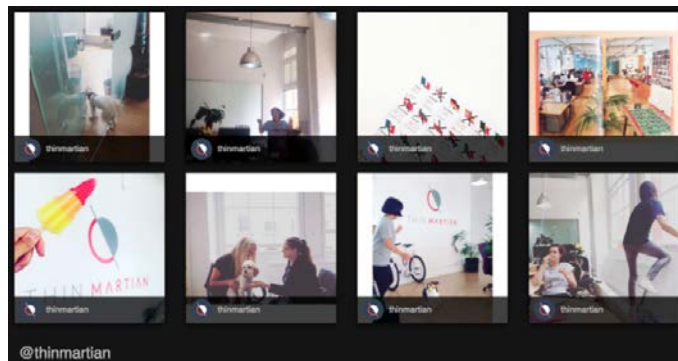
Twitter social media wall

The Twitter social media app is the easiest way to share tweets across your digital signage solution. Simply pick your hashtag or handle, filter for the results you don't want to see and you're ready to begin showing live tweets throughout your store.
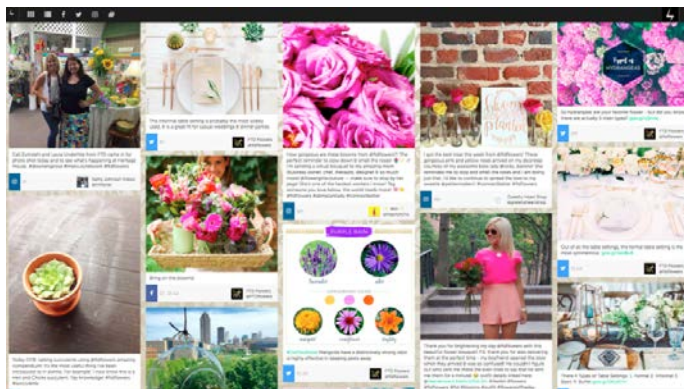

Social feed for Facebook

If Facebook is where your customers are at, share their thoughts, feedback and your beautiful updates through social feed for Facebook. The beautiful interface clears away the noise, so that only the posts you want to see are shown to an in-store audience. Ideal for running campaigns and building interest across channels.

SocialHUB

Using SocialHUB you can focus attention on the content already being shared by your followers. Drawing together feeds from Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Tumblr, Pinterest, SoundCloud and more to create engaging displays. Select content around specific hashtags, curate and moderate, zone into a specific area and then use SocialHUB's analytics to check for success. Ideal for creating a buzz around your store.

TINT

TINT app makes social feeds look and feel beautiful. TINT allows your organization to create social displays of content, from Facebook and Twitter to YouTube and Instagram. Custom-brand the display and drop the single URL into ScreenCloud to get your feed live in seconds. TINT also integrates with Google News, RSS, Slack and more to help you tailor the content your audience wants to see.

Video playlists

Many of the ScreenCloud apps are designed to help take your company information and make it more visually engaging, ready for a digital signage display.

This could be video showreels, a new demo video, or a customer caught on screen talking about how great you are. Great pieces of content that can easily be added to your playlist, either by direct upload or through an app such as YouTube or Vimeo.

Current news and events

If you want your shoppers to linger longer, use a real world news source such as one from Sky news, Aljazeera news, BBC news, CNN news or ESPN. You could also add in local travel information to help customers plan their trips home and to get them engaging with your digital screens using information that is truly useful.

2. Content you already have and own

When it comes to digital signage you may not even need to create new content. Perhaps you already have a whole host of content you can use.

Some of the content you can add to your digital signage display using ScreenCloud includes:

Your website

You can show your website (or any URL in fact) on screen by simply adding it to the ScreenCloud Signage dashboard. A simple way to help direct your audience online and showcase your best work! Plus show off that nifty website you have.

Designed files

If you want to create your content, be it a store showreel, a presentation or just a notice, you can upload a range of files to ScreenCloud including jpeg, gif, png, and svg, PDFs and Office/iWorks formats.

3. Free content creation tools

If you already have a piece of perfect digital signage content in your mind's eye, you may need to create it yourself.

Enter free content creation tools. Gone are the days of needing Photoshop or Indesign to mock up a great looking visual. There are so many tools out there that allow you to do this yourself and for free, no design skills needed.

In digital signage, if you're working with a regular TV monitor, the ratio of your content will be 16:9. So to create a graphic you simply select 'custom dimensions' and set your pixel count to 1600 x 900.

Once you've played around with fonts, colors and background you simply export as an image and upload to ScreenCloud. Job done!

There are a ton of free content creation tools out there, but some of our favorites include:

—Canva - canva.com
—PicMonkey - picmonkey.com
—Pablo - pablo.buffer.com

Stock content

You probably already know about photo stock libraries but did you know there are other versions too? When you're on a content budget, sites that allow you to use royalty-free videos, images and music are gold dust!

When it comes to free video, image and music stock content here are a few we like:

—Stocksnap.io - stocksnap.io (images)

—Pexels - pexels.com (images)

—Google fonts - fonts.google.com (fonts)

—Vimeo HD - vimeo.com/groups/freehd (video)

—Coverr - coverr.co (video)

Rolling out a multi-store screen strategy

Digital screens only work if they're relevant to the people looking at them. With multiple screen strategies, this becomes even more important. If you have multiple stores or areas, what you show on each should depend on the area and the audience. A store in the city, is going to look very different to a store in the suburbs and each should be catered for.

For that reason, multiple screen strategies must be easy to roll out, easy to connect across a single network and easy to manage.

Choosing screens for a multi-location strategy

With ScreenCloud Signage, you can use as many different types of screens and media players in the same strategy as you need. So you could have one Samsung screen, fuelled by an Amazon Fire TV Stick and one Android TV using the Android TV app from Google Play. Because our content system is cloud-based, it really doesn't matter what hardware you run things on. Ideally, this will save on cost as you can use whatever screens and monitors are most convenient at that time.

In our "add screen" section of ScreenCloud Signage you can use the same process multiple times to add different screens.
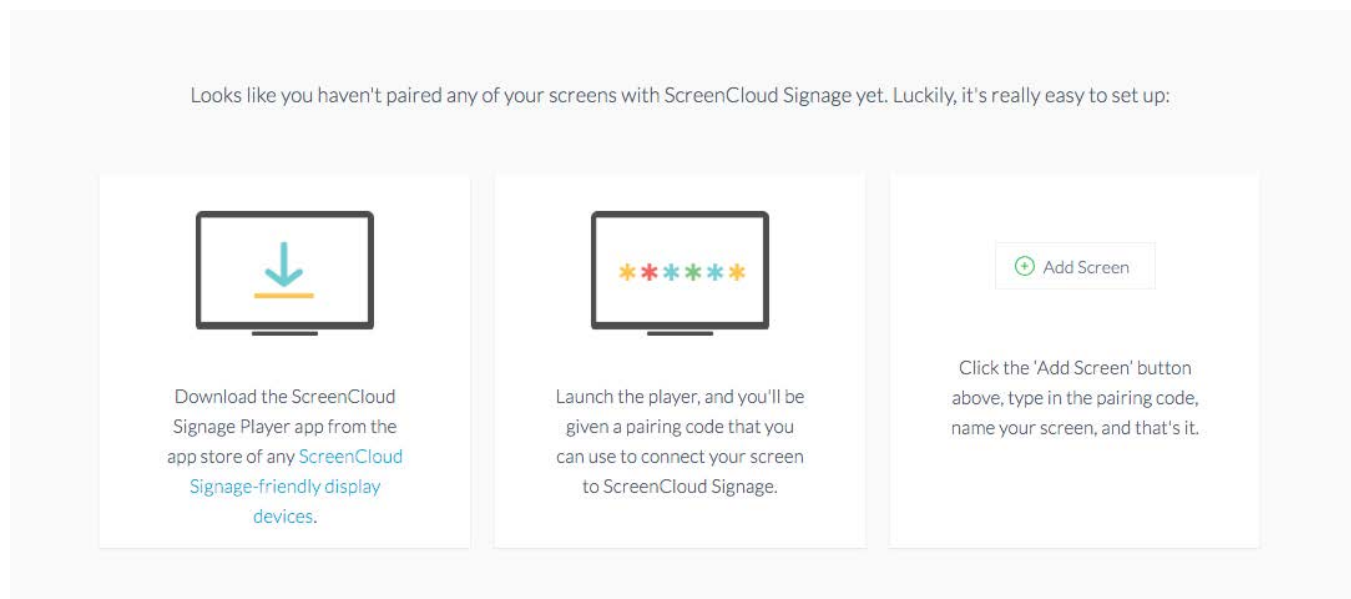

You can add as many screens as you like to your account and manage them all centrally, from one login. The power of the cloud is that these screens, once paired, can then be managed from wherever you like. You don't even have to be anywhere near the store in question! This makes it much easier to change content and manage multiple screens simultaneously.

Organise your screens

When using multiple screens, it's useful to have a way to organize them. To manage your screens, select "Screens" from the left-hand menu.
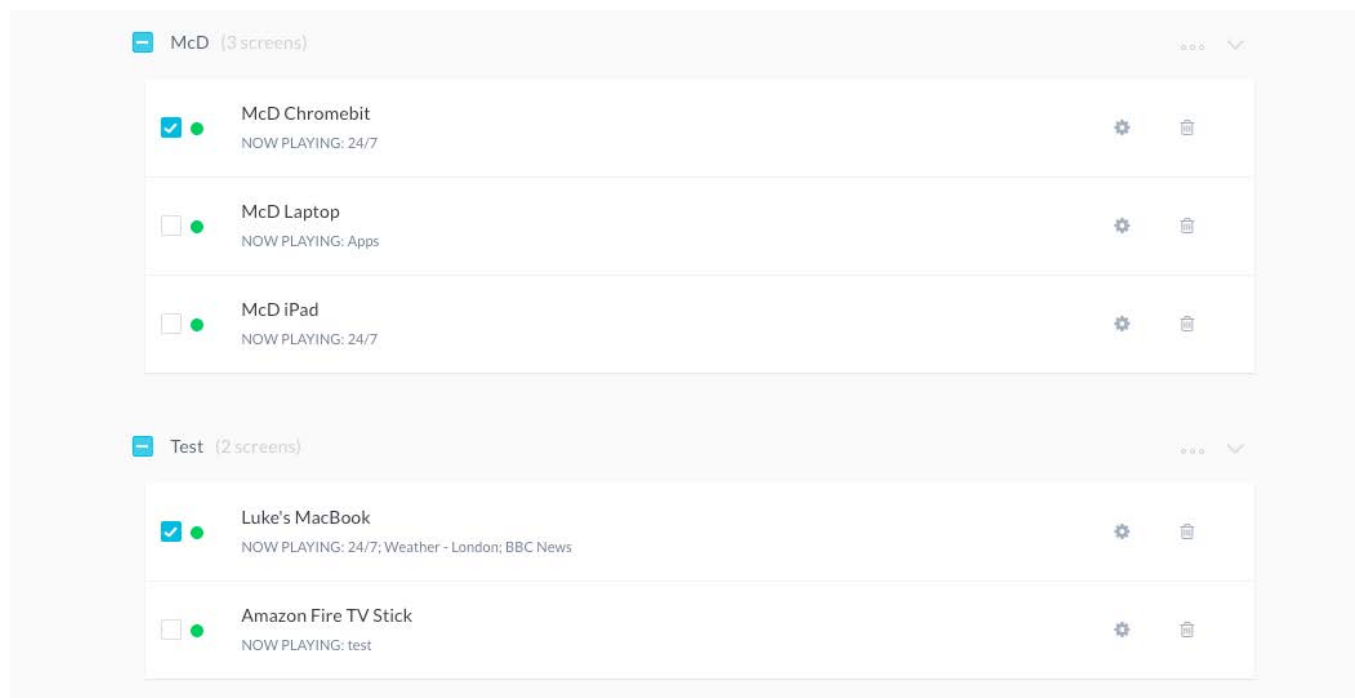
Here, you will see the option to Add screens, Edit screens and Create groups.

Groups help you to organize your screens. They also allow you to set all of the screens to display in one format, for example portrait or landscape. To change the settings on a group of screens, select the dropdown and then "Edit Screens". Here you will see the option to Choose a Layout or Copy a Layout from another screen.
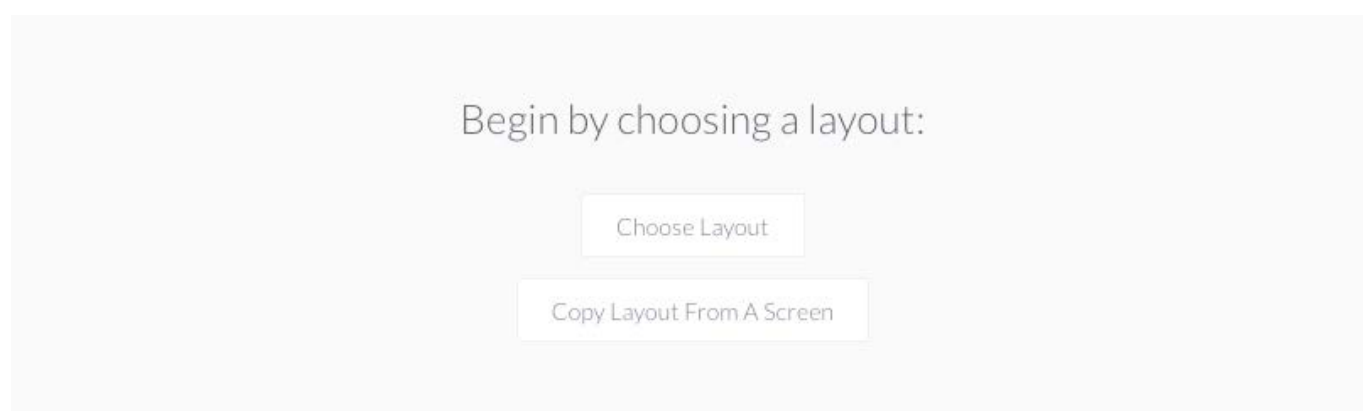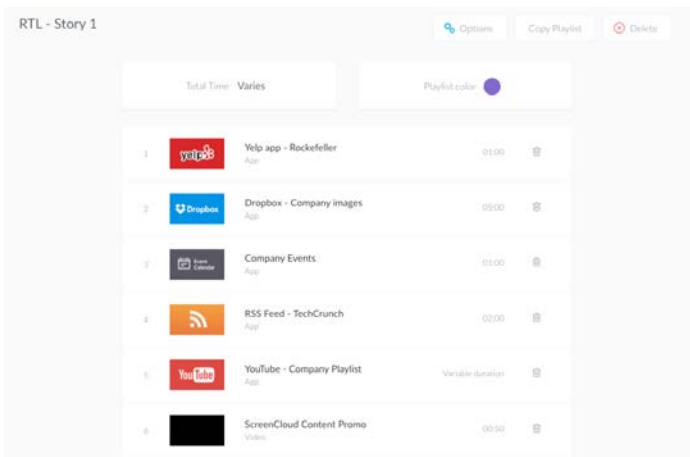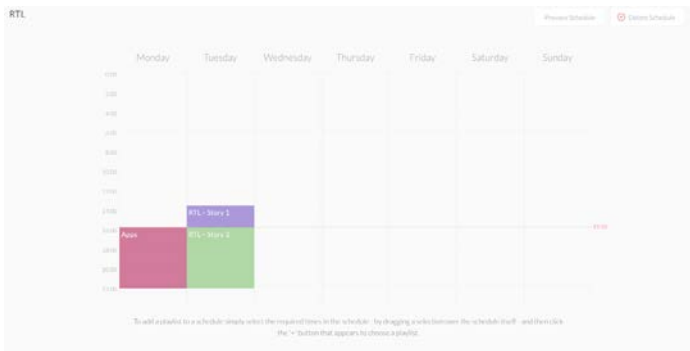
When it comes to managing content across screens you can use playlists to create unique lists of content.

The order in which to manage content is:

i. Set up a playlist of content that you want to show
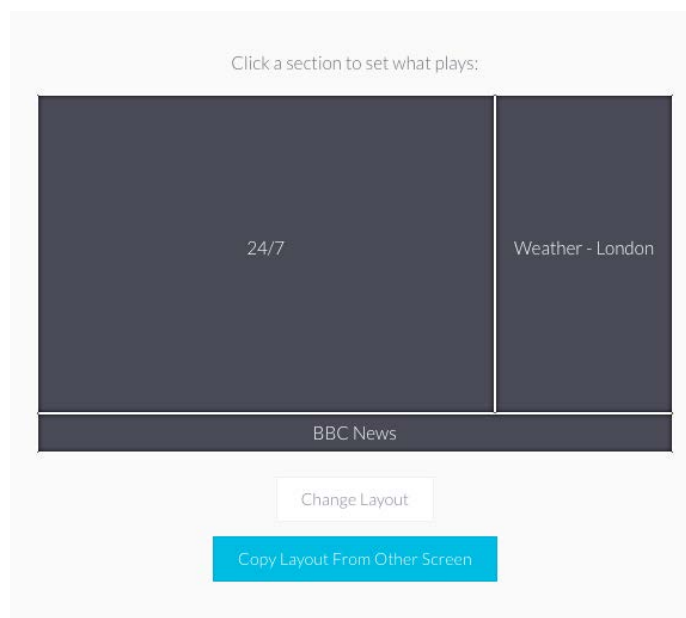

## ii. Add your playlist to a schedule

ii. Add your playlist or schedule to a specific screen.

To do this you'll need to visit "Screens" and choose "Screen Settings" on the specific screen you wish to edit. If you're using a zoned digital signage display, you can click on the specific zone to select what shows in that individual section.

If you aren't using zones, you can simply click anywhere on the screen and choose from a playlist, schedule or piece of content that you want to play.
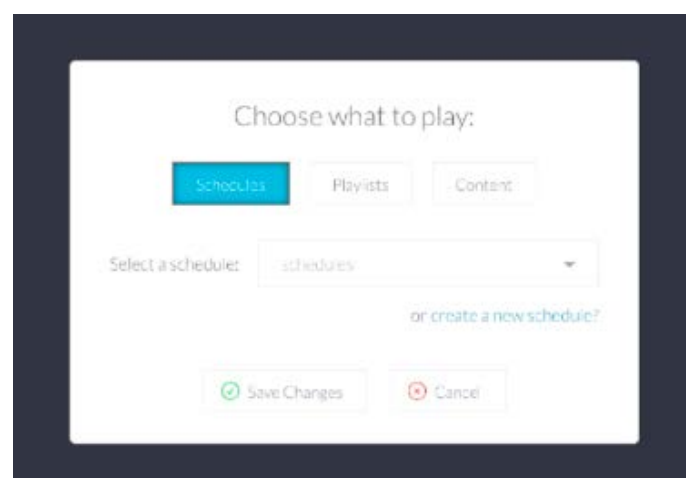
For more help on setting up playlists and schedules, view our online video tutorial.

Editing multiple screens simultaneously

If you're looking to setup a series of store screens with identical layouts, playlists and schedules, you may want to edit multiple screens simultaneously.

To do this first, select your screens by ticking each screen you want to edit (they don't have to be in the same group).
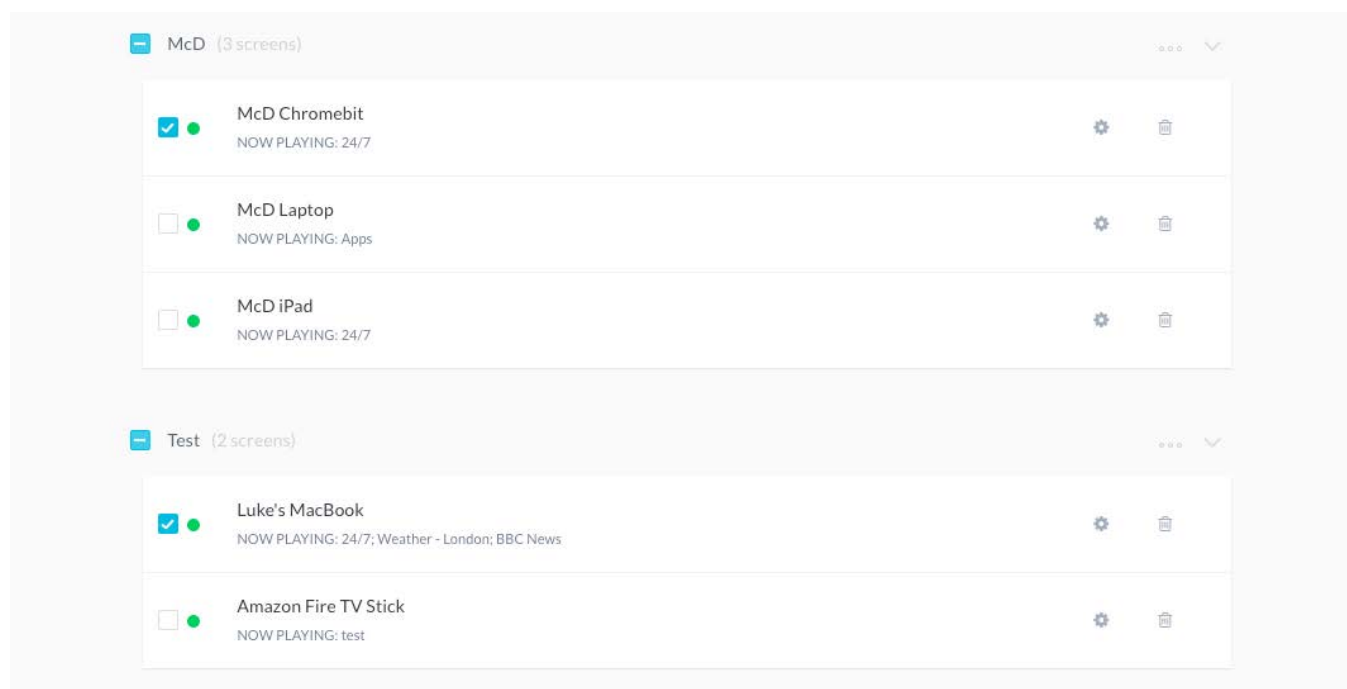
Next choose "Edit Selected Screens" from the top right-hand corner. Now you will need to choose your layout for the screens (portrait or landscape).
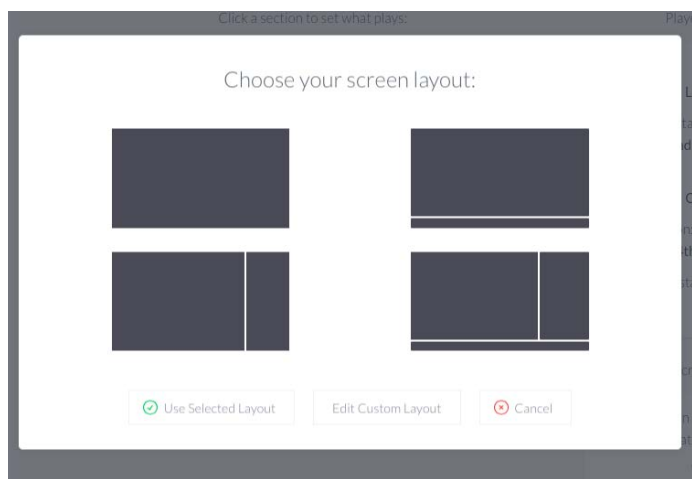
Then click either in the centre of the screen, or in a specific zone and choose what you want to display. This can be a playlist, a schedule or a piece of specific content.
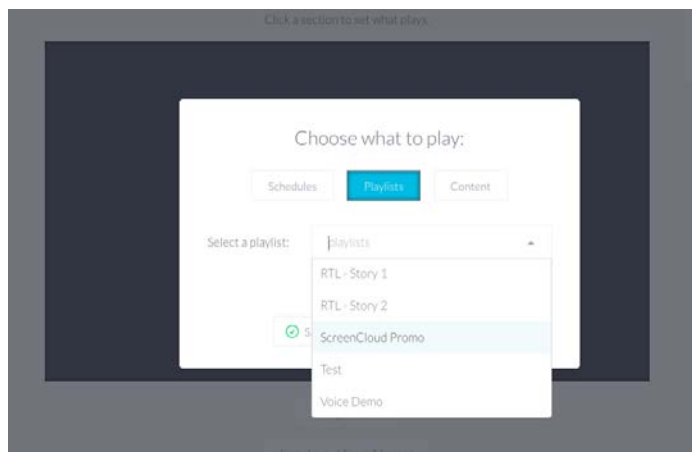
This will save the layout and content across all of the screens you have selected, allowing you to update all of them in seconds.

In use: how four retail stores use digital signage

There are many different ways to use a screens and certainly not a, "one size fits all" answer to how you use digital signage for your retail store. To help fuel your ideas, here are four customer case studies, including the application and why it worked, for you to use as a reference point.

<div style="background-color:#5bd877; color:white; padding:10px; font-weight:bold;">Digital signage at the point of sale</div>

Application:

Mitchell's Delicatessen is a deli located in Nashville that specializes in fresh artisan sandwiches using high quality ingredients with a focus on supporting the local economy. Their messaging is pretty special, so when they decided to implement digital signage, we knew it was going to be something equally awesome. The restaurant, like all retailers, had pain points. The queues were long and customers were getting bored. The speciality items they were creating were often being overlooked.

With some standard Sony TVs, ScreenCloud Signage and some clever video content created by a local photographer, they completely changed their business model. Delicatessen speciality chickens, which were being thrown away, were suddenly highest in demand.

Why it worked:

In retail there's a lot going on. Customers can get blindsided or even confused about what they need and why. Digital signage is like a visual signpost, guiding them towards specific departments, offers or items. When things are easy to navigate, decisions are easier. When customers can see the best, or most popular products, it becomes a no brainer what to choose and stores can become better at anticipating needs, just as Mitchell's Deli did here.

Application:

Lenovo is a PC and tablet manufacturer primarily stocked through retail partners such as Currys, PC World, John Lewis and Very.co.uk. One of Lenovo's challenges is that they don't own any physical stores. This makes them heavily reliant on store marketing from retail partners.
One of the ways Lenovo combats this is through "pop up" stores, essentially a store within a store at one of their retail partners' holdings.

Lenovo also wanted people to interact with their tablets - not just look at them. Using ScreenCloud they created a live selfie wall, where images could be taken on a tablet, sent to Twitter and Instagram to extend the footprint and then shown on a digital screen.

Why it worked:

Screens are a huge campaign connector. In this sense, without the screen, Lenovo may have found it hard to see and share the results of its pop-up store. The digital signage element brought together both the campaign happening in-store and the one going out online, for the audience to enjoy. The real time element also meant the visitors could stay for longer and see their efforts up on a big screen, resulting in a truly fun and personal retail experience.

Application:

Soletrader, a premium high-street shoe retailer, has been around for over 50 years offering superior shoe collections for men and women. Despite having such a strong physical retail presence, Soletrader has also worked hard to establish a presence on social media. Using ScreenCloud, they brought their online efforts in-store, to join up the experience for customers and make one, seamless brand story.

Why it worked:

We've all heard of "omnichannel" marketing in retail and while the term may be slightly overused, the meaning is actually pretty relevant. Consumers aren't separating their online and offline retails experiences any more. They expect things to be joined up and for younger generations in particular, to have a connected experience wherever they shop. Adding social media in-store and using digital signage campaigns, is a clever and yet really simple way to do this.

Then you have the added benefit of repurposing content. Any retail brand who's spent time and effort creating amazing social content should see the fruits of their labor shared as often as possible. Taking social media and plugging it into your digital screens is a great way to double down on great content you already have, particularly in retail, where things change fast.

Application:

Feilo Sylvania is a leading provider of professional and architectural lighting solutions for both the public and private sectors. At a key industry exhibition, the brand used ScreenCloud to run content across four digital screens, that each related to a different division of the company.
This was a hugely effective way to share lots of different information simultaneously, without giving visitors overload or tons of printed brochures and information packs.

Why it worked:

The solution worked in an exhibition environment because of its ability to streamline different information and put it in a simple medium for passing visitors. To take that one step further, Feilo Sylvania also then used the application to roll out across physical showrooms throughout the UK and Europe.

This allowed them to reuse their content and to create personalized welcome messages for customers and show off presentations, brochures, videos and anything else that has been prepared for a particular showroom or event.

The ability with digital signage to change, re-use and repeat content is key to creating a truly relevant feed that's easy to set up. Making digital signage a great medium for retail companies looking to share news, products and updates regularly while in-store.

How to monetize your store's digital signage

As we may have mentioned once or twice, at ScreenCloud we're intent on helping people to get really great content onto the screens around them. But once the content's up there, shouldn't it work harder?

Work harder in that it makes your customers feel great, saves your team a job and entices everyone into buying in on your brand ethos. But something else we get asked once in a while is - can digital screens be used to boost our revenue too?

Here, we provide you some ways to monetize your store's digital signage for better results, higher revenue and a more interesting entry-to-customer sales process.

Brand collaborations

Digital signage allows you to sell your own products and services, as well as using the power of mesmerizing screen content to sell for you. While you don't want to bombard your customers with ads, you can use relevant collaborations and partnership opportunities to bring in additional revenue. For example, you could allow other retailers, events or local business services to advertize on your screens in between your content. This allows you to make a small profit from the businesses advertising, while genuinely showcasing content that provides beneficial information to your audience.

Interactive selling boards

Monetization can often be achieved based on the jobs your screens do everyday. For example, if you have a pre-order system in your store, why not allow people to pay a small surcharge to secure an item through your screen? If you have a coffee bar, allow busy shoppers to pre-order their favorite drink.

Both of these examples make the process of booking or buying something easier. They also benefit the customer, giving them an easy way to access what they need without having to stand in a queue, log on or leave the store. And what happens when things are easier to buy? People are more inclined to want them.

Promotion and timely offers

Proximity-marketing is a growing trend, pulling together digital screens and mobile marketing where offers and information can be transmitted to the mobile phones of those passing by a store. The key to effectively using this in a way which raises revenue is to submit timely offers that are truly relevant to the audience.

Using ScreenCloud's playlist and scheduling feature, many business owners are considering their customer personas and what messaging will be relevant to them and when. Switching between child-friendly snacks and adult-only beer at appropriate times. Selecting useful wayfinding displays for times when shoppers are in a rush and long, leisurely entertainment for when they have more time to stroll.

The more relevant and timely the offer, the more likely the customer is to buy, raising revenue as a result.

Using screens to reduce overheads

We're still a way off of technology replacing human jobs, but screens are becoming a key tool in the business ecosystem, used for a variety of jobs outside of just looking pretty.

In stores, screens can be used to help customers find a specific product or department, check stock levels or pre-order items. Where usually each of these jobs would be done by a member of staff, store owners can save on overheads by making their digital screens work harder.

In-store digital signage is changing the way we shop, think and buy. Those looking to harness it are at the peak of opportunity, not only to digitalize their stores but to also monetize their offering and help customers get to what they need faster.

ScreenCloud

Thanks for reading

If you've made it this far, we'd like to thank you for reading and also congratulate you on setting your store up for success using digital signage.

To start your free trial of ScreenCloud now, head to

screen.cloud

For other ways of getting in touch, check out our channels below:

screen.cloud

@screencloud

hello@screen.cloud