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carmanahsigns.com

Transforming the Player Experience at Retail

PGRI Introduction: STRATACACHE and its gaming division, Carmanah Signs, is the world's leading provider of digital signage network software, hardware, and services. An active member of the global lottery community, Carmanah serves 49 lottery customers on four continents—providing everything from digital signage software and hardware (media players, screens, tablets, networking equipment, and jackpot signs) to services (content creation, scheduling and distribution, network monitoring, and technical support). Together, STRATACACHE and Carmanah have over 1.4 million connected media players and 130,000 wireless jackpot signs at retailers around the world.

David Roy, who spent the previous seven years working with IGT's European clients on retail sales optimization, joined the Carmanah team in 2015. Prior to that he was a top retail executive with Coca-Cola International. His current mission? To engage Lottery players by digitizing the in-store playing experience.

Paul Jason: *With competition from online vendors like Amazon, isn't the pressure on retail to modernize just as compelling as it is for Lottery? How is STRATACACHE evolving the in-store experience?*

David Roy: Retailers are facing a fundamental challenge as e-commerce redefines the shopping experience. STRATACACHE is focused on supporting retailers by providing scalable in-store digital solutions that personalize the in-store experience and distribute targeted real time messaging. We're integrating (rather than competing with) online and mobile, leveraging the power of touch interactive, proximity to product, and real time content distribution.

How do we honor and manage customers as assets? What data can we pull about the customer? How do we use that information to align the customer's experience? For example, Amazon will use previous sales to suggest new purchases to the customer. What can we do to guide the customer; to make their experience easier, better, faster, more relevant, more entertaining? These are the questions we ask when building highly effective, mass scale solutions for the largest retail networks in the world.

Aren't retailers looking to Lottery to help them modernize?

D. Roy: That has been a theme at Lottery industry conferences and is congruent with what we've found in the field. Retailers know they must evolve to survive and are looking for guidance and leadership. Lottery holds a privileged position and valuable real estate at retail, and is positioned to be a leader in this area. Lottery could and should step into that role. Be the leader. Show retailers how to adapt, how to transform the retail experience, how to create a new level of customer engagement. There is so much that can be done to alter the in-store experience.

It's no longer a question of whether to invest in upgrading the shopping experience with digital solutions; at this point it's about developing a comprehensive retail strategy that will position both Lottery and retailers for long-term success. Retailers that install digital signage—promoting winner awareness, new game launches, rising jackpot levels, special promotions or prizes, and more—are delivering a different kind

of experience. Lottery is a game, it's fun. Buying a candy bar or milk will never be a theatrical experience, but Lottery is an inherently entertaining activity that readily lends itself to engaging consumers and increasing dwell time.

Jackpot awareness is a vital component, but the Carmanah solution is to think bigger?

D. Roy: Exactly. We're reimagining the role of signage, helping Lottery and retailers to personalize the player experience, and driving conversion. The goal isn't just to communicate a message, but to engage and inspire action. That's our mission. It means both innovating and expanding on our traditional jackpot signage, as well as exploring leading edge digital signage solutions tailored to the specific needs of Lottery.

We're using advanced jackpot signage to drive incremental sales by reimagining zones of activation at retail. For example, in-lane jackpot signage is increasing sales in the grocery channel by making it quick and simple to add lottery to grocery sales, while gas pump toppers are driving additional foot traffic into gas convenience stores.

Scalable digital solutions that distribute targeted real time messaging, instant customer service, robust shopper analytics, immediate product information, and easy mobile integration—those are the retail experience of today, and we're delivering these capabilities right now. At the moment that means solutions such as upgrading traditional PlayStations to touch interactive Digital PlayStations, using Digital Menu Boards as animated Instant Ticket planograms, and evolving traditional window jackpot signs to Sunlight Readable LCD Window Signs that make video and other short dwell time content visible in direct sunlight.

Both the traditional jackpot signage and Digital Signage (DS) are driven by ActiVia for Media—the most robust, reliable DS software available today. Built to handle the most complex DS networks at massive scale, ActiVia is currently powering the largest retail networks in the world.

So ActiVia also supports signage not attached to a PlayStation?

D. Roy: Absolutely. ActiVia powers the entire network, integrating everything from terminals and media players, to Digital Menu Boards and Digital PlayStations, along with all variations of wireless jackpot signs in between. It supports the streaming of highly targeted messaging across massive networks

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of signs, both inside and outside of the store—up to 250,000 screens at a time. This can be animations, HD video, gamification, and other interactive experiences. It can be advertisements, optimized for dwell time and location in the store. It can be real time jackpot awareness, winner information, and top prizes

remaining. Whatever you want it to be.

The dynamic tagging and highly efficient content distribution enabled by ActiVia allow for hyperlocal targeting, giving Lotteries full control of any segment of any screen, in any store, in any type of retail channel, in any location, at any time. This means you can target specific audiences by location and time of day, adjusting for language or other regional differences, showing local store specific winner information, with live jackpot feeds, even tying in third party data such as weather. Using one of our Quick Serve Restaurant (QSR) customers as an example, McDonald's actually accesses real time weather data, adjusting their signage to promote hot beverages when the temperature falls below a certain point (and vice versa).

Lotteries have sales data about what types of games are sold in each store. Would ActiVia enable the Lottery to shape their messaging to appeal to the play styles and demographics of the individual store?

D. Roy: Yes, precisely. It's one thing to have incredible data, but it's of little value if you can't capitalize on it. ActiVia uses the Lottery's data in real time to deliver exceptionally targeted messaging to very specific screens, stores, and locations. As with all ActiVia driven digital signage, content can be hyperlocalized down to the single store level based on content and store meta-tagging. The tagging capabilities with ActiVia are endless. Combined with the detailed analytics available, this represents a quantum leap forward in optimizing Lottery sales at retail.

We have entered the age of retail modernization. The future is here now, and Lottery can be a key enabling partner. Owning that leadership role will put Lottery in a position to drive both player and retailer engagement. That's our vision for Lottery, and we're ready to help make it happen! ∎