



INSTALLATION OVERVIEW: I-X CENTER, CLEVELAND, OH

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I-X Center, Cleveland, Ohio

Industry: Conventions and Events

CLEVELAND'S I-X CENTER INVESTS IN SIGNAGE WITH 22 INDOOR LED DISPLAYS

Convention centers are becoming... unconventional. The most recent hall to shake things up is Cleveland's International Exposition Center- widely known as the I-X Center-which realized it needed more than its massive dimensions to capture attention, and it looked to AV for a fresh source of sizzle.

A 2,200,000-square-foot structure with over 1,000,000 square feet of exhibition and conference space, the I-X Center stands as one of the largest meeting, convention, and exhibition centers in the Midwest, not to mention one of the top 10 exhibition centers in the world. Ohio-based integrator SoundCom knew that innovative displays would be essential to meeting the center's goals.

"Convention centers today have to differentiate themselves from other offerings that are out there," said Richard Threadgill, director of business development for SoundCom. "At the I-X Center, they wanted to make an impact statement as people enter the facility, while having the flexibility to meet different sets of deliverables for different events."

Centered around a huge open floor, the I-X Center required displays that would be large enough to not get swallowed up by the space. But size wasn't the only thing that mattered-row after row of large support columns presented their own complications. To address their issues, the I-X Center specified NanoLumens' NanoWrap and fixed NanoSiim indoor LED signage solutions, implementing 22 indoor LED displays that ranged from a 30- by 17-foot flat screen to eight- by eight-foot wrap screens, encompassing virtually every type of fixed and curved display that the company offers.



In addition to the flat screens being affixed to walls or suspended in traditional fashion, the wrap screens encircle key columns through the center, effectively transforming the attendee experience into something uncommon. "We're seeing a growing need for large-format displays that are really bright and eye-catching, but people are also getting away from the traditional 16:9 aspect ratio," noted Nathan Remmes, director of business development for NanoLumens. "Everyone is looking for the 'wow' factor, and conventions themselves are looking for different modes to advertise on."

In assessing the I-X Center's needs, the SoundCom team identified three unique requirements. First, was providing a unique impression to guests as they entered and exited the I-X Center. "We wanted to get someone to say, 'That's new and different-I haven't seen that before,'" Threadgill explained.



A second priority was a mechanism to change up looks within the center's main floor. "They wanted something with a unique visual look that would enable them to promote upcoming events, the event itself, or sell unique advertising on the round displays that wrap the columns," said Threadgill. "That gives them an opportunity for a premium upsell to shows that are exhibiting."

The third directive was to offer traditionally shaped displays of various sizes that could be hung in portrait or landscape mode, on walls or center-hung over exhibition spaces, providing traditional images or promotional signage. "There are multiple connection points to the media distribution system," Threadgill said, "so they can be flown around the building, and tied to any event's specific needs. It's a diverse offering."



Created expressly to provide 360-degree coverage, Nanolumens' NanoWrap emerged to meet the criteria of integrator and client on the I-X Center project. "To accommodate the round displays, obviously we needed a flexible product," noted Threadgill. "It had to appear seamless, be very bright for various show conditions while still being power-efficient and have a thin ultimate profile."

For the traditional displays, being light in weight was deemed particularly essential. "They had to be light because we needed to fly them from existing structures without reinforcing them," Threadgill says, "Those displays also need to be moved around the facility with minimal labor. And since the I-X Center intends to use these screens a lot, they needed to be assured of excellent support from the manufacturer."

Over 1.5 million visitors come to the I-X Center every year, which means that the displays were put to the test early and often—opportunities for creative applications included the Pro Football Hall of Fame Fan Fest, which was held there in early May. Beyond helping their client to get the "wow" they were after, SoundCom sees success in how low-maintenance the new displays have proven to be after the install. "There's a lot of complexity to the operation, potentially," pointed out Richard Threadgill. "You've got many shapes and sizes among the displays, they can be positioned anywhere in the facility, and there's a media distribution center on a centralized head end with a content management server. In spite of all that, the customer hasn't needed to reach out to us for support—they're very self-sufficient, which to us is the best indicator of a job done right. "Visitors to the center are connecting with the displays. Now the next step is to help our customer in the content development side, so that what's presented remains fresh and compelling. From here on, it's a content story."

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