

NEWS

The patience of the showroom

How digital signage in a car dealership turns a salesroom into a place where people really make choices

20 May 2026, Tobias Engl



There is a moment that is familiar to every car dealership customer: the first ninety seconds after entering the showroom. You look around, you touch the paintwork of a car that has been following you on posters for months, and in the back of your mind you count the seconds until a suit appears from somewhere on the left and says "Can I help you?" in that tone of voice that can mean anything but the offer of help.

At that very moment, on a Saturday morning in November, Mr. Voss enters the dealership.

Mr. Voss is 58, a widower, and his third-generation Golf decided yesterday at a red light that enough is enough. Nineteen years. 247,000 kilometers. A steering wheel on which the plastic has bulged where Mr. Voss put his hand down. He hasn't bought a car since 2005. He has no idea how it works now. He is - and he won't tell anyone - a little afraid of the

salesman.

What Mr. Voss doesn't know is that there is a screen in the entrance area that doesn't attack him. A calm greeting, today's test drive slots, a hint that coffee is free at the back left. No pop-ups, no "You are our 10,000th visitor", no competition. Just the friendly information that this room is deliberately waiting for him, not the other way around. He goes left first. Coffee first, that's always been his strategy.

Between the models, there are small, knee-deep displays next to each car. Mr. Voss stops in front of an estate car, curious because it looks about the same size as his old Golf, only thirty centimetres longer and with a hood that hints at something aggressive, which Mr. Voss doesn't quite understand. On the display: model name, real consumption (not the WLTP fantasy), delivery date, price from, monthly installment from. On the second page, when he taps on it: Interior photos, trunk volume with small comparison ("So four crates of mineral water plus a suitcase fit inside"). This is the information that Mr. Voss has been trying to fish out of three different configurators for two weeks. Here it simply is. Politely.

He looks to the side. In the background, on a wall, a quiet video loop is playing: sunrise, a car on a country road, no voiceover, no scary music. It's advertising, of course - but advertising at a volume that doesn't give Mr. Voss the feeling that he's being sold something. Rather the feeling that someone is giving him time.

A family is sitting in the waiting area where the coffee is. On the screen there today, because it's Saturday and there are children, a slightly more playful loop is running: teething troubles of the past ("Did you know that this starter used to take 30 seconds?"), a little brand history, then at some point the current model range. None of this is instructive. All of it keeps the family at the table for twelve minutes while dad talks to a salesman two rooms away.

Mr. Voss goes to the service corner because his old car, if it can still be revived at all, has to go somewhere. A discreet status ticker appears on a screen to the right of the service counter: "Workshop 73% full today. Next available appointment: Wednesday 11:00 am." Next to it, with a discretion that surprises Mr. Voss, is a list of vehicles ready for collection - just the license plate number and first name. "M-AB 1234, Ms. S." Nobody is called through here. It's the opposite of a waiting room.

At some point, after 22 minutes and three models, the salesman appears. Not before. He doesn't ask if he can help. He asks: "Which one stopped you?" And Mr. Voss, who hasn't really explained what he's looking for in two weeks, starts talking.

This is the moment that does not appear in any sales report and yet is the real gain. Mr. Voss had time. He had information. He was not being watched, but *receive*. And without realizing it, he learned more about three models in those 22 minutes than a salesperson could ever have conveyed in an initial meeting.

This is precisely the inconspicuous art of digital signage in a car dealership. It's not about the biggest video wall in the entrance, not about the most spectacular light show. It's about content in the right place at the right time: model information next to the model, service status in the service corner, brand history where there is waiting time, children's content at the weekend, quiet loops on weekdays. In the background, as quiet as a well-stocked car dealership itself, software that coordinates the whole thing: Maintaining content centrally, supplying branches synchronously, importing stock levels live, changing promotions on a daily basis - without an intern somewhere changing posters on a Saturday morning.

At ScreenWay, we honestly just call it our job. Since 2026, we have been building digital signage solutions for showrooms, branch networks and brand spaces that don't have to be loud to be effective. Car dealerships, manufacturer branches, mobility brands of all kinds - always with the idea that in the end the customer doesn't praise the screen, but the feeling with which they left the room.

Incidentally, Mr. Voss is going for a test drive the Saturday after next. The station wagon he looked at first. He will tell his son on the phone that the dealership was "pleasantly different". He has no more words for it. But anyone who has ever stood at a red light with a third-generation Golf that has run out of gas knows that "pleasantly different" is a tremendous compliment.

In a very sober sense, this is also the best key figure that digital signage can deliver.

You can find out more about how ScreenWay supports car dealerships, brand showrooms and branch networks in staging their spaces at [screenway.com](https://www.screenway.com).