

NEWS

Balladeers at the exhibition stand

How digital signage at trade fairs turns 36 square meters of carpet into a place where you want to stay

15 June 2026, Tobias Engl



Sabine, 41, has been working in B2B marketing for a medium-sized mechanical engineering company for ten years and has corrected and replaced more table displays at the last minute than she would have liked - including the morning at 9:42 a.m. when someone noticed that the A0 poster still had the old version number. This time it's different. Six screens have been hanging on stand B22 since yesterday evening, and all six are now telling us what Sabine gave them from her hotel room via laptop at half past six in the morning.

The largest, an LED wall at the top of the stand, runs in a quiet loop: three customer voices, a short product animation, a live counter showing the number of machines delivered worldwide. Nobody stops for the whole loop, that would be too much to ask, but everyone who walks past takes a detail with them. A number. A face. The sentence "In 47 countries since 2003". That's more than most posters have ever achieved. At the consultants' desks, smaller screens show different things depending on the time of day: the lecture schedule in the morning, the standing lunch menu at lunchtime,

the demo times in the afternoon. At 2 p.m. sharp, the display automatically changes to "About to start: Sebastian from the service team on predictive maintenance - center of stand, 12 minutes". Sebastian doesn't have to remind anyone, he just has to be ready.

At the back of the lounge, where there is an espresso and two upholstered armchairs, a third screen runs quietly with a discreet branding loop in an orchid look, no sales pressure. This is the screen for conversations that lead to an appointment in ten minutes, or a polite "We'll be in touch". Both are fine; screens that understand this are rare. At around 11 a.m., one of the managing directors enters the stand, looks around and says the sentence that marketing managers rarely hear: "Looks like it's all of a piece". Sabine says nothing, Sabine does nothing, she has only activated the "Trade fair day 1" tab in the morning, which she prepared two weeks ago together with days 2, 3 and 4.

Six screens, centrally controlled, a separate plan for each time of day, an emergency slide for stand failure stored. If necessary, it could import a price change from Frankfurt to a stand in Tokyo, but nobody needs to know that today. In the late afternoon, the moment happens that doesn't appear in any trade fair report and yet is the real winner. A buyer from Sweden stops in front of the LED wall, reads the Swedish version of the customer's voice - played automatically because the software recognizes him by his lanyard - and says a sentence to his colleague whose tone of voice reveals that he has become aware. Three minutes later, he is sitting with Espresso and Sebastian. This is the lead that no Excel spreadsheet could have predicted.

This is precisely the inconspicuous art of digital signage at trade fairs. It's not about the biggest LED wall in the hall or the loudest stand, but about content in the right place at the right time: lecture schedules in the morning, demos in the afternoon, languages depending on the visitor, quiet images in the lounge, loud ones at the head of the stand. Everything can be maintained centrally, everything is reliable for four days. In the background, as quietly as a well-planned stand itself, software that coordinates the whole thing ... Schedule content on a daily basis, synchronize screens worldwide, play out languages automatically, overwrite emergencies in seconds without anyone rushing through the hall with a USB stick.

ScreenWay builds digital signage solutions that help exhibitors to present themselves more intelligently than the first day of the trade fair actually allows. Stands, roadshows, showrooms, hybrid events, always with the idea that, in the end, no visitor praises the screen, but the stand where it was located. Sabine drives back on Thursday evening and will say at home that this trade fair was "amazingly relaxed". That's not entirely true, trade fairs are never relaxed, but it's closer to the truth than she thinks. Nobody had to reprint posters, nobody had to stay at the stand just to explain the presentation schedule, and in 47 countries the live counter continued to run without her intervention. That, too, is the best key figure that digital signage can deliver.

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