



Mike's Furniture Store Employs Elo to Sell More In-Store

How Touchscreens Replaced Catalogs in Chicago-based Retailer

Challenge

Today's consumers are very likely to combine online and in-store visits when making a sizeable purchase. The practice of viewing a physical product in the store then buying it online at a discount—continues to place tremendous strain on brick-and-mortar retailers.

Solution

Tampa-based Wondersign, makers of endless aisle kiosk solutions added kiosks equipped with large, 22-inch Elo interactive digital touchscreens. These products have become helpful for retailers selling large, unwieldy items with many SKUs.

Benefit

After completing pilot installations, retailers using Wondersign in-store report a staggering year-over-year sales lift of 300% to 800%.

Case Study - Elo Wondersign Endless Aisle Kiosk



Elo
Touchscreen Signage



The In-Store Challenge

Today, shoppers combine online and in-store visits when making significant purchases. Consumers want to know what all their options are, and walk in with the information they need to make a purchase. To add to that, showrooming (the practice of viewing a physical product in the store and then buying it online at a discount) is preventing many brick-and-mortar retailers from competing with free shipping, huge selections, and low prices offered by e-tailers.

Omnishoppers (multichannel buyers) are the customer of tomorrow, and are often frustrated when items are not available or when in-store inventories differ from what's online. Relying on paper catalogs or websites to showcase the retailer's complete product line doesn't help shoppers, and may actually drive them to online competitors, like Amazon. Mike's Furniture, in Joliet, IL a suburb of Chicago, addressed this issue head-on by partnering with Elo and Wondersign to revamp their customer experience and appeal to a new generation.

The Power of Endless Aisle

Before deploying a touchscreen solution, Mike's Furniture, like many other furniture stores, relied on paper catalogues, which could sometimes be out-of-date, difficult to navigate, and expensive to print. This doesn't meet the needs of today's omnishoppers, who on average spend 4% more, according to recent research from the Harvard Business Review. To simplify and streamline the search and purchasing process, and appeal to the modern consumer, the retailer decided to create an 'endless aisle' shopping experience using interactive digital touchscreens. Endless aisle solutions are helpful for stores like Mike's Furniture that sell large items that come in a variety of SKUs. Due to the intuitive design and easy-installation, Mike's Furniture settled upon an Elo and Wondersign deployment.

The Customer Wins with Elo & Wondersign

The Wondersign kiosk pairs an endless aisle application, optimized for a large-format experience, with interactive digital touchscreens that provide shoppers with visual detail, complete specs, dimensions, and more. "Retailers are struggling to compete against margin-slashing drop shippers," cited Casper Fopp, VP of Business Development for Wondersign. "You have Hulu and Netflix and Amazon Prime, yet people still flock to movie theaters for that big-screen experience," he noted. "Our endless aisle kiosk creates a visually-immersive experience that makes brick-and-mortar locations a destination again."

At Mike's Furniture, the customer reception has been nothing but positive and has helped keep long-term customers from turning over to online competitors. Shoppers are immediately impressed with the Wondersign, as it adds a 'wow-factor' to what is typically a mundane shopping experience. As a retailer with a 32-year year history in Chicago, customers immediately noticed the installation and were intrigued. "The touchscreen kiosk grabs customer attention immediately; most customers think it's really cool. The shoppers who have been coming to us year after year are especially impressed by the interactive experience," said Mike Kordik, co-owner of Mike's Furniture. Their customers can browse the store's full inventory, connect to the store's website to show salespeople a particular item they had seen, and can even browse new selections in real-time. Wondersign's endless aisle kiosks are built with slim, 42-inch PCAP touchscreens made by Elo.

The company also sells a smaller kiosk using Elo's 22-inch I-Series Android model, which is more appropriate for smaller, intimate shopping settings. Wondersign's kiosks are also "offline capable," which means all information is locally cached. With no Internet data streaming, there are no delays while customers wait for content to load. If the

Internet connection fails, the endless aisle kiosk still works and as soon as the connection is restored and the kiosk application is updated.

The Silent Salesperson Can Also Help with Assisted Selling

The Wondersign kiosk also acts a 'silent salesperson' in the furniture store. Customers are able to efficiently browse their options, find a style that they'd prefer, and get in touch with an in-store salesperson to make the final purchase. Instead of replacing staff, the Wondersign kiosk helps make employees be better at their jobs, and assists with closing sales. It can be used to communicate an array of options, and enables a more genuine interaction where customers and salespeople stand side-by-side to view different SKUs and styles. The entire experience can be tailored to customer wants and preferences. During slower time periods, the touchscreen kiosk is used as a training tool to help employees become familiar with the inventory and learn more about each individual product, creating a more educated employee who can better assess customer concerns and needs.

Typically, customers back away from making 'big-ticket' purchases because of unavailable merchandise and the absence of a partner to provide a second opinion. The Wondersign endless aisle application addresses this issue, as it enables shoppers to send emails and text messages directly from the kiosk, with complete specs and high-resolution, zoom-able product photos. The application also allows associates to display real time inventory and the ship date for out-of-stock merchandise. Now, customers can consult close friends when making tough decisions, and salespeople can easily offer alternative options to uneasy consumers.

A Quick Return on Investment

Typically, retailers using Wondersign in-store report a staggering year-over-year sales lift of 300% to 800%. Mike's Furniture was also able to see a quick return on their investment. Approximately 80% of customers that come through their doors interact with and use the display when browsing their inventory or making a purchasing decision. The store no longer loses sales due to out of stock items because shoppers know when the products can be shipped or will be back in inventory. Mike and Billy, brothers and store owners, estimate that the installation paid for itself after of a week of it being installed. Today, they're able to keep up with major online retail competitors, such as Amazon, and can engage new shoppers to add to their 32-year-old customer base.

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