

# CASE STUDY

## HD Digital Signage Helps Legends Hospitality Management Improve the Fan Experience at Yankee Stadium

Concession stands at Yankee Stadium received already-prepared content to place into sturdy stand-alone players, helping them simply and effectively market their products.

DigitalSignageToday.com

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**BrightSign®**

### The players

**BrightSign**, a leader in the digital signage and kiosk industry, manufactures non-PC controllers for both stand-alone and networked applications, with a focus on quality and reliability. Headquartered in Saratoga, Calif., the company is owned and operated by Roku Inc., which was founded in 2002 by Anthony Wood, the inventor of the personal video recorder (PVR).

**Diversified Media Group (DMG)**, founded in 2001 and based in Kenilworth, N.J., provides the design, engineering, implementation and management of private video, rich media, digital signage networks, corporate communications systems and business distance learning technologies to corporations, retail organizations and public venues. The company oversees networks ranging from a few sites to more than 4,000 end-points around the world.

**Legends Hospitality Management LLC** was founded in the fall of 2008 by the New York Yankees Baseball Club, the Dallas Cowboys Football Club, Goldman Sachs and CIC Partners. The company, based in Newark, N.J., offers catering, concessions, retail merchandising and facilities management services to sports, entertainment and recreational venues.



*When the new Yankee Stadium opened, Legends Hospitality Management wanted to draw people's attention to its menu boards. Diversified Media Group and BrightSign found a solution.*

## **The problem**

As part of the overall construction of the new Yankee Stadium, Legends Hospitality Management required an eye-catching, colorful, animated visual solution that would enhance its menu boards and promote the brands it sells at 19 concession stands throughout the venue. DMG was enlisted to integrate high-quality digital signage systems that fulfilled the goals of delivering excellent high definition (HD) image and video quality that could be updated over a network, while at the same time being quick and easy to install. The company selected the BrightSign HD210 playlist playback system for each of the 19 locations.

“Legends has a totally different concept in terms of the stadium hospitality experience,” said John Melillo, president of DMG. While preferred seating areas benefit from direct-to-the-seat delivery of concessions, the venue’s management also wanted to give their general fan base a unique visual experience going to the concession stands. “It was a good way to support their brands and show off some of the product.”

The most significant challenge that DMG faced was integrating the signage in a short time frame — five weeks before opening day. This required not only the installation of the equipment, but the creation of content for each of the 19 locations, which sell, on average, about 10 brands, and, in some cases, almost double that number.

## **The solution**

The HD content running on the digital signage at each Legends concession stand was created by DMG, and placed onto SD cards that were simply inserted into the BrightSign HD210 units for automatic playback and looping, resulting in true plug-and-play functionality. Thanks to their compact size (6.6” x 5.9” x 1.2”), each of the HD210’s was easy to install behind the video screens, out of sight. Unlike PC-based systems, BrightSign’s solid-state platform includes no moving parts, eliminating the need for additional ventilation or temperature controls to ensure reliability.

“They have run flawlessly,” Melillo said. “While these signs are under overhangs and are not directly exposed to rain, they are in open areas.”

While the product’s ruggedness must be taken into consideration, what made BrightSign the perfect fit for this application was its quality.



*BrightSign’s units, like the one above, offered automatic playback, durability and reliability.*

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“I like to say, as an old television producer/director, that you can do a lot of things, but you can’t lie about picture and sound,” Melillo said. “The BrightSign product is an extremely good playback engine.” If one is installing equipment for a clientele of this caliber, he adds, it had better be top-notch. “We had been looking at the BrightSign product for a long time, and had done some testing, and this seemed like the perfect application. It offers extremely high-end playback.”

One of the most significant benefits of the BrightSign HD210 is its networkability, which enables content updates to be conducted from a remote location. At Yankee Stadium, this feature was not initially utilized, due to the short time frame in which the installation had to take place. When the network is installed for next season, however, all that will be required is a simple Ethernet connection to the BrightSign units, allowing for communication via the Internet with a secure, Web-based link with the BrightSign network manager.

“Next season, we will be working with the Yankees’ IT department to network BrightSign,” Melillo said. “It’s a flexible product in that we can use the SDHC card to begin with, and add the networking later.”

### The result

This was DMG’s first deployment of the BrightSign system, and Melillo says that the experience has been a positive one. “The product is extremely reliable, the client is very happy and they love the playback,” he said. “And it looks gorgeous, and that was one of their big drivers.”

Another driver is the need to draw fans that have grown accustomed to elaborate entertainment experiences wherever they go — even if it’s just to the living room, where consumer electronics have become so sophisticated that they almost compete with what can be found in the professional realm. To address this, facilities are shifting their attention to what else they can offer.



*Fans want an exceptional experience when they visit a sports stadium. High-quality digital signage helps keep customers engaged.*

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“Many of the stadiums are about more than the game. The game is part of it, but it’s also about the total fan experience,” Melillo said.

Food service within these facilities is a high priority — and Yankee Stadium and others are paying close attention to it. “No longer is it enough for a vendor to flip a bag of peanuts at you from down the aisle,” he said.

As sports and entertainment venues strive to meet the public’s increasing demand for an experience that not only focuses on the event, but the ancillary services as well, companies like BrightSign are well positioned to inject the necessary razzle-dazzle.

“The team owners and their suppliers, in understanding that, are trying to enhance the total experience by having some of the best food, great service and great ambiance,” Melillo said. “And, if the team’s doing well, it’s perfect!”

***About the sponsor:*** BrightSign, headquartered in Saratoga, Calif., is owned and operated by Roku Inc. BrightSign manufactures non-PC controllers for both stand-alone and networked applications, with a focus on quality and reliability. The company is a leader in the digital signage and kiosk industry.



*Digital signage can help draw patrons to different venues throughout Yankee Stadium.*



*BrightSign’s slim player easily fits behind video screens, out of sight of customers.*