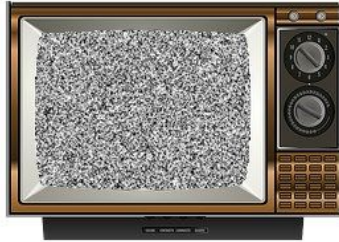


# WHAT IS A DIGITAL SIGNAGE PLAYLIST?

Before defining what is a digital signage playlist, let's discuss what makes up a digital sign.

## What is a digital sign? What is the difference between a digital sign and a digital signage player?

A screen is just an empty shell until it receives a video signal. This was the case of the "snowstorm" seen on television sets in the 1980s and 1990s. When the video signal was absent, a television screen displayed "video noise," or a random flicker of black and white dots.



Most people are familiar with some form of video signal supplied to a screen: for example a coaxial cable delivering cable programming to a television, or an RCA plug from a DVD player into an LCD screen, or a VGA cable connecting a desktop computer to the monitor.



A digital signage player is a small computer situated behind the screen of the digital sign. This computer, referred to as a player, provides the video signal to the screen displaying the digital sign. The digital signage player also updates dynamic media content, such as local weather information, and checks for media scheduled to play at specific times and dates.



A digital signage player connected to a screen and displaying the player's video signal creates a digital sign!

## What is a digital signage playlist?

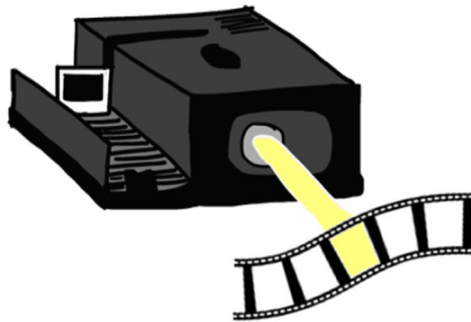
A digital signage playlist is a sequence of media designed by a user for playback on a digital signage player.

**Wikipedia** states, “In its most general form, a playlist is simply a list of songs...sometimes [playing in] a loop.” A digital signage playlist, in its simplest form, is very comparable to a playlist of songs, especially if the playlist is being watched as well as listened to, as is the case of a YouTube playlist for instance.

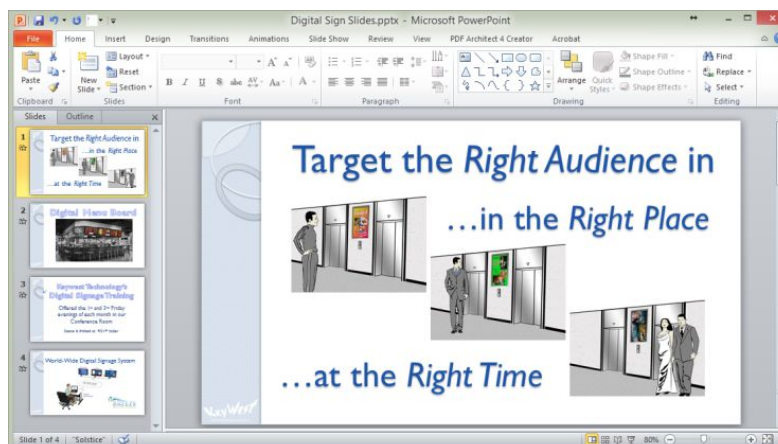


However, a digital sign is capable of displaying multiple graphics at the same time, whereas a musical playlist typically delivers just one song (and/or one music video) at a time.

It is a common practice in digital signage to divide the screen into several areas to display different media content. This also enables media content to display for different lengths of time on the same screen. These divisions of the screen are called “zones,” and they are simply containers for the media content. “Zones” allow different media content to run for different lengths of time in different areas on the screen, rather than all media content on the screen changing at the same time like an old slide projector flipping through a series of Kodachrome 35mm photographs.

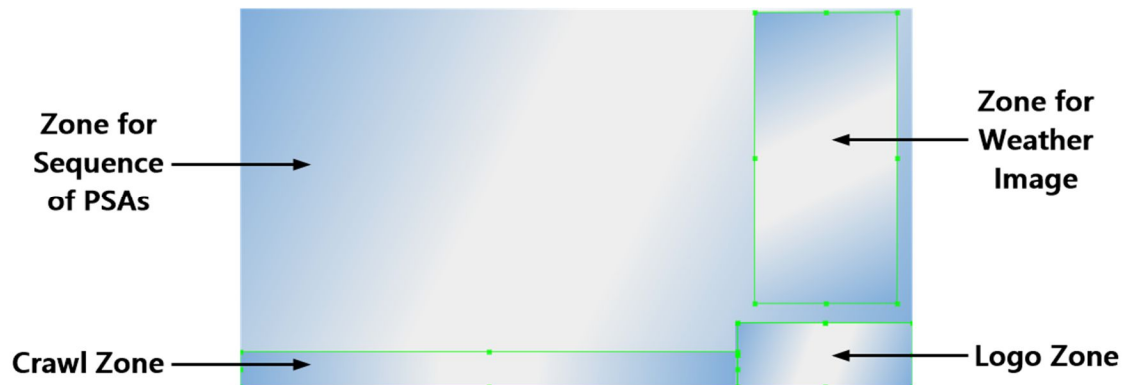


To illustrate this concept, let's compare a digital signage playlist to a **PowerPoint** presentation. **PowerPoint** allows users to create digital slideshows. All media content is embedded in each slide, and the **PowerPoint** presentation moves through the sequence of slides. To display a company logo in the bottom right corner throughout a **PowerPoint** presentation, the company logo image must be added to each **PowerPoint** slide. When one slide exits the screen, another enters and all media content on the screen changes. In a digital signage playlist, “zones” allow one media item, such as a company logo, to stay on the screen while other zones rotate through different sequences of media.



## What is a digital signage playlist? (Continued)

Let's say a digital sign will show several public service announcements in the form of mostly text, and they will repeat in a loop. With a digital signage playlist and the use of "zones," the digital sign could display the PSAs, plus easily incorporate a logo, dynamically updating local weather image, and a local news crawl in different "zones."



In conclusion, a digital signage playlist is the combination of zones, media items in the zones, and design attributes adding the polishing touches to digital signs!

