

Hope Gospel Mission Carries its Message with StrandVision Digital Signage

Hope Gospel Mission opened in 1998 and quickly became a leader in the "Rescue" of poor and homeless men and women in Wisconsin's Chippewa Valley. The Mission offers short-term emergency shelter and long-term programs dedicated to addressing the root causes of a homeless person's problems. The Mission requires the continued support of the community since it receives no government funding at any level and is solely supported through private donors, businesses, churches, volunteers and foundations. One key source of funds comes from its Bargain Center. A StrandVision digital sign is located in the store to help Hope Gospel bring its mission to the public.

Hope Gospel Mission Bargain Center is a key contributor to the Hope Gospel organization.

Explained Craig Pedersen, Hope Gospel Mission Business Manager, "The Bargain Center is the largest thrift store in the upper mid-west with 45,000 square feet of display space. Yet, many who visit the Center don't realize that its purpose is to support our residents and our life skills training programs.

"The digital sign is an in-store advertising medium that lets people know why we're here. It encourages them to support our mission through prayer, donations of time and money, and by hiring Mission residents."

The StrandVision digital sign presents a series of 30-50 text and image pages through a digital projection system that is shown on a 6' X 8' screen near the store entrance. It reaches the 500 customers who visit the store each day with information on the Mission's services.

The digital signage has three target audiences – donors, shoppers and volunteers, and with its flexible programming and scheduling can reach all three in a single mix of pages.

"The digital sign plays an important role in our community outreach," explained Craig. "We try to create an atmosphere of a large for-profit store. With the StrandVision signage we differentiate ourselves from even the large retailers that have nothing like it. This is cutting edge for a non-profit."

The pages feature program profiles, job postings and fund raising updates, as well as special events such as the Ruth House Women's Shelter grand opening, banquets, volunteer picnics and store promotions.

Big Plans for the Future

As successful as the StrandVision Digital Signage software has been for Hope Gospel, Craig has plans to make it even better by taking advantage of StrandVision's video service. He plans to add audio and full video capabilities in order to show Mission videos.

Both the Hope Gospel Mission, which airs Public Service Announcements (PSAs), and the Bargain Center, which advertises on local television, have professionally produced video. Craig plans to add these 30-second videos to the mix.

Another source of interesting and compelling content will come from showing short client testimonials.

The Bargain Center also plans to add small flat screen displays at the checkout registers to reach customers as they wait. Craig thinks that this may be as, or even more, effective than the large screen presentation.

Adding to the Communications Mix

The StrandVision Digital Signage software is a valuable addition to Hope Gospel Mission's communications mix. It supplements their TV ads, Web site (www.hopegospelmission.org), quarterly newsletter and direct marketing email campaigns and mailers.

"It's become part of our retail experience," said Craig. "People appreciate the information it gives them and we appreciate all the things that it lets us say about our mission."

