

Luther Midelfort uses StrandVision Digital Signage for Marketing and Emergency Notifications

Luther Midelfort - Mayo Health System, serving Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and the surrounding area, has a number of constituencies that it needs to communicate with on a regular basis, including staff, patients and the general public. There was also an interest in developing a downtime emergency communications system to notify staff in the event of an IS outage. Luther Midelfort discovered that it could address both of these needs through a digital signage network. It turned to StrandVision for its Internet-based system.

Luther Midelfort – Mayo Health System’s Information Systems (IS) management wanted a cost-effective way to deploy a separate, redundant communications system to notify hospital and clinic staff of IS or network downtime. They discovered that a networked digital signage system could fill the bill. StrandVision LLC, with its Internet-based solution, was selected.

Emergency notification is an unusual motivation for a digital signage purchase since digital signage is generally viewed as a marketing tool. Not surprisingly, as IS management presented the idea to Luther Midelfort department heads, the marketing potential of the system quickly became obvious.

Promoting Luther Midelfort

The initial installation is geared toward the marketing end. One StrandVision digital sign is located in the Radiology Department waiting room. This sign, a 30” LCD screen, carries information on Luther Midelfort services, such as cardiac care and weight management services. It also includes more general information, such as local weather, upcoming events, seasonal notifications, etc.

A second unit is deployed off site at the Oakwood Mall in Eau Claire. This 27” LCD screen is mounted in an unattended kiosk. Connected via cable modem, it carries announcements similar to the waiting room sign but also includes additional information on medical services, community events and volunteer opportunities.

Both signs are regularly updated by Luther Midelfort Corporate Communications staff. Account coordinators work with departments to determine slide content and develop the slides. Mario Medrano Lopez, application specialist, posts the updates to the screens through a Web interface on the StrandVision server.

StrandVision’s Internet digital signage management and content delivery is important. Commented Mario, “The system allows me to instantly make changes from any computer. Before, when we had a PowerPoint slide show running at the mall, I had to drive 15-20 minutes to the mall just to change a slide. Now I make the change from here, and it is immediately updated at the kiosk.”

Focusing on Downtime Notifications

The original mission for the StrandVision digital signage application, downtime notification, is envisioned as an

alternative communications network for planned or unplanned events. It will instruct staff to implement alternative procedures in order to continue serving patients.

The entire digital signage network is independent of any of the Luther Midelfort’s communication technologies; even StrandVision’s server is remotely located over the Internet. When fully deployed, the digital signage network will include displays at several staff locations, such as nursing desks, labs and other non-public areas.

Joe Woodie, lead project specialist, Information Systems, explained that the displays would normally serve as an internal employee newsletter carrying news of interest, such as weather, staff notices, upcoming events, employee recognition, etc. However, the normal programming could be overridden by IS to broadcast emergency notices.

At Luther Midelfort, a single, digital signage software system supports marketing and employee communications, as well as emergency messaging.

