



HIGHLIGHTS

Product Type

Clarity Matrix LCD Video Wall

Location

Washington, D.C.

Industry

Museum

Application

Education & Entertainment



UNIQUE DESIGN OF CLARITY MATRIX VIDEO WALL CREATES MEMORABLE VISUAL EXPERIENCE

For more than a century one could explore the world and all that's in it through National Geographic Magazine. In recent years that's also been possible through programming on the National Geographic Channel, on the society's engaging and constantly evolving website and recently on an interactive, tablet-based version of the magazine.

2013 marked continuation of this rich tradition – and the ongoing embrace of technology – with the opening of an exhibit in the National Geographic Museum in Washington, DC. The exhibit pays unique tribute to the 125 years of work of the society's explorers, photographers and scientists while also looking forward to the future of the society. The exhibit presents a larger-than-life picture of the many facets of our world on an LCD video wall, from Planar, whose physical layout provides a novel and engaging platform that maximizes the impact of the National Geographic Society's renowned visual content.

Offset configuration is both engaging and flexible

The Planar video wall consists of a 12-panel (4x3) array of Clarity™ Matrix MX46HD LCD video wall displays. It was installed by Sterling, Virginia-based Avitecture, which designs, installs and supports integrated audio-visual systems with an emphasis on dynamic architectural displays. The video wall is unusual in that its three horizontal rows are offset from each other—a unique layout that creates an engaging experience.

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- Thomas Oelberger,
*Exhibit Designer,
National Geographic Museum*

“Our creative team envisioned the offset layout as a way to present nature in a more organic format,” says Thomas Oelberger, one of the museum's exhibit designers. “Rather



than depicting the natural world in a rectilinear box, our layout allows for compelling compositions that highlight and accentuate the lyrical beauty of each scene. It was tremendous to be able to work with such a highly engineered system such as Clarity Matrix, it certainly encouraged our creativity." Oelberger calls the system highly flexible as well, owing to features such as its Quad Controller Processors. "The built-in configuration tools allow us switch between inputs and wall layouts very easily. For the 125th anniversary exhibit we currently output full HD to all 12 panels. But if we need to use the display for a special event we can stretch a single input over the entire video wall with minimal effort."

Off-board electronics design minimizes heat, keeps cooling costs down

Clarity Matrix earned particularly high marks for its off-board electronics design; a unique feature that allows components such as controllers and power supplies to be housed away from the video wall in a remote rack room. "This design keeps the video wall from heating up, which minimizes cooling of the exhibit space," says Bill Apter, Special Projects Consultant for Avitecture. "It also facilitates convenient troubleshooting at the AV rack, without having to disrupt the visitors in the exhibit space. This is a powerful advantage of the Planar system and a great benefit for the end-user.

"The unique, off-board electronics design of Clarity Matrix minimizes heat build-up and facilitates convenient troubleshooting without having to enter the exhibit space.

-Bill Apter,
Senior Consultant - Special Projects,
Avitecture

Planar's ERO technology adds ruggedness, protection and visual enhancement

To protect the video wall and preserve the visual experience it provides, the museum ordered Clarity Matrix with Planar's Extended Ruggedness and Optics (ERO™) technology. This is a glass surface that is optically bonded to the front of each display within the video wall. It adds ruggedness, protects the video wall from damage that could occur in the museum's high-traffic environment and provides enhanced ambient light rejection and contrast. Using the ERO technology also provides an easy upgrade path to convert Clarity Matrix to an interactive touch display if required.

Mounting system delivers multiple benefits

The Clarity Matrix video wall features Planar's EasyAxis™ Mounting System, which has proven beneficial in several ways. "Because of the offset nature of our installation, accurate placement was exceedingly important. Planar's EasyAxis Mounting System greatly simplified the installation and ensured our content looked exactly as we imagined," Oelberger says. "We really like the EasyAxis Mounting System because even with unusual configurations such as this one, the panels go up quickly and easily, alignment can be fine-tuned in minutes," says Avitecture's Bill Apter. "And if a panel has to be serviced, it is accomplished simply by pivoting an adjacent panel up and out of the way." Oelberger adds that the EasyAxis Mounting System also provides a high level of flexibility and modularity, which is important in the dynamic museum environment. "Because setup is so simple, after the current exhibit closes we will definitely be able to un-install the video wall and repurpose it elsewhere in the museum. Furthermore, because Planar offers additional features such as a multi-touch overlay, we know that our investment has a life that will extend much further than our initial installation."

Planar demonstrates its strong customer commitment

"Choosing Planar as the vendor for this installation has been wonderful," says Oelberger. "Both prior to our purchase, and after installation, they have been extremely responsive to all questions and concerns. The three year warranty gives us piece of mind and Planar has already proved that should a problem occur, they are ready to respond immediately. Our installation has been so successful that we have already begun to develop concepts for additional media installations throughout the National Geographic campus."