



HIGHLIGHTS

Location
Louisville, Kentucky

Industry
Museum

Application
Digital Signage



VIDEO WALL MAKES EVERY DAY "DERBY DAY"

The Kentucky Derby Museum welcomes more than 200,000 visitors each year, giving them a first-hand look at the event for which Louisville, Kentucky is known worldwide. In operation since 1985, the museum saw itself re-born after near destruction from a storm-related flood in August 2009. In keeping with its mission to provide a lasting impression to visitors, the museum, as part of its re-building effort, decided to utilize state-of-the-art video wall technology to literally put visitors face-to-face with a field of horses and jockeys as it jolts out of the starting gate and thunders toward the first turn in the fabled race. No sooner has one entered the museum through an actual starting gate then they're in front of a massive video wall, nearly 250 square feet in size, and almost life-like video footage of a race heading directly at them at break-neck speed.

The awe-inducing video spectacle owes its realism to Planar Systems, which provided the innovative Clarity™ Matrix LCD Video Wall System. 16 of Planar's Clarity Matrix LCD displays comprise the video wall, each 46" in size, and arranged edge-to-edge in a four-wide-by-four-high (4x4) configuration. Clarity Matrix was specified by Design and Production, Inc. (Lorton, Va.), which also installed it in the new exhibit space created by the San Francisco office of another long-term museum partner, Gallagher & Associates. Clarity Matrix replaced a three-screen rear-projection system that had been seen by the museum staff as outdated, costly to maintain, and underperforming in the high ambient light conditions of the museum's entrance area.

Clarity Matrix delivers much greater visual impact by its brightness (700 nits) and narrow image gap that combine to vividly bring the race footage to life, almost seamlessly across the entire four-by-four video wall, even under the brightest light conditions. Each LCD panel has a long-life backlight (~50,000 hrs.), with no lamps or other elements to replace, thus satisfying the museum's desire for a low-maintenance solution. All 16 panels feature Planar's unique EasyAxis™ mounting system, featuring 6-axis adjustment and a front access feature should service be required. Although not a factor in the Kentucky Derby Museum's situation, the EasyAxis system allows Clarity Matrix to be closely installed to the wall surface, giving the video wall a total depth of just 4.5 inches, the thinnest footprint of any LCD video wall on the market today.

Another feature key to the museum's selection of Clarity Matrix is the off-board electronics - a design that allows power supplies and electronic controllers to be rack-mounted away from the video wall. This freed up space behind the video wall that would accommodate another exhibit area called My Spot, an intimate space that lets a visitor experience Churchill Downs from various locations. An added benefit of this design is that it removes components from the video wall that generate heat, contributing to a longer life cycle.

Currently, the Clarity Matrix video wall showcases broadcast-quality race footage that re-plays approximately every 30 seconds during the museum's hours of operation, seven days per week, and after hours in some 280 events per year. The design of Clarity Matrix ensures 24/7 picture-perfect performance, and no action has been required by the IT staff to perform re-configuration or re-calibration. And should the museum or a corporate, civic or charitable client wish to display additional content, the off-board control modules make loading of other video, photography or graphics a quick and easy process.

The museum staff calls Planar's Clarity Matrix LCD Video Wall a winner with its key factors including minimal footprint, reliability, unique design, and fully supportive of the museum's intent to create an immersive, memorable Kentucky Derby experience.

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