

National Naval Aviation Museum (USA)

World's largest Naval Aviation museum welcomes donors into the digital age.



Background

The Naval Aviation Museum Foundation, Inc. is an educational and fundraising organization that supports the development of the National Naval Aviation Museum located at Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida. The Museum and its nearly 350,000 square feet of exhibit space is home to more than 150 beautifully restored aircraft representing Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard Aviation.

Challenges

As part of a renovation of the museum's donor recognition space, the museum's management team decided to convert a significant portion of their traditional donor recognition plaques to a digital format. Physical space was short which was making it difficult to continue adding donation plaques. Beyond that a digital approach would make future corrections and additions simpler and less costly.

The museum's AV team tried a variety of digital display solutions (from barebone and embedded PCs to higher-end media players and display controllers), but all the solutions they tried turned out to be too complex from a management point of view, and they all meant more work as the donor list grew. Until they found Userful.

Solution

When looking online for a solution that allowed them to run multiple displays from a single computer, Nick Thrasher, Media Specialist/Editor in Chief, of the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation, came across Userful's video wall solution, and realized that this was exactly what they were looking for. Userful enables customers to drive a large and flexible number of displays over the network using just a single, standard PC. It's got an easy to use drag-and-drop browser based control center that makes it easy to manage content.

Thrasher and his team deployed a video wall of six 55" LED displays in portrait orientation. They are all powered from a single Intel Core i7 PC with 32GB of RAM located in a server room and connected via Gigabit Ethernet network. The videos they use to showcase donors are currently stored on the PC's hard drive, though in the future they plan to incorporate web, or HTML5, content.

Results

Thrasher loved that Userful's solution "was simple and straightforward to set up and install, and it has proven easy to update and reconfigure with little to no maintenance at the actual display locations. Userful has operated reliably despite occasional disruptions such as network and power outages." Equally important, Userful has brought, "significant reduction in man-hours required to deploy and maintain the video wall system, as well as in cost of hardware when compared to purchasing multiple PCs or a video wall controller."

Results

The Naval Aviation Museum now has a six-screen donor recognition display that draws significant visitor attention and gives the museum a robust and reliable way of honoring their supporters. Whenever necessary, the museum can make updates and correct errors on their donor recognition wall, and they have the ability to incorporate more dynamic visual content whenever they choose.

Nick Thrasher recalls that "Life before Userful required significant man-hours to maintain our very standard-looking displays, while life after Userful has required little effort despite the deployment of our dynamic, non-traditional setup."



We have been very pleased with the Userful solution, which has delivered as promised. Our resulting donor recognition display is far more dynamic and eye-catching than we had previously envisioned when considering more traditional alternatives, and far easier to maintain and operate. In Navy parlance, Bravo Zulu!

-Nick Thrasher Media Specialist/Editor in Chief at The Naval Aviation Museum Foundation