

Case Study

Retail
Digital Signage



Elevating Foot Traffic and Engagement with Digital Signage

ComQi's end-to-end digital signage solution is helping Famous Footwear engage shoppers and optimize sales with the help of Intel® processors, technologies, and support



"Intel-based media players have performed exceptionally well for Famous Footwear and our other customers. The processors' price-to-performance ratio and stability have allowed us to offer reliable, high-performing media players that meet our clients' high standards."

—Don Lunetta, SVP of Sales, ComQi

With over a thousand storefronts nationwide, Famous Footwear needed a digital signage solution that could scale easily from an initial deployment at its flagship store in Manhattan to hundreds more stores across the United States and Canada. In addition to delivering localized content, the solution needed to be reliable, cost-effective, and flexible enough to meet different store needs, from small-footprint LCDs to large, eye-catching LED window displays.

For help, Famous Footwear turned to ComQi, an AU Optronics Corporation (AUO) company and global provider of customer engagement technologies. Since the initial deployment at its flagship store in 2016, Famous Footwear has deployed ComQi's digital signage solutions at 200 additional stores, including at a new flagship store. Additional rollouts are expected due to the benefits seen thus far, which include increased foot traffic, shopper satisfaction, and increased sell through of promoted inventory.¹

ComQi's end-to-end digital signage solution includes hardware, software, services, and ongoing support. Its Famous Footwear deployments feature ComQi Intel® processor-powered media players that are vetted as [Intel® IoT Market Ready Solutions](#) (Intel® IMRS). The media players run EnGage, ComQi's cloud-based digital signage platform that enables retailers to create, manage, and analyze content locally across an easily managed network of devices.



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Finding the right fit in digital signage

Retailers like Famous Footwear, part of the Caleres group of retail companies, are under pressure to create compelling, interactive, and highly personalized content and experiences to attract discerning shoppers into stores. Once inside, the goal is to engage and delight shoppers, leading to increased customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, and sales.

Famous Footwear once relied on display cases and print media that were expensive, took a long time to execute, had a brief life cycle, and weren't always installed at all stores. In recent years, the shoe seller had shifted toward digital signage solutions, but its initial deployments delivered disappointing results with synchronization issues between fixtures, unreliable displays, and sluggish technical support.

An added concern for Famous Footwear was that core customers revealed in internal surveys that, although they were loyal to the brand, they wanted more information about footwear fashion trends and how those trends related to on-shelf products. To respond to those needs, the retailer decided to combine conventional merchandising with high-definition digital displays and curated creative content that would drive customer awareness of the most-popular name-brand athletic and casual shoes on its shelves.¹

ComQi puts its best foot forward at flagship stores

The goal of ComQi's initial digital signage deployment for Famous Footwear, in 2016, was to attract attention and foot traffic to the retailer's first flagship store on West 34th Street in Manhattan, one of the most competitive stretches of retail real estate in North America.

To help Famous Footwear stand out from more than 175 other stores on the street, ComQi supplied and installed a video wall with 51 total displays in the sidewalk-facing main window. The striking display included 15 55-inch LCDs and stacked rows of 36 20-inch LCDs.

Three years later, when Famous Footwear closed its first flagship store and moved to a different location on West 34th Street, the retailer again engaged ComQi to create compelling street-facing displays, this time on both the first and second floors. This time, ComQi took advantage of the latest LED technologies, which are brighter and more striking, use less power, are easier to maintain, and offer a longer lifespan than LCD alternatives.

For the first-floor display near the store's entrance, ComQi worked closely with Famous Footwear's visual merchandising team to develop an innovative alternative to traditional flat-panel displays. The custom-designed cabinet houses 2.5 mm LED tiles, each one foot by one foot, arranged at different depths to create an attention-grabbing 3D effect. The artistic display is four feet tall and a little over six feet wide. On the second floor, the new flagship store features a showstopping 32:9 LED street-facing 2K display that is over six feet tall and 19 feet wide.

How ComQi creates a seamless digital signage experience

ComQi's displays connect to the company's EnGage media players, powered by Intel processors. ComQi offers four types of Intel® processor-based media players, including a rack-mountable option, and supports Intel-powered media players from other manufacturers. The EnGage media players are designed specifically for digital signage or interactive applications. They are vetted as Intel IMRS, which means, among other attributes, the products collect and analyze data at the edge, are easily scalable, and provide an end-to-end business solution.

"Over the years, we have increased our partnership with Intel and leveraged their extended partner base to assist us in finding other media player manufacturers. We also leverage Intel's support capabilities to help diagnose hardware and driver issues should we encounter them," said Sara Bause Mason, SVP of Global Operations for ComQi.

As an Intel channel partner, ComQi has visibility into the Intel® product road map, which Bause Mason said has enabled ComQi to effectively manage its development costs and choose chipsets that ensure its media players are supported and available to clients for extended periods. "This allows our clients and us to manage operational costs by ensuring we have a small and consistent number of player models for the duration of our client contracts," she said.

ComQi's EnGage media players run the EnGage content management system (CMS), an intelligent, enterprise-wide software platform powered by Intel® chipsets. The EnGage CMS is an easy-to-use, feature-rich, reliable platform, with a wide range of content scheduling and targeting tools to support complex content requirements. The browser-based, cloud-hosted solution requires no infrastructure, and with remote monitoring and support, retailers do not have to install local software.

For video walls, the EnGage CMS synchronizes complementary content across multiple displays. According to ComQi, the displays can run 24/7 with 99 percent uptime, and the CMS provides immediate feedback on any unexpected downtime or other issues, thanks in part to alerts provided by the Intel® NUC Watchdog Timer Utility.



Key capabilities of ComQi's EnGage media players and CMS

- **Plug-and-play simplicity:** EnGage media players require only power, Ethernet, Wi-Fi, or cellular connections to connect automatically to the EnGage CMS.
- **Remote management:** EnGage media players can be remotely managed using the EnGage CMS.
- **Continuous connectivity:** EnGage media players stay connected to the EnGage CMS without need for polling and require minimal bandwidth.
- **Video wall support:** With the video wall arrangement tool, retailers can design their own video wall layout, with content mapped to each screen.
- **Automatic content updates:** All content, schedules, and settings are managed within the EnGage CMS and distributed to the player before playback. A connection to the CMS isn't required to play content, only to get updates, so playback is not affected if the internet connection is lost.
- **Play logs and reports:** All content playback is logged, even while offline, and transferred back to the EnGage CMS so retailers know exactly what has played across their network and how playbacks are performing.

Proven success leads to continuing deployments

In addition to providing digital signage solutions at Famous Footwear's flagship stores, ComQi installs, services, and maintains digital signage solutions at 200 other Famous Footwear stores, with further expansion anticipated.

In a 30-store trial that followed the first flagship store deployment, ComQi partnered with retail display company SEG Systems to build and install 65-inch digital displays called Trend Fixtures (see Figure 1). These displays address core customers' stated desire for information on emerging fashion trends by cycling through full-motion videos and other content about the latest footwear styles. The displays also alert shoppers to related merchandise available in the store, including products on shelves adjacent to each Trend Fixture screen.

After installing more than 100 Trend Fixtures, ComQi next deployed about 100 50-inch window and street-

facing displays. ComQi also manages internal video focal walls in multiple locations that feature a variety of screen configurations, from 1x2 LCD walls to 1x6 LCD walls, to fit store footprints. The displays provide contactless experiences, some with touch functionality that encourages customer interactions such as searching for products at the retailer's website.

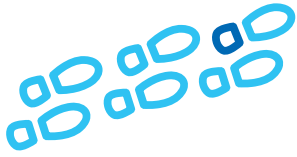
Using the EnGage CMS, Famous Footwear can control thousands of remote media players from a central location and synchronize screen content at its stores across the country. Administrators can configure playlists and assign workflows to local sites, which then upload and schedule content to be played on-site. Content updates require only a few clicks, and updates can be made at individual locations based on local trends and inventory. Data is collected and analyzed on when, why, and how content was delivered, providing insights that can be integrated with other internal data systems.



Figure 1. ComQi's Trend Fixture digital signage solution at Famous Footwear.

Benefits at Famous Footwear

Famous Footwear reports several key benefits of its digital signage engagement with ComQi:¹



Higher foot traffic

Compared to locations without Trend Fixture, foot traffic was 5.7 percent higher at locations with the customized digital signage solution.



Greater customer engagement

The retailer reports positive customer response to video focal walls, where the touch functionality has been used to search for products on Famous Footwear's website.



More sell through

Famous Footwear has seen higher sell through of products that are merchandised on Trend Fixture installations.

Customers and retailers benefit from digital signage

In one decade, Famous Footwear transitioned from reliance on print media to limited digital signage deployments to adoption of an end-to-end, turnkey digital signage solution at more than 200 stores across North America, including LEDs at the retailer's latest flagship store. Famous Footwear's journey demonstrates how Intel-based solutions support the continuing transformation of retail business. ComQi's Intel-powered media players and intelligent CMS have helped the shoe seller increase foot traffic, engage customers, and improve sell through of promoted products. Based on those successes and more, further deployments are expected.¹

Learn more

[Learn more about ComQi customer engagement solutions >](#)

For details on Intel retail solutions, visit [intel.com/retail](https://www.intel.com/retail) >



¹. Source: Famous Footwear internal data.

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