WHY HOME BUILDERS NEED INTERACTIVE DISPLAYS

New residential construction is on the rise, and interactive touchscreens can serve as a great tool to match buyers with their dream homes.



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Jeff Niles, Display Solution Specialist for Horizon Display. Niles has been around since the beginnings, forging strong industry relationships. His expertise has allowed him opportunity to work on some awesome deployments for customers such as ESPN, Ferrari, Oakley and Citibank. When not working, you can find him fishing off-shore or at the local motocross track reliving his youth.
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Casey Dubbs, Marketing Manager for Horizon Display. Casey is a classic over-achiever who likes to get the job done right and can't stand when things are left unfinished or with unmet potential. She is passionate about implementing others' vision into reality. When she is not obsessing over marketing, she can be found on Pinterest trying to find recipes everyone in her family will eat.
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introduction.

For builders, marketing new residential developments typically has consisted of building a model for each available floor plan and holding open houses, providing walk-throughs for interested buyers.

Doing so, though, involves a great deal of time and expense. As long as homes are available, the sales office needs to maintain enough staff to handle the phones and provide home tours.

Not only must the builder foot the bill for model homes that may stay vacant for an extended period, once the development is complete, those models are likely to require repainting or other work to prepare them for sale.

The way real-estate professionals market homes is changing, though. Interactive touchscreen technology now offers a quicker, more cost-efficient way of matching buyers with their new homes.







picking up the pace

After seeing a downturn brought about by the 2008 recession, new residential construction is on the rise. Still, competition is fierce and any tool that offers a sales advantage can be invaluable.

But while in the past potential home buyers might have spent an entire day looking at a variety of floor plans in a new development, today's consumers rarely have that much time or patience.



"When buying a home, there is more to consider than a model home can showcase. Today's home buyer wants to know what's nearby, community amenities and all the builder's available options."

- jeff niles, horizon display

"We have found that portraying the lifestyle a community provides and helping potential home owners envision themselves and their family living there is very valuable" said Jeff Niles, senior display solutions specialist at Lake Forest, California-based Horizon Display. "Interactive maps of the area with information on restaurants schools, parks and walking trails can get people more excited about seeing the model homes and provide a more lasting positive experience."

Horizon's interactive touchscreens increasingly are being used for marketing applications, particularly in the home building market.

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> “Interactivity gives [potential buyers] the ability to create their dream home”

- Zoe Miller, Principal of Rancho Cordova, California-based Computer Presentation Systems

“With a touchscreen display, you can show someone several floorplans in a matter of minutes, identifying quickly an option that meets their needs and desires” he said. “It shortens the sales cycle, focuses on the positive and is a pleasant experience for the prospective buyer.”

Inside a sales center, interactive displays are very valuable for portraying information to potential home buyers. A salesperson can use the touchscreen to show how the various floorplans will fit on the available lots. The display can allow buyers to see the views outside their west-facing windows, and how close the neighborhood park is. For communities that are being built over several phases, show what the city has planned for the future. Nearby shops, restaurants and even what the mature landscape will be like down the road.

Many builders allow for structural changes to their floorplans, such as choosing between a loft or a bedroom, turning a formal living room into a home office and even moving around doors and windows. Having the right interactive software can help homeowners create their ideal floorplan and bring them closer to their ideal home.

“Interactivity gives [potential buyers] the ability to create their dream home,” said Zoe Miller, principal of Rancho Cordova, California-based Computer Presentation Systems. The company develops, markets and supports interactive software for home builders ranging in size from local entrepreneurs to regional builders to nationwide corporations. “What many builders offer today are structural options, taking the base floor plan and adding things to create their own floor plan,” Miller said.

Websites have been used in a similar manner for several years, but marketing via interactive touchscreens offers a number of advantages over an Internet-based virtual tour. Rather than just seeing 2D plans, 3-D models allow users to natively rotate and manipulate their way around the virtual model in order to find what best suits them and their family.

“What many builders offer today are structural options, taking the base floor plan and adding things to create their own floor plan,” Miller said. “Buyers can also select different types of brick or siding for the exterior, which is tough to envision when you’re just looking at a 2-inch square piece of brick. By using an interactive display, they can choose different exteriors, paint colors and roof styles to create their own selection.”



navigating the choices

When building a new home, there are a lot of choices and available upgrades. While you can't negate the benefit of the tangible touch and feel of samples, seeing them in a room beyond the small sample square can really paint the picture. Add your chosen finishes to a 3d model of the chosen plan's living room to really get an idea of how it will look.

Beyond cosmetics, interactive displays can educate homeowners on the benefits and selling features of upgraded insulation, furnaces, appliances, electrical & automation options, and discuss the options that may get overlooked on a standard upgrade price sheet.

Often in design centers, employees are not equipped to educate on all available upgrades, especially those related to HVAC or electrical. By implementing a design center interactive touchscreen, a customer can research all options and have the necessary information available to them to make important decisions.

Couple the interactive information center with a barcode reader, and allow customers to easily get more information on products they see within the center. Integrate a smart phone app, and allow the customers to choose their upgrades, see their running total and watch their monthly payments change based on their finishes.



"Interactive displays provide buyers with actionable information," Miller said. "They can take something, make their selection and make it their own. That's what people want."

Today's buyer is a connected consumer used to unlimited amounts of information at their fingertips. Large dollar item purchases are researched before hand and compared across the market looking for the best value. Just as many retailers are bridging the gap between their brick-and-mortar stores and the digital shopping experience, home builders can too by integrating interactive technology into their sales and upgrade centers.



Horizon Display, based in San Clemente, Calif., specializes in large format touchscreen displays and interactive digital signage solutions. Horizon Display is committed to championing the impact of display technology as a means of communication by educating our audience, consulting our customers and becoming intimately familiar with their business objectives. Their motto is "first to respond, first to resolve." Horizon Display translates your vision into tangibles and provides the solutions to do it all.
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