

Playing Out To Russia In Style...



Fashion store Takko has adopted BrightSign to spearhead its strategic move into Russia.

BrightSign's signature reliability has led Takko Fashion to adopt its XD230 players to drive video walls and screens in its 28 new Russian stores. Each of the new outlets uses six players, supplied by Interactive Multimedia Solutions, IMS, BrightSign's Russian reseller.

Central to Takko Fashion's success story, which has seen its inclusion in the magic circle of leading fashion retailers in Europe, is the company's consummate ability to respond to market shifts promptly. This sensitivity to market trends extends to the point of sale.

"Our branding presence at the point of sale is a key pillar of our on-site marketing as a value fashion retailer," says Evgeniy Kozlovskiy of Takko. "Our branches are retail and advertising spaces at once, offering our customers an appealing shopping environment as well as an attractive and modish range of clothing."



Takko's first non-EU stores

Founded some 30 years ago in Münster, Germany, Takko is a leading textile retailer with over 1700 branches in Germany and the rest of the EU. And it is expanding rapidly, opening over 150 new outlets every year in Germany and abroad. It is

currently projecting 100 outlets in Russia and the now open 28 Russian stores are Takko's first outside the EU.

Choice of players was a key decision for Takko in its digital signage investment. "This is a completely new market for us," explains Kozlovskiy, "and we are keen to create a strong presence. Takko uses digital signage extensively in the Russian stores to enhance the experience of its young and fashion conscious customers. An important factor in selecting the players was BrightSign's reputation for reliability as well as their very competitive price. We are installing BrightSign in all our shops in Russia, and it is extremely important that they work flawlessly and do not require frequent maintenance."

Six players are installed in each store. One drives a 3x3 array video wall in the window and a second drives a similar wall placed centrally in the store. A further four screens are placed in individual sections in the store. To accomplish the video wall output with one BrightSign player, Takko sources professional displays with HDMI pass-through which allows each monitor to be set so that it will stretch the video across the entire video wall in a specified way.

New content is uploaded regularly via the BrightSign network, with major updates seasonally to reflect each new collection, and more frequent smaller promotions around sales and special events.

"Russian retailers have a different design concept for stores compared to the model Europeans are used to," Kozlovskiy points out. "They have minimal window dressing with no mannequins. When we need to change the window dressing or to announce a sale, we just download the latest videos: it's very convenient and reduces the cost of our PoS materials. We are using displays very successfully in Russia. However, it is difficult to say if this model would work for our colleagues from Takko in Europe."

BrightSign Network

Takko manages the six players in each of the 28 Russian stores remotely over the BrightSign Network, an affordable and scalable subscription based, hosted service. Through a web based user interface, the network manager, located in Moscow, can ensure that each display in each store presents the same content at the same time. It is also possible to edit the presentation in each individual store if required.

The BrightSign Network web based user interface is accessible from any Internet connected PC or Mac. And it allows the manager to provide user assigned access, set user roles and permissions, manage and monitor networked units, and perform basic presentation creation, scheduling and publishing functions.

For more comprehensive content creation and management functions, Takko uses BrightAuthor, a free PC software application for BrightSign that makes creating, publishing and managing BrightSign presentations simple and dependable. It is the central application that takes the BrightSign user from building and distributing a presentation to managing the entire BrightSign Network of remote signs.

Not only does BrightAuthor provide an intuitive user interface and a wealth of digital signage features, it is also free of charge to all BrightSign customers.

The latest release of BrightAuthor features BrightSign's BrightWall, a powerful new content creation tool for making video walls in any size and layout. Simply choose the number of displays and specify the configuration of the video wall, then drag&drop the video into BrightAuthor. Notably,

this powerful new feature uses a common clock to achieve frame-accurate synchronisation.

BrightAuthor 3.8 also provides the ability to preview signage presentations so the author can see exactly how they will appear onscreen prior to publishing the presentation.

Fashion moves to 4K

"There is a growing trend for fashion retailers to adopt digital signage," comments BrightSign European Sales VP Pierre Gillet, "one that spans the whole spectrum from the high to the value end. Customers are looking for an experience when they visit a store. Selfridges, for example, regularly uses digital signage in its shop windows in London's Oxford Street. To launch the world's biggest denim store it devoted four prime shop windows entirely to BrightSign driven digital signage."

Gillet believes that the fashion industry will be one of the first to adopt 4K. "4K resolution images really do match the best printed posters in terms of resolution," he says, "and most content is already shot in 4K anyway. BrightSign believes in making technology affordable, and in September we will start to ship our new line of players."

BrightSign's 4K line includes three models, starting at only \$600. The base line unit is the 4K242 networked basic interactive player. It features a powerful 4K video engine capable of dual 4K and Full-HD decoding and boasts abundant content support, including HTML5, UDP network control and GPIO interactivity.

The 4K1042 networked multi-control interactive player adds S/PDIF output for pure digital and surround sound audio, and a diverse range of interactive controls such as GPIO, serial, USB, UDP and mobile devices for engaging, interactive displays.

At the top of the range, BrightSign's 4K1142 networked multi-control interactive and live HDTV player includes all the features above plus live HDTV playback for content from any broadcast channel, even HDCP protected content, via the HDMI input.

Pricing is \$600 for the 4K242, \$700 for the 4K1042 and \$850 for the 4K1142.

BrightSign's players are being chosen by partners across the Pro AV space for this end to end support of the new technology standards for true 4K playback, as well as the firm's reputation for extreme reliability, affordability and ease of use. All the new models are built on BrightSign's proven software platform, a true digital signage operating system that exposes the capabilities of the latest web advances in HTML5 without the limitations of a generic browser based environment.

Additionally, BrightSign's 4K players incorporate all features of the industry's best selling, solid state, digital signage platform, including advanced interactivity, flawless video wall synchronisation, free BrightAuthor software and the BrightSign Network.

Russian market

"The Russian market has huge potential for digital signage," concludes IMS MD Nikolay Valyuzhenich. "Screens are not yet quite as widespread as in London or New York, so retailers like Takko that use them creatively can gain a really big advantage. BrightSign has a great business model with quality technology at an affordable price, which is perfect for our market. I believe that Takko will see great impact from its installation!"

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