

BAE Integrates Scala InfoChannel for OEM Digital Signage on the Plant Floor

BAE Systems -- Fort Wayne, Indiana -- BAE is a major producer of aircraft engine controls and avionics equipment. Winner of the 2005 Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing, the Fort Wayne location recently faced a critical internal challenge. As manufacturing director Royce Binion put it, "We realized we needed to do a better job of getting real-time manufacturing and quality performance data out to our manufacturing floor, while at the same time disseminating corporate information to our production associates. These were two similar challenges that begged for a single solution."

BAE recognized a critical challenge communicating with real-time manufacturing

A technical inquiry to Scala, Inc. in Exton, PA gave Binion the starting point needed to launch their new digital signage program. Digital AV, the regional Scala Certified Partner was called to evaluate the industrial signage application and advise BAE Systems on an efficient solution. With the help of Tom Johnson, DAV's President, and other key personnel, Royce and his team undertook the major project of developing a significant digital signage network throughout the 700-employee Fort Wayne plant.



The scope of the project ultimately involved the installation of fourteen, 42 inch wide-screen, LG monitors positioned in various key departments including engineering, manufacturing, quality assurance, operations, human resources, corporate communications, and information technology. It has become a corporate success and is now a model for other BAE Systems locations across the United States.

BAE Systems' corporate content is created in Scala's InfoChannel



Designer Software and housed on standard Dell computers. The content messaging is driven over the internal company network by the Scala InfoChannel Net Manager

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out to Scala's InfoChannel Player software locations configured as remote IP addresses throughout the factory.

The new mini-Dell computers are mounted directly on the LG displays creating a very efficient package profile suspended by a after-mounted plasma ceiling mounts and plasma

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brackets. Some departments have wireless keyboards and mice at the PC to call up MPEG video files and script sets for on the plant floor training.

While most key departments have DS monitors, others are located in strategic locations throughout the plant including the lobby, employee break areas, major plant thoroughfares and other high-traffic venues.

Other addresses include critical shop floor locations displaying monthly scorecard and electronic ANDON signals and other key customer performance metrics. A "video of the week" is now tying BAE Systems' avionics products to end-user applications. Real-time weather, weather emergency updates, Doppler Radar and traffic situations are now all displayed for employees via the new DataCall Newsfeed System recently provided through Digital AV.

BAE Systems calls its new digital signage network, 'The inSight Channel,' to signify its internal plant-wide communications application," said Binion.

In addition to standard digital signage content that scrolls throughout the day, InfoChannel scripts may be overridden on the

shop floor so the digital displays serve as a communication and training medium for impromptu aisle meetings with employees. This allows the product team leaders to conduct employee training sessions via streaming MPEG videos — right on the manufacturing floor without reservation.

"Applying these displays in this manner is more practical and efficient than using a conference room," said Binion.

In new product development areas, the displays are used in conjunction with a Web camera for "virtual design reviews" with other BAE Systems sites for live product design reviews and to provide feedback regarding real-time producibility.

Certified Scala training at Digital AV's Fort Wayne offices helped train the BAE Systems IT team with new programming concepts, including Web scraping, RSS feeds, VB Scripting and Web media capture for the new signage system.

"We were able to bring in all sorts of streaming and static media of the end application of our products, allowing us to 'put a face' on the products we build," Binion said. "Scala's InfoChannel coupled

with Digital AV's support has provided us with a truly world-class communication system for our employees." DAV's president Tom Johnson discussed the projects resonant effects; "The success of the Scala network in Fort Wayne was noticed by other BAE Systems operations. The facility's sister plant in Johnson City, New York integrated their plant with a similar Scala network and 10 plasma displays shortly after the initial integration."

Additional locations have followed suit installing InfoChannel-based DS systems. The company's facilities in Irving Texas and Cheshire Connecticut are now involved and trained with Scala InfoChannel software and LG displays. Others plants are in project development. Digital AV has helped integrate each of these locations by providing the entire digital signage package including Scala InfoChannel software, LG Plasma displays and Premier mounting systems. Standard Equus or Dell pre-configured PC systems are integrated as well as Scala certified sales, training and support for the entire software package.

"Our customers find it easier to procure from one certified source for all of their digital signage network requirements, knowing we can pull together all the pieces

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of the network puzzle and bundle it under one purchase order. Digital signage is all we do at DAV and OEM applications such as BAE Systems' are our dominant market. Our customers generally have IT staffs who know how to push data up and out on their own network. This is really helpful for large project deployment", said Johnson.

Recent IT requests from new DAV corporate clients call for importation and integration of key manufacturing databases such as Oracle, Access and other software sets to be read and interpreted by the Scala InfoChannel and displayed in logical fashion within the Scala templates.

Critical factory line data can be automatically read and interpreted by the Scala InfoChannel through simple VB Scripting and displayed as color coded, crawl lines or flashing signals to alert key corporate personnel to critical shop floor situations miles away from the location of the corporate viewer. Johnson said, "It's a simple way to know what critical factory line situations are in play with a quick glance to a plant monitor and it's all automatic, through the software."

DAV's Johnson sums it up: "The electronic signage growth in the OEM and corporate world is now driven by initiatives calling for closer integration of different systems and observation of those systems by more people in

different locations. Big investments in manufacturing and quality control make digital signage networks the icing on the corporate muffin."

About Scala Inc.

Scala, Inc. (www.scala.com) is the world's leading provider of software for digital signage software used in retail, education, entertainment, government and other industries. The company's cutting-edge multimedia software platform powers thousands of digital signs around the world including the digital signage networks of Tesco, Best Buy, T-Mobile, ShopRite, Virgin MegaStore, Bloomberg, Burger King, Kiwi, Azizia-Panda Supermarket, McKee Foods, Muvico, Santiago Airport, RaboBank and Warner Brothers Movie World. Since InfoChannel is proven, scalable, and easy to manage, it is the platform of choice for many digital display networks ranging in size from one screen to thousands of screens with uses including advertising displays, touch screens, retail TV, LED billboards, lobby signage, digital menu boards, interactive kiosks, and more. Scala, Inc. pioneered the industry of digital signage in 1987, and is today headquartered near Philadelphia, PA with operations in California, the UK, Norway, The Netherlands, China and Japan.

About Digital AV

Founded in 2004, Digital AV is the Midwest's largest dynamic digital

signage company. Located in Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, Indiana, DAV is a leader in digital signage development and service.

DAV specializes in the deployment of a variety of digital signage technologies linking to special IP addresses through networked LANs, FTP distribution networks, broadcast servers, Cat-5 distribution networks and broadcast satellite.

DAV is a fully authorized dealer for LG Electronics, LG Commercial, Scala InfoChannel, Premier Mounts, Equus Computer, Sampo Professional and many other quality lines of professional AV products.

Display mediums quoted on a daily basis include LCD and Plasma displays, LED blocks and walls, Plasma walls and many other specialty displays.

Deployments include universities, stadiums, convention centers, museums, corporate / industrial sites, churches, hospitals and retail stores. With technology showrooms in Indianapolis and Fort Wayne their customer list is impressive.

Additional capabilities include comprehensive content development, content management and content systems controls.