

visualplanet™

Case study

Digital wayfinding -
information at your finger tips



Digital Wayfinding – information at your fingertips

Thousands of people visit the Embarcadero Center - one of San Francisco's premier shopping destinations - each day. RTKL, a Los Angeles-based environmental graphic design team, was selected to work on the project to ensure that the solution worked in harmony with the architecture.

The application was devised exclusively for the shopping centre to accentuate its unique brand encompassing retail, dining and event experiences occurring in any of the centre's four building locations. Features include an audience-relevant attract loop to incite interaction, 3D dynamic maps to provide clear, distinct paths to desired destinations, even access to Bart train schedules, cinema times, and upcoming events. All integrated into the brand's existing content management application, marketing stakeholders can manage their web and digital signage campaigns from a single platform.

RESEPECTING THE EXISTING, ENCORPORATING THE NEW

The key to the digital upgrade was to rethinking wayfinding in the digital era whilst continuing to respect the landmark architecture. Although the design was crucial for success, the profitable improvement aims were primarily to re-energize engagement with the retail area and secondly, better direct people to the office lobbies and towers above to improve customer service for visitors.

The upgrade also needed to seamlessly link static navigation with digital interactive wayfinding. Finally, the application displayed on the interactive touchscreens would be complimented by phone and tablet apps.

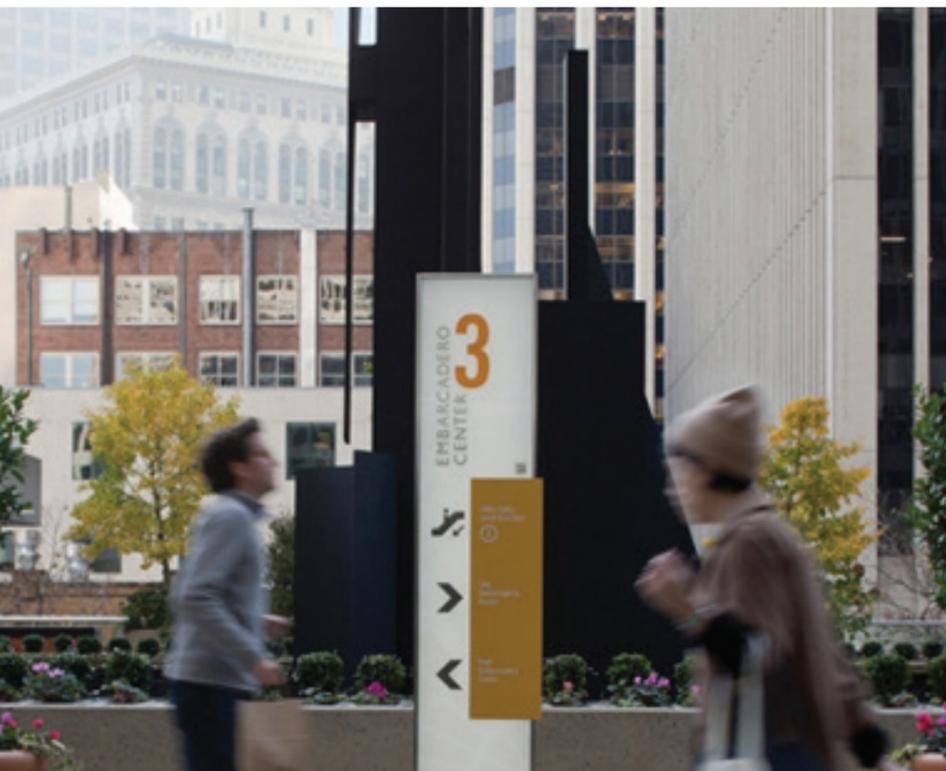
STEPPING INTO THE DIGITAL ERA

During the early project stages, it was opted to upgrade to 1/2-inch glass faces and stainless steel returns. To create a seamless appearance, Corporate Sign Systems, RTKL's digital partner, recommended touchfoil technology rather than conventional touchscreens.

The design required a single continuous glass panel, so a foil based touch sensor fitting flush to the glass was necessary to compliment the design. The touchfoil was laminated directly on to the glass, and was surrounded by a translucent digital print that was also applied to the back of the

glass. The LCD monitor was then mounted to the internal sign structure, independent of the glass and behind the touchfoil.

The touchfoil continues to operate consistently through thick glass; when a user touches the front of the glass to drive the content on the screen behind the glass, the touchfoil sends the signal through a connected, non-visible circuit 'whip' to the display and mini-PC inside.



The touchfoil is perfect for fitting in seamlessly to existing kiosk designs. Working consistently through glass thicknesses up to 15mm, it does not become a barrier to design in terms of glass selection or 'designing in' to existing kiosks. Working through thick glass the sensor is ideal for withstanding high volumes of traffic in public facing applications.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

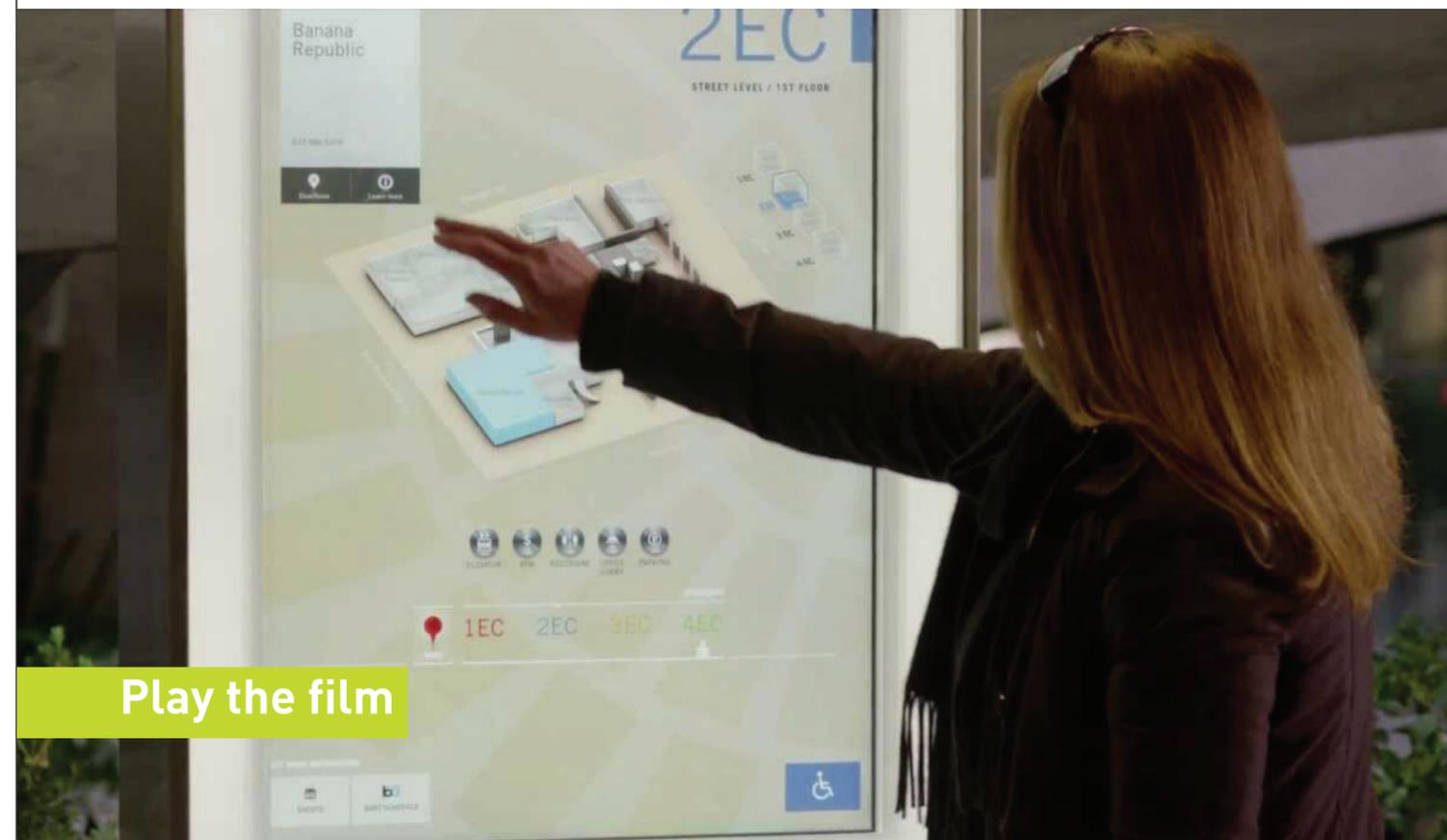
The signs need to be strategically placed in critical points to be most useful to the visitors. Finding a solution that works within the building's concrete construction - open air with high traffic conditions - posed the greatest design challenge. The solution was to select touchfoil technology so the signage at the Embarcadero Center could be brought to life, whilst maintaining design integrity with the added reassurance of zero maintenance and longevity of the displays within the rugged solutions.

WHY UPGRADE?

“ It has never been easier to find your way around - upgrading to interactive wayfinding dramatically improves user experience. Frustration is reduced because at the touch of a button users can switch through languages, carry out searches, and navigate between a map, aerial view or written directions. The information can simply be selected and sent directly to a mobile device to continue supporting the user on their way.

For the management of the displays, costs are significantly reduced - no more out of date printed maps - simply keep everything up to date on a central system, reducing the number of people needed to assist with navigation and even set up support on the screens. The content displayed can instantly be refreshed to display announcements, promotions or generate revenue through advertisement displays - all contributing to improving the overall customer experience.”

Vernon Spencer, Managing Director, visualplanet





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