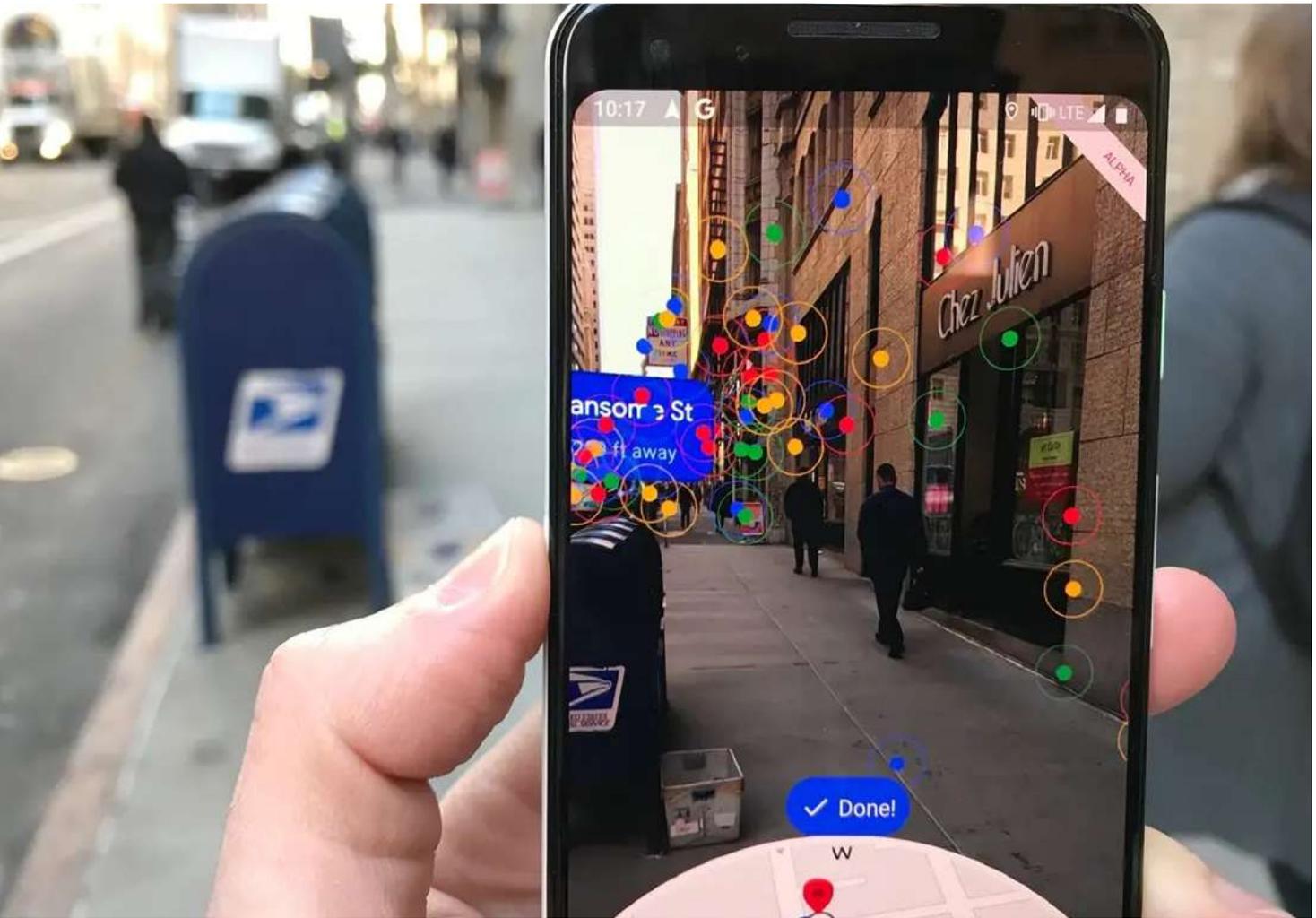




The Impact Of **Virtual Signage On A Physical Brand**



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Yes, your physical brand is probably one of the most important aspects of a successful business. It's the real-life embodiment of your brand values, often a key touchpoint for your customers to engage with your offerings, and helps create a larger emotional connection with potential and existing stakeholders. However, think of this. A new customer is in the market for a new lawn mower. They've reached a point of knowing what features they're looking for as well as the kind of price they're expecting to pay. All that is left is visiting a store to get a feel for it's physical dimensions, and practicality for their needs.

Meet Them At All Buying Journey Touchpoints

They open Google and search for 'XYZ Lawn Mower near me'. Your store pops up alongside your direct competitors and they begin filtering for the brand that aligns best with their expectations. They click on your Google My Business profile and you've got no imagery showcasing your products, your physical store environment, or even a contextual photo of where your store is located. Immediately you've created a barrier that has subtly shifted the prospects journey toward a direct competitor. Worse yet, they're on the move and have decided to visit your store on the way home only to find the direction have taken them to the heavy vehicle entry of a loading dock when your store is located inside the shopping centre. Not only have you lost a potential sale and life long customer, but you've broken their trust and created an association that the customer may apply to your brand as a whole for years to come.

You've spent time and resources in crafting a brand and designing physical touchpoints for memorable customer experience but you've forgotten that the buyer journey often starts on a third-party platform like Google Maps.

Bridging The Virtual And Physical Customer Journey

If you are going to an unfamiliar location, for example a store you have never been to, you may turn to Google Maps to help you find your way. However, at some point along your journey, there is a transition between finding your destination virtually on Google Maps, and actually locating the physical place.

If customers cannot find your store with ease in the physical world, despite following directions in the virtual world on Google Maps, their confidence in your brand may waver or they may end up going to a different store altogether.

Therefore, having comprehensive, contextual virtual signage is essential in bridging the gap between the digital and physical experience and ensuring a seamless customer journey. Here's how you can use virtual signage to bridge the gap between virtual and physical customer journeys.

The Power Of Contextual Imagery

Contextual, high-quality virtual images show the store in relation to the environment and surroundings and can help the customer easily locate their final destination in the physical world. Showing the store in relation to local landmarks or points of interest will help customers find more obscure places or unfamiliar locations. Usually on Google there will be lots of customer images of the store's products or premises, which may help others to decide whether to go to the store, however, these images do not assist with the experience of locating the store.

Therefore, it is important to capture images which customers can quickly glance at and place in the physical world to help them on their journey. This means showing nearby street signs, street names and other buildings to situate the customer in the physical space through virtual means. When photos are contextual, they also tend to be more successful, as customers find these photos the most helpful and therefore the customer experience is enhanced. One of our customers reported an increase of 11% in sales of new customers as a result of a virtual signage update from SignManager!

The images must be high quality however, as poor images can hinder a customer's brand experience, despite the actual quality of the store or physical signage. As Google rotates these photos, usually you won't have much control over the main photos shown. Therefore, someone needs to be in control of updating Google regularly. Otherwise, customers may get frustrated with incorrect images. With technology being a prevalent aspect of our lives, especially with younger people tending to not look up from their phones when following directions, having contextual images in the virtual space is essential.



2.3 ★★☆☆☆ 12 reviews

0 ★★★★★ 10 reviews

Benefits Of Virtual Imagery

Along with bridging the gap between the virtual and physical customer journey on Google Maps, contextual, high quality virtual images offer a range of other benefits:

- Customers can form positive associations with brands before entering the store, fulfilling a core role of signage - helping customers find their way with ease to your brand to purchase products
- Shows your understanding of powerful branding and customer-centric innovation
- Customers increasingly rely on technology, namely Google Maps for planning trips, buying products/engaging services, planning routes, etc

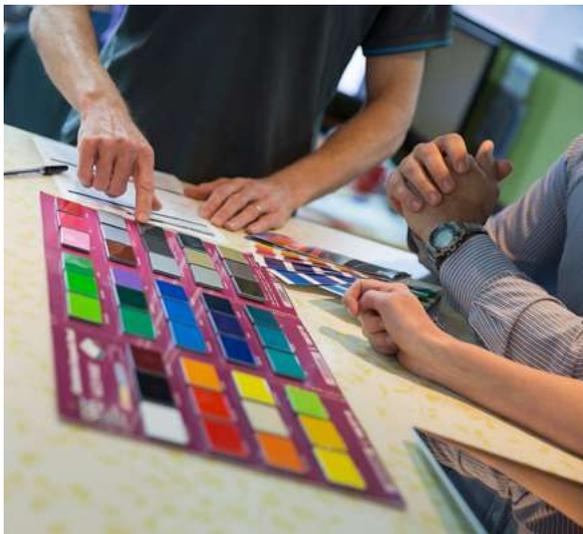
As a whole, your efforts will result in more store traffic and better customer interactions, while simultaneously improving associations made with your brand across digital, and subsequently, physical touchpoints.

What's Next?

With technology rapidly advancing, the next progression of technology in relation to bridging the gap between the virtual and physical customer journey may be to integrate videos, 360 images and virtual reality into Google Maps alongside these contextual, virtual images. However, this may be problematic as customers may not have the time to actually view and engage with these experiences. It may also be more costly, and require much more time investment (editing, compiling, regular updating etc).

High-resolution, contextual photos allow customers to receive quick virtual assistance when searching for their destination in the physical world, enhancing a customer's journey. Brands can measure the impact of this as better represented stores may drive more sales, further demonstrating the role signage plays in both virtual and physical worlds.

Get Help From SignManager



SignManager are independent consultants who help large corporations improve the way they manage their branded assets across all their stores and facilities.

Some of the benefits of outsourcing your sign program include:

Brand And Marketing Managers benefit from a single point of control to ensure the brand is consistently applied across their national and international presence. You may also wish to set up systems to manage the brand throughout its lifecycle.

Property And Construction Managers benefit from having a single point of contact to assist their team. This can provide expertise, a national network of resources, and access to specialist systems to make implementing signage projects simpler. They will also see improved quality control processes, better risk management, a more flexible supply chain and achieve the best market value.

Facility Managers benefit from quicker response times from a national network of service-providers and lower costs through the intelligent use of asset data and mobile tools.

Procurement Managers are empowered to achieve the best market value for their full Capex and Opex budgets.

SignManager provide a mechanism for a competitive bid process for 100% of the spend, rather than just the 60% made up of standard products and services. We can also help you cut costs through improved product design, better buying behaviour and strategic spend analysis.



If you'd like our help with a strategy to better manage your signage and branding requirements, simply email us at info@signmanager.com.au

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