

*This is the fourth part in a series about getting started in digital signage for ProAV dealers. Read the first part on our website [here](#), the second part [here](#) and the third part [here](#).*

Jay Martin, Director of US Sales for X20 Media points out that poised between the technical and the business side there is a paradigm that is often overlooked -- the customer's content plan. According to Martin, "the integrator has to be the consulting entity that helps them decide that." He further asserts that before choosing the technology, integrators need to help the client figure out what information they want to put in front of their viewers. "What form is it going to take?" asks Martin. "Will it be PowerPoint? Video? Text? Stills? Is it a retail menu? Is it all of the above, intermixed? Until they determine what this content plan is, you're taking a stab in the dark!"

For that reason, Martin puts that first and foremost when meeting with integrators and their clients. He explains that once you determine your content and your target audience, that's how you'll determine which advertising model will work. Says Martin, "Advertising is a key component and if you're an ad network, you don't really want a huge capital expenditure at day one." He suggests that if you do go down the advertising route, consider leasing to reduce the client's cost to a monthly revenue model, and if you're not advertising, talk about setting up and installing as fixed costs. In all cases he advises integrators to talk about technological scalability. "Does the client want ten displays or ten thousand? That will determine the platform you select."

On the technical side, Martin advises integrators to consider the content. Does the client need an HD image? Since some streaming technology is compressed, resolution is lost, admins can't work in real time, and workflow is compressed.

"With real-time platforms like X20 Media, you have the ability to work with the content as it goes out," he says. Another big difference is the amount of bandwidth that's necessary. "For HD you need to have sustained data throughout," he explains. "So that makes it difficult to use 3G air cards because HD streams don't render through hiccups very well."

The other consideration Martin counsels is that the user interface is of the utmost importance. Just because content is coming from a central location doesn't mean that management has been centralized. "There are corporate, regional, and local messages," says Martin, who notes that the interface has to be adaptable via roles-based user permissions to allow for some local

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adjustment without interfering with the overall corporate branding.

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