

Best Case: Digital Signage at the University of Wuppertal



Digital Signage as an Information System at the University of Wuppertal



Photo: University of Wuppertal

About the University of Wuppertal

The University of Wuppertal is a modern university in the heart of North Rhine-Westphalia. The wide range of subjects available provides a large number of study options that optimally equip the students with the skills and knowledge required in the professional and working world.

The bachelor's degree courses convey a broad range of knowledge; the follow-on master's degree courses then offer – depending on the choice of career – the opportunity to specialize in a chosen field. Furthermore, the university's cooperation program with external partners allows practice-oriented study phases to be offered.

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Since November 2010 the University of Wuppertal has been using a total of 12 digital-signage displays to provide the students with general information about the university as well as cafeteria menus, news or bus schedules. In the near future the system will be extended to a total of 20 displays, and digital doorplates for the lecture halls will be introduced that will also be controlled by Kompas.

Modern communication at the university

The 12 displays (46") are located at central locations spread across the campus (main campus at Griffenberg, Freudenberg campus, Haspel campus). The program that runs on these displays is mainly informative: besides information about the university, its departments and facilities, events, staff and students, they also provide information about cafeteria menus, bus and train schedules and also the weather. The program is supplemented with regional and national news in cooperation with WDR, Radio Wuppertal and ARD-Tagesschau.

The information is updated several times a day and supervised by a digital-signage editor. Information is presented according to the KISS principle: Keep it short and simple. This ensures that visitors, university staff and, above all, the approximately 20,000 students receive all important information at a glance.

Moreover, for the first time Kompas will be responsible for the content management of so-called SMIL players at the University of Wuppertal. These less powerful, miniature PCs are used for particularly small digital-signage screens. By the winter semester 2015/2016 it is expected that 75 digital doorplates with individually adaptable content will be controlled with Kompas and the SMIL players for a total of 45 lecture halls.

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Technology and concept requirements

The University of Wuppertal uses the kompas digital-signage software, whose main strengths actually lie in the management of large national networks but which also works very well on a smaller scale. kompas makes it especially easy for the user to monitor the operation of the individual players and to manage and customize the playlists. It can be quickly and easily installed via the web browser without the need to install software. This means that kompas is ready for use in a tenth of the time required for the competitors' products (about five minutes).

The program, which is based on the Linux operating system, runs stably and consistently adheres to a "no blue screen" policy: All content is presented reliably; dynamic content such as tweets, weather forecasts and departure schedules are skipped in the event of outages; and the software deals with poor-quality networks and impaired reception intelligently. The analysis and reporting tool provides a clear overview of the network, allowing prompt action to be taken if problems occur.

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kompas guarantees reliable operation and is able to repair its own systems.

Dipl.-Ing. Michael Simon of the Center for Information and Media Processing at the University of Wuppertal on the project and the decision to use kompas:

"The decisive factor when selecting the kompas digital-signage software solution was the fact that it is almost completely based on open-source software. This allows us, the customer, to individually customize the programming and the design ourselves. The Linux operating system used allows continuous, reliable operation around the clock. Further deciding factors were the company headquarters in Germany and the resulting comprehensive support provided in German."

Eva Noll, digital-signage editor in the university's public-relations department, on the fundamental decision to use digital signage: "We decided to use digital signage to keep the students, staff and visitors at the University of Wuppertal up to date by providing the latest information about the university, the region and the world. Info displays lent themselves as the ideal tool to supplement our previous communication channels (Internet presence, newsletters, posters, flyers, etc.)."

All the advantages at a glance

- Simple, centralized support and coordination of the displays' contents
- Contents are constantly updated
- Simple control of digital doorplates

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About Digital Signage

Digital Signage describes digital media content for advertising and information systems such as electronic posters and traffic signs, instore marketing, digital door signs or large-scale projections. Digital Signage is increasingly being used in public spaces such as railway stations, airports and shopping centres. dimedis is among the leading Digital Signage providers in Germany. Our Digital Signage software kompas is the driving force behind more than 5,000 screens across the country.

About kompas

kompas, developed by the experts in digital media distribution at dimedis GmbH, is one of the most powerful and flexible Digital Signage systems on the market.

kompas offers Digital Signage users an intuitive interface built around drag-and-drop usability. More than 5.000 players in Germany alone are controlled by kompas, making it the driving force behind one of the largest advertising networks in the country. The kompas software is stable and relies on HTML5. Another part of the kompas family of products is the award-winning kompas wayfinding.

kompas received the VISCOM Digital Signage Best Practice Award in 2008 and the POPAI Digital Award Gold for "Best Digital Media Technology" in 2011.

For more information please visit: www.kompas-software.com

About dimedis

dimedis stands for digital media distribution. Founded 1996 in Cologne, the software company is specialized in trade fair- and digital signage solutions. FairMate is a visitor management solution and kompas a digital signage and wayfinding system. The customers are amongst others Messe Düsseldorf, Koelnmesse, Stockholmsmässan, Messe Stuttgart, Reed Exhibitions Deutschland, Westfalenhallen Dortmund, a chain of supermarkets in France called "Casino" and shopping malls from ECE, SEC and mfi. More than 40 employees currently work for dimedis. For more information please visit: www.dimedis.eu or blog.dimedis.de

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