



Case Study

MediaTile

Ruggedized Hard Drives Facilitate Growth For Global Digital Signage Company

A prominent digital signage provider and leader in cellular-based signage solutions, MediaTile sought a way to make the hard drives in its Digital-Sign-in-a-Box systems thrive in extreme conditions, from the harsh heat of a popular American raceway to the dusty interior of a nationwide hardware store. MediaTile requires hard drives that can withstand the rigors of both indoor and outdoor environments, and the cost of repair and replacement of standard drives became a problem. MediaTile turned to Seagate for help and integrated the Seagate® EE25 Series™ hard drive into its signage technology. Designed to work in extreme temperatures and tolerate high levels of vibration and shock, the EE25 Series hard drive quickly outperformed the competition. Today, MediaTile continues to deliver excellent commercial-grade systems, reducing expenses and downtime across its clients' digital signage broadcast networks.

Company

MediaTile

Location

Scotts Valley, California

Contact

www.mediatile.com

Customer Profile

MediaTile provides digital signage solutions that dramatically simplify the deployment and ongoing operation of public and private digital signage broadcast networks.

A Compact Signage Solution

Located in Scotts Valley, Calif., MediaTile is one of the few companies in the world to provide a comprehensive, all-in-one digital signage platform that integrates an LCD high-definition display, an embedded computer, a media player and cellular-based network access. The advanced digital signs are managed remotely by customers using MediaTile's web-based content management portal.

MediaTile's comprehensive Digital-Sign-in-a-Box solution is available in a variety of configurations, some including touch-screen options. The displays' embedded CPUs feature a cellular broadband network connection, allowing customers to deploy and control their signage networks virtually anywhere. Mike Foster, senior vice president of worldwide marketing for MediaTile, explains, "Unlike a lot of our competitors, we provide a fully integrated digital signage solution that works with little attention—just add power and your virtual broadcast network is ready to go."

MediaTile currently has 14 affiliate offices around the world, and its products must perform flawlessly in a variety of conditions. And since MediaTile also offers a system uptime guarantee of 99.9 percent—which means a downtime tolerance of less than 2 minutes in a 24-hour period—performance and reliability are critical to the business.

An Array of Climate Changes

Many different communication networks use the MediaTile solution, including community advertising networks across the U.S.; a corporate communications broadcast network in a Rolls-Royce manufacturing facility; retail stores in Scandinavia, and gas stations that use dual sided advertising displays for gas pumps. Recently 32-inch MediaTile displays were deployed in over 100 popular home improvement stores in Canada. The signs are portable and moved around as individual store environments change, requiring the signage to withstand frequent motion.

"As MediaTile displays are set up and moved around the store, employees are not always careful with the equipment," says Tony Stramandinoli, vice president of worldwide operations for MediaTile. "It's important to us that the displays work all the time, even when moved or jostled around."

Wind, rain, heat, cold and unpredictable movement can inflict havoc on otherwise dependable technology, so MediaTile required that its systems be of professional, commercial grade. But finding that one of the key elements of its solution—the hard drive—often failed under such harsh conditions, the company could no longer effectively meet the unique demands of its growing customer base. MediaTile faced a challenge to find a hard drive that could stand up to tough environmental conditions while fulfilling its customers' expectations.

A Ruggedized, Versatile Solution

In The initial hard drives that MediaTile used in its signage systems came with the embedded computers that the company bought from the manufacturer. Stramandinoli explains, "We incorporated a standard 40-GB hard drive that didn't make a lasting impression because of failures when subjected to harsh environments."

A major account with a popular raceway in Indiana presented a critical turning point for MediaTile. "It was 110 degrees outside when we set up the signage," says Stramandinoli. "Subsequently, after some six hours in the sun, many of our products failed to work properly. We cannot afford a field failure, and it's often impossible to send installers out to repair our computers." So MediaTile began looking for a better hard drive.

After researching various storage solutions, MediaTile turned to Seagate and realized that the Seagate EE25 Series hard drive was just what the company needed. "Since using the Seagate EE25 hard drive, we haven't had a single hard drive failure," Stramandinoli says, and the company has reduced its need for third-party field service technicians.

"We ship MediaTile Digital-Sign-in-a-Box systems into some of the harshest environments on the planet, so we need them to exceed customer expectations and be virtually indestructible. With Seagate® hard drives, we can be assured of delivering the best commercial-grade solution."

Mike Foster,
Senior Vice President,
Worldwide Marketing,
MediaTile

MediaTile

Ruggedized Hard Drives Facilitate Growth For Global Digital Signage Company



Advantages of Seagate Storage

EE25 Series 2.5-inch hard drives with RunOn™ technology work in extreme temperatures and tolerate high levels of vibration and shock. They are designed specifically to operate with the highest reliability in the harshest environments. The dependable drive outperformed and outlasted all the storage solutions that MediaTile had worked with previously, and quickly became the company standard. The relationship MediaTile developed with Seagate was also instrumental to the company's success. "It has been very easy working with Seagate," says Stramandinoli. "Anytime we had a question it was answered efficiently. Our trust in the Seagate name and brand is extraordinary."

Because the EE25 Series hard drive has a mean time between failures of 550,000 hours or almost 23,000 days, MediaTile does not have to interrupt messages broadcast by the signs, jeopardizing potential sales, to replace components. "It's worth it to get great components that can survive in the extreme environments we expose them to," Foster adds. "Our signs play advertisements while the store is open, which dramatically influences product sales within those stores."

Though the new drives cost a little more than conventional drives, MediaTile does not charge customers more for the system, mainly because the company realizes substantial savings in repairs and increases in customer satisfaction. Foster explains, "Our customers often have their broadcast networks operating continuously, and with the reliability of the EE25 Series hard drive, their advertisements or promotions can play without the interruptions we've had in the past." Using its Digital-Sign-in-a-Box solution with Seagate drives in retail networks, MediaTile has seen its customers experience anywhere from an 18 to a 100 percent increase in product sales.

"That's how much influence these digital signs have on consumers in retail and how important it is to keep them up and running flawlessly," Foster says.

A Secure Future With Seagate

The digital signage market is doubling every two years, and MediaTile needs to deliver dependable, commercial-grade solutions to outperform the competition. "Our entire product portfolio depends on the continuous operation of the EE25 Series hard drive," explains Foster. "Seagate has become a critical supplier that will help ensure our success." MediaTile also expects that the drive's ability to thrive in almost any condition will introduce the possibility for the company to create more mobile applications, including transit based advertising systems in taxicabs, buses, trains and aircraft. Foster says, "We're confident Seagate will be able to meet our specific challenges so that we can continue to grow our business."

Having considered the total cost of ownership and upon witnessing the positive impact on customer deployments, MediaTile is pleased with its decision to integrate Seagate storage into its solutions.

"We ship MediaTile Digital-Sign-in-a-Box systems into some of the harshest environments on the planet, so we need them to exceed customer expectations and be virtually indestructible," says Foster. "With Seagate hard drives, we can be assured of delivering the best commercial-grade solution that offers one of the highest mean-time-between-failure times, with one of the best uptime guarantees in the business. Because of the performance benefits we have received from Seagate, we really believe in their products and we're confident that our business will stay competitive for a long time."

To Learn More:

Seagate® EE25 Series™ Drives

For more information on utilizing EE25 Series drives, visit www.seagate.com.

AMERICAS
ASIA/PACIFIC
EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

Seagate Technology LLC 920 Disc Drive, Scotts Valley, California 95066, United States, 831-438-6550
Seagate Technology International Ltd. 7000 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 5, Singapore 569877, 65-6485-3888
Seagate Technology SAS 130-136, rue de Sully, 92773, Boulogne-Billancourt Cedex, France 33 1-4186 10 00