

# NEC Video Wall Helps IT Service and Solutions Provider 'Walk-the-Walk'

## Facility:

- Zones Inc.

## Vertical:

- Corporate

## Location:

- Auburn, Washington

## Challenges:

- Showcase services and products to vendors

## Solution:

- NEC X554UN (3x3) video wall

## Result:

- An in house example of the technology that is offered to customers

## Date:

- July 2015

About 20 miles south of Seattle, in the heart of the Pacific northwest, sits the corporate headquarters of Zones Inc., a billion dollar plus IT solutions provider. More than 700 people work out of the Auburn office, in addition to the hundreds of IT partners who frequently pass through to meet with sales representatives and management.

Because its business is connecting organizations with the right technologies to fit their needs, it's crucial for Zones to walk-the-walk and present its products and capabilities in the best possible way. At the center of the headquarters is a large multipurpose space that hosts everything from town hall meetings to showcases for partners to employee lunches. Until recently, Zones used a projector to share content that included information about new products, staff announcements, and promotions about partners. The projector, however, wasn't making the impression that corporate leadership preferred.

## The Challenge

Sunlight streams into the space from large windows, which washed out the images that came from the projector. Compounding the problem was the fluorescent lighting that illuminates the room. "The projection didn't really hit you," says Michael Stavnsjoj, a category manager at Zones who helped oversee the project.

The information conveyed on the screens helped educate sales reps on offerings from vendors, so it was crucial that they be able to read it clearly. The new solution needed to be bright enough to withstand both the natural sunlight and the artificial fluorescent light that filled the space throughout the workday. Zones didn't want seams between the displays to distract from the integrity of the image, so the bezels needed to be extremely thin. And Zones wanted to work with a partner whose products it represents. "If we're going to sell it, we're going to use it," Stavnsjoj said.

A video wall seemed like the perfect fit. "In the long run, it's much less expensive and more impactful than static signage," Stavnsjoj said.

The Zones organization has a long-standing partnership with NEC and frequently equips its customers with the company's digital signage solutions. So it was an easy decision when it came time to pick a vendor for the new video wall. "The NEC name means something," Stavnsjoj said. "We know we'll never have a problem with its products. Its reputation is for quality."



## The Solution

Zones decided to install a 3 x 3 video wall using NEC 55-inch X55X4UN displays, which are known both for their brightness and ultrathin bezels, as well as their impeccable reliability. Even though the video wall will only run during typical work hours, it is durable enough to withstand 24/7 operation, so Zones never has to worry about a failure at a critical moment during a partner presentation.

The direct LED backlighting creates a uniform, high-definition resolution that remains clear and bright no matter how much ambient light is in the room. Employees don't have to struggle to read the information; in fact, their eyes are drawn to it because of the vibrant, true-to-life colors and crisp image quality.

The installation was also simple, even though Zones had to reinforce the wall on which the displays hang with additional aluminum studs. Once the wall was ready to go, however, it was a snap to hang the industrial-strength panels, which also provide thermal protection. NEC consultants were just a phone call away whenever the Zones team had questions. "They gave us the confidence to put it in ourselves," Stavshoj said.

Now that Zones has all of the video wall capabilities at its fingertips, it uses the displays to promote corporate activities such as blood drives, advertise its partners, and showcase its own work. In between the business-oriented content, it plays outdoorsy videos that epitomize life in the Pacific Northwest, such as footage of Orca Whales and high-intensity sports videos. The ultrathin

bezels mean that viewers see each video as an uninterrupted image, without distracting seams where the displays meet. As of now, Zones shows a single image at a time, stretched across the whole tile matrix, though in the future it may experiment with sending different content to different displays.

An in-house graphics team provides the bulk of the content, while the interstitial video footage comes from an outside vendor. The Zones team uses a VS Networks media player because of its reputation of creating players specifically meant for digital signage.

The video wall also helps sales reps to speak more authoritatively about NEC's digital signage. Because they've seen one in person, they can explain from personal experience the benefits to customers and paint a clear picture of how video walls can enhance a lobby or meeting space, no matter whether the space fits 250 people or 10,000.

"The video wall has definitely created a buzz, from the president and CEO on down," Stavshoj said. "Everyone has commented on how great it looks. It's a living example of what our reps can espouse to our customers."



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