



Straight A's: Outdoor LED Display sets ULM's Student Center up for Success

Background

The University of Louisiana Monroe is a public university with almost 8,000 undergraduate students. In 2021, ULM began construction on a new student building to be named, The HUB. An \$11.6 million facility, The HUB is a contemporary student center with five dining options, a small market, meeting areas, group seating, and more. As a symbol of campus life for current and prospective students, The HUB is also available for club meetings, student gatherings, and other community events. In replacing ULM's former Student Union Building, built in 1938, The HUB exemplifies ULM's commitment to student and faculty needs, technological advancement, and enhancement of campus life.

Custom Needs

In planning the design of the space, an important element of The HUB was the outdoor entertainment space, including plans for a large mounted LED display wall on the northeast side of the building. ULM wanted an eye-catching and impressive signage display capable of displaying campus signage, communicating relevant school news, and streaming sports games – a passion shared by many of ULM's students.

The display unit installed needed to be durable, integrated for various inputs, and have a vivid and bright image. Additionally, with ULM's largest dormitory directly across the street from the Hub, automatic sensors for brightness adjustment at night was a must-have to avoid disrupting student sleep schedules.

The Challenge:

The HUB, which opened in August of 2022 at the University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM), is a modern, 23,000-square-foot student center with seating for more than 600. As the newest student center built at ULM in almost 85 years, it was essential to equip the space with world-class digital signage and entertainment display to enhance campus life and provide flexible options for large-scale viewing.

Solution:

- One 16.4' x 6.56' Outdoor Direct View LED with 3.9 mm pixel pitch – LED Q039E2, installed on the Northeast side of the building to not only provide a visual impact - but also give students a platform to enjoy sports, news, and even entertainment between classes and in the evenings.

Result:

ULM has a modern and state-of-the-art student center with a durable and sleek platform for digital signage that includes sports, news, and films. NEC's outdoor LED display helps promote ULM as a student-focused university valuing modernization, quality, and progress.



Easy to Work with and Turnkey

With an understanding of ULM's needs, Bluum, the audio and visual provider for the project, reached out to the leading providers of display solutions, including Sharp.

Scott Albarado, Account Executive at Bluum, said, "I recommended Sharp because they were easier to work with, the quote came quickly, and most importantly, they did a turnkey package for an LED display. Other companies would give us a quote just on the outdoor display, which meant we had to get a separate price for the custom mounting mechanism and a separate price for the installation. From Sharp, we got one quote that included the custom display, the mounting mechanism, and installation for this specialized project. Sharp made it so much easier." With ULM having already implemented other NEC projectors and LEDs in other areas of campus, NEC was a logical fit for Bluum and The University of Louisiana Monroe.

ULM's Director for Information Technology, Chance Eppinette, said, "We wanted to be sure that the visual quality was nice no matter what distance an individual may be from the screen. With as large of a screen as it is, you can get close to it and still have good visual perception of the image." With a pixel pitch of 3.9 mm and overall size of approximately 16.4' x 6.56', this LED Q039E2 is the ideal option for both close and distance viewing."

ULM hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony for The HUB on August 12, 2022, and opened the student center at the end of the same

month. Since The HUB opened, it has become the most popular building on campus for students to gather, study, eat, and connect. NEC's outdoor digital display has become a central platform for school signage and news – as well as a place for students to check in on their favorite sports teams between classes. As an easily adaptable and high-quality LED platform in a high-traffic area of the building and campus, the sky is the limit for ULM and its students as they explore the capabilities of NEC's video wall.



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