

## ZONES



**A**bout 20 miles south of Seattle sits the corporate headquarters of Zones, an IT services and solutions provider that generated \$1.3 billion in sales in fiscal year 2015. More than 700 people work out of that office, in addition to the dozens of partners who frequently pass through to meet with sales representatives and experience new technology. 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.

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 says.

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

Zones decided to install a 3x3 videowall using NEC 55in. X554UN displays. 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. The installation was simple, even though Zones had to reinforce the wall on which the displays hang with additional aluminum studs.

Zones uses the displays to promote corporate activities such as blood drives, to advertise its partners, and to showcase its own work. In between the business-oriented content, it plays outdoor videos that epitomize life in the Pacific Northwest, such as footage of Orca Whales and high-intensity sports videos. 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 inhouse 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 videowall has definitely created a buzz, from the president and CEO on down," Stavnsjoj says. "Everyone has commented on how great it looks. It's a living example of what our reps can espouse to our customers."