

# NEC cooks up a digital signage treat in the GE Monogram® Design Center

## Quick Facts

**Facility:** GE Consumer & Industrial Monogram Design Center

**Location:** New York City

**Challenge:** Complementing an NYC design theme using a sophisticated A/V and IT system/Educating and entertaining showroom guests

**Solution:** 46" NEC MultiSync LCD4620

**Date:** February 2008

Showrooms, with their dazzling products and inviting setups, are designed to make visitors want to bring every item into the comfort of their own homes. So when GE Consumer & Industrial looked to create a unique atmosphere in its new Monogram Design Center in New York City, it needed digital signage displays that would complement the showroom design, as well as enhance cooking demonstrations, informational seminars and special events. Due to the non-traditional workspace, designers would need to think through the eyes of a New Yorker to create an inviting and eye-catching showroom.

GE Consumer & Industrial is a worldwide industry leader in major appliance, lighting and integrated industrial equipment, systems and services. It provides solutions for commercial, industrial and residential use, incorporating innovative technologies and ecomagination, a GE initiative to aggressively bring to market new technologies that help customers meet pressing environmental challenges.



To achieve a Times Square-like visual effect, the GE Monogram Design Center used six NEC 46" MultiSync LCD4620 displays in a tile configuration. Installed in landscape orientation, these thin-bezel models are capable of displaying an overall portrait image in stunning clarity.

To help guide the technical aspect of its new Monogram Design Center, GE worked with Rethink Innovations, an audio/video, network and IT data infrastructure design company that provides cost-effective professional content for commercial facilities. Centrally located between New York and Philadelphia, Rethink Innovations assisted GE in creating a sophisticated New York City-themed environment that showcases Monogram appliances.

## The Challenge

When the design team, which uses local culture as influence for designing showrooms, began planning the new Monogram Design Center, it needed the sparkle and shine of New York City flair in the four kitchen areas to make it familiar and inviting to visitors. Designers wanted the showroom's city theme to be evidenced by terrazzo flooring laid out in the pattern of the Manhattan street grid, a representation of Times Square and 59<sup>th</sup> Street Subway tile covering an area of the wall above one of the four kitchen areas. In order to work the design theme into the showroom, the team chose audio/video and IT creative design company Rethink Innovations, which would focus specifically on two areas in the showroom's 4000-square-foot home on the tenth floor of the Architects & Designers Building in Midtown East.

Within the reception area is a structural column that designers wanted to transform into a representation of Times Square. After discussing ideas of LED-based displays and a video wall of displays in portrait mode on the column, designers looked to Rethink Innovations for a feasible technology to create the environment they were looking to design.

"The Times Square column provided us a challenge as visitors would be able to walk right up to the column, yet the client wanted the large LED-based Times Square look and feel," said Eric Christoffersen, president and CEO of Rethink Innovations. "With no room for rear projection and not enough ceiling height for front projection, this particular digital signage install required a thin-bezel display that would not take away from the main attraction of GE's appliances and still give them the desired effect. We created several 3-D renderings of video wall configurations to determine which would best suit the column, as many of the design team members were out of state."

Keeping with the New York City atmosphere, the hallway would channel Broadway and continue from the reception area's Times Square column to Columbus Circle, eventually leading to the presentation area. Known as the working kitchen, this portion of the showroom would be used for appliance demos, product demonstrations and training sessions with professional chefs. It would seat approximately 50 audience members and, therefore, require microphones, cameras and displays so all action taking place in the working kitchen could be seen and heard from the seats. GE also needed a flip-down display lift for the working kitchen, which would remain retracted during everyday business hours.

### The Solution

After Christoffersen and designers considered various ideas to bring New York City indoors for its showroom, they chose NEC Display Solutions' 46" MultiSync LCD4620-AV based on its price point, thin bezel size and screen quality. While other displays'

bezels tested as too thick for the Times Square column, the LCD4620 display fit perfectly, leading GE and Rethink to choose nine units for the new showroom. Six LCD4620 displays were mounted in two 3x1 video wall configurations onto the Times Square column. The working kitchen would boast a hideable unit in addition to one on the flip-down lift—both to be used for audience demos. For uniformity, another display with speakers would be placed into a conference room for presentations and meetings.

"The overall showroom design concept was to create an environment that's familiar and surprisingly original at the same time," said Paula Cecere, manager for the GE Monogram Design Center. "We wanted to showcase Monogram appliances against a backdrop that beckons visitors to explore, and the NEC displays helped us do just that."



The showroom's working kitchen, which seats up to 50 audience members, features two NEC MultiSync LCD4620 displays (including one installed on a flip-down lift) to make it easier to see demonstrations.

The digital content for the Times Square column/video wall runs in a custom aspect ratio for portrait mode and all content is mastered at 1080 x 1920. With the LCD4620 displays each mounted in landscape orientation and showing content in portrait mode over the entire video wall, this install captures visitors' attention and offers them a unique perspective.

"We picked the NEC MultiSync LCD4620 because at design time it was a brand new product that fit perfectly in the GE Monogram showroom space," said Christoffersen. "Other LCD products we considered at the time had bezels that were too thick, creating large gaps in the image and distracting from the Times Square desired effect. NEC's sleek thin bezel and excellent screen quality was exactly what we were looking for, and I'm very happy with the outcome of our project."