PLANAR

INSTALLATION PROFILE
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

HIGHLIGHTS

Location
Starkville, Mississippi

Industry
Education

Application
Digital Signage

VIDEO WALL ADDS 'HIP' FACTOR TO NEW RESIDENCE HALL

Mississippi State University (MSU) is a doctoral-degree-granting university with a proud history, dating back to its establishment in 1862 as the Agricultural and Mechanical College of the State of Mississippi. It became Mississippi State University in 1958, and today is among the top 100 universities in the United States, offering a wide range of courses of study for more than 18,000 students.

On 4,200 acres at its main Starkville campus sit 70-plus academic and research buildings, and 15 residence halls. The newest—South Hall—opened in April 2010. In keeping with the university's mission to use leading-edge technology throughout, South Hall incorporates a video wall from Planar Systems in its two-story lobby. The Planar Clarity™ Matrix LCD Video Wall System can be viewed from both floors of the lobby, where it serves as a TV, movie screen and electronic billboard. Content shown includes live feeds of football games; television programming and information about other campus activities, events and news. "It also may be one of the biggest video game screens in a residence hall," says Ann Bailey, director of housing and residence life. "We wanted the video wall to be an advanced communication tool. But being able to play video games on it makes it hip, and that's important too."

MSU housing, facilities and maintenance staff evaluated several video wall technologies before selecting the Clarity Matrix system. The 16 Clarity Matrix LCD panels, each 46 inches in size, provide a total screen size of nearly 120 square feet. The four-by-four (4x4) panel configuration affords excellent visibility from both lobby levels. The image area is virtually seamless due to the tiling design, which results in a panel-to-panel gap of 7.3 millimeters. Clarity Matrix's brightness (700 nits), contrast ratio (3000:1), resolution (1366 x 768) and color-handling (16.7 million supported colors) ensure the image quality that the university was looking for in the video wall.

Low cost of ownership also was important. Clarity Matrix delivers here as well. Planar's unique EasyAxis™ Mounting System allows for total-alignment control and service access to panels in both landscape and portrait orientation. Each LCD panel can be tilted up and out to access the panel below, so there's no need to remove panels to do maintenance or service adjacent panels.

In addition, EasyAxis makes it possible to mount Clarity Matrix close to South Hall's lobby wall. Extending out just 4.5 inches, the video wall integrates well with the clean, streamlined look of the lobby.

Also unique to Clarity Matrix is its off-board component design. Controllers and power supplies can be mounted in racks away from the video wall for easy access. No power outlets are required behind the video wall, which reduces installation costs. The off-board design also is a key factor in Clarity Matrix's ability to deliver 24x7x365 operation because it minimizes the heat build-up that can damage the LCD panels and, potentially, cripple a video wall.

Two other Clarity Matrix features factored into this cost-effective solution for MSU. First, the system is engineered with a 50,000-hour backlight. Second, the system incorporates redundant power supplies and controllers. If either pair of devices fails, Clarity Matrix continues operating at a very high level of visual performance.

The MSU video wall was installed by Quantum Technologies, Inc. The firm, based in Huntsville, Ala., specializes in custom, professional audiovisual solutions.

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