



HIGHLIGHTS

Location

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

Industry

Hospitality

Application

Corporate Lobby



PLANAR PS-SERIES VIDEO WALL MAKES A BIG IMPRESSION

The Athletic Club, operating in Canada since 1997, opened a new facility in Waterloo, Ontario in December 2011. The 65,000 square foot club features water walls, a café, two pools, gym and more than 600 pieces of workout equipment. And it welcomes members and visitors with a state-of-the-art video wall from Planar Systems.

“We wanted to impress our members as they walked in the door. The Planar video wall provided the visual impact and upscale feel we were looking for and filled the large open area perfectly!” says Rick Quesnel, Waterloo manager and an owner of The Athletic Club.

Installed in the two-story lobby area by London Audio Ltd. (London, Ontario), the 16-panel video wall is made up of an array of Planar® PS-Series™ LCD displays. With the PS-Series, Planar leads the industry with a line of affordable LCD displays for digital signage, while providing commercial-grade performance and reliability. “Because the Planar PS-Series was engineered as a commercial product, we see it as a superior offering in this class, where many competitive products are little more than re-purposed television brands,” says Rick Ho, president of London Audio, Ltd.

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Reliability is Key

The Athletic Club's Quesnel acknowledges the importance of the Planar PS-Series' reliability, noting that the Waterloo club is open to customers nearly 24/7. "Whenever we're open and have people coming and going, we want the video wall to be running top-notch. It entertains anyone going through the lobby, provides information about the club and makes a strong visual impression."

The full 1080p high definition (1920 x 1080) display ensures Quesnel that club guests see the content at its best. Currently, the Planar video wall displays PC and cable TV feeds, including fitness programming and live broadcast feeds of sports and entertainment television. Quesnel hopes to expand the range of content that can be shown, and will do so as the club expands its inventory of in-house video and commits to a broader range of cable broadcasting. "We're very happy with what we're showing now, and customers tell us they are really impressed with the video wall's HD quality."

Other features that make the Planar PS-Series appealing include support for a variety of data and video inputs (which will enable The Athletic Club to take feeds from an expanded set of content sources), 500 cd/m2 screen brightness, 1500:1 contrast ratio, and 178-deg. viewing angle (all three important considering the club lobby's often high ambient light) and 190W power consumption (which helps keep operating costs down).

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A Time and Money Saver for the System Integrator

Rick Ho from London Audio gives Planar high marks for the ease with which the Planar PS-Series installed at The Athletic Club. "Every panel was ready to go right out of the box. Commercial-grade mounting brackets were where we expected them to be, each panel came with the required power and VGA cables and the panel-to-panel calibration was spot-on." Commenting further on the ease of installation, Ho said: "The product workmanship and installation readiness mean that this system cuts our labor time by at least a day over competitive video walls. Also, there were no hidden costs or unanticipated steps that would have inhibited our productivity—a pretty remarkable situation in this day and age."

For a system integrator, Ho adds, the Planar PS-Series provides a high level of predictability, which is another advantage. "Because of the engineering that has gone into this product, we know that it will arrive on-site and install as we expect it to. We can construct other bids that we know will come in right on both cost and profit goals. This allows us to be more competitive and increases our likelihood of winning business."