

## The Finest Fillets

Gelson's believes in giving our customers great choices. For example, we select larger fillets to produce a bigger center cut and we sell fish skinless and skin-on, so you'll have plenty of options.



### Unrivaled Seafood

At Gelson's, we're proud to bring you the freshest, highest quality seafood available. Thanks to our buyers and partners, we offer a wide variety of locally and globally sourced seafood, including a wide selection of fresh fish and shellfish.

# Gelson's

#### INTERVIEWED

► **Yvonne Manganaro**,  
SVP Customer and  
Team Experience

#### INDUSTRY

► Enterprise

#### CHALLENGE

► Upscale retail market sought to upgrade print signage with a more contemporary alternative that would enable them to change out content more quickly and cost-effectively

## Retail Market Chain Shines with Cost Savings and Contemporary Look of ViewSonic Digital Signage

#### COMPANY

Founded in 1951 by brothers Bernard and Eugene Gelson as an extraordinary grocery shopping experience for discerning consumers, Gelson's Markets is recognized today as one of the nation's premier supermarket chains. With stores in neighborhoods throughout Southern California, each location is singularly known as the area's best market for superior produce, highest quality meat, seafood and deli, an unmatched selection of wine and liquor, and exceptional service.

#### CHALLENGE

Known as "the ultimate foodie paradise," and a "place to spoil yourself," by fans on Yelp, Gelson's is not your average supermarket. Amenities like wine and craft beer bars, gourmet cheese islands, and chef-led prepared food stations distinguish Gelson's shopping experience. Offering made-fresh daily dishes is clearly an outstanding recipe for customer satisfaction. However, keeping the signage as fresh and up-to-date became a costly and time-consuming burden.

"Many of our departments needed to update their signage on a very regular basis," said Yvonne Manganaro, SVP Customer and Team Experience. "We realized that we needed to do something different that would allow us to reduce print costs while also bringing a more contemporary look to the stores."

To find a solution for this dilemma, Manganaro and a coworker from the company's procurement department traveled to a digital signage trade show in Las Vegas to assess the options.

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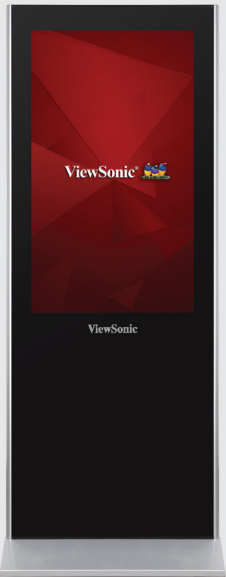
— Yvonne Manganaro, SVP Customer and Team Experience

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## SOLUTION

- ▶ ViewSonic 43-inch CDE4320 professional-grade commercial displays
- ▶ ViewSonic network media players models NMP309-W and NMP589-W with included digital signage software
- ▶ ViewSonic 42-inch EP4220 ePoster



## SOLUTION

The duo visited a host of booths, talking to reps from many companies. By the time they left the ViewSonic booth, Manganaro was convinced that they had found their digital signage partner.

“The first thing that we liked about ViewSonic was that they’re based in California, close enough for us to easily visit their showroom,” she said. “Along with that, and probably the primary deciding factor, was the free software that is included with their digital signage solutions.”

While not as feature-packed as some of the available software, said Manganaro, the ViewSonic software had everything they needed to meet their retail signage needs.

“The more robust software usually has monthly or annual subscription fees and that would have added a lot of cost to each unit,” she said. “We loved that the ViewSonic program was included and very functional for what we needed.”



Manganaro was sold on the ViewSonic solution, which included vibrant ViewSonic® 43-inch CDE4320 professional-grade commercial displays and ViewSonic network media players (models NMP309-W and NMP589-W) with included Signage Manager software. Gelson’s began installing the ViewSonic digital signage throughout their stores, for what has amounted to a total of 16 ViewSonic CDE4320 displays (plus one EP4220 ePoster) in each of 27 stores over the past 10 years.

## RESULTS

Take one look and it’s clear that the digital screens deliver a more modern look than printed signage, easily meeting Manganaro’s first goal.

“Everything on the ViewSonic displays looks better than printed signs. Images and text are crisp and clear and we can also use video,” she said. “It’s a lot more compelling and eye catching.”

What’s more, department managers can update content in a fraction of the time it took when the stores relied on printed signs.

**RESULTS**

- ▶ Return on investment was achieved across all departments in under a year
- ▶ Department managers can now update content as often as needed
- ▶ Digital signage and ePosters deliver a more modern, upscale look
- ▶ The digital platforms provide vendor partners with message showcase opportunities
- ▶ Customer satisfaction increased, with compelling content to view while waiting for service

“The ViewSonic digital signage gives us a lot more flexibility,” said Manganaro. “There were times in the past when budget wouldn’t allow us to update a menu because it was going to cost a couple thousand dollars to change out signs. Now that’s not even a factor; we can change content whenever department owners want to.”

The convenience and good looks of the ViewSonic digital signage came with another outstanding benefit – substantial cost savings.

“We calculated the ROI before we purchased the displays,” said Manganaro. “For our departments that had the most variability in menu and ingredient content it took about 10 months to break even. A few took a bit longer, but not much.”

As the Gelson’s business continued to grow and add departments, increasing the number of screens to manage with the ViewSonic software, Manganaro acknowledged that they did encounter a constraint in the free software.

“The ViewSonic software has a limit of 50 screens on one set up, but because it’s so wonderfully straightforward and easy to work with our IT team was able to create a work around,” she said. “They created channels of content for departments – one for meat and seafood, one for the front desk, and so on.”

This, she added, makes it easy for their designer to create content, then copy and paste as needed, and finally upload quickly to multiple units. Content is then scheduled through the software, another basic yet critical feature, according to Manganaro.



“The ability to schedule is key,” she said. “I can’t imagine trying to have a designer physically at a computer at 6 am before we open or right when our ad breaks, or on Friday when suddenly there’s something new to communicate in the produce department.”

After nearly 10 years of using the ViewSonic CDE displays and software, Manganaro says that the most beautiful thing about the solution is that it ‘just works.’

“We didn’t need or want to pay for bells and whistles; this is a very functional program that does everything we need it to do in a retail environment,” she said. “We looked at a lot of other systems and we’re so glad to be working with ViewSonic. We service hundreds of thousands of customers per week and need to deliver a uniformly good experience – our stores get so busy that the last thing we need to worry about is tech failing.”

In fact, Manganaro confessed, they once installed a digital signage system in a store because of a technology ViewSonic didn’t have at the time, and it has been a headache.

“The downtime at that store has been horrible,” she said. “The ViewSonic system is just so reliable. I don’t have to worry about it and my team doesn’t have to worry about it. It just works.”

As Manganaro and her team became more experienced with the digital signage equipment and its benefits, they began looking for a solution to the unwieldy signage in the stores’ entryway.

“We replaced some rather cluttered-looking printed signage with the sleek ViewSonic EP4220 ePoster,” she said. “Now we can display multiple moving images and when visitors walk into the store it delivers an upscale look in line with our brand.”

Beyond saving a substantial amount of time and money, and imparting a contemporary feel, the ViewSonic digital displays have added value to Gelson’s markets in another notable way, said Manganaro – for their partners.

“We are able to do some terrific storytelling and create videos that showcase our amazing partners,” she said. “For example, our director of meat and seafood went on a fishing trip with a vendor and shot a video we used to showcase their sustainable practices and how they bring product to market so quickly.”

Gelson’s partners are thrilled to receive this additional visibility and support, she added, and customers are big fans of the content as well.

“While they’re waiting for service customers have something interesting to watch,” she said. “This compelling content helps improve customer satisfaction and informs them about the vendors, products and care that sets us apart from other groceries.”

In every way, working with ViewSonic has been a very positive experience, concluded Manganaro.

“We manage well over 300 screens in our chain, and when there’s a problem it’s virtually always because one of our team members accidentally bumped a media player, unplugged something, or broke an antenna,” she said. “It’s rarely a problem with the ViewSonic solutions.”

