

PAYING DIVIDENDS

Royal Randwick's \$168m investment includes one of largest and most sophisticated signage and signboard solutions in the world.

Story: Christopher Holder

The Australian Turf Club's \$168m redevelopment of the Royal Randwick Racecourse is something to behold. With full glass frontage on all levels, the new grandstand provides an uninterrupted outlook of the racecourse and surrounding parklands as well as spectacular views of the CBD skyline.

With views like this it may come as a surprise to many that the grandstand packs a whopping 800 networked hi-def displays! The truth is, of course, that the punters' needs come first, and the latest in digital signage ensures racegoers will never miss any of the action (at Randwick and elsewhere) as well as providing all the odds and other vital raceday information.

The screen experience is powered by an Exterity IPTV system, supplied and installed by systems integrator The PA People. Consultants Norman Disney & Young specified a system that would accommodate a broad range of content sources from terrestrial free-to-air television, satellite pay TV, outside broadcast vans, production facilities and locally produced digital signage produced in-house by the Australian Turf Club (ATC).

There are over 60 channels at the site with over 30 signage pages displayed. The Exterity IPTV System from Hills enables each screen to access any content under central control of the Exterity management platform.

High definition displays are located right throughout the venue including bars, suites, ballrooms, dining areas, outdoor spaces and management facilities and the Exterity IPTV system enables control of each display and associated content both centrally and from AMX control panels located throughout the facility.

A CASE FOR IPTV

An IPTV system such as this makes plenty of sense for a large facility such as the Royal Randwick Racecourse. Each of the screens has its own IP address and as a result, with the aid of some simple controls gives the user the ability to change 'stations' to suit. In the hospitality areas, each table (some 200 in all) has its own Sony Vaio touchscreen — effectively a self contained tablet PC — which allows patrons to change the channel via an idiotproof interface designed by The PA People. Only an IPTV system could provide this manner of flexibility.

Similarly, every corporate box has operator controls for adjusting the content of their screens. Other displays in bars and concourses are under the control of ATC staff.

The entire system is managed from a control room deep in the bowels of the grandstand. Sophisticated management software from Exterity allows the ATC to manage its digital signage content creation and scheduling.

The PA People: (02) 8755 8700 or www.papeople.com.au

Hills Antenna & TV Systems (Exterity): 1800 720 000 or www.hillsantenna.com.au

Sony: pro.sony.com.au

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GRANDSTAND FACTS

110m long x 33m wide new five-level grandstand
Free wi-fi throughout the building and surrounding areas
25,000sqm of floor space (old stand 15,000sqm)
Ability to cater for a diverse range of events
Capacity to host 4200 banquet style or 7900 cocktail-style dining over the five levels
The joint largest LED screen in the Southern Hemisphere (11m high by 40m long)
Two 18m long super screens located on ground level betting auditorium





LIVING LARGE

The finishing-post Daktronics Semaphore 15HD LED video display is a showstopper. Along with the same format screen (420sqm) at Rosehill Racecourse this display is the biggest south of the equator. It features 720 x 2568 pixel resolution at a 15mm pixel pitch. Daktronics screens are well regarded for their wide viewing angle, high brightness and high contrast, and the full IP65-rated outdoor Semaphore display provides a genuine focal point for all 40,000-odd people on race day.

Indoors, Daktronics has two of its large-format 6mm pixel-pitch LED panels taking care of all the odds and vision from races around the country – one above the bar and another above the TAB. The control features are rather good. Using the Daktronics show control solution the displays are fully integrated with the TAB interface, taking the TAB data and displaying it in any format the ATC desires. Practically this means the traditional ugly-but-serviceable TAB readouts are replaced with better looking fonts and colours, and the data can appear anywhere on the big screen that works best.

Daktronics; (02) 9453 4600 or www.daktronics.com

