



IMPERIAL THEATER

Historic Imperial Theater Installs New Digital Marquees.

Dynamic electronic displays installed for post-pandemic reopening.

Center: INFINITY-RGB: 20mm pixel pitch (3'11" x 24'4"). Right: INFINITY-SMD: 10mmHB pixel pitch (3'11" x 9'5")



LED DISPLAY TECHNOLOGY

The Imperial Theater in Augusta, GA., boasts a long history and celebrated its centennial anniversary in 2018. Leading up to the anniversary, the theater completed \$1.25 million four-year infrastructure project that included site work to eliminate flooding issues, installing a new roof surface, replacing aging fire escapes, upgrading electrical systems and HVAC, and renovation of the historic marquee.

Modern-Day Marquees With A Retro Look

Landmark, older theaters with architectural distinction often make them a challenge to combine a modern, electronic sign system with a pre-existing historic look. However, through technological innovations, theater marquees are evolving to include full-color graphic display boards and even high definition video screens.

While maintaining the signs' historical integrity, new LED displays add a modern aesthetic to theater facades. These updated displays allow theaters to promote shows using uniquely branded visuals from the bands and touring acts, including videos, to draw patrons' attention and increase ticket sales.

Challenge

Aware of the advertising advantages of technologically advanced, full-color electronic displays, the Imperial Theater knew it was time for a refresh. The theater's 15-year-old electronic display could no longer be maintained because of its age and replacement parts were not available. Additionally, the theater didn't want to cut into the existing cabinet for a different size display to preserve its historic appearance.

Relationship Driven

Relationships help business grow and succeed, which is exactly how Finuf Sign Company, Inc., (Finuf) has become a second-generation company in Augusta, GA. The company has worked with Imperial Theater for over 15 years, having built and installed the theater's marquee including the existing electronic displays and worked on any maintenance issues since the installation. When the theater needed to refresh its marquee and update the technology, they contacted Finuf.

Mark Finuf, president and owner has developed a long relationship with CA-based Optec Displays, Inc.,



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(Optec). Finuf looks to the company as a trusted resource and solutions provider to leverage their entertainment complex experience. As a digital display solutions provider, Optec designs, engineers, and manufactures LED displays that are unique to each installation project.

Solution

The theater's electronic display presents content informing the community about current and upcoming shows and special events, wedding announcements, and advertises rental space available within the theater.

The theater decided to install three full-color displays. The largest measures 3'-11" H x 24'-4" W and is a 20mm pixel pitch Infinity RGB, which provides better visuals than the previous monochrome display. The two smaller 10mm Infinity-SMD side displays measure 3'-11" H x 9'-5" W and feature high brightness SMD tiles with XL louver technology. The three displays are capable of showing graphics, animations, and video and utilize Optec's content management system, M.E. Pro Plus software.

Optec provided onsite software training for the Imperial Theater marketing team. To maximize the marquee's effectiveness, Optec worked with the marketing team training them how to select appropriate graphics for the events and shows they want to promote, import those files and transfer the content to their marquee, making it more visually interesting and increasing business to the

theater. When requested, Optec's content-creation team worked with the theater's marketing department to help create dynamic and engaging messaging.

Results

The pandemic had profound financial impact on all theaters and most businesses, and the Imperial Theater was no exception. Being shuttered for 18 months dramatically affected the revenue and capital improvement fundraising efforts. Fortunately, businesses like Finuf Signs stepped up when the theater reopened in August 2021, by providing the updated marquee sign at a reduced cost with a free 10-year extended warranty. Additionally, Finuf contributes annually to Imperial's fundraising campaigns.

"The Imperial Theater is a landmark in this community, the same community that has helped my family's business grow for two generations," said Finuf. "This theater went through a very challenging year and as a proud Augusta business owner, I'm happy to support its reopening."

After being closed for over 18 months because of the pandemic, it's more important than ever to sell tickets and fill seats. The dynamic visuals on the Imperial Theater's upgraded LED display marquee are helping to drive ticket sales and engage patrons.



Worldwide Headquarters
1700 S. De Soto Place, Ontario, CA 91761 USA
Phone: +1.800.876.1668 Fax: +1.626.369.7858
www.optec.com