

TOSHIBA BOOSTS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AT CRAZY HORSE MEMORIAL

Customer: Crazy Horse Memorial
Country: South Dakota, USA
Industry: Tourism

CRAZY HORSE MEMORIAL

South Dakota's Crazy Horse Memorial, located in the state's Black Hills and about half an hour from Mount Rushmore, is the world's largest mountain carving in progress. This massive undertaking was the passion of the project's founder, Korczak Ziolkowski, an accomplished sculptor who ventured west from Boston in 1948 after receiving an invitation from Lakota Chief Standing Bear to create a mountain carving dedicated to Crazy Horse. The effort to complete the ambitious sculpture, which will measure 563 feet high and 641 feet wide, continues even after Ziolkowski's passing in 1982 as his family continues his devotion to the project by overseeing the day-to-day activities.

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– Chief Executive Officer,
Jadwiga Ziolkowski



EDUCATE. ENTERTAIN. ENGAGE.

The executive leadership team of Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation, a non-profit, public charity of international scope, wanted to improve the learning experience for its more than one million annual visitors. Executive team members Monique and Jadwiga Ziolkowski and Laurie Becvar often discussed adopting innovative technology in an effort to educate, entertain and engage the Memorial's patrons.

A student studying in the summer program of Crazy Horse's Indian University of North America introduced the leadership team to South Dakota Toshiba professionals, which led to a presentation of Toshiba's Ellumina digital signage. After hearing about how it was increasing visitor engagement at St. Paul, Minnesota's Xcel Energy Center, STAPLES Center in Los Angeles and Las Vegas' recently-opened, T-Mobile Arena, they were convinced the Virtuoso was the right solution for them.

“At the first meeting with Toshiba's team, we touched on the primary goals we wanted to achieve with digital signage,” Jadwiga Ziolkowski, CEO of Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation stated. “We discussed our interests in enriching the guest experience; increasing the number of participants in our Storyteller donor program and significantly enhancing the awareness of our world-class Indian Museum of North America.”

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After getting a sense of Crazy Horse Memorial's objectives, the Toshiba team provided an overview of the full-service hardware, software and content development expertise Toshiba has to offer and reviewed a few of the compelling Ellumina installations that have delivered impactful results for customers in the retail, sports and entertainment and education markets.

With a clear vision of how Toshiba could 'check the boxes' on their wish list, Crazy Horse Memorial took the next step and scheduled a demonstration of Toshiba's signature interactive digital signage solution, Virtuoso. "After seeing the demo, we understood exactly how Toshiba's digital signage could fulfill our objectives," noted Jadwiga Ziolkowski. "Virtuoso was everything we wanted and more."



Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation's executive management team was intrigued by the interactive display's capability to host massive amounts of diverse content. "We provided Toshiba's design team with a ton of photos, videos and artist renderings," said Becvar, Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation's president and chief operating officer. "We sent them everything from early photos of Korczak and his family, a photo diary from the very beginning of the sculpture in 1948 as well as pictures of local artists and their art. We also delivered a video library of staff restoring Native American textiles, signature moments of the carving's development as well as a video series entitled, 'Tools and Machines of the Mountain,' which beautifully convey the time and effort needed to create such a historical structure."

Within 90 days, Toshiba's Ellumina team had created the content and integrated the interactive touch screen displays (ranging from 46- to 55-inches) throughout Crazy Horse Memorial's spacious visitor complex including the Welcome Center, the Indian Museum of North America, Native American Educational & Cultural Center, Mountain Carving Room and The Covered Porch — which sits on the footprint of the home of the monument's original sculptor, Korczak Ziolkowski.

Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation's leadership quickly learned that visitors were able to interact with the Virtuosos to learn about the sculpture, its history and the rich culture of Native Americans throughout North America. They also discovered an additional — and unexpected — benefit. Toshiba's touch screen displays were serving as virtual tour guides, which is significant because the docent program only operates during the May through September peak season. With the Memorial's year-round calendar, the capability to easily incorporate answers to guests' frequently asked questions into the complex's Virtuoso fleet enriched the visitor experience to an entirely new level.

Impressed with the public's level of engagement with the displays, the Crazy Horse Memorial team recognized the opportunity to leverage the devices for staff training and development. "Our visitors' interaction with the Virtuosos was so natural, it surpassed the ambitious benchmarks we had initially set," noted Monique Ziolkowski. "When we considered the significant amount of information available on our displays and the amount of time our visitors spend with the displays, we decided to implement the use of the products within our own docent and employee training program. One of our student docents became an expert guide after walking through the information stored on the Virtuoso."



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**– Chief Executive Officer,
Monique Ziolkowski**

Another benefit of the solution is a significant increase in requests for the Memorial's newsletter, *The Insider Update*. Signing up for the newsletter to keep informed of the Memorial's progress is easy and instantaneous on the Virtuoso. Virtuosos are also having a positive impact on the number of visitor surveys the Memorial receives. "Visitor survey responses have increased 30 percent since we added the visitor feedback option on the Virtuoso," stated Becvar. "And, more than 80 percent felt positive about their experience at the Memorial, noting that they would recommend Crazy Horse Memorial to their friends. Clearly, the Toshiba Virtuosos have helped us enrich our guest experience and acquire valuable feedback."

Toshiba's digital signage team is also assisting the Memorial to enhance its support for the project through a giving option on the Virtuosos. Individuals are encouraged to make charitable gifts to the Foundation and become Storytellers to positively impact progress towards fulfilling the mission.

Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation leadership team is now looking to Toshiba's Ellumina team for support on two new projects. The Memorial is creating a searchable database of the museum collections of its Indian Museum of North America®. Museum staff is in the midst of researching and recording the provenance – or history – of each Native American art piece, tribal flag and textile in the vast collection of art and artifacts from numerous Native communities throughout North America. Toshiba's Ellumina team will step in and link the Museum's database to a searchable, interactive database on the Virtuoso, providing the visiting public more in-depth knowledge about the art and accompanying culture of a native Nation. The Memorial also plans to share oral testimonies from Native elders with visitors through the Virtuosos so visitors can hear the stories of Crazy Horse the warrior and other Native American culture and traditions from the elders themselves.

"The Toshiba team has impressed us in every aspect of the installation process and has enabled us to properly articulate our story to the more than one million guests who visit us each year."

– Chief Executive Officer,
Jadwiga Ziolkowski



"The interactive experiences through Toshiba's Virtuosos have assisted the Memorial in living out its mission to protect and preserve the culture, tradition, and living heritage of North American Indians."

– President and Chief Operating Officer,
Laurie Becvar

