

Cineplex Inc.

Case study



▲ Reclining seats and always-perfect digital cinema images in this Cineplex VIP Cinema make the movie experience that much better.

Digital cinema — a smart investment

When digital cinema technology became available, Paul Nonis, senior vice president, national operations, Cineplex Entertainment, made sure his organization was an early adopter of the new technology.

“Cineplex recognized the possibilities right from the start and invested in digital cinema long before Virtual Print Fee (VPF) financing became available,” states Pat Marshall, vice president of communications and investor relations, Cineplex Entertainment.

The first digital screening for Cineplex took place in 2005. The first all-digital cinema opened in December 2007 in Oakville, Ontario. The company then undertook a full digital cinema conversion in 2008 using Christie® exclusively. Nonis and his team oversaw the transition.

“It was a very complex installation for Cineplex because it was across six provinces, new theatres were being opened during the conversion period, and we had to

work around peak operating periods when business had to be operational so guests weren't affected. We couldn't close up shop and just do the conversion. We're open 365 days and serve 70 million people in a year — twice the population of Canada. But we were so motivated to get those crisp, clear digital images on the screen,” explains Nonis.

“The communications, flexibility and professionalism of the Christie folks were a huge part of the success factor.”

Pat Marshall,
vice president of communications and investor relations, Cineplex Entertainment

“The actual conversion was fantastic. Communication is key to the success of a project.... We worked with vendors, installers, electricians. It's the largest project we've ever undertaken. We felt that once we did the deal, we all became partners in this roll

Customer:

Cineplex Inc. (Cineplex)

Head office location:

Toronto, ON, Canada

Industry/Market:

Cinema

Requirements:

- Digital cinema
- Amazing picture quality
- 3D capabilities
- Reliable performance

Summary:

Cineplex Inc's shrewd investment in converting to digital cinema was a massive undertaking and has proven to be well worth the effort. The organization converted more than 1,400 screens in 133 theatres across six provinces and did it with no down time to customers.

Products:

- Christie Solaria Series projectors:
 - CP2210
 - CP2220
 - CP2230
 - CP4230

Results:

Digital cinema has opened the doors to incredible new programming options and creates an experience that audiences can't get anywhere else.

out — we had a partner relationship and we communicated that effectively. Christie's sales and service teams went the extra mile to give the roll out team what they needed," Nonis states.

"We're not the typical client," adds Marshall. "With a large business like ours, we're renovating and building new theatres and making theatre acquisitions. And all that came into place during the installation schedule. It required juggling. The communications, flexibility and professionalism of the Christie® folks were a huge part of the success factor."

In fact, because the roll out was working so smoothly, the roll out team compressed the original 18-month schedule to 12 months. Every week, the team quietly converted 20 to 30 screens.

Cineplex is very satisfied with the results. Digital cinema technology creates a better and more consistent customer experience. Image quality is the same from screening to screening; it doesn't deteriorate with each screening as 35mm film presentation does.

The digital technology has also given Cineplex new screening opportunities. Marshall illustrates just some of the programming flexibility that digital cinema offers. "We've created UltraAVX cinema with wall-to-wall screens, Dolby® Digital surround sound and reserved seating. We can only provide this new level of entertainment because digital cinema projectors create bright enough images to fill a huge screen."

She continues, "Satellite content delivery has expanded our programming options. We show the Metropolitan Opera live via satellite. We started this show in 2005 with just 24 theatres. Now we show it in more than 100 theatres. In some ways, the show is better than

actually being there. Our audiences still get the exciting, shared experience of attending a live event, but they see the opera from many different camera angles and are even treated to behind the scenes interviews and information. You can see the sweat on the conductor's face. It's incredible. And the possibilities are amazing -the Bolshoi ballet, Wimbledon in 3D. Sports, especially in 3D are going to be big!"

Cineplex correctly foresaw that the big studios would be rolling out more and more 3D movies and invested in digital cinema accordingly. Nonis adds that 3D cinema "is a game changer for the exhibition business and provides Canadian movie goers with an experience they can't get at home."

There are also construction cost savings because new theatres don't need to be designed with a big projection booth space. And with digital cinema's satellite delivery, it's easy to get the latest movies delivered to the most remote locations.

Digital cinema technology also makes programming screens easy. Now Cineplex can preload movies, yet easily adjust what they plan to show based on actual audience demand.

When "mystery shoppers" review and rate Cineplex theatres — something they do 7,000 times each year — onscreen presentation scores have gone up. That's a measurement that Cineplex takes very seriously and is proud of.

Contact Christie

Contact us today to find out how your organization can benefit from Christie solutions.



▲ Cineplex theaters operate in six provinces across Canada.



▲ Cineplex's UltraAVX theaters take moviegoing to the next level.

Photo credits: Cineplex Inc.

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