

# PREMIER MOUNTS RIGHT ON TARGET FOR **WIDESPREAD ROLLOUT AT RETAIL CHAIN**

Premier Mounts delivers custom solution that fit into Target's budget, timeline, and requirements for a serviceable result for the retail store's video walls in all of its top-grossing locations.

**THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR BEING** in the right place at the right time but it is what you do with that situation that makes all the difference. In the case of Premier Mounts, it was recognizing the opportunity and then delivering a problem-solving solution that made the customer want to offer a worldwide opportunity based on that performance and value.

After a successful project wrap-up for American Eagle Outfitters featuring custom built video walls that face inside the store and pivot backwards like barn doors, Premier Director of Solution Sales Shaun O'Brien was in a wrap-up meeting with their integrator partner ProMotion, and asked a simple question: "Is there anything else we can do for you?"

That seemingly innocuous but often overlooked question, gave Premier the lead on a project at hundreds of Target stores through its Solutions Group, a new division that came about when Premier split the company into product and service models to better meet the challenges of today's market.

In the solutions business segment, Premier staffers "put a lot of our engineering capabilities up front in the sales cycle to support the customer," says co-CEO Rich Pierro. "Target had already deployed about 30 mock-up stores for a pilot program with 4x2 video walls but weren't pleased with the early results because of the display alignment issues and the installation itself."

After assessing the project and the challenges and problems that existed, O'Brien proposed a design approach that could fit it into Target's budget, timeline,



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and requirement for a serviceable result.

Pierro explained, that "part of our solutions business on a project like that is that we'll just knock out a prototype design. We will simply let the product speak for itself and have the customer tell us if they like it. We spend time in prototype design from a problem-solving perspective and most often we'll get the job. In the case of Target, we did just that and we flew the prototype up to their headquarters in Minneapolis."

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Pierro further commented that, "Shaun followed it up there, as we often do on projects of this magnitude. Shaun did the preliminary installation with them and took notes. They liked what they saw, but as is often the case, they wanted to tweak a few things that might not be

evident by simply looking at a drawing or photo of a mount and display combination. Being in the environment reveals a lot. They decided that they wanted to add some cosmetic covers because you could see through the sides into the back, where you could see the wires and the mounts. We explained that we could custom create those covers for them and paint them the branded color, Target red."

"We flew home with new instructions to make a few tweaks and create the side covers. Then, we created another prototype. Upon completion, Shaun flew up there and did another test installation. They liked it and we got the blessing from them. They gave us the green light, and ProMotion gave us the order. That's how you make the most of an opportunity and best serve the customer," says Pierro.



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### Custom Creation but Mass Deployment

Target later split up the job, sending the other half of the work to Tierney Brothers, an integration firm, which like Target, is in Minnesota.

"This project illustrates that if we can get in front of the customer, our win ratio is really high because we're not just selling stock products, we are selling value and satisfaction," says Pierro. "It often goes far beyond bent metal in a box. We actually get to use our engineering services, our custom design and manufacturing capabilities. We focus on the challenges and the result, and stock products weren't able to fill the bill. We had to tweak it a bit to properly fit the application."

Premier Mounts prides itself on being able to create custom solutions for any project. That helps them land some unique and interesting projects and makes integrators appreciate them.

"We add the most value by tweaking these products so they install faster," says Pierro. "If we can take an integrator off the site faster, their bottom line is better or they can pass those savings off to their customers. That was the other piece

of this product that was really good. It installed much faster."

Target has video walls in all of its top-grossing locations, but is likely to continue adding them in more locations, says O'Brien, who expects Premier Mounts to be part of any future phases. The most recent order was for about 40 stores.

"We coordinate so that the POs are placed right about the same time, so we can fabricate at the same time," says O'Brien. "Then, we schedule shipments to fit their need. Depending on how they want them shipped, sometimes it's in roll-out. Sometimes it's in a full shipment to their specific location."

"In terms of logistics, they consolidate one store on one or two pallets. They'll take our mounting solution, the displays, the computers, the hardware, the software and everything that's needed for one store, consolidate it to a pallet it and ship that out from their location to the different locations across the country. Their integrators have install teams across the country that they've contracted with, that go out and do the actual installation," he says.

Another key part of this story was "the relationship we built with Target," says Pierro. "Our aim is not to go around any

of the integrators, but we complement them as an extension of them. Getting this trust and a relationship with them, it was natural for them to give us their next project, which was sold through one of the integrators as well."

That second phase involved an interactive in-ceiling projector box flush with the ceiling tiles and projected to the floor at about 50 Target stores.

"Through the trust and partnership that we built with the integrator and Target, they naturally gave us the ceiling projector box," says Pierro.

### Thinking Forward Pays Off

O'Brien is excited about the progressive approach Target has taken with technology.

"What they're doing is trying to find different ways to bring technology to the stores for different types of interaction," he says. "There's gesture-tech interactive technology built into the projector box project as well. When the image is being projected on the ground, a field, a soccer ball or whatever it may be, whoever is there on the ground, can interact with the image that's being projected."

"What we do as soon as a new request like this comes in, is to get engaged in



the conversation right away. A lot of times you'll get the integrators or the consultants that'll try to solve the mounting solution for you. We prefer that they do what they do best, which is design a full system. Let us, as the mounting champions, as I like to call us, get involved and design the mounting solution," says O'Brien.

"What we try to do is get to the end-user level. Sometimes it's not possible because the integrator, the consultant or whoever we're working with, doesn't want us to talk to the end-user right away, but where we can get involved up front, we ask all the right questions. 'What environment is it going into?' 'What's the goal of the end-user?' 'What's the finished look?' 'What are the top three priorities of the solution?' 'Is it price? Is it speed? Is it safety? Is it aesthetics?' In other words, what are their priorities?' We ask all the questions that are going to bring us to that final and most effective solution," he says.

"For the Target project, I listened to what their needs were, went back to the drawing board for them and delivered a semi-custom solution with custom rails that would actually go to the wall using a stock product for the brackets that mounted the display. Because those were right off the shelf, we could save on cost. We then passed those savings on to the customer. For us, it's getting in early, asking the right questions, understanding what their end-goal is and delivering the results," says O'Brien.

About 90 percent of the stores in the initial Target rollout used wall-mounted solutions, says O'Brien.

"What they're doing is taking the shelving gondola system which normally ends above the CDs, DVDs or magazines, and take it all the way to the ceiling," he says. There are rectangle slots in the gondolas that the shelves hook into. When you're talking about a video wall, you're talking about precision seams where alignment is very key.

"What we did was to come up with a unique method to adjust the hooks that fit into the gondola system. It allowed them to level out the system. There was over an inch of adjustment because we saw some stores that had three-quarters of an inch or more difference between that gondola on the right and the gondola on the left. What we found was that, because we attach to four vertical gondolas across the system, the right one and the left one would be lined up, but the middle one might be different. We had to overcome that and give ourselves a Y-adjustment, which is your up and down vertical adjustment, in the rails," says O'Brien.

The gondolas had a tendency to lean forward, which made servicing the video walls at various Target locations as needed a bit troublesome, says O'Brien.

"We had to come up with a way for them to easily access the panels," he says. "That's why we went with our stock video

wall mounting brackets. They have a kickstand that allows them to flip out the panels and hold the panels in a service position. In the end, that kickstand was the deal maker. As soon as they saw that, they were hooked."

"We had to provide a system that was easily understandable for every installer, for if they'd done it before or just grabbed it out of the box. They could look at it, figure out how it actually hooks in and adjust the rails for level and end up with a perfect solution at the end," says O'Brien.

Trent Fettig, project management and engineering manager for Tierney Brothers points out that, "Premier provides a good solution because it's efficient to implement and easily replicated for a mass rollout to Target stores."

In the end, it is how you approach a project and a customer. Pierro points out that "Any time we can find a way out of the commodity trap, we love it because we can really bring value to the end-user through the integrators. It's one of our missions to convince the integrators to stop looking at Premier Mounts as an alternative to our competitors and stock products, because we're so much different than just a stock product company."

Target represents "a model project for us where we worked as partners - the manufacturer, the integrator and the end-user, all focusing on the end-user's success," says Pierro.

"We want them to throw the ball our way to make the best shot. If they have a mounting project, just give it to us. Because we have stock products and custom capabilities, our job in that relationship is to give them the best option, taking into account total cost of ownership - not necessarily just the cheapest price. As a friend of mine says, there is a huge difference between price and cost," he says.

In most cases, Premier gives customers a good-better-best array of solutions based on what their buying criteria is.

"If you want good and cheap, we've got good and cheap," says Pierro. "If you want great, something that's going to bring more value to the job site or if the job is going to be a multi-site roll out, our job for the integrator is to give them the best option, which installs faster, and makes their client beyond excited." ■