



One of Clear Channel's core objectives was to create the opportunity for brands to really stand out (Pictures: Clear Channel Italy)

DOOH as the Romans do

A two-year, multi-million euro project has seen the complete overhaul of the advertising infrastructure at Italy's largest airport – which had to be carried out without disrupting daily operations. **James Christopher** reports

Clear Channel Italy has overhauled the advertising infrastructure at Rome's Fiumicino Airport, which has seen major investment in several Absen LED displays.

With 40 million passengers served in 2015 alone, Fiumicino – run by Aeroporti di Roma (ADR) – is the largest airport in Italy and one of the busiest in Europe. And thanks to the city's history, architecture, gastronomy and nightlife, it attracts a demographic that premium brands are keen to reach.

These are brands for which proper representation is sacrosanct. However, out-of-date advertising assets were hindering the airport's advertising revenue; this was the thrust of ADR's decision to appoint Clear Channel in December 2013. Jonathan Goldsmid, airports director for Clear Channel Italy, led the multi-million euro project, which took two years to complete. He opted to utilise Absen products to get the job done, citing their "premium quality", "reliability" and "price-to-quality ratio" as the key factors that led to the decision.

Goldsmid says: "Clear Channel employs a number of different formats that cater to different advertising needs" – rather than being into digital advertising for its own sake. However, he acknowledges that an airport of Fiumicino's scale will "automatically look to digital as a key part of their advertising asset strategy".

One of the core objectives was to create the opportunity for brands to really stand out, be that through the installation of spectacular large-format opportunities or the installation of tactical digital advertising networks.

Reduced area

The project began with the removal of almost every outdated panel across the airport. Clear Channel reduced the number of square metres of advertising by approximately 40%.

For some of the more bespoke and eye-catching installations, involving short viewing distances, Clear Channel chose to use the Absen A2 LED display, which has a 2.5mm pixel pitch and a 160° viewing angle. "The fact that Clear Channel entrusted the Absen A2 on a project of this scale is a great vote of confidence," comments Nacho Perez Borjabad, senior director advertising market for Absen Europe.

One of the signature solutions installed by Clear Channel is the four large digital columns in the C Gate area of the airport, booked exclusively by Chanel; these comprise 61.44sqm of four-sided Absen A2 displays.

Subsequently, two huge Absen AI06 LED screens were set up in the check-in hall of Terminal 3, the airport's main international terminal. The Absen AI06 possesses a pixel pitch of 6.25mm, and measures 8m x 4.5m, delivering effective coverage to 100% of the passengers within the vicinity. The AI06's 85mm panel depth and 16kg panel weight facilitated the installation process, and maintenance is also improved by the module, power supply and receiving card being accessible from the front.

Also installed during the project were two other models in Absen's high-definition LED line-up, the AI03 and AI05, boasting pixel pitches of 3.9mm and 5.2mm respectively.

Terminal 1's check-in hall was fitted with two large AI03 displays, which were immediately sold

Installed

Video

All Absen

- A2 2.9mm indoor LED display
- AI03 3.9mm indoor LED display
- AI05 5.2mm indoor LED display
- AI06 6.25mm indoor LED display

exclusively to magazine publisher Conde Nast. Installed last in the check-in area was a 36sqm AI05 screen, between two traditional lightboxes.

Premium audience

Perhaps the biggest challenge during the project came in the form of the Fiumicino's Pier B. Classed as a "very premium business audience and environment" by Goldsmid, Clear Channel felt under pressure to deliver here both because of the clientele, and as the area required a more extensive reworking than many of the others. In a similar manner to the four columns for Chanel in C Gate, Clear Channel digitised Pier B, but with 10 columns – or 131.04sqm – of Absen A2s. Goldsmid is particularly proud of the column configuration, which stretches from one end of the area to the other.

By the very nature of the airport environment, the installation process wasn't without its challenges. Undertaking a large-scale project such as this in any 'live' venue is problematic, but Fiumicino's long operating hours; high volume of foot traffic; the columns' close proximity to a boarding gate; and endemic access restrictions and security protocols all posed another level of challenge.