

This is a printer friendly version of an article from the **Green Bay Press-Gazette**

[Back](#)

Jones Signs takes the leap to digital billboards

Six signs to be installed between Green Bay and Oshkosh along U.S. 41

By **Bob Van Enkenvoort**

rvanenkenvoort@greenbaypressgazette.com October 3, 2007

Jones Sign Nationwide is going digital in Northeastern Wisconsin.

The Lawrence-based company will install six digital billboards at five locations along U.S. 41 from Green Bay to Oshkosh, and one by Wisconsin 172 in Ashwaubenon.

"It is going to be a big production," said Christine Martens, senior sales director of outdoor advertising. "We kind of want to make it: 'Bam. Here they are.' They're going to be rolled out in one day."

The signs will arrive in one piece on flatbed trucks.

"They actually have to put them on angles so they can get under bridges and so forth," she said.

On Oct. 15, two cranes will hoist each of the 14-foot by 48-foot, 11,000-pound digital displays, which will replace the traditional billboards, on existing 100-foot support structures.

The signs, Martens said, will be a first in the regional market.

"We are the smallest market in the country," she said, "to introduce digital (billboards)."

Each digital billboard is equipped with a



[buy photo](#) [zoom](#)

Jones Sign installation manager Bob Lepak climbs a billboard tower Monday along northbound U.S. 41, one mile south of Freedom Road in the town of Lawrence. The tower will be used as one of six sites for new digital billboards going up in the area Oct. 15. H. Marc Larson/Press-Gazette

Advertisement

Multimedia

[Map: Where digital billboards will be located](#)

About digital billboards

- The digital billboards are manufactured by Young Electric Sign Co. (YESCO), which has its corporate office in Salt Lake City, Utah.
- According to YESCO, about 600 digital billboard are installed throughout the United

computer and is connected to the company by DSL Internet.

As a result, Martens said, advertisements can be changed in just minutes, compared to several weeks with traditional billboards.

But the biggest difference, she said, is the immediacy with which ads can be put up.

"The nice part about being digital is on the normal end, once you decided on artwork for a normal billboard, it would take at least two weeks to print it and get the board up. With these new digital boards, installation could be instantaneous. If a client would call in and say, 'We're running a special today, We want this ad up before 5 o'clock tonight when traffic hits,' we could have it up there for them like that."

And she said the signs allow smaller customers who might have been able to afford sign rental, but not the initial cost of \$1,500 to \$2,000 to put up the sign, to use outdoor advertising because they would only pay for rental.

"They have the capability now to reach an audience that they never could."

The current illuminated billboards shut off at midnight. Not so with the digital billboards.

"They are going to be illuminated 24/7," she said.

"They are actually going to burn as bright as or brighter than the sun during the day and then at night they get turned down because if they kept burning that bright they'd appear as fuzzy white light."

Still, she said, they won't outshine anything in their path or around them.

"It's not going to be any more bright than what currently is out there. None of our boards are near houses. They're on the highway. Most of them are in fields so it's not going to affect anything in that respect," she said.

States.

- Signs are 14-foot by 48-foot and weigh 11,000 pounds.
- They have a 10- to 15-year life expectancy, according to YESCO.
- The signs will be capable of counting down.
- The signs will also be capable of posting Amber alerts.
- A report by the Outdoor Advertising Association of America said digital billboards are not linked to accidents. The association pointed to a study from South Carolina that tracked accident data for six months following the installation of three electronic billboards compared to the same timeframe a year earlier. They did not find a link to increased accidents with the signs.

— Press-Gazette

Jones Sign Nationwide

- Address: 1711 Scheuring Road, Lawrence
- Phone: (920) 983-6700
- Fax: (920) 983-9145
- Web site: www.jonessign.com
- Employees: 140
- Products/services: Designs, creates and installs signs for small, independently owned businesses to major venues throughout the nation.



zoom

Young Electric Sign Co. electronics employees work recently at their plant in Logan, Utah, on the digital signs that will be installed in Northeastern Wisconsin. Submitted photo

The billboards, she said, are basically like flat-screen televisions. It is a plastic-backed screen with light-emitting diodes providing the brightness for the advertisements.

The signs were introduced about five years ago in Las Vegas, she said, but Jones Signs waited to go digital.

"I think the reason why we waited so long to introduce them to the market is to make sure they'll withstand our market with heat and cold and everything else."

The six signs, which all have permits, will make up a small part of the 300 billboards that Jones Signs has in Northeastern Wisconsin. Martens said they are working on getting permits for others. They will add digital signs at locations where permits can be approved and that will support the cost of the signs, which is roughly \$500,000 apiece, she said.

The first group of signs, Martens said, are in high-traffic areas where the advertisers will get a lot of eyeballs for the buck.

"A lot of these are on a curve so you drive into it, therefore having a longer read off the board," she said.