



Product

Planar TVF Series

Location

Johnson City, Tennessee

Industry

Higher Education

Application

Gaming
Digital Signage

Partner

AVI-SPL

East Tennessee State University Installs Massive LED Video Wall to Showcase Esports Gaming

Esports Video Wall - East Tennessee State University

Ahead of the fall 2020 season, East Tennessee State University (ETSU) launched its first varsity esports team, introducing 22 students to compete for the university in video gaming matches, including tournaments hosted by the National Association of Collegiate E-Sports (NACE). ETSU's inaugural gamers were split into two teams that compete against other universities in Overwatch and League of Legends. In January 2021, ETSU announced plans to add a third Rocket League esports team.

Back when the esports initiative was being developed, ETSU became interested in procuring a display solution to show live gaming tournaments on campus. At that time, the D.P. Culp Student Center was undergoing a multimillion-dollar renovation. The bottom floor of the building—known as the Cave—had been a popular social area with students for decades. It offered the perfect environment for a video wall installation.



Creating a feature attraction for gaming

ETSU's vision for a video wall was to generate excitement and awareness around the new esports program, and create a space that would be the center for video gaming on campus and the region. "Our goal was to make gaming a spectator sport for our student body," said ETSU Chief Information Officer Dr. Karen King.

To consult on a solution, ETSU engaged audio visual integrator AVI-SPL. "When we became involved in the project, ETSU had design plans for a large format projector and screen, which we advised against," said AVI-SPL Senior Design Engineer Sam Looper. "Due to the size of a projector required for a space that large, they were bound to run into color mapping issues, ambient light challenges and ongoing expenses for bulb replacements."

Looper and AVI-SPL began advocating for LED technology. "To display gaming in real time, they needed a zero-latency system for supporting high-speed video graphics," he said. They invited ETSU to Planar's Atlanta Showroom to view LED video wall products, which ultimately led to the decision to install a nearly 30-foot-wide, 12-foot-high Planar® TVF Series LED video wall with a 1.8mm pixel pitch (TVF1.8). "The system has an extremely fast refresh rate—the LEDs are very responsive," Looper said.

The Planar TVF Series LED video wall provides the optimal pixel pitch, maximizing visibility throughout the entire space, according to King. "The video wall is just gorgeous. It looks truly spectacular. It has vibrant colors with a brightness that offers viewing in ambient light. In fact, with the renovation, some large windows were installed near the video wall. It didn't matter. The video wall looks beautiful in all lighting conditions."

King anticipates the video wall will be a huge draw for the esports program. "We look forward to hosting in-person gaming tournaments, with teams competing live in the space," she said.

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*— Dr. Karen King,
Chief Information Officer, East
Tennessee State University*



When the video wall is not being used for esports games, King said they plan to use it for lots of other purposes including presentations, movie nights or digital signage. “It’s really multi-dimensional. We want to make it available for the entire campus and help make the student experience as good as it possibly can be.”

About the TVF Series

The Planar TVF Series is a family of fine pitch LED video wall displays with a 16:9 aspect ratio that allows every pixel pitch to exactly achieve popular resolutions including Full HD and 4K. Featuring front serviceability and a creative stackable design, Planar TVF Series cabinets are assembled like building blocks, eliminating cabinet-to-cabinet cabling and reducing the complexity of installation and vertical alignment. With a profile of less than three inches, the Planar TVF Series reduces the overall footprint and servicing space that is required.