



## Spotmedia Introduces New Approach to Retail Advertising and Communications with the Initiation of Digital Signage for Azizia-Panda Supermarkets in Saudi Arabia



Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 8 July 2004 – Azizia-Panda, an established retail chain supermarket in Saudi Arabia, adopts the power of dynamic digital signage to deliver a possible first of its kind In-Store Channel delivering in-store advertising and information to its customers in Saudi.

The full solution was successfully implemented by Spotmedia, the first company to initiate a project of such a kind in Saudi Arabia, and currently runs at eleven of Panda's retail stores located in Jeddah, Riyadh, Mecca and Dammam. Spotmedia is responsible for the content that is displayed and also oversees the operations of the In-Store Channel, via alliance with Click Grafix; a software solutions provider for video and multimedia broadcasting, to provide software solutions and technical consultancy.

The content for the In-Store Channel is played back on a network of 350 screens comprising state of the art 42" plasma displays strategically placed at point-of-purchase locations around the "horse track", cashiers and perishable areas of the supermarkets in 11 locations in four major cities around the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The current numbers of display screens are expected to expand to 1000 by the end of the year. The In-Store Channel works together with a high quality Public Address System in addition to the use of the Scala Broadcasting Authoring System.



With the In-Store Channel, Panda's weekly shopping guide is transformed into a more dynamic visual form on the screens and short product commercials are run together to create a competent and higher "Top of Mind" awareness among the shoppers, which in turn translates into higher sales for the supermarkets. The content of the channel not only drives the customer's purchasing power but also builds better customer relationships, adding further value to the store's customer service.

Content for the channel varies in the form of Panda value messages, ad breakers, weekly promotional items, informative clips such as cooking recipes, entertainment for kids and more, as well as community service and social messages. Although many advertisers had their own TV commercials, Spotmedia chose to re-edit and create separate ads for the channel in consideration of the difference between the home and retail environments.



According to Mr. Fadil Alireza the Director of Creative Services for Spotmedia, "at home, a viewer is more passive, thus you have more time to tell a story. However in a dynamic retail environment like a supermarket, the viewer becomes an active shopper who will not stop and watch, but rather glimpse or listen. So by re-editing or creating ads, we make sure the message is concise and that the branding is maximized in order to help deliver the most effective audio/visual communication available at "the point of purchase!"



In the search for a suitable solution to deliver this new approach in retail advertising, Scala won hands down in view of its advantages as a simple, reliable and integrated tool with a proven track record. Spotmedia commends it as a complete solution that is as easy as “plug and play”. Spotmedia awarded Click Grafix the contract to provide the software and professional consultancy for the Panda project in view of its long term relationship with Mr. Ahmed Balfaqih, the founder of Click Grafix, citing him as a true pioneer of this industry whose dedication and passion makes him an ideal partner to work with. Says Mr. Fadil, “our experience of working with Ahmed has been as “good as it gets” when it comes to working relationships”.

The implementation of Panda's In-Store Channel marks a significant step for the digital signage technology in a country where network infrastructure and broadband internet connection is not easily available or affordable. Spotmedia also faced another challenge with the scheduling of over 700 different entries every week for the varying prayer times in the four different locations but with the capabilities of Scala, that was pulled off smoothly. At the same time however, research is in progress to find a more effective method of entering those 700 entries which are currently done manually due to the limitations of the internet infrastructure there. Spotmedia's successful installation and implementation of Azizia-Panda's In-Store Channel using the Scala InfoChannel solution adds another significant milestone to Scala's testimonies. The In-Store Channel has gained favor with Spotmedia's clients who are not just impressed with its effectiveness but also with the flexibility and intricacy of this tool.

#### About Spotmedia | [www.spotmedia.com](http://www.spotmedia.com)

Spotmedia is an innovative, marketing based company in Saudi Arabia that provides creative and technological solutions to reach consumers at the point of purchase with the objective of inducing trial, stimulating ad recall, enhancing awareness, and sustaining strong brand equity.

#### About Azizia-Panda | [www.savola.com](http://www.savola.com)

Azizia-Panda is a division of the Savola Group. In 2002 Azizia-Panda annual sales exceeded SR 1.5 billion for the first time. The Savola Retail Division expanded to 46 stores in the Kingdom and increased market share substantially in the retail supermarket sector. The two newest supermarkets are open in Al-Dammam and in Ras-Tannourah, in the eastern region of KSA. The Division intends to continue its ambitious expansion strategy. This is on track and will see the opening of our first hypermarket in late 2003 or early 2004. Panda remains the market leader in the supermarket sector. All existing stores are branded “Panda” while two up market stores in Riyadh use the “Azizia” branding because of their up market, more luxurious positioning.

#### About Click Grafix Sdn Bhd | [www.clickgrafix.com](http://www.clickgrafix.com)

Established in 1995, Click Grafix has firmly established itself in the South East Asia and Middle Eastern market and industry as a premiere provider and system integrator for digital video, animation and multimedia hardware, software, solutions and services. The company is the appointed regional distributor for NewTek Inc. and also holds the distributorship for Scala multimedia and visual communication products, as well as Realviz, Anark, Curious Labs Inc. Bauhaus Software and Qarbon products in Malaysia. Currently, Click Grafix is represented in Singapore, Thailand, Philippines and India.

#### About Scala Inc. | [www.scala.com](http://www.scala.com)

Founded in 1987, Scala pioneered the cable TV industry with software and services to allow users to create localized channels inexpensively. Today, Scala has grown to lead the corporate communications, retail dynamic signage, and interactive kiosk industries as well. With an unrivaled software suite to handle authoring, networking, monitoring, and logged playback, Scala has been the choice of tens of thousands of customers worldwide. Built on reliable and flexible network architecture, Scala software can support nearly any existing infrastructure from dial-up to LAN to Wi-Fi to satellite and terrestrial-based multicast networks. Scala's powerful and efficient store-and-forward design allows the control of unique content on a single cable head end or thousands of remote displays or kiosks from a single desktop PC without the constraints of streaming video.

