

Courtside LED signs give Knicks flexibility

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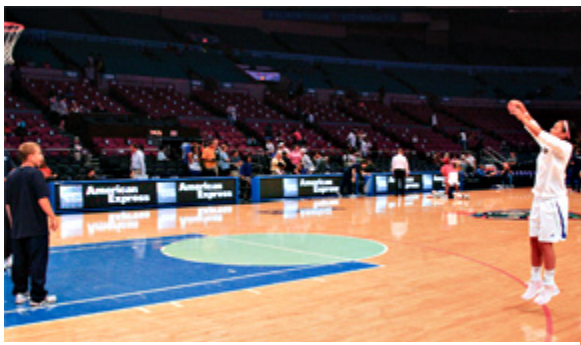
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The New York Knicks are the first NBA franchise to install LED courtside technology that aims to drive advertising revenue while adding more dynamic messaging during games at Madison Square Garden.

Until now, the NBA prohibited teams from using LED technology along the scorer's table mainly because of player safety issues from the surface-mounted lights protruding from the LED signs.

But league officials gave the Knicks the green light on a new LED system after a test this summer during the WNBA Liberty home games with new LED signs by Mitsubishi that are recessed and spring mounted to the scorer's table to protect players. ANC worked with the Knicks to create the software integration of the new signage.

The result is a new LED system that Knicks and NBA officials said allows for more customized courtside advertising inventory along with the ability for teams to tie all their scoreboard and ribbon-board LED down to court level, improving the in-game presentation.



New technology was tested at a WNBA Liberty game.

The Knicks can run real-time statistics, fan prompts and other game information along with the advertising on the courtside LED signage. The system will be in place for the Knicks' first home preseason game on Oct. 13.

"The advantages are it allows us to drive revenue and offer full integration opportunities with our sponsors," said MSG Sports President Scott O'Neil. "But it allows us to better entertain fans as well." O'Neil would not disclose the cost of the new system and said that the

Knicks are repricing the value of their courtside advertising.

Twenty of the 30 NBA teams use rotational signs for their courtside advertising, with 10 teams employing DLP systems, or rear digital projection courtside advertising systems.

Steve Hellmuth, executive vice president of operations and technology for the NBA, said the DLP systems are more cumbersome than the sleeker new LED panel.

"The LED is thinner and more compact," Hellmuth said. "The viewing angles are better, but just as important is that you can run game information and statistics, which makes it more valuable to advertisers because people will look at the signage more."