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Electronics



T O U C H SOLUTIONS

APPLICATION

Interactive information kiosks

PRODUCT

Elo Entuitive touchmonitor with IntelliTouch surface wave technology

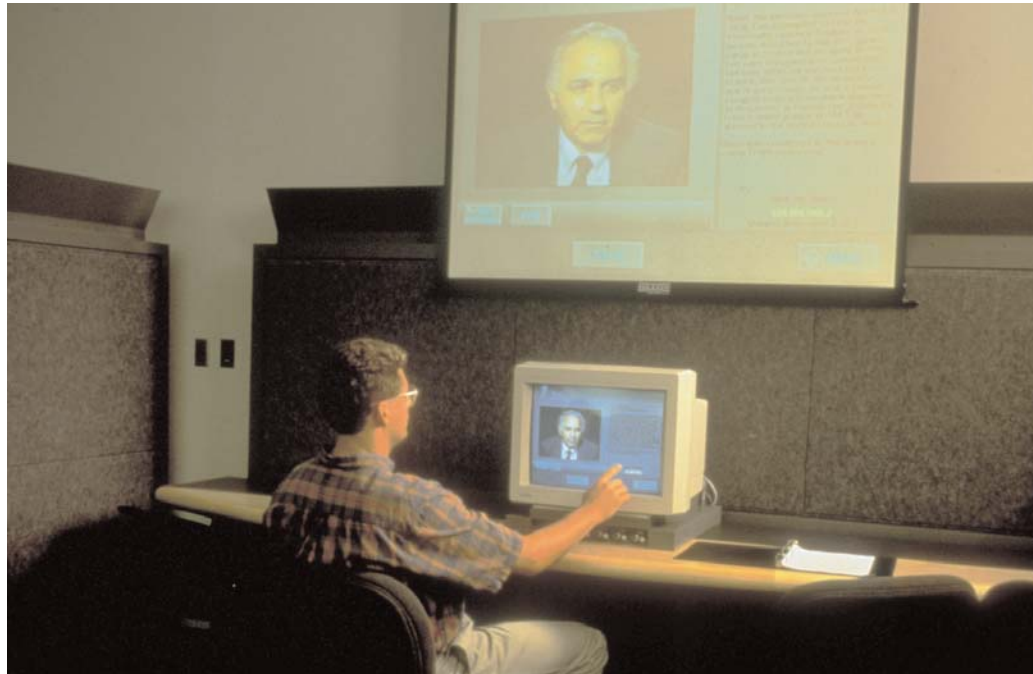
KEY BENEFITS

- Intuitive interface
- Durability and reliability
- Clarity
- Ease of use

“YOU CAN’T GET MORE INTUITIVE THAN TOUCH. IF YOU SEE SOMETHING THAT INTERESTS YOU, YOU TOUCH IT. THAT SIMPLICITY MEANS WE’VE ACHIEVED A ZERO-TRAINING-TIME SYSTEM.”

—Yechiam Halevy,
U.S. Memorial
Holocaust Museum
Director of Information
Systems

U.S. Memorial Holocaust Museum



Touch technology is helping to ensure that one of the darkest chapters in human history will never be forgotten.

Touchscreens installed in the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum’s Wexner Learning Center provide visitors fast, intuitive access to the museum’s diverse—and often disturbing—collection of multimedia information. With the touch of a finger, for example, a visitor can instantly call up a World War II newsreel or view a documentary film; another touch at the screen may call up a scholarly article or a recording of a song left behind by a death camp inmate.

“This is definitely not a science museum,” says Yechiam Halevy, the museum’s director of information systems. “We didn’t want any gimmicks, we simply wanted a

window into the important materials assembled here.”

“The touchscreens, which were supplied by Elo TouchSystems Inc., give us a durable, intuitive interface that eliminates traditional keyboards,” Halevy continues. “That way, there’s no barrier between visitors eager to learn and the array of learning material available online.”

At present, Elo TouchSystems’ IntelliTouch touchscreens are installed on 25 interactive stations, each of which features an IBM computer, a Mitsubishi monitor and numerous audio headsets. The interactive stations link to the museum’s six multimedia databases via a local area network.

The touchscreens respond to a visitor's touch almost instantly. All information is stored on magnetic disks that help guarantee response times of less than one second. The disks contain roughly 5,500 photographs, 850,000 words, 10 hours of music, 760 maps, and 22 hours of video footage, including vintage film clips and recent interviews with survivors.

TOUCHSCREENS REDUCE TRAINING TIME

"The touchscreens play a key role in hiding the complexity and size of the system from the user," Halevy says. "You can't get more intuitive than touch. If you see something that interests you, you touch it. That simplicity means we've achieved a zero-training-time system. The average visitor spends only two hours at the museum, so they can't afford to waste five minutes learning to use our system."

Halevy notes that the Wexner Learning Center cannot gear the museum's computer system to an "average visitor," as the Holocaust Museum attracts a diverse cross-section of patrons, ranging from scholars to schoolchildren to death camp survivors. Each visitor's approach and focus is different, he says. Some visitors sit down with a clear idea of what they want, while others browse, calling up whatever catches their attention.

"The touchscreens help us create an intermediate layer, so that each visitor can create a personal 'path' through all the information; one that matches their knowledge and interests," says Halevy. "No two visitors chart the same course, because no two people are alike in their interests."

When a visitor first walks up to an interactive station, the screen displays pictures and text with certain key words in blue. When touched, both the pictures and blue words lead the visitor to related information such as a map, a video interview or an article.

Users can also specify certain words on their own by using an image of a keyboard displayed on the touchscreen. For example, a user may touch the keyboard's two-dimensional "keys" to enter the name Winston Churchill. The computer responds by displaying information on Churchill relevant to the topic or geographic region in which the user was already immersed.

INTERACTIVE AND USER-FRIENDLY

The touchscreens have proven intuitive and user-friendly for all ages, Halevy says. That user-friendliness is part of the reason the museum has made provisions to shield small children from the often horrific material. For example, five-foot high "privacy walls" deter children from seeing death camp footage and other distressing images, unless parents decide to pick them up and give them a clear view.

"We offer warning prompts at certain points," says Halevy, "so that visitors can back out before viewing something particularly brutal."

One of the few problems to arise, Halevy says, is a tendency among many visitors to become completely engrossed and spend hours at a time in front of a touchscreen.

"The touchscreens are such an efficient input/output device that visitors often completely forget that they're sitting at a computer screen," Halevy says. "We've been forced to limit each visitor's time at a station to 30 minutes. If we don't set limits, people just keep touching what interests them and sifting through all there is to see and hear."

IntelliTouch Technology



Solid glass and Elo's patented surface-wave technology are the keys to the superior performance of the IntelliTouch product line.

- Pure-glass touchscreens for superior image clarity, resolution, and light transmission.
- Antiglare glass and anti-vandal options.
- Stable, drift-free operation—for touch response that is always accurate.
- Durable, scratch-resistant glass surface—continues to work if scratched.
- Fast touch response.
- Finger, gloved-hand, and soft-stylus activation.
- Smart touch response—no false touch activation.
- Flat, spherical, and cylindrical touchscreen options for design flexibility.

To find out more about Elo's extensive range of touch solutions, visit our Web site at www.elotouch.com or simply call the Elo office nearest you:

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