Digital signage for a businesses: info screens that run themselves

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Digital signage in a climbing gym is a screen, usually a TV, that shows information to customers without anyone operating it: today's opening hours, the class timetable, a route-setting notice, an offer, a safety reminder. It is cheap to start and easy to let rot. The slides are rarely the problem. The player, the little box or app that has to come back by itself after a power cut and keep running for years, usually is.

This article covers what to put on the screens, what hardware to use, and the operational details that decide whether the screens are still working in a year.

What should a climbing gym show on its screens?

Show what a customer standing in the lobby wants to know now, and what you would otherwise repeat out loud a dozen times a day:

- **Opening hours and changes to them**, including holidays and unstaffed hours.
- **The timetable** for classes, guided sessions and kids' groups.
- **Safety and etiquette**: belay checks, the rules for the bouldering area, what to do after a fall.
- **Offers and memberships**, shown only while they are valid.
- **What is new on the walls**: a reset sector, a competition date.

Two habits keep a screen useful. Give time-limited slides a start and end date so they disappear by themselves, because an offer that is still on screen a month after it ended costs you more trust than having no screen. And keep it short: a loop of a handful of slides, each readable in a few seconds from across the room.

What can GymKeeper info displays show?

A GymKeeper info display is a named set of slides that one or more screens play. A slide is an image, a video, a web page address, or custom HTML. There is a visual editor for slides made of text, images and simple shapes. Each slide has its own duration (videos play to the end), can be switched off, and can be given an optional start and end time.

A display is either fullscreen or split into two zones, left and right or top and bottom, each with its own slides. That suits a timetable on one side and promotions on the other. Transitions between slides are fade, slide or none. Each display also has a short viewer address that opens it in a browser.



What hardware does a climbing gym screen need?

The screen needs a player that runs a current browser. Many older smart TVs and information displays have a built-in browser that is too old to play a modern slideshow, which is the common reason a gym ends up buying a small box.

An **Android TV box** plugged into the HDMI port solves it. Two data points from our own checking, both for November 2026:

- A budget Android TV box (an RK3518 model sold as 8 GB RAM, 128 GB storage) was listed at about €33. It is the cheapest route, but cheap boxes vary, so test one before ordering many.
- A Google-certified Google TV box (the Strong LEAP-S3 V2) was listed at €79, with 16 GB storage. Certified boxes get system updates and the Play Store, which a cheap box may not.

Amazon Fire TV Sticks are not a good fit here. As of November 2026 the newer sticks run Amazon's Vega OS rather than Android and cannot install Android apps, and older Fire OS sticks block apps from starting by themselves after a power cut without a computer connection.

If the screen is a modern smart TV with an up-to-date browser, you may not need a box at all: open the display's address in the TV's browser. What a browser cannot do is start itself after a power cut, which is why an app is the better choice for a screen nobody looks after.

How do you connect a screen without typing a long address?

Typing a long web address with a TV remote is slow, and putting a secret token in an address is a bad idea. GymKeeper uses a pairing code instead, the same idea as casting to a TV:

1. The screen opens the gym's TV page and shows a short code.
2. In GymKeeper you open **Info displays**, choose the display and type the code under **Pair a**

screen.
3. A few seconds later the screen starts playing that display.

The code works once and expires after 15 minutes. The box remembers the pairing, so after a power cut it plays again without anyone touching it. The access token is never part of an address and never shown on the screen.

For Android TV boxes there is a small GymKeeper Display app. It opens the pairing page fullscreen, keeps the screen awake, and lets whoever installs it type the gym address once with the remote. If the address is built into the app, it is already filled in and can still be edited. You can set a box up in your office, pair it with the customer's display, and ship it: the customer plugs in power and HDMI.

Can several screens show the same display?

Yes. Pair each screen to the same display, one code per screen, and they all play the same slides. Use this for a lobby and a café that should say the same thing.

Screens that need different content, such as the lobby and the bouldering hall, should each have their own display. One display has one playlist, and every screen paired to it plays the same one.

What should a screen do when the network goes down?

Decide this before you install, because it is the failure customers see. A screen that goes dark or shows a browser error page makes the gym look neglected.

The GymKeeper Display app handles it in two ways:

- **At start-up, if it cannot reach the server**, it shows what is wrong in plain words: no network connection, an address that cannot be found, or a server that is not responding. It also shows the address it is trying and tries again every 10 seconds.
- **While a display is playing**, it keeps playing what it already has. After the connection has been gone for a minute, a small note appears in a corner with the reason and the time it went offline, so staff who walk past can see something is wrong. The note disappears when the connection returns.

A wired connection is more dependable than Wi-Fi for a screen nobody looks at, so use a box with an Ethernet port where you can.

Common questions

Do I need a Google account on the box? A plain Android TV box does not need one. A Google TV box usually asks for one during set-up. Set up each box yourself before it goes to a customer.

Will the screen start by itself after a power cut? It will if Android allows it. On Android 10 and newer, make the app the box's launcher or allow it to display over other apps, once, when you prepare the box. Also turn off the screensaver and the sleep timer.

What if a box is lost or stolen? All screens paired to a display share that display's access, so cutting off one box means deleting the display and pairing the others again. Keep this in mind if you place screens where customers can reach the box.

Last checked: 20 November 2026. Hardware prices change; check the current listing before ordering.