

The Unitech MR650
makes patron tracking at
Harrahs' Casino possible



Harrahs Entertainment, Inc
www.harrahs.com

Industry
Gaming

Solution
Patron Tracking

Products
Unitech MR650

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Tim Reaves
IT Director
Harrahs’

Profile

Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc. is the largest nationwide gaming corporation in the world with yearly revenues of approximately \$7.11 billion. Based in Las Vegas, Nevada, Harrah’s Entertainment began business in 1937 and owns and operates (38) casinos, hotels, and six golf courses under several brands. Well known casinos such as Paris Las Vegas, Caesars brand, Bally’s, and Horseshoe brand casinos are all owned and operated by Harrah’s Entertainment Inc.

Challenge

Nationwide, every casino conforms to local laws and regulations to operate legally. The Harrah’s casino located in St Louis faces a unique regulation that is mandated by the Missouri state legislature. This law states that gaming establishments must implement specific monitors to ensure a maximum loss limit of \$400 per hour for individual patrons. This law was put in place to protect patrons from losing large amounts of money in a relatively short time.

A tracking system located, or connected to, each gaming device needs to identify the patron, determine how much they have lost in the last hour, and then allow/deny access to the gaming machine. Because of the hotel’s back-end network, a Windows interface is required. Unfortunately, typical tablet PC solutions are too large to locate by each gaming machine effectively. A compact and versatile option is needed to interface with Harrah’s Windows-based network.

Solution

Harrah’s approached National Data Collection Solutions (NDCS) to help develop this challenging new tracking system. After evaluating several options, NDCS and Harrah’s concluded that the Unitech MR650 is a perfect fit for the critical new solution.

The MR650 allows any customer to swipe their loyalty card to gain access to a gaming device. The bright LCD display conveys color coded messages that are easily understood by the user. The MR650 is small enough to fit nicely next to each gaming machine and the screen is large enough for easy viewing. The optional wall mount effectively provides a secure and stable mount location.

Communication to Harrah’s main network utilizes the MR650’s built-in ethernet port. In cases where a network line is not available, a wireless network card is installed in the CF slot. The integration and loss limit data retrieved from Harrah’s main server is made possible by the CE 5.0 operating system on the MR650. NDCS helped with specific software development on the MR650 and with assimilating the input data into a useable format for Harrah’s network server. Up to (300) MR650s are required for Harrah’s to serve all their customers and to meet new state regulations.

“The MR650 is perfect because of its compact design, network interface, CE operating system, touch screen, and integrated MSR reader. Best yet, it’s about half the price of the closest proposed tablet PC solution,” says Tim Reaves, the IT Director at Harrah’s. The rollout of the (300) MR650s into the St Louis location has just begun, but Harrah’s believes the MR650 will provide a long-term solution that may also benefit other casinos in their corporation.