Hollywood Casino Aurora uses upgrade
to enhance customer experience

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>
> **Rob Saucedo**
> Director of Surveillance

Combining customer service with security requirements

Hollywood Casino Aurora has upgraded its surveillance system with an integrated solution from Synectics – a decision driven as much by customer service as by security requirements.

With over 1,100 slots, almost 40 tables, including a live poker room to monitor – in addition to the property's restaurants and hospitality areas – detecting and investigating theft, fraud, and security threats are a priority for the surveillance team. But for Director of Surveillance, Rob Saucedo, one of the biggest reasons for upgrading the current system is being able to support repeat business growth by enhancing customer experience.

Rob said: "On average, around 3,000 guests come through our doors every day, the majority of which live locally – we are not what you might term a vacation destination casino. Repeat business is key and that means doing everything we can to offer a high-quality customer experience in every aspect of our operations. There are several ways the new surveillance system is helping us do this."

Simplified incident investigation

Using Synectics e1600 H.264 encoders, high-quality footage from the site's 500 plus analog cameras is converted to digital video. With Synergy, operators can then 'live view', control, record, and review this footage on the IP monitor walls in the surveillance control room, and also set up customized alerts to automatically detect specific incident scenarios.

Rob said: "We've been operating a purely DVR system for the past 10 years or so. It facilitated high-quality image capture but had its drawbacks – for example, when reviewing any incidents, we could only proceed one camera at a time. With the new system, we can review multiple cameras in real time, and up to 24x original speed. Combined with the intuitive and user friendly interface, this makes incident investigation a vastly simpler and speedier process.

"In turn, this enables us to deal with customer service issues far more efficiently – 'credit theft' complaints being a key area. Playing credits that

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another guest has left on a machine is effectively theft and something we take very seriously. A guest with credits still to play may have moved away to take a call, fetch a drink, or visit the restroom. For them to return and find another player has essentially spent their money is not acceptable.

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"With multiple levels of failover protection, including hot swap and RAID redundancy for all recorded footage, the reassurance is also there that we will always have the data at our fingertips to investigate any claim, even in the event of a network failure. These are benefits of real value to us and our customer base."

Improving operational strategy

"People often think gaming surveillance is entirely about fraud or theft detection," said Rob, "but actually it can be a vital management tool. With our solution, for example, we are able to detect scenarios such as cage lines exceeding certain lengths. This enables us to respond by informing management so that staffing levels can be adjusted to better serve our

guests. Also, through Synergy's in-built analytics and reporting functionality, we are able to easily look for trends to help inform future staffing, stock, or security decisions. It all supports our goal to deliver the best experience possible for our guests."

While the surveillance upgrade is already helping Hollywood Casino Aurora realize many immediate benefits, a crucial consideration during the specification process was system longevity – the ability to adopt emerging technologies easily and organically. Synectics has developed a solution for Aurora that offers future-proofed flexibility.

A solution for both current and future needs

The Hollywood Casino Aurora upgrade serves two purposes; an immediate step change in capability and usability, and a step towards future expansion and enhancement.

The transition was seamless and, by implementing the new Synergy system in tandem with Aurora's existing DVR-based operations, there was minimal disruption and zero downtime. The property now has a solution that meets existing needs, with storage capacity and a system structure that will easily accommodate further digital migration.

PROJECT DETAILS

Client
Hollywood Casino Aurora

Location
Chicago

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Rob said: "We have already begun introducing IP camera technology – without doubt this is the future. But navigating away from analog to entirely IP is not a feasible single-step process. Synergy's open platform architecture means that we can migrate gradually, as time and budget permit. It also means that we will easily be able to introduce more sophisticated data integrations, for example to point-of-sale and player systems.

Hollywood Casino Aurora is one of 16 Penn Gaming properties to adopt a Synectics surveillance system, and one of over 100 gaming properties worldwide.

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