



Software Solutions: Solving Critical Operational Challenges

by Maris Berzins

Most tribal gaming properties recognize that implementing state-of-the-art technology is necessary to achieving a more profitable bottom line. Three systems critical to streamlining operations, regardless of the property's size, include comprehensive point-of-sale, automated inventory and procurement and workforce management.

Following is an overview of these solutions, including features to look for when selecting each one, and a discussion of how these systems work together to increase staff productivity, boost profitability and enhance the guest experience.

Point-of-Sale

The mission-critical point-of-sale (POS) system will have a major affect on the efficiency of operations as well as overall profitability. Select a POS solution that can handle the multi-unit operations common in tribal gaming environments, such as dining, bar service and retail. If the property has a gas station, RV park or convenience store, make sure the point-of-sale system works well in those environments too.

The POS system should allow the addition of terminals without having to build out expensive infrastructure. Features to look for include real-time reporting capabilities, packages and prix fixe menus, signature capture and offline support. Additionally, consider mobile POS for maximum guest service flexibility to round out the point-of-sale plan.

Inventory and Procurement

An automated inventory and procurement system enhances operations by streamlining inventory control and supply chain management and reducing errors, labor costs and waste.

Select a made-for-hospitality inventory and procurement solution that includes modules for menu planning, buffet management and recipe analysis. Other features to look for include budget tracking, electronic invoicing, detailed reporting features and business intelligence functionality.

Workforce Management

With labor being one of the most costly items on the balance sheet, it's prudent to take steps to control it whenever possible. An automated workforce management solution streamlines efficiency and productivity by providing the tools for precision staff scheduling and management. Additionally, much of the paperwork associated with labor management – such as employee reviews, pay adjustments, transfers and terminations – can be eliminated with a comprehensive workforce management solution.

Features to look for in a labor management solution include easy configuration, intuitive user design, compatibility with other IT systems, mobility, real-time business intelligence and sophisticated forecasting.

Streamlining Operations

How can the combination of point-of-sale, inventory and procurement, and workforce management solutions help the tribal gaming property streamline efficiency and improve the bottom line?

Adding an automated inventory and procurement solution to food and beverage operations allows for a single point of entry for maintaining menu items. Any additions or revisions flow seamlessly through the POS system, eliminating the need for duplicate entry. It also enables the property to manage the cost of goods in the inventory and procurement system and update prices to the point-of-sale system so that food costs are maintained at optimal levels.

When the POS and inventory and procurement systems communicate, it allows the property to calculate total costs per item and analyze the menu mix and margins to ensure higher profits. Product sales can be tracked as they occur, so items can be replenished the moment they are needed.

Automated workforce management further enhances productivity and efficiency. Employees can be required to clock in on the POS terminal, which maximizes time and enables better control of labor costs. Employee records can be imported directly from the workforce management system to the POS solution, cutting down on duplicate data entry.

Additionally, sales-by-hour reports generated by the POS system can translate into staffing reports, so fewer employees can be scheduled during slower hours. Likewise, sales forecasts in the workforce management system can be generated in dollars and used by the inventory and procurement solution to create shopping lists and production worksheets based on historical product mix.

Best of all, reporting will be tightly integrated, so up-to-the-minute data is available for informed decision-making. Managers can be proactive rather than reactive, positioning the property to capture greater wallet share and gain an advantage over the competition. ♣

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