

DOING MORE WITH LESS IN POS



Our industry is in the middle of a major pivot. It's an exciting time to be in hospitality.

The Last 15 Years = Doing More with Less

From 2001 until now, the focus for point-of-sale (POS) enterprise software was to help optimize operations – to help properties and staff do more (service) with less (effort).

As technology doubled in speed every two years, POS applications sped up. Screens were streamlined and optimized for different venues and workflows. Offline capabilities were introduced and enhanced to ensure optimum server performance even when the network failed. Introduction of hosted POS allowed IT departments to relieve some system maintenance.

More optimized, efficient performance resulted in cost savings, and for many, this resulted in additional revenue. Faster POS software and hardware combined with optimized workflows enabled bartenders and cashiers alike to complete POS transactions faster. For locations with never-ending queues – e.g. popular Friday night bars, convention hall coffee shops, and special concert series concessions – faster meant greater throughput which meant higher revenues.

POS Mobility Results in Real Change

Guest Satisfaction: Notching up to New Levels

Server Availability

Around 10 years ago, I extended a business trip to spend an extra day at my Las Vegas hotel's pool. I arrived in time for lunch and spread out my 'pool' gear while waiting for service. And waited. No servers in sight. After 30-45 minutes, a server arrived to take my order as well as orders for others nearby. This took approximately 15 minutes before once again vanishing from site presumably to batch enter our orders into a POS terminal.

Fast forward to today, at gaming properties using mobile POS and a server-runner model. As soon as I'm ready to order at the pool, casino floor or bingo hall, there is a server within sight. I no longer have to watch, wonder or worry. Even if I have to wait for the server to finish with another party, the delay is minor and I can stay focused on my slot machine or reading my book at the pool as I know the server is on his or her way shortly.

Speed of Service

Gaming properties often have large service areas with obstacles or people to maneuver around. In these areas, I have noticed that the server may take other orders after mine – batch ordering, if you will. It doesn't usually bother me that this delays my order getting entered. I try not to be distracted by the possibility that I might lose my place in "line" and others being served before me. If I'm distracted by it, then how many others are noticing it as well? As a guest, I love POS Mobility and the server-runner model. The server is readily available, and after pleas-


anties and a couple of questions, I place my order. Depending on the property, I have seen the server enter my order immediately into a POS tablet he or she is carrying. I have also seen the server take a few steps away before pulling out the tablet to enter my order. Either way, I'm satisfied that my order hits the kitchen or bar within seconds. The server-runner model also ensures my hot food is delivered still hot and my cold drinks still cold, protecting food quality without compromising server ready availability.


Great Service

Historically, servers were well aware that the extra time spent taking subsequent orders would negatively impact the individuals who placed their orders first. As the server smiled and did their best to get the orders efficiently and pleasantly, an invisible stop watch was ticking in their head.

The biggest shift with POS mobility and a server-runner model is the effect of eliminating that invisible stop watch. The server knows that the order will hit the appropriate service area immediately. A critical shift happens across properties; where servers are no longer order takers, they become your powerful front-line brand ambassadors. Each server can take extra time to connect with every guest and make them feel more welcome.

I was meeting with a recently opened luxury boutique hotel. They shared a story about a server in bar. The server took the guests' order, quickly entered the drinks into their mobile POS tablet, and then engaged in a conversation to better understand the guests' impressions of the brand new hotel. Shortly, while the guests were still animatedly sharing their



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opinions, the runner came with their drinks. The guests were surprised about not only the speed of service, but also that the server cared to spend the time to connect with them.

Part of the major pivot in the last 15 years is the empowerment of front-line staff to bolster your brand and reputation. Is it making a difference?

Revenue: Resulting in Moving the Needle

The payback for many gaming properties deploying a mobile POS solution can have a significant ripple effect. One study quantified the network effect as:

- One happy customer inspires three brand new customers.
- One angry customer scares away 10 potential customers.

Revenue Lift

One high-end Las Vegas strip hotel pool piloted a mobile POS with a server-runner model. They prided themselves on service, and expected POS Mobility to help take it up a notch. They also expected a bump in revenue, but were stunned at their resulting 76% revenue lift.

They're not alone. Other properties in different regions have seen significant revenue increases with the introduction of POS Mobility and a server-runner model. *Speed of Service* and *Server Availability* were the top reasons attributed with the increase. These types of increases occur primarily in venues where guests are anxious to buy even more, but something slows them down – no servers in sight, servers taking multiple orders, servers walking distances to POS terminals, delays in getting orders into the kitchen, interruptions on the way back to the POS terminal, etc.

How often in our careers will guests reward us with higher ratings on popular review sites because we allowed them to spend more money at our property? POS mobility offers that opportunity. We live in exciting times in hospitality.

New Revenue

The creativity of gaming properties is impressive to say the least. As POS goes mobile, able to go to anywhere guests are located, gaming properties are re-deploying their POS Mobility assets in even more creative, spontaneous flexible ways, generating new sources of revenue – and guest satisfaction. Recently, at a Las Vegas hotel with convention facilities, they combined their brand new POS tablet with carts laden with coffee, sodas, and snacks and rolled them through the aisles at a busy

convention. At one brief stop, I witnessed a man step out of his booth and ask in a negative, forgone conclusion way, “You don’t take credit cards, do you?” When the cashier happily replied, “Not only do we accept credit cards, you can also charge to your room.” In his excitement, the man bought refreshments for everyone working in the booth with him.

Other hotel and gaming properties abound with creative ideas now that they are no longer limited by the location of their POS terminals. More expansive concessions near special events, providing service in under-served areas of their property, convenient products, food and beverages at inconvenient locations. A tribal gaming property talked about selling on the charter buses so food and beverages could be waiting for guests upon their arrival, ensuring a great guest experience right from the start.

Our Future: The Next 5, 10 and 15 Years

Our industry is going through a major shift. Tablet software and hardware providers see gaming as one of the top industries to report real value and reflect real need for mobile POS. Their requirements are informing the designs and plans of mobile POS developers. As POS mobility and tablet software and hardware solutions finally meet the enterprise demands, even more opportunities and ideas will surface.

Throughout all the changes, the single constant is our focus on the guest and increasingly more holistic guest experiences. Combining player tracking and POS transaction history, servers can learn how often the guest has been at the property, what they ordered in the past, and possibly even the guest’s past reviews. Servers will have information and tools to suggest items based on past orders, or their allergies or preferences. Properties will be able to personalize, creating richer, more lasting connections with guests, resulting in higher guest loyalty, guest ratings and greater revenue lift.

Technology is finally catching up to take guest satisfaction – and revenue – into the next generation. There’s never been a more exciting time to be in our industry.

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