

Crown casino

Business



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Company: Dmicros. comCustomer: Crown CasinoSubmitted by: Berkeley PRBased in Melbourne, Australia, the Crown Entertainment Complex, spanning 500, 000 square metres, combines world-class 500 room hotel, convention, restaurant, retail entertainment and gaming facilities including 350 gaming tables and 2, 500 slot machines. The largest gaming facility in the Southern Hemisphere, the complex boasts one of the most innovative and technologically advanced sites in the world.

“ Senior casino management have always seen technology as being vital in bringing efficiencies and effectiveness to our operation,” explains Greg Morrison, technology manager, Crown Casino, a unit of the Crown Entertainment Complex. “ Many of the software and systems operating at the casino are unique and have been developed in-house.”

The challenge

Crown Casino use 1, 200 CCTV cameras and 750 video recorders for the surveillance of its gaming tables, machines and cash tills, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. The size of the operation demands high-level maintenance and management, particularly the analysis of

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individually recorded video footage from the 750 video recorders. This method proved to be extremely time intensive and costly.

Crown Casino required a cost effective, flexible solution that would accommodate their current in-house software and surveillance requirements and provide a simple method of video footage analysis and management from a single location. Crown Casino investigated the options available and concluded their entire surveillance infrastructure required restructuring. After evaluating various solutions, Crown Casino chose to head their Digital Video Management project with the network video server technology provided by Dmicros. com. Morrison comments, “ Implementation of a Digital Video Management project, using the network video server technology, is seen as an important component in the technical evolution of the casino. We are the first casino to embrace the technology which will revolutionise traditional casino surveillance practices.

“ He adds, “ Dmicros. com’s hardware together with specialised software applications by AD Holdings provides us with outstanding flexibility, stability of the operating system and affordability. To do what we are doing now with the other major systems we investigated would have cost at least 50% more.”

The solution

Dmicros. com’s V-serve technology puts live and pre-recorded digital video images onto a PC desktop over a LAN network, Intranet or the Internet using familiar Netscape or Explorer browsers, at a rate of twenty-five images per second. The V-serve 100 technology allows users at Crown Casino to view

live images from up to 16 CCTV cameras, per V-serve video server, at any one time.

The technology is generally being used for the monitoring, security and surveillance of gaming tables, gaming machines, cash handling, car park, point of sale and remote monitoring. Morrison comments, “ The flexibility of the V-serve provides a unique “ On Table” electronic game supervision which greatly improves the resolution time of gaming disputes whilst reducing supervisory labour costs.” The V-serve also features alarm facilities, allowing triggers to ‘ tag’ particular events, such as cash till or slot machine interference, so that they can be quickly located, or even presented as frames of footage upon alarm activation. Morrison comments, “ Utilising our extensive data network and the V-serve we are able to change our mode of operation to “ Event” based so that we only review things that are of interest to us and that have actually occurred, rather than wading through endless video footage. The system has given us far greater control of the surveillance operation than was previously available to us.

“ The V-serve’s ability to store archive footage for longer than the standard twenty-four hours and record continuous uninterrupted footage while the viewing process takes place proved vital for Crown Casino. “ Because we require all our recorded video for a minimum of 72 hours, we need large data storage drives. The V-serve is fitted with dual 75GB hard drives. In addition we have in excess of one Terabyte of archive storage for footage that we either need to or wish to retain indefinitely,” explains Morrison. V-serve 100 also allows video footage to be monitored remotely which is vital to large, multiple sites. “ Because our property is so extensive and we have remote
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buildings and offices, we utilise the V-serve over a Wide Area Data Network to monitor some of the more remote areas which would otherwise not be fully monitored or would require expensive cabling and transmission equipment.

We will also be utilising the system in the near future to enable the Government Authority responsible for the casino to monitor the site from their offices across the City,” adds Morrison. V-serve 100 provides the additional security of password protected features for selective access and restricted camera usage for complete viewing control and management.

The implementation

The Digital Video Management project consisted of two stages. The first stage, commencing in August 1999, included the evaluation of the V-serve technology and rollout of 50% of the new surveillance system. The rollout included the installation of 70 V-serve 100 video servers and the replacement of 450 video recorders that formed a component of the 1, 200 CCTV camera security and surveillance infrastructure. Crown Casino also implemented a dedicated data network connecting all 70 V-serve video servers and operator workstations.

A digital archiving system consisting of 520 Gigabytes of hard drive storage and a robotic data tape system has also been implemented to enable long term storage of specific video files. The second stage of the project, which began in September 2000, sees an additional 100 V-serve video server units being introduced and the implementation of an extensive “ Network Based Event Triggering System”, enabling significant gaming and security events to

be tagged and transmitted to surveillance for review. The second stage of the project is expected to be completed by June 2001. Morrison comments, "The implementation has been surprisingly straight forward. There have been many hurdles to cross including protecting the Data Network from excessive traffic, developing an automatic digital video archiving system and determining exact system configuration from all the possible variable factors.

But we have been delighted with the support from the Dmicros. com team."

The Future

Morrison explains, "The system is still evolving and will continue to do so for years to come. It is expected that in excess of 200 V-serve video servers will be in use in Crown Casino within the next 18 months, feeding a potential 3,200 video images."