



Clearwater Casino Resort

Opening Bet on Digital

Clearwater Casino Resort's new system simplifies casino monitoring and forges a path for digital technology.

Suquamish Clearwater Resort, located on the Port Madison Indian Reservation overlooking Puget Sound, Wash., serves as an escape for vacationers looking to relax and test their luck. The resort features an 85-room hotel, full-service spa, four restaurants and a variety of entertainment amenities including a casino offering a range of table games, poker tournaments, keno and more than 1300 slot machines.

In early 2006, the resort began researching solutions to upgrade its security surveillance system from an analog to a digital system and to help alleviate the problem of too little space in its surveillance and equipment rooms. Bill Jackson, Clearwater Casino Resort IT director, began working at the resort during the bid process "We wanted to switch to a digital system and take advantage of the newer available technology," he says.

CASE SUMMARY

Location:

Port Madison Indian Reservation,
Washington

System:

American Dynamics:
Intellex DVMS

Jackson compiled a list of desirable video management system features and began comparing the list to features offered by current products. "We wanted a system with a low, affordable cost as well as one that was a durable product from a well-known supplier accessible here in the United States," he says. After cost, Jackson says the next important consideration was to find a system that would yield a smaller "footprint" size and would not make the resort have to change the current configuration of its equipment and casino surveillance room. Since the resort used an analog system with older VHS tape technology, security officers and surveillance operators previously had to switch out videotapes continually in the casino surveillance room throughout the day. "Our operators were glued to the screen and often unable to devote time to other tasks. It was very time-consuming, and it seemed like a sacrifice to our overall security plan," Jackson says.

The casino surveillance room and its adjoining equipment room also had limited space because of its large amount of analog equipment. "When I first looked into the analog room, there were hundreds of cameras and VCRs taking up space," Jackson says. "We generally have two operators working in the room, and with the previous system, they were very cluttered in their workspace."

In addition to switching to digital surveillance technology, the casino was also looking for a system that would integrate megapixel cameras easily, the newer-technology cameras would be incompatible with an analog system. Currently, Clearwater Casino Resorts employs between 500 and 600 cameras on its casino floor and between 24 and 32 in its parking garage - all monitored from one room. The cameras are analog, but the resort technology staff sought to forge a path to adopt digital cameras in the future.

After receiving bids from various suppliers, Jackson chose the Intellex Digital Video Management System

from American Dynamics, San Diego."The system was very attractive to me because of its virtual matrix capability," he says. The virtual matrix solution takes the place of a traditional video hardware matrix, which uses a network of video analog input boxes to distribute video to multiple monitor outputs. With the Intellex system, the virtual matrix is configured through software, and camera feeds appear on a virtual LCD wall of monitors. "Our operators can watch the cameras on a large wall in front of them," Jackson says. "Because less hardware is necessary, our surveillance room is more organized, and our operators have a lot more room. The footprint of the Intellex system is a third the size of our previous system."

Reliable Security, an electrical contractor based in Everett, Wash., completed the system's installation in late August 2006. The system offers a range of video surveillance controls, including search and retrieval, frame-by-frame viewing and customized camera views. "With the Intellex system, we can retrieve recorded surveillance footage at a moment's notice so our surveillance officers can work more effectively. "Jackson says With a frame-by-frame forward and reverse play control, security operators are able to scrutinize camera frames in detail, a feature critical to casino security and surveillance. Jackson says his surveillance operators monitor the c-o floor for everything from suspicious behavior to cheating.

The casino is now also ready to adopt digital megapixel camera technology in the future. "We now have a clear path to adopt digital cameras via the virtual matrix and its ability to migrate from an analog to a digital system," Jackson says.

By Ashley Roe

Originally Published: March 2007, Access Control and Security Systems