

Casinos, Security & RFID in the US

Whitepaper – Casino Security



1.

Comply with the
Regulatory
Environment

2.

Avoid fines and
optimize how
staff spends time

3.

Secure and control
access in the
building

4.

Manage assets
and equipment

Background & History

The US was colonized in the 16th Century as a Puritanical Society. Among the many things conceptually forbidden in this early society was gambling. As the nation moved West in the 19th century it left much behind, including its aversion to gambling. But even in the least civilized bastions of the expanding nation gambling was still restricted largely to saloons and brothels. As territories became States in the newly opened Wild West, those states established anti-gambling laws – laws that were largely unenforced but which opened up an ad hoc industry in protecting these establishments where enforcement was by pistol, shotgun and hanging.

In the midst of the Great Depression, in 1931, and reeling from the economic shock, the State of Nevada legalized gambling; renamed it "Gaming" to provide a veneer of respectability; and established The Nevada Gaming Commission to regulate and protect the industry. The Commission was given the authority to license and control casinos.



Legal Casinos became very attractive to the then operators of most illegal casinos – Organized Crime (aka The Mob). They became a way of laundering illegal money and a route to legitimate businesses. By the early 1950's the Mob was active in Nevada and this attracted the attention of the Commission as well as Federal Law Enforcement – the FBI. By the late 1980's casinos were largely free of this influence. And the State of New Jersey also legalized gambling and established its own New Jersey Gaming Commission. ►

Shooting and Hanging remained enforcement techniques but were increasingly supplanted by fines and imprisonment. Then in 1988 the US Congress passed the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, allowing the many Native American nations scattered throughout the United States to ameliorate their common poverty through the establishment of Indian Casinos. As a result legal gambling became spread through most of the United States. The Act also established the Indian Gaming Commission – it, along with New Jersey’s were modelled on but not identical to the original Nevada Gaming Commission.

To further complicate the industry, each state in which an Indian Casino resided established their own State Gaming Commissions. While governed by the Indian Gaming Commission, these State agencies were free to establish stricter rules of their own.

Regulation

The Commissions expanded and continue to expand their authority over the Gaming Industry. The Commission giveth and the Commission taketh away. Every aspect of casino operations is now controlled by the Commissions: Who can own a casino; who can invest in a casino; who can work in a casino; what security measures must be put in place; what records must be kept; what odds could be set for various gaming devices; how much profit could be made; how much loss could be tolerated; ad infinitum. Today fines (six figures in US Dollars being not uncommon) are the principal means of enforcement for the vast labyrinth of regulations under which the casino industry must operate with licensing withdrawal being the ultimate punishment for repeated and egregious failure to abide by the rules set by the Commission(s) to which an individual casino is subject.

The Security Environment

It is both a reality and a common requirement of all the Commissions that casinos treat their operations as being always under threat. Threats include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating Customers
- Cheating Staff
- Theft by Customers
- Theft by Staff
- Theft by Organized Outside Resources (Oceans 11!! – a bit extreme and unrealistic but a nonetheless dramatic example)

Those basic threats have multiple touch points and not only risk monetary loss but, because of the potential amounts (bad guys also operate on an ROI concept and are willing to take large risks for the potential large payout of striking a casino), risk violence. The Commissions take this into account – often to the extreme – and are a nature operating concern of Casinos even outside their regulatory environment.

The security and regulatory environment, in turn, create an operational challenge: How best to meet the security and regulatory needs with a reasonable allocation of costly staff resources.

At the dawn of the Casino regulatory age (1931 in the USA but undoubtedly preceded by governmental engagement outside the United States in places like Monte Carlo, Tunisia and others), these needs were met with manpower: security guards when emptying slot machines; security guards inspecting cash counters in and out of the counting rooms; etc.

In the modern Casino environment, these security functions still involve staff but are increasingly engaging technology to leverage these expensive resources.

CCTV was (and remains) the first such major application of technology but many more have followed.

Security Asset Protections & Audits

The rules (and good operating practice) of casinos dictate that assets with fiscal or security implications must be (1) controlled in terms of who and when access is authorized; (2) auditable at any time as to when and by whom such assets are taken; and (3) for some such assets carefully controlled as to where the asset(s) may and may not be taken. Assets subject to such regulation include (but are not necessarily limited to):

Keys



This was the original driver of technology for security management in US Casinos. The various commissions require:

- That only authorized individuals be able to take keys to such things as slot machines, chip storage, cash boxes, etc.
- That such access be supervised by a supervisor (4-eye) and, depending on the specific Commission a security officer (6-eye) and, again depending on the specific commission for return of keys as well.
- That specific keys be restricted to movement within specifically defined areas (different keys will often have different defined areas).
- That reports on who and when be instantly on demand available to a Commission inspector/enforcer. ►

Weapons



Depending on the specific governing commission(s), casinos may be required to maintain on a 24/7/365 basis, some portion of their security staff, to be armed.

Unlike sworn law enforcement, weapons are required to be kept in storage when not in use on casino grounds.

The control of who and when authorization is granted for such weapons is usually as (or more) tightly controlled as keys.

Maintenance Tools



Increasingly gaming machines (slot machines are the classic, but far from the only, example) are electronic with embedded microprocessor control.

Such machines may use proprietary and highly sensitive electronic tools for programming odds, payouts and other regulated aspects of such machines.

The commissions(s) (as for keys) typically require continuous accountability for such devices.

Restricted Area Pre-Access Storage:



Many areas within casinos must carefully restrict not only who can enter but what they are allowed to enter with (a classic example is the Counting Room – under most Commission rules no personal items are allowed – not even pockets).

Casinos must make available locker compartments and/or other mechanisms for employees to safely store their personal items and/or clothing prior to entering such sensitive areas. Use of deister Lockers within the proxSafe system allows for secure storage and concomitant Audit Trails of such storage to satisfy Commission requirements.

Challenges Addressed by deister

- Dependence on electronic automation creates a crisis when the automation fails. Metal to Metal contact has proved susceptible to dirt, water, corrosion and the gradual loss of spring contact elasticity. This is expensive and, more importantly, the resultant system failures create regulatory risk. RFID eliminates those problems. deister Lifetime Warranty Keyfobs can be exposed to the mud, the blood and the beer (with homage to Johnny Cash) and still keep on working.
- When a controlled asset is about to exit its defined and restricted area, amanTag can create a local alarm (flashing light, siren, etc) and/or remote notification (via Commander Connect) of this pending violation.
- Commander can instantly create use reports by user and/or by asset as well as asset status reports. More sophisticated reports can be generated by exporting Commander data via CSV files for analysis and formatting with a wide range of 3rd party analysis tools.
- Locker/Key Box Common Structure: Access to key and other assets all have similar regulatory requirements as, in some cases, may storage of personal items prior to entering sensitive areas of the Casino. It is critical, for efficiency and prevention of confusion, to have common interfaces and operational procedures to access all critical assets.

Staff Access & Protections

Who can work in a Casino and when they work are also a security concerns and regulatory burden for the Casino. Everything from parking access and audit to time and attendance to Real Time Location (RTLS) are operational, security and/or regulatory concerns of Casino Management.

Many of those concerns are addressed above and others are functions of 3rd party systems (Time and Attendance for example).

deister can help. Once again Commander Connect can tie other operational functions in with the original system functions of key and asset management discussed above. Some of these are:



tranSpeed® systems can control access to parking and other staff areas as well as provide audits of such coming and going.



dataLog® systems can track the inspection activities of operational requirements.

Security Staff rounds become part of the audit database along with less secure (but still important to profitability) functions as Janitorial inspections of Rest Rooms.



teXtag® systems can also audit and control uniform and other textile (tablecloths, sheets, etc) access and return and again tie that utilization within the same database and reporting environment as security resources.

And...loss of textile assets is another (less obvious but often expensive) security concern for Casinos.

In many Casinos those (and other) operational tasks are overseen by expensive staff supervisory and managerial assets.

These tasks can be automated and, more importantly, audited – not all audit trails are for the ever watchful eye of the Commissions; they can also measure organization performance. ■

About deister electronic

For 40 years, deister electronic has been an internationally modern and sustainably managed family business that stands for innovative and safe automation solutions. With five international locations, we sell our solutions worldwide and have a strong international focus. Our solution portfolio is used, for example, in the following applications: Long-range identification for access control, access control to buildings, automatic management of work equipment and valuables in electronic locker systems, dispensing and management of textiles for laundry and hospital logistics.



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