

CASE STUDY: International Game Technology

John van Waard is a sales executive for one of the world's largest providers of gaming systems, but he doesn't gamble when it comes technology so he uses Tegatech's Touch Tablet PCs.

International Game Technology (IGT) is one of the world's largest manufacturers of poker machines, but it's also responsible for the IT systems to support table-based casinos games such as poker and blackjack. While it's easy for slot machines to keep track of every dollar that comes in and out, a fast-moving blackjack table presents a range of challenges, says IGT Australia sales executive John van Waard.

The last thing blackjack players want to see is the dealer struggling with a computer mouse and keyboard - it's also the last thing the casino wants. As such, IGT Australia has deployed more than 400 Tegatech Touch Tablet PCs in casinos around the country including Star City and Conrad Jupiters Gold Coast.

"Traditionally, table game managers have had to rely on periodically counting the money in the drop box, or the chips that are left in the trays. We wanted to improve on this and calculate details such as the average bet for a patron at a table and how many hands are dealt per hour," van Waard says.

"We needed an unobtrusive table management system that lets dealers quickly log details such as when a player buys chips, or takes chips away from the table. Of course casinos need their tables to be in play as much as possible, so we needed to minimise interruptions. The Touch Tablet PCs we're using from Tegatech are all-in-one devices, so they're perfect for our needs. The touchscreen is right where the dealer is standing, so important information can be quickly and accurately captured without interrupting game play."

IGT Australia began using Tegatech's Sahara i412T Touch Tablet PCs, but has since switched to the newer Sahara NetSlate a230T. The NetSlate a230T is a fully-featured PC - with a 1.6GHz Intel Atom processor and up to 2GB of RAM running Windows Vista, Windows XP, Windows XP Embedded or openSUSE Linux 11. It features a 12.1-inch resistive touchscreen and can be easily mounted on matching VESA-compatible Port Replicators while still connected to mains power and peripherals such as a magnetic swipe card readers for swiping member cards. The NetSlate a230T puts the power of a computer at the fingertips of each casino dealer, in an environment where space is at a premium and a clunky desktop PC would not be welcome.

Installing Tegatech's Touch Tablet PCs alongside gaming tables not only allows IGT Australia to offer casinos precise table data, it also allows the casinos to expand their customer loyalty programs. Tracking a player's average bet and how long they spend at the table lets the casino calculate reward points for their loyalty programs - a valuable tool in such a highly competitive industry.

"Tegatech's Touch Tablet PCs give IGT Australia a competitive edge in the market, a benefit which flows on to the casinos and even the players at the tables," van Waard says. "We don't like to gamble when it comes to technology, but we know we've backed a winner with Tegatech and its touchscreen expertise."

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