Sands Resort and Casino
Las Vegas

Case Study

The most important thing we build is trust

Overview
Provided the Sands Casino Resort with a communication system that supports both Public Safety and Commercial Networks ensuring the security of guests and enabling Bethlehem Sands staff to run an extremely responsive and effective customer services programme.

Challenge
Due to the Casino Resort being built from a remote disused steel mill, this meant signals could not reach those inside. Therefore a system was need to support all forms of communication, including cellular for the visitor, public safety for the emergency services and an internal radio system for the smooth running of the resort.





The Challenge

Installing a complete wireless system into a remote disused steel mill being refurbished for a casino resort was the challenge for this deployment. Due to location, there was no existing cellular coverage, so the system needed to include a completely redundant public safety system and a mobile network for customers, as well as internal radio communications for the smooth running of the new resort.

The Sands Casino Resort - Bethlehem is a new casino and entertainment destination developed by Las Vegas Sands Corp. (NYSE: LVS). It is located on the former site of the historic Bethlehem Steel plant in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The facility had fallen into disrepair following the decline of the steel-making industry in the region.

Following the award of a Category 2 Slot Machine license by the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board in December 2006, and at a cost of $743 million, the plant was transformed into a fully integrated resort consisting of 3,000 slot machines, over 300 luxury hotel rooms, 9 restaurants, 200,000 square feet of premium retail outlet shopping, and 46,000 square feet of flexible multi-purpose space. The project has since been characterized as one of the largest redevelopment projects in the United States, and the largest casino development investment made to date in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The remote location and economic decline of the area meant that LVSC needed to install a complete wireless system to meet immediate needs as well as being easily upgradeable as the resort expanded. Seamless and fail-safe coverage was vital from a security perspective, while the staff needed a tailor-made instant response system to meet the high levels of customer service. Due to the lack of telecoms infrastructure of any kind within the disused building, or indeed the whole surrounding area, Anderson Communications needed to install a customized system that would meet a number of stringent service and safety demands. One such requirement was that the system had to be designed to provide wireless coverage for both public safety and commercial usage.

The system needed to initially support over 200 staff, including security, housekeeping and other casino-specific activities, as well as catering to the telecommunications demands of its customers. The resort's system also needed to operate in various frequency bands and voice and data services, because a casino resort needs to meet a wide variety of needs to its staff and customers.

The project teams were faced with delivering a complex system within a short time period since the resort was planned to open in May 2009 and the system needed to be installed in less than six months to facilitate other ongoing operations.



The Solution

A dual-band commercial and public safety system supplied by Cobham Wireless and installed by systems integrator Anderson Communications was the solution. This included a specialised UHF band on an 800MHz spectrum, using amplifiers throughout the building to deliver guaranteed seamless coverage in every area. Cobham Wireless worked with Anderson Communications to design and develop the necessary equipment for a customized communications system that would extend seamless coverage across the resort's facilities. The Anderson team installed a Cobham Wireless UHF, Cellular and PCS system.

"One of the unique capabilities of Cobham Wireless is that we can provide complete systems for both Public Safety and Commercial Network Operators" says Steve Damewood, Cobham Wireless' VP of Sales for the Americas. "Our strategic partner Anderson Communications did an outstanding job in managing this project to its successful completion."

Karen Fingl, VP sales at Anderson Communications, commented that, "Having worked with Cobham Wireless on the Sands Resort Bethlehem's sister casino, The Venetian, it was a natural evolution to use the team again for this new project. Because of the history associated with the Bethlehem Steel Mill, this was a particularly important project for the area, and it's fantastic to see the area coming back to life now. Cobham Wireless met and exceeded the delivery schedule to the extent that the equipment was arriving faster than we could install it, ensuring the project was completed on time and could further support the refurbishment of the Sands Casino Resort Bethlehem."

The Benefit

The development received 100 percent coverage throughout the building, ensuring the security of guests and enabling Bethlehem Sands staff to run an extremely responsive and effective customer services programme. In addition to creating coverage for carriers AT&T, Verizon, and Sprint, the resort was able to offer customers a high-capacity Wi-Fi service, creating an additional revenue stream for the company.

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The network was installed on budget and completed well within the specified six month timetable. On the first day, the system was fully tested by a line of cars two miles long full of people waiting to use the new casino. The system is capable of supporting 200 private radio users on a daily basis as well as providing support for both cellular and public safety applications.

The casino management team is able to operate smoothly and efficiently. The wireless system underpins the programs that have been set up to help the casino staff monitor the slot machines and respond to any technical problems immediately, in addition to ensuring that public safety radio services are available in the event of an emergency. The efficient deployment of this project has created a working model for similar redevelopment sites across the country.

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