

Profile:

Morongo Casino, Resort & Spa, Cabazon, California

Less is More. Cashiers do less. Casino makes more.

CA

Morongo Resort guest Amanda D'Ambra cashes in her winnings at the casino's CoinMax™ money machine. The printed voucher generated by the machine will be turned in for cash at the cashier's window (background).



"People would come to our cashier cage with full bags of coin," said Eddie Montes, cash operations manager for the premier Morongo Casino, Resort and Spa in Cabazon, Calif, near Palm Springs. "Processing it was an operational disruption that also produced customer relations problems. Solving those problems was a must. Being able to make money as a result was an added bonus."

Converting a payload of coins into folding money is something that casinos do as a matter of course, but smart casino operators like Montes know that both the burden of processing, and at least some of the associated costs, can be shifted to the consumer.

A customer with a large container full of coins presents a number of problems for the cashier staff at the cage. For starters, large amounts require a hefty machine to effectively handle the processing,

and a hefty person to move it around. At Morongo Casino, Resort and Spa, the big coin processing equipment is in the main vault behind the cashier's cage.

"As often as not, having a large-volume coin customer coming to the cage meant that a cashier's window would have to be closed while the cashier lugged the bag to the vault," Montes remarked. "The cashier wasn't happy because a bag of coins weighs a lot and is difficult to handle. The guest who brought in the coins wasn't really happy either, because the processing takes some time. But the guests who really were inconvenienced were the ones who happened to be next in line," Montes continued.

Improving customer service certainly was a prime motivator for finding a solution. And anything the casino could do to make work easier for the staff would be well

received, he knew. Could it be possible to eliminate the service aggravations and have the solution turn into a profit center? For Montes it was worth a try.

"I had been approached by people who maintain coin processing kiosks in grocery store lobbies," Montes explained. "I know that consumers are willing to pay as much as 10 percent of their total piggy bank to convert coins to cash, but I couldn't buy in to the idea that their company should be the lion's share of the processing fee money, especially since we already service lots of other money-handling equipment in the casino. We also believed that a lower withholding percentage would translate into better customer relations," he added.

"After a brief trial period with a Cummins Money Machine installed next to the main cage, we knew we had a solution to

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Less is More.

Cashiers do less. Casino makes more. (Continued from page 1.)

all of these problems. Even better, it became a significant profit center in a very short period of time," Montes remarked.

The Money Machine™ from Cummins-Allison Corporation is a self-service coin-processing kiosk that boasts the industry's fastest running speed and most accurate count. It is also widely known for its rugged reliability.

To make sure the machine was highly visible and recognizable, the machine was ordered with appealing CoinMax™ graphics. Max is a lovable cartoon character with the body of a penny coin. Kids and adults alike form an immediate cognitive connection with the CoinMax illustration and the processing machine it represents.

The machine selected by the Morongo Casino, Resort and Spa counts the coins by denomination and separates them into the machine's 12 high-volume bagging stations. Whenever a bag reaches its maximum capacity, coins of that denomination are automatically diverted to another bag. This 12-bag configuration keeps machine service time to a minimum and allows careful monitoring of the machine's available capacity for each coin denomination.

Machine attendants can monitor machine status, including coin intake, fees withheld, number of transactions, collection bag capacity and a host of other data by using the equipment's touch screen. A paper report also can be printed directly from the machine.

The Money Machine touch screen is extraordinarily consumer friendly and

on-screen graphics can be modified to suit each establishment's particular needs. The screen also prompts the user regarding the machine's use and informs him/her up front about the percentage that will be withheld as a processing fee.

"Although research has shown that consumers will readily tolerate up to 10 percent of the amount of coin being processed as an acceptable fee, we elected to hold our fee to 5 percent," Montes said. "Guests have told us that the lower fee is the reason they come here instead of going to a retail store coin kiosk."

The added influx of processed coin from outside sources also has produced a financial side benefit to the casino. Morongo now orders much less coin from the bank because the casino generates a stronger supply of it internally to bulk fill its coin changers.

The decision to buy The Money Machine self-service coin-processing kiosk from Cummins was not taken lightly. The casino demanded a trial period to make sure that the returns would justify the decision. To make sure that the effort would not be compromised by the cashiers in the cage, however, they simultaneously established a policy that requires coin customers to use the machine rather than accepting loose change at the cashier window.

The Money Machine with CoinMax graphics is conveniently located next to the main cage, which makes the coin redemption payout easy. "Our cage team welcomed the opportunity to channel customers to the kiosk instead of having to process coins in the vault. Now those customers simply

come to the cashier station with a voucher slip from the machine, and the cashier pays it out. It's a win-win for everyone," Montes concluded.

Each month, the machine processes about \$65,000 in coin. Montes said that at that rate and with a 5 percent fee, the machine paid for itself in less than seven months.

Cummins-Allison Corp. is the leading manufacturer of coin and currency processing equipment for the banking, gaming and retail industries, with products that range from small back-office currency counters and cash drawer processors to self-service coin kiosks to high-speed, multi-pocket currency scanners and sorters with counterfeit and fitness detection. All Cummins products are made in the United States.

Morongo Casino, Resort and Spa is the premier gaming resort in California. Located in Cabazon, California, in the scenic Coachella Valley, Morongo is a prime getaway for residents of Orange County, Ontario, Palm Springs, Palm Desert and Los Angeles. Earning the prestigious AAA Four Diamond Award for three consecutive years, Morongo offers 310 well-appointed rooms and suites, a 150,000 square-foot casino floor, continuous world-class entertainment offerings, and nine restaurants and lounges. One of the largest tribal gaming facilities in the country, Morongo Casino Resort and Spa is owned and operated by the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. For more information, visit www.morongocasinoresort.com.

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