

# Gateway Ticketing Systems

## Case Study



## Mall of America Increases Efficiency, Profits with Customized Galaxy System

### Mall of America

Location: Bloomington, MN

#### Key Challenges

- Needed new ticketing system to replace previous 15-year-old system
- Required custom modifications to Galaxy system
- Needed an access control solution for a gateless facility
- Wanted a self-serve ticketing delivery system onsite

#### Solution

- Install Galaxy Point of Sale to provide automated ticketing processing and minimal maintenance
- Develop custom solution for points ticketing system
- Use handheld scanners at rides to enhance admission control and make staff more mobile
- Implement Galaxy Kiosk to reduce staffing costs and increase revenue and customer convenience.

#### Business Results

- Expanded ability to sell ride tickets in more locations through onsite self-service kiosks, POS terminals in park retail stores, and mall gift stores
- Significantly reduced wait times for guests buying tickets on high-volume days
- Highly dependable and stable system performance

Mall of America, a 4.2 million square foot complex— the nation's largest retail and entertainment complex— is the home to the newly rebranded theme park, Nickelodeon Universe®. The park is the nation's first Nickelodeon theme park. The Mall opened in August of 1992 and is located in Bloomington, Minnesota.

Mall of America has partnered with Gateway Ticketing Systems, Inc., to deliver a customized ticketing solution for the newly rebranded theme park located inside the mall, *Nickelodeon Universe*.

Nickelodeon Universe combines the country's largest shopping and entertainment destination with the number-one entertainment brand for kids, Nickelodeon. It features new rides, live shows, attractions, retail, games and entertainment, and food service establishments themed with top ranking Nickelodeon characters.

#### Outdated Ticketing System Required Upgrading with Rebranded Park

Before the rebranding, Mall of America ran an amusement park for more than 15 years - since it first opened back in 1992. "The original admission control and ticketing system was over 15 years old," reported Janette Smrcka, Systems Analyst at Mall of America. "It was clear that, with the rebranding, a new ticketing system would be required to enhance profitability and efficiency."

The mall's parent company, Triple Five, has been using Gateway's Galaxy product for more than 10 years at West Edmonton Mall in Canada. "They had been very satisfied with Gateway and were anxious to standardize systems throughout the enterprise," said Smrcka.

#### New System Allows Guests to Enter Park Freely, No Admission Gates

Located in the center of the mall, Nickelodeon Universe has no admission gates—it allows guests to enter the park freely. Admission control and tracking is done using barcode wristbands that provide all-day admission.

Barcoded, points-based tickets are also available to guests.

"Each ride has a point value that ranges from 3-6 points. Guests can purchase point passes for a single ride or larger point passes at a lower price per point. These points

are stored electronically on bar-coded tickets and deducted at each ride," Smrcka said.

#### **Gateway Designs Special Module for New System**

Mall of America contracted with Gateway to provide the custom designed points-decrementing module that accommodates their points-based ticketing system. In addition to this module, Gateway also provided solutions for admission control, Point of Sale, photo passes, group sales and kiosks.

#### **Self-Service Kiosks Save Time and Money, Maximize Retail Exposure**

The mall wants to encourage self-service ticket purchasing as much as possible to maximize processing efficiency and minimize staffing costs. It has combined its attended ticket sales locations within the retail shops so that the self-service ticket stations receive optimized sales volume.

The kiosks serve to expose guests to the abundant themed merchandise available in the park, and they significantly increase retail sales opportunities. The new ticketing system also provides prime advertising space by having on display LCD panels located at rides, where guests are waiting.

#### **Gateway Support Provides "Highest Level of Service"**

Despite a short time frame, Gateway was able to complete the custom software design and implement the new system by the targeted completion date. "The timeline required a launch-date just six months after the date the order was signed—from October, 2007 to March, 2008. In addition to providing direction and assistance with configuration, Gateway delivered everything on time," said Chris Lake-Smith, Director of IT at Mall of America.

Lake-Smith feels the level of support provided by Gateway was exceptional. "Gateway's support staff seems genuinely dedicated to providing the highest level of customer service, and its implementation team worked diligently to ensure that the required custom coded enhancements would function reliably from the first day."

#### **Results: More Sales Channels and Reduced Wait Times for Guests**

Although it's too early to report any information regarding the return on their investment, Mall of America is already seeing significant improvements in several areas of their operations after having installed the new Gateway system.

"Through self-service kiosks located in the park, POS terminals in the park's retail stores, and the mall gift stores, we have expanded our ability to sell ride tickets in many more locations than before, and we have been able to reduce significantly the amount of time guests wait in line to buy tickets on busy days," said Lake-Smith.



Nickelodeon Universe features rides, live shows and other attractions.



Ticket scanning booths like this help minimize staffing costs.

**"Gateway's support staff seems genuinely dedicated to providing the highest level of customer service ."**

-Chris Lake-Smith,  
Director of IT, Mall of America