



Station Casinos Uses Informatica Real-Time Data Integration to Increase Customer Loyalty and Improve Profitability

FAST FACTS

BUSINESS INITIATIVES

- Develop and execute tailored marketing campaigns geared to maximizing customer acquisition and retention
- Support Station Casinos' leadership as gaming provider to people who live and work in Las Vegas

TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

- Deployed wide-ranging Informatica business analytics solution to integrate data from more than 500 heterogeneous sources and introduce a 360-degree customer view—all in real time.

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Jeff Martin, Director of Business Intelligence, Station Casinos

Consider the Station Casinos Dilemma

There are a lot of casinos in Las Vegas, catering for just about every taste. However, every customer has a unique personality, unique desires, and unique behavior. The challenge for Station Casinos—the premier provider of gaming, lodging, and entertainment services to the city's residents—is to be the number one choice again and again for those customers. To do that, the company needed to know its guests, make them feel special, and deliver a rewarding service experience that they would want to come back to—and tell their friends about.

By standardizing on the Informatica® Platform, Station Casinos is developing a unified, 360-degree view of all its customers and their activities. Real-time data capture and integration supplies the analytics needed to provide immediate promotional offers to the guests and give them an incentive to return to Station Casinos. This customer-centric strategy has enabled Station Casinos to increase the guest retention rate from 72 percent to 86 percent in 4 months, grow the new member acquisition rate by 160 percent in a 12-month period, and reduce database marketing reinvestment costs by \$1 million per month.

BENEFITS

- Expanded number of targeted customer segments from 40 to 160
- Increased monthly slot revenues by 4 percent
- Reduced database marketing reinvestment costs by \$1 million per month
- Cut monthly \$13 million slots promotion budget by \$1 million
- Increased guest retention rate from 72 percent to 86 percent in four months
- Lowered marketing production and processing expenses by \$500,000 per month
- Increased new member acquisition rate by 160 percent in 12 months
- Reduced data input error rate from 80 percent to 1 percent
- Helped deliver a rewarding experience guests want to share with others and return to again and again
- Directed messages to customers more accurately, with extended personalization and delivery in real time, using various points of contact

A Beacon on the Las Vegas Skyline

Station Casinos pioneered the locals gaming market in Las Vegas and has continued to stay one step ahead of the competition by getting to know its customers' likes and preferences, which in turn has helped to ensure that its loyal customers return on a regular basis. Today, Station Casinos, Inc. has grown from simply catering for the people who live and work in the Las Vegas valley to emerge as the leading provider of a total casino experience, which includes not only gaming but also lodging and entertainment. Its 18 casinos and hotels are regional entertainment destinations and include such amenities as restaurants, entertainment venues, movie theaters, bowling, and convention/banquet space, as well as traditional casino gaming offerings, such as video poker, slot machines, table games, bingo, and race and sports wagering.

But like the Las Vegas skyline, change is happening fast. In what many consider the entertainment capital of the world, competition for guests is fierce—and that means Station Casinos needed to adapt by targeting, acquiring, and retaining guests more effectively than other venues. That task involves understanding more about the value of each guest to the business and his or her interests and priorities when visiting the city. It means going as far as learning how much a guest spent in the spa and whether a customer spending \$50 on the slot machines was as valuable as a customer spending \$50 on one of Station Casinos' blackjack tables. The goal was to predict customers' needs as much as possible and target them with personalized, compelling sales and marketing activities.

Understanding Customer Trends, Usage Patterns, and Their Experience at the Casinos

Karen O'Dell, product director, Business Intelligence at Station Casinos, explains why data integration plays such a fundamental role in providing that degree of business analytics. "The best way to appreciate our customers is to track and record the customer experience," O'Dell says. "By collecting customer, financial, gaming, and other data from a variety of systems, we can understand the customer trends, usage patterns, and overall experience at the casinos. It makes certain that a customer name is not duplicated in any of our systems; it also ensures that if a customer gambles at different locations, we have a sum of those activities. For example, the information coming into the data warehouse can help us to learn that a guest perhaps plays more high-limits gaming tables if his wife is in the spa. So we send a free spa coupon to his wife."

Station Casinos has assembled a group of technologies and players to deliver this visionary enterprise analytics and customer relationship management (CRM) strategy. Informatica underpins the information supply chain enterprise-wide, providing the capability to access, clean, and deliver critical data in real time. This system is connected with a data warehousing solution from Teradata to create a detailed, comprehensive, and actionable view of its growing customer base that will enable more efficient and effective marketing.

"We were introduced to Informatica by Teradata not a day too soon," O'Dell continues. "We examined other data integration solutions such as Information Server; however, Informatica was our preferred choice. The easy-to-use technology meant there would be a fast learning curve since the solution is very intuitive for business and IT users, and our teams could be productive relatively quickly with minimal training. Furthermore, the Informatica solution was highly scalable and

offered both batch and real-time multiplatform connectivity. One final impressive aspect was their flexibility. For example, when Station Casinos first met the Informatica team, they weren't able to process remote journals, despite it being one of our key requirements. Within weeks though, they had nailed this with the launch of Informatica PowerExchange 8.6." Comprehensive Informatica Deployment at Heart of Customer Analytics

The Informatica Platform accesses multiple sources of critical data without the need to develop custom data access programs. The solution takes Station Casinos' data from the journals and logs in real time, reads it, and then feeds the data into the Informatica Platform data integration engine. It even offers the scope to push data transformation processing to the most appropriate processing resource and increase performance. And it captures database inserts, updates, and deletes from more than 200 feeds (all from both SQL Server and an iSeries AS/400 server) in both batch and real time—all running on a 24x7 basis.

Alongside this best-of-breed technology, Station Casinos is also able to process remote journals. With gaming data coming in 24x7 from locations as diverse as gaming, hotel, and food and beverage, Station Casinos needed a way to capture that data in real time for immediate campaign analysis and guest interaction, but without putting an additional burden on each source system. The challenge was that Station Casinos has a high-availability journal on its source systems that writes a journal each time a row is written, changed, or deleted; that way, if the system went down, the data could be quickly reloaded. Informatica provided a means of sourcing from remote journals, which copies the data into a second location without getting in the way of the high-availability journal or the source system. "It's valuable, intelligent functionality like that which keeps the casinos working at peak performance and helps maximize market share, wallet share, and loyalty," O'Dell says.

Trusting and Acting on Customer Usage Data

The final aspect of the Informatica deployment is Informatica Data Quality™, which performs in-line matching for more than 5.7 million customer records, O'Dell explains. "I might have one guest named 'Suzie' and another listed as 'Susan'. That doesn't allow me to understand my guests' playing behavior or what they're worth unless I can group that information and look at it. Using Informatica Data Quality, we can now group those people as they're coming into the data warehouse, linking any gaming information or any spend information anywhere within any property, and create a single view of the customer. It's all part of the strategy to trust and act on customer usage data—and deliver a rewarding experience guests want to share with others and return to again and again."

According to Jeff Martin, director of Business Intelligence, Station Casinos, the true advantage of the Informatica Platform is that it empowers business users with desktop access to consolidated and reliable data about customers, gaming and entertainment products, accounts and relationships among them. "Station Casinos is moving to a position of customer centricity with Informatica," Martin explains. "The technology allows us to align service levels to customer value to drive deeper, long-term, and profitable relationships. It improves business agility and speed to better meet gaming customer needs and gain a competitive advantage. And it enables Station Casinos to make relevant cross-sell and up-sell offers to customers."

NUTS AND BOLTS

- **Solution:** Enterprise data warehousing
- **Products:** Informatica PowerCenter® Advanced Edition, Informatica PowerCenter® Pushdown Optimization Option™, PowerExchange® Change Data Capture Option™ for SQL Server and iSeries, PowerExchange for Teradata, Informatica Data Quality, Informatica Data Explorer™
- **Service:** Informatica Global Customer Support
- **Sources:** More than 500 gaming, housekeeping, food and beverage, and other data sources (including SQL Server and iServer)
- **Target:** Enterprise data warehousing from Teradata and Cognos 8 business reporting application

Station Casinos has a significant amount of evidence that the Informatica Platform is delivering where it matters most: increasing revenue per customer, inspiring enhanced customer loyalty, and boosting marketing efficiency. These are just some of the quantified benefits that Station Casinos is experiencing from the Informatica Platform:

- Enabled Station Casinos to expand the number of segments it targets from 40 to 160
- Resulted in a 4 percent increase in total monthly slot revenues (after deduction of marketing costs)
- Increased guest retention rate from 72 percent to 86 percent in four months
- Reduced database marketing reinvestment costs by \$1 million per month, through more effective targeting of incentives
- Cut monthly \$13 million slot promotion budget by \$1 million
- Lowered marketing production and processing expenses by \$500,000 per month
- Increased new member acquisition rate by 160 percent in 12 months
- Reduced data input error rate from 80 percent to 1 percent

Having achieved great success with the Informatica Platform, it's no surprise to find that the Informatica solution has many advocates and allies at Station Casinos. Scott Kreeger, senior vice president and chief information officer, Station Casinos, views Informatica as a linchpin for successfully understanding customer activities and executing the targeted campaigns needed to maintain and expand the company's customer base. "We are using the power of enterprise analytics to understand our customers significantly better than ever, faster than ever, and recognize their present and potential value to our organization," Kreeger says. "By standardizing on Informatica technology, Station Casinos is able to reach customers more effectively, and direct our messaging to them more accurately, with extended personalization and delivery in real time, using various points of contact. The results have been that Station Casinos has been able to gain an edge in maintaining relationships with current customers and attracting new guests."

Looking ahead, Karen O'Dell has a vision for Station Casinos being able to engage with customers in real time, during the actual touch-point engagement. With the Informatica data integration solution, Station Casinos is able to determine if customers have a historical entertainment or dinner preference; then the next time customers engage in a gaming experience, they would be rewarded with a relevant dining incentive, possibly via text message or similar means. The firm also intends to extend its customer-centric strategy with the integration of social media information, thereby penetrating even deeper into the knowledge held on each customer. She concludes, "It all comes back to making each and every customer feel loved and ensure that they know Station Casinos really cares about their experience. That way, we retain their loyalty and increase our revenues."

LEARN MORE

Learn more about the Informatica Platform. Visit us at www.informatica.com or call +1 650-385-5000 (1-800-653-3871 in the U.S.).

ABOUT INFORMATICA

Informatica Corporation is the world's number one independent provider of data integration software. Organizations around the world gain a competitive advantage in today's global information economy with timely, relevant and trustworthy data for their top business imperatives. More than 4,100 enterprises worldwide rely on Informatica to access, integrate and trust their information assets held in the traditional enterprise, off premise and in the Cloud.



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