

Wireless Gaming: A Technical Perspective
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The nature of the casino floor is changing day by day. Wireless technology is allowing casino operators to rethink the layout of their facilities. Using this technology, players can now pick up their gaming device, and move to any other authorized area within range in the casino.

Leading operators are looking to wireless gaming devices to either supplement or replace their existing machines, thereby giving them an edge over the competition.

This technology is just starting to catch on in the gaming industry, so there is still time to stay ahead of the game.

There are a number of applications for wireless technology on the gaming floor.

For one, hand-held bingo units are revolutionizing bingo parlours around the world.

Players used to be stuck sitting in front of a betting terminal with a touch-screen, or worse yet left holding a physical bingo card and staring at a jumbo-sized monitor or old-fashioned ball blower. With wireless hand-held devices connected to a server-based bingo system, players are free to move about or sit wherever they choose, all the while playing their favourite games.

Many of these hand-held units even allow players to switch between group play for the jackpot and personal games played alone against a paytable, with just the touch of a button.

All of this convenience for the players can mean a significant increase in potential revenues for operators, since patrons can keep playing games without interruptions.

Similar benefits can also be realized with sportsbetting.

Introducing wireless technology into sportsbook facilities can mean that players need not turn their back on the action just to buy a betting ticket from either an automated kiosk or a manned booth. They can simply hold their hand-held device, place new bets whenever they want, and keep their eyes on the game.

Among other advantages, it also means that punters can easily make additional bets on entirely separate events, without missing a beat on their favourite game on the big screen.

Even the traditional casino environment has massive potential for wireless technology.

Imagine every single gaming machine in a casino of several thousand machines being connected to the Central Monitoring System (CMS) through nothing but wireless connections. The advantages would be tremendous. Machines could more easily be moved from one location to another, and all the hassles of hard-wired connections could be forgotten.

Combined with server-based downloadable games and a cashless payment system, gaming machines using wireless technology would require virtually no physical overhead to operate.

Further still, players equipped with hand-held units could even play their favourite traditional casino games anywhere in the facility – even in the restaurant or by the side of the pool!

Naturally, the decision to go wireless should not be made lightly. There are security matters to consider, which left unchecked could mean leaving critical exposures.

Any hand-held units must be monitored to ensure that they are not taken off of the property.

Also, and more importantly, the wireless network itself must be locked down to prevent unauthorized intrusion. Industry-standard methods such as strong encryption and authentication must be properly implemented in order to provide the network with the protection it needs.

Finally, as always, you should consider the regulatory impact before going wireless.

Many jurisdictions are understandably apprehensive of wireless networks in casinos. Wireless technology is a big jump for regulators to accept, particularly considering the additional security measures that must be put in place in order to protect the integrity and the privacy of the data communications.

Your jurisdiction's regulatory authority may or may not allow wireless networks in their borders.