



**THE CONTEMPORARY CASINO:  
EVOLUTION AND PROTECTION**

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The casino industry is not just about gambling: casinos have become family oriented tourist attraction and are now designated as mega-resorts. Producing a strong income, casinos have become one of the most successful businesses in the United States, and with so many assets, security measures must be continually enhanced. The reader can develop an understanding of the casino industry and the methods used in casino security. Discussion of the history of gambling in the United States as well as the beginnings and development of casinos, leading to these mega-resorts, and the methods of security implemented will show how far this industry has come.

## **HISTORY OF GAMBLING IN THE UNITED STATES**

### **Colonial Period**

Extensive gambling in the United States can be traced back to the time of English colonization. The ships that came to the east coast in the early 1600's were not just Puritans seeking religious freedom or people who wanted to get away from the tyrant called the King; gamblers were also onboard (Barker & Britz, 2000). Forms of gambling brought over by the English and the Dutch were playing cards, dice, and cockfighting. Bear-baiting, which was basically a sport where dogs tortured a chained bear, was also introduced by the British and the Dutch; however, bear-baiting was banned by the Puritans "not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators" (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Puritans prohibited all forms of gambling because it promoted idleness, in other words, it was meaningless to the Puritan way (Barker & Britz, 2000). A Puritan caught gambling could receive a fine or a whipping.

Horseracing and lotteries were also introduced to America during the colonial period. In 1610, the first load of racehorses came to Jamestown. About ten years later in 1620, the colonists developed the quarter mile horse race, which is known as the American style of horse racing (Barker & Britz, 2000). During 1666, in Salisbury Plains (now known as Garden City, Long Island, New York), the very first American racehorse track was built (Barker & Britz). The New York upper class could attend the horse races and place their bets; the lower class was not allowed to attend because they were not considered gentleman. Lotteries were used to raise wealth for the colonies. In fact, the Virginia colony as well as the Jamestown settlement was provided funds by a lottery initiated by the Virginia Company in London, England (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). "All 13 colonies raised funds through lotteries for roads, bridges, jails, churches, libraries, hospitals, and colleges"(Barker & Britz, 2000). Lotteries became a dominant fund provider in the revolutionary period.

### **Revolutionary Period**

When the revolutionary period came about, lotteries' popularity magnified. Lotteries were used to finance construction projects for many colleges such as Harvard, Yale, William & Mary, University of North Carolina, Columbia, Union, Princeton, Brown, and Pennsylvania (Barker & Britz, 2000). Gambling was becoming a way of life in America. Revolutionary troops often played cards and dice; however, card playing within the troops became so prevalent, George Washington forbade the playing of cards and any other form of gambling (Barker & Britz, 2000). Benjamin Franklin was involved with both lotteries and playing cards. He printed and sold

playing cards at his post office as well as developed a lottery to pay for the defense of Philadelphia against Indian attacks (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998).

The Continental Congress, in 1777, engaged in a five million dollar lottery to provide funds for the Revolutionary War; winnings in excess of \$50 were to be collected at a future date. There was lack of good lottery management and most winners did not receive their deserved cash (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Thomas Jefferson enjoyed gambling as well in his younger years; unfortunately, after his presidency, he mounted extreme debt. Desperate for funds, Thomas Jefferson asked permission from the Virginia Legislature to organize a lottery to sell some of his assets in attempt to raise some money. Jefferson was given permission; however, the lottery failed and Jefferson died in major debt (Thompson, 1997). It is in the revolutionary period that we begin to see problems with gambling.

### **Nineteenth Century**

Gambling became a form of entertainment for many people during President Andrew Jackson's term. "Jackson believed that a person's destiny should be controlled by the individual, rather than by elected officials" (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998, p. 2-3). Gambling continued to thrive in America. Cockfights became popular particularly in the south while horse racing was becoming a way of life for Kentuckians (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). A new form of gambling developed in the early 1800's called riverboat gambling, otherwise known as riverboat casinos (Thompson, 1997). These riverboats traveled mostly along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers ending at New Orleans which, in the first half of the nineteenth century, was considered a "gamblers' paradise" (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Gambling houses were also a new form of gambling. New York City in 1850 accounted for 6,000 gambling houses (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998).

The nineteenth century also brought a time of troubles for all forms of gambling. The 1840's marked the beginning of the reform movement. According to Begun, Siegel, and Jacobs (1998), America saw reforms against "tobacco use, profanity, and the transit of mail on Sunday" beginning in 1840 (p. 3). The movement against slavery and women's rights also gained recognition. Gambling, too, was affected greatly during this reform movement. In the 1830's, the newspapers attacked lotteries. The public began to realize, with the help of the newspapers, the corrupt operations of these lotteries. By 1840, very few northern states still allowed lotteries to operate (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). In fact lotteries were becoming extinct. "By 1860, every state in the Nation except Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri had enacted constitutional or statutory prohibitions against lotteries" (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998, p. 3). Horse racing was also hit with great impact because of the Civil War. Horses were needed for the war instead of horse race gambling; therefore, horse racing was ended (Thompson, 1997). Even with gambling being illegal in most states, gambling was still enjoyed in New York, Chicago, and New Orleans. Gamblers achieved this by paying local police officers for protection against being arrested (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). However, gambling never picked up steam till after the Civil War.

Gambling received, or so it was thought, a fresh breath of life after the Civil War. Westward expansion allowed gamblers to move far away from government control as well as the reform

groups that attacked gambling. “Gambling in gold and silver camps became a major entertainment activity for prospectors, miners, and cowboys, with opulent gaming houses springing up in San Francisco, Denver, and Colorado Springs” (Thompson, 1997, p. 10). However, the event of the Louisiana lottery again put gambling into jeopardy. A group from New York asked the Louisiana Legislature for permission to set up a lottery. The Louisiana Treasury, in return, would get \$40,000 annually for 25 years to finance the charity hospital in New Orleans (Thompson, 1997). Bribery of elected officials and legislators made this lottery possible. This lottery allowed players to participate by mail. Congress, in 1890 and 1895, passed federal laws banning postal delivery of lottery related mail (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Therefore, in 1895, the Louisiana lottery was closed. The Louisiana lottery paved the way for more reformation that began early in the twentieth century.

### **Progressive Period**

At the start of the twentieth century, “Progressive reformers had two main goals: to use state power to curb unscrupulous business trusts and to stem the threat of socialism” (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998, p. 5). The progressives affected gambling because their reforms closed gambling houses and a majority of horse tracks. Seven states still permitted horse racing by 1915 (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Although illegal gambling was popular during the twentieth century, by the 1930’s, legalized gambling began to come of age by way of casinos.

## **BEGINNINGS AND DEVELOPMENT OF CASINOS**

### **Legalization of Gambling**

The beginnings of modern day casinos can be found in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Nevada Legislature, from 1910 to 1931, declared gambling illegal. Even though gambling was illegal, lack of law enforcement allowed it to continue throughout these years (Hsu, 1999). A serious event, however, led to the legalization of gambling in Nevada. The Great Depression put the United States in serious economic turmoil. The Nevada Legislature, aware that illegal gambling was a major problem and that the state was in desperate need of economical relief, decided to legalize gambling in an attempt to use the profits it could produce; therefore, in 1931, the Nevada Legislature legalized gambling in the state of Nevada (Hsu, 1999). The first step toward building a strong economy was the construction of the Boulder Dam, also known as the Hoover Dam. This project helped the economy in two ways: it brought jobs (an estimated 5,000 workers) and tourists (Hsu, 1999). These tourists would play an important role in the development of casinos.

### **The First Casinos**

Fremont Street in Las Vegas was considered the first area where casino hotels were built. In 1931, the first casino that was licensed was called the Northern Club; in 1932, the Apache Hotel became the first “luxury” hotel in Las Vegas (Hsu, 1999). However, Guy McAfee decided to build a casino somewhere else. “McAfee opened a casino on Los Angeles Highway and gave the ‘Las Vegas Strip’ its name” (Hsu, 1999, p. 7). Thomas Hull’s El Rancho, the first “resort hotel” in Vegas, paved the way for the development of the “Las Vegas Strip.” The development

of casinos was increasing as Las Vegas was rolling in money. However, the transformation from these recreational casinos to modern day casinos came from the contributions of Benjamin Siegel, also known as Bugsy Siegel. “The crucial event which transformed Las Vegas from a recreational to a full-fledged resort city was Bugsy Siegel’s Flamingo Hotel.... It combined the sophisticated ambiance of a Monte Carlo casino with the exotic luxury of a Miami-Caribbean resort” (Moehring, 1989, p. 49). Thus, modern day casinos were born. In the 1950’s, the strip added several more modern day casinos such as the Sahara (1952), Royal Nevada (1955), The Hacienda (1956), The Tropicana (1957), as well as many others (Hsu, 1999). Las Vegas became a major tourist attraction in the United States.

### **Casino Expansion**

Although Las Vegas was flourishing from the benefits of legalized gambling, that legalization was confined to just Nevada. From 1931 to 1975, Nevada was the only state that allowed legalized gambling. Then, in 1976, New Jersey permitted the licensing of casinos in Atlantic City (Hsu, 1999). Legalized gambling began to spread. In the middle of the 1990’s, card rooms could be found in California, Oregon, Washington, Montana, South Dakota, and Colorado, while riverboat casinos became popular in Illinois, Iowa, Mississippi, and Louisiana (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). One hundred and forty-seven Indian tribes also were allowing gambling establishments on their reservations. Cruises are also adding casino operations to provide passengers with a chance to gamble on the waters (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). The casino industry is becoming one of the biggest businesses in the country attracting vast amounts of tourists per year.

## **THE EMERGENCE OF MEGA-RESORTS**

### **Casinos are “Mega-Resorts”**

Casinos today are not just places to gamble; they have become family entertainment centers. A lot of families with children did not come to casinos; however, these mega-resort casinos have something for everyone. Casinos are trying to compete against many tourists attractions in the United States such as Disneyland and Disney World, theme parks like Kings Dominion and Hershey Park, and cities like New York, Paris, Rome, etc. The more tourists who visit, the more money made and that is the mindset of the casino industry.

### **The Casino**

While these mega-resort casinos have many different themes and attractions, the casino aspect is still the same. In the casino section of these mega-resorts, people can try their luck at a variety of games. Slot machines have become the major game in most casinos. A player puts in a coin and pushes a button or pulls a lever in attempt to hit the “jackpot”. Players can play anywhere from five cents to five hundred dollar machines (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Casinos also have a variety of different table games for people to play. Many of these table games include blackjack, poker, roulette, craps, baccarat, keno, bingo, big six, as well as many others. Statistics show that slot machines are becoming more popular. In 1996, for Nevada and New Jersey casinos, table games amounted to 34% of casino total winnings which is about a 18% decrease

from 1982 (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Slot machine revenue, in contrast, has increased tremendously between 1982 and 1996. In 1982, slot machines took 48% of the total winnings; by 1996, this increased to 66% (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Computerized games are also becoming available in casinos. "Coin-free slots, which began in the VLT market, are being adopted by casinos for some games" (Barker & Britz, 2000, p. 93). Video poker as well as computerized lottery, keno, and bingo are also picking up a tremendous amount in popularity. Gambling is definitely the main attraction for these mega-resort casinos. According to the Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs (1996), in Nevada, "Table 5.2 shows that gaming accounted for 58 percent (\$7.4 billion) of total revenue" (p. 71).

### **Casino Themes**

Mega-resort casinos provide many attractions for the whole family. Most of these casinos take on different themes and build the casino to accommodate that theme. The Mirage casino started the mega-resort idea when it was built in 1989 with a rainforest theme. "The new 87-acre, \$690 million mega-resort "family entertainment center" with a rainforest, an erupting volcano in front, white tigers in a glassed-in habitat, and sharks swimming by the front desk was extravagant even by Las Vegas standards. The five dolphins swimming in their \$14 million, 1.5 million-gallon lagoon came the next year" (Barker & Britz, 2000, p. 46). The Mirage began the new wave of casino. Tourists loved the Mirage because it was not just a casino. It had all of these other attractions that the whole family could enjoy. In 1990, a medieval-themed casino, The Excalibur, opened. Built in the shape of a medieval castle, its employees dressed in medieval period clothes (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998).

Some casinos developed their theme from famous places around the world. The Luxor, with its Egyptian based theme, was built in 1993 in the shape of a pyramid with a replica of the Sphinx ("Las Vegas", 2002). The New York-New York, built in 1997, has replicas of the skyscrapers of the New York skyline as well as the replica of the Statue of Liberty. This casino also has a replica of the Coney Island roller coaster (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). The Paris has a fifty-foot replica of the Eiffel Tower as well as a French theme ("Las Vegas Hotels", 2002). "The new image for Las Vegas appears to successful. In 1991, 21.3 million people visited Las Vegas; by 1994, 28 million people came, and an estimated 29.6 million arrived in 1996" (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998, p. 75).

### **Hotels**

A significant part of the casino industry is the hotel rooms it offers. Casino hotels have a choice of rooms, for example, one bed or two beds, different views from the rooms, etc. The styles of the hotel rooms will depend on the theme of the casino. According to the "Las Vegas Insider" (2002); MGM Grand hotel has 5,005 rooms ranging from \$89.95-\$269.95, The Luxor has 4,472 rooms ranging from \$69.00-\$299.95, The Excalibur has 4,032 rooms ranging from \$49.00-\$229.95, The Bellagio has 3,000 rooms ranging from \$189.95-\$819.95, The Stratosphere Tower has 2,444 rooms ranging from \$41.00-\$289.95, and The Tropicana has 1,900 rooms ranging from \$49.95-\$269.95. Obviously, the cheaper prices pertain to off-season while the more expensive prices pertain to in season. Most hotel rooms will include air conditioning, alarm clock radio, telephone, handicapped accessible, color cable TV, hair dryer, room service, laundry

service, maid service, and door locks. More expensive hotels will provide more types of service or other amenities (“Las Vegas Hotels”, 2002).

### **Entertainment**

Mega-resort casinos thrive from different styles of entertainment, such as magic shows, live concerts, amusement parks, etc. Entertainment features depend on the theme of the casino as well. One type of entertainment found in casinos is theme parks and thrill rides. According to “Las Vegas Hotels” (2002), the Stratosphere Hotel, along with its twelve story high revolving pod, has two different thrill rides: the roller coaster called the High Roller, which starts at 909 feet above the ground, and the Big Shot, which is like a reverse bungee jump. The Las Vegas Hilton developed a partnership with Paramount Parks and constructed a Star Trek entertainment area covering 40,000 square feet (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Another type of entertainment that is found in most casinos is live entertainment. Live shows include: magic shows, concerts, stand up comedians, etc. MGM Grand is considered to be the entertainment capital of the world. MGM Grand has held concerts in the Grand Garden area by performing artists such as Phil Collins, The Rolling Stones, Billy Joel, and Elton John as well as held tennis matches including Andre Agassi and Pete Sampras (“Las Vegas”, 2002). MGM Grand has many theaters with Broadway performances and stand up comedians. Caesar’s Palace has a Circus Maximus Showroom which has live entertainment from magicians, comedians, rock ‘n’ roll bands, circus clowns, and many more (“Las Vegas”, 2002). Circus Circus’s main attraction is the World’s Largest Permanent Circus, which provides many circus acts with tigers, elephants, and clowns (“Las Vegas”, 2002). Live entertainment is seen throughout every casino in all forms.

All casinos have arcades that appeal to children. One most notable arcade is the Sega amusement arcade found in The Luxor. This arcade takes up 20,000 square feet and has all of the Sega arcade games for a child’s enjoyment (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). A majority of casinos offer a child-care center where parents can leave their children under adult supervision while they go to the casino (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998). Dance clubs and night clubs can be found in about every casino where guests can dance to a variety of styles of music such as pop, rock, rap, techno, etc. These clubs may have stand up comedians as well as other entertainers. The bottom line is, no matter what type of entertainment one is looking for, casinos have just about every kind of entertainment imaginable.

### **Shopping and Restaurants**

Casinos make sure they cover all tourists’ shopping and eating needs. “These ‘mega-resorts’ are opening up retail outlets in the hotels to offer the growing number of visitors yet another opportunity to spend their money” (Begun, Siegel, & Jacobs, 1998, p. 75). There are many types of items sold at the retail outlets such as jewelry, clothes, toys, artifacts, sports equipment and many more. Casinos tend to have stores that sell items related to their theme. For example, The Luxor, with its Egyptian theme, has many replicas of artifacts for sale (“Las Vegas”, 2002). Dining is a very important part of a casino as well. All casinos provide a variety of food every thing from fast food chains to five star restaurants. Casinos have all types of food that can be imagined such as hamburgers, steaks, Italian foods, Chinese foods, etc. Casinos, with certain

themes, such as The Paris hotel and The Luxor, will have foods that fit those themes. Some casinos even have famous chefs preparing delicious and tasty meals. If one does not want to gamble, there are plenty of other opportunities for them to spend their money on when your at a casino. With all of these assets, casinos must have security measures to protect them from all types of loss.

## **CASINO SECURITY**

### **Risk Management**

Designing a security system for a casino is not an easy task. The major thing for designers, before designing the casino and the security features, is to assess what needs to be protected. Casino developers engage in the risk management process before they begin to design the casino. The five steps to the risk management process are asset valuation, identification and characterization of threats to specific assets, identification and characterization of vulnerability of specific assets, identify countermeasures, and select cost efficient countermeasures (Hess & Wroblewski, 1998).

The first step of the risk management process is asset valuation. In casinos, there are many assets that need to be protected. According to O'Sullivan (1998), "It should suffice to group assets according to category except where an item is especially attractive (from the point of view of the thief) and valuable. The following categories should include most assets for most companies: land, heavy machinery, office equipment, vehicles, goodwill, raw material, buildings, production equipment, office furniture, cash or other negotiables, public image, and finished product" (p. 82). However, there are some specific assets that stand out and need special attention. Tourists are casinos' major assets. Tourists put a lot of money into a casino; therefore, casinos need to develop a protection system to protect tourists from any kind of harm. Casinos have to make sure that tourists are protected because if something happens to a guest, the image of the casino is going to suffer and business will be severely affected; therefore, the casino will not make any money and have to shut down. The image of the casino and the money in the casino are very important assets as well and need to be protected. All assets in a casino need to be protected; tourists, casino image, and money are the lifeline of the casino and need the most significant protection because harm to any one of these assets could lead to a substantial amount of loss.

The second step of the risk management process is identifying threats related to the assets. There are great numbers of possible threats to casino assets. Employee theft is the most consistent and damaging threat-facing casinos today (Boss & Florence, 2001). In between 1999-2000, 34% of arrestees for theft were casino employees. According to Boss & Florence (2001), some motives for employees to steal from casinos are "the need to pay for high personal debt, a lifestyle that exceeds income, or drug or alcohol abuse" (p. 88). Another threat that is increasing is violent crimes. Robberies by non-employees are becoming a serious threat. Cages could be targeted more often by robbers because of the lack of burglar bars (Gips, 2001). Fire can be the most devastating disaster to the casino business. Assets can burn rapidly and the damage could be significant causing casino closure. All of these threats can cause harm to tourists, casino image, and money; therefore, the threats can damage or halt the casinos operation

Once the threats have been identified, the next step is to assess the probability of threats occurring. This step is considered to be the hardest step of risk management process. “Information must be collected and carefully analyzed to determine its affect on the probability for occurrence” (O’Sullivan, 1998, p. 82). With money being a strong part of the casino industry, theft by employees as well as guests will most likely to occur. The probability of wallets or pocketbooks being stolen is also significantly high because of the high number of tourists who are inside the casino. Although the probability of a fire is very less than the probability of employee theft, fires are still a major concern. According to O’Sullivan (1998), certain, highly probable, moderately probable, and improbable are the probability ratings used in determining vulnerability of threats. Casino developers should assess and research threats to assets from other casinos to help them decide which assets are at the most risk and design the casino security system accordingly.

After the vulnerability of threats has been established, identifying the countermeasures in relation to the probability is the next step. The countermeasures that will be selected are based on dollars and cents. “The most important thing to remember is that dollar losses may be either direct or indirect and that they may be so high as to be crippling” (O’Sullivan, 1998, p. 83). The cost for the countermeasures should be compensated by the results they produce over time. Levels can be assigned to allow a correlation to the four ratings of probability. These levels are very serious, serious, moderately serious, and unimportant (O’Sullivan, 1998). Tourists, casino image, and money would definitely be rated very serious; therefore, effective countermeasures must be implemented to reduce the risk to those assets.

Selecting countermeasures is another step of the risk management process. Casinos are implementing many types of countermeasures to handle risks that have made a significant presence. Countermeasures such as CCTV cameras and security officers have become a popular trend in casinos in protecting tourists as well as money. The professionalism of the security officers helps maintain a strong casino image. Fire alarms and sprinkler systems are also a popular countermeasure in protecting a casino from fires. Casinos have to make sure that the countermeasures selected are reliable and cost efficient; the countermeasures must also produce positive results.

The final step of the risk management process is the evaluation of the selected countermeasures. Testing countermeasures’ effectiveness in different conditions such as weather, day or night time, and during heavy traffic of tourists, will allow designers to see if these countermeasures as appropriate. Designers might have to repeat the risk management process if certain countermeasures perform ineffectively. Once effective countermeasures have been selected and evaluated, casino designers can begin with developing blueprints of the casino.

### **CPTED**

When designing a casino, many casinos use ideas for security development from the concept of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). According to Crowe (1991), “CPTED is based on the theory that the proper design and effective use of the built environment can reduce the incidence and fear of crime and make an improvement in the quality of life” (p. 84). CPTED is very important during the blueprint phase of designing a casino because

difficulties in design can be found and corrected. Casinos are faced with different difficulties during the building process. One major difficulty is meeting standards of local and state as well as federal agencies. The Paris in Las Vegas was required by the Nevada State Commission to have every gaming table monitored by cameras; however, the ceiling was forty feet high (Anderson, 2001). The Paris faced other difficulties: such as the design of the control room, camera placements, wiring, and housing configurations (Anderson, 2001). CPTED concepts help designers' position physical security components throughout the casino; therefore, ensuring that the casino will be safe and the risk of loss will be reduced.

### **Security-in-Depth**

Most casinos, after construction is completed, are constructed in a barrier design known as the security-in-depth concept. According to O'Sullivan (1998), "Security-in-depth is a military concept that means placing a series of progressively more difficult obstacles in the path of an aggressor. These obstacles are often referred to as 'lines of defense'" (p. 83). The three lines of defense are property line, building exterior, and building interior.

### **Property Line**

The first line of defense for casinos is the property line. Natural or man-made methods can be utilized in this defense line. "Additionally the barrier maybe psychological or physical. At a very minimum, the property boundary must be defined in some way that separates it from its neighbors" (O'Sullivan, 1998, p. 83). Streetlights are one type of boundary used by casinos. One major operator of streetlights is the MGM Grand. Streetlights are placed along the property line to ensure tourists and guests safety while walking at night without worrying about being robbed or attacked. A number of casinos use fences to outline the property as well. This forces people to enter at the main entrance; therefore, criminals will only be able to get in the casino at the main entrance where security officers can monitor suspicious behavior. Other boundaries may be trees, big rocks, etc. Roads help deter criminal activity along the property line because vehicles are traveling on them constantly giving criminals little chance at engaging in an act of crime.

Inside the property line are parking lots and garages, which are monitored by cameras as well as security officers. According to Baum (1999), The Bellagio has "security in the parking garages - two structures, one on the grounds with 600 spaces and an adjacent one for 2,500 vehicles - includes 78 cameras. Two-way phones from Sprint Las Vegas, and panic alarms from Infographics Systems, Los Alamitos, Calif. are installed throughout the garages" (p. 16). Most casinos have all the grounds outside of the casino covered with cameras and with sprinkler systems in case of fires. The first line of defense is effective in deterring crime; however, it is not perfect.

### **Building Exterior**

The second line of defense is the building exterior. "Strong, locked doors and windows, limited entrances, secured openings, alarms, surveillance, and lighting help establish the physical security of a buildings exterior" (Hess & Wroblecki, 1996, p. 105). All entrances at casinos,

whether it is walls, the roof, or floor, are under surveillance by Closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras. CCTV cameras are designed to monitor several areas simultaneously while avoiding the high cost of security officers to do the same task (O'Sullivan, 1998). Most CCTV cameras in casinos are equipped with video tape recording and pan/tilt/zoom features; therefore, one camera can move horizontally, vertically, zooming in or out, and record the actions in the area. CCTV cameras are good for tracking and identifying possible suspects.

Access control of employees is a major concern for security. The Bellagio employees have photo access cards to use at a specific entrance for clocking in and out. These cards have multiple functions such as allowing the employees access to the casino, notify them of their drivers' license close to expiration, or letting them know that their CPR training needs to be updated (Baum, 1999). Proper lighting is also essential to casino security. According to Hess & Wroblewski (1996), "The alley, the rear of the building and all entry points should be lit" (p. 109). Casinos have many lights placed on the building walls and corners; thus, all of these places can be properly monitored. However, "because no perimeter or building exterior can be 100-percent secure, internal physical controls are usually required as well" (Hess & Wroblewski, 1996, p. 109).

### **Building Interior**

Interior security is the last and most important defense line for casinos. The interior of a casino has all the important assets that need to be protected. Most of the criminal acts, such as employee theft, robberies, and some violent crimes, reported in casinos are inside the building; therefore, a wide variety of security measures must be implemented. Countermeasures such as CCTV cameras, security officers, and fire protection devices are the heart of the security system found in the building interior.

The CCTV cameras have become a major security countermeasure against both employee and guest theft. According to Baum (1999), The Bellagio's CCTV system includes: 1,650 Sanyo cameras placed in domes, monitors from Sony, and VCRs from Sanyo. These cameras run into one of the two monitoring rooms where security personnel can examine players as well as other people. The Venetian has about 1,200 CCTV cameras. The cameras inside the casino are joystick manipulated so that security can track suspicious guests (Etheridge, 1999). CCTV cameras can pick up cheating techniques by players, violent crime incidents, and employee theft. "At one casino, a surveillance officer saw a blackjack dealer straighten the chips and then leave without making the proper gestures. A live audit was initiated, as well as a review of recent CCTV tapes. They revealed that the dealer had previously stolen from the gaming table on at least two occasions" (Boss & Florence, 2001, p. 88). New technology is coming out to work with the CCTV cameras in efforts to recognize suspicious guests at a faster rate. "The Sony RSE 500 transmits over ISDN phone lines. It serves as the hardware midpoint between the casinos' CCTV matrix and the ISDN, allowing digitalized live images from the gaming floor to be transmitted directly between the casinos" (Etheridge, 1999, p. 25). With this new device, casinos can contact each other and find out information about a suspicious person in a matter of minutes.

Another major role player in the third line of defense is the security officer. Casino security officers have many different tasks. According to Etheridge (1999), security officers at The

Venetian perform many tasks: such as patrolling among the tourists and at the main doors as well as the casino floor, and assisting guests with information while looking for potential problems. When a person walks into a casino, chances are the first person he or she will meet is a security officer. Security officers have a crucial role in protecting a casino's image. They must be neat and organized while being able to serve and please the customer. The security officer must make sure that a great first impression is created with the customer so he or she would be likely to return again to the casino. Security officers also aid the surveillance systems by patrolling all areas of the casino. Security officers and surveillance teams need good liaison when tracking down a suspect spotted on CCTV. Good liaison with the local authorities is also very important. Meetings between local authorities and casino security members allow the groups to exchange updates crime levels, security operations, etc (Etheridge, 1999). Security officers accompany personnel while money is being moved anywhere on site, such as loading money in an armored car for a bank deposit (Etheridge, 1999).

Security officers are now engaging in more training. The dreaded incident of seven-year-old Sherrice Iverson, who was raped and strangled by Jeremy Strohmeier in a bathroom at the Primadona, caused a new training program for casino security officers. "Officers are taught the behavior cues of pedophiles and other child predators, as well as the general signs of child abuse or child neglect" (Etheridge, 1999, p. 53). The Venetian security officers must complete a list of training courses before their probationary period is over. "Training for both proprietary and contract security officers includes casino operations, report writing, patrol routes, basic law, arrest law, handcuffing techniques, use of force, first aid, CPR, and water rescue. Training also includes public relations and diplomacy" (Etheridge, 1999, p. 56). Security officer training is being practiced by more casinos to ensure that all of the assets, especially tourists, money, and casino image, are protected and losses are held to a minimum.

Fire protection is another countermeasure utilized by casinos. Casinos are taking precautions on the chance that a fire could commence. According to Baum (1999), The Bellagio has a "state of the art fire alarm system with two control centers- a main fire command center and another in the monitoring room. A sprinkler system covers the property and officers are trained in fire fighting" (p. 16). Fire alarms are spaced out within the casino and help protect all of the people present in the casino if a fire were to initiate. Liaison between the local fire department and the casinos helps result in a effective countermeasure against fires. Casinos are utilizing effective cost efficient countermeasures to protect their assets as well as their business.

### **Detection, Delay, and Response**

A casino security system must perform three main functions known as detection, delay, and response. These functions are very important in asset protection. Detection means the discovery of an adversary action (Garcia, 1999). Physical security systems need to be able to detect an action not wanted in a casino. Surveillance employees as well as patrol officers can detect criminal acts, such as violent crime and theft. A fire can be detected by an installed fire system. Quick and precise detection is necessary because the primary goal of the security system is safety and asset protection.

The second function of a security system is delay. Delay means to slow down the adversary action by barriers, locks, or activated delays (Garcia, 1999). In a casino, the casino game tables and slot machines, the traffic of people, as well as the number of security guards can delay a thief. These delays do not allow the thief a chance to gain good speed and movement giving the security officers the upper hand in catching the adversary. Fires can be delayed by a sprinkler system until the fire department arrives.

The third and final function of the security system is response. Response means the action taken to stop and apprehend the adversary (Garcia, 1999). An effective and quick response shows the tourists that the casinos security system is very well structured and organized as well as showing that safety and protection is the primary goal. The fire department arriving to put out the fire is another example of response. A casino security system must be able to protect all of the assets present in a casino as well as allow the casino to have continued success.

## CONCLUSION

The casino industry has developed tremendously since the 1930's. The development of these mega-resorts shows a breed of new casinos where all family members can visit. While casinos are becoming centers of mass entertainment, security departments are doing their part in protecting the assets of the industry. Casinos will only become larger as they continue to implement new ideas and new tourist attractions into their business.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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