

PROFILE

Name: Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

Location: Santa Cruz, California

Founded: 1907

www.beachboardwalk.com

CHALLENGE

Challenged by spiking visitor volume, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk sought new POS technology to speed transactions at its food concessions to serve more customers and grow bottom-line profits.

SOLUTION

Adopt Revention POS with Epson TM-T88V, TM-U220 and Mobilink P20 printers for faster, more reliable food ordering and receipt printing—in the restaurant or on the go.

Life is a Beach at The Boardwalk

With Best-of-Breed POS Technology, Feeding the Masses is a Day at the Beach at the Historic Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

The iconic Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk is a modern-day melding of history and technology. Built in 1907, the 24-acre amusement park is home to 34 rides and attractions (including two national historic landmarks), casual restaurants, gift shops, indoor arcades, laser tag and miniature golf, serving 3 million visitors a year. Unlike newer theme parks owned by investor-backed resort operators, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk is owned by the Santa Cruz Seaside Company, a private family business whose goal is to preserve the flavor of the historical site while investing in infrastructure to ensure a memorable experience for visitors of all ages.

2007 marked the Boardwalk's 100th anniversary, and the property has seen record-setting gross revenues each year since. "Our visitors come for the memories," said Monty Matteson, POS Systems Administrator. "We have 80 year-old patrons who proposed to their wives on the merry-go-round and return with their grandkids to reminisce." The temperate ocean climate is also a plus. "When the needle hits 100 degrees in the Central Valley, we've got a pleasant 78 degrees here," he said.

Food sales deliver a large slice of the Boardwalk's profitability. With the highest volumes of seasonal visitors coming on holiday weekends and pleasant summer days, POS system downtime delivers a huge blow. "We have a fixed number of days where we make the majority of our revenue—Labor Day, Memorial Day,



Fourth of July—so how fast we take POS transactions dictates what's going to the bottom line. If we make an extra \$10K that day because we can support more throughput, that's direct profit," he said.

With responsibility for five fast casual restaurants, two quick service concessions and a bevy of specialty food carts, keeping up with peak volume was impossible with the Boardwalk's old POS system, built on a closed POS architecture and cloud-based network plagued by chronic failures. "We're a huge property and one little network hiccup would take the entire system down," observed Matteson. He knew he needed a POS system with a modern architecture and network that could run all the Boardwalk's food businesses while taking increased volume and mobile transactions in stride.

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— MONTY MATTESON, POS SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR
SANTA CRUZ BEACH

Reinventing POS with Revention and Epson

Matteson turned to Revention of Houston, Texas, a provider of complete food service POS systems for QSR, fast casual, fine dining, bars and more. After a visit with developers in Houston, Matteson was convinced the Revention solution, including Epson's industry-leading receipt and kitchen printers, fit the bill for the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, with plenty of room to grow. The Revention system supported customized, easy-to-use order screens and a centralized database that enabled tracking loyalty points and sales revenues for each restaurant concession.

"We wanted a nimble POS provider willing to customize the application to fit our needs," noted Matteson, "and more responsive service was a critical requirement." Revention's open-architecture platform supports the latest networking technologies and the system's on-premise network includes access points across the property to ensure smooth and fast wireless POS transactions from any Boardwalk location.

Matteson had used Epson printers with his prior POS system, but chose to replace them as part of the technology upgrade in 2016. The new Epson printers display the Revention logo for a more unified look. "Our existing Epson printers still worked perfectly, but we wanted to improve our POS cosmetics. So we upgraded to new Epson models that match our sleek, dark grey POS terminals," he said. "Epson is the industry standard for POS printers. Period. There is not a system I know of that doesn't use Epson."

Solid Performance, Wired or Wireless

Today, the Boardwalk's array of food concessions are powered by more than 40 Revention POS terminals, with Epson's reliable, best-selling TM-T88V thermal receipt printers at the counters and heat-resistant TM-U220 impact printers in the kitchens. They also use tablets with ultra-compact Mobilink P20 handheld printers for on-the-go Bluetooth mobile receipt printing at food carts and special events.

Since adopting the Revention POS system with Epson printers, training Boardwalk staff has become a faster and simpler task. "Being a seasonal business, we have a large influx of new

employees at the start of every season. With the new POS system, training has gotten a lot easier for new staff to pick up," noted Mattison. Since the system upgrade, he estimates a 95% reduction in software support time and costs. "Our new system requires far less backend support and maintenance, and labor costs have dropped substantially," he said. Among the many benefits of the new system, Matteson cites the speed, reliability and ease of use of the Epson printers as a definite cost-saving advantage.

Preserve the Past, Create the Future

The Boardwalk management team continually looks for ways to grow revenues and offer an improved experience to keep visitors coming back. "Events are a growing revenue source for us," Matteson noted. "We hold a lot of seasonal events to draw people to the Boardwalk—like our Free Friday Night Bands on the Beach concert series and Holiday Train Rides—so having reliable mobile POS technology that makes it easy for people to buy tickets, merchandise or food and beverages, opens up new possibilities for event locations and new services we can offer."

A \$12.5 million renovation of the park is now underway, including a new restaurant concept expected to be both popular and profitable. In 2017, Matteson plans to add new, tablet-based POS stations for line busting, to speed credit card transactions at stores, restaurants and special events. Steady growth and profitability have enabled the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk to embrace best-of-breed technology to keep the property fresh and current, while preserving the history and sense of nostalgia that make a visit to the Boardwalk a truly unique—and quintessentially Santa Cruz—beach experience.

"Epson has always been rock solid. Why look at other brands when Epson meets all of our needs?"

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