

NetEffect is a Las Vegas-based leader in Information Technology. NetEffect provides a wide range of IT services to Treasure Island including:

- 24x7 helpdesk ticketing
- Password resets and account unlocks
- Desktop troubleshooting including printer and drive mappings
- 24x7 system monitoring and alerting
- 24x7 application monitoring
- Weekly and monthly system availability reports
- Customized helpdesk ticketing software
- System administration management tools for in-house IT staff

NetEffect & Treasure Island Hotel & Casino *Efficiency, Value, and Performance*



For thousands of visitors to Las Vegas, the T.I. (Treasure Island) Hotel & Casino is one of the iconic landmarks of the Las Vegas Strip.

But for Dominic Vacca, IT Executive Director for the hotel-casino, and his 16-person team supporting over 100 servers, nearly 200 network devices, and over 3,000 employees, ensuring the uninterrupted technology behind the hotel and casino is a formidable challenge.

“We implement and support nearly every piece of technology at the property, and T.I. requires continuous uptime, especially when it comes to guest services,” says Vacca.

Not surprisingly, the property’s IT needs have evolved with its history. When MGM Mirage sold the property in 2009, T.I. had to build its own technology support team, and it has been evolving ever since. Says Vacca, “It’s been a challenge to build our support systems, but it’s been rewarding. We have a solid team in place, and we’re proud of what we’ve accomplished over the last few years.”

Identifying and Addressing The IT Challenges

Behind the neon and bright lights that are part and parcel of a Las Vegas Strip icon, T.I. has a wide array of complex systems that are totally dependent on their technology infrastructure.

“Even a very small problem with a network device, server, or application could result in a serious disruption to our business,” Vacca explains. “Our IT staff is tasked with managing a very complex set of interdependent systems, requiring the use of complex tools for monitoring, alerting, and reporting.”

In the past, T.I. used standard off-the-shelf monitoring and alerting tools including Microsoft’s System Center Operations Manager (SCOM) and WhatsUp Gold, but their staff used these tools reactively; addressing problems only after something went wrong. A proactive approach to IT is always preferable, and monitoring tools require a dedicated person to fully leverage the tools for proactive monitoring; however daily IT activities and responsibilities typically result in a lack of focus on monitoring tools.

“Our IT department shouldn’t be in the business of managing complex infrastructure management tools, we should be serving the IT needs of the business.” says Vacca.

Thus began Vacca’s search for a service provider to manage the monitoring, alerting, and reporting for his infrastructure, and to provide help desk services to give T.I. improved metrics on the types of calls they were receiving.

And of course, given the highly regulated nature of the gaming industry, T.I. also required an IT service provider who could participate in the management of their gaming control board regulated systems.

Finding the 'I.T.' Solution for T.I.

That search led Vacca to NetEffect, a Las Vegas-based leader in outsourced IT solutions.

"If you're going to provide great service to disparate networks and organizations all over the valley, you have to master some pretty sophisticated Enterprise-class tools," explains NetEffect CEO Jeff Grace. "We've invested a lot of time and money over the years developing our processes to effectively monitor, manage, and report on a wide array of system conditions for our clients.

"So when the challenge came from T.I., we were well-prepared to meet their IT needs."

Grace adds that his company offers a service called "Streamline/IT" to supplement organizations with in-house IT. "We partner with clients to provide their in-house IT staff with the tools they need to more effectively manage their IT assets," he says. "We also offer clients a customized ticketing solution that greatly benefits their IT staff, the organization's end users, and management. The tools we use are typically out of reach for most organizations."

But by partnering with clients, NetEffect works in the same ticketing system, and seamlessly picks up the overflow, whether from skillset gaps or staff shortages. "Bottom line is that Streamline/IT allows our clients with in-house IT to accomplish a lot more by reducing the load on in-house IT staff," says Grace.

Meeting Great Expectations with Great IT Solutions

"NetEffect clearly had the experience and expertise we were looking for," says Tim Frawley, an IT consultant working with T.I. "They had a genuine interest in learning the systems and processes, as well as the willingness to apply for a gaming license, which is no small task."

For its part, NetEffect experienced one of its defining corporate moments when, on December 22, 2011, the Nevada Gaming Commission amended Regulation 5, allowing for licensure of IT service providers to work on gaming-related systems.

"This was a perfect alignment of a client need and one of our core competencies: network monitoring," says Grace, "I knew we could hit this out of the park." NetEffect completed the rigorous application process in three months, and became the first IT service provider to be granted a gaming license by the Nevada Gaming Commission on July 26, 2012.

With its newly minted status as a Las Vegas IT service provider with a gaming license, NetEffect now had the capacity to monitor the services or processes tied to gaming-related applications, automatically restart them if they stop, as well as proactively alert IT staff 24x7 – no small feat, indeed.

Solving IT Problems, and Preventing Others

NetEffect also provides Treasure Island with an Enterprise-class ticketing system customized exactly for their use.

"The ticketing system provides a lot of value to us," says Pete Small, Treasure Island Information Technology Operations Manager, "we now know how much time our techs are working on support tickets, and we can generate reports that quickly identify the top issues. Our service tickets are customized to where we can even see which software packages are giving us the most trouble. It's easy to see where our biggest problems are."

The data collected also allows NetEffect to provide availability and performance reports on these applications. "The gaming license allows us to go far beyond up/down status, drive space, CPU, and memory," says Grace. "We can help gaming properties achieve better uptime of their gaming applications. Frankly, we can greatly assist them to bolster their own bottom line."

The Result – An IT Partnership That Improves Efficiency And Provides Value

The result of Treasure Island partnering with NetEffect is a technology partnership Treasure Island can leverage for greater efficiencies, higher system availability, and valuable information to properly allocate resources. T.I. receives access to best-in-class monitoring and management tools, and they leave the complex management and configuration tasks of that software to the IT experts at NetEffect.

"I've wanted to partner with a technology service provider for years," says Vacca. "We're very good at managing IT, but we operate in a relatively isolated way. Now we have access to tools and information we've never had before. And the fact that NetEffect is licensed by the Nevada Gaming Commission allows them to help with the systems that matter most to Treasure Island."

As with any successful partnership each party must understand and strive to meet the needs of the other. As the IT partner to one of Las Vegas' most iconic hotel-casinos, NetEffect does exactly that – every day of every week.

ABOUT NETEFFECT

NetEffect is a privately held, full-service provider of computer and information technology support and consulting services. Founded in 2002, and based in Las Vegas, NetEffect attained the first Service Provider license by the Nevada Gaming Control Board in July, 2012. The company is located at 5575 S. Durango Drive, Suite 110, Las Vegas, NV 89113. For more information, contact NetEffect at (702) 318-7700 or visit the firm's website at www.neteffect-it.com.

