

# Case Study Sam's Town Tunica



## The Client

Sams's Town Hotel & Gambling Hall is a full service casino, hotel, resort and golf destination located in Tunica County, Mississippi, just south of Memphis. The property consists of a 75,000 square foot casino, 800 guestrooms, three restaurants, a convention center and assorted recreation and leisure activities. Sam's Town Tunica is a unit of Boyd Gaming Corporation (NYSE:BYD), one of the most geographically diversified companies in the gaming industry. Boyd owns and operates 13 gaming facilities in six states, including The Borgata in Atlantic City and The Stardust in Las Vegas.

*LRA and Sam's Town introduce PRIME Customer Experience Program*

## The Situation

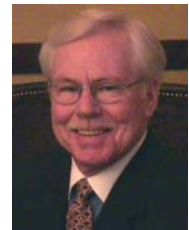
Legalized gambling was approved in Tunica County by the Mississippi legislature in 1990, and Sam's Town was one of the first properties to be developed shortly thereafter. For a number of years, the property performed extremely well, generating outstanding financial returns. In recent years, a number of other gaming companies entered the market, building newer properties in arguably superior locations.

Several of these casinos are owned by experienced operators, and they offer an exciting gaming environment in clean and crisp facilities. They presented a compelling alternative to Sam's Town. These newer properties also heavily recruit from the same employee base, and attract talent that might otherwise have been employed at Sam's Town. Sam's Town leadership position in this market was threatened.

## The Solution

Using employee and management feedback, LRA drafted mission and vision statements for Sam's Town Tunica. These statements set the theme and goal of the new "PRIME" customer service-oriented culture. The PRIME concept was derived from the Sam's Town Prime Rewards Frequent Player Card, which was introduced at Sam's Town during 2003. LRA and Sam's Town conducted a process mapping exercise to document the various customer service encounters for each guest contact position. The mission and vision statements were then incorporated into the standards. LRA shopped competing casinos to identify their customer service attributes and benchmark against Sam's Town. LRA designed and wrote the content and curriculum for the new PRIME Training Program. PRIME Training consists of four modules, with the 1<sup>st</sup> module focused on customer service culture, positive guest behavior, and a certification program for the entire staff. This was backed up by Module 2 that reinforced the PRIME concepts, and taught the importance of teamwork, and introduced service recovery techniques. Modules 3 and 4 are both scheduled to be implemented during Q3 and Q4, 2004. LRA conducted train-the-trainer sessions with internal training leaders, to position them to sustain this initiative. LRA also designed a rigorous quality assurance and mystery-shopping program to measure compliance with the standards and track continuous progress in all departments.

*The PRIME Program that LRA is helping us develop is much more than a typical customer service program; we are fundamentally changing the way we do business at Sam's Town, in our continuing effort to deliver winning customer experiences."*



*Gordon Morris, Director of Customer Service, Sam's Town Tunica*



## The Results

As a result of the renewed concentration on improving the customer experience, guest satisfaction scores as measured by an independent research company have improved over 10 percent at the property, and customer complaint rates have declined by 40 percent in direct customer contact areas. The performance gaps identified in the quality assurance program are being reduced and, in some cases, eliminated. A high-energy launch of the PRIME training program has created a property-wide buzz. Employee rallies and mentions in the employee newsletter have provided additional attention. Job descriptions and responsibilities for the property's managers now require them to model and enforce compliance with the PRIME standards, thereby increasing consistency and compliance levels. Positive employee behaviors are now being modeled, using humor, while undesirable behavior incompatible with the PRIME Service Philosophy is highlighted and discouraged.



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