

CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of Electronic Engineering

Fall 2007

New Radio System a Sure Bet for Meskwaki Casino

For years Meskwaki Hotel & Casino in Tama, Iowa, had been struggling with reliable communication. There were coverage issues inside the casino because of electronic interference creating dead spots where their two-way radios were useless. The buildings' steel construction combined with all of the overhead cable needed for slot machines, closed circuit television and electrical service was also absorbing radio signals. In the end, there was not enough coverage for all the different talk groups that needed to communicate, such as security, engineering, slots and the hotel.



Scott Knutson, Director of Security at Meskwaki

“We were dying. Customer service was coming to a screeching halt. Everything moves in a casino with the use of a radio,” said Scott Knutson, Director of Security for Meskwaki. “Our communication system, prior to working with Electronic Engineering, was as close as you can get to two tin cans on a string.”

Meskwaki had been using a non-Motorola trunking system for about two years. SMR trunking allows a large number of talk groups to use a limited number of repeaters. Their existing system would only allow two conversations at a time and should have allowed ten. They were experiencing numerous problems that their existing dealer was unable to resolve. So they put in a call to Electronic Engineering.

EE Communication Consultant, Rich Weiss of Ames, thought he would be meeting with one or two casino officials. Weiss was surprised to see that every Meskwaki department head had shown up at the meeting to vent their frustration on a lack of radio coverage. Weiss said, “They felt like they had been given toys instead of tools. The radios they were using did not have the durability of a 24-hour casino operation.”

Within a matter of days, Electronic Engineering was hired by Meskwaki to do a “Sight Study” to



From one location, Meskwaki dispatchers can answer radio calls from all departments.

find a solution to their radio coverage and equipment reliability issues. EE's Vice-President of Engineering, Richard Burt and Roger Schlenker, EE's Telecom Analyst, conducted the study and presented their recommendation. The most important piece of the puzzle was an indoor “Distributed Antenna System.”

Continued on page 3.

2

Race for the Cure

3

The Truth About Cell Phones and the National Do Not Call Registry

4

Employee Profile

Product Spotlight

RAZR²

The Motorola RAZR² takes the revolutionary RAZR phone to a new level of sophistication and function. And it takes the slim RAZR profile and makes it even sleeker.

Features:

- Touch-sensitive buttons on external display for camera, music and voice activated dialing.
- Large external key pad
- :45 video clips
- Web and email capable
- Bluetooth®
- GPS enabled



A Letter From The President



I always enjoy being able to talk about a current event within the telecommunications sector with you, and an interesting event happened recently – that was – “this is a major event, something good to share”

We all know that cellular phones service providers have this “contract thing”- sign up for two years, and if you try to cancel they want both a lot of money and possibly even one of your children as a penalty. While I do understand the marketing aspect of – IF we provide you a free or heavily discounted phone then we want your loyalty and a chance to make back the cost of the equipment via your monthly service fees and usage. It does still offend my sensibilities as it is like buying a car for a greatly lower price, but then for the next two years – you can only buy their gasoline (at \$5 per gallon).

Another item is that many also have a caveat that if you want to change your price plan in six months (you love the service, and just want to use more, more, and even more minutes each month), the reward for you changing your plan – it that the contract is now extended from the original date, to the date you made the change, effectively adding months or even a year to that contract “penalty” end date. After the two years initial contract time frame, some companies immediately go on a month to month contract, some lock into one year contracts if not notified of an intent to cancel, etc.

It was just announced by one of the major carriers that now if you decide to change your price plan (monthly fee, included minutes) your contract end date will not change or be extended. That is huge. It also could be risky for them. They could lose those customers at the end of the contract period to another company. However, what a great business model – stay with us because you like our service, we give you fair, accurate billing and our tower service is great – we do not have to bind you to us with a contract with a stiff cancellation policy.

It is actually what we have done with our paging and two way radio business for years, no contracts, keep the service as long as it works and provides value to you, cancel when it changes. Has it been risky for us? Yes, we have lost some revenue that would have been collected if in a fixed contract, but it was the right thing to do. Having contracts that provide handcuffs on customers is not nearly as appropriate as holding hands and strong handshakes with customers as we are providing mutually beneficial products and services that have value. Let’s hope this catches on and is implemented by other cell carriers, as this would be a true win for the cellular consumer.

Thanks for your business, and we’ll talk to you next quarter.

Mark Clark

Race for the Cure

For the past several years, Electronic Engineering and its employees have been active supporters of race for the Cure, the Susan B. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and its related activities.

The company has provided two-way radio communication for the Race, donated funds, sponsored a fund raising “Jean Week”, and have had many employees walk in the race over the years.

This year, the Race for the Cure in Des Moines was held on Saturday, October 6.

EE/DSM contributions for the event totaled over \$800, with the company matching that dollar amount.

Electronic Engineering Locations

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|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Des Moines (515) 283-1100 | 1100 Keo Way (800) 343-3998 | Marshalltown (641) 752-0778 | 913 Iowa Avenue E. (800) 345-2540 |
| Ames (515) 232-5385 | 2220 E. Lincoln Way (800) 343-7718 | Mason City (641) 423-6818 | 608 S. Delaware (800) 343-2688 |
| Cedar Rapids (319) 364-1900 | 1900 6th Street S.W. (800) 762-0795 | Mt. Pleasant (319) 385-7650 | 126 N. Main Street (800) 458-2355 |
| Davenport (563) 322-0981 | 1354 W. 4th Street (800) 322-0981 | Omaha (402) 346-5123 | 13704 P Street (800) 315-3579 |
| Fort Dodge (515) 576-2411 | 2411 5th Avenue S. (800) 343-3405 | Sioux City (712) 258-5234 | 500 W. 20th Street (800) 243-3756 |
| Fremont (402) 727-5115 | 339 N. Broad Street (800) 427-2185 | Waterloo (319) 235-5556 | 750 Ansborough (800) 365-9702 |

New Radio System a Sure Bet for Meskwaki Casino (Cont.)

EE Installation Technicians would hang almost a 1,000 feet of transmission line throughout the ceiling of the casino area. Then multiple antennas, attached about every 50 feet to the transmission line, could deliver a quality radio signal throughout the casino.

Additionally, EE also determined that Meskwaki's existing two-way radio system could not be made reliable. So the recommendation was to replace their existing trunk system with a Motorola Passport system that would deliver greater reliability as well as additional features and security. Meskwaki approved the proposal.

In January of this year, Electronic Engineering technicians began installing the distributive antenna system, while the trunking infrastructure for Meskwaki was being manufactured and assembled. Another EE crew was working on configuration of a communications console, similar to ones used by law enforcement centers in every county. That would allow Meskwaki Security personnel to dispatch from a single location, instead of using multiple base stations and multiple microphones, depending on the department they were trying to reach. Other EE

employees were meeting with Meskwaki to determine what programming was needed for the 175 portable radios and four base stations that had been ordered.

In mid-April, the Motorola trunking system was delivered – assembled and programmed in a separate location outside of Meskwaki. This allowed for talk groups to be determined and radios tested before being installed on-site and being inter-connected with the new antenna system. The communication console was put in place and, finally, at 5am on May 16, 2007, Meskwaki Hotel & Casino's new communication system went LIVE and all departments—including over 40 talk groups—began using their new Motorola HT1250LS+ portable radios.

“The day we did the switchover, it was seamless. I had lost a lot of sleep over it but it turned out to be a piece of cake. Your people made the transition really easy,” said Meskwaki Director of Security, Scott Knutson.

Electronic Engineering technicians and staff from several branches including Des Moines, Ames, Fort Dodge, Mason City and Marshalltown were involved with making the Meskwaki project a success.

Find Your Way Without Missing a Call.

The Motorola T815 smartphone based navigation system adds turn-by-turn GPS navigation to any compatible Bluetooth® phone. Whether you're driving to the hottest new restaurant or trying to find the nearest pharmacy, the T815



dash mounted navigation device will get you there. Complete with spoken directions and on-screen maps.

Plus, the T815 helps you find updated traffic information and will even save and manage your favorite locations so you don't have to convert anything to memory – it will do it for you.

T815 comes complete with:

- A car charger
- Phone holder
- Visor clip and dash mount
- MOTONAV memory card

For instant solutions to all of your wireless needs, including GPS navigation, visit Electronic Engineering today.

The Truth About Cell Phones and the National Do Not Call Registry

If you've received an e-mail saying that your cell phone is about to be assaulted by telemarketing calls because of a new cell phone number database, rest assured that this is not the case. Telemarketing to cell phone numbers has always been illegal in most cases and will continue to be so.

- Telemarketers are prohibited from using automated dialers to call cell phone numbers. Automated dialers are common, so telemarketers are barred from calling consumers on their cell phones without consent.
- The federal government doesn't maintain a national cell phone registry. Consumers can add home or cell phone numbers to the registry online at www.donotcall.gov or calling toll-free 1-888-382-1222 from the telephone number they wish to register. There is no cut-off date or deadline for registrations.
- Business-to-business calls are not covered under the Registry.

For more information, go to:

<http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2004/04/dnc.shtm>

<http://www.snopes.com/politics/business/cell411.asp>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Do_Not_Call_Registry

Electronic Engineering Employee Profile



Name: Mike Carroll

EE location: Davenport

Job title: Branch Manager

Job history: After graduating from Texas State University, I started working for Motorola as a Government Sales Rep. I worked in a number of management positions during my 13 year tenure before buying a Motorola dealership in 1997. In 2005, Electronic Engineering purchased my company and I am now the Branch Manager in the Davenport location.

My first "real" job: At the age of 16, my first real paying job was as a Starter at Northern Hills Golf Course in Rochester, MN making \$3.65 per hour.

Recent accomplishments: This past summer I passed the ASA "American Softball Association" Certification. I am now an official ASA umpire. I have been umpiring girl's fast pitch tournaments on the weekends and men's slow pitch games in the evenings.

The toughest part of my job: Losing a good employee to another company. Then finding a qualified replacement and getting them up to speed fast enough to keep our customers happy.

Someone I admire: My Father. He is a very charitable man. He helped my mother raise five children while being a great provider and educator of right and wrong. He always had time to attend sporting events or just play catch with us in the back yard.

About my family: I have been married to my wife and best friend Jodi, for 22 years. We have two daughters, Natalie,

a junior at the University of Northern Iowa and Brianna, a senior at Bettendorf High School.

Something else I'd like to accomplish: I would like to get both of our girls through college, build on our retirement fund and teach Jodi to play golf. Then we can enjoy the next stage of our life, "The Empty Nest" and retirement years.

Something about me not everyone knows: I come from a Professional Baseball family. My Grandfather, Owen Carroll, was a professional baseball player. He pitched for the Brooklyn Dodgers, Cincinnati Reds and the Detroit Tigers. After his retirement he became the head coach of the Seton Hall University baseball team for many years. Upon his death, the University named the baseball stadium after him.

4

Can You Guess the Year?

- Sputnik 1 falls to Earth from its orbit
- Velcro's trademark is registered
- United States Air Force Academy opens

Think you know the year? Email your answer to contest@connectingyou.com. Every correct entry received by Nov. 3th will be placed in a drawing for a chance to win a \$100 gift certificate from Electronic Engineering.

**Last quarter's winner:
Mitch Harris of Des Moines**

Mitch guessed correctly the year was 1958.

Extremely durable, high-performance flashlights.

You depend on your ability to see wherever life takes you. The Streamlight® Stinger LED flashlight makes the right kind of light for all kinds of jobs around the home, garage and outdoors – making it easy for you to see no matter the conditions.

At Electronic Engineering, we not only sell Streamlight flashlights at competitive prices, we have an Authorized Service Center in Des Moines. Stop by today and check out our full-line of flashlights.



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10/07

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