

Kiosk deployment scores in Boston arena

With TD Banknorth Garden's self-service ordering kiosks, developed by NEXTEP SYSTEMS, fans never have to miss the action

By Richard Slawsky,
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In 2007, automated-ordering systems provider NEXTEP SYSTEMS partnered with the operators of Boston's TD Banknorth Garden to deploy NEXTEP's self-service kiosks at the arena's foodservice concessions stands. The kiosks would completely automate the ordering process and had the ability to integrate seamlessly with the arena's existing MICROS 9700 POS system.

The six total deployment locations included the arena's Pile High Deli, an Italian-style eatery with selections including hot sandwiches and an assortment of Italian pastries, and Dunkin' Donuts express beverage stands.

Each kiosk displays the operation's full menu and allows for the purchase of food and beverages, accepting payment via credit or the arena's Garden Gold card. The kiosk's software submits orders and payment information to the MICROS POS system through a Web service application programming interface, or API.

The problem

Since its grand opening in 1995, more than 25 million people have come through the turnstiles at TD Banknorth Garden to see the arena's famous occupants. The NHL's Boston Bruins and the NBA's Boston Celtics, as well as world-renowned concerts,



NEXTEP'S Concessions Express kiosks were deployed in six areas of the arena, including Dunkin' Donuts express beverage stands and Pile High Deli locations.

sporting events, family shows, wrestling, ice shows and more appear at the arena. The state-of-the art building is a year-round, 19,600-seat venue that boasts three private restaurants; 90 executive suites; 1,100 clubs seats; a multimillion-dollar, high-definition video scoreboard; and complete 360-degree LED technology.

The facility is operated by DNC-Boston, a subsidiary of Delaware North Companies Inc., which is a leading provider of foodservices and hospitality at airports, sports stadiums and tourist destinations throughout the United States and internationally. Revenues for the privately held company exceed \$2 billion annually, and its 50,000 associates serve half a billion customers around the world each year.

DNC-Boston's foodservice company, Sportservice, operates more than 56 concessions stands throughout TD Banknorth Garden.

When DNC-Boston decided to upgrade the point-of-sale technology throughout the facility, the company wanted to offer fans a fast and easy way to purchase food and beverages and get back to their seats without missing a minute of the action.

The solution

To help accomplish that goal, DNC Boston tapped NEXTEP SYSTEMS to deploy its self-service kiosks in the arena's concessions areas.

"The kiosks give us an opportunity to showcase new technology, as well as offer our consumers an alternative to traditional counter service," said Lorraine Spadaro, vice president of technology for DNC-Boston. "Our goal is to provide our fans with the best, most efficient service."

The system, called Concessions Express, allows customers to order and pay with their credit cards or Garden Gold cards at touchscreen kiosks, getting fans back to the event faster than at a traditional stand.

"Stadiums and arenas are ideal candidates for self-service," added NEXTEP President Tommy Woycik. "Kiosks solve the three primary concessions challenges: Long lines during peak periods, inconsistent upsell performance and labor issues."

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NEXTEP's expertise in the adoption and use of kiosks by consumers helped guide DNC's decisions about where and how to install the kiosks, Spadaro said. So far, DNC has been pleased with the results.

"We expected there to be a process of adjustment for our consumers," she said.

"In locations where we offer kiosk-only or preferred service or signage for kiosk orders, we have seen very positive results," she said. "There is a definite lift on orders placed on the kiosk, which is consistent with consumer credit card spending lifts."

The future

Although Delaware North was mum about its plans for future deployments of self-service kiosks, the opportunities within the company seem vast.

DNC's Sportservice division operates concessions at more than 50 major and minor league sporting arenas, while its Travel Hospitality Services division runs concessions and retail operations at more than 25 airports. The company also provides hospitality services at several tourist destinations.

DNC expressed pleasure with its experience working with NEXTEP on the TD Banknorth Garden kiosk deployment, which seems to bode well for the prospect of future partnerships between the two companies.

"NEXTEP is an excellent partner," Spadaro said. "Their technology is rock solid and their commitment to service is outstanding. I look forward to working with them as we consider additional kiosks in the future."

About the sponsor: NEXTEP SYSTEMS, based in Troy, Mich., is a leading provider of automated-ordering solutions for restaurants, casinos, airports, stadiums, arenas, delicatessens and other high-volume foodservice venues. NEXTEP's core business revolves around self-order kiosks, online ordering and digital menu boards.



At Boston's TD Banknorth Garden, hockey fans and concert goers alike can order snacks more efficiently using NEXTEP'S Concessions Express kiosks.