

Outdoor Central Uses Elo TouchSystems Solutions to Reel in Higher Revenues for Customers



SNAPSHOT

Opportunity: Automate paper-based, manual processing of state hunting and fishing permits.

Why Elo?: Elo TouchSystems touchmonitors with IntelliTouch technology offers a rugged, durable and easy-to-use solution for the harsh operating environments where Outdoor Central's solutions are placed.

Solution: Elo TouchSystems 1529L multifunction 15" desktop touchmonitors and 15A2 all-in-one 15" desktop touchcomputer with IntelliTouch surface wave touch technology.

Key results: 8-18% increase in state license revenues; expanded customer base; transaction times reduced up to 93%.

For hunters and fishermen, obtaining a fishing or hunting license often means standing in long lines and dealing with slow manual processes that try the most patient of outdoor enthusiasts.

Outdoor Central (now known as Active Outdoors, stemming from the purchase of Outdoor Central by the Active Network in November of 2008) is transforming the annual ritual with software that automates the processing of licenses and related permits.

"The fish and game departments that use our services were in need of a technology infusion," says Eric Richey, general manager of Outdoor Central. "We saw that automating licensing processes and creating more sales venue options would create a significant return on investment for the states and the state-authorized retail outlets that sell licenses."

Internet-enabled point-of sale terminals (IPOS) using Elo TouchSystems touchmonitors and touchcomputers are deployed in state fish and game offices and retail outlets, ranging from large chains to small bait shops. The solutions are available in a handful of states and will soon be deployed in more than 20 others. At least 8,500 IPOS solutions will be deployed by the end of 2009.

Rugged products make the sale

After reviewing touch technology solutions from several competitors, Outdoor Central chose Elo TouchSystems touchmonitors with IntelliTouch surface wave touch technology.

"Tyco Electronics Elo TouchSystems is a leader in touch technology," explains Josh Richardson, product manager for field hardware at Outdoor Central. "IntelliTouch is a stable technology and accommodates a variety of data transfer standards that enable us to connect various peripherals. The touchmonitors also have the ruggedness we require for the harsh environments we operate in."

These include places where the devices must withstand rough usage—scratches and "slime, grime and gook," says Richardson.

The touch systems successfully underwent Outdoor Central's rigorous and unorthodox testing, including attempts to scratch and break the monitors, spreading harsh compounds on the screens and dropping the units while in their packaging.

"The durability of Elo TouchSystems products is unmatched," declares Richardson.



“The strongest vendor relationship we have is with Tyco Electronics Elo TouchSystems because of its cooperation, flexibility and support.”

- ERIC RICHEY, GENERAL MANAGER, OUTDOOR CENTRAL

Smartly designed systems

Quick installation and plug-and-play capability make the devices easy to deploy. Intuitive use is especially critical in retail environments where high employee turnover and repeated trainings are commonplace.

The small form factor also provides a sleek design that Outdoor Central appreciates.

“It has a good design and is easy to use and replace if need be,” says Richardson.

Real cooperation provides value

Equally important is Tyco Electronics Elo TouchSystems’ willingness to meet Outdoor Central’s specific needs.

“The strongest vendor relationship we have is with Tyco Electronics Elo TouchSystems because of its cooperation, flexibility and support,” observes Richey.

Engineers modified the touchcomputers to work with specific peripherals, altered terminal enclosures and helped with testing. Staff also developed drivers that allowed Outdoor Central to

create a highly secure operating system impenetrable to viruses and malicious attacks. These efforts to meet and exceed the mandatory and industry standards surrounding the integrity of a customer’s personal information were of the highest priority for Outdoor Central, especially with customer’s personal information being entered into the IPOS system.

Exceeding customer expectations

Outdoor Central set high performance expectations for its IPOS solution, but the results have surprised even Richey.

Manual processing took 5 to 15 minutes per transaction. The IPOS solution has shrunk that time to less than a minute. Rapid throughput is critical because many people wait until the day before a season officially opens to buy their licenses.

The ease of use of Elo TouchSystems touchmonitors in conjunction with Outdoor Central’s applications have resulted, in some cases, in record breaking increases in state license revenues, anywhere from 8 to 18 percent annually.

The solution has also serendipitously expanded the customer base, which will translate into continued higher state revenues over time.

“The revenue increases have delivered a rapid return on investment. The Elo TouchSystems touchmonitors pay for themselves in a short period of time,” he adds.

Retail outlets have also seen their fortunes rise, as they have become convenient one-stop shops for license and goods purchases.

Technology drives new opportunities

Outdoor Central is pursuing other novel uses of its solution. The company is constantly evaluating hardware solutions for alternative purposes, including the potential use of Elo TouchSystems Acoustic Pulse Technology (APR) for a number of up-and-coming solutions currently in the R&D phase.

“Working with Tyco Electronics Elo TouchSystems has enabled stronger relationships with state clients and retailers by helping us offer a solution that improves service levels, provides better data integrity and delivers a rapid return on investment. We are very happy with our relationship.”

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