How VARs Can Utilize Technology to Sell Into the Entertainment Industry

Why VARs Should be Entertaining Entertainment

The entertainment industry has emerged as a significant opportunity for value-added resellers that specialize in retail, mobile point of sale (POS), and barcode printing/scanning technologies. The number of events and attendees has exploded, and companies in this sector are turning to technology to help them increase efficiency and improve customer service.

▶ **Why are Entertainment Venues Turning to Tech?**

- 7% of the world's population visited a theme park in 2018
- Global concert sales hit a record high in 2018, experiencing 12% growth
- 17 million people attended NFL games in 2018, with many more attending NBA & MLB games as well

▶ **Increased Attendance Means Increased Demand for Improved Efficiencies**
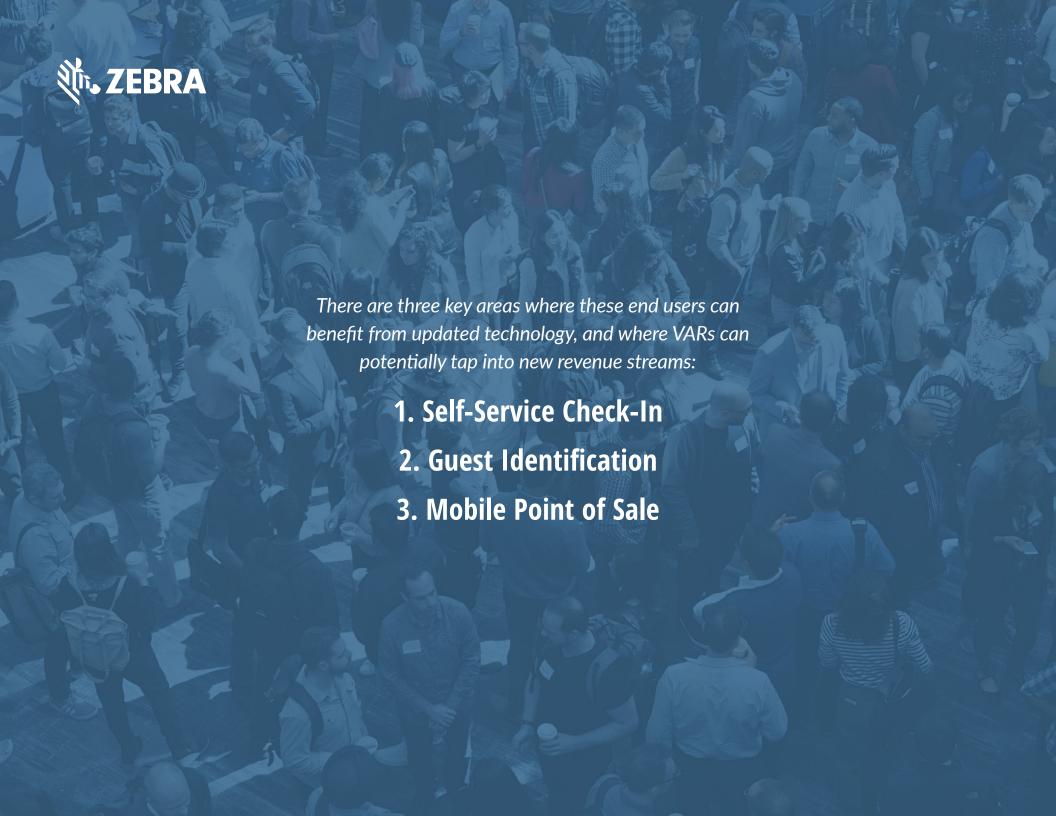
Value-added resellers (VARs) must understand how they can leverage the features of their technology solutions to serve this growing population of consumers and keep up with the growth and demand within the sector.
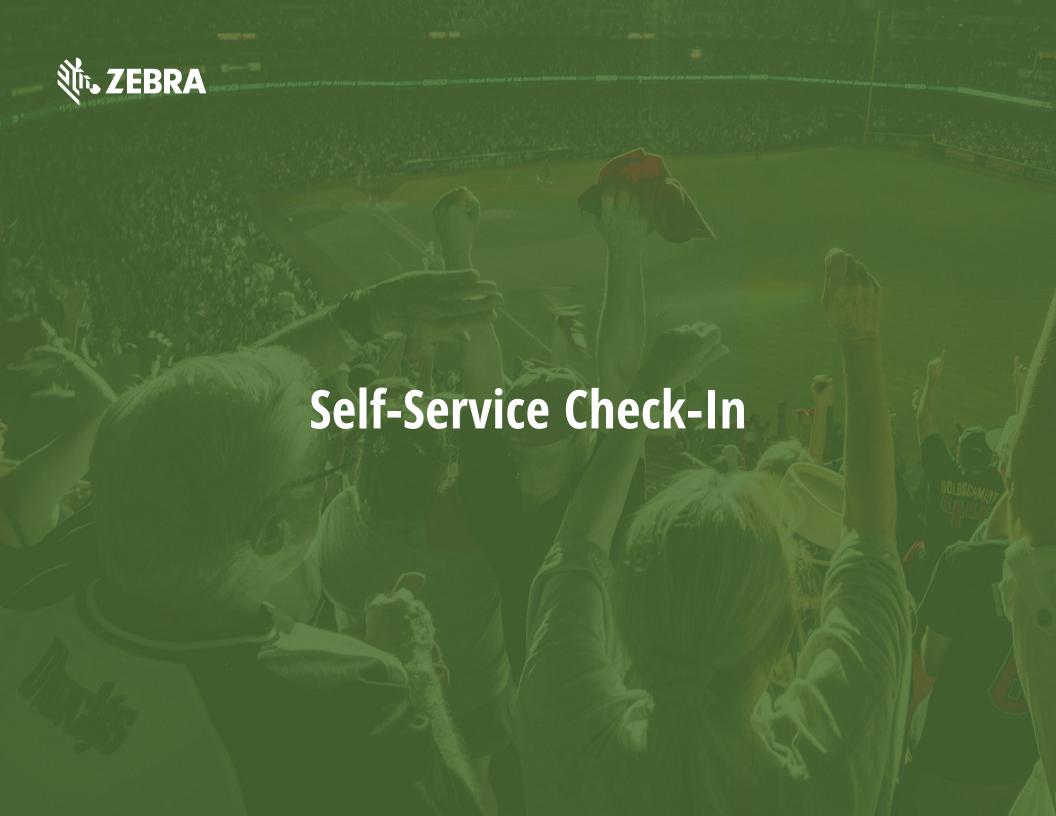
▶ **Help Your Customers Eliminate Costly Pain Points**

By positioning retail, mobility and automatic identification solutions as a key part of improving customer service and lowering operating costs, VARs can establish potentially lucrative relationships with:

- Event venues
- Concert/event promoters
- Amusement and theme park operators

According to the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) and AECOM 2018 Global Attractions Attendance Report more than half a billion, or nearly 7% of the world's population, visited a theme park in 2018.

There are three key areas where these end users can benefit from updated technology, and where VARs can potentially tap into new revenue streams:

1. Self-Service Check-In

2. Guest Identification

3. Mobile Point of Sale

Self-Service Check-In

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Self-Service Check-In

In an effort to drive down costs and improve customer convenience, businesses in the entertainment and hospitality sectors are increasingly turning to self-service solutions for check-in and ticketing applications.

In many instances, these businesses are implementing self-service kiosks and tablets, which can be used in the hospitality and retail industry for signing up for loyalty cards, filling out safety/liability waivers, and ticket purchases at amusement parks, stadiums, concerts, events, and other types of venues.

Most customers are already comfortable using touchscreen kiosks because they experience similar interfaces in their daily lives, and are likely to gravitate toward the technology. Additionally, self-service technology lets customers feel more in control of their purchases, which often leads to higher spending compared to a traditional check-out/ordering station staffed by an employee.

▶ What VARs Should Know: Kiosks Bring More than Just Convenience

- **Drive down operational costs**—serve more customers with less staff.
- **Improve customer experience**—customers are in control of their purchases.
- **Streamline labor management**—reallocate to other tasks.
- **Enhance employee satisfaction**—fewer grueling hours facing a long queue of tired frustrated customers.

Using kiosk solutions such as the Zebra CC600, the CC6000, and the CC5000-10, venue operators can increase efficiency and serve more customers with less staff. When otherwise long lines move faster, customers have an enhanced, seamless experience that involves less frustration.

Guest Identification

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Guest Identification

While barcoded wristbands and other automatic identification technology are typically associated with healthcare operations, the hospitality/entertainment sector is increasingly moving away from "dumb" color-coded wristbands to more advanced applications.

Part of this is because many venues now offer enhanced or value-added experiences for an additional fee—i.e., a VIP experience at a concert, or special speed passes at amusement parks that allow customers to bypass long lines for a premium admission price.

Using a barcoded wristband not only helps monitor customer and ride/attraction access, the wristbands can be a fun way for guests to interact with the park, feel a sense of belonging, and tap into special perks or features. At higher-end venues, RFID wristbands can be used for access as well as cashless purchases and other applications.

▶ **What VARs Should Know: Wristbands Are the Key to Unlocking Opportunity**

- **Enhance experiences**—provide access to premium services.
- **Revenue generation**—encourage more spending through cashless payment integration.
- **Big data**—make data-based decisions about which rides/features are most popular, and which promotions have been most successful.

Zebra Z-Band Wristbands

Event wristbands can be integrated into the customer experience, especially for theme parks that have on-site hotels or other facilities. Barcode- and RFID-based wristbands take the guesswork out of guest identification for employees. The codes can be scanned for access or to identify patrons that are over the age of 21 in venues that serve alcohol, for instance. By collecting data from the wristband scans, companies can also get a better idea of what rides or features guests are using, and at what frequency.

Mobile Point of Sale

Mobile Point of Sale

The retail industry as a whole has embraced mobile point of sale (mPOS) and point of purchase tools for line-busting applications, as well as pop-up stores and card transactions at festivals and farmer's markets.

According to Juniper Research, one quarter of all POS transactions will be completed on mobile devices by 2023, when the research firm predicts roughly 87 billion transactions will take place on these devices.

These mPOS solutions also enable new types of payment opportunities. Rather than being tethered to traditional cash register systems, venues can establish temporary POS stations for mobile merchandise carts or merch booths at special events, and do so much more easily because of the flexibility of the mPOS platform.

▶ What VARs Should Know: Mobility is a Must

- **Deliver ultimate convenience**—place or take orders without ever leaving seats.
- **Reduce training time**—built on the Android OS, a platform your employees are familiar with.
- **Increase average order size**—upselling promts encourage servers to ask about add-on items.

Zebra MC9300

Zebra TC52

Zebra XSLATE L10

Understand how to leverage tablets and mobile computers to expedite sales and mobile ordering. Devices such as the Zebra MC9300, TC72/TC77, and TC52/TC57,offer a mix of touchscreen and keypad interfaces, reliable barcode scanning, and robust wireless communication that can help employees bust lines at a theme park or stadium, take mobile orders, and even track inventory or scan guest wristbands.

Entertainment/Hospitalty: A Lucrative Opportunity

By investing in the right technologies, entertainment venues can improve their own efficiency while also providing enhanced customer convenience. They also have the potential to increase revenue streams through premium pricing or offering new services/features. **But they can't do it alone.**

▶ What this Means for VARS

VARs that match their technology offerings to the unique needs of these customers can successfully sell mobile POS, barcoding, and self-service technology solutions in the rapidly-expanding hospitality/entertainment sector and create new, highly profitable revenue streams.

Zebra Technologies is leading the way in developing technology solutions that help entertainment and hospitality venues provide a modern experience to the modern consumer. Successful VARs expanding into this niche will leverage this technology to help solve the unique pain points faced by amusement parks, stadiums, concerts, and event venues. For VARs with the resources for offering consulting services, there is additional opportunity to help these customers identify new applications or create new premium feature or service offerings.

About Zebra Technologies

With the unparalleled visibility Zebra provides, enterprises become as smart and connected as the world we live in. Real-time information – gleaned from visionary solutions including hardware, software and services – gives organizations the competitive edge they need to simplify operations, know more about their businesses and customers, and empower their mobile workers to succeed in today's data-centric world. For more information, visit www.zebra.com.

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