

Increasing Workflow Efficiency and Reducing Time Spent on Controls



“I always recommend BlackLine to other organizations because it’s such a versatile tool. There are so many processes within our day-to-day work that are streamlined through BlackLine. We’ve enhanced our controls and improved the efficiency of the entire organization.”

—Allison Combs, Controller, Caesars Entertainment Corporation

Caesars Entertainment is the world’s most geographically diverse casino entertainment company. Established in 1966, Caesars focuses on building loyalty with its guests through a unique combination of great service, operational excellence, and technological leadership.

The Challenge

Caesars Entertainment operates casinos on three continents under the brand names Caesars®, Harrah’s®, and Horseshoe®. Financial operations of any casino are under continual scrutiny from various regulatory bodies, and Caesars accounting and finance teams must stay on top of strict reporting and compliance regulations. The company’s finance and accounting teams were incredibly diligent about regulatory compliance and reporting, but as result, it took a tremendous amount of time and people resources to manage reconciliations and control activities.

According to Allison Combs, controller, at Caesars, “The majority of our revenue audits were automated but in a very ‘early automation’ manner. We were using a lot of macros and Excel tools. We needed to lessen our daily workload and our need for control activity. As a company that focuses on continuous improvement, we were constantly saying, ‘there has to be a better way.’”

INDUSTRY

Hospitality and Entertainment

REGION

Global

ADOPTION DATE

2011

ERP

Infinium

NUMBER OF USERS

316

PRODUCTS

Account Reconciliations, Transaction Matching, Bulk Journals, Journals, and Task Management

BUSINESS IMPACT

Improved and streamlined control activity, gained true interoperability among accounting functions, increased efficiency, improved workflow and ensured greater accuracy.

Why BlackLine

Prior to selecting BlackLine’s unified financial controls and automation platform, Caesars considered developing an in-house solution. But the time commitment proved daunting. “Building our own system would have consumed a lot of internal development resources,” said Combs. “We looked at BlackLine, and it made more sense because it was available right away.”

Caesars implemented BlackLine’s Account Reconciliations in 2011 and has since added Transaction Matching, Bulk Journals, Journals, and Task Management. “Due to the success of our original partnership with BlackLine, we began exploring other options for our entire company. We knew BlackLine worked, and we knew the benefits to it,” said Combs. “Based on our experience with the Account Reconciliations module, we saw other use cases that would improve our process.”

Caesars plans to expand its use of BlackLine over the next two years. “We’re going to engage BlackLine with casino revenue once we have approval from the regulatory bodies. We’re also looking at using it within accounts payable,” said Combs. “We want to bring every process into the 21st century.”

The Results

Improved and streamlined control activity. For Caesars, BlackLine’s internal control tools have been crucial to managing regulations and improving accuracy—in less time. “BlackLine makes such a difference in our control activity. We’re spending less time on SOX testing,” said Combs. “This helped us gain user buy-in, as well. Management fully supported transitioning to BlackLine from the beginning, but the team jumped onboard once they understood the system’s implications to their work in the control process.”

Gained true interoperability among functions traditionally housed in different systems. With BlackLine’s unified platform, Combs and her team manage all reconciliation functions within a single solution. “We started using BlackLine for reconciliations, but we can use it to manage invoices, validate our cash, and manage our settlements,” said Combs. “It’s no longer a case of ‘this system needs to match this system needs to match this system.’ Because BlackLine offers incredible interoperability between pieces, we’re able to have our entire process in one system.”

Increased efficiency. With casinos on three continents, Caesars accounting and finance teams process thousands of transactions every day. BlackLine’s versatility has been a key factor in the team’s ability to increase efficiency. “I

always recommend BlackLine to other organizations because it's such a versatile tool. There are so many processes within our day-to-day work that are streamlined through BlackLine. We've enhanced our controls and improved the efficiency of the entire organization."

Improved process workflow – and ensured greater accuracy. Combs and her team have saved time by eliminating the need to manually transfer data from one process to the other. The team also spends fewer hours correcting errors as BlackLine's automation reduces data entry mistakes so common to manual processes. "With BlackLine, we don't have to put data in one place, take it out of another, and have so many different processes going," said Combs. "We can keep the workflow happening. That's the biggest thing for me."