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Atlantic City Resurgence as Revel™ Resort Opens

Crestron automated room control brings luxurious experience to guests and significant savings to property

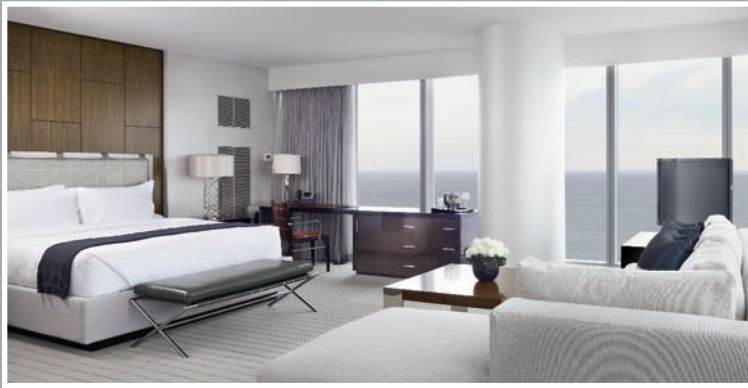
After years in decline, Atlantic City is poised for a rebirth led by Revel™, an upscale \$2.4 billion resort and casino that opened in April.

Among its amenities are Crestron systems in all guest rooms, meeting rooms and public areas that go far beyond anything previously installed, even in high-end Las Vegas properties.

“This is by far the most sophisticated system in any hotel anywhere in the United States,” says William Schafer, principal

of Warwick, NY-based Assurity Design Group. “By integrating all of the hotel’s major systems, including lighting, HVAC, audio/video, door locks, mini bar, shades and drapes, the property dramatically improves the guest experience, simplifies system monitoring and maintenance and has saved nearly \$2 million over the cost of installing separate systems.”

Throughout the four years it took to plan, implement and commission this system, Assurity worked hand-in-hand with engineers at Crestron, who developed several new products specifically with this project in mind. “Revel has definitely set the bar for every hotel in the United States,” adds Schafer.



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Automated amenities

One of the biggest advances that Revel brings to the hotel industry is automation of its sleeping rooms. The Crestron system goes to work as soon as the guest checks in, automatically setting temperature and lighting levels to comfortable, welcoming levels.

Once in the room, the guest has full control over lights, climate, TV, pay-per-view movies, and the mini bar from a simple, Crestron handheld remote. Press the “Do Not Disturb” button and the doorbell is disabled and a red indicator is displayed outside. Press “Housekeeping” and a green “Service Needed” indicator lights up outside. Before guests leave the room, they can simply turn off all systems with the touch of one button. In ADA-accessible rooms and suites, the system also provides drapery and shading control.

All of these functions are connected to Revel’s property management system, so that the front desk, reservations, billing, marketing and security can access them as needed. When guests check out, the Crestron management system automatically turns off everything (lights, TV, climate control, etc.) in that room, resulting in significant energy savings.

In addition, each of the guest room systems is constantly monitored for possible problems through Crestron Fusion RV™ software. Assurity staff works in tandem with the IT and facility departments to help maintain and operate these systems, Schafer explains. “They know if there’s a problem in the room, even before the guest notices. For example, if the temperature hits 80 degrees and that’s not how the guest normally likes it, we will check to see if there’s a mechanical problem, an electronics problem, or if the guest desired this temperature.

The system is so comprehensive, Schafer adds, “It will know when the batteries need to be replaced in a remote.”

Although similar systems have been installed in high-roller suites in some Las Vegas hotels, at Revel every one of its 1,898 guest rooms is automated, from standard guest rooms to luxurious loft suites, which feature two stories of windows with spectacular views. Furthermore, this is the first time these systems have been integrated to this degree, and that’s a major advantage to the property.

“As in most other hotels,” Schafer explains, “everyone’s product is networked. You have a mini bar that rides on a wireless network, as does the room key system and a doorbell/room entry system, with each company normally installing its own network and its own server.

“In a building this size, to install those three separate networks, each with its own wiring and parts would have cost close to \$2 million more than our solution, which was to integrate everything onto a single Crestron network.”

Another important advantage to Revel’s guest room system is that it can be upgraded very rapidly. “For example, we recently added a sleep timer function similar to what you’d find on a TV remote, except that it turns the lights off in addition to the TV. Once we had written the code and tested it, we were able to upgrade the entire building in about 30 minutes, without the need to visit a single room or disturb a single guest.” Another new feature, which Schafer hopes to implement soon, will save guests’ temperature and lighting preferences, so that when they return for future stays, their room will automatically be set up the way they like it.

Luxury suites

The hotel features five two-bedroom Hospitality Suites and two three-bedroom Sky Suites on its exclusive 44th floor, each with a living room, mini kitchen and bar, two full baths and a dining/conference area.

Each of these suites offers guests a music system with multiple iPod® docs and XM® radio, using a multi-zone Crestron Adagio® media system to allow guests to play what they choose in any room. The suites also include a wireless Crestron touch screen controller to further simplify the use of the various electronic systems.

Two super-luxurious Sky Suites add a media room, two private massage rooms and a butler's pantry to the floor plan. In addition to the other amenities, they offer a Crestron DigitalMedia™ solution that allows guests to watch the same movie on any or all of six large-screen TVs, either from the hotel's video system or an in-room Blu-ray Disc® player.

The electronics in the luxury suites represent collaboration between Assurity Design for the electronic amenities and Cerami & Associates of New York City for the audio/video systems, with KMK Technologies of Monroeville, NJ handling the installation.

Conference and common areas

The innovations at Revel continue beyond its guest rooms and suites.

The common and back-of-house areas of the hotel –the lobbies, halls, employee lounges and restrooms– all use centralized Crestron lighting control, together with Crestron dimming systems and occupancy sensors – to maximize their energy efficiency and minimize their carbon footprint.

In addition, Cerami & Associates designed audio/video systems for a conference center and more than a dozen restaurants and bars, all using Crestron DigitalMedia technology, to optimize quality while reducing installation and maintenance costs. These systems also feature Crestron control to simplify operations.

“We have integrated all of these systems with Fusion RV as well, so that Assurity staff can monitor them constantly and anticipate any problems before they occur,” Schafer explains.

For Atlantic City, the opening of Revel is more than the addition of a fancy new hotel and casino. “Governor Christie worked hard to ensure that this property was built here, because he saw it as an opportunity for the state, which it definitely is,” Schafer says.

“Four years ago I started traveling to Atlantic City regularly to work on this project. In those few years I've seen a transformation. The city has been revitalized. New homes and condos are being built. Other hotels have been watching what Revel has been building, and I think they've been saying, 'we've got to pick up our game.'”

“Revel is setting the bar, and that's a great thing for the hotel industry.”

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