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That's the ticket, New York-New York parkers say

Bar-coded system helps valets cut patrons' wait times

By **ROD SMITH**
GAMING WIRE



New York-New York visitor Melinda Gribben scans her valet ticket to retrieve her car. Property officials say the system has cut patrons' wait times even as parking volume has increased. Photo by [K.M. Cannon](#).

High tech is giving the New York-New York resort an edge on at least one traffic problem its namesake city hasn't solved yet: valet parking.

The new high-tech system is allowing the Strip megaresort to move traffic and patrons through -- especially customers imported from other resorts for the entertainment and other amenities -- faster and in greater numbers.

New York-New York President Felix Rappaport said a major challenge for New

York-New York is getting guests in and out of the property more efficiently especially with the added dining and nightly entertainment options such as "Zumanity" and Rita Rudner's show.

With the new system, it takes an average five to six minutes to retrieve an automobile, Rappaport said.

"Our main concern is guest service, especially with all the attractions we just added," he said.

Rappaport said New York-New York has eight primary attractions, each of which he described as world class: the roller coaster, the Rita Rudner show "Zumanity," the ESPN Zone, Coyote Ugly, Nine Fine Irishmen, the Big App Bar and the bar at Times Square.

"Our biggest fear was that services would slow down, and this system is one way we've been able to maintain the service with much greater volumes," he said.

With the new system, valets are handling between 1,200 and 1,800 automobiles a day, New York-New York Vice President of Hotel Operations Micah Richins said.

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Second, the automated valet parking system protects the hotel-casino against fraud from anyone who tries to win a settlement for automobile damages actually done elsewhere.

At the same time, the system protects patrons whose vehicles are dinged in New York-New York, by providing records about who parked it and how and where an accident happened.

"A couple of years ago, we found we had an incredible amount of liability claims," Rappaport said. "For every legitimate claim, and they were few and far between, we had a lot of bogus claims. Any of the (resort) properties a target for people who just want a settlement."

Wanting to address that problem and improve service as it redefined itself with added entertainment and dining opportunities, the hotel-casino two years ago installed its computerized valet parking system, Richins said.

Now, when guests check their cars at New York-New York's parking valet, they get a receipt with a computerized bar code, he said.

When they claim their car at one of the automated kiosks, the receipt will indicate who parked it, when it was parked and where, Richins said.

"In addition, as your car goes down the ramp with the valet, the car is photographed from a number of angles," Rappaport said. Similarly, it is shown on the way out so both the hotel-casino and patrons can see if it was damaged while under the control of valet parking or not.

Guests can also claim their cars by going to attendants at the valet parking desk, but the same information and photographic records are available.

The system has an added benefit, therefore, of protecting attendants who are now in a position to show they did not damage any particular automobile.

The system resolves disputes almost instantaneously, Rappaport said, and once employees got a feel for it, they realized it helped them, too.

"It's a win-win," he said.

Now, it gives the hotel-casino very accurate feedback on the volume of parking handled, lets management track retrieval time, and speeds finding vehicles if (and when) guests lose receipts, he said.