

PRESS RELEASE

Final piece of the jigsaw for SMG Europe as it upgrades its payment technology in Europe's largest indoor arena

Manchester's Phones 4u Arena deploys the latest POS solution from Verteda, AURES and Barclaycard for integrated Chip & PIN and contactless card processing across its food & beverage operations.

In total, more than 230 AURES Ninô terminals have now been deployed across four SMG Europe locations (in Manchester, Newcastle and Leeds).

Runcorn – Lisses, November 2014: A trio of payment technology specialists - AURES Technologies, its solutions partner Verteda formerly Agilysys (Europe) Ltd, and Barclaycard, have provided venue operator SMG Europe with the first rollouts of a new integrated POS solution.

The 21,000-capacity Phones 4u Arena in Manchester, one of the busiest live entertainment venues in the world, is now benefiting from support for integrated Chip & PIN payments and contactless credit and debit card processing across its food & beverage services.

Other SMG venues, such as Newcastle's Metro Radio Arena, the 13,000-capacity, £60 million new-build First Direct Arena in Leeds and Manchester's The Bridgewater Hall, have also completed rollout of the solution.

Impressed by the providers' pedigree in the stadium and arena sector, all four SMG Europe venues became Verteda clients two years ago. All venues are now seasoned users of both Verteda software and hardware from its partner AURES Technologies (including J2 Retail Systems).

Comments Trevor Roberts, Sales Director, Verteda Ltd: "The SMG Europe venues use our award-winning Agilysys InfoGenesis™ POS software and Eatec® inventory and procurement software. Additionally, the Manchester and Newcastle operations equip staff service corporate boxes with our Normandy mobile POS solution on iTouch devices, integrated with InfoGenesis™.

All public concessions at the Manchester Arena initially accepted cash only, before moving to EPOS with Verteda. This latest move to more sophisticated card processing technology (and to the latest version of InfoGenesis™ to support it) is part of SMG Europe's evolution of its technology provision.

Adds Roberts: "At Verteda, we've observed how the market is changing and we've integrated contactless payment into InfoGenesis™ POS to give our users a streamlined solution and distinct business advantage. Contactless payment offers benefits all round."

Tony Sagar is Group Food and Beverage Director for SMG Europe. He explains: "I was initially concerned that customers entering PIN numbers would lead to longer queues. I was also wary of card processing costs. However, having visited The NEC (a Verteda client), I was reassured and could see that the commercial case was strong. Customers clearly want to use contactless and traditional cards to pay for their purchases. We're confident of the return on our investment of moving to these new payment technologies."



Within three months of upgrading, the Phones 4u Arena has started to see an increased spend per head across its public food and beverage operations. With over 1 million visitors a year, food & beverage is a significant contributor to Phones 4u Arena's profitability. There are operational benefits too, such as faster transaction times and quicker reconciliation of transactions after an event.

"The new payment solution is adding to customer service and convenience and we're having no difficulty keeping queues moving quickly at pinch points such as intervals. Customers have taken to it like a duck to water," adds Sagar.

Continues Verteda's Roberts: "We work closely with Barclaycard so were able to bring them to the table and introduce them to SMG Europe. Our tight relationship and the integration of our two solutions helped Tony Sagar to make his decision."

The two linked software solutions introduce efficiencies in both the front-of-house and back-office. They provide SMG Europe management with real-time business visibility, enabling them to analyse sales and trends both during and after an event. This knowledge leads to more accurate recording of waste and management of stock, all of which adds up to sound gross profits.

For the Phones 4u Arena and other SMG Europe venues, Verteda recommended one of the market's most compact PC-based touchscreen terminals. Previously branded as the J2 225, this is now marketed as the Ninô. More than 230 of these terminals are deployed across the four locations.

As Trevor Roberts observes, Ninô is a space-efficient EPOS system, with a small, neat footprint. "When it comes to future-proofing its investment, SMG also liked the fact you can attach a secondary screen to the units in the future for digital display and promotional purposes."

With its spill-proof and dust-resistant casing, Ninô is well suited to a busy food & beverage environment such as the Phones 4u Arena concessions. SMG is finding the machines very reliable and has the added reassurance of the manufacturer's 3-year warranty.

As regards hardware to support card processing, Barclaycard has supplied its Fixed Connect Ingenico iPP350 Series PIN pad terminal. This contactless-enabled unit processes transactions of £20 and less in an average transaction time of under 2 seconds.

The Barclaycard terminal is linked to SMG's EPOS system, obviating the need re-key amounts twice through the till and the terminal. This is not only faster, but reduces the likelihood of mis-keying or of fraud. Because no customer cardholder data is stored, processed or transmitted via the till system, the Barclaycard technology limits PCI compliance to the local processes and controls needed for the physical management of the terminal. This gives SMG the confidence of addressing PCI DSS compliance easily.

Concludes SMG Europe's Tony Sagar: "We are now getting real revenue and service benefits from having integrated Chip & PIN payments and contactless credit and debit card processing."

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About Verteda – www.verteda.com

Our innovative SaaS, Hosted and on premise IT solutions enable hotels & resorts, Sports & Entertainment venues, restaurant chains and foodservice partners to streamline operations to enhance customer satisfaction, increase workforce productivity and maximise revenue and profitability.

World-class solutions combine award winning software, hardware and services to increase reliability, performance and control across retail, food & beverage operational management and include point-of-sale, mobility, eCommerce, procurement, inventory, workforce scheduling & forecasting and business intelligence reporting.

Headquartered in Warrington, UK, Verteda are the exclusive distributor for Agilysys products in the EMEA operating directly or through trusted international partners. Verteda Ltd acquired the shares of Agilysys Europe Ltd from former US parent company Agilysys Inc in March 2014.

About Phones 4u Arena – www.Phones 4u Arena.co.uk

Phones 4u Arena Manchester, managed and operated by SMG Europe, is one of the busiest venues in the world and the largest indoor arena in Europe. Since opening in 1995, the Arena (formerly The Manchester Evening News Arena) has hosted the biggest names in live entertainment including U2, The Rolling Stones, Madonna, Lady Gaga, Pavarotti and the record-breaking 2010/2011 residency by local comedian Peter Kay.

In addition to live music, it has staged some of the biggest events in the UK sporting calendar including several 2002 Commonwealth Games' events, the 2012 Olympic basketball warm-up match between team USA and GB, the 2008 FINA World Swimming Championships and international boxing bouts by Mike Tyson, David Haye, Joe Calzaghe and local champions Ricky Hatton and Amir Khan.

The arena has played a key part in Manchester's rich musical heritage with historic shows by local bands Take That, Oasis, Elbow, New Order, James, Happy Mondays, The Charlatans, Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds, M People, Doves, The Inspiral Carpets, The Verve, Simply Red and The Courteeners.

Attracting over one million visitors each year, the 21,000 capacity arena is a former winner of the industry's prestigious International Venue of the Year award.