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**Intelligent
Systems**

Charles Sets Sights On Tourism Marketing

This interactive kiosk solution combines the knowledge of a concierge with elements of a POS system that is available for tourists and hotel guests around the clock.

CHALLENGES

· **Increase visitor awareness** of local businesses and attractions
· **Elicit spending** with partnered businesses
· **Ease the pressure** on front desk and concierge staff

SOLUTIONS

· **Implement digital signs** to provide dynamic advertising content placement
· **Utilize Intel® AIM Suite** to optimize physical placement and advertising content
· **Install point-of-sale capabilities** for an all-in-one service device

CITYCORRIDOR

City Corridor is a leading provider of interactive advertising solutions and services which fit many market verticals.

Tourists and convention-goers in Charleston, SC are making the most of their time in the historic city by getting ideas, advice and directions from virtual concierges, all named Charles, set up at the airport, visitors centers and top hotels.

The interactive firm behind Charles, City Corridor (www.citycorridor.com), is in turn using Intel's AIM Suite technology to gain invaluable insights about the people tapping into the service, and how information is consumed and used.

Playfully dubbed Charles, the stations feature large flat panel displays with touchscreen capabilities, and a small sensor embedded at the top of the station. That sensor is used to send data to AIM Suite for real-time face pattern detection and analysis while maintaining the user's privacy.

Where most interactive tourism kiosks can only report how many times they were used and what people looked for, City Corridor is using AIM Suite's capabilities to develop a much richer demographic profile of users, as well as how the s tations are used.

Background

The Charles Network is the answer to the Charleston Area Convention and Visitor's Bureau's (CACVB) need to quickly and effectively educate business and leisure visitors with increasingly shorter, tighter itineraries. The CACVB worried that people were missing out on many local attractions simply because they didn't know about them.

Hotel concierges, front desk staffers and the people working at visitors centers are often busy, and can't possibly stay on top of all the options. The better option was a widely deployed, user-friendly visitor information tool that could distribute accurate, engaging information on demand.

But such a tool also had to have a business rationale. The Charles station developed by City Corridor not only makes Charleston visitors aware of attractions, shops and dining options, it drives business.

The units have built-in mag-strip readers to take credit and loyalty cards and hotel keycards, and printers that let customers instantly take away ticket vouchers, restaurant confirmations, directions, and more.

The back-end of the custom-built Charles system is cloud-based and end-users have online access to friendly content management and reporting tools.

The fully automated management portal gives users the ability to dynamically place advertising, track inventory, and access the real-time viewership and demographic analytics driven by AIM Suite.

Optimizing With AIM

City Corridor functions as a "white-label" service provider to the CACVB, which makes the product available to premium members. The CACVB markets Charles while City Corridor works in the background to install and manage systems, as well as train hospitality staff when Charles is first turned on.

Chad Priest, City Corridor's co-founder and COO, says Intel AIM Suite has been valuable in understanding the profile and numbers of people looking, and when they look. But they've also used AIM Suite to fine-tune service delivery.

In one case, says Priest, a hotel manager insisted Charles be located in a lobby area that Priest and his colleagues were convinced wouldn't work well. "We said, 'We appreciate this is where you want it to go, but it's not going to get seen.'"

Rather than debate the point, they put Charles where the manager wanted. Then they went back armed with AIM Suite viewing data that made the compelling argument that the position was indeed
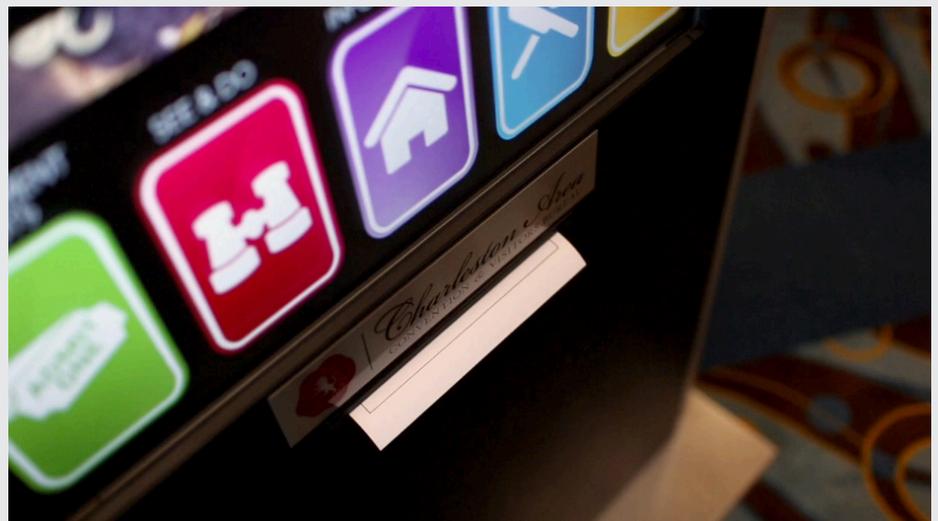
wrong. Charles got repositioned to an optimal location in the lobby, and within hours was outperforming interactions at the previous position. "Ticket sales were suddenly sky-high because it was in the right place," says Priest.

Charles Hits The Road

Launched only in spring 2012, there were 50 Charles stations in place within two months. Now the company is expanding to new markets. Nearby Hilton Head, South Carolina is putting Charles in place, and more markets will follow in 2013.

Priest says AIM Suite data has been invaluable to operations, and believes the hotels and attractions operators using Charles have barely scratched the surface in terms of understanding and taking advantage of viewer and traffic data.
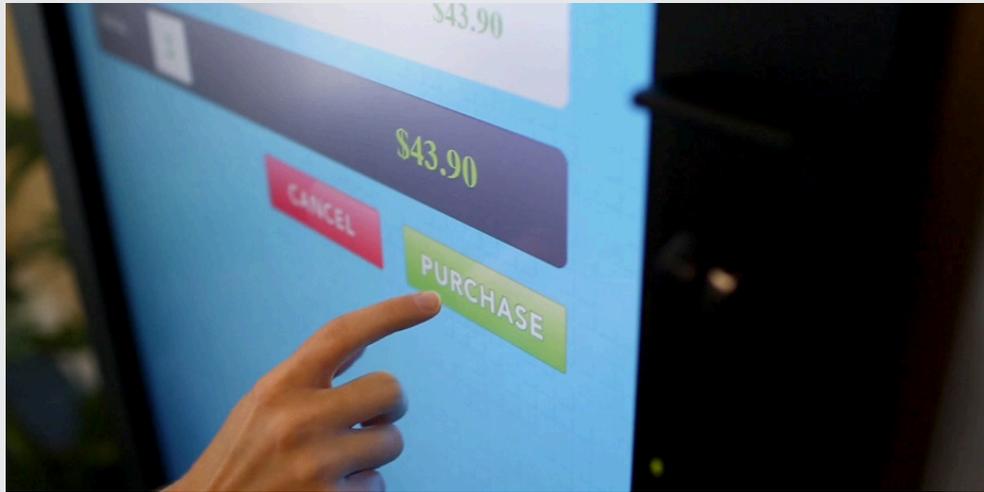
"It's the perfect vehicle to reach our target market. We see the opportunity to maximize sales by managing inventory."

– Rick Mosteller,
Vice President, Fort Sumter & Spiritline Tours

For more information on Intel® AIM Suite, please visit **https://aimsuite.intel.com/**
For City Corridor's case study on Charles, please visit **www.citycorridor.com/solutions/charles/**

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