

Sun International's Faith in Local WAP Pays Off



Smiles all round, as the first locally conceived and developed wide-area progressive jackpot installation, "Duma" pays off for the operator. From l-r: Jacques Venter (Carnival City), James Forbes (Simplicit-e), Charl Geysler (Simplicit-e), Des Witcher (Sun International), Sandise Sibanda (Carnival City), Derek Panaino (Carnival), Ed Jordan (Event MC), Piet Swanepoel (Carnival).

In just six weeks following the simultaneous launch across twelve sites, "Duma," the first locally conceived and developed wide-area progressive jackpot installation created not only its first Duma Millionaire but also celebrated linked-jackpot winners at all but one of Sun International's South African casinos.

From the 117 linked Gold Club machines the combined value of these jackpots was almost R4.5million shared by eighteen individual winners; roughly equivalent to a jackpot of every three days or R100,000 each day! This was in addition to the regular multiplier payouts made from the jackpot feature game that ensured that everyone entering the feature game had a win to celebrate.

For Simplicite Gaming Solutions, the award of this prestigious Sun International project following an open tender process was not only a major milestone in the company's short history but also a tremendous opportunity to deliver the first ever casino slot jackpot - even the first ever casino slot game - conceived and developed in South Africa. With little more than five months to take the entire system from concept through to installation, Simplicite was fortunate to be able to turn to the expertise of its product partners at Gold Club and

DRGT for proven platforms for the slot games and the WAP links and communications respectively. As the game and its themes were finalised with input from the Sun International slots team, the graphics and animated character sequences were given life by the Gold Club specialists in Europe for whom Christmas 2012 proved to be particularly brief affair as they worked feverishly through the festive season.

For the WAP jackpot controller, the DRGT system was the natural choice as for this implementation the proud claim 'works on ALL slots' could be expanded to include 'works across ALL systems' as the device-agnostic nature of the DRGT system ensured compatibility with the different slot management systems employed within the Sun International properties. This WAP capability is just one of the features built in to the DRGT System suite that delivers a comprehensive casino management solution and so the DRGT platform was very much under-utilised in this solution. In parallel, work in South Africa was no less demanding as slot bases and jackpot signage were brought into production by Signkor after an exhaustive design process that included development of perhaps the most sophisticated lighting and graphics controller yet employed in a casino jackpot installation. Incorporated into the signage at the design stage was a powerful concert-standard sound system; essential in order to do justice to Mandoza's unique Duma re-mix of his anthemic "Nkalakatha" which is at the heart of the jackpot celebration.

Also enjoying some Yuletide overtime were the test teams at BMM as the demanding approval

processes for almost every element of the WAP solution were diligently pursued in respect of each of the Gold Club and DRGT components as additional stability and communications tests were carried out between the Sun International test lab and various remote locations as led by Marie Fowler. Meanwhile, project implementation teams headed by Arnold Moffatt at Simplicite and Riaan Stoltz for Sun International planned the launch implementation in coordination with each of the host casinos, their technical teams, and Signkor.

As D-(Duma)-Day loomed ever nearer, installation teams supported by engineers flown in from Gold Club progressively traversed the country setting up the dedicated Duma WAP banks under shrouded signage as anticipation grew. Casino visitors joined in the pre-launch excitement; dancing to the Nkalakatha beat as sound levels were checked and adjusted. Gaming Boards across South Africa were also being introduced to Duma and the return to casino gaming, for the first time in many years, of a wide-area linked-progressive jackpot. For the exhausted staff at Simplicite Gaming Solutions, the launch celebrations themselves were little more than a blur following a series of sleepless nights as the last of the installation details were attended to and the system was put through its final tests.

The success of the Duma launch and the overwhelmingly favourable response received has clearly vindicated the decision of Sun International to seek and support a 'local' solution for its reintroduction of a WAP product for its group casinos; a decision doubtless fully supported by the Boardwalk Casino's first Duma millionaire!

