Entertainment Industry Automation—
Print-on-Demand Bar Code Wristbands
Drive Revenue
Introduction

Businesses across the entertainment industry—from amusement parks to hospitality chains—are looking for ways to lower expenses and boost revenue. During 2007, U.S. amusement parks alone attracted 341 million people, generating combined revenue of $12 billion.¹ Automating ride ticketing, concession purchases, and park entry could save the industry significant labor costs while creating unique opportunities for boosting consumer spend. Bar code wristbands printed on-demand coupled with cashless point of sale (POS) solutions provide the optimal path to meeting these goals.

The Wristband is Your Wallet

Imagine bringing your family to a sprawling water park in the heat of the summer. Instead of buying a ticket at the front gate from an employee, an interactive POS kiosk greets you and provides a visual list of attractions. You swipe your credit card, and out prints a durable, bar coded wristband for each of your family members. After securing your personal items in lockers, your family seeks out attractions and concessions, simply passing the wristband over a bar code reader to enter rides. The system automatically deducts the funds from your account, and your family enjoys their day.

The above scenario is not science fiction. No doubt, the technology is gaining widespread deployment. Take also into account sports arenas, resorts, and concerts, and it is easy to visualize the enormous potential of print-on-demand (POD) bar code wristbands. In fact, bar code-enabled wristbands provide an alternative currency to consumers carrying cash—the wristband is their wallet. Consider the following benefits of bar code-enabled wristbands:

- Enhanced opportunities for consumer spend
- Improved convenience for attendees and guests
- Streamlined ticketing, hospitality, and venue efficiencies
- Unique branding and marketing differentiation

The discussion that follows reveals how businesses can realize the most value and return on investment (ROI) from a wristband solution that keeps costs low while providing a tamper-proof, waterproof, durable wristband.

Ticketless is the Ticket to Success

Providing customers quick, easy access to entertainment events and attractions are essential for improving the customer experience and differentiating the brand. Achieving these goals while reducing costs and driving revenue requires the elimination of paper tickets and non-bar coded wristbands.

Once purchased, the bar coded wristband replaces a ticket, with payments either collected at the point of sale, or extracted from the customer’s account. From there, the customer can use the wristband throughout the venue for rides, purchasing products from concession stands, and attending access-controlled events. Resorts and hospitality chains stand to gain significant benefits as well. When a guest arrives at the resort or hotel, the front desk issues a bar code wristband. As the guest attends events, restaurants, or other activities, each purchase automatically charges directly to the guest’s room.

Below are some of the key benefits of bar code wristbands:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits to Businesses</th>
<th>Benefits to Attractions</th>
<th>Benefits to Patrons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reduce ticket fraud</td>
<td>• Ability to prioritize patrons</td>
<td>• Do not have to carry cash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increase per-cap spending</td>
<td>• Increase average revenue and profits per visitor</td>
<td>• Eliminates need for separate tickets to attend premium attractions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improve transaction speeds</td>
<td>• Non-transferrable</td>
<td>• Reduce risk of losing ticket(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reduce cash handling by employees</td>
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<td>• Ability to receive preferred customer benefits</td>
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<td>• Gather patron preference information</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Offer benefits to preferred customers, such as free lockers, beverages, shorter lines, etc.</td>
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**Considerations for Entertainment Venue Automation**

The entertainment industry is in the early stages of automating their operations through bar code and POS system adoption. While most venues do not provide wristbands to their patrons, those that do rely on pre-printed bar code or costly radio frequency identification (RFID) wristbands. To realize the most value from automation, businesses must carefully evaluate each wristband alternative—from both a cost and tamper resistance perspective.

**Costs**

Each component of automation creates an expense, including the initial acquisition cost, reoccurring operating expenses, and the cost of the wristband itself. Businesses must implement a data management system to capture information from bar code or RFID wristbands, deploy a wireless or wired network infrastructure, and install bar code or RFID readers. IT managers must also consider the printers that actually create the bar code and RFID wristbands. Regardless of the infrastructure, the biggest expense by far is the reoccurring cost of the actual wristbands.

**Risk of Theft**

While pre-printed wristbands are currently the solution of choice, this exposes the business to the risk of theft and loss of revenue. Pre-printed vinyl and Tyvek® wristbands already contain the bar code and are ready for immediate use. Fact is, dishonest employees and thieves could steal ready-to-use wristbands in...
large quantities, and resell them. Additionally, most wristbands are not tamper-resistant, which means patrons could remove the wristband, and give it to someone else—resulting in lost revenue for the business.

**Print-on-Demand for Maximum Value**

There is no discounting the benefits of bar code wristbands to the entertainment industry. But to deliver the most value, businesses need a low-cost, durable, tamper-resistant alternative to pre-printed wristbands. Print-on-demand (POD) delivers the optimal solution. Unlike pre-printed wristbands, POD only creates the bar code at the point of sale when the customer makes the initial wristband purchase.

With POD, businesses no longer have to worry about securing quantities of pre-printed wristbands, eliminating the concerns of theft and lost revenue opportunities. Enhancing security further, the ticketing kiosk can print the customer’s name, which personalizes it for an added branding touch. If someone transfers the wristband, employees can see the name printed on the band, and ask for identification to verify the name is the same as the band. Additionally, businesses can print unique colors, indications, and symbols so venue employees can visually identify if a customer is in the right location if a bar code scanner is unavailable.

Like pre-printed bar coded wristbands, POD wristbands allow businesses to increase data gathering and visibility into consumer metrics including arrival patterns, attendee traffic, demographic information, and length of stay. Once collected, businesses can view the data in real time, including which attractions patrons visited, how much they spent, and general traffic patterns. Entertainment venues can use this information to improve park design, place concessions in optimal locations, and reduce bottlenecks to visitor traffic.

Once armed with rich consumer metrics, entertainment venues can target and offer special deals and incentives to preferred customers such as free food and beverages, returning customer discounts, and other loyalty-building promotions.

**Cost-Effective, Tamper-Resistant Wristbands from Zebra**

Zebra Technologies, a trusted leader in bar code printing solutions, delivers cost-effective, tamper-resistant wristbands that enable deep automation and cashless POS. Zebra offers two different solutions to meet the needs of diverse attractions and entertainment venues. Exclusively from Zebra, Z-Band® Fun and Z-Band® Splash wristbands deliver print-on-demand efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Z-Band Fun is an extremely low-cost wristband designed for one-day use in amusement parks, sporting events, and other single-day activities. Z-Band Splash features a durable, water-resistant adhesive for water parks, resorts, and
other attractions where there is excessive water exposure and the wristband must last multiple days. Zebra wristbands are tamper-evident—wearers cannot remove the wristband and transfer it to someone else. As a result, businesses can significantly reduce revenue losses associated with counterfeits and theft.

With industry-differentiated desktop and tabletop printers—including the innovative HC100™—Zebra brings a wealth of POD experience and unmatched reliability to the entertainment industry. Zebra POD bar code wristbands deliver several benefits beyond standard wristbands including:

- **Security**—Unlike pre-printed wristbands, Z-Band wristbands are blank, and do not contain value until printed.
- **Control Access**—Businesses can custom-print wristbands with colors and symbols to indicate access to special events and exhibits.
- **Non-transferrable**—The wristband can be printed with the patron’s name so employees can easily verify access.
- **Cost-effective**—Z-Band wristbands offer a significant cost savings when compared to RFID.
- **Durable**—Waterproof, tamper proof, and comfortable.

**Conclusion**

In the entertainment industry, it’s all about keeping costs low. Bar code technology provides a key enabler for automating ride ticketing, concession purchases, and park entry. As a result, businesses can realize significant labor cost savings while creating unique opportunities for enhancing the customer experience and improving sales. Bar code wristbands printed on-demand coupled with cashless POS solutions deliver the following key benefits:

- Unmatched flexibility versus pre-printed wristbands
- Rich feature set similar to RFID wristbands, but at much lower cost
- Enables automated, cashless POS, which helps increase per guest spend
- Opportunity to collect rich market metrics from loyalty programs, etc.

Boosting the bottom line is what matters. Z-Band wristbands exclusively from Zebra make it easier to prevent theft, save money, and improve the customer experience—giving entertainment and hospitality businesses the automation and flexibility they need to remain focused on driving revenue.

Zebra Technologies Corporation (NASDAQ: ZBRA) provides the broadest range of innovative technology solutions to identify, track, manage, and optimize the deployment of critical assets for improved business efficiency. Zebra’s core technologies include reliable on-demand printer and state-of-the-art software and hardware solutions. By enabling improvements in sourcing, visibility, security and accuracy, Zebra helps its customers to put the right asset in the right place at the right time. Zebra operates in over 100 countries and serves more than 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies worldwide. For more information about Zebra’s solutions visit [www.zebra.com](http://www.zebra.com).
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