

Nugget's ISO designation translates to greater efficiency, quality

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A certification process recently completed by the Carson Nugget leaves it poised to deliver better customer service and quality, according to company heads.

“The Carson Nugget is the only casino in the state of Nevada and the entire country to hold the prestigious ISO 9001 management designation ... not common in the hospitality industry,” said Kerri Garcia, spokeswoman for the Nugget. She said she learned this from International Organization for Standardization auditors.

The ISO designation is more common in the manufacturing industry, giving companies a standard for providing quality products for clients and customers, Garcia said.

ISO 9001 is a generic system standard that specifies, in broad terms, the necessary components of a quality management system, she said.

“The certification process took two years and culminated with the Nugget receiving the designation in October 2010,” Garcia said.

“In order to obtain and keep the designation, the Nugget has developed literally hundreds of working instructions for each and every department — finite details for all areas and departments — job descriptions, checklists and training instructions, in addition to creating an auditing committee that reviews each area, makes observations and makes sure the entire property is in compliance,” Garcia said.

The type of details covered include everything from how the food and beverage departments store food to make it last longer, to how the banquet department sets the tables and trains the staff.

“All of these important details create standardization and consistency,” Garcia said.

Denise Darling, the Nugget's controller and ISO management representative, said the ISO standards have worked well.

“This was a really good fit for a casino, because we're already so highly regulated. It was hard getting it all set up, but it's actually easy to do, and it keeps us in line,” Darling said. “Some companies have vision statements or mission statements — it's just a good way to do business.”

Darling explained that the ISO process gives more power to the people on the front lines who can fill out action request forms if they feel a procedure isn't working.

“Management has a responsibility to follow through, and a commitment to communicate with employees” under the ISO standards, she said.

ISO audits are conducted quarterly.

Nugget General Manager Star Anderson said the ISO helps the Nugget understand what consumers want.

“They have expectations about what we offer our guests and help us measure those. It's a way we can regulate

ourselves and define our quality and consistency,” Anderson said.

“The ISO process also helps us streamline our processes with smaller budgets” all businesses are facing right now, she said.

“It also makes us organizationally more efficient, and I can't imagine being without it,” she said.

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