



T O U C H S O L U T I O N S

OEM

VLC, the gaming division of Powerhouse Technology, Bozeman, Montana, U.S.

END USER

Interactive gaming machines

PRODUCT

IntelliTouch touchscreen

DEVELOPER

In-house software development

KEY BENEFITS

- Reliability
- Flexibility of play
- Intuitive interface
- No need for periodic recalibration
- Multiple games for continuous play

“TYPICALLY, NON-TOUCH MACHINES CAN ACCOMMODATE ONE OR TWO GAMES AT MOST, BUT THERE IS NO LIMIT TO THE NUMBER OF DIFFERENT GAMES THAT CAN BE LOADED ONTO ONE TOUCH-ENHANCED MACHINE.”

—Jess Tode, VLC Hardware Engineer

VLC



Touchscreens are becoming the user interface of choice in a vast array of gaming applications, from casino slots and card tables to coin-operated bartop and arcade amusement machines. So rapid and extensive has the adoption of this technology been in gaming that the public has come to expect displays to be touch-enabled—as fingerprints on non-touch displays can attest.

The gaming industry actually discovered touch in the 1980s. One company, VLC, the gaming division of Powerhouse Technology of Bozeman, Montana, has designed, manufactured, and marketed interactive gaming machines and central control system hardware and software for gaming programs and casino markets since 1988. The company actually introduced the industry’s first multigame touchscreen video gaming machine.

“Typically, non-touch machines can accommodate one or two games at most, but there is no limit to the number of different games that can be loaded onto one touch-enhanced machine,” says Jess Tode, hardware engineer for VLC. “There are no buttons at all on our machines, which makes them extremely player-intuitive. We design games of chance, with multiple variations of poker, keno, and spinning reel games for use in a variety of marketplaces around the world—and we design Elo’s screens into all our products.”

FLEXIBILITY OF PLAY

Tode says that one of the main benefits of using touchscreen technology is the flexible player interface, which allows customers to play multiple games on one machine. “Casinos like to give players the option of playing different games on one machine because it keeps the players interested and playing longer. Players who have

to get up and move to a different machine to play a new game get distracted along the way and quit playing.”

With the touch interface, the machine can switch back and forth between games simply by accessing different software. “Players can try their luck at multiple games without ever physically moving from a keno game to a poker game to a spinning reel game,” says Tode.

PLAYER-INTUITIVE INTERFACE

From a player’s standpoint, touch provides a more intuitive play interface. In the case of a poker game, players can examine the five cards they’re dealt and then discard one just by touching the unwanted card. If they want to return the card, they can touch it again, or touch the deal button to get the next draw. No buttons to decipher, no labels to read, and no levers to pull equals easy play with no frustration or wasted change.

“Similarly, keno players sometimes want to pick the whole column. With the touch interface they can just swipe the entire column with a finger instead of repeatedly pushing a button to move down the column, so play is faster and more efficient. As a result, people play more games for longer periods of time,” Tode adds.

24 HOURS A DAY

Two of the most compelling reasons why VLC integrates Elo touchscreens into its machines are quality and reliability. In the gaming industry, the demand to reduce the cost of machine ownership is ongoing. “If a machine is not functioning properly it must be removed from the floor, and money is being lost each hour the machine is not in use. Since many casinos are open 24 hours a day, usage is very high, and there is no downtime for repairs or adjust-



WITH A TOUCH INTERFACE, PLAYERS TRY THEIR LUCK AT MULTIPLE GAMES WITHOUT EVER PHYSICALLY LEAVING THE MACHINES.

ments to the equipment. The touchscreens are in constant use,” says Tode. “Elo’s IntelliTouch screen provides a stable, drift-free interface with no need for periodic recalibration, which means we can rely on the touchscreen to respond precisely to every touch—even with hard use.”

IntelliTouch screens come with a scratch performance warranty—a testament to their inherent scratch resistance and the robustness of surface wave technology. This is a bonus in the casino world, where inadvertent scratches can occur from diamond rings and the serrated edges of coins. Even if scratched, IntelliTouch touchscreens continue to operate and register touches accurately in the scratched area. The touchscreens are also sealable against spilled food and drinks.

Non-touchscreen arcade or casino-based gaming machines, normally operated by a row of buttons, have signage and instructions on the fascia of the machine. This means that the machines have to be taken out of field operation for a face-lift or upgrading with new software. But with touchscreens, the signage, instructions, software—the very personality of the machine—are all on-screen and can be simply upgraded via software. As Tode says, “Now the front of the machine can be used for signage to attract the user. Having no button wiring reduces our cost and labor. It makes designing the product easier because it’s a flexible game interface that doesn’t require dedicated hardware.”

FIRST IN THE INDUSTRY

VLC proudly asserts that it was the first in the gaming industry to use touchscreens. Now, all VLC machines are touch-enhanced and all have Elo touchscreens. Diana Webb of VLC's Purchasing Department says, "It's pretty simple. Our customers expect a product to work flawlessly—even something as simple as recalibration or replacement can result in huge losses in revenue. We chose Elo for quality, reliability, and on-time delivery."

Jess Tode elaborates: "We grew up in the industry with another touchscreen vendor, and we recognized the need for a second source. We chose Elo and worked closely with them to integrate our product, and they have since become our primary source. And, yes, we do believe that everything you can do with a button can be done better with a touchscreen."



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—Jess Tode

IntelliTouch Technology



Solid glass and Elo's patented surface wave technology are the keys to the superior performance of the IntelliTouch product line.

- Pure-glass touchscreens for superior image clarity, resolution, and light transmission.
- Antiglare glass and anti-vandal options.
- Stable, "drift-free" operation—for touch response that is always accurate.
- Durable, scratch-resistant glass surface—continues to work if scratched.
- Fast touch response.
- Finger, gloved-hand, and soft-stylus activation.
- Smart touch response—no false touch activation.
- Flat, spherical, and cylindrical touchscreen options for design flexibility.

To find out more about Elo's extensive range of touch solutions, visit our Web site at www.elotouch.com or or simply call the office nearest you:

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