

The Top Five Reasons Your Players Aren't Rated Correctly

By Derk Boss

And why you should care

We all spend a lot of time rating our players to make sure that they are comped correctly and fairly. Most of us, if not all, use the standard formula below to determine a player's value:

Earning Potential = Avg. Bet x Hours Played x Decisions per Hour x House Advantage

We use this formula to rate players in all games, but primarily in Table Games and Slots. Slots is easy; the player signs up for a player's club card, puts his card into the machine, and he's being rated. No involvement is needed from slot personnel on the floor, unless the machine malfunctions or the player has a question. Rarely is there an issue with player ratings in Slots.

Not so in Table Games. Even though there are a lot of systems out there that perform ratings pretty much automatically, there is always a human element that can, and often does, go awry. I've participated in many surveillance audits of player ratings and, unfortunately, the below is what we almost always find.

1. Floor personnel didn't use, or there isn't, a "house" formula to determine a player's average bets.

You would be amazed how inaccurate these averages can be. This is usually due to a floorperson using his own system for an average bet, or just guessing because he didn't see the player make the wagers, he isn't aware of the formula used by his department to determine an average bet, or such a formula doesn't exist at that property.

2. Floor personnel didn't see all of the play.

Meaning that the floor didn't see the player start or end play, his wagers, buy-ins, or the player's wins/losses. Floor personnel are watching more games nowadays, and don't see everything. Dealers are often asked by their floorperson what a player wagered or walked with, but that isn't something we should depend upon. I can tell you that surveillance doesn't get a lot of calls requesting such information. Maybe they should.

3. No approach of the player was made.

I can't tell you how many players we see who aren't rated at all, and it's not just \$5 players. Floor personnel tend to miss some players who should be welcomed to the property and signed up for a player's club card. These players are often listed as "refused name" players. Take a look!

4. No verification of ratings by supervisors.

Surveillance audits also frequently detect that a pit supervisor either didn't review the rating submitted, or simply rubberstamped what a floorperson turned in. I realize that we can't review every rating, but those of significant amounts should be reviewed for accuracy and legitimacy.

5. Fraud. There is a real potential for fraudulent ratings to occur.

In fact, I've seen it happen in my career too many times. Such frauds nowadays can cost a property tens of thousands of dollars very quickly and easily, and it usually involves employees working with outside agents. It is almost always predicated on a floorperson or pit clerk entering fraudulent player information that wasn't verified by someone else.

How can you protect your property? Some properties monitor their ratings closely and report any discrepancies or suspicions to their surveillance department. Some surveillance departments audit ratings regularly to search for discrepancies and suspicious activity. I recommend both approaches.