



TribalNet Newsletter



Volume 4, Issue 1

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Stimulus Package– I.H.S. Report to Congress



**Indian Health Service
30-Day Report to Congress:**
General Plan for Expenditure of Recovery Act Funds

WHAT, HOW, WHEN?

What is the report to congress?

This Report to Congress is prompted by language in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (“ARRA”) in the Interior General Provisions, Title VII, Section 701, as follows:
 “Sec. 701. (a) Within 30 days of enactment of this Act, each agency receiving funds under this title shall submit a general plan for the expenditure of such funds to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations.” The following information is presented in response to the requirement outlined in part (a), above.

Summary of Funding:

A total of \$500 million was provided to the Indian Health Service in ARRA for Services (**\$85 million**) to fund **health information technology activities**, and for Facilities (\$415 million) to fund construction and sanitation projects, as well as deferred maintenance projects and the purchase of equipment. These activities are *(cont. on p. 4)*

Upcoming FREE TribalNet Webinar **Wed. 5/6/09 @ 2:00 EST**

Negotiate Your Vendor Contracts– save valuable IT funds & resources

Presented by: Amos Auringer– Gartner

For webinar description and more information on how to login for this webinar go to: [TribalNet Webinars](#)

Morongo Band of Mission Indians & Morongo Casino, Resort & Spa

In each issue of the quarterly newsletter, we feature at least two articles that are focused on technology in the tribal industry. The first is an interview with an IT leader at a tribe, where we typically discuss projects and programs within the government and health divisions. The second interview is with a casino IT leader, where we focus on the issues at hand for the Native American technology gaming industry. Through the years we have had some great stories to share from organizations of all sizes and we attempt to have something new and useful to share with our readers in each issue. In 2009 we are continuing the trend of providing valuable industry information to our readers by kicking off the year with a feature that crosses over between tribal government and tribal gaming.

The Morongo Band of Mission Indians operates their IT division in a separated structure with two IT Directors. The direction of IT for the tribe and it’s government programs falls under the leadership of Doug Van Gelder, while the IT department at Morongo Casino, Resort & Spa, one of the tribes major businesses, is led by Marlon Ortiz. In this issue, we were fortunate enough to get a chance to speak with both Doug and Marlon so our readers have the chance to take a look inside their individual divisions as well as take an all encompassing look at the way they work together. *(continue below)*

Morongo Band of Mission Indians

**MORONGO
BAND OF
MISSION
INDIANS**



A SOVEREIGN NATION

Common challenges of a tribal IT leader can be anything from difficulty recruiting staff to dealing with the latest downturn in the economy. But, in Doug’s case, his biggest challenge, and also his biggest priority, is getting to know his way around tribal operations. He joined the tribe just over five months ago and since then has been focused on determining where he and his team of nine fit into the organization. “I’ve been having a lot of one-on-one meetings with my staff to evaluate what we are doing well and what we could improve on,” Doug commented. “It’s important that I take this time to listen to my staff, get a complete picture on the hardware and software we have installed and learn more about the overall tribal operations, policies and procedures. This learning process is helping me to begin setting priorities and *(cont. on p. 2)*

Morongo Casino, Resort & Spa



Ortiz leads his team in overseeing IT for the gaming and hospitality operations at Morongo Casino Resort & Spa. Within his staff of 19, there are two divisions, the Operations Group and Project Management Group. The Operations Group, the larger of the two, keeps up with the traditional 24x7 gaming environment, while the Project Management Group” organizes, schedules and deploys any new software or system solution. IT has been lucky, keeping their staff levels since Marlon began with the casino just over two years ago. “Technology is an enabler,” said Ortiz. “We continue to show the value of technology and our tribal leaders have been responsive to that. We are always automating process so that other departments can be more efficient.” *(cont. p. 2)*

Gaming Enterprises Government Health Gaming Enterprises Government Health Gaming Enterprises Government Health Gaming Enterprises Government Health

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Morongo Band of Mission Indians– (cont.)

(cont. from p. 1) goals for my department.” Doug oversees IT operations for the entire tribe including all government programs and non-gaming enterprises. When he joined the tribe as their IT Director, the Administrative Complex for the Morongo Band of Mission Indians was in the process of being built.

This newly constructed and beautiful 67,000 sq. ft. administrative center and 8,600 sq. ft. tribal meeting facility was built to function as the center of all Morongo’s Tribal affairs. They pulled together what once were multiple buildings scattered across their lands, into one consolidated location. The administrative staff, tribal government and approximately 1,000 members of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians can now enjoy a place where they can unite and share information all in one central location. “Building the Administrative Complex is just another example of how the Tribe continues to keep pace with the needs of its people and provide the support needed to enable us to succeed in the years to come,” said Chairman Robert Martin.



During this project, IT was involved with installing, testing and deploying equipment and systems for the entire complex. This included the technology necessary for the administrative offices and government affairs, the installation of a new and complete A/V center, new equipment for the meeting facility as well as a modern sound system that is used throughout the complex. All of the technology implemented within the building, make it a true state-of-the-art complex. The first step that enabled IT to move ahead with any of these initiatives was the upgrade to a fiber network across their lands that connect into the complex. “We brought in an outside consultant for the network project,” commented Doug. “We do a lot of work in-house and have the capability to do most of the installation, but in this case the construction and planning portion is best handled by the experts. The choice to use an outside consultant for any technology depends on the project.”

(cont. to page 3 for the conclusion of this article)

Morongo Casino, Resort & Spa– (cont.)



(cont. from p. 1) Morongo features a 310 room hotel tower and boasts over 2,000 slots all running with products for the IBM i-series and “casino in a box” integrated hospitality gaming suite. “The suite is perfect for our environment,” said Ortiz. “These are proven systems that compliment each other and run on a solid platform- the **IBM- i-series**. With this setup we have a high availability 24x7 which requires minimal support from our staff in-house. If we went outside the core solutions (**IBM, Infor-Infinium, Bally Gaming Systems, and Agilysys**) we feel that more manpower support would be needed to maintain our systems, which ultimately would lead to increased costs.” Although reducing and monitoring costs is critical for IT leaders to focus on year-round, it couldn’t be more on the forefront of their agendas than in this staggering economy. Marlon mentioned this as his biggest current challenge but also finds opportunity in these uncertain economic times.

He has taken on what is becoming a more popular, optimistic view on the state of the economy. “As an IT leader I now have time for reflection and to prepare for the future,” he stated. “The gaming technology market is constantly changing. We often find ourselves immersed in upgrades, installs, expansions all while leading day-to-day operations and keeping in line with the overall vision of the tribe and it’s businesses. This slower time allows us to put an added focus on where we are at and where we want to be in the future. We can concentrate on the basics of IT Management, the core of our business, and fine tune and improve our processes. We have the chance to re-evaluate our policies and procedures and must take actions to prepare for when the economy bounces back. We are simply keeping a positive mindset and getting ready for the future.”

Additionally, the casino is exploring long term cost saving technologies and initiatives such as switching to VOIP, a transition that the tribe has made and the casino is considering. One of the major projects in their sights is installing and testing a high-speed networked casino floor. “We are taking the time now to test this new technology within our environment,” said Ortiz. “With this technology, guests will be able to enjoy marketing promotions, server-based tournaments and a more interactive and customized player activity. We should be able to cross-promote every part of our business from gaming to hotel to restaurants and entertainment promotions. The networked floor is the solid foundation that will provide the ultimate customer experience and is the future growth path for many new technologies just on the horizon, such as player-specific-gaming and centralized casino management. We’re taking the first critical steps to what we and others in the industry see as the casino of the future. We are looking forward to successfully completing our tests so that we can roll-out this new technology as soon as possible.”

(cont. to page 3 for the conclusion of this article)



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SERVICE TRACKING SYSTEMS:

BRINGING REVENUE ENHANCING & RISK MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGIES TO TRIBES ACROSS AMERICA

Service Tracking Systems (STS) is a front service technology solutions company designed to elevate customer service, increase productivity, minimize liabilities, and enhance facility security. Known as the inventor of today's popular valet parking technology, its Computerized Valet Parking System, Bell Desk Management Software and CheckPointLPR perimeter alert technology are examples of STS's innovative design concepts that have swept the industry since 1994. In addition to over 70 years of collective industry experience, the company also holds several patents covering vehicle imaging and other aspects of the valet parking technology concept.

STS technologies:

- Reduce valet claims payout by 50%-80%
- Increase employee performance and reduce payroll
- Interface with major casino management and player card systems
- Elevate customer service levels through cutting-edge technologies



Some of our tribal casino and gaming clients that have enjoyed some of these benefits so far include:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Barona Casino | • Firelake Casino | • Morongo Casino | • Seminole Hard Rock Tampa |
| • Cache Creek | • Four Winds Casino | • Mystic Lake Casino | • Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort |
| • Casino Rama | • Foxwoods | • Pechanga Casino | • Sycuan Casino |
| • Creek Casino | • Harrah's Cherokee | • Potawatomi Casino | • Tachi Palace Casino Hotel |
| • Firekeeper's Casino | • Mohegan Sun | • Red Hawk Casino | • Thunder Valley Casino |
| | • Mohegan Sun Pocono Downs | • San Manuel Casino | |

STS is proud to serve tribes across North America and look forward to growing our relationships.

For more information, visit us at www.ServiceTrackingSystems.net or call 1800 955 3516.

Morongo Band of Mission Indians & Morongo Casino, Resort & Spa– conclusion (cont. from p. 2)

Although there are very different applications and priorities for technology that exist between the government and gaming divisions, Ortiz and Van Gelder did discuss some areas that cross over between both. They are working together to share their resources and evaluate efficiencies in areas such as networking, backup storage and disaster recovery solutions. This open communication and evaluation process is important to both leaders in ensuring that they stay focused on the same overall goal and vision of the tribe as a whole. Similarly, they both commented on how their backgrounds led them to their current positions. Prior to joining the team at Morongo Casino, Resort & Spa, Marlon worked in IT at Aztar - Tropicana, Las Vegas and Harrah's – Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas. Prior to joining the tribe, Van Gelder worked in State and Local governments. Both joining their positions new to the inner-workings of a tribal organization and business, they embraced the uniqueness while finding many similarities to their past experiences.

Lastly, both felt continued education and sharing information specific to their industries are critical elements to being solid leaders in IT. Both have used resources through TribalNet to stay connected to their peers and were pleased to be able to share their stories with our readers. We would like to thank both Doug and Marlon for being a part of this issue. They can both be reached for any questions or comments at: Marlon_Ortiz@morongo.com and DVanGelder@morongo-nsn.gov

Tribe Core Systems:

Desktops/Workstations: *Dell*
 Network Hardware: *Cisco*
 Phone System: *Avaya*
 Accounting: *Infor- Infinium*
 Purchasing: *Agilysys*
 GIS Mapping: *ESRI*
 Help-Desk: *Numara Software*

Casino Core Systems:

Desktops/Workstations: *Dell*
 Network Hardware: *Cisco*
 Phone System: *Avaya*
 Accounting: *Infor- Infinium*
 Slot Accounting/Player Tracking: *Bally Gaming Systems*
 Point of Sale: *Agilysys- Infogenesis*
 Property Management: *Agilysys*
 Group/Convention Sales- *New Market International*



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Stimulus Package– I.H.S. Report to Congress– (cont.)

(*cont. from p. 1*) presented in the five areas funded by the Act: Health Information Technology (\$85 million), Sanitation Facilities Construction (\$68 million), Health Care Facilities Construction (\$227 million), Maintenance & Improvement (\$100 million) and Equipment (\$20 million.)

Health Information Technology (\$85 million)- what, how, when:

Activities to be Funded: The purpose of this funding, as specified in the ARRA, is for health information technology activities, including tele-health services development and infrastructure requirements, to be allocated at the discretion of the IHS Director. IHS will fund activities based upon the IHS mission to improve access, quality, safety and overall health status of American Indian/Alaska Native patients and populations.

Activities to be funded with this investment include the following:

- HIT (Resource and Patient Management System -RPMS) application development and enhancements
 RPMS Electronic Health Record (EHR) Modernization
 Personal Health Record
 Population Health Application Enhancements
 Practice Management System Acquisition
 RPMS Architecture Enhancements
- HIT and tele-health infrastructure and development
 Security Enhancements
 Network upgrades

*This article is re-posted from the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Website:
<http://www.hhs.gov/recovery/reports/ihreport.html>*

Distribution of Funds and Timeline: Approximately 95% of these activities will be carried out through commercial contracts and may also be carried out under a P.L. 93-638 contracts with a Tribe or Tribal organization. IHS will use up to 5% of the ARRA funds for administrative costs related to these activities. Approximately 20% of the funds will be used for **hardware acquisition for the purpose of infrastructure modernization relating to security, networking, communications, and health information technology**. These purchases will be completed through new contracts competed among vendors offering products that meet the government's requirements. In addition, a number of new acquisitions are anticipated for **software development and related services**. These new acquisitions will also be awarded via appropriate contract vehicles, as well as through existing Tribal contracts as appropriate. The Indian Health Service has several existing GSA competitively awarded contract vehicles that will be accelerated to accommodate the immediate opportunity afforded by the ARRA funding. IHS anticipates that it will obligate approximately 60% of the funds in FY 2009 and 40% in FY 2010.

What's new with TribalNet?

Industry Report 2009

We need your help in order to provide you with the:

- 2009 Native American Casino Technology Report
- 2009 Native American Government Technology Report

Only if we can get enough technology profiles updated with IT leaders at tribes & tribal casinos nationwide, will we be able to collect enough data to create & provide each tribe & tribal casino with a copy of the 2009 industry reports.

A useful tool IT leaders can use year-round!

So, if your phone is ringing, you see us in your mailbox or your e-mail inbox...please respond– it's up to you!

For updating your technology profile you will also be eligible to win a \$500. VISA gift card!

**If you want to update and are unsure how–
[contact us today!](#)**

TribalNet 10th annual conference

10/5/09-10/8/09

**Suncoast Resort Casino
 Las Vegas, NV**



Onsite hotel room rate for attendees- \$70./nt. plus tax
Free shuttle to and from airport

*Help TribalNet celebrate a decade of
 bringing technology and tribes together!*

Join TribalNet on LinkedIn!

Exclusive group for IT leaders at tribal organizations & casinos to share ideas, post discussions, questions, news, & more!

To join, simply login to **LinkedIn** today, select to search groups and enter TribalNet online community

www.linkedin.com

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