Parc Astérix

Customer success story

ARCA ◈

Inspired by the famous French comic series, *The Adventures of Astérix*, created by Albert Uderzo and Rene Goscinny, Parc Astérix brings the stories of these beloved characters to life in a family-centered theme park just outside of Paris. In operation since 1989, the park is known for its variety of roller coasters which help to draw over 2 million visitors per year.

Over the last few years, the park has seen growth approaching 10% each year in terms of number of visitors, going from 1,800,000 visitors to 2,100,000 in just three seasons. Today, they average 180 cashiers operating on a typical park day with as many as 250 cashiers on peak days and holidays.

With annual revenues of more than €110 million, a high volume of cash flows through many points of sale located throughout the park. With so much cash to manage, completely manual cash processes exposed cash to multiple staff exchanges with little traceability or accountability to resolve balancing discrepancies.

Parc Astérix decided to streamline cash management between the points of sale and the central cash room to improve efficiency and create an audit trail for better cash security.

⊙ The Challenge

Manual cash processes were time-consuming, error-prone, and also lacked traceability and accountability to resolve discrepancies

As one of the largest theme parks in France, Parc Astérix has cash registers operating in boutiques, restaurants, ticketing, supermarket, parking and other points of sale located throughout the park.

Outdated manual cash processes required considerable staff resources and involved multiple staff exchanges between the cash registers and the central room. All of these cash touchpoints made it difficult to trace the source of any cash discrepancies. Park management needed to find a way to tighten control of the cash flow throughout the park while creating an audit trail for security.

Prior to using cash recyclers, staff based in the park's central cash room prepared till floats at the start of the day. Then a supervisor from each point of sale picked up the float cash for the cashiers they managed and manually verified each till before giving it to each cashier to put in a register.

The supervisors repeated this activity for till deposits, collecting the cash revenue from all of their cashiers and bringing it to the central cash room where cash control staff again counted the deposits. Finance Director of Parc Astérix, Jean-Louis Nicaud describes the end of day process, "At the end of the shift, one or two people per till were mobilized for 30 minutes to an hour to count a cash register. The operators manually counted their cash registers, put money in a cash bag and went back to what we call our internal bank. Teams in our cash control room once again recounted the revenues as a second verification. Indeed there was a lot of energy spent by many people to count cash."

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Jean-Louis Nicaud
FINANCE DIRECTOR

⚲ The Solution

Streamline manual processes with cash automation technology to improve security and efficiency and reduce operating costs

Parc Astérix decided to implement ARCA cash automation solutions to streamline their cash operations. There were two main reasons they chose to automate cash management: to improve cash security by adding accountability to cash processes and to increase profitability by reducing cash operating expenses. Jean-Louis Nicaud describes their objectives, "We wanted to secure the cash process, the circulation of cash in the park, and reduce the number of staff who touched the money. From the moment the cash float was handed over and the day's cash revenue was returned to the cash control room, we wanted to try to limit the handling of money by multiple operators."

Agnes Csernak, the Central Cash Room Manager, describes what the daily cash process looks like now: "The cashier is accountable for their cash register from the beginning of the day, when the cashier receives the cash float directly from the cash recycler until the return of the revenue at the end of the shift. (The automated process) removed any existing ambiguity in the money flow. That is, if we have a discrepancy, it is actually the cashier we are going to see, and no longer their manager or cash room personnel, since the cashier now completely controls their cash till."

All of the cashiers and central cash room quickly came to trust the accuracy of the cash recyclers. "We are certain that these machines are accurate, so we can rely completely on the results they give us. They are more reliable than human count," reports Nicaud. Furthermore, he adds, "Another advantage is that the recyclers transfer deposit funds directly into bags that are automatically sealed and handed over directly to the cash transporter. There is no longer any manual contact with funds. Here again, the revenue data communicated by the machines is accurate throughout the chain."

By limiting multiple cash touches and providing an electronic record of till dispenses and deposits, the cash automation solutions created accountability for each cashier. And the recyclers enhanced the efficiency and security of the deposit preparation process for central cash room staff.

Parc Astérix also met their other primary objective of reducing operating costs. By removing multiple levels of staff from the cash process, making recounts unnecessary and automating till issues and till returns, they saved hours of labor. The finance director described it this way, "If you consider that counting takes about 30 minutes to an hour per cash register at each point of sale for 200+ cash registers - and this counting is no longer done today - you get an idea of the hours that are saved on these tasks. This does not mean that people work less, but it does mean that these hours are spent on higher value work. They can now focus on their core business."

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Agnes Csernak
CENTRAL CASH ROOM MANAGER

🏁 The Result

Completely new cash processes with built-in accountability resulted in such significant time savings that the park did not need to increase permanent staff despite a 10% year-over-year attendance increase

"Now, with the machines, cashiers dispense their own start float directly from the recyclers in the morning then bring their deposits back in the evening. The main difference is that they do not recount their cash float in the morning or their return deposits in the evening since the recyclers are accurate. If they are supposed to have €300, they trust that they have €300 and they do not recount their float. At the end of the day, cashiers empty their register till into a cash bag without counting it, bring it to the central cash room to deposit the banknotes and coin to the recycler solutions. The recyclers almost instantly return the data for the deposit and the cash control teams retrieve the data for use in daily accounting."

From an accounting point of view, they have connected the recyclers and the ARCA software to their daily cash control system. That is, all reported revenues of the day of every type of point of sale are fed back into the cash control system, and both the ARCA software and recycler solutions report the cash data for each cashier. Data from the reports can be entered directly into this cash tracking system, generating a report for each cashier of their reported revenue and actual revenue, thus quickly identifying any variance. Then, these variances go back into accounting.

Cash automation has also created more transparency in the back office accounting process. "For the security of the funds, we appreciate the automated sealing feature of the deposit bags. Cash room staff doesn't have to touch money as often. We just remove the bag from the recycler and put it directly in the armored van to transport deposits to the bank. As such, there is total transparency for the central cash room staff." explains Csernak.

Park management anticipated more streamlined operations but implementing a new process can also bring about unexpected benefits. "A little surprise that we didn't expect was the speed of (float) distribution and cash counting. We were also surprised at how easy the recyclers were to use." confides Csernak. "Our cashiers have found the solutions very simple to use and we have full confidence in the counting and deposit activities. The cashiers do not need to count their start floats anymore, and in the evening they no longer have to count their register drawers in advance. They can fully rely on the recycling solution and they have never reported an issue with the accuracy of the machines."

The ARCA solution has streamlined cash operations for Parc Astérix so significantly that they have not needed to hire additional staff over the last three years, despite significant attendance growth. They have experienced the improved security and cost savings they hoped for and are adding more ARCA cash automation solutions as the park expands. 🔴

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Jean-Louis Nicaud
FINANCE DIRECTOR

The ARCA Solution for Parc Astérix

CM18b
Dual Function Cash Recycler

CC3R
Coin Recycler

ARCEO/Quireo
Software

ARCA

Since 1998, ARCA has been committed to helping people control and streamline cash operations in bank branches, retail stores and self-service kiosks. By focusing on technology and services, ARCA delivers thoughtful solutions to make transactions simpler, more efficient and more secure.

We are reimagining everyday transactions, freeing people to focus on what matters most.

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