



Miami HEAT / American Airlines Arena  
Project Highlight

# American Airlines Arena Home of the Miami HEAT



Located in beautiful downtown Miami, the American Airlines Arena is home to the three-time NBA champion Miami HEAT and host to nearly 150 annual events, including many of the top names in entertainment.

## Background

Like most venues, the AmericanAirlines Arena was using handheld scanning technology to validate entry tickets. Although this had worked well for validating traditional printed tickets, the HEAT instinctively knew that they had to prepare for a rapid transformation to digital ticketing.

Already underway to develop a robust mobile application platform utilizing Ticketmaster's Mobile SDK, the HEAT needed to make sure digital tickets could be validated smoothly.

The issues faced by ticket attendants using handheld mobile scanning devices to validate digital tickets included:

- Variations in the screen sizes and the resolution of various types and models of smartphones
- Differences in backlight settings on individual phones
- Glare and differences in ambient lighting at different entry locations



Due to these and other factors, scanning a mobile barcode was often an exercise in the art of perfectly positioning the scanner and phone at just the right angle to get a good read.

This required ticket attendants to verbally instruct guests on how to position their cell phone, and/or assist to maneuver the guest's hand to position the cell phone's screen to the correct angle. In some cases, the ticket attendants had to resort to scanning the guest's phone themselves. Besides the obvious fact that most guests would prefer not to be touched during the validation process, this also increased the risk of accidentally dropping and damaging a guest's phone.

Recognizing these challenges, the HEAT sought an entry solution that would allow fans to self-scan both digital and paper tickets quickly and reliably. Additional requirements included printing of customizable seat locators during the entry process. In order to meet these requirements, real time integration with Ticketmaster's Access Manager and Archtics and would be needed.

## Alvarado - The Intelligent Admission Control Expert

Founded in 1956, Alvarado specializes in entry control systems for the entertainment and security industries. The company installed the first computerized stadium entry system in the U.S. in 1994 at what was then known as Jacobs Field (now Progressive Field). Today, Alvarado products are installed at thousands of security and entertainment locations world-wide.

Alvarado manufactures a full line of entry control hardware and offers powerful server-based access control software called GateLink10. The expertise of Alvarado personnel also brings added value through its ability to assist clients with product selection, layout and spacing of equipment, installation and implementation. Alvarado manufactures and supports its products from its large manufacturing and R&D plant located 40 miles east of downtown Los Angeles.



## The HEAT and American Airlines Arena Select Alvarado

Alvarado worked with the Arena's building operations and technology teams to review available product options, and explain the features and benefits of Alvarado's wide array of intelligent admission entry turnstiles and pedestals. Once the product choices were narrowed, Alvarado's engineering staff created real-life renderings to allow HEAT and Arena executives to visualize how the products would look and operate when installed.

Ultimately, the HEAT and the Arena settled on one of Alvarado's barrier-free pedestal entry models with an integrated high speed printer.

### Barrier-Free Intelligent Entry Pedestals

Alvarado's intelligent admission pedestals have a compact installation footprint which leaves more room in the entry area for tables and metal detection equipment that is used most major facilities. The compact footprint also provides operational flexibility, allowing the facility to modify (widen/narrow) entry passages using portable stanchions.

Like all of Alvarado's self-scanning products, pedestals provide the added benefit of freeing the ticket attendants from constantly scanning tickets, allowing them to focus on providing excellent service, a priority for guest-centric organizations like the Miami HEAT and American Airlines Arena.

Alvarado offers five self-scanning entry pedestal models that can be optionally equipped with high speed printers. All are designed to optimize the guest ingress process and allow for quick and easy self-validation in both low and bright sunlight conditions.

All pedestal modes have bright color customer-facing TFT displays that provide prompts/instructions for the guest via onscreen graphics that can be customized by the venue. This makes it possible to incorporate sponsor logos, bilingual customer prompts and other desired messaging. The display also provides administrative functions via a touchscreen login.

Printing models incorporate a high-speed printer that can be used to print seat locators, receipts or coupons. All models also have options to add readers that validate virtually any type of media. Pedestals can either be fixed installed or portable.

In addition to Alvarado's intelligent admission pedestals, the Miami HEAT also selected Alvarado's PocketGate-MVT mobile validation terminals to validate tickets in parking areas and to provide customer service functions. Similar to Ticketmaster's hand held scanning product, Alvarado's PocketGate terminals offer options for printing and validation of other media such as magnetic stripe and RFID cards.



## GateLink10 Admission Software & Integration to Ticketmaster

Working closely with The HEAT and Ticketmaster's technology teams to implement the required operational functionality, Alvarado's GateLink10 admission software was used to integrate to Ticketmaster and control the installed pedestals and handheld validation terminals.

Used by some of the largest and most prominent sports and entertainment venues around the world, GateLink10 serves as the real-time link between the entry devices and Ticketmaster's Access Manager and Archtics systems. The installed system supports validation of Host and Archtics generated box office tickets, print at home and mobile tickets for Miami HEAT games, major concerts and the other events held at the Arena.



## The Results

Alvarado's products were installed at AmericanAirlines Arena in late 2014, with the system going live in conjunction with the 2014-15 NBA season. The system was optimized during the first few weeks of operation, and various enhancements and additional functionality were added. The added functionality allowed attendants to override and print seat locator slips in the event a guest displayed and scanned a print-at-home PDF file on their mobile device, something that previously required a guest to be redirected from the gate to the box office.

For the 2015-16 season, the Miami HEAT rolled out functionality in their mobile app for digital ticket delivery and are actively moving fans to their digital platform. Alvarado pedestals are now used to instantly print seat locator slips for all mobile ticket validations, making it easier for ticket holders once they're inside. The slips not only include event and seat information, but also a dynamically generated graphic logo that visually alerts ushers if a ticket holder has access to restricted areas within the venue. For example, a logo is printed at the top of the seat locator slip for someone who is authorized to enter the Flagship Lounge.

As Miami HEAT fans and ticket holders for other events utilize the new and improved entry process, Alvarado has continued to work closely with the Miami HEAT and AmericanAirlines Arena team to ensure that their continuing transition to digital ticketing is smooth.

"The Alvarado pedestal technology has significantly improved our ingress process", said Tony Coba, Executive VP and CIO of the Miami HEAT. "Both paper and digital tickets scan very quickly and our guests like the much improved self-scanning process."

"Alvarado has a proven portfolio of products and they've been a great partner for us. Alvarado continues to be very responsive to our evolving needs and their technical team does a great job at providing excellent customer service and support. I highly recommend Alvarado to other Ticketmaster clients who may be considering a similar effort," said Coba.

# Project Details

**Project:** Miami HEAT  
AmericanAirlines Arena  
601 Biscayne Blvd  
Miami, Florida 33132

**Client:** Miami HEAT

**Website:** www.heat.com

**Ticketing System:** Ticketmaster

**Completion:** November 2014

**Photos:** Alvarado

**Alvarado Products:**



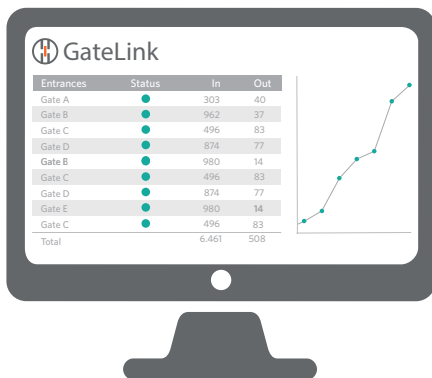
Venue Access Control  
Software

## TAS12P-AS1

Intelligent Admission  
Stations with Printers

## PocketGate-MVT

Mobile Validation  
Terminals with Printers





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