



WEEK 2

FRIDAY 10 JAN 2014

THIS WEEK

- HappyBet founder shot dead in Germany
- Betfred launch Windows lottery app
- Guest column: Andy Harris on attracting players
- Tweets of the week

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TOP STORY

TRANSFORMERS CASINO AD BANNED

Optimus Prime character deemed to appeal to minors



Optimus Prime from Transformers

An online casino advert has been outlawed for featuring a character likely to appeal to minors. The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) ruled that a newspaper ad for Metro Play Casino featuring Optimus Prime from the Transformers franchise breached four aspects of the UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising.

The slot game advert, which featured in the daily *Metro* newspaper, showed the character holding up a sign which read: "£30,000 will be won this week - Transformers: Battle for Cybertron - Play now for your chance to win!" Text underneath the sign stated: "Exclusive Bonus - deposit £5 and play with £15 - promo code: Jackpot. Play now!"

The ASA upheld two complaints which challenged whether the use of a character from a popular toy brand was irresponsible for a gambling product and likely to appeal to those under the age of 18.

Although acknowledging that the small print on the advert made it clear the offer was only available to over-18s, the ASA concluded that the marketing breached the Code due to its depiction of a character that was likely to have particular appeal to children and young people. It was

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also noted that the ad appeared in an untargeted medium which was available to under-18s as well as adults.

The advert must not now appear in its current form, with Metro Play warned not to use characters or images that were likely to appeal to under-18s.

Metro Play said they understood the concern about using a popular toy brand to promote online gambling but made the point that the character was highly relevant to the game in question. The brand have however decided not to publish any more advertising for Transformers: Battle of Cybertron, while ensuring that future marketing communications avoided using characters that might appeal to under-18s.

In November 2012 the ASA upheld similar complaints against the *Daily Mirror* after the newspaper printed a gambling advert for MirrorCasino.com featuring the same character.

KEY POINTS

- ASA ban Transformers casino advert.
- Optimus Prime character said to appeal to under-18s.
- Operators Metro Play to cease all advertising for Transformers slot.

GERMANY

HAPPYBET FOUNDER SHOT DEAD

Oliver Fröhlich killed near operator's offices

The founder and CEO of bookmakers HappyBet has been shot dead in Germany. Newspaper reports state that Oliver Fröhlich was hit twice in the head at the back entrance of his company's offices in Frankfurt. Police found several ammunition casings at the scene but no gun, and are



Oliver Fröhlich was killed outside Happybet's office in Frankfurt

appealing for witnesses. The Frankfurt prosecutor's office are offering a reward of €5,000 for information.

Fröhlich was a nightclub operator in the 1990s and a partner in Paramount Park, one of the most famous clubs in Germany. It is this connection which has led to the allegation in some quarters that he was involved in some way with the Hells Angels, although the police have described this suggestion, as well as rumours of the victim's Mafia links, as being purely speculation.

Malta-licensed HappyBet offer online sports-betting and casino gaming, as well as sports betting via shop and kiosk systems, terminals and mobile phones. Last October the firm agreed a deal to become the official betting partner of German football club Bayer Leverkusen.

KEY POINTS

- HappyBet founder shot dead.
- Police appeal for witnesses; reward offered.

LOTTERY

BETFRED LAUNCH FIRST GAMBLING APP ON WINDOWS APP STORES

Players able to play 12 lotteries on their PC or Windows Phone

Operators Betfred have partnered with Microsoft to launch a lottery app for Windows 8 and Windows Phone 8, the first time a gambling app has been available through Windows app stores.

Players can bet on 12 daily lotteries live. Betfred managing director Chris Sheffield said: "It is a monumental time for Betfred.com and a real coup to team up with one of the world's most recognised technology brands.

"I've no doubt the partnership will propel us in our mission to become the front-runners in mobile gambling and gaming, especially in the lottery sector."

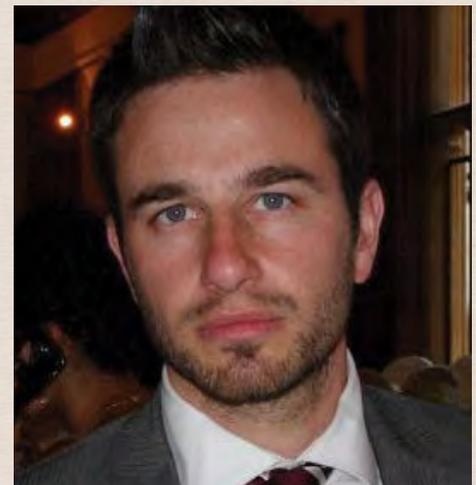
KEY POINTS

- Betfred secure an industry first with a gambling app available through Windows.

INDUSTRY EVENTS

YOUTUBE ON LAC AGENDA

Google manager to explore video-sharing site's advertising power



Chris Harrison

A standout session at next month's London Affiliate Conference (LAC) sees Google's gaming manager take to the floor to expand on the potential of YouTube as an advertising channel.

Tweets of the week 

"Barclays downgrades both William Hill & Ladbrokes today following yesterday's Parliamentary debate on fixed odds betting terminals."
Telegraph journalist Natalie Thomas [[@NathalieThomas3](#)]

"PartyPoker NJ Seals Online Poker, Casino Deal With Sixers and Devils."
Online Poker Report's Chris Grove [[@OPReport](#)]

"What is the PMU doing right?? Reported a 19.5% increase in poker GGR. Yes, POKER!!"
Industry consultant Aideen Shortt [[@AideenShortt](#)]

Chris Harrison, e-gaming industry manager at the search giants, is to give a talk titled *The YouTube Opportunity*, where he will explore how marketing on YouTube through a Google search account can drive both branding and direct response objectives.

LAC takes place from 6-9 February in a new venue for 2014: Earls Court Exhibition Centre in London.

GUEST COLUMNIST

“HOW TO BE MORE APPEALING TO PLAYERS IN 2014”



by Andy Harris
software firm
commercial
director

“This year will be a huge one for the gambling industry, with the World Cup in particular looming large. For UK-focused companies, point-of-consumption tax (PoC) will also have a significant impact. The ability of operators to profit from the former may help to soften the blow of the latter. But regardless of the effect of these headline events, it’s clear to me that operators could do much more from a product perspective to defend and strengthen their positions.

Mobile will be the talk of ICE again next month, as it was last year, yet a surprising number of firms have yet to fully optimise their websites or products for the increasing array of phones and tablets. Most agree it is a requirement, but in some cases there remains a gulf between theory and practice. With an expanding range of better quality devices, and more accessible price points, optimising your offering for Android tablets may represent one of the

biggest opportunities for mobile growth this year. It’s an area that my company have dedicated significant resources to.

Operators, as obvious as it sounds, should make it easier to play the full array of products regardless of the device being used. To do so, navigation between products needs to be simple and clear. Furthermore, customer journeys need to be straightforward and logical. For example, ensure you maintain login sessions when moving between products, and, if you offer different product wallets, you should make it easy to transfer money between them. It would also be beneficial to a player choosing to deposit when he’s playing in the Casino, for example, to be returned there (rather than the Sportsbook) once the depositing process is complete.

I’d also recommend that operators implement a personalised (and automated) product experience so players can easily access their preferred games and betting markets. I have no doubt it will result in happier customers who spend more money. As a betting customer commented at the recent Mobile and Tablet Gambling Summit, in London during November: “Why keep telling me about ice hockey when all I bet on is football?”

A step on from this would be the provision of relevant ‘up-sell’ opportunities. Other industries have been doing this successfully for years. Our industry’s operators have just as much information on their customers but don’t seem to use it effectively. There are massive rewards awaiting those who are prepared to invest in this more personalised approach.

Once players get to their preferred betting markets, bet placement should also be made as easy as possible,

regardless of the bet they choose. I still find it surprising how time-consuming it is to place my weekend football accumulator on my iPad.

As an industry we also need to encourage more product innovation. Gaming suppliers can certainly help support a more innovative approach. There are many in our space who can deliver completely new game types, features, or different takes on popular formats. I can’t imagine many operators will mind if everyone takes a break from producing yet more cloned five reel slots!

If PoC is making you think even more seriously about diversifying into other markets, make sure that you have truly localised your products and services. This means a lot more than translating what you already have, though it would be a good start in some cases.

There are, of course, many other key ingredients, such as well executed marketing and promotional activity, outstanding customer care, and effective technology that will help drive success in an increasingly competitive environment. But providing an excellent product experience will be more important than ever this year if operators want to attract players, retain them, and optimise their value.”

Andy Harris has two decades’ worth of experience in land-based and online betting and gaming at Rank, BetVictor, and Ladbrokes. As commercial director of Realistic Games he’s secured partnerships with leading operators

Want to be a guest columnist in GI Friday? Write to: editor@gamblinginsider.com

COMING SOON: Look out for a new issue of *Gambling Insider’s* print magazine this month, including a major focus on mergers and acquisitions in the gambling industry, as well as two additional *Gambling Insider Focus* publications in time for the ICE and LAC industry events

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