



WEEK 38

FRIDAY 18 SEP 2015

THIS WEEK

- G2E Vegas event preview
- Interviews with organisers and exhibitors
- Industry news round-up
- Columnist: Bragi Aegisson on European DFS

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TOP STORY

AGA: \$93BN ILLEGAL NFL BETTING

Only \$2bn to be wagered at legal Nevada sportsbooks



American Gaming Association president and CEO
Geoff Freeman

The American Gaming Association (AGA) has predicted that the majority of the \$95bn it expects to be wagered on National Football League (NFL) and college football games this season will be bet illegally.

Following the kick-off of the NFL season last Thursday, the AGA anticipates that \$93bn worth of illegal wagers will be placed on football, with just under \$2bn wagered at legal sportsbooks in Nevada. A total of \$3.8bn worth of illicit bets were made during last season's Super Bowl between the New England Patriots and the Seattle Seahawks – an amount 38 times greater than the total bet legally.

Nevada, Oregon, Delaware and Montana are the four US states that are in some way exempt from the 1992 Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA), which placed a federal ban on state-sanctioned sports gambling on events in which either professional or amateur athletes participate. Exceptions for state-sponsored sports wagering in Nevada and sports lotteries in Oregon and Delaware were made, while sports pools are legal in Montana.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ►

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- AN OPPORTUNITY TO NETWORK WITH HIGH PROFILE INDIVIDUALS

FROM FRONT PAGE ►

The US Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit ruled in August that a 2014 law that legalised sports betting at New Jersey racetracks and casinos, which was subsequently blocked, violates PASPA. The 2014 law, which also prohibited wagering on New Jersey college team competitions, was blocked by the District Court after four major US sports leagues and the National Collegiate Athletic Association filed suit.

Geoff Freeman, chief executive of the AGA, said: "Illegal sports betting is reaching new heights of popularity in America. It's clear that a federal ban on traditional sports betting outside of Nevada is failing."

The AGA's "Stop Illegal Gambling – Play it Safe" initiative was launched in April, seeking to distinguish the "highly regulated, \$240bn legal gaming industry" – which it says supports 1.7 million jobs – from "the criminal networks that rely on illegal gambling to fund violent crimes and drug and human trafficking". June saw the debut of the AGA's Illegal Gambling Advisory Board as part of the initiative.

KEY POINTS

- The AGA has predicted that \$93bn will be wagered illegally on NFL and college football games this season
- Just under \$2bn will be bet with legal Nevada sportsbooks
- A total of \$3.8bn was bet illegally on this year's Super Bowl

LEGAL

CALIFORNIA MISSES ONLINE POKER DEADLINE

Legislative session comes to a close



Real-money online poker will not be legalised in California this year, after the state's legislative session ended last Friday.

The Assembly Appropriations Committee voted in favour of advancing Assemblyman Adam Gray's [pictured] AB 431 bill in May, which the Governmental Organization Committee voted unanimously in favour of in April. Hearings for two other online poker bills, Assemblyman Mike Gatto's AB 9 and Assemblyman Reginald Jones-Sawyer's AB 167, were removed from the schedule of a GO Committee hearing in July.

Gray has since introduced two bills seeking to regulate sports betting and fantasy sports respectively. AB 1441 would allow for sports betting providing that changes were made to the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act. AB 1437 would require fantasy sports operators, including daily fantasy sports operators, to pay an annual regulatory fee.

KEY POINT

- The deadline to legalise real-money online poker in California this year has passed

ASIA

WYNN MACAU ALLEGEDLY HIT BY THEFT

Between HK\$200m and HK\$2bn reported to have been stolen by VIP room operator

A VIP room operator in Macau has reportedly stolen between HK\$200m and HK\$2bn from casino operator Wynn Macau, according to an analyst's report. Staff at Dore Holdings are suspected of taking the money belonging to Wynn Resorts.

Daiwa Capital Markets analyst Jamie Soo is quoted by Bloomberg as saying: "The balance in this instance, even at the low end, is material and quite significant. Our on-the-ground checks point to the possibility that other junket operators may share some of Dore's existing stakeholders which may exacerbate this contagion impact."

Junkets operate as middle men for operators in Macau, lending players money and organising casino trips, collecting any debts upon their return to China.

Dore Holdings operates within Wynn Macau, a holding of Wynn Resorts.



KEY POINT

- Staff at Dore Holdings are alleged to have stolen at least HK\$200m from Wynn Macau

UK

LADBROKES CFO TO STEP DOWN IN FEBRUARY

Ian Bull will not be part of the Ladbrokes Coral management long-term

Ladbrokes CFO Ian Bull will stand down from the operator in February. Coral CFO Paul Bowtell is set to become group CFO of Ladbrokes Coral when the planned merger between the two operators is completed. Should the Ladbrokes Coral merger complete before February, it has been agreed that Bull [pictured] will leave shortly after.

Ladbrokes chairman Peter Erskine said: "Ian has worked tirelessly through what have been challenging times and has helped steer Ladbrokes to this exciting point in its journey."

"At the time of announcement of the proposed merger with Coral, we announced that Ian would be stepping down as Ladbrokes CFO and Ian has recently informed the board that he wished to leave Ladbrokes on completion of the annual accounts."

KEY POINT

- Ian Bull will stand down as Ladbrokes CFO in February or shortly after its merger with Gala Coral is complete



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G2E VEGAS PREVIEW

INDUSTRY HEADS FOR G2E VEGAS

Global Gaming Expo to offer exhibitions, seminars and networking

This year's Global Gaming Expo (G2E) will take place at the Sands Expo and Convention Center, Las Vegas between Monday 28 September and Thursday 1 October. G2E Vegas is organised by Reed Exhibitions and presented by the American Gaming Association.

The show, which is the second G2E show of the year following G2E Asia in Macau in May, will be attended by gaming industry professionals



from a variety of sectors, including i-gaming, bingo, lotteries, pari-mutuels, racinos and resorts.

G2E Vegas boasts the largest gaming floor in North America, which will be filled by more than 450 exhibitors.

New to the show this year is the Integrated Resort Experience, which will be the very first end-to-end casino resort property event and will include a chef competition, fashion show, mixology demonstrations and southern wine and spirits classes.

The show has a five-day seminar programme, led by industry experts. Topics on the agenda include advancements in slot machines, tribal casino developments, i-gaming insights, sports betting, daily fantasy sports and security & surveillance. The seminars will begin on the first day of the show and the exhibit hall will open at 10am on the second day.

G2E's social networking sites will provide attendees with relevant updates.

Included in the schedule of networking events are the 2015 Global Gaming Awards, to be hosted by *Gambling Insider* at the Titian



Ballroom in the Venetian Palazzo Congress Center on day one. The presentation, which is open to all G2E seminar attendees, will celebrate the finest achievements of operators and providers in both the land-based and online industries.

G2E Vegas caters for operators and providers from a wide range of sectors, including the i-gaming sector, and an i-gaming zone will host some of the online industry's best-known companies.

G2E provides reduced hotel rates and travel discounts, and the Venetian and Palazzo resort hotels are conveniently connected to the Sands Expo Center.

G2E VEGAS PREVIEW - SEMINARS

A selection of some of the standout seminars and speakers at this year's G2E Vegas. (Speaker line-ups subject to alteration/addition.) For a full seminar program, click here.

Monday 28 September – 9am-10am

Veronese 2402

Tribal Overview:

The State of Indian Gaming

The presence of tribal casinos in the US should never be underestimated. An economic, legal and regulatory update on tribal gaming will be provided on a state-by-state basis during this session. The seminar, moderated by NIGA's Ernie Stevens, will provide an analysis of historical trends and will make comparisons with other sectors of the industry.

Moderator: Ernie Stevens

Speakers: Alan Meister, Jason Giles, Melanie Benjamin

Monday 28 September – 3.45pm-4.45pm

Bellini 2104

Embrace Sports Books:

Integrity of Sports and Wagering

Nevada is the only US state that allows single game sports betting and it is important to consider how the industry can work with regulators and the major professional sports leagues to create a new regulatory system. The history of sports wagering will be discussed, as well as the current state of affairs.

Speakers: Tony Coles, Karl Bennison, Daniel Wallach

Tuesday 29 September – 11.45am-12.45pm

Marco Polo 802

Regulation of Sports Betting and Daily Fantasy Sports in the United States: Questions Abound

One of the most high-profile debates in online gaming centres on whether or not playing real-money daily fantasy sports constitutes gambling. With the likes of Yahoo Sports, CBS and Amaya Gaming recently entering the daily fantasy sports market, it is constantly gaining press coverage. This seminar will look at how regulation could be applied to the sector.

Speakers: Daniel Wallach, Seth Young, Joe Asher

Wednesday 30 September – 9am-10am

**C-Suite Perspectives:
AGA CEO Roundtable**

Titian 2301

The big names are in town for this one. Among the speakers are the CEOs of operator Caesars Entertainment and provider Scientific Games, who will be looking into trends and regulation, among other topics.

Speakers: Mark Frissora, Gavin Isaacs, Greg Carlin

Wednesday 30 September – 10.30am-11.30am

Veronese 2402

Best Practices: Gaming Industry Market Research and Customer Insights

Attendees can learn about the latest techniques being applied to market research that can target various types of consumers. The panel will discuss market research that can assist a strategic approach that can be applied towards understanding customers.

Moderator: Roberto Coppola

Speakers: Fernando Ramirez, Michael Tsai, Ryan Harris, Kathy Hickman



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G2E VEGAS PREVIEW - NETWORKING

Previewing the networking opportunities on offer at this year's show.

G2E Vegas not only prides itself on being one of the key events on the gaming calendar based on its conferences and exhibition, but also due to its networking opportunities, and this year's show will be no exception.

A limited number of meeting rooms are available and can be rented by exhibitors and/or related industry groups on a first-come, first-served basis. Those who require a room can make a request by filling in and returning a meeting room request form.

A welcome reception will be held from 5pm to 6.30pm at the Integrated Resort Experience Show Floor on 29 September, where cocktails and various forms of entertainment will be provided.

Some delegates may be fortunate enough to be invited to this year's Gaming Hall of Fame event, organised

by the American Gaming Association. The event will see the new members inducted into the Hall of Fame as a result of significant contributions they have made to the industry. They will be joining more than 80 previous entrants that have been inducted since the Hall of Fame's inception in 1989. The ceremony is invitation only and will be held at the Chairman's Reception on 30 September.

There will be opportunities for delegates to get to know each other at various entertainment offerings hosted by the Integrated Resort Experience. Its schedule includes a chef competition that will be held on all three days, as professional chefs go head-to-head in contests that will be decided by a celebrity judging panel, culminating in a final that will take place at 12.30pm on day three.

Unforgettably, the Global Gaming Awards, powered by *Gambling Insider*, will be held at the Titian Ballroom at the Venetian Palazzo Congress Center on day one, rewarding the strongest performing operators,



providers and executives in the industry. Every G2E seminar delegate or speaker with a conference pass for 28 September will be able to attend the ceremony. Up to 800 delegates are expected to be in attendance.

G2E delegates will be able to activate a My Show account via G2E's website to build a professional network.

Click [HERE](#) to book a meeting room.

G2E PREVIEW - OVERVIEW

“A WINDOW TO OUR INDUSTRY”



Ed Seval
Senior vice president, Global Gaming Expo (G2E)

As part of our special G2E Vegas preview, we've interviewed a series of expo organisers and exhibitors to gather their thoughts ahead of the big event. We begin with G2E senior vice president Ed Seval, who offers an overview of this year's show, including an exciting new feature called the Integrated Resort Experience.

Why should the gaming industry attend this year's Global Gaming expo?

Attending offers a window to the world of what's new in our industry. From exploring the latest technology, products and services to learning about the future of gaming in the G2E Seminar sessions,

G2E offers the opportunity to meet your business goals in a few number of days.

How have you developed/evolved G2E from last year?

In 2015 we will debut the Integrated Resort Experience, offering end-to-end solutions for casino resorts. From gaming to non-gaming technologies, products and services, this is the first event specifically designed to showcase products and seminars focused on driving more guests to stay longer, play longer and spend more per visit. In addition, we have evolved the G2E Show floor to enhance the ability to do business with dedicated 'business zones', networking lounges and on-floor food courts. Our G2E Seminars have expanded to feature critical topics that will enable our industry to successfully navigate the future.

What can you tell us in particular about this year's Integrated Resort Experience?

The Integrated Resort Experience will feature a circular show floor with a working Circle Bar in the centre, surrounded by slots and table games supported by vignettes

of curated casino resort products and exhibits covering stay well products, food & beverage, restaurant concepts, meeting products, entertainment and much more. There will be a chef competition, live uniform fashion shows by Cintas and seminars. A totally experiential approach.

What aspects of this year's G2E are you personally most looking forward to?

From the first Seminar session to the opportunity to renew and make new relationships to the launch of so many new technologies and products, every minute will be so jam-packed that I'm not sure I can answer that.

How do you intend to continue developing G2E in the coming years?

Plans are already underway for 2016 to reflect the industry to an even greater extent. We are working with the American Gaming Association and our attending and exhibiting customers now and will be ready to announce many exciting enhancements shortly after G2E.

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WHI	TOR	1-1	GG	1	2/1
CHI	ROK	2-2	GG	4	2/1
LAZ	CEP	1-1	GG	5	1/1
VER	CAG	1-1	GG	2	1/1
PAL	PAR	1-1	GG	1	1/1
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G2E PREVIEW - SEMINARS

“MORE VARIETY THAN EVER BEFORE”



Ginger Curtis
Director of Industry relations & programming, Reed Exhibitions – G2E Events

Could you explain how the G2E educational seminar program is being structured this year and what is new?

This year's G2E educational seminar program offers more options and variety than ever before. Our Monday G2E Intensive Education Programs now include a full Tribal Gaming program as well as new workshops in our Global Gaming Women program. The G2E main program includes a variety of seminar types from our seminar keynotes and general sessions to traditional breakouts and our introduction of two new seminar formats: in-depth discussions and speed sessions. G2E in-depth discussions are

extended seminars allowing for an even deeper conversation about today's most important topics. G2E speed sessions will feature multiple presenters for shorter time segments, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the main seminar topic. It will be great to hear feedback from our attendees on our new additions both during and after the show.

What do you think are the major topics and issues that delegates will be most keen to hear about this year?

Some of the topics throughout the G2E program that are instrumental to the future of casino gaming are the development of skill-based games, the tremendous growth in the percentage of non-gaming related revenues – indicating the necessity for a truly 'Integrated Resort Experience' – the evolving state of sports betting, daily fantasy sports, eSports and i-gaming in general, and of course what everyone needs to plan for: the millennial customer.

Which of the seminars/speakers are you personally most excited about this year?

The G2E seminar keynotes Jeffrey Ma and Rahul Sood are a must-see. Jeffrey is an expert and leader in this digital age, the growth and development of which is such an important business aspect in the industry as a whole right now. Rahul's innovation in bringing the eSports betting platform Unikrn to life is a great example of his desire to bring innovation, design, technology, and business together with a great product. Their insights will be invaluable for our audience and my own professional growth and development.

Why should delegates attend this year's G2E seminars?

The G2E team has worked hard all year to create seminar programming that is a comprehensive view of everything related to the business of casino resort gaming. G2E is the world's largest briefing on the gaming industry, offering more C-Level executive insights, real-world best practice takeaways and insights, as well as the analytical data behind today's truly global markets and fully integrated resorts to move your business forward.

G2E VEGAS PREVIEW - GGA 2015
THE GLOBAL GAMING AWARDS 2015

The industry gears up for a prestigious presentation

The Global Gaming Awards 2015 are to culminate in a showpiece presentation ceremony in Las Vegas during G2E Vegas, with 11 companies and one executive recognised and rewarded for their impressive achievements during the past year. The awards will be handed out during a gala luncheon event in the Titian Ballroom (Titian 2301) of the Venetian Palazzo Congress Center at 11.30am on 28 September. Those wishing to attend the Awards presentation can purchase a ticket **HERE**.

The destination of each of the awards is decided by a panel of 50 judges made up of esteemed industry executives from a range of sectors and geographies. The first judge confirmed for the 2015 Awards was a landmark addition to the Panel: Scientific Games president and chief executive officer Gavin Isaacs. Other new judges on this year's Panel include OpenBet CEO Jeremy Thompson-Hill and Betfred

CEO John Haddock, while the likes of IGT International CEO Walter Bugno, Microgaming CEO Roger Raatgever and American Gaming Association president and CEO Geoff Freeman reprise their judging roles from last year. A full list of judges, alongside other information on the Awards, can be found at globalgamingawards.com.

Following the formulation of a shortlist in each category, compiled by an official Nominations Panel in conjunction with the in-house editorial team at *Gambling Insider*, each of the 50 judges voted for a winner and runner-up in each of the 12 categories, with the runner-up votes being used to decide the award victor in the event of a tie. In the interests of fairness, judges were not permitted to vote in any categories in which their companies featured.

KPMG Gibraltar, one of the world's biggest corporate advisory firms, has once again signed up as an official partner of the Global Gaming Awards. The Awards' official adjudicator will be verifying the voting process, including software testing, to help

provide evidence that voting has been conducted in a transparent and equitable manner, and that the results are an accurate reflection of the votes cast by the 50 judges.

The Global Gaming Awards are powered by *Gambling Insider* and presented to the industry in association with G2E Vegas. NYX Gaming Group is the Lead Partner of the Global Gaming Awards 2015.



NYX Gaming Group are proud sponsors of the 2015 Global Gaming Awards, and would like to congratulate all shortlisted nominees!



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G2E PREVIEW - NYX GAMING GROUP "A CRUCIAL EVENT IN THE CALENDAR"



David Johnson
Commercial
director, NYX
Gaming Group

As ever with our show previews, we've interviewed a collection of G2E Vegas exhibitors to discover the reasons behind their attendance and what they're hoping to achieve at the show. This section begins with David Johnson of NYX Gaming Group.

Why will you be exhibiting at this year's G2E Vegas expo?

G2E is a crucial event in NYX Gaming Group's calendar. We are headquartered in Las Vegas and have a worldwide footprint. Bolstering our stellar non-US business with the regulating States is a key strategy moving forward, capitalising on

our strong early success in New Jersey, including Golden Nugget and the Resorts project, featuring NYX's on-property i-gaming zone.

What special events or presentations do you have planned for the show?

NYX Gaming Group has a significant stand space this year and a team of 30 executives at the show. We'll be showcasing new games from proprietary games studio NextGen Gaming, as well as those of our quality supplier partners. After welcoming Holly Madison to the stand last year, NYX may well have another surprise up its sleeve this time round. Come see us at booth 4023!

Why do you think other firms should want to meet with you at the show?

NYX Gaming Group provides flexible gaming solutions to some of the largest lotteries, casinos, poker rooms and i-gaming operators across the globe – I would imagine with such growth and M&A activity

since the last G2E there will be plenty of inquisitive delegates being welcomed on to the NYX booth.

NYX Poker Network is our leading online internet poker network, while NextGen Gaming is the industry's leading platform-agnostic provider of engaging, repeat play slots. Through our Open Platform System (OPS), operators can take advantage of best of breed products and services, including their own, all managed via a single interface. The fully hosted Open Gaming System (OGS) allows licensees to leverage the best in multi-vendor casino content from around the world.

With all this and more under the one umbrella, we're anticipating a hectic few days!

What aspects of the show are you most looking forward to personally?

It's the best chance to experience the latest gaming innovations under one roof, likewise to make new partnerships and catch-up with all those already working with NYX Gaming Group.

G2E PREVIEW - BETRADAR
"A NOT-TO-BE-MISSED EVENT"



Eduard Blonk
Managing director sales, Sportradar

Why will you be exhibiting at this year's G2E Vegas expo?

Exhibitions in general play a very important role in our company when it comes to demonstrating and showcasing the services and solutions we are providing to our 450 bookmaker clients in over 80 countries. Las Vegas is naturally the centre of the entertainment industry and for Betradar as market leader in sports data and betting services, G2E is a not-to-be-missed event.

What special events or presentations do you have planned for the show?

We are proud to present the market's very first full-scale Virtual Basketball product. The 3D animations are outstanding and based on an impressive motion-capture technology process. The next big exposure will be what we call MTS – Managed Trading Services – which is all about externalising labour-intensive tasks and dealing with them efficiently and cost-effectively. This service enables our clients to partially or completely outsource their trading

What sort of business will you be looking to do at the show?

The last big sports-betting trade shows in which we have taken part in Colombia and Peru have shown that there is a huge demand from American operators for our services and products. This includes our core product line 'Betting Solutions', where we currently offer over 18,000 live events per month on 18 sports, but also content, streaming and virtual solutions. With our second participation at G2E Vegas we expect to extend our brand recognition in the market and demonstrate to clients and potentials how they can succeed in an increasingly competitive market with our

market-leading solutions. The American market will play an important role for our business, depending on future legislation.

Why do you think other firms should want to meet with you at the show?

We are positioned as a 360-degree one-stop shop for betting and gaming operators worldwide. For companies in the gaming and sports-betting industry, our product portfolio provides solutions to externalise labour-intensive tasks, increase the in-play betting offering, enrich sportsbooks with bet-stimulating content solutions, enhance engagement through live streaming and speed up bet cycles with virtual sports betting solutions.

What aspects of the show are you most looking forward to personally?

The program offers a good combination of interesting and informative conference sessions as well as a large number of exhibitor booths of all genres. Based on our experiences from G2E 2014, the quality and quantity of visitors, particularly from America but also the rest of the world, is outstanding.

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G2E PREVIEW - SG INTERACTIVE
"A WHO'S WHO OF GAMING"



Bob Hays
*Vice president
 global
 commercial, SG
 Interactive*

Why will you be exhibiting at this year's G2E Vegas expo?

The Global Gaming Expo in Las Vegas is one of the most significant annual gaming trade shows in the world. It provides a platform for Scientific Games to showcase SG Interactive's ever-evolving library of content and technology to an extremely relevant audience. G2E also grants us the opportunity to connect with customers, industry thought leaders and media in one of the largest 'who's who' in gaming events.

What special events or presentations do you have planned for the show?

SG Interactive will highlight SG Universe with an in-booth demo at booth #1126. SG Universe is a suite of products that empowers land-based casinos to deepen their relationships with players through incremental engagement both on and off the casino floor, keeping their brand top-of-mind between casino visits while increasing in-casino spend. The suite is comprised of award-winning platforms including Mobile Concierge, VenueBet, Play4Fun Network, Core System Integration and Game Server.

We'll also participate in two panel discussions. On Tuesday we'll speak on the topic of *Blurring the Lines: Lotto, Sports Betting, iGaming, Social and Fantasy Join Casinos* and on Wednesday we'll provide insights on *Making it Mobile: Leveraging Technology in Casino Marketing*.

Why do you think other firms should want to meet with you at the show?

As the exclusive distributor of content through the company's Bally, Barcrest, Shuffle Master and Williams game development studios, SG Interactive

offers one of the deepest and broadest portfolio of player-favourite wagered content to online casinos globally. With SG Universe, we're providing land-based casinos with a premier, holistic solution to engaging players whenever and wherever they may be – all with the casino's bottom line in mind.

What aspects of the show are you most looking forward to personally?

I'm looking forward to showcasing SG Interactive's impressive library of content and evolved technology to our customers and the category as a whole. I also look forward to having in-depth conversations with our customers to better understand their needs, challenges and how SG Interactive can provide solutions and opportunities for their individual brands. Lastly, engaging with other industry thought leaders is always energising and inspiring. It's an exciting time to be in the gaming industry, and SG Interactive is looking forward to bringing an evolving portfolio of innovative products and services to our casino partners.

GUEST COLUMNIST

“DFS: THE EUROPEAN OPPORTUNITY”

by **Bragi
Aegisson**
CEO, Fanaments

“Cynics will tell you that daily fantasy will never work over here because real-money sportsbooks beat them to it. Yet, while the UK may have a well-established betting industry, the same cannot be said for the rest of continental Europe. Where sports betting exists at all, it is still in its infancy.

The same assumptions also fail to take into account that an estimated \$380bn is wagered on sports betting in the United States every year. It may be illegal, but if daily fantasy can compete against that market, why shouldn't it compete against a legalised one worth a fraction in the UK?

A bigger barrier to both entry and success, in my view, are the different languages and cultures in Europe. DFS sites have a job on their hands to educate people about their offering. Those hoping to break into different territories will have to take care to localise not only their product but their marketing too. In doing so, they will have to demonstrate that DFS has far more skill and social elements to it than sports betting.

If they're able to do this, I believe they'll find that Europe is probably the natural home for daily fantasy sports.

Over the past twenty years media companies, with their mass market reach, have carried the torch, while sportsbooks have shunned season-long fantasy games because they don't fit naturally on a sports-betting site.

But daily games, with their similarities to in-play betting, are a different proposition. They could, in fact, be even better than in the States, as we can create any market we want in Europe, not being bound by US legislation's definition of what makes a daily fantasy game legal. This therefore allows us to create engaging products that deliver better customer lifetime values.

Fantasy games are as much about fan engagement as gambling. Creating an experience where the sports fan can pit his or her knowledge and opinion against those of another fan is what drives conversation and retention. Those that learn this trick will attract large numbers of players quickly, as social media and refer-a-friend incentives spread the message among peers. But the quality of customer will be of equal importance. Not only do we need sports fanatics, we're looking for those who are willing to have a wager too.

Many of those new customers will be attracted to football products, which is understandable given the game's universal popularity in Europe. With the vast majority of games restricted to weekends and a handful of weeknights however, there is limited scope to offering a single sport, even if it includes leagues in different countries.

It makes more sense to offer other sports alongside football, such as

golf, basketball and mixed martial arts. Cross-selling those sports with attractive offers for participation can only help with retention rates in the same way that sportsbooks with casino tabs are more profitable. What sports you offer depends on where you're hoping to attract customers, of course. Cricket, for instance, would be a natural choice for India, but perhaps less so for Sweden!

What it boils down to is providing sports fans and casual punters with a new buzz – an option to test their skill and knowledge in a social setting among friends and fellow supporters. Not all of the DFS sites that have mushroomed in recent weeks will do so. Some will not have the money for marketing or the guaranteed prize pools, nor indeed the distribution networks to reach a critical mass.

But others, be they the big boys from America like FanDuel and DraftKings, or hopefully homegrown ones like Fanaments, now have a great opportunity to turn fantasy into reality.”

Bragi Aegisson is CEO of Fanaments, which he co-founded in Iceland in 2013 with Arnor Davidsson and Gudmundur Sveinsson. He has a background in banking and risk management and has been a fantasy sport devotee for a number of years.

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