

THIS WEEK

- Record UK mobile slot jackpot
- US casino market tipped to hit \$93bn
- Tennis match-fixing measures to be reviewed
- Columnist: Nikita Mishchenko on payments

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TOP STORY

PROGRESS FOR CALIFORNIA DFS

Bill passes Committee vote



California has edged closer to DFS regulation

California has moved a step nearer to regulating daily fantasy sports (DFS) after an Assembly Appropriations Committee passed a bill by a near-unanimous vote.

AB 1437, authored by Governmental Organization (GO) Committee chairman Adam Gray, received 15 votes in favour and zero votes against, with two members choosing not to cast a vote.

The bill proposes the enactment of the Internet Fantasy Sports Game Protection Act, which would mean DFS operators would be required to pay an annual regulatory fee to be deposited into the Fantasy Sports Fund.

California became the first state to approve any form of DFS regulation by a legislative vote when the bill was passed by the GO Committee earlier this month. It will now be retained for the next legislative session.

The progress echoes developments made on the issue of online poker in the state last year. AB 167 also passed votes held by the GO Committee and Assembly Appropriations Committee but then stalled and could not be passed before the end of last year's legislative session. That bill is authored by Assemblyman Reginald Jones-Sawyer, who is also a co-author of AB 1437.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ►

FROM FRONT PAGE ►

The GO Committee hearing where AB 1437 was passed was initially scheduled to also include AB 167, but AB 167 was removed from the agenda before the start of the hearing.

Victor Rocha, owner and editor of gaming resource Pechanga.net told *Gambling Insider*: "DFS seems to have come and taken the wind out of the sails of i-poker. It's still moving but DFS is now opening up questions that i-gaming was asking, such as whether this is a violation of the [tribal] compact."

In other regulatory news, online poker legislation is back on the agenda in New York, as Assemblyman Gary Pretlow has introduced A9049 and reintroduced S5302, a Senate version of the bill.

The bill would allow for up to 10 online poker licensees, with operators being charged a licence fee of \$10m and a tax rate of 15% of gross gaming revenue.

KEY POINTS

- A bill seeking to regulate DFS in California has passed another Committee vote

- AB 1437 received 15 yes votes and zero no votes out of 17
- The bill will be retained for the next legislative session

CASINO

RECORD UK MOBILE SLOT JACKPOT
Player wins millions from one spin as Playtech claims new feat

The record for the biggest win on a UK mobile slot has been broken after a Galabingo.com player received £4.5m from one £4 spin.

Provider Playtech announced the jackpot had been won via its software and that the victory is the largest ever on a Playtech network bingo site as well as being the second largest on a Playtech progressive jackpot game.

The winner, a female librarian from Glasgow who has been playing with Gala Bingo online for three years, has chosen to remain anonymous.

She said: "I picked up my mobile and started playing while I was watching TV. Minutes later I saw a huge string of numbers coming up and realised

I'd hit the jackpot. I was simply blown away and couldn't believe I'd won."

US

US CASINO MARKET TIPPED TO HIT \$93BN BY 2020

Tourism and growth of i-gaming among reasons for predicted increase

A report from market research firm Technavio forecasts that the US gaming market could see revenues rise as high as \$93bn by 2020. The study highlighted a number of factors, including increased tourism, economical benefits and market expansion.

Faizan Akhtar, lead research analyst for Technavio, said: "The US is one of the few countries that allow advertisements for casinos, thus encouraging local



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level marketing. This strategy has increased the number of tourists interested in gambling in the country."

Growth in the online gambling environment was listed as another reason for the prediction.

New Jersey's i-gaming revenue increased 21% to \$148.9m last year, while Delaware's figure dropped 14% to \$2.1m for the same period.

SPORT

TENNIS MATCH-FIXING MEASURES TO BE REVIEWED

Development follows suspicious betting patterns

An independent review into anti-match fixing measures has been announced following revelations of suspicious tennis betting patterns.

An investigation carried out by BBC and BuzzFeed News said that tennis authorities have been warned about 16 players that have been ranked inside the world's top 50.

The report said that the Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU), which was set up in 2008 following a previous suspicious



betting investigation into 28 players, had not been able to take further action as it could only act on future events.

BBC Radio 5 live tennis correspondent Russell Fuller said: "The panel has been asked to look into how the TIU can become more transparent without compromising the need for confidentiality. It will also consider additional resources for the TIU and structural changes that may enhance its independence."

ASIA

WYNN WARNS CONTRACTOR

Delay in opening Wynn Palace could cost CIMIC Group \$200,000 a day

Wynn Macau has informed the contractors responsible for building its second casino in Macau that they may

be liable for around \$200m in damages if delays surrounding the completion of the Wynn Palace project continue.

International contractor CIMIC Group has been warned by the operator that it could be on the hook for up to \$200,000 per day if it misses its third schedule point.

Australian-based CIMIC was scheduled to complete the project by 26 March, however the company told Wynn Macau in November that fulfilment of the \$4.1bn casino development contract would be postponed to 25 June.

Wynn Resorts CEO and founder Steve Wynn said in a letter to the contractor: "We are concerned that with your current levels of progress in the execution of the work, you will fail to achieve the third interim milestone."



LAC PREVIEW
FIRST STOP LONDON



With just a week to go before the first major affiliate show of the year, here is all you need to know about the 2016 London Affiliate Conference

The 10th London Affiliate Conference (LAC) is drawing nearer and over 4,000 delegates coming from more than 70 countries are expected to be in attendance at the Olympia National. Taking place between 4-7 February, this will precede LAC's sister shows

the Amsterdam Affiliate Conference and the Berlin Affiliate Conference that will be staged later this year. With over 190 exhibitors and sponsors set to advertise their offerings, there should be plenty to see and do on the exhibition floor across the second and third days of the conference. The show conveniently crosses over with the ICE Totally Gaming show being held at ExCeL London from February 2-4. So what can you expect from this year's offering?

Venue

The Olympia National is located in Hammersmith, west London, approximately four miles from the centre of the city. The building is situated less than a few minutes' walking distance away from Kensington (Olympia) overground and underground (District Line) stations and an approximate 12-minute walk and four-minute bus journey from High Street Kensington underground station on the District and Circle lines. West Kensington

underground station on the District Line is an eight-minute walk away.

Covering an area of over 8,000 square metres, the venue boasts a dedicated guest entrance, hospitality rooms and on-site car parking. Between 1,000 and 4,800 guests can be accommodated.

Registration

The first day of the show is a pre-registration day. Admission is free for all affiliates and introducing brokers, who will receive email confirmation along with their e-ticket after they have registered. The e-ticket will allow you to avoid queues and



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As ActiveWins know from experience, it doesn't take a big team to break records. Come to booth L1 to meet the Bonneville Bantam team, the UK motorcycle enthusiasts who have burst onto the racing scene, shattering five world land speed records. Make sure to come meet the record holders and see their vintage Bantams on display at our booth.

The ActiveWins Program works seamlessly to provide innovative and competitive marketing tools to improve traffic conversion. Powered by ActiveWin Media, the ActiveWins program is managed by a team of Digital Marketing experts. With access to the best brands in the industry, we tailor each of our incentives around individual affiliates. No matter what demographic your site audience is, we're sure to have a program that will earn you commissions. Visit our booth at L1 to find out more.

Come visit booth L1 at LAC to meet the team and try out our Motorcycle Simulator



LONDON AFFILIATE CONFERENCE
4th - 7th February 2016

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will contain all relevant details. The ticket will give you access to the exhibition, conferences and networking parties. Five working days must be allowed while the process of validating your status as an affiliate/introducing broker is carried out. Applicants that are not validated and are not eligible for an e-ticket will be informed via email.

What's new?

The most notable addition to this year's show is the Acquisition Zone. The zone will be a dedicated area for all companies connected to marketing, including email service providers, tech companies and performance marketing and creative agencies.

Financial Partners Expo

The Financial Partners Expo will run alongside LAC and will be held at the same venue. More than 2,000 affiliates and brokers are expected to be in attendance, with the show



aiming to act as a networking and educational platform. Affiliates and introducing brokers will have the opportunity to enhance their business within the retail finance sector. Seminars will be held in Conference Room 2, while LAC seminars will run in Conference Room 1.

Conferences for LAC and the Financial Partners Expo will be held across the second and third days of the show. Topics set to be explored within the Financial Partners Expo are regulatory issues, US traffic and SEO on day two, before moving on to internal marketing, global

commerce and website business optimisation on day three.

Schedule

The conferences will begin at 10.30am on both days. A highlight for day two will be an SEO gurus panel in the morning session, looking into how affiliates can boost their rankings this year. The latest Google updates, current SEO trends and challenges, and tools to prevent a website from dropping out of an organic search are all set to be discussed by a selection of experts, including Fili Wiese of Search Brothers and Jon Earnshaw of Pi Datametrics.





The panel will be moderated by ForeverUn Limited's Jason Duke.

Technological developments will be explored in the afternoon session. If affiliates want to find out about current trends and which techniques they can adapt to their strategy, then this is the seminar for them. The line-up here includes Cory Padveen of t2Marketing, Colossus Bets' Laurence Jones, and Sreeram Vanga, managing director of Cozy Games.

Phil Fraser, owner of bingo marketing agency Focus Online Management, will round off the

day by offering his expertise on how a successful affiliate business can be built, having been in the gaming affiliate sector for 15 years.

Conferences continue into Saturday, and if you would like a slightly later start after the previous night's schmoozing (see Networking), then the LAC 10-year anniversary panel at 11.15am could be a good place to start. The panel will involve some of the most prestigious speakers to have appeared at LAC in its 10-year history, including Michael Corfman and Ory Weihs, and will look towards the future of the industry.

Moving back to the present, and one of the afternoon conferences will delve into tips on how to create a competitive advantage by using a blog. Learning points from 90 Digital CEO Aferdita Pacrami include how to research content ideas and how to direct more traffic to your site.

The conference programme concludes with a focus on gamification in real-money casinos from Ronald Arlt, co-founder &

CEO at Ever Adventure Ltd. He will be considering questions such as 'What is the impact on retention and conversion of introducing gamification to real-money products?' and 'What will real-money products look like five years from now?'

A complimentary lunch is included in the conference schedule.

Networking

A mobile app is a potential means of streamlining your networking appointments during this year's show. The app, which will be sent to



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delegates after they have registered, will provide details of schedules and networking events, and help them explore sessions. Users can view photos, discussion topics and which sessions are trending, while also being able to post updates to sessions. Delegates can earn points, badges and prizes for being active on the app and at the event. They can also check the leaderboard to see how they compare to other attendees.

With the first day of the show being primarily for welcoming and pre-registration, this will

allow visitors to meet and drink before the actual event begins.

Proceedings on days two and three are set to go on long into the night. The official networking party rounds off day two, with proceedings beginning at 7pm and ending at around 3am at one of London's most exciting and acclaimed clubs, MODE.

The trend will continue on day three with the official closing party, which takes place at the top floor of the unique and decadent Kensington Roof Gardens.

There will also be an opportunity to finish off the show with drinks at the Sunday Session, held from 1pm to 4pm on the final day of the conference.

Networking breaks in the morning and afternoon are also scheduled for days two and three, while there is also an open bar scheduled for both afternoons.

Accommodation

The Hilton London Olympia Hotel, located on Kensington High Street, is

the official hotel for this year's LAC. The hotel is a five-minute walk from Kensington (Olympia) overground and underground stations. Transfers via Heathrow and Gatwick airports can be arranged. The Olympia National is a short walk from the hotel and can be reached by heading south west onto Kensington High Street. The Olympia National will be on the right-hand side.

For more information on this year's London Affiliate Conference visit igbaffiliate.com/events/londonaffiliateconference



LAC PREVIEW | iGAMING BUSINESS

"OUR BIGGEST LAC EVER"



Shona O'Donnell
 Head of
 Operations,
 iGaming Business

What can delegates expect from this year's London Affiliate Conference?

We say it every year but this is expected to be our biggest LAC ever with over 4,000 delegates in attendance, and we are really hoping to see some old faces as it's our 10th anniversary. We will be using all of Olympia National and delegates can expect to see a lot of brands go very big and aim to impress with stands and giveaways. LAC also sees the permanent return of the acquisition and retention marketing zone, meaning we have even more conference sessions than ever before.

Attendees can expect to see some amazing offers on revenue share, some truly incredible prize draws that include once-in-a-lifetime holidays, tickets to major sporting events, sporting memorabilia, cash and all of the latest tech goodies.

What has been your aim with the conference content this year?

In the last six months we have created a new role within the events team that is focused on the conference content. This is an area that we are really keen to develop and improve on as the industry matures. We hope that this means the content is stronger than ever before, and we are bringing new speakers to the event. We are always keen to bring the brightest minds from both within the industry and other sectors to share ideas and help our delegates take home practical, actionable information they can use to immediately impact their business.

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

There will be a lot of famous faces at LAC so I'm looking forward to some good photo opportunities, and I always love catching up with old friends and meeting those that are new to the industry.

How do you intend to keep developing the show in future years? What have you learned from last year?

As the industry has grown people still want to party but business is key, so it's important to provide quiet spaces where they can do this even in the evening. And while music on stands creates a great atmosphere it can be really disruptive, so we have taken measures to manage this. Overall, we listen to our sponsors, exhibitors and delegates, and react to the feedback they give us. We really do read every single survey and email sent after the show, so please let us know your feedback. It's your show as much as it is ours.



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LAC PREVIEW | SELECTED CONFERENCES

Here we highlight some of the standout conferences taking place at the forthcoming London Affiliate Conference. For full details visit igbaffiliate.com/events/londonaffiliateconference

LONDON AFFILIATE CONFERENCE

Friday 5th February, 10.05am-10.50am

The SEO gurus panel: technical insight to boost your rankings in 2016

This panel will dissect the latest Google updates to help you future-proof a website against dropping out of organic search. By focusing on SEO practice that is working right now, this session will give you clarity over exactly what you need to be doing. The SEO gurus will be ready to tackle your very own SEO challenges, so come prepared to put them to the test.

Speakers: Jason Duke, chief tea boy, ForeverUn Limited (moderator); Fili Wiese, SEO consultant, Search Brothers; Andy Blackburn, director, GameOn; Jon Earnshaw, CTO and co-founder, Pi Datametrics

FINANCIAL PARTNERS EXPO

Friday 5th February,
11:45am-12:15pm

To be or not to be regulated...

With the rapid expansion of the financial markets and changes in regulation, it is important to understand the implications of working with regulated vs unregulated companies for affiliates. This session will provide a clear perspective on what the future may hold for unregulated brokers and the impact of regulation across the wider industry.

Speaker: Demetris Tsingis, partner, K.Treppides

AQUISITION ZONE

Saturday 6th February,
2.30pm-3.00pm

Data driven marketing – an easy path to increase conversions

As an affiliate you don't necessarily control which device your visitors will visit your sites with or click on your affiliate links. This session will

demonstrate how implementing simple technologies that maximise that data you already have will allow you to make sure your visitors always land on the right landing pages and prevent traffic losses.

Speaker: Laurent Malka, CEO, Tracking Desk

LONDON AFFILIATE CONFERENCE

Saturday 6th February,
3.15pm-3:45pm

Gamification in real-money casinos – it's working

Ever since the mega success stories of Slotomania and DoubleDown Casino, there have been many attempts to introduce gamification elements into real-money casinos, but with very mixed results. In this session, Ronald Arlt will outline what this means for affiliates and how this new breed of casinos could mean higher conversion rates and new monetisation opportunities.

Speaker: Ronald Arlt, co-founder & CEO, Ever Adventure Ltd

LAC PREVIEW | IAFFILIATES

“ONE OF THE BEST OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT”



Roi Rintzler
*Head of Affiliates,
 iAffiliates*

Why will you be attending and exhibiting at this year’s LAC show?

iAffiliates has been attending the i-gaming conferences since way back in 2009 and we have never missed a single one. LAC is one of the best opportunities for operators to connect with affiliates on a personal level, meeting face-to-face and learning about each other in person. Exhibiting is as much about reconnecting with existing partners as it is about attracting new affiliates.

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

iAffiliates goes the extra mile to create a unique, innovative theme for our booth at each conference that connects everything from the graphics and conference print ads to the gifts and giveaways. At BAC a few months ago our drone giveaway was a huge hit and we have another exciting gadget giveaway planned for London. Standing out from the crowd is our specialty – we want to show affiliates that among the many affiliate casino programs, iAffiliates is unique.

What do you think will be the main topics of discussion at the show among delegates?

Everyone today struggles to keep pace with changing technology. One trend we’ve seen, which is certain to come up in conversation, is how social gaming is taking over the player market. The paradigm which differentiates between casino games and social games is outdated. Today casino games from many software providers have adapted a look and feel to mimic social and free-to-play

games, not to mention the hybrid social casino games. With the right marketing tools and tactics, affiliates can latch on to social gaming traffic and turn the trend into an advantage for online casino. It will be interesting to hear different perspectives on social gaming from other operators and members of the industry.

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

With all the drama of the giant booths, the lights, and the spectacle that LAC does so well, nothing interests me as much as meeting as many affiliates as possible in person. Meeting new affiliates over drinks, talking business with veteran iAffiliates partners, developing new relationships and strengthening existing ones – that is what my team and I look forward to at the show. Having said that, the speakers are always informative, and I am interested in seeing what the other operators bring to the show.

COME & SEE THE TEAM ON STAND B10



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LAC PREVIEW | ACTIVEWINS

**"THE NETWORKING
EVENTS ARE LEGENDARY"**



Natalie Merrison
*Head of Affiliates,
ActiveWins*

Why will you be attending and exhibiting at this year's LAC show?

LAC gives our team the opportunity to meet with our affiliate partners – those we have been working with for years as well as new affiliates who are joining our program. There are many new opportunities to discuss, and we are excited about our incredible display booth this year.

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

Our motorcycle theme is going full throttle, with a state-of-the-art bike simulator on

hand for affiliates to clock their best lap time for our leaderboard. The affiliate with the fastest time at the end of the show will win a fantastic prize. Plus, our special guests are the UK's own Bonneville Bantam team, who have set five land speed records with their vintage motorcycles. The team will be there to answer questions, and affiliates can pose with the beautifully restored machines in our photo booth as a souvenir.

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

Our motto is "business with a personal touch" - and LAC is a time for us to spend time with affiliates to discuss new partnerships, review upcoming opportunities and sign new affiliates to our programs. It will be the busiest show of the year for our team.

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

ActiveWins has a host of new options, and we encourage gaming affiliates to book time with their account managers to learn about them.

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

The iGB networking events are legendary and give our team the chance to spend some social time with affiliates and with each other.

What do you think will be the main topics of discussion at the show among delegates?

New compliance guidelines will likely be a hot topic of conversation, as will the emergence of mobile.

How has the show developed in the years you've been attending?

The sophistication of the booths and displays by exhibitors gets better every year. In 2016, ActiveWins will have one of the largest booths at the show and it is our first year with a VIP suite. We have splashed out on a great experience for affiliates visiting our booth, and we are looking forward to meeting and greeting as many of them as we can.

LAC PREVIEW | CORAL
“THE SHOW HAS GROWN SO MUCH”



Sarah Caskie
 Marketing Affiliate
 Partner Manager,
 Coral Interactive

Why will you be exhibiting at this year’s LAC show?

We will be exhibiting at this year’s LAC show as we think it is a great opportunity to meet with our affiliate clients and discuss both our plans and their plans for the coming year. The show itself is a great way to showcase your brand, advertising what is new as well as portraying an extension of your own personality and brand values on the stand. We always go with something that is a bit fun and quirky but which allows for meetings to happen in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

The shows are just as important for cementing existing relationships as they are for generating new ones.

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

Personally, the aspect of the show I’m most looking forward to is meeting up with the affiliates themselves. A number of them have become friends over the years so it is always great fun to meet up, and it is always great to put a face to the name of people you have been in constant email or Skype contact with. Also, it is such an innovative industry so it is really refreshing to hear what new ideas and concepts affiliates have come up with or technologies they have integrated or developed.

What do you think will be the main topics of discussion at the show among delegates?

I think the main topic of discussion will be upcoming sporting events like Cheltenham and the Grand

National. This is in addition to Euro 2016, which is only a couple of months away and will be a huge focus for us. The evolution from desktop to mobile app will continue to be a hot topic, especially around how operators can use affiliates to drive their own mobile products.

How has the show developed in the years you’ve been attending?

The show has changed so much in the six years that I have been attending. It has grown so much in size and scale, and moved from what now seems like the tiny venue of Old Billingsgate to the grand heights of Olympia. There’s also such a large and diverse mix of people now – affiliates are no longer limited to people with considerable SEO and HTML knowledge needing massive servers to power their sites, but to a whole range of people with social media pages, apps, networks and databases. It’s so diverse! One thing however hasn’t changed: the parties are still awesome!

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TAMARA LOPEZ
AFFILIATE PROGRAM MANAGER

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LAC PREVIEW | QUASAR GAMING "THE BIGGEST AFFILIATE EVENT OF THE YEAR"



Jake Stagno Navarra
*Affiliate Manager,
Quasar Gaming*

Why will you be attending and exhibiting at this year's LAC show?

Besides the fact that LAC is the biggest affiliate event of the year, I am eager to meet as many of our existing affiliates on a personal level as I can in order to continue to strengthen our already successful partnerships. It's also a great opportunity to bring new recruits on board with Team Quasar.

Plus we have some great new features to showcase, which will help put us on the map as one of the

top casinos to work with and really show everyone that we mean business.

We are constantly looking for new ways to create the perfect gaming experience for our players and I believe this year we are taking great steps to accomplishing that.

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

I love the entire vibe that there is around the conference, plus the fact that you're constantly meeting new people, creating new business partners and also great friendships along the way.

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

Well this is an easy one: to acquire new affiliates and build on our success.

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

We're coming up to LAC with a new and improved Quasar Gaming site

which we are extremely proud of. Plus, we have a brand new stand that we have worked hard for and which is going to look awesome, even if I do say so myself.

We also have some upcoming and exciting new topics that we will discuss with our affiliates, one of them being the launch of our mobile version of Quasar. At the moment this is all I can really say openly, you'll need to pass by our stand to find out the rest!

How important is mobile going to be in the coming year? Why is this?

Extremely – in this day and age everybody is used to being able to do practically everything on their mobile and tablet, and enjoying their favourite slots at their favourite casino should definitely be one of those things. Many players consider this when choosing a casino so it's a great plus for both us and our affiliates.

CLARION WEBINAR | DATA
DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH DATA
 Steven Pimblett, chief data officer at Betsson, offers his take on transitioning to data-driven business



Strategic alignment
 In your strategic statement or strategic benchmarking, data is classed as a pillar or an asset. At Betsson we have five big ideas and one of them is to be data-driven. Why that's so important is because obviously any culture or business transformation needs investment, and if you've got a place at the

strategic table, your CEO backing you and your exec team supporting you, that's hurdle number one really. If you haven't got that you're always going to be viewed as a cost centre or a department that doesn't add the value it needs.

Align success to business outcomes
 At Betsson, it's a standard subscription business, or digital business, which is all about a growth funnel and growth hacking through that. I've made sure my team are very much aligned in terms of objectives, targets and outcomes to the success of all the various business departments.

Measure capability and focus
 To start with, I more or less did a self-maturity model. I really just put together a view on where our capabilities were against three pillars: data, insight and action. So I gave us a score and started to look at the focus areas, which highlighted the areas in which we should invest in year one,

because any transformation obviously happens over a number of years.

Big data
 In the last four months we've actually built our data lake – it's now fully operational, which means that we have all our different data sources intergraded into a single environment. So that's every web view, every email sent to a customer, every transaction across sportbooks etc. It's designed to answer the questions that the business has never been able to answer, which are: what's the impact of my campaigns on certain customers? Or: what percentage of customers log in every day and don't bet?

Single individual view
 The mythical single customer view to many companies is: 'I'd love to get a 360 view of our customer so I can better understand them and extract more value from them.' This is just one example of visualisation, where

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we could correlate how our customer base was moving between our brands. We are targeting people that have left one brand, doing a look-alike comparison and making sure we put the right next brand in front of them. So it might be as easy as re-targeting through banners or actually even through notifications on the site of Brand A. So our goal there was to increase multi-brand penetration.

Drive the culture

It's ok to have a great data strategy and it's also good to be able to have solid insights, but actually how do you drive that across a thousand people across the company? We're trying to drive the culture to make sure there is a continuous improvement mentality. So find out what to improve, find out the hypotheses, conduct the experiments and measure and act again. You've got many people who are very much of the mindset: 'I'm doing what I'm doing, how do you help me?' So then it's about bringing

it back to the actions, measuring those actions to prove that it's adding value to their KPIs, which gives them benefit, and then you can go through that continuous improvement cycle.

Measure and share success

One technique that worked quite well was to leverage the fact that we had web analytics data where we could see people dropping out of the website just literally trying to log in. We could see from some of our email open rates that some of our forgotten password emails weren't getting delivered on time, which was another data source. We could also see through qualitative feedback through our call centre, and live chat sessions, that there was a problem with forgotten passwords.

What did we do? We worked with the business to improve the on-site experience – so a better designed user experience through a funnel. We worked with our technology team to make sure that our emails were delivered faster and better. What

difference did that make? We got 3,500 more customers through the cycle and 90% fewer complaints. So we were able to measure the impact of the actions and highlight the team that took it as superstars. That engenders that spirit of win-win, and we then get all the teams coming to us, asking us to give them insights so we can win together. That's how you get scale through an organisation.

Steven Pimblett was speaking as part of a webinar titled: 'Transitioning to data-driven business', part of Clarion's Gaming Leaders Webinar Series. These highlights are presented by Edward Obeng of Gambling Insider.



LAC PREVIEW | AFFILIATE ARTICLE

STRATEGIES FOR THE NEW AFFILIATE

Roi Rintzler, head of affiliates at iAffiliates, explores how new entrants can overcome some tough challenges to find their niche in the market



Few beginnings are as daunting as a new affiliate starting out in the gaming industry. The once colossal growth of online gaming is challenged by prices, competition, regulation and prohibitive Google algorithms. Without an already-strong online presence, experience

and financial backbone, affiliates can be overwhelmed and lose sight of their goals. However, the same challenges that concern affiliates also hold the key to how they can fight back and win a niche in the world of online gaming.

Rising prices, competition, and regulation

Marketing online casino has never been a more expensive venture for affiliates, especially for new PPC and SEO affiliates with limited resources. Changes in Google's algorithms now necessitate quality, unique content for a good ranking, which cost significantly more than lesser-quality writing. In comparison, larger affiliates can afford more keywords, content, links and platforms. They often boast in-house SEO and bloggers, allowing them a cheaper entry to high placement on Google and various networks. The result of these rising prices is a crowded marketplace that favours more established affiliates.

Legal regulations add further challenges. High taxes in the all-important UK market force affiliate programmes to offer affiliates lower plans which, when coupled with heavy media costs, makes achieving a good ROI difficult. Moreover, affiliate tax rates in markets such as Italy place campaigns for those countries beyond the budget of many affiliates. Affiliates have additional concerns, including constant changes to regulatory rules that hurt novice affiliates the most: a beginner who was breaking even could end up with a loss that makes it impossible for them to continue. Affiliates without resources at the tips of their fingers quickly lose on ROI. With all its long-term benefits for the industry as a whole, regulation can be a major impediment for individual affiliates.

All of these issues can be reduced to two main obstacles: resource and focus. Due to high prices, smaller affiliates have difficulty amassing many

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resources, yet the high online competition demands stand-out creativity via consistently new and unique marketing content. This calls for affiliates to focus more than ever – choosing markets, marketing material, networks, content and keywords carefully. Affiliates need to optimise resources and focus themselves to succeed in a bottlenecked market. This is where the importance of good partner operators comes into play.

Pick the right operators

A good operator empowers affiliates to focus on a target and allocates them the resources to achieve it.

For example, when new regulatory rules catch an affiliate by surprise, a programme that provides new marketing materials with a 24-hour turnaround can save thousands of dollars in otherwise lost revenue. iAffiliates works hard to stay innovative and informative for its affiliates, as well as providing them with a full package of marketing materials. Our experienced account managers aid large and small affiliates alike by learning the affiliate's needs and anticipating industry changes. We help affiliates streamline their goals – for example, picking rarer keywords to attract a niche market, choosing the right partner networks, or providing optimised content and marketing material for a campaign. It's the experience of hands-on affiliate managers, and the resources that the right affiliate programme can provide, that enable newer affiliates to secure a position in this demanding industry.

Mobile: the Wild West of online gaming



Mobile is the latest frontier in online gaming. With resources still available and constant growth as a platform, mobile is a good bet for newer affiliates, both in price and competition. Mobile PPC, for instance, is cheaper than the same keywords destined for web, so affiliates can achieve a greater impact in placement, with a smaller impact on their pocket. However, affiliates and brands take a risk with mobile Google placement if their websites are not fully responsive. iAffiliates addressed this with the reinvention of our key





brand, Casino.com, through a mobile client and native app, and with the opening of our newest fully-adaptive casino, Jackpotland.com. Affiliates can ensure a place in the mobile market by working with similarly responsive or adaptive brands. Mobile is also an excellent way into another fast-growing trend: social-themed games.

Market new, social-themed games

The lines between different categories of games are blurring. Free-to-play games like Candy Crush operate like

slot machines, while Facebook hosts slot games where 'likes' buy social stickers and spin credits are gifted to friends. The flood of online games leads players to drift from genre to genre, resulting in new opportunities for long-tail keywords and a fresh pool of players. In order to stay relevant and attract this new audience, online casino software platforms now roll out new 3D, animated, character-driven games on a frequent basis. iAffiliates and its partners have noticed a marked ROI increase when affiliates market content to leverage new games coinciding with the game's release. By marketing new games similar to social games, new affiliates can latch onto the success of the prosperous social gaming market.

Despite regulatory and algorithmic restrictions, online gambling still holds a wealth of opportunity for new affiliates. Affiliates must integrate industry trends into their strategies and develop good relationships with experienced operators who

can provide the right marketing tools, business advice and focus that the new affiliate needs.

Roi Rintzler became the head of affiliates at iAffiliates last year, after many successful years as team leader in the program. His in-depth experience in the industry has been an instrumental force in the overall growth and success of iAffiliates.

This article appears in the latest Affiliate Focus publication from Gambling Insider, available free at the London Affiliate Conference.



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GLOBAL GAMING AWARDS 2016

A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS

Hot on the heels of a successful 2015 event, the build-up for the Global Gaming Awards 2016 is already gathering pace

Planning for the 2016 Global Gaming Awards is well and truly underway, with the first instalment of judges and sponsors already secured, while the self-nominations window for interested parties has also opened.

Now in their third year, the Awards will once again consist of 12 industry-wide categories, recognising and rewarding innovation and achievement across both the digital and land-based gaming sectors.

The destination of each award is decided by a panel of 50 judges made up of esteemed industry executives from a range of sectors and geographies. Judges vote for their winner and runner-up in each category based on a shortlist compiled by an official Nominations Panel alongside the in-house editorial team at *Gambling Insider*.

Self-nominations from within the industry are welcomed for consideration during the shortlisting stage. To make a self-nomination, visit globalgamingawards.com. Organisations or executives can either nominate their own firm, themselves as an individual, or a colleague, for achievements over the previous 12 months.

As ever, winners will be presented with their award during a prestigious Las Vegas presentation ceremony, attended by some of the biggest names in gaming.

Meanwhile the first judges confirmed are both reprising their roles from last year: Joseph Cuschieri, executive chairman of the Malta Gaming Authority, and Olga Finkel, senior partner at WH Partners.

The Global Gaming Awards are also delighted to announce that NYX Gaming Group has been confirmed as the Lead Partner of the 2016 event. The provider has supported the Awards for the past two years and has already agreed to extend that backing into 2016.

Three of last year's individual awards sponsors have also signed up again

for 2016. NetEnt will sponsor Digital Operator of the Year, Betradar will sponsor Digital Acquisition Program of the Year, and Microgaming will sponsor Responsible Business of the Year.

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 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.



GUEST COLUMNIST

“I-GAMING WILL BENEFIT FROM ADVANCEMENTS IN PAYMENTS”



by Nikita Mishchenko
Director of product development, ECommPay

Payment technology trends in i-gaming

The payment industry is constantly changing, growing, developing, and adapting to best suit the needs of its diverse clientele. Merchants working within different industries have individual requirements and specifications unique to their sphere of business. Experienced payment providers and processing centres monitor the trends within each client industry, attending events, conferences and exhibitions to intimately familiarise themselves with any relevant information.

ECommPay is attending ICE Totally Gaming as an exhibitor for the second year running, having developed a number of products, services and technologies specifically targeting profit maximisation for i-gaming clients worldwide. Here we highlight a few of the most pertinent developments and advancements within the payments industry for the benefit of i-gaming merchants.

Technology and innovation trends for electronic payments in 2016

Companies operating within the electronic payments industry consistently push the boundaries of existing technologies, services and solutions, striving to develop highly advanced payment tools and to innovate the existing options. New, original start-ups, groundbreaking implementation of technological solutions, financial innovation for the payment services industry, and alternative payment methods (including the e-Wallet, mobile payments and more) have come to define the pioneering mindset of an industry seeking to provide high-quality, state-of-the-art payment solutions for the

i-gaming industry. Regular maintenance and development of payment tools and processes guarantees an increased level of safety and risk management, improving the service quality more generally.

Blockchain technology takes the world by storm

I-gaming merchants have demonstrated considerable enthusiasm for the increasingly popular blockchain technology, eager to entice new gaming customers with diverse payment options. The advantage of this technology is predicated on its very nature – there is no single data centre to produce and control currency, to exert influence on its value, affect the amount of coins in circulation, to block transactions and/or accounts etc. The operational power and management is exclusively in the hands of blockchain currency users – there is no risk of having an account frozen, payments cancelled, or transactions prohibited – all of which appeals to gaming customers.

Bitcoin, one of the most well-known examples of blockchain cryptocurrencies, exemplifies the lack of a global consensus in regards to this revolutionary technology.

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Governments, as well as established financial and legal institutions, face difficulties in regulating bitcoin and similar services, in part due to the fact that use of cryptocurrencies tends to be completely anonymous.

In spite of this, blockchain technology has produced a new payment instrument, which promises high demand in the near future. Already, a growing number of financial service providers are considering how to incorporate the increasingly popular blockchain technology into the services they provide to clients.

Simplifying the payment process and user identification methods

The trends identified in the sphere of electronic payments echo the desires of i-gaming merchants, demonstrating a significant shift towards combining and balancing between security and convenience.

Alternative payment services are on the rise, boosted by the long-term financial crisis, which affected a number of countries. The difficult economic

situation encouraged and facilitated the development and growth of innovation, seeking to optimise the cost of payment services to appeal to a broader audience of customers.

Subscribers to gaming websites, as well as more casual gamers, now have access to advanced payment systems, which combine efficiency and convenience across a number of platforms. The most striking examples demonstrating the simplification of payment are the payment systems Apple Pay and Samsung Pay, which can read bankcard details using only a smartphone (having linked the two previously).

Soon, many payment services will no longer require the standard identification code and will instead progress to identifying users with the help of voice recognition, a fingerprint or a photograph. No longer will a password be necessary to remember – the user themselves will become the password.

The future is here

The growth and development of the payment industry continues to gain speed as more and more market players

are involved in the development of new technologies and as regulatory institutions make greater compromises for the sake of user convenience than was ever thought possible. The i-gaming industry will massively benefit from the abundance of ingenious new payment methods, systems and services. Gaming customers worldwide are experiencing a shift to simpler, more convenient payment functionalities, and i-gaming merchants are ideally positioned to make a huge profit from satisfied consumers.

Nikita Mishchenko joined the online payments industry in 2008. Working on behalf of the largest payment provider operating within the Russian Federation at the time, Nikita engaged in risk management as well as the design and development of anti-fraud systems for a period of three years.

The last five years have been spent acting as Director of Product Development at international payment processor ECommPay. One of Nikita's main achievements at the company is his development of the proprietary processing solutions offered to clients.