



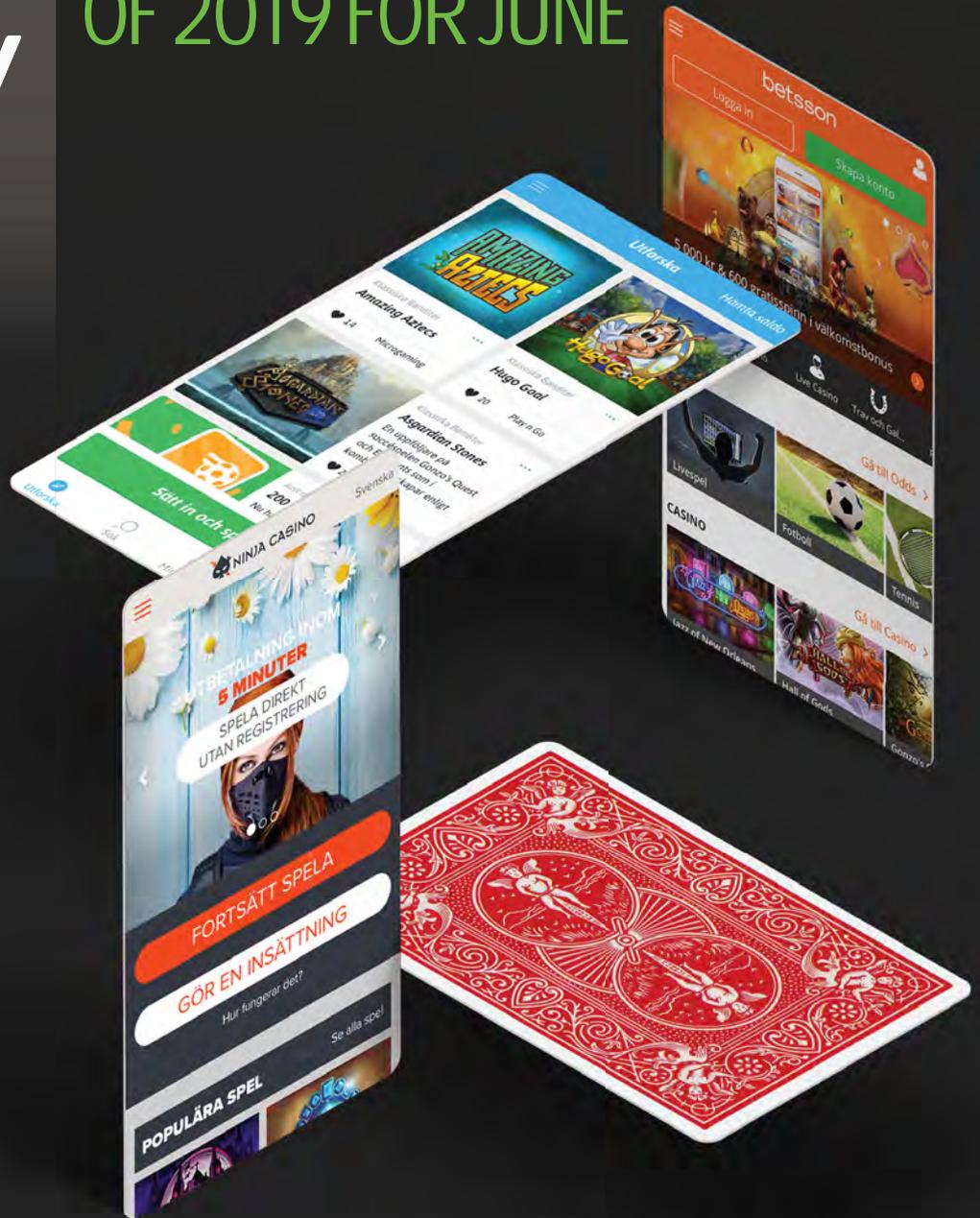
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# WEEK 27

## FRIDAY 5 JULY 2019

### MACAU CASINOS RECORD HIGHEST REVENUE GROWTH OF 2019 FOR JUNE



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## THIS WEEK

- **New CEO at Sportech**
- **Illinois legalises sports betting**
- **MLS welcomes gambling sponsorships**
- **Operators fined in Sweden**
- **William Hill to close 700 shops**
- **iGB Live previews: Play'n Go, Greentube, 1xBet**

### GUEST COLUMNIST:

- **Nadia Adelstein, Head of Branding, Ganapati**

# WEEK 27

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## MACAU CASINOS RECORD HIGHEST REVENUE GROWTH OF 2019 FOR JUNE



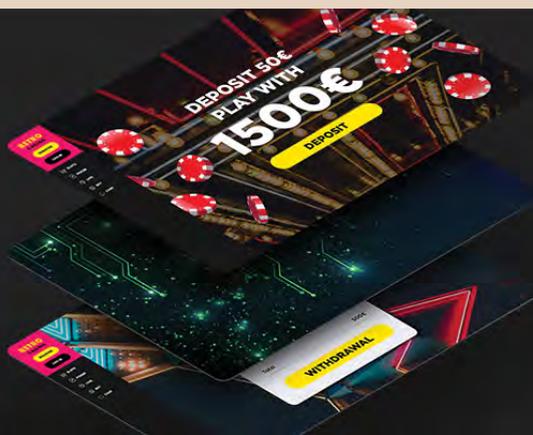
Macau's casino industry enjoyed its highest year-on-year growth of 2019 for June, as gross gaming revenue (GGR) rose 6% to MOP23.81bn (\$2.96bn).

The total itself is the second-lowest of the year and still leaves casinos 0.5% down on accumulated GGR for the calendar year so far.

However, Macau's casino sector has now grown for two months in a row, following April's 8% drop.

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# THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

8



French Agency des Participations de l'Etat (APE) has named eight investment banks to work on the planned privatisation of the state-run Francaise des Jeux (FDJ) lottery operator

Fall in Kambi's value on the Nasdaq to SEK148 (\$15.96) the morning after reports claimed its rival SBTech was close to being acquired by operator DraftKings. It has since risen to SEK 160

19%



€13.1m



Aspire Global has agreed to buy GMS Entertainment, the owner of online casino content developer Pariplay, for approximately \$14.9m

LeoVegas has entered a seventh locally regulated market after receiving its Spanish license



Revenue rose 2% for May and June's 6% increase should allay constant speculation about the state of Macau's gambling market.

The figure generated in June was ahead of analysts' expectations of a gain of between 1% and 3% but represents a drop of 8% from May's total of MOP25.95bn.

Gaming industry stocks bounced back after a 20% decline in May. The Bloomberg Intelligence index of Macau casino operators shows an 8% rise for June.

Las Vegas Sands, MGM Resorts International and Wynn Resorts all increased individually; Sands was up 5%, with Wynn rising 6% and MGM up 1%.

Volatile VIP revenue and the impact of the US-China trade war have been forecasted as factors for dwindling Macau handle and revenue.

As the island marks 20 years since its change from Portuguese rule, slow mainland economic growth and a weaker Yuan added to the effects of the trade war to slow GGR.

But growth, for June at least, was significantly more positive and means three out of six months in 2019 have seen yearly increases.

While the trade war will have undoubtedly affected travel and tourism, especially to and from the US, it is highly unlikely Macau would revoke the licenses of US-based Las Vegas Sands, MGM and Wynn Resorts.

The tension between China and the US may even start to reduce. President Trump and China's Xi Jinping announced a truce on Monday after a meeting at the G20 summit in Osaka, Japan.

Analysts however, are not so optimistic. Aditya Bhave, Senior Global Economist at the Bank of America, pointed to last year's meeting between Trump and Xi at G20 in Buenos Aires.

On that occasion, the two countries agreed to hold off on additional measures against each other while failing to resolve the issue of existing tariffs or wcome to a long-term resolution.

Macau is currently going through changes, with officials in the Chinese Special Administrative Region looking to reduce its economic dependency on gambling.

Macau wants to be seen as more of a diverse destination for tourists, although this will be a tough ask given the success of its casino sector. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has proposed the island implement incentives to encourage casino operators to invest in non-gaming options.

Unlike Macau in June however, total gaming revenue in Nevada fell 6% for May, to \$981.8m, while both its sports betting handle and revenue were surpassed in New Jersey for the first time.

Although 1 cent slot machines saw revenue grow 4% to \$299m and multi denomination slots fell a marginal 0.5% to \$281.4m, table, counter and card game revenue dropped 19% to \$302.1m.

The biggest faller was baccarat, down 55% to \$54.6m, perhaps the victim of the US-China trade war. Revenue from the game twenty one also fell 12% to \$90.4m.

But the big story for many will be the 45% drop in sportsbook revenue to \$11.3m, partly due to a \$2.4m loss in the football wagering category.

This means New Jersey's sports betting revenue for May, \$12.7m, has surpassed Nevada's for the first time. New Jersey's \$320.4m handle was marginally higher, too.

The thriving mobile sports betting market in the Garden State is likely a key reason behind its triumph over Nevada, although Las Vegas sportsbooks should return to former heights when the NFL season returns.



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Of Britain's leading operators have agreed a ten-fold increase in funding for problem gambling treatment



Year-on-year rise in Pennsylvania slot machine revenue for the 2018/19 fiscal year, to \$2.38bn

## SPORTECH APPOINTS NEW CEO AS PART OF TWO BOARD CHANGES

Sportech has appointed Richard McGuire as its new CEO, while Giles Vardey will become the company's new Non-Executive Chairman.

McGuire has been part of the Sportech board since 2016 and will leave his role as Interim Executive Chairman.

He was also previously Non-Executive Director and Non-Executive Chairman with Sportech. To support the company's US business strategy, he has already relocated to Connecticut, where the group's US headquarters are situated.

In its annual report for 2018, published in March, McGuire announced Sportech's progress towards a future in the US sports betting market for its business and consumer-facing divisions.

He will also be investing significant time in the group's UK, European and Asian interests.

McGuire has over 30 years' financial and corporate experience across the gaming, technology and horseracing industries, holding several senior posts across international companies.

Meanwhile, Vardey has been serving as the company's Non-Executive Director since November 2017.

He has 37 years of experience within the financial industry under his belt, including roles as CEO of Greig Middleton and President and CEO of Fidelity Brokerage Services.

Vardey spent five years as Director of Markets Development and Marketing at the London Stock Exchange, prior to which he held senior investment banking positions at firms Salomon Brothers, County NatWest, and Swiss Bank Corporation.

He will also continue to chair the Remuneration and Nomination Committees. Sportech is currently looking into potential candidates to fulfil an additional Non-Executive role created by the company.

In further changes, Chris Rigg, the group's Independent Non-Executive Director, will chair the Audit Committee. Sportech said its board continues to review candidates to identify an additional independent non-executive to further strengthen the company.

On 26 June, Sportech announced Raj Sanjanwala had been appointed as Group CTO, Andrew Lindley as Group COO, and Julian Bewley as Group CCO.



1 Sep

The date Indiana is reportedly planning to launch retail sports betting

160

Investigations carried out by the Gambling Commission in the last 12 months, according to its annual report



## ILLINOIS LEGALISES SPORTS BETTING

Governor J.B Pritzker has officially signed Illinois' gambling expansion into law, making it the 17th state to legalise sports betting in the US.

As well as regulating sports wagering, the legislation will bring a new casino to Chicago, a city with more than 2.7 million people.

However, it also includes a number of controversial elements, such as a bad-actor clause to keep the likes of DraftKings and FanDuel out of the market for at least 18 months.

According to Rep. Mike Zalewski, the state's 10 existing casinos and three horseracing tracks will all partner up with sports operators in due course. Professional teams which have a stadium capacity of 17,000 or more will also be allowed to set up legalised sportsbooks.

The official date of when sports betting is set to be legalised is yet to be announced. With plenty still to iron out, it is looking increasingly likely it will be available for the Super Bowl

next February, Zalewski is quoted as saying.

"It'll depend largely on [Governor J.B. Pritzker's] new Gaming Board, how quickly they can get operational on this topic and decide how fast they issue licenses," he added. American Gaming Association CEO Bill Miller has responded by emphasising the "critical" nature of protecting consumers.

He said: "Today, Illinois became the 17th US jurisdiction to legalise sports betting, joining a growing number of states that have taken action since the Supreme Court deemed PASPA unconstitutional last year.

"As the state rolls out its sports betting framework, it's critical Illinois sports teams and other newcomers to the gaming business follow the lead of the state's licensed gaming operators in advancing responsible gaming practices to ensure protections for consumers, bets and game integrity."

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## \$18.9m



Sports betting handle for May in Rhode Island, an increase from April, although revenue fell month-on-month from \$1.9m to \$0.9m

## \$1bn



Reports suggest IMG is nearing a multi-year agreement with the ATP World Tour for betting data and live wagering rights

## MLS WELCOMES GAMBLING SHIRT SPONSORSHIPS; FOUR MORE OPERATORS TEAM UP WITH FOOTBALL CLUBS

Major League Soccer (MLS) has confirmed its 24 clubs can now use sports betting and liquor companies as shirt and stadium sponsors.

The move continues MLS' relaxed stance towards gaming and liquor firms, as it looks to generate extra revenue streams from each sector.

The North American major sports leagues don't generally offer shirt sponsorship for betting firms in the manner currently seen across the English Premier League.

However, NBA teams did introduce sponsorship patches in 2017, with MLB teams also wearing MGM Resorts International patches on the opening day of the current season.

Carter Ladd, MLS SVP Business Development, said: "We want to be viewed as a progressive league. We don't want to be restrictive; we want to enable them in a positive way and that's why we're taking this action. We strongly believe this is going to help drive new revenues."

Meanwhile, English Premier League football club Norwich City has announced a three-year partnership with Dafabet, which has become the club's new Principal Club Partner.

Dafabet will be Norwich's front-of-shirt sponsor on all three of its shirts for the upcoming Premier League season, after the club won the English Championship last campaign.

Swansea City has also announced a multi-year partnership with Yobet. The online operator will be the Championship club's shirt sponsor for the 2019-20 season.

This is a landmark deal for Yobet, as it will be the betting partner's first sponsorship with a UK football club.

Elsewhere, Spanish La Liga football team Valencia CF has announced Bwin as its main sponsor in a deal commencing 1 July and running for three seasons.

GVC-owned Bwin first sponsored the Spanish football team in the 2016/17 season, and has now expanded the deal to be the club's front-of-shirt sponsor and feature on its training shirts.

Finally, Unibet has agreed a deal to become the front-of-shirt sponsor for Belgian football team Club Brugge.

Kindred-owned Unibet was a sleeve sponsor of Club Brugge for the previous campaign, and will provide official match data for the club this year.

## THE WEEK IN QUOTES

*“Virtual sports are always compared to live sports when it comes to rivalry. However, for best results they need to work side-by-side to supplement each other.”*

**Steven Spartinos, Kiron Co-Founder and Co-CEO, talks to Gambling Insider about virtual sports**

*“The American Gaming Association (AGA) accomplished a great deal during Sara and Stacy’s tenure, and much of our organisational success is to their credit.”*

**AGA CEO Bill Miller praises Sara Slane and Stacy Papadopoulos after their departures from the organisation were announced**

*“The top-performing companies in our industry are the most focused. I’ve always admired Kambi, Evolution Gaming, NetEnt and companies like this for completely staying away from platform and B2C licensing.”*

**Ebbe Groes, EveryMatrix CEO, speaks exclusively to Gambling Insider about the company’s aims**

## EIGHT OPERATORS FINED IN SWEDEN FOR TAKING BETS ON EVENTS WITH CHILDREN

Stars Group, Betfair International, Bwin and Bet365 are among eight operators to face sanctions for offering bets on sporting events involving children, according to Swedish regulator, Spelinspektionen.

Back in May, Spelinspektionen warned operators to avoid underage matches, after wagers were previously offered on a football match between IFK Göteborg and AIK, involving underage players. Since then, the regulator has noticed several matches had been offered to players from multiple leagues.

The fines total SEK 41.2m (\$4.4m), with Stars Group and Hillside Sports, which holds a license for Bet365, facing the largest levies: SEK 10m each.

Betfair and ElectraWorks Limited, which holds a license for GVC-owned Bwin, were both issued fines of SEK 5.5m each.

Zecure Gaming and Casinostugan were fined SEK 3.5m; Bethard faces

a fine of SEK 2.5m. Polar Limited was the last company named and was issued with a penalty of SEK 700,000.

Gambling companies operating with a Swedish license must not offer wagers on events where the majority of participants are less than 18 years of age.

According to the Gaming Inspectorate’s assessment, providing bets on an event where the participants are predominantly children is a direct danger to minors being exposed to the influence of manipulating results.

The operators said they have now taken various measures to ensure future betting takes place according to law, and will not offer wagers on U19 and U21 series.

In June, Svenka Spel began a course to educate young players about match fixing and the potential dangers it can pose for individuals.

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**THIS WEEK'S WINNERS AND LOSERS**

**WINNERS**

*Better Collective's – USA branch has been granted an Ancillary Casino Service Industry Enterprise License in New Jersey*

*Qatar Racing & Equestrian Club – Has announced it will continue to sponsor the Glorious Goodwood Festival until 2024*

*Global Gaming – Has given temporary CEO Tobias Fagerlund the role of President and CEO on a permanent basis*

*William Hill – Is currently in the process of refunding all ante-post bets placed through its Swiss platform*

*SLS Las Vegas – A lawsuit has been filed against the owner of the casino resort for unpaid licensing fees*

**LOSERS**

**WILLIAM HILL SET TO CLOSE 700 LICENSED BETTING SHOPS**

William Hill will be closing 700 licensed betting shops, a process likely to begin before the end of the year.

The operator has attributed the move to the UK Government's decision to reduce the maximum stake on fixed-odds betting terminals (FOBTs) from £100 (\$125.74) to £2 on 1 April.

William Hill says 4,500 jobs are "at risk" due to the closures.

Back in March, William Hill sent out 2,000 letters to its landlords, seeking rent reduction across its shops.

At the time, Ciaran O'Brien, William Hill's Director of Corporate Communications, told *Gambling Insider*: "The stake cut was always going to have a significant impact on the business and we think it could close up to 900 shops, but we aren't going to close anything immediately.

"We'll look at long-term customer behaviour and what we seek through mitigation, one of which will be through rent reductions."

Horsereading will also be impacted by the decision, as each betting shop pays roughly £30,000 per annum to broadcast live sport in store.

William Hill said: "The group will look to apply voluntary redundancy and redeployment measures extensively and will be providing support to all colleagues throughout the process."

Elsewhere, there was more welcome news for 888 Holdings, which has launched its poker brand, 888Poker, in the Portuguese market.

This entry makes it the second poker brand available to players in Portugal, adding to Stars Group's PokerStars.

Portuguese players will be able to compete against 888Poker's Spanish customers as a result of the new European interstate poker network.

Guy Cohen, 888 Holdings' Head of B2C, said: "Portugal is a fantastic opportunity for 888 and we're excited to be just its second poker operator."

## NV, STRIP FALL AGAIN

Nevada gaming revenue fell year-on-year for the fifth straight month, as the Las Vegas Strip's 11.07% decline for May dragged down results.

The Strip also fell for the fifth straight month.

Strip baccarat revenue, which was hurt by poor hold this year versus last year, fell 55.46%. Baccarat revenue would have fallen 4.38% with normalised hold.

The Strip would have been up 0.58% with baccarat factored out.

Markets outside the Strip rose 0.47%.

Downtown Las Vegas grew for the fourth straight month, while Reno rose for the second consecutive month, after declining each month from December to March.

May had nine Fridays and Saturdays this year versus eight last year, but with an equal number of Sundays.

MARKET/PROPERTY	REVENUE (M)	(%) CHANGE
Nevada	\$981.842	-5.96
Las Vegas Strip	\$517.348	-11.07
Clark County	\$835.841	-7.63
Downtown LV	\$54.822	+2.84
North LV	\$25.605	-6.00
Laughlin	\$45.447	+3.22
Boulder Strip	\$69.759	-12.61
Mesquite	\$11.847	+4.57
Balance of County	\$111.014	+3.38
Las Vegas locals market	\$206.377	-3.76
Washoe County	\$74.762	+2.34
Reno	\$55.152	+3.11
Sparks	\$11.800	+1.78
North Lake Tahoe	\$1.963	+3.60
Balance of County	\$5.847	-3.78
South Lake Tahoe	\$20.095	+11.50
Elko County	\$26.579	+9.44
Wendover	\$18.168	+12.17
Balance of County	\$8.411	+4.00
Carson Valley Area	\$9.827	-0.12
Other areas	\$14.739	+5.17

## COMPONENTS OF STRIP PERFORMANCE:

MAJOR STRIP SEGMENTS:	REVENUE (M)	(% ) CHANGE	(% ) WIN	
			2019	2018
Blackjack	\$67.429	-14.81	11.7	11.96
Baccarat	\$53.858	-55.46	7.69	16.51
<b>Total games</b>	<b>\$229.472</b>	<b>-23.48</b>	<b>11.74</b>	<b>14.62</b>
Slots	\$287.875	+2.13	8.23	8.26

TABLE DROP	2019	2018	(%) CHANGE
Blackjack	\$576.316	\$661.764	-12.91
Baccarat	\$700.364	\$732.417	-4.38
<b>Total Games</b>	<b>\$1.955 BN</b>	<b>\$2.049 BN</b>	<b>-4.62</b>

RACE BOOK AND SPORTS POOL	REVENUE (M)	(% ) CHANGE	(% ) WIN	
			2019	2018
NEVADA				
Race Book	\$4.978	-6.64	15.92	15.83
Football	-\$2.417	-736.05	-796.00	45.36
Basketball	\$4.515	-51.45	5.14	8.52
Baseball	\$7.770	-28.09	4.25	7.30
<b>Sportsbook Total</b>	<b>\$11.267</b>	<b>-44.97</b>	<b>3.55</b>	<b>6.49</b>
CLARK COUNTY				
Race Book	\$4.251	-6.41	15.79	15.71
<b>Sports Book Total</b>	<b>\$10.049</b>	<b>-45.81</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>6.29</b>

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## EVENT PREVIEW: IGB LIVE 2019

Returning to Amsterdam for its sophomore edition, iGB Live will expand and house more exhibitors and sponsors, grow its conference theatres, and host more networking parties in Amsterdam's most exciting spots. More than 5,000 online gaming professionals are expected to attend the event, which will be held at Amsterdam RAI, the biggest exhibition space in the Netherlands. It is free to register and attend the exhibition; the only requirement is to be above 18 years old.

Born as an evolution of EiG and the iGaming Super Show, iGB Live 2019 has established itself as one of Clarion Events' leading shows. Senior-level operators, decision makers and directors from powerhouse names within the industry and notable brands outside it are already signed up.

Networking events are spread across 16 to 19 July. They include welcoming drinks, VIP B2B events and parties later on in the evening. The exhibition provides a focus on new technology.

Innovative products from the fields of VR, live streaming and CRM techniques will be on display.

Stuart Dacre, Event Director, said: "Each event in the iGB portfolio

is proud of the content it offers, highlighting the industry trends and needs, narrowing in on the specifics, then following through with takeaways ready to be applied



to any business. iGB Live 2019 is no different, with two free-to-attend theatres; iGB Affiliate Amsterdam and iGB Live HQ. This year's content will be mega."

iGB Live HQ, the exhibition's conference, returns this year following its 2018 launch. The speakers will cover a range of industry subjects on 17 and 18 July. Attendees can expect debates on hot topics such as crypto-currencies, esports and player protection. There will be specific regional focuses and an analysis of the relationship between affiliates and operators.

The speeches, debates and panel discussions will be divided into four different venues. Just as it was at ICE London, the four rooms will be Elevator, Counsel, The Hive and Boardroom. Alongside the conference rooms will be a space dedicated away from the expo floor noise to have private meetings. There is also a refreshment area, lunch provided and a free bar available in the afternoon.

The iGB Affiliate Amsterdam conference will be run in congruence

with iGB Live HQ. After busy conferences at LAC in February and LIAC in October last year, the Amsterdam Affiliate Conference promises more of the same. It will also be spread across 17 and 18 July, with a networking lunch available on each day.

The talks from industry experts will cover well-discussed topics and provide new angles from which to understand and implement them. A discussion titled 'UX meets SEO' analyses the increasing importance of the user experience for first-page ranking, for example. Panellists will also examine fresh opportunities provided to affiliates in new markets.

The iGB Live Start-Up Launchpad is open again this year. Applicants submitted their start-ups with the chance to pitch in front of industry leaders and investors. Last year, two winners tied for first. Moonify.io and Betflow.com shared the award. Five finalists are chosen to receive delegate passes to iGB Live 2019, with the winner getting a free exhibition stand at the 2020 show.

The Totally Gaming Academy, part of Clarion Events, will be providing a number of learning opportunities at iGB Live this year. A 45-minute session, delivered by Tom Galanis, Course Director for the Affiliate Management Academy at Totally Gaming Academy, will take a look at the importance of investing yourself as a vital part of your business plan – a necessity, not a luxury. This session will also provide a glimpse of Totally Gaming's new affiliate management training suite.

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*Just as it was at ICE London, the four rooms will be Elevator, Counsel, The Hive and Boardroom. Alongside the conference rooms will be a space dedicated to private meetings*

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## PLAY'N GO – IGB LIVE PREVIEW



Ahead of his first iGB Live as Play'n Go Affiliate Manager, Tommy Adolfsson Saarela sat down with *Gambling Insider* to talk about the event and the company's year so far.

### **How has 2019 been so far?**

We've had some amazing releases the market has loved. The likes of Phoenix Reborn, Contact and Sabaton have really taken off, and we have lots more exciting things to come we think are going to be just as well received.

**Play'n Go attended both the Brazilian Gaming Conference and the Peru Gaming Show this year.**

**How important is the South American**

### **region to your operations?**

New markets are important to us; we want to bring our unique brand of entertainment to the whole world and so, of course, Latin America is of interest.

We already have a presence in the region, but there are new markets emerging and changes to regulation happening even as we speak, so we'll keep our eye on everything that is happening and make the best move to take us forward as a company.

### **What challenges have you faced in this new region?**

We face the same challenges here as in any market; making sure you are choosing the right partners; staying ahead of the competition and building a strong foundation to make sure you have the best possible base to build on.

### **What do you have prepared for iGB Live?**

This will be my first iGB Live with the company. The focus is very much on the affiliate side of things this year, and I've got a lot of plans in place for moving forward.

It goes without saying we'll have a strong team there as usual: our sales

representatives, account managers and others will talk about all of our products and services. But affiliate networking is going to be important this year.

### **Will there be any new launches?**

We have a brand new 'Play'n Go first' launching just a couple of days before the event. It's called Wild Rails, and it is our first horizontal slot reel.

We're very excited about it; it's a brand new experience for players and we think it's going to do well for our operators. People are really going to enjoy the gameplay and all the features it has to offer.

### **What can you tell us of plans for the rest of the year?**

Naturally, we have plenty of games planned for the rest of the year; 2019 is going to be our biggest output in terms of titles; we've already had a big number of releases in the first six months. We're eager for people to see what we have, and you might even see a familiar face or two in our future releases.

# FROM THE EXHIBITORS: GREENTUBE

Michael Bauer, CFO/CGO



## Which products will you be launching/showing at iGB Live this year?

Greentube will be exhibiting its Home of Games portfolio, which is finding its mark in more and more international markets. The jewel in the crown will be our Sherwood Showdown title. As the name would suggest, it features Robin Hood, but his arch enemy is a wicked wolf, rather than the Sherriff of Nottingham.

## What do you think will be the general theme of products being launched at the show by online casino suppliers?

Well, the path to regulation in the Netherlands is now finally paved, so if any show can serve as the starting gun on a new era for the country's betting and gaming industry, it should be iGB Live.

Several large operators who stayed out of the Netherlands amid regulatory concerns are now preparing their market entry and we expect increased interest. We will have a lot of games ready which have been specifically developed for Dutch players.

## How have your products been received so far through Wplay in the Colombian market? How successful do you think this market can be for you?

Wplay tell us our products are performing very well, so we're obviously very pleased. In the meantime, we have launched with a second operator in Colombia and there are others who have expressed a keen interest.

## You have previously told us about how mobile games can compete

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### through captivating gameplay. How do you plan to make your gameplay more captivating with future launches?

We are currently engaged in a lot of research regarding not only new trends in slots, but player preferences gleaned from years of data. We have pledged to make sure part of our release roadmap will always include totally new game concepts that evolve out of this.

*Technological developments will continue to play a significant role. Keeping an eye on disruptive changes - be they device-led, feature-based, or on the design side - is key*

Of course, technological developments will continue to play a significant role in the development of anyone's products. Keeping an eye on disruptive changes – be they device-led, feature-based, or on the design side – is key. But what is most important when it comes to harnessing any of this is producing pragmatic products that are both playable and commercially successful. You can come up with all sorts of crazy stuff if you put your mind to it, but throwing the baby out with the bathwater would be a mistake.

The suppliers able to make games that are anchored by the clear commitment to produce engagement and entertainment will be the ones who succeed in the long run.

**What do you think will be the main challenges online casino game suppliers will have to contend with in the next few years?**

As more countries decide to regulate their online markets, we will undoubtedly see a fragmentation of regulation. That is not a complaint, as Greentube took a conscious decision to stay out of markets where regulation is unclear, but it does make it a challenge for suppliers like us with an international standing. Therefore, the more markets get regulated, the bigger the potential gets for us.

Germany, with different viewpoints on whether EU or national rules apply, is a case in point on our doorstep. We would prefer to see increased national regulation as an opportunity to expand in new markets.

Other suppliers face a more difficult situation, as increasing regulation hits them in a number of areas: lower margins due to tax deductions, higher costs for game licensing and increased complexity from a compliance perspective.

# FROM THE EXHIBITORS: 1XBET

*Ahead of its appearance at iGB Live, 1xBet discusses getting the best out of an affiliate programme*

Can an affiliate programme transform your business? Like any partnership, success requires dedication from both sides. It also requires a top-quality product which will appeal to your customers. But, no matter what your platform, there are certain tried and tested tips which can help boost your profits.

## WEBSITE

More original content is a sure way to boost traffic, but it's vital this content is of value to the reader. Try quality instead of quantity, in terms of brands promoted. Menus need to be simple and intuitive, making visitors want to explore your site further.

## BLOG

Create tutorials (such as how to register, deposit and bet) to interest and inform visitors. Incorporate a power brand in any mailing list newsletters and make sure you have attention-grabbing headlines. Creating funny viral videos and infographics can engage your audience and keep them returning. Establishing a unique identity and personal brand are key to forming connections in an

amiable way. While blogs are also about content and value, it's imperative it feels personal – your audience should feel like they know you.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

It's crucial for social media to be at the forefront of breaking news, opinions, trends and special offers. That's why it's important to have a partner who recognises this and keeps you in the loop 24/7 with current creative banners, changing odds and important event updates.

Remember to inform, but don't inundate your followers with information. There's a fine line between the two and it's a balance which needs maintaining at all times.

Information can certainly be repeated at decent intervals, but it needs to be palatable and enjoyable. A general rule of thumb: if you don't find it interesting or appealing, your followers probably won't either. Try to provide unique value every time you suggest a product.

## MOBILE APP

App Store optimisation is a must. Be sure to make full use of all differing character limits and the importance each algorithm attaches to certain elements of your app. UX design can be a make-or-break element too, with the simpler approach often being the more effective. People will find your app, but after that, it's up to you to give them a high-value experience, adding weight to any adverts shown.

Whatever your platform or content, it's imperative you find a successful affiliate programme that employs the latest technology, together with valuable proven experience.

Obviously, a superb product is another prerequisite. Some key factors to look out for include:

- High lifetime commission on all products: highest residual income potential
- Top conversion rates: less wasted traffic
- Automatic weekly payments: enabling quicker reinvestment of your profits to improve your business
- Premium marketing support: personal 24/7 assistance



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## GUEST COLUMNIST



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*Adelstein emphasises the importance of standing out in the slots market*

Every decade or so, an industry comes along with an unprecedented level of consistent growth. Currently, that is the online gambling industry.

It is among the fastest-growing industries of all time, and by 2020 experts predict the market will be worth \$59.8 billion, rising to \$94.4 in 2024.

Our love of gambling has been coupled with advances in digital technology to create some of the most entertaining game experiences. While each local market may have its own unique gambling preferences, like online bingo in the UK, and online poker in Australia, online slots are the world's online gambling game of choice, according to global games market intelligence firm, Newzoo.

### THE POPULARITY OF SLOTS

Slot games have always been popular with gamblers; however, the rise of the internet and mobile technology has accelerated this.

The rise in popularity of online slot games can be put down to a number of factors. The opportunity to win pounds from pennies in a short amount of time is an attractive proposition for many players. Traditionally, the amount of skill involved is relatively low, making the games accessible and no interaction with other people necessary; players can enjoy slot games privately and at a time, place and mood which suits them.

### THE ISSUE WITH CHOICE

Due to the explosion in slot game popularity, there's been a spike in the number of slots on offer. While this does give the consumer greater choice, it also means there is a whole lot more of the same out there. The sheer volume of copied and unoriginal slot games on the market leaves consumers confused as to which are best.

New gamers could quickly be put off slots by not knowing what to play. That's why, as a developer of online slots, it's never been more important to create games of a high quality, which really stand out.

### FIND YOUR INSPIRATION

To stand out, you need to create games with narratives to them: stories that take the player on a journey. Developers should take inspiration from popular culture – movies, TV shows, sports personalities.

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At Ganapati, we take inspiration from our Japanese heritage to create highly immersive slot games. We've been successful because we are authentic; our cultural heritage has enabled us to develop eye-catching anime and manga-style graphics and games that truly stand out and attract brand loyalty.

## BUILD A GREAT DESIGN TEAM

Never underestimate the power of design. When people buy a new house or car, they want it to look good. The same applies to watching an advert on TV, among other things – the visual impact is important. So why should slot games be any different?

Social casino players undoubtedly consider visual appeal and art to be an important part of their enjoyment of online casino games. If your customers appreciate great design, then it's important you cater for it. There are great game designers out there – hire them and build a team that can help you design the most interactive and immersive experiences.

## STRIVE FOR INNOVATION

We're living in a digital-first world where consumers expect to use the latest innovations and technologies, regardless of sector. The gambling industry has been notoriously slow to adapt to new trends, but that is changing.

Mobile-first gaming is at last catching up with its desktop predecessor, meaning consumers can now gamble where they want. This breakthrough has seen mobile gambling account for nearly 45% of the market. Different styles of slot games are also being introduced, gradually diversifying the range of games available to play.

But innovation shouldn't stop with smart phones. At Ganapati, we're creating a blockchain-based platform through our subsidiary, G8C, to improve online gaming and online gambling, making it more transparent and a better experience for gamers. Our mission is to future-proof online gaming.

Consumers are attracted to brands which strive to innovate. Make sure you're one of those brands.

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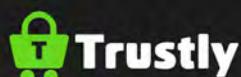


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