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WEEK 42

FRIDAY 22 OCT 2021

**JASON ADER: ARISTOCRAT
CAN TAKE PLAYTECH TO
EVOLUTION'S LEVEL**



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DRIVING DIFFERENTIATION



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JASON ADER: ARISTOCRAT CAN TAKE PLAYTECH TO EVOLUTION'S LEVEL ▾

THIS WEEK

- Entain 'Put up or shut up' deadline extended for DraftKings
- Modest measures: 888 reports 7% growth in Q3
- Drop from the top: Macau faces worst quarter in history
- Revenue breaking: Catena set to reach all-time high

GUEST COLUMNIST:

- Boris Gokhman, AnyVision



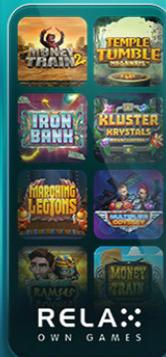
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Round-Up, Round-Up:
Elsewhere in US Gaming

DRIVING DIFFERENTIATION

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One of Playtech's largest shareholders hit the jackpot this week. Not only did his SPAC (Special Purpose Acquisition Company) take Okada Manila public in a \$2.6bn deal, Playtech's board agreed for Aristocrat to acquire it for \$2.9bn. Gambling Insider caught up with Jason Ader to discuss...

▶ **What stood out about Okada Manila for you to pick the property in particular?**

We looked at a lot of opportunities. As you can imagine, we looked at many things in online gaming: video gaming and fintech. There's a lot of price inflation in online gaming; there's a lot of companies that have very little revenue and profits that are being acquired at super high valuations. The Okada Manila asset I was familiar with. It's really the most luxurious integrated resort in the Philippines.

It's, I think, one of the nicest casinos in the world, honestly. Universal had indicated in March that they were contemplating spinning off their business to a SPAC transaction. It was a good fit, I think between my expertise and background; I spent many years as an investor in the gaming industry and many years as a board member at Las Vegas Sands, a big Asian business.

How much potential is there here, who are you looking to compete with on an international scale?

Universal Okada Manila was just given a domestic licence online for the Philippines. So the partnership seems exciting. Valuation is always important as an investor. I was struggling to find attractive valuations in the online gaming space but I really concluded that Okada Manila was an attractive investment, because we were buying it at a discount, \$2.6bn is about five times the 2025 EBITDA – full recovery EBITDA.

And I believe, just based on what I'm seeing in Las Vegas and the regional markets, that gaming, travel and tourism will recover. Vegas is over 2019 peak levels now, some of the riverboat markets, gaming is above 2019 levels. I like the Philippines, barriers to entry are high. Very few companies are going to be able to compete on the scale of this asset, because construction costs are so high. This property cost \$3.3bn to build – but I think it would cost much more to build it now.

To me, this looks and feels a lot like the Wynn Macau. The only real competition is in Macau. The dancing fountains are spectacular, I think it's better than the Bellagio; it's amazing. Nice shopping, 25 restaurants, a really beautiful pool area. When Entertainment City was built, it's super close to the airport – which is a nice airport, so there's a lot of international travel. Ten minutes by car from the airport and there are tons of flights from South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong – and those are the main feeder markets.

How is the market performing now following Covid-19 restrictions?

It's never really opened fully – it'll be complete finally next year. By this I mean the number of gaming tables will go up to 974 and the electronic gaming machines will be almost 7,000. That's a lot more gaming positions alone than when it was in the soft opening period. During the last several months, the Philippines was pretty much on lockdown. Saturday, the casinos went to 30% and the Philippine Government has a 92% vaccination goal

for those who qualify by the end of the year. Nobody knows when in Asia things will recover but history shows that life does go back to normal after the many pandemics our species has faced throughout civilisation.

So what are your thoughts on the Playtech deal?

You know I think it's very undervalued and it's nice to see Aristocrat recognise that. I do think Aristocrat will be able to gain a lot of synergy out of the B2B business that Playtech has developed. It's exciting from that part. It's bittersweet only because with Bwin we got GVC shares, which did great, and with Stars Group we got Flutter shares. Here, we're only getting cash; we negotiated and tried to get stock but Aristocrat held tough. I think Aristocrat, if they get this deal done, has significant upside, so later we'll become a shareholder in Aristocrat.

But again I applaud [Playtech Chairman] Brian Mattingley. He has not been at Playtech very long; I was joking that it took longer to recruit him than his tenure on the board. But he really got the company focused on the shareholder initiatives, and all the things I think make sense to pursue a sale. This offer showed up and let's stay tuned.

There's nothing preventing IGT, Apollo Global Management or Scientific Games from looking at this business and seeing, unlike most, it's very profitable, it's a very unique collection of assets. If £6.83 (\$9.41) becomes the final price, we're still so happy with that, but I'll probably become a shareholder of Aristocrat, because their stock will have a lot of upside from Playtech in the next few years. Whoever buys the Playtech assets has a huge competitive advantage in B2B casino. B2B casino is really the next big thing after sports in the US, and more specifically live table games is what's going to drive that.

How will this new proposition compare to the very biggest players in the industry?

Evolution has a \$30bn valuation; this is a steal compared to Evolution. And Aristocrat has the potential to make it like Evolution; I think IGT has the ability to do that, too. Kudos to Brian, and to Aristocrat for recognising the value. Fingers crossed, a higher offer comes and all the shareholders can benefit.

Aristocrat becomes a powerhouse in online if this deal goes through. It has a great reputation; Playtech arguably didn't have the best reputation. We tried really hard to improve that and upgraded the board; but there were legacy challenges as customers didn't trust them. And, all of a sudden, Aristocrat – conservative, clean, customer-facing Australian company that will do anything for their customer. They can do so much for Playtech's business that it could never do. I expect it will be a leading platform for online casino. Playtech should be making €400m+ (\$466m) in EBITDA and somebody like Aristocrat can make more, just because they're going to run it better.

THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

65

Cases of suspicious betting recorded by the International Betting Integrity Association in Q3 2021



€617m

Record revenue for France's online gambling sector in Q2 2021 (\$718.62m)



190

Potential job cuts made by Finnish gambling monopoly Veikkaus



\$1.1m

Stolen from casinos by five New York residents in a fake-check scam



AU\$9.1m

Record turnover for Australia's Victoria Cup (\$6.83m)



ROUND-UP, ROUND-UP: ELSEWHERE IN US GAMING

► **New Jersey** set a new monthly revenue record for both the state and the US. The state's sportsbooks rode the return of football to a record \$1.01bn in September handle, becoming the first state to surpass \$1bn in monthly sports wagers. New Jersey held the previous record of \$996m in handle, set in December 2020. Handle in September was up 83% year-on-year.

Penn National completed its acquisition of Score Media. The total price for the deal came to approximately \$2bn. Penn National believes theScore will strengthen its digital media and gaming strategy. As Canada's largest sports media app, Penn hopes theScore will allow the company to better serve its customers.

Pennsylvania sportsbooks reported a handle of \$579m, the second highest of all time in the Keystone State. The return of the NFL and college football drove Pennsylvania's surge. Handle was up 25% year-on-year and up 66% from August, a sign of just how dependent operators are on the gridiron.

Bet365 and the San Antonio Spurs have partnered for a free-to-play game lunch. The product released 20 October 2021 via the official Spurs mobile app. The product, entitled Call Your Shot, allows players to win prizes and exclusive NBA-related experiences. This deal, the sports betting group's first with an NBA team, will see the Bet365 integrated into the basketball franchise's signage and TV advertising.

Connecticut has launched iGaming and real money sports betting after years of debate on the matter. Operators such as FanDuel and DraftKings will now be opening sportsbooks in the state. The decision finally came in the wake of declining revenue as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This situation prompted both the state government and industry operators to come to the table and cut a deal. Connecticut has become the seventh state in the US to

have legalised online casinos.

The Seminole Tribe's hold on Florida sports betting will remain unopposed after a District Court challenge was dismissed. Wet Flagler Associates, owners of Magic City Casino in Miami and Bonita Springs Poker Room could not show the sports betting law harms parimutuels.

Game Play Network struck a deal with the game developer and provider AGS which will see the latter's vast collection of online mobile games integrated with GPN's B2C website and mobile app. Given GPN's reach, which allows it to operate for real money in up to 40 states (40% more of the US market than other iGaming companies), this move will almost certainly expand AGS' audience.

Entain completed the purchase of esports betting operator Unikrn. Courtesy of this deal, Entain is now able to launch new esports products for its customers in 2022. Unikrn's technology, products, platform, brand and even its international team have all been purchased, a move that will help spread its launch worldwide.

Texas has decided to address the issue of tribal gaming legality. The state's supreme court will hear a case brought by El Paso's Tigua Tribe, potentially ending a 30-year legal battle over the tribe's right to offer gambling. In 1994, a circuit court declared that bingo-style games being operated at Speaking Rock Entertainment Center were illegal. This prompted a number of appeals, the most recent in 2019.

New York has charged five residents of fraud after they deposited phony bank checks for gaming chips at five casinos between August 26 and 28 of this year. The five New Yorkers are accused of having stolen \$1.1m from the casinos. The Golden Nugget and Hard Rock casinos lost \$134,000 apiece while Caesars, the Borgata and Ocean Casino Resort honoured \$284,000 checks each.

GOLDEN FISH TANK 2

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BIGGER wins,
BIGGER fish to fry!

COMING 28 OCTOBER



4



Final applications received by the Gambling Commission for the Fourth National Lottery licence competition

€5m

Cash prizes up for grabs in WSOP Europe Main Event through 3 – 8 December (\$5.82m)



6



Betway NBA sponsorships following its recent Dallas Mavericks deal

ENTAIN EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR \$22BN DRAFTKINGS BID

Entain has confirmed it has extended its deadline for DraftKings to make an official offer to buy the company, to 16 November 2021.

In an announcement made “without DraftKings’ consent,” operator Entain has labelled this move an “extension of the Put Up or Shut Up Deadline.”

Under the terms of the previous proposal, DraftKings would offer £28 (\$38.65) per Entain share, consisting of cash and DraftKings shares.

However, following discussions with DraftKings, the deadline for an official offer has been extended. The original deadline was 19 October 2021.

A statement read: “The board has been in discussion with DraftKings in order to explore the merits and feasibility of a potential transaction reserving its position on the appropriateness of the value of the proposal. As part of this, the board will require a number of matters to be satisfactorily resolved that are fundamental to the structure and value of the proposal.

DraftKings later responded with a

statement of its own: “DraftKings will continue to engage in discussions between both companies and to conduct more substantive due diligence and analysis regarding its possible offer.

GI Verdict: Entain is still keen to make a deal with DraftKings and in the past has suggested approval at the \$22bn asking price. The fact it is still on the table means it may very well happen, albeit at a slightly later date, and after more of the details have been ironed out.

Front and centre among these details is the status of BetMGM. Currently Entain and MGM Resorts International are 50-50 owners of BetMGM (which uses Entain technology). DraftKings is MGM Resorts’ biggest rival. Were Entain to be purchased by DraftKings, it seems natural that there be something of a divorce between MGM Resorts and the newly formed powerhouse; though it is also likely that MGM will continue using Entain’s technology through licensing agreements. To be continued.

THE WEEK IN QUOTES

“Cricket is the second-most popular sport in the world after football, and it lends itself well to fantasy sports because the assessment of performance is pretty quantifiable versus football, where it’s quite a subjective decision on who’s playing well.”

The Cricket Draft Co-Founder Dante O’Reilly speaks exclusively to Gambling Insider

“With the endless support and dedication of my co-founders Anne and Keith Evans, I have been on an extraordinary personal journey, and I feel extremely proud of what we and the staff team have achieved together. This is a special charity and one that has exciting plans for the future.”

Ygam Chief Executive Lee Willows on stepping down from the organisation please change to Ygam

888 HOLDINGS REPORTS 7% GROWTH IN Q3 TRADING UPDATE

888 Holdings has announced its Q3 2021 trading update and the numbers suggest modest progress. The operator generated \$229.9m total gaming revenue for the three months ended 30 September 2021, showing a 7% increase year-on-year.

During the period, 888 announced the acquisition of William Hill International, which will enhance its scale and create new opportunities in several regulated markets.

In July 2021, the group launched the World Series of Poker (WSOP) brand in Pennsylvania under its partnership with Caesars, thus bringing 888’s latest poker platform to the US; WSOP is also set to launch in Michigan by the end of 2021.

Itai Pazner, CEO of 888, put a positive spin on what was a steady but not a miraculous set of results: “Q3 2021 was a period of outstanding strategic progress for 888. During the period we announced the transformational acquisition of William Hill International, successfully launched SI Sportsbook in the US, and began operating 888sport under a new licence in Germany as we

continued to execute our plan to build a global online betting and gaming leader.

“Alongside these important strategic milestones, I am pleased with the group’s continued positive trading, particularly as we lap very tough comparative periods. This performance reflects the continued success of our data-driven investments and execution against our product-leadership plan that delivers ongoing improvements in the usability, quality and safety of our sports betting and gaming products.”

GI Verdict: 888’s report showed strong performance in B2C casino gaming, while B2C sports betting declined against a strong outcome in Q3 2020. Compared to Q3 2019, B2C sports betting revenue increased by 21%, with data also showing a particular growth in Italy and Romania. It seems like 888 has a promising platform for extended growth; but it will be expecting far more than 7% long term, especially following the William Hill acquisition.



“On the basis of Slater and Gordon’s investigations to date, we consider there may be a proper basis to allege that Star has been in breach of its continuous disclosure obligations, and further that it has made misleading or deceptive statements to the ASX.”

Law firm Slater and Gordon discussing a proposed class-action lawsuit against Star Entertainment amid money-laundering allegations

“Our research has shown that the ‘Take Time To Think’ message will encourage even more customers to pause and consider whether to make use of the wide range of safer gambling tools that are available. That will enable them to stay in control of their betting.”

Michael Dugher, the Betting and Gaming Council’s Chief Executive, on the industry body’s new ‘Take Time to Think’ campaign

MACAU Q3 GGR DOWN 26% QUARTER-ON-QUARTER

Macau’s mass-market GGR in Q3 2021 was MOP12.81bn (\$1.60bn), a 24% decline from Q2, but the figure made up 68% of the city’s aggregate casino GGR for the period.

Mass-market baccarat earned MOP10.56bn, 56% of all GGR. VIP baccarat accounted for 32% of casino GGR with MOP5.96bn.

Revenue from slot machines for the quarter was MOP1.08bn.

In total, Macau reported MOP18.76bn in GGR in Q3, 26% down compared to the previous quarter.

Analysts noted that the VIP segment suffered the most, mainly due to the ongoing pandemic and regulatory changes.

According to a survey from Bloomberg, Macau casino operators are expected to see third-quarter profits slump to \$62m in EBITDA, plunging several operators into a loss and leaving Macau with a profit that is 97% lower compared to pre-pandemic levels.

“Sharp deterioration of visitor arrivals

during the October Golden Week holiday is unlikely to end soon,” said Bloomberg Intelligence analysts, led by Angela Hanlee.

Arrivals from mainland China fell 94% year-on-year during the holiday and the drop in numbers will likely further impact gaming revenue in Q4.

Macau’s government is also working to change the regulations regarding the casino industry, which, according to Bloomberg, triggered a record sell-off of gaming stocks and erased \$18bn in combined market value. The mainland government is also pushing Macau to diversify its economy away from gambling.

GI Verdict: In terms of the Bloomberg survey, it seems like Macau could be facing one of the worst upcoming quarters it’s ever had.

This drop has started to alter opinions on the city being seen as the uppermost echelon of gaming. The return to growth recently seen in the US is still some way off in Macau.



TAKING STOCK

SHARE PRICES COVER THURSDAY 14
OCTOBER TO THURSDAY 21 OCTOBER
(10:00AM GMT)

Playtech
674.89 GBp



52%

Entain
2,150 GBp



4%

Aristocrat
47.10 AUD



4%

DraftKings
49.09 USD



1%

Elys Game Technology
4.51 USD



5%

CATENA MEDIA REPORTS Q3 GROWTH; REVENUE DOUBLES FOR NORTH AMERICAN IGAMING

Catena Media has announced its preliminary results for Q3 2021 and the numbers show strong growth. Q3 revenue is estimated at €33.1m (\$24.9m), up 33% from the same period last year. Revenue from North American iGaming has more than doubled, showing a 124% increase and accounting for 51% of total group revenue during the quarter.

Adjusted EBITDA is estimated at €16m, showing an increase of 33% and corresponding to a margin of 48%. The reports show an estimated 23% organic growth of 34% excluding the now-regulated German iGaming market (where revenue fell almost 62% and accounted for 4% of the group revenue during Q3).

Catena Media CEO Michael Daly said: "The impairment charge adjusts our European business to new market realities following a review by the management team

and our focus on transforming the business to reach maximum potential."

According to the report, operating profit is to suffer a negative impact by a non-cash impairment of intangible assets in accordance to IAS 36, which shall result in an estimated writedown of €49.4m (€42.8m of the writedown is related to the German sports assets purchased between 2016 and 2018; €6.6m is related to French sports assets acquired in 2018).

Management explained the write-down would have no impact on cash flow.

GI Verdict: Due to strategic, organic development in the US, and throughout North America specifically, Catena's third quarter is set to reach exceptionally high levels; with September providing "revenue breaking" all-time results. The affiliate will hope it's the start of a run of successful quarters for the company.



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BILLIONS: NEW JERSEY SKYROCKETS

New Jersey gaming revenue jumped 49.43% to \$453.560m in September vs. the same month in 2019 and 40.3% year-on-year.

Legacy casino revenue rose double digits vs. last year and 2019, but iGaming and sports betting remain the prominent revenue growth drivers.

iGaming revenue skyrocketed 198.01% to \$122.595m compared to 2019. MGM Resorts' Borgata continues to lead market share with 31.2% market share.

Sports betting revenue inclined 117.62% to \$82.440m despite some double-digit declines and losses. Meadowlands remains far ahead in market share with 50.05%.

Sports betting handle was \$1.01bn, marking the first time that a US sports betting jurisdiction has eclipsed \$1bn in monthly handle.

NEW JERSEY ALL-SOURCES REVENUE	SEPTEMBER REVENUE (M)	% CHANGE VS 2019
Resorts	\$59.280	+70.82
Borgata (MGM)	\$111.887	+69.82
Hard Rock	\$48.679	+52.73
Caesars (CZR)	\$31.825	+36.81
Golden Nugget	\$44.195	+36.73
Ocean	\$32.116	+32.24
Tropicana (CZR)	\$34.828	+20.15
Harrah's (CZR)	\$27.858	+4.66
Bally's AC (BALY)	\$14.550	-4.91

IGAMING	SEPTEMBER REVENUE (M)	% CHANGE VS 2019	% CHANGE VS 2020	PARTNER
Borgata (MGM)	\$38.224	+449.26	+88.48	Entain/Pala
Resorts Digital	\$28.386	+217.90	+41.85	SGMS, FLTR
Hard Rock	\$5.810	+209.10	-6.46	GiG
Ocean	\$1.382	+167.16	+76.82	GAN
Caesars (CZR)	\$10.180	+157.93	+21.96	888, SGMS
Tropicana (CZR)	\$7.206	+120.88	+20.15	Gamesys
Golden Nugget	\$31.070	+98.61	+19.48	FLTER/GAN/SGMS
Bally's AC (BALY)	\$0.337	N/A	N/A	PBH
Total iGaming	\$122.595	+198.01	+39.89	

Poker	\$2.492	+52.05	-2.44
Online Casino	\$120.103	+204.06	+41.17
Total Casino*	\$371.120	+39.70	+33.40

*TOTAL CASINO INCLUDES LAND-BASED AND ONLINE CASINO

SPORTS BETTING	SEPTEMBER REVENUE (M)	% CHANGE VS 2019	% CHANGE VS 2020	OPERATORS
Tropicana	\$3.267	+1,528.60	+881.04	CZR
Borgeta	\$13.417	+807.63	+230.27	Entain
Hard Rock	\$1.795	+338.32	+70.27	GiG
Harrah's	\$0.386	+226.83	+930.89	SGMS
Meadowlands	\$41.257	+143.66	+46.39	FLTR, PBH
Resorts	\$0.484	+42.25	+88.04	DKNG
Resorts Digital	\$13.165	+22.79	+175.69	FLTR/DKNG/ Kambi
Monmouth Park	\$2.874	-14.49	-17.49	CZR/Rush st
Ocean	\$1.658	-46.62	-36.79	CZR
Golden Nugget	\$0.181	-62.83	+14.87	DKNG/CHDN
Bally's	\$0.126	-82.63	-21.51	SGMS/888
Freehold	\$4.282	N/A	N/A	Greenwood
GNOG	(\$0.070)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Caesars	(\$0.381)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Sports Betting	\$82.440	+117.62	+82.86	
Same Store**	\$78.539	+107.32	+74.04	

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RETAIL NETWORK MANAGEMENT

GUEST COLUMNIST



BORIS GOKHMAN, *ANYVISION*

Gokhman discusses the seven challenges casinos are facing right now, and how technology can help

Managing a casino is not easy. Operators are tasked with monitoring and ensuring thousands of guests and players are following industry-specific regulations, as they move about an expansive space.

An error in oversight can cost the casino thousands and providing world-class customer service is essential in such a competitive industry. A casino needs to properly manage these challenges, as well as invest in new technologies to gain a leg-up in their operations. Some of these challenges include:

Knowing who the bad actors are

Preventing card counting, cheating, or hacking is hard. Being able to identify who attempted to or successfully targeted your casino is the first step in preventing these

types of occurrences from happening. An advantage player can cost a casino tens of thousands of dollars in payouts, so it's important to ensure they are identified in the facility before they can do any harm.

Creating superior experiences for VIPs

We all know competition is fierce these days. Gamblers and slot players will gravitate to casinos that offer perks and provide the most enhanced gambling experiences. Being frequently asked to show ID, requiring membership and VIP key cards to keep track of points, and seeing dozens of security personnel at every station, tends to worsen the ambiance of a casino.

“In a world where time is of the essence, a lack of direct information sharing from surveillance to security can lead to extraordinary losses for a casino”

Preventing self-excluders from entering the casino

While the impact can vary depending on local laws, it's

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safe to say that allowing self-excluders to gamble in your casino can create significant liability and costs for your casino.

Adhering to Covid-19 regulations & helping guests feel safe

Wearing a mask and social distancing are important measures to reduce contamination. Having the ability to ensure guests are keeping their masks on is crucial to maintaining the safety of guests. However, simply issuing mask mandates and "Stay 6 Feet Apart Signs" aren't enough when operating a casino that hosts hundreds of people at a time.

Being able to track who was contaminated and trace who they were in contact with can help your casinos limit exposure, keep employees and visitors safe, and comply with ever-changing Covid-19 quarantine regulations.

Establishing proper communication channels between security teams

In a world where time is of the essence, a lack of direct information sharing from surveillance to security can lead to extraordinary losses for a casino.

The surveillance team is in the control room and is responsible for identifying threats before they occur; but it's very difficult for a human to identify every person that enters the facility across all cameras, while properly communicating these findings with the security team.

This constant need for over-communication results in operational friction and leads to security procedures that take more time, require more people and work less efficiently.

"An error in oversight can cost the casino thousands and providing world-class customer service is essential in such a competitive industry. A casino needs to properly manage these challenges, as well as invest in new technologies"

Protecting sensitive areas from unauthorised individuals

There may be areas of your facility, such as the bank vault or the control room, that are extremely sensitive and should only be accessed by specific personnel or employees of the casino.

Security must be alerted right away if a non-authorised individual enters – or even attempts to enter – these areas.

Eliminating violence, loitering & solicitation

Local offenders are nothing new for casinos, yet their continued presence puts a tremendous amount of pressure and stress on security personnel whose job is to ensure guests feel safe and protected, without disrupting their experience on the casino floor or surrounding property.

With the maturation of facial recognition technology, and it becoming increasingly accepted by organisations and individuals, access control and watch list alert solutions based on facial recognition enable leading casino operators to deal with these challenges.

The right technology leverages computer vision to help protect an organisation's physical access points.

By identifying both authorised personnel and persons of interest in real-time, whether VIPs or bad actors, modern enterprises can layer in additional protection & operational insights to improve the customer experience.

More specifically: they can allow you to receive real-time alerts whenever a bad actor or self-excluder enters your casino, if a non-authorised individual attempts to access a secured area, or if a visitor removes his or her mask while indoors.

It additionally enables seamless and cost-effective offer entry benefits to visitors, without requiring them to use key cards, membership chips, or any other physical device.

In addition, facial recognition solutions help casinos to communicate efficiently, and keep surveillance and security team members up-to-speed on everything that goes on "on the floor" in real-time.

Boris Gokhman is VP Sales at AnyVision, a visual AI platform company that organisations including leading casinos across the globe use to create trusted, seamless experiences.

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