



WEEK 34

FRIDAY 26 AUG 2022

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THE GLOBAL GAMING AWARDS ASIA

WINNERS REVEALED

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GLOBAL
GAMING
AWARDS
— 2022 —
ASIA



WEEK 34

FRIDAY 26 AUG 2022

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THIS WEEK

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GLOBAL GAMING AWARDS ASIA WINNERS REVEALED



WINNERS REVEALED



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After the inaugural Global Gaming Awards Asia ceremony this week, we run down the worthy winners who represent the very best of the Asia-Pacific gaming market

► This week, the winners of the very first Global Gaming Awards Asia were announced at a virtual event hosted by *Gambling Insider's* Mariya Savova and Micky Swindale, Partner and CEO of KPMG Islands Group.

The maiden Global Gaming Awards Asia used the same rigorous voting procedures to select the winners from a decorated pack of nominees as the Global Gaming Awards Las Vegas and Global Gaming Awards London events.

The ceremony, which was announced earlier this year by *Gambling Insider*, comes as part of a focus on the Asia-Pacific market, following the success of the awards in Las Vegas and London over the past decade.

It's a focus *Gambling Insider* Editor-in-Chief Julian Perry was keen to emphasise, saying: "Congratulations to all winners and of course well done to all the companies that were nominated. A big thank you to our Judging Panel, the event sponsors and KPMG in the Crown Dependencies for supporting our event. As I've mentioned previously, we have been thinking about expanding the Global Gaming Awards and adding an event for Asia-Pacific for a number of years now. To see this event finally happen, albeit virtually, is a huge moment for us."

The nominees for the debut Awards can be found in the official Shortlist brochure, which also specifies the reason for every nominee's selection in each category and can be found on the Awards' official site.

Each of the categories was extensively researched before the winners were selected by a panel of 20 industry specialists and experts from the Asia-Pacific region. The Awards themselves were adjudicated by KPMG alongside Crown Dependencies, with BetConstruct as the Lead Partner.

Other sponsors of the inaugural Global Gaming Awards Asia include: Digitain, SA Gaming, Pragmatic Play and Simple Play.

After the Awards were announced, Jakob Rothwangl, Vice President of Global Sales at Novomatic, hailed Novomatic's win for Game Table of the Year, commenting: "We are very honoured to receive this Award. Novo Unity II products are very popular in the Asian region, with major arena installations in markets like Cambodia and Malaysia."

Ken Jolly, Vice President and Managing Director for Asia at Light & Wonder, said of his company's multiple win: "On behalf of Light & Wonder, I'd like to thank the Global Gaming Awards because we've been fortunate enough to win two Awards this year. Thank you to the Awards and we're very, very pleased to have won."

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this year's ceremony was held virtually; however, the Global Gaming Awards Asia looks forward to hosting its first in-person event when it returns in 2023 to celebrate excellence in the Asia-Pacific region once again.

Meanwhile, the Shortlist for the ninth annual Global Gaming Awards Las Vegas 2022 will be announced in September, with the ceremony taking place at the Global Gaming Expo (G2E) Las Vegas in October, which will round out 2022 for the Global Gaming Awards.

The Awards will return in February 2023 with the Global Gaming

Awards London at ICE London. Find a full list of winners & runners-up for the first Global Gaming Awards Asia 2022 below.

CASINO OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

Winner: Bloomberry Resorts Corporation

Second Place: Las Vegas Sands

Third Place: Galaxy Entertainment

CASINO SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR

Winner: Light & Wonder

Second Place: Aristocrat Gaming

Third Place: Jade Entertainment

INTEGRATED RESORT OF THE YEAR

Winner: Solaire Resort & Casino

Second Place: Marina Bay Sands

Third Place: NUSTAR Resort and Casino

CASINO PRODUCT OF THE YEAR

Winner: Light & Wonder – MDX Shuffler

Second Place: Konami – All Aboard-Dynamite Dash

Third Place: (Joint) TCSJOHNHUXLEY – Blaze LED Surface

Technology & Sega Sammy Creation – Lucky Fruits Links Series

TABLE GAME OF THE YEAR

Winner: NOVOMATIC – NOVO LINE Novo Unity II

Second Place: (Joint) Sega Sammy Creation – Baccarat

Maximum Fortune & Aruze Gaming – Dragon Sic Bo

Third Place: (Joint) Light & Wonder - Dragon Tail Baccarat

on the Quartz™ Standalone & LT Game - Multi Roulette

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE YEAR

Winner: Melco Resorts & Entertainment

Second Place: Las Vegas Sands & Sands China

Third Place: Bloomberry Resorts Corporation

DIGITAL OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

Winner: Sportsbet

Second Place: Solaire Online Casino

Third Place: TIPSTAR by mixi, Inc.

DIGITAL SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR

Winner: Evolution

Second Place: BetConstruct

Third Place: BBIN

EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

Winner: Enrique K. Razon Jr. – Chairman & CEO,

Bloomberry Resorts Corporation

Second Place: Lawrence Ho – Chairman & CEO,

Melco Resorts & Entertainment

Third Place: Andrea Domingo – Chairman & CEO,

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation



THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

AU\$2.37bn
(US\$1.64bn)

Revenue for Tabcorp Holdings for the full year ended 30 June 2022, down 4% year-on-year



SEK 42m
(\$3.9m)



To be invested by Svenska Spel into research on gambling problems over the next five years

500,000+

Online gambling accounts shut down over the last four years in Indonesia, where gambling is illegal



2

Year initial agreement between Sportradar and the International Golf Federation

22

Yorkshire-based charities, foundations and similar groups shortlisted for Sky Bet's Ebor Festival Community Sweepstake



LOTTERY.COM FACES LAWSUIT FROM INVESTORS

▶ A lawsuit has been filed against Lottery.com over "false and misleading statements," among other complaints.

The company has seen shareholders take legal action following a series of setbacks in recent months, setbacks which have negatively impacted Lottery.com's share price.

The termination of President and CFO Ryan Dickinson in June caused Lottery.com's share price to tumble, as did the resignation of Chief Revenue Officer Matthew Clemenson in July.

The former's departure was pre-empted by an internal investigation that revealed "instances of non-compliance with state and federal laws," as well as "issues pertaining to the company's internal accounting controls."

Clemenson's decision to step down, meanwhile, accompanied an announcement from Lottery.com that it had "overstated its available unrestricted cash balance by approximately \$30m and that, relatedly, in the prior fiscal year, it improperly recognised revenue in the same amount."

In addition, because Lottery.com lacked sufficient resources to fund its operations for a 12-month period, there existed "substantial doubt about the company's ability to continue as a going concern."

As a result, investors have filed a class action lawsuit, with Bragar Eigel & Squire, as well as the Portnoy Law Firm, encouraging anyone who purchased Lottery.com securities between 15 November 2021 and 29 July 2022 to come forward.

"Lottery.com failed to maintain

appropriate accounting controls.

The company also failed to maintain appropriate controls over financial reporting, including revenue recognition and the reporting of cash. The company was not in compliance with laws related to the sale of lottery tickets," Bragar Eigel & Squire stated.

"Based on these facts, the company's public statements were false and materially misleading throughout the class period. When the market learned the truth about Lottery.com, investors suffered damages."

Lottery.com stock closed at \$0.39 on Monday 22 August, down from \$0.48 at close on Friday (it is now at \$0.40). On a year-to-date basis, the company's share price has fallen from \$6.11 and, to make matters worse, the threat of delisting hangs over Lottery.com's head.

The company has yet to file Form 10-Q for the quarter ended 30 June. It has, as of now, until 31 August to do so; failure could see it delisted from the Nasdaq Stock Market.

An SEC report noted that Lottery.com "can provide no assurances as to timing" but it "plans to file the Form 10-Q as soon as practicably possible."

GI Verdict: Lottery.com isn't in a good place right now. First it fired Dickinson, then Clemenson left, followed shortly afterwards by CEO and Co-Founder Tony DiMatteo. If their decision to jump ship wasn't alarming enough, revelations about Lottery.com's allegedly inadequate accounting controls and non-compliance would be enough to make any investor think twice. The company is wedged between a rock and a hard place; whether it can wriggle out remains to be seen.

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2%

Year-on-year top-line revenue decrease for H1 for ATG, the Swedish Horseracing Totalisator Board

18,000

Seat City of Glendale facility to be renamed Desert Diamond Arena through the partnership between Desert Diamond Casinos & Entertainment and ASM Global



15

Game complement of regular season Thursday Night Football games included in a partnership between Amazon and Directv

PANSY HO TO SERVE AS MD OF MGM CHINA SUBSIDIARY

MGM China Holdings has revealed plans to invest MOP\$4.8bn (US\$594m) into a subsidiary, enabling the unit to qualify for a new Macau casino licence.

The move will work to ensure that the subsidiary, MGM Grand Paradise, meets the condition that licence-holding companies must have capital of at least MOP\$5bn.

If the tender is successful, Pansy Ho will serve as MGM Grand Paradise for at least another 10 years, where she will be paid \$8m a year and receive 730,000 Class B shares.

Additionally, Ho will receive incentive payments on MGM Grand Paradise's financial performance, up to a maximum of \$95m over the term of the licence.

New Macau gaming regulations stipulate that licensees must have a Managing Director with at least 15% of company capital, an increase from the previous requirement of 10%.

If the share arrangement is successful, MGM China will hold approximately 85% of the unit's capital and voting rights, Ho 15% and MGM China's parent company

MGM Resorts International 0.4%.

MGM China submitted this information in filings to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. The company's Macau rights, held via Grand Paradise, are due to expire on 31 December.

GI Verdict: MGM China's support of its Macau-based subsidiary should come as no surprise. Macau's concession holders have been struggling from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic for some time, living under the rule of China's zero-Covid policy. We have already seen the likes of SJM offer financial support to its Grand Lisboa Palace, and Las Vegas Sands pump \$1bn to support its Macau operations. It's clear the region's current concession holders share one thing – a belief in Macau's future. Purchasing a new concession licence for the 10-year period starting January 2023 now appears a formality for MGM China. As for Ho, her remit will be to ensure the firm bounces back as strongly as possible when Macau's incoming tourism numbers return to pre-pandemic levels.



THE WEEK IN QUOTES

"We see massive potential for esports betting to allow us to engage an even broader audience while providing existing players with new betting experiences. But to not only do this but do this right, we knew we had to work with a partner at the cutting edge of the vertical, and in PandaScore, we have exactly that. We look forward to leveraging its odds feed and unmatched experience to take our esports betting customer experience to the next level."

William Hill Global Director of Sportsbook Nick Maurice upon the group selecting PandaScore as its new esports betting partner

"We're thrilled to partner with Betbazar for the data produced by Beter, an industry leader in creating content for betting and gaming solutions. By expanding our eSoccer and eBasketball offering through our partnership with Betbazar and Beter, we hope to help sportsbooks fill in the gaps in the highly seasonal sports calendar and provide engaging 24/7 content for sports fans."

Abios CEO and Founder Oskar Fröberg on its data partnership facilitated by Betbazar for the data rights and fast betting tournament content powered by Beter

BGC CALLS FOR HELP AMID RISING COSTS

The UK's Betting and Gaming Council (BGC) has called on the Government to act as the hospitality and leisure industry sees operating costs soar.

Michael Dugher, CEO of the BGC, expressed his grave concerns over rising energy prices, saying: "The cost of simply doing business is rising at an exponential rate.

"If urgent action isn't taken soon, continued energy price increases could have a catastrophic impact across the hospitality and leisure sector, including hitting our members."

He added: "Casinos are a vital pillar of the hospitality and tourism sector in cities and towns across the UK. Just like the rest of the hospitality sector, they are struggling to build back after the global pandemic and now they face a new crisis."

In Britain, there are 6,500 betting shops and 121 casinos that employ 44,000 people, which contribute more than £4bn (\$4.72bn) to the economy every year, and around £2bn in taxes.

Businesses are facing a 300% increase

in the cost of energy, while the Rank Group recently stated the cost of energy in the UK could hit £46m this year – double last year's £23m.

This news also comes as the UK Government prepares for a handover of leadership, with Prime Minister Boris Johnson stepping down after being forced to resign.

Currently, Rishi Sunak and Liz Truss are battling it out for 10 Downing Street, and both have laid out plans to ease the crisis when the results of the Conservative election are announced in September.

GI Verdict: Covid and now a cost-of-living crisis have undoubtedly hit land-based operators' bottom lines but, if the BGC is to be believed, the sector is on the brink. This is likely an exaggeration; an attempt to lobby for more favourable treatment, especially as the UK Government's long-awaited White Paper draws near. However, the cost of doing business has definitely increased, and if certain estimates are to be believed, operators may be forced to take more drastic cost-saving measures.

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Pollard Banknote Vice President, Sales & Marketing Brad Thompson after Guy Fieri joined its portfolio of licensed games for use on printed instant tickets

"I'm delighted to announce this licensing agreement with one of the most prestigious football clubs in the Premier League. This agreement will enable Highlight Games to further extend its product portfolio, combining unique archive footage with Manchester City's intellectual property to create premium branded games. We are confident that the simplicity of our new Instant Win games, combined with the best goals from Manchester City's past seasons, will prove very popular with players."

Highlight Co-CEO Steven Holmes on the group's licence agreement with Manchester City FC

THE STAR ENTERTAINMENT FULL YEAR REVENUE DOWN 2%

The Star Entertainment Group has reported revenue of AU\$1.53bn (US\$1.05bn) for the 12 months ended 30 June 2022, a 2% decline from the prior-year period.

The operator reported EBITDA of AU\$237m, down 45% year-on-year, and a net loss of AU\$32m.

The Star Sydney represented AU\$781m of total revenue, down 6% from the prior-year period, with earnings significantly impacted by the closure of the property for 102 days amid the Covid-19 pandemic. EBITDA at the venue declined by 60% to AU\$82m.

The Star Gold Coast revenue was up 11% year-on-year to AU\$424m, with the property closed for 11 days. EBITDA was down 20% to AU\$90m.

And the group's Brisbane property, which was closed for 12 days, reported revenue of AU\$326m and EBITDA of AU\$65m, declines of 6% and 43% respectively.

Domestic revenue in the June quarter was up 11% on pre-Covid levels, with slots revenue and non-gaming revenue up 28% and 26% respectively, while domestic

table revenue was down 4%.

"The past year has demonstrated how resilient our business is and how quickly customers return when the properties are allowed to open and operate without restrictions," said Acting CEO Geoff Hogg.

"This gives us great confidence moving forward. The fundamental earnings prospects for The Star's domestic business remain attractive.

"They are underpinned by valuable long-term licences in compelling locations while the transformation of our properties into globally competitive integrated resorts continues."

GI Verdict: The removal of Covid restrictions has given The Star some breathing room, but it may not be enough. Under normal circumstances, a full recovery would likely be on the horizon, but The Star has stepped out of the pandemic and into a regulatory minefield. A report is due on 31 August regarding the review of The Star's Sydney casino, while another inquiry in Queensland has only just begun.



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6%

Kambi
178.40 SEK



2%

Las Vegas Sands
37.87 HKD



0%

MGM Resorts
34.67 USD



3%

SJM Holdings
2.75 HKD



3%

THE RIGHT MANN FOR THE JOB

The Glitnor Group has undergone a high-level reshuffle, with former Swintt Chief Commercial Officer David Mann being promoted to CEO.

David Flynn, meanwhile, Swintt's former Chief Executive, will now focus his efforts entirely on parent company Glitnor Group, of which he is also CEO.

Fomer CCO Mann will now lead Swintt, having been tasked with expanding the business, driving profitability and managing the provider's overall operations.

Gambling Insider spoke to Mann in an exclusive interview to discuss his promotion, having been the first publication to break the news to the industry on Monday morning.

My first question is a slightly humorous one. Do you have to be called David to be a CEO within Glitnor Group?

I think it definitely helps and it's been proven! I guess you can never have too much of a good thing.

On a more serious note, how did the move come about? Is the CEO role one you have always targeted?

I've moved up within the industry and within this company in particular, so I've been on that commercial path within my career, and CEO is something I've been looking to take a go at.

Obviously, within Swintt, I was the first employee after David Flynn, the Founder and now Group CEO of Glitnor Group.

The opportunity was there for me to step up. In terms of knowing the business and the culture, being able to form a strategy envisioned around the people and the setup we already have in place, it made sense.

GI Verdict: Swintt is likely in safe hands. Mann has been with the organisation since 2019 and has helped the studio expand. The decision to promote from within rather than looking externally indicates that Glitnor, and by extension, Flynn, trust Mann's expertise. Naturally, a newcomer would lack his familiarity, but the business may miss out on the insights an external hire could bring.

SCCG MANAGEMENT

STEPHEN A. CRYSTAL

Founder and CEO, SCCG Management

Email stephen.crystal@sccgmanagement.com
Mobile / WhatsApp +1 (702) 427-9354

On the Web at sccgmanagement.com
igaminglaw.online
stephenacrystalesq.com

On LinkedIn at [linkedin.com/company/sccg-management](https://www.linkedin.com/company/sccg-management)
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BETTER COLLECTIVE Q2 REVENUE UP 40%; PARTNERS WITH BOSTON GLOBE MEDIA

Affiliate Better Collective has reported revenue of €56m (\$55.5m) for the second quarter of 2022, a 40% increase from the prior-year period.

Quarterly EBITDA was down 3% year-on-year to €12.2m, with an EBITDA margin of 22%. Cash flow from operations more than doubled year-on-year to €22.5m, while new depositing customers grew 93% year-on-year to 387,000.

The group made its second-largest acquisition ever in the period, acquiring Futbin and related domains for a total price of up to €105m. It also established a new media partnership with the Philadelphia Inquirer to deliver “engaging sports betting content, data and statistics to the publication’s readership of approx. 10 million monthly visitors,” with the partnership co-branded with Better Collective-owned Action Network.

Also taking place in the quarter was the appointment of Mikkel Munch-Jacobsgaard as Director of Investor Relations, with the executive bringing

“insight and network in the international capital markets through long experience from a role as Institutional Equity Sales at both Danske Bank and SEB.”

For the first six months of 2022, revenue grew by 57% to €123.4m, with EBITDA growing 37% year-on-year to €35.3m. Cash flow from operations grew 31% to €35.6m, with new depositing customers doubling from 371,000 to 737,000.

“Q2 was a productive quarter,” said Better Collective Co-Founder & CEO Jesper Sogaard. “Our geographical diversification really proved its worth as the Europe & RoW Publishing business continued its strong momentum for both revenue and earnings.

“Our US business showed 90% topline growth and a negative EBITDA, which runs in line with our strategy to continue large-scale investments in what rapidly has become our largest single market.”

Better Collective has also announced



a partnership with Boston Globe Media’s Boston.com, to provide its readers with betting odds and tips for upcoming games, along with analysis of teams and players, and direct links to sports betting platforms.

The partnership will be co-branded with Better Collective subsidiary VegasInsider, and is expected to be operational before the end of August.

GI Verdict: Given that plenty of companies are reporting declines for Q2, Better Collective will be very happy with its results for the period.

However, Sogaard’s insistence on results being in line with a strategy that includes negative EBITDA may not be for every investor. Concurrently, Better Collective’s share price dipped 9% in the 24 hours that followed its Q2 report.

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DAZN BET NOW AVAILABLE IN THE UK

Dazn Bet, the betting partner of sports entertainment platform Dazn, has launched its beta product in the UK – the operator’s first market.

The company claims this pilot period will allow it to test its services, optimising gaming and betting experience before releasing it in wider markets.

Dazn says it has launched its new betting arm as part of its commitment to enhancing interactive experiences for fans.

Other markets where the operator plans to launch include European markets such as Spain, and Ontario in North America.

Furthermore, the operator believes its new betting service can offer fans a more recreational, sociable and relevant sports betting experience than they would otherwise receive.

Dazn’s pilot period will also serve as a data-gathering exercise, helping the operator learn how its global subscribers like to interact with its latest betting and gaming offering.



Dazn Bet CEO Mark Kemp said: “The initial launch of Dazn Bet is the start of an exciting journey across media and sports betting, and further delivers on commitments we have made to revitalise sports viewing for fans.

“We are on a mission to create a richer entertainment product that over time is

integrated into Dazn’s daily destination sports business where possible. While this market entry will be a learning phase, our goal is to provide sports fans with a fantastic recreational sports betting product for Dazn’s global sports fans community. It is a journey and we begin it now.”

Dazn is a live sports streaming service available in over 200 regulated markets. Alongside its introduction of Dazn Bet, the company plans to offer written and radio sports content, while offering NFTs, tickets and merchandise.

GI Verdict: It’s an interesting move from Dazn, one which continues the trend of a media firm going into betting. Given its huge size, the UK market is an unsurprising yet perhaps risky choice, with the company facing a very public defeat if the move doesn’t quite work out.

It follows a very similar move from TalkSport earlier this month, with the sports radio station partnering with BetVictor to produce TalkSport Bet – also a sports betting brand, and also in the UK.



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JULY REVENUE REPORTS: LOUISIANA

Fantini Research partners with *Gambling Insider* to provide weekly gaming industry data. This week, we look at revenue from all sources for Louisiana.

Most of the casinos in Louisiana for the month of July saw annual falls, except for Boomtown Bossier, Treasure Chest and Margaritaville.

Meanwhile sports betting handle fell overall, although sports betting revenue saw significant growth.

ALL-SOURCES REVENUE	JULY REVENUE (M)	CHANGE (%) YEAR-ON-YEAR
Boomtown Bossier (PENN)	\$4.747	+3.24
Treasure Chest (BYD)	\$8.205	+1.95
Margaritaville (PENN)	\$17.849	+0.65
Golden Nugget - LC	\$31.464	-0.06
Fair Grounds (CHDN)	\$3.816	-1.20
Delta Downs (BYD)	\$16.207	-2.23
L'Auberge LC (PENN)	\$31.231	-2.53
Boomtown N.O.(PENN)	\$10.298	-6.18
Horseshoe Bossier (CZR)	\$13.450	-9.34
Routes, Truck Stops	\$66.741	-9.74
Amelia Belle (BYD)	\$3.144	-10.17
L'Auberge Baton Rouge (PENN)	\$14.403	-11.76
Harrah's N.O. (CZR)	\$22.630	-12.08
Evangeline Downs (BYD)	\$6.214	-16.06
Belle of B.R. (CZR)	\$1.246	-17.28
Hollywood B.R. (GLPI)	\$4.400	-26.02
Bally's Shreveport (BALY)	\$8.079	-28.57
Louisiana Downs (Rubico)	\$3.088	-31.96
Sam's Town (BYD)	\$3.696	-33.56
Diamondjacks (Legends)	\$0.000	-100.00
Horseshoe LC (CZR)	\$0.000	N/A
State Total	\$291.565	-1.49

SPORTS BETTING, FANTASY SPORTS	JULY REVENUE (M)	CHANGE (%) YEAR-ON-YEAR
Fantasy Sports	\$0.058	+75.10
Retail Sports Betting	\$1.393	+833.36
Mobile Sports Betting	\$19.205	+82.13

HANDLE	JULY REVENUE (M)	CHANGE (%) YEAR-ON-YEAR
Mobile Sports Betting	\$103.342	-9.13
Retail Sports Betting	\$14.987	-19.89



GI FRIDAY **GUEST**

INTERVIEW

EARLE HALL
CEO, AXES

Hall speaks to Gambling Insider about money laundering, addictive gambling, data collection safety and how he wants to help the Native American gaming sector with his system

Your system aims to identify and prevent gambling addiction and money laundering. Tell us more.

Well, there's really three pieces to what we've built. The first piece, and probably the most important, is the IOT piece. In other words, it's the computer that we put inside of every slot machine which can read every piece of information and intervene – so it writes as well – but the computer we put inside of every slot machine basically makes the information come alive in real time. That computer talks to our cloud and transmits all of the information from any type of slot machine in the world, so we're very agnostic to the manufacture or model version, year, language the machine speaks. That's not important to us because we've developed a protocol that speaks to every machine in the world.

That being said, because we're getting every single piece of information out of the machine in real time and it's transmitted to our cloud, the third piece is our big data algorithm set. Now that the data is sitting in our cloud, we have an overlay of literally thousands of algorithms that are looking for all kinds of different things in real time. Two of which are our addictive gambling module; where you can set up any type of parameter, from time in device, number of cash-in's, change in clicking speed, which is probably the least well known. A lot of my personal research is on

neurosciences; one of the things that is very important to understand about addiction is when a person will leave an adrenaline experience – where you can have tonnes of fun – and suddenly something will shift in your psyche, and you'll start to feel you're losing or that you're outside of your comfort zone. Then you switch from adrenaline to cortisol. All kinds of things happen when you switch to cortisol, of which one of the easiest things to measure is your clicking speed.

Can you tell us how your system achieves its goals?

What we look for in our algorithms is any change in player behaviour: are you putting money in faster? Are you changing game type? Are you changing denomination? Are you changing clicking speed? As we learn a player's habits and behaviour, it's easy for us to establish what the median is between the lower end and higher end of their normal habits during playing sessions, and when do they go outside of them and why. I'll give you an example: Somebody has \$100 in their machine and they win \$1,000; it's normal for them to either cash out and go away or increase their bet and play more.

You can't flag that as addiction because it's a normal reaction of fight or flight – that's not addiction. But if a person has been losing in their session more than normal, you see them starting to bet more, you see them starting to click faster; that means they're trying to make up for their losses, which is one of the roots of the beginning of addiction. Once we have those things, it becomes a jurisdictional issue and we block them out of the machine. That's another thing we can do, anytime there's any abnormal behaviour at the machine, we can automatically shut it off.

When you shut off that machine because somebody is exhibiting behaviours of addiction, does that mean they can no longer sit at any of the machines?

Exactly, they're completely locked out. The machine would return their balance to them and from there that's it. They can't resume until the time has expired.

Some jurisdictions work on time, while others work on a combination of time and money; more work on time, money and number of visits.

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When you talk about number of visits, is that things like per year, per month, per week, or is it all considered?

For us it's over eternity. We have jurisdictions where we have data from 12 years – and I can pick out any player in that jurisdiction and say their average number of visits per month for the last 10 years is six. Which isn't a problem unless their average bet is not going out of the median. But let's say we have somebody that visits six times a month for the last 10 years, and in the last three months they've gone up to 12 visits and their average bet as gone up 30%, while their average spend has gone up 20%. They are indicators that they're outside of their habitual entertainment experience.

“If I have a guardrail for money laundering and I have a guardrail for addictiveness, I'm not gambling anymore, I'm gaming. I'm in an entertainment experience because I've taken out the only two risks we have”

You have spoken before about the benefits of a KYC system and money laundering becoming rife. It's right to say, then, that your system identifies where the money is coming from?

Exactly. We can, and do, manage addictive gambling and money laundering in anonymous jurisdictions because, let's be truthful, 80% of jurisdictions worldwide are anonymous gaming or gambling; and that's the reason why I always distinguish them. Gambling is when there's no guardrails. If I have a guardrail for money laundering and I have a guardrail for addictiveness, I'm not gambling anymore, I'm gaming. I'm in an entertainment experience because I've taken out the only two risks we have in our industry.

Talking about risk, your system collects data and analyses that data in real time, so how do you mitigate the risks now associated with data collection?

The very first thing is we do not share, we do not sell, we do not do anything with our data – except use it to feed our algorithm. Number two, because we're GDPR compliant, our data is all crushed into a number sequence. The only way I would ever know player A is having issues

is because their personal player card matches a secure number that we have in our database. The third thing, which is the most important, I'll use a word that nobody really has a handle on yet, unfortunately – five years ago we were so worried about what we were seeing in the increase of hacking worldwide, especially the ignorance toward information security, that we applied multiple blockchain algorithms. I don't really believe in public blockchains, that's just inviting trouble.

But in the private blockchain world, where you can set up private servers so that you're synchronising and validating information, and if you put in the algorithms that are available to protect the data, all of our data is chained. You can try to get at our data, but the best guess I've heard from the company that does our forensic and pen testing – which is testing for hacking stuff – they'd take something like 78 years to hack our database. We've put the blocks in there. The only reason we use that data is we're still banking on the fact that someday the land-based gaming industry will take the integral quantum leap to join online and sports betting to protect their players, jurisdictions, taxpayers and citizens.

Are there plans for more expansion or are you at a point where you only want to expand in certain markets worldwide?

Our priorities are always threefold; it's probably interesting that I spent two or three minutes on it because the market I love the most is the route and street markets. Route and street – just to make sure everybody has the same definition – is bars, truck stops, drive-ins, restaurants. Why? Because that's where the most amount of problems are hidden in society. We've spent a lot of work over the last four to five years in jurisdictions helping operators become more and more legitimate, so they can go to the local authorities and say 'look how I run my business, look how integral my business is, how transparent it is; my data is picked up by a third party, and all of my reporting is done by a third party.'

So there can be no tampering fraud, theft, or anything like that. What we've decided to do this year, which is going to be a big jump for us, we're going to the G2E show in Las Vegas for the first time with a booth. Why? Because the Native American gaming industry in the United States needs our help. First, they would like to go to the cloud, but the cloud is scary because of their sovereignty rules, because of the way they run their sovereign nations; they don't want their data being spread over cloud servers all over the world. And a very important part of our tech solution is that we create private clouds for clients that want to have all of our technology, but they want to have it geofenced inside a certain geographical area for legal, ethical, moral and sometimes even sovereign reasons.

What we're starting this year is all of our Native American licensing and the big push into Native America as of 1 January next year.



THE

DEBRIEF

This week, *Gambling Insider* travelled to Singapore for G2E Asia where Macau was naturally a central part of the agenda. Asia's once great gaming capital is now inhibited by persistent Covid-19 restrictions and bereft of the tourists and VIPs that once filled its gaming floors. Angela Han Lee, APAC Gaming and Hospitality Analyst for Bloomberg Intelligence, spoke about the absence of Chinese VIPs and the effect this has had on Macau.

She said: "China's economy is not doing well; there are fewer wealthy people. So, Macau's casinos are shifting focus more onto mass gaming markets, which have a higher GGR."

The number of visiting VIPs to Macau has been hindered further by the decimation of the region's junket industry. Once key conduits between wealthy mainlanders and Macau's casinos, junkets have fallen by the wayside after a string of arrests took place against corrupt company leaders, including the likes of Suncity Group's

Alvin Chau. Paul Bromberg, Spectrum Gaming Group's Asia Senior VP, spoke more about this: "The most important takeaway from the new gaming law for me is the supervision of concession holders by the Macau Government, overseen by China.

"National security has become the most important element of Macau's gaming laws. If national security is breached, Macau's Chief Executive can take away a concession."

However, despite a mounting case suggesting Macau's post-pandemic reality may never return to how it was pre-pandemic, Praveen Choudhary, Managing Director of Morgan Stanley Asia, feels Macau's recovery will come naturally.

He said: "The mass revenue and EBITDA will be bigger than in 2019; at least that's what we expect. We're pegging that in 2024, but it could come in during the second half of 2023."

Choudhary also touched upon Macau's shift from being a VIP market pre-pandemic, to taking up a mass market model post-pandemic: "Having a higher slot business and lower VIP business could be positive for Macau."

With Singapore on the up and Japan turning on its engine, the future of Macau seems clouded, despite expectations that revenue will return to pre-pandemic levels. New laws, tighter Government controls and an enforced shift to a mass market model mean Macau's comeback may not be so simply signified by the end of Covid-related restrictions in the region.

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