

trafficology

AFFILIATE FOCUS BY GAMBLING INSIDER

OCTOBER 2017

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CHRISTIAN STRUTT, DIRECTOR, LUCKY MEDIA LIMITED

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FLYING THE COOP

How to successfully exit the affiliate industry without getting your wings clipped

BETTER COLLECTIVE AFFILIATE SPENDING SPREE CONTINUES



Better Collective is continuing its international expansion strategy, concluding a number of high profile affiliate network acquisitions across Europe.

The firm concluded deals for French media firm Pull Media, British affiliate network CasinoLounge and German sports website Wettportal, with its French and British acquisitions marking Better Collective's debut in these markets.

Better Collective's acquisition of Pull Media includes over 200 affiliate sites, with the majority being sports betting-related websites. The company have confirmed that Pull Media's 35 employees will be absorbed into the larger company, retaining their positions.

John Samson, CEO of Pull Media stated: "Following seven years of steady growth internationally, Pull Media needed to go to the next level. With the help of Blueprint Partners we

looked for consolidation partners and Better Collective came as the perfect fit for us, notably in terms of working synergies and company cultures. Our team is really excited to share best practices, tools and betting services within the new group."

Better Collective's current affiliate portfolio comprises over 1,000 websites and products including DiscoverSlots, CasinoVerdiener and bettingexpert LIVE.

The UK-based CasinoLounge site was initially launched in 2013, but was later bought by the Cashmio organisation in 2015. Although this deal represents Better Collective's first acquisition in the UK casino market, the company have stated that their ambition is to build on this purchase and continue forward in the UK.

Maria Boelius, CEO at Cashmio said: "We are happy to pass CasinoLounge on to an industry leader like Better Collective. We are sure that in their

experienced hands, CasinoLounge will be able to develop even further."

Since being established in 2001, German site Wettportal has become a major brand within the German speaking market, making it ideally positioned for Better Collective's strategy of affiliate acquisition.

In a statement following the conclusion of the deal, Michael Kosten, Owner of Wettportal said: "As Wettportal is an established product within the industry, we feel very comfortable handing the reigns over to another experienced company, like Better Collective."

Michal Kopec, Head of Mergers & Acquisitions at Better Collective added: "It's an established brand with big potential, which we can now explore further using our existing resources and know-how. We believe we will be able to build on the successful operation and drive the business forward."

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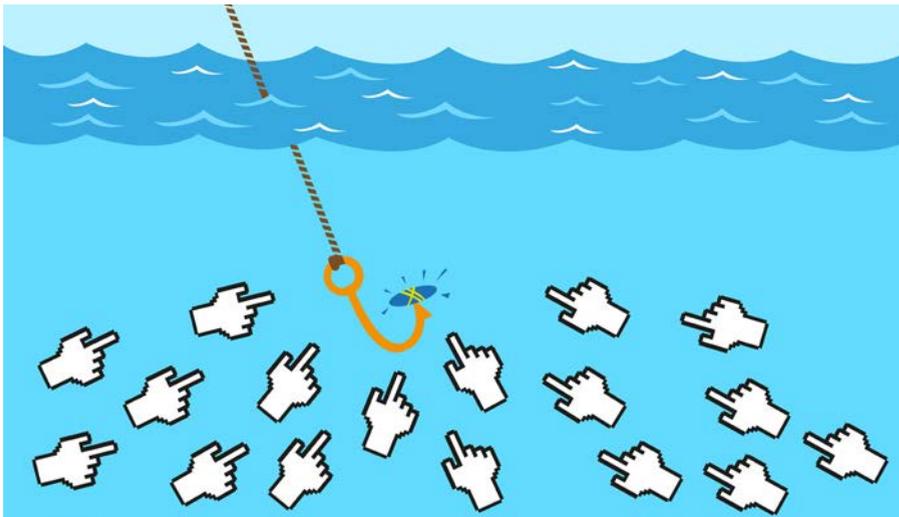
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CASINO

VEGAS

888, SKY VEGAS, LADBROKES AND CASUMO CENSURED BY ASA OVER 'FAKE NEWS'



Online operators 888, Sky Vegas, Ladbrokes and Casumo have been found guilty of breaching advertising standards rules surrounding so called 'fake news' advertorials targeting vulnerable people.

A total of nine complaints were received by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) relating to advertisements on websites which suggested that gambling would provide an escape from personal problems including depression, and that it could potentially be a solution to financial concerns.

The four near-identical ads tell the story of 'William' who was supposedly £130,000 in debt because of mounting medical treatment costs for his wife. Under the title 'On Their Wedding Night He Delivered a Secret She Wasn't Ready For. The Result Will Have You In Tears,' the article then goes on to claim that William discovered an advertisement for a gambling site which allowed him to win thousands of pounds, pay off his debts and take his wife on holiday to Bora Bora.

Advertisements appeared on the 24hournews and casinohacks websites, which are known among industry circles to be providers of fake news which is commonly used to host affiliate links.

In all cases, the ASA found that the advertisements were deemed to "suggest that gambling can provide an escape from personal problems such as depression or that it can be a solution to financial concerns."

Responding to the rulings, Ladbrokes, Casumo and Sky Vegas all stated that the ads in question were generated by affiliates working with their brands and that they had not approved the advertising content in question. 888 stated that it had terminated its agreement with the affiliate found to have supplied the offending advertisement.

A spokesperson for Ladbrokes said: "Nobody in Ladbrokes Coral believes that this sort of 'fake news' marketing has a place in the sector. We have been reducing the number of affiliates we work with as well as clamping down hard on anyone using our name without our knowledge in a bid to curtail this sort of activity going forward."

The ASA ruling stated that the ad must not appear again in its current form, and informed each company that its "future ads, including those prepared by affiliates, must be clearly identifiable as marketing communications and to take care to ensure their ads were prepared in a socially responsible way."

XL MEDIA HAILS RECORD REVENUE RISE IN H1 2017

Digital marketing and affiliate provider XLMedia has announced record year-on-year revenue growth of 33% for the first six months of 2017, when compared to the same period of 2016.

In its first half-yearly financial filing of 2017, the company reported revenue of \$67.9m (£51.4m) beating the previous year's total of \$51.2m, with its publishing division reporting an equally record-breaking increase in revenue of 32%.

The London-listed company's underlying earnings before interest, taxation depreciation and amortisation increased by 30% to \$22.9m from a 2016 H1 total of \$17.7m, while its corporate pre-tax profits jumped 23% to \$19.5m.

It has been a busy period of acquisition for the Jersey-based firm, who have bought Canadian credit comparison website GreedyRates.ca and US financial services affiliate MoneyUnder30.com earlier this year. In August XLMedia also concluded acquisition deals for mobile first advertising platforms ClicksMob and MarMar Media.

The group already owns over 2,000 websites and has been expanding its presence in several key markets and sectors.

In a statement accompanying the results, Ory Weihs, Chief Executive Officer of XLMedia, welcomed the company's record H1 2017 corporate performance, saying: "We are delighted to report another record period of strong profit growth for the group. The combination of both organic and acquisitive growth has accelerated our progress extending our business into new verticals and new geographic regions.

"Current trading remains strong and we are confident that the ongoing implementation of our strategic focus will continue to yield excellent results, underpinning the board's ongoing confidence in the company's near and medium term prospects."

SKY BETTING & GAMING TO END AFFILIATE MARKETING PROGRAM

Sky Betting & Gaming have announced that it will end its affiliate marketing programme, known as the 'Affiliate Hub' with effect from 2 October. This follows a strategic review which highlighted what it called "growing regulatory concerns".

All existing commission and player referrals with its existing affiliate marketing partners will cease, with the firm asking its partners to remove all existing marketing materials from their respective websites.

In a statement detailing the affiliate

programme closure, Sky Betting and Gaming stated: "The regulatory landscape in which the industry operates is developing and maturing and operators are experiencing increased obligations regarding their regulatory responsibilities and level of compliance.

"In order to continue to operate in a compliant manner, we feel that operating the programme is no longer viable and that managing the output of affiliates presents a significant risk to our business from a

regulatory perspective. It is for this reason that we have chosen to terminate the programme."

Speaking to *CalvinAyre.com* at Betting on Sports, Sky Bet CEO, Richard Flint said: "There are lot of high profile detractors and people criticising the gambling industry, to have those sort of affiliate-led advertisements that damages our licence and certainly damages our reputation, we had to act. This announcement today was really the last straw in us taking the decision to shut our affiliate programme."



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Jobbigt høge vinster

THE DIGITS

Trafficology has partnered with data experts Casino City Press to bring you an invaluable insight into website and traffic trends across the gaming industry. This month we rank the top 20 traffic jurisdictions and web portal owners.

JURISDICTIONS

Traffic Rank	Sites	Jurisdiction
1	1089	United Kingdom
2	423	Gibraltar
3	606	Malta
4	14	Seychelles
5	896	Curaçao
6	51	Australia
7	51	Spain
8	90	Cyprus
9	94	United States
10	180	Italy
11	26	China
12	24	France
13	12	Nigeria
14	171	Isle of Man
15	18	South Africa
16	3	Hong Kong
17	91	Canada
18	183	Alderney
19	157	Costa Rica
20	25	Germany

WEB PORTAL OWNERS

Traffic Rank	Sites	Website
1	12	livesportmedia.eu
2	1	performgroup.co.uk
3	1	livescore.com
4	4	skybet.com
5	3	gracernote.com
6	10	taketthat.co.uk
7	1	iggroup.com
8	12	xlmedia.com
9	4	sportsgaming.ltd.uk
10	22	catenamedia.com
11	3	bettercollective.com
12	19	latestcasinobonuses.com
13	66	infotechsys.com
14	2	sportsbookreview.com
15	1	lotteryusa.com
16	1	zcap.net
17	1	yogonetgroup.com
18	2	cardplayer.com
19	13	hastoplay.com
20	1	cbsinteractive.com

Rankings are estimated based on a panel and should not be considered absolute ranking values. Over 20 complementary top lists are available on the [iGamingBusinessDirectory.com](https://www.IGamingBusinessDirectory.com) website operated by Casino City Press.



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POINTS OF DEPARTURE: HOW TO SELL YOUR AFFILIATE BUSINESS

Julian Buhagiar, investor and Co-Founder of RB Capital, a specialist M&A and funding brokerage in gaming, fintech and media, sits down with *Trafficology* to discuss best practice when parting ways with your affiliate business



On one of the recent discussion panels I was involved in this summer, one of the affiliates in the audience asked a poignant question – how do I know when it's the right time to exit my business?

The truth is you don't really know. Depending on forces outside your control, you could be too early, or too late, or selling to the wrong buyer, with the wrong message, and the wrong structure. And whilst there's always a right time in the market, it's just very hard to call.

Territories could change legislation suddenly, or worse: threaten to change, which leaves an uncertainty hanging on how, when and where. Or that perennial update in the search engine bears a significant short-term impact in ranking but evens out in the medium term. Until the next engine update.

Historically, numerous other industries outside of affiliate marketing have been through similar existential periods. When it becomes evident that you have entered a golden age – and there are enough indicators to suggest that the affiliate business is indeed enjoying such a phase, for reasons we will go into later – it is natural to pause and reflect on how best to exit a business, and under what conditions.

Here at RB Capital we're at one of our busiest periods so far, both from a buy- and sell-side perspective, which indicates that demand for right-sized affiliate businesses is at an all-time high. That and the need for larger affiliate networks to continue expansion through complementary augmentation (M&A speak for buying your way to growth) means that affiliate businesses have never been more in demand.

There is another, more tangible reason though; over the last 24 months a significant portion of affiliate businesses have delivered solid returns back to their investors; mainly through a combination of diversified media deals and reward plans (thereby de-risking revenue growth), first-to-market approaches to technology (lean, optimal strategies focused on content, ASO and SEO), and an overall tighter control of profit margins in general. Get your acquisition and operational strategies right and you could be in the black sooner than you think, as we've seen on some of our leaner ventures.

Once the demand has been established – when should the business be sold? This is where operational metrics come into play. How long has the business been running? What are the growth factors? Has the business demonstrated revenue resilience? How diversified is the acquisition strategy and product/territory portfolio? What does the tech stack look like? How are each of the affiliate accounts aligned? These indicators are the start of a series of due diligence questions that will be considered by any serious buyer.

More pertinently; the founder of a successful business will instinctively feel a sense of momentum; that the business you helped create is gaining traction on a number of fronts; there is a growing excitement that the next few quarters will be game changing. Bullishness (backed by solid numbers) is a key element to selling a business.

Assuming the timing's right then, what next? No business can be sold without the right buyer. No business is the exact fit for any buyer, no matter how interested they are. And the right metrics for one buyer will not be optimal for another. The need to actively identify the gaps in demand across different buyers here is key. Who's looking to augment their territories, or acquisition strategy, and where? And what is this buyer's best way of acquiring? What would the optimal structure look like? Is the tech well documented and aligned with the target stack to be integrated? Is the business set up the right way, in the right territory or territories, both legislative and tax-wise? What would

“NO BUSINESS CAN BE SOLD WITHOUT THE RIGHT BUYER. NO BUSINESS IS THE EXACT FIT FOR ANY BUYER, NO MATTER HOW INTERESTED THEY ARE”

the best role for the founders be post-acquisition, in the buyer's view? Each of these points are key to having a successful sale.

Once demand, timing and the right buyer have been assessed, the next phase is one of the most challenging aspects of the process, and indeed where most acquisitions fail. The due diligence process is where all the aspects of the business are analysed to determine risk, reward, reliability and reaching an overall valuation.

It helps that most of this work can be prepared beforehand, so the analysis phase can hopefully be expedited. The more upfront the aspects of the business are (and the ability/willingness of the stakeholders to part with some of this info), the higher the rate of success in progressing to the next stage.

And what is this next stage? This is where the all-important offer comes in. It will be based on the buyer's (or buyers') initial

high-level assessment of the business, the founders and the overall value that such an asset would bring to the organisation. This is also where both seller and buyer will need to be realistic, take into account current market conditions, be informed (but not dictated) by recent public acquisitions, and agree on a fair market value for the business; both at time of sale and throughout the remainder of the sale period.

Indeed one of the most overlooked parts of any exit is that the majority of the work for the affiliate business happens after the initial sale is made. This is when the transition to the acquiring business takes place and a smooth handover is key to ensuring that the remaining portion of the sale (typically expressed as an earnout period) is successful. It is imperative that the post-sale period is as meticulously planned as the first stages of the process.

To summarise; the key steps to successfully exiting an affiliate business are:

- **Review** the current state of the business, determine if the metrics are optimal and show positive upward trends
- **Prepare** information upfront; ensure sellers, business, IP and other metrics are structured in the right way
- **Profile** a list of ideal buyers;
- Be informed and **realistic** around value and valuation, initially and throughout the remainder of the buyout process
- Be willing to get actively **involved** during and after the sales process

All this would be relatively simple were it not for the fact that affiliate businesses need to be actively managed on an ongoing basis, and there simply is not enough resourcing and competency to properly fulfill each of the above points to its full potential. This is where professional intermediaries come in. As is similar to structured M&A activities across other industries, a competent brokerage will actively fulfill the majority of the due diligence and sales process and remain engaged with all parties well after the sales process has concluded.

However care must be taken to ensure such an intermediary is well suited to what is one of the most critical stages in the lifetime of a business. This third party must be discreet, well connected, savvy on all matters affiliate, gaming and M&A, and agile and able to work at the pace of both buyer and seller, whilst liaising with all other parties throughout each stage of the process.

We have been involved with brokerages previously, and occasionally have been asked to act as brokers ourselves, and have witnessed exits where poorly managed processes lead to an improper representation of the business, which then rapidly descends into what is known as a fire-sale. Even worse; the wrong terms are dictated for buyer and seller, which either lead to an aborted process or over-onerous terms for the seller, both highly undesirable outcomes of what could have been a valuable sale.

The two main questions to ask when engaging an intermediary are; (i) will this business contribute more to the process than I could by myself, and, more pertinently (ii) will the net sum they add to the final sale be more than their cost?

Finally, if you're on the buying side, what should you look out for that's a good affiliate purchase? Simply put, it's an asset that showing strong trends across the metrics you're trying to solve for your own business, has a team that's open and willing to share their knowledge and experience to help you reach your goals, and is as excited about working with you as they are to continue running their operation in the medium term.

Our most successful exits transpire when both buyer and seller are similarly motivated to create a new strategic venture, resulting in long, happy, future partnerships. Indeed, successful M&A's are very similar to marriages. Just don't tell the better half...

require time and effort, and this is what link building is – a way to add value to the Web, working all the time alongside great content.

But no matter how hard it is, don't ever be so desperate to use black hat link building techniques that can cause more harm than good. Invest in software that can help you get white hat SEO backlinks and invest in people that can produce great content!

Most important of all, focus on the users and give people real value. Build links that are relevant, enriching both the web and its users.

4 Not checking if your website is indexable by search engines

Just imagine that you do a website launch or re-launch, but you still block robots from indexing your website. If you don't monitor your website's performance in the SERPs, you can lose 100% of your traffic and revenue in days. Even if you then get it back the damage can be massive. On a website relaunch that went wrong we've seen a 21% traffic loss in the first week and a 80% traffic loss on the page that generated most revenue. You need to monitor your traffic, rankings, robots.txt, meta robots.

Don't forget to remove the NOINDEX tag so that search engines can index your new website. You can quickly check if your website has a global robots noindex tag by using the Link Redirect Trace browser extension.

5 Stuffing the anchor texts with commercial keywords

We have all tried it. And it is tempting, isn't it? Don't obsess about anchor text; your links will not look natural!

In general, a typical anchor text distribution with a lot of brand keywords is the key to high rankings.

Links with money keywords (commercial phrases) are a lot riskier today, and many Spam examples given by the Google team during reconsideration requests consist of links with money keywords – even if they are NOFOLLOW.

6 Stop building new links after you recover from a Penalty

Google confirmed that links are the #1 ranking factor, alongside great content. Ranking without links is hard, and why would anyone try to rank without links in the first place? Google cares about links more than anything, and so should you. Don't be afraid of links only because you got hit by a Google penalty. Google loves trustworthy and powerful links. "The more, the better" saying doesn't go for links. At least not as long as "more" means links you buy without checking if they are risky for your backlink profile or not. You're better off aiming for fewer high-quality links, than for thousands of links that bring no value to your backlink profile. Weak or risky backlinks won't help your rankings at all. It can get even worse. These links can get you a Google penalty and severe (if not 100%) loss of organic traffic.

7 Not monitoring the backlink profile after a backlink audit

You are not the only one building backlinks to your website; your competitors are also. They can build risky links to your website and trigger a Google penalty. Google doesn't care who built the links. They only care that your backlink profile looks spammy.

If you want to keep your website out of trouble, you need to monitor your backlink profile. Your business relies on traffic from your website. Nowadays, all kinds of bad linking practices can cause troubles and a loss in traffic.

8 Looking only at one slice of your backlink profile

Did you do a link audit in the past, but still haven't recovered your website's rankings? The number one reason why that happened could be that you haven't done a thorough enough link audit.

There's a high chance that you need to audit your backlink profile again. This time, you must go for a full backlink audit.



Partial link audits don't work. I want you to look at the full picture of your backlink profile and clean up all the toxic links that could get your website in trouble. Keep in mind: the backlinks that you didn't audit are holding your website back.

I saw a 530% organic traffic increase after a full backlink audit, but you can only trust this process if you do it properly.

9 Disavow all the links regardless of their quality

Cheap workers will certainly not take the time to have a second look at your links. They just disavow all the weak links without having a second look. That's wrong. I always recommend that our users review all the links before deciding to disavow them.

A pattern I see is that they take whatever link list they get from Link Detox® and just generate a disavow file that follows the pattern "weak links" must go. Congratulations! You'll probably disavow 50% of your natural links with that. Just because a link does not have inherent link strength doesn't make it unnatural.

Your backlink profile needs a mix of links. It doesn't only need powerful links, it also needs weaker links, as long as these don't come from link networks, malware sites, etc.

The time and resources that you invest in doing your link audit work right will certainly pay off big time.

10 Disavow and wait for Google to take care of things

One typical problem I see is that people create a disavow file, hand it back to their clients for upload or upload it themselves to Google Search Console (GSC) using the Google Disavow tool and then they sit back and relax. Even if that is the perfect disavow file, it can take months for Google to re-crawl those links. Do you want to recover from a Google penalty in a few months? Or do you want to have those rankings back in a few days only?

After you upload a disavow file to Google, don't sit around and wait. You have no time for that. You can force the Google bot to re-crawl your disavowed links faster. That's why I built Link Detox Boost® (BOOST) in 2013. It speeds up the re-crawl of the links you have in your disavow file. If you don't use it, don't expect to recover your rankings fast.

Conclusion

Google Penguin 4.0 has been tailored to detect and penalise sites with an unnatural or manipulative backlink profile in real time. This is why it is important to analyse your full backlink profile, evaluate the risk of your links and disavow proactively. Start building trustworthy links and keep your backlink profile clean by monitoring it and Google will love you.

MAINTAINING YOUR POWER IN THE APP STORES

App store expert and Founder of Miratrix, **Nick Duddy** takes us on a nautical voyage across the choppy waters of app optimisation



Let me tell you a story about a ship. You can profit from this ship's journey, it carries a cargo of commercial wisdom that might keep you afloat in the dangerous ocean that is the app store. Incidentally, my grandfather built ships in Glasgow shipyards, so I possess authority - at least by proxy - on stories about ships. This tale should therefore be taken as gospel.

Chapter 1: Fastest ship in history

A shiny new ship is built, the fastest ship ever. The ship is launched and sails at an incredible pace. News of this speedy ship - believed to be powered by Pure Magic - appears in myriad press articles (usually techcrunch). Unbeknown to the crew, the press articles help fuel the ship's propulsion and add to its mysterious power.

Everyone celebrates, high-fives and chest bumps all round. This is the way to travel. It's going great, why ask questions about how it works. The captain cries, 'Job Done!'. Nothing. Can. Stop. Them. Except ...

Chapter 2: Holes? What holes?

The ship slows. Everyone on board looks at everyone else.

Nobody knows what was powering the ship. Surely Pure Magic doesn't just run out?

Without forward speed the ship starts sinking. Turns out the ship has issues with how it was designed and built. Rumours abound of holes below decks. Someone cut corners during the build ... Well, everyone wanted it completed quickly and were so in love with its shininess ... it's a leaky boat!

Chapter 3: That sinking feeling

Nobody can get the engines going. They can't even find the holes that are causing the ship to sink, given that the power is out and the lights have failed. The boat sinks. Everyone dies.

I didn't promise a happy ending. But fear not, app-saving lessons are on the horizon.

MORAL: PLUG LEAKS, BOOST POWER, SURVIVE LONGER

Where am I going with this dark story? Knowing what's powering your ship and being able to find the holes which drain your power is the difference between life and death in the App Store.

Power gauges and flashlights

Before embarking on your voyage fit power gauges (attribution analytics) and flashlights (funnel analytics). Without these you might suffer the same fate as our shipmates in the story.

Power gauges: What to look for in attribution tracking tools

There are many different types of power gauges in the app eco system. Despite what the salesmen say, they're all pretty similar when it comes to accuracy. Main players in the attribution space include Tune, Appsflyer and Adjust. These tools were spun out of the need to identify the difference between multiple paid sources, which is where most attribution tools' strength lay.

What you're looking for in an attribution tool is ease of setup and simple reporting. Don't sweat it if the numbers don't match your Play or iTunes Connect exactly, you're simply trying to identify trends in what's powering your ship.

Another tool which could help with attribution is branch.io. This can help you pick apart your Google App Indexing as well as sources from earned PR and organic social campaigns. I've found it useful in past campaigns which have broad and dynamic distribution.

Flashlights: Identifying where your leaks are occurring

To plug leaks you first need to be able to see them. The answer usually lies in UX or user in-app analytics. Much like attribution analytics there are many out there doing this. I've used Mix Panel, AppSee and Google Firebase with success.

Audit each tool and match it against your goals. Each tool has a different focus and in some cases you might need two.

Outwit your leaks: Plan for them

Before launching your boat, plan for the worst case scenario. Ask yourself, 'Where are the weak points, where might users leak out?'. Write down any doubts you have and create a funnel with your flashlight tools.

At this stage you should now know what's powering the boat and where you can expect it to leak. Now on to more advanced stuff.

Love-Hate relationship between power and leaks

Leaks and Power aren't independent variables. You can spend a lot on power only for it to immediately squish the wrong way out of the boat, which essentially means you're standing still or going backwards. Understanding where your power is coming from and how it's driving your boat forward is crucial to keeping your ship buoyant and progressing.

Why you should sweat the small stuff, bigly

I often say don't sweat the small stuff. Not this time. Start sweating the small stuff big time from now on. Check all your power sources (by that I mean marketing channels). Map the flow of power to leak. You can do this with most user flow maps in your in-app analytics. It also exists in many of the attribution tools. The biggest cost to you is your time, but it's worth the investment.

A general rule: If you find a power source with a big leak ratio, kill that power source and find another. The more power diverted into channels that don't leak, the better your chance of survival.

BEFORE YOU GO: OBVIOUS LEAK POINTS IN THE APP STORES

Before you launch your boat I have tips on leaks to plug to ensure you don't sink instantly.

Where to find your leaks

There are two places where you'll find the app store's listing page leak ratio: your Google Play and iTunes Connect analytics. In both you'll find metrics that show listing page impressions, to views, to installs. Your goal is to improve the ratios at each stage.

Tackle listing page leaks one by one

If you're an analytical decision maker/maker and you need stats to convince you of the benefit of this, StoneMaven have great ones:

- A good first impression will increase conversions by 35%
- 60% of your visitors won't scroll beyond your First Impression
- 50% of your installers make their decision based on the First Impression only

Productive icon and app name optimisation

The first leak point is the impression to listing page. The only tools you have are icons and app name. You've only got (currently) 30-50 characters in the name. Make it specific to what your app does, you'll need to balance the keyword rich with the snappy titles.

Your second and most powerful tool is the icon. Be bold. Differentiate yourself clearly from your competitors in the space. Being bold attracts more eyeballs and more lead app store result page browsers to convert to your listing page.

Descriptions, videos and screenshots:

A first impression has never been more important than it is now. Fail here and 50% of the browser will not install.

Create the most descriptive, standout and interesting screenshots, descriptions and videos (depending on the vertical, in that order). Showcase your product, its features and above all the benefits to the user. Assume they know nothing about your brand, your industry or the app.

“THE APP LISTING PAGE IS THE FIRST POINT OF FAILURE, WHERE YOUR FIRST LEAK WILL APPEAR AND WHERE YOU CAN MAKE YOUR MOST GAINS WITHOUT SPENDING A PENNY ON POWER. MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION!”

Trust through social validation is a huge factor in gaining an install - the more trust the higher the likelihood of the install. If you're relatively unknown use the brands you partner with in your assets to build an association of trust: this is a form of social validation and it works well until you can build your own individualised brand.

Tacking listing page leaks early on could lower your cost per install by 50%. Who wouldn't want two installs for the price of one?

Bless all who sail in App Stores

Despite the dodgy euphemisms about losing power and sinking ships, I hope that you've taken on board one little lifebelt: identifying where you are leaking users and reducing that loss is a primary factor in success in the app stores.

I believe that it's more important than acquisition. I believe your 'life' depends on it.

ASO and its importance in keeping you afloat

ASO or App Store Optimisation is, as you may have guessed, optimising your app for ranking in the app store's keywords search results. However it has a less obvious but incredibly important function and behaviour. The app listing page is the first point of failure, where your first leak will appear and where you can make your most gains without spending a penny on power. Make a good first impression!

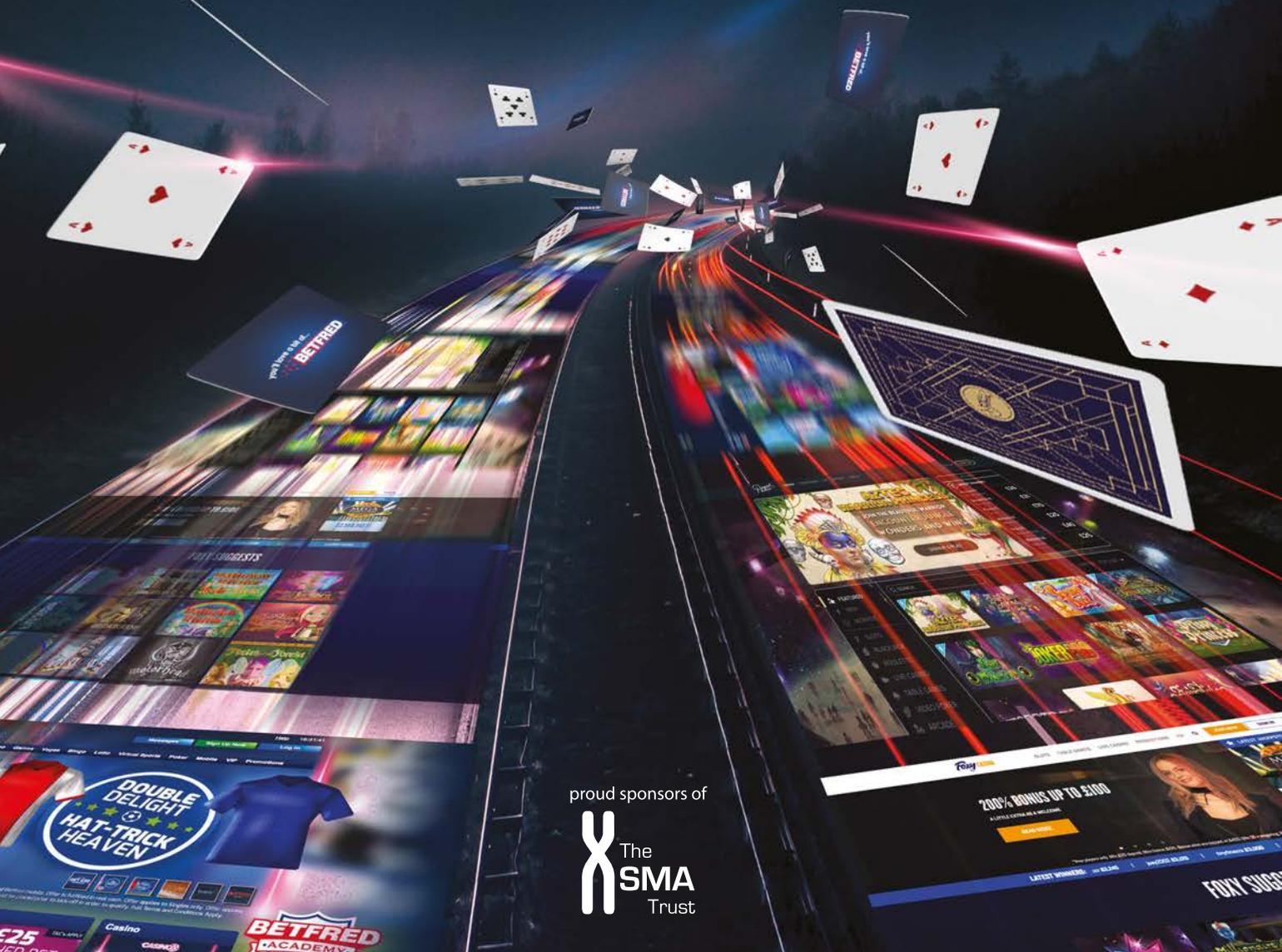


ActiveWins

Good business with a personal touch

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BIG QUESTION

Given the recent bad press around unscrupulous affiliates, what are your thoughts on regulating the industry?



Rita Venckunaite

Key Account Manager, Energy.Partners

“Currently, the legal environment fails to offer any meaningful or practical guidance for affiliate programs; therefore it urgently [the affiliate industry] requires regulation in countries like the UK”

As a company that values integrity, we would welcome clear, fixed regulations that clarify the rules, standards and responsibilities regarding advertising and partnerships. As things currently stand, we feel that the legal environment fails to offer any meaningful or practical guidance for affiliate programs, and leaves all parties unsure of how to avoid creating or using content that may fall foul of advertising standards (for example, in the UK particularly), and this subjects affiliate programs to unsustainable risk.

The affiliate industry urgently requires regulation in countries like the UK (as, indeed, it already has in many countries). Of course, there has to be an obligation on operators to ensure that they take all reasonable care to run all of their marketing activities in a lawful manner, but regulation and enforcement need to be fair, with individual affiliates also taking responsibility for their output and conduct.

With regards to our affiliate program, we have been watching developments closely, and will soon be rolling out a new verification and registration procedure, together with more extensive and thorough monitoring, in addition to some other general policy changes.

Though we are very conscious that we must keep the process as affiliate friendly as possible, we accept that there is a strong likelihood that we may lose some partners, who do not agree with these changes. While that is regrettable, we believe that our changes will prove to be reflected industry-wide, and we are confident that most affiliates will understand the need for them.

Indeed, we would urge our partners to bear with us, even though some of the changes may be frustrating for a short time, because ultimately, we are working towards creating a healthier, fairer and more sustainable industry, and that will benefit everyone in the long-term.



Kateryna Koll

Affiliate Manager, Tipbet

“It is better to be cautious with bookmakers that do not have licences for specific markets. It can be dangerous for both affiliates and suppliers”

We believe that it is quite difficult to regulate the affiliate industry because different jurisdictions handle gaming differently.

There are obstacles such as heavy regulations and multiple licensing regimes, especially in European markets. We would therefore suggest that affiliates should look at their contracts closely, considering their target jurisdiction, and where bookmakers are licensed.

It is better to be cautious with bookmakers that do not have licences for specific markets. It can be dangerous for both affiliates and suppliers. An affiliate partnership is a matter of mutual trust, and at Tipbet we are looking forward to earning your trust!

We would ask you to read our Terms and Conditions, and we are always available to be contacted for further assistance.

We know that good affiliates are important to a bookie's success and we utilize their understanding and local knowledge of specific regions and markets – working together to achieve the best results possible.

Due to this understanding of different markets around the globe, affiliates can record big profits in the long-term. That is why we are glad to offer big and profitable commission schemes to welcome you to Tipbet, and then build a solid and successful affiliate partnership.

For new registrations we currently offer 60% Revenue Share, which comes with no negative carryover. After this, conditions can be negotiated to suit both parties, and we take care of our best-performing affiliate partners.

As well as getting a personal service from one of our expert affiliate managers, becoming an affiliate at Tipbet will give you many ways to help drive traffic and, ultimately profits. Our marketing materials are varied and of high quality – including gifs, banners, and landing pages – while we have regular promotions for both new and existing customers to give them extra funds in sports betting, casino, and welcome bonuses.

A PLATFORM FOR SUCCESS

Lucky Media has been operating as affiliates and casino white label owners since 2013, and as any of our clients would vouch, we have strong professional views about the landing page suites we work with.

We regularly turn away new clients because their landing page suite is not versatile enough for us to target our traffic effectively so that it converts efficiently. If a casino affiliate program has no money to invest into landing pages so we can promote their brand effectively, we have no money ourselves to invest into their program. We believe that having geo-targeted landing pages is a mandatory requirement for any credible casino affiliate program in 2018. We find our CPA costs come down by around 30% when localised landing pages are employed. Once you have made up a template, you will find that localising each template only takes an hour or so of work. Having AB tested lots of templates, the addition of a few images like the country's flag, and a small paragraph of localised ad copy, tends to work best. With an ever changing legal landscape in grey markets like Netherlands and most recently Australia, it's important to remove all landing pages that are specific to markets that close off like this. It only takes one landing page with say a tulip image, or an Australia flag, and you can fully expect to be fined by the relevant government authority. As consumer demands for a more personalised internet and gaming experience rise from players in 2018, we also expect to see a lot more landing pages being launched in different languages. From AB testing we have found a landing page in the local language served will reduce CPA costs by 50% - even if you do not have the localised website and CRM program, you can still get those CPA costs down by having landing pages in different languages despite your site only being available in one language. Further demand from affiliates, and increasing demand from players for a laser-targeted personalised user journey; we have found that many affiliates have game-targeted content and hence love game-targeted landing pages. We believe that all major casino games should have a landing page available, and our top affiliates use up to 100 different landing pages.

We find that by providing such a range of landing pages enables some of our affiliates to realise CPA cost reductions of up to 50%. We managed to scale some of our affiliate campaigns by 3X or more, by providing them with lots of landing pages that fit in various sections of their sites. In 2018 we believe we will see a trend whereby

more casino affiliate programs make game-targeted landing pages available for their casino affiliates. In the past year a number of grey markets have tightened up, which we expect to continue throughout all of 2018 and beyond, as more governments take a similar path. The UK casino market has seen lots of tightening up of advertising copy and marketing messages appearing on landing pages. Big fines have been handed out to the likes of BGO and 888, and this is a trend we expect to see rise in 2018. Today also marks the day that my Sky Bet affiliate account became officially closed as well, with Sky apparently seeming to have closed their programme citing compliance and legal issues caused by affiliates. This is a very worrying trend that we expect to see rise in 2018, and we expect at least one of the big UK bookmakers to follow suit and close their affiliate programme like Sky Bet have this month. We can only advise that affiliates spread risk by working with numerous casino affiliate programs, and research all affiliate programs before you take them on. To cover this issue in 2018 we will be regularly monitoring forums on the likes of The GPWA, APCW, Affiliate Guard Dog and Casinomeister. You can pretty much guarantee, if a casino affiliate program is rogue, you will find information about these programs on these sites.

One trend we expect to see in 2018 is a lot more technical issues! As more mobile devices, more operating systems and more browsers become used - one can only expect more technical problems with your landing pages loading and rendering perfectly. To get round this issue we simply advise testing all landing pages using all major devices, browsers and operating systems. This testing process is not expensive and does not take long, once you have the infrastructure set up. As the online casino market gets more competitive, the demand from players for a big sign-up bonus increases. We have AB tested no deposit bonuses, particularly in the UK, and we believe these to be a false economy; a trend we do not expect to see change in 2018. We are aware of just one brand in the industry that operates a policy of having no sign up bonus, and frankly speaking we believe this is no coincidence and a casino brand operating with no sign up bonus cannot ever be competitive.

We do believe there will be a continued trend towards offering an extra bonus on top of a standard deposit bonus, and throughout 2018 we expect this to be mostly given as free spins. Giving free spins, along with a deposit bonus, is the way we expect the market to trend.

CHRISTIAN STRUTT
Director of Lucky
Media Limited



AWARD
NOMINATED
AFFILIATE
NETWORK

YOUR GLOBAL GO-TO IGAMING AFFILIATE AGENCY

We work with operators in a global capacity, cherry picking those which will convert the best for your traffic and which offer our affiliates the most competitive deals.

- Working with more than 140 operators
- For new and established affiliates
- Reducing strain on in-house affiliate teams
- Allowing for quicker return on investment
- No start-up time
- Free service for affiliates
- Keep 100% of your commission

Contact us on partners@ihreconsulting.com