

# trafficology

AFFILIATE FOCUS BY GAMBLING INSIDER

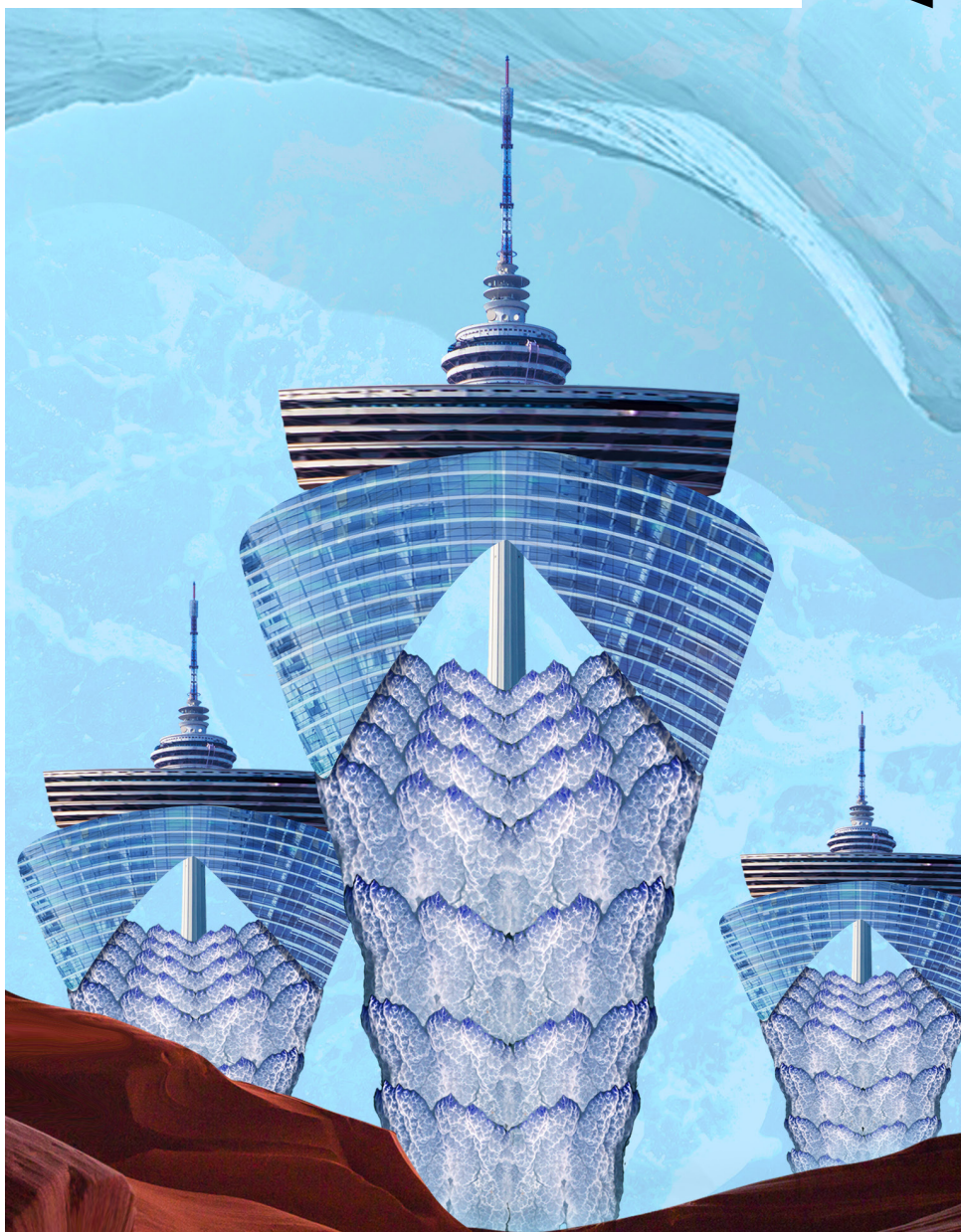
AUGUST 2019

## INSIDE

- **IGB LIVE TRIP REVIEW**
- **TIME FOR VIDEO?**
- **ONLINE GAMING ERRORS**
- **ESPORTS ENGAGEMENT**
- **PLAY HARD: TOM WADE, SICKODDS**

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## SHORE THING

The threat of affiliates working offshore

# TRAFFIC REPORT

*Trafficology has partnered with data experts Casino City Press to provide insight into website and traffic trends across the gaming industry. Here, we rank the top 20 online poker portals overall and by continent. The current quarter is Q2 (April to June) and the last quarter is Q1 (January to March).*



## OVERALL CHANGE

Rank	+/-	Name	Website
1	-	PokerNews	pokernews.com
2	1 ▲	GipsyTeam	gipsyteam.ru
3	1 ▼	PokerStrategy.com	pokerstrategy.com
4	-	TwoPlusTwo.com	twoplustwo.com
5	1 ▲	Card Player	cardplayer.com
6	1 ▼	CardsChat	cardschat.com
7	-	SharkScope	sharkscope.com
8	4 ▲	PokerListings	pokerlistings.com
9	-	Poker Pro Labs	pokerprolabs.com
10	2 ▼	PocketFives.com	pocketfives.com
11	-	Clubpoker	clubpoker.net
12	1 ▲	The Hendon Mob Poker Forum	thehendonmob.com
13	3 ▼	OPR - Official Poker Rankings	officialpokerrankings.com
14	-	Upswing Poker	upswingpoker.com
15	1 ▲	NLOP - National League of Poker	nlop.com
16	5 ▲	PokerStars School	pokerstarsschool.com
17	2 ▼	HighStakesDB	highstakesdb.com
18	4 ▲	PokerAtlas	pokeratlas.com
19	12 ▲	EducaPoker	educapoker.com
20	5 ▲	PekarStas	pekarstas.com



Rankings are estimated using statistical data and should not be considered absolute ranking values. More than 50 complementary top lists are available on the iGamingDirectory.com website operated by Casino City Press





# ACTIVEWINS

GOOD BUSINESS WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH

FANCY BEING PART OF THE INDUSTRY'S  
PREMIER AFFILIATE NETWORK?



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BLING**

**POTSD  
LUCK**

**O'reels**

**KERCHING!**

**TEMPLE  
SLOTS**

**BETFRED**

**KERCHING!**

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## AFRICA CHANGE

Rank	+/-	Name	Website
1	1▲	GipsyTeam	<a href="http://gipsyteam.ru">gipsyteam.ru</a>
2	3▲	CardsChat	<a href="http://cardschat.com">cardschat.com</a>
3	-	PokerNews	<a href="http://pokernews.com">pokernews.com</a>
4	4▲	Upswing Poker	<a href="http://upswingpoker.com">upswingpoker.com</a>
5	1▼	Clubpoker	<a href="http://clubpoker.net">clubpoker.net</a>
6	7▲	TwoPlusTwo.com	<a href="http://twoplustwo.com">twoplustwo.com</a>
7	83▲	UAPoker Info	<a href="http://uapoker.info">uapoker.info</a>
8	7▲	PokerGlobal.info	<a href="http://pokerglobal.info">pokerglobal.info</a>
9	2▼	PokerStrategy.com	<a href="http://pokerstrategy.com">pokerstrategy.com</a>
10	22▲	Kill Tilt	<a href="http://kill-tilt.fr">kill-tilt.fr</a>
11	5▲	PokerListings	<a href="http://pokerlistings.com">pokerlistings.com</a>
12	196▲	MotsDePassePoker	<a href="http://motsdepassepoker.com">motsdepassepoker.com</a>
13	27▲	PokerTH	<a href="http://pokerth.net">pokerth.net</a>
14	2▼	Kelbet	<a href="http://kelbet.com">kelbet.com</a>
15	6▼	The Hendon Mob Poker Forum	<a href="http://thehendonmob.com">thehendonmob.com</a>
16	6▼	Card Player	<a href="http://cardplayer.com">cardplayer.com</a>
17	1▲	PokerSites.co.za	<a href="http://pokersites.co.za">pokersites.co.za</a>
18	12▼	Poker Academie	<a href="http://poker-academie.com">poker-academie.com</a>
19	3▲	PocketFives.com	<a href="http://pocketfives.com">pocketfives.com</a>
20	6▼	PokerStars School	<a href="http://pokerstarsschool.com">pokerstarsschool.com</a>



## ASIA CHANGE

Rank	+/-	Name	Website
1	1▲	TwoPlusTwo.com	<a href="http://twoplustwo.com">twoplustwo.com</a>
2	1▲	SharkScope	<a href="http://sharkscope.com">sharkscope.com</a>
3	2▼	GipsyTeam	<a href="http://gipsyteam.ru">gipsyteam.ru</a>
4	-	Upswing Poker	<a href="http://upswingpoker.com">upswingpoker.com</a>
5	1▲	PokerNews	<a href="http://pokernews.com">pokernews.com</a>
6	1▲	CardsChat	<a href="http://cardschat.com">cardschat.com</a>
7	2▼	PokerStrategy.com	<a href="http://pokerstrategy.com">pokerstrategy.com</a>
8	-	Pokerland-il	<a href="http://pokerland-il.com">pokerland-il.com</a>
9	1▲	The Hendon Mob Poker Forum	<a href="http://thehendonmob.com">thehendonmob.com</a>
10	5▲	OPR - Official Poker Rankings	<a href="http://officialpokerrankings.com">officialpokerrankings.com</a>
11	2▲	Pokerren	<a href="http://pokerren.com">pokerren.com</a>
12	534▲	Poker Pro Labs	<a href="http://pokerprolabs.com">pokerprolabs.com</a>
13	3▲	Card Player	<a href="http://cardplayer.com">cardplayer.com</a>
14	5▼	UAPoker Info	<a href="http://uapoker.info">uapoker.info</a>
15	2▲	PokerListings	<a href="http://pokerlistings.com">pokerlistings.com</a>
16	4▼	Pokerisivut	<a href="http://pokerisivut.com">pokerisivut.com</a>
17	6▼	Pokeroff	<a href="http://pkeroff.ru">pkeroff.ru</a>
18	9▲	World Poker Deals	<a href="http://worldpokerdeals.com">worldpokerdeals.com</a>
19	7▲	PokerStars School	<a href="http://pokerstarsschool.com">pokerstarsschool.com</a>
20	2▲	PekarStas	<a href="http://pekarstas.com">pekarstas.com</a>





## EUROPE CHANGE

Rank	+/-	Name	Website
1	-	GipsyTeam	<a href="http://gipsyteam.ru">gipsyteam.ru</a>
2	1▲	SharkScope	<a href="http://sharkscope.com">sharkscope.com</a>
3	1▼	PokerStrategy.com	<a href="http://pokerstrategy.com">pokerstrategy.com</a>
4	-	TwoPlusTwo.com	<a href="http://twoplustwo.com">twoplustwo.com</a>
5	-	Clubpoker	<a href="http://clubpoker.net">clubpoker.net</a>
6	1▲	OPR - Official Poker Rankings	<a href="http://officialpokerrankings.com">officialpokerrankings.com</a>
7	1▲	PokerNews	<a href="http://pokernews.com">pokernews.com</a>
8	2▲	The Hendon Mob Poker Forum	<a href="http://thehendonmob.com">thehendonmob.com</a>
9	874▲	Poker Pro Labs	<a href="http://pokerprolabs.com">pokerprolabs.com</a>
10	4▼	UAPoker Info	<a href="http://uapoker.info">uapoker.info</a>
11	2▼	Upswing Poker	<a href="http://upswingpoker.com">upswingpoker.com</a>
12	3▲	EducaPoker	<a href="http://educapoker.com">educapoker.com</a>
13	2▼	CardsChat	<a href="http://cardschat.com">cardschat.com</a>
14	-	PekarStas	<a href="http://pekarstas.com">pekarstas.com</a>
15	1▲	HighStakesDB	<a href="http://highstakesdb.com">highstakesdb.com</a>
16	3▼	PocketFives.com	<a href="http://pocketfives.com">pocketfives.com</a>
17	1▲	Pokeristby	<a href="http://pokeristby.ru">pokeristby.ru</a>
18	1▲	PokerNet.dk	<a href="http://pokernet.dk">pokernet.dk</a>
19	7▼	Pokeroff	<a href="http://pokeroff.ru">pokeroff.ru</a>
20	1▲	PokerAkademia	<a href="http://pokerakademia.com">pokerakademia.com</a>



## LATIN AMERICA CHANGE

Rank	+/-	Name	Website
1	1▲	PokerStrategy.com	<a href="http://pokerstrategy.com">pokerstrategy.com</a>
2	1▼	TwoPlusTwo.com	<a href="http://twoplustwo.com">twoplustwo.com</a>
3	2▲	SharkScope	<a href="http://sharkscope.com">sharkscope.com</a>
4	-	PokerStarsSchool.es	<a href="http://pokerstarsschool.es">pokerstarsschool.es</a>
5	2▼	CardsChat	<a href="http://cardschat.com">cardschat.com</a>
6	3▲	GipsyTeam	<a href="http://gipsyteam.ru">gipsyteam.ru</a>
7	1▲	Codigo Poker	<a href="http://codigopoker.com">codigopoker.com</a>
8	1▼	MaisEV	<a href="http://maisev.com">maisev.com</a>
9	2▲	PocketFives.com	<a href="http://pocketfives.com">pocketfives.com</a>
10	4▼	PokerGlobal.info	<a href="http://pokerglobal.info">pokerglobal.info</a>
11	1▼	Super Poker	<a href="http://superpoker.com.br">superpoker.com.br</a>
12	6▲	Poker-Red	<a href="http://poker-red.com">poker-red.com</a>
13	1▼	Upswing Poker	<a href="http://upswingpoker.com">upswingpoker.com</a>
14	-	Jackpot Freerolls	<a href="http://jackpotfreerolls.com">jackpotfreerolls.com</a>
15	1▲	UAPoker Info	<a href="http://uapoker.info">uapoker.info</a>
16	1▼	PokerNews	<a href="http://pokernews.com">pokernews.com</a>
17	3▲	Card Player Brasil	<a href="http://cardplayer.com.br">cardplayer.com.br</a>
18	1▼	EducaPoker	<a href="http://educapoker.com">educapoker.com</a>
19	6▼	Poker Dicas	<a href="http://pokerdicas.com">pokerdicas.com</a>
20	278▲	Poker Pro Labs	<a href="http://pokerprolabs.com">pokerprolabs.com</a>



## NORTH AMERICA CHANGE

Rank	+/-	Name	Website
1	-	TwoPlusTwo.com	twoplustwo.com
2	-	NLOP - National League of Poker	nlop.com
3	3▲	PokerNews	pokernews.com
4	1▼	UpSwing Poker	upswingpoker.com
5	1▼	SharkScope	sharkscope.com
6	1▼	Card Player	cardplayer.com
7	2▲	The Hendon Mob Poker Forum	thehendonmob.com
8	1▼	CardsChat	cardschat.com
9	1▼	PocketFives.com	pocketfives.com
10	1▲	PokerAtlas	pokeratlas.com
11	1▼	OPR - Official Poker Rankings	officialpokerrankings.com
12	1▲	GipsyTeam	gipsyteam.ru
13	1▼	PokerListings	pokerlistings.com
14	-	HighStakesDB	highstakesdb.com
15	2▲	PokerStars School	pokerstarsschool.com
16	-	Float The Turn	floattheturn.com
17	448▲	Poker Pro Labs	pokerprolabs.com
18	3▼	PokerStrategy.com	pokerstrategy.com
19	1▼	Online Poker Report.com	onlinepokerreport.com
20	5▲	Liquid Poker	liquidpoker.net



## OCEANIA CHANGE

Rank	+/-	Name	Website
1	-	TwoPlusTwo.com	twoplustwo.com
2	183▲	NLOP - National League of Poker	nlop.com
3	1▼	PokerNews	pokernews.com
4	1▲	Liquid Poker	liquidpoker.net
5	1▼	The Hendon Mob Poker Forum	thehendonmob.com
6	3▼	UpSwing Poker	upswingpoker.com
7	175▲	Poker Pro Labs	pokerprolabs.com
8	1▼	Cardschat	cardschat.com
9	3▼	HighStakesDB	highstakesdb.com
10	1▼	Card Player	cardplayer.com
11	1▼	SharkScope	sharkscope.com
12	1▲	888Poker League	888pl.com.au
13	5▼	PokerListings	pokerlistings.com
14	-	PocketFives.com	pocketfives.com
15	4▼	PokerStars School	pokerstarsschool.com
16	1▼	Vigorish.ru	vigorish.ru
17	1▼	Professional RakeBack	professionalrakeback.com
18	6▼	PokerStrategy.com	pokerstrategy.com
19	2▲	PokerPT.com	pokerpt.com
20	-	The Poker Bank	thepokerbank.com



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# THE OCTOPUS, THE OLD LADY AND AMSTERDAM

As Guinness World Records fell in Amsterdam, **Tim Poole** reports on a non-stop few days at the iGB Live conference at the Amsterdam RAI Convention Centre



If someone told me an old lady would chase me down the street for making too much noise on a Wednesday night in Amsterdam, I probably wouldn't have believed them. But exactly that happened, and a lot more, during an intoxicating few days at iGB Live in July (no, not that type of intoxicating).

With the Dutch sun shining and the Dutch Remote Gaming Bill being passed earlier this year, there was no

better time for the gaming industry to descend upon Amsterdam and take over the city for a few days.

There was an air of unpredictability to this particular trade show. A case in point was the 1xBet octopus (a human dressed in an octopus costume, before you ask) greeting us as we entered the main arena. Later, I bumped into a 1xBet knight sat atop a bear; how wonderfully gaming.

The Amsterdam RAI was full of such gimmicks, as the lighter side of the affiliate sector, with a free bar at most stands, crossed with what is generally considered the more serious B2B half of the industry. There were hotdog stands, ice cream stands, foosball tables and lottery competitions throughout. There was even a successful Guinness World Record attempt for the highest amount of scratchcard players at one time; a whopping 386.

The vibrant nature of the event was best summed up by an interviewee telling me I looked "like a man who hasn't stopped all day." This was on day one, but she was absolutely right. Once iGB Live got going, the back-to-back meetings started to catch up with us all. Thankfully, finding my way around the arena was a coast compared to ICE London.

Speaking of coasts, the sandy beach bar outside the Amsterdam RAI was everyone's favourite catch-up point at the end of proceedings – and is something every conference venue could do with. There was nothing more relaxing than parking up on the sand and looking out at the water on the final day. Upon reflection at each day's end, all the hustle and bustle was worth it and I don't think anyone in the sector would really have it any other way.

For those looking to catch a break in between their busy schedules, the beautiful nearby park was a welcome distraction and I was fortunate enough that it led straight to my hotel.

But how did I get from calmly walking through a sunny green area to being shouted at through the streets of Amsterdam that night, I also hear you ask? No, it didn't involve the Red Light District. Honest.

Amsterdam's night life is world renowned, meaning there was no shortage of options for attendees looking to put a day's hard work behind them – or extend their day's networking – come evening time. My Wednesday night took me to three different venues; the first of which was the REM Eiland, a classy restaurant sitting directly on top of the canal. The event was hosted by Betsson Group Affiliates, which then organised a boat ride back down the Amstel. Anyone who's read my ICE London review will realise the gaming industry loves a boat trip.

For an hour-an-a-half, we soaked up the Amsterdam landscape, before heading to Chin Chin Club for the evening's official event; but not before an elderly woman appeared as if from nowhere to berate our travelling party for making too much noise.

On a more positive note, Chin Chin, followed by Escape Amsterdam, kept some conference-goers up until the early hours of the morning – and others even longer – without any neighbourly nagging. *Trafficology* knows for a fact certain CEOs had a good time.

Back on the professional side of things, I was fortunate to attend a couple of decent affiliate panels at Conference Room 1. There was analysis on how affiliates can compete in both the UK and US markets, while there were various other insightful-looking conferences I would have attended were I not already in meetings at exhibitor stands. I'm reminded here of a *Play Hard* interviewee wishing they could clone themselves at affiliate events, ending up in more than one place at a time.

Conference Room 1 did suffer a bit from background noise, with it being much easier to hear the B2B conferences taking place over at Counsel and Boardroom. That may have been something the affiliate panels lacked, as there was noticeably less input from an audience which could have been engaged a tad more.

For any small niggles however, my overall iGB Live experience was distinctly positive. So much so in fact,



I ended up wishing the show went on longer. That might have had something to do with the event being shorter than ICE and LAC, as both the affiliate and B2B events are combined into one. The 40-minute flight back to London only emphasised this feeling of brevity, but on that front, I won't complain.

Although deals will be hammered out and partnerships formed off the back of the conference, it's the intangibles which matter most at an event like this one. As with ICE and G2E Las Vegas, meeting people around the world you would otherwise only call or email is a priceless advantage. There are some I may only ever see at trade shows, and many of them are based in the same country as me.

Next on the tip of affiliates' tongues are the Lisbon Affiliate Conference (October) and SiGMA (November). They will no doubt have their own unique feel, but Amsterdam is the sector's own little summer celebration. I was once told people only go to iGB Live to socialise and sunbathe; it was perhaps not this extreme in reality, but there was definitely a friendly vibe to all our dealings at the RAI.

The conference was unquestionably one of the high points of my 2019 gaming calendar. Until next year Amsterdam, ik hoop dat we elkaar weer ontmoeten.

**"ALTHOUGH DEALS WILL BE HAMMERED OUT AND PARTNERSHIPS FORMED OFF THE BACK OF THE CONFERENCE, IT'S THE INTANGIBLES WHICH MATTER MOST AT AN EVENT LIKE THIS ONE"**



# KEEPING EVERYTHING ONSHORE

**Tim Poole** looks into the practice of promoting offshore bookmakers and how the affiliate market can combat this

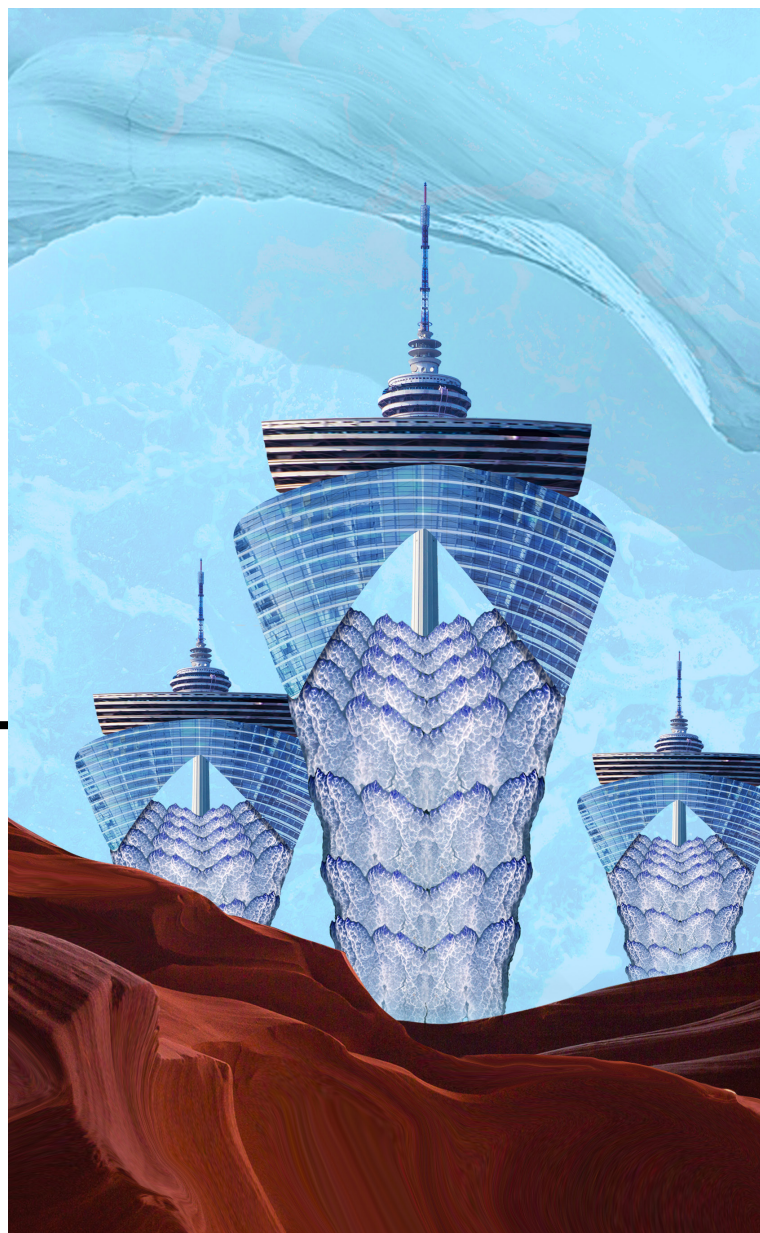
For the average bettor, whether in Sweden, the US or anywhere else in the world, there might not be a difference between an offshore or regulated operator. A customer sees a casino's free spins or a sportsbook's welcome bonus and chooses whichever brand suits them best. In many cases, the player won't know they are doing anything wrong.

But that is far from the case for affiliates, who cannot use incognisance as their defence. An affiliate directing a player to an unlicensed operator is an affiliate doing so with full knowledge of the illegality behind their decision. Rules and restrictions are flaunted and, while the player may still be none the wiser, it is an affiliate's duty to not include links to unauthorised brands on their website, social media or marketing campaigns.

The promotion of offshore bookmakers however, is hardly on the wane. In October, broadcaster Fox Sports (an investor in regulated-market operator DraftKings) could be seen brazenly promoting offshore odds on US television. As recently as January, US-facing OddsShark was punished by the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement for advertising unlicensed operators; it was made no longer accessible by users with IP addresses in the Garden State.

The practice is also rampant in the Netherlands, where – although it has now legalised digital gaming – no legal online market is expected to exist until at least 2021, due to the length of the licensing process. Still, the Dutch regulator recently announced the results of its examination of 44 different websites. No less than 26 of these advertised online gambling firms and only 20 stopped promoting illegal bookmakers once the regulator made them aware of its findings.

In markets where a mature legal sector already exists though, affiliates working with offshore operators is arguably even more harmful, as it provides a direct rejection of the opportunity to work with good actors. Despite the obvious benefits of a legal, regulated market, you don't need to look far to see offshore promotion in practice. Speaking to *Trafficology* on the issue,



Better Collective CEO and Co-founder Jesper Søgaard is keen to highlight the work of affiliates making strides in the right direction. At the same time, the executive is aware the ill deeds of certain affiliates will “negate” any such progress and “discredit” the sector.

He says: “Affiliates that promote offshore operators undoubtedly affect the reputation of the overall industry negatively, as these actions looking for short-term gains discredit the sector. Gambling is a topic media can easily publish bad press around. In some cases, it is well-deserved, like when affiliates promote offshore operators, as this ultimately results in a less safe environment for online bettors.

“However, we know there are many players in our industry working hard to professionalise online gaming. The promotion of offshore bookmakers risks negating these efforts and the reputation it can foster will cause a long-term hurdle for the industry as a whole.”





"The best way for a country to tackle this and ensure market overview is to develop sound regulation, with high social responsibility standards, and a commercially viable licensing and taxation plan. This is what is happening in Brazil, where we are very pleased to see regulators entering this path. This ultimately creates a safer environment for the Brazilian betting audience and secures steady market growth."

### A UNIFIED VOICE

But there is only so much a regulator can do. Of the examples used earlier, New Jersey boasts a competitive regulated market, yet still suffers the marketing of offshore gambling companies. While the Netherlands is in the process of launching its online gaming market too, it will continue to suffer from the advertising of illegal operators if affiliates themselves do not take note.

Actions taken by Better Collective and other reputable affiliates have certainly helped the sector's cause recently, but Sogaard knows the industry needs a unified voice. He says: "A concrete example of our dedication to social responsibility is the formation of the organisation, Responsible Affiliates in Gambling (RAiG), which we co-founded with Racing Post and Oddschecker, to strengthen the affiliate sector as a whole.

"We see a need for affiliates to get together to form a unified responsible approach and provide affiliates the opportunity to talk with one voice, which is more powerful than what individuals can do by themselves. This is one way the industry can move forward to improve standards."

### A SHORT-TERM MENTALITY

In the end, compliance and the application of best practice will always come down to willingness. If an affiliate publicly acknowledges the importance of regulated markets while travelling from conference to conference, then gladly works with an unlicensed operator upon their return to the office, the issue won't go away anytime soon. Equally, if an affiliate values a short-term mentality over long-term gain, there is little to be done to change their mindset. Others in the sector will only suffer as a result.

Actions speak louder than words of course, and RAiG is a case study in affiliates moving forward responsibly. But that willingness needs to filter down to affiliates of all sizes. They do not necessarily have to form or join trade bodies; they simply have to adopt a responsible culture.

After all, without that culture, any affiliate looking towards future M & A will sacrifice the chance of investment from companies who prioritise business in regulated markets. No action comes without consequence and inaction can be as harmful as purposely making the wrong choice.

So *Trafficology* is calling to all affiliates. Will you stand up and be counted? Can you guarantee you – and your partners – won't search for shortcuts and keep looking to make a quick buck?

At the heart of this issue is player protection. Licensed operators are bound by regulators to offer players basic protection and fairness, such as responsible gambling measures, timely payouts (and payouts in the first place, for that matter), as well as fair odds. If they don't, regulators can punish them as they deem necessary.

Unlicensed operators are not subject to the same scrutiny. Their revenue cannot be taxed, stripping the relevant jurisdiction of one of the strongest upsides of having a gambling market. As the US gaming market grows, the American Gaming Association has championed the societal advantages which stem from sizeable tax revenue. Gambling critics have a much stronger case if these benefits cannot be realised.

### THE ROLE OF THE REGULATOR

It is on this note Sogaard places a relative amount of responsibility on lawmakers and regulators themselves. With the right regulation in place, affiliates will be pushed towards the right practices by the will of the market.

Drawing on a historic example from Europe, the Better Collective CEO says: "With more sound regulation being implemented in various markets, it becomes riskier for affiliates to act unethically. This will create a natural push for affiliates to only operate within the regulated playing field.

"We can draw similarities between the promotion of offshore bookmakers to affiliates who bypassed marketing regulations in Europe to profit in the short run. This activity resulted in much stricter enforcement of operator-affiliate partnerships; many partnerships were ended because of it. If affiliates want to last in the long run, they must act according to regulation, otherwise they risk harming an overall ecosystem that stands to benefit stakeholders, including operators, affiliates and bettors themselves."

Brazil, a country analysed in-depth in the June edition of *Trafficology*, is currently following this example, with recent legislation beginning the process of opening up its online sports betting market. This kind of policy is effective and proactive from the regulator's side, according to Sogaard. "What you can see globally is that, in jurisdictions lacking clear and balanced regulation on gambling, a grey market springs up," he explains.

**"WHAT YOU CAN SEE GLOBALLY IS THAT,  
IN JURISDICTIONS LACKING CLEAR AND  
BALANCED REGULATION ON GAMBLING,  
A GREY MARKET SPRINGS UP"  
- JESPER SØGAARD**



# IS VIDEO THE NEXT STEP FOR AFFILIATES?

**Matthew Enderby** looks into the capability of video and asks if affiliates are using it to its full potential

During a rare foray into baking, I needed to learn how to separate an egg's yolk from its white. Cracking the shell and transferring the yolk to and from each half, as the recipe encouraged, seemed far too intricate for my clumsy fingers. I needed to find a better way. I went online and Google quickly linked me to YouTube, where I saw a one-minute video that solved this problem forever.

It instructed me to first crack the egg into a bowl, and then squeeze an empty plastic water bottle to suck the yolk from the white. It was quick, easy and clean, but to be honest, I can't say it improved my cooking.

From there, YouTube tutorials were my go-to solution for any tricky task. Instead of reading a manual or pouring through web pages, I would watch a one-to-two minute video that provided me with an effective solution. Just type 'How to' into the platform's search window and be amazed at how much easier life will become.

With the instructional capability to hook and educate an audience, it comes as a surprise affiliates are not

completely exploiting the potential in video and associated platforms.

Communication through video is becoming more of an expected medium. Think of any consumer-facing aspects of industries, and videos are everywhere. It's moved well beyond additional advertising to a more interactive and targeted realm.

In an era where our attention spans are shrinking, video becomes more powerful. The auto-play function is responsible for holding browsers' focus on social media channels. This is the same from YouTube to Facebook.

The video audience is already waiting online. Let's take a closer look at YouTube; the biggest provider of videos. It is the second-largest search engine after Google, with 300 hours of video uploaded every minute and five billion watched every day.

A quick search on YouTube, asking for the best online casino, prompts a long list of responses. These videos are not just sitting in the background; they are



accumulating views; some of them in their hundreds of thousands. But most of them lack the professional touch serious affiliates can bring. They are often uploaded to personal accounts of tipsters.

What makes video so engaging is it has the ability to provide a live demonstration of how an online casino or sportsbook experience will play out. It can provide a real-time run-through of what a slot will look like, for example, and those playing the games go through the emotions of winning and losing.

This gives the consumer an instant connection to the operator and affiliate. To see a solution in action, be it a sportsbook, poker tournament or slot game, provides players with a feel of the product. As a result, they will sign up to a specific operator with more confidence than they would have had in the past, having only read a review.

Connectivity concerns should be cast aside. Of course there will always be some dead spots or areas where data use is restricted due to the volume of users present, but wifi is widespread. With a mini-computer in almost everyone's pockets, players are always seconds away from going online and watching a video.

Better Collective has a YouTube channel which appears to function as a B2B operation. This explains the low number of views it has picked up. On its channel, Better Collective offers descriptions of its brands, financial reports and targets the group has set out. While this is all useful for people and organisations within the industry, it has little appeal to an average gambler.

What would be more beneficial to the business are individual channels dedicated to each brand. Take Lucky Street for example. Better Collective has a 30-second video explaining what Lucky Street does and a link to the website beneath it. While there is nothing wrong with having this, it does little to make the affiliate shine.

With its own channel, Lucky Street could upload videos showing players redeeming the bonuses it offers. These videos can also be easily embedded into websites and provide more colour and emotion to what is otherwise a long list of operators, all clamouring for attention with the same voice. The YouTube Partner Programme allows channels to link to external websites, so long as they meet YouTube's community guidelines.

So how would the format work? Setting up a channel on YouTube takes minutes. From there, affiliates create their videos and upload. Let's say affiliate X is commenting on sportsbooks to use for bets on golf. A video could have an actor or recognised figure on screen, scrolling through the options and bonuses available and deciding which one to go with.

Alternatively, for a cheaper approach, a voiceover will work. The whole video could be put together without a single camera being used. The video, whatever the format, should be short and snappy. This will help players move through content and keep them engaged.

Of course, this new stream of content is not without its own challenges. The cost of expanding an affiliate's offering to include video will be considerable and might not be worth it to all companies. Arranging cameras, sound equipment and editing software can be done on a budget, but no matter how careful affiliates are with costs, those associated with video will always be higher than having an article written.

In this article, it does feel like I've sung the praises of a medium which could take over from text-based communication - an odd task for a writer. But it is essential for any communicator today, from journalists to affiliates, to adopt a multimedia approach. When opening brands up to the potential behind video, businesses will find a whole new wave of content possible, and more of an audience waiting to sign up.

**"THE COST OF EXPANDING AN AFFILIATE'S OFFERING TO INCLUDE VIDEO WILL BE CONSIDERABLE AND MIGHT NOT BE WORTH IT TO ALL COMPANIES. ARRANGING CAMERAS, SOUND EQUIPMENT AND EDITING SOFTWARE CAN BE DONE ON A BUDGET, BUT NO MATTER HOW CAREFUL AFFILIATES ARE WITH COSTS, THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH VIDEO WILL ALWAYS BE HIGHER THAN HAVING AN ARTICLE WRITTEN"**



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# AVOIDING COMMON MISTAKES IN ONLINE GAMING

Online gaming consultant **Kate Romanenko** points out several areas for improvement in B2B online gaming companies



Online gaming has transformed into an intense arena for companies to fight for affiliates, new depositors, player loyalty and so on. But it seems as if while engaged in conducting these ongoing efforts, what we have missed is the actual purpose of these actions - growing our business. In the case of B2B operations, the purpose is to grow the businesses of our clients.

In B2C, online casinos and sportsbooks fight for traffic and hand over all registered accounts to their CRM teams, just to allow the acquisition teams to go back and focus on signing new partnerships and launching new campaigns.

The issue I would like to address here is precisely this handover process - as done within B2B companies between sales and account management. It seems simple and automatic, but this is very problematic sometimes. We need to pay more attention to the losses and potential gaps we may experience along the way. Another issue we will go through is innovation as a means of marketing.

With the ongoing challenge of gaining new customers and keeping the existing users and clients on board, many companies make an effort to stand out by introducing innovations; the most popular of which are blockchain and crypto products.

### INNOVATION

A very important point here is that innovation is not for everyone and that's okay - just accept it. You may not have a mystifying talent to predict and build what your clients will use and love, but you must have other qualities in place. You may have superior customer support or an excellent loyalty program and rewards, or maybe you are a 20+-year-old brand and have delivered the games that people love playing. Every company is exclusive and instead of running after the industry trends just for the sake of running, have a proper look at your own solutions and realise what your differentiation point is. Once you do that, keep developing it and the success will come.

When it comes to AI, I suggest we do not look at it as an innovation anymore; it's a new technology that occurred over time and may serve for any business right now. Let's say in B2C operations - why don't you put it into reporting for predictions, or monitoring of the unusual behaviour on your website, or payment activity and errors? In fact, most businesses have already been doing this for a while.

Another way operators should use AI is within customer support. This is not just a gaming issue. There are so many unfortunate examples of various bots that were implemented to make the user journey easier and at the same time to help optimise the workload by decreasing the manual work of online agents.

I have not seen one good example of this and have not heard of any satisfactory feedback from people who have chatted with the bot. It often doesn't make things easier when you come with a specific issue that you can describe in two sentences, instead of clicking through 10 steps.

Recently though, I ran into a good example of using AI within customer support. The company, called Sinitic, has developed an AI algorithm for multi-language support teams (mainly Asian for now) that doesn't just serve as an FAQ, but also supports mixed-language conversations. I did hear some good feedback about this one, but I'm sure it depends on the business model and the volumes. The bigger the volumes, the more trained and smart your AI software will be.

## HANDOVER

From my own experience of partnering with different companies in the industry, I can say there is something we could improve about the handover in B2B. When you buy something, you feel so wanted and so welcome that you start losing touch with the ground. But later, when it comes to paperwork and ongoing communication, a little problem sometimes occurs. I don't mean late responses (we've all been there). In fact, I'm speaking of the lack of not only efficiency, but also lack of knowledge and expertise.

This can happen when companies are scaling too fast and, usually, this is a good thing overall. More new clients are on board, new tools and features are released and numbers are growing. We should not celebrate this forever though. Get grounded and make sure you are able to keep up with this success. This again brings us to the client zone. If you see your numbers growing - in analytics or revenue reports - talk to your HR and team managers to make sure you have enough resources to cover these volumes and keep your clients happy.

Listening to business owners and other people in the executive roles made me pay additional attention to that, and I'm calling to these people right now. When a business grows, it either hires slowly or doesn't even rush to hire new talent. That piece of negligence may happen for different reasons:

- You may be busy with the next priorities on your list that have been waiting for a while, so you just switch your attention and don't consider that success needs additional efforts. That is why we call it success, right?
- You may think if your people have managed to get there and keep it running without additional resources, why would you think of any changes like restructuring, additional roles and hiring?
- Nobody may tell you they struggle or ask for help and that's why you may miss the sense of urgency while, again, being busy with your many other responsibilities and headaches.



KATE ROMANENKO

Obviously, it's not just about the CEO and similar roles; it may be your subordinates as well. This problem may not be addressed, because the current talent is also enthusiastic about the prosperity and doesn't recognise they will quickly burn out.

Business is a live body and if one part grows, you need to provide support on the other side. You have all the means and authority to do that.

It's also still current for some companies that the best talent and, most importantly, the right talent for you, is not just there for money. Such employees may often not stand out and not raise salary or promotion discussions at all, because they are gladly busy with what they do and that's their source of happiness.

In the meantime, you may have 80% of the staff who like and respect you no more than any other paying boss. That's another call of mine to the CEOs - you should force yourself to dedicate the time to speak to your employees.

If you are in a C-level role, you should recognise from a conversation how truthful and loyal to your company each employee is. Just pay additional attention to those 'stars' and maybe you even need to push their boundaries a bit and see if they can be of even more value to your business.

For those CEOs who just want to believe they see 'a star' and irreplaceable person in front of them, make an effort and force yourself to answer honestly if the person is really that great or if it's just you who wants to believe it that much.

**"I HAVE NOT SEEN ONE GOOD EXAMPLE OF  
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# HOW TO ENGAGE WITH ESPORTS BETTORS

UltraPlay's Esports Head Trader, **Dragomir Ivanov**, discusses the need for esports suppliers to continually innovate their offering



Esports has grown as an entertainment phenomenon, with around 400 million enthusiasts and occasional viewers around the world. The 2018 League of Legends World Championship attracted more than 74 million viewers. Meanwhile, The International 2019, the annual Dota 2 world championship, gathered more than 50 million viewers, and this year's prize pool broke an esports record by surpassing \$30m. A recent report by Newzoo suggests the esports industry could be worth \$1.7bn by 2021, and that will surely result in an increase in interest from a betting perspective.

Betting on esports was a logical step a few years ago that we thought would interest the growing number of viewers and fans of esports worldwide. We started offering esports pre-match and live odds. By allowing people to bet on a specific team or a player they think will win the particular tournament or match, we started and enlarged a very profitable gambling vertical.

### COVERAGE

A few years ago, esports was an exclusive gambling vertical to be present on websites. Now, nearly all the leading sportsbooks and online casinos have included some esports betting options. While some of these

operators fail to offer some of the more niche esports tournaments and titles, at least the golden trio in esports betting - CS:GO, Dota 2 and League of Legends - should be provided. Not all tournaments attract a lot of bettors, but with the right approach, players will know coverage is constantly expanding. For the low-tier events, there is often no information, but we try to find the best source and develop connections with the organisers. The low-tier events keep the bettors' attention during the time between big events.

Live betting on esports was once considered unreliable and risky. It takes a lot of knowledge and experience to grasp the trends and transform them into a profitable business; not only because there are multiple variables, but also because the dynamics are much bigger than in regular sports.

### USER EXPERIENCE

Diversified markets are at the core of offering an ultimate esports betting experience. By constantly adding new and exciting opportunities for players to place their bets on, esports betting brands will develop a strong bond with their community of esports fans.

### DATA

Most people who are interested in esports watch live streams of a favourite professional player or a tournament channel where the matches are streamed. Those kinds of channels use ads for deposit promotions or a live odds widget. Esports rules are heavily impacted by the upgrades of the game itself, which makes it very dynamic and exciting to watch and bet on. From a trading perspective, those kinds of changes require in-depth knowledge and experience to manage and provide the best odds to our clients.

**"NOT ALL TOURNAMENTS ATTRACT A LOT  
OF BETTORS, BUT WITH THE RIGHT  
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# PLAY HARD

**Tom Wade**, Co-Founder and Lead Developer at SickOdds, talks to *Trafficology* about late-night gaming, chilli con carne and aliens

## CAN YOU NAME A MOVIE OR TV SHOW TITLE THAT REFLECTS YOUR LIFE?

I would absolutely love to say Silicon Valley. I love the thought of it as a TV show; the idea of banding together with a few people and creating something fantastic as a start-up. We're all socially awkward at SickOdds, just like in the show. It's worryingly accurate.

## WHAT WAS THE WORST JOB YOU'VE HAD?

Unfortunately, there's been a couple. For one of my first jobs, I worked in a clothing store. I was 16 and it was a part-time job on the weekends. I worked there through the summer. The problem was I originally worked in men's wear and then moved into women's wear. A 16-year-old boy does not have the most in-depth knowledge of women's clothes and fashion. So that was a very long summer.

## WHICH SINGLE PIECE OF TECHNOLOGY WOULD CHANGE SOCIETY THE MOST IF IT WAS REMOVED FROM OUR LIVES?

On the broad scale – if anything around the internet got removed, people of all ages would just drop and dissolve into dust. No more Netflix, Facebook or Skype.

To take a more intricate level, I'm going to go really geeky now and say anything around the Turing Test and the different logic gates and technology that Alan Turing brought. He was quite a pivotal part of the technology movement. We wouldn't have language processors or the ability to do a lot of the things we do in AI. We would find that a lot of the machinery we have would be a lot dumber and slower.

## WITH ALL THIS TALK ABOUT PEOPLE PLANNING TO STORM AREA 51, I HAVE TO ASK IF YOU THINK ALIENS ARE REAL.

I love to think so. With the 50 million-odd galaxies and planets and infinite space, it would be very small-minded of me to think we were the only people out there. If there are aliens, the fact they haven't come and introduced themselves means they are probably rude and a little bit

snobby. But there's got to be something out there, somewhere. We can't be the peak of life.

## ARE YOU THE TYPE TO BE AN EARLY RISER OR BE UP ALL NIGHT?

I am definitely not an early riser; it was a stretch to get up for this call. I've been very fortunate to work remotely for the past two or three years. It's given me the opportunity to wake up at five-to-nine, jump on the laptop and get on Slack. I'm much more focused on being a night owl.

I play a lot of video games, and a lot is an understatement. Once my wife's gone to bed, I'll play until one or two in the morning and then rinse and repeat.

## IF YOU GOT TO ASSUME THE ROLE OF ANY INFLUENTIAL PERSON FOR A DAY, WHO WOULD IT BE?

As I'm an esports fanboy, there's a chap down in London called Sam Matthews; he started up the esports team Fnatic. I've got a lot of respect for what they've done. I've also pretty much single-handedly funded their entire organisation from the amount of merchandise that I've bought.

## WHAT MEAL DO YOU ENJOY COOKING THE MOST?

Chilli con carne, through and through. It's dead simple; I'm not one of those fancy people that cook using the actual ingredients. For me, it's a jar of sauce, a pack of mince and it just tastes fantastic. I'll use a few herbs and spices for when I'm feeling a little bit spicy. It's a simple meal and reminds me of a home-cooked meal from when I was younger.

## YOU HAVE A WEEK OFF WORK AND ALL ASSOCIATED COSTS COVERED; WHERE WOULD YOU TRAVEL TO?

I generally don't travel too much when I've got holiday. I'm an absolute recluse and I just end up playing games at home. If I was to go anywhere, it would probably be Japan. It's always been a culture I adore. There's the technology side, but also the outskirts with the pink blossoms. It's just a beautiful place, but also an expensive place to get to. There's a Japan travel fund growing in the background. Plus, because I'm 6ft 3", I'd have no problems seeing everything.