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JULY 2019

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JULY 2019

INSIDE

- **Q & A WITH NEW RAIG CHAIRMAN CLIVE HAWKSWOOD**
- **CRO AND SEARCH INTENT WORKING TOGETHER**
- **CATENA MEDIA US' MICHAEL DALY INTERVIEWED**
- **THE RFM METHOD FOR VIPS**
- **PLAY HARD: JASON ROSENBERG, AMERICAN IGAMING SOLUTIONS**

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CHANGE OF PLAN

Would a gaming ad ban help affiliates?

SPECIAL AFFILIATE BONUSES



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highest profit

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and we'll do the rest

BAN FOR GAMBLING ADVERTS PLACED ON CHILD-FACING GAMING APP BY AFFILIATE

WINNERS

Mediacle AB will supply Nektan with affiliate software and services, following the expansion of their deal

Matching Visions has opened doors to its Lithuanian office following the affiliate's expansion

EVENES

The first affiliate conference in Georgia will be held in Tbilisi on 17 October

ESSA has re-launched as the International Betting Integrity Association (IBIA), which will fight corruption in sporting bodies and affiliates

The Gambling Commission has written to operators, reminding them to ensure affiliates do not offer free-to-play games without age verification controls

LOSERS



Advertisements for LottoGo EuroMillions, William Hill Vegas, Betfair Bingo and Dunder have been banned by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), as the operators failed to ensure they were not directed at children.

LottoGo, Dunder and Betfair said their adverts were placed by affiliate Tapjoy, and have since terminated contracts with it. The adverts appeared on the Looney Tunes World of Mayhem app in February, a game based on the Warner Brothers cartoons.

William Hill said it has blacklisted the app and would not advertise within it through Tapjoy or any other affiliate.

The app provided players with the opportunity to earn in-game gems by viewing adverts or performing tasks.

The adverts in question were found to be in breach of the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) Code, section 16.3.13.

This section states marketing communications for gambling must not be directed at those aged under 18, through the selection of media or context in which they appeared.

The app itself also had to accept blame for the complaints caused as it had been marked to display "mature gambling" marketing. This was reportedly done in error and has since been corrected.

Better Collective announced the establishment of a new credit facility with Nordea Bank (\$45.4m)

DKK 300M

30

The years of experience in sports media and publishing Gerry Ahern will be bringing to his new role as Director of North American Content at Gambling.com Group

Catena Media began its first affiliate campaigns in Mexico. Google Ads opened PPC for casino terms in the market in April

6 JUNE

\$10M

The total figure XLMedia could spend in its new share buyback programme



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You can focus on your traffic,
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aplaycasino.com



mrbit.net



slotv.com



frankcasino.com



driftcasino.com



casinosolumbus.com

PASS NOTES

Affiliates and US sports betting



THE US AND SPORTS BETTING. CAN AFFILIATES EVER HOPE TO LAND A BIGGER OPPORTUNITY?

The market certainly represents a great chance for small affiliates to grow and big players to cement positions, but it is a fractured market.

WHY IS IT BROKEN?

It's not broken, it's just that each state represents its own market, and with that comes requirements unique to each one.

SO THERE'S NO ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH?

Not at all. Some of the most challenging aspects will

be the individual regulatory hurdles. The process for affiliates is straightforward in New Jersey, but Pennsylvania is more complicated. Different types of affiliation require different fees. Revenue shares, for example, demand an application cost of \$2,500 and a certification fee of \$5,000.

WILL IT BE WORTH IT FOR AFFILIATES TO OPERATE IN EVERY STATE POSSIBLE IF IT'S SO DIFFICULT TO GET INTO THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE?

They will have to decide for themselves, state-by-state. But if the big acquisitions are any indicator, there is a lot of money to be made.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

"The in-play market continues to grow. However, there is no content to help customers make informed decisions on live bets in the market. We see an opportunity for the in-play content market and if we are successful with football, we can then move into providing in-play content for other sports."

Andrew Synnott, Racing Post's B2B Marketing Manager, on the launch of Intel's new in-play football product

"He comes with many years of managerial experience from within the industry and will help set an ambitious content vision that will empower the Better Collective brands, such as Bettingexpert.com, even further. This will ultimately lead to a better experience for our users."

Better Collective CEO Jesper Søgaard on the appointment of Shane Anderson as Group Content Lead

"Becoming FunFair's first white label with Crypto Casino gives us great satisfaction. We're extremely confident in our brand, the platform and the innovative affiliate technology, and we can't wait to take Crypto Casino and its players to the moon."

RakeTheRake's Founder and CEO, Karim Wilkins, on the affiliate's expansion into blockchain

bet365 Affiliates



VISIT US AT AAC 2019 – STAND H10

A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

SPORTS

BINGO

POKER

CASINO

VEGAS

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 break down the top 20 rankings for online casinos worldwide and by continent for the period from March to May 2019, in comparison with the previous three months.



OVERALL

Rank	+/-	Website	Owner
1	1 ▲	sunmaker.com	Cherry
2	1 ▼	888.com	888 Holdings
3	13 ▲	verajohn.com	Jackpotjoy
4	77 ▲	livecasinohouse.com	Class Innovation
5	1 ▲	winbet.bg	Winbet Online
6	4 ▲	mobile.bet365.com/casino	Bet365 Group
7	4 ▼	lapalingo.com	Rabbit Entertainment
8	1 ▼	skyvegas.com	Stars Group
9	-	unibet.com/casino	Kindred Group
10	2 ▼	leovegas.com	LeoVegas
11	7 ▼	casino.mrgreen.com	MRG
12	7 ▼	sunnyplayer.com	Cherry
13	1 ▼	jackpotcitycasino.com	Bayton
14	6 ▲	casino.bet365.com	Bet365 Group
15	3 ▲	casumo.com	Casumo Services
16	1 ▼	jackpotjoy.com	Jackpotjoy
17	3 ▼	bitstarz.com	Direx
18	1 ▲	casino.bwin.it	GVC Holdings
19	3 ▲	videoslots.com	Videoslots
20	5 ▲	europacasino.com	Universe Entertainment Services Malta



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

betsson group

AFFILIATES



betsson

betsafe

NordicBet

casinoeuro

CASINO:DK

starcasinò

CASINO WINNER

LOYAL CASINO

NORGES
AUTOMATEN

SUOMI ARVAT

SUPERCASINO

RACEBETS

LIVEROULETTE

JACKPOT247

VERNONS



AFRICA

Rank	+/-	Website	Owner
1	-	europacasino.com	Universe Entertainment Services Malta
2	-	springbokcasino.co.za	Springbok Group
3	1 ▲	silversandscasino.com	Paxson Marketing
4	10 ▲	stake.com	Medium Rare
5	2 ▼	casino.com	Mansion (Gibraltar)
6	1 ▲	casino.bet365.com	Bet365 Group
7	1 ▼	bitstarz.com	Direx
8	1 ▲	casino.bwin.com	GVC Holdings
9	49 ▲	videoslots.com	Videoslots
10	5 ▼	africasino.co.za	Equinox Dynamic
11	19 ▲	karamba.com	ASG Technologies
12	24 ▲	crypto-games.net	JuSi
13	5 ▼	winner.com	Zirconium Gaming
14	11 ▲	whitelotuscasino.com	Paxson Marketing
15	3 ▼	richcasino.com	Engage Entertainment Group
16	17 ▲	fortunejack.com	Nexus Group Enterprises
17	23 ▲	blackdiamondcasino.net	Engage Entertainment Group
18	2 ▼	casinotropez.com	Imperial E-Club
19	241 ▲	grandreefcasino.com	Rand Logic Gaming
20	30 ▲	games.bitcoin.com	



ASIA

Rank	+/-	Website	Owner
1	-	livecasinohouse.com	Class Innovation
2	-	verajohn.com	Jackpotjoy
3	-	stake.com	Medium Rare
4	1 ▲	crypto-games.net	JuSi
5	1 ▼	bitstarz.com	Direx
6	-	joycasino.com	Pomadorro
7	7 ▲	bitcasino.io	mBet Solutions
8	4 ▲	royalpanda.com	LeoVegas
9	2 ▲	casino.bet365.com	Bet365 Group
10	6 ▲	fortunejack.com	Nexus Group Enterprises
11	3 ▼	happyluke.com	Aggregated Fun
12	5 ▼	12macau.com	Lucky89 Casino
13	4 ▼	888.com	888 Holdings
14	9 ▲	games.bitcoin.com	Saint Bitts
15	5 ▲	jeetwin.com	Sky Infotech
16	77 ▲	showlion.com	Seven Digital Solutions
17	14 ▲	leovegas.com	LeoVegas
18	1 ▼	frankcasino.com	Avento MT
19	9 ▼	casitabi.com	Hero Gaming
20	5 ▼	casino.betfair.com	Flutter



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EUROPE

Rank	+/-	Website	Owner
1	-	winbet.bg	Winbet Online
2	2 ▲	sunmaker.com	Cherry
3	-	leovegas.com	LeoVegas
4	5 ▲	casumo.com	Casumo Services
5	3 ▼	casino.mrgreen.com	MRG
6	1 ▲	skyvegas.com	Stars Group
7	3 ▲	videoslots.com	Videoslots
8	3 ▼	lapalingo.com	Rabbit Entertainment
9	1 ▼	estorilcasinos.pt	Estoril-Sol
10	7 ▲	888.it	888 Holdings
11	5 ▼	sunnyplayer.com	Cherry
12	39 ▲	casinoeuro.com	Betsson
13	-	virgingames.com	Gamesys
14	3 ▼	rizk.com	GiG
15	1 ▲	casino.bwin.com	GVC Holdings
16	18 ▲	jackpotjoy.com	Jackpotjoy
17	11 ▲	stake.com	Medium Rare
18	15 ▲	onecasino.com	One Casino
19	1 ▼	888.com	888 Holdings
20	5 ▼	totalcasino.pl	Totalizator Sportowy



LATIN AMERICA

Rank	+/-	Website	Owner
1	-	zamba.co	ETotal Gaming
2	-	juegaenlinea.com	Inversiones AAG 2010
3	-	bitgames.io	Danguad
4	-	stake.com	Medium Rare
5	2 ▲	casinosdelasamericas.com	Green Clover Telemarketing Group
6	1 ▼	bitstarz.com	Direx
7	1 ▲	hallmarkcasino.com	Total Software Solutions
8	1 ▲	casino.bet365.com	Bet365 Group
9	1 ▲	vegasrushcasino.com	Total Software Solutions
10	1 ▲	casino.betsson.com	Betsson
11	3 ▲	wcasino-online.com	Mirage Corporation
12	6 ▼	crypto-games.net	JuSi
13	7 ▲	fortunejack.com	Nexus Group Enterprises
14	13 ▲	playbetr.com	Global Limited Holding
15	-	slots.com	
16	3 ▼	jackpotcitycasino.com	Bayton
17	102 ▲	miamiclubcasino.im	Deckmedia
18	6 ▼	games.bet365.com	Bet365 Group
19	2 ▼	888.com	888 Holdings
20	391 ▲	libertyslots.eu	



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NORTH AMERICA



OCEANIA

Rank	+/-	Website	Owner
1	-	ignitioncasino.eu	Lynton
2	5 ▲	slots.lv	Lynton
3	-	casino.sportsinteraction.com	Mohawk Online
4	1 ▲	caesarscasino.com	CIE
5	5 ▲	bitstarz.com	Direx
6	10 ▲	fortunejack.com	Nexus Group Enterprises
7	5 ▼	playsugarhouse.com	Landry's
8	6 ▲	cafecasino.lv	Lynton
9	12 ▲	resortscasino.com	DGMB Casino Holding
10	4 ▼	betcoin.ag	CGN
11	3 ▼	eovegas.com	LeoVegas
12	8 ▼	nj-casino.goldennugget-casino.com	Landry's
13	4 ▼	jackpotcitycasino.com	Bayton
14	1 ▼	betfaircasino.com	FanDuel Group
15	4 ▼	planet7casino.com	Ace Revenue Group
16	4 ▼	888.com	888 Holdings
17	-	casino.bodog.eu	Bodog
18	5 ▲	vegascrestcasino.ag	PalauGames
19	1 ▼	casino.bet365.com	Bet365 Group
20	25 ▲	luckycreek.com	Genesys Technology

Rank	+/-	Website	Owner
1	4 ▲	emucasino.com	Emu Group
2	1 ▼	jackpotcitycasino.com	Bayton
3	3 ▲	bitstarz.com	Direx
4	1 ▼	fairgocasino.com	Deckmedia
5	5 ▲	joefortune.com	Haydock Sports
6	10 ▲	jokaroom.com	
7	2 ▲	houseofjack.com	
8	41 ▲	rizk.com	GiG
9	14 ▲	dunder.com	GiG
10	2 ▼	playamo.com	Direx
11	1 ▲	ignitioncasino.eu	Lynton
12	32 ▲	gwcasino.com	Digi Markets
13	2 ▼	casino-mate.com	
14	10 ▼	tangierscasino.com	Celicorp
15	68 ▲	voodoo dreams.com	SuprNation
16	3 ▼	roocasino.com	
17	-	casino.bet365.com	Bet365 Group
18	1 ▲	luckystar.io	Mirage Corporation
19	1 ▼	allspinswin.com	
20	939 ▲	slotsmillion.com	Alea Gaming



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EVENT PREVIEW



EVENT PREVIEW: IGB LIVE 2019

We give you a rundown of what to expect from the second iGB Live at the RAI Amsterdam Convention Centre, from 16 to 19 July

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

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

Networking events are spread across 16 to 19 July. They include welcoming drinks, VIP B2B events and parties later on in the evening. The exhibition provides a focus on new technology. Innovative products from the fields of VR, live streaming and CRM techniques will be on display.

Stuart Dacre, Event Director, said: "Each event in the iGB portfolio is proud of the content it offers, highlighting the industry trends and needs, narrowing in on the specifics, then following through with takeaways ready to be applied to any business. iGB Live 2019 is no different, with two free-to-attend theatres; iGB Affiliate Amsterdam and iGB Live HQ. This year's content will be mega."

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

The speeches, debates and panel discussions will be divided into four different venues. Just as it was at ICE London, the

four rooms will be Elevator, Counsel, The Hive and Boardroom. Alongside the conference rooms will be a space dedicated away from the expo floor noise to have private meetings. There is also a refreshment area, lunch provided and a free bar available in the afternoon.

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

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

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

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



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WOULD GVC'S AD BAN PLAN BOOST AFFILIATE MARKETING SPEND?

Matthew Enderby looks into the effect TV ads have on affiliates and what GVC's proposed ban in the UK could mean for the industry



Did anyone take GVC Holdings' call to drop arms seriously? In April, the operator spoke to the UK industry and asked to end sports betting broadcast advertising on live and repeated televised sporting events.

The company went on to announce new responsible gambling initiatives, including provisions for specifically promoting responsible gambling and safer gambling campaigns, limited to one advertisement per break.

Oren Arzony, Marketing Manager at affiliate House Tech Ads, can see positives in this initiative, but indicates it could still slow down traffic.

He says: "Overall, this ban could be a positive step. People who bet are aware of betting platforms before the event. They don't necessarily need incentives during the event and in a way it could spoil the viewing experience itself. The viewers who want to bet will do so anyway; let the other ones enjoy ads about cold drinks. This will provide a cleaner experience of the game with less pushy advertising.

"As affiliates, we do see changes in a specific brand which is advertised on TV, because more people search for it, some arrive at the brand itself and some start by reading reviews or news about said brand – and this is how it affects us.

"At OnlineCasinoReports.com, we cover high-profile sporting events, with commentary and odds, and we can definitely notice more traffic directed to the advertised brands during their TV campaigns."

GVC said the voluntary pre-watershed, whistle-to-whistle ban announced by the Industry Group for Responsible Gambling (IGRG) in December does not go far enough, and wants other companies to "join it in helping to revolutionise the marketing of gambling brands."

Announcing the campaign, GVC CEO Kenny Alexander said: "Increasing investment in research, education and treatment ten-fold by 2022, funding treatment centres and using technology to intervene before a problem develops, alongside our existing behavioural analytics, brings to life our commitment to be the most trusted and enjoyable betting operator in the world."

"The industry should and can do more to protect the vulnerable, and today's announcement demonstrates GVC's commitment to delivering on that."

Is there any doubt most operators need an overhaul of their advertising efforts? No, nobody is questioning that. Should responsible gambling measures feature higher on the priorities list of companies and receive financial commitments? They certainly should.

But what does raise eyebrows is that GVC did not appear to make a commitment itself to stop advertising on television. After publishing an in-depth press release and causing a stir, it seems the operator has no actual intention itself of cutting down its TV advertising. This may change if it sees its rivals pledge to the same cause.

The first indicator that this is not necessarily a move to help with problem gambling was the omission of horseracing. Just as with the whistle-to-whistle ban, horseracing has wriggled clear of the tightening expectations and voluntary regulations.

If GVC views TV advertising as a cause of problem gambling, then surely horseracing would need to be treated as any other sport. The vertical has its own population of problem gamblers who also need help with the steps to recovery. But the fact is horseracing has an accepted relationship with gambling. A horseracing event or broadcast will be punctuated with gambling advertisements and that seems unlikely to change any time soon. The horseracing industry needs these ads to survive.

Due to these limitations and other contributing factors, GVC's call to the industry has been described as more of a publicity activity than a proactive solution to problem gambling.

Norbert Varga, Director of online gaming marketing company NWM, says: "I hope most people in the industry can see how cynical this operator's call is - it's probably best viewed as a PR stunt. They own some of the biggest established betting brands in the UK, with some of the largest existing customer bases, so such a ban would probably work out well for them."

"The type of ban they are calling for would likely force many smaller operators out of the market, as they would find it next to impossible to acquire market share. Of course, this would then benefit the huge, well-established operators, who would not only find it easier to keep their existing customer base, but would likely vacuum up customers from the many smaller operators forced out of the market."

Varga also sees another potential reason for the campaign, adding: "Mind you, let's not forget this particular operator's call for a ban might just be an effort to placate their own



NORBERT VARGA

investors, drawing their attention away from more challenging aspects of the business."

GVC has however, begun to put its plan into action and recently donated one of its shirt sponsorship rights to a charity. Betdaq, owned by GVC, confirmed in May it had given its shirt sponsorship of Sunderland Football Club to the Children with Cancer UK charity.

The operator will continue to pay until the deal runs out next year, and will see the charity's logo on Sunderland

"I HOPE MOST PEOPLE IN THE INDUSTRY CAN SEE HOW CYNICAL THIS OPERATOR'S CALL IS - IT'S PROBABLY BEST VIEWED AS A PR STUNT. THEY OWN SOME OF THE BIGGEST ESTABLISHED BETTING BRANDS IN THE UK, WITH SOME OF THE LARGEST EXISTING CUSTOMER BASES, SO SUCH A BAN WOULD PROBABLY WORK OUT WELL FOR THEM"

shirts until that point. GVC confirmed to *Gambling Insider* this is part of its Changing for the Bettor campaign and aims to extend it to other clubs. Betdaq is also the shirt sponsor of Charlton Athletic. The team and operator have been in partnership for three seasons, so GVC could have another platform available to use if it sees fit, should the partnership continue.

While doubters will always exist and suggest this is still more of a PR stunt than a proactive method of derailing problem gambling, exposure for the charity is a positive move. GVC could perhaps quell questions of intention by involving gambling charities which specifically deal with that cause in its next steps.



Despite not drawing stellar reviews from the industry, GVC's proposed ad ban may come to benefit the affiliate world. To remove these televised ads will not exert a hugely detrimental effect on the affiliate space, as Arzony explains.

He says: "In general, gambling ads during sporting events do not have a noticeable impact on affiliates, since these events in their nature are very limited in time; the viewer has to react quickly and sign up. In a sense, this ban could re-regulate traffic flow to different channels, affiliates included."

On top of that, if GVC was to pull the plug on TV advertisements tomorrow, this does not mean it would stop marketing altogether. Just because it is one of the world's leading gambling companies does not mean it has any right to relax and think the work is done.

"IN GENERAL, GAMBLING ADS DURING SPORTING EVENTS DO NOT HAVE A NOTICEABLE IMPACT ON AFFILIATES, SINCE THESE EVENTS IN THEIR NATURE ARE VERY LIMITED IN TIME; THE VIEWER HAS TO REACT QUICKLY AND SIGN UP. IN A SENSE, THIS BAN COULD RE-REGULATE TRAFFIC FLOW TO DIFFERENT CHANNELS, AFFILIATES INCLUDED"

Data from Regulus Partners shows nearly half of the £1.56bn (\$1.99bn) spent on marketing by gambling companies in Great Britain between 2014 and 2017 was online. Television only made up 15% of the total during that period, indicating operators are not getting what they used to from TV and are keen to spend elsewhere. Broadcast advertising did experience a rise in its total marketing spend, climbing 15% to £234m in 2017, but this does not match the amount operators are spending on affiliate ads.

The money spent on affiliate marketing rose 2% in that period, to £301m. The commercial online spend on affiliates also saw an increase in the three years examined by the analysts, rising 3% to £295m. While these are not the biggest categories of online spending, they both show the potential for affiliates.

In addition, the current climate around betting advertising could lead to an even higher allocation of funds to affiliate marketing. The whistle-to-whistle ban announced at the end of last year only comes into effect this summer, so that will reduce the TV spend even further.

No longer looking to snap up prime spots before and during major sporting events, operators will have to find different ways to generate attention and new leads. Affiliates should be ready and waiting for this opportunity.

There is of course a big risk associated with operators moving considerable chunks of spending into affiliate marketing. The gambling industry is familiar with controversy and a temperamental public perception, but TV advertising currently draws much of the negative attention.

Ads on TV are right in the face of consumers. They might have no association with gambling, they might be bettors themselves, or they could have a more negative connection. That benefits operators, as it draws in a whole new batch of players, but it is also to their detriment, as the general public can grow weary and frustrated with the number of betting ads it has to sit through. This is good for affiliates at the moment, as they are free of most of those negative connections (see our interview with Clive Hawksood on p22). They might however find these coming their way if TV ads are turned off completely.

But there may be a buffer standing between affiliates and negative attention from the mainstream media. Social media marketing saw the highest increase in spend between 2014 and 2017, jumping 53% to £149m. While affiliates received £152m more than this in the timeframe, the increased use of social media channels like Facebook and Instagram as marketing tools is clear to see.

This will undoubtedly be a target of campaign groups further down the line, as they shift attention away from dwindling gambling TV ads. But as those groups look to pick out and eradicate what they believe are negative influencers, they may turn their attention to the affiliate world.

This could add further tension to already strained relationships between affiliates and operators.

As is often discussed in conferences around the world, the onus is on the operator to get the right message across.

Affiliates that do not pay close attention to the developments with gambling advertising on TV need to reassess their outlook on the industry. While the ads themselves may not have the biggest impact on player traffic, their removal could prove pivotal to the affiliate sector. If major businesses like GVC do decide to pull the plug on their broadcasted marketing schemes, whatever the intention, affiliates have to be ready to increase their share in operators' marketing budgets.



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THE PROBLEM OF PERCEPTION

Responsible Affiliates in Gambling (RAIG) Chairman **Clive Hawkswood** speaks to **Tim Poole** about the perception of the affiliate sector, outlining what the new UK-based body aims to achieve



What exactly will your role involve day-to-day at the RAIG?

I'm Chair and it's not a full-time job. It should be a few days a month, like most Chairman roles. I've been involved in the last couple of months, helping the founding members, Better Collective, Oddschecker and Racing Post set it up.

What are the main skills and lessons you can take from your previous role at the Remote Gambling Association to apply at the RAIG?

I think the first one is a good understanding of the gambling industry and the importance of marketing and advertising to it. Consequently, for affiliates, particularly as regulation creeps out into the wider sector, that's the drive for setting up a new affiliate body. That's direct regulation or indirect regulation imposed by the Gambling Commission on licensed operators contracted with affiliates.

There's also what some people call the existential threat. Why has the mood changed against the gambling industry? We're focusing exclusively on social responsibility, which has become the sole area of any interest to the wider world. On the practical level, I have a lot of experience working with

diverse companies and trying to get consensus; hopefully that will be of some use.

Before we move into affiliate-specific questions, what was it like being on the political side of things when you worked for the UK Government?

I'd worked in the betting industry in my younger days. Before joining the online association, I worked on gambling policy within the government for six years, first at the Home Office and then the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) when it was transferred across. It is a useful perspective, because you do see things from that side. While for people in the industry, this is our whole world, this will only be covered by a small number of officials in government.

Beyond that, most politicians won't ever even think about gambling. One of the problems we always face is gambling is never a vote winner - it can only be a vote loser. So we've got that natural in-built dynamic. That's why a lot of senior people in the industry said the best thing we can do is stay below the radar and not be debated. But we are a good few years off that state.

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CLIVE HAWKWOOD

You've previously mentioned the difficulty of bringing rival companies together to form a body such as the RAIG. Are you confident the affiliate sector will encourage this kind of co-operation?

I am very confident. Clearly, it's such a diverse sector. We can't even agree on how we define what an affiliate is. But obviously, it will be good to have some smaller affiliates on board, just to get their views and make sure it's not just the views of the bigger companies. As with a lot of industries, you need some big players to get behind it and show their support. It's helpful looking solely at social responsibility; we're not looking at commercial issues. The large players certainly get that affiliates need to be seen to be proactive in this area.

I have genuinely been very encouraged by affiliates' views being very similar and chiming a lot. Realistically, it will be a transition; it's a new association and people will have a lot of questions. We've deliberately not finalised everything, particularly around the ongoing work programme, because we wanted the views of others first. The next three to six months are a chance to have that dialogue with other companies and hopefully they'll feel it's worth getting involved with.

Are you expecting any new members to join and have you had any talks with specific affiliates?

I think we haven't taken a view on it. We're never expecting a rush of members, simply because it's not something people should jump in with both feet towards if it doesn't work for them. That's just a natural progression over the next few months.

Personally, even if it's just a small number of other affiliates, I would like to see some of the smaller affiliates involved. While the issues may be the same, the ability of companies to address them can vary pretty dramatically based on resources, which is true of any industry.

If we were looking to do something around a code on something or raising standards, it's no good if only the big players can do it. That's what I'd like to see; it would be disappointing if the membership doesn't increase significantly over the next three to six months. But we're not talking about 1,000 people joining. What we'd like to do is come up with some good guidance documents and recommendations that are made public to everyone, even without joining, to improve the reputation of the industry.

Can you see the RAIG branching out into tackling commercial issues further down the line?

We've discussed everything under the sun. Again, lots of affiliates have been thinking about industry issues for a long time. It was difficult for me to talk to people before the launch. Having had the launch, we are now able to speak to people more freely. People in the affiliate sector have been so helpful in giving me their time and sharing what discussions they may have had with others. That's all going into the pot.

Likewise, I've had a meeting with the Gambling Commission, DCMS and Advertising Standards Authority. Whether we accept them all or not, at least we'll all know what the issues are for them. It's just that big melting pot at the moment; we're chucking it all in and we'll come out with a work programme. People need to have realistic expectations. We're not going to solve all these issues in a year or two. We'll have to prioritise some and, hopefully, bring as much of the wider sector as we can along with that.

You've talked about certain affiliates letting down the industry as a whole. How do you aim to combat this in the future?

You can't. Every industry and sector has this. It can be a combination of having some bad actors. But some companies are perhaps on the margins of profitability and have to cut corners to keep going. What we can do is get better at separating the perception of the outliers and the bulk of the industry. Because affiliates haven't really had that voice or a way to engage with politicians, everyone is tarnished by some horrendous story and the Daily Mail runs with it. Everyone then thinks that's what affiliates are like. Of course, that's not what affiliates are like.

Nobody's going to run a story on how good or commercially successful affiliates are. There's one which always comes up when you talk to the Gambling Commission. An affiliate ran an advertorial about someone whose wife was getting cancer treatment and he had this big win. What was going on in their mind? How was that ever going to be received well in the public eye? The truth is most affiliates are nothing like that and are heavily regulated. Then, alongside that, there's a commitment to go further when we can.

What other challenges does the RAIG face?

One of the early challenges is developing some policies. If people ask why you can't do this or that, we can say we've looked at that and we can't, but here's what we can do instead. So the next time a horror story comes up, we're in a much better position to say that is not representative of the sector as a whole.

It won't be easy. We're not starting from scratch. There are a lot of affiliates out there; some started talking about this kind of thing three years ago. Others have done a lot of work. But we've got to be realistic and say this will take a while. We can try and get some credibility; first by engaging other stakeholders and then creating a credible work programme.

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MILICA RISTIC

WORKING TOGETHER: CRO AND SEARCH INTENT

Speaking at this year's AffiliateCon Sofia, **Milica Ristic**, SEO Specialist for affiliate Better Collective, talked the audience through how different departments can come together to optimise CRO



Let's start by talking about what makes a really successful SEO campaign. The general idea is that if you have amazing SEO people working on your website, they can drive a lot of traffic and then your traffic will start increasing. The reality is actually quite different. People often use a lot of server bandwidth on things like consumer research and competitor research. You invest in your copywriters and you produce content to optimise previous content that is already presented on the website, and you're actually burning a lot of money.

What you should actually do is spend more on converting more people to your website, because this is of course the ultimate goal. You want a much bigger portion of your website traffic to actually convert. How do you achieve that? First things first, you have to be present on all possible devices. Once you are on top of search results, you will attract some really amazing traffic.

What you do next is maintain consistency with your content and your pages. You need optimised call-to-action (CTA) buttons and pullout text. You need to be transparent. Do not pile up multiple products on one page. You don't want people to sign up for a newsletter on a page that you actually want them to convert, so don't give them a huge pop-up just asking them to sign up for a newsletter.

Doing your homework is always going to be important. Dive deeper into search intent and look into your traffic numbers. Conduct comprehensive SEO research like keyword research, competition research, and then collate all the data from your SEO people.

Look into the numbers and try to detect what users are actually searching for. What is the basic need they want to satisfy with your website? After that, look into the content performance metrics, like bounce rate, exit rate, time spent

on the page, whether players scrolled down etc. You can get all that information from tools such as Google Analytics.

Try to detect what portion of your traffic is bringing you traffic, but is not really converting. You can push commercial elements on that page a little bit more to satisfy the commercial need behind the search intent. Giving people what they want is the main thing, but before you do that, you first have to find out what the search intent behind that is.

BREAKING DOWN THE DATA

There are three main funnels to divide the stats behind the conversion journey in online gaming. The first is the informational data. When users want to read the news, this kind of content will give you conversions, but it will be a really small percentage.

The second one is research. Are users interested in signing up with a particular operator? Are they interested in actually placing a bet after they've signed up?

Finally, there is the transactional data. When have they actually decided to convert? When have they looked for terms like bonus offers, sign-up offers and promotions related to a specific operator?

I will use the example of a Better Collective German site called Wettbasis. We are providing sports news on this page, but we managed to push an element that can potentially convert the user.

This is a really small portion of the conversion point where we point them towards our bonus pages.

Sometimes you will satisfy the user's need right from the search results, and that is fine, because with the right search strategy, you can attract a lot of traffic and click-through rates. If the user wants to learn more, they need to click and you should be prepared and make sure that page actually works.

With transactional information, we can see what is about to unfold. I use mobile, because it doesn't make that much sense to use desktop nowadays.

Do not be afraid to collaborate with different departments. If you have your conversion rate optimisation and SEO teams ready, then you can bring them together and brainstorm once a month. This will bring a lot of good results.

HOW THIS WORKS IN PRACTICE

In our case, our gaming performance and digital intelligence teams brought their knowledge together to discuss the same topic – SEO. They were talking about a Better Collective Portuguese website servicing a Brazilian website. There was a lot of betting tip content on there that brought us a huge amount of content. The truth though is that only 2% of people converted. We tried to find a way to optimise the page.

We worked around the problem by carrying out extensive traffic analysis. We had negative results, but we continued to optimise the pages, and finally, we got a positive result.

First, we pushed odds for the main three markets and made them more visible. We looked at heat maps. People didn't recognise what kind of conversion journey we wanted for them, and instead of clicking on links, they were clicking on odds which were not clickable. We had missed the point. We managed to get a slight increase in conversion, but the rate still wasn't high enough.

We joined forces with digital intelligence and our colleagues showed us how to structure the page correctly. Since the user is looking for a specific match and the tip on that match, we included a table of different operators. We gave them a choice of which operator they wanted to go with and we



MILICA RISTIC

emphasised the odds for bets we were actually tipping. We also included a huge CTA button in the middle of the text.

The main point here is that those kind of pages are really engaging. Even before we did this, people were reading the content and scrolling through it, but they were not converting. After we changed our plan, we actually converted a huge portion of traffic. We increased conversion by 62%. The project was redeemed because we sat down together and talked about the problems we had. We were investing a lot in SEO without actual conversions, and this is the main point.

After we recovered, we applied more features to the page and excluded all the redundant and duplicated content that appeared on the page. Any duplicated team names or tips were removed.

The main takeaway from this is the importance of brainstorming and talking to all the relevant colleagues. You should always base decisions on data and collaboration on top of the data is key.

**“THE PROJECT WAS REDEEMED
BECAUSE WE SAT DOWN TOGETHER
AND TALKED ABOUT THE PROBLEMS
WE HAD. WE WERE INVESTING A LOT IN
SEO WITHOUT ACTUAL CONVERSIONS,
AND THIS IS THE MAIN POINT”**

MAKING BLOCKCHAIN WORK FOR AFFILIATES

Kostas Farris, CEO of blockchain lottery supplier Quanta, on what needs to happen for blockchain to become more widely accepted in online gambling, particularly through affiliates



KOSTAS FARRIS

Online gambling affiliates are always looking for ways to drive growth, whether through signing deals with new operator partners or entering new markets.

One of the biggest opportunities at present seems to be the US, which is slowly opening up to legal online sports betting, casino and poker. But growth can also be found elsewhere, particularly if affiliates are prepared to work with highly-innovative operators that are pioneering new products and services. For example, some affiliates have taken advantage of the growing number of operators offering PayPal, with many having dedicated pages to PayPal casinos. The same applies to bitcoin.

"JUST AS THEY HAVE DONE WITH BITCOIN CASINOS, AFFILIATES SHOULD CREATE DEDICATED PAGES FOR THE BLOCKCHAIN GAMBLING BRANDS THEY WORK WITH. IN ADDITION TO THIS, THEY SHOULD PRODUCE DETAILED ARTICLES, FEATURES AND GUIDES SO THAT CONSUMERS CAN ACCESS ALL THE INFORMATION THEY NEED TO PROPERLY UNDERSTAND THE TECHNOLOGY"

Others are working with the hugely popular pay-and-play casinos that don't require players to create an account to play – they simply make a deposit via their bank account and away they go.

In the sports betting world, there has been a surge in affiliates promoting esports betting brands and again, creating dedicated pages and sections on their sites to do this.

Of course, as these points of difference become more common, affiliates will have to look elsewhere for growth and to offer their readers something different. But what will this be?

Blockchain has yet to make a significant impact on the global online gambling sector, but operators and developers are embracing the technology and momentum is building.

In the same way a small number of operators started offering PayPal and now the majority do, the use of blockchain will increase over the coming months and years. There are already online gambling sites powered by blockchain – Quanta is the first licensed blockchain lottery operator, for example, with more to follow.

Given it is still early days for blockchain and online gambling, this presents a huge first mover opportunity for intrepid affiliates seeking new growth opportunities. Of course, affiliates that do decide to work with blockchain operators will have to play their part in the education process that needs to take place for consumer confidence to rise.

Before looking more closely at how that can be done, it is worth clarifying how the relationship between affiliates and blockchain operators works.

Here at Quanta, our affiliate partners are paid using a mix of fiat currency and our utility currency, the Quanta Game Token (QGT).

They can earn more of these if they meet certain KPIs too. Our affiliates can also provide additional incentives to their players by running promotions and rewards using these QGTs.

The key to unlocking the full potential of blockchain gambling is the proliferation of business applications in different industries based on blockchain, and also to educate consumers about the technology; what it is, how it works, the benefits it offers etc.

This is where affiliates can really come into their own and leverage the high levels of trust they have built with their readers and players.

Just as they have done with bitcoin casinos, affiliates should create dedicated pages for the blockchain gambling brands they work with. In addition to this, they should produce detailed articles, features and guides so that consumers can access all the information they need to properly understand the technology.

If affiliates can educate their readers and convince them of the many upsides blockchain gambling websites offer, it won't take long for mainstream adoption to take place. This in turn will further open up the opportunity for affiliates to drive players to new brands and take their earnings potential to the next level.

Of course, the affiliates that decide to partner with blockchain operators now will be ahead of the curve and in the driving seat to cash in.



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The 1xBet affiliate team discusses how to take an affiliate business to the next level

Affiliate managers have a challenging yet extremely rewarding task – to propel their affiliates to the front of the pack. This is only possible with dedication, know-how and a top, innovative brand.

Affiliate managers need to be fully prepared and equipped, especially in the hyper-competitive industry of online betting.

There are many factors they need to consider before success can be achieved. Targeted campaigns, for example, are necessary, as are unique approaches for each affiliate. Gone are the days of the one-size-fits-all approach which so many brands unfortunately still cling on to. A higher level of customisation is necessary to stand out from the crowd. A successful affiliate knows this and has a great brand which facilitates it.

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

WEBSITE

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

BLOG

Create tutorials (such as how to register, deposit and bet) to interest and inform visitors. Incorporate a power brand in any mailing list newsletters and make sure you have attention-grabbing headlines. Creating funny viral videos and infographics can engage your audience and keep them returning. Establishing a unique identity and personal brand are key to forming connections in an amiable way. While blogs are also about content and value, it's imperative it feels personal – your audience should feel like they know you.

SOCIAL MEDIA

It's crucial for social media to be at the forefront of breaking news, opinions, trends and special offers. That's why it's important

to have a partner who recognises this and keeps you in the loop 24/7 with current creative banners, changing odds and important event updates.

Remember to inform, but don't inundate your followers with information. There's a fine line between the two and it's a balance which needs maintaining at all times. Information can certainly be repeated at decent intervals, but it needs to be palatable and enjoyable. A general rule of thumb: if you don't find it interesting or appealing, your followers probably won't either. Try to provide unique value every time you suggest a product.

MOBILE APP

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

Whatever your platform or content, it's imperative you find a successful affiliate programme that employs the latest technology, together with valuable proven experience. Obviously, a superb product is another prerequisite. Some key factors to look out for include:

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

The bottom line is when choosing a brand to partner with, make sure their affiliate programme has the vision and resources to make your dreams come true. Every affiliate is different and, as such, deserves a unique approach crafted solely for them.



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OCEANIAN MARKETS PRESENT NEW CHALLENGES

Tal Itzhak Ron and Stephanie Attias of law firm
Tal Ron, Drihem & Co. discuss the terms of new financial
services regulation in Australia and Vanuatu

In the past year, we have seen a wave of tightening regulations in Europe, the UK, Asia, and recently Australia relating to the fin-tech, FX, CFD and crypto industries. This increased scrutiny started when the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) implemented various leverage caps and marketing restrictions.

Recently, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) decided to go down ESMA's route and increased regulatory requirements to create a fair and honest market for retail traders, whether located in Australia or abroad.

If Australia was once considered a regulatory safe haven for brokerages, this is no longer the case. ASIC has recently set up a set of strict rules and submitted a data collection notice to brokers regulated in the country. Australian brokers were requested to provide an extensive list of information by March 2019.

Australian brokers are asked to provide ASIC with a detailed breakdown of client numbers before and after December 2017 by age, account size, income, and the number of clients transferred from overseas between January 2018 and March 2019. ASIC also demands information relating to the broker's business strategy, a breakdown of the broker's A-Book and B-Book, as well as the criteria used by the broker to assign clients to different books.

The regulatory trend worldwide is towards greater scrutiny and increased transparency of brokerages and their business strategy. Nothing is left out from liquidity partnerships, hedging counterparts, referral agreements, white labels and every aspect of the broker's business.

TRENDS FOR ASIC BROKERS

Recently, we have seen an exodus of those brokers moving into offshore jurisdictions (Vanuatu, Belize, Bermuda, Bahamas, the Cayman Islands), while some of them also found a safe place within European jurisdictions. The most popular move we see occurring nowadays is the migration of non-Australian client bases into offshore regulated entities, while opening banking facilities in various reliable financial centres. There are some ASIC brokers still sitting on the fence waiting to see what their competitors do, while already having multiple licenses set up for a rainy day.

HAS THIS REGULATORY SCRUTINY REACHED OFFSHORE JURISDICTIONS SUCH AS VANUATU?

Yes. Lately, we have also seen changes relating to Vanuatu's regulatory requirements. The new amendments require each company listed in the financial dealers list to have a director or manager which must (a) be a natural person, and (b) have at least five years' experience dealing in securities. It also became an obligation for such director(s) or manager(s) of the company to reside in Vanuatu for six months within each year. The purpose of this new amendment is to allow the Vanuatu Financial Services Commission (VFSC) to monitor licensees under the Act and conduct onsite inspections locally.

Each company listed under the VFSC will have to operate from a physical premise located in Vanuatu, which maintains the following systems: a filing system; a management and accounting system; a business continuity system; and a software system with a server.



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It is to be noted however, that the VFSC does not allow licensees incorporated as an international company to operate activities in Vanuatu. An international company cannot sell any products or services within Vanuatu.

WHAT'S IMPACTED?

The latest changes in the Vanuatu regulatory framework now separate the dealer's licenses into three different categories, each dealing with different types of securities. It is extremely important for a person intending to carry on a business dealing with securities to apply for the respective license:

- **Class A Licenses** deal with: Debenture stocks; loan stock, bonds; certificate of deposit; or proceeds of foreign exchange.
- **Class B Licenses** deal with: Future contracts and derivative products, but not limited to futures and options.
- **Class C Licenses** deal with: Shares in share capital of a corporation; proceeds of precious metals; proceeds of commodities; a right under, whether or not conferred by warrant, subscriptions for shares of debt securities; a right under depository receipts; an option to acquire or dispose of any security falling within any other provision of the Act; and a right under a contract for the acquisition of securities.

HOW LONG WILL COMPANIES HAVE TO ADJUST?

Companies possessing a principal's license before the commencement of this Act must apply within six months from the commencement of this Act for a Class A, Class B or Class C principal's license. If a company fails to make such an application, the principal's license issued to that company will expire after six months from the commencement of this Act. The end of the transitional period is 7 July 2019.

COMPETITION SPOTS

Some of the most popular jurisdictions nowadays include Estonia and Malta, especially for companies looking to work with crypto-currencies. On 26 June 2018, Malta took a new regulatory approach by evaluating the technology described

in the white papers of operators interested in coming to Malta to launch ICOs. This is a regulatory innovation which led Malta to adopt three new laws: The Malta Digital Innovation Authority Act, which establishes the Malta Digital Innovation Authority and certifies DLT platforms; the Innovative Technology Arrangements and Services Act, which concerns the setting up of exchanges and other companies operating in the crypto-currency market; and the Virtual Financial Assets Act, which sets up the regulatory regime governing ICOs, crypto-currency exchanges and wallet providers.

The final choice is up to personal preferences and business goals, but companies should always seek efficient legal counselling to set up a business with the most appropriate regulatory regime.

Advocate, Certified Computer Scientist and Notary Tal Itzhak Ron (LLB, B.Sc., M.Sc.) - General Member of International Masters of Gaming Law (IMGL) and STEP, practicing i-Gaming, Ad-Tech and Financial Entertainment. Tal graduated both from Haifa University's School of Law (LL.B.) and Faculty of Computer Science (B.Sc.), and while leading a software development team at a publicly-listed software company, Ness Technologies, has further obtained a Master's Degree in Computer Science (M.Sc.) from Bar-Ilan University. Tal established **Tal Ron, Drihem & Co., Law Firm** back in 2003, focusing from the start on Hi-Tech, Ad Tech, and Digital Marketing, quickly becoming one of the first international firms practicing exclusively in these areas. The firm today advises the world's leading operations, platforms and governing bodies and is considered the industry standard for entrepreneurs setting up businesses in the online gaming, digital marketing and FX industries.

Financial Jurist Stephanie Attias - Graduated from Fordham University School of Law (New York), with an LL.M in Banking, Corporate and Finance Law, and from the Faculty of Law in Nice (France) with a Master of Laws in Business Law and Economics, followed by a Master of Finance in Financial Engineering with Magna Cum Laude Honors. After working at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in New York and in the prestigious law firm Gide Loyrette Nouel, both in London and Paris, Stephanie joined Tal Ron Drihem & Co., Law Firm in 2012, where she serves as the Global Head of Regulation, advising the top tier of financial technologies and gaming companies. She is a globally recognised speaker in the most influential events and has published numerous articles on financial and gaming law.



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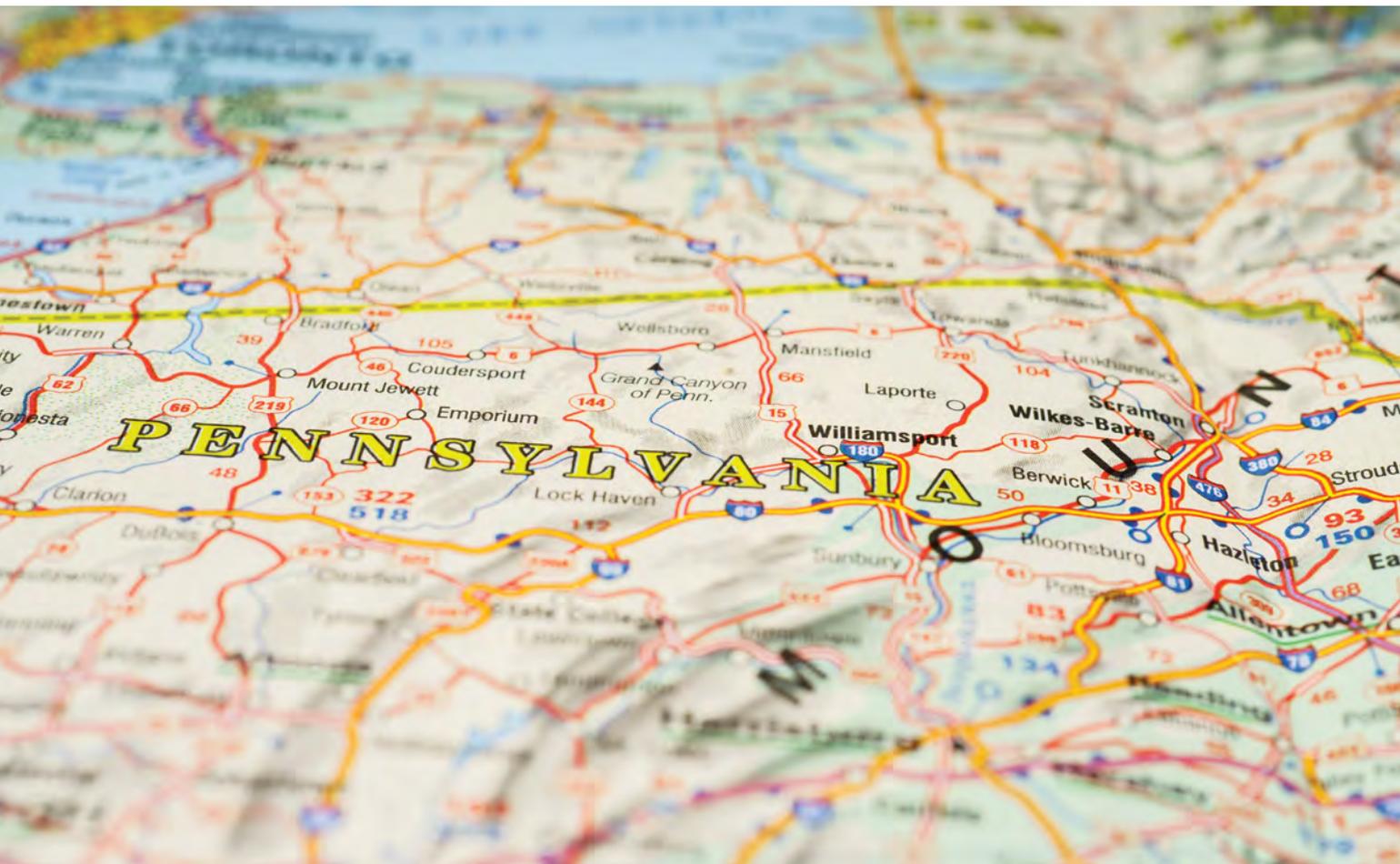
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CATENA MEDIA US: 'DON'T READ TOO MUCH INTO THE WIND OF CHANGE'

Catena Media US General Manager **Michael Daly** speaks to **Tim Poole** about the affiliate's Pennsylvania launch and plans for North America



Tell us about Catena's plans for the Pennsylvania market and how you've reacted to news of the launch.

We're feeling great about the news. It's been a long time coming – not even since the repeal of PASPA or when Pennsylvania passed its bill for online casino; it's essentially been since 2013, when New Jersey first launched online gaming. Many had hoped we'd see many more states follow and Pennsylvania is the first to really do that in a large-state format. That's very exciting to us and, with lots of other launches happening, it's a fantastic time for our industry.

It's another wave of progress in how to make our gambling industry compatible to today's world. Today's world is not about people going to buildings for what they want. They don't do that for banking; they don't do that for shopping.

If the gambling industry continues to force them to go to buildings and interact with people all the time, it won't work, as it just isn't the way people are being trained now. This is a great step.

What other states are you looking at or confident will progress?

We watch a lot of states, because things can happen surprisingly out of the order we expect. But what we've been watching most encouragingly is Indiana, which passed the sports betting bill for both land-based and online. While they had high aspirations in saying they will be live for the next NFL season, I think that somewhat shows the lack of understanding of what is involved in running an online operation.

But we could see online sports in Indiana as early as next year, which is the same thing potentially for Tennessee. We're very excited about both those states. We're excited about Iowa. We've been running play on Illinois for years, knowing it would come to fruition at some point. It's still quite a way out, if you look at the 18-month moratorium on online registration. But it's still very exciting and the world is shifting when companies like Catena look at how we can help, even when the final registration process has to be done in the land-based casino.

It used to be we couldn't track who came in and we couldn't get paid because we didn't know if the lead came from us or through the casino's direct marketing. But the systems and information that exist now on players and people, from their online activity to what they're doing offline, is becoming pretty well synced up. You'll probably see us working in Illinois well before it has mobile-only registration.

What are your thoughts on the mobile-only approach adopted in Tennessee?

Mobile-only is a fantastic move for them. It doesn't really have a land-based gambling industry, so it creates a potentially new model and new open playing field for all operators to compete. We'll really see which operators have the best product, because they don't have anything to leverage, in terms of a land-based database to work with. It will be an apples-to-apples comparison. They might also end up with some interesting, forward-looking regulations and processes, which is exciting.

How big does Catena see the US opportunity as being in comparison with other geographical markets?

I believe our CEO at the last quarterly update noted the US now makes up more than 10% of revenue flow for the company. Catena had said previously the goal was for no country to be more than 10%. Then our CEO will say, "unfortunately, I can't hold that to the US," because we now have so much coming from just New Jersey, which accounts for about 3% of the US population. The opportunity for us is huge; we expect very good things from Pennsylvania. Even with the higher tax rate, because it has a 25% higher population, it's equivalent to the same profitability.

We'll still see lots of competition but, if things go well over the next two to three years, you will still have Massachusetts, Arkansas, Ohio, Kentucky, Arizona and New Mexico. Then you get to the big states like New York, Texas, California. They will be much further out, with more factions and people at play. But we could easily be at as much as 80% of Catena's business being US, doubling the size of the company.

These are forward-looking projections with lots of risk and lots of unknowns, but that's what we're going to be striving for as states come online. We will be land-grabbing long before states are open, so we're in the strongest position for operators when they get there.

What are your thoughts on Better Collective's RotoGrinders acquisition and the chances of other European affiliates taking this route?

I respect the European competitors coming across, taking a look at what is going on and investing. Having been on the operator side myself before, you often think you'll stick a European platform across and it'll work in the US. All the online gaming operators back in 2013 in New Jersey realised they had to make major changes for the regulations, audience and lack of technology in the US.

I have great respect for Better Collective deciding to invest in a US affiliate that's doing well. We know the RotoGrinders team well; they are a good competitor to us. Catena probably looks at



everybody. We bought the largest US affiliate back in September 2016. In 2018, we bought BonusSeeker. It might have been the company Better Collective bought or made a major investment in. That major investment [in RotoGrinders] is going to help them grow. It's a good thing for affiliates to have more competition out there; it helps give you a stronger and cleaner business.

Better Collective made a good move, but we are not afraid of the competition. We consider it healthy. Catena looked at something like that. I'm not saying whether we specifically looked at RotoGrinders or not, but we are looking more at organic growth now than another acquisition of a similar product. Are there other companies out there we're going to acquire? Yes, I'm sure over time we'll make more acquisitions, especially with niches we don't have. If, for the right price, you can accelerate yourself and come up with a good integration, that's fantastic.

How many operators have you spoken with in Pennsylvania?

I cannot go into specific names, because of the contracts we have with some. But I'm hopeful to see four operators live by the NFL kick-off for the sports side and ideally for casino. Then, my expectation is a couple of others coming in New Jersey later in the sports season. The more the merrier for us as an affiliate.

How do you view the state of the US affiliate market in general?

We often get scared by reading too much into the latest winds of change. I understand that, based on the history of the gaming industry. We had the DoJ opinion and then New Hampshire revoked that, which was great. There will still be an appeal and then probably a Supreme Court case in two years. The industry is not getting spooked.

We saw a couple of state politicians get concerned about this – and the investors get all squirmy about it. Anything that happens in the US, good or bad, will take a long time to come into effect. I'd like to see fewer knee-jerk reactions from the markets; don't sell yourself short on Catena or whoever you're looking at in the gambling space, because of something released in the morning press. By evening, it could have changed. The US is coming; I don't think the train can be stopped at this point.



VIPS: USING THE RFM METHOD

Online gaming consultant **Shahar Attias** explains a trusted method for retaining VIPs

We all love VIPs. We enjoy that James Bond feeling, thinking if we can treat our top players like in films, we might get a free meal during our next trip to Las Vegas - because, you know, karma and such. At this point, you probably know by yourself that in reality, the karma phase ends differently. Once you're concentrating on your top segment, why even bother with them annoying, block-capital using, bonus-nagging players, who can't seem to spell even the word "a" correctly?

Let's go about a hundred years back, to Italy. One statistician was looking into the tax distribution across the country, and found 20% of the people owned 80% of the property. That's funny, he thought - 80 and 20 makes 100. How cool is that? So he started reviewing other databases, and what do you know? Same phenomena. Nearly everywhere, 20% of the list was in charge of 80% of the impact.

Before ditching my moral values (along with any hopes to ever have a healthy liver again) and working in this lovely industry of ours, I used to be a logistical consultant (yes,

it was indeed so much more sexy, thank you for asking). Hear me out; in all warehouses, a very small group of items are considered the 'fast movers,' and they amount to the vast majority of all transactions within a given period of time.

This Italian dude was Pareto, and to date this type of segmentation he figured out is called the "Pareto Rule." Now you know this fact, let's look at other types of segmentation. The most common is called RFM:

- Recency: based on what portion of the activity happened in the very near past
- Frequency: based on the repetitiveness of the occurrences of the encouraged activity
- Monetary value: based on the size of the activity; e.g. purchases, profit or any income type

HOW WOULD THAT WORK IN PRACTICE FOR ONLINE CASINOS?

Recency segmentation would look into players not only according to their lifetime contribution, but how much of it happened in the past day/week/month/running x amount of days; so you have a €15,000 LTV player, but he hasn't played in four months? They may be playing with the competition. Yes, they do have a stronger platform and better employee benefits, so you can go feel sorry for yourself.

In terms of frequency, you could better evaluate a player who's not too impressive when it comes to transactional value per average visit or set period, but is super loyal and keeps returning. Maybe we have here a case of a known regular in certain events - such as tournament die-hards and raffle freaks. These guys can reach quite a significant LTV, but it will take them more time by comparison to the supernova stars. Think these guys are overrated? Don't roll your eyes in disgust - it's not like as a child you have developed much faster than the other kids, so let's skip this discussion.

Obviously, most of the attention is given to how much they deposit/lose in terms of monetary value, and rightfully so - this is what we care about eventually, and anybody who thinks otherwise is either a regulator, or working for Paf. But going back to analysing your database, you will always look first of all at the top players and sort them according to financial results.

Let's see how we can combine the above and make some sensible tips you can start using at the office.

How about you don't just look at the players who made the most deposits, but instead look at the players who contributed the most net gaming revenue (NGR) within a certain period? Since clearly these are your money makers, you can also monitor your VIP team efforts by comparing how many of them are retained between the periods.

The benefit of this is you will end up with the players that actually fulfill the RFM concept to the dot - they have a recent activity, you aim to retain them (so here's your frequency), and we are talking about NGR as the leading KPI, so we have got them covered too.

Another interesting insight: Your largest players, for some reason, prefer your product/graphics/offering better than the others; since you don't want to see them leaving, all you need to do is ensure nothing harms their experience. Again, they already enjoy the activity (you had them at hello, so to speak), so there's no need to be pushy or salesy. By simply keeping them engaged, you are in fact granting yourself the volumes they bring with them, as when these players play, it's noticeable on any given report.

This way, you also present your VIP team with a clear goal, shifting their focus to retention rather than income, and you align the company success with your top players' satisfaction. This will be unlike the activities you conduct during your weekend visits to the nearby dungeon club. In this case, when they are happy - then instead of being in pain - you are happy.

An optimised segmentation and a correct allocation of your resources means you invest the right amount of attention to the very few who impact your business so much. With the insane amount of money our industry is making, that's pure gold. So start digging.

Shahar Attias is a globally recognised online gaming expert, with decades of experience in senior operational roles, and the founder of Hybrid Interaction Ltd., the premier online gaming consulting firm, with already dozens of successful projects across all verticals and through most jurisdictions. As a VIP



SHAHAR ATTIAS

Management specialist, Shahar is obsessed with maximising income from top players, and he's the world-leading expert when it comes to trends in retention marketing and CRM operation. Among his clients are GVC Holdings/BwinParty/Sportingbet, PokerStars, William Hill, Holland Casino, BetConstruct and NightRush, yet surprisingly enough - not you! Do yourself a favour and go find him on LinkedIn.

"YOUR LARGEST PLAYERS, FOR SOME REASON, PREFER YOUR PRODUCT/GRAPHICS/OFFERING BETTER THAN THE OTHERS; ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS ENSURE NOTHING HARMS THEIR EXPERIENCE"

EXPANDING IN-PLAY THROUGH CONTENT

Racing Post's **Will Flyer** explains how improved website content can boost in-play sports betting

Technology has rapidly changed the nature of gambling practices over the last decade. The online sports betting industry now accounts for 37% of the annual online gambling market in Europe. There has been an integration of social and technological processes that has enabled the cultural prominence of contemporary online betting. One of the biggest contributing factors to the growth of online betting is in-play betting, which has increased ten-fold in the past decade.

In-play betting has allowed operators to increase the number of markets available to bet on during sports events, and customers are able to place bets based on many different types of in-game activity during matches.

The advancement of sporting technologies and intelligence has also accelerated over the past five years. Football clubs run incredibly complex live algorithms to gather insight from their players to forecast injuries, fatigue, dips in form or when a player is not pulling their weight. Before signing a player, a club will dive into data and statistics to predict the probability of their success. Put simply, data is transforming sports.

It would make sense this translates to betting on the game. Quantitative models that combine data from a live match with betting intelligence can help inform bettors on their next decision, much in the same way tracking models mixed with data can inform sports scientists when a player is at his or her capacity.

The content angle is where this data can be used by a wider audience. While data is there to be mined, most bettors want to feel connected to an event without having to return to their A-level maths textbook to work out the probability of Eden Hazard scoring the next goal. Content which uses data and expertise to produce informed verdicts has long been around for pre-game sports, but this content is not readily available after the event starts.

In the past few years, in-play football has grown to a countless number of betting markets. The introduction of 10-minute markets has given the in-play betting experience a casino feel to it, with bets taking a shorter time to win or lose. However, to a new or relatively inexperienced bettor,



WILL FLYER

this extensive list of markets and odds can seem intimidating and discouraging.

The lack of information for bettors on all these markets impedes customer loyalty to bookmakers, damaging the chance for bookmakers to generate turnover. This problem escalates if the potential customer cannot watch or listen to the game. This is where content still remains king. Expert, engaging content can help bring the customer closer to the game, giving them the experience and information they need to make their next decision.

Research shows rich content on a sportsbook improves customer dwell time by more than 40%. Keeping customers on your sportsbook for that much longer greatly improves the conversion rate. When the content is live and changing based on the event taking place, this dwell time grows to more than 50%.

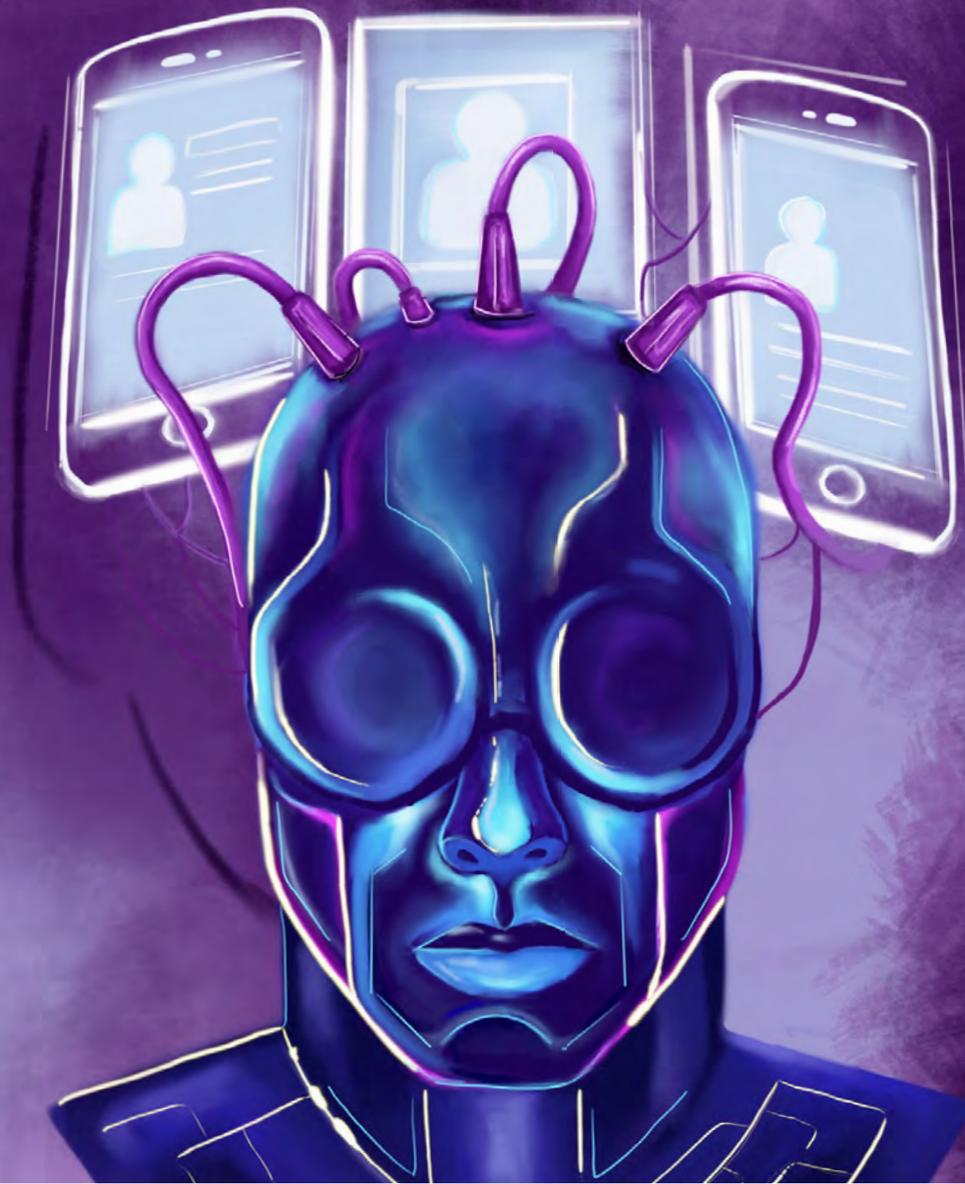
Research shows bettors are 47% more likely to place a bet after receiving a prompt. When these prompts are supported with engaging, informative content, that number increases even more.

As sports technology grows, sports betting technology is hot on its heels. Informing your customers of in-play betting opportunities through relevant engaging real-time content is the natural solution to enhancing sportsbooks, increasing turnover and bringing customers closer to the action.

"RESEARCH SHOWS BETTORS ARE 47% MORE LIKELY TO PLACE A BET AFTER RECEIVING A PROMPT. WHEN THESE PROMPTS ARE SUPPORTED WITH ENGAGING, INFORMATIVE CONTENT, THAT NUMBER INCREASES EVEN MORE"

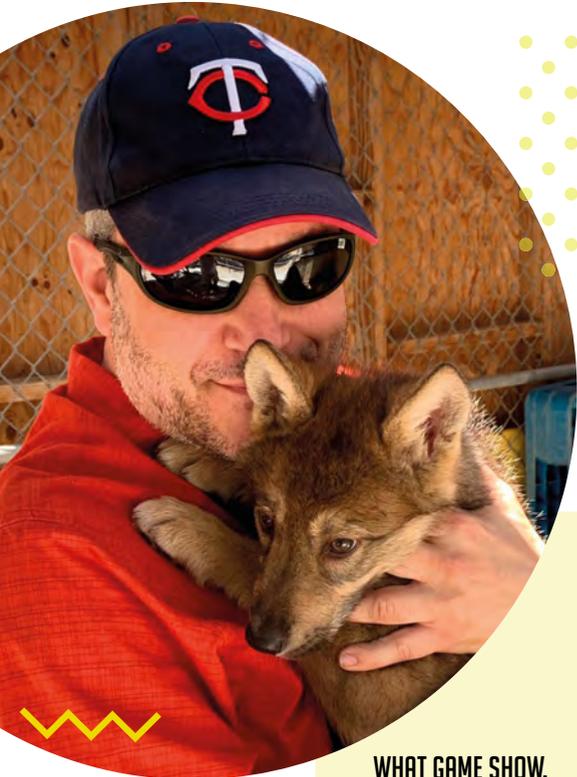
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PLAY HARD



Jason “Wolf” Rosenberg, CEO of consultancy American iGaming Solutions, takes a break from his hectic schedule and tells **Nathan Joyes** about his weird airport hobby, chasing people with vinegar and the best gig of his life

them and I thought it was a cool gift until all the Native Americans were laughing. Apparently, when they give you this gift, they expect you to have a baby and come back in a year and show it to them. So, it was a gift which had some obligations to it that I did not know about.

IF YOU WERE TO GET RID OF ONE STATE IN THE US, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

Ah man, that’s difficult, as I work here. I would have to say my hometown, North Dakota. It’s so cold there that people should not be there. It should be a big refugee sanctuary for buffalos or other animals. I left North Dakota to go to Minnesota, which is right next door, purely because it was 10 degrees warmer. Things are wrong when you have to make that decision.

WHAT’S THE WORST JOB YOU’VE EVER HAD AND HOW LONG DID YOU LAST IN IT?

I worked for a third-party company, which operated in big warehouse stores like Costco. I had to sell a cleaning solution and I had to chase women around with a paper towel, which I had to spray with vinegar and ask them to smell. They would recoil in horror, but then I’d spray it with my magical cleaning solution and then it would smell like flowers. It would break down odours in the house, basically. I literally scared a lot of people having to sell this product. I owed my girlfriend money at the time, so I had to do any kind of job which was available, but I did stick with the job for several months. You don’t want to be homeless in Minnesota when it’s -20 degrees.

WHAT GAME SHOW, PAST OR PRESENT, DO YOU THINK YOU’D BE ABLE TO WIN AND WHY?

Either Jeopardy or Who Wants To Be A Millionaire. I’m really good at useless trivia. I’ve developed a memory that has absolutely no value that I can pull out pretty quickly.

WOULD YOU RATHER FORGET WHO YOU WERE OR WHO EVERYONE ELSE WAS?

I spend a lot of time on flights, so I’d like to forget everyone else around me. I shouldn’t admit this, but I actually have a hobby of taking pictures of horrible things people are doing on flights around me. This isn’t to shame them; I just need to show other people I was not lying.

IF YOU COULD RELIVE ONE DAY WITHOUT IT AFFECTING TODAY AS YOU KNOW IT, WHAT DAY WOULD THAT BE?

I’d have to say the first gig I ever played. I was in a band; I was 19 and played at a house party at the University of Minnesota. I played guitar and drums – I can play pretty much anything I pick up, but I’m kind of bad as I never just stuck to one. I can sing too. In that particular gig, I played guitar and bass and sang and we did around 30 covers we had learned in one week. It was a pretty glorious moment.

IF YOU HAD TO INTRODUCE A NEW LAW FOR EVERYONE TO FOLLOW FOR ONE WEEK, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I’d like to introduce a law against all wars; I think we could definitely do with a week off from the horrible things which go on in the world and have a break from killing each other.

WHAT’S THE STRANGEST GIFT YOU HAVE EVER RECEIVED?

I was speaking at a tribal gaming show in New Mexico and I received a pair of little moccasins for babies. I received





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