

trafficology

AFFILIATE FOCUS BY GAMBLING INSIDER

JULY 2020

INSIDE

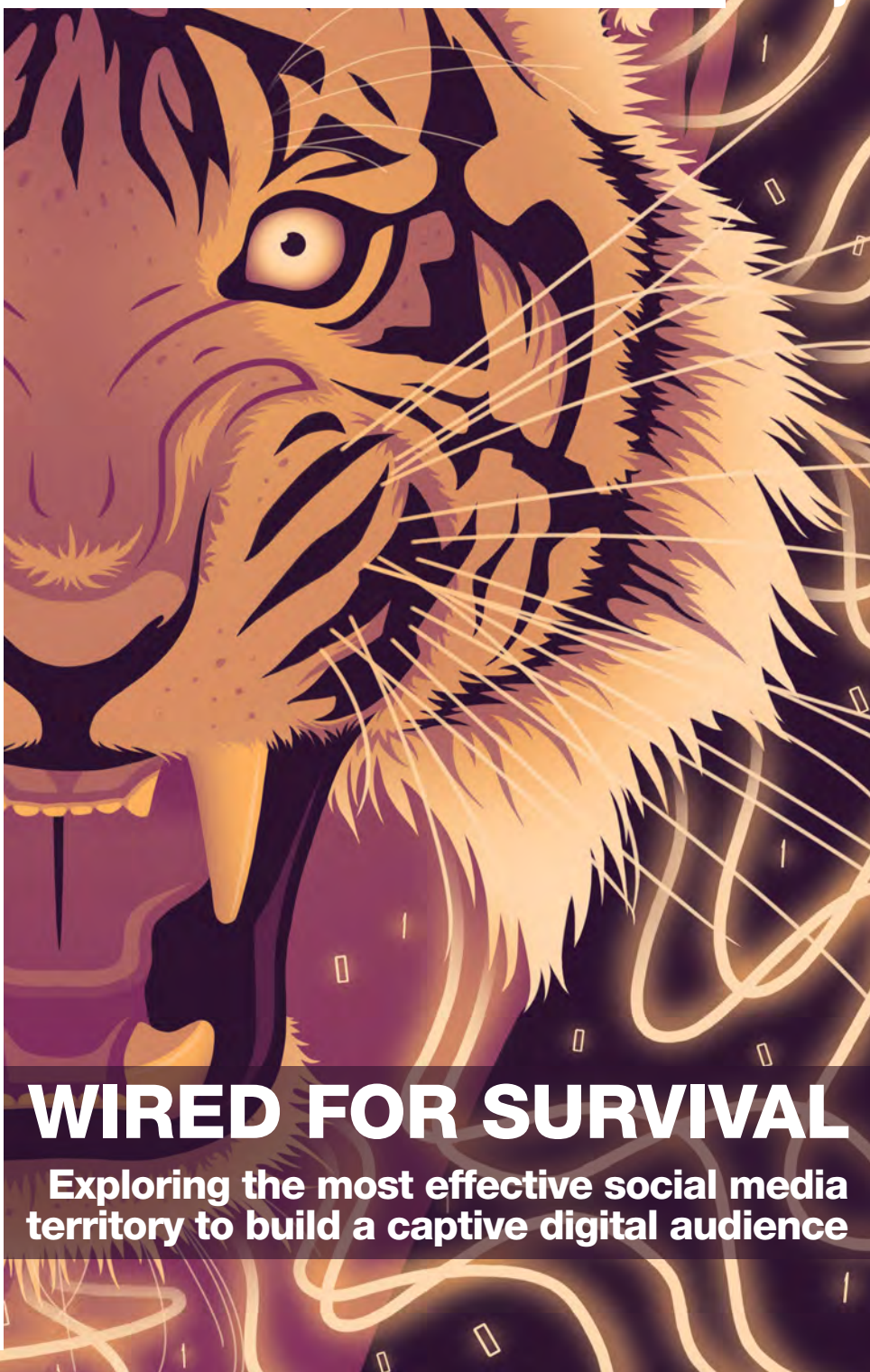
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casinosolumbus.com

TRAFFIC REPORT

Trafficology has partnered with data experts Casino City Press to provide insight into website and traffic trends across the gaming industry. Below is a breakdown of the top 20 affiliate programmes by market for May 2020, across all devices (desktop and mobile)



bet365 Affiliates



A WORLD OF
OPPORTUNITIES

SPORTS

BINGO

POKER

CASINO

GAMES

FINANCIAL

Rank	Name	Website
1	IQ Option Affiliate	affiliate.iqoption.com
2	eToro Partners	www.eturpartners.com
3	IG Markets Partners	www.ig.com/uk/market-ing-partnership
4	XM Partners	partners.xm.com
5	BinPartner	binpartner.com
6	Binary.com Affiliate Program	www.binary.com/en/affiliate-ib.html
7	Forex Affiliate	www.forex-affiliate.com
8	IC Markets Affiliate Program	www.icmarkets.com/partnerships/affiliate-program
9	AVA Partner	www.avapartner.com
10	Kingfin	kingfin.com
11	Financial Partners Marketing	fpm.global
12	The Plus500 Affiliate Program	www.500affiliates.com
13	Admiral Markets Partners	partner.admiralmarkets.com
14	Exness Partner	www.exness.com/partnership
15	FXTM Partners	www.fxtmpartners.com
16	Alpari Partners	alpari.com
17	Forex Club Affiliate	www.fxclub.org/affiliate
18	HotForex Partners	www.hfaffiliates.com
19	IFC Markets Partners	www.ifcmarkets.com/en/partnership-referral
20	OctaFX Affiliate Program	my.octafx.com/open-account/partner

AFFILIATE NETWORKS

Rank	No. of sites	Name	Website
1	4	IQ Option Affiliate	affiliate.iqoption.com
2	3	bet365 Affiliates	www.bet365affiliates.com
3	13	betway Partners Africa	www.betwaypartnersafrica.com
4	120	Bet9ja Affiliates	affiliates.bet9ja.com
5	35	Binary.com Affiliate Program	affiliates.binary.com
6	24	Sunbet Partners	www.sunbetpartners.co.za
7	41	1xBet Partners	1xpartners.com
8	12	eToro Partners	www.eturpartners.com
9	12	Sportingbet	www.sbaaffiliates.com
10	73	IC Markets Affiliate Program	www.icmarkets.com/partnerships/affiliate-program
11	67	Supa Partners	supapartners.com
12	50	Betmaster Partner Program	betmasterpartners.com
13	59	XM Partners	partners.xm.com
14	311	Kingfin	kingfin.com
15	13	HotForex Partners	www.hfaffiliates.com
16	15	ZanziBet Affiliates	www.zanzibet.com/en/affiliates
17	3	ZEurf Affiliates	affiliationen.zeturf.com
18	15	Exness Partner	www.exness.com/partnership
19	3	IG Markets Partners	www.ig.com/uk/market-ing-partnership
20	10	FXTM Partners	www.fxtmpartners.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

BINGO

Rank	Name	Website
1	Rank Affiliates	www.rankaffiliates.com
2	U-affiliates	www.uffiliates.com
3	Gamesys Group Partners	www.gamesysgrouppartners.com
4	GVC Affiliates	www.gvcaffiliates.com
5	Revenue Planet	www.revenueplanet.com
6	LuckyJar Affiliates	www.luckyjar.com/uk
7	Kindred Affiliates	www.kindredaffiliates.com
8	Gogame Partners	www.gogamepartners.com
9	NetHive Affiliate Program	www.nethive.com
10	Tau Affiliates	www.tauaffiliates.com
11	Broadway Gaming Affiliates	www.broadwaygaming.com
12	William Hill Affiliates	affiliates.williamhill.com
13	Vista Gaming Affiliates	www.vistagamingaffiliates.net
14	United Commissions	www.unitedcommissions.com
15	Butlers Bingo Affiliate Program	www.butlersbingo.com/affiliates
16	bet365 Affiliates	www.bet365affiliates.com
17	Paddy Partners	www.paddypartners.com
18	The Bingo Affiliates	www.thebingoaffiliates.com
19	Lovehearts Bingo Affiliate Program	affiliate-loveheartsbingo.bingosys.net
20	Jumpman Affiliates	www.jumpmanaffiliates.co.uk

LOTTERY

Rank	Name	Website
1	FDJ Affiliate Program	www.fdj.fr
2	Lottoland Affiliates	www.lottolandaffiliates.com
3	Michigan Lottery Affiliates	playonline.michiganlottery.com/affiliate
4	The Lotter Affiliates	www.thelotter-affiliates.com
5	Affiliate Empire	www.lottogoaffiliates.com
6	West Lotto Partners	www.westlotto.de/unternehmen/affiliate/partnerprogramm.html
7	Tipp24 Partners	www.tipp24.com/aktionen/partnerprogramm/
8	PA iLottery Affiliate Program	www.pailottery.com/p/partners
9	LottaRewards	www.lottarewards.com
10	Banana Lotto Affiliates	www.bananalotto.fr/affiliation.php
11	MultiLotto.com Affiliates	www.multilottoaffiliates.com
12	Giant Affiliates	giantaffiliates.com
13	The Health Lottery Affiliate Program	www.healthlottery.co.uk/affiliates
14	LottoElite	www.lottoelite.com/affiliates
15	MyLotto	www.mylotto.com
16	Lottobay Affiliate Program	www.lottobay.de/partnerprogramm.html
17	LottoHoy Affiliates	lotohoyaffiliates.com
18	LottoHoy Affiliates	affiliates.boylesports.com
19	Boylesports Affiliate Program	lotteryofficeaffiliates.com
20	Megalotto Affiliates	www.megalottoaffiliates.com



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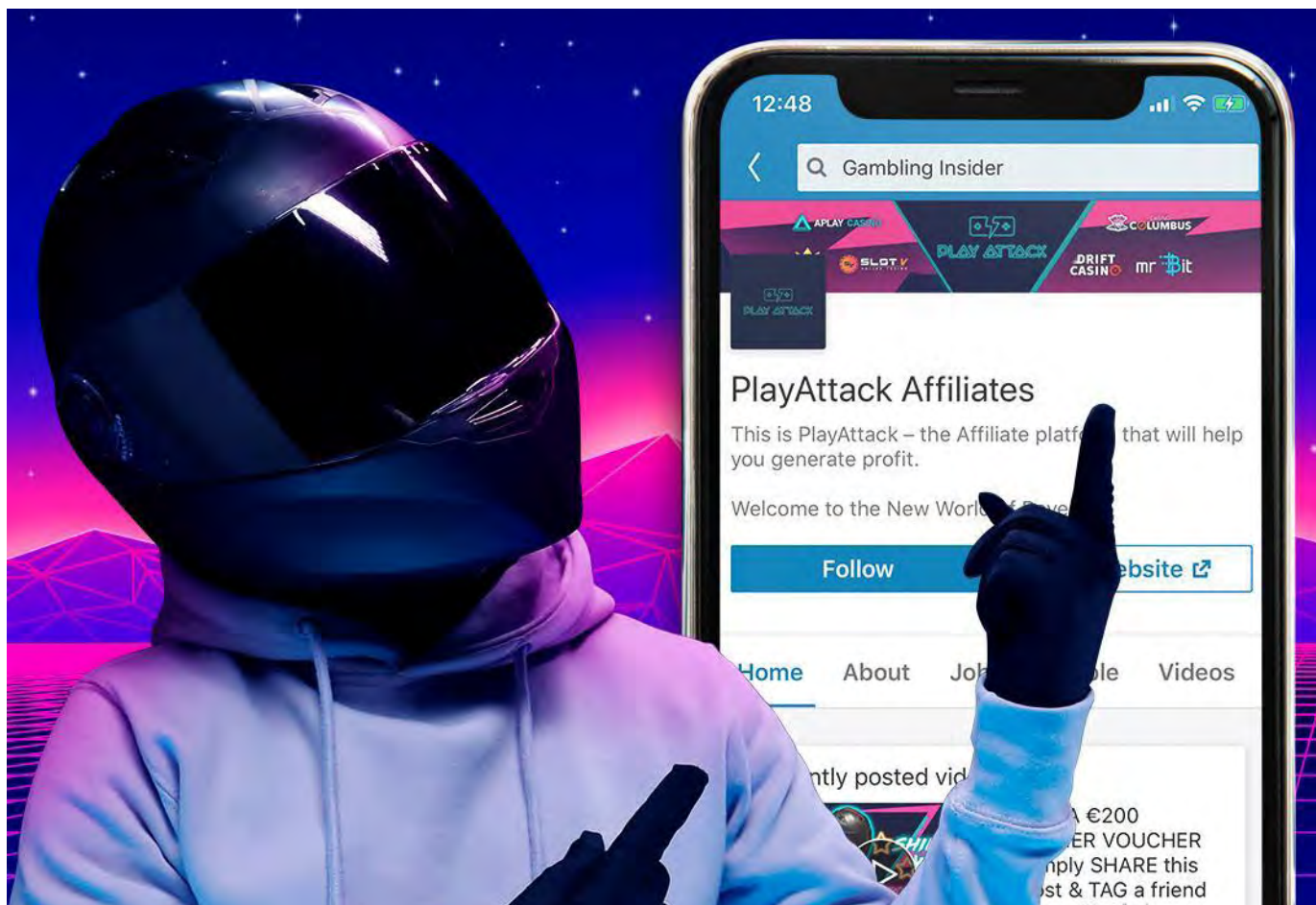
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STANDING OUT ON LINKEDIN

PlayAttack's **Helmet Guy** speaks to Trafficology about new market updates and why LinkedIn is the affiliate programme's most important B2B social medium



HOW DID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AFFECT PLAYATTACK FROM A BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE?

Undeniably, the pandemic had a massive effect on the gambling industry and the economy overall. The publicly available reports and the personal conversations I've had with friends in the industry showed that companies suffered huge losses, and a lot of people were made redundant. Fortunately for us, this was not the case. We actually grew our team by hiring affiliate managers for the DACH and Scandinavian markets.

We can all agree that COVID-19 changed our habits. However, PlayAttack has always had employees scattered across the world, so we were already used to the whole video conferencing routine. We organised daily meetings to catch up, talk business, brainstorm,

and, well, keep each other sane. But I have to admit I've missed vibing with my folks in the office.

On the business side of things, we were again quite lucky. All PlayAttack brands have a focus on casino, so we didn't take a significant hit. And with the affiliate team growing, we managed to increase the number of affiliates we work with.

YOU'VE PREVIOUSLY SPOKEN TO TRAFFICOLOGY ABOUT YOUR USE OF VIDEO, BUT HOW IMPORTANT IS SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PLAYATTACK?

It feels very outdated to speak about the power of social media. I honestly think there's nothing to add to that discourse. We live in a world where social media dominates our attention. Putting ourselves out there is not a choice. It's an absolute necessity.

I'd like to believe PlayAttack is not an affiliate platform that purely relies on the work of affiliate managers to attract traffic. We invest in our marketing activities and social media is a big part of it. Yes, video has proven to be a medium that works really well for PlayAttack. People just keep coming for more. But would our videos have such an impact without the reach of social media? I'd say it's a rhetorical question. And yes, I know I look pretty damn good on camera, so maybe that's what it's all about.

Our primary goal with our social media was to create a brand people recognise, so we use loads of social media channels – YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn, which we consider our main platform.

Being in B2B, we felt like we needed to go the extra mile to attract attention. We had to sit down and think about what content would work for us. Our main rule is to not post for the sake of posting. So our content is centred around things like industry news, tournaments on our brands, affiliate contests, etc. – things our audience might find useful.

WHY IS LINKEDIN YOUR MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL MEDIA OUTLET?

I remember a brainstorming session we had to discuss the pros and cons of each social media platform for PlayAttack. This was the briefest session ever held within the PlayAttack walls. Everyone was just so sure about their opinion – we all said LinkedIn.

Our reasoning was quite simple. We're an affiliate company working in a B2B environment, and LinkedIn is the perfect space that gives you immediate access to industry professionals and decision-makers. LinkedIn also allows you to get useful insights right away; we researched our competitors and made some strategic decisions based on their content and engagement rates.

Even though we don't yet have thousands of followers, it seems like we made the right decision to invest in LinkedIn. Our social media growth is very steady since we created our profile back in mid-February. We actually just closed a yearly deal with LinkedIn to be able to use it to the fullest.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU OFFER ABOUT STANDING OUT ON LINKEDIN WITHIN THE B2B GAMING COMMUNITY?

When we were designing our social media strategy, we all agreed we didn't want to be just an affiliate platform offering amazing commission plans. You definitely have to be top-notch on the business side of the things to remain competitive and effectively promote your product. The key, however, is to know your strengths and believe in your product.

As a brand ambassador, I believe it's crucial. If you don't think your product is unique and you don't know what you as a company have to offer, you certainly can't expect to stand out. Social media might give you a huge opportunity to be noticed, but the abundance of choices makes it essential to narrow it down to what truly matters.

Also remember that there are actual people behind each business. The human-centric approach is rarely given proper credit in B2B due to the nature of the industry. Your choices really matter when you address humans, especially when you're trying to convince them you're worthy of their attention. So, for instance, the way I speak, the way I move in the videos

“OUR MAIN RULE IS TO NOT POST FOR THE SAKE OF POSTING. SO OUR CONTENT IS CENTRED AROUND THINGS LIKE INDUSTRY NEWS, TOURNAMENTS ON OUR BRANDS, AFFILIATE CONTESTS, ETC. – THINGS OUR AUDIENCE MIGHT FIND USEFUL”

(and my glorious personality, of course) – all this is part of the process, or rather our social media strategy.

WHAT'S NEW FOR PLAYATTACK IN TERMS OF MARKETS AND STRATEGY?

Well, there will be more of me. People are starting to recognise me, which means we achieved our main goal for Q2.

It's no secret that we've assembled a new team based in Malta, which has now been taking care of the MGA and the SGA side of things. So even though PlayAttack is not exactly a newcomer, we only started to pave our way into the “regulated markets” at the end of 2019, which means we had to define our strategy, goals and KPIs all from scratch.

In Q3 we'll have new campaigns, more content and videos, and I'll hopefully get to attend the conferences (if they're still happening). I don't want to be someone who simply pops on your screen. I want to meet our affiliates, talk to them, hear what they have to say and build personal relationships.

Also, I have a juicy spoiler for you. One of our brands, MrBit, is ready to join the MGA squad, and the rest of our brands will follow the same path. The plan is to enter 2021 with six MGA-licensed brands, which means our affiliates will have more chances to drive traffic.

HAS YOUR APPROACH BEEN DIFFERENT ENTERING THESE NEW MARKETS AND HOW HAVE YOU OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES THIS PRESENTED?

Absolutely! It's not just that the markets are regulated, they also differ from each other. We've been following the situation in Sweden, for instance, and all these changes (no matter how we feel about them) have to be implemented pretty much immediately. Plus, fines are not exactly rare, so yeah, it's the real deal.

We've recently launched a new website specifically for our affiliates interested in driving traffic to our MGA and SGA-licensed brands. We've changed the registration form, added a more structured and hopefully comprehensive way to present our brands and welcome offers, and made sure everything, including our news, articles and video reports, is gathered under one roof.

On a positive note, our team in Malta has plenty of experience working with the MGA and SGA, so this transition was quite smooth for us. They know what they're doing.

The background is a dark, textured collage. At the top left are three circular roulette wheels. At the top right is a large, detailed roulette wheel with a ball in motion. Below the roulette wheels are several playing cards, including a fan of cards and individual cards like the Ace of Spades. In the bottom left, there is a cricket player in a batting stance. In the bottom right, there is a soccer player kicking a ball. In the center, there is a tennis racket and a soccer ball.

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PROTECTING THROUGH EDUCATION

Daniel Dolejsi, social media and community manager at Casino Guru, talks to Iqbal Johal about why education to promote safe play is more important than ever, and how a global self-exclusion scheme could help protect players

HAVE YOU SEEN A RISE IN ONLINE CASINO ACTIVITY DURING LOCKDOWN, BOTH AT CASINO GURU AND IN THE INDUSTRY IN GENERAL?

Activity at Casino Guru has risen by more than 50% during lockdown. People said they found us by searching for more information about online casinos during the lockdown period. Considering land-based casinos were closed and sports betting was basically non-existent, the increase wasn't as high as it could've been. It doesn't mean most people who are used to betting on sport or going to land-based casinos moved to online casinos. That's not true. Either way the increase was significant, 50% is still a lot.

The most significant increase was with the free game section. Probably people were bored being stuck at home with nothing to do so they wanted to play games without spending money. The free games section was the most popular one so we added more games, and noticed most people wanted to play but didn't want to lose anything. They couldn't win either, but they just wanted to have fun.

DID CASINO GURU HAVE TO CHANGE ANYTHING TO COPE WITH THE SUBSTANTIAL RISE IN ACTIVITY?

I don't think we had to change anything significantly on our website despite the rise in activity because the website is built in a good way, with the recommended casinos for every specific country. So when we had someone coming from Germany, they could see completely different information than someone coming from the UK. Depending on which country you're in, you can view it in your native language, so, for example, if you're in Spain you can see it in Spanish. If they really enjoy the games, we always have links to casinos where you can play the specific games. That's what they can do but we didn't want to force anyone or send emails or notifications encouraging someone to make a deposit after playing a free game. I think it wouldn't be the moral thing to do during this period.

We focus on education and providing the most honest reviews on casinos. Since the crisis, we haven't needed to change much, we just continued developing new features, adding new languages and publishing new articles as usual.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT AN INCREASE IN ONLINE GAMBLING ACROSS THE INDUSTRY BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC WILL RESULT IN INCREASED PROBLEM GAMBLING?

We led interviews with random players and some of them admitted they played more than usual online during the lockdown. On the other hand, we can't claim the number of players with gambling issues will rise, since land-based casinos were closed and sports betting was more or less cancelled.

It depends on what type of player they are. If you used to bet on sports every day, then it was probably beneficial for you to take a break during the lockdown. If you were used to playing in an online casino from time to time but you started playing more because you had nothing else to do, then it could be dangerous for you and you need to make sure you get back to your old habits and pastime activities once the measures are limited. Potentially, these types of players could get addicted more easily.

HOW HAS CASINO GURU HELPED ITS PLAYERS DURING THE PERIOD OF SELF-ISOLATION?

I don't think there's much we could do specifically during the pandemic, it's a long-term process. I believe the best way to protect the players is by educating them on how online casinos



DANIEL DOLEJSI



work, because when you understand how the business works, it's easier for you to assess the risk while playing. That's what we were used to doing before so it was nothing new to us. It's our main goal to educate the players. That's how we try to protect them but it's not because of the COVID-19 crisis, as that's been our focus since we started four years ago.

We publish articles helping players understand how slots work, how popular table games like roulette or blackjack work. We help them to understand different casino related terms, like RTP (return-to-player), and how it influences game play.

We inform them about options related to responsible gambling because some casinos have them and some don't, so we always prefer to promote casinos that behave responsibly towards players. We actually published a video explaining how slots really work, during the lockdown period, which was a pretty big thing as we worked for one or two months on it.

The crisis wasn't an exceptional situation for us because we do this sort of stuff to help and inform players on a regular basis, so we just continued doing what we always did.

CAN MORE BE DONE IN THE INDUSTRY FOR PLAYER SAFETY AND MENTAL HEALTH, PARTICULARLY IN THIS PERIOD?

More can be done from a player safety point of view. It would be great to create standards and guidelines about how casinos should approach responsible gambling, which measures to take and which tools to implement in order to protect players. And also how to approach and identify potential problem gambling. Maybe some smaller and new online casinos would like to behave responsibly but they don't know how. They don't have enough resources to carry out the research. There could be guidelines that would help them and is another way Casino Guru could help.

Another tool I would mention that would work is a global self-exclusion tool because currently there's nothing like it, which would be used by players who already feel they have gambling issues. It would help them to exclude from all casinos in the world. I know you have GamStop, which is mostly for the UK, and other countries have their own self-exclusion schemes. But there's no global self-exclusion tool that would allow this at the moment and Casino Guru would love to help create it. That's one of our big projects for the future, to help create a global self-exclusion tool for all the casinos in the world.

It'll be a big project but we're investing quite a lot of resources to it in terms of money and human resources. It's a long-term

process and we'll definitely need help from different licensing authorities, but I think we're able to find even the smallest casinos in the world. We have a pretty big database with almost 3,000 casinos in it.

If countries and licensing authorities would like to have something like that, I believe it would be possible. Our job is to show to the licensing authorities that it's a good tool to have. I believe the UK Gambling Commission or the gambling authorities in Sweden, Malta and Denmark, for example, will be interested. It's just another tool to protect the players and that's what the regulatory authorities should be interested in.

There's not much point in using GamStop in the UK when you can start playing in another casino that has a license outside of it. We've seen many cases where players self-excluded themselves in the UK so they couldn't play in any casino that has a licence there. But they just start searching for other casinos, and obviously most of those casinos won't be as good as those who have a licence in the UK. Under one global self-exclusion scheme, they wouldn't be able to do that.

WILL AN ACCELERATION IN ONLINE GAMBLING HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON THE INDUSTRY?

The transition to online is certainly good for Casino Guru because we're a website focusing on online casino so when people move from land-based casinos, which we're not interested in, then obviously it's good for us. The acceleration to online depends on the country and culture, because I'm afraid that since online gambling is much more accessible, it's more dangerous in terms of getting addicted to gambling.

It's better for our company, but generally speaking, I don't think it's a good trend to transfer the whole industry to online. In the 1990s people were going to Las Vegas, and yes they were losing money, but they came home and that was it. But when you have the option to play anytime and from anywhere, it's a different case and you can get addicted without knowing how it happened.

"I BELIEVE THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT THE PLAYERS IS BY EDUCATING THEM ON HOW ONLINE CASINOS WORK, BECAUSE WHEN YOU UNDERSTAND HOW THE BUSINESS WORKS, IT'S EASIER FOR YOU TO ASSESS THE RISK WHILE PLAYING"

RISKING MARKET LEGITIMACY

From 2 July, new measures in Sweden were introduced by the government until the end of the year that include a SEK 5,000 (\$535) weekly deposit limit for online casino and slots, as well as time limits on play. Iqbal Johal spoke with **Ewout Wierda**, general counsel at Videoslots, one of Sweden's leading online casinos, to discuss his fears of the impact the new measures could have



EWOUT WIERDA

THE MARKET IS ALREADY HEAVILY RESTRICTED SO HOW CONCERNED SHOULD WE BE THAT MORE PLAYERS WILL BE FORCED TO THE BLACK MARKET AS A RESULT?

We should be very concerned. The Swedish government itself aims for a channelisation rate of 90%, accepting that 10% of players will not be protected by the licensing regime. That percentage will mainly be the group of players who need protection the most and for whom risk-based player protection was created. We believe the black market is even higher than that and will boom even more when the further restrictions are introduced.

INSTEAD, WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE DONE DURING THE CURRENT PANDEMIC, TO HELP PROTECT THE PLAYERS?

Now that several countries are starting to ease the lockdown, sports betting will soon revive and operators should keep a close eye on punters who become over-enthusiastic. For regulators, it's already too late to deal with the pandemic by changing or introducing new regulations. What would help players however is if mandatory, player-set loss limits were required instead of one-size-fits-all deposit restrictions. We have a positive experience with this at Videoslots and contact the players who ask to change the limit. Loss is the easiest measure to understand, and deposit limits are simply not realistic with pay-and-play and instant withdrawals becoming the norm.

IN TERMS OF THE ALREADY RESTRICTED SWEDISH MARKET, WHAT ARE THE AREAS YOU THINK ARE MOST RESTRICTED AND HOW CAN THE REGULATIONS BE MORE BALANCED?

Aside from bonus and deposit limits, the regulations are fairly balanced, but enforcement is harsher than necessary. This is true especially in light of the channelisation rate being much below the government's target. Many of the Swedish requirements are not clearly worded, and the regulator should continue on the path of being more open to communication, discussion and constructive solutions to compliance issues with the industry.

The restriction to only allow one welcome bonus per player and licensee was not a good idea as it doesn't really reduce problem gambling. It distorts the competition among licensees and strengthens the position of operators outside the licensing regime. In other words, it removes protection from those who need it the most and benefits operators who don't invest in licensing or pay tax in the country. Licensees should be allowed a 100% channelisation rate if the regulations are actually about player protection, as it rightly should be. While the target is 90%, the reality is indicating it's around 80% for online casino. If channelisation drops to around 50% due to the new measures, the licensing regime will lose its legitimacy.

CAN YOU PROVIDE SOME INFORMATION ON YOUR BACKGROUND INTO THE LEGAL SIDE OF THE GAMBLING INDUSTRY?

For the last five years, I have been responsible for legal and compliance at two tier-one operators, currently at Videoslots. I joined the industry after working for the gambling regulator in the Netherlands, where a large part of my role was preparing new online gambling legislation and how to best strike a balance between rigorous licensing requirements and ensuring high channelisation rates in the market.

YOU'VE PREVIOUSLY SPOKEN ABOUT THE TEMPORARY MEASURES IN SWEDEN BEING UNNECESSARY. WHY DO YOU BELIEVE THAT'S THE CASE?

First of all, the Swedish government has not been able to show that there has been a significant increase in activity and a problematic shift towards problem gambling. Where there is an increased risk, the Swedish regulations already require advanced risk-based player protection measures to be in place. This covers the risks of boredom, depression and anxiety associated with the pandemic. The measures will start in July, much too late to help players during the pandemic in lockdown. In any case, our experience has shown that simplistic limits do not improve customer protection and will in fact have an adverse effect as we expect many players will turn to unlicensed operators that are not offering proper player protection tools if these measures are introduced.



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SURVIVING THE STORM

Tal Ben Yehuda, head of sports at freebets.com by XLMedia, speaks to Tim Poole about the return of Premier League betting, and how the affiliate weathered the lack of major sport during the coronavirus pandemic



Trafficology and *AffiliateCon Virtually Live* both addressed the lack of major sports in-depth during the COVID-19 pandemic, as affiliates and operators looked to fill the void left by the absence of football, horse racing and other key revenue sources. Now that the Premier League, German Bundesliga, Spanish La Liga, Italian Serie A, UK horse racing and more have returned, however, sports betting companies find themselves emerging again.

For Tal Ben Yehuda, head of sports at freebets.com, this means the welcome return of higher betting volumes, along with a serious boost in offers and odds promotions from the operator side. We caught up with the affiliate to find out the current state of play for football bettors in the UK market, as well as look at how freebets.com navigated life without major sport during the peak of the coronavirus pandemic.

NOW THAT PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL HAS RETURNED, IT'S A LITTLE DIFFERENT WITH EMPTY STADIUMS. ARE PEOPLE BETTING LESS IN

THE CURRENT CLIMATE AND IS THERE EVIDENCE THIS IS BECAUSE OF A LACK OF CROWDS?

The contrary would be true. From 15 March when everything stopped until pretty much the Bundesliga returning, what we did see is that people still bet on sports, wherever it was played – mostly in Belarus. But we saw a nice spike as the German Bundesliga restarted 16 May. A month later, when the Premier League returned, it was another huge spike, along with La Liga and Serie A. We always knew football was a big deal for the UK bettors, but we could clearly see a flat line and you could add on sports and see their direct effect.

DURING THE FLAT LINE, WHAT WAS THE PLAN FOR FREEBETS.COM? DID YOU MOVE INTO OTHER VERTICALS OR KEEP THE FOCUS ON NICHE SPORTS?

It was both; offering everything and anything that was going on. There were bettors still reaching our site, looking for some



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TAL BEN YEHUDA

distraction, something to do at home. We offered the online gaming options – casino, online bingo and poker, with poker seeing a big surge during COVID-19 around the world. We did offer the two buzz niches: esports and virtual sports, but we did see that people still preferred real sports.

WITH MAJOR SPORTS LEAGUES HAVING RETURNED, ARE YOU CONCENTRATING LESS ON THOSE KINDS OF STOP GAPS OR IS THERE STILL ROOM FOR ESPORTS AND VIRTUALS IN YOUR VIEW?

You have your resources, then you can allocate them. Obviously, everything has gone back to the football leagues, mainly the Premier League, and UK horse racing returning on 1 June was also huge. Everything is now on football. During those couple of months prior, everything went to the niches I specified. We aren't totally ignoring them at the moment but it's at a much lower volume. We did have the time to build up esports to a greater level than we offered it before. Now we're still doing it on a lower volume, providing updated offers and options for whomever wants it.

HOW IS THE LACK OF CROWDS AFFECTING WHAT IS ACTUALLY WAGERED? OPERATORS HAVE SPOKEN ABOUT AN INCREASE IN AWAY TEAM BETTING, FOR EXAMPLE.

As an affiliate site, we'll have welcome offers and the best offers towards these games. These include specific odds and it was very apparent in the Bundesliga that more away teams were getting more points. That manifests itself on the odds offered but we aren't privy to what people are actually betting on, from the brand side.

HOW DIFFERENT ARE THE OFFERS BEING SENT OUT BY OPERATORS AT THE MOMENT?

There are definitely more. As an affiliate, we're privy to what brands are sending us. If it was one offer per brand per weekend, suddenly we're receiving three or four offers, goals scored here, odds there. There is much more to take advantage of with football coming back. Players are thirsty for action and we see much more offered by brands.

WITH THE AMOUNT OF ACTION WE'RE GOING TO SEE IN THE COMING WEEKS, WILL THERE BE SO MUCH BETTING IT'LL ACTUALLY MAKE UP FOR THE LULL OF PREVIOUS MONTHS?

That's a great question. I'll have a much better answer when the Premier League ends. But I was just talking about it with another content writer on freebets.com. Football is back, full capacity, there's a game every day. But Liverpool did clinch the title before the end of June, so I'm very curious to see how that would affect betting. Last year, the title went to the last day and we saw the high volumes hold across the month of May, whereas usually you see a bit of a downward trend. The fact Manchester City and Liverpool went all the way during May, we saw high volumes throughout the month, which was great for us and the brands. It'll be interesting to see how the two factors combine during the rest of July. We have Premier League, La Liga and Serie A, and then the Champions League starts in August. But I'm interested to see how these two factors affect things.

SPEAKING OF THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE, HOW DO YOU THINK THE SHORTENED VERSION OF THE TOURNAMENT WILL IMPACT INTEREST LEVELS AND BETTING VOLUMES IN AUGUST?

Again, I'm curious to see the impact. I'm excited about the event being a vacuum, all in one go. Usually, with so many different sports and tournaments, if we send traffic on a normal weekend, it's difficult for us to know what players actually bet on with the brands. But now, between 7-23 August, the Champions League will be the only main football going on, especially in Europe. It'll be interesting to see the volumes when the Champions League is in a bubble. My best estimation would be quite a bit. I think and hope again it will be enough action for UK bettors.

“IF IT WAS ONE OFFER PER BRAND PER WEEKEND, SUDDENLY WE’RE RECEIVING THREE OFFERS, FOUR OFFERS, GOALS SCORED HERE, ODDS THERE”



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CASINO BRANDS

COHESIVE COMPLIANCE

Trafficology spoke with Responsible Affiliates in Gambling (RAiG) chairman **Clive Hawkswood** to find out why the group supports plans for a statutory licensing regime for affiliates in the UK market.



RAiG aims to help raise standards in the UK affiliate sector, particularly regarding responsible gambling.

The group recently pledged its support for a statutory licensing regime for affiliates in the UK market. The trade association, whose members include *Racing Post*, Oddschecker and Better Collective, mentioned its support is subject to being provided more detail of any proposed system.

FIRST, COULD YOU EXPLAIN A BIT ABOUT WHAT YOU SEE THIS NEW LICENSING SYSTEM ENTAILING?

There are precedents in other jurisdictions, which point at some of the areas that might be covered, but every jurisdiction is different, and we fully accept that agreeing detailed licensing conditions is never straightforward. However, from a UK perspective, which is where RAiG's interest lies, a licensing system needs to address clear areas of perceived and real regulatory weakness. From talking to various stakeholders these tend to distil down into three broad questions. Who are all these affiliates? Can they be relied upon to market gambling in a socially responsible manner? And how do we ensure they play their part in creating a safer gambling environment?

We have said all along that existing rules (such as CAP/BCAP codes) and procedures (such as those applied by operators via contracts with affiliates) go a long way to providing comfort on these points, but if they don't go far enough then we have

suggested licensing should focus on some form of traditional fit and proper test, and adherence to minimum social responsibility conditions.

All regulation brings with it costs, in terms of both financial and resources, but there is no reason that a light touch and inexpensive regime could not be established if it focuses on a very limited number of objectives.

WHAT BENEFITS DO YOU SEE THIS HAVING FOR THE UK GAMING INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE?

Everything currently should be seen against two main backdrops. The first is the need to make sure that all parts of the industry are fully playing their part in the wider safer gambling agenda. We could list all sorts of reasons for doing so, but quite simply it's the right thing to do. The second, and there is no hiding from this, is that the industry's reputation with politicians and the media is pretty much as low as it can go. To say that's a dangerous position to be would be an understatement.

So, anything we can do to rectify that needs to be seriously considered and the licensing of affiliates can only serve to improve the sector's reputation. At the moment, it's too easy a target. Of course, much can and is being done by affiliates themselves, but only a licensing regime can guarantee comparable standards are adopted by all and that real sanctions are in place for those who fail to meet those standards.

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From a lobbying perspective and getting the sector's views heard and accounted for, licensed entities have a status that others do not. For example, at present the Gambling Commission can consider all kinds of regulatory actions that could impact directly on affiliates without any requirement to consult them. It means that decisions can be taken, and then imposed by operators, without affiliates having any real input. A licensing or registration regime would change that and should also enable affiliate participation in national consumer protection and self-exclusion tools to ensure the broader reach and impact of these measures.

For operators, it would largely remove the burden of individually policing affiliate partners for regulatory compliance. For affiliates, it would provide a cohesive, unified approach to compliance standards and requirements rather than the various interpretations that they have to grapple with at the moment.

THE RAIG'S STATEMENT OF SUPPORT MENTIONS THAT YOU CARRIED OUT A THOROUGH INTERNAL REVIEW INTO SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SAFER GAMBLING STANDARDS IN THE AFFILIATE MARKETING SECTOR. COULD YOU EXPLAIN WHAT YOU FOUND WITHIN THAT REVIEW?

The review was about the pros and cons of licensing rather than all safer gambling initiatives and standards in the sector. Not surprisingly we found that there were valid arguments for and against it. But for me, the key argument made was that in such a diverse sector, where we even struggle to agree a definition for what constitutes an affiliate, the only way to ensure that everyone plays by the same rules and, in the area of player protection, applies the same safeguards, is by way of some form of statutory approval process.



RECENTLY, A REPORT BY THE HOUSE OF COMMONS PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE CALLED FOR A "RADICAL OVERHAUL" OF THE GAMBLING COMMISSION, WHICH IT DESCRIBED AS "TOOTHLESS". IN YOUR OWN OPINION, HOW DO YOU THINK THE GAMBLING COMMISSION IS PERFORMING AS A REGULATOR? AND WOULD THE COMMISSION BE THE IDEAL CANDIDATE TO ENFORCE THIS AFFILIATE LICENSING REGIME?

My personal view, and one I have held for some time, is that compared to regulators in many other jurisdictions, with whom I have had first-hand experience, the Commission still rates near the top. Have they made mistakes and done things that I have disagreed with? Absolutely. But the complexity of the regulatory challenges they have to face makes that inevitable. Something of a Commission-bashing bandwagon seems to be developing following a series of critical public reports, but I would caution the industry from jumping on it. It follows that while I might not say the Commission is an ideal candidate to license affiliates, I do believe it's the best option available to us.

DO YOU THINK A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF AFFILIATES WOULD LEAVE THE BRITISH MARKET IF A LICENSING REGIME WAS ENFORCED?

It would be disappointing if that was the case. Diversity and competition within the sector are two of its strengths and should be protected. The key is to ensure the licensing regime is proportionate so that fees for smaller affiliates reflect the size of their businesses, and that the licensing conditions serve to aid the protection of consumers without being so restrictive that they effectively drive people out of business.

WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROACHING REVIEW OF THE GAMBLING ACT 2005? DO YOU THINK THERE WILL BE MUCH REGULATORY OVERHAUL?

I'm still not persuaded that there's an appetite within the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to review every aspect of gambling again, but it's inevitable that they'll want to look closely at online gambling and marketing. It would be easy to see a bill coming forward on that basis, and it would be hard to find any politician who would not support that. For want of a better phrase, it could easily turn into a witch hunt with little or no concern for the commercial consequences that it might have for every part of the food chain, including affiliates.

SOME AFFILIATES ACROSS EUROPE HAVE BEEN CRITICISED FOR TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THEIR MARKETING CAMPAIGNS. IN YOUR OWN OPINION, HOW HAVE THOSE IN THE BRITISH MARKET BEHAVED DURING THE CURRENT CRISIS?

It's a sad fact that whole industries can be judged by the actions of a few irresponsible actors, and it's well known that a couple of dubious campaigns have been launched. But from everything I've seen, the vast majority of affiliates have acted with a great sense of responsibility.



CLIVE HAWKSWOOD



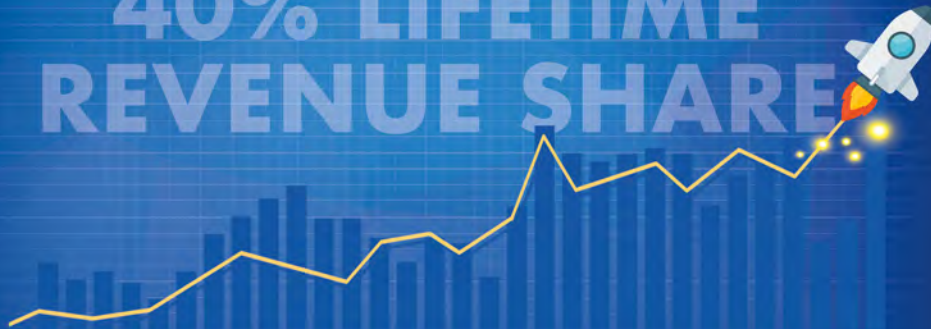
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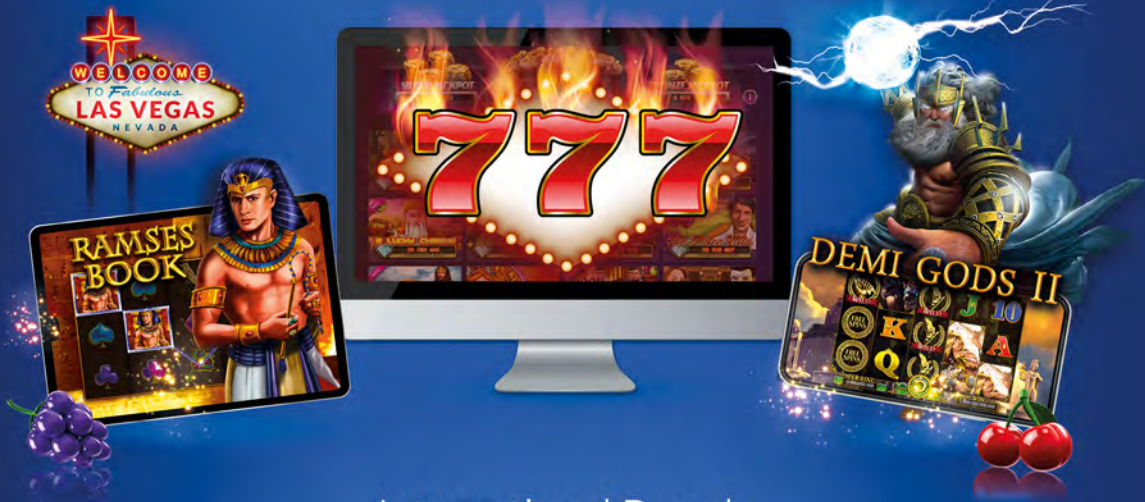


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PLAY HARD

Andreza Majela, affiliates & partnerships manager at Campeón Gaming Partners reveals her favourite summer meals and running marathons to burn them off

YOU'VE BEEN IN THE GAMING INDUSTRY FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS. WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT WORKING WITH AFFILIATES? WHAT DREW YOU TO THE SECTOR?

The best thing about working with affiliates is it's such a dynamic and fast-paced environment; everybody is just moving so quickly. I think the greatest thing is that not everybody is so corporate. Everyone is still doing business but having fun while they do so.

I really love people and I am very social, so from the beginning when I heard about affiliation, I thought it suits me and from there on, I think I just fell in love with affiliation marketing and everything that comes with it, such as selling to affiliates and helping to guide them through our casinos, so I think it was all about that.

AND THE FUNNIEST STORY DURING YOUR TIME IN THE GAMING INDUSTRY?

There's a couple, but one in particular was kind of funny and kind of frustrating. We were at our first conference where we had a stand in Malta, and we had to set up the whole stand by ourselves, because it was the first time we were actually participating in a big event with a stand.

Some of us had to go and pick up the merchandising, and some of us had to stay at the stand building area. We had rented a van and on our way to pick up the merchandising, there was a blackout, and we were wondering how we were going to do this. We couldn't find anything and nothing would fit inside the van. So we decided not to return empty handed and went back with a couple of beers and joined the rest of the team who were inside the conference centre and leave it for the next day because it was quite frustrating.

AS SOMEONE WHO IS VERY WELL TRAVELLED, IF YOU HAD TO PICK ONE COUNTRY THAT YOU'VE BEEN TO, TO LIVE IN FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, WHICH ONE WOULD YOU CHOOSE AND WHY?

I think that's a very difficult question for me. I'm from Brazil but I was born in France, then after that I moved to the Dominican Republic, have lived in Uruguay, Turkey, a couple of months in Burkina Faso and now I live in Greece. If I had to pick one I would like to say Greece because it's so similar in culture to Brazil and everything is so fluid,

which is the best description I have as everything just flows, and everybody is just so chilled and relaxed.

WITH THAT IN MIND THEN, GREECE IS WELL KNOWN FOR ITS GREAT FOOD, BUT WHAT WOULD BE YOUR GO TO GREEK DISH FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR?

I think if you come here in the summer, you must have some kind of seafood, so I would say grilled octopus or grilled calamari with a glass of ouzo is the best thing you could possibly have at any time of the day, even for breakfast.

HOW DO YOU LIKE TO WIND DOWN AND RELAX AFTER A LONG DAY AT CAMPEÓN GAMING PARTNERS?

After work, we like to go out for a drink, we normally do a weekly drinks with our colleagues here. Going out for a drink and just unwinding and talking about the day. Nothing special but a good way to relax at the end of the day. My usual would have to be a gin and tonic in any season really, whether its summer or winter I would say it's my go to beverage, after water of course.

ARE YOU AN OUTDOOR ADVENTURE OR DAY AT THE BEACH WITH A COCKTAIL, SORT OF PERSON?

I'm very much an outdoor kind of person. I cannot stay sitting down for too long, so I like to explore everything. I love running and it's very nice running around Greece, although the centre can usually be very crowded with tourists, but right now during the coronavirus, it's empty so it's perfect to go around town and run. You can actually see the city because there's no large crowds. I've also run two marathons in Athens too, which they say it's one of the hardest ones to do because there's so many hills, it's insane.



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