

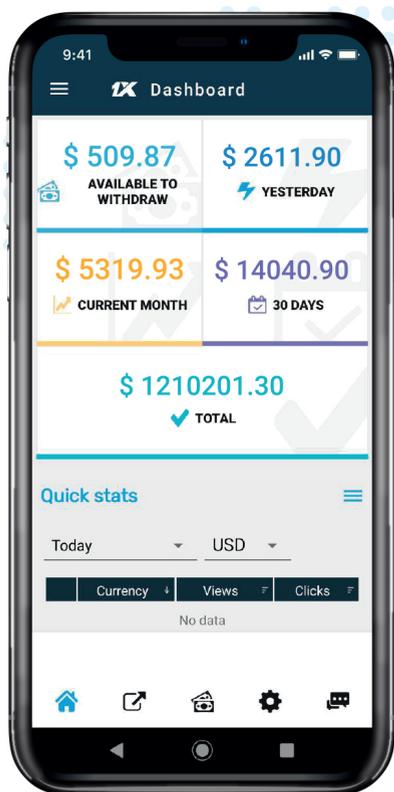
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OCTOBER 2020

## INSIDE

**Affmore's Thomas Azzopardi on affiliate network success**

**The free-to-play revolution with Whow Games' Adrian Valett**

**Meet the team at Campeon Gaming Partners**

**Play Hard: Mobius Interactive's Lynn Pearce de Freitas**

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Growth opportunities for affiliates emerge after a forced hibernation

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Hey guys! Today's serious bit of #igamingnews is hot off the press from Spain!

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# TRAFFIC REPORT

*Trafficology has partnered with data experts Casino City Press to provide insight into website and traffic trends across the gaming industry. The below is a breakdown of the top 20 affiliate programmes by market for August 2020, including: overall across all devices (desktop, mobile and tablet), sports betting across all devices, casino (mobile and tablet) and casino (desktop)*



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Rank	Name	Website
1	bet365 Affiliates	www.bet365affiliates.com
2	IQ Option Affiliate	affiliate.iqoption.com
3	NetHive Affiliate Program	www.nethive.com
4	eToro Partners	www.ETOROPARTNERS.COM
5	Betfair Partnerships	affiliates.betfair.com
6	Kindred Affiliates	www.kindredaffiliates.com
7	Yahoo Fantasy Sports Affiliates	sports.yahoo.com/dailyfantasy/affiliates
8	Best Partners	www.bestpartners.com
9	GVC Affiliates	www.gvcaffiliates.com
10	U-affiliates	www.uffiliates.com
11	Bovada Affiliate Program	www.bovada.lv/new-bovada-affiliate-program
12	betway Partners Africa	www.betwaypartnersafrica.com
13	William Hill Affiliates	affiliates.williamhill.com
14	WinBet Affiliates	winbetaffiliates.bg
15	AfiladosW	afiladosw.co
16	PM Affiliates	pmaffiliates.com/en/
17	FanDuel Partners	www.fanduel.com/partners
18	DraftKings Affiliates	www.draftkings.com/affiliates
19	FDJ Affiliate Program	www.fdj.fr
20	Rush Affiliates	rush-affiliates.com

## CASINO (MOBILE)

Rank	Name	Website
1	WinBet Affiliates	winbetaffiliates.bg
2	Gamesys Group Partners	www.gamesysgrouppartners.com
3	U-affiliates	www.uffiliates.com
4	StarVegas Affiliates	www.starvegasaffiliate.com
5	Platin Casino Affiliates	partners.platincasino.com
6	Rabbit Affiliates	www.rabbit-affiliates.com
7	bet365 Affiliates	www.bet365affiliates.com
8	PlayAmo Partners	playamopartners.com
9	William Hill Affiliates	affiliates.williamhill.com
10	Buffalo Partners	www.buffalopartners.com
11	Betsson Group Affiliatesv	www.betssongroupaffiliates.com
12	BitStarz Affiliates	www.starzpartners.com
13	GVC Affiliates	www.gvcaffiliates.com
14	Kindred Affiliates	www.kindredaffiliates.com
15	Videoslots Affiliate Program	partner.videoslots.com
16	LeoVegas Affiliate	www.lovegasaffiliates.com
17	HappiAffiliate	www.happiaffiliate.com
18	Rank Affiliates	www.rankaffiliates.com
19	Casino Secret Affiliates	www.casinosecretaffiliates.com
20	InTouch Partners	www.intouchpartners.com



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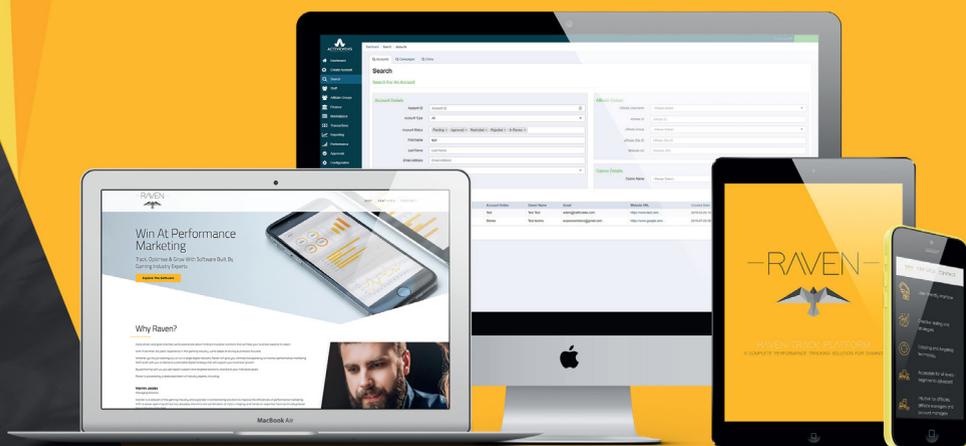
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# CASINO (DESKTOP)

# SPORTS BETTING

Rank	Name	Website
1	Gamesys Group Partners	<a href="http://www.gamesysgrouppartners.com">www.gamesysgrouppartners.com</a>
2	Betsson Group Affiliates	<a href="http://www.betssongroupaffiliates.com">www.betssongroupaffiliates.com</a>
3	WinBet Affiliates	<a href="http://winbetaffiliates.bg">winbetaffiliates.bg</a>
4	GVC Affiliates	<a href="http://www.gvcaffiliates.com">www.gvcaffiliates.com</a>
5	LeoVegas Affiliate	<a href="http://www.leovegasaffiliates.com">www.leovegasaffiliates.com</a>
6	U-affiliates	<a href="http://www.uffiliates.com">www.uffiliates.com</a>
7	Kindred Affiliates	<a href="http://www.kindredaffiliates.com">www.kindredaffiliates.com</a>
8	Videoslots Affiliate Program	<a href="http://partner.videoslots.com">partner.videoslots.com</a>
9	Rabbit Affiliates	<a href="http://www.rabbit-affiliates.com">www.rabbit-affiliates.com</a>
10	Stakes Affiliates	<a href="http://affiliates.stakes.com">affiliates.stakes.com</a>
11	Wildz Affiliates	<a href="http://wildzaffiliates.com">wildzaffiliates.com</a>
12	Mr Affiliate	<a href="http://www.mraffiliate.com">www.mraffiliate.com</a>
13	Best Partners	<a href="http://www.bestpartners.com">www.bestpartners.com</a>
14	Platin Casino Affiliates	<a href="http://partners.platincasino.com">partners.platincasino.com</a>
15	Buffalo Partners	<a href="http://www.buffalopartners.com">www.buffalopartners.com</a>
16	BitStarz Affiliates	<a href="http://www.starzpartners.com">www.starzpartners.com</a>
17	ComeOn Connect	<a href="http://www.comeonconnect.com">www.comeonconnect.com</a>
18	Paf Partners	<a href="http://www.pafpartners.com">www.pafpartners.com</a>
19	William Hill Affiliates	<a href="http://affiliates.williamhill.com">affiliates.williamhill.com</a>
20	Casumo Affiliates	<a href="http://www.casumoaffiliates.com">www.casumoaffiliates.com</a>

Rank	Name	Website
1	bet365 Affiliates	<a href="http://www.bet365affiliates.com">www.bet365affiliates.com</a>
2	NetHive Affiliate Program	<a href="http://www.nethive.com">www.nethive.com</a>
3	Best Partners	<a href="http://www.bestpartners.com">www.bestpartners.com</a>
4	Betfair Partnerships	<a href="http://affiliates.betfair.com">affiliates.betfair.com</a>
5	Bovada Affiliate Program	<a href="http://www.bovada.lv/new-bovada-affiliate-program">www.bovada.lv/new-bovada-affiliate-program</a>
6	betway Partners Africa	<a href="http://www.betwaypartnersafrica.com">www.betwaypartnersafrica.com</a>
7	AfiliosW	<a href="http://afiliosw.co">afiliosw.co</a>
8	Kindred Affiliates	<a href="http://www.kindredaffiliates.com">www.kindredaffiliates.com</a>
9	GVC Affiliates	<a href="http://www.gvcaffiliates.com">www.gvcaffiliates.com</a>
10	PM Affiliates	<a href="http://pmaffiliates.com/en/">pmaffiliates.com/en/</a>
11	Tipsport Partners	<a href="http://www.tipsport.cz/partner">www.tipsport.cz/partner</a>
12	ZETurf Affiliates	<a href="http://affiliationen.zeturf.com">affiliationen.zeturf.com</a>
13	Sportsbet.com.au Affiliates	<a href="http://www.sportsbetaffiliates.com.au">www.sportsbetaffiliates.com.au</a>
14	William Hill Affiliates	<a href="http://affiliates.williamhill.com">affiliates.williamhill.com</a>
15	Betway Partners	<a href="http://www.betwaypartners.com">www.betwaypartners.com</a>
16	U-affiliates	<a href="http://www.uffiliates.com">www.uffiliates.com</a>
17	Stoiximan.gr Affiliates	<a href="http://affiliates.betano.com">affiliates.betano.com</a>
18	Rush Affiliates	<a href="http://rush-affiliates.com">rush-affiliates.com</a>
19	1xBet Partners	<a href="http://1xpartners.com">1xpartners.com</a>
20	Ladbrokes Partners	<a href="http://www.ladbrokescoralpartners.com">www.ladbrokescoralpartners.com</a>



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# ARE FREE-TO-PLAY GAMES A USEFUL TOOL FOR OPERATORS?

Owain Flanders, Tim Poole and Iqbal Johal of the *Trafficology* editorial team debate whether free-to-play games are a useful tool for acquisition and retention



## OWAIN FLANDERS – YES – COMBAT POTENTIAL CONSUMER APATHY

For me, the real value of free-to-play (FTP) comes in its ability to entice those who might otherwise be apathetic to that specific form of betting, or even gambling in general. In my argument for this, I would like to share a couple of personal experiences in which I have witnessed this being particularly successful.

The first instance involves the use of Sky Bet's Super Six game. The FTP game requires players to guess the exact results of six games in the English Football Leagues. A correct guess means points, and the owner of the highest point tally is guaranteed £5,000 (\$6,460) each week. If a player guesses all six of the scores correctly then they can net a prize of £250,000 (as long as they are the only player to have guessed the scores correctly that week).

Personally, I am a big fan of football, making Super Six the perfect weekend FTP game. However, I have an old friend who truly couldn't care less about the outcome of the week's football fixtures. In betting terms, he is more of an online casino punter, and would much rather absorb himself in Netflix than watch the football scores roll in on Gillette Soccer Saturday.

Despite this, each week without fail, that same friend will make his six score predictions in Sky Bet's FTP app. The question is why would someone with no interest in football do this? The answer is simple. This is a free app offering a jackpot of £250,000. Regardless of a lack of football knowledge, he feels like he would be stupid not to get involved – and rightly so. If the app asked him to predict scores for the weekend's

synchronised swimming, he would still probably take a punt, as would I as a matter of fact.

That being said, the real key to FTP lies in its ability to create new customers. After all, how else would operators make money from apps boasting significant jackpots. Once someone apathetic to a form of gambling has been enticed into making a free bet, it's no great leap for them to begin betting with real money. My friend's eventual dabble into real-money sports betting is evidence enough of this fact.

Although the UK is generally a football-loving nation, it's important to mention that the same football apathy is shared by a significant portion of the population. These FTP apps offer a foot in the door, a way to tap into that otherwise inaccessible revenue stream. No amount of TV advertisements, football team sponsorships or smart pricing can convince these potentially profitable customers to suddenly engage with a vertical like an FTP can.

This tactic doesn't just apply to sports betting, as my second example demonstrates. Sky Betting and Gaming offers another FTP game on its Sky Vegas app. The Prize Machine offers players a chance to win a prize every day, whether it be free spins on certain slots or the opportunity to enter raffles. Although slightly less glamorous than the £250,000 offered by Super Six, the FTP offers the chance of prizes each day as opposed to once per week.

As a sports bettor, I would rarely venture into the world of online casino. However, these free spins are a great way for me to have a spin or two on slot machines free of charge. On occasion, that has enticed me to deposit some of my own

money, and I'm sure it has had the same effect for a lot of other gamblers. Again, the role of an FTP in attracting new customers is very clear to see.

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need to attract and retain customers, perhaps greater than ever before. That goes for all operators, from casinos, to bookmakers and everything in-between. In my opinion, companies that are not making use of FTPs are missing out on an incredibly valuable acquisition tool.

#### **TIM POOLE – YES - FINDING THE LINE**

If you're an avid follower of the gambling industry, you'll have probably read a lot on FTP games already. They are all the rage, one of the sector's latest trends and touted as one of the next big things in B2B circles. We've heard similar about esports, virtuals and cryptocurrencies in the past – with varying degrees of success. But where proponents of FTP have been proven right is on the homepages of major UK sports betting operators.

Esports has boomed recently, especially during the coronavirus pandemic, but still serves a dedicated audience and is nowhere near a mainstream revenue source for big-name operators yet. Virtuals, too, is on the rise but is still viewed by many as an add-on. Cryptocurrencies, frankly, have been the biggest letdown for anyone who believed the hype crypto advocates were pedalling two years or so ago. Those pushing FTP, however, can point to tangible evidence of the category's breakthrough.

Take big names such as Ladbrokes Coral, Sky Betting & Gaming and 888Sport. Each has an FTP product that offers jackpots and encourages players to create an account to play – even if it doesn't force them to bet. As a sports bettor myself, I recently tried the 888 Up for 8 game (and as a football fan I've always been an admirer of Sky Bet's Super Six). I thought the concept of Up for 8 was great – it got me playing with the site more for the appeal of winning free bets, although those seeking lottery-style big wins will obviously be drawn to the jackpot element of the product too.

The rules are simple: pick eight win-loss-draws correctly (888 selects which games qualify) and there's an £8,000 prize if you get all eight right. This aspect is free to play every week, so it's a guaranteed positive in the fact it'll draw players in to create accounts even if they don't want to spend money. In the more likely event that you get some picks wrong, you get £1 in free bets for every pick you get right (so if you get four right, it's a £4 free bet). Here, though, after two free plays, you must wager at least £25 a week to qualify for the free bet element of the game.

In my opinion, this is where operators looking for conversion need to find the line between making FTP games a hit or a barren wasteland that will never lead to any real-money gaming. While certain players won't blink an eye at £25 a week, in my opinion, this is too much of a leap for someone just looking to play an FTP game. For me, a simple £10 bet per week would suffice and be far more effective in attracting a genuinely paying audience from this initially free product.

There are two main reasons behind my argument here: first, players who play with 888 are likely to already be familiar with Sky Bet Club – an ongoing offer with a rival

**“THE REAL KEY TO FTP LIES IN ITS ABILITY TO CREATE NEW CUSTOMERS. AFTER ALL, HOW ELSE WOULD OPERATORS MAKE MONEY FROM APPS BOASTING SIGNIFICANT JACKPOTS. ONCE SOMEONE APATHETIC TO A FORM OF GAMBLING HAS BEEN ENTICED INTO MAKING A FREE BET, IT'S NO GREAT LEAP FOR THEM TO BEGIN BETTING WITH REAL MONEY” – OWAIN FLANDERS**

brand where you secure a free weekly £5 bet if you stake £25. This guarantees a player a weekly £5 bet, as opposed to potentially earning £1-7 in free bets depending on the success of their predictions. In essence, this means you can find better value for money elsewhere.

Second, if a player is willing to wager £25 a week already, they are probably part of the central target market. This target market (a casual weekend punter at the very least) may actually have no interest in FTP games or free bets, and will go straight to their betslip anyway. That means FTP games aren't needed to encourage them to place a sports bet, as opposed to a player specifically interested in FTP and willing to bet once a week if it can win them a small free-bet reward.

But if that balance is achieved, FTP games are a significant plus in my book. After all, operators like Sky Bet take a completely different approach, presumably completely separating its Super Six game from its conversion metrics. While marketing is used to encourage players to place accumulator bets – and players have to set up an account to play in the first place – there's a certain family feel about playing the game without having to bet. Ultimately, while that FTP game may not directly lead to deposits or wagers, the entertainment value gained from the product boosts the brand's reputation to no end among the sports betting community.

#### **IQBAL JOHAL - NO - PUT TIME AND RESOURCES TO BETTER USE**

On the face of it, FTP games make a lot of sense. They can be used as a clever marketing strategy to entice players to sign-up to an operator they might not have played with before, with the intention of turning them into paying customers.

From an operator and affiliates point of view, it's getting players familiar with its website and game offering. From the customer's perspective, there's no risk attached to losing any money on a free roll, with the likelihood of winning a prize, however small, always tempting.

The risk the operator has of course, is losing big money to a player who may not convert that into real money deposits. Take Sky Bet's Super Six game for example. In order to win the £250,000 jackpot – or £1m in some cases – you must correctly predict the results of all six of the selected matches, but the player with the most points each week will win a consolation prize of £5,000.

For Sky Bet, that's a small price to pay when you consider thousands of players enter each week. The issue of course is when a player wins the £250,000 jackpot, as we saw last September, and perhaps is never seen again on the platform. That's a large amount of money to risk on the off chance a percentage of customers end up parting with their cash.

Even if an operator the size of Sky Bet can get away with losing a jackpot sum every so often, it's not viable for smaller operators. For some, the risk of losing even the £5,000 consolation prize Sky Bet gives away every week may be too steep. Any money given away on prizes in their freerolls is always going to be small fish in comparison, which begs the question: Is it worth the time and effort for them?

While my colleagues make some very credible points, first-hand experience leads me to disagree with them. During my previous role, working on a marketing team

for a start-up operator, it seemed like we spent a lot of time promoting freeroll games for very little reward. Daily horse racing prediction freerolls might receive hundreds of entries daily, but players were fighting it out for around £10 in total prizes and the amount of those customers who had ever made a deposit was minimal. It was the same freebie hunters playing each free game, who might win the odd bet here and there, but nothing to make them deposit. Usually, any half decent win they enjoyed was instantly withdrawn. From this perspective, the amount of time it takes to set up and promote these games for smaller operators hardly seems worth it if the end result is negligible and if there's barely any conversion from freeroll players to cash customers.

It seems the question depends on the size of the operator, but even then, to win any decent prize is usually nigh on impossible, save for the odd stroke of good fortune as highlighted with Sky Bet's Super Six. That could lead to customers getting frustrated with the operator's product. Perhaps operators are better off spending their entire time and resources in promoting games and markets that will actually earn them some money.

**“EVEN IF AN OPERATOR THE SIZE OF SKY BET CAN GET AWAY WITH LOSING A JACKPOT SUM EVERY SO OFTEN, IT'S NOT VIABLE FOR SMALLER OPERATORS. FOR SOME, THE RISK OF LOSING EVEN THE £5,000 CONSOLATION PRIZE SKY BET GIVES AWAY EVERY WEEK MAY BE TOO STEEP. ANY MONEY GIVEN AWAY ON PRIZES IN THEIR FREEROLLS IS ALWAYS GOING TO BE SMALL FISH COMPARED, WHICH BEGS THE QUESTION: IS IT WORTH THE TIME AND EFFORT FOR THEM?”**

**– IQBAL JOHAL**

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# RELIABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND SPEED

*Trafficology* caught up with **Thomas Azzopardi**, head of affiliates for Affmore, to discuss the key aspects to a successful affiliate network and the company's post-COVID strategy

#### **How did you first get started in the industry?**

I started a decade ago as a support agent. I was hired as an affiliate manager by Gambling Affiliation who taught me the work of affiliate manager. Then I had to move geographically for family reasons. I was between the Netherlands and Spain, building an affiliate platform. That took me one year and then I went back to Malta. I worked for Betsson as an affiliate manager and then I was head of sportsbook affiliate for their brands. After that I moved to ComeOn in London and was head of affiliates for two-and-a-half years.

#### **What was it that attracted you to Affmore as a company?**

I went back to Affmore because the founder was an old colleague from Betsson who became a friend. Back in those days Affmore was really rocking. The key sentence he told me was: "We only give rev share because our conversion is so good." I was seduced by Affmore, mainly by the people who worked here.

#### **Could you explain a bit about the company and how it's set up?**

It started with a few people. We had one owner taking care of the affiliates and then we hired other people. When I joined it

was only Lucky Dino and Casino Jefe, then we launched Kalevala and OlaSpill. The strategy was to do something different. For the tech side, we are really lucky that we have the best tech guys in the industry. They were able to code everything in-house. The affiliate backend was not meeting our expectations, so we coded that first of all. After we coded the affiliate backend we also coded the entire casino backend from scratch. We wanted to disclose the numbers, and show growth – be transparent. Our original back-house didn't offer that so a member of our tech team coded it in the space of an hour in a meeting. After that, we moved on to our casino backend. Everything was also coded in-house for that. Now we've launched our new Affmore affiliate backend on 1 October.

#### **How important have these tech developments been in the progress of Affmore during your five years with the company?**

Those tech improvements have been some of the main developments. When you start out and you are a young company, you need to have a unique selling point. Our USP was that the site was slick and that everything works really fast. Every time we asked something of tech, it was coded very quickly – they didn't even tell us sometimes. Every little thing that we could think of is being taken

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**THOMAS AZZOPARDI**

care of by a really strong tech team. Basically, if an affiliate has a need then we can code it.

**When Trafficology spoke with Affmore CEO Robert Reinikainen last year, he mentioned that usability was key for a successful affiliate program. Would you agree with that?**

I would agree that usability and gamification of the brands are the most important things. One example of this is in the rewards, which were called Bounties on Casino Jefe. These were shown in a bar at the side. How full or empty this bar is corresponds to the rewards, so there's always the incentive for the player to keep going. That reward program and that gamification were really key to the success because people could see our players were playing longer. Also, we are completely transparent, which really helps us to grow and build affiliate trust. It's a good product that's easy to sell.

**Other than the technological developments that you just mentioned, could you explain a bit about what you can offer potential partners?**

You get a really nice team to work with. It's a dedicated team that's always here and can work fast to meet the needs of any partner. Then we would also advertise our reliability, transparency and live stats. Not everyone shows transparent numbers. Not everyone is reliable. Most of our competitors will be down for one reason or another. Then finally, we are live. Live stats are not something that everyone offers. In general most competitors have 24-hour reporting, where you will need to wait until the next day to see the stats from the day before.

**Has the current pandemic affected Affmore's operations in any way? What effects have you seen?**

Confinement has actually improved our numbers. We saw that more confinement meant more casino players and a bigger CRM than ever. On the human side, we've had to manage a team at distance without seeing them. We have hired employees that I am still yet to meet. We have partners that we normally meet often and go to dinners with, so it is hard on the public relations side to maintain a relationship only over Skype rather than

meeting in real life. There is something missing in the human side.

**Do you think it will have any long-term impact on the industry moving forwards from a business perspective?**

Some countries have been implementing really strong restrictions on gambling, or have disabled gambling, for example in Spain or Sweden. I live in Spain and I have some friends who are affiliates. It was strange for me because I saw that they had to disable all of their links, and the same in Sweden with the restrictions. The numbers are not good for those countries. Luckily we are not in those markets so we have not been affected.

However, if there is more confinement combined with more unemployment and people start being more careless with their gambling, will they have the money to gamble in the future? We're seeing a bubble now and the question is whether it's going to burst. Are these people still going to be able to gamble in 2021, or is it going to be worse and will they gamble everything they have? We don't know. Only time will tell.

**Is there anything you can do to prepare for that eventuality or is it a 'wait and see' approach?**

It's more that we need to be agile. We have to have fast reactions. It's not only a 'wait and see' because we are trained to be optimistic and prepare campaigns for when there is no more COVID. We are trained to look forward to a post-COVID already.

**What is the main plan moving forward?**

Getting into new markets and continuing to be agile. When we had to stop in Sweden we moved to Germany, but now it seems Germany is going to be regulated, so we're preparing Canada, New Zealand and India and planning to get more non-European markets. In 2021, we're also going to implement more payment methods.

**“FOR THE TECH SIDE, WE ARE REALLY LUCKY THAT WE HAVE THE BEST TECH GUYS IN THE INDUSTRY. THEY WERE ABLE TO CODE EVERYTHING IN-HOUSE. THE AFFILIATE BACKEND WAS NOT MEETING OUR EXPECTATIONS, SO WE CODED THAT FIRST OF ALL. AFTER WE CODED THE AFFILIATE BACKEND WE ALSO CODED THE ENTIRE CASINO BACKEND FROM SCRATCH. WE WANTED TO DISCLOSE THE NUMBERS, AND SHOW GROWTH – BE TRANSPARENT. OUR ORIGINAL BACK-HOUSE DIDN'T OFFER THAT SO A MEMBER OF OUR TECH TEAM CODED IT IN THE SPACE OF AN HOUR IN A MEETING”**

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# FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Bojoko chief business officer, **Joonas Karhu**, talks to Iqbal Johal about the comparison site's unique model and the importance of promoting safe gambling, while giving power back to the customer



**JOONAS KARHU**

that thinks the VIP scheme should be scrapped altogether, especially in the current climate where player safety is arguably more important than ever. This led the affiliate to publishing a special report on the future of loyalty schemes and VIP clubs in the UK online casino market.

Joonas Karhu, chief business officer at Bojoko, speaks to *Trafficology* about its special report, and the effect the new VIP measures will have on the affiliate sector, while also providing an in-depth look at Bojoko's business model.

## **What makes the Bojoko model unique? How popular and important do you think this model is?**

Bojoko was the first online casino comparison site to use the model pioneered by the likes of Tripadvisor and Airbnb to allow online casino brands and game developers to create their own listing on our site and for our members to then rate and review the casino or studio based on the experience they receive. Operators and developers are able to create their own account and tell their story through their own words, images and videos. In this new era of compliance, giving operators complete control over the content that is published about their brand has proved to be incredibly popular. Today, we have more than 170 UK-licensed online casinos listed on the site.

## **Would you say the model promotes safer gambling?**

Our model definitely promotes safe gaming. Not only can players be sure they are accessing accurate and up-to-date information about the brand, each casino is held to account by our members and the ratings and reviews they are given. What's more, to list on Bojoko a casino must hold a license from the Gambling Commission.

## **How important is it to give operators more control over how their games are promoted, especially when it comes to responsible gambling?**

Bojoko is all about honesty and transparency. We do not review casinos; we leave that to our members, which in turn means we're not in a situation where the casinos that pay the most get the best reviews. The casino tells their story and then the player decides whether they like the experience they receive or not. Of course, this gives operators total control over the information published about their brand, but they also have to be mindful that they will be held to account by our members. Our model also allows operators to access their account at all times, so they can update terms and conditions and information in real time. This is unique as in the past the operator would have to email the affiliate about a change

VIP and high-value customer schemes have come under a huge amount of criticism, both from those inside and those outside the gambling industry. In September, the Gambling Commission released strict new guidance for UK-based operators, on how they can treat VIP customers.

After running a consultation process, which saw senior members of the UK industry discuss how standards could be improved, the Commission published a series of checks which must take place before an operator makes a customer a VIP.

These include checks surrounding source of funds, occupation, and identity verification, as well as ongoing gambling harm checks. Operators must also ensure player spending is affordable and sustainable, and will be required to assign a senior executive to oversee the VIP scheme, which makes that individual accountable for the safety of high-value players.

However, many within the industry believe these new measures don't go far enough in ensuring the safety of VIP players. Affiliate Bojoko, an online casino comparison site using a user-generated content model, is one of those



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to information and terms and conditions, and this could take several weeks to resolve, leading to periods of potential non-compliance.

**Do you think players appreciate this kind of model, and how important is it to give them a voice and a say?**

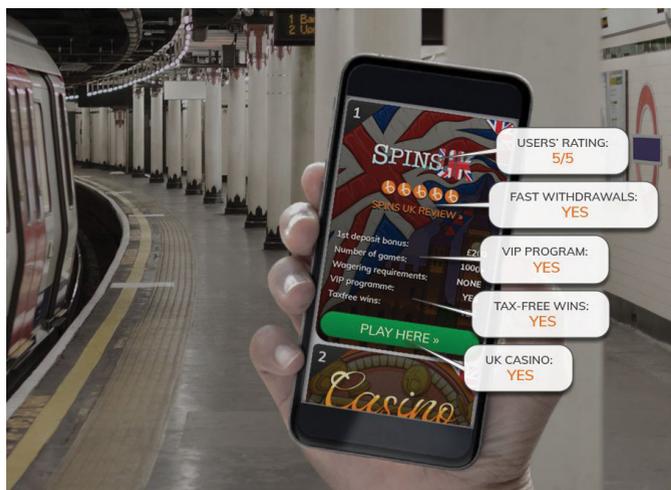
I think our numbers speak for themselves. Today, Bojoko has more than 23,000 registered members and more than 26,000 unique monthly visitors. I think we've become so popular because we do give players a voice and allow them to speak openly about the experience they receive at a casino. For other players, they can then get a real understanding of what the casino has to offer, both good and bad. Players are now super savvy and many understand that affiliates earn commissions from the casinos they work with. By providing a platform for players to openly talk about an online casino and to use that to find the best brand or brands for them, we've been able to foster incredible trust among our members.

**How can Bojoko further enhance its product?**

It's still early days for Bojoko and while we have already taken big steps ahead of our rivals and competitors, we still have a very long way to go before we achieve our ultimate goal. We have an incredibly exciting product roadmap, but at this stage we're going to keep it under wraps. What I can say is that big things are coming.

**In terms of the VIP schemes, Bojoko has said it thinks this should be abolished. Why and do you see another viable alternative? Do you think the measures should've gone further?**

I do not think they go far enough. The Gambling Commission's new requirements are what operators should have been doing in the first place, and those that are members of the Betting and Gambling Council have been doing since November. I do not usually favour prohibition but in this case I believe it is the only way to effectively stop players being encouraged to gamble beyond their means. If you look at the stats highlighted in our white-paper on such schemes, it's clear they are responsible for the vast majority of Gambling Commission fines where responsible gambling is a factor in the fine



**“OPERATORS AND DEVELOPERS ARE ABLE TO CREATE THEIR OWN ACCOUNT AND TELL THEIR STORY THROUGH THEIR OWN WORDS, IMAGES AND VIDEOS. IN THIS NEW ERA OF COMPLIANCE, GIVING OPERATORS COMPLETE CONTROL OVER THE CONTENT THAT IS PUBLISHED ABOUT THEIR BRAND HAS PROVED TO BE INCREDIBLY POPULAR. TODAY, WE HAVE MORE THAN 170 UK-LICENSED ONLINE CASINOS LISTED ON THE SITE”**

being awarded. More concerning, if you look at some of the headlines over the past few months with people stealing from employers to fund their gambling activity and, in the most severe cases, people falling into debt and taking their own lives, the scrutiny and calls for change are justified. The very nature of loyalty and VIP schemes is to encourage players to wager more, and while checks and balances can be put in place, some players still slip through the cracks. The only way to stop this from happening is to ban VIP schemes outright.

**What effect do you think the new regulations for VIP schemes will have on affiliates? Will affiliates lose out if there are fewer VIP schemes?**

As the measures are what some casinos have and should have been doing so far, I don't believe there will be a significant impact on affiliates as a result of the new regulations. Affiliates that have sent high-value players to casinos might lose out in the short term if those players reduce their gambling activity at that casino or go elsewhere; but ultimately affiliates benefit from players that are happy and healthy and can stay in control of their play.

**Do you think the industry is doing enough to promote responsible gambling and what more do you think can be done?**

I believe the industry as a whole is doing an excellent job of promoting responsible gambling and taking the necessary measures to ensure players are protected. It's an ongoing process, of course, but steps continue to be taken such as the recent changes to VIP schemes.

**What are the biggest challenges Bojoko faces?**

The biggest challenge for Bojoko and for the wider industry is making sure that gambling is safe and that players receive a fun and entertaining experience. This is not just in the UK, but in markets around the world including the USA, where we plan to enter the action in the near future with a market-leading product that puts safe gaming first.

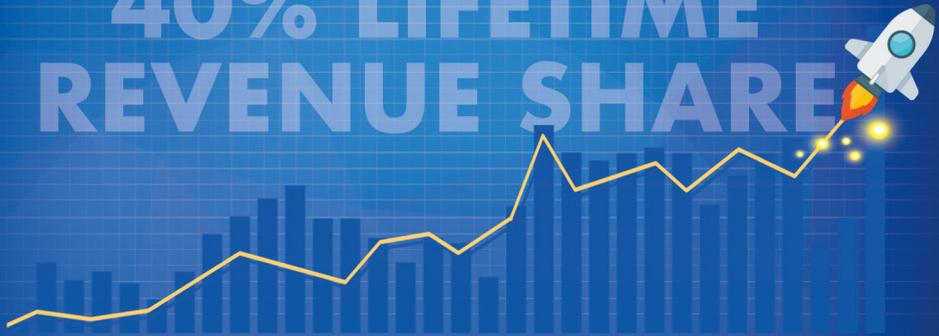
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## MEET THE TEAM: CAMPEON GAMING

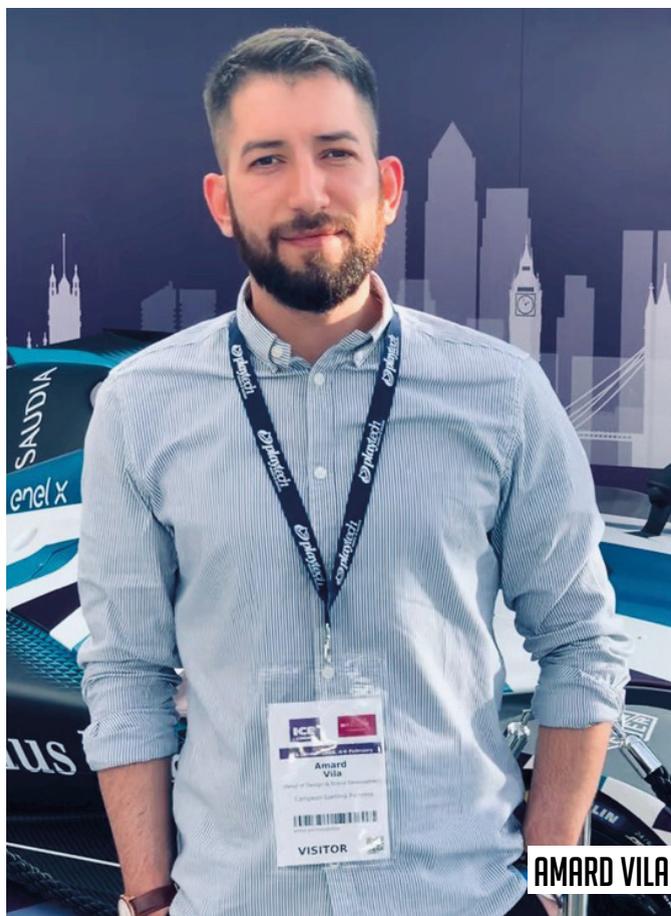
*Trafficology* meets Theo Tsimpogiannis, Antonis Voerakos and Amard Vila of Campeon Gaming Partners, who tell us about everything from how they got into gaming to Elvis impersonator gigs

### AMARD VILA - HEAD OF DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

#### How did you get into gaming and end up at Campeon Gaming?

I joined the industry of gaming by chance. I was looking for a job as a designer after I graduated and was recruited by a casino operator. I was fascinated with all the graphic work of casino games and its vibrant colors, so creating my first banners was fun and creative.

Things started to snowball from there, working hard, my passion for design while meeting the right people, led me to the Campeon Gaming Partners co-founders.



AMARD VILA

#### What is your day-to-day role with the company?

My role revolves around design and development of brands, projects and technologies, from their concept creation to its foundations up to the daily operation. I run a team of designers, developers, partners and together with other departments such as marketing and affiliates, we provide users with unique designs, optimal usability, and enhanced gaming experience.

#### What would you like to see more of in the gaming industry?

I would like to see some innovation in the casino area, maybe using modern technologies such as AR/VR to make games more immersive. I'd also like to see enhanced slots with better graphics, animations, music and sounds to give the gaming experience a feel of a triple-A video game. In addition, providers could also add within slots multiplayer capabilities where friends may spin and bet together in the same session.

#### Describe the person you are. What do you get up to outside work?

I like to have fun in creative ways and I like to learn new things. I'm also curious about how things work and how they can be improved. To recharge my batteries, I play PC games, hang out with friends, go to the gym, and travel to new places when I'm in the mood. Other than that you'll normally find me on my couch watching TV and movies.

### ANTONIS VOERAKOS - HEAD OF RETENTION AND CUSTOMER LIFECYCLE

#### How did you get into gaming and end up at Campeon Gaming?

As a young man I was clueless about what I wanted to do for a living, and with my life in general. That, inevitably, led me to some experimentation and after switching career paths twice, I was given the opportunity to get my first marketing job at a casino-sportbook operator. From there, I had the pleasure to collaborate with some CGP colleagues on some online gaming projects, so as soon as the opportunity arose, I was happy to make my move and joined the team.

#### What is your day-to-day role with the company?

I am responsible for marketing and retention activities



**ANTONIS VOERAKOS**

across our brands. Following a multi-brand strategy can be challenging at times. However, it's always fun and rewarding. It gives us the flexibility to experiment with different marketing mixes, models and tactics.

**What would you like to see more of in the gaming industry?**

From a player's perspective, I would love to see more transparency and less bureaucracy and complexity. Playing should more accessible and overall player access to information should be made easier. As a professional, I would love to see more meaningful product innovation and more of core differentiation.

**Tell us a little bit about yourself. What do you get up to outside work?**

Well, outside my Elvis Presley impersonator side-job, I love spending time with my two baby boys. I also love music, psychology, fighting sports and RPG video games. And as you can tell, I like to add some humor here and there.

**THEO TSIMPOGIANNIS – HEAD OF OPERATIONS**

**How did you get into gaming and end up at Campeon Gaming?**

My excitement about the online gaming industry was always there. Although I tried different industries throughout my business career, I realised that online gaming is the one that gives me thrills every single day. As I tend to say, in this industry everyone needs to have of mixture of three main ingredients:

determination, effort and luck. These three brought me to where I am today.

**What is your day-to-day role with the company?**

As head of brand operations, my eyes are constantly on multiple areas within Campeon Gaming Partners. The target is pretty straightforward: maximise productivity and minimise operation costs while constantly working on improving our products. What makes this more exciting and at the same time more challenging is the fact that we have to do this effectively on multiple brands.

**What would you like to see more of in the gaming industry?**

I would like to see more esports team tournaments and cups. On sports it would be interesting to see in football or basketball where each player controls only one player within the game. It exists out there but not on a global scale like LoL (League of Legends) tournaments or Dota2. Also, I'm a huge fan of animations within slot games, so I'm eager to see more games with breathtaking graphics and iconic sound effects.

**Describe what kind of person you are. What do you get up to outside work?**

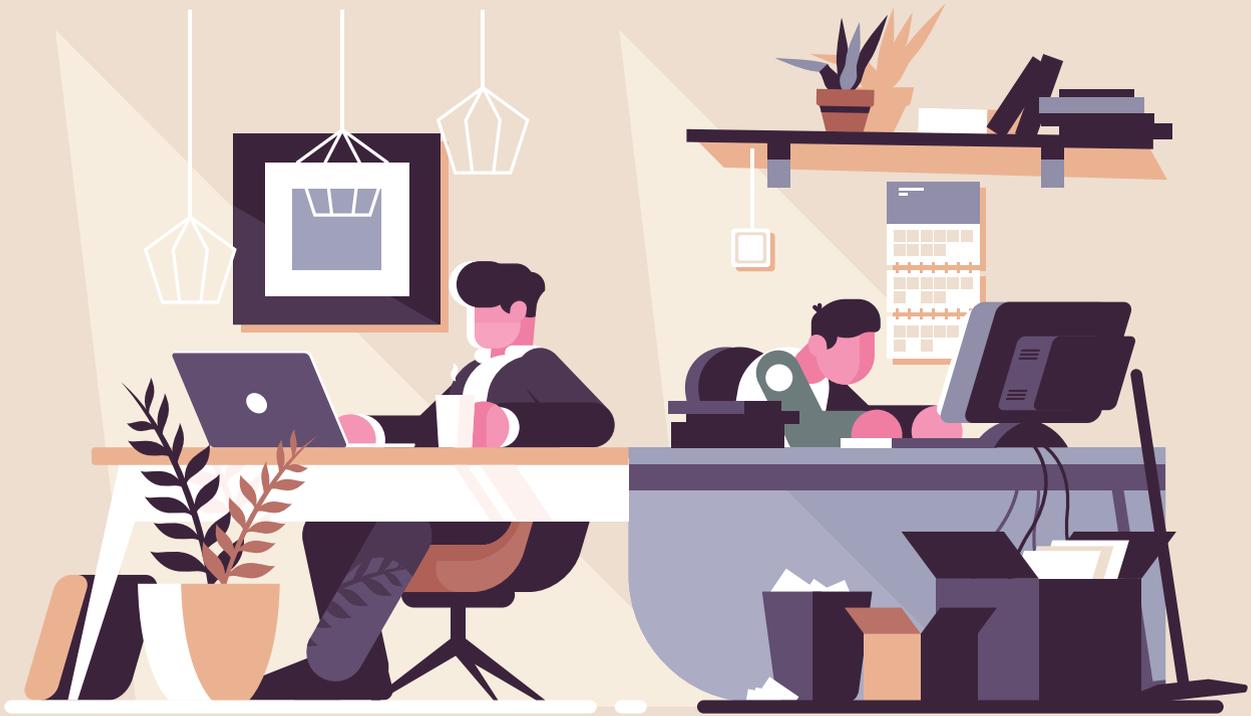
I like to feel fit, mentally as well as physically. I spend a lot of hours educating myself on new concepts about self-development and overall wellness. I also always enjoy time with friends and family (nowadays, with some social-distancing, of course).



**THEO TSIMPOGIANNIS**

# CREATING A REAL EXPERIENCE

Whow Games' **Adrian Valett**, online marketing manager, speaks with *Trafficology* about the supplier's free-to-play games, and how the company has navigated the current pandemic



**For our readers who don't know a lot about Whow Games, can you give us some background on who you are and what you do?**

We are one of the leading developers and publishers of online free-to-play social casino games. Based in Hamburg, Germany, we bring the casino lifestyle directly from Las Vegas to the web browser and app stores so anyone can play when and where they want. But it's not just about the casino games themselves. It's also about the atmosphere around it that makes playing feel like a real experience. So we are constantly developing new features and events that always guarantee our players variety and fun.

**Which authority regulates your brands?**

The Whow Games platform falls under the category gaming in the sense of casual video games and free-to-play games as we don't require our users to deposit or wager real money, nor can users win or cash out real money. Playing our casino games is for fun and entertainment only. To bind the user we build a gamification around the slots. This is legally recognised throughout Europe, so we don't need a gambling license and are not subject to any regulatory authority.

**What is your strategy for gaming innovation?**

We put the social experience of casino games in the foreground. All our casino games are playable for free. The games are aimed at both



**ADRIAN VALETT**

women and men and deliver the same fun and entertainment of an exciting casino visit. To guarantee our players long-lasting fun and great variety, we are constantly developing new features and events.

**Do you have to cater your social games towards certain demographics?**

Our offered game portfolio is quite extensive, including well-known slot machines like Ramses Book or roulette, so we have the right product for every taste. But we take our responsibility towards young people very seriously. That is why our games are aimed at adults over 18 years of age.

**What are the most important markets for Whow Games right now?**

Our Jackpot.de and local myJackpot brands represent the leading social casino platform in Germany and across Europe with over 200 playable slot machines and table games. The platform is localised to 15 different languages, including English, French, Spanish, Italian, Polish and many more. In our games, players do not need an account.

**For those who are unfamiliar with the gaming style, how do you make money with free-to-play games?**

Our players play for free with virtual chips that they can collect and win in various ways on our gaming platforms. Each user also has the option to buy additional chip packages if they want to play longer and with higher stakes. But even if our players can purchase chips with real money, we never pay out real money. With us, fun and chips

are in the foreground. Non-paying players have the same odds of winning as paying players. Thus the conversion rate is much higher than in a casino with cash payouts.

**How can an operator best utilise free-to-play games to increase acquisition and retention of players?**

The competition on the free-to-play market is very strong. Meanwhile the choice of games and providers is very large, so that players can choose from a wide range of offers. To stand out from this, it's important to constantly improve the quality of your own products and to be better than the competition. Only if a game is fun and the quality is right will a player come back again and again.

**Of course, there's also the affiliate program side to Whow Games. In your opinion, what is the key to a successful affiliate program? What is it that partners want from a program primarily?**

We see our affiliates as partners with whom we want to be successful together. To achieve this, close coordination and good and fast support are required. However, the basis for all this is mutual trust. Here we are proud to have established long-standing partnerships and look forward to any further inquiries.

**How has the pandemic affected your business?**

Like many other companies in the entertainment industry, we noticed that people spent significantly more time at home. During the peak phase of the lockdown in Europe, we had significantly more DAUs than in the time before coronavirus. Due to the high quality of our games, we were able to convince many of them of our products, so that we are still at a very high DAU level today. The absolute number of players has also grown significantly.

**How have you found the experience?**

Like so many others we were completely surprised by the virus at the beginning of the year. When the first reports came in from China, we never imagined what impact the virus would have on the world.

**What measures have you taken?**

As a tech company, we are quite technologically advanced. The home office was part of our everyday life even before the coronavirus crisis, so we were always able to be fully productive, even at the time when practically all our employees had to work from home. However, colleagues who travelled a lot in their jobs to meet partners and agree on new collaborations are particularly hard hit. From now on, all travel has been stopped and all meetings are now only virtual. Especially at the beginning, it was a strange situation, but we adapted to it very quickly.

**What are your next plans?**

We are constantly working on improving our existing games. We want to offer our players the best possible gaming experience and therefore we are always working on new slots and events. At the same time, we are also developing new games to appeal to an even larger audience. On this you'll soon hear news from us.



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# WORKING TO YOUR STRENGTHS

Iqbal Johal catches up with **Adam Rowley**, general manager of affiliate tracking platform Raven Track, who explains the progress the company has made since launching last year, and its ambitious plans for the future



And as general manager Adam Rowley explains, using that industry experience has helped Raven Track work out how best to create a tracking product that actually meets the requirements of the industry.

“Accurate conversion tracking is the backbone of affiliate marketing, and our team had faced ongoing issues using other systems that did not meet the needs of affiliates or operators,” Rowley explains. “We created the Raven Track management system based on feedback received from both sides, applying the very latest technology coupled with a strong understanding of what the market needs. Since launch, we are running millions of impressions, and helped brands to significantly increase their traffic thanks to the in-depth reporting, recommended offers and ease of platform use for the affiliates in generating tracking links and creatives.”

So what makes Raven Track stand out from other tracking platforms, in such a short space of time? Rowley believes one of the keys has been the fact that instead of being a corporate business, it's a group of online gaming experts who invested their own time and money into a sector crying out for a better tracking solution. “So, we decided to create an AI-based platform based on this feedback,” Rowley adds.

Speaking about its other key features, Rowley elaborates, saying these include, fast, in-depth reporting, quick integrations, an interactive user interface and expert customer service.

“We think it's imperative to offer operators and affiliates UK-based account support services instead of chatbots or overseas telecentres because we live and breathe the industry. That means we will have a much better understanding of a problem or issue than an outsourced service to large, generic customer service teams. It may cost more, but we believe our client partners prefer our approach.”

That human connection is certainly one element that helps with the user experience and has benefited Raven Track. So too has its in-house compliance team, in an ever-changing regulatory landscape across the world, not helped by the current pandemic situation. Such a team is essential to keep track of all the tighter regulation in Europe and North America, that is seemingly being brought in on a nearly weekly basis, to help ensure affiliates are being provided with compliant marketing assets.

As Rowley explains, the constant updates in regulation can prove a challenge but he is confident of Raven Track's ability to cope.

Since launching in 2019, Raven Track has been making impressive strides across the affiliate sector. The affiliate tracking platform, based in the UK, formed to provide an integrated solution for operators in the industry, with a team compiled of more than 30 years of expertise in online gaming.

And since its birth, Raven Track has already generated more than 30 million monthly clicks, which equates to at least £10m (\$12.98m) generated in revenue for 17 online brands, and more than 5,000 affiliates. In total, there are currently 40 brands across eight different providers on Raven Track, which has gained an overwhelmingly positive response from its operations since formation.

“The global regulatory landscape continues to expand and contract, with countries changing their online gambling legislation regularly,” he adds. “It’s tough to predict where the industry will be in a few months, never mind a few years. But because Raven Track is such a dynamic platform, we can quickly adapt our offering to cater to changes in any market.”

“In a highly regulated industry like gambling, compliance changes are the biggest challenge for any brand. It’s difficult enough for operators to keep up with the latest guidelines, so we understand how unwieldy it can be for affiliates. Raven Track helps to fill that knowledge gap with our in-house team of regulatory experts.”

And in terms of its progression in such a short space of time, Rowley is proud of its accomplishments to date.

He said: “We had been working on this project for years, so it’s incredible to see the platform in action and doing all the things we set out to accomplish. It’s really a game-changer for gambling affiliates, and we’re looking into adapting the system for other industries that depend on affiliate traffic in the future.”

Of course, launching last year means Raven Track has been almost thrust straight into the deep end, entering the industry just before the midst of the pandemic. The impact of the coronavirus has been devastating for many industries, with parts of the gambling sector not exempt. The pandemic forced months of shutdown for the retail and casino sector, while the suspension of live sport for several months wreaked havoc to operators and affiliates worldwide. However, online-facing businesses, such as Raven Track, managed to weather the storm, and mitigate the impact it could’ve had on the company.

“Since we are a digitally driven business, the pandemic and resulting lockdown were not tricky obstacles to navigate,” Rowley says. “Like most other businesses, we adapted quickly to remote working conditions with little upheaval to our operations. We conduct the day-to-day processes much like everyone else; lots of video conferencing and socially distanced meetings, but we are managing very well.”

“The importance of KYC [know your customer] is the same, whether there is a pandemic or not. The COVID crisis has not changed how we operate when it comes to vetting players. Nothing is as important

as verifying a customer’s identity, age and location to ensure a safer gambling environment. It also allows casino and sportsbook operators to weed out fraud and meet AML obligations.”

But despite Rowley’s insistence that the pandemic didn’t have the devastating impact on the online gambling market as the retail or hospitality industries, he did admit the period has meant operators “must be more diligent than ever to protect vulnerable players”.

“Despite what we see on some media outlets, operators take problem gambling very seriously and are proactive in taking steps to combat it,” he adds. “The industry has to continue to be flexible enough to adjust to changes for the safety of all players, particularly safeguarding younger audiences from exposure to gambling ads and offers.”

In terms of Raven Track’s ambitions, once “our old normal becomes our new normal once again”, the sky is very much the limit. They have a very ambitious goal to be the biggest tracking platform in the UK and European gaming industry, plus they are looking further abroad to emerging markets like North America and Latin America.

But while Raven Track continues to make strides in the gambling sector, Rowley says the company is exploring various other industries, which also rely on affiliate marketing activity.

“Our mission is to bring new offerings to the market faster and with more precision than any other provider,” he adds.

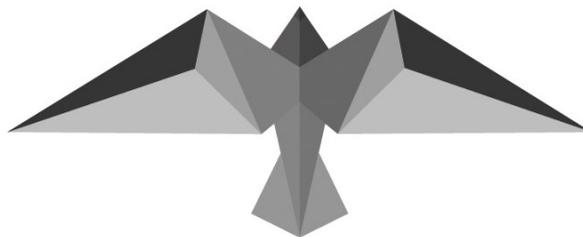
“To do this, we begin with extensive research to uncover gaps in the market to derive the most useful insights on where we go next. These include growth potential, opportunities, drivers, industry-specific challenges and risks.

“Then we look to define and analyse market share and the competitive landscape in each vertical and geography for an in-depth SWOT analysis to begin laying out our development plans in the next few years.”

Such ambitious goals are fully justified when you consider the progress Raven Track has made in the online gambling space, and you wouldn’t put it past the brand to be successful in other industries.

The company is undoubtedly building momentum, with more clients in the pipeline, and as Rowley concludes, “We are feeling good about our growth and looking forward to watching the business continue to thrive.”

— RAVEN —



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# PLAY HARD



**Lynn Pearce de Freitas, CEO, Mobius Interactive, talks to Tim Poole about setting up a company during lockdown, being her ex-boyfriend's neighbour and killing a cockroach with her cooking**

## WHAT'S BEEN YOUR FAVOURITE PASTIME DURING LOCKDOWN?

Well, my favourite has been starting a company. This was the perfect time to do it because there was nothing else to do. We had different core skills to bring to the party; it's a small team we've assembled but highly experienced in online gaming. And we kicked off a company in lockdown, which is not the easiest thing in the world. We had to find a platform provider, and go in as a white-label company because we had nothing other than our experience.

We partnered with Ultraplay, because they are an esports platform. Sports weren't happening and we're positioned to take esports forward pretty quickly. We set up three different brands and websites targeting different regions; we set up an investment portal and an affiliate website with three different affiliate brands linking off from that. What better time to do it? And here we are!

## WHAT'S BEEN YOUR BIGGEST DISLIKE DURING LOCKDOWN?

I was forced to cook for myself – and I cannot cook. Not only was I forced to cook but I was forced to eat my own food, which was horrible! I've been known to genuinely poison people. I'm the only person in the world who has managed to cook dinner at night that nobody wanted to eat, left it at the table and the following morning come back to see a cockroach dead in my plate of food.

## IF YOU COULD HAVE ONE DAY OUTSIDE LOCKDOWN, WHERE YOU COULD DO WHATEVER YOU WANTED WITH GUARANTEED HEALTH AND SAFETY, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

I would go to the beach with my grandson, surf, swim and play on the rocks as we do. To be quite honest, I turned into a criminal because I did fetch my grandson during lockdown, and we did go to the beach. We had an awesome day and I had to use every back road known in Cape Town to make sure I wasn't arrested. We had an absolute ball.

## HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN LOOK AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS AT HOME?

Well, it wasn't my garden. I was staying at an ex-boyfriend's place with his mum and they don't like plants. She stays in one house, he stays in the other and I was staying in the third

house, which is an Airbnb rental. They've never had plants in their garden, which is like 1,000 square metres, because they need so much maintaining. So I took cuttings of plants from the flora around and planted these little leaves, which ended up growing beautifully – much to their disgust. Apparently, when I left they got in a gardener to come in and remove them all.

## HOW MANY SHOWS HAVE YOU BINGE WATCHED DURING THIS TIME? ANY RECOMMENDATIONS?

Quite frankly, I didn't really have time to watch Netflix. I did get to finish a series I watched five years previously, *Jane the Virgin*, which I absolutely love. But basically during lockdown, after work, I couldn't even look at a computer or TV. What I did instead was put YouTube on and dance like a crazy person. I put on every song I've loved for the last 10 to 20 years and danced up a storm. You can ask anyone in the gaming industry, I dance – even during presentations. It's a major embarrassment for everyone who knows me but for me it's great.

## WHO WOULD BE YOUR NEIGHBOUR FROM HELL DURING LOCKDOWN?

I was the neighbour from hell during lockdown. I had a trip booked to Cape Town and when I came back, my ex-boyfriend needed help with the SEO on his tourism company. So I stayed with him for two weeks and then it became clear we were heading towards a lockdown. But being in South Africa, no one thought we'd hit a lockdown so quickly. His new girlfriend, though, was a lawyer and warned him that if he didn't get rid of me in the next three days, I would have been with him for the whole of lockdown. So he gingerly said to me 'When are you leaving?' I said let's look at it when it happens – but it happened two days later. We were in level five lockdown for over two months. I felt very sorry for him but there was nothing I could do about it except enjoy the free internet and his mother's cooking!

## WHAT'S YOUR BEST MEMORY WHEN YOU REFLECT BACK ON 2020?

There's good and bad in anything but joining up and deciding to do something positive in our time, creating Mobius Interactive. So 2020 will be the year that we have actually launched a company and we believe it's going to be a very successful company. We're just looking forward to the rest of 2020 and we're going forward with strength. ◀





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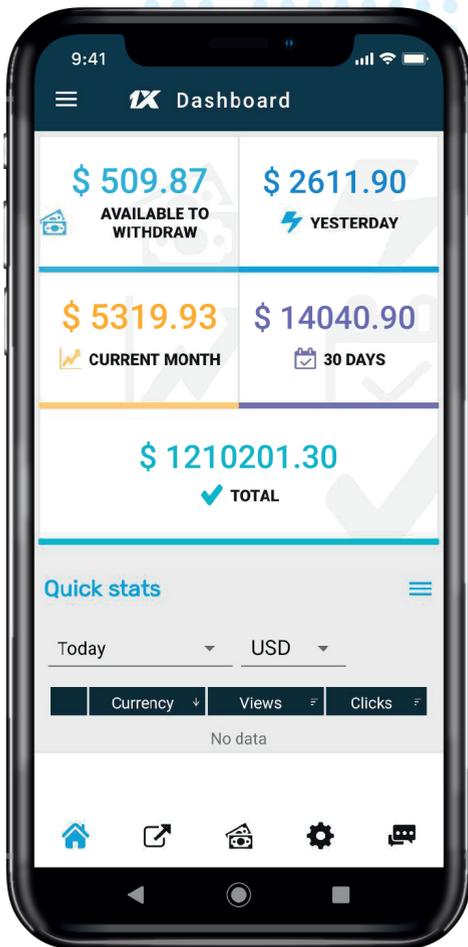
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