

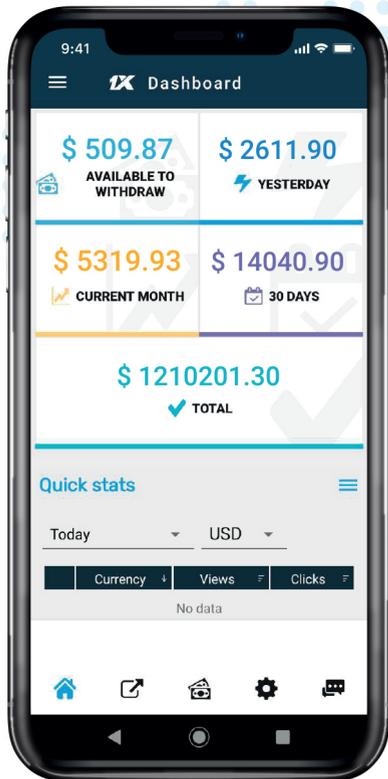
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INSIDE

**Luckbox CEO
Quentin Martin:
how affiliates
became integral
to esports' growth**

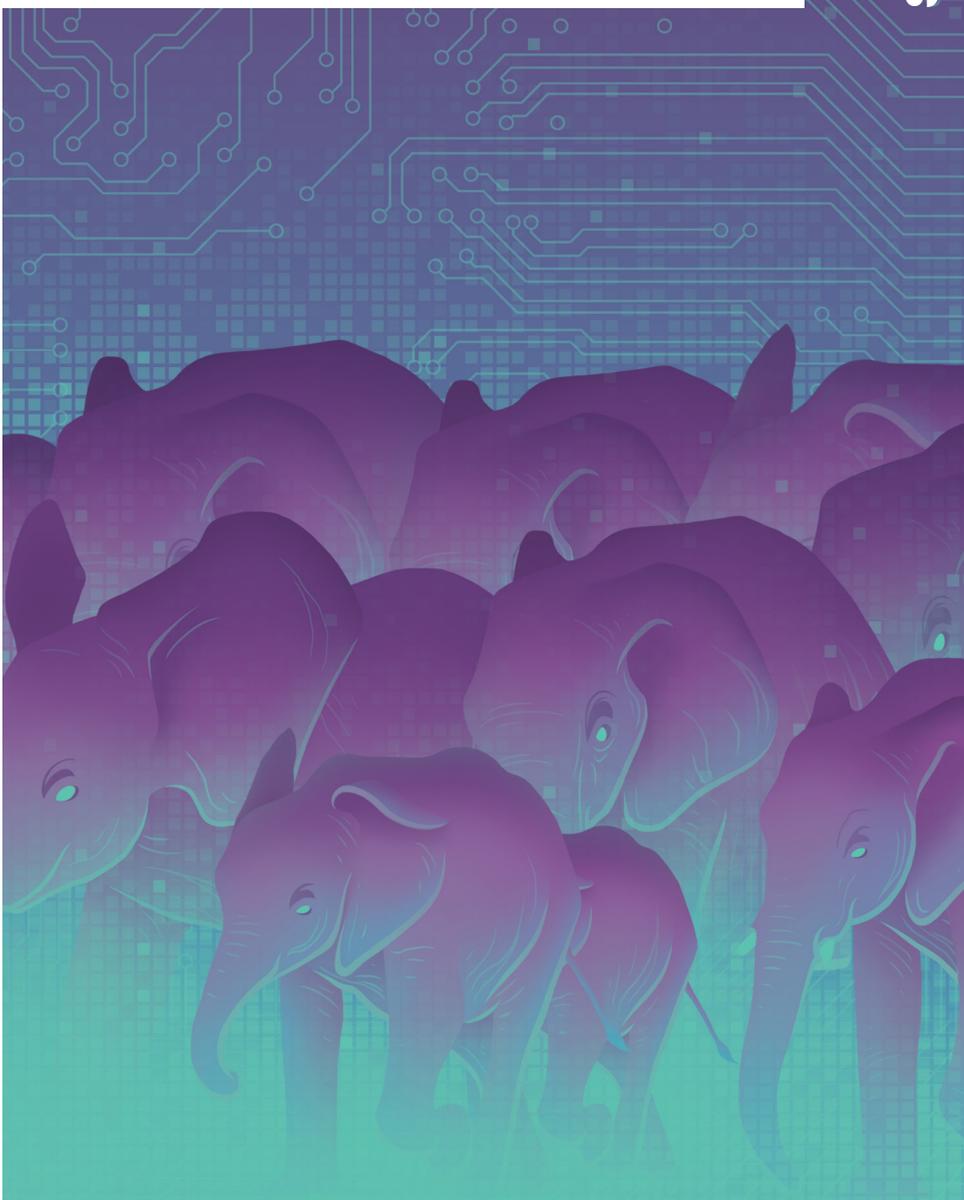
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**Katy Stafford at
Comeon Connect
on sharing ideas
to thrive**

**Play Hard: Thomas
Azzopardi at AFFmore**

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

It seems that the Spanish government has rolled out stricter regulations for gaming operators. Well, maybe not so suddenly... they went into effect in April, but back then it was like: "Don't worry guys, it's temporary, we'll lift the ban once the quarantine is over, 100% guaranteed!"

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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 July 2020, including: overall across all devices (desktop and mobile), sports betting across all devices, casino (mobile) and casino (desktop)



bet365 Affiliates



A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES



SPORTS



BINGO



POKER



CASINO



GAMES

OVERALL

Rank	Name	Website
1	bet365 Affiliates	www.bet365affiliates.com
2	IQ Option Affiliate	affiliate.iqoption.com
3	NetHive Affiliate Program	www.nethive.com
4	U-affiliates	www.uffiliates.com
5	Betfair Partnerships	affiliates.betfair.com
6	eToro Partners	www.etoropartners.com
7	Kindred Affiliates	www.kindredaffiliates.com
8	GVC Affiliates	www.gvcaffiliates.com
9	Best Partners	www.bestpartners.com
10	betway Partners Africa	www.betwaypartnersafrica.com
11	Bovada Affiliate Program	www.bovada.lv/new-bovada-affiliate-program
12	BinPartner	binpartner.com
13	William Hill Affiliates	affiliates.williamhill.com
14	AfiladosW	afiladosw.co
15	FDJ Affiliate Program	www.fdj.fr
16	Stoiximan.gr Affiliates	affiliates.betano.com
17	Bet9ja Affiliates	affiliates.bet9ja.com
18	Gamesys Group Partners	www.gamesysgrouppartners.com
19	IG Markets Partners	www.ig.com/uk/marketing-partnership
20	Yahoo Fantasy Sports Affiliates	sports.yahoo.com/dailyfantasy/affiliates

CASINO (MOBILE)

Rank	Name	Website
1	U-affiliates	www.uffiliates.com
2	Gamesys Group Partners	www.gamesysgrouppartners.com
3	StarVegas Affiliates	www.starvegasaffiliate.com
4	WinBet Affiliates	winbetaffiliates.bg
5	Rabbit Affiliates	www.rabbit-affiliates.com
6	Platin Casino Affiliates	partners.platincasino.com
7	Lucky Days Affiliate Program	www.luckydaysaffiliates.com
8	bet365 Affiliates	bet365 Affiliates
9	PlayAmo Partners	playamopartners.com
10	William Hill Affiliates	affiliates.williamhill.com
11	Genesis Affiliates	genesisaffiliates.com
12	Buffalo Partners	www.buffalopartners.com
13	GVC Affiliates	www.gvcaffiliates.com
14	Videoslots Affiliate Program	partner.videoslots.com
15	Kindred Affiliates	www.kindredaffiliates.com
16	HappiAffiliate	www.happiaffiliate.com
17	Rank Affiliates	www.rankaffiliates.com
18	King Billy Affiliates	kingbillyaffiliates.com
19	LeoVegas Affiliate	www.leovegasaffiliates.com
20	Betsson Group Affiliates	www.betssongroupaffiliates.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

CASINO (DESKTOP)

SPORTS BETTING

Rank	Name	Website
1	Gamesys Group Partners	www.gamesysgrouppartners.com
2	Betsson Group Affiliates	www.betssongroupaffiliates.com
3	WinBet Affiliates	winbetaffiliates.bg
4	LeoVegas Affiliate	www.lovegasaffiliates.com
5	GVC Affiliates	www.gvcaffiliates.com
6	U-affiliates	www.uffiliates.com
7	Rabbit Affiliates	www.rabbit-affiliates.com
8	Videoslots Affiliate Program	partner.videoslots.com
9	Stakes Affiliates	affiliates.stakes.com
10	Platin Casino Affiliates	partners.platincasino.com
11	Wildz Affiliates	wildzaffiliates.com
12	Kindred Affiliates	www.kindredaffiliates.com
13	Mr Affiliate	www.mraffiliate.com
14	bet365 Affiliates	www.bet365affiliates.com
15	Buffalo Partners	www.buffalopartners.com
16	Casumo Affiliates	www.casumoaffiliates.com
17	Best Partners	www.bestpartners.com
18	PlayAmo Partners	playamopartners.com
19	William Hill Affiliates	affiliates.williamhill.com
20	Paf Partners	www.pafpartners.com

Rank	Name	Website
1	bet365 Affiliates	www.bet365affiliates.com
2	NetHive Affiliate Program	www.nethive.com
3	Betfair Partnerships	affiliates.betfair.com
4	betway Partners Africa	www.betwaypartnersafrica.com
5	AfliadosW	afliadosw.co
6	Best Partners	www.bestpartners.com
7	Kindred Affiliates	www.kindredaffiliates.com
8	Bovada Affiliate Program	www.bovada.lv/new-bovada-affiliate-program
9	Sportsbet.com.au Affiliates	www.sportsbetaffiliates.com.au
10	Tipsport Partners	www.tipsport.cz/partner
11	GVC Affiliates	www.gvcaffiliates.com
12	ZEturf Affiliates	affiliationen.zeturf.com
13	Bet9ja Affiliates	affiliates.bet9ja.com
14	U-affiliates	www.uffiliates.com
15	William Hill Affiliates	affiliates.williamhill.com
16	Betway Partners	www.betwaypartners.com
17	Stoiximan.gr Affiliates	affiliates.betano.com
18	1xBet Partners	1xpartners.com
19	PM Affiliates	pmaffiliates.com/en/
20	Ladbrokes Partners	www.ladbrokescoralpartners.com



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STANDING OUT

Tim Poole argues that online casino homogeneity offers affiliates the chance to differentiate more than ever during this year's digital traffic boom



Japanese author Shūsaku Endō once said “every weakness contains within itself a strength”. The principle here applies pretty universally. At job interviews, a classic candidate approach is to answer a question about weaknesses with phrases like “I’m too hard-working” or “if you think about it my biggest weakness is my greatest strength!” Athletes and sports teams can turn their weakest areas into a positive by enhancing other aspects of their game, while companies with a weaker product can compensate through practices like marketing or even M&A.

More specific to gaming, the current global climate is rife with opportunity for affiliates in the realm of online casino – particularly due to one of the sector’s most striking criticisms, or weaknesses. For years now, while online casino has continued to generate growing revenue, little has truly separated the different products within the industry (a criticism also aimed at the sports betting sector). Yes, slot games will have different themes, graphics and slight variations in prizes, but the principles of the games themselves will always remain the same.

Innovation at the core of online gaming remains limited, as companies know what a customer wants. So why risk venturing too far out in the way of differentiation? For live casino, roulette, blackjack and poker, the same principle exists by way of necessity. You can change the dealer, the suit of cards, the colour of the table, but at their heart, these games will also remain the same. Twenty-one would no longer work, nor would it attract a new audience, if it was suddenly called twenty two.

While this doesn’t necessarily hurt online casino operators – as discussed, revenue continues to boom – critics point to a homogeneity between casino products as an industry weakness.

And when it comes to marketing your product, not really being able to have any unique features to work with definitely brings its disadvantages. But as our Endō hinted earlier, this weakness provides the perfect chance for affiliates to forge one of their biggest strengths.

With so many new customers looking to gamble online this year – but with such homogeneity across the sector – it’s the perfect opportunity for affiliates to stand out to new players.

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Gamblers new to online casino will be looking for introductions and education. They'll have time on their hands and will be looking for the perfect site to spend their entertainment budget on. But how will they be able to tell one online casino from another?

This is where affiliate content comes in. While online casinos (no matter how successful they may be collectively) struggle to stand apart from one another, affiliates can stand apart with how they choose to frame their content – and it's a real opportunity to drive revenue and shape the market. In the September 2019 edition of Trafficology, we spoke of the importance of honest casino reviews and not misleading the player.

Given how the industry climate has changed over the past year – and how the emphasis on online has grown – the benefits of connecting with players is greater than ever. When you're setting out content schedules and delivering briefs, don't just settle for average casino content. If so many casino brands offer so many similar products, why not stand out with your affiliate product?

In that September edition, Shane Anderson, Better Collective senior director, content & brand, said: "The affiliate industry has evolved to become an integral step in a punter's betting experience. This has been achievable thanks to one key factor: affiliates are on the punters' side. Affiliates have the advantage that we can remain honest and transparent across our operator partners, making sure the users of our platforms are completely aware of what they are engaging with when placing a bet with an operator."

Now more than ever, that opportunity to engage with players and create a new following is there in abundance. Online casino is a bull market right now, with Catena Media, Betsson Group, Evolution Gaming and many other online firms posting record quarterly results. Yet, for all the sector's success, the problem of homogeneity still remains, giving affiliates the advantage to be bolder with their content.

"It's always better for affiliates to give an honest review of operators," Anderson added in last year's Trafficology.

"WHEN YOU'RE SETTING OUT CONTENT SCHEDULES AND DELIVERING BRIEFS, DON'T JUST SETTLE FOR AVERAGE CASINO CONTENT. IF SO MANY CASINO BRANDS OFFER SO MANY SIMILAR PRODUCTS, WHY NOT STAND OUT WITH YOUR AFFILIATE PRODUCT?"



"For one, it's a crucial component of building and maintaining trust with the users of our affiliate platforms. Of course, some operators may not like criticism that comes along with this honesty – but the benefit of this is it helps keep our partners motivated to improve their products. In the end, we want to give the best experience possible to our collective end users; any dishonesty can have negative consequences."

Being honest is not the only component to standing out content-wise. The need for player education is greater than ever with so many gaming newcomers – especially in the burgeoning US online market. For sports wagering, a common affiliate strategy is to produce how-to-bet guides on different sports, and it's a tried-and-tested method. For online casino, there's nothing stopping affiliates from going a step further to teach players about the various strategies, risks and benefits involved.

Instead of rating certain operators 9.9 and others 9.8 out of 10, affiliates can truly paint the full picture for their players. That doesn't mean completely lambasting a partner of yours but rather empowering players to make decisions that will enhance their betting experience. With so many players looking for new ways to game, an affiliate that grabs their attention can become an even more valuable resource than usual, building loyalty to that affiliate in the long term.

So while the competition in the online casino market is intense, more power may lie with affiliates right now than at any other period in online gaming's modern history. If homogenous content is the online casino sector's weakness, let that become the affiliate sector's biggest strength. Be creative with your content; don't just reproduce what's already been done a thousand times. Be original, be different and you, as an affiliate, can claim far more of the new traffic that's searching for online casinos.

Summer
IS ALMOST
over



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E TIME

As a dedicated esports-betting platform, Luckbox has been at the sharp end of the surge in interest in the sector witnessed during the first half of 2020. CEO **Quentin Martin** discusses how the company adapted quickly to capitalise and how affiliates became an integral part of the growth strategy

In 2019 esports wasn't a sport. In 2020, it was the only sport. At least that was the meme doing the rounds during the darkest days of lockdown, when the coronavirus pandemic had shut pretty much every live event across the globe.

For a bleak few weeks, there was very little live action for customers to enjoy (with honourable exception of the Belarus Premier League) and that clearly presented significant challenges to the gambling industry. At Luckbox, it became an opportunity we were able to capitalise on.

Certainly esports was and still is hit by the pandemic, with the many major events that were due to be held in arenas affected. But most of these events were able to adapt into online tournaments, meaning they could still go ahead, be broadcast live and bet on. Dota tournaments ESL One Los Angeles and ESL One Birmingham switched online, likewise the CS:GO showpiece ESL One Cologne and the regional divisions in League of Legends.

The gambling industry saw a massive uptick in esports betting, with volumes up 40% between 9 March and 19 April, according to EveryMatrix, which also estimated that total wagers on esports could reach \$15bn by the end of the year.

As an esports-centric platform, we were already well positioned to ride this wave but we too adapted to capitalise. For a start, we worked quickly to add FIFA and NBA2K betting. These two games are not typically big games in esports circles, but the influx of customers from traditional sports betting fuelled demand. Indeed, EveryMatrix estimated that 80% of esports bets were driven by these titles.

The work paid off as our numbers exploded. We saw a 500% increase in betting volume compared with November 2019; the average bet size increase by 200% since January; and a 10-times increase in the number of deposits since January 2020.

The growth was so significant that it accelerated our plans to go public and after raising \$5m CAD from investors, we are poised to list on the Toronto Ventures Stock Exchange (TSXV).

AFFILIATE LINKS

As well as adding new games and a slight realignment of some of our marketing messages, the most significant change we made was with affiliates. We had always intended to build an affiliate network but, in truth, it was low priority at the start of the year.

However, with the expected influx in customers coming from traditional sports, we knew it made sense to reach people through existing affiliate platforms and we worked quickly to on-board a select number of high-quality partners and they've played a vital role in our growth.

We work with a blend of established sites through networks such as Catena and smaller sites with strong penetration in esports thanks to their loyal and knowledgeable audience.



QUENTIN MARTIN

Between the beginning of March and the end of May, almost 50% of our first time depositors came via affiliates. It's been so successful that we're currently in the process of integrating a well-known affiliate platform provider, which will allow us to scale up our operation.

With enhanced CRM cycles, we were able to lock up more than 75% of our lockdown uplift and, because we know many of our players are also fans of traditional sports, it's prompted our team to adapt again and we are working on adding traditional sports to our site to coincide with the return of domestic football across Europe.

One of the key advantages of being a bespoke platform with a dedicated development team is that we can react quickly to changes in the market to cater to customer demands.

We hope that this will make us even more attractive to affiliates as we offer not only an industry-leading esports betting experience, but also the option to bet on the world's most popular traditional sports.

ESPORTS: NO FLASH IN THE PAN

Since the return of traditional sports, esports betting volumes have held up very well.

CS:GO betting volumes sky-rocketed, with consistent double-digit percentage growth on a monthly basis for both number of bets and betting volumes. Dota 2 volumes dipped slightly, due to a lack of top-tier in-arena events in May compared to April but now back up to 17% growth in volumes. League of Legends betting volumes were also affected by the break between spring and summer splits but, with the return of LCS and LEC in particular, there's been a 93% growth in volumes and 75% growth in the number of bets in June compared to May.

Just because we'll offer betting on football, tennis and other sports doesn't mean we're turning our back on esports. On the contrary, Luckbox has been built by a team passionate about esports and we know it's the future.

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SHOULD SPORTS BETTING AFFILIATES DIVERSIFY?

The *Trafficology* editorial team looks at whether sports betting affiliates should hedge their bets on the sporting calendar after the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic



IQBAL JOHAL: YES – EVOLVING YOUR OFFERING WILL HELP COUNTER UNPREDICTABLE LANDSCAPE

Like There are many lessons for the gaming industry to take from the coronavirus pandemic, not least for affiliates. Traditionally, sports betting has been a central source of revenue for affiliates, which is why the suspension of live sport in mid-March caused chaos throughout the sector.

Racing Post covers a plethora of sport on a daily basis, to the extent it was no surprise the suspension of major leagues back in March had a detrimental effect on the affiliate. So much so that its parent company Spotlight Sports Group made the decision on 26 March to temporarily cease publication of its

newspaper, after 34 years of daily UK circulation. This was due to a lack of racing and football content, although it returned to print on 1 June. “No sport means no betting, and very little content,” Spotlight Sports Group CMO Louise Agran explained at AffiliateCon Virtually Live back in May.

In stark contrast, Catena Media posted record quarterly revenue and profit for Q2, growing 17% to €27.8m (\$33m). The affiliate credited this rise to the performance of its casino segment, which saw an increased level of activity as sport was suspended. Even though its own sports business was obviously affected, investing and focusing on other verticals helped offset those losses.

It's no secret virtual sports and esports betting boomed during the pandemic. Gambling Commission statistics focusing on major operators covering approximately 80% of the Great British online gambling market showed that between March and April, gross gambling yield for virtuals grew 41%, esports

**“IT MAKES SENSE TO HAVE A SMALL FOCUS ON CONTINGENCIES ALONGSIDE YOUR MAIN SPECIALTY. THIS IS PERHAPS TRUER FOR SMALLER AFFILIATES AS OPPOSED TO THE BIGGEST COMPANIES WHO HAVE THE LARGEST AMOUNTS OF LIQUIDITY TO FALL BACK ON”
– TIM POOLE**

124% and online poker 66%. While figures in subsequent months have tailed off to a degree since the return of live sport, these statistics demonstrate the importance of focusing on a number of verticals, because you never know when one might suffer a reversal of fortunes.

Affiliates and operators who are diverse have emerged from the worst of the pandemic stronger than those focusing solely on sports betting. That's been indicated from the various Q2 and H1 financial results we've seen in the past few months. The rises in other verticals suggests the demand is there for affiliates to diversify into these markets.

While not as popular as during height of lockdown, the esports industry is still hopeful of retaining a significant number of new players, with SickOdds co-founder Tom Wade saying he was confident of a 30% to 40% retention rate, during his talk at AffiliateCon Virtual Live. Casino comparison site CasinoGuru saw a 50% rise in activity during lockdown, with both these stats implying there is a marketplace for affiliates to offer easy access odds for alternative verticals, and to customers who have been engaged by offerings they might not have previously been interested in.

It's hard to deny sports betting is very much back and thriving again, with operators and affiliates benefiting from pent-up demand after months of inactivity for the vertical. But the pandemic has taught the industry, and indeed the entire world, that we live in precarious times; uncertainty is rife. At the start of the year, very few would have foreseen the events that took place, and no one can be sure of what the landscape will look like this time next year. With that in mind, it certainly helps affiliates to prepare for the worst-case scenario the more they

diversify, and help evolve in the ever-increasingly unpredictable and fast-paced world we now live in.

DWAIN FLANDERS: NO – IT SHOULD ALWAYS BE QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

“Do one thing. I think you'll struggle to do something well if you're going to try to do more than one. I'd just say target it real niche and be awesome at it. I think that's the only way you will beat the other guys.”

That was Gavin Walters, director of business development at Gambling.com Group, speaking during last year's iGB Live. The executive was sharing his ideas on what it takes to compete in the UK affiliate market and, since that panel, a global pandemic has sent shockwaves through the industry. Some might say this has put a spanner in the works for sports betting affiliates, too. Once considered untouchable, the pandemic has taught us that even our professional sports leagues are susceptible to a global crisis.

Just months ago, websites like Oddschecker and Better Collective were operating in absolute certainty of their content's continuity. That certainty has now been replaced with serious concern. Sports betting operators across the world have been investing in esports and virtuals as they look to mitigate losses, and online casino has seen considerable growth in sports' absence.

However, while the pandemic might have been a wake-up call for large parts of the sports betting industry, I disagree with my colleagues' arguments that diversification is necessary in the affiliate space. Instead, I believe the words of Walters still stand true today – “do one thing” and do it well. That is the way to compete.

The main factor behind this reasoning should be the most important aspect to any industry: its customers. Traditional sports bettors can be found all across the globe, forming the foundation of an industry as old as time itself. When affiliate executives consider diversification in the wake of COVID-19, it's these customers who should be at the forefront of their minds.

**“AFFILIATES AND OPERATORS WHO ARE DIVERSE HAVE EMERGED FROM THE WORST OF THE PANDEMIC STRONGER THAN THOSE FOCUSING SOLELY ON SPORTS BETTING. THAT'S BEEN INDICATED FROM THE VARIOUS Q2 AND H1 FINANCIAL RESULTS WE'VE SEEN IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS”
– IQBAL JOHAL**

When a sports bettor utilises the services of an affiliate, they want easy access to the best odds from multiple operators. To this end, successfully providing accessible odds in an easy-to-use format is what generates success.

If these traditional sports bettors were to click onto their favourite affiliate site and be inundated with odds for esports, online casino or virtuals, that website would lose considerable allure.

It's also important not to panic. While we may be in a global pandemic today, the easing of restrictions and restart of sports leagues in most areas of the world shows there is light at the end of the tunnel. For most of the sports betting industry, the storm has been weathered successfully. Now is the time to capitalise on the return of sports and provide bettors with those wagers they had been craving in sport-less months.

During the first half of the year, alternative verticals have provided the sports betting industry with a satisfactory substitute. But it's important for sports betting affiliates to remember this was an unprecedented time. H1 2020 was an outlier in the history of the sports betting industry and one that should (hopefully) remain an outlier for years to come. To completely overhaul the makeup of a successful business based on such a period would be irresponsible.

As we move forwards into the last few months of 2020, I believe sports betting affiliates will find their users more fervent than ever. As sport returns to screens and fans ultimately return to stadiums, the odds provided by affiliate sites will prove vital. The diversification of these sites would do nothing but cloud them with additional options – both unwanted and unneeded.

TIM POOLE: YES – PIVOTING NOW A NECESSITY FOR AFFILIATES

Affiliates can spend years building their brand and perfecting their niche. From SEO expertise to six-figure social media followings, the time taken to specialise in one area – like sports betting – can't be replicated in a snap. So it's no surprise to see so many sports betting affiliates play the waiting game this summer, as the coronavirus pandemic ate away much of the sporting calendar.

An approach adopted by many has seen cost-cutting, followed by patient anticipation of the sporting calendar's return. Figures have shown bettors who like their sports will stick to them, waiting for the return of the Premier League, NFL, Open golf or whatever it is they prefer. Sports bettors with a taste for sport won't suddenly just turn to casino at the drop of a hat.

And yet that begs the question of what these affiliates are supposed to do when there's no major sport available. Granted, the sporting calendar is very constant throughout the year and, barring a pandemic, won't realistically be disrupted like this again. But there are two factors worth considering here. One is that the pandemic isn't over, meaning any second waves could potentially still reduce the number of sporting events available. Second is that sport is still susceptible to postponements and cancellations, unlike online gaming that is available 24/7.

If all bets are off for sports, there must be a more dynamic strategy than just sitting and waiting? Catena Media, for example, posted record financial figures for Q2, showing the value of its casino arm during the pandemic. Online

casino has been a huge winner this summer and by extension, so too online casino affiliates.

So instead of focusing on Belarusian football or table tennis next time there's a snag in the sporting calendar, why not promote slots and online casino games more centrally on a sports betting site's home page? This is not to U-turn on strategy completely but would simply show an affiliate keeping its options open.

During the pandemic, for example, one speaker at AffiliateCon Virtually Live expressed regret that he hadn't diversified one of his affiliates to a greater degree before COVID-19 struck. Diversification does not necessarily need to just mean online casino, either. Something many affiliates have embraced is virtual sports and, particularly esports, where content can

**“I DISAGREE WITH MY COLLEAGUES’ ARGUMENTS THAT DIVERSIFICATION IS NECESSARY IN THE AFFILIATE SPACE. DO ONE THING AND DO IT WELL. THAT'S THE WAY TO COMPETE. THE MAIN FACTOR BEING THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT TO ANY INDUSTRY: ITS CUSTOMERS”
– OWAIN FLANDERS**

reign supreme just as it does for traditional sports wagering.

Now, though, rather than consigning these verticals to the history books as bonus temporary sources of revenue, why not learn from 2020 and pivot long term? Again, this doesn't mean abandoning sports betting, which is still big business, and is also growing strong in the US. But instead of relying fully on one vertical, it makes sense now more than ever to have a small focus on several other contingencies alongside your main specialty. This is perhaps truer for smaller affiliates, too, as opposed to the biggest companies in the industry who have the largest amounts of liquidity to fall back on.

So while many affiliates who specialise in sport have seen recoveries since the return of major leagues and competitions, the impact of the pandemic won't be lost on those who were furloughed or lost their jobs. Sports betting affiliates should by no means abandon their routes and transform into casino review sites. But even a 20 to 30% pivot towards other verticals, including those that are related to sports (esports, virtuals), provides more stability and revenue potential, especially as the pandemic is not over yet. Without neglecting your core product, diversification can only enhance your offering.

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FREE-TO-PLAY GAMES RETURN

Marc Wood, sales and marketing director from 1account says a solution must be found to allow affiliates to offer free-to-play games, and he believes he's found it



The online gambling affiliate space is fiercely competitive, and publishers have to constantly improve their content, products and services to keep pace with their rivals. This must be done in an environment where regulations are always changing and tightening, and where they are constantly under the watchful eye of partners, regulators and watchdogs. It's a tough game that keeps on getting tougher, especially for smaller publishers that lack the budget and resources of the power players who keep exerting their dominance. As a result, affiliates – whether a one-man band or a flagship site belonging to Catena or XL Media – are always looking for cost effective ways of providing more value to their readers.

Creating content, partnering with streamers, offering exclusive welcome bonuses and developing powerful

comparison tools are all good ways of doing this. But there's another proven way of engaging and entertaining players, but one that was taken away from affiliates targeting the UK market. Back in July 2019, the Gambling Commission took the decision to require operators and affiliates to age verify players before allowing them to access free-to-play games. This was done under the LCCP Social Responsibility Code Provision 1.1.2, which states that free-to-play games cannot be accessed by children and those under the age of 18. The rule led to the majority of affiliates removing free-to-play games from their sites, thus losing an effective point of conversion and driver of revenues, especially for those on CPA deals.

While the reasoning behind the decision is sound, it has dealt a blow to affiliates – especially those lacking



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MARC WOOD

funds and resources from which it's been hard to recover. Some affiliates have tried to implement ways of verifying players with basic age verification tools that are as ineffective as they are damaging to the user experience. An underage player could easily enter a false date of birth to gain access to the games, and legitimate 18+ players are put off by the need to manually enter their DOB on landing on a site. In such a competitive sector, a poor customer experience is just as bad as the negative impact suffered by having to remove free-to-play games in the first place. What's more, the risk of an underage player clicking through to an operator site from an affiliate partner is simply not worth the risk from the former's perspective.

The regulator has made it very clear that operators are ultimately responsible for the activity carried out by their affiliate partners and it's simply not worth putting their licences at risk. But when you consider that there is no ban on affiliates or operators offering free-to-play games (just the need to age verify players), a solution could and must be found. This is something I've been considering for many months now, and believe the key lies in being able to provide affiliates with the right tools to accurately verify players. Of course, this has to be achieved without negatively impacting the user journey and the experience they receive on landing on the affiliate site. This could be packaged up into a simple tool that combines a developer's remote game server with age and ID verification technology. Affiliates can then embed this into their sites. If the player is successfully verified – this can be done in a matter of seconds with the right age verification technology – they

are granted access to the free-to-play games. If they aren't, then they could be taken to a similar page where there's a library of footage showing the games being streamed by a popular streamer or something similar. This would provide operators with confidence that their affiliate partners are verifying players using the very same technologies they use as part of their own KYC processes.

For the affiliate, it means they can bring back free-to-play games and leverage the tremendous value they bring in terms of user acquisition and conversion. It also prevents underage players from accessing free-to-play content, which is exactly what the Gambling Commission was seeking to achieve when it initially changed the rules. Of course, this is something affiliates and operators should support but at the same time, they need to be able to run viable businesses in what is an expensive sector in which to compete.

As part of this, the solution I have in mind would be free to use for affiliates as game developers would shoulder the small cost associated with verifying players and using the tool. If I am making it sound like such a product exists, then you wouldn't be wrong. It's something we've been working on with a number of other stakeholders for many months now. What we've come up with is an absolute game-changer for affiliates but also operators and, of course, game developers who need to be able to market games cost effectively as well.

We'll announce more details about the tool we have developed in the coming weeks, but rest assured that the return of free-to-play games is nigh.

“THE REGULATOR HAS MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT OPERATORS ARE ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIVITY CARRIED OUT BY THEIR AFFILIATE PARTNERS AND IT'S SIMPLY NOT WORTH PUTTING THEIR LICENCES AT RISK. BUT WHEN YOU CONSIDER THAT THERE IS NO BAN ON AFFILIATES OR OPERATORS OFFERING FREE-TO-PLAY GAMES, A SOLUTION COULD AND MUST BE FOUND”

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MARRYING STRATEGY AND TECHNOLOGY

Allan Petrilli, VP of sales & growth at Intelitics, discusses the key factors behind running campaigns at scale in 2020



The For as far back as affiliate programmes existed in the online gaming space, SEO dominated the scene, accounting for the large majority of acquired traffic across casino, sportsbook, bingo and the remaining verticals. SEO traffic was generally high quality, transparent, easy to manage and most important, easy for affiliates to rank on Google and grow highly profitable businesses.

Fast forward to 2020, the SEO space is highly consolidated, making it more expensive for operators to scale traffic through, and much more competitive, making it harder for affiliates to rank successfully in fast-growing markets like the US. With this truth, paid media, including social platforms, Google search

and display network, native platforms, as well as push networks, have quickly grown to dominate the traffic space in online gaming. While these channels provide exponential scale, they also provide challenges when it comes to running profitable campaigns given the current latency in most online gaming tracking platforms, as well as the general inability to place conversion pixels and optimise at granular placement levels, where it's pivotal for campaigns to be successful.

While historically traffic has always defined where technology headed in the space, in 2020, technology plays a massive role in defining which channels you can acquire traffic on, and the ability to run campaigns efficiently at scale.



Here are a few key factors for running campaigns at scale in 2020:

1. Let technology work for you, not against you. Do you have the ability to pull in spend across multiple channels into one centralised reporting platform, or are you forced to utilise multiple platforms to make decisions? There is a lot of wasted time when it comes to campaign evaluation, and as they say, time is money. The quicker you can gain access to data and make decisions on scaling up or down, the more success you are going to have towards driving real ROI for your business.

2. Are you set up to see your campaign stats, both conversion and revenue in real time? You wouldn't believe how many brands in online gaming still rely on a 24-hour delay in reporting, which puts you at a real high risk for fraud, scaling bad traffic, or missing opportunities for scale. This isn't just important for you, it's pivotal for your traffic partners.

3. Are you evaluating traffic at a granular placement level? Is your tech set up to allow you to do this? Running profitable campaigns, especially in paid media, is more than scaling or cutting entire partners or platforms based on holistic stats. You need to be deep diving into the different target traffic groups within each channel and source, scaling what's working and cutting what's not. To do this, you need to hold your channels and sources accountable to pass you back this data, which brings me to my next point.

4. Do you have the ability for your partners or platforms to pass you back sub ID data via postbacks, and collect and report on this in an easy and efficient way? With how competitive and variable biddable media is in 2020, this is absolutely essential to your success. You need to be giving yourself and your partners the tools to spend efficiently. Without this set up, it's nearly impossible.

5. Are you running cohort analysis on your traffic? Traffic takes time to mature, so evaluating all of a specific source's traffic in one bucket will surely lead to mistakes. This is a classic issue we've faced across this industry for many years, and generally because most technology doesn't make this easy to do. Specifically, when running CPA type campaigns, you need to give traffic time to mature, and be constantly reviewing traffic in segments based on when users were acquired. If you're grouping in traffic from 60 days ago with traffic acquired in the last 7 days, you're skewing your analysis.

Effectively running campaigns takes proper technology that is set up in a way that understands your goals, and allows you to make quick decisions. Choosing the right technology partners, and setting them up to best suit your needs is as important as choosing the right traffic partners. This takes upfront time and effort, but ultimately saves you a ton of time and money on the backend. In 2020, you cannot justify poor campaign performance with the inability to deliver on the above.

Allan Petrilli is VP of sales & growth at Intelitics, a marketing-tech and analytics services company that provides data-driven user acquisition at scale across online and mobile channels, leveraging its proprietary innovative igaming-focused marketing technology stack. Allan has been in the industry since 2011, delivering tailored and proven user acquisition strategies across all iGaming verticals. Outside work, Allan enjoys consuming as much live sports as possible, as well as travelling with the family and discovering new places that are considerably warmer than Montreal in the winter months.

“THE SEO SPACE IS CONSOLIDATED, MAKING IT MORE EXPENSIVE FOR OPERATORS TO SCALE TRAFFIC THROUGH, AND MUCH MORE COMPETITIVE, MAKING IT HARDER FOR AFFILIATES TO RANK SUCCESSFULLY”



THE WAITING GAME

Harry von Behr, strategy and business development director at Spotlight Sports Group, formerly known as the Racing Post Group, speaks with Tim Poole about measuring expectations, and opportunities, when it comes to the great potential of the US market

How is life at Spotlight Sports Group?

Very good Tim; things are good. I think we're now all very used to lockdown and working from home and we're very happy that things are heating up here in the UK and in other markets around the world as well. It's great to have sports and racing and therefore betting back in full swing.

Like you say in the UK we are happy to have horse racing and sport back. In the US, sport is slowly returning and we're here to talk about the US market and affiliates. So can you give us a general state of play when it comes to affiliates in America?

I think the US is a really exciting market and space to be operating in. Very rarely do you see a completely new market that inevitably will become the biggest in its industry as it matures. There's definitely a clearly defined path as to what that looks like when you look at markets such as the UK, others in Europe and Australia. So we're seeing that as the US shifts from black to white, a really exciting opportunity opens up for ourselves and other businesses in the space. If you think about the affiliate sector specifically, it's continuing to evolve as you'd expect. It doesn't make sense to look at the US market as a single market. You have to understand the dynamics

of each specific state. But as the market continues to evolve and regulate, it's an exciting place to be. I think from an affiliate perspective, operators at the moment are very much on a land grab and are looking to build up their market share with expectations from shareholders and investors. That means it's a good time to be an affiliate business if what you're doing is helping them to drive that.

At Spotlight, as well as being an affiliate we have a strong B2B content and data arm as well. I think on that side we're having some really positive conversations with US operators about our ability to provide bet stimulating content and data as well. What we typically see is that the early stage of a market development such as the US, it's all about driving player acquisition and growing share. Then as that market continues to mature it's more focused on yield and monetising contests better. That's when the B2B side kicks in. So yeah it's an interesting place to be.

How different is the betting content a US audience wants compared to a European audience?

We've done a lot of research into the US punter over the last couple of years and we've seen that there's a significant appetite for sports betting and sports betting content, which is no surprise and it's

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heartening given the focus for that market. I think that's reflected in some of the rich commercial and CPA deals that operators are handing out. In terms of the content that the audience is looking for, there's a strong desire for picks and tips and predictions, which, again, isn't a surprise. That fits nicely with our expertise in bet stimulating content. I think when you compare the US audience to European sports as an example, it's a lot more stat heavy. I think if you think about the language that is used within US sport, even when they talk about performance of players and teams it's a lot more linked to statistics than typically a more qualitative approach to talking about sports from a UK and European audience. Our experience in other markets shows that if you're able to link betting tools and betting products to the underlying data to help punters make informed decisions, then it's a pretty compelling proposition for the US audience. I think the other point just to mention is the importance of content that educates the audience.

A lot of our US audience forms the research we've done, and the behaviour we've seen isn't necessarily used to betting online if they're used to betting online with the unregulated black market. So we're helping punters understand the difference between regulated and unregulated operators and what betting online looks like versus visiting a brick and mortar casino or a race track. That's also very important to improve the experience for the audience and also your conversions and yields.

AGA CEO Bill Miller has been talking a lot recently about separating the offshore and the legal market. Bearing in mind content and what the audience wants, what are Spotlight Sports Group's specific plans for the US market?

We started looking at the US market in early 2018. I think we heard rumours that the Supreme Court was going to look at PASPA, and I thought it was something akin to what I mentioned earlier in terms of the sheer potential of the market. Following the repeal, we reviewed our various options, both in terms of acquisition and partnership opportunities and also from an organic perspective. Fortunately the same month that PASPA was repealed, we acquired a business in the UK called Apsley Group International, which operates Free Super Tips, MyRacing and the associated websites, apps and social accounts. What that business had and still has is market-leading experience in building affiliates from scratch. We've used those capabilities to launch and to grow our own US-facing affiliate site, PicksWise.com, which is now live in all the major regulated US states. We're licensed in New Jersey, West Virginia, Indiana, Colorado, and Pennsylvania and also operational in states such as Iowa and Illinois that don't require affiliate licensing. We're live with all the major US operators out there and we've seen strong growth from an audience perspective; we're beginning to see good results in terms of the returns for operators on the affiliate side.

We will continue to look at other inorganic opportunities out there if there are ones that make sense to fit in that affiliate portfolio alongside PicksWise. On the B2B side, we've been in conversation with a number of operators in the US regarding US sports content, as they look to replicate the link between the sportsbook and content that we've built with them in Europe. I think on that front if you look at strength of content that it has in a retail setting, and I appreciate now isn't the best time for retail given what's happening with the coronavirus, but I think the value of content and bet stimulating content in retail sportsbooks and helping to educate and stimulate bettors is something we've seen real success with over in the UK and

mainland Europe. It's something US operators appear quite keen to explore on the other side of the Atlantic.

Just how big of a focus is the US for your brand and affiliates generally? In the long term, how will it compare to Europe?

It's a really unique opportunity. You're going to see a market that's leading in terms of size and scale as it regulates. It's obviously a significant opportunity and a focus for Spotlight Sports Group. From our perspective we're ensuring we take a measured approach. I'm very conscious that what we don't want to do is burn through cash in the early stage as the market continues to form. But recognising that, we need to make a serious play here given the potential scale of the market and the opportunity for what the business could look like. We're confident that we already have the tools and the capabilities within the business to make inroads in the US, and continue to make smart investments that we've made and create serial value in the market.

Therefore the US will be a large part of the future strategy on both the sports and the racing side. In terms of where it sits versus other markets, the UK and Ireland remain our largest territory at the moment. If you look at the potential for regulation in Brazil, for example, and the potential scale in that market, they'll increasingly be a focus for the business in the medium to long term. I don't think there's any shying away from the fact businesses operating in largely mature markets are going to come under a significant amount of regulatory pressure as we're seeing here in the UK and affiliates that operate in Scandinavia are facing. So I think it's important to have a balanced portfolio when you think of different territories.

On the flip side, we as a business only operate in regulated white markets and therefore we'll continue to keep a close eye on regulation and how that evolves. In terms of how important it's likely to be for others in the industry I guess both on the affiliate and the operator sides, it's inevitably going to be a significant part of their plans. I think you can see by reading shareholder reports and listening to shareholder presentations that a lot of people are staking success in the US. I think that's good for affiliates when operators are focusing on the US so significantly, which means there's a huge amount of opportunity for those people who can be the intermediary between punters and the sportsbooks themselves. There'll be some serious winners in this space but only time will tell as to what happens.

“I THINK THE US IS A REALLY EXCITING MARKET AND SPACE TO BE OPERATING IN. VERY RARELY DO YOU SEE A COMPLETELY NEW MARKET THAT INEVITABLY WILL BECOME THE BIGGEST IN ITS INDUSTRY AS IT MATURES”

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PREFERENCE PERFORMANCE

Sports betting affiliate site The Punters Page recently undertook a survey with its users on betting preferences. Here we analyse the results based on favourite sports to bet on to the most important features a bookmaker needs to have to cater for punters



What are the most appealing promotions?

Welcome offers and loyalty bonuses are the two most popular offers, with both ending in a tie of 37.2%. Welcome offers allow you to place first bets without deposits or have their wins doubled, for instance. Meanwhile, loyalty bonuses reward punters who bet consistently with a particular bookmaker. Accumulator bonuses followed with a close 34.8% and enhanced odds with 28.5%. Acca insurance was chosen by 16.3%, while 13.1% of respondents stated that they are not interested in promotions.

How do you bet?

49.5% use both the desktop and mobile to bet, while 40.2% prefer to use mobile only; just 10.4% prefer the desktop website. This shows how important an efficient mobile app is for punters, who often select bookmakers accordingly. Punters are increasingly choosing convenience and methods that are less time-consuming.

56% named accumulators as their type of bet placed most frequently, while 50.1% chose the less risky singles. Doubles and trebles proved to be lower in popularity, with 33.5% and 21.6% of respondents selecting them respectively.

45.2% prefer to bet on both pre-match and live betting, while 44.4% prefer pre-match betting, which consists of betting on predetermined odds before a match. Previous match statistics drive odds for pre-match betting, while live betting consists of placing bets after a match has started. Although exciting, it also involves greater risk, as there is less time to evaluate your decisions properly. This may be why only 10.4% of our respondents prefer live betting.

On what do you enjoy betting?

A whopping 91.5% of punters selected football, while horse racing followed with 26%. The latter may partially be due to how much data is offered with this sport, but also due to just how many horse racing events actually take place. 57.9% of our visitors prefer to simply bet on sports, while 24% also play at online casinos. Casinos and sports betting tend to differ in the level of knowledge required, with serious sports requiring punters to learn different rules and systems. On the other hand, online casinos provide the option of selecting games that don't require previous experience to play well.

What is your main reason for visiting sports betting affiliate sites?

64% selected tips & predictions. Naturally, these help punters improve their betting skills and learn more about sports betting. Free bets & betting offers followed with 61.7% of respondents, while 24.2% selected best betting sites. 15.2% chose general & beginners guides and 14.2% went with match/tournament previews. Meanwhile, 2.2% of respondents gave other reasons.

How does the way you bet compare with other punters? What are the most popular promotions? To find out what customers want from bookmakers, we decided to gather data from our over 100,000 monthly visitors by running a week-long survey on their betting preferences.

What are the most important features when joining a bookmaker?

62% of respondents replied with competitive odds, indicating that most naturally favour securing the highest profit from their wins. 39.5% selected cash out, which conveniently allows bettors to retrieve their money on placed bets before the event in question is over. Typically offered as part of live betting, the terms that surround cashing out give certain bookmakers an edge over others. Promotions were also an important incentive for many bettors at 26.3%, such as receiving cash back as a free bet if your initial bet is lost, or receiving a free bet for your first bet. Other important features were ease-of-use as well as deposit and payout speed, with 31.7% and 30.2% of respondents selecting these respectively. Live streaming was also chosen by 15.9%.

How many bookmakers have you signed up with?

39.4% of respondents opened an account with one to two betting operators, while 31.3% selected three to five, indicating that the majority prefer to select a few bookmakers with their prioritised features. 14.5% of respondents don't have any accounts open, reflecting that many visitors seek to open an account for the first time and may be doing their research beforehand. 7.9% of respondents have an account open with six to 10 betting operators, while 6.9% have an account with 11 or more.



GI FRIDAY... A GREAT END TO A WEEK
GAMBLINGINSIDER.COM/FRIDAY

A STUDY IN SYNERGY

Katy Stafford, head of central operations at ComeOn Connect, details her journey through the affiliate sector and the importance of sharing ideas to not just survive but thrive



Can you walk us through your journey in the gaming industry and your time at ComeOn Connect?

I started in the gaming industry in 2005, initially as office manager for Ads Dot Com, which was the marketing wing of CryptoLogic. We operated InterCasino, one of the first online casinos. Within that role I was lucky enough to work with some amazing people, some of the early trailblazers in online gaming. We were based in London, with our CS based in Cyprus.

In 2010 it was decided that we would close both of these offices and open one in Malta. In my role of office manager I was responsible for finance, office management and HR. Unfortunately, due to the fact I am English and not Maltese, I thought it would be best to have more localised staff to do my role. But I had always been very interested in affiliation and I believe that my knowledge of all departments, I could be put to good use in the affiliate team. Luckily our MD and the head of affiliates agreed and I started in

Malta in September 2010 as a junior affiliate manager.

From then, it's really just been a matter of luck and opportunity. Our head of affiliates at InterPartners moved on to new adventures quite soon after we moved to Malta and I pushed for more responsibility and ended up becoming head of affiliates about a year afterwards. I stayed there for three more years before deciding it was time to look for something new. Luckily for me, Cherry Group was looking for a new head of affiliates and it seemed that I fit the bill. It was an interesting time as I hadn't worked in a true multi-brand operation before and the Nordics were new to me also. I joined Cherry in 2014, and in 2016 we acquired ComeOn! Whilst the merger was happening, I was managing both affiliate teams, CherryAffiliates for Cherry and EarnAffiliates for ComeOn! along with affiliation for around 18 brands covering six main markets. Once the merger was complete, my team and I undertook the migration and merger of both programs into one fully functioning multi-brand platform

and programme: ComeOn! Connect. The merger was completed late 2018 and since then we have launched five new brands and entered three new markets. I currently have a team of eight market specialists and we hope to grow even further in 2020.

What are the most pressing priorities as head of affiliates?

Keeping up with ever changing regulations and compliance issues is a huge one. We currently have licenses in Sweden and Denmark as well as Malta, so from my end, we have to ensure that our affiliates are fully compliant in these markets and content on site is up to date. I think recently there have been quite drastic approaches to regulations. Certainly in Sweden as of 1 July, and fundamentally it's my job to ensure that we are abreast of what these changes could mean to our company bottom line. Will we see a reduction in NDCs? Will we see a reduction in player value? How can I offset that with renegotiating deals, ensuring that we keep mutually beneficial partnerships with our affiliate intact?

I was told that affiliation is the hardest job in gaming. We have to understand everything from product, tech, CRM, VIP, finance, compliance and of course overall company strategy. As well as maintaining profitability and keeping a steady flow of new customers into the business, we have to also maintain great relationships with our affiliate partners. We have to be available and make sure we can give the best support possible. That's what makes a good program in my eyes: trust, flexibility and profitability.



KATY STAFFORD

How have you seen the affiliate market react to abrupt market shifts in light of the coronavirus pandemic?

Not having sports was a blow. We were incredibly lucky that ComeOn Group have a great casino and live casino team, so we were able to shift a lot of retention activities there. Overall, as a company we surpassed expectations and we are now seeing things get back to normal. Obviously, this pandemic was not expected, so I found it really impressive how everyone was able to react so quickly without losing focus. Yes, some markets were more affected than others; we had just launched in India in time for the IPL and that was postponed until later this month, so we used the time to test the market. It's a new market for us, and it's been really valuable to have the time to do this to ensure that we have the best possible product, and that we have the best affiliate partners. I can't speak for other operators, but I also think this period has brought us closer to our affiliates. Everyone is in the same boat and personally, it was a time to ensure that everyone was safe and business was steady. It wasn't a time to massively grow; it was a time to sustain.

How have you been able to persevere over the last several months and what new opportunities have presented themselves?

We've all been working from home since early March. I've found it really easy to adapt as have my team. Luckily for us, we're used to being out of the office at conferences and so working remotely is fine. We have regular Zoom calls and we're, of course, in regular contact with other departments and our affiliates. I feel like I've become more organised, have more time for my team and for my affiliates, and we have managed to keep the status quo. As I said, I took the approach of sustainability and stability rather than growth for the affiliate team, and have also taken this opportunity to test new affiliates and some new approaches to deals.

What has inspired you in terms of industry cohesion and communication over the course of 2020?

I have missed the face to face contacts with our existing affiliates and friends and the atmosphere of a conference. However, I've been really impressed with the online content that's been published. People are coming together and sharing ideas, sharing how their workplace is during this time, discussing really interesting topics that I always miss at a conference as I am manning a stand. Everyone seems to be on the same page. We love this industry, we want it to survive and grow and we are all in it for the long run. But we do miss our friends.

What is your outlook for 2021?

This is a hard question as it all really depends on what happens with the coronavirus. If it calms down, then I think those operators that were smart, budgeted well and took just the right amount of risk, this year will flourish. Those that didn't may not survive into 2021. In regard to events, so far there are just as many scheduled for next year as there were for this year. But I just don't think it's sustainable to have so many in a year. I have actually really enjoyed not getting on a plane and travelling so much, but I completely understand the need to meet with our affiliates regularly. I think 2021 may be the year to be smart and utilise the technology we have or just pick up a phone as I have done. I think conferences in the future are better more niche so everyone gets something out of their time and money.

PLAY HARD

Thomas Azzopardi, head of AFFmore.com, explains how he takes his frustrations of going virtual out in the skate park



CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR BACKGROUND IN THE GAMING INDUSTRY AND WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THE AFFILIATE SECTOR?

I have been working for more than a decade in the gambling industry. I started as a French customer support agent at Betclac and my first affiliate manager adventure was with Gambling-Affiliation.com in 2009 in Malta. I then did one year of consultancy work in the Netherlands, with a gaming company MMO RPG affiliation and helped them build their platform. I then returned to Malta and worked for Betsson affiliates for a couple of years, then to ComeOn as the head of affiliates in London for another two years before moving to AFFMore five years ago as their head of affiliates.

ARE YOU WORKING FROM HOME OR IS EVERYONE BACK IN THE AFFMORE OFFICES?

We are all working from different locations. I am working from home in Menorca, Spain, while Joonas is working from our Tallinn office and Henna and Gemma work from our Maltese office.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO STILL WORK AS AN EFFECTIVE TEAM AND REMAIN COMPETITIVE IN SUCH A CHALLENGING SECTOR, AND IN VERY CHALLENGING TIMES?

I think I have a great team and leading them is easy. They are efficient, smart and I can rely on them. It has been challenging times indeed, but more for me and travel. For the past three weeks the AFFMore team has been working from the Malta office to welcome our new affiliate manager Gemma on board and to bond as a team. I enjoy working with them. The AFFMore team rocks!

WHAT EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES HAVE EMERGED AS A RESULT OF PEOPLE BEING ON THEIR DEVICES AND HOME COMPUTERS MORE?

Our numbers have increased significantly. The confinement of some countries in our main targeted markets have indeed boosted our numbers. We have also increased our marketing budgets accordingly.

IT'S BEEN A VERY SERIOUS TIME OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS. WHAT DO YOU DO TO UNWIND? I HEAR YOU'RE INTO SKATEBOARDING.

That's right, I am into skateboarding, and Joonas is an excellent

snowboarder. I also do a lot of bike riding. It helps me clear my head and focus on the moment intensely.

RODNEY MULLEN OR TONY HAWK?

I like both. I'd say Tony Hawk on this one, but David Gravette would be my favourite skater.

STREET OR HALF PIPES?

I love riding the streets and going freestyle in the skate park. However I am 40 years old, so I try to go early in the morning or when there are no kids around.

HOW ARE YOU ADAPTING TO EVENTS GOING VIRTUAL NOW?

Truthfully I am not adapting to virtual events. I prefer meeting people in person. Virtually is not the same.

DO YOU MISS BEING ON THE ROAD, TO EITHER GO TO SHOWS OR HOLIDAY?

Yes, I am lacking human contact, travelling, five-star hotels, and dinners and night outs with affiliates. Henna, Gemma and Joonas, who were all in Malta together, have the benefit of being surrounded by a large number of affiliates, and have finally managed to maintain some contact with key partners and restarted having a couple of business lunches.

ONCE THINGS GET BACK TO A REASONABLE STATE OF NORMAL, WHERE WILL YOU FIRST FLY TO?

First I have to go and meet Gemma who I hired three weeks ago and have never met in person. I also need to catch up with Henna who started in March and the last time I saw her was at LAC when our CEO Mattias introduced me to her. I also want to visit Haarlem, near Amsterdam in the Netherlands, on my way to Tallinn office.



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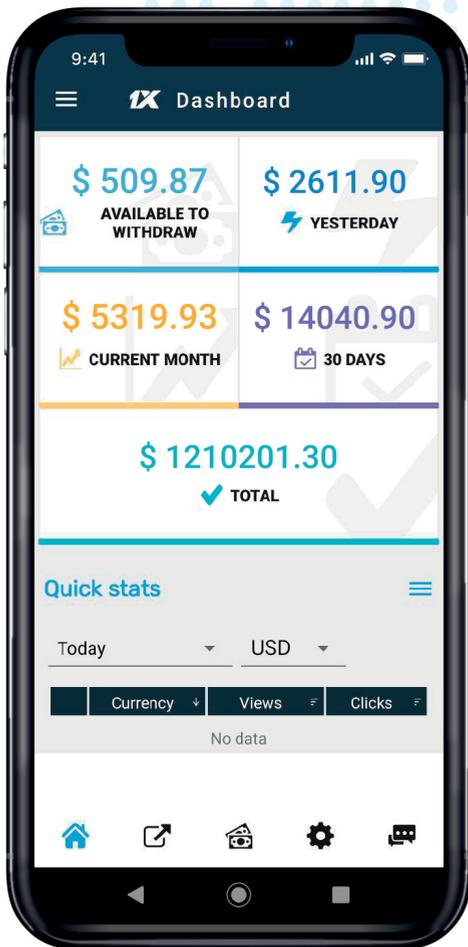


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