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Marketing & affiliate focus by *Gambling Insider*

JULY 2022

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BestOdds on the NFL

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World Cup hubs**

**US: Unsustainable
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**Play Hard:
Rlmante Nemanyte,
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MARKETS, MARKETS, MARKETS

Trafficology looks at new territories and new prospects for iGaming affiliates

TRAFFIC REPORT

Trafficology has partnered with data expert Casino City Press, to provide insight into website and traffic trends across affiliate industries – predominantly in gaming but including others. In this edition, we review affiliate programmes per vertical for May 2022. The below is a breakdown of the top 10 sites globally, including both desktop and mobile, sorted by: overall ranking, casino ranking, sports betting ranking, poker ranking, lottery ranking and financial ranking



OVERALL

Rank	Name	Website
1	ESPN	espn.com
2	Cricbuzz	cricbuzz.com
3	Investing.com	investing.com
4	LiveScore.com	livescore.com
5	Diretta.it	diretta.it
6	NetKeiba	netkeiba.com
7	La Gazzetta dello	gazzetta.it
8	HLTV	hltv.org
9	Goal.com	goal.com
10	247Sports	247sports.com

CASINO

Rank	Name	Website
1	Casino.Guru	casino.guru
2	Apuestas free	apuestasfree.com
3	Online Casino Ground	onlinecasinoground.nl
4	CasinoScout	casinoscout.ca
5	FreeSlots.com	freeslots.com
6	Casino.org	casino.org
7	Chipy	chipy.com
8	Tracksino	tracksino.com
9	AskGamblers.com	askgamblers.com
10	VegasSlotsOnline.com	vegasslotsonline.com

SPORTS

Rank	Name	Website
1	ESPN	espn.com
2	Cricbuzz	cricbuzz.com
3	LiveScore.com	livescore.com
4	Diretta.it	diretta.it
5	NetKeiba	netkeiba.com
6	La Gazzetta dello Sport	gazzetta.it
7	Goal.com	goal.com
8	247Sports	247sports.com
9	NBC Sports	nbcsports.com
10	L'Equipe	lequipe.fr

FINANCIAL

Rank	Name	Website
1	Investing.com	investing.com
2	MQL5	mql5.com
3	Forex Factory	forexfactory.com
4	ProFinance	profinance.ru
5	MyFXBook	myfxbook.com
6	FXStreet.com	fxstreet.com
7	DailyFX	dailyfx.com
8	babypips.com	babypips.com
9	ForexLive	forexlive.com
10	FX Empire	fxempire.com

LOTTERY

Rank	Name	Website
1	XOSO	xoso.com.vn
2	Euro-Millions.com	euro-millions.com
3	Lottery Post	lotterypost.com
4	Lotto.de	lotto.de
5	Lottery.co.uk	lottery.co.uk
6	Jugando OnLine	judandoonline.com.ar
7	LotteryUSA	lotteryusa.com
8	Estrazione Del Lotto	estrazione dellotto.it
9	Minh Nogoc	minhngoc.net
10	Tujugada	tujugada.com.ar

POKER

Rank	Name	Website
1	Card Player	www.wpnaffiliates.com
2	GipsyTeam	gipsyteam.ru
3	Poker News	pokernews.com
4	Shark Scope	sharkscope.com
5	EducaPoker	educapoker.com
6	TwoPlusTwo.com	twoplustwo.com
7	Cardschat	cardschat.com
8	UpSwing Poker	upswingpoker.com
9	The Hendon Mob Poker Forum	thehendonmob.com
10	PokerStrategy.com	pokerstrategy.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.



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NFL: A YEAR-LONG FOCUS

Malcolm Darnley of BestOdds discusses the best strategies for producing pre-season NFL content for US affiliates



Each year, as the NFL season concludes, billions of dollars are wagered on the Super Bowl. Undoubtedly, the NFL is easily the biggest attraction for those who enjoy sports betting in North America.

For last year's Super Bowl, the American Gaming Association suggested that over 30 million Americans were going to bet on the big game. Estimates indicate that half of all legal sports bets made over the course of a calendar year are on the NFL.

Before the Super Bowl kicks off, there are over 20+ weeks of NFL football, including the regular season and playoffs. These 20+ weeks can be the most lucrative time of year for affiliates who get their NFL content strategy right.

As mentioned above, NFL season is when most affiliates try to maximise their brand exposure on the SERP, if organic traffic is

their forte, and squeeze as much revenue as possible.

There is no shortage of content one can create around NFL topics. From the standard "how-to guides" to team and player pages, betting strategy analysis or content around operators.

Ideas are plenty, but the game is played at the execution of content production and knowing what pieces may generate traffic that will convert. Affiliates need to remember that not all traffic is equal and chasing it without a detailed understanding of what it will bring is suboptimal.

Creating content just for the sake of more pages is not the goal. Specificity trumps quantity, given how well different affiliates cover most NFL-related topics.

There are still plenty of soft topics not covered by different

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websites or topics written poorly, which provides an opportunity for new sites to wedge themselves into a competitive ranking position through organic searches.

The ability to search for NFL content on the web has been around for over two decades. However, each NFL season, there is always plenty of new content to create.

Fans find new ways to search and discover things about betting on their favorite teams or players. The trick is finding them and providing answers via well-thought-out written content to generate organic conversion traffic.

How one discovers these new ways is an art and a science. The science part is not a secret. There are plenty of resources on the internet to help create a system for discovery.

Third-party tools, competitive research, change in trends and new products are things one should factor in their discovery method.

Affiliates closely guard the art part of the equation. Each affiliate has its own internal strategy for discovering and providing the content sports bettors want to consume. These unique strategies can be the difference between being good or great.

The story does not end here. Creating content for NFL, NBA or any other topic is not one and done. It requires care and attention, optimisation, refreshing, pruning or expansion as things are not static in the search.

Even though the NFL season is just over five months long, an affiliate must have a year-round NFL plan.

What content needs to be produced during the season and the playoffs? What will your Super Bowl content strategy be and when do you need to start creating that content? Finally, the NFL off-season is not an off-season at all for affiliates. Take the time to thoroughly review, edit and update all of your evergreen

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content. Understand what pieces can carry over for another year.

Update articles where required and create new pieces before the season starts. Obviously, engagement for NFL content will be at its highest peak during the actual season. Still, the most critical time of year for an affiliate is the months leading up to the start of the season and ensuring you have a thorough NFL plan for your site.

The NFL season may only be five months long for those playing the games. However, for an affiliate to maximise their revenue opportunities during those five months, the NFL should be a year-round focus.



INFLUENCING AMERICA

Troy Paul, Founder and President of Sports Gambling Guides, discusses the role of social media in the rapidly growing US gaming market

HOW SOCIAL MEDIA IS CRACKING THE US SPORTS BETTING MARKET

The liberalisation of sports betting in the US has unleashed a tsunami of competitive advertising, as huge corporations vie to outspend one another to muscle themselves a chunk of the market. And every time a new state regulates betting, it's ground zero for competitors like DraftKings, FanDuel, Caesars and MGM Live, to grab the biggest share of the customer pool by unleashing a sign-up bonus blitz across the airwaves.

IT'S GETTING OUT OF HAND

Last August, Caesars CEO Tom Reeg told analysts his company would spend \$1bn marketing its sports betting app in the ensuing 24 to 30 months. As Matt Maddox, former Wynn Resorts CEO, complained: "competitors are spending too much to get customers."

Caesars has crossed the Rubicon. How can anyone compete with a billion? Operators can't, and there's a strong argument to say they shouldn't bother. In the mature UK market, the tide of public opinion has turned against betting companies, largely because of the proliferation of television advertising around sports.

As long as traditional advertising exists, operators may feel compelled to engage with it or lose ground to competitors. But many feel a TV advertising ban would be no bad thing. It would remove the need to compete in a space that drains marketing budgets while producing arguably spotty results.

The UK industry, eager to demonstrate it can sensibly self-regulate to avoid punitive regulatory controls, has agreed a self-imposed "whistle-to-whistle" ban on TV advertising. But it would be unlikely to agree so readily to a ban on digital marketing, even less so on social media. That's just too important.

The way we consume and bet on sports has changed. Today, 78% of Generation Z and Millennials are 'dual screening' while watching live games, according to Business Wire. They're plugged into their phones, absorbing live game score updates, betting odds, in-game new betting point spreads, and live images and videos of the action in real-time.

Nearly 50% of all US legal sports bettors are under age 50. They want content that is witty and engaging, as well as enlightening. Being a sports fan is no longer just about the game itself. Research suggests that fans want to be a part of the narrative – part of a community, engaging in comments, forums and video content during events.

FOR OPERATORS AND STARTUPS OF ALL SIZES, SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS ARE AN AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE MARKETING ROUTE

Meanwhile, the US industry's hunger for sign-ups represents an exciting opportunity for affiliates. For those that don't have the market cap of, say, Catena Media, the beauty of social media is that it's not something you have to throw inexhaustible amounts



TROY PAUL

of cash at to get results. You just have to do it smartly and have a strong eye for talent.

Sports Gambling Guides believes that social media consumption of sports information is synonymous with the modern sports fan, and the giant gambling corporations are beginning to come round to our way of thinking.

At the most recent Caesars earning call, Reeg had changed his tune. "You are going to see us dramatically curtail our traditional media spend, effective immediately. We have accomplished what we set out to do," he said. "You're going to see our commercials largely disappear from your screens."

Plowing money into traditional advertising is not a sustainable long-term strategy, and operators are now realising that engaging with their audience using the power of social media is the ultimate winning formula.

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OPTIMISING THE OPERATOR

Rob Black, B2B Sales Director of Spotlight Sports Group, discusses the worth of creating specialised sports betting hubs for major sporting events



You launched your World Cup Event Hub a few weeks back. What can you tell us about the product?

We've launched Event Hubs around sports, specifically for bigger events. We're regularly selling to operators on a day-to-day basis, providing spaces for operators to use content on their wider platforms. One of the things we find we come up against very consistently is the real desire to get good content live, but an inability to get things on the roadmap. For many, technical problems get in the way, content isn't necessarily prioritised compared to, say, fixing a betslip or bugs across the wider site. These things are more business-critical in the short term.

What we've done is come up with an ability to build event hubs around special events. This is where we find operators will have particular interests, whether that's activating a sponsorship, or a massive sporting event like Cheltenham Festival or the NFL Playoffs; something that's going to drive bigger interest. To try and ease the technical burden for operators, we've built an entire event hub on our site. That means we do all of the technical builds, right through to integrating the price feed to the bet button so there's an addition to betslip functionality within that. We also specialise in content and localised content, so we'll create editorial

articles, tipping and short-form tipping and data visualisation – stuff that can engage an active and potentially a more casual bettor around bigger events. This is then integrated into the operator's site, so it lives as its own entity while being a natural part of the user experience for the end user. So it becomes a natural feature on operator sites, whether that's for a World Cup, or Cheltenham... we've even done one for the Winter Olympics, for example. The key is the end user doesn't know they're moving away from the operator's site; the experience is all encapsulated by the operator, and they're able to provide better content and a slick product. Overall, players are getting a product that speaks to the wider sportsbook in which they play.

Who has access to this product? How many markets do you operate in?

As a business, we have offices all around the world. We have sales teams primarily out in North America and London. But we service clients right across the world, whether that's North America, Latin America, Africa, Asia, etc. My team specifically works everywhere except North America, although we do have a close relationship with our colleagues who deliver sales efforts in the US.

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Netherlands, Serbia, Peru

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Colombia

Zamba
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Portugal

ESC
ONLINE

France

JOA

Arkansas, Tennessee

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Are there certain trends, continentally and between local jurisdictions, that differ? How varied do you think the types of solutions your clients ask for will be for the World Cup, particularly the hubs?

In terms of the execution of our products and World Cup Hub, the technical side of things will be fairly similar, I would imagine. But the content and the things clients are looking to dial up and down vary across different markets. It can, and will, vary quite widely within the same market. Different operators have a different tone of voice, a different brand, so it depends as much on the operator as the jurisdiction they're in.

Regarding North America, soccer is growing in interest out there. I think we sometimes do it a bit of a disservice (popularity of soccer in the US); I think there'll be massive interest around the World Cup. If you caveat that with the NFL, which will be right in the thick of things when the World Cup is on. So, the number of bets on soccer during the World Cup going up against the behemoth of the NFL. However, you'd hope the three or four games played a day at the World Cup, seven days a week, will have an impact on soccer sports betting numbers. I'm sure it will do very well, despite the fact kick-off times cater to a European audience; games will be on quite early in North America. So the impact that would have on betting patterns, I wouldn't necessarily like to say at this point.

But as I said, we see variation in markets but we also see variation in clients, even down to the level of promotions they want to do. Some operators are very promo-heavy and like to give cash incentives for players to be there, whereas other operators will rely on providing a premium experience and delivering a better level of content themselves.

How can you guarantee World Cup Event Hubs will be a success on affiliate or operator sites, and prove this tangibly, given that many players would have already looked to place bets regardless?

If you look at this not just in the betting space, but in the wider digital space, every operator and supplier will be competing heavily when it comes to the World Cup. It'll be on TV; mobile highlights will be widely accessible and every sports channel will be broadcasting opinions with 24/7 content. So, if you don't do anything special, people aren't going to be drawn to your product at all. If you think you can get away with offering prices and a list of events, and everyone else is offering really engaging, high-quality content, it's just not going to stack up against that. You would have an inferior product than that of your competitors and broader digital offerings that will be available.

Regarding how we evaluate our content, we've done numerous A/B (control and variation) tests, analysed stats around both our Event Hubs and our broader content, and we've never done an A/B test and it not deliver ROI. We know that we see increases in bet volume, and we know we see increases in bet value. We know that if we make a particular tip or selection, we generally see an increase in the volume and value of that selection. So we know that every level of content we do delivers ROI.

I get what you mean, that maybe people could've placed bets anyway despite the fact they've come to the Event Hub. Look, it's always going to be difficult to attribute what the defining factor was, but if you are creating an improved user experience, you're using content to increase dwell time, return visits, which we know are all important metrics. I don't think it matters in a way, if the Event



ROB BLACK

Hub was the defining factor on what persuaded a person to place a bet or not; that is almost irrelevant, really. If I'm an operator in a competitive environment, if I can increase my engagement metrics significantly around an important event that drives huge value for my business and others, I'd rather do that than not. Of the players that access our Event Hubs, 49% of players place a bet in the same session. I think this shows the value of creating hubs for big sporting occasions.

How popular do you think your World Cup Hub will be? Are you building clientele now or are you expecting a lot more interest closer to the World Cup in November?

We're trying to get things done fairly quickly. There are a lot of development resources required on our side, less so for the operator; we just need to get all of that in a roadmap. We have tech resources set aside, but the longer we can allow ourselves to focus on that, the better the outcome will be. There's no cap to our Event Hubs necessarily; we're selling them on a territory exclusive basis. We've had interest across the globe. Even if it's not this product, we still hope clients will come to us for audio commentary, in-play betting tips, pre-play betting tips, CRM material, etc. Not necessarily a full event hub, but there's a huge amount of content we can offer outside of that as well.

Do you have anything else planned for 2022?

Our biggest product is SuperFeed, which is our pre and in-play betting tips. We have clients lined up so it's all hands on deck to deliver those. We're currently working behind the scenes on a pre-play golf product, which has been well-received by some of our key partners. The in-play offering on this product has improved vastly from a golf perspective, but there's a real gap in the market regarding pre-play. We've done something very special we think will deliver value for our SuperFeed partners as well, with something that will be incorporated into the SuperFeed product.

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PLAY HARD



CrazeAffiliates Head of Affiliates **Rimante NemanYTE** talks to *Trafficology* about dream summer holiday destinations, and travelling back in time to watch Freddie Mercury on stage

How would you describe the gaming industry to someone from another planet?

The gaming industry is one of a kind – very dynamic, fast and exciting. You can meet people from all over the world, learning about different cultures and making business in various markets. If you are a fast learner, can adapt quickly and like the international environment – the industry is definitely for you!

What is the most enjoyable part of attending the many in-person events and exhibitions the industry has?

After some years in the industry, the exhibitions become an opportunity to meet long-time partners that often become friends. Day-to-day conversations and work, especially when seeking the same goals, always bring people together from all over the world, which makes this industry so great.

Also, another enjoyable thing I would mention is that industry events bring variety to daily office life, helping to get out of the routine and get motivated by visiting new places and meeting new partners. From an affiliation perspective, the industry events are a great opportunity to get new leads and expand your personal portfolio, therefore the events are very beneficial for that.

Summer is now upon us in Europe. Where is your dream summer holiday destination?

I have so many! But definitely somewhere out of Europe. I personally love wildness and nature, therefore often choose a campervan or rental car to reach some wonderful natural gems, and unwind from the hectic city life... Can't wait to do this again very soon.

But do you prefer summer or winter? And why?

Definitely summer. Even though sometimes the heat is hardly bearable, especially here in Malta, summer has its own charm – long evenings with good friends on the beach chasing sunsets or early sunrises, outdoor activities, swimming... I guess everyone gets a bit relaxed in summer and tries to enjoy the moment.

What three items would you want to have if you were stranded on a desert island?

Knife, filter for drinking water, mirror... As I like nature and wilderness, I am pretty practical in these situations, so definitely going to be prepared for survival haha :D

Where is the best place to see or visit in Malta?

Even though Malta is small, it definitely has a lot to offer. I would suggest starting with visiting Valletta and Mdina, historical places with unique architecture and charm that definitely leave a great impression. For nightlife and some shopping, I would suggest visiting Sliema and St. Julians – the most touristic places in Malta.

Malta has wonderful panoramic views of Dingli cliffs and fun boat rides visiting the caves of Blue Grotto.

Popeye village is also not to be missed – an iconic place, created for the Popeye movie that was released in 1980 featuring Robin Williams. The set for the movie, which is the actual size of a little village, is now an amusement park where one can relax and enjoy the sea, or shows by iconic characters.

I would also suggest visiting Blue Lagoon located on Comino island, nearby Malta, where you can see amazing blue waters. Also, for a more relaxed and quiet time, Gozo island is a perfect place to unwind while visiting historical places such as Victoria, or exploring caves next to Ramla beach.

Plenty of exciting shows and films are now coming out... are you currently watching anything fun on TV?

Summer is a difficult time to catch up with the series on TV; however, I do binge-watch sometimes after long, tiring days. I like psychological thrillers and documentaries, but also love to watch classic sitcoms that bring some positivity and good laughs.

If you could travel somewhere in a time machine, where would you go?

I would love to go back to the '70s/80s to a Queen concert, to see Freddie Mercury live and dance to 'Hammer to Fall!'



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