John Connelly, CEO at Interblock

“ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING GAMING COMPANIES IN THE WORLD”
LET’S NEVER STOP LEARNING

Life is about taking advantage of every moment of our lives. Each of the experiences makes us a better person. Everyday life is essential. The future is a project that concerns us. The tools that we can incorporate are absolutely necessary on that path. We have to be prepared for every opportunity. All of this not only shapes us as human beings, but also to transmit these foundations to the next generations.

In the same way in our professional field. We never stop learning. Constantly incorporating knowledge is an infinite subject in our work spectrum. It is walking a path through each stage until you aspire to lead a work team. The philosophy of effort, the spirit of growth, the wisdom of generosity. Be a leader, but also teach how to lead others to feed that natural cycle.

REVISTA CASINO in this special edition exclusively opens the doors of the Executive Development Program of Lake Tahoe. It is a program dedicated to the gaming industry that is made up of elite professionals within the sector and where, either in classes or in practices that are as profound as they are original, it is deepened from leaders of today and for leaders of tomorrow. It is about learning to teach, but also to teach how to learn. Be a better professional to make better professionals.

The experiences of its teachers, as well as the opinions on current issues and the needs to face the challenges of tomorrow. Also testimonies from the graduates, who developed their intellect above their professional work since they started in the gaming industry, but who found a starting point to go beyond their knowledge.

On our pages, you will also find current reports, interviews with very important executives in the sector and technological advances, among other topics, with our quality that has characterized us for more than 20 years. Our commitment to the industry remains stronger than ever. It is an edition so we can learn together. It is a wish of all of us who make REVISTA CASINO.

Kind regard,

[Signature]

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The full power of AI at our fingertips

Combine innovación con cumplimiento y obtendrá GLI. Con nuestro alcance y presencia global, podemos satisfacer las necesidades de ensayo y certificación de nuestros clientes en todo el mundo. Esto significa que, independientemente de su tamaño o ubicación, puede acceder a nuevos mercados, establecer relaciones sólidas e impulsar su crecimiento. En GLI, nos dedicamos a usted.
An unforgettable 2022 pushes up the fiscal year

Both consecutive balances were part of a series of 28 consecutive months above $1 billion. June 2023 was the tenth maximum collection in the history of the State, but negative in comparison, although without a specific reason that became a trend.

There was a presumption that this would be the case since the start of the year, but either way the number is staggering. Long before it was known that it would be a record calendar.

Nevada had actually eclipsed the 2021 record by November 2022, but December was a record-setter as well, with casinos reporting $1.3 billion in revenue. “December came in much stronger than we had anticipated,” says Lawton. The Las Vegas Strip set an all-time monthly record during the last month of the year with $814 million, which is up 25% compared to December 2021. Looking at the final month of 2022, revenue in December reached $1.31 billion, an increase of 13.9% on the same month in 2021 and also 7.4% ahead of November 2022.

The specialists explain the event without a doubt. “The year wasn’t a surprise, we knew we were going to set a record for a couple of months,” says Michael Lawton, senior economic analyst at the Nevada Gaming Control Board. “It’s a great year in terms of comeback and showing the strength of our gaming-tourism industry.”

In fact, Nevada has experienced 22 straight months of $1 billion or more in gaming revenue. During the streak, the state’s monthly gaming revenue total has surpassed Nevada’s previous statewide record of $1.16 billion set in October 2007 in 15 different months, including July 2021’s current single-month record of $1.36 billion.

Tourism and Visitors

The state of Nevada, but particularly Las Vegas, is a land that thrives on visitors. Whether for tourism or business opportunities, many times the explanation of the numbers is in the social and economic movement. But in 2022 there was something beyond this equation.

There are several forces that drove Nevada’s record year. A stocked events calendar and lingering effects of pandemic stimulus checks helped drive tourists to the Las Vegas. But the strongest factor was a “steady demand” for gambling, Lawton says, by “resilient customers” who consistently chose to go to Vegas in the face of inflation, recession fears and rising fuel prices.

A statement from the Nevada Gaming Control Board read: “Nevada has continued to benefit from the surging demand for leisure travel domestically and internationally and a healthy local economy experiencing record employment levels.” So it is not only the movement of people and their needs, but also the structure of the economy and its consequences.

Visitation to Las Vegas fell just short of 39 million in 2022, 20.5 percent ahead of 2021, but still trailing the pre-pandemic total of 42.5 million visitors in 2019 by 8.7 percent, according to a report released Tuesday by the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. December saw more than 3.3 million visitors to Las Vegas, an increase of 10.1 percent from a year earlier.

Convention attendance, which was severely diminished after COVID-19 caused cancellations throughout 2020 and 2021 and reduced attendance figures for shows that returned in 2022, fell just short of 5 million. LVCA officials expressed confidence the 25 percent drop from 2019’s 6.6 million convention attendees would be made up in 2023.

In 2022, overall hotel occupancy reached 79.2%, with 89.3% occupancy on weekends.
Nevada casinos have generated $15.1 billion in revenues, up from $14.6 billion for the fiscal year.

room rates were $182.11, 27.2 percent higher than in 2019.

THE STATE PARTS

The lights don’t shine the same way in Nevada. There is a part of the state that is not only essential when it comes to measuring income for the regional economy, but also to define the size of the entertainment industry.

The Strip is by far the most successful gaming market by revenue in the country and No. 3. Atlantic City isn’t anywhere close. In 2022, the Strip generated $8.24 billion in gross gaming revenue. Next on the list was the Atlantic City, which reported $2.79 billion that year, followed by Baltimore and Washington D.C. and the casinos in Maryland and West Virginia with $2.17 billion in gaming revenue.

But not all of the industry’s business in Nevada comes down to The Strip. Among the top 20 gaming markets in the United States, three more in Nevada made the list. The Boulder Strip ranked 10th in the country with revenue of $967 million. Reno-Sparks Strip ranked 10th in the country with $911 million revenue of $967 million. This was 2.3% less than $1.28 billion in June 2022 and also 3.1% lower than $1.29 billion in May this year. In fact, it was not the first month of decline since the beginning of the year. But either way the bottom line was on the rise.

For the fiscal year from July 1, 2022 through June 30th, Nevada casinos have generated $15.1 billion in revenue, up from $14.6 billion for the fiscal year.

WHAT ABOUT 2022?

The result of the last month of the fiscal year was in decline. Total revenue for June amounted to $2.25 billion. This was 2.3% less than $1.28 billion in June 2022 and also 3.1% lower than $1.29 billion in May this year. In fact, it was not the first month of decline since the beginning of the year. But either way the bottom line was on the rise.

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For the fiscal year from July 1, 2022 through June 30th, Nevada casinos have generated $15.1 billion in revenue, up from $14.6 billion for the fiscal year. The Boulder Strip, which includes Henderson and downtown Las Vegas, reported double-digit gaming revenue declines. However, several Northern Nevada casinos continued a resurgence after severe winter weather issues depressed results in the first part of the year. Washoe County as a whole grew 2.9% in gaming revenue by 10% in June to $94.2 million, and Reno casino revenue was up 12.5% to $69 million.

The other factor to understand the June result was sports betting. Nevada sportsbooks collected $9.5 million in revenue during the month, a decline of 60.1% compared to a year ago. The books held less than 2% of all wagers compared to a nearly 4.9% hold last June.

Sportsbook wagers totaled $479 million, which was down 2.3% from June 2022. Bets placed on mobile apps accounted for 67.4% of all wagers. Through the first six months of 2023, sports wagers are down more than 8%. However, revenue is up 7 percent.
Maureen Beddis
“AMERICA’S GAMING INDUSTRY CAN ONLY REMAIN STRONG, SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE THROUGH THE WELL-ESTABLISHED LEGAL MARKET”

The Senior Vice President, Membership & Events at the American Gaming Association traces the long and deep agenda of discussions within G2E and analyzes current topics for the gaming industry, such as sports betting, fiscal year indicators and “skills” machines.

Despite the economic circumstances throughout the world, the gaming industry continues to grow. How important is the annual contribution of G2E, both as a link between people and companies and also for the technological contribution? For more than 20 years, G2E has been a catalyst for gaming’s success—fostering innovation and connectivity in the gaming industry.

The fiscal year that just closed was a record for Nevada. How does the business unit impact G2E? What are the conclusions about business growth?

Since the Supreme Court’s decision in 2018 to strike down the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA), legal sports betting has generated more than $20 billion in commercial gaming revenue in the U.S., helping propel the industry to 10 straight quarters of annual growth. Accordingly, sports betting remains a top industry topic, especially as states continue to consider legalizing sports betting and as already legal markets mature. While sports betting on the expo floor will be focused on the next product innovation in the space, G2E’s education conference will focus on how to continue to build a responsible, sustainable marketplace.

G2E Education is a very valuable contribution to the industry. The agenda is very varied and deep. How different the transformations of the industry influence the proposal? What are the new issues around the world that need knowledge?

As always, G2E education programming will offer rich, dynamic content. Our 2023 program will be G2E’s most insightful yet, drawing on more than 100 session proposals from industry stakeholders in our first-ever call for content and speakers. Adding additional expert perspectives to this year’s sessions, education content partners for G2E 2023 include Global Gaming Women, Gaming Next, Indian Gaming Association, International Association of Gaming Advisors and more. Trends like technological advancement and gaming’s expansion—as well as industry priorities like combating illegal gambling and bolstering responsibility—will help drive this year’s themes, which include: Advocacy, AI, Diversity/ESG, the Future of Gaming, Global Gaming, iGaming, Investments, Payments, Regulations/Compliance, Responsible Gambling, Sports Betting, Traditional Gaming and Tribal Gaming.

The AGA always focuses on protecting the consumer. What factors do social networks and new communication platforms mean to raise awareness among human beings in general?

AGA has been deeply committed to fostering responsible gaming for decades. On AGA’s social media channels, we actively promote responsible gaming and the importance of consumer protections via the regulated market. This includes promoting AGA’s Have A Game Plan campaign, which brings together leagues, teams, media, sportsbooks and other important industry stakeholders to educate fans on responsible sports wagering. Additionally, during Responsible Gaming Education Month in September, the AGA and our members have been placing an emphasis across our channels on celebrate and advance responsible in the industry. And finally, we have seen many gaming influencers promote responsible gaming on their channels and are excited to have them as a part of the discussion at G2E.

“Skill” Machines are seen as games of chance by two-thirds of the population in the United States. What is AGA’s opinion regarding the regulation and the use of these games?

“Skill” machines are simply unregulated gambling devices that skirt the law while providing none of the consumer protections or responsible gaming measures that regulated casino slot machines do. Nor do they contribute anything in the way of tax revenue. As such, policymakers, law enforcement, regulators and the legal gaming industry must work together to eliminate these bad actors and the dangers they pose to consumers and communities. Americans agree, with 71 percent saying “skill” machines lack the player protections that are available to players in casinos, 64 percent saying “skill” machines are too easily accessible to children, and 56 percent saying “skill” games increase the risk of crime and endanger employees and customers of businesses where these devices are located. America’s gaming industry can only remain strong, safe and responsible through the well-established legal market.
TRIBAL GAMING BREAKS THE ALL-TIME RECORD

With seven of eight regions rising across all 29 states and for all 246 tribes, the fiscal year ended nearly 5% up year-on-year for a total of $40.9bn.

As with the commercial casinos, the tribal establishments also had an unforgettable year in terms of numbers. According to the new fiscal year report from the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC), in 2022, 246 tribal governments operating 504 facilities in 29 states generated approximately $40.9 billion in gross revenue. Tribal gaming operations generated an additional $5.3 billion in gross revenue from ancillary/gaming-related enterprises, including hotels, restaurants, entertainment, and related operations. As a result, Indian gaming accounted for a total of $48.4 billion in direct gross revenues in 2022. The number is a 4.9% uptick from FY2021 and the best year on record for the industry.

“This year’s historic revenue reflects the resiliency of many tribal gaming operations, and how tribal gaming continues to rebound and remain strong. Tribal governments and the operations they license continue to explore new and innovative ways to expand and deliver world-class experiences to cultivate sustainable economies. Across Indian country, tribes pursue economic sustainability through gaming by relying on the robust regulatory reputation for which Indian gaming is well known, and made better when supported by efficient and effective measures,” said NIGC Chair E. Sequoyah Simermeyer.

Despite the dip in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, where GGR was recorded at $27.8bn, the tribal gaming industry has more than recovered; making $39.0bn in 2021. The FY 2022 revenues are calculated from the independently audited financial statements of 519 gaming operations owned by 244 federally recognized tribes. Indian gaming operations are located on Indian land in 29 states. Seven of NIGC’s eight regions showed an increase over FY 2021.

REGION BY REGION

The only region not to experience growth over the past fiscal year was the Sacramento region (Comprising California and Northern Nevada) which was essentially flat year-over-year. It was $11.9bn in 2021 against $11.8bn in 2022, but curiously with the opening of nine new operations.

The region with the biggest year-over-year growth was Phoenix. Tribal casinos in Arizona saw revenues jump more than 15% to $3.7 billion in the last fiscal year. While the reporting does not break down what verticals the revenue is coming from, the jump times with a change in Arizona law allowing for expanded table games at the state’s tribal casinos in addition to the legalization of sports betting. Only one new operation was opened.

Tulsa and DC also saw large increases of 11% each. Tulsa recorded GGR of $3.2bn in 2021, going up to $3.5bn in 2022. DC recorded GGR of $8.1bn in 2021, going up to $9.0bn in 2022. Tulsa continued with the same number of stores, while DC had one less than in 2021.

The fourth largest increase was Rapid City (9.1%), albeit with the lowest billing amount of all regions ($0.5bn). Oklahoma City, at $3.1bn, was the fifth increase for tribal games (4.0%). Meanwhile, Portland and Saint Paul, with almost $5bn, grew at 1.0% and 3.4%, respectively.

CONCLUSIONS AND CHALLENGES

Approximately 8% of gaming operations reported more than $250 million of GGR in FY 2022 and their aggregate revenues made up more than half (51%) of the total GGR. In comparison, 55% of tribal gaming facilities reported less than $25 million in revenues and this group represents about 5% of the total GGR share. This is consistent with past results though and not a sign that the tribal gaming industry is consolidating. In order to expand the offer, for some years tribal casinos have focused their investment on essential factors. Marketing, promotions and wages were some of the most significant expenses. Marketing expenses increased slightly compared to previous years, and casinos of every size spent more on employee benefits and incentives. According to Wipli, Slot machines continue to be the primary source of gaming revenue, driving the majority of profits. Unlike other states and commercial casinos, sports betting is prohibited in much of the tribal gaming regions. Tribes are the sole sports betting offers in California, Connecticut, and Florida. However, this does not guarantee future revenue as battles over sports betting continue to play out.

In fact, some states are willing to go to court to gain access to those benefits. For example, a Florida cardroom operator has asked a federal appeals court to reverse its decision to uphold an agreement that gives the Seminole tribe exclusive rights to sports betting in the Sunshine State.

The average net profit margin was approximately 30%, which is roughly six percentage-points lower than in 2021. Native American casinos widened their operating expense margins almost two percent, despite facing inflation and higher interest rates and spending more on staff and marketing.

Inflation and labor shortages also continue to drive up costs for operations. In order to expand the offer, some states tribal casinos have focused their investment on essential factors. Marketing, promotions and wages were some of the most significant expenses. Marketing expenses increased slightly compared to previous years, and casinos of every size spent more on employee benefits and incentives.
tors, as noted by Wipfli survey. There is also more stringent competition on the horizon and more competition for discretionary dollars for tribal casinos compared to the pandemic era.

In 2022, Indian Gaming was responsible for generating $37 billion in direct and indirect wages throughout Indian Country and nearby communities. Indian gaming operations paid nearly $8 billion in wages to their direct employees. Tribal industry generated an additional $29 billion in wages that resulted from Indian gaming employees spending their disposable incomes, casino operations purchasing activities, capital expansion projects, and transfer payment spending activities.

In 2022, Indian gaming was responsible for generating $11.5 billion in federal taxes, $4.6 billion in state taxes, and $1.4 billion in county taxes—a total of $17.5 billion. Over the past decade, Indian Gaming has delivered more than $140 billion to the federal and state governments in the form of employment, income, sales, and other taxes, and reduced general welfare payments. Of this total, tribes shared more than $15 billion to state governments through revenue-sharing agreements codified in tribal-state gaming compacts.

BILL ANOATUBBY INDUCTED INTO AGA HALL OF FAME

The development and growth of the tribal industry has invaluable people throughout its history. One of them is Bill Anoatubby. The American Gaming Association decided to induct him into the 2023 class of the Hall of Fame. Anoatubby has served as Governor of the Chickasaw Nation since 1987. Early in his tenure, Anoatubby recognized the important role gaming could play in advancing sustainable economic development and self-determination for the tribe. Since 1987, gaming operations have helped drive the number of Chickasaw Nation employees from 250 to more than 14,000, expanding tribal assets two-hundredfold. As Governor, Anoatubby oversees the tribe’s operation of more than 100 diversified businesses—including 24 tribal gaming locations—generating funding for 200-plus programs and services that benefit education, healthcare, housing and more for Chickasaw families, Oklahomans and their communities. Anoatubby also played an integral role establishing the Indian Gaming Association and Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association, as well as negotiating the 2004 Oklahoma gaming compact which solidified the future of tribal gaming in the state. Under Governor Anoatubby’s direction, the Chickasaw Nation also places a strong emphasis on preserving and sharing its heritage, history, language and culture.
The last 15 months have been very interesting for Interblock. In July 2022, the company announced that it was acquired by Oaktree Capital Management, and a few weeks ago, the manufacturer purchased specific assets from Aruze Gaming America. John Connelly, CEO at Interblock, gave an exclusive interview to Revista CASINO to talk about the strategy behind these movements and the future of their product offering.

US commercial gaming revenue reached a quarterly record of 16.07 billion dollars in Q2 2023, marking the industry’s tenth consecutive quarter of annual growth, according to a report from the American Gaming Association. How has this industry record impacted the company’s business?

When I joined Interblock at the very beginning of 2015, there were many people who (including myself) didn’t understand what Electronic Table Games (ETGs) really meant, who was playing them and what their potential was. Fast forward just seven years later, which is relatively quite quickly in our business, and now when people talk about casino floors, you would be hard-pressed to find anybody that doesn’t include ETGs in that discussion. They talk about slots, live tables, and Electronic Table Games, and quite frankly online also enters the conversation.

Interblock will be officially releasing its new category called the Smart Pit at G2E 2023 in Las Vegas.

When the industry rises, it’s our job at Interblock to make sure our technology and product offerings rise with the industry, remain competitive, solve the problems that the operators are facing, and allow them to become more competitive and profitable while attracting younger demographics combined with existing players as well. It’s not easy; it’s a daily challenge. But as you see the industry growing, it’s good for all of us, and in the company, we just try to do our best to contribute in some way to those numbers you’re seeing, whether it is in a small way in some places and a larger way in others. We just want to be part of that success and that story, and we work every day to try to do that.
What is the objective behind the acquisition of specific assets from Aruze Gaming America? What added value do the company’s products provide to Interblock?

When I look across the globe at the competitive landscape that we are facing on a day-to-day basis, one of the most innovative companies that we come across is Aruze Gaming America. They have been at the forefront of innovation and technology for quite some time. The opportunity to acquire them, from a competitive standpoint, was obviously very interesting. The transaction gave us, from a North American perspective, approximately 80% of market share. From a product perspective, the technology that Aruze Gaming America utilizes for roulette or the dice units, whether it is Sic Bo in Asia or the Craps game in the North American market, is very impressive.

And quite frankly, I think their roulette product was undervalued and underestimated due to some capital constraints they had in the company. I see their portfolio as complementary: their products and the player demographics they attract don’t necessarily overlap in a negative fashion with the types of products that Interblock is currently offering. I see them as synergetic. I’m excited because they can only increase our portfolio in terms of the number of players and customer groups in a positive way. And last but not least, financially speaking, the transaction was very interesting to us, and it resulted in a very creative move, almost from day one.

It’s been more than a year since the company announced that it had been acquired by Oaktree Capital Management. How has the synergy between both organizations benefited Interblock’s operations?

Interblock has been a private company that was founded in Europe over 25 years ago, a quarter century ago. It was the first company to innovate electronic table games (ETGs), but it was growing so quickly that myself and the founders all agreed that it was time to really bring in the financial and expertise needed to take the company to the next level. So we began that process almost four years ago. We started looking for the right partner to do a transaction, and a little over a year ago, we finally closed with Oak Tree Capital, which is one of the largest private equity firms in the world.

As a result of being a phenomenal partner for the company, they’ve infused well over 100 million dollars of capital to allow us to expand the company from both an innovative research and development perspective as well as an infrastructure and portfolio perspective over the past twelve to eighteen months. This has resulted in Interblock becoming one of the fastest-growing gaming companies in the world, and we wouldn’t have been able to achieve that without having that kind of financial strength behind us and strategic partnerships.

The company is flourishing under the Oak Tree Capital ownership. They bought 100% of the company and, since then, we can engage in transactions like the Aruze Gaming America acquisition and many other things like that, which allows us to go to that next level. So, all positive.

How has the company’s offerings evolved over time?

The best way I can summarize is that we’ve evolved Interblock over the past six years into three distinct product categories. One of them is where the company started, which was stand-alone products: the Mechanical Roulette Wheel that you now see around the world. These are products that don’t require a dealer, and they have people sitting around a mechanical device, whether it be a roulette wheel, a video blackjack, or a dice product.

We then migrated into what’s called the Stadium type of concept. The product portfolio around stadiums currently approaches close to 200 stadiums worldwide, with most of the major casinos having at least one, if not two, from Interblock. This was a different demographic, more of a social atmosphere. We continue to invest heavily in that area.

The third category we introduced a couple of years back was the Universal Cabinet. It was an electronic table game for one player or four. A couple of players sit in front of it, and they have their own generator, creating a more personalized environment. That was another demographic that we catered to. These three areas have really catapulted the company into what it is today. The company is probably 15 times larger today than it was six years ago.

However, we learned that there isn’t just one type of player who plays mechanical roulette. Just like in slots, you have many diverse styles of machines for different types of players. We’re learning that ETGs (Electronic Table Games) are very similar. So, with that said, coming out of COVID, we noticed that many players stayed on our products, and they didn’t go back to the traditional live table games, but many players did.

Therefore, as one of our company principles, we’re trying to be synonymous with any-thing related to live table games, whether it be online or a physical casino. We want Interblock to be synonymous with the idea of live tables, anything related to a live table. This means that we now need to take our innovation and technology and somehow integrate that into traditional live table game pits.

We have done that and have started to launch some products.

The company is presenting the future of table games at G2E 2023. Which product will attract the attention of visitors?

Las Vegas tends to be where a lot of technological innovations are launched, and this year will be no different. We are known for being one of the more innovative companies each year. We will be officially releasing the complete product offering, the new category within our company, at G2E 2023 in Las Vegas. That category will be called the Smart Pit. Essentially, it’s a technology umbrella that lays over the top of a casino table game pit and provides each dealer with ways to increase decisions per hour and ways to increase the house advantage with more side bets, while also reducing the ability of the dealers to make mistakes, almost eliminating it.

If you think about how many hundreds of millions of dollars are lost around the world each year due to dealers unintentionally making mistakes, this technology will eliminate the vast majority of that. It’s the future: every-one we’ve shown it to, including major groups around the world, agrees, and we are all in the process now of installing that technology on the Las Vegas Strip in preparation for the trade show and launching it around the world. We believe that we have essentially re-volutionized the way live table game pits will operate in the future, from Craps to Roulette to Blackjack.
EADINGTON´S LEGACY:
THE EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Since 1990, EDP has been carried out under the tranquility of the environment that emerges in Lake Tahoe, but with the intensity and passion with which its founder lived before every aspect of the gaming industry, with the conviction of developing every aspect of the professionals until become the leaders of the future. The story goes that when Bill Eadington arrived in 1969 to be the director of the Study of Gambling and Commercial Gaming at the University of Nevada, Reno, he expected to find a library full of books dedicated to the subject, but was surprised that there were very few. So his mission would not only have to do with teaching about the gaming industry from every point of view, but also with the legacy of education for transformation in future generations.

During his time at the University, Eadington founded the Executive Development Program in 1990 and the International Conference on Gambling & Risk Taking in 1974 - now known as the Eadington Conference. He edited conference papers and published them as books. He was also the editor of the 1984 issue of the Annals of the American Academy of Political Science on gambling. Additionally, he published articles in academic journals like the Journal of Gambling Studies, International Gambling Studies, the Journal of Gambling Business and Economics, the UNLV Gaming Research & Review Journal, the Annals of Tourism Research, the Journal of Travel Research, and the Journal of Economic Perspectives.

His contribution was not only limited to the academic field, but also in different organizations. Eadington served on the board of the National Council on Problem Gambling. At the international level, he has advised the governments of South Africa and South Korea on the economic benefits of gambling. Eadington received an honorary doctorate from the University of Macau in 2008. Eadington died on February 11, 2013, in Crystal Bay, Nevada. He was 67 years old. He had recognitions in life. He was inducted into the Gaming Hall of Fame in 2011. He received the Goldman Lifetime Award for Advocacy from the National Council on Problem Gambling in 2012. He also transcended into memory. Three days after his death, on February 14, 2013, Senator Dean Heller highlighted Eadington’s “academic contributions and expertise in this field have been invaluable to the State of Nevada and to UNR” and called him “honorable Nevadan” before the Senate.

The Executive Development Program (EDP) is where two essential spirits in Eadington’s life come together: delving into every feature of the gaming industry and learning how to then teach each fundamental to tomorrow’s leaders. It is the first and only program of its kind: an eight-day, best-in-class professional development opportunity for the industry’s future C-suite executives. EDP attracts a diverse and dynamic group of participants. Now in its 33rd year of offering an educational experience, the program has graduated more than 1,600 executives from gaming companies and regulatory agencies throughout the world. It is an executive development program, but also a different look at the gaming industry. It’s not just about learning about leadership, but also learning how to teach. It is working on the problems of the game, but also analyzing the impact within certain events within society. Casino Magazine invites you to explore the different experiences that are lived in Lake Tahoe.
BO BERNHARD: “LEADING THROUGH CHANGE IS AT THE VERY HEART OF WHAT WE TEACH”

In an exclusive interview, the Vice President of Economic Development at UNLV, what it means to be the leader of the program based on the experience with his mentor Dr. Bill Eadington and how the experience enhances his vision of the gaming industry and generates an experience of for life in the perspective of the attendees.

What is the executive development program? Bill Eadington founded the executive development program in 1990. What goals did he want to achieve with this initiative? For whom is it specifically designed?

EDP is, simply, the very best gaming leadership program in the world – and it is my favorite thing that I get to do. In 1990, Bill Eadington recognized that this was an often-controversial industry, but one that was maturing rapidly. This industry was in need of sophisticated, globally-literate leaders. It was in need of an Executive Development Program.

Today, EDP is held every year in November in Lake Tahoe, and everything about it is purposeful, innovative, and intensive. Lake Tahoe is perhaps the most gorgeous place on the planet – Mark Twain once called it the most beautiful and idyllic place that human eyes have ever seen. More importantly for us, it is a wonderful site to take a break, take a break, and elevate your thinking – alongside 60 attendees from dozens of countries who soon become your best friends and colleagues from around the world. If you ever meet an EDP alumnus, they will tell you pretty much the same story: the faculty were world-class, the team project was legendary, and it was the most difficult week I ever loved. My LinkedIn posts are filled with testimonials, nearly all of whom say EDP not only was career-changing, it was life-changing, and they never again look at the gaming industry the same way again.

Attendees typically range from department leads to CEOs, but all have the same potential: to lead us into an uncertain, globally-complex future in a fast-growing gaming industry. They are all people whom their bosses have said “now this is a person who has profound leadership potential not just for us, but for the entire industry.” Meanwhile, the faculty also all have one thing in common: they have led massive teams all over the world (typically, half are CEOs or former CEOs), but more importantly, they also have a passion for sharing, for teaching. There are many, many people who know the global gaming industry well – but relatively few are true teachers at heart. We have found about twenty of those individuals, and once EDP faculty come and feel the spirit of the program, they come again and again and again. Most of them stay a few days with the attendees, so EDP graduates emerge with a network of not just peers, but of superstars who become friends and mentors.

What was your motivation to get into EDP?

I was “just” a faculty member for about ten years before taking over EDP leadership in 2013. It was the best professional decision of my life, and it is my favorite thing that I get to do – and I typically travel to six continents each year to teach and learn, so this is saying something significant! Sadly, when my mentor Dr. Bill Eadington was diagnosed with terminal cancer, he had to make a decision: how can we keep this very special program going? It was then that he presented me with the opportunity of a lifetime, and asked me to take over EDP. I was nervous – this was the largest and most prestigious program in the world! But just as we teach at EDP, these moments when you’re a bit scared because the opportunity seems daunting? That tells you that you probably should take advantage of the opportunity, and make a big leap. So that’s what I did, and I hope that I have continued the program in the spirit of its creator, and “founding father” of the gaming studies field. What I saw previously as an EDP teacher is what I see now as a leader: those who are in charge of this industry are truly special leaders in the new “fun economy” (which incorporates things like entertainment, sports, and tourism), which in turn is one of the largest sectors in the world’s economy. People in the EDP room always say they love the way that EDP frames this industry – as a positive force for good, for change, and for leading the tomorrows of our planet.

What are the main topics taught and in which formats are the classes/lessons?

The entertainment and hospitality industry is constantly evolving. Does the program help, executives to adapt to the new reality? Yes – in fact, that is the theme: managing and leading in change. Think about this: we define the “fun economy” as entertainment, sports, and tourism, and together that is now somewhere around 15% of the entire economy of planet earth. In most countries, that is much larger than traditional industries like agriculture, or manufacturing. And those numbers are growing, as globally, the middle class is seeing major growth in several reasons – and the first thing they buy when they join the middle class? More fun. As such, these new leaders at EDP learn to lead an industry that really did not exist in their parents’ grandparents’ age – but that is evolving rapidly as our children inherit the world. These themes of leading through change are at the very heart of what we teach.
THE EDP EXPERIENCE

The professors’s perspectives on their experiences within the program in Lake Tahoe, as well as that of LATAM-based participants, from the construction of classes and the particularity of group work to the perspective of the different trends that must be covered by the leaders of today and tomorrow.

The extensive content agenda that the Executive Development Program (EDP) has is directly involved with the experience. On the one hand, the journey of each of the participants within the gaming industry, but also the teachings and learnings that these professionals achieve in that habitat so deep in experiences in Lake Tahoe.

“I am a full-time Gaming Lecturer at the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. I have participated in the creation of four online gaming courses that are now being facilitated to our UNLV Hospitality students. After 40 years in the casino gaming industry, having every job from dealer to Assistant Vice President of Table Games, it was time to give back to my alma mater, UNLV. My UNLV degree opened many doors for me in the casino gaming industry and I desired to pay it forward to our current students,” says Scott Morrow about his vocation.

It is from the combination of experience within the industry and the vocation to teach that knowledge is developed for EDP attendees, as in the case of Morrow. “In all the casino gaming courses I facilitate, I include, very early in the course, a ‘Responsible Gaming or Problem Gambling Awareness’ lecture. It is important that the gaming leaders of the future respect the fact that Problem Gambling is present in our industry. The focus today is on the new trends in electronic gaming devices such as electronic table games (ETGs), smart shoes, the growth of online wagering and the proliferation of Sports betting across America. Also, revenue generation through time in motion and the focus on more hands per hour or spins of the Roulette Wheel per hour. In the early stages the focus was on operations, identifying card counters and advantage play,” says the academic.

Robert H. Rippee, Executive Director UNLV Black Fire Innovation Hub & UNLV Incubator powered by Hughes Center, delves into this idea of joint development. “The Executive Development Program (EDP) serves as a unique confluence of industry expertise and scholastic rigor. This platform is designed with the singular goal of fostering intellectual growth and leadership acumen. Speaking from my vantage point as a former C-suite executive, within the industry, the EDP is precisely the caliber of program that would have captivated my interest. What sets EDP apart is not solely its rich, thematic content; it is also the innovative, project-based pedagogy that thrives emerging leaders into a real-world case study simulation. These hands-on experiences do more than challenge participants; they equip them with a comprehensive skill set that is essential for fast-tracking their career progression and achieving meaningful success, day one,”

Knowledge and development also allow innovation both in professional life and in classes, such as the experience of Jim McClanahan. I started working on the program in 2007 as an organizer for Dr. Bill Eadington who founded the program. When he passed away in 2013, I was part of the leadership team with Dr. Bo Bernhard and Mark Lipparelli to keep EDP going through the transition, as part of my position in the College of Business at the University of Nevada, Reno. I taught a session using a psychometric instrument called ‘Emergentics’ that helps leaders communicate and work with teams more effectively. Within a few years, Bo and I started collaborating more and more on faculty and content. We challenged ourselves to make the program better every year and find the best presenters possible that combine industry expertise, and a passion for mentoring and developing people. We developed “EDP Presents” which was a shorter, online version of the program during the pandemic that focused on crisis management. “Bo and I have been teaching at UNLV and UNR respectively for many years and we love getting the 2-5 public universities in our state to collaborate on the most important program in the gaming industry,” he recounts from its beginning to the present.

From that point of view, there is an interesting conclusion for McClanahan. “I think industry based education not just in gaming but in all industries is evolving. Rather than focus on specific tactical issues, it’s more strategic and evolving. Rather than focus on specific tactical issues, it’s more strategic and focused on developing people. We spent a lot more time on people issues than we would on slot floor layout”, extends into the full picture.

Anthony Lucas is another of the important names within EDP. “I am a professor at the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality at UNLV. I teach two casino management courses and one casino marketing course,” he says of his educational CV. Regarding his motivation for teaching about the gaming industry, there is no doubt that it was “to help others learn about a complex and fascinating industry.” “Twenty-three years ago, when I began my career at UNLV, there was a paucity of quality educational materials and research aimed at casino management. I was also motivated to fill this void,” he continues, because there are differences over the years. “The early days, the focus was primarily on operations. This was because so few people understood how casinos were operated. The mystery appealed to the curiosity of many students. Today, a wider array of courses and materials exist, allowing for a broader educational experience,” he concludes.

Alan Feldman is another of the professionals with long experience who is part of the EDP team. “I’ve been privileged to serve on the faculty for more than a decade. I initially started as a lecturer in crisis communications and later asked sessions on Responsible Gaming. Five years ago, I became a co-moderator alongside my esteemed colleagues, Dr. Bo Bernhard, Mark Lipparelli and Holly Gagnon. Throughout this time, EDP has consistently been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my career. I’m not certain I can express how gratifying it is to have an EDPer reach out years later to share that their careers were impacted by the lessons taught in Lake Tahoe,” he summarizes about the spirit.

THE CLASSES

The doors of knowledge open. The ideas flow. The study plan is developed. Academics and students form the same nucleus. The gaming industry is enriched with wisdom. One class leads to the next. This is a permanent addition.

“My goal is to identify and prepare the future leaders of the casino gaming industry. I share with our students my current experiences, with opening new casinos, the recruitment, selection and training process. I share my experiences in the day-to-day operation of the casino and how to professionally engage challenging situations. My first four years at UNLV I taught in person and currently I am teaching strictly online gaming and hospitality classes,” says Morrow.

Also in EDP there is an interaction between theory and practice, like Rippee’s experience. “In my capacity at the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, EDP is spearheaded a specialized module focusing on the intersection of innovative solutions and effective crisis communication. This presents an interesting foundation for EDP and opens new horizons for the participants to learn how to leverage these strategies and solutions to their advantage.”
is experience. There are also times for in class learning opportunity is fantastic announced at our closing banquet. The of expert judges. The winning team is first day and ultimately prepare a written spond to an RFP that is presented on the constructed using individual profiles in the industry. After a day of presentations, some of the most influential presenters in Georgia and one may work in Marina Bay be alongside senior leaders, aspiring se- ing and most fun days of your life. You will a very particular day-to-day life at EDP . helps leaders communicate and work instrument called “Emergenetics” that aforementioned invention: “Emergen- From then on, the experience has INTERVIEW political and business reporters in Ne- Sam Shad, one of the longest -serving Our panel of journalists has included crisis scenario and give the teams 30 hardest elements of EDP . We provide a exercise that many consider one of the most of the EDP spirit. enriching every day. This situation is part of the EDP spirit. and needs, according to Feldman. “The pursuit of truth and knowledge is a jour- ney rather than a destination. There are few things more fascinating than the discovery process. Given the pace of change in our industry, what was once true may no longer be so. The constant presence of change makes a strong ar- gument for becoming a lifelong learner. None of us will ever know everything, so the best we can do is to continue to watch and learn”, he analyzes in the extension of the contribution by EDP.

EDP’s advantage of having long- standing academics in the gaming in- dustry is reflected in infection situations. This methodology has two fundamental aspects in Feldman’s concepts. “For the crisis communications class begins with a 60-90 lecture/interactive discus- sion about the nature of crises, how the media work in these situations and how to prepare so that when crisis comes - and it always does - your company is ready to respond. We follow this with an exercise that many consider one of the hardest elements of EDP. We provide a crisis scenario and give the teams 30 minutes to prepare to face the media. Our panel of journalists has included Sam Shad, one of the longest -serving political and business reporters in Ne- vada, among many others. The exercise is intended to push participants well out of their comfort zone and usually does exactly that”, he says for an essential subject for any group leader. There are also contributions for a social perspective. “For the responsible gaming sessions, I try to offer both an overview of what research has discov- ered about the entire spectrum of gam- bling behavior with an emphasis on what constitutes “problem” gambling as well as some of the indicators that player safety may be at risk and insights into the reality of what individual players may experience. We also discuss the political aspects of the topic as it impacts legisla- tive or regulatory policies and practices,” advances Feldman.

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THE CASINO Gaming industry and the world in general are constantly evolving. As a leader in my classroom, I am com-

BE A STUDENT FOR LIFE

In life you never stop learning. The same thing happens in the gaming in- dustry. The dynamics of generations and the connection with technology mean that professionals must always update their tools. So the experiences are more enriching every day. This situation is part of the EDP spirit. “The casino gaming industry and the world in general are constantly evolving. As a leader in my classroom, I am com-
THE LINKAGE WITH THE UNLV INTERNATIONAL GAMING INSTITUTE

Brett Abarbanel tells us this part of the story. “For 30 years, International Gaming Institute (IGI) has provided research-based solutions, cutting-edge insights, and executive education to stakeholders in the gambling and gaming industry, including industry professionals, government representatives, non-profit entities, gamblers, others academic institutions, and more. Described as the ‘global intellectual capital of gaming’, the former Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval and ‘The Harvard of Gaming’ by Global Gaming Business, IGI houses multiple centers, projects, and initiatives, the Center for Gaming Innovation, the International Center for Gaming Regulation, the Nevada Problem Gambling Project, Responsible Gambling and Health Initiative, and a Leadership Development initiative,” describes the Executive Director of IGI, Jose Miguel Chueca.

In matters of education, IGI has a very particular characteristic. “It isn’t just our work that helps shape the future of gaming; we also rely on those outlooks to particular characteristic. “It isn’t just our Executive Director of IGI. Development initiative,” describes the Responsible Gambling Regulation, the Nevada Problem Gamblers, and ‘The Harvard of Gaming’ Project. Responsible Gambling and Health Initiative, and a Leadership Development initiative,” describes the Executive Director of IGI.

EDP’S LATAM LOOK

The gaming industry is part of the globalized world. EDP is a proposal that not only seeks to share knowledge and experiences about all existing trends, but also to extend ties to each continent, both in the classes and then outside the classrooms.

Among the LATAM experiences is Aristocrat Gaming Director, Product & Marketing - LATAM Carlos Carrion. “I attended EDP in 2016. I can say that was an extraordinary experience, and a time that changed my working career. EDP opened the possibility to connect with a lot of people in the gaming industry, including the academic side, and gave me the opportunity to make very good friends. For 10 days, I worked with a team on a special assignment to present a project on a casino proposal. My teammates were working in different gaming organizations in legal, finance, marketing, operations, and data analytics, and together we presented a project to build a Hotel Casino Resort in a country in Latin America. That was a fascinating experience, and a great opportunity to learn from my teammates about their current roles and responsibilities,” says Carrion.

Carrion was also able to be in contact with the most important professionals, for essential objectives in the gaming industry. “I was working in Mexico during the time that I attended EDP and the class taught by Anthony Lucas. "Operators on the Casino Floor: Profits, Potential, and Pratfalls" was very helpful for the Aristocrat operations in Mexico. As a result of the course, the way that we analyzed data changed, and it was very beneficial for our customers and for us. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to participate with Dr. Lucas in some studies and the results were very convincing about the importance of performance studies to analyze data with a scientific method. I had the opportunity to learn from notable experts in the gaming industry about different topics such as Alan Feldman, ‘The Press Conference Is in One Hour: Communications Strategy and Management.’, Roger Snow, ‘What Makes a Game Great’, Roberto Coppola, Latin America and Millennials: ‘The Next

also attended Jose Miguel Chueca, from Peru. “When I participated as an exhibitor at the EDP in 2017, I was in charge of an exhibition on general aspects of the Latin American market. The main focus was aimed at the viability of a comprehensive resort, which is the concept of a resort that includes different entertainment options, in the all-inclusive Caribbean style. This presentation was the introduction, in a way, to the teamwork that the participants had to develop, which was a complete project for the implementation of a resort in South America. The assignment was divided into 6 groups, who had to make a formal defense before a jury, of which I was part, covering financial, regulatory, operational aspects, among others. One of the most enriching aspects of this experience, both for exhibitors and teachers,

as well as for students, is the possibility of exchanging opinions, experiences, and points of view with professionals from very different markets,” says the General Manager of EDUCATIVA.

Based on Chueca’s knowledge in his professional life, his time at EDP allowed him to make a conclusion that involves the present of the industry. “Undoubtedly EDP is the most important tool for the professional who aims to maintain a global vision. After the pandemic, where for various reasons different markets’ certain operating rules had to be adjusted, omnichannel’s presence is basic in today’s business, he concludes about the experience.

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Our Executive Development Program, for example, brings industry executives together for an 8-day professional development bootcamp to learn about gambling best practices and implementation in integrated resorts. Now in its 23rd year, the program updates annually to best reflect the current major subjects and discussions in the industry,” says Abarbanel.

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THE IMPACT OF MESSI AND THE ONGOING LEGAL DISPUTE ON SPORTS BETTING IN FLORIDA

While Miami is experiencing a financial revolution and the takeoff of the MLS since the arrival of the Argentine soccer player, the gaming industry in Florida awaits decisions in the courts.

The New York Cosmos was a soccer team based in New York, United States. Its place of origin was a link with business. During the 1970s, it stood out as one of the most ambitious clubs in North America, coinciding with the professionalization of this sport in the United States through the North American Soccer League (NASL). Ross managed to attract great footballers back then. That decision had a great impact both for the country and for the sport. The most important signature of the Cosmos was in 1975, when Pelé landed in “The Big Apple”.

When the rumor that Lio Messi would join Inter Miami, there were some who drew that parallel in history with Pelé and the Cosmos, but as the days went by the impact of the news was exceeded until it reached the infinity of expectations. From a sporting point of view, the difference is that while Pelé arrived in the United States to finish his career, Messi in 2022 was world champion with Argentina and a few months later he won his seventh Ballón d’Or as the best player in the world. But from the commercial point of view, the popularity of “Lio” enjoys two engines that make it an incomparable fact, both for soccer and for the showcase of universal fame: globalization and social networks.

THE IMPACT WAS IMMEDIATE

The sports market in the United States has its greatest strength in American football, basketball and baseball. With Messi, the expectation of soccer is to reach that level. “The future of soccer in America is so bright,” Inter Miami co-owner David Beckham said in an Adidas news conference on the eve of Lionel Messi’s debut with the MLS club. “I’ve seen the growth of it over the last 10, 15 years... Bringing someone like [Messi] not just to Inter Miami, but to MLS, to America, it means so much. You have the eyes of not just Latin America, but the world on Miami”, concluded the British with dreams in mind. And he wasn’t exaggerating...

The effects were before the ball started rolling. When the news broke that soccer’s all-time greatest talent would be taking his talents to South Beach, Inter Miami’s global popularity, as far as Google searches go, increased by more than 1,200%. “When Lionel Messi announced his move to Inter Miami,” said Gene Cook, vice president of global collectibles at eBay, “searches for his collectibles -- spanning trading cards and memorabilia -- increased over 75% the following day on eBay... globally,” Messi’s Inter Miami kit was Fanatics’ top seller across the main beneficiary, although not the only one. Per a statement from Apple spokesperson Tom Neumayr, the MLS (and their broadcasting partners over at Apple TV) enjoyed “the 3 most watched matches ever on MLS Season Pass, with viewers in almost 100 countries and regions around the world. And the fans for those matches were roughly split between the MLS Season Pass English and Spanish language broadcasts.” In 7 Leagues Cup games, Messi scored 10 goals, his first goal against Cruz Azul was seen by over 50 million viewers on Twitter in just 24 hours.

In terms of tickets sold, Messi’s influence at Inter Miami also made the rest of the teams take off. For example, the Chicago Fire team played 17 home games this season. In the previous 16, total ticket sales billing was $10 million. Against Messi and Inter Miami, the balance amounted to $7 million.

MEXICO IS ALSO A FACTOR IN THE BETS

Inter Miami was a sportingly below-

Apple’s MLS Season Pass have more than doubled. Inter Miami’s Instagram account now has over 14 million followers, more than any team in the NFL, MLB, or NHL. Inter Miami won all of its Leagues Cup matches, but it wasn’t the only winner. Apple announced record viewership for three games the week of Messi’s debut, indicating an increased engagement with the sport. Social media numbers are soaring, with Messi’s debut last-minute free-kick winner against Cruz Azul drawing hundreds of millions of views. Subscriptions to
The future of Florida sports betting remains tied up in the federal court system following an appeal. Amidst Messi's success, BetMGM Sportsbook has also taken note (Inter Miami has odds as high as +12000 to win it all this season, more than ten times as good as they were before Messi joined the fold) and is offering the best BetMGM bonus codes, giving fans the chance to place bets on Inter Miami's matches and Messi's goal-scoring prowess.

Nonetheless, 90.2% of the betting tickets and 94.8% of the money that came into the MLS futures market following the Messi news was on Inter Miami at BetMGM. Around the horn, the line movement at BetMGM Sportsbook for Miami as league winner, including playoffs, has showed the Messi effect: 34.00 before Messi's first game, 26.00 before his second game, 13.00 before his third game, and 8.00 after his sixth game. Highest ticket percentage is Inter Miami at 37.9 per cent, highest handle is Miami 50.8 per cent.

The MLS revolution in sports betting in the United States and in the world generated a responsible gaming campaign with the main firms in the industry. The deals are aimed at giving the Major League Soccer Players Association access to gambling harm education and awareness programs, which will work to provide its members with information about the dangers of problem gambling.


The agreement not only includes the general population, but also the players. The partnership is valid for the next three years and is targeted at avoiding situations such as the one Brentford and England striker Ivan Toney found himself in last season, when he confessed to being addicted to gambling and was investigated by the FA. Toney was later banned for eight months for 232 breaches of gambling regulations and won't play for Brentford again until January 2024.

The Sports Betting Debate in Florida

In May of 2021, the State of Florida and the Seminole Tribe agreed to a 30-year compact that allowed for statewide mobile sports betting via the Seminole Tribe's Hard Rock betting app as part of a $500 million per year payment to the state. The gaming compact was negotiated between Gov. Ron DeSantis and the tribe and approved by the Florida Legislature. The Seminole Tribe-owned Hard Rock casinos in Florida launched their online sports betting app shortly after the deal was codified, but it was forced to shut down about a month later.

Since then, the future of Florida sports betting remains tied up in the federal court system following an appeal. West Flagler Associates, the former owners of the Miami Magic City Casino and the plaintiffs in case that overturned the 2021 betting compact between the state and the Seminole Tribe, filed to have the case heard en banc by an appellate court.

The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia’s three-judge panel directed a lower court to enter a judgment in favor of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior in June. That decision overturned a ruling by a federal judge who threw out the 2021 gaming compact between the state and the Seminole Tribe. In its appeal, West Flagler Associates argued that the appeals court departed from previous cases and is “erroneous and will create confusion.”

Florida will be the largest state in the country with legal sports betting if/when it returns. More than 21.78 million people live in Florida. That is nearly 2 million more than in New York. Florida's largest state budget ever - $116.1 billion - took effect July 1. And not a single penny of that record spending came from Florida sports betting revenue. Sports bettors in Florida enjoyed 34 days of state-wide betting in 2021 when the Hard Rock Sportsbook app was up and running across the Sunshine State.
Sports Betting
WHAT’S GOING ON IN THE STATES?
Current news breakdown on status of Sports Betting progress in these States.

At the moment the states that have sports betting with regulation with 32 in addition to DC. There are other jurisdictions that are far from joining the business unit. Below is a detail about the different pending situations.

ALABAMA: NOT LEGAL
The state has proposed multiple bills, including one in 2021, but all have been shot down. Alabama currently doesn’t have any commercial casinos. Currently, a gambling and lottery bill that would allow sports betting in casinos is working its way through the Alabama Senate and House. Regardless, there’s nothing new to report until these gaming options turn up on a 2023 voters ballot.

ALASKA: NOT LEGAL
In 2020, the state put legalizing sports betting under consideration and Gov. Mike Dunleavy even showed support for the bill. However, the COVID-19 pandemic put an end to its consideration and the bill ended up expiring in May 2020. Efforts to move toward legal Alaska sports betting haven’t been completely dormant — Rep. Adam Wool introduced legislation (HB 385) in February 2022 that would bring mobile sports wagering to the state.

CALIFORNIA: NOT LEGAL
There were two major propositions on the November 2022 ballot that could have legalized sports betting in California, one to legalize in-person sports betting and the other to legalize online sports betting. Both propositions broke spending records and had active ad campaigns, but both were heavily voted down by Californians. It is not known at this time if the topic of legal California sports betting will be brought back up in 2023.

DELAWARE: IN-PERSON ONLY
In-person sports betting is legal in Delaware, but online is not. A few weeks after the Supreme Court’s landmark ruling on sports betting in 2018, Delaware became the first state outside of Nevada to accept a legal, single-game sports bet. However, the action is limited to the state’s three casinos. Proposals for online gambling have been in place since 2013, yet the Delaware Division of Gaming Enforcement has yet to authorize online sports betting. It appears as though the regulator is taking a wait-and-see approach before allowing the racinos to launch online.

FLORIDA: NOT LEGAL
Sports betting is illegal in Florida, both online and in-person. Just three weeks after legal Florida mobile sports betting launched in 2021, a judge ruled that an agreement between the state of Florida and the Seminole Tribe was illegal. It wasn’t until June 2023 that a D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously overturned the decision that had blocked regulated Florida sports betting. There is a chance the ruling will be appealed and could even head to the Supreme Court.

According to experts, the NFL season could produce more than 1 billion in Florida.
Commercial sportsbooks will now have to wait until 2024 to take another swing at the Florida market.

GEORGIA: NOT LEGAL
It is one of two U.S. states with no form of gambling. A group of Georgia lawmakers filed bills in January 2023 that would have legalized Georgia sports betting in the Peach State and wouldn’t have needed to be voted on by Georgia residents. But on March 6, 2023, the Georgia Senate voted down multiple bills that would legalize sports betting in Georgia and the House failed to get legislation of their own voted on before the deadline for new bills passed. Georgia lawmakers are looking to 2024 now that a last-minute attempt to legalize sports betting has fallen short in 2023.

HAWAII: NOT LEGAL
A bill was proposed in January of 2019 that would’ve allowed for the regulation of sports gambling through a newly-established corporation, but the bill was denied. Hawaii is one of just two states, Utah being the other, with no legal gambling provisions.

IDAHO: NOT LEGAL
Sports betting is illegal in Idaho, both online and in-person. Little to no movement from Idaho lawmakers suggests no momentum or appetite for legal Idaho sports betting. Although many of its neighboring states moved quickly to add sports betting legislation in recent years, not one bill has been proposed in the Gem State.

KENTUCKY: LEGAL, NOT YET LAUNCHED
On Aug. 10, 2023, the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission (KHRC) confirmed that seven operators submitted online sports betting applications: bet365, BetMGM, Caesars, Circa, DraftKings, FanDuel, and Penn Interactive. All eyes were on the Red Mile on Monday, July 10, 2023, when regulators approved wagering rules and announced a September launch of Kentucky sports betting. Kentucky’s horse racing tracks and other retail outlets will begin accepting wagers on Sept. 7, while online sportsbooks go live on Sept. 28. The wait for legal Kentucky sports betting has come to a favorable conclusion. On March-31, 2023, Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear signed House Bill 551 into law, legalizing retail and online sports betting in Kentucky.

MARYLAND: LEGAL BUT IN-PERSON ONLY
Maryland voters approved sports betting in November 2020, but currently only in-person options are available. Gov. Larry Hogan has pushed for the speedy launch of online betting ahead of this NFL season, but the timeline remains murky.

MINNESOTA: NOT LEGAL
In 2022, a bill that would have given the state’s Native American tribes — operators of the state’s casinos — the ability to control online and in-person action fell apart in the state senate. Legislation to legalize Minnesota sports betting passed in August 2022, but a launch date has not been set yet.

MISSISSIPPI: IN-PERSON ONLY
The first sports bets in Mississippi were placed on August 1, 2018. The state enacted a law in 2017 that allowed for sports betting. In-person sports betting is legal, but online action is prohibited. Retail betting launched in 2018, but online betting is only allowed when inside a casino. Several online bills have been introduced, but none have gained traction.

MISSOURI: NOT LEGAL, BUT LEGISLATION PROPOSED
Missouri had several sports betting bills introduced in recent years but the state hasn’t taken action on them yet. There was a serious push in 2022, but it fell apart in the state senate. Legal Missouri sports betting will not arrive in 2023. After passing through the House, HB 556 stalled in the Missouri Senate. Lawmakers will reconvene to discuss legalization in 2024. On Jan. 3, 2023, Rep. Dan House introduced House Bill 556, a follow-up to the bill (HB 4) that died in September 2022. On Jan. 4, House Rep. Phil Christoforetti sponsored House Bill 581. Both proposals included mobile sports betting, with both casinos and professional sports teams partnering with online sportsbook operators.

NEW MEXICO: LEGAL, BUT...
No legislation has been passed, but Native American casinos have taken bets since 2018. Under the current state laws, sports betting isn’t explicitly prohibited, nor is it a prohibited Class III game in the gambling compacts shared between tribes and the state. This has allowed the Pueblo of Santa Ana tribe to open their own not-technically-legal but also not-technically-illegal sportsbook at its in-state casino. Sports gambling is legal at the Santa Ana Star Casino Hotel and four other tribal casinos.

NEBRASKA: LEGAL BUT PENDING
Governor Pete Ricketts legalized sports betting and put it into law on May 25, 2021, although there is only in-person betting. On Friday, Oct. 21, 2022, legal Nebraska sports betting took a significant step forward. The Nebraska Racing and Gaming Commission unanimously recommended approving new rules, including sports gambling for operating casinos. Formal recommendations by the NRGC do not ensure the legality of gambling on sports in Nebraska. It still needs to go to the Attorney General’s office, be signed by the Governor, and then to the Secretary of state to be ratified.

NORTH DAKOTA: NOT LEGAL, BUT LEGISLATION PROPOSED
Similar to New Mexico, the state has not passed any official legislation to legalize, but Native American casinos take in-person bets. The last effort to legalize North Dakota sports betting was in 2019 and was unsuccessful.

OKLAHOMA: LEGAL, NOT YET LAUNCHED
Oklahoma lawmakers may soon consider legal sports betting, as Republican Rep. Ken Luttrell introduced House Bill 1027 on Dec. 29, 2022. The proposed legislation calls for in-person and online sports betting via Native American tribes. There is no word yet as to whether a new motion will be proposed in 2023.

SOUTH CAROLINA: NOT LEGAL, BUT LEGISLATION PROPOSED
Gambling in South Carolina is restricted solely to casino riverboats but state legislature has proposed bills in consecutive years that would open the door to sports gambling. No action has been taken yet.

TEXAS: NOT LEGAL
One senator pre-filed a sports betting bill ahead of the 2023 legislative session that would amend the Texas constitution to legalize Texas sports betting. The bill calls for legal sports betting in Texas at a limited number of facilities. Texas sports betting will be legalized if the amendment receives a two-thirds vote from the legislature and approval from state voters in November 2023.

UTAH: NOT LEGAL
And very unlikely to happen. Utah is highly doubtful to adopt legalized sports betting, particularly since its anti-gambling position is written into the state constitution. Decades of opposition make any changes to its policy toward gambling unlikely and would signify a massive departure.

VERMONT: LEGAL, WAITING TO LAUNCHED
A proposed bill to legalize mobile sports wagering in-state passed through both the Vermont House and Senate and was signed by the governor in June 2023. Legal sports betting in Vermont to commence later this year or early 2024. In the meantime, Vermont regulators will issue RFPs in an effort to drum up competition. The legislation will allow two to six sportsbook operators to launch apps and online sports betting sites.
Kushki

EMPOWERING THE USER EXPERIENCE IN THE SPORTS BETTING AND ONLINE GAMING INDUSTRY

The platform that connects Latin America with payments has been showing sustained growth in its transaction operations in the sports betting and online gaming sector in Peru.

Kushki (www.kushkipagos.com), the platform that connects Latin America with payments, has been showing sustained growth in its transaction operations in the sports betting and online gaming sector in Peru.

This development is due to the growth that the sector has experienced in recent years. Many of the casinos operating in the country have implemented web pages and mobile applications, which has allowed them to expand their businesses on the internet and achieve greater reach to digital audiences. But it’s also because the company has identified the importance of payments being processed quickly and effectively for an optimal user experience (UX).

For this reason, Kushki has made various investments to have the most advanced technology and in this way achieve approval rates higher, sometimes over 90%, one of the highest in the ecosystem.

"Accessing and using an online casino or betting platform should always be a positive and rewarding experience. The investment that companies in the industry make in attracting users - in an increasingly competitive environment - will be truly effective," said Rafael Hospina, Country Manager for Peru and Ecuador at Kushki.

Hospina indicated that a 10% improvement in the customer conversion rate in online gaming businesses would improve the profit margin of a company in the sector by almost 10% as well, while the possibilities of selling to an already loyal customer are up to 40% higher than when it comes to new clients.

In this context, a payment being rejected or delayed due to the use of traditional systems or software that has not been fully updated for several years is detrimental to the end customer’s experience, and, therefore, to the business.

A DEVELOPED PLATFORM

In order to meet the needs of its clients in the sector, Kushki has a robust and secure platform for online payment processing, which guarantees high transaction approval rates.

“One of the main advantages that we offer to online gaming companies is the possibility of having various payment alternatives, adapting to their specific needs through personalized attention,” said Rafael Hospina.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES AND CUSTOMIZATION

Kushki has made an investment to implement advanced cloud-based technology that allows the company to offer a fast and optimal payment flow, accepting different payment methods and in local currency. This way, it enhances the user experience of its clients.

One of the main advantages that Kushki offers is customization. This is key for online betting and gaming companies since they can adapt their payments to the profile of their users, either through one-time or recurring charges.

“Kushki has all the technological and operational advances to leverage the growth of online games, video games and Internet sports betting, and contribute to the growth of companies in the sector not only in Peru but throughout Latin America,” said the Country Manager for Peru and Ecuador by Kushki.
The construction transformed Las Vegas skyline

THE SPHERE, A GAME CHANGER

The venue’s exterior – the Exosphere – consists of approximately 1.2 million LED pucks, spaced eight inches apart. Each puck contains 48 individual LED diodes, with each diode capable of displaying 256 million different colors. The Exosphere – transforming the Las Vegas skyline. A signature feature of the construction, a next-generation entertainment medium, the Exosphere will showcase a wide range of artistic and branded content that will be seen not only by guests at Sphere and the 40+ million visitors to the city each year, but also is photographed and shared around the world on social media.

As part of a special show to celebrate the Fourth of July, for the first time ever, Sphere’s 580,000 square foot fully-programmable LED exterior – the largest LED screen on earth – was completely illuminated. The show started with a welcome – “Hello World” – and was followed by dazzling fireworks and stars and stripes animations, before transitioning through a wide array of visual content, from vibrant underwater scenes to performances to vividly-textured lunar surfaces, putting on full display the versatility of this unparalleled canvas.

The Exosphere consists of approximately 1.2 million LED pucks, spaced eight inches apart. Each puck contains 48 individual LED diodes, with each diode capable of displaying 256 million different colors – creating a vivid new LED media plane (that’s 4x football fields) to the 17,385 seats inside the Bowl. The Exosphere is a 360-degree canvas for brand storytelling that will be seen anywhere in the world, offering our partners an unparalleled opportunity to become part of the greatest show on Earth. There’s nothing comparable to the impact from displaying innovative brand and immersive content on the world’s largest video screen. The extraordinary experiences we can create are only limited by imagination, and we’re thrilled to finally share with the world the spectacular potential of the Exosphere.”

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LET THE GAME BEGIN!
Rick Meitzler, President and CEO at Novomatic Americas, gave an exclusive interview to Revista CASINO to talk about the company’s plans in the American continent for the remainder of the year.

Novomatic America is proud to unveil their latest innovations at G2E 2023 in Las Vegas. The company’s focus this year revolves around creating universally appealing experiences for players around an Emerald Isle themed stand. The manufacturer can’t wait to showcase their latest work, and for attendees to see the exciting entertainment products that they will have on display.

Rick Meitzler, President and CEO at Novomatic Americas, gave an exclusive interview to Revista CASINO to talk about the company’s plans in the American continent for the remainder of the year.

US commercial gaming revenue registered a Q2 record of USD16.07 billion, according to the American Gaming Association. How has this industry record impacted on Novomatic America’s business?

As a gaming solutions leader, we’re aligned with this growth and committed to providing top-tier products. This revenue expansion underscores market opportunities and an active economy. We’ll leverage our expertise to fuel industry growth with advanced technology and player entertainment. Excited for more collaboration and innovation in North American gaming.

What are the main characteristics of the products that Novomatic America will present at G2E 2023 in Las Vegas? Which one do you think will impress the visitors?

We are excited to introduce an array of new games under the Thunder Cash Gold Link where every game has lock-and-win progressives, free games or winning spins that cater to various player preferences. One particular standout is “Irish Grace,” a game that encapsulates the charm and magic of the Irish countryside. Players will experience a world of lush landscapes and the allure of Irish culture. The game features a beautiful character who guides players through an adventure filled with exciting bonuses and rewards.

Another exciting offering is “Irish Locks,” inspired by the beauty of Ireland. This game takes players on a journey to unlock the mysteries of ancient castles and hidden treasures. With its engaging storyline, immersive visuals, and unique gameplay mechanics, Irish Locks promises an unforgettable gaming experience.

What sets “Irish Grace,” and “Irish Locks” apart is the strong player-friendly math models and the incredible visuals and attention to detail which make these games universally appealing. Players can connect with the themes of luck, expectation, and the allure of discovering lucky treasures. While all of our offerings are always designed to leave an impression, these games are particularly unique in their storytelling and gameplay experience.

We also are showcasing the new Money Party Fresh link, Thunder Cash X link and several new kiosks such as the new ActionBook Edge J-Curve single screen and the Novo Rewards promotional kiosk.

What are the company’s plans in the American continent for the remainder of the year?

We will continue to unveil new gaming technologies and content. We are focused on deepening collaborations with casino operators and delivering successful solutions. We will continue to aggressively enter new jurisdictions, securing approvals to reach more players and venues, and to build industry leadership by fostering more creative industry relationships. In summary, we’re focused on innovation, collaboration, expansion, and responsible practices to create exceptional gaming experiences, grow our reach, and enrich the gaming industry.

In March, the company presented the new Golden Book of Ra Thunder Cash Gold Link progressive at IGA 2023. Could you tell us more about the product?

The product is an exciting addition to our portfolio this year. There have been many successful Book of Ra games over the years, and this version has it all. The game is internationally successful and has extensive recognizability for players. This version merges several interesting play elements to create a thrilling and new rewarding experience. Free games, special expanding wilds, lock and wins and a progressive on top sets this game apart from other versions. This is by far the best yet. The game gets its inspiration from the well-established “Book of Ra” series of slot themes, which incorporate ancient Egyptian themes, mysticism, and exploration. This recent version takes the theme a step further by adding a unique twist. The Golden Book of Ra Thunder Cash Gold Link Progressive has visually appealing graphics and animations that immerse players in the world of ancient Egypt, featuring symbols like scarabs, hieroglyphics, and of course, the iconic “golden book” itself.

In February, the company relocated its headquarters from Mount Prospect to Buffalo Grove. What have been the benefits of this initiative?

It is an incredible facility. Relocating to Buffalo Grove offers us significantly increased efficiency, enhanced capacity, improved safety, energy efficiency, heightened employee morale, better regulatory compliance, improved quality control, all of which provide us with a competitive advantage.

It also enhances our brand image in North America, leads to cost savings, and provides adaptability to changing market conditions. In summary, our newer facilities enable us to enhance customer satisfaction, create a superior working environment for our team, and offer expansion opportunities for the growing company.
Brazil

THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES APPROVED THE BASIC TEXT OF THE PROVISIONAL MEASURES THAT REGULATES SPORTS BETTING

Among the main changes introduced, it is established that the regulation will also include both other online games and virtual casinos.

The Chamber of Deputies of the Brazilian Congress approved, on September 13th, the basic text of Bill 3626/23, which regulates sports betting. Among the main changes introduced, it is established that the regulation will also include both other online games and virtual casinos, taxing the income of betting sites to operate legally. The distribution of revenue collected between government areas is modified. Social Security will drastically reduce its percentage, dropping from 10 to 2%, while the Ministry of Sports will increase from 3 to 4%. Likewise, the Ministry of Tourism will also be included in the distribution of funds.

Another point established by the bill also stipulates that betting companies must be registered in Brazil. “Only legal entities constituted in accordance with Brazilian legislation, with headquarters and administration in national territory, that meet the requirements of the regulation issued by the Ministry of Finance, may obtain authorization to operate fixed probability bets,” the text says.

BRAZIL: AN IGAING OPPORTUNITY

In 2021, the gross revenue of the iGaming industry was 1.9 billion euros, and by 2026 it is estimated to be 3.2 billion euros, having the potential to represent 1% of Brazil’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 1.5 trillion euros. Currently, Brazil presents high and positive statistics that position it as one of the largest markets in the world. In fact, in 2022, the estimation of Brazilians participating in some activity related to sports betting and online casinos was more than 46%. So active is the market, that the 2023 projection is to have a revenue per user (ARPU) with an average of 801.60 euros, the highest in Latin America.

Brazil’s GDP was USD 1.61 trillion, with a growth of 2.7%. According to the IMF, Brazil is the 12th country with the highest growth potential, ahead of countries such as Australia, Mexico, and Spain. In other words, Brazil’s GDP can compete with top economies based on estimated data from 2020 to 2026.

By the end of 2023, online casino gaming revenues are projected to reach 0.51 billion euros. A figure that undoubtedly hints at a country with a strong iGaming culture. By 2027, the prediction is that there will be an increment in approximately 2.25 million users participating in online casino games. To confirm that projection, it is estimated that 48% of Brazilian users play casino games 1 to 3 times per week.

A study conducted by online casino OKTO revealed that the majority of players reside in six of the country’s states: 33.9% in São Paulo, 24.54% in Rio Grande do Sul, 14.54% in Minas Gerais, 9.06% in Paraná, 6.58% in Santa Catarina, and 2.34% in Rio de Janeiro. These numbers indicate the greatest concentration of users in the three southern states of Brazil. At the same time, the six states with the highest number of users coincide with the most economically developed states and the most significant metropolitan areas. Users in Rio Grande do Sul have sessions with an average time of 9 minutes and 54 seconds, while in São Paulo, the average time per session is 1 minute and 56 seconds. This places Rio Grande do Sul as the state with the lowest online casino gaming activity rate.

In addition to demographic data, player preferences in terms of online casino games are as follows: 78% play online roulette, 66% play online blackjack, 64% play online table games, 63% play online slots, 61% play online video poker, and 50% play live dealer games.

The bill, which will now be analyzed by the Senate, will also establish a new distribution of income, payment of fees, requirements and restrictions, compared to what was presented by Lula da Silva’s government with the Provisional Measure (MP) of July. The distribution of revenue collected between government areas is modified. Social Security will drastically reduce its percentage, dropping from 10 to 2%, while the Ministry of Sports will increase from 3 to 4%. Likewise, the Ministry of Tourism will also be included in the distribution of funds.

One of the most commented points in the discussions between the different actors in the sector was the tax on the income of betting sites which, despite the intention of federal legislator Adolfo Viana to lower it, will remain at 18%. The initial fee to authorize the operation of the sites will be 30 million reais (approximately 6 million dollars), and these will be able to operate for 3 years. Prizes for individuals will be taxed at 30%, including the initial investment as well as the profits.
Although casinos games are popular among players, the general consensus from market players is that the majority of users play casino games on sports betting sites. A country with such a large population and with such a large market, it is not a question of one or the other. As growth projections indicate, Brazil has everything to be one of the powerhouses of the iGaming industry, and that, in itself, is an opportunity for every online casino company.

The fact that so many users are gambling online in Brazil is also beneficial for online casinos. It means all those users know how to interact with an online site. They know the industry, and they trust it. This makes them easier to attract online than people who have never placed a virtual bet online.

**SPORTSBOOK USER BEHAVIOUR**

The sports betting market in Brazil is significantly larger than that of online casinos in terms of number of users. The first evidence showing the difference between the two markets is the revenue generated through online sports betting. During 2020, the operations recorded 1.2 billion euros. In 2023, the expectations are an increment that reaches 2 billion euros, almost doubling in three years.

This sum is directly related to the number of online gambling users in Brazil. By 2027, it is believed that there will be 2.25 million active users. The sports betting demographics in Brazil share many similarities with the online casino demographics presented above. However, in terms of Google searches, the states of Tocantins and Rondônia lead the way in searches for the keywords "bookmakers" and "sports betting", respectively.

Favouritism for betting on football is no secret in Brazil or the rest of Latin America. Corinthians and Flamengo, the two most popular teams in the country, have more than 30 million fans each. In addition, 39 of the 40 First Division teams have online sportsbooks as main sponsors.

The frequency with which Brazilian players bet is another attractive aspect of this market. In a survey develop by Globo, 18 % of respondents said they bet seven days a week, 16 % said they bet between four-to-six days a week. The majority, 48 %, bet between one and three times a week. Another 18 % bet between one and three times a month.

**TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS IN THE BRAZILIAN IGAMING INDUSTRY**

In the case of Brazil, there are 3 critical points to highlight regarding the technical and technological requirements iGaming operators need to consider to satisfy the needs of their users.

Based on a Globo study, when asked what factors they consider to be positive when evaluating an online casino/betting house experience, 54.2 % of players responded – security and a secure connection certificate. This aligns to Brazil's suffering more than 103 million attempted cyber-attacks in 2022. User responses clearly indicate that all online casinos and betting sites must operate with the highest security standards for data protection and payment methods.

Over half of the online casino and sports betting users prefer to log in from their mobile phones. This is mainly because, as mentioned above, most users live in metropolitan areas that require long journeys by public transport, and this is when many take this as the opportunity to gamble and bet. As a result, websites must be fully optimised for mobile devices, as must the games they offer in their catalogue. Otherwise, you risk losing a large number of users.

Despite Brazil already having 5G connectivity in several regions and being one of the fastest in terms of internet speeds in Latin America, many users prefer downloading apps to play and gamble online. They feel more secure when their data and money are processed through an app. They know that they will not have connectivity problems. While many casinos focus on optimising their sites for mobile devices, in Brazil it is a real advantage to offer an app to play and gamble.
March again in Cartagena, the exhibitors achieved sales for an approximate amount of 18 million dollars and multiple commercial alliances.

In September, GAT Showcase Bogotá was held with the attendance of 1300 operators of large, medium and small casinos located throughout Colombia, as well as the presence of executives from the 16 online gambling platforms authorized in the country since 2016.

Some of the companies participating in this showcase were: Pragmatic Play, BetConstruct, BetPlay, Novomatic, EGT, IGT, Interblock, Merkur, Amusnet, Nubes, Alteran, Evolution, Win Systems, Spintec, Inspired y Gem Solutions. The GAT events have the support of Coljuegos, the country’s regulator, and the main associations of operators in Colombia: Asojuegos, Fecoljuegos, Cornazar and Fedelco.

The following is the calendar of GAT 2024 events, adding a new location for exhibition and academy in Mexico in November: GAT Expo Cartagena (April 9, 10 and 11 at Las Americas Convention Center in Cartagena de Indias), GAT Showcase Punta Cana (June 28-29 at The Westin Punta Cana Resort & Club in the Dominican Republic), GAT Showcase Bogotá (September 5 at the Sheraton Bogotá Hotel, in Colombia’s capital city), and GAT Caribe Cancun (November 28-29 at the Cancun Convention Center in Mexico).

GAT EXPANDS ITS INFLUENCE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

With vast experience in trade shows and academic meetings in Colombia, Peru, Dominican Republic, it gathers the most important companies with business or interests in the land-based and online markets.

Gaming & Technology Expo is currently the most relevant organizer of exhibitions and B2B events of the gaming industry in Latin America. With vast experience in trade shows and academic meetings in Colombia, Peru, Dominican Republic, it gathers the most important companies with business or interests in the land-based and online markets in Colombia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

The GAT brand evolves at the pace of innovation in casino equipment and games, digital transformation, the unstoppable growth of online gaming and the latest trends in entertainment and eSports, incorporating B2C activities in its events.

GAT Expo, the large-format trade show held every year in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, is generating great anticipation. In 2024, organizers will celebrate the 25th anniversary of this Latin American show on April 9, 10 and 11.

Some figures of the 2023 fair speak of its importance, bringing together executives from 42 countries and 4 continents, adding 3500 visitors and 100 exhibitors with stands of equipment, products and services for physical casinos, online platforms, virtual games and online betting. It is estimated that in the edition that took place last March again in Cartagena, the exhibitors achieved sales for an approximate amount of 18 million dollars and multiple commercial alliances.

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Sports Betting

THE DEBATE ON LIMITING ADVERTISING IS IN THE AIR

The contribution of specialists, the participation of the state and the role of operators, as part of a current debate on the health of society and the development of a business unit in continuous growth.

Sports betting is a reality. It is a broad, universal and successful business. What is also a reality is the need for states to limit the actions of operators so that the link between the business and its clients works harmoniously.

Currently, all regions are working to adjust the structure to an always difficult ideal. In some cases a legal point was achieved. In others it is in process. And there are also scenarios with strong arguments for moving forward. Below are some cases in detail in this present of changes.

CANADA

Two Senators introduced a bill, S-269, to create a national framework for advertising on sports betting in Canada. Both sponsors, Sen. Marty Deacon and Sen. Brent Cotter, supported the legalization of single-event sports wagering in 2021.

Advocates and academics have raised concerns about the inundation of sports betting advertising seen in the province since Ontario opened up to independent online gambling sites last year, and decried the impact those advertisements could have on the health of young people.

Bill S-269 would create a framework very similar to the one developed to curb tobacco advertising in Canada. It also pointed to sports betting regulations being developed by several European countries including Spain, the UK and Belgium.

Some of the rules proposed in the bill include: limiting or banning celebrities and athletes from appearing in ads; limiting the number of ads that can be played or shown in a specific location; restricting the use of non-broadcast advertising; and establishing national standards for the prevention and diagnosis of gambling addiction.

The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) announced it updated the Registrar’s Standards for Internet Gaming to prohibit the use of athletes and said new restrictions will come into effect Feb. 28, 2024.

Hockey legend Wayne Gretzky and current NHL stars Connor McDavid and Auston Matthews are among the athletes who have appeared in ads for gambling sites. Ontario regulators allowed the commercial iGaming market to open in April 2022. From the beginning, sportsbooks could not advertise promotional offers without customers first opting in to receive them.

The AGCO was quick to levy fines against multiple operators who broke that rule. The lack of promotional advertising might have hindered the pace at which Ontario operators got up to speed, especially those new to the province and unable to transfer databases from the gray market.

The first year in Ontario attracted $26.5 billion in total wagers, including iCasino and sports betting. The fourth quarter brought in $10.6 billion in bets, compared to $3.1 billion during the first quarter. In April, the AGCO held consultations on its proposal for the ban and received submissions from a host of stakeholders, including mental-health organizations, gambling experts, gaming operations and the public.

In its report, the AGCO said its proposal “comes after significant criticism from advocates, experts and parents about the notable rise of online gambling advertisements, especially during live sports. “For example, during a 2023 playoff series game between the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Florida Panthers, nearly eight and a half minutes of advertisements were dedicated to online sport gambling.”

UK

The project was ready and things were on track. The Betting and Gaming Council (BGC), the state body that regulates betting and gambling in the UK, introduced extensions to the already existing rules to ensure the current restrictions are effectively working in the digital sphere as well as TV and radio. There has already been a demand for 20% of gambling commercials and advertisements on TV and radio devoted to responsible gambling messages. But it’s not done yet.

The UK government’s recent decision to cancel a upcoming ban on gambling advertising recently came under intense scrutiny. During a fiery parliamentary meeting on the subject, it became ap-
In the absence of significant limitations in the evidence, they found. While researchers acknowledged that advertising was causing harm, it was limited proof suggesting that exposure to advertising alone led individuals to be affected by gambling harm. The government assessment was conducted by one leading expert on gambling harms. “The evidence is clear that gambling advertising drives consumption, which increases harm,” said Dr Matt Gascoigne, Heritage and Civil Society stated that they had heavily relied on the available evidence to point out that there was limited proof suggesting that exposure to advertising alone led individuals to be affected by gambling harm. He also mentioned that further investigation provided additional evidence indicating that advertising was causing harm, which would be considered for action.

The government assessment was disputed by one leading expert on gambling harms. “The evidence is clear that gambling advertising drives consumption, which increases harm,” said Dr Matt Gascoigne. During a 2023 playoff series game between the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Florida Panthers, nearly eight and a half minutes of advertisements were dedicated to online sport gambling.

Obviously the debate is very deep, even beyond the field of health. The demand for limiting sports betting advertising comes from a long time ago and from countless sources. One overarching assessment of research into gambling advertising, published in the journal Public Health in February, called for advertising restrictions. While researchers acknowledged significant limitations in the evidence base, they found: “In the absence of definitive controlled studies, the substantial and consistent evidence base supports restrictions to reduce exposure to gambling advertising.”

**AUSTRALIA**

The federal government is being urged to ban gambling advertising during sporting events within three years, as the nation grapples with a crisis threatening the financial and mental health of many Australians. The committee inquiry was initially set up last September after a referral from Amanda Rishworth, the first state’s social services minister. Australian prime minister Anthony Albanese labelled betting advertising during sports matches as annoying, while other opposing MPs have also called for stronger action.

As of now, gambling advertisements are not allowed to be in the five minutes of a sporting event starting or finishing with, some exceptions permitted during longer-form events taking place after 8:30 pm such as cricket or tennis matches. Commercial broadcasters have previously warned that free sports broadcasts could be cut if a ban was implemented, while several bookmakers have called the recommended ban an overreaction.

A parliamentary committee has released its findings into the harm posed by online gambling, making 31 recommendations on how the industry should be regulated and how Australians struggling with addiction should be supported. Committee recommended a phased ban to be implemented in four steps. Committee chair Peta Murphy said a three-year timeline would allow major sports and broadcasters time to find alternative advertisers and sponsors. Australian federal government called on to implement a national strategy on online gambling harm reduction. National regulation, online wagering, and harm reduction levy on online wagering providers were among the measures recommended. Bans on illegal gambling websites and stronger identity checks among other steps suggested.

“The people don’t like it – they feel they’re inundated with advertising, they’re very concerned that children are exposed and exposed regularly to ads for sports betting,” committee chair and Labor MP Peta Murphy said. “There’s obviously a concern that we are producing, if we haven’t already produced, another generation of Australians who see sport and betting intrinsically linked, and sport almost as a vehicle for which betting can occur.”

**UNITED STATES**

There have been two very significant events in recent times to limit advertising on sports and particularly with promo offers, which is the very core of the sport. A group of professional sports leagues and media outlets have formed a coalition that aims to ensure a responsible approach to sports betting advertising, which has increased dramatically over the past five years and caused great anxiety for politicians.

This is a more than representative field for the groups of sports in the United States. The Coalition for Responsible Sports Betting Advertising consists of the NFL, NBA, NHL, Major League Baseball, WNBA, NASCAR and MLS. Media outlets NBCUniversal and Fox have joined the coalition headed by NFL executive vice president of public policy and government affairs Jonathan Nabozny.

The coalition aims to implement and maintain consumer protection policies built on six core principles: sports betting should be marketed only to adults; sports betting advertising should not promote irresponsible or excessive gambling or degrade the consumer experience; sports betting advertising should not be misleading; sports betting advertisements should be in good taste; publishers should have appropriate internal reviews of sports betting advertising; and publishers should provide consumer complaints pertaining to sports betting advertising.

The evaluation of the different groups starts from the states where sports betting already operates. It is not only about solving this issue in those regions of the country, but above all so that it begins in the best way in the states that are about to launch.

During the 2023 playoff series game between the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Florida Panthers, nearly eight and a half minutes of advertisements were dedicated to online sport gambling.

**ECUADOR**

This trend also takes place in LatAm. The most recent case has to do with Ecuador. The government of Ecuador, in an act headed by President Guillermo Lasso, subscribed and issued the general regulation to the Organic Law of Communication, which prohibits the advertising of any type of betting system or sports predictions.

The controversial law was drafted to eliminate former policies of President Rafael Correa, who during his tenure authorized the ‘Gag Law’ on Ecuadorian media. This was regarded as an instrument of state control over media matters, liability, and reporting. “Misleading advertising is prohibited, as well as any type of advertising or promotion of child pornography, cigarettes, controlled substances and any type of betting system or sports predictions,” according to Article 56, which came into force on the date of its signing on August 23.

Lasso had previously pledged to implement a new “15% transactional tax” on all betting houses, both foreign and domestic, as his office has criticized the Internal Revenue Service (SRI) for collecting only $480,000 in tax income from betting houses in 2022. According to SRI, which oversees Ecuador’s tax policy and collection, 33 companies operate in the country. Six of these are domiciled locally, while the remainder are international.

The Coalition for Responsible Sports Betting Advertising supports limiting advertising in the United States.
Two different cases

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF ONLINE SPORT BETTING IN CHILE AND PERU?

From the Andes Mountains to the Pacific shores, the allure of online sports betting continues to grow, and it’s a journey that promises both thrills and insights for all who partake.

In recent years, the global landscape of sports betting has undergone a profound transformation, with online platforms emerging as the dominant force in this industry. While sports betting has always held a special place in the hearts of enthusiasts, the advent of technology and the internet has pro-

Both Chile and Peru share a fervent passion for soccer, with iconic clubs like Colo-Colo and Universitario de Deportes stirring the emotions of fans on a weekly basis. Beyond soccer, other sports such as tennis, basketball, and horse racing also enjoy a dedicated following. The intersection of this fervor with the convenience of online sports betting has created a synergy that is re-

sport betting continues to grow, and it’s a journey that promises both thrills and insights for all who partake.

Chile and Peru, both known for their rich sporting traditions, have embraced the digital revolution with open arms, allowing sports enthusiasts to place bets on their favorite teams and ath-

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lethletes from the comfort of their homes or on the go. The amalgamation of traditional sports culture with cutting-edge technology has not only fueled the popularity of sports betting but has also opened up a world of opportunities for operators, bettors, and the econo-

mies of these South American nations.

As the highest Chilean court ruled last night, these sites “carry out gambling activities within the borders of Chile, without legal authorization or authorization from any national tax au-

thority, which is why they are illegal accor-
ding to national regulations.”

From there, the entity requested that “it be declared that the online betting sys-
tems carried out in Chile through the Inter-

net by persons or companies not autho-
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Chile

Last August, the regulation of sports betting and online games in Peru finally oc-
curred. With the law, the General Frame-
work of Requirements and Operations for the activity has been defined, as well as the intervention of the different global operators and agents in the country has been regulated, through the definition of a clear policy, both for fixed establishments and residents, as for online systems.

In terms of foreign online gaming op-
erators, the full and guaranteed openness that Peru maintains to international investment has remained within the con-
stitutional framework, the same one that enshrines equal treatment for foreign in-
vestment and the financial schemes that make it possible, such as the floating exchange rate, market supply, as well as the freedom of remittances abroad.

International operators will find with this new regulation in Peru the legal in-
strument that will allow them, not only to participate in a regulated market, but in a market in which they will enter on equal terms for free competition of the different products they offer.

In legislative matters, the definition of the regulations of the law is expect-
ed, as well as the single text of admin-
istrative procedures of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism, both norms that will now constitute the legislative body regulating the activity.

It is important to highlight that with the issuance of the law, not only is the political will of the Peruvian state ex-

pressed to consider sports betting and online games as activities permitted in the legal system, but also as economic activities subject to regulation, supervi-
sion and control, with respect and openness to foreign investment, and with full participation of the different operators and investors in the world market.

Chile

The case is different and more complicated in Chile. On September 12th, the Supreme Court accepted a protection appeal filed by the Pola Chilena de Beneficencia and ordered the blocking of online sports betting activities subject to regulation, supervi-
sion and control, with respect and openness to foreign investment, and with full participation of the different operators and investors in the world market.

The amalgamation of traditional sports culture with technology has not only fueled the popularity of betting but has also opened up a world of opportunities”.

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Following the promulgation of Law No. 31557 of August 13, 2022, and Law No. 31806 of June 28, 2023, the regulation of sports betting and online games in Peru occurred. With the law, the General Framework of Requirements and Operations for the activity has been defined, as well as the intervention of the different global operators and agents in Peru has been regulated, through the definition of a clear policy, both for fixed establishments and residents, as for online systems.

The new norm, maintaining the coherence and legislative development coming from the Peruvian casino and slot machine law (Law No. 27153 of 1989 and Law No. 27796 of 2002), has largely transposed the legal structure under which the sports betting activity in fixed establishments within the country.

The legislative development has not been surprising, since in the internal debate the standards of social surveillance, tax structure, health and protection of the population have been maintained, based on the different self-regulations imposed by the sector.

In terms of foreign online gaming operators, the full and guaranteed openness that Peru maintains to international investment has remained within the constitutional framework, the same one that enshrines equal treatment for foreign investment and the financial schemes that make it possible, such as the floating exchange rate, market supply, as well as the freedom of remittances abroad.

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In legislative matters, the definition of the regulations of the law is expected, as well as the single text of administrative procedures of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism, both norms that will now constitute the legislative body regulating the activity. Unlike the law, which is a norm produced by the Legislative Branch (Congress of the Republic), the regulations of the law, as well as the single text of administrative procedures, are regulatory norms produced by the Executive Branch and published by means of a Supreme Decree of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism.

The deadline for the issuance of the Supreme Decree that publishes the regulations has already been met, and therefore its validity and complete regulation for the sports betting and online gaming sector are imminent.

Finally, it is important to highlight that with the issuance of Laws No. 31557 and No. 31806, not only is the political will of the Peruvian state expressed to consider sports betting and online games as activities permitted in the legal system, but also as economic activities subject to regulation, supervision and control, with respect and openness to foreign investment, and with full participation of the different operators and investors in the world market.
A new model

OMNICHANNEL: A SEAMLESS EXPERIENCE FOR PLAYERS

The entrance into the digital realm has provided convenience and accessibility, it has also presented a challenge: how to maintain a cohesive player experience across both physical and virtual platforms.

You can’t go anywhere in business these days without hearing the word “omnichannel,” even though it means different things in every industry, from connecting customers across touchpoints, to coordinating and personalizing the healthcare experience for both providers and patients or allow people to access their money wherever they are.

In the casino industry, technological advancements continue to reshape the way casinos operate and engage with their patrons. One such transformation that has gained significant momentum is the implementation of omnichannel strategies. Omnichannel, a term that originated in the retail sector, refers to the integration of multiple communication channels to create a seamless and consistent customer experience. In recent years, this concept has found a natural fit within the casino industry, offering numerous benefits for both players and casino operators alike.

The casino industry has historically been centered around physical locations, where players would visit brick-and-mortar establishments to indulge in their favorite games of chance. However, the rise of digital technology has disrupted this traditional model, introducing online casinos that allow players to engage with their preferred games from the comfort of their homes. While this expansion into the digital realm has provided convenience and accessibility, it has also presented a challenge: how to maintain a cohesive player experience across both physical and virtual platforms.

Omnichannel solutions address this challenge by integrating the various touchpoints that players interact with, ensuring a seamless transition between the physical and digital aspects of a casino’s offerings. These touchpoints encompass not only physical casino floors and online platforms but also mobile apps, social media presence, and customer support channels. The goal is to create a unified ecosystem where players can move effortlessly between different platforms while experiencing consistent branding, rewards, and gameplay options.

Omnichannel, a term originated in the retail sector, refers to the integration of multiple communication channels to create a seamless customer experience.

Omni-channel “front-end” of the operation is what players and casino staff interact with, which most people tend to talk about when it comes to the topic. Your new game should work similarly in the land-based casino, on the computer, or through a mobile app. The “Players Club” sign-up experience should be seamless, whether with a live host, at a kiosk, or online. If someone starts the registration in one channel, they can end it in another channel, the customer ultimately decides.

While “back-end” omni-channel describes what your customer and casino staff don’t always see. This involves the integration and analysis of all data about a player across the channels used, so that the casino can have a complete view of the player’s interactions on the casino floor, on a sports betting or iGaming platform, in the hotel or restaurants. This creates a treasure trove of analyzable data points for the operator, providing a much more personalized (and profitable) player experience.

In 2023 players don’t see convenience, flexibility and access to games on different platforms as added value, today they are basic requirements. Players expect to be able to access their games not only from a land-based casino, but also via a computer, self-service kiosk, smartphone or tablet.

The adoption of omnichannel strategies in the casino industry brings forth a myriad of benefits that cater to the needs and preferences of both players and casino operators.

ENHANCED PLAYER EXPERIENCE

Omnichannel implementation places the player at the center of the experience, allowing them to interact with the casino brand through their preferred channels. Whether a player chooses to visit a physical casino, play on a website, or use a mobile app, the transition is seamless, providing a consistent atmosphere and game selection. The goal is to create a unified ecosystem where players can move effortlessly between different platforms.
The rise of digital technology has disrupted this traditional model, introducing online casinos that allow players to engage with their preferred games from the comfort of their homes.

The omnichannel model seeks a synergy between the different contact points and the interaction channels between the company and the consumer, with the aim of optimizing the gaming experience. It is therefore the union of the traditional and digital parts, in such a way that it responds to the new gaming needs of users.

In this way, it is enough to use a single credential for the land-based casino and for the online one, being able to maintain the same progress on the same channels, as many experts in the field suggest.

Another great model to thwart the gaming crisis is the use of social media. Not only the traditional ones like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok or Twitter, but everything is focused on Twitch and YouTube: in fact, videos have become the new preferred channel for any type of content, such as the latest news in online casino games.

Gaming experts, professional players, longtime fans, they all hold live or streaming sessions where they talk about online gaming, offer advice to users and visitors, leave valuable tips or advice.

This is a way that allows gambling to stay on track and also look at the new generations. All this without forgetting artificial intelligence, augmented or virtual reality, cybersecurity. In short, with these weapons the gaming industry tries to restart. And, above all, it tries to counteract a crisis that seemed irreversible and perhaps, fortunately, it is not, as in other sectors.

OMNICHANNEL AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

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As the casino industry continues to evolve in response to technological advancements, the implementation of omnichannel strategies emerges as a transformative approach. By integrating physical and digital platforms, casinos can provide players with a consistent, personalized, and seamless experience across various touchpoints. The benefits of omnichannel implementation extend to enhancing player satisfaction, optimizing operational efficiency, and fostering loyalty through multi-platform engagement. However, casinos must navigate challenges related to technology integration, data security, branding consistency, and employee adaptation.

In a landscape where players expect convenience, choice, and a tailored experience, omnichannel strategies are poised to revolutionize the casino industry. The convergence of physical and digital realms into a harmonious ecosystem has the potential to reshape player engagement and position forward-thinking casinos at the forefront of innovation. As this transition continues to unfold, the industry will undoubtedly witness the profound impact of omnichannel strategies on both players and operators alike.

### CHALLENGES

While the advantages of omnichannel implementation in the casino industry are substantial, it’s important to acknowledge the challenges that casinos may encounter during this transition. Integrating diverse technology systems to create a seamless omnichannel experience can be complex. It requires a robust technological infrastructure that can handle the data flow, communication, and synchronization between various channels. Overcoming technical challenges is essential to ensure a smooth player journey.

With the collection and utilization of player data comes the responsibility to ensure its privacy and security. Casinos must navigate stringent data protection regulations and implement robust security measures to safeguard player information across all channels.

Maintaining consistent branding and messaging across different platforms is crucial for creating a cohesive player experience. Casinos need to ensure that players perceive the same values and atmosphere whether they are on a physical casino floor or engaging with the brand online.

Implementing omnichannel strategies often requires staff training and adaptation to new processes. From customer support to marketing, employees need to be equipped with the skills to navigate the interconnected landscape and provide a seamless experience to players.
ChatGPT
THE FULL POWER OF AI AT OUR FINGERTIPS

Sportsbooks have long used AI for data feeds and odds setting. How will the advent of widespread AI access change the sports betting landscape?

In November 2022, OpenAI released ChatGPT, letting anyone, anywhere, harness the power of AI for calculating odds, strategizing, and quickly solving tasks of immense complexity. With the capacity to assess any situation, analyze the available options, and weigh all possible outcomes in the snap of a finger, ChatGPT gives the user an obvious edge for any kind of game.

So it’s no wonder that people are posting about their experiences using ChatGPT for (primarily) sports betting and (less often) casino gaming. Sportsbooks have long used AI for data feeds and odds setting. How will the advent of widespread AI access change the sports betting landscape? Can ChatGPT help sports bettors and casino gamers, and what can casinos and sportsbooks do about it?

HOW CAN BETTORS USE CHATGPT?

Betting is a numbers game. For avid bettors, choosing a winner is only half the thrill; their joie de vivre comes from pitting their idea of the odds against the bookies’. Given ChatGPT’s knack for arithmetic and ability to gather data at blinding speeds, it’s no wonder that sports bettors sat up and took notice as soon as the technology was available: surely AI would give them an edge on the bookies.

ChatGPT, as an AI-powered chatbot, can help sports bettors in several ways. It can analyze large amounts of data in real-time to provide bettors with up-to-date information and insights about teams, players, and events. This can help bettors make informed betting decisions. It can learn a bettor’s preferences, betting history, and other factors to provide personalized betting recommendations that are tailored to the bettor’s individual needs. It can analyze past performance data for teams, players, and events to identify patterns and trends that can help bettors make more informed betting decisions. ChatGPT can monitor odds and lines from multiple sportsbooks in real-time.

ChatGPT can help sports bettors save time and make more informed and profitable betting decisions by providing real-time insights.
time to identify the best betting opportunities for bettors. It can provide bettors with betting strategies and tips that are based on historical data, trends, and other factors. This can help bettors make more profitable betting decisions.

Overall, ChatGPT can help sports bettors save time and make more informed and profitable betting decisions by providing real-time insights, personalized recommendations, and analytical tools that are tailored to their individual needs.

Though this list might be a little overconfident. Aside from the fact that ChatGPT is only as useful or creative as the user’s dedication to prompt engineering, it usually insists it’s incapable of covering real-time odds when you actually ask it to do so, and only offers predictions with much reservation.

There’s also the fact that as a generative pre-trained transformer, ChatGPT is a language-model, not an all-seeing mystic with a crystal ball. Still, sports bettors are using ChatGPT in two main areas: prediction/analysis and strategy.

PREDICTION

Obviously, ChatGPT doesn’t know who’s going to win the next Champions Cup. For now, it’s only familiar with information up to 2021 (which obviously excludes the future) though you can feed it any relevant information after that.

ChatGPT can learn a bettor’s preferences and other factors to provide personalized betting recommendations that are tailored to the bettor’s individual needs.

But AI is no stranger to predicting sports events. In 2018, the winner of the Virtual Grand National, a CGI version of the UK’s premier horse racing event, went on to win the live event as well. With full access to all relevant data, ChatGPT can go toe-to-toe with the best sports analysts out there. Based on a team’s recent history, as well as the history of any two given teams in a match and a few other factors, ChatGPT can predict which of them will come on top.

If, for example, someone wanted to know whether AC Milan would beat Napoli on April 12, 2023, you would have some work ahead of you, feeding the bot every ounce of information it needs. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn’t, but if the bettor provides a very well-engineered prompt with detailed instructions, ChatGPT could theoretically spit out a recommendation.

When given this prompt: “Act like a sports analyst. Collect head-to-head statistics between AC Milan and Napoli in the Champions League. Consider the fact that in AC Milan’s last five matches in Italy’s Serie A league, the team won once, lost twice, and tied twice.”
Similarly, consider how Napoli has won three times and lost twice in its last five matches. Based on that information, make a prediction for who will win the match between AC Milan and Napoli on April 12, 2023, how many goals will be scored, and who will score them."

ChatGPT returned this answer: "As an AI language model, I do not have access to future information, such as the result of the match between AC Milan and Napoli on April 12, 2023, or the number of goals that will be scored in the match, or who will score them. Additionally, predicting the outcome of a single match can be difficult, as many factors can influence the result, including injuries, team strategy, and individual player performances.

However, based on the head-to-head statistics between AC Milan and Napoli in the Champions League, we can look at their historical performances and re-in the Champions League, we can look at their historical performances and re-in the Champions League, we can look at their historical performances and re-in the Champions League, we can look at their historical performances and re-in the Champions League, we can look at their historical performances and re-in the Champions League, we can look at their historical performances and re-in the Champions League, we can look at their historical performances and re-in the Champions League, we can look at their historical performances and re-in the Champions League, we can look at their historical performances and re-in

As Deep Blue and AlphaGo have proven, the human mind is no match for AI when it comes to strategizing. By the way, between ChatGPT’s two predictions, the one common thread was that the game would be close. In the end, AC Milan came out on top, 1 - 0.

**STRATEGY**
ChatGPT’s other major application is betting. This can be simple, such as generating a list of betting strategies for you to choose from. Or it can be very involved, such as creating a bot for arbitrage betting. Arbitrage betting involves seeking out two bookmakers with different odds on a single match and placing bets on both sides so that, with only four away goals that ChatGPT said, predicting the outcome of a football match is always the same; it’s always a matter of probability. And, after a more extended conversation, ChatGPT changed its prediction: “Based on the analysis of the game, we might predict that Napoli has a slight edge in this match, based on their recent form and home-field advantage. AC Milan has been in good form recently, winning their last three games in a row, while Napoli has struggled somewhat, with only one win in their last five games. Additionally, AC Milan has a strong record at home, where they have won seven of their last ten games, while Napoli has a relatively poor away record, with only four away games that ChatGPT said. In other words, so ChatGPT can do all the heavy lifting, in fact, a YouTuber even used ChatGPT to create an app for arbitrage betting, complete with plug-ins for sports data APIs. Punters no longer need an advanced degree in mathematics to try and take advantage of bookmakers. ChatGPT often demurs when asked to grab live data, such as generating a list of betting recommendations can be pretty free-wheeling, it’s a different scenario when it comes to casino table games. Take blackjack, for example. Blackjack is a simple game. Either ask the dealer to deal you another card (“hit”), stay as you are, or split (spitting is when you have two cards of the same value which you “split” and play as two separate hands). The decision of whether or not to have the dealer give you another card is where the “skill” comes in. Also, AI can tell you when to double down and when to split.

**Using AI for predictive modeling has become a standard practice for sportsbooks, and now that ChatGPT is out, punters will certainly be making use of it.**

Deciding to hit, stay, or split depends on your hand and the dealer’s visible card. While a memory champi-on might have a complete probability table at hand, mere mortals can turn to AI, report their current hand and which card the dealer is showing, and get a recommendation for what move to make.

ChatGPT can do all the heavy lifting in trying to make predictions. But doing some-thing and doing it well are two different things. Is it accurate? Well, it’s certainly accurate enough for the bookies themselves, and numerous studies dating back to the 90’s have found AI predic-tions to be as much as 75% accurate. Using AI for predictive modeling has become a standard practice for sportsbooks, and quite simply, now that ChatGPT is out, punters will certainly be making use of it.

The conversations took place several hours apart, with no developments in any of the relevant information. It begs the question: aside from whether or not ChatGPT can make predictions, would a savvy sports bettor even use it? And if ChatGPT’s capabilities de-pend on the information the user feeds it, how could you possibly know if you’ve fed it enough of the right info? Will it change its prediction along with the weather — if there are 3 millimeters of rain instead of 1? In other words: so ChatGPT can make predictions. But doing some-thing and doing it well are two different things. Is it accurate? Well, it’s certainly accurate enough for the bookies themselves, and numerous studies dating back to the 90’s have found AI predic-tions to be as much as 75 % accurate. Using AI for predictive modeling has become a standard practice for sportsbooks, and quite simply, now that ChatGPT is out, punters will certainly be making use of it.

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An evolving betting segment

UNVEILING THE MULTITUDE OF BENEFITS VIRTUAL SPORTS BRING TO ONLINE BETTING PLATFORMS

In this digital age, where instant gratification and accessibility are paramount, virtual sports have seamlessly carved out a niche that caters to the ever-changing preferences of modern bettors.

In the ever-evolving landscape of online gambling, virtual sports have emerged as a game-changing phenomenon, enriching the experience for both bettors and operators. These virtual events, which combine cutting-edge technology with the thrill of sports betting, offer a unique and engaging platform that brings a plethora of benefits to players.

Continuous Action and Instant Gratification
One of the most significant advantages of virtual sports is the ability to experience continuous action. Unlike traditional sports, where bettors have to wait for scheduled matches, virtual sports offer a non-stop stream of events, allowing gamblers to place bets and experience the excitement 24/7. This uninterrupted flow of events caters to the desire for instant gratification that modern audiences seek, boosting engagement and fostering a sense of immersion.

Virtual sports open up a whole new world of betting opportunities. Online betting platforms can offer an extensive range of virtual events, including soccer, horse racing, basketball, and more, each with its unique set of betting options. This diversity appeals to a broad audience, from sports enthusiasts to newcomers interested in exploring the world of betting. The availability of various sports also ensures that there is always something for everyone to bet on, regardless of personal preferences.

Reduced Downtime and Shorter Betting Cycles
In traditional sports, downtime between matches or events can lead to a lull in betting activity. Virtual sports eliminate this downtime, as new events start almost immediately after the previous one concludes. This shorter betting cycle keeps users engaged and encourages them to place bets more frequently. For online betting platforms, this translates to increased revenue and a more consistent stream of activity throughout the day.

Virtual sports are not only an extra layer of entertainment but also encourage users to remain active and invested in the platform over the long term. This engagement fosters a sense of immersion and enhances user experience, as users can make more informed decisions based on historical performance data.

Integration of Gamification Elements
Virtual sports have also paved the way for the integration of gamification elements into online betting platforms. Gamification enhances user engagement by incorporating game-like features such as leaderboards, achievements, and rewards. These elements encourage users to participate more actively and invested in the platform.

Accessibility and Convenience
Virtual sports bring the thrill of betting to a wider audience, including individuals who may not have access to physical sports events. This inclusivity appeals to those who may not be physically present at a stadium but still want to experience the excitement of betting on their favorite sports. Additionally, the convenience of participating in virtual sports betting from the comfort of one’s own home or on-the-go through mobile devices further boosts their appeal.

Advancements in technology have led to the creation of virtual sports events with stunningly realistic visuals. High-quality graphics and animations provide an immersive experience that mimics the atmosphere of real sports events. This visual fidelity adds to the excitement of virtual sports betting and enhances user engagement. The ability to watch events unfold in real-time, complete with commentary and realistic crowd reactions, further elevates the experience for bettors.

In the realm of online entertainment, where technology-driven innovation continually shapes consumer experiences, virtual sports have emerged as a captivating and transformative force.

VIRTUAL BETTING

From the bustling virtual soccer pitches to the thundering digital racetracks, virtual sports bring an array of benefits that reshape the dynamics of the gambling industry.

现代博彩者。从竞标虚拟足球场到轰鸣的数字赛马场，虚拟体育为本来分散的博彩平台带来了全新的精彩体验和重绘博彩行业的动态。

UNVEILING THE MULTITUDE OF BENEFITS VIRTUAL SPORTS BRING TO ONLINE BETTING PLATFORMS

在当今数字时代，即时满足感和可访问性是关键，虚拟体育已经巧妙地雕刻出一个迎合不断变化的现代博彩者的利基市场。

在不断演化的博彩业景观中，虚拟体育已经被证明是一种游戏改变者的现象，为两者的体验增添了诸多要因。这些虚拟事件，结合前沿技术与体育博彩的刺激，为博彩者提供了多样化和令人兴奋的新选择，为博彩行业的动态注入了新鲜活力。

持续行动与即时快感
一个最显著的优势是虚拟体育的持续性行动。与传统体育不同，博彩者不必等待赛程安排，虚拟体育提供了一种不间断的事件流，让人们能够享受即时快感，增强了参与感并激发了一种沉浸式体验。

虚拟体育打开了全新的博彩机会。在线博彩平台可以提供一系列虚拟事件，包括足球、赛马、篮球等，每种都有其独特的博彩选项。这种多样性吸引了广泛的观众群体，从体育爱好者到对博彩感兴趣的新手。各种体育项目的存在确保了总是有适合每个人博彩的事件，无论个人喜好。

减少停顿时间与缩短博彩周期
传统体育的停顿时间，即比赛或事件之间的空档，可能导致博彩活动的停滞。虚拟体育消除了这种停滞，因为新事件几乎立即在前一场之后开始。这种较短的博彩周期保持了用户的参与度，鼓励他们更多的下注。对于在线博彩平台来说，这转化为收入的增加和持续的活动流。

虚拟体育不仅为那些可能无法到达现场的人提供了一倍层的娱乐，但同时也鼓励用户在平台中保持活跃。

集成化的游戏化元素
虚拟体育已经开辟了博彩业的一片新领域，通过将游戏化元素融入在线博彩平台。游戏化增强了用户参与度，通过融入如排行榜、成就和奖励等游戏化功能。这些元素鼓励用户更多地参与和投资于平台。

可访问性和便利性
虚拟体育为更广泛的受众带来了博彩的刺激，包括那些可能无法访问实体体育赛事的个人。这种包容性吸引了那些可能无法亲身处于体育场但仍然想要体验博彩刺激的博彩者。

技术进步和进步的集成
随着技术的不断进步，已经产生了虚拟体育事件，具有惊人的真实感。高质量的图形和动画提供了沉浸式的体验，模仿了实体体育赛事的氛围。这种视觉真实感增强了虚拟体育博彩的刺激和用户参与度。观看事件的实时展开，配有评论和真实的观众反应，进一步提升了博彩者的体验。

虚拟体育在博彩业的领域中，是技术驱动创新的持续性形状消费者体验的有力表现，虚拟体育已经成为了吸引和重塑博彩者体验的吸引性和变革性力量。
Virtual sports generate a wealth of data that can be leveraged by online betting platforms to provide bettors with valuable insights and analysis. Historical performance data, player statistics, and event outcomes can help users make more informed betting decisions. This data-driven approach adds an analytical dimension to the betting experience and empowers users to strategize their bets effectively.

REDUCED EXTERNAL INFLUENCES AND MANIPULATION

One of the challenges in traditional sports betting is the potential for external influences or match-fixing that can impact the outcome of a game. Virtual sports significantly reduce this risk, as they are not subject to real-world events or external manipulation. This enhances the integrity of the betting experience, providing users with a sense of fairness and transparency.

Virtual sports enable online betting platforms to offer a wide range of betting markets beyond the standard win/lose options. This variety includes bets on specific events within the virtual game, such as the number of goals scored, player performance, and even in-game events like penalties or free kicks. These diverse betting markets cater to different preferences and strategies, giving bettors more ways to engage with the virtual sports experience.

Virtual sports provide a unique opportunity for novice bettors to learn the ropes of sports betting without the pressure of wagering on real events. Users can experiment with different strategies and gain experience in a risk-free environment. This learning curve fosters skill development, allowing newcomers to become more confident and knowledgeable bettors over time.

PRIVACY AND ANONYMITY

For individuals who may be concerned about privacy or social stigma associated with gambling, virtual sports offer a more discreet way to engage in betting activities. Users can place bets and enjoy the excitement of virtual events without revealing their identities or personal information, providing a sense of anonymity that may be appealing to some bettors.

But also, virtual sports provide online betting platforms with an avenue to create and nurture communities of like-minded bettors. Social features such as live chats, forums, and virtual events discussions enable users to connect, share insights, and discuss strategies. These online communities foster a sense of camaraderie among bettors, enhancing the overall betting experience and encouraging long-term engagement.

As the digital age continues to reshape industries, virtual sports have emerged as a transformative force in the world of online betting platforms. With their constant action, diverse betting opportunities, reduced downtime, and realistic visuals, virtual sports offer a host of benefits that cater to the desires of modern bettors.

The marriage of technology and sports betting has created an exciting and immersive experience that transcends traditional limitations, attracting a broader audience and propelling the industry into a new era of entertainment. As technology continues to evolve, the potential for virtual sports to enhance the online betting experience is boundless, promising even more innovation and excitement in the years to come.
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