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REVISTA **Casino** TURISMO DE ENTRETENIMIENTO



John Connelly, CEO at Interblock

**“ONE OF THE FASTEST
GROWING GAMING
COMPANIES IN THE WORLD”**

Cover
"ONE OF THE FASTEST
GROWING GAMING COMPANIES
IN THE WORLD"



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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 there 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,

Flabrua Infante

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UNLV's Executive Development Program

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.

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TU CAMINO
AL ÉXITO

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. Casinos across Nevada brought in \$14.8 billion in gambling revenue in 2022. But the story behind the number makes it even more shocking. 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. LVCVA 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 percent, with 89.3 percent occupancy on weekends. Average daily room rates on the Strip in December reached \$187.90, up 38 percent from 2019. For the year, average daily



In 2022, overall hotel occupancy reached 79.2, with 89.3 occupancy on weekends.



Nevada casinos have generated \$15.1 billion in revenue, 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. 2 Atlantic City isn't anywhere close. In 2022, the Strip generated \$8.24 billion in gross gaming revenue. Next on the list was 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 checked in at No. 12 with \$911 million and Downtown Las Vegas was 17th at \$787 million.

In addition to the Strip, nine of Ne-

vada's 18 submarkets had record revenue totals for 2022, including downtown Las Vegas and the combined areas that make up the Las Vegas locals casino sector. Clark County saw gaming revenue jump 11.8 percent in 2022 to almost \$12.8 billion – which would match the 2007 statewide gaming revenue total that stood as an all-time record until 2021. Downtown Las Vegas casinos recorded \$880.2 million in revenue, up 4.5 percent from a year ago, and the combined locals market topped more than \$2.9 billion, an increase of 2.4 percent.

The Boulder Strip, which includes casinos in Henderson, was the state's only region that saw gaming revenue decline in 2022, though the \$966.7 million figure was a less than a 1 percent dip from 2021's all-time record of \$967.5 million. Lawton suggested the market's revenue was hurt by the timing of slot machine revenue collections because the month ended on a weekend. "The Boulder Strip market remains very healthy," Lawton said.

Northern Nevada's major gaming markets didn't set records in 2022 but exceeded their 2021 totals. Washoe County hit more than \$1 billion for the second year in a row, a 2.4 percent in-

crease. Reno casinos grew revenue by 2.1 percent to \$743.8 million. Sparks, which saw the opening of Legends Bay Casino in August, grew gaming revenue by 3.6 percent to \$172.8 million.

WHAT ARE YOU BETTING ON IN NEVADA?

The gaming offer in Nevada is as broad as it is solid. Slot machines generated \$10 billion in revenue last year across Nevada. Slot revenue made up 67.4% of total gaming win. Penny slots generated 9.8% of total slot win with \$3.59 billion. Table games, at the same time, set an annual revenue record for the category with \$4.83 billion, a 15.3% jump in 2022 compared to 2021.

Other possibilities also contributed to the final number. Baccarat surged last year with \$1.18 billion in revenue, a massive 25.4% increase over 2021. Blackjack brought in \$1.29 billion, a 14.4% increase over 2021, craps hit \$447.2 million, a 9.7% increase, and roulette made \$456 million, an all-time record for the game.

Meanwhile, the latest regulated supply in Nevada is on the rise. Sports books generated \$446.7 million in revenue on \$8.7 billion in wagers. Revenue and wagers in 2022 broke the previous

year's record of \$445.1 million in revenue derived from \$8.1 billion in wagers.

WHAT ABOUT 2023?

The result of the last month of the fiscal year was in decline. Total revenue for June amounted to \$1.25 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.

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 that ended June 30th, 2022. This year's total was an increase of 3.2% or \$475.4 million over fiscal year 2022, which increased 37.4% over fiscal year 2021.

Michael Lawton, senior economic analyst for the Nevada Gaming Control Board, said the June comparison was a tough one. June 2022 represented the all-time high for the month and was the 10th highest monthly total in state history. "Over the next year, every monthly comparison will be up against the highest monthly total for that particular month or the second highest total for that specific month. Needless to say the comparisons are going to be the most difficult the state has ever faced", Lawton added.

The state has recorded decreases in three of the last four months, but Lawton said Nevada continued to record win amounts in excess of pre-pandemic levels in June. Statewide, total win was 19.7% or \$204.9 million over June 2019. At this point, June still represented the 28th consecutive month that the state has recorded \$1 billion in monthly gaming win.

Statewide slot win in June of \$836.2 million decreased 0.3% or \$2.6 million and coin-in of \$11.8 billion was up \$672.7 million or 6.0%. Slot win percentage was 7.07% versus 7.52% in June 2022. This is 2023's first decrease in slot win; the last decrease was in July of 2022. Revenue from slot machines reached \$836.2m, down 0.3% year-on-year. Of this total, some \$486.2m came

from multi-denomination slots, while penny slots generated \$255.2m.

Statewide, table, counter, and card games win of \$409.6 million in June decreased 6.5% or \$28.6 million and games drop of \$2.7 billion decreased 3.0% or \$84.6 million from June 2022. Blackjack drew the most revenue at \$104.0m. Baccarat win in June of \$100.5 million decreased 29.8% or \$42.7 million and baccarat drop of \$673.9 million increased 2.7% or \$17.4 million. Baccarat's hold percentage was 14.91% versus 21.81% last year.

Meanwhile, there are other indicators that are definitely on the rise. The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority pegged June's visitation at 3.4 million, 3.1% higher than June 2022. The 20.3 million visitors in the first six months of the year are 9.4% higher than 2022's 18.5 million. Visitor volume in Las Vegas during the first six months of 2023 was 20.3 million, a 9.4% increase over 18.5 million in 2022, according to the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. It's aided by convention attendance of 3.2 million, up 30.7% from 2.46 million during the first six months of 2022.

One of the explanations for the decline is in the "heart" of the casino industry in the state of Nevada: Las Vegas Strip. Gaming revenue of \$727.3 million was a 1 percent decline from 2022, primarily driven by a 29% decline in bac-

carat revenue. Control board senior economic analyst Michael Lawton said Strip gaming revenue without baccarat increased 5.7% in the month. Lawton said if the baccarat total was removed from the statewide number, gaming revenue would have increased by 1%.

As for the smaller jurisdictions, there were mixed results. Two markets in Clark County, the Boulder Strip (which includes Henderson) and downtown Las Vegas, reported double-digit gaming revenue declines. However, several Northern Nevada casino markets continued a resurgence after severe winter weather issues depressed results in the first part of the year. Washoe County as a whole grew 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.



Casinos across Nevada brought in \$14.8 billion in gambling revenue in 2022.

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.



Maureen Beddis

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 con-

vening the global industry to define tomorrow. For attendees, it is a chance to experience global gaming under one roof. They can interact with key players, discover winning solutions, and advance their businesses. For exhibitors, G2E is an opportunity to claim the spotlight as a gaming innovator, as the show sets a global stage for launching new solutions and technologies. In a phrase, G2E is where gaming gets business done.

iGaming Zone will be one of the novelties for G2E 2023. How was the conception of this space? What are the goals for the future?

Legalized gaming is expanding to new verticals in the U.S. and across the globe. This includes iGaming, and we felt it was important to showcase this growing sector. This year, we are thrilled to offer attendees a dedicated space to bring together iGaming solution providers in a focused location that explores the future of the online casino space. While this is an exciting new destination on the show floor, this will also lead attendees to our mainstay exhibitors involved in iGaming, sports betting, land-based casino gaming and more.

Sports betting is already a reality within the gaming industry in the United States, even reaching more and more states

with regulation year after year. How does this 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 innovations 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 the different 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 400 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, iGaming 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 fiscal year that just closed was a record for Nevada. How does the business adapt to the new generations? What are the future challenges for gaming and entertainment in Las Vegas?

In 2022, Nevada’s statewide commercial casino gaming revenue reached an all-time record of \$14.84 billion, up 10.5 percent compared to its previous record-setting year in 2021. In particular, Las Vegas has seen record visitation and gaming revenue in the post-pandemic era, as well as exciting new and ongoing property developments. Trends like these suggest gaming in Nevada, Las Vegas and around the country is stronger than ever and our momentum is continuing well past post-pandemic pent-up demand. The continued evolution of Las Vegas and the nationwide gaming industry to increasingly encompass sports, world-class dining and non-gaming entertainment has been a major driver of newer generations for gaming. And our industry’s expansion into sports betting and iGaming is also helping to bring in new customers across age ranges. Certainly, both new challenges and opportunities will arise in the coming months and years—and our industry is well positioned for continued success.

AGA always focuses on protecting the consumer. What factor 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 this September, the AGA and our members have been placing an emphasis across our channels on celebrate and advance responsibility 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.

»»»»For exhibitors, G2E is an opportunity to claim the spotlight as a gaming innovator, as the show sets a global stage for launching new solutions and technologies.

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 government 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.

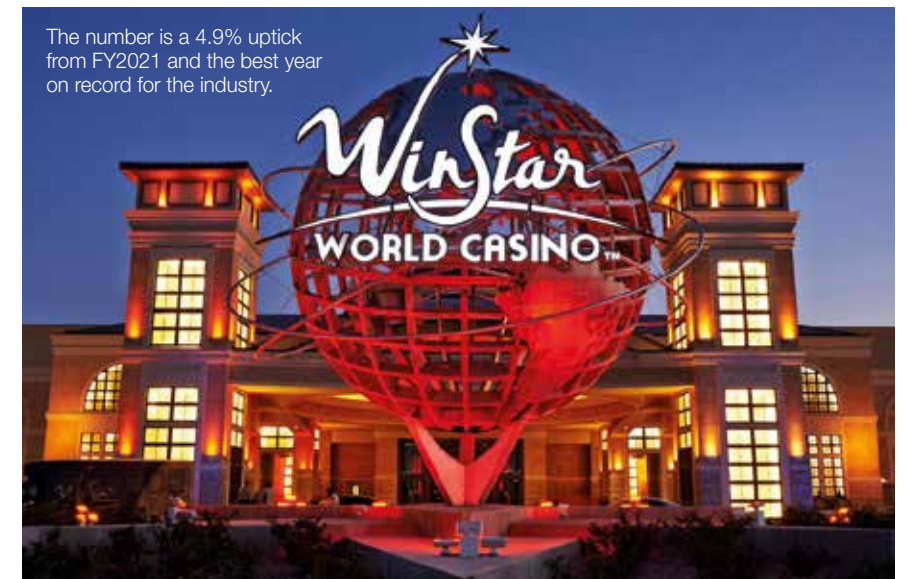
REGION BY REGION

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 \$11.9B 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



(\$0.4bn). 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.

»»»» In 2022, 246 tribal governments operating 504 facilities in 29 states generated approximately \$40.9 billion in gross revenue.

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 Wipfli, 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 opera-

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

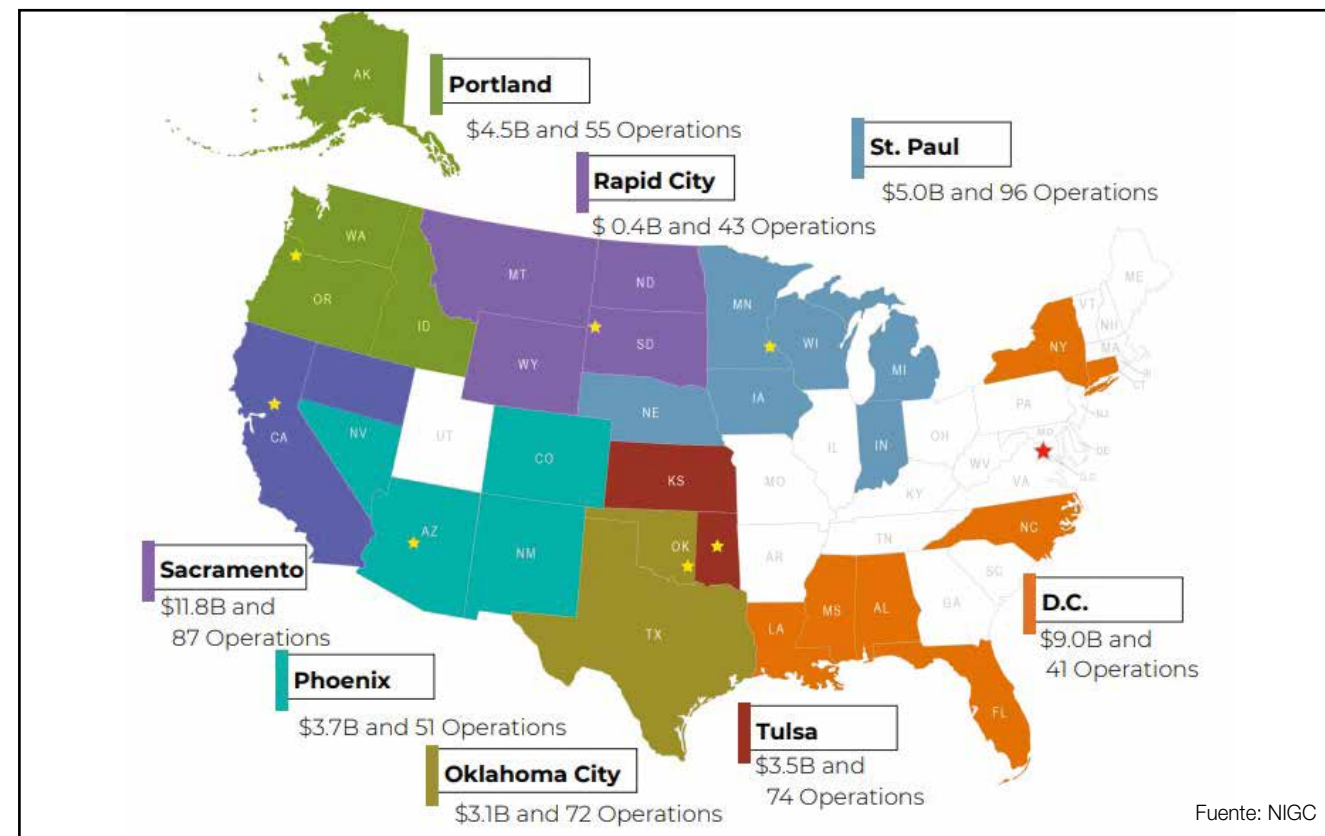
welfare payments. Of this total, tribes shared more than \$15 billion to state governments through revenue-sharing agreements codified in tribal-state gaming compacts.

In 2022, Indian gaming delivered more than 680,000 jobs for American families. Of this total, 38.7 percent, or 264,963, were direct jobs, and 61.2 percent, or 419,195, represented indirect jobs. These indirect jobs are generated from Indian gaming wages, purchasing activity, capital expansion, and related activities. As a result, Indian gaming remains among the top 20 employers in the United States.

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.



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John Connelly

“ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING GAMING COMPANIES IN THE WORLD”

The CEO at Interblock provides exclusive insights into recent company strategies and future product offerings.

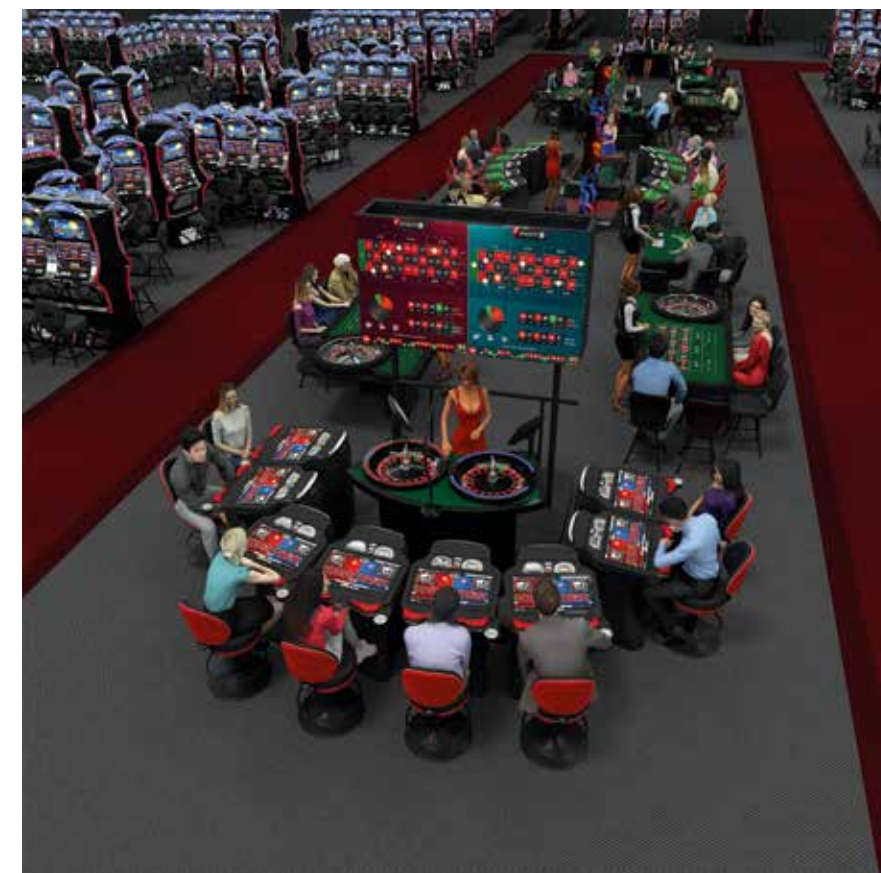
The last 15 months have been very interesting for Interblock. In July 2022, the company announced that it was acquired by Oaktree Capital Management, and a few weeks ago, the manufacturer purchased specific assets from Aruze Gaming America. John Connelly, CEO at Interblock, gave an exclusive interview 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.

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.



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

The Smart Pit 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.



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 face 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 complimentary: 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 synergistic. 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?

»»»» "It's our job to make sure that our technology and product offerings adapts to the evolving industry changes and solves the problems that the operators are facing".

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's not 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-

»»»» "Oak Tree Capital has infused well over 100 million dollars of capital to allow us to expand the company over the past eighteen months"

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: everyone 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 revolutionized the way live table game pits will operate in the future, from Craps to Roulette to Blackjack.



The Smart Pit also provides ways to increase the house advantage with more side bets.

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 also 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.



Bill Eadington

BO BERNHARD: “LEADING THROUGH CHANGE IS AT THE VERY HEART OF WHAT WE TEACH”



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 place that human eyes have ever seen. More importantly for us, it is a wonderful site to take a breath, 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

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

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 very 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 EDP over. 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 gambling studies field. What I saw previously as

»»»»Executive Development Program is held every year in November in Lake Tahoe, and everything about it is purposeful, innovative, and intensive.

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. I always leave energized – I feel like an attendee myself!

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

Topics and the final project cover the range of things that gaming leaders need to know about, including conventional things like marketing, operations, diversity, leadership, public relations, game design – but then there are also some surprise exercises that the attendees never forget, and they are sworn to secrecy not to tell the following year’s

attendees. Suffice it to say here: these exercises themselves become famous, and they challenge attendees to push their own leadership limits. Each day, after the classes end, attendees retreat with their team (from all over the world of gaming), to develop their submission to compete for the famous “trophy” awarded to the winner of the EDP team

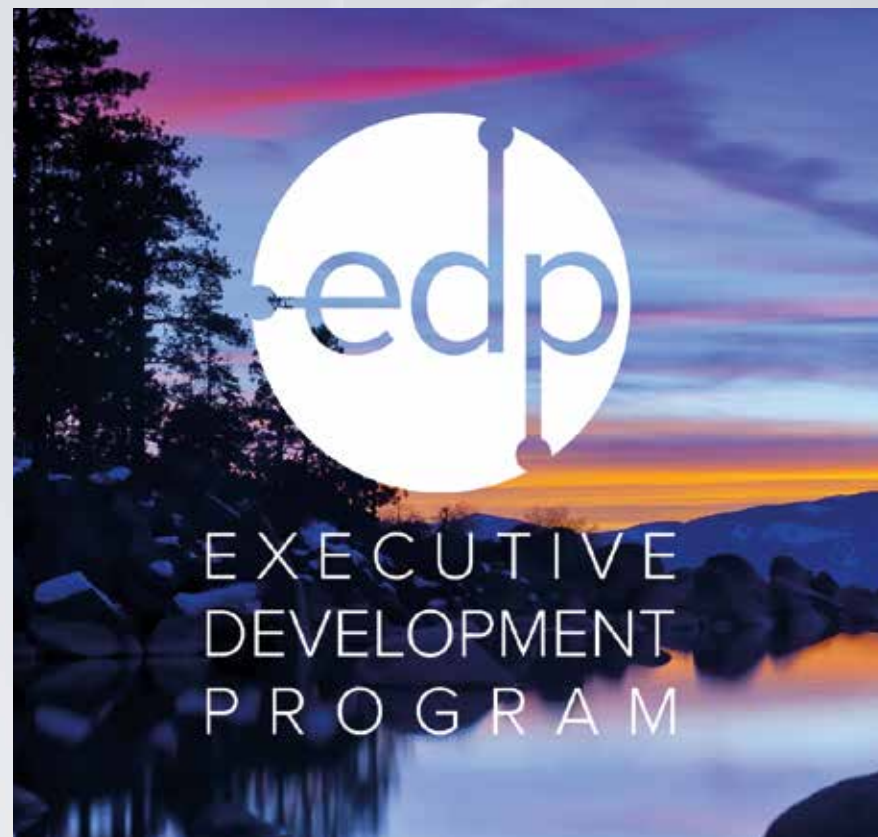
competition. You can ask any former EDP attendee which team they were on – and they will happily name it (e.g., “EDP 2015 – TEAM SIX!”) Winners brag about winning this competition on their resumes and LinkedIn posts for years, even decades.

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’ and 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 academics 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 thrusts 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 measurable success," he analyzes.

Knowledge and development also allow innovation both in professional life and in classes, such is the experience of Jim McClenahan. 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 'Emergenetics' 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 combined 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 public universities in our state to collaborate on the most important program in the gaming industry," he recounts from its beginnings to the present.

From that point of view, there is an interesting conclusion for McClenahan. "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 more focused on developing people. We spend 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 years. "In the early days, the focus was primarily on operations. This was because so few people understood how casinos were operated. The mystique 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 added 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 EDP'er 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 add-on.

"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 courses," says Morrow.

Also in EDP there is an interaction between theory and practice, like Rippee's experience. "In my capacity at the Executive Development Program (EDP), I spearhead a specialized module focusing on the intersection of innovative solutions and effective problem-solving. The session blends traditional lecture elements with interactive discussions to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Beyond the formal instructional setting, I also take on the role of mentor to the EDP teams. This allows for in-depth, one-on-one interactions where we delve into the practical applications and contextual nuances of the concepts introduced during my lecture. This multi-faceted approach provides participants not only with theoretical insights but also with actionable strategies, thereby enhancing the overall EDP experience," he indicates about that link.

In the same way, classes are generated from the same inspirations of the professors, such as McClenahan's



Scott Morrow



Jim McClenahan

aforementioned invention: 'Emergenetics'. "I help organize the event but my specific class uses a psychometric instrument called "Emergenetics" that helps leaders communicate and work with teams more effectively."

From then on, the experience has a very particular day-to-day life at EDP. "The days are the longest, biggest learning and most fun days of your life. You will be alongside senior leaders, aspiring senior leaders from all facets of the industry. One may work in a small tribal property in Georgia and one may work in Marina Bay Sands in Singapore. Both have valuable perspectives to offer to discussion with some of the most influential presenters in the industry. After a day of presentations, it's time to move to groups. Groups are constructed using individual profiles in Emergenetics to optimize performance with diverse teams. The groups will respond to an RFP that is presented on the first day and ultimately prepare a written and face to face presentation to a panel of expert judges. The winning team is announced at our closing banquet. The in class learning opportunity is fantastic but the group learning is life changing," McClenahan illustrates.

Obviously not everything at EDP is experience. There are also times for

texts. This is Lucas's proposal in pursuit of the accentuation of knowledge. "For the management courses, the focus is on how the games produce a profit and why certain policies and procedures exist. For the marketing course, the focus is on understanding how to measure the effectiveness of the marketing activities. This is often quite difficult. All of the courses feature a lecture format, but there are also case study exercises to cement the real-world relevance of the material," he explains about his classes.

EDP's advantage of having long-standing academics in the gaming industry is reflected in inflection situations. The methodology has two fundamental aspects in Feldman's concepts. "For the crisis communications class it begins with a 60-90 lecturer/interactive discussion 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 discovered about the entire spectrum of gambling 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 legislative or regulatory policies and practices," advances Feldman.

BE A STUDENT FOR LIFE

In life you never stop learning. The same thing happens in the gaming industry. 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-

mitted to my staff educational development and understanding the latest innovations and policy changes affecting the gaming industry", is Morrow's definition of accepting the challenge.

There are benefits to accepting that commitment, both among academics and for students, according to Rippee. "Being a lifelong student keeps you intellectually agile, allowing you to adapt to new challenges and technologies that may arise in your career and personal life. Continuous learning fosters a mindset of curiosity and openness, qualities that are essential for innovation and problem-solving. Finally, the pursuit of knowledge enriches your life, not only by making you more competitive professionally, but also by deepening your understanding of the world and your place in it," he says of the equation.

The advances of modernity require infinite learning. "Technology has accelerated change. Tools like Chat GPT and other large language model systems are starting to disrupt all industries. Only the lifelong learner is prepared to adapt to a world that changes so quickly. Strategies and people that don't change quickly will fail behind and are more apt to fail," McClenahan adds to the discussion.

The horizon is full of possibilities

and needs, according to Feldman. "The pursuit of truth and knowledge is a journey 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 argument 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.

ENTERTAINMENT AND HOSPITALITY

Among many, the gaming industry historically faced two essential challenges. On the one hand, the attraction of the person to a world of fun and unforgettable experiences. And on the other hand, how to make those people feel full of satisfaction, both from the moment they arrive and from that living memory that invites them to return.

McClenahan has no qualms about explaining the best way to achieve success in those subjects. "Two words: Robert Rippee. Dr. Rippee is the global leader in hospitality innovation and has been a key member of our faculty for many years. His content, along with several other leaders,

constantly changes to adapt to changing environments. Discussions on social gaming, esports, sports betting, virtual gaming have all been key topics in classes", introduces one of the academics with the longest experience in that spectrum.

Rippee, meanwhile, opens the game to a more than necessary incorporation of concepts. "The use of real-world case study simulations is the core of EDP. These simulations present these rising executives with the challenges, obstacles, and opportunities from an ever-changing gaming landscape," makes the invitation for answers.

In these classes you achieve an essential optics for today's world. "As a leader in the classroom or in industry, it is critical to be receptive to change and innovation. I enthusiastically embrace the new innovation so my students and team members can make a seamless transition to the new normal," says Morrow.

But it is not easy. "It is a lot of work. We try our best to update our teaching materials to reflect current conditions. Thank God for PowerPoint. Remaining active as a consultant is also very helpful. It keeps me current on many new concepts and practices," he points out Lucas when presenting a study plan in line with such a profound topic.



Alan Feldman



Carlos Carrion

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' by former Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval and 'The Harvard of Gaming' by Global Gaming Business, IGI houses multiple centers projects, and initiatives, including 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.

In matters of education, IGI has a very particular characteristic. "It isn't just our work that helps shape the future of gambling; we also rely on those outlooks to shape our curriculum for future professionals. We evolve what we do and how we teach as the needs of the industry evolve.

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 33rd year, the program updates annually to best reflect the current major subjects and discussions in the industry," says Abarbanel.

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 was also able to be in contact with the most important professors, 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 "Operations on the Casino Floor: Profits, Potential, and Pitfalls" 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



Patricio Herman

Asia" Opportunities in Gaming?, Paul Steelman, "Trends and New Innovations in Casino Design", Jan Jones Blackhurst, "Lessons in Business, Lessons in Community, Lessons in Gaming" along with others. This program is immediately applicable to your gaming career. The knowledge learned has been applied to all of the different roles and responsibilities that I have performed in my gaming career, and I am very fortunate to be an EDP Alumni", details about the topic book.

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,



Brett Abarbanel

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 in different markets certain operating rules had to be adapted, omnichannel presence is basic in today's business," he concludes about the experience.

Alejandro Farias, from Chile, participated in EDP in 2021. "The program is highly recommended and is clearly a contribution to the development of professionals in the industry. The combination of different cultures and work methodologies make this program a necessary requirement to advance in generating a cutting-edge gaming industry with a high customer orientation the entertainment industry in LATAM," he describes about the classes the Corporate Operations Manager at Sun Dreams.

Meanwhile, in the role of his student, Patricio Herman also highlighted the importance of the group work method-

ology. "The project that we carried out with the work group was quite enriching since each one of the members contributed the best of themselves, taking shared leadership and generating advantages in time and innovation, the participation of everyone and the team methodology is something that really it has helped me in my professional advancement", says the CEO of Dreams.

Rodrigo Fernandez, from Mexico, participated in 2017. "It was an amazing experience sharing the course with people from all over the world and extremely big companies and markets like the ones from Macao or the Indian Reservations, and the experienced speakers at the course that "they are real experts in the gaming industry with many years and very big projects achieved under their direction. It definitely helped me in forming the strategic vision for my company," he highlights about EDP.

Regarding the knowledge acquired, Fernandez does not hesitate to affirm that it was a step forward in his professional career. "After the course I formed a strategic vision for the company including growth in the land based sector but also including the entrance in the online arena that I realized in the course it is going to be very important in the future for gaming companies".



Jose Miguel Chueca



Alejandro Farias

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. His place of origin was aiming high. In addition, it was founded in 1971 by two Atlantic Records record executives, Ahmet and Nesuhi Ertegün, and for most of its history it has been managed by Steve Ross, president of

Warner Communications. So it is that the business gaze was in a permanent 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 Ballon 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, baseball and basketball. 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 all sports in July.

But the increase was not only in products. As a digital media group specializing in that region, Futbol Sites has driven



Messi arrival at Inter Miami increased all indicators.

significant traffic to Apple TV's coverage of the MLS, which has led to Apple's subscriptions increasing by 730% compared to 2023's monthly average prior to Messi joining Inter Miami. Additionally, Futbol Sites' US brand, World Soccer Talk, has seen a 48% increase in web traffic during the last month. Singlehandedly, Messi has been responsible for Apple TV's MLS Pass subscriber base increasing by 43% overall.

»»»»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

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.

The North American market was 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.

MESSI IS ALSO A FACTOR IN THE BETS

Inter Miami was a sportingly below-



The future of Florida sports betting remains tied up in the federal court system following an appeal.

average team before Messi's arrival. Inter Miami had +15000 odds to win the MLS Cup prior to the reported signing. The club is in last place in the Eastern Conference and is six points out of a playoff position.

Amidst Messi's success, BetMGM Sportsbook has also taken note (Inter Miami has odds as high as +1200 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.

»»»» 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.

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 argued that the appeals court departed from previous case 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 spree 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.

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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 cases like Florida, Vermont, Kentucky, Maine and North Carolina that are very close to starting their operations. Meanwhile, there are others in the process of regulating online gambling. Likewise, 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. Approvals 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 hail-mary 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 Houx filed House Bill 556, a follow-up to the bill (HB 4) he filed in September 2022. On Jan. 4, House Rep. Phil Christofanelli 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 gaming compacts shared between tribes and the state. This has allowed the Pueblo of Santa Ana tribe to open their own not-outright-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 NRCG do not ensure the legality of gambling on sports in Nebraska. It still



The St Louis Cardinals is leading a coalition of Missouri professional sports teams to support the legalization of sports betting within the state.

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 bet-

ting 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.



Seven operators are waiting for the launch at the home of the Kentucky Derby.

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, some-

times 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.

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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.

On July 4, Sphere lit up the global stage with a captivating display of dynamic, animated content on the venue's exterior – 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 landmark on the Las Vegas skyline.

Guy Barnett, Senior Vice President of Brand Strategy and Creative Development at Sphere Entertainment, said: “The Exosphere is more than a screen or a billboard – it is living architecture, and unlike anything that exists anywhere in the world. The Fourth of July's show provided a glimpse of the Exosphere's captivating power, and the possibilities for artists, partners, and brands to create compelling and impactful stories to connect with audiences in new ways.”

The Fourth of July production was just the beginning for the Exosphere, as it will continue to display creative activations in coordination with major events in Las Vegas, with more content planned throughout the year. In November, during the Formula 1 Las Vegas Grand Prix, Sphere will have a prime position along the circuit to showcase the Exosphere to a global audience – in-person and on TV – as well as significant exposure through planned takeovers of the Exosphere for race-related content, activations and advertising. Eventually, the Exosphere will display a wide range of artistic and branded content daily, from rituals such as sunrise and sunset, to

impactful brand campaigns, to delightful moments running at set times.

David Hopkinson, President and Chief Operating Officer of MSG Sports, who oversees global marketing and brand partnerships across Sphere Entertainment and the MSG family of companies, said: “Sphere's Exosphere is a 360-degree canvas for brand storytelling that will be seen around the world, offering our part-

ners 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.”

THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE SPHERE

To create the Sphere, the company deployed some centuries old mathematical formulas and some very 22nd century engineering and technology. Here are just a few of the formulas and mathematical laws involved in its construction.

Area of a sphere

Area of a sphere was used to calculate the square footage of the Exosphere, which features 580 000 square feet of LEDs — a creative canvas so bold and bright you can see it from space.

Volume of a sphere

Did you know you can fit the entire Statue of Liberty inside of Sphere? Volume of a sphere was used to calculate the interior square footage of the venue and maximize the size of its immersive technologies – from its 160 000 square feet LED media plane (that's 4x football fields) to the 17 385 seats inside the Bowl.

Finite Element Method

Did you know many parts of Sphere were built first in virtual reality? The company's engineers and architects used the Finite Element Method to transform equations into computer models of key structures across the venue – testing their strength and functionality before they even existed.

Geodesic math

What goes into constructing the world's largest Spherical building? A lot of triangles. If you look closely at Sphere's exoskeleton, you'll see the laws of Geodesic Math in action – where hundreds of interlocking triangles create the 360° shape and structure for this world-first immersive venue.

Law of sines

Like any global entertainment icon, Sphere would be nowhere without knowing our angles. The Law of Sines was used to calculate architectural angles across the building, from the pitch of the Atrium escalators to the curve of the archways in front of you.

Pi

At Sphere, almost every equation you'll see circles back to Pi. Defined as the ratio of the circumference of any circle to its diameter, it's how we can calculate everything from the size of our pizzas to the exact location of the best seat in the house.

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SCAN TO REGISTER!

Rick Meitzler

“WE’RE FOCUSED ON INNOVATION TO CREATE EXCEPTIONAL GAMING EXPERIENCES”

The 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.



Rick Meitzler, President and CEO at Novomatic Americas.

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 game play 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

companies, prizes for winners and will also create an initial subsidy to authorize websites to operate legally.

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.

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.

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 regu-

lations issued by the Ministry of Finance, may obtain authorization to operate fixed probability bets," the text says.

BRAZIL: AN IGAMING OPPORTUNITY

In 2020, the gross revenue of the iGaming industry was 1.9 billion euros, and by 2026 it is estimated to be 2.3 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.

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 0.91 billion euros. A figure that undoubtedly hints at a country with a strong casino gaming culture. By 2027, the predic-

tion is that there will be an increment in approximately 2.25 million users participating in online casino games. To confirm that prediction, 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 minutes 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.



Deputies approved the project in a Plenary session on September 13th.



Federal legislator Adolfo Viana proposed changes to the project text.

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 Bra-

zil: 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 developed 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.

BRIDGING ONLINE CASINOS AND SPORTS BETTING

Overall numbers show a clear difference between the casino and sports betting markets, placing sports betting well ahead of online casinos. This difference is supported by the preference of users in Brazil when choosing where to spend their online gambling money:

69 % bet in online sports betting, 38 % bet in fantasy games, 36 % bet in online casino, and 32 % bet in online bingo. The number of monthly Google searches reflects the trend towards online sports betting: 135 000 look for bookmakers, 33 100 look for sports betting, and 5400 look for online casinos.

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.



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Gaming & Technology Expo

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.

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, Nuvei, Altenar, 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 Center, in Mexico).

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ARISTOCRAT GAMING

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.

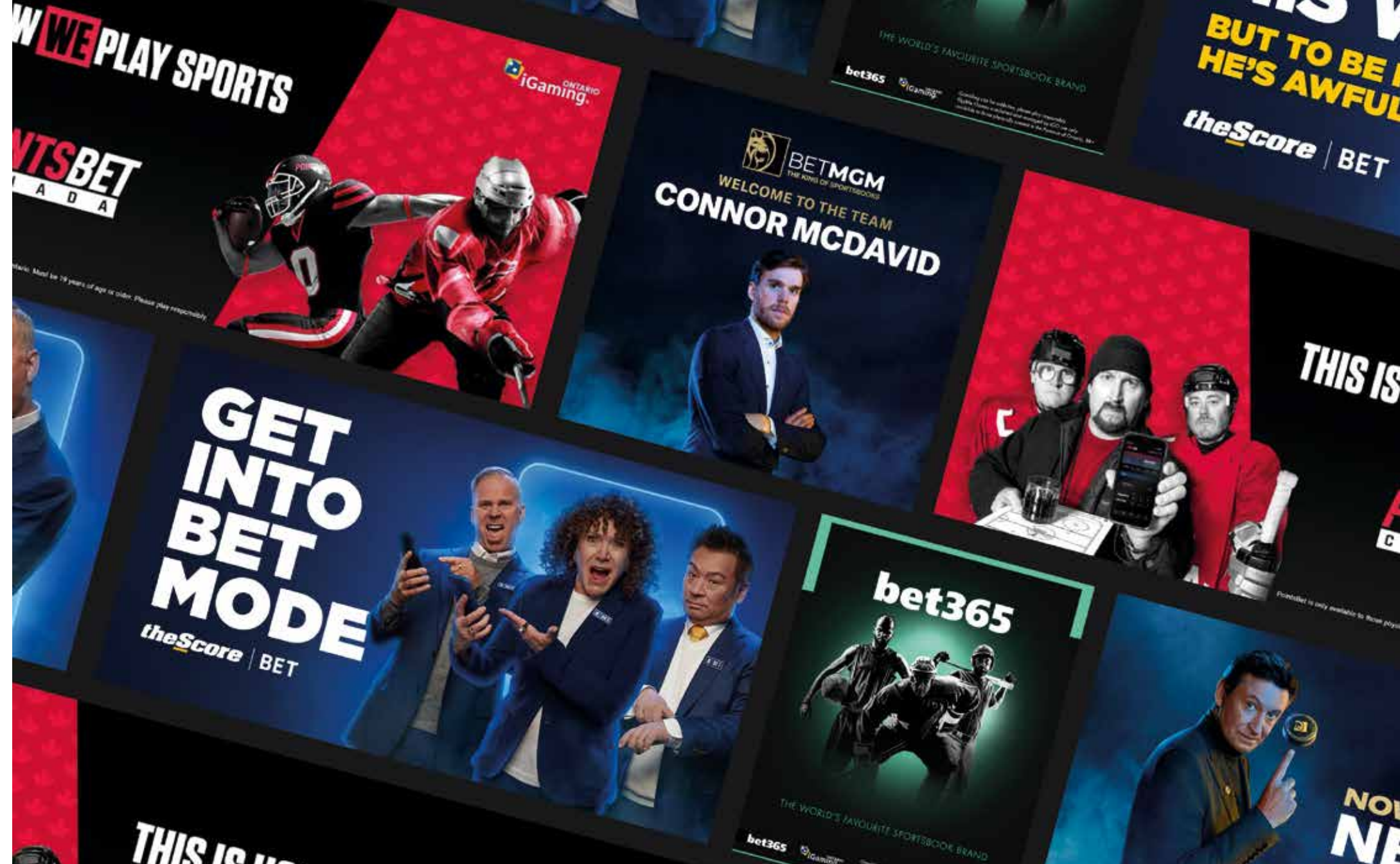
CANADA

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 ad



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 play-off 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-



Wayne Gretzky, NHL legend, in advertisements in Canada.

Minister Stuart Andrew says there is not enough evidence in the UK to change the law.



parent that there is still no consensus regarding the best course of action.

The biggest opposition voice was that of Stuart Andrew. UK's Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society stated that they had heavily relied on the available evidence and pointed out that there was limited proof suggesting that exposure to advertising alone led individuals to be affected by gambling harm. He also mentioned that if further investigation provided additional evidence indicating that advertising was causing harm, it 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 Gaskell, a consulting psychologist who runs the NHS's northern gambling service.

But contributions on limiting sports betting advertising come 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."

»»»» 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 demands of broadcasters that make substantial revenues from gambling advertising are understood to be one factor influencing government thinking in what Andrew acknowledged was "a very difficult debate at times." The government, meanwhile, points to plans to limit direct marketing to gambling customers and a voluntary ban on front-of-shirt sponsorship undertaken by the Premier League as signs that clubs are responding to the problem.

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 country'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 aired within 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 the findings of its inquiry 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 gambling regulator, 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.

"People don't like it — they feel they're inundated with advertising, they are very concerned that children are exposed and exposed regularly to ads for sports betting," committee chair and Labor MP Peta Murphy said. "There's

a concern that we are producing, if we haven't already produced, another generation of Australians who see sport and betting as 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 betting. The first started from 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 caught the attention of politicians.

This is a more than representative group for the field 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 spearheaded by NFL vice president of public policy and government affairs Jonathan Nabavi.

The coalition says it aims to implement and maintain consumer protection policies built on six core principles: sports betting should be marketed only to adults of legal betting age; sports betting advertising should not promote irresponsible or excessive gambling or degrade the consumer experience; sports betting advertisements 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 review 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.

So, on the other hand, during a North American Gaming Regulators Association meeting, regulators discussed best practices in US sports betting advertising regulation. The discussion stemmed

from Maine Gaming Control Unit executive director Milton Champion asking for help regarding advertising as the state ramps up before launching sports betting in Maine, likely later this year.

One of the fundamental axes of this need arises as a consequence of the start of a new season of the sport most loved by North Americans. As the football season approaches, sports betting marketing, particularly with promo offers, will also increase as NFL betting is the prime season for sportsbooks to acquire customers. Still, sportsbooks might be less aggressive than in previous years as the American Gaming Association rolled out new marketing standards for its members earlier this year.

Likewise, professional sports leagues including the NFL, as well as broadcast partners, unveiled the Coalition for Responsible Sports Betting Advertising this spring. Last year, sportsbooks spent \$314.6 million on national sports betting commercials, according to iSpot, a firm that measures TV advertising and audiences. The industry could be trying to limit the attention drawn to national politicians. In February, US Rep. Paul Tonko introduced federal legislation to ban sports betting ads. The discussion is just beginning, however the aforementioned movements - and many others - have the strength to consolidate the objective.



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

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 propaganda 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.

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 propelled it to new heights. In this digital

age, where convenience and accessibility are paramount, the online sports betting markets in Chile and Peru have emerged as two vibrant and dynamic hubs for sports wagering.

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 athletes 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 economies of these South American nations.

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 reshaping the sports entertainment landscape in these countries.

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.

PERU

Last August, the regulation of sports betting and online games in Peru finally 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 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 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.

International operators will find with this new regulation in Peru the legal instrument 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 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.

It is important to highlight that with the issuance of the law, 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.

»»»»“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”.

CHILE

The case is different and more complicated in Chile. On September 12th, the Supreme Court accepted a protection appeal filed by the Polla Chilena de Beneficencia and ordered the blocking of online sports betting sites after declaring them “illegal” according to the regulations of the South American country.

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 authority, which is why they are illegal according to national regulations.”

From there, the entity requested that “it be declared that the online betting systems carried out in Chile through the Internet by persons or companies not authorized by law (mentioned in this action) are illegal, and the appeal must be adopted immediately, or within the period determined by the court, the necessary measures to ensure the blocking of the online betting sites that operate in Chile and that have been indicated in this appeal.

In detail, the Supreme Court affirmed that this activity is “prohibited” in the Chilean legal system, “covering the debts contracted in said games of chance as an illicit object, as well as criminally sanctioning those who enable said activity as well as those who participate in it.”

The decision comes as Chile's Chamber of Deputies is in the middle of discussions about the bill that regulates online betting. The improvement of the regulation aims to generate a competitive market, in which different actors (both national and international) can participate, resulting in an improvement in the offer for users.



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.

By Nicolas Samohod Rivarola and Mario Vidal Olcese

REGULATION OF SPORTS BETTING AND ONLINE GAMES IN PERU

International operators will find with this new regulation in Peru the legal instrument 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.



Nicolas Samohod Rivarola, Director.
Mario Vidal Olcese, Founding Partner.

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 1999 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.

International operators will find with this new regulation in Peru the legal instrument 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 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.

In Peru, the regulations are executive in nature and expressly determine the detail and development of the basic principles of the law of the sector, therefore it is not expected that the regulation imposes or contains greater restrictions than those already declared in the law (this would not be possible).

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.

»»»» *“The new norm has largely transposed the legal structure under which the sports betting activity in fixed establishments within the country”.*

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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 touch points, 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.



The goal is to create a unified ecosystem where players can move effortlessly between different platforms.

»»»»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. This



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.

uniformity not only fosters brand loyalty but also ensures that players can enjoy a tailored experience regardless of the platform they choose.

»»»» *Omnichannel implementation places the player at the center of the experience, allowing them to interact with the casino brand through their preferred channels.*

PERSONALIZATION AND DATA UTILIZATION

Omnichannel strategies empower casinos to gather data from various sources, enabling them to better understand player behavior, preferences, and spending patterns. With this data in hand, casinos can personalize offers, rewards, and recommendations for individual players. For example, a player who frequently enjoys slot games online might receive offers for similar games upon visiting a physical casino. This personalized approach enhances player engagement and satisfaction.

By integrating physical and digital channels, casinos open up opportuni-

ties for cross-promotion. A player who typically visits a physical casino might receive incentives to explore the online platform, and vice versa. This synergy not only expands the casino's reach but also introduces players to a wider array of gaming options.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

From an operational standpoint, om-

nichannel solutions streamline processes and reduce redundancies. Instead of managing separate systems for different channels, casinos can centralize operations, leading to cost savings and improved efficiency. This consolidation also allows for real-time updates and consistent communication across all channels.

Omnichannel loyalty programs reward players for their engagement regardless of the platform. Whether a player accumulates points by playing slots in a casino or poker online, these points contribute to a single loyalty account. This approach incentivizes players to explore different avenues while reaping the benefits of their loyalty.

MEETING EVOLVING PLAYER EXPECTATIONS

As technology advances, player expectations evolve in tandem. Modern players seek convenience, choice, and a tailored experience. Omnichannel strategies cater to these expectations, offering a comprehensive and adaptable platform that aligns with players' changing preferences.



OMNICHANNEL AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

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.



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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.

»»»»As the casino industry continues to evolve in response to technological advancements, the implementation of omnichannel strategies emerges as a transformative approach.

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.



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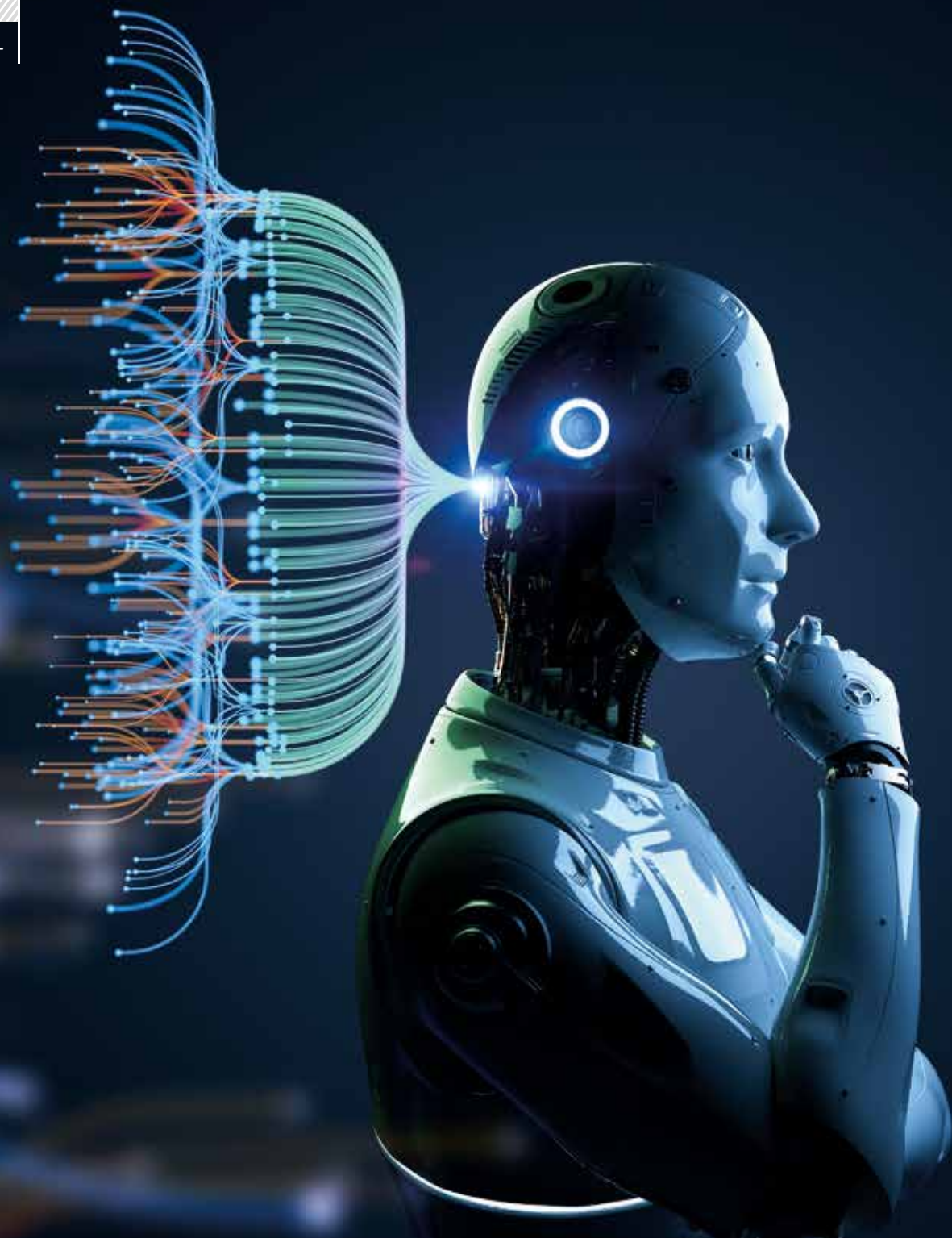


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ChatGPT

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 1997, IBM's supercomputer Deep Blue defeated reigning world chess champion Gary Kasparov, becoming the first computer to win a match against a world champion. With 10 123 possible moves in a typical game of chess, the game's complexity made the win a landmark moment in the development of artificial intelligence (AI).

In 2016, Google DeepMind's Alpha-Go program beat world Go champion Lee Se-Dol in three out of four match-

es, with 250 150 possible moves in an average game, Go is even more complex than chess.

And 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-

»»»»In November 2022, OpenAI released ChatGPT, letting anyone harness the power of AI for calculating odds, and quickly solving tasks of immense complexity.



AI 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 ver-

sion 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.



ChatGPT is only as useful or creative as the user's dedication to prompt engineering.

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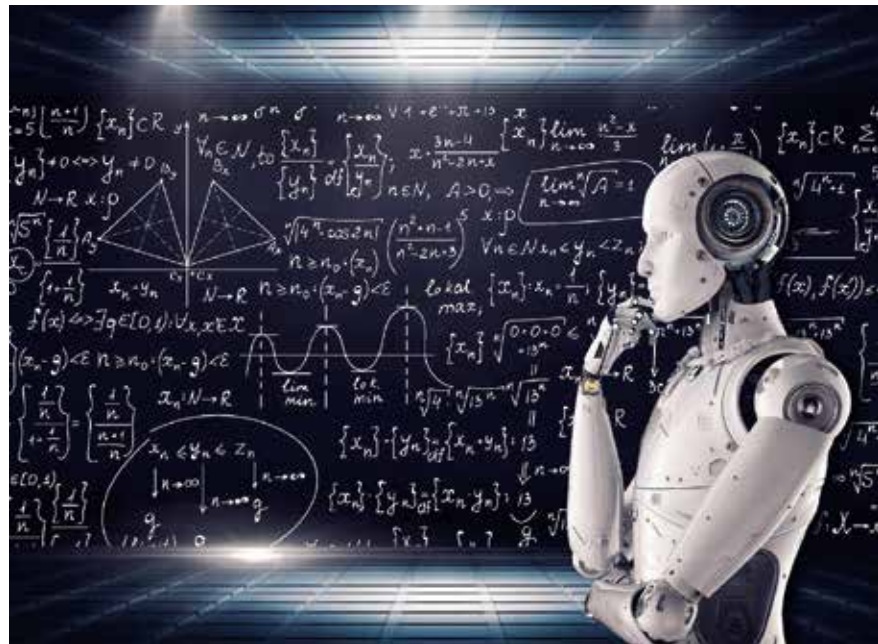
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AI can analyze large amounts of data in real-time to provide bettors with up-to-date information and insights about teams, and events.

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 recent form to make an informed prediction for their upcoming match."

"In their previous Champions

League encounters, AC Milan and Napoli have played against each other a total of 6 times, with AC Milan winning 3 times, Napoli winning twice, and one match ending in a draw. Looking at their recent form in Italy's Serie A league, AC Milan has had a mixed run

»»»»Based on the history of two given teams in a match and other factors, ChatGPT can predict which of them will come on top.

of results, winning only one of their last five matches, losing twice, and drawing twice. Napoli, on the other hand, has won three times and lost twice in their last five matches. Considering AC Milan's recent struggles and Napoli's stronger recent form, we might predict that Napoli has a slight advantage going into the match on April 12, 2023. However, the outcome of any football match can be unpredictable, and it is difficult to say for certain who will come out on top. We will have to wait and see how both teams perform on the day of the match," added the AI-powered chatbot.

Not a very strong recommendation, and furthermore, perhaps not very different from what a layperson — let

alone a habitual sports bettor — would decide, given the information involved. Here, the utility of ChatGPT comes in more as an ability to gather data.

And, after a more extended conversation, ChatGPT changed its prediction: "Based on the analysis of the teams' recent performance, head-to-head record, and home-field advantage, as well as my machine learning algorithms, I predict that tonight's match between AC Milan and Napoli is likely to be a close and competitive game. However, if I had to make a prediction, I would give AC Milan 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 wins in their last ten away games. That said, predicting the outcome of a football match is always difficult, and there are many variables that can affect the final result, including injuries, tactics, and individual performances on the day. So, while AC Milan may be the slight favorite in this match, there is always a chance that Napoli could pull off an upset and secure a victory," concluded ChatGPT.

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 depend 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 something 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 predictions 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.

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 strategies. 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 you profit no matter who wins.

Arb betting is traditionally the purview of sports fanatics with superior math skills, who can quickly scan spreadsheets and pick out the sets of odds that work in their favor. Now, though, 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, but with the proper coaxing and the right API, it could fetch live odds during matches to help bettors pit their wits against the bookies' line.

HOW CAN CASINO GAMERS USE CHATGPT TO PLAY?

While ChatGPT's sports 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 (splitting 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 champion 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.

AI could have a similar application for poker, though trying to use it to play slots, roulette, or baccarat would be misguided. For those, the best use of AI would be to quickly search for casinos with high-RTP games and favorable bonuses. However, ChatGPT does stop short when it comes to what it regards as "unethical" behavior, meaning it'll stop short of leading bonus abusers to easy targets.

WHAT CAN CASINOS AND SPORTSBOOKS DO?

The AI arms race leaves casinos with no choice: fight fire with fire. Luckily, high-quality sports betting and casino platform software often comes with the modules companies need to block scammers from taking advantage of them.

With the right AI-powered security tools, they can analyze unnatural betting patterns, segment players according to suspicious behavior, take necessary actions, analyze traffic for spikes in volume and multiple "bettors" coming from the same IP address or flag bot-type behavior.

Bot-type behavior includes actions that are suspiciously smooth or efficient, like placing large numbers of bets in a row or placing a bet immediately after logging on.



ChatGPT, as an AI-powered chatbot, can help sports bettors in several ways.



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 online betting platforms. From providing constant action to attracting a wider audience, virtual sports are re-

shaping the industry in ways unimaginable just a few years ago.

In the realm of online entertainment and gambling, where technology-driven innovation continually shapes consumer experiences, virtual sports have emerged as a captivating and transformative force. These digitally simulated sporting events, meticulously designed to mirror the excitement of real-world competitions, have garnered immense attention for their unique ability to blend the thrill

of sports with the allure of betting. The convergence of advanced technology, data analytics, and the innate human desire for competition has resulted in an entertainment landscape that transcends geographical limitations, time zones, and even the traditional boundaries of sports seasons. 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. From the bustling virtual soccer pitches to the thundering digital racetracks, virtual sports bring an array of benefits that enrich the online betting experience and reshape the dynamics of the gambling industry as a whole.

CONTINUOUS ACTION AND INSTANT GRATIFICATION

One of the most significant advantages of virtual sports for online betting platforms is the availability of 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 broader 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.

Traditional sports are often affected by external factors such as weather conditions, player injuries, or scheduling conflicts. These uncertainties can disrupt betting plans and result in unex-

pected outcomes. Virtual sports, on the other hand, are not influenced by external factors, ensuring a more controlled and predictable environment for both bettors and operators. This predictability can enhance the overall betting experience, as users can make more informed decisions based on historical performance data.

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

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 phys-

ically 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.

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 not only add an extra layer of entertainment but also encourage users to remain active and invested in the platform over the long term.



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.



The convergence of advanced technology, data analytics, and the innate human desire for competition has resulted in an entertainment landscape that transcends geographical limitations.

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 bring the thrill of betting to a wider audience, including individuals who may not have access to physical sports events”

ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN LIVE EVENTS

In traditional sports, there can be periods of downtime between matches or seasons. Virtual sports fill this gap by providing continuous action and entertainment even during the off-season of various sports. This consistent engagement keeps users active on the platform, ensuring that they remain connected and invested in the betting experience year-round.

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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