



EBE Intel

Report 2017

Winners



- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| • BetConstruct | • NetEnt |
| • deltaDNA | • Playtech |
| • FAST TRACK | • Pragmatic Play |
| • Inspired | • SBTech |
| • Kambi | • Sportradar |

A NEW LIVE EXPERIENCE ON MOBILE HAS ARRIVED



NetEnt proudly launches a unique live casino experience to your players, whether they're at home or on the go. We've designed it with real players to ensure the ultimate entertainment experience.

Its easy-to-use interface and outstanding streaming solution, synchronizes audio and video to guarantee seamless graphics and sound. Players can enjoy landscape or portrait mode, with the freedom to view the felt or video stream during the game.

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NETENT **live**

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A night of celebration

Thank you to our headline sponsor



More than 500 of the industry's elite gathered at The Hurlingham Club in London for this year's prestigious EGR B2B Awards in June.

Comedian Dominic Holland kicked off the evening's proceedings with a short routine ahead of the glittering awards ceremony, which saw 37 accolades handed out.

The night's biggest winners included Playtech which fought off stiff competition to win the coveted platform of the year award – one of five prizes for the supplier giant.

In addition to the headline gong, Playtech also topped the multi-channel supplier, poker software, poker network and bingo supplier categories in what was a successful night for the London-listed company.

Shimon Akad, COO, Playtech, said: "It's always a great honour to win an award at the EGR Awards, but to receive a record five trophies is fantastic, and great recognition for all the hard work our employees put in in order to make each and every Playtech product the leading product in its category."

Kambi also had a good evening, with the Stockholm-listed firm winning the prestigious sports betting supplier award – a feat which ended a run of seven consecutive wins for OpenBet.

"We are delighted to collect the mantle of best sportsbook supplier after the dominance of OpenBet in recent years,"

Kambi chief commercial officer Ian Freeman said.

Elsewhere, Evolution picked up the live casino supplier gong for the eighth year in a row, edging out six other nominees.

NetEnt was another of the night's big winners, with three awards for RNG casino supplier, innovation in RNG casino software and mobile supplier. "It is hugely satisfying to once again have our achievements identified by the industry and our peers at the EGR B2B Awards," Per Eriksson, CEO of NetEnt, said.

Meanwhile, Square in the Air won the marketing and PR provider of the year award for a fourth consecutive year.

The slot provider of the year gong went to Yggdrasil Gaming for the second year running, with the supplier beating nine other nominees.

Gamevy was also a second time winner, as it retained the skills games supplier gong it first won last year.

Other winners included innovation in sports betting software which went to Betgenius, while IWG won the online lottery supplier category and GBG took home the award for fraud and compliance solution.

From everyone at EGR, congratulations to the shortlisted companies and winners, all of which are honoured in this special report.

Melanie Dayasena-Lowe,
managing editor



Acquisition and retention partner

Qubit

NIAMH GALLAGHER, HEAD OF EVENT CONTENT, EGR; COLLECTOR: DEBBIE ROBSON, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER, EGR; HOST: DOMINIC HOLLAND

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Affiliate software

NetRefer

BRAD ALLEN, EDITOR, *EGR NORTH AMERICA*; COLLECTOR: TIM BUTTIGIEG, COO



Corporate services provider

BDO

COLLECTORS: JOHN BARKER, PARTNER, HEAD OF BETTING AND GAMING AND KIERAN STORAN, PARTNER



Best customer service

BetConstruct

COLLECTOR: GEORGE VOYATZIS, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR



Data analytics partner

deltaDNA

COLLECTOR: MARK ROBINSON, CEO



Bingo supplier

Playtech

COLLECTOR: GARY KEANEY, DIRECTOR OF BINGO PRODUCTS



Datacentre of the year

Continent 8

COLLECTORS: PETER WILLIAMS, CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER AND GRAHAM FOSTER, ACCOUNT DIRECTOR



Fraud and compliance solution

GBG

PRESENTER: SAM COMPAGNONI, GROUP COMMERCIAL MANAGER, EGR; COLLECTORS: PETER MURRAY, HEAD OF GAMING, ADAM BOYLE, HEAD OF NEW BUSINESS, ELLY BERRILL, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER AND MICHAEL HUGHES, CLIENT DIRECTOR



Innovation in mobile

Quickspin

COLLECTORS: DARREN STEPHENSON, ACCOUNT MANAGER, EMILIE ZAMPONI, ACCOUNT MANAGER AND PAUL MYATT, COO



Innovation in payments solution

Secure Trading

COLLECTOR: LAURENT DHAAYER, MANAGING DIRECTOR



Innovation in RNG casino software

NetEnt

COLLECTORS: DIANE CROOKES, KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER, SIMON HAMMON, CHIEF PRODUCT OFFICER AND STEVEN PAYNE, REGIONAL BUSINESS MANAGER



Innovation in slot provision

Red Tiger Gaming

SPONSOR: ULLE SKOTTLING, COO, VIDEOSLOTS (SECOND FROM LEFT); COLLECTORS: GAVIN HAMILTON, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CARL EJLERTSSON, ACCOUNT DIRECTOR



Innovation in sports betting software

Betgenius

COLLECTOR: JACK DAVISON, MANAGING DIRECTOR



In-play betting software

SBTech

COLLECTORS: GABI PITILEAC, DEVELOPMENT AND ACCOUNT MANAGER AND LETIZIA ANGELO, GLOBAL COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR



IT supplier

Ardena

COLLECTOR: NEIL TRUBY, MANAGING DIRECTOR



Live casino supplier

Evolution Gaming

COLLECTOR: MARCUS HUBER, HEAD OF KEY ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT



Live streaming supplier

Betradar

COLLECTOR: DANIEL FENNER, GLOBAL DIRECTOR AUDIO VISUAL, DIRECTOR OF SALES



Marketing and PR provider

Square in the Air

COLLECTORS: DAVID BARTRAM, ACCOUNT DIRECTOR, ROBIN HUTCHISON, DIRECTOR, OLLIE DREW, DIRECTOR AND BEN CLEMINSON, DIRECTOR



Mobile gaming software

Microgaming

COLLECTOR: BEN WOOD, SALES MANAGER



Mobile services provider

Element Wave

COLLECTOR: BEN CLEMINSON, DIRECTOR, SQUARE IN THE AIR



Mobile supplier

NetEnt

COLLECTORS: DIANE CROOKES, KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER, SIMON HAMMON, CHIEF PRODUCT OFFICER AND STEVEN PAYNE, REGIONAL BUSINESS MANAGER



Multi-channel supplier

Playtech

COLLECTORS: GARY KEANEY, DIRECTOR OF BINGO PRODUCTS, OREN HURY, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR AND RUAIRI BOYLE, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR



Online lottery supplier

IWG

COLLECTORS: SIMON BUCKNALL, COO AND RHYDIAN FISHER, CEO



Payments company

Zimpler

COLLECTOR: SVANTE SAHLSTRÖM, CCO



Platform of the year

Playtech

COLLECTORS: LUCY OWEN, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR, ROSS POOLEY, NETWORK MARKETING MANAGER, OREN HURY, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR, GARY KEANEY, DIRECTOR OF BINGO PRODUCTS AND RUAIRI BOYLE, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR (SECOND FROM RIGHT)



Poker network

Playtech

COLLECTOR: OREN HURY, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR



Poker software

Playtech

COLLECTOR: RUAIRI BOYLE, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR



Recruiter of the year

Pentasia

COLLECTOR: ALASTAIR CLELAND, MANAGING DIRECTOR



RNG casino supplier

NetEnt

COLLECTOR: SIMON HAMMON, CHIEF PRODUCT OFFICER



Services rising star

Easy Payment Gateway

COLLECTOR: ALEX CAPURRO, CEO AND FOUNDER



Skill games supplier

Gamevy

COLLECTORS: HELEN WALTON, MARKETING DIRECTOR AND MAREK VENTUR, GAME DEVELOPER



Slots provider

Yggdrasil

SPONSOR: DANIEL HANSEN, HEAD OF GAMES, VIDEOSLOTS (SECOND FROM LEFT);
COLLECTORS: ANDREW PEGLER, CCO GIBRALTAR, ANTONIA ANDERSSON, CCO MALTA,
KRZYSZTOF OPAKAI, CPO, CHRIS MIFSUD, CSO, WAWRZYNIEC SOSNOWSKI, CTO AND
HENDRIK BLAAUW, CREATIVE DIRECTOR



Software rising star

Pragmatic Play

COLLECTOR: YOSSEI BARZELY, HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



Sport betting supplier

Kambi

COLLECTORS: KRISTIAN FRIBERG, HEAD OF KEY ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT AND MAX
MELTZER, SALES DIRECTOR



Sports data provider

Betradar

COLLECTOR: ALEX AMON, HEAD OF ODDS



Virtual sports supplier

Inspired Entertainment

COLLECTOR: STEVE ROGERS, CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER, DIGITAL GAMES



White label partner

Fast Track

COLLECTORS: SIMON LIOZÉN, CEO AND CO-FOUNDER, CHRIS HIRST, DIRECTOR
AND HANS DAHLGREN, DIRECTOR



* thank you for recognising that a flexible, highly scalable and premium fully managed service is the most effective operational model for operators wishing to compete in regulated markets.

Featuring: *Playtech*

Leaders of the pack

Playtech consider the main factors driving the firm's success, and what they are doing to remain leaders within the industry

EGR Intel: What have been the decisive factors in Playtech's success and awards recognition in the past few years?

Playtech: It is a combination of many factors but ultimately it comes down to quality, innovation and generating record results for our licensees and the ultimate gaming experience for their players.

We strive to produce the best quality products across our portfolio which is the largest and most comprehensive of its kind anywhere in the industry.

Playtech ONE is the most recent example of this, and arguably the industry's biggest innovation in many years.

The last 12 to 36 months has seen the company drive further innovation and enhancements to our comprehensive suite of pioneering software tools, features and functionality to ensure we continue to lead the industry in delivering the best omni-channel platform product on the market – a seamless

anytime, anywhere gaming experience across any product, any channel and any device through one account and one wallet.

This innovation has been across all areas of our product suite from the platform that powers Playtech ONE to the content, services and individual products that operate within and are enabled by this platform.

“We strive to produce the best quality products across our portfolio which is the largest and most comprehensive of its kind anywhere in the industry”

EGR Intel: What aspects of Playtech are you looking towards enhancing in the near future?

Playtech: We are continually enhancing our products, be it on a platform/Playtech ONE level or extending to the omni-channel capabilities we already have with licensees; on a content level with new and exciting games and never-before-seen games features; or on a service level which we pride ourselves on when working closely with our licensees

Playtech ONE – The ultimate gaming experience

Powered by our robust back-end platform, our Playtech ONE omni-channel solution delivers a flawless anytime, anywhere and on any device gaming experience, covering every vertical and all platforms; retail, online, mobile and tablet.

For Playtech, a true omni-channel offering is not just an integrated solution connecting products or games delivered to customers, or the same games offered across different channels. Instead, omni-channel is a comprehensive solution that shares the same infrastructure and CRM (through our intuitive IMS platform) across retail, web and mobile environments, allowing a seamless journey between different channels, products and

platforms as well as cross-platform functionality improving the offering to players and creating an eco-system that incentivises players to remain loyal to operators.

The one, unified CRM and infrastructure provides operators with a single view across all customer activity and allows them to tailor promotions and bonuses across all channels and verticals. It also provides operators with the ability to deliver a fully personalised offering and successfully target players through cross-product marketing, thus delivering the ultimate gaming experience for players. This is something that our competitors are unable to match.

Award-winning technology

Our award-winning Information Management Solution (IMS) technology sets us apart as the most powerful and successful software supplier in the industry, providing all the necessary tools to successfully run and manage every aspect of a licensee's business.

This complete, configurable and fully-integrated suite of services intuitively guides the management of an operator's player base, enabling them to optimise marketing spend, maximise cross-sell and conversion potential, and leverage player loyalty and value.

IMS enables our licensees to access all the elements of our unique configurable omni-channel capabilities allowing play-

ers to seamlessly transition across games and platforms via a single account and single wallet, while providing operators with simple third party integration and full visibility and control of the entire player lifecycle.

IMS unifies Playtech products across all channels, including retail, presenting operators with a single account overview and allowing them to streamline and optimise marketing spend, maximise cross-sell and conversion potential, leverage player loyalty and value and increase revenues by automating key aspects of the player journey.

There is no equivalent to IMS – gaming's most powerful omni-channel enabler.

and developing products in close collaboration with them.

One specific area will be sports, where you will see a greater emphasis on enhancing the products we have and unifying them to deliver an even greater proposition. You will begin to see this coming through towards the end of this year and in the first quarter of 2018.

Crucially, the end of last year and the beginning of 2017 saw us sign renewal agreements with all our major licensees, so now it is a question of working closely with them and all our other customers on delivering even greater results through our best performing products.

EGR Intel: What emerging gambling markets are Playtech looking towards entering?

Playtech: We look at any and every market that is regulating or considering regulation. At present, there are a number in the process of entering regulation, considering regulating in the future and examining the best ways possible, as well as several territories that are in the early days of regulating and finding their feet.

In every case we are present, particularly in the very early stages where we work closely with regulators to share best practice, our experiences and examples of how other countries have approached and successfully adopted a dot.country model.

We have recently sent a senior delegation to Brazil, for example, where the government and various organisations there are exploring the best ways to regulate if the country passes the necessary laws. There is a long way to go until Brazil regulates,

however we pride ourselves on being leaders in regulated markets and have a long and successful heritage in successfully entering and growing in those markets. Many stakeholders are therefore particularly interested in learning from our experiences. ♦

Playtech ONE innovation: Examples from the last 12 months

The last 12 months have seen us enhance existing, and develop many new, platform features including re-engineering our Golden Chip Bonus functionality for casino and live casino licensees. This gives licensees the ability to configure the free bet Golden Chip and tailor it to specific marketing and campaign events. We have also:

- Further developed advanced platform tools including bonusing, messaging, personalisation and content delivery
- Intuitive key services: player management, financial, fraud, payment, communication, regulation support and marketing
- Omni-channel gaming: Development and deployment of Tiki Paradise and Davinci's Vault, the industry's first two complete omni-channel games with 'unlockable' features that reward players with enhanced features, bonuses and free spins as more channels are played – supported by our robust back-end technology capabilities
- Worked closely with the UK Gambling Commission and our licensees to ensure Reality Check processes were developed, implemented and integrated into our platform and systems ahead of schedule
- Key strategic partner agreements: Added Captain Up! and Featurespace platform capabilities to offer our licensees an even more comprehensive service



Yossi Barzely

◆ Head of business development

◆ Pragmatic Play

Yossi Barzely is head of business development at Pragmatic Play. He joined Pragmatic almost two years ago, coming into the industry from the entertainment and international business arena. He has multiple degrees in business, culture and Chinese. He considers the most important elements of sales to be personal skills and a quality product.

Featuring: *Pragmatic Play*

A rising star

Yossi Barzely, of Pragmatic Play, reflects on the vision behind Pragmatic, and the company's growth

Pragmatic Play is one of the fastest growing providers of digital casino games on mobile and desktop. We started small, with a passion for our players and partners, and a commitment to continuously improving our games and experiences.

In the two years since, we have expanded rapidly; we now have a healthy family of experienced professionals who work day in, day out to deliver premium entertainment that responds to operators' needs. We believe in accessibility, flexibility and customisation.

From starting out, our portfolio has now grown to more than 80 titles, including hits like Queen of Gold, Wolf Gold, Panther Queen, Hot Safari, 8 Dragons and many more. We're now launching two new games a month, despite our comparatively small team, with some great titles about to be released.

We launched Pragmatic Play with a simple vision: to build great products and make it easy for customers to get them live. We made integration fast and painless, aiming to be compatible with the most common APIs in the industry. Then, as a priority, we focused on building a diverse games portfolio that we could be proud of, creating a high-volume pipeline of games that operators could provide to players with as few barriers to entry as possible.

Being a young company, we're free of technical debt and able to react quickly to customer needs. In reality, this means that if a customer wants a new tool or we realise there's a need for a new product, we're able to respond faster than many of our competitors. We've built our company around a mobile-first world, with compatibility in mind for all operating systems and devices. So everything we offer is user-friendly from the back

office to making the most of small screen real-estate on mobile when playing our games.

We have stuck to our ambitious overall vision, making the necessary small-scale tweaks along the way as we attentively seek, listen to and incorporate feedback from our customers. As a smaller brand with big plans, it's not always easy to make yourself heard, but we believe our products have helped us to cut through. We're thrilled to be receiving so much recognition from the industry for this today.

We remain convinced that a continuous cycle of innovation and creativity is essential to continue meeting our customers' evolving needs, and providing players with the best possible experience.

"We're now launching two new games a month, despite our comparatively small team, with some great titles about to be released"

Yossi Barzeli | Pragmatic Play

Our roadmap today is as strong and as reliable as ever, offering over 99.99% uptime and 24/7 technical support. We are also now licensed in multiple regulated markets – including the UK, Malta, Italy, Romania and others. We have invested heavily in research, understanding player behaviour, and tracking down the industry's best talent. Today we have around 75 employees dedicated to Pragmatic Play's success and we're a very close team.

We are honoured to add the Rising Star award to our trophy case. We've now won four awards in just over a month, and it's meant a lot to everyone in the company. We pride ourselves on both our service levels and the strength of our products, and we believe that the best is yet to come from Pragmatic Play. ◆



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Per Eriksson

◆ CEO
◆ NetEnt

Per Eriksson is CEO of NetEnt, the leading digital entertainment company which provides gaming solutions to the most successful casino operators across the globe. With NetEnt since 2012, Eriksson has worked within the technology industry for more than 26 years.

Featuring: *NetEnt*

Breaking ground

Per Eriksson, of NetEnt, reflects on how innovation is a major driving force behind the company's ambition to bring a new dimension to the casino experience

NetEnt displayed its prowess at the EGR B2B 2017 Awards, claiming a hat-trick of titles in the mobile supplier, innovation in RNG casino software, and RNG casino supplier categories.

As a forward-thinking company, we are determined to bring new ideas to the industry and add exciting new dimensions to gaming to fulfil our goal of bringing the ultimate entertainment experience to the player. This year was no different, as we continued to make significant improvements to our product offering to keep us one step ahead of the competition.

Today, we manage an industry-leading portfolio featuring hundreds of in-demand slots. These include incredibly successful IP and in-house games such as Motorhead™, with sensational bonus features, Red Riding Hood™ and Aloha! Cluster Pays™, which have performed exceptionally well, and the blockbuster production Warlords: Crystals of Power™ with its stunning 3D artwork.

Combining these new releases with high-flying classics such as Starburst™ and Gonzo's Quest™ continues to be a winning strategy. Another key success factor is the focus on mobile that has placed us at the forefront of mobile gaming. Mobile accounts for more than 40% of our total portfolio gamewin – an improvement of more than 20% in a single year. This is a significant increase that is a result of our continuous investment in what we offer our customers and the mobile experience for their players. Our award-winning mobile product was further strengthened in H1 2017 with ground-breaking innovations, both in the RNG and live casino portfolio.

NetEnt is a market leader in mobile gaming, setting precedents and standards for game UI and design. We have always been focused on delivering the most intuitive mobile experience, which has

recently been enhanced further with releases such as the Mobile Script Plugin, allowing for a deeper level of operator-to-player engagement through messaging and communication possibilities. A key part of mobile script plugins are quick deposit functions, which allow the player to deposit money without logging out of the game session. This is vitally important in not breaking the flow of the player's journey, and leads to increased session length.

Innovation can only be effective when combined with cutting-edge expertise in technology, design and mathematics, but also alongside far-reaching knowledge about regulations, the market, customers and players.

With years of experience to lean on, along with our enthusiasm for creativity, we look to design the highest standard of content for our players and customers.

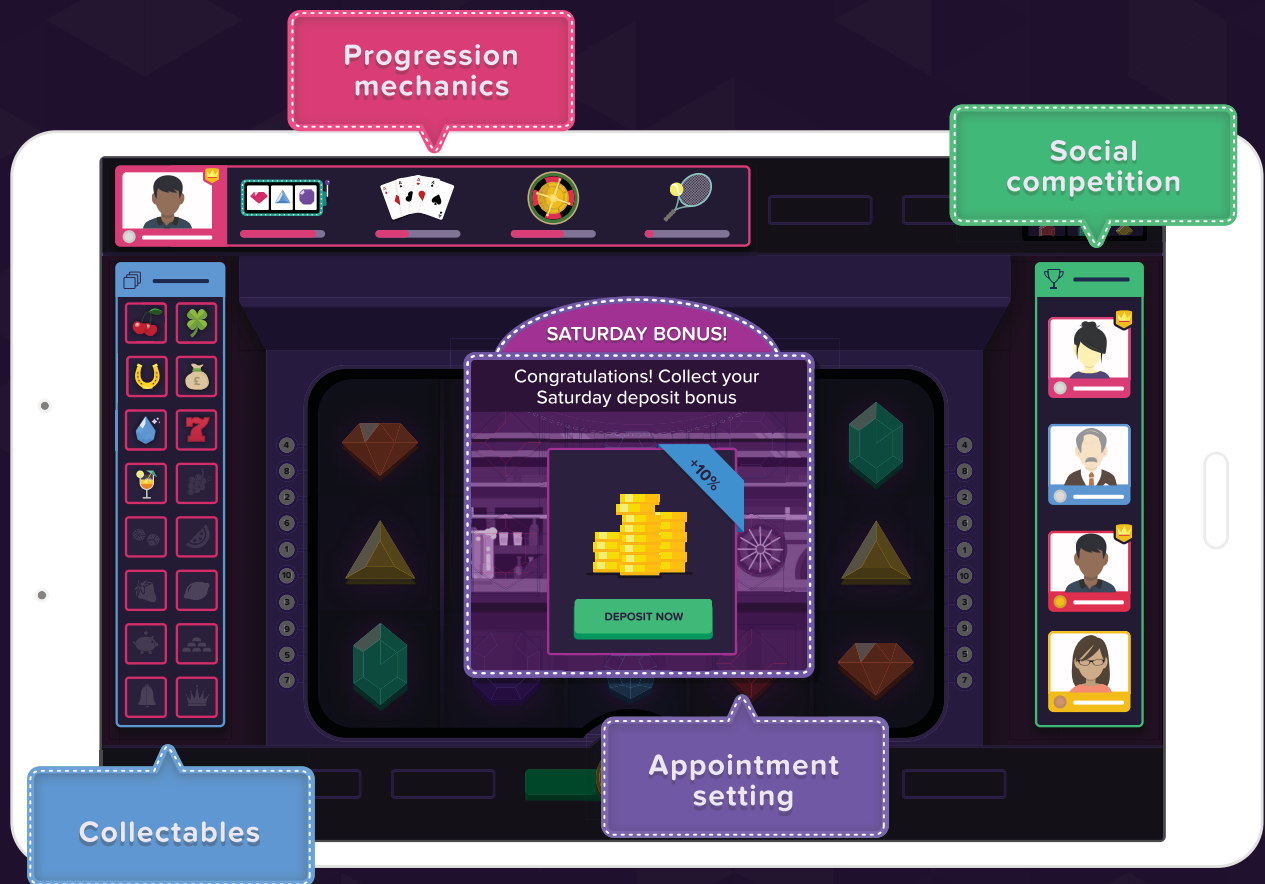
Taking player engagement in live gaming to new levels

Our recently launched NetEnt Engage™ adds a new dimension to the live casino experience and exemplifies the company's player-focused product development. Through NetEnt Live Rewards, part of the Engage promotional tools, operators can now offer instant rewards, with real time, in-game notifications within live gaming. It is a next-generation stimulation tool designed to take marketing and promotional efforts to a new level – and improves the overall live casino player experience – by enabling a constant flow of new and varied acquisition and retention-focused promotions.

The proprietary Live Rewards offering is a transformative development for the live casino sector, bringing a long-awaited solution that delivers truly innovative and attractive, not to mention personalised, promotions. Live Rewards allows operators to easily take care of the entire promotional life cycle at lightning speed and to customise their campaigns, while instantly rewarding their players, and so create a truly unique user experience.

Operators are able to not only create promotional campaigns quickly, but design them in order to

MAKE GAMIFICATION WORK IN YOUR GAME



We employ big data, game design consultancy,
data science and real-time marketing to make great games

cater for specific players, markets, and even devices, saving a lot of time while also eliminating manual errors.

Through this innovation, the entire promotional process is made much more efficient, which inevitably leads to higher ROI. It represents a real pivot in live casino, and demonstrates how creative problem-solving allows us to circumvent barriers and revolutionise the way things get done.

Furthermore, the deposit function allows the player to deposit money without logging out of the game session. Again, this is of great importance as it makes the player's journey as simplistic as possible. It is also a vast improvement on the industry-standard, where activation and redemption can take up to 72 hours.

This latest development complements our live offering, which includes the industry-leading NetEnt Live Mobile products.

NetEnt's Live Mobile Casino allows for a seamless integration of live-streamed HD images with lucid graphics, as well as synchronised audio and statistics that enhance the player experience.

In addition, another first for the industry is our Live Common Draw Blackjack table, which allows hundreds of players to join in and play in multiple currencies and in 25 different languages, at any time – on desktop and on mobile.

The potential of this means the product can cater for an unlimited amount of players at each table, leaving no player disappointed. The unique design also brings with it a wealth of tailored branding opportunities for companies and operators looking to stand out.

Companies will no doubt be empowered by the opportunity to differentiate their casino by using our flexible and highly customisable solution, displaying their brands in a unique casino environment, and all this, together with professional dealers, promises to set a new benchmark for mobile gaming.

Gone in a flash

With Flash technology approaching its end, suppliers across the industry have been working hard behind the scenes to ensure their games have been updated to HTML5 for multi-device compatibility. NetEnt has been no different, bringing our best-selling titles to a future-proof HTML5 codebase.

To limit the challenges our customers face, our comprehensive casino platform, CasinoModule, provides them with the foundations to seize future opportunities.

Packaging a suite of world-class games, marketing tools, support for multiple languages and currencies, and advanced statistical and operational functions, CasinoModule delivers both front-end and back office quality.

Opportunity for growth

Our large portfolio of games remains hugely popular with the community of online players, and NetEnt is committed to releasing a steady stream of games to meet the ever increasing demand.

In the last year, 30 new games have been released, with more set to follow as we continue with our ambitions to bring the industry forward with exciting new concepts to enhance the player experience.

NetEnt is committed to building on its status as a leader in digital casino through entry into new and recently regulated markets. During the past

“Innovation can only be effective when combined with cutting-edge expertise in technology, design and mathematics but also alongside far-reaching knowledge about regulations, the market, customers and players”

Per Eriksson | NetEnt

year, in North America, we have strengthened our position in New Jersey and obtained a supplier's licence in British Columbia, and in the case of Mexico, NetEnt entered its first Latin American regulated market. In Europe, we have moved into new regulated online markets such as Romania, Bulgaria, Portugal and Serbia, and recently marked our two-year anniversary in Spain.

Finally, I would like to mention that we are hugely excited by the opportunities virtual reality can bring to our industry, and we are already developing our first real-money VR slot game. Even though it is still early days, the use of VR is a growing trend among consumers, and research shows that online players are starting to look for alternative, more immersive gaming experiences.

Our segment of the casino industry is growing by the day, around the world, and we intend to grow with it and lead the charge.

We are already looking forward to next year's awards ceremony, and hope to break new ground with our forward-thinking, innovative approach. ♦

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Available in venue, online and mobile 2017

Featuring: *Betradar*

Only the best will do



Warren Murphy

◆ Managing director of betting and gaming
◆ Betradar

Warren Murphy is managing director of betting and gaming. He joined Betradar in May 2017, where he oversees all of the betting business. Before Sportradar, Murphy was CEO at the Sporting Index Group for seven years.



Lukas Seiler

◆ Managing director of audio-visual
◆ Betradar

Lukas Seiler is managing director of audio-visual. He joined Sportradar in 2014, where he heads up the audio-visual business unit. Before Sportradar, he was managing director of the Sportsman Media Group and legal counsel of the 2016 FIFA world cup merchandising project at EM.TV.

Warren Murphy and Lukas Seiler, of Betradar, reflect on their success at this year's EGR B2B awards, and what the company will continue doing to remain frontrunners in the industry

EGR Intel: Congratulations on your win in the Live Streaming Supplier category. This is the first time Betradar has won that category, right?

Lukas Seiler (LS): Actually, we were highly commended by the jury last year, so we were the 'nearly men' of 2016. But interestingly, even though Sportradar had already acquired the core business of the sportsman media group by the time we sat down at the Tower of London venue last year, when we submitted our portfolio for the category in April, we had not yet made the acquisition. So the 'highly commended' acknowledgement was received on the back of our pre-sportsman portfolio and service. That really encouraged us this time around. Seeing that the service we offered pre-sportsman was already highly respected by the industry and operators, we were really looking forward to putting in our submission this year.

EGR Intel: What do you think made the difference this year?

LS: I think the impact of the sportsman acquisition cannot be understated. Before the deal early last year, the two companies already had very strong portfolios of audiovisual rights, yet with little overlap. So when we amalgamated the portfolios, our new offering with over 35,000 matches per year put us right at the top of the pile. We had premium content such as the Bundesliga, Spain's Copa del Rey and Chinese Basketball, and we had content that really enabled operators to fill their calendars with the likes of ITF tennis events worldwide. We brought the best of both worlds and the feedback from operators was immediate and excited. And that was before we started adding even more excit-

ing streams to our joint offering; our deals with ESL and other esports tournaments mean that we are in the enviable position of being able to offer genuinely live streams that are not the same as the 'public' ones that are delayed at source by the organisers.

EGR Intel: Do you think it was primarily about quantity?

LS: Not at all. Sportradar also brought its peerless data and content solutions to the equation which meant that we could immediately look to cross-pollinate our new AV portfolio with our existing data solutions. The impact this had on the market was immediate. By overlaying our statistics and information over our expanded list of streams, our clients' customers enjoy an especially rich and insightful experience, whether they are in-store, online or across mobile.

I think all of that together put us in such a strong position going into this year's awards. We are glad the judges saw the upgrade we were offering and saw fit to move us a stop up from "highly commendable" in 2016. We will of course continue to develop improvements in our AV offering, so I hope we can get a repeat of this result in 2018!

EGR Intel: 2017 marked the third year in a row when Betradar took home the "Sports Data Provider" silverware. What is the secret to the company's success?

LS: There is no secret! Obviously you have to get the basics right. Speed. Accuracy. Reliability. In our world, operators absolutely need that and absolutely expect that to be taken care of. If you get it wrong, you are out of business, let alone out of the running for awards. Get it right and no one will roll out the fireworks. It is almost like a hygiene factor.

EGR Intel: What is it that moves Betradar from credible to outstanding?

Warren Murphy (WM): I think the first thing that makes our offering stand out is its sheer breadth. We are able to provide fast, accurate and reliable data from over 400,000 live events a year across 48

sports. That is quite simply unmatched. But as you discussed with Lukas, quantity is not the whole story.

Now, I can't speak for the judges, but my sense is that it is our attention to quality control and data collection integrity that marks us out as different. Obviously our data collectors are our front line and there is no margin for error. So we invest a lot of time and attention in selecting the best data collectors.

Every year we get thousands of applications and, genuinely, only 1% make the grade. Why? Well, it is because we do extensive initial vetting of the collectors, often running their profiles through detailed background checks. Then they go through extensive training and testing, where they record test matches and their efficiency and lag times are collated and evaluated. Once they pass these steps, they then go on to accompany existing data collectors, so that we can see how they compare to our more established data collectors. Only once they 'graduate' through the whole of this do they get to become collectors that we can trust to go to matches alone.

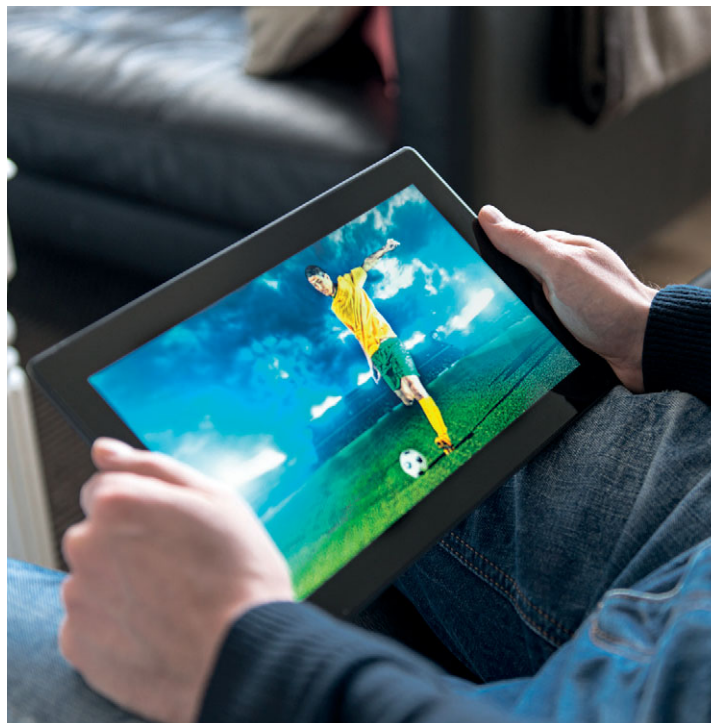
“My sense is that it is our attention to quality control and data collection integrity that marks us out as different”

Warren Murphy | Betradar

EGR Intel: That seems pretty thorough...

WM: That is just the start. Once they are part of the team, we then need to employ stringent quality assurance measures to make sure that the standard and quality we expect is maintained. To do that, we employ audio and sometimes video feeds to check whether the data is being fed back in sync with what we are hearing or seeing live over the feeds. We also use random parallel collection, where we send data collectors into the same stadiums, just to make sure that all our collectors are working within the thresholds we expect and our clients need.

One thing I would add as an aside is that we also pride ourselves on offering data feeds that are genuinely live. So we focus on data that we receive direct from servers via our official relationships with tournament organisers and rights holders. No other provider has the data from this many esports tournaments in its portfolio, and we are strict



about refusing to offer tournaments where the data latency is not suitable for betting and our clients are put at risk. I think when you put all these processes, systems and frankly values together, you get an offering that our clients really appreciate, and it seems that puts us in the position we are in today: where we are walking away with the award for the third year in a row.

EGR Intel: Do you anticipate a fourth consecutive award?

WM: Frankly, I hope that all data suppliers can get to a point where we are all establishing very stringent quality assurance, data collector evaluation and oversight. From my point of view, it would be great for the industry if even these high benchmarks became hygiene factors. Having said that, it is always exciting to be recognised. So we will continue to look at more modern and innovative ways to ensure that the data we provide is as clean, quick, accurate and trustworthy as we can possibly deliver. With the unique NBA data from our official partnership and genuinely live esports tournament data that we are now delivering to operators, I think we are going in the right direction. And if there is one thing we are not doing at Betradar, it is standing still. ♦

Featuring: *Inspired*

A revolutionary portfolio



Steve Collett

◆ Chief product officer
◆ Inspired

Steve Collett is Inspired's chief product officer. He has over 10 years of experience with Inspired and is responsible for all content and innovation across its mobile and VLT divisions. His previous roles include UK market product director and head of VLT Product Development.

Steve Collett, of Inspired, discusses the new offerings and technology shifts the company are currently undergoing to remain innovative market contenders

EGR Intel: Talk us through Inspired's new game content.

Steve Collett (SC): In 2017 we've got some of our strongest and most exciting mobile and VLT games ever. Following months of consumer research and development, we're introducing a portfolio of disruptive games which we believe will challenge, engage and excite players across all channels.

Two Fat Cats 'The Lost Ark' will be our biggest production of the year, featuring a mixture of six bonus mechanics that include three different Free Spin bonuses; a watch-me, a risk feature and pick-me. For this game, we have focused on the bonus rounds and offering the player a huge amount of entertainment and excitement. For online bettors, we have added a loyalty feature to boot.

Leaders of the Free Spins World will be another of our big production multi-bonus games, available across retail, online and mobile. The game features five historical leaders (Cleopatra, Napoleon, Genghis Khan, Abraham Lincoln and Churchill), all with their own unique Free Spin bonuses. This is also our first episodic retail game with the strategic intention of driving the uptake of player accounts, but designed in such a way to also appeal to non-account players.

Ninja Monkeys is an omni-channel game designed in a portrait layout specifically for our new curve screen cabinet. Available for retail and mobile customers, the game features expanding reels and has again required high levels of production.

Jaguar Gems is already live on mobile and online, and has had a fantastic reception from players. This game involves two modes and offers opportunities to change volatilities within the game. Players can randomly switch between lower and

higher volatility modes – the latter offering bigger bonus opportunities.

EGR Intel: What value add does your new game content bring to bolster your current offerings?

SC: Our focus is on producing quality rather than quantity in our games content going forward; meaning we're looking to build on our existing portfolio of hit titles, which include Centurion, Goddess of the Amazon, and Atlantis. We're also varying the maths in our new games to mix up the player experience and contrast with existing titles. Each new game is unique and noticeably different from our other offerings; for example, Two Fat Cats is focused on delivering a truly immersive player experience through cutting edge production, whereas Jaguar Gems is centred around its new concept mechanic. Given the fantastic response we've already seen to the latter going live on mobile, there is certainly scope for a new Inspired game series which we'll be looking at in the coming months.

Another strategic initiative which we're focused on is in the delivery of a family of descendants to our current portfolio of games. For example, for mobile, the upcoming 'Pharaoh' will be a descendant of the enduringly popular Atlantis, and 'Chief' will descend from the top title, Centurion. Rather than cloning a successful game, our focus is very much centred around producing a descendant of that popular title; taking the best parts and developing the product further while maintaining a level of familiarity. We're performing strongly against our competitors, and hence the focus is on producing descendants of our popular content and rebels; original titles which aren't seeking to replicate anything else already on the market.

EGR Intel: Which innovative features should we look out for in these new games – why were they added? How do you anticipate these offerings drawing more punters towards your product and what makes them stand out?

SC: The production and graphical quality of our

new games will undoubtedly attract players; we're consistently delivering sharper, more sophisticated content and with every production endeavouring to push this evolution further.

Inspired has a reputation for producing Entertainment with an Edge, and it's therefore no surprise that we're applying this idea to our games content – taking risks with new maths and new features to bring players an experience which is unique to Inspired. Our cartoon-style of games – featured in Leaders of the Freespins World, Fat Cats and Centurion – is becoming recognisable to players; they asked for more and that's exactly what we're delivering.

In addition, we're also focusing on changing our technology; exemplified in the new UX which is debuting with Fat Cats. This move will enable us to introduce more complex animation and sophisticated features. We're continually analysing our content and assessing what works and what doesn't which, of course, feeds into our game design and concepts. For example, the thought process behind Chief comes from a single word associated with Centurion, a single character who delivers new features while bearing some thematic similarities to the successful Centurion which players know and love. These two games have a similar structure but different gameplay – hence, we class Chief as a descendant product.

EGR Intel: Which markets are you currently experiencing the biggest success in with your offerings, and what areas will you expand to in the near future?

SC: Greece is currently a big success story for Inspired. At the time of writing, our games are top performers in retail venues across OPAP's retail estate and this is largely attributable to our delivery of market-specific content which engages players and keeps them coming back for more.

Mobile is also an area of the business which is quickly growing as we go live with more operators and tailor our products to suit mobile players. Our new Rush Go! products combine the excitement of virtual horses and virtual dogs with casino style gaming for quick and easy fun via casino and games Tabs. Rush Horses GO! and Rush Dogs GO! are the first ever Virtual Sports products to be developed specifically for non-sportsbook bettors and again exemplify the ways in which Inspired is creating a product portfolio which offers consumers a choice of games designed to suit their preferences and lifestyles.



“We’re introducing a portfolio of disruptive games which we believe will challenge, engage and excite players across all channels”

Steve Collett | Inspired

UK retail remains steady, and we're confident that the introduction of the heretofore described portfolio of new content over the coming months will only bolster our position. The same applies for our Italian business, which has seen success with our recent launch of Goddess of the Amazon.

EGR Intel: Anything to add?

SC: We're extremely excited to soon be in a position to reveal our new curve screen cabinet to the industry, 'The Curve', which promises to revolutionise the VLT market. This is more of an evolution than a step change; undoubtedly our best looking and coolest cabinet to date, and I have no question that customers and players will be stunned by the quality and clarity of graphics and immersive player experience that The Curve will offer. Watch this space for the ultimate Entertainment with an Edge, coming soon... ♦


Mark Robinson

◆ CEO
◆ deltaDNA

Mark Robinson has over 15 years' experience in data mining, working with companies including Heineken, Office Depot and Unibet. Fascinated by the potential of big data, Robinson has made it his personal mission to evangelise on how analytics can change the fortunes of games and apps by delivering player insight and personalising game experiences.

Featuring: *deltaDNA*

It's time to talk about data

Mark Robinson, of deltaDNA, discusses what it takes to fix the thorniest topics in egaming

In the last 12 months, the importance of data in legaming has undergone a transition. The key driver for data infrastructure used to be accurate and timely reporting, but it has now taken centre stage, as a core means of generating revenue, not just reporting on it.

Planning for General Data Protection Act compliance is going to be a challenge for everyone, but the smart operators are making the most of the opportunity to take a broader view of the value that can be extracted from behavioural data. And with regular noises coming from the regulators on the future role of big data in being part of the solution for mitigat-

ing social responsibility, solving fraud and money laundering along with giving a credible alternative to the much-maligned sign-up bonuses, it's clear why so many are looking at how to employ the internal structures they require, before it's imposed.

There are enormous advantages that can be realised from using data to manage and influence the player experience. In-game behavioural data facilitates a very high level of understanding and control over player experiences that enables operators to make more much more of their investment in player acquisition.

The accessibility of behavioural data has changed beyond recognition. Not only are operators much more likely to have vertically integrated game design within their organisations, but games platforms are also being much more proactive in making the data available.

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Making sense of big data

DeltaDNA provides deep data analytics and real-time marketing services to online, mobile and server-based gambling organisations. We work with operators and game platforms. We combine data from the game with CRM and other data silos to provide a granular understanding of players, while our Insight Consultancy team works with and supports gaming companies to delineate patterns from the data to deliver actionable insight.

Our tools include data mining, dashboards and alerts, acquisition optimisation, granular segmentation for analysis and real-time targeting, campaign testing, push notifications, live in-game messaging, live game parameter adjustment to deliver security and targeted personalised offers, email and AB testing of game mechanics and campaigns.

We address four key important issues in gambling; player longevity, problem gambling, sign-up bonuses and fraud, and draw on vast experience in Free to Play (F2P) online video games, where understanding players' behavioural patterns is key to generating revenue through enhancing the in-game experience. The three pillars of our service are analytics, personalisation and gamification.

“There are enormous advantages that can be realised from using data to manage and influence the player experience”

Mark Robinson | **deltaDNA**

Extending longevity

Data mining and predictive analytics uncover patterns of play, to deliver a personalised experience for each player, enhancing retention by managing their player lifecycle, from the first-time user experience through early life to VIP conversion and management, lapsing players and re-activation.

Our platform uses predictive analytics to identify players with problems, looking at behaviours like repeated high-risk betting after a loss, burning through deposits really quickly, repeatedly leaving only when there is nothing left in the bank, coupled with high return frequencies and depositing patterns.

Using the deltaDNA platform, operators can then instigate real-time interventions like in-game messaging, limiting the size of stake that can be placed based on deposit amounts, offering players the opportunity to opt-in to time blockers, incentivising players to stop playing before they deplete their funds

by offering free spins linked to remaining funds at the end of each day, or providing free plays after a player loses heavily, in order to prevent them immediately compounding the loss.

Optimising sign-up bonuses

The draconian conditions around sign-up bonuses prevent them from being effective as a low churn, high LTV acquisition tool, as players are sceptical. We help operators to deliver realistic incentives that encourage players to experience the game and prevent abuse through control of the experience a player receives when they take up the offer. For example, if you want the player to experience a specific slots game with your bonus, the game will take them there, and apply the specific experience you want them to have, for instance the free spins that apply to that specific game.

Dealing with fraud

The deltaDNA platform uses game data to automatically identify suspicious patterns of play that stand out from normal parameters of gameplay. It employs live in-game mitigations, while they are flagged and investigated. The platform can be set up to employ real-time interventions immediately upon the discovery of potential fraud. These can include limiting the size of the bets by game/event, quarantining the account pending investigation, requiring authentication of the account, providing warning notifications, stopping users from making deposits / withdrawals, and controlling how incentives can be applied within the environment.

Our approach is to augment the technology with specialist expertise. The start of the journey is a data readiness assessment to determine the opportunities that can be achieved with the data that's available. We take a consultative approach to customer support. We help with set-up and training. Our game design consultants play-test the game and suggest an optimum event schema to facilitate analysis and player interaction. Our support team is on hand to guide customers through every aspect of their analytics journey.

We can offer a complete support programme to clients if needed, where we help them with setting-up on the platform and then work with their BI team to help set objectives and help them to understand how their data can be of most value to their business.

However, some prefer to manage this process themselves. In which case the platform is fully set up for self-service, where marketers and data analysts can respectively create campaigns and undertake complex data mining and analysis. ♦

Featuring: *Kambi*

Continue to differentiate



Kristian Nylen

◆ CEO
◆ Kambi

Kristian Nylen is chief executive officer at Kambi Group Plc. Nylen joined Unibet Group plc in 2000. From 2003, Nylen was responsible for the Sportsbook operation and a part of the management team. Nylen cofounded Kambi in 2010.

Kristian Nylen, of Kambi, reflects on his company's recent awards success, and the factors Kambi are considering to further differentiate their offering and stay ahead of the curve in a competitive sector

EGR Intel: What have you been working on in the past year or so that has made you best in class in the sportsbook sector (according to our judges)?

Kristian Nylen (KN): I feel that one of the big reasons for our continued success has been down to consistently signing new customers each year. Throughout 2016 we signed five new operators, each of whom were of a very high quality.

Lately we have also been particularly focused and working hard on our differentiation capabilities. We provide our operators with an ever-evolving toolbox, which allows them to readily differentiate their user interfaces.

I think a further key part of what makes us good partners is the fact our service can be built on top of easily, and this allows our partners to be creative and further diversify their offering independently with the likes of webcam-enabled integration.

This has brought us to a point where the numerous operators we provide our service to don't really have to have the same sportsbook as one another, which has helped us a lot in terms of offering something which stands out.

On top of this, I think we are offering a service that is popular to our operators' end-users, and this has translated to a strong financial performance and one which is clearly outperforming the wider market. It's clear for us to see that our operators' end-users really appreciate the quality of the sports betting service we're offering.

EGR Intel: Are these the key reasons why clients stay with Kambi?

KN: I believe they are. Again, the track record we have with listed companies and their financial

performance is clearly another strong part of our appeal. This, coupled with our good reputation within the industry, can only serve to bolster the appeal of utilising our service. And, generally, many of our clients are simply drawn to the overall depth, breadth and quality of the offering which we provide to our customers.

EGR Intel: How do you enable clients to offer a more customised sportsbook product, i.e. so all Kambi powered products don't feel the same?

KN: We have a lot more options that enable our operators to build their own parts that can easily be integrated into their landing pages.

We still do the heavy lifting on behalf of our operators, tough things such as creating a bet slip that is mapped to a particular offering and so on. A matter like this is quite tedious and doesn't add very much value in terms of differentiation, but it can be done on our part with minimal effort and aids clients in changing the look and feel of their site by themselves.

EGR Intel: Can you tell us more about the micro-markets that you've been helping clients to introduce?

KN: For some time now we have borne in mind the fact that the new generation of players are not quite as patient as those that came before. Due to this, we've long held the opinion that we need to implement offerings such as point by point and other rapid betting markets to retain punters. Within the last couple of years, we have opened up more and more of these point-based markets across a number of different sports.

And we are always looking to further this concept in sports such as football: who will win the next throw in? Free kick? Corner? We can take this occurrence-based betting further, with bets on what will happen thereafter, who will win or benefit from the occurrence, and so on.

The new ideas we try out are offered to all of our operators, yet some of them are taking our APIs to



“For us, being innovative and creating a solution which allows for differentiation is key, but this solution must also be very scalable”

Kristian Nylen | Kambi

push for further customisations that add an extra level of diversification.

EGR Intel: What do you think is behind the shifting mindset in the industry towards outsourcing and what benefits does it bring?

KN: Firstly, I would say that this is a trend you see in every single industry. The reality is that there are few operators with the financial capability and means to produce every service in-house. And there are continually fluctuating trends within outsourcing. We’ve now been around for 7 years, but the interest of our services has grown a lot within the last year – a very positive trend for us.

EGR Intel: How important is the ability to scale rapidly?

KN: Yes, rapid scalability is very important, and this is something that we are particularly conscious of at all times; if we don’t build a system that is scalable on one base platform that works across all regulations, we will not be as fast as the leading in-house operated sports betting services. So for us, being innovative and creating a solution which allows for differentiation is key, but this solution must also be very scalable – it’s immensely important to us.

EGR Intel: What are Kambi’s plans going forward?

KN: We will keep working on the road we have taken – with a continuing focus on sports betting and building out our offering to provide more empowerment capabilities to our operators. We see ourselves as the natural choice in the industry at the moment for operators who remain or are taking a market leading position within their respective markets, and it is critical that we continue to assess and improve. ♦

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Simon Lidzén

◆ CEO

◆ FAST TRACK

Simon Lidzén is the CEO and co-founder of FAST TRACK. Lidzén has been active in the gambling industry for 10+ years in various strategic product roles at companies such as Betsson group and Betfair.

Featuring: **FAST TRACK**

Building the next generation of casinos

Simon Lidzén, of FAST TRACK, provides his view on the background of online casinos and predicts where they are headed in the future

FAST TRACK was founded in February 2016 and has already, after only this first year of operation, been recognised for its achievements by winning White Label Partner of the Year, a prestigious category in 2017's EGR B2B awards. FAST TRACK is an iGaming technology & services provider, specialising in developing market leading online casinos.

Between the nomination of FAST TRACK and the winning of the award, we launched another casino, signed three new exciting partners, and further enhanced our platform capabilities to achieve a fully automated life cycle management.

Changing the online casino landscape

The industry is moving quickly and you need to be constantly on point to keep up. Not too long ago, one could be successful by simply offering a few hundred games from a handful of providers, a range of payment options and a stable website. This is no longer the case and the industry is learning quickly from other successful e-commerce industries. The bottom line is that your end customer expects more; more entertainment, a more in-depth experience and more accuracy in everything that you do.

With a strong foundation, you can do great things. In our first year of operation, we have delivered four online casinos, bespoke loyalty systems, a range of operational tools including highly intelligent platform and data visualisation tools to provide our partners with real-time dashboards of their room performance.

When we founded FAST TRACK, we had a clear

focus from day one – the systems we build must be based on real-time data, we must never stop reinventing ourselves and we need to make all of our systems able to work as one. This chimes with our core belief that exceptional customer experiences are created through seamless, personal and tailored experiences. It is the little things that make the biggest difference.

What's imperative right now is how you build tools that help you communicate the right message to every customer, and how you align your message across all your channels; and the real magic begins when the end user does not even know it's happening; the player only recognises relevance, which results in value. The opportunities are limitless to upsell your customers when you do it in a smart way. This is where our partners will find growth and return on their investments – hence why this is also our top priority. It is clear that our competitors get stuck within their current capabilities and fail, or even worse, stop 'thinking smart' and reinventing themselves. To date, we have rebuilt our infrastructure and core services twice from scratch – we recognise that the requirements and purpose of a specific system will change with time, and that your technology needs to change along with it.

Our ambition is to stand out in this respect. When our partners come to us with fresh and exciting new ideas, small or large, we welcome them and always bring further solutions to the table. There is always a way. This is our culture.

This means that if we want to make FAST TRACK a successful partner, we need to bring something to the table. For us the focus remains clear. We not only need to provide our partners with a competitive casino site and service, we also need to provide them with operational tools to stay ahead of the game. These tools come in terms of data, having a solid overview of spend, behaviour and income, and also in terms of life-cycle management, to be

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UI Designer

UX/UI Designer

SWEDEN

Animator

Concept Game Designer

Game Designer

Game Producer

Group Accounting Manager

HR Manager

Illustrator

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MALTA

Head of Table Games

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structured on true intelligence, tackling each marketing source and player independently from another with attractive offers.

When you invest a significant amount of money on marketing and acquiring customers to your site, you sure as hell better make the most out of them when they finally come to you. We built Activity Manager as one of the primary vehicles to achieve this – possibly one of the most advanced life-cycle management tools for the online gambling industry today. It can interact with all touch points and channels throughout the customer life cycle. Activity Manager comes with an intelligent rules engine that can trigger an activity on any customer interaction in real time and change the end customer experience and messaging, based on their customer behaviour. We are proud to see that all of our operator brands use Activity Manager today, and that 95% of all site experiences, communications and campaigns are completely automated.

Heading in a different direction – against the grain

One clear distinction between FAST TRACK and other organisations we tend to get compared with, is that we focus almost all of our time on what happens after a partner of ours goes live. We know that

“We recognise that the requirements and purpose of a specific system will change with time, and that your technology needs to change along with it”

Simon Lidzén | FAST TRACK

as soon as end customers reach your site, the feedback and the priorities will most definitely change, and our job is to stay flexible to meet those evolving needs.

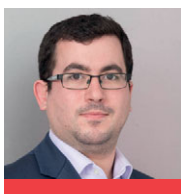
We are fortunate to have great relationships with our partners, and we continue to be very selective about who we get involved with – it is important that those we collaborate with are in agreement with the direction in which we are heading.

Our future technology will recognise and learn from customers' behaviour, creating a reality wherein we only provide the framework and limits it will operate within, and the system figures out the rest.

As we look forward, we plan for our systems to know what works and what doesn't. We will not only aim to understand the most optimal time to engage with the player, and at what time you should not, but understand why on a per-player basis. ♦

Featuring: *SBTech*

Innovation in in-play betting: The future of live betting – taking it to the next level



Gregory Karaolis

◆ head of online and innovation
◆ SBTech

Greg Karaolis is the head of online and innovation at SBTech. Having spent over 10 years in online gaming – and as an Arsenal season ticket holder – he is passionate about building platforms, interfaces and experiences that will excite and engage sports fans and punters.

Gregory Karaolis, of SBTech, discusses the upcoming changes that will further evolve the live betting segment

The rise in prominence of in-play betting in recent years has been nothing short of astronomical. Since its emergence some 10 years ago, live betting has captured the imagination of experienced and novice punters alike, catapulting it to the forefront of the online sportsbook scene.

Players love the immediacy of the live betting experience, especially with the inclusion of features such as live streaming and match trackers which allow them to follow games in real time, betting on events as they happen. It is simply a far more engaging and entertaining way for sports fans to get involved than traditional pre-match bets.

Offering more in-play options has benefitted operators, many of whom have experienced large increases in player value as live betting has grown more popular. It is currently estimated to deliver between 50% and 80% of revenue for online operators depending on the jurisdiction and quality of the product.

With the pace of technological development, the potential for further innovation in live betting is enormous. At SBTech, we are proud to be recognised as a market leader in the field, having won the EGR B2B award for Best In-play Betting Software for the past two years. We have been involved in live betting right from the start, and have consistently shown our commitment to the development of new features and options to enhance the user experience.

Covering over 25,000 in-play events every month with more than 2,000 proprietary bet markets, SBTech's in-play solution includes all major sports, from football to tennis and basketball, as well as more niche sports such as handball and cycling.

Over the last twelve months, a key focus has been

on enhancing the 'Fast Markets' that allow players to bet on what will happen in the next one minute or five minutes of an in-running event. As well as the major leagues, our wide range of Fast Markets cover numerous minor events, including youth football and tennis qualifying tournaments.

This past year has also seen a significant enhancement of the cash-out options our operators can offer their players. When betting on thousands of different events, players can now choose to select full cash-out or implement a partial cash-out using a simple, user-friendly slider. The SBTech cash-out feature can be used on singles, doubles and system bets on thousands of events across dozens of sports, including both pre-match and in-play markets, and includes the "Bank My Stake" feature, whereby players can minimise their risk by cashing-out when in profit.

As with other industries, the drive towards 'mobile first' is inexorable. Operators are fully aware that players are constantly looking to make bets on their phones and tablets and the SBTech solution allows them to offer the entire array of in-play markets on mobile as well as on web. This is particularly attractive to players who enjoy betting on a second screen while watching a game at home on television or online, as well as those using a mobile site or app while on the move.

In terms of more radical in-play innovation, there is much more to come in both the near and long-term future. Gamification, personalisation, faster update speeds and more intelligent suspension logic offer the possibility of totally transforming the in-play betting arena in the coming months and years.

Analysis of the behavioural patterns of in-play bettors has shown a strong correlation with those who also enjoy casino gaming. With its focus on visual appeal and instant results, live betting has traditionally attracted the more casual player, so a move to-

wards increased gamification and a softer approach is a natural next step. The introduction of rewards and incentives systems is widely expected to encourage more casino gamers to give live sports betting a try.

This approach is already being trialled by Malta-based operator Hero Gaming, whose SBTech-powered 'Betser' brand includes a twin-track loyalty scheme. Betser players can earn points from their sports bets and exchange them for free bets in the "locker room", while also competing against other players in a league points programme where they earn achievements and move up through various divisions in a social leaderboard format.

Another trend that will change the way players are made aware of in-play betting options is the increasing use of personalisation and recommendation. Using the vast banks of data that they collect on betting activity, egaming companies have been able to build detailed profiles of every player. This information can be used to create targeted marketing campaigns that enhance the overall user experience, and to set the order of sports and events that are displayed to each player.

With so many live games available, it is essential that players are shown updated lists of the live events they are most likely to be interested in. At the same time, big data allows operators to target the right players with the right events at the right times via the communication channels that have proven to be the most effective. With improved technology, operators will be able to create more individually tailored marketing messages and player journeys, promoting specific live betting opportunities to players who have already shown an interest in them or have previously taken advantage of them. Automated push and email messaging can be triggered by this data to alert players to in-play or cash-out options while a game is being played.

The increase in the speed of updates will have also a significant impact on the Fast Markets operators will be able to offer players. Rather than focusing only on the main sports like football and tennis, operators will be able to give players the chance to bet on what will happen next in events such as golf, darts or American football. This is all reliant on the provision of fast data feeds, which are updated quickly enough to stay in touch with live events. Fast Markets betting on golf, for example, could allow users to bet on whether a player will make a putt as he approaches the green.

At the same time, another impact of this technol-



Featuring: SBTech

ogy will be the introduction of more intelligent suspension logic. Currently, operators generally prefer either to suspend an entire event or not to use suspension at all. However, with faster data speeds, operators will be able to suspend certain in-play markets for very short periods of time. A good example would be dynamically changing prices and suspension logic for next scorer markets based on which player and team has possession of the ball during a football match.

The long-term potential for in-play betting is even more exciting. Virtual Reality has only recently been made available to the general public, but will undoubtedly become more popular in the coming years. Once fans can view live sports events in VR it could become possible to integrate more dynamic automated push messages offering live betting opportunities.

In-play sports betting has been a major part of the online gaming industry for the past decade, but it is still in its infancy. The increasing speed of technological advancement now offers enormous opportunities to take it to the next level. ♦

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Aris Gabrielyan

◆ *Head of the help desk*

◆ *BetConstruct*

Aris Gabrielyan is head of the help desk at BetConstruct. Gabrielyan joined BetConstruct in 2015 to become a customer specialist. Since 2016, he has been heading the B2B support team that has grown into the help desk department.

Featuring: *BetConstruct*

Excelling in customer service

Aris Gabrielyan, of BetConstruct, reflects on the changes that have led to the company's awards recognition

EGR Intel: BetConstruct recently won the Best Customer Service award. What are the key developments within the past few years that you believe have led to this recognition?

Aris Gabrielyan (AG): One of the most essential moves was achieving better collaboration between our various teams. This move drastically increased our productivity and resulted in the creation of a new help desk ticketing system, giving the teams an opportunity to track open tickets. Another important point was the expansion of our support services. This year BetConstruct's B2B support has evolved from one team to a whole department which consists of B2B support teams in Armenia, Uruguay and Taiwan, and service desk teams and a support team for the back office, all working 24/7.

EGR Intel: What obstacles did you overcome to implement such a respected approach to customer service?

AG: "Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal," stated Henry Ford. We try to never take our eyes off of our goals. And our goal is to deliver a support service as good as our products.

We believe that no matter how good the products or prices of our competitors are, ultimately it is trust that maintains customers' loyalty. Our partners

trust us because they know that we use our business insight and resources to reveal new areas of growth for them.

EGR Intel: What further plans do BetConstruct have to improve their customer service even further?

AG: We never stop working on our services. There is always room for improvement, and this kind of hard work won us the Best Customer Service award for the third year running.

This August we will host all of our partners for a training session, and before that we will implement certification procedures for our partners. Starting from 1 July, no new partner can go live unless we have gone through all of the documentation and manuals together.

Meanwhile, we are recruiting for a polyglot to help us improve communication with our customers. Our help desk will soon be backed with an FAQ section including information on documentation for products and many more.

A new statistical reporting system will be added, too, allowing our partners to view daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly reports on the number of requests opened and time spent on their interface.

Along with this, we believe the never-changing trend in customer service should be in ensuring that the company ethos is understood and subscribed to wherever your offices are located. Partners should get the same customer support everywhere and every time they contact you. ◆



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