

Lotoclic: A Source of Interesting Findings

By Carole Pinsonneault, Ingenio

Around two years ago, on October 15, Loto-Québec launched Lotoclic, its gaming portal. Since then, over six million rounds of interactive lottery games have been played by the corporation's Web clientele.

Like many of the world's lottery corporations, Loto-Québec continuously invests a great deal of effort in its gaming line-up in order to meet the ever-changing needs and demands of its customers. The Web has become a top source of entertainment for consumers, so Loto-Québec must position itself strategically to meet that demand.

"Loto-Québec decided to introduce the Lotoclic gaming portal as a way for the company to make its first foray into the world of interactive Web-based gaming without launching into online gambling per se," says Nathalie Rajotte, director general of Ingenio, Loto-Québec's R&D arm. Rather, Lotoclic brings together a large variety of short-play multimedia games called Quick Play Games, which are part of the greater family of instant interactive lotteries that require customers to purchase a ticket at a retail outlet.

Our first two years have taught us that something can always be learned about online player behavior. "The portal helps us understand the market and establish a direct relationship with consumers without an intermediary," says Nathalie Gemme, head of the Loto-Québec Marketing branch's Instant Lotteries department. As a result, we get virtually instant feedback: a Quick Play Games portal can be used as a nearly real-time lab for testing games, gauging user preferences and honing overall approaches.

MAJOR SURVEY

When it was launched, the portal hosted nine games. Today, Lotoclic players can choose from some 30 small games in three categories: action/sports, discovery and word games/puzzles. The site now also includes a "Game Trivia" section about the games, a list of the five most popular games, and a background that changes with the passing seasons. Plus, each player can view a list of the games he or she plays most often.

To paint a picture of Lotoclic fans, a survey hosted on the site itself was launched in winter 2009. Over 5,200 customers accepted the invitation to take part, and the responses of 2,035 of them were retained as a representative sample of people who purchased four or more Lotoclic product tickets.

Among the survey findings, "click and reveal" games turned out to be just as popular as "skills" games, a statistic that supports an approach based on diversity. While confirming that it was successfully reaching the intended target market, namely women in their mid-forties, it was pleasantly surprising to note that 20% of Lotoclic clients were in the 34 or above range, despite the fact that none of the advertising campaigns targeted them in particular.

A BRIDGE BETWEEN LOTTERIES AND CASUAL GAME PLAYERS

The findings also led to a very interesting conclusion for Quick Play Game developers. According to the survey, 80% of Lotoclic clients are also fans of online casual games. Quick Play Games just happen to meet the criteria of these kinds of games: they're easy to play and entertaining.

"This particular finding has confirmed what we've said all along, that fans of Web-based casual games are attracted to Quick Play Games, mul-



timedia instant lottery games that give players an opportunity to have some fun combined with the added value of maybe winning cash prizes," adds Nathalie Rajotte.

Loto-Québec is not the only ones who can see a market for this product category. A large number of online gambling Web sites operating in parallel with our industry have understood just that. For some time now, they have been peppering their traditional gaming offer with their own brand of instant multimedia games; marketed under a variety of names, each one is clearly related to a lottery game.

A MORE VARIED LINE-UP, WITHOUT ADDITIONAL RETAIL COSTS

One of the big benefits of implementing a Quick Play Games portal is the ease with which the gaming offer can be managed. When it comes to paper instants, adding a new product usually means withdrawing an existing one, a choice that is not always easy to make.

"In comparison, there's no additional cost to the Lottery to keep all interactive games on its portal once it has been launched, because the space it takes up is only virtual. At the same time, consumers are offered a wide selection and can therefore customize their gaming experience," says Nathalie Rajotte. A closer look at this product also revealed that it is an excellent example of the Long Tail phenomenon popularized by Chris Anderson of Wired magazine.

A number of lottery corporations, including the British Columbia Lottery Corporation (BCLC) and Denmark's national lottery, Danske Spil, have added Quick Play Games to their product line-up. The Kentucky Lottery is also conducting a pilot project involving this kind of game, while GTECH features a Game Lounge portal among its lottery products.

"In the age of 2.0, where now more than ever consumers can access a wide array of custom products, and where using the Web space as a commercial, and yet state-of-the-art, responsible gaming tool, Quick Play Games constitute a key transition solution for Lotteries seeking to take their first steps in that direction," says Nathalie Rajotte. ♦