Betware

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PGRI Introduction: In the complexity of a crowded gaming market, lottery operators make the true difference, being the ones with the strongest brands in the industry. Lottery is the most well-known brand among consumers of all age groups. Lottery is, however, faced with the challenge of leveraging new technologies to bring their most popular products closer to the modern player. There is plenty of talk across the industry about the multi-channel approach, and how to stay competitive when the consumer is faced with a multitude of entertaining opportunities served within this new space. PGRI talks to Pall Palsson about how operators could benefit from applying Responsive Web Design.

Traditional lottery games compete today with casino and social games, as well as other forms of online and mobile entertainment, which have already carved out a big role for themselves in the online and mobile sales channels. However, even though Lottery may not be the first to the interactive gaming market, the combination of brand equity, trust, and the largest base of active consumers in the industry gives lottery operators a very powerful competitive advantage.

Paul Jason, Public Gaming: *So, in another words, the best strategy for making a successful step into the interactive gaming market is to adopt a multi – channel strategy?*

Pall Palsson: Our experience shows that draw – based and instant lottery games featuring large jackpots, if implemented well, have proven to become big sellers online. And most vital to long-term growth, the internet has proven to be a powerful driver of player acquisition. The key is to recast the traditional games for these new media to take full advantage of the format to deliver the most entertaining consumer play experience.

In addition to big jackpots, players are now looking for, even demanding, entertainment, convenience, and simplicity of use. Tablets and smartphones have now become a basic commodity and internet is something that the modern society can probably not function without – something closer to a utility such as gas or electricity rather than a luxury. It's been a long time since people were using their mobile phones purely for calling – a smartphone is now a device that connects us to the whole world and we have it at hand 24/7. This represents a truly incredible sales opportunity for any mass-market business, not just gaming. And how does the multi-channel strategy fit in with gaming? Well, in today's world of internet connected devices of all shapes and sizes (tablet, desktop or mobile) the answer is to build the solution based on HTML 5 and Responsive Web Design. Those are the tools that allow developers to build a really flexible solution that adapts to whatever device the player chooses to use.

Locking the sales and player experience within simply one sales channel limits accessibility and attractiveness for the player. Within a growing competitive environment, this is simply a step towards losing players' interest. While many operators are afraid of cannibalization when new sales channels are opened, Betware's experience is quite opposite. Betware's strategy takes into account all sales channels, combining them into a perfect mix which not only adds incremental revenues but creates great cross-promotion opportunities. The result is that the retail channel benefits tremendously from a stronger lottery with a stronger brand.

Responsive Web Design is a buzzword that some of us need to have explained. What exactly is it and why is it important?

P. Palsson: Yes, it has already been named "the industry best practice" and it made the "Ecommerce Marketing Checklist for 2013" done by the Forbes Magazine. Responsive Web Design is a web design approach that allows websites to adapt to the user's interface, providing the users with the optimal viewing experience, regardless of the device in use and whether it is a landscape or a portrait mode. Responsive Web Design is basically a way to adapt the layout and content of any webpage to the viewing environment. To be more specific: the website, using media queries, can ask the browser how large the viewing area is and then scale graphics and text and rearrange content appropriately for the size of the viewing area. The amount of devices (traditional desktop computers, smart TVs, tablets, smartphones) and screen resolutions people use nowadays is huge. Responsive Web Design enables developers to design content that works similarly across all platforms. For gaming industry operators, it guarantees a seamless entertaining experience for players, regardless of the device they prefer to use. There is more: Responsive Web Design also simplifies search engine optimization and content management for multi – channel sites. If you are an operator who needs to reach the customers on smartphones, tablets and desktop PC's and want to be found through search engines, Responsive Web Design is an indispensable approach. At Betware, we have retooled all our product development so that our products are built with HTML 5 and Responsive Web Design approach. We recommend that our customers follow the same approach and are increasingly finding that operators themselves are quickly coming to the same conclusion. ◆