



## The Foundation for an iLottery Site: The Player Account

Pall Palsson

Executive Product Manager, Betware

[www.Betware.com](http://www.Betware.com)

*PGRI Note: First in a series of iLottery articles*

Our industry has now left an eventful, and for many lotteries quite prosperous, 2013 behind and is moving confidently into 2014. There are many things to look forward to this year, including The World Lottery Summit in Rome in November, and PGRI conferences in New York and Miami. Some lotteries are eagerly looking forward to new legislation that will allow them to take their business online for the first time this year. Other lotteries may already have the legal framework to offer games online and may be looking at exercising that option this year. Demand for internet solutions is, after all, only growing among lottery players. The aim of this article series is to provide a brief primer on what is required to set up an iLottery site to help lotteries who are thinking about moving online, and to discuss what is required. It should also be a good refresher course for anyone already involved in online operations. In this installment we will cover the heart and foundation of the internet system: the Player Account.

Veteran iLottery solutions providers like Betware view the Player Account as essential for any successful internet solution. It may be hard for lotteries to get excited about setting up a Player Account. But we all know that when you are building a house, it is imperative to have a solid foundation that fulfills all the needs of the structure you intend to build on top of it. It is still far easier to get excited about the open plan kitchen/dining room and other less structurally important, but more visible elements, of the house rather than the awesome, secure and totally functional foundation! Even dressing it up with exciting words, bold type and an exclamation mark doesn't help. The same is true for a Player Account. It's hard to get excited about the Player Account as opposed to virtually all other aspects of an iLottery solution, but the future of a lottery's internet business rides on picking the right Player Account. The Player Account is what stores the player profiles, handles registrations, account changes, transaction histories, responsible gaming controls, wagers, funds etc. You should only ever have one Player Account (and one wallet) even if you offer on your site content from multiple unrelated game providers. You also want a proven track record of adapting the Player Account to different regulated markets, and also good support for Single Sign-On and Single-Wallet which will be covered in a later installment.

### MAIN THINGS TO LOOK FOR WHEN PICKING A PLAYER ACCOUNT:

**Experience:** There are few areas where experience matters more. You are going to build all of your online operations on top of this Player

Account so you want it to be tried, tested and audited over a number of years. You want it to be purpose-built for the lottery industry as our industry is unique in many ways even when compared to other types of online gaming. Years in successful operation are more important than the number of live customers, as good Player Accounts (in any industry, not just in iLottery) are built by relatively small teams over an extended period of time. The experience the supplier, operating in not only one regulated market but different regulated markets, is also very important as the Player Account typically handles a lot of the regulatory requirements. Regulatory requirements are set for the common good and are on the whole good for players, the lottery industry, and the jurisdictions that set them. That doesn't mean they always make sense or are always beneficial to the players or the players' gaming experience. They are, however, almost without exceptions mandatory, well intentioned, and on the whole beneficial to all parties. Because lotteries work in regulated jurisdictions and often hold themselves to higher standards than required by law, it is an absolutely fundamental requirement that all the solutions the lottery chooses for its iLottery site have a proven track record of complying with regulations. Not all software can simply be modified to comply but must be built from the ground up or evolved over an extended period of time with regulatory compliance in mind.

**Flexibility:** Do you want to be able to offer the best gaming content? No one game developer makes all the best content so you will need a solution that allows you to pick the games you want regardless of who makes them. This approach to content is called multi-sourcing or "best-of-breed strategy." Be skeptical of anyone who offers a complete suite of their own games and their own player account in a bundle and says you can add any additional content from any other provider if you want. These companies are heavily incentivized to keep you using only their own content. There are companies out there that say this and honestly mean it - so just dig a bit deeper than the initial sales pitch.

**Attitude:** This is surprisingly important. Your Player Account provider will potentially hold a lot of power over how you conduct and grow your business, since the Player Account (sometimes called a platform in this context) is what ties everything together. The iLottery market is fast moving and it's important to pick a partner that can be agile and react quickly to any needs you have. The internet does not move at the same pace as land based industries so a quick turnaround on changes, new features or fixes is imperative to a successful online operation.

You also want to find a partner who recognizes that you should be in control of the content you offer YOUR players. This article covered what the Player Account needs to do as the foundation and the heart of your iLottery solution and provided some guidelines to have in mind when shopping around for a Player Account. Future articles in this series will cover other components that need to be present for an iLottery site to be complete, and successful. ♦