



PLAYBOOK FOR LAUNCHING AN i-LOTTERY WEBSITE

Third Article in 5-part series

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In the last two installments of this series we covered the Player Account, the Wallet and the importance and function of Single Sign On (SSO). The Player Account is the foundation and the heart of your iLottery solution, the Wallet lets players buy wagers and SSO lets the Lottery seamlessly tie together offerings from multiple providers so that players may enjoy the very best games available. In this final installment of this article series we will cover the Back Office, regulatory compliance, marketing, games and a few other considerations that are important to keep in mind when setting up a great iLottery site.

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BACK OFFICE: Whatever you actually call it, and there are many names in circulation, this is the piece of software that lets you monitor and manage your iLottery site. Your call center will also use the back office to assist players with issues that come up. The functions of the Back Office are too numerous to list here but you can think of it as the administrative and reporting portal of your site. If you are offering content from multiple suppliers you will most likely have more than one Back Office system. Some suppliers even have separate back office systems for different game zones so even if you have one supplier for poker, bingo and casino you may end up with three separate Back Office systems. While this can be a pain to get used to it's not really a hindrance to the smooth operation of your site once you get used to it; It's however not a bad idea to have SSO in place here too so that your employees will not need to log into different systems all

the time. For bonus credits this SSO can be done through something like Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) which means your employees only need to log into their own machines to access all the different back office systems without a username and password.

MARKETING: Included here are promotions (including bonuses), affiliate solutions, e-mail marketing solutions, campaign management systems and other marketing related functionality. Essentially as a first step you want to ensure that you have a way to complete all of these functions as the Marketing features are essential for your ability to attract more players and your ability to attract more revenues from your current and future player base. You may even double up on some of this functionality between your Player Account and game zone providers. There is an argument for example that promotions including bonuses should be handled across the board by the Player Account and not individual game zones as the Player Account contains the wallet but many game zones today offer game zone specific bonuses already. The thing to remember is that there are always bonuses that only the Player Account can handle. As an example you may have a promotional bonus that offers players a 200% bonus on first deposit. This bonus would have to be handled by your Player Account while all your Bingo bonuses may be handled by your

casino game provider or your Player Account.

REGULATORY VAULT: This component has many names and is sometimes provided by the gaming commission and sometimes it is a requirement that the operators must have a solution for themselves. In simplistic terms it's essentially a black box that you must send your ecommerce transactions and player data to so that the gaming commission has a copy of your records that cannot be altered. There is very little leeway in how this is implemented if you need it to comply with regulation so simply ensure your supplier is willing to commit that his solution will fulfill the requirements set forth in the regulation that governs your license.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

THE "BUILD QUALITY" OF THE SOFTWARE: This applies to all of the above and is near impossible to figure out from marketing material and sales pitches but it is still important so before you commit to a buying a product have someone who's technical expertise you trust grill the supplier on the way the solution is put together and how it connects to other solutions. You don't want to buy the software equivalent of something that is held together with blue tack and duct tape or only works perfectly in total isolation.

SUPPORTED CHANNELS: Although this is rapidly changing there are still many content providers out there that do not support any channel other than the (t)rusty old PC. Your demand as a modern Lottery should be for solutions that will work across the whole spectrum of Internet connected devices from the small, cheap and cheerful Android smartphones, through the high end smartphones; 5", 7", 9" tablets; small to high resolution PCs and the list goes on... the range of screen sizes and device types is in practical terms infinite but this is what you should demand that your content suppliers support. Read up on responsive web design, as a concept it's easy for non-technical people to comprehend and it is quite possibly the way out of this mess for everyone.

INITIAL DEPLOYMENT: Launching your first iLottery site in a regulated market is far from easy and if the legislation in the market you are launching in is still being developed, you and your partners (games, Player Account etc.) are in for one hell of a ride! Before you pick your partners make sure they are willing to commit to a launch schedule you are happy with. Working penalties into the contract is not a bad idea if you can swing it. A lot of companies have been burnt by picking partners that promise a day 1 launch and then fail to deliver. Often this is because the "partner" makes a strategy decision to allocate his resources elsewhere instead of getting your site live.

SOFTWARE UPDATES: Internet technologies are rushing ahead at a breathtaking speed with no sign of slowing down in the foreseeable future. The Lottery industry has had the luxury

of Adobe Flash as a common development platform for a good few years but Flash is rapidly becoming a footnote in the annals of technologies past. This will mean experimentation with newer technologies/standards like HTML5 and many updates to iLottery software as browsers change to accommodate HTML5 and new functionality becomes available, and if the past is any indication, stuff that "used to work" turns into stuff that "won't work at all". Ask your partners what their software update plan is. Does the operator have to pay for updates? How often is the software updated? How quickly is a critical issue fixed? Etc. Most content providers will make updates available without charge, or by just charging for the cost of deployment vs. the whole cost of development. This is a potential pitfall for Lotteries new to having an iLottery site so it's worth getting the details clear.

ANALYTICS: This could be an article in and of itself so let's keep it brief: 1) Your data is invaluable as it helps you tune your site and increase your revenue. 2) You may not be able to insert a tracking module into all the 3rd party content you offer on your site so ask your content providers about the analytical capabilities of their software. As with so many other things the best way to start with analytics is to "start using analytics." Even a basic implementation of Google Analytics will tell you a lot and you can tune what you track and how you track it as you go along. Just don't go live with your site with no analytics as you try to figure out the PERFECT analytical solution on paper.

IN CLOSING

Let's talk about what games you should offer through your new iLottery site. What games to offer depends entirely on the license you have. In general the best practice is to have all games available through all channels so that means anything you currently sell through any channel, including retail, should be available through your iLottery site as well. In practice there are certain games that only work in certain channels. A classic example of this is multiplayer poker which would be a very strange game to play through a traditional lottery terminal. Most Lotteries do not have the license to offer multiplayer poker but the example gets the point across nicely. Having a healthy mix of different types of products is desirable and cross selling between these products can be very successful.

If you have read all three of the articles in this series you should have a pretty good working understanding of what it takes to setup a successful iLottery site and what you need to watch out for when selecting partners for the different aspects of the site. If the task seems a bit daunting remember that iLottery revenue is the driving force between the growth of many lotteries around the world today and some receive over 50% of their revenue from the interactive (internet) channel already. ♦