

Geonomics

TOWARDS AN INTERACTIVE 2014

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The start of a new year is always a good time to reflect on the past twelve months and make resolutions, and here at Geonomics it's no different. As with any technology supplier, we are always in the process of testing and fine-tuning our offering continues, and in 2013 we learnt a great deal about consumer expectations and user experience. We are delighted to be making strides in our mission to help lotteries worldwide innovate and remain relevant in the twenty-first century, and are incredibly excited about our plans for 2014 – so much so that we wanted to take the opportunity to share them with you.

Many of you will be aware that Geonomics specialises in building geo-based, interactive games for lotteries all over the world; ones which revolve around squares or 'geos' on a map of their home country. In the last quarter of 2013, we began work on developing our GeoLotto offering in the UK, and in 2014 will be primarily focussed on refining the product into a game that pushes boundaries (no pun intended!) in terms of user engagement and, most importantly, creating a game that players love. And what we learn we want to share with our lottery partners.

Superfast internet connectivity and extensive social networks have brought together audiences that lottery providers can't afford to ignore. Whilst ultimately revolving around the same tried-and-tested lottery model, interactive lottery games call for a whole new way of thinking. Factors like player acquisition, user experience and online marketing, all require lottery operators and their partners to think about how to best engage an online audience. Ultimately, the process of rolling out an interactive lottery game like GeoLotto does not end when the game 'goes live.' Interactive games rely on analysing player feedback and preferences and constant refinement in order to remain relevant and desirable to play. At Geonomics, this is really what gets us excited – the challenging and exhilarating process of creating games that consistently evolve to suit player preference is what gets us out of bed every morning.

We've been working on arriving at a product proposition that does just this, and have been experimenting with various factors; the outcome of which we think will inform the future of interactive lottery gaming. These factors range from extensive research into user experience, draw frequency, prize structures, and cost to branding and marketing games in an online world. To use an example, in the UK, we've been changing the ways in which players win prizes – we have developed a way to offer flexible odds, meaning that we can replicate existing 6/49 games, or create brand new odds previously unattainable with games of this format. Likewise, we've been working with features and parameters like draw frequency, price point and prize payout, and refining player journeys to ensure they're as slick and engaging as possible.

As we continue to evolve our product in 2014, we want to pass this leading-edge knowledge on to lottery partners worldwide, and launch our improved products in new international territories. Currently, we're making progress with this on a global level, and we want to continue making headway in the American, European and Asian lottery markets.

We are also working on developing and expanding our portfolio of geo-based games. On top of our draw-based offerings, we have been working on our instant games such as 'Treasure Hunt' in which players 'dig' up geos to win instant prizes, as well as developing new themes that can be customised and skinned to suit individual lottery's users and their markets. We have also been experimenting with, and creating, a draw/instant hybrid. This version of our game, in which players 'dig' for instant prizes but are also entered into a draw at the same time, combines the instant fun of our Treasure Hunt product with the anticipation that builds up before a draw occurs.

There are lots of benefits to this hybrid model. It offers players the possibility of instant reward for interacting with the game, but also extends game play until the draw. It also encourages greater engagement with the game, as players are likely to purchase more instant tickets for entry into the draw – and gives players a sense of value-for-money because they see more chances to win a prize.

I firmly believe that 2014 will be an incredibly exciting year, not just for us at Geonomics, but for the lottery industry as a whole. Could this be the year that the industry takes those much-needed steps towards offering customers that interactive, engaging experience that they're used to in other aspects of their life? We think so. At Geonomics we're determined to use all of the new knowledge that we'll be acquiring about interactive lottery gaming to inform the rest of the industry to prove, using cold hard data from our own testing, that the interactive channel is one worth exploring. ♦

