

OFFERING SOMETHING NEW

TOM LIGHT, VP OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AT SBTECH, GIVES HIS PERSPECTIVE TO EGAMING REVIEW ON THE LATEST INDUSTRY TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS



TOM LIGHT

Tom Light was born and presently resides in Tel Aviv, Israel. Tom has lived and travelled worldwide and is highly knowledgeable and experienced working in various global regions. Tom has been working in the gaming industry for many years with a focus on casino operations and sports betting.

eGaming Review (eGR): What do you see as the most significant current trend in in-play betting?

Undoubtedly cash-out. The cash-out numbers for SBTEchs operators are exceptional and increasing daily.

Two direct positive effects:

1. Every time the punter cashes-out he is doubling his turnover, as he will re-use the cashed-out funds to place another bet.
2. The margin is guaranteed and the savings in additional punters winnings is massive. When we look at the improvement of profitability in our BI, it is apparent that the money we would have lost dramatically outweighs the money we would have won, thanks to our cash-out feature. Furthermore, we see the traction on acquisition for operators, which evidently stands out to be more attractive with the cash-out feature. In the UK it is publicised on every TV sportsbook ad.

eGR: In light of the growth of mobile and online, how can the land-based sports betting industry ensure it remains relevant? How does SBTEch provide solutions in this respect?

TL: The issue begins when the activities are separated; when it is being looked at as two different businesses. In most shops the odds are less competitive and it is almost like the punter has a fee-for-retail that he has to pay.

Today, operators need to understand and grasp the new way-of-thinking by placing the punter in the centre.

Picture a day in the life of a punter: he wakes up in the morning and makes some tennis bets on his mobile device while getting ready or even on the train. Afterwards, he goes to work, places some more bets from his computer, goes to lunch, stops at a betting shop on the way back, takes some of his winnings, makes another bet, then he goes home and sits in the living room with his iPad while watching the main football game and making some in-play fast-market bets.

All of this is simply and easily done, from one-account, one-wallet, one experience. The omni-channel.

eGR: What does recent M&A activity (GVC-Bwin, PaddyPower-Betfair, Ladbrokes-Coral, Unibet-Stan James) mean for the future of the market?

TL: Clearly we see the majority of these deals have a positive influence on the share prices, but lets get more specific:

GVWin Traditional M&A, cuts operational and IT costs/resources. Most of the revenue is kept, which will consequently rise profitably. I believe Kenny [Alexander, GVC CEO] made a good decision here.

Paddfair In my opinion, a bit risky and has already risen some red flags with the UKCMA, which has opened an investigation regarding the consolidation of Paddy Power and Betfair, as the competition may lessen within the country.

Lads-Coral This merge makes a lot more sense, especially on the technology aspect. They both use similar platforms and technology. If done correctly, it should reduce resource redundancy and allow their brands to focus on what they do best.

UniStan Great acquisition? Could be. This is dependent on Unibets near-future strategy. Stan James is much stronger as a brand in the UK compared to Unibet, which mainly operates in Scandinavia. If Unibet decides to keep the Stan James brand, in the UK, I can absolutely see the value in this deal. Although, according to a recent *R* interview, this might not be the case.

eGR: How has SBTEch created the ultimate casino-like experience for casino players who want to gamble on their favourite sports without being pushed to become a traditional punter?

Fast markets, aka micro markets, are the one-minute bets on football, next point in tennis, what will happen next, etc. These markets have an immense effect on the turnover, as the punter is able to wager and roll over his funds multiple times, within the same event, while getting constant winnings from the minute before.

This goes hand-in-hand with second-screen betting (betting from your mobile device while watching the game on TV) and the live streaming feature. Both lock the punter in one event, while the fast markets allow him to continuously place bets throughout the whole 90 minutes.

Overall, not only do these markets gamify and enhance user experience, they also increase turnover, margin and efficiently cross-sell acquisitions, as they attract many non-traditional punters as well. ∑