

Betting USA: how it can live up to the hype

More than a year has passed since the PASPA repeal. As soon as this landmark Supreme Court ruling was issued the race was on for which States would be the first to join the Silver State (Nevada) in regulating sports betting and, in turn, which operators would be the first to launch within these newly regulated States in their effort to grasp the so called first-mover advantage. To date, more than a dozen states have already legalized sports betting and additional states are in the process of doing so, while numerous legal sportsbooks have launched mainly on casino property and on the internet as well as in lottery retailer locations.

In the year since sports betting has been legal in the nascent US market, we've seen an explosion of fan engagement and growing revenue potential for lotteries and private operators, but now that the first rush has gone, industry focus is shifting from fast launches to offering optimal solutions and entertaining player experiences. In this sense, operators in the process to engage with the sports betting market need to think strategically to make the most of this lucrative opportunity, as the best product and an unparalleled player experience may be far more important in the long run than the first-mover advantage. As it was proven in other jurisdictions, successful operators in the US market will be those that proceed beyond mere localization, and not limit their offer to US sports and US odds formats and bet types. The market leaders will be those that provide the most relevant sports betting experiences that ultimately drive the engagement of the US players.



But this, as evidenced in the newly regulated states, is no easy task. The US market covers a large number of player or potential player segments with diverse preferences, from the longtime betting enthusiasts already familiar with Nevada-style or internet sports betting offerings, to the casual fantasy sports players or even the first-time bettors who may not have any entrenched biases as to a sports betting offering but see sports betting more as an entertainment option. This vast diversity of play styles and motivations will be further amplified as the US market grows, since player tastes will steadily diverge into something new

and distinct from the typical user experience in European and other markets.

There are certain nuances to the US market, spanning from features of the current sports betting offerings to the particulars of the American consumer behavior which will play a role in shaping the right path to sports betting excellence. First, it is the breadth and depth of the sports offering which needs to be adapted to the particulars of the most popular US sports. Second, it must incorporate markets that instill interest in the US player community. Additionally, the US players are used to the presentation of bets in Las Vegas but, given the multitude of available events and markets enabled through modern wagering technology, it is required to transform the experience into a more casual and connective experience.

Another important dynamic is the plethora of statistics in US sports and the broad cultural appreciation for them, while the longtime familiarity of the younger demographics with fantasy sports is favorable for offering prop bets.

Although very popular in Europe and Asia, in-play still has some way to go in America, as US bettors are historically accustomed to wagering on games before they start and so player education will be important to increase the appeal and relevance of in-play which has a vast room to grow given the suitability of US sports' gameplay for in-play markets.

The availability of sports content will also play an important role as Americans are sports enthusiasts who perceive wagering more as a fun and entertainment side activity. This is evident from the high viewership of sports events. The delivery of rich content in-store or via app-streaming services will provide for an overall entertaining and connective experience.

All of the above amplify the importance of visualizing the most relevant data and offering players of varying experience the right information through user-friendly UIs. Merging all that content and delivering it through a curated location for players to consume will play a key role in enabling the most rewarding player's journey. The mobile is the go-to-tool for bettors all around the world, and this will undoubtedly be true in the U.S. as well. But relevant content delivery will need to extend to physical locations through digital screens and/or self-service betting kiosks.

Finally, channel convergence and omni-channel retailing is a powerful trend in the US. Growing consumer acceptance of concepts like Buy-online-pick-up-in-store (BOPIS) indicates that retail presence is a powerful asset which can be leveraged to engage and connect the US player with a sports betting offering.

For operators to best address this vast and diverse player audience and characteristics specific to the US market, they need to be equipped with technologies and solutions that enable them to cater to a broad diversity of consumer tastes and expectations. The key qualities that wagering solutions need to possess to enable a successful venture into the lucrative, yet challenging US marketplace: breadth and depth of sports betting offering, broad personalization features and true omni-channel delivery without neglecting the cornerstone requirements of confidentiality, integrity, security and availability.

INTRALOT, with experience in 15+ regulated sports betting jurisdictions globally and longtime presence in the US lottery market, has built its wagering solutions based on global bettor insights and has tailored them to address the challenges and opportunities present in the US market by augmenting and personalizing the player experience. INTRALOT Orion sports betting platform offers an unparalleled breadth and depth of US-relevant assets and serves the entire player journey across multiple channels while offering a single point

learning models. In addition, INTRALOT Orion encompasses a wide array of risk-management tools and automations including algorithmic pricing models and customer profiling, designed to effectively balance product attractiveness with profitability. Our INTRALOT Orion platform, coupled with our industry-best on-property solutions, from retailer terminals to digital content delivery solutions and self-service wagering terminals, supports the successful launch and sustainable development of profitable sports betting operations in the



of control of all the player touchpoints - including desktop, native mobile application and on-property terminals. It is designed to simultaneously feed multiple, diverse online and offline customer touchpoints, with the most relevant content.

INTRALOT Orion is built with a view towards optimizing current and future sports betting trends. It incorporates rich personalization options and capabilities in its product and player-facing modules with further personalization features in the roadmap including the use of advanced behavioral analytics and predictive AI-based and machine

burgeoning US market always in compliance with state regulations and in support of the uncompromising standards of government-sponsored operators. ■