

Hit the jackpot

Alison Digges of **GTECH G2** shares her views on how the increasing regulation of online gaming will open up opportunities to the bingo market



Alison Digges is group director of operations and services at GTECH G2. Within this role Alison is responsible for all gaming operations for the groups commercial and WLA customers. Prior to this, Alison was managing director of St Minver and was responsible for the launch and development of the International Bingo Network

EXPERTISE IS WHAT WILL SEPARATE the winners and eventual losers as incoming regulation and the demands of customers shapes the future landscape for online bingo. Alison Digges of GTECH G2 explains how to keep up with the increasingly competitive market.

eGR: As one of the leading online bingo suppliers within the industry, how do you see the online bingo market developing over the next five years and how will GTECH G2 cater for these new developments?

Alison Digges (AD): By far the biggest development in the online bingo market is the change in regulation that is starting to take place across Europe. I believe, the growth of regulated markets will be the biggest driver in the coming years to the online bingo market. GTECH G2 is very well positioned to lead this development. Through our extensive experience working in regulated markets and supplying our G2 Bingo product to lotteries like Veikkaus in Finland and Win2 Day in Austria, put simply, we understand these markets. The US Market, if and when it opens up, will without doubt become the largest market in the world, representing a huge opportunity for GTECH G2.

I envisage that within the next five years, most European countries and North America will introduce regulated online gaming, which will have the effect of growing the market over and above where it is today as new entrants enter the bingo market. However there is a concern that bingo will not always be included within the initial legislation (as is the case in Denmark and Spain), which could pose a threat to the bingo market in the short term, but we would expect this to be added into legislation as we have seen in Italy with the recent launch of regulated online bingo in that market.

Looking at the bingo proposition itself, players will continue to demand more feature/functionality and innovation. The evolution of more integrated social media features and increasing use of live presenters, as well as increasing sophistication of mini and side games will all lead to a more engaging bingo experience with the focus around entertainment, value and choice. GTECH G2 will continue to develop our product with

new releases scheduled on a quarterly basis

We are excited about the next five years; GTECH G2 welcomes the move to more regulated markets and the ability to leverage our expertise in these environments. It will also allow us to continue to develop our products to become more sophisticated and meet the needs of the players that play on our bingo networks or stand alone bingo sites.

eGR: How have the needs of customers evolved and what challenges and opportunities do these changing needs pose?

AD: Players have certainly become more sophisticated in the last few years, and we have seen them demand more from the bingo operator in terms of product functionality and engaging and entertaining new features. At GTECH G2 we have developed sophisticated player segmentation models to allow our CRM teams to communicate in a more targeted and effective way to increase player values and gain a better understanding of player behaviour across the various markets we operate bingo in.

Players want new exciting content and a more engaging experience as well as the chance to win 'life changing' jackpots and smaller guaranteed jackpots. G2 operations team has worked hard on creating some of the most competitive and compelling jackpots on the market.

We have also developed and grown the success of live presenters (now in 6 languages) with the focus on creating a 'bingo show' rather than simply a presenter calling bingo numbers, which for a lot of players can be somewhat dull. We regularly add new content to the shows and exciting new games to keep the 'live presenter' experience fresh and alive.

At the same time we have recognised the importance of mini and side games, in particular branded gaming content such as Chippendales or *CSI Miami*, and to regularly refresh content to keep up player interest.

eGR: How does GTECH G2 take a proactive approach in ensuring responsible gaming? What are the issues involved, and how can gaming technology be deployed to best tackle problem gaming?

AD: Responsible gambling is at the heart of every decision we make. Working with lotteries such as Veikkaus in Finland and Win2Day in Austria means we have to ensure responsible gambling and player protection is at the forefront of everything we do. We have introduced substantial measures to monitor players and ensure we are protecting the vulnerable.

eGR: What are the key issues which face the sector today and how does GTECH G2 effectively deal with them?

AD: As discussed earlier, we strongly believe the biggest issue facing the industry today is the changing face of regulation; this is something GTECH G2 welcomes. We believe GTECH G2 represents the best choice for customers in regulated markets.

The other big issue is of course increased competition within the bingo market, again we welcome this at GTECH G2 as it helps to keep us fresh and ensures we are constantly striving to offer our customers and players the best bingo experience possible and to innovate.

eGR: Does GTECH G2 envisage the development of new bingo markets? What impact will this have on existing bingo markets and in a wider sense, the gaming sector?

AD: We envisage that the North American bingo market will develop following changes in regulation and that this will become the largest market in the world due to the huge popularity of bingo across the US. We also expect that as regulation comes in and operators are allowed to advertise in the mainstream media that there will be an increased awareness of online bingo, which will make it have a mass market appeal. In terms of impact on the gaming sector overall, we expect that the increased growth of the bingo market will help to grow the overall market as it feeds more player liquidity into the market and attracts players to spend across sectors.

eGR: What does the future hold for GTECH G2? Which initiatives will GTECH G2 use to maintain its dominance in the industry?

AD: We have just reached our second anniversary since launch and everyone at GTECH G2 is very proud of the business and how it has grown and developed. The future is exciting and fast paced. We will continue our successes with lotteries such as Veikkaus and our success in regulated and cross border markets. We have always been very proud of our clean reputation.

We are also always developing our product and continuing our reputation for innovation and quality. We will continue to be true to our player centric ethos and using the tools and expertise we have to develop new games and updates that meet the need of the most important person in the industry the player!

GTECH G2 is excited about the future of Bingo, the future for us is all about new opportunities. ❖

