“Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.”

Seneca (ca. 4 BC – 65 AD; Roman philosopher, dramatist, and writer)
Gaming: Consolidation drives deal-making

The thirst for scale is constantly being fuelled by growth rate pressures, a regulatory dimension in flux, and increased competition and costs. A quick glance at a selection of recent deal activity is testament to this. This space is also not limited to the largest players only, with smaller deals adding colour to the M&A fabric.

KPMG’s Deal Advisory team leverages its cross border Merger and Acquisition network and dedicated gaming professionals to identify, execute, and support you throughout the entire transaction cycle and beyond.

Key (Left to right)
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- Churchill Downs Incorporated & Big Fish Games
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- Scientific Games & Bally Technologies
- Aristocrat & Video Gaming Technologies (VGT)
- Cherry & Game Lounge
- Playtech & TradeFX
- Betsson & Europe-Bet
- Optimal Payments & Skrill
- NYX Gaming Group & Chartwell and Cryptologic
- Unibet & iGame Group
- Entertain & Gamesys
- GVC Holdings & bwin.party
- Ladbrokes PLC and Coral Group
- Paddy Power PLC and Betfair Group PLC
- Activision Blizzard & King

Source: Bloomberg L.P, Thomson Reuters, iGaming Business

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PHOTOGRAPHY
Alan Carville / George Scintilla / Fritz Grimm / Viewingmalta

PRINTING
Gutenberg Press, Malta

PUBLICATION DATE
January 2016

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The story of Malta’s iGaming sector is currently being rewritten. The island was the first EU member state to introduce iGaming-specific regulations, and its licensing regime has attracted hundreds of iGaming companies to operate from the Mediterranean island. However, this version, say operators and service providers, is out of date. While Malta continues to appeal to iGaming operators and still boasts one of the highest concentrations of iGaming companies in Europe, the sector is evolving and embracing new opportunities. Malta’s new story features the island as a thriving service centre for all things gaming.

A robust regulatory framework, an accessible regulator and a cost-competitive highly skilled workforce have allowed Malta to emerge as Europe’s iGaming capital. While many European states have begun to regulate the iGaming industry to cash in on the tax revenue and employment opportunities, the island is confident in withstanding competition and is busy reshaping itself. As the EU’s smallest member state with a population of 420,000 and just over 316 square kilometres in area, Malta is nimble and able to adapt quickly. The island’s leaders are optimistic that these qualities will help Malta retain its position as a centre for international iGaming business in the years ahead. The country has proven that it can deliver: while Malta only gained independence 50 years ago, joined the EU in 2004 and the Eurozone in 2008, it is considered as one of the most successful small island states boasting one of the best-performing economies in the Eurozone.

**EARLY DAYS**

Few countries in the world have a vision for the gaming sector as defined as Malta’s. The first online gaming businesses arrived on the island in the late 1990s, well before the online boom. Unlike many other countries that protected their monopolies, Malta allowed commercial operators to set up and enter the gaming market, with the first online betting businesses established under the Public Lotto Ordinance in 2000. The government quickly recognised the need for a dedicated regulatory framework, set up a regulatory authority for this young industry and released the Remote Gaming Regulations in 2004 just before Malta joined the European Union. This move gave licensees the added benefit of being located in and regulated by a jurisdiction that forms part of the largest single market in the world.

**GAMING JURISDICTION OVERVIEW**

**A New Chapter**

As the iGaming industry is going through major reform, with many jurisdictions in transition between pre and post-regulation, Malta has not lost its appeal as a hotspot for gaming operators, game developers and service providers. The island is now pitching to become a leader in the provision of game-related services to companies based in Europe and beyond.

*“The introduction of EU national licensing regimes has strengthened Malta’s position as the island can use its iGaming ecosystem to now also service multiple jurisdictions. The days where a licence fits all are over. However, the ancillary services used to service those iGaming operators are the same, and in Malta one can find the full spectrum in a very small space. The Malta Gaming Authority, the service providers as well as the Malta-based gaming operators are also working proactively to achieve a unique but long lasting synergy.”*

ROGER A. STRICKLAND JR
Director of CSB Group
DIVERSIFIED SECTOR
Malta is regarded as a world-class base because of the high quality of its industry-specific services and infrastructure. Its established state-of-the-art telecommunications infrastructure delivers round-the-clock connectivity, while infrastructure investments in this area over the past few years have cemented the island’s position as the leading EU jurisdiction for iGaming operators. The presence of industry support services such as data centres, online payment processors, security auditors, gaming software developers and platform providers, contribute to a tailor-made environment that is conducive to growing a successful business. The island also boasts technical expertise to support critical operations in areas such as search engine optimisation, as well as affiliate management companies, with experienced consultants always on hand. Equally, the island’s lawyers and accountants have a wealth of experience, thus ensuring that a vibrant and creative cluster of talent and know-how is in place to help companies manage their operations.

THE MALTA PACKAGE
Beyond the regulatory framework, one of the main benefits of establishing operations in Malta is the quality of human resources. The Maltese workforce is renowned for its strong work ethic, loyalty and high productivity. However, the iGaming industry requires specialist knowledge that at times is difficult to find in Malta. As a result, two thirds of those employed in the sector are foreign expats, attracted by the rapid growth of the industry and the added value of living on a Mediterranean island. When it comes to taxation of gaming companies, Malta’s approach is widely seen as to be within the acceptable range, and tax can be as low as 0.5% on the gross amount of bets accepted for a sportsbook. In addition, tax is capped at €466,000 per year, whereas taxation under other licensing regimes makes it difficult for operators to generate profit. It is not only Malta’s gaming tax that is attracting operators; the island’s corporate tax regime is also doing its bit. While companies are taxed at 35%, a refund system brings down the effective tax rate to around 5%. Malta has also introduced a 15% tax cap on the salaries of highly qualified foreign professionals in the gaming sector, which allows operators to offer expat employees very competitive packages.

BIG BUSINESS
Ask any Maltese today about the country’s business strengths, and you will likely hear about Malta’s status as European gaming hub. Today, the gaming industry contributes around 10 to 12% to Malta’s GDP and employs around 8,000 people directly, with an additional 2,000 to 3,000 providing ancillary services such as web hosting, security auditing or legal work. With around 270 operators now based on the island holding 490 licences for online offerings such as casino-style games, lotteries or sportsbooks, the industry is proving that tight regulation and stringent supervision offer the ideal conditions for remote gaming companies to succeed and flourish.

Major companies such as Betsson, Betfair, Interwetten, Unibet, bet-at-home and Tipico have long understood Malta’s advantages as a gaming jurisdiction. New businesses are also flowing in: 2015 saw leading online bookmaker Pinnacle Sports and industry heavyweight bet365 receive Malta licences to name but two examples, while long-established players announced plans to expand their operations. They all comment that Malta offers them a stable and secure framework in which to carry out their business.

“Malta is not only a licensing jurisdiction, but it is a fully-fledged gaming services centre. Over the years, Malta managed to position itself as THE major European centre in this sector, similarly to what the City of London is for Financial Services. The strong regulatory framework attracted (and still attracts) hundreds of gaming companies to Malta while it induced the growth of a comprehensive community of service providers, which have acquired unparalleled experience in servicing the gaming sector, to the extent that the majority of licence applications across Europe are serviced from Malta.”

REUBEN PORTANIER
Founder & Executive Advisor of Avviza

“It would be great if the Maltese authorities keep on pushing to have the Maltese gaming licence valid across all the EU countries irrespective of their local legislations. In the end the EU should be one market with no boundaries. It would also be beneficial to decrease taxes for high level senior managerial positions in order to attract talent to the Island and increase investment, while providing training and development opportunities for non-experienced personnel who want to join the gaming industry should be another priority.”

REBECCA BALDACCHINO
Head of Affiliate Product, Quasar Limited
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NETWORKING & SUPPORT
On an international level, Malta is regarded as one of the most competent and experienced jurisdictions to consult with when guidance and advice are required. The government and the MGA are also ensuring that Malta’s voice is heard on a European level by promoting the country’s view on how the sector should be regulated. Locally, the Malta Remote Gaming Council represents the industry, while the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry hosts a business unit for iGaming. A string of networking events are also organised in Malta. The Summit of iGaming (SiGMA) and the Malta iGaming Seminar (MiGS) offer operators, affiliates and service providers the opportunity to network with like-minded people and potential investors. In 2016, the International Association of Gaming Advisors (IAGA) and the Gaming Regulators European Forum (GREF) will also be holding their joint International Gaming Summit in Malta.

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE
Developments such as these show that the island hasn’t lost its dynamism, although Europe’s iGaming market has changed considerably over the past few years. Malta has always been an advocate of online gaming within the EU’s single market, believing that an operator licensed on the island should be allowed to provide services across Europe. At first glance, the introduction of national authorisation models in many EU countries, which means iGaming operators targeting players in a number of countries need to hold multiple licences, seems to make Malta less attractive as an iGaming hub due to the small size of the local market. However, Malta’s iGaming sector is working together to develop ways to recharge the industry, acknowledging the fact that past successes are not a guarantee for the future.

RETAINING POLE POSITION
One initiative is the overhaul of the gaming legislation that the MGA initiated in 2015 to streamline, consolidate and future-proof all gaming sectors under one legislative umbrella. A key change envisioned is the design of a new licensing framework and the introduction of only two different licences: a Business-to-Business and a Business-to-Consumer licence. Malta’s gaming industry is eagerly awaiting the implementation of this new structure and the steady and constant increase in gaming licence applications with the Malta Gaming Authority evidences that Malta has remained an attractive and practical jurisdiction for remote gaming operations. Some of the principle advantages include availability of industry-specific infrastructure, serious regulation, low gaming taxes, Malta’s status as an onshore financial centre, opportunities for tax optimisation and an open-door policy regulator that champions the right to free movement of services.

DAVID GONZI
Managing Partner of Gonzi & Associates, Advocates

“In the context of new national licensing regimes for gambling in the EU, operating under the seal of the MGA is equivalent to tested excellence. Foreign regulators hold the Maltese gaming regime in high regard to the extent that the prior obtaining of a Malta licence is generally advisable. Malta is increasingly becoming the hub for EU multi-licensed operations.”

SILVANA ZAMMIT
Partner of Chetcuti Gauchi Advocates

Major companies such as Betsson, Betfair, Interwetten, Unibet, bet-at-home and Tipico have long understood Malta’s advantages as a gaming jurisdiction. New businesses are also flowing in: 2015 saw leading online bookmaker Pinnacle Sports and industry heavyweight bet365 receive a Malta licence to name two examples.
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other processes that are being simplified, and the MGA is undergoing consultations with industry stakeholders to gain opinions and recommendations on proposed measures that will improve the regulatory framework. In 2015, the Maltese government and the MGA have also launched a new promotional body ‘GamingMalta’, which is expected to take over the marketing of Malta as an iGaming jurisdiction during 2016. A new Gaming Academy to train local and foreign people to acquire the required skills to work in the sector is also in the pipeline. Ultimately, the aim is to make Malta a centre of excellence for game-related companies, where executive decisions are made that drive global gaming businesses and where start-ups and innovative ideas are nurtured.

SERVICING GLOBAL GAMING BUSINESSES
This is already happening. The industry is witnessing increased management, structuring and financing activity, and the island is developing into a European hub for the operation of multi-jurisdictional online platforms. Some operators choose the island as a nominal base, without applying for a licence in Malta. Instead, they use Maltese companies to hold their licences to operate in other countries to take advantage of Malta’s tax-efficient corporate structures. More important than having been the first to enter the market, is that Malta understands the iGaming industry’s needs better than others. The island boasts specialists and the necessary resources in all lines of services that gaming companies require. These can be used by gaming operators irrespective of where they are licensed and where they are selling their products.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD
Malta is also embracing opportunities for growth in a number of areas. Malta’s new regulatory framework will cater for new and innovative gaming products. The MGA also emphasises that operators offering betting on eSports, professional video game competitions that have seen explosive growth in 2015, can already be licensed in Malta under the current framework. Gametech is also very much on Malta’s radar, and the island is building a conducive environment for iGaming and tech start-ups, including access to incubation facilities. Malta is also positioning itself to offer new services that are currently not provided in other jurisdictions – Malta can be a disaster recovery site, a base for payment companies and back office activities.

Initially customer service has been a secondary concern for many operators, however, the competitive pressures of recent years have seen this function become more important when it comes to player acquisition and retention. There is a strong case this trend will continue, and Malta is expected to benefit. Big data is also playing a key role in back-office support, and Malta has the opportunity to become a leader in this fast-emerging field. With the right investment and a stronger focus on big data applications from an educational perspective, Malta could become a key hub for data scientists and analysts. Companies established in Malta may also benefit from the recent trend of mergers and acquisitions in the iGaming industry. While many deals included industry giants, Maltese firms have also started to attract investment, with global gaming supplier Intralot buying a 35% stake in Bit8, a Maltese gaming software development company.

HOLISTIC APPROACH
While Malta has long been the default choice for iGaming companies due to its strong regulatory framework, in 2015 Malta caught the public eye due to allegations made by Italian authorities that a handful of companies were involved in money laundering and links with the Calabrian mafia. While it has not yet been established whether the suspected iGaming

With around 270 operators now based on the island holding 490 licences for online offerings such as casino-style games, lotteries or sportsbooks, the industry is proving that tight regulation and stringent supervision offer the ideal conditions for remote gaming companies to succeed and flourish.

"The ongoing process of national authorisation models, particularly in a fragmented Europe, is resulting in a consolidation of key market leaders that can sustain growth in a highly competitive market. Irrespective of the market, players want a variety of content that suits their mood and tastes, and they want to enjoy the content when they want. I believe Malta can lead in developing such content to global markets."

JOSE MICALLEF
General Manager of B3W Group
companies were involved in any illegal activities, the MGA has suspended the licences and made it very clear that illegality and abuse will not be tolerated. The MGA said that the case also showed that regulatory mechanisms and tools have a very short shelf life. Compliance is not sufficient; measures and evidence of effectiveness are equally important. Malta’s new regulatory framework is expected to take these factors into account.

When it comes to future-proofing Malta’s status as an iGaming hub, Malta is seeking to improve its operating environment. For an operator the cost of getting licensed in a country can be quite high, as it is not just paying the relevant fees, but complying with distinct and many times varied requirements. As with other industries, cost efficiency is a key aspect of any gaming operator today. Malta is very aware of these challenges and is committed to and focused on streamlining its processes. However, the industry says a more holistic approach is required. In addition to reducing bureaucracy and simplifying procedures, there is a need to introduce more incentives for both local and foreign professionals to join the gaming industry and to invest in infrastructure to address certain capacity constraints in terms of schooling and kindergarten facilities, as well as office space.

The island boasts specialists and the necessary resources in all lines of services that gaming companies require. These can be used by gaming operators irrespective of where they are licensed and where they are selling their products. Initially customer service has been a secondary concern for many operators, however, the competitive pressures of recent years have seen this function become more important when it comes to player acquisition and retention. There is a strong case this trend will continue and Malta is expected to benefit.

FUTURE OUTLOOK
Although the gaming sector seems to be flourishing, some analysts question whether Malta will remain ahead. Developments of the coming years are difficult to predict in the fast-moving iGaming industry, but one thing seems clear: growth in Malta will be stifled if the sector cannot obtain the skills it requires. Investment in education and talent attraction are key to strengthen Malta’s position. A challenge for Malta will be to retain the industry base in times of national licensing regimes. While there are some initiatives from the European Commission to get to a level of technical standardisation and increased cooperation between regulators, most industry commentators are not hopeful that a single market for gaming will become a reality in the short to medium term. However, even though more countries are emerging with their own licensing regime, most professionals do not expect a drastic slow-down of activity in Malta. For operators active in more than one country Malta still makes sense. There are also many countries outside of Europe that operators can target from Malta. Although Malta’s role in iGaming will likely remain significant, its future course may veer away further from licensing and towards worldwide service provision.
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The Next Generation of Gaming Regulation

Joseph Cuschieri, Executive Chairman of the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA), is convinced that Malta will remain a top jurisdiction if it manages to successfully reinvent itself. He says the MGA is making good progress in future-proofing Malta’s status as a gaming hub of excellence.

Malta has attracted some 270 iGaming operators and is widely regarded as Europe’s iGaming capital. How did Malta become the jurisdiction it is today?

Malta started regulating iGaming way back in 2004 at a time when it was a growing, novel economic activity yet nomadic and largely unregulated which required a more specific approach in order to address the risks usually associated with gambling. Our framework was designed to make Malta a remote gaming hub of repute, and we put a lot of effort in promoting Malta internationally. Today we host companies such as Betsson, Unibet, Betfair, Tipico and Bwin amongst many other prestigious names. The gaming sector in Malta currently generates around 10% of our GDP, and we are one of the leading iGaming jurisdictions globally. In 2015, the sector kept on growing, and we issued some 87 new licences. Among the companies seeking a licence were newly set-up companies, but most companies were already licensed in Malta or elsewhere and were expanding their operations, thus seeking additional licences.

When you took over the MGA, you stressed the need for innovation and renewal. What initiatives have you implemented so far?

The iGaming industry is renowned for its speed of innovation and general dynamism. The regulator must keep pace if we do not want to risk a total misfit and failure of our efforts at implementing the national gaming policy. Therefore, innovation and renewal are essential. Malta is a top gaming jurisdiction, but we cannot expect to keep growing at the same pace. The fact that many companies based here are expanding their operations is very positive, and we are seeking to scale up our regulatory performance to keep and sustain the industry in Malta for the future.

In 2015, the MGA initiated a number of policy and legislative reviews that would lead to
the general regulatory overhaul, such as those relating to digital games of skill, cloud solutions for iGaming and other network infrastructure, competence requirements of key officials, and outsourcing to mention the most salient. We have also updated the external and internal guidelines on the fit and propriety assessments, and the general on-boarding processes and will continue to work on our proposed enhanced automated reporting system for both land-based and online segments. Adjacent to these reviews, we launched GamingMalta, which will take over the promotion of Malta as a gaming jurisdiction by mid-2016. We also started working on the Gaming Academy, which will become an educational body for the local and international gaming industry.

Our main focus though has been on the development of a new Gaming Act, which will create a coherent governance and regulatory framework for all forms of gaming based on a set of common principles. The new Gaming Act will provide for the necessary regulatory agility required now and over time to address the ever-changing industry structure, products and consumer behaviour. Our aim is to create more value for the licensees and for the Maltese jurisdiction, while creating an enhanced consumer protection regime in the short and longer term. This is what I mean when I say that our aim is to future-proof Malta’s status as a gaming hub of excellence.

**What are the core issues that you are seeking to address with this new legislation?**

As I indicated in my previous reply, our main aims are coherence and performance of both the industry and the jurisdiction. The measures being foreseen to attain these aims are very wide. Among our priorities is the widening of the scope of competence of the MGA and, indeed, of the regulatory framework. This would allow us to keep under review, or even to regulate, any gaming activity warranting our intervention due to risks that this activity may pose to society. We are also seeking to streamline our licensing structures under two main categories, namely, Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C), in addition to simplifying pre- and post-licensing compliance processes, which will seek to eliminate any duplication of checks and speed up time to market for the operator, depending on the risk profile of the operator, new gaming product and business models. The critical and core issue to be addressed is game and technology neutrality, which will be more evident in the new framework. Coupled with other tailored initiatives, this will serve to foster innovation in the industry, enabling us to regulate other forms of gaming, and generally raise the standards of our service providers and protection levels of players.

The idea of regulating the affiliate sector is also a hot topic at the moment. Can you comment on this?

Affiliates are critical in the gaming supply chain, and regulators cannot ignore their existence and their part in the gaming marketing and offering. To date, and like many other regulators, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of sub-contracted third parties. However, due to the growing dependence on third parties for the provision of various services to the gaming provider, the MGA has focused its regulatory attention on the licensee who is ultimately responsible under the licence, irrespective of the conclusion of their work, which is expected to be concluded in a few weeks’ time, but the MGA does not exclude the possibility of including certain third-party providers under its regulatory oversight, especially those that provide critical activities.

“Developing a new Gaming Act is no piece of cake, and we are taking this very seriously. We are consulting with many experts and are thoroughly considering their suggestions. I do not mind if this process takes longer than envisioned if, at the end, we will have developed strong legislation that will serve the industry for the next 10 to 15 years.”
“We are also seeking to streamline our licensing structures under two main categories, namely, Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C), in addition to simplifying pre- and post-licensing compliance processes, which will eliminate any duplication of checks and speed up time to market for the operator.”

You were hoping to push some of these suggested changes through quicker. What held up the process, and when do you expect to see them taking effect?

This is true. For instance, we were hoping to have the Gaming Academy already in place, but just developing the right corporate and governance structure proved to be more time-consuming than expected. Considering where we are today, it might take up to two years until the first training sessions will be delivered at the Academy. We had also planned to roll out more regulatory changes ahead of the actual overhaul. However, the inter-dependence of measures with those being totally re-designed by the overhaul mean that they have to be rolled out in one phase in order to avoid any imbalance or undue impact on the industry, even if we have to operate two parallel systems for a transitory period.

Developing a new Gaming Act is also no piece of cake, and we are taking this very seriously. We are consulting with many experts and are thoroughly considering their suggestions. I do not mind if this process takes longer than envisioned if, at the end, we will have developed strong legislation that will serve the industry for the next 10 to 15 years. The draft legislation has just been completed. This year we will reach out to the industry to gain their thoughts and opinions on our suggested changes before entering the legislative process for its enactment by Parliament.

The MGA has increased its staff to more than 100 people to perform the regulatory function more efficiently. Have you had the outcomes that you had projected?

Not yet. We have improved, but we need to continue reducing bureaucracy and instal a more private-sector mind-set. We are aware that time to market is crucial for operators, and we are currently planning the re-engineering of our licensing and additional approval processes. Our current processes are often perceived as too burdensome ex-ante. The first big administrative shift will be the non-duplication of checks that an operator already complies with. The other, which we are approaching very cautiously, is to shift certain checks which today are conducted before an operator goes live with a compliance audit after an operator goes live with a new system. We are also going to introduce the concept of a licensing relationship officer, who would become an operator’s single point of contact for any queries and would actually take all the necessary actions to ensure a comprehensive and responsive service.

These shifts will be more pronounced once the new regulatory framework is adopted and implemented. We are very mindful of our primary function to regulate the industry and to protect the consumer. We want to be a business-friendly Authority, and I think we can be more pragmatic in certain cases, but we also need to assess risks and implications properly and ensure a seamless transition.
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“The MGA does not exclude the possibility of including certain third-party providers under its regulatory oversight, especially those that provide critical activities.”

One of the other criticisms is that you require more people with specific iGaming experience.

Our senior leadership team is highly competent, but when we have gaps in competencies, we source expertise from external service providers, including the Big 4 firms. When it comes to recruiting new employees, it is difficult for us to compete with the private sector, especially with the iGaming industry whose salary levels are often above average. We need to develop our own people, but this takes time. My plan is to build a strong and robust organisation, which can sustain a highly dynamic environment and future challenges. Perhaps we could be criticised for initiating too many changes in one go, but frankly I do not know what we could have postponed.

We are seeing new forms of gaming emerging such as eSports and Fantasy Sports. What’s the MGA’s position in this regard?

Under our current licensing system, we are already regulating the betting on eSports, but not eSports itself. We are of the opinion that when it comes to skill games, with no, or a negligible element of chance, regulatory intervention should not go beyond what is necessary to ensure a safe and fair environment for consumers. Our new regulatory framework will account for this, as we believe that this is an exciting growth area for Malta. For instance, digital games are popular in Asia and could be localised. Asia, along with South America, is one of our target markets, and we have already developed good relations there with some of the countries.

How do you expect the gaming industry to develop in Malta in the coming years taking into account the emergence of new licensing regimes in Europe?

The political boundaries in the European Union will remain. The recent push for the harmonisation of technical standards offers a window of opportunity. However, the existence of different licensing regimes is a reality we have learnt to live with. We are encouraged by a number of key trends though: Firstly, the Malta-based industry has continued to register growth in spite of the changes in Europe, and our strategy is to continue to add value, to sustain and foster a more efficient environment for its improved performance in the long term; secondly, the greatest and fastest rates of growth are seen in markets outside of Europe and in non-traditional gambling segments, and we are strategically working to attract a share of that market. Regulation for innovation – this is our roadmap for the future, and I am sure that our new regulatory framework has the potential to become a role model for others. We are also seeking to strengthen the environment for start-ups. My vision is for Malta to be the “Silicon Valley” of iGaming, and we have already done a lot to achieve this vision, but there is much more to do.
Malta’s gaming regulator, the Lotteries and Gaming Authority, changes its name to Malta Gaming Authority (MGA). The strategic move, which includes a complete refresh of its corporate branding, is aimed at better reflecting the industry’s challenges, focusing on Malta as the jurisdiction of choice and signalling a new vision for the industry.

The biggest ever jackpot win on a mobile device is won at LeoVegas. A Swedish player wins €5.6 million playing the Mega Fortune Touch slot on an iPad.

Malta’s iGaming community heads to the ICE Gaming Expo 2015 in London. The MGA is also present, and the MGA’s Executive Chairman, Joseph Cuschieri, receives the Gaming Intelligence Award after being listed as one of the Hot 50 2015 Backstage Heroes.

Leading online bookmaker Pinnacle Sports receives a licence from the Malta Gaming Authority. Pinnacle says the move initiated ambitious plans for expansion into regulated markets and the development of relevant B2B relationships.

GamingMalta, a new foundation tasked with promoting Malta as a gaming jurisdiction of excellence, is being launched. GamingMalta intends to enhance the communication channel between all the different stakeholders, including operators, intermediaries and service providers together, and to develop Malta as a differentiated brand of excellence in all aspects related to the industry.

The MGA meets the Spanish gaming regulator. The talks focus on EU and international developments and the establishment of bilateral relationship to foster further collaboration between the two jurisdictions.
MAY

The MGA participates in the Gaming Regulators European Forum (GREF) in Lithuania, discussing challenges being faced by European Gaming Regulators, such as the changes in taxation, responsible gambling and addiction, match fixing, and suspicious activity reporting.

Crystal Cruises are the first cruise liner company to be allowed to operate their onboard casinos while berthing in Malta and its territorial waters following the introduction of the Cruise Casino Regulations.

JUNE

The EU publishes the 4th Anti-Money Laundering Directive. Through the Directive, all providers of gambling services shall be subject to anti-money laundering obligations for the first time. The Directive must be transposed into Maltese law by June 2017.

The Malta eSports festival takes place in Valletta, inviting thousands of gamers to come and take part in various tournaments, talks, shows and quizzes.

Malta’s iGaming community heads off once again to the iGaming Super Show in Amsterdam.

JULY

Malta’s iGaming industry feels the spotlight of international media attention when several companies are accused of money laundering and suspected links to the Calabrian mafia. While the Malta Gaming Authority suspends the licences of the relevant companies, Italian police investigations are still ongoing to this day.

AUGUST

Malta pitches to host operations of one of the largest gaming companies in the world as Paddy Power and Betfair announce their merger.

Bet365 secures an online sports betting licence from the Malta Gaming Authority via its Hillside (New Media Malta) subsidiary. A company spokesperson explains that in addition to its Gibraltar-based hub, the company decided that an MGA licence is required “in order to obtain and maintain certain regulatory approvals as well as to support its operations in the evolving global regulatory environment.”
**SEPTEMBER**

The Responsible Gaming Foundation launches its national helpline to provide support to persons experiencing problems related to gambling in Malta. They can contact the helpline either through Freephone 1777 or through a chat facility which can be assessed through the Foundation’s website www.rgf.org.mt.

The MGA issues fit and proper guidelines setting out the minimum criteria applicable to all relevant persons falling under the activities regulated by the MGA. The criteria to assess whether a person is fit and proper include: honesty, integrity and reputation; competence and capability; as well as sound financial standing.

The annual Malta Sports Day brings together the iGaming community for an action packed day of sporting competition. The event is held in aid of local Maltese charities.

**OCTOBER**

Games developer NetEnt announces plans to increase its Maltese workforce by 20% and expand into new offices in 2016.

Malta’s iGaming community meets in Berlin for the annual EiG Gaming Expo.

Malta hosts its second ever European Poker Tour at the Portomaso Casino, the first being held earlier in March.

**NOVEMBER**

iGaming professionals from around the world visit Malta to attend the second edition of the iGaming Summit in Malta (SiGMA) and the seventh edition of the Malta iGaming Seminar (MiGS). Poker players from across the world also gather in Malta for the island’s largest poker event, the Battle of Malta.

The MGA signs a multilateral cooperation arrangement with EU/EEA gaming regulators, which aims to institutionalise and structure the cooperation between the different authorities relating to the exchange of information and best practices.

**DECEMBER**

The MGA issues guidelines on technical infrastructure for iGaming companies, highlighting that the MGA will follow the principles of proportionality, consistency of outcomes and suitability when assessing an operator’s setup.
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How important is the iGaming industry to Malta?

“The gaming sector has grown into one of our most successful industries and is the second largest contributor to the economy after tourism, constituting some 12% of our GDP. The sector has been a major contributor to Malta’s overall economic success. This year we predict that our economy will grow by over 4%. Malta has been described as the Gaming Capital of Europe – we host 270 gaming companies, and the sector employs some 8,000 people. We are now in the process of overhauling our regulatory framework to make a quality and a quantum leap forward. We want to add value for the companies that are located and licensed here, while encouraging those that are not yet here to put us on their agenda.”

CHRIS CARDONA
Minister for the Economy, Investment and Small Businesses

What are your priorities for the iGaming industry?

“Our mission is to continue supporting the iGaming industry, and we will do our utmost to facilitate its growth in a responsible way. Malta was the first country in Europe to identify this market. We enjoy a competitive advantage when compared to other jurisdictions because we offer a favourable climate in terms of regulations and taxation. However, if we want to succeed further and bring more work, we need to tackle some very important issues, among them the availability of staff. Not enough Maltese people have the right skills to work in this industry. This is also why we will be setting up a Gaming Academy. We have also created GamingMalta, which will become the promotional body for the industry and spearhead the further internationalisation of Malta’s iGaming sector, while the Malta Gaming Authority can focus on its regulatory duties.”

JOSÉ HERRERA
Parliamentary Secretary for Competitiveness and Economic Growth
How can Malta compete with other jurisdictions regulating iGaming?

“The Malta product and our unique selling points have evolved over time and will continue to do so. As the novelty of Malta’s iGaming regulation launched in 2004 wore off, with an increasing number of jurisdictions introducing national authorisation models, Malta remained attractive due to its strong regulatory framework and sophisticated ecosystem that supports the industry. The availability of a wide spectrum of ancillary business to business services, coupled with cost advantages, effectiveness and efficiency in doing business and a renewed focus on innovation, with the development of a next-generation regulatory framework in 2016, will ensure that Malta remains the jurisdiction of choice for iGaming companies, today and in the future.”

CHRISTIAN SAMMUT
Chairman - GamingMalta

What is your outlook for Malta’s iGaming industry over the next five years?

“The iGaming industry is a very dynamic and fast-moving industry, and it is not easy to predict how it will develop next year, let alone in five years’ time. However, all indications are that the industry in Malta will continue to consolidate itself. It is likely that we will see fewer new licences, but on the other hand we will likely see more substance in Malta, which means that operators based in Malta will increase their presence here. This will also be supported by the anticipated positive impact of the regulatory overhaul, making regulation more effective and efficient. I am confident that Malta will remain the jurisdiction of choice and the most attractive base for iGaming industry players.”

OLGA FINKEL
Chairperson - Remote Gaming Section, The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry

Looking across the entire gaming landscape, what other segments of the industry could be developed further in Malta?

“Software development and innovation in the area of apps, games, skill games, fantasy and eSports, as well as back-end software applications, data mining, hacking and security, should be stimulated and encouraged. It is an area that interests young graduates, while companies based in Malta could tap into and utilise their creativity and innovation skills. Incentives for these entrepreneurs and angel investors should be brought together in one area, where gaming companies can exchange ideas in a dynamic and business-friendly environment.”

SIMONA CAMILLERI
Deputy Chairman - Remote Gaming Section, The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry
How are mergers and acquisitions affecting the iGaming sector?

“The ongoing trend of mergers and acquisitions in the iGaming sector creates consolidation in the industry, enabling companies to join strengths and leverage their assets, clients and operations to deliver better experiences to players and operators world-wide. An interesting side effect is that the inevitable shakeup that follows an acquisition also leads to the creation of a new generation of start-up companies bringing about new services in new niches that are left uncovered by the larger companies. Larger companies are also using acquisitions as a tool to acquire more innovative and nimble companies while providing a ready-made framework to expand market reach.”

ANGELO DALLI
Member of the Executive Committee - Remote Gaming Section, The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry

Can you outline the challenges and opportunities that the iGaming industry is facing in Malta?

“The main challenges that we are facing in Malta are the increasing number of EU countries who are deciding to have their own regulation and licences. This lack of harmonisation, with every nation drawing up its own regulations, is resulting in duplication of work and higher compliance costs due to the increase in regulatory audits on all the licensed companies. The 4th Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Directive will also be a major challenge, and although we have one directive, the difficulties will start with the different interpretations that may be given by different countries to some of the directive’s clauses as well as different results of the risk assessments. Implementing the directive should provide the opportunity for the gaming industry to clearly demonstrate that it is an active partner in protecting the end customer and is serious about handling AML risks.”

GEORGE DEBRINCAT
Chairperson - Malta Remote Gaming Council
Member of the Executive Committee - Remote Gaming Section, The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry

What are your thoughts on the current international regulatory landscape?

“Gaming in Europe has changed considerably in the past few years. Since the start Malta has always promoted gaming within the EU’s single market, and Malta has always argued that a Malta-licensed operator should be allowed to provide services across Europe using its Maltese - “European” licence. Since there has never been any clear agreement between the EU members on gaming and how it is to be regulated, member states have adopted internal policies leading to national authorisation procedures. The major challenge we face today is lack of full recognition of the Malta licence in other European jurisdictions. This has increased the cost of operations for operators. Most countries that have regulated gaming have proclaimed they are doing this to protect players and their funds, however one might wonder if this is the case or if this is being used as an excuse for tax collection purposes.”

DANIELA GRIOLE
Deputy Chairperson - Malta Remote Gaming Council
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In view of recent and upcoming regulatory changes, the year ahead promises to be one of continuing change for the iGaming industry. Operators in this sector will need an expert advisor when navigating the challenges ahead.

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How have you seen the gaming industry develop in the last few years?

“The gaming ecosystem in Malta has evolved drastically over the years. At its inception in 1999 there was a severe shortfall with regard to the skills required to work in the industry. This led to an influx of foreign professionals with elevated salaries. Today, with some 8,000 professionals plying their trade in the gaming industry locally, the island has a massive spill-over effect, with entertainment venues and restaurants benefiting from the industry as well as a booming rental market for both residential and office spaces. Today, Malta also has highly skilled and knowledgeable local workers, a robust training curriculum specialising in online and digital skills as well as an enhanced communication infrastructure that is one of the best in Europe.”

ALAN ATTARD
Treasurer - Malta Remote Gaming Council

What makes Malta attractive as a location for iGaming companies?

“While the initial motive for locating to Malta, i.e. obtaining a gaming licence applicable throughout European Union member states, might have lost importance, in certain markets a licence issued by the Malta Gaming Authority still offers legal backing and protection for the operator. A Maltese licence is also a significant asset when it comes to applying for other European licences. Apart from regulatory considerations, corporate tax in Malta remains attractive for European gaming companies. Finally, Malta’s infrastructure is all geared up for our products. Suppliers and business partners may be found literally just around the corner. There is a great choice of professional service providers and when it comes to recruitment, jobs in iGaming are very popular amongst Maltese, whereas expatriates enjoy the standard of living on the island.”

BIRGIT BOSCH
Council Member - Malta Remote Gaming Council

What issues should operators be aware of today, and what further obligations do you see coming down the line?

“The main issues I envisage are the 4th Anti-Money Laundering (AML) directive and the implications on the industry which have still not been properly determined. VAT will continue to create uncertainties and concerns until it is properly clarified which products are VATable and where and how VAT will be charged. Changes in Data Protection legislation will also create some concerns although to a lesser extent. The MGA has issued various consultation papers, and it is expected that these will lead to changes at various levels of the operations, such as data extraction for reporting, Key Official requirements, cloud solutions, due diligence for key positions such as CFO, CEO and COO, as well as possibly additional control requirements on the outsourcing of various functions and processes.”

ALAN ALDEN
General Secretary - Malta Remote Gaming Council
In your opinion, what will be the next big thing for Malta?

“Malta should align its efforts to capitalise on establishing a robust gaming hub. This hub should not focus exclusively on the gambling industry, but should also incorporate the digital gaming sector, along with its various game mechanics and creative strengths, that will have a knock-on effect on other industries. Skill gaps will shrink, start-ups will grow and in turn knowledge will be shared to the benefit of the jurisdiction and its players. Malta will also be in a stronger position to lure VCs and Angel investment. If we were to work on ascertaining the critical mass between gambling operators and digital gaming entities in Malta (through targeted incentives, opportunities, education and streamlined processes), the spill-over effects of talent, ability and creativity will award Malta with a significant feather to add to its cap.”

RUSSELL MIFSUD
Council Member - Malta
Remote Gaming Council

What initiatives are being taken by Malta to promote responsible gambling?

“Malta launched the Responsible Gaming Foundation in 2014 to fund projects that enhance and improve responsible gaming. The Foundation – in collaboration with the Malta Gaming Authority – is putting in place the necessary checks and balances to prevent the abuse of gambling and address compulsive gambling. In 2015, we launched the national helpline (1777) to support and guide those individuals, and their families, who suffer from gambling-related problems. We are also actively educating the younger generation about the risks associated with gambling and have developed a self-test for people who suspect that they have issues. The gaming industry supports our initiatives because persons having gambling problems are not assets for the industry – they become a liability.”

SILVIO SCHEMBRI
Chairman - Responsible Gaming Foundation
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The Future of In-Play

2015 has been a breakthrough year for in-play betting. However, there are many more new developments to come. Itai Zak, CEO, and Tom John Light, Vice President of Business Development & Commercials, of SB Tech say the sports betting industry is just at the start of a revolutionary journey.

Sports betting has entered a new era, fuelled by the meteoric rise of in-play wagering options. “Three years ago, live betting was hardly known. Today, it accounts for as much as 75% of many operators’ turnover from sports betting.” says Itai Zak, CEO of SB Tech, a leading online betting and gaming technology and service provider. No matter what sport, in-play betting is offering punters an interactive and exciting betting experience.

The sector is growing faster than ever before, with live betting now covering a whole range of sports from around the world, ranging from the usual in-play sports such as football and tennis, to golf, ice hockey, cricket, basketball, volleyball and winter sports. Today’s players don’t want to wait until the end of the game to see if they have won or lost, and they want to bet on any event possible, Zak emphasises. This does not come without its challenges. “Operators need to constantly offer new bet types.”
NEW MARKETS
SBTech already provides over 1,000 unique bet markets covering over 25,000 monthly live events. “The introduction of new bet markets, including Free-Bets and Micro-Markets, also known as Fast-Markets, has created a new thrill for the punter,” says Tom John Light, SBTech’s Vice President of Business Development & Commercials. He highlights that SBTech is offering various Fast-Markets on hundreds of in-play events per day, allowing a tennis punter to bet on the next point / the next game, a football punter to bet on ‘What will happen in the next minute?’ or ‘What will happen in the next five minutes?’ with bet selections such as: Throw-In, Corner, Goal Kick, Penalty, Card, Free-Kick, and Goal. In-play betting, he says, has also helped certain sports to achieve more prominence and offered access to new customer segments. “For instance, the turnover from table tennis grew more than tenfold since this sport was offered for in-play betting, making table tennis super-exciting for the average punter.”

Mobile technologies have had a tremendous impact on the evolution of in-play betting. “Around 55 to 60% of the revenues of our customers are coming from mobile devices. Sports betting lends itself to a second screen user experience: you watch a game on your TV, and you place the bet via your mobile,” Zak explains. “We also see a lot of activity on tablets and have custom-tailored front-ends for tablets,” Light adds.

LIVE STREAMING AND CASHOUTS
Live streaming, in particular of sports that do not enjoy much media attention, is seen as a must-have for sportsbooks offering in-play betting. According to Light, it is a major acquisition tool that encourages betting and brand loyalty. Itai Zak emphasises that players want to find great live coverage and betting markets in one place, and SB Tech has introduced high-quality live-streaming on a huge variety of games. Operators can benefit from complete technical integration with three of the industry’s leading video-streaming providers. Offering multiple cash-out options are also regarded as crucial in attracting punters. Cashout functions increase the turnover for the operator, simply because the same funds can be rolled over multiple times. “However, they are equally important for the punter”, says Light because a cashout can act as a stop loss for potential losing bets. The punter can change the betting strategy depending on the developments, or cash out his winnings in order to cut risk. “This makes punters feel more comfortable in placing bets.” SBTech even offers a cashout function, which gives players the option to sell their bets back to the operator.

MANAGING NEW RISKS
While in-play betting offers operators new opportunities, they also face new challenges. “In-play betting has created a new kind of risk that is related to speed. For instance, a punter can be in the football stadium and bet right when the goal hits, so operators need to be super quick,” Light says. SBTech offers operators ways to minimise these risks. The company has 100 in-play traders. “Each trader has been skilfully trained in the SBTech Traders Academy and has been equipped with the know-how and knowledge to make the best real-time decisions in regard to in-play trading. They use accessible statistics and detailed information on the punter’s behaviour before manually accepting a bet but without delaying the bet acceptance,” Light comments. Operators also need to stay abreast of the latest technology innovations. “You either need to have a strong provider or a strong innovation team. Today’s punters are smart and innovation-savvy. Come to the market with a leading product or don’t come to the market at all.” This is Light’s advice to any operator.

LOOKING AHEAD
In the future, Zak and Light agree, the quality of the in-play betting experience will increase, while in-play will continue on its growth path, covering an even wider range of events, including the live betting on non-sports events such as political elections. Mobile betting will also be more accessible across more devices, with better touch screen capabilities and more personalised offers. “Punters expect a personalised betting experience, this means we need to cater for different gender and geographical preferences,” Zak says. Many new exciting elements will already be launched this year. “We are seeking to make our sportsbook much more mobile-friendly,” Light says, adding that SB Tech is planning to bring a fully responsive sportsbook design to the market, including new data-driven visualisation graphics. “We will also launch our Chameleon360 which is our intuitive iGaming platform integrated to all known third-party providers, offering intelligent reporting and super-strong CRM.”
The mainstream adoption of mobile gambling has finally taken place. iGaming companies are seeing triple-digit growth in mobile revenues. While not all operators and markets experience the same level of growth, operators that have invested heavily in mobile technology, talent and product innovation, today generate between 50 and 60% of their revenue through this channel. It was not until recently that gaming companies realised that mobile was on track to fulfilling its potential. Sports betting companies were the first to take advantage of this new channel, with many punters using a second screen while watching a game on TV. However, mobile casino, poker and the like followed in the past few years. Operators, in this context, had to start thinking about their mobile strategy very intensely. The move to mobile has been driven by two technologies: HTML5 and Native. Most operators have opted for a hybrid of the two: they push specific services Native apps, while the generic casino and sportsbook would be on a responsive HTML5 web application. Until today, the debate about the virtues of HTML5 versus an app-based mobile approach continues. The biggest challenge in developing mobile products lies in the heterogeneity of the myriad of devices and operating systems. Most operators say that mobile gambling has not cannibalised desktop revenues, and that sessions played on smartphones are usually shorter than those on tablets and desktop. This is also one of the reasons why most operators are not only cross-selling their products on different devices, but have even begun upselling, actively encouraging clients to gamble on desktop and laptop too.

LeoVegas is a story of growth: Launched in January 2012, the Maltese company has established itself as one of the leaders in the mobile gambling marketplace, with a total workforce of almost 200 people and a strong foothold in the Nordic and UK markets. LeoVegas was created for mobile first and then became an online casino. “Our entire business model is focused on mobile – everything from marketing to technology development. This is fairly unique in the industry and has given us a competitive advantage,” explains Johan Styren, CEO of LeoVegas Gaming Ltd. According to Styren, most operators find it difficult to overcome the traditional ways of looking at their product and to really embrace the mobile experience.

While mobile is part of LeoVegas’ DNA, it does not spare the company from encountering mobile-related challenges. “Every time there is an upgrade for Apple and Android, it affects us, and we need to react to it. We are also closely monitoring smaller changes, for instance the recent move by Apple to allow third-party ad-blockers to be installed.” Payment is another challenge, and LeoVegas has always sought to work with partners who also have a strong focus on mobile. But the opportunities, on the other hand, are huge because with mobile “you can reach people everywhere and at any time of the day,” says Styren.

Looking to the future, Styren says: “I think we will see growth in the area of tablets. They are great devices for gaming. They lend themselves more to games that require the player to pay more attention and focus, such as Black Jack and Roulette, as well as to live versions of casino games.”
CUTTING EDGE GAMING SOLUTIONS

State of the Art Slots and Casino Games

HTML5 Technology

Marilyn Monroe Photos © Renaissance Road Inc.
Gamification – More than a Buzzword?

The iGaming industry couldn’t seem to avoid the term ‘gamification’ in 2015. Casino operators in particular are betting on social gamification to encourage players to come back for more. While some say that the concept of introducing game mechanics into a service that already revolves around games is unnecessary and won’t appeal to gamblers, other operators argue that gamification has given less exciting games a competitive element. For instance, gamification gives players a third dimension of play – rather than just trying to match up three symbols on a slots machine, players can battle their favourite super hero characters and be rewarded with additional prizes. However, rather than gamifying the gambling product itself, most operators today are offering players side challenges, effectively using gamification as a customer retention and acquisition strategy. The challenge that most face in gambling is that anything they can offer, their competitors can too. There are very few unique selling points when it comes to encouraging players to remain loyal to a brand – gamification promises to change this. Companies report that they have in fact seen increased retention and loyalty from players when offering them something in addition to the traditional games.
The Benefits of Gamification

A number of casino operators in Malta have embraced the concept of gamification.

3 Questions with Kristian Svensson, General Manager of Casino Room

Gamification is currently one of the big trends in the iGaming industry. How have you gamified your casino product?

Where to begin? Simple login missions give players the opportunity to collect rewards for a mundane task like logging in. Assuming the player was logging in anyway, this is a great way to give the player a little extra every day.

3 Questions with Magnus Alebo, CEO of Hero Gaming

Can you explain how your company is using gamification to better engage players?

I believe that not even a handful of operators are truly offering a gamified user experience, out of which I would claim we are in the forefront. Many operators are simply offering light versions of loyalty programmes. I wouldn’t call that gamification. At the core of the customer experience in our casinos www.casinoheroes.com and www.casitabi.com is our unique adventure in which the players advance as they play their favourite casino games. As the players advance, they encounter new characters to fight and advance to the next level.

How does the rise of mobile gambling affect gamification features?

You have to be agile, you can no longer think of a web platform in a “desktop form” you have to execute every idea or update in unison with both mobile and desktop. The mobile has opened up an entirely new aspect of gamification for us. Playing on the move has been something that players have adapted to incredibly quickly, almost more quickly than sites have been able to adapt. Gamification for us is a great way to cross-sell the mobile platform, we have done this through “mobile only” missions and promotions.

Some industry commentators say that we have not yet seen the gamification of “real gambling”. How do you see gamification developing in the coming years?

That is of course debatable. Going back to the translation of gamification from idea to practical application, we wouldn’t be so bold as to say we have been perfect at it. I think you will see gamification coming in from the game provider side a lot more in the coming years. Sites and labels have begun to do their part, but “in-game” gamification can be vastly expanded in our opinion. Taking a look at popular and traditional gaming titles like Call of Duty and FIFA, we can see that the gamification element has grown massively over the last couple of years. They have begun with gamification from game-play up, whereas gamification from the casino side has grown from ‘platform-up’, with plenty of work remaining for ‘in-game’ gamification.

What would you highlight as the key benefits of gamification for your operations?

By engaging and entertaining the players in and with the adventure, we can see that less traditional retention activities and bonuses are required. Internally, the storyline in the adventure itself provides a strong guiding light for all types of communications above and below the line, allowing us to offer a 360-degree approach in our strategy without having to synchronise every single piece.

What challenges are you facing when applying gamification features, and how do you address those issues?

Gamification requires many skills, roles and concepts that are not by default found within operator organisations today. True gamification affects the entire business both vertically and horizontally, and cannot be left only with the Marketing team. We address it by setting up appropriate internal forums, recruiting people, such as creative front-end developers, rich media designers and game producers, who are not necessarily from the iGaming industry, and by putting the gamification aspect on top of the agenda for the top management.
Legal Aspects of GAMIFICATION

While gamification is shaking up the gambling sector, Olga Finkel, Managing Partner of law firm WH Partners, says operators need to strike the balance between creating a fun user experience and paying attention to legal risks and restrictions.

WHAT IS GAMIFICATION?
Gamification is the concept of applying game mechanics and game design techniques outside the contexts of gaming in order to engage and motivate people to achieve established objectives. Use of badges, points, leader boards, and various rewards for reaching goals in non-gaming tasks are just some examples of gamification. Gamification is being increasingly used in marketing and other outward (customer-facing) systems to increase sales, as well as in inward (employee-facing) systems in businesses to increase employee productivity. In a more narrow sense, gamification (or gamblification) is the use of game design elements and techniques within the gaming context to make a game more similar to gambling games.

While gamification is proving to be a very useful tool for heightening customer participation and engagement, modelling and influencing their behaviour and ultimately positively driving business performance, there are several legal implications that one needs to be aware of. Some of these implications are discussed below.

PRIVACY
The gamification trend is closely related to another important current trend – ‘big data’ and its analysis, as gamification is built upon leveraging data. Data on customer actions and behaviour is collected in many different ways, such as when browsing the web, interacting with others in social networks, using loyalty cards and points systems, and through the increasingly pervasive presence of mobile apps and smartphones. More and more data is collected about customer activities, locations, choices, moods, friends, preferences, financial means, and many other attributes. Personal data is also used to create customer segments to design targeted marketing campaigns. All this data is analysed and used to predict and influence customer behaviour and future choices.

Gamification features are often designed on the basis of analysing the collected customer data and rewarding the customer for the choices and actions desirable for the business, for example, offering promotions for purchasing more products than a customer normally buys or for purchasing products linked to them. Once data collection and use are in play, it is not surprising that privacy becomes a major concern, and compliance with applicable personal data protection laws becomes a necessity for all website operators, app developers and data analytics/business intelligence departments alike.
It is against this background of increasingly pervasive collection and use of personal data that the European privacy laws are set to be reformed. In December 2015 the EU has adopted the data protection reform package, which aims to ensure that the citizens’ fundamental right to personal data protection remains strong in the digital age. The new law, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), will come into force in two years’ time, thus giving adequate time for companies to prepare. The GDPR will provide tools for individuals to have more control over their personal data and its use, ensuring stronger and more effective enforcement of the data protection rules, while simplifying compliance for businesses by mandating the same set of rules for every EU country. GDPR will enshrine the ‘data protection by design and by default’ principle — all products and services will have to be designed with data protection in mind, and business will have to put privacy-friendly settings on their apps and websites by default. The individuals’ right to know and decision on when, how and for what purposes their data is used will be strengthened. The GDPR will also provide for new rights: the right to be forgotten, to have data portability and to know when one’s data has been compromised. All these privacy aspects will need to be taken into account when collecting and processing personal data in gamified (and all other!) digital contexts.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
Another important aspect that gamification brings to focus are considerations relating to intellectual property, in particular where gamification results in offering participants rewards in the form of virtual goods developed, assembled or obtained through participants’ actions (user-generated content), or where participants may buy virtual goods to advance in a game. Who has the right over these virtual goods, the participant or the organiser of the game? What if a user buys a virtual good in a game world but the game designer takes it away? What if the virtual good is stolen or ends up being the subject of a court case? It may not be easy to answer these questions. Those designing the gamified experiences must be aware of potential problems and set out clear rules, in the terms of service, for participants to minimise the risk of breaching third parties’ rights, as well as to clearly protect their own intellectual property.

REGULATORY IMPLICATIONS
Last but not the least, we need to look at the regulatory implication of gamification. Gamification produces experiences that may be on the boundary line between regulated and non-regulated industries. Sometimes the boundary lines may not be clear. Each design for a gamified experience needs to be examined against the regulatory framework for gaming and gambling. Clearly, not all experiences become regulated as gaming proper simply because they use some elements used also in regulated games. However, a combination of certain elements will definitely transform a gamified experience into a game subject to the regulatory framework applicable to gaming proper. For instance, the introduction of prizes for winners that can be used outside of the game’s world or be exchanged into money, goods or services is one such element. Requiring a stake to participate in the game is another. Introducing an element of chance that has a material effect on the outcome of the game is yet another such element.

Unlike in the case of unregulated industries or industries benefiting from the passporting rights in the EU across regimes, the examination of whether a gamified experience falls within the regulatory regime applicable to gaming must be carefully carried out in territories where it is proposed to be offered, since there is no uniform or harmonised international regime for gaming regulation. As a result, it may be the case that the same gamified experience is subject to regulatory scrutiny in some countries but not in others. If it has been determined that the experience does fall within the scope of the gaming regulatory framework in a country, then all relevant obligations and responsibilities would apply to the provider of the experience and, therefore, compliance will become mandatory.

Gamification is a relatively new trending concept already successfully applied to many activities; and we will see even more areas of business, employment, education, health and many other services implementing useful gamification methods in the future. We should not lose sight, however, of the multifaceted complexity and of multiple and often intertwined legal and regulatory implications that gamification brings, so that the legal risk for enterprise is minimised and the applicable laws are continuously complied with.
BtoBet is a pioneer in new technologies for iGaming operators and the betting industry by using technological intelligence as its main base for its products. It offers unique, customisable, secure and flexible cloud based systems delivering unprecedented capabilities to drive Sportsbook and iGaming business. The company accomplishes its vision through innovation, agility, and anticipation.

DRIVE YOUR BUSINESS TO THE FIRST ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENT IGAMING DIMENSION WITH THREE UNIQUE PRODUCTS:

- **Neuron**: The 1ST intelligent gaming and betting platform.
- **Konnect**: Sportsbook ready to connect. Seamlessly.
- **Retail**: The solution to operate seamlessly landbased businesses.
DDoS Attacks Continue to Rise

The iGaming industry was hit particularly hard by distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks in 2015. According to industry reports and fraud specialists, the prevalence of DDoS attacks has increased at a rapid pace. The question is not any longer if a company will become a target, the question is when it will happen, experts warn. DDoS attacks include those that flood servers with traffic to bring them down by using all available bandwidth, and for instance attacks that can lock users out through multiple failed password reset attempts or wipe entire databases. iGaming operators are targeted because they are dealing with a large amount of transactions, and there are many different ways for hackers to get access. For companies trying to protect themselves against attacks, this means that some defences are easily constructed while others are more complicated. The reasons for DDoS attacks vary. They include demanding a ransom, denting a company’s reputation, stealing information and simply proving that a particular company’s system can be hacked. Fraud specialists say there are also competitive attacks with iGaming operators attacking other operators. While this has never been proven, experts are highlighting that they have witnessed incidents where an operator’s website was down due to a DDoS attack, while at the same time its main competitor’s marketing spend increased significantly.

FRAUD FROM WITHIN

When it comes to security and fraud, it is not just DDoS attacks that operators have to be wary of. From payment fraud to identity theft and misrepresentation, most operators today pay close attention to security threats posed by individuals from outside but also from within their organisations, with employee fraud being a key concern. Operators are also facing the challenge of having to constantly adapt their customer identification procedures and fraud prevention tools. The more sophisticated the technology to combat fraud, the more advanced the levels of fraud become. Experts agree that it is crucial to analyse behaviour in order to detect suspicious patterns and fraudulent behaviour. They also emphasise that it is important to know what platform a transaction is coming from when implementing certain protective measures, although not all operators agree that certain channels, for instance mobile, are riskier than others.

A Year of Merger Mania

2015 has been the year of operator mergers and acquisitions (M&A) in the iGaming industry. Until recently, there was very little consolidation in the industry, and even smaller operators were able to make significant profits. However, regulatory costs, marketing costs and IT costs have all grown significantly in recent years, making scale increasingly important. But the industry did not only see smaller operators selling out to larger ones. Big deals in 2015 included the tie-up between Ladbrokes and Gala Coral in July, the merger of Betfair and Paddy Power in August, and GVC’s acquisition of bwin.party in September. Even large corporations highlight that obtaining economies of scale to offset increasing costs for tax, compliance and technology are the main reasons for increased M&A activity. As the iGaming industry matures, the competition to gain market share is fiercer than ever before, and many operators are looking for new ways to grow. Joining forces with another operator allows companies to enter new markets and offer new products. Industry experts however warn that most companies underestimate the difficulty in integrating, highlighting that gaming operations are complex and that joining two companies is therefore even more complex.

“One of the greatest shifts in the gaming industry over the last 12 months is the explosive increase in mergers and acquisitions which is affecting all aspects of regulated jurisdictions such as Malta, and globally. Such activity presents both risks and opportunities for all those reliant on the gaming industry such as hosting providers, regulators, corporate service providers and lawyers and even local economies. It means that a jurisdiction potentially loses out to another, infrastructure is integrated and staff locations change affecting all aspects of the supporting environment that these companies rely on.”

PETER WILLIAMS
Director of Global Sales of Continent 8 Technologies
Business Opportunities in the Mergers and Acquisitions Space

With approximately 300 iGaming companies operating in Malta (and growing), coupled with top institutional support for this vibrant industry, Malta could be a land of opportunities from a deal making space. KPMG explains why.

IGAMING IN MALTA – A LUCRATIVE INDUSTRY

In 2016, it is difficult to envisage Malta without an iGaming essence. Over the span of a decade, the industry has progressively undergone significant revolutions, maturing into a cornerstone of our economic structure. It is estimated that the sector now contributes approximately 10-12% of Malta’s GDP. Malta is part of a wider boom mushrooming across continents as Global and European demand for remote gaming products and services propel a steady drive along a strong growth trajectory, across both market and product ranges. Indeed, research shows that online gaming’s Gross Gaming Revenue (GGR – stakes minus winnings) in the EU-28 is expected to rise from €10.9 billion in 2013 to €13.27 billion by 2015. Industry players and decision makers understand its significance to the economy as a whole, resulting in a strong commitment to this sector.

Malta has been able to capitalise on its EU first mover advantage, and has continued to be proactive in developing its regulatory framework to sustain the island’s competitive edge at the forefront of the gaming sphere. Today, Malta hosts in excess of 280 remote gaming companies holding 460 plus active licences locally (an increase of 21% over 2014) for online offerings such as casino-type games, online lotteries, poker derivative games, peer-to-peer (P2P) gaming and game portals, and sportsbooks amongst others. With some of the world’s largest companies such as Betfair, Unibet, Tipico, Betsson, Mangas Gaming Group, Mr Green, and LeoVegas operating in Malta, together with an attractive pool of smaller yet ambitious outfits and niche players, the remote gaming sector today employs over 8,000 multinational industry professionals.

In this scenario Malta is hard at work in safeguarding and renewing its jurisdictional benefits, both to continue enticing new entities to set up their iGaming (or related) business here and also in ensuring that existing operators have sufficient reasons to stay. To this end the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA) is spearheading a suite of new initiatives that are enjoying widespread support across the gaming industry. These changes are aimed at ensuring that Malta remains an iGaming hub of excellence, and a professional and reputable jurisdiction.

GLOBAL IGAMING M&A ACTIVITY

With operators facing increasing regulatory, compliance and operational costs, M&A activity in the iGaming sphere is set to increase globally and across Europe. Indeed, over the past two years there has been a slew of M&A activity across the Continent. 2015 was characterised by a number of big-ticket deals

KPMG

Over the last 5 years KPMG emerges as the #1 mid-market M&A advisor globally.

SOURCE: THOMSON REUTERS

over the €1 billion mark, and several other smaller transactions, as companies continue to seek to scale up their operations. Pre-eminent industry commentators remain of the view that the European online gaming sector is set to consolidate in the near term as falling industry growth rates in Europe, rising marketing costs, increased gaming taxes and rising competition makes scale an increasing necessity to compete more effectively. In the same vein, industry stakeholders agree that the current wave of M&A activity shall continue to be prompted by the following key thrusts:

- the remote gaming sector is becoming increasingly established and regulated, prompting investors and lenders to inject capital into the sector;

- companies will continue seeking to position themselves as leaders in regulated jurisdictions, predominantly via acquiring several online brands to expand their customer bases across different gaming products and services;

- with increased costs of customer acquisition, competition and an increased tax burden, scale remains increasingly important — and those companies which won’t scale up will struggle to fund marketing expenses over the long term, eventually losing market share; and

- technology and platform providers’ interest in launching in-house gambling websites is set to continue — these providers are set to continue acquiring B2C companies to scale up their operation and bring revenue growth.

**IGAMING M&A ACTIVITY IN MALTA**

With the iGaming industry set for increased M&A activity, operators and practitioners involved in international M&A are beginning to pay more attention to what Malta can offer them. Indeed, data sourced from Bloomberg and Capital IQ for the period 2008-2015 reveals that the iGaming sector emerges as the foremost sector in Malta in terms of the number of Malta-based assets targeted as part of M&A transactions.

**THE PROCESS – TRIALS & TRIBULATIONS**

Deal makers will be quick to note that a committed project team enjoying a multi-disciplinary skill set is a key ingredient to the process. Commensurate regulatory input is required to ensure early identification of regulatory issues as well as in support of both Bidder and Target’s liaison with the relevant Regulatory Authorities. An early approach could be a timely investment noting the prerogative of the Regulatory Authority in approving such transactions.

The ICT dimension should never be underestimated, as platform regulatory approvals and transitional mechanics may come into play. Competition law considerations could be another fabric that can significantly colour the transaction dynamic.

Within the context of a sale of business, the preparatory stage of grooming the asset never starts early enough, particularly when businesses have enjoyed rapid growth which has placed pressure on organisational structures.

For entities bidding for Targets in cross-border deals, local knowledge and support remain quintessential to provide additional speed of execution, sensitivity to local operating norms and customs, and bridging into the wider eco-system within which the Target operates.

**KPMG MALTA - THE PRE-EMINENT MALTESE DEAL ADVISORY TEAM**

KPMG in Malta recognises and understands the challenges and opportunities faced by gaming entities, both on the micro level and on the wider global scale. With dedicated M&A professionals and industry champions in the local office, KPMG Malta is fully integrated in the KPMG M&A global network which spans more than 160 offices in 82 member firm countries giving us access to invaluable understanding and knowledge of markets and decision makers throughout the world.

We distinguish ourselves by our integrated multi-disciplinary approach offering a start-to-close (and beyond) solution. We leverage one of the widest transaction tool-kits. KPMG in Malta’s team assist clients to navigate through issues including regulatory, pricing, IT, tax, corporate, negotiations and due diligence – all key to a successful transaction.

We are geared to assist with a wide range of transactions, including opportunistic acquisitions, mergers, disposals, public takeovers, share-for-share deals, minority participations, joint ventures, strategic partnerships, and IPOs.

We look forward to helping you take your business to the next level of the game. ■
We exist to empower our clients to move forward with confidence.

To make confident decisions about the future, a growing business needs a different kind of adviser.

If you’re a remote gaming business owner seeking added value, RSM can help you achieve more. Our Business Advisory service line offers a dedicated unit to help you understand the regulatory requirements and to implement controls effectively. We will help you exploit our knowledge to best implement your strategies and achieve your goals.

Experience the power of being understood.

Experience RSM.

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A New Tax Reality

The iGaming industry has seen substantial fiscal changes in recent times. 2015 brought a new mechanism for VAT, whereby VAT is to be charged in the member state where the players are established, unless an exemption applies in such member state. Previously the status quo was that gaming operators would be subject to VAT based on the rules of the country in which their services were based. While the new VAT rules affected online gaming operations differently depending on the residence of their main market audience, the transition to this new regime has not been smooth, with many operators having to implement new systems and processes to comply with the new rules.

COUNTRY BY COUNTRY REPORTING

The new VAT regime has not been the only tax-related concern for iGaming operators in 2015. In the autumn of 2015, the OECD also released their measures on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) to reform international tax rules that will affect companies throughout the iGaming sector. Along with other businesses operating internationally, iGaming operators now need to gear up for a new era in international taxation that might require them to report their activity on a country-by-country basis. Designed to tackle tax avoidance, the OECD has compiled a comprehensive package of 15 main action points in order to “harmonise” tax regulations worldwide. One of the measures states that Multinational Enterprises (MNE’s) with more than €750 million group turnover will need to pay taxes in the countries where profits are made. The OECD estimates that the measure will affect some 9,000 companies globally.

While the BEPS measures are a set of recommendations rather than rules, and implementation will vary between countries, many countries have already adopted or are poised to adopt changes to their international tax systems based on the OECD recommendations. For example, in April 2015, the UK government introduced the Diverted Profits Tax (‘DPT’) to be charged at 25% of the “diverted profits”, which applies to both UK and non-UK companies where the entity or transaction lacks economic substance or where a UK taxable presence is avoided. iGaming companies operating in the UK especially need to check the extended Permanent Establishment (PE) definition in order to determine whether or not they are affected.

Malta’s fiscally attractive tax regime, especially when compared to other EU countries, has been identified as one of its major competitive advantages. Specific Tax incentives, such as the 15% flat tax rate for Highly Qualified Persons, and a wide array of double taxation treaties with various countries worldwide, have contributed to Malta’s success as a base for iGaming companies. CFOs working in iGaming have pointed out that if in a few years’ time an iGaming operator would need to pay high gaming taxes, plus VAT and up to 30% in corporation taxes, this would pose a major challenge to the sustainability and profitability of many operations.
EU Application of the Gambling VAT Exemption

2015 was a year of headaches for iGaming operators across the EU and their advisors, who had to understand what the new VAT place of supply rules meant to the industry and to ensure that such rules are properly implemented. The principle is simple - VAT is to be charged in the member state where the players are established unless an exemption applies in such member state. A general rule stemming from the EU VAT Directive is that gambling should be exempt from VAT across the EU. Yet, the determination of whether the exemption applies is more complex than merely relying on the EU VAT Directive as the exemption is dependent on the conditions and limitations laid down by each member state. This is not to mention other issues that gambling operators had to deal with, such as the legality of their operations in some member states and the regulatory changes that these jurisdictions have implemented or are implementing, partly driven by the 2015 VAT changes.

There were several efforts to ensure that there is sufficient publicly available information on the VAT treatment of online gambling across the EU, including efforts by the EU Commission which published a report providing high level detail on the application of the gambling VAT exemption across the 28 EU member states. Yet, the devil is in the detail. Given the dynamic nature of the regulation, the country-specific conditions for the exemption and the wide spectrum of forms of gambling, it is always advisable that the treatment is checked regularly with advisors in each state. Nonetheless, the table hereunder gives a snapshot on the applicability of such exemption across the EU and should at least act as an indicator of whether and to what extent complexities exist in the application of the VAT exemption.

<table>
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<th>Member State</th>
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<th>Other Comments</th>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Generally the VAT exemption applies albeit certain exceptions apply such as video lottery.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Poker and casino are generally taxable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Regulatory restrictions apply for the provision of gambling supplies in Greece.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>No except for sports-betting and lottery subject to regulatory conditions</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>Yes (with strict limitations)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The VAT exemption applies to the operation of lotteries and other similar games as defined in the Czech Lotteries Act although the Ministry of Finance may grant the concession to other lotteries and games.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Portugal</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>The Luxembourg VAT Law provides for an exemption on bets in relation with sporting events and games of chance provided they are authorised and subject to a gaming duty. However in practice the application of the exemption is very limited due to strict legal requirements.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>Subject to approval by the Minister.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Licence/authorisation required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>A licence/concession is however required to offer gambling services in Slovenia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>The scope of the exemption covers games of chance wherein players cannot intervene and are elected randomly and contest for a prize unless the contest results in a contract between the winner and the organizer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>The exemption covers games of chance irrespective of how they are offered, however the offering of games must fall within the meaning of the Bulgarian Gambling Act.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>The exemption applies as long as there is compliance with the Law on Games of Chance, which, amongst others, requires that a local licence is obtained.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>All forms of online gaming and sports betting that are offered by a licensed or unlicensed (not legally operating) operators are exempt from Cypriot VAT.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Online gambling and similar activities are all exempt from VAT, generally with the exception of commercial lotteries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Gambling is monopolised by government supervised entities and only gambling services provided by such operators would be exempt for VAT purposes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>The VAT exemption applies if the gambling services are subject to a specific French tax on entertainment. The VAT-exemption is not applicable to the fees received by organizers and disclosed intermediaries involved in the provision of horse-race betting and sport betting. Intermediaries acting in their own name may benefit from the VAT exemption.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>The VAT exemption applies only if the specific gambling activity is subject to the Race Betting and Lottery Act (namely betting and lotteries). Gambling/betting is strictly regulated in Germany and the right to provide such services under the Race Betting and Lottery Act is granted on a case by case basis. In cases where the VAT exemption does not apply, the VAT (at 19%) is chargeable on entry fees, pots or wager.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>VAT at 23% is generally chargeable on stakes less winnings or rakes less operator top-ups. Where applicable, the exemption applies when the outcome of an event is unknown with the odds being set by a bookmaker. The exemption is dependent in some cases on certain excise duties and licences applying.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>The VAT exemption applies to the provision of online gambling and betting games that are subject to gaming duties. Gaming operators should be specifically authorized, although unauthorised operators may still benefit from the VAT exemption albeit they may be subject to administrative and criminal penalties.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>A licensing regime exists in Latvia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Effective as from 1st January 2016 and subject to having a licence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>The exemption covers games of chance as described in the Dutch Betting and Gaming Tax Act. The market is being regulated and it is expected that the first gaming licences will be granted in 2016.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Rules are being enacted and implemented to remove prohibitions on the provision of gambling services yet the market will be regulated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>In principle, operators should be licensed and pay excise duty for online betting and gaming.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Gambling licences in Romania may only be issued to legal entities incorporated in Romania, other EU Member States or other EEA Member States.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Subject to being organized by authorised gambling operators and being subject to gambling tax (which may depend on the Spanish region).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>The VAT exemption in Sweden is not conditional on any external factors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Pure games of chance and other games involving a combination of chance and skill are typically exempt.</td>
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Navigating a Fragmented Regulatory Landscape

In 2015 more countries decided to follow the trend of enacting national licensing regimes, increasing regulatory and taxation costs for companies who wished to engage in these newly licensed markets.

EASTERN EUROPE

The fast emerging gambling industry in Eastern Europe has attracted a considerable amount of interest in 2015. While iGaming has been regulated in Estonia since 2010 and in Bulgaria since 2012, in 2015, the Ukrainian Ministry of Finance presented draft legislation to fully regulate casinos, sports betting, and online gaming in the country. Gambling has been prohibited in Ukraine since it was outlawed in 2009. Romania, which introduced gambling in 2010, initiated gambling reforms in 2015 and lowered its tax rates, a move that prompted quite an interest from operators. The Czech Republic’s plans to revamp its gambling regulations have also gathered pace, with the government submitting its draft legislation to the European Commission for approval. However, experts think the new regulations will not come into force before 2017. The Hungarian government also discussed amendments to its licensing regime, which include restricting the availability of online licenses to its existing land-based operators. The European Gaming and Betting Association (EGBA) said this decision was “discriminatory and has an adverse effect on the Single Market” of the European Union. EGBA said it believes that if Hungary approves the legislation as written, a European Commission legal challenge will follow.

THE NORDICS

From the Nordic countries, only the Danish gambling market has been fully regulated since 2012. Sports betting, horse race betting, poker, casino, bingo and lottery are available for Danish players. Norway, which is not part of the European Union, has commissioned a number of studies in recent years to assess the potential impact of gambling regulations, and experts say that it doesn’t seem likely that the country will introduce regulations. Gambling in Norway is reserved for the two monopoly providers: Norsk Tipping and Norsk Rikstoto, while the Finnish government also has the monopoly on gambling in the country. Sweden has been promising regulations for a number of years now, and while the Swedish government has come under pressure from the EU to update its regulations, Swedish iGaming operators believe it might take a few years until Sweden actually opens the market for private operators.

CENTRAL & SOUTHERN EUROPE

While countries such as the UK, Italy, France, Spain and Belgium have introduced national licensing regimes a few years ago, Portugal liberalised its market in 2015. However, as soon as the new gambling regulations were enacted, the tax rates of 15-30% for casino revenue and 8-16% for sports revenue have been heavily criticised by the industry. 2015 brought new uncertainty for operators targeting the German and Greek markets. After first banning most forms of online gaming and betting, Germany introduced a licensing regime for sports betting. However, this system has yet to be enforced. In 2015, court decisions re-confirmed the licensing process as non-transparent and contrary to European law. The licensing regime in Greece is also in a state of legal turmoil. Greece issued some 24 temporary licences in 2011, only to revoke them one year later, which led to a flurry of litigation that continues to this
day. In 2015, the cash-strapped government laid out a number of reform proposals, one being to reinstate online gambling through the issuing of new gaming licenses. In 2015, the Dutch government also discussed plans to allow online gambling in the Netherlands; however, experts say that it is unlikely that the new legislation will come into effect before 2017. In Switzerland, online gambling is illegal, although the law is not being enforced, but Switzerland is now set to reverse the online gambling ban. In 2015, Switzerland’s government proposed legislation that would authorise the country’s land-based casinos to begin offering online gambling services.

MANAGEMENT HUB MALTA
Malta has always been an advocate of online gaming within the EU’s single market, believing that an operator licensed on the island should be allowed to provide services across Europe. While the introduction of national licensing regimes might seem to make Malta less attractive as an iGaming hub, due to the small size of the local market, the island continues to receive new applications, and long-established players are expanding their Malta operations. Some operators choose the island as a nominal base, without applying for a licence in Malta. Instead, they use Maltese companies to hold their licences to operate in other countries to take advantage of Malta’s tax-efficient corporate structures. Some 60% of Danish and 40% of French licensees are Malta-registered companies, and a similar pattern is to be found in Italy and Spain.

“In this day and age of advanced technology, successful contemporary organisations are trending towards globalisation. This phenomenon is also pertinent to avant-garde iGaming software companies such as ours. One of Wirex’s strong points has always been its flexibility in adapting its portfolio to its clients’ particular needs, and for this very reason we are already fully compliant with the laws of various countries such as: Malta, Italy, England, Greece, Austria and Croatia.”

GERARDO FERLAINO
CEO of Wirex

“As more countries introduce national gambling legislation, operators have had to apply and adapt to operating with multiple licences to retain their market share. This presents operators with additional licensing costs as well as new administrative burdens. Operators already licensed in Malta are finding it easier to comply with the other jurisdictions’ requirements as they tend to be very similar to what they are already complying to, thus resulting in Maltese licensed operators attaining other licences before their competitors.”

CHRISTINE FRENDO
Manager iGaming and Risk Management at EMD

In the autumn of 2015, Swiss legislators submitted a bill that would allow operators of the country’s brick-and-mortar casinos to launch online gambling sites. “Currently, there is no regulatory framework that would allow for licensed online gaming offers. The Federal Casino Act bans the offering of online games of chance,” says Simon Planzer, Partner at law firm Planzer Law. However, the federal act does not apply to the portfolios of ‘Swisslos’ and ‘Loterie Romande’ as the cantons (regions) are responsible for the regulation of these public lottery and betting providers. While gambling is officially prohibited, Planzer says the supervisory authorities have only taken enforcement actions if gaming-related acts took place on Swiss territory such as the installation of servers. With Swiss players not being prevented from gambling online and operators not being stopped from offering their games, international iGaming operators, including Malta-based companies, have been active on the Swiss market for many years.

“However, the suggested gaming act includes measures that will alter the situation. The government bill foresees a ring-fenced market in which only the 21 land-based casinos will be able to legally offer online games. The supervisory authorities would be empowered to act against gaming offers provided from abroad. Such measures include black listing and IP blocking. Foreign operators, game suppliers or other affiliated service providers would not be able to get licensed. However, the bill does not exclude the possibility of partnerships with Swiss casinos,” says Planzer. He advises Malta-based companies to closely follow the legislative developments in Switzerland, highlighting that the significance of the Swiss gaming market is not to be underestimated. “When assessing the significance of a market, people tend to make the mistake of getting carried away solely by the big size of a country’s population. However, other factors are just as important as the Swiss case illustrates: very high internet and mobile penetration, one of the highest purchase powers in the world and wide-spread societal acceptance of gaming as a leisure activity.”

A Market to Watch

Simon Planzer, Partner at law firm Planzer Law, comments on the Swiss government’s decision to regulate online gaming in Switzerland.

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what do I want to offer on my gambling website?
It is wonderful that as an affiliate you decided to take the leap and jump in the operators' boat. But have you decided on the gaming content you want to offer? If you plan to build a classic casino gaming website, have you thought about adding live casino rooms to deliver the ultimate “real-life” gaming experience? Don’t forget there may be multiple software providers that you need to contact. Alternatively, you may want to focus solely on sports betting, but will you leave aside the incredible thrills delivered by last minute betting in live events?

From Affiliate to Operator
The affiliate marketplace is in transition. Top affiliates have gained considerable market share, and many want to take the next step to become an operator. Rob Dowling, Business Development Manager of software solutions provider EveryMatrix, says there are six major questions new operators need to ask themselves in order to achieve success in the iGaming industry.

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2 Whom should I select to build my gaming website?
This is probably the most important decision you will need to make in your hopefully long career as gambling operator. To reach the best possible conclusion, you need to really understand the main players out there, their services and their prices. Did you decide to launch an online casino? Or do you feel better in the sports betting arena? In this case, focus your search on software providers that are experienced in launching these types of gaming websites.

3 How do I obtain the necessary licences to access the desired market(s)?
The regulatory landscape in today’s iGaming industry is more fragmented than ever. Especially when an operator wants to offer betting services in regulated countries and territories, like the ones in the European Union. There are a number of elements to question before you gain access to a particular jurisdiction, for example you need to know what licence requirements are to be respected, what costs are involved and how much time would be needed to prepare for the marketplace.

2015 saw affiliate relationships change further with emerging technology and newly regulated markets. Social and mobile gaming are reshaping the gaming industry and have forced affiliates to develop their own mobile-optimised sites and applications. At the same time, regulatory changes in the EU are driving up operators’ expenses, and many gaming companies began looking at the sustainability
will it take to obtain a licence. It is not easy to secure a gambling licence on your own without regulatory and legal teams. The easiest way to access a jurisdiction is to simply become a licensee of an iGaming software provider. This is another reason why selecting a reliable and experienced software provider is a vital decision.

### Do I need a payment system provider?

To be considered as a serious player in the industry, you have to sign an agreement with a payment system provider capable of offering multiple payment options for a number of countries. It is important, of course, to choose a payment provider that is experienced in the market you want to access. Finding a solution provider that is capable to deliver not only gaming software, but also a licensing system and a number of payment options simplifies this process.

### What should my website look like?

The way a gaming website looks is important, no doubt about it. As a new operator you must decide whether you control your website’s image or leave this up to the software provider. An experienced provider can certainly give you a good template for your website, but in the end, isn’t this the reason you want to become an iGaming operator: to offer the ultimate gaming experience and an original front end?

### How do I promote my gaming website?

Delivering targeted content and specific information to increase traffic, especially when some social media platforms and search engines are against gambling advertising, is not easy to do. Before you find your voice through a solid marketing strategy, you need to build up your image as a provider of quality games and fair betting options. In addition to this, your business has to be seen as transparent and trustworthy. As soon as you have secured the elements above, a number of marketing campaigns need to be launched and maintained over a long period of time in order to make your website’s name known.

### Some final remarks

To be successful in the iGaming industry as an operator, you need to prepare a long-term strategy. The financial aspects involved should not be treated lightly and the regulatory requirements need to be fully understood.

Rob Dowling
Business Development Manager of EveryMatrix
Odds Matrix
Reliable, time-tested sportsbook solution

Game Matrix
Ultra-flexible gaming management & advanced payment processing platform

Casino Engine
Thousands of games from top international game providers

Partner Matrix
Advanced Multi-Level Affiliate & Agent Systems
As increasing market consolidation and heightened competition continue to tap the brakes on growth in the iGaming sector, pressure is mounting on companies to seek out innovative ways for player acquisition and retention. Competition for players has always been fierce, “but 2015 saw that become even more pronounced,” says Emilia Rynkowska, EnergyCasino’s Head of Affiliates. She says there are only a certain number of successful online gambling affiliate websites, “and currently all the online casinos and online gambling platforms, not to mention the forex and binary outfits, are saturating that space. All online casinos are competing to get mentioned and to get reviewed”. Rynkowska says she sees online casinos moving away from these traditional locations to attract new players, highlighting that campaigns coordinated with Vloggers/YouTubers and audiences not specific to the iGaming niche could be an avenue for customer acquisition. She also expects more online casino operators sponsoring football and other sporting clubs, with EnergyCasino sponsoring German football club Offenbach Kickers. “We are shifting increasingly offline with on-street campaigns to win players, and this style of offline marketing activity is trending.”

Affiliate marketing, on the other hand, is becoming increasingly content-driven. Affiliates are currently required to make changes due to the widespread use of ad blocking software. “144 million+ computer users have added ad blocking software to their browsers. Those numbers are on the rise, and the effects for businesses sustained in part by affiliate referrals are obvious,” says Rynkowska. “We support affiliates as they move from advertorial delivery to the provision of real trustworthy content to drive traffic.” She expects 2016 to be the year of cyber-attacks against online casinos, “but their affiliate partners are coming under attack too”. She also says that retagging of affiliate referrals is occurring with frequency. “While the term ‘retagging’ makes it sound like an innocuous activity, it deprives affiliates of their deserved earnings. Casinos must make it their business to know exactly the source of their traffic, and to ensure the correct people are rewarded for its provision. Added security measures combined with training to spot the tell-tale signs of fraud amongst casino workers is the only way the industry can keep this menace at bay.”
OMNI-CHANNEL

Omnichannel has exploded in the iGaming world and it shows no signs of slowing down, with many operators highlighting that the omni-channel revolution is just beginning. Omni-channel is more than a buzzword, the industry agrees. It is a must. Gamblers want their experience to be as seamless and convenient as possible on all digital and retail channels. Analysts predict that an omni-channel strategy offers the opportunity to grow revenue per player by some 30%. To avoid the strong growth in the digital space eating away retail gambling revenue, land-based operators are increasingly seeking to join forces with online companies. Similarly, iGaming companies as well as game providers are turning to their land-based competitors to source new growth opportunities in an industry disrupted by mergers and acquisitions. For an omni-channel strategy to work, marketing messages and loyalty programmes need to be consistent, while gambling operators need to make sure that the product offering across channels is the same to give the player a seamless experience. The benefits are huge: analytics and business intelligence can run over an integrated platform, providing a new level of insight into player behaviour across channels.
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The Fastest Payouts
The Best Promotions

40% Rev Share
Exclusive GamingMalta Offer

affiliates.ql
affiliates@quasargaming.com

Contact us via email with 'GAMINGMALTA' in the subject line to benefit from this exclusive offer
Omni-channel and synced releases are the critical drivers for growth

As online and land-based gaming are converging and HTML5 is emerging as the standard for delivering the new generation of games, Managing Director of NetEnt Malta, Enrico Bradamante, says cross-platform products will power the next phase of growth for the iGaming industry.

Looking back at 2015, what were the main milestones for NetEnt?
2015 was a very special year for NetEnt as some of our digital games became available for the very first time in a land-based environment. We entered into a partnership with William Hill to provide some of our most popular digital games to their betting shops in the UK. Players can now enjoy our blockbuster games Starburst and Gonzo's Quest as well as our latest release Koi Princess in William Hill’s retail network. Today’s players expect the same casino experience on different channels, and more and more operators are implementing omni-channel strategies. This offers exciting growth opportunities for us, too. We must keep in mind that the online market accounts for only 5 to 10% of the overall gambling market. In 2015, we also received our operating and software licences from the UK Gambling Commission, and the UK is now one of our Top 3 markets. We have also been granted a licence for the Spanish market, and in June we started distributing our products there, strengthening our presence in regulated markets.

2015 also marked a shift in the balance of power in favour of mobile games. How mobile-friendly are your products?
We have been focusing our attention on mobile for a number of years now, and NetEnt has been recognised as an industry leader in mobile innovation by receiving various awards, including EGR ‘Mobile Supplier of the Year’ and ‘Innovation in Mobile’ in 2015.

From May 2015 all our new games are released simultaneously on both desktop and mobile – a synced release. It is very important for operators to make a new game available to players on all devices and platforms to maximise the return on investment. It doesn’t make financial sense for them to spend money on marketing a game, which is not yet available on mobile. We have also upgraded our mobile toolbox to Touch 2.0, improving the player experience even further by leveraging more of the functionalities of the smartphones. We are currently upgrading all our games to this technology as we do see rising revenues from this source. In general we have also seen no cannibalisation of desktop business when we launched mobile, something that has been validated by the operators themselves.
What makes a game successful these days?
Our game development process is constantly refined and improved by analysing our games’ performance and player preferences, mainly by our Business Intelligence and Product Owners colleagues. NetEnt is known in the industry for the fact that all our games are unique productions. The theme, the mathematical model and the visuals are all very important components of a successful game, and we have brought a lot of innovation into developing the sounds of a game, which has become an area of differentiation for NetEnt. What we have also learnt is that it is important to create games for specific markets, having localised and targeted content optimised for chosen audiences.

Which technologies do you use to create your desktop and mobile games?
We now use HTML5 for both our desktop and mobile games. This technology has underpinned our synced release. Before we used Flash for desktop, and HTML5 for mobile. We are also converting our historical games to HTML5, a process that started several years ago.

How is NetEnt reacting to new device innovations, for instance wearable technology?
They are very high on our agenda, and in 2016 we will reveal more details on how we view the future of gaming. In my opinion wearables, such as the Apple Watch, are too small to offer a satisfactory gaming experience but they can, for example, play a role in informing players of new games, bonuses and free spins.

Personalisation is seen as the key to customer retention. What would be your one key piece of advice to an operator integrating your games into its website?
Thus far the majority of operators have chosen to personalise their experience by offering exclusive game content that cannot be found elsewhere. This is an expensive option, both for the operators and for ourselves. To drive the innovation in the personalisation area, we have developed a feature called NetEnt Extend, which allows our casino partners to tailor the experience for their players via an application programme interface (API). The extended API enables operators to see a number of parameters in real-time, and to add extra animations, rewards and other social elements to the games. For instance, if a player loses three or four times in a row, the operator could offer a bonus to keep the player engaged. We have seen a number of visionary companies really leveraging the possibilities enabled by NetEnt Extend, creating a unique gaming experience for their players on their site. My advice for operators is to invest a lot more time and resources in exploiting those in-play and real-time processing features.

How is the recent wave of mergers and acquisitions affecting your operations, and how are you reacting to the consolidating market?
Mergers and acquisitions have not affected us negatively, as we have grown successfully with our operators through those events, and I don’t see that dynamic changing fundamentally going forward. NetEnt is proud of developing long-lasting business partnerships with larger operators, which leads to economies of scale and optimised go-to-market strategies for all involved. In addition, we continue to see a lot of very dynamic start-ups coming on the scene, for instance in the social gaming and gamification segment. They are driving innovation in the gaming field, while the larger operators, especially the ones involved in mergers and acquisitions, are necessarily focusing some of their efforts on aligning their operations and improving efficiencies. This leaves room for the smaller, more agile start-up companies to identify niches and grow very quickly. We are also seeing affiliates expanding downstream and becoming operators themselves. All in all, I expect that these market dynamics will continue to have a positive net effect on NetEnt.

What are your expectations for the future of the gaming industry?
I think we will see a continuation of the existing trends in the coming years. Mergers and acquisitions will still be high on the agenda. The demise of Flash will continue and perhaps even accelerate. We will also see a lot of virtual reality concepts, but their business and monetary impact will be small for the time being. Mobile will continue to rise to the fore, but we need to keep in mind that not all markets are experiencing the same mobile growth rates. It is important not to forget the desktop and laptop – as those channels still account for the majority of our revenue today, and we need to ensure that those devices get the right level of attention, while we steer our development focus on future devices. ■
The award-winning online casino

EXPECT THE

the unexpected

Online Casino Operator
2013 - 2014 - 2015
Who is Mr Green?

Ladies and gents, let us introduce you to the famed gentleman, adventurer extraordinaire and illustrious entertainer behind the award-winning Online Casino—Mr Green.

The story of Mr Green’s rise to riches is not an easy one. Abandoned at birth on the steps of an orphanage on a dark and chilly night, rumours are that Mr Green’s birth parents left no clue as to their identity.

Adopted by a hat-maker and his wife at the age of two, he grew up in the quiet of the countryside in a rustic cottage. Believe it or not, but Mr Green was a bit of a troublemaker and the class clown when he was in his teens.

It wasn’t until Mr Green met his mathematics professor that his life changed for the better. The professor’s father-like figure has continued to influence and inspire Mr Green to this day including the adoption of an old-school gentlemanly attitude, bowler hat and classic umbrella.

Using his talent for mathematics and probability, plus his thrive for adventure, Mr Green risked it all by investing everything he had into his very own Casino.

Apart from naming his own Casino after himself, Mr Green has opted for a life away from the spotlight, remaining an elusive and mysterious figure. It’s hardly surprising Mr Green strays away from the camera and never reveals his true self.

Though, he’s not shy by any means. Mr Green spends much of his time exploring undiscovered locations and experiencing all that life has to offer. It’s this thirst for adventure that ultimately defines the Mr Green Online Casino experience.

Mr Green wants to share his drive for adventure with his players and turn players’ dreams into a reality. In the past, Mr Green has sent players on luxurious vacations around the world, gave away once-in-a-life-time experiences and even gifted hundreds of custom-branded bicycles. One player even reached for the stars, literally, when Mr Green sent him to the edge of space.

Who is Mr Green?

Mr Green Ltd. is an online gambling company that today offers online casino in 13 countries in 9 languages, and an award winning casino operator being named IGA Operator of the Year three consecutive years 2013, 2014, 2015. Mr Green Ltd. is a fully owned subsidiary of Mr Green & Co AB - a Swedish company owning, acquiring and developing leading on-line gambling companies. Mr Green & Co AB is listed on Swedish AktieTorget, MRG.
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You get the idea. Mr Green’s Online Casino is more than just a gaming platform, it’s a superior Casino experience. Mr Green is proud to offer people a break and a happening, which they can afford and are willing to pay for, but of course, in a responsible environment.

Mr Green believes what makes a gentleman is the manner in which we show respect to our players and all those around us by being honest, clear and fair. Ensuring that online gaming remains fun and entertaining, Mr Green has made it his mission to provide a responsible and secure gaming platform. Through the use of Green Gaming, he provides tailored solutions for players in need or at risk effectively and efficiently.

It’s one thing to talk-the-talk and another to walk-the-walk. Every player with Mr Green can expect only the best each and every time. It’s not just about the games and the winnings but also about having the time of your life over and over again. Mr Green gives his players an amusing and enjoyable experience by absorbing and engaging them each time they log in.

Mr Green is smart, classy, sophisticated and distinctive. He is never afraid to take risks. This, is what makes his Casino experience a cut above the rest.

Are you ready to expect the unexpected?

mrgreen.com

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Antoine Bonello, Managing Director of Betfair Malta explains how Betfair utilises big data.

Big data is becoming increasingly important for customer acquisition and retention. “It is not just about getting the data: it is about what you do with it and also how can you use the data to predict and anticipate customer behaviour and make business sense out of it,” says Antoine Bonello, Managing Director of Betfair Malta.

Betfair has already put in place a big data strategy a few years ago, with the aim to build a complete digital picture of each of its customers to boost the customer experience.

Big data analysis helps Betfair to make more informed decisions and to recommend markets and events to their customers that they will most likely be interested in based on their past behaviour. The game-changing aspect of big data lies in its ability to provide real-time, or near real-time, insights. “For instance, analysing specific aspects of customer behaviour in a structured way allows us to build predictive models and extrapolate their next actions. This may lead to triggering targeted offers or agent support to complement that behaviour in real time.”

While the customer is still the biggest focus of big data adaption, big data also promises to revolutionise the ways companies manage back office and operational processes. “This is definitely a growth area,” Bonello says, adding that there are many opportunities to derive value from big data when it comes to improving retention, know your client, payment, anti-money laundering and fraud procedures and processes.
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WEARABLES

Innovative new technologies are always an attention grabber. While smartphones and tablets have extended the gaming environment for players on the go, wearable technologies have the potential to take this experience a step further. 2016 is expected to be the year where iGaming companies and game providers will present a whole range of applications for wearable devices. The lack of screen real estate might inhibit their ability to act as gambling devices in their own right, however, potential uses include the ability to channel marketing messages through them that would entice users to play on mobile or desktop.

VIRTUAL REALITY

2016 is also seen as a make or break year for virtual reality (VR). VR isn’t something new and has long been predicted as the next big thing, but it is only now promising to fulfil its real potential. With big names behind the competing technologies, VR could become something truly mainstream. Google already delivered a simple cardboard headset that turns a smartphone into a VR device, while Samsung’s latest version of the Gear VR landed in stores in November 2015, allowing customers to use their Samsung smartphones as a screen. Three of the big contenders, HTC Vive, Sony PlayStation and Oculus Rift, are all set to hit the shelves in 2016. They are considered as premium VR products with controllers, sensors or both to make the experience as interactive as possible and really give a sense of ‘presence’, placing them very much on the agenda of gaming operators. VR is also seen as offering potential in furthering the omni-channel experience where platforms can be used to offer a retail shop experience to an online player.
How to develop a VR Game

Malta-licensed SlotsMillion has launched a virtual reality casino for Oculus devices. Alexandre Tomic, co-founder of SlotsMillion and its parent company Alea Gaming, tells us about the challenges and opportunities for VR.

What are the key features of your VR casino and how did you develop it?
The VR application of SlotsMillion works with the Oculus Rift headset, but players can also enjoy the games without the goggles – just in 3D. We developed it in partnership with Lucky VR, a company that creates virtual reality experiences and specialises in casino gaming content. It is a multi-player application, developed in Unity. It gives users the feeling of being in an imaginary casino based in a skyscraper. The virtual environment features an especially large slot gaming screen to offer players the most immersive slots experience possible, with 3D graphics bursting out of the screen when they win big, as well as the ability to interact with other gamblers. Users can play a range of games already offered on the standard SlotsMillion site. Basically, we integrated all the slots from our traditional site, such as the games from Microgaming, Playtech and Netent, into this environment. This integration was actually the biggest challenge.

Did you encounter any issues from a regulatory point of view?
Not really. We prepared a user manual and invited the Malta Gaming Authority to our office to test the VR application. The MGA does have a bit of a reputation of being a conservative institution but we were really surprised by their openness. They only asked us to make minor tweaks to the product. For instance, we had to introduce a clock that shows exactly how long a user has been playing and this has to be visible on the screen all the time. We initially envisioned the character to turn his wrist and check his watch.

With VR technology still in infancy, what were the key drivers for your decision to invest in a VR casino?
A year ago, we saw this company called Digital Cybercherries. They developed a beautiful arcade room, where you could play Nintendo games from the 80s, the likes of Donkey Kong. When we saw it, we thought that it would be great if we could replace all these games with slots. When we found out that it was possible, we didn’t think twice. It is true that VR technology is not yet a consumer product, so we are well ahead of developments in this sector. The Oculus Rift headset will be released in the first quarter of 2016, but we have to wait at least two to three years before mass-adoption occurs and we have a real market. But we believe in innovation and are definitely product-driven, rather than market-driven. I also believe that VR provides a bridge between social players and real money players and while it will take a few years for VR to really take off, the time for operators to get involved is now.

Do you fear that technology developments might render your product irrelevant before it reaches critical mass?
Well, just before the launch, we had to re-develop our product twice because of technology advancements. Going forward, we have to be very careful not to develop things that will be completely useless within a short period of time. We need to monitor market developments, but at the same time, I believe that development teams have to be able to develop new products without any interference – this is the only way to come up with new products that could potentially be the next big thing. In fact, we are now looking at introducing a new VR product: social poker.
2015 has been the year of online personalisation – and the gaming sector is no exception to this. Going forward, iGaming operators will continue customising their content offering and marketing based on player preferences. A data management platform and analysts who know how to learn insights from big trends and apply them in the right way will become instrumental in driving sector growth. This should enable operators to market the types of games individual players are most likely to play, on a device and at a time that they are most likely to play.

When talking about data science and big data, one topic that often comes up is recommendation engines. Recommendation engines narrow what could become a complex decision to just a few recommendations. Netflix, Spotify, Tripadvisor and Amazon today all use algorithms to guess what films we’d like to watch, what music we’d like to download, which cities we’d like to visit and what gifts we’d like to give. Some operators believe it would be worth building an equivalent for gambling websites, although they warn a true recommender system involves some fairly hefty data science.

“Today gaming sites are loaded with a lot of content, making it difficult to give players what they are really looking for. The aim of technology providers in 2016 is to give operators the tools to drive their players to the right content. Here at BtoBet, we have already developed an intelligent system known as recommendation engine that acquires players’ behaviour, which then helps operators to anticipate the players’ needs on games and bets.”

ALESSANDRO FRIED
CEO of BtoBet

Differentiate for Growth

Sebastian Johannisson, Chief Commercial Officer of Evolution Gaming, says iGaming companies respond in new ways to stand out in a crowded marketplace.

In a competitive market, iGaming operators are finding it ever more important to differentiate themselves from their competition. Companies are offering players increasingly individual features with a view to attracting new customers. “Differentiation is definitely a key trend,” says Sebastian Johannisson, Chief Commercial Officer of Evolution Gaming. Live casino, he highlights, is currently the fastest growing sector, providing operators the opportunity to offer a very customised solution and differentiate their brands. “An increasing number of licensees are opting for dedicated tables and dedicated teams. This gives them maximum control over the online presentation of their brand. In particular, we are seeing significant investment in larger dedicated areas and more elaborate décor.”

The convergence between land-based and online operators is another trend. “We have seen a marked increase in the number of land-based casinos looking to take — and strengthen — their brand online. Land-based casinos are looking to maximise loyalty across all channels with single rewards and loyalty schemes and with innovative solutions such as our Dual Play Roulette, where land-based players and online players can play at the same in-venue table,” Johannisson says. Evolution Gaming, he emphasises, has always been a strong advocate of an omni-channel strategy. “As standard, our games are available on desktop, tablet and smartphone, so players can enjoy our games virtually anytime, anywhere. We also have our live content available via TV shows and on large screens in land-based casinos. In both cases players can bet in the live on-screen game using their tablets and smartphones.”
Payments

The global payments industry is developing at a rapid pace. Digital technology has already changed the way people pay, merchants sell and how both interact with financial institutions. From wearable devices and connected gadgets to cryptocurrency, payment technologies are changing in ways that were once unimaginable, and iGaming companies should watch the payments space closely.

The year 2016 is shaping up to be a defining one for the payments industry, as mobile payments are set to rise to the fore. It is estimated that globally mobile payments will account for more than US$1.3 trillion annually by 2017. This means that iGaming companies can expect to benefit from a wider offering as many payment providers are working on more mobile-friendly solutions. At the same time, payment processes will become more complex due to additional requirements imposed by the 4th Anti-Money Laundering Directive. The industry seems to be most divided when it comes to assessing Bitcoin’s potential. While some believe the iGaming industry will become Bitcoin’s stronghold in the near future, others argue that trust in and transparency of Bitcoin transaction would need to be established first.

“I number of key innovations will resonate in the payments industry, directly affecting iGaming Operators. We see these pegged to player acquisition and retention via mobile and tablet devices, agility of deploying new payment methods to support the growing complexity of domestic payments, identifying disruption to traditional payment channels in order to capitalise on business model evolution and building customer trust in mobile payments through improved authentication and verification processes.”

IAN PELLICANO
Director of Apco

“Payments are more than just handling a transaction. Innovation within the payments industry boils down to creating added value for the operators as well as for the paying end-user. Our answer to this is a true mobile-first checkout, best described by some of our partners as a “wallet without all the negative aspects of a wallet” where the end-user automatically connects its mobile number to the preferred payment solution.”

JOHAN FRIS
Co-Founder of Zimpler
### eSports

While some industry commentators argue that eSports and eSports wagering isn’t really the next big thing as it is already here and thriving, most operators say the eSports betting market will grow substantially in the coming years. There are 205 million people globally that watch competitive video gaming. The market was estimated to be worth between $600 and $750 million in 2015 and is expected to hit almost $2 billion by 2018. North America and Europe make up a combined 52% of the market as they continue to rapidly invest in the space while Asia approaches stagnation after a long fascination with eSports. Large multi-million dollar tournaments, an infusion of venture capital and mainstream media coverage have propelled eSports from the sector’s best-kept secret to a worldwide phenomenon, while betting on eSports has also gained popularity. One of the most successful games is League of Legends, which has also attracted the largest eSports following community in the world. While eSports wagering attracts a different customer group than traditional sports betting, and is in particular seen as a way of attracting Millennials, an increasing number of iGaming companies no longer consider eSports as niche or novelty and offer eSports betting markets alongside mainstream sports like soccer and basketball. eSports are currently Pinnacle Sports’ seventh largest market, ahead of golf and rugby, and the company expects it to become the fifth largest wagering market in the near future. The emerging trend of marrying the Daily Fantasy market and eSports could result in even bigger business for Pinnacle Sports and Co. With the addition of Daily Fantasy eSports (DFeS), gaming industry research firm Eilers Research predicts eSports fans around the world will wager more than $23 billion on eSports by 2020.

### Forex

Foreign Exchange Trading (Forex) is one of the new opportunities for iGaming operators. Traditionally the exclusive preserve of the high-flying financial elite, the arrival of electronic trading platforms opened the marketplace to retail investors and changed the industry landscape beyond all recognition. Many gaming firms are currently in the process of expanding their online gaming business into the world of forex. They have potential clients that are interested in financial trading and seek opportunities to make money and currency trading offers exactly that. Some casino players have already made the transition to currency trading, using skills that they developed playing poker and blackjack. Financial betting offers iGaming companies new marketing channels such as new SEO possibilities while cross-selling their products.

### Binary Options

Binary Options are a relatively new trend in the iGaming sector. The market quickly headed towards regulation after a string of negative stories about “brokers” disappearing with traders funds caused a bad reputation for binary options. Managing a binary options operation is very similar to managing a gaming operation, and financial betting is appealing to a similar audience. This opens up opportunities for database conversion, making it attractive for operators who are looking at getting more out of their players. Binary options are a simple form of forex, with the trader only needing to predict if the price of an asset will rise or fall by a specific expiry time. This simplicity, in addition to being offered across many interesting assets such as currencies, stocks, commodities and indices, make binary options an interesting addition for iGaming companies. When the binary option expires, the option holder will receive either a specified amount of cash or nothing at all. With the market for binary options growing beyond all expectations, adding binary options as a financial games tab or as a standalone solution also allows gaming operators to diversify and engage additional players that would not play the traditional casino-style games, through the reassurance of supplying a regulated product.
Start-ups

10

The iGaming industry is consolidating faster than ever before as major companies continue to make deals to absorb more value. However, at the same time, the appetite for investment in iGaming start-ups is at an all-time high. The current consolidation trend means that in a few years we will see fewer, but larger, operators in the marketplace, and growth opportunities through mergers and acquisitions will become more limited.

Increasing market share through innovation and creativity will become more important than ever. Recognising that disruptive innovation often comes from start-ups, many larger iGaming corporates looking to fund innovation gaps or reinvest surplus cash are already pioneering new ways to collaborate with fast-growth businesses. They have begun to systemically engage in and support R&D projects as well as early-stage companies. Some have even set up their own incubators and innovation labs. Governments in many countries are becoming more ‘switched on’ in terms of taking positive steps to create entrepreneurial ecosystems in which start-ups can thrive and team up with angel investors and venture capitalists.

AN INSIDER PERSPECTIVE

Starting up in Malta

Start-up fever is spreading in Malta. DiscountIF is a vibrant start-up that combines the thrill of winning a bet with the value of an online discounts site. We spoke to CEO Lewis Holland.

DiscountIF is one of the hottest start-ups of 2015 in Malta. An eCommerce platform, with an element of thrill, DiscountIF “seeks to add a bit of excitement to the otherwise quite stale shopping experience,” says founder and CEO Lewis Holland. “Customers can earn up to 100% cashback on any product purchased on Amazon UK through our website. They will need to link their purchases to the outcome of any sporting or TV event, and if they predict the correct outcome, they will receive cashback,” Holland explains. “For instance, clients can get 100% cashback if they correctly predict that England win the Euro 2016, or 50% cashback if Barcelona win the Champions League in 2015/16.” Customers, Holland stresses, are not limited to sporting events but can also link their purchases to weather predictions, political elections and much more.

DiscountIF is not required to hold a licence from the Malta Gaming Authority or the UK Gambling Commission; however, the start-up has won the attention of the iGaming community. “iGaming companies have enquired about our product and expressed interest in hosting our technology on their sites. We could link our offering to events that are featured on a sportsbook,” Holland says.

DiscountIF is operated by a Maltese team co-located in Malta and London. “This means in Malta, we can benefit from office space at Take Off, the business incubator at the University of Malta, while we can also source support at very competitive rates. In London, we have access to investors and venture capitalists.” DiscountIF recently reached and surpassed their initial investment target on the UK crowdfunding platform Seedrs. “Our business model works on mass sale volumes. We consider cashback as marketing costs, and our profit margin is slightly smaller. We are now seeking to grow our business beyond Amazon by entering into other partnerships with online retailers.”
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THE SILENT INTERVIEW

Don’t Say Anything Now...

Nikolai Livori, CEO of Yobetit, AJ Thompson, Non-Executive Director of Kwari.com, Angelo Dalli, CEO of Bit8, along with Alan Alden, Director of Kyte Consultants and Contact Advisory Services, reveal their thoughts and opinions about the past, present and future of the iGaming industry in Malta.
How has 2015 been for you and your business?
What is the biggest challenge you will be facing in 2016?
What is your outlook for Malta’s iGaming industry over the next five years?
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- Compliance  
- Payments  
- e-money
How do you feel when interacting with Malta’s government and regulatory agencies?
How do you think the international iGaming community views Malta?
What would be your key message to the iGaming community?
What does living and working in Malta mean to you?

Don’t say anything now…
The 7th edition of the Malta iGaming Seminar was a huge success. We had delegates joining us from across the globe to learn from some of the best speakers in the industry. The knowledge gained from our informative seminars and contacts made during our various networking events will surely stay with us until we meet again in 2016.

Described as “top notch”, “the best show on the calendar this year”, and “a fantastic event”, the Malta iGaming Seminar (MiGS) delivered on all of its promises. From the content-driven programme presented by a who’s who of industry experts to the inspired networking events, over 430 attendees are abuzz after the seventh instalment of the annual event. Building from a once small, Malta-focused event to a global industry standout, MiGS continued to impress with its unique way of blending high-level business with epic-level fun.

A highlight of the conference came from a panel of industry legends that collectively share over 100 years of experience on the front lines of iGaming. The ‘Century of iGaming’ session brought together: Mark Blandford, founder of SportingBet, Paris Smith, CEO of Pinnacle Sports, Franz Wohlfahrt, recently retired CEO of Novomatic, Pontus Lindwall who launched Betsson and NetEnt and Calvin Ayre of Bodog (via Skype). Moderated by Sue Schneider, a pioneering iGaming figure in her own right and MiGS partner, the panelists also looked at how the industry is still evolving, where the growth potential lies, how the balance between business and government can be achieved and the importance of technology.

With 18 exhibitors and 39 sponsors, MiGS was able to ensure attendees could find any business service they needed. MiGS enjoyed a diverse delegation with more than 40% of the attendees coming from outside Malta and a total of 22 countries represented. As the Honorable Herrera, Malta’s Parliamentary Secretary for Competitiveness and Economic Growth said in the closing presentation, “MiGS is the ideal event for anyone involved in the industry to come together to share best practices and ideas.”
MiGS held its seventh annual summit in November 2015 at the Corinthia Hotel in St. Julian’s. The event provided a unique and exciting opportunity for discussion about trending topics in the iGaming industry. Boasting speakers from some of the world’s biggest gaming operators, the Malta Gaming Authority also took part in the discussions, along with lawyers and technology experts. The event brought together operators, regulators, service providers, affiliates and provided invaluable insights into the fast evolving industry. Session topics included the past, present and future of iGaming, the increasing cost of doing business, eSports, Fantasy Sports and Payments. MiGS also entailed a networking bonanza including Zorb football, a Harbour Cruise and an ABBA Tribute Act closing party.

Mark your calendar for MiGS 2016 which will take place from 14th – 18th November. Tickets for MiGS16 are not yet available however you can subscribe online at http://www.maltaigamingseminar.com/event-registration/ to be the first to know when they are available.

Some might still ask, “But why Malta?” Malta is host to some 300 gaming companies, 450 licenses and a strong workforce of 10,000. The idea of creating a platform to showcase the industry had been brewing in many minds until SIGMA took off in 2014.

The SIGMA goal, ultimately, is to bring together the entire gaming community, from affiliates and operators through to regulators and vendors. If you’re looking at an exciting show where this industry can meet, learn and do business, look no further; SIGMA16 ticks all these boxes.
Following feedback, we identified EIGHT features that should make SiGMA16 a worthy investment:

**INDUSTRY TREND**
The three distinct pillars within the industry – solution providers, operators and affiliates – are coming closer together. Today’s affiliate, for instance, is fast becoming a successful operator within months. SiGMA is the only 360° igaming showcase in Malta that reflects this trend.

**TRUST**
Virtually all our exhibitors from 2014 and 2015 will exhibit again in 2016. SiGMA also won the trust of many exhibitors who did not take part before.

**RECRUITMENT**
With some 300 gaming companies and a solid workforce of 10,000 based in a five mile radius in Malta, you are likely to find the right talent for your company’s recruitment needs.

**LOCATION**
Different format. Different organisers. Different crowd. Different affiliates. Different deals. SiGMA guarantees quality and quantity with 1 Expo, 4 Conferences, 40+ Affiliate Programs, 60+ speakers, 100+ Exhibitors and 3,000+ participants.

**KNOWLEDGE**
SiGMA16 will feature five conferences and an investors session: 1 – Gamification; 2 – Payments; 3 – Affiliates; 4 – Regulatory; 5 – Binary: 6 – SiGMA Pitch.

**VALUE**
A free admission policy for affiliates and a low entry fee for all other participants is indicative of a solid turnout. Not bad for a show that enjoys worldwide coverage thanks to an exhaustive list of media partners.

**HOSPITALITY**
Great weather in autumn calls for free, open air networking events close to the venue itself. SiGMA16 will include networking pre-registration drinks, networking poker tournament, conference open bar drinks, closing party.

**EARLY BOOKING**
Book your booth or sponsorship package by 31st March 2016 and enjoy a number of extra perks, including free hospitality flights from top gaming destinations, extra coverage on SiGMA publications and premium booth location on the expo floor.

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www.maltaigamingsummit.com
The second edition of SiGMA was held in November 2015 at the InterContinental Hotel in St. Julian’s, making its mark as Malta’s largest iGaming show. Created as a platform to showcase the industry, the 2015 summit was twice as big as 2014. Bringing together affiliates, operators, regulators, industry vendors and suppliers, SiGMA 2015 ran over three days with a huge expo floor and several conferences taking place. The sessions featured key industry players, legal, regulatory and SEO experts and members of the Maltese Government. Gamification, Anti-fraud, Bitcoin and Social Media were some of the hot topics during the discussions. The three days were also packed with networking events such as a poker tournament, networking drinks and dinners and was finally topped off with a huge closing party held at the Westin Pavillion.

Preparations are now in full swing for SiGMA 2016, where virtually all exhibitors from 2015 will exhibit again. SiGMA also won the trust of many exhibitors who did not take part in 2014 or 2015. Following feedback, SiGMA16 will feature five conferences showcasing expert knowledge from key players within the industry. The event will include networking pre-registration drinks, a networking poker tournament, conference open bar drinks and a closing party.

Book your booth or sponsorship package by 31st March 2016 and enjoy a number of extra perks, including free flights from top destinations, extra coverage in SiGMA Magazine (April issue) and premium booth location on expo floor.
DON’T MISS GAMING’S LEADING EVENTS SERIES IN 2016!
clarionevents.com/gaming

ICE TOTALLY GAMING
EXCEL, LONDON, 2-4 FEBRUARY 2016
ICETOTAALLYGAMING.COM
#ICEGAMING

World Regulatory Briefing Africa
April 2016, Lagos
wrbriefing.com/africa
#WrBafrica

GiGse
27-29 April 2016
Marriott Marquis, San Francisco
gigse.com
#GiGse16

Juegos Miami
31 - 3 June 2016
Biltmore Hotel, Miami
www.juegosmiami.com

EiG
18 - 20 October 2016
Arena Berlin, Germany
www.eigexpo.com
#EiG16
EVENTS CALENDAR

2016

FEBRUARY

CS's 6th Annual Regulatory Forum on International Online Gaming
1 February
London, UK

ICE Totally Gaming
2-4 February
London, UK

London Affiliate Conference (LAC)
4-7 February 2016
London, UK

MARCH

iGaming Asia Congress
21-23 March
Macau, China

World Regulatory Briefing Africa (WR8 Africa)
11-12 April
Lagos, Nigeria

APRIL

i-Gaming Forum 2016
13-14 April
Stockholm, Sweden

European eSports Conference
13-14 April,
London, UK

iGaming North America Conference 2016
5-7 April 2016
Las Vegas, USA

JUNE

35th annual International Gaming Summit by The International Association of Gaming Advisors (IAGA) & Gaming Regulators
European Forum (GREF)
31 May – 2 June
St. Julian’s, Malta

iGaming Super Show Amsterdam
7-10 June
Amsterdam, Netherlands

JULY

World Gaming Executive Summit 2016
4-7 April
Barcelona, Spain

SEPTMBER

Global Gaming Expo (G2E)
27-29 September 2016
Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

OCTOBER

Excellence in iGaming (EiG Berlin)
18-20 October
Berlin, Germany

Berlin Affiliate Conference
Dates TBC
Berlin, Germany

NOVEMBER

SIGMA
Dates TBC
St. Julian’s, Malta.

MIGS
14-18 November 2016
St. Julian’s, Malta.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

iGamingBusiness
SIGMA
Maltaprofile.info (gaming section)
EGR Magazine
Gaming Intelligence
Calvinayre.com
GGB Magazine
Gambling Insider
Yogonet
GamblingCompliance
Access to iGaming Business includes:

- Print copies of iGaming Business magazine as well as access to the digital version
- Digital archive of back issues of iGaming Business magazine
- Access to daily news, breaking news, press releases and the event calendar
- Access to online features and news analysis
- Access to dedicated sections; technology, finance, marketing, management and legal
- Access to European Gaming Lawyer Magazine (print and digital version)
- Access to full webinar archive, previous recordings and presentations
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OPERATOR ROUNDTABLE

LEOVEGAS
CEO: Johan Styren
Employees: 200+ in the group (including 160 in Malta)
Office location: Sliema
Operational in Malta since: 2012
Key products: Casino
Key markets: Sweden, Norway, Finland & UK

Tipico
CEO: Jan Bolz
Employees: over 200 in Malta and 6,000 in the Group
Office location: Portomaso Tower, St Julian's
Operational in Malta since: 2004
Key products: Sportsbook & Casino
Key markets: Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Italy (online)

Interwetten
Speaker of the Board: Werner Becher
Employees: 11
Office location: Gzira
Operational in Malta since: 2004
Key products: Sports-betting, Casino, Live casino & Games
Key markets: Europe

Mr Green LTD
CEO: Bo Wänghammar
Employees: 150
Office location: Sliema
Operational in Malta since: 2008
Key products: Casino
Key markets: The Nordics, UK & Austria

Betsson
CEO: Ulrik Bengtsson
Employees: 1,800 people working within the Betsson Group
Office location: Malta (Experience Centre), Stockholm, Tallinn & Tbilisi
Operational in Malta since: 2005
Key products: 22 different brands in Casino, Poker and Sportsbook
Key markets: The Nordics, Western Europe & Central Asia

Looking Back Racing Ahead

Gaming Malta 2016 Edition
What would you highlight as your organisation’s biggest achievements of 2015?

**JB**
For our company, 2015 was full of challenges. As market leader in Germany, our main aim was, and continues to be, to strengthen this position and keep growing as fast and as healthily as we did during recent years. In 2015, we also became a Platinum Partner of FC Bayern Munich, one of the biggest football clubs in the world. This was for the Tipico brand, by far the biggest achievement of 2015.

**WB**
2015 was a special year for Interwetten. The company was founded in 1990, and in 2015 we celebrated our 25th anniversary. We have been offering online gaming since 1997. We are very proud of the strong growth rates that we achieved in 2015. Net revenue increased by 24% to date. Our market leading mobile share of more than 55% and our unique cashout features underpin our strong position.

**2015 was the year of product overhaul at Mr Green. We updated our technical architecture as well as the front-end of all products to create a seamless user experience throughout our product portfolio.**

**JS**
In 2015 we introduced a whole range of new games, and we also started offering live games. 2015 also brought a number of back-end improvements to our systems that offer a better and faster user experience to our customers. We launched Touch ID sign-in for our iPhone app to allow our customers to log in by using their fingerprint. 2015 was also the year in which LeoVegas really succeeded in the UK, while we also managed to keep growth momentum in all our other markets.

**UB**
2015 was another strong year for Betsson. We continued to deliver on our strategy, both when it comes to providing the best customer experience as well as when it comes to growth, organically or via acquisition.

What would you list as the most important events and developments for the industry in general?

**WB**
Market liberalisation in more and more countries in the EU for sports betting and gaming are a game changer for our industry. However, many European countries are missing fair and feasible economic conditions for licensees. Going forward, inflated cost structures and low growth rates will make it even harder for operators to stay profitable.

**UB**
I would also highlight the ongoing local re-regulations in Europe. However, I believe this makes the market more competitive and will ultimately lead to a better customer experience.

**JB**
While our market share in Austria, Denmark and Belgium is growing, Germany remains our most important market. Hence, the legal situation in Germany, and in particular the ruling of the Hessa administrative court suspending the granting of licences under the German Interstate Treaty on Gambling, were very important events for us. On a wider level, we have seen how technical achievements and especially mobile innovations in regard to customer relationship management changed the iGaming market.

**JS**
2015 was the year in which a large group of people became ‘mobile by default’. 2015 also confirmed that the term mobile is indeed a fluid one that is constantly changing. A few years ago, ‘mobile’ meant a laptop, then a phone, then a tablet and now we have a whole range of mobile devices. Most significantly in 2015 we have seen the increase of a wide variety of mobile wearable devices.

**BW**
Innovation has been important. The industry seems to understand the importance of offering true entertainment through gamification, as well as the need of taking responsible gaming to the next level by providing a safe user experience.
If you were the Prime Minister of Malta, what initiatives would you pursue to make Malta’s iGaming industry more competitive?

Malta should strengthen its educational system in areas such as marketing, as well as in web and system development. The industry also needs modern office space, and the government could incentivise the development of office complexes. I think it would also be beneficial for Malta to include a wider range of job titles in the highly qualified persons rules, so that more professionals can benefit from a 15% flat tax rate. This would make it easier to attract foreign professionals to work and live in Malta.

I agree. Malta is a very attractive working and living area for talented young people from all over the world, and it attracts many people seeking a career in the gaming business. However, one of the initiatives I would pursue is to strengthen this position. In addition, there are many talented people on the island, and we should never forget that being a Malta-based company also means that we have to give something back to the people of Malta by promoting talent from the island within our companies.

I would ensure the continuation of promoting the island as a great place to work and live in. In this respect I would also keep creating or extending schemes that attract foreigners to Malta. In addition, and in consultation with the different educational institutions on the island, I would see how we can offer more specific courses related to gaming and technical development. I would also support and encourage the organisation of iGaming-related international events in Malta. The Summit of iGaming (SiGMA) and the Malta iGaming Seminar (MiGS) are great examples of how such events can pin Malta to the iGaming map. From a regulatory perspective, I would further simplify Malta’s licensing regime. I would put in place the much awaited ‘super-licence’ that would make it easier for licensed operators to add new brands and products to their portfolio. This, coupled with other simplified processes for companies and for employee-approvals, would strengthen Malta’s licensing system over other regulated markets.

What key message would you like to send to gaming regulators and policy-makers in Malta and abroad?

I can repeat my last point. Regulators and policy-makers should modernise the legal framework and try harmonising the local regulations in Europe.

The key message is: keep it simple. When regulating and legalising, gaming regulators and policy-makers need to take into account practical aspects. Regulations need to allow operators to operate in a legal manner, protect their customers and carry out their day-to-day business without being held back by overly stringent processes, banned products or high taxes. This would create a win-win situation for both the regulators (i.e. the countries) and operators. The more operators thrive, the more they contribute to the economy in terms of job creation, tax payments and corporate social responsibility programmes.

There is only one single key factor of success for gaming regulation: fair and feasible economic conditions for licenses. Unreasonable taxes and restrictions for the product offering channel just direct customers to the black market.

Regulators and policy-makers should also focus on harmonisation of the regulatory regimes across Europe to avoid creating a patchwork of individual regulatory systems.

“Your bet in safe hands” is not only an advertising claim, it is our company’s basic principle. In my opinion, all gaming regulation should follow this simple sentence and focus on consumer protection.

If you want Malta to keep growing, the following would need to be addressed over time: Firstly, infrastructure; everything from roads, public transportation, housing, to internet and electricity connections. Secondly, improve the education system, both in terms of availability for employees and their children as well as at university level in order to supply relevant talent. This includes English language and computer science. Finally I would urge the regulator to stop talking about “the next thing” and instead ensure that current regulation holds up to today’s requirements of the quite significant existing gaming business in Malta.
If you were to bet the farm on one product, service or technology that will have the greatest impact on the gaming industry in 2016 and beyond, what would that be and why?

**This would be gamification because I believe it will play a central role in taking the industry to the next level in terms of entertainment.**

**I think the use of data will power continued growth in the industry.**

**From my point of view, mobile technology will by far have the greatest impact on our business and the modern life in general. All services connected to that will also be of special importance, such as payment solutions and simple and secure customer registration.**

**I am also convinced that mobile devices will become even more important in the next few years, although many operators still focus their investments on desktop devices.**

**Mobile is slowly but steadily moving into wearables, so my bet would go on the expansion of some good content and functionality in this regard. I am also confident that the gaming industry will further capitalise on big data in order to direct even more personalised services and offers to customers.**

What are your company’s priorities for 2016?

**Tipico’s priority will remain to entertain and fascinate our customers. We want to keep our brand promise on every occasion. It is all about keeping and raising our high quality standards. We are the German market leader, and it is of vital importance that it stays that way.**

**At Mr Green, our ambition for 2016 is to lift the level of entertainment in our product offer above and beyond the industry standard.**

**The customer is always the focus for the Betsson Group. We will seek to extend our marketing initiatives in an effort to expand our brand awareness and footprint in our core markets based on the UEFA Euro 2016 in France.**

**We want to retain our position in our existing markets while expanding into new regulated ones. From a recruitment perspective, we will definitely be expanding our operations in Malta and Sweden, while we also want to enable our existing workforce to take on more responsibilities and progress further within the company.**
REGULATORY UPDATE

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

EDWINA LICARI
Chief Officer - Legal & International Affairs

HEATHCLIFF FARRUGIA
Chief Officer – Operations

RACHEL MIFSUD BONNICI
Chief Officer – Compliance

DOMINIC MICALLEF
Chief Officer – Enforcement
Malta: A Thought-Leader in iGaming

Malta was the first EU state to introduce specific regulations and to bring forward new concepts in the iGaming industry. The country has created a flexible framework that places great emphasis on player protection, responsible gambling and anti-fraud measures, benefiting operators and players alike. The Malta Gaming Authority (MGA), the sole regulator responsible for the governance of all forms of gaming in Malta, has continuously upped the ante in establishing the country as the jurisdiction of choice for remote gaming.

MGA STRUCTURE
JOSEPH CUSCHIERI
Executive Chairman

MGA BOARD MEMBERS
Chris Cilia
Caesar Grech
Ruth Trapani Galea Feriol
Juliana Scerri Ferrante
Board Secretary - Matthew Bondin
Across-the-board consultancy…
no matter how challenging or complex.

Contact Advisory Services is the company that you can depend on for professional, across-the-board consultancy services in Malta. Specialised in the remote gaming sector, we are dedicated to providing you with an efficient and dependable service that ensures all of your needs are met - no matter how challenging or complex.
When Malta began licensing online gaming more than ten years ago, this was a bold move. While governments all over Europe protected their monopolies, Malta opened up. The first online betting businesses were established under the Public Lotto Ordinance; but it was recognised that a dedicated regulatory framework was needed. Following the establishment of a regulator for the industry, Malta introduced its new Remote Gaming Regulations in 2004 under the Lotteries and Other Games Act.

REGULATING OPERATORS
The regulatory framework of Malta is both technology and game neutral, encompassing any type of gaming using a means of distance communication, including internet, digital TV, mobile phone technology, telephone and fax, meaning that any remote game that can be securely managed under its regulations will be considered for licensing.

Remote gaming licences are issued by the MGA, and all operators planning to set up in Malta must obtain a valid licence. Applications can be submitted by a company registered in the European Economic Area. Malta offers four different classes of licences. Applicants can apply for one or more licence classes depending on the nature of their business. All operators have to adhere to the same principles – no matter which class they are licensed under – and it is important to highlight that the Remote Gaming Regulations regulate operators, not the games themselves.

KEY BENEFITS
Malta’s strict regulation of the industry is proving a strong advantage and is seen as a feature which gives Malta-based operators a winning edge over operators based in other jurisdictions. Serious operators appreciate the MGA’s stringent demands on the iGaming industry, and the requirement that operators continue to liaise closely with the Authority and obtain approval for any changes to the licensed operations, has garnered respect for the MGA. Malta has set excellent standards, and iGaming companies say that this is a major attraction when selecting Malta as their jurisdiction of choice.

One of the foremost advantages of regulation is consumer trust. The reputation of Malta as a well-regulated jurisdiction gives players confidence and peace-of-mind. Regulation provides players of Malta-based operators with the added comfort of knowing that their monies are secure and that the games offered by such operators are fair and free from fraud and other irresponsible gaming practices. Maltese regulation also offers operators further direct benefits through the requirements to implement effective Know Your Client procedures, while the anti-money laundering policies provide them with the assurance that their operations are protected from fraudulent activities carried out by third parties.

TOWARDS A NEW FRAMEWORK
With the online space changing rapidly, it is important that legislation is reviewed on a regular basis. During the past two years, the MGA has introduced some quick-wins that have simplified the licensing process as well as the compliance audit for operators. In addition, Malta’s policy-makers are back to the drawing board to design a brand new framework to regulate the next generation of gaming. While the MGA is looking at overhauling different aspects of the regulations, the licensing framework is expected to see the most profound changes, with the introduction of only two types of licences. A Business-to-Business (B2B) and a Business-to-Consumer (B2C) licence are expected to simplify the current framework in the coming years.
Applicants are requested to submit all the required information in one go, and the MGA commits itself to the analysis of all information through multiple internal process streams. The MGA stresses that the submission of an application for a remote gaming licence should be the end result of thorough considerations made by the prospective applicant. Applicants should acquire knowledge of the Remote Gaming Regulations and ascertain themselves whether they are committed to complying with the high standards. The implications of getting a Maltese licence - such as taxation, human resources, operating costs and legal implications to name but a few - should also be taken into consideration. There are four different classes of licence, and companies setting up in Malta will need to obtain a licence to the class appropriate to their operations. Once granted, a licence is valid for five years and can be renewed thereafter for further periods of five years.

**MGA RECEIVES REMOTE GAMING APPLICATION**

In the application stage the MGA assesses whether an applicant:

1. Is fit and proper to conduct gaming business.
2. Is correctly prepared from a business strategy perspective.
3. Has the operational and statutory requirements to meet the obligations prescribed by law and policy.
4. Has correctly implemented what has been applied for, on a technical environment before going live.

1. The MGA conducts an in-depth financial analysis of the applicant’s business plan. The applicant’s business plan is expected to have a detailed forecast of the operation, inclusive of marketing and distribution strategies, HR plan and growth targets.

2. The MGA conducts a fit and proper exercise on the applicant by assessing all information related to persons involved in finance and management and on the business viability of the operation. As part of this process, the MGA conducts probity investigations with other national and international regulatory bodies and law enforcement agencies. Any non-disclosure of criminal records or misleading information will result in automatic disqualification.

3. The application is examined on the instruments required to conduct the business. This process includes examining incorporation documents, the games, the business processes related to conducting the remote games, the rules, terms, conditions and procedures of the games, the application architecture and system architecture of the gaming and control systems. Furthermore, a remote gaming applicant is subject to minimum issued and paid-up share capital requirements. Class 1 and Class 2 licence holders are required to retain a minimum share capital of €100,000 whilst Class 3 and Class 4 licensees are required to retain a minimum share capital of €40,000. Companies with multiple licences are required to meet the above share capital requirements cumulatively up to a minimum capping of €240,000.
The final phase consists of a detailed audit of the applicant’s completed and operating business. Once the MGA informs the applicant that the application was successful, the applicant will be allowed 60 days to complete the technical roll-out. If the applicant does not complete such technical roll-out within the mentioned 60 days, the application will be considered as suspended and subject to re-application unless a reasonable justification is submitted for the MGA to consider. At any stage within those 60 days, the applicant shall request an external systems review (performed by an independent third party contracted by the MGA against a fixed market price). The systems review will audit the live environment against the proposed application. To test whether the applicant complies with the regulations, the auditor will have a close look at the front and the back-end applications as well as how one manages and maintains policies and procedures. Further documentation required would include copies of signed agreements with all third parties that may affect the gaming or control system such as the agreement with the equipment hosting providers, payment processors as well as any other contract where functions are outsourced clearly outlining the responsibilities to be carried out by such providers. If there are significant changes to the gaming system, the applicant shall resubmit all updated documentation and will have to undergo another systems review. Once the review is complete and approved, a five-year licence will be issued.
“The licensing process today consists of a single stage, and we process different types of documentation simultaneously to speed up the process. We are currently receiving 6 to 8 new applications per month, and in 2015 we issued 87 new licences. Going forward, we aim to streamline the process even further and ensure non-duplication of processes and requirements. The introduction of a new regulatory framework will play a key role in simplifying the licence application process. There seems to be a misconception when it comes to licensing fantasy sports as this is licensed under a Class 3 licence, and we have been regulating this activity for a number of years. What we currently do not license are eSports competitions as these are currently considered to be games which are completely dependent on skill.”

SAMUEL GAUCI
Acting Chief Officer - Authorisations

**LICENCE FEES**

- **Application Fee:** €2,330 (on submission of application for a remote gaming licence)
- **Licence Fee:** €8,500 (on issuance of licence and subsequently per annum)
- **Licence Renewal Fee:** €1,500 (on submission of application for renewal)

**COMPLIANCE FEES**

- **Compliance Review:** €3,500 (paid in advance for the execution by the Authority’s approved third-party certifiers/auditors).
- **System Review:** €2,500 (paid in advance for the execution by the Authority’s approved third-party certifiers/auditors)

**TYPES OF LICENCES**

**Class 1**
A remote gaming licence for operators managing their own risk by offering players repetitive games, the results of which depend on random number generation. This class includes the licensing of casino type games and online lotteries.

**Class 2**
A remote betting office licence for operators managing their own risk by offering bets on events based on a matchbook. Fixed odds betting fall under this class.

**Class 3**
A licence for operators taking a commission from promoting and/or betting games. This class includes P2P, poker networks, betting exchange and game portals.

**Class 4**
A licence to host and manage remote gaming operators, excluding the licensee himself. This is intended for software vendors who want to provide management and hosting facilities on their platform – a business to business gaming licence.
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REGULATIONS
AT A GLANCE

COMPLIANCE REVIEW
The MGA’s rigorous application process is designed to ensure ethical behaviour and fair play, from the strict due diligence process each company undergoes prior to being issued with a licence, to the monitoring and supervision of the operations once they are set up and running. The MGA mandates that after going live a Licensee undergoes a number of compliance reviews in order to ensure that the licensee is compliant and operating in accordance with the applicable requirements. Therefore, licensees need to be aware that the licence application process is just the beginning when it comes to compliance requirements.

The MGA requires the following reviews:
• After the first year of operation once licensed by the MGA.
• On the third year of operation after being licensed by the MGA, following a risk-based assessment.
• Prior to the expiry of the five year licence for its renewal.
• At the discretion of the MGA when this is deemed necessary and specifically in cases where the licensee is suspected to be conducting its operations in breach of the applicable requirements.

Failure to carry out or successfully undergo a compliance review may lead to administrative action from the part of the MGA, including the suspension of a licence.

SUSPENSION AND CANCELLATION
The MGA may order the suspension or cancellation of a licence for a number of reasons, including but not limited to; cases where the licensee or the Key Official is convicted in any country of an offence which is punishable by imprisonment, the licensee fails to comply with material term or condition of the licence, fails to pay taxes and other fees or is insolvent, fails to meet commitments to players, has obtained

“The guy who invented poker was bright, but the guy who invented the chip was a genius.”

JULIUS WEINTRAUB, A.K.A. “BIG JULIE”
(1919-1997; American jeweler, philanthropist and gambler)
Some people are never satisfied. They are always looking to improve in everything they do. We like those people. In fact, we’d like them to fill our great Ta’Xbiex offices.

We’re looking for those that can use their creativity and passion to create seamless, intuitive and engaging online gaming experiences. We are a fast growing and very profitable company. On top of that, we are also the largest internet company on the Stockholm Stock Exchange.

We are looking for developers, designers, marketers, customer service agents and more.

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the remote gaming licence by providing false or misleading information or is in breach of the laws or regulations for the prevention of money laundering.

**KEY OFFICIAL**

Every licensee is obliged to appoint at least one Key Official who is responsible to supervise operations and to ensure that the licence holder complies with all laws, regulations, conditions and any directives issued by the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA). The official must assist the Authority with any investigations and queries relating to the licensed operations, oversee and audit processes, ensure that all games are fair and correct, and that the remote gaming system is well-kept and maintained. The Key Official role holds great responsibility, and therefore the selected person should be readily available in Malta, appointed as a director of the gaming company, and has to be approved by the MGA. The MGA will not accept the resignation of a Key Official unless a new Key Official has been approved, ensuring that licensees have an approved Key Official at all times. The role and requirements for Key Officials are currently under review to ensure that such an important role is performed in a diligent and effective manner at all times. In fact, the Authority is planning to launch Key Official training and certification to embed more value within the role. The MGA is also proposing to widen and diversify the role of the Key Official so as to capture other relevant functions within a licensed operation.

**GAMING SYSTEM AND CONTROLS**

In applying for a gaming licence, the applicant must present to the MGA the software used and the specifications of the control system that will be used to conduct gaming operations and which will be subject to verification testing. The operational manual must include the following details: game description, software, reporting requirements, and a full list of the terms and conditions with the rules of the games. It should also include the general procedures to be followed for the operation of remote gaming software where applicable, the procedures for recording and paying prizes won in remote gaming, and the accounting systems and procedures to be followed to play a game.

The MGA also requires the following to be submitted: the procedures and standards for the maintenance, security, storage and transportation of equipment to be used to conduct remote gaming, the procedures for the setting up and maintenance of security facilities including general compliance and internal controls relating to access to critical systems, a disaster recovery plan and an adequate system of data backup. Before a new gaming system becomes operational, a licensee must provide adequate certification to the MGA to confirm that the gaming system was tested within the previous six months and found to comply with all technical specifications. These requirements confirm that the system is technologically sound, secure and unbiased.

More specifically, the data in the gaming system must be randomly generated,
unpredictable and unable to be reliably reproduced. The operation of all gaming equipment must have the prior approval of the MGA. The requirement for randomly-generated data means the system must pass appropriate statistical tests of randomness to prove that the data is unpredictable and that it is computationally unfeasible to predict what the next number will be, given complete knowledge of the algorithm or hardware generating the sequence, and all previously generated numbers. If, for example, the sequence generator is activated again with the same input, it must produce two completely unrelated random sequences.

Moreover, the outcome of the game event, and the return of the player, must be shown to be independent of the CPU, memory, disk or other components used in the playing device. Nor must the game event outcome be affected by the effective bandwidth, link utilisation, bit error rate or any characteristic of the playing. Operators must seek prior approval of the MGA before making any changes to the system. The gaming system must also be capable of producing monthly auditable and aggregate financial statements of gaming transactions, and calculate accurately all taxation and other monies due to the Authority. The gaming system must maintain information about all games played and the identity of the player.

“All the evidence shows that God was actually quite a gambler, and the universe is a great casino, where dice are thrown, and roulette wheels spin on every occasion.”

STEPHEN HAWKING
REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS
The regulations require players to submit certain information to the licensee before they can be registered as players and participate in the games, including the following details, which the operator is obliged to obtain from each player: that the player is over 18 years of age, the player’s identity, the player’s place of residence, and the player’s valid e-mail address. The database server must be physically located within the European Economic Area or any other approved jurisdiction and could be subject, if necessary, to inspection by the MGA. The MGA also requires the presence of a mirror server in Malta that replicates in real-time the data on the database.

PLAYER ACCOUNTS AND PAYMENTS
Operators granted a Malta licence must set up and maintain a player’s account for each player registered, and the licensee cannot accept a wager from a player unless a player’s account has adequate funds to cover the amount of the wager. The licensee is barred from accepting cash from a player, and funds can only be received from the player by credit/debit cards, electronic transfer, wire transfer, cheques or any other method approved by the MGA. It is a strict provision that a licensee must not provide credit to a player or act as agent for a credit provider to facilitate the provision of credit to that player. When a player requests to withdraw funds from their account, the licensee must remit such funds within five working days, if practical, and a licensee must not personally deal with the credit of a player’s account. A licensee cannot make a payment in excess of €2,329.37 out of a player’s account to a player until the player’s identity, age and place of residence have been verified. An amount may only be remitted by the licensee to the player to the same account from which the funds paid into the player’s account originated. Inactivity for 30 months on a player’s account permits the licensee to remit the balance in that account to the player or, if the player cannot be satisfactorily located, to the MGA. The licensee must keep players’ funds separate from the licensee’s own funds in a client’s account held with an approved credit institution. The licensee must instruct and authorise the credit institution at which a player’s account is held to
disclose any information as may be requested by the MGA in respect of a player’s account. The licensee must also submit to the MGA a Player Liability Report on a monthly basis to confirm that player funds are controlled in accordance with the applicable requirements.

**PROTECTING PLAYERS**

The regulations oblige all licensees to display at all times, in a prominent place on the entry screen of the website, a warning of the addiction possibilities of gaming and links to other websites assisting compulsive/problem gamblers. In addition, after every hour, an automatic reality check that suspends play must appear that: indicates how long the player has been playing, displays the player’s winnings and losses during such period of time, requires the player to confirm that the player has read the message, and gives an option to the player to end the session or return to the game. All amounts displayed must be quoted with the symbol of currency that the player is playing with, while full-screen games cannot be offered unless a real-time clock is displayed on the screen at all times and players are given the facility to exit the game.

**SELF-BARRING**

Self-barring gives players the option of managing their gaming activity effectively. All registered players must be given the facility to set a limit on the amounts wagered within a specific period of time, set a limit on the losses that the player may sustain within a specific period of time, set a limit to the amount of time the player may play in one session and exclude the player from playing for a definite or indefinite period of time. If the game is displayed on a screen, an automatic counter must indicate the player’s account balance.

**RESPONSIBLE GAMING**

Malta’s commitment to player protection includes an obligation to put in place safeguards to ensure responsible gaming. The dangers of compulsive gambling and other gambling-related problems are well recognised by the legislation and regulation governing Malta’s remote gaming industry. The MGA has put in place a variety of checks and balances to prevent the abuse of gambling and the proliferation of compulsive players who feel they should exclude themselves from playing for a period of time. Self-barring also includes provisions such as limiting the amount per wager, or limiting losses. The Authority has recently founded the Responsible Gaming Foundation, aimed at further research and education on problem gambling, also with the objective of helping problem gamblers, and helping people gamble responsibly and without developing problems or addictions.

**ABORTED OR MISCARRIED GAMES**

A licensee is to take all reasonable steps to ensure that its computer system enables a player whose participation in a game is, after they have made a wager, interrupted by a failure of the electronic communications system or a failure of the player’s computer system, to resume playing, on the restoration of the system. If a licensee’s computer does not enable a player to continue, the licensee shall ensure that the game is terminated and the amount of the wager is refunded to the player by placing it in the player’s account.

**COMPLAINTS**

The MGA takes complaints from players very seriously, and every licensee must give players the possibility of filing complaints. Every licensee is obliged to enquire into any complaint made, and in the event that the complaint is escalated to the Authority, the licensee must provide the initial feedback within 21 days from the date on which the complaint has been lodged.

“Malta’s new gaming regulatory framework will adopt a risk-based approach and address any weaknesses in our current regime. The new B2B and B2C licensing regulations aim to reduce administrative burdens, while avoiding duplication of requirements for applicants undergoing a licensing process. In drafting the new regulations, we are focusing much more on objectives, and the guiding question for the Authority will be if the systems and measures an operator proposes meet the objective. We are seeking to develop a regulatory framework that allows us to embrace innovation, for instance in the area of digital currencies, which at the moment the MGA does not accept. The main issue is the anonymity of transactions when it comes to bitcoin and blockchain, but new ways to conduct Know-Your-Customer checks seem to be emerging.”

EDWINA LICARI
Chief Officer - Legal and International Affairs
Reflecting insurance solutions around your innovations

At Citadel we operate with a forward-thinking strategy built on our established reputation as a provider of quality-driven, competitive insurance solutions combined with a personalised service. We are uniquely positioned, in that we offer businesses and individuals extensive, innovative and flexible solutions including life insurances for loans, retirement and savings plans, aligned to their financial assets.

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Value • Service • Security
ADVERTISING

The framework also lays out detailed guidelines on advertising, and licensees are not permitted to carry out advertising that, among others: implies that remote gaming is required for social acceptance, personal or financial success or the resolution of any economic or social problems, that contains endorsements by well-known personalities that suggest remote gaming contributed to their success, that encourages individuals under 18 years of age to engage in remote gaming, or that sends unsolicited electronic mail, whether it is through its own operation or by the intervention of third parties.

KEEPING RECORDS, ACCOUNTS, GAMING TAX

Licensees are required to keep accounts and records that show a true and fair view of the financial position and state of affairs of the licensee. Within 180 days from the end of its financial year, the licensee needs to file with the Authority an audited set of financial statements. Within 30 days from the end of the half yearly period, the licensee has to submit interim financial statements. The gaming tax based on the licence class has to be paid monthly by the 20th of the following month.

ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING

Safeguards to ensure the prevention of money laundering are built into the Maltese remote gaming regulations, placing it fully in line with the EU’s Third Anti-Money Laundering Directive. The Fourth AML Directive came into force in June 2015 and must be transposed into national law by June 2017. The new directive presents a legal obligation for iGaming companies requiring more robust due diligence and more onerous obligations to prevent money laundering, while bringing about an obligation for all gambling operators to conduct CDD for transactions of €2,000. Thus far, iGaming operators are not subject persons under the EU’s Third Anti-Money Laundering Directive, but this is about to change when the Fourth Directive will be transposed into national law at the very latest. In fact, the MGA is currently assessing whether it will already impose stricter requirements on iGaming operators ahead of the 2017 deadline.

Currently, the Prevention of Money Laundering Regulations (PMLR) require operators to appoint a Money Laundering Reporting Officer and to notify the Financial Intelligence Analysis Unit, a unit of the Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA) and the MGA of the appointment. The importance of this aspect of the regulations is underlined in the provisions laid down, which require operators to have systems and training in place to prevent money laundering and the financing of terrorism. These systems include customer due diligence procedures, record keeping and internal reporting procedures. Gaming operators should take particular notice of the following sections of the PMLR regarding the requirement to be aware of compliance requirements on identification of criminals, on appropriate record keeping, on dealing with internal reporting procedures and on establishing the duty to report money laundering activities.

WEBSITE

MGA licensees are obliged to display the following information on the homepage of their websites:

- the registered name of the licensee’s company
- the address of the company’s registered office
- the official number and date of issue of the licence
- a statement that the licensee’s operations are regulated by the MGA
- hyperlinks to the websites of MGA-approved organisations specialising in helping problem gamblers
- hyperlinks to the rules of the games or betting offered and the procedures adopted by the licensee for the registration of players
- the kite-mark of MGA, which shall double up as a link to the MGA website
- any other information that the Authority may deem necessary
Malta is in the process of reshaping its gaming regulatory framework. We look back at the developments and changes which were proposed in 2015 and highlight what proposals are in store for 2016 and beyond.

**MOVE TO SMARTCITY MALTA**

In 2015, the Malta Gaming Authority relocated from its offices in Mriehel to SmartCity Malta in Kalkara. Once completed in 2021, the technology park based on the model developed in Dubai, will act as a European hub for ICT and include a complete ICT and Media City. It is also expected to add to Malta’s appeal as an iGaming jurisdiction, as it attracts more ICT companies and professionals to the island and motivates more Maltese to go into ICT.

**NEW ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP**

The MGA has implemented a new organisational set-up that came into effect on 1 August 2015 and which, amongst other initiatives, saw the Regulatory Directorate being split into the Compliance and Authorisations Directorates. The purpose of this new set-up is the consolidation of the Authority’s corporate and regulatory functions with the aim of strengthening the MGA and enabling it to address current and future challenges facing both the Authority and the gaming industry, as well as to address any gaps in the relevant functions. This increased focus on compliance has enabled the MGA to introduce new functions within the Compliance Directorate such as the introduction of the Licensee Relationship Management function, which will act as the first point of contact between licensees and the MGA. The MGA said that this function would allow both licensees and the Authority to be more efficient and effective.

**REVISED FIT AND PROPER GUIDELINES**

In 2015, the MGA issued fit and proper guidelines setting out the minimum criteria applicable to all relevant persons falling under the activities regulated by the MGA. The criteria to assess whether a person is fit and proper include: honesty, integrity and reputation; competence and capability; as well as sound financial standing. The MGA believes that persons who are entrusted with the management and oversight of a regulated entity need to have appropriate skills, knowledge and experience. Thus, in determining whether a person is competent and capable of fulfilling a certain function, the MGA considers past experience; relevant qualifications and training received; the time at hand to perform such functions in the case of a person; or in the case of a company, the capacity and the internal control structures to enable it to comply with the policies and directives in force; as well as any other requirements deemed necessary in the light of such function. When it comes to verifying good financial standing, the MGA assesses the current financial position, the financial background and the business reputation of the applicant or licensee.
Avviza has been assisting clients to push all the right buttons. Drawing on our skills and experience whilst elevating your concepts with some shining innovation of our own, we want you to get all the glory. Our team is way ahead in the online gaming sector, just right to see you win your position in the market and quickly ascend to the throne.

*The game is on. Be better prepared for success.*
STRENGTHENING THE KEY OFFICIAL

The role of the Key Official is gaining ever-more importance, with the MGA currently revisiting the functions and responsibilities to establish a clearer definition of the role in the upcoming overhaul. In addition to the general fit and proper requirements, the MGA has proposed that Key Officials under the new regime should prove their competence through certification, relevant experience and continuing professional development. Key Officials are required to have a sound understanding and knowledge of their obligations as well as gaming operations compliance methodologies, attested by a certificate that can be obtained by following an accredited training programme. In terms of proving a Key Official’s professional experience, the MGA is considering two years experience in the five years preceding the Key Official application as legal, finance or compliance officer in a gaming or financial services company as sufficient. The MGA is proposing that Key Officials must continuously keep themselves updated on developments in the regulatory and compliance areas directly or indirectly affecting the gaming sector.

UPDATE ON LICENSING REGULATIONS

Most of the changes that the MGA proposed in 2015 will form part of, and will be reflected in, the upcoming legislative overhaul proposal to Government, which will also see the development of a new licensing framework. The MGA is seeking convergence in the licensing framework, both conceptually and also tangibly, by proposing two tier licences: a business-to-business licence and a business-to-consumer licence. The MGA shall also be revisiting a number of player protection mechanisms as well as proposing a new set of Commercial communication standards (advertising) for gaming providers operating or operating their services in Malta. The MGA is currently putting together a set of proposals for Government’s approval, and subject to such clearance the Authority is hoping that the Minister may present a draft Omnibus Bill to the Maltese Parliament in 2016.

“"The MGA is undergoing major changes. The legal review is key in future proofing Malta’s position as an iGaming hub. While we have laid the groundwork in 2015, we have to be realistic about timeframes. It will take a year or two before operators and service providers will feel the full impact of these changes. In 2016, we will focus on reaching out to the industry to get their feedback on our proposed changes, a process that will definitely help us prioritising and putting emphasis on areas that require urgent regulatory attention.”

HELGA PIZZUTO
Chief Officer - Business and Programme Development
POSITION ON DIGITAL GAMES
Digital skill games (with prize) have long been on the MGA’s agenda. In 2015, the MGA announced that it is of the opinion that pure skill games, including eSports and Role-Playing Games, should not be subject to a licensing regime. Notwithstanding, the MGA believes that skill game operators and their gaming activities should fall under the governance and regulatory competence of the MGA in order to keep their activities under review. This would also allow the MGA to introduce certain standards and monitoring if necessary to ensure a safe and fair environment for consumers. The MGA stated in its position paper on this topic that games whose outcome was mainly accidental and influenced significantly by the skill of the player, and which were licensable under the present gaming framework, should still be subject to a licensing requirement. However, this should reflect the risk posed by such operation and must be distinguished from pure games of chance. Regulatory intervention should not go beyond what is necessary to ensure a safe and fair environment for consumers, the MGA said.

EU DIRECTIVE ON ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING
The EU’s 4th Anti-Money Laundering Directive defines iGaming operators as obliged entities, requiring them to file an annual report with the Financial Intelligence Analysis Unit (FIAU) as well as to conduct detailed due diligence for transactions of €2,000 or over, whether carried out in a single transaction or several transactions. While Malta has time to transpose those requirements into national law until June 2017, the MGA is currently assessing whether it can impose stricter requirements on iGaming companies ahead of the deadline.

SIMPLIFYING REPORTING PROCESSES
The MGA is considering the implementation of an Automated Reporting Platform for iGaming companies in order to improve and simplify reporting processes. The MGA’s supervision of its licensed operators today is performed through various processes that depend on submissions made by operators, physical checks conducted by MGA officials or approved auditors and through ad-hoc download requests. Operators often argue that these processes as burdensome and time-consuming, leading to delayed

“...The MGA has tightened its due diligence process after Italian authorities suspected that five iGaming companies were involved in money laundering in the summer of 2015. The MGA immediately suspended the licences of those companies, and we are convinced that this was the right thing to do. While investigations are still underway and nothing has been proven, the case has shown that there is room for improvement when it comes to due diligence checks. In addition to our previous checks, we are now paying more attention to adverse media reports while we also invite applicants for interviews if we require more details and clarification. The case also showed the need for the assets management bureau that Malta is currently setting up. The bureau will not only trace and identify assets involved in organised crime, it will also manage and administer seized assets.”

DOMINIC MICALLEF
Chief Officer - Investigations and Enforcement

SmartCity - The new home of the Malta Gaming Authority
Without the right shoes…
your steps can only be counted.

Compliance is our business.
compliance which hinders both the operators’ and the MGA’s performance. The MGA stresses that several iGaming operators already have systems in place to manage and monitor gaming data, and announced that the MGA intends to leverage data from those systems.

FOCUS ON OUTSOURCING
As the iGaming industry continues to evolve and develop, it is increasingly relying on the outsourcing of certain functions within a licensed gaming operation. In collaboration with the industry, the MGA shall be developing a Policy on Outsourcing and has set up a joint working group to this effect. Licensees today are outsourcing significant parts of their regulated and unregulated activities across their whole operational and supply chain, the MGA said. The complexity of the outsourcing arrangements, the nature of services being outsourced and the jurisdiction of the service providers were just some factors that may be of a concern from a regulatory perspective which may warrant some form of regulatory oversight. The outsourcing policy, the MGA said, would propose a definition of outsourcing for gaming and establish benchmarks that takes into account the regulatory, cross-jurisdictional and operational relationships and risks faced by iGaming operators.

BEATING GAMBLING ADDICTION
The Responsible Gaming Foundation, which was founded in 2014, launched a National Helpline to provide support and guidance to those individuals, family members or significant others who are experiencing any problems related to gambling in 2015. Individuals in need can contact the Helpline either through its freephone 1777 or through a chat facility which can be easily accessed through the Responsible Gaming Foundation’s website www.rgf.org.mt. Callers can choose to remain anonymous and any information obtained will be treated confidentially. The MGA is also conducting a national survey on gambling. The report is expected to be finalised in 2016 and will serve, in addition to other studies, to substantiate the approaches proposed for player protection mechanisms in the upcoming legislative framework.

FOSTERING MULTILATERAL COOPERATION
The MGA signed an administrative cooperation arrangement with other EU/EEA gambling authorities in November 2015. This agreement aims to institutionalise and structure the ongoing cooperation between the competent authorities of EU/EEA member states relating to the exchange of information and best practices, as well as to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens in gaming related matters. The MGA believes that in order to achieve results, clear objectives need to be set in order to keep up with this dynamic and fast-moving industry. The MGA hopes that such an agreement would facilitate communication in order to embrace the subject of online gambling services objectively, as a regulated offer irrespective of the country of consumption or supply. The message transmitted through such cooperation and the value that may ensue is the link between independent authorities all working towards the same objectives within the respective political and governmental ambits albeit diverse legal and regulatory gaming frameworks.
Employer branding is increasingly being seen as a key HR tool. One year ago, Tipico launched its new Career brand. Can you comment on your experience thus far?

The competition for talent in iGaming is fierce, and we felt that we needed to reach out to a wider audience to explain better what working at Tipico is all about in order to attract the right people. Thus, we have increased the visibility and reachability of our HR function through new digital and social platforms. We believe that employer branding will help Tipico to stand out in a crowded market and provide prospective candidates compelling reasons to join our company rather than going elsewhere.

We launched a new careers website, www.tipico-careers.com, and invested heavily in videos, visuals and animations to showcase our company values, benefits and the opportunities we offer. Just a year later we are already reaping the benefits of this strategy: we have seen a noticeable increase of industry professionals wanting to work for us. To quote a few figures, the careers website had 37,200 unique site visitors and 98,981 page views since June 2015. With 70 new positions filled and a total of 3000 direct applications received over the last year, I feel that employer branding has proved to be a key tool for breathing new life into the recruitment process and is helping us win the war for talent.

What kind of talent are you looking for at the moment?

We have vacancies open across the board, ranging from entry level to top management positions. We are seeking to recruit passionate, open-minded and innovative people that fit in with our company culture. Applicants need to be keen to work in a multicultural environment. We employ some 210 people in our Malta office, with 50% of them being foreign nationals, coming from 28 different countries. Experience is also very important these days, and we are constantly on the lookout for people who understand how the gaming industry is evolving.

New roles and disciplines that were not required a few years ago are emerging in the iGaming sector as the industry transforms. How is this affecting your recruitment process?

In our industry, the nature of jobs and job descriptions seems to be changing all the time. This also means that we cannot always fill positions immediately, simply because there is a shortage of talent available with the required skills. At the moment, we are seeing a rise in so-called hybrid jobs. We often have a demand for a mix of specific technical skills along with finance, business, HR, product, marketing, as well as legal and compliance skills.
Are there any positions that you cannot fill from the local labour market?
Locally, it is challenging to find professionals possessing very specific skills, for instance certain programming languages. When it comes to analytics and business intelligence, it might also take a while to find suitable candidates with knowledge in maths and statistics. For very specific roles, at times we have to resort to relocating professionals.

The iGaming industry has a reputation for paying above-average salaries, and recruiting top talent can be quite expensive. What are you doing to avoid wage inflation?
This is one of the main reasons why I wanted to build the employer brand: the aim for it is to increase and add value to our talent and recruitment areas, while decreasing the costs. While we usually do not recruit top-level executives through our careers website, it today accounts for a large percentage of entry-level recruits. The fact that we created a number of direct channels for them to get in touch with us makes the recruitment process more personal, faster, straightforward and, of course, more cost effective.

How do you ensure not to lose your top talent?
Our slogan “we invest in our people” actually says it all. A strong employer brand is not just for attracting new talent, it also provides a compelling reason for our current employees to stay with Tipico. Career progression and job satisfaction are very high on our agenda. We also have an employee engagement programme. We organise activities and events on a regular basis and offer incentives in addition to other benefits such as private health, dental, accident insurance and sports benefits. What matters most is the management approach with an effective open door policy and the relationship employees have with their immediate supervisors.

What are you doing to attract foreign talent to work in Malta?
We offer attractive relocation packages for all positions. They include services such as temporary accommodation and car hire, as well as assistance in finding schooling or kindergarten facilities for children. We try to anticipate what one would need and offer them all the necessary help so they can quickly settle in. But our main selling point is Malta. With 300 days of sunshine per year and our relaxed Mediterranean lifestyle, working and living in Malta is a very special and rewarding experience.

From an HR point of view, what are your priorities for 2016?
We plan to continue growing our workforce in 2016. In fact, we are seeking to hire a substantial number of new people.

To quote a few figures, the careers website has registered

37,200 different users and 98,981 page views since June 2015
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MARKET ACCESS
Malta was the first country in the European Union to create dedicated legislation for remote gaming that is based on the EU’s freedom of movement of goods and services. Throughout the past years an increasing number of member states have implemented national authorisation regimes. Malta however, holds tight to the original principle that a licensed operator from Malta should be able to use that licence in any other EU member state without the need for an additional licence from other member states. Operators in Malta highlight that despite the fact that the European market is becoming more restricted, the Malta licence still provides value, offering access to countries that have not introduced national licensing regimes. In addition, Malta license holders may find it easier to acquire a licence in other jurisdictions, such as the UK, as there are certain similarities between the Maltese and UK regimes, and the UK Gambling Commission has a very high regard for the Maltese licence. The Malta Gaming Authority (MGA) is also building stronger relations with its fellow regulators to lobby for an agreement on technical standards, and on how certification of games and all processes should be carried out. The Maltese licence also provides value for B2C operators in those European countries that do not have a B2B licensing model, and can therefore turn to Malta to regulate the B2B element of their business by obtaining a Maltese B2B or Class 4 licence.

The Malta Gaming Authority (MGA) believes it is also important to look beyond the EU and explore the emerging markets of Asia and Latin America. Malta believes there are opportunities for the sector in the sense that if Asian and Latin American countries open up to remote gaming for Maltese companies, licensees who are operating in Malta would have access to that market. Malta is also exploring the possibility of Asian companies setting up shop in Malta.

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
Malta offers a well-established infrastructure that supports the creative needs of iGaming companies. The island has become renowned for its creative industries such as film, website design, graphic design, animation, digital media and advertising. Over recent years, the island has succeeded in attracting key players and supporting companies to establish operations in Malta, ensuring that iGaming companies can tap into areas such as SEO, affiliate management companies and consultants. Due to Malta’s lower cost base, iGaming companies can source services at a lower rate here than in Continental Europe. Due to the fact that advertising guidelines vary in European jurisdictions, the Malta Gaming Authority recommends that operators seek advice in relation to if, how and what can be advertised in other jurisdictions. When they advertise in Malta, operators have to abide by the Code of Conduct on Advertising.

MALTA’S ADVERTISING GUIDELINES
In the interest of the reputation of the jurisdiction and to protect players, operators licensed in Malta are not permitted to carry out advertising that, among others, implies that remote gaming is required for social acceptance, personal or financial success or the resolution of any economic or social problems. Endorsements by well-known personalities that suggest remote gaming contributed to their success are also not allowed as well as any type of advertising that encourages individuals under 18 years of age to engage in remote gaming. Malta-based operators are also not permitted to send unsolicited electronic mail, whether it is through its own operation or by the intervention of third parties. Television stations are prohibited from broadcasting gambling advertisements between 6 am and 7 pm. The sponsorship by any gambling licensee of any programme or advert is also prohibited during these times. When advertisements are broadcast outside these times, they should not be aired during, or immediately prior to or after, children’s programmes or those programmes directed at or likely to be of particular appeal to children.

With more than a decade of experience under its belt, Malta has established itself as Europe’s top iGaming jurisdiction. A key pillar of its success has been the support provided by the country’s skilled technical and professional services sector, coupled with the operator-friendly business environment. Below you will find the key information that every start-up and established business coming to Malta should be aware of.

IGAMING DOING BUSINESS GUIDE

The **DO’S & DON’T’S**

for iGaming companies
Malta is determined to keep up its reputation as a transparent jurisdiction and places great emphasis on the fact that it is not a tax haven. The country ensures its regulatory framework is in sync with the changing demands of the industry and is fully in line with the requirements laid out at EU level. With the island’s accession to the EU in 2004, Malta’s tax regime – which had been in place since 1948 – was approved by the European Commission. The country operates a full imputation tax system under which companies are taxed at a rate of 35%. However, shareholders are entitled to refunds for the tax paid by the company. The refund may be equivalent to either 2/3rds (when double taxation relief is claimed), 5/7ths (in the case of passive interest and royalties) or 6/7ths on trading income. Income and gains from a participating holding, where a company holds directly at least 10% of the equity shares of a non-resident company, or meets certain other criteria set out in the law, are exempt from tax. Malta’s network of some 70 Double Taxation Treaties further strengthens the country’s position as a key corporate location. Malta also meets international tax standards and is included in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) white list. Adhering to the highest anti-money laundering standards, Malta’s regulatory framework has been assessed numerous times.

### CORPORATE TAX REGIME

Malta offers senior employees the opportunity to avail themselves of a 15% flat tax rate. In our opinion the Highly Qualified Persons Rules should be given more prominence and importance. The skills foreign nationals can bring to Malta are priceless. Other incentives, whether tax or otherwise, to attract senior employees would also be welcome.

**DR ANN BUGEJA**  
Advocate at CSB Advocates

### GAMING TAX

Besides paying tax on their profits, gaming companies licensed in Malta must also pay gaming tax, however, when compared to other European Union member states, the gaming tax is relatively low and capped at a maximum of €466,000 per year. The gaming tax depends on the class of the licence:

- **Class 1 - Fixed rate at €4,660 per month for the first six months and €7,000 per month thereafter**
- **Class 1 on Class 4 - €1,200 per month**
- **Class 2 and Class 2 on Class 4 - 0.5% of the gross amount of bets accepted in remote betting operations**
- **Class 3 and Class 3 on Class 4 - 5% on real income**
- **Class 4 - No tax for the first six months operation, €2,330 for the subsequent six months, and €4,660 per month thereafter for the entire duration of the licence**
- **Class 4 licensee hosting and managing an operator that is not in possession of the relevant Class 1, 2 or 3 licence in terms of regulations, however hosting an EEA licensed Business to Consumer operator - €1,165 per month per operator, paid by the Class 4 licensee**
PERSONAL TAXATION & EXPAT TAXATION

Individuals are charged on their income at progressive tax rates up to a maximum of 35% (for income over €60,000). The top rate of income tax for those who earn less than €60,001 is 25%. To attract highly qualified personnel from abroad, Malta has introduced an incentive scheme targeting foreign executives. iGaming professionals can benefit from a flat personal income-tax rate of 15% on income up to €5 million. Any income over that figure is tax-free. To qualify for this tax incentive, the employee must earn a minimum of €81,457 per year (basis year 2015), among other criteria. EU nationals can benefit from the reduced tax rate for an unlimited period, EEA and Swiss nationals for a period of ten years and third-country nationals for four consecutive years. Malta is also an attractive place for retirees as well as high-net-worth individuals and their families, with separate programmes allowing them to benefit from a reduced tax rate if they relocate to the island.

INCORPORATING A COMPANY

Forming a company in Malta is relatively easy and only takes a couple of days. The Maltese legal structure is a hybrid system of Civil and Anglo law. While it is based on the civil law pattern of Continental Europe, most administrative and fiscal legislation is constructed on the British model. While Maltese law does not have a specific requirement on the nationality and residence of directors of a company incorporated under the laws of Malta, iGaming companies are required to appoint a Key Official, who must be resident in Malta. Maltese law does not lay down any specific requirements on the shareholding of a gaming company, and the iGaming company may be owned indirectly through a Malta holding company or directly by non-resident shareholders.

VAT

New VAT rules for the iGaming industry have been brought in 2015. The EU ‘VAT Package’ has shifted the place of taxation for Value Added Tax (VAT) of ‘games of chance and gambling games’, when supplied to non-business customers within the EU, from the country where the provider of the services is established, to the member state where the customer of the services is located. Thus, the supply of online gambling services by Maltese operators to players located in other EU Member States is now treated as being supplied in the Member State of the player, and hence, in most cases, outside Malta. This means Maltese operators are required to apply the VAT rules as applicable in each of the member states in which their customers are located. In member states where iGaming is taxable, operators must charge their players with the local VAT rate of the country in which the players are located. Since VAT rates vary from one EU country to another, this may affect operators’ profit margins, and they may need to revise their pricing strategies. Operators also need to understand the taxable value on which VAT should be charged, and also review their data maintenance and record keeping.

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

With operators facing higher regulatory, compliance and operational costs, M&A in the iGaming industry has increased over the past few years. Malta is perceived as a flexible and efficient jurisdiction for M&As due to its attractive corporate law and regulatory environment as well as the advantageous fiscal treatment of locally registered companies used as vehicles for cross-border acquisitions. Equally important, the minimal tax leakages mean bidders using a Maltese company to launch an offer for a foreign firm are able to put in a more attractive bid in an auction process.

TELECOMS & DATA MANAGEMENT

Malta has developed a growing cluster of service providers offering hosting and co-location services. Data centres are operated by the telecoms operators with their own international fibre-optic cables, but also by telecoms companies and several specialist data centres. Data centres are provided with international bandwidth through the three main telecoms service providers; GO, Vodafone and Melita. Malta’s data centres offer co-location services and IT connectivity as well as the provision of technical services. Malta is internationally connected through two satellite stations (one to the Atlantic Ocean region and the other to the Indian Ocean region) and four submarine fibre-optic links to mainland Europe, which land in Sicily, Italy. One of the links – dramatically increasing the bandwidth available to Malta – connects Malta (from St Julian’s) directly with Milan. Bandwidth in Malta is slightly more expensive than elsewhere due to the fact that Malta is an island, but increased competition from multiple market players is expected to drive telecommunications prices further down in the near future.

“Regardless its small size, Malta is a great place to establish a gaming company for many reasons, including its good business environment, comprehensive legislation, the quality and availability of educated staff at very competitive conditions, as well as Malta’s excellent connectivity in terms of telecommunications, transportation and financial services.”

GERMANO ARNO’
CEO of em@ney

”Malta’s success as a jurisdiction was built on its pioneering regulatory framework and the taxation benefits. Although this strength has started to be challenged in recent years by ongoing regulatory developments across the EU, Malta continues to be extremely successful because of its overall attractiveness as a destination. It offers a strong technology infrastructure and hosts a high concentration of legal, finance and IT professionals with years of expertise in the industry.”

NICK TONNA
Chief Commercial Officer of BMIT Ltd
BANKING & FINANCIAL SERVICES
Malta is renowned for its robust financial services sector that continues to grow year on year. The sector offers a full range of services to the iGaming industry and has developed industry-specific products and services. More than 25 foreign or privately owned credit institutions are present in Malta, offering the full set of banking services ranging from retail and investment banking to wealth management, trade finance and custody services. Malta’s banks are ranked amongst the safest and best-run financial institutions in the EU. While many European banks suffer hangovers from the financial crisis and continued shockwaves inside the Eurozone, Malta’s banking sector suffered no systemic shocks or banking failures. The World Economic Forum’s Competitiveness Index 2014-2015 rates Malta’s banking sector the 10th soundest banking system in the world. Bank of Valletta (BOV) and HSBC are the largest players in the local retail sector. BOV is the main player in the iGaming sector. Most iGaming operators in Malta maintain merchant accounts and player funds accounts with top-tier overseas acquiring banks such as RBS and Lloyds, while the local Maltese banks are used for operational funds, personal bank accounts and wealth management solutions.

PAYMENT SERVICES
Malta is also home to credit card companies, payment service providers, payment gateways, card issuers and eWallets, regulated and overseen by the Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA). The island’s financial services legislation is modern and sophisticated, leading many of its competitors in the areas of e-commerce regulation and facilitation. Specialist PCI-certified payment service providers offer a full range of payment services. Payment service providers in Malta maintain their own in-house data centres with redundant connectivity and power, and extremely high security, and are connected to a large number of international and local banks, eWallets and financial institutions. Malta’s professionals believe that there is strong potential to attract more payment business given the overall growth of the industry. The island offers the necessary legislation and infrastructure to support their operations while the presence of a large number of iGaming operators and software providers situated on the island means a cluster of potential clients are already in situ. This is seen as an excellent opportunity for eWallets and eMoney providers to set up operations and take advantage of the many benefits Malta offers.

INSURANCE
The island’s insurance sector includes traditional insurance companies and agencies, as well as captive insurance companies. Investors can find a number of insurance management companies handling cover for large corporations and providing reinsurance solutions. This means iGaming companies based in Malta are able to tap into some of the most sophisticated insurance products on the market, including industry-specific products ranging from technology cover to business interruption cover and key official cover, as well as revenue and player fund insurance. In addition, insurance companies can also provide any personnel cover, such as home, health and motor insurance, expatriate employees and directors of iGaming companies may need.

STOCK EXCHANGE LISTING
The Malta Stock Exchange (MSE) has become a gateway for businesses targeting the EU capital market. With a market capitalisation of €10 billion, the MSE may be small by international standards, yet it provides iGaming companies with a solid alternative venue to access the EU market and to raise funds through its recognised and reputable regulatory framework, a cost-effective fee structure and a speedy processing time. The Exchange uses Deutsche Börse’s Xetra trading platform, while on the settlement and custodial side the MSE has a link with Clearstream Banking, the global liquidity provider of Deutsche Börse Group, which facilitates international investor access. Although equipped with and connected to the latest technology, what sets the MSE apart is its very high standard of personal service. In Malta, iGaming companies can go through the preparation for an initial public offering (IPO) with more support than on a larger exchange. In addition to this, costs and fees remain competitive. Companies can also benefit from ancillary services that range from admission and trading, to depository and custodial services.

HR & RECRUITMENT
A highly skilled workforce is the backbone of the iGaming sector, and Malta offers a well-educated labour pool comprising both Maltese nationals as well as expats. iGaming companies require a diverse range of professionals ranging
from IT specialists, accountants, financial controllers, and customer care personnel to product managers, traders and more. While most of these positions can be filled by the Maltese labour market, the island’s comfortable lifestyle and magnificent climate make it easy to attract expats to relocate in Malta. The iGaming industry currently employs around 8,000 people, with an additional 2,000-3,000 employed in ancillary fields – lawyers, accountants and recruiters – enhancing iGaming’s impact on the local workforce. Some 70% of the sector’s workforce is foreign. Maltese staff tend to fill positions in IT, finance and general management, while the more specialist gaming, customer relationship management (CRM) and marketing posts are filled by expats. As the industry in Malta grows, the availability of staff expands along with it. However, there is a shortage of business intelligence professionals and software developers, and there is a high demand for marketing professionals, affiliate managers, online marketing managers, business intelligence developers – and on the IT and technical front, there is increasing need for Java and front end developers, .NET developers, systems engineers (Linux/UNIX) and digital designers.

**EMPLOYMENT REGULATION**
The Employment & Industrial Relations Act governs the conditions of employment, termination of contracts and the organisation of workers and employers. Employment may be for a fixed or indefinite term, and on a full-time or part-time basis. The length of the probation period is normally six months. The standard working week is 40 hours. Employees in full-time employment are entitled to 24 days of vacation per year. Maternity leave for female employees in full-time employment is 18 weeks. The law also provides for up to three months’ unpaid parental leave in the case of birth, adoption or legal custody of a minor. The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) is responsible for providing a public employment service and managing state-financed vocational training schemes, as well as for processing work permits for non-EU nationals.

**RECRUITMENT AGENCIES & TRAINING**
To cater to the high demand for experienced gaming professionals, there are a number of specialist remote gaming recruitment companies located in Malta, including Pentasia, Betting Connections, iGaming Elite, Reed iGaming, People & Co, INTER-SERV
Total Gaming Solutions, Quad Consultancy, VacancyCentre.com, and CSB Group. These companies can assist operators in deciding how and where to recruit the human resources necessary, using their international networks to reach potential candidates from around the world. Most of the larger companies on the island now also have their own gaming-specialised HR departments. Training companies and some educational institutes provide industry-specific training, while the launch of a new Gaming Academy in a few years time is set to expand the current offering by providing training modules that are to be tailor-made to industry needs, targeting Maltese nationals and foreigners alike.

**SALARIES & STAFF COST**

Malta remains significantly cheaper than other European capitals in terms of staff salaries and other costs. Although the iGaming industry tends to offer remuneration that is some 30% higher than other industries in Malta, the figures are still significantly lower than the European average. As the industry sources many employees from the international job market, operators are quick to point out that the lower cost of living in Malta means that staff actually enjoy a much higher quality of life on the lower salary, than on a higher salary in locations like London or Scandinavia.

**WORK PERMITS AND APPROVALS**

Visa obligations for foreign nationals reflect EU regulations and obligations. Non-EU nationals must apply for and obtain an employment permit, and the granting of the permit is subject to a labour market test. Due to the nature of the industry and the specific knowledge that is required, the granting of employment permits even to non-EU nationals is generally an uncomplicated and smooth process, according to operators and recruiters. However, to attract specialist talent from non-EU countries, Malta recently relaxed its rules for work permits, and iGaming companies can now hire experts for certain roles, including IT consultants and system analysts, without having to prove that they were unable to find a suitable EU employee. To protect the reputation of the jurisdiction, operators that are licensed in Malta need to submit certain due diligence, such as a police conduct certificate and a passport copy, of their prospective personnel to the Malta Gaming Authority for their approval before the employee can start work.

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Malta has a solid cluster of firms that specialise in providing professional services to iGaming operators, guiding them through the pre-licensing process, the licence application and post-licensing requirements, as well as in the setting up of a Malta company, establishing operations, offices and recruiting HR. In addition, the iGaming community in Malta is strongly supported by a large range of accounting and auditing practitioners ranging from small boutique practices to the global Big 4 accountancy firms, as well as most international network brands. The jurisdiction also has various companies providing excellent back office services such as bookkeeping and payroll services. Most also offer a wide selection of Key Official and business advisory services, providing operators with a director and Malta Gaming Authority liaison who is both experienced and has the relevant industry knowledge to ensure smooth operations. Some companies have also started to provide multi-jurisdictional advice, responding to recent changes in the legislative landscape and the opening up of new markets. Most of the country’s legal firms are part of international networks, such as Lex Mundi and Lexis Nexis, and are regularly ranked on Chambers, Martindale-Hubbell and Legal 500. Malta is able to offer operators professional services such as accountancy, business consultancy and legal services at costs that are generally lower than in other Western European locations.

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

Technical services are well catered for in Malta with a number of firms being set up to exclusively support the iGaming industry. These include iGaming specialist firms offering comprehensive security audit services, custom-tailored assessment and examination programmes to test every aspect of iGaming system security and also the testing of all types of games on a wide range of gaming platforms. Malta has also proved an attractive location for software developers and platform providers supplying the iGaming industry. Companies present in Malta include NetEnt, Microgaming and Omega Gaming Malta, amongst others. Another area registering significant success in Malta is the setting up of call centres offering multilingual services. While most of the larger iGaming operators in Malta have in-house customer relations teams, many smaller outfits are turning to outsourcing opportunities.

"Apart from its legislative infrastructure, Malta offers an extremely attractive domicile for individuals to live and work in Malta. Atlas’ unique insurance offerings make it just a little easier to attract the human resources required. With access to AXA international networks, 24/7 services, unique dental insurance range and other products from the Atlas Group including personal accident and sickness, permanent health and a great group secretaries’ portal, we help you attract and retain the best possible talent."

CATHERINE CALLEJA
Managing Director of Atlas Healthcare
GamingMalta’s objective is to promote Malta as the leading jurisdiction and a centre of excellence for the gaming industry, both locally and internationally.

Tasked with attracting new companies to use Malta as their place of establishment, it is also responsible for liaising with the relevant authorities to improve Malta’s attractiveness as a jurisdiction and a complete eco system for the gaming industry.

GamingMalta Foundation
Building SCM 02-03, Level 3,
SmartCity, Ricasoli SCM1001, Malta
E info@gamingmalta.org

gamingmalta.org
COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE
Malta offers enviable real estate with sea views and marinas as well as prestigious landmark office complexes within easy commuting distance of residential areas. Although sales and letting prices have gone up recently, they are around two-thirds of those charged for comparable spaces in Continental Europe. Most iGaming offices are located in the vibrant areas of St. Julian’s and Sliema, but many have also chosen to move into the more central areas of Malta such as Mosta, Naxxar or Birkirkara. Office space comes in many flavours, ranging from purpose-built office blocks, converted houses, apartments and palazzos as well as new, large mixed-use areas currently under development. The latter are generally located in key urban areas with sea views. Modern office space is also available in SmartCity Malta, a dedicated IT business park based on the model of Dubai Internet and Media City that is currently under construction. The first office building of SmartCity was inaugurated in October 2010, offering 12,000 square metres of office space. iGaming executives can also find a wide range of residential property, including apartments, penthouses, townhouses and villas, with or without a pool. Malta’s small geographical size is a benefit in terms of short commutes. Traveling time between Malta International Airport and an office or a home is rarely longer than 20 minutes. A large number of local and international real-estate agents provide sales and letting services and can assist in locating suitable property.

START-UP INCUBATORS
iGaming start-ups can find Malta an attractive place due to the concentration of suppliers on the island. Face-to-face meetings with those companies can easily be arranged. The island is also stepping up its efforts in helping to create new businesses and has expanded the scope of support for innovators.

Based at the University of Malta, TAKEOFF is Malta’s first technology business incubator. The programme is specifically designed to help innovators and aspiring entrepreneurs create successful science, technology, engineering, creative media and knowledge-based start-up businesses. The TAKEOFF programme delivers a tailored package of benefits and guidance to entrepreneurs from inside and outside of the University of Malta.

The Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA), Malta’s national IT agency, also runs an Innovation Hub at SmartCity Malta. The hub provides a location backed by software tools and all the necessary resources in which students, web designers, software developers and start-ups can share ideas and develop prototypes under the mentorship of world industry players. To back their projects, future web entrepreneurs and innovators will have access to a number of software and cloud technologies, and support programmes.

START-UP SUPPORT
Malta Enterprise, the national development agency responsible for promoting and facilitating international investment, also provides incentive packages to support research and development from the initial stages to post-implementation of certain projects. Incentives include part-financing of the costs and business advisory services. A government website, BusinessFirst.com.mt, provides information and tools that are designed especially for start-ups, established businesses and those who support them and advise them. An ‘Innovative Start-Up Programme’, which is also available to businesses that have the potential to develop innovative products or services, provides start-up advisory services, business incubation, grants to cover costs related to investments in tangible and intangible assets, and access to finance. Start-ups can also benefit from a number of other initiatives and institutions such as the Microsoft Innovation Centre at SkyParks Business Centre, PwC’s 1 Million Euro Startup Fund initiative and the Malta College of Arts Science and Technology (MCAST), which has recently been assigned a number of units at the Kordin Business Incubation Centre managed by Malta Enterprise.
We will gladly develop the best possible payment processing system specially designed to meet your personal needs. Let us show you the best and most secure way to make payments in today’s digital world. Put us to the test! We will show you how payments work in today’s digital environment.

## E-WALLET
Our e-wallet solution is provided as a co-branded close loop solution or an open loop solution. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and personally discuss the ideal solution for you and your customers.

## VOUCHER / PREPAID
Are you looking for a solution for vouchers – card-based, as a “gift card” or virtual? Talk to us.

## SEPA PAYMENTS
Our solution: Using Paymentworld means that you can collect your outstanding payments from your customers – on the desired due date, without extensive and expensive ERP solutions, and without technical issues relating to .xml data formats. Easy and convenient. Our SEPA Payment Platform does it all for you. You have personal online access to your Merchant Portal and thereby full access to your transactions and data.

## CREDIT CARD HANDLING
Our core competence is the worldwide handling of credit card payments over the internet. This applies to all current types of credit cards. In addition, we offer you:
- Solutions via virtual terminals
- Credit card payments via mobile devices
- Payment apps

*Are you looking for a new, uncomplicated solution?*

## EVEN MORE
Irrespective of the questions you may have, we will work out the appropriate solutions with you – whether this involves virtual terminals, mobile or other payment methods.

## OTHER PAYMENT METHODS
We are also very familiar with [all other payment methods. What method(s) would you like to use to manage your business?]

The proper mix of alternative payment methods can significantly increase turnover. Every region, country and industry has its own preferred payment processes. We will structure the payment portfolio that is best for you. Quick and easy integration of our Payment Gateway on your payment page ensures that you will have access to a large selection of other payment methods within a remarkably short time.

Contact: info@paymentworld.eu
Finding Homes for a Booming Industry

As Malta’s iGaming industry continues to boom, its employees are dominating the rental market, with up to 29% of properties being rented by those working in the sector.

In light of this, it is no surprise that there has been a drive towards quality and quantity of both commercial and residential real estate offered on the island.

Over the last 16 years of servicing the iGaming industry in Malta, we have seen a sharp increase in the quality of not only the furnishings, design and finish of properties, but also in the quality of the service that is being delivered to the staff, management and the executives of iGaming companies.

The cosmopolitan Northern Europeans who expect nothing less than the same modern, minimalist style, which they are accustomed to in their own countries, has been the key driver in the upsurge in quality homes. As the increase in demand for properties from the iGaming industry in Malta, we have seen a sharp increase in the quality of not only the furnishings, design and finish of properties, but also in the quality of the service that is being delivered to the staff, management and the executives of iGaming companies.

The cosmopolitan Northern Europeans who expect nothing less than the same modern, minimalist style, which they are accustomed to in their own countries, has been the key driver in the upsurge in quality homes. As the increase in demand for properties from the iGaming industry has continued to increase at a rapid pace, Maltese investors have discovered the opportunity of buying properties for the sole reason of letting them out. Now, we are even seeing an increase in professionals in the gaming industry choosing to share properties between them.

Creating Space

Many new properties over the last four to five years have been purchased with the main requisite to accommodate the growing industry, and this trend has continued with the investment in commercial office space. Today Malta has some of the most sophisticated office spaces available in Europe. However, there is still a demand for more, and we at RE/MAX are asking developers to change buildings into offices which are central, open-plan and have sufficient parking facilities. It is important to us to offer excellent quality developments with the latest technology.

New start-ups are growing very quickly, and we have clients renting offices who within three to six months are doubling their office spaces. RE/MAX are committed to keeping up with the extremely fast pace at which iGaming is growing by providing our clients with the best possible properties. Trends are changing, and it is no longer the case that most companies are based in Sliema or St. Julian’s, nowadays, companies are spreading out throughout the island.

The influx of iGaming companies that were literally packing their bags lock, stock and barrel and moving to Malta also caused a need for new blood within the real estate sector. We were the first company to identify this trend and hired five or six associates to specialise in and cater for this demand.
COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Today, we have a team of over 20 associates catering for several different sectors, but iGaming has consistently topped the charts as one of our main type of client. Our commitment to excellence is as strong as ever, and as the competition grows, so does RE/MAX Lettings.

The investment in human resources in the form of training has never been so important in such a buoyant market, where over the last seven years we have had an exclusive real estate trainer assessing our service and building training programmes to suit our needs. Training includes seven consistent topics per year, as well as two or three ad hoc topics depending on the latest trends, not to mention our foundation programmes.

Our investment in the iGaming industry cannot be questioned. Over the years, we have exhibited at ICE, organised iGaming Socials, have coordinated five-a-side football tournaments and for the past seven years have been an organiser as well as founding partner of the Malta iGaming Seminar (MiGS).

MiGS was originally organised by five companies with a main objective to attract new business to Malta. The event has evolved into a global conference attracting over 400 delegates, international experts, major sponsors and has recently been rated as one of the top ten international experts, major sponsors and global conference attracting over 400 delegates.

The Malta Gaming Authority (MGA) is also committed to excellence. At our most recent MiGS conference, Joseph Cuscieri, Executive Chairman of the MGA, outlined that they are working on a drive towards regulation for innovation. This will be sought through a new regulatory framework, which is to be presented to parliament in 2016. We are confident that the MGA, together with the Maltese Government, will strive to continue to enhance the gaming industry.

LEADERS OF THE PACK

The letting industry is very close to our hearts. As a matter of fact before we founded RE/MAX in Malta, we were J&K Properties or better known as “The Letting Specialists”. In 1999, we opened the first fully-fledged letting agency in Malta, which catered for every need of a relocating individual or company. In life one should never forget their roots, and while we have become the largest real estate company in Malta and Gozo with over 250 sales and letting agents, letting has always been central to the success of the company.

Our letting team has grown tremendously over the years, however we still have most of the original team intact. Our letting manager, Edward Agius, has been with us for 16 years and continues to treat letting in the same way we built the team as the number one rental company in Malta.

Despite our recent growth, we are still focusing on expanding. I believe we can grow to 450 agents, and we plan to open another 10 offices. Relatively unharmed by the recession in comparison with the rest of Europe, Malta has had the highest growing prices in all of Europe. The recession actually corrected prices here, once people realised they had to lower their asking prices in order to sell, they went down by 10-15%, and real prices changed by about 5%.

OUTLOOK FOR MALTA

Malta as an iGaming jurisdiction is an excellent choice. The infrastructure is ever improving, and there are an abundance of incentives. If not for the favourable tax and affordable competent skills, the lifestyle is second-to-none. Malta is a place that will ensure that any employer will retain its workforce: 10 months of sunshine annually, excellent seaside accommodations, an array of different entertainment venues, restaurants galore and an airport that reaches any destination in Europe within three to four hours. A small island that sees over 1.7 million tourists per year, Malta is also home to several major international corporations.

Malta is doing exceptionally well in all areas of the economy. We are a jurisdiction that is miles ahead in terms of regulation, licensing and training, while having the most credible people to work with. We do however see room for more big retail brands here, such as Louis Vuitton or Gucci. For the future of Malta, we expect to continue to see the iGaming industry grow, as well as other sectors such as financial services. We believe that we at RE/MAX need to continue to be the knowledge base of the industry. By continuing to do things right, we will remain leaders.

We have become the largest real estate company in Malta and Gozo with over 250 sales and letting agents.
Melita is Malta’s leading provider of next generation broadband, fixed and wireless connectivity services, and owns and operates Malta’s largest data centre facility built to Tier 3 specifications. Through its advanced converged nationwide network reaching over 99 percent of the dwellings in Malta, Melita serves the growing telecommunication needs of small and large businesses along with leading positions in the broadband, pay-tv and mobile consumer markets. Through redundant submarine fiber cables connecting Malta to mainland Europe, Melita provides high quality connectivity to Malta’s growing financial, online and technology service provider sectors through its Milan based peering capabilities to the world’s leading connectivity providers.

For more information visit datacentre.melita.com or call us on +356 2727 3535

Our services:
- Hosting & Co-Location
- Carrier neutral Tier 1 international connectivity
- Nationwide fibre connectivity
- Managed services & cloud
- DDoS mitigation solutions
- 24/7/365 technical support

Malta’s largest data centre facility
Tailor made solutions to host your mission critical data and applications in a secure and scalable environment
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For more information visit datacentre.melita.com
or call us on +356 2727 3535
What makes Malta extraordinary is not only its idyllic beaches, magnificent architecture or enviable climate, but also its unique, inspiring people. Bursting at the seams with the best of all things, Malta encapsulates the heart of the Mediterranean. History and beauty can be found wherever you go on the island. It is only natural that Malta attracts people from all over the world: from Australia to America, and from Sweden to South Africa.

Malta has the perfect fusion of a modern cosmopolitan lifestyle, while often being viewed as a place of refuge. Despite its small stature on the map, for several millennia people have found the country an irresistible draw. Today, visitors are coming to the island in their droves, whatever it is they are looking for, the odds are they will find it in Malta. The astonishing diversity of the country truly is second to none. Fast-paced city streets and office complexes are located within minutes of picturesque bays, medieval forts and tiny fishing villages. Whether visitors arrive on the island for business, pleasure or both; there are endless opportunities to explore. The chance to do so in a climate that has been voted the best in the world, and at a reasonable price, is certainly one that should not be missed.

COUNTRY
Anchored in the crystal clear waters of the central Mediterranean, the Maltese archipelago is situated just 90 kilometres south of Sicily and 300 kilometres north of Africa. Just over 316 square kilometres in area, the Maltese Islands comprise Malta, Gozo and Comino. The main island, Malta, has an area of 246 square kilometres. Popular for decades with tourists, Malta’s proximity to Europe means it is relatively easy to reach. Just an hour away from Rome and three hours from London and Frankfurt, the island offers visitors the chance to get away from it all and experience for themselves the beauty of its languid Mediterranean lifestyle, the charm of its island landscape and the vibrancy of its multicultural, multilingual, young and energetic social scene.

HISTORY
A modern nation with ancient roots, Malta has been home to a wide range of civilisations and people over its 7,000 years of history. The island’s strategic position between Europe and Africa made it a key possession for its many settlers and conquerors: from Neolithic man to the Ancient Romans, the Byzantines, the Arabs, the Normans, the Knights of St John, the French and the British, all of whom have left a wealth of architectural and cultural treasures. The country’s archaeological sites pre-date Stonehenge and the Egyptian pyramids by more than 1,000 years, while the Neolithic temples are the oldest free-standing constructions in the world. Modern Malta, officially known as the Republic of Malta, was founded in 1964 following independence from Great Britain.
CLIMATE
A rocky Mediterranean island with a dry and sometimes windy climate, Malta enjoys around 300 days of sunshine per year. With average summer temperatures around 30 degrees Celsius and winter temperatures ranging from 15 to 20 degrees Celsius, Malta’s mild warm climate is considered to be the best in the world. Even in winter Malta enjoys an average of five to six hours of sunshine – and more than 12 hours a day in summer. The annual average rainfall is as low as 600 millimetres, mostly falling between October and March.

LANGUAGE
Despite many strong linguistic influences and the fact that English is one of the two official languages, Malta has kept its own language alive. Maltese is a Semitic language believed to have developed during the Arab occupation of the Islands (870–1090), and it is still the only Semitic language to be written in the Latin script. English is the main language of business, while laws and regulations are published in both languages. Many Maltese are also fluent in Italian, and some even speak a fourth language, usually German or French.

TIME
Malta lies in a convenient time zone for doing business across the world: one hour ahead of GMT, meaning office hours coincide with Asia in the morning, Europe throughout the day and the US in the afternoon. The country observes daylight saving time in summer, with the time shifted forward by one hour on the last Sunday of March, making it two hours ahead of GMT. On the last Sunday of October, the time is shifted back by one hour.

GETTING THERE
Malta is positioned as a gateway to Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. From most major cities such as London, Frankfurt, Paris, Rome and Istanbul it takes just two-to-three hours’ flying time to reach Malta International Airport (MIA), the island’s only airport. Regular flights are provided by Air Malta, the national airline, as well as other carriers such as Lufthansa, Emirates, Turkish Airlines, Alitalia, Air France, Austrian Airlines, Scandinavian Airlines, Ryanair, easyJet and Spanair. Malta is also a short 90-minute trip by catamaran to Sicily, and car ferries operate on the sea routes between the main port of Valletta and mainland Italy and Sicily.
HOTELS
Modern comforts are served up with impeccable style and welcoming hospitality in Malta’s many hotels. Visitors can choose between two and three-star hotels, or a large range of upmarket ones with four and five-star status. Sea views are never hard to find wherever you choose to stay. Global brands such as Hilton, Starwood, Radisson and Kempinski all have a presence. One of the largest local players is the Corinthia Group. There are also a number of family-run Maltese hotels such as the Hotel Fortina and the Fortina Spa Resort, in addition to boutique five-star hotels such as the Xara Palace Relais & Chateaux. The island offers something to suit the most discerning of tastes: modern, luxury seaside hotels equipped with spa, private beaches and marinas; magnificent period hotels set in sprawling landscaped gardens; elegant 16th century buildings on the waterfront; or even an exquisite boutique hotel situated within a medieval palace.

CULTURE
Malta has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Successive waves of traders, occupiers and colonisers have left their mark. The Maltese character is imbued with the British legacy of a strong work ethic and powerful ambition, softened by the natural southern Mediterranean temperament. Maltese are very hospitable and helpful people, exuding the traditional warmth and spontaneity of the Mediterranean region. With such an eclectic mix of culture and a diverse population, it does not take long to feel at home here. Christianity plays a major role in the Maltese culture with each town and village celebrating the feast day of its patron saint.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES
Malta offer visitors and residents a unique experience packed with the best of all things Mediterranean. Sparkling blue seas, excellent food and a buzzing night life have made it one of Europe’s most popular destinations. The variety of daytime activities available in Malta compares favourably with many destinations around the world, despite the small size of the island. Most of the picture-postcard bays are found in the northern region. With warm temperatures and clear waters around the coast, you will certainly enjoy a dip in the Mediterranean – to swim or to explore the thriving marine life. You can also test your endurance rock climbing high above the deep blue sea on the majestic Dingli Cliffs; or wind down with a leisurely round of golf and afternoon tea on the lawns of the Royal Malta Golf Club. Other activities include horse riding, jeep safaris and even sky diving. From autumn to spring Malta turns itself into a green island. A walk through the countryside is perfect for recharging your energy levels. You can also head to Gozo, Malta’s smaller sister island only 20 minutes away by ferry. Gozo is an island idyll of hills, valleys and cliffs, where time moves slower and life can be savoured, minute by minute, second by second.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
Although Malta is a small country, it has a great variety of world-class attractions. Its stunning historical sites regularly provide the backdrop for events such as concerts, plays or art exhibitions. Every year promises a colourful blend of local and international events, entertainment and exhibitions – from the Carnival to May’s celebration of a traditional music and song festival, to the Malta Jazz Festival, the Isle of MTV music event and Malta Arts Festival in summer-to-early-October and the magic of Valletta’s Notte Bianca.
SPORTS
Water sports are popular in Malta. The conditions for scuba diving and snorkelling are excellent, with great views of reefs, caves and fish shoals. Also, the sea temperature never drops below 13 degrees Celsius, even in winter. The best sites can be found around the northern coast of Malta and Gozo. Besides diving, the Maltese Islands have other forms of sports to offer such as horse riding, hiking, climbing or sailing. Malta has one golf course, located at the Royal Malta Golf Club. Gyms can be found all over the island, as well as football or water polo clubs. There are also a number of highly popular sports events, including national water polo competitions, horse racing, clay pigeon shooting and football. Once a year the Rolex Middle Sea Race, a highly rated offshore classic, starts and ends in Malta, attracting between 25 and 30 yachts. There is also a racecourse in Marsa, where you are guaranteed a great day out if you fancy a flutter.

CUISINE
Maltese cuisine will suit most tastes, featuring many of the typical ingredients of the region: aubergines, tomatoes, peppers, courgettes, onions and garlic, together with freshly caught fish and seafood. Mediterranean herbs such as basil, mint, thyme, oregano and bay leaves are used in abundance, and flavours are enhanced by virgin olive oil. Typical year-round dishes include rabbit and bragioli (beef olives), and every meal is served with the renowned local bread made with sourdough and baked in a traditional wood-burning stone oven.

NIGHTLIFE
Malta has been making headway as the “new Ibiza”, for some time now, and there is no shortage of fashionable nightclubs and bars to enjoy. Throughout the summer months the island is the place to be for music lovers. With some of the biggest DJs appearing at various venues throughout the island, open-air clubs provide a unique experience for party-goers. You can relax poolside during the day, soaking up the vibrant atmosphere and party all night if you wish. 2016 will see the second instalment of the AMP Lost & Found festival, a four day event which takes place across the island hosting the world’s best house music DJ’s. Over the course of the event there are boat parties, castle raves and pool parties. The event attracted thousands of young music lovers in 2015, and it set to attract more this year. If clubbing is not your scene, there are plenty of luxurious bars to relax and unwind with cocktails, delicious food and live music.

SHOPPING
Malta has a wide array of shops, catering for all tastes and budgets. Most international chains and brands have a presence in the country, as well as a number of exclusive boutiques – not forgetting the traditional markets. If you’re shopping for arts and crafts, look out for the renowned Malta lace, delicate silver and gold filigree or the colourful and creative Malta hand-blown glass. The main shopping districts are Sliema and Valletta. Shops usually open from 9 am – 1 pm and 4 pm – 7 pm, although many are open throughout the day. Most are closed on Sundays, except for those located inside the BayStreet Shopping Centre in St Julian’s, as well as some outlets in busy tourist resorts like Bugibba.
DINING OUT
Dining out in Malta can be a wonderful experience: there are many restaurants which stay open late to enable you to enjoy a pleasant Mediterranean evening: from smart city restaurants in Baroque palaces to family-run trattoria-style establishments or seafront fish restaurants, the choice is wide. Maltese food is served in most restaurants offering Mediterranean cuisine, but in addition there are numerous ethnic restaurants: Italian, French, Chinese and Indian are the most numerous, but you will also find Greek, Turkish, Russian, Thai, Japanese and many others.

TIPPING
Gratuity is usually not included in a bill. As in most other European countries, tips in restaurants are usually around 10 to 15 per cent of the total. Tipping at a bar is not expected unless you are served by a waiter/waitress. Tipping is not the norm in taxis; however, you could tip up to 10 per cent of the fare.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT
Being small enough to walk from one side of the island to the other in a day, getting around in Malta is easy. The public transport system is safe and cheap. A network of routes and a fleet of modern buses provide an extensive service across Malta and Gozo. A train service does not exist in Malta.

CAR HIRE & TAXIS
Cars can be hired at reasonable rates compared to those in other Western European countries. All the major car rental companies have a presence in Malta. Local firms also offer this service, with or without a chauffeur. Taxis are white and fitted with meters, charging government-controlled prices. You can also agree on a fare before starting the journey. Taxis at the airport operate on a different system, with set fares which have to be paid at the taxi ticket booth in the arrivals lounge.

DRIVING
Malta has a road network of 1,500 kilometres – even though it only takes one hour to cross the island. EU nationals (aged 18 and over) are allowed to drive on their existing licences, or exchange them for a Maltese one after having lived in the country for more than six months. Non-EU nationals can drive on their existing valid licences for a maximum of 12 months from the date of their last arrival in Malta. As in the UK, cars drive on the left.

STANDARD OF LIVING
Malta is also one of the easiest places to relocate to, and residents enjoy an exceptional standard of living: 10 months of sunshine, an English-speaking population, and a Mediterranean island setting in which it is easy to find one’s way around. Although Malta is a small country, it offers a variety of lifestyle choices that range from urban, cosmopolitan and luxurious to relaxed and rural. Boasting a diverse range of shopping, cultural and leisure activities, all at affordable rates, Malta provides expatriates with a unique opportunity to live every aspect of life to the full.

COST OF LIVING
The cost of living in Malta is one of the lowest in Europe. Banking, taxation, insurance, social security, utilities and communications services are sophisticated, professional and reliable, offering exceptional value without compromising on quality.

HOUSING
The island offers a wide range of housing from contemporary high-rise apartments to traditional country houses and villas with a pool, furnished and unfurnished, all at competitive prices – in city, urban or more rural environments, according to lifestyle preferences. Favourite villa areas are Santa Maria Estate in Mellieha, as well as Madliena and High Ridge in the vicinity of St Julians/ Sliema. A number of five-star developments have recently been built on the island, including Portomaso and Tigné Point, which offer luxury apartments surrounded by commercial, health, fitness and leisure facilities and command the highest prices and rents. Rents are paid monthly in advance. Utility costs are not included in rental charges and are charged depending on usage. Alternatives to renting a flat are hotel-style serviced apartments. Malta’s small size and excellent public transport facilities mean short commutes to work – no matter where you live.
RELIGION
Over 90 per cent of Maltese are Roman Catholic, with Christianity being prevalent since 60 AD when St Paul was shipwrecked on Malta; converting the local population. The Church still plays an important role in most communities, and most Maltese attend Mass on Sundays – there are no fewer than 365 churches on the island. Other Christian denominations present include Anglican, Church of Scotland, Greek Orthodox and Methodist. Malta also hosts Jewish and Muslim communities.

PETS
If you want to bring your ‘best friend’, you need to ensure that your pet is micro-chipped, vaccinated against rabies and blood tested. Malta is a member of the Pet Travel Scheme which allows pets from any of the countries covered by the arrangement to enter Malta without quarantine six months after a satisfactory blood test. There is also a wide variety of private vets, kennels and catteries.

PERSONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES
Malta offers a wide choice of banking options, including local, international and private banks. The banks operate a strong network of ATMs and branches across the islands. All major cards are issued and accepted. All banks offer telephone and online banking services to conveniently and efficiently manage your financial affairs. A host of insurance companies offer all levels of cover, such as home, motor and health insurance. If you plan to stay in Malta, it is advisable to apply for a Maltese eResidence document before opening a local bank account as this will speed up the process. All banks also offer foreign-currency accounts. Banks in Malta are open from Monday to Saturday, from 8.30 am to 2.00 pm.

EDUCATION
Malta provides an excellent standard of education. Children can be educated in one of the private international schools, or enrolled in the local state, church or independent schools. All schools use the British model of education, which is compulsory between the ages of five and 16. Third-level education is offered through the University of Malta and other institutes and private colleges.

HEALTHCARE
Malta has one of the best health services in the world. The main general hospital is Mater Dei Hospital in Msida, while most towns and villages have their own medical clinics. Malta also has several private clinics and hospitals, such as the renowned St James Hospital in Sliema. EU nationals resident in Malta are eligible to receive free medical treatment at public hospitals and clinics, but foreign residents are advised to take out private medical insurance. EU food and beverage standards are strictly monitored in Malta, but it is still recommended to drink bottled, rather than tap water.

REMOVAL / SHIPPING
There is no shortage of shipping and relocation companies to meet the demands of people intending to relocate to Malta. They offer assistance with every aspect of the move, ranging from furniture transportation to the sourcing of schools.

CHILD CARE
Childcare centres are run by the state, the church and private organisations. Some facilities operate 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Kindergarten is not compulsory in Malta, but English-speaking kindergarten and pre-school facilities are widely available.
HOME HELP
Domestic and home help is relatively common in Malta. Many expatriates find they can afford domestic help that they could not have afforded at home. Most choose to employ a helper for cleaning, cooking, general household chores and child minding.

MEDIA & TV
Malta’s bilingual culture is also reflected in the media landscape, with half the newspapers published in English. Foreign newspapers can also be purchased easily. In addition to satellite and cable TV, the high penetration of superfast broadband has resulted in the launch of IPTV services to subscribers of Melita and GO. The content is diverse and international, including Italian, French, British and Russian programming. Radio programmes are primarily in Maltese with a number of English-language music stations.

UTILITIES
Energy and water supplies are stable. Tariffs differ between domestic and residential, with residential being the lower rate. Energy and water requirements are catered for by Enemalta and the Water Services Corporation respectively. Bottled gas is used in most households and can be purchased from delivery vans (in most areas once a week) or from special distribution centres. The electricity is 240 volts AC, 50 Hz, and plug types are the three-pronged British model.

VISAS & EMBASSIES
As an EU member state, Malta’s immigration laws are in line with EU policies. The country is part of the Schengen zone. EU nationals are free to live in Malta. Third-country nationals who are family members of EU nationals living in Malta can accompany them. Non-EU citizens can find details about visa-exempt countries and visa application procedures on the website of the Maltese Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security. Most major countries have an embassy or a consulate in Malta. The full list of foreign representations can also be accessed on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Malta also offers foreigners the option to obtain Maltese citizenship through an Individual Investor Programme.

EMPLOYMENT
EU nationals can work in Malta without an employment licence. It is relatively easy to obtain everything you need to begin work as an EU national. Social security numbers can now be obtained online. This, along with a promise of employment letter from your prospective employer and your passport are all you need to retrieve a tax number in order to commence employment. A short trip to Floriana will guarantee you have your tax number within one to two weeks. Third-country nationals require work permits, and the granting of these is subject to a labour market test for most positions. Permits will be given on a temporary basis and have to be renewed every one-to-three years. The applicant must possess a professional qualification or a high degree of skill or experience.
EXPERT LEGAL ADVICE
FROM THE LEADERS
IN THE FIELD

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PREMIUM CASINO GAMES

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ACT ADVISORY SERVICES LIMITED
ACT is a multi-disciplinary firm made up of young, dynamic and experienced professionals providing Advisory, Corporate, Tax and other related services to an extensive array of international clients. We are a boutique firm, providing a comprehensive range of tax advisory and tax compliance services, as well as a variety of specialist corporate services. ACT’s personnel strives to be the best to provide an efficient service to our clients, who range from private individuals and family owned business to medium sized and multi-national enterprises. We give utmost importance to our clients’ needs, and we strive to be as efficient, professional and timely in whatever we do.

Stephen Balzan
PARTNER

ACT CONSULTUS LIMITED
ACT Consultus is based in Malta, and it specialises in the online gaming industry, online payment processing and related services thereto. ACT Consultus provides senior international gaming consultancy in all sectors of the gaming industry, including but not limited to online gaming, land-based casinos and arcades, software and platform providers, and gaming machine manufacturers. Our gaming practice encompasses all aspects of gaming law, including licensing, corporate, legal and financial compliance, acquisitions, mergers and development. Our consultants have previously occupied strategic posts in the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA) for a number of years and with their expertise in the gaming industry, provide tailor-made solutions and consultancy to our gaming clients, locally and internationally.

Denitza Dimitrova
PARTNER

ALEA (SLOTSMILLION)
Alea is an award-winning leader in the field of online gaming, with more than 10 years’ experience in the industry. We aim to create a remarkable experience for players in our casino, SlotsMillion, which hosts a variety of software providers to supply players with over 1000 slots and more than 500 mobile and tablet games. Driven by innovation, we have created the first real money 3D/VR casino experience, which we offer along with many more features inside our casino.

Alexandre Tomic
CO-FOUNDER

APCO
We are a global payment gateway enabling businesses to accept online payments efficiently. Mobile ready and PCI Level 1 Certified, ApcoPay comes with advanced fraud protection, 3D Secure and recurrent billing. Smart hosted checkout pages together with over 200 payment alternatives are provided in a straightforward unified system designed to manage and process multi-channel payments utilising cutting-edge technology.

Ian Pellicano
DIRECTOR

ATLAS HEALTHCARE INSURANCE AGENCY LTD
Atlas Healthcare, the AXA PPP healthcare Malta agent, occupies a prominent position in the local healthcare market, with a wide range of healthcare products including the only local dental plans. The innovative dental product range is supported by Denplan, the UK’s leading dental payment plan specialist. Health plans offer several unique benefits including access to AXA’s international hospital network, AXA assistance services, a local 24/7 claims assistance service as well as preventive care, chronic benefits, MEDIX and other optional add-ons. Atlas offers the only local group secretaries’ portal allowing updating and exporting of staff lists, flexible billing and monthly reporting of claims.

Catherine Calleja
MANAGING DIRECTOR
Avviza is an advisory firm, which was founded in 2014 by Reuben Portanier, former CEO of the Malta Gaming Authority and winner of the 2013 GIQ Hot 50. Avviza offers a complete suite of advisory solutions, both for established gaming companies and start-ups. As Avviza’s associates hold international experience, we serve a number of jurisdictions including licensing and compliance for Malta, UK, Denmark, Italy, Romania, and Curacao amongst others. Avviza also offers advisory services with respect to Mergers & Acquisitions, Investment Brokerage, Business Planning, Tax Planning, Company Incorporation, Recruitment, Policy and Key Official Services.

Reuben Portanier
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE ADVISOR

B3W Group is a complete iGaming software platform provider that delivers all the elements that a competitive online gaming company requires to succeed. Licensed under the well reputed gaming jurisdictions of Malta and UK. B3W Group provides flexible solutions to iGaming start-ups and added benefits to existing online gaming sites. The B3W solution provides casino, live dealer, sports betting and poker products within branded sites as White Label enhanced, with back office services including its own proprietary affiliate management software.

Jose’ Micallef
GENERAL MANAGER

MGA Class4 licensed Best Gaming Technology is a software company, which has developed market-leading turnkey wagering solutions for the betting industry, covering all sectors and distribution channels, from retail through to web and mobile products. BGT’s flagship product is the SSBT which BGT supplies to clients across the globe, including major players such as Ladbrokes, Codere and William Hill, resulting in over 22,000 BGT products currently live worldwide. BGT excels by providing the software platform, which drives the total service allowing operators to focus on core areas while BGT takes care of the rest.

Dr Armin Sageder
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

BetConstruct is an award-winning developer and provider of online and land-based betting and gaming solutions. BetConstruct’s innovative and proven offerings include an extensive range of market-leading vertical products including Sportsbook, Sports Data Solutions, RNG Casino Suite, Live Dealer Casino, Poker, and more. BetConstruct powers operators worldwide serviced by 10 global offices. All partners benefit from the BetConstruct Spring™ platform which combines the vertical product suite, powerful back office tools and all inclusive services that help contain operator costs. BetConstruct also offers White Label opportunities for partners wishing to operate with BetConstruct’s licensing assistance.

Kristina Hambardzumyan
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Betsson AB, the parent company of Betsson Malta, is the largest Internet company on NASDAQ OMX, with over 50 years of experience in the gaming industry. Betsson Malta is fast growing and operates 23 brands across Europe, Central Asia and Latin America, all with a vision of providing the best customer experience in the industry. Some of the brands are: Betsson.com, Betsafe.com, Nordicbet.com, Starscasino.it, MrSmithcasino.co.uk, Krooncasino.com and Europe-bet.com. Betsson Group currently employs over 1,800 people from 40 different nationalities. Most work in the operational Head Office in Malta, others are located in offices across Europe and Central Asia. Revenues for 2014 were SEK 3,035 million, up 23% compared to 2013.
**BIT8**

Bit8 is a gaming platform software development company that offers an innovative intelligent gaming backend catering for current and future needs of modern gaming operators, both online and land-based. Available in both standalone and hosted versions, and complemented with a variety of professional services, our platform solution provides a source of competitive advantage to operators that maximises player lifetime value while increasing revenues and decreasing costs through the use of Artificial Intelligence technology and automation of manual labour.

Angelo Dalli  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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**BMIT LIMITED**

BMIT is Malta’s leading data centre, providing secure facilities and reliable services to a wide range of highly sophisticated industries such as online gaming, financial services and communications. BMIT’s suite of solutions includes: a range of data centre services offered from 2 facilities in Malta and from POPs in Germany and Italy; access to an exclusive, international private network linked to leading Tier 1 IP providers; Public, private and hybrid cloud Services; Managed IT services and disaster recovery solutions. BMIT’s data centres are ISO 27001 and PCI DSS certified and supported by an expert 24/7 team of dedicated professionals.

Christian Sammut  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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**BTOBet**

BtoBet is a pioneer in new technologies for iGaming and betting industry by using technological intelligence as its main base for its products. It offers customisable, secure and flexible cloud-based systems delivering unprecedented capabilities to drive Sportsbook and iGaming business. The company accomplishes its vision through innovation and anticipation. BtoBet drives the business to the first Artificial Intelligent iGaming dimension with three unique products: B Neuron, the only gaming and betting platform that enables licensees to eliminate complexity and unlock growth; B Konnect, Sportsbook ready to connect seamlessly; B Retail, the tailored solution to operate seamlessly land-based business.

Alessandro Fried  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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**CAMILLERI PREZIOSI**

Camilleri Preziosi commands an outstanding reputation amongst clients and peers as a leading Maltese corporate law firm. The firm is consistently ranked as a top-tier firm by Chambers, IFLR1000 and Legal 500, and retains a strong presence in the gaming and gambling advisory sector. The firm offers online and land-based operators bespoke assistance ranging from the structuring and the incorporation of the prospective licensee through to the licence application process and, thereafter, in compliance, regulatory and dispute resolution matters. The firm’s employment, litigation and corporate support services departments complement the iGaming and Landbased Gaming team to meet clients’ ancillary requirements.

Dr Malcolm Falzon  
PARTNER

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**CAREERS AT TIPICO (TIPICO CAREERS)**

Tipico’s employer brand Tipico Careers was launched in January 2015 and has since become an established careers brand within the online gaming sector in Malta. The recently launched Tipico-careers.com website has become Tipico Careers’ showcase, displaying the benefits Tipico has to offer to its future employees combined with animations and videos about the company’s history and success story, its offices in the Portomaso Business Tower, and last but not least a spotlight video feature about Malta. Tipico constantly looks for experienced people who are interested in working in a dynamic, fun, innovative and paced online environment. Tipico Careers - ‘We invest in our people’.

Thomas Mahoney  
HR PROJECT MANAGER & EMPLOYER BRAND MANAGER

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CHETCUTI CAUCHI ADVOCATES

Chetcuti Cauchi is a law firm serving successful businesses and private clients using Malta as an international business centre. With offices in Malta, Cyprus and London, we advise clients seamlessly on their business and private legal needs, both at home and abroad. Led by Dr Silvana Zammit, Commercial Law Partner at Chetcuti Cauchi, our iGaming practice serves start-ups or established operators seeking a fully-fledged set up or a back-up operation within an EU jurisdiction. With experience in the Maltese gaming industry since its inception in 2004, our iGaming practice prides itself on in-depth expertise in all aspects of gaming including licensing and compliance, key official services, international tax planning, accounting and company formation & administration.

Dr Silvana Zammit
PARTNER

CITADEL INSURANCE PLC

Established in 1997 as the second indigenous insurance company in Malta, Citadel Insurance is a composite company authorised by the Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA) to transact general and life insurance. Citadel offers a wide range of products for business, motor, home, marine, travel and life insurance including savings. Bespoke packages are available for SMEs and large corporations ranging from group life, liability, property insurance and more. Group Health insurance is also available from the company’s subsidiary Citadel Health Insurance Agency Ltd, regulated by the MFSA to act as an insurance agent for Swiss Life Prévoyance et Santé.

Angela Tabone
MANAGING DIRECTOR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CLARION GAMING, CLARION EVENTS

Clarion Gaming are the organisers of ICE Totally Gaming, G2E, EiG, Juegos Miami, WSB Series, Brasil Gaming Congress and Japan Gaming Congress. Clarion is an international business, with a portfolio of events and media brands across a range of markets. Our 500 employees worldwide specialise in delivering marketing, networking, and information solutions in high value sectors, both in mature and emerging geographies. We are market leaders in providing connectivity and business-critical insight across communities of buyers and sellers. Clarion’s customers use our range of exhibitions, conferences, tradeshows, and websites to target new business, demonstrate their products, build deeper relationships with their clients and identify new opportunities for performance improvement. For more information visit: http://www.clarionevents.com/sectors2/gaming

Rory Credland
EVENT DIRECTOR, GAMING

CONTACT ADVISORY SERVICES

Contact Advisory Services is a company specialised in remote gaming, offering professional, across-the-board consultancy services in Malta. Contact Advisory Services synergises a team of key professionals with decades of experience in Information Systems Advisory, IT Audit and Assurance and Corporate services. The company offers a number of bespoke services ranging from Remote Gaming Consulting & Compliance, Corporate Services, Fiduciary Services, Financial Institution Licensing, Back Office support, Key Official Services, Assurance Services, Management Consultancy, PCI DSS Certification & Consultancy, Information Systems Audit & Assurance, Internal Audit, Information Security Services, and Data Protection services.

Alan Alden
DIRECTOR

CONTINENT 8 TECHNOLOGIES

Continent 8 Technologies provides managed hosting solutions secured over a global private redundant network for today’s online business-critical services platforms. Our customers benefit from our continued investment in advanced data centres and a private global redundant network. With multiple centres of excellence globally including London, Paris, Dublin, Isle of Man, Guernsey, Gibraltar, Lisbon, Singapore, Montreal and New Jersey, Continent 8 provides a truly global service capability to its clients, regardless of geography. Continent 8 is ideally positioned to provide expertise in the provision of hosting and managed services in both highly regulated and technically challenging geographic locations around the world.

Peter Williams
DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL SALES
COUNTRYPROFILE MALTA LIMITED
CountryProfiler (CP) is an international media company that specialises in the publication of country reports and investment guides on the world’s most innovative and high-growth markets for trade, foreign investment and international financial services. CountryProfiler’s publications provide blue-chip companies, their executive management and professional advisors with global business intelligence and market insight they require when managing cross-border operations, investing or doing business with new markets. CountryProfiler’s publications are considered to be among the most prestigious economic intelligence products available.

CSB GROUP
CSB Group (est.1987) provides its clients with a spectrum of specialised business and commercial services, offering a complete turnkey solution to clients wishing to setup or relocate their business to Malta. CSB’s areas of specialisation today include: iGaming & Gambling; ePayments; Setting up of EMIs & PSPs; Corporate & Trust; Advisory; Legal; Tax; Accounting; Recruitment & HR; Credit Risk; Relocation & Real Estate services. Furthermore, CSB offers the following services: Incorporation and redomiciliation of companies; Trust, Fiduciary & Escrow services; Payroll & Tax Administration; Regulatory & Legal Consultancy; Licensing of Financial Services, Hedge Fund Registration; Ship, Yacht & Aircraft Solutions; HR Consultancy; Residence Permits & Serviced Office Space.

DAIS SOFTWARE LIMITED
DAIS Persona is a multi-function “customer acceptance” software that combines client document management and a compliance search tool for KYC/AML/CFT process. Designed as a front-line screening and reporting tool to minimise regulatory risks, DAIS PERSONA enables you to automatically monitor, screen and search for an individual or a corporate entity against known sanction lists that include UN Sanction list, US Treasury OFAC and EU Sanctions lists. POWERED BY Dow Jones Risk & Compliance data solutions.

DELOITTE
Deloitte Malta is a multidisciplinary firm, which offers a wide range of professional services. With a globally connected network of member firms in more than 150 countries, Deloitte brings together world-class capabilities and high quality service to clients. Deloitte has the largest international tax practice in Malta, a dedicated financial services industry group, an experienced audit practice and a financial advisory arm, all servicing a vast range of national and international companies, together with private and high net worth individuals.
DHL
DHL is the global market leader in the industry and “The Logistics Company for the World”. Our popular International Express door-to-door delivery service is available when you’re sending document or non-document shipments anywhere around the world. In Malta it was the first company to establish itself, and DHL Express remains a pioneer, constantly providing new solutions for its customers, solutions that make it the market leader. While maintaining the largest market share, DHL sets very high levels of service and always seeks to serve the customer in the best possible way. Having a constant presence in the Maltese market since 1983, DHL has acquired a deep knowledge of critical shipments as well as unparalleled experience in the specialised handling of express deliveries for each industry sector.

Charles Schiavone
COUNTRY MANAGER

Sarah Borg
DIRECTOR

E-VOLVE CONSULTANCY LIMITED
Malta is now a mature gaming jurisdiction. It pioneered the European regulatory regime in this industry. The competitive cost of real estate and the remarkably advantageous social cost of human resources are angles that are difficult to match coupled with unique advice. Instead, we can stress one aspect over others. For us at e-Volve that is probity. We have strict rules on submissions to the regulatory authorities. A strong and transparent statement not only paves the way for a smooth path with the MGA but can also help lead onto multi regulatory status. Indeed, regulators today share information and not only paves the way for a smooth path with the MGA but can also help lead onto multi regulatory status. Indeed, regulators today share information and the strong and honest market protagonists will benefit from their reputation for integrity in Malta when they venture into new markets.

Michael Spiteri Bailey
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Dr Tonio Ellul
PARTNER

E-VOLVE CONSULTANCY LIMITED

E-Management provides fiduciary services, focused on establishing and managing internationally engaged e-Gaming Companies based out of Curacao and Malta. With more than a decade of experience in assisting major software providers and operators with their corporate and licensing requirements, e-Management was amongst the first in 1997 to enter the Online Gaming Industry. e-Management offers innovative solutions by assisting all e-Gaming (related) businesses to structure their business. e-Management provides Business Support & Corporate Services in the following jurisdictions: Anguilla, Bahamas, Barbados, Benin, British Virgin Islands, Curacao, Colombia, Curacao, Malta, Nevis, The Netherlands, Panama, Sint Maarten and Uruguay. We are proud to offer e-Gaming Corporate Solutions worldwide.

E-Management
E-Gaming Corporate Solutions

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E-Management
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E-MANAGEMENT LIMITED

E-MANAGEMENT LIMITED

EM@NEY PLC
The company, founded in 2011, is involved in emoney issuing, payment services, payment circuits and internet banking solutions. Em@ney is a fully licensed Financial Institution, authorised in 2013 by Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA), to operate in all SEPA countries. The Em@ney platform has been designed to innovate, complete and optimise the gaming experience for micro-payments, user fidélisation, transaction tracking and very low transaction costs. The platform guarantees transactions without threats of money laundering due to absence of anonymous users and utilisation of sophisticated security tools. Em@ney’s clients can count on an highly professional team, specialised in financial and technological fields, allowing the company to offer advanced technology and secure, fast and customisable services and solutions.

EM@NEY PLC

EMD
EMD is an established multi-disciplinary firm based in Malta offering services in the legal, tax, accounting, recruitment, advisory, ICT, translations and corporate services, through our 80 plus in-house staff complement. EMD Advocates, the firm’s legal arm, boasts a strong international practice in a number of niche markets, including remote gaming. At EMD we assist and provide legal advice to investors interested in setting up a remote gaming business. We assist during the company incorporation and licensing stage and provide on-going services related to administration services, tax consultancy, back office services, on-going remote gaming compliance services and IT services.

EMD
ENERGYCASINO

Experiencing strong growth across markets including the UK, Eastern Europe and Scandinavia in 2015, EnergyCasino doubled their employee headcount. Why the success? Just luck? Or is it the continuous expansion of their gamer offer, courtesy of trusted game providers like NetEnt, Microgaming, Novomatic (and Oryx Gaming for DACH markets)? Is it because of the in-game experience made fluid and aesthetically awesome by a talented IT and Creative team? Is it the Trojan work of their affiliate, loyalty, VIP and customer service teams? Everyone plays an ongoing role in this success, and EnergyCasino looks forward to 2016 being another great year.

Emilia Rynkowska
HEAD OF AFFILIATES

EQUIOM (MALTA) LIMITED

Equiom’s specialist eBusiness team includes eGaming professionals and an experienced, proactive advisory and support team comprising legal, tax and VAT specialists. We have a highly successful track record in licence applications and the provision of the required compliant corporate structures and key personnel. Whether a start-up or existing company, our experts can help with strategic input into business planning and assistance with administration and compliance. We also provide introductions to specialist bankers, payment solutions providers, hosting providers and telecom companies. Our multi-jurisdictional presence means we can support multiple licence applications, creating greater flexibility for clients.

Colin Gregory
DIRECTOR

EVERYMATRIX

EveryMatrix is an independent company offering award-winning software solutions to the iGaming industry, whilst working with high-profile gaming partners and payment providers. The main products include OddsMatrix, a fully-managed sportsbook providing more than 18,000 live events monthly; GamMatrix, a complete gaming and payment processing platform, and CasinoEngine, the largest aggregator on the market with more than 2,000 games from top casino vendors. Our solutions can be integrated into gambling operators’ existing platforms or can be offered as standalone products, where clients can choose to operate under their own licence or use a White Label from us.

Robert Dowling
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER (MALTA)

EVOLUTION GAMING MALTA

Evolution Gaming is the leading provider of Live Casino solutions, working with more top-tier operators than any other provider. Committed to delivering a flawless live gaming experience in regulated markets, Evolution streams world-class Live Casino solutions from Malta and Latvia as well as on- premise live studios in land-based casinos. Real-time live dealer casino games are streamed in TV-quality video to desktop, tablet and smartphone devices, plus Live Casino TV show content. Evolution’s Live Roulette, Blackjack, Baccarat, Casino Hold’em, Three Card Poker and Caribbean Stud Poker games are ‘as real as it gets’, offering players an interactive experience that’s just like playing in a real casino.

Sebastian Johannisson
CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER

GAMINGMALTA

The GamingMalta Foundation is a non-profit organisation which was launched in March 2015. Its founding members are the Government of Malta and the Malta Gaming Authority. Its objectives include the promotion of Malta as the leading jurisdiction and a centre of excellence in the gaming industry, both locally and internationally. GamingMalta will be the promotional arm for the gaming industry tasked with attracting new companies to use Malta as their place of establishment for their activities. Furthermore, its remit will be to liaise with the relevant authorities to improve Malta’s attractiveness as a jurisdiction.

Christian Sammut
CHAIRMAN
GAMING & ASSOCIATES ADVOCATES
Gonz & Associates, Advocates is an established Maltese law firm specialising in Gaming, Telecoms, IT and Financial Services. Amongst other areas, the firm provides advice on Company formation, Tax planning, Licensing, Compliance, Contracts, Website terms and conditions, Data Protection and Trademark Registration. Our team of lawyers are experts in their respective fields allowing us to provide you with relevant, reliable and experienced based legal advice. The firm is associated with GA Corporate Limited licensed by the Malta Financial Services Authority to provide corporate services. Contact us to discover how we can better your business by setting-up or relocating your company to Malta, or by assisting you with legal matters relating to gaming.

Dr David Gonz
MANAGING PARTNER

GONZI AND ASSOCIATES ADVOCATES
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W: www.gonzi.com.mt
Contact: Dr David Gonz - Managing Partner

GREENTUBE INTERNET ENTERTAINMENT SOLUTIONS GMBH
Greentube Internet Entertainment Solutions, the global interactive business unit of NOVOMATIC, is a leading developer and supplier of iGaming solutions. Greentube is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The NOVOMATIC Group, one of the biggest producers and operators of gaming technologies and one of the largest integrated gaming companies in the world. Greentube’s industry leading technology allows the convergence of online, mobile and land-based games. Our well diversified product portfolio includes Classic Slots, Table Games, Live Dealer Gaming, AWP Reloaded Slots, Server Based Gaming, Social Casino Gaming, Bingo, Poker and more.

Gernot Baumgartner
HEAD OF MARKETING AND SALES
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W: www.greentube.com
Contact: Gernot Baumgartner - Head of Marketing and Sales

IGAMING BUSINESS
iGaming Business is the most established and respected information provider for the interactive gaming and gambling industry. Now entering our 13th year of business we provide the latest news, analysis, research, data and insight to senior level executives in the iGaming space. We take pride in the fact that our editorial and content is written for the reader and not the advertiser. By taking a strict editorial stance and having industry experts contribute to our magazine and online content; we give you the tools and resources to improve your business performance.

Alex Pratt
HEAD OF IGAMING BUSINESS
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W: www.igamingbusiness.com
Contact: Alex Pratt - Head of iGaming Business

KAYEM CONSULTING
KayEm Consulting is a multi-disciplinary firm of accountants and auditors with a proven track record in the gaming industry. Our specialisation covers corporate, fiscal, financial, regulatory and compliance perspectives. The specific design and organisational structure of the firm allows it to understand the requirements of its clients in a more focused and timely manner. Services offered include company incorporations, corporate services, remote gaming licensing, financial institutions licensing, investment services licensing, secretarial services, back office services, accounting, audit & assurance and tax consultancy.

Keith Massa
MANAGING PARTNER

KAYEM CONSULTING
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W: www.kayemconsulting.com
Contact: Keith Massa - Managing Partner

KPMG MALTA
With a staff complement of over 261, including 29 principals, KPMG in Malta is one of the leading providers of audit, tax and advisory services. Our vision is to become the clear choice for our clients. We are committed to providing quality, value added services to our clients. This commitment translates into a high level of client satisfaction – 91% of our clients responding to our last client survey confirmed that we exceeded or met their expectations. Following the acquisition of Crimsonwing plc, now rebranded KPMG Crimsonwing, by a joint venture between the UK, Malta and Dutch practices, KPMG is today the largest professional services provider in Malta with a staff complement of over 450 professionals.

Tonio Zarb
SENIOR PARTNER

KPMG MALTA
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Contact: Tonio Zarb - Senior Partner
LEOVEGAS
‘The greatest gaming experience – number one in mobile casino.’
LeoVegas is an online and mobile casino that provides world-class game entertainment and offers 600+ games on mobile, tablet and desktop. LeoVegas is Europe’s fastest and most user friendly mobile casino. With cutting technology, innovative data, and a strong entrepreneurial management, LeoVegas has grown to become an e-commerce sensation. LeoVegas employs a team of 200 talented people in its offices in Malta and Sweden.

MALTA REMOTE GAMING COUNCIL (MRGC)
The MRGC is in its 10th year of existence and operation. In the past years it has had to deal with numerous issues at local and EU level. It contributed positively on behalf of its members at local Authority, Governmental and EU level. The MRGC is going through a change process to ensure that it remains a serious and credible stakeholder that represents the local industry operators and suppliers. A new website and logo have recently been launched, and the Council is registering as a voluntary organisation. Its plans are to continue to grow its membership and remain one voice for the local industry.

MALTA GAMING AUTHORITY
At the Malta Gaming Authority, our regulatory philosophy, organisational principles and culture are focused on player protection. Malta’s transparent legal framework and experience in regulating gaming has developed into a world class eco-system providing effective, innovative and efficient regulation. Our regulatory framework provides assurances both locally and internationally that fairness and transparency are at the core of everything that we do. To this effect, our licensees are associated with the highest levels of integrity and efficiency. Proudly recognised as a world class authority in terms of innovation, governance and diligence. Mission Statement “To regulate competently the various sectors of the lotteries and gaming industry that fall under the Authority by ensuring gaming is fair and transparent to the players, preventing crime, corruption and money laundering and by protecting minor and vulnerable players.”

MALTA IGAMING SEMINAR (MiGS)
The Malta iGaming Seminar (MiGS) is established as a must-attend event among the international iGaming community, with key participation from leading players in this annual informative and networking event held in Malta. MiGS 2016 will be the eighth edition. The past seven editions have been outstanding successes from the deliverance of key topics by expert speakers to hosting excellent networking opportunities throughout day and night. MiGS targets only C-level delegates that are decision-makers from their respective field whether they are operators, service providers or start-up companies.
MALTA SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY
Malta Sotheby’s International Realty aims to serve the high-end residential and commercial real estate market, representing lifestyle properties of exceptional quality and unique characteristics. A brand that represents quality and luxury, its presence in Malta serves international clients looking for high-end real estate investment in Malta and Gozo, and local clients seeking real estate investment opportunities worldwide through our international network. Services include: Residential Sales & Letting, Commercial Sales & Letting, Property Management and Relocation & Residency.

Miguel Bonello
GENERAL MANAGER

MAZARS MALTA
Mazars Malta is one of Malta’s top ten multi-disciplinary business advisory and audit firms, with specialist knowledge in the gaming industry, having been appointed by the Malta Gaming Authority as an approved systems and compliance auditor. We take a holistic approach towards understanding your business and delivering our range of services in a more integrated manner. We act as a one-stop shop with a niche focus on specialist knowledge in licensing, regulatory advisory, payroll, accounting, auditing, tax and corporate services. Powered by Mazars Group, we can call upon the skills of more than 15,000 professionals in 74 countries.

Alan Craig
PARTNER

MEDITERRANEAN INSURANCE BROKERS (MALTA) LIMITED
MIB is Malta’s largest insurance broker and risk management services firm, the local pioneer in this sector with over 40 years of proven track record serving some of Malta’s major public and private corporate entities. MIB is the independent breaking arm of the MIB Insurance Group. MIB corresponds with various leading global insurance broking and risk consultancy groups bringing MIB’s clients directly in touch with a wealth of specialist resources and knowledge. MIB is highly specialised but flexible enough to afford the same dedication and professional support to both global companies as well as to individual concerns. MIB are at the forefront to present the Gaming Industry with the latest Insurance products directly responding to today’s emerging risks, such as Cyber Crime and innovative Employee Benefits.

Joseph G. Cutajar
DIRECTOR

MELITA PLC
Melita is Malta’s leading provider of next generation broadband, fixed and wireless connectivity services, and owns and operates Malta’s largest data centre facility built to Tier 3 specifications. Through its advanced converged nationwide network reaching over 99% of dwellings in Malta, Melita serves the growing telecommunication needs of small and large businesses along with leading positions in the broadband, pay-tv and mobile consumer markets. Through redundant submarine fibre cables connecting Malta to mainland Europe, Melita provides high quality connectivity to Malta’s growing financial, online and technology service provider sectors through its Milan based peering capabilities to the world’s leading connectivity providers.

Malcolm Briffa
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS SERVICES

MR GREEN LTD
Mr Green Ltd. is an online gambling company that today offers online casino in 13 countries in 9 languages, and an award winning casino operator being named IGA Operator of the Year in three consecutive years 2013, 2014 and 2015. Mr Green Ltd. is a fully owned subsidiary of Mr Green & Co AB - a Swedish company owning, acquiring and developing leading on-line gambling companies. Mr Green & Co. AB is listed on Swedish AktieTorget, MRG.

Bo Wanghammar
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
PAYMENTWORLD EUROPE LTD

As licensed Electronic Money Institution (EMI) by the MFSA, Paymentworld Europe Ltd. offers a comprehensive range of solutions, products and services in the field of international payments. When designing individual solutions for our customers e.g. Payment processing or e-Wallet solutions, our clients can rely on an established network of international banks and acquiring banks, state-of-the-art gateway and VAS providers. We cover a wide range of industries from low to high risk categories. A well experienced team in the payment sector is at your disposal.

Jens Podewski
Chief Executive Officer

879, Skyway Offices, Block A, Marina Street, Pieta, PTA 9072 - Malta
T: (+356) 2546 6148
E: info@paymentworld.eu
W: www.paymentworld.eu
Contact: Jens Podewski - Founder, Chief Executive Officer

PLAY’N GO

Play’n GO is the leading developer of smart systems and games for mobile devices, gaming terminals and websites. Their content can be uniquely customised to suit the style of any operator or brand. In addition to premium quality slots and table games, Play’n GO ensures its clients are equipped with superior back-office administration tools for reporting and marketing. Their Gaming Account Toolkit (GAT) is an independent e-gaming platform delivered with a comprehensive back office application. It now hosts over 80 games in more than 32 languages, including several bespoke games designed for some of the world’s leading casino brands. For more information about Play’n GO please visit http://www.playngo.com

Johan Törnqvist
Chief Executive Officer

878, The Strand, Siemra, SLM1022 - Malta
T: (+356) 9903 9500
E: sales@playngo.com
W: www.playngo.com
Contact: Johan Törnqvist - Chief Executive Officer

QUASAR LIMITED

Since its launch in 2011, Quasargaming.com has been committed to delivering an outstanding experience, brand and product to its affiliates, enabling them to generate superior results with a fair and reliable programme. Offering authentic Novomatic games, this casino surely has great value to offer to both new and existing affiliates.

Rebecca Baldacchino
Head of Affiliate Product

202/19 (Suite 1395), Old Bakery Street, Valletta, VLT 1453 - Malta
T: (+356) 2779 0566
E: rebecca.baldacchino@quasarlimited.com
W: www.quasargaming.com
Contact: Rebecca Baldacchino - Head of Affiliate Product

RE/MAX MALTA

RE/MAX Malta is a Real Estate Agency with 20 offices strategically located throughout Malta & Gozo. The company provides a comprehensive service in the form of residential and commercial property sales and letting as well as ancillary services such as Office Relocation, Hotel Accommodation, Holiday Rentals, Insurance Services, Property Management and Condominium Services. The company has a team of over 250 sales & letting associates that each specialise in different areas of the market. This, paired with one of the largest property databases on the island, certifies that your RE/MAX real estate associate can easily show you almost any property currently available on the market.

Kevin Buttigieg
Chief Executive Officer

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T: (+356) 2578 3015
E: kevin@remax-malta.com
W: remax-malta.com
Contact: Kevin Buttigieg – Chief Executive Officer
RSM MALTA
To make confident decisions about the future, an entrepreneurial, growing business needs a different kind of adviser. One who starts by understanding where you want to go and then brings the ideas and insights of an experienced team to help you get there. If you’re a remote gaming business owner seeking greater business efficiency and added value, RSM can help you achieve more. Our Business Advisory service line offers a dedicated unit to help you understand the regulatory and licensing requirements and to implement controls effectively. We will help you exploit our knowledge to best implement your strategies and achieve your goals with integrity, accountability and in full compliance.

Vladimiro Comodini
PARTNER

Itai Zak
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Eman Pulis
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Jan Bolz
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SBTECH
Established in 2007, SBTech is a leading provider of interactive sports betting solutions and services and has become a global market leader within the online gaming industry in both regulated and traditional markets. The complete offering includes an innovative, dynamic and customisable suite of turnkey and fully managed solutions specifically designed for top gaming operators, existing bookmakers and land-based networks. SBTech is EGR award winner for ‘Innovation in In-Play Betting’ in 2014 and 2015, which proves superiority for the In-Play betting platform. The platform features more than 25,000 monthly live events, 1000+ bet markets on more than 60 different sports and a wide variety of special bets.

SBTech

SiGMA
The second edition of SiGMA, the Summit of iGaming in Malta, took place in November 2015, cementing itself as the largest, most dedicated iGaming show in the Mediterranean. SiGMA registered twice the delegates and twice the exhibitors since it took off in 2014. The show features a large expo floor with over 100 exhibitors, six dedicated conferences, a start-up/investors lab as well as a string of networking events; from a charity poker tournament to networking drinks, dinners, cultural tours and the infamous closing night. The show attracts a crowd of 2,500 delegates; from affiliates to operators, solution providers and regulators. SiGMA is also responsible for SiGMagazine, a bi-annual publication that sheds light on pertinent gaming topics.

SiGMA

Established in 2004, Tipico is the leading sports betting company in the German market. Tipico offers a wide range of pre-live and live sports betting products delivered through cutting-edge mobile and online channels as well as through a top-class portfolio of approximately 1,000 retail outlets predominantly in Germany. Tipico also offers a range of online casino and table games. Tipico’s growth has always been strong and shows no sign of slowing in its core market and in the new markets which it is opening. Over 5,000 people work in Tipico shops, and the company is 200 people strong in Malta with additional teams in Germany, Croatia and Columbia. Tipico’s highly experienced and dedicated staff, its strength in software development, pervasive marketing strategy and world renowned brand ambassadors are a winning combination when it comes to servicing our customers and keeping Tipico as the number one sports betting company in Germany.

Tipico

REGUS SERVICES OFFICES
Regus is the world’s largest provider of workspace, with customers including some of the most successful entrepreneurs, individuals and multi-million dollar corporations. Our network of 2,600 locations in 106 countries encompasses 43 million square feet of the world’s leading locations, offering convenient, high-quality, fully serviced spaces for people to work, whether for a few minutes or a few years. Companies like Google, Toshiba and GlaxoSmithKline choose Regus so that they can work flexibly and make their businesses more successful as they grow around the world. Founded in Brussels, Belgium, in 1989, Regus is based in London and listed on the London Stock Exchange.

Regus

RSM MALTA
To make confident decisions about the future, an entrepreneurial, growing business needs a different kind of adviser. One who starts by understanding where you want to go and then brings the ideas and insights of an experienced team to help you get there. If you’re a remote gaming business owner seeking greater business efficiency and added value, RSM can help you achieve more. Our Business Advisory service line offers a dedicated unit to help you understand the regulatory and licensing requirements and to implement controls effectively. We will help you exploit our knowledge to best implement your strategies and achieve your goals with integrity, accountability and in full compliance.

Vladimiro Comodini
PARTNER

Itai Zak
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Eman Pulis
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Jan Bolz
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Regus
VacancyCentre is an Online Recruitment Portal and Job Board. VacancyCentre (operated by CSB Group) guarantees efficient and personalised Recruitment, HR Training & Consultancy services with maximum confidentiality. Supported by new technologies, our function as recruitment partners is to bring together employers and career seekers while maximising their time, efforts and resources. While assisting employees in pursuing their career to fulfill their ambitions, we continuously strive to provide employers with suitable top candidates according to their recruitment requirements. VacancyCentre has been the innovator in online recruitment in Malta, and has continued expanding its' portfolio of services in Training and HR.

Sarah Miceli
TEAM LEADER

WH Partners is a Malta-based business law firm with focus and a sound reputation for its work in gaming and gambling, ICT, digital industries, privacy and data protection, financial services and e-payments, corporate finance, M&A and taxation. The firm’s approach combines an in-depth understanding of clients’ industries with a result-oriented attitude to work, a strong dose of enthusiasm and perseverance. Lawyers at WH Partners are known for their pan-European experience and seek to give clients a competitive advantage which is also facilitated through solid relations with the regulators. The firm has won international awards for its service levels and is ranked and recommended, together with its partners and lawyers, by the foremost independent legal directories.

Olga Finkel
FOUNDER & PARTNER

Wirex, a small yet impressive force in the gaming world, provides a complete, internally developed, custom-made software package for online gaming; products include software for online sports betting, live casino, slots, RNG casino, virtual gaming, players’ management platforms. Wirex is particularly specialised in the management of live casinos providing a cutting-edge full featured mobile version. Wirex has headquarters in Lecce (Italy), and offices in Lamezia Terme (Italy) and Malta. It has major clients such as Betsson and Portomaso Casino (Malta), Casinò di Venezia (Italy) and Playbet (Greece). It is currently in advanced negotiations with gaming companies in Bosnia-Herzegovina, England, Montenegro and Slovenia. Wirex is associated with several influential companies, such as: Betsson, Oracle, Betradar, Lightstreamer, Netent and Papaya.

Gerardo Ferlaino
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Yobetit has grown into a successful and innovative sports betting company providing its services to sports traders and punters alike. One of our keys to success is having a young and dynamic team focused on creating state-of-the-art solutions. With gamification at heart, we produce apps and online solutions that are attractive both B2B and B2C. Based in Sliema, the Yobetit team is steadily growing and expanding its portfolio of products and services.

Nikolai Livori
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/ MANAGING DIRECTOR

Zimpler is a Swedish mobile payment service specialising in iGaming transactions. Our unique service allows players to make deposits directly from their phones without any pre-registration or apps. Zimpler is integrated with most platforms such as DevCode, Easy Payments Gateway, EveryMatrix, Intelligent Payments, Playtech, PPRO, Safe Charge, SoftSwiss, TAIN and many more. Read more about us on: www.zimpler.com

Johan Friis
CO FOUNDER
One Voice

Serving the Remote Gaming Community in Malta

The Malta Remote Gaming Council was launched in March 2005 and has continued to grow over the years. The Malta Remote Gaming Council is made up of all stakeholders in the Remote Gaming industry including licensed operators, data carriers, Internet service providers, and professional services providers.

The Council’s main objective is to serve as an ongoing discussion forum giving valuable feedback to the Authority to enable it to keep abreast with the latest developments in the industry.

The Council has achieved many milestones during its existence and continues to work on a number of ongoing projects and discussions to better serve the local remote gaming community.

Why should I Join?

- More members, stronger voice
- Voice your opinion on matters that affect you!
- You’ll be part of a lobby group that defends your rights.
- The council listens and presents a common front.
- Keep up to date with events and news.
- Remain aware of local legislation.
- Be part of a discussion forum.
- To help promote fair gaming and build credibility.

The Malta Remote Gaming Council
Tower Business Center, Tower Street, Swatar BKR3013 Malta - EU
info@mrgc.org.mt
www.mrgc.org.mt
Energise your company with Bit8's new services

Bit8 has transformed into something more than just a revolutionary gaming platform. Our clients now enjoy a multitude of complimentary professional services aimed at propelling their businesses forward. Custom development, consultancy, training & business analysis coupled with truly supportive after sales service are just a few reasons why you should make Bit8 part of your daily diet.