



SPORTS BETTING

AN OPEN OPPORTUNITY

Opinion Editorial by **Keith O’Loughlin**, SVP Sportsbook & Platforms at **Scientific Games**

As sports betting grows in regulated jurisdictions globally and particularly in burgeoning U.S. geographies, stakeholders across the industry should stay open to continued innovation and flexible solutions that meet short- and long-term needs. Prior to the Supreme Court’s PASPA decision, the U.S. was on the precipice of massive change, anticipating a new wave of sports betting and rapid expansion. Now, we’re in the thick of that change: eight states have already legalized sports betting, and more have started the process.

The U.S. market covers a vast number of sports bettors with varying preferences. Staying prepared for inevitably diverse consumer tastes and needs requires an open attitude towards new technology and flexible sports betting features. Being “open” means tweaking technologies to give consumers 360-degree access to their favorite betting content. It means upping the ante with top-notch services that propel sportsbooks to the top of bettors’ minds. It means incorporating both direct and indirect feedback into a product stack so sports betting technology continually advances.

THE CONSUMER-CENTRIC APPROACH

A sportsbook and its bells and whistles should focus on the consumer. With a constant deluge of media and content to consider, a sports betting offer requires a heavy lift to capture a consumer’s attention and keep them engaged. And once you have a loyal audience, the solution needs to be nimble, flexible, and stable all at once to cover any number of high-profile sporting events.

Further, growth is a constant in the sports betting industry, and it’s important to keep focused on players even in the heat of swift expansion and as new technologies are introduced. Starting at square one with a highly stable solution that can support a massive influx of betting volume without any downtime. With a reliable solution up and running, lottery sports betting suppliers and operators can use development time to better improve the front-end player experience and related services like marketing, pricing, trading and retail.





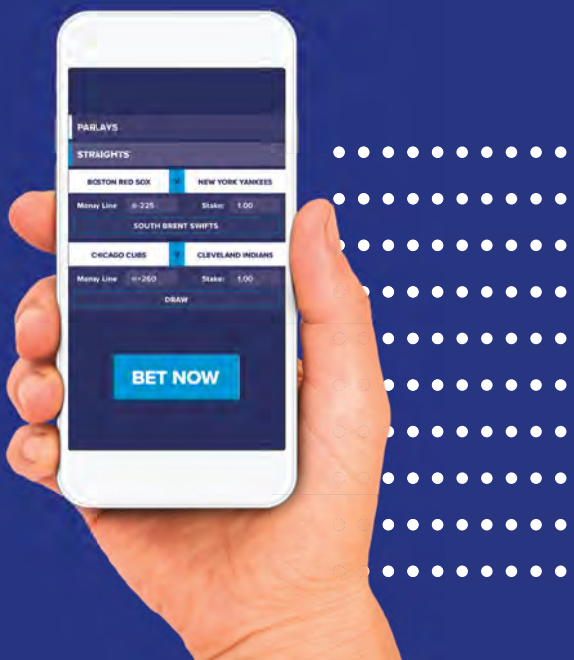
THE OPEN, FLEXIBLE OPERATION

By putting consumers first, lotteries can open up to a bevy of new possibilities that can set the stage for success in the short and long term. Openly addressing bettor feedback through innovation and product improvements advances the sports betting experience. The size and diversity of individual states also means lotteries can get creative with their portfolios to cater to their specific audience.



It all comes back to the end user. Will consumers find what they need quickly and place their bets on a seamless and intuitive interface? Will they experience any issues during peak betting times? Do the bets on offer reflect the local fandom and the current list of ongoing sporting events? Maintaining a solution that allows operators to address these questions first, not last, is the key to a winning sportsbook.

The fill-in-the-blanks approach pairs perfectly with the open, innovation-seeking strategy that keeps sports bettors happy. In-venue sportsbooks can raise the bar by introducing a world-class online betting interface that reaches players on the go, where regulations allow. And properties with a strong fanbase that cheers for a particular local team can offer niche bets to encourage bettor activity and introduce them to the options at hand. The point here is that seizing opportunities, and vigilantly remaining open to them, can drive revenue by reaching players with the bets they want, a well-rounded experience, and an interface that connects all of the elements that make sports betting enjoyable.



CHANGING THE GAME

One viable method of taking an open path to sports betting—among many—is the modularization of a technology portfolio to easily adapt to the needs of any customer. Scientific Games has adopted this approach with OpenSports, a full-service solution with mix-and-match options that empowers lotteries to maximize sports revenues.



The shift has made an impact. Lotteries can choose the tech and services that suit their needs and, by extension, directly address the needs of their end users. Without the added footprint of duplicate or overlapping sports betting features, lotteries are free to focus on the most impactful elements of their sportsbook.

This deconstruction of the one-size-fits-all strategy means customers across the gaming and lottery industry can better serve sports betting fans with specific, tailored features. Operators who are open to the growth and innovation opportunities can make the most of the new market while remaining future-focused and ready for the continuous evolution of positively disruptive technology.



THE NEXT LEVEL

Sports betting is the next big thing in the U.S. gaming industry, and stakeholders—from supplier to lottery to consumer—are chomping at the bit to capitalize on what is effectively a new entertainment space. By opening up and building product based on player preferences and a constant feedback loop, the industry can set a new standard for sports betting excellence while shaping the gaming channel into a perfect fit for the expanding U.S. market.

