AMAZON. eBAY...LOTTERIES?

LOTTERIES TAKE THEIR PLACE AMONG DIGITAL GIANTS: *MOVING BEYOND THE TRADITIONAL MARKETING GROUP*

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The Virginia Lottery

Anyone who is a LinkedIn contact with the Virginia Lottery knows firsthand that Rob Wesley has a full schedule. Since being named as the Virginia Lottery's first Director of Digital in August 2017, Rob has kept the Lottery's Human Resources group busy helping him build out his newly-formed group. Some of the recent postings on the Virginia Lottery career page:

- Digital Customer Experience Manager
- Digital Product Owner
- Digital Customer Acquisition Manager

Not the traditional job titles we've been accustomed to seeing in the lottery industry.

Rob Wesley, Director of Digital, Virginia Lottery

These positions, and others to come, are the result of the Virginia Lottery's increased focus on how games and information are delivered to players outside of the land-based retail experience. And this move into digital will only continue to grow.

The Virginia Lottery is certainly not alone in quickly sharpening its focus on the digital world. Whether it is improving the usability of a web site, adding functionality to an app or selling lottery products, the digital world has transformed the way lotteries operate, both internally and externally.

And lotteries are ramping up their hiring to keep pace with the need.

The Virginia Lottery Digital Team

"Our new digital jobs are similar to positions you find at top online platforms-like Amazon and Google," Wesley said. "So we have been working hard to attract the digital professionals who will lead us into the future with our digital efforts. This is an important focus and priority for the Lottery and we want to make sure we have the right people in place."

The lead-up to the creation of Rob Wesley's job in the fall of 2017 actually began many years prior when the Lottery launched its push beyond brick-and-mortar retailers. The milestones include:

• January 1, 1992	Lotto by mail
• October 12, 2000	Big Game added (predecesor to Mega Millions)
• August 1, 2005	Subscriptions available on web site
• October 31, 2016	New eSubscriptions platform launched (Mega Millions and Powerball)

The payoff for its years of effort took place in September 2017 when the Lottery announced that it was adding IGT's Player Direct Core solution. Through this program, the Lottery is able to offer a new mobile app, mobile-based eInstant tickets, and options for a player loyalty program and iKeno product. Currently, the Virginia Lottery is prohibited by law from selling single tickets on the Internet, so IGT's PlaySpot feature gives the Lottery a creative solution by linking all mobile sales to a retail location via bluetooth technology.

The new mobile app is of particular importance as it will allow Virginia Lottery players to play digital games at lottery retail locations. This will allow the Lottery to also expand into new locations which are not currently lottery retailers.

With all these digitial capablites on board, a seasoned lottery veteran was needed to oversee this new multi-faceted program. Enter Rob Wesley.

"I am thrilled to create and lead this new team and help move the Virginia Lottery into the next stage of customer experience and engagement," said Wesley. "I have the same mission now as I have for the past 14 years as Director of Sales and Marketing and then Director of Sales – increase the sales of lottery products. Only as Director of Digital, we're now using modern tools to promote sales.

"This full push into digital will also help attract new players," Rob said. "Virginia residents will have a variety of options to purchase lottery tickets. Brick and mortar retailers will always be the most critical avenue for lottery sales. Digital is a way to reach new players by providing engaging, relevant, and timely information and products while creatinga great customer experience. That is how we can bring them into the lottery fold."

The Michigan Lottery

Attracting the best and brightest into the digital world has been an important part of Shannon DeHaven's job for almost two years. As the Michigan Lottery's Deputy Director of Digital Operations, she oversees the daily operations of the most successful iLottery program in the U.S., as well as the strategic direction of her divison.

Michigan Lottery Digital Team

"I have an amazing and innovative staff that brings forth great ideas," DeHaven said. "I'm in a fortunate position to help them find ways to see those ideas come to life.

"When we were preparing to launch our new iLottery program there was no shortage of Lottery experts in the space, but we did find a shortage of professionals with the right set of digital skills needed to support the launch of the program. The digital space is incredibly competitive, so we worked with our vendor partner to find ways to attract and retain the best talent in our area. To our benefit the work we do is unique, so it certainly helped us promote new positions in an attractive way," she said.

Shannon DeHaven, Deputy Director of Digital Operations, Michigan Lottery

BCLC Canada

Most U.S. lotteries actually slightly trail their nothern brethren in terms of adapting their business to the internet. Take for example, Sam Hofer, Senior Product Manager, eLottery at the British Columbia Lottery Corporation. Sam accepted this position in 2012 after many years in the video game and video production businesses. So he and his colleagues were working on the BCLC's eLottery business while many U.S. lotteries had yet to launch mobile strategies.

"Early on, we saw a great opportunity to provide players with mobile apps, and engage digital-savvy current players and attract new players with new technology," Sam said. "The eGaming division within the BCLC was a completely different culture than the rest of the lottery. We operated more like a start-up, with the ability to accept more risk and a quicker speed to market."

Sam credits the growth of BCLC's digital enterprise on the lottery's focus on the alignment between the traditional lottery and eGaming divisions. And this alignment included everything from a new lottery native app to the replacement of lottery terminals. This led to a stronger culture of working together as one enterprise to support an overall lottery strategy.

"The senior management team restructured roles and responsibilities to create cross-function opportunities for resources within both the lottery and eGaming divisions," Hofer said. "This created greater awareness about the current state of the lottery business and helped identify the opportunities that existed for eLottery."

The BCLC digital transformation is an ongoing process. The lottery is constantly updating technology and hardware, including replacing its retailer terminals.

"Our transformation strategies offer us the flexibility to create innovative lottery ex-periences at retail and online that will give our customers greater value and a seamless experience, regardless of where they play lottery," Hofer said.

With more than six years under their belts, the eLottery veterans at BCLC have some tips for their colleagues to the south.

"It's critical that lotteries establish their digital strategy and then prioritize their activites," Hofer said. "For example, our executive team gave us an objective to launch our lottery mobile app in six months. This goal helped focus the cross-functional team on a minimal viable product approach along with pioneering agile development for the BCLC.

"Lotteries need to always focus on adding customer value – early and often," he added. "An enhanced player experience will make for a happy customer and, and in the end, more revenue for the lottery." ▪