

PROGRESSIVE PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

David Barden and Drew Svitko Step into New Leadership Roles at MUSL

New Mexico Lottery CEO **David Barden** and Pennsylvania Lottery Executive Director **Drew Svitko** are MUSL's newest Board President and Powerball Product Group Chair, respectively. The two lottery veterans, elected by the Association's 38-member Board of Directors, started their new roles on July 1.

The leadership transition comes nearly one year after the organization implemented several changes to its premier product, Powerball®, which included adding a third weekly drawing on Monday nights and Double Play®, an add-on feature now offered by 14 lotteries with the Montana Lottery becoming the latest to join on July 18. Both officers agreed that their predecessors, Hoosier Lottery Executive Director **Sarah M. Taylor** and former Missouri Lottery Executive Director **May Scheve Reardon**, left MUSL with a solid foundation in place. Barden and Svitko plan to carry forward with that type of progressive product management in mind.

"For a sizeable organization with diverse members, MUSL has shown it can execute big changes for the long-term health of its products," Svitko said.

"Progressive product management doesn't mean you stop when you've had a good year," added Barden. "We're reviewing our portfolios, assessing whether our products are relevant, and ensuring that we have the games our players want."

The MUSL Board of Directors has continually identified the development of new products as a top priority in its Strategic Plan. Svitko, who previously served as Chair of MUSL's Development Committee, said there has been a significant focus on researching game categories for potential growth combined with listening to member input.

"The Development Committee, now led by Puerto Rico Lottery Director **Armando Perez Cruz**, is making tremendous strides on creating new game content for MUSL members, including work toward a multi-state progressive fast-play game," Svitko said. "We've done enough homework on product portfolios across jurisdictions to

know where the opportunities lie."

MUSL's infrastructure supports the rollout of new products – both in terms of draw services and technology. Over the last year, the organization has expanded its draw services with daily Lucky for Life® drawings, tri-weekly Powerball and Double Play drawings, and most recently on July 18 with Lotto America®, which added a third weekly drawing on Monday nights.

MUSL is also debuting a new online game management system, called FLEX, that will modernize how lotteries and vendors report sales and winner data to the Association as part of the draw process. A primary benefit for product development will be the ability to quickly program new games and changes to existing games. MUSL is currently implementing a phased transition of lotteries and vendors to the new FLEX system with completion expected later this year.

Barden and Svitko also emphasized the importance of strengthening dialogue between MUSL and the Mega Millions Consortium. Both noted that communication between the two organizations is critical for strategic planning in the national games category.

"The more input we have from the Mega Millions Consortium, the better we can schedule product changes and promotions," said Barden. "We feel this collaboration benefits all U.S. lotteries that have Powerball and Mega Millions® in their portfolios."

Both leaders see online sales as a huge opportunity to inject further growth into the national games category. Currently, Pennsylvania is one of the U.S. lottery jurisdictions that offers iLottery wagering. Svitko said there is some urgency for U.S. lotteries to add online sales to



their distribution channels, "As other gaming products become more entrenched in the digital marketplace, it will become more difficult for lotteries to acquire customers. It would be ideal if MUSL could help states get in the position to sell online. In the long run, it will help Powerball."

Svitko added that lotteries face even wider competition for discretionary entertainment dollars – outside of gaming. With players able to shop and interact with brands on-demand through their smartphones, it only makes sense for lotteries to meet them on their mobile devices, a sentiment echoed by Barden. "One of our biggest obligations to players is to make it easier for them to purchase our products. We must be able to reach players through the convenience of their smartphones."

The two officers made multiple references to MUSL's Strategic Plan when talking about the Association's future endeavors. They termed it the "playbook" that has the support and approval from MUSL's Board of Directors. Moving forward, Barden hopes to build consensus among MUSL's 38-member lotteries by fostering a transparent environment.

"All members will continue to have the opportunity to attend any meetings – we're an open book," said Barden. "I think that will strengthen our ties. We want to be a strong, unified Association as we undertake these initiatives to be a reliable revenue source for our beneficiaries." ■