

Helping Lotteries Globally Generate Revenue and Thrive

A Chat with IGT's Karri Paavilainen



Karri Paavilainen, Vice President,
IGT Products and Services

Lotteries are more receptive than ever to new ways of engaging with lottery products. IGT applies its lens as an operator and supplier to provide customers with a full spectrum of solutions, accelerating retail and digital innovation.

Karri Paavilainen, IGT Vice President iLottery Products and Services, is a familiar face at industry events as a subject matter expert, speaker, and participant in roundtable discussions, recognized for his expertise in lottery digital transformation and outstanding customer relationship management. He is described as an excellent thinker, respected by customers and colleagues, with the ability to generate consensus and a dedication to leading by example. Known for his precision and meticulous organizational skills, Karri has established a strong record of collaborating with lotteries to develop the digital channel, resulting in double-digit growth across IGT's iLottery customers.

Here, Karri shares news about his latest role at IGT, and describes how lottery continues to evolve to meet today's customer needs.

For those who might not yet know you, can you please share a little about your background and how you came to be at IGT?

Currently as a Vice President at IGT, I am responsible for products, platforms, and services for our core iLottery offering. My prior responsibility was focused on leading Player Marketing Services, delivering B-to-C marketing as a service to our customers. I have now been with IGT for a decade. Prior to joining IGT, I worked with Veikkaus, the Finnish national lottery and sports betting operator, for eight years.

What are you rolling up your sleeves to tackle this year?

I will continue collaborating closely with IGT's customers to understand how we could better create solutions to fulfill evolving operator and player needs, including my now expanded scope of accountability for platforms and products alongside services.

Which approach do you employ to achieve your goals?

Achieving successful solutions in today's marketplace requires collaboration across a diverse base of contributors. Creating alignment through a shared goal is a key factor in successful operator-vendor relationships. To me, it's necessary to number one, crystallize market need; two, envision a solution to fulfill the need elegantly; and three, gain alignment across the organization and work together to produce a desired, impactful product.

Is there a current theme in the lottery industry that may not have been central when you originally entered the business?

iLottery used to be a separate isolated sales channel. Thinking has been now converging more toward viewing digital as a platform to serve and manage player relationships across retail and digital channels. Instead of the mindset of channel competition, digital lottery enhances the relevance of overall lottery brands and expands consumers' access to lottery products; usage is not confined to a specific time or place. We have so far only scratched the surface in our thinking about how we can build stronger player relationships by employing technological advances to provide highly personalized digital product and service experiences.

You have been advancing with this industry for more than 18 years. What keeps you going every day?

First and foremost, this is a continuously evolving industry, and I enjoy being part of a team resolving challenges related to that transformation. Second, I consider it meaningful that lotteries generate funding for good causes. This thinking was set deeply in me during my years with Veikkaus, the Finnish national lottery. It was very tangible how the work we did contributed to culture and sports. This is a unique industry, and while IGT helps lotteries to grow, we are also their

partners assisting to contribute for good causes. And third, lottery is very much a consumer business. Understanding how the end users – the players – are behaving, and how we can create services and content that resonate with them, is a great challenge to work on, and deliver against.



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Can you share one of the distinct ways that IGT brings value?

IGT is in a unique position to be working with so many lotteries around the world. This provides us with the opportunity to create a vast and deep foundation of knowledge. Our close relationships with a wide base of lotteries help us appreciate market needs internationally. Our global network of people connections is invaluable. We have worldwide learnings we can share with lotteries everywhere. We are at retail; we are digital; we understand lotteries and their players across platforms. IGT has great customers. We're proud to have developed solutions that help them responsibly generate revenue and thrive. I'm excited about what's to come as we continue to develop products, platforms, and services to meet the evolving needs of customers and their players. ■

