

## SuzoHapp-Nanoptix partners

TICKET printing solutions from Nanoptix will be distributed globally by SuzoHapp under a new agreement reached between the two companies.

Nanoptix has over 20 years' experience in the gaming, lottery, kiosk, POS and amusement markets and its PayCheck NextGen printer is to be the main product line for SuzoHapp.

"We are particularly pleased with this new partnership," commented Goran Sovilj, vice president of sales gaming EMEA for SuzoHapp. "Nanoptix is a progressive and innovative manufacturer and represents the future of ticket printing technology. We are happy to provide our customers with the most current technology available in the marketplace and deliver quality and long-term value."

"We were looking for an industry leader with a strong distribution network and outstanding service capability in the global gaming market" said Daniel Vienneau president and CEO of Nanoptix. "We believe that SuzoHapp is the ideal partner for us."



## Atari returns

THE Atari name and logo returned to a coin-op exhibition for the first time in many years at the IAAPA show.

The company, which has always survived since those heady days of Pong, but in a much reduced format, mostly working on software games, has forged a relationship with major Chinese supplier UNIS.

An Atari stand formed part of the overall UNIS display on the IAAPA floor and was thronged by intrigued operators who found a new version of Pong, not unsurprisingly, on display. Most observers felt that the cocktail table design of the game would lend itself mainly to the consumer market.

The newly-resurrected Pong is a two-player physical version, using an all-electronic powered table in which pucks are batted from side to side in a high-speed competition.



Pong in its new format



## An essential bridge to cashless

TITO will help to provide a bridge to card payment on machines, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

**TICKET-IN, ticket-out technology has been a growing feature of our industry in recent years.**

It is a natural response to the decline of cash and a necessary one, while regulators refrain from allowing cards to be used directly on machines. Since Euromat started to make the case for regulators to allow debit cards to be used directly in machines, many in the industry have asked me what that means for TITO.

While I believe that card payment on machines has to happen, I'm also realistic that this will take time. This is not just about regulatory change but

## Challenges ahead for new Camelot CEO Railton

CAMELOT UK Lotteries has appointed Nigel Railton as permanent CEO, spearheading a drive to return the UK National Lottery to growth.

Camelot reported total National Lottery ticket sales of £3.28bn for the first half of the 2017/18 financial year, a year-on-year drop of 3.2 per cent. During the period, the lottery returned £746.6m to good causes, 4.7 per cent lower than the corresponding period in 2016.

"I am delighted to see Nigel appointed as the CEO of Camelot UK," said Jo Taylor, chairman of Camelot. "He has a wealth of experience, a proven track record and is passionate about the role that The National Lottery plays in society."

"Under Nigel's leadership, the new executive team at Camelot has recently concluded a thorough strategic review and designed a clear plan to put the business on a path to responsible and sustainable growth."

Railton added: "It's a privilege to have been given the opportunity to run Camelot's UK business."

"Coming off the back of last year's disappointing sales performance - and in the face of the very real threat posed by intensifying competition from the wider gambling sector, which benefits from significant taxation advantages, and continuing doubts over the economy - I don't underestimate the challenge ahead of us. It is going to take some time to turn things around."

Subject to regulatory approval, Camelot's plan to return UK National Lottery to growth is based on four main principles: improving its range of games, investing to enhance its retail offering, upgrading its digital capabilities and reinvigorating the National Lottery brand.

## William Hill enjoys growth

UK betting and gaming giant William Hill enjoyed continuous growth in 2017, according to its latest set of figures.

The year to date results revealed that online net revenue was up six per cent and gaming net revenue up by 14 per cent. This was despite there not being a major football tournament in Europe as there was in 2016.

Retail net revenue came in three per cent up on the back of growth in sportsbook and gaming.

Its overseas operations produced mixed results with Australia having an improved gross win margin, despite a five per cent wagering decline. The US reported strong net revenue growth, up 30 per cent in local currencies.

Philip Bowcock, CEO, commented: "Overall, I am encouraged by the huge amount of progress the William Hill team has made this year in improving our customer proposition and delivering on our strategy. We remain on track to deliver on market expectations for 2017."

## COLUMN

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also the technical protocols necessary to enable quick payback of winnings on to cards, something that will be essential to make it usable for players. This is possible but needs cooperation between manufacturers, operators and the banking sector, a dialogue that Euromat has already started. In the meantime, TITO will bridge the gap and mitigate the risk of irrelevance that the decline in cash poses for us.

TITO is an essential bridge to a cashless future. Ultimately we need to get to the other side, but in the meantime the bridge is much needed to keep us relevant to customers.

## Eurocoin's 11th office opens

A NEW Greek E-Service office has been opened by Eurocoin, bringing the total number of the company's offices to 11.

The office is in Athens and will include technical service and support for the company, which is a major distribution and service business, specialising in machine operations. "We know customers are under pressure to reduce production lead times and machine down times and we are resourced to support them," said sales and marketing director Colin Veitch. "For that we need a professional team across Europe who know the regional markets and can provide expert back-up."

The biggest market for Eurocoin is Hungary, where it has had a presence since 1993 and forms its main production and logistics centre. Veitch said that the company had other regional opportunities under review.

## Kossway applauds Playdium

PLAYDIUM, the jukebox launched by TouchTunes in the UK last year, has had a positive impact on the fortunes of the country's members' clubs according to the operator, Kossway.

Rob Hill at Kossway believes the Playdium has raised the bar in terms of both the role of pay-to-play music within members' clubs and the impact it is having on cash box income. He said the operation has replaced its older jukeboxes in a number of its sites with the new model.

Commenting on the feedback, James Luck, commercial director at Soundnet, which markets TouchTunes, said: "As everyone in the industry will agree, the only measure of success that really matters is the cashbox and I'm delighted to confirm that the uplifts reported by Rob are being experienced by clubs, pubs and other entertainment venues where the Playdium is sited throughout the country."

Playdium delivers a smarter music experience by learning from the music being selected in a venue and then refining the user offer and experience over time to better match what customers want to hear.



James Luck, commercial director at Soundnet



The team from Merkur Gaming at the first in-house exhibition in Zagreb

## Merkur hosts Balkan operators

AN in-house show for operators was held by Merkur Gaming at the Hotel International Zagreb, Croatia, in December – the first time such an endeavour has been undertaken by the big company.

It sent out invitations to operators in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Montenegro and was delighted at the response. It also hosted a meeting of the Croatian trade association, HUPIS.

Merkur was joined for the presentation by other industry suppliers, AGT Plus with its casino management and jackpot systems and electronic roulette, EEP Casino with the Xlivebet terminal, Ensico with a casino management system and MGR with casino furniture.

Igor Budinlic, sales manager for Croatia, said that the company had not expected such a positive response and operators were keen to see the Avantgarde Trio and Evostar series of cabinets plus all the new software available.

## Paradise mini-golf acquired

THE Brighton Pier Group has spent £10.5m on acquiring the Paradise Island Adventure Golf chain of indoor mini-golf sites.

There are six locations in the group, all in the UK, in Glasgow, Livingston, Manchester, Sheffield, Cheshire Oaks and Derby and the venues are all in high-footfall retail and leisure centres.

The purchase has been funded through existing bank facilities and by raising £3m through a sale of new shares.

The purchasers own Brighton Pier, which is the fifth most visited tourist destination in the UK, with 4.6 million visitors in 2015. It is 1,722ft long, juts out into the English Channel and is the longest pier in the country.

## COLUMN

# A little knowledge goes a long way

It's Monte Carlo for the 2018 Euromat Gaming Summit, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

### I BELIEVE that in our industry a little bit of knowledge goes a long way.

Sometimes we're so focused on our own national markets that we lose sight of the bigger picture. Since I became Euromat president, I've realised that market or regulatory developments in one country are often the start of a chain reaction that triggers similar developments elsewhere.

As an operator I really value the ability to look across Europe and understand the trends that will quickly become a reality for my business. It is why I think that the Euromat Summit is such a valuable proposition: an international forum that is dedicated to low stakes gaming and amusement operators and manufacturers. This year, I'm proud that we'll be taking the Euromat summit to the spiritual home of leisure and entertainment - Monte Carlo.



We are extending the programme to accommodate a half-day on social responsibility, as I feel this issue bonds all of us no matter where we distribute or operate. We will also be talking about electronic payment, get a chance to hear from the regulators and gain some insight from industry leaders about the future and where they expect growth to come from. We'll also be taking a closer look at redemption products and the case for liberalisation of the French market.

Of course, as we're in Monte Carlo, there will be plenty of fun and entertainment for delegates. Networking should be a big part of any industry event and this will be no exception. I hope to see you all in Monte Carlo in June. Go to [www.euromat.org](http://www.euromat.org) for further details and online booking.

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## D&B in profits warning

A WEAKER-than-expected December 2017 has led US chain Dave and Buster's to cut its sales and profit forecasts for fiscal 2017.

Shares in the sports bar and arcade brand fell 17 per cent at one stage following the announcement of a revised forecast.

The company now expects net income somewhere between US\$108m and \$110m, down from the previous forecast of \$110m-\$112m. Revenues will now be in the \$1.138bn-\$1.142bn range, reduced from \$1.148bn-\$1.155bn. The same-store sales estimates are down from 1 to 0.7 per cent compared with the flat rate of up to 0.75 per cent.

Steve King, CEO, said that despite the weak December he expected overall growth. "Our new stores continue to perform well. We will open 14 or 15 new stores in 2018."

## Operators taking VAT hit

EARLY investigations into the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia by InterGame's representatives on their regular tour of the region this year indicated that in many, but not all cases, operators were absorbing the five per cent VAT now being applied to FEC revenues in the two countries.

The other four GCC countries, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman, are all due to begin to impose VAT across virtually all commodities and services in 2019.

In most cases the tax is being applied to the cost of a debit card, but there are variations. One or two companies are taking the hit where players opt for higher payment packages for entry into FECs. One said that if its premium package of AED120 (around €26) is opted for by players then it would waive the five per cent.

## COLUMN

# A serious and social mix

Monte Carlo in June is the place to be for our industry, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

WITH ICE and the EAG both falling at the beginning of the year, I have had plenty of opportunity to speak to many of the operators and manufacturers that make up our membership.

As president of Euromat, it is vital for me to be out and about talking to companies that operate and sell all across Europe and a trade show is a great opportunity to do that.

Repeatedly, I heard from those businesses that they really value an opportunity to connect with their peers Europe-wide in a forum that is dedicated to low stakes gaming. This is why I feel that the Euromat Summit is so valuable and why there is so much excitement in the industry about this year's edition at the Monte-Carlo Bay Hotel from June 4-6. There are a number of reasons why this is merited.

The Euromat Summit is about serious discussion but this year there also will be a more enhanced social programme with a scheduled get together every evening. There is no better place than Monte Carlo in June to relax, socialise and connect with friends in the industry old and new.

Regulation plays a major role in shaping European markets and this year there will be an opportunity to hear from those regulators that take the decisions that impact our business. Regulators organise themselves on a European basis through the Gambling Regulators European Forum and I think Euromat is the natural interlocutor for the GREF. This is reflected in the fact that the chair of the GREF will provide our keynote address and has agreed to participate in a panel with her colleagues from across Europe.

Finally, there is one issue that is common to every operator and



manufacturer in Europe: social responsibility. This is why June 6 will be dedicated to this subject, with panels on pre-commitment, the application of technology to social responsibility, social responsibility in different gaming channels and the realities of problem gambling.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you in June. Registration, programme and negotiated room rates are available on the Euromat website, [www.euromat.org](http://www.euromat.org).

## Vegas events abound for Funovation

COLORADO, US company Funovation has had a busy start to the year, having attended a flurry of Vegas events including Amusement Expo International, the Laser Tag Convention and Foundations Entertainment University.

The company's expo booth focused on the small footprint appeal of its Laser Maze Challenge and RAID attractions that are designed to provide quick throughput and ROI to customers.

The company has almost 350 attractions in locations around the world, with more to be announced soon.

As sponsor of the Foundations event, Funovation was delighted to see a record number of attendees. "We were able to have one-on-one discussions with people in the industry," said Funovation CEO, Ryan Borton. "Our attractions have widespread appeal for venues from laser tag centres to bowling FECs to museums, so the high attendance meant that we were able to speak to venues across all categories."



Funovation CEO Ryan Borton (left) CEO with Nic Hanzelik, sales manager, global at the Amusement Expo

## Sky Zones for Turkey

OVER the next five years, 10 Sky Zone trampoline parks will be opened in Turkey by Middle East operator Al Hokair from Saudi Arabia.

The company has the Sky Zone franchise for several Middle East countries, including Turkey, where the first project will be in Istanbul and will open later this year.

It has opened a string of the parks across Saudi Arabia and is planning other substantial installations in other countries in the region, 10 of which will go into Egypt over the next five years.

## COLUMN

## Making the case for change

Commission's push to develop financial technology is a reminder that we need to move away from cash to stay relevant, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

THE European Commission published its FinTech Action Plan last month.

A regulation on crowd funding was accompanied by a range of initiatives designed to increase understanding of new and emerging technologies.

An EU FinTech Laboratory will bring European and national authorities together with technology companies to examine policy challenges related to new technology and Commission-led workshops will look to increase information sharing on cybersecurity risks related to new technology.

Blockchain will also be the subject of a separate strategy: this is not just limited to cryptocurrency, one application of blockchain that has already made inroads into the online gambling channel, but across the board. With advantages of transparency and security, blockchain is a technology that has multiple applications across many industries, ours included.

While mainstream public policy ponders the impact of technological innovation in the field of financial services and payments, in many markets regulation is still locking us into cash payment to the detriment of players

## Backing down on coinless

UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Phillip Hammond has backtracked sharply on his suggestion of a consultation on whether to scrap the 1p and 2p coins and look at more digital payments.

A furore ensued when charities and amusement arcades said small copper coins were vital to their survival.

Now the UK government has gone to some lengths to reassure the public that it will not pull the coins out of circulation.

It seems that around eight per cent of copper coins ended up in household rubbish, but spare change is vital to some sections of the community. British seaside arcades, for example, have thousands of low-payout machines and novelty games on 1p and 2p play.

## Nickelodeon unveils SlimeZone

NICKELODEON and Imax Corporation have partnered to bring SlimeZone, the network's first multiplayer social virtual reality experience, to Imax VR centres globally.

SlimeZone allows up to six players to step inside the Nickelodeon virtual world, play games, watch cartoons and slime friends. The attraction debuts initially at Imax VR centres in Los Angeles, New York City (US) and Toronto (Canada) and is scheduled to launch at other centres in Shanghai (China), Bangkok (Thailand) and Manchester (UK) soon.

"Our SlimeZone partnership with Imax lets kids and families interact with Nickelodeon properties and characters by bringing them to life in new and innovative ways," said Cyma Zarghami, president, Nickelodeon Group. "This new VR experience will also show the creative community how we are using technology to create unique forms of entertainment for all ages."

SlimeZone is a multiplayer social VR experience that allows families to interact in a Nickelodeon-designed virtual world. After selecting an avatar, users of all ages can slime blast their friends with green slime, play games such as ping pong and basketball, create art projects using glitter streams and colourful paint and watch cartoons.

Non-virtual reality players can participate in spectator mode, by flying a virtual drone from a device to slime players.



as well as operators. I hosted a meeting of leading manufacturers at the ICE show to look at the issue of payment technology. This was a useful exchange on some of the technical challenges that mobile payments or e-wallets could face.

However, once again it was clear that the need for change is compelling, particularly as this will be evolution and not revolution. Cash will remain the mainstay of our business for quite some time, but to remain relevant to players and enhance our ability to protect them, then we need to enable new technology.

The next stop in this debate is the Euromat Summit at the Monte-Carlo Bay Hotel and Resort (June 4 - 6). We have a panel session on alternative payment with manufacturers, operators and payment providers all providing their perspective, as well as a packed room of regulators. This is another opportunity for us to make the case for change and come together as an industry to make it happen.

## Hologate ties up with Warehouse of Games

VR purveyor Hologate has struck a partnership with Dubai-based distributor Warehouse of Games, which will market the company's products in the Middle East.

Company CEO and founder Leif Petersen said:

"Warehouse of Games is one of the biggest distributors in the region with a long history in providing excellence in product and service and because Hologate is the fastest growing virtual reality system and has the largest amount of installations, our partnership is a perfect fit."

"Hologate offers a multiplayer virtual reality attraction that delivers advanced graphic technology in a small footprint. The turnkey system is easy to operate and integrates well with family entertainment centres, cinemas and any other locations."

Petersen continued: "With more than 100 units sold within the last six months and the majority of them already installed, Hologate is the fastest growing VR system in history."

The company's products were shown on Warehouse of Games' stand at the DEAL show in Dubai last month.



## FOBTs in Qutee poll

A NUMBER of UK industry notables have started a poll through the Qutee online community conversations website on the fixed-odds betting terminals debate.

Everyone in the industry is invited to comment by registering with Qutee.com and inserting FOBTs in the search space. They can then leave a comment.

A number of high-ranking industry personnel have already used the medium to comment on the debate that sees slots games on FOBTs being limited to a £2 stake the same as Category C (AWP) machines in high street pubs, but £30 for all other FOBT games including roulette and blackjack.

## COLUMN

## Celebrating charity

Charitable giving is an established part of our industry and we should be doing more to celebrate and encourage it, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

IF there is one phrase that you hear more than any other in our industry it is social responsibility. It underpins so much of what we do, whether you're a manufacturer or an operator, and colours the relationship we have with regulators. I've always been impressed by the fact that social responsibility, for many peers in the industry, rarely stops at player protection.

As a bricks and mortar enterprise we are very much about people. Our relationship with our players is not through an IP address, we know our players as human beings. Our establishments are rooted in local communities, often right in the heart of towns and cities. Through manufacturing and venues, our industry touches many people. This is why there has always been a solid record of philanthropy and charitable giving

## Sound Leisure celebrates 40th

UK jukebox manufacturer Sound Leisure celebrated its 40th anniversary with a six-week pop up store in the heart of Leeds.

The company opened the store on March 7 in collaboration with Leeds City Council and Victoria Gate Shopping Centre, closing it on April 18. The store featured an array of Sound's vinyl, CD and digital jukeboxes, games room related products such as arcade game machines and a series of new products.



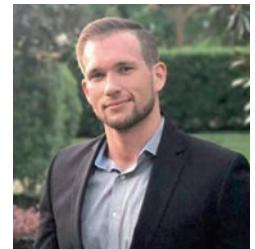
Sound Leisure was formed in Yorkshire in 1978. The family-run company is the only manufacturer of vinyl playing jukeboxes and one of only two classic jukebox producers in the world, it says.

The pop-up store also hosted a variety of events to celebrate the business's 40th anniversary, as well as the Yorkshire manufacturing industry.

"We're delighted to have partnered with Victoria Gate and Leeds City Council to run the pop-up store throughout March and April," said managing director of Sound Leisure, Chris Black. "As a proud Yorkshire manufacturer that is entering its 40th year in business, we're really looking forward to celebrating and showcasing the truly unique products we create right here in Leeds."

## Schneider joins UNIS

UNIS has announced the appointment of Logan Schneider (pictured) to its sales team, who will be working primarily out of the company's Dallas, US, office.



The role will see him splitting sales responsibilities with sales manager Debbie Gonzalez, offering advice and introducing new products in North America.

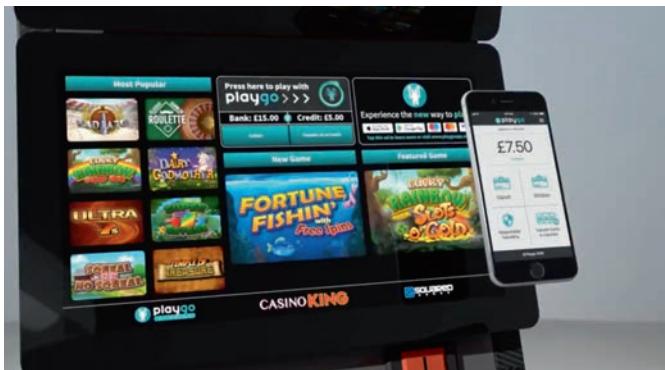
"We are excited that Logan is joining our team at UNIS. He brings a new perspective and new energy to our team," said Gonzalez.



in our industry by large corporates, small companies and individuals. Often, this is completely unrelated to gambling, with money donated to children's charities and other good causes.

I believe this is something special that we should do more to nurture and celebrate. As well as standing up for our interests, in my opinion Euromat should also be recognising those who have played their part in supporting worthy causes. This will help to encourage others to step up and do the same and can only be a good thing.

We will be coming together as an industry in Monte Carlo on June 4-6 for our Euromat Summit. I will use that opportunity to explain how Euromat will be playing a greater role in showcasing this aspect of our industry.



## G-Squared to sponsor Euromat Summit

UK manufacturer G-Squared Games will be a sponsor of the Euromat Summit 2018 (June 4-6) at Monaco's Monte Carlo Bay Hotel.

The company will demonstrate Playgo to the show, which it introduced at EAG in January.

G-Squared director Jonathan Powell is looking forward to his role as a panellist on the event's Alternative Payment Options: Now Or Never? session.

"Alternative payment methods are a key topic for discussion and are of paramount importance to the industry as they will fundamentally change the way players interact with gaming machines," he said.

"The Euromat Summit offers the perfect forum to discuss all the available options and I look forward to many interesting discussions in June."

Euromat president Jason Frost welcomed G-Squared Gaming's participation. "We are delighted that G-Squared Games will be joining the ranks of Summit sponsors," he said. "Their involvement as a manufacturer is particularly gratifying as it endorses our wishes to open up Euromat to the wider amusements and gaming community."

## New Berlin offices for Bally Wulff

BALLY Wulff's recent growth has meant the company has needed to relocate its headquarters in Berlin, Germany, to accommodate its ever-expanding workforce.

After more than 50 years in Maybachufer by the Landwehr River, the company is now based in two modern sites in south Berlin in order to meet the requirements of a modern production and logistics environment.

## Codere hit by downturn

SPANISH gaming giant Codere reported an €800,000 net profit for the first quarter of 2018, compared with the €2.7m for the same period of last year, a fall of 70 per cent, citing the downturn on the impact of currency exchange rates, particularly in Latin America.

This follows a loss of €5.5m in the final quarter of 2017. The group's income reached €383.3m, but was a decrease of 5.4 per cent on the same period of last year, while its holding of gaming machines grew by 2.4 per cent to 56,571, up from the 55,263 in the previous quarter.

Codere operates 148 gambling halls, up from 144, and the number of sports betting positions rose 46.6 per cent to 6,227.

## Lane Master goes pro

UNIVERSAL Space has introduced Lane Master Pro, an updated version of the original game with a single lane instead of two, aimed at the bar market.

The new single-lane video bowling game was designed with the street operator in mind. It has a compact design and can accommodate a coin mechanism or dollar bill acceptors.

The Pro model has the same software as the original and allows up to six players to bowl in a game. Operators also have the option to adjust the game's settings, including the number of frames a player gets per credit.

## COLUMN

# A question of timing

Commission plans to restrict cash payments are on hold but not off the table, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

NEWS that the European Commission is likely to delay a proposal for restrictions on cash payments should not be interpreted as the end of the road for possible action.

A European Commission consultation process last year looked at restrictions, with some suggested thresholds that were worryingly low. Euromat, along with many other associations, contributed to that exercise with the result that, in the short term, the Commission has now kicked a decision into its next term. In the meantime it will focus on building a clearer evidence base.

While this is welcome breathing space for cash, the impetus for action is still very present. Driving this initiative and many others within the European Commission is the security situation in Europe, which is likely to remain fragile for the foreseeable future.

It is also the case that policymaking in the European Commission is generally incremental. Tentative steps can often be mistaken for diffidence but simply reflect political reality. It is certainly the case for this initiative that the timing was not right.

The Commission has effectively stopped producing proposals until after European elections next year but once the political dust has settled it will likely be in a stronger position to move forward legislative projects on which work has already started.

In my view, the industry needs to see this delay as an opportunity to gain the acceptance of regulators for alternative payment methods as an addition to cash. Failure to get on the front foot is likely to be the source of regret later. I intend to make sure that Euromat does everything it can to push this forward.





Singer Lou Bega was the star attraction at the reopening of the Prague location

## Merkur expands in Spain, Czech

A NEW arcade-casino has been opened in Madrid, Spain, by Casino Merkur International, the Gauselmann Group subsidiary.

At the same time the company announced that its venue in Prague, Czech Republic, has been extensively renovated and expanded making it the largest location in the city.

The Spanish holdings of Merkur have until recently consisted of five arcades in Majorca. The Madrid location is the first on the mainland.

In the Czech Republic, the company operates 23 arcades including eight in Prague. The largest in the capital has been expanded from 500sq.m to 1,800sq.m and player positions expanded from 88 to 249. Eleven tables for roulette, blackjack and poker have been added.

## Fall-out from FOBTs

THE aftermath of the UK's decision to reduce the maximum stakes in fixed-odds betting terminals in bookmakers shops from £100 to £2 was almost immediate.

In a report published just days after the new regulations were announced, Global Betting and Gaming Consultants of London outlined the consequences. Its Lorien Pilling wrote that one major high street betting firm had written to staff asking for voluntary redundancies and informed them that over the next 18 months hundreds of shops will close.

"An independent bookmaker told GBGC that his FOBT revenue has been slashed by half in his shops since the announcement. How has this happened in just a few days? Betting shop customers seem to have assumed that the new lower stake came into force on the day it was announced by the DCMS Secretary of State, Matthew Hancock MP."

The problem, said Pilling, is that the minister did not announce an implementation date, so players are already reacting, income for operators is already falling and tax revenues for the Treasury are dropping.

Pilling reported that little of the "missing" money is going over the counter in bets on horse racing and that players no longer regard FOBTs with such a low stake interesting.



## COLUMN

## Euromat ready to step up

The number of regulatory issues that the sector shares across Europe is growing, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

### OUR summit in Monte Carlo in June was a great advert for our industry.

It was also a reminder for me that while our industry is often rightly focused on dealing with national issues, many of these issues are shared challenges across nearly every country where our industry exists. I believe that our industry suffers from fragmentation because regulators work within a very narrow frame of reference and too often we get sucked into that rather than helping them to see the bigger picture. Euromat is ready to step up in this respect.

I was heartened that Marja Appelman's vision for the Gambling Regulators European Forum, as set out in her keynote address to our summit, was to help regulators to work in a more coordinated way.

There are two priorities that we want to put on the agenda of the GREF: the first is alternative payment.

The business and social responsibility case for this is overwhelming. Cash should remain but we need alternative payment systems and we need regulators, preferably from most of the major markets in Europe, to indicate that they will allow us to introduce that within clear parameters.

The second is redemption. It's clear to me that redemption machines are not understood and unfairly categorised as gambling in the absence of that

understanding. Euromat needs to help regulators to demystify the product and set clear boundaries that European regulators can accept.

We will be moving these issues forward in the months ahead and I invite my industry colleagues to get in touch if they feel that they can help.



## Call to bring forward FOBTs reduction

THE pressure to bring forward the changes to the stakes set by the UK government for fixed-odds betting machines is mounting.

Authorities had lowered the maximum stake from £100 to just £2 but planned for it to come into effect by 2020.

A campaign by various interested groups has been launched to get that date brought forward. Now the Local Government Association, an organisation of local authorities representing 370 town halls across England and Wales, has called for the new stake to be brought in from spring 2019. It claims that the delay could mean players losing more than £3bn on the high stakes machines in the interim.

The betting industry needs the time to reorganise its businesses, closing or merging some betting shops, but the LGA has said that the government should resist "unacceptable" betting shop industry pressure to delay the change for the current two years.

An average of £5m per day is being lost on the machines, exacerbating the financial and mental problems that the terminals pose to vulnerable people, it said.

## More cinema growth for MENA

AL-FUTTAIM, the UAE conglomerate, and PVR, the largest film exhibition company in India, have signed an agreement to explore opportunities for jointly developing a cinema business in the MENA region.

The joint venture will introduce a collection of cinema formats to the region, including PVR's Director's Cut, a format that blends high-end hospitality and entertainment.

"We see great potential in the cinema business in the region, and particularly in Saudi Arabia, following the government's decision to reopen the cinema industry," said Marwan Shehadeh, group director, corporate development at Al-Futtaim.

## Gambling study published

THE UK Gambling Commission has released a new report it says can help to measure the potential harm gambling can have on society.

The report comes from Dr Heather Wardle, on behalf of the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board, which provides independent advice to the UK Gambling Commission.

A result of close collaboration between the Gambling Commission, GambleAware as funding body, and RGSB, the report calls for views on how the social cost of gambling-related harms can be measured and better understood.

Mapping out for the first time methodology that could be used to quantify the impact gambling can have on relationships, finances and health, the report seeks to: agree a definition of gambling-related harms that can be used by policy makers and public health officials; explore how the social and economic impact of gambling-related harms can be better understood, measured and monitored; set a framework for action that considers how the impact of harms can be felt by individuals, families and communities; and identify the most effective way to estimate the social cost of gambling-related harms.

"While the majority of consumers can enjoy gambling without experiencing harm, we cannot forget the devastating effects it can have on some individuals, families and communities," said the Gambling Commission's chief executive, Neil McArthur. "This report shows significant progress in understanding those effects and measuring the impacts on wider society and the economy as a whole."



## COLUMN

## Consistent legislation needed

Ireland deserves gambling legislation and the European Commission should ensure that it is delivered, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

### IRELAND'S approach to gambling legislation seems uniquely chaotic.

A decision decades ago to allow local authorities to rescind gaming legislation means that the country has contrasting approaches to gambling - some local authorities offer licences while the majority seem to deny its existence. The Irish experience is a case study in the failures of both the Irish government and the European Commission to achieve sensible legislation that gives businesses predictable and fair rules.

Today, many operators in Ireland pay taxation, employ people and operate businesses that look identical whether they're in a local authority with a licensing regime or not. Many of these are businesses that have operated in the same site for several decades. What I hear from operators and the Irish Amusement Trade Association is that the industry is desperate for consistent legislation in Ireland so that they have some certainty and ability to plan for the future.

Reform has been on the agenda in Ireland for a long time with very little follow up. The government seems unwilling to take on legislation that is unlikely to capture the public imagination, while it deals with other pressing domestic political problems. Politics should be expected to interfere with good policy but it is more surprising that the European Commission has not looked more carefully at the Irish situation, despite pleas from the industry to support their calls for a clear legal framework.

Member states can justify ignoring internal market rules in respect of gambling if they are able to justify that legislation is proportionate and necessary to protect players. It seems unlikely that Ireland's situation of partial regulation and confusion could be justified in this way.



## Vertigo launches VR venture

PREVIOUSLY only developing for the consumer market, Netherlands-based Vertigo Games has launched a new and separate company devoted to location-based VR arcades.

Vertigo Arcades connects VR developers and VR arcades through its VR Arcade Suite, a content launcher for free-roaming VR titles. It also includes an application programming interface for integrating a variety of key arcade features like tracking systems, peripherals, spectator and mixed reality functionality in both location-based VR and core VR titles.

At time of launch, Vertigo Arcades' titles account for approximately 20 per cent of all VR arcade minutes played in western markets.



## New gambling bill for South Africa

A 'NOTICE of intention' to introduce the National Gambling Amendment Bill in South Africa, has been issued by the Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies.

The draft bill will change the National Gambling Board to the National Gambling Regulator. It will also transfer the regulation of bets on the national lottery, foreign lotteries, lottery results and sports pools to the National Lotteries Commission.

At the same time, it will ban dog racing and bets on dog racing and toughen up the regulation of casinos and limited payout machines and bingo.

Other changes will see greater black empowerment, recognise self-regulation in horse racing, impose restrictions on gambling advertising, regulate electronic bingo machines and increase the powers of gambling inspectors.



## UK debut for Great Lego Race

IMMOTION Group, the UK-based immersive virtual reality out-of-home entertainment business, has partnered with the Merlin Entertainments-owned Legoland Discovery Centre Manchester to install a VR attraction: The Great Lego Race.

The company has provided the multi-sensory VR experience pod and content for The Great Lego Race, the second of its kind in the world, following the one at Legoland Discovery Centre Boston, US.

The exclusive 360-degree attraction, designed for guests six-years-old and above, combines sight, sound and motion and sees racers entering a virtual world for two and half minutes, venturing across rocky mountains, rolling rivers and hot lava.

"Legoland Discovery Centre in Manchester is part of a massively popular worldwide brand and we are excited about delivering this specially created VR experience in the UK, after successfully launching it with them in the US," said Martin Higginson, executive chairman of Immotion. "It demonstrates the kind of high-quality bespoke VR experiences we can develop on behalf of our partners."

## COLUMN

## Net regulation needed

The next European Commission should look again at the case for EU-wide regulation of online gambling, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

### WE'RE now less than a year out from European elections.

With populist parties continuing to make inroads in national elections across the EU, there is justifiable concern that the next European Parliament is likely to see a larger contingent of extreme parties of both left and right. Growing populism is bad for business generally, with politicians from the extremes of the political spectrum far more likely to champion simplistic policy solutions and prone to confrontation rather than consensus.

However, I think the next mandate for the European institutions will present our industry with opportunities as well as risks. This Commission has shown little or no interest in gambling. It has chosen not to pursue infringement proceedings affecting the sector, preferring to let member states take the lead on gambling rather than stepping on their toes. While politically this may make sense, from a business and player perspective it doesn't.

While some issues may sensibly be dealt with at national level, there are some basic aspects of regulation that should be consistent across every EU member state. This is certainly the case when it comes to the regulation of online gambling.

The internet knows no borders, so it seems crazy to attempt to regulate the online channel on a national basis. As I look around Europe today, there is substantial variation in the approach to the regulation of online gambling; some countries opt for prohibition, some keep it in a grey area and others

choose to regulate with different conditions and taxation applied. It seems to me that this is an area where the EU can and should add value.

Regulating any online service requires a concerted and coordinated approach from governments to be in any way effective because of the cross-border nature of the internet. Gambling should not be an exception to this rule.



## ITL plans for G2E

**INNOVATIVE** Technology, the money handling specialist, will go to G2E this year at a time of rapid expansion in North America for the company.

ITL has expanded its US team and invested in a new extended booth at the show (October 9-11 in Las Vegas).

The portfolio of product at the show will be headed by the NV200 Spectral and Live Ticket TITO solution, two of the latest innovations from the company. NV200 is an advanced bill acceptor with spectral sensors to give complete bill image capture in order to efficiently identify bills. It has an over 99 per cent first-time acceptance of new and street grade bills.

"As well as showcasing our spectral technology, we will also have our US TITO solution (Live Ticket) on the booth for visitors to demo," said Rebecca White, VP of sales and business development. "Our low-cost TITO offering maximises revenue and increases total play time while eliminating fraudulent tickets. Live Ticket uses the NV12 with a MicroHub and Android desktop TITO redemption terminal. The NV12 combines a compact validator and ticket printer to reduce operational and cash handling costs by increasing machine play time and speeding up customer payouts. Operators can scan, print and read barcoded tickets using our US TITO solution and we have seen a lot of success and increased revenue straight from the initial trial stage in Wisconsin."



9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018  
Stand No. 3635



## Demonic Descension for Aintree

A SCARE attraction is returning to Aintree, UK, following a successful 2017 event.

Demonic Descension will see guests navigate their way through a maze containing 16 horror-themed rooms and will include a live séance with a real Ouija board.

Last year's Chamber of Terror event was nominated by review website ScareTOUR for Best New UK Scare Attraction 2017.

The operator, Contained Liverpool, has completely revamped last year's Chamber of Terror event, with brand new scenes, characters and five extra rooms that will offer escape room puzzles.

## Spanish show dates change

THE major Spanish amusement machine exhibition has changed its 2019 dates.

The 23rd Feria Internacional del Juego will now be held from April 9-10 at Hall 3 in the IFEMA exhibition grounds on the outskirts of Madrid, its organisers, a consortium of associations, ASEFAM, CEJUEGO, Convergent Club and Random Group, said.

The show, formerly the FER, was originally set for March 26-28. The latest date wchange is given as "operational reasons" by the venue.

## COLUMN

# Tightening the net

Developments in Scandinavia are a reminder that EU-wide online regulation is the only way to ensure enforceable online rules, writes Euromat president

**Jason Frost**

I WAS intrigued recently to read the results of an industry funded report from Norway that showed that unregulated foreign operators have the majority of an online gambling market that is currently subject to a state monopoly.



In neighbouring Sweden, new legislation due to take effect on January 1 next year includes tough new social responsibility legislation for licensees but few powers for the regulator to enforce rules or block the websites of those companies that don't comply.

These are obvious examples of the limitations of national legislation to deal with an online gambling offer that is unavoidably international in nature. For governments to ignore that fact has negative consequences for responsible industry players both offline and online, and, critically, players themselves.

Increasingly, governments are collaborating on a global level to manage other internet-born businesses because they accept that this is the only way to design rules that are likely to be effective. For gambling to continue to be the exception rather than the rule is simply not sustainable and it is time for an honest discussion between governments about how they can do better.

At Euromat's Summit this year, I was heartened to hear the then chairman-elect of GREF acknowledge that some degree of alignment on online regulation should at least informally be established between European countries.

Personally, I think Europe needs to think bigger if it wants to protect players and encourage responsible industry operators.

## Arcades to get Street Fighter V

YOU would think that a video game with the words "Arcade Edition" in the title would have been initially released as a coin-op title - but Capcom has done the opposite.

Originally available for the Playstation 4 and PC in February 2016, Street Fighter V then got an update in the shape of the Arcade Edition in January this year, with improvements to the user interface and content.

For its real arcade debut, however, Capcom has worked with fellow Japanese game developer Square Enix, which was announced during a recent esports tournament, the Japan Premier Top 8, part of the Capcom Pro Tour 2018.

The arcade version will include all the characters available in the consumer versions and features a redesigned arcade cabinet with USB support, so players can either use the default joystick and button set-up, or plug in their own.

There is no word as yet on a release date, but the game was on test in various Japanese locations throughout October.



## Free-roam zombie VR coming to UK

THE world's first free-roaming, multiplayer VR entertainment experience has opened in the UK with social VR gaming company Zero Latency's MeetspaceVR at the Victoria Centre, Nottingham.

The immersive 15 or 30-minute social VR experiences see guests battling zombies in a survival game, intergalactic firefights in space and solving puzzles in alien worlds. Players enter the arena equipped with headsets, headphones, military-style backpacks and a gun (for shooter games) to navigate their full-motion avatars through the virtual worlds set in an 180sq.m esports arena.

Nottingham is set to host Zero Latency's full game product, with experiences planned including Zombie Survival, Outbreak Origins, Singularity and Engineerium.

"It's long been our ambition to launch Zero Latency in the top tech hub of Europe and we can't wait to share with Brits the UK's first free-roam, multiplayer VR entertainment experience," John Lilley, chief experience officer at Zero Latency, said.

Zero Latency was founded in 2014 and offers large-scale free-roam VR in 19 venues in 10 countries.



## Gravity receives investment boost

UK trampoline park operator Gravity has raised £3m with the intention of diversifying into new areas of the leisure market.

The funds were raised from Guinness Asset Management, which also completed a £5m investment in Gravity last April.

The investment will not only fund adding further attractions to existing trampoline parks but will supplement the company's franchise and partnership programme, which has already seen work begin on a 10-park franchise deal in Saudi Arabia. Further expansion is planned for the UAE, India and Europe.

## COLUMN

## A sensible approach needed

Money laundering is back on the agenda at European level, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

THE President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, gave his final State of the Union address in September.

Buried within this lengthy set piece speech was the announcement of a fresh push on money laundering. Europe is worried that its banking sector is earning an international reputation for the wrong reasons.

A Commission communication published alongside the speech detailed a number of initiatives that are under development. Of particular note to our sector was a reference to a new anti-money laundering regulation, replacing the many directives on the subject. The Commission sees this as a beneficial move that would "have the potential of setting a harmonised, directly applicable Union regulatory anti-money laundering framework."

While there are certainly advantages of having consistent law on money laundering instead of legislation that is full of national nuance, this does come at a risk for our sector. Euromat fought hard to ensure that member states had the option to exempt AWPs from onerous legal compliance on the basis that our sector is low risk.



Unlike a directive, a regulation allows member states no flexibility to adapt the law according to national circumstance. A new regulation will mean that we will have to make our case afresh based on the latest available data and evidence.

However, there are opportunities for us: a regulation is a chance to hardwire the low-risk approach into law Europe-wide. A renewed focus on money laundering from European policymakers is also another reminder for gambling regulators to take alternative payment options for AWPs seriously.

There is no sense in regulators worrying about the risks associated with cash, while locking us in by law to cash-only payment. A new regulation is a chance to make the case for a sensible approach to alternative payment options.

## Play 'N' Learn in Indonesia

BATAM, Indonesia, is the next destination for the Timezone Play 'N' Learn education and fun brand, it has been announced by parent company, The Entertainment and Education Group.

Designed for children aged two to eight, the brand is aimed at teaching children through play. Each venue is designed to maximise fun and enjoyment for the children while injecting learning moments and activities that help to develop new skills and strengthen existing ones.

The opening of the Batam store brings the number of Play 'N' Learn venues to 13 across Asia Pacific, with six more in progress to open within the next three months and another 20 in the pipeline for 2019.

"We create safe and modern spaces where children and parents can enjoy special moments together, from experiences that propel learning, bonding and fun," said Sonaal Chopra, CEO of TEEG.

The newly opened venue shows off key features such as a climbing Skynet, long trampolines, a dedicated party and activity room, an exclusive Toddler Zone for smaller guests, a safe-for-children cassia seeds adventure, custom-made role play cabinets and a big ball pool.

## Call to ban inflatable rides

A CALL for a temporary ban on the use of inflatable rides in the UK has been made by a Member of Parliament after eight children were injured falling from a ride at a fireworks display in Surrey.

Former minister and current Conservative MP for Harlow, Essex, Robert Halfon, is seeking the ban while regulations are updated. Earlier this year a three-year-old girl was killed when an inflatable trampoline took off in high winds.

Halfon referred to 20 injuries from inflatable rides since 2011 and two deaths. He called for a ban "until we know for sure that children are safe and no parent has to ever worry again."

The organiser of the fireworks party said that he had used a professional funfair operator to provide the ride. A spokesman for the British Showmen's Guild said: "This slide has up-to-date test certificates and insurance documents; these have been provided to the police."



## Hologate's new VR partnerships

VIRTUAL reality specialist Hologate introduced new partnerships with popular movie and game brands at IAAPA.

The company has over 150 active locations across Europe, North America, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region, all initiated in the past year. Those locations have already entertained over one million guests. Key to this, said the company, was its distinctive design, compact dimensions and VR multiplayer technology.

Hologate has unveiled a line-up of fresh hardware and new games, including the new in-house properties Zombyte, a photo-realistic sci-fi zombie shooter and Groove Guardians, a rhythm action game with music tracks and full-body gameplay. The company has also announced fresh partnerships with popular AAA brands in gaming and movies to open up the platform for third party content. It has joined up with Sony Pictures VR and Rovio Entertainment Corp to bring Angry Birds Movie 2 into the world of VR next summer.

The war movie *Das Boot* will become a VR game experience on Hologate with the TV series restarting in the next year. It has also partnered with WarGaming, creator of the multiplayer online game World of Tanks, to produce World of Tanks VR on the Hologate platform.

## COLUMN

## The path to consensus

Social responsibility unites the industry Europe-wide but we can learn some important lessons from each other, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

AN important part of my role as president of Euromat is getting out into the different markets to understand the reality of operating and manufacturing across Europe.

Doing this teaches you that ultimately we share a lot as an industry; whether you are operating in Blackpool or Bucharest, the way you think about your business and the regulatory pressures are very similar.

Bucharest was my most recent visit in this capacity and as part of that trip I was asked to attend the signing ceremony for a new social responsibility pledge. Self-regulation is not unique in our industry but I was struck by the fact that the Romanian industry had developed this hand-in-hand with regulators.

Regulators and industry sitting together to make social responsibility more effective sounds obvious but unfortunately is all too rare. Too often the relationship between the two is more about conflict than dialogue but actually it is the latter that really yields results.

Ultimately regulators and the industry want the same thing: happy players that can enjoy their leisure time in a controlled, professional environment. Once you accept that it makes it easier to find consensus.



## Smaaash to develop esports strategy

SMAAASH, the India-based amusement operator and manufacturer, has announced it will develop an esports strategy as it expands internationally.

The company's CEO, Shripal Morakhia, said he was "enthused" with its aggressive efforts in the esports space, which is projected to grow to US\$1.7bn in annual revenues by 2021.

He said: "I strongly believe that our goal to create a fully integrated esports platform, encompassing the development, ownership and management of esports teams at all competitive levels, paired with the strategic integration of social influencers, a specialised content strategy and various contests and scholarships at our planned esports locations, will drive the creation of a significant fan base. We plan to monetise this using internally developed fan engagement initiatives while concurrently establishing the company as a leader within the esports industry."

## Mediamation arrives in Serbia

MEDIAMATION has installed its MX4D theatre into two Cineplexx cinemas in Serbia.

Located in the capital, Belgrade, Cineplexx's second MX4D theatre boasts 100 seats configured into 25 benches.

"Working with Cineplexx on additional theatres only solidifies the great relationship we've formed," said Jeremy Devine, vice president of marketing for MMI.

The third MX4D theatre, featuring 15 four-seat benches, is located in Vojvodina's Novi Sad. "After the great interest generated by our Graz MX4D location, we are proud to have partnered with Mediamation on our two additional theatres," said Cineplexx CEO Christian Langhammer. "As an innovation leader, Cineplexx feels responsible for offering the best film experience to our visitors, providing an ideal destination for unforgettable fun and technological experience."

The seats for both installations feature a full range of motion and effects to enhance Hollywood's latest releases. Moving beyond standard 3D, they utilise MMI's newly patented EFX armrest, which allows for every customer to have a better uniform experience across an entire theatre. Additional atmospheric effects include wind, fog and strobes.

## Stern releases Primus pinball

PRIMUS, an American rock band, is the subject of Stern's latest pinball.

Released in a limited edition of only 100 band-signed units, the game comes equipped with 13 of the band's classic tracks and original artwork.

The graphics were created by renowned illustrator Zombie Yeti and long-time Primus art curator Zoltron, who spent more than 100 hours collaborating on the direction and illustration of the game.

In a statement, the band said a classic pinball playfield was chosen to allow "the visual menagerie to take hold of the player."

Each unit is hand-signed by all three band members and includes a metallic "authenticity" placard individually embossed. All units are outfitted with an upgraded Kenwood sound.



## Monopoly for Bell-Fruit

THE licensed game Monopoly has been approved for Bell-Fruit Games.

The company has a stable of licensed games, including Reel of Fortune and Deal or No Deal for the UK AWP market.

The latest game is Monopoly Streets Ahead, available only from RLMS Sales, the distributor. It is based upon the famous board game.

"The creative team at Bell-Fruit, led by Alistair Harris, is enjoying a phenomenal run of success that will deliver cash box earnings for our single site customers at a key point in the year," said Bell-Fruit sales and marketing director Ian Shreeve.



## COLUMN

## Taking the lead online

The online gambling industry wants the EU to give it regulation and it should happen, writes Euromat president **Jason Frost**

IF an industry thinks that it should be regulated, then it is definitely time to act.

Last month, the European industry body for the online industry made a strong plea to the European Commission to take forward EU legislation of online gambling. This would mean possible rules on information requirements, protection of minors, player registration, player activity, self-exclusion as well as advertising and sponsorship. I think this is long overdue.

Tougher rules are necessary because a failure to act may risk eroding cultural acceptance of gambling generally.

The invention of the smartphone has meant that online gambling is now accessible directly in the players' pocket and spending on advertising and sponsorship means that company brands are becoming ever present, to a degree that is not going unnoticed. This is no longer a talking point just for



regulators; the general public is increasingly uncomfortable with the huge exposure online companies are buying.

In the meantime, there is a huge disparity between online and offline channels in terms of social responsibility requirements and limitations on stakes and prizes, with the former enjoying considerable freedom compared to the latter. This is not sustainable.

If there are to be tougher rules, then it makes sense that these are set at the EU level. We can't expect to regulate an industry that is not limited by national borders without EU regulation. This has been accepted for every other type of online business but seemingly ignored for gambling.

Over the last few years EU member states have been incrementally developing their own legislation and so the time is right for the European Commission to take the lead.