



A Clear Commitment to Drive the Industry Forward

A simplified organizational structure positions IGT to continue to serve the needs of customers, invest in growth opportunities, and accelerate time-to-market with solutions for a post-COVID world. Jay Gendron, IGT Chief Operating Officer Lottery, discusses recent events and looks to the future.



IGT maintains close communication with customers, and this was especially the case as the coronavirus pandemic unfolded. How were lotteries most challenged, and how did IGT partner with them?

Gendron: When this pandemic unfolded, my team and I let our customers know they had our undivided attention to assist them in whatever challenges they were facing. I spoke with the directors of virtually all our lottery customers over the first few weeks to make sure they had everything they needed from IGT – not only locally, but also from corporate resources. Every state faced different challenges. Obviously, everyone's first priority was the health and safety of their employees. And after all the steps were taken to ensure that this was addressed, the priority was to ensure that we minimized any interruption to their business, especially given that lottery beneficiaries are reliant on those proceeds.

Probably the most significant challenge from the lotteries' perspective was the need to close claim centers to prevent people from congregating. There were concerns around the distribution of instant

tickets and making sure the warehouses in different states were able to receive inventory and get it out to the field. In close coordination with our customers, I think we struck the appropriate balance in making sure everyone was safe and maintaining their business operations.

Can you talk about the efforts to support customers' business continuity as the situation developed? The feedback from many customers was that IGT was uniquely able to commit resources to that effort.

Gendron: From the outset, at the direction of IGT's Chief Executive Officer Marco Sala, we created a COVID-19 Task Force consisting of six different working groups, with executive leadership and a universe of about 100 IGT people assigned to it. One of the working groups was specifically focused on ensuring business continuity. In the U.S., IGT has a primary and a backup data center for each of the states where we have facilities management responsibilities. Our team constantly worked through scenarios covering what would happen if any of those

data centers became unavailable because of the pandemic, and made sure we had as many levels of redundancy and backup in place as necessary to maintain our customers' operations.

We also immediately began close collaboration with Charlie McIntyre, President of MUSL at that time, and Gordon Medenica, head of the Mega Millions group, to address any issues that could be a factor in preserving their business operations. We mobilized an industry-wide working group to collaborate with other vendors and specifically with MUSL to ensure we had contingency plans in place to address draw procedure protocols. Through discussions with the leadership of the MUSL Executive Committee, we achieved the temporary ability to enact a workaround for specific areas of concern in the event it ever became necessary, which fortunately it never did.

The collective uncertainty of the pandemic and its potential impact on our customers' good causes created an environment where vendors and lotteries came together and collaborated for the benefit of the

industry at large. We also worked together internally even more closely, whether the issue was sales, technology, government relations, public relations, or health and safety – the circumstances tapped into the depth and breadth of IGT resources to provide a wide array of advice to our customers.

In July, IGT announced a new organizational structure. What has changed, and what do the changes mean?

Gendron: In the five years since the merger between GTECH and IGT, we operated under a geographical structure. The new organization, primarily centered around two business segments – Global Lottery and Global Gaming – creates a stronger, more focused IGT. We have a very clear view in a stand-alone business unit of sales, market and player trends, operations, and so on – what’s working well and what the areas are for improvement. Combined with IGT’s B2C experience and our ability to share knowledge and technology across the organization, this structure will allow us to best serve customers’ changing needs. We can provide greater responsiveness, working with lotteries on what they see as the next step of their evolution, and then take all that information and bring it into our R&D funnel. We’ll use the strength of our balance sheet to fund R&D and ensure that we continue to meet and exceed our customers’ expectations to fulfill player needs and drive the global lottery industry forward.

At the time of the merger in 2015, the management team assured lottery customers that the company would not change its focus and commitment to the lottery business. Since then, the feedback has been positive that we have lived up to our promise. This change only solidifies our commitment to our customers.

How has your role changed within this new structure, and how will that benefit customers?

Gendron: Until now, I’ve principally been focused on our NASPL

customers. My role has changed from managing sales and operations in North America to managing them worldwide, with responsibility for overall customer satisfaction. With the view of the international lottery player and the trends emerging in the rest of the world combined with insights from North American lottery players, we can continue to invest and expand on solutions to deliver the best player experience. Whether it’s leveraging leading practices elsewhere or working with the early adopters of new programs or products, we can feed all of that back into our own R&D plans and product development roadmaps, and share the insights with customers as they develop their own business plans.

Where is IGT focused now to help ensure lotteries’ success going forward?

Gendron: Worldwide, everyone wants a seamless player experience, one touchpoint with the player, whether they’re at retail or online, or at a bar or casino. We are drawing on research and innovations from across the organization to deliver the products, technologies, and games to enhance the player experience.

Improving player convenience and increasing the number of potential touchpoints with consumers remains a priority. IGT is the in-lane leader. We collaborate with more than a dozen customers and enable over 80,000 lanes worldwide. We’re working to help more lotteries reach a large, untapped market of retailers and potential players while also minimizing contact, lines, and cash handling. With ongoing concerns around the pandemic, IGT’s state-of-the-art solutions for cashless and contactless lottery transactions support health and safety and offer consumers the preferred experience they’re using today for other purchases.

Every jurisdiction that can’t currently offer interactive wagering is looking at digital for a variety of good reasons. We continue to advocate for and help customers fast-track digital play. IGT PlayDigital solutions

offer an engaging and responsible player experience, and they serve an important role in making the retail player journey contactless. We can also support lotteries that are restricted from offering full digital play with bridging strategies, such as a convenience app to entertain players and offer ticket checking capabilities, e-Subscriptions, and e-Wallets to claim payments and pay at the retailer. This allows lotteries to establish a digital relationship with players and to better know their habits and behaviors to enable more tailored experiences and communication.

IGT recently launched ACE, Advancing Cultural Education – the company’s sixth global Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) group, which focuses on advancing people of African descent in the industry through professional development and networking. Why have you taken on the role as executive co-sponsor of ACE?

Gendron: Our company has made tremendous progress with Diversity & Inclusion, and I was proud to be asked to be a part of developing this D&I group. The timing of me taking on this role coincides with a global discussion and civil unrest around race and racism. The first thing that I did was listen. Through a series of discussions with ACE and within our global company, I have a better sense of the challenges some of our Black colleagues experienced at IGT and beyond, and that many of us do not truly understand or appreciate. An effective leader needs empathy, and that starts with listening and being willing to engage in difficult discussions about challenging issues. That allows me to be a better mentor, sponsor, and advocate. I strongly believe that D&I is a responsibility of all companies and all employees. It’s not enough to do a few things and say, “Okay, now we’re a diverse and inclusive company.” It’s something that’s an ongoing challenge, and we can all do more, myself included. So, I’m pleased to take on this role and urge other leaders to join one or more of our D&I groups. ●