

The reel value of gamification

Real value will come when you are able to create new gamification experiences without heavy development involvement and using immediate feedback from customers to improve the journey. Over the past decade, marketing teams have become experts at deploying promotions – deposit bonuses, free spins, free bets, best price guarantees and merchandise – to inspire loyalty in customers.

The blizzard of promotions has blown out the cost of acquisition and retention of customers, with operators slogging it out in offers that are largely interchangeable. Point schemes offering bonuses help stickiness, as they do in the airline and retail businesses, but again add to bottom line costs. Tournaments can clearly help by offering a different method of creating stickiness without necessarily needing to spread money everywhere. Instead, we increase the value of the experience to the customer by giving them a sense of achievement.

So what makes a great tournament experience? The gambling part of us will always default to prize money but that reduces the great experience down to just the winners. A clear feeling of progression, challenges that require some thinking or reward patience, can massively enhance a punter's journey and increase the time lingering on a site.

Progression – either through a defined pathway or through the collection of tokens and achievements – allows the creative operator to start weaving a story or narrative specific to their brand, showcasing values and features of their platform.

Local appeal

Introducing themes can offer a great opportunity to localise the brand and increase its relevance to targeted territories, helping the story move from the generic and global branding to a country-by-country opportunity – something that should excite managers everywhere.

While gamification can be glori-

ously ambitious, it can be most effective when in miniature – daily challenges, achievements and competitions to draw customers back on quiet days. The ability to quickly author and publish these daily challenges, we think, is going to be a major opportunity to operators in the quest for differentiation, allowing them to quickly test challenges before scaling them up into major promotions.

How do you measure the effectiveness of a tournament? Certainly, the number of players, increased turnover and a long tail of continued interest are convenient measures. We have observed operators that adopt these kinds of tournaments and achievements see jumps in all of these from their implementations.

Perhaps the harder to measure metrics of increased brand affinity, personal enjoyment and diversified product usage might provide strong indicators of success as well? We believe this balanced scorecard approach will help you shape the right kinds of gamification for your user base in the long term, helping put the punters' engagement at the centre of success.

With the ability to ingest and process vast amounts of data, you can also start to take advantage of the power of AI and machine learning. Imagine being able to accurately segment your customers in real-time, as they move from game to game. Or predicting when a player might lapse. The real power then comes when you can rapidly offer them challenges or missions that keep them interested in your brand.

Does moving towards gamification require retooling everything in your existing product suite? Certainly, you could spend a vast amount of money adapting and extending products, but it's not necessary to start experimenting. Using technology that lets you tap into yours and your suppliers' vast real-time streams of data to drive your gamification experience with low IT effort is probably the simplest way of creating a brand-wide experience – and it will certainly excite your engineers. ●

CompetitionLabs
CPO Julian
Steinwender on how
tournaments and a
gamified experience
can effectively
increase a brand's
relevance



Bio

Julian Steinwender brings over 15 years' hands-on experience at key operators such as Betsson, Betfair and Youwin, having performed every role from product to commercial to operations, with extensive experience in the poker space.