



# EBR Intel

Report 2018

## Sports Betting



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*Introduction*

# Innovative and add value

**O**ne sports betting is a market segment where everyone is continually striving to innovate. The contributors to this *EGR Sports Betting Report* outline the products, platforms and processes they've been working on to bolster their offerings and add value to their partners.

Sportsbook platforms nowadays need to be more flexible than ever, and capable of adapting to fulfil a variety of global regulatory requirements and operator needs to give their clients the best, most straightforward betting experience possible.

Elsewhere in the report contributors discuss their new product launches in 2018 as the need to innovate to stand out remains more important than ever.

We hope this report leaves our readers with a good overview of what 2018 holds for sports betting.

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Featuring: *Kambi*

# Agility and innovation



**Max Meltzer**

◆ Chief commercial officer  
◆ Kambi

Leading Kambi's commercial division, Meltzer is responsible for the formalisation, execution and development of Kambi's commercial strategy focusing on new business growth and customer retention. He joined Kambi in 2016 from the Press Association where he was head of sales and was previously co-founder and director of a successful sports agency.

Max Meltzer, of Kambi, gives his view on how a flexible sportsbook platform is essential in providing US players with a truly engaging sports betting experience

**A**lthough at the time of writing the US Supreme Court has yet to pass judgment on the state of New Jersey's attempt to end the country's near federal ban on sports betting, it's practically impossible to talk to anyone in this industry without the topic of discussion quickly turning to a legal US sports betting market.

The size of the prize understandably has operators and suppliers from across Europe jockeying for position in anticipation of PASPA being ruled unconstitutional. However, as my conversations have illustrated, those looking to make hay in the US have yet to reach a consensus on what form a successful US sports betting product will take, with much of what I hear no more than educated guesswork.

In fact, if you were to ask five sports betting CEOs their view on what's crucial for a US betting product, you'll probably hear five different opinions – that's how divided the market is. And with such a wide range of often conflicting advice available, it must be incredibly difficult for US companies currently scoping out their sportsbook options to make confident decisions.

## Reality check

In reality, no one can be sure of the winning formula in terms of product and UX state-to-state and you shouldn't be told any different. The US is a vast country, and although there are many similarities between states, each one has its own fingerprint – its own set of unique characteristics. What works in New York may not work as well in California, for example. It's a similar situation in neighbouring Mexico, where Kambi provides its multi-channel solution to Televisa's PlayCity brand and its 18 casinos.

State-by-state regulation will also play a major role in the US. Will there be limitations placed on

what market types can be offered or which leagues bets can be accepted on? Will online and mobile be restricted in some states? Will any guise of turnover tax burden in-play? Comparing how a product stacks up against the offshore books is all well and good but it's worth remembering they operate in an unrestricted and unregulated environment.

Bearing this in mind, operators wishing to offer a sportsbook must ensure they remain agile – so not only are they compliant with regulation but also have the ability to innovate, try new approaches and launch new product types. Despite all best efforts, there can be no guarantee initial product launches will work and it may well be a case of trial and error. As such, only those on a sportsbook platform which allows for this flexibility will succeed. Operators simply can't afford to be boxed-in by a restrictive, one-size-fits-all platform.

*Whatever US operators require to gain market leadership, it can be found in the Kambi Sportsbook platform*

The B2C operators or B2B providers placing their time and efforts on a fixed product and bet types as part of their roadmap, rather than focusing on the agility of their front-end and product, as well as their price differentiation capability, are the ones that will truly struggle as and when the US inevitably opens up.

## Providing the answers

In short, it's not a case of trying to sell the 'silver bullet' product to the US market from day one, but rather ensuring operators have the capacity and flexibility they require to develop the best product for their target audience. That's what we are focused on here at Kambi, and we are confident that whatever US operators – indeed operators in any jurisdiction – require to gain market leadership, it can be found in the Kambi Sportsbook platform. It is for this reason I'm happy to write about our capability, whether or not operators choose to work with Kambi or go with their own proprietary technology.





Featuring: *Kambi*

For instance, look at our open APIs. Kambi is unique in empowering operators with the control to take these APIs and build differentiated betting experiences on top of the Kambi platform. One recent example of this is Mr Green, which leveraged our APIs and innovative instant betting tennis product to build a fast and exciting next point betting client. A heritage casino brand, Mr Green used the flexibility of the Kambi platform and strength of our sports product to create a quick-fire experience tailored specifically for its thrill-seeking audience.

This freedom to innovate, coupled with our depth and relevance of sports coverage, provides operators with a powerful opportunity. For example, much like the Mr Green example, through Kambi a US operator will have the ability to offer a dedicated in-play app just for NFL, or an MLB app focused on bet offers for the current innings. The flexibility to create a sports betting product that is as complex or simplified to appeal to a target market is exactly the kind of capability operators need; not precise instructions on what a product or UI should look like just because it works in Nevada or for an offshore company.

Imagine a sportsbook or app that enables sports fans to bet on specials and prop bets as they unfold, such as being able to put your money on whether the Patriots will make first down when 3rd and 8, if the Astros' George Springer will hit or walk when taking the plate, or how many points the Cavaliers' LeBron James will score in the next quarter.

#### **Not built in a day**

These are just a few examples of the exciting and innovative markets Kambi offers today, not ones we'll rush to develop as and when the US market opens up. They are the result of two decades' worth of ex-

perience in trading US sports with highly skilled traders, refined risk management processes, sophisticated algorithms and our steadfast dedication to using only official data sources to ensure accuracy and optimise availability. It's no coincidence we have the most comprehensive coverage of MLB in the market, for example, delivering steady margins, driving revenues and improving retention rates for Kambi and our operators.

And by coupling that trading expertise and unrivalled sports coverage with the flexibility to package and sell these unique betting opportunities in a myriad of ways, operators will have all the ingredients they'll need to appeal to a range of audiences. Many of whom may never have placed a sports bet previously and are therefore unfamiliar with, or even daunted by, the standard long-form sportsbook experience.

So as the jockeying continues, we'll leave the guesswork to others and avoid placing our chips on one number in the hope it comes up. With state regulations yet to be decided, different geographies and demographics likely to favour different products, and the US having a proud history of innovation, Kambi's money is on offering a platform which can perform under all conditions and for all audiences, thereby springboarding our customers to success, whatever their requirements.

Another thing I'd put money on is that given the technological expertise in the US, coupled with its passion for sports and gambling, operators from those shores will in time develop some of the greatest innovations the sports betting industry has seen. Therefore, operating on a platform agile enough to be a catalyst and a foil for new ideas will be crucial for future market leaders. ♦



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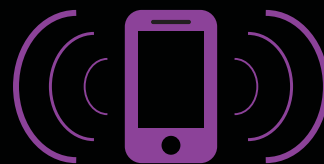
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Featuring: **OPTIMA**

# Sportsbetting in the digital era



**Jacob Lopez Curciel**

◆ CEO  
◆ OPTIMA

Jacob Lopez Curciel is the founder, chairman and CEO of OPTIMA, a B2B software developer of the awarded OptimaMGS™ platform, supplying sports betting and gaming solutions with customers and partners in Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

Jacob Lopez Curciel, CEO of OPTIMA, describes the market-leading power and flexibility of the OptimaMGS™ platform

**G**iven the demand for immediacy in the digital era, mobility, live events and real-time data transfer require powerful, stable and innovative betting and gaming systems to be competitive today, tomorrow, and in the future: real-time control, mobile betting, in-play betting, cloud-based processes and human-AI led risk have taken a big role in recent years in the betting and gambling industry.

Mobile betting channels have grown in importance due to their immediacy and convenience, allowing customers to place bets anytime and anywhere. The latest industry reports suggest that bets placed on mobile are above 70% of all bets placed overall within Europe and the UK/ROI. In Africa, this figure is even higher.

New bettor behaviour and today's variety of different markets mean there are demands on operators to have multichannel strategies available which allow operators to promote, control and engage customers in specific ways depending on the channel they are using. Beyond responsive applications, a multichannel system must offer the functionality to arrange promotions, reporting, analytics and user experience in an easy, flexible yet comprehensive way which takes into consideration the channel the customer is using in every moment.

OptimaMGS™ is a turn-key multichannel platform which includes an optional fully-fledged sports betting integrated solution allowing operators to offer all features across mobile, desktop, retail, call centres, and any channel that could be created in the future. Overall the platform offers a suite of possibilities under only one system, using integrated Optima products as well as hundreds of third-party integrations managed from a central point.

The flexibility of our system allows our customers and partners to easily decide how to shape their business while OPTIMA shapes the platform based on the unique requirements of the operator through bespoke development, ensuring the platform fully adapts and delivers all services the different operators require in different parts of the world.

Our system is fully configurable by the operator, who has full access to every single part of the system and software, along with the 24/7 availability of OPTIMA'S support team to address any questions they may have.

*The flexibility of our system allows our customers and partners to easily decide how to shape their business*

At OPTIMA, trust, transparency and confidentiality is paramount. Our commercial and technological architecture simply facilitates the endeavours of operators who work with us; these operators retain ownership of all the data which is processed or acquired through our platform and retain the maximum degree of operational control.

## **In-play betting and the importance of real-time data transfer**

In-play betting has emerged as one of the most important tools for operators to engage with bettors. Without fast, accurate and real-time data transfer, operators leave themselves exposed to reputational and financial risks.

It is crucial for an operator to have the flexibility and time to market which OPTIMA takes as a guiding principle for its business, supplying a platform that seamlessly processes in real time across all channels.

At OPTIMA, we offer an unparalleled level of performance in all products, from in-play betting to casino gaming, the likes of which no other platform



# \* empowerment

Kambi

\* we deliver it.

With full access to our open APIs, Kambi-powered operators have the unique ability to differentiate and innovate upon our scalable Sportsbook platform, enabling them to tailor their product for specific audiences.

[sales@kambi.com](mailto:sales@kambi.com)

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on the market can achieve. OptimaMGS™ processes all transactions immediately with a baseline of tens of thousands of operations per second in peak time using a medium-size infrastructure that can quickly and flexibly scale out to service the demands of our operators.

We can offer a production up-time of 99.99%, while also offering up to 300 live events simultaneously. All of this comes with just milliseconds of processing time from the feed suppliers all the way through to the hands of the customer; basically there is zero delay, though each customer may at any one time have hundreds of markets and selections constantly being created and settled, prices and statuses being updated and rich stadium or venue data being generated.

These service levels, together with the amount of content being processed and the ability to accept tens of thousands of bets per second with full real-time automated hybrid human-AI led risk management active in the system, is one of the key reasons our partners and customers see an immediate revenue increase when they switch to the OptimaMGS™ platform.

#### **Real-time promotion: the key to standing out**

Real-time promotions are crucial to engage bettors base on their use and activity trends such as churn

prevention or activation campaigns, across all channels and verticals, for OPTIMA and third-party integrated products.

OPTIMA has designed a specific Promotion Management module which allows operators to use the existing ready-to-launch real-time promotions such as registration bonuses, deposit bonuses, money back, and other best-in market promotions. All these features and more such as the embedded anti-bonus-abuse and product features, unlimited segmentation parameters and the use of machine learning and AI algorithms, make the OptimaMGS™ platform promotion system one of the most powerful, not only for the gaming and betting industry, but in general.

The next world cup will be one of the most dependent data sport events in history. At OPTIMA, we love competition, and an event of this caliber could not be given more attention from our side regarding data management and capacity.

The OptimaMGS™ platform is well known for its stability, capacity and performance, bundled with our Advance Analytics and Business Intelligence systems, which are the base to machine learning and AI led customer segmentation and processing. This makes OptimaMGS™ the perfect platform to support all operators' requirements, including those for special events like the football World Cup. ♦



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Featuring: *Betradar*

# Maximising potential, minimising risk



**Nick Soye**

◆ Business development manager  
◆ Betradar

Nick Soye works out of the London office of Betradar as the business development manager for the Managed Trading Services. Harnessing Betradar's own trading and risk technology, this market-leading service is dedicated to supporting betting operators with the day-to-day running of their Sportsbook operation, in a cost-efficient manner. Soye manages the lead generation, preparing commercial outlines and then driving operational delivery, integration and final launch.

Nick Soye, of Betradar, assesses the benefits of Betradar's Managed Trading Services (MTS)

**W**hen it comes to operating sportsbooks, fast, accurate and reliable pre-match and live odds are essential. This is something that Betradar prides itself on, and since the Managed Trading Services were launched back in 2015, pick-up of the offering has grown exponentially.

Running an efficient sportsbook is not just about data. Lowering operating costs and keeping abreast or ahead of the competition, while equipping your trading team with the best in practice tools so they can react to market changes with speed and flexibility are all challenges that bookmakers face on a daily basis.

This is something that Betradar's MTS team has identified and why they are dedicated to providing a 360-degree service offering, which delivers everything required to manage and operate a healthy sportsbook in today's technologically-driven sports betting industry.

Betradar's MTS includes all the benefits of an outsourced sportsbook solution, including real-time monitoring, trading analysis, bet settlement, plus risk, liability and player management as well as the ability to tailor to specific margin and risk parameters and other operational needs.

Betradar's Managed Trading Services remains the only solution available to operators that's based upon the full control of all components necessary to power a modern and highly efficient sportsbook.

From the initial data collection process with Betradar, where we capture 370,000 pre-match events annually and an impressive 25,000 live events every month, through to content solutions, risk management and trading capabilities: what it enables operators to do is benefit from

a full turn-key solution with everything a sportsbook needs under that one roof.

The success of our MTS is undoubtedly reflected in our numbers. From the first bookmaker that we signed at the beginning of 2015, we now have more than 95 active bookmakers using the service.

As a market-leading outsourced solution for operators, it still allows for complete control and flexibility through the Integrated Trading Solution for example, where the trading teams combine to work in parallel. Through the pooled li-

*Betradar's MTS includes all the benefits of an outsourced sportsbook solution, including real-time monitoring, trading analysis, bet settlement, plus risk, liability and player management as well as the ability to tailor to specific margin and risk parameters and other operational needs*

quidity, it ensures that the MTS team have the most comprehensive market overview that allows them to deliver a reliable risk management solution to the marketplace.

There's extensive content provision that's also available to operators, with components such as live match trackers, as well as fan streaming solutions that render MTS a one-shop stop for all sportsbook requirements.

Furthermore, what our clients can also obtain is added insurance from Betradar's Fraud Protection and integrity-based services, which identify erroneous or risky events. This is why we believe MTS is a must-have solution for sportsbook management and delivery, without forgetting the benefits of the surplus trading and guaranteed margin models that we can offer.

Featuring: *Betradar*



We're now dealing with 3.6 million odds updated, on average, every minute and processing more than 30 million bets per month, which include over 150 million selections. The unique and compelling nature of MTS means that we can

deliver high-quality turn-key solutions, incorporating the world's best trading capabilities to provide bookmakers with the most effective sportsbook risk management solution available in today's highly volatile betting market. ♦

Featuring: *Inspired*

# The year ahead



**Steve Rogers**

◆ COO  
◆ Inspired

Steve Rogers is chief commercial officer of Inspired's Digital Games division and has over 15 years of experience in the virtual sports sector. Prior to his current role, Rogers was COO of Red Vision, which was acquired by Inspired in 2006.

Steve Rogers, of Inspired, considers the potential in virtuals, and details Inspired's product launches for 2018

**EGR Intel:** What potential does the virtuals market hold for Inspired and what can we expect to see in the course of the next year?

**Steve Rogers (SR):** Inspired is proud to be leading the industry in virtual sports innovation and investing in the future growth of this expanding market sector. We currently supply virtual sports products through more than 40,000 retail channels and over 100 websites, in approximately 35 gaming jurisdictions worldwide. We have the largest portfolio of products in the industry, with over 30 variations of 13 different sports and four numbers games. These have been developed by a BAFTA award-winning team of graphic designers and sports betting experts using advanced motion capture techniques to create some of the most realistic and innovative products on the market.

In late 2017, Inspired's virtual sports went live online in New Jersey, making it the first and only virtual sports provider in the state, and we're now live with six operators. This was a significant strategic milestone for the business following our first North American virtual sports launch with William Hill Nevada in late 2016. Five of Inspired's award-winning products including Horses, Greyhounds, Soccer, Motor Racing and Speedway are now available for online and mobile distribution in New Jersey, with more (including market-specific) sports expected to become available in 2018.

Indeed, one of our biggest product launches of the year will be 1st Down Virtual (American) Football, which has been specifically developed for the US market. Players will be able to witness the theatre and passion of an all-America Virtual Football play out in under 90 seconds, with new events shown up to every three minutes. The product features new, never-before seen betting opportunities and live commentary on each play. 1st Down is indisputably Inspired's most impressive looking virtu-

als product to date and features ultra-realistic player simulations which have been developed using the latest available animation and motion capture techniques. In developing the product, we carried out extensive consumer research in the US to ensure that the finished article would engage and excite players by delivering a unique, game-changing experience. New Jersey will be one of the first territories to launch this new product, and we're looking forward to seeing the customer reaction.

Following the success of The Virtual Grand National 2017, we developed and launched the Virtual Grand National 2018, again featuring the 40 runners and riders from the most anticipated horse race of the year.

*One of our biggest product launches of the year will be 1st Down Virtual (American) Football*

A new 3.5-minute highlight race enables operators to virtually show the world's most famous horse race whenever they want, each time with a different set of outcomes. Punters are able to bet on new events as frequently as every five minutes and place bets on individual horses as well as specials such as Grouped Runners, providing multiple chances to win from a single bet.

Two variations of the race have been created; the single race event features 40 customisable runners and riders and the 'Race of Champions' version showcases forty of the greatest Grand National competitors from yesteryear competing in the same field. Both races feature the iconic Aintree course and its most famous fences, including Becher's Brook. To add to the user experience and realism of the product, features including falling horses, unseated riders and collapsing fences have been added to the updated race.

Inspired will also be expanding its successful portfolio of Rush GO! products in 2018. These on-demand games combine the excitement of best-in-class virtual sports with casino-style betting





for quick, simple wagering via casino and games tabs. Featuring simple maths, high quality graphical races, and straightforward betting language, the Rush Go! product range has been designed to appeal to a non-sportsbetting audience. Created with the typical casino player in mind and as a companion to roulette, slots and other electronic table games, Rush Go! appeals to those who enjoy betting on their lucky number or having a low cost, easy flutter.

In addition to Rush Horses GO!, Rush Dogs GO!, Rush Cars GO!, Rush Cycling GO!, Rush Speedway GO! and Rush Bingo! are now also available via online games tabs. Inspired recently launched the much anticipated Rush Football GO!, the first virtual football game with 'Cash Out' functionality on all bets placed. Special 'World Cup' variants of Rush Football GO! and Rush Football Live will also launch this year, which will incorporate all the key features from the original products with 16 top international teams featured in the World Cup Russia 2018.

Bet 'N Go will also launch later this year and offers customers a fully hosted, end-to-end, cost-effective and scalable solution which enables players to place bets on Inspired content in land-based casinos, lottery and sports betting locations. Again, this is a product which demonstrates Inspired's commitment to driving innovation in the virtual sports sector, with original solutions designed in response to consumer and customer demands.

Core product ranges will be evolved and updated to include new iterations of enduringly popular football products (Rush Football 2 and Matchday) for the World Cup. Live action presenters will be added to numbers games, the idea being to replicate the success of existing real-money gaming products, again in response to customer demand.

The virtual sports sector is an incredibly exciting arena to be working in right now; as technology advances, so does the scope and innovation of our products and I can't wait to see where we take things next. ♦



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Featuring: *Colossus Bets*

# Racing ahead

David O'Reilly, of Colossus Bets, highlights the firm's new racing product and the reasons for partnering with Britbet

**EGR Intel (EGR):** What significant products are you launching in 2018?

**David O'Reilly (DOR):** The bets which we have ready to deliver fit into three categories. First, we will offer a daily multi-leg win bet which will be based around picking the winner of every race on the day's feature card. On a Saturday we may move it to a cross-card bet to take in the terrestrial TV races. Second, on each card every day we will offer a multi-leg place bet requiring players to pick a horse to be placed in the first six races on the card. Third, we'll offer a number of correct order 'fecta' bets, requiring players to pick the first four or five in order in a select number of races. The Pick 5 correct order bet will regularly provide a £1m+ guarantee and will be offered on a feature Saturday race to begin with, before being extended to midweek festivals and then potentially offered on a daily basis.

These pools will all be provided with the standard Colossus features: significant minimum guaranteed prize pools; leg-by-leg Cash Out and crowdfunded Syndicate tickets. We have spent a lot of time working on the design and presentation of the pools and we think they will provide a properly modernised experience for players.

**EGR:** What are the advantages of partnering with Britbet?

**DOR:** The most obvious advantage is that Britbet is owned by a consortium of nearly all of the UK's racetracks. That means the tracks will have a direct stake in the success of the pools we are offering. The tracks bring with them a large portion of the sport's marketing and media assets, and with attendances at UK racetracks in the region of five million annually, this will provide exposure for our pools to a captive and targeted audience.

Working with Britbet also means that each of us has one fewer competitor from July. We had intended to launch racing pools on the Colossus network in any event but once we started talking to Britbet the synergies in joining forces became clear. Our combined package is also a more compelling proposition for prospective B2B partners than would be the case for a standalone offering from either Colossus or Britbet.

Finally, being associated with a consortium which comprises what is effectively the British racing industry is beneficial to Colossus from a reputational point of view as we grow our network of international B2B partners.

*Colossus is increasingly being asked by our operator partners to provide free-to-play access points to our pools and I expect this to be especially popular for racing given that the sport provides such a variety of year-round content*

**EGR:** How will this product bring innovation to the racing industry?

**DOR:** Pool betting on racing globally is largely afforded monopoly protection. The justification for this is that it provides a key source of funding for the sport, but one consequence is that innovation is generally secondary to maintaining monopoly status. The on-course pools betting experience today is largely the same as it was before the arrival of the internet and all the disruption and innovation that technology has brought to every other form of betting.

In simple terms pool betting, which is so heavily associated with racing, has fallen behind and in its current guise it will soon become of historical interest only. All of this provides us with an opening to innovate and modernise. I believe life-



**David O'Reilly**

◆ *Colossus Bets*

David O'Reilly joined Colossus Bets in 2013 and is responsible for the company's operational and regulatory functions. O'Reilly spent the previous decade with Betfair, initially as part of its in-house legal team and latterly as managing director of Betfair's Gibraltar office



changing guaranteed prizes with the engagement provided by Cash Out and Syndicates will make racing pools relevant to punters who have become accustomed to high quality fixed odds and exchange betting products.

I also expect that the racetracks will take the opportunity which comes with a new pool betting operation to upgrade not only the on-course pools betting experience, but also the presentation and communication of the experience.

**EGR:** Where is the racing side of the betting industry heading?

**DOR:** It is clear that horse racing is a key product for any operator seeking to win or retain market share in the UK. Every UK-facing operator invests in a portfolio of sponsorship within the sport as well as absorbing levy, data and picture costs that do not apply to taking bets on other sports. So racing as a product remains core.

I think free-to-play racing competitions will become an increasingly popular way for operators to acquire and retain customers. Colossus is increasingly being asked by our operator partners to provide free-to-play access points to our pools and I expect this to be especially popular for racing given that the sport provides such a variety of year-

round content. Skybet has led the way here with their Super6 football game and have recently taken on sponsorship of the ITV7 racing competition, but to be blunt I think the format of these games is tired and will not work for operators seeking to replicate what Skybet has done.

In terms of how the Colossus product has evolved, I think the introduction of Colossus

*Being associated with a consortium which comprises what is effectively the British racing industry is beneficial to Colossus from a reputational point of view*

Syndicates last year has been our most important innovation since our launch. Given the expert nature of horseracing analysis I expect this feature to be more compelling on racing than it is (for example) on football. I foresee experts and well-respected pundits establishing a following as Syndicate Captains and our Captains' Leaderboard will maximise transparency and give players a clear form guide as to which Syndicate Captains are worth following. ♦

# The highest revenue-driving solutions in the market



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