

# Charitable Gaming

# THE VIEW



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## 968 – Canadian Gaming News – Mr. Jordan Gnat

In the latest edition of the Canadian Gaming News, you will find a feature article on our former colleague, *Mr. Jordan Gnat*. As you will recall, Jordan was appointed to be *Managing Director (Canada)* for Scientific Games. This can be found on page 16. Please follow the link below.

[http://issuu.com/riccardo11/docs/gb\\_march\\_finallowrez?mode=window&backgroundColor=#222222](http://issuu.com/riccardo11/docs/gb_march_finallowrez?mode=window&backgroundColor=#222222)

Jordan will also be in attendance at the Canadian Gaming Conference next month and will be chairing a panel on 'Loyalty Programs/Player Cards'. It may well be worth checking out and I encourage you to attend this session.

## 969 – Rank Group PLC – Interim Management Statement

On Thursday, the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012, the *Rank Group PLC* issued an Interim Management Statement on the Group's performance. Although the UK trading conditions, as with the majority of Europe in the Retail Leisure Sector, remains very challenging Rank continues to forge forward.

The focus on broadening the appeal of its *Brands* and investing in its businesses is delivering success. There were strong performances in *UK Casino & Rank Interactive Division*, while Bingo generally remains flat on admissions but score on increased customer spend per visit. The encouraging element of the Bingo division has been the re-alignment of *food & beverage offering* that is delivering higher revenue growth. Top Rank *Espana* (Spain), which has had a rather challenging period both in terms of the Spanish economy and recent smoking ban, appears to be stabilizing and there are improvements that our coming through their recent upgrades in the amusement machines. The two Belgian Casino's continue to be affected by the non-smoking ban introduced last summer.

The focus on the *Interactive Division* and interlinking the land-based brands is seeing firm growth. This crossover, especially in Meccabingo.com, is an example reporting a +19% and the grosvenorcasino.com is quickly improving its online position.

However, a large part of Rank's progress in this channel is attributed to the progress we have made in improving their brands **Mobile Channel**. Rank continues to develop mobile gaming products and content. It has released an upgraded bingo application under the Mecca brand which has optimised the ipad and has released 15 new online games across their brand portfolio.

**As an additional note** - It was further reported in the trade press on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2012 that Rank & Gala are back in talks over Gala's Casino Division, which has 24 Casinos throughout the UK. Rank or Gala are yet to formally confirm that these discussions are engaged. If a deal was completed it would make the Rank Group the leading (land-base) Casino Operator in the United Kingdom. On the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2012, it was further reported that the Rank Group PLC and Gala Coral Group Limited have agreed the purchase/sale of the Gala Casino Division for £205m (UK=sterling). This acquisition will make Rank the largest casino Operator in Great Britain.

### 970 – Olympic Games – Getting Ready

With the lighting of the Olympic torch on Thursday, the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012 in Greece, the countdown is now on for the Olympics in July 2012 in the United Kingdom. This is going to be a *Global event* and attract a lot of interest.

I would encourage all Gaming Centre Managers to ensure they have factored this into your promotional plans for this period. I would greatly encourage you to speak with your Suppliers who provide a tremendous amount of promotional knowledge & experience. For your reference we have listed their contact details below.

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### 971 – Bingo The Brand – Defining Our Experience

Some weeks ago we held our first *Defining Our Experience Internal Workshop*. This was focused generally on background and achieving a *common understanding* of an experience by individual members of our internal team. The day ended up with looking at the *consumer touch-points*, how we come into contact with our consumer and the impact we could have at any given point.

This *Internal (CGAO) Team* will be reconvening in the next two weeks in order to carry this initiative forward. It will be facilitated by our external advisor, *Ms. Marian Magrane*, and I am once again going to invite our OLG partners to the session.

I have been given a clear direction by our Chair & Vice Chair (Orser & Johnstone) that the Association must look to bring a heightened awareness of customer engagement to our Members and all the Bingo Centre Managers as we go forward.

### 972 – A Changing Landscape – Seeking The Opportunity

The advent of the OLG document *Modernizing Lottery & Gaming in Ontario* (Strategic Business Review) has set out the changing face & structure of Gaming in this Province. The primary operator of Gaming in the Province, the OLG, will be transformed over the next few years into a modern, efficient agency operating in the best interest of Ontarians.

Currently there are 4 resort casinos, 17 Racetrack (Slot Venues), 6 OLG Casinos (includes the Blue Heron Casino) - in **total 27** operating venues. Naturally, this doesn't include the 6 e-bingo sites or the 10,000 retail sites selling lottery tickets.

There are two key initiatives that are underway, being *Charitable Gaming and Internet Gaming*, but as clearly defined in the OLG document, there is likely to be greater engagement with the Private Sector (regulated) in delivering Lottery & Gaming services.

Therefore, we are likely for the next few years to see changes in site locations and methods of delivery, I raise this in order that we, within the Charitable Gaming Sector, will embrace these changes and look to seek the opportunities within them.

You can be assured that OLG Senior Management Team are well aware of the Charitable Gaming Sector and are engaged in delivering our platform as we have set out under the *Revitalization of Charitable Gaming*. We will continue to ensure this **unique** business platform is highlighted and, may I say, promoted.

I am quite sure that if and when the OLG has further details based on their overall modernization strategy this will be made available to any interested party.

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Information: Resources: Reference

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