



Learning your times tables

UK casino operator, Grosvenor Casinos, is broadening the appeal of tables games with a brand new Games Showcase for its players

A unique table gaming event took place in April in the UK. An exhibition of new and exciting table games from international gaming suppliers was staged not in an exhibition venue, filled with exhibitors and visitors, but live on a casino floor, with customers assessing for themselves and giving their personal feedback throughout an evening of new experiences for both employees and players.

The Grosvenor Casino and G Casino Table Gaming Showcase was held at the G Casino Coventry on April 21, 2011. This first-of-its-kind event was the brainchild of Grosvenor Casinos Table Gaming Project Manager, Ian Shanahan, who devised the event to promote a wider range of table games, in an exhibition-style format, live on the casino floor.

Having created a diverse and dynamic demonstration schedule, the showcase began at 7:30pm and ran until 2am, giving players ample time to sample each of the 30 games from the seven different suppliers represented at the event. The Showcase was comprised of a range of different games, from variations of the traditional poker, blackjack, roulette and dice; to more unusual games not yet found in the UK.

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games is time consuming, costly and hasn't been a major success to date," stated Mr. Shanahan on the floor of the Table Gaming Showcase. "The idea for the Showcase was to present a wide range of different types of games directly to the players, allowing them to simply walk up and play."

The G Casino Coventry invited over 180 customers to the event, in addition to a host of Grosvenor's management team, who were all eager to access the games and the success of the event for themselves. The showcase was targeted at both social and transactional players with hosts playing an important role on the night, explaining the games and gathering feedback from the players. "Feedback is the most important part of the exercise," underlined Mr. Shanahan. "We are looking to reinvigorate certain table games in the casino, while at the same time presenting brand new games that players will have never seen before."

"It's all about keeping the live gaming offer fresh and as dynamic as possible," stated Mr. Shanahan. "The traditional trials process is just too slow. The games that work here at the Showcase will be trialled by the Group and we're looking forward to seeing the reaction of players across our 33 clubs. We currently have three games on trial at the present in seven clubs and we're looking to take the successful games from the Showcase into 60 day trials in the near future."

Supporting the event were casino equipment suppliers and games



"I like the way Ian Shanahan and the team split the feedback between experienced players, novices and Grosvenor managers. We could see that our blackjack variation appealed to the experienced players, while our poker game appealed to new players and management. I think it was opportunity to get to listen to players' responses in a non-pressurised environment and as a result it generated honest feedback.

"I think it's a good way for the operator to narrow the field in regards to making the right games choices" Geoff Hall, Customized Casino Games.

I also think its a good way for the operator to narrow the field in regards to making the right games choice according to player preferences. Overall, the Showcase was a very successful night, with both of our games enjoying good play. The players were happy to give great feedback and we're hoping to move forward with both games as a result and look forward to the next Showcase.

Geoff Hall, Customized Casino Games



designers from around the world. Shuffle Master brought five different games to the event, while TCSJohnHuxley supplied its impressive Double Action Roulette with EL Lumina table layout and synchronised display. ICS-Europe showed its three-dice game, Qillin, with Customised Games Limited, Dice Room Games, Mr Casino Games and Saphirh Games all putting their combined weight behind the Showcase.

Suppliers brought their own tables at their own cost, while the G Casino Coventry staffed and supplied the venue for the event. "Everyone's been very helpful, supportive and professional, from the suppliers to all those at the G Casino Coventry, especially the hosts," enthused Mr. Shanahan. "They've circulated all the questionnaires to the players, asking them about each of the games they've played. We'll take this



information and input everything into a specially designed spreadsheet to drill down into the data. The essence of this event and its reason for being, is that we wanted to ask players what they think is a good game, as opposed to giving them games that we think they'll like."

At the beginning of the evening there was a worry that the event was perhaps catering for too many games, presenting too many options, but as the event progressed it was clear to see which of the games on the floor attracted the most attention. No doubt the feedback forms would determine exactly which games had impressed the most on the night.

"As a first event I'm very pleased with the outcome," stated Mr. Shanahan. "We now plan to host a series of smaller events regionally at different G and Grosvenor Casinos across the UK. Demographically, we realise that players will react to the games differently, and so plan to take a smaller number of games to venues up and down the

"A lot of the regular roulette players have been here all night playing the card games, which has surprised us. They've tested everything and spent hours playing cards. Without this kind of event we could have never anticipated that."

Ian Shanahan,
Grosvenor Casinos.

"The Table Games Showcase at the G Casino in Coventry was certainly a fresh idea from the Grosvenor Casinos. Shuffle Master immediately decided to participate and present a small selection of our great mix of table games. We chose four poker games, all of which were brand new to British casinos: Four Card, High Five, Rabbit Hunter & No Flop Pineapple."

We started the event with Four Card poker, the fastest growing specialty game since Three Card Poker. Four Card poker is already popular in the United States and Canada. It proved a big hit with the players, so much that we had to extend the time allocated to this game to meet the extra demand. Players who visited North American casinos recognised Four Card poker instantly and looked forward to playing it in Britain.

"We received valuable feedback which will in turn influence new game introductions to the UK market." Yaroslav Roshchin, Shuffle Master UK.

All of our games presented on the night had an exciting new twist to them, making them appeal to the players. The event was certainly worth participating for everyone; we received valuable feedback, which will in turn influence new game introductions to the UK market. We did our best to create a fun night for the G Casino customers, some of whom found it difficult to stop playing once they sat down at the table."

Yaroslav Roshchin - Shuffle Master Agent, UK

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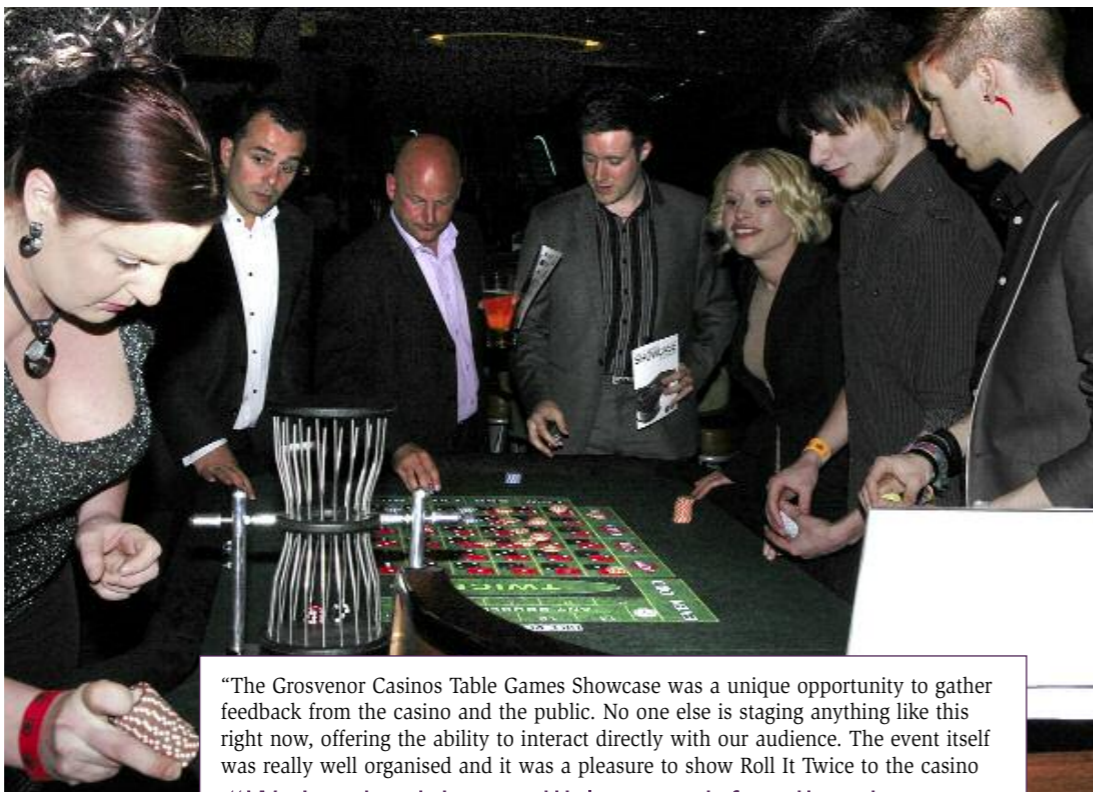
country, with another event already planned before the end of the year.”

The idea for the Showcase was born in February, with exhibitors spending the interim time preparing their games. Some were still at the production stage when Mr. Shanahan invited their creators to participate in the Showcase, with many making their worldwide debut in Coventry. “I’ve had experience of exhibitions in the past and was keen to take the latest games direct to the end customer,” stated Mr. Shanahan. “We believe that there’s a massive gap in the range of games available to UK customers and the spectrum of choice is very narrow in terms of table gaming options. Having invited 180 customers from three of our local casinos, Birmingham, Walsall and of course, Coventry, to this event, the fact that 120 of those invited made the effort to attend is an indicator of the level of interest in table games in this market.”

The end result of all this customer analysis will be a series of focused games trials across Ranks’ casinos in the UK. The relaxation in June of the trials process by the Gaming Commission will have a big impact on the number of table games operators can trial in the UK. An event such as the Showcase means that operators needn’t randomly select games, but can instead back up their choices with player data that shows accurately which games their customers want to play.

During the six and a half hours running time of the event, there were as many Grosvenor employees on the floor in Coventry as customers. General Managers from across the UK all made the trip to study not only the new games, but players’ live interaction with them. It was also important to see the reaction to games that need to make a connection with the players; to engage and enthuse them in the play. Craps has always been a game that needs both the interaction of players and a lively atmosphere to work - which explains its lack of success in the still reserved UK market. However, Grosvenor with its G Casino format is seeking to break down that reserve. The Coventry G Casino has seen Scaletrix races on the gaming floor alongside Ferrari driving simulators, each encouraging players to engage with the fun aspect of gaming and not take everything too seriously.

2-Up is a classic example of a game that would only work in a lively environment, and probably then only on a Friday or Saturday night. However, the game offers a totally new experience for casino players and it’s exactly what Mr.



“Table gaming can be both complicated and intimidating to new players. Introducing new games is an important part of attracting new players to the casino. We try to create an environment with our casinos that is less formal, has greater energy and a real sense of fun.”
Ilan Shanahan,
Grosvenor Casinos.

“The Grosvenor Casinos Table Games Showcase was a unique opportunity to gather feedback from the casino and the public. No one else is staging anything like this right now, offering the ability to interact directly with our audience. The event itself was really well organised and it was a pleasure to show Roll It Twice to the casino

“We’ve had incredibly good feedback. Watching the general public interact with our game was invaluable.” Hayley Bedford, Dice Room Games.

and the guests. We’ve had incredibly good feedback that’s been wholly positive. Watching how the general public interacted with our game, playing with their own money, was invaluable. This is a new perspective, whereby the player isn’t viewing the game from the position of the house, ie. what might be attractive for the casino, but instead judging the game on its playability, its attention-holding ability, and most importantly - they played to find out if they could win.

People have their own agendas at traditional gaming exhibitions, whereas all the public want to do is enjoy themselves... and win. Roll It Twice was busy all night and illustrated to everyone its true potential. We can’t wait for the next Showcase.”
Hayley Bedford - Dice Room Games

“I show-cased seven new games from my portfolio, of these the three most popular games were Roulette Link-Bets, Lucky Draw Baccarat and Hybrid Triple-Bet. I received favourable comments on the other four games.”

“The feedback I received from the dealers was the the games’ procedures were easy to learn and deal.” Stephen Au-Yeung, Mr. Casino Games.

“As a result of the Showcase I am in the process of finalising arrangements regarding the three most popular games. The feedback I received from the dealers was that the games’ procedures were easy to learn and to deal. The principal benefits from the event were: seeing how the players took to the new games; meeting face-to-face with the negotiating team from Grosvenor Casinos, and testing how dealers adapted to the novel concepts of the new games. I enjoyed the event and look forward to the next Table Gaming Showcase.”

Stephen Au-Yeung - Mr.CasinoGames

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"We have taken what players loved from roulette and doubled the action. It was clear just how easily G Casino players took to it." Luke Davis, TCSJH.

We've simply taken what players love from Roulette and doubled the action and it was clear to see at the Table Games Showcase just how easily the G Casino Roulette players took to it. The success of any new table game is ultimately decided by player adoption, so it was wonderful to be involved with such an interactive event hosted by Grosvenor Casinos, that brought together game developers, casino management and more importantly a group of players eager to be the first to try their luck on the best new games."

Luke Davis, TCSJohnHuxley

Shanahan is experimenting with and looking to assess by staging the Showcase. "2-Up was either going to be a great success or an absolute flop," stated Mr. Shanahan, whose enthusiasm for the Australian coin-tossing game is obvious. "It's a short 3-4 hour window of fun on the floor, but the game really impressed and I'm really pleased it performed so well."

Of the 30 games displayed on the night, 19 had never been shown in the UK before, while 10 received their international debut, with many of the games described as still having their cloth wet on the day of the Showcase.

What was interesting, watching player behaviour is that customers circulated around all the games, sampling everything on offer. The poker variants attracted a lot of attention, while regular players left their comfort zones and experimented with new games, spending the evening away from their usual, familiar favourites. "A lot of the players at the Showcase have already indicated to staff which of the games they'd like to continue to play," stated Mr. Shanahan. "A lot of the regular roulette players have been here all night playing the card games, which has surprised us. They've tested everything and spent hours playing cards. Without this kind of event

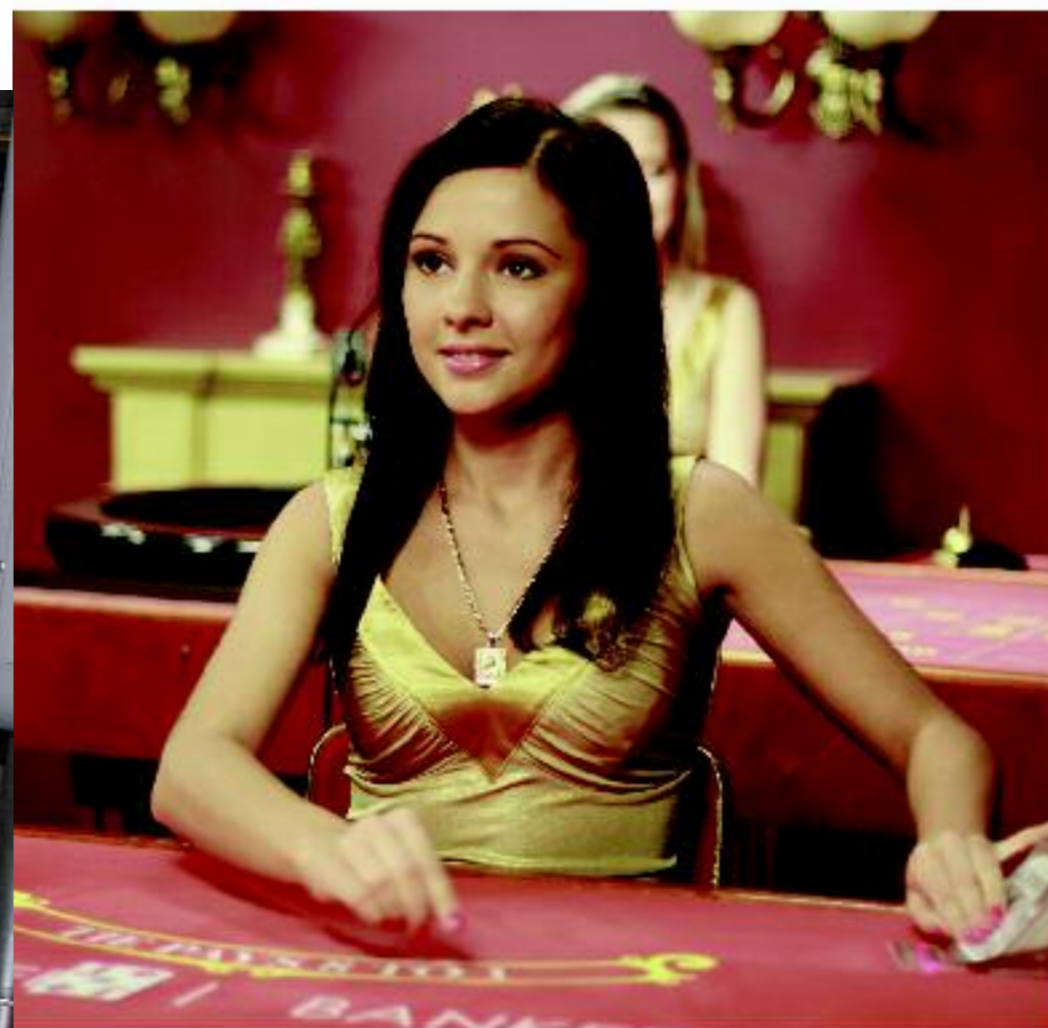
Double Action Roulette is a new game that offers a unique variation on the format of traditional Roulette. Developed by TCSJohnHuxley, Double Action Roulette features two contra rotating number rings on a single wheel, delivering two winning numbers from a single spin. The table consists of two identical betting areas, one for each set of numbers, as well as the Double Action area, which allows players to place side bets on double numbers occurring, with odds of up to 1,200 to 1. Based on the Mark VII Roulette Wheel, the new game requires no specialist dealer training or additional staff to operate.

we could have never anticipated that."

The success of the games will be based upon customer feedback, with each of the forms circulated on the night assessed as to which games attracted the casual player as opposed to the transactional customer. The aim is to introduce table games that will widen the experience for the player, introducing games that offer different variations and inject more fun onto the floor.

"Table gaming can be both complicated and intimidating to new players," stated Mr. Shanahan. "Introducing new games is an important part of attracting new players to the casino. We try to create an environment with our casinos that is less formal, has greater energy and a real sense of fun."

The Table Games Showcase injected not only energy and fun to an evening at the G Casino Coventry, it showed the true appetite for table gaming in the UK market in addition to an acknowledgement by management that they can still learn new tricks. And where casino exhibitions around the world have become dominated by slot games, table games can still surprise, delight and entertainment quite unlike any other form of gaming.



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