



GAMES WITHOUT FRONTIERS

Third-party game development is playing an increasingly important role in shaping the future of the casino games industry. We talk to leading exponents about the future of this industry sector

Third Party Game Developers have been quietly beavering away providing quality 'indie' titles for many years, but as game development costs increase, they're playing a much more important and prominent role in the gaming industry, both off- and online. Speaking to a host of the industry's leading third-party games developers, and a couple of tied games creators too, we wanted to pick the brains of the industry's finest to find out their views about their own sector. Some you'll have heard of, others you will soon.

G3 gathered together Next Gen Gaming's Scott Smith, Betlow's Justin Chamberlain, Ash Gaming's Steve Schrier, Leander Games' Ramiro Atucha, Jaydeep Chakravartty of Cozy Games, Peter Causeley of Lightning Box, Tony Oliver of Mazooma Games and Matt Cole of Blueprint Gaming. We locked them in a room with no food, light or water and forced them to answer questions about the games they create, the partners they work with and the future of the gaming industry in general.



Jaydeep Chakravartty - Cozy Games



Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games

Despite market contractions, stagnation in the player base and further consolidation in the online/land-based development industry, third-party content suppliers are continuing to expand in number and size. What are the reasons behind this growth?

Jaydeep Chakravartty - Cozy Games: "We believe the reason behind this is a clear line of distinction between platform providers and content providers, created due to advanced technology and infrastructure requirements. While a Gaming Platform provider can concentrate on providing advanced features to operators, they rely on third-party content suppliers to provide them with new, innovative and branded products to be plugged and seamlessly be available on these platforms to operators."

Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games: "The presence of Third-party content suppliers is a relatively new phenomenon compared with online/land-based software platforms. The latter, is further ahead in the business life cycle and has experienced consolidation for several years. Currently, new Third-Party content suppliers are entering the market and this industry is experiencing an expansion. However it too will eventually mature and consolidation through mergers,

acquisitions, and closures, will also eventually find its place in this sector. Ultimately the quality suppliers will persevere."

Scott Smith - Next Gen Gaming: "The barriers to entry for an entrepreneurial game designer are very low. We have seen a lot of small groups come and go. Very few have survived the test of time. It's much easier to create that new game than it is to successfully stand out in the crowd of both internally developed and externally developed games on an online casino site."

Steve Schrier - Ash Gaming: "There is constant demand from the industry for new and interesting products. There is also a constant stream of people with a new big idea that think that it will be the 'next poker'. The industry by its nature evolves through innovation and entrepreneurial ideas, which means there will always be more content being developed. Whether all the products work however is a very different thing."

Justin Chamberlain - Betlow: "I think that bringing brand opportunities to market, either land-based or online, is behind the growth of content suppliers. With the continuing growth of global gaming the opportunities to raise brand awareness and derive revenues from a new channel previously not open to brand rights



holders is proving too much too resist. Couple this with the challenges faced by games developers in gaining market share and having USP in the market and it then compounds this growth.”

Matt Cole - Blueprint Gaming: “Online has a longer track record of 3rd party manufacturer independent development,” and in that sector there has over the past years been growth in the number of studios. However, as in any market of this type, acquisition is playing a part. Within land-based, certainly within the UK, the independent developers have struggled in the past couple of years, both in number and size. It’s a more price sensitive market and certainly with the bookmakers, only the best content stays on the terminals.”

Peter Causley - Lightning Box: “I believe the boom in online slots drew a lot of people from the fringes, ranging from low experienced slot designers to even other game developers with zero slot experience.”

Slot design appears to have reached a tipping point where the number of slots is sufficient for player demand. In this case, is there a demand for better quality games, not just more games?

Justin Chamberlain - Betlow: “I would agree entirely and we are in a very exciting time with regards to being able to deliver better quality games to the market. The continuing penetration and access to high speed broadband is opening up new and exciting opportunities to develop and deliver far more engaging and exciting content that was possible even 3 – 4 years ago!”

Steve Schrier - Ash Gaming: “Definitely. I think it is true to say that there are a lot of games out there now, but more than 80 per cent of the revenue is probably going through less than 20 per cent of the games. It has been very easy to throw up games on a website to see what might work but now operators are struggling with the amount of content and the presentation of that content. With the rising acquisition and retention costs of players it is now more important than ever that the player does not have a mediocre experience when they arrive at a games page and select a game. Therefore better product marketing business intelligence and customer journeys are all essential to drive growth. Quantity is definitely not a focus over quality.”

Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games: “I agree with that. As in any economy, when there is abundance of options the customer can choose. Henry Ford used to say

‘Customers can buy our cars in any colour, as long as they want them black.’ This would be unthinkable today in the car industry.

In a similar way, with such a huge array of casinos and slot games, the players are starting to be more demanding in terms of quality. And by quality we refer to innovative mathematic models, functionality, topics, good graphic quality (without reaching the point of bizarre overloaded screens!). The challenge here is - in my opinion - balancing usability while providing the player with a great experience. Once this is achieved, the challenge is targeted content.”

Jaydeep Chakravartty - Cozy Games:

“Slots is still by far one of the most popular games in land-based and online gaming. While it is true that there are already a number of slot games available in the market, the game development industry is working on various new designs to cater to the requirements of players who are constantly demanding something new. Primary changes to these have been introduction of 3D slots, Community Slots and Story based gameplay.”

Peter Causley - Lightning Box: “This can be seen to be evident as to the growing complexity of online games and indeed the increased demand from online operators to seek out “Land-based” style slots.”

Independent or tied? How independent is your studio from the major publishing houses and is that something that you’ll stick to in the future - no matter what the offer?

Scott Smith - Next Gen Gaming: “Our company was founded on the principle of platform agnostic supply. It’s likely we will continue with that model although there is an increasing mix of suppliers partnering with major platforms. The market appears to support competing content and distributor/platform companies working closely together.”

Justin Chamberlain - Betlow: “We firmly believe that independence is a good thing to have as this allows us to react quicker than many of the big publishing houses, differentiate and compete on our own small business terms (less bureaucracy). It also allows us to retain our identity and methodology for developing games content, which hopefully can only be good for the market. That said if the offer was right I am sure we will all go and work ‘for the man!’” (NB: since this interview, Betlow has been acquired by UK’s Core Gaming - Steve Murray in this case being ‘The Man.’ - Ed)

Steve Schrier - Ash Gaming: “We are completely independent from outside influences, but we would say we are a major publishing house for online gaming! However, all our products have customer input alongside our own R&D efforts and this is a continuing process to embrace the most innovation. I don’t see how this would change as our business grows - it gets more important to use the lessons learned in collaboration with those inputs to develop the best games.”

Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games:

“Currently we are absolutely independent. We create our content based on our criteria and then offer it to the publishing houses. Of course, we listen to their thoughts and recommendations. It is difficult to decide today what our position will be in the future once consolidation sets in. However, we will always be open to discuss opportunities for our company and its shareholders.”

Jaydeep Chakravartty - Cozy Games: “We have an in-house game development studio which, once provided with an input from our clients, operates independently to produce quality games. Decisions pertaining to design and development are solely taken by the studio, with constant feedback from the clients (internal and external). While currently we would like to work on this model, with the rapidly changing landscape we might take a different decision in time.”

Peter Causley - Lightning Box: “Lightning Box was at formation and for an initial term 100 per cent exclusive to IGT, but these days is totally independent.. Whilst we value and enjoy our independence and the freedom it allows towards game design, we would be foolish to rule in or rule out future directions we make take.”

Matt Cole - Blueprint Gaming: “As part of the Gauselmann Group, Blueprint, its staff and the partners we work with, get the benefits that come with a group that has the pedigree and experience of Gauselmann, whilst also getting the reactive, creative and personal side that a small business offers. In terms of partnering, we have taken each market as it comes. For example, in the UK LBO sector we have a very successful exclusive relationship with Inspired Gaming, through which we have developed industry leading slots for William Hill, Bet Fred and Paddy Power. Within the more fragmented online market most of our content is distributed broadly via the platforms of Openbet, GTS and G2. However, we have undertaken bespoke projects, particularly where there’s good reason, such as the online-offline crossover we enjoy with William Hill.”



Justin Chamberlain
- Betlow



Peter Causley -
Lightning Box



Matt Cole -
Blueprint Gaming



Scott Smith

NextGen is unique in its ability to offer our partners and clients an end-to-end gaming development service.

"We believe that exclusive content will be a profitable and growth market for us over the coming years as due to saturation of the market operators are being forced have to find ways to differentiate from competitors. Key to this will be developing tailored content for operators that have a regional distinction in game creative and game play."

Justin Chamberlain, Betlow

Game-ography: 300 Shield, Bobby 7's, Joker Jester, Mad Mad Monkey, Maid O Money, Medusa.

Profile: NextGen Gaming is the world's leading independent supplier of innovative games to the gambling industry. NextGen has delivered hundreds of games to our international partners and gained a reputation for delivering the best player experience. We pride ourselves on our ability to deliver exceptional game performance and game longevity that translates into profit for our partners and a great experience for their players.

We partner with On-Line, Land Based Operators and Software providers and our success has been built on the exceptional performance of the games we have delivered to our partners. Founded in 1999, NextGen pioneered platform-independent content delivery. Our vision was a new model of engagement focused on the games and from the very beginning we have built our reputation as an innovator. We push the envelope of innovation to enhance the player experience.

In this emerging era of digital gaming our strong culture of innovation and responsiveness is embedded within our proven management and development processes. This maturity and longevity of business has enabled us to engage in long-term strategic projects with our partners and deliver sustainable value to their businesses. NextGen is unique in its ability to offer our partners and clients an end-to-end gaming development service.

What are your views in regards to creating exclusive content as opposed to providing your games to the marketplace under your own label?

Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games: "We believe that operators are looking for a balance. They need to have the new releases so that no player has to go to another casino looking for a specific game. But they also need to differentiate from the rest. I believe that adding some exclusive content to the mix is the way to go. In our current offering we are trying to be as flexible as possible by including some exclusive titles when combined with larger licensing orders of non exclusive content.

By doing this we are able to provide the operator with our main games, while giving them exclusive elements to differentiate."

Jaydeep Chakravarty - Cozy Games: "Since we have an in-house studio, most of the content available is marketed as own label. We have partnered with companies to provide their content on our platform. Some of these companies have access to branded content and we believe they have a strong following."

Steve Schrier - Ash Gaming: "We don't develop games that are exclusive for anyone. All our games wherever possible are branded as our own and we protect them. Online is a marketplace of its own and the games are developing their own recognition and it is becoming increasingly more important for us to engage directly with those players."

Scott Smith - Next Gen Gaming: "There will always be demand from operators and certain distribution channels for exclusive content. However, the demand for high quality feature rich games has dramatically increased the cost of the development of games. This cost alone prevents many operators from taking exclusive content."

Justin Chamberlain - Betlow: "We believe that exclusive content will be a profitable and growth market for us over the coming years as due to saturation of the market operators are being forced to have to find ways to differentiate from competitors. Key to this will be developing tailored content for operators that have a regional distinction in game creativity and game play."



Name:

NextGen Gaming

Founded:

1999

Website:

www.nextgengaming.com

Location:

Level 5, 189 Miller Street, North Sydney
NSW 2060, Australia

Number of staff:

46

Key staff:

Matt Davey, CEO - Scott Smith, COO

Games:

300 Shields, Mad Mad Monkey

Is there more pressure on third-party developers to create a higher percentage of hit games within their portfolio of releases - what are the economic advantages/disadvantages of being a smaller-scale games developer?

Scott Smith - Next Gen Gaming: "There is always pressure on developers to deliver hit games. Smaller-scale developers can more easily focus on niche game formats and target markets which can provide a useful focus. As with all entertainment industries there will be room for large and smaller scale developers."

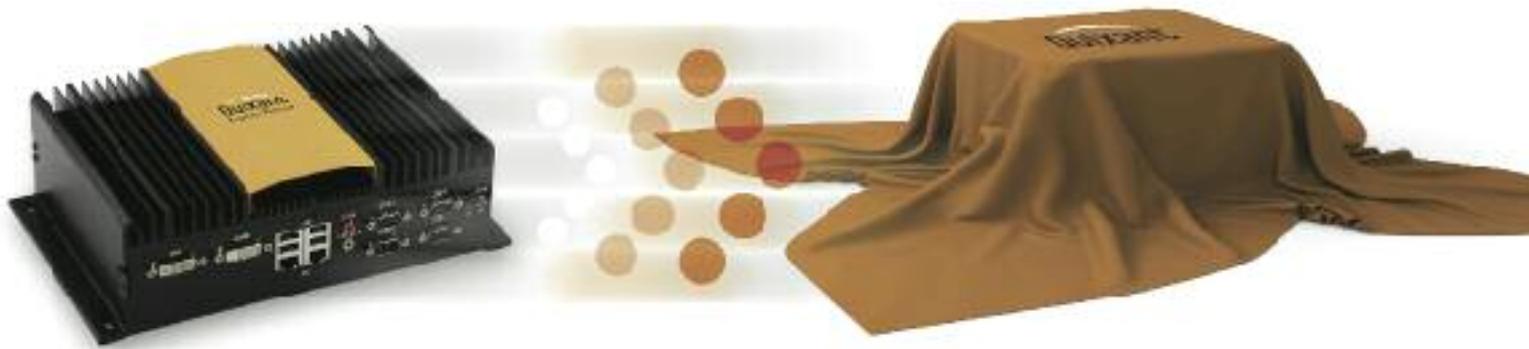
Justin Chamberlain - Betlow: "There is pressure and that pressure can only be addressed by creating and delivery either a) branded content or b) localised and bespoke content for an operator. Being smaller does mean we struggle a little to compete on the brand front, but localised and bespoke content is more about research of a market and listening to a clients requirements of which we are much better positioned to do."

Steve Schrier - Ash Gaming: "It is a pretty tough economic paradox to be honest because no matter how hard you try, you couldn't possibly have a hit all the time."

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Jaydeep Chakravartty

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"The pressure to develop successful games existing regardless of scale.

For the smaller independents the biggest challenge is getting games to market as it's a busy space. At blueprint we weren't early into the online space, but we have proven offline game concepts, invested in relevant brands, and focused on quality over quantity."

Matt Cole, Blueprint Gaming.

Game-ography: Online: Past - Multi-Hall Bingo where you can play up to 20 Bingo halls on one screen. Present - Currently working on a community slots with 'Jacks and Beanstalk' story as the underlying theme. Social: Past - Successful launch of social games on Facebook platform with Big City Bingo and Bingo Farm having over 500,000 regular players. Present - Expanding the boundaries to introduce a mobile social gaming application in partnership with Playphone Social. Mobile: Past - Touch based 5 hand blackjack with optimized resolution features for easy viewing of cards. Present - New version of iPhone bingo with advanced features like in-game chat for web apps

Profile: Founded in 2005, by a team of gaming industry veterans, Cozy Games has emerged as one of the top innovators in the industry today. We bring decades of experience and a global workforce to ensure that our products and services advance your business and meet your budget. We have achieved solution excellence and continue to build on our success. We are continuously evolving our product suite and technological expertise to ensure our operators have the finest products and services possible. Our product suite includes a large selection of bingo games, classic and video slots, table games, scratch cards, network jackpot games, and casino games. Each market has different needs and we make sure that our products are customized to the markets to ensure better returns for our operators. We also have partnered with industry leaders to add branded games to our portfolio. Our product portfolio makes collaboration across platforms seamless. All our popular games are available on the three platforms - Online, Mobile, and Social. Our games and services truly live the phrase - 'Anywhere and Anytime'.

The games are getting much more involved to develop and are taking a lot longer. However, it is much better economically to focus on getting it right and getting a hit and whilst we can't guarantee we will with every single game, we have a very good idea nowadays and consequently a very high percentage of our new games are performing incredibly well."

Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games:

"Absolutely! In the current context operators are getting more and more demanding and are beginning to pick and choose what they consider the best of breed. Right now we couldn't afford to produce a game that is not innovative. While many content providers skin their games in order to expand their portfolio offering, we focus on building games that are innovative with their own identity, creativity and unique math models. I feel that the main advantage of being a smaller scale games developer is that it enables us to keep the ownership and passion levels high. Every member of the team believes he or she is fundamental to the success of the company - because in fact, they are.

As the company grows, the challenge is to maintain that same level of commitment, ownership and passion of each employee."

Jaydeep Chakravartty - Cozy Games: "The pressure arises from the ability of third-party developers to take the risk of working on new offerings, largely economically. While a large scale game developer can spend more time on designing, working on variety of games and create a larger portfolio; a smaller-scale developer would need to focus on a smaller set of specialised offerings to make a mark in the industry."

Peter Causley - Lightning Box: "There is definitely more pressures on third party developers to produce hits. We are often seen as costing more than in-house development, when in reality that is not the case. Where clients pay for 100 per cent of the development of ALL their in-house games, they only outlay for the games they "choose" from us. Therefore, we make many more games than ever get taken up. This increases the quality of our played games just via the Darwinian "natural selection" process, also the fact that we "don't eat" unless our games

COZY GAMES
THE BEST GAME IN TOWN

Name:

Cozy Games

Founded:

2005

Website:

<http://www.cozygames.com/>

Location:

35, Zachary Street,
Valletta, VLT 1132, Malta

Games Past:

Multi Hall Bingo, Big City Bingo

Games Present:

Playphone Social, iPhone Bingo

Games Future:

Jack and the Beanstalk

perform is a strong motivating factor towards stronger game performance. So I would ask, can you afford not to have 3rd party games as part of your portfolio?"

Matt Cole - Blueprint Gaming: "The pressure to develop successful games existing regardless of scale. For the smaller independents the biggest challenge is getting games to market as it's a busy space. At Blueprint we weren't early into the online space, but we have proven offline game concepts, invested in relevant brands, and focused on quality over quantity."

Do you get the same scale of opportunities open to you as the larger developers? Can you offer the same level of licensed product and is it harder or easier to sell your games to the market?

Scott Smith - Next Gen Gaming: "The scale of opportunities is more closely tied to the reputation and profile of the company rather than just size of the business. However, benefits do accrue to larger companies when looking to deliver product into different regulated markets due to the compliance and market specific requirements."



Peter Causley

Our expertise lies in the innovative math models that we create and use to design our games from concept to fruition. Our focus is on 5 reel, high Lineage or Ways slots games as well as overarching progressive systems for such games also.

"The pressure arises from the ability of third-party developers to take the risk of working on new offerings, largely economically. While a large scale game developer can spend more time on designing, working on variety of games and create a larger portfolio; a smaller-scale developer would need to focus on a smaller set of specialised offerings to make a mark in the industry."

Jaydeep Chakravarty, Cozy Games.

Game-ography: Beach Comber, Double Bungah, Stretch Limo, Up Size Me, Heart Of Africa, Radar Riches, Three Pandas, Gumball Goodies, Dunkin' Donkeys, Trolls Treasure, Buck Bonanza, American Pride, Mad Hares, Super Happy Fortune Cat, Dragons Spell, Serengeti Diamonds, Lost Temple, Aztec Sun, Frogs n Flies, Angels Touch, Jackpot Monkey, Cashpot-Regal Dragon, Cashpot-Jungle Reels, Queen of Legends, Bidding Wild, Pyramid Bonanza, Samurai Princess

Profile: Founded in 2004, Lightning Box brought together a number of very experienced gaming professionals (including our contractors) with the vision of providing independent content to the mature land-based gaming market that would greatly enhance the playing experience and increase operator profits. Our skill and success is best demonstrated by the fact that the world's largest provider of slot games signed an exclusive content deal with Lightning Box, for an initial term, giving IGT access to our innovative approach.

While we maintain an excellent relationship with IGT internationally, Lightning Box is now in a non-exclusive partnership and we are currently working with a number of land-based and online clients. Our expertise lies in the innovative math models that we create and use to design our games from concept to fruition. Our focus is on 5 reel, high Lineage or Ways slots games as well as overarching progressive systems for such games also. Our studio is as close to a virtual office as you may see, with collaborations from our graphic & Audio contractors both locally & indeed the US & UK, taking full advantage of the electronic communications age we live in. All math and final prototyping is done in-house to ensure the highest quality of the games is maintained.

Peter Causley - Lightning Box: "Our focus is to develop a relatively small number of quality games each year. We can't offer the large up front commercial deals that have become commonplace to capture licensed brands, but we can offer a swift acting group of talented designers to quickly take advantage of things like the latest market trends - in either Land Based or Online markets."

Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games: "To be honest, we have received a very nice welcome from operators. There will always be a need for new content with innovative features and I feel we've been able to respond to that with new concepts (Latinos) and some interesting functional innovations like our "Reely Series," where we have combined slot games with some other traditional games such as Poker, Roulette and Bingo, among others."

Justin Chamberlain - Betlow: "We definitely don't get the same opportunities as larger scale developers and it is definitely harder to sell to market."

Steve Schrier - Ash Gaming: "In online the platform providers now have a lot of power. If you don't have a good

relationship with them or there is a strategic reason for them not to engage with you then you will have trouble getting your products live anywhere. Proven products in land-based or specific markets may make that easier but we have a large number of products proven in the online space. These are brands recognizable to the online group of players."

Jaydeep Chakravarty - Cozy Games: "Having established substantial customer based over the past 7 years of operation and having good business relationships helps us market the products globally. We are now confident that our offering is on par with the best in the industry and can provide best available services to operators. Being a relatively smaller company has helped us to embrace newer technology thus establishing a niche market for ourselves."

How do you build a brand for yourselves in the marketplace?

Scott Smith - Next Gen Gaming: "Consistent messaging and focus on our core strengths. A successful game is going to get you noticed, continued successes will ensure you are remembered."



Name:

Lightning Box Games Pty Ltd

Founded:

November 2004

Directors:

David Little & Peter Causley

Website:

www.lightningboxgames.com

Location:

Sydney, Australia

Games Past:

Super Happy Fortune Cat

Games Future:

Samurai Princess

Justin Chamberlain - Betlow: "We are building our brand around our reputation to a) deliver solid games to market and b) to offer consistent and trusted 3rd party integration and development services. Providing these services and proving ourselves as a games integration partner is paying dividends in respect our brand and new opportunities."

Steve Schrier - Ash Gaming: "We believe that it's about having the best performing, innovative products that excite players and make them return for more."

Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games: "Initially by "word of mouth" and we will try to be present at all the major events, and use every possible opportunity to present our games and concepts. We have become some kind of 'Leander evangelisers.' Now we are gaining more solid ground by launching our website, print material, more presence at the shows and retaining a PR Agency with offices in London and Gibraltar, to make sure that all the good things that are happening are properly communicated."

Jaydeep Chakravarty - Cozy Games: "Cozy Games comes across as a premier online gaming solution provider in three



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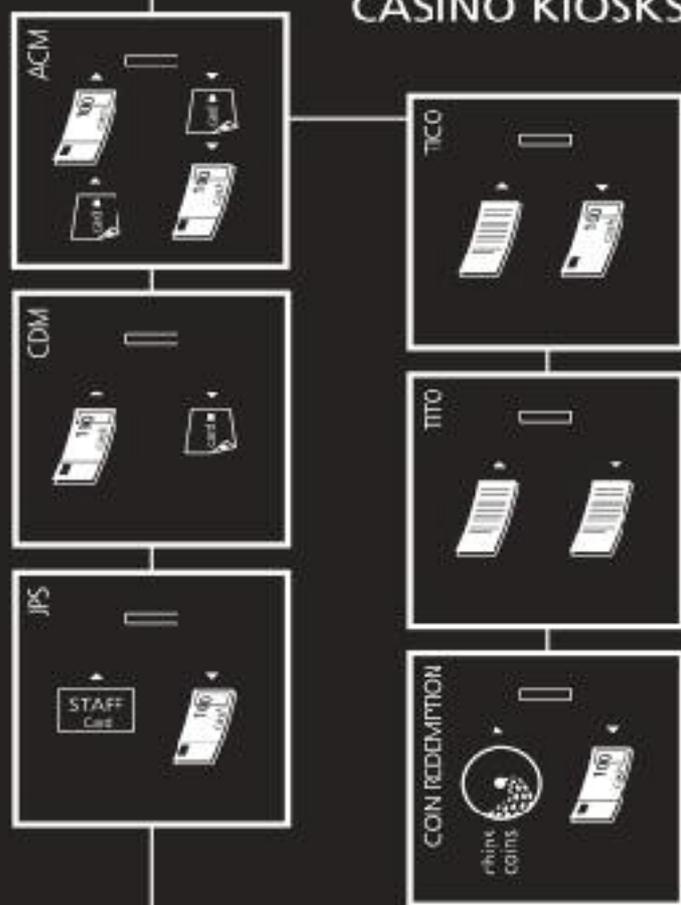
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Ramiro Atucha

Most of Leander's development occurs in one of the nicest areas in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The eighteen people team, work in a large English house that has been recycled and equipped with the latest technology.

Game-ography: 33 Lives, Celebrity Cash, Jean-Wealth, Lucky Shot, Lucky Tango, Magic Building, Magadeth, Pampa Treasures, Rally, Reely Bingo, Reely Poker, Reely Roulette, SeeGold, Snake Slot, Treasures of the Sahara.

Profile: Daniel Schultz, co-founder of Leander Games, has in-depth knowledge of the gaming industry with experience leading Real Time Gaming - one of the most successful platforms within online gaming - and also RTG Asia, based in Singapore. Ramiro Atucha, co-founder and CEO, has a wealth of expertise putting together high end art and technology teams and managing them. Most of Leander's development occurs in one of the nicest areas in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The eighteen people team, work in a large English house that has been recycled and equipped with the latest technology.

The ground floor hosts the development teams -divided into "Server" and "Client", Project Management and Mathematics office, large dining area and kitchen. The first floor hosts the creative area, art studio, meeting room, server room and Management office.

Separated from the main building, large space is being adapted as the "Leander fun room", where a small gym will be built and games will be made available (pool, ping pong, wii, etc). There is also a large garden with a large Argentinean grill where once a week some of the employees show their skills at cooking a traditional Argentinean Asado (grilled meat). Friday's Poker tournament is becoming quite popular within the team, and is usually hosted until late in the Leander Fun Room.



Name:
Leander Games

Founded:
July 2008

Key staff:
Daniel Schultz, Ramiro Atucha

No. Employees:
18

Website:
www.leandergames.com

Location:
Bahamian Company, with production team based in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Current projects:
Reely Poker, Megadeth, Reely Roulette, Snake Slot, Pampa Treasures, SeeGold

Over the last two years those who haven't expanded their portfolio to have a mix of games from different suppliers have been left behind in the market and have seen lower growth rates (or none at all) and an increasing pressures on their marketing budgets to acquire and retain players. That said some have just thrown up a lot of mediocre content which hasn't been presented well and suffered as a result."

Steve Schrier, Ash Gaming.

different mediums: Online, Social and Mobile. We take brand building very seriously and ensure we come across as a partner of repute to our customers. To do this:

- We sponsor/exhibit at most of the major I-Gaming exhibitions across Europe
- We frequently attend speaking sessions at major conferences across globe
- We meet our existing and prospective clients regularly to understand their requirements."

Peter Causley - Lightning Box: "In a very crowded marketplace this is tough. You just need to keep putting out quality product for the players, and over time grow the 'player base' that is attracted to your style of game."

How hungry is the market right now for third-party games? What are the products that are currently in the hottest demand?

Steve Schrier - Ash Gaming: "The online market has changed significantly as it is maturing - just like other industries.

People have realised that it is very difficult for one company to do everything well - particularly with something as important as the gaming content. Over the last two years those who haven't expanded their portfolio to have a mix of games from different suppliers have been left behind in the market and have seen lower growth rates (or none at all) and increasing pressures on their marketing budgets to acquire and retain players. That said some have just thrown up a lot of mediocre content which hasn't been presented well and suffered as a result."

Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games: "I wouldn't use the term 'hungry' to define it since I believe that the operators already have many slot games, and are now at a stage of picking and choosing the best games. In our experience the hottest demand is for innovation, good quality and new topics. With the opening of the Latin American Markets, I believe that our understanding of their culture and our capacity to develop Latino oriented content will continue to be an important asset."

Jaydeep Chakravartty - Cozy Games: "The current times are the best for any third-

party game developer to showcase their offering on various platforms. Consumers are aware of changing trends and demand more from the gaming sector. There is a strong demand for content based on movies and TV shows. Also, games with high interactivity are also getting very popular."

Scott Smith - Next Gen Gaming: "There is no shortage of opportunities to sell games, however, the availability of content is at all time high. Operators are becoming very selective and need to clearly see the value of your game. The market today is very focused on Branded content and as a result a good brand will pretty much ensure a sale. To compete with brands requires a lot of effort to ensure a sufficient level of "WOW" factor to stand out in the crowd. We believe that, just like the land based experience, Brands will be less important in the medium to long term due to the added cost."

Justin Chamberlain - Betlow: "The market still seems to be hungry for branded video slots."



Justin Chamberlain

"The Betlow team are thrilled to be part of what promises to be an exciting and rewarding future within Core Gaming"

Game-ography: Born2Rock, Reel Racers, Temple of Rah, That's Life, Roulamid, Cry Havoc, Knife Thrower, Tank Commander, Find the Bone, Duck Shoot, Scratch Football, Loot Raider, Penalty Shootout, Skeet Shoot, Pirate's Plunder, King's Quest, Hold'Em or Fold'Em, Betball Bingo 75 Ball, Betball Bingo 80 Ball, Dice Winner.

Profile: Betlow Ltd is a UK-based game development studio providing state-of-the-art, highly popular products for the international gaming market. Our products, systems and capabilities are under constant review and improvement giving us a distinct edge in a fast moving, highly technical industry. Betlow is renowned for its willingness to go the extra mile in ensuring that the products of its valued client base get to market smoothly, on time and to the highest possible quality standards.

Our in-house capabilities presently include:

- Game creative conception and design including 3D animation
- Technical design and build to the highest standards.
- Rigorous crash testing and debugging
- Smooth, trouble-free integration to all major platforms

Betlow is rapidly becoming one of the foremost developers in the UK with contract workflow and industry interest growing year on year. Betlow has been acquired by content development organisation, Core Gaming as part of a long-term plan to design and deliver branded and original content to both land-based and online operators from a single operational base offering the best of both worlds in terms of design and experience.



Name:

Betlow (now part of Core Gaming)

Founded:

2008

Website:

www.betlow.co.uk

Location:

1st Floor, 12 Euston Place,
Leamington Spa CV32 4LR

Games Past:

Born2Rock, Cry Havoc

Games Present:

75 and 80 Ball BetBall Bingo

Games Future:

Hold 'Em or Fold 'Em

"Demand is different in different market segments, divided both by delivery platform & geography. Online and to a lesser extent mobile demand is strong in Europe with a growing trend for "Land Based" style games. In the land based markets, clients servicing Nth America including VLT are looking for the cutting edge developments, in the UK/European land markets are wanting US style slots and in Asia Australian style slots are very popular."

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At what point, with all the demands of more complex slots, higher quality games with HD graphics etc., does it become difficult/impossible to invest the time and money into a new generation of games.

Scott Smith - Next Gen Gaming: "The cost of game development is increasing as developers continue to try and "out bling" each other. It can take a long time to return your investment if you pick the wrong partners."

Justin Chamberlain - Betlow: "I think that scenario is about two years away and hopefully by which time we will have sold out."

Steve Schrier - Ash Gaming: "I think the industry is reaching a stage where it is innovate or die. You have to invest in all areas to find out what works. We think a lot of energy gets wasted in this regard though and lot of games and the people behind them lose sight of what is really important to a gambler. It is about getting a mix and understanding that the market is different from other industries. Operators need to be prepared to reward the good content developers in order for them to continue to invest in the latest innovations."

Ramiro Atucha - Leander Games: "Certainly! Better graphics means better illustrators and more time per game. 3D means more resources and more rendering time. I'd still like to point out that more complex and more definition doesn't always mean 'better.' HD and 3D are great tools to create some interesting games, but if they are not used with purpose, then it affects the game usability. If a terrific animation doesn't have a purpose in the game, then I'd rather not have it. As content developers, our challenge is to balance the creative approach by building a balanced game library. I'd rather spend my resources

building a team that affords me with the flexibility to vary the graphic style e.g. 3D, toons, realistic, etc, than lock me up in a unique style."

Jaydeep Chakravarty - Cozy Games: "We understand that with advancing technology and player awareness, they demand better quality games. However there is always a balance between risk and reward. It is advisable to look at the masses of players and their ability to access games for easier and faster gameplay, rather than working on an overly complex advance HD game which takes time to understand and ages to download."

Matt Cole - Blueprint Gaming: "In the past five years the development effort that goes into the top games has certainly increased. It's not just graphics and depth of features, but also functionality such as languages and currencies for online games. As most operators increase their game menus you would think that it's harder to earn a share, but in our experience the move from 10 to 50 games makes a difference, but when you go from 50 to 200 the top 20 games are still the ones doing the money."