



| EDITED BY CHARLES ANDERER & PAUL DOOCEY

ICE Totally Gaming showcased the latest gaming products and technologies from leading international casino suppliers

By any measure, the 2018 version of ICE Totally Gaming certainly lived up to all the hype.

The event, which took place February 6-8 at the ExCeL Exhibition Center in London, bills itself as the world's biggest gaming technology gathering that features world-leading innovators drawn from the casino, betting, bingo, lottery, mobile, online, social, sports betting and street gaming sectors. Although final visitor numbers for 2018 ICE Totally Gaming were unavailable as of press time for this issue of *Casino Journal*, event organizer Clarion Gaming reported they were trending 4 percent above the 2017 attendance of 30,213 people.

The attraction for this crowd was undoubtedly ICE's constantly improving and expanding education program. The ICE VOX program of paid-for content, the free-to-attend ICE Seminars and the Totally Gaming Academy taster courses were well received and well attended, according to a press release. ICE VOX comprised



nine streams, the Totally Gaming Academy provided nine free taster courses with the seminar program covering a broad spectrum of topical issues including a joint initiative with Global Gaming Women on the challenges of creating a diverse workforce within the gambling sector.

An equally important attraction was ICE's tradeshow floor, which featured a record-breaking 589 exhibitors from 65 nations occupying 43,500 square meters of net space and 36 of the 44 halls at ExCeL London. These exhibitors were a who's who of the international gaming industry, and showcased cutting-edge wares for both European and International casino customers. What follows are some of the gaming product highlights, organized alphabetically by company.

ARISTOCRAT TECHNOLOGIES

Focusing on the theme "It's all about what's inside," Aristocrat Technologies offered visitors to its ICE stand a unique

Right: Helix+ cabinet
from Aristocrat
Technologies

commercial edge to celebrate the EMEA release of its new Helix+ cabinet, heralding the arrival of a vast array of new game content for 2018.

Based on the same footprint as the popular Helix cabinet, Helix+ incorporates two 27-inch screens offering 40 percent more visible gaming space over its predecessor. A virtual button deck also comes as standard, adding even more interactivity at players' fingertips, while further enhancements have also been made to its security and serviceability, according to a press release.

"All new orders for Helix+ placed on stand will benefit from an extremely attractive show special deal offering operators additional hardware benefits bundled together with the latest and greatest software content," said Erik-Jan van den Berg, Aristocrat's sales director for EMEA. "Allowing for more choice on gaming floors, much of the new game content in the 2018 portfolio is also compatible with both traditional dual-screen format for Helix/Helix+ and the premium portrait Arc Single platform."

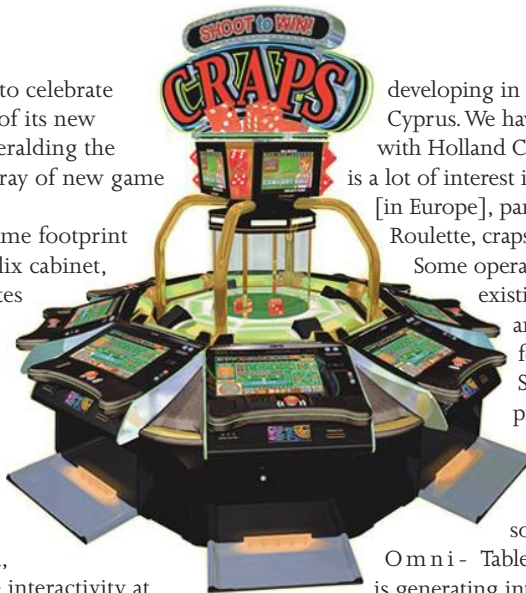
Aristocrat has also ported some of its most popular classic games onto the latest Gen8 Helix/Helix+ platform, featuring original math models and enhanced hi-res graphics and audio. Games on display at ICE included Queen of the Nile, Dolphin Treasure, Pompeii and Choy Sun Doa.

ARUZE GAMING

A major point of emphasis for Aruze Gaming at ICE were electronic table games (ETGs), in particular the Omni-Table, Shoot-to-Win Craps, Lucky Roulette, Lucky Big Wheel and RFID chips.

"There are a lot of fresh ideas coming from our management team and R&D; we're taking advantage of some of the ideas that we've had in the past, commercializing them and taking things to the next level," said David Meacher, director of business development—Europe for Aruze.

He added the European ETG market is very competitive, but "we are slowly growing our footprint here. Our main markets are France, Germany and we're



Aruze's Shoot-to-Win Craps ETG concept

developing in Greece and Cyprus. We have machines with Holland Casino and there is a lot of interest in our products [in Europe], particularly Lucky Roulette, craps and Omni-Table.

Some operators are replacing existing ETGs, some are making room for new products. Some of the products are a little older and people are looking for something new. The

Omni-Table, for instance, is generating interest not just from a gaming perspective but also because of its marketing capabilities and the additional

revenue they can receive from the product."

On the slot machine side, Aruze showcased its Cube-X Innovator Deluxe games which debuted at last fall's G2E. "They're doing very well in the U.S. and we've also got a lot of games going into Europe," said Meacher. "Our Vertical 40 cabinet is doing extremely well with the release of new games. We have a two-year game warranty on video products which everyone is interested in because it gives them a guarantee of not having to change games and running up high expenses very quickly. And the games are performing. The feedback from the market to us is that our video product is holding its own with the competition and in some cases beating them."

GARY PLATT MANUFACTURING

ICE was timed with the announcement by Gary Platt of its first ever permanent office outside of the U.S. Gary Platt Europe will be based in London and headed by General Manager Jon Temple. "Our business is global; we're number one in the U.S., Canada, Australia and soon in the UK, but we were never able to be number one in Europe," said Joshua Corrick, vice president of sales and marketing for Gary Platt. "Jon will be handling production, assembly and sub-assembly here and in Europe as well. We think that will be the key to European growth."

"The response from the customers here at the show has been all about having a European base; having assembly done locally, delivering it personally and having local support; the response has been really

phenomenal," Temple added.

Corrick said the firm's growth potential is higher outside of the U.S., where he estimates its overall market share is about 50 percent, plus 70

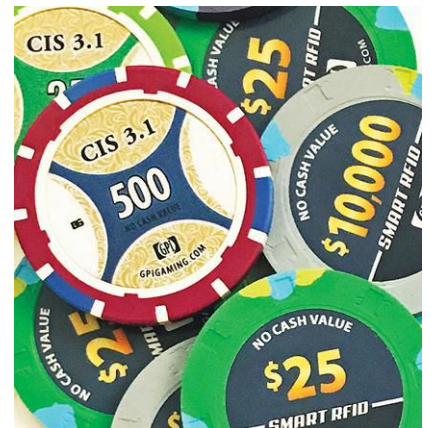


The Monaco chair from Gary Platt

percent of all new openings. "Globally, it's much more fractured and split," he said. "We know we can double the size of the company internationally just through gaming. The U.S. is a growing market, but international markets, especially Europe, have a lot of upside."

GPI

Being a leading global supplier with an extensive suite of table game products including chips, plaques, jetons, layouts, dice and more, Gaming Partners International (GPI) used ICE as an opportunity to meet with customers from around the world and showcased its full collection of table game products with substantial emphasis on cutting-edge currency features, range of playing cards and RFID solutions.



RFID chips from GPI

With the most comprehensive gaming currency options available in the industry, GPI delivers options to its customers such as its popular BG V-Series chips. The V-Series was developed using a new, innovative and highly durable injection material formula, according to press materials. The V-Series is unique in that it provides advanced design flexibility with the edge spot pattern and decal configurations alongside available unparalleled security features. Those who ordered the V-Series with four or more color shots had included an infra-red security feature exclusive to GPI customers.

GPI recently added newly developed and advanced options to its vast suite of currency security features. BG customers can now include Focus feature, an advanced covert security feature, into their injection molded chips. In addition, BG V-Series customers can also incorporate unique Hollow Shot in their chips. The Hollow Shot is an indentation in the chip's outer ring and serves a dual purpose in the chip's design and counterfeit deterrence.

Customers at ICE also experienced demonstrations of GPI's exclusive high-frequency SMART RFID products and solutions. SMART offers the latest advancement in casino currency RFID technology and is available on all GPI currency brands.

IGT

At ICE, the numbers for the first two days were very strong, said Walter Bugno, CEO, international, for IGT. "It's important for us because ICE is a selling show, a business generator," he said. "It's not a trade show where people come just to get a look at the product. Here, they come with a checkbook. We get a good feel for how the year will go based on what happens at this show. It has been very good."

The standout at ICE for IGT was perhaps the CrystalCurve cabinet. IGT actually did a soft launch of the product into the Europe, Latin American and Asia/Pacific markets in the late fourth quarter of 2017. "We put some into the market and got some early performance reports which were very positive," Bugno said. "That has translated onto the floor here; people have

been buying them heavily which is fantastic. We've got some good games behind it, such as the Fury family of games and Fortune Gong. I think we've got a very good library and a great road map going forward to support this product."

Also very important at this show was the global launch of the CrystalDual 27-inch, which will be available towards the end of the first quarter. "So people were inquiring about that rather than buying it at this show,"

said Bugno, who added that IGT is very happy with this product.

"We have high expectations for it... it presents fantastically well and more importantly, once again we've got a fantastic line-up of games to support it."

TRUE 4D technology was also showcased at the IGT booth. "The market internationally

IGT's CrystalCurve cabinet

for that product is not as big as in the U.S., but we had a strong success with 3D when we launched it into the international market so we expect a good response to 4D," said Bugno. "Our first installation has already gone into Casino Venezia and the early numbers are very good so we have some good expectations there."

IGT was also very happy with the response to its interactive content. "Of course here at ICE, interactive is now a bigger part of the show than land-based gaming in terms of presence at the trade show," said Bugno. "We've presented a lot of the new content and the road maps for 2018 and a number of exclusive games that we're bringing out with particular partners and we're walking away happy with the response to that as well."

Bugno stressed that IGT has made considerable strides in its effort to localize game content for international markets. "IGT has traditionally not been very good at that, and it's an area that we've invested

a lot of time and effort in the last three years since the two legacy companies came together," he said.

Along those lines, IGT has put in place a test bank program and partnered with a number of operators to trial new games in multiple regions; the U.S. and various countries in international markets.

"We put them into the marketplace for three months, measure the performance, then we take them back and decide on the course of action based on the data and feedback that we're getting from individual markets," said Bugno.

INTERBLOCK

In certain regions, the willingness of people to have dedicated areas of their floor for electronic table games (ETGs) has increased tenfold in the last three years, said John Connelly, CEO of Interblock. "Obviously, we saw that in Macau for a very long period, but when you start to look at places like Latin America, North America and even in parts of Europe, the number of operators who are now willing to replace live \$5 or \$10 tables, which tend to be not as profitable, with automated technology, a stadium or an ETG pit, has grown tremendously," he said.

That phenomenon is more prevalent in North and South America and Europe, less so in Asia due to the level of handle in baccarat play. "In Asia, though, you can find 20 to 30 percent of the floor dedicated to ETGs," said Connelly. "When you look at North America, it's still under 1 percent. I truly believe we're



Interblock's stable of ETG products includes the G5 StarBar.

in the infancy of what the ETG business will become in the Americas when you compare it to what has happened in Europe and parts of Asia."

The key message for Interblock in 2018 is that it now has enough data to demonstrate that ETG's bring a new player to the floor, according to Connelly. "We are able to say with confidence that between 30 and 60 percent of the carded play on an ETG are new players who had historically not been carded before in that casino," he said. "Some of those are traditional table game players who had not been carded, but a large percentage are new players within the casino itself. We're also seeing slot players beginning to migrate over to electronic table games, perhaps because they've always wanted to try a live table game and been intimidated. Those players we find are staying longer and their handle is going up; they're bringing incremental value. As a result of all this information that we're able to quantify now, several operators in the last six months are now breaking out the way they measure ETGs within their internal reporting systems. So we're seeing slots, tables and electronic table games all having independent metrics because I think we're learning as an industry about the incremental benefits that an ETG can bring to a casino environment."

To help keep pace with growing demand, Interblock is keeping the R&D pipeline full, and aims to release six new products by the end of this calendar year. "These will be new product designs, as opposed to another 10 products that would be add-ons to existing concepts," said Connelly.

JCM GLOBAL



Ticket2Go retrofit ticketing solution from JCM

Larger than life waterfalls, futuristic video cubes, even a video floor were part of JCM Global's dynamic and dramatic exhibit at ICE 2018. JCM's stand amazed and entertained attendees with its line of PixelPRO digital displays and video content that showed how operators can unleash their creativity and connect with their customers in fun, modern ways.

With HD and UHD frameless LED

screens with industry-leading color contrasts, PixelPRO displays allow for spectacular images and video on a flat, square or even curved surfaces, according to press materials. JCM's PixelPRO displays have HD and UHD frameless LED screens with industry-leading color contrasts allowing spectacular images and video on a curved or flat wall, indoors and outdoors, giving operators the ultimate in flexibility. PixelPRO MAX displays also offer the widest possible viewing angle of 160°, while maintaining exceptional picture quality, unsurpassed color uniformity and fidelity. Proprietary RBG wavelengths guarantees vivid colors and rich contrast.

PixelPRO
Cubes offer a

Konami's Concerto
Crescent cabinet
with SeleXion technology



variable design that can join, stack or hang to produce interesting 3D shapes, such as a Great-Wall or a Roman Pillar Railing.

In addition to PixelPRO displays, JCM showcased the world's leading casino transaction technology, including the iVIZION bill validator, GEN5 thermal printer, ICB 3.0 Intelligent Cash Box system, Ticket2Go retrofit ticketing solution and FUZION technology.

KONAMI GAMING

Gaming executives and professionals from around the globe discovered a record variety of original progressive game developments at Konami Gaming's 2018 ICE display. Progressives spanning everything including symbol-trigger, linked, wheel-spin, mystery-



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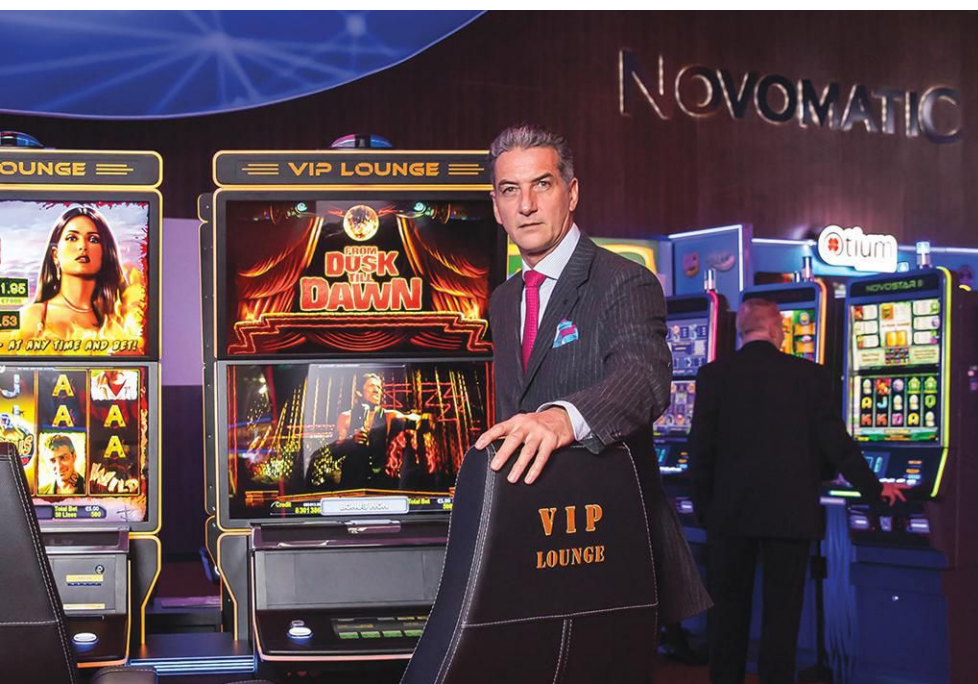
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NOVOMATIC AG CEO Harald Neumann in front of the company's From Dusk Till Dawn-themed slot machines.

trigger, pick 'em and more were available for an estimated guests to see and explore. Castlevania, Power Boost Inferno, Celestial Sun Riches, Celestial Moon Riches, Star Watch Magma and Smash Smash Festival were among the top-anticipated titles.

In addition, the show marked the ICE premiere of Konami's first curved multi-game cabinet, as the company's popular SeleXion technology expands to Concerto Crescent, which offers the popular Lotus Land Deluxe Wild, China Shores Great Stacks and Dragon Fury together on one machine.

"Building upon the expanded Concerto Collection with a new library of KP3+ games, Konami is delivering even more entertainment for every machine from Slant to Crescent," said Steve Walther, senior director, marketing and product management for Konami, in a prepared statement. "The depth of Konami's creative bonus features and progressive mechanics on display made this our most exciting ICE yet."

Power Boost Inferno was also among the centerpiece progressive game attractions. This all-new linked progressive for Concerto upright and Slant allows players to activate more prize opportunities on a three-round wheel-spin bonus at higher extra bet amounts. Similarly, Konami's fiesta-themed Smash Smash Festival was also a featured linked game at ICE and allows players to

select their own extra bet amount, with greater bonus odds at higher extra bet levels. Power Boost Inferno and Smash Smash Festival both offered advanced compatibility with SeleXion multi-game and combine with most KP3+ platform base games, including Chili Chili Fire and Dragon's Law Twin Fever.

"Konami brought a rich array of progressive developments to ICE 2018 with a focus on long-term business value for operators and enduring entertainment value for players," Walther said. "This extends to our curved Concerto Crescent cabinet as well, with games like Lucky O'Leary Jackpots and Castlevania."

NOVOMATIC

Among the key NOVOMATIC products at ICE for the U.S. market was the Enchanted Fortunes Linked Progressive. "It's a high hit frequency, high return-to-player, high-value entertainment game," said Kathleen McLaughlin, vice president of marketing for NOVOMATIC Americas. "We've added a few features to the game here. Wait for the Wild symbol to appear and it may trigger a Pick and Win for one of four corresponding progressives. It's

available on Dominator Curve and we've enhanced the size of the topper monitors to improve the visual appeal of the link. And the games that we put on the Progressive platform represent the best-of-the-best that we have in the market. Asian Fortunes, Treasures of Tut and Goddess Rising can all be linked together to contribute to the shared linked, four level jackpot.

"The other high return-to-player game that we're coming to market with here is Viking and Dragon. That's a game we recently put on the market and it's getting a lot of traction with orders. The merchandising package and game graphic design are really appealing." The game itself was made available at the end of February.

Also on display were NOVOMATIC's dealer-assisted NOVO Unity II terminals, which are trending almost 2.5 to 3 times earnings at Foxwoods Resort Casino compared to the competition.

"Our advantage is that we are so reasonably priced and earn a premium; it's a great value," said McLaughlin. "We use an elliptical design which is more spacious than the competition and we think that's another advantage. The pods have two cup holders and dual USB ports with plenty of comfort. We're aggressively adding side bets as well. The games are getting a lot of great Asian style play, so Foxwoods is now expanding our footprint and moving forward with another 24 unit mini stadium. That is fantastic for us both. This is a segment of the market that we've done well with in Europe for a very long time and now we are able to grow in the U.S."

SCIENTIFIC GAMES

Among the new products that Scientific Games debuted at ICE were a new bank of Pink Panther machines designed in the company's Australian studio. It has a new variation to the games' hold and re-spin feature that was first shown with the Lock It Link series.

"Pink Panther



has been a very good international brand for us,” said Greg Colella, vice president, product marketing for Scientific Games. “We have two Pink Panther games here that were successfully rolled out in Australia and are approved in Europe; Mega Mariachi and Kalahari King. We also have a brand new Monopoly game that was also designed in Australia for international markets. Monopoly has always been a great brand for us on the domestic front, but this time with the Monopoly Grand Hotel theme, we think we have a good fit for the international style of player.

“We continue to have success with the Duo Fu Duo Cai games; we now have Flowers of Riches and Diamond Eternity. We’re also starting to introduce the TwinStar J43s and some of the first James Bond-themed games internationally.”

Colella stressed the contributions of Scientific Games’ Australian studio in addressing international markets. “It’s different math, different players, and I think it’s one of those things that has helped us a lot,” he said. “When you look at international markets, they play a very different style of game than in the U.S. A little bit more gambler-driven, a little bit more volatility. They’re looking perhaps for a little more value within the game. They don’t tend to gravitate toward some of the big production values that are in the leading U.S. games. Our Australian designers develop their games with those kinds of players in mind because that’s their market; that’s how they survive in Australia. It has given us a pretty big advantage; it keeps us very competitive in Australia and it helps us in international markets.

“We’ve seen big benefits from our Australian and Asian studios including the development of our Duo Fu Duo Cai series which we’ve been able to take back to the states and seen it be very successful there as well.”

While at ICE, Scientific Games also launched SG Digital, a new global proposition which incorporates the existing portfolio of SG Interactive B2B products and services with those of the newly acquired NYX Gaming Group, to create the most diverse supplier of digital gaming and sports betting technology and content in the industry.



VIZEXPLORER

VizExplorer, a leading provider of operational intelligence solutions to the gaming industry, used ICE as a backdrop to announce a new agreement with Les Ambassadeurs Club—its first casino customer in the UK.

As part of the agreement, VizExplorer will install its bundled solution for international gaming operators, which includes elements of floorViz for gaming floor optimization, campaignViz for marketing campaign automation and hostViz for enhanced VIP player management, according to a press release.

VizExplorer™

The milestone agreement also includes the VizExplorer Concierge Program, the company’s highest level customer support tier complete with private onsite consulting resources to help Les Ambassadeurs Club develop best practices and tactics to properly utilize its platform. With the full support of the VizExplorer Customer Success Program, VizExplorer Industry Specialists will train and support Les Ambassadeurs users as they adopt VizExplorer software, providing in-depth best practices and case studies and collaborating to ensure replicable successes.

“To deliver the premium experience our club members expect, our team need access to the right information on the right customers, at the right time,” said Kevin McGowen, chief executive, Les Ambassadeurs Club. “VizExplorer’s advanced CRM solution makes that possible, along with further capabilities we expect will help to enhance our club services and optimize our operations to maintain our position as the top casino in London.”

“We’re confident that the Les Ambassadeurs Club team will be pleased with their decision to entrust their data to the VizExplorer platform,” added Jeffrey Hoss, vice president of business development for VizExplorer. “We’ve proven our solutions repeatedly with U.S. casinos and look forward to validating them in this new market.” 🌐

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