March 2008

The Independent Voice Of The Coin-Op Industry

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N all families there are rivalries and jealousies and the sister industries of coin-op and casino are no exception.

This month, the sometimes uneasy relationship was put into the spotlight at both

the IMA and the ATEI shows. Firstly, in Dusseldorf, Paul Gauselmann spoke of the German casino lobby having been instrumental in persuading the government to introduce a new amendment to the gaming law for AWPs, due to concerns over their similarities to casino slot machines.

Then, at ATEI, once again there were grumbles about the amusement sector being sidelined upstairs while the gaming machines took pride of place on the ground floor.

The problem is that the two sectors overlap but they are not properly related at all. If anything they are like a step family. Comparisons between the two are inevitable but not helpful.

Casino and coin-op are subject to widely differing rules and regulations and therefore like any brothers or sisters not allowed to do the same things, they will complain from time to time, "It's just not fair!"

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Astra has all markets covered

stra showed a wide variety of UK and overseas product at ATEI. There was a selection of video and reel based Category C games; the evergreen themes of Party Time and Bullion Bars were re-incarnated in a new Platinum presentation, complete with a new Category C overhaul. These games were accompanied by Astra multiplayer "Locomotion"which introduced a compelling presentation enhanced via three 32" LCD top screens; mixing a Wild West train theme with an innovative top feature for the UK market.

Category B3 was represented by a host of exciting new product, again in the form of multi-game compendium Party Slots, which introduced new game Bullion Bars 500 and the Megaslot feature enhancement. Double Action Slotto with its "Gamble" feature lived up to the pre-show hype.

Astra devoted two thirds of stand 620 to the ten markets -Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Holland, Italy, Poland, Spain,

Slovak Republic - that make up its export sectors.

Czech Republic saw Riverboat Gambler 750 and Hi Energy 750; The Netherlands introduced the Multi Game compendium in the Mk5 cabinet for street locations; House of Fortune for Denmark, a growing performer, made an appearance; Belgium presented Royal Riches and Party Dice in the Games Palace compendium, as well as multiplayer Las Vegas Dice; A strong Eastern European showing with Slovakia -Riverboat Gambler 300, Poland -Riverboat Gambler 500 and Hungary – Fortune Sevens, was met with a very positive response by Astra's partners in each of the countries.

Spain, a market where Astra hasbeen establishing a brand presence with an expanding range of games, featured exciting new product tinged with the passion and colour of the Mediterranean. Game of Fortune ably represented Italy, and new market Germany presented a trio of "Wall Cabinet" games in addition to the Multi Game Upright concept aptly named Party Games.



Playtrix takes orders from around Europe

laytrix continues to bring new ideas to the gaming and amusement business. Its many years of experience in the field and innovative research and development department are paying off for the company. Playtrix introduced the wireless Blackjack at the ICE show last year, where the players use remote-controls to play, and it expanded its products range even more at ICE this year. Products now include the wireless multi-game of 15 games, the five-player blackjack, and the five-player baccarat.

The company reports an excellent show, with orders from major operators from around Europe as well as significant interest from its regular customer base in North America. "Our production line has been running at full capacity since last December!" said George Samaha, company CEO. "Our wireless games are small to ship and easy to install anywhere. But don't let their size fool you! They are real gaming machines for real operators. And most of the games are proven for many years in operation in countries around the globe. You may remember seeing this or that game in an old "wired" cabinet somewhere? Well, now look for it in the "wireless" configuration."



Playtrix is advertising its games to casinos, lounges, bars, hotel rooms, and cruise-ships. "We signed exclusive distributorship agreements for a few countries in Africa and South-America," added Samaha "At ICE, we also signed contracts for rental of our five-player games," he continued. Playtrix offers the possibility to rent the games by fixed rent or profit sharing. "It is simple; the games connect to a mobile phone and report statistics by sending and receiving short messages. The operator sends an SMS from their mobile phone asking for the report and, if the phone is already registered with the game, it replies with the statistics. The rental game stops if it fails to communicate with its internal mobile phone and you also have the possibility to shut it down wherever it is in the world. Of course, these are options for the rental games," said Mr. Samaha.

"We got a lot of casinos interested and we are now working on the approval of the blackjack and baccarat in their countries and jurisdictions." He said. Besides casinos, Playtrix has entered into negotiations to place their wireless games in cruise-ships and hotels

General information about Playtrix can be found on: http://www.playtrix.com/aboutus.php