

Top 5 Online Player Acquisition Strategies for iGaming Operators

Executive Summary

The major goal of any iGaming business owner is having a lot of players that will ensure a growing revenue for his/her business. The question is: how to bring players into your online gambling website and make them play/bet?

With the competition heating up in the iGaming industry, the most precious resource becomes the player's attention. Merely building an awesome iGaming website and waiting for players to find you is nothing but a waste of time.

To help you with the player acquisition, we have researched and reviewed a lot of online strategies. In this ebook, we summed up the most effective player acquisition strategies that will ensure constant player flow to your gaming and betting website.

Here they are: [affiliate marketing](#), [SEO](#), [paid search marketing](#), [social networks](#), and [digital advertising networks](#).

Each of the mentioned online player acquisition strategies has pros and cons which are precisely discussed in the ebook. Considering the peculiarities of each strategy, iGaming marketers will be able to choose the best working one for their website.

For instance, if you are looking for a free strategy with long-term trackability results to rank high on search engines, SEO is right for you. Paid search marketing is a more targeted solution, with short-term trackability results, but it can cost you a lot of money.

The promotion of gambling content is not an easy one. Many websites and networks totally refuse to display gambling ads or impose strict rules. Affiliate programs or digital ad networks can help you out of the situation. Affiliates use their own website as a funnel through which players get to your online gaming

website. While, digital ad networks apply their big inventory of gambling networks to get your ads to the right people.

The strategies work best when integrated and strategically aligned. It will be wise for iGaming marketers to use all these 5 strategies in the complex to achieve higher results in acquiring new players.

Read the eBook to Get a Better Insight Into Each of the Player Acquisition Strategies.

The Importance of Player Acquisition in iGaming Business.

iGaming industry is on the rise over the last few decades. With vast money-making opportunities, it represents a real goldmine for gaming operators. So, they hit the ground of iGaming in the hope to get their piece of the money pie. However, the promise of a big profit is only one side of the coin. On the other and the toughest side of the coin is the player acquisition: the fierce struggle for winning players. After all, who are the key profit-boosters for an iGaming business? Right! The players, A LOT of players.

With more and more operators entering the iGaming arena, the competition heats up. As a result, getting players to give your gambling website a chance becomes a hardgain. iGaming business owners jostle to win players' attention and engagement. Consequently, the fierce competition results in skyrocketing player acquisition costs.

The cost of player acquisition is the price online gambling operators pay to attract new players into their iGaming platform. Calculating player acquisition cost is crucial for evaluating the value players bring to your iGaming business. This is done by dividing the total amount of money spent on player acquisition by the total number of players acquired, as shown below.

Player Acquisition Cost Calculation Formula:



The player acquisition requires forethought and well-planned strategies that encompass a myriad of processes, channels, marketing techniques, and resources. Here, we have drawn together 5 of the most effective online player acquisition strategies that will ensure constant player flow to your gaming and betting website.

Top 5 Online Player Acquisition Strategies

A good online player acquisition strategy is the driving force behind every successful iGaming business. Of course, offline activities have their weighty role in directing player flow to your gaming and betting business. Yet, in this digital world, online player acquisition strategies provide better efficiency. A well-planned affiliate marketing, search engine optimisation (SEO), paid search marketing, social network marketing and digital media ads are the solid bricks that form the baseline of an effective player acquisition strategy. The five in-demand acquisition strategies will help you to move the player acquisition needle, outperform the competition and generate more bang for your buck.

Let's jump in and take a closer look at each of them!

#1. Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing is a plug-and-play solution for iGaming operators to market their website and acquire new players. It is an effective way to promote an online gambling website via the efforts of third-party marketers. That is to say, affiliate marketing is like hiring a whole marketing team at a performance based compensation basis. Affiliates use their own website as a funnel through which players get to your online gaming website. This is done by placing your links and ad banners on their websites.

Affiliates promote your gambling website in return for a revenue share. Depending on the players' actions, affiliates get a certain percentage of commission from the partner, i.e. cost-per-action approach is applicable for affiliate marketing. Or, affiliates can get a percentage from the losses of players, which is known as a cost-per-sale approach. To put it in a nutshell, affiliate marketing is a performance-based marketing strategy. Thus, affiliates are usually very enthusiastic to bring more good players into your online gaming website to get higher commissions. The rule of thumb is that the more players they direct to your website, the higher their share will be.

“Affiliate programs generate 15%–30% of all sales for advertisers.”

Unlike other industries, gambling affiliates are usually experienced players themselves or iGaming business holders. Most of them successfully run their blogs on iGaming or have their websites. This factor is certainly the greatest perk of sportsbook and casino affiliate marketing. Why? Firstly, because gaming affiliate marketers know all the ins and outs of the industry. Secondly, this empowers them to bring super relevant traffic into your iGaming website with higher conversion rates.

To sum up, there are several unarguable advantages affiliate marketing holds over other online player acquisition strategies:

- ➔It is performance-based
- ➔It is easily trackable
- ➔It is overly relevant
- ➔It ensures high ROI.

As an online gaming website owner, you can bring your website to the attention of professional gaming affiliates with good commission rates and high reputation. Simultaneously, rewarding your best performing affiliates with higher commissions or bonuses will trigger them to put more effort into diverting players into your website. At the same time, note that it takes much effort to partner with a really good and reputable affiliate. Anyway, one experienced and qualified affiliate brings significantly more value to your iGaming website than 3 novice ones. Besides, it is recommended to have a page in your website that allows affiliates to sign up and take your ready-made banners to place it in their websites.

#2. SEO for Sportsbook and Online Casinos

Anyone who builds an iGaming website holds the vision of ranking high in SERP (Search Engine Results Page) and be easily found by potential players. Without having a high-profile presence in SERPs, your iGaming website will not get much traffic, if any at all. Here is the point where SEO promotion makes wonders.

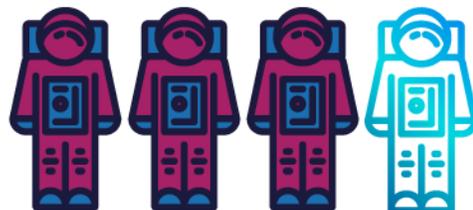
Optimising your iGaming website content for search engines will help you stay on the top of search pages and be seamlessly found by players. Fortunately, Google offers [SEO guidelines for webmasters](#) that foster the website to show up in top SERP listings.

Having a **blog** on your website that covers industry-related topics can be a real SEO-booster. It helps to build trust with potential players and adds credibility to your website. More importantly, blog increases your chances to beat out your competitors in the search engine results page. Quality content in your blog, enriched with relevant keywords, is a significant aspect for Google (or other search engines) in assessing your website.

“75% of users never scroll past the first page of search results”.



of users **never**
scroll past the
1st page
of search results



A well-researched, keyword-rich (but not keyword-stuffed) and player-oriented content will help your iGaming website hold top positions in organic search results. Your content should be dynamic, value-driven, entertaining in a way it drives bets and motivates to play. More than that, it must satisfy the actual needs of the players. This means that you should clearly envision what your players search in google and optimise your content accordingly.

For instance, it is well known that online bonuses are the best triggers for players. Hence, “best online casino bonuses” will have relatively high search volume among players. So, why not target players looking for best online casino bonuses and rank for the keyword? Just optimise your content around the keyword (title, meta description, alt text) and be easily found by your potential players. There are several resources where you can find keywords that people type in Google search box. One of the most popular is [Google Trends](#).

‘Content is King’,-Bill Gates.

Website organisation is another pivotal component for being favored by search engines. A good site structure means great user experience, which in return ensures lower bounce rates. The lower bounce rates, the higher chances of appearing at the from page. Seamless navigation, intuitive design, loading speed and responsiveness make up an SEO-friendly website structure, doubling

player acquisition chances. The proper site organisation enables search engines to find and index content faster.

Therefore, your gaming and betting website organisation is an essential factor for ranking high and acquiring new players.

Website authority is all about link building. Backlinks give your iGaming website an extra boost in authority. This, in return, triggers your ranking. The more authoritative websites link to your content, the more trustworthy source you seem to be in the eyes of lady Google. A link to your iGaming website from another industry leader is a vote of confidence for Google. It signals to Google that you offer something valuable that people want to share. With this in mind, iGaming webmasters should make sure their website distributes quality and trustworthy content that others would like to link to. The three most effective natural link building strategies for the gambling industry include:

- ***Engaging, quality content.*** Focus on crafting unique, research-based content. Everything else will take care of itself. A good, player-oriented content allows to bring value to your players, ensure unforgettable sports betting experience for them, and thus, multiplies the chances to be linked by players as their favorite source. This is to say, players bring players.

- ***Social shares:*** Your iGaming website should be interesting enough players would like to share it on their social platforms. Who won't like to share his/her achievements with friends? So, give them the chance to share their victories with their friends, at the same time increase your reach naturally.

[49% of players](#) share the information on products they like with the hope to change opinions or encourage actions.

- ***Email outreach:*** Perhaps, this is not the most natural and working way to build links. Statistics reveal that at least 5 out of 100 emails you send out are linked back to your website. Yet, do not be over-excited with the player acquisition possibilities offered by email marketing. The poorly structured or wrongly targeted email can have quite a reverse effect, making you appear as a

spammer. The fundamentals to never forget when sending out emails are: 1) know your readers, 2) deliver value, 3) direct the players to take desirable actions.

You can make your sports betting and gaming website more SEO-friendly and higher ranked in SERP with the help of [SpringBuilder SEO app](#).

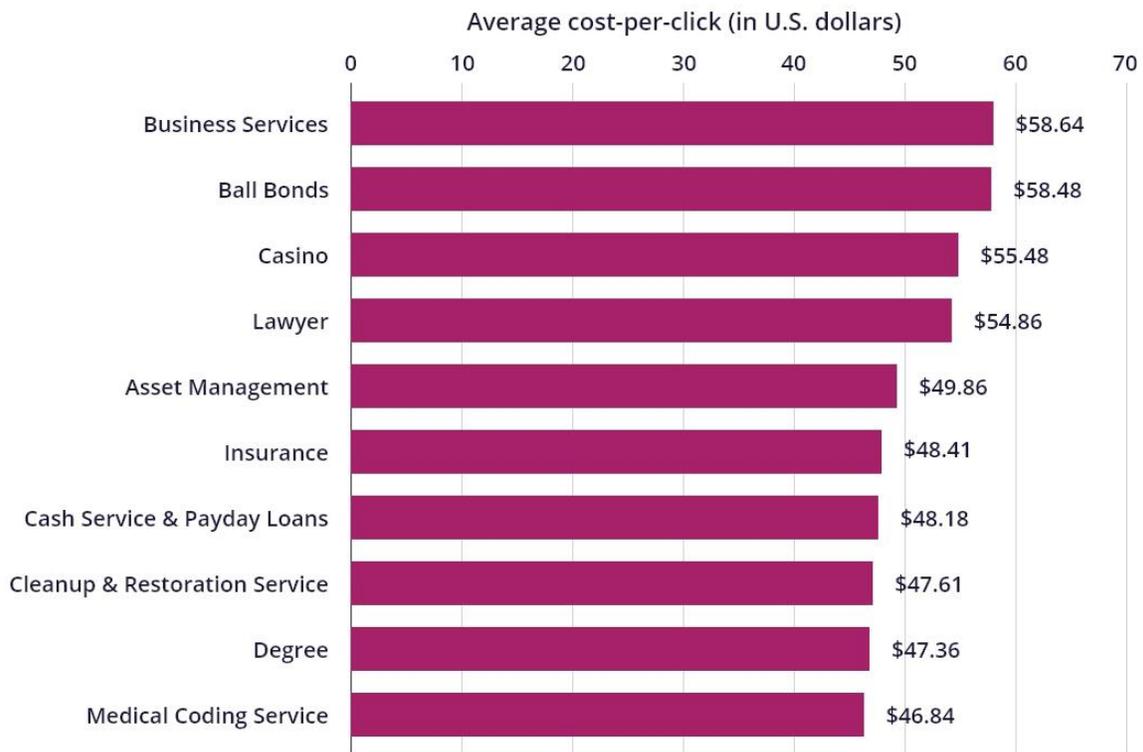
Originally designed for igaming website, [SpringBuilder SEO app](#) fully optimizes your gaming and betting website for search engines.

#3. Paid Search Marketing

To elevate their website above the digital competition, many igaming businesses complement their organic search engine optimisation efforts (SEO) with paid initiatives. Online ads encompass everything from static images to auto-play video.

PPC and CPC are highly valuable online ad methods that ensure steady player traffic into a sportsbook or casino website. It is targeted, fast, easily trackable and provides high-level website exposure. In Google system, you place a “bid” for a certain keyword, (for example, best online casino) and every time somebody searches for the keyword, your ad will appear in the search results. You have a chance to outrank the competition by bidding more. In gambling industry, the most expensive keyword cost \$180.12 (in 2016), and guess what the word was? The gold-worth keyword was ‘play live blackjack’.

The statistical portal [Statista](#) represented the most expensive keywords in Google Adwords Advertising as of June 2017 (in U.S. dollars). First in the ranking of the most expensive keywords on Google AdWords platform is ‘business services’ with a cost of 58.64 U.S. dollars per click. ‘Bail bonds’ holds the second place, for which Google was earning just 16 cents less for clicks on searches for the keyword. As you can see, ‘Casino’ is the third high-priced keyword with the costs of \$55.48 avg. CPC.



When it comes to gambling, online advertising platforms (particularly, Google Ads) become exceedingly careful. Yet, it's not rocket science. If online gaming websites follow special requirements imposed by the ad platforms, they will be able to buy traffic via online ads. If you want to advertise your online gambling website, you must be certified by Google. This is how you can apply for [certification](#):

- Check the policy and country-specific requirements first. Make sure you meet those requirements.
- Fill out [online gambling application form](#), if you are operating in one of the countries where online gambling content ads are permitted.
- Use [this form](#), if you operate in one of the countries where only state-run entities are allowed.
- Fill [out the form](#), if you are a social casino game operator.

“Even YouTube, (owned by Google) recently removed hundreds of videos advertising links to legitimate online poker sites.”

In addition to Google requirements, there are further restrictions based on the countries your campaign targets. For more details, view Google's Gambling country restrictions list.

#4.Social Networks

Social networks are another channel online gaming websites use to acquire new players. Though direct advertising of gambling content is prohibited or restricted by most of the social networks, online casinos and sportsbooks use them to communicate with potential players.

"[Facebook](#) allows ads that promote or facilitate online real money gambling only with prior written permission."

Online gambling businesses can also harness the potential of social network pages by using them as platforms for announcing special promos, bonuses and discounts. In this way, they can motivate players to visit their websites and play.

Social media networks greatly contribute to the recognition of your brand. Regularly posting some engaging online gaming-related content with powerful CTAs on your social media pages will direct players to take desirable actions, i.e. place bets or play.

"Content is King...but distribution is queen and she wears pants,"-Jonathan Perelman.

Ultimately, to raise your chances of success in acquiring new players even further make yourself known in question and answer networks, like [Quora](#), or forums. Q&A networks open a window of opportunity for igaming website owners. They can directly connect with their potential players by providing industry-related expert answers to their questions. As you give helpful advice and answers, you gain trust, expertise and influence in the eyes of players. Without establishing trust among potential players, it's far more difficult to prompt them to bet and play on your igaming website. The most popular forums for question/answer platform for gaming and betting include [NeoGAF](#), [Gamefaqs](#), [AskGamblers](#) and [Reddit](#). The forums enable gaming operator or

marketers to gain solid backlinks and drive players into their online sportsbook or casino.

#5 Digital Advertising networks

Digital advertising networks serve as a mediator between advertiser, i.e. the online gambling website, and the publisher-the website on which your gambling ad will be displayed. They can help igaming operators to coordinate an ad campaign across thousands of publisher websites in an efficient manner. They use their big inventory of gambling networks to get your ads to the right people. This is done by delivering your ad to the publisher's website by an ad server. It sends a code to the publisher's website that calls the ad. The digital ad network's ad server enables to target, track and make a report on the campaign. Publishers earn a percentage of ad revenues.

Digital advertising networks generally work on the following pricing options:

- **Cost-per-mile (CPM)**: This is the price that an advertiser pays for one thousand views of his/her ad.
- **Cost-per-click (CPC)**: An online advertising model in which an advertiser pays when the ad is clicked.
- **Cost-per-acquisition (CPA)**: The pricing model suggests that the advertiser pays for a specified acquisition.
- **Cost-per-view for video (CPV)**: The payout is triggered each time the video ad is viewed. Most ad networks count 30 seconds of video view when charging based on CPV.

To help you save your time, we have researched and reviewed a lot of advertising networks in the igaming industry. Here are the top igaming digital ad networks that can skyrocket your success in player acquisition:

1) [Venatusmedia.com](https://venatusmedia.com)



If we are talking about igaming ad networks, then Venatusmedia.com is what first comes to mind. It's the leading ad network that is primarily specialized in distributing entertainment, gaming and gambling content. The major target market is **Europe**, with geographic, demographic, site-specific, contextual,

retargeting, channel targeting opportunities. Advertisers have **CPM, CPC, CPV** payment options.

2) AdBoosters.com



Offers a wide range of niches, including gaming and gambling content. Though it's Europe-based, the geographic market outreach expands **worldwide**. The targeting possibilities provided by AdBoosters.com include demographics, site-specific, contextual, retargeting, purchase-based and channel targeting (showing your ad in certain sections of a website). As an advertiser, you can choose your payment type from the following available options: **CPM, CPC, CPA, CPV**, Auction.

3) Taboola.com



Taboola.com has a vast network of about 200.000 publishers worldwide. The most outstanding ones are **MSN, FoxSport, NBC, USA Sport, Bild, Hearst, Bloomberg, Business Insider, Daily Mail**. The extensive network makes Taboola one of the major traffic providers, so if your goal is to have a large volume of clicks Taboola is the best choice. Of course, no one guarantees your ad to appear in the above-mentioned high ranking websites, but still, you can promote gambling using that network successfully. Taboola accepts payments on a **CPM, CPC, CPCV** basis. You can target your campaign by locations, platform, operational system, and audience. The key target markets are **Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Europe, India, Japan, United Kingdom, United States**.

4) Bidvertiser.com



Bidvertiser.com is another standard ad network that supports gaming and gambling content. The distinguishing element of Bidvertiser.com is that it offers a wide range of targeting capabilities: geotargeting, device targeting, time-of-day targeting, interest targeting, contextual targeting, etc. The network takes

payments on a **CPM and CPC** basis and handles campaigns **starting from \$5 a day**. The biggest perk of Bidvertiser for advertisers is that they can select the sites they want to get the ad on, rather than letting a network algorithm to choose for them. Bidvertiser.com offers global targeting market coverage.

Final Thoughts

In this era of technological transformation, the innovative digital player acquisition means outpace the traditional ones. The battle for player attention now is held on online platforms by digital weapons. Online casino and sportsbook owners have to establish a solid online presence to engage with potential players at every touchpoint.

Affiliate marketing, search engine optimization, price-per-click ads and social networking are all the ingredients of a successful player acquisition strategy. To achieve higher results in acquiring new players, it is wise for gaming operators to promote their online gaming website using all these 5 strategies in complex.