Top 5 Online Player Acquisition Strategies for iGaming Operators

Executive Summary

Any igaming business owner's objective is to have a lot of players that will ensure a growing revenue for their business. The question is: *how to attract players to your online gambling website and motivate them to play/bet?*

With the competition heating up within the igaming industry, getting the player's attention becomes the ultimate precious resource. Merely building an awesome igaming website and expecting players to find you can be a waste of time.

To help you acquire new players, we have done our research and reviewed numerous online strategies. In this ebook, we've put together a list of the most effective player acquisition strategies that can ensure a constant flow of players to your gaming and betting website.

Here they are:

Affiliate Marketing

SEO

Paid Search Marketing

Social networks

Digital Advertising Networks

Each of the mentioned online player acquisition strategies has its pros and cons, all discussed in detail in this ebook. Taking into account the peculiarities of each strategy, igaming marketers will be able to choose the most effective one for their website.

For instance, if you are looking for a free strategy with long-term trackability results to get a higher search engine ranking, then SEO is precisely what you need. Paid search marketing, on the other hand, 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 easy. Many websites and networks either totally refuse to display any gambling ads or tend to impose strict rules. Affiliate programmes or digital ad networks can be helpful in this situation. Affiliates use their own websites as funnels through which players get to your online gaming platforms. Meanwhile, digital ad networks employ their big inventory of gambling networks to get your ads to the right people.

The strategies work best when integrated and strategically aligned. It would be wise of igaming marketers to use all these 5 strategies as one whole bundle, in order to achieve higher results in acquiring new players.

The Importance of Player Acquisition in iGaming Business.

The igaming industry has been on the rise over the past few decades. With vast money-making opportunities, it has manifested itself as a real goldmine for gaming operators. So, they hit the ground of igaming in the hope of getting their slice of the money pie. However, big profit promises are the one side of the coin. The tough struggle for player acquisition is the other side. After all, who are igaming businesses' actual key profit boosters? That's right! Players! A LOT of players.

With more and more operators entering the igaming scene, the competition keeps heating up. As a result, having players give your gambling website a chance becomes a serious challenge. Igaming business owners jostle for winning players' attention and securing their involvement. Hence, the fierce competition results in skyrocketing player acquisition costs.

The cost of player acquisition is the price online gambling operators are willing to pay to attract new players to 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:

Player acquisition requires forethought and well-planned strategies that encompass a myriad of processes, channels, marketing techniques, and resources. Here, we have put together 5 of the most effective online player acquisition strategies that can ensure a constant flow of players 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 do play a

weighty role in directing the player flow to your gaming and betting business. Yet, in this digital era, online player acquisition strategies prove to be more efficient. Well-planned affiliate marketing, search engine optimisation (SEO), paid search marketing, social network marketing and digital media ads are all the solid bricks that form the baseline of an effective player acquisition strategy. The five in-demand acquisition strategies will help you move the needle on player acquisition, outperform the competition and get more bang for your buck.

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

#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 through the efforts of third-party marketers. Affiliate marketing is like hiring a whole marketing team on a performance-based compensation basis. Affiliates place your links and ad banners on their own webpages: the latter serve as funnels to get players to your online gaming website.

Affiliates promote your gambling website in return for a revenue share. They get a certain commission percent from the partner, based on players' actions, i.e. cost-per-action approach is applicable in affiliate marketing. Alternatively, affiliates can receive commission based on players' losses: this is known as a cost-per-sale approach. In a nutshell,

affiliate marketing is a performance-based marketing strategy. Thus, affiliates are usually quite enthusiastic about bringing more profitable players to 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 programmes generate 15%–30% of all sales for advertisers.''

Unlike other industries, gambling affiliates are normally experienced players or igaming business owners . Most of them successfully run their blogs on igaming or have their websites. This factor is certainly the greatest advantage of sportsbook and casino affiliate marketing. Why? First, because gaming affiliate marketers know all the ins and outs of the industry. Secondly, this allows them to forward super relevant traffic to your igaming website at higher conversion rates.

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

☐It is performance-based
☐It is easily trackable
☐It is overly relevant
☐It ensures a 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 a high reputation. At the same time, rewarding your best-performing affiliates with higher commissions or bonuses will encourage them to put more effort into diverting players to your website. But do not forget that it takes a great deal of effort to partner with a really good and reputable affiliate. Whatever the case, one experienced and qualified affiliate brings significantly more value to your igaming website than 3 novices. It is also recommended to create a page on your website that would allow affiliates to sign up and take your ready-made banners to their platforms.

#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 being 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. And this is where SEO promotion can do wonders.

Optimising your igaming website's content for the search engines will help you stay at the top of search pages and be quickly found by players. Fortunately, Google provides **SEO guidelines for webmasters** that make your website show up in top SERP listings.
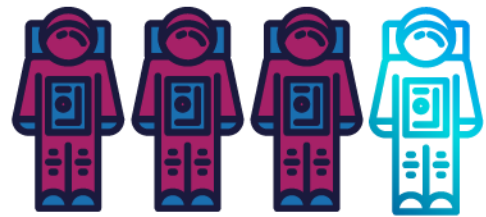
Having a **blog** on your website that covers industry-related topics can be a real SEO-booster. It helps to build trust with potential players and adds credibility to your website. More importantly, blogs increase your chances to beat out your competitors on the search engine results page. Quality content in your blog, enriched with relevant keywords, is a

significant factor for Google (or other search engines) in the process of assessing your website.

"75% of users never scroll past the first page of search results''.

Well-researched, keyword-rich (but not 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 such a way that it prompts bets and motivates players to take action. It must also satisfy the actual needs of the players. This means that you should clearly envision what your players google for and optimise your content accordingly.

For instance, it is a well-known fact that online bonuses are the best triggers for players. Hence, ''best online casino bonuses'' is statistically among players' most searched phrases. So, why not target specifically the players looking for the best online casino bonuses and improve the ranking for the keyword? Just optimise your content around the keyword

(title, meta description, alt text) and get easily found by your potential players. There are several resources (**Google Trends** being one of the most popular ones) where you can find keywords that people often type in when using the Google search box.

''Content is King'',-Bill Gates.

Website organisation is another pivotal component for being favoured by search engines. A good site structure means greater user experience, which in return ensures lower bounce rates. The lower the bounce rates, the higher the chances of appearing on the front page. Seamless navigation, intuitive design, loading speed and responsiveness form an SEO-friendly website structure, doubling player acquisition chances. The proper site organisation enables search engines to find and index content much faster.

Therefore, accurate organisation of your gaming and betting website could become 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 will appear to be in the eyes of Lady Google. To Google, a link to your igaming website from another industry leader is a vote of confidence. It signals that you offer something valuable that people want to share. With this in mind, igaming webmasters should

make sure their websites distribute quality and reliable content that others would like to link to. The three most effective natural link building strategies in 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 makes it possible to deliver value to your players, and to provide them with unforgettable sports betting experience.This multiplies the chances of being linked by players as their favourite source. In other words, players bring players.

 - *Social shares:* Your igaming website should be interesting enough for players to want to share it on their social platforms. Who wouldn't like to share their achievements with friends? So, increase your reach in a natural way, give them the chance of telling their friends about their victories.

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

 - *Email outreach*: Perhaps, this is not the most natural and effective way of building links. Statistics reveal that at least 5 out of 100 emails you send out are normally linked back to your website. Yet, do not get overexcited with player acquisition possibilities that email marketing offers. A poorly structured or wrongly targeted email can have quite a reverse effect, making you appear as a spammer. The fundamentals to

consider when sending out emails are as follows:1) know your readers, 2) deliver value, 3) prompt players to take action.

With [SpringBuilder SEO app](#), you can make your sports-betting and gaming website more SEO-friendly and improve its ranking in SERP.

Originally designed for igaming platforms, [SpringBuilder SEO app](#) fully optimises your gaming and betting website for search engines.
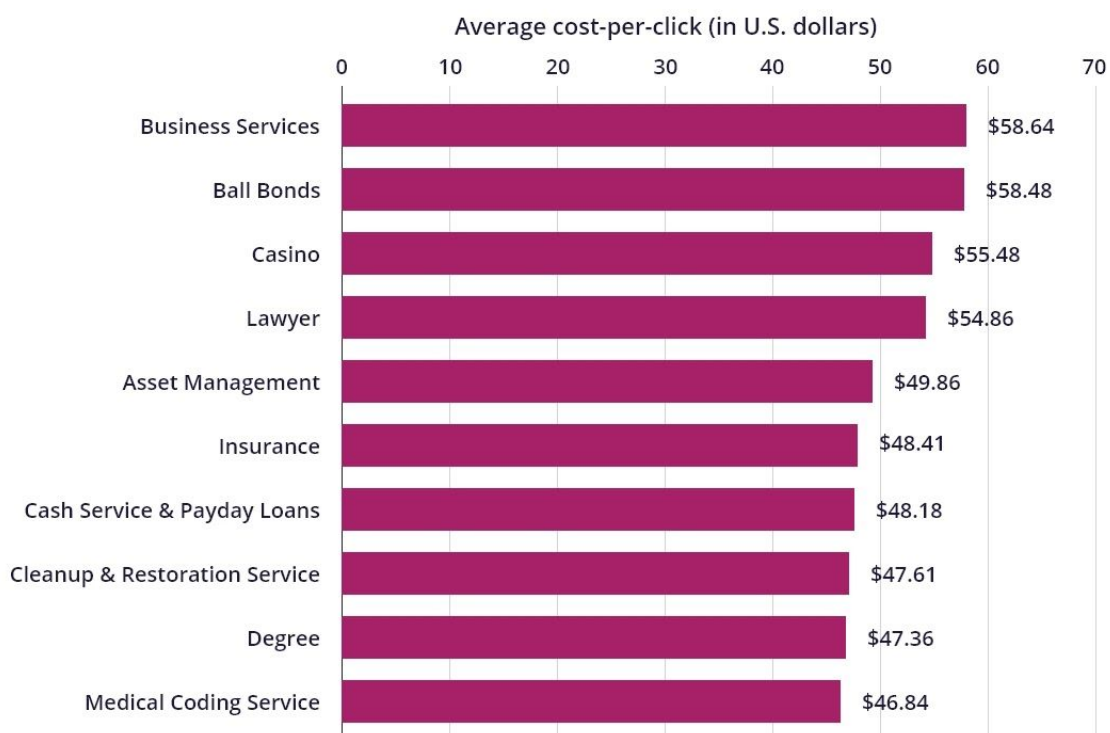
#3. Paid Search Marketing

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 videos.

PPC and CPC are highly valuable online ad methods that ensure steady player traffic into a sportsbook or casino website. These are targeted, fast, easily trackable and provide high-level website exposure. In the Google system, you place a "bid" for a certain keyword, (for example, "best online casino") and every time somebody searches for that keyword, your ad will appear in the search results. You have a chance to outrank the competition by bidding more. Back in 2016, the most

expensive keyword in the gambling industry cost $180. And guess what the word was. The gold-worth keyphrase was 'play live Blackjack'.

The statistical portal **Statista** presented the most expensive keywords in Google Adwords Advertising, as of June 2017 (in U.S. dollars). "Business services" happened to be the highest-ranking and most expensive keyword on Google AdWords platform, with 58.64 USD per click. "Bail bonds" held the second position, letting Google earn just 16 cents less for clicks in the keyword-related searches. "Casino" was the third high-priced keyword costing $55.48 avg. CPC.

Average cost-per-click (in U.S. dollars)

Keyword	Cost
Business Services	$58.64
Ball Bonds	$58.48
Casino	$55.48
Lawyer	$54.86
Asset Management	$49.86
Insurance	$48.41
Cash Service & Payday Loans	$48.18
Cleanup & Restoration Service	$47.61
Degree	$47.36
Medical Coding Service	$46.84

When it comes to gambling, online advertising platforms (Google Ads, in particular) become exceedingly careful. Yet, it's not rocket science. If online gaming websites manage to follow the special requirements imposed by 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 the **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 this 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 the majority of social networks, online casinos and sportsbooks still 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 igaming-related content with powerful CTAs on your social media pages will motivate players to take action, i.e. place bets or play.

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

Finally, to further increase your chances of success in acquiring new players, make yourself known on question-and-answer networks (such as **Quora**) or forums. Q&A networks open a window of opportunity for igaming website owners. They can connect directly 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. In the case of gaming and betting, the most popular Q&A platforms include **NeoGAF, Gamefaqs, AskGamblers** and **Reddit**. These forums enable gaming operators or marketers to gain solid backlinks and to lead players to their online sportsbook or casino.

#5 Digital Advertising Networks

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

Digital advertising networks generally work according to the following pricing options:

- Cost-per-mile (CPM):This is the price that an advertiser pays for one thousand ad views.

Cost-per-click (CPC): An online advertising model in which an advertiser pays when the ad is clicked.

- Cost-per-acquisition (CPA): This 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 as a video view when charging for 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 terms of player acquisition:

1) Venatusmedia.com

As far as igaming ad networks are concerned, Venatusmedia.com is the first one that comes to mind. It's the leading ad network that primarily specialises in distributing entertainment, gaming and gambling content. Its major target market is **Europe**, with various geographic, demographic, site-specific, contextual, retargeting, channel targeting opportunities. Advertisers offer **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**. AdBoosters.com provides demographic, site-specific, contextual, retargeting, purchase-based and channel targeting possibilities (i.e. 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 boasts 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**. Having an extensive network is what makes Taboola one of the major traffic providers. So, if your goal is to end up with a high click volume, then Taboola is your best choice. Of course, no one guarantees that your ad will appear on the above-mentioned high-ranking websites. But you can still promote gambling if you use that network efficiently. Taboola accepts payments on a **CPM, CPC, CPCV** basis. You can target your campaign by location, platform, operating 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. What distinguishes Bidadviser.com is that it offers a wide range of targeting mechanisms: geotargeting, device targeting, time-of-day targeting, interest targeting, contextual targeting, etc. The network charges on a **CPM and CPC** basis and handles campaigns **starting from $5 a day**. To advertisers, the biggest advantage Bidvertiser gives is that they can select the sites they want to place their ads on, as opposed to letting some network algorithms make choices on their behalf. Bidvertiser.com provides global targeting market coverage.

Final Thoughts

In this era of technological transformation, innovative digital player acquisition strategies outpace the traditional ones. The battle for players' attention is now happening on online platforms, with digital weaponry. Online casino and sportsbook owners need to establish a solid online presence in order to engage with potential players at every touchpoint.

Affiliate marketing, search engine optimisation, 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 recommended that gaming operators promote their online gaming websites using all these 5 strategies as one whole bundle.