

# The art of player retention



Player retention has become an art form that includes segmentation, automation and personalization. **Mitja Slavec, Product Manager at Comtrade Gaming** explains.

In the competition overflow, a basic casino game can quickly become a bore and players turn to competitors. To prevent this, a vast amount of attention needs to be put into achieving a superb player experience. Player retention is no longer just an email sent out to a player database, it has become an art form that includes segmentation, automation, and personalization. Casinos must precisely know their players, and incentives must be created based on business intelligence and predictive analytics.

There are many proven and successful player acquisition strategies, but their real value is shown in the increase of long-term players – and not just bonus hunters that leave after their welcome bonus is played through. So, casinos have to continue developing subsequent retention incentives and a good casino platform with a player tracking system to make a big difference. Based on the data they produce, an operator can decide which type of promotion would have the most impact for a particular type of player. But not every report can guarantee efficient results. Player segments need to be set in the right way, considering all previous player activities. Behaviour patterns are determined on the basis of frequent game choice, bets, time of play, duration, and money transactions. This ensures an important and effective allocation of the promotion budget.

For a casino to be successful, players have to lose their money. But a bad streak should not mean the end of a player relationship. Cashback promotions might reduce their pain a little, but are not the only or even most successful method. Retention bonuses that are awarded in real-time during game play, or cleverly set up loyalty programs are some other best practices. These work better when they are

based on good analytics that can also predict a behaviour of a certain player segment, and can trigger automated actions. Rewards that are camouflaged into bonus games where players have a chance to win their incentives are one of the best retention tools. VIPs, on the other hand, require a different kind of approach and more attention. They need to feel like they are special and treated with extra respect. Ordinary incentives are not enough in their case, but when combined with unique and exclusive rewards more success can be achieved. Here traditional casinos are in a better position because they see their clients, and that contact is always more personal. The online industry has to rely on the information that their systems provide and approach their VIPs remotely. Since transition to another site is so easy, successful VIP relationships today have become a main indicator of successful casino operations.

Every casino should worship the players who refer their friends. Word of mouth is more convincing than advertising. Those kind of customers require special support and should be considered as a part of the community. They should be offered special promotions that better motivate them for further work.

A trend on the rise is also various quest journeys, where players have a chance to win tempting prizes when fulfilling different assignments. By doing the quests, players



receive points that lead them on the way to alluring rewards. These types of incentives motivate the players to try out specific games across all casino products, to play more, longer, and discover other interesting and unfamiliar games from the offering.

These kind of quests come in various shapes and can have a different scope of rewarding. They are easy to implement, but should not be too demanding, as this could drive the player away. The choice of rewards should be done based on a deep analysis and experience. Their main goal is to motivate as many players as possible, and to convince them to play and solve the quest assignments. These type of incentives assure a live atmosphere and extend players' wish to play.

Player retention should not be viewed as a way of locking down the player, but as a way of offering them a diverse, interesting, and fun experience. Players need to have fun and feel special, but this can only be achieved through promotions and rewards, tailored to their playing needs.