

BANDWAGON

Among some quarters of the casino industry are those who fear that the virtual casino may take away customers from their land-based offering. But far from cannibalisation, Digges believes that so-called cannibalisation just doesn't happen. Far from it, she says. "It will make a Gala customer be more loyal to the brand. It's a good way of cross-marketing a land-based brand."

According to Digges, St Minver will create the design, take care of all the operations including secure cash transactions – in fact take care of everything – lock, stock and barrel. Of course, this comes at a price. Digges declined to comment on the \$64,000 dollar question of how much, preferring to say that each customer has different needs, so each price is different.

But other sources revealed that a good ball-park figure was a revenue split of around 15 per cent. Whether this is a good deal or not will depend on the total amount of revenue made online. Gala Casino websites average daily payouts were £142,295 in 2005. Their top individual winners were £50,000 on Tropical Fruits, a slot machine, £12,000 in roulette and £13,000 in stud poker.

William Hill Online Casino is one of the pioneers, having been operating for five years. They offer the attractive double package of new games and the promise of big payouts. They have recently added 19 new games to the download casinos, including five new games on their Boss Media European language casinos, and now offer over 130 games. William Hill's biggest ever jackpot is running in the 'Millionaires Club' game, which currently stands at £673,572.

But probably the biggest driver for many online players are the continuously growing jackpots which can be played 24 hours a day. Jackpots of over \$1 million are retaining players on-site for longer periods of time. With this kind of momentum growing, there's plenty of action for both virtual and land-based offerings. ♦

PokerShare.com Launches Most Rewarding Affiliate Program

PokerShare (www.pokershare.com), a revolutionary new concept in online poker, launches their much anticipated affiliate program. PokerShare is seeking motivated, business-minded people to help them promote their "play it, own it" concept in online poker. The "play it, own it" concept is unique in online gaming and means that players are entitled to a percentage of the company's profits as a reward for their loyalty to PokerShare.

PokerShare has teamed up with The Income Access Affiliate Network, specialising in affiliate marketing for the iGaming industry. "We're excited to have PokerShare on board with the Income Access network. They have a unique concept that the affiliates love and are already keen to promote. We thrive on keeping the affiliates happy and this makes for a win-win-win for all parties involved," says Nicky Senyard, Principal, of Income Access.

An affiliate of PokerShare.com can earn either a percentage of revenue generated by the players referred for the lifetime of those players or they can collect a one-time cash payment for each new, real-money sign-up.

Sharing in the company's revenue is a unique selling point that differentiates PokerShare from all other online poker sites in the market.

With positive features in both Market Watch and The Wall Street Reporter, PokerShare is positioned to be the next big poker site. "Poker Share's concept simply means more value for players. Affiliates do best promoting products that have inherent demand, and the poker player community clearly craves the value concept of PokerShare. Simply put, players make money so affiliates make money with PokerShare," says Michael Caselli, Editor of America's biggest poker magazine, Bluff Magazine. ♦

ONGAME DIRECTOR JOINS ECOGRA BOARD

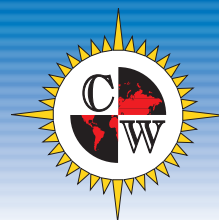
Michael Hirst OBE, the independent chairman of eCOGRA has announced the appointment of Swedish national Karl Magnusson (30) to the board of directors of the online gambling self-regulatory body.

Magnusson is a director of software developer Ogame in Stockholm Sweden which powers one of the largest poker operations, PokerRoom.com in the booming poker room industry. He is also a director of UK companies Ogame Limited and Nordicone Limited and has extensive financial and general management experience with major organisations like ABN Amro's Alfred Berg Asset Management and the financial statistics department of the government of Sweden. He holds a Master's degree in Economics from Uppsala University in Sweden.

"We welcome Karl's membership of eCOGRA's board of directors," said Hirst. "He brings valuable financial and management expertise which complements the high calibre of professional management capability eCOGRA already has in its independent directorate through respected figures such as Bill Galston and Frank Catania, together with leading industry executives John Anderson of Cassava and Roger Raatgever of Microgaming."

Ogame recently became the third major online gambling software company to join the eCOGRA self-regulatory initiative, which seeks to protect players through the "Play It Safe" seal on 56 top online casino and poker room sites. eCOGRA's members now account for over 80% of the online casino industry's turnover, and provide software to 3 of the top 6 poker networks.

Although directors representing eCOGRA's members now equal the number of independent directors, the organisation's constitution is such that board control is still in the hands of the independent directors, as well as fundamental decisions such as which software suppliers may be admitted as members, and which online gaming sites have earned eCOGRA accreditation. ♦



www.casinoworld.co.uk