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Wayne Pickup is at the forefront of data-first thinking and innovation within the global lottery industry. As CEO of Camelot Lottery Solutions, he presided over the first digital platform and iLottery conversion in the US that puts data at the heart of the Illinois Lottery.

PGRI met with Wayne at the EL Congress in Antwerp to discuss why successful lotteries of the future will be data-led

Is data the new oil for lotteries?

Paul Jason: I'm sure everyone will have heard the phrase 'Data is the new oil'. Do you agree with that sentiment, and does it hold true for the lottery industry?

Wayne Pickup: The analogy is glib, but there are similarities. While anyone can stick a shovel into the ground and hit oil. A barrel of crude oil itself isn't very useful to most of us. Once that crude oil is refined, however, it becomes far more valuable.

Data, like oil, must be processed to create something of value. The lottery industry relies on marketing for player acquisition and creating engaging experiences. As other industries already know well, the real value comes from organizing, learning from, and automating the power of data to test marketing hypotheses and recommend personalized strategies.

Lotteries have had mountains of data at their fingertips since the beginning. What's changed?

W. Pickup: Historically, the lottery industry hasn't been very efficient in gathering and utilising its data. Typically, lotteries have wholly separate streams of data coming from upwards of 15-20 different sources (e.g. CRM, gaming systems, app, web etc.). The burden is on each lottery to use its time and resources to try and join the dots between the different data sources.

Access to analyzed data is often core to the success of some of the fastest growing and most successful companies of our time. Context-rich data helps provide customers with increasingly personalized products and services, leading to improved ability to communicate and more customer satisfaction.

A data integration platform can be the tool that allows lotteries to flourish in today's competitive market. By pooling all of those previously disparate streams of data, lotteries create a single 'source of truth' and a singular view of the player. This opens the door to a wealth of opportunities to both generate insights and introduce exciting new capabilities like ID resolution.

Would you say the rise in digital technology has kick-started the data economy?

W. Pickup: Every time we open our phones or laptops, visit a website, buy something, or even just connect to WiFi, we throw off an incredible amount of data that is used to market products and services back to us. In today's digital-first society, data is everywhere.

Consider this - in the year 2000, only half of Americans had internet access of any kind. Now, more than 80 per cent own a smartphone. It's now possible to capture an incredible wealth of data on the actions, interests and preferences of lottery players. This is particularly exciting for the lottery industry, existing at the intersection of the physical and digital player journey.

In today's hyper-personalized consumer marketplace, this data helps lotteries connect with their players on a one-to-one level.

For example, by optimizing its website landing page to the preferences of specific cohorts of players, the Illinois Lottery increased revenue 26% per web visitor. Similarly, by using real-time data to exclude players already in the next draw from push marketing campaigns, the Illinois Lottery achieved significant uplifts in player participation.

By harnessing the power of data, lotteries become more relevant to their players and build loyalty and motivation to play.

Many would consider a "data integration platform" to be an iLottery solution, what about retail-based lotteries?

W. Pickup: With a data-led mindset, there are a multitude of applications in both retail and digital channels to make a significant impact upon the bottom line.

At the simplest level, by increasing the availability and convenience of essential business information. Using an integrated data platform, easy-to-access business reports are automatically generated and emailed, including: a weekly trading summary and a daily sales summary.

A real-time portal then provides a live data view and is automatically updated every five seconds. The customizable portal tracks headline sales figures for retail and digital channels and shows sales totals tracked against the same day in the previous week.

Building on this, lotteries can use advanced analytics and machine learning to ensure its retail shops have the right amount of Instants on display at any given time, or that marketing dollars are being funnelled to deliver the greatest ROI from each marketing dollar.

Having access to a rich stream of data allows lotteries to make informed, intelligent, data-driven decisions, across all channels. Access to player data also helps deepen responsible gaming controls and ensures the very best in digital ethics and player privacy.

The possibilities of using big data and data platforms within the lottery industry are almost endless.

Wayne Pickup is Camelot Lottery Solutions' CEO.

Camelot Lottery Solutions is a leading solutions and technology provider to lotteries around the world. Camelot's Atlas data platform brings together data-points from multiple channels and systems to deliver real-time business intelligence and insights that inform marketing strategies for retail, player engagement and iLottery.