

# Buzzword Alert

## Thinking Outside of the Box



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What is this proverbial “box” that constrains our thinking, our ability to imagine creative solutions that will drive the industry forward? What if that box was a lottery terminal itself? The terminal has been such a foundational and successful cornerstone to the lottery industry for so long, it can be difficult to imagine solutions that do not include this fixture of our industry. After all, it’s the terminal that determines where your tickets are sold in the store and provides an in-store presence for draw games. It also defines how tickets are sold: Draw games could easily be re-defined as a virtual product. The terminal contains many of the features required to successfully deliver the games, security, an RNG for Quick Picks among many others. It’s really important.

So how do you start to think outside of that particular box to open up a new sales channel, namely In-Lane sales? This is the challenge that Abacus faced when launching Lottery Everywhere in Europe, and a challenge many lottery organizations are now facing in North America following the release of the NASPL Standard API.

We like to summarize our approach as “thinking from the player in, to the lottery”. We didn’t have a terminal, we had a blank sheet of paper and started with the fundamental question - how do consumers behave now? It was important to us that the player experience was as simple as possible, complemented their current behavior, to use another buzzword, we didn’t want to introduce “friction”.

With the ABACUS solution, a shopper can



ask for a quickpick, or present a pre-printed hang-tag to the cashier, as simple as a can of beans. Their ticket is included in their basket of goods, with no additional fees or charges (aside from the cost of the ticket of course!).

With this focus on understanding the customer, we then considered this challenge from the retailers point of view. What systems do they have? What would their attitude be to selling lottery tickets directly from their EPoS? What policies do they have in place that could help or hinder us in achieving our objectives? What are their requirements? What are their goals and priorities and how can our solutions help them accomplish those better?

Major retail chains have their own view of their world. It is important to appreciate that they view the entire retail environment as THEIR world. If you want to exist in their world, you play by their rules. Imposing requirements specific to Lottery is going to impede progress at best or halt it altogether. And retailers do not all have the same goals, much less the same operational methods for achieving those goals. One retailer may be quite happy to allow you

to deploy software on their system, for another that may be out of the question. So a solution that imposes a heavy burden on the retailer, requiring them to change their methods of operation and play by someone else’s rules, will probably meet with resistance from retailers.

For multi-state retailers, ABACUS provides a managed service, acting as a single connection point interfacing multiple lotteries, similar to the payment systems retailers use today.

All of this learning led to Lottery Everywhere to be developed as a very flexible system. It was developed firstly with the player in mind. If the playing experience is complicated by too many steps, or is vastly different from what the player expects, then the players will not adopt it. And Lottery Everywhere was designed to fit right into the world of the major retailer, with numerous options designed to integrate easily into those retailers’ EPoS systems as well as their practices and policies. It was built to make it easy for retailers.

One of Abacus’ integrations for a retailer in Europe was completed in six weeks from agreement with the retailer to go-live. That meant nearly 6,000 new points of sale were available in a month and a half. It happened because the lottery and the retailer were fully engaged and committed to the project, but also because Lottery Everywhere was flexible enough to be adapted quickly to the new world of the modern retailer. It wasn’t quite “plug and play”. We worked hard to meet the retailer’s requirements, and the retailer appreciated our flexibility to meet their requirements quickly.

Thinking outside of the box can be quite liberating! We look forward to helping you apply the NASPL standard API to open up new channels of distribution with in-lane sales technology.

#### Call to Action

Give us a call and we can walk you through the details and the potential new sales opportunities for your lottery. ■