

What's the forecast for land-based bet shops in 2013?

2012 saw an increase in demand for more live sports betting opportunities as well as availability of such in a more mobile-friendly format, with punters preferring to bet while watching the action unfold from the comfort of their home or while out with friends. This trend saw many sports betting software developers rushing to incorporate more live betting options into their existing software and produce mobile versions of their software to keep up with the fast pace of the changing industry, not to mention a very busy year for sports.

But where does that leave land-based sports betting operators? Once the bread and butter of the sports betting industry, bet shops are still making big business in the regions they dominate, but they also recognise that migration to the online marketplace and offering mobile betting capabilities is the industry's new direction. SBTech's Itai Zak believes that these land-based operators are perfectly positioned to expand into offering online and mobile products, as long as they are backed by partners who are experienced in providing quality solutions in regulated jurisdictions and that 2013 will see more and more of these bet shops looking to strengthen their already impressive foothold on their own market before making the leap into the online and mobile betting arenas, thus improving their potential for increased revenues from all three avenues: offline, online and mobile.

Land-based sports betting shops still exist?

With the progression of the sports betting industry moving at such a head-spinning pace, it's easy to forget that the physical establishments that inspired the whole industry still exist and that many of them are still racking up huge business in their areas. Established in 1996, Betshop is one such operator who dominates much of Europe with an impressive portfolio of over 1,000 bet shops across Italy, Cyprus, Greece and Romania. Licensed Nigerian sports operator, Betland, boasts over 100 bet shops and is the leading land-based operator in their region. Leaders in the regulated Albanian sports betting market, Xhoilloto has over 500 bet shops and holds the biggest market share in their area. But while bet shops are definitely still alive and kicking, they are all too aware of the growing trends in the industry and have thus shifted their focus to offering their customers a better quality sports betting experience with a larger variety of bet types and, of course, the much sought-after live betting options that today's punters are particularly interested in.

However, this is very much a case of 'easier said than done', especially when you take into account that many of these well-established bet shops are running outdated and inefficient systems. Betshop, Betland and Xhoilloto, mentioned above, were all in the same position before their deals with SBTech: looking to expand their current offering to cover live betting and a greater variety of bet types and options, but not in a position to focus their resources on software development or trading capabilities.

In all 3 cases, SBTech solved their dilemma with their all-encompassing solution for land-based sports betting operators, providing them with a more efficient and updated system, user-friendly betting interfaces and terminals, a powerful live betting platform offering 8,000 live events per month, including more than 200 bet types on over 20 types of sports, but without the headache of expensive trading and odds feed costs. This has allowed these massive land-based sports betting operators to expand further into their regulated jurisdictions, offering their members the wider variety of betting options they've been waiting for.

But there's more to it than that...

The smart move for land-based operators

Any land-based sports betting operator worth his salt knows he's missing out on a fair chunk of the revenue by not having an online presence. Bringing their offering to the online space allows them to

offer their current customers even more flexibility with the option to bet from the comfort of their own home. But it also allows them to broaden their reach, appealing to those who are perhaps familiar with their brand but are more likely to bet online rather than go to the bet shops. However, in many cases, bet shops are unfamiliar with how to make that leap online, as attractive as it may be. Again, the 3 land-based operators mentioned above have a distinct advantage over their competition in that SBTech's next option is that exact process of helping them achieve an online presence that ranks among the top sports betting operators online today, thanks to their award-winning online betting platform and live betting options. Once again, these land-based operators benefit greatly from SBTech's fully managed online solution, allowing them to focus on developing their business commercially, and avoid all the hassle and expense of additional trading, risk management and odds feed services. One more very important aspect to cover is regulation, among the other business challenges might be the biggest threat landbased operators a partner with experience in the field the infrastructure in place and can smoothly comply with any requirement raised by the regulator

In terms of regulatory issues, SBTech currently powers several successful operations in regulated jurisdictions around the world, including the UK, Malta, Austria, Denmark, Georgia, Albania and Nigeria. SBTech's experience and proven ability in meeting the strict guidelines of these regulated markets also serves as an advantage to land-based operators, allowing them the option to penetrate other markets but also giving them the reassurance that the solutions provided are not only highly efficient for themselves and attractive to their customers, but also conform to the relevant region's high regulatory standards, an essential element for successful progression of their business.

Having such fully managed and comprehensive support available definitely puts these land-based operators in a great position, but to be at the very forefront of the sports betting industry, incorporating a mobile betting platform into your current offering is a must...

Bet shops go mobile

All 3 of our land-based operators mentioned above chose SBTech not only because of their expertise in bringing bet shops up to speed and allowing them to offer their customers a better sports betting experience, but also due to their capabilities in the online and mobile betting media.

SBTech's mobile betting platform gives these land-based operators the unique opportunity to provide their customers with a user-friendly sports betting interface that's fully compatible with any mobile device, including iPhones, iPads and Android devices. The HTML5-based mobile betting platform features SBTech's wide variety of sports events, live betting options and bet types, as well as banking and transaction capabilities, allowing punters to deposit, bet and withdraw from within the mobile app itself. This means land-based operators can offer their customers the freedom to bet from wherever they like, bringing their entire sports betting business straight into the 21st century, and right ahead of the pack.

The final frontier for land-based operators

So the greying land-based sports betting operator is still alive and kicking, and in the perfect position to bring their offline business into both the online and mobile media, thereby extending their reach, growing their business and landing themselves right at the cutting edge of the industry, which is exactly what their customers want. SBTech's partnerships with Betshop, Betland and Xhoilloto – notably all of which were made in quick succession of one another – are an indication of what lies ahead for the sports betting industry, with land-based operators very much aware of developing trends and keen to keep up with them. 2013 looks to be an exciting year – one which SBTech is fully prepared for, with their focus set on continuing to develop successful partnerships with forward-thinking businesses by providing them with the fully managed yet cost-effective solutions they need.