

**Casino International** talks to **Nick Hogan** from **Gaming Support** about its excellent **Jackpot Junction Table Bonus Module**, which we think is the most exciting thing to hit the Roulette wheel for players in some time...

# Jackpot Junction explodes into Roulette

**S**ometimes in gaming, you come across an idea which just works. They're usually the ideas that make people money, and therefore succeed in the industry; when Casino International saw Jackpot Junction Table Bonus Module at a trade show last year, we thought it slotted right into that category. We were knocked out by its simplicity and the potential it has to drive traffic and generate excitement around Roulette. Nick Hogan, Vice President of Sales and Business Development for Gaming Support International, took the time to explain to us a bit more about this superb product.

**Casino International: Jackpot Junction is an established name within your suite of products; how does the Table Bonus Module fit into that?**

*Nick Hogan: We have a very large footprint in digital signage in general with our Jackpot Junction suite. The success behind these products has been their ability to enliven a given slot environment and the ability to cross-promote the various businesses found inside a diversified gaming organization – hospitality, retail, box office, F&B and, of course, the casino.*

*When it comes to generating excitement on the casino floor, the recipe is surprisingly simple. We simply accumulate as much jackpot data as possible and integrate them into the overall broadcast infrastructure. Let's say you are showing advertising clips for your various businesses. As the playlist cycles, we overlay real-time jackpot odometers, serve picture-in-picture data covering historical hits, all of the feedback necessary to convey that there's a certain critical jackpot mass of which everyone should take notice.*

*Then, when there's a jackpot hit, all hell breaks loose. The speakers go on, there are brilliant displays across all plasmas, sometimes we use environmental effects like strobe lights or smoke machines, but the key thing is to accumulate as much jackpot volume as possible so that you get an enormously large number of small hits throughout the environment.*

*What we see is that, when inundated by all of this positive reinforcement, players simply extend their duration of play, generally by double-digit percentages. They stay longer at the slot machine, thinking 'my turn is coming, I'll just stay put'. In turn, the core numbers (coin-in, utilization, slot win) climb. Generally speaking, players walk away with an elevated notion of value and the house reaps elevated win.*

*Taking that success story, we started looking at the table games area. They call it 'live games' but, let's be honest it's the deadest part of any casino. It's boring. In select, seriously up-market environments, this is perfectly appropriate. But, in the overwhelming majority of venues, it's just stuffy and stale. So, the overall goal is to breathe some life into mid-market table operations, the bulk of which could benefit hugely from a solid splash of multi-media sunshine.*

*We started looking at different ways to do this, which led us straight to the jackpot layer. There are a couple of games around that feature a jackpot controller, Caribbean Stud being one of them, Let It Ride being another. We can (and do) collect those data, but again there's just not enough critical mass. You're limited to a novelty segment of the operation and the jackpot hit frequency is anything but high. So, the trick is creating hit data on the bread and butter games.*

*Now, in the past, the approach to this has been the side bet – an extra wager which funds a peripheral jackpot. Think Caribbean Stud and Let It Ride. Although these are great games, you just can't swing a side bet on a staple game. Players hate them categorically.*

*So, we looked at it a different way. We started with a game featuring well-established data collection vis-à-vis results (roulette) and isolated, from the player's perspective, the least-advantageous bets. In this case, the single number or 'hard' bet. So, the idea is to incentivize players to bet more money more often on these propositions, thereby boosting the house's average monetary win per spin. How do we do this? We simply create a promotion.*

*So, we broadcast that the magic number is 27. The next person who wins a hard-27 bet will not only receive a 35:1*



payout, but also an iPhone, a bottle of champagne, a voucher for the steakhouse. We then monitor result data across all tables and broadcast them in real-time for all to see. When the number finally falls, bang! music, video, strobes, whatever. The key thing is that there's nothing else required – no random number generator, no buttons, no side bet. Everything is inherent to the base game. The promotion is rendered viable by the incremental win, the house's win skyrockets and the environment comes alive.

But this is only a single example. Other derivative bets have already been developed for roulette and we've just cut our first for baccarat / punto banco. The beauty of the package that we've put together is that everything – the bets, the scheduling, the promotional content, the mathematics – is in the operator's hands. If result data can be captured, everything else is already there.

**CI: You say that when someone wins a jackpot i all hell breaks loose. Do you think this type of celebration fits with the atmosphere in the 'live games' area of a casino?**

NH: Good question, and I'll take you back to what I've just said if I may: 'The beauty of the package that we've put together is that everything is in the operator's hands.' What JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module offers casino operators is the ability to communicate in a different way with customers; it gives operators another opportunity to promote what is going on in their property – or properties – with their customers. The managers in the live games area will know their customers – maybe not each and every single one of them, but certainly the customers that count; the regulars and the VIPs.

Chances are in a Hard Rock casino, players in live games areas will be at ease with audio that is quite loud, lots of visual stimulation and environmental effects such as confetti canons that are triggered when decent-sized jackpots hit. JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module can deliver this range of stimuli to positively influence player behavior.

Switch locations to, say, the Casino de Monte-Carlo, and management can tailor the content to fit both the player base and the environment with JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module. So, for example, the audio used to celebrate someone winning could be Beethoven's 9th Symphony, which would obviously be played at a lower audio level, perhaps supported by appropriate, low-key visual and environmental stimuli.

If I were to use an analogy, I'd say that JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module is the light switch that turns lights on and off; JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module can help to switch on players feelings of excitement, fun, and value so they leave the casino with a more positive perception about it if whether they have lost or won. And if players leave with positive perceptions, they will be happier to come back and play at that casino.

**CI: What are the major challenges facing JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module in the tables market?**

NH: I would say the biggest challenge is that the 'live



games' area is a people area, and JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module is a technical product. Table managers are great at what they do because they have superb 'soft skills'. They can read people; the best can pretty much out-think their customers, making sure they have their favorite drink just as they begin to feel thirsty.

That level of customer service is one of the key features that sets Casino A apart from Casino B. It's a 'soft trigger' that is difficult to quantify; why does a player prefer Casino A to Casino B? The player may not even know why because their preference is driven by an emotional preference, rather than a hard functional preference.

JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module allows management to communicate and reinforce the 'soft' messages so players feel even more loyalty to Casino A. Although a technical product, JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module actually reinforces players' softer, emotional perceptions of luck, entertainment, fun and value.

**CI: Do you have any JackpotJunction Table Bonus Module installations yet?**

NH: We haven't formally released TBM yet, but expect to do so later this year. At this point, we're short-listing candidates for pilot.

