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WEEK 34

FRIDAY 21 AUG 2026

**IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE:
IS BALLY'S FACING A DEBT CRISIS?**





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THIS WEEK

• **MORE ON, YOU GUESSED
IT, PREDICTION MARKETS!**

• **EUROPEAN
REGULATION LATEST**

• **AUSTRALIA ROUND-UP**

• **MOVERS & SHAKERS**

• **LIVE CASINO MEETS
CRYPTO TRADING**

• **GUEST COLUMN
Hassan Peymani**

WEEK 34

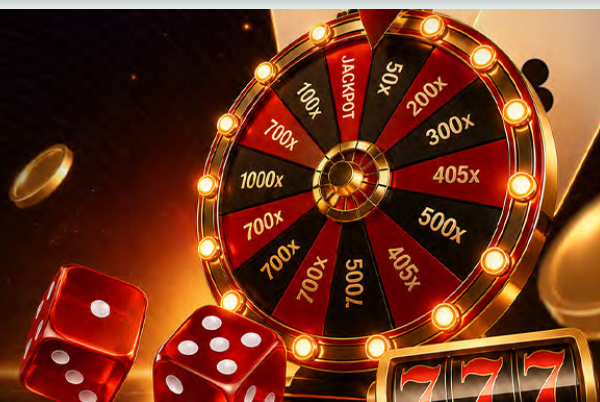
FRIDAY 21 AUG 2026



**WHAT'S
GOING ON
AT BALLY'S?**



**EXECUTIVE
ROUND-UP:
TLC, ALLWYN,
& MORE...**





HAS BALLY'S ACQUIRED ITS WAY INTO ADMINISTRATION?

The operator faces growing financial pressure as heavy debt and major commitments raise questions over its liquidity. This week, its stock plunged over 30%...

▶ Bally's stock plummeted this week after the operator disclosed concerning information relating to its liquidity – or lack thereof – in its second-quarter filing with the US financial regulator, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Shares fell 31%, dropping from last Friday's close of \$13.99 to \$9.68 and reducing the company's market capitalisation to under \$500m. Moreover, shares are down 37% year-to-date but remains up 11% over the past year, sitting at \$8.84 at the time of writing.

Crucially, however, as part of its SEC filing, Bally's reported that it does not expect to meet the liquidity requirements attached to a temporary waiver its lenders granted in May for a debt covenant. In other words, it's worried it's running out of money.

BALLY'S: BUYING ITSELF INTO A HOLE?

In recent years, the operator acquired Gamesys Group for \$2.7bn, executed a landmark asset combination transaction valued at a similar price with Intralot, invested several hundred million dollars into The Star Entertainment and, just this week, had its would-be £243m (\$326m) M&A with Evoke overwhelmingly approved by shareholders.

The result? Bally's stated that it is pursuing "a number of financing alternatives intended to enhance its liquidity" by early next year, to remain in compliance with the requirements of its revolving credit facility. The company is considering several options to raise cash, including asset sales, an equity offering or additional debt financing.

The eyebrow-raising filing still stated that "while the company is actively engaged in discussions on several financing alternatives, the conditions and events raise substantial doubt about the company's ability to continue as a going concern." Auditors use this language when they believe a company could face difficulties meeting its financial obligations within the next 12 months, and it can precede a bankruptcy filing. Following this statement, investor fallout was immediate; shares fell significantly.

Nevertheless, the operator sought to reassure investors and put the warning into context. Company representatives stressed that the filing "reflects a forward-looking technical accounting analysis and should be understood in that context. The analysis does not take into account anticipated future funding until definitive financing agreements have been executed."

And yet the Bally's financial situation has come under further scrutiny given the scale of its debt relative to its market value. As of June 30, the company held \$4.51bn in long-term debt, including

the current portion, compared with a market capitalisation of around \$500m. Its revolving credit facility had \$303.75m drawn. The balance sheet has also absorbed significant costs this year, including a \$500m New York gaming licence fee and a \$115m contingent payment linked to its golf course concession for Q1 2026. Hey, big spender.

THIN PICKINGS FOR SILVER LININGS

If the operator is beginning to appear as the industry's troublesome child with a debilitating spending problem, there is some more positive news. Despite a widening loss and falling adjusted EBITDA, Bally's revenue continues to grow, with Q2 2026 revenue reaching \$792.2m, up 20% year-on-year.

The operator has paused most non-gaming construction at its \$1.7bn Chicago casino, putting the hotel, events centre and restaurants on hold amid a dispute over video gaming terminals. Indeed, a less encouraging sign, especially for the 200 workers who have been affected.

Bally's maintains the Chicago disruption is separate from its financial concerns, with the casino still targeted to open in early 2027. Meanwhile, its plans for a \$4bn Bronx casino and pending acquisition of Evoke add further pressure to its liquidity position.

The situation is also serious in Rhode Island, where Bally's operates two casinos, the state's online casino and is set to become the region's second online sports betting operator. Gambling is Rhode Island's third-largest source of state revenue, with the two casinos generating \$313.6m for the Rhode Island Lottery in fiscal 2025 – highlighting the company's importance to the state budget.

Bally's has regulatory obligations to invest \$100m in its Rhode Island properties through 2043, with around \$39m still outstanding. The company employs approximately 1,800 people in the region.

Here, the immediate concern is not necessarily that casino operations will stop, but who would control Bally's properties if creditors were to take ownership. Any change in control could require state approval and potentially reopen aspects of the 20-year master contract between Bally's, IGT and Rhode Island.

More broadly, Bally's now faces enormous pressure from an incomprehensible number of stakeholders to secure new financing while managing its \$4.5bn debt burden and major development commitments. While the company remains 'confident' in its liquidity options, its declining cash reserves and ongoing financing needs leave its financial position under close scrutiny – to say the least.

THIS WEEK'S BIG QUESTION: Will Bally's now regret its Evoke acquisition



THE WEEK IN NUMBERS



\$102.5m

Virginia Lottery's reported casino revenue for July, up 20.9% year-on-year

AU\$2.25m

Fine issued to The Star and Crown Sydney for underage access (US\$1.6m)



17.6%

Q2 2026 revenue decline reported by Raketechn, reaching €5.6m (\$6.5m)

\$195m

Penn Entertainment's investment to relocate Boomtown Casino & Hotel New Orleans riverboat operations to land



\$4.6m

Amount the MGM Resorts Foundation has granted to 211 organisations

THIS WEEK'S EXECUTIVE ROUND-UP: ALLWYN, POLYMARKET & MORE...

The numbers don't lie, and this week **The Lottery Corporation's (TLC)** full-year 2026 financial report for the period ending 30 June 2026 highlighted a poor overall performance amid weak jackpots. Overall, TLC's revenue fell 2.7% year-on-year to AU\$3.58bn (US\$2.53bn) for the 12-month period, with EBITDA before significant items decreasing 1.8% to AU\$736.1m and net profit after tax before significant items falling 6.3% to AU\$342.5m. Indeed, statutory net profit, including AU\$57.9m in significant items, also declined 22.1% to AU\$284.6m. This year marked the first since FY 2021 with no AU\$100m Powerball jackpot, with Oz Lotto failing to reach AU\$50m for the first time since FY 2017.

Elsewhere, **Allwyn UK** unveiled the appointment of a new **Interim CEO** this week, with Andria Vidler set to be succeeded by **Phil Walker** after three years in the top job. Vidler will remain at the operator until late October in an advisory capacity to assist with the transition, with Walker set to step into the position from 7 September. He brings plenty of industry experience to the role, including senior stints at Ladbrokes Coral, William Hill and 888. It remains unclear how long the interim period will be; however, Walker is set to draw an enhanced focus on digital implementation and moving Allwyn UK into its next growth phase.

Following an extended period of deliberation, **South Korean** authorities this week ordered local internet service providers to block access to **PolyMarket** for citizens in the nation. The Korean Communications Commission undertook an extended investigation into the prediction market platform, which subsequently concluded that its services constituted as illegal gambling services under the country's current laws. Arguments that the platform falls outside Korean jurisdiction because it no longer offers a Korean-language interface or accepts

payments in Korean won were also rejected by the Commission.

In the Swedish market, **ATG Trav och Galopp (ATG)** reported financial results from the first half of the calendar year, unveiling a 1% year-on-year revenue decline to SEK 2.89bn (\$303m) as weaker horseracing and sports betting activity outweighed growth from casino and its Danish operations. Net gaming revenue fell 2% to SEK 2.52bn. Horseracing NGR declined by 4%, while the operator's sports betting segment recorded a 7% reduction. Casino NGR increased by 15%. ATG's full interim report showed EBITDA of SEK 809m, compared with SEK 803m in the corresponding period. Operating profit rose 2% to SEK 687m and net income increased 3% to SEK 669m. The operating margin improved by one percentage point to 24%.

In the Baltics, **Lithuania** formally notified the **European Commission** of technical provisions relating to its proposed centralised player-card system amid broader gambling supervision reforms in the nation. The notification procedure provides the Commission, alongside other EU member states, a chance to examine technical rules before their adoption. The proposal outlines the mandatory adoption of player cards across land-based venues and remote gambling. Operators would have to connect their systems to a central platform containing player identification data, gambling limits and exclusion records.

Finally, despite continuing to record overall growth through July and early August, figures from **Macau's Government Tourism Office (MGTO)** the number of international visitors failed to meet Government targets over the summer. Indeed, officials have attributed the lack of growth in international arrivals to external factors such as geopolitical uncertainties and reduced flight capacity. Overall, however, visitor arrivals for July rose by 2% year-on-year, with first half of August visitors rising by 10%.

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KALSHI, NGCB, POLYMARKET & MORE...

AT A GLANCE

- Kalshi seeking federal intervention in Utah
- NGCB threatens daily fines over Kalshi
- Israeli officer investigated for insider trading
- Kalshi, Polymarket and affiliated companies sued in Baltimore

This week, **Kalshi** filed for an emergency injunction seeking federal intervention to prevent Utah from enforcing its gambling laws against the operator. The move follows a ruling earlier this month in which a federal judge determined that **Utah** has the authority to enforce its laws against Kalshi. Kalshi is seeking injunctive relief to protect its personnel from potential civil or criminal charges, while it awaits a 10th Circuit ruling on whether state enforcement is pre-empted by the Commodity Exchange Act.

Meanwhile, **Kalshi** is facing another regulatory battle in Nevada. The **Nevada Gaming Control Board (NGCB)** has threatened to fine the operator \$120,000 per day for failing to geo-fence Nevada users by the previous 12 August court-ordered deadline. State investigators reportedly managed to purchase contracts on prohibited events despite the restrictions. Apparently, the 'safeguards' could be bypassed by running an older version of the Kalshi app, not subject to geo-fencing. Kalshi has argued that investigators bypassed its controls by violating federal law and misrepresenting their residency. The Control Board has dismissed those claims as "baseless."

Prediction market challenges extend beyond the US. In **Israel**, an **Air Force**

major is facing a possible breach of trust charge after allegedly using inside knowledge to trade **Polymarket** contracts linked to military strikes in Iran and Yemen. The officer has been called to a pre-indictment hearing. Prosecutors will make a final charging decision after considering his response. Authorities have not disclosed the contracts, amounts traded or whether the officer made a profit.

The **City of Baltimore** (Maryland) and its Mayor, Brandon Scott, sued **Kalshi, Polymarket and affiliated companies**, alleging that they operate unlicensed sports betting platforms. The lawsuits claim the platforms allow residents to wager on outcomes and players, without the licences, taxation and protection requirements imposed on regulated sportsbooks.



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THE WEEK IN QUOTES

EUROPEAN REG

ROUND-UP

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HUNGARY, TURKEY, & MORE...

AT A GLANCE

- Hungary tightens its AML rules for operators
- Turkey introduces court-ordered addiction treatment
- North Macedonia sharpens integrity rules

European regulation took steps forward this week as **Hungary's Supervisory Authority for Regulated Activities (SZTFH)** published a new decree tightening anti-money laundering (AML) obligations. The rules apply to land-based casinos, cardrooms and online operators. Indeed, these revised obligations formally take effect on 20 August and demand that operators must consider the size and structure of their business, the nature of their product's game mechanics and further considerations when conducting risk assessments. Operators will also have to examine customer transaction patterns and strengthen their KYC procedures.

In the Mediterranean, **Turkey** formally introduced new laws this week to allow for gambling addiction treatment on children who lack criminal responsibility. Law No. 7593 – or the Child Protection Law Amendment – creates a series of child-specific security measures for children in judicial proceedings who are found not to have criminal responsibility. One measure covers gambling alongside other behavioural addictions that pose a danger to a child's health.

Moving Northwest in **North Macedonia**, the nation's Ministry of Finance this week adopted new regulations related to the validity and integrity of gambling operators. New obligations outline the documentation required to verify the reputation of all legal licence applicants to operate a casino, betting shop, slot or bingo hall – following recently introduced laws around games of chance in the nation. All in all, a busy week for European regulation...

By voluntarily aligning around a common, enforceable set of standards, ROGA member operators are demonstrating their commitment to responsible marketing and to strengthening consumer protections across the regulated industry.

ROGA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JENNIFER SHATLEY
ON THE RELEASE OF THE ASSOCIATION'S
MARKETING AND ADVERTISING CODE

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KEVIN NEPHEW, SENECA RESORTS & CASINOS
PRESIDENT AND CEO, DISCUSSES THE \$47M
SENECA NIAGARA HOTEL ROOM RENOVATION

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THE WEEK IN QUOTES

AUSTRALIA

ROUND-UP

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ACMA, VGCCC & MORE...

AT A GLANCE

- ACMA to run national advert opt-out register
- VGCCC unveils three-year RG tech strategy
- TLC accused of lobbying for foreign-matched lottery ban

A busy week for regulation Down Under saw **Australia's Coalition** back plans for a new register that would allow players to block gambling advertisements across participating online platforms. The national advertising opt-out register is reportedly set to be run by the **Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)** and comes as part of wider reforms in the nation's market. The register is not expected to go live until 2027, when the gambling reforms become operational.

In additional player protection news, the **Victoria Gambling and Casino Control**

Commission (VGCCC) this week unveiled a new three-year strategy to introduce new technology, data and harm reduction techniques. More specifically, an enhanced focus on intelligence and early intervention will be implemented under Strategy 2029, as the regulator looks to redirect additional resources towards areas in the region that have reported inflated levels of harm.

Elsewhere, in the wake of a new proposed bill that seeks to ban foreign-matched lotteries, the **Lottery Office** has accused **The Lottery Corporation (TLC)** of lobbying Australia's Labor Government. The proposed prohibition appears in the Gambling Reform Bill 2026 and would prevent The Lottery Office from continuing its main online lottery model, as it defines foreign-matched lotteries as products whose prizes are determined by an overseas draw. Other news saw Tim Poole (no, no that one) promoted within TLC.

I'm delighted to join the team at Gambling.com as their Head of Smarter Gambling. It mattered to me to understand exactly how they go about promoting gambling before I said yes.

FORMER MASTERMIND CHAMPION SHAUN WALLACE SPEAKS ON HIS APPOINTMENT AS GAMBLING.COM'S HEAD OF SMARTER GAMBLING

I look forward to getting to know all the new colleagues, and together we take on the important task of creating good conditions for a functioning Swedish gambling market.

PETER KNUTSSON BEGINS HIS TENURE AS SPELINSPEKTIONEN DIRECTOR GENERAL

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THE HOUSE JUST OPENED A TRADING DESK

This week, CreedRoomz became the latest supplier to bet that punters would rather feel like Warren Buffett than James Bond.

Its new release, Crypto Market, drops players into 10-second live-dealer rounds styled as crypto trading sessions, complete with a provably fair RNG engine, a mobile-first “trading terminal” interface and payouts of up to 99%.

It's slick, fast and unmistakably of-the-moment – a live casino title built for an audience just as comfortable staring at a candlestick chart as a card table.

This is certainly no accident, either. As CreedRoomz's Senior Product Manager Aghasi Grigoryan put it, the title represents a “natural progression of the trading-as-gaming category” – and the timing looks shrewd.

What's happening is a broader evolution sweeping through live casino, one that began roughly two years ago when Evolution launched Stock Market, a crash game where, instead of watching a plane fly off the screen, you watch a simulated share price wobble up or down. Different chart, same dopamine hit.

For a while, that felt like a novelty, but it's starting to seem more and more like the future.

Over the past 12 months, prediction markets have detonated into the mainstream. Kalshi and Polymarket combined for roughly \$50bn in monthly global trading volume by mid-2026, reportedly eclipsing the entire US legal sportsbook market – evidence, if any were needed, of just how much appetite there is for products that blend trading and betting.

“It's slick, fast and unmistakably of-the-moment – a live casino title built for an audience just as comfortable staring at a candlestick chart as a card table”

Suppliers have clearly noticed, and CreedRoomz's crypto pivot taps into

that same cultural moment, giving live casino its own credible foothold with a crossover audience that has gone mainstream fast.

But where does it go from here?

Expect more hybridisation, not less. Crypto Market's mobile-trading aesthetic is an obvious play for younger, terminally online users who already think in charts and tickers as readily as reels and paylines – the same demographic prediction markets have been drawing in.

Crypto Market is an already-licensed live casino game with a transparent RNG engine and a stated RTP, openly wrapped in trading-inspired packaging rather than trying to be mistaken for something it isn't – a regulatory footing that could be a real asset as the wider category matures.

Two years ago, a live casino game asking players to guess if a stock goes up or down felt like a novelty. Now it's a genre – and CreedRoomz has just given it a crypto edge. Don't bet against more suppliers trading their dealer's chips for a ticker tape going forward; the house, it turns out, is bullish.



COREY GOODMAN
CEO
NorthStar Gaming
Canada

Goodman steps into the permanent CEO role after serving in an Interim capacity since December 2025. A NorthStar Gaming Co-Founder, he previously led corporate development and legal affairs.



JAIME VIVES PINEDO
President
Coljuegos
Colombia

Pinedo takes on the regulatory role, bringing extensive private-sector experience from Grupo Biocosta and the Santa Marta Chamber of Commerce in Magdalena. He will now lead Coljuegos, overseeing efforts to combat illegal operations and the Colombia market as a whole.



TOM POHLMAN
President
Bally's Atlantic City
US

Pohlman joins the operator after most recently serving as SVP and General Manager of Golden Nugget Atlantic City. He brings over 20 years of experience in casino operations and leadership, succeeding George Papanier.



KRISTIN BISIGNANO
Chief People & Culture Officer
Interblock
US

After most recently serving as Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer in the public transport sector, **Bisignano** steps into the role with more than two decades of people leadership experience. She will lead the supplier's global HR strategy.



CHRIS ARMES
EVP of Gaming Technologies
Veikkaus
Finland

Armes brings technology and operational experience from High 5 Games, Gaming Innovation Group and Scientific Games Digital. His areas of expertise include scalable digital platforms, cybersecurity and the use of AI in player protection.



XENIA OLAJOSOVA
Group Media Director
Allwyn
Switzerland

Stepping into the position, **Olajosova** brings senior media and marketing experience from BD, Galderma, Duracell and Procter & Gamble. She will lead Allwyn's global media strategy, supporting digital growth and marketing impact.



US

There was an unprecedented amount of action in the US this week... from regulatory shifts to financial reports and everything in between



BRAZIL

Lottery updates, licensing documents, Pixbet suspensions, sports collaborations and yet more bills to ban betting. No such thing as quiet in Brazil...



CANADA

A new NorthStar CEO, OLG collaborations, Lottery modernisations, Alberta updates and more in Canada this week



CHILE

New casino licences and a corruption case made headlines, alongside a proposed TV ad ban and a failed casino tender process



ARGENTINA

Action in Argentina's land-based sector came alongside new prevention programs and legal updates this week



COLOMBIA

Coljuegos unveiled a new President this week, as well as weighing temporary earthquake relief for victims

NEW JERSEY JULY REVENUE: LAND-BASED VS DIGITAL

- Land-based was New Jersey’s key revenue driver through July, reporting \$304.2m in revenue, up 7.1% year-on-year
- Caesars experienced the sharpest revenue uptick of 34.6%, while Borgata generated the highest revenue figure of \$81.57m

LAND-BASED		
OPERATOR	REVENUE (\$M)	% CHANGE YEAR-ON-YEAR
Caesars	25.29	+34.60
Ocean Casino	52.18	+20.98
Harrah’s	22.03	+7.85
Hard Rock	57.34	+4.03
Golden Nugget	13.36	+3.68
Borgata	81.57	+2.07
Tropicana	23.31	+1.80
Resorts	16.93	+0.60
Bally’s AC	12.18	-13.73
Total	304.21	+7.07

- New Jersey’s July iGaming revenue reached \$276.9m, rising 11.9% in comparison to the year before
- The state’s highest earner was Golden Nugget, who reported a revenue of \$85.32m, while Hard Rock saw a revenue rise of 42.54%
- Will iGaming get to a stage where it catches and consistently outperforms land-based, or will Atlantic City always stay king?

IGAMING		
OPERATOR	REVENUE (\$M)	% CHANGE YEAR-ON-YEAR
Hard Rock	22.51	+42.54
Golden Nugget	85.32	+23.46
Borgata	60.58	+10.43
Bally’s AC	20.76	+10.41
Caesars	27.74	+6.22
Resorts	55.19	-0.81
Ocean Casino	4.88	-1.40
Total	276.95	+11.99

GGI
FRIDAY

GUEST

INTERVIEW

HASSAN PEYMANI
INDUSTRY DIRECTOR, iGAMING
CREATEFUTURE

Peymani explores why iGaming can't afford to wait until 2027 on the AI Act

The EU's AI Act is not something sitting on the regulatory horizon anymore. As of August, the majority of the legislation comes into effect, and authorities will begin enforcing its requirements.

This includes new transparency requirements around AI-generated content and interactions. It will require people to know when they're interacting with AI or seeing content that has been generated or manipulated by AI, while in-game imagery and any marketing or promotional materials created by AI must carry visible and machine-readable markers.

Other provisions around prohibited practices, AI literacy and general-purpose AI models are already in force. However, much of the iGaming industry believes it has until 2027 before the EU's AI Act becomes a real concern for them – that most of its activities classify their AI usage as the 'high risk' type where the timetable has been pushed back a year to give organisations more time to prepare.

That's a dangerous misconception.

The delay does not mean the entire industry has another year before it needs to act. Nor should operators assume that every system they use falls outside the scope of the legislation until 2027.

More importantly, the work required to use AI safely and accountably cannot be completed in the weeks before a regulatory deadline. Operators need to understand where AI is already being used, what data informs its decisions, who is responsible for its outcomes and whether those decisions can be explained, challenged and reversed.

It's a clear shift from AI technology as an innovation challenge to an operational and governance one.

GREATER RISK MEANS GREATER SCRUTINY

It's worth noting that some of the AI systems being used by gaming operators will not fall within the Act's highest-risk categories. AI-enabled gaming products, marketing tools and many virtual assistants, for example, should not automatically be considered high-risk systems.

But where the risk goes up, so does the attention.

A bespoke loyalty offer based on a player's stated preferences and previous activity may be a valid form of personalisation. But where an algorithm identifies signs of financial vulnerability or compulsive behaviour and uses that information to encourage longer or more intensive play, the operator risks crossing from personalisation into exploitation.

An operator should be able to explain why an offer was made, what information informed it, and what safeguards prevented the system from targeting someone showing markers of harm.

This is not only about satisfying regulators, but also maintaining the trust of players and ensuring that commercial objectives do not override the responsibility to protect them.

YOU CAN'T OUTSOURCE RESPONSIBILITY

The rush to introduce AI technology throughout iGaming is understandable. It is a relatively young, highly technology enabled and fiercely competitive industry. When one operator introduces a new solution or customer experience, others move quickly because nobody wants to be left behind.

It is also very transaction volume-heavy, particularly at peak moments like a Super Bowl or a FIFA World Cup final, and AI undoubtedly comes into its own when managing heavy data loads.

But the AI Act is going to force companies in the sector to take a step back. Whether a system falsely flags a VIP, misses a marker of player harm or makes a flawed automated decision, accountability ultimately remains with the operator, regardless of who built the technology.

Explainability is therefore becoming a business imperative as AI becomes embedded in operational decision-making. The 'black box' systems that some operators are buying in and adding to their tech stack create a new layer of regulatory, reputational and commercial risk, making transparency and auditability just as important as performance.

Operators need to take a wider view around their people, platforms, places and products and how AI can help weave them together. And responsibility and accountability will form an integral part of that picture. The AI Act has thrown this into sharp focus, but it's a road they should already be travelling.



COMPANY	NEW PARTNER	VERTICAL	REGION
Fanatics	NFL	Sports betting	US
Ainsworth	Aristocrat	Land-based	Australia
Hollywoodbets	Brentford FC	Sponsorship	UK
Relax Gaming	Imagine Live	iGaming	Global
Winamax	Olympique Lyonnais	Sports betting	France
DigiPlus	Teneo	Consultancy	Philippines
SCCG	ClashX	iGaming	US
Hub88	NeverEnding	iGaming	Europe
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