

# G2E keynote panel focused on technological advancements and expansion

Technological advancements and the international expansion of gaming dominated the discussion at Wednesday's G2E keynote panel as international industry leaders gave their insights on what will define the next generation of global gaming. Moderated by American Gaming Association (AGA) President and CEO Frank J. Fahrenkopf, Jr., the panel also discussed the continued importance of responsible gaming initiatives in the industry's ongoing evolution.

Panelists for the keynote session included Peter Dean, CBE, chairman of the British Gambling Commission; Terry Lanni, chairman and CEO of MGM MIRAGE; T.J. Matthews, CEO of International Game Technology; Paul Oneile, CEO of Aristocrat Technologies; and Mark Yoseloff, chairman, president and CEO of Shuffle Master.

From server-based games to RFID tracking technology to Internet gaming, the industry leaders on Wednesday's panel agreed technology is changing the way customers enjoy gaming entertainment and the way gaming companies conduct business. They emphasized, however, that new technologies on the gaming floor will not be adopted and become pervasive unless they can offer an improved entertainment experience for the customer.

„With server-based gaming, we're moving from a stand-alone [slot machine] environment to a network environment," said Matthews. „New technologies such as this need to take into account what customers are looking for and how this new environment can deliver an improved entertainment experience."

Oneile pointed to multi-player slot machines as one of the new products that is designed to integrate into the new network

environment. „Community games are much more than just an experiment,“ he said. „We’re already seeing more community involvement in general, and I expect that will continue.“

New technology also is changing the way table games are played, according to Yoseloff, who expects table games to experience explosive growth in the coming years, from 47,000 legal gaming tables today to 66,000 five years from now around the world. While new electronic and interactive table game products now on the market have not yet seen widespread adoption in the U.S., Yoseloff stated that both the Australian and Asian gaming markets have embraced them. Particularly in Macau, which experts predict will gain approximately 8,000 tables in the next few years, electronic table games could help to ease the enormous staffing needs the added tables will create, he said.

When asked how the international expansion of gaming will affect the U.S. market, Lanni offered positive news. „I think international expansion is going to add to our industry here,“ he said. „As the industry becomes more global, we’re going to see an increasing number of international visitors here at home.“

Fahrenkopf pointed to Britain’s approval for its first „super casino“ in the country as an example of the international expansion currently under way. According to Dean, the U.K. has created a panel to determine where the new casino will be built; the panel’s decision will be reported in January. Once the location has been decided, a competition will be held to determine what operator will be selected to build and run the property.

Dean also touched on Britain’s efforts surrounding Internet gambling. „We firmly believe that the way to move forward [with Internet gambling] is to regulate,“ he said.

After pointing to the contradictions in the Unlawful Internet

Gambling Enforcement Act of 2006, which was signed into law by President Bush in October 2006, Lanni added that regulated Internet gambling might actually have positive implications for problem gamblers. „We will probably be better able to identify problem gamblers online because of the registration and identification processes,“ he said. „It’s harder to identify these people at properties because they can move to different machines.“

Mark Yoseloff talked about the role of those programs in fulfilling their responsibility to all their customers. „We have a responsibility to problem gamblers,“ Yoseloff said, „and we also have a responsibility to the remaining 99 percent of people to provide a great entertainment experience.“