How to Capture the Growing U.S. Fantasy and Sports Betting Community

Sports Innovation

Data Strategies for Market Expansion, Fan Acquisition, and Customer Retention

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It's been four years since sports betting was legalized in the United States, and there's still a tremendous amount of energy and focus on this market opportunity. The people who understand this market know this isn't about winning dollars from sportsbooks; it's about sports media rights. The thinking goes, if fans have skin in the game, they will stay tuned into blow-out games, niche sports programming, and non-traditional sporting events.

This promise has fueled massive growth for the industry. Eyepopping bets in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York are seemingly breaking records every month. State governments are salivating over tax revenues, sports leagues are bending over backwards to accommodate new betting products and sponsors, and media companies are awash in sports betting advertising. But that has led to a crowded market. Even as mergers and acquisitions drive consolidation, there's still a wave of new entrants moving into the space.

DraftKings and FanDuel—early daily fantasy leaders demonstrated their willingness to spend what it takes to hold onto their early lead in most states, and our data shows they've done a strong job converting those daily fantasy sports (DFS) consumers to sports bettors once states legalize online gambling.

In-person casinos aren't waving a white flag yet, and now with the rise of cross-channel betting (both in casinos and online), gaming companies, like Caesars, Hard Rock, and MGM, factor heavily into the competitive landscape. The American Gaming Association (AGA) reported 2021 had a record-high commercial gaming revenue, being "driven by higher spending per visit (in-person) in many states and despite lower overall visitation compared to 2019." While responsible gambling initiatives and lessons from Europe warn about unfettered growth, we expect more growth in the coming years as more states legalize online gambling and sports betting products evolve to welcome fantasy players that bet socially. Fan spending patterns provide early indications that there's still a lot of growth in this market.

So, where is this growth coming from exactly? Not all markets are equal, and data shows clear differences in state-by-state adoption and market share figures. These distinctions should inform partnership and marketing strategies, while also informing state budgets and revenue forecasts. Betting outlets would love the chance to be in every market, especially from an online perspective, as retail betting comes with geographic challenges. At the time of writing this report, 30 states plus Washington, D.C., have live and legal sports betting, 5 states have legalized it but are not operational, 3 states are active, and 12 states have either no or dead legislation.

The entertainment organizations that own retail and online channels have a powerful opportunity to win the consumers who spend the most: cross-channel bettors. This means experiential marketing, in-venue activations, and more stadium-based sportsbooks are coming. It's still a rapidly evolving market, but regulatory and financial data help provide visibility in fan behavior. The sports organizations that use this data well will avoid overspending on marketing campaigns and efficiently acquire market share. The others will spend blindly and hope for the best. It's game on.

# Messa From Our Chief Data Officer

#### When I was done reading this report, I was conflicted.

On one hand, I see from our data what lots of other people see: a sports betting market primed to engage a younger population of sports fans in new ways, a product category that lets fans have more skin in the game, and almost certainly, a way to increase tune-in to live sports.

On the other hand, I see data that shows a market tapped out and exhausted. I see that the two market leaders have done everything they can to solidify their lead, spending huge amounts of money on marketing, promotions, and buying up competitors. The skeptic in me looks at the data and says, "They've beaten each other into submission." Once all the online fantasy users are converted over, there's not a lot more room for growth. These new entrants are probably too late. The casino owners have a right to win, but the hill ahead is really steep.

Here's the thing, both points of view are probably right. But it almost doesn't matter. The biggest issue staring this market in the face is accessibility. Nowhere in our data do we see strong signals of the sportsbooks expanding beyond a core base of consumers who already bet. In fact, our state-by-state analysis argues strongly that most adoption is tied to icasino games and less to sports betting. So what? That's a problem for leagues and states. Leagues are counting on general sports fans and prop betting to drive viewership, attendance, and media rights. States are banking on the market expanding for aggressive tax revenue forecasts.

This report took us months to put together because we agonized over the conflicting signals: high growth in deposits versus few new users; retention and loyalty versus slow acquisition; and legal expansion versus vendor consolidation.

I welcome you to read this report and come up with your own conclusions. We're here for the debate. Our clients care deeply about this segment of the market, so we're eager to get your thoughts once you've had a chance to review our findings. I look forward to continuing this discussion.

Josh Walker

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**The Research:** Our Methodology and Key Definitions

Ridden

### **How** Sports Innovation Lab Conducted This Research

- Where Does Our Sports Betting Data Come From? Our data tracks anonymous debit and credit purchasing information for 10 million United States residents, as well as online and mobile search and social media behavior. Our sample represents roughly 3%–5% of the country's spending population. From this robust data set, we are able to search for purchasing trends as long as a debit or credit transaction occurred. For the purpose of this report, "debit" transactions reflect deposits into a betting outlet, while "credit" transactions indicate a withdrawal from a betting account.
- What Does Customer Spend Reflect? The sample size we are tracking is at the brand level, e.g., DraftKings, MGM, and Caesars. This means we do not see individual transaction details. For example, we are not able to determine if money spent with a casino or online sportsbook is for sports betting, daily fantasy, or casino games. We use other methods to determine whether a consumer is a sports fan or simply a consumer who visits casinos and bets online. This improves our understanding of who these fans are, what sports they follow, and what brands they spend with.
- Our Methodology for Analysis: The analysis in this report will cover high-level metrics at the state level. Given that sports betting and daily fantasy are controlled at the state level, our analysis stays at that level of detail throughout the report. We use legalization dates to extrapolate differences between daily fantasy spend and sports betting, projecting potential value across those markets that have yet to legalize online or sports betting.
- Validated and informed by other public sources, including the American Gaming Association, Legal Sports Report, The Action Network, and more.

<sup>1</sup> "State of the States 2022: The AGA Analysis of the Commercial Casino Industry." American Gaming Association (AGA), 11 May 2022, https://www.americangaming.org/wp-content/ uploads/2022/05/AGA-State-of-the-States-2022.pdf.

#### Commercial Casino Gaming Consumer Spend<sup>1</sup>

State	2020 Spend (millions)	2021 Spend (millions)	YoY Change
Arizona	-	\$161.1	-
Arkansas	\$355.5	\$564.8	58.9%
Colorado	\$636.1	\$1,226.3	92.8%
Connecticut	-	\$78.5	-
Delaware	\$340.3	\$483.2	42.0%
D.C.	\$13.5	\$26.8	97.8%
Florida	\$341.3	\$649.5	90.3%
Illinois	\$743.4	\$1,712.4	130.3%
Indiana	\$1,709.5	\$2,725	59.4%
lowa	\$1,167.7	\$1,861.3	59.4%
Kansas	\$299.5	\$403.5	34.7%
Louisiana	\$1,658.5	\$2,380.1	43.5%
Maine	\$71.4	\$146.9	105.9%
Maryland	\$1,225.9	\$1,925.6	57.1%
Massachusetts	\$551.9	\$1,020.8	84.9%
Michigan	\$638.7	\$2,700.3	322.8%
Mississippi	\$1,795.2	\$2,669.2	48.7%
Missouri	\$1,263.8	\$1,896.6	50.1%
Montana	\$2.4	\$6.4	171.1%
Nevada	\$7873.3	\$1,3429.9	70.6%
New Hampshire	\$23.6	\$43.8	85.4%
New Jersey	\$2,881.4	\$4,737.1	64.4%
New Mexico	\$51.8	\$216.2	317.1%
New York	\$1,184.7	\$2,712.7	129.0%
Ohio	\$1,440.3	\$2,310.3	60.4%
Oklahoma	\$101.7	\$145.8	43.3%
Oregon	\$20.1	\$30.4	51.4%
Pennsylvania	\$2,695.9	\$4,830.8	79.2%
Rhode Island	\$326.2	\$594.1	82.1%
South Dakota	\$105.3	\$146.1	38.7%
Tennessee	\$27.1	\$239.8	784.1%
Virginia	-	\$285.9	-
West Virginia	\$435.5	\$668	53.4%
Wyoming	-	\$4	-
United States	\$29,981.7	\$53,033.2	76.9%



## Defining the Bettor Community:

#### How the Different Kinds of **"Bettors"** Behave

As seen in the next table, the "bettor" community is defined as consumers who display spending habits towards in-person casino betting (retail) and those who gamble online with daily fantasy sports, sportsbooks, and online casino games. We isolate these channels to determine how these consumers differ, but we also see how spend changes when bettors go to casinos *and* bet online. This bettor is the most valuable—the "holy grail"—to the industry, more than doubling the annual spend of any other sports betting consumer segment.

In our sample of 10 million U.S. consumers, we see the day consumers deposit or withdraw money from their accounts.<sup>2</sup> This does not reflect when they bet or what they bet on. In some ways, this is more interesting, because it reflects the amount of money in the market at any given time and the pent up buying power of different bettors.

<sup>2</sup>Analysis in this report only includes transactions towards retail and online betting outlets between January 1, 2019 - June 30, 2022. For fan behavior that goes back to 2016, please contact infosportsilab.com.



<sup>3</sup> "State of the States 2022: The AGA Analysis of the Commercial Casino Industry." *American Gaming Association (AGA)*, 11 May 2022, https://www.americangaming.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/AGA-State-of-the-States-2022.pdf.

<sup>4</sup> Wyld, David. "What the Surprisingly Youthful Demographics of Sports Betting Portends for the Future." *Medium, Modern Business*, 27 Dec. 2021, https://medium.com/modern-business/theyoung-demo-of-online-sports-betting-c595f7dcefaa.

<sup>5</sup> Lombardo, John, and David Broughton. "Going Gray: Sports TV Viewers Skew Older." Sports Business Journal, 5 June 2017, https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Journal/ Issues/2017/06/05/Research-and-Ratings/Viewership-trends.aspx.

# Segmenting the Providers:

#### Online and Retail

Within the bettor community, we have three segments: retail bettors, who place their bets in-person at casinos; online bettors, who place their bets on sportsbook apps; and cross-channel bettors, who place bets at physical casinos or sportsbooks *and* on digital sportsbooks, too. We're also able to see which general sports fans (GSF) place bets, and this slice of the community may represent fan acquisition opportunities.

According to AGA survey data, "The average visitor to a landbased commercial casino in 2021 remained notably younger than prior to the pandemic. In 2021, the mean age of a casino patron was 43.6 years old, versus 49.6 in 2019 and 48.6 in 2018."<sup>3</sup> In addition, research continues to show youth in online sports betting, with the average age of online sports bettors being 38.1 years old.<sup>4</sup>

Similar to the rest of the entertainment industry, attracting a younger and more active fan base is a priority. According to a study by *Sports Business Journal*, the lowest average age among major professional sports fans is 40 years old, held by Major League Soccer.<sup>5</sup> With a younger population, online gambling provides an opportunity for sports and entertainment to get younger, more engaged fans through partnerships. Bringing together in-person and online bettors, in turn creating more cross-channel bettors, is a serious goal for these outlets, a topic we'll dive deeper into throughout the report.

#### Online Gambling

Barstool Sportsbook bet365 Betfair **BetMGM BetRivers** Betway Caesar Online Deposits Caesars Sportsbook DraftKings FanDuel FOX Bet Game Play Network Hard Rock Digital partypoker PointsBet theScore Bet Unibet WynnBET

#### **Retail Bettors**

Beau Rivage Bellagio Borgata Circus Circus Las Vegas Excalibur Gold Strike Luxor Mandalay Bay MGM Grand MGM National Harbor MGM Springfield The Mirage The Venetian Resort Wynn Resorts

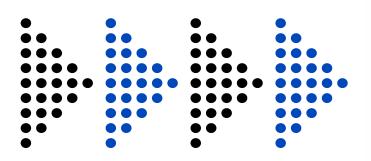
**The Takeaway:** Cross-Channel Bettors Are Gold

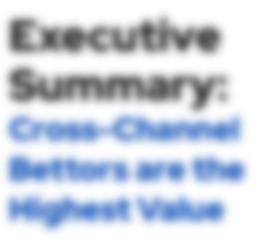
# Which Consumers Are In Focus

In this report, we break down the sports betting landscape by channel and betting behavior. These are the relevant consumer segments we focus on:

Segments with- in the Bettor Community	Definition	Sample Count
Bettors	Consumers who have spent money with any betting operator.	826,356
Online-Only Bettors	Consumers who have spent money online with sports- books but never spent with retail casinos.	539,224
Retail-Only Bettors	Consumers who have spent money in casinos and never spent money with digital sportsbooks.	234,496
Cross-Channel Bettors	Consumers who have spent money in both casinos and online sportsbooks.	52,636

Since 2019, there are over 800,000 unique bettors in our data set. Over the years, we saw the maximum number of unique consumers occur in 2021 with 467,000 bettors, and we anticipate 2022 to show even higher numbers. Marketing and promotions have enabled outlets to cast a wide net toward customer acquisition, but this could pose an issue for trying to maintain dedicated consumers.

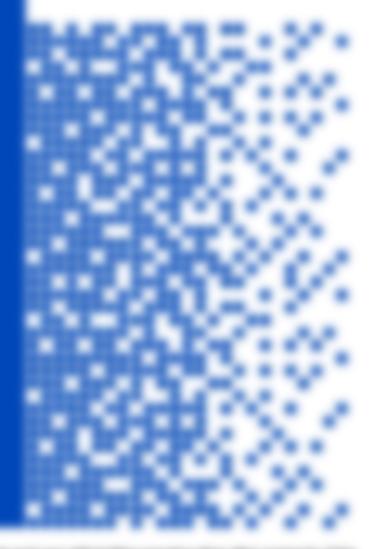








Focus on Acquiring the Most Valuable Consumer: The Cross-Channel Bettor



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#### The Sports Betting Community Is Growing Quickly



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## M&A Activity and Market Spend on Betting Continues at a Rapid Clip

# Betting vs. Gamification: Revenue Diversification Strategies



# The Reminder: Sports Betting Fuels Media Rights

## Sports Leagues Are All In on New Revenue Sources

#### But Sports Betting Is Primarily a Media Acquisition Strategy

#### The Most Valuable Segment is Clear: Cross-Channel Bettors Bhould Be the Terget

# The Community: How Sports Bettors Behave

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### How Cross-Channel Bettors' Spend Varies by Fandom?

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## Other Than Cross-Channel, Who Has the Most **"Top Bettors"** in Its Community?

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## NBA Has the Greatest Share of

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## A Smart Combination: UFC and NBA Promotions



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The Competitive Landscape: Sportsbooks Positioning In a Cross-Channel World

### Early Daily Fantasy Platforms Have the Edge but Lack a Broad Retail Footprint



# BetMGM's Third Spot Is Notable, **Followed by Caesars**

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### Effects of DFS on Conversion in Legalized States Means They're Largely Converting Existing Customers

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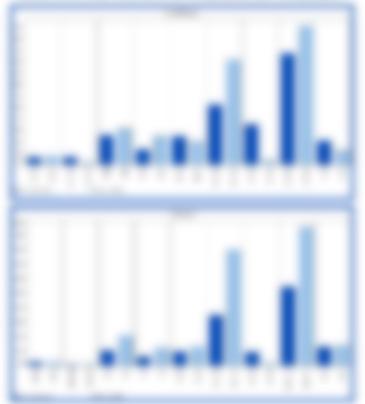
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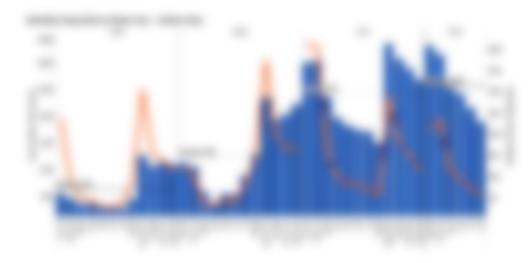
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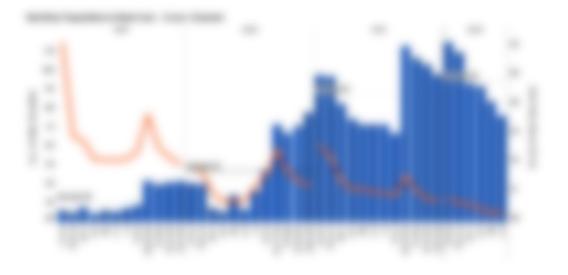
### Momentum or Stagnation?



Online-Only Bettors



## Momentum or Stagnation? Cross-Channel Bettors

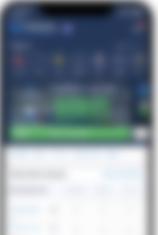


















# The Growth: Where New Bettors Will Come From

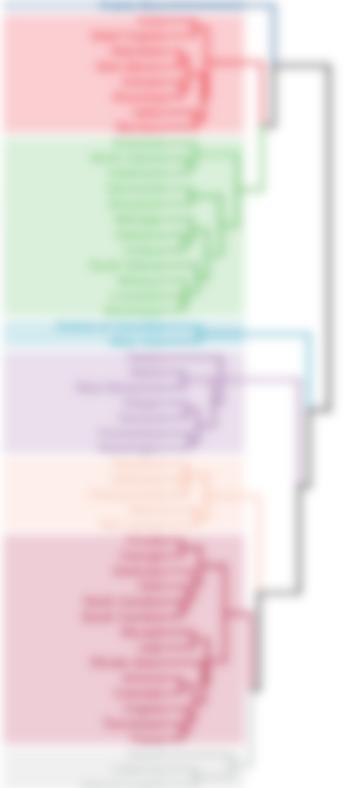
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## How to Identify High Potential Geographic Markets

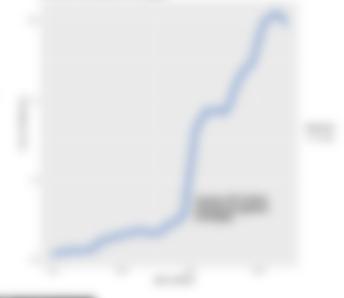
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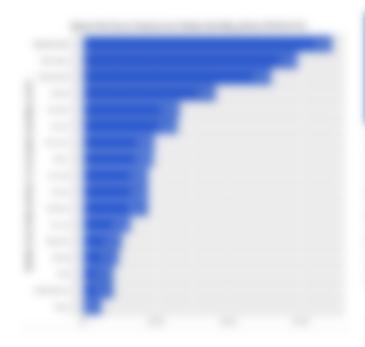
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# Where is There Cross-Channel Bettor Potential?



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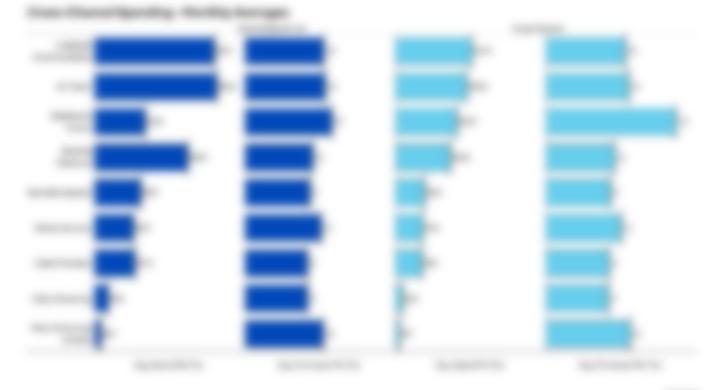


# The Advice: How to Win the Fluid Fan

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## What Else Do Cross-Channel Bettors Buy?



# Frequency of Transactions: Cross-Channel





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#### You Can Expect Sportsbooks to Become Media Channels and Media Channels to Become Sportsbooks

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#### If You Found This Report

#### Valuable, Join Now:



from Sports Innovation Lab

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  Briefing recordings



#### A 45-minute, interactive session that includes:

- The Big Question to answer
- Member-only data and insights
- Expert guest speakers
- Moderated discussion and "Ask the Analyst"

#### What value will I take away?

- An answer to: "Who are the most valuable fans, and what are the most innovative approaches to acquiring them?"
- We go beyond the hype to look at real market signals in fan data, and we bring you the most progressive voices from across (and beyond) the industry. **This data is not available anywhere else.**
- A valuable network. Through our interactive briefings, guest speakers, and in-person events, you'll build an invaluable community of deal-makers and thought leaders.



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