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The digital revolution: use of internet gambling in Australia

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The digital revolution: Use of Internet gambling in Australia

Sally Gainsbury, Nerilee Hing, Alex Blaszczynski, & Robert Wood

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Internet gambling expenditure is increasing globally

- Internet gambling represents 9% of global gambling market

**Gross Gaming yield (AUD$ million)**
Key growth factors

- Cheap, fast broadband connections
- Mobile technology
- Increase use of and trust in sites
- Safe, secure online payment systems
- Increased marketing
- Bonuses and incentives
Features of Internet gambling

- Accessible & convenient
- Solitary or social play
- Players create a persona
- High degree of customer choice
- Any type of level of play possible
- Large pool of players
- Competitive odds and player return
- Account information available
- Vast amount of information to guide bets
Regulation & Availability

- Interactive Gambling Act 2001 under review

- 2,642 online gambling sites, 92% available to Australians

- Australia 14th largest provider of online gambling

- National prevalence study underway led by CGER (Hing, Gainsbury, Blaszczynski, Wood, & Lubman)
Australian gambling participation

- 60%
- 39%
- 24%
- 10%
- 4%
- 0%
Australian Internet gambling expenditure

Wagering $600m

Casino, bingo, EGMs $541m

Lottery, skill games?

Poker $249m
Potential concerns

- Adolescents & young adults
  - Familiar with technology and Internet
  - Use practice sites
  - Can circumvent restrictions

- Problem gambling
  - Features may facilitate risky play
  - Research suggests higher prevalence of PGs online
Australian Gambling Survey

Test your gambling knowledge:
Click Here to take the online gambling survey

Conducted By: The University of Sydney, Southern Cross University

centre for gambling education & research
Australian Gambling Survey

Have you ever had an issue with your gambling?

For some people gambling can change from entertainment and pleasure and become an issue. When that happens, gambling can play too big a role in a person’s life and hurt them, their family, friends and the people who care for them.

If your gambling is causing issues in your life, you can take steps to change this. Talking about gambling with somebody you trust can reduce the stress that can cause you to continue to gamble. If you have an issue with gambling there is free, confidential professional help and support available.

Help for gamblers

- There are many ways you can take control
  - Self Help
  - Why do I gamble?
  - Practical tips
- Find help through Counselling
  - Gamblers’ Help
  - Immediate Help
- Find other ways to get help

Has a family member or friend ever had an issue with their gambling?

You cannot force someone to acknowledge that they have an issue with gambling but you can encourage them to seek professional help. If you’re not sure how to approach the situation, a counsellor can help point you in the right direction.

Help for family and friends

- Does someone care about have an issue with gambling?
  - Is there an issue?
  - Practical help
  - Parents
- There are some practical ways you can help
  - How can you help?
  - Practical tips
  - Strategies
- Find out more about what you can do

See how your gambling knowledge, attitudes and behaviour compares to other Australians:

Conducted by:

Northern Cross UNIVERSITY
All gambling behaviour
Internet gambling
Attitudes
Knowledge and beliefs
Problem Gambling Severity Index
Problem gambling & help seeking
Feedback
Demographics
Interactive feedback provided

Original interactive survey created by Wood & Williams (2010) University of Lethbridge
Participants

- 6,682 usable responses
- 64% total completion rate
- 86% male
- 46% married
- 59% employed full-time
- Mean age 45 years
- >50% from NSW & QLD
- 70% Internet gamblers
Internet vs. non-Internet gamblers – demographic characteristics

- Male
- Employed full-time
- Higher household income
- Married or co-habitating
- Not a homogeneous group

[Chart showing percentage of non-Internet gamblers and Internet gamblers by gender]

- Female:
  - Non-Internet gamblers: 26%
  - Internet gamblers: 7%

- Male:
  - Non-Internet gamblers: 74%
  - Internet gamblers: 93%
Internet vs. non-Internet gamblers – gambling behaviour

- Internet gamblers:
  - Participate in more forms of gambling
  - Gamble more frequently
  - Wager, play poker and Internet casino games weekly
  - Greater median expenditure for wagering

- Non-Internet gamblers:
  - Use EGMs weekly
  - Greater median expenditure for bingo and poker
Internet gamblers have significantly more positive attitudes towards gambling

- Gambling is not morally wrong
  - Non-Internet gamblers: 80%
  - Internet gamblers: 100%

- Gambling benefits > harms
  - Non-Internet gamblers: 10%
  - Internet gamblers: 50%
Internet gambling

- 50% gambling online before 2004
- Gamble online from home
- Gamble on computers
  - Minority mobile gambling

- Gamble online 12-6pm
  - 6pm-midnight

- Lottery and wagering on onshore sites

- Electronic payment increases spend for substantial minority
Perceived advantages of Internet gambling

1. Don’t have to leave the house
2. Availability/convenience
3. No crowds
4. No unpleasant people
5. Greater privacy & anonymity
6. More physically comfortable
7. Higher payout rates
Perceived disadvantages of Internet gambling

1. Too convenient
2. Easier to spend more money
3. More addictive
4. Poorer social atmosphere
5. Concerns about money/deposits
Internet vs. non-Internet gamblers – problem gambling

- Non-problem gambler
  - Non-Internet gamblers: 45%
  - Internet gamblers: 25%
- Low risk gambler
  - Non-Internet gamblers: 20%
  - Internet gamblers: 25%
- Moderate risk gambler
  - Non-Internet gamblers: 20%
  - Internet gamblers: 25%
- Possible problem gambler
  - Non-Internet gamblers: 15%
  - Internet gamblers: 15%
Internet Problem Gamblers

- Problems related to:
  - 1) Wagering
  - 2) EGMs
    - Both Internet and land-based gambling

- Majority of problems start after gambling online

- Internet PGs have disrupted sleep and eating
- Electronic payment → spend more
- Less likely to have sought help
Survey feedback

- Very useful: 20%
- Somewhat useful: 52%
- Not very useful: 19%
- Not at all useful: 9%
Conclusions

- Internet gamblers not homogenous group
- Differences between Internet and non-Internet gamblers
- Unique problems related to Internet gambling
- Need to consider wider patterns of behaviour
- Treatment & prevention programs required
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