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Sportsbook Innovations

By Paul Mrocza

With the advent of the online sportsbook more than a decade ago, the wagering landscape was forever changed. Suddenly, those running gaming ventures and those looking to put money on sporting events were provided with opportunities that up to that point had been unimaginable. You no longer had to travel to Vegas, walk to an Off-Track-Betting site or call your local bookie. Simple wagering became simple to do.

Over the years, online sportsbooks have grown in number and also services offered. It's a highly competitive field with companies vying for billions of dollars each year. Innovation is one manner by which each sportsbook has managed to create an individual identity. To survive and thrive the online sportsbook, an innovation itself born from the marriage of the Internet and gaming, had to continue to be creative and unique.

One of the latest developments in online wagering involves your cell phone and not your computer. The cell phone revolution continues to link consumers with various services that have little to nothing to do with speaking directly to another person. Some online sportsbooks are starting to offer betting opportunities via your mobile phone. No need to have access to a PC; you can place your bet, check lines or find out results via your cell or Personal Digital Assistant (PDA). The service itself is free and involves a simple download.

First-rate online sportsbooks are constantly searching for ways to create new interest and enliven the betting scene through unique wagering opportunities. A few years ago the If bet came into being. If bets vary from sportsbook to sportsbook and some sites don't offer them at all. But the basic If bet is made up of 2 to 5 straight bets, each of which is joined or bridged by an "if" clause.

With this type of wager in a 5-game If bet, the second bet is only processed "if" the first bet is won (or in some cases ends in a push or is canceled). The third bet is alive only if the second bet is a winner and so the string continues. However, let's say that the third bet loses; then that would mean that the final two wagers are pulled and the bettor conserves that cash, losing less than he or she would in a straight parlay.

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The If bet allows someone to wager on a lot of action while still retaining some control over the amount of money they bet. Unlike the parlay, this type of action is terminated once the bettor loses, thus saving him or her some cash.

The If bet has also morphed into the reverse bet. This is a series of If bets going in both directions—forward and reverse. Here's an example of a reverse bet that involves single action (meaning to pay off a team must win; there cannot be a tie). There are two parts to this wager. In the first part, you bet on the Chicago Bears (-8) \$110 to win \$100 and the Miami Dolphins (-175) \$110 to win \$63 and in the second part, you wager on the Miami Dolphins (-175) \$110 to win \$63 and the Chicago Bears (-8) \$110 to win \$100. If everything goes the way you want it to your wager of \$220 will result in a \$326 profit.

Here are four possible outcomes. If both the Bears and Dolphins win then you see \$163 on the first part and \$163 on the second part, for a total of \$326. If the Bears win and the Dolphins lose, then you'll

lose \$10 on the first part of the wager and \$110 on the second part, for a total loss of \$120. Finally, if the Dolphins win and the Bears lose, you'll lose \$110 on the first bet and \$47 on the second, for a total loss of \$157. The only way you can lose the maximum amount of money—your full bet of \$220—is if both clubs lose. As with other if bets, this is a way to reduce your losses and still benefit from your wins.

Bonuses have been around since the start of online sportsbooks but some sites are more generous with their bonuses than others. Bonus opportunities change all the time as does the ebb and flow of money being bet. Bonuses are often related to the amount of money deposited or wagered and are usually given as percentages.

As an example, if you sign up with an online sportsbook and deposit \$500 in your account and the site currently has a 30% bonus incentive, then you would receive a bonus of \$150. That \$150 would also be in your account, for a total of \$650. So, instead of having \$500 to gamble with, you now have \$650.

Other bonuses are often given to subscribers for referrals, additional deposits and even for winning. Some sportsbooks offer a rewards program in which a participant can earn points for wagering, referrals and taking part in special betting opportunities. Those points can then be redeemed for various goods, services and even cash.

Bonus programs vary greatly from sportsbook to sportsbook. Why offer a bonus? For the sportsbook, they're a good way to attract clients and keep them involved in the site. For the bettor, bonuses give them a bit more bang for their buck.

Although innovation is an important aspect of online sportsbooks, perhaps the most significant attribute is a company's reputation and history. If you subscribe to an undependable site, all the innovation in the world won't mean a thing. Always go with an online gaming service that is trustworthy and has a solid track record. Sportsbooks are reviewed by the Off Shore Gaming Association (OSGA), which is an independent organization dedicated to helping consumers find and utilize reputable gaming sites. Look for a sportsbook that is both innovative and dependable and you'll end up with a winner. And isn't

that the goal of every bettor?

By Paul Mrocza sponsored by

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What Makes A Great Online Sportsbook

By Sebastien Veilleux

All sportsbooks were not created equal. The Internet has given us unprecedented choice when it comes to betting on sports online. I am going to list a few of my must-have items for online sportsbooks. Does your current sportsbook have these features? If not, perhaps it's time to check around for a new sportsbook.

Feature One: Security

It all starts and ends with security. If an online sportsbook is not secure, there's nothing else to talk about. For security, I look at a couple things. Is the online sportsbook licensed and regulated by a government entity? I want to make sure there's some sort of bond backing up the actions of the sportsbook. Another key point is Internet security. Is the sportsbook using the latest and greatest in security methods? I certainly don't want to deposit my money just to find all my personal financial information spread around the Internet a week later.

Feature Two: Depositing Methods

An online sportsbook absolutely must have many depositing options. For me, the critical one is 3rd party options, like NETeller. Using a 3rd party depositing service like NETeller or FirePay should be like second nature for anyone gambling online. Rather than spreading your vital financial information to many parties around the web, use one source to handle your money. Once you have money in NETeller or FirePay, you can simply send money back and forth to many online sportsbooks. As far as I am concerned, you should never do things any differently.

Feature Three: Action

You might be surprised to learn this, but not all sportsbooks have the same events up for betting. Take horse racing for instance. Many sportsbooks fall short in this category. Another area where sportsbooks vary is prop bets. If you love prop bets or future bets, it's best to shop around for multiple sports books. It's very rare to find one sports book that has it all. Usually, you think they have it all until you find another sportsbook with other options. In the old days, Vegas sports bettors would have to drive around town looking for a good deal. Today, you can just click over to multiple online sportsbooks and find the deal you want.

These are three very important features. They are must-have features for me. Online sportsbooks come big and small. The competitive winning sports bettor will want to have accounts at a few or more to get the best deals and the most action. Before jumping into any online sportsbook, do your research, and make sure the online sportsbook is reputable. Research is becoming very easy these days as there are sites setup specifically for this purpose.

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