



Earnings+More

The betting and gaming industry newsletter

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Startup focus – GSI

Who, what, where and when: The Game Safety Institute – GSI for short – was founded by UK-based Sarah Ramanauskas and Simo Dragicevic in late 2023. Both are well known in the industry: Ramanauskas as a former Betfair and William Hill executive and compliance and player protection advisor to major operators globally; Dragicevic as the founder of BetBuddy and former MD at Playtech.

Funding background: The company is pre-seed and currently funded by its founders.

The pitch: GSI contends that across the industry, consumers are being presented with games that are unsuitable for their entertainment needs such as with slots where, while many have similar RTPs and are marketed alongside one another in the lobby with no product differentiation, the player experience will vary significantly.

- “This is not good from both a player experience and consumer protection perspective,” says Dragicevic.

Apples with apples: He adds that regulators are taking a much closer look at products as player-centric consumer protection initiatives plateau, for example in the UK and the Netherlands. However, existing product risk methodologies, such as ASTERIG, compare verticals with one another e.g., slots vs. lottery products.

- “We don’t think this is optimal, for example, as every online slot is considered high or very high risk, regardless of the significant variation within slots,” Dragicevic adds.

What's the news? GSI is launching its first product, a slots SaaS intelligence platform, in Q124. Early discussions with operators have been "encouraging" and GSI expects to sign up customers throughout the year.

- "We want stakeholders to understand the nuances around theme, math and mechanics, for example, and build strategies to ensure the product positioning and marketing is optimized from a player safety perspective," Dragicevic says.
- GSI plans to do the same with sports betting, table games and instant win games later in 2024 and is also planning on publishing its methodologies over the next one to two years.

What will success look like? "Success will be to help the industry and regulators to take a more data-driven approach to product safety and develop the evidence base on what strategies actually work," Dragicevic explains.

- The company is building assets and expertise in product intelligence, data, software and safer gambling.
- "It's early days and the founders are passionate about the need to fill this gap and are focused on solutions that add value to a wide range of industry stakeholders."