

Centralised gaming models: A Delphi Study

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Phase One - Literature Review

- Review of literature relevant to social responsibility considerations for a centralized gaming model.
- Also considered various advantages/disadvantages of the three example models supplied by the *NSGC*.
- Final part of the phase outlined a set of overall considerations that might be considered when developing a centralized gaming model.

Phase Two - Delphi Study

- Delphi employs a structured process for collecting and distilling knowledge from a group of experts
- Done through a series of questionnaires interspersed with controlled opinion feedback.
- Shown to be a successful technique for facilitating communication between experts, and assists the formation of a well informed group judgment.
- Delphi method been used extensively to generate reliable forecasts in technology, education, etc.

Phase Three - CGM Evaluation Framework

- Involved the development of a final report detailing the overall findings and incorporating a checklist to allow *NSGC* staff to evaluate and develop centralized gaming models.
- The findings were also used to develop a framework for monitoring and evaluating the ongoing effectiveness of an implemented centralized gaming model.

CGMs - Definitions/Assumptions

- No prescribed definition of a CGM.
- Assumed that CGM provides gambling only within dedicated gambling environments
- Restricted to one or two venues per city or major populated area.
- Venue would be away from the downtown sector or major residential area (such that a minimum of a 10-minute drive would be required to reach it).

Assumptions (cont.)

- Assumed CGMs would have strict codes, policies and guidelines, in relation to access and control.
- Assumed that no gaming opportunities would exist in area that are peripheral to the outlets' main purpose
- (Such as the location of gaming machines in retail outlets, restaurants, bars, etc.).

Delphi Study (Stage 1)

Formation of an expert panel

Five international advisors were enlisted with expertise in the area of responsible gaming

Dr Alex Blaszczyński

Dr Jeff Derevensky

Dr Jonathan Parke

Dr Karen Finlay

Dr Paul Delfabbro

(plus investigators

Dr Richard Wood and Dr Mark Griffiths)

Delphi Study (Stage 2)

Identifying the relevant issues

- Dec 2007 to Feb 2008, research team reviewed the literature relevant to the principles underpinning a CGM.
- Literature helped identify a list of areas that might be considered important when assessing the potential strengths and weaknesses of a CGM.
- List sent to the advisory panel, and they were asked to consider whether or not any items were missing.
- From this a 33-item questionnaire was developed based on literature review and initial responses from the advisory panel.

Delphi Study (Stage 3)

Developing consensus

- Questionnaire sent to advisory panel - asked how much they agreed with each statement using a five-point Likert scale
 - Responses analysed and then a second 11-item questionnaire was devised
 - This followed up on issues where there was no overall consensus or where new issues has arisen from the first questionnaire
 - Responses analysed by examining the combined means and standard deviations for each statement.
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Delphi Study (Stage 4)

Presenting the findings

- Further explanation of the ratings was developed by examining the additional comments for each statement on the questionnaire.
- Results were written up descriptively to represent the overall views of the panel and to show where there was consensus.
- Generally, there was a high level of agreement
- When not, tended to reflect the fact that empirical evidence was limited or contradictory.

Results of the Delphi Study

Advantages of CGMs (1)

- ***Prevention of gambling access to vulnerable groups*** - CGMs more likely prevent access to vulnerable group such as under-aged gamblers and those who choose to self-exclude (e.g., problem gamblers)
- ***Industry compliance to codes of conduct*** - Gaming companies are more likely than non-gaming companies (e.g., retail outlets that offer gaming) to adhere strictly to industry codes of compliance.
- ***Prevention of impulse gambling*** – CGMs more likely to minimise impulsive decisions to gamble as players must travel to a specific dedicated gambling environment having made a predetermined decision to gamble.

Results of the Delphi Study

Advantages of CGMs (2)

- ***Prevention of continuous gambling (1)*** – CGMs offer a wide range of non-gambling activities that can encourage players to do other things and have a break (and a reflective time out) from gambling.
- ***Prevention of continuous gambling (2)*** – CGMs offer have a better infrastructure for ensuring a reasonable schedule that enforces breaks both within session (e.g., having machines that shut down after a predetermined period of play) and across sessions (e.g., player has to leave establishment because of predetermined closing times).

Results of the Delphi Study

Advantages of CGMs (3)

- ***Prevention of continuous gambling on potentially problematic games*** – CGMs offer a range of different activities (various speeds, stake sizes) that is desirable from a player choice and social responsibility perspective. Such options are rarely available in peripheral gaming sites.
- ***Prevention of problem gambling through information provision and social responsibility infrastructure*** – CGMs are much more likely than non-dedicated gaming environments (such as retail outlets) to offer self-help services (RG information and where to get help).

Results of the Delphi Study

Advantages of CGMs (4)

- ***Dedicated and specialist staff training*** – Because of the ongoing cost, gaming operators are more likely than staff in non-gaming companies to have formal and /or dedicated specialist staff training programs that deal specifically with social responsibility issues.

- ***Dedicated social responsibility staff*** – Gaming operators are more likely than staff in non-gaming companies to have staff that are dedicated to social responsibility in gaming issues.

Results of the Delphi Study

Advantages of CGMs (5)

- ***Player tracking*** – CGMs are more likely than peripheral sites to have player loyalty programs and/or player cards that provide the opportunity for playing behaviour to be tracked.
- ***Destination resorts*** – One of the advantages of a CGM could be the decision to make the gambling venue a destination resort that almost everybody has to make a predetermined decision to visit the premise. This will minimize and/or eliminate impulse gambling.

Results of the Delphi Study

Disadvantages of CGMs (1)

- ***Proximity to deprived residential areas*** – If the location of the CGM happens to be in (or adjacent to) a socially deprived residential area such a CGM may not be seen as ethically appropriate.
 - ***Proportion of available games*** – If a centralized gaming environment contains a much higher proportion of potentially problematic games, players may be more encouraged to play these games.
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Results of the Delphi Study

Disadvantages of CGMs (2)

- ***24/7 availability*** – If 24/7 gambling is provided within a CGM, vulnerable gamblers can theoretically gamble all day every day.

- ***Free shuttle buses to and from gaming environment and free car parking*** – Could be argued that providing free shuttle buses to and from the venue and/or free car parking make it easier and increase the likelihood of getting people into the gambling environment.

Results of the Delphi Study

Disadvantages of CGMs (3)

- ***Gambling as entertainment (1)*** – Could be argued that marketing of the gambling venue as a general entertainment site promotes the notion of people congregating for social activities in a social environment (where gambling also resides)
- ***Gambling as entertainment (2)*** – Patrons may feel less stigmatized going to gamble in an entertainment establishment rather than a casino.

Results of the Delphi Study

Disadvantages of CGMs (4)

- ***Gambling under the influence of alcohol (1)*** – Those in retail outlets as opposed to a dedicated gambling environment is that players are less likely to be under the influence of alcohol.
- ***Gambling under the influence of alcohol (2)*** – Given the number of gambling activities that can be done without a staff member (e.g., dealer, croupier) being present (e.g. playing a slot machine), it may be hard for intoxicated people to be prevented from gambling.

Results of the Delphi Study

Disadvantages of CGMs (5)

- ***High concentration of 'hard' or potentially problematic gaming activities in one place*** – Could be argued to be a disadvantage – especially to vulnerable gamblers.
- ***Encouragement of non-gamblers to gamble*** – Always a chance that someone enters the premises to do something other than gamble (e.g., watch live entertainment, have a meal) could be encouraged to gamble (i.e., intrinsic association).

Conclusions of the Delphi Study

- Delphi Study indicated a **CGM appears best model for harm minimisation** by considering positives and negatives of dedicated gambling environments versus other types of environments.
- Many of the **negatives** of a CGM can be **minimized or eliminated through appropriate pre-planning.**

Main CGM Advantages (1)

- CGMs well regulated and tend to have **more rigorous procedures** in relation to **social responsibility** in gambling and **player protection** (e.g., control and monitoring).
- Have a **suitable infrastructure** to introduce **player card technologies** that will help in terms of preventing underage access and aiding self-exclusion schemes.

Main CGM Advantages (2)

- CGMs have strict **enforceable age controls**. This makes gambling by minors more difficult than in non-gambling environments (e.g., retail outlets, bars and restaurants).
- CGM premises frequented by people who have made **a pre-determined decision to gamble**
- This is unlike gambling in non-gambling environments where the gambling may be an impulsive and unplanned behaviour.

Main CGM Advantages (3)

- Have the **flexibility to introduce socially responsible practices** that may be harder in other environments such as:
 - No ATMs on the gaming floor (difficult and/or impractical to do in a retail environment)
 - Not drinking alcohol while gambling (may be impossible or impractical in a bar)
 - Restricted opening hours.

CGM recommendations (1)

- Success of an effective CGM would require an **effective responsible gaming policy** that should be regularly reviewed and audited to ensure that it remains both up-to-date and effective.
- **Staff training** would be a key component for a successful responsible gaming policy in a CGM.
- **Dedicated responsible gaming staff** would need to be appointed to work in CGM venues.

CGM recommendations (2)

- **Marketing** of a CGM should make it clear that the **primary business is gambling**, even when peripheral activities (e.g., restaurants) are being promoted.
- The general message should be that gambling is about **'buying entertainment'** rather than about winning money.
- **Some non-gamblers may be more likely to gamble whilst attending for a peripheral activity.** However, this is unlikely to have much (if any) impact for vulnerable players or problem gamblers.

CGM recommendations (3)

- The **placement of a CGM venue is critical**, and they should be situated far enough away from downtown areas and large residential conurbations so that **some form of travel is required to attend**.

- **ATMs should not be placed in any gaming areas** but should be reached by a short walk in order to provide a moment of self-reflection and emotional time out.

CGM recommendations (4)

- **Player cards** should only be used for the **purposes of responsible gaming** and not for marketing or other purposes designed to promote further gambling.

- **Alcohol would be acceptable to serve in non-gambling areas** (e.g., restaurants) provided that it was not free, or subsidised, and staff are trained to identify and deal with intoxicated customers.