

# INSIGHTS

## 5 Hot Takes on Holiday 2025 Games

By Scientific Games

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It's that most wonderful time of year when product managers across North America look at last year's holiday game portfolio performance—and apply those insights in the year ahead. Fresh off the season of eternal hope, as planning for 2026 gets underway, instant game innovators and data scientists at Scientific Games shared their hot takes on what players were purchasing this past holiday.

### 1. New Premium Holiday Traditions

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house, premium games were stirring the biggest story of holiday 2025. Premium pricing is no longer a holiday experiment—it's a core planning consideration.



The top 10-performing holiday games in the U.S. were all priced at \$10 or higher (based on weekly per capita sales). Lotteries launched a total of 26 games at the \$20 price point or above—proving that premium games are quickly becoming a holiday tradition for players.

The Ohio Lottery launched *\$1,000,000 HOLIDAY WISH* at the \$20 price point. Loaded with \$50 and \$100 prizes—and enhanced with *Sparkle* in the *Stella Gold* pattern and *Scratch My Back* play on the back of each ticket—the game's value proposition made it perfect for gift-giving.



Overall, holiday game sales at \$25+ in the U.S. grew 277% year-over-year, confirming strong demand for more special, more memorable play experiences.

Offering the best chance to win \$500 in the Ohio Lottery's history, \$30 *HOLIDAY MILLIONS* did not disappoint with loads of \$100 to 1,000 prizes and *Scratch My Back* play.

**PENNSYLVANIA LOTTERY**  
**\$30 LOTS OF \$100 WINS!**  
**MERRY MONEY MATCH**  
**5 TOP PRIZES OF \$1,000,000!**

BONUS GIFTS: Match any of the HOLIDAY SYMBOLS to any of the BONUS GIFTS symbols to WIN \$100 instantly. Reveal a (HAT) symbol to multiply the (100TIMES) symbol to multiply the TOTAL WIN in the YOUR NUMBERS area by 100 TIMES!

**BONUS GIFTS**

**WINNING NUMBERS**

**YOUR NUMBERS**

OVER \$22.5 MILLION IN \$100 PRIZES!

Match any of YOUR NUMBERS to any of the WINNING NUMBERS to win prize shown under that match. Reveal a (HAT) symbol to win prize shown under that symbol automatically. Reveal a (WINALL) symbol to win **000** ALL 25 prizes shown in the YOUR NUMBERS area!

**SCRATCH TO CASH**

**PENNSYLVANIA LOTTERY**  
**\$30 LOTS OF \$100 WINS!**  
**MERRY MONEY MATCH**  
**5 TOP PRIZES OF \$1,000,000!**

BONUS GIFTS: Match any of the HOLIDAY SYMBOLS to any of the BONUS GIFTS symbols to WIN \$100 instantly. Reveal a (HAT) symbol to multiply the (100TIMES) symbol to multiply the TOTAL WIN in the YOUR NUMBERS area by 100 TIMES!

**BONUS GIFTS**

**WINNING NUMBERS**

**YOUR NUMBERS**

13	29	8	33	22	39	14	26
15	30		23	1			
3	12	34	8	17			
19		7	21	31			
32	20	38	9	24			
11	35	25	40	27			

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 2 3

Match any of YOUR NUMBERS to any of the WINNING NUMBERS to win prize shown under that match. Reveal a (HAT) symbol to win prize shown under that symbol automatically. Reveal a (WINALL) symbol to win **000** ALL 25 prizes shown in the YOUR NUMBERS area!

**QR CODE**

Of note, the [Pennsylvania Lottery](#) launched *MERRY MONEY MATCH*, its \$30 holiday Scratch-Off and most successful to date (*through nine weeks of sales*). Loaded with \$100 prizes, the key number match game featured symbols that varied from ticket to ticket, giving players randomized Bonus Gifts when they matched key symbols. The game offered a unique value proposition of five top prizes of \$1 million, different from the Lottery’s previous \$30 holiday game, which called out three top prizes of \$3 million.

## 2. Merry Extended Play Moments

Extended play of continues to earn a bigger role in holiday portfolios.



As players slowed down to savor the magic of the season – and the scratch – extended play games were a go-to. In the U.S., the extended play category represented 3.5% of holiday 2025 sales (up from 2.2% in 2024) and more than 18% of overall sales for the year.

Holiday extended play offerings in 2025 saw an expanded \$5 price point, which helped drive U.S. extended play sales for the year up by more than 58% over 2024—signaling growing player appetite for longer, more immersive play.

Festive holiday games with familiar play mechanics like crossword were popular as always, but the Scientific Games Dream Team—a team of highly experienced extended play game design innovators—lit up the 2025 season for [Colorado Lottery](#) players with some fresh fun. Featuring collection play and an intuitive magical Christmas tree maze, \$3 *ORNAMENT DROP* was a bold new scratch innovation with two different games and a bonus win opportunity.



### 3. More Ways to Play, More Chances to Celebrate

Enhancements are no longer optional—they are performance drivers.

Overall, nearly 30% of 2025 holiday games in the U.S. incorporated at least one enhancement—from *Sparkle* to *Platinum* and *Metallic Ink*—reflecting a clear shift toward more visually and mechanically engaging play.



The line of *Scratch My Back* products from Scientific Games gave holiday players more gameplay and more opportunities to win. Featuring bonus games on the back of the tickets, *Scratch My Back* holiday games outperformed traditional holiday games by 5%, with the \$1, \$3 and \$20 price points notably performing 13%, 23% and 15% higher respectively.

This past season, the [Georgia Lottery](#) added more magic to its staple *JINGLE JUMBO BUCKS* games by combining two product enhancements, *Scratch My Back* and holographic, resulting in stunning games featuring a holiday second-chance promotion. The \$10 *JINGLE JUMBO BUCKS* game performed 32% higher than other \$10 games in the market fiscal year 2025, reinforcing the impact of combined enhancements.



#### 4. Holiday Classics

Licensed brands continue to deliver familiarity—and performance. The nostalgia of classic holiday films came to life in games with brand-immersive play.

The Colorado Lottery launched the holiday classic *NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION* and pulsed the game with *NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VACATION*—leveraging the film franchise with year-round recognition to extend the game's longevity in market well beyond the holiday season. Each pulse featured iconic film graphics and Travel Cash

Bonus play. Launching a bit later in the holiday season, the game performed 15% higher than other \$10 games in market fiscal year 2025.



The Ohio Lottery took a different approach, launching a \$2 NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION game with three scenes. The game was the top-performing holiday game of all holiday games launched this season in Ohio, delivering an unbelievable performance at 117% higher than other \$2 games in market.



The Pennsylvania Lottery fully embraced the 2025 holidays with an omnichannel suite of *ELF*-themed games: \$5 Scratch-Off, \$5 Fast Play and two digital games (eInstant and eTAP) with progressive jackpots. With the Scratch-Off game performing 30% higher than other \$5 games in the market fiscal year 2025, the brand once again proved to be a holiday winner.



## 5. Shaking Up Sales

The holidays just wouldn't be as magical without memorable visual themes. One of the biggest design standouts of the 2025 season was the snow globe, offering the perfect opportunity to add sparkle and seasonal charm to holiday games.

Across the U.S., lotteries launched eight snow globe-themed games, each bringing wintry scenes to life in a distinctive way. Scientific Games designers elevated the concept with eye-catching details, including a new bonus-play golden dollar sign showcased at the center of a snow-filled globe to create a festive focal point.



The [Massachusetts Lottery](#) shook up its holiday sales with an entire snow globe family of games priced from \$1 to \$20—with the \$20 holiday game featuring the big guy himself in the snow globe. The company’s new *Diamante* holographic enhancement added even more magic to the globe and surrounding graphics. The game performed 16% higher than other \$20 games in market fiscal year 2025.



The [Texas Lottery's](#) *WINTER WINNINGS* snow globe-themed game contributed significantly to its holiday line-up's success last season.



And the [Arkansas Scholarship Lottery](#) launched its first holiday game at the \$5 price point since 2014, making a positive impact on 2025 sales. Both games featured three scenes.



## Happy Holiday Planning

While the sleigh bells of 2026 are months away, now is the time to take the reins of portfolio planning for this critical sales window—using insights-driven, analytics-inspired game innovation. From premium indulgences to giftable joy and traditional play experiences, here’s to happy holiday sales!



[Request a Scientific Games 2026 Holiday Catalogue](#)

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