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WORLD LOTTERY ASSOCIATION

Retail Technology for a Digital Generation: Transforming How Instant Scratch Games Are Managed and Sold



For decades, instant scratch games – scratchers, scratch-offs or scratchcards depending on where you are in the world – have powered lottery revenues. In 2024, the product category represented USD 111.5 billion in global retail sales. Behind the retail counter, however, little has changed with lottery. While modern retail systems track everything from soft drinks to shelf-stocking patterns, lottery scratch game retailers have often relied on handwritten shift reports, manual restocks and little insight into what sells, when and why. Open product displays aren't necessarily secure, inviting theft from store employees and customers.

In more than a dozen jurisdictions across the U.S. and, most recently Europe, a growing number of lotteries and retailers are adopting a modern in-store system. *SCiQ* is an in-store ecosystem developed by Scientific Games lottery technology experts to solve the unique challenges of managing and selling the instant game category. The in-store ecosystem is garnering attention and outstanding results: 15% to 40% increases in instant game sales, easy reporting, faster restocking, fewer inventory errors, product security and a measurable boost in player engagement at the counter.



SCi/Q Simplifies and Streamlines

Offering inventory and operational efficiencies and unprecedented analytics, SCi/Q automates the manual, analog processes behind retailing instant game sales. Using a smart dispensing unit that holds games in individual, secure bins, SCi/Q dispenses only the game purchased, tracking every movement and feeding real-time data to both lottery and retailer systems. A dynamically updated digital menu board shows available games and prices to players, and a back-end portal provides the retailer access to sales, inventory and performance data by store, bin and SKU, down to the minute. The system offers reporting at the touch of a button.



“There’s never been this level of visibility into what’s happening at the retail level for instant games,” said Michael Martin, Scientific Games VP of Retail Solutions. “And once you have that data, you can forecast better, distribute better, game plan better and reduce friction in the lottery’s supply chain.”

From the players’ perspective, the lottery’s instant game products are displayed and dynamically updated on a digital menu board at or near the store check-out area, which is some of the most valuable retail space. The digital solution makes the games more visible and the lottery’s brand more modern. High-definition game artwork is displayed automatically with configurable enhancements, promotional messaging movement and integrated draw game information, allowing lotteries to gain shoppers’ attention and communicate with them at point-of-purchase.

Results in US Markets

SCiQ results are stacking up. In North Carolina, Scientific Games installed SCiQ at multiple retailers, including high-volume Circle K convenience store locations. The system was so successful that the North Carolina Education Lottery announced a full-scale rollout for 2025, citing both operational and financial returns.



Mark Michalko, North Carolina Education Lottery CEO and Executive Director, said, “We’re excited to bring SCiQ to our retailers throughout the state, providing them with a streamlined

way to manage and sell NCEL Scratch-Off games in their stores. We anticipate that this technology system will improve inventory management for our retailers with store-level data analytics and improve sales to ultimately benefit education in our state.”

Those real-time insights are precisely what retailers like 7-Eleven have been missing. The world’s largest convenience store chain implemented *SCiQ* in multiple jurisdictions.

“*SCiQ* has been a fantastic product,” said Lauren Fanta, Category Manager, Lottery/Gaming/Kiosks at 7-Eleven. “The service alone has exceeded expectations. The digital menu boards grab customers’ attention, and the added accountability has been huge, especially when it comes to maintaining planograms and avoiding out-of-stock situations. In high-theft locations, *SCiQ* has been a lifesaver. Many stores used to avoid stocking high-value games out of fear. Now, they can stock confidently.”

Fanta reports that *SCiQ* stores see at least a 20% lift in sales, with internal audit teams praising the system’s tracking tools and inventory accountability.



Similar gains have been observed with *SCiQ* implementations in Colorado (13.7% increase), Illinois (30–31% increase at participating Circle K and Casey’s convenience stores/fuel stations), and in Kansas, where retailers have shared how *SCiQ* enables faster and more accurate restocking.

The South Carolina Education Lottery's decision to launch SCiQ in 2025 marked the beginning of a broader retail transformation strategy.

“We’re embarking upon our first retail modernization initiative with a trusted partner in Scientific Games,” said SCEL CEO Dolly Garfield. “Retail has evolved considerably over the past decade. It’s important to us – and to our players – that SCEL instant games are easy to buy, quick to restock, and available when and where players want them. SCiQ helps us do that, making it easier for our retailers to manage these high-performing products.”

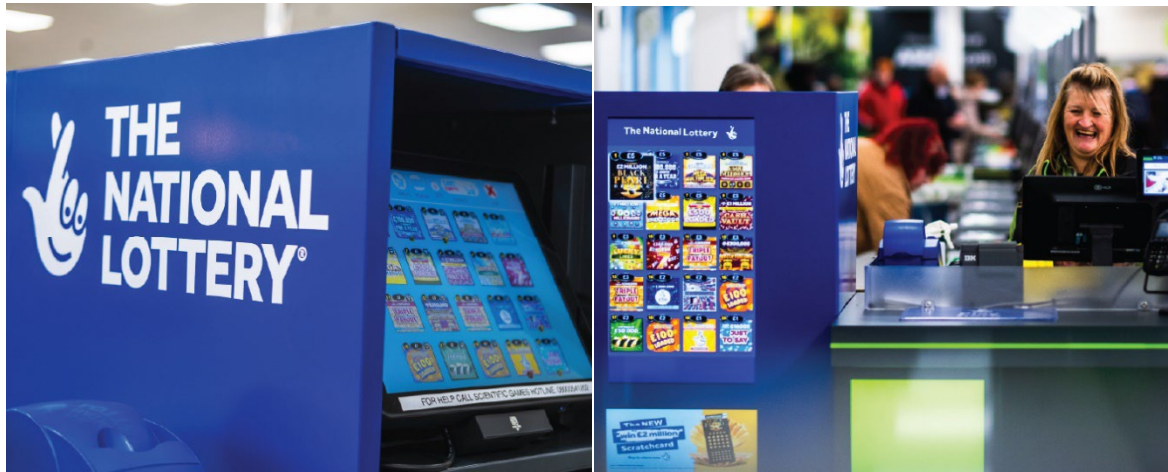


Ease is a recurring theme. What once took managers 20–30 minutes – counting games, confirming inventory, logging game changes – can now be done with a few taps from a tablet or phone. SCiQ’s dashboard shows sales trends, bin status, restocking needs and SKU performance across multiple stores. That data also gives lotteries better insight into what games are driving results in various local markets, at what time and with which player segments.

European Debut

SCiQ’s reach extends beyond the U.S. In January 2025, SCiQ made its European debut through a project with Allwyn and Asda, the UK’s second-largest supermarket chain. The rollout marked the first time a system of its kind had been introduced into the UK’s highly regulated lottery market. SCiQ was configured to include a 10-scratchcard purchase limit and other

responsible gaming features, demonstrating its flexibility in adapting to The National Lottery's requirements.



“As we continue transforming The National Lottery from the inside out, we’re deploying innovative lottery technology fit for the future,” said Jenny Blogg, Operations Director for Allwyn. “Thanks to the teams at Allwyn and Scientific Games, this scratchcard retail technology takes the player and retailer experience to a whole new level. We’ll now assess it over the next few months to determine how we move forward, but we’re really excited by the initial results.”

Modernizing Instant Games in Stores

The real story of *SCiQ* isn’t the technology innovation. It’s the shift in how lotteries and retailers now treat instant games as a managed, measurable category, no different from high-value consumer packaged goods. For years, instant games were the only major retail product without meaningful unit-level sales data. *SCiQ* changes that, allowing for smarter distribution, fewer out-of-stocks and real-time insights that inform everything from marketing campaigns to reorder timing.

“Most importantly, *SCiQ* helps protect the long-term health of lottery retail by making operations smoother for frontline staff. In an industry where many stores rely on part-time employees and have frequent turnover, simplifying processes is key,” shares Martin. “Locked bins reduce shrink. Intuitive displays and processes reduce training time. Automation improves accuracy. The result? More games on sale, more consistently, with fewer headaches.”



SCiQ is a highly configurable product that covers the needs of the lottery and retailer. Martin explains, “It’s a modular ecosystem that can integrate with existing systems, scale to accommodate varying storage sizes, and evolve in line with changing lottery goals. From single-store operators to national retail chains, the system has proven adaptable and effective.”

Powering Self-Service

With consumer preferences for self-service convenience at retail increasing, Scientific Games has integrated the breakthrough SCiQ technology into its line of *PlayCentral* self-service machines. From real-time analytics to inventory management and easy reports, *PlayCentral Powered by SCiQ* brings all the benefits of SCiQ to self-service.

The global lottery industry, rooted in tradition, is also under increasing pressure to deliver measurable value and return to the public beneficiary programs it supports. For instant games, the largest lottery product category by global sales, this means smarter decisions at the retail level.

SCiQ is transforming lottery retail for a digital generation: consumers, retailers and lottery product managers. By giving lotteries and retailers the tools they need to manage instant games

with intelligence and control, *SCiQ* is quietly rewriting the rules for how scratch-offs are sold and what's possible when they are.

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