

FY22 Retail Initiatives

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Scientific Games' Liz Johnson: Licensed Games Made Easy

In case you hadn't heard, Scientific Games launched the rebranded $SGZONE^{TM}$ this summer. The website is command central for lotteries using licensed properties across instant, draw and digital games.

A popular tool originally known as the MDI Zone, SGZONE is a passion project for Liz Johnson, Director of Lottery Licensed Properties. "The original site dates back to 2004, and now it offers a more modern, streamlined experience."

"SGZONE's functionality is the same as the former MDI Zone. Lotteries are able to access licensed brand assets and guidelines as well as upload all of their branded materials for licensors' approval. Typically, this is game art, as well as social media, out-of-home, retail point-of-sale, radio and TV advertising and promotions. We review all submittals first providing immediate edits or comments needed, or send materials right through to the licensor," said Johnson.

The site also serves as an archive for over 15 years of approved licensed brands artwork. "Within each brand page, our lottery clients can access all approved materials submitted by other marketing teams. They can filter by category or lottery. This really helps facilitate their creative process," said Johnson.

Johnson provides day to day management of licensed properties and acts as a liaison between lotteries and licensors. Prior to joining Scientific Games, she provided key customer support on a number of lottery accounts as well as licensed properties at OGT, which was acquired by Scientific Games in 2007.

She streamlines the licensed brands process for lottery clients and their marketers. "We want to make working with brands fun and easy," she explained. "Sometimes there is this idea that there are a lot of hurdles with licensed products. I try to make it as seamless as possible."

From an administrative point of view, *SGZONE* is where Johnson spends her workdays, overseeing the approval queue and maintaining all the brand pages and related assets for the company's lottery licensed brands portfolio. "The site is not limited to our lottery clients, it's also a



great tool for our account teams so they can assist their clients," she explained.

Breadth is a critical advantage for Scientific Games' licensed property portfolio. Currently, there are 100+ brands in the company's lineup. "We are continually evolving," explained Johnson. "Even the 'evergreens'—or perennially favorite brands—are constantly seeking to change."

Record Demand

With 20 million players new to instant games during the pandemic, scratchers sales are on track to increase 20% in FY21. Licensed games are a proven way to connect with players and keep them entertained. In FY 2021, Scientific Games' licensed products represented \$2.6 billion in retail sales. "We saw a huge surge where lotteries could not keep licensed games in stock. We saw multiple reorders and successful relaunches of branded games," said Johnson.

Scientific Games has consistently offered a strong portfolio of tried and true brands such as MONOPOLYTM, SLINGO® and LOTERIATM. In FY21, sales went through the roof and included several lotteries launching MONOPOLY families of games. "It is amazing how well MONOPOLY always performs," said Johnson. "It is usually ranked in our top performing games."

Georgia Lottery recently launched a MONOPOLY For Life family featuring a second chance digital promotion and monthly drawings. "The family performed

very well, topping \$165 million at retail to benefit education in Georgia," said Johnson.

Pennsylvania Lottery set the bar high with its omni-channel marketing, launching their MONOPOLY family with a total of nine games for scratch, Fast Play and iLottery. Their holistic approach is planned with several licensed brands launching in the next year. "We're sharing this creative model with our account teams to illustrate how to maximize a licensed brand in the market," shared Johnson.

As the industry moves to the post pandemic phase, there will also be big demand for linked games. Total combined Scientific Games' linked game retail sales for FY 2021 is more than \$246 million.

For linked games, there are three major properties mainstage right now. First, the upcoming *JAMES BOND*Lottery Challenge winners event was held in Las Vegas in July.

The latest WILLY WONKA GOLDEN TICKET™ is on sale now with nine lotteries participating. And sales for the company's next blockbuster linked instant game, THE PRICE IS RIGHT®, kicked off.

With a lottery career spanning two decades, Johnson said she still marvels at how she began working in the licensing business. "My father-in-law always asks how I ended up in lottery with a Humanities degree and minor in Art History," said Johnson. "Every day is truly different and keeps me on my toes, but it is the relationships with our lottery clients as well as at Scientific Games I enjoy most. We are a family."

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