

Sim Bielak, President of Global Gaming and Amusement Business



The natural choice in Technology

Sim Bielak, President of Global Gaming & Amusement Business,
SUZOHAPP. Interview by *Damien Connelly*

Nobody makes more game parts than SUZOHAPP, founded in Mount Prospect, Illinois, with manufacturing facilities in China and Poland. Fresh off the ICE show in London, SUZOHAPP had a wealth of new technology to showcase, which it does in this conversation with Damien Connelly. With sports betting on the upswing, this is a particularly opportune time for technology companies to turn their attention to that sector and capitalize upon it. As company President Sim Bielak says, "it's a very exciting time." SUZOHAPP was ready with sports-betting terminals and a line of replacement parts.

SUZOHAPP's focus is happily divided between what's new and what's old. In the latter case, retro, reel-spinning slots are making a comeback, something upon which Bielak is poised to capitalize. As for the new, that would be jurisdictions like Brazil and Ukraine, which have been flirting with casino development for some time and seem finally poised to take the plunge. That's quite a long way for a company that started out making coin doors for arcade games. Bielak brings us up to date on SUZOHAPP's new frontiers and what it has to offer a rapidly expanding gaming industry.

How was ICE London 2020?

ICE London was a very successful show for us and was a great experience to see what's new in the industry. Traditionally, ICE has given us the opportunity to meet with our customers and find out what new projects they're working on and showcase solutions that may help them develop new ideas. What surprised us most this year, however, was the number of new faces at the show. With the rise of sports betting, the gaming industry is growing and evolving rapidly as technology advances to support this new sector. It's a very exciting time to be in the industry and that was clearly reflected in the diverse nature of the businesses and attendees at ICE.



What were amongst your most popular products at ICE London this year?

We have a number of well-known products and brands in the gaming sector. Our ELO and VisionPro monitors are very popular, which are our premium products for electronic table games. While our new dynamic panel buttons were a huge hit because of their ease of use and adaptability, it was particularly interesting to see the resurgence of our mechanical reels and levers. Stepper games, otherwise known as mechanical reel games, have renewed appeal as a retro item and are making a comeback. While digital games are certainly still pushing the boundaries of innovation and looking for new ways to appeal to customers, the attachment to traditional gaming methods remains strong and we aim to be a primary supplier for that market. As sports betting is on the rise worldwide, our sports betting terminals and components for these terminals were also of key interest. Our offering includes a variety of



different sports betting options from kiosks to retail counter POS terminals and our booth showcased the main component areas where our products live. This comprehensive level of support for an upcoming market really made us stand out.

SUZOHAPP clearly invests a great deal of money and time in the provision in what must be the most comprehensive range of products, components and solutions for the Gaming, Amusement, Sports Betting, Lottery and Bingo markets.

Absolutely. While our offering is unparalleled in the industry, we are always looking at ways to make it broader and more effective. One of the biggest benefits of our extensive knowledge and experience in the industry, is the ability to look at products outside the gaming world and recognize right away if they could make our industry better. That “eye” for products allows us to find niche markets and increased value for our

customers with products that can serve them in ways the competition can’t. On top of those unique products, the sheer size of our offering makes the sourcing search much simpler and allows customers to focus on their primary product rather than on the peripherals.

What are the most exciting markets for you right now?

The North American and European casino gaming markets remain steady but strong. Obviously, we are looking for larger emerging markets such as the sports betting market in the US which has evolved in some areas faster than expected. We are always keeping an eye on international markets to see that regulation takes hold such as in markets like Brazil which can have significant potential. Then we are always looking for new opportunities for growth. Our core markets are strong and stable and we are looking for the next emerging market such as Ukraine – we will see how that evolves.



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What are amongst the main objectives for SUZOHAPP 2020?

Our primary objective, not just for 2020, but always, is to exceed our customers' expectations. We exist in an industry that is constantly changing and growing and adapting. To that end we have to be able to change, grow, and adapt and help our customers do so as well. The primary benefit of working with us is the combination of our experience and years in the industry with the wide selection of products that we've handpicked because we know they can serve a purpose and serve it well in a gaming environment. A partnership with us allows companies to have that edge when change comes to be flexible and quickly adapt with new products and new designs because we simplify the sourcing process. To that end, it's our prerogative to take that a step further every time to make sure that our customers are set up to succeed and excel.

How have things changed since your promotion?

When I first started with the company, the primary goal was to branch out the revenues out of our core business of gaming and amusement products with some acquisitions outside of that space to give broader diversity to our business overall. About halfway through last year, I took up the role of the President

of the Gaming and Amusement business. My aim was to refocus our efforts on the global gaming and amusement business because it is a core segment to our company with a large, loyal customer base. Over the last several months we have refocused our efforts in this space by introducing several investments in people and products - really showing our commitment to the industry and driving the business forward.

Our whole strategy is to help customers to simplify their sourcing. Whether you're an OEM looking for innovative, highly engineered solutions for your gaming machines, or you're an operator of casinos, we really are the best provider in terms of products, availability and support. Similarly, we have the engineers, the resources and the manufacturing capabilities in China and Poland to meet any of our customers' needs. As leaner work environments become more prevalent in our times, we feel that those attributes and benefits work well for our customers and service that need.

For myself, it has been great to come back and refocus on an industry that I love and am passionate about with great customers, friends and colleagues; working with a great team of people to make the business even more successful. Having very loyal customers has been a key driver for our continued growth and success.

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