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Caesars Entertainment Partners with Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians; Acquires Michigan iGaming Operations from Wynn Resorts

On Tuesday of this week, Caesars Entertainment, Inc. (“Caesars”) published a [press release](#) to announce a new agreement to operate the Michigan iGaming business of WynnBET in the state. Pending regulatory approvals, Caesars will subsequently agree to a long-term extension of market access rights with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, giving them access to the Sault Tribe’s skins.

This transaction, subject to regulatory approvals, will enable Caesars to operate additional iGaming brands in Michigan, with the intention being to transition existing WynnBET patrons to Caesars’ Michigan iGaming platform. This transition is projected to occur later in 2024. Caesars will also continue to operate Caesars Sportsbook and Caesars Palace Online Casino.

The Sault Tribe currently owns and operates Kewadin Casinos. The Chairman of Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Austin Lowes, commented, “It was paramount that our next partner in iGaming possessed both expertise in the U.S. iGaming market and a history of strong partnerships in Indian country. We believe we found that with Caesars...”

Matt Sunderland, Caesars Entertainment’s SVP and Chief iGaming Officer, shared in this sentiment when he said, “We are honored to

work with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and look forward to growing with them in Michigan.”

Fanatics Sportsbook Launches Today in Michigan

Fanatics Sportsbook & Casino [launched](#) in Michigan on February 22, 2024. Michigan patrons are now able to download the app on iOS and Android to begin placing wagers. For Fanatics Betting and Gaming, Michigan is the thirteenth state for the online sportsbook, and the third for the online casino apps. Fanatics Sportsbook and Fanatics Casino offer new search, discovery, and rewards features.

With Fanatics Betting and Gaming’s August 2023 acquisition of PointsBet, PointsBet Michigan customers’ login information and account balances were automatically migrated to the Fanatics Sportsbook platform.

Michigan Internet Gaming, Sports Betting Operators Report \$229.6 Million in January Revenue

As [reported](#) by the Michigan Gaming Control Board (“MGCB”), Michigan commercial and tribal internet gaming (“iGaming”) and sports betting operators reported a combined \$229.6 million total gross receipts in January. January receipts decreased 5.4% when compared to last month’s results.

January iGaming gross receipts were \$181.9 million, the highest to date. Gross sports betting receipts totaled \$47.7 million. In December 2023, iGaming gross receipts were \$181.4 million and gross sports betting receipts were \$61.1 million.

The combined total adjusted gross receipts of \$183.0 million were reported for January, including \$164.2 million from iGaming and \$18.8 million from internet sports betting – representing an iGaming increase of 0.5% and a 46.5% decrease for sports betting when compared to December 2023. When compared to January 2023 iGaming was up 18.7% and sports betting was up by 5.4%.

Total internet sports betting handle was \$577.4 million, a decrease of 1.0% from the \$583.0 million result in December 2023.

The operators delivered \$31.3 million in taxes and payments to the State of Michigan during January, with iGaming taxes and fees contributing \$30.0 million and internet sports betting taxes and fees contributing \$1.3 million.

The three Detroit Casinos – MotorCity Casino, MGM Grand Detroit, and Greektown Casino – reported city wagering taxes and municipal service fees of \$8.5 million, with iGaming taxes and fees contributing \$7.9 million and internet sports betting taxes and fees contributing \$614,000 for the month of January.

Tribal operators reported making total payments of \$3.6 million of wagering payments to the tribes’ governing bodies according to the MGCB.

An online gaming and sports betting revenue distribution [table](#) is available on the agency’s website.

As of January, a total of 14 commercial and tribal operators offered internet sports betting and 15 commercial and tribal operators offered iGaming. Details for each

operator's internet gaming and internet sports betting [results](#) are available and published on the MGCB website.

Clarion Gaming Digital Expands North American Reach with Global Gaming Business Acquisition

[Announced](#) earlier this week, Clarion Gaming Digital has acquired the iGaming publishing company, Global Gaming Business ("GGB"). Clarion purchased GGB's magazine publications, Casino Style, Tribal Government Gaming, and Progressive Products Preview and online assets, including GGB News.

Established in 2002, GGB is a trusted gaming news source, and its acquisition will expand upon the range of industry news Clarion offers. Moving forward, Clarion intends to continue their North American expansion.

Alex Pratt, Managing Director of Clarion Gaming, remarked, "This is a major milestone for our digital business as we unlock the benefits of our investment. We are acquiring a business with deep industry heritage and with it the opportunity to build on their solid foundations in the US."

Roger Gros, CEO of GGB's holding company, Casino Connection International LLC, said of the transition, "As the gaming industry continues to grow in many different ways, our relationship with Clarion will make certain that our pivotal role in the industry remains unchanged and we can continue our important work going forward."

Third-Straight Year of Record Revenue, Commercial Gaming Revenue Reaches \$66.5 Billion in 2023

U.S. commercial gaming revenue reached an annual record of \$66.5 billion in 2023, according to the [press release](#) issued by the American Gaming Association ("AGA") and its [Commercial Gaming Revenue Tracker](#). The total revenue surpasses 2022's previous high of \$60.5 billion by 10 percent, marking the industry's third-straight record revenue year.

"From the traditional casino experience to online options, American adults' demand for gaming is at an all-time high. Sustaining our momentum will take unified industry efforts around combating pernicious illegal operators and growing responsible gambling efforts in tandem with the growth of the legal market—both of which the AGA is committed to lead on throughout 2024," said AGA President and CEO Bill Miller.

The commercial gaming industry continues to evolve, with online gaming making up nearly one-quarter (24.7%) of nationwide commercial gaming revenue in 2023, a new annual high.

There are a few key takeaways that lead another record year, looking at each sector:

Traditional Gaming:

- Brick-and-mortar casino slots and table games grossed a record \$49.4 billion, up 3.3% over 2022.
- On a state level, 19 out of 27 traditional gaming markets saw record annual revenue.

Sports Betting:

- Sports betting achieved new records for handle (\$119.8B) and sportsbook revenue (\$10.9B), up 27.8% and 44.5% respectively.

iGaming:

- Online casino revenue grew 22.9% year-over-year to \$6.2 billion in the six states with full-scale legal iGaming.

In 2023, 12 of the top 20 commercial casino gaming markets reported revenue growth compared to 2022. The top markets surpassing \$1 Billion in gaming revenue including Detroit:

1. Las Vegas Strip—\$8.83 B
2. Atlantic City—\$2.286 B
3. Chicagoland—\$219 B
4. Baltimore-Washington, D.C.—\$2.08 B
5. Mississippi Gulf Coast—\$1.59 B
6. Queens/Youkers—\$1.54 B
7. Philadelphia—\$1.37 B
8. Detroit—\$1.24 B
9. St. Louis—\$1.07 B

The commercial gaming industry also contributed more to state and local governments' coffers than ever in 2023. Throughout the year, operators paid an estimated \$14.4 billion in direct gaming revenue taxes, an increase of 9.7% from 2022.

“Gaming’s success translates directly to the success of the states, cities and towns in which we operate,” continued Miller. “We are proud to be in 47 U.S. jurisdictions, acting as economic drivers, creating jobs and providing the funding that makes critical public education programs, infrastructure projects, problem gambling resources and more possible.”