

# Local and Global Excellence in e-Gaming

Five years after entry into the EU, Malta's e-gaming sector is still going strong. With the jurisdiction being hailed as an example of best practice, it is still attracting new players to the scene.

The Economic Update spoke to Jonathan Dalli, the recently appointed head of marketing at e-Management Group to learn more about this sector.

Sat in a plush office, I talk to a young Mr Dalli about our island's potential and the e-gaming industry in general.

A dedicated partner of HBM Group – a premier provider of international financial services that is headquartered in Curacao within the Netherlands Antilles – e-Management Group offers corporate and licensing solutions to the e-commerce sector, with particular focus on e-gaming, in various jurisdictions around the globe.

"We have offices in Amsterdam, Malta, Curacao and St. Maarten - both of which lie in the Dutch Caribbean - British Virgin Islands, Panama and Uruguay," Mr Dalli explains. "We began in Curacao as this jurisdiction has been very active in the remote gaming sector since the 1980s, making it the ideal starting point for the group. But with Malta's strong emergence in this sector and its entry into the EU in 2004, we decided to also open a local office in the same year."

e-Management Limited in Malta offers a broad spectrum of services to its clients, truly becoming a one-stop shop for operators looking to set up and maintain their e-business in Malta.

"We offer a wide range of complementary and ancillary business set-up, support and corporate services," Mr Dalli says. "All an operator has to do is to express an interest in Malta or another jurisdiction and we are able to take over from there."

"However, more importantly, we like to focus on the demographic that the operator is looking to target with his software and are able to guide them to jurisdictions that suit their market. We do not focus solely on Malta, though we do recognise Malta is a leading e-gaming jurisdiction and that a Malta Remote Gaming Licence can easily be considered as a gateway to Europe," he continues.

e-Management's services include: company set-up, formation and domiciliation, directorship and nominee services, administrative and secretarial services, accounting and reporting services, as well as key official solutions within its portfolio.

This provides important added value for operators and is one of the factors that saw e-Management Limited become so successful since commencing its operation. But although we have seen continued growth within Malta's e-gaming sector, this growth has now slowed down. Does he feel that we have now



reached saturation point within this industry?

"Absolutely not," he says emphatically. "While the boom has settled into a steady growth we are still seeing operators choosing Malta as their jurisdiction of choice. Quality attracts quantity. In September we attended and exhibited at the European iGaming Congress and Expo in Copenhagen whereby encouraging interest was still expressed in respect of a Malta Remote Gaming License. There are a number of factors for this continuing attraction. In my opinion, the first is Malta's attractive tax structure and the second is its low HR costs. These have kept the island strongly positioned despite growing international competition for business."

Malta is also a strong jurisdiction whose regulator has an excellent international reputation. In fact, Malta is often quoted in international fora as an example of best practice. "I have recently returned from a gaming expo and conference in Bulgaria, whereby during the Eastern European Gaming Summit, Malta and the LGA were specifically pinpointed as such."

"Malta also enjoys an easy relocation procedure which is another attraction for businesses looking to come to the island," Mr Dalli says. "And e-Management offers companies the ability to maintain someone on the ground as we can act as directors of the company to facilitate business."

However, Mr Dalli also points out that while Malta is an excellent location for e-gaming operators, there is still much to be done to continue to improve the island's attractiveness.

"New markets are opening up and Malta must maintain its position. It has yet to be seen how these new jurisdictions will react to each other and how they will develop as a result. Product Malta is therefore an important issue and we need to ensure that it is maintained at the highest standards to keep operators focused on our shores," Mr Dalli says.

Malta's future certainly looks strong within this sector, assisted by the fact that the island's financial institutions, the government and banks take a very pragmatic and pro-business approach, and international organisations such as e-Management Group only add to our strength within this important industry. 