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The New King of Retail Fast Play?

Vermont may be the new king of Fast Play games. The industry knows Fast Play by many names: PlayNow, InstaPlay, Print 'n Play, EZ Play, Print On-Demand, etc. Twenty-six U.S. lotteries sell Fast Play games in their jurisdictions, generating \$1.4 billion in sales, or 3.8% of all terminal-generated games, in 2023. While overall sales are still relatively small for Fast Play games, the Vermont Lottery is a perfect example of the category's laden potential.

After moving to a new lottery system provider, Scientific Games, in 2022, the Lottery strategically planned to improve its Fast Play product category. Two years later, the results are impressive. In 2023, Vermont's Fast Play sales increased by 88%, with per capita sales jumping to \$23. Compared to all other state lotteries where Fast Play is exclusively available through retail, Vermont has earned the No. 1 spot. In fact, its Fast Play per capita sales are approximately \$9 more than the second highest-performing lottery.

The Vermont Lottery's Fast Play strategy required a comprehensive category overhaul from visual appeal to play mechanics, led by a three-pronged approach: portfolio redesign, increased in-store and social media advertising and expanded sales channels. Scientific Games advocated expanding the Lottery's Fast Play portfolio from 10 to 14 games and replacing every game previously in the market. They also diversified play styles, adding a family of Fast Play games and standalone progressive jackpots alongside the standard key number match play styles. The company also introduced more cashable retail prizes, adding "loaded" and "blowout" prize structures, doublers and multipliers.



Leslie Badger, Vice President of Lottery Content for Scientific Games

At retail, the Vermont Lottery and Scientific Games increased the frequency of Fast Play motion graphics shown on lottery displays. They also introduced an "interrupt screen," allowing retail clerks to replace the digital screen to showcase available Fast Play games. Outside retail, they repurposed motion graphics for social media. For states with tight advertising budgets, leveraging existing resources can optimize their outreach effectiveness. "It is a big plus to recreate content for social channels," adds Leslie Badger, Vice President of Lottery Content for Scientific Games, who brings 25 years of expertise to the product.

Finally, the Lottery increased the number of self-service terminals and added Fast Play games. Now, 50% of their sales come from SSTs. "Some of the changes were small tweaks, and others were slightly bigger. Interestingly, we accomplished this while still maintaining payouts. We wanted to responsibly grow the category," says Badger.

Nationwide Success

Vermont is not the only Scientific Games' customer that improved Fast Play game sales last year. All of the company's Fast Play customers grew the category. In La Fleur's 2023 Calendar Year Sales Report, Arizona, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Vermont all saw year-over-year increases. "We implement a strategic, targeted approach for Fast Play games, employing a managed portfolio strategy similar to our method for scratch-off games," Badger explains. "It requires advanced data analysis to do correctly."

FAST PLAY SALES	CY2022	CY2023	GROWTH YOY
Arizona Lottery	43,425,375	49,485,784	13.96%
Iowa Lottery	26,358,839	31,389,597	19.09%
Maine Lottery	13,305,858	13,404,700	0.74%
Maryland Lottery	75,440,235	78,668,301	4.28%
Oklahoma Lottery	1,913,794	7,305,810	281.74%
Pennsylvania Lottery	145,610,406	157,074,695	7.87%
Vermont Lottery	8,093,923	15,269,874	88.66%

La Fleur's 2023 Unaudited Sales Report

Fast Play requires careful management, but the potential is there—as Scientific Games customers have already discovered. One customer will launch the first \$50 Fast Play price point next year. "Scientific Games is monitoring the optimal balance between terminal-generated, instant win, scratch and digital instant win. We're monitoring the market and strategizing the best way forward," Badger explains.

Fast Play's intrinsic advantages are hard to ignore. It has no shrinkage or distribution costs. Smaller lotteries often cannot print seasonal-themed scratch games, especially for minor holidays like Mother's Day or Halloween. Since Fast Play games are printed on demand, they offer far more flexibility.

The same is true for Fast Play games featuring licensed brands. Since lotteries are only charged for games purchased, licensed Fast Play games may be more cost-effective than their scratch counterparts. The Oklahoma Lottery showcased how effective this can be with a family of Fast Play games featuring different classic board games at various price points. "It was a fun way to offer a licensed family of games without limiting it to just one game," Badger says.

Scientific Games' success with the Fast Play category has garnered the attention of lotteries. In the next 24 months, two more U.S. Scientific Games customers are expected to launch Fast Play. Requests for more detailed information from international lotteries have also increased. The continued interest and expansion of the category are testaments to its promising future.