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Year of the Goat: China Sports Lottery Ranks #1

Asian Lotteries Flourish

Taiwan is a unique and vibrant lottery environment. Sales for Taiwan's public welfare lottery have nearly doubled since 2005 (from 73.4 million NT to 132.2 million NT) and saw a 7.4% rise in sales in 2014. While there are many factors that contribute to the long and ongoing success, the stewardship of Marios Mitromaras, INTRALOT's Managing Director for Asia, is integral to the partnership.

INTRALOT provides ChinaTrust Commercial Bank and its subsidiary lottery operator Taiwan Lottery Corporation (TLC) with the LOTOS™ O/S On-line Gaming Computer System, Photon lottery terminals and Horizon Content Management Platform. TLC operates its own retail network.

"The lottery has grown from around 2 billion euros to 3.5 billion since 2007 when INTRALOT received the technology supply contract from China Trust," asserted Mitromaras. "We have worked with the lottery on marketing and consulting. The system is robust and the product portfolio is strong. In this long lasting collaboration parties think of themselves as a family. Our philosophy is to bring passion to our work. The Asian culture embraces the building of strong and trusted relations and likes our passion for excellence."

In July 2013, INTRALOT was selected by the Taiwan Sports Lottery Corp. (TSLC), among other international companies, as its single betting services partner for the next 10 years.

The history of lotteries in Taiwan in the 21st century is a fascinating one. INTRALOT has been a part of the modern iteration of lotteries in Taiwan from the outset.

"Officially we are in the third license for the Taiwan Welfare Lottery and the second sports betting license," noted Mitromaras. "The lotteries are mature in the sense of a robust corporate social responsibility regime applied by both lotteries. Both organizations are very advanced and highly adaptive."

The Taiwanese government does not operate lotteries directly, preferring to license the operation to trusted

entities. "Typically there will be a joint venture between an institution and a reputable operator like a trust bank," said Mitromaras. He also noted that banking and lottery systems share a common need to be highly secure and robust.

In Taiwan, traditional numerical games, sports gaming and instant tickets are legal. Online and mobile sports wagering is authorized only under the Sports Lottery license.

"This has created a great opportunity for the lottery," said Mitromaras. With the introduction of mobile and internet, sales of the sport lottery have grown more than 50% in the first year of operation."

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The increase in sales created a good deal of positive buzz in the country. "The mobile and interactive sales are not quite as much as in other parts of the world, but with smart phone penetration being greater than 95%, it has great potential to expand further," declared Mitromaras.

TLC's motto is "Public Welfare Concept: Buy lottery for public welfare to accumulate merits." This unique approach targets lottery proceeds for the underprivileged.

"The agents for the lottery are handicap people, single-parents families or families with small incomes. This is a popular and very effective way to support citizens who need extra help," he said.

People play to support these people. There are approximately 50,000 street vendors selling lottery instant tickets. "It is an example of money from the people, to the people. It is part of being in a society that cares," said Mitromaras.

Asian Lottery Industry

Lottery play and betting in general has a more social role in Asia. "One aspect of Asian culture is that they like to socialize in the streets," explained Mitromaras. "This is similar to Mediterranean where the climate is mild."



Asian players are also people of habit. They enjoy playing in the same lucky shops. They like face to face contact with their retailers.

In Asia, casual wagering is part of the fabric of life. "Asians will bet on everyday things like how many seconds it will take for a traffic light to turn from red to green. It's fun," said Mitromaras.

The retail businesses in Asia have a distinct local flair. "There is a lot of feng shui that goes into selecting a lottery shop location," said Mitromaras. "Does it face north, south, east or west? Is it on a cross road or is there a temple nearby? All of these factors are considered." The shops tend to be very small, housing a coffee shop and lottery retailer in the same location.

Officials through out the Pacific Rim want to work with vendor partners with global experience. "Asian authorities tend to be very driven by rules. They want partners who will respect the regulations. We have been successful at this as opposed to big names that have gotten business and then left the country, because they did not play by the rules," observed Mitromaras. "There is no room for frivolity in Asia. Everything takes time. It is not like other continents where you shake hands and start operating the next day."

INTRALOT has been successfully working in the region since 2005. "Currently, we have contracts and on going projects in China Mainland, Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan and South Korea that run through 2023. That will be a nearly two-decade run. We hold a dominant position in the market over our competitors," said Mitromaras.