

# Experience COUNTS

Since 1995, Ainsworth Game Technology has been leading the way in Australia as a manufacturer and supplier of gaming solutions. Now it is also making its mark on international shores.

Images courtesy of Ainsworth Game Technology

Australia's gaming industry might be coming into a period of sluggish growth; however, Ainsworth Game Technology has a plan in place to ensure its success in the years to come. The business was established by Len Ainsworth, a pioneer in the poker and gaming machine sector, in the mid 90s—a year after he was inducted into the country's Gaming Hall of Fame. Len's solution to combat the pending lull has been to expand Ainsworth Game Technology's operations into overseas marketplaces where the pace isn't showing any sign of slowing down soon.

Executive Director and CEO Danny Gladstone has been leading the Ainsworth team since February 2007 under the watch of Len, who holds the position of executive chairman. Danny came in at a time

when the company had reported a loss of \$50 million, but quickly set to work to turn those figures around. Last year, he was proud to report a profit of \$80 million. Ainsworth Game Technology is headquartered in Newington, Sydney, and has presence in South America, North America, Asia, Europe, Macau, and New Zealand. Its operations are fully integrated to include design, development, assembly, testing, sales, and field service, making it a one-stop solution for its clients all around the world.

Danny has been in the gaming industry his whole life. Prior to his role with Ainsworth Game Technology, he was the director of video game developer Konami Australia for 10 years. He is highly respected in the field—being inducted into the Club Managers Association Australia Hall of Fame in 2000—and has ample experience.

He says that over the past eight years, the biggest challenge for him has been dealing with the large revenue loss in those early days of his tenure. "We had to restructure the whole place, we had to put in new business plans, and we had to implement new product plans—it was all about getting the right product out to the customers. There were some very good people who came on board at the same time as me, and together we focused on being a sales-driven company on the back of the performance of the product. In our industry, our product relies on performance. You are accountable every day for every one of your machines, so I think everyone understands that our goal is to make sure our product is out in the field and working. It has to work beneficially for the person who purchases it, otherwise we know that our business will be limited in the future." >

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When the global financial crisis hit, like most businesses, Ainsworth Game Technology was affected; however, it was coming off a fairly low market base so it had the opportunity to use this time to proactively pursue growth. “We weren’t affected by the crisis probably as much as the larger corporates across the world, but it did have a devastating effect on the industry,” Danny says.

In 2014, Ainsworth Game Technology broke ground with the

unveiling of its plans for a 300,000-square-foot purpose-built manufacturing facility in Las Vegas. Danny says this was a monumental moment for the business and demonstrated the company’s commitment to its continued growth in the North American market. “We had our office in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and then we decided to move to Las Vegas to start our production facility there,” Danny explains. “In January 2012, we had 10 people in the office in Las Vegas, and now across the Americas we have 148 people. So there’s been a lot of growth. At present, we are building the \$30-million state-of-the-art facility to further our expansion in North America. In 2012, I moved over to North America for two years to facilitate the growth of the company and to employ key people and a president. I then moved back to Australia at the end of 2013.”

Danny believes Ainsworth Game Technology has experienced such significant success in the US

because it has been able to offer a unique product that is a little bit different from what was already available to purchase there. “We market an Australian-style math which has got a bit of volatility in it, and we’ve produced a good, clean machine that’s obviously got appeal on an international basis. The US is the largest market in the world, so it’s a great place to be doing business.”

Looking forward, Ainsworth Game Technology will continue to expand its premium range of gaming solutions across North and South America, as well as to markets in Europe, Asia, and New Zealand. This year, the business will start supplying its machines to South Africa as well. “There’s nowhere we’re not looking at the moment,” Danny says. “We’re looking everywhere that’s legally licensed and has the potential to give us a substantial return. If the online gaming situation increases and regulations change around the world, we feel we are well placed

in those markets, with our Responsible Gambling Services and our social media site. There are also other forms of technology we are looking at developing for the future.”

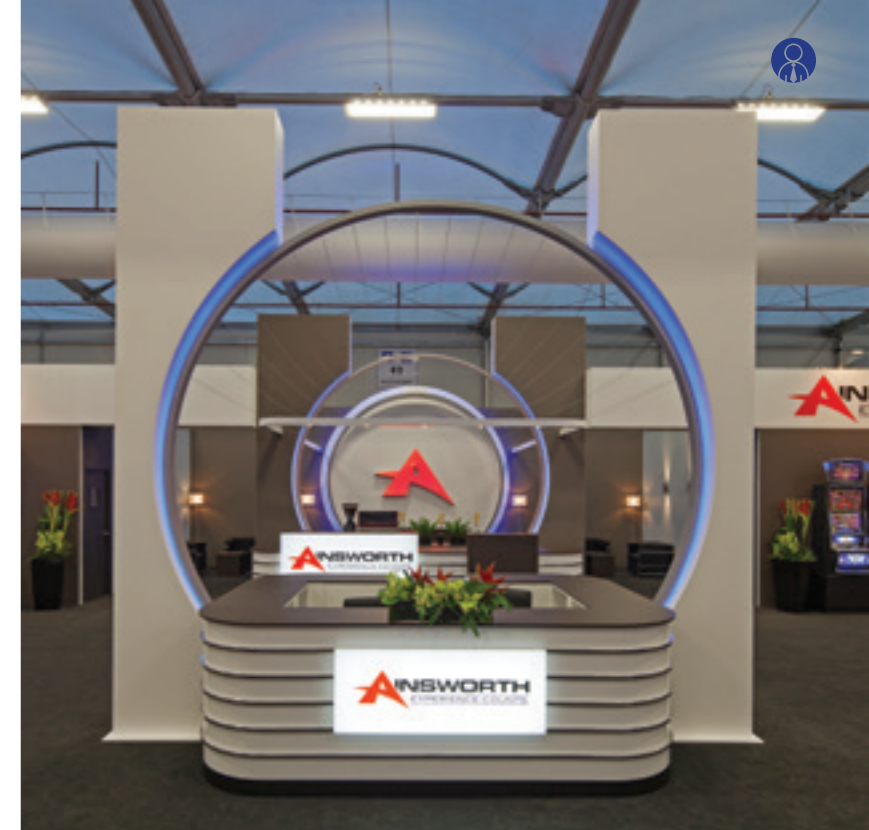
Ainsworth Game Technology considers itself to be highly innovative, producing only premium products with up-to-date technology. It dedicates 11 per cent of its budget to research and development, and has a special site in Sydney with 50 staff consistently working on new ideas. Last year, the company had a turnover of approximately \$240 million, with \$24 million of that put back into research and development.

Danny sees technology as an important platform for the business to embrace as its competitors make the most of the ever-changing online space. “In early 2007, we looked at working with another company to get our platform upgraded so it would have the latest technology, and we’ve done that now. We’ve gone from our first platform with this company and we’ve developed the software, and we keep adding technology and putting it on our new products that are coming out. It’s all about having the technologies to present our games in the best possible way.

“In the industry itself, the biggest change we’ve seen over the years in the products that do similar things to ours is online social media sites where gaming machine games are being played on the internet,” he says. “In Europe, there has also been the introduction of online casinos. They have been the most significant things that have hit the industry. In the past three or four years, my senior people and I have put in strategies so that we now have our own social media casino called Players Paradise. This was launched in January of this year and we think it is going to go very well. It also gives us a way to showcase our games. Furthermore, we have also got an online solution to supply the European casinos with our own RGS—Remote Game Server—that we will supply to some of the leading casino operators across Europe and the UK.”

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- Danny Gladstone



**COLE KEPRO INTERNATIONAL** celebrates Danny Gladstone’s leadership. Cole Kepro is proud to work with such a seasoned leader at Ainsworth. Well done Danny, and continued best wishes.



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Ainsworth Game Technology collaborates closely with a number of key suppliers to ensure its ongoing success. Danny says that as the industry moves quickly in terms of new updates with technology and innovation, some of the relationships are developed for the long term, while others are for much shorter periods. “When you work with suppliers, it’s a two-way street. They understand that if they don’t supply us with products of a high quality, if it affects the performance of our

product, they don’t get our business anymore. It’s as straightforward as that.”

With a strong global vision and exceptional leadership, Ainsworth Game Technology will continue to provide the gaming market with its premium range of gaming products and accompanying software. It has already made an impact in Australia and is well on its way to becoming a well-known name around the world. ●