

Record Number of Visitors at Holland Casino, but Sales Decline

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Holland Casino logged a total of 7.5 million visits in 2007. That is 7.6 percent more than in 2006 and it makes Holland Casino an extremely popular entertainment venue.

The growing number of visitors, however, did not make for higher operating results. Net operating income was 85.6 million Euro, 4.1 percent lower than in 2006. Spending per visit decreased compared to 2006, from 104 Euro to 101 Euro in 2007. Holland Casino's net operating income has been decreasing since 2003. That is partly due to visitors spending less, but it is also caused by tax increases. For 2007, total payments to the Dutch treasury (taxes plus net profits) amounted to 268.2 million Euro, compared with 260.1 million Euro in 2006, a 1.6 percent year-over-year increase. The Board of Directors is concerned about costs increasing faster than income. Holland Casino is preparing some strategic changes.

"We are doing fine when you look at the number of visitors. An increasing number of people know to come visit us for a wonderful night out," says Dick Flink, Holland Casino CEO. "It is notable that spending per visit has been declining since 2003, while taxes have been increasing. To guarantee Holland Casino's continuing operations, strategic changes must be made. We will be outlining a new strategy and at the same time we will be facing higher taxes on slot machines (up from 19 percent to 29 percent) and the implementation of the smoking ban. That will cost us millions. We are facing an important and exciting year," Flink noted.

Prevention policy successful

Holland Casino is a popular leisure destination and it was also charged by the Dutch government to offer casino gambling in a secure, reliable and well-controlled environment. The most recent numbers and the international recognition show that Holland Casino successfully accomplishes this mission (editors: more information at <http://www.hollandcasino.com/nl-NL/verantwoord+ondernemen/gamingaward.htm>). Compare the numbers: In the Netherlands, the National Alcohol and Drug Addiction System (LADIS) monitors the status of addictions. The number of gambling addicts registered with outpatient treatment facilities has been cut in half since 1995. This makes the current number the lowest since registration started. "This shows that a growing number of visitors and a decrease in the number of gambling addicts go together," Flink notes.

"Holland Casino logged a total of 31,000 preventive discussions in 2007. That is a 27 percent increase compared to 2006. This increase has nothing to do with an increase in the number of problems, but has everything to do with us noticing signs of addiction earlier. In order to prevent problems with addiction," Flink continues, "we continue to fine-tune our prevention policies. We recently decided, for example, that young adults should already be informed about possible risks of the game at a level of six visits a month. At eight visits, we engage them in a private, one-on-one conversation. For adult visitors, we generally start intervention at eight and ten visits a month. It is our responsibility towards society to protect our guests where we can. We take this very seriously and our prevention policy is very valuable for our company and our guests," Flink states.

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