

'Converting Gamblers to Gamers' with Transform Gaming

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Sina Azeri, Founder & CEO of Transform Gaming about leveraging technology to transform problem gamblers into engaged gamers.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Before founding Transform Gaming, I built a business in the gambling industry where I consolidated the UK space to create the third largest high street mini casino operator. Throughout my time in that business, I witnessed many upsetting incidents as a result of problematic gambling behaviours. These experiences inspired me to pursue a different path - one aimed at making a positive impact on helping with the issue of problem gambling. I believe casual games offer a constructive way to channel gambling impulses, and my mission is to leverage technology to transform problem gamblers into engaged gamers.

Tell us about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

At Transform Gaming, seek to position ourselves as one of the largest social casino gaming publishing groups in the world and a leader in responsible social casino gaming apps. Our aim is to consolidate the sector, collaborate to find efficiencies and growth opportunities whilst bringing about positive change for the consumers. We also have a social-purpose, to develop a product that can vastly improve the lives of the

2.5% of the UK population who are experiencing problem gambling. This in turn will bring about huge benefits for society, allow us to convert users to the safer form of gaming and potentially disrupt the status quo permanently.

Gambling operators face a challenging dilemma: excluding customers with problematic behaviours can mean losing some of their most profitable players. I realised that if operators had a 'free-to-play' gaming alternative to guide these customers toward - while still having a cut of the revenue - there would be a way to actively transition problem gamblers into a safer environment while supporting their recovery. This is the mission behind our flagship product, CONVERT, which is designed to collect touchscreen, accelerometer, and gyroscope data from a mobile phone, without accessing sensitive biometric data. It will then analyse this data using ML/AI to establish a baseline index and detect shifts in user emotions—such as extreme highs and lows—that may indicate problem gambling behaviours. Our goal is to be able to make real-time game adjustments that reduce randomness and increase skill-based challenges or incorporate calming mini-games to ease gambling impulses. Additionally, during gameplay, CONVERT will block all gambling apps to reduce the likelihood of relapse.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

The business is currently evolving. Since the beginning of 2024, we have been focussed on building strong foundations, preparing essential infrastructure, building a highly experienced and capable team, refining our strategy and securing funding. Now these are in place, we're on the verge of launching fully as a shell company ready to make our first acquisition and start deploying capital in early 2025.

Tell us about the working culture at Transform Gaming?

The working culture is still forming, and I'm expecting it will continue to develop as the company does. Everyone on the team shares the same values of collaboration, rolling up their sleeves and getting stuck into whatever task needs completing. I feel lucky that everyone has a different but complementary skill set and we all support each other. This will translate into the businesses we buy into, as everyone is committed to ensuring we provide the best service and deliver the strongest results to them.

How are you funded?

We completed our Seed Round, which brings together angel investors with significant experience in the gaming and tech sectors that would have a clear impact on our future development. Our Acquisition Round of financing will enable the completion of our first acquisition and will be supported by private equity and hedge funds.

What has been your biggest challenge at Transform Gaming so far and how have you overcome this?

Multiple challenges - general volatility this year - such as wars, high inflation, fiscal challenges, tax changes. Biggest challenge is general uncertainty, making fundraising and acquisition discussions tricky. Some want to hold on to assets during times of volatility but others see volatility as an opportunity.

How does Transform Gaming answer an unmet need?

A product like CONVERT simply doesn't exist. We want to challenge the status quo with a product that gambling operators want to use, and one that encourages them to transition players over to a significantly safer alternative. Currently, the approach is more regulation and harsher penalties - while this may seem like an effective solution, gambling operators generally make a lot of money so a fine can be easily absorbed. Alongside this, successive governments have increased regulations but this is an unsustainable approach as it's impossible to predict every aspect that will need regulating. Instead, there is a clear need for a practical solution. By offering a product that aligns with operators' interests while prioritising user safety, we're establishing a new and more responsible path forward.

What's in store for the future?

My razor-sharp focus is on securing our first acquisition.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Persistence is the critically important element. We all know the stat about how 90% of startups fail, so of course you need to have the right strategy in place, but being able to pivot, persevere and keep going will leave you and your business in a strong position to be part of the 10% that succeed.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

My rule is that my body is my temple. I have optimised the quality of my sleep over the years to ensure I can retain clarity and be productive every day. I make time for exercise every morning and eat healthy.

Furthermore, I always make time in my day for my family and friends - they keep me grounded and balanced.

Sina Azeri is the Founder & CEO of *Transform Gaming*.



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