



Rehab Lotteries Celebrates

Pictured above:

John McGuire displays the new special edition "Celebrations" scratch card. It has a top prize of €10,000, four chances to win and one in every three tickets overall is a winner.

"€170m worth of lottery games is a fantastic amount of product to have sold!" remarks John McGuire, Director of Fundraising and Marketing with the Rehab Group, as he recalls the achievement of Rehab Lotteries since its establishment. He added, "This has only been possible because of the tremendous support for Rehab's lottery games received from our customers and fantastic staff."

HE WAS SPEAKING IN AN INTERVIEW WITH *Rehab News* as Rehab Lotteries recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary with a Mardi Gras-style carnival birthday party in St Stephen's Green in Dublin complete with dancers, drummers, balloons and, of course, the obligatory birthday cake. A special edition "Celebrations" scratch card has also been issued to mark the event and is now available in convenience stores, supermarkets and petrol stations nationwide.

McGuire is with Rehab Lotteries almost since the beginning, having joined two years after it was established. Back then, the world in which Rehab Lotteries operated was a very different place. "We initially had our offices in Dame Street, where we

had two floors and a basement and about 30 staff working for us. There was a lot of administration and paperwork but with technology has come greater efficiencies and reductions in the costs of operations. Of course, the whole shape of retailing has changed dramatically over the years too. In those days there were more corner shops and family shops, unlike today where the grocery business is now much more concentrated amongst a small number of multiples.”

So where did the idea of Rehab Lotteries come from? McGuire explains, “When the idea of a National Lottery was announced back in the 80s, the government launched a competition to see who would get the licence. Three organisations tendered for the contract – An Post, the Irish Sweepstakes and Rehab in a joint venture with the Central Remedial Clinic. In preparation for the bid, then CEO Frank Flannery did a huge amount of research and formed a strategic alliance with the Ontario State Lottery in Canada, which provided advice on how lotteries were run. Of course, as we now know, An Post won out in the end, but as Rehab had acquired a huge amount of lottery know-how, Frank decided to put that to good use and so Rehab Lotteries was born.”

So have scratch cards always been a key part of the business? “Our core anchor product has always been scratch cards and over the years we have continued to introduce new innovations and games. Our first scratch card was ‘Instant Cash’ and for the price of IRE1 you could win a Ford Orion car. We’ve probably had around 100 games since then – the most successful game we have ever had is ‘Extra’ which has been in circulation now for about ten years and which has developed a real following.

“Of course, we have always continued to innovate. We had cards to celebrate people’s birthdays and anniversaries, where people would get a musical greeting card but with a lottery card contained within. We had a special lottery with Superquinn where you could win points in Superquinn’s customer loyalty scheme on your card. The unique aspect of this game was that every ticket was a winner in that every ticket had a minimum amount of points as a prize. We also offered people the opportunity to buy a ticket and win prizes in the UK National Lottery draw, including multi-million jackpot prizes. In fact, the biggest winner we ever had was in the UK Lotto where a man, whose name I will never forget – Paddy Clair from County Clare – won €254,000.

“More recently, we have introduced online gaming with rehabbingo.com. Launched in November 2006,



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we spent most of 2007 getting rehabbingo.com established and securing a reasonable player base and thanks to all of that hard work, it’s really taken off. It is now making a real contribution to Rehab such that online activity accounts for two-thirds of the business. We also have electronic scratch cards for sale in public houses, where customers can ‘scratch’ their tickets on screen. Over the next year, we have plans to introduce scratch card games on mobile phones too and are at an advanced stage with a mobile phone provider on this.”

So how vital are the funds raised? “Rehab Lotteries forms an essential part of the fundraising operations for Rehab. It has enabled Rehab to constantly improve the services provided at locations all around Ireland for people with disabilities and others who are marginalised for whom there is a constant requirement to develop new services to meet their needs. On this, our twentieth anniversary, I especially wish to thank all those who have supported Rehab Lotteries over the years and particularly our team of very loyal and dedicated staff.”

So where does McGuire see Rehab Lotteries in 20 years’ time? He gazes into his crystal ball. “One of the issues for us is that the Gaming and Lotteries Act 1956 does not



Pictured above: Alan Kennedy from RehabCare in Ballyfermot celebrates Rehab Lotteries' twentieth birthday with the help of three friends.

legislate for today's gaming environment. The Act needs urgent review as times have moved on and it needs to deal with issues such as casinos and the internet. Reform of the legislation could present us with new opportunities. Notwithstanding this, in 20 years' time, the likelihood is that there will be less sold in shops and a lot more people playing games from their armchair on their interactive TV or via their mobile phone. One thing is for sure, Rehab Lotteries will continue to be at the forefront of lottery innovation and continue to make a vital contribution to the work of Rehab." ■

Still here after all these years!



Three members of staff have been with Rehab Lotteries since day one. Pictured (left to right) John Slevin, Prize Redemptions Manager, Diane Munroe, Business Support Department, and Tom Quigley, Area Sales Representative. John McGuire says, "More than any of us, this is their birthday, and they are a testament to the fact that Rehab really is a great place to work and that people can be really happy here."