

Social media keeps people gambling -

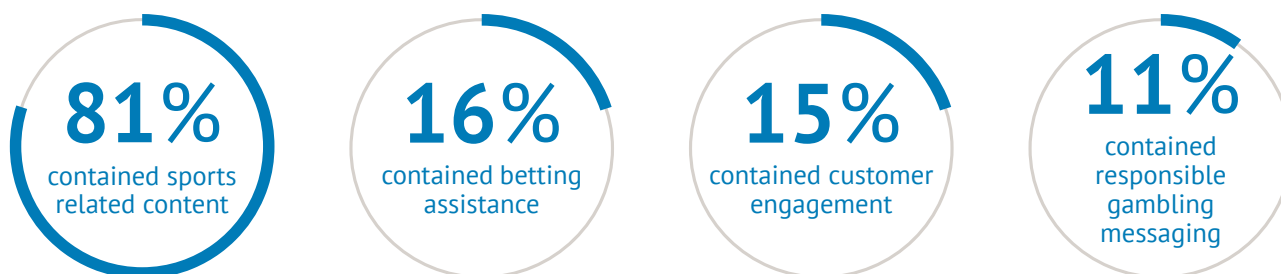
More responsible gambling content is needed.

There is a significant lack of responsible gambling messaging in the social media content of UK gambling operators.

Social media influences how people behave. Gambling operators use social media as a marketing tool to keep people gambling regularly.

Gambling tweets

Tweets from operators contained mixed content -

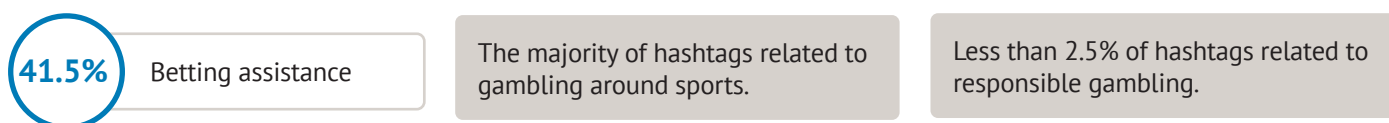


Gambling operator replies to tweets

Social media messaging provides gambling operators with greater ability to engage directly and individually with players. This allows them to intervene early with players who may be displaying indicators of problematic gambling behaviour but only 0.01% of replies did this.



Gambling operator use of hashtags



Emoji's

More than half of gambling operators tweets contained an emoji, most were sports related.

Only 6.5% of emoji's related to responsible gambling, and only a small number of gambling operator accounts used them.



Using social media to promote safer gambling

Operators should also use social media to promote safer gambling and reduce gambling harms by including varied responsible messaging and links to help in 25% of their social media posts.

Operators should work with researchers and collect statistics of those seeking help to determine the influence that social media content has on seeking help, and develop support strategies that capitalise on social media positive influence.

A recognisable safe gambling emoji could be standardised and adopted by all operators across the UK to help players quickly spot the posts that will help them.

Background

Social media has the potential to inform public and global health policy by communicating relevant information to users. Gambling brands have considerable reach on social media with hundreds of thousands of followers. During Covid-19, social media use proliferated.

Brands use a range of content to keep audiences engaged: promotions, competitions, sports news, betting tips, features, and use of humour, with differences in the intensity and frequency of social media posts across brands and sports-related events.

In this research we analysed 21,448 tweets and 20,892 replies from across 10 UK gambling operator brands to better understand how social media is used by the gambling industry.

