

Case study: William Hill

Experian enables fast
and efficient identity
and age verification



About William Hill

Founded in 1934, William Hill is one of the best-known names in the gambling industry, providing gaming and betting services across three channels: online, on the high street and on the phone. The company has been listed on the London Stock Exchange since 2002, and employs over 16,600 people in the UK, Gibraltar, Ireland, Israel and Bulgaria.

William Hill Online, a joint venture between William Hill and leading software provider Playtech, was established in early 2009. Since its launch, William Hill Online has become one of the leading European online gaming and sports betting businesses – taking bets from customers in over 175 countries.

William Hill
//online

www.williamhill.com

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Matt Green
Regulatory Affairs Manager
William Hill

Situation

For a company like William Hill, brand and reputation are key business drivers. As a reputable, long-established operator William Hill not only adheres to gaming legislation, but also goes the extra mile to prove to the authorities that it is doing everything within its power to verify that its customers are over 18, and to identify fraudsters and prevent fraudulent activity.

From a user perspective, an additional driver is the fact that the gaming industry is hugely competitive; customers can switch providers in an instant. For this reason, it's crucial that gaming operators make the sign-up process as slick and efficient as possible. In addition, the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority regulations state that if a gaming operator cannot verify the identity of an applicant within 72 hours, they must suspend the account.

For these reasons, when William Hill Online was created in 2009, it needed a reliable and trustworthy age and identity verification solution that would “pass” the maximum amount of applicants electronically, first time, without the need to ask them for paper-based forms of identification. These are generally inconvenient for customer, and slow down the application process. Having used Experian's Identity Authentication since 2005, they were the natural solution.

Solution

To meet its business needs, William Hill turned to Experian's Identity Authentication solution, in order to verify the age and identity of new applicants registering to use the online gambling service. New applicants are asked to submit their name, address and date of birth. The solution includes an address look-up tool, which makes it easier for the applicant to enter their address with fewer keystrokes, and reduces the chances of the applicant entering an incorrect address.

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When the details have been entered, Identity Authentication cross-references them with numerous datasets, and returns an index score that gives William Hill a good indication as to the likelihood of the applicant being over the age of 18, and indeed, being who they claim to be. If the applicant's identity is authenticated, they are passed straight through to the online gaming platform.

Many of the datasets used in the Identity Authentication process are unique to Experian. Collectively, they ensure that the applicant's details are checked against a total of 1 billion records. The breadth, depth and quality of these datasets, combined with Experian's position as the UK's longest-established credit rating agency, and its relationships with major UK financial institutions, means that Identity Authentication is able to pass more applicants first time, electronically. This leads to increased customer satisfaction and convenience, and increased revenues for William Hill, as the applicant is able to start playing within seconds, rather than days. This is particularly important when there is a big sporting event taking place, and William Hill sees a spike in the number of people applying to play online.

Results

Using Identity Authentication has enabled William Hill to reduce its reliance on paper-based authentication, and to verify the identity and age of applicants quickly. The breadth, depth and quality of the Experian data sets mean that the system can pass more people first time, which improves the customer journey, and also ensures that William Hill is fully compliant with Gibraltar Regulatory Authority regulations.

There are additional benefits too, in the form of reduced data storage costs, and a more efficient business process, which in turn helps revenue generation, since new applicants are able to begin spending money with William Hill more quickly.

"Identity Authentication is playing a major role in upholding the great reputation that the William Hill brand enjoys," says Matt Green, Regulatory Affairs Manager for William Hill's online division, WHG (International). "The solution enables us to pass more applicants, electronically, more quickly, and has led to a significant reduction in the volume of paper-based authentications."

So pleased is William Hill with Identity Authentication, in fact, that the company recently signed a 2-year renewal deal for the solution with Experian – an indication of the company's confidence in the solution and the business benefits it delivers.

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