



Gaming needs to operate with 'integrity and ethics' in order to thrive in the future - argues industry thought leader

Richard Schuetz, former Executive Director at the Bermuda Gaming Control Board, President & CEO at the Stratosphere Hotel and Casino, and board advisor to Shuffle Master Gaming, Casino Publishing and the Institute for the Study of Gambling and Commercial Gaming at the University of Nevada, explains the beauty of ICE London, highlights what he believes will be the hot topics debated at the 2020 event and outlines what's required for the industry to be vibrant and sustainable in the future

As you know, the 'Step into the future' theme adopted to promote ICE London 2020 was based on one of your quotes – how does that feel?

When I first read this, it made me laugh. I thoroughly enjoy ICE and I think the people are great, so I was glad and honoured to have my name associated with it. It still makes me smile and I chuckle a bit.

Do you stand by that sentiment and do you still regard a visit to ICE London as being, as you said, 'magical'?

I do think the ICE show is magical. There is such a diversity of products and people, plus it is in one of my favourite cities in the world. I have a whole group of friends that I just see at ICE, and so not only is the show great, but the opportunity to meet up with old friends is wonderful. Most importantly, ICE is still a looking glass into the future for anyone from the United States.

What do you think the hot topics and themes will be at February's event and in what direction do you see the industry heading?

The technology is always an important part of ICE and that is the whole point of the expo floor. The hot topics will be the curious dance that many of the UK and EU operators are in with their regulators and governments, the potential of future growth of sports wagering in the US (with a fair amount of interest with the tribes, given the developments in California) and potential new markets in Africa, Asia and South America. I would also be interested to see how the issue of gender begins to become a larger part of the conversation.

Taking your inspiration from ICE London's invitation to 'Step into the future', what do you think the industry will look like in 10 or 20 years' time – what conversations do you think Gaming professionals will be having at ICE London 2030 or 2040?

I began working in the industry in the early 1970s as a way to finance my education. The changes since then have been amazing. Moreover, the rate of change has accelerated tremendously, so it is beyond my mental skills to even guess what it will look like in 10 to 20 years. I do know, however, that in order to be sustainable the industry needs sound regulations, it needs to operate with a high degree of integrity and ethics and it needs to provide safeguards for the vulnerable. If it pays attention to these areas, it will be vibrant and sustainable in whatever forms it takes in future worlds. Hopefully, I will still be coming to the show with the excitement and enthusiasm that I feel today!