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The Protective Science of the Pause in Responsible Gambling

Introducing RESPONSIBLE RECOVERY

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US Patent 12,337,119 B2 | CA Patent 3,213,671

Technology shouldn't just capture attention.

It should help restore it.

The Power of the Pause

A pause works when it interrupts automatic reaction and makes room for conscious choice. *That gap, the space between stimulus and response,* lowers emotional intensity, restores clear thinking, and helps prevent regret.

Concept: Psychology Today

The moment your dad holds the swing high, then lets go.

The moment before a first kiss.

The beat of silence before the twist.

The Market Is Changing. So Are the Players.

66%

of the world's population lives with stress-related disease (WHO, 2023)

71%

of players cannot recall the responsible gambling ad they were just shown

2026

This data, this market, this moment

The message sent is never the message received.

That 71% is not a failure of advertising spend. It is a fact about how people process information, and it is where this talk begins.

From Inputs to Outputs

Today the industry measures inputs. We ask a different question: what should responsible gambling actually accomplish?

TODAY: INPUTS

- Number of RG ads
- Number of pop-ups
- Number of warning messages
- Number of impressions
- Number of self-exclusions

RESPONSIBLE RECOVERY: OUTPUTS

- ✓ Did someone voluntarily engage?
- ✓ Did their mood improve?
- ✓ Did they come back?
- ✓ Did they make a better decision?
- ✓ How long did recovery take?

Defining the Terms

The vocabulary this talk uses, in plain language, before the data.

Microbreak

A short, voluntary emotional-regulation moment, such as a Doodle or a Pairs game, offered inside an existing digital experience.

Mood Shift

A change in a player's self-reported state between the start and end of a microbreak. Shifts can move up or down.

Relief Rate

The share of players who both needed a microbreak and engaged with it. Not the same as engagement rate.

Recovery Latency

How long it takes a player's mood to shift after engaging. The speed of recovery, not just whether it happened.

RG Referral

A player voluntarily continuing from a microbreak to a Responsible Gaming page or resource.

Return

A player voluntarily coming back to the tool later, with no ad, incentive, or reminder prompting them.

Not a Coincidence. A Neuroscience Platform.

2019

Microsoft Canada

A digital wellness curriculum was deployed inside Teams to increase focus time and reduce workplace stress, not to address gambling.

**+10% focus
–10% stress**

Donohue & Sheridan, Microsoft Canada



2023–2025

Regulated Gaming

The same intervention mechanism, tested across six deployments in casino, lottery, and forum environments, produced measurable emotional recovery in players.

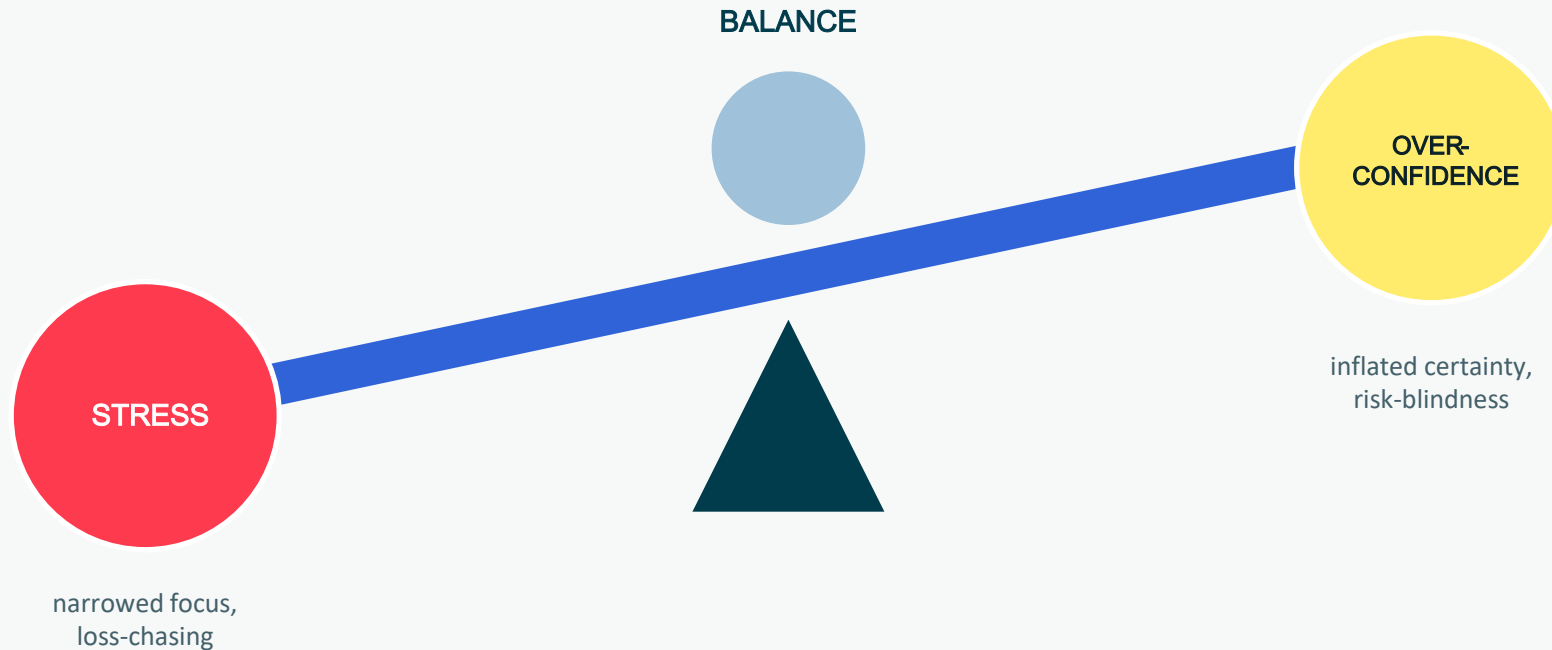
**4–20x
engagement**

Beyond Free Spins, DWC

Five years later, the identical mechanism showed up again, in a completely different environment.

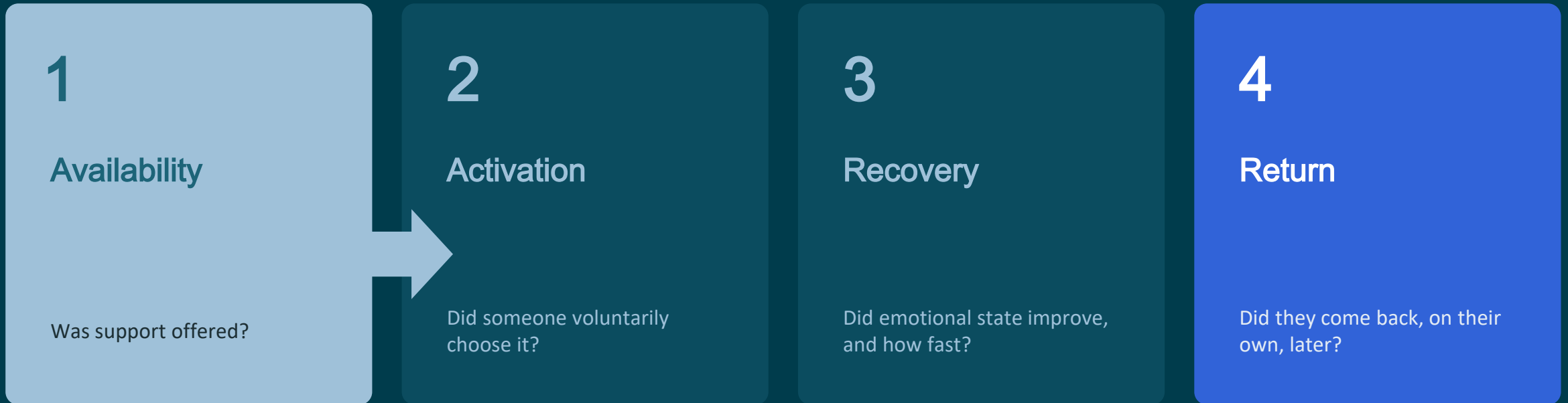
Recovery Isn't Stopping. It's Balance.

Stress pushes the brain to one side. Overconfidence pushes it to the other. Recovery brings the brain back toward balance.



Introducing: Responsible Recovery

Measured through four simple stages.

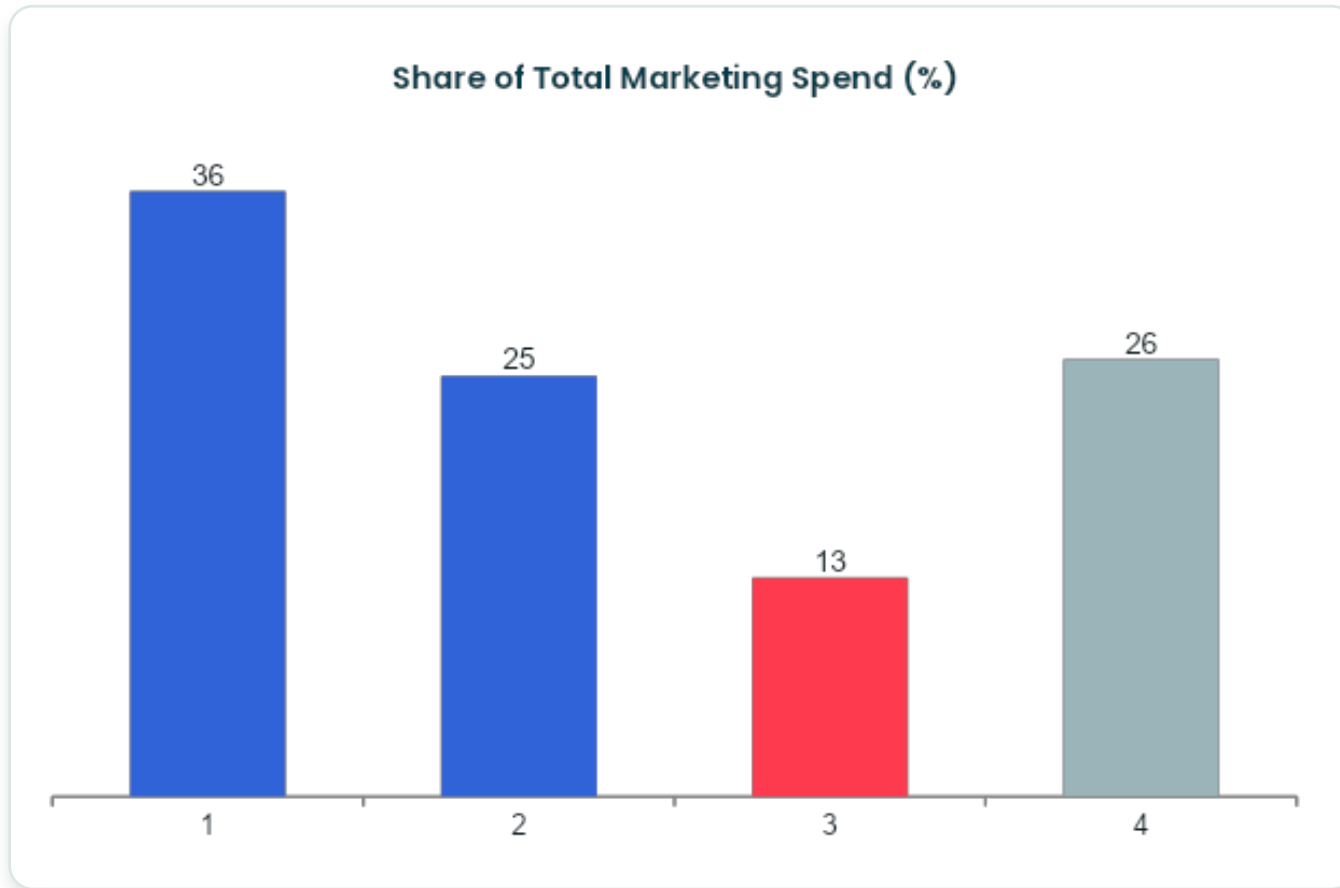


Recovery Latency lives inside stage 3: nobody currently measures how quickly a player returns to balance after risk. **Return** is the proof of value: it happens with no incentive and no reminder.

To what end? So that player protection is judged by outcomes, not by the number of warnings delivered.

Where the Money Actually Goes

Total industry marketing spend, sports betting and online gaming, 2025: \$3.9B



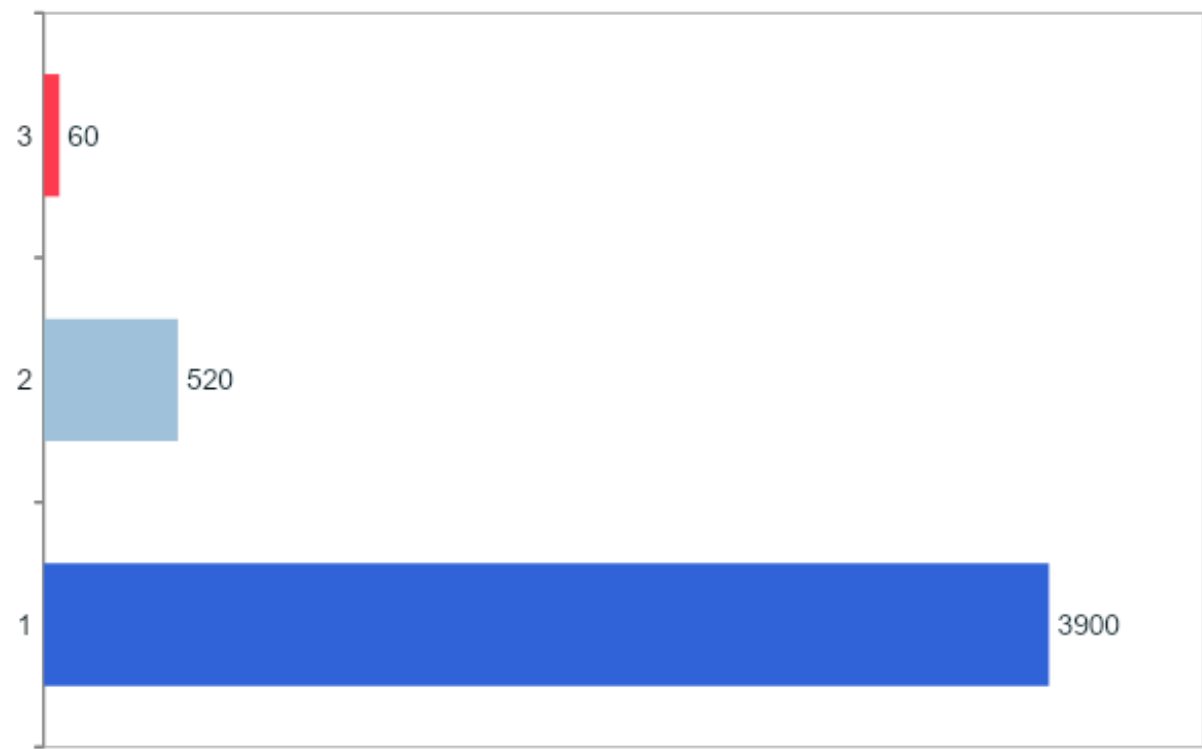
78%

of all industry media volume comes from just five operators

Celebrity and athlete partnerships alone outspend responsible gambling nearly 9 to 1.

If Players Can't Remember the Ad, What Are We Buying?

What the Industry Spends (\$ Millions)



71%

of players cannot recall the responsible gambling ads they were shown

"If people cannot remember responsible gambling advertising, what exactly are we buying?"

Perhaps we have been measuring the wrong thing.

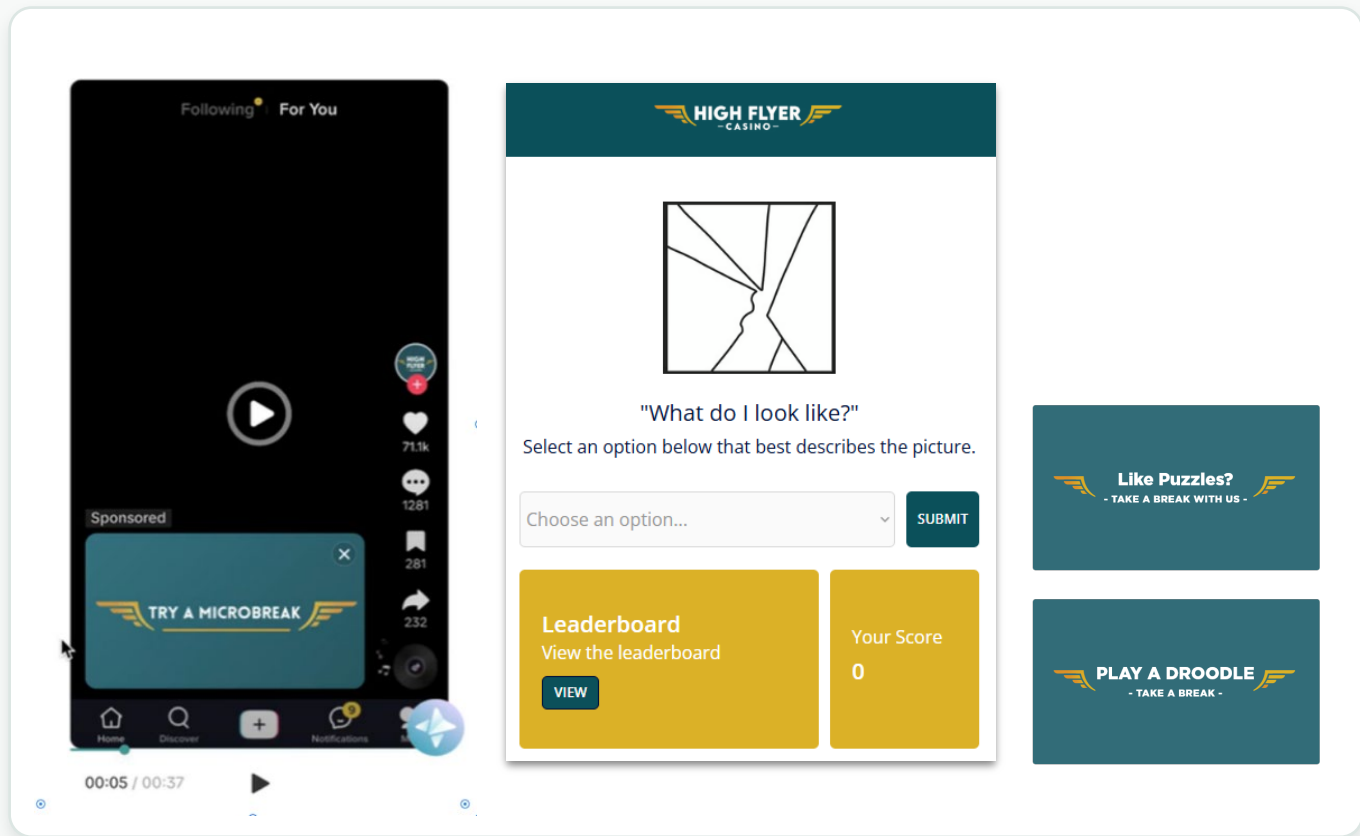
We don't measure whether someone saw a message.

We measure whether someone recovered.

That is the bridge into Responsible Recovery, and into DWC.

Case Study: HighFlyer Casino

TikTok, Ontario, Jan 26 to Mar 31, 2026



20.89%

CTR vs. 1 to 3% industry average

566,921

total landing sessions

\$0.03

cost per engagement, CAD

The Doodles microbreak, the same experience
deployed inside the TikTok campaign.

Full report: HighFlyer RG Campaign Final Report, 2026

Case Study: OLG PlaySmart

QR codes, three Ontario casino sites, 90-day trial

43.1%

engagement rate vs. 15 to 20% benchmark

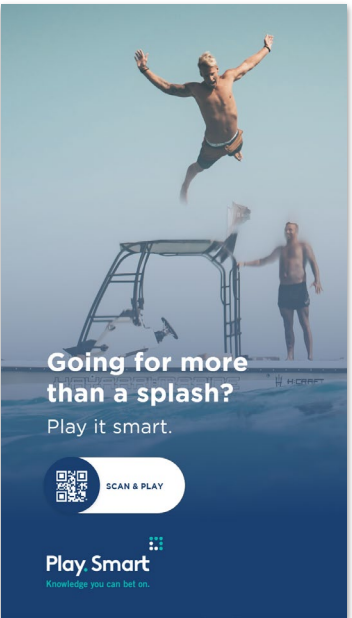
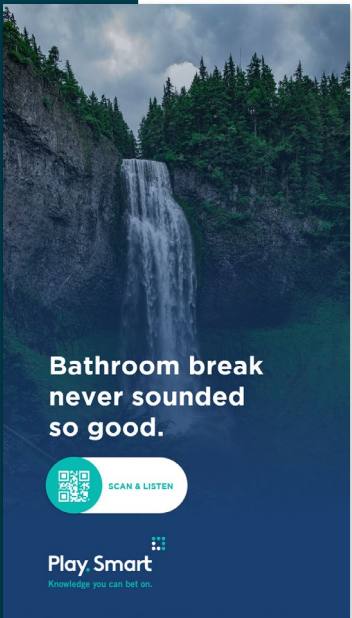
84%

positive mood reported post-engagement

23.4 min

average time on tool per player

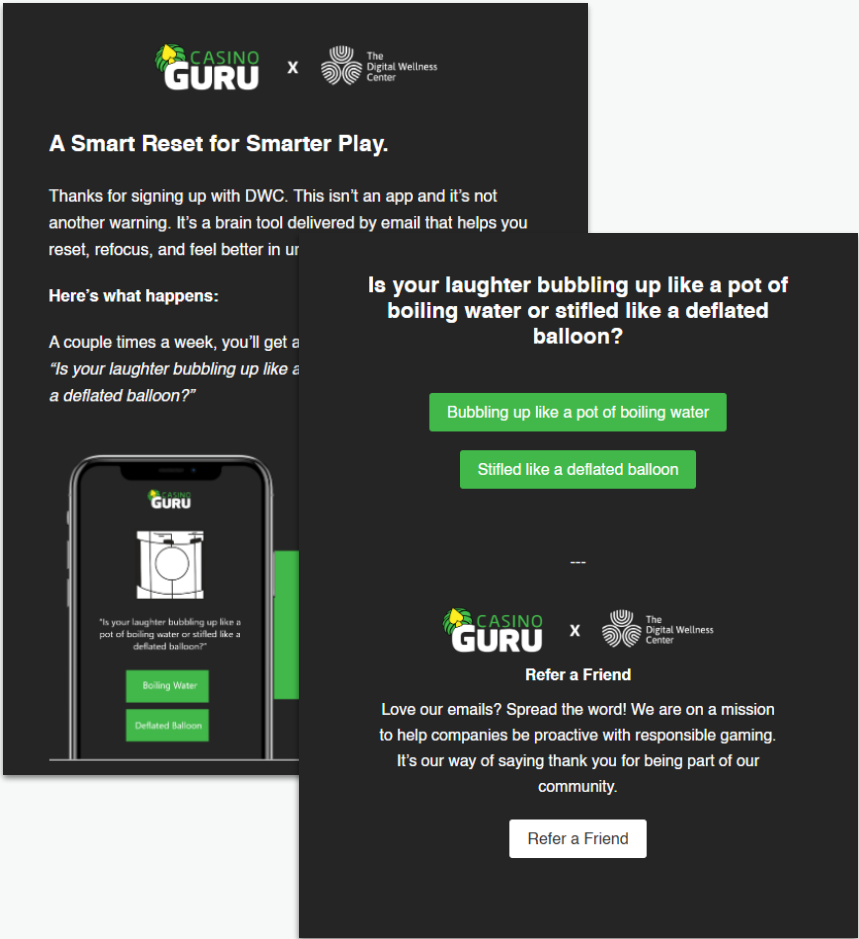
Full report: OLG PlaySmart 90-Day Trial



The QR poster deployed across casino floors and washrooms, on-site and voluntary.

Case Study: Casino.Guru

Forum link and email, Central and East Europe



74.2%

positive mood, leading every partner benchmarked

NPS 90%

sustained across the deployment

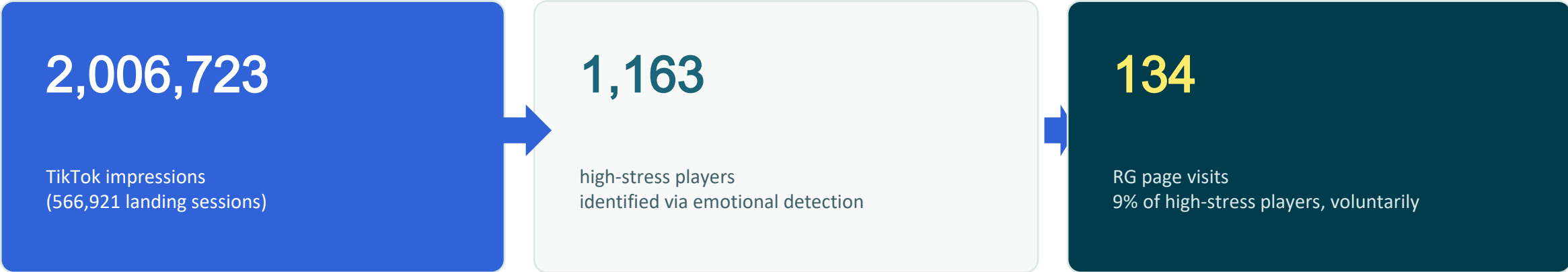
4.52 min

average engagement time per user

Full report: *Casino.Guru Forum Competition Pilot*

Inside the HighFlyer Funnel

Jan 26 to Mar 31, 2026. Three stages: reach, detection, support.

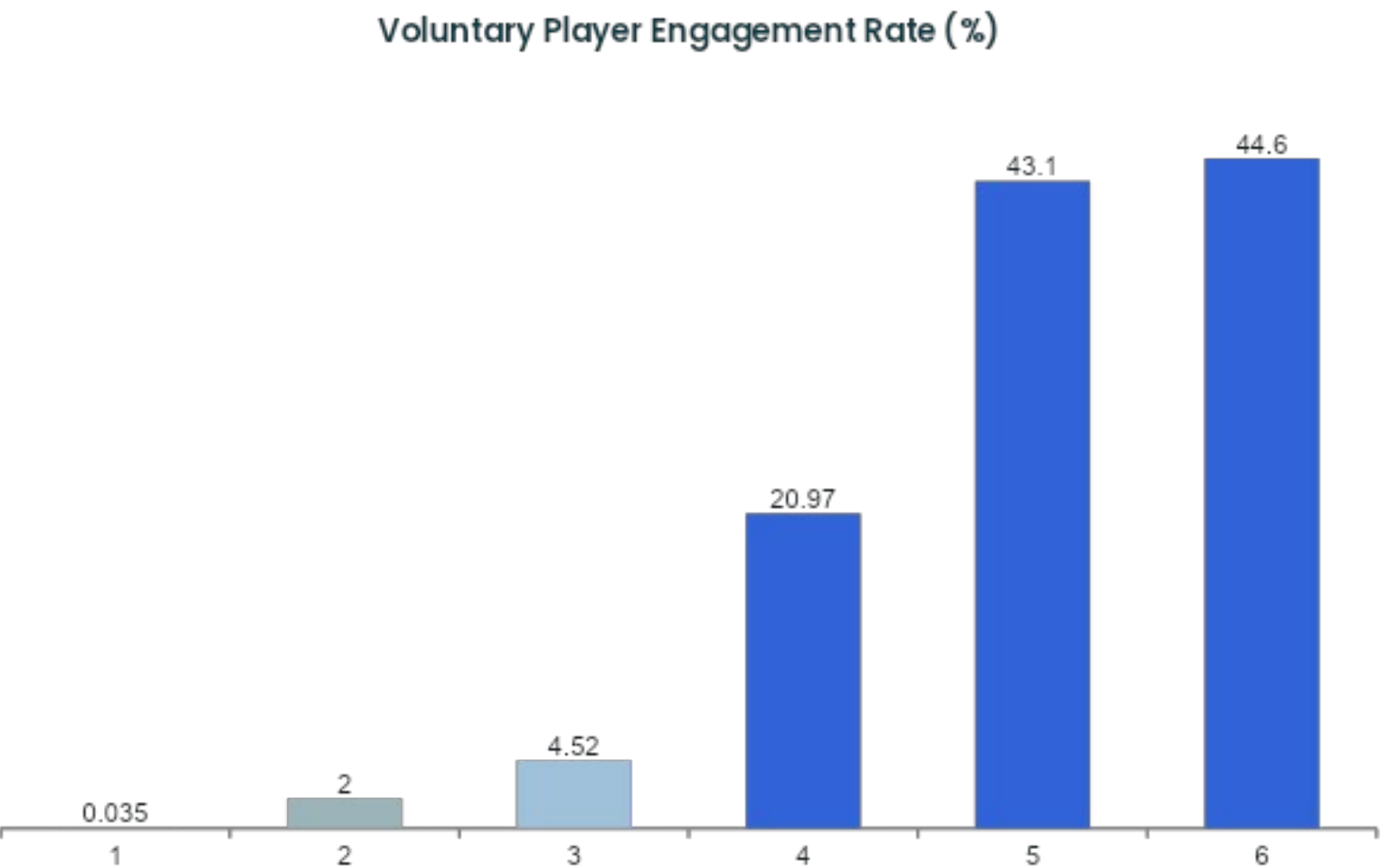


Doodles vs. Pairs: late night is the highest - value window

	Doodles	Pairs
Typical play time	8:29 PM	3:49 AM
Engagement	215,600	351,321
Microbreaks	149	1,014
Relief rate	0.03%	0.27%

Pairs achieved 9x the relief rate of Doodles. Late-night, high-frequency play is where intervention matters most.

Availability and Activation, Proven Across Six Deployments



4–20x

higher engagement than published RG benchmarks, across all six deployment contexts

Every one of these interactions was a voluntary player choice, not a passive impression.

This is what Availability and Activation look like at scale.

Recovery Is Measurable, and It Skews Positive

44%

positive or stabilized mood, post-tool (OLG, 718 mood entries tracked)

74.2%

positive mood at Casino.Guru, leading every partner we benchmarked

50%

mood uplift for players who entered in a negative state (Casino.Guru)

Independent academic review found: Stressed to Better, 40%. Annoyed to Better, 55%. Bored or Tired to Better, 20%. Content to Happy, 10%. Roughly half of stressed or annoyed users improve, and happy users stay happy.

*These patterns are consistent and repeatable across deployments from 2023 through 2026. **In our largest single dataset, emotional state improved for 30 to 44% of users within three minutes.***

Sometimes the Right Shift Is Down

We won't pretend mood only ever moves one direction. This is a tough audience, and it deserves the honest data.

It is not zero. And that's the point.

HighFlyer: 1 of 32 tracked risk profiles shifted (3.1%)

OLG: 28 of 580 (4.8%)

Casino.Guru: 0 of 684 (0.0%)

Content → Bored, and High Stress → Stressed, are real and show up in the data. At HighFlyer, the downward track is what preceded a player's move to the RG page.

Players show up at 3:49 AM. At 4:30 AM. On their own clock, not ours, which is exactly where an honest shift, up or down, matters most.

"That stupid game helped me realize how tired I was, which is good. See you later."

Casino floor exit interview, OLG deployment

A downward mood shift that ends in a player walking away is not a failure of the tool. Sometimes it is exactly the job.

The Most Important Finding We Almost Missed

It isn't engagement. It's return.

1

HighFlyer, TikTok The campaign ended March 31. Players are still using it more than three months later, with no ads running and no reminders sent.

2

OLG, QR Codes Codes were still being scanned 3 to 5 months after the campaign ended.

3

Casino.NL Players remained active 6 months post-pilot, with zero incremental budget, and play grew 64%.

4

Casino.Guru NPS of 90 to 100 sustained months after deployment, on a public forum with no paid promotion.

No incentives. No reminders. No new advertising.

Amazon, Spotify, Peloton, Wordle, and ChatGPT are not judged by first use. They are judged by voluntary return. Our data is quietly showing the same pattern.

We did not build a campaign. We built a resource people choose to revisit.

Bounded Delegation. The Person Decides.

A 2026 study of 860 Microsoft developers found the same preference in a different context: explicit authority limits, provenance, and least-privilege access, not full autonomy for AI. That's bounded delegation. Responsible Recovery couldn't work without it.

1

Signal

Game density, message volume, and time of day are read as context, not judgment.

2

Recognition

The player is shown where they are; the system offers a moment of awareness.

3

Choice

The player decides what happens next. The AI supports judgment; it does not replace it.

Bounded delegation: the AI supports judgment. It does not replace judgment.

Streetlight, our new AI uses signals like meeting density, communication volume, and time of day to time an intervention. It never chooses for the player. It helps them recognize where they sit on the teeter-totter.

What if the future of responsible gambling isn't measured by warnings, but by recovery?

RESPONSIBLE RECOVERY

- Measure recovery.
- Reduce recovery latency.
- Build player resilience.

What we've designed is a digital therapeutic, run by a recovery intelligence engine, built to help people help themselves make better decisions.