
PRESS STATEMENT

Reference	0170
Release date	13 November 2015 - for immediate release
Images available	Responsible Gambling Trust logo

Demos and Responsible Gambling Trust launch study of gambling and social media

The Responsible Gambling Trust (RGT) and think-tank Demos have signed an agreement to conduct a study of the link between online communities and gambling. The study will look at the scale and nature of conversations on social media regarding gambling and assess whether it is possible to identify the prevalence of conversations which reflect problematic gambling behaviour.

RGT has commissioned Demos' Centre for the Analysis of Social Media (CASM) to analyse conversations collected from Twitter, Facebook and other user-generated online forums over a one month period which included the Rugby World Cup. It is hoped that the results will shed light on the way people talk about gambling on the internet and inform efforts by the gambling industry to minimise gambling-related harm being experienced by people online and elsewhere.

RGT invited proposals in March 2015 from organisations with relevant expertise and experience to participate in a programme of research into remote gambling behaviour. Demos submitted a proposal for research into gambling and social media as part of that open tender.

A final report is expected to be published in January 2016.

Marc Etches, Chief Executive of the Responsible Gambling Trust said:

"The internet has created new opportunities for people to gamble and to talk about gambling. For those of us whose job it is to find ways to minimise gambling-related harm this has created a lot of new challenges. There are still many things we don't know about what influences people's gambling behaviour and I hope this study will help the industry to think about what it does to promote responsible behaviour among those that gamble online."

Alex Krasodonski-Jones, Demos, said:

"Gambling, like so many other things, has gone online. New digital spaces have opened up in which a mix of promoters, tipsters and sports fans are brought together in ways we haven't seen before. We're really excited to team up with the Responsible Gambling Trust to research this new space, to understand the behaviours it encourages and what the impact might be on gambling behaviour, and especially how social media analysis can help to identify problematic and compulsive manifestations."

-ENDS-

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- The Responsible Gambling Trust is the leading charity in the UK committed to minimising gambling-related harm. As an independent national charity funded by donations from the gambling industry, the Responsible Gambling Trust funds education, prevention and treatment services and commissions research to broaden public understanding of gambling-related harm. The aim is to stop people getting into problems with their gambling, and ensure that those that do develop problems receive fast and effective treatment and support.
- The Responsible Gambling Trust raises a minimum of £5 million each year from the gambling industry operating in Britain within a voluntary (donation based) system and funds research, education, prevention and treatment services. Funding priorities are guided by the national strategy advised by the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board (RGSB) and endorsed by the Gambling Commission. The latest strategy was published in December 2012.
- Demos is Britain's leading cross-party think-tank: an independent, educational charity, which produces original and innovative research. Visit: www.demos.co.uk.
- Demos' Centre for the Analysis of Social Media (CASM) is the first think-tank unit dedicated to researching digital society by building robust social media analytic tools. It builds new ways of understanding social media as a useful and ethical instrument of policy research, and uses them to learn more about the politics, social world, beliefs, health and dangers of the digital age. CASM is a collaboration between Demos and the Text Analytics Group at the University of Sussex.