

Leadership Profile: Mick Ingersoll

Director of Gaming Strategies, Everi Holdings, Inc. and ELG 40 Under 40 Class of 2019

As a member of the Emerging Leaders of Gaming (ELG) 40 Under 40 Class of 2019, I'm incredibly proud to be associated with such a talented and innovative group. Now, only two years after being selected, I have hit an age where I would no longer be eligible, and it was perfect timing for me. An early adopter of new methods and technologies, I see the future of our industry relies on our younger colleagues, which is what is so exciting about the ELG program. Their fresh perspective guided by industry experience presents tremendous opportunities to sharpen our approach and compete in new spaces. Now, more than nine months into a world-changing pandemic, their own experience will be more meaningful than ever. With my own career evolution serving as a guidepost, I'm excited to help inform the future of ELG and support the development of individuals who will shape the gaming industry for years to come.

I was nominated and selected as an ELG 40 Under 40 while working as the director of international customer success for VizExplorer. While in that role, the exponential growth of my experience truly began and led to my affiliation with the 40 Under 40. At that same time, I was just returning to the U.S. after living and working in Nice, France, and was transitioning into a new role with the loyalty products brand Atrient where I accepted the task of leading and revamping the training and technical writing teams. The creativity required when working with such a varying customer base was really exciting and exposed me to every side of the industry.

As I settled into life at Atrient, news came that we were being acquired by Everi Payments and the move to its headquarters opened the door to even more opportunity. This was my first time on the "you've been bought" side of a purchase, which comes with a certain level of wondering how your life will look at the end of it all. A lot of my trepidation came from having lived in start-up environments for so long, which offer the opportunity to wear many hats and try new things, to now joining a "corporate" structure with processes that fit each person neatly into a certain box. Much to my relief, the leadership team at Everi took the time and care to have a conversation about where I thought I could provide the most value and where I saw opportunities to grow partnerships with their customers. From that conversation, my role as director of loyalty strategies was created. Kudos to the executives at Everi for being openminded and aligning their employees' strengths and professional goals with their organizational plan and business objectives.

I'm not designed for factory work because I get a little uneasy if I'm only doing one task. Everi has imparted complete trust upon me and allows me to work with our development team to help guide future versions of our products. The small company feel in conjunction with big company resources makes me feel like a kid in a candy shop. I love analytics and data. Go ahead, make fun of me all you want. I spend hours looking at the *Data is Beautiful* thread of Reddit. I work on my own data projects for fun in my spare time. Imagine how excited I am to have the opportunity to work with people at Everi like Thomas Kirschenmann, a data scientist who can create predictive models I've only fantasized about! My time at Everi has been filled with the excitement of collaborating with people like Thomas on projects that are truly innovative and make me smile every time I think about them being used in the future.

At the end of last year, Everi acquired yet another loyalty company. Folding the MGT team into our own and getting to work with more people who have been solving similar challenges in different ways is awesome. Doing that in a best-of-the-best matchup where we're able to combine the areas that each company was nailing for their customers into one product makes me excited about being tied to the pinnacle of loyalty products.

Just as we were settling in as The Brady Bunch of loyalty, the landscape of the entire industry and world changed. My whole career has been centered around betting and probability, but I would have bet my last cent that casinos across the world would never close over a virus. To travel down Las Vegas Boulevard and see no activity was surreal. To talk to my friends in the business with years of experience and continually hear, “I don’t know,” was like being in The Twilight Zone. But something interesting happened during these past few months as well -- a reinvigoration of my professional network. As the pandemic brought our business to a screeching, indeterminable halt, it’s been quite the experience coming together to work through that situation. If nothing else, it’s been an untrainable learning experience to be plucked from normal challenges and attempt to resolve something of such magnitude.

For those who have lived through this experience early in their careers, it is something that will stay with them forever. The “plan as if anything is possible because it actually is” approach could make the next generation the most tenacious of all. As they take these lessons into the next chapter of their careers, they’ll deserve to be recognized for how they grow the business from here. My way of ensuring that such recognition is awarded, and that essential collaborative networks are established to overcome any obstacle the future holds, was to accept a position on the newly established Emerging Leaders of Gaming Advisory Board.

The incredibly diverse frame of reference our younger team members have today lends itself to provide unorthodox solutions to our oldest problems. They’ve been more transient in their career paths. They’ve come from other industries. They’re comfortable adopting new technologies and swiftly changing corporate culture climates. I think they’re amazing and I genuinely look forward to giving credit to the individuals who are making the advancements for the whole – those who have taken a calculated risk and experienced success, those who have exemplified our industry and strengthened our place in the entertainment and hospitality sector.

I envision each member of future 40 Under 40 classes being connected throughout their careers and becoming the Mensa of the gaming world. While typical professional networks are slow to build, this cadre will have the commitment of myself, other industry executives and the entire team at The Innovation Group to give them outlets where knowledge, experience, and advice can be shared. I understand the chance to go to events like G2E and ICE don’t always present themselves to younger employees and consider it my responsibility to create reasons to justify attendance or help create alternative opportunities. A stage to present to peers is an excellent chance to develop the skills needed to get ideas conveyed and better address executive teams when returning to their own companies. When I think about what I learn from the varying approaches to our business across the U.S., Macau, Australia, and Europe, I realize it’s an opportunity to share that knowledge with this demographic and encourage them to adjust those learnings to their roles. From there, we can help them construct summaries of their practices for academic articles and aide in the publishing of that content.

I cannot stress enough what a privilege it is to be a part of this Advisory Board. I am excited to see what’s coming next and aim to support the development of anyone who is committed to a career in what I believe to be the best industry in the world.