LIQUID&GRIT

Slots Design Report

Competitive Research and Data Insights for Slots Designers

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FEBRUARY
2019

NEW INNOVATIONS

DEVELOPED MINI-GAMES

MECHANIC ANALYSIS

Slotomania and Caesars Slots both released machines with mini-games that incorporate progression and collection systems.

Feature Details

- Slotomania Macau Nights
  - In base play, players collect *Sic Bo* symbols to fill a progress bar to earn *Chips* (1).
  - After collecting eight *Chips*, players may access the *Sic Bo Mini-Game,* or continue collecting *Chips*.
  - In the *Sic Bo Mini-Game,* players can use their collected *Chips* to place bets (2).
- Slotomania My Dear Puppy
  - Players choose to start at one of six destinations on a map (3).
  - At each step on the map, players spin a wheel. The wheel determines the number of *Bone* symbols needed to collect to advance (4).
  - Reaching a *Monument* on the map triggers the corresponding bonus game.
  - After reaching five *Monuments*, a sixth is unlocked.
- Caesars Slots Tex Tycoon's Cattle Drive
  - Players collect map *Pieces* during base play.
  - Map *Sections* are uncovered by collecting a certain number of *Pieces* (5).
  - Players win additional prizes for uncovering each *Section* within the allotted time (6).

Related Machines in Feature Database

- Princess Wild – Caesars Slots
- Santa's Jackpot Run – POP! Slots
- Farm Fortune Markets – Slotomania

EXPERT INSIGHTS

Release multi-layered progression systems on top of proven slots machine mechanics to *increase bets-per-spin.* Then, add collection systems to *increase spins-per-session.*
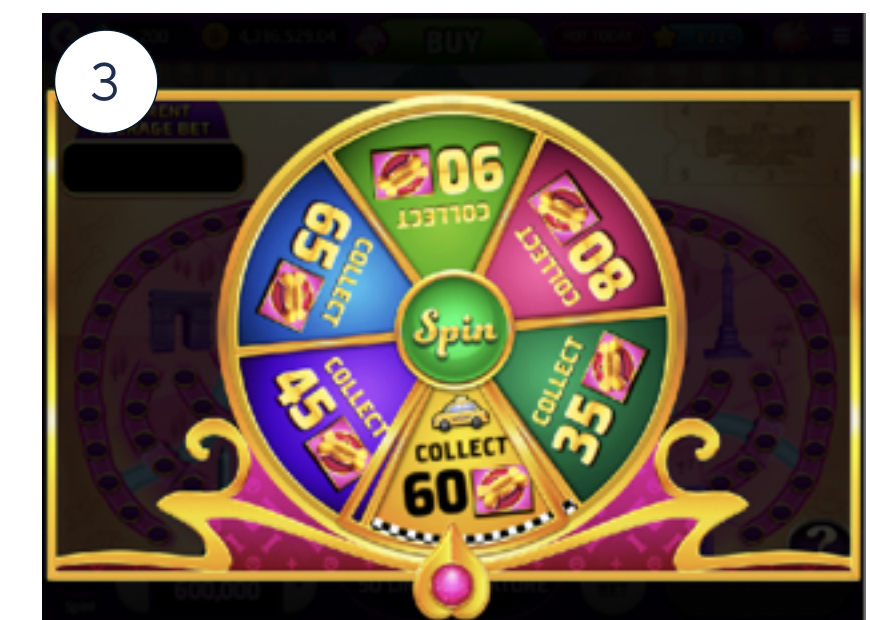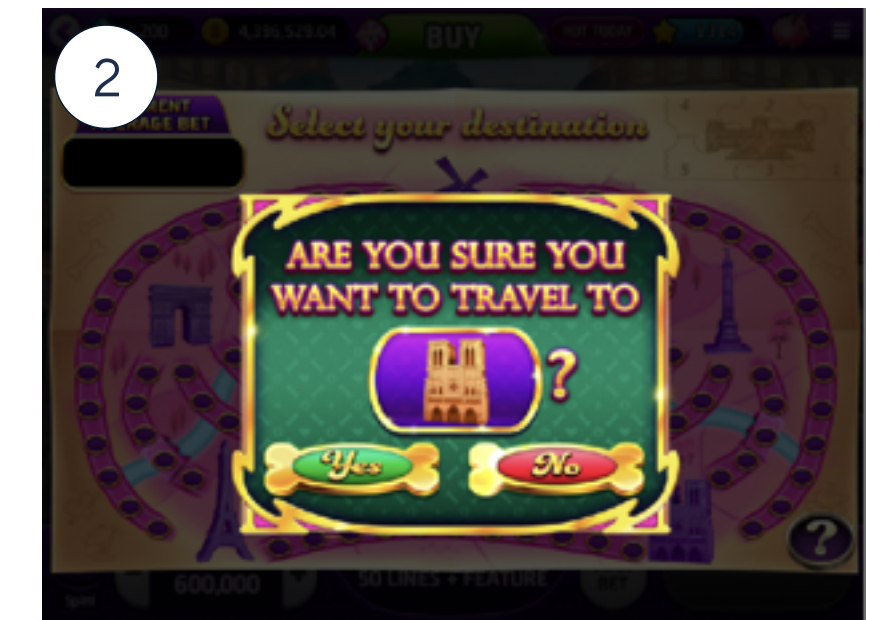
Product Council Insights

- In Slotomania, the minimum bet is so inexpensive that players can play *almost* indefinitely. Therefore, primary goals of machine design are to increase *bet-per-spin* and *engagement.* To increase bet-per-spin in *Macau Nights,* players are required to make a certain bet to unlock the progress bar (1). To increase engagement, players must fill the progress bar 8x to unlock the *Mini-Game.*

- In *My Dear Puppy,* allowing players to select their starting point is a new opt-in personalization mechanic. This system allows players to *choose* the number of steps to each bonus ... potentially making earlier progressions easier or harder, depending on player preference (2).

- Adding boosts to the progression, like the *Taxi 'Skip forward one step'* in *My Dear Puppy,* and the *Free Chip* in *Macau Nights,* is a nice way to increase engagement with surprise rewards (3).

- To add variety in a cost-effective way, consider variations to the free spins. This is detailed later in the Report in Heidi's Bier Haus.

- Add a timer to create a *sense of urgency,* incentivizing larger bets when time is running out (4).

Player Persona Insights

- *Daydreamer Denise* and *Sensation Serena* have a clear preference for *challenges, collections,* and *quests.*

- *Daydreamer Denise* spends the least amount of money and is motivated mostly by Escape ... whereas, *Sensation Serena* spends the most money on digital slots and is motivated by Arousal and Profit.

- Email me for details about the new L&G Slots Personas Report. A preview of this Report is available in the Appendix.

Revenue Insights (online)

- Slotomania Macau Nights
- Slotomania My Dear Puppy
- Caesars Slots Tex Tycoon's Cattle Drive

MIGHTY CASH RESPINS

MECHANIC ANALYSIS

During the *Mighty Cash-inspired* respins, filling all the slots with special symbols adds a *multiplier* to all prizes earned.

Feature Details

- Six or more *Ultra Coin* symbols award six to ten respins (1).
- During respins, players can win one to four *extra* spins (2).
- At the end of the respins, players win the displayed coin values ... plus any jackpots (3).
- Players that fill all the slots with *Ultra Coins* receive a 2x multiplier (4).

Other Mechanics in the Machine

- Feature Spins
- Free Spins

Related Machines in Feature Database

- FarmVille Mighty Cash – Aristocrat (RMG)
- Big Money Gold – Cashman Casino
- Jumble Jungle – DoubleU Casino

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EXPERT INSIGHTS

Consider releasing *Mighty Cash* to experienced *Lightning Link* players who may be experiencing frustration from <u>not yet winning</u> a *Lightning Link* jackpot.

Product Council Insights

- *Mighty Cash* differs from *Lightning Link* in the following ways: 1) More respins are awarded to start ... but *Prize Symbols* do not reset the respins, 2) Filling all 15 positions awards a multiplier ... instead of a *Grand Prize,* 3) A "save pick" may be given at random when players initially run out of respins (1).

- For experienced players, the multiplier is <u>attractive</u> because the *Grand Prize* is so infrequently won in *Lightning Link.* The opposite is true for players less knowledgable of *Lightning Link* payouts.

- Consider allowing players to start over again and win more with the remaining respins, as was done in <u>FarmVille Mighty Cash</u>, the RMG machine released at G2E 2018 (2).

- Include a base play mechanic that lets players accumulate free spins by hitting certain symbols with *Ribbons.* See the <u>G2E Slots Design Report</u> on *FarmVille Mighty Cash* for details.

- To attract *Money Mike* player types, use simpler designs that draws attention to the potential winnings. These player types are namely motivated by Profit (and less interested in the aesthetics of the machine). See Cashman Casino <u>Big Money Gold</u> as an example (3).

Target Persona Player Data

- Target Player: *Money Mike*

- Personal preference for features with respins

Revenue Insights

- Jackpot Magic <u>Big Fortune Valley</u> (online)

SYMBOL-TRIGGERED FS VARIATIONS

MECHANIC ANALYSIS

Different colored *Heidi* symbols influence the *Free Spins Bonus.* At the end of the free spins, players are guaranteed to win at least 250x the bet, or more.

Feature Details

- During base play, one to six reels randomly fill with wilds (1).
- Five or more adjacent *Green, Red, or Purple Heidi* symbols trigger the *Free Spins Bonus* (2).
- The number of free spins depends on the number of landed *Heidi* symbols (3).
  - If a *Red Heidi* is part of the bonus trigger, players also spin *Heidi's Wheel.*
  - Each *Purple Heidi* in the bonus trigger is replaced with a locked wild for all free spins.
- Any *Free Spins Bonus* that is less than 250x is awarded a 250x bet multiplier (4).

Other Mechanics in the Machine

- Free Spins

Related Machines in Feature Database

- Cirque Du Soleil Kurios – Gold Fish
- Monster Riches – House of Fun
- Wild Orchards – Caesars Slots

EXPERT INSIGHTS

Utilize the design team to differentiate this machine with a *visually-powerful theme.* Consider adding a Scatter symbol with different designs to alter the bonus … like adding a wheel, including sticky wilds, or unlocking a jackpot. This will increase excitement around bonus-trigger moments.
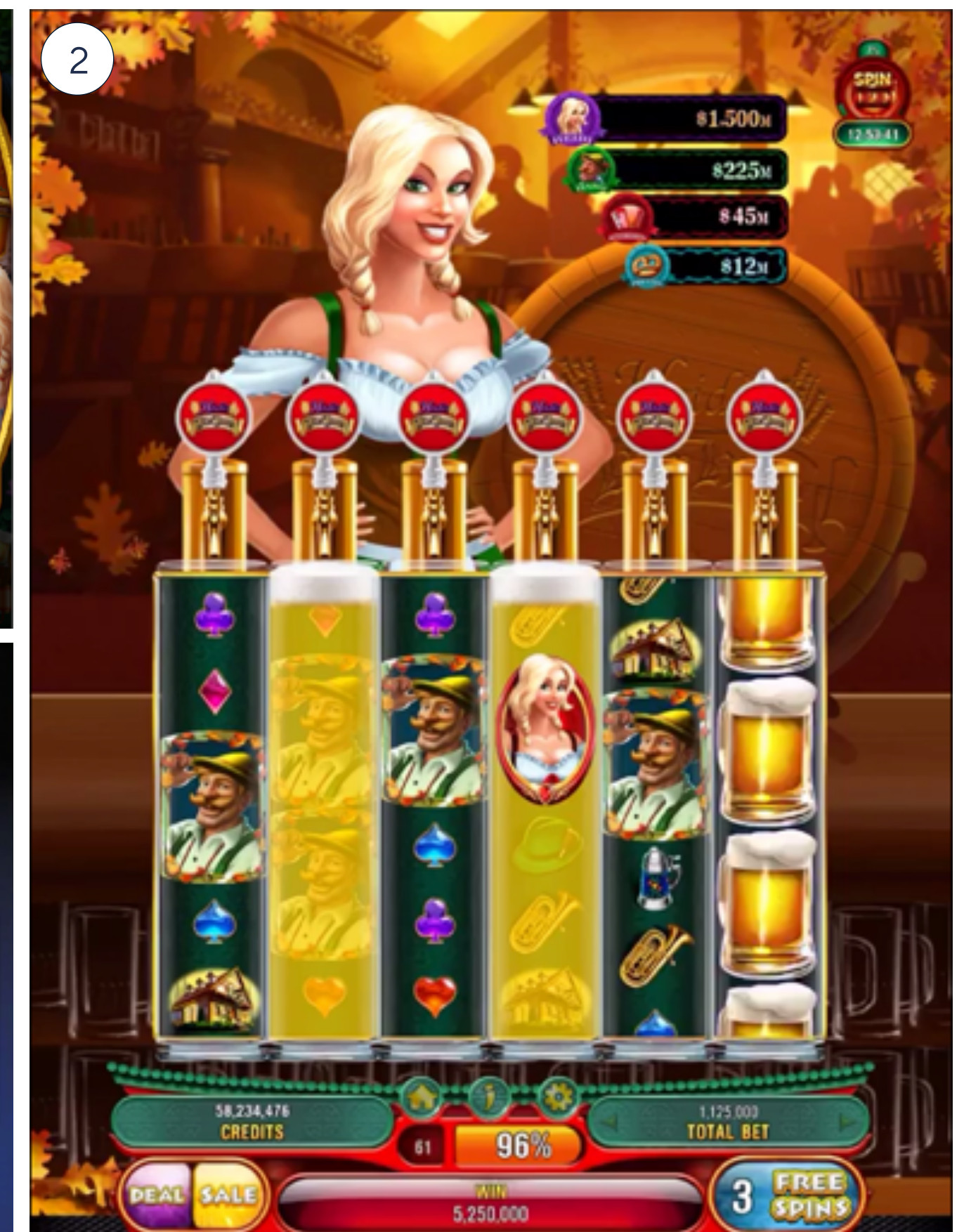
Product Council Insights

- The prominent, stylized *Oktoberfest* character artwork is a hit. *Bier Haus, Bier Haus 200, Colossal Bier Haus* … and now *Heidi's Bier Haus* were all successful (1).
- This machine nicely integrates the full reel wild into the bet … as opposed to a separate ante (which is done in the RMG version) (2).
- Implement a *Bonus Guaranteed Minimum* with extremely volatile bonuses. This will eliminate player complaints when they receive small bonus game wins.
- Add a wheel to the free spins based on a trigger-symbol … to make players excited to not only hit a bonus but also to receive a jackpot (3).

Target Persona Player Data

- Target Player: *Gambler Gail*
- Machine preference: Bonuses that add additional reels, lines, or pays. And, bonuses with multiple bonuses one after another

Revenue Insights

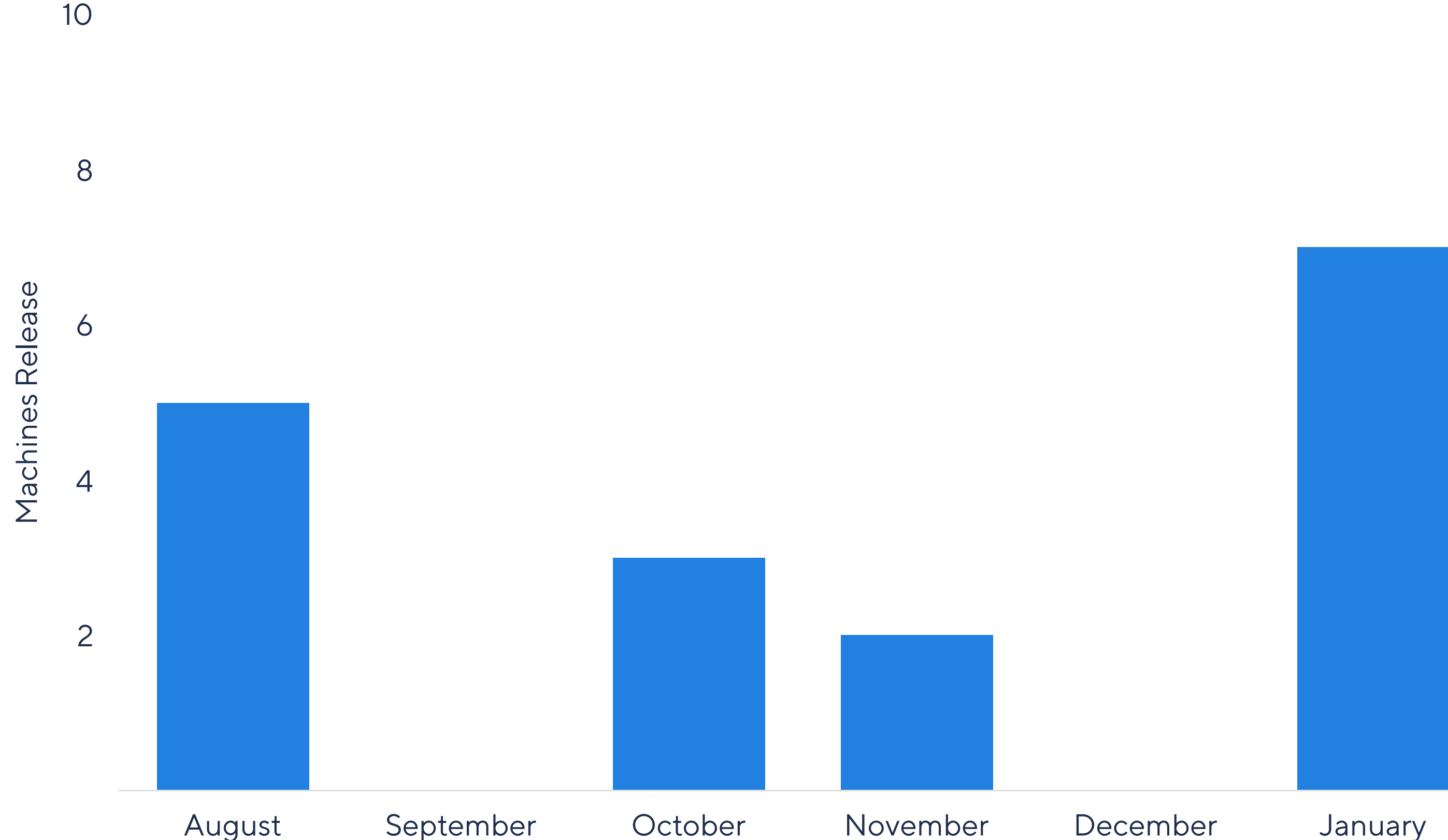- 88 Fortunes Slot Heidi's Beir Haus (online)

KEY TRENDS

REEL CONFIGURATIONS

Multi-Matrix reel formations, not typically common in the top grossing slots apps, spiked in January with seven machines (12% of total top grossing machines released for the month).
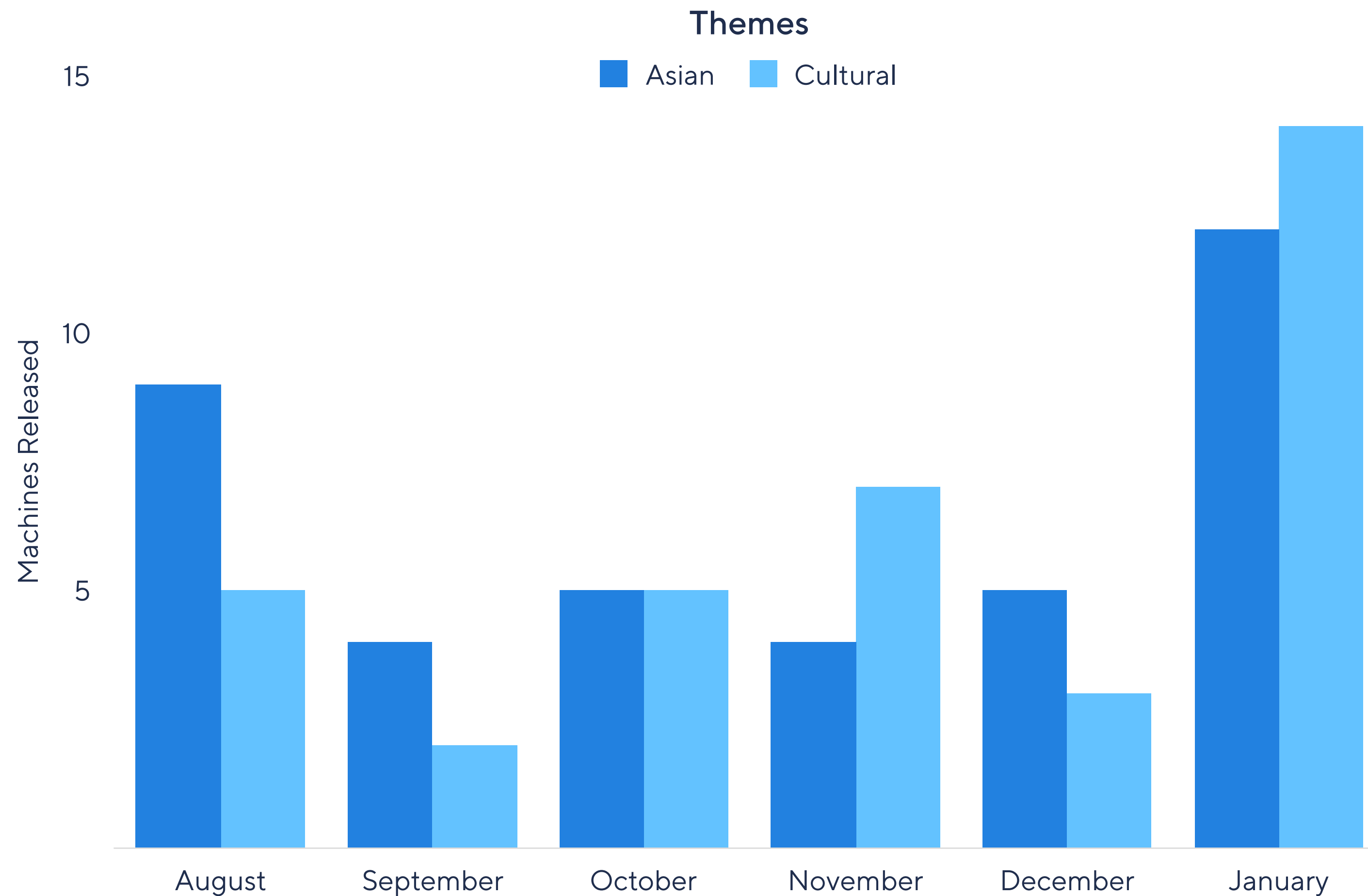
Multi-Matrix Reels

Nautilus in Jackpot Party

Tex Tycoon's Cattle Drive in Caesars Slots

THEMES

Asian and Cultural themes were very popular in January, making up 37% of the total themes released by top grossing apps.
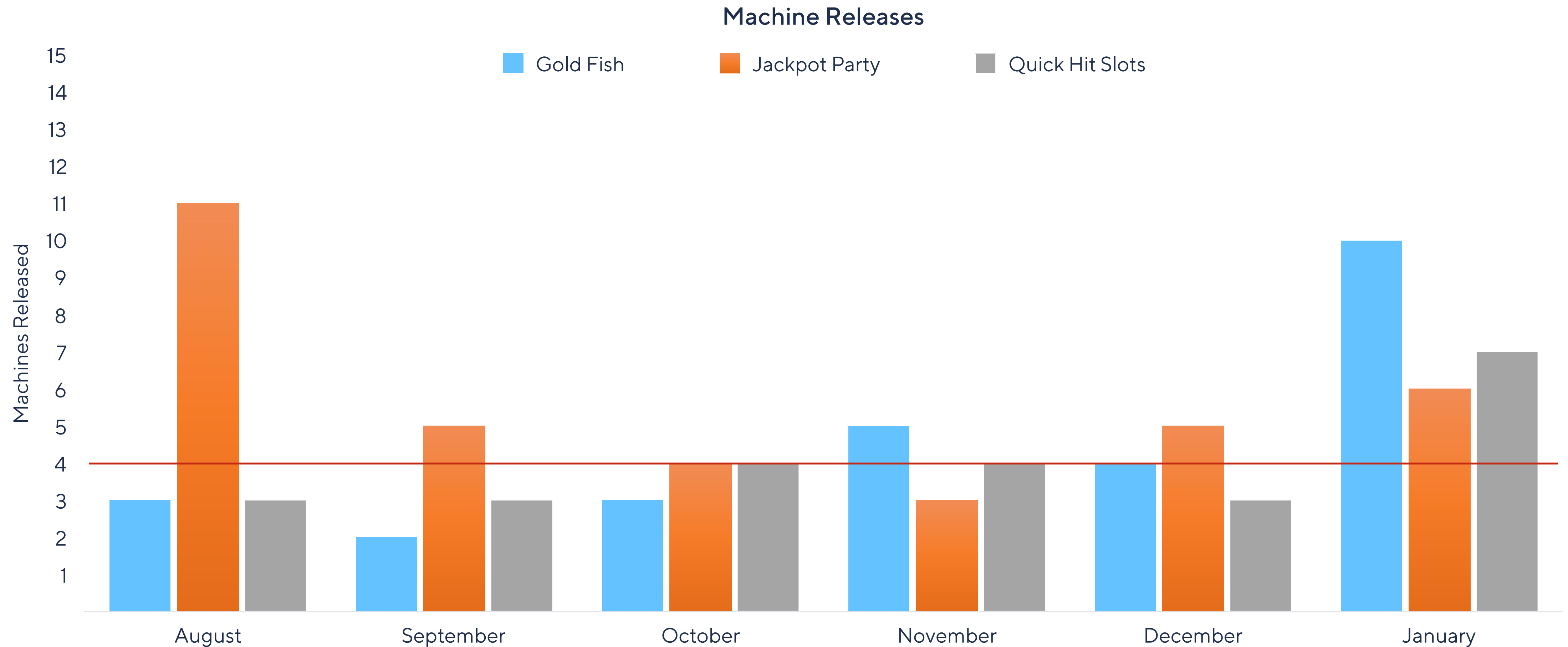
Themes

■ Asian   ■ Cultural

Machines Released

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August   September   October   November   December   January

Jackpot Shanghai in Big Fish Casino

Fu Jinlong in Huuuge Casino

SCI GAMES: MACHINE RELEASES

Gold Fish, Jackpot Party, and Quick Hit Slots all had strong machine releases in January ... above the industry average of four machines released per month.

Machine Releases

■ Gold Fish   ■ Jackpot Party   ■ Quick Hit Slots

MARKET WATCH

1/1/19 – 1/31/19

NOTABLE RELEASES I

App	Machine	Special Feature Video/Image	Description
Big Fish Casino	Penny's Patisserie	Pick an Ingredient!	In the pick'em bonus, players combine *Baking Ingredients* to bake a *Cake* (1)
House of Fun	Fangalicious	Colossal Rewards	During respins, payouts are based on the shapes formed by locking *Dracula's Coffin* symbols
	Mighty Montezuma	Coin Bonus	Players must fill two meters, one filled by free spins and the other by bonus games, to trigger the *Super Coin Link* feature
Cashman Casino	Amazon-Cashman Fever & Hot Chocolate-Cashman Fever	Cashman Fever	In respins, players win all prizes connected by a *Flaming* path of landed symbols (2)
Caesars Slots	Savage Beauty	Lover's Choice Free Spins	For respins, players choose between sticky wilds or random wilds (3)
DoubleU Casino	Nanna's Dragons	Nanna's Dragons	During free spins, matching special symbols in the *Cash Zone* grows one of three standalone progressive jackpots … or grows all three

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NOTABLE RELEASES II

App	Machine	Special Feature Video/Image	Description
DoubleU Casino	Jumble Jungle	Jumble Jungle Respins	In respins, matching locked winning symbols in a square shape applies a multiplier, which increases based on the size of the shape (1)
Hit it Rich	Vikings Hoard	Pick Bonus	Players choose one of three *Sails* to reveal free spins, coin prize, or *Pick Bonus Mini-Game*. Picking three *Keys* during the *Pick Bonus Mini-Game* awards a jackpot (2)
Quick Hit Slots	777 Blazing Triple X	Triple X Multiplier	On a multi-matrix stepper machine, a multiplier may be randomly applied on up to two spins ... at the start of each spin
Gold Fish HD	Little Dragons	Dragon Feature	During base play, players randomly trigger one or more bonus features, including free spins, expanding reels, additional wilds, jackpots, and multipliers
Lightning Link Casino	Outback Jack	Gold Mine	Special symbols are collected to unlock one of six bonus games chosen at random (3)
Lucky Time Slots	Medal Mission	Medal Mission	Players choose one of five *Missions* to collect *Medals* during free spins

Click here for a full list of machines released

APPENDIX

SLOTS PRODUCT COUNCIL

These industry-leading slots experts strengthen the Insights & Advice sections by analyzing the machines and providing commentary and analysis for the Report.

Arthur Lee	Robin Littleworth
Game Design and Math Innovator Consultant	**Product and Operations Consultant**
LinkedIn Profile	LinkedIn Profile

Arthur Lee is a leading slots consultant in social casino.

Prior to going independent, Arthur was a Game Designer at Playtika for two and a half years. At Playtika, he headed the innovation of Lightning Link-type games with Fairy Bliss, Lady Havana, and one of the best performing games at House of Fun, City of Queens. Arthur designed record breaking titles such as Frankenbride, Lady Hotness, Giant's Treasure, and Beast.

Before making an impact in the social mobile market, Arthur was a Senior Mathematician in RMG at American Gaming Systems (AGS) and KONAMI Gaming.

He combines his experience of land-based slots with the lack of regulation in social games to provide the most competitive games in social and real money gaming.

Robin Littleworth is a leading management consultant and with over a decade of experience producing hundreds of compelling slot games.

Currently, he is an advisor to social casino companies on game design, studio operations, marketing, and strategic planning.

Prior to his current consulting roles, Robin led all of the worldwide game development studios for Scientific Games, where he annually produced the world's most innovative slot titles for both land-based and online.

L&G SLOTS PERSONAS

FUNDAMENTAL MOTIVATIONS

In partnership with Kinrate Analytics, an expert team specializing in gaming user personas, we identified four fundamental motivations of online slots players; **Glory, Arousal, Escape,** and **Profit.**

Glory
- Feeling important and glamorous
- A great night out ... just like a real-life casino trip
- The desire to master gaming skills in front of others
- Enjoying challenges and wanting others to envy gaming abilities and success

Arousal
- Feeling enjoyment, entertainment, and excitement
- Appreciating the rhythm and audiovisual effects
- Effortless way to feel awarded and experience a high
- Strong emotional arousal and high stimulation

Escape
- A replacement for everyday concerns and anxiety
- Relieving stress and pressure
- Motivating activity when bored
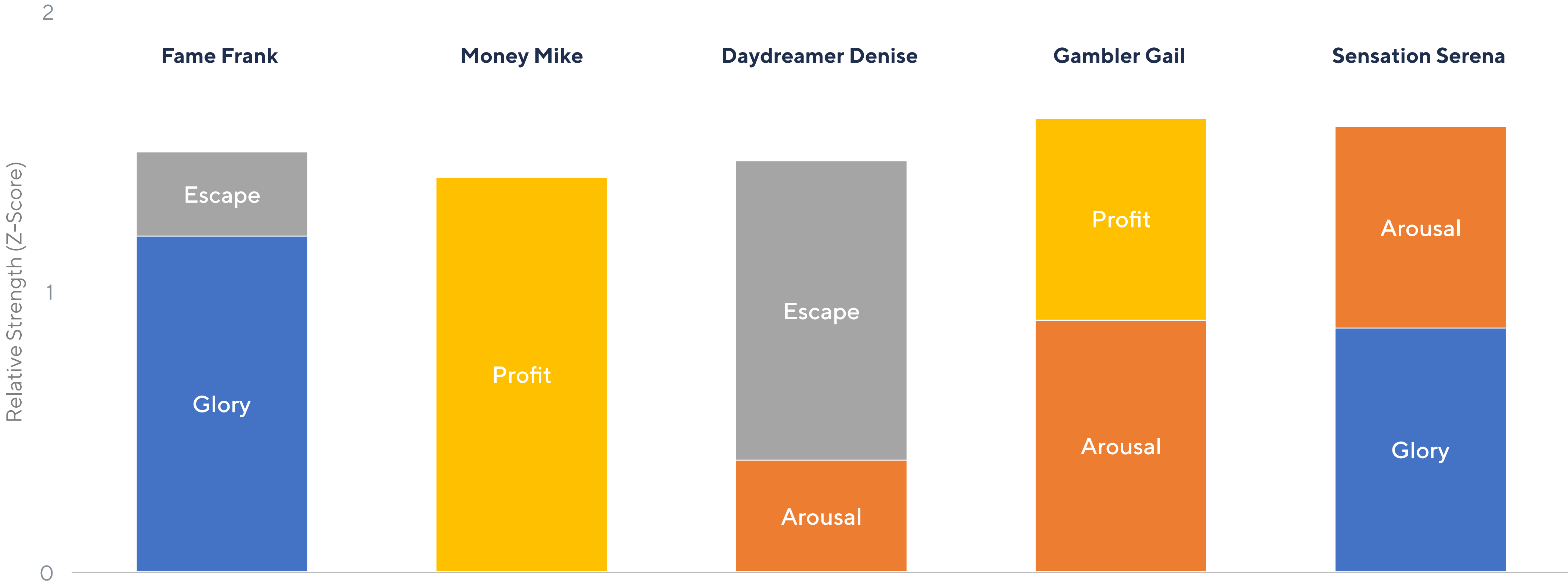- A sleep-alternative

Profit
- The feeling of gaining money
- Wanting to make a profit, get rich, and win prizes and rewards

SLOTS PERSONAS

Based on these fundamental motivations, online slots players were segmented into five core player personas: **Fame Frank, Money Mike, Daydreamer Denise, Gambler Gail,** and **Sensation Serena.**

Slots Personas: Motivations

PERSONA CHARACTERISTICS

Each persona seeks out experiences that trigger positive motivations ... while limiting exposure to less desirable emotions. For example, **Fame Frank** is motivated by <u>Glory</u> and somewhat by <u>Escape</u> ... and is put off by feelings of <u>Arousal</u> (e.g., over-stimulation from audiovisual effects).

	Fame Frank	*Money Mike*	*Daydreamer Denise*	*Gambler Gail*	*Sensation Serena*
Demographics*					
Size	21%	22%	27%	19%	12%
Women	50%	51%	66%	60%	55%
Age	32.4	34.3	35.5	35.2	35.2
Motivations & Detractions*					
Glory	1.2	–0.2	–0.4	–1.1	0.9
Arousal	–1.1	–0.6	0.4	0.9	0.7
Escape	0.3	–0.6	1.1	–0.5	–1.1
Profit	–0.4	1.4	–1.1	0.7	–0.6
Play Characteristics*					
Online Slots Interest	3.1	3.0	3.3	3.6	3.8
Money Spent	4.2	4.9	3.5	5.4	5.8
Play Time	5.0	4.5	5.0	4.9	6.5

*The mean age of respondents was 34.5, 57% female, and U.K. n = 818 and U.S. n = 481
**These numbers indicate relative strength of each player persona using Z Scores (<u>more info</u>)

"If you invest in beauty, it will remain with you all the days of your life."

- Frank Lloyd Wright

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