# LIQUID AND GRIT
# SOCIAL CASINO REPORT

Competitive research and actionable recommendations for product owners on innovations in social casino gaming

JANUARY 2016

# SCATTER SLOTS DEEP DIVE


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# Introduction

Dear Product Owner,

In this report, you will find data and recommendations based on a thorough analysis of Scatter Slots. Since July of 2015, Scatter Slots has experienced tremendous growth, becoming a top 20 grossing social casino game on iOS.

We are very excited to see the success of an RPG-style slots game like Scatter Slots. This indicates that players are ready for more innovation in social casino games *and* want slots games to incorporate features and themes from other genres. And why wouldn't they? From our independent surveys, it is clear that Scatter Slots players enjoy a variety of genres.

As always, we identify the most valuable and innovative features based on data, market research, and experience. Then, we recommend how to best apply these features to generate more value in your upcoming releases. Incorporated into these recommendations are mechanics from other genres – a concept that Scatter Slots capitalizes on well. Enjoy.

- The Liquid and Grit Team

# HIGH-LEVEL GAME OVERVIEW

Scatter Slots is an RPG-themed slots game with map progression, quests, daily challenges, primary and secondary coin bonuses, and mini-games

## Lobby

### Map screen

Players progress on a map, unlocking new machines, the secondary coin bonus, and daily challenges along the way. Players can also see their friends on the map, similar to Candy Crush Saga

### Secondary coin bonus

Every hour, players receive a free play of the secondary coin bonus. This feature is examined closely in this report

## Room

### Slot machines

The theme is very RPG inspired, and the slot mechanics are strong for a non-IP game: the machines include free spins, bonus games, and a tumbler machine with multipliers

### Daily challenges

Players have five daily tasks within the daily challenge, as well as quests in every level. These two mechanics are reviewed in this report

# KEY FEATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Identification of the most valuable and innovative features in Scatter Slots and recommendations for how to best apply these features to your game*

# FEATURE RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

## Pay close attention to the VIP for a month feature…and continue to invest in the secondary coin bonus, while considering mini-games and challenges and quests

| Feature | Impact | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|
| **VIP for a month** | • Drive conversion<br>• Increase transactions<br>• Improve retention | • Build a version of this golden mechanic that fits best with your game. This feature is clearly a winner…few features increase transactions *and* retention this well<br>• Test this feature's limits…explore price points, time horizons, multiple offerings, and fiction |
| **Secondary coin bonus** | • Improve engagement<br>• Grow ad revenue | • Shift the distribution of free daily coins out of the primary coin bonus and into the secondary coin bonus to increase engagement<br>• Invest more in the secondary coin bonus, adding engaging features, level locks, and paywalls |
| **Mini-games** | • Increase revenue/transaction<br>• Boost short-term revenue | • Increase revenue per transaction by adding an indirect purchase mini-game to high-priced packages<br>• Release direct-purchase mini-games for strong but short-term revenue bumps |
| **Challenges and quests** | • Create a long-term product advantage | • Adopt successful features from other genres: 52% of slots players play arcade games like Candy Crush Saga and 45% of slots players play hidden object games like Pearl's Peril<br>• Consider owning the challenges and quests category within slots games |

*Source: Liquid and Grit independent surveys. For more information see the data collection process description in the appendix*

# VIP FOR A MONTH

# VIP FOR A MONTH: FEATURE SUMMARY

VIP for a month is a powerful purchase mechanic that gives players coins, gems, and upgrades every day, with a catch… Players must return daily to the game to collect the bonus

## Details

- The VIP for a month package is a $2.99 package that gives players 6.0M coins (worth $2.50), 10 gems (worth $2.50), and 1 upgrade every day for 30 days straight (image 1)
- The package is an excellent deal; the total value is ~$150.00 if collected every day. Interestingly, there is actually no VIP program in Scatter Slots
- After players purchase the VIP for a month package, the message on the buy page turns from, “$2.99 Buy” to, “VIP days remaining: x days”…where “x” is the number of days remaining
- The important part of the feature is that players must log into the game daily to collect the VIP bonus. When players log in, they receive a notification dialogue upon game entry (image 2)
- In Heroes Charge, a mid-core game, the fiction behind this type of feature is a monthly card and there is a first purchase bonus included in the package (image A)
- Summoners War, another mid-core game, includes multiple different price points for this kind of package, ranging from $9.99 to $99.99 (image B)

## VIP for a month in Scatter Slots

## Versions of this feature in other games

# VIP FOR A MONTH: BACKGROUND DATA

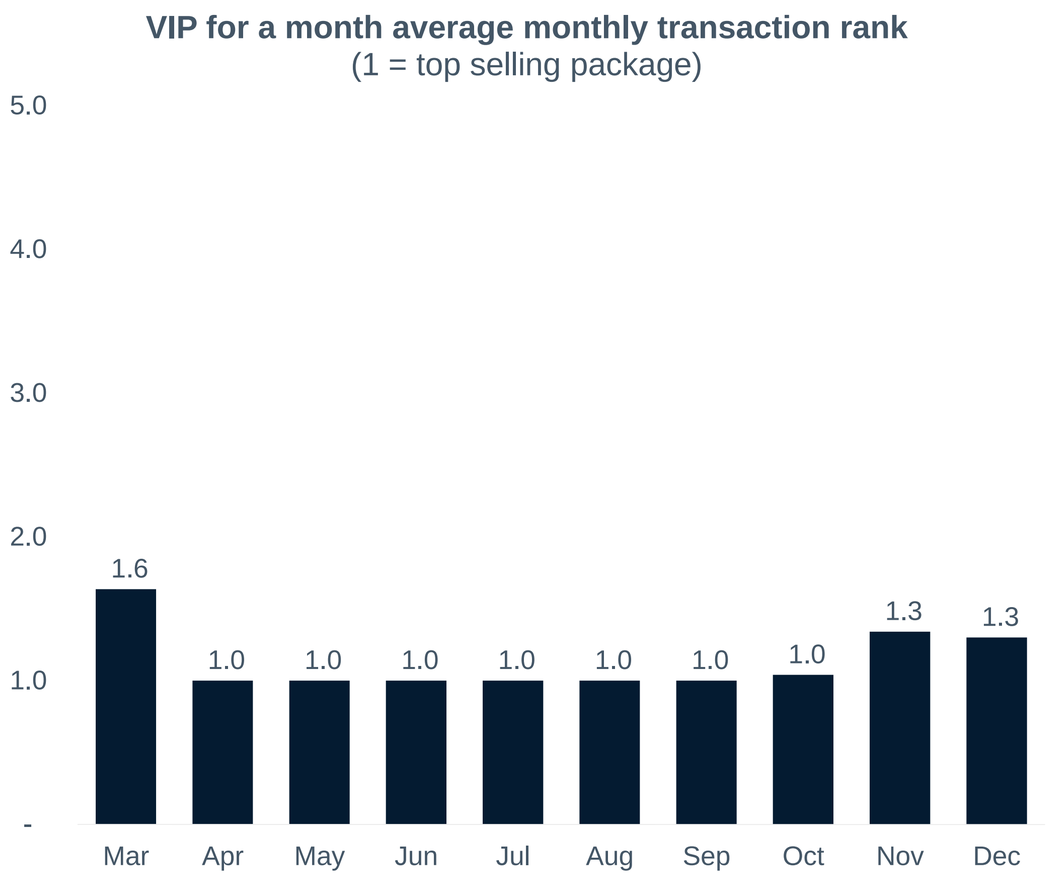
The VIP for a month package is the top selling package for Scatter Slots and was for most of 2015

## Current rank

| # | Most transactions (all packages) | Price |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | VIP for a month | $2.99 |
| 2 | Mini coins pack | $4.99 |
| 3 | Holiday sale package | $24.99 |
| 4 | Advanced coin pack | $14.99 |
| 5 | Holiday sale package | $0.99 |
| 6 | Holiday sale package | $9.99 |
| 7 | Pro coins package | $4.99 |
| 8 | Package of 20 gems | $4.99 |
| 9 | Medium coins pack | $9.99 |

*Source: iOS App Store In-App Purchases tab. For more information see the data collection process description in the appendix*

## Trending rank




*Source: Priori Data. For more information see the data collection process description in the appendix*

# VIP FOR A MONTH: MARKET INFORMATION

VIP for a month-like features are not utilized by other top grossing iOS slots games. Some games have features built into their VIP program but have no direct-purchase package to drive additional transactions

| Game | Strength of feature | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| DoubleDown | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| Heart of Vegas | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| GSN Casino | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| MyVegas | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| House of Fun | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| DoubleU | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| Wizard of Oz Slots | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| Hit it Rich | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| Slotomania | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| Big Fish Casino | | • No direct-purchase feature like the VIP for a month |
| Scatter Slots | | • VIP for a month |

# VIP FOR A MONTH: RECOMMENDATIONS

Build a version of this golden mechanic that fits best with your game. Few features increase transactions *and* retention this well. Test this feature's limits…explore price points, time horizons, multiple offerings, and fiction

## Details

- **Release with a low-priced offering:** To drive new buyer conversion, like Scatter Slots, have a low-priced package (image 1)
- **Add a new buyer bonus:** Like Heroes Charge, include a new buyer bonus to drive additional conversion (image A)
- **Add multiple price points:** Like Summoners War, add four price points to increase revenue and retention in heavy payers (image B)
- **Test the time length of this feature:** There is no reason this feature would not work for 7, 60, 90, 180 days…or possibly hourly
- **Consider different fiction if you already have a VIP program:** Like both mid-core examples, the fiction of the package can simply be a monthly card or a monthly bonus package (images A and B)

## VIP for a month in Scatter Slots

## Mid-core versions of the feature

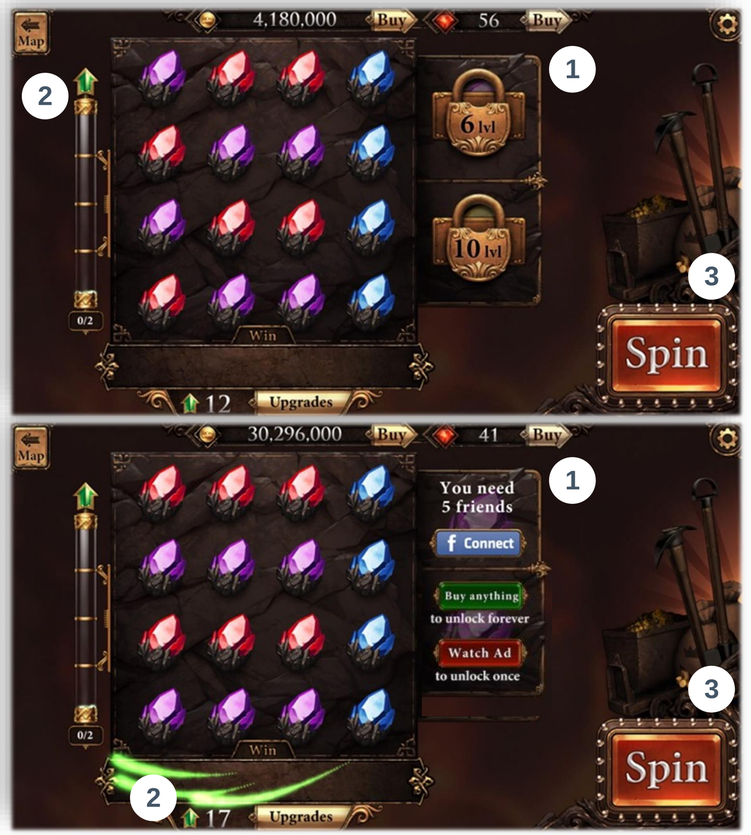
# SECONDARY COIN BONUS

# SECONDARY COIN BONUS: FEATURE SUMMARY

Scatter Slots takes the secondary coin bonus (SCB) to the next level of innovation: it is a slot machine with bonus reels that are locked with level, Facebook connect, and monetization paywalls . . . and it also has an upgrade system

| Details | Secondary Coin Bonus |
|---|---|

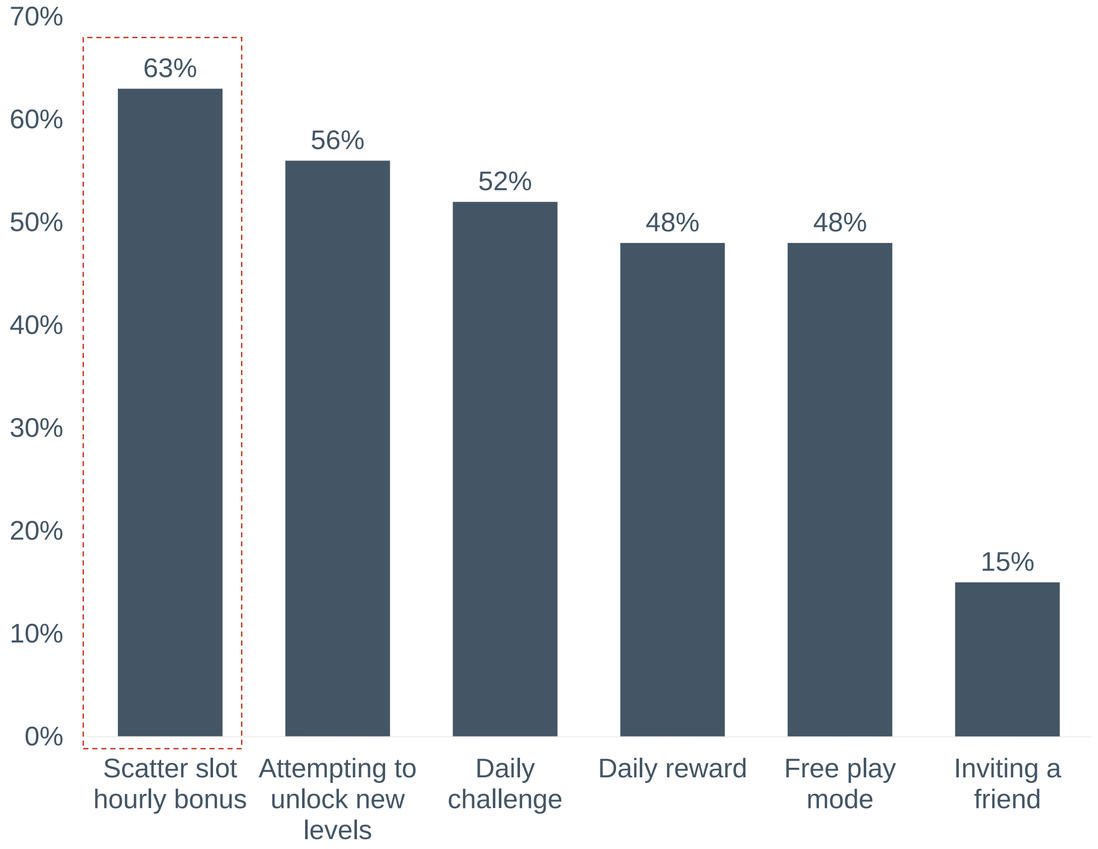
- **Secondary coin bonus (SCB):** The SCB is locked to players until level two. Upon first play of the SCB, it is a 4x4 slot machine with two locked bonus reels. The SCB is given to players every hour. With no reels unlocked or upgrades, the average payout is worth $0.45 per play (see the economy section for full economy-related details)
- **First bonus reel:** To unlock the first bonus reel, players must first advance to level six. Once at level six, players must then Facebook connect with at least five friends
- **Second bonus reel:** To unlock the second bonus reel, players must first advance to level ten. Once at level ten, players must either watch an advertisement to unlock the bonus reel for one turn or make a purchase to unlock the bonus reel forever (#1 in both images)
- **Upgrades:** Playing the SCB adds one step to the upgrade progress bar. When the upgrade progress bar fills up, players receive one upgrade. Upgrades are used to increase the payout of symbols on the SCB. The upgrade progress bar is first two spins, then four, then six…and so on (#2 in both images)
- **Spins:** The SCB is thirty seconds worth of spinning. After the SCB play, players can purchase another spin using gems. The cost of a spin increases with every additional spin purchased from 10 gems (costing $2.50), to 12, 14, 16, 18, and so on (#3 in both images)



# SECONDARY COIN BONUS: BACKGROUND DATA

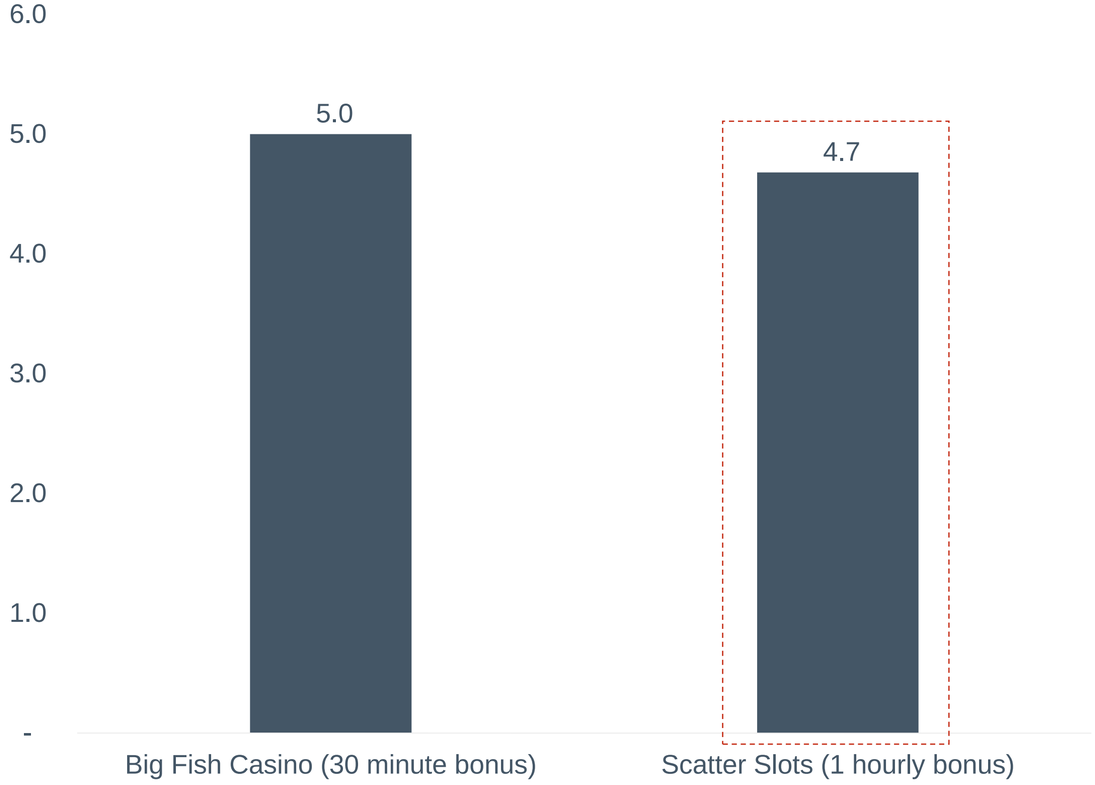
63% of Scatter Slots players play the SCB almost every time they play. Scatter Slots players collect the SCB almost as many times a day as Big Fish Casino players – even though Scatter Slots' SCB is given out half as many times

**Activities players do almost every time they play**




*Source: Liquid and Grit independent survey*

**Average number of times players collect the SCB daily**

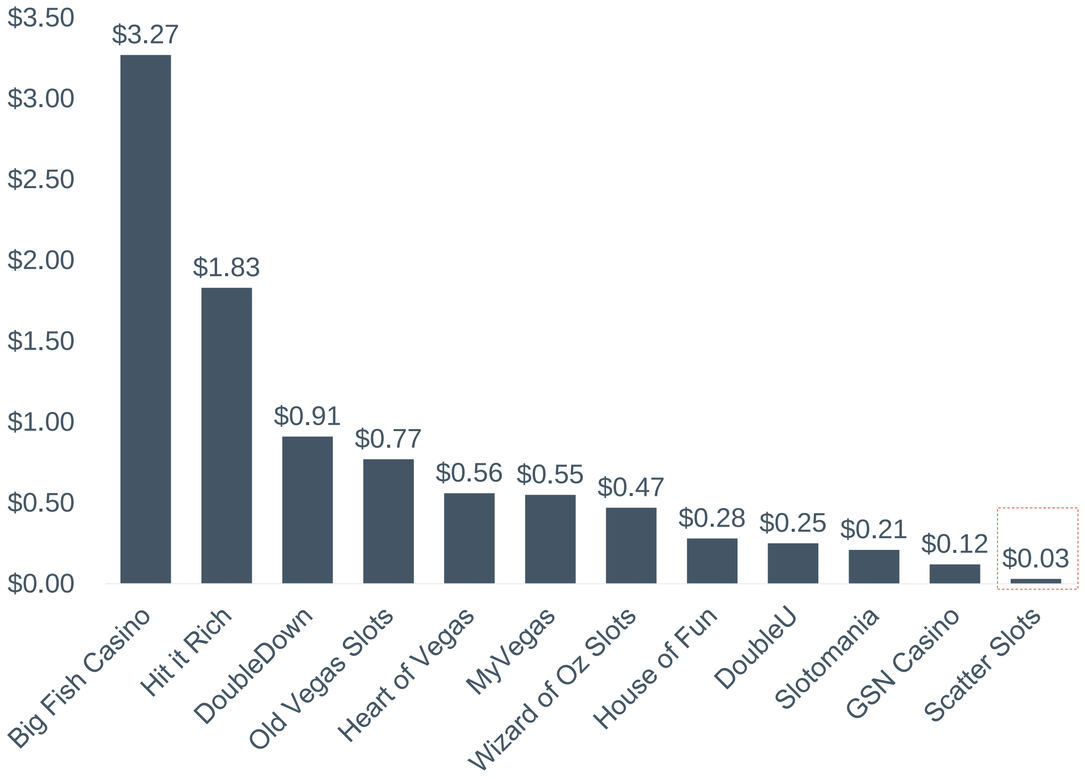



*Source: Liquid and Grit independent survey. Due to response bias, these players are likely to have higher engagement scores in general…therefore use this graph as directional data*

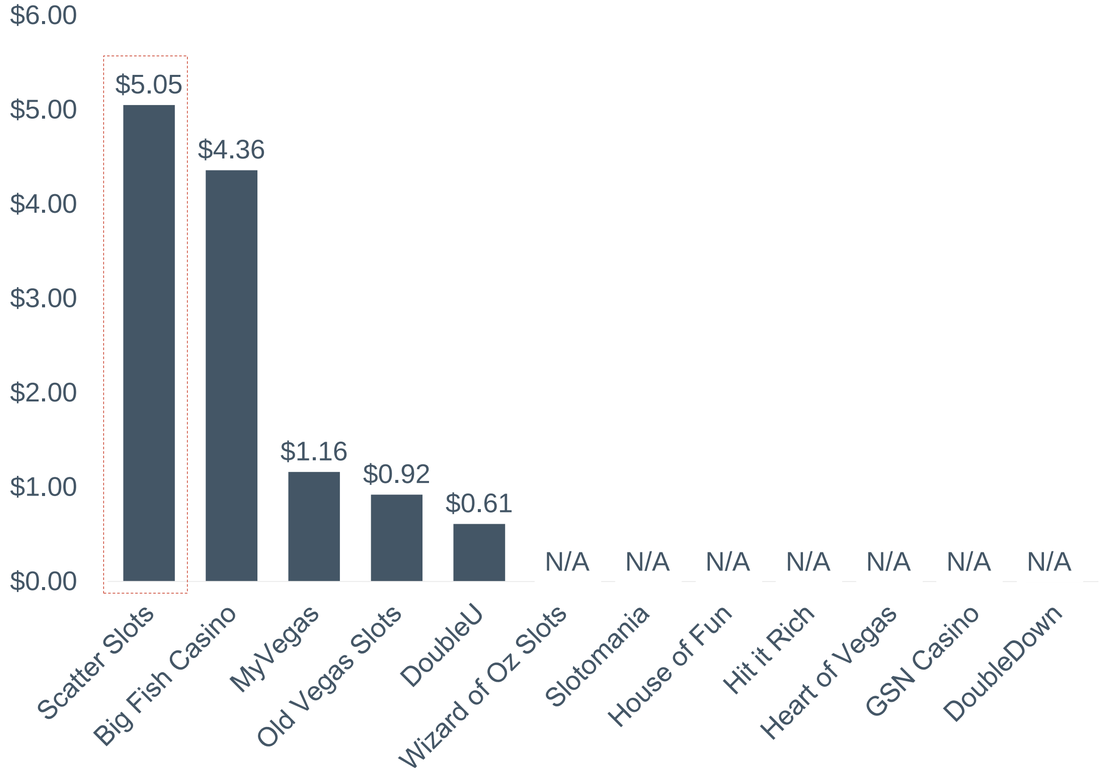
# SECONDARY COIN BONUS: MARKET COMPARISON

Scatter Slots places 1% of the total daily coins in the primary coin bonus and 99% in the secondary coin bonus – a unique distribution of coins comparatively

**Value of primary coin bonus**
(converted using $1.00 of non-sale coins over a 12 hour period)




**Value of secondary coin bonus**
(converted using $1.00 of non-sale coins over a 12 hour period)




*Source: Liquid and Grit deep dive game analysis on mobile iOS.*

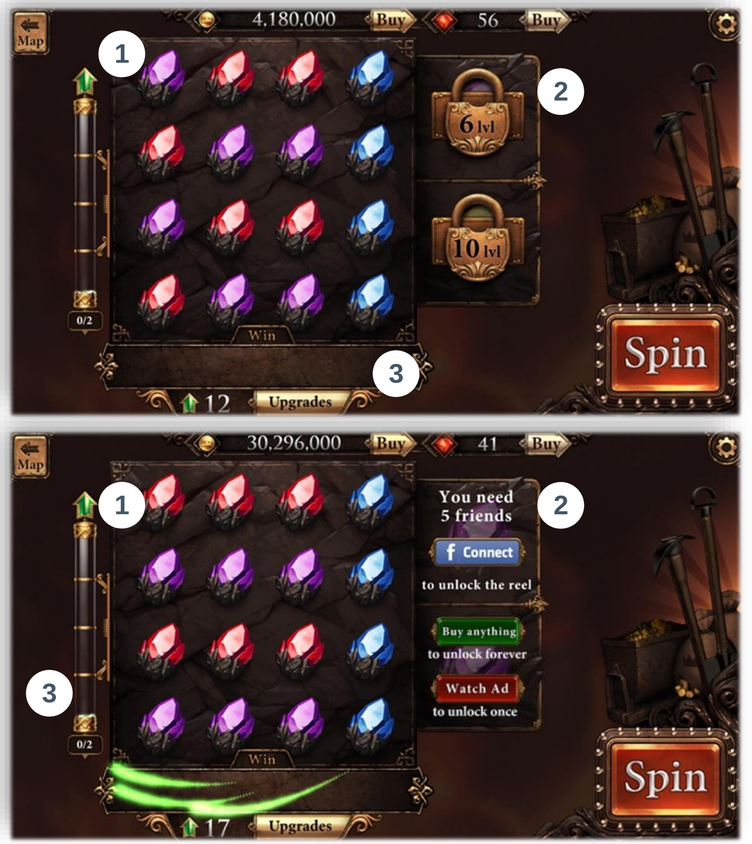
*Note: Secondary coin bonus numbers only include the main feature and not any additional bonuses as was the case in last month's report*

# SECONDARY COIN BONUS: RECOMMENDATION

Shift the distribution of free daily coins out of the primary coin bonus and into the secondary coin bonus to increase engagement. Invest more in the secondary coin bonus, adding engaging features, level locks, and paywalls

| Details | Secondary coin bonus |
|---|---|

- **Distribute more free daily coins into the SCB:** Since the primary coin bonus is a relic of Facebook web, consider shifting more attention to the shorter interval reward system
- **Create a slots machine SCB mechanic:** Convert any simple SCB into a more elaborate, fun game (e.g., a slot machine) to keep players around long enough to engage and potentially monetize (#1 in both images)
- **Gate content behind Facebook connect:** Apple's iOS 9 release has made it much easier for players to Facebook connect via Safari. According to Facebook's developer website, apps like Trip Advisor see a 27% increase in engagement for Facebook connected users. Therefore, gate bonus features, like additional reels, behind a Facebook connect button (#2 in both images)
- **Consider adding a progression system like upgrades:** According to our independent survey, 77% of Scatter Slots players "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the statement, "Upgrading the scatter slot hourly bonus is important to me." Although the upgrade system is fairly complicated, it provides long-term benefits for more committed players (#3 in both images)
- **Add longer interaction to drive engagement:** Players will collect the SCB more often than they will actually spin an in-game machine. Therefore, increase the time and interaction of the SCB to make players stick around long enough to potentially monetize



# MINI-GAMES

# MINI-GAMES: FEATURE SUMMARY

## Scatter Slots releases direct purchase mini-games for seasonal events and adds an indirect purchase mini-game to the buy page

| Details | Direct purchase mini-game | Indirect purchase mini-game |
|---|---|---|

- **Direct purchase mini-game:** Recently released, the Santa Claus mini-game is a simple direct purchase slot machine. Every day, players receive one free spin and can purchase additional spins; for example, three spins for $4.99 (image 1)
- Players win coins, gems, VIP bonuses, lottery tickets, and cookies until the countdown timer completed on Christmas day. Players then received a message from Santa that each cookie won in the mini-game converted into a Christmas tree wheel spin (image 2)
- **Indirect purchase mini-game:** To drive up revenue per transaction, Scatter Slots rewards payers with Lottery mini-game tickets scaled with higher priced packages that can be redeemed with the Lottery mini-game (image A)
- The Lottery mini-game lets players pick a mystery card on each row. On the first row, there are four winning cards and one losing card. If a winner is picked, the player proceeds to the next row; and by completing all the steps, the player can win 2B coins that are worth $100.00 (image B)

# MINI-GAMES: BACKGROUND DATA

The indirect purchase mini-game increases revenue per transaction on Scatter Slots' buy page. Two of the three most purchased buy-page packages for Scatter Slots include an indirect purchase mini-game

*Source: Taken from the iOS App Store In-App Purchases tab*

# MINI-GAMES: MARKET COMPARISON

Only three top grossing iOS slots games provide indirect or direct purchase mini-games

| Game | Strength of feature | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| DoubleDown | | • No indirect or direct mini-game with purchase |
| Heart of Vegas | | • No indirect or direct mini-game with purchase |
| Wizard of Oz Slots | | • No indirect or direct mini-game with purchase |
| MyVegas | | • No indirect or direct mini-game with purchase |
| House of Fun | | • No indirect or direct mini-game with purchase |
| GSN Casino | | • No indirect or direct mini-game with purchase |
| Hit it Rich | | • No indirect or direct mini-game with purchase |
| DoubleU | | • No indirect or direct mini-game with purchase |
| Slotomania | | • Direct purchase mini-game |
| Big Fish Casino | | • Indirect mini-games with purchase using lottery tickets |
| Scatter Slots | | • Indirect and direct purchase mini-games |

# MINI-GAMES: RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase revenue per transaction by adding an indirect purchase mini-game to high-priced packages.
Release direct-purchase mini-games for strong but short-term revenue bumps

| Details | Direct purchase mini-game | Indirect purchase mini-game |
|---|---|---|

- **Add an indirect purchase mini-game to high-priced packages to increase revenue per transaction:** Like Scatter Slots, consider tiered mini-game bonuses on the buy-page to incentivize higher-priced package purchases
- **Create massive rewards that are difficult to achieve:** Scatter Slots' Lottery mini-game provides a jackpot woth $100.00, which is relatively small considering the difficulty of the game and the price spent to obtain tickets ($30.00 and up). Keep the game difficult but make the jackpot reward much bigger
- **Market the jackpot reward on the buy-page:** Headers that include numbers have a CTR ~5 basis points higher than headers without numbers. Therefore, include the jackpot number on the buy-page and in other marketing
- **Consider releasing direct purchase mini-games on a cadence:** Mini-games like slot machines and wheels can provide short-term revenue bumps when released regularly and rotated in and out

# CHALLENGES AND QUESTS

# CHALLENGES AND QUESTS: FEATURE SUMMARY

Scatter Slots has a daily challenge system that includes five daily tasks and a quest system that allows players to level up by completing a quest

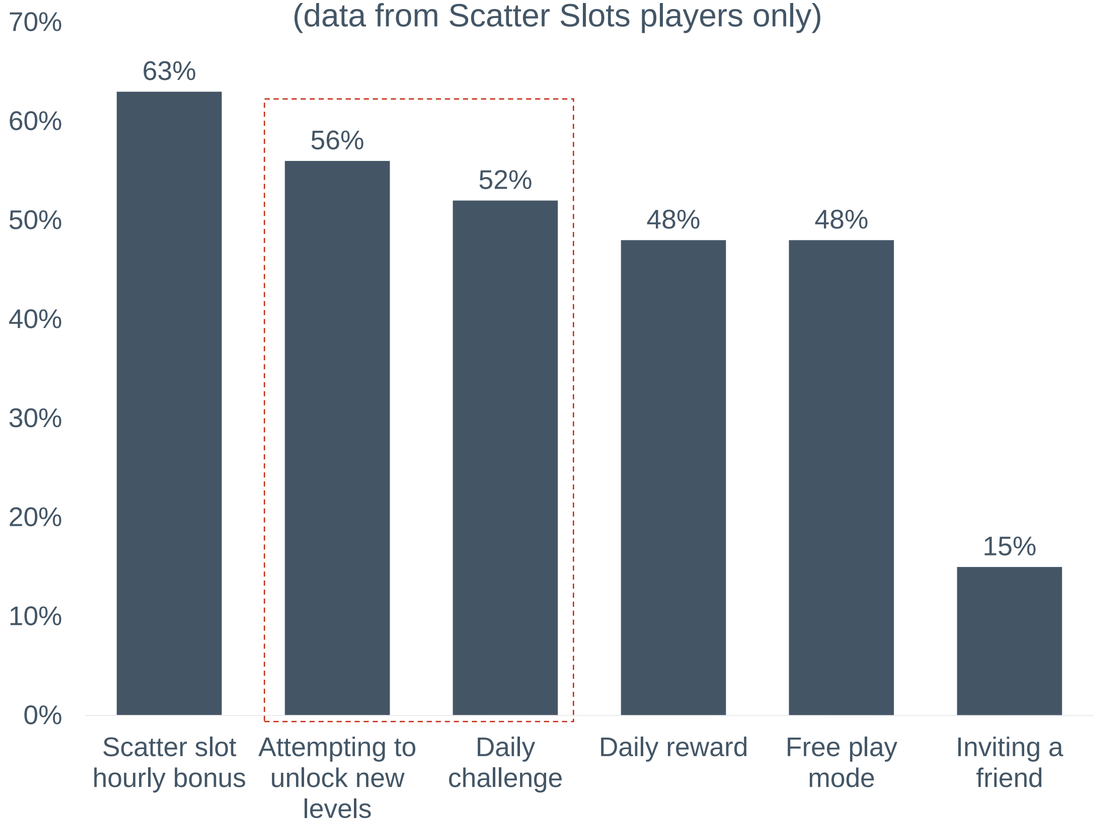
| Details | Challenges in Scatter Slots | Quests in Scatter Slots |
|---|---|---|

- **Challenges:** There are five tasks players must complete for the daily challenge…e.g., play a bonus game, get a free spin, and spin at max bet (image 1)
- Upon completion, players are rewarded 2.5M coins (worth $1.04), 5 gems (worth $1.25), and 1 upgrade. When players complete a task, a message appears over the top of the slot machine with a progress bar, clearly notifying players that they completed one of the tasks. When players complete all the tasks and therefore the daily challenge, the bar comes down again and remains over the machine until players collect the reward (image 2)
- **Quests:** Players can complete a level by either leveling up through spins or by completing the level-specific quest. Quests include spinning 100 times, winning 20M coins, and spinning 20 times at max bet (image A)
- Once a player completes a quest, the level is finished and players cannot go back and play the level again (image B)

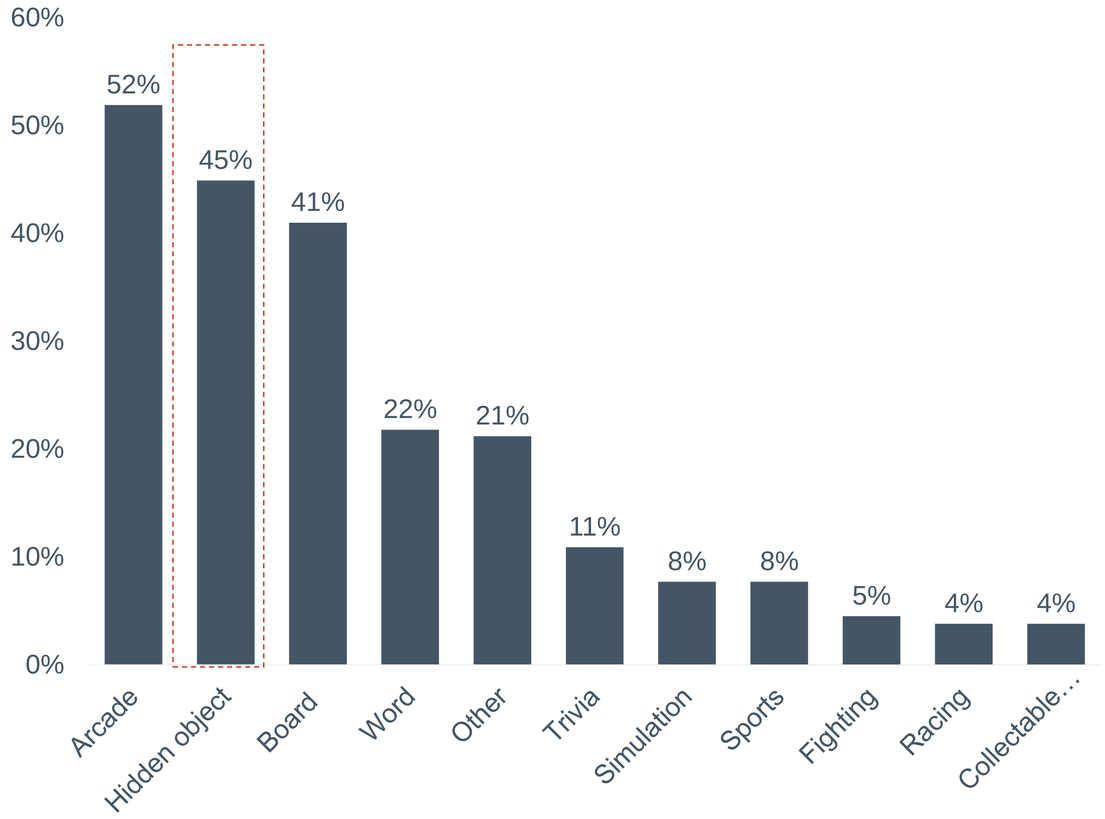
# CHALLENGES AND QUESTS: BACKGROUND DATA

56% of Scatter Slots players attempt to unlock new levels and 52% of players participate in the daily challenge almost every time they play. 45% of all slots players also play hidden object games

**Activities players do almost every time they play**
(data from Scatter Slots players only)




**Genres slot players play**
(data from multiple games and surveys)




*Source: Liquid and Grit independent surveys*

# CHALLENGES AND QUESTS: MARKET COMPARISON

GSN and Scatter Slots are the only top grossing iOS slots games with challenges or quests

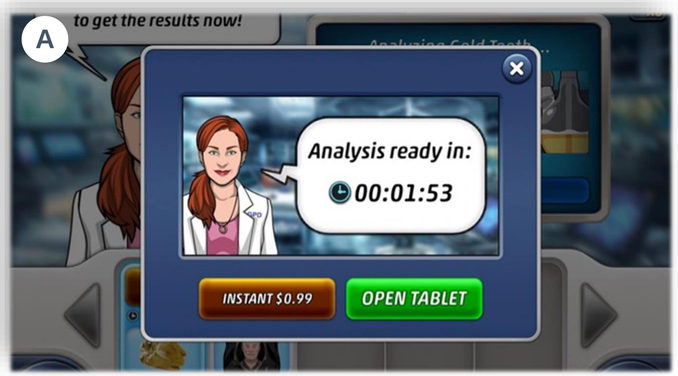
| Game | Strength of feature | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| DoubleDown | | • No challenges or quests |
| Heart of Vegas | | • No challenges or quests |
| Wizard of Oz Slots | | • No challenges or quests |
| MyVegas | | • No challenges or quests |
| House of Fun | | • No challenges or quests |
| Big Fish Casino | | • No challenges or quests |
| Hit it Rich | | • No challenges or quests |
| Slotomania | | • No challenges or quests |
| DoubleU | | • No challenges or quests |
| GSN Casino | | • Daily challenges with time limits |
| Scatter Slots | | • Daily challenges and quests for each level |

# CHALLENGES AND QUESTS: RECOMMENDATIONS

Adopt successful features from other genres such as hidden object games. Consider owning the challenges and quests product category within slots games

| Details | Scatter Slots and Criminal Case examples |
|---|---|

- **Test the quest concept but then own the category:** Successful games like Big Fish Casino go deep on a product category (e.g., social) to create a long-term advantage. Consider personalizing the quests toward preferred behaviors…such as social quests for social players (image 1)
- **Remove risk by copying hidden object games:** To remove risk, build a hidden objects-based challenge game; potentially placing hidden objects onto the background images of each slot machine (image 2)
- **Add quests and challenges with timers...then add a purchase to speed-up mechanic to monetize players:** This mechanic will increase retention with a timer mechanic and drive revenue with a purchase to speed-up mechanic (image A)
- **Build a story that works with open graphs...then add an open graph to all steps:** Like Criminal Case, add an open graph to challenges and a story that fits with the Actor, App, Action, and Object open graph format (image B)



# ECONOMY COMPARISON

*A summary of the game economy and comparisons to other top grossing iOS slots games*

# ECONOMY SCORECARD

Scatter Slots' new-user economy is moderately tuned with an overall score of 2.9 out of 5.0 compared to the top grossing iOS slots games

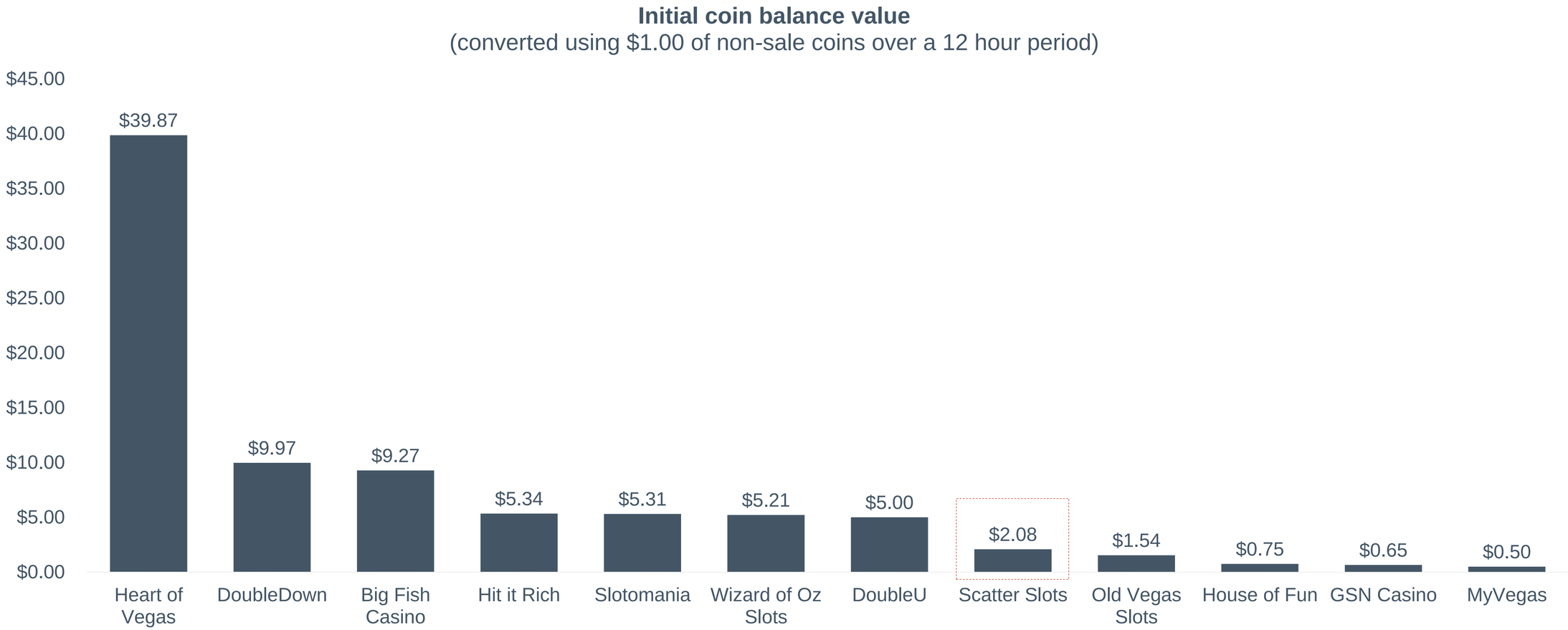
| | Value | Score | Details |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Initial coin balance (ICB)** | **$2.08** | **2.3** | • The value players receive upon install. Value is determined by taking the initial coin balance and converting it using $1.00 worth of non-sale purchasable coins |
| **Default bet value** | **$0.02** | **3.8** | • The cost of the default bet in the first machine converted into a dollar value |
| **Minimum bet value** | **$0.02** | **2.9** | • The cost of the minimum bet in the first machine converted into a dollar value |
| **ICB/default bet** | **125** | **3.0** | • The value of the initial coin balance divided by the cost to spin at the initial default bet |
| **ICB/minimum bet** | **125** | **2.5** | • The value of the initial coin balance divided by the cost to spin at the initial minimum bet |
| **Primary coin bonus** | **$0.03** | **0.1** | • The average amount of value players receive from the primary coin bonus (over a 12 hour period…assuming players do not collect all day) |
| **Secondary coin bonus** | **$5.05** | **5.0** | • The average amount of value players receive from the secondary coin bonus (over a 12 hour period) |
| **Total daily coin bonus** | **$5.08** | **4.6** | • The total average amount of value players receive from the primary and secondary coin bonuses |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Very tight economy | 2 | Moderately tight economy | 3 | Moderate economy | 4 | Moderately loose economy | 5 | Very loose economy |

*Source: Liquid and Grit deep dive game analysis on mobile iOS. Games with abnormal numbers in any category are removed from the scoring*

# VALUE OF INITIAL COIN BALANCE

Scatter Slots gives players $2.08 worth of coins upon initial install – a moderately tuned initial coin balance compared to the top grossing iOS slots games

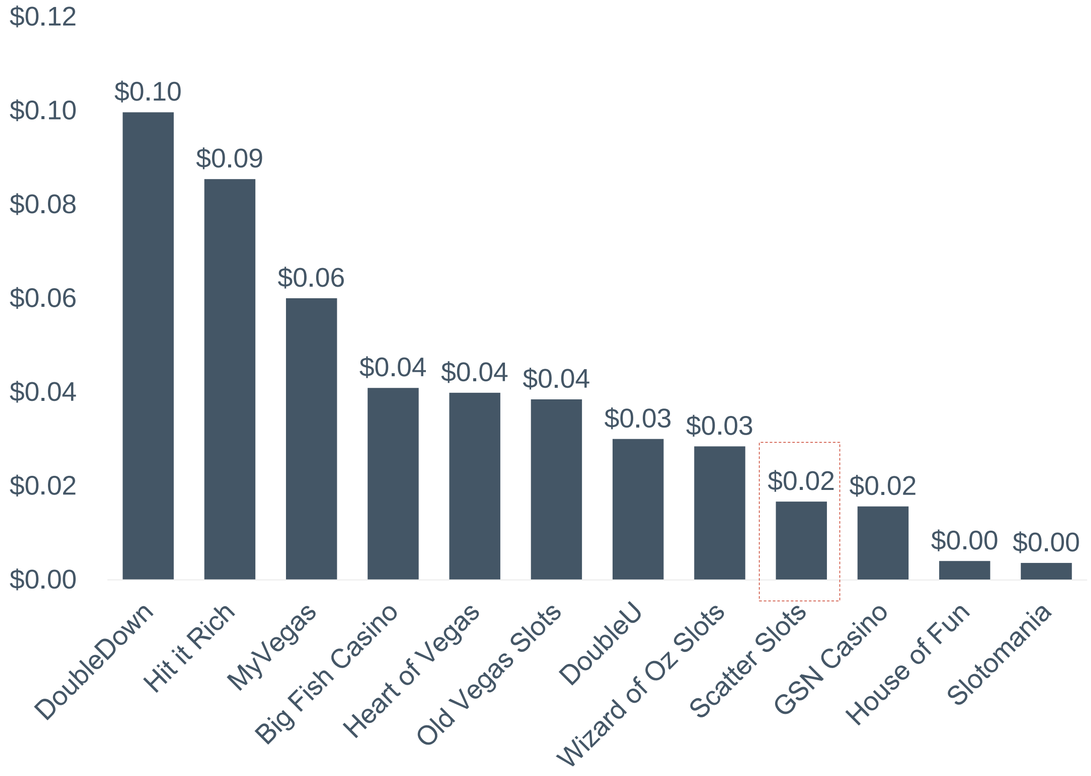



*Source: Liquid and Grit deep dive game analysis on mobile iOS*

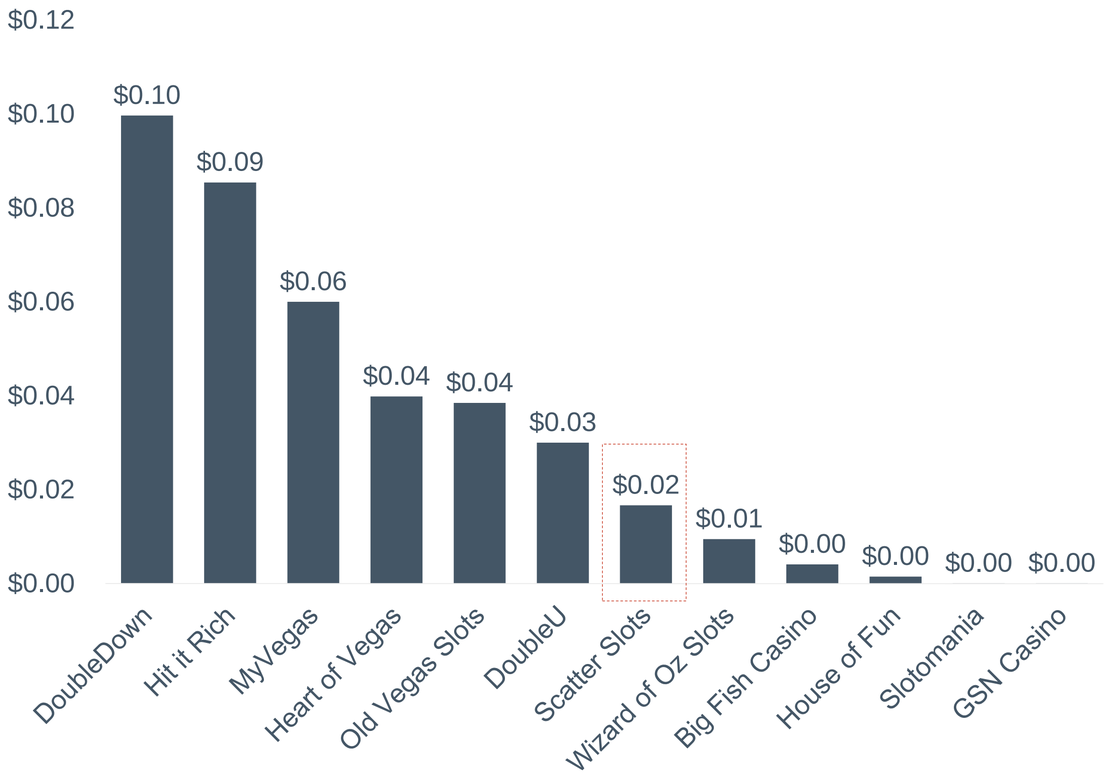
# NEW USER DEFAULT AND MINIMUM BET VALUES

Scatter Slots' new user default and minimum bet values are both $0.02. The new user default bet is moderately loose and the minimum bet is moderate comparatively

**Default bet value**
(converted using $1.00 of non-sale coins over a 12 hour period)




**Minimum bet value**
(converted using $1.00 of non-sale coins over a 12 hour period)

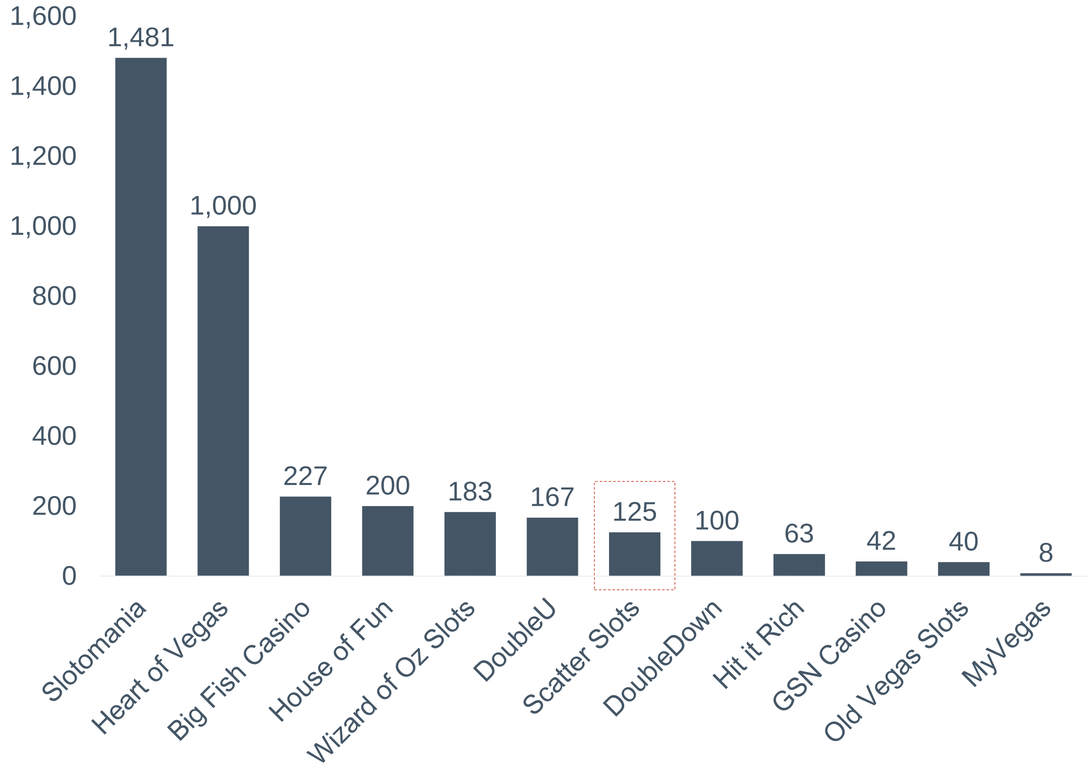



*Source: Liquid and Grit deep dive game analysis on mobile iOS*

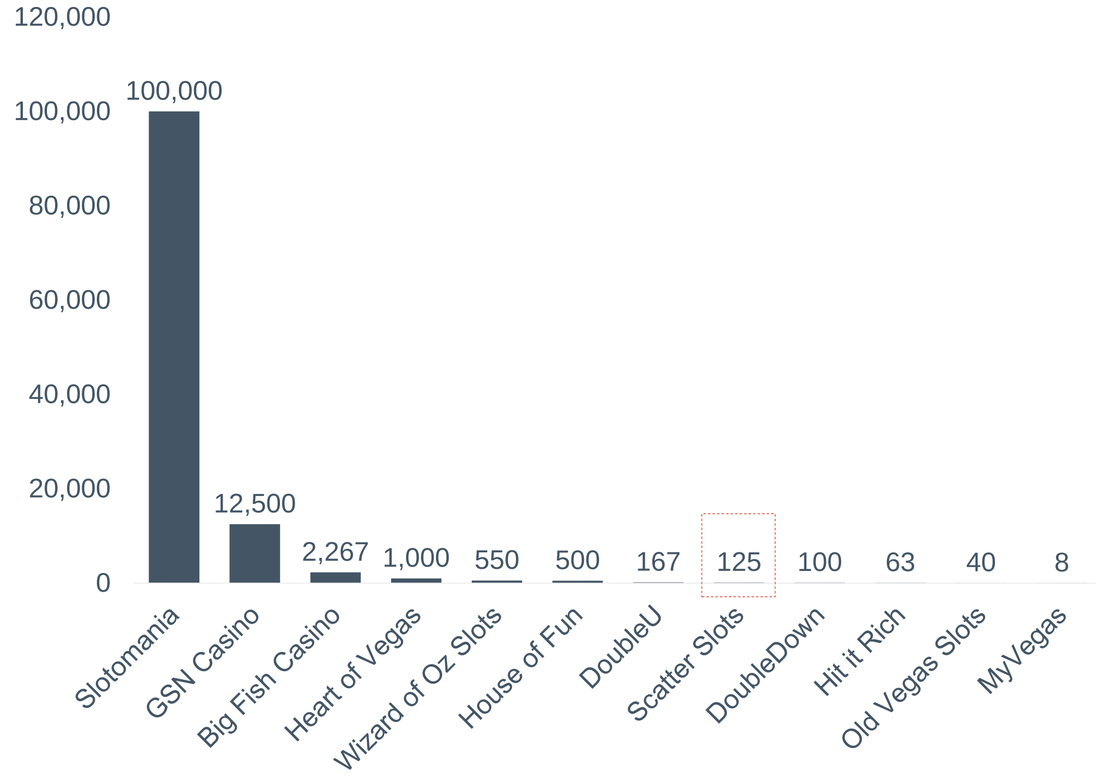
# NEW USER TUNING

The initial coin balance divided by the new user default and minimum bets is 125 for both bets – moderately tuned compared to the top grossing iOS slots games

**Initial coin balance/default bet**
(converted using $1.00 of non-sale coins over a 12 hour period)




**Initial coin balance/minimum bet**
(converted using $1.00 of non-sale coins over a 12 hour period)

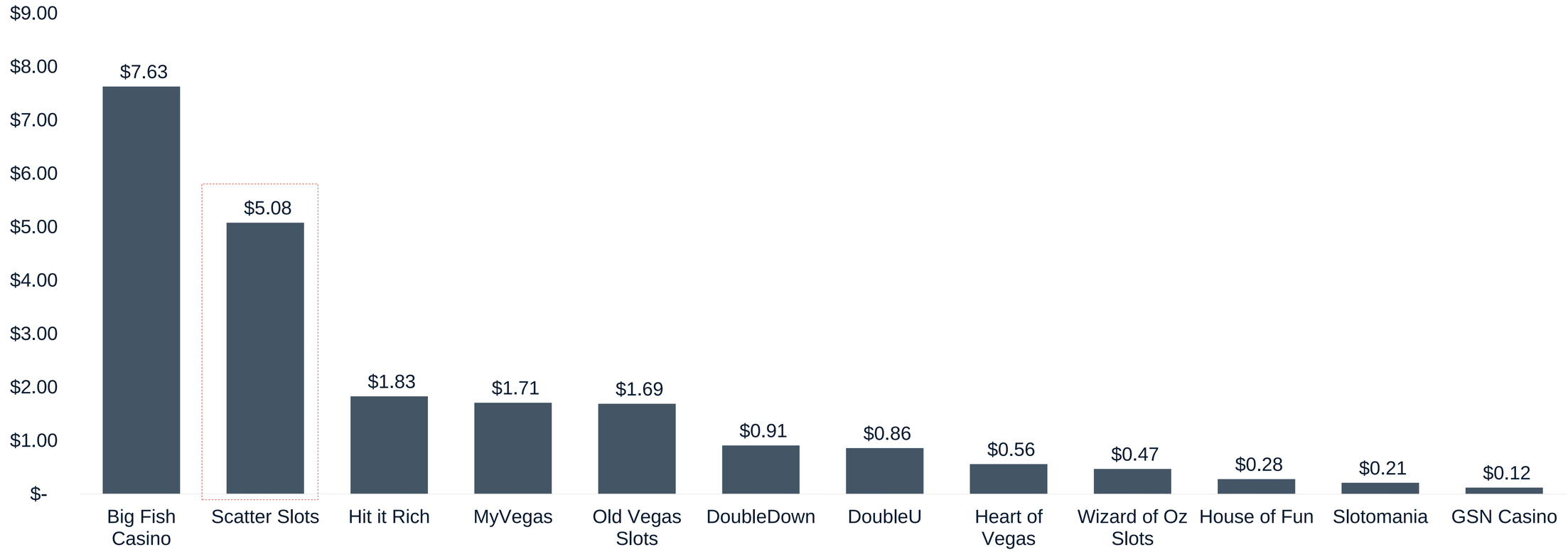



*Source: Liquid and Grit deep dive game analysis on mobile iOS*

# TOTAL VALUE OF COIN BONUSES

Scatter Slots gives away the second most total daily coin bonus value. The secondary coin bonus comprises 99% of the total daily coin bonus value

**Total daily coin bonus value**
(primary and secondary coin bonuses summed and converted using $1.00 of non-sale coins over a 12 hour period)




*Source: Liquid and Grit deep dive game analysis on mobile iOS*

# APPENDIX

# DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

## Information and data is collected from players, market research, app intelligence tools, and a deep dive analysis of the game

### Independent survey information

For each report, survey responses are gathered from players who play the game in review. In some graphs, the data compares responses from several different surveys (e.g., the age demographic information compares responses from the Old Vegas Slots, Big Fish Casino, and Scatter Slots surveys). Players are found primarily through targeted Facebook advertising campaigns. Response rates to the surveys vary from 50 to 200 responses

### Whale insights

In some reports, whale payers are interviewed over Facebook chat. Whale players are defined as having spent over $1,000.00 and are typically found through the Facebook surveys. To confirm that the players are actual whales, players send their spend history using the Facebook history in the Payments section of the Facebook profile

### Market research

Trending revenue, downloads, and package rank data comes from a variety of sources including the iOS App Store In-App Purchases tab and Priori Data, a Liquid and Grit partner. Las Vegas player insights come from online sources like the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority and the UNLV Center for Gaming Research

### Game information

Game information comes from a deep dive analysis of each game. Return-to-player (RTP) and win percentage, for instance, is found by tracking over 500 spins from a machine at a certain bet amount. In the economy section and economy related slides, the value of coins is determined by converting coins into money using $1.00 worth of non-sale purchasable coins in each game. For example, if the minimum bet is 1,000 coins and players can purchase 500 coins for $1.00, the value of the minimum bet is $2.00. For games without a $1.00 package, the next closest package is used

**“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles”**

**– Sun Tzu, The Art of War**

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