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By Lewis Lazare, Sun-Times Columnist

**ILR: States missing bet on Jacking up lotteries**

Do you know Jack?

Independent Lottery Research, a new Chicago-based lottery research company, suspects most executives running state lotteries and the ad agencies that work with lottery organizations don't have a clue who he is. "Jack" is the fictitious name ILR has given to the sometime, infrequent or lapsed lottery player, a group that represents a whopping 80 to 85 percent of the general population, according to ILR.

The principals behind this new lottery research and consulting company are: Michael Jones, a former director of the Illinois state lottery under former Gov. James Thompson and a longtime lottery consultant; Matthew Smith, president, Leo J. Shapiro and Associates, a Chicago-based market research firm; Gary Kubo, president of the Kubo Group Ltd. and an ad agency executive who has worked on lottery campaigns for Illinois, California, Michigan and Florida, and Margaret Mueller, a senior research analyst at Leo J. Shapiro with expertise in both consumer attitudes and behavior.

Jones, who was instrumental in forming ILR, believes most state lottery organizations aren't doing nearly enough to entice new or lapsed players. Most state lotteries prefer instead to focus on getting hardcore players to play more frequently.

To help lottery executives better understand the Jack who doesn't currently play the lottery, ILR has interviewed on camera a number of Jacks coming out of outlets where he or she might find lottery games.

ILR also has created a profile that shows Jack is typically 32 years old, makes around \$54,000 annually, is married with one child, has a college degree and one year of grad school, works as a consultant, watches the evening news and reads a daily newspaper and has never noticed the instant games on offer at the 7-Eleven or other convenience stores. But according to the profile, Jack will play Mega Millions when the prize is larger than \$100 million and someone in the office puts together a pool to buy tickets.

Jones said one of the chief reasons most lotteries aren't expanding their player base as aggressively as they might is the lack of creative new games, as well as an absence of attractive alternatives to cash prize offerings. Jones believes new players could be motivated to participate if there were different kinds of prizes that appealed to their particular interests, such as bit parts in a movie or free gas cards.

Source: <http://www.suntimes.com/output/lazare/cst-fin-lew24.html>