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The creation of the online casino

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Before online casinos, players would've spent their days travelling far and wide to find the best casinos to place their bets. With communities bustling and gaming becoming a popular pastime for the high and lower-classes alike, socialising with friends at the local pub or bar after a hard day at work quickly became an opportunity to try out a whole new gaming adventure.

Fast-forward to present day, and online casinos are all over the internet – making gaming more accessible than ever before. But what sparked the idea of the online gaming revolution, and how did brick-and-mortar casinos survive the invention of the internet? Read on to find out more.

Slots

In 1894, San Francisco saw the birth of *the Liberty Bell*, an invention pioneered by Charles Fey. This device is said to have been the first slot machine featuring the familiar design we all know and love today. With three spinning reels, a single line and a fully automated payout system, *the Liberty Bell* was the first of many mechanical gaming machines.

The popularity of Slots is undoubtedly vast, and games such as these were one of the first examples of the capability of technology in its day. Classic slot machines hit their peak in the 1970s, with the invention of the internet following closely behind.

The internet and online casinos

January 1st, 1983 is considered as the birthday of the internet. Computer networks could now interlink with each other as a new communications protocol was discovered.

With the obvious popularity of the gaming industry, there was no wonder that *Microgaming* saw a gap in the market and an opportunity to be involved in something big. According to their company history, they developed the first online casino software in 1994, despite casino management tools and player tracking systems not being launched until 1995.

In 1995, a company called *Cryptologic,* run by brothers Andrew and Mark Rivkin, developed a secure online financial transaction system and began developing some online casino software. The following year, *Cryptologic* launched *InterCasino* – which they claimed:

"[was the first] *application which allows users to connect from anywhere around the world, via the Internet, and gamble for real money.*"

In 1997, *Microgaming* became a founding member of *Interactive Gaming Council* and there were a few games downloadable online.

These included:

- Slots – *Fantastic Sevens*
- Table – Blackjack, *Cyber Stud* Poker, Roulette and Craps
- Video Poker – *Jacks or Better*
- Parlour – Keno

The birth of the online casino in UK dates back to almost the start of the internet itself, and the affects this had on on-land casinos was surprisingly minimal. Online casinos purely made the gaming experience more accessible, with pros and cons remaining for both. You get a different experience visiting a brick-and-mortar casino than you do playing online, however with technology advancing as quickly as it has – graphics, animations and the ability to play with a live dealer being streamed directly from a studio into your home, makes the online gaming experience even more immersive than ever before. Just imagine what the experience could be like in *another* 20 years' time!

Photo by Clifford Photography on Unsplash

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