

Innovation in the Pit: Spicing up the Action*By Anne Burke*

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While many companies are using technology to help casinos manage table games, in some cases the games themselves are going high tech.

DigiDeal President Mike Kuhn said digital games are popular in jurisdictions that don’t permit paper playing cards and chips, among them Idaho, the racino market, certain South American markets, and the Australian slot parlor market.

DigiDeal has an arrangement with the World Poker Tour to release a WPT-authorized version of Texas Hold’em on their new DTS platform. The company offers games with live dealers and without.

But Kuhn emphasized that DigiDeal’s intent is not to eliminate the dealer. With virtual games, the dealer’s role morphs into that of a host and entertainer, he said. “We feel whole-heartedly that a dealer or host is very important in the gaming experience,” he said.

Kuhn said that apprehensions about digital dealer-less games are disappearing. “The face of gaming is changing considerably. People who go to casinos are readily accepting technology and virtual images much more so than in the past,” he said. “We have millions of players now who are exposed to virtual gaming via the internet.”

Even traditional jurisdictions that permit real playing cards and chips are purchasing DigiDeal products. Kuhn said the games allow features such as bonus rounds, animation, and snazzy graphics. Digital games are also much faster. Digital blackjack is capable of dealing 700 hands an hour, according to DigiDeal.