

Probably one of the most crucial achievements in my academic life have pertained to the studies of the economics of casino gaming. When I started my studies shortly after the Macao SAR Government's decision in 2002 to replace the monopoly structure of its casino gaming industry with an oligopolistic structure, I was given an opportunity to present my first piece of gaming research work at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Gambling and Risk Taking (ICGRT), which Professor William R. Eadington from the University of Nevada Reno has nurtured over the past 38 years. As the pioneering conference in the world for gaming

researchers and related practitioners, participants not only are enabled to exchange their ideas and gain insights about the most updated research topics and trends in the industry, but also could develop and maintain an effective network, which of course are crucial in facilitating our studies. Since then, I have attended each conference, and look forward to the 15<sup>th</sup> in May, 2013.

Throughout my participations in the past three International Conferences, I not only obtained valuable feedback from scholars on my work, I also gained exposure to new ideas from other high-quality research presented there. In addition, the wide range of research at the conference, from theoretical to empirical and practical, provides a comprehensive and interactive platform for gaming researchers to explore and accumulate knowledge in this new but rapidly growing global industry.

As the Chinese proverb says, "Study is like sailing against the current, either you keep forging ahead or you keep falling behind." In this spirit, it brings me great pleasure to see that the 15<sup>th</sup> ICGRT will be hosted in Las Vegas in May 2013. This means that the almost 4-decade effort of Professor Eadington in encouraging and motivating the related studies will be continued, and that the current will keep us from falling behind. Indeed, the continuation of this conference is an essential dynamic for the study of commercial gaming and gambling to "forge ahead."

Last but not least, I must once again express my sincerest personal gratitude to Professor Eadington. On top of the ICGRT, I also gained a lot from attending his truly world-class Executive Development Program (EDP) in 2002 and 2004.

Through the well-organized interactions with other participants (from the industry and from other academic organizations), I managed to build a pragmatic foundation for my own research over the past decade. In particular, the case studies presented in this program have been one of the most valuable teaching lessons I have experienced, and I know that most participants feel the same way. To the gaming industry, high quality business and academic research are necessary for enriching knowledge base to secure the industry's sustainable growth, and

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the unarguable reality is that high quality research is contingent on high quality conferences and programs like these.

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