

Running Rich RACING

Competition Interactive, an offshoot of legendary casino architects Steelman Partners, has created the excellent Running Rich Racing. We talked to **Stephen Steelman** about the evolution of this superb skill gaming slot

To create a product that appeals to a new demographic, it makes sense to have that demographic represented on your team. At Competition Interactive, Stephen Steelman brings a wealth of videogaming experience – and his gaming passion is reflected in Running Rich Racing with its echoes of classic karting console games.

We caught up with Stephen late in 2016 to talk about their exciting product.

Casino International: How did the company evolve? It's not an obvious side-step from Steelman Partners.

Stephen Steelman: Paul Steelman has been doing architectural design for over 35 years, and as part of that he has been doing 3D animation of his projects; a few years ago he got into character design and animation with some of his artists that wanted to branch off. Keith Winters brought me into the fold

and a couple of years ago, we thought about how we could combine this with what we were already doing in casino design. We felt there was a need for new games and experiences.

I grew up here in Las Vegas and gambling didn't have a

draw for me because I had video games. We would sit in my basement, play Super Mario Kart and drink beer. That was our Craps, that was where we got our buzz, and I feel casinos have lost some of that vibe so we thought, what can we make that makes sense for this? So we created Competition Interactive with the idea of creating something that requires people to look up from their phones, engage with one another, compete with each other, and win real money.

Outside of a slot tournament, there is not a lot going on on the casino floor – slots are single-player experiences. Running Rich Racing is designed to be a multiplayer experience, and when you play it you are racing the other people on the bank. We can link up to ten machines together, and you can even back bet, so you can have two people betting per machine.

CI: Your slot game, Running Rich Racing, pits players against each other which is quite different for a casino slot floor...

SS: Outside of a slot tournament, there is not much like that on the slot floor. Slots are primarily single-player experiences, outside of slot tournaments. Running Rich is designed to be a multiplayer experience, so when you race in it you are competing with the people around you. There are always eight cars on the track, so if you have a bank of machines and three people are playing, you will have five AI cars. We can link up to ten machines together, and we can also provide a facility for back-betting so every machine you can have two people betting at the same time. If I'm racing, I'm racing against you – or against strangers, whoever is around.

CI: Any plans for a mobile product?

SS: When we move into mobile, it will be with separate tracks and a different experience from the casino product so players won't be able to practise at

Keith Winters playing Running Rich Racing at G2E 2016; the game was incredibly popular at the show



