

Gaming industry gross revenue up 3% nationwide

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

The gaming industry is getting healthier nationwide with gross gaming revenue and tax revenue up from the 492 commercial casinos and 517 card rooms operating in the United States, the American Gaming Association says.

The Washington-based organization issued its annual "State of the States: The AGA Survey of Casino Entertainment" report on commercial casino operations on Wednesday.



Casino
industry in
U.S.
improving.
Photo/LTN

It's the 14th AGA report comparing key casino data from the 15 states that have commercial casinos, 13 with so-called "racinos" at horse and dog tracks, 29 states with tribal casinos and five states allowing card rooms.

This year's edition also includes a survey of elected officials and civic leaders in gaming jurisdictions on the overall impact of casinos on their communities.

This year's report says gross gaming revenue was up 3 percent

over 2010 to \$35.6 billion in 2011. In the previous year, revenue increased by less than 1 percent.

Tax revenue climbed 4.5 percent to \$7.93 billion in 2011 and the industry directly employed 339,000 people who earned \$12.9 billion in wages, tips and benefits. While the industry touts the number of jobs it provides, the total number of jobs in 2011 was down 0.4 percent from a year ago.

The report provides a comparative snapshot of commercial casinos and indicates that the Las Vegas Strip remains the top U.S. casino market with \$6.07 billion in gross gaming revenue. Three of the top 20 markets are in Nevada with Las Vegas' Boulder Strip the No. 10 market (\$778.9 million in revenue) and Reno-Sparks at No. 14 (\$663.3 million).

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