

Newfangled slots aim to hook younger players

By Jeff Barker, Baltimore Sun

Many slot machines on casino floors bear images of faded but recognizable movies or TV shows such as “Sex and the City,” “Ghostbusters” or the still-running “Wheel of Fortune,” appealing to an older generation of players who reliably play the random games of chance.

But time and technology are catching up with traditional slot machines, which don’t hold anywhere near the same appeal for younger players as they do for their parents. Slots simply can’t compete with the variability and social nature of the window through which most young people view the world – their smartphones.

Slots play “has kind of been slowing down nationally. It’s not advancing as fast as table play,” said David G. Schwartz, director of the Center for Gaming Research at UNLV. “Today, anybody who has the disposable income to play a slot machine has something in their pocket that is way more entertaining than that slot machine.”

Anxious about millennials’ indifference to slot machines, manufacturers are testing more social and interactive games that would make the casino floor of the future look like a cross between a TV game show and a NASA flight control room.

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