

2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on

# Addiction Research and Therapy

May 13-14, 2019 | Prague, Czech Republic

## Identifying and treating Gambling Disorders in an immersive virtual world city

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**G**ambling Disorder (GD) is the term used to describe an addiction to gambling that may be harmful to the gambler, family and friends, society, or both. With the phenomenal rise in internet usage over the past 20 years, and the resulting ease of access to gambling activity, GD is now recognised as a significant problem in modern society which is demanding the attention of Governments worldwide and in particular healthcare professionals, industry operators and regulators. One of the main problems of treating GD is helping the sufferer to recognise they have an issue and seek assistance for what many regards as a shameful, embarrassing compulsion<sup>1</sup>. They may be reluctant to admit the scale of their condition and avoid accessing traditional healthcare routes in an attempt to hide the problem until it is no longer containable, by which time there are often devastating financial, emotional and social consequences.


HABET Addiction Healthcare seeks to explore the benefits and the capabilities of various emerging state-of-the-art interactive 3D and virtual world technologies and investigates how these technologies can be developed to create a more effective technology-supported addiction therapy and treatment solution for GD. As an immersive internet support system, Habet seeks to address the patient's addictive state and situation through the use of avatar-based, audio and physiology-based analysis in this environment while also

offer access to localized health and support services. HABET's innovative virtual reality exposure therapy system is adaptive and customizable to the demands of the in vivo experience and therapeutic progress. HABET follows a gamification approach where rewards and achievements are utilized to motivate the patient to progress in his/her treatment. The HABET research project will outline how HABET could be part of classical cognitive behavioural treatment and how to validate the integration of such an immersive treatment environment.

### Speaker Biography

Dion Croom is acknowledged as a social entrepreneur and virtual world pioneer in avatar digital media and avatar brand marketing and its use in translating virtual world branding into real world success within society at large. Bridging the digital divide through the use of immersive technology. Games-based intervention strategies, emergent in-action/on-action models, industry companies, commercial products, and patented communication method and apparatus have evolved from his research. Targeted is societal impact and benefit in respect of future demographics and service industries through applied ICT and optimized motivation of use through inclusive intervention strategies. He originates from Brooklyn, New York and has been instrumental as part of the initial community ICT strategy in the late 1990's into disadvantage community adoption of ICT and is now the current Managing Director of Habet Addiction Healthcare an Immersive Internet intervention virtual city initiative.

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