

some type of gaming operation would one day be found within easy access of so many people in so many locations. The same type of phenomenon happened in Macao in 2003 when China eased visa requirements, and gaming exploded as tourists flooded in.

The increasing availability and ease of access to gaming locations just in the United States has resulted in more Americans visiting casinos than attending major league and collegiate football games, arena concerts, symphony concerts, and Broadway shows combined, as shown in Figure 9.1.

From New Mexico to Connecticut, casinos all over the country are in the midst of a high-stakes gamble: remaking themselves into full-service, if not luxury, vacation destinations. Taking their cue from Vegas, they're throwing up plush hotels, high-end shopping malls and even kiddie amusement parks, all in an unprecedented bid for the family-vacation dollar (p. W4).<sup>15</sup>

Five basic factors combine to explain the current success and future prospects of the gaming industry. First, voters have been increasingly willing to approve new gaming alternatives because these activities have come to be viewed as a “voluntary tax”<sup>16</sup> or form of economic development while politicians have been unwilling or unable to pursue new taxes.<sup>17</sup> Second, more people than ever before are choosing casino gaming as an acceptable leisure activity. Four out of five adults now report that they consider casino gaming to be a “fun night out.”<sup>18</sup> Third, retirees constitute the single largest segment of the casino market,<sup>19</sup> and their numbers continue to grow. Fourth, casinos have devised marketing programs to attract the previously ignored “low roller,”<sup>20</sup> and fifth, expanded availability of gaming opportunities is attracting many individuals who have never before visited casinos for entertainment.<sup>21</sup>

With the advent of more locations, accessibility, and new technologies, the characteristics of gaming as a leisure-time activity have changed. Currently, there are five broad categories of gaming alternatives:

- Traditional, full-scale casino gaming, including well-established locations in Atlantic City, Las Vegas, London, Macao, and Monte Carlo
- Historic, **limited-stakes** operations such as those in Colorado's mining towns
- “Dockside” (riverboat) casinos, such as those operating in Missouri and Illinois, and on the Mississippi Gulf Coast
- Gaming on Native American reservations varies all the way from limited-stakes, small-scale operations such as the Sky Ute Casino in Ignacio, Colorado, to large-scale Vegas-style operations such as Foxwoods on the Mashantucket Pequot reservation in Connecticut
- Casino on ocean cruises where the slot machines and gaming tables begin operation when the cruises reach international waters.

Table 9.4 highlights some of the milestones in the growth and availability of gaming activities.

Casino gaming is one of the most regulated businesses around the world. Gaming businesses must comply with local, state, and federal regulations. These include complying with tax laws, treasury department regulations, and rules governing alcohol consumption, types of games allowed, and sizes of bets. The size of casino operations is measured by **gross gambling revenues (GGR)**. GGR is the amount wagered minus the winnings returned to players.

## Gaming Segments

The development of new games and expanded gaming availability have given rise to several gaming segments, each with a profile somewhat different from the others and