

# Zynga builds on casino-style play with Elite Slots

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"It's kind of like going to Las Vegas and sitting around a social slot

machine with other people," [Zynga](#) design director Josh Gause said while demonstrating the new [game](#) for AFP. "Unlike Vegas, everyone is a winner."

Gause and fellow game design director Nate Ratcliffe built role-playing and mini-game elements into Elite Slots, which Zynga promised would be available at [Facebook](#) soon.

Players are represented on screen as animated pets that progress through levels and find in-game treasures based on outcomes of spins at virtual slot machines.

Themed levels include an enchanted forest and a vampire "house of [fangs](#)." At certain points players are pitted against powerful enemies in "boss battles," the outcomes of which are determined by slot machine spins.

"Every one of our themes tells a story," Gause said. "There are bosses, heroes, and every pet has a back story."

After big wins at the slot machine, victorious animated characters appear on the screens of other players dropping rewards.

Elite Slots is free to play, but Zynga is hoping people will spend money buying animated pets with upgraded powers and on in-game coins for extra pulls at slot machine handles.

"Cool collectibles" and being able to progress through games by leveling up abilities are among features typically found in successful Zynga and Facebook games, according to Ratcliffe.

"Those game mechanics work," Ratcliffe said. "We are taking basic principles like those and looking at how to make a slots game better."

The [slot machine](#) part of the experience was kept "pure" when it comes to the odds of getting winning spins, according to the [game designers](#).

Elite Slots will be Zynga's fifth casino-style game in a lineup that includes poker and bingo.

Zynga did not reveal how Elite Slots fits into what the struggling social games pioneer has described as a "strategic effort to enter regulated ream money gaming markets."

Zynga has applied to the Nevada Gaming Control Board for a "preliminary finding of suitability" that would clear the way to seek a license to let players bet money on its online games in the state that is home to Las Vegas.

San Francisco-based Zynga expected it to take a year to 18 months before the outcome of the application is known and did not reveal whether it intended to pursue a Nevada gambling license of any kind if it is successful.

The Nevada move came less than two months after Zynga announced a partnership with RMG operator Bwin.party to run poker, roulette, blackjack and other virtual casino games in Britain.

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