

How Connected Play Works for Kentucky

A unique solution that digitalizes the retail journey is now live in Kentucky, supporting the Lottery's mission to fund education across the Commonwealth.



"Consumers appreciate convenience, ease. And that's what Connected Play provides," says Kentucky Lottery President & CEO Maggie Garrison. Above: Sample graphics from the Kentucky Lottery's Connected Play webpage.

Kentucky, are you ready to unlock your new game playing experience?

This intriguing call to action greeted players on the Kentucky Lottery website earlier this year, signaling an exciting step forward: In February, the state became the first in the U.S. to launch the omnichannel capabilities of Connected Play, an innovation that enables players to engage with lottery in a more modern, seamless way using their own mobile device at retail.

In Kentucky—an established iLottery market—the Connected Play solution from Brightstar Lottery links a player's in-store and online lottery purchases, mobile functionality, and registered player account to provide a unified experience.

With a registered Kentucky Lottery Fun Club account, players can now:

- Redeem retail ticket prizes up to \$600 directly into their eWallet via Mobile Cashing
- Purchase scratch-off, draw, and fast play tickets using eWallet funds at the retail counter or self-service vending machines
- Track all winnings in their eWallet and use these funds for lottery purchases at retail or online
- View their transaction history across retail and online play

This new functionality builds on features that were already available to Kentucky players:

- Build and scan digital play slips for convenience and accuracy
- Scan and check tickets instantly

All the features are accessed through the Kentucky Lottery's official mobile app, ensuring a familiar and intuitive user experience. At the same time, Connected Play delivers something fundamentally new for the Lottery: a view of player activity in both its retail and digital channels.

Unlocking Possibilities

Every innovation the Kentucky Lottery implements is tied to its commitment to fuel imagination and fund education throughout the Commonwealth. Through FY 2025, the Lottery has contributed over \$7.6 billion to good causes. In fact, now over 1 million Kentucky students and families have benefited from the scholarship and grant programs funded by the Kentucky Lottery.

"It's critical for us to continue to innovate," says Maggie Garrison, President & CEO, Kentucky Lottery. "Lottery proceeds have such an important impact on the state through prizes to players that are spent in their communities, retailer commissions that stay local and strengthen small business, and funding education to build brighter futures for students across Kentucky. Launching the Connected Play experience is all about creating new ways for players to engage through convenient, mobile-enabled retail experiences."

The benefits extend to many aspects of the lottery ecosystem. Mobile Cashing up to \$600, for example, is a meaningful shift for players, providing a self-service option to redeem winnings that is immediate and effortless. At retail, the introduction of the Virtual Player Card enhances both convenience and confidence.

It streamlines transactions, helps reduce lines, and reinforces the ongoing importance of retail, while also giving players a digital record of purchases. Tickets can be scanned, scored, and tracked in the app, with players automatically notified of results, adding transparency and peace of mind.

Uptake: Convenience Where It Matters

Kentucky's players quickly discovered and embraced the Mobile Cashing feature. In the three months following launch, 22,641 players accessed the capability, with more than \$2 million in prizes claimed to eWallets. "In this timeframe, we've seen continued 16% month-over-month growth in total winnings being redeemed through Mobile Cashing, and a 10% increase in the number of players who are using the feature," notes Garrison.

Players are also beginning to discover and access another convenience feature of Connected Play: eWallet use at Retail, with a digital wallet in the Fun Club account, which allows players to pay for their lottery tickets in the same way that many buy their morning coffee. Uptake has varied week to week since launch and overall is trending up.

From launch through May 31, both Mobile Cashing and eWallet functionality have been used for all game types offered in Kentucky. By a wide margin, the highest proportion of players who have used Mobile Cashing are redeeming winnings from scratch-offs, and the highest percentage of purchases with the eWallet have been scratch-offs purchased via LVM.

Applying Player Insights

With a registered Fun Club account, retail transaction data is now available to the Kentucky Lottery for the first time. Regular reporting from Brightstar gives the Lottery visibility into how many players are accessing both retail and iLottery games, as well as detailed analysis on how and where players are applying the Connected Play features.

Connected Play will give Kentucky a clear, unified view of player behavior—how players move between retail and digital play, which products they prefer, and how promotions and features perform in near real time. This will directly inform future incentives, promotional strategies, and cross-channel engagement.

Currently, the Lottery is strategically applying Connected Play functionality to promote cross-channel engagement. "To tap into the iLottery channel's potential to support retail, we are exploring options to direct more activity to retail through bonusing," says Garrison.

Launch Approach and Early Adoption

Kentucky introduced Connected Play through a soft launch, allowing organic adoption and real-world learning before expanding the promotional efforts.

The Lottery initially drove awareness through a dedicated "Unlock Possibilities" webpage for Connected Play, with messaging built around simplicity and convenience. In addition to detailed information and FAQs, the webpage features a video demonstrating how two typical Kentucky Lottery players would use the new Connected Play features.



*Kentucky Lottery President & CEO Maggie Garrison introduced Connected Play on the Kentucky morning news program **Great Day Live**.*

Further communications include extensive in-app education and a television segment about Connected Play, featuring President & CEO Maggie Garrison, on the Kentucky morning news program *Great Day Live*, which included a live demonstration of ticket scanning through the Lottery's app.

This phased communications approach allowed the Lottery to educate players, gather feedback, and refine messaging before scaling promotion.

Retail-Only Lotteries: A Foundation for What's Next

While not all lotteries are regulated to offer iLottery, all can benefit from digitalizing the retail experience. Connected Play is available to any lottery, regardless of internet wagering regulations.

For retail-only lotteries, Connected Play provides the means to upgrade technology and modernize retail today while laying the groundwork for future iLottery expansion when regulation allows. And, by providing previously unavailable retail transaction data, Connected Play enables lotteries to support player acquisition in a way similar to iLottery programs. Observes Brightstar's Srinu Nedunuri, Senior Vice President, iLottery Global, "The iLottery channel has advanced the industry's approach to player acquisition by showing how well acquisition can be done with a registered player base and the data and analytics to segment, build offers, and evaluate the response. If you're not an iLottery jurisdiction, you can adopt a similar approach to acquisition with the retail data that becomes accessible through Connected Play, and provide retail players with the conveniences and benefits we're seeing in Kentucky."

Innovation in Action

"The Kentucky Lottery chose this solution because they saw a genuine opportunity to serve their players better," notes Adam Perlow, Brightstar Vice President, U.S. Sales and Operations. "What Kentucky has demonstrated, in practical terms, is that the connected lottery experience isn't theoretical anymore. It's operational. It's measurable. And it's already delivering for players and for the communities they ultimately support."