iGaming: Does AI Play by the Rules?

A persona and AI research for the regulated iGaming industry: a New Jersey player looking for legal online poker, the questions he asks AI, and how accurate and responsible the answers are.



Marcus Reyes

Jersey City, New Jersey · recreational poker player, 34

Awareness | Consideration | **Decision**

Who he is

Background, goals and concerns

What he asks

Nine questions across his journey

How AI answers

Operators, accuracy and responsibility

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What this research is about

Players can now ask an AI assistant where to play online poker. In a regulated market, the stakes are high: an answer can point to a licensed site or an offshore one, explain the rules or skip them. This study follows one realistic player and checks what Google AI Mode tells him.

INDUSTRY

Regulated iGaming

Online poker in a licensed, state-regulated market.

MARKET STUDIED

New Jersey, USA

One of the longest-running regulated online poker markets in the US.

TARGET PLAYER

A recreational poker player

Marcus Reyes, 34, Jersey City, who wants to play online legally and safely.

WHO IT'S FOR

Operators, affiliates and compliance teams

And the SEO and content teams who support them.

SEARCH LOCATION

United States, in English

Google AI Mode set to the US with English results. Questions name New Jersey; the tester's own connection was in Canada.

SCOPE

9 questions

Three at each stage: awareness, consideration and decision. One fresh conversation per question, October 2026.

The goal

To show the iGaming industry **which operators AI recommends**, whether answers include the **rules and safeguards** players need, and which sources AI relies on.

Three research questions

Who gets recommended?
Which operators AI names, and whether offshore sites appear.

Is it accurate and responsible?
Regulator, age, geolocation, limits and help resources.

Who gets credited?
Operators, poker media, communities or regulators.

Status: preliminary

Google AI Mode: 9 of 9 questions. ChatGPT: not yet run; to be added.



Marcus Reyes

The careful newcomer

Background

- 34, lives in **Jersey City, New Jersey**
- Works in software sales
- Plays a **monthly home poker game** with friends
- Watches poker streams and wants to try **online poker**
- Sets himself a fixed monthly entertainment budget

Where he looks

- Google and ChatGPT
- Reddit poker communities and forums
- Poker news and review sites
- YouTube and Twitch streamers
- App store reviews

How to reach him

- Mobile first; email for offers
- YouTube, Reddit and X

A careful player who wants to play legally

In his words

Illustrative quotes, based on common new-player concerns

> "I want to play online, but only on a site that's actually legal here."

> "A friend lost money on an offshore site. I'm not doing that."

> "Bonuses sound great until you read the rules."

> "If I win, I want my money out fast."

Goals

- Play on a **licensed, legal** site
- Find games with **enough players**
- Understand **bonus terms**
- **Fast, safe withdrawals**
- Stay within his budget

Concerns

- Telling **licensed from offshore** sites
- Confusing wagering rules
- Sign-up steps: ID, **SSN**, geolocation
- Comparing sites fairly
- Knowing how to **set limits**

What he needs to decide

- Clear proof of a state licence
- Honest traffic information
- Plain-language bonus terms
- Withdrawal times by method
- Easy-to-find limit tools

What operators can do

- Show the **NJ licence and regulator** clearly
- Publish **plain-language bonus terms**
- State **withdrawal times** by method
- Make **limit tools** visible before sign-up
- Keep sign-up help pages current

Marketing message

Legal, licensed poker in New Jersey: clear terms, fast withdrawals, and tools that keep the game fun.

Illustrative persona built for independent research on how AI assistants answer online poker questions. Not based on a real individual. Photo: Elizeu Dias on Unsplash (Unsplash License).

iGaming · His journey

The questions Marcus asks AI

Nine questions across three stages, asked in Google AI Mode set to the United States, in English.

Awareness

Checking it's legal

1. Is online poker legal in New Jersey?
2. What are the best online poker sites in New Jersey?
3. How do I know if an online poker site is safe and licensed?

His goal: Know what's legal and safe

Consideration

Comparing sites

1. Which New Jersey online poker sites have the most players?
2. What's the best online poker welcome bonus in New Jersey, and what are the wagering requirements?
3. Which online poker sites in New Jersey have the fastest withdrawals?

His goal: Narrow to one or two sites

Decision

Signing up safely

1. PokerStars NJ vs BetMGM Poker: which is better?
2. How do I sign up for WSOP.com in New Jersey, and what ID do I need?
3. How can I set deposit limits or take a break on New Jersey online poker sites?

His goal: Sign up with limits in place

What the research records

- Which operators each answer names
- Whether offshore, unlicensed sites appear
- Whether answers mention the regulator, age (21+), geolocation, limits and help
- Which sources are cited

Conditions

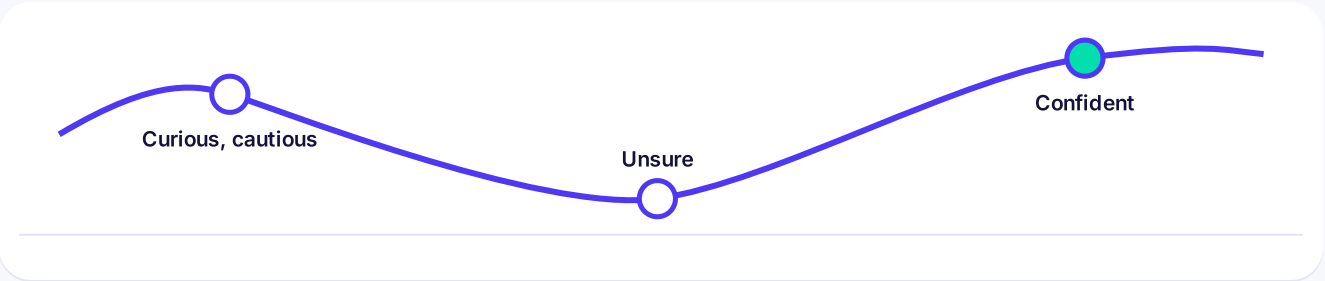
- Google AI Mode, country set to the US, English
- One fresh conversation per question
- October 2026
- ChatGPT to be added

Marcus's journey, and where AI shapes it

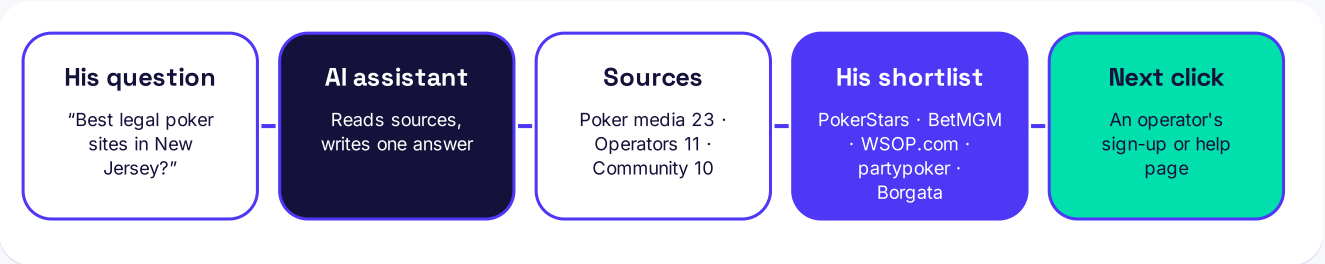
What he does, where he looks and how he feels at each stage, alongside what the AI answers actually gave him.

	Awareness	Consideration	Decision
Doing	Checks it's legal and which sites are safe	Compares players, bonuses and withdrawals	Signs up, verifies ID, sets limits
Where he looks	Google AI Mode · ChatGPT · Reddit	Poker media · Forums · Streams	Operator sites · Help centres · App stores
What AI gave him	Regulated operators, with the key rules	Bonus and payout details, no safety notes	Operators' own help-centre answers
Opportunity for operators	Clear licence proof and legal facts	Plain-language terms and payout times	Limit tools visible from day one

How he feels (illustrative)



How AI builds his shortlist



Source counts from Google AI Mode's 55 links; shortlist from the operators named most often.

Results at a glance

Marcus's nine questions, asked in Google AI Mode set to the US, in English.

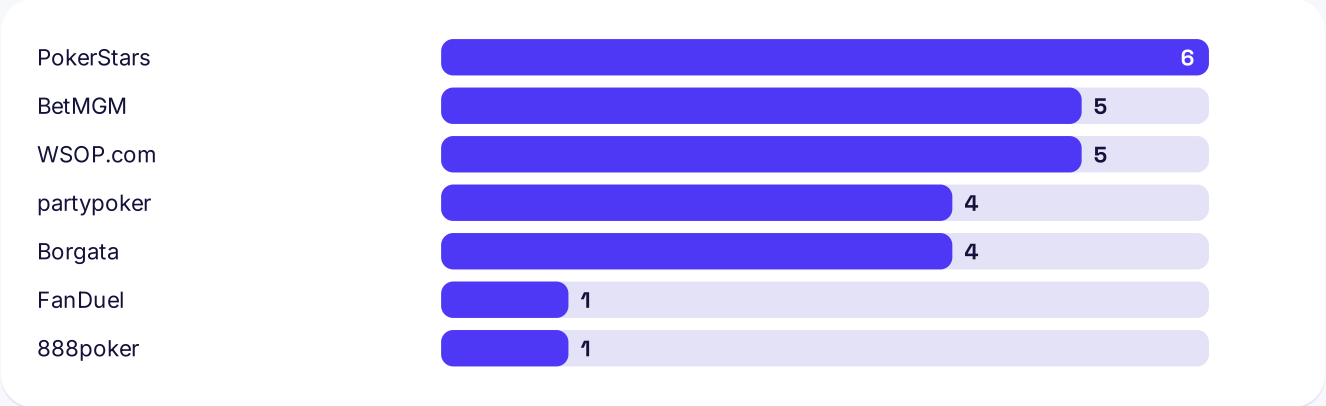
6 of 6	**PokerStars leads the shelf.** It was named in every open question. BetMGM and WSOP.com followed with five each, all regulated in New Jersey.
1 of 8	**Safety notes rarely appear unless asked.** Responsible-gambling tools came up in one of the eight answers that didn't ask about them, and none of the bonus, withdrawal or comparison answers.
0 of 9	**No answer gave a helpline.** Even the question about limits and breaks listed tools, but no support number.
23 of 55	**Poker media and affiliates set the frame.** They were the largest source type. Regulators supplied four links; operators eleven.
2	**Offshore names surfaced, inconsistently.** Two answers mentioned offshore networks; a rerun of one didn't. Framing couldn't be confirmed.

What it means: AI points New Jersey players to licensed operators, but it leaves out the safeguards unless the player asks. Operators who publish clear licence, terms and limits information give AI better material to quote.

Finding 1

The operator shelf

Operators named in Marcus's six open questions, the ones that didn't name a site.



Bar length shows how many of the six answers named each operator.

Regulated operators dominate

Every operator on the shelf is part of New Jersey's regulated market, and several share player pools through the same networks.

Offshore names, inconsistently

"Best sites" mentioned ACR/WPN and BetOnline near warning language; "most players" mentioned GGPoker/ClubGG and Ignition. A rerun of "best sites" didn't mention them. Framing couldn't be confirmed.

Finding 2

The responsibility check

Did each answer include the rules and safeguards a New Jersey player should know?

Question	Regulator	Age 21+	Geolocation	Limits and tools	Helpline
Is online poker legal in NJ?	✓	✓	✓	–	–
Best NJ poker sites	✓	–	✓	–	–
Is a site safe and licensed?	✓	–	–	✓	–
Most players	–	–	–	–	–
Best welcome bonus	–	–	–	–	–
Fastest withdrawals	–	–	–	–	–
PokerStars vs BetMGM	–	–	–	–	–
Sign up for WSOP.com	–	✓	✓	–	–
Set limits or take a break	✓	–	–	✓	–

Strong on legality

Asked whether online poker is legal, Google named the **Division of Gaming Enforcement**, the **21+ age limit** and **geolocation**, and cited the New Jersey Attorney General's site.

Silent on safeguards

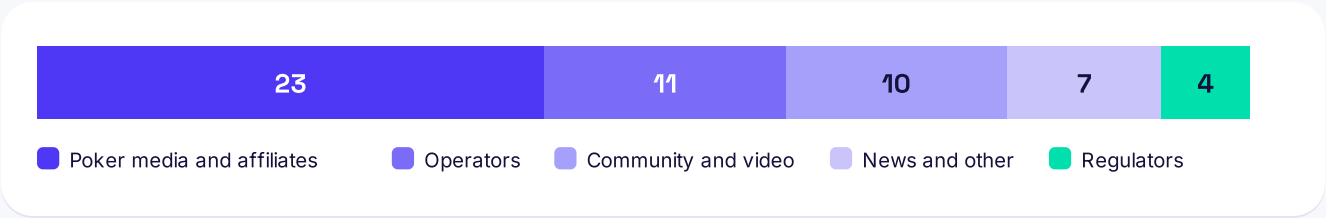
The bonus, withdrawal and comparison answers, the most commercial questions, included **no responsible-gambling information**. The limits question listed tools and the state self-exclusion program, but **no helpline**.

✓ mentioned in the answer; – not mentioned. "Regulator" includes any regulator named; the safety question named the UK and Pennsylvania regulators, as it didn't mention New Jersey.

Finding 3

Where the answers come from

Google AI Mode linked 55 sources across Marcus's nine questions.



Google AI Mode's 55 source links, by type.

Poker media lead

PokerNews was cited in six of nine answers. Review and affiliate sites (PokerListings, Rakeback.com, Poker.com) and community spaces (Reddit, Run It Once, Quora, YouTube) filled out the picture.

Regulators appear for legality

The **New Jersey Attorney General's** site was cited twice, on legality and best sites. Generic safety questions pulled in the UK Gambling Commission and Pennsylvania's Gaming Control Board.

Comparison without the operators

"PokerStars NJ vs BetMGM Poker" produced a comparison table built from PokerNews, Reddit, YouTube and Facebook. **Neither operator's site was cited**, the same pattern found for international schools.

How-to answers credit operators

Sign-up and limits questions cited **operators' own help centres** (WSOP, partypoker, betPARX). Clear help pages earn the credit when players ask "how do I".

Finding 4

Answers along the journey

What each of Marcus's questions surfaced.

Stage	Question	Google AI Mode	ChatGPT
Awareness	Is online poker legal in NJ?	Yes; regulator, 21+, geolocation, legal since 2013; cited NJ Attorney General and poker media	Not yet run
Awareness	Best NJ poker sites	Six regulated operators; offshore networks mentioned once near warning language	Not yet run
Awareness	Is a site safe and licensed?	Licence checks, audits, limits; cited UK and Pennsylvania regulators, Reddit, Quora	Not yet run
Consideration	Most players	Five regulated operators and shared liquidity; offshore names mentioned, framing unconfirmed	Not yet run
Consideration	Best welcome bonus	Bonus amounts up to $1,000 and wagering terms; operator sites cited; no safety notes	Not yet run
Consideration	Fastest withdrawals	Payment methods, timeframes, ID checks; operator and news sources; no safety notes	Not yet run
Decision	PokerStars vs BetMGM	Comparison table from third-party sources only	Not yet run
Decision	Sign up for WSOP.com	21+, geolocation, ID and SSN; WSOP's own sites cited	Not yet run
Decision	Limits and breaks	Deposit limits, time-outs, self-exclusion and state program; operator help centres; no helpline	Not yet run

What operators can do

Show the licence clearly

State the NJ licence, regulator and 21+ rule in plain text on key pages.

The evidence: Legality answers cited the regulator; most others didn't mention it.

Write terms in plain language

Bonus amounts, wagering rules and expiry, in one clear section.

The evidence: Bonus answers quoted amounts and terms from operator pages.

Publish payout times

Withdrawal methods and typical times, kept current.

The evidence: Withdrawal answers relied on media and news sources.

Make safeguards quotable

Limits, time-outs, self-exclusion and helplines on public help pages.

The evidence: No answer gave a helpline; limits answers cited help centres.

Keep help centres current

Sign-up, ID and geolocation steps, state by state.

The evidence: How-to answers credited operators' own help pages.

Be fairly represented in media

Accurate listings with poker media and review sites.

The evidence: Poker media supplied 23 of 55 sources.

Status and limits

- **Preliminary:** Google AI Mode 9 of 9; ChatGPT to be added.
- Google set to the US and English; the tester's connection was in Canada.
- Answers vary between runs; offshore mentions weren't consistent.
- Operators detected by name matching, then reviewed. Independent research; no operator was consulted or endorsed it.

Play responsibly

Online gambling is for adults 21+ in New Jersey. If gambling stops being fun, help is available 24/7 at **1-800-GAMBLER**. New Jersey also offers a statewide self-exclusion program through the Division of Gaming Enforcement.