Companies tied to Mafia-linked firm

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Two Nevada businesses reportedly sent gambling devices to a Minnesota venture with family ties.

Two licensed Nevada slot machine manufacturers and distributors shipped hundreds of gambling devices to a Minnesota company with links to a New York Mafia family, federal and Nevada gaming authorities said Friday.

International Gaming Management Inc., of St. Louis Park, Minn., also obtained slot machines from Worldwide Gaming Inc., a Louisiana company indicted by federal officials in May in connection with a scheme to skim video poker profits intended for Bally Gaming Inc., according to a federal search warrant affidavit filed in Minneapolis.

Federal and state officials raided the company's office Thursday using a search warrant containing allegations of racketeering, money laundering, securities fraud and other violations.

Agents also searched the Deephaven, Minn., home of **Douglas Polinsky, IGM**'s chief executive officer, and the Atlantic City, N.J., home of his father, **Jerrold Polinsky**, believed to be the company's top executive.

No arrests were made.

IGM generated profits for the Polinskys and their accused handler, Gary Danzo, "an associate of the **Genovese** La Cosa Nostra organized crime family," according to the affidavit, a copy of which was obtained by the Review-Journal.

IGM, in a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, said it had 653 gambling machines in operation at two American Indian casinos: the Ojibwa Casino in Baraga, Mich., and the Leelanau Sands Casino in Sutton's Bay, Mich.

IGM purchased 412 machines from Alman Enterprises, doing business as Nevada Fruit Slot Machine Co. and Nevada Novelty Inc., both in Reno, according to the affidavit.

Nevada Fruit and Nevada Novelty were among six companies raided

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by state Gaming Control Board agents in March in connection with an investigation into the possible illegal, nationwide shipment of slot and video poker machines.

No officers of Nevada Fruit and Nevada Novelty were arrested, but documents confiscated in the searches were given to authorities in Minnesota.

"We've been working them since March," said Ron Asher, the board's chief of enforcement. "I'm going to send a couple of agents to Minnesota to follow up on this."

Asher declined to say if officers with the two companies will be arrested in connection with either the state investigation surrounding the March raids or the Minnesota case.

"Whether they've done anything wrong, at this point we don't know," he said.

State records show Nevada Fruit was licensed May 24, 1973, as a slot route and distribution company. The company's sole officer, identified in the records as Lane Fleischer, could not be reached for comment.

Nevada Novelty was licensed Jan. 1, 1950, as a slot route, manufacturing and distribution company, according to state records. Louis Bennetti was listed as owning 67 percent of the company with Lynn Bennetti Hill holding 28 percent of the shares and Tamarra Bennetti owning 5 percent.

A person who answered a telephone call to Nevada Novelty declined to comment.

Documents seized in the March raids include transfer records showing that machines purchased from the two companies were to be sent to Minnesota "when in fact those slot machines were ... transported from Nevada to Indian reservations within Michigan," according to the affidavit.

Nevada agents told federal investigators in Minnesota they would have not allowed the machines outside Nevada if they had known they were being sent to Michigan, the affidavit said.

IGM's subsidiary, Louisiana Gaming Management, became the state's biggest distributor of video poker machines, which are legal in bars and truck stops. Worldwide Gaming, which served as the Louisiana distributor for Bally Gaming Inc., supplied machines to **IGM**, according to the affidavit.

Federal officials said Worldwide was run by the **Genovese** and Gambino Mafia families in New York and the Marcello organized crime family in New Orleans.

Bally Gaming Inc. was described by federal in the New Orleans case as victims in a scheme by Worldwide Gaming to skim more than $2 million in profits.

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