

# Room for new Portsmouth independent

## INDEPENDENT VIEW THE BETTING ROOM

Harry Redknapp and Jim Smith were reunited for the first time since their public split from Southampton Football Club when they officially opened Portsmouth's latest betting shop, The Betting Room. The media turned out in force to ensure good exposure for Portsmouth's newest independent bookmaker Peter Higgins.

Higgins, the former business development director for Betdaq and Sportingbet, has returned to his home town after travelling the globe and has started a new brand which he feels epitomises the local area.

The Betting Room, operating under the strap line of 'the smart place to bet', is Portsmouth's newest and first shop in the Hampshire town's locale to utilise iSIS's touch screen technology. ABETA has been chosen to run the EPOS and the layout, whilst themed on the increasingly popular luxury coffee style layout, is cleverly linked to the local football team Portsmouth.

Higgins commented: "In the past six years I've been fortunate enough to work for two

forward thinking execs in the internet world:

Dermot Desmond of Betdaq and Nigel Payne of Sportingbet. I respect both individuals immensely and learnt a great deal from working and listening to them.

"The shop is impressive to look at and boasts the latest in retail shop technology. The staff are from customer service backgrounds as opposed to classic bookmaking backgrounds and the connections with the local media and Portsmouth Football Club have enabled us to grow at a much faster rate that one would envisage."

Higgins believes that his approach should be emulated by other independents as competition from the national chains is set to become even stronger. He commented: "With the need to prove demand being removed in the near future, it's even more imperative that an independent focuses on something a little different that pure competitive pricing. That's what we're trying to achieve and at the end of the World Cup we'll be able to see if that's been achieved. We're ahead of expectations at present." 



Peter Higgins (centre) with football's Jim Smith and Harry Redknapp outside the new betting shop