# Yaspa targets US gambling market from Atlanta with fresh funding to tackle chargebacks and player protections



Yaspa has begun to plant roots in the United States, opening a small Atlanta operation this spring and announcing fresh capital aimed at accelerating its push into regulated gaming markets. The company — founded as Citizen in 2017 and now best known for a bank‑to‑bank “Intelligent Payments” solution — says the funding will finance local hires, strategic partnerships and adaptations to meet US operators’ compliance needs. According to press reports, the round was led by Discerning Capital, with participation from Techstars Ventures and other investors. The exact size of Discerning Capital’s cheque has been reported differently across outlets. In a news release quoted by industry press, Discerning Capital partner David Williams described gambling payments as “high‑risk” and said Yaspa’s approach addresses “two of the biggest issues: chargebacks and player protections.”

Yaspa has deliberately targeted gambling and other high‑fraud verticals rather than mainstream consumer e‑commerce. The company’s Intelligent Payments product blends instant account‑to‑account settlement with AI‑driven identity and affordability checks, aiming to reduce intermediaries, eliminate card‑related chargebacks and surface risk flags in real time at the point of deposit. Company materials describe configurable dashboards that suggest interventions and cross‑border support intended to keep friction low while enabling operators to perform compliance checks at the moment customers fund accounts. The firm also highlights potential benefits for other risk‑heavy sectors such as crypto exchanges and forex platforms.

That product roadmap rests on two recent developments. In April 2024 Yaspa received an Innovate UK grant to build a safer‑gambling payments and AI platform that combines open‑banking transaction data with machine‑learning to deliver real‑time affordability and vulnerability insights. The grant co‑funds collaboration with academic partners to develop data models the company says will align with anticipated UK regulatory reforms. More recently, Yaspa’s chief executive, James Neville, told the Leaders in Payments podcast on 4 August 2025 that combining instant bank payments with identity verification creates “safer, faster payment experiences” and that the firm intends to draw on Europe’s more mature regulatory playbook as it engages with US regulators and operators.

Regulatory context and market timing are central to Yaspa’s US strategy. European markets such as the UK and EU generally impose stricter player‑protection and KYC rules than the US, and Yaspa argues its experience in 18 European markets gives it an edge. Mr Neville told the podcast he sees an opportunity to “shape the industry while it’s in its relative infancy in the U.S.” That said, the US market is fragmented: state‑by‑state gambling rules vary widely, and efforts to expand legal wagering have met resistance. For example, attempts to legalise sports betting in Georgia stalled during the 2025 legislative session, leaving the state among a small group that still prohibits retail and online sports wagering.

Investors backing Yaspa are explicit about the commercial case. The lead investor has framed account‑to‑account payments as a way to reduce chargebacks and to bake protections for vulnerable customers into the deposit flow, potentially lowering operator costs while meeting emerging regulatory expectations. The company’s public communications describe the funding as enabling rapid US market entry — opening an Atlanta base, hiring locally and tailoring the platform for regulated operators — though some outlets have reported differing totals for the round. The company’s own news release sets out its intentions; independent reporting provides the market context and investor commentary.

Atlanta is a deliberate choice. Yaspa incorporated a US entity and established a presence in Midtown Atlanta in May, taking space in a co‑working facility once associated with major payments firms. The city has long marketed itself as a payments hub: earlier investments by international payments companies moved substantial US operations there to access fintech talent and scale. Yaspa describes Atlanta as an “epicentre of payments” where it can recruit staff for a growing local team and build partnerships with operators and vendors across the region. The firm currently lists more than 70 employees across its London base, a tech hub in Leeds, and the new Atlanta outpost.

The company’s pitch is not without technical and regulatory caveats. Mr Neville has acknowledged constraints around account‑to‑account rails and broader payments innovation — including how stablecoins, central bank digital currencies and different clearing models might interact with instant bank payments — and warned that adoption will depend on operator integration work and evolving regulatory expectations. Observers note that while tighter rules can raise operator costs, they can also drive revenue and consolidate market leadership for firms that can combine compliance with a smooth customer experience.

Yaspa’s expansion is therefore as much an experiment in regulatory adaptation as it is a market play. The company claims its combination of open‑banking data, machine‑learning and instant settlement can reduce fraud and protect players; investors and industry commentators say there is a commercial opportunity if those claims hold up in practice. Whether US regulators, operators and consumers embrace bank‑to‑bank deposits at scale will determine whether Yaspa can translate its European experience into a durable position in American gaming payments.

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## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://hypepotamus.com/companies/b2b/yaspa-expands-to-atlanta-gambling-payment-security/), [[4]](https://www.openbankingexpo.com/news/yaspa-receives-12m-investment-led-by-discerning-capital-to-fuel-us-expansion/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[3]](https://www.yaspa.com/products/intelligent-payments), [[1]](https://hypepotamus.com/companies/b2b/yaspa-expands-to-atlanta-gambling-payment-security/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.yaspa.com/blog/press-release-payment-provider-yaspa-is-awarded-innovate-uk-grant-for-safer-gambling-platform), [[5]](https://leadersinpayments.com/2025/08/04/james-neville-ceo-of-yaspa-episode-421/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://hypepotamus.com/companies/b2b/yaspa-expands-to-atlanta-gambling-payment-security/), [[2]](https://www.yaspa.com/blog/press-release-payment-provider-yaspa-is-awarded-innovate-uk-grant-for-safer-gambling-platform), [[6]](https://www.foxsports.com/articles/soccer/efforts-by-georgia-lawmakers-to-legalize-sports-betting-fizzle-again)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.openbankingexpo.com/news/yaspa-receives-12m-investment-led-by-discerning-capital-to-fuel-us-expansion/), [[1]](https://hypepotamus.com/companies/b2b/yaspa-expands-to-atlanta-gambling-payment-security/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://hypepotamus.com/companies/b2b/yaspa-expands-to-atlanta-gambling-payment-security/), [[5]](https://leadersinpayments.com/2025/08/04/james-neville-ceo-of-yaspa-episode-421/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://hypepotamus.com/companies/b2b/yaspa-expands-to-atlanta-gambling-payment-security/), [[3]](https://www.yaspa.com/products/intelligent-payments), [[4]](https://www.openbankingexpo.com/news/yaspa-receives-12m-investment-led-by-discerning-capital-to-fuel-us-expansion/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://hypepotamus.com/companies/b2b/yaspa-expands-to-atlanta-gambling-payment-security/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.yaspa.com/blog/press-release-payment-provider-yaspa-is-awarded-innovate-uk-grant-for-safer-gambling-platform> - On 2 April 2024 Yaspa announced it had been awarded an Innovate UK grant to develop a Safer Gambling payments and AI platform. The press release states the platform will combine open banking transaction data with machine‑learning to give operators real‑time affordability and vulnerability insights at the point of deposit, aiming to replace slow paper checks and narrow single‑operator views. CEO James Neville is quoted describing the project’s potential to transform compliance and player protections while allowing frictionless deposits. The grant co‑funds collaboration with academic partners to build robust data models aligned with anticipated UK regulatory reforms addressing financial vulnerability.
3. <https://www.yaspa.com/products/intelligent-payments> - Yaspa’s Intelligent Payments product page describes a Pay‑by‑Bank solution that blends instant account‑to‑account payments with AI‑driven identity verification and affordability checks. The page highlights real‑time settlement, reduced intermediaries and elimination of card‑related chargebacks, plus configurable dashboards that flag risk and suggest interventions. Yaspa positions the product for iGaming, crypto, e‑commerce and retail, emphasising faster conversion, lower fraud and built‑in protections for vulnerable customers. Features include instant account verification, AI behavioural analysis, cross‑border support and integration options, enabling operators to accept verified deposits and perform compliance checks at the point of payment without slowing the customer journey, and reducing operational costs.
4. <https://www.openbankingexpo.com/news/yaspa-receives-12m-investment-led-by-discerning-capital-to-fuel-us-expansion/> - On 2 July 2025 Yaspa announced a $12 million funding round led by Discerning Capital to accelerate its expansion into the United States. The Open Banking Expo report states the round included Metavallon and TechStars Ventures, and that Yaspa has incorporated a US entity based in Atlanta. Discerning Capital is described as focusing on online gambling and sports tech and believes account‑to‑account payments can reduce chargebacks and embed player protections. The article quotes David Williams on those advantages and explains Yaspa will use the funds to hire locally, build partnerships and adapt its Intelligent Payments platform for regulated US operators.
5. <https://leadersinpayments.com/2025/08/04/james-neville-ceo-of-yaspa-episode-421/> - The Leaders in Payments episode (Episode 421) features James Neville, CEO of Yaspa, discussing how combining instant bank payments with identity verification creates safer, faster payment experiences. The episode page notes Yaspa’s focus on iGaming regulation, use of real‑time bank data and machine learning to assess affordability and detect potential gambling harm, and confirms a recent $12 million funding round enabling an Atlanta presence. Neville explains opportunities to shape the US regulated gaming market drawing on Europe’s more mature regulatory experience and discusses technical constraints around account‑to‑account payments, stablecoins, CBDCs and the role of AI in payment flows and adoption.
6. <https://www.foxsports.com/articles/soccer/efforts-by-georgia-lawmakers-to-legalize-sports-betting-fizzle-again> - An Associated Press report published via Fox Sports on 7 March 2025 explains that efforts to legalise sports betting in Georgia failed during the 2025 legislative session. Bills and a proposed constitutional amendment did not advance to a House floor vote before the crossover deadline, stalling reform for at least another year. The article notes that while many states have adopted online and retail sports wagering, a minority still ban it; Georgia was cited among the remaining states without legal sports betting. Lawmakers retain options to revive measures, and a constitutional amendment would require voter approval before any launch nationwide.
7. <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20141209006353/en/Worldpay-to-Relocate-US-Headquarters-to-Atlanta%E2%80%99s-Atlantic-Station-Add-600-Jobs-to-Keep-Pace-with-Rapid-Expansion> - Worldpay announced in December 2014 that it would relocate its US headquarters to Atlantic Station in Midtown Atlanta, occupying substantial office space and bringing hundreds of jobs. The Business Wire release outlines a multi‑year move beginning in 2015, the company's planned investment and cooperation with Invest Atlanta and state economic development bodies, and the strategic rationale of accessing fintech talent and establishing Atlanta as a payments hub. The release notes Worldpay would occupy 130,000 sq ft, relocate over 600 staff and plan further hires, emphasising the city’s role as an epicentre for payments technology and innovation and regional growth potential.