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This year's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions is only weeks away. Check this issue for fun facts you probably didn't know about Orlando, as well as seminar topics, a partial exhibitor list, and more.

50 State Show: LAMOA

Play Meter was the only trade press at last month's Louisiana Amusement and Music Operators Association (LAMOA) Convention and Trade Show. We have full coverage of the event and industry happenings in the state.

69 FEC Focus: Attractions

Jim Kessler of Lasertron looks at traditional views on family entertainment center (FEC) attractions. He explains why bigger is almost always better, and why settling for mediocre attractions can set you up for disappointment down the road.

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Editor

We want to hear from you about any of the articles in this issue or topics you'd like to see.
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Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon.com, recently purchased *The Washington Post*, which has been run by the Graham family for almost 80 years. Bezos borrowed money from his parents to launch Amazon.com back in 1994, a true garage start-up operation. That was one of the wisest investments they ever made. His idea came at the right time and at the right place. Bezos has played a key role in the growth of e-commerce.

The unbelievable success and scope of Amazon.com can be summed up in one sentence from Bezos, who told *Fortune* magazine last year: "The three big ideas at Amazon are long-term thinking, customer obsession, and willingness to invent."

Every business should take those words to heart and see how they can help improve performance and secure a foothold on the future by following those ideas.

First, long-term thinking: Where would you like your business to be in five years? Reinvesting in new equipment will go a long way to insure that your plans will be realized.

Second, customer obsession: What entertainment options are players looking for in your locations? Visiting your locations and talking with the players will be an eye-opening experience. You can find out what they like and don't like and how they access entertainment. Remember the rule: Don't purchase games because you like them personally; know your customer demographics and what appeals to them.

Third, willingness to invent: Try something new; perhaps start a junior pool league, host a tournament or contest on other equipment to add excitement and draw in players. Happy players will spread the word and boost the attendance at your next event. Get on board with new technology and utilize social media to connect with locations and players.

One of the biggest buzz words lately is "relevant," as in, how does coin-op equipment stay relevant in the lives of today's tech-savvy and online-connected consumers who are accustomed to having everything at their fingertips instantaneously?

While each location has to be evaluated for its ability to sustain major reinvestment, the playing public notices that the same equipment occupies the same spot for long periods of time. Clean equipment in good working order is paramount, as well as new titles and promoting the equipment.

If you are looking for a little inspiration, step out of your comfort zone and take a trip to the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo 2013 in Orlando, Fla. You are guaranteed to come back energized.

Forget that old myth: "This is not a coin-op show." Yes, it is a coin-op show as evidenced by the 19 coin-op companies that will occupy 6,200 square feet of exhibit space at the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) Pavilion, plus other coin-op companies that routinely display at this show and often save new product introductions for the large audience it attracts. Coin-op presence at the IAAPA Expo has been steadily growing, and for good reason. Check it out for yourself. ▲

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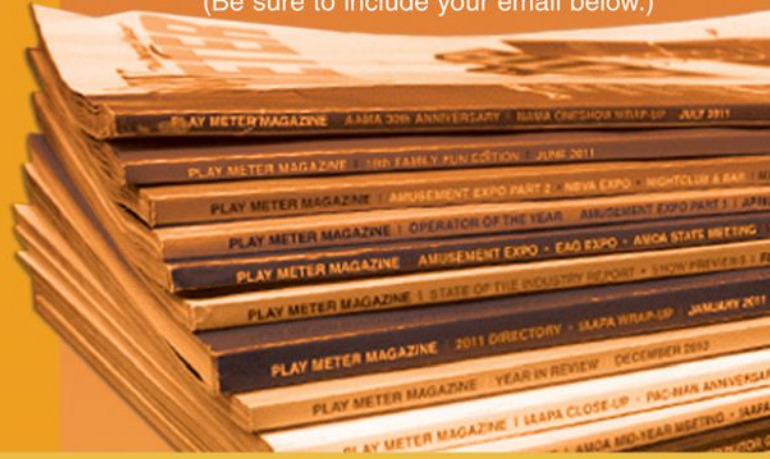


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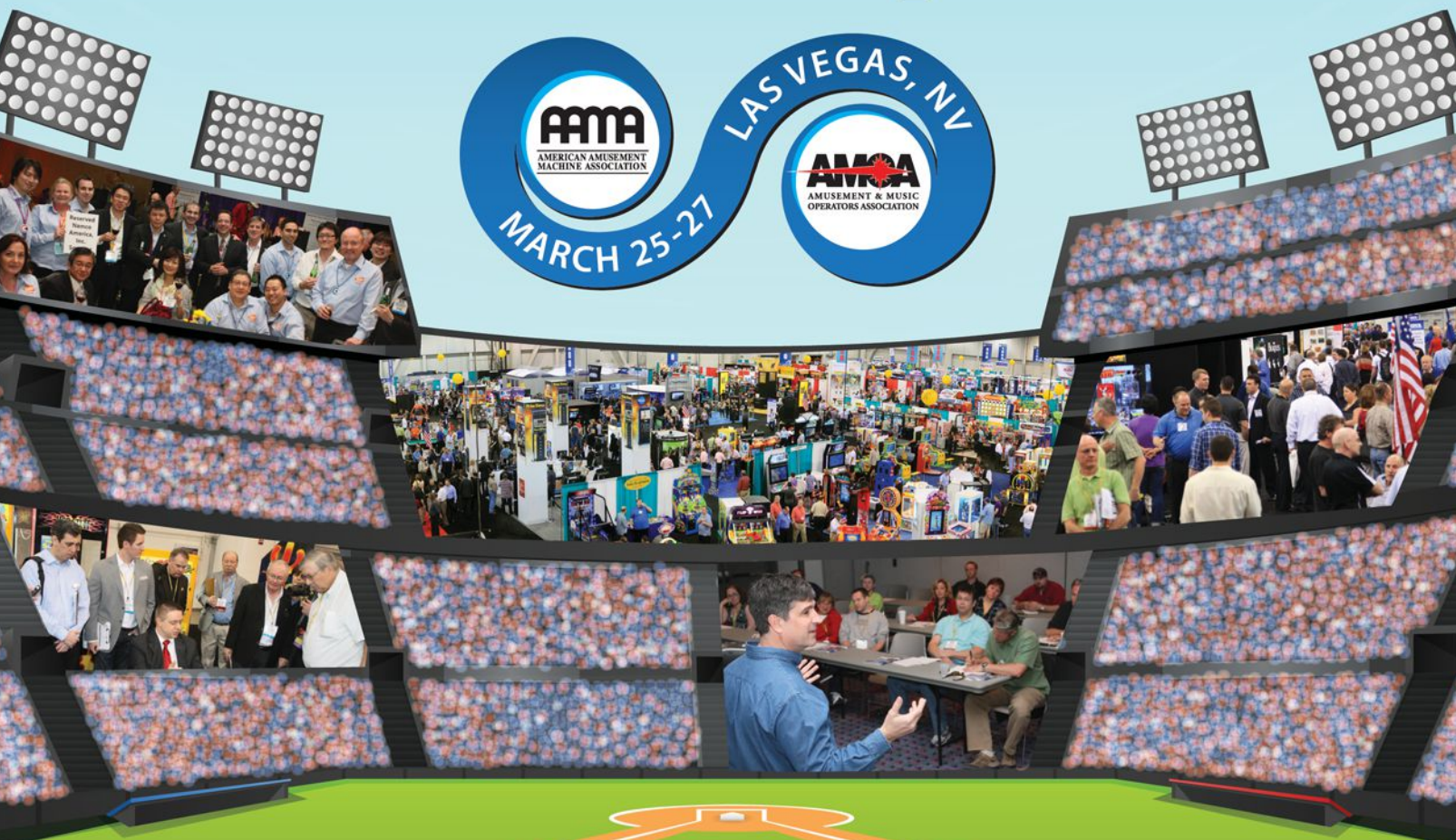
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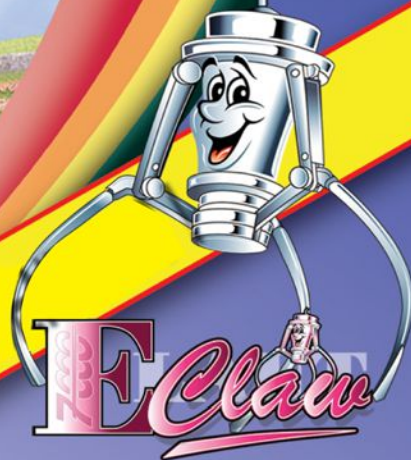
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Industry returns to Capitol Hill



On Capitol Hill, (l-r): Bobby Hogin, Gaines Butler, Lori Schneider, Pete Gustafson, George Smith, and John Schultz.

The American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) and the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) again jointly traveled to Washington, D.C., to visit with legislators Sept. 17-18 as part of planned quarterly visits.

Previous trips to Capitol Hill this year were in February and June. Arrangements for meetings with legislators and their aides were made by members of the Public Policy and Regulation team at Dentons, the Legislative Counsel for both AAMA and AMOA.

AAMA representatives included AAMA President Pete Gustafson of Sega Amusements, Family Entertainment Group President George Smith, and AAMA Executive Vice President John Schultz.

AMOA representatives included AMOA Deputy Director Lori Schneider, AMOA First Vice President Bobby Hogin of Hogin Amusement, and AMOA Secretary Gaines Butler of Metro Distributors.

Industry members visited the offices of Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL), Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), Rep. Peter Roskam (R-IL), Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Rep. Joe Heck (R-NV), Rep. Rod Woodall (R-GA), Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL), Rep. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), and Rep. Jim Cooper (D-TN).

John Schultz said, "The trip was again effective. We discussed video violence and the continued taxation on small business. Our members have all come away with the idea that they need to get involved with the offices of their local senators and congressmen. To get mad at government does nothing; you have to get involved. It does work."

"One of the liberties we have in this great nation is the privilege of visiting elected officials we voted to send to Washington, D.C.," said Bobby Hogin.

He continued, "Our mission was to tell our representatives about our business—what we do and how we do it—and to meet our elected officials face to

“Legislative awareness is a cornerstone of protecting our industry.”

face to discuss issues important to small business. Our association members were welcomed in Washington, D.C. Most of our hosts could recall time spent playing their favorite pinball game, coin-op video game, or favorite song on the jukebox.

“The value of this meeting was expressing that we are the men and women who provide the music, games, billiards, etc., and that we face the same challenges that other businesses face. We are not the home video game supplier. We are all now more comfortable meeting our senators and representatives when they come to our districts for a town hall meeting than before this visit to Washington, D.C.”

George Smith said, “I was honored to go to Washington, D.C., and to be asked to represent AAMA and the industry. Legislative awareness is a cornerstone of protecting our industry. I hope the whole industry will understand that you need to make friends first before you look for favors.”

Smith added, “The last year has been fraught with issues in many states, issues of taxation, health insurance, and safety that touch all of us. It is better to know your elected officials before you ask for a favor than to ignore the political world and hope good things will happen.”

Lori Schneider commented, “We had some great dialogue both on the House and Senate side. Our joint visits (AMOA and AAMA) continue to create an awareness of who we are, what we do, and the challenges we face as an industry.”

Gaines Butler said, “Our goal has been to make sure legislators know

about our industry, that we touch a lot of people, that we are small businesses, that we produce games in a social atmosphere (not to be confused with home system games).

“We emphasized the same things that happen to other businesses affect us as well. We put a face on the amusement industry. Once in a while you need to be seen.”

He added, “I was impressed with Dentons and its staff. We have some really good people there keeping us engaged.” Also: “It was neat to visit with legislative staff and see some of the behind-the-scenes of our government.”

Pete Gustafson said, “We met legislator staff in their offices to discuss who we are as an industry and perhaps more importantly, who we’re not. We started every conversation by letting them know we weren’t here to ask for anything (which put them immediately at ease). We were there to share with them distinctions about our industry and perhaps get them to see us in a new and more favorable light than they may have otherwise viewed us in.

“Our goal was to ensure we conveyed three things:

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In conclusion, Gustafson said, “In every meeting we were able to get a positive memory evoked in the person we were meeting with regarding their personal interaction with our form of entertainment. There was more than one nostalgic smile as our host would share with us his/her recollection of a favorite pinball machine from college or a day spent with their family at a local amusement center.

“The value of these meetings is to establish relationships ‘before’ a crisis so we have as big a group of decision makers as possible on our side in the event a crisis does occur. It’s best to have friends before you need them...”

For more information, visit (www.coin-op.org) and (www.amoa.com).

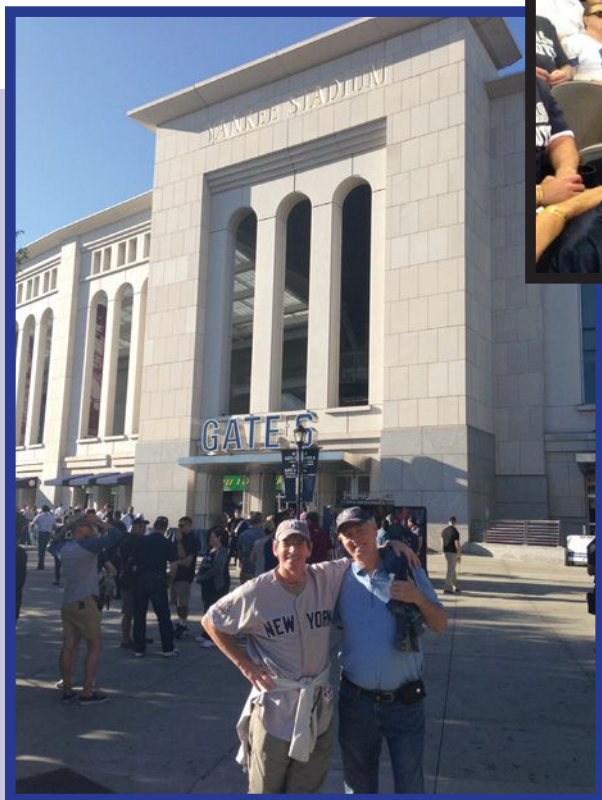
Photos courtesy of AAMA.

Pete Gustafson (l) and George Smith by the office of Sen. Mark Kirk (IL).





Wedding bells: Michael Pascaretti, son of John Pascaretti of Pascaretti Enterprises, married his sweetheart Lisa Rapske on Aug. 3 at Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church in St. Clare Shores, Mich. From left: Christopher Pascaretti, Frank Pascaretti, Lisa, Michael, and Shirley and John Pascaretti. Congratulations to the happy couple. *(Photo by BTW Photography)*



From Wrigley field to Yankee Stadium: During the recent Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Mid-Year Meeting in Jersey City, N.J., Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega, a Past President of AMOA, took AMOA Executive Vice President Jack Kelleher to a baseball game at Yankee Stadium. It was a return favor for Jack taking Frank to his first Chicago Cubs game at Wrigley Field in Chicago in 2006.



Football fans: Peter Betti of Betson Enterprises, Kelye Stites of Valley-Dynamo, and Rich Babich of Game Exchange of Colorado take in the closer-than-most-folks-expected Dallas Cowboys/Denver Broncos matchup in Arlington, Texas, on Oct. 6. *(Photo courtesy of AMOA.)*

WOZ pinball in Hollywood: Four Wizard of Oz (WOZ) pinball machines from Jersey Jack Pinball (JJP) were brought to the exclusive premiere party for “The Wizard of Oz in IMAX 3D” at the TCL Chinese Theater in Hollywood and an after-party for the “Wizard of Oz” musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber. It was all to celebrate the 75th anniversary of “The Wizard of Oz,” the iconic movie that was released in 1939. JJP President Jack Guarnieri is pictured with the Cowardly Lion, Tin Man, Scarecrow, and Good Witch Glinda. ▲







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Amusement Products LLC	5120, 7030	Harris Miniature Golf Courses Inc.	2928	PLI	639
Andamiro USA Corp.	1021	Hershey's Ice Cream	1937	Price Chopper Inc.	4420
Apple Industries Inc.	1817	HMS Monaco	2711	Primero Games LLC	4184
Arachnid Inc.	222	Hoffman Mint	2013	Primetime Amusements	2000
Astro Carpet Mills	4606	Ideal Software Systems Inc.	238, 5663	Pyramid Technologies Inc.	2011
Automated Batting Cages Corp.	2835	IGPM Group/Kalkomat	1600	QNC Inc. dba Quik n' Crispy	425
Barron Games Intl.	4013	Injoy Motion Corp.	843	QubicaAMF	1317
Bay Tek Games Inc.	1025	Innovative Concepts in Ent. (ICE)	1607, 1807	Quick-Tag (The Hillman Group)	1633
Bears2Go.com	702	InterCard Inc.	1033	RDC/Ride Development Co.	2625
Benchmark Games Inc.	1306	International Currency Tech. (ICT)	1829	Redemption Plus	1300
Betson Enterprises	1743, 2017, 713	International Play Co. Inc.	2667	Rhode Island Novelty	2211
Big Sky Miniature Golf	3038	ISERA (Evolution Ins. Brokers)	4713	S&B Candy and Toy	1921
Bob's Space Racers Inc.	2617, 2817, 7039	J&J Amusements Inc.	2631, 2640, 2633	S&S Worldwide Inc.	2217, 7100
Bonita Marie Intl. Inc.	825	Jane Farrell Turf & Carpets Inc.	2937	Socoa Playcard System	225
BPAA	727	Jennison Entertainment Tech.	1000	Sega	517, 617
Brady Distributing Co.	230	Jersey Jack Pinball Inc.	833	Shaller Eng.	4200
Brunswick Bowling & Billiards	4833	Jolly Roger (Amusement Rides) Ltd.	600	Simuline Inc.	2261
Carolina ATM Services	3471	Kellytoy USA Inc.	3033	Skee Ball Inc.	1322
Castle Golf Inc.	2630	KLOPP Intl. Inc.	1821	Smart Industries Corp.	1719
CenterEdge Software	847	LAI Games USA Sales Inc.	412	Soft Play LLC	3621
Champion Shuffleboard	2007	Larson Intl. Inc.	4222	Southern Golf	202
CLM Entertainment Inc.	3230	Laser Star Amusements Inc.	802	Speedy's One Stop Repair Service	1703
Coast to Coast Entertainment	2003	Laser Tag Pro	4786	Spider Climbing Inc.	5713
Coastal Amusements Inc.	1325	Laser-Blast	5418	State Fair Mini Donuts Inc.	4061
Coca-Cola Refreshments	4800	Laserforce Intl.	5430	Sterling & Sterling Inc.	4102
Coin Tech S.A.	804	LASERTRON Inc.	2806	Stern Pinball Inc.	1704
CORE Cashless Inc.	4578	Lazer Mazers	2891	Super Booths Inc.	5479
Cossio Insurance Agency	5733	LaZer Runner Laser Tag Systems	1343	Superior Inflatables	6079
Cost of Wisconsin Inc.	4027	Liberty united Ins. Ser.	5586	Supreme Party and Novelties	3667
Creative Works Inc.	2270	Lil' Orbits Inc.	3017	Sureshot Redemption	1733, 1833
Deltronic Labs Inc.	207	Limelight Photo Booth	3286	SUZO-Happ	710
Digital Centre America	3809	Magic Play LLC	2211	Sweet Monkey Frozen Yogurt	443
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Elaut USA Inc	2613	MaxFlight Corp.	1058	The Michael Angelo Auction Co.	1739
EMBED Intl. Pty Ltd	1047	MedTech Wristbands	3006	The Penny-Press Machine Co. LLC.	736
EuroLink Development LLC	1617	Megatouch	1700	The Toy Barn	821
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Foto Club Inc.	5609	Naughton Insurance Inc.	2611	Venco Business Solutions	203
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Funovation Inc.	4646	Noble Roman's Pizza	3204	Zamperla Inc.	2025
		Novelty Inc. Wholesale	4219	Zhongshan Golden Dragon Amusement	406

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Laser tag and other Shenanigans

Shenanigans of La Crosse, Wis., has something for everyone. The indoor facility, which opened in November of 2011, is a Mecca for people of all ages seeking a good time, especially in the harsh winter months.

Owner Adam Etrheim said, "Shenanigans was designed to bring some indoor entertainment to the La Crosse area. There were three investors that helped jumpstart the company. We wanted to just provide something to do here."

The project took about nine months to complete from having the idea to opening to doors.

Known for hosting the only laser tag arena in its area, Shenanigans also features a Riverside Tiki Bar that has become a popular spot for ladies' night on Wednesdays. Rounding out the diverse attractions are a rock wall, high ropes course, bumper cars, inflatables, mini bowling, an arcade, and a Human Hamster Ball arena.

On deciding to add the entertainment options for older generations, Etrheim said, "We skipped the snack bar and did a full-fledged sports bar. We have a 130-inch television with seating for around 90 people. We just added the Riverside Tiki Bar, which is right off the river. There are about 25 boat slips down there. We

tell people 'come by car or boat.'"

The laser tag arena was designed by Lasertron and features its products. The entire center runs on the Embed card system. The arcade features around 36 games. The best

Shenanigans has a number of different promotions that guests are eager to take advantage of. One of the most popular is the "Eat and Play" deal where guests get an entree of their choice, a free drink, unlimited attractions, and a \$10 play card for only \$30. Another promotion the facility has had success with is its Rainy Day special. Any time it rains, Shenanigans offers unlimited attractions for \$10 per person.

Etrheim said, "When it rains, we know we're going to be slammed."

Guest appearances by celebrities like Gilbert Brown and other Green Bay Packers players bring people in for special events.

If unlimited funding was available, Etrheim said he would like to incorporate the river and surroundings into

the attractions. He explained, "I'd love to do something like an outdoor zip line or river activities. I'd probably increase the size of the laser tag arena too. That would be a guaranteed good investment. Indoor paintball would be another idea."

Overall, Etrheim has enjoyed the family entertainment center (FEC) industry so far. He said, "The most rewarding aspect of running the business is seeing the smiles on the guests' faces. It's nice to have a business that spreads joy and laughter."



Facility:
Shenanigans Entertainment Center and Sports Bar

Location:
La Crosse, Wis.

Contact:
(608)783-3333; www.shenanigansfun.com

Attractions:
Laser tag, rock wall, high ropes course, bumper cars, inflatables, mini bowling, arcade, Human Hamster Balls

performer is Big Bass Wheel from Bay Tek Games.

Redemption Plus supplies most of the redemption counter where kids go crazy for giant mustache plush. Other popular items include canoes, kindles, Xboxes, iPads, and NFL memorabilia.

The facility hosts parties of all kinds and is always bustling with guests attending parties on the weekends. Adult birthday packages feature drink chips and different attractions than those for younger partygoers.





Family Entertainment Center

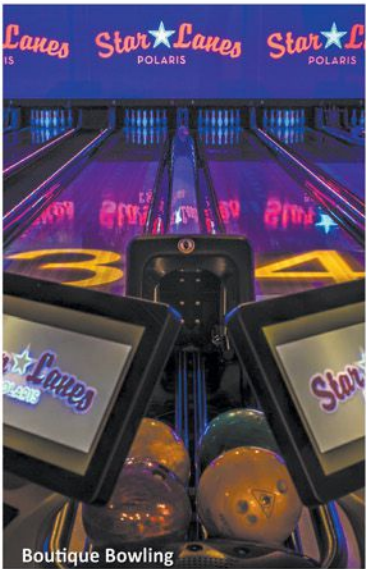


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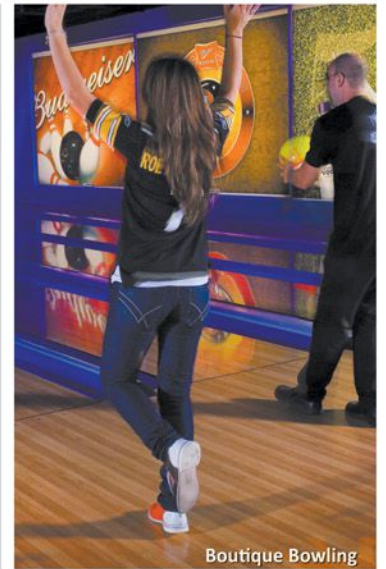
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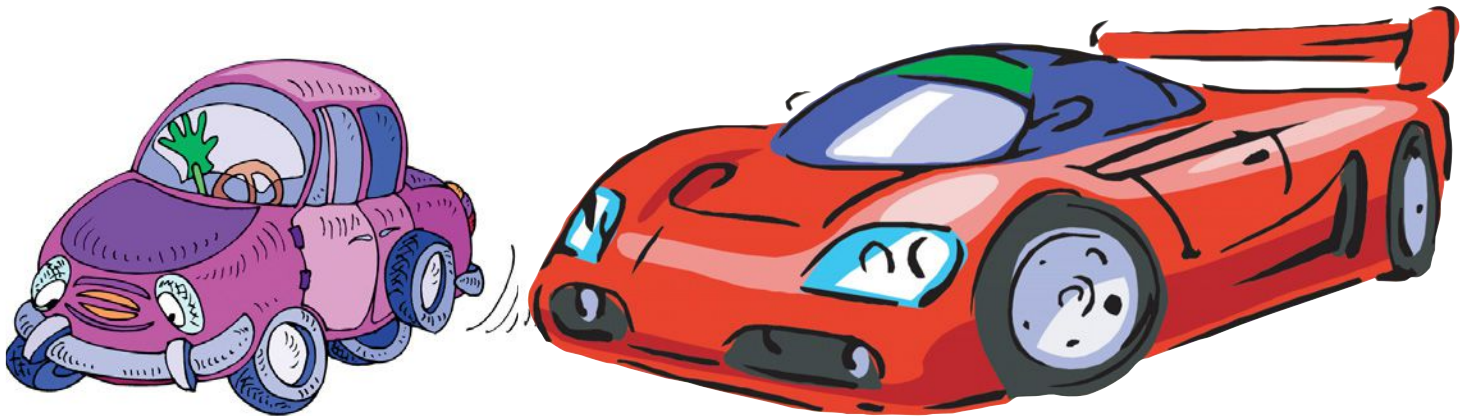
Mini-Bowling



Mini-Bowling

Why are many FEC attractions so mediocre?

Reader discretion advised: The contents of this article will most definitely ruffle a few feathers.



Those who know me realize that I am very passionate about our industry and especially the attractions side of the business.

The number one problem I see with our industry is that we continue to allow mediocre attractions to exist. What's most disturbing is that mediocre attractions far exceed the number of great ones. The large number of mediocre attractions adversely affects our entire industry.

If the vast majority of customers are having mediocre attraction experiences, then every center is affected negatively. It even hurts the centers that strive to develop and maintain the best attractions.

Our attractions should be generating the vast majority of our centers' profits, but far too often they are the weakest link. Having multiple weak links (mediocre attractions) does not make for a stronger chain (a stronger entertainment center).

Why are mediocre attractions so plentiful and great attractions so rare?

Mediocre attractions are so abundant because we all conspire as an industry to make our attractions as mediocre as possible.

Yes, that's right; it's everyone's fault and I am not excluding myself from this ongoing conspiracy. However, I am attempting to expose the depths of the problem.

Here are some of the many reasons why so many mediocre attractions are created in the first place:

Size of my piggy bank

This is probably the number one reason most attractions are designed to be mediocre or even worse than mediocre. Trying to build a great attraction based on the size of our piggy bank is like trying to build or buy a Ferrari for \$20,000.

It isn't going to happen and you end up owning a Ford Focus. It's still a car, but sitting next to a Ferrari there is no comparison. The difference between a mediocre attraction and a great attraction produces the same lopsided effect.

What we all have to remember is that we are renting our attractions to our customers. We can either provide them with a ride in a Ford Focus or a Ferrari. Which attraction will attract a lot more people as well as give us the ability to charge a much higher price?

The answer is obvious, but why do we keep building attractions that we call a Ferrari, but we provide our customers with a Ford Focus experience?

If our piggy bank isn't big enough, then we have to do whatever it takes to make sure we secure the resources required to build a great attraction that our customers will enthusiastically tell their friends about.

We don't want our competitors (or friends) to have bigger or better attractions than ours.

This isn't what we actually say, but it is one of the reasons why we try to convince other operators to not go bigger and/or better. Nobody wants to have an attraction that is smaller than the average, but we also don't want the new center or our friends in the indus-

try to have a bigger and/or better one than ours.

Unfortunately, we all knowingly or unknowingly conspire to make all of our attractions average (i.e. mediocre). In fact, most will tell you smaller or less is good enough, but they will almost never tell you, "You should build yours bigger and better than mine."

If everyone is telling you to do the average and the average is (x), then add 50, 100, or even 200 percent to the size and/or coolness of the attraction and you will be a lot more successful than the average operator. Good enough never is, and never will be, able to compete with the best.

Average is safe.

We think we are making a good business decision when we copy the averages of an industry. That's like a NFL football team looking for an average quarterback and expecting to build a winning team.

We also think we are making a better decision if we go slightly above average. From the customer's perspective, slightly better than average is still average.

Playing it safe is very dangerous, because it will do nothing to set our business apart from all the other existing entertainment centers. More importantly, an average attraction will not help us increase the number of people we attract from other competitive out-of-home options like movie theaters.

Give your customers something to talk about by building the best of the best. Nobody tells his or her friends and family about an attraction that is average or mediocre. After buying a new Ford Focus, would anyone race over to a friend's house to show off his or her new Ford Focus when the friend has a new BMW, Mercedes, or Corvette sitting in the driveway?

Space limitations

Can I squeeze this attraction into this space? If you can't do it right, then you shouldn't be doing it at all. Good is not good enough; it's called MEDIOCRE!

How many of us want to go out and pay for a mediocre dinner, have a mediocre vacation, watch a mediocre movie, or have a mediocre life?

If you don't have the space, then figure out how to create enough space or add a new addition, but don't do it unless you can create a great attraction.

Better to have more attractions than only a few.

This one just kills me because it is a totally false and stupid assumption. It is much more important to build just one or two attractions that are the best of the best, than to have five or even 10 mediocre attractions.

When we build the best, our customers will spread the word to their friends and family. They will help us grow our business, but they won't if we give them a bunch of mediocre experiences.

"The opportunity to generate significantly better returns comes from building much better attractions."

Here are two examples:

■ You can buy a round bungee style trampoline with a harness and it can generate \$20,000 in annual sales from 4,000 participants annually at \$5 per person or you can build an indoor trampoline park that generates \$2,000,000+ in annual revenue from 150,000 participants annually. Both are similar types of attractions, but one is 10 times cooler and bigger and generates 10 times the revenue.

■ You can build a 2,500-square-foot single level laser tag arena that can hold 16 players and generate between \$75,000 and \$100,000 in revenue per year or build a 7,500-square-foot multi-level laser tag arena that can hold 42 players and generate between \$750,000 and \$1,000,000 in revenue per year. Again, both are similar types of attractions, but one is 10 times cooler and three times bigger, but it generates 10 times the revenue.

The above numbers are NOT imaginary. They are REAL numbers and very DOABLE! By the way, a 2,500-square-foot single level arena is not an example of mediocre. Mediocre is a 4,000-square-foot multi-level arena that can hold 26 players and generates \$300,000 in revenue.

I'm not trying to upset anyone. What I am trying to do is to get all of us to understand that the opportunity to generate significantly better returns comes from building much better attractions.

Right sizing is NOT smart; it's stupid!

Building a smaller and/or cheaper attraction because of the size of the space we have available, or because the market size is smaller, will not make our attractions more likely to succeed.

In fact, we will successfully make it more likely that we will fail. If the size of our space or the market area is not big enough to support a great attraction, then we shouldn't be doing it in the first place.

Right sizing an attraction by making it smaller because of the demographics is like McDonald's deciding to downsize its quarter-pounder with cheese to a one-eighth-pounder with a half slice of cheese and still calling it a quarter-pounder with cheese and charging the full price. McDonald's customers would feel cheated and so would the customers of an entertainment center that experiences a downsized attraction.

Unless our demographic is made up of mini-people, don't build a downsized attraction and assume it will produce full sized revenue.

It's mainly for the kids and not the adults.

If we DO NOT want to DRAMATI-

CALLY REDUCE the sales potential of an attraction, then we should NOT design it to appeal to kids in the first place.

Instead, we must focus on making our attractions cool for adults. If we make our attractions cool for adults, we will still get the kids and even more teens.

If our center's target market is exclusively kids, then it's OK to design our attractions for kids. Just don't expect to get the adults and don't waste your time trying. Instead, focus your time and money on promoting to kids and growing that specific market segment.

“Playing it safe is very dangerous, because it will do nothing to set our business apart.”

Adults know what cool is and they also know when something was designed for kids and not them. If we want to get the adults, we have to design our attractions so the adults want to have their birthday parties at our facility.

If we want our attractions to attract a significant percentage of adults, we have to make sure we have the following in place: a very cool looking center (inside and out), comfortable seating, an atmosphere that promotes socialization, good food, and most importantly a full bar.

What we convince ourselves of is true.

Saying, “I know that my new center will be good enough” does not make it so. We have to recognize that we do not control the marketplace's perception of mediocre. The people who live in our market area make the final decision.

If we do not build the best attractions, then we leave the door wide open for a new competitor to do it right the second time, which could easily put us out of business very quickly.

Being first with a mediocre attraction does not protect us from a competitor being second with great attractions. At best, we have only educated the market on what is possible and a new competitor with bigger and better attractions can enter our market and quickly steal our customers.

We must not convince ourselves that what we are going to offer is good enough, especially when a much better experience can be provided.

The arcade is how I'll make my money.

If we build great attractions we will make more money from our attractions

and more money from our arcade. Inversely, if we provide our customers with mediocre attractions we will make less money from our attractions and arcade.

Great attractions attract a lot more people. The more people our attractions draw into our centers, the more money they will spend in our arcade.

Food and beverage is how I'll make my money.

Again, if we build great attractions we will make more money from our attractions and more money from our food and beverage service.

Great attractions that draw large numbers of people to our center produce a compounding effect for all the profit centers in our facility.

Consultants, designers, manufacturers, and suppliers all smiled and agreed with “almost” everything that came out of my mouth.

Why would a consultant, designer, manufacturer, or supplier tell us we are spending too little, building it too small, or designing it the wrong way?

They may tell us what could be better, what others have done or what the averages are, but at the end of the day

they want to sell us something even if they know it won't give us what we really need.

If the consultants, designers, manufacturers, or suppliers are telling us our project is fantastic, good enough, or meets the averages in our industry, understand that they are not providing us information on what the best of the best is and why we need it.

After all, if they already know how big our piggy bank is, they are going to sell us on what we can afford even if it is mediocre or worse. We must all learn to dig deeper and figure out a way to build a great attraction.

Referral clicks

We can't believe anything anyone tells us. Instead, we have to do a lot of research and explore all the different options that are possible and then we have to learn to trust our gut.

There are several networks that try to refer prospects to other members within their group. Without us knowing it, our center becomes a hodgepodge of mediocrity to fit all the pieces that make up the services and products provided by the network.

We must rigorously seek out conflicts of interest. Find viewpoints that are contradictory to the norm. Once we have done a lot of homework, we have to ask even more questions and focus in on what makes sense to our gut.

We must make sure that we seek out and find the best operators who are operating the best attractions that generate the highest revenues and profits. We will learn more from the very best operators than any other source.

Once again, we must make sure we don't let our piggy bank and all the other things mentioned above influence our final decision. We have to let our true gut make the final decision. Even if it means not doing the attraction if we can't figure out a way to do it right.

Mini-attractions are NOT attractions.

Sales and marketing tactics confuse and distort the whole idea of what a true attraction is meant to achieve for

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If an attraction that is being promoted can only handle one or even a small number of people at one time, then it is not an attraction that is capable of driving large numbers of people to visit a center.

In other words, a true attraction is one that attracts tens of thousands of people to our center on an annual basis.

There are many smaller attractions that are great additions to the arcade or overall fun center, but an attraction is not a traffic generator unless it can drive a substantial number of people to our centers.

I don't have any competition.

Not yet! It is 10 times harder to react to a new competitor when our center is already open than it is to plan for a potential competitor before we open.

During the planning stages of a new center, we must always look at our proposed entertainment center's strengths and weaknesses as if it already existed. Then we must mentally shift our perspective to one in which we are the new competitor coming into town.

We have to ask ourselves, "How would I destroy my proposed entertainment center if I had the resources to do it even better a second time?"

If we don't have the money to do it right today, then we have to use today to find the resources we need. Otherwise, we have to fully understand that our business could be quickly destroyed if someone else enters the market with the resources to do it right.

I'm better than my competitor down the street.

Who cares how much better we are than our competitor down the street? What we have to fear is what the best

competitor in the world is doing.

If an entertainment center exists that is better than our center, then that is the benchmark we have to be concerned about and not our competitor down the street. The best of what exists and could exist is what we all must fear and prepare for on a daily basis.

How do we start figuring out how to develop and build the best attractions?

We have to search for and experience the best indoor and outdoor attractions in the world. We have to find the ones that generate revenues and profits that are five to 10 times the norm.

We have to study all the best in class attractions we can find and ask lots of questions. We have to try to discover and understand what enables the best attractions to generate the highest revenues and profits in the industry.

We have to talk to the owners of these centers as well as the consultants, designers, manufacturers, and suppliers who helped put them together. We have to dig deep and use our gut to figure out what the most important variables are to creating each attraction's success.

If we take the time to constantly learn and discover why the best attractions work. . .

If we secure the resources required to create the best attractions and successfully execute all the steps required to create them. . .

If we implement the best management and operational systems to run them, then we will enjoy all the benefits of owning the very best and most profitable attractions. ▲



Jim Kessler is the Founder/CEO of LASERTRON's BLOCK PARTY Entertainment Center, celebrating its 25th year of creating great attraction experiences. For more information, visit (www.lasertron.us); for LASERTRON Mfg., visit (www.laser-tron.com); for Cyper Sport Mfg., visit (www.cybersport.us); e-mail (jkessler@lasertron.us).



Candy, paint, and prizes

Use these tips to make your candy stand out, your prizes pop, and your laser tag arena shine.



TIP ONE

What new prizes are you offering in your cranes? Remote Control (R/C) helicopters are hot right now. I spent an hour looking at two different stores at these cool toys with my 10-year-old son. These toys come in different sizes and price points.

You can use this prize in a crane by putting a letter on each knobby ball and have the players spell out the prize. I have done this with R/C cars and other items with great success. Give it a try and I know you will see the same great collections I do. The picture shows one happy player with his new R/C Hummer.

TIP TWO

Turtle Beach headphones are another great item to add to your merchandisers and cranes. My son needed a new pair so he tested them out. This company has a number of price points to match your needs. Colin had me try them out and I was impressed with the quality. I think I may have scared the two friends he was playing with when I took control on Mine Craft.

TIP THREE

Have you repainted your laser tag arenas lately? There is a company by the name of Stuartizm Desdigns LLC that does the coolest 3D painting I have ever seen.

The Owner is Stuart Smith. He is a hoot and has a real talent for painting 3D figures that jump out at you. A roller rink in Georgia had him come out to paint an arena about six to eight months ago. I was there when it was finished and I've never seen anything like it.

I spoke to the arena owner again recently to see how this type of painting held up and if his income increased. The painting is perfect and income has increased, as the players love the look and what it adds to the game.

Smith can be reached at (231)335-6270; Web (www.stuartizm-online.info). I will warn you he is a real artist and has more passion for his work than you will ever see.

TIP FOUR

Does your candy counter look like this?

Display your candy like this and watch your sales soar. Everyone loves sweets, so take advantage of it! Also look into adding "ethnic" candy that appeals to your customer base.

I received a call from a family entertainment center (FEC) that decided to add a variety of candy from the home countries of his Spanish-speaking clients and they went bonkers.

It made these customers feel great that the owner took the time to source the candy. I was also a huge hit with his other customers. ▲



Jim Chapman has been a part of the coin-op industry for over 25 years. His experience ranges from manufacturing cranes, merchandisers, redemption, and video games to operational experience in FECs. You can find him at trade shows sharing his passion and experience when giving redemption seminars. He can be reached via e-mail (jimmychaps@aol.com).

Namco provides fun *all over the world*

Not many companies have the distinction of producing a game that became a social phenomenon, an instant classic, and launched a popular franchise that extends long past its introduction 33 years ago.

The company, of course, is Namco, and the game is Pac-Man, which continues to attract players in officially licensed game spin-offs. Pac-Man is also part of the collection at New York's Museum of Modern Art and at the Smithsonian Institute.

Producing successful games is what Namco does, expanding its scope well beyond video and into every category of coin-op equipment.

Play Meter caught up with Frank Cosentino, Senior Vice President at Namco America, for an update on what's new at Namco as well as reflections on the company's accomplishments and the current marketplace.

Namco is one of the most recognizable names in the industry with a long history of bringing solid products to the marketplace. To what do you attribute Namco's longevity?

Namco does have a long history of providing entertainment across a number of different mediums. We have been successful at providing fun all over the world.

Our parent company in Japan (Namco Bandai Holdings Inc.) has over 80 different companies in over 20 different countries that are all working together to help us become the "Leading Innovator in Global Entertainment." Namco has always found ways to innovate and stretch

the current boundaries of our industry while sticking to our core strengths.

Namco has a great deal of important assets but the greatest of these are our people. From engineers and game designers that have been with the company for decades to upper management people that have worked with the company from the ground up and understand what it takes to be successful in today's rapidly changing marketplace.

It is amazing to participate in the creative process in a company like this where the enthusiasm is high and the global approach is the focus.

What is the most significant accomplishment for Namco to date in coin-op?

Certainly, Namco's longevity is a significant accomplishment. There are not many other manufacturers in our industry that have been providing products for 58 years. While this is an accomplishment, I believe that Namco has provided the industry with an icon that is instantly recognizable as the "symbol" of the arcade business, and that icon is Pac-Man.

A few years ago, *Variety* magazine celebrated its 100th anniversary and created a list of the 100 most important entertainment icons of the previous 100 years and Pac-Man made the list! The only other animated character on the list was Mickey Mouse and that is a pretty amazing company indeed.

Not only does Pac-Man hold a special place in our hearts from the '80s but his popularity has held strong with future generations as well. The



Pac-Man
Ticket
Mania



Dead Heat Riders



Mach Storm

new "Pac-Man and the Ghostly Adventures" cartoon that debuted back in June on Disney XD is proof of that. They are having great success with the debut season. So much so that season two is already commissioned, guaranteeing broadcasts well into 2015.

Pac-Man is going worldwide again with 30+ broadcasters airing in 60+ markets and in over 20 languages.

In harmony with the popularity of the show, our lineup of Pac-Man themed arcade products are also selling great. These games are new innovative products with a Pac twist.

Pac-Man Battle Royale is the four player "Pac VS Pac" video, Pac-Man Smash is the only air hockey that has both big and dozens of mini pucks, Pac-Man Ticket Mania is the redemption hit, and Pac-Man Ghostly Bowl is the alley roller where the ball comes out of nowhere from under the playfield. We have a few more games that we will be adding to the series in the coming months; stay tuned.

A lot has changed since the company's early days. How is the market different today than 10

years ago, even 20 years ago?

There are a great many market opportunities out there today. I would say more so than 10 years ago. New FEC locations are popping up as well as existing locations reimagining

"Namco has always found ways to innovate and stretch the current boundaries while sticking to our core strengths."

themselves as family entertainment centers (FECs).

As the bowling industry changes, I'm seeing more and more centers increasing their game and other attraction floor space as they evolve to compete in today's out of home entertainment market.

It is difficult to go back and compare the mid-'90s to today because the face of location-based entertainment has changed so much in that time. Twenty years ago there were still hundreds of small mall-based arcades that did not focus on the party business or redemption machines in a big way.

One of our strengths has always been the diversity of our product

lineup. While we still provide the highest quality in video games and large "simulator" attractions, we also have great ticket games and prize merchandisers as well. This diversity allows us to remain competitive with whatever happens in the marketplace.

The IAAPA Expo is Nov. 19-22 in Orlando. How important is this show for Namco?

IAAPA is a truly global amusement show. The three main arcade game selling divisions of Namco Bandai Games are Namco America Inc. (the Americas), Namco Europe (U.K., Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the Middle East), and NBGI (Japan and Asia).

While we all do shows in many of these markets, IAAPA is the only one where all of us have customers in attendance. So many buying decisions for the New Year are initiated here and consummated in the early spring. More sales are generated or initiated here than at any of our other shows. It is basically the biggest show of the year for us as a group.

What do you say to people who don't consider the IAAPA Expo a



Product Strategy team, (l-r): Tim Marlega, Frank Cosentino, and Sam Ven.



Accounting and HR team, (l-r): Bonnie Buszkiewicz, Robin Perez, Rich Wisniewski, Joan Garfield, Emily Sanchez, and Mike Lewandowski.



Merchandising team: Jim Wulfers (left) and Yoshitaka Sakamaki.

coin-op show?

If they are an attendee, either an operator or a location owner, they are missing out on some great ideas that can improve your business.

As a manufacturer we have gotten ideas for new materials and concepts by walking the floor and taking in all of the non-coin-op related things here.

If they are a competitor of ours then, yea no need for you to come to IAAPA; you should stay home.

Will Namco introduce any new titles at this show?

Of course; we couldn't let an opportunity like this go by without rolling out some brand new stuff. We will have a new large attraction video, a new driving game video, a new ticket redemption game, and another surprise that we'll wait until the show to unveil.

We will have our first new Flight Simulation game in quite some time on the floor called Mach Storm. This game comes housed in our patented 180-degree screen cabinet where the player is completely visually and environmentally immersed in the experience.

When you climb into the cockpit, you're not just playing a game, you become a fighter pilot flying missions



President of Namco America John McKenzie and Managing Director of Bandai Namco Games Hitoshi Hagiwara.

"It takes innovation and a great deal of R&D money to create experiences that you cannot get at home and that drive our business forward."

and taking down the enemy. With the action completely covering your field of vision, the wind in your face and surround sound in your ears, the experience is intense.

What currently available product will be on display at this show?

At this time it looks like we will have approximately 50 games in the booth covering 23 or so titles. Virtually every one of our current titles will be on the floor. You'll have to stop by the "Pac-Man Zone" to see our full range of products and a new

theming concept in there.

Our merchandise sales group will also be on the floor showing the latest Pac-Man plush and some great new electronics as well. The Pac-Man headsets have been a huge hit for them since their release. They also have a new line of "Pac-Man and The Ghostly Adventures" plush in the seven-inch jumbo size.

We're seeing a great many trade shows in the Asia Pacific region. Is this area poised for dramatic growth?

The Asian market has been a very good market for a number of years already. The recent China show is a pretty good barometer of how well things are going there.

I understand that government intervention is causing some difficulties in the China market. Since this is by far the largest of the markets in the region, lack of sales here are hurting some companies that rely on this business.

I'm sure we will see even more Chinese companies that used to derive a majority of their business from sales in China here at the IAAPA Expo looking to help shift their dependency on their home market.

The economy has had an impact on all levels of the industry. Is



Sales team, (l-r): Tom Siemieniec, Emilio Cabrera, Anita Friedl, and Katsuhiko Mikami.



Mehdi Eghbal, Sales Team.

among manufacturers?

Since we are one of the few manufacturers that provide video games, attraction pieces, ticket redemption, prize merchandisers, novelty (air hockey, basketballs, alley rollers), we are positioned to offer the FEC owner or an operator anything they may need.

What is the biggest challenge for Namco in the current market climate?

Our biggest challenge is staying in tune with what the player wants. We do our best to observe and survey during initial testing to find out what the players think, like, and do not like.

After all, the industry's real customer is the player—that person who has taken time away from their home to stop in at a location that has the type of equipment we sell. This person is looking for entertainment outside of their home. They want a social (actual not virtual) fun environment where they can do things that are different.

We hope to provide them with an experience that they cannot get in front of their TV or their iPad. It takes innovation and a great deal of R&D money to create experiences like Dark Escape, Pac-Man Smash, and the upcoming Mach Storm, but it is these types of experiences that you cannot get at home and that drive our business forward.

For more information on Namco, visit (www.namcoameica.com). ▲



Parts/Customer Service team, (l-r): Seth Origitano, Joe Blackwell, Neil Goheen, and Pierre Bermudez.



Manufacturing and Engineering team, (l-r): Jesus Maldonado, Pat O'Brien, Hitoshi Asano, Jim Roycroft, Mario Cruz, Ray Tanzer, and Katrina Dato.

Namco seeing a turnaround?

While a slow U.S. economy can hurt sales as location owners tighten their belts expecting the worst, they sometimes can have a positive affect on our business as well with more stay-cations benefitting the local non-tourist locations. I would hope that the worst is over and we will continue to see economic improvements.

Ultimately, we are a product driven business. As long as there are locations, they will need to keep the mix fresh to keep their customers



Sales team, (l-r): Josh Pick, Erik Gilly, Namco America President John McKenzie, and Steve Ignarski.

interested. Since our focus is to keep coming out with hit games, we will continue to do great.

What equipment categories are most in-demand today, and why?

I think all equipment categories are in demand today because today's FEC location has a wide demographic of customers. This is why having a diverse selection of products that covers many categories is a distinct advantage, which brings me to your next question.

What makes Namco unique

Guest confidence is at stake; what will you do?

The recent news articles and television news broadcasts surrounding the confiscation of redemption equipment, and the simultaneous occurrence of lawsuits against national brands like Denny's and Chucky Cheese's referencing their practices and policies regarding redemption, should be sending chills down the spines of operators of redemption equipment.

The likelihood of these issues growing in number and intensity should guide the practices of our businesses in the future. The potential lack of confidence in our industry—if the investigating reporter set decides this is an issue ripe for the picking—is a real and present danger that all redemption operators should take seriously.

The possibility of nuisance lawsuits against individual entertainment center operators and/or reporters prowling through our facilities aside, there are many reasons why business practices that have become commonplace in some areas and some operations should be changed.

WHAT'S GOING ON???

While it should be obvious that operating within the law is both prudent and wise, many have pushed the envelope over the years with cash prizes (clearly illegal), bait and switch tactics, and the most recent trend, which has gained momentum over the last several years: the high value prize in the low-win rate auto-percentage machine.

In the pursuit of profits, many in our industry have embraced machines that aren't even fun anymore, equipment

that essentially functions as sophisticated vending machines for high value prizes.

We have lost our way. We have forgotten that FUN is what our business has always been about!

Many were thinking about bulging cash boxes; logically however, a low-win rate equals a high loss rate! For every winner, many losers. . . and so, the very practices that have been spreading through the industry have

sowed the seeds of the reactions we see today.

Just because a piece of equipment is capable of operating in a certain way that can fool or lead a guest into thinking that a goal is easily attainable, certainly does not mean it should be operated in that manner. Thinking about people—your customers—has always been

the way to sustain and grow this business, or really any business.

While we should all be concerned about legislation, we need to consider our guests and the perception they have about our games. The definition of skill-based games may be fought in the courts, but unless our guests are willing to play the games we operate, it will be a moot point for our industry.

How many times have you heard a mother say to a child, "No, you can't play that (crane), nobody ever wins?" It is a common misconception. If you have never heard that statement, you probably need to spend more time with your customers!

Where does a perception like that come from? Low-win rates!

While testing games to determine if they are skill-based is a necessary evil,

needed for the manufacturers to be able to sell the games in areas with strict laws; in order to regain the confidence of our clientele, the real question is the perception of our guests. Do most people win at your location? How do they feel when they leave?

Does the game your guest is playing have an obviously developable skill? Can they practice that skill? Can they get better at putting the ball in the hoop, or faster at hitting that button, or rolling a ball down the alley in the hole they are aiming for?

Or does the computer have the option of delaying their efforts, in order to thwart them in their goal of achieving the prize of their choice? Do they realize or understand that fact?

How does your guest perceive your operation?

LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE

Many industry professionals, myself included, present redemption concepts at industry trade shows and in books or articles based on our own experience and training that differ in various ways, but virtually all of these concepts are based on giving back value to the guest.

Our industry has a traditional payout percentage of 25 percent, with a redeemable percentage that averages 20 percent. This is not an arbitrary number; it was determined through trial and error over time by operators that were in their stores, close to their customers, and observing their reactions in real time.

Others have been advocating practices that take value away from the guest, such as double dipping on prize values and advocating low payout percentages. It is these practices that are at the root cause of these recent issues we



By Michael Getlan

now face. Guests can tell when they are being ripped off; sometimes not right away, but they will get the message over time.

Buying wholesale and allowing the guests to pay for the prizes with game play is the way to earn back the confidence of our guests and to return to our roots as an industry.

Proper purchasing of prizes that appeal to all varieties of guests is critical to your success, especially if you tailor your offerings to the type of guests that specifically visit your center.

In order to sustain our industry and our individual businesses, we need to put ourselves in the guests' shoes. Do they receive value for their playing budget? When they spend \$20, do they walk away with a perceived value of \$5 in prizes? Or do they feel like they were ripped off, just aching to

complain to their friends, to spread the word and never to return?

Current prize value limiting legislation is active in 21 states; it is being considered in three more. Can we prevent this trend from continuing? Probably not, but we can change, adapt, and thrive if we think about the welfare of our guests and give them what they want: fun games and prizes!

Industry veteran Al Kress of Benchmark Games once told me, "The higher the payout, the higher the gross a machine will make (and more net income as well)." This is based on his 50 years of experience; and he has proved it many times. There are many operators that use payout percentages up to 40 percent.

What will you do? Will you look at your practices and judge them on how well your guests gain or lose value

when they play? Will you adopt practices that grow your business? Or will you operate in ways that are detrimental to your business and the industry, focused on the short term instead of the long term?

Remember: If your guests feel like winners they will come back time and time again; and *everybody* wants to be a winner!

The choice is yours. ▲

Michael Getlan is a third generation FEC operator and consultant based in New York and is the Director of Enthusiasm & Opportunity for Funfuzion in New Rochelle, N.Y. He is the author of the only book on redemption operations ("How Much is that Doggie in the Showcase?") and can be reached at (michaelgetlan@amusementconsultants.com).

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Legislative visit to Washington, D.C.

Pete Gustafson has had a busy start to his term as President of the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) with two recent events: the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Mid-Year Board Meeting and the quarterly visit by AAMA and AMOA representatives to Capitol Hill.

CAPITOL HILL

Gustafson said the trip to Washington D.C., was “about creating relationships.” The idea started with Rick Kirby of Betson New England, Chair of the AAMA Government Relations Committee, and has been organized by Dentons, Legislative Counsel to both AAMA and AMOA. The first visit was made by AAMA in September 2011; this is the third time the two associations have made the journey together.

“Dentons has delivered a tremendous value,” said Gustafson. “This is the seventh journey of this type to Washington, D.C., with a small group, which is an effective approach. We spent face to face, quality time with congressional staff.”

Gustafson mentioned, “The first thing said at each meeting by John Russell of Dentons was that the group was not there to ask for anything, but rather to tell who we are. This put the congressional representative at ease and put them in a more receptive posture.

“In our conversations we explained that our games do not have violent content. That’s not who we are. We wanted to create a distinction between our games and games for home systems. Our games have to be Mom-approved. We create wholesome, family entertainment.”

Gustafson continued, “There is not a community in America that does not have some form of coin-op entertainment. When you say that, it resonates; we’re more pervasive than Starbucks. Often in our conversations the people we spoke with had fond memories of interacting with the form of entertainment we provide. Our goals for these meetings are to nurture relations and establish who we are and what we provide.”

The group also invited those they met with to attend industry events taking place in their states, such as the Amusement Expo in Nevada and the AAMA Annual Gala.

AMOA MID-YEAR

Gustafson said, “It’s a terrific event. All the operators in the committee meetings are independent business people who have created something out of whole cloth. I am really impressed by that. Day to day they’re in charge of running their own business, but in a committee setting, they have to put aside their tendency to be that guy to effectively participate in creating a greater good for everyone.”

DEFENSE FUND

AAMA announced at its Annual Meeting in August that it would establish a Defense Fund to help protect the industry from negative legislation. “We’re working toward a program that will benefit everyone in the industry; the framework is coming together,” said Gustafson. As a non-profit association there are certain procedures to follow.

“This will be an added value to being a member of the association. We want industry members to know this is an organization interested in their success and survival.”

AMUSEMENT EXPO 2014

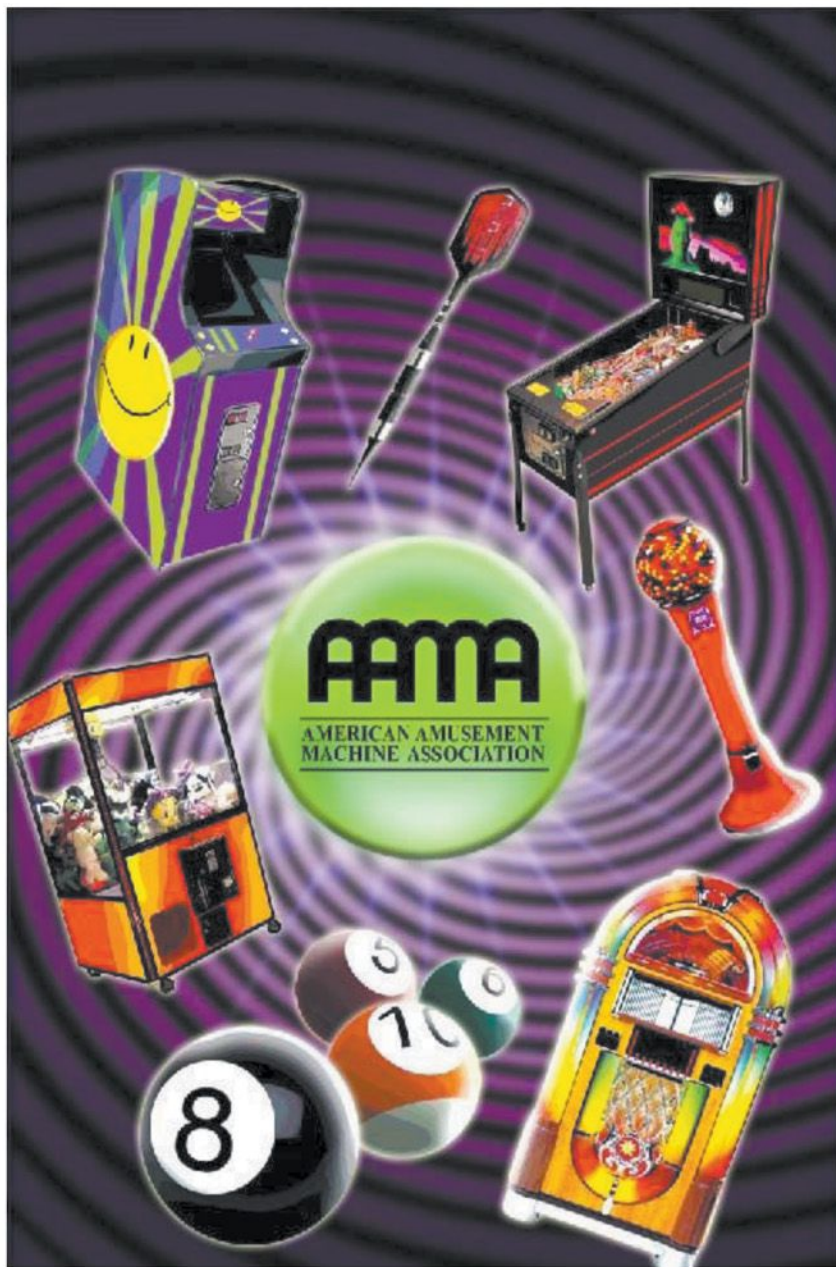
Marketing efforts are under way for the spring show. Gustafson said, “We want to create greater relevance with people in our industry and adjacent industries with a more manageable trade show structure of one full day of education and two full days of exhibits.”

Gustafson mentioned that a mission statement is being formulated for the Amusement Expo: “There is a sense of energy and enthusiasm present in the show committee. Meaningful activity is taking place. Our committees are made up of people who possess high levels of passion, integrity, and intention. Combine those three elements and good things are sure to happen.” ▲



Pete Gustafson
AAMA
President

“We want industry members to know this is an organization interested in their success and survival.”



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The value of education

John Pascaretti is at the halfway mark in his term as President of the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA). A significant amount of travel is scheduled in the fourth quarter.

In October Pascaretti attended the West Virginia Amusement and Limited Video Lottery Association (WVALVLA) State Meeting. The meeting included a tribute to Jerry Derrick of Derrick Music Co. in Charleston, W.Va., a Past President of AMOA who died suddenly in April.

Pascaretti said, "When I took office at the AMOA Breakfast Meeting during Amusement Expo 2013 in March, Jerry was one of the first to congratulate me and told me I would be fine. It was a nice thing to remember Jerry by. He remained interested in AMOA's work long after his term and he made many contributions to the association."

On tap for November: the Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association (GAMOA) Annual Meeting, the AMOA Road Scholar Program, and the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo. On Dec. 6 he will attend the Music and Vending Association of South Dakota (MVASD) Annual Meeting.

In every appearance at a state event Pascaretti said he "emphasizes all the work that AMOA is involved with that helps operators and the industry."

He added, "I can assure association members that the officers and board communicate on a daily basis and are engaged on issues that affect them, in addition to insuring that we continue to expand benefits for the members."

One of those benefits is the new Road Scholar Program that takes place Nov. 9-10 at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare Chicago.

"We understand that everyone is doing more with less staff," he said. "And we know that everyone cannot get away for the time required for the Notre Dame Management Program. We hope that this program will lead to those attendees wanting more and signing up for Notre Dame."

Pascaretti continued, "AMOA continues to provide educational opportunities and keep members informed about what is going on in the industry."

He recalled being in Class 13 of the Notre Dame program, echoing a statement often heard: "Our class was the

best class." He also participated in the Notre Dame Masters Program.

Pascaretti said plans are to continue the Road Scholar Program and possibly host it in different cities around the country to make it convenient for AMOA members to attend.

"The intent of the Road Scholar Program is to reach out to as many members as we possibly can," said Pascaretti. "There is nothing like being at Notre Dame, but it's a commitment that is not always easy to make. Everyone who has been to Notre Dame can't say enough good things about it.

It's all part of the networking and camaraderie that the program instills.

"One of the most valuable things you take away from Notre Dame is a phone book of people you can call to share ideas and discuss issues. There's nothing like speaking with someone who has been there to shortcut the process.

"You're talking with people who share a common interest with you who are not your competitors. You also reconnect at the trade show. We would like every AMOA member to take advantage of Notre Dame."

Pascaretti complimented the AMOA board members who give so generously of their time on behalf of AMOA: "It's a group of people who are genuinely involved in the industry. This is not a good old boys club. We are a working board, a group of dedicated people trying to make things better. Everyone's viewpoint is important and everyone has a voice. We have some hits and we have some misses, but we keep on swinging."

He added, "That's what makes the position of being President so satisfying: There is a group of people behind you working their tails off and supporting you."

Lastly, Pascaretti turned to Education Day on March 25 at the Amusement Expo 2014, the full day of free seminars before the two days of exhibits.

"The emphasis is on education," he said, "and it cannot be overstated. AMOA and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) have been working together on this education program and we are all very excited about it. There are plenty of good topics and we hope that will bring attendees to the show." ▲



John Pascaretti
AMOA
President

"AMOA continues to provide educational opportunities, expand benefits, and keep members informed."

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Brian Elliott



VNEA.com...an operator's friend!

Last month I discussed the Player Friendliness of the Valley National Eight-Ball (VNEA) Web site (www.VNEA.com). This issue I will focus on the **Charter Holder Usefulness** of our site.

I'm going to share the incredible amount of important information that our site contains for our Charter Holders and how, if they use this site to its full potential, they will absorb that extra knowledge needed to stay on top of current VNEA events and successfully conduct their pool league program.

Our site is full of information for the public to see and use, but there is also a special Charter Holder Login section specifically designed for our Charter Holders, which allows them to utilize some of the promotional tools that VNEA offers.

There are major advantages to browsing our site. Following are a few of the useful items in the Charter Holder section.

Sanctioning: Our site is the best place to sanction your league players. By clicking on Charter Holder Sanctioning, you will be guided step-by-step through the simple process of entering your players in our system. This is available to our Charters 24/7 and can be used as needed throughout the league season.

Charter Holder Directory: Our Charters have every VNEA league operator at their fingertips with our Charter Holder Directory. We have an alphabetical listing and a listing by State/Province and Country.

A lot of times the best source of league knowledge and insightful tips is from fellow Charter Holders in the VNEA family. We make available a list of veteran operators who are more than willing to help anyone who has league questions. What a great tool for our new members AND our long-time members.

Popular Charter Holder Forms: This is probably the most visited and POPULAR area of the Charter Login sec-

tion. This area contains both the VNEA Material Order Form and Awards Request Form. These forms are mandatory when ordering both materials and awards.

Also, when operators sanction their players, they must use our VNEA League Recap Form (L-15R). This form is also available in this section. Another popular download from this area is the Flow Charts. We have printable Flow Charts (both double and single elimination) to accommodate

four to 64 player/team needs. Priceless!

League Schedules:

No matter what size league you put together, the VNEA has got you covered. We have printable League Schedules for leagues with four to 16 teams. These sheets take the guesswork out of scheduling your teams, and they're free.

VNEA Logos and

Artwork: A lot of times Charters want to use the VNEA logo or our Charlie Cougar logos on their score sheets, posters, Web site, etc. We have a section of the Charter Login where high resolution logos can be downloaded and used as you please. And if you don't see what you want there, don't forget that we're just a phone call away.

Various Other Helpful Items: Both the Vegas and Junior World Championships "Tournament Kits" are available online so that you will never have to guess about event details. Also, when it comes time to register players for Vegas, you will easily be able to do that in this section.

And if you are looking for new software to use for your league system, you can click on Software Options and see everything that is available in our industry.

As you can see by the amount of information above, the VNEA's Web site is truly an operator's friend. ▲

From promotional tools to popular Charter Holder forms, it's all found on the VNEA Web site.



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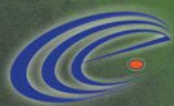
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tel: (800)937-2662
e-mail: llschneider@prodigy.net
web: www.amoa.com

November 12-14

NAMA CoffeeTea&Water
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Opryland Hotel
tel: (312)346-0370
fax: (312)704-4140
web: www.vending.org

November 18-22 PM

IAAPA Attractions Expo
Orlando, Fla.
Orange County Convention Center
tel: (703)836-4800
e-mail: iaapa@iaapa.org
web: www.iaapa.org

January 18-21, 2014

BPAA Bowling Summit
San Diego, Calif.
Omni San Diego Hotel
tel: (800)343-1329
fax: (817)633-2940
web: (www.bpaa.com)

January 21-23

EAG International
London, England
ExCel London
tel: +44(0)1582-767254
e-mail: karencooke@eagexpo.com
web: www.eagexpo.com

February 4-6

ICE Totally Gaming
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ExCel London
tel: +4490)20-7384-8119
e-mail: john.hodgkins@clarionevents.com
web: www.icetotallygaming.com

February 6-8

AMOA Council of States Meeting
Tampa, Fla.
Renaissance Tampa International Plaza Hotel
tel: (800)937-2662
e-mail: amoa@amoa.com
web: www.amoa.com

March 4-6

Vending Expo and World of Entertainments
Kyiv, Ukraine
International Exhibition Center
tel: +38-044-258-01-23
e-mail: manager@troyan.kiev.ua
web: www.vendingexpo.kiev.ua

March 25-27 PM

Amusement Expo
Las Vegas, Nev.
Las Vegas Convention Center
tel: (708)226-1300
fax: info@amusementexpo.org
web: www.amusementexpo.org

March 25-27

National Bulk Vendors Association (NBVA) Expo
Las Vegas, Nev.
Las Vegas Convention Center
tel: (888)628-2672
e-mail: info@nbva.org
web: www.nbva.org

March 25-27

International Pizza Expo
Las Vegas, Nev.
Las Vegas Convention Center
tel: (502)736-9500, ext. 520
e-mail: boakley@pizzatoday.com
web: www.pizzaexpo.com

March 26-28

Nightclub & Bar
Las Vegas, Nev.
Las Vegas Convention Center
tel: (888)966-2727 (attendees)
e-mail: nightclub@xpressreg.net
web: www.ncbshow.com

April 9-11

NAMA OneShow
Chicago, Ill.
Lakeside Center McCormick Place
tel: (312)346-0370
fax: (312)704-4140
web: www.namaoneshow.org

April 25-May 3

Team Dart
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Bally's Las Vegas
tel: (800)808-9884
e-mail: info@ndadarts.com
web: www.ndadarts.com

May 22-26

BullShooter World Challenge of Champions
Rosemont, Ill.
Hyatt Regency O'Hare
tel: (800)435-8319
e-mail: lorid@bullshooter.com
web: www.bullshooter.com

May 22-31

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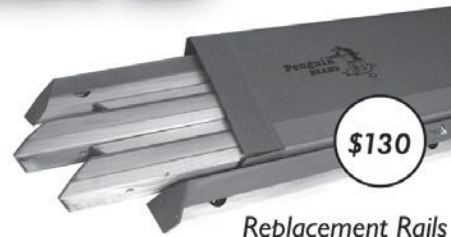
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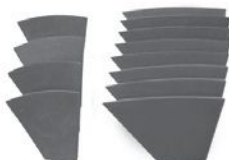
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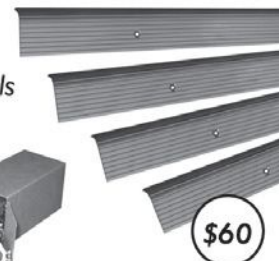
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† 410 Deacon Blvd
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EQUIPMENT CHECK IN Dec 13: 11am-9pm
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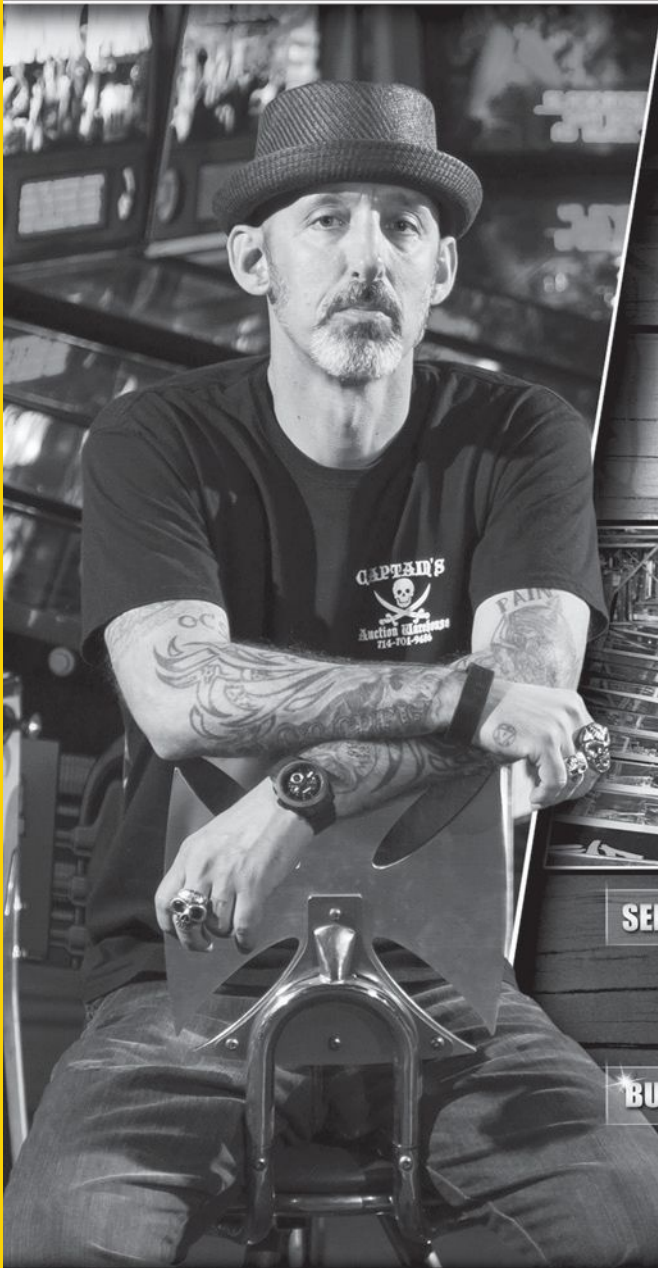


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- Jumping Jackpot
- Pinball machines
- Deal or No Deal
- Off Road Thunder
- Ms Pac Man
- Multicades
- Colorrama
- Chocolate Crane
- Golden Tee Complete
- Jukebox
- Dog Pounder
- Tonka kiddie ride
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