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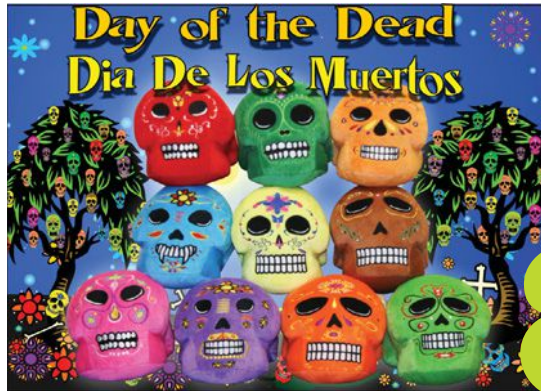
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35 State of the Industry

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46 Show Previews

The 2013 Amusement Expo, along with the 2013 NBVA Expo, are taking place next month in Las Vegas. The International Pizza Expo and the Nightclub & Bar Convention and Trade Show are happening at the same time. We've got information and schedules for each show to help you make the most of your time in Las Vegas.

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This issue contains *Play Meter's* Annual State of the Industry Report, which the magazine has been conducting since 1976. First let me thank all of the readers who took the time to respond to the survey, which was made available electronically for the first time in its history.

Considerable time and energy went into compiling the results, which are shown alongside the results from the four previous years in order to provide perspective.

In addition to questions about revenue, new purchases, and general business, we ask a timely question each year and this time we posed one that we thought would be on the upbeat side: "What was the bright spot in your business in 2012?"

Without question, most respondents singled out digital jukeboxes and ATMs as bright spots for them. Those who were happy with 2012 said they invested in new equipment and obtained some new locations. Several comments focused on satisfaction with new products offered in 2012.

Alas, there were respondents who did not find any bright spots last year: One said, "The sun, when it came out." Another operator said his bright spot was eliminating pool and dart leagues, something that runs counter to what most operators consider a staple and a necessity to offer and retain players.

There were general comments as well: "These are tough times not only for the industry but also for the economy in general. It seems like we pay union wages and only get minimum wage results."

One respondent said that in his state, "The coin-op business is falling like a rock," adding, "I don't see any turnaround; home systems have pretty well destroyed (our) games."

Another said he had two family entertainment center (FEC) locations but one closed due to the economy in his area. He added, "We're 38 percent off pre-recession business and have gotten only 10 percent back."

The saddest comment was, "I finally admitted to myself that I am never going to make any real money in the business or be able to maintain a business satisfactory to me and my family. The good old days left long ago."

For some, the good new days are here and they are making the most of their existing equipment and continuing to invest in new equipment. One operator said, "Revenue did not fall as far as it did for some others. I think adding new pool tables, darts, and jukeboxes helped."

Plentiful new equipment will be on display at the upcoming Amusement Expo in Las Vegas, March 20-22. The expo will be co-located for the third consecutive year with the National Bulk Vendors Association (NBVA) Expo. In addition, a crossover day has been arranged on March 21 for Amusement Expo attendees to visit the International Pizza Expo in the Las Vegas Convention Center.

Check out the show previews in this issue for the Amusement Expo, the NBVA Expo, the Pizza Expo, and the Nightclub and Bar Expo, all taking place the same week. Note the new hours for the Amusement Expo and NBVA Expo: March 20, Noon-6 pm; March 21, 10 am-5 pm; March 22, 9 am-1 pm.

After the State of the Industry Report and the show previews, check out our regular columns and features. Pinball lovers will especially enjoy the coverage of the Pinball Expo. ▲



BONNIE THEARD
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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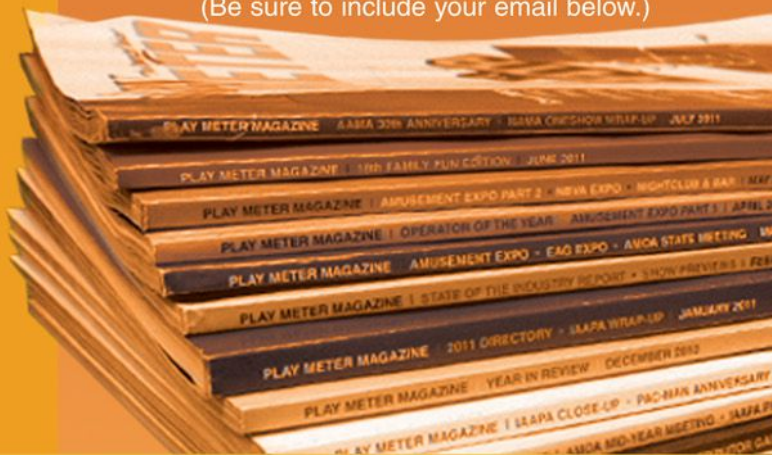
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STATE OF THE **industry** report

2012

VITAL STATISTICS

Number of locations:

Arcades: 1,500

Street: 149,000

FECs: 2,000

Total locations: 152,500

Number of operators: 2,200

<i>Air Hockey</i>	41
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What was the bright spot in your business in 2012?

“Everything was better in 2012. It’s about time because in 2008, 2009, and 2010 we were sliding the wrong way.”

State of the Industry Report

General Business

1. Where do you operate?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Arcades ONLY	*	1%	7%	4%	6%
Street Locations ONLY	43%	34%	36%	24%	43%
FECs ONLY	9%	5%	3%	12%	12%
Bulk ONLY	9%	6%	5%	2%	9%
Various Combinations	45%	54%	49%	58%	30%
Did not specify	4%	*	*	*	*

NOTE: Various combinations include Arcade/FEC, Arcade/FEC/Street, FEC/Street/Bulk, etc.

2. How many locations do you have?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Arcade	1,500	2,100	2,700	3,400	5,000
Street Location	149,000	101,000	110,000	147,000	168,000
FEC	2,000	1,800	1,900	1,200	3,000
Bulk	8,000	30,000	37,000	24,300	*

NOTE: Smaller response from Bulk operators for 2012 affected the totals.

3. If an FEC operator, what do you operate?

23% of FEC operators have miniature golf (up from 2011) and 8% of FEC operators are doing coin-op Mini Bowling (double from 2011).

4. If an FEC operator, what types of events do you host?

36% of FEC operators host birthday parties, 26% do corporate/group events, and 21% do prom nights/lock ins.

5. How long has your company been in business?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average	36 yrs.	34 yrs.	35 yrs.	27 yrs.	29 yrs.
10 yrs. or less	12%	6%	13%	15%	19%
11 to 25 yrs.	24%	37%	29%	39%	31%
Over 25 yrs.	63%	57%	57%	46%	50%
Less than a year	*	*	1%	2%	*

6. Are you optimistic that your company will be in the coin-op industry in the next five years?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	94%	85%	89%	77%	91%

7. Has your community been affected by a smoking ban in your area?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	70%	69%	52%	45%	49%

8. Do you attend major industry trade shows?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	70%	61%	59%	60%	61%

NOTE: Those who named which trade shows, the Amusement Expo was at the top of the list. IAAPA Expo attendance was up from 2011.

9. Are you pleased with the Amusement Expo show in the spring?

	2012	2011	2010
Yes	83%	79%	80%

10. Have routes been sold in your area in the past year?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	51%	52%	50%	52%	42%

11. What is the average target age of your customers in the MAJORITY of your locations?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
12 yrs. & Under	4%	13%	9%	22%	8%
13 yrs.-18 yrs.	8%	13%	8%	12%	14%
Over 18	50%	37%	38%	25%	38%
All Ages	38%	37%	45%	41%	40%

“Revenue did not fall as far as it did for some others. I think that adding new pool tables, darts, and jukeboxes helped.”

What was the bright spot in your business in 2012?

State of the Industry Report

12. Indicate YOUR share of the revenue split with locations?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
GAMES					
Under 50%	13%	7%	2%	5%	11%
50/50 Split	65%	66%	8%	71%	64%
Over 50%	22%	27%	30%	24%	25%
MUSIC					
Under 50%	27%	8%	17%	22%	11%
50/50 Split	34%	40%	39%	42%	46%
Over 50%	39%	52%	44%	36%	43%
BULK					
Under 50%	24%	41%	46%	37%	*
50/50 Split	12%	21%	16%	23%	*
Over 50%	64%	38%	38%	40%	*

13. Does your business have a Facebook presence?

	2012	2011	2010
Yes	35%	30%	21%

15. Does your business have its own Web site? E-mail address?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Web site-Yes	53%	46%	34%	43%	33%
E-mail address-Yes	88%	79%	69%	72%	81%

16. Do you use a “Smart Phone” in your business?

	2012	2011	2010
Yes	79%	44%	33%

NOTE: Music apps were popular.

17. What industry Web sites do you visit regularly?

The #1 answer was “music sites,” followed by associations. No one checked off “none,” compared to 37% last year.

18. Where do you get your industry news?

Magazines	51%	Web sites	14%	E-newsletters	35%
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19. Which social networking sites do you visit the most?

Facebook	86%	Twitter	6%	Other	8%
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NOTE: Networking on Facebook went up from last year’s 38% of respondents.

20. Business activity in your area:

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
COMPETITION					
Increased	41%	30%	21%	37%	27%
Decreased	26%	24%	37%	26%	21%
Unchanged	33%	46%	42%	37%	52%
LOCAL ECONOMY					
Increased	16%	6%	7%	2%	5%
Decreased	63%	80%	84%	86%	79%
Unchanged	21%	14%	9%	12%	15%
YOUR BUSINESS					
Increased	41%	22%	23%	13%	25%
Decreased	47%	57%	56%	67%	52%
Unchanged	12%	21%	21%	20%	23%

21. Do you belong to industry associations?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	76%	67%	64%	60%	79%

NOTE: Increased number of operators involved in both AMOA and state associations.

What was the
bright spot in
your business
in 2012?

“Digital jukeboxes and merchandisers (self-redemption) saved the day.”

State of the Industry Report

22. Who handles the majority of your financing?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Banks	21%	20%	23%	37%	29%
Firestone Financial	17%	10%	14%	21%	16%
Finance myself	50%	63%	58%	37%	45%
Distributor	4%	7%	5%	5%	7%
Other	*	*	*	*	3%

23. Are you offering your customers online tournaments?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	40%	35%	28%	23%	32%

24. How do you plan for your new game purchases?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Dollar Amount (average \$) (8% of operators)	*	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$74,000
Percent of Gross (average %) (2% of operators)	13%	10%	19%	18%	10%
Buy equipment by need	87%	90%	81%	86%	85%

25. Are you using a cashless payment system in any locations?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	39%	44%	25%	33%	13%

26. Do you plan to diversify your business?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	67%	52%	45%	53%	40%

27. Do you sell machines to the home market?

	2012	2011	2010	2009
Yes	72%	64%	60%	59%

28. Do you see video gaming coming to your state?

	2012	2011	2010
Yes	38%	39%	40%

29. Do you visit distributor open houses?

	2012	2011
Yes	74%	77%

30. Do you operate sweepstakes games?

	2012
Yes	2%

31. Is law enforcement cracking down on sweepstakes games in your area?

	2012
Yes	59%

Pinball Games

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$41	\$31	\$31	\$33	\$42
Average # Per Operator	13	11	11	10	12
Total # On Location	22,308	15,004	15,433	17,000	20,000
Total New Purchases	6,864	2,728	2,806	2,900	5,000

78% operate pinball machines; 62% last year.

24% of those operating pinball games bought new ones; 28% last year.

“We were able to get several new accounts this year.”

What was the bright spot in your business in 2012?

Video Games

Dedicated Video Games

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$53	\$58	\$71	\$69	\$213
Average # Per Operator	64	80	86	113	92
Total # On Location	126,720	146,080	168,130	254,000	211,000
Total New Purchases	7,920	9,130	7,640	20,250	21,000

43% of those operating dedicated games bought new ones; 51% last year.
90% operate dedicated video games.

Video Game Kits

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$32	\$38	\$35	\$42	\$65
Average # Per Operator	59	49	37	49	39
Total # On Location	103,840	88,347	60,421	93,100	90,000
Total New Purchases	10,560	9,015	9,798	13,300	18,000

32% of those operating kits bought new ones; 44% last year.
80% operate video game kits.

Deluxe Video Game Simulators

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$64	\$96	\$86	\$115	\$194
Average # Per Operator	13	27	19	13	26
Total # On Location	13,860	29,700	20,539	13,000	60,000
Total New Purchases	1,980	3,300	5,405	6,000	16,000

19% of those operating deluxe simulators bought new ones; 36% last year.
50% bought an average of 17 used video games in the past 12 months.
45% operate video game simulators.

Do you still charge 25 cents per play on ANY of your videos?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
OLD games-Yes	63%	70%	63%	62%	66%
NEW games-Yes	12%	15%	14%	20%	13%

What is your standard price per play on your video games?

	Upright videos:			Deluxe videos:			Kits:		
	2012	2011	2010	2012	2011	2010	2012	2011	2010
25 cents	3%	4%	5%	3%	3%	2%	18%	20%	27%
50 cents	51%	64%	72%	13%	13%	19%	62%	70%	70%
75 cents	12%	14%	7%	13%	15%	19%	12%	3%	*
\$1	32%	18%	16%	57%	65%	37%	8%	7%	3%
Over \$1	*	*	*	14%	4%	3%	*	*	*
Under 25 cents	2%	*	*						

Photo Booths

	2012	2011
Average Weekly Gross	\$85	\$123
Average # Per Operator	4	6
Total # On Location	4,400	4,356
Total New Purchases	1,100	1,452

50% operate photo booths; 33% last year.
13% of those operating photo booths bought new ones; 36% last year.

State of the Industry Report

“We converted the route from 45 and CD jukeboxes to digital jukeboxes.”

State of the Industry Report

Jukeboxes

Digital Downloading Jukeboxes	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$165	\$155	\$155	\$162	\$203
Average # Per Operator	55	39	28	43	8
Total # On Location	94,380	65,208	41,216	64,500	50,000
Total New Purchases	41,184	15,048	16,192	13,500	12,000

78% operate digital jukeboxes; 76% last year.

65% of those operating digital jukeboxes bought new ones.

22% use the karaoke feature; 46% use the photo feature; 54% use the social networking feature; and 89% use the mobile apps feature.

CD Jukeboxes	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$40	\$61	\$56	\$61	\$70
Average # Per Operator	11	13	6	15	17
Total # On Location	14,179	14,872	6,900	17,625	22,000
Total New Purchases	*	1,144	2,300	1,175	1,800

59% operate CD jukeboxes; 52% last year.

* None of those operating them bought new ones; 52% last year.

Pool Tables

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$50	\$56	\$55	\$58	\$78
Average # Per Operator	49	35	31	51	43
Total # On Location	87,318	62,370	55,614	84,150	80,000
Total New Purchases	10,692	7,128	5,382	8,250	9,000

81% operate pool tables; same as last year.

22% of those operating pool tables bought new ones; 30% last year.

53% indicated that they are using pool tables with battery-operated bill acceptors; 42% last year.

32% indicated they run tournaments on their table games, primarily pool tournaments; 60% last year.

How much are you charging per play on your pool tables?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Over \$1	22%	16%	14%	11%	8%
\$1	50%	62%	51%	64%	47%
75 Cents	17%	31%	27%	14%	33%
50 Cents	11%	9%	8%	11%	12%

Foosball Tables

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$13	\$15	\$16	\$20	\$23
Average # Per Operator	7	4	3	6	7
Total # On Location	9,702	5,720	5,199	6,000	8,000
Total New Purchases	4,158	1,430	1,173	1,000	1,500

63% operate foosball tables; 65% last year.

8% of those operating foosball tables bought new ones.

“The Amusement Expo in 2012 was a good show with great new products.”

What was the bright spot in your business in 2012?

Electronic Darts

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$25	\$32	\$24	\$26	\$31
Average # Per Operator	\$39	25	14	55	49
Total # On Location	54,054	35,750	16,422	64,800	66,000
Total New Purchases	15,246	11,440	3,519	10,800	11,000

63% operate electronic darts; 65% last year.

28% of those operating electronic darts bought new ones.

24% run leagues on all of their dart games (17% last year); 16% on some of their dart games (27% last year); and 60% on none of their dart games (58% last year).

Shuffleboards

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$16	\$26	\$14	\$17	\$24
Average # Per Operator	2	3	4	3	4
Total # On Location	2,068	1,386	1,656	1,800	2,800
Total New Purchases	1,034	924	828	600	700

47% operate shuffleboards; 21% last year.

3% of those operating shuffleboards bought new ones; 31% last year.

Air Hockey

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$45	\$61	\$55	\$65	\$80
Average # Per Operator	11	8	8	9	9
Total # On Location	17,908	12,320	12,676	12,600	13,000
Total New Purchases	3,256	3,080	4,761	4,200	7,600

74% operate air hockey; 70% last year.

5% of those operating air hockey bought new ones.

Boxers

	2012	2011
Average Weekly Gross	\$110	\$87
Average # Per Operator	5	6
Total # On Location	7,810	6,996
Total New Purchases	3,124	3,498

71% operate boxers; 53% last year.

35% of those operating boxers bought new ones.

State of the Industry Report

“New locations opening up presented new opportunities.”

State of the Industry Report

Redemption/Novelty

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$76	\$118	\$100	\$151	\$198
Average # Per Operator	51	54	83	80	78
Total # On Location	79,662	72,468	101,177	128,000	120,000
Total New Purchases	10,934	21,472	20,723	17,600	25,000

71% operate redemption/novelty equipment; 61% last year.
51% of those operating redemption bought new ones; 63% last year.

Is there a prize value limit in your area?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	34%	28%	33%	38%	31%

NOTE: Prize value limits average \$10.

Kiddie Rides

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$23	\$35	\$40	\$33	\$44
Average # Per Operator	13	13	11	11	13
Total # On Location	12,298	10,010	9,108	12,100	12,000
Total New Purchases	1,892	1,540	3,312	3,300	3,000

43% operate kiddie rides; 35% last year.
5% of those who operate kiddie rides bought new ones; 14% last year.

Cranes

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$77	\$121	\$92	\$82	\$115
Average # Per Operator	35	30	20	30	21
Total # On Location	71,610	58,080	39,560	51,000	47,000
Total New Purchases	10,340	11,616	9,890	17,000	18,000

93% operate cranes; up from 88% last year.
37% of those operating cranes bought new ones.

Rotaries

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$30	\$59	\$67	\$85	\$94
Average # Per Operator	4	11	8	6	7
Total # On Location	2,728	4,840	3,864	2,700	2,500
Total New Purchases	*	880	483	450	*

31% operate rotaries; 20% last year.
None of those operating rotaries bought new ones.

“Decreasing gas prices helped my business, and getting some new locations.”

What was the bright spot in your business in 2012?

Countertops/Touch Screen Games

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$33	\$38	\$43	\$47	\$62
Average # Per Operator	39	34	36	39	43
Total # On Location	68,640	62,832	58,788	68,250	78,000
Total New Purchases	8,800	7,392	13,064	12,250	15,000

80% operate countertops; 84% last year.

40% of those operating countertops bought new ones; 60% last year.

Video Poker

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$61	\$139	\$81	\$92	\$236
Average # Per Operator	36	22	5	11	79
Total # On Location	11,088	11,616	2,300	5,500	15,000

14% operate video poker; 29% last year.

3% of those who operate video poker bought new ones; 17% last year.

Is law enforcement cracking down on this type of equipment in your area?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	49%	57%	62%	48%	45%

Have video poker machines been seized in your area?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	57%	63%	59%	40%	55%

Do you know any operators involved in a court case involving video pokers?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	42%	52%	51%	38%	40%

NOTE: We've asked this question for many years, and the answers always vary because it's a difficult category of equipment to quantify; results may be very different year to year.

8-Line Games

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$144	\$94	\$97	\$105	\$160
Average # Per Operator	47	29	36	30	49
Total # On Location	20,680	13,398	19,044	15,000	23,000

20% operate 8-Line games; 21% last year.

10% of those who operate 8-Line games bought new ones.

Is law enforcement cracking down on this type of equipment in your area?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	48%	58%	57%	54%	50%

Do you know operators who have been involved in a court case involving 8-Line games?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	36%	64%	48%	41%	46%

Have 8-Line games been seized by law enforcement in your area?

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Yes	54%	51%	53%	46%	58%

State of the Industry Report

What was the
bright spot in
your business
in 2012?

"I managed to pay my bills AND stay in business."

State of the Industry Report

Automated Teller Machines (ATMs)

	2012	2011	2010
Average Weekly Gross	\$280	\$50	\$65
Average # Per Operator	25	22	18
Total # On Location	33,550	16,830	16,146
Total New Purchases	14,762	4,950	5,382

61% operate ATMs; 45% last year.

32% of those operating ATMs bought new ones; 68% last year.

41% indicate they will add ATMs to their route; 46% indicated interest last year.

Vending-Bulk

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$50	\$32	\$56	\$67	\$66
Average # Per Operator	27	63	48	133	165
Total # On Location	22,275	72,512	76,176	205,000	217,000

48% of the bulk vending respondents indicated they operate mechanical bulk; 27% operate electronic bulk.

10% indicated that they have raised their bulk vend price-per-play in the last 12 months; 24% last year.

40% have seen traditional amusement operators adding bulk to their routes; 43% last year.

24% have added other types of equipment, with cranes at the top of their list; 31% last year.

Mechanical machines averaged the same weekly gross as last year (\$30), while electro-mechanical machines averaged a weekly gross of \$71 (\$38 last year).

50-cent and under vends remained the same as last year but the \$2 vend appeared and made up 6% of the over 50-cent vends.

Vending-Full Line

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$131	\$72	\$63	\$55	\$123
Average # Per Operator	59	88	63	55	108
Total # On Location	24,662	25,168	27,531	22,000	30,000

19% operate full line vending equipment; 13% last year.

10% of those who operate full line vending bought new ones; 8% last year.

There was added interest in personal products and snack vending this year.

Vending-Cigarette

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Average Weekly Gross	\$223	\$137	\$186	\$192	\$135
Average # Per Operator	13	19	22	15	16
Total # On Location	7,436	8,778	10,120	8,250	9,000

26% operate cigarette vending machines; 21% last year.

None indicated purchasing new equipment.



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SAY WHAT?



10
second
interview
with...

Tracy Sarris is the President of INOVA, an association and business management consulting company. She has previously served as the President/CEO for the International Association for the Leisure Entertainment Industry (IALEI).

My first job was:

a cashier at McDonalds.

My favorite type of music is:

anything that fits the mood! (Except Bluegrass!)

I wish I had the nerve to:

bungee jump.

If I were invisible, I would:

go as a stowaway on a space shuttle mission.

If money and time were not obstacles, I would:

want to say "thank you" and give back something to all the people who have positively influenced my life and made me realize that even the smallest gestures can make a very big difference.

One word that describes my personality is:

optimistic.

The best advice I ever got was:

learn from the past and then let it go.

My favorite TV show is:

"Shameless."

If I could have dinner with a famous person that person would be:

Richard Branson.

My most cherished inanimate possession is:

(are) the handmade and personally picked out gifts from my sons when they were very young.



Photo courtesy of AAMA



Play Meter Operator's Choice Awards 2012

Amusement Expo rocks Las Vegas

The 2013 Amusement Expo, co-sponsored by the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) and the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) is fast approaching. The show will be co-located again this year with the National Bulk Vendors Association (NBVA) Expo. Show dates are March 20-22 in Las Vegas. This year's theme is "Rock the Show," highlighting the impact the jukebox has had on American culture and the coin-op industry.

All registrants receive three days of admission to the Amusement Expo and the NBVA Expo, access to free education programs, entry to the Industry Gala Reception at the Las Vegas Hotel, and special room rates at the Las Vegas Hotel. AAMA and AMOA members receive two free badges.

On March 19, the American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation (AAMCF) will host its annual Golf Outing at the Royal Links Golf Club. Located less than 20 minutes from the Las Vegas Strip, this castle-style clubhouse was inspired by 11 different British Open rotation courses.

Highlights will include awards presentations by AAMA and *Play Meter* after the ribbon cutting ceremony on March 20, an Industry Gala Reception on March 20, Wayne E. Hesch Memorial Scholarship Raffle Drawings (the grand prize is a 2013 Dodge Charger SE), and the AMOA Breakfast and Membership Meeting and Innovator Award Presentations.

Again this year, Foundations Entertainment University (FEU) will host a two-day/one evening educational event March 18-19 prior to the expo for entrepreneurs looking to get into the location-based entertainment industry; companies that are planning facilities; and owners/managers who want to grow, modernize, or invest in their current operations.

There will be a one-day reciprocal exchange of exhibit floor badges on March 21 between the Amusement Expo and the International Pizza Expo, which takes place March 19-21.

There is no secret to success when it comes to expo education. The basic formula is having a team of mostly operators plan a series of sessions that

appeal to mostly operators. This year's lineup reflects this long-standing approach. So, on March 20, prior to the commencement of the Amusement Expo trade show at 12 p.m., there will be a full morning devoted exclusively to structured learning for industry executives.

Preliminary Schedule of Education Sessions on March 20 (as of press time)

8-9 am

Self-Redemption: Obtaining Your Greatest Returns; Moderator/Panelist: Chip O'Hara, Midwest Coin Concepts, Waite Park, Minn.; Presenter/Panelist: Joe Camarota, Alpha-Omega Amusements & Sales Inc., East Brunswick, N.J., and Foundations Entertainment University (FEU); Jim Chapman, Coast to Coast Entertainment.

8-9 am

What You Need to Know About ATMs; Moderator/Panelist: Michael Guthrie, Cypress Advantage, Spokane, Wash.; Presenter/Panelist: Brandon Hedley, Rich and Junnies Coin Inc., Dubuque, Iowa; Rob Lowe, PAI/ATM Express, Billings, Mont.

Schedule *at a Glance*

Amusement Expo

9:10-10:10 am

Enhancing Your Route Via Social Networking; Moderator/Panelist: Mary Lavine, Bullseye Inc., Madison, Wis.; Presenter: Barry Chandler, Chandler Interactive, Columbus, Ohio; Panelist: Michael Martinez, N2 Industries Inc., Brea, Calif.

9:10-10:10 am

Keeping Those Cranes Cranking: Tweaks That Make a Difference!; Moderator/Panelist: Marty Murin, Rainbow Falls Video Service Co., Tannersville, N.Y.

10:20-11:40 am

Operator Roundtable Survival for Route Operators III; Co-Moderators: Dale Lazar, H. Lazar & Son Inc., Pittsburgh, Pa.; Phil Juckem, All Brands Vending, Tampa, Fla.

NBVA EXPO

The following companies, as of press time, will be exhibiting at the NBVA Expo: A&A Global Industries,

MONDAY, MARCH 18

7:30 am-9 pm

Registration for Foundations Entertainment University Program, Las Vegas Hotel

8:30 am-9 pm

Foundations Entertainment University Program (includes lunch and dinner)*, Las Vegas Hotel

TUESDAY, MARCH 19

8 am-5 pm

Registration Open

8:30 am-5:30 pm

Foundations University Program (includes lunch)*, Las Vegas Hotel

11:30 am-12 pm

Bus departs from Las Vegas Hotel to Royal Links Golf Club

12:30 pm - 5 pm

AAMCF Charity Golf Tournament; Royal Links Golf Club

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

8 am-6 pm

Registration Open

8 am-11:30 am

Education Sessions

11:45 am

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony & Awards Presentation

12 pm-6 pm

Exhibit Hall Open

5 pm

Wayne E. Hesch Memorial Scholarship Raffle Drawing

6:15 pm-8:15 pm

Industry Gala Reception, Las Vegas Hotel

THURSDAY, MARCH 21

8 am-10 am

AMOA Breakfast & Membership Meeting

8:30 am-5 pm

Registration Open

10 am-5 pm

Exhibit Hall Open

3 pm

Wayne E. Hesch Memorial Scholarship Raffle Drawing

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

9 am-1 pm

Registration Open

9 am-1 pm

Exhibit Hall Open

12 pm

Wayne E. Hesch Memorial Scholarship Raffle Drawing

*Separate registration required

Schedule *at a Glance*

NBVA Expo

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

8 am-5pm

Registration Desk Hours

12 pm-6 pm

Show Hours

1 pm

New Member Orientation

6 pm-8 pm

Shared Cocktail Hour*

THURSDAY, MARCH 21

8:30 am-5 pm

Registration Desk Hours

10 am-5 pm

Show Hours

10:30 am

New Member Orientation

8 am-10 am

General Meeting*

7 pm-11 pm

Awards Dinner*

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

9 am-1 pm

Registration Desk Hours

9 am-1 pm

Show Hours

*For NBVA Members Only

Allstar Vending, Baton Lock & Hardware, Beaver Machine Corp., Brand Vending Products, Cardinal Distributing, Carousel Vending/Ford Gum Concord Confections/Tootsie Roll Inc., Flatline Corp., Impulse Industries Inc. Oak Leaf Confections Ltd., Oak Mfg. Co. Inc., SSM Vending, The Northwestern Corp., Top Notch Toys Inc., and Vendynamics.

Due to the overwhelming success of last year's event,

the NBVA will be teaming up with the AMOA and AAMA on Wed. March 20, for another shared cocktail hour. The NBVA Awards Dinner will be held March 21 from 7 pm to 11 pm at the Las Vegas Hotel. This year's awards dinner will have a '60s theme. Be sure to wear your grooviest finest!

For more information on the AAMCF Golf Outing, call Tina Schwartz (847)290-9171; e-mail (tschwartz@coin-op.org). For more information on other activities, visit (www.amusementexpo.org). ▲

Fun thrives in Southwest Louisiana

Kart Ranch, located in Lafayette, La., is a family entertainment center (FEC) that places an emphasis on family, both in providing its customers with fun experiences for all ages, and in its family owned and operated business model.

Don Johnson, formerly employed as a manager of a fabrication yard in the Port of Iberia, started Kart Ranch in 1985, when the Louisiana oilfield was in major decline. The family took a vote on whether or not they would remain in Lafayette, and with the decision to stay, decided to open the track along with a small game room.

Gradually Kart Ranch expanded and the family added on as time and money permitted. Now, two of Don's four daughters work at Kart Ranch with Katie Johnson as General Manager and Krystyn Johnson helping out while earning her business degree from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Today the facility employs the "fab five" FEC attractions: go-karts, bumper boats, adventure golf, batting cages, and a game room. The facility also has a number of other attractions which include Bump-N-Blast at the bumper boats, Castle Clash, Water Wars, kiddie karts and typical inside activities including a large soft modular play area, four party rooms, a concessions stand, wide screen TVs, and games.

Don commented, "It is the synergy of all the attractions which allow the business to perform well, but the go-karts and games create the strongest draw and generate the highest share of revenue."

Approximately 60 games round the 10,000-square-foot arcade selection with a mix of (mostly) redemption, merchandisers, video games, interactive games, and kiddie rides. Big Bass Wheel by Bay Tek Games and Treasure Quest from ICE are the top performers.

With redemption games being the primary type of game in the arcade, the facility created a redemption counter to match.

Don said, "We have a redemption counter and a large display case we converted from a game. With many great redemption goods suppliers we have chosen primarily Rhode Island Novelty and Sureshot Redemption based on pricing, service, and quality. We prefer to buy American but that's a major challenge all by itself."

As far as what kids are playing for, Don offered, "What kids want is always a moving target seasonally, regionally, and following hot trends. This certainly is an area where good suppliers and publications like *Play Meter* are of great value. Our current 'best sellers' are PS Vita, Kindle Fire, and iTouch in merchandisers. At the redemption counter, it's any type of "giant" candy, tennis balls, whoopee cushions, and anything gross such as slime, putty, or splat."

On the marketing front, Krystyn's business education has provided her with fresh ideas for social media and advertising. She said, "We definitely have a Facebook page and we're hoping to expand more into different social media sites in the future. As far as advertising we use radio, TV, print magazines, and do different things with the schools. The challenge is in properly evaluating which sites or efforts create the most success in reaching our target audience."

On giving advice to operators hoping to open an FEC, Johnson said, "I could write a

book on this subject but there are certainly short lists of major considerations:

1. Common for virtually all business is the need for good personnel. Our staff is as good as, or better than, we've had in 27 years thanks to the people we employ and the managers who do our hiring and training.
2. Study of the industry by way of trade publications, trade organizations, contact with owners and management of similar existing facilities, and the application of this knowledge to one's particular location are of prime importance.
3. Many are able to and should utilize the knowledge of industry consultants, keeping in mind that each market is different and you must amend "cookbook" solutions to your specific market.
4. Another challenge and need is to always keep a facility fresh, clean, and continually renewed. Our facility has the advantage of a 12 month open season which certainly is a consideration for any in/out FEC.

On managing Kart Ranch, Katie said, "I think the best thing about the industry is that it's diverse. My work days are never the same. One of my favorite days at work would just be getting back to the basics and dealing directly with customers." ▲

KART RANCH, INC.
FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

Facility: Kart Ranch	Attractions: go karts, bumper boats, adventure golf, batting cages, game room
Location: Lafayette, La.	
Contact: (337)837-5278 www.kartranch.com	



BUTTONS
PUSH

TOUCH
SCREEN



COVER STORY

Steady innovation from



Digital Centre (DC) literally changed the face of photo booths 16 years ago with the introduction of the Dr. Face model in 1997. The company has successfully designed photo booths to meet the standards of both the coin-op industry and the rental industry.

Today's increasingly sophisticated customer base demands much more from a photo booth than the black and white photo strips of days past. Digital Centre is keenly aware of those expectations and has responded to them.

Josep Tarres, CEO of Digital Centre, said, "Digital Centre products have established the beginning of a new era for the photo booth industry. Our photo booths come with a bundle of cool new software features that transform the regular photo booth into a new technology photo booth."

Play Meter spoke with Tarres about Digital Centre's history and products.

To what do you attribute the success of Digital Centre?

Since its inception, Digital Centre has not only established itself as a

leader in both coin-op and party rental photo booths, but it has done so through a strategy of steady innovation.

After Dr. Face we went on to create Dr. Fashion, Crazy Doctor, Pix-Mix Factory, Baby Boom, Instant Photo Souvenir, and the New Generation Photo ID, which has been a top-selling photo booth in America since 2005.

Since then we have introduced an updated New Generation model featuring expanded zoom and a larger studio area to allow more people in the booth, now available either as a button model or a touch screen model with video and Internet features.

We have two new models especially designed for event rentals: the Party-N-

Go and the Fold-N-Go, plus our signature-designed models The Strip, The Strip Wall, The Mega Strip, and The Mega Combo—all with touch screen technology and video and Internet capability. After the success of these models we introduced seven new models in 2012.

What were your priorities in product development in 2012?

Digital Centre focused its attention on the privacy and security of all photo booth owners and users in terms of the Internet. Photo booth and social network expansion requires the transmission of a big volume of private photos and private data such as e-mails, user names, passwords, and phone numbers.



Next Generation photo booths on the production line.



Digital Centre CEO Josep Tarres by The Strip Wall.

All this information is sensitive to being stolen or spied on by third parties watching the screen as you type your Facebook or Twitter password.

We love innovation and technology, and that is why we have fun working on new products. But as far as we go with technology, we should go the same distance or more with regard to user security.

Digital Centre has introduced many new photo booths in the last two years. How deep is the talent in your research and development team?

The development team, with its never-ending imagination, continues to develop new and innovative products year after year, and this year is no exception.

Our award winning team is composed of the best photo booth engineers in recent Digital Centre history, with a total of almost 150 years of combined experience in photography.

We continue to surprise everyone with our innovation. When we think we've reached the pinnacle, the team comes back with a better product. The best is still to come!

Our photo booths are durable and reliable. We are proud to say there are Digital Centre photo booths operating with total satisfaction that have been in locations since 1997.

How important is customer feedback?

Digital Centre listens to its customers. We take customer feedback very seriously and make a concerted effort to incorporate the best ideas when developing new products.

Our research and development team works tirelessly to mix the latest technological improvements with hip, upbeat exterior designs to ensure we produce the very best new products.

We take great pride in bringing our products to market at affordable prices, both for the photo booths and the film. Our ultimate goal is to provide our cus-

tomers with maximum return on their investment. Because of this commitment, Digital Centre customers become repeat buyers over time, whether their main endeavor is coin-op amusement or event rentals.

What are some of the most popular photo booth models, and what features make them a hit?

The Strip, the Mega Strip, and the New Generation are the most successful, and all come with QR-Photo technology, Share Secure, touch screens, and video and Internet capability.

The Strip has a clean, modern look, unlike any other photo booth in the market. In fact, it's not really a photo booth but rather a stand-up presentation that grabs the customer's attention and takes up less than four square feet of floor space.

Mega Strip features the new standard size 6"x16" strip (4-4"x6" photos) and the market confirms it because it makes twice the income.

The New Generation photo booth has all new technology. It takes photos, 2"x6" double strips or a single 4"x6" photo, videos, and social media features. It has the QR-Photo technology so all pictures come out with a QR-Photo printed on it. The user can scan and get photos instantly on their smart phone.

Digital Centre has a wide range of high quality, well-designed models which can be adapted to different types of clients and offer different picture sets depending on customers' demands.

The photo booth operator can control which kind of pictures people like the most through an easy to use menu. And all our photo booths are ready to use as soon as you receive the machine. Simply plug and play.



Fold-N-Go portable photo booth.





Crystal Limited Edition



The Mega Strip

What do you hear from operators at trade shows?

The feedback is fantastic. Our customers are very happy with the new technology but what they emphasize is the innovative look and new printout options. What they like best is paying half for the film and doing double income on some of our photo booth models.

The QR-Photo and the Share Secure are probably the best options on a photo booth (both are patent-pending). QR-Photo is an exclusive and Unique QR code on each print that allows users to get their photos anytime, anywhere from any smart phone, or print the photos again anytime, anywhere from any Digital Centre photo booth.

What response are you getting with the My Photo Code (QR) technology? Are customers using “the wall” nationwide spot where they can post their photos?

The response is fantastic. We opened a new door with the QR-Photo technology. The option to get photos anytime, anywhere from any smart phone, or print them again anytime, anywhere from any Digital Centre photo booth is a major step forward.

Our customers love to post their photos to the wall, share comments, and meet new people taking photos on

other photo booths from other locations.

Photo booths are very popular today and our PhotoBooth App addresses two important things: “What am I doing?” (Photo and comments) and “Where am I doing this?” (geo-localization). It appears that future interaction with customers will be through Apps, and it will be difficult for the photo booths to progress without them.

How did you develop the Expression 3.0 software? What are the benefits to the user?

The Expression 3.0 software is a new way to interact with the photo booths. Photo booths no longer only print photos and send them to the Internet. Taking the photos is the first step; we are opening the door to a huge new line of options, such as:

- Scan the QR on your photo and get the digital photo instantly to your smart phone
- Post the photos to the specific photo booth social network (MyPhotoCode), and meet other users who have taken photos on other DC photo booths nationwide
- Get extra copies from your photos (anytime, anywhere) by simply scanning the QR Photo to any DC photo booth
- Login to any DC photo booth by pointing your smart phone at the camera and getting ALL your photos on the screen to print
- If you are logged in to the photo

booth, it will store and send your recent photos to your cloud and your smart phone, without needing to scan the QR-Photo or take any other step

- Avoid typing any personal data into a public kiosk (our photo booths don’t ask for any passwords, e-mail addresses, or phone numbers)
- And, of course, post them to Facebook, Twitter, or Pinterest

We believe that the future of photo booths is through smart phones. We have a list of new ideas and new applications for smart phones that will interact with the photo booth.

We noticed in recent years that many customers were asking to print extra copies from that wonderful photo strip they made a few weeks ago with the grandchildren, but that was not possible until QR-Photo technology.

With QR-Photo technology the photo booth sends the photos to a private and exclusive cloud for each user, which he/she can access at anytime, anywhere to make extra copies, share to the wall, e-mail to family and friends, and more.

What is the importance of social media to photo booths?

It is now a basic feature on any photo booth. Some customers are requesting old style photo booths without Internet capability and new technology, but most of operators and loca-

tions want the new QR-Photo technology; it's a priority. The QR-Photo is a safe way to share photos with family and friends.

We saw a growing interest in social networks, which led us to develop an exclusive new social network for photo booth users only where photo booth fans can share their photos and experiences with other users nationwide.

They can vote on other people's photos and see the top 10 most voted photos. The top photos will get a prize and have their photos promoted on our Web site and nationwide on all of our DC photo booths.

Tell us about the Share Secure service.

The majority of photo booths send photos over the Internet. We think it's safe, but think again. Minors are a big share of photo booth users. Are they secure when typing private data in a public kiosk? Every year there are numerous cases of identity theft, scams, account lockouts, spam, viruses, etc.

Imagine that you are with a friend in a photo booth and you want to send a photo to your e-mail address or share a photo on Facebook. The majority of photo booths make you enter your personal data or log into your account while in the photo booth.

First, you are typing your personal information in a public terminal where third parties could access and steal the data; and second, you are writing your password in the presence of another person. It isn't secure.

With our Share Secure you won't have to type your e-mail address to log on to Facebook or Twitter because our photo booths will send the photos to your smart phone, and it is your personal smart phone that will manage the photos safely. Your smart phone has all of your personal data, and all your photos and videos will arrive safely, confidentially, and without any error.

Share Secure is a service that DC offers in all its touch navigation photo booths (new and old). It ensures reliable delivery of photos via the Internet to guarantee a safe and private transmission.

All customers owning a previous touch navigation photo booth from Digital centre will be uploaded to the new Expression software for free.

Are operators taking advantage of the iPhone and iPad PhotoBooth App?

This PhotoBoothApp has been created for Digital Centre photo booth owners. It controls all their photo booths remotely and in real time. It has



an interactive map where you can see your location, and the location of your photo booths.

It warns if any photo booth is running out of film, the cash box is full, or if the booths are not working properly. The owner decides whether or not to be warned when the film stock is low. If your photo booth is running out of film, you can reorder by pressing a button only, as you can contact Digital Centre directly from the application.

It works in real time 24/7 so it is a lot better than receiving only a daily e-mail report. It also sends a daily report to operators for bookkeeping purposes. This App makes management easier for all photo booth owners and improves income.

Are customers uploading photos from their smart phones to print

out in your photo booths?

That option is growing rapidly and we expect to print a higher volume of photos coming from smart phones. The QR-ID links the user with the photo booth when he/she starts using it, immediately sending the photos to their smart phone.

Users can print extra copies of his/her pictures taken in any Digital centre photo booth at any time. They can locate nearby Digital Centre photo booths to take new pictures or print existing ones with family or friends.

Are you thinking of adding filter editing as a feature, similar to Instagram?

Digital Centre differentiates itself from competitors through innovation and technology. That is what encourages the team and makes them enjoy the work. Day after day, everybody at DC is looking for something better; that makes the team proud of its work.

Filters, frames, and new functions are things we already do in our photo booths, but the next step will be to add those features to the Apps.

Are new photo booths being embraced by a wide range of locations? What are some of the best locations for photo booths today?

The best locations are malls, shopping areas, bars, nightclubs, movie theaters, tourist areas, arcades, family entertainment centers (FECs), and the rental market for celebrations.

We've seen innovative photo booths like The Strip open new doors for exhibition attraction displays, retail promotions, and digital signage. We like opening new doors and that encourages our team to keep growing and developing new ideas.

For more information on Digital Centre, call (305)387-5005; Web (www.digital-centre.com). ▲



New Year, new products



Josh and Zach Sharpe

The Sharpe brothers give mini reviews of games shown at the 2012 International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo.

Just like that it's already 2013! What better way of bringing in the New Year than to recap what is arguably one the biggest and best shows in the amusement arena: the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo held in Orlando, Fla.

You can say it's three times the charm for us because we are continually impressed not only by the sheer size of the show, but all of the new and innovative equipment, which goes for items outside of the coin-op industry. We're not going to lie, going down a huge indoor zip line was pretty fun, especially when followed up by Dippin' Dots, Noble Roman's pizza, and the Coca-Cola booth (in no particular order).

With that being said, we did notice an influx of new product at this year's show in the coin-op department. The overall optimism was running very high at this show and we don't think it coincided with the free donut booths either. Here is a list of a few of the gems we saw at this year's show with full reviews to come in future months.

DARK ESCAPE 4D/NAMCO

Similar to its impressive previous effort with the Deadstorm Pirates game, Namco has taken that game play to another level with its latest, Dark Escape 4D. While we were only able to capture a glimpse of the game play, Namco really pulled out all of the stops to interact with the player.

As advertised, there's a form of "shock" to all of your five senses. There are 3D graphics, vibrating seats, air blasts, surround sound, and our personal favorite, the panic sensor where the game literally detects a player's heart rate.

PONG 1800/TOCCATA GAMING INTERNATIONAL

We've never heard of or seen products from Toccata Gaming International before, but what better way of capturing our attention than a giant pong table of red cups.

While we don't endorse (publicly) that this game be used for the consumption of alcohol, there's no denying the sophistication of the game itself. The first time we saw the rotating cup platform to ensure



AC/DC



Dark Escape
4D

Pong 1800

Zombies!

X-Men

Wizard of Oz

the cups are facing the “correct” direction for the player throwing, we were sold.

The accompanying LED lighting, graphics via the dual monitor setup, and sounds only enhanced the impressive footprint. We see this game going through many many ping pong balls in its future, and that’s a great thing (not to mention the complementary beer sales if placed on a location that serves alcohol, not that we are recommending it by any means.)

“ZOMBIES!"/TRIOTECH

While we personally get confused with the various “5D, 6D, 7D!” advertisements and marketing slogans thrown on games (we’ll need to follow up with Albert Einstein on those and get back to you), there’s no denying a fun experience, regardless of the number of Ds involved.

Triotech hit the ball out of the park with its latest “XD Dark Ride” games with Zombies. Maybe because we’re huge fans of the hit TV show “The Walking Dead,” we found the theme to be a fantastic fit for this interactive environment where things pop up at you and spray you.

The use of 3D was fantastic, and for a company that normally just does the motion simulator type rides, the actual

shooting/game play was extremely impressive.

WIZARD OF OZ/ JERSEY JACK PINBALL

It was roughly two years ago when Jack Guarneri ventured into the fun, crazy world of pinball when launching his start-up, Jersey Jack Pinball. They went with a theme that appropriately accompanies such a crazy world with the Wizard of Oz license, and brought eight games to display at IAAPA.

While the game is still far from being complete, upon our most recent play testing at the show, there’s no denying the excitement this game has brought to lovers of pinball. Aesthetically, the game truly shines with bright visuals, fantastic lighting, and a gorgeous cabinet.

It’ll be interesting to see how and when everything comes together for Jersey Jack Pinball, but we’re certainly impressed with the inaugural effort.

X-MEN AND AC/DC (REDEMPTION)/ STERN PINBALL

Last, but certainly not least, we wanted to mention what took place at Stern’s booth. While we did give X-Men and AC/DC full reviews in previ-

ous editions, we wanted to mention the company’s redemption pinball that was on display again.

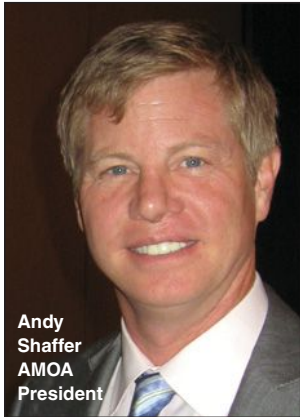
I know we’ve mentioned it before, but we love the forward thinking in trying to reach bigger markets (in this case, redemption) with pinball machines.

We already know these games can survive on location whether it’s at a bar or in someone’s basement. However, if they can truly hit that younger demographic where tickets are king and subsequently introduce this generation to pinball, it’s a win-win for everyone.

In addition, we have to give extra kudos to Marco Specialties for once again doing a fantastic job of setting up the Stern booth. The hooking up of monitors, speakers, and lighting really does create an event-like atmosphere around the games on display. ▲

With a father like Roger Sharpe, the original “Cornered Critic,” it is probably no surprise that sons Josh and Zach share a true passion for the coin-op industry. Former pinball champions, both are recognized as being two of the finest players in the world. But their interest and skills have grown far beyond the silver ball to embrace video games and attractions of all types.

Hectic but rewarding schedule



Andy Shaffer
AMOA
President

“Operators in every state need someone on the inside who can stop proposals before they become a public issue.”

Looking at the calendar of Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) President Andy Shaffer of Shaffer Services brings to mind a blackout game of bingo because every day is filled in with commitments.

The upbeat and energetic Shaffer is ready to meet the demands of the first quarter of 2013. The first task at hand: traveling to Irvine, Calif., on Jan. 15 to meet with operators forming a new state association: the California Entertainment Machine Association (CEMA). The AMOA and its Council of Affiliated States assisted operators in the inaugural meeting.

Ron Westphal of Newport Diversified/Primetime Amusements and Michael Martinez of N2 Amusements spearheaded the creation of CEMA. Shaffer said that Ron and Michael “were incredible to work with; they made the meeting a possibility.”

Shaffer added, “One of my goals was to plant a flag in the ground in California and have them move closer to forming a state organization. The state had an organization in the past. We needed to get everyone together.”

He referenced the Chuck E. Cheese situation in California in early 2012, where a proposal was made to limit the award of gifts or prizes to no more than \$10 in value, a proposal that would have a devastating effect on the operating community in California.

Shaffer said he saw that as “a great opportunity” and “a lightning rod” for operators in California to work together and move closer to forming an organization to represent the operators in the state.

Next on the agenda: the AMOA Council of Affiliated States Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, Feb. 7-9. Shaffer said, “Our State Association Committee does a phenomenal job on the educational side and the political side.”

The meeting is a rare opportunity for executive directors of state associations and other state representatives to share ideas and concerns, learn from the experiences of others, and find solutions to common problems.

Then, later in February (already a short month), Shaffer will join fellow AMOA representatives and their counterparts in the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) on a trip to Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress.

Shaffer said, “One of the main reasons why AMOA is going back to Capitol Hill is to be proactive and get ahead of issues that might become a hindrance to our industry later on. I found out the hard way that whenever an issue goes public in the state house, it’s almost too late to turn it around.”

He referenced proposed restrictions on redemption games being faced by operators in Maryland: “This is a clear example of why states must have a united operating community. It takes organization and it takes money. That’s why we need healthy state funded coin-op organizations, and why we need lobbyists on the state level. Operators in every state need someone on the inside who can stop proposals before they become a public issue.”

Right around the corner is the Amusement Expo, March 20-22 in Las Vegas. Shaffer said, “Time is moving quickly, whether we want it to or not. We are in a phenomenal spot in planning for this event.

“We’ve become more cohesive with excellent committee conference calls to get things done in advance. I feel that we could almost pull this show off tomorrow because we’ve done such a good job of planning. Enthusiasm is building the closer we get to the show dates.”

Shaffer will turn over the reins of AMOA to his successor, John Pascaretti of Pascaretti Enterprises, at the Amusement Expo. ▲

ADD VALUE. ADD AMOA.

Wayne E. Hesch Scholarship Program

Buy Raffle Tickets to Support Our Scholarship Program.

For the past 27 years, the Amusement & Music Operators Association (AMOA) has been conducting a raffle at the industry's annual trade show to support our Wayne E. Hesch Scholarship Program, which provides college students with funding to further their academic pursuits.

Since the inception of the program in 1985, more than \$1 million in college scholarships have been awarded!

Daily drawings for a variety of prizes will be conducted March 20-22, 2013 at the AAMA/AMOA Amusement Expo in Las Vegas. Winner need not be present.

Raffle tickets are \$25 each or 5 for \$100.

The Wayne E. Hesch Scholarship and Annual Raffle are conducted as part of the AMOA Coin-Op Cares Education & Charitable Foundation.

Grand Prize: 2013 Dodge Charger!



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Education &
Charitable
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Capitol Hill and the Amusement Expo

It's a new year and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) is embarking on the first of its quarterly meetings on Capitol Hill later this month.

AAMA representatives traveling to Washington, D.C., will include John Schultz, President of AAMA; David Cohen of Firestone Financial Corp., a Past Chairman of AAMA; and Rick Kirby of Betson Enterprises, Chairman of the AAMA Government Relations Committee. They will be joined by representatives from the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA).

John Margold of AMI Entertainment, Chairman of AAMA, said a number of members of AAMA wanted the opportunity to travel to Capitol Hill. "It's gratifying to know that we have so many members who feel this is important. We have an august group."

Margold said issues of concern "include taxes, health care, the dollar coin, and the elimination of the paper dollar. But the main purpose of these trips is to establish relationships. It's been said before, 'When you need a friend it's too late to make a friend.' We're going to Capitol Hill to make friends."

He added, "We must do our best to meet the people who could have a positive influence and help us when legislation affecting our industry arises."

Coming in March is the Amusement Expo, co-sponsored by AAMA and AMOA. Margold said the show is seeing higher pre-registration of attendees and exhibitors. "We're happy about that. We've seen growth for a few years in a row; we're still seeing growth and that's very exciting."

Play Meter asked Margold about the recently announced change in show hours on the third day, now 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

"We are always trying to make improvements to the show," he said. "Adjusting the hours will allow some staff to get to the airport and not have to spend an extra night at a hotel. It may be more cost effective, which is a good thing, and make it possible for some companies to bring more staff to the show."

He continued, "If we don't try anything new we can't

improve. But we always want to make things better. I can't say yet if any changes will be positive and become standard procedures.

"We have a large group of committed people who care a great deal about the show. Conference calls are lively. Putting on an event the size of the Amusement Expo is complicated.

We consider every aspect. AAMA members and AMOA members have carved out time from their work schedules to plan this event. I'm impressed with how hard volunteers from both organizations are working."

AAMA and AMOA have renewed the contract with show management W.T. Glasgow Inc. Gary Colabuono of GTG Marketing has been engaged to market the show. Margold said, "Gary will help us tap into areas we may have overlooked in the past. We're very happy that he has joined us."

When asked about the possibility of moving the show to another convention city away from Las Vegas, Margold said, "It's not about choosing a city to have fun or find new restaurants. Exhibitors pay for booth space because they want to interact with customers; they will go where the best traffic will be.

"While there are many great cities to visit, history tells us that we will be more successful in Las Vegas. In 35 years of attending trade shows for this industry I've seen fewer operators walking the aisles when we're not in Las Vegas."

He added, "You have to give attendees more reasons to attend the show, such as having spousal activities, food, and entertainment available. There's a lot to do in Las Vegas."

In closing, Margold mentioned another draw for the show: the American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation (AAMCF) Golf Outing at the Royal Links

Golf Club. "Most attendees can play on good golf courses at home," he said, "but this course is special. Some come because it's a worthy charity event, some come because they've heard about the course. Regardless of the reason, we want them to participate." ▲



John Margold
AAMA
Chairman

"We must do our best to meet the people who could have a positive influence and help us when legislation affecting our industry arises."



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TAP INTO HIGHER EARNINGS!

Promote tournaments to your players

Create a win-win-win situation for players, locations, and your company.

Sanctioned VNEA league players love the idea of getting out of the house once a week and playing their league matches at local league establishments. There are actually many players who play in a league more than once a week.

Just being able to get together with your friends and enjoy a night out is what VNEA leagues are all about. But if weekly leagues are all that you are offering your players, you are missing the boat.

Weekly league play is great and may be enough for some players, but a high percentage of members may want more. That's where the inclusion of "tournaments" can help satisfy and bolster your membership.

Local Tournaments: A lot of leagues will have an end of the season tournament for the players. Some even conduct an ad-hoc tournament at their league-ending banquet.

These types of tournaments are great and the players love them. But you should also hold other small tournaments throughout your league season (pick a weekend) to add a little spice to your league schedule. Charge a small entry fee to your players and throw in a little added money and let the players slug it out.

You will benefit by gaining your players' loyalty; one of your locations will benefit by all of the extra business and exposure the event will give their establishment; and the players will benefit because you are giving them a chance to play more pool. A win-win-win situation!

Regional Tournaments: These are

a great chance for your players to test their skills against other players in their area without having to travel a long distance. When a few VNEA operators in the same area (i.e., a 50-mile radius) get together and hold a tournament for their members, great results occur.

Team unity will be built as everyone loves taking small trips with their friends. These are great events for players who can't afford to travel to the annual state/provincial tournament and also can't afford to take a lot of time off work or away from home. These weekend events are perfect for most league players.

State/Provincial Tournaments: For most VNEA players, this is the highlight of their league season. Almost every state and province has an incredible VNEA tournament available to those players who qualify. These events are sponsored by VNEA and have the full backing and support of the Association.

Every VNEA operator in your state/province will be involved in the tournament and it will be spectacular. Make it a point to promote this event hard to your players because it will help build long-lasting relationships between your players and with the Charter and League Coordinators.

These events are the closest thing to the Vegas World Champi-

onships that most of your players will ever get to experience. And with VNEA's State/Provincial Tournament Rebate Program, this can be a very financially beneficial undertaking.

Vegas World Championships:

This is the pinnacle, the top of the mountain for every VNEA league player to experience. With over 5,000 league players representing 150+ Charter Holders from 30+ States, six Canadian Provinces, and more than seven other countries, the VNEA World Championships at Bally's in Las Vegas concludes the league season with incredible style.

The "Vegas Experience" will be the best selling tool for your league if you can send at least one team to the event. You notice that we don't call this a tournament because it is so much more...it is a full-blown "pool experience."

With 40+ events, Team Opening Ceremonies that draw nearly 3,000 players to the extravagant awards banquet finale, this 10-day "blast of fun" will leave your players refreshed and looking forward to next season.

For more information, call the VNEA, (800)544-1346; Web (www.vnea.com). ▲



Brian Elliott is the Director of Marketing and Promotions for the VNEA.





February 5-7

ICE Totally Gaming

London, England
ExCel Centre Centre
tel: +44(0)20-7384-8110
e-mail: jason.miller@clarionevents.com
web: www.icetotallygaming.com

February 7-9

AMOA Council of Affiliated States Meeting

San Antonio, Texas
San Antonio Marriott Riverwalk
tel: (847)428-7699
e-mail: llschneider@prodigy.net
web: www.amoa.com

February 26-28

FEC Phoenix

Scottsdale, Ariz.
Millennium Scottsdale Resort & Villas
tel: (703)836-4800
fax: (703)836-6742
web: www.IAAPA.org/expos/fecphoenix

March 5-6

Irish Gaming, Amusement, and Casino Expo

Dublin, Ireland
Green Isle Conference Center
tel: +353(0)21/431-6776
e-mail: info@gambetnews.com
web: www.gambetnews.com

March 12-15

ENADA Spring

Rimini, Italy
Rimini Expo Centre
tel: 39(0)541-744214
e-mail: s.bodellini@riminifiera.it
web: www.fierarimini.it

March 18-19

Foundations Entertainment University

Las Vegas, Nev.
The Las Vegas Hotel
tel: (816)931-1040, ext. 103
e-mail: linda@whitehutchinson.com
web: www.foundationsuniversity.com

March 19-21

International Pizza Expo

Las Vegas, Nev.
Las Vegas Convention Center
tel: (800)746-1122, (800)489-8324
e-mail: ballar@pizzatoday.com
web: www.pizzaexpo.com

March 19-21

Nightclub & Bar

Las Vegas, Nev.
Las Vegas Convention Center
tel: (888)692-2066 (attendees)
e-mail: jhoivik@guestex.com
web: www.ncbshow.com

March 20-22 **PM**

Amusement Expo

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

March 20-22

National Bulk Vendors Association (NBVA) Expo

Las Vegas, Nev.
Las Vegas Convention Center
tel: (888)628-2872
e-mail: info@nbva.org
web: www.nbva.org

April 5-7

GameNET Expo

Athens, Greece
E.K.E.P. Exhibition Centre
fax: +30-210-24-210-2478-786
e-mail: info@game.gr
web: www.gamenetexpo.gr

April 19-27

Team Dart 2013

Las Vegas, Nev.
Bally's Las Vegas
tel: (317)367-1299
fax: (317)387-0999
web: www.ndadarts.com

April 23-25

Dubai Entertainment, Amusement & Leisure Show

Dubai, UAE
Dubai World Trade Centre
tel: +971-4-343777
e-mail: themeparks@iec.ae
web: www.themeparksdubai.com

April 24-26

NAMA OneShow

Las Vegas, Nev.
Venetian/Sands Resort and Expo Center
tel: (312)346-0370
fax: (312)704-4140
web: www.namaoneshow.org

May 23-June 1

VNEA Championships

Las Vegas, Nev.
Bally's Hotel & Casino
tel: (800)544-1346
e-mail: info@vnea.com
web: www.vnea.com

June 20-23

VNEA Jr. Championships

Battle Creek, Mich.
Kellogg Arena
tel: (800)544-1346
e-mail: info@vnea.com
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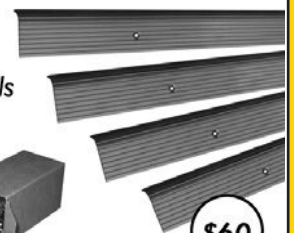
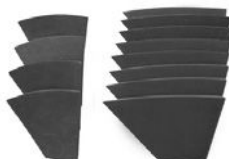
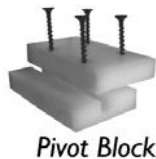
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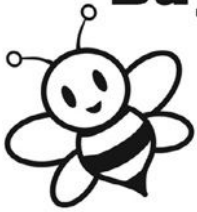
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