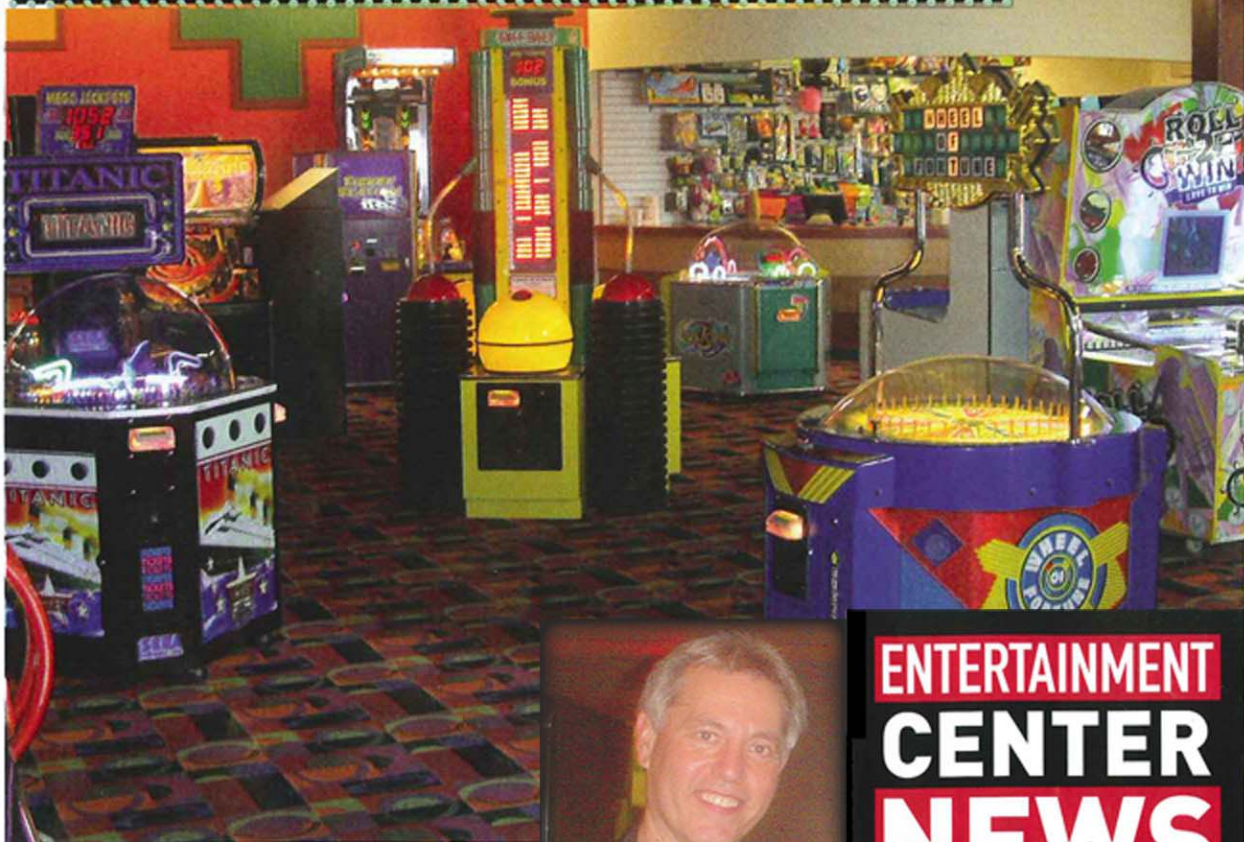


REDEMPTION 103

A CASE STUDY OF THE ALLEY AT SOUTH SHORE



By Frank Seninsky
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In the two previous articles (Redemption 101 and 102), I described how bowling centers with 500 sq. ft. (8 redemption games) can reap the benefits of redemption (ticket dispensing) games with an automatic prize vendor and those with 1000-1500 sq. ft. can make serious money with up to 30 games (20 redemption games) with a small redemption prize center that can even be a part of the bowling service desk. This 3rd segment, Redemption 103, pertains to those bowling facilities that have 2000-3500 sq. ft. available for up to 40-70 games and one attraction choice with a footprint of approximately 500 sq. ft.

Case Study: The Alley at SouthShore, Riverview, Fla. It has been a complete pleasure working with

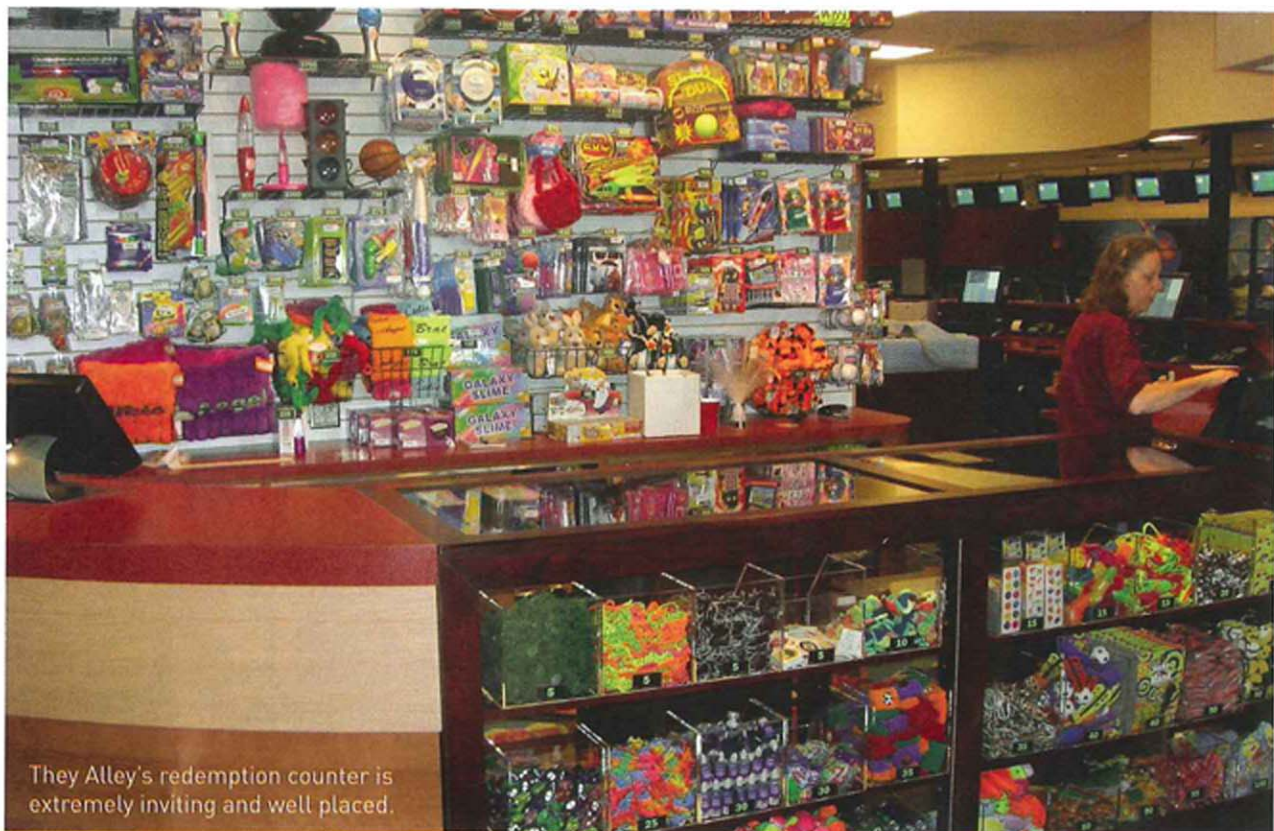


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Jeff Bojé (BPAA Past President & current USBC President) and his Dad, Bill, to help create this fantastic ground-up 32-lane 41,600 sq. ft. bowling-anchored family entertainment center.

The Alley opened in March 2008 but planning goes back several years. AEM started working with Jeff in December 2006 but first attended a meeting several months earlier with Jeff and his dad at their Brandon Crossroads Bowl (which they built in 1998) that is located just 12 miles north of the Riverview site. Jeff and Bill pay attention to every detail and, just like me, analyze the pros and cons of every situation. Jeff has had the opportunity to travel around the country (and world) and spend time at almost all of the new ground-ups. He agreed that the games need to be right up front and that the customers must see the redemption prize center the second they walk in the door. Another important design facet is the eight private



They Alley's redemption counter is extremely inviting and well placed.

boutique lanes (split from the 24 lanes) that are served from its own private bar.

From the start it was evident that every inch of the facility would be utilized. The following steps were followed:

Step 1: Location of Games is critical. Make sure the game space is in a location where it can generate maximum revenue and the customers will literally be "drawn into" the game space. Bill Bojé says, "Having the games by the front entrance is just fantastic! The customers are just awestruck to see a huge game room. They can't believe that all of these games are here in a bowling center!"

Step 2: Make sure there are no barriers to get to the games. By barriers, I mean both physical and psychological.

Step 3: Make a detailed list of the actual model games, related equipment and potential attractions that would fit into the game and attraction space and the sports bar using 50 sq. ft. per game and working from a realistic budget. I came up with 68 top-earning games (See Spring 2008 Purchase List) that would fit the game spaces with a game budget of \$400,000 and an additional 12 games/machines for the bar to fit that budget of \$50,000.

Step 4: Determine the minimum game revenues to support the budget. The game revenue criteria for the 68 games was estimated at an average of \$200/week/game = \$13,600/week or rounded to \$700,000/year. This game revenue figure should also be close to the per capita spending level for games for this size facility (ranging from \$3-5), depending on the number of attractions.

Step 5: What attraction(s) if we have additional space? The attraction revenue rule of thumb is that the attraction should gross annually approximately what its purchase price is, be it extremely popular as evidenced that there are few used models for sale, and that the attraction holds its resale value (stays ahead of its depreciated book value over time). It should also be a major component of birthday parties as an added bonus.

The attraction chosen was Highway 66 Mini Bowling, which has a footprint of 440 sq. ft. (including the enclosed service area behind the pinsetters that also houses the high voltage 220 volt-25 amp electrical supply). It was estimated that the Hwy 66 revenue would be \$1000/week or \$50,000 per year.

Step 6: Create the game and attraction layout floor plan to scale (See diagram). Make adjustments as necessary to maintain optimum traffic flow. Maintain clear lines of sight from the entrance all of the games and start preparing which ones will get traded in for some potential new games over the next several months.

The top earning games at the Alley for the past five months have been: Highway 66 (averaging \$1000 per week), Wheel Deal 3 PI, Deal or No Deal, Mad Wave Motion Theater, and in no particular revenue order: Colorama 4 PI, Slam a Winner, Roll 2 Win 2, Monopoly 8PI, Toy Soldier Cranes, Jumpin Jackpot, Cyclone, Tower of Power 3 PI, Dog Pounder and Hoop Fever. Two weeks ago Big Bass Wheel was added and it has taken over the No. 1 spot edging out the Highway 66 lanes.

How are the games at the Alley at SouthShore doing?

Jeff reports, "From an accountant's position it is too early to tell until we have been open a couple of years [Alley has been open 5+ months] and you only get smart when you learn what you don't know. I can tell you that the Alley has had a positive cash flow each month and that the games are averaging \$20,000 per week during the summer. And that does not include the game revenue from the games in the bar!"

Jeff continues, "When we first opened in mid-March, everyone flooded in and some weeks the games were grossing closer to \$25,000 per week. Brandon Crossroads always did a great summer business so I am not surprised at how well we are doing in this summer. At this point I have been so busy with the USBC and BPAA that I haven't spent any money on marketing the Alley and we don't even have our website up yet."

And Bill gets in the last words: "If I had room I would put in a large gameroom like this in our other two centers. This game space is sized just right. Our staff is being developed and getting better everyday. Having a well-trained mechanic for these games is very important. I never imagined how busy the games could be!"

Frank Seninsky is president of Alpha-Omega Group of companies, which includes a consulting agency specializing in feasibility studies, business plans, and facility layout, Amusement Entertainment Management, LLC (AEM) and a nationwide revenue sharing equipment provider, Alpha-BET Entertainment: all are headquartered in East Brunswick, New Jersey. During his 37 years in coin-op, Seninsky has presented nearly 250 seminars, penned more than 1200 articles, and consulted for hundreds of clients in the bowling, family entertainment center, waterpark, and casino/hotel industries. He has served as president of the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) from 1999 - 2000, sits on the AMOA Board of Directors and has served as the president of the International Association of the Leisure & Entertainment Industry (IALEI). Seninsky can be reached by telephone at (732) 254-3773, or by email at

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