

Movies + Bowling = A Rolling Success

Dinner and a movie? Bowling and a bite?

Each alone are leading time-honored choices for date night, an evening with friends, or a family outing. But what if patrons could engage in either or both?

As bowling surges in popularity across a myriad of demographics, theater owners across the country are forging relationships with bowling industry leaders to increase traffic to their complexes and offer a more diverse entertainment option lengthening each visit. The most popular of indoor sports is now sharing space with the always classic option of movie going.

Understanding the needs of their market for a one-stop entertainment destination, movie complexes have now added inviting and modern upscale bowling lanes, destination restaurants, and even bars to their facilities opening the door to a wider audience targeting not just singles, couples but also families of all ages.

“We’re focused on bringing in a cross section of recreational bowlers, with an emphasis on families,” says Kevin Mitchell, president and founder of ShowBiz Cinemas. “Traditional standalone bowling alleys generally allow limited access for non-league bowlers, and we’re offering a more contemporary and all-inclusive type of experience with our newest enterprise in Baytown, Texas.”

ShowBiz Cinemas opened in October of 2015 and Mitchell’s deep-rooted family history in the theater industry and his desire to develop his own centers into cutting-edge entertainment venues, led him to partner with Brunswick in the design and construction of a 14-lane bowling alley within his theater. “We talked to other leaders in the bowling industry, but Brunswick really excelled in support, training and even in providing furnishings and equipment,” Mitchell said. “They made it a complete turn-key package.”

“Brunswick strives to provide the best possible customer service to its vendors,” says Jay Saladino, new business development director at Brunswick. “Working with ShowBiz Cinemas we were able to advise on the interior composition of the bowling alleys, ensuring a result both aesthetic and functional. Our ability to provide services beyond the actual lanes and mechanics, including employee guidance and even vendor partnerships puts us well ahead of the pack.”

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The inclusion of a full restaurant and bar commonly non-existent in classic bowling alleys or theaters generates more foot traffic, lends to longer on-site time per customer, and more profit for the bottom line.

A typical Friday night at ShowBiz Cinemas’ Baytown location finds a broad range of customers enjoying movies and bowling. The added convenience of a stylish

bowling alley to the 10 screens featuring leather recliner seating and 3D sound and SDX has visibly increased customers and the bottom line.

Today’s bowlers are tracking as younger and more affluent than ever before, with more than 19 million youths aged 6 to 17 bowling annually coming from a household with median income of \$76,000 or above, according to Hansell & Associates. As the market continues to change, the industry is expecting for more nontraditional bowling avenues to open up around the country. It is essential these centers appeal to women, who now make up 49% of recreational bowlers, as attractive and safe arenas for their families, preferably offering more than snack bar options for food. The ever important 30-50 age bracket has shown a definitive preference for upscale lanes with modern décor, equipment, music and lighting.

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A recognized long-time leader in the bowling industry, Brunswick is now forging the way into improving and updating today’s bowling facilities. A \$2 million study conducted by Brunswick between 2012 and 2014 revealed bowling’s upswing in popularity with contemporary bowlers is in tandem with consumer desire for updated facilities and services. With their ongoing placement of lanes into alternative entertainment venues and constant evolution such as the new Sync Scoring & Management System, which allows for a more technologically integrated consumer and center experience, Brunswick’s continued innovations secure their place at the top in the field of bowling.