

MARKETING YOUR BINGO

Bingo players are a very small percentage of the general public. For that reason you need to attract as many of these players as possible. Professionalism is the key to a good bingo game. One important aspect of the bingo game is the social element it provides to the players.

Here are a few ideas on how to accomplish a social event with the professionalism that will bring players in and back again.

Make sure the hall promotes a "good feeling". Get an outside perspective of your hall. Does it have?

- Ease of entrance
- Parking well lit, clean, safe and secure
- Adequate clean rest rooms
- Good refreshment counters with good food
- Good general appearance
- Congenial, well groomed staff

The entire staff should have good interaction with the players. Should be on the floor talking and helping players when needed. Learn players by their first name. Know when they are not there. Greet them when they return. They come to have a good time, see that they have it.

The caller is the key person in your game. Should be well groomed, enunciate well, follow the timer or call balls consistently. His job is to announce the game pattern, paper to be used, the award for that game, if playing machines how to go to next game and call the Numbers, nothing else. The Bingo Chairman or his assignee should make all announcements. Professionalism should be shown at all times.

If making changes, inform the entire staff. A well trained staff is an asset to any Hall. Changes are sometimes scary to players. Be sure they understand the changes.

In case of disputes, the Bingo Chairman's word should be final. Disputes should always be handled from the players point of view. Don't lose a paying customer over a small dispute.

Arrange your sales area so that players are not standing in line waiting. Idle players don't spend money.

Sell Pull Tabs on the floor as well as in a designated area. Impulse buying can add profits to your bottom line. Sell a variety of pull tabs including special event tickets, change off often. Slow moving tabs can often be sold successfully at a later date.

Use in house marketing. Use flyers to show upcoming changes and promotions. Put out a new flyer at least monthly. Use posters to show special games and pricing and what to buy where, and how much. Keep them up to date.

Market your charities. Share your accomplishments with the public. Call your local news paper when any local deed is accomplished, this is called "Earned media" and can take the place of advertising. Let the public and your players know how your proceeds are being spent. Post the various charities you donate to. The amount donated is not important, the fact that you do support and donate to various charities is important.

Run promotions, promotions don't have to cost a lot; they simply have to be fun. Any promotion run between games must be short. Players are always ready for the next game.

Have door prizes. Players love getting door prizes, don't have to be expensive. Maybe a couple bingo bags, a couple bingo t-shirts, even dauber sets. Play Deal or no Deal. Give a couple of gas cards away \$10/15 each. This is an acceptable give away as long as all persons in the hall are given a chance to win, players love it.

Recognize (celebrate) players birthdays and anniversaries with a little gift or free play. Maybe on a monthly basis (last week of the month) to bring people in. Celebrate workers birthdays by get the players involved. Maybe have some free cake and ice cream during intermission. (This could work very well with small bingos)

Recognize and promote special holidays such as Easter, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, 4th of July, Veterans Day, Mother and Fathers day. Decorate the hall accordingly. Put candy out on the tables to celebrate the occasion. You might want to give daubers away on a special Holiday.

Special gifts to players should always have your logo, your name and phone number imprinted on them. its good publicity. Order daubers with your logo most suppliers will do this free.

Advertise in your small inexpensive local paper. Let people know the day, time and location of your hall. If you have a college in your area promote bingo to the students, same if you have a nursing home invite them. Maybe you could give a student or seniors discount.

Create a database of your players; send periodic newsletters promoting specials, up- coming events. Get your players e-mail addresses so you can send news items to them.

Let players know you appreciate their business.

If you don't sell 50 /50 tickets, raffle tickets and special event tickets you are missing out, this gives you extra dollars to spend on advertising and attendance prizes.

List your bingo on the ACGM web-site.

Visit the other bingo halls in your area see what they are doing, share ideas with each other.