

Helping Making that Personal Connection With Your Players

Having worked with bingo managers for over 20 years, it became apparent early on that two of the most important goals that needed to be reached to run a successful hall was to build player loyalty and attract new players. Most managers realize building personal relationships with their players goes a long way towards earning that loyalty. Developing these personal connections also helps bring in new players through referrals to family and friends. Attracting non-referral new players is a bit more complicated requiring some creative marketing.

Some halls have successfully built personal relationships with their players and they know their market and have successfully attracted new non-referral players. Others may be struggling and need to find that secret formula that is tailor made to their circumstances. In all cases, things can always be better, times change, and we should all always be open minded to new ideas that fit the changing times.

For quite some time now, social media has become very important in our society. To adapt, many halls rightfully have created and maintain active social media sites. Technology has allowed people to stay in better touch with each other then ever before. And one of their favorite ways to do this is through pictures and video. Bingo hall managers, if you are not using pictures and videos on your social media sites...you should be. This is where society is today and it's where any successful hall needs to be. The overall theme in utilizing social media is to help create that personal connection with your players and potential new players. As far as social media marketing effectiveness, it's does seem to be one of those things that you get out of it what you put into it.

To help create this personal connection in the hall, letting your players and potential players get to know your employees, and their leader, through pictures, is a useful tool. But not just any pictures. Using interesting employee images that show their personality, interest or hobby, not just in social media but in other aspects of your marketing, may make employees more approachable and could expose common interests with players. Using their images on flyers, posters, brochures, and anything that is used to communicate with your players and potential players will provide another opportunity for players to get to know your employees and possibly trigger that first contact. Many professionals believe all business is personal. This is especially true with bingo halls. The more comfortable and familiar the hall is to the player, the more time they will want to spend there. The more employees they know and can interact with, the better. Even if you have a lot of employee turnover, making use of employee pics can be a positive by taking the opportunity to introduce new employees. →

PromotingBingo.com

...And Refreshments Are a Specialty!

MR. RAY'S CAFE:
LOVE TASTY FOOD?
Our Cafe is located just through the lobby. There are plenty of tables to stop and enjoy a bite to eat. Don't want to sit in the Cafe? Take your food to your seat in Bingo, Slots or Speed.

SMOKEY JOE'S:
INTERESTED IN SOMETHING OTHER THAN GAMING?
Enjoy the luxury of our famous cigar bar and sports lounge. A complete food, drink and cigar menu will meet all your relaxation needs.

Now That You Know a Bit About Us... We Look Forward to Getting to Know You. To Plan Your First Visit, Visit Our Website at www.BJsBingo.com. See You Soon!

Want To Join Our Team? If you are interested in becoming a BJ Crew Member you can submit your application on our website. Just click 'Employment' at the bottom of the home page.

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BJ's Bingo & Gaming
Getting To Know Us!...

Offering Gaming Entertainment In The Pacific Northwest Since 1980.

Here is a sample of an idea, that was created for BJ's, to help make that personal connection with new non-referral players. It introduces the staff with very special group employee photos, from all of the departments, along with a brief description of what services are offered. What makes these photos special is that they are photos of the employees appearing in outfits that reflected a special hobby, interest or holiday and appeared in their 2016 wall calendar. The idea with the calendar was

to get regular players a little more familiar with the employees. Although it does take a bit of an effort to get these photos created, it is more than worthwhile when they accomplish their goal of helping make a connection with the current players, through the wall calendar (with much larger pictures), and with potential new players through the brochure. Plus they can be used in other creative pieces throughout the year.

Another huge benefit to this approach to making your hall better, is it's potential to have a positive effect on employee moral. At first, some employees might be a little resistant to the idea. But when it's recognized how well received the photos are among the players, and the calendars 'cool' factor, that resistance will most likely melt away and it will be replaced with enthusiasm to be part of the next one. Take a look at the article starting on page 4 that appeared in Raving Consulting magazine about the employee calendar we did at Angel of the Winds casino a few years back. →

BJ's Is A Most Unique Gaming Facility!
Offering a Variety of Gaming Experiences 7 Days a Week, We are Here to Make Your Experience Memorable!

Meet Our Fun Loving Staff...

BINGO:
DO YOU ENJOY SOCIALIZING AND PLAYING GAMES WITH THE CHANCE TO WIN \$\$\$?
Just come in with a valid ID and sign up or a FREE membership. Our very friendly staff will help get you started.
We have the best payouts for your money...anywhere!!

COSMIC BINGO:
LOOKING FOR SOME FUN?
Cosmic might be for you. Come enjoy black lights, music, dancing and a different theme each month. Listen in house for our next bingo party... Or check our website or mobile app which can be downloaded from Apple iTunes or the Google Play Store.

...Their Mission is To Put a Smile on Your Face.

SLOTS:
INTERESTED IN HAVING A FUN AND EXCITING TIME?
Come try our Vegas style gaming machines. There are smoking and non-smoking sections with the most comfortable chairs for you to relax and win some cash!

SPEED:
LOVE FAST PACED GAMING ACTION?
Speed is a fast, highly interactive game that uses table chips and large tile cards. Try the most unique table game in the state. This game will keep you on your toes with chances to win every few minutes!

Bingo Callers
Bingo Crew
Our Slots Crew
Speedsters
Creative Management Team
IT and Guest Services
Security & Maintenance
Accounting Team

A successful bingo hall is all about getting the seats filled. When the seats are filled, it's a sign of happy players, so management is happy and it's a lot because the employees are happy. Fill the seats by making players want to be at your hall using the personal connection strategy.

This is just one way to help make that personal connection with your players. We would be very interested to hear from you on your ideas for making that personal connection with your players. If you have implemented any of them, let us know the results you have experienced and we will pass them on.

Gary DeNoble

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- Harrah's New Orleans (New Orleans, LA) – sent a direct mail offer for a free gift card to various VIPs. In the offer reviewed, the player was guaranteed to receive at least a \$250 gift card for coming in and redeeming the offer. But the gift card value was increased to \$375 if the player earned 6,200 Base Reward Credits® on the redemption visit, \$500 for 8,300 credits earned, and \$700 if 10,500 credits were earned.



- Horseshoe (Hammond, IN) – held a promotion on four dates in November, offering its Seven Stars® players 10X points on those days, Diamond players 7X points, Platinum players 5X points, and base Gold players 3X points. In addition, on each of those days, four players were selected to receive 100X points and two hundred players were selected to receive 25X points.



“Ah, the famous ‘point multiplier’ promotions. If guests see value in your point rewards, then they’ll see even more value in your 2X, 3X, 10X, 100X point days, right? Right?”

“Point multipliers have been pretty successful for most casinos, when done right. They have a high perceived value among players, and when the casino’s rewards program includes already desirable benefits, well, players just get them that much faster. But there are some cautions.

“Sometimes, if the multiplier is too aggressive or targets the wrong players (e.g. video poker players), the promotion can become mathematically suspect and the casino can get ‘upside down’ on its investment. If the multipliers become too ingrained (e.g. ‘2X Tuesdays’), they can lose their motivational ability and become ‘entitlements.’ Competitors can up the ante in sort of a point multiplier ‘bidding war,’ where no one eventually wins, except perhaps the player that is being fought over. And sometimes, even point multipliers can’t overcome certain casino doldrum times, like graveyard shift or the week before Christmas.

“But point multipliers have some marketing power, much like cannon powder. Just keep the powder dry, wait for the right moment, and fire when it can do the most good.” – D.C.

WASHINGTON

Angel of the Winds Casino (Arlington) – World’s Friendliest Employee Calendar



Calling itself “The World’s Friendliest,” Angel of the Winds Casino backed up its brand with a 2012 wall calendar filled with photos of their employees. (The year before, they featured casino cartoons). Each month sports a large photo of the members of a different department, staged in their actual work areas. Photos were taken at department shift changes to capture day and swing employees. Starting with Keno in January and continuing with Table Games (posed behind a craps table), Poker (in front of their wall of promotions), Katie’s Kitchen, IT/Marketing/Admin, Facilities & Housekeeping, Totem Club (with the booth in the background), Security, Cashiers, HR/Receiving/Finance, Slots, the final photo is the Watershed Restaurant and Lounge. Virtually everyone is smiling ... even Finance (OK, some of the security guards were wearing their “I’m at work and you’ll take me seriously” expressions, but they are wearing happy, red shirts). The calendar opens with December 2011, displaying 30 pictures of winning players with their giant jackpot checks. The calendars, created as the December Totem Club gift-of-the-month, were distributed to all the employees and given to over 8,000 guests at the players club, with or without the coupon from the monthly mailer. They were also distributed at the local Chambers of Commerce.



“They titled the calendar ‘Friendly Familiar Faces.’ And from the looks of the department

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members, it seems there's no doubt. In addition to keeping Angel of the Winds top of mind (the calendar has large squares for posting important dates and planned casino visits), the calendar speaks critically to brand. Every month boasts smiling employees, many of whom are likely to be familiar to regular customers. And the casino is truly walking the walk of their 'friendly employee' brand by highlighting the value of their friendly staff and reminding patrons of their service every day. When asked what they like best about a particular casino, loyal customers always mention 'how I'm treated by the employees,' or 'the employees are really friendly,' or 'the employees know my name.'

"According to John Cronin, Angel of the Wind's Marketing Manager, the calendar was a hit with employees and customers. 'Some of the employees were camera shy, but many of them have personally told me that they want in next year, even if they have to come in on their day off. Some players requested employees' signatures on their calendars, like a yearbook; many said it's nice to wake up to our friendly faces.' John also shared that the October picture was of a department that works on their lower level with no windows. When brought outside on a beautiful day for the photo and some sunshine, one employee needed to wear his Elvis sunglasses because it was so bright." – T.O.

Suquamish Clearwater Casino Resort (Suquamish) – Beat the Boss



Steven Buechler, Poker Manager

To overcome the challenge of a slow Tuesday night in the poker room, Clearwater's Poker Manager created a "Beat The Boss" Hold 'Em Tournament. In addition to the player buy-in, the casino added a \$100 bounty on the manager's head (he didn't pay to play and wasn't eligible to win any of the prize pool). Steven moved from table to table, filling in when they were short (instead of using



Steven's "Beat the Boss" costume, created by one of his employees.

the standard "closest to the big blind") and so that every player had a shot at the bounty. While this was a disadvantage to him, the goal was to expose him to all the players, give them a chance to beat him, and give out the \$100 to whomever knocked him out. (Note: The one time he did win, the bounty was carried over to the next week and doubled).

To spark interest in the tournament and drive players to the casino's website and Facebook page, a special feature was created by their graphic arts team. Customers could play a game online where they were challenged to "Beat the Boss" in a boxing ring. Steven's voice was recorded and his face was photoshopped onto a boxer's body; the goal was to land three accurate punches to knock him out. The game ended with an invitation to "Beat the Boss" at the real thing in their No Limit Texas Hold 'Em Tournament.

The result of this promotion was a three-month uptick in Tuesday night action, increased revenue both in tournament fees and live play, and a great time for the players.

"Since the World Series of Poker craze cooled down, keeping poker rooms open and profitable has been more and more challenging for casinos. Many continue to provide the games as a service or loss-leader ('I like to play while my wife plays slots'). But some casinos are still finding ways to keep the excitement up while keeping costs down. Steven Buechler, Poker Manager at Clearwater, speaks with pride about his 'Beat the Boss' promotion. In his words: 'I may not know a lot about poker, but I DO know my customers