

InterGame

Family Focused Fun

Last year InterGame spoke with some of the leading figures in the redemption sector to bring you a better understanding of what is happening out there in the field... Now 12 months on, we go back to discover what's new, what's changed and what's in store for the year ahead!

THE OPERATOR'S VIEW

Frank Seninsky, President/CEO
Amusement Entertainment Management



Frank Seninsky works as an operator and consultant in the US FEC market and has, over the past five years, seen redemption continue to generate around 70 per cent of the total gross game revenues in locations. "This has, however, probably increased as we have increased our use of offering stacks of redemption tickets as prizes in many of our merchandise dispensing machines," he told InterGame. "I believe that as more and more game vendors and FEC owners learn more about redemption we will see a big increase in the redemption game presence. My guess is that less than 10 per cent of game vendors in the US currently operate redemption games and it has taken our industry more than 30 years to even get to this 10 per cent. The jukebox sector followed a similar pattern; it took a long time to achieve 10 per cent of the market, but once it did, the percentage increased rapidly and I think we could see the same with redemption."

For Seninsky, it is important that operators adopt an entirely different service philosophy and commitment to be able to run a profitable and high grossing redemption route. "In my case, I learned 40 years ago that the technicians need to be on site during just about all operating hours during the weekends and holidays and then be able to spend quite a bit of time during the rest of the week doing preventative maintenance, collecting and loading the merchandise into the dispensing machines and behind the redemption prize counter," said Seninsky. "Overall I use one hour of on-site technical service for every \$500 a week in game gross revenue, this doesn't include collection time or time operating and ordering, stocking prizes or game parts, or the time it takes to do game rotations."

Redemption games are continuing to increase in importance when it comes to their place in the game mix and according to Seninsky it simply comes down to the fact that playing redemption games in a social setting is fun for people of all ages, as is being able to win prizes that you really want and can use. "This is a lot more fun for many of us than say shopping," he said. "Redemption games so far haven't been able to be played at home like many video games can. Playing redemption games, or any kind of amusement game, is a diversion from the stressful challenges of the real world. As long as our industry continues to provide a less expensive form of entertainment, it will continue to earn a small piece of the leisure entertainment pie."

Seninsky has been presenting redemption seminars all over the world for the past 30 years and told InterGame that it is only now that he is seeing the most interest in the redemption sector. "It seems that the entertainment pendulum swings back and forth," he said. "Sometimes its speed is aided by economic conditions. Currently our industry is seeing more competition for the smaller out of home leisure entertainment dollar from our traditional competitors as well as many other businesses. In the US we are seeing a small wave of anti-redemption sentiments and regulations that our industry will have to fight head on. There are those non-industry characters who will continue to violate current amusement game laws by placing banknotes and rolls of coins on the playfields of pushers that have been converted to gambling machines, or those who will wrap banknotes around the prizes in a crane and then make those prizes very difficult or impossible to win. Our industry will have to be vigilant to assist law enforcement in stopping those operators who commit fraud against the general public."

"If redemption is to continue to grow, it is imperative that the vast majority of the general public continues to enjoy and favor 'predominantly skill' redemption games."