

# Where Innovation Lives & Thrives

## ICE Continues Quest for Games that Bring Players & Revenue

nnovative Concepts in Entertainment (ICE) has always prided itself on making unique family fun games built for reliability with operator-first design and a timeless play appeal. An example of that is their Super Chexx, first introduced into the coin-op market in 1982 and still being made at ICE's factory in Clarence, New York. (That's over 40 years!)

In this tradition, the company has added four very different games to their catalog this year: Smash N Win, NBA Baller, Neon Bowling and Stop the Drop. A brand-new game called Odin's Hammer Strike will also debut this month at IAAPA Expo.

Each of these games taps into different segments, but ICE says they're all "skill based and can be enjoyed from age 7 to 70." This year, ICE has continued to focus on the family entertainment sector, keeping their portfolio of offerings "competitive, sports-minded and physically interactive."

#### Smash N Win: A "Merchandiser-First" Product

ICE said their new Smash N Win has "redefined the merchandiser category." It's a simple, intuitive experience that allows players to win physical balls as prizes. The gameplay combines the instant gratification of a crane with the skill-based mastery of timing games. Players wait until the right moment to "smash" their way into the win zone.

For operators, they say the game can run as a prize merchandiser or as a hybrid ticket redemption game. It can also be operated solely as a ticket redemption game with a ball self-reload system that allows no balls to be dispensed.



Smash N Win on location, right next to the company's Tons of Tickets.

By engineering flexibility into the core product, ICE said they've ensured the game can succeed in different floor mixes, whether at a high-volume FEC such as Dave and Buster's (where you can find a unit in every store), a route operation stop such as a cinema, or a mid-size bowling alley.

Operators are loving it, says ICE. Chip O'Hara, the president of Midwest Coin Concepts, said Smash N Win was "a big hit right out of the gate and continues to be a top earning game in each location. We have just installed one in a sports bar – a street location – with great results as well."

Rich Del Vecchio of Kids Quest and Cyber Quest, based in Plymouth, Minnesota, said, "Smash N Win is a fastpaced, vibrant and well-designed merchandiser game. It offers great flexibility by rewarding players with tickets and high-quality merchandise prizes, including the chance to win collectible balls from their favorite basketball teams. It's a fantastic addition to any arcade floor another great skill-based game from ICE that keeps players engaged and encourages repeat play. Even better, we achieved a full ROI within just three months!"

The NBA-branded edition of *Smash N Win* added the licensed collectible element to the game, making it instantly recognizable to NBA fans. There is also a monster ball-branded version. The company plans on obtaining additional IP titles in the future to ensure this title never goes out of style.

#### NBA Baller: A Modern Twist on Basketball

Basketball has always been a reliable anchor in arcades, but with *NBA Baller*, ICE aimed to "refresh the genre by layering in modern presentation and NBA licensing while preserving the casual yet competitive gameplay." The game also allows players to win a 7" NBA-licensed basketball if they beat the high score. The cabinet features sleek NBA branding, LED effects, and shooting mechanics that rewards accuracy and speed.

For players, the appeal is obvious: step up and test your skills in a high-energy game trying to win a real basketball with a logo of your favorite pro team. For operators, *NBA Baller* is another example of ICE taking a proven product to the next level.

NBA Baller has the same specs as ICE's NBA Hoops Matrix, too. "We wanted Baller to match the size of Hoops Matrix so it can seamlessly complement a location's existing sports wall," explained Ryan Coppola, the company's international salesman. "The goal isn't just to provide variety by offering a different type of prize by giving players the chance to win a ball, but also to draw attention back to the NBA Hoops games already on site."

Shawn Hetzel, game room director of Frankie's Fun Park in Huntersville, North Carolina, echoed Coppola's comments: "NBA Baller has been a great addition to our arcade. Our NBA Hoops games have always done exceptionally well for us, and the NBA Baller machines continue that trend when added next to our existing NBA Hoops."



NBA Baller

Together, ICE's CEO Joe Coppola, said *Smash N Win* and *NBA Baller* show the company's two-pronged strategy this year – prize-driven merchandisers that create instant engagement (*Smash N Win*) and sports-driven skill games that act as long-term floor anchors (*NBA Baller*).

"This balance is a big differentiator," he added. "Some manufacturers specialize only in sports or only in flashy prize machines, but ICE delivered both this year – each engineered with operator flexibility and broad player appeal. That makes it easier for locations to build a floor mix around ICE titles alone, knowing they cover multiple revenue categories."

Another recurring theme in ICE's product line this year is configurability. *Smash N Win* allows operators to finetune payout percentages and ball quantities. *NBA Baller* offers adjustable difficulty and other settings that let venues cater to different audiences, whether it's families, competitive teens or adult leagues.

#### **Bowling Reimagined**

Unlike a traditional bowling alley, where players need long lanes, heavy balls, and rented shoes, ICE's *Neon Bowling* packs the fun into a compact, brightly-lit and futuristic experience. ICE said the game takes all the best aspects of traditional bowling – skill, accuracy and the thrill of knocking down pins – and transforms it into "something electric."

Neon Bowling lives up to its name with glowing pins, LED lights that react to every roll, and a sleek, high-energy design that feels more like a laser party than a bowling alley. Every strike and spare is celebrated with light shows that "give the game the feel of an experience, not just a score."

Another key difference is accessibility. Traditional bowling requires a lot of space, but *Neon Bowling* fits neatly into arcades, FECs and even small venues. Players use smaller balls, perfect for kids and adults alike, so the game is fast, approachable and fun for all ages, ICE notes.

"Neon Bowling is very low hassle from a logistics standpoint for the operator compared to other bowling attractions," said Ryan Coppola. "The game ships in three pieces and each lane can be assembled in under two hours with no crazy installation costs. Past that, the air compressor system used to lift and reset the pins has proved to be very low maintenance and operator friendly."

What truly sets *Neon Bowling* apart, the company says, is its arcade spirit. Instead of a long, 10-frame match, it's designed for quick, exciting rounds that keep players moving. It's not about long games and score sheets – it's about instant fun, glowing visuals and that satisfying feeling when the pins explode with color as they fall.

Beyond a classic mode, players can choose from a variety of fun, skill-based mini games built right into the system. These quick-play modes add extra layers of challenge, variety, and replay value, turning every visit into a new experience as players compete for high scores.

Added Dan Coppola, ICE's vice president of sales: "Betson Distributing



operators and arcade-spirited play in quick, exciting rounds. At left, a youngster tests his strength by giving Odin's Hammer Strike a solid whack!

said, "It's one of our top-performing attractions across multiple venues – fits perfectly in social clubs, trampoline parks and more." Ken Morrissey of Casino Pier Arcade added: "We swapped out VR for Neon Bowling at our arcade – it was an instant success."

Neon Bowling isn't trying to replace bowling alleys – it's reinventing the concept for a new environment. "It's bowling made brighter, faster, and more dynamic," said Joe Coppola. "Bowling may be a

century-old pastime, but in *Neon* Bowling, it's been reborn for the future of arcades."

has been a major proponent of Neon Bowling since its debut. After seeing the game firsthand and testing it in the fall of 2024, they placed their initial commitment order even before last year's IAAPA show."

ICE said the game's versatility and strong guest appeal "continue to support Betson's strategy of expanding into nontraditional FEC spaces.

Betson has been selling Neon Bowling to bowling entertainment facilities, casino-based arcades, axe throwing venues, movie theaters, pickleball locations, sports pubs and more.

David Leichus of Sunstar Vending

#### Skill-Based Play & Licenses

ICE's new games continue the company's long-standing belief that "arcade success comes from games rooted in skill."

"These are not games of chance," Coppola said. "They reward timing, accuracy, and practice. Players feel they can improve with each attempt, which drives repeat play and helps

build loyalty to a venue."

Regarding the NBA licenses on Smash N Win and NBA Baller, Coppola added, "By weaving licensing into the mechanics and rewards, ICE ensures the license isn't just decorative and name recognition – it's a reason to play. The gameplay is just as important if not more important than the license itself."

With Smash N Win, the NBA-branded balls are the actual prize, creating a real connection between brand and gameplay. With NBA Baller, the license "enhances the fantasy of being on the court and competing under league branding to win a basketball."

#### **New Game for** IAAPA Expo

Coming soon to a location near you... Odin's Hammer Strike. This game concept comes from ICE's longterm development partners, G&B Amusements.

For more than a decade, Gordon Crompton and Ben Wilson have delivered games like Stop the Drop, Whack N Win, and World Football Pro. With this latest release, the focus shifts from the soft touch needed for Whack N Win to showing your "Viking-like strength"

#### cover story

in *Odin's Hammer Strike*. Designed with a compact footprint, the cabinet easily fits into existing locations, allowing operators to add the game without sacrificing multiple pieces from their floor.

"Odin's Hammer Strike has been tested in venues throughout the U.S. and Canada and has repeatedly shown itself to be one of the top earning redemption games throughout," Coppola said.

"Once again, we combine simplicity with an action-packed cabinet and audio visuals that players of all ages enjoy. We see kids and adults competing, laughing and genuinely enjoying the experience."

# Trade Shows and Operator Education

ICE has enjoyed quite a few major global trade shows and distributor events in 2025 to highlight and showcase all of these new titles. They've



**ICE's Down the Clown** has a bright, new look thanks to LED lighting kits. The game debuted before LEDs were "the" thing in arcade games and with the kit, its look can now shine just as brightly as its more modern counterparts on the game room floor.

also been focused on marketing efforts, producing live demos, highlight reels and transparent walk-throughs of operator settings. And there's also aftersales support – not only technical service but product communication and guidance, too.

"More than ever, we want to be in front of operators helping them maximize their revenues with ICE product," Coppola expressed. "It's a very real area of focus for us and we feel it's an area we can further separate ourselves from the competition with our experienced sales team."

Following the upcoming IAAPA Expo in Orlando, you'll be able to see ICE games in person in 2026 at EAG London in the Sega booth, FEC Bergamo in Faroplay's exhibit, IAAPI Mumbai in CSML's space, at Amusement Expo in their own booth, in multiple locations at IAAPA Middle East, in the Warehouse of Games booth at DEAL Dubai and SEA Saudi Arabia, at the NJAA event in partnership with Betson, at Bowl Expo in their own booth and at IAAPA Expo Europe (again with Sega).



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### Reliability & U.S.-Based Manufacturing

ICE's foundation remains its domestic manufacturing and parts support. While some competitors rely on complex overseas supply chains, ICE continues to emphasize "Made in the USA" reliability. For operators, they say, that translates to faster replacement parts, consistent service, and less downtime.

"The company is working diligently to provide operators with a seamless shopping experience – from real-time shipping costs on parts and adding a new subscription option for consumables to potential discounts and promotions for signing up for the parts newsletter," said Lenny Hayes, ICE's parts manager. "ICE is reshaping what after-sales service looks like in the arcade industry."

An example of this is the promotion ICE is running on their *Down the Clown* lighting kit. *Down the Clown* was launched before LED lights were seen all over different arcade game cabinets. The game continues to be a top earner on



location, and ICE wanted the look and feel of the cabinet to match others in the game room. (From Nov. 24 through the end of the year, operators will get a

free case of *Down the Clow*n balls with their LED kit. To sign up for the company's parts newsletter, use the QR code above.)

This year, ICE worked to differentiate itself by playing to its strengths while pushing innovation in focused,



**ICE** also put a shiny, new look on its front office, from the lobby to workspaces to hallways. (At *RePlay*, we're especially knocked out by the wall of past front covers.)



operator-first ways. "Smash N Win brought fresh energy to the merchandiser space, especially with its NBA-themed prizes, while NBA Baller modernized a classic sports staple with authentic branding and upgraded presentation," the company said. They also have high expectations for Odin's Hammer Strike following the initial tests showing strong repeat play.

For operators, the message is clear: "ICE isn't just another arcade manufac-

turer," the team explained. "We are the company most committed to delivering games that balance excitement for players with predictability for operators, which is the true formula for long-term

success in out-ofhome entertainment."

Learn more by visiting www.ice game.com (scan the QR code).





