



PLAYMETER ARTICLE 1

Redemption Tips From The Field

Author: Jim Chapman with Richard Oltmann -- Family Fun Companies

My goal is to share with you proven redemption tips that you can put to use in any of your locations. Each month I will be sharing with you successful strategies that have been used and I know that work. My information comes from working closely with my mentor, Richard Oltmann, as well as my 21 years of being part of this great industry of ours.

Tip of the Month: The Magic Potion....

This tip comes with five components. For the next five months we will be concentrating on these five "MUST DO" items. They may sound simple, but without the proper execution of each part of the potion you will not maximize your earnings or player enjoyment. Keep in mind you must put into action each of the five parts of this potion to get the most out of your efforts.

The first part of the Magic Potion is the correct *Prize Selection*. This is one area that I have personally seen that gets the least amount of attention during my travels and seminars during the last two years. I have seen redemption counters that do not have prizes for all segments of the customer base. Some counters do not have prizes for the parents (blenders, grills, toasters, coffee pots, etc). Some counters do not have prizes for the girls in their customer base (Hanna Montana prizes, dolls, jewelry, etc). And some counters do not have any higher end products to make their customer save their tickets and come back to play for (bikes, Wii's, large licensed plush, skateboards, XBOX 360, etc).

I have seen counters that have actual holes in them where prizes were and they never replaced. I have seen prize counters with baskets that have only five key chains or worst yet NO PRIZES!!! Toss out those final few prizes and fill the bin up. FULL BINS ARE A MUST!!!

In Rich's parks the goal is to have every customer come in and say "WOW...look at all of these prizes....I can't believe all that I have to choose from!" We learned over the years that the better the prize counter looks and the more choices the customers have, the more the games will earn. It is a very simple relationship. The quality of prizes you offer sets the tone of your customer's experience.

The key to a "WOW" redemption counter is variety at all ticket values. Give your customers a reason to save their tickets by having prizes of value. We see every day the children, and parents as well, save their points for bikes, a TV, George Foreman Grills, R/C cars, sports plaques, large licensed plush, etc. When they see quality prizes they can save for, they will return time and time again for those prizes. Our parks live on repeat business so we design our prize selection around quality prizes that they will save for. Also, do not over load your counter with low-end ticket prizes. Focus more on better quality prizes so they play more or save to buy on their next visit. Moms know quality and they are willing to spend more when their child can take home prizes that will last longer than the ride home.



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Also, use more than one prize source. So many times I ask an owner how many sources they are using for their prizes. They say one, two or maybe three. This is simply not enough. You need variety! Yes there are some great prize companies out there providing a good selection of prizes. But to be the best you can be, and generate more income, you need to utilize many more prize companies. I will guarantee, if you expand your prize selection you will dramatically increase your income and the amount of fun your location offers your customers. For a list of our supplies just email, or call me, and I will share with you the 30 plus companies we use to fill our redemption counters.

Here is a tip inside a tip. Take an honest look at your redemption counter as if you were the customer. Ask yourself if there are any items you would want your kids to come home with? Would you give your son or daughter a few extra dollars to win a better prize? Are there any items that you would want to win for yourself???? Are there items that would make you come back again to play for? If the answer is no...then you have some work to do. This is a simple way of knowing if your redemption counter is all it can be.

A list of prizes that work in our parks include: Play Dough, board games, popular licensed plush, coloring books, licensed dolls for girls, quality jewelry, inflatable toys, cotton candy, our candy counter (see picture), electronic items for Mom, Dad and teenagers, and local pro sports team items. Keep in mind your adults will play games if you have prizes for them to win. Remember, the parents of today were game players when they were kids!!!

Lastly, make Mom happy. If the kids have fun in your location they will ask to come back. But if Mom is not happy with her experience in your location she will find another place to spend her money—movie theater, museum or worse yet your competitor. In our parks we bend over backwards to make sure Mom is happy. We know she will bring her kids back to a place that she feels she gets good value, that her business is appreciated and that she feels safe in. Make her happy and she will be back time and time again with her family and friends.

If you have questions, comments or want to share what works for your locations please call (920.497.6991) or email me (jimmychaps@aol.com). I will answer your questions and even share them with our readers the next month. I will also share with you all of the great ideas from our readers as well. Like I always say, “We are all in this together so let’s all help each other out.”

See you next month!!!!

