



# **BOWLING CENTER PLAYBOOK**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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Bowling Day in the USA is a new initiative developed by the International Bowling Campus Youth Development team, in coordination with the United States Bowling Congress and Bowling Proprietors' Association of America. The goal of this event is to rally bowling centers to get excited about hosting a one-day event designed to get the entire community, especially kids, excited about going bowling.

The launch date is Super Bowl Saturday, Feb. 11, 2023, one day before Football's "Big Game." Although Bowling Day in the USA is surrounding a special kick-off day, we want bowling centers to know they have the freedom to participate in this initiative by hosting their event on any day in February.

### **What's in it for me**

Each participating center who registers receives a FREE promotional kit valued at \$500, complements of the IBC Youth Development team. This kit includes a variety of printed and digital materials to help you achieve success.

In addition, our team will set up and manage your event registration through a shared Eventbrite page as well as a fully managed social media ad campaign. That's right, our team will launch and spend \$400 on a targeted ad buy within a 50-mile radius of your center that all but guarantees enough families to help your event be a success.

Now remember, the goal of the event, in addition to introducing these families to your business, is for their kids to experience the enjoyment of bowling. Your opportunity truly lies in the preparation of what comes next. Whether that is a birthday party sign-up, learn to bowl classes, a ball league or traditional short-season league in the spring, getting them committed is the final step in the process to generating new lifelong bowlers.

### **Case Study**

Bowling Day in the USA came from a traditional sales funnel model inside of centers from running a blastoff event. IBC Youth's USA Bowling team met with 12 different centers across the country. The goal was to launch a USA Bowling league program in the area, but the team soon found out, once they left the facility and moved on to the next customer, each center struggled to adopt the USA Bowling format.

However, the sales funnel concept worked well, utilizing a legacy program from BPAA called Bowling Blastoff. Across these case studies, we found that when we invested approximately \$400 in a social media targeted ad buy, USA Bowling could generate approximately 500 families to register, which turned into nearly 220 families who came with their kids.

In addition to introducing bowling to a new audience, the host centers often generated revenue that day by offering food and beverage in their snack bar and through those in attendance bowling additional games and patronizing other areas of the bowling center.



## Program Goal

The IBC Youth Development team wants to register 500 centers and deploy targeted ad campaigns in the amount of \$400 per center, then help them register enough families across the country so more than 100,000 people walk into a bowling center from this program in February 2023.

Begin thinking about your program goals. What do you want to get out of it? We'll talk about this later in the playbook, however, be considering this along the way.

- How many registered would be considered a success?
- How many attendees would be considered a success?
- How much revenue do you want to do that day to consider it a success?
- How many signups for something else would be considered a success?

## BEFORE GETTING STARTED

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*"Desire is the key to motivation, but it's determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal – a commitment to excellence – that will enable you to attain the success you seek."*

*-Mario Andretti*

## Make the Commitment

Before you begin down the journey of launching an event for Bowling Day in the USA, it is important that you make a commitment to follow the program. Sure, it takes some time and energy to properly prepare, plan, and execute this playbook, but the rewards will be worth the effort. Before you can get started, you first must be willing to commit. Making the commitment and decision to get started is half the battle. With that decision behind you, it is full speed ahead.

## Adopt the Proper Mindset

There is more to making a commitment, and that includes adopting the right mindset. You cannot execute this program (or any program) if you don't believe in it. If you think kids and parents are too busy with other activities to consider joining a bowling league, the results of your program will reflect that. Similarly, if you believe you have tried everything to market your center and grow your youth program, but nothing ever works, it probably won't.

Once you are committed to the program and have adopted the mindset that your center is willing to offer local children a fun youth league experience that is both exciting and memorable, then you have taken the first few steps toward success.

## PLANNING

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*"Plans are nothing; Planning is everything."*

*-Dwight D Eisenhower*



## Inform your staff

Simply put, let everyone in your center know and understand what is happening with this event. Inform your staff of the concept of Bowling Day in the USA, so they are well-versed and prepared for questions they might receive.

Make this the day that you put out all the marketing materials so they can review them. While the social ad campaign can generate a lot of registered attendees, your center staff can easily identify new customers and speak to them about the upcoming event.

**Helpful Hint:** Consider asking your staff for ideas on ways to recruit participants for the big day.

Staff scripts are available as a resource in the back of this guide. Encourage your counter attendants to ask every parent/child that comes into the center if they are interested in attending Bowling Day in the USA to learn more about the sport. Training your staff and making them aware of the programming is vital to the recruitment of new bowlers.

## Identify a Champion

No, we are not talking about giving out awards, not yet. What we mean by identifying a champion is to select someone to run point on this event. Between your existing staff, youth parents or volunteers, who is best to take on this initiative to ensure 100% success?

Identify that person and put them in charge. As an owner of your establishment, you can't do it all. And while you'll need to be involved in approving budgets and adhering to the timeline, ensuring someone else is thinking about this event and working on it even more than you are, guarantees a successful endeavor.

## Your Event

Consider what your event might look like. Evaluate your center and identify what you have to offer.

**Helpful Hint:** Having a specific free offer for those who register is a key to success. We recommend two free games of bowling (including shoe rental) for kids, and exclusive discounts for adults who want to play, too.

Then determine what additional things can be brought from outside your business to keep individuals busy having fun and to make it an even more memorable event.

- Video game trucks
- Bounce houses or obstacle courses
- Face painters
- Bowlopolis coloring contests
- Dunk booth or other carnival games
- DJ or promoter



- Corn hole boards
- Oversized Jenga games
- Local police or firemen providing safety tips
- Ability to tour fire trucks or police cars
- Outside news or radio coverage
- Prizes and competitions
- Bring in a local or national professional

All of these are great options, and if you get busy and the lanes are full, these are ways to keep folks occupied while they wait to bowl.

## Target Groups

What makes a great event is identifying your target audiences in your community from which you can draw. Here are a few examples:

- Recommended ages 5-14 for kids
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Schools who run Bowler's Ed
- Day care programs
- Church groups
- Home school groups

## Goal Setting/Budgeting

Like anything you do in your business, it is important to set your goals and a budget around this event to help determine what the return on investment (ROI) looks like.

Below are some examples you can use or build in Excel for yourself. Simply identify all the revenue areas and capture the gross sales for each. This includes any future registration for events you captured that day.

## Bowling Day in the USA - Revenue

REVENUE CATEGORY	QTY	SALES	TOTAL SALES
Bowling Sales	1	\$ 2,500.00	<b>\$2,500.00</b>
Food & Beverage	1	\$ 2,500.00	<b>\$2,500.00</b>
Arcade	1	\$ 500.00	<b>\$500.00</b>
Birthday Party Sign-ups	10	\$ 150.00	<b>\$1,500.00</b>
Ball league Sign-ups	24	\$ 150.00	<b>\$3,600.00</b>
Learn to Bowl Sign-ups	4	\$ 10.00	<b>\$40.00</b>
			<b>\$10,640.00</b>



**Helpful Hint:** You will also have email addresses for these individuals, so it's important to follow up for any possible additional outbound sales you might capture for anyone who did not have time to sign-up onsite.

Here you will identify all the expense areas for your event, including cost of goods sold (COGS) and future program costs.

## Bowling Day in the USA - Budget

REVENUE CATEGORY	QTY	EXPENSE	TOTAL EXPENSES
Marketing Kit	1	\$ -	<b>\$0.00</b>
Event Planning hours	50	\$ 15.00	<b>\$750.00</b>
Printing	1	\$ 100.00	<b>\$100.00</b>
Rentals 1	1	\$ 500.00	<b>\$500.00</b>
Rentals 2	1	\$ 500.00	<b>\$500.00</b>
Event day payroll	1	\$ 1,500.00	<b>\$1,500.00</b>
Materials	1	\$ 250.00	<b>\$250.00</b>
Supplies	1	\$ 250.00	<b>\$250.00</b>
Bowling Balls	24	\$ 50.00	<b>\$1,200.00</b>
Birthday Party Hosts	10	\$ 50.00	<b>\$500.00</b>
			<b>\$5,550.00</b>

Then you calculate these numbers to generate your ROI. Total Revenue minus Total Expenses equals our Total Profits. Divide profits by expenses for your ROI calculation.

Is the below example of 92% good? Yes, you almost doubled your costs, this is typical of a positive ROI. The higher the percentage the better.

Now consider the future leads you captured and the value of them over the next 12 months. That is truly where we see how valuable an event like this can be. They are future customers who frequent your business and generate additional weekly revenue for your business.

Bowling Day in the USA ROI Calculation			
Total Revenue	\$10,640.00		
Total Expenses	\$5,550.00	subtract (-)	
Total Profits	\$5,090.00	divide by expenses	
ROI Calculation	92%		
New Leads	38		
Future Revenue	\$500.00		
Future Revenue	\$19,000.00		



## USBC Association Support

USBC has a great network of approximately 15,000+ volunteers, and they are right there in your community. Association board members, coaches, and league officials. All these volunteers who want to see the sport grow and will welcome the idea of supporting events in their area.

Here are a few ideas:

1. First set up a meeting with your local association to discuss your event and help them understand the overall framework.
2. Ask how many volunteers they believe they can rally for your event.
3. Work with them to review what help you are looking for and empower them to be responsible for the areas of support needed. Examples include:
  - a. Help at your main registration table and check folks in as they arrive. Be the Welcoming Committee.
  - b. See if they could set up a table for or hand out flyers to inform attendees about the scholarship opportunities in bowling.
  - c. See if they have any raffle items to provide as giveaways.
  - d. If coaches are available, they could be stationed on the lanes and help engage customers with helpful tips to improve their experience and scores.
  - e. Ask for their help in printing and distributing of yard signs to spread the word about the community.
  - f. Identify what leagues you are wanting to fill and have an association-run table where they capture registration for those leagues.
  - g. Here they can also talk about bowling opportunities for kids, scholarships, competitions in the area and more.
4. If you have a house pro/coach, they could set up a table and promote an upcoming coaching clinic or private lessons for those looking for quicker improvement.
5. To aid with pre-event registration, they could help by setting up a table at local businesses who allow them in order to offer information on Bowling Day in the USA along with a member of your staff.
6. There are always great opportunities for fundraising at events, allow the association to accept donations for their youth scholarship tournaments. First set up a meeting with your local association to discuss your event and help them understand the overall framework.

## Timeline

Make sure to plan out all the steps necessary for your event to be successful. From coordinating staff and volunteers, to contacting vendors, working with IBC Youth on registration and much more. Set a date for your event and work backward to today so you can ensure you stay on plan and do not get overwhelmed. Here's an example timeline:





DATE	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE
20 Weeks	Staff meeting (all) to discuss the event	Ownership
19 Weeks	Set event date and time	Ownership
18 Weeks	Assign an event lead	Ownership
17 Weeks	Identify target group and customers	Event Lead
16 Weeks	Establish your event goals and budget	Event Lead
15 Weeks	Establish a meeting with your local association	Event Lead
14 Weeks	Identify any business leads and build a simple sponsorship package to invite other businesses to participate and set up a table	Sales Lead
13 Weeks	Staff meeting with leads to discuss event Update team with registration numbers	Event Lead
12 Weeks	Set up the printed materials you received from IBC Youth	Team
11 Weeks	Determine what opportunities you will promote to all attendees to sign them up for	Team
10 Weeks	Begin making announcements during your existing leagues	Center Desk
9 Weeks	<b>Staff meeting with leads to discuss event</b> <b>Update team with registration numbers</b>	<b>Event Lead</b>
8 Weeks	Rollout your digital promotional materials through web, email and social platforms	Marketing
7 Weeks	Consider rolling out a referral program for your existing customers to help with attendee registration	Marketing
6 Weeks	Tap into any other community-based marketing initiatives	Marketing
5 Weeks	<b>Staff meeting with leads to discuss event</b> <b>Update team with registration numbers</b>	<b>Event Lead</b>
4 Weeks	Finalize sponsorships and local businesses who will be attending	Sales Lead
3 Weeks	Contact local news or radio for possible PR event coverage for your event	Marketing
2 Weeks	Touch base with volunteer support from Association	Event Lead
1 Week Away	Staff meeting with leads to discuss event	Event Lead



	<b>Update team with registration numbers</b>	
<b>6 Days</b>	Follow up with local news or radio for possible PR event coverage for your event	Marketing
<b>5 Days</b>	Make sure all key roles have been identified	Event Lead
<b>4 Days</b>	Make calls to vendors to ensure everyone is ready and on-schedule	Team
<b>3 Days</b>	Any final outreach to possible attendees	Team
<b>2 Days</b>	Do an inventory of all your supplies to make sure you have what you need	Event Lead
<b>Day Before</b>	Setup decorations and have final cleanup and thorough center review to ensure you are ready	Team
<b>2/11/2023</b>	<b>Bowling Day in the USA</b>	Team

## Sponsorships

Consider existing business partners you might already have with your center. Those who have benefited from traffic in your center to their business and maybe vice versa. You can sell sponsorships to allow each small business to come and set up a table at your event whether indoors or outdoors. Knowing that in one day you are going to have lots of families come through your doors, most businesses would be excited to have a huge influx of folks to speak to.

Get creative here though, it does not simply have to be a flat fee of \$300 - \$500. They could even donate items for raffles, door prizes, or silent auctions you could put together. Don't forget to provide some additional value-added promotion as well. Consider some of these things so if they don't have a high activation rate on your visitors, there are additional benefits to contributing to your event:

- Discounted event for their future business or holiday meetings for staff
- Event flyer thanking and recognizing them for sponsoring the event
- Make announcements throughout the day to visit their table
- Print a large banner with all the supporting brand logos for each sponsor
- Pass out business cards to your league captains the following week

## PROMOTION

*"Master the topic, the message, and the delivery."*

– Steve Jobs



## Point of Sale Kit

Make sure to set up the kit we send you:

- One (1) corrugated standee approximately 5' tall
- One (1) tabletop corrugated standee approximately 2' tall
- One (1) 6' x 3' vinyl banner
- Two (2) 24" x 36" posters
- 25 Tabletop Inserts
- 100 Rack Cards
- 250 Bowling is Healthy brochures
- Proprietor How-To-Guide
- Digital download to access customizable materials along with web, social, email and monitor graphics

Place all the marketing assets in high-traffic areas within your center. Place the vinyl banner on the walls alongside and/or above the lanes. Place posters at the entrance to the game room, pro shop, and snack bar.

Place counter cards at the ends of the front counter and snack bar. Be sure to keep details on where to sign-up, staff scripts and the FAQ next to the register for staff reference.

## Event Registration

Make sure you have been in touch with IBC Youth regarding your registration. We can connect you to your Eventbrite account, so you have access to monitor event registration numbers once we go live and launch your ad campaign.

This should be the only way you take registration from your in-house promotional efforts too. Whatever you do, just make sure you capture everyone in this system even if they walk up and try to register at the desk. Simply pull up your event page and enter their information.

This way you have everyone signed up in the same database and you can plan accordingly rather than trying to manage it in multiple areas. Plus, you have the benefit of event reminders through the registration system.

## Referrals

Generate interest from your existing customers by encouraging them to tell their friends about the event. There is bound to be someone on the local PTA that bowls in your centers, see if they will pass along your event flyers to help drive registration.

Remember, this event is about bringing new families into your center for a day to experience bowling. More kids bowling in your youth leagues creates more fun and excitement for existing league bowlers. Make sure to lean on them for help in bringing in new folks each year, and an event like this is a great way to introduce them to bowling.



Consider printing referral cards about the size of business cards and distribute them to some of your existing customers who think they can help. It should encourage them to come to the front desk to register for Bowling Day in the USA, along with room for each person's name who referred them.

For every card that comes in with someone's name on it and you register that person or their family, you would provide three free games of practice during non-peak times to the person noted on the referral card.

## **Community Marketing**

### **Get into the schools!**

The most effective way to raise awareness about youth bowling and market your program to children is marketing through your local school district. Although schools have put safety measures into place when it comes to soliciting to their students, it is still very possible!

The first step to getting in with the schools is exhausting all connections you may have. If you utilize the Bowler's Ed Program, that is an excellent place to start. Contact your local physical education coordinators or teachers and ask if they would allow you to promote your programming in conjunction with their teachings. They might even allow you to visit their class and speak with the children about youth bowling.

If you do not currently utilize the Bowler's Ed program, but know a schoolteacher or principal who bowls in a league or parent who is involved in the PTA, ask them what you need to do to be able to send flyers home with the kids. You can even request a free Bowler's Ed curriculum to provide to your local school, using the teacher's resource as a conversation starter. You will be surprised how easy the process can be if you know someone within the school system.

If you are unfamiliar with the school district and do not utilize the Bowler's Ed program, your first step is understanding your local flyer distribution policies within the schools. These can be found on the school district's website under the listed school board policies. To find them quickly within the board policies document, search for flyer distribution, advertising in the school, or community relations.

**HELPFUL HINT:** It may be worth looking to see if your school district is listed on [www.peachjar.com](http://www.peachjar.com). This website allows businesses the opportunity to market their products to families and students via their online distribution platform for a modest fee.

### **Contact Community Centers!**

Do not forget there are several other community organizations that offer youth activities. Consider reaching out to churches, daycares, parks, and recreation centers, as well as youth organizations like the YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, etc.

Assign this to your sales team to go out and find other groups to participate.



## Digital Marketing

The internet is where a lot of people go for information. Use it to your advantage and let it do your recruiting for you!

**Website:** Utilizing the digital assets provided, make sure to upload content to your website that promotes the registration page on BOWL.com. That way if individuals are already researching your website about what you offer, now they may stumble on this special event you are running. If you utilize BPAA web services to host your site, contact their team for more information to help include graphics and the program details.

**Email:** If you have an email list for recreational customers this is another great excuse to invite them out. If you do not have a list like this, simply create a newsletter collection on your website and then have a way for individuals to sign-up when they first visit. These folks need to be marketed to more often to generate increased frequency and email is a great way to accomplish that.

**Scoring/TV monitors:** Most centers can run ads throughout their center and IBC Youth provided you with promotional materials that you can run. If you need adjusted sizes simply contact the IBC Youth team and we will adjust them to fit your needs. Again, keep in mind this is for your non-league bowler base, so consider running these mostly on the weekends.

**Social Media:** Social marketing is an excellent tool for online marketing. If you do not at least have a Facebook page, consider building one for this event. Instagram is another must. It's a great way to capture event pictures from your venue that can excite customers about checking out your business if it looks appealing to them.

Schedule the event on social media. And while we don't want to have two types of event registrations, encourage users to visit our Eventbrite page to register there so we have their information for check-in.

**HELPFUL HINT:** One of the most cost-effective means of attracting families to your event is by running paid Facebook ads promoting it. While IBC Youth is going to do this for you on their page and spend \$400 in ads, there is nothing that says you can't do this as well.

Need help with creating social media marketing graphics? Contact IBC Youth and utilize our **FREE** creative services!

## PREPARATION

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*"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."*

*-Benjamin Franklin*



## Orientation Meeting

It is very important as you get close to the event day to do a complete walk-through of the event. Try to invite anyone participating, sponsors included. This will ensure as folks arrive, everyone can help with support by knowing everything from top to bottom.

**HELPFUL HINT:** As the owners of the establishment, this is a great opportunity to thank your staff for all their hard work and recognize your event lead who has put a lot of additional hours into planning this event. Also, remind everyone what the goal is! Whatever it evolved to over time, you want everyone to have fun!

Here are the recommended highlights to discuss in this meeting:

1. Do a walk-through of the facility to discuss customer flow in and out of the building to cover the registration area.
2. Discuss what the offering is and what we should do if someone says there are no lanes available. In preparation for this, have someone scheduled to liaison and escort individuals to other opportunities in the center.
3. Talk about the schedule and announcements that the DJ will highlight based on your event.
4. If you have outside vendors and sponsors coming, make sure to have a list of them and what they should receive in the way of support and expectations.
  - a. Make last-minute calls 24-48 hours in advance to make sure they have the right date and times and know when to be there.
5. Have a plan in place to turn the lanes quickly as individuals come in, but then be there or have an event card handed out at registration. Almost like a scavenger hunt of the center so they do not leave prematurely without checking everything out.
6. Roles and assignments – make sure everyone knows where they should be stationed once the event starts, and when they should approach families for assistance as not to be too overwhelming.

That is a good starting list, we are sure you will have more things to cover based on what makes your event unique. The important thing is that with these types of orientation meetings, you can typically identify things you did not think of and new opportunities that you can still capitalize on and plan for.

## Event Day

- Show up early for final setup steps that are still required.
- Think about hourly steps throughout the day to manage a successful event.
- Have someone available in the office to contact families who do not arrive, invite them out again.
- Make sure to dress up your center with additional decorations to make it feel like a party.
- You can take down some of the event registration marketing materials since those will no longer be needed.



- Have your key tables set up in advance and pre-labeled so folks can come in and know right where to go.
- Capitalize on the opportunity of having so many people in your center excited about bowling to promote your leagues and birthday parties.
- Make sure that staff is energetic, welcoming, and fun.
- Solicit staff members who have exceptional customer service skills or volunteers passionate about bowling to walk around and discuss your programs with children and parents.
- Make sure to have someone capturing event photos and posting on social media. The official Hashtag is: #BOWLINGDAYUSA

## EXECUTION

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*“Whatever you do, do it well. Do it so well that when people see you do it they will want to come back and see you do it again and they will want to bring others and show them how well you do what you do.”*

*-Walt Disney*

### What’s Next

If you remember when this whole thing started, this was about introducing kids to our sport and finding a love for the game like so many of us have.

**GET THEM IN:** We provided you all the necessary tools to get families to walk into your center so you can show them a great time.

**GET THEM EXCITED:** We know you ran a great event, and your staff did an awesome job of getting them excited and they all had a blast in your center!

**GET THEM COMMITTED:** Now it is up to you. Do not let them walk out those doors without signing up for something. Your newsletter, adult/youth leagues, birthday parties, learn to bowl programs, ball leagues and more.

We know if you had 200 families walk through your doors, getting at least 10% of them to register for a league program is very possible. No matter how you end up deciding to graduate them through your programming, just remember the value of a youth league bowler has annual residual income in the amount of at least \$500/per year.

Here is a list of ideas and programs to consider:

1. USA Bowling – Learn the Sport
2. 8x8 league programs
3. Adult/youth beginner league
4. Starter league (everyone receives a ball, bag, and pair of shoes)
5. GoBowling America’s have-a-ball league
6. After school programs



## POST-EVENT

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1. Make sure you post all those event pictures and videos and if you used our event hashtag, your content may show up in our social feed at BOWL.com/BowlingDayUSA.
2. Keep an eye out for our post-event survey coming out shortly after the events conclude so we can learn about your successes and challenges from running your event this year.
3. Follow up with your registration lists and event no-shows. Thanking them for attending and signing up, and for those who missed out, encourage them to stop by for some of the opportunities still available.

## RESOURCES

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Visit BOWL.com/BowlingDayUSA for more helpful resources

- Digital material download
- Scripts
- FAQs
- ROI Calculator

Thank you for your interest in youth bowling and joining us for Bowling Day in the USA. At the International Bowling Campus, we are excited about the development of our youth programs and look forward to helping you in any way we can. Good luck!

### Questions?

Contact us at: [marketing@ibcyouth.com](mailto:marketing@ibcyouth.com) or 800.514.2695

