

# Roller Skating

Business Magazine

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## NATIONAL ROLLER SKATING MONTH?

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### From the RINK To the RINGS!

*In this issue...*

- + 10 Tips for Combating Negative Online Reviews
- + Women Taking a Leadership "ROLL" in the Roller Skating Industry
- + How to be a Social Media Superhero
- + 10 Ways to Cut the Cord with New Options in Phone Service



**CHAD HEDRICK**

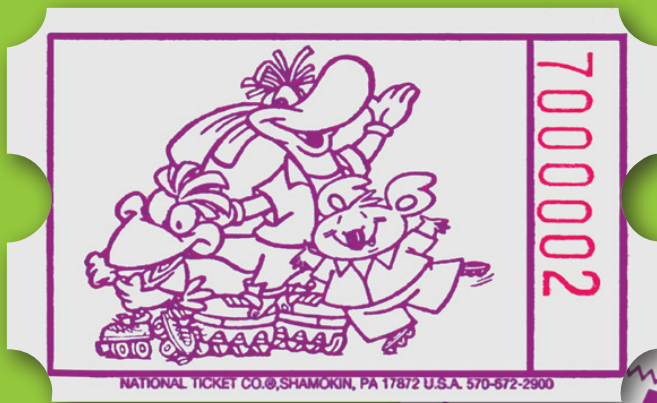
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**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**

Bobby Bentley, Lynette Anacker, Lori Lovely, Cornelius Fortune,  
 Sara Hodon, Nicholas Napier, Anthony Profaci, Kevin Ekmark,  
 Genie Davis, Tonya Dickerson, Joseph Camarota III

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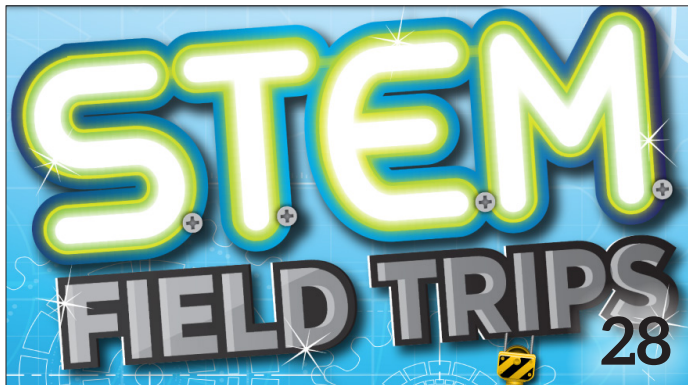
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10 Tips for Combating  
Negative Online Reviews



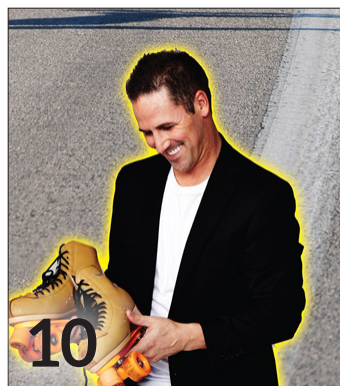
Women Taking a  
Leadership "Roll" in the  
Roller Skating Industry



Complete Guide to USA STEM Field Trips Program



10 Ways to Cut the Cord



Q/A with NRSM Cover  
Model, Chad Hedrick

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Join us online today!





# PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

When the Roller Skating Association began investigating the importance of STEM education in schools and how it applied to the roller skating industry, we knew that it was important for us to help our members with a program that didn't just bring kids to our rinks, but also educated, inspired and encouraged them to return to the rink.

We quickly learned, during our research, that to create a curriculum with hundreds of files, videos and educational materials that would fit every single grade level would be a massive undertaking. In fact, massive would be an understatement.

That's when we learned about the success that United Skates of America had with their own STEM program. In our meetings with Jim Dvorak and Karen Palermo of United Skates of America, we were able to sit in on presentations, see how the program was made up and how it would impact member rinks - we were beyond impressed.

USA spent nearly 1/4 million dollars putting the program together and tested it for a full year before sharing the results. The success of their rinks in year one is so impressive that one rink was able to bring in an additional \$102,000 just in educational lessons through the STEM program - not including income from parties, redemption, games, etc.!

After months of negotiations, conversations and a generous grant from the Roller Skating Foundation in the amount of \$37,500 to help cover a portion of the licensing fees, we are thrilled to share with you the USA STEM program available for licensing by RSA members.

In the center spread of the magazine, you'll learn all about the program and we encourage you

to invest in your business by purchasing the rights to this program.

Here at the RSA, we're working to help you improve your business and we promise you one thing - the USA STEM Program will change the face of the roller skating industry.

## SK8 Expo Rolls in STEM Program

Of course, we would be remiss to share with you the success of Sk8 Expo held this September. Attendees were treated to a bevy of educational seminars that left guests energized and entertained. The highly anticipated STEM Program kicked off with a two hour seminar with question and answer sessions that showed attendees how utilizing this program in your rink will not only change how the public views your business, but it will ultimately change the face of the roller skating industry. Ten rinks signed up immediately, with Jeff Warrenburg and myself as the first two businesses to buy the licensed program. (See center spread of this issue for complete article on the program and how to register).

## Teamwork Development

The Magic and Mayhem Show with James Songster and Art Thomas presented the importance of teamwork development.

The focus of the interactive seminar taught attendees about the Five Steps to Building a High Performing Team:

- Select team members who are team players.
- Personally model good customer service behaviors.
- Remove the obstacles to team performance.

- Train, train, train.
- Reward exceptional job performance.

## Email and Content Marketing

Howard Flint with Ghost Partners Marketing Experts taught attendees about the best practices with Constant Contact and email marketing. Content marketing is broken out into email, social and web, all of which involves content - articles and conversations that engage, educate and entertain your customers and potential clients. Videos clips from these seminars will be available on the RSA website in the near future.

## Building a Better and More Stable Staff

David Saxe of Ownership Thinking taught attendees about the importance of making use of the quarterly cycle and annual planning to progress their business. Knowing your team's health, reviewing scorecard key performance indicators, identifying and solving issues, introducing new tools, setting quarterly goals, creating strategic plans and much more were all reviewed to show business owners the best practices to move their business forward.

## Leveraging Your Hiring Practices

Tony Menendez of Chick-Fil-A shared how their facilities hire staff members and make the most of their talents. With the increase in minimum wage and the competitive nature of hiring, Tony shared how to leverage your hiring practices to ensure that you're getting the best and brightest talent.







Roller Skating Foundation President, Joe Champa, United Skates of America President, Karen Palermo, and RSA President, Bobby Bentley

### Improving Your Social and Web IQ

Lauren Turner with Trustworkz taught attendees the importance of social media and corporate optimization through the use of social media and content management, as well as knowing your online presence. Some of the important things she touched on included:

- SEO - Understanding the basics
- Local optimization through the use of Google, Yelp, and other location-based apps and websites. With over 60 directory listings, it's important to keep your hours and addresses updated on the most major sites.

- Creating content on your site and sharing it far and wide.
- Utilizing an easy to manage content management system like Wordpress
- Social media: Kids are moving away from Facebook and utilizing sites like Snapchat, Instagram, Pinterest,
- Building a database that will allow you to keep track of your customers and their information
- Website analytics
- Optimizing your web presence through social media, titles and meta descriptions, website content, local listings and more.

### Expanding the Use of KSF

Bill Hoefler explained to attendees how to get the most out of their Kids Skate Free program. "Is your Kids Skate Free program as welcoming as Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood?"

Do you want those skaters? What do your actions show? Some rinks use some of their worst session times without trying to use them during busier session times such as: Tuesday and Friday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. for kids under 10. If kids get out of school at 3 and parents get off work at 5 that leaves very little time to visit the rink. Make sure that you're realistic about which times you want skaters in your rink and that parents and children may be able to utilize the passes.

Are you using all of the tools?

- Free audio and video files are available on the Kids Skate Free dashboard to use in your rink, on your local radio station, etc.

- Posters, postcards, brochures - all of these files are available on the member dashboard.
- Get creative and tie in your social media and QR codes on your materials, put [www.kidsskatefree.com](http://www.kidsskatefree.com) on your billboards and advertisements.
- Your customers are looking for added value - give it to them! Free laser tag, free skatemates, free soda with a pizza purchase, community partners, promote other businesses within your materials and then have them promote it in their facility, as well.

### Look for Even More at the 2016 Roller Skating Industry Convention and Trade Show

If you enjoyed these seminars, you definitely don't want to miss the 2016 Roller Skating Industry Convention and Trade Show - it's bound to be one of the most memorable events in the industry!

Thank you for being a valued reader and member of the Roller Skating Association and we're looking forward to sharing with you more educational tools and resources in the upcoming months.



*Bobby Bentley*

RSA President

Robert "Bobby" Bentley

# SAVE THE DATE

**2016**  
INTERNATIONAL  
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# EDITOR'S NOTE



## FEATURE AUTHORS

**H**ave you updated your Facebook page today? Did you post anything on Twitter? How about on your website's blog? If there's one these we have learned, it's that social media is an everchanging beast and one that we must continue to invest in and utilize to our advantage.

That being said, we have begun to create roller skating memes and social media images for you to share and repost on your pages. We encourage you to share them with your own customers and use them to create a conversation. Just click on the "share" button and include your own message or links. The image you see below was shared by 158 people and seen by 15,000 Facebook users!

We're incredibly excited to share information with you about the STEM Program from United Skates of America in this issue. If your schools are telling you, "we don't take field trips unless they're educational" you can't afford to be without this completely turnkey program. Whether your state follows the STEM curriculum or not, you can be assured that this program is educational in every way and schools are jumping on board across the country.

We know that time is money and life is busy, but I encourage you to take the time to read through each article in this issue. I promise you that there will always be one thing that you can take back to your rink and employ. If you ever have any ideas or suggestions, questions or concerns, I encourage you to contact me and we'll do our best to include information on the topics you're seeking.

Lynette Anacker  
Editor & Publisher  
editor@rollerskating.com  
317.347.2626 Ext. 107

*Lynette Anacker*



### NICHOLAS NAPIER

After a seven year career in the US Navy which included living in Japan and serving on AEGIS Cruisers and Destroyers, Nicholas Napier completed his MBA and settled in California. He's published over 40 articles as the San Diego Fitness Trends Examiner, and regularly contributes blogs and articles to various publications. "Bad reviews are an inevitability in businesses that deal with the public, so it was interesting to explore what rink owners think is most important when responding. There's real research out there showing how necessary reputation management has become."



### SARA HODON

Sara Hodon is a freelance writer based in northeast Pennsylvania, where she lives with her family, including two very spoiled Labrador retrievers. Her work has appeared in G.I. Jobs, Pet Business, History, Souvenirs, Gifts, and Novelties, and Tourist Attractions & Parks, among others. She received her English degree from Lebanon Valley College, Annville, Pa. She was pleasantly surprised to learn about the many opportunities new skaters have to improve their skills. Besides writing, she is an avid reader, music lover/concert goer, and traveler. Growing up, she spent many Saturday afternoons at the roller rink.



### CORNELIUS FORTUNE

Cornelius Fortune is a writer and journalist whose work has appeared in WD's Ventito, Yahoo News, *iPhone Life Magazine*, Cinema Blend, and others. Follow him on Twitter @Arlingtonscribe or arlingtonstories@gmail.com.



### LORI LOVELY

Lori is an award-winning syndicated writer, editor and photographer whose byline has appeared in a wide range of local, national international publications. A recipient of the 1999 AIDServe Superstar Award, Lovely is a long-standing PETA member and was a 25-year member of CARA Charities. She and her husband, an IndyCar mechanic, run Montrose Farms where they raise alpacas and chickens. Lori can be reached at [lori@montrosefarms.com](mailto:lori@montrosefarms.com)

Images like this will be shared on the RSA Facebook page and Twitter account allowing you the opportunity to share with your customers. Make sure to use hashtags like #rollerskating or include @RSAIntl when you're posting!



## IMPORTANT DATES



### SECTION MEETINGS & ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Event	Date	Contact or Registration Information	Event Location
Section 5 Meeting	February 8-9, 2016	Monday, Section 5 Meeting with crawfish or shrimp boil along with a "Learn to Skate" seminar for attendees to show teachers how to teach customers to roller skate. Tuesday, Ground Pat'i Grille for Mardi Gras from 8 am - ? Details visit <a href="http://www.rollerskating.com">www.rollerskating.com</a> .	Hilton Garden Inn 2350 West Congress Lafayette, LA 70506

### TRADE SHOWS & NATIONAL EVENTS

Event	Date	Contact or Registration Information	Event Location
RSA Convention and Trade Show	May 1-4, 2016	Contact Tina Robertson at <a href="mailto:convention@rollerskating.com">convention@rollerskating.com</a> or call 317-347-2626 Ext. 103 to reserve your space or see <a href="http://www.rollerskating.org">www.rollerskating.org</a> for more information as it becomes available.	Rio All Suites Hotel & Casino 3700 W. Flamingo Rd Las Vegas, NV 89103

\*All information provided here, along with flyers and forms for download are available at [www.rollerskating.com](http://www.rollerskating.com) under EVENTS for each section meeting or trade show.

**FREE FOR MEMBERS!**

**FREE FOR STAFF!**

# 2015-2016 Webinar Series CONSTRUCTING YOUR SUCCESS

**Presented by the Roller Skating Association International**

**OCT 7:** Part 1 - Web Presence 101 with Kevin and Taylor of Trustworkz

**OCT 22:** USA STEM Program Presentation with Karen Palermo

**NOV 11:** Part 2 - In Depth Look at Monitoring Your Web Presence with Kevin and Taylor of Trustworkz

**JAN 13:** Making Music Work for Your Rink with Jim Juniper of FEC Music

**FEB 10:** How to Make the Most of Your Kids Skate Free Customer List with Bill Hoefler of Interskate 91 North

## REGISTER TODAY!

All webinars are hosted at 1 p.m. EST. Visit [www.rollerskating.com](http://www.rollerskating.com) > Events > Webinars to register or email [education@rollerskating.com](mailto:education@rollerskating.com) for more information. All webinars are recorded and uploaded to the members only section of [www.rollerskating.com](http://www.rollerskating.com) for viewing at any time.



# Q/A with Cover Model and Speed Skating Olympian, Chad Hedrick

**RSA / How did you get your start in speed skating?**

**Chad Hedrick** / I started skating at 16 months old in my dad's rink in Houston, TX. I started racing at the age of four and loved it from the first day. I felt like I was born to skate. My parents operated their business as I skated 6-8 hours each day.

**RSA / Your family has a long history in the roller skating industry, how did this influence you?**

**Chad Hedrick** / My family has been involved in some way for 40-50 years. That past encouraged my dad to open the business and it gave me the opportunity to have the resources I needed to become the best. It has been a different life in comparison to others, but I wouldn't have changed it for the world.

**RSA / I see that you introduced a new technique to the world of inline skating called the double push, can you tell us more about it and how you were able to get this integrated into the sport?**

**Chad Hedrick** / The double-push was a technique used to win all of my championships. The technique was my natural way of skating and today people are writing books and analyzing extensive video to try and duplicate it. It's pretty humbling to be honest. I was just a kid that loved to skate and gave it my heart.

**RSA / You've won 93 national championships and 50 world championships. Is there a win, in particular, that means more to you than the others?**

**Chad Hedrick** / My first world championship was won in 1994 at just 17 years

old. When this happened, I saw the light at the end of the tunnel and I truly believed at that point that great things were coming. When you sacrifice your whole life for a goal and you get a taste of it early it motivates you to continue to work hard and dream bigger.

**RSA / I heard that they put a \$20k bounty on your Duluth Marathon Record, do you think it's achievable?**

**Chad Hedrick** / Yes, I think it's cool. I honestly can't believe it's still a record. I used 84mm wheels and now they are up to 125mm. Technology has come so far and the sport has changed so much. I would be there in Duluth, but I already have a camp in South America that week. I wish all the skaters the very best.

**RSA / I see that you're a motivational speaker now. How do you think that your background in roller skating impacted your career today?**

**Chad Hedrick** / I think just setting goals for myself and dreaming to be the best in the world really changed me as a person. I love inspiring people to wake up and be the best they can be with my personal story. Kids are really where my heart is. I just want them to know what is possible with passion and

dedication. Usually when I speak, I meet people that inspire me to push harder in the process. It's funny how that works.

**RSA / Do you still venture out on the rink floor?**

**Chad Hedrick** / I honestly just skate indoor when I do camps for kids. It's where I grew up, so it feels like home. In America, I can use the rinks, but outside the country it's a different story. We have to use all types of facilities depending on the country.

**RSA / Are you teaching children to roller skate?**

**Chad Hedrick** / Yes, the double-push race academy will travel to 15 countries each year and inspire people to skate hard and dream big.

**RSA / Who was one of your fiercest competitors?**

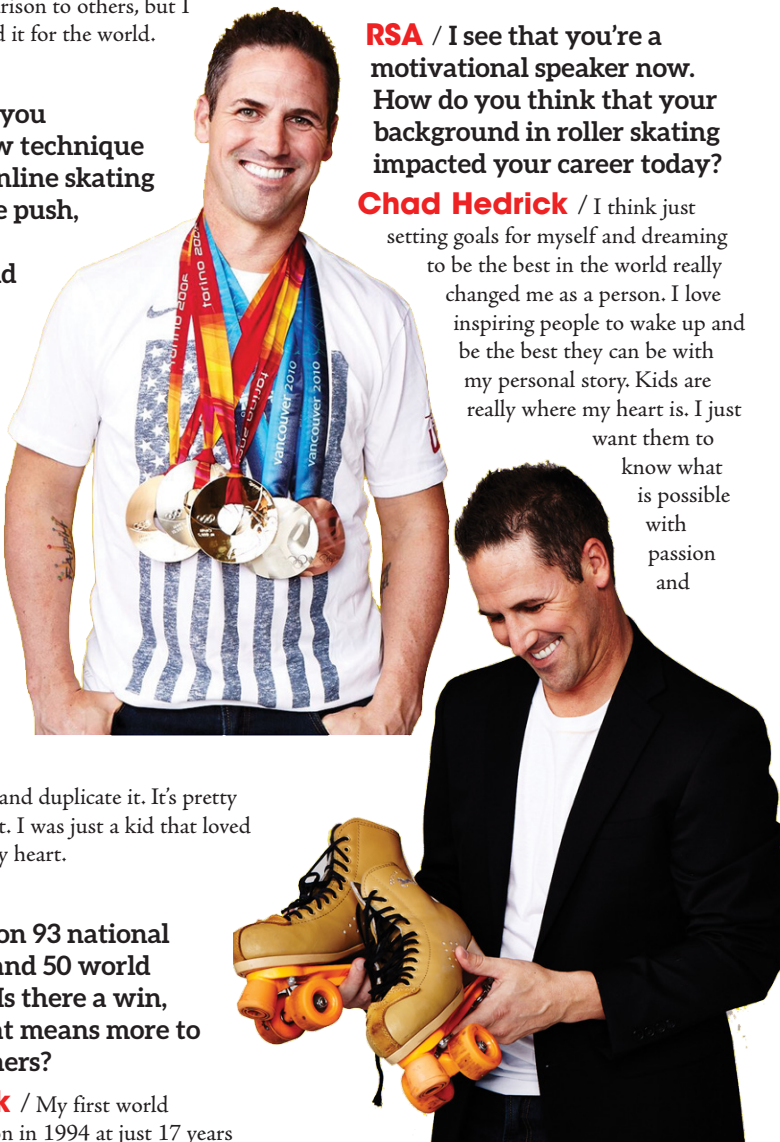
**Chad Hedrick** / My fiercest rivals were mostly overseas. I was fortunate enough to be on top for 9 years and the "X" was on my back for quite a while. I loved that pressure. I woke up each morning with the goal of proving I was the best.

**RSA / October is National Roller Skating Month. If there was one piece of advice you could give to roller skating center owners, what would it be?**

**Chad Hedrick** / I would encourage all rink owners to introduce skaters to speed and get a qualified coach to help. It's a really good sport to teach kids the qualities needed to be successful in life. With so much going on out there in this world a rink can be a safe place for kids to find themselves and learn how to set goals. That's what I did.

**RSA / Did you have any pre-race rituals?**

**Chad Hedrick** / I am very superstitious of my hotel room number. I would always make reservations in advance and ask for a room that ended in 1.



# Super Skater Teaches, Creates Repeat Customers

By: Tonya Dickerson

Are you looking for a way to get repeat skaters into your skating center? Do you have skaters that make you cringe with worry because they're still wobbly on skates?

The Super Skater Program is a learn-to-skate program offered by the RSA, designed to teach basic roller skating skills. This is an easy and effective way to encourage new skaters or help build safe, confident skaters.

## Build your Learn-to-Skate Program classes

This program offers:

- ♦ Attainable goals for beginner skaters
- ♦ Increases a skater's confidence and enthusiasm for roller skating
- ♦ Teaches safety and proper technique to avoid injury
- ♦ Tests are based on individual performance; no pressure of competition

## What are coaches saying about the program?

"The Super Skater program has been received with much enthusiasm in our classes. The skaters get very excited when I tell them that they are ready to test," says Coach Karyn.

When asked about the benefits of running this program, Karyn had this to say. "This has helped with retention of skaters. They become excited to skate and learn. At the end of the testing, we roll out the red carpet, which they get to walk upon to receive their pin! Last season we built our club from about 6 competitors to 24, plus a 12 skater junior precision team consisting of skaters who have come through our class and Super Skater Testing. The skaters also move on to the Achievement Proficiency Test Program."

By making it a ceremony, participants really feel a sense of accomplishment. "I take a class photo with the skaters, coach, and judge and individual photos if they wish. The parents stay and cheer on the skaters." *Coach Karyn Cormier – Skate Reflections, Kissimmee, FL*

"I find the benefits of running the Super Skater test is it gets the skaters excited about

The programs [Super Skater and Achievement Programs] from the RSA really work for us here in Kissimmee, Fla.!

- Coach Karyn Cormier - Skate Reflections, Kissimmee, Fla.

earning the reward of the pin. We make a big deal about presenting them with the pins and we also recognized them at our rinks annual awards night. Once they pass Super Skater I, they want to know when they can do Super Skater II." *Coach Diann Tanney – Rollarama Skating Center, Schenectady, NY*

"The Super Skater program actually benefits the skaters at my off-site locations. I use it mostly in my satellite classes (church, elementary school). I can easily run the level one test in the gymnasiums, but level two is not possible because of the track size needed for the race. That provides a fabulous opportunity for me to invite those skaters to their local rink to take the next test and further their skating accomplishments." *Coach Jamie Noll – Rollhaven Skating Center, Flint, MI*

## How do you get the Super Skater Program in your rink?

Interested in running Super Skater in your rink? Follow these simple steps to get started:

- ♦ Obtain Test Forms. Download forms from the SRSTA Program section of the

website or call the National Office.

- ♦ Set up Super Skater classes to teach the basic skills needed for level one and/or level two.
- ♦ Don't have an experienced skater to teach the program? Download the "Teaching a Non-skater to Teach Beginning Skating" curriculum from the website.
- ♦ Have one or three judges present when your skaters are ready to be tested.
- ♦ Judges must be 15 years of age and knowledgeable of skating skills.
- ♦ Submit the Test Forms and \$3 fee per test to the RSA office and we will mail your pins and certificates.
- ♦ Pre-purchased Super Skater pins through the RSA National Office gives you the opportunity to present pins to the skaters when they pass their tests.

Questions about how to get this program launched in your roller skating center? Contact Tonya Dickerson at 317-347-2626 Ext. 112 or email [achievement@rollerskating.com](mailto:achievement@rollerskating.com).



Karyn Cormier has been coaching for 37 years. She has had great success with the Super Skater program that she runs out of Skate Reflections in Kissimmee, Fla. "As they move on to the next higher class, they also become interested in private or semi-private instruction."



# Winter is coming...and so are renewals!

We hope you caught that *Game of Thrones* reference. We've been working hard to secure a variety of new benefits, educational programs, promotional flyers and products, news and information for you to use in your skating centers.

Renewal packets will be mailed within the coming weeks - so when you get your mail from the RSA, make sure to open it. Inside you'll find information on all of the member benefits you receive, including a few new ones we're securing for you by the end of 2015. You'll also receive your BMI form to be completed and returned. You can also pay for your membership dues online just by logging into your account at [www.rollerskating.com](http://www.rollerskating.com). Once you remit your dues,

you'll be mailed a variety of items including:

- RSA member sticker for your skating center door showing visitors that you are a member
- A complete 2016 Pepsi/RSA promotions calendar with ideas for every single day of the year
- New membership cards

## Remind me again. What's in it for me?

We get this question every once in a while and we like to take the opportunity to list many of the benefits you receive as a member of the Association. As you'll see, your \$360 dues pays

for itself several times over and we encourage you to utilize the most of your benefits.

If there's something you'd like to see here, whether it be a program, a discount, an offering or service, etc., we want to know. We're always working with our members to reach out to new businesses to develop partnerships to join the RSA Advantage Program and your voice matters.

Deadline for 2016 will January 1 in order to have your information listed in the membership directory. Questions? Contact Stacy Thomas, Director of Membership Services, at [membership@rollerskating.org](mailto:membership@rollerskating.org) or 317-347-2626 Ext. 108.

## RSA MEMBER BENEFIT LIST

<b>NEW!</b> 2016 Promotional Calendar	Meadowbrook (RSA-endorsed Worker's Compensation Program)
<b>NEW!</b> Licensing opportunity for completely turnkey USA STEM Program	K.L. Owens & Assoc. (Specialized insurance product for roller skating rinks)
<b>NEW!</b> Clip art and stock photos	JBL Liability Insurance (RSA-endorsed Liability & Property Insurance Program)
<b>NEW!</b> Kids Skate Free Program Discount - \$250 signup / \$150 renewal	BMI Music Licensing (13% off street rates)
<b>NEW!</b> \$500 giant inflatable roller skate discount from Yushan Yijia Products	USA Roller Sports - Roller Hockey Program (\$1 per player rebate)
<b>NEW!</b> Consumer Energy Solutions 10% discount with upgraded LED Lighting	Center Edge Software (Free web setup with service - \$995 value)
<b>NEW!</b> Constant Contact 60-day trial plus 30% off first three months	Froggy's Fog (20% discount)
<b>NEW!</b> Mercury Credit Card Processing (Meet or beat member's current merchant card services or a \$100 gift card.)	Party Center Software (\$500 theming bonus for all RSA members with a software subscription.)
<b>NEW!</b> Lasertag 360 event admission free to all RSA members	Fun Express (Discounts available to RSA members.)
<b>NEW!</b> Sam's Club (\$400+ worth of discounts with renewal)	Embed USA (Design & setup of custom card with system purchase - \$500 value)
Voting Rights for RSA members	Derby Lite (Save \$200 on Roll Out Fitness Skating Program)
RSA Website Access to members only documents	Hertz Car Rental (Discounts to all RSA members)
Annual Marketing and PR Campaigns	Quik n' Crispy (5% discount 5% with the purchase of a Quik n' Crispy or cleaning supplies.)
Educational Materials and Seminars	SESAC (RSA members can purchase a license for a discounted flat annual fee. Contact RSA for pricing.)
Networking and educational events	National Ticket (\$95 per case for RSA members)
Member rates for convention and trade show	Commercials and videos to edit and use for your rink provided by RSA
Turnkey Achievement Program and Super Skater Program	Theisen Vending Company (10% discount on first order)
Professional staff available 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	WhentoWork (10% discount on subscriptions)
On-Staff Pepsi Representative	Rebecca's Toys and Prizes (Monthly sale program for all RSA Members with mailbox monthlies.)
Pepsi rebates of \$1.90/gallon poured & \$500 sign-on bonus	HR360 Human Resource System (\$397/value per member)
Mailing list available for purchase	Office Depot (Deep discounts on 300+ products)
Discount on Roller Skating Industry Trade Show Booth Space	CFG Wealth Management (\$1950 value)
Discount on Advertising - Significant members only rates	National PR Submissions (Send <a href="mailto:editor@rollerskating.com">editor@rollerskating.com</a> your local PR contacts to be added to our national database, along with your completed press release, and we'll send an eblast from the RSA announcing your news.)
Membership Directory (online and in print)	Rink/Business Locator Listing (Add coupons, images and more!)
Risk Management Guidelines and Safety Standards	Indoor Playgrounds International (10% off a playground)
Monthly Promotional Flyers (Editable with instructions)	Weekly RSA Today E-newsletters & Award-winning RSB Magazine
State Fair Mini Donuts (Complete mini donut oven starting package - \$125 discount. Includes oven, sugar bottle, donuts, bags, sugar, etc.)	Roller skating products at significant savings
RSA Mascot Identity Program	Free webinars provided by the RSA

**AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!**

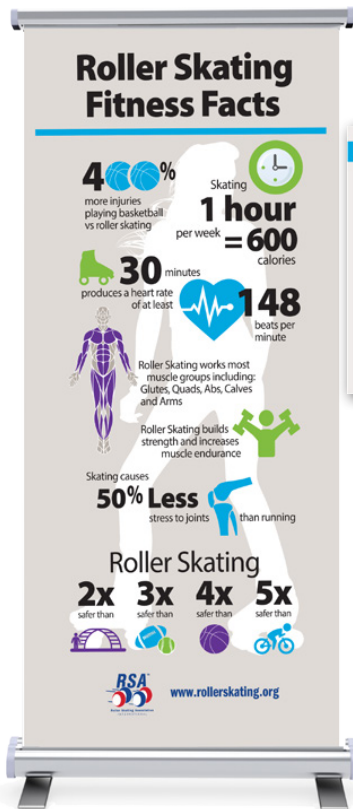
## NEW PRODUCTS

## Products from the RSA

## Fitness Facts Banners &amp; Brochures

**Banners (#RSABAN5):** Display roller skating facts with this wildly popular, colorful infographic roll up banner. Use it throughout your rink, at local events, or during school field trips and parties. Each roll up banner stands 79" tall x 33" wide and is attached to a sturdy, silver metal base and pulls out. Comes with a black carrying case for secure shipping. \$80 for banner and bag.

**Brochures (#B117):** These brochures offer a variety of facts about health, fitness, safety and history of roller skating and are great to hand out at local events, schools or in your rink to inform the public about why roller skating is a healthy, safe and fun activity for the whole family. \$18 for package of 100.



## Learn-to-Skate Brochures

**Brochures (#B120):** These brochures are great for rinks or coaches who would like to advertise their skating classes to bring in new skaters, or those who might want to take their skating to the next level. The back of the brochure will be printed with your custom contact information. Example shows a coaches contact info, but rinks can use these brochures as well.

**Cost:** 25 brochures for just \$8. We will customize your brochures to include your contact information on the back of each brochure!



## Three Banners, One Price

**Banners (#RSABAN1, 2, 3):** The RSA procured a brand new distributor allowing us to drop the prices on our trio of banners from what was once \$345 a piece to just \$240 for all three! Banners are in a sturdy metal frame and made of a sturdy vinyl material. Rolls up when finished, easy to transport with complete carrying case and collapsible base. Place your order online at [www.rollerskating.com](http://www.rollerskating.com) or call today to order.

**Price:** \$240 for all three

**Size:** 79" tall x 33" wide

**Includes:** Sturdy metal frame, collapsible base, carrying case



## Activity Books

We now sell two different 9-page activity books perfect for you to hand out at medical offices, schools and local businesses to help you promote your rink. Each book includes: The Story of Roo, three Roo and Kooky coloring pages, one word search, two mad libs, one maze, and a roller skating informative page.

## ACTIVITY BOOK OPTIONS

**Fitness (#ACTFIT):** Colorful front and Roller Skating Fitness Facts on the back, includes an 3 1/2 x 2 1/2 blank space for you to put your Skating Rink information.

**Kids Skate Free (#ACTKSF):** Colorful front and Kids Skate Free on the back, includes an 6 1/4 x 2 1/2 blank space for you to put your Skating Rink information.

**Cost:** \$10 for pack of 25.



# SK8EXPO & CONFERENCE 2015



*Trader Winds*  
ISLAND RESORTS ON ST. PETE BEACH





# PHOTO GALLERY



Visit [www.sk8expo.org](http://www.sk8expo.org) for more photos!







## ROLLER SKATING FOUNDATION GRANT PROGRAM

The Roller Skating Foundation is proud to share with you information on our school grant program.

Throughout the year, the Roller Skating Foundation has raised money to help support educational programs at schools across the country, promote physical fitness, provide scholarships to deserving high school and undergraduate students, and promote the sport of roller skating.

For 2015, the Roller Skating Foundation will be making several grants, ranging from \$250 and up, available to schools, educators and volunteers to accomplish educational objectives and fitness-related goals.

The following criteria will be used when determining grant recipients:

- ☀ **NEED**
- ☀ **CREATIVITY**
- ☀ **PRIORITY** will be given to projects directed towards roller skating, including field trips to roller skating centers, as well as innovative projects designed to improve physical fitness or education.



### RETURN INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill in your skating center's info and ask educator to complete grant application form. (**Digital fillable PDF form can be found at [www.rollerskating.com/pages/grants/70](http://www.rollerskating.com/pages/grants/70)**).
2. Return to [grants@rollerskating.com](mailto:grants@rollerskating.com). While email is preferred, you may alternatively mail to RSF, 6905 Corporate Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46278 or fax to 317-347-2636.

**DEADLINES: NOV 1 & FEB 1**

## ROLLER SKATING FOUNDATION MISSION

01

To promote physical fitness and to help build self esteem among school age children and discourage unsafe and undesirable activities by providing them with a constructive alternative to becoming involved in drugs and crime.

02

To receive, administer, distribute, and expend funds, gifts, donations, bequests, contributions, and other receipts of money or property of every kind or nature in furtherance of the Roller Skating Foundation's charitable and educational objectives and purposes.

03

To promote family values by providing families with opportunities to participate together in the sport of roller skating.

04

To establish and provide scholarships and grants to deserving high school students in furtherance of their undergraduate education.

05

To promote safety and risk management programs.



## PROMO FLYERS

## Promotional Ideas for January/February 2016

## January - Souper Bowl of Caring



January's promotion for 2016 will be Souper Bowl of Caring. Use this program to raise food and money for your local charities, log on to [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org) and register your rink under the RSA to help us show just how much money our members are able to raise for their community. Program provides free downloadable materials, a playbook of materials mailed to you, ways to track funds raised and more. See totals at <https://souperbowl.org/profile/1031795>. Promotional materials will be available on the RSA website as it becomes available.

## February - White Hot Winter Nights



Hold a white party - a popular trend among celebrities. Discount admission for those wearing white and make use of your black lights for this event. Activities can include using glow-in-the-dark spray paint on shirts, kiss sheet (white butcher block and sample lipsticks), spicy food eating contest, games from the Big Book of Games from the RSA, snowball fight, white hot chocolate, half-dipped marshmallows, white Hershey kisses, S'mores,

white meringues, fire and ice pops, etc. For complete instructions on this promotion, download the files from the RSA website.

DOWNLOAD FILES AT [WWW.ROLLERSKATING.COM](http://WWW.ROLLERSKATING.COM) > MEMBERS ONLY > DOCUMENTS > PROMO FLYERS

## BEST WEBSITES FOR PROMO IDEAS

Getting ideas to create new promotions every month can be daunting. Here are a few websites that will make your search for ideas a bit easier.

- [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)
- [www.holidayinsights.com](http://www.holidayinsights.com)
- [www.brownielocks.com](http://www.brownielocks.com)
- [www.daysofftheyear.com](http://www.daysofftheyear.com)
- [www.healthfinder.gov/nho](http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho)
- [www.celebrations.com](http://www.celebrations.com)



## HOW TO DOWNLOAD FLYERS

If you're not downloading the free promotional flyers created for your rink, you're missing out. They're free, turnkey promotional ideas with flyers that you can edit.

1. Visit [www.rollerskating.com](http://www.rollerskating.com)
2. Click on Member Login and log into your account.
4. Hover over Members Only and go down to Documents >> Promo Flyers
5. Click on the 2015-2016



## ENTER GOLDEN SKATE AWARDS

The RSA Promotions Committee is hosting the Golden Skate Awards to honor the most creative promotional ideas. Members should visit [www.rollerskating.com](http://www.rollerskating.com) and click on 2016 Golden Skate Awards Form under Members Only >> Documents >> Promo Flyers. Winners will present their winning promo at the 2016 RSA Convention and share in an issue of RSB Magazine.



## USE THE RSA PEPSI CALENDAR

In your 2016 renewal package you will receive a variety of items, including a brand new 2016 calendar, sponsored by Pepsi, that includes a holiday for every single day of the year. You'll find birthdays, health holidays, wacky holidays, global observances, food holidays, and a few very rare observances that you won't find elsewhere. Take these ideas and use them to your advantage!



VISIT [OWNERS.KIDSSKATEFREE.COM](http://OWNERS.KIDSSKATEFREE.COM) AND CLICK ON REGISTER!

HELP US REACH 1 MILLION KIDS!

A WHOPPING 584,105 KIDS REGISTERED!





# 10 TIPS FOR COMBATING NEGATIVE ONLINE REVIEWS

**A**ny company that deals with the general public runs the risk of bad reviews. From huge chains to local rinks, no company can escape the occasional angry customer, and since they can influence others, their complaints can affect your bottom line. In 2015, there are more opportunities than ever for customers to voice their opinions, with the most popular of which

being Yelp. The bad review could be because a kid didn't like the kind of pizza you serve, or it might expose a genuine weakness in your rink. Either way, freaking out and stressing over a bad review is not going to help. Instead, let's maintain a cool head, and consider these options of what to do when your rink gets a scathing online review.

BY: NICHOLAS NAPIER



## TAKE INITIATIVE

Owner of Columbus Event Center in Columbus, Neb., Jason Beiermann recommends a quick response to customer complaints, whether they're favorable or negative. "Take initiative. If something wrong or great is going on with my business, I want to know about it." Ultimately, the less time that a negative review remains unaddressed, the better. Plus, surveys show that 33% of reviewers who were reached out to by a company they reviewed negatively ultimately ended up deleting the negative review and leaving a positive review.

## STAY PROFESSIONAL

Marketing expert and author of *The Zen of Social Media Marketing*, Shama Kabani, explains that when receiving a bad review, your first instinct will be to lose your head and react emotionally, but more often than not you'll regret it. It's at that time when you may want to explode on them that it's most important to take the high road and remain the consummate professional. Smart prospects will definitely appreciate the professionalism, and they'll notice the contrast between you and the irate customer.

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Further questions or explanations about the reviewer's issue may be enough to turn around their opinion, plus it's a gesture that shows other readers that you care about customers. For instance, maybe they complained that there

were too many young kids making a mess, but the reviewer didn't know that it was your rink's monthly "Kids Skate Free" night, or that local elementary schools were having an event there. Many disagreements are misunderstandings, and until you fill them in on the truth of what's going on, they'll never know. Plus, they'll respect you more for taking the time out of your day to make them happy.

## DEVELOP A REPUTATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

A recent study by Nielsen revealed that 70% of consumers trust online reviews from strangers. This means that the time spent encouraging good reviews and resolving bad ones is worthwhile because it can directly affect your profits. Much like businesses must develop a contingency plan to quickly deal with unforeseen challenges, taking the time to develop a reputation management plan is equally wise. The reputation management plan for your rink can answer questions like who is appointed to respond to customer comments online, and how often you will check your rink's social media outlets.

## UNDERSTAND THE MEDIA YOU'RE USING

Depending on whether you're replying via a Twitter post, email, or Facebook page, the degree of privacy is going to vary greatly. Before responding to a bad review, it may be worthwhile to take a minute to realize how many people have

seen it and will see your response. For example, if a customer left a horrible review where many people will see it, then you may choose to do damage control, replying in a way that conveys professionalism and highlights positives about your rink. Conversely, there may be times where a single customer might have a problem, but they handle it in a way that doesn't garner negative attention. For any business owner who engages in social marketing, it pays to know the differences in social media outlets.

## IDENTIFY AND CORRECT THE PROBLEM

Brad Armstrong, owner of Roller Kingdom in Reno, Nev. and The Rink in Sacramento, Calif., noticed a common theme in some of the bad reviews he was getting. The arcade machines were constantly causing problems. With 30-35 arcade games, keeping them all up and running was becoming a challenge. "I'm a business owner, not an arcade vendor," Brad said, explaining that he had tons of other responsibilities with running the rink aside from constantly worrying about the arcade machines. After identifying the problem, Brad brought in a vendor to repair the machines when needed and was able to eliminate a major source of customer complaints.

## HIGHLIGHT THE POSITIVE POINTS OF YOUR SERVICE

In cases where the customer is irrational or you can't fix the problem, you can always take the

# What **NOT** to Do When You Receive a **BAD** Review

There is definitely a need to take the high-road when responding to a bad review as a company. If nothing else, you simply don't want customers to think your rink is run by hotheads with a short temper, even if your outburst is justified. That said, a professional, thoughtful response can resolve the issue while allowing other readers to notice your professionalism. When you get a bad review and your emotions are running rampant, here are a few things to keep in mind before responding:

### DON'T HIRE FAKE REVIEWERS

In an investigation from ABC News, it was estimated that 20% of online reviews are fake, and companies like Yelp are taking measures to alleviate the problem. While there's no doubt that reviews can drive business, if you're caught hiring reviewers on a site like Yelp, they will out you to the public via an online message, so be aware that it can easily backfire.

### DON'T IGNORE A REAL PROBLEM

Only you can decide the severity of a customer's complaint, and whether it's your fault, theirs, or a misunderstanding. Either way, if other potential customers see that a complaint has been ignored, their natural assumption is going to be that the owners don't care about the customers' needs. Taking initiative when a bad review is spotted is crucial.

### DON'T PANIC

Bad reviews and difficult customers are necessary evils of a service business. The energy spent worrying about a negative review could be better used to create a positive response or fix the issue. Marketing expert, Shama Kabani reminds us that even the most successful companies all have to deal with angry customers and negative reviews at times, and that the reviews are ultimately a positive that can lead to needed improvements.



# —Now— HIRING

## UNITED SKATES OF AMERICA, INC.

The largest chain of roller skating facilities  
in the country is **Now Hiring:**

**Managing Partners,  
Operations Managers & Sales  
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### USA PROVIDES:

**40 Years of Roller Skating Experience**

**Beautiful, Renovated Locations**

**First Class Marketing & Sales Programs**

**Competitive Compensation & Bonus Plans**

**Advancement & Growth Opportunities**



### JOIN THE USA TEAM TODAY.

Send your resume to: **Karen Palermo,**  
President, United Skates of America  
**Kpalermo@usa-skating.com**

opportunity to bring up positives about your business. For example, if a customer is complaining about a minor thing they see as a safety hazard, you can highlight several other safety measures that you have implemented. To anyone reading your positive response, it shows strong concern for your rink and highlights positive counterpoints to the initial complaint.

### ASSESS WHETHER THE REVIEWER IS GENUINE

Armstrong has a unique perspective on assessing a negative review pointing out that the reviewer's profile will show whether they are fair reviewers or not. Furthermore, he suggests that if the reviewer seems fair, and has a history of both positive and negative reviews, then he will take the review seriously and do everything possible to help. This insight is useful for separating customers with genuine issues from people who are just notorious complainers.

### ENCOURAGE POSITIVE REVIEWS WITH CUSTOMERS

The best way to mitigate the sting of negative reviews is to encourage as many positive reviews as possible. One popular method used by rinks and restaurants involves using post cards or flyers and inviting customers to leave a review so they'll receive a free pass the next time they come in. Scott Metcalf of Convince and Convert explains another benefit of positive reviews: Pricing Power. In addition to more business, you can expect happy customers to be willing to pay more than lower reviewed rinks.

### MAKE THE REVIEWS WORK FOR YOUR BUSINESS

According to CEO of the Marketing Zen Group, Shama Kabani, negative reviews can be an excellent opportunity to show that you're a serious business online. "People are not looking for perfection online. They're looking for humanity and a genuine response," Kabani explained in a recent *Forbes* interview. Turning the negative review into a positive source of attention for your rink is the optimal goal when responding to a bad review.

### CONCLUSION

Among the many ways that the internet has changed business, the ability to publicly leave reviews and complaints about a company is arguably the most impactful. With studies showing that 70% of consumers take these reviews seriously, it's clear that reputation management is an important facet of successfully running your rink. Fortunately, there are more ways than ever for savvy business owners to identify, respond, and deal with reviews that could otherwise hurt their rink's reputation.

If you're looking for more information on how to manage your web presence, make sure to download the webinar videos available to RSA members at [www.rollerskating.com](http://www.rollerskating.com)  
>> Members Only >> Documents >> Webinars.



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# Women Taking a Leadership **"ROLL"** in the Roller Skating Industry

by Lori Lovely



**W**omen have always played an integral role in the roller skating industry, often partnering with spouses, significant others or family to run the rink and guide the industry.

One quick look in the halls and board rooms of the RSA and you'll notice that it wasn't until 48 years after the inception of the Association that women finally began taking on leadership roles at the national level.

## PRESIDENTIAL MATERIAL

Since the Roller Skating Association was established in 1937, it has had only three female presidents. Paving the way, Annelle Anderson became the Association's first female president in 1984. "I never thought I wanted to be president," she reflects. "I had no ambition. I was just interested in serving; I have a natural inclination to help people."

She believes she and the women who followed her succeeded because they bring a different perspective. "Women naturally attend to detail and think outside the box. We look at the big picture."

A rink co-owner with her husband for 43 years, Anderson first served at the local level as secretary and then chairman. When a new national constitution allowed women on the board, she was nominated for a seat.

"When I put my feet under the board table, I knew the challenges," she says. The biggest one she faced as president was getting liability insurance. "It was a major problem. We ran two years without insurance. It was my crisis in office."

## TAKE TWO

It took 14 years before the RSA's second female president was elected. Like her mentor Annelle, Deb Torries, co-owner with husband Frank Torries of Lafayette, Louisiana's Skate Zone for 40 years, also held office at the section level before moving up through the ranks to become president in 2000.

The challenges during her presidential term started early. "Two weeks after my election, we lost our executive director," she says. Without a replacement for four months, she witnessed a mass exodus of staff due to personality conflicts. "Every few months someone would leave." All but one were eventually replaced.

Despite that disruption, Torries negotiated the first Pepsi contract, a significant milestone for the Association. The five-year deal wasn't the only negotiation she was burdened with. "We were about to lose our insurance again." That entailed numerous trips to New York for negotiations not long after the 9/11 terrorist attack that disrupted business and impeded travel.

She maintains that the challenges she faced were the same any male president would have encountered, although she believes women deal with them in dissimilar ways. "We think differently," she hypothesizes. "We see both sides better than men. We consider all ideas and build a consensus. There's more than one path to the same goal."

## THREE'S A CHARM

The most recent female Association president is a former rink rat and current owner of Sk8away Inc. in Topeka, KS. First working at a rink in 1989, Tina Robertson became chapter secretary/treasurer at the section level in 1995, and then president. "When I first got involved, section president and secretary were always a husband-wife team. But when I was secretary, the president was the wife of the director. It was a different setup that hadn't been done before. Fortunately, we worked well together." When Robertson became section president, her secretary/treasurer was

**Annelle Anderson**  
RSA President  
(1984-1986)



**Deb Torries**  
RSA President  
(2000-2002)



**Tina Robertson**  
RSA President  
(2012-2014)





# 10 Facts About Women-Led Businesses

1. Women-owned business have grown 54% in the last 15 years - 8.3 million women in the United States, in fact.
2. Only 5.5% of women-owned businesses used a loan to get started, compared with 10.7% overall.
3. Entertainment and recreation are two of the five fastest growing women-owned industries.
4. Over the past 15 years, women-owned businesses saw 58% increase in revenue - more revenue, in fact, than the combined market cap of Apple, Microsoft, GE, Google and Sony - COMBINED!
5. When it comes to first-year funding, the inequity comes to light with women receiving 80% less capital than men, despite owning nearly 30% of U.S. businesses.
6. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, as noted in the Havard Business Review, by 2018 there will be 9.72 million new jobs in the small/medium business sector, more than half of which will be the result of women-owned businesses.
7. Women make 36 percent of products or services in the U.S., men make up just 33 percent.
8. In a study of 350 financing institutions in 70 countries one trend stood out to analysts: lending to women was less risky than lending to men.
9. Women in Europe and the U.S. are 18% less likely to think they are capable enough to become business owners, whereas women in developing countries are more likely to think they have what it takes to start their own business.
10. Despite this, and at the current rate of progression, women won't reach pay equality until 2058.

a man because "women in leadership were rare at that time."

She moved up to the national level, volunteering as convention chairman and joining the Board of Directors in 2005 before becoming vice president in 2010, a job she likens to an understudy in training for the next role: president. She assumed that title in 2012.

"We all take on projects," she observes. "I did three things under my watch." Her administration established and developed a new website for the Association, updated the data base to a cloud-based system and renegotiated a seven-year Pepsi contract.

## GENDER BIAS

At no time did Robertson feel like she was treated differently because of her gender. "I always had a positive reception, perhaps because the two fine women before me broke ground."

Anderson demurs, "Women on the board have always been well-respected," she states. "No man ever put women down. They don't look at gender." In fact, gender neutrality in the board room carried through to wardrobe. "Annelle had to wear a suit and tie to board meetings, just like the men," Robertson marvels.

Attire aside, women have forged change in the industry. "By taking more of a leadership role,

women left a mark on the industry," Anderson assesses. "Women have been given a lot of opportunities and now play a predominant role in our industry. That was not done before. We created history and opened the way for others. There are three women on the board now and a lot of females head committees."

Because Torries was the only female on the board for a while, she encouraged other women to get involved. "My goal was to bring in other women. We need female leaders in the industry."

That's easier said than done. Robertson acknowledges the impediment of taking on these roles without support back at the rink. Torries agrees, "The only way I could be president was because my husband was at the rink."

Supportive men aren't always prevalent. Chris Cohen, owner of Spectrum Entertainment Facility in Fond du Lac, WI, is a former RSA board member now serving on the board of the Roller Skating Foundation. She explains that many women don't want to run for office because "they get bowled over by confrontational men. It's difficult being a female in board situations."

Stacy Benson, owner of Kate's Skating Rink in Gastonia, N.C., says she faced "a lot of stigma" when she first started in the industry at the age of 21. "I had to learn how to handle people." While she says she hasn't seen much disrespect in the business, she did encounter one vendor who talked down to her because she is a woman. "I

don't use him anymore."

As president, Torries encountered "a couple isolated incidents when gender was mentioned," but generally sees little gender gap in this industry. "The men in this industry accept women because so many work beside their husbands at their rinks. They know what women are capable of."

In addition to business acumen, women are capable of multi-tasking and, Robertson contends, are naturally warmer, kinder and softer. But those traits do not denote weakness, she's quick to point out. "We are still strong leaders."

## RUNNING THE RINK

Women make great rink operators, insists Torries, who, with her husband, has owned three rinks. "We're not the best example of a team," she jokes. "We don't work great together."

Husband Frank had an outside job, but during her second pregnancy, he left it to run the business. "When I went back, there was a new dynamic," she indicates. To mitigate conflict and confusion, they diversified their roles, managing different areas of the business. "We do our jobs differently. We still bump heads because we have different views on how to do things."

Anderson was an equal partner with husband Robert, overseeing several rinks they owned.

*(continued on page 26)*





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Sabina



**The men in this industry accept women because so many work beside their husbands at their rinks. They know what women are capable of.**

"We worked together, but he did his thing; I did mine," she summarizes. His thing was teaching—creating national and world team-caliber skaters. Her thing focused on the rink: promotions, cleaning, party booking, organizing and setting up. The key to their success, she believes, is that they gave their business their all, "around the clock, together."

Rinks are often a generational family business. "But not me," Robertson says. She started with part-time jobs at a rink during college, working in concessions, as floor manager, then as rink manager and finally owner. Sacrificing marriage and family, she explains that "something had to give. There are only 24 hours in a day; you can't be in two places at once."

While her significant other doesn't direct sessions due to the potential for conflict, as a former owner, he understands the demands and helps out with projects. She relies on his expertise and familiarity with the building. "It takes the pressure off."

Cohen inherited the family rink built in 1981 about 10 years ago and has been running it on her own. Her husband of six years is not in the business. As an only child, she is accustomed to taking a big role in business, but she admits that nights and weekends could be easier if her she had some assistance.

It's hard enough working things out at home, though. "I work nights. It's very hard to juggle schedules with a spouse who works a 9-5 job," she says. "He likes to do things on weekends, but I go to work at noon on Saturdays, so it's difficult to schedule. We argue about 'we' jobs, like household

chores. We both think we do it all."

## TIME OUT

Vacations give rise to conflicts, of course. Because skating is slow on Sundays, Cohen has been able to attend Green Bay Packers games with her husband, a brief get-away that helps prevent burnout. After 35 years in the industry, Cohen realizes she simply has to "grin and bear it. I have to do it; it's my business. If I don't, there's no money in my pocket." Still, she has made changes. "My parents never went away. We were even open during my mom's funeral. I changed that. I have a different mentality. I will leave a manager in charge."

Torries is also able to get away now by relying on her managers, but because most rinks are open on holidays, it wasn't always possible. By the time she and her husband were able to celebrate New Year's Eve, they were bored and ended up back at the rink.

Getting away is important. "We're open a lot of hours," says Benson, whose management staff and POS system lets her see what's going on at all times enabling her to take time off. "The hours are insane: office hours plus weekends. Roller skating consumes your life."

Robertson knows "the rink can take a hit when you're gone" and says that having "superior staff" enables rink owners to take on Association duties. "It helps to have someone at home looking after things."

Being able to rely on her brother Billy, who runs a second location four miles away, is a benefit to Benson. Eleven years ago when the siblings

took over the family business founded by their grandparents, she made changes. Although they share a web site and instituted equal pricing structures, this multi-tasker takes credit for organizing the business and is in charge of ordering for both rinks. She maintains a fully stocked pro shop, manages online sales, books parties and school events and oversees the social networking and marketing. She also assumes some stereotypical female roles. "My facility is clean. It's about dedication and attention to detail." It's also about setting an example for her employees.

## THE BENEFITS AND RESULTS OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP

Assuming a leadership role has been a good experience for most. "More women should do it," Cohen says.

Robertson, now director of convention and special events, says, "I loved every minute of it and would do it again. It's my life. It's a heck of a commitment for anyone and there are different expectations for women, but it's a great experience."

Torries credits her desire to give back to the industry. "If you only take without giving back, it's not fair. Members help each other; that's what makes it work. Get involved; it helps the industry, and that helps you."

**Are you a woman in the roller skating industry who runs or owns a majority stake your own business? Do you have insight that you'd like to share with other women in the industry? The Publications Committee wants to hear from you! Email [editor@rollerskating.com](mailto:editor@rollerskating.com) to share your story!**



**REVIVE**  
LIGHT 



# STEM FIELD TRIPS

## A COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE USA STEM FIELD TRIPS PROGRAM

### How did the United Skates of America start the program?

It started as a field trip program, like many rink owners utilized. United Skates of America had updated their field trip program, but never on a large scale. While on a trip to one of their roller skating facilities in Baltimore, M.D., Karen Palermo, President of United Skates of America, met with an educator named David who taught math with roller skating as part of an educational field trip to the rink. A little dismayed by the information lacking in the field trip program, he suggested altering the field trip to encompass the STEM curriculum. Being in the roller skating industry for more than a decade, her first response to the idea: What is STEM? He gave her a background on the program and she went back to the office and researched the program and how it was being integrated, shocked at how applicable STEM was to the roller skating industry.

David was an engineering professor at a well-known college and decided to take on the first round of the STEM curriculum as it applied to roller skating, which ultimately still needed considerable work, according to the United

Skates of America team. To get schools into the rink, Karen knew that it had to have an educational component, and the curriculum had to be impressive to the administration and the teachers in the schools.

After two and half years of revisions on the USA STEM program and \$250,000 invested in making sure the program is the best it can be, they are thrilled with the response school districts have had to the program and have opened it for

licensing to Roller Skating Association members for use in their roller skating centers. "We know that, based on our year one results, that we are going to continue to see a great return on our investment. We are very passionate about this program," says Palermo while speaking to a room of nearly 200 at the Sk8 Expo in St. Pete, Fla. "This program is going to change the roller skating industry."



**One of the most important parts of the STEM program is to ensure that you hire an energetic, intelligent and motivated STEM educator who can both help you sell the program with your sales team, as well as present to every grade level effectively and in a fun manner. Graduate students in the areas of science, technology, engineering or math are great for this role.**



## Why STEM?

The United States is lagging so far behind in the world in science and math education that it has fallen to 27th in the world. As a result, the education system in the U.S. has taken on STEM in a nationwide push to advance our country in the hopes of turning out leaders in math and science industries. Future jobs will rely upon science, technology, engineering and math and at the current rate, the US will need at least 1 million more professionals with a math and science background over the next decade. If these numbers don't improve, we will drop well below 27th in the world.

The STEM program gets kids excited about math and science. Mike Hudoba, an educator of the roller skating STEM program and PhD candidate at Ohio State University said of the program, "I can always tell it was a successful program when I have a line of kids waiting to hug me before they leave." Palermo champions the program for being the force behind changing children's lives, "We are literally making an impact on these kids to think about and incorporate math and science in their future. That's where the jobs are going to be." And because there are so many STEM-based grant programs out there, schools can apply to grants for these field trips making it a win-win for everyone involved.

## What are the benefits of the STEM Program

No one wants to have their doors closed during the day. The USA STEM program will turn your rink into an educational learning facility for your area school system, but it also has the ability to draw in school districts from more than 80 miles away.

- New stream of revenue and profit for daytime operation from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. or later.
- Daytime STEM field trips offer greater potential to create new skaters than evening fundraisers.
- 100% of students attend the field trip. During a fundraiser, there are many factors that contribute to students attending.
- Increases your prospect list by targeting every single teacher in every single grade level.
- Schools are willing to travel further to attend this educational experience. Current schools using the USA STEM program have traveled from as far as 1 ¼ hours away.

Schools support verified, STEM-based educational programs making the USA STEM program the only program of its kind in the roller skating industry. It has been tested in 17 different

markets, many with Title One schools, and has been approved by numerous school districts which previously would never approve daytime field trips.

## What does a STEM Field Trip look like?

The USA STEM program combines verified STEM education, physical education and lunch into an exciting format.

This one hour lesson demonstrates the relationship between STEM curriculum and roller skating. Students learn these concepts in an interactive and entertaining way to enhance learning. The STEM portion of this program is instructed by a trained, experienced educator, NOT A TEACHER, your rink will hire who is knowledgeable on STEM and roller skating. Energetic educators are a must!

An introductory lesson on roller skating will teach all skill levels with a 10 minute lesson demonstrating the basics. Lunch will then be provided during the three hour period following the lesson plan and then they will skate for approximately 2 hours. The lessons take place in the mornings, Monday through Friday between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. The best part? Lesson plans have been created for Grades K-12 that cover every aspect of roller skating and its relationship to STEM. The field trips are booked for a minimum of 60 students with up to 200 at a time. Schools normally book an entire grade level, which increases the number of prospects you have available to you by leaps and bounds.

## What are the most important components of STEM?

First, lesson plans are key. The benefit of the USA STEM program is that there isn't just one lesson for each grade level. Grades K-5 have 15 STEM lesson plans. Grades 6-8 have 6 STEM

lesson plans. Grades 9-12 has one lesson plan. In addition, there are currently 17 more lesson plans in development. Offering various lesson plans on each facet of STEM in various areas allows teachers to choose the topic that best relates to what they'll be discussing in their class for the year. For large groups, music, math and roller skating is the perfect lesson plan. The highlight is that the curriculum is constantly improved and is done so with the state education requirements



**Students will receive hands-on educational lessons designed to teach various topics that relate to the curriculum taught in school.**

in mind.

Second, a dynamic, intelligent and energetic educator who is passionate about STEM education is absolutely key to delivering this program to students. "If you take this program on, you can't settle for a mediocre educator because it will kill it [the program]," says Palermo. A complete job description and information on how to find this educator is available once you license the program. "Grad students are a great place to start. We love science and we love money – because the schools we work for often don't give us a lot of it," says Mike Hudoba, STEM educator for Skate Zone 71 and doctoral candidate in mechanical engineering at Ohio State University. "The introduction is very important. As you can



USA'S S.T.E.M. PROGRAM NOW BEING LICENSED  
EXCLUSIVELY TO RSA MEMBERS!!!

# STEM

## FIELD TRIPS



**S.T.E.M.  
EQUALS  
RINK  
PROFIT!**





## RINK BENEFITS

- ⊕ New Daytime Revenue/Profit Stream
- ⊕ 100% of the students attend the daytime field trips vs. a school fundraiser with minimal attendance
- ⊕ Schools fund educational S.T.E.M. trips
- ⊕ Increase your prospect list by targeting grade level teachers
- ⊕ Schools travel further distances for S.T.E.M. Field Trips
- ⊕ New Skaters Return for Birthday Parties, Special Events and Public Sessions



EMAIL LAUREN FINK, REGIONAL SALES MANAGER OF UNITED SKATES OF AMERICA, at [Lfink@usa-skating.com](mailto:Lfink@usa-skating.com) for More Information or to Register your Rink!





**Lesson plans range from kindergarten to high school and will educate students in the areas of science, engineering, math and technology according to their grade level.**

imagine, getting that initial attention of the young students is one of the most important things. Once you get that attention, you can keep that attention and you want to show them something exciting. If you have a great curriculum but not a great educator you're only halfway there."

### What is covered in a sample STEM lesson?

The STEM program doesn't cover just the basics, it includes physics, astronomy, chemistry, algebra, calculus, design, engineering, computers, biology, geometry, architecture and medicine – all of which are included throughout these lesson plans. "We show them connections to introduce the subject matter with the science of music, the science of sound and then combine that science of sound with math to create music," says Hudoba. Roller skating centers are, according to Hudoba, a gold mine for STEM. "The goal is to show the connection between what you have at your rinks with STEM," he says. "We have three topics that feed into an overall topic." For example, in a lesson plan about friction, kids would learn things like:

- What is friction?
- What are the different types of friction?
- What type of motion does each type of friction indicate?
- How do you reduce friction?

- How does friction apply to roller skate wheels?

The lesson plan then moves into activities that demonstrate the science and math behind friction.

The topics don't change from grade levels, but how they are taught and the level of depth changes with grades. A good educator should be able to teach complex subjects to all ages and have a passion to do so.

### What have been the financial results?

United Skates has 17 locations and the average overall results for Year 1 (2014-2015) are

outstanding:

- Number of trips booked: 45 STEM field trips per rink
- Number of students per trip: 105 students per field trip
- Average yield: \$12 per person per field trip
- Total revenue from STEM for each individual skating center: \$56,700 in just the first year
- Top performing facility: 85 STEM field trips with \$102,000 in revenue for Year 1.
- Not included in this income is: The above results do not include revenue from vending, redemption or lockers, nor does it include all of the additional revenue from public skating, birthday parties, special events, etc. that were booked because of the new children that were introduced to roller skating.

Those rinks that didn't market it and reach out to schools didn't do as well as others, so it's important to remember that once you purchase this program and market it heavily, your success is based on your motivation and commitment to the program. It is also important to start as close to the beginning of the school year as possible, before all field trips are scheduled. **NOW IS THE PERFECT TIME TO SELL STEM!**

### What about package pricing for schools?

Packages are set up in three different levels. Basic, which includes admission, skate rental and STEM lesson. Deluxe includes everything from the basic package plus a slice of pizza and a drink. And the Super Package, which includes all of the



**Packages for schools are set up as deluxe, super or basic and allow teachers and schools to select which one works best for their students and families. In addition, schools can ask for and utilize grants through programs, such as the Roller Skating Foundation Grant Program, to help put money back into your roller skating center.**



deluxe items plus unlimited pizza and drinks. Most schools take the deluxe package and pricing will vary based on your rink and location.

## What are the community benefits?

The STEM program changes the way your community sees your business. Instead of being a recreational facility, your business is now branding itself as a first class learning environment where kids can not only come to have fun, but also to be educated. Your business becomes more valuable to the community from day one with the STEM program.

## What's included with the USA STEM program?

The USA STEM program is a turnkey program, which means that they provide you with literally everything you need to take to your school system and start booking STEM field trips. The materials included are professionally designed and created with every level of rink owner in mind. The tools are easy to use and the step-by-step checklists show you how to go about launching the program in your area.



**Classes are meant to accommodate up to 105 students per trip, ensuring that every single child receives an educational lesson on roller skating - as well as try their hand at participating once the lesson is complete.**

An electronic database of all STEM materials will be available to licensees of the STEM program at [www.usastemlibrary.com](http://www.usastemlibrary.com). Licensees will receive their own confidential username and password to be able to access the STEM materials at any time.

Licensees will be provided with all of the information they need to hire a STEM educator who can educate children, as well as attend sales meetings with your sales manager; a complete equipment list of what you will need to make



**Even high school and middle school students will learn the mechanics and engineering design behind roller skates.**

the program work; every single marketing tool, including commercials, flyers, highlight videos for teachers who wish to see more, and state standard example flyers which you can customize quickly and easily in Microsoft Word; STEM training videos and lesson plans; photos and images to use in your materials; confidentiality agreements for educators; STEM program operational instructions; videos to teach your own educators how to present the materials and much more.

In addition, checklists of how to market the program show licensees exactly how to launch the program in their area. The STEM Program will also show you how to maintain your STEM school database of every single teacher in your area to ensure that you're reaching the right people at any time, as well as how to utilize Facebook and email marketing, templates, and more to boost your STEM program sales.

Those who license the USA STEM Program will receive complete support for the USA STEM

program. Access to the web-based library system, 24/7 access to marketing and training materials, quarterly LIVE educator video/audio STEM training calls run by USA providing training on the programs, as well as visits to USA facilities to view STEM programs happening LIVE and to meet the USA management teams to answer any STEM questions on implementation. In addition, you will have access to top USA STEM educators to help you implement your STEM program and monthly regional video calls with the top STEM Sales Producer for sales training.

## How do I sign up?

Sign up is quick and easy. There is a one-time licensing fee based on facility volume and an annual renewal fee.

To sign up to the program, if you have questions or would like a pricing sheet, contact Lauren Fink, Regional Sales Manager for United Skates of America, at [LFink@usa-skating.com](mailto:LFink@usa-skating.com) or call 516-795-5474 Ext. 0. Lauren will help you with the contract, answer any questions you might have, and sign the form with you.

Once signed by USA, you will complete the remaining confidential information and submit with payment to Tonya Crenshaw, RSA Accountant, at [accounting@rollerskating.com](mailto:accounting@rollerskating.com) or by fax to 317-347-2636 with payment information. (Note that credit card payments will incur a 3% fee). If you have questions about payment methods, she can be reached at 317-347-2626 Ext. 111.





# HOW TO BE A *Social Media* SUPERHERO

*by Sara Hodon*

Social media has drastically changed the way many business owners think about marketing. No other marketing method allow for real-time interaction that encourages relationship building, which hopefully translates into increased business. But as with traditional

marketing, social media can be a little overwhelming and intimidating. The key to using social media effectively for your business is to choose the right platforms for your goals, to develop a detailed plan with designated staff members to manage it, and stick to the plan.

## *Kick Off with a Bang!*

There are literally hundreds of social media sites available, and while it may be tempting to create profiles for a number of them, it's best to focus on those that can add the most value to your business and goals. These sites provide an opportunity to connect directly with people, so good customer service is still essential. "Social media is still human-to-human contact," Ekmark explains. "You should be courteous, professional, and abide by your brand, but also show empathy. You want to have a natural conversation, and getting into conversations with people is a real privilege." Above all, it shows your customers that you care enough to speak with them.



Tyler Anderson, owner of Roller City in Mason City, Iowa, says that he views his rink's Facebook page as means to connect with customers in an authentic way. "Some people think of social media as another way to advertise, but we almost do as much storytelling as we do selling our product," he says. "If your story is powerful enough, it will travel fast. For example, we had a campaign to fix our floor exclusively through social media, and we posted it through a short, concise story. The campaign was extremely successful, and I think the crux of it was the willingness to tell our story."

# Zoom into Connections

Social media has become such an embedded marketing tool, business owners can no longer afford to not participate in some way. "It's one of the most important ways to market," says Kevin Ekmark, President/CEO of TrustWorkz. "Traditional marketing doesn't give as broad a reach as social media. For example, why put up a billboard that no one will see because everyone is looking at their phones? It allows people to connect in real-time. What business owners need to know is that the conversation is happening. There are over 1 billion users on Facebook alone. And that conversation will either be about your business if you're there, or your competitors if you're not." That's a pretty big risk to take if you're writing off social media.

The cost savings that accompany social media also makes it attractive. "Small businesses tend to have limited budgets, so social media can provide some marketing 'oomph' without much overhead necessary. Advertising on social media platforms also tends to be

much less expensive than advertising in Google searches and other mediums like print," explains Cheryl Ambruch, Director of Marketing for Xtel Communications, Inc. "Most platforms' advertising programs now provide opportunities to target your audience very specifically. For example, Facebook ads enable companies to target users of a certain age range who live in a very specific geographic area who have particular interests. Target by education level, job title or persona (parents, executives, etc.). Like anything else, it takes testing and tweaking to figure out what really works for your business, but the ability to be in front of the exact people you'd like to target is extremely powerful."



# Communication Zaps

Tiffani Lindsey, General Manager and Program Director at Great Skates Entertainment Center in Bangor, Maine, says that social media is a daily activity for her. "I use Facebook every day. Even if I forget to post, I check it and have a 100% response rate to our followers," she explains. "We also have Twitter, tumblr, Instagram, and Google+. I've claimed our listings for Yelp, Swarm/Foursquare, and a few others." Lindsey says she sees social media as part of her job. "We didn't have a social media presence before I took over 3 1/2 years ago, and I think it makes a huge difference being diligent about it now. I communicate with my customers in real time, speaking a language they are familiar with. Not only are our kids and teens social media savvy, but we are shifting to a time where the parents I want to reach are predominantly of the millennial generation," she says. "The times of ignoring social media marketing are over. Social media affords me the ability to quickly respond to customers, put tons of information out there, and manipulate what information I want to prioritize at any given time. It also allows us to make our customers feel greater comfort with us. By keeping it playful and personal, our customers get to know us better and feel more connected to the rink."



# Crack the Code on Social Media Platforms

There are countless social media sites, but Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram remain three of the most popular. You can post to each separately, or use a publishing/scheduling tool like HootSuite, Buffer, or Twibble to manage your content. "Tools like HootSuite are dashboards whose primary use is to have all of your social media in one spot," Ekmark explains. In other words, if you have profiles on Facebook and Twitter and you post your content through HootSuite that site will post your information on both pages—you don't need to update both profiles separately, which can be an incredibly daunting task. Ekmark cautions that some of these tools have issues with converting content and formatting, so it's important to be aware before you randomly post something as it might not look the way you had envisioned. Another option is blogging. Short for "weblog," a blog is

essentially an online journal. Unlike Facebook (where most posts are typically a few sentences) or Twitter (whose posts are limited to 140 characters), blog posts can be much longer, often a few paragraphs. Posts' content can vary from what's happening at your rink, like fundraisers or expansion/improvement projects, to how your rink is responding to industry trends. Sites like WordPress and Blogger offer a variety of functions like the ability to schedule posts, and both sites are reasonably user-friendly. Blogging is also driven by reader feedback, so customers can respond to posts instantly. Most blogging pros recommend posting content on average of three times a week so that content stays fresh but does not overwhelm readers.





# Conversations that Make Your Business Pop!

Rather than simply posting information, many businesses invite customer feedback. "Asking for input is a way to find that engagement with your audience and to make them feel involved, like posting a poll or asking for ideas on something relevant to your rink," says Kendall Cabe of Times Two Technology. "For example, maybe you're looking to feature a guest DJ, so you might post the question 'Who are some of your favorite DJs?' to the kids, or ask them about their favorite type of music. Or say that you're thinking of adding new items to your snack bar—what are some of their favorite snacks? But when you ask, be ready for what comes in." Again, a courteous, timely response is essential. In the case of

negative feedback, Ambruch says, responding quickly is even more important. "Make sure your business responds quickly to everything – whether it's positive or negative. Be honest, apologize and admit mistakes, then find ways to make those unhappy customers happy," she advises. "No business can please everyone all of the time, so a few negative comments that have been properly addressed can actually come across as even more authentic than having no negative feedback at all."



# Don't Whack Your Ratings. Manage 'Em

Yelp! is a form of social media for people to review your business. Similar to Facebook's business pages, websites like Yelp!, Urbanspoon (for restaurants), Google+ Local, TripAdvisor, Foursquare, Angie's List, etc., these platforms give customers the opportunity to tell the public what their experience was with your business. People can sometimes be harsh, short, non-descriptive, while others take the time to really share what they experienced. By and large, those who take the time to offer up descriptive reviews usually do so in hopes that the business owner will see them, make the corrections or contact them – make use of it, these people can frequently end up being your biggest advocates! And then there are the people who just completely make up lies because they didn't get what they wanted (or they're just having a bad day/month/year). Moonlight Rollerway in Glendale, Calif. had such an experience. Manager, Adrienne Van Houten, had a customer write a scathing review filled with name-calling and wild accusations, including "I found


a corn dog in my skate!" and "There was nacho cheese all over the rink!"

In the end, it was Van Houten who had the last laugh – their closed-circuit television caught the reviewer actually sticking a corn dog in a skate and spraying nacho cheese all over their rink. She was able to get the review removed and the video tapes were turned over to the local police department for charges of vandalism.

Being diligent in maintaining your presence on these review sites, while it can sometimes feel like you're constantly putting out fires, can sometimes work to your benefit because customers feel more open to share their thoughts online than face-to-face. According to surveys from social commerce company Reevo, 30% of customers are suspicious of a business that doesn't have any negative reviews. Responding thoughtfully to negative feedback gives your brand legitimacy. In fact, studies show that nearly nine in ten American's (89%) believe that companies should regularly leverage both negative and positive feedback to optimize their products and services. And with 47% of Americans relying on reviews of the general public as to whether or not they frequent your business, it's a necessary in today's era of social media.



# How to Create a Social Media Marketing Plan



In order to get the most out of your social media presence, Ekmark says, it's important to have a plan—both for the types of sites you wish to frequent, and what kind of information you'd like to post. "For your plan, the first thing you want to do is list your goals. Ask yourself, what do you want to achieve with your social media presence? Social media can do a lot of different things—PR, reputation management, branding—so you need to decide where you want to focus," he says. Next, decide how you want to reach those goals. Perhaps you will focus on posting Facebook ads in order to increase sales, or focus on using the platforms as a way to manage your business' reputation. "You can monitor reviews, update your business info on Yelp, et cetera," Ekmark says. "But whatever you decide, stick to the rules and who you are as a business." We live in a culture that values both timeliness and meaningful

connections. It's likely that the nature of social media has had something to do with it. Because of this, Ekmark says, the importance of posting on your site regularly cannot be overstated. "You also have to remember that social media can be a full-time job. You can outsource it to a company like ours, but if you do it yourself, it needs to be part of your job. If you're ready to push social media off as an ad platform and a way to just post specials once a day, you'll fail." Ekmark says that a post should fall into one of three categories: education, edification, or entertainment. Posts should also generally abide by the "5-3-2 rule": 5 posts of content from others, such as an article about the cardiovascular benefits of roller skating; 3 posts of your own content, which can be anything from videos to customer surveys—"It also doesn't have to encompass direct "selling" posts, either. Sure, you want to promote

events and sales but don't sell all the time or users will feel pressured and put off by the intrusion," Ambruch says—and 2 posts unrelated to your company, like a funny image. Anderson says that he plans his posts out about a month at a time. "I love the function on Facebook that allows you to schedule feature posts so I can kind of sit down and think out a theme. I like to take a look at our schedule. I try to put posts out 2-3 days before. We'll often tell users to 'Share' the post and win a free skate pass. For us we like to be really aggressive with giving away passes—we're confident in the experience the customer will get, and it's been great. I'll post random things out of the ordinary—goofy things that reinforce our family-friendly atmosphere. That's really important to us on social media."


## Make a Splash With Your Audience



Most social media platforms offer users an option to "follow" others, which is basically a type of online word-of-mouth. "The bigger your audience, the bigger chance you have at converting a percentage of that audience into paying customers," Ambruch explains. "Also, remember that in most cases, users who don't follow you on social media can see when their friends interact with your company. If the average user has 100 friends/connections, then adding 5 followers for your company suddenly becomes almost like adding 500."

Posting activity comes through trial and error. "Tools like HootSuite allow you to schedule posts ahead of time," Ambruch says. "In general, social media usage tends to peak around mid-day (lunch time) and in the middle of the evening. However, that might be different for your audience. Try different times of the day and see how your audience responds. It's always helpful to include some type of call to action in your posts, as often as possible. A call to action could be anything from asking the user to call or visit your website to "click 'like' if you agree" to 'caption this photo - comment below!' The more interactivity, the better!"

## Smash the Competition



If you're not very savvy about how to use social media, there are a few things you can do - but you must do at least one.

1. **DIY.** Websites like Lynda.com allow you to subscribe and watch training videos on any one of these sites. Learn the fundamentals of advertising, how to navigate your pages, best practices, how to create a content calendar, when and how to respond to negative feedback, and much more.
2. **HIRE A SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY EMPLOYEE.** Because social media is a method of marketing, and an imperative one, many companies hire dedicated social media ops to manage their online presence. While you can use this staff member for other marketing methods, social media should be one of their top priorities.

3. **HIRE A COMPANY.** Businesses like Trustworkz make your business their business by managing your social media and web presence for you. It's a time-consuming job to post three weekly blogs, make posts to Facebook and Twitter, Snapchat, Google+, respond to customers, address reviews and more. It can truly be a full time job and if you don't have the time, sometimes it's better to hire someone to manage it for you. Companies like Trustworkz have full time staff members who dedicate their time to writing blogs and social media posts that engage your customer base.

However you decide to manage your social media and web presence, the most important thing is to do it - period!



# 10 Ways to Cut the Cord

## New Options in Phone Service Can Mean Saving Time & Money

By: Nicholas Napier



**W**hile a landline is perhaps better than carrier pigeons, if you're still running your rink on only a landline, know that there are a wide-array of more advanced options on the market. A stat from Paul Howie, CEO of Talkroute, states that the average business loses 40% of its sales-related phone calls. Fortunately, there are many options for ensuring that no potential business gets lost due to missed calls or messages. This overview of common voicemail systems will provide an understanding of the technologies that are available, and the basics of how each system is unique.

### Landline and Answering Machine

An option that's been available since 1898 is still the voicemail preference for a surprising number of skating rinks. Tried and true, yet lacking the bells and whistles of digital and cloud-based voicemail systems, the main thing to be aware of with answering machines is that they become full, preventing additional messages. Plus, messages can be accidentally deleted with no evidence of who did it, so it definitely isn't the most dependable option. However, landline can make an excellent backup option when more advanced services aren't available.

### DSL (Digital Subscriber Lines)

As the owner of Columbus Event Center in Columbus, Neb., Jason Beiermann knows the challenges of running a rink in a rural area all too well. Since most of Nebraska consists of rural farm areas, cable is not available near his rink. Jason relies on DSL provided by a local phone company for internet and voice mail service. DSL is known to be a significant improvement over dial up, but can be difficult in rural areas since speed is related to how far you are from the hub. Much of Europe and the rest of the world relies on DSL over cable systems, since it operates by using unused space on currently existing phone lines.

### Q&A Voicemails

Question and answer voicemails have gotten a bad rap over the years, mostly due to major companies implementing them in such a way to avoid actually hearing complaints. However, done right with quick, effective questions, Q&A voicemails are effective ways to screen applicants, conduct surveys, or direct customer calls to a proper department. That said, there's often an extra price associated with Q&A voicemails, so only you can decide if it's worthwhile for the needs of your rink. To peruse popular options for Q&A voicemails, companies like VoicemailOffice.com offer plans based

# Supplement with Software

If you're still in the businesses of just handling all of your party bookings over the phone, you should know that you're losing out on a considerable amount of business – not just in business that could be sold after hours, but money you're paying staff to field sales calls all day, as well. Using a software that allows customers to book parties on your website after hours from their computer or mobile phone turns your website into a cash cow! Plus, these systems have capabilities far beyond just letting people buy party packages.

- Allows your customers book parties on their phones. After all, 50% of parties booked for birthdays and special events are done on mobile devices.

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For a complete list of party booking software companies that work directly with our members, visit the Computer Technology section of our RSM listings in the back of this magazine!

on the number of questions your voicemail will require.

## Unified Voicemail

According to the International Engineering Consortium, unified communications consist of all the various forms of message management and media that your company uses. The voicemail derivative of that is unified voicemail, a service that lets you read your rink's messages from all sources at once. If it's important to you to have all avenues of communication combined into one service, then unified voicemail may be ideal for you. The main advantages of unified voicemail are typically cost and convenience, since you're using one service to manage multiple communication outlets.

## Voiceover Internet Protocol (VOIP)

Voiceover Internet Protocol (VOIP) is a service that allows voice information to be sent over the internet. This service can come from a vendor or from the phone itself, and

essentially is used to save tons of money and to add functionality. VOIP services are often less expensive than voicemail through phone companies, primarily because phone companies typically have a monopoly over a particular area. If VOIP services, also known as internet phone services are available in your area, it's often worth

store the PBX hardware and a higher initial cost, but once your gear is up and working, you can save significant money on phone and internet services. There is more to know with self-hosted VOIP because you're in control of how the system is set up, programmed, and arranged. Experts like VP of product development at

**In a survey by MarketTools on voicemail, it was found that 38% of Americans indicate that ‘listening to long and rambling messages’ is the primary reason for their dissatisfaction with voicemail.**

looking into to see if the price is lower. For detailed info on VOIP services, check out [voip-info.org](http://voip-info.org).

## Self-Hosted VOIP

If you're technically savvy and confident that you can figure out how to deal with the gear yourself, then you can invest in your own private branch exchange (PBX) hardware and try self-hosting. Self-hosting VOIP requires room to

ShoreTel, Pej Roshan, recommend hiring IT staff to maintain a self-hosted VOIP, so self-hosting services are often meant for large websites or companies with multiple departments.

## Cloud-Based VOIP

The difference between cloud-based and self-hosted VOIP services is like the difference between leasing and purchasing any major investment, like a new car or solar panels for



# It's Time for a Bulletproof Phone Greeting

Whichever system you choose for your voicemail services, your voice is the first contact a customer will have with your business, so an excellent greeting will guide them in the right direction. Brad Armstrong, owner of Roller Kingdom in Reno, Nev. explains what is important in a voice message. "It should be a friendly, inviting voice. You want the system to be there when you're not." In addition to other relevant info like hours of operation and special promotions, Brad always includes the moniker of his skating rink, "Where families come for fun." Including a well-conceived slogan is a good idea according to Kumail Hemani, a web-analytics manager writing for *Social Media Today*. Kumail explains that "A slogan adds meaning to the name and can strengthen your relationship with the client." Ultimately, an informative, smart voicemail greeting shows callers that your rink is a welcoming place that cares deeply about its customers.

A word of caution, however – keep it simple. When you're recording your greeting, here are a few tips:

## 1. Make sure to include the basics:

- a. Hours of operation (If you're closed now, let them know right away and that they can leave a message when you're done talking or cut to the chase and tell them what button to press to leave a message right away).
- b. Physical address
- c. Prices and Specials
- d. Website

**2. Avoid the "Data Dump" greeting where you pile every single detail on.** Keep it simple. If you don't, chances are they're going to hang up.

**3. Be up front from the beginning.** If your phone system only kicks in when no one is



answering (rather than an automated system allowing customers to choose a department), make sure to state that from the beginning. There's nothing worse than sitting through a long winded message only to realize no one is there and you can't leave a message either.

**3. Make it lively and energetic.** Parents want to know that you're a fun, upbeat and fun place to take their children – let it shine through your voicemail system.



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example. With a cloud-based service, all of the technical aspects of your voicemail are handled by the vendor for a monthly fee. That means you'll only need basic equipment, while the vendor is responsible for internet routing and other functions. A wide-array of companies provide hosting services, so there's likely to be a deal that fits the needs of your rink.

### **Virtual Private Server**

Another feature that's typically meant for IT departments, virtual private servers (VPS) are smaller servers that function within the same system. Voicemail, phone, and internet services are among the numerous options enabled by VPS. A primary reason you would need VPS is if you required multiple different servers that are independent of each other, but all controlled

by a master server. If voicemail is the main purpose, there are far simpler options than VPS, but companies like Myhosting.com sweeten the deal with free Bing advertising included in their packages.

### **Voice On-demand**

The on-demand format has taken over the world of video, but similar technology is also used to provide a voicemail service. If your rink is an entertainment complex that needs more advanced services, voice on-demand systems can provide conference calling, webinar services, and web teleconferencing. Regarding the voicemail, Voiceondemand.com offers a voicemail service with such noteworthy advantages as unlimited length and unlimited amount of messages. Depending on how sophisticated your voicemail

needs are, several packages are available ranging from \$9.95-49.95.

### **Visual Voicemail**

Offered by most companies as an extra feature, visual voicemail is ideal for reading your messages at times when you might not have time to cycle through them all. There are now revolutionary companies like YouMail which function like a secretary that takes accurate messages and even disregards junk calls. If you're someone who demands maximum accuracy in your messages or if you often have trouble understanding people, then visual voicemail would be ideal for you. Many companies offer a visual voicemail service, from major ones like AT&T and Verizon, to newer apps like Hulio Mail and Magik Mail.

# Five Phone Mistakes That are Costing You Money

Eliminating these bad habits can minimize the opportunities lost due to miscommunication with customers. Communication errors are a significant problem in all industries, so mitigating this by enabling easy ways for customers to reach you could significantly boost business.

### **Don't Let it Go to Voicemail if You Can Answer**

Brad Armstrong, owner of Roller Kingdom in Reno, Nev. and The Rink in Sacramento, Calif., has a policy regarding incoming calls. "I tell my employees to answer in three rings. If I call the rink and no one answers in three rings, they better be pretty busy." Since it's estimated that 85% of customers who call never leave a message, the importance of picking up the phone cannot be stressed enough in business.

### **Don't Get Unwillingly "Locked In" with a Vendor**

Much like merchant services and payroll systems, voice mail providers have clever ways of locking you into a long contract. Even if the vendor seems right for you, long contracts are generally avoided by businesses who want to keep their options open. Be aware of indirect obligations in a vendor contract that lock you in longer than you may expect.

### **Don't Let Just Anyone Have Access to your VOIP System**

Most VOIP systems offer a host of features and advanced options, and an employee who doesn't fully understand the system could be losing



valuable calls. For this reason, it's important to be selective in who has access to your voice mail, and the ability to delete or alter your voicemails.

### **Have a Plan "B" for when Your VOIP Goes Down**

The "I" in VOIP stands for "internet", and that means that it's vulnerable to going down. Whether it's a landline or alternate cell phone service, having a back-up option for your voice mail system will prevent your business from being dead in the water if VOIP has issues. Likewise, if you use a lot of internet or you offer free public wifi, be aware that this could mean that your phone systems will be affected. You may need to obtain two completely separate lines.

### **Don't go Overboard with Buying Equipment**

Whether dealing with a VOIP Vendor or considering a deal with a company that already handles another aspect of your business, they'll probably try to sell you as much gear and extras as possible. In the heat of the moment, it might seem like the most elaborate system is what's needed, but remember that with each of the bells and whistles comes a higher price. Since there are always improvements and enhancements that demand money in a skating rink, it's important to minimize excess money wasted on necessities like a VOIP service.



# Putting the Pizzazz in your Pizza

BY: LORI LOVELY

Admittedly, roller skating rinks haven't exactly been at the top of the list of the world's best pizzerias. In fact, over the years, they have acquired a reputation for serving barely warm greasy cheese slathered on cardboard that's been sitting in the display case a little too long.

But no more.

Rink owners are working diligently to improve the product they serve, well aware of statistics. The USDA reveals that one in eight Americans eat pizza on any given day, with 94 percent of Americans eating pizza regularly, accounting for 3 billion pizzas sold in the U.S. every year. Averaged out across the population, that equates to each person in this country eating 46 pizzas a year. Envision it this way: Americans eat approximately 100 acres of pizza per day—roughly 350 slices every second.

Kids ages 3 to 11 prefer pizza over all other choices for lunch and dinner, while 36 percent of adults consider cold leftover pizza fit for breakfast. C'mon, you know you've done it!

Perhaps the statistic that matters most to rink owners is that pizza accounts for more than 10 percent of all food service sales. Annual pizza sale revenue in America is \$32 billion, according to StatisticBrain.com and Pizza Marketplace reports first quarter sales increases of 8%. Clearly, it makes good business sense to offer better pizza that will keep skaters coming back for more.

## Pizza personality

That's exactly what Charlene Conway, owner of The Carousel Family Fun Centers in Massachusetts, set out to do when she put in a pizza operation two years ago. "We were purchasing 200 pizzas a week," she reflects, "but the prices kept going up. We paid triple what we pay now." Even worse, she says she was competing against the supplier's specials if she bought in bulk at higher prices.

In addition to ensuring that pizza sales add to her profits as they simultaneously cut her expenses, Conway wanted to inject a little personality to add to the ambiance. Because she's big on brand imaging and wanted to give an identity to her pizzeria, she created a character named Pattino, which means "skate" in Italian. He presides over both the pizzeria and—in pirate attire—over the redemption area, appropriately named the Treasure Chest. "We want to be different than the average rink," she says.



## Investing in the pie

Some rinks require an investment in equipment in order to prepare pizza. Bob Housholder, owner of Skateland Savoy in Champaign-Urbana, Ill., got lucky. After 14 years as a rink owner, urban sprawl led him to move to a new location. The Savoy rink had a kitchen with an established pizza program and recipes, he says. Although he had warmers and toaster ovens for the 3,400-3,500 pizzas he purchased every year, transitioning from buying pizza to making it in his new rink was an easy decision.

Conway wasn't so lucky; she had to make some in-house changes. By keeping her build-out expense under \$10,000, she was able to purchase a larger freezer and refrigerator. She also bought three conveyor belt pizza ovens, which led to cooking more things besides just pizza. "Now we have fresher, quality products—and we're not dealing with another vendor!"

## Sourcing ingredients

"I did lots of research," Conway recalls. "I did taste-tests all the time." After tasting products for a year and attending Pizza Expo in Las Vegas, Nev. to get ideas to please return customers, she chose a sauce that is closest to the brand of pizzas she previously bought.

Conway buys frozen dough balls from a local company to make the crust, but at Savoy, a manager and one employee make the dough and the sauce. "It's easy [for other employees] to make a pizza from that," Housholder says.

He buys ingredients from three suppliers and picks up fresh vegetables from the local grocery stores and farmer's markets, opting for a variety of toppings in order to keep up with the competition. Skateland Savoy offers topping

choices such as cheese, pepperoni, sausage, mushrooms, green peppers and black olives. "For special events, we add buffalo chicken."

Conway decided to specialize in limited pizza toppings: cheese and pepperoni. It's a safe choice: statistics show that 36 percent of people order it as their favorite pizza topping, annually consuming 252 million pounds of pepperoni on pizza.

## Any way you slice it

Despite limiting topping choices to two, Conway gets creative with in-house choices in other ways. Individual pizzas called bambinos are popular with teen sessions, she says. To make them, the dough ball is cut into four pieces, then topped and baked.

She cuts a 16-inch pie in 10 slices for birthday parties because the minimum number for parties is 10, but at the snack bar, pizza is cut into 8 slices for combos: a slice of pizza and a drink. She does a special deal for groups: one or two slices with a drink.

Flexibility and fresh food have helped her concession sales. Frozen drinks and pizza are the top sellers at Carousel.

Similarly, Housholder says he sells more pizza than hot dogs. "People really like it," he observes. "Families wait to eat until they get here because of the price and outstanding quality." He believes his pizza helps him book parties. "We offer an 8-inch pizza for the birthday person and two 12-inch pizzas for up to 8 guests."

An everyday special at Skateland Savoy consists of a large 16-inch pizza with one extra topping and a 2-liter soda for \$17.50. He also sells cheese and pepperoni pizza by the slice.

Housholder points out the financial benefit of making pizza in-house. "Once you start making pizza like we do, you can do 12-inch cheese pizzas for about a dollar, depending on the price of cheese." Conway's profits have increased by 20 percent since she began making her own pizza in-house.



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# 5 Issues that Kill Rink Productivity

BY: GENIE DAVIS

All too often, the daily operations of a roller rink are so intense that owners work in their business rather than on their business. Too overwhelmed with day to day operations to hire and train others and spend time working on improving business and succession planning, productivity can go down the tubes.

Here's a look at the five main things that can attack productivity and how to avoid them.

## Delegation Issues

Veronica Hunt, co-owner of Skatetown Enid, in Enid, Okla., says the main thing that derails her productivity is "not designating to other people." Hunt notes "What derails us the most is focusing too much on menial activities that we could assign to others. As a business owner, sometimes you want to just jump on in and do a job yourself, because you know how to do it, and you know it will be done right. You tend to not want to assign to others." The solution? "I need to make sure that I train my staff to get chores done, so that I'm free to spend more time with customers." Hunt also notes that it's vitally important to "remember why you're in this business in the first place. Otherwise, you can be overwhelmed by the everyday business aspects. If you go back to why you originally started here, your heart for children, to provide a safe place for families, then you stay on track. I'm sure not everyone gets into the roller skating business for that reason, but it was certainly our main goal."

## Staffing Issues

Skatetown Enid owner Hunt has dealt with this issue, as well. "My biggest problem is having enough employees to cover things so we don't have to be here all the time. It's hard to find employees who don't need time off for a number of different activities, which makes scheduling difficult. We want to make sure we have great coverage, but of course we can't hire a staff of forty."

The key to avoiding these types of issues? In the end, rink owners may very well need to hire full-time, long-term employees rather than part-timers when possible.

## Lack of Direction

According to Doug Ingles, owner operator of Stadium Sports Centre, Inc. in Hillsdale, Mich., lack of direction is what is most likely to derail a business, and to Ingles, avoiding this trap is all about "maintaining a productive mind-set," he explains. "I have a small rink, and I'm responsible for doing all the things that need to be done. But I have to be very directed, and prioritize. You have to become determined to accomplish the big goal items, promotions, improvements, that kind of thing, and not let the day-to-day tasks overwhelm you." Ingles has plans to expand attractions at his rink. "We're always doing new things, so I focus on where that will take me."



## Avoiding the Big Picture

At Russell Roller Rink in Russell, Pa., owner/operator Mike Sharp says his biggest issue is "focusing too much on small details instead of the big picture." The solution for Sharp is to "look past the minor details and realize the bigger things going on. But unfortunately," he says, "one of my downfalls is that I don't think in terms of five or ten year plans. We do plan ahead in terms of say New Year's Eve events, but as far as long term plans, such as succession for the business, that hasn't even been on my mind." He notes that his rink did have a business plan when they started out twenty years ago. "But honestly we haven't looked at it in about fifteen years."

How to see a bigger picture? Create or update that business plan. Drafting a useable, quality business plan can be time consuming, so it's helpful to buy business planning software as an efficient tool. Used thoughtfully, business plan software can shape a strategic business plan that works as a resource for long-term, big-picture

planning. And an important, and often ignored, part of that picture is succession planning.

## Lack of a Marketing Plan

It's important to understand how other rinks position themselves in the marketplace, and then shape a rink in a way that sets it apart from others. Once a unique, marketable concept has been established, marketing ideas such as special events planning, discount coupons, social media, and school advertising are all important tools to improve business. So are direct mail, yellow pages ads, online ads, and developing a PR program to increase awareness of the rink.

Russell Roller Rink's Sharp asserts that his team is always "looking for something to

enhance family attendance. We focus on keeping the fun flowing for people, and marketing in that way."

Skatetown Enid's Hunt works hard to "plan and schedule specials and events four to six months in advance," and market them through

carefully planned promotions such as mailers and ads.

Ashlee Erny, operator at Latrobe Skating Center in Latrobe, Pa., says the best way to stay on top of marketing efforts and simply stay organized, is to put everything on a calendar. "Events, marketing and promotional flyers, sales tax payments - it all goes on the calendar. When you see it, you know you have to do it, and you can keep organized for months ahead." Erny also makes good use of her iPhone, setting reminders for "anything and everything, from promotional flyers for school parties on," she says.

In short, strong delegating, reliable staffing, and a well-thought-out marketing plan are key ways to improve rink productivity. Establishing a direction for the business and keeping an eye on the big picture are also major components in boosting productivity.

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# Crisis Management in a Social Media Era

Online reviews, bad press, and negative PR. These are all things that cause the average rink owner to shudder in fear when mentioned. Unfortunately, sticking your head in the sand and wishing for it to all go away isn't an option. What happens on the Internet, stays on the Internet (see you in Vegas at Convention next year - also on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram...) While a bad review might be important to your business, how you respond can be even more important. Even more important is how your business reacts to a full on social media crisis.

Similar to most things in life, preparation is key when it comes to crisis management. I have a simple rule when it comes to most things in business: Control the controllables. So before you start ripping your hair out or responding to bad reviews with sarcasm, let's explore a different option that might leave your brand intact and ready to bounce back stronger than ever before!

## No Customer or Problem Is Too Small - Monitor Your Mentions

Conversations about your brand are happening online whether you realize it or not. It's the nature of the connected world that we live in today. Even the seemingly small issues can be amplified on the Internet. When it comes to online mentions, reviews, and conversations about your brand, there is no such thing as small customer or problem. All of them are worth tracking or acknowledging internally.

It's important to note that negative reviews are not a social media crisis. A violent fight breaking out in your parking lot is a crisis. A manager tweeting their political views from your business account accidentally instead of their personal account can be a crisis. Someone thinking that the pizza served at your cafe is "not the best" is not a social media crisis.

There are a variety of tools that you can use to track brand mentions. Many of you use Google Alerts, but there are many other tools that will help you track mentions across other networks such as Raven Tools (marketing software), Buffer, Yext, and Hootsuite. Facebook is pushing their direct message feature, and that's a great tool for you as well. Some of these services will cost

you money. However, your brand is your name and ignoring your online reputation is like not having insurance. You need to protect your assets and your future.

Once you begin to find your brand mentions online (conversations about your business), it's time to create a gameplan.

## To Respond or Not to Respond

Before responding to an online crisis, you need to examine and understand the content published about your center and who actually published. Yes, this will require some digging, but it will be worth it if it means saving you from embarrassment.

If you look at the flow chart (download your copy on [trustworkz.com/crisis](http://trustworkz.com/crisis)), you will notice a variety of online personas and comment types. This will provide you with a blueprint of what needs immediate attention and what should just be monitored before taking further action. An actual crisis will need to be handled and investigated immediately.

## Assign Responsibility Before an Issue Erupts

When creating your crisis management plan, it is essential that you assign responsibilities to your team. A true crisis will have the public calling or reaching out via social media. Even journalists will show up to your center, call, email, and reach out via social media channels.

Know ahead of time who is responsible for handling responses online, who will be speaking to the media, and how you will all get on the same



page before responding to anyone.

Going into battle without knowing who you are defending yourself from leaves your center vulnerable to looking foolish. Meet with your team responsible for managing the crisis and make sure that everyone understands what happened and what you plan on saying or not saying.

## We Are Aware of the Issue

If something is going around or spreading online about your center, the first thing you need to do is acknowledge the issue. A simple, "Yes, we are aware of the issue" provides the public with enough information when you're still investigating the circumstances.

According to J.D. Power and Associates, 67% of consumers have used social media for customer service. Those people went directly to the brand to message online. Social media is one of the first places consumers go when communicating with or about a brand. A well maintained profile provides consumers with a direct link so that you can receive their message and attend to it promptly.

Your social media manager, or person assigned to monitoring and responding online, should respond directly to each individual concern. Each reply should fall between the guidelines set forth by the team to address the issue, but

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@KitchenAidUSA Cynthia, you have done the right thing in quickly assuming responsibility, apologizing, and taking corrective action. Kudos.

12:22 AM - 4 Oct 2012

5 4



**KitchenAid**  
@KitchenAidUSA

4 Oct 12

I would like to personally apologize to President @BarackObama, his family and everyone on Twitter for the offensive tweet sent earlier.



**Mimi Noble**  
@MimiBakerMN

Follow

@KitchenAidUSA Clearly this was a personal tweet sent accidentally by someone from your team. You have a reputable brand & mistakes happen.

12:26 AM - 4 Oct 2012

3 3

As you can see in this interaction between KitchenAid and their customers, public apologies can mean a great deal to loyal customers.

keep it personal by not replying with a canned response. It shows empathy and makes your brand seem more personable during the crisis.

### Own the Issue, and Make It Right

When KitchenAid's social media manager made a personal comment about President Obama and his grandmother from the brand account in 2012, the head of branding for KitchenAid USA, Cynthia Soledad, swooped in and made their public apology within 15 minutes of the incident. Cynthia's response was direct, honest, and sincere. It saved the brand from a complete online catastrophe and made the following days of interviews significantly easier to manage.

Do what's right. Own the issue with integrity and honesty and you will make it out of the situation with your reputation intact. People have enormous

respect for you when you mess up, admit it, and work towards making it right.

If you handle your crisis with empathy and urgency, then consumers and media will humanize your brand and see that everyone makes mistakes. A sincere apology goes a long way.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**KEVIN EKMARK**

Kevin Ekmark is the President and CEO of TrustWorkz with over 10 years of Internet marketing experience

for local businesses. Follow Kevin on Twitter: @KevinEkmark, Circle Kevin on Google Plus: +KevinEkmark. Find Kevin on LinkedIn: LinkedIn.com/in/KevinEkmark. Check out Kevin's personal Blog: KevinEkmark.com

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# Top Performers Mean Big Money

Whether you decided to venture out and introduce games to your rink or you are looking to update your existing equipment line, choosing from hundreds of games can be a daunting task. To alleviate this painstaking task, we reviewed a dozen of our operating accounts, consisting of over 100 unique titles, and created a who's who of the top redemption, video and novelty machines. Not to be left out, we also included several workhorse units who have lasted the test of time and still generate positive income well after the game has been paid off.

## Top 3 Video

- Jurassic Park
- Terminator
- Typhoon

## Top 10 Redemption

- Monster Drop (Extreme or Standard)
- Big Bass Wheel
- Ticket Monster
- Fishbowl Frenzy
- Whack N Win
- Grand Piano Keys
- Down the Clown
- Space Balls
- Pharaohs Treasure 4 Player
- Black Hole

## Workhorses

- Spin N Win
- Slam a Winner
- Skee-ball/Iceball
- Deal or No Deal
- Wheel of Fortune Deluxe
- Hoop Fever
- Elvis Pusher
- Wheel Deal 3 Player
- Cyclone 3 Player

## Top 3 Novelty

- Photo Booth
- Pacman Smash
- Fast Track Air Hockey

## Top 3 Merchandise

- Candy Crane (with Ticket Bundles)
- Knock it Off Rotary (with Ticket Bundles)
- Cranes (claw machines) with high quality generic or licensed merchandise

There are several factors we took into consideration when generating this list, including roller skating demographics, game room square footage, repeat clientele and the "fun" factor.

Video games are generally installed to keep the teenagers and adults entertained. Classic drivers are always a hit and should be a staple in every center but more recently the numbers show

newcomers such as Jurassic Park and Terminator have ranked consistently #1 and #2. Typhoon, though placed under our video headline, is more of an attraction/simulator than a video, with a higher price tag, but the earnings are off the charts.

Redemption games, not only the top earning equipment, bring multiple facets to the game room. Units such as Monster Drop, Big Bass Wheel and Whack 'N Win bring the excitement of quick play, instant winners, whereas Grand Piano Keys, Down the Clown and Black Hole allow kids to sharpen their cognitive skills gaining higher rewards as they master the skill play. Whether quick play or skillful, each unit brings a unique twist to your game room and keeps the players coming back for more.

"Workhorse" games are units we've placed on our route ranging from 5 – 15 years. These units have truly stood up to the test of time and continue to earn well, paying for themselves ten times over. A strong consideration with these units was maintenance. Besides the normal wear and tear, each one of these units require minimal service time and can be placed in the game room without a worry.

Novelty games are essential to every game room. The new age Photo Booth has

revolutionized the media clientele. Not only does the player receive a hard copy of their picture but now they have the ability to upload their image to a Facebook, Twitter or Instagram account.

And who doesn't like Air Hockey? From your tested Fast Track to the new and improved Pacman Smash, air hockey with a twist, these units bring the family together for some fun and fierce competition.

Last, but most certainly not least, merchandise games are a must for every game room. There are hundreds of titles, styles and brands, but when it comes down to each specific unit it's all about the merchandise you put inside your crane. The candy crane has been restored to its early greatness with the addition of ticket bundles ranging from 50 to 500. Knock it Off rotary was brought back from ranking between 30-40 to ranking top 5 of ALL games with

the use of ticket circles ranging from 50 to 1,000. Adding these updated units to our already successful claw cranes displaying high quality generic or licensed plush, the players cannot stay away.

As always, please feel free to contact an AAMA representative at (847) 290-9088 to discuss the options when it comes to your game area, or visit our website at [www.coin-op.org](http://www.coin-op.org).

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



### Joseph Camarota III

Joseph Camarota has been serving the industry and Alpha Omega Amusements for nearly 20 years, working his way through each department and has managed Merchandise, Dispatch, and the Parts/Service Department. He became the Director of Operations in 2009. Joseph can be contacted at [Joseph@alphaomegasales.com](mailto:Joseph@alphaomegasales.com).



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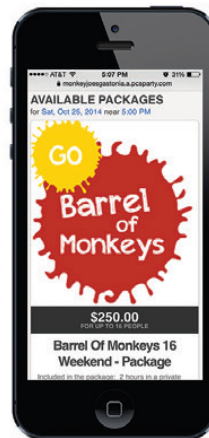
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# Fall Arcade Game Lineup Makes Waves

PART ONE

BY: CORNELIUS FORTUNE

It's time to go beyond pixels. Or game consoles.

And while there's certainly time and a place for those types of games, a roller skating rink can have a real added ROI (return on investment) by incorporating redemption games into their business model.

It's important to really take games as serious, because they can be lucrative and help to bring in more customers. There are plenty of companies out there to help get you started.

Bay Tek Games Inc., Benchmark Games, Gold Standard Games/Shelti, and Shaffer Distributing, provide an overview of the industry and some trends to look for this fall.

## Bay Tek Games, Inc.

The company has been in business since 1977, specializing in ticket redemption games.

"Bay Tek Games got its start with ticket redemption games, which is our main focus to this day," says Mark Lense, Midwest Account Manager, Bay Tek Games Inc. "We also design and build prize merchandising games and a self-contained prize dispenser called Prize Hub."

Some of the company's most popular games include: The Big Bass Wheel series of games – "Big Bass Wheel," "Big Bass Wheel Pro," "Crank It, Crank It Revolution" and "Ticket Monster."

"There is always a new product coming out," Lense says. "Merchandise games seem to always be a hot item. Not only do FECs operate them, but many other locations that might not do ticket games have enjoyed great success with prize merchandisers."

## What's trending?

"Card Reader systems seem to be the biggest trend right now," Lense says. "More locations, both small and large, are going to a ticketless philosophy to save costs and help with promotions within the facility."

As for where he sees the industry advancing, locations are looking to reinvent themselves and be more family friendly. They're investing in remodeling and branding to make their businesses

stand out.

"Many times we are involved with new game room layouts as families are looking for other fun things to do while at the location,"



Lense says. "Bay Tek's Flappy Bird Merchandiser is a brand new, skill based game that has just been released with high expectations. Our Grand Piano Keys ticket game was released last spring which has been a top earner for locations this summer. Orders are coming in for both games for the fall and winter seasons now."

## Benchmark Games

Redemption games have been the bread and butter for Benchmark games since the company since the late '90s.

Richard Long, national account sales manager, Benchmark Games has watched the growth of the industry and his business.

"We have been in the redemption game business since the beginning," Long says. "We've continued to develop them. Like 'DRILL-O-MATIC.' That was one of the first ones. We did that and the first real successful game was 'Wheel Deal,' which

was a three-player wheel game. That was in early 2001. We got in the crane business for a while, it's been mostly ticket redemption."

Some of the games have been retired, but "Monster Drop," a new game, is gaining in popularity. It comes in one-player, two-player, or extreme player, an 11-foot tall piece.

"That, generally speaking, is inapplicable for the roller skating industry. Another one is the Pop It and Win. The better you score in the game the more the balloon blows up, finally it pops. That's been a very popular game. We still sell that.

You can spend anywhere between \$5,000-6,000, assuming you own the equipment. The best part about redemption games is that they don't take up much space, which is a valuable commodity in a roller skating rink, according to Long. "They're looking for a good return investment and we've been able to offer that. The majority of our games are affordable for them."

Additionally, the upkeep on the games is simple. "They've learned that it's not rocket science to keep them operational and make a lot of money. That's a trend that has really continued to develop to this day. Benchmark Games offer in-house service. If they have problems with the

games, they can pick up the phone and the technicians will walk them through the problems. We also have in-house parts. We have all that right in our facility in Florida."

One thing he's seeing more of is the younger generation taking over the skating rinks.

"They're coming in with the idea that coin-operating games are another cash venue for them to offer to the skating public," Long says. "And that's where I think we're seeing the industry evolving, with the





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addition of new blood."

And redemption games, generally speaking, have more value.

"It's only been in the last five years that they've introduced coin-operated redemption games that give out tickets," Long says. "The players get value out of playing the game. They don't just play the game. Get a ticket and they can buy merchandise. They don't have to buy it with cash."

## Gold Standard Games/Shelti

Shelti was started in 2001 by a group of investors. Mark Robbins, owner of Gold Standard Games/Shelti bought the company in 2010, but kept the Shelti brand name on certain products.

"Our heritage goes back to 1945," Robbins says. "We are in the same building as the original Valley, with some of the same employees from before the company merged and moved in the late '90s."

Gold Standard Games/Shelti specializes in table games, including pool, foosball, and air hockey. Air hockey's a specialty. In the '80s, Robbins designed tables for U.S. Billiards, and then the original Dynamo air hockey tables.

"Now, I've refined what I know into building the very best earning and most durable air hockey tables ever," he says.

Some of the most popular games from this series is the "Gold Flare Elite" air hockey table, featuring eye-catching graphics, LED chase lights, and the company's unique "player's choice" overhead with either black light or white light. It's their most popular coin model.

Robbins believes what's new on the market in the gaming industry is debit card systems, which are getting more popular as a way to simplify collections and offer more pricing options.

Although over the last few years, he's seen the trend going toward bigger, flashier, more expensive games.

"But now there is a counter-trend toward more affordable games with great ROI that offer great value and entertainment to the customer. Those

are the kind of games we specialize in."

Also, he sees the amusement game industry having to continue offering an experience that cannot be easily duplicated in the home. So that means redemption (ticket) games; big flashy games with a lot of "wow" factor; and high quality interactive physical games like air hockey.

A game he anticipates that'll be popular this fall is "Jet-Ball." Gold Standard Games/Shelti will be introducing this new game at the IAAPA (International Association of Amusement Parks) show in November. The game was invented by a Canadian entrepreneur.

"It's a fast, fun air-powered foosball-type game where the ball is propelled



by powerful jets of compressed air rather than by men on rods," Robbins says. "It has tested well and we hope to have a good response at the show."

## Shaffer Distributing

Established in 1929, Shaffer Distributing Company is a factory authorized distributor and service center for virtually every manufacturer of amusement, redemption and video game products in the amusement machine industry.

The company sells and services a broad range of customers that include family entertainment centers, skating rinks, bowling centers, movie theaters, arcades and indoor waterparks.

"Partnering, growing, then maintaining the relationship has been and will remain an essential part of Shaffer's legacy within the Amusement Game industry," says George Speakman, Shaffer Distributing. "Our consultative advise begins with understanding that there are many variables that come into play. It is imperative to partner with the customer to understand their short term and

long term objectives, as well as their targeted demographic to ensure the long term success of their overall operations."

Shaffer also provides State of the Art Design Services, which help the client to see their vision realized.

"While our business model has not changed since 1929, our involvement within customer projects has exponentially expanded as the FEC market has expanded," Speakman says. "The investment that our customers are now making is substantial and our responsibility as a distributor has grown tremendously. Given this responsibility, we have adapted and grown our FEC Consultative Program to assure our customer is making the best possible financial decision."

Today, he adds, manufacturers are making games that really present the 'Wow' factor. Not only do games today have an increasingly large foot print that attracts customers from afar, they are also now being manufactured in 'Play Value' redemption settings that offer the end user a more gratifying experience.

There are many great options on the market today to choose from that a facility can add to increase foot traffic, he says. The importance of being able to offer multiple attractions is increasing as competition is increasing.

Engagement is important as well, as he's seen a trend towards more activities meant to include the entire family.

"Many facilities are finding ways to engage their patrons from adulthood to childhood whether that be a designated area within the game room that has couches and comfortable seating for the parents or a designated area for toddlers to enjoy their time while their big brother or sister plays games," Speakman says. "It is important to remember that the more you can keep all parties engaged the longer they will spend in your facility, which in turn will lead to additional revenue and repeat customers."

Paramount to your survival is capturing as much repeat business as possible. In order to obtain the goal of customers coming back to your facility the importance of recreating the environment is unparalleled.

Speakman's looking forward to IAAPA. "Amusement game manufacturers are offering the best diverse equipment we have seen in years at Shaffer Distributing," he says. "Manufacturers will show the latest and greatest games to entice new levels of game play within Arcade Rooms throughout the US."





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# Minimizing Risk in Your Skating Center

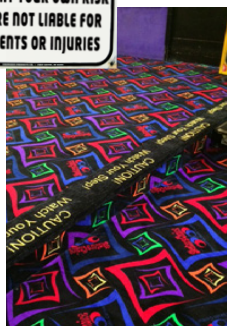
**A**s the Endorsed Insurance Provider for the Roller Skating Association, we, at JBL Trinity Group, have a vested interest in preventing lawsuits against our member roller skating rinks and non-member rinks alike. In my earlier years at JBL, I worked specifically in our risk management department, administering claims for our roller rink program as well as our other lines of business. I gained valuable insight into the industry and the claims that come with it. I learned quickly that loss prevention, and the avoidance of lawsuits, all starts with you, our owners and managers, our first line of defense!

Claims are a fact of life in this business. And nothing hurts more than receiving a dreaded Summons & Complaint from a patron. It is often from someone you may know and like. Now this person is alleging that you caused them great harm due to your negligence. It hurts. Just like claims, there will always be lawsuits. However, by maintaining a safe facility with a well trained staff, you will reduce claims and lessen the scenarios that can give rise to a lawsuit. The best way to avoid a lawsuit is to avoid the claim altogether. Your facility must be vigilant, from top to bottom, in the implementation and enforcement of safety and housekeeping best practices.

No matter how diligent you are in providing a safe environment, as long as there are personal injury attorneys in this world, you will be sued. When we think lawsuit we think liability. What did the rink do or fail to do to provide the plaintiff's attorney with a theory of liability? Remember, most plaintiff attorneys work on a contingency basis and will only get paid if they obtain a settlement. Minimizing the plaintiff attorney's ability to establish a feasible theory of liability is the cornerstone of preventing a lawsuit.

So, how do we minimize this? It lies at the heart of what we should be doing every day to prevent claims. The basic roller rink risk management must be in place prior to the accident. This includes, but is not limited to, signage, liability waivers, video surveillance, proper lighting, marked step downs, clean and secure floor (and sufficient number of qualified floor guards). Your safe practices must extend to the parking lot, as well.

The real work of lawsuit prevention begins when an accident occurs. Assuming a skating accident, the music must stop and the floor cleared. As the manager is attending to the injured party, the floor guard should immediately commence interviews of the witnesses and



secure detailed statements. The more unbiased 3rd party statements you get, the better. These statements should be as detailed as possible, and include their name, address, relation to injured party, and their contact number. If under the age of twenty five you should get their parents' phone number as well. The parents' phone numbers are important for any witness who is under the age of twenty five due to the probability of them going off to college or moving before the lawsuit is initiated. This provides a good secondary means of reaching our witnesses at the time we need them for a deposition.

Having a GOOD video surveillance system is our best line of defense in avoiding a lawsuit. Video is the most effective means of immediately preventing a lawsuit. And, should it not diffuse it, judges and juries love it and will go a long way to increasing your odds of prevailing at trial. However, you can have the best surveillance system in the world, but if you don't save the clip depicting the accident, it is useless. It is unrealistic to save every clip from every slip and fall. But your experience should tell you what incidents will give rise to a claim. Those clips should be preserved. When in doubt, save it! Clip the incident from your recorder (two minutes before the incident until two minutes after the incident) and save it on a disk or thumb drive with your witness statement, incident report, and rink maintenance reports.

Incident reports and rink maintenance reports are equally important to the video in limiting a lawsuit. Rink maintenance reports, skate maintenance reports and well written detailed incident reports are essential to our defense. Remember, this is the first account of what the claimant states happened. Generally, once the claimant retains an attorney we will see this story change. When the claimant says "I just slipped and fell", and we have that documented, and accompanied by an "after injury skate report" stating the skate was in good working condition, and rink maintenance report showing the floor is swept before and after each session and is free of debris/defect will diffuse the most common claims. This makes the plaintiff attorney's creation of a theory of liability much harder.

Proper signage of potential hazards is important, too. We need to post signs warning patrons that skating is a hazardous sport where they assume the risk of injury. The rink rules and procedures must also be posted in plain sight. This is especially important in the states where we have assumption of risk statutes, but warning

patrons in any state is helpful. You can get these signs from Southeastern Skate Supply. Something new that I recently saw and really liked was a "caution sign", which is inlayed into your carpet, warning of a step-up or step-down. This is manufactured by Flagship Carpets, and will provide a great defense in these types of claims.

Contact with the injured party the day after to show concern for their well being is proper and should be practiced. It is up to you whether you want to offer free passes or a party to help soothe their hurt. You can commiserate with the patron and offer sympathy that they were the victim of an unfortunate accident. A little TLC can go a long way. Listen to what they say, and hear what they need. Maybe it's just some assistance with some of their medical bill co-payments. Maybe they don't have any medical insurance, so the only way they can pay their bills will be to sue you. Talk to your insurance provider and let them know what your conversation with the claimant was, and hear what their recommendation is. Ask them if they can help with medical bills or co-payments. Depending on the circumstances this may be a reasonable and cost effective way for the insurance company to avoid a costly lawsuit. Be careful with apologies. An apology implies liability.

In summary, good video, detailed incident reports, rink maintenance reports, proper signage and good bedside manners are all very important means of keeping a claim from becoming a lawsuit, but the most important way is to keep the claimant away from retaining an attorney in the first place. If you know or think that the incident occurred because of your negligence then report the claim immediately to your insurance provider and explain that you may be liable, so they can contact the claimant and make a reasonable settlement offer and obtain a legal release from the claimant so they can not retain an attorney afterwards. Once an attorney is involved, settlement demands increase exponentially, often 2 to 3 times the past and future medical expenses and wage loss (if any).

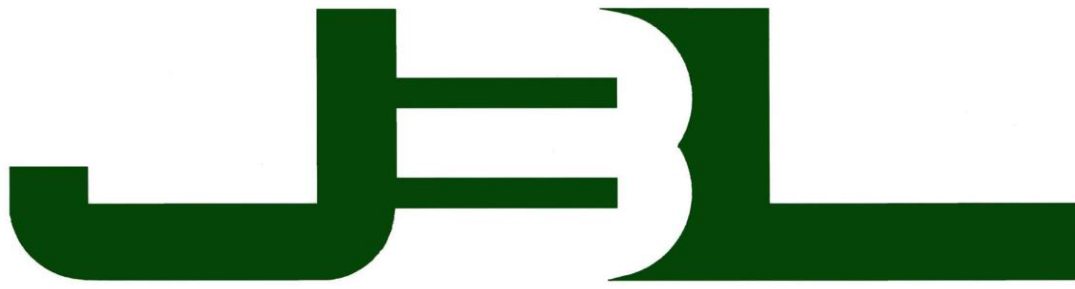
## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



### Anthony Profaci

Anthony Profaci is the President of JBL Trinity Insurance Group, the endorsed carrier of the Roller Skating Association International. To contact Anthony for a quote or questions about your insurance liability, email

AnthonyProfaci@jbltrinity.com or call 1-800-925-RINK.



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# Roller Skating

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## Former Rink Family Seeking Home for New Rink in Modesto, Calif.

Jeremy Matthew's in-laws owned Roller King in Modesto, Calif. for 31 years before finally closing up shop in 2005. A city that once boasted two separate roller rinks of the same name is now without a skating rink for kids to enjoy. Matthews and his family are working to find a location for a roller skating rink in an area where many were shuttered because the land ends up being worth more than the business itself. But Matthews has hopes to find a facility large enough to include a large snack bar and suit events for the Special Olympics. Families in the area say his aspirations are doable and the urgency to re-invigorate the area with roller skating is at the forefront. To read the complete article visit <http://tinyurl.com/nrjkd8r>



Photo by Joan Barnett Lee of Modbee.com



Photo by Terry Caccia

## Chicks in Bowls, International Extreme Skaters, Shred the Bowls in Skate Parks Around the World

It was only a matter of time before roller skating saw its own form of extreme roller skating. Chicks in Bowls is an international group of female skaters who frequent skate parks throughout the world - from California to New Zealand, to share their love of extreme bowl skating. Their growing notoriety has made them so popular that they've become the topic of documentaries, merchandise and public appearances. In fact, the all-female group had opened 84 chapters by 2014 from the United States to Russia and Japan. With this kind of popularity, founder, Samara Pepperell, aka Lady Trample, of New Zealand, anticipates competition level interactions around the globe. To read the complete story visit <http://tinyurl.com/pzhdc9b>.

## Get Movin' Crew Helps Schools and Rinks Host Skate-a-Thon

Get Movin' Crew is an expert at helping schools make their fun runs or "a-thon" fundraisers successful. Their Pledge Headquarters is a custom-built software database to keep fundraisers organized on the web - a great tool for skating centers and schools to use together!

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- Schools keep 95% of total funds raised online and 100% of all funds raised by check or cash!

Get Movin' Crew has sent out information to 21,000 schools with information on the Roller Skating Association and how schools can reach out to their local skating centers to host a skate-a-thon. A link to the RSA rink locator and detailed information is also included on their website 24/7. Download a detailed brochure to share with your local schools today on the RSA website under Members Only >> Programs >> Fundraisers.



## Kenya's Roller Skating Craze Fueled by Growing Middle Class and Love of Speed Skating

In 2010, Nairobi County began allowing skaters to use a lot on Sundays and during holidays - a much needed reprieve from the streets. With more than 100 schools featuring roller skating during gym, a speed skating tournament this June brought in more than 400 participants from around country. The reason for the increase? A growing middle class with more income for leisurely opportunities has caused a rise in sports such as roller skating and golf. Competitors in speed skating are known to make \$3000 a year on endorsements through sponsors ranging from restaurants to politicians. For more information on this article, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ooyftux>.



Photo by AP



Photo from @fasterskates (Instagram)

## Faster Skates Relocating to Detroit, Mich.

Faster Skates Founder, Sarah Hipel, is going back to her roots by moving the company back to her hometown of Detroit, Mich. In an interview with Fox 2 Detroit, Hipel says that the move will allow the company to "expand across multiple segments of roller skating" and is expected to help them move into other markets, such as skateboarding.

The company will change its name to Detroit Skate Company and utilize Detroit's workforce, already skilled in the manufacturing industry. A partnership with TechTown Detroit allowed the company to connect with necessary resources to make the big move. To a city already in love with roller skating, it's a full circle move. To read the full story, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ntwl6mk>.



SBT Photo / GREG SWIERCZ

## Former Bowling Center in Mishawaka, Ind. Converted to Roller Skating Center

Steve Phillips has always been an entrepreneur at heart. He spent most of his career in real estate, buying and selling property and vehicles. When asked why he decided to get into the roller skating industry, he stated that while he did roller skate as a child, owning a roller skating rink is something he thought about doing for years and he finally found the opportunity to do it. He purchased the former "Regal Lanes" bowling center, built in 1958, and completely remodeled it. "It took a little over a year. I'd come in for a month and all in all, it took about six months of consistent work. We have a total of nearly 26,000 sq. ft. with a 16,000 sq. ft. beautiful new maple hardwood floor."

In addition, it includes a brand new arcade, as well as an upcoming snack bar complete with homemade pizza. "Made from scratch is the way to go. Fresh is always better," says Phillips. The rink officially opened right before Halloween after receiving their occupancy permit. They had a costume contest and the soft opening allowed the staff to get acclimated to the dynamics. Phillips is quick to add that one of his main reasons for opening the rink is for a charitable organization he works with in the Philippines. Funds from the rink will go to help feed as many children as possible. Congratulations to Phillips and the city of Mishawaka, Ind. on their new rink.

To learn more about the skating center, visit [www.michianarollerskatingrink.com](http://www.michianarollerskatingrink.com).

## Roller Skating Center in North Philly Up for Sale

Roger Lloyd once said, as a 12-year-old, that he was going to own the roller skating rink he frequented. Forty years ago he put everything he had on the line and purchased that rink. At age 70, Lloyd owned the rink that opened in 1932 at the height of the Great Depression. It served as a second home to him, allowing him to perfect his roller skating skills and later becoming an employee. Once he returned from Vietnam, Lloyd returned to the rink as the business manager and later signed a lease-to-own purchase agreement and later, after meeting a bank vice-president, secured a loan for \$50,000 and paid it off in just five years. In the height of the '80s, the rink pushed the maximum capacity of 1080 visitors. His hope is to keep the building as a skating rink. After all of the hard work and energy he has put into his business, he hopes to see a "young man get a chance like I got by stepping up and trying this." To learn more about Carman Gardens in this story by the Philly Voice, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ojma4gq>.



Brian Hickey/PhillyVoice



# 2015 RSA Affiliate Member Listings

The companies listed below are "RSM" members of the Roller Skating Association International who provide goods and services to the roller skating industry. Company information is updated in each issue of RSB for your reference. If your firm services the roller skating industry and you would like information about becoming a member, or you are a current member needing to update your information, call the association headquarters at 317-347-2626 Ext. 108. If you would like an additional listing under another RSM category, there is a charge of \$125 per additional category. Information below is as provided on 2015 RSM renewals. Changes and category updates must be made with Stacy Thomas at [membership@rollerskating.com](mailto:membership@rollerskating.com).

## COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

### Occasion

Contact: Eric Di Silvestro  
Address:  
321 N. Clark  
Chicago, IL 60654  
Phone: 312-620-7275  
Email: [eric@occsn.com](mailto:eric@occsn.com)  
Website: [www.getoccasion.com](http://www.getoccasion.com)

### Party Center Software

Contact: Scott Drummond  
Address:  
1010 Camerado Drive, #206  
Cameron Park, CA 95682  
Phone: 888-804-1166  
Email: [sales@partycentersoftware.com](mailto:sales@partycentersoftware.com)  
Website: [www.partycentersoftware.com](http://www.partycentersoftware.com)

### Partywinks.com

Contact: Larry McLean  
Address:  
9450 SW Gemini Dr Suite 30375  
Beaverton, OR, 97008  
Phone: 877-345-4012  
Email: [larry@partywinks.com](mailto:larry@partywinks.com)  
Website: [www.partywinks.com](http://www.partywinks.com)

### Pathfinder Software/ Centeredge Software

Contact: Johnny Loffin  
Address:  
5050 Durham Rd  
Roxboro, NC 27574  
Phone: 336-598-5934  
Fax: 336-598-7562  
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### TrustWorkz, Inc.

Contact: Kevin Ekmark  
Address:  
PO Box 379, 1025 Rose Creek Dr. Ste. 620  
Woodstock, GA 30189  
Phone: 404-692-4133  
Fax: 888-624-8767  
Email: [kevin@trustworkz.com](mailto:kevin@trustworkz.com)  
Website: [www.TrustWorkz.com](http://www.TrustWorkz.com)

## CONSULTING AND RINK PLANNING

### Leisure Services Associates Inc.

Contact: Edward Wankel  
Address:  
PO Box 1275  
Cutchogue, NY 11935  
Phone: 631-445-8798  
Fax: 912-439-3280  
Email: [lsagolf@optonline.net](mailto:lsagolf@optonline.net)

### RC Sports Inc.

Contact: Ronald Creten  
Address:  
9910 Lakeview Ave  
Lenexa, KS 66219  
Phone: 913-894-5177  
Fax: 913-894-5179  
Email: [lehrke@rcsports.com](mailto:lehrke@rcsports.com)  
Website: [www.rcsports.com](http://www.rcsports.com)

## COSTUMES

### Mask US Inc

Contact: David Bragg  
Address:  
3121 Main St., Suite F  
Chula Vista, CA 91911  
Phone: 619-476-9041  
Fax: 619-476-7346  
Email: [info@maskus.com](mailto:info@maskus.com)  
Website: [www.maskus.com](http://www.maskus.com)

## FINANCING/FINANCIAL PLANNING

### CFG Wealth Management Services

Contact: Michael Puckett  
Address:  
9840 Westpoint Drive, Suite 150  
Indianapolis, IN 46256  
Phone: 239-784-6861  
Fax: 317-579-2440  
Email: [mpuckett@cfgwms.com](mailto:mpuckett@cfgwms.com)  
Website: [www.cfgwms.com](http://www.cfgwms.com)

### Live Oak Bank

Contact: Ben Jones  
Address:  
1741 Tiburon Dr.  
Wilmington, NC 28403  
Phone: 303-325-4131  
Email: [sarah.carroll@liveoakbank.com](mailto:sarah.carroll@liveoakbank.com)  
Website: [www.liveoakbank.com](http://www.liveoakbank.com)

## Mercury Payment Systems

Contact: Carrie Doyle  
Address:  
4610 S. Ulster St., Suite 600  
Denver, CO 80237  
Phone: (970) 335-4831  
Fax: (970) 335-4778  
Email: [cdoyle@mercurypay.com](mailto:cdoyle@mercurypay.com)  
Website: [www.mercurypay.com](http://www.mercurypay.com)

## FLOOR, MATERIALS AND INSTALLATIONS

### Astro Carpet Mills

Contact: Edward Hurney  
Address:  
PO Box 1483  
Chatsworth, GA 30705  
Phone: 800-542-4189  
Fax: 706-259-9684  
Email: [ed@astrocarpetmills.com](mailto:ed@astrocarpetmills.com)  
Website: [www.astrocarpetmills.com](http://www.astrocarpetmills.com)

### Flagship Carpets

Contact: Jane Farrell  
Address:  
734 S. Riner St.  
Calhoun, GA 30701  
Phone: 800-848-4055  
Fax: 706-276-0823  
Email: [jfarrell@flagshipcarpets.com](mailto:jfarrell@flagshipcarpets.com)  
Website: [www.neoncarpets.com](http://www.neoncarpets.com)

### Floor Systems Inc

Contact: Kim Wall  
Address:  
4517 Industrial Rd.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46825  
Phone: 260-484-7746  
Fax: 260-484-7799  
Email: [kim@floorsystemsinc.com](mailto:kim@floorsystemsinc.com)  
Website: [www.floorsystemsinc.com](http://www.floorsystemsinc.com)

### Omega Pattern Works

Contact: Marsha Long  
Address:  
716 S. River Street  
Calhoun, GA 30703  
Phone: 800-241-4908  
Fax: 866-375-8633  
Email: [marsha@marquisind.com](mailto:marsha@marquisind.com)  
Website: [www.omegapatternworks.com](http://www.omegapatternworks.com)

## Rink-Cote/ Port City Paints

Contact: Roy Spencer  
Address:  
1250 9th Ave  
Muskegon, MI 49440  
Phone: 231-726-5911  
Fax: 231-722-4081  
Email: [muskegon@repcolite.com](mailto:muskegon@repcolite.com)  
Website: [www.repcolite.com](http://www.repcolite.com)

## Roll-On Floor Products

Contact: Joseph Nazzaro Jr.  
Address:  
233 W. Pipeline Rd.  
Hurst, TX 76053  
Phone: 800-243-3900  
Fax: 817-354-6393  
Email: [joenazzaro@aol.com](mailto:joenazzaro@aol.com)  
Website: [www.roll-on.com](http://www.roll-on.com)

## Skate/ Ice Court

Contact: Nicholas Johannes  
Address:  
1264 Waterfront Dr  
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464  
Phone: 843-884-0603  
Email: [jmatejec1@yahoo.com](mailto:jmatejec1@yahoo.com)

## Southeastern Skate Supply #2

Contact: David Ramsey  
Address:  
462 Bankhead Highway  
Mableton, GA 30126  
Phone: 800-241-8060  
Fax: 770-944-8589  
Email: [david@seskate2.com](mailto:david@seskate2.com)  
Website: [www.seskate.com](http://www.seskate.com)

## Title Coat International

Contact: Vicki Gray  
Address:  
5421 Dorsey Evergreen Rd.  
Fulton, MS 38843  
Phone: 800-442-8483  
Fax: 662-862-6100  
Email: [owner@titecoat.com](mailto:owner@titecoat.com)  
Website: [www.titecoat.com](http://www.titecoat.com)

## INSURANCE

### American Insurance Administrators

Contact: Darrell Diodato, Noreen  
McKenrick, Andrew Diodato  
Address:  
4550 Lena Drive  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055  
Phone: 717-591-8280  
Fax: 717-591-8193  
Email: [ddiodato@aiaaworld.com](mailto:ddiodato@aiaaworld.com)  
Website: [www.aiaaworld.com](http://www.aiaaworld.com)

**Hanasab Insurance Services Inc.**

Contact: Robert Ferrer  
Address:  
625 South Fairfax Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90036  
Phone: 909-581-6271  
Fax: 909-581-6276  
Email: robert@hanasabinsurance.com  
Website: www.hispcs.com

**Heartland Agency Inc**

Contact: Becky Thurman  
Address:  
6808 N. Barr  
Oklahoma City, OK 73132  
Phone: 405-789-2733  
Email: bltheartland@coxinet.net  
Website: www.heartlandagencyinc.com

**JBL Trinity Group Ltd**

Contact: Anthony Profaci  
Address:  
50 First Avenue  
Atlantic Highlands, NJ 7716  
Phone: 800-925-7465  
Email: anthonyprofaci@jbltrinity.com  
Website: www.skatinginsurance.com

**K.L. Owens & Associates LLC**

Contact: Karen Owens  
Address:  
309 Bouldercrest Way  
Woodstock, GA 30188  
Phone: 770-855-4723  
Fax: 866-845-5081  
Email: karen@klowensassociates.com  
Website: www.klowensassociates.com

**Meadowbrook Insurance Group**

Contact: Nancy Clay  
Address:  
11880 College Blvd, Ste 500  
Overland Park, KS 66210  
Phone: 913-266-5325  
Fax: 877-892-4574  
Email: nclay@meadowbrook.com  
Website: www.wcpolicy.com/rsa

**McGowan Insurance**

Contact: Rick D'Aprile 20595 Lorain Rd.  
Fairview Park, OH 44126  
Phone: 440-333-6300 x5309  
Fax: 440-333-3214  
Email: rdaprile@mcgowaninsurance.com  
Website: www.mcgowaninsurance.com

**LEGAL SERVICES****Anselmi & Mierzejewski PC**

Contact: Kurt Anselmi  
Address:  
1750 South Telegraph Rd, Suite 306  
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302  
Phone: (248) 338-2290  
Fax: 248-338-4451  
Email: kanselmi@a-mlaw.com  
Website: www.a-mlaw.com

**MUSIC****BMI**

Contact: Josh Lagersen  
Address:  
10 Music Square East  
Nashville, TN 37203  
Phone: 615-401-2000  
Fax: 615-401-2812  
Email: jlagersen@bmi.com  
Website: www.bmi.com

**FEC Music**

Contact: Jim Juniper  
Address:  
787 Adelaide St North, Suite 2  
London, ON N5Y 2L8  
Phone: 866-684-8324  
Email: sales@fecmusic.com  
Website: www.fecmusic.com

**SESAC Inc**

Contact: Bill Lee  
Address:  
421 West 54th Street  
New York, NY 10019  
Phone: 615-320-0055  
Fax: 615-321-6292  
Email: blee@sesac.com  
Website: www.sesac.com

**NOVELTY ITEMS/REDEMPTION PRODUCTS****A & A Global Industries**

Contact: Erin Roach  
Address:  
17 Stenerson Lane  
Cockeysville, MD 21030  
Phone: 800-638-6000  
Fax: 800-800-1110  
Email: eroach@aaglobal.com  
Website: www.aaglobal.com

**Allstar Vending**

Contact: Myrna Dorfman  
Address:  
150 Voyageur Ave.  
Pointe Claire, QC H9R 6A8  
Phone: 514-708-2508  
Email: myrna@allstarvending.com  
Website: www.allstarvending.com

**Coast To Coast Entertainment**

Contact: Gary Balaban  
Address:  
1000 Towbin Ave  
Lakewood, NJ 8701  
Phone: 732-238-0096  
Fax: 732-238-4404  
Email: gary@coastentertainment.com  
Website: www.cranemachines.com

**Fun Express**

Contact: Lae Phonephakdy  
Address:  
4206 S 108th St  
Omaha, NE 68137  
Phone: (800) 875-8494  
Fax: 800-228-1002  
Email: laep@funexpress.com  
Website: www.funexpress.com

**Funtastic Novelties**

Contact: Kris Wall Friesner  
Address:  
4515 Industrial Rd  
Fort Wayne, IN 46825  
Phone: 800-348-0888  
Fax: 260-482-1568  
Email: kris@funtasticnovelties.com  
Website: www.funnov.com

**Gloworks**

Contact: Joe Iacona  
Address:  
126 N. Groesbeck Hwy  
Mt. Clemens, MI 48043  
Phone: 800-809-4569  
Fax: 586-840-4996  
Email: joe@gloworks.com  
Website: www.gloworks.com

**Rhode Island Novelty**

Contact: Dan Highcove  
Address:  
350 Commerce Dr.  
Fall River, MA 2720  
Phone: 774-365-6120  
Fax: 508-675-9406  
Email: dhighcove@rinovelty.com  
Website: www.rinovelty.com

**The Stuff Shop**

Contact: Mike Hill  
Address:  
111 Triple Diamond Blvd  
North Venice, FL 34275  
Phone: 800-860-8474  
Fax: 941-480-1899  
Email: mike@stuffshop.com  
Website: www.stuffshop.com

**Theisen Vending Co**

Contact: Anita Bennett  
Address:  
2335 Nevada Ave North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
Phone: 612-827-5588  
Fax: 612-827-7543  
Email: judi@theisenvending.com  
Website: www.theisenvending.com

**Virginia Toy and Novelty Company**

Contact: Shizuka Benton  
Address:  
2503 Squadron Ct.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23453  
Phone: 757-313-7000  
Fax: 757-313-7007  
Email: tom@virginiatoy.com  
Website: www.virginiatoy.com

**Sureshot Redemption**

Contact: Sondra Doyle  
Address:  
568 Meadow Sweet Circle, Attention:  
Sondra Doyle  
Osprey, FL 34229  
Phone: 941-445-5073  
Fax: 909-923-7909  
Email: SondraD@folandgroup.com  
Website: www.sureshot-redemption.com

**PARTY SUPPLIES****Northwest Enterprises**

Contact: Gordon Vong  
Address:  
900 Lunt Ave.  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007  
Phone: 847-806-0034  
Fax: 847-806-0577  
Email: gordonv@nwparty.com  
Website: www.nwparty.com

**Rebecca's**

Contact: Joseph Nazzaro Jr.  
Address:  
233 W. Pipeline Rd.  
Hurst, TX 76053  
Phone: 800-777-2235  
Fax: 817-354-6393  
Email: joseph@rebeccas.com  
Website: www.rebeccas.com

**Sureshot Redemption**

Contact: Sondra Doyle  
Address:  
568 Meadow Sweet Circle, Attention:  
Sondra Doyle  
Osprey, FL 34229  
Phone: 941-445-5073  
Fax: 909-923-7909  
Email: SondraD@folandgroup.com  
Website: www.sureshot-redemption.com

**Southeastern Skate Supply #2**

Contact: David Ramsey  
Address:  
462 Bankhead Highway  
Mableton, GA 30126  
Phone: 800-241-8060  
Fax: 770-944-8589  
Email: david@seskate2.com  
Website: www.seskate.com

**PLAY EQUIPMENT AND LASER TAG****Amazing Play Design**

Contact: Darrell Weaver  
Address:  
8775 SW Timberlake Dr.  
Lathrop, MO 64465  
Phone: 816-935-3635  
Email: amazingplayllc@yahoo.com  
Website: www.amazingplaydesign.com

**Amusement Products, LLC**

Contact: Dutch Magrath  
Address:  
5954 Brainerd Rd.  
Chattanooga, TN 37421  
Phone: 423-892-7264  
Fax: 423-855-0432  
Website: www.amusementproducts.com



### ARC Laser Tag Arenas

Contact: Lathan Gareiss  
Address:  
5450 Lee Street  
Lehigh Acres, FL 33971  
Phone: 888-514-0283  
Email: lathan@arclta.com  
Website: www.arclta.com

### Creative Works Inc.

Contact: Kimberly Schilling  
Address:  
350 Bridge St.  
Mooresville, IN 46158  
Phone: 317-834-4770  
Email: kimberly@thewoweffect.com  
Website: www.thewoweffect.com

### Indoor Playgrounds International

Contact: Julie Caricato  
Address:  
885 Sunny Ridge Dr.  
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406  
Phone: 866-856-9778  
Fax: 866-856-9778  
Email: juliec@indoorplaygroundsintl.com  
Website: www.indoorplaygroundsintl.com

### International Play Company Inc.

Contact: Kathleen Kuryliw  
Address:  
215-27353-58th Crescent  
Langley, BC V4W 3W7  
Phone: 604-607-1111  
Fax: 604-607-1107  
Email: sales@iplayco.com  
Website: www.iplayco.com

### Laser Blast

Contact: Carla Ewald  
Address:  
6118 Gotfredson Rd.  
Plymouth, MI 48170  
Phone: 734-259-5300  
Fax: 734-418-2017  
Email: mike@laser-blast.com  
Website: www.laser-blast.com

### PlaySmart

Contact: Gary Boots  
Address:  
107 North Missouri  
Sedalia, MO 65301  
Phone: 217-221-4031  
Fax: 660-829-0526  
Email: gboots@playsmart.com  
Website: www.playsmart.com

### Ride Development Company

Contact: Tamara Dean  
Address:  
PO Box 40  
Independence, OR 97351  
Phone: 503-606-4438  
Fax: 503-606-4436  
Email: RDCcars@aol.com  
Website: www.bumpercar.com

### Zone Laser Tag, Inc.

Contact: Erik Guthrie  
Address:  
419 Webbs Lane  
Dover, DE 19904  
Phone: 866-966-3797  
Fax: 317-783-3711  
Email: erik@lasertag.com  
Website: www.lasertag.com

### ROLLER SKATE MANUFACTURERS

#### Bont Skates

Contact: Debbie Rice  
Address:  
4178 70th St Cir E  
Palmetto, FL 34221  
Phone: 225-603-6588  
Email: debbie@bont.com  
Website: www.bont.com

#### Chicago Skates/National Sporting Goods

Contact: Joel Aranson  
Address:  
376 Hollywood Ave.  
Fairfield, NJ 7004  
Phone: 800-242-7476  
Fax: 973-276-8419  
Email: skater@chicagoskates.com  
Website: www.chicagoskates.com

#### Crazy Skate Company

Contact: Trent Carter  
Address:  
7345 Mission Gorge Rd., Suite K  
San Diego, CA 92120  
Phone: 619-241-2141  
Fax: 619-241-2151  
Email: trent@crazyskateco.com  
Website: www.crazyskateco.com

#### Golden Horse Rentals/LW Skates

Contact: Walt Hedrick  
Address:  
4004 Cedar Creek Ct  
Arlington, TX 76016  
Phone: 817-781-1898  
Email: walt skate@yahoo.com  
Website: www.usedrentalskates.com

#### KL New Generation Sport Products Inc.

Contact: Mandy Liang  
Address:  
2173 W 7th St.  
Brooklyn, NY 11223  
Phone: 917-703-8817  
Fax: 347-708-9618  
Email: info@klskates.com  
Website: www.klskates.com

#### Nistevio Sport- Luigino & Atom Wheels

Contact: Doug Glass  
Address:  
3306 E. Washington Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
Phone: 602-275-3271  
Fax: 602-275-5895

Email: Info@nistevousa.com  
Website: www.nistevousa.com

#### Reverse Sports Inc

Contact: Joey Barbera  
Address:  
18531 Wessex St.  
San Diego, CA 92128  
Phone: 310-350-9701  
Email: joey@reversesports.com  
Website: www.reversesports.com

#### Riedell Skates Inc

Contact: Bob Riegelman  
Address:  
122 Cannon River Ave N  
Red Wing, MN 55066  
Phone: 651-388-8251  
Fax: 651-385-5500  
Email: margie@riedellskates.com  
Website: www.riedellskates.com

#### Roller Derby Skate Corp

Contact: Will Marion  
Address:  
311 West Edwards Street  
Litchfield, IL 62056  
Phone: 217-324-3961  
Fax: 217-324-2213  
Email: wmarion@rollerderbyskates.com  
Website: www.rollerderby.com

#### Skates US, Inc.

Contact: David Ripp  
Address:  
415 West Eaton Pike  
Richmond, IN 47374  
Phone: 765-935-7477  
Fax: 765-935-7033  
Email: david.ripp@skatesUS.com  
Website: www.SkatesUS.com

#### Sure Grip International

Contact: Jim Ball  
Address:  
5519 Rawlings  
Southgate, CA 90280  
Phone: 800-344-3331  
Fax: 562-923-6965  
Email: skates@suregrip.com  
Website: www.suregrip.com

#### Southeastern Skate Supply #2

Contact: David Ramsey  
Address:  
462 Bankhead Highway  
Mableton, GA 30126  
Phone: 800-241-8060  
Fax: 770-944-8589  
Email: david@seskate2.com  
Website: www.seskate.com

#### Betson Enterprises

Contact: Brian Murphy  
Address:  
303 Paterson Plank Rd  
Carlstadt, NJ 7072  
Phone: 201-438-1300  
Fax: 201-438-7246  
Email: ajijon@betson.com  
Website: www.betson.com

### RC Sports Inc.

Contact: Ronald Creten  
Address:  
9910 Lakeview Ave  
Lenexa, KS 66219  
Phone: 913-894-5177  
Fax: 913-894-5179  
Email: lehrke@rcsports.com  
Website: www.rcsports.com

#### Southeastern Skate Supply Inc

Contact: Glenn Ramsey Jr  
Address:  
2917 Nicholas Ave  
Roanoke, VA 24012  
Phone: 800-444-7528  
Fax: 540-342-7873  
Email: info@seskate.com  
Website: www.seskate.com/sites

#### Southeastern Skate Supply #2

Contact: David Ramsey  
Address:  
462 Bankhead Highway  
Mableton, GA 30126  
Phone: 800-241-8060  
Fax: 770-944-8589  
Email: david@seskate2.com  
Website: www.seskate.com

### ROLLER SPORTS

#### Derby Lite, LLC

Contact: Barbara Dolan  
Address:  
37 South Blvd.  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
Phone: 888-989-DLHQ  
Fax: 708-851-0445  
Email: queenb@derbylite.org  
Website: www.derbylite.org

#### USA Roller Sports

Contact: Richard Hawkins  
Address:  
4730 South Street  
Lincoln, NE 68506  
Phone: 402-483-7551  
Fax: 402-483-1465  
Email: rhawkins@usarollersports.org  
Website: www.usarollersports.org

#### Duracart USA LLC

Contact: Michael DiPietro  
Address:  
150 W. Berks Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19122  
Phone: (717) 633-0011  
Fax: (717) 633-0012  
Email: michael@pennscale.com  
Website: www.duracart.com

#### Expert Hosiery, LLC

Contact: Abid Sheikh  
Address:  
45 Industrial Park Rd  
Siler City, NC 27344  
Phone: 919-799-7707  
Fax: 919-799-7717  
Email: info@experthosiery.com  
Website: www.funtimefootwear.com

## SNACK BAR EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

### Gold Medal Products Company

Contact: John Evans  
Address:  
10700 Medallion Drive  
Cincinnati, OH 45241-4807  
Phone: 800-543-0862  
Fax: 800-542-1496  
Email: info@gmpopcorn.com  
Website: www.gmpopcorn.com

### Pepsi-Cola Company

Contact: Patrick Hunt  
Address:  
Attn: Paula Garcia, 7701 Legacy Drive  
Plano, TX 75024  
Phone: 972-312-0059  
Fax: 502-479-1630  
Email: patrick.hunt@pepsico.com  
Website: www.pepsiworld.com

### Quik n' Crispy

Contact: Paul Artt  
Address:  
12021 Plano Rd., Suite 160  
Dallas, TX 75243  
Phone: 972-669-8993  
Fax: 972-669-8990  
Email: paul@q-n-c.com  
Website: www.q-n-c.com

### State Fair Mini Donuts

Contact: Dan Sher  
Address:  
1515 Archwood Rd  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
Phone: 763-438-2867  
Fax: 952-544-6261  
Email: dsher@statefairminidonuts.com  
Website: www.statefairminidonuts.com

### Action Lighting

Contact: Al Kottwitz  
Address:  
310 Ice Pond Rd.  
Bozeman, MT, 59715  
Phone: 800-248-0076  
Fax: 406-585-3078  
Email: allan@actionlighting.com  
Website: www.actionlighting.com

### Audio Life

Contact: Terry Maxfield  
Address:  
701 Graham St.  
Emporia, KS 66801  
Phone: 800-255-1015  
Fax: 620-342-3338  
Email: terry@audiolife.com  
Website: www.audiolife.com

### Froggy's Fog

Contact: Christopher Markgraf  
Address:  
302 Rutherford Ln  
Columbia, TN 38401

Phone: 615-469-4906  
Email: sales@froggysfog.com  
Website: www.froggysfog.com

## SPECIAL PRODUCTS & SERVICES

### Airbrushfire.com

Contact: Joseph Barrilleaux  
Address:  
312 Fairway Blvd  
Panama City Beach, FL 32407  
Phone: 228-282-4890  
Fax: 228-282-4890  
Email: jody@airbrushfire.com  
Website: www.airbrushfire.com

### Consumer Energy Solutions

Contact: Patrick Clouden  
Address:  
1255 Cleveland St., Suite 400  
Clearwater, FL 33755  
Phone: 866-683-9723  
Email: pclouden@cessstaff.com  
Website: www.consumerenergysolutions.com

### Global Roofing Company

Contact: JoB LeRay  
Address:  
2117 Goliad Circle  
Frisco, TX 75033  
Phone: 800-257-3758  
Fax: 888-614-9559

Email: info@globalroofingcompany.com  
Website: www.globalroofingcompany.com

### Helix Leisure

Contact: Ted Parsons  
Address:  
2015 McKenzie Dr, Suite 106  
Carrollton, TX 75006  
Phone: 469-521-8000  
Fax: 214-260-0976  
Email: tedp@embedcard.com  
Website: www.helixleisure.com

### Rinksider

Contact: Linda Katz  
Address:  
2257 E. Broad St.  
Columbus, OH 43209  
Phone: 614-252-3552  
Fax: 614-235-3584  
Email: rinksider@gmail.com  
Website: www.rinksider.com

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Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309  
Phone: 954-917-3009  
Fax: 954-917-3079  
Email: wayne@americanchanger.com  
Website: www.americanchanger.com/

### Bay Tek Games, Inc.

Contact: Jenna Woepse  
Address:  
1077 E. Glenbrook Drive  
Pulaski, WI 54162  
Phone: 920-822-3951  
Email: jwoepse@baytekgames.com  
Website: www.baytekgames.com

### Benchmark Games

Contact: Richard Long  
Address:  
51 Hypoluxo Rd  
Hypoluxo, FL 33462  
Phone: 561-588-5200  
Fax: 561-493-2999

Email: rlong@benchmarkgames.com  
Website: www.benchmarkgames.com

### Gold Standard Games

Contact: Mark Robbins  
Address:  
333 Morton St  
Bay City, MI 48706  
Phone: 989-893-1739  
Fax: 989-893-1809  
Email: info@gold-standard-games.com  
Website: www.gold-standard-games.com

### Shaffer Distributing Co.

Contact: Paul Jones  
Address:  
1100 W. 3rd Ave  
Columbus, OH 43212  
Phone: 614-294-1040  
Email: pjones@shafferdistributing.com  
Website: www.shafferdistributing.com

### Theisen Vending Co

Contact: Anita Bennett  
Address:  
2335 Nevada Ave North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
Phone: 612-827-5588  
Fax: 612-827-7543

Email: judi@theisenvending.com  
Website: www.theisenvending.com

## WHEEL AND BEARING MANUFACTURERS

### Skate One Corp DBA Roll One Distribution

Contact: Isaac Oltmans  
Address:  
30 South La Patera Lane  
Santa Barbara, CA 93117  
Phone: 805-683-4779  
Fax: 805-964-0511  
Email: isaac@rollonedist.com  
Website: www.rollonedist.com

## WRIST BANDS, TICKETS AND TOKENS

### Hoffman Mint

Contact: Wayne Snihur  
Address:  
1400 NW 65th Place  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309  
Phone: 954-917-3009  
Email: wayne@hoffmanmint.com

Website: www.hoffmanmint.com

### MedTech Wristbands USA

Contact: Jennifer Purdy  
Address:  
7380 Sand Lake Rd., Suite 500  
Orlando, FL 32819  
Phone: 800-361-1259  
Fax: 519-686-9369  
Email: rachelme@medtechgroup.com  
Website: www.medtechgroup.com

### National Ticket Company

Contact: Patrick Carter  
Address:  
PO Box 547  
Shamokin, PA 17872  
Phone: 800-829-0829  
Fax: 800-829-0888  
Email: pcarter@nationalticket.com  
Website: www.nationalticket.com

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