

Greg Langston, Phil Kinzer, Gordon Chapin and Roy Rinker of BowlingDistributor.com • Dallas, Texas

Any bowling center mechanic knows the difficulty of finding, ordering and waiting for parts. The team behind BowlingDistributor.com helped eliminate that problem in 2007 with the launch of BowlingDistributor.com, an interactive, online parts supply site led by Greg Langston, Phil Kinzer, Gordon Chapin and Roy Rinker. BowlingDistributor.com has quickly made an impact on the bowling industry by helping proprietors, managers, mechanics and others find and order parts (new or used) and products quicker. The result is bowling center machinery back in action generating revenue quicker.

"I remember talking to proprietors and mechanics for years who had many problems getting parts," remembers Langston. "One guy would tell me, 'I wish I could see the part or a detailed picture.' So that was a big part of our company, creating an easier way to break down these ancient machines on the screen."

Kinzer, who owned and operated Jupiter Lanes in Dallas for many years, is the most outspoken leader of the BowlingDistributor.com group. He is also the inventor of bumper bowling. "Although we talked about the BowlingDistributor.com idea several years ago, it was dropped," says Kinzer. "We picked it up again when we saw a three-dimensional drawing of a pinsetter that showed all the parts and could be rotated. I could definitely see the need for a program like this. It's the same principle as ordering parts from your car dealer.

"People have been waiting for this type of business," says Kinzer. "They like the idea of one-stop shopping and no back orders. Additionally, our program supports their local distributors."

BowlingDistributor works with a network of distributors nationwide, receiving a percentage of all sales. When parts and products are ordered, BowlingDistributor.com checks with the customer's local distributor to see what part of the order it can fill. Then it sends out a "needs list" to its network of distributors. Those who have the parts or products available respond with the price. If all the prices are the same, BowlingDistributor.com asks if anyone is willing to sell it at a lower price.

"This is a win-win situation," stresses Kinzer. "It's good for proprietors and distributors. We take a lot of hassle out of the process for proprietors and distributors are able to move their products quicker."

BowlingDistributor.com makes it possible to search for parts and products by category such as

pinsetter parts, tools and supplies or lane machine replacement parts. Customers also can search by manufacturer or manufacturer's part number. Pro shop supplies as well as bowling center products are available.

"The industry's biggest problem is with part numbers," says Gordon Chapin, the company's General Manager. "Manufacturers are always changing the numbers and it makes things difficult. Our image-mapping idea came from that. They can look at the machine, click on the part and order it."

By creating and logging in to a simple account, customers have the ability to view exclusive technology, interactive machine layouts, installation manuals, various installation instructions and a part finder.

Proprietors receive an email confirmation once an order has been placed. They also can receive a notice when their budget for specific parts has been reached. Kinzer says his company can create a budget profile geared toward specific areas. A red screen will indicate when the budget has been met.

Although Kinzer wasn't able to quantify how many parts and products BowlingDistributor.com sold this past year, he says the company is experiencing "overwhelming success."

"I was surprised about how strong of a response we received from distributors," he says. "At first, many people were skeptic. They thought we were trying to put other distributors out of business. We had to convince other companies and manufacturers that we aren't in competition with them. We don't plan to warehouse parts; we're not in the warehouse business."

Kinzer says talking to people one-on-one at seminars and Bowl Expo was the most effective method for increasing BowlingDistributors' network of distributors and customer base.

"We are growing rapidly because people can see the value of our service. Proprietors are benefiting and companies we are moving parts for are not getting hurt."

BowlingDistributor.com's future is bright, according to Kinzer. The company is moving toward more improvement parts, at least three of which will be introduced at Bowl Expo 2008.

"Our company has great potential," says Kinzer. "We are planning to expand our services to include other bowling center supplies such as fluorescent light bulbs and shoe spray. If a center has a need for it, we'll find a manufacturer or distributor."

BOWLING CENTER MANAGEMENT

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PROPRIETOR OF THE YEAR

**FLORIDA'S ANTHONY PERRONE
HAS CREATED A WHOLE NEW
IDENTITY FOR HIS CENTERS—
AND POTENTIALLY FOR BOWLING.**

