

# STOP THE SCROLL, **PACK THE HOUSE**

Where To Post, What to Post, and Pro Tips to Grow Your Crowd

By Brandon Willey

Ongoing guest engagement is crucial for a thriving bowling entertainment center (BEC), and social media is a key way to stay connected with past and potential guests.

I recently sat down with Chuck DeMonte of Raydius.co to discuss how Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok can be used, not just as megaphones for promos but as extensions of the guest experience. As he states, “This is where people spend their time, period. These are the online platforms where your lanes, food, music, leagues, and parties live on long after the lights are shut off.”



Chuck DeMonte

DeMonte adds that “this is also how people discover new local places to go and what is happening in their town. It’s your chance to give people a glimpse behind what you have to offer and how much fun they can have there.” The aim is not merely promotion; it is community building in an online environment that feels as welcoming, energetic, and inclusive as your center itself.

## POST SMARTER, ENGAGE FASTER

### Instagram: Show, Don’t Sell

- Post polished, eye-catching photos and reels.
- Highlight atmosphere, staff, and guest moments.
- Avoid bland promo graphics — focus on people and stories.

### Facebook: Build the Town Square

- Great for adults, parents, and group planners.
- Use Events for recurring and special nights.
- Run Event Response ads to boost attendance.

### TikTok: Capture the Energy

- Lean into trends, humor, and authentic clips.
- Empower younger staff to create monthly content.
- Keep it playful, fast, and personality-driven.

### Keys to Success

- Consistency matters more than occasional bursts.
- Storytelling beats sales pitches every time.
- User-generated content = free reach with built-in trust.
- Respond quickly—guests view social media as a form of customer service.

## UNDERSTANDING THE PLATFORMS

**Instagram** is your visual showroom. It thrives on short, polished videos, aesthetic photography, and behind-the-scenes moments that convey your center's vibe and hospitality. DeMonte clarifies, "Millennials, Gen Z, and young families scroll for inspiration, not ads, so design your content with entertainment first, marketing second." Don't be afraid to get creative! Showcase your glowing lanes or game floor, your chef plating a limited-time slider, a league bowler chasing a 300, or a time-lapse of your team flipping a birthday party room.

DeMonte is blunt about what not to do: "The biggest mistake I see centers make is posting nothing but terribly designed promotional graphics. No one wants to see that, and the algorithm hates it. You might as well not even post." Replace bland marketing flyers with human stories: quick staff intros, "what to expect" Reels for special events, or guest shoutouts that feel personal.

DeMonte explains, "**Facebook** is like your neighborhood town square. Adults 35 and up, parents, and corporate planners use it to make decisions and coordinate groups, which makes it ideal for events and longer posts that explain packages or league formats." Create Facebook Events for everything that repeats (such as weekly karaoke or monthly family nights) and for everything special (like holiday tournaments or themed nights). Then amplify!

He advises, "Creating a Facebook event for your evergreen events and special one-off events is great, but to really increase attendance at these events, run Facebook Event Response ads. This is, hands down, one of the best ways to increase event attendance. But do not promote specials like Two for Tuesdays, rather think glow nights, and special holiday celebrations." In other words, boost experiences, not promos.

Lastly, **TikTok** is your energy channel. It rewards authenticity, trends, and humor, such as fast cuts of trick shots, lane-side dance challenges, and staff-taught tips. Younger audiences expect personality and playfulness. Don't overthink it! "If you have younger staff, work with them to create some monthly content for TikTok; they will love it," DeMonte says. "Just help them get organized with it. Pick one day a month when a few of your staff members will get together and record some content. Don't worry, they will know the trends and how to do it step by step." Give your team a theme list and a one-hour filming block, then let them run with it.

## HOOK THEM OR LOSE THEM

Consistency beats sporadic bursts of posts. A reliable cadence trains both the algorithm and your audience to expect you. DeMonte continues, "To stay consistent, we recommend getting organized. Have a specific day of the week you create and batch content. Then use a content scheduler to schedule it out for the rest of the month." Treat content like prep in the kitchen—batch it, label it, and put it on the line.

Once you have gotten organized and your posting rhythm down, focus on storytelling over selling:

- Instead of posting "\$5 off pizza," show the moment a family high-fives over a shared pie under vibrant lights.
- DeMonte suggests showcasing the guest through mini spotlights, such as "League Legend of the Week," "Birthday MVP," or "First-Time Bowler Friday."
- On TikTok and Reels, leverage trending audio and memes, but anchor them to your brand.
- Finally, weave in interactive formats like Instagram Stories polls on "bumpers on or off," Facebook "choose your own adventure" threads to plan Friday night, and TikTok comment prompts asking followers which spare gives them nightmares.

"User-generated content is free reach with built-in trust," DeMonte emphasizes. "Make it easy and rewarding for guests to share." Post signage at lanes and party rooms with a scannable QR code linking to your handles and a branded hashtag. Offer a "Feature of the Week" where one tagged photo or video earns a prize such as arcade credits, a dessert flight, or a lane upgrade. Repost your users' content with genuine gratitude in the caption and share a brief story about the group. The more guests see people like them featured, the more they imagine (and plan) their own visit!

## MAKE IT A CONVERSATION, NOT A COMMERCIAL

Great social is not a broadcast; it is a back-and-forth. Respond to comments, DMs, and mentions quickly and with personality. As DeMonte notes, "People view social media, especially Facebook, as a customer support platform for FAQs and other inquiries. If you are not responding to them, you are losing business." Create response templates for common questions (such as birthday packages, lane availability, and corporate buyouts) and empower a trained staffer on each shift to monitor and respond.

Beyond service, spark participation like hosting trick-shot challenges, league-versus-staff showdowns, or local school nights where each share equals a small donation. Spotlight your community partners (e.g., sports teams, charities, local restaurants) and share those stories frequently—community attention compounds when you celebrate others.

Social media should be an extension of your lanes: lively, welcoming, and easy to join. Done right, it turns announcements into anticipation, visitors into co-creators, and followers into regulars. DeMonte reiterates, "Be very active where people already spend their time. Show them what's happening in their town and offer a glimpse behind what you have to offer and how much fun they can have there." Keep it consistent. Keep it human. And watch your online community become tomorrow's full lanes. ●



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