

Bring on the Fun

by Susan Snyder-Davis

Ice arenas should be fun. The following are suggestions of ways to increase the fun image and fun experiences for ice skating facilities.

Ice arena gift baskets – Everyone enjoys receiving gift baskets, and they are very popular for gift giving. Why not put together an ice center gift basket to give to group sales prospects and media contacts and for contest give-aways? Your ice arena gift basket could contain candy, novelties, passes, coupons and logo merchandise from your facility.

Dress for the season – Half the fun of going to a themed restaurant is the staff's involvement in the theme. Create this kind of fun at your arena every new season by costuming the staff and decorating for the season. In the winter, create a ski party theme, and in the summer, create a beach party atmosphere. To add to the excitement, you could give away skis, ski trips, beach balls, beach trips, and more.

Contest excitement – Kids love the excitement of winnable contests. What better way to generate enthusiasm for a contest than to display the prizes in your arena? Prizes might include bicycles, scooters, tricycles, wading pools, inflatable pool toys, music CDs, CD players, telescopes, cameras, software, inflatable rafts and more.

Water fun carnival – Bring community attention to your arena by hosting a “water fun” carnival in your parking lot during an especially hot summer day. It will be a guaranteed hit; kids love playing in water. Your carnival can include a dunking tank, duck pond game, fish pond game, and a water balloon toss game with beach and water toys for prizes. Photograph your guests in cutouts of wacky mermaids, fish and scuba divers.

Decorate for fun – If you want people to think of your facility as a great place to go for a party, why not decorate your arena like you're having a party every day? Everyone loves a party atmosphere, especially kids.

Fantasy staff costumes – Encourage your staff to dress in fun, fantasy costumes to generate excitement for parties. What fun for your little party guests when their hostess greets them in a princess costume.

Digital dress-up photos – Invite your young customers to dress up in make believe costumes for digital photos you can e-mail to their parents. This provides you with customer e-mail addresses where you can send e-mail news, class schedules and event notices from your arena.

“How can we have more fun?” contest – Ask your customers to tell you how your arena can be more fun. Select the best suggestions and give the winners prizes for their ideas.

Host an “Ice Is Nice” or “Celebrate Ice” party – Serve snow cones, ice cream and Popsicles. Have an ice sculpture display and an ice skating exhibition for a variety of ages.

These are just a few ideas to generate a little extra fun at your ice skating center. Try these, or create your own ideas, but don't forget, ice arenas are in the business of generating fun.

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