

Super service rewarded at Arcade City



Service with more than a smile is routine at Arcade City in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. It is part of a master plan to elevate the guest experience in a world of high expectations on a crowded map of entertainment options.

Arcade City is one of three family entertainment centers (FECs) operated in Pigeon Forge by industry veteran Clarence Mabe of S&M Amusements in Gray, Tenn. The others are Big Top and Rockin' Raceway. Arcade City is part of a major complex called The Island.

Clarence told *Play Meter*, "Today, it's the guest experience. The days are over when you just put games in a building."

Part of Arcade City's program includes greeting guests at the front door. Personal service carries throughout a visitor's stay.

Recently, a family of seven spent two days at Arcade City enjoying the attractions. When they left, the father asked how many employees worked in the facility. He returned to give each of the 20 employees an American Express gift card for \$100. The family also posted a positive review on TripAdvisor.

"A lot of people use TripAdvisor to check the ratings on restaurants and attractions," said Clarence. "In Pigeon Forge alone there are 100 amusement locations."

Clarence and his sons, Bucky and Rusty, have formed the FACE Amusement Group, taken customer service to a new level, and created a brand.

FACE stands for Faith, Attitude, Consistency, and Excellence. FACE builds on the rich history that Clarence established with S&M over 30 years ago.

JD Kyle is the Vice President of Operations for FACE Amusement Group. He explained the fundamental philosophy: "It's engagement and connecting from start to finish. We open our doors like we are inviting someone into our home for dinner. What takes the guest experience from good to great is that the engagement is genuine."

Kyle added, "The number one question in the arcade is 'Where are the restrooms?' We actually escort guests to the restrooms, which are kept spectacularly clean. We try to create multiple good experiences throughout a guest's stay. When you are able to tie it all together and tailor experiences for the guests, they leave with something memorable."

Clean and functioning games are also part of the package. "If a game is down we have 60 minutes to get it back up and running," said Kyle. "Guests expect all the games to be working. We check games every hour."

When asked about the guest who rewarded the employees for good service, Kyle said, "We exceeded his expectations and did it continually. We get letters complimenting us on our service all the time. The surprise was the volume of his gratitude. He told us that he

had never had this level of service before. Our team was excited, and we are proud of them. We know what good service looks like and now we've seen a tangible expression of guest satisfaction."

When asked about the superlative service, Clarence said, "This is the way the industry has to go." For more information, visit (www.smamusements.com).

