

## Steps in the right direction

**THE atmosphere at this year's Amusement Expo, held at the Las Vegas Convention Center, was one of positivity and enthusiasm about the market – worlds apart from the 2010 show.**

The first and second day saw aisles packed with visitors – something *InterGame* hasn't seen at a trade show anywhere in the world, for a while. The third day was naturally a lot quieter but even then, exhibitors still had customers on their stands discussing business.

Exhibitor numbers were up by 26 per cent to 135, probably helped along by the co-location with the National Bulk Vending Association, which had a pavilion within the show floor dedicated to its exhibits, and the show attracted 3,083 visitors over the three days - a 49 per cent increase.

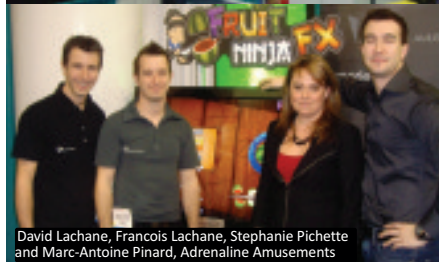
Having seen a lot of the companies exhibiting just six weeks ago at the EAG Expo in London, I was curious to see how much more new product would be shown, but was pleasantly surprised. Product that had been shown in prototype at the IAAPA in November had been tidied up and was shown in final format and product that hadn't quite been ready for the EAG show made it to Vegas.

ICE showed a 'tweaked' model of Treasure Quest shown at the EAG Expo, as well as NBA Hoop Troop, which replaces Mini Dunks, Frogger, Knock Out Punch and The Price Is Right Shell Game. Canda's Adrenaline Amusements showcased a smaller version of its Touch FX platform, making it accessible to all types of locations and operations, while Jet Jennison presented a final version of its ticket redemption game Space Balls, which is now ready for shipping.

The redemption theme continued on Namco America's stand, which showcased prototypes of two brand new games Frog Frenzy and Robo Rescue. Bay Tek Games made a huge splash at the show with its first ever product for the street market – Beer Balls. Sega Amusements presented a two-player version of Let's Go Island video game for the US market, along with new games we saw launched in London, while Bob's Space Racers concentrated on Stinky Feet, launched at the IAAPA show and new games Strike Zone and Tune Town. These are just a few of the new launches coming out of the show; you can read up on all of the new launches in this month's product pages.

Exhibitors *InterGame* spoke to told us how they had talked to a lot more operators this year and while people were still cautious about what they spent their money on, they were now buying again – a positive sign for the industry, it is hoped.

Commenting on the US market in general, Sega Entertainment's Cory Haynes, which operates the GameWorks locations across the US, told *InterGame*: "I am very encouraged by the signs of improvement going into the summer months. The past 12 months have been up and down but more recently, most of our stores have been up by two per cent, which is a great sign. The industry is still however being very cautious with its money and there is a lot of testing before buying happening - a machine really needs to



David Lachane, Francois Lachane, Stephanie Pichette and Marc-Antoine Pinard, Adrenaline Amusements



Holly Meidl, Larry Treankler and Jenna Woepse, Bay Tek Games



Kern and Justin Jennison, JET



The Embed team

**MARCH**  
1-3, 2011

2011 Amusement Expo

## 2011 AMUSEMENT EXPO

LVCC, Las Vegas, US

### The Verdict:

The atmosphere at the 2011 Amusement Expo was hopefully a sign of things to come for the coin-op amusement industry in the US. The aisles were busy, exhibitors generally seemed pleased with the quality and quantity of visitors and there was some interesting new product on show. The US, like all markets, has suffered at the hands of the recession, but a 49 per cent increase in visitor numbers could indicate a renewed faith in the industry.

**Helen Fletcher**

pay for itself in three months to be successful."

And when it came to product on show, for Haynes there were a few games that really stood out at the Amusement Expo, including Jennison's Space Balls, which has been on test with GameWorks and has performed very well, DDRX 2, Frogger, Price is Right Shell Game and Treasure Quest.

"I would like to see the manufacturers continue to push innovative product through, especially on the redemption side," added Haynes, "and when it comes to video, it has to have some sort of cool feature or attribute to make it appealing – players are just so much more sophisticated these days. Value for money is important, but so is interactivity."

Dates for next year's show have been confirmed as March 14 to 16, 2012, with the Pizza Expo's dates set for March 13 to 15. The NBVA had yet to determine if it would continue to co-locate with the Amusement Expo as *InterGame* went to print with this issue.