

bar &
restaurant



DIRECTV for BUSINESSSM helps a Minnesota bowling alley deliver a perfect game for its customers

Shakopee entrepreneur Dave Johnson revitalizes a struggling bowling alley with a new game plan.

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Sometimes it takes the new perspective of an outsider to identify and correct a seemingly intractable problem. In the case of an aging, slowly dying bowling alley in Shakopee, Minn., a Minneapolis suburb of 40,000 on the south bank bend of the Minnesota River, local builder, remodeler and entrepreneur Dave Johnson brought the sort of fresh vision needed to make the business thrive.

“The year before I bought the business [2017], sales were about \$700,000. This year [2022], I should do almost \$4 million,” says Johnson.

Central to Johnson’s success was rebranding the business, now called The Bowl, as a sports and family entertainment experience, not just a collection of 24 bowling lanes. The 28,000-square-foot facility now boasts an outdoors volleyball court, a full-turf Wiffle Ball field, two patios, a full sports bar, bowling—for both league play and general recreation—and regularly scheduled live musical entertainment.

Part of the entrepreneur’s vision was to give the children of parents who would patronize The Bowl fun things to do while the adults watched their favorite sports on any of the 57, 42- to 70-inch HD and 4K flat screen TVs strategically positioned around The Bowl, all while buying food and beverages.

“The parents can tell their kids to go play, and they’re going to be busy for hours. We literally have people that are here for seven or eight hours at a time,” says Johnson.

“There’s no way a 12-year-old kid is going to survive at a typical sports restaurant and bar for more than 35 minutes. Put one of those restaurant-bars next to me, and I’ll whip it because I can entertain the kids with Wiffle Ball, bean bags, putt-putt golf, volleyball, bowling and an arcade.”

Sports and entertainment

Johnson, a college and 20-year amateur baseball player, knows firsthand how sports is a big part of life for many people and has leveraged that knowledge in a variety of ways to make The Bowl a success. To help build a robust clientele, which includes what Johnson estimates to be more than 250 regulars, the entrepreneur aligned himself with Little League sports fundraising efforts early on, raising an estimated \$120,000 from the sale of pull-tabs for a local children’s hockey association and thousands more from the sale of carryout pizzas during the COVID pandemic.

“Youth sports communities support those who support them,” he explains. “Naturally, all of those hockey parents are going to come here to support my business because I’m supporting their kids.”



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Just as important to the success of The Bowl are the games that are on TV. Whether it's the Minnesota Vikings, Wild, Twins, Timberwolves, their popular rivals, college football and basketball, including March Madness, or even popular local high-school games, patrons know they'll find what they are looking for on TV at The Bowl.

"It's almost a given that I could walk into any sports bar and restaurant and the marquee game of the night is likely not on TV," says Johnson. To eliminate the chance of that at The Bowl, Johnson has contracted with DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS to ensure his customers don't suffer the same fate. "DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS is a natural fit, because they offer everything," he adds.

As the leader in sports content, DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS offers the premium game packages The Bowl needs to build and maintain its brand in the Shakopee area. The NFL SUNDAY TICKET[®], for instance, ensures Johnson can offer patrons live games—both those televised locally by CBS, FOX and NBC

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as well as out-of-market action.

DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS has entered into a deal with EverPass Media to deliver NFL SUNDAY TICKET to commercial establishments, which includes bar and restaurant customers. The deal has cemented the sports leadership position of DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS by bringing its customers Thursday Night Football games, MLS and Friday Night Baseball games, making it easy for bars and restaurants to get the best in sports from one place.



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Minnesota Wild fans, as well, can be confident every one of their favorite hockey team's games will be on at The Bowl, which subscribes to NHL Center Ice. Timberwolves and Twins fans can be certain The Bowl will have their games on, too, thanks to NBA League Pass and MLB EXTRA INNINGS subscriptions.

Johnson is not alone in recognizing the value of DIRECTV premium sports channels when it comes to delivering the games patrons want to watch—especially when it comes to NFL SUNDAY TICKET. A February 2023 survey of bars and restaurants found 92% rate NFL Sunday Ticket as good, very good or excellent for its ability to show a wide selection of games.

The Bowl also benefits from the regular additions DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS makes to its lineup of games. Recently, the video producer inked an exclusive deal with Apple and Major League Soccer to offer MLS Season

Pass; signed another exclusive agreement to be the national home of Apple TV+ Friday Night Baseball, which delivers two marquee games on Fridays to its customers; and reached an accord with the New York Yankees to distribute 20 Yankees regular season games in New York state, Connecticut, north and central New Jersey and northeast Pennsylvania.

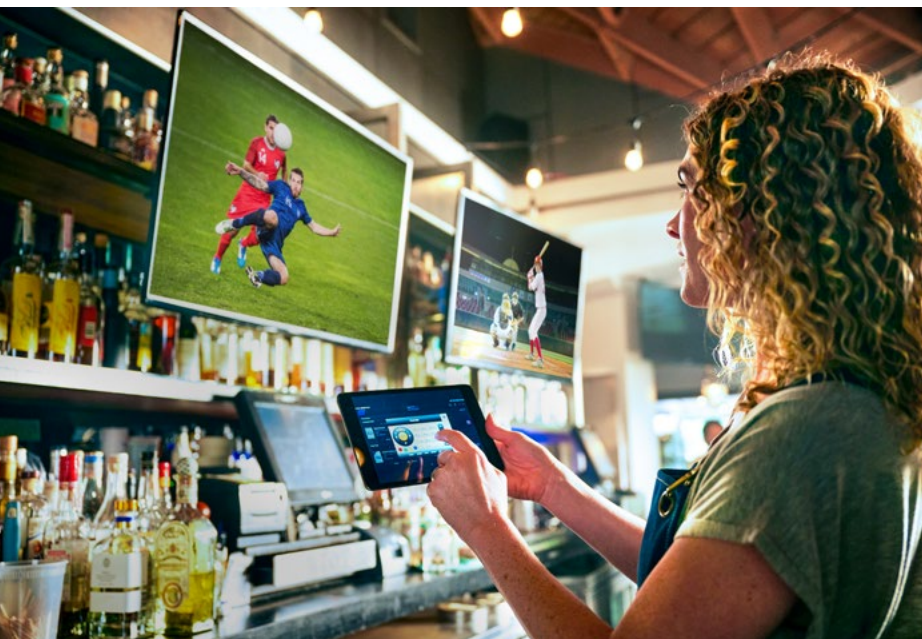
“For The Bowl, we talked about what Dave wanted to create. He wanted to allow for his guests to watch nearly every single game with focus on the local teams,” says Neil Sudaisar, Assistant Vice President of National Accounts at DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS.

“He wanted to have his guests know that they could come to The Bowl and share in the camaraderie and fandom that happens when a good game is on.”

As a business owner, Johnson also appreciates the convenience of sourcing all of his sports content from one provider, rather than having to subscribe to multiple packages from a variety of competitive services just to make sure he has all of the bases covered. “I would never want to have three cable TV bills,” he says.

Programming and tech

The wide variety of DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS sourced sports fits hand in glove with the technology Johnson relies upon to display it and his marketing efforts to build customer loyalty. To assign specific games to specific televisions around the entertainment complex, Johnson leverages a combination of GameView™ (formerly DTVGameControl), an iPad-based controller application that leverages the capabilities of the Vantiva (formerly



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Technicolor) COM3000 IP multicasting platform used to receive and distribute content to TVs.

“The Bowl is really a cutting-edge place,” says Wally Wood, co-founder and Chief Levels System Designer at GameView. “Dave is very in-tune with technology. He wanted the most sophisticated, best audiovisual experience he could get in his unique facility.”

That means easily assigning games to specific televisions, which is the hallmark of the GameView controller app. Every day, Johnson or one of his managers uses the app on one of the business’s two Apple iPads to assign that evening’s games to specific screens. If a change is necessary at game time, adding other screens to those already assigned to show the game or replacing a game with a different one is fast and simple.

Easily controlling what game appears on which monitor ahead of time and being able to make changes quickly when required is especially important to Johnson. “When you’re running a bar-restaurant, your manager’s first concern is getting people seated and taking their drink order.

“We’re an entertainment center with people running around. There’s 50 things to do before worrying about what’s on a TV. So, one of my biggest needs was to be able to sit down at my laptop in my office and schedule what would be on my 57 TVs. I’m creating my game plan hours before we ever open,” says Johnson.

The GameView Tapestry™ feature also makes it simple to add customized graphics around the video for promotions, advertisements and messaging. The GameView gateway even



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supports incoming internet streams, which The Bowl uses to display high school Sabers sports, a local favorite.

“Any time we have high school sports televised online, we dedicate seven TVs to it,” says Johnson. Using the GameView Tapestry feature, The Bowl promotes which screens are assigned and when the next high school game will be on.

“So, we call it Sabers TV,” says Johnson. “We have a big logo on there [the screen] to tell people to come and watch the games on those screens.”

Using a free-to-use online graphics design tool, Johnson can easily create content to promote the high school games at The Bowl

and is able to leverage the same tool for social media graphics on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

In the same fashion, The Bowl promoted one of its two patios for Vikings fans and the other for Green Bay Packers fans with GameView Tapestry. When it was time for the Vikings-Packers game, GameView simply assigned the correct video and audio to each patio so fans of the different teams could enjoy each other's company and root for their favorite team.

"It was a cool weekend with a bunch of Packer people over here and Vikings fans over there," recalls Johnson, "and they're cheering against each other without having to pay for a ticket."

The GameView controller integrates tightly with Vantiva's COM3000 platform, which is responsible for routing the right game to the TV Johnson specifies with GameView. "The COM3000 at The Bowl consists of a COM400 chassis and one single COM51 receiver with 16 active tuners," says Tony Watters, multi-client services senior sales executive at Vantiva. "This single receiver blade is equivalent to 16 STBs [set-top boxes]."

Video is sent via Ethernet from the COM3000 as IP (internet protocol) streams rather than traditional RF via RG59 or RG60 TV antenna coax. "The COM3000 becomes a video router in this application," explains Watters. "Rather than outputting a fixed number of channels continually, as is typical when used in hotels, the COM3000 dynamically controls what content is available and only streams out the channels that are being requested to be watched."

The Bowl COM3000 deployment allows for the minimum use of tuners as an input and a theoretically unlimited number of end point displays. "A tuner streaming a selected channel can output to a single monitor," says Watters.



"Additional monitors that desire the same programming can join that stream without the need for an additional tuner."

"Eliminating the need for separate set-top-box tuners for each TV, the COM3000 used together with GameView dramatically reduces the number of possible points of failure," adds Wood.

The bigger picture

The Bowl is a prime example of a growing trend among bars and restaurants. "Entertainment and guest experience are so important to the hospitality space," says DIRECTV's Sudaisar. "Providing localized messages across digital signage, being able to quickly and effectively manage content across so many screens and being able to do that without disrupting food and beverage sales is complex."

"The Bowl has thought through the right entertainment areas with games—like pop-a-shot, arcade, pinball, Golden Tee [and] bowling—a live music stage, whiffle ball fields and lots of TVs with a broad range of live content and lots of sporting events. It's also made it simple for staff to manage all of these complex experiences. Dave has brought the

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customer experience together with the right technology to manage it.”

The right combination of programming and technology is needed to fulfill the concept an entrepreneur like Johnson has for its brand, says Sudaisar. “DIRECTV National Accounts works with each customer to understand that vision. When we start with our customer’s

vision, we can identify the right programming and technology to make that vision a reality.”

The same February 2023 survey revealed other bar and restaurant owners also understand the benefits of having DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS premium sports channels available on the screens throughout their establishments. Of the bars and restaurants

EXCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING FROM DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS

A broad range of content attracts a broad range of customers.



ESPN+ for BUSINESS

CHANNELS 9521–9525

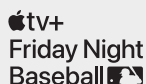
- Up to 120 live events every month!
- Content from networks like UFC, Top Rank Boxing, PFL, PGA Tour Live, Bundesliga, EFL, LaLiga, NHL, ESPN college basketball and football, and more coming!



MLS Season Pass

CHANNELS 9475–9490

- Follow all 29 major league soccer teams throughout the season
- Catch over 500 regular-season matches from around the league
- Order a promotional poster on directvmvp.com



Apple TV+ Friday Night Baseball Doubleheader

CHANNELS 9528–9529

- Check out Friday Night Baseball and get two live games every week during the season
- Included in all programming packages that have ESPN
- Order a promotional poster on directvmvp.com



NFL SUNDAY TICKET¹

CHANNELS 9552–9567

- Every live game. Every Sunday.
- Locally broadcast FOX and CBS games, Sunday Night Football on NBC, select digital-only games and international games excluded.
- 18 weeks of exciting football action
- Game Mix Channels—Watch up to four or eight games at the same time, live.
- Receive on-premise sports kit and 250 DIRECTVMVP credits



NFL REDZONE

CHANNEL 9551

- 7 straight hours of commercial-free football
- Catch every touchdown from every game, every Sunday afternoon

NFL RedZone subscription sold separately.



NFL NETWORK

CHANNEL 212

- 24/7, 365, catch football’s best shows, exclusive live games, and all the news and analysis you need hosted by NFL experts
- Get 8 exclusive games in 2023

NFL Network subscription not included with NFL SUNDAY TICKET.



MLB EXTRA INNINGS[®]

CHANNELS 721–749

- Get over 2,000 games—that’s up to 90 out-of-market MLB games a week
- Up to 99% of these games available in HD each week²
- Game Mix (Channels 720–721)—watch up to eight games at the same time, live on your TV³
- In-market games will be shown on your Regional Sports Network (RSN) or a local channel
- Receive on-premise sports kit and 150 DIRECTVMVP credits



NHL[®] CENTER ICE[®]

CHANNELS 769–785

- Get over 1,100 games—that’s up to 40 games a week during the NHL regular season
- Almost all of these games available in HD each week²
- Dual broadcasts: Choose the home or away feed
- The NHL Network™ at no extra cost: 24-hour NHL coverage, including live games, highlight shows, hockey news, exclusive programs and more
- Receive on-premise sports kit and 150 DIRECTVMVP credits



NBA LEAGUE PASS[®]

CHANNELS 750–768

- Get over 950 games—that’s up to 40 out-of-market games a week during the NBA regular season
- Most games available in HD2
- See the matchups you want—even from outside your local area
- Includes NBA TV™ and NBA TV HD2 for live games and 24/7 league coverage
- Receive on-premise sports kit and 150 DIRECTVMVP credits

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that subscribe to one or more DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS premium sports channels, the survey found 95% agree doing so has been good for their businesses.

As Johnson expected when he bought The Bowl and learned after implementing his vision for the business, having the right games on TV attracts patrons, many of whom stay longer and spend more money. No wonder then that the survey also found 90% of bars and restaurants rate DIRECTV FOR BUSINESS Premium Sports Packages as good, very good or excellent for their ability to keep guests entertained.

A perfect game

Johnson is not standing still; he continues to look for ways to improve his business in pursuit of the perfect game. In the fall, he added a second Wiffle Ball field. Johnson, who is

considering the addition of a video wall, has plans next spring to tear out six of the facility's bowling lanes. In their place, The Bowl will feature two new golf simulators, two baseball simulators and more video games.

"Today, every inch of this building has something that makes money," says Johnson, who contrasts The Bowl's family friendly, sports-oriented direction with traditional league bowling that underpins most alleys.

"Twenty- to thirty-year-olds are not going to be interested in a 32-week league bowling season," he says. "They just don't want to make that commitment. But youth sports, that's a \$50 billion operation." Serving the youth sports community—and by extension, the parents, families and friends of those youth athletes—has helped to establish The Bowl as a must-visit destination for Shakopee's adults and children alike.

Actual number of games varies by market. Blackout restrictions and other conditions apply. Professional and collegiate sports subscriptions sold separately. Sports subscriptions auto-renew each season at special renewal rates unless customer calls to cancel prior to start of season. Subscriptions cannot be canceled (in part or in whole) after the start of the season and subscription fee cannot be refunded. 1 NFL SUNDAY TICKET consists of all live out-of-market NFL games (based on customer's service address) broadcast on FOX and CBS. However, games broadcast by your local FOX or CBS affiliate, will not be available in NFL SUNDAY TICKET. Programming subject to change at any time. Receipt of DIRECTV programming subject to DIRECTV Customer Agreement; copy provided at directv.com/legal and in order confirmation. NFL, the NFL Shield design and the NFL SUNDAY TICKET name and logo are registered trademarks of the NFL and its affiliates. NBA, the NBA logo and team identifications are the exclusive intellectual property of NBA Properties, Inc., and the respective member teams. Major League Baseball trademarks and copyrights are used with permission of the applicable MLB entities. All rights reserved. Visit the official website at MLB.com. NHL, the NHL Shield and Center Ice name and logo are registered trademarks of the National Hockey League. NHL and NHL team marks are the property of the NHL and its teams. ©NHL 2023. All rights reserved. Blackout restrictions and other conditions apply. MLS Season Pass: ©2023 MLS. All rights reserved. ©2023 DIRECTV. DIRECTV and all other DIRECTV marks are trademarks of DIRECTV, LLC. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

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