



# GEORGIA Amusement JOURNAL

Dedicated to serving the Georgia COAM industry  
Endorsed by the Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association  
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## Supply chain woes

# Plan ahead, panel says

By Paul Tash

Georgia Amusement Journal

COAM manufacturers and licensees will continue to deal with significant challenges in the supply chain for the next 12-18 months, but those companies who “plan ahead” have the best chance to succeed despite the supply problems pushing machine costs higher, according to a panel of industry representatives during the Southern Amusement & Entertainment Expo in August.

“It’s a growing and expanding problem,” said Phil Caldwell of ATI, a gaming manufacturer based in Las Vegas.

One reason, he said, is that ocean freight costs are “rising dramatically.” Supplies and devices shipped from Europe cost his company about \$3,500 per container six months ago, he said, but now the cost of freight per container is \$10,500.

Caldwell, Dan Lewicki of Banilla Games, Michael “Smitty” Smith of Primero, and Anthony Sofran of IGT took part in the panel to discuss some of the challenges manufacturers are currently facing in the continuing pandemic.

“We continue to evaluate ways we can evolve our supply chain,” Lewicki said, in an effort “to safeguard our customers.”

Longer lead times, chip shortages, monitor component shortages, and shipping container shortages are all problems the industry is dealing with.

“The shipping industry is in tough shape right now,” he said, as it faces dock-crew shortages, driver short-

See PANEL Page 7



Paul Tash photo

**GAMOA HOSTED** a reception Oct. 6 during the Global Gaming Expo in Las Vegas for those in the Georgia COAM industry who attended G2E. The reception drew a big crowd, including, from left, GAMOA leaders Salim “Sam” Khambawala, director; Mehul “Mike” Patel, vice president; and Shawn Fellows, president.

## ‘Robust’ G2E back in Vegas

The Global Gaming Expo (G2E), presented by the American Gaming Association (AGA), returned to Las Vegas Oct. 4-7 for its first in-person show after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, highlighting the gaming industry’s resilience and innovation.

“After the hardest year in our history, G2E provided a robust marketplace to drive the global gaming industry’s recovery forward,” said AGA Chairman and Aristocrat CEO and Managing Director Trevor Croker. “Nothing beats an in-per-

son show, and we’re thrilled with the audience and enthusiasm surrounding G2E 2021.”

More than 13,000 global gaming professionals, including exhibitors, buyers, and media from around the world, gathered at the Venetian Expo and Convention Center for four days of face-to-face business appointments, product displays, keynotes, and education.

With 233 exhibitors, the show was the largest in-person global gaming event

See EXPO Page 3



## GACS Show returns Nov. 11 in Athens

The Southern Convenience Store and Petroleum Show, sponsored by the Georgia Association of Convenience Stores (GACS), will be held Thursday, Nov. 11, at The Classic Center in Athens, GA.

One of the largest and most comprehensive such events in the southeast, The Show provides an opportunity for C-Store suppliers to showcase their products and services, and for retail decision makers to learn about what is new in the industry.

Just before the trade show floor opens, GACS is offer-

ing a free seminar to attendees titled “What Makes Talent Tick?” In this seminar, attendees will learn tips on how to find talent, and discover strategies to learn what makes each individual tick. They will also learn how to implement strategies to encourage their teams to exceed expectations and how to raise the bar.

The presenter, Linda McKenna, is co-founder of Convenience Store Coaches, Inc. She also facilitates a Convenience Store Coaches’ Leadership Academy, which

See SHOW Page 3



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Details Inside!



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# Show

from Page 1

transforms managers of paperwork into coaches who do successful people work.

Also new to the Show is the GACSPAC Silent Auction, which has been moved from this year's annual convention to The Show. Setting up at The Show means more exposure for donors and more fun for Show attendees. Show attendance is always higher than at the convention because it is free to all C-store retailers across the state. This means more exposure, more opportunities for higher bidding, a better outcome for the GACSPAC, and added excitement for participants. Bidding will be available

**Show Agenda**

**Wednesday, Nov. 10**  
 8 am-5 pm – Exhibitor Set Up  
 4-6 pm – Cocktail Reception

**Thursday, Nov. 11**  
 8-9:00 am – Seminar: What Makes Talent Tick?  
 9 am-4 pm – Trade Show Floor Open  
 9 am-3 pm – Silent Auction benefitting GACSPA

via an app as well as in person.

Suppliers can contact Kevin Kirby in the GACS office at 770-736-9723 or kevin@gacs.com to reserve a booth, or learn more about sponsorships at the Show.

Show attendance is free for retailers, including the seminar. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged at [www.gacs.com](http://www.gacs.com).

# Expo

from Page 1

since the pandemic's start. The 21st year of the Expo featured five dynamic keynotes and 46 education sessions that provided actionable insights relevant to today's trends and operating realities.

"The energy at G2E 2021 is a testament to the resilience of the industry," said David Lucchese, Association of Gaming Equipment Manufacturers (AGEM) president. "This year's show connected exhibitors with the right, high-level audience to show off the innovative products and technology that will improve the player experience, engage new audiences, and advance global gaming."



## The SHOW to pick.



**J**oin us in The Classic City of Athens on November 11, 2021, for **The SHOW – The Southern Convenience Store & Petroleum Show!**

Retailers, petroleum marketers, convenience store owners, operators, supervisors, and managers are continuously looking for new ways to improve their businesses – from food service to fuel, novelties to snacks, COAM games to lottery ticket sales, and everything in between. **The SHOW** provides an outlet for C-Store vendors to showcase their products and services, and for C-Store decision makers to view new products and services.

So join us in Athens. Exhibitor set-up is November 10; contact **GACS** at **770.736.9723** to find out if booth space is still available if you are interested in exhibiting.

**The SHOW** is free for retailers; advance registration is strongly recommended. To register or for more information visit [www.gacs.com](http://www.gacs.com).



November 11, 2021 | The Classic Center | Athens, Georgia



# Journal Opinion

## Top 10 reasons to attend The Show

Once each year the Georgia Association of Convenience Stores brings suppliers and retailers together under one roof for what is one of the largest and most comprehensive C-Store industry events in the southeast: The Southern Convenience Store and Petroleum Show.

The Show provides an opportunity for C-Store suppliers to showcase their latest products and services, and for retail decision makers to learn about what is new in the industry.

This year The Show takes place in Athens, GA at The Classic Center Thursday, Nov. 11. Why should you attend? Here are the Top 10 compelling reasons not to miss this year's Show:

**#10.** The Show is open and free to all retailers in the Southeast, including petroleum marketers, store owners, operators, supervisors, managers and employees. You do not have to be a GACS member to attend!

**#9.** The Show will be open all day on Nov. 11 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m., providing ample time to visit the nearly 200 vendors who will participate.

**#8.** Before this year's Show opens, GACS is offering a free seminar to attendees: What Makes Talent Tick? In today's

complex environment, finding, keeping and motivating the workforce is more challenging than ever. In this seminar, attendees will learn tips on how to



Sharon Shuford

find talent, and discover strategies to learn what makes each individual tick. This session is free and open to all attendees.

**#7.** Wednesday evening GACS will host a cocktail reception for attending exhibitors and retail buyers from 4-6 pm. Admission is by name badge only – the reception is held in appreciation of the exhibitors who make The Show possible.

**#6.** The GACSPAC Silent Auction, absent from this year's annual convention, has been moved to The Show. This

means more exposure for donors, more fun for Show attendees, more opportunities for higher bidding, and a better outcome for the GACSPAC. To add

The Show is perhaps the best opportunity of the year to connect with retailers and suppliers over a full day in November.

to the excitement, bidding will be available via an app as well as in person.

**#5.** GACS will continue to follow CDC guidelines and safety protocols: Food samples will be served "cafeteria style," sanitizer stations will be available, face masks will be requested, workers will be trained on COVID-19 symptoms, and the show floor will meet distancing requirements.

**#4.** The Show has a convenient location at The Classic Center, 300 N. Thomas Street,

Athens, GA.

**#3.** You may still be able to reserve a booth. Just a few spots are left, so please contact Kevin Kirby in the GACS office at 770-736-9723 or kevin@gacs.com, or visit [www.gacs.com/events](http://www.gacs.com/events) for booth contract information, to reserve your booth, or learn more about sponsorships at the Show.

**#2.** Retailers who register will now be able to do so on line using GACS' new website! Just launched this month, the website is more robust with more features and benefits too numerous to list here. GACS encourages everyone to visit the site and take a look around. Pre-registration for The Show is strongly encouraged to avoid long check-in lines, as admission is by badge only.

**#1.** Still the number one reason to attend: The Show is perhaps the best opportunity of the year to connect with retailers and suppliers, over a full day in November, under one roof.

Show attendance is free for retailers, including the seminar. Attendees must pre-register or register on site and pick up badges by 2 p.m. Nov. 11.

For assistance contact Kevin Kirby at kevin@gacs.com or 770-736-9723 for information.

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## COAM calendar

### — REPORTING DATES —

**Oct. 20:** Each monthly report should be submitted by Location License Holders in electronic format via the [www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com) website as required by the GLC by the 20th of each following month.

### — MEETINGS/OTHER —

**Oct. 19:** COAM Advisory Board, Lottery headquarters, Atlanta  
**Oct. 21:** GAMOA meeting, Moose Lodge, McDonough, GA  
**Nov. 11:** Southern Convenience Store & Petroleum Show, Athens, GA  
**Nov. 11:** Technician Appreciation Day, Sonesta Gwinnett Place, Duluth, GA

### Write us

The *Georgia Amusement Journal* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must include the writer's name and address. The word limit is 300. Mail to Georgia Amusement Journal, P.O. Box 4307, Butte MT 59702, or you can email us at paul@tashcommunications.com. The *Journal* reserves the right not to print letters it finds objectionable.



# Journal Opinion

## Jukebox Jams Emerging Artists launched

By **Lori Schneider**  
**AMOA Executive VP**

AMOA has officially launched a new program called Jukebox Jams Emerging Artists. The association has been working with both AMI Entertainment and TouchTunes to create a program that encourages jukebox fans nationwide to discover and play music featuring “emerging artists” on the jukebox.

The new program runs Nov. 1 through Nov. 24 (National Jukebox Day, the day before Thanksgiving). The program will feature a playlist of select up-and-coming artists to drive more awareness to both the artists and the jukebox music experience. The same playlist is featured on both AMI and TouchTunes jukeboxes.

Jukebox operators, it’s not too late to get involved today. Now more than ever the jukebox is the focal point in your locations ... keep that momentum going with this exciting new program!

Visit [www.amoa.com/jukeboxjams](http://www.amoa.com/jukeboxjams) to ac-



Lori Schneider

The program encourages jukebox fans nationwide to discover and play music featuring ‘emerging artists’ on the jukebox.



cess a digital marketing kit. Coasters with QR codes are also available for purchase drawing patrons to play the jukebox in your locations. AMI Entertainment and Touch-

Tunes will be selling Jukebox Jams Emerging Artists promo cards for a limited time, as well.

### Legislative advocacy

AMOA is meeting with key legislators late October/early November to discuss several issues affecting the industry, including supply chain/shipping issues, the ongoing labor shortage, banking issues, and payment choice.

### 2022 events

**AMOA State Council Meeting** – Jan. 20-22, 2022 – Hyatt Regency San Antonio Riverwalk.

**Amusement Expo International** – March 15-17, 2022 – Westgate Las Vegas and Las Vegas Convention Center.

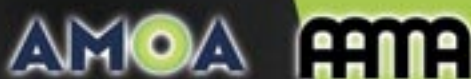
Be sure to visit [www.amoa.com](http://www.amoa.com) to learn more on these events and the many other AMOA member programs and services.

**AMOA is a national trade association representing the interests of operators, distributors, manufacturers and suppliers in the amusement entertainment industry. GAMOA is an active participant in the AMOA State Council.**

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# Panel

from Page 1

ages, and congested port traffic.

Banilla is working on developing a wider distribution network by repositioning warehouse and production facilities into larger, more strategic locations, he said. For example, he said, the gaming manufacturer is opening a new facility in Savannah, GA, in November. The new “20,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art production and warehouse facility” will help meet the demands of the Georgia COAM market, but also facilitate more efficient importation of ocean freight, he said.

“We’re pretty excited about that,” he said.

Banilla, he added, is securing inventory “like never before.” Pre-COVID, the company would purchase 2-5 months’ worth of supplies, but now, he said, “we have to buy 12-24 months of supplies to ensure availability for customers.”

“The name of the game,” he said, “is to buy now ... and buy at the right price” to avoid future price increases, more component shortages, and even potential geopolitical issues that can disrupt the supply chain.

Primero’s Smith said bill validators will be especially hard to obtain, especially refurbished validators, because the country’s resort casinos are back operating and not recycling their inventory of bill validators.

“They’re just not there,” he said. “We were forced to buy an 18-month supply if we wanted the product.”

The expectation of gift cards coming to the Georgia COAM market in the near future and expanding the market quickly by a couple thousand machines could compound the pressure on inventory, he said.

“We’re stocking,” he said, “but it comes at a cost.”

Smith said cost of raw metal recently increased another 25-30 percent, which means cabinet costs will likely reflect that increase, and customers will feel it.

Besides metal, Lewicki said other cabinet components are rising in price, too, including resin, which has risen 20 percent in 2021. In addition, he said, the cost of circuit boards has increased 20 percent this year, and even packaging material, such as cardboard, is up 10 percent in 2021.

“It’s a tough situation,” he said. “We want to take care of our customer base, but that comes at a cost to manufacturers.”

That cost has to be passed on to customers.



Paul Tash photo

**PANEL MODERATOR** Mike Patel, left, asks a question to panelists, from left, Anthony Sofran of IGT, Phil Caldwell of ATI, Dan Lewicki of Banilla Games, and Michael “Smitty” Smith of Primero Games.

“We don’t want to do it,” he said. “It isn’t fun for anybody. We all have to weather this storm together.”

IGT’s Sofran urged licensees “to think ahead” when planning a new location because lead times for new machines has been pushed to 14-16 weeks, even for resort casinos.

“We’re doing our best to shelter Southern Gaming Solutions (Georgia’s sole provider of IGT machines) to ensure they have product on hand,” he said, “but with some of these shortages, it’s going to be a longer lead time to get machines.”

“If you’re opening up a new location, think ahead a little bit.”

Lewicki agreed.

“Be forward-looking,” he said. “Be open-minded.”

Lewicki advised operators to use “good quality manufacturers and trusted suppliers” who are critical in helping “plan for your future.” He also urged licensees to support manufacturers “who have committed to the Georgia industry” and “committed to you guys.”

“Buy stuff from us,” he said. “Buy inventory for your own shelves. Buy it now before the price goes up.”

“It’s going to go up,” he said. “It’ll continue to go up.”

Despite supply challenges and corresponding price increases, panelists agreed that the outlook still looks good for the COAM industry.

One reason for optimism is the technological advances that are expected, panelists said.

Licensees can expect a continual evolution of card systems that have been very successful in Georgia that allow players to take money on and off machines. TITO (ticket in, ticket out) systems will also improve, resulting in more replay.

Health and safety protocols instituted during the pandemic will also continue to play a role in the industry, panelists said.

“Our industry will never look exactly the same after COVID,” Lewicki said.

Social-distancing guards are still prevalent in the marketplace, he said, and separation “is always going to be a factor we’ll have to deal with long-term.” Future machines could incorporate touchless control panels to minimize touch points, he added.

IGT is working on other solutions to keep players healthy, Sofran said, including the potential to use UV lighting that would shine

down on the button panel to eliminate germs and bacteria on the machine’s playing surface. He also said several companies are looking at developing play buttons that are made of material that repels germs.

Moderator Mike Patel summed up the panelists’ outlook by saying that supply-chain issues require that operators pre-plan for future machine and peripheral purchases.

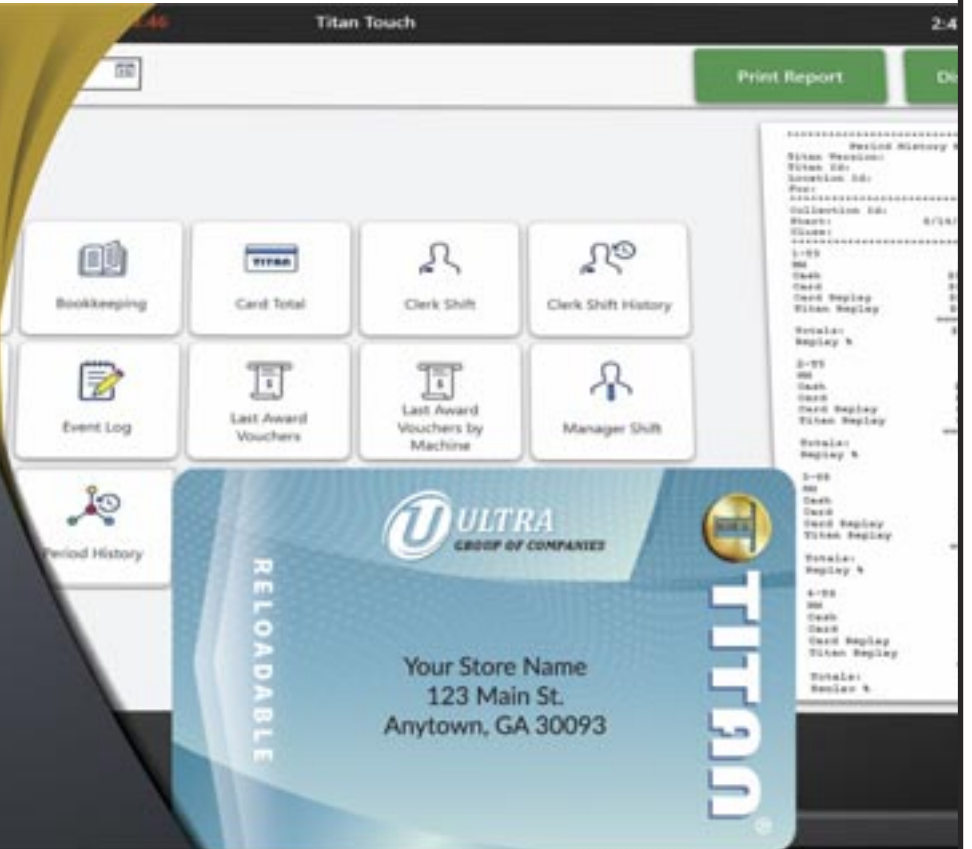
“You need to understand ... the challenges in the market place,” he said. “If you don’t, you’re just not going to have games.”





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# Goldfinger supports Vietnam community with food donations

The pandemic has had an impact on manufacturing all over the world, and companies have had to make strategic changes to best adapt to ever-changing circumstances.

Monitor manufacturer Goldfinger has been a company recently shifted production of its monitors to Vietnam, “where it has been received with open arms,” according to a Goldfinger news release.

With a focus on safety and health precautions, Goldfinger is one of the few companies that has been able to continue its production process as another lockdown affects the country, the release said. Locals have been hit hard recently with grocery stores and shops being forced to close.

Goldfinger has stepped up to support the community with food donations, the release said.

“We view our factories as an extension of the company and true partners in our production process,” said Daniel Hartmann, CEO of Goldfinger Monitors. “I’ve personally overseen the production at our Vietnam factory and have seen first-hand some of the issues facing

the local community. I knew it was important to give back because we can help.”

The Goldfinger team has been able to support over 700 households with:

- 10 tons of rice
- 8 tons of vegetables
- 1,500 canned food
- 4,000 eggs
- 500 boxes of milk for babies and elders

### About Goldfinger

Goldfinger offers full in-house design capabilities for video and touch screen hardware and software for the amusement, gaming, kiosk, vending, digital signage, and retail/hospitality industries.



Goldfinger’s experienced engineering and manufacturing teams focus on design and quality control. This focus on quality allows Goldfinger to boast the lowest warranty return rates in the industries it serves, the release said. For more, visit [goldfingermonitors.com](http://goldfingermonitors.com).

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