Main Event Entertainment is a growing Dallas-based company that is adding to its footprint of high-volume entertainment centers, all of which are currently located in five states.
A Dallas-based organization, Main Event Entertainment strives to be the ultimate fun destination for people of all ages. The company is an operator of high-volume family entertainment centers that are located throughout the U.S. and range in size from 45,000 to 75,000 square feet.

“When the company started out about 15 years ago, its founder recognized that the business of bowling had largely been built between the 1950s and 1970s on a model of league bowling along with some casual business,” President and CEO Charlie Keegan says. “That has been on a consistent decline, and our approach was to create a big-box entertainment facility with bowling as an anchor along with other entertainment as well as food and beverage.”

SOMETHING FOR ALL
Main Event Entertainment is now a subsidiary of Australia’s Ardent Leisure Group, acquired in 2006. One of Australia’s most successful owners and operators of premium leisure assets, Ardent’s portfolio includes more than 100 assets across Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. In addition to Main Event Entertainment, Ardent’s assets include the Dreamworld, WhiteWater World and SkyPoint theme parks and attractions, AMF and Kingpin Bowling, d’Albora Marinas and Goodlife Health Clubs.

Main Event Entertainment offers what it calls the “Eat.Bowl.Play.” experience. All of Main Event Entertainment’s locations feature state-of-the-art bowling, billiards, laser tag, more than 100 virtual and interactive games, chef-inspired dining options and full-service bars. Select locations also offer an indoor gravity ropes course, rock climbing and mini golf. Main Event Entertainment facilities offer free Wi-Fi, too.

“We have developed a diverse portfolio through thoughtful, measured incubation,” Keegan says. “The first 10 centers were built over a period of 15 years, and we’ve upgraded the look and feel of our facilities to make them more aspirational since Ardent acquired the company. Our work to combine leisure and entertainment with contemporary food and beverage offerings in an upgraded environment is on trend.”

Fun and Games
By offering a diverse array of amenities, Main Event Entertainment has grown beyond its Texas roots and begun to grow around the country. 

"We have developed a diverse portfolio through thoughtful, measured incubation."
This diversity of offerings allows Main Event Entertainment to appeal to all demographic groups while also bringing in walk-in and group business. In fact, the company’s facilities have private rooms, complete with full-service catering and the latest A/V technology, that make Main Event an ideal venue for special events such as birthday parties, social gatherings and corporate meetings.

“About one-quarter of our business is groups, including corporate, schools, churches and parties,” Keegan says. “We have a sales office in front of all of our facilities, and group sales are a core competency of ours. Our top user groups are medium- to high-income families with kids, as well as 20- to 30-year-old singles who like to work hard and play hard.”

SAVE ELECTRONICS

As a preferred vendor for Main Event Entertainment for 16 years, SAVE Electronics custom designs, fully integrated and automated, Sound, Video and Lighting Systems for their entertainment centers. From a simple board room with video conferencing to a multi-screen sports arena presenting every second of action, SAVE Electronics takes pride in providing solutions for businesses large and small. President Tim Boyd proclaims, “Our company culture dictates that customer support and reliability is an essential part of finishing the job with efficiency. We haven’t missed a deadline in 57 years.”
The last few years have seen Main Event Entertainment continue to innovate and push the boundaries of the high-volume family entertainment center marketplace. After opening a new prototype facility in San Antonio in April 2012, Main Event Entertainment followed that up in early 2013 by announcing plans to double its operations by the middle of the decade.

“The development of our new centers started with the interiors,” Keegan says. “The layout is such that when you walk in to one of our centers, you see bowling as one of five elements. We have created an energetic look that is full of lights and sound as well as modern décor and finishes. On the outside, we have created a modern look that is dynamic, and it looks great day and night thanks to some LED treatment.”

Main Event Entertainment opened locations in Katy, Texas, in December 2012. That was soon followed by the opening of a center in Stafford, Texas, in the spring of 2013.

The Stafford location is a large-scale facility with entertainment options for all ages, including laser tag located between state-of-the-art bowling lanes, billiards, an indoor gravity ropes course and more than 100 virtual and interactive games. It also includes dining options and full-service bars.

Main Event Entertainment’s expansion efforts have included venturing beyond Texas. The company’s first steps beyond
the Lone Star State were into Arizona in late 2013. The Main Event Entertainment location in Tempe stands at 55,000 square feet, and the facility features bowling laser tag, video games, dining and a ropes course.

“We’ve invested in technology because our guests expect us to have connected, tech-enabled facilities.”

CHARLIE KEEGAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO

In early 2014, the company announced that it had begun a national expansion effort in the wake of the opening of its latest prototype and first location outside of Texas. With a number of new locations in its sights, Main Event Entertainment was aiming to expand its number of U.S. locations to 20 by 2015.

To reach that goal, Main Event Entertainment’s growth plans included additional expansion in Texas. It has since opened its second location in West San Antonio after the prototype facility in North San Antonio exceeded performance expectations, and it also opened in Pharr in the Texas Valley.

The 58,000-square-foot Pharr location includes state-of-the-art bowling; multi-level laser tag; a gravity ropes adventure course; and more than 100 interactive, virtual and video games. It also includes regulation-size billiard tables, full-service bars, chef-inspired dining experiences and free Wi-Fi access.

The second location in San Antonio also is a 58,000-square-foot entertainment center, providing a cutting-edge bowling experience, multi-level laser tag and a gravity ropes course. Other attractions found at the facility include billiards, more than 100 interactive video games,
dining, a full bar and private rooms for birthday parties and corporate events.

**NEW REGIONS**

Outside of Texas and Arizona, the company initially set its sights on expansion in Georgia, Illinois and Oklahoma. Main Event Entertainment first opened a new center in the Atlanta-area suburb of Alpharetta in June 2014.

The Alpharetta facility was a 65,000-square-foot facility that featured bowling, laser tag, a gravity ropes course, more than 100 games, billiards, full-service bars, dining experiences and free Wi-Fi. Around the same time, Main Event Entertainment also opened a new center in Atlanta, near Cumberland Mall, as part of its ongoing national expansion in 2014.

In Illinois, Main Event Entertainment opened in Warrenville in September 2014. The company’s 48,000-square-foot entertainment center includes bowling, multi-level laser tag, a gravity ropes course, billiards, more than 100 arcade games, dining, a full bar and private rooms for birthday parties and corporate events.

The company then opened its Oklahoma City location on Black Friday 2014. The 57,000-square-foot enter-
A Main Event location has more than 20 cutting-edge bowling lanes, multi-level laser tag, a gravity ropes course, more than 125 interactive video games, dining, a full bar, billiards, and private rooms with Wi-Fi and A/V capabilities for birthday parties and corporate events.

Main Event will soon open its second facility in Oklahoma, this time in Tulsa. Once open, the company’s footprint will consist of 20 centers in five states.

**FOCUS ON EXECUTION**

With food and beverage as its top revenue stream (followed by games and bowling), Main Event Entertainment understands that it is in the hospitality business. Many of its employees have worked in other sectors of hospitality and understand the principle of guest service and operating with a sense of urgency.

“We’ve invested in technology because our guests expect us to have connected, tech-enabled facilities,” Keegan says. “We’ve also created an aspirational environment, having designed some of our own furniture and constantly work-
ing very hard to find innovative ways to create an upgraded environment.”

Main Event Entertainment will continue to evolve in the coming years. One of the company’s efforts is focused on working to enhance its food and beverage offerings.

In addition, Main Event Entertain-