



**Larry Williams**

📍 McKim's IGA  
Mt. Vernon, IA

🛒 Meat

🐾 Easy

**Store Specs**

Store size: 10,000 sq ft

## BEST PRACTICES

### CREATE SOME BIG HOLIDAY BUZZ WITH TURKEY BOWLING

#### STRATEGY

“Four years ago, my oldest son Brian wanted to try running a turkey bowling promotion. We got in touch with a local bowling alley, and they agreed to give us some bowling pins. We also reached out to a local radio station in Evansville, IN, and they wanted to come out and cover the event. For the first year, they basically did the promotion for free. We cordoned off one of our aisles and made a wooden backstop that employees can hold up behind the pins. From the start, we had a good group of people waiting in line for their chance to win a turkey by getting a strike using a 12-pound turkey as the bowling ball. The event is held once a year before Thanksgiving and, between the hours of 5-7 PM, we give away up to 20 frozen turkeys. Local supplier Prairie Farms also wanted to participate, so they give out coupons to anybody who fails to get a strike. Every year, we get between 50-100 people coming in to participate in turkey bowling, with many coming all the way from Evansville. While we don't necessarily see a big jump in sales on the day, it is a great way to showcase our store to new potential customers.”

**20**

**TURKEYS TO GIVE AWAY**

**10**

**TURKEYS FOR BOWLING**

**50-100**

**PARTICIPANTS**

#### WHY IT WORKS

##### For Our Shoppers

###### It's a Whole Lot of Fun

The crowd loves to cheer on the bowlers, and people really enjoy the event.

###### Have a Chance at a Free Turkey

Several customers tell us that they really appreciate having the chance to treat their family to a great meal at no cost.

##### For Our Store

###### Reinforces Local Roots

Light-hearted events like this help us showcase our community ties and reinforce that we are more than just your typical grocery store.

###### Great Exposure

Between the radio station broadcasting the event and the increase in foot traffic, turkey bowling is a great way for us to show off all our store has to offer.

###### Give Back to the Community

Whether we just treat them to a fun evening, or they go home with a turkey to feed their family, we feel like everybody who comes to the event gets something out of it. Including our employees, who also have a great time!

## PRICING

It is free to participate in the turkey bowling event

## TACTICS

- 1.** Set up the aisle by placing marks for the bowling pins. You will also want to have a back stop ready to catch the turkey after it hits the pins. We mark off two lines, one which men can't cross while bowling, and one, slightly closer to the pins, that women aren't allowed to cross.
- 2.** If you have a radio station or other media attending, make sure that you reserve space for them to set up in that has a good view of the bowling.
- 3.** Before the bowling starts, welcome all of the bowlers and provide them with the rules.
- 4.** Decide how many turkeys you want to give away beforehand, and then conclude the event when the turkeys are won, or the allotted time ends, whichever comes first.

## PRO-TIPS

When choosing the aisle you will use for the event, look at your sales data and pick the aisle that is the least busy during that period, because shoppers won't have easy access to the products there during the event. It is also good to choose an aisle with few breakables in case a turkey goes flying off course.

Really think about the equipment you are using. The first time I tried to host a turkey bowling promotion, it was a real disaster. I was working in a store and somebody told me about the promotion, so we setup two-liter soft drinks and used a 12-pound turkey. Needless to say, that promotion didn't last long and there still may be soda stains on the ceiling.

In addition to the turkeys you plan on giving away, you will need turkeys to bowl with. After a few throws, they will start to get tears in the packaging. To avoid any bacteria, we only throw each turkey 3 or 4 times before moving on to the next one.

We used to allow bowlers to use the loop on the turkey to hold on to, but some of them would go flying. Now, we have a rule that you must use two hands and you can't use the loop. This makes it fairer for everybody and limits product damage.

