

**Wahl Marketing Communications**  
6250 Lakota Drive Cincinnati, OH 45243  
(513) 561-2002 – Phone (513) 561-0814 – Fax  
[jim@wahlmarketing.com](mailto:jim@wahlmarketing.com)

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**For More Information Contact:**

Jim Wahl  
Wahl Marketing  
(513) 561-2002  
[jim@wahlmarketing.com](mailto:jim@wahlmarketing.com)

David Blumenfeld  
Osborne Coinage Co.  
(866) 274-0868  
[davidb@osbornecoin.com](mailto:davidb@osbornecoin.com)

**Custom Coins Help Pineapple Willy's Promotions Stand Out**



Cincinnati, OH – Boasting the only bar with a pier in the Florida panhandle, a gift shop which prints and then sells their own line of souvenir t-shirts, and a packed house from Spring Break throughout the summer vacation season, Pineapple Willy's is certainly unique. So when manager Dan Baird was looking for ways to entice patrons to return, he wanted a promotion that would carry through on that uniqueness. Custom coins minted with the Pineapple Willy's logo fit the bill on all counts.

The restaurant, which has been in operation in the same location since 1984, has evolved significantly since its inception. In that time they have undergone many changes – including weathering hurricanes and tropical storms. And when the storm waters subside, they always rebuilt bigger and better than before. Throughout the process, the family owned and operated facility has tried lots of different marketing and promotional endeavors. Given their prime location, Pineapple Willy's is busy from spring break through the summer. So “we are very selective about our advertising” says General Manager Dan Baird. Instead, he prefers promotional tactics with a “WOW” factor.

“Everyone does coupons, nothing memorable there,” says Baird. But the custom coins are a different story. “Everybody that I give the coins to likes them.”

He started to see redemption soon after the first coins were issued, and estimates that the redemption ratio is about 3-times higher than that of coupons. “Ratio on coins is at least 3 to 1 – we’re seeing huge returns” says Baird. “The recycle value is great – we’ve been able to recycle them time and again.”

While the increased redemption rate is a huge benefit, the real promotional value is in those that are not redeemed. “Some people will keep them as good luck charms or mementos – which is great because we’re still getting advertising value every time that they show it to someone. How often does that happen with paper coupons?” Baird ponders rhetorically.

Baird first saw custom coins at an ASI show in Orlando. “We picked up several coins, brought them back and laid them out, and then selected the highest quality,” he recalls.

Once he selected Cincinnati’s Osborne Coinage as the vendor, Baird and crew devised a use for the coins. They had two versions minted – a \$5 coin and a coin worth a free drink – either a domestic or call drink. The \$5 coin is good for anything on the property – including food or merchandise. Whoever happens to take the coin (bartender, gift shop, wait staff) back to their station and treats them like cash.

“We’ve probably given away 500 so far and we’re getting a really good return rate” says Baird. In addition to using the coins to promote the restaurant, Baird also uses them to promote his \$3 million gift shop which prints and sells their own line of t-shirts.

“We give out the coins to potential customers to come up and see the business and check out the gift shop in case they want to develop their own” says Baird.

He originally purchased 2,500 of each coin type for a total order of 5,000 coins – all with ridged edges to give them a real cash-like effect. Including the die-charges, the total order cost was under \$3,200.00 – including shipping. But the effect has been priceless. That is partly because the coins are unique – and partly because they have a high perceived value. Both of those combined ensure that the coins are unlikely to be discarded.

In addition to using the coins to promote Pineapple Willies restaurant and gift shop, Baird has also used them to support civic causes, like Sponsors of Hope, which includes them with gift baskets which are then raffled to raise money. A motorcycle enthusiast, Baird also uses them to support “Poker Runs” where bikers ride to a predetermined set of restaurants or bars and then draw poker cards. The winning hand then wins merchandise or food – or in this instance Pineapple Willy’s coins. The unique and tangible nature of the coins makes them an ideal fundraising effort - they can be sold at a discount to civic groups who then sell them at face value and keep the difference for their organizations.

“I really like the quality – and so do our customers. They say things like “WOW that is a nice big coin.” The Pineapple Willy’s team is pleased with the redemption rate but they are most impressed with the reaction to the coins - which is, in a word, “WOW!”

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About Osborne Coinage:

Established in 1835, Osborne Coinage is America’s oldest private mint. They produce high quality custom minted coins, medallions, and key chains in aluminum, Goldine®, nickel-silver, bronze, and even fine silver and solid gold. For more information on using custom coins, medallions or key chains for commemoration, promotional purposes or as advertising specialties, visit [www.osbornecoin.com](http://www.osbornecoin.com) or contact Osborne Coinage Co., at (866) 274-0868, or via mail to Osborne Coinage Co., 2851 Massachusetts Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45225.