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Great American Merchandise and Events

Eric Schechter, president
Manufacturing



Great American Merchandise and Events specializes in both event marketing and innovative and fun products for the retail industry. But creating fun and games takes hard work and commitment. Over the past two years, Great American Merchandise and Events, or GAME as it prefers to be called, has added engineering and professional staff, and implemented employee development programs. GAME has also made a significant investment in research and development, and has a large distribution center close to Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

GAME's merchandise lines focus on fun products for the pool, spa and backyard. The company's floating accent lights have made a particular splash, placing second at the recent International Pool and Spa Expo.

Since early last year, the pool market has slumped along with the general housing market. As a result, the pool industry as a whole has experienced a 30 percent overall decline in revenue. During this same period, however, GAME's says its revenue has grown more than 25 percent, thanks in part to strong growth in its retail product sales.

In 2007, the company significantly increased its retail base, with customers such as Wal-Mart and Target increasing their store count where GAME products are sold by more than 30 percent. Additionally, GAME's products are now being sold in top warehouse clubs and are increasing their international presence in Mexico, Canada and Japan. By opening new markets, GAME has been able to continue its double-digit growth despite a tough economy. In fact, last year GAME was picked one of the Inc. 5000 Fastest Growing Companies in the United States.

Despite its retail success, GAME remains mindful of the market that started it all — events and fundraising. GAME's events and fundraising division has helped raise more than \$140 million for nonprofits and charities since the company was founded in 1988.

- ▶ Established: 1988
- ▶ Offices in Arizona: 2

Year	Full-Time Employees
2004	21
2005	21
2006	26
2007	35