

Road Trip- Capsule vs. Spindle

By: Rob Ozarowicz

We are enjoying a successful run with Road Trip since its summer of 2009 release and one of the most common questions asked by customers, whether they are buying their first unit or making a repeat purchase is, "Should I buy capsule or spindle?"

Often times the decision is made based on what the operator knows. If they are accustomed to other merchandisers that utilize the hanging prize for the small reward, they stick with what they know and order the spindle version. If an operator uses a lot of bulk 2" capsules with other equipment, and has a lot of stock on hand, they may determine the capsule version is right for them. Both thought processes are valid; however, here are a few other things to consider.

Before going any further however, it is important to note that the only difference between the capsule and spindle Road Trip is at the small prize level. Both the medium and large prizes are exactly the same configuration (2 spindles each level) on each version.

Prize Capacity:

Capsule Version – 200 to 300 capsules (2" to 2 1/4" capsules)

Spindle Version – 40 to 56 hanging prizes

To help determine if capacity should factor into your decision, think about how much traffic the location receives; high traffic may require higher capacity. Also, consider how often you have personnel on location to fill the machine. For example, an FEC with staff on hand to fill the game whenever necessary may not need a lot of prize capacity. However, a remote location that is only tended to on a bi-weekly basis may require higher capacity.

Price Point for Small Prizes:

Capsule version: One can easily obtain pre-filled 2" capsules from several different vendors at a cost of .18 to .33 cents each and this is the exact price point that the factory settings suggest. It should help achieve the target payout percentage.

Spindle Version: The cost on minor hanging prizes ranges from .40 to .75 cents from most vendors. At a recommended price per play of \$1.00, these price points factor into the payout more than one might realize. The closer one can get to the .25 cent price point on small prizes, the better off you are from a payout perspective.

Prize Appeal:

Prize appeal actually may be counter intuitive to some operators. One basic premise of Road Trip operation is to entice the player to work their way up the prize levels and getting a chance to win a more valuable prize as they progress. Since capsules generally have less visual appeal and monetary value to the player, they are more likely elect to trade up their win and try for a more desirable medium or eventually large prize. Hanging prizes, having a higher value and tendency to display in a more appealing way, may reduce the amount of players that actually elect to trade up, potentially increasing the frequency of small prizes paying out. This may increase your payout percentage. It could also cause the machine to require more frequent small prize fills.

Both versions have been successful with operators globally and in a multitude of location types. The operation route and location will help determine which small prize option to go with. But remember, as important as the small prizes are it is really the large and medium prizes that the customers are playing for. Consequently, take the considerations outlined in this article to make the most informed decision on capsule versus spindle and then concentrate on the rest of the prize mix. Understanding the clientele and catering the prize mix towards them will attract the most players and increase the game's revenue. Happy Operating!

Rob Ozarowicz has been with Bay Tek Games for over 13 years and has worked with customers worldwide. His in depth knowledge of the industry is invaluable to the OPTS team serves on at Bay Tek. To contact Rob, call 920-822-3951 or email at rozarowicz@baytekgames.com.