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Despite urgent calls by the Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association and the Puerto Rico Tourism Co. for the Treasury Department to rein in an estimated 45,000 adult entertainment machines operating illegally throughout the island, it appears absolutely nothing is being done. With 7,000 government-sanctioned slot machines in 22 casinos in Puerto Rico bringing in \$315 million for the local tourism industry, you can just imagine what the illegal ones are doing and how they are hurting legalized gambling. Insiders estimate the potential economic activity generated by these machines outside of casinos now exceeds \$1.5 billion. From Pueblo to fast-food outlets to mini marts and just about everywhere in between this illegal industry is probably the fastest growing on the island today. ■



On the other hand, despite the down economy the local franchisee of Interstate All Battery Center (IABC) has not only exceeded its \$500,000 goal by reaching sales of more than \$750,000 but was also recognized as IABC's 2008 Store of the Year at the company's recent international franchise convention. IABC, which carries more than 16,000 types of batteries and power solutions for everything from laptops to cameras to boats and hearing aids, also offers battery recycling.

Meeting customer needs, delivering unmatched dependability and knowledgeable staff committed to IABC's "Have it, Find it, Build it" promise are the keys to our local success, according to franchisees Javier Vento, his brother Juan Vento and Eduardo Fernández. ■