



More Than a VIP Weekend

How Brightstar and iHeartRadio Are Turning Experiential Promotions Into Marketing Platforms

The ballroom at Austin's Westin Downtown pulsed with anticipation as contestants stepped toward the stage one by one. Colored lights flashed across giant "POWER BLITZ" graphics while a DJ worked from a booth designed like an oversized old-school boom box — the kind of detail that instantly signaled this was not going to be a typical lottery event.

Then the prizes started climbing. \$5,000. \$10,000. \$30,000.

More spins. More cheers.

Fifty Texas Lottery® VIP winners and their guests packed the ballroom for the Power Blitz Challenge Event on May 1, each hoping their second-chance entry would lead to a life-changing payday. By the end of the evening, nearly \$1 million in prizes had been awarded, but the real story behind the event was bigger than the cash.

The Power Blitz Challenge represented another chapter in an evolving partnership between Brightstar Lottery and iHeartRadio — one that is reshaping how lotteries think about experiential promotions, media support, and player engagement at a time when many organizations are being asked to do more with tighter advertising budgets.

For lotteries across North America, that combination may prove just as valuable as the prizes themselves.

Beyond the Winner Trips

Lottery experiential prizes are nothing new. For years, lotteries and their vendor partners have offered VIP trips, concerts, sporting events, and destination experiences designed to deepen player engagement and create memorable moments for winners.

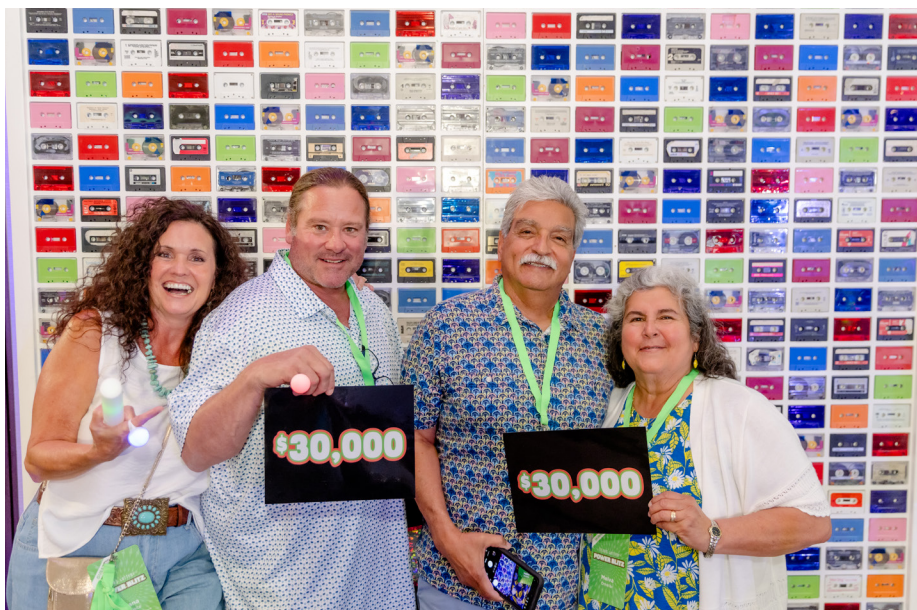
What Brightstar and iHeartRadio have built in Texas goes a step further.

The Texas Lottery has already launched four families of games "powered by iHeart," and they have committed to a fifth launch in January 2027. The May 2026 event was tied to the Power Blitz family of games launched in January 2024 across five price points.

Rather than treating a winner event as a standalone prize-fulfillment exercise, the partnership combines experiential rewards with a broader marketing platform powered by iHeartRadio's vast media ecosystem, extending the visibility and impact of a scratch-ticket campaign.

For lotteries searching for efficient ways to maximize visibility, the appeal is obvious.

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That flexibility is critical in today's environment, where many lotteries face increasing pressure on advertising budgets while competing for consumer attention in a fragmented media landscape. The Brightstar/iHeart structure helps address both challenges at once.

The Media Multiplier

At first glance, Power Blitz looked like a traditional scratch-ticket family supported by a second-chance event. In reality, it was powered by a much larger promotional engine.

The Texas Lottery program combined prerecorded and live radio chatter across 44 Texas stations, streaming audio and podcast placements, digital and social advertising, streaming/connected TV, out-of-home media, event sponsorships, activations, and branding integrated directly into major iHeart events.

The promotional footprint extended far beyond traditional lottery advertising. Through the partnership, the Texas Lottery received

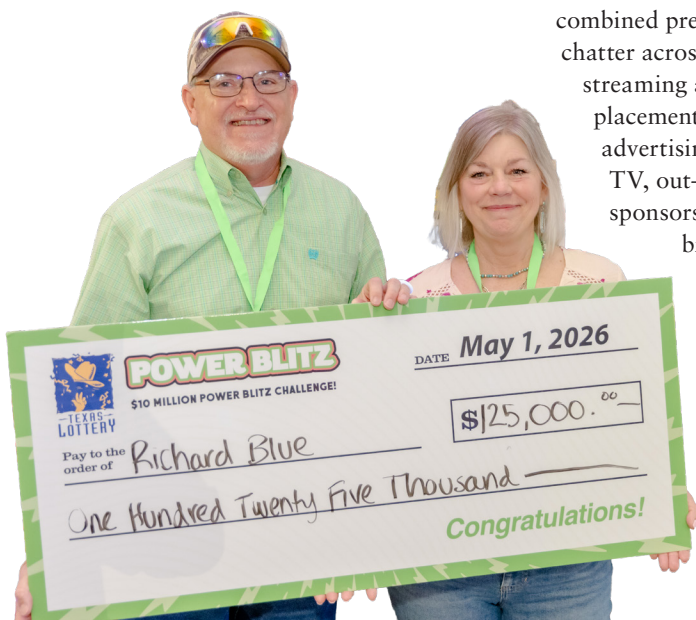
activation opportunities at major iHeart events, including Jingle Ball in Dallas and the iHeartCountry Festival in Austin. Lottery branding appeared throughout event venues, promotional spots ran during shows, and the Texas Lottery hosted on-site activations featuring free tickets, promotional giveaways, and interactive games. At the iHeartCountry Festival Daytime Village, the Lottery even received a stage shoutout, putting the brand directly in front of thousands of engaged attendees. Later that night at the main event, Texas Lottery spots played on the main stage in between artists' sets, visible to the approximately 15,000 festival-goers inside the Moody Center.

According to Brightstar, the campaign generated more than 237 million total impressions across its media components. That kind of amplification matters.

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“iHeart's partnership with Brightstar and the Texas Lottery has expanded significantly over the past several years,” said Damon Gunkel, VP/ Director of Sales for iHeartMedia. “We are continuously exploring new ways to engage and reach Texas Lottery players through our comprehensive, multi-platform ecosystem—including broadcast radio, digital, social, streaming/CTV, and podcast networks. We're excited to demonstrate to lotteries across the U.S. how they too can harness the strength of the iHeart brand through scalable, turnkey, localized media strategies, as well as gain access to truly unique experiential prize opportunities.”

Traditionally, lotteries that pursue entertainment-based promotions often incur significant licensing costs before media support is even considered. The Brightstar/iHeart model offers a





different path — leveraging iHeart's built-in promotional infrastructure and nationally recognized events to create excitement without relying on expensive standalone entertainment licenses.

The partnership also allows lotteries to attach the platform to virtually any family of games. Cash Blitz. Power Blitz. Blitz. X the Cash. Jackpot. The names and themes evolve, but the underlying promotional and media architecture remains scalable and adaptable.

For lotteries, that means a successful framework can continue building momentum year after year rather than starting from scratch with each launch.

Building Excitement in Austin

The experiential side of the promotion came to life in Austin. After arriving at the Westin, winners were welcomed

into an atmosphere that felt part game show, part concert pre-party. Brightstar transformed the ballroom into a high-energy event space complete with immersive lighting, music, and live entertainment touches that reinforced the iHeartRadio partnership throughout the experience.

Hosted by Bryan Chan, the event kept contestants and guests engaged from start to finish as players selected envelopes, spun wheels, and revealed cash prizes. Every participant walked away with a meaningful prize, but the suspense built steadily throughout the evening as the largest awards remained on the board.

By the time the two finalists emerged, the room had become fully invested in the outcome. One finalist secured \$125,000. The other walked away with \$157,500.

The event awarded more than \$950,000 in total cash prizes, creating the kind of energy and emotional payoff that lotteries hope experiential promotions will deliver. Yet even after the checks were awarded, the experience was only halfway complete. The

following day, winners and their guests shifted from the ballroom to one of country music's biggest stages.

At the iHeartCountry Festival outside Austin's Moody Center, lottery winners received VIP access to the Daytime Village and festival events, including premium hospitality areas and interactions with iHeart talent. That evening, winners attended performances featuring some of the biggest names in country music as part of a festival hosted by Bobby Bones.

The transition from cash-prize excitement to premium live entertainment created a layered experience that felt larger than a traditional second-chance promotion.

"Experiential second-chance promotions give the Texas Lottery an opportunity to reward players in ways that go beyond the prize, and every part of this one was designed with the winners' experience in mind," said Courtney Arbour, executive director of the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, which oversees the Texas Lottery. "Every detail of the cash-prize event, hospitality, and festival access



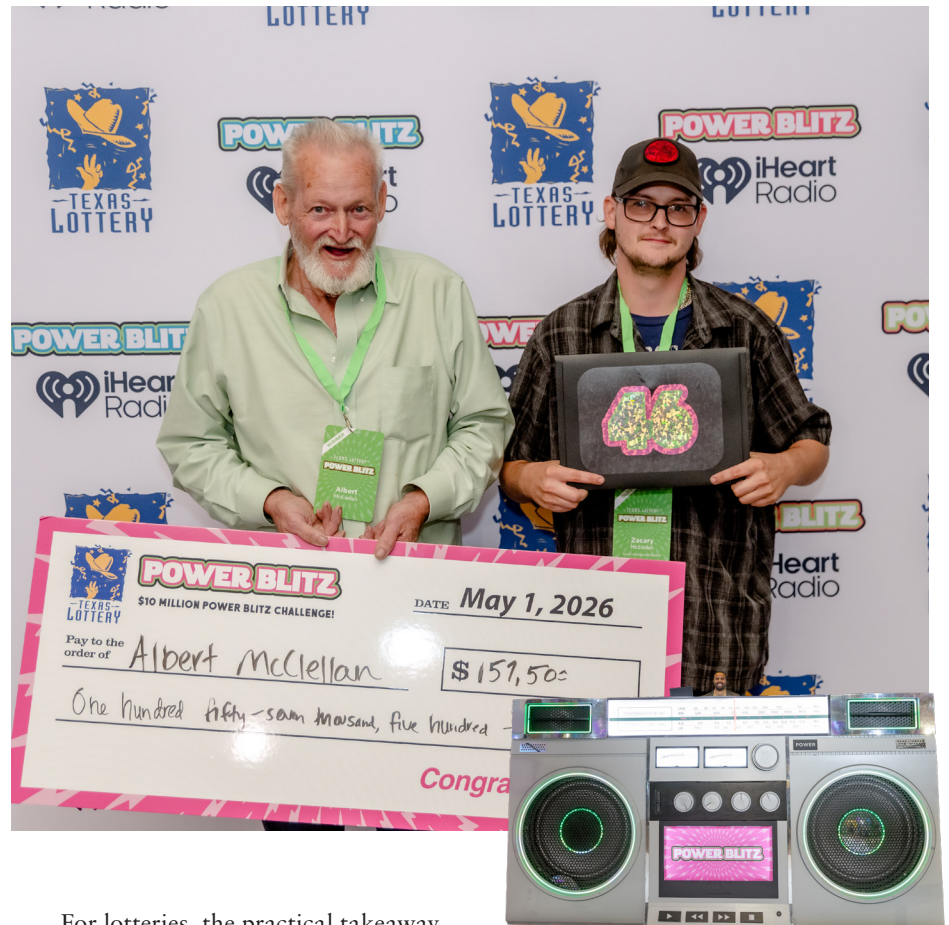
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Organized, Scalable, Repeatable

One of the most impressive aspects of the Austin experience was how seamlessly the moving parts fit together. The transportation. The staging. The hospitality. The exclusive access. Everything felt coordinated and intentional.

That operational consistency is important because experiential promotions only succeed when players feel taken care of from beginning to end. While the prizes create excitement, the execution shapes how winners remember the experience — and whether the promotion generates broader positive sentiment around the lottery brand.

Brightstar's Winner's Choice™ platform appears designed with that reality in mind. The company's approach combines fulfillment, event production, media integration, and promotional support into a repeatable framework that can be customized market by market.



For lotteries, the practical takeaway may be even more significant than the spectacle itself. Programs like Power Blitz demonstrate that experiential promotions no longer need to function solely as aspirational winner trips. Increasingly, they can serve as integrated marketing platforms that generate retail excitement, earned media, social engagement, event visibility, and hundreds of millions of impressions long before winners ever arrive at the event itself.

The winner experience remains the centerpiece, but the marketing value extends far beyond the 50 VIP winners who attended the Austin event. Broadcast radio or podcast listeners, cord-cutters now watching exclusively on streaming services like Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, etc., festival attendees, and players who encounter the promotion now become part of a broader campaign designed to keep the lottery's brand visible and relevant.

In an era of constrained advertising budgets, that kind of built-in augmentation may be just as valuable as the experiential prize itself.

An old-school boombox served as the DJ stand for BSL's Power Blitz Challenge.

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