

# Attractions

## MANAGEMENT

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# Attractions

## MANAGEMENT

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VOL 23 4 2018

The legendary  
George Carlin  
is among those  
honoured in the  
new National  
Comedy Center

# THE

# PERFECT

# PUNCHLINE

The first ever museum  
dedicated to telling the story  
of American comedy opens

### EVERMORE

Ken Bretschneider  
and Josh Shipley on  
the US's newest park

### IAAPA 2018

What to expect from  
the largest attractions  
show of the year

### JOANNA LUMLEY

Iconic British actress  
backs plans for Peter  
Pan literary attraction





East Beach Thom Island, Vietnam



Xixi Park Hangzhou, China



Attraction Concept, Hong Kong



Roma Entertainment Center Rome, Italy



Xiangjiang Joy City Changsha, China





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# The power of IPs

Theme park operators have long known the value of IPs in creating amazing visitor experiences. Now the museums and heritage sector is starting to work in this area, creating opportunities for collaboration

**F**rom Mickey and Minnie to Harry and Hermione, theme park operators have deep experience of deploying IPs to drive the development of physical and digital assets to create billion dollar values.

Now the heritage and museums sector is starting to get into its stride in exploiting the potential of its IPs for the creation of new attractions and visitor engagement.

Leading the way were initiatives such as the Louvre and Guggenheim being licensed into Abu Dhabi and now we're witnessing an acceleration of this trend, as developers worldwide go looking for a fast track to success, by partnering with precious, unique cultural properties.

In this issue, for example, we report on a new heritage and cultural centre in San Weng, Jiangxi Province, South China, which will see the development of replicas of William Shakespeare's homes as visitor attractions.

The developments are the result of a collaboration between Fuzhou Culture Tourism Investment Group in China and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in the UK.

San Weng – a new town currently under construction – will celebrate three masters of literature, William Shakespeare, Miguel de Cervantes and Tang Xianzu, the Ming Dynasty playwright and 'Shakespeare of the Orient'.

As part of the tribute, the town will feature an entire quarter dedicated to Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare's birthplace (see page 29 for more details).

This growing interest in celebrating heritage is creating opportunities for museums and heritage brands of international significance, to both spread their influence and generate revenue by sharing their IPs for the good of all.

A phenomenal new report, *Heritage and the Economy 2018*, just published by Historic England, gives deep insight into why heritage IPs are so sought after by nations where culture is valued, but in short supply.



Shakespeare's birthplace will be replicated in China

Authentic IPs are sought after in places where culture and heritage are valued, but in short supply

It proves how the presence of heritage boosts property values, tourism and job creation and injects value into local economies, saying: "Places with strong, distinctive identities are more likely to prosper than places without them."

As these markets converge, there are learnings to be shared between sectors as operators work to optimise commercial opportunities, while ensuring authenticity.

**Liz Terry, editor**  
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■ p62 Jordan Middleton on fan engagement



■ p12 Joanna Lumley gives her backing to a Peter Pan literary attraction



■ p46 Tom Anstey enters shark-infested waters following an expansion at New York Aquarium



■ p34 The team behind Evermore speak to AM

## 07 Editor's Letter

### 12 People

Meet the people in the news, with iconic British actress Joanna Lumley, director Marco Balich and IAAPA's Hal McEvoy

### 20 Science Centres news

### 21 Visitor Attractions news

### 22 Waterparks news

### 24 Theme Parks news

### 27 Museums & Galleries news

### 29 Heritage news

### 30 Zoos & Aquariums news

### 32 Technology news

## 34 Interview

### Ken Bretschneider and Josh Shipley

Evermore is one of the US's newest theme parks. We speak to CEO Ken Bretschneider and chief creative officer Josh Shipley

## 46 Mystery shopper

### A walk in the shark

Tom Anstey visited the New York Aquarium to find out more about its major expansion

## 54 News report

### Mammoth implications

There are efforts being made to open a park with living woolly mammoths in Siberia

## 56 Rides

### Themed dreams

We take a look at some of the major openings at visitor attractions worldwide

## 62 Theme parks

### Fan power

Jordan Middleton explains how operators can best work with their audiences

## 66 Tourism

### The Tourist Trap

What role could attractions play to keep tourism beneficial for residents and visitors alike? Kath Hudson reports



■ p56 We look at a selection of new ride openings, including Europa Park's EuroSat coaster



■ p82 National Comedy Center opens doors



■ p88 San Francisco's Museum of Ice Cream



■ p100 Kengo Kuma-designed V&A Dundee opens in Scotland

## 77 Show report

### Enabling fun

Tom Anstey was on-hand to see what was on offer at this year's Euro Attractions Show

## 82 Museums

### The perfect punchline

The team behind the US's new National Comedy Center share their experiences

## 88 Museums

### Frozen delights

San Francisco's Museum of Ice Cream is making its stay permanent following a hugely successful first year

## 96 Heritage and museums

### Kicking the dust

The Heritage Lottery Fund has created a scheme to engage young people in heritage

## 100 Openings

### Dundee design

The V&A has opened a new home in Dundee, Scotland

## 110 Show preview

### IAAPA Attractions Expo

The 2018 IAAPA Attractions Expo kicks off on 12 November. Here's what to expect from the show and its exhibitors



On the cover: George Carlin

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For suppliers of products and services in the worldwide attractions industry, turn to page 124

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# Attractions People

“I loved the idea of a centre for storytelling in the house where JM Barrie imagined the adventures he would use to create one of the most popular stories ever written”

**Joanna Lumley** actress



Lumley believes that the new attraction will help to nurture future generations of creative young minds

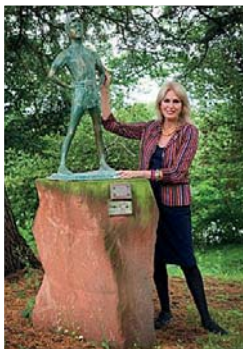


Lumley was named patron of the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust when it was formed in 2009

**A**ctress Joanna Lumley has given her patronage to a *Peter Pan*-themed literary visitor attraction, which is set to open next year, turning a "forgotten corner of Scotland" into a major tourist destination.

Located in Dumfries and Galloway, the historic Moat Brae house is undergoing a major redevelopment to transform it into a national centre for children's literature and storytelling.

Included in the plans will be interactive displays and exhibits designed to entertain and educate families. The centre will also host workshops, artists and writers in residence, giving visitors the chance to meet different authors and creatives.



The house was the inspiration for *Peter Pan*, the novel and play created by JM Barrie, who as a child would spend time in the gardens of Moat Brae "playing pirates". The author and playwright called the house a "sort of Odyssey that was long afterwards to inspire the play of *Peter Pan*".

As part of the restoration, the gardens are being landscaped to become a Neverland Discovery Garden.

Set to open in 2019 and expected to draw more than 250,000 visitors in its first five years of operation, Lumley – who boasts an acting career spanning nearly five decades, with roles in films and television shows such as *The New Avengers*, *Absolutely Fabulous* and most recently *Paddington 2* – has thrown her





weight behind the project, acting as the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust's patron.

"I loved the idea of a centre for children's literature and storytelling in the house where JM Barrie first imagined the adventures he would use to create one of the most popular stories ever written," Lumley tells *Attractions Management*.

"The Moat Brae project matters on many levels. Dumfries and the wider region have had a tough time economically for many years and a new international visitor attraction will make a valuable contribution to all the regeneration work taking place. It's a very beautiful part of Britain and once people discover it they often return."

The Trust was established in 2009, saving the Georgian-era property, which was just three days away from being demolished when it was taken over by the group. Plans were then made to develop the historic location as the country's first centre for children's literature, with Lumley helping to raise £6.1m (US\$8m) of the £8m (US\$10.4m) needed for the full restoration.

"Over the years, my involvement has involved lots of different things, many

**The Trust expects to attract around 250,000 visitors in its first five years and is being built by construction firm Balfour Beatty**

of them great fun," says Lumley. "For example, we organised a fundraiser in London with British actor and comedian David Walliams, where we answered questions and talked about his children's books to a theatre full of young people."

"I've also made videos, spent time meeting people all round Dumfries and Galloway, done a fair few photo shoots and interviews to show how the project has been progressing."

"Ultimately my role is to focus attention on the really important things – the efforts being made by staff and volunteers at Moat Brae to create something that'll be very special in the lives of generations of children."

As the birthplace of *Peter Pan*, the building and its gardens have a significant place in literary history. For Lumley, though it's not just about the past, but also the future –

the house will act as a place of inspiration for young people who are interested in the creative realms of writing, acting and art.

"Moat Brae will give children and young people access to a whole new world of stories and creativity," she says. "While JM Barrie and Peter Pan are very important, this historic location goes far beyond that one story and is about so much more."

"One of our key aims is to have the centre introduce children to tales from all sorts of different times and cultures. Something that has really impressed me is the way it's bringing together writers, poets, illustrators and others from all over the country and beyond. Many of the activities are also being shaped by young people themselves."

"Firing young imaginations is enormously important and that's what Moat Brae is all about," she says. "The more we can ignite a love of stories in young people, the better. It's by doing this that we will nurture the next generation of readers, writers, illustrators, actors, games designers and other creative adults."



## Make the connections

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## “Using the work of a lifetime to tell the story of the Sistine Chapel was a huge responsibility”

**Marco Balich** director



**M**arco Balich, a director of more than 20 opening and closing ceremonies for the Olympic, Paralympic and Winter Olympic Games, has turned his creative mind towards the world of attractions, creating a stunning immersive experience allowing visitors to step inside the works of Michelangelo.

Debuted in Rome, Italy, earlier this year, *Giudizio Universale: Michelangelo and the Secrets of the Sistine Chapel* features an all star line up, with voice acting headlined by Hollywood actress Susan Sarandon and Italian movie star Pierfrancesco Favino.

The musical score for the dramatic piece was composed by British rock star Sting.

Starting in the 16th century with Michelangelo's famous sculpture David, viewers are taken back in time to the quarries of Carrara on the hunt for the perfect piece of marble, which was used to carve the Renaissance masterpiece.

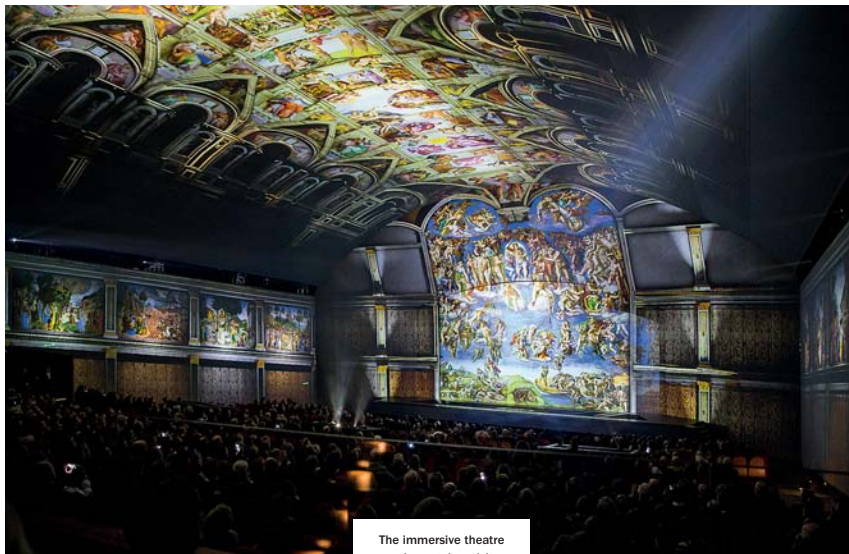
Continuing through his professional life and work, the experience explores the story behind Michelangelo's famous Sistine Chapel ceiling, which forms inside the theatre in front of visitor's eyes.

"With *Giudizio Universale*, we wanted to create a completely new kind of show, in which the genesis of a masterpiece of universal art is narrated, by mixing all the languages that the world of live entertainment has today," says Balich. "And we do all this in the most rigorous respect of the work of Michelangelo."

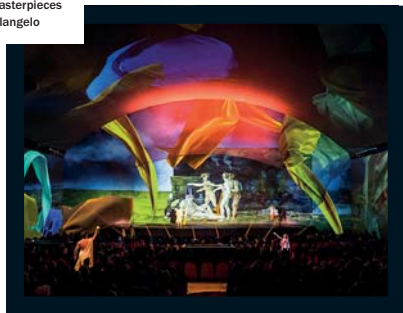
Balich has a rich portfolio, with his expertise in producing large-scale events applauded worldwide. In addition to his work on the Olympics, he was artistic

Balich has a number of high profile projects under his belt, including multiple Olympic ceremonies





The immersive theatre experience takes visitors inside the masterpieces of Michelangelo



director of the Italian Pavilion at the 2015 Milan Expo. He was recognised with an Emmy Award for his work on the Olympics and has received special acknowledgement from the president of Italy, so with such pedigree, it's no surprise that the Vatican agreed to support the project.

The city-state surrounded by Rome, which is the home of the Pope and the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church, donated high resolution imagery of the Sistine Chapel at a reduced rate to Balich, also offering scientific and historical advice to ensure Giudizio Universale's accuracy.

"This project was born and has grown thanks to the support and trust of the Vatican Museums," says Balich.

"To fulfil this trust we wanted the world's greatest talents in the entertainment industry that we were able to involve thanks to the experience accumulated in years of great ceremonies. Those events taught us to inject into our creations the two most important ingredients for a successful show – emotion and authenticity."

Giudizio Universale has been made possible by a private investment of €9m (US\$10.4m). The immersive show takes place inside Rome's former symphony

hall – the Auditorium Conciliazione – which sees Michelangelo's work projected across its walls, ceilings and stage, with dancers and actors also featured to tell the story. The show lasts an hour.

"Using the work of a lifetime to tell the story of a world heritage site as significant as the Sistine Chapel was a privilege and a huge responsibility," says Balich.

"We like to think that the spectators who will come to see Giudizio Universale – especially the younger ones – can leave the Auditorium Conciliazione inspired by a renewed awareness: there is nothing more exciting than the beauty of art."



McEvoy was with the team in May, as IAAPA broke ground on its new Orlando headquarters

“I plan to build on the foundations laid this year that will take IAAPA into its next 100 years”

**Hal McEvoy** president and CEO, IAAPA

**H**al McEvoy will permanently take the reins at IAAPA, being named the organisation's president and CEO by the organisation's Board.

McEvoy – who was named interim president and CEO of IAAPA following Paul Noland's resignation in February – says it's a “dream come true” to lead the global association for the attractions industry.

“Working with the IAAPA team of talented individuals to support the success of our passionate and innovative members around the world is indeed a privilege,” he says. “I'm deeply honoured to be named president and CEO by IAAPA's Board.”

McEvoy joined the association in April 2017, taking up the position of chief financial officer and leaving SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment after more than 42 years at the company.

An active member of IAAPA long before joining the organisation, McEvoy has attended many of its expos and participated in a number of association task forces and panels, with particularly heavy involvement in the organisation's Audit Committee, which was created in 2005. McEvoy has



Hal McEvoy, IAAPA president and CEO

been a member of the committee and also chaired it from 2013 through to 2016.

He has a number of major IAAPA events and projects to oversee from the get go, with the organisation's annual US expo returning to the Orange County Convention Centre in Orlando, Florida in November.

Also in Orlando, IAAPA is currently developing its new global headquarters, which are expected to open in 2019.

“We're extremely proud to be a part of the Central Florida community,” he says. “Bringing our global headquarters to the heart of the attractions industry is the perfect next step for us, as we continue to better serve our members.”

IAAPA's engagement with Orlando and the wider Florida economy is significant, with more than 500 members located in the state and the IAAPA Expo generating an estimated US\$77m for the area each year.

In 2017, more than 38,000 people from 100 different countries attended the event.

“I plan to build on the foundations laid this year that will take IAAPA into the next 100 years,” says McEvoy.

“We will work to give our members the best expos, networking events, and educational programmes, as well as developing and delivering innovative new products and services. Our mission is to tell the story of this important and professional, yet fun-focused industry to the public, policymakers and press around the globe.”

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## Qatar planetarium to open in December

Qatar's first planetarium is scheduled to open its doors in late 2018 as part of a larger expansion of the country's Katara Cultural Village.

Featuring a 22m (72.2ft) screen, and fully equipped with digital projectors, a terrace overlooking the sea and seating for 200 people, the Al Thuraya Planetarium will open its doors in December, according to the village's general manager Khalid bin Ibrahim Al Sulaiti.

Also known as the Planetarium of the Astronomical Chandelier, the attraction covers 2,240sq m (24,000sq ft) and is part of a wider development drive in the region, aimed at increasing both visitor and tourist numbers.

Speaking earlier this year, Al Sulaiti said:



■ The planetarium is part of the Katara Cultural Village

"Katara's strategy aims to utilise the facilities and buildings to create a suitable environment to nurture art and creativity to make Katara a global cultural icon."

Also slated for a December opening is Katara Hills, a tourist

destination featuring green space and gardens covering an area of 361,500sq m (3.9 million sq ft).

In addition, Katara Plaza, a luxury shopping centre, is also being developed in partnership with the Ali Bin Ali Group.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=J4N5F\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=J4N5F_T)

## INDUSTRY OPINION

### Gamification meets citizen dialogues

Herbert Munder

I'd like to invite you to respond to what is both a serious and a joyful invitation.

Serious because we live in serious times – advancing sustainable development, overcoming polarisation and enabling dialogue on complex ethical issues has become an urgent priority and, therefore, central to many cultural organisations' missions, in particular in the field of science engagement.

I believe fostering critical thinking, scientific literacy and dialogue is more crucial than ever: we have an important role to play in both "post truth" and "anti-expert" contexts.

It's also a joyful invitation because I am pleased to introduce PlayDecide, a card game for simple, respectful and fact-based group discussion.

The game enables players to get familiar with a question, see it from different perspectives and form or clarify their own opinion.

PlayDecide also invites players to look at issues as a group: can they reach a positive consensus? Can they propose solutions, define strategies and policies for action, and put themselves in decision and policy makers' shoes?

Originally developed in 2004, the game has just been offered a brand new web platform by Ecsite, allowing players and facilitators to share games and create their own versions.

PlayDecide is being used today in a wide range of dialogue events, by a diverse community of users, including teachers, science engagement professionals, civil society organisations, professional trainers and more. Game topics vary from vaccination to football refereeing.

Try out PlayDecide yourself by visiting [www.playdecide.eu](http://www.playdecide.eu).

Herbert Munder, Ecsite president and general manager of Universum Bremen, Germany



## Aberdeen Science Centre to double in size

A proposed £4.7m (US\$6.1m) renovation of Aberdeen Science Centre in Aberdeen, Scotland, has been given planning approval by the city's council.

Plans for the building include installing a new upper floor, doubling the size of the exhibition space, renovating the existing coffee shop and installing new facilities to cater for the expected increase in the number of visitors.

"This new floor incorporates voids to allow light from above to filter down to the lower levels," said project designers Halliday Fraser Munro.

"In conjunction with the new upper floor, we've introduced a new feature staircase which links the



■ The science centre will double its exhibition space

reception with the new exhibition space. This has an open design allowing views through and up to the exhibits on the new level."

It was reported last year that £1m (US\$1.3m) was being sought from

Aberdeen City Council for the regeneration, while remaining funding would be sourced through a combination of charitable donations and external sources.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=7X5M\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=7X5M_T)



## Merlin plans expansion in Australia and New Zealand

Additional Legoland Discovery Centres and Dungeons attractions are being planned for Australia and New Zealand by operator Merlin Entertainments, according to the region's divisional director Rob Smith.

Smith said that the expansion is planned as a result of improvements in visitor numbers to Merlin's local attractions in Australia for 2018, which are up by three points to 4 per cent.

Merlin's growth in the region, where it's currently the largest visitor attractions operator, is largely due to the Asian inbound tourism market, with visitors from India and China particularly adding value, according to Smith.

"You could almost say that Australia is becoming a short-break destination for certain international markets – the average length of time spent in-destination is definitely shrinking," he said.

Merlin's newest attraction, Legoland Discovery Centre Melbourne, opened in April 2017 and has performed strongly, said Smith, while good snow conditions boosted numbers at its Victoria ski resorts, Mount Hotham and Falls Creek.



■ More Legoland Discovery Centres are on the cards for Merlin in Australia and New Zealand

Merlin is currently the world's second largest attractions operator – with Disney being the largest – and has more than 130 attractions around the world. It entered the Australian market in 2011, acquiring the Sydney Attractions Group, which at

that time operated the Sydney Aquarium, Sydney Tower and Sydney Wildlife World. It operates 13 attractions in total in Australia and New Zealand.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=H6i2s\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=H6i2s_T)



■ Deep Architects designed the gallery

### Mountain gallery completed in China

A dramatic mountain-top arts centre has been built in the Hebei Province of China's Yanshan Mountains.

The Hilltop Gallery – also known as the Phoenix Valley Summit Art Centre – was designed by Chinese architecture studio, Deep Architects (DA).

The 2,600 sq m (28,000sq ft) building has a ballroom, theatre, dining area and exhibition halls.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=9k2K\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=9k2K_T)

## Sydney tunnels to become visitor attraction

Abandoned tunnels under the city of Sydney, Australia are to be turned into a new heritage attraction under plans outlined by the New South Wales (NSW) government.

Originally intended as a transport link between two suburban areas – the Eastern Suburbs and the Northern Beaches – the tunnels, which sit underneath the city centre's St James station, were dug in the 1920s but the plans were stymied by the Great Depression of the 1930s. The tunnels were later used as air raid shelters to protect people during World War Two.

The NSW government is now calling for expressions of interest to turn them into a "world-class" attraction,



■ The tunnels in Sydney were dug in the 1920s

however no concrete plans are in place as to what the attraction would actually be.

"Around the world, hidden spaces are being converted into unique experiences and we want St James Station to be part of that," said NSW transport and infrastructure minister Andrew Constance.

"That's why we're casting the net right across the world. We want the world's best to come up with the best ideas."

St James Station was the first underground station in Australia. It's heritage listed as a place of state significance.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=a3V4F\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=a3V4F_T)

## Six Flags acquires Illinois' Magic Waters

Six Flags is taking ownership of another attraction, adding the Magic Waters Waterpark in Cherry Valley, Illinois, to its growing portfolio.

Starting in Q1 2019, Six Flags has agreed a lease deal with the Rockford Park District Board of Commissioners to run the 43-acre attraction, which has been operated by Rockford Park District since 1988. The attraction will be rebranded as a Six Flags waterpark.

The acquisition is part of a continuing North American expansion drive by the company, which has set out a strategy of acquiring existing properties, allowing it to expand capacity and attendance with minimal investment, while providing



■ Rockford Park District has operated the attraction since 1988

a quick payback and high return on invested capital.

"By having the Six Flags brand in this market, we expect a major increase in tourism, which will have a significant economic impact for our community," said Jay Sandine, Rockford Park

District executive director.

"Six Flags will continue to make capital investments in the waterpark, which frees up district resources to invest in our communities' priorities such as parks, playgrounds and youth."

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=n6w2A\\_2](http://lei.sr?a=n6w2A_2)

## US\$90m waterpark to open in December

The first phase of a new US\$90m indoor/outdoor waterpark is set to open its doors at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

The park will be revealed in two stages, with the indoor half set to launch ahead of the busy Christmas period on 1 December 2018.

Designed by Blur Workshop, indoor facilities at the 111,000sq ft (10,300sq m) waterpark will include a tower with slides up to 46ft (14m), a river ride, a looping raft ride, FlowRider surfing attraction, children's pools, an adult infinity pool and a pool-side bar.

The 106,000sq ft (9,850sq m) outdoor park



■ The resort is owned by REIT, Ryman Hospitality

will open in 2019 and will feature a 315,000 gallon wave pool with a giant LED movie screen, a 45.5ft (14m) slide tower, an adults-only pool and a kids pool with a multi-level play structure.

The resort is owned by Ryman Hospitality, a REIT specialising in group-

oriented, destination hotel assets in urban and resort markets.

"There is really truly nothing like this in the US," said Ryman Hospitality CEO Colin Reed, speaking to local media. "It's an unparalleled waterpark experience."

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=n6U9b\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=n6U9b_T)

### INDUSTRY OPINION

## Necessity driving new ideas in the waterparks sector

Aleatha Ezra

The World Waterpark Association is often asked by media and others about how the industry is faring in any

given year. As you'd expect, the answer varies a bit each year depending on factors that are outside the control of most operators, including weather and economic downturns.

In general, 2017 was considered a tough weather year for large swathes of our global industry, however many signs indicate that 2018 has been considerably better in many regions of the world. While not every park in every region experienced perfect weather every day, the weather was generally more consistent and allowed operators to string more good days together.

Some areas such as European markets are benefitting from an increase in "tourism from within the EU that seems to have returned to affordable European destinations," according to the 2017 TEA/AECOM Global Attractions Attendance Report.

Another contributing factor to how the industry is doing this year: many operators used the offseason to brainstorm some new, innovative ways to market and promote their attractions. As the proverb says, "necessity is the mother of invention". The weather challenges of 2017 galvanised many in the water leisure industry to think creatively about how to be more reactive to good and bad weather days.

Whether it was dynamic pricing strategies or launching new in-park promotions and events to boost attendance, waterpark operators have been actively trying new things in 2018 and seeing positive results.

Aleatha Ezra, director of park member development, WWA





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## Hersheypark plans include park's 'fastest ever' coaster

Hersheypark, the 121-acre (489,000sq m) theme park in Hershey, Pennsylvania, has revealed details of its expansion plans.

The 23-acre (93,000sq m) expansion of Hershey's ChocolateTown will include rides, dining and shopping and is set for Q3 2020.

"Hershey's ChocolateTown will mark the true intersection of where fun meets chocolate," said John Lawn, president and CEO of Hershey Entertainment & Resorts. "ChocolateTown will be a place where chocolate-inspired attractions will transform the guest experience in new and engaging ways."

New additions include Hersheypark's 15th rollercoaster – its "fastest, tallest, longest, sweetest ever", according to the park – a new arrival experience and front gate; a new home for the Carousel, which turns 100 years old in 2019; a flagship store with the largest collection of Hersheypark merchandise; and a fully licensed restaurant, bar and patio.

Other features include an ice cream parlour and confectionary scratch kitchen, a Starbucks and the largest kettle corn location at Hersheypark.



■ New features coming to the area include a new arrival experience and front gate

An investment of US\$100m has been ploughed into the venture, which is the largest capital investment in Hershey Entertainment & Resorts' history.

Construction is due to begin in January 2019 and Hersheypark will remain fully

operational during the 2019 season until the opening in 2020.

"This will be a definitive project for Hersheypark, HE&R and our destination," said Lawn.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?n=w6V7q\\_T](http://lei.sr?n=w6V7q_T)



■ Adlabs already has a site in Khopoli

## Adlabs plans new theme park in India

Adlabs Entertainment – owner of Adlabs Imagica in Khalapur – has announced plans to develop a major theme park project in Amaravati, India.

Amaravati – a city being built across 217sq km (83sq miles) – will become the future state capital of Andhra Pradesh and as part of that development, Adlabs is planning a new theme park development worth INR5.5bn (US\$88m).

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?n=e3M8x\\_T](http://lei.sr?n=e3M8x_T)

## Moomins attraction completes construction

Japan's first Moomins-themed amusement park, located in Hanno near Tokyo, has completed construction and will begin a phased opening next month.

The whole park is called Metsa and is split into two areas – Metsa Village, which features northern-European restaurants and other facilities and Moomin Valley Park, an amusement park which is built around stories from the popular Finnish cartoon *The Moomins*.

Moomin Valley Park will officially open in March 2019, while Metsa Village will open in November.

Peekka Orpana, the Finnish ambassador to Japan, was on-hand at a ceremony to celebrate the completion of the park, which was built



■ The Moomins stories were first published in 1945

in a 190,000sq m (2 million sq ft) forest area by Lake Miyazawako.

Investment bank FinTech Global (FGI) is behind the development and remains a major stakeholder in the project. The Tokyo-based firm initially wanted to launch the park in 2015 but had difficulties finding

the right site for it. FGI signed a Basic Agreement on Local Renaissance with the city of Hanno to set out the development's parameters. According to FGI, this agreement underpinned joint efforts to attract tourists to both the theme park and to Hanno.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?n=F289y\\_T](http://lei.sr?n=F289y_T)





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## Stockholm Nationalmuseum reopens following refurbishment

Larger exhibition areas across three floors will showcase more than 5,000 artworks at the reopened Nationalmuseum in Stockholm, Sweden, following a revamp.

With work on show ranging from the 16th century to the present day, Nationalmuseum also displays drawings, prints, portrait photography, ceramics and applied arts.

The museum is Sweden's largest museum of art and design, and its collections comprise more than 700,000 objects in total. It was originally built between 1844 and 1866 and was designed by German architect Friedrich August Stüler.

The building has been repurposed for the museum's changing needs over the years. However, it's never had a full renovation and this one has been undertaken to meet modern international safety, climate control, fire regulation, working environment and logistics standards.

"The renovation project by two leading Scandinavian architecture practices – Wingårdh and Wikerstål Arkitekter – has created a modern, visitor-friendly museum



■ The museum's collection comprises more than 700,000 objects

environment better equipped for the display of art on both a large and a small scale while preserving the integrity of the museum's architectural heritage," the museum said in a statement. "The visitor experience has been improved by opening

more than 300 windows in the building, the majority of which have been shuttered since the 1930s, to create light-filled spaces controlled by a new lighting system sensitive to changes in daylight."

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=p5k3t\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=p5k3t_T)



■ The ice attraction will open in 2019

### Ice art gallery to open in Reykjavik

Norwegian entrepreneur Kirsten-Marie Holmen is to open an ice-themed art gallery in Iceland.

Located on Laugavegur, the main commercial street in Reykjavik, the new gallery is set to open in November 2019.

Magic Ice Reykjavik will be part of a franchise that currently has three locations in Norway, one in Denmark and one in the US Virgin Islands.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=R2s4c\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=R2s4c_T)

## Largest museum in western Canada reopens

The history of Alberta, Canada, is now on display at the newly rebuilt Royal Alberta Museum (RAM) in Edmonton, following seven years of planning and development.

The museum building – now the largest in western Canada – is somewhat of an exhibition itself, with glazed walls that glow and then dissolve as the evening wears on and interior windows that allow views into its research laboratories, giving visitors the chance to see scientific and research work first hand.

At night, the museum's Roundhouse is transformed, with laser-cut metal panels illuminated to form an image of the night sky for visitors. In the day, the panel acts as a solar shade for the building,



■ The building was designed by architects Dialog

The museum stretches to a huge 419,000sq ft (38,926sq m) in area, effectively doubling the size of its predecessor.

It boasts a range of natural and human history displays, long-term exhibition and children's galleries, as well as curatorial, research and

collection spaces and a 11,840sq ft (1,100sq m) feature gallery.

The building was designed by architects Dialog, who won a 2011 competition for a design-builder in collaboration with a build team including Ledor and Lundholm.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=E9x3P\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=E9x3P_T)



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## Replica Shakespeare's birthplace to be built in China

A new heritage and cultural centre in Jiangxi province, south China, will see the development of two replicas of William Shakespeare's historic homes, which will become visitor attractions when completed.

San Weng is a new town currently under construction that will celebrate three great literary figures – Shakespeare, Miguel de Cervantes and Tang Xianzu.

As part of the tribute, the town will feature an entire quarter dedicated to Stratford-upon-Avon – the poet, playwright and actor's hometown.

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust will act as the main consultant to the project, which will see Shakespeare's Birthplace and his adult home at New Place – both in Stratford-upon-Avon, England – duplicated.

The trust will provide historical and contemporary data for the houses' design and construction, giving guidance on traditional building methods and materials and support for exhibition content.

"This innovative, two-way partnership will significantly advance our charitable objective to promote worldwide the enjoyment and understanding of Shakespeare's works, life



ART PHOTO/AMT MURIELL

■ The development, supported by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, will open in 2020

and times," said Peter Kyle, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust chair. "By providing our knowledge and expertise to help the team to create an authentic spirit of place, we will enable more of our ongoing work here in the UK to conserve Shakespeare's legacy.

"Shakespeare speaks to all humanity, transcending borders and barriers and he is a powerful ambassador for the growing cultural, creative and tourism ties between the UK and China."

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=8B4M7\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=8B4M7_T)



PHOTO LOTUS

■ Feilden+Mawson are project architects

### Lotus plans heritage centre and museum

Car manufacturer Lotus is planning a new heritage centre and museum at its home-base in Norfolk, UK.

The home of the iconic car brand for more than 50 years, its Hethel site will be redeveloped to include a new Customer Experience Centre, while the heritage centre and museum will incorporate the original main office, showcasing a wide range of Lotus vehicles and exhibitions on-site.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=m6y2x\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=m6y2x_T)

## Norwich Castle Museum granted £9.2m

The historic Keep at Norwich Castle in Britain is to be restored to resemble its Norman heyday following the injection of £9.2m (US\$11.8m) financing from UK grants body the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Detailed plans have been submitted for the renovation and, if approved, construction will begin in Q2 2019 and the transformed castle will reopen in 2020.

Under the plans, operator Norfolk Museums Service has included the restoration of the original Norman floor level in the keep, making all five levels accessible for the first time.

Works will also include the development of a new medieval gallery – designed in partnership with the British Museum – new visitor



■ The plans have been supported by the British Museum

and school entrances and new visitor facilities, such as a café, shop and digital learning spaces.

The British Museum has been a lead partner throughout, developing proposals for the new medieval gallery, while the University of East Anglia has acted in an advisory capacity.

"We are delighted to be working on the project and will lend around 60 important objects for the British Museum Gallery of the Medieval Period, which will form part of the new displays in the castle keep," said British Museum director Hartwig Fischer.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=p5v2R\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=p5v2R_T)

## AZA's US\$1bn conservation target on track after record year

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) is on target to spend US\$1bn on conservation efforts in the next five years, after the organisation reported record breaking contributions from its members benefitting multiple initiatives worldwide.

In 2017, AZA members funded a record-breaking US\$220m-worth of field conservation initiatives. Included in that figure, members contributed US\$15.7m towards the organisation's SAFE (Saving Animals From Extinction) programme – a scheme that prioritises strategic planning for field conservation in the AZA community and builds on existing recovery plans for the world's most threatened species.

"AZA and its member facilities are committed to a mission of conserving wildlife and wild places," said Dan Ashe, AZA president and CEO.

"We're consistently increasing efforts to save species from extinction through AZA SAFE and other local and international projects. We're also well on the way to meeting and exceeding our ambitious goal to invest US\$1bn in conservation in the next five years."



■ The AZA has set a target of US\$1bn for conservation efforts worldwide in the next five years

Revealed as part of the AZA's *Annual Report on Conservation and Science*, in 2017, the organisation's members ran conservation programmes in 128 countries, which the report says benefitted 863 species and subspecies. More than

280 of those were listed as endangered or threatened under the US Endangered Species Act. The report also highlighted AZA members' efforts in education, research and green practice.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=u2A2t\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=u2A2t_T)



■ The aquarium will cost US\$70m

## Brevard Zoo given boost for aquarium

Florida's Brevard Zoo's plans for a lagoon-themed aquarium has received a significant boost from a US\$10m tax funding scheme from Brevard County.

The US\$70m Indian River Lagoon Conservation Campus and Aquarium will have a large educational component, focusing on the lagoon itself, with 12 indoor and five outdoor exhibits.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=B7A9k\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=B7A9k_T)

## San Antonio Zoo plans US\$200m expansion

Officials at the San Antonio Zoo are expanding the 104-year-old visitor attraction, unveiling a US\$200m masterplan for the historic site.

The zoo in Texas, US, has had its development plan for the next 20 years laid out by its leaders, starting with a new US\$1m rhino habitat, which broke ground last month.

"We've been working on our masterplan for well over a year now and we're excited to build on the momentum we've gained with recent improvements to the zoo," Tim Morrow, CEO and executive director of the zoo told *Attractions Management*.

"Over the next 20 years we'll create new, large, naturalistic habitats in ways



■ The masterplan will include naturalistic habitats

never seen before by our visitors, taking advantage of current zoo spaces, as well as underutilised land on our property which will be fully transformed."

Included in the plan is a concept for a safari-style park, with wide open spaces which will be home to a variety of different animals.

New animals could be included in the masterplan following a visitor survey, with gorillas, orangutans and polar bears all requested.

Essential infrastructure work is also included, with major upgrades to plumbing among other improvements being planned.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr?a=u2A2t\\_T](http://lei.sr?a=u2A2t_T)



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## Netflix's *Black Mirror* offers viewers branching narratives

The upcoming season of the Emmy Award-winning sci-fi series *Black Mirror*, due for release in December, will have an episode that allows users to choose their own story.

The episode is to be the first of a number of viewers' choice specials across broadcaster Netflix's 'Originals' range of shows, which will potentially include two new adaptations of video games.

This isn't the first time Netflix has dabbled in these areas. In 2017, the online broadcaster released a new feature based on *Puss-in-Boots* called *Puss in Book: Trapped in an Epic Tale*. Aimed at children, the show used interactive cut scenes to allow viewers to select how they wanted the story to play out from branching decision paths.

After *Puss in Book: Trapped in an Epic Tale* came two more interactive children's shows, namely *Buddy Thunderstruck: The Maybe Pile* and *Stretch Armstrong: The Breakout*, while a fourth interactive kids show, *Minecraft: Story Mode* will air on 7 November 2018.

The implications of all of this new interactive programming for the attractions



■ *Black Mirror* is set to introduce interactive episodes and plots to the series

industry could be significant. In 2017, Aaron Bradbury, VFX supervisor for immersive storytelling studio NSC Creative, briefed *Attractions Management* on the possibilities of interactive experiences at visitor attractions, saying:

"We know there's a way to make interactive narratives work meaningfully," he said. "As I embark on a journey into multi-narrative experiences in VR, I hope there's a meaningful destination."

■ Details: [http://lei.sr7a-m9U3B\\_T](http://lei.sr7a-m9U3B_T)



■ Art becomes a puzzle with the app

### Gallery launches AR puzzle game

US art museum the Minneapolis Institute of Art (MIA) has launched a new augmented reality app that is able to transform spaces into giant puzzles.

Taking visitors through 12 puzzles, 'Riddle Mia This' encourages people to interact with works of art, as well as MIA's physical space, inviting them to search for clues in 12 galleries spread across two floors.

■ Details: [http://lei.sr7a-2k9Y4\\_T](http://lei.sr7a-2k9Y4_T)

## Art museum turns drawings into instruments

An art gallery in the US has created a new installation where visitors can create music using its exhibits.

Located in Brunswick, Maine, the Bowdoin College Museum of Art created the new exhibition, which comprises four large drawings on separate walls of the gallery. Moving along the art wall with a smartphone, different pitches and tones play based on the art itself.

The works have been created by artist-in-residence Linn Meyers. They were created alongside an interactive sound installation, called *Listening Glass*, by interactive and audio artists Rebecca Bray, James Bigbee Garver and Josh Knowles.

The drawings are a series of curved and squiggled



■ The drawn work of Linn Meyers can be translated into music

lines that develop more heavily in texture from left to right. As users move their smartphones across and around them, they create sounds which vary from point to point.

"The wall drawings are always usually in response to the architecture, but

with this particular piece the architecture was just one of the elements that the drawing responds to," said Meyer. "It was made in response to the architecture and equally in response to the technology and the sound."

■ Details: [http://lei.sr7a-2k9Y4\\_T](http://lei.sr7a-2k9Y4_T)



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# KEN BRETSCHNEIDER & JOSH SHIPLEY



Evermore is one of the newest theme parks in the US. CEO Ken Bretschneider and chief creative officer Josh Shipley talk to *Attractions Management* about their plans for the park and how they got to this point

Tom Anstey, managing editor,  
Attractions Management

Josh Shipley (left) and Ken Bretschneider (right) worked together to bring the fantasy world of Evermore to life



Evermore is filled with a cast of characters for its visitors to interact with

**E**vermore – a first of a kind theme park which is based on role play experiences – was spawned from two of the most creative minds in the attractions industry.

CEO, Ken Bretschneider, started out as an artist, becoming involved with digital arts, 3D animation and videogame development at a young age.

"As a child I always felt escapism was a really important thing," he says, speaking to *Attractions Management*.

"I grew up in a rough situation, with a very abusive father, but I had the wonderful opportunity of being around other people who were mostly artists. They helped me escape out of my negative world and embrace a positive one. That really meant a lot to me and set an important tone through my entire life."

While focusing on his art, Bretschneider also showed his entrepreneurial side, creating a number of new products and

companies based on innovative concepts, with some proving to be a hit.

His major success came in 2002 when he founded DigiCert – an internet company that verifies the authenticity of secure websites on behalf of web browsers.

Initially founded using US\$30,000 of his own money, he sold DigiCert a decade later in a multi-million dollar deal, with the company going on to become a multi-billion dollar asset.

More recently, Bretschneider co-founded virtual reality company The Void.

"I liked the creative aspects of being an entrepreneur," he says. "I was fortunate enough to have a couple of successes along the way that allowed me and afforded me the ability to create everything I'm building now."

Despite these successes Bretschneider, has always had one dream – Evermore. Designed as an old-world, gothic-styled European village, the brand new theme

park concept combines theatrical performance, movie-quality costumes, state-of-the-art effects, and cutting-edge technologies to create an experience unlike any other currently on the market.

### Trick becomes treat

As an unintended precursor to Evermore, in 2008 Bretschneider and his family started hosting special Halloween events at their home in Lindon, Utah – a city with a population of around 11,000. These events were so anticipated and spectacular that by 2013, practically the entire city's population was visiting the 22,000sq ft (2,000sq m) property over the course of two days.

"It was originally an event for my wife, daughters, surrogate kids, neighbours and friends," says Bretschneider.

"They all worked together on an immersive production at our home. There was the ghost adventure and then we





The Evermore experience is brought to life through theatrical performance, movie quality costumes and state-of-the-art effects



► did a Victorian graveyard haunt. Every year we kept building it bigger. In 2013, a year after I sold DigiCert, we had 11,000 people come through our house. You can imagine in a small town how crazy that is. Linden City Police had to figure out where to put people and direct everyone, because we had waves of thousands of people coming into our house."

It was then that Bretschneider recognised the niche he had carved, in creating a detailed immersive experience based on storytelling. To expand on this idea, he stepped down as CEO of the Void in early 2017, placing his full attention on the realisation of Evermore.

"We live our lives through story," he says. "People love experience and

that's what life is. I decided the business I wanted to be in and the thing that I was most passionate about is creating experience. To some degree, I did that with The Void. What I'm doing with Evermore is taking that idea to the physical world of doing things to immerse people and to get a deeper, richer experience based on story. That's what this idea is all about."

## A spark of imagination

Work started on Evermore in 2017 with a US\$50m investment. Josh Shipley, who at the time worked for Disney Imagineering, caught wind of the project and was very intrigued in Bretschneider's ideas.

"My daughter ended up in Utah as a student in 2014," he says. "She went over

to Ken's Pumpkin Fest event because it looked like this weird, new, fun Halloween thing. She called me and said, 'I wish you could be here right now, this is one of the most amazing Halloween things I've ever been to and it's super fun'."

Working for Disney Imagineering and seeing spectacular, well-known Halloween shows such as Universal's Fright Nights and Knott's Berry Farm's Scary Farm event, Shipley was surprised that there was such a popular event in such an unknown region for major attractions.

"I was confused by what my daughter was telling me," says Shipley. "I'm down at Imagineering, working in the big realm of themed entertainment offerings, and she's saying, 'I'm out here in the



As the seasons change,  
so does the gothic park's  
storyline and aesthetic



middle of a field in Utah having the best Halloween experience I've ever had."

After doing some digging, Shipley discovered that it wasn't a company putting on this amazing production, rather one man – Ken Bretschneider – backed essentially by his friends and family.

"For New Year's 2017, we decided on a whim to drive up to Utah and visit family while the kids were going back to school. We didn't have any plans, and I'd seen something posted that said Evermore was back in development. It interested me so I went to LinkedIn and I found Ken on there. I sent him a note asking to meet up.

"We went and sat for this half hour meeting, and then two-and-a-half hours later I was so blown away by how this

BB

I was so blown away  
by how this person  
was willing to take  
this massive risk and  
try something new

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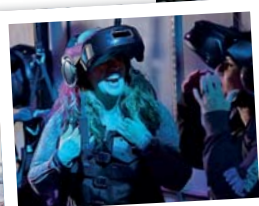
person was willing to take this massive risk and try something new.

"At the time, I didn't feel like we were taking big risks at Disney anymore. I would go into several pitch meetings and instead of them saying things like, 'let's try this new thing', the responses I was getting instead were, 'has somebody else done this yet, we'd like to know it's been proven'. It was a risk-averse environment.

"I go from that, to this guy saying, 'I know this hasn't been done before, but that's what sounds fun to me'. After the meeting, Ken said 'let's keep talking', and we did, with him eventually offering me the position of chief creative officer for Evermore."

Now working together, Bretschneider and Shipley conceptualised the idea

Virtual reality and infrared devices are just two examples of technologies Evermore's management is planning to incorporate



## IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGIES

**THE VOID** – Making its debut in July 2016, The Void uses virtual reality hardware with motion tracking, haptic feedback and special effects systems to explore and interact with virtual settings within the confines of specially-designed environments.

Debuting with a Ghostbusters-themed VR attraction at Madame Tussauds in New York City, The Void has gone from strength-to-strength,

becoming prominent in the VR realm. It was among the first major attractions anywhere in the world to be built around mixed reality content.

**MAGIQUEST** – First opened in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, in 2005, MagiQuest is an interactive live-action, role playing game, where players embark on quests and adventures using magic wands to solve the mysteries of the game.

Players use an infrared device – formed into a wand – to interact with objects. By waving and pointing the wand at an object, players activate different parts of the quest. Doing things like pointing a wand at a treasure will cause the chest to open, awarding an amount of gold to the player's account.

Applied to Evermore, these kind of technologies would offer a new level of immersion to the park.

► of Evermore, putting storytelling and immersion at the forefront of everything they created in the fantasy world.

"We built Evermore off the idea that we can create productions that are story-driven and involve a lot of detail in the production value, almost like a film," says Bretschneider. "That was always our goal. For one night you can immerse someone into a story and they can feel like they've left this humdrum world for a moment and experience some kind of fantastical story driven experience."

"It's different in that when you go to most theme parks – and I'm not in any way cutting down the experience at those parks. They're great and I really enjoy places like Universal or Disney, but they're primarily a ride-based experience."

"Our product is different to that. At Evermore, we offer a more elaborate and immersive production. There are also more characters and there's more gamification going on within our visitor experiences."

### Technological advancement

Evermore, which covers 479,000sq ft (44,500sq m) has been built effectively as a giant stage for visitors to explore. Depending on whether or not they want to get involved with this world, guests can choose just to explore the park, take in its scenery and watch different scenes unfold, or they can become part of the action and follow a quest line in the experience.

"We've built it from the ground up with the idea that the park is dedicated to this level of immersion and role play," says Shipley.

"From a fantasy, storytelling aspect, really the only thing that's been approached at this level – and I do say storytelling because it's not a physical build out – is the concept of Westworld, which is the idea that you would take your day and dedicate it to playing, embracing the world around you as being something different, with yourself playing an integral role to that product. That's what we are at Evermore."

The technology of the fictional WestWorld might not be there right now but Evermore is prepared for the future, says Shipley: "One day the user experience will speak on a technological level. We're actively pursuing that now, so new things will start to come online fairly soon."

"What this means is it's not just you that's coming to Evermore for the day

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Evermore is a performance playing out on what is being touted as the "world's largest stage"

BB

The park is designed so that we can take advantage of technology as a way to help create magic

BB

► or the evening and playing through for that day, it's every time you enter. The residents of Evermore, as well as other guests, will start to build your personality and persona and continue to be a part of this living, breathing world."

Looking to the future, this concept is one that the team at Evermore plans to build on, with the park future-proofed to adopt new technologies.

"We've built this as a smart park," says Shipley. "There's still a lot to come online with those efforts, because it's quite robust. Underneath the park are miles of wiring and conduits, which in the future will be activated as new technologies come in. There are moments in the park, where we'd love to have technology that's able to interact with you in real-time. Not just in real-time in the sense of asking a question, but in the sense that something would recognise you, be aware of what you've done in the past, to help or thwart the efforts of the characters in the park and continue to engage.

"We're not necessarily pursuing robots like in WestWorld, but we're definitely ramping up for a very robust technologically smart park concept."

Bretschneider went into more detail, revealing some of the planned technology uses coming to Evermore.

"We can do things we haven't been able to do before and the park is designed so we can take advantage of technology as a way to create magic," he says. "That could be by doing something as simple as having really good interactive lighting, but could also involve reality and things like aromas.

"We have interactive elements like 3D projection mapping and we're planning to implement human tracked 3D projection mapping, which will be used to create magical costumes.

"In time, we plan on implementing other technologies. For example we're working with MagiQuest to create interactive elements within our Mythos experience that you can purchase at very low cost. These will be things such as magic wands, keys and other environmental interactives you can use around the park.

"As Evermore comes of age, we want to use other technologies such as augmented reality and artificial intelligence where we can add physical actors into an environment and guests can experience discovering things – objects or characters – using these wearable or holdable augmented reality devices. It's not there yet, but we know it's coming. Technology is exploding, so once it gets to a stage that it's more than just a gimmick, we'll be implementing that technology."

## Storytelling supreme

The experience at Evermore will be different depending on the time of year, encouraging repeat visits. The debut season was Mythos – A magical lantern festival based on Norse mythology that celebrates the light of summer. For the Autumn, Evermore enters Lore, a haunted experience from Celtic folklore that explores the battle with darkness. In the winter, Aurora brings a Dickensian feel, with a magical snowy festival taking place through Christmas.

"The basis of our story is that Evermore sits on an energy gateway," says Shipley. "Evermore sits along these energy lines, which the portal crosses over at certain points of the year, opening different gateways to different worlds. It's like our own Narnia, with those other worlds stepping into Evermore. Creating a magic portal is a nice, convenient, storytelling device that helps us continue to build."

The park's European aesthetic was decided on by Bretschneider, with the goal of creating the ultimate stage for his live-action adventure to play out on. Its design not only plays off real-life heritage, but it also provided a fantasy backdrop to bring the Evermore story to life.

"We're one part immersive theatre, one part an event venue and another part gamification," he says.

The lore of Evermore goes far beyond what the visitors see, with an entire backstory created for the fantasy world as the basis for its characters and seasonal events







## WESTWORLD

*Westworld* – a sci-fi Western television series set in a technologically advanced Wild-West-themed amusement park – is in the same vein as *Evermore*.

Populated by android “hosts”, *Westworld* caters for high-paying “guests” who can live their Wild West fantasies – good or bad – without fear of retaliation from the hosts, who are prevented by their programming from harming humans.

*Evermore*’s approach obviously doesn’t follow the dark overtones of *Westworld*, but there are comparisons to be made between the sci-fi and real-life creations.



Sci-fi television series *Westworld* has guests explore an immersive world populated by humanoid robot hosts

Evermore is designed to appeal to a wide range of target markets, with different events drawing different demographics



► "We designed the park as an old European village, because there's a lot of mystique, history, and magic to it.

"Part of the reason for doing that is the genre has proven to be very successful in *The Lord of the Rings*, *Harry Potter* and *Game of Thrones*. Those are all characterised by that design, style and era.

"Evermore has a park element but it's really a themed stage. We create productions within that. You get to enter a story and get immersed in that world when you go into it. This setting is perfect for what we want to do."

## Casting the net

One of the strengths of Evermore is that its offering can be experienced by almost anyone. The park has a widely targeted demographic and can be enjoyed by most people regardless of age or disability.

"Our audience depends on the production," says Bretschneider. "A good comparison would be a traditional theatre. You've got a building with a bunch of seats, theatrical lighting and a stage. What happens there from one month to the next – when a new production comes in – can appeal to different audiences."



We're one part immersive theatre, one part an event venue and another part gamification



One week it's *Beauty and the Beast* and the next maybe it's *The Book of Mormon*. Both those shows appeal to very different audiences. The theatre stays the same but the productions change. Our venue is this giant stage we've created and within that stage the productions change, the lighting changes, the characters change, the set design changes, the story changes and you get to live a different production or experience.

"Right now, we have two different kinds of audience that we're already attracting.

During the earlier hours we make this Halloween experience more 'spooky fun' for families. At night, the whole experience becomes a little bit more macabre and scary, appealing to older visitors."

## Looking forward?

With Evermore only just open, Bretschneider is keeping his feet on the ground for now. However, there could be plans in the future to take the concept to new US states, possibly even overseas.

"We knew Utah was a good market for the first park," he says. "It's vastly less expensive to build here for the kind of quality that we wanted but we're certainly not just ending here."

"We're open to the idea of expanding the Evermore brand further. It's a regional brand but we've already reached national and international audiences in our first few weeks of operation."

"What's really important for us right now is to get it right. As the creator, I will never be satisfied. I want to push Evermore in directions no one's ever experienced before and I want to see it continue to grow. I want to learn and discover new ways to make more magic for guests." ●



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# Clip 'n Climb

## a market leader conquering the highest peaks

Founded in 2005 by John Targett and Tim Wethey, Clip 'n Climb's team are experts in fun and climbing. Going from strength-to-strength, since its foundation, the company is now planning to open 1,000 facilities worldwide by the end of 2022

Clip 'n Climb is not just the leader in the fun climbing market – it innovated the concept. With 215 facilities worldwide, the leisure supplier has set its sights on world domination, with a projected 1,000 facilities due to be in operation by 2022.

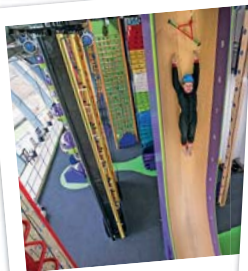
### The creation of a new industry sector

Invented in Christchurch, New Zealand by John Targett and Tim Wethey, Clip 'n Climb is the international market leader of the fun climbing industry, with 215 energy-filled facilities worldwide.

Since the very first centre opened in New Zealand in 2005, Clip 'n Climb has revolutionised indoor climbing. Its theme park meets climbing wall concept has been thrilling and challenging people of all ages, extending the appeal of indoor climbing to a mass audience and creating a new sector in the leisure industry that by 2010 had grown in popularity all over the world.

Testament to the company's vision and enduring success, in early 2017, Clip 'n Climb was completely acquired by Entre-Prises – a specialist in climbing solutions for more than 30 years. Entre-Prises is also a subsidiary of ABEQ, a stock exchange listed French group, that ranks among the leading global players in the sports and leisure sector.

● John Targett  
(second right)  
is co-founder  
of Clip 'n Climb



### The Clip 'n Climb concept

Clip 'n Climb currently offers facility owners and investors more than 40 colourful and unique challenges designed to appeal to everyone from four years old and upwards.

Challenges are created to stimulate several senses simultaneously. Visual impact is coupled with tactility – incorporating soft, rough, cold, plastic and even velcro features to create a unique climbing experience. Whilst all challenges are suitable for people

of all ages, Clip 'n Climb has ranked them from one to five to help business owners choose concepts based on their specific audience demographic.

Outdoor facility owners can also benefit from the company's concepts, with six outdoor challenges now available.

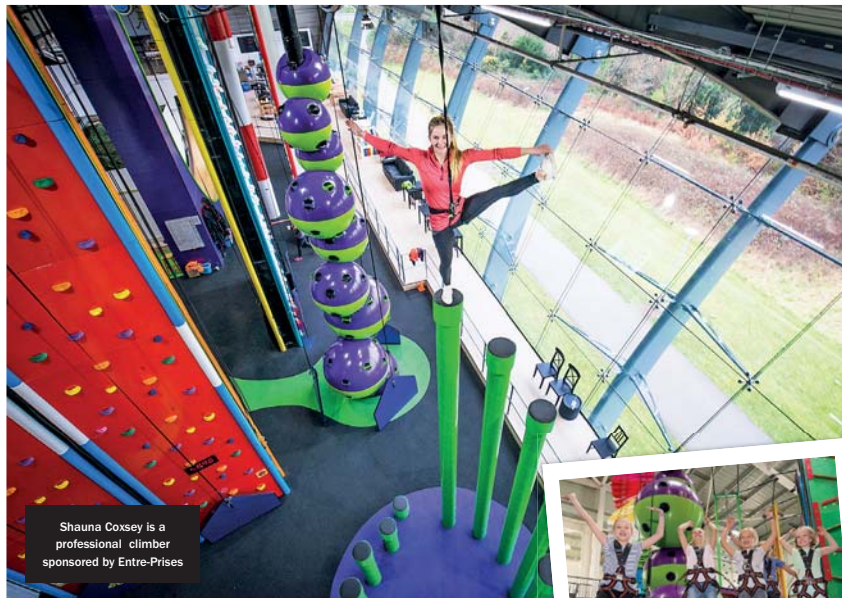
Clip 'n Climb's brand is built around the belief that 'everybody can' – from its customers who can conquer its challenges to its investors who can reap rewards from a fun, strong business. Its brand values

are centred around being fun, brave, free, optimistic, physical and safe. These values are the core of the business.

Demonstrating the flexibility and wide appeal of the concept, the company's market share is currently split between standalone







Shauna Coxsey is a professional climber sponsored by Entre-Prises



● The company operates facilities all over the world, with more than 215 active sites

In 2018, the company has opened 49 centres in 17 different countries, staking a claim in five new territories

Clip 'n Climb centres (35 per cent) in which the entire facility is dedicated to the concept, and zones within retail and leisure facilities (65 per cent), which include trampoline parks, shopping centres and amusement parks.

Entre-Prises has five subsidiaries worldwide taking care of Clip 'n Climb in the US, France, UK, New Zealand and China, and it's actively seeking new distributors. The intention is for the business to increase market share worldwide, having just joined forces with international distributors including RCI, ELI Play and SPI Global.

### Leading the charge on industry innovation

Quality and innovation is, and always has been, central to the business and it boasts a number of industry firsts, which have set it apart from the competition from the outset.

In 2008, John Targett co-invented the Trubule auto-belay system, which allows all participants to climb independently without

any previous experience. Also unique to the company is its BelayMate auto belay system which was engineered by Clip 'n Climb and guarantees complete safety.

An innovator since inception, Clip 'n Climb is not intending to rest on its laurels any time soon. Today it continues to trailblaze with the adoption of new technologies that are changing the face of the sector.

With augmented reality dominating leisure experiences, in 2017 Clip 'n Climb partnered with Valo Climb to offer an augmented climbing wall experience, rivalled by no other. In early 2019, the business is due to launch a new cutting-edge software application and scoring system that will allow people across the world to compete with other Clip 'n Climb climbers – no matter their location.

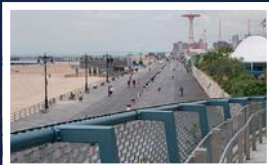
Created to add a brand new dimension to the experience, the concept is designed to embrace the connectivity of the leisure industry and how technology is increasingly breaking down geographic barriers.

### The path to world domination

2018 has been a landmark year for Clip 'n Climb and it's not over yet. To date, the company has opened an unprecedented 49 centres in 17 different countries, staking a claim in five new territories – Portugal, Brazil, Poland, Oman and Denmark. Add to this a further 44 ongoing projects opening very soon and news that the company will unveil its biggest Clip 'n Climb to date in April (located in Ipswich with a mammoth 32 challenges), it's clear that business is following a serious upward trajectory.

Clip 'n Climb is expected to far exceed its ambitions to operate 1,000 facilities worldwide by 2022 – ensuring that generations across the world are embracing the challenge of fun indoor climbing.

● [www.clipnclimb.biz](http://www.clipnclimb.biz)



The 57,500sq ft tanks hold 800,000 gallons of water and are home to 18 shark varieties



# A WALK IN THE SHARK



A new shark-focused extension has opened at the

New York Aquarium. Tom Anstey visited the attraction to find out more about the major expansion

**H**urricane Sandy, which devastated the Eastern Seaboard in 2012, killed 233 people and caused more than US\$70bn worth of damage.

At the time, it was the second-costliest hurricane on record in the US, until Harvey and Maria struck in 2017.

Caught up in the destruction was New York, which was battered by Sandy. 53 people died during the hurricane, with economic losses in New York City estimated at US\$19bn.

Along the famous Coney Island boardwalk in Brooklyn, there was little protection from the elements. As a result, just days before builders were scheduled to break ground on its new extension, the New York Aquarium was severely damaged when the Atlantic Ocean surged over the

Boardwalk and into the six structures that made up the 14-acre aquarium complex, flooding multiple areas, destroying expensive electrical equipment and putting the lives of the collection at risk.

## New beginnings

The aquarium, which opened in Battery Park, New York, in 1896, moved to the site in Brooklyn in 1957. At the time of Hurricane Sandy it was already in need of significant restoration and following the storm, it was closed for an additional seven months, as power was restored and damaged buildings secured and cleared.

Builders finally broke ground for the new building in early 2014 and it opened in June.

Called *Ocean Wonders: Sharks!*, around US\$158m has been invested in the brand new three-storey development. ▶



Interactive displays add a whole new level of immersion for visitors to the new aquarium



Called Ocean Wonders: Sharks!, around US\$158m has been invested in the brand new three-storey aquarium



## MYSTERY SHOPPER

- A 57,500sq ft (5,300sq m) space made up of nine different galleries, Ocean Wonders has been designed to build awareness of the importance of sharks to the health of the world's oceans, as well as educating visitors about the severe threats which sharks face and inspiring them to protect New York's own marine wildlife.

Included in the new exhibit are more than 115 species of marine life, including 18 different types of sharks.

### The visitor experience

Visiting on a weekday the new addition, perhaps unsurprisingly, is significantly more crowded than the rest of the aquarium.

What starts as a more tranquil experience as you look around at the animals on display both indoors and outdoors is suddenly a challenge, as children excitedly take in the different types of sharks, so expect it to be noisy.

The new Ocean Wonders attraction is separate from the rest of the aquarium and to gain access, I had to join a queue which – on a weekday outside school holidays – was a very quick process.

### LOCATION

Surf Avenue & West 8th Street,  
Brooklyn, New York

### OPENING HOURS

10:00 - 17:00 on weekdays,  
10:00 - 17:30 on weekends

### ADMISSION PRICES

General admission for people aged 13+ is US\$29.95. For a child aged 3-12, tickets are US\$24.95, with children 2 or under given free entry. For a senior aged 65 plus, tickets are US\$26.95. Value admission is available on certain days (primarily weekdays) and offers the previous ticket prices with a discount of US\$5



The staff maintaining the queue line were not hugely enthused to be handling the task. When asked questions about how to enter the new addition, they were passive in attitude, which didn't make a great first impression.

The first major visual is a walk-through acrylic tunnel, showcasing a coral reef environment. This stunning element is home to some smaller shark species, including blacktip reef sharks and zebra sharks, with other reef wildlife such as butterflyfish also on display.

### Edutainment messages

The experience is very immersive, with a mock shipwreck a fine example of this.

The focus of the messaging is the importance of sharks to our oceans and the new building houses a range of activities for children that teach them more about the animals. By taking part in these activities, they find out about the shark's relationship with New York City, as well as learning how they reproduce, move and breathe. Visitors also discover the threats faced by sharks and what they can do to help.

The space is made up of nine different galleries,  
which aim to drive awareness of the importance of  
sharks to the health of the world's oceans



Ocean Wonders: Sharks!, enjoyed its grand opening on 30 June, six years on from the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy





In this area, the tanks provide a window into the oceans, also detailing different shipwrecks in the waters off New York that have created their own ecosystems.

Although visually engaging, when we visited, the expansion had only recently opened and was in need of some fine tuning, as quite a few of the interactive elements weren't working.

However, it didn't seem to affect things too much, as the children exploring the new space appeared to be having a very enjoyable experience.

### The shark show

The main attraction is Canyon's Edge – a breathtaking space offering a window onto the world of sharks. With an entire wall taken up by the expansive main tank, the artistically-lit space seems to stretch on forever, fading away into the darkness. This puts prominence on the tank's inhabitants, which include nurse sharks, sand tiger sharks, sandbar sharks, and rough tail stingrays, as well as sea turtles.

The exhibit gallery highlights biologically diverse marine ecosystems found off the coast of New York State

Leaving Canyon's Edge, the final part of the exhibition focuses on plastic.

Hanging from the ceiling as you exit is rubbish which has been collected from the area. Accompanying interactives tell visitors what they can do to cut plastic use and keep the oceans clean. This area also features immersive exhibitions showing the real-world cost of overfishing and what efforts can be made to help sustainability.

Using interactive screens in a restaurant setting, visitors can "place an order" for



different types of fish and see whether or not it's a good choice for the oceans.

Upon exiting, there's small gift shop selling items related to the exhibition.

### Iconic design

Presented as an "iconic" addition to the New York skyline, the building and exhibition design is a collaboration between ►



Visitors can walk through the hull of a local shipwreck, representing one of the more than 60 wrecks found along the New York coastline

the Wildlife Conservation Society's (WCS) Design Department, the New York-based Edelman Sultan Knox Wood, Doyle Partners, and Seattle-based interdisciplinary design firm The Portico Group.

Standing alone on the boardwalk, the new building is dramatic and eye-catching. Chief architect for WSC, Susan Chin, has led the team to create a design which is "inspired by nature", with a facade that's "alive and visually magnetic".

Rising out of the boardwalk, the spiraling structure is wrapped in a 1,100-foot-long (335m) Shimmer Wall, which has been created by environmental artist Ned Kahn. The dynamic structure is designed to be ever-changing and driven by the forces of nature, and more than 33,000 aluminium flappers attached to the wall move individually with the wind.

In addition to being able to explore the building's interior, a sloping pathway spirals around the outside, leading visitors to

## WHAT'S THE SCORE?

Staff	6/10
Cleanliness	8/10
Experience	9/10
Value for money	9/10
Toilets	8/10
<b>Overall experience</b>	<b>8/10</b>

Ocean Overlook, an elevated viewing point which looks out over the Coney Island boardwalk, beach, and surrounding New York waters. From the lookout, guests can see important local habitats such as Sandy Hook, and enjoy sustainably-sourced food in the aquarium's rooftop restaurant.

Education is a priority for the newly-opened attraction, with around 60,000 young people and adults expected to participate each year in the aquarium's education programmes.

To support this, the new building features a 1,500sq ft (140sq m) education space called the Oceanview Learning Laboratory on its rooftop.

The space has an outdoor terrace where the aquarium's education team offers a rooftop touch tank.

The aquarium also offers dive talks, an overnight sleeper programme, field trips and a summer camp for kids.

## Building a wonder

From a project that started in the wake of the devastation that was caused by Hurricane Sandy, *Ocean Wonders: Sharks!* is indeed a wonder.

While there may have been some teething problems in the early stages of the redevelopment, the new attraction offers a spectacular experience to visitors, giving insights not only into the life of sharks, but also into the ecosystems of New York and surrounding waters. ●



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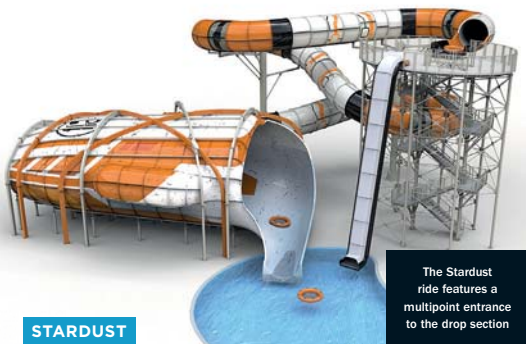
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PolinWaterparks

# Integrating technology into waterparks

Polin Waterparks has a range of products on offers across multiple divisions. The company explains how it's integrating new technologies into its offering



The Stardust ride features a multipoint entrance to the drop section

## STARDUST

Pushing the boundaries of storytelling in waterslides, every detail in the design of the Stardust Waterslide supports its mysterious story and delivers guests on a daring journey. Using a unique, streamlined geometry, the expertly engineered waterslide allows guests to impact their journey throughout its ellipses and orbits. Guests' weight and movement directly affect their raft's speed and course along the slide's path, delivering endless alternatives as they approach the drop section. The result is a journey so unexpected that, as guests exit the ride, they will be consumed with an urgent desire to start the adventure anew. The engineering accomplishment of this slide – delivering a "multipoint entrance" to the drop section – is a significant, ground-breaking accomplishment within the waterslide-design industry. It's also one more substantial example of Polin's customer-oriented, adaptable and efficient understanding of design and engineering.



Polin Waterparks is a 43 year old waterpark company. We're part of the Polin group. At Polin, we do design, manufacturing, engineering and installation of waterparks and water play attractions. We've completed more than 3,000 waterpark projects in 105 countries worldwide and have many patented signature rides.

You might be familiar with our King Cobra, Magic Sphere, Space Shuttle and Spheres, as well as our RTM waterslide manufacturing technology, which has marked many milestones in the industry.

Polin group serves as a one-point solution provider. Our aim is to extend our services to fully serve our clients and help them to integrate different entertainment channels. We want to be a one stop destination point for our clients, which is where our industry is heading. To achieve this, we've established multiple strategic divisions within Polin.

## POLIN GAME TECHNOLOGIES

The PGT division is integrating technology, interactivity and gaming into waterparks and water play attractions. As of March 2017, we've been a research and development centre, where 54 leading engineers are working on new technologies and projects. We focus on high-quality design and innovation patents.

## POLIN DESIGN STUDIO

Polin Design Studio designs the most sophisticated ride types, works with the unique characteristics of each project, maximises the site potential and ensures the success of every project.

## POLIN WAVE PARKS

Creating ideal conditions for surfing in a safe and controlled environment, any time of the year, anywhere in the





## STORM RACER

Just opened at Aqualand Frejus, France. Storm Racer incorporates a variety of key features that set it apart from other waterslides on offer: unique geometry, high capacity, a pioneering ride configuration and an exclusive, interactive "watersplash" feature that ensures intense competition and blasts of adrenaline.

Storm Racer perfectly exemplifies Polin Waterparks' expertise in engineering, R&D and technology integration into its signature rides.

As rafts shoot to the top of the slope, Polin Waterparks' exclusive watersplash sensors detect the exact high point reached by the raft. The sensors are connected to a lighting system that displays results on a score board to create a competitive element for riders. At each level, the lighting system showcases another colour and, if the raft makes it to the top, the Watersplash feature activates, and water splashes over the riders. Winners can be determined based on each hour of the day, day of the week or the entire season to ensure months of competition between teams.

world isn't rocket science because of Polin's ground-breaking technologies, innovative perspective and dedicated team of experts. Polin Wave Parks can generate waves that will ensure hours of fun for guests. The installations are engineered for durability, ease of operation, maintenance, safety and fun. Polin has perfected hundreds of exclusive and successful projects all around the world with that attitude.

## POLIN AQUARIUMS

This division of Polin is entirely dedicated to the design of aquariums, with all projects we undertake in this area including concepts, architecture and design, construction, business plans, procurement of the living creatures and brand identity development.

Polin Aquariums aims to achieve excellence, with its team of experienced architects, engineers, biologists, veterinarians and technical experts.

Debuted in 2016, Polin Aquariums' initial projects are now developing into full-fledged installations.

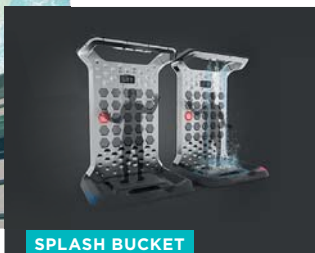
The division allows the company to serve up multifaceted levels of expertise that let clients integrate an entirely new entertainment channel into their facilities.

Polin's oversight includes every imaginable detail of the installations, such as concepts, business plans, architecture, construction, procurement of living creatures and brand identities – all delivered by a team of experienced architects, engineers, biologists, veterinarians and technical experts.

● [www.polin.com.tr](http://www.polin.com.tr)



The Storm Racer uses watersplash sensors to detect each raft's high point, so riders can compete and try to beat the set high score



## SPLASH BUCKET

Head to head competition in stunning interactive splash challenge

Splash Bucket is a one-on-one interactive splash game to see who has better reactions. Players must tap the lit buttons as fast as they can when lights appear on the wall. If successful, their competitor is splashed by nozzles embedded on the wall and also by water splash at the end of the game.

### HIGHLIGHTED FEATURES

- Availability of single gaming module and double gaming modules
- Against the clock and score collection game mode options
- Ability for head-to-head battles by playing simultaneously
- In game variable levels of difficulty
- Water shooters embedded on the modules
- Sound effects available
- 'Easy to Play' and 'Plug'n to Play' features
- Slim and unique design
- Various colour combination options
- Availability of different themed modules

# MAMMOTH IMPLICATIONS

A team of scientists are working to resurrect the woolly mammoth. If they succeed, there are plans to bring the animals to a park in Siberia

**B**ringing animals extinct for more than 10,000 years back to life sounds like something straight from the script of a Hollywood movie. Box office hits like *Jurassic*

Park show the excitement this idea – straight out of science fiction – can have among the general public. Now a combined effort from Russian, Japanese and Korean scientists could turn this idea into a reality.

## A myriaannum in the making

The woolly mammoth, whose closest living relative is the Asian elephant, became extinct around 4,000 years ago due to a number of suspected causes, including increased temperatures, over hunting, habitat shrinkage and a reduction in the supply of fresh water.

We have evidence that mammoths existed in Siberia up to 9,650 years ago, during the Holocene epoch.

Now plans have been tabled to create a one-of-a-kind nature reserve, which will open in Siberia within the next decade. What makes it unique is that if scientists can crack their genetic code, resurrected mammoths will become the centrepiece of the mother nature-defying attraction.

“In 2014 I proposed a project to create an ice age park with mammoths,” said Aisen Nikolaev, the acting head of Russia’s Sakha Republic, while speaking at the recent Eastern Economic Forum (EEF). “Everyone laughed then, but they’re not laughing now. The prospect is no longer fantastical.”

Nikolaev revealed that a joint research project is currently underway,



Using DNA found in frozen woolly mammoths, scientists think they can clone the now extinct mammals

This is the project of the future. I believe that in our lifetime, we’ll be able to clone woolly mammoths

with the long-term goal of bringing back the woolly mammoth within the next decade.

To successfully clone a mammoth, scientists will have to work their way around a roadblock formed by existing mammoth DNA.

Because samples, taken from frozen mammoths, are at least 10,000 years old, the DNA has deteriorated significantly, meaning the cloning process is extremely difficult.

Cloning experiments with extinct horse breeds and cave lions are underway, with the aim of producing mammoth embryos that would be fertilised using elephant tissue.



Aisen Nikolaev is the acting head of Russia’s Sakha Republic

## Ice age attractions

If successful, the creatures would be introduced to Pleistocene Park, a reserve where Russian scientists Sergey

Zimov and Nikita Zimov are currently working to recreate the northern sub-arctic steppe grassland ecosystem that flourished in the area during the last glacial period.

The primary aim of the park would be to recreate the arctic tundra – known as the mammoth steppe.

Scientists working on the park believe that animals, rather than



The majority of woolly mammoths were wiped out 10,000 years ago during the early part of our current geological age

## WOOLLY MAMMOTHS IN CULTURE

During the 21st century, global warming made access to Siberian mammoths easier. The permafrost has thawed faster, exposing its hidden secrets.

Long since its extinction, the woolly mammoth has remained significant in popular culture, starring in films such as *Ice Age* and also proving to be big business for museums.

A 42,000-year-old baby woolly mammoth, discovered in 2007 and named Lyuba, is one of the most intact specimens of the species.

Last year, the Australia Museum debuted *Mammoths - Giants of the Ice Age*, which was Lyuba's first visit.

Backed by the Government of New South Wales, the exhibition gave people across Australia a rare opportunity to explore the age of mammoths. During its run, the exhibition generated more than AU\$3.7m (US\$2.6m) and over 9,000 overnight stays, with hundreds of thousands of people attending the landmark exhibition.

climate, maintained that ecosystem and that it could be restored.

Reintroducing large herbivores to Siberia would adjust the balance of the food chain by introducing a new species, say the scientists, who are promoting the reestablishment of the ancient grassland ecosystems.

"This is the project of the future," said Nikolaev. "I believe that in our lifetime, we'll be able to clone mammoths. All the prerequisites are here for this.

"Today, technology is developing at an explosive pace, and what seemed to be scientific nonsense yesterday, is now an absolutely clear prospect for scientists in the near future.

"I believe that miracles are possible," he added. ●



Lyuba the mammoth generated more than AU\$3.7m for New South Wales



The Moulin Rouge partnership is a first for any theme park

# THEMED DREAMS

From Europa Park's reimagined Moulin Rouge rollercoaster, to SeaWorld's new conservation-focused water ride, we take a look at some of the major openings at visitor attractions worldwide

## EUROSAT COASTALITY VR

Europa Park  
Germany

Mack Rides has taken the idea of space utilisation and visitor throughput to the next level at Europa Park, creating two separate ride experiences on the same track. The main experience is the CanCan Coaster, a traditional rollercoaster ride. The other is a VR coaster ride called Coastality VR.

Both run on the tracks of the Eurosats coaster – a ride built in 1989 inside the park's iconic sphere – which has been completely reimagined, with a new design

### MACK RIDES

and theming based on the Moulin Rouge cabaret in Paris. EuroSat has undergone an extensive renovation at the cost of several million euros as part of a retheming of the French area of the popular German theme park.

The ride's track has been completely rebuilt by Mack Rides over a period of 10 months, with the track layout remaining very similar to its original design as a tribute to its creator – the late Franz Mack.

The most significant change has been the addition of a second station for the ride, so visitors can be queued and loaded separately for the two experiences.

"EuroSat now offers a much smoother ride with a softer track and new trains,"

Europa Park founder Roland Mack tells *Attractions Management*.

"The second station for the ride sits on the other side of the building to CanCan. To do this we've connected the two using some special engineering, creating a switch point on the ride so both coasters can run at the same time."

Created by MackMedia, the EuroSat Coastality VR experience starts in the queue line – a world first for any ride, with the new format dubbed 'roam and ride'.

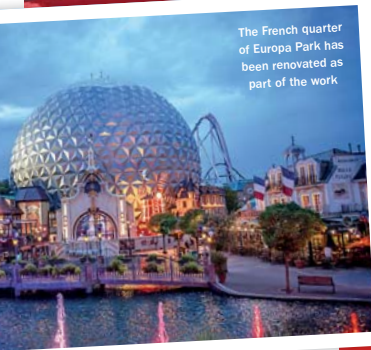
"We use special cameras, reacting to motion detectors on your VR headset," says Mack. "You put them on in the queue line and can move around in the world we've created. You can also see the other people queuing, so you can move







Roland Mack (below) has reimaged the park's iconic EuroSat ride, which was originally built by his father Franz in 1989



The French quarter of Europa Park has been renovated as part of the work



around without walking into them. What's unique is you can also board the ride in VR. It's the first time ever that something has ever been done in this manner."

The track for Coastality is slightly longer than the 922m (3,024ft) CanCan coaster, extending an additional 50m (164ft) to accommodate the second station. The Coastality experience lasts around eight minutes and this part of the ride has a capacity of 210 people an hour. CanCan by comparison lasts three-and-a-half minutes and has the capacity to carry 1,050 people an hour. Both rides reaches speeds of up to 60kmph (37.3mph).

The launch marks the start of a partnership between two family-run businesses, the Macks and the Cléricos.

**"A family working in show business with world class entertainment and collaborating with a theme park is great for our industry"**

The Mack family – who own Europa park and Mack Rides – have teamed with the Cléricos, who have owned and operated the Moulin Rouge in Paris since 1955.

Jacki Clérico, who died in 2013, was credited for reviving the brand over the last fifty years, with his son Jean-Jacques Clérico now in charge.

"We are two families with the same purpose – to entertain people," says Mack.

"Moulin Rouge offer shows, as do we, but we also have our rides. A family,

working in show business with world-class entertainment and collaborating with a theme park is great for our industry."

The partnership marks the first time Moulin Rouge has partnered with a theme park. When the company was first founded in 1889, owners, Joseph Oller and Charles Zidler, planned to build an amusement.

"They didn't succeed with this dream," says Mack. "But here we are 100 years and three generations later and that dream has now been realised at Europa Park."

Infinity Falls opened to the public in October

**"Infinity Falls is the first project built with the sole purpose of Experiences That Matter"**

## ► INFINITY FALLS

SeaWorld  
Orlando, US

INTAMIN

SeaWorld's focus on creating "Experiences That Matter" has continued, with the launch of the operator's latest Orlando attraction – the Intamin-manufactured Infinity Falls river ride.

Featuring a world record 40ft (12.2m) drop, the ride finds inspiration in its design from the rainforests of South America, with guests taken through a jungle as they travel along the 1,520ft (460 m) rapids.

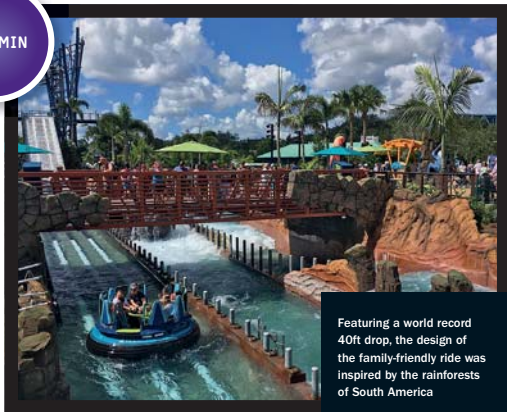
The ride, which features eight-seater rafts, has an unusual element in the form of a vertical lift which takes riders up a giant waterfall to the big drop.

According to SeaWorld, visitors will have the opportunity to take on the role of a conservationist on a journey through the rainforest, where they can learn about the importance of freshwater conservation through interactive games and stories throughout the ride experience.

With the new addition comes a themed village area featuring retailing, rest and dining areas, and interactive educational experiences.

SeaWorld and Coca-Cola have made a joint US\$100k donation through the SeaWorld and Busch Gardens Conservation Fund – in partnership with The Everglades Foundation – to support a freshwater replenishment project with non-profit Audubon Florida.

Using interactive games, player scores will be converted into real-world water



Featuring a world record 40ft drop, the design of the family-friendly ride was inspired by the rainforests of South America

saving initiatives using these funds. The project, says SeaWorld, will help replenish 37 million gallons of water in the Western Everglades at Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary in Naples, Florida.

### New additions

The ride opened to the public on 4 October and is the latest in a line of new additions, including Mako and the Kraken Unleashed VR rollercoaster experience. "Infinity Falls is the first project built with the sole purpose of 'Experiences

That Matter'," says Brian Morrow, former vice president of theme park experience design, who first envisioned the project. "It's fantastic for the creative team, because it gives them new design goals."

"From the thrilling rapids, to its amazing vertical lift, Infinity Falls is an adventure that appeals to the entire family," says Mark Pauls, president of SeaWorld Orlando.

"The opening of Infinity Falls marks the start of an incredible year ahead. We're proud to bring our guests more events, rides and thrills than ever before."

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The Incredicoaster is the anchor attraction for the redeveloped Pixar Pier

INTAMIN

INGENIEUR  
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STENGEL

## INCREDICOASTER

Disney California Adventure  
Anaheim, California, US

As part of the redeveloped Pixar Pier at Disney's California Adventure, the park's signature California Screamin' ride has undergone a major transformation, redesigned by Disney's Imagineers as the brand new Incredicoaster.

First opened in 2001 at a cost of US\$60m, the steel-launch coaster features an all-new *Incredibles*-themed experience, which includes a mid-century, modern-style loading area, new character moments and redesigned carriages.

The ride, manufactured by Intamin and with design by Ingenieur Büro Stengel GmbH, employs music, lighting, special effects and exciting character figures, while distinctively coloured vehicles add to the extreme thrills on this super-speedy coaster.

The ride is based on *Incredibles 2*, which opened in theatres earlier this year. In the pre-show, screens show the fictional Edna Mode being interviewed for the ride's rechristening as the Incredicoaster. While being interviewed, Jack-Jack begins using his unpredictable super powers, eventually escaping. The Incredibles then take off through the ride trying to catch him. Each member of the family uses their superpowers – Dash his super speed, Elastigirl her stretch powers, Mr Incredible his super strength and Violet her force field – to try and stop him. Eventually

they catch up with Jack-Jack, who's calmed by being given a cookie to eat.

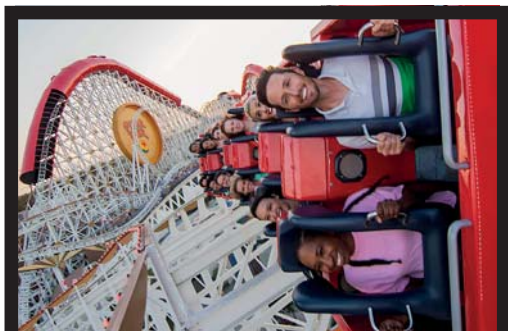
The story plays out over 6,072ft (1,851m), with a vertical loop and drops of up to 108ft (33m). The launch system accelerates guests from 0 to 55mph (88.5kmph) in just four seconds, making it the fastest attraction at the park. It also holds the distinction of being the world's longest looping coaster.

Because the park is located adjacent to a residential zone and must adhere to

noise restriction guidelines, the ride was created with special tubes designed to direct riders' screams back into the park. Following the redevelopment, those tubes now have *Incredibles* characters in them and play out as part of the ride experience.

Anchored by the Incredicoaster, Pixar Pier features four different themed neighbourhoods using Pixar's most popular IPs. The area closed in January 2018 to undergo its redesign, reopening in June.

**"The story plays out over 6,072ft, with a vertical loop and drops of up to 108ft"**



The former California Screamin' rollercoaster has undergone a complete makeover





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# FAN POWER

Jordan Middleton, assistant brand manager at Thorpe Park Resort, explains how operators can best work with their audiences, especially the die-hard fans who can change public sentiment with a single tweet



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jordan Middleton has a long-held passion for the themed attractions industry and uses her knowledge to bring exciting and innovative attractions and events to life.

Since taking up her position at Thorpe Park, she's helped to oversee the delivery and implementation of 'The Year Of The Walking Dead', including the launch of 'The Walking Dead: The Ride' in March 2018.

Middleton joined Thorpe Park as its social media executive, a role she landed through her experience assisting with the operation of the social media channels for enthusiast website *CoasterForce*. She used her knowledge of social media and branding to develop the theme park's social channels, bringing it to life through its multiple digital platforms.

Alongside her role at Thorpe Park, she also runs her own fan page *Cupcakes & Coasters*, which has more 5,000 followers.

It's easy to forget how lucky we are to live and work in an age where we have such a direct line of contact with our fans. I can't imagine the excitement of launching a new ride or putting out a new piece of news or information without the buzz that comes from reading the initial fan comments.

Seeing the shares, comments and reactions increase as the excitement and discussion builds. Realising that those months of hard work have paid off is a feeling unlike any other and that instantaneous fan feedback is precious because it's absolutely priceless. It's a litmus test of how your message will be received across the board and is an invaluable tool when it comes to communications, marketing and PR.

## Fan knowledge

Working with influencers in theme park marketing is a gift. For me, working on-site at a park is particularly wonderful because not only do we benefit from that two-way fan/park communication via social media, fans also share their thoughts and feedback directly with me in the park, which I can then take back to my desk.

It's a competitive advantage that not many other marketeers around the world have the benefit of and one I look to maximise at every opportunity.

Fans are an endless source of knowledge, whether it be sharing feedback on a change in operations that hasn't been communicated clearly, or whether they remember something that worked well that we might want to re-instate.



Middleton is a key part of the team at the Merlin-operated Thorpe Park

## Influencing the influencers

Although the fan/park dialogue can be rocky at times, in my experience it's largely positive if you're willing to work together.

If you have fans on-side, then you essentially have an army to fill that sometimes-daunting social media echo chamber with praise, positive feedback, helpful suggestions and playful banter.

Having these real conversations via social media with our fan groups humanises the resort as a brand, allowing us to come across as more approachable and likeable. At Thorpe Park, we dedicate hours of our time to engaging with fans on Twitter. Often it ends up with other parks joining in and everybody involved having a good laugh. It allows the joy of a day



Fan opinion can make or break an attraction and it's up to attractions to manage their relationship with their guests



WE DEDICATE HOURS OF TIME TO ENGAGING WITH FANS ON TWITTER. IT OFTEN ENDS UP WITH OTHER PARKS JOINING IN AND EVERYONE HAVING A GOOD LAUGH



out at the resort to extend beyond the gates and as a result, it simultaneously enriches the perception of the brand and strengthens the park/fan relationship, which can only be of benefit to us all.

Loyal followers can also help tactically through their own communications, in both positive and negative ways.

We often work with fan groups in the very early 'tease' phases of a campaign, sharing a vital piece of information with one or two key influencers in the community. We then watch as it spreads like wildfire, as the various groups discuss and theorise what this new piece of the puzzle could possibly mean.

### Dealing with backlash

Then there's the other side of the coin. What do you do when a rumour gets out of hand and that once playful and optimistic discussion starts to stray down the wrong path and comments become negative?

In this instance, we would issue an official statement directly to the fan groups stating the facts to ensure any rumour remains just that – a rumour.

Not only does this benefit us by quashing potentially negative discussions, it also further improves the relationship with fans, by maintaining a line of contact.

Public negativity and potential social media backlash seems daunting, but there are ways attractions can control these.

Firstly, we always follow our social media guidelines, to protect our team and ensure communications remain professional, while maintaining our brand's tone of voice.

It's also important to communicate in a concise and informed manner, and not be afraid to call out uninformed comments or factual inaccuracies. On the rare occasion when there's an incident, social provides the best, and now generally expected, way of communicating quickly with the park's stakeholders, including our guests.

### A look behind the curtain

Merlin Entertainments – Thorpe Park's parent company – launched its Merlin Backstage service in 2016.

It's a platform that highlights the great work we do across all of our attractions and it's about sharing brand positivity, achievements we're proud of as a company and exciting behind the scenes articles that grip the interest of the most dedicated members of our fanbase.

Increasingly some parts of the media rely on sensationalism in order to drive clicks or paper sales, at the expense of telling the whole story.

We want to ensure that when people form an impression of Merlin, they do so with the right context and information.

Our fans shout the loudest on our social media platforms, and because they love sharing and engaging with these articles, this in turn helps boost a better understanding of what Merlin does. ▶





### ► Getting engaged

The key to strengthening your attraction's fan base is simple – engage.

Use your social media platforms to leave comments on your fans' content.

Share their reactions and opinions on your official channels and make their voice heard. Let them know how much you loved their latest vlog and actively take an interest in the content they're producing and the information they're giving you.

Fan-made vlogs, Facebook comments and discussions and even internet forums are a goldmine when it comes to gaining first-hand perspectives of a day out at your attraction. It's absolutely something parks should be taking the time to read through and engage with. Not only will it let the fans know the park they love, really does care about them and has a vested interest in what

Middleton helped to deliver Thorpe Park's 'Year of the Walking Dead', which proved to be a huge success

they're doing, it also unlocks priceless information you can use to continue to develop and improve your product.

From my own personal background as a fan, it's easy for me to understand how news can be blown out of proportion. "Somebody has a brother who works on a ride who heard the gardener say such and such is happening", and suddenly it's taken as gospel and you have hundreds of angry fans demanding more information. I understand how fans behave and react because I'm one myself. I believe that my experience as a theme park enthusiast has instilled in me a valuable knowledge of not

only how these rumours and misinformation spread, but also how fan groups want to be treated by the theme parks that they love.

### Building relationships

Social media is an incredibly powerful brand building, engagement tool, but it has its risks too. We're aware that people are not always who they say they are, which is why we have clear guidelines for using social media. They're there to protect both us and the company. I'm passionate about the importance attractions should place on maintaining a good relationship with fan groups. They can be honest – brutally so at times – but it's that honesty that will help you identify any key issues at your park. It's about trust and respect, because ultimately, we all have the attraction's best interests at heart – whether that's from a personal or business perspective. For me, it's both. ●



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# THE TOURIST TRAP

The dark side of tourism came to the fore in 2017, leading to protests and the coining of a new term: overtourism. As the United Nations World Tourism Organisation lays out a new strategy, what role could attractions play in ensuring tourism is beneficial for residents and visitors alike? Kath Hudson reports

Overtourism is becoming a major issue in some of the world's most popular visitor destinations



Overtourism is a major issue in Venice, which is swamped by day trippers who far outnumber overnight visitors and local residents

**F**uelled by cheap flights, greater affluence, the media and – more recently – new accommodation platforms, tourism has skyrocketed in the post-war period. International arrivals have increased from 25m in 1950, to more than 1.3bn in 2017. Growth of this recession-proof industry is projected to continue year-on-year and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) forecasts it reaching 1.8bn in 2030.

The tourism sector brings with it many benefits: it boosts economies, strengthens international ties, leads to the creation of more events and supports the protection of historic places and the restoration of traditional architecture. There are also trickle down benefits to other industries – the attractions industry being one of them.

However, when places become so geared around tourists that butchers and grocers give way to souvenir shops and most rental accommodation is for tourists, it starts to cause a problem for residents. Last year saw protests by locals in both Barcelona and Venice, complaining that lives in their

home cities are becoming unsustainable due to congestion, the prohibitively high cost of living and noise. Tourism experts caution such popularity could eventually lead to the bubble bursting: as locals are forced to move out, the character of the city is lost and then the appeal disappears, along with the tourists.

### Tackling overtourism

This situation has led to the start of a conversation on how to manage overtourism. UNWTO recently launched a report (see p59) which studied eight popular cities and concluded 11 strategies, and 68 measures to help destinations spread their visitors across the year and over undiscovered parts of the city.

The report says overtourism comes about through the absence of good management and uncontrolled



Zurab Pololikashvili became UNWTO secretary general on 1 January 2018

development and that as numbers increase, tourism must be managed in a sustainable manner for the good of both visitors and local communities.

UNWTO secretary general, Zurab Pololikashvili, believes there's a pressing need to set a sustainable roadmap for urban tourism and is confident a solution can be found, saying: "This can be achieved through community engagement, congestion management, reduction of seasonality, careful planning that respects the limits of capacity and the specificities of each destination and product diversification."

### A successful approach

New York is an example of a popular city which manages its tourism successfully. ►

**"WHEN PLACES BECOME SO GEARED AROUND TOURISTS THAT BUTCHERS AND GROCERS GIVE WAY TO SOUVENIR SHOPS AND MOST RENTAL ACCOMMODATION IS FOR TOURISTS, IT STARTS TO CAUSE A PROBLEM FOR RESIDENTS"**



## COSTA RICA'S APPROACH

With much to recommend it in terms of wildlife, national parks and interesting geographical features, Costa Rica could easily have seen tourism undermine its USPs. For this reason, Visit Costa Rica chose to approach tourism with a strategy to promote high-end, sustainable tourism, avoiding mass tourism.

Tourism products are built around providing beautiful natural experiences, with visitors educated on conservation. The Costa Rican Tourism Institute offers a Certificate for Tourism Sustainability which categorises businesses according to their sustainability. Already producing 99 per cent of its electricity from renewable sources, Costa Rica aims to be the world's first carbon neutral country by 2021.



Costa Rica is building its tourism offer around natural experiences

Governors Island is one example of good tourism management in New York



Christopher Heywood is senior vice president, global communications for NYC and Company

Ferry service, which makes it cheap and easy for visitors to explore other neighbourhoods in the city.

- By actively promoting the off-season, as well as creating new destinations, such as The Rockaways and Governor's Island, New York has managed to make a visit to the city far more than just a trip to the Statue of Liberty and the Empire State Building.

New York's marketing arm, NYC and Company, gears much of its promotional activity to push the off-season – January to March. "This includes initiatives such as NYC Restaurant week, a signature dining programme involving up to 400 restaurants and also NYC Broadway week, where visitors can buy two-for-one theatre tickets," says Christopher Heywood, senior vice president, global communications for NYC and Partners.

"The NYC Must-See Week is centred around visitor attractions, offering two-for-one admission to attractions, historic sites, museums, tours and performing arts venues across all five boroughs."

Public transport also comes into it, with an improved and actively marketed NYC

## The importance of attractions

There is a great deal of visitor attractions can do to ease tourist congestion. Florida, which has a US\$60bn tourism industry, wants to be the world's top travel destination and is aiming for 120m visitors this year. Good management and its theme parks, which both attract and soak up visitors, are key to the success.

The UNWTO report offers up many ways in which visitor attractions could help to ease the problems caused by overtourism, these include offering longer opening hours in peak season, encouraging off-season visits via programming and dynamic pricing, and popular attractions partnering up in marketing initiatives with less central sites, to drive traffic to less-visited areas.

NEW DESTINATIONS, LIKE THE ROCKAWAYS AND GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK HAS MANAGED TO MAKE A VISIT TO THE CITY MORE THAN JUST A TRIP TO THE STATUE OF LIBERTY AND THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING





## UNWTO's overtourism report

UNWTO has researched overtourism and released a report called *Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions*, which examined tourism in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Munich, Copenhagen, Lisbon, Salzburg and Tallinn.

The majority of people questioned didn't think there should be a limitation on numbers. UNWTO believes good tourism management enables tourism to grow in ways which benefit locals and visitors.



### Strategies proposed by UNWTO

#### ■ Promote the dispersal of visitors within the city and beyond

Host events in less visited places, implement travel cards and create a joint identity of the city and the surrounding area. Attractions can play their part by increasing capacity and dwell time.

#### ■ Promote time-based dispersal of visitors

Promote experiences and events in off-peak months and use new technologies to stimulate dynamic, time-based dispersal, as well as dynamic pricing.

#### ■ Stimulate new visitor itineraries

Get people off the beaten path with guided tours in less-visited places, market hidden treasures and offer combined discounts for attractions and experiences. Create virtual reality applications to famous sites and attractions to complement on-site visits.

#### ■ Review and adapt regulation

This calls for the review of a number of measures which have an impact on tourism, including the regulation and taxation of new tourism services and accommodation; regulation of access to certain areas of the city for tourist-related activities and the review of opening times of attractions, as well as the creation of parking at the edge of the city and in pedestrian-only areas.

#### ■ Improve city infrastructure and facilities

Create a city-wide plan for traffic management with secondary routes which is available for peak times, make public transport better suited for visitors, create safe cycling routes and stimulate bike rentals, set up safe and attractive walking routes, safeguard the quality of cultural and heritage attractions.

#### ■ Create city experiences which benefit both residents and visitors

Develop the city to fit with the residents' needs and consider tourists as temporary residents, integrate visitor facilities within local festivities and activities, extend

opening times of visitor attractions and promote art and culture initiatives, such as street art, to create fresh perspectives and expand visitation to new areas.

#### ■ Ensure local communities benefit from tourism

Strive to create decent jobs and engage local communities in the development of new tourism products and stimulate the development of impoverished neighbourhoods through tourism.

#### ■ Enhance visitor segmentation

Adapt marketing to target visitor segments which have the lowest impact on the city and discourage certain visitor segments.

#### ■ Communicate with and engage local stakeholders

Create a tourism management group

of local stakeholders, organise local discussion platforms for residents, encourage residents to share content about their city on social media and unite disjointed communities.

#### ■ Communicate with and engage visitors

Create awareness of tourism impact among visitors, educate visitors on local values, traditions and regulations, provide adequate information about traffic restrictions, parking facilities, fees etc.

#### ■ Set monitoring and response measures

Monitor key indicators such as seasonal fluctuations in demand, arrivals and expenditures, patterns of visitation to attractions etc. Create contingency plans for peak periods and emergency situations. Advance use of big data and new technology to monitor tourism performance.

### UNWTO BELIEVES THAT GOOD TOURISM MANAGEMENT ALLOWS TOURISM TO GROW IN A WAY WHICH BENEFITS BOTH LOCALS AND VISITORS



■ Amsterdam is a tourism-reliant city that would benefit from UNWTO's proposed strategies



# CREATIVITY COCKTAIL

This year's SATE conference came to the global epicentre for themed entertainment – Orlando – as the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) searched for the secrets to “The Experience Recipe”. Christine Kerr reports



**T**he Experience Recipe was the theme of SATE Orlando – SeaWorld, held in early October 2018 and organised by the TEA. SATE is the TEA's signature conference on experience design.

The first took place in 2007 and reflecting growth and demand within the industry, events are now also held in Europe and Asia.

With more than 500 delegates, the Orlando conference set an attendance record for the TEA's SATE events. Attendees also made the most of the event's location and hospitality, exploring SeaWorld's rides and attractions.

## A PINCH OF CREATIVITY

In Orlando, the approach of SATE co-chairs Bettina Buckley – vice president, Disney Parks Live Entertainment, Walt Disney World – and John Paul Geurts – founder of Funopoly – was driven by the understanding that each themed entertainment project represents a unique blend of the ‘ingredients’ in the SATE formula – Storytelling + Architecture + Technology = Experience.

**Bettina Buckley and John Paul Geurts co-chaired the conference at SeaWorld in Orlando, Florida**



The Experience Recipe considered the different aspects of projects and explored them through the lens of SATE.

In presentations curated by the conference's ‘mixologists,’ different areas were explored, including: the Fusion of Digital and Practical Storytelling; Animals/Environment/Education; Production and Experience Design; Connecting Nature, Community and Culture; and Designing in Uncharted Waters; Finding Your North Star. There were also more straightforward titles such as; What Developers Really Want from a Design Partner; Costume Design and Development; Retail; and Leadership.

Each speaker went below the surface, exploring ideas relevant to our industry.

Deanna Siller of The Strategy+Design Shop and Tom Ito from Gensler started things off with a thought-provoking and inspiring presentation on experience Trends titled ‘The Why? Behind the Experience: Driving People to Explore’.

The session, which included findings from Gensler Institute's research project, *The Experience Index*, shared many useful insights into the nature of experience. The research began with defining the nature of experience – clearly a challenge, as there are so many different definitions and it means different things to different people.

The report suggests that ultimately, the definition of experience is rooted in the intention behind the experience being



More than  
500 people  
attended  
SATE Orlando  
SeaWorld – a  
new record for  
the conference



sought: task, social, discovery, entertainment, aspiration. This defines what “experience mode” the participant will be in. Clearly, guests, fans, customers, attendees, followers (or whatever we call our users) participating in the themed entertainment experiences we all create share these intentions. They’re sharing time with family and/or friends, they’re open to new discoveries along the way, they definitely want to be entertained and taken away from their everyday life, they’re open to being inspired or connected to a larger purpose and the transactional part of the entire experience must be easy, efficient and not take away from any of the other aspects.

The perspectives on experience shared by Deanna and Tom provided a solid foundation for the sessions and discussions that were to follow.

## CREATIVE SCIENCE

The Animals/Environment/Education panel – brought together by mixologist Scott Gass, director of Zoological Communications and Interpretation at SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment – took attendees through a series of presentations that all considered the question: With real life as our starting point, how do we incite wonder in the lives of our guests?

Dr Dave Gallo from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute shared footage of exploring the wreck of the Titanic and other significant, deep undersea discoveries, revealing a fascinating world that’s inaccessible to most and, therefore, a very fertile storytelling opportunity.

Jesse Schell, CEO of Schell Games, shared a “Transformational Game Design Model” for creating games by thinking first about the “change” desired as the end outcome.

Dr Tierney Thys shared her work at the California Academy of Sciences, expressing concern over the fact that as the world becomes more and more urbanised, we need more exposure to nature to counteract this. She demonstrated the powerful positive effect that simple images of nature can have – and shared a hilarious, satirical video that encouraged viewers to imagine what actually being in nature could do for all of us.

The group concluded that the scientific community needs the creativity of the

## SPEAKERS:



From top to bottom: Melissa Ruminot, Eric Cantrell, Fran Boettcher, Christopher Dold, David Willrich and Jennie Nevlin



A number of networking events took place at SeaWorld, during SATE

## The new TEA Masters programme honours industry veterans who are Masters of their Craft, working in various disciplines within themed entertainment

► themed entertainment industry. We're the portal for curiosity and discovery that ensures their stories don't remain internal but are shared. It's certainly a rich and never-ending source for ideas and content.

### IN MEMORY

'Beyond a Title: The Ingredient of Leadership' featured three strong and inspiring female leaders brought together by mixologist Melissa Ruminot of The Companies of Nassal and also serving as TEA Eastern North America Division Board president.

Of particular impact was Barbara Poma, CEO/executive director of onePULSE Foundation and owner of Orlando's Pulse Nightclub. Barbara spoke about what has happened since the tragic events of 12 June 2016 – when a mass shooting and hate crime took place at the nightclub – and the plans being developed to create an appropriate, educational memorial to remember the victims of the

tragedy. This includes those who were killed and injured, their families, loved ones, and the first responders and healthcare professionals who treated them.

Poma's journey since that night has been a thoughtful and thorough examination of how memorials of this type have been handled in many other places. She's received strong support from the local Orlando community and around the country and has discovered the significance and power of the place – demonstrated by the visitors who come to visit even now as any formal remembrance is still in development.

Clearly her leadership is an effective catalyst to collaboration for a shared purpose. Her story highlights the challenges of a specific form of destination creation and storytelling.

### TEA MASTERS

One of the significant new elements of SATE Orlando was its tie-in with the launch of the new TEA Masters programme, honouring industry veterans who are accomplished Masters of their Craft, working in various disciplines within themed entertainment.

Described as "creators, developers, designers and producers whose body of work has made a significant and

sustained contribution to the growth and development of the industry through their innovation, design, craftsmanship and artistry," the first group of TEA Masters is made up of seven people. These include Glenn Birket (engineering and control systems), Joe Falzetta (lighting design), John Lindsay (project management), Ralph Nielsen (master craftsman, project production), Rich Procter (writer), Philipp van Stratum (creative director) and Nina Rae Vaughn (illustrator and art director).

After formal recognition and presentations, TEA founder and past president Monty Lunde sat down with the group and asked a series of questions that explored their careers and their perspectives on the industry. Advice ranged from "Embrace the happy accidents", to "Don't fear a blank sheet of paper, be joyful in it" leaving attendees with an understanding that this group of successful industry leaders shared a sense of optimism through all that they had achieved.

### SWEET TREATS

The keynote speech featured Brian Smith and Jackie Cuscuna, founders of Ample Hills Creamery. Speaking to SATE co-chair Bettina Buckley, the husband and wife team opened their first ice cream shop in Brooklyn, New York, in 2011.

Brian, a former sci-fi movie writer and Jackie, a high school teacher, have based everything on story: their business locations, their brand and their products. Every flavour has a story. Every new store has to be in a place with the potential to



Barbara Poma, owner of Orlando's Pulse Nightclub, spoke about the tragic mass shooting of June 2016





Presenters at the Orlando edition of SATE curated an intellectual menu to satisfy attendees' taste for adventure, discovery and fun



Top to bottom: Dr David Gallo, Jesse Schell, Dr Tierney Thys, Scott Gass, Thomas Ito, Deanna Siller, Bettina, Buckley, Brian Smith, and Jackie Cuscuna



become a community hub and gathering place. As they prepare to open their eleventh store, in Los Angeles, the pair were candid about the careful process they go through when choosing their locations and planning expansion.

They've recently opened an ice cream production facility where they still control all ingredients for all flavours but which will now provide them with production capacity to keep up with growing demand and other new initiatives.

Brian and Jackie credit Disney CEO Bob Iger's discovery of their ice cream having led to opportunities for some licensing agreements and the opening of a shop at Disney's Boardwalk Inn. The connection led to a collaboration with Disney and Lucasfilm

for three limited edition flavors inspired by the heroes, villains, and enduring themes of the iconic film franchise in celebration of *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*.

The relationship with Disney is set to continue, with the launch of The Disney Mickey Mouse Collection to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Mickey Mouse. They call it a "collaboration beyond our wildest imagination" but it was clear to SATE attendees that this couple has applied the S+A+T=E formula to all that they do in the creation and operation of their business. They have great instincts for the industry and their ice cream lived up to expectations – it was the dessert on offer at the lunch taking place directly after their session!

## RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

It was a great homecoming to a major hub of our international industry, having SATE in the US return to Orlando again after several years in other locations (including Pittsburgh, New York City, Savannah GA and Los Angeles). Co-chairs Bettina Buckley and John Paul Geurts were passionate about their approach to The Experience Recipe and the results were evident in the response to the programme they delivered. As an international conference, SATE is growing in scope and impact, and at pace with TEA's growing presence around the world. ●

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christine Kerr of BaAM Productions is a past president of the Themed Entertainment Association and chairs the TEA Education Committee.



Delegates at SATE in Orlando got a close look at some of SeaWorld's residents



# WHITEWATER®

Entertain the Possibilities

# DREAM BIG

**WhiteWater is branching out of the waterpark business as it introduces two new attractions products and its brand new Vantage guest engagement and management software**

It all starts with a dream – one person, one idea and one seemingly unattainable dream. That's the origin story of WhiteWater, and we'd wager that it's the origin story of most of the brilliant things that humanity has achieved in the course of history.

Over the last four decades, we've committed ourselves to helping others realise their dream—whether it be creating unforgettable experiences or pushing the boundaries of what's possible. In short, if we can do it, we will.

In line with this, we recently introduced our new tagline: "Entertain the possibilities". It's a reflection of our vision to make the impossible possible through a combination of in-house creativity, engineering, and production based on decades of tried-and-true methods.

Our current brand advertising campaign, "Be Boundless" is an extension of the idea that barriers are meant to be breached. That's how discoveries are made.

## Building relationships

As market leaders, we put our success down to our attitude. There's a lot to be said about staying true to our roots and never forgetting what our mission is: To help parks solve problems, create immersive experiences and delight guests.

We're only successful if our clients are, too. This is why we truly believe in building relationships and forging lasting partnerships – we stand by our products and are always happy to help clients even years down the line.

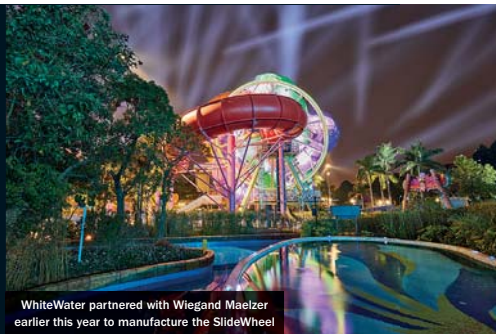
Over the years, we've made it a priority to identify not only what parks and guests

We're proud of our water park heritage, but we're excited about branching out and the opportunity to be part of the vast world of entertainment

need or want, we've innovated on what's in the market and invented new products that help make experiences better. Amongst some of our most memorable inventions are the Mat Blaster, the world's first uphill mat racer, and Smart Blast, the first energy saving VFD water control technology, both of which were Brass Ring winners. Additionally, Slideboarding, the world's first interactive game in a slide won both a Brass Ring and a TEA Thea award. Over at FlowRider, our WaveOz became the world's first 180° stationary wave.

## Collaboration and innovation

We recognise that we don't have the exclusivity on good ideas, so we're always on the lookout for exciting and interesting innovations that we can manufacture with licensing agreements. As a result, we're able to bring our clients the very best on the market with the convenience of dealing with only one supplier. Recent licensing deals include Life Floor – an award-winning aquatics flooring company which manufactures safety surfaces



WhiteWater partnered with Wiegand Maelzer earlier this year to manufacture the SlideWheel



WhiteWater's Raft Battle is a reimagining of the classic water ride experience, where interactivity and the 'battle' spirit add to the river raft ride

specifically designed and engineered to perform in wet environments. We've also partnered with Wiegand Maelzer to make their iconic SlideWheel – a ride that combines strong G-forces, backwards sliding and pendulum movements.

#### New markets

We're proud of our waterpark heritage, but we're excited about branching out and the opportunity to be part of the vast world of entertainment. Two new attractions products, No Boundaries and Raft Battle, are innovations that transcend theme parks.

No Boundaries is a completely dry attraction that combines a vast array of activities from zip coasters and climbing obstacles to traversing bridges. It's a high capacity attraction that's compact in size yet features over a dozen activities to keep guests of different ages engaged for hours.

Raft Battle offers interaction between riders and spectators. Inspired by epic water battles, guests can not only ride "on" water, but also "interact" with it. In the experience, they can battle from

Raft Battle offers infinite theming options – boats, layout, and fixtures can all be customised however park owners see fit

boat to the shore, from the shore to the boat, and from boat to boat. One of the most interesting things that Raft Battle offers is the infinite theming options—boats, layout, and fixtures can all be customised however park owners see fit.

#### Vantage point

The latest WhiteWater product to hit the market is the best proof of our "boundless" approach. Vantage is poised to completely alter the way parks are

managed and run. The idea to create Vantage stemmed from the age-old belief that knowledge is power. We want to not only invent the biggest, best rides for guests; we wanted to help parks succeed. Some of the questions that we ask are: What would help make people safer? How can visitors have more personalised experiences and shorter queues? How can real-time analytics help operators boost performance?

It all boils down to that fact that the more we know, the more we can make sound decisions and improve on what we're already doing. Vantage translates guests' behaviours into meaningful insights, and enables venues to make real-time, strategic decisions that optimise park operations. Its pioneering guest engagement software empowers guests to customise their entertainment and better navigate venues for a superior guest experience.

● To learn more about Vantage, visit [www.vantage.co](http://www.vantage.co) and to learn more about WhiteWater, visit [www.whitewaterwest.com](http://www.whitewaterwest.com)

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We should talk.**

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**"Oh, it definitely impacts  
the bottom line. It makes  
us stand out over our  
competitors."**



ALAN MAHONY,  
VP AQUAVENTURE WATER PARK,  
ATLANTIS SANYA

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# ENABLING FUN



**M**ona Keijzer, state of secretary for the Department of Economic Affairs in the Netherlands, was an honorary guest in Amsterdam to officially launch this year's European Attractions Show (EAS).

Taking place at the RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre, Keijzer welcomed a record-breaking 15,800 people to the show, saying that EAS and its IAAPA members were "enabling people to have fun". She called the event "the ultimate show and tell".

Travelling from locations across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and beyond, visitors from more than 100 countries travelled to Amsterdam, with 525 exhibitors showcasing their offerings over the course of three days.

**This year's Euro Attractions Show broke multiple records on its return to Amsterdam. *Attractions Management's* Tom Anstey was on-hand to report back what was on offer**

Our members love this city and so do we," said Jacob Wahl, IAAPA vice president for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

"This year marks the first time we hit more than 15,000 attendees in Europe, reflecting the strength of the location and of the attractions industry."

## Celebrating achievement

As part of IAAPA's centenary celebration, special Hall of Fame inductions have taken place during each of the organisation's expos this year, with EAS no exception.

Eugenius Birch, a pioneer of seaside pier amusement parks, was the first inductee at EAS. Prior to his innovations in the 1800s, piers would be constantly ripped down and rebuilt, as they were not durable enough to handle adverse weather conditions. But Birch's work in the 1800s changed the game. He designed 14 piers in the UK, turning them into entertainment destinations.

Roland Callingham, a pioneer of model villages, was the second Hall of Fame inductee. For Callingham, his Bekonscot Model Village, which opened in 1927, is widely recognised as the earliest example of a model village worldwide.

The father of the modern zoo – Carl Hagenbeck – was the third inductee. His humane design approach to zoos shifted the consensus as to how such an attraction should be presented. Creating open geographic enclosures for animals, Hagenbeck abandoned the tradition of caging and, as a result, attendances increased and animal welfare improved.

The final inductee, Dr Peter Rosner, created magnetic braking and motorised launch systems for launch rollercoasters.

Debuted in the Intamin-designed Hellelevator drop tower at Kentucky Kingdom in 1996, his magnetic braking system has made thrill rides more thrilling and fail-safe. Also in 1996, Rosner's linear motor launch system was used for the first time on Superman: The Escape at Six Flags Magic Mountain, with the electromagnetic propulsion system now an industry standard for launched rollercoasters.

**15,800 people attended EAS 2018, including 11,300 buyers**





**“IF YOU LOOK REALLY FAR AHEAD, IN 20 YEARS I THINK WE’LL BE TALKING ABOUT OPENING THE FIRST THEME PARK ON THE MOON”**

## ► Theme park edutainment

Andreas Theve, park historian at the popular Gronska Lund theme park in Stockholm, spoke during an education session, urging theme park operators to include edutainment offerings in their annual calendar, using the Swedish park to demonstrate the success such a scheme can have for an attraction.

Founded in 1883, Gronska Lund held its first ever edutainment day in 2009. For the session, a mix of 1,200 junior and senior school students from the Stockholm area came to the park before regular opening hours, going on the rides and performing a number of physics experiments on them based on the school curriculum.

It proved an eye opener for the students, with teachers reporting to Gronska Lund improved results in science studies following the visit to the park.

“We started with 1,200 students visiting the park for our first edutainment session, which took place over a single day nearly a decade ago,” said Theve. “It’s proved such a success that in 2018, we held sessions over three days, with 7,500 students taking part and teachers regularly bringing back new classes each year.”

## CEC Talks

Hosted by Gateway Ticketing’s Randy Josselyn, one of the key education sessions came from Europa Park CEO Michael Mack, Liseberg CEO and President Andreas Andersen and DXB deputy CEO Ahmad Hussain Bin Essa.

Sharing their knowledge and experiences, the three CEOs discussed

a number of topics, including leadership styles, industry impact and future trends.

Mack, who grew up at Europa Park and has worked there his entire life, became company CEO in 2006.

“As CEO I choose to lead and live by example,” he said. “A lot of people see you out there in the park. If you want to be a positive role model, you can never be arrogant or snobbish.”

“If you do things like picking up trash in the street or they see you looking for quality and looking for detail, that’s important.”

“If you can operate every ride yourself and know about the mechanical aspects and are willing to take part in the jobs that need doing every day, it has an impact.”

Andreas Anderson, who for the last year has acted as IAAPA’s chair, said the role of CEO has changed, with people in leadership roles having to look well ahead in order to be ready for the future.

## PARISIAN DELIGHTS

Following the record-breaking performance in Amsterdam, eyes are now being cast towards Paris, as next year’s EAS heads to France.

Taking place between 15-19 September at the Paris Expo Porte de Versailles – the same venue used for the 2013 event – EAS 2019 is expected to be the biggest yet, as Europe’s attractions industry continues to grow and drive new business across the continent.



“We have to be much more in tune with our environment and with what that may be in the future,” he said. “Now, the role of the CEO is about thinking ahead and having a clear vision for the future. It’s also about adapting and reacting to change that is accelerating every day.”

For DXB, which owns and operates Dubai Parks and Resorts, Ahmad Hussain Bin Essa believes that to be a success you must be aware of and adopt new technologies or be left in the dust. He also made some bold predictions for the future, saying: “In five years believe there will be things that people won’t accept any more. “Queueing for an hour-and-a-half to ride a single rollercoaster is one of them and will be one of our biggest challenges.”

“The way we consume food and beverage is another thing that’s changing. Much F&B is now app-led, with the consumer able to order meals on their phone, which will force us to change the way we do this kind of business. It’s a similar story in retail, which is being taken over by e-commerce. How will that affect our parks and how do we adapt to it?”

“I can see rides and attractions changing too. Currently they’re built for one size and one speed. They’ll become more interactive, with different seating for different people. Guests have different needs, so we need to be able to accommodate that.”

“If you look really far ahead, in 20 years I think we’ll be talking about opening the first theme park on the moon. Everyone is talking about space and it’s somewhere we can realistically head.” ●



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# MIXED REALITY & INTERACTIVITY

With virtual, augmented and mixed reality experiences at the forefront of new and emerging trends within the attractions sector, Alterface shares how it's working with the technology on its interactive mixed-reality dark rides

Laurence Beckers, creative director Alterface

Physical attractions at theme parks or other venues need to offer their guests something they cannot experience at home.

There's been a lot of hype surrounding head mounted displays (HMD), Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR). However, there are still many hurdles prohibiting flawless implementation and usage, especially related to motion and safety. Mixed Reality (MR) offers a more realistic option, combining physical spaces and elements with digital overlays. The technology behind it is less complicated and operationally more feasible. After all, technology should facilitate and enhance the experience of the visitors.

Mixed reality (MR), sometimes referred to as 'hybrid reality', is the merging of real and virtual worlds to produce new environments and visualisations where physical and digital objects co-exist and



As creative director, Laurence Beckers drives Alterface's Creative Division, developing turnkey attractions for its customers

interact in real time. This mix of reality and virtual reality encompasses both augmented reality and augmented virtuality via immersive technology.

Mixed reality is an environment in which real world and virtual world objects are presented together within a single display or setting. In theme parks, this is often manifested through dark ride attractions within an indoor physical space. Most often, these are using high definition screens, video and 3D projection mapping, optical illusions and animatronic figures, as well as variable lighting to enhance the immersion of guests into the story.

Upon developing a mixed reality attraction, the following requirements should be taken into consideration:

- Choice of story or theme (IP or proprietary)
- Type of experience, nature of the ride
- Capacity of the attraction
- Available space
- Target audience
- Type of attraction within park offering
- Budget and timeframe

Based on the outcome, a first concept and proposal can be developed. Besides safety, robustness and a high throughput, attractions should be offering a fun experience. This can be obtained by immersing people into the story, allowing them to get better at something and offering them both an internal and a social experience. This is where interactive technology kicks in.

Digital layers and interactivity will maximise the physical environment and augment the theme. Guests will feel empowered and get fully immersed into the story, which should certainly not be overcomplicated. Not only can guests







## CASE STUDY

### BASILISK INTERACTIVE DARK RIDE @LEGANDIA, POLAND

The Basilisk dark ride opened last year at the rebranded Legandia theme park. It's the very first interactive dark ride in Poland on such a scale and offers a one-of-a-kind experience featuring the most advanced interactive dark ride technology, within an affordable budget.

The story of Bazyliszek is based on Polish folklore. In the peaceful village of Kurkowo, citizens are fighting monsters, the most dangerous one being the Basilisk. The Monster Hunter vehicle takes visitors through ancient villages, dark caves, forests and ruins. During the fierce battle they use their Monster Hunter Gun, an Alterface-designed laser weapon with light and mirror technology for special effects, with players competing for the highest score.

We're very proud of this attraction which perfectly synchronises all ride elements into a dynamic and compelling game

Pawel Cebula, CEO of Legandia, Poland:  
"It's a great honour for us and our team to receive all these awards for the Basilisk ride. We had full confidence it would be a successful ride and have seen a tremendous interest from visitors over summertime."

Benoit Cornet, CEO & Founder of Alterface:  
"It's taken a while for the market to recognise

the importance of a family ride that offers more than a short thrill and whereby all family members can participate, sharing the fun and experience. The multiple awards for Basilisk clearly demonstrate the firm belief in interactive mixed-media attractions, offering highly immersive experiences. We're very proud of this attraction which perfectly synchronises all ride elements into a dynamic and compelling game."

improve personal scoring, but also enjoy the experience with family or friends.

Alterface has been developing interactive mixed-media attractions for many years, creating new technology advancements each year. The most recent one is NOMAD (New Optimized Mobile Action Device) – a compact and portable device enabling interaction with media screens, scenery and animatronics. NOMAD brings a new level of game simplification and interaction, based on Alterface's patented technology.

All attractions developed by the Alterface team are based on a very modular

approach, with solutions to fit every need and budget, making each attraction unique. The newest non-linear solutions are very flexible and scalable, fitting smaller footprints in buildings or even spreading across the park to maximise use of space.

Compared to a game or a movie, a mixed reality dark ride is all about movement and flow rather than singular actions. Shooting or interacting on-screen is less important than the way the transitions from one scene to another are done. An effectively-themed, media-based dark ride with a good balance is the best guarantee

for a successful ride with long lifespan. Therefore, park owners should always first get proper advice and consider all options, thus making sure the concept is right before starting to build the actual ride.

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# THE PERFECT PUNCHLINE

The first ever museum dedicated to telling the story of American comedy has opened in Jamestown, New York, US. The team behind the new attraction share their experiences



Featuring more than 50 exhibits exploring comedy history – from vaudeville to viral memes – the National Comedy Center is a state-of-the-art museum dedicated to the history of comedy in the US. Operating as a nonprofit cultural institution, the US\$50m museum celebrates comedy's great minds and unique voices, from Charlie Chaplin to Dave Chappelle. Exclusive collections and world-class exhibits allow visitors to get a glimpse behind the laughter, with an experience tailored to their interests using special RFID technology.





PHOTO: JAM ROSEBATT PHOTOGRAPHY

After creating a humour profile, visitors can explore content tailored to their individual taste

## JOURNEY GUNDERSON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
NATIONAL COMEDY CENTER

### How did you get involved in the project?

Up until 2011, I was executive director of the Lucille Ball Desi Arnaz Museum. Honouring actress Lucille Ball – best known for the 1950s sitcom *I Love Lucy* – the museum celebrates the couple's lives.

It was Lucille's idea, before her death in 1989, to create a destination comedy centre celebrating comedy and comedians. I left my position in 2011 to make that dream a reality in her hometown of Jamestown.

### Who were your main partners on the development?

JRA handled early concept design, working very closely with myself and the organisation. Later on we brought in interactive design firm Cortina Productions. We also recruited Herzog and Company, who are mainly media producers and documentary makers.



### What challenges did you face?

Comedians are a cynical, intelligent and sceptical bunch. It was daunting to make a museum about them, knowing they're very good and making fun of things. Also, Jamestown is not New York. It was an uphill battle for credibility from the start and we knew the authenticity would be paramount in making it a success. It could have easily become the butt of a joke if we didn't get it right, but thankfully we did.

### How have comedians been involved in the project?

We formed a 22-person advisory board of people in the comedy industry. We also worked closely with the estates of people like George Carlin,

Richard Pryor, Lenny Bruce and Harold Ramis to inform our approach.

### What are your aims for the attraction?

Our goal has been to build an engaging and immersive attraction that would be enjoyable for the average American tourist or the ardent comedy nerd. I'm proud to say that it's being lauded by the comedy industry and everyday visitors alike.

### How does technology play into the experience?

The museum approaches comedy in a way that's appealing to people from all eras and with all tastes. The way we do that is with use of an RFID chip, implanted in a wristband.

The first step in any visitor's arrival is the creation of a sense of humour profile. When a visitor indicates that they like an artist from a film, television show, or form of new media like a podcast, behind the scenes we have a content management system that reads that and applies sense of humour attributes, such as sarcasm, dark humour, irony and slapstick among hundreds of choices.

# COMEDY PRESTIGE

The new museum has had huge backing from the world of comedy, with many elite-level comedians lending their support to the project. Here are some of the men and women involved with making the National Comedy Center a reality



## CARL REINER

A legend of American comedy, Carl Reiner has achieved great success as a comic actor, director, producer and recording artist. In the 1960s, Reiner was best known as the creator, producer, writer, and actor on *The Dick Van Dyke Show*. His recent appearances include the film series *Ocean's 11*, *Ocean's 12* and *Ocean's 13*, as well as on television with *Hot in Cleveland*, *Parks and Recreation*, and as a voice artist in the animated series, *The Cleveland Show*.



## LEWIS BLACK

Stand-up comedian, actor and author, Lewis Black has overseen the development of more than 1,000 plays, as well as his own original works. He's best known for his angry demeanour and belligerent comedic style. He makes regular appearances on *The Daily Show* with Trevor Noah delivering his "Back in Black" commentary segment, which first debuted as a weekly segment on the show in 1996.



## JIM GAFFIGAN

Jim Gaffigan is a stand-up comedian, actor, writer and producer known for his material about fatherhood, laziness and food. He's also regarded as a "clean" comic, using little profanity in his routines. Gaffigan has guest-starred on hit shows including *That '70s Show*, *Sex and the City*, *Third Watch*, *Ed* and *Law & Order*.



## W KAMAU BELL

W Kamau Bell is a socio-political comedian who's the host and executive producer of the Emmy Award winning CNN docu-series *United Shades of America* with W Kamau Bell. Bell has been nominated for multiple NAACP Image Awards and a GLAAD Award, and he was featured on Conde Nast's Daring 25 list for 2016. Bell is known for his short-lived FX and FXX comedy series *Totally Biased with W Kamau Bell*.



## GEORGE SHAPIRO

One of comedy's most respected managers and producers, George Shapiro, is among the most successful managers in show business, best known for representing Jerry Seinfeld, Carl Reiner and Andy Kaufman. He also served as a producer for the highly successful sitcom *Seinfeld*.



## LARAINNE NEWMAN

Laraine Newman gained fame in 1975 as an original *Saturday Night Live* cast member. During her five years on the show, Newman originated and portrayed memorable characters like Sheri the Valley Girl and Connie Conehead. In addition to extensive voice-over work in TV and videos, she's had roles in numerous television shows including *Brothers and Sisters*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *Friends* and *Entourage*, among others. Her movie credits include *Stardust Memories*, *Perfect*, *Problem Child 2* and *Jingle All the Way*.





PHOTO: JAY ROSENBLATT PHOTOGRAPHY

Exhibits respond to your sense of humour, presenting content based on those attributes. The exhibit itself will read the room, just like a comedian has to. Taking into account the sense of humour of the people in the space, it presents stories and content accordingly.

#### What's the visitor experience?

After completing your sense of humour profile and being equipped with a laugh band, visitors are greeted with a theatre show currently starring Jim Gaffigan, presenting holograms of himself from three different eras of his career.

After that, visitors are greeted with artefacts that include everything from Charlie Chaplin's cane to the iconic puffy shirt from *Seinfeld*.

For comedian George Carlin – who died in 2008 – we've scanned and digitised extensive joke files from his 60-year career. Visitors can really see the trajectory of his comedy – from a scrap of paper with a musing on a topic all the way through to a finished performance on an HBO special.

After that they walk through an area that has exhibits on late night comedy, looking at everybody who's sat at the hosting desk.

There's also an exhibit called the Comedy Continuum, which is a more than 70-foot-wide (21 metre) wall with a touch screen interface. It's a never-ending web of connections in comedy that connects artists to one another.

PHOTO: JAY ROSENBLATT PHOTOGRAPHY



● The Blue Room offers an uncensored look at controversial or explicit styles of comedy

Built into the environment of a comedy club, we have a stand-up comedy exhibit. Exhibits also include comedy in television, comedy in film, cartooning, sketch and improv.

The lower level of the museum is called the Blue Room. That's for a completely uncensored experience. It's laid out like this so that if you're uncomfortable with controversial or explicit subject matter, you can completely avoid it.

The experience ends with the participatory wing. In there, they can try out 'Comedy Karaoke', where they deliver

lines of some of the most successful comedy bits of all time from major artists. They can also play out comedy scenes using green screen technology.

#### What are your future plans?

We're already talking about a possible expansion. It's important that we keep our finger on the pulse of comedy and that the experience is ever changing. It's been designed with that in mind. The content management system acts as our exhibits' central nervous system, making them easily updatable.



**MATTHEW WHEELER**

SENIOR PROJECT DEVELOPER

JRA



**DAVID FERGUSON**

ART DIRECTOR

JRA



**SHAWN MCCOY**

VICE PRESIDENT

JRA

**How did JRA get involved in the project?**

**SM:** Journey Gunderson initially contacted JRA to see if we might be interested in helping to create a new audio tour for the Lucy and Desi Amaz Museum. During that discussion, she mentioned that they had a much bigger project in mind, which was the idea for the National Comedy Center. A few years later, she called us back and said that they wanted to move forward with Comedy Center proposal.

**How did you go through process of figuring out what comedians/genres/delivery methods would be included or excluded?**

**MW:** We researched and just looked at what already existed out there. We performed a SWOT analysis, checking out the potential competition, assessing how the annual Comedy Festival was developing and determining how content could evolve.

We then drafted lists, reading various websites, examining different genres, and gathering a lot of visual references for inspiration.

**What were the most unexpected challenges throughout the process?**

**MW:** We had to adapt the content to fit the design over a very long design period of around four years. There was a period when the design had been approved but we were in a holding pattern waiting for fundraising to come through.

When we began schematic design, a whole new series of redesign occurred. It's worked to our benefit though, because the end product is a better one because of the various stops, starts and pivots.

**Was there an "aha" moment?**

**SM:** From the very outset of the project, Journey knew that the museum had to be unique in order to draw visitors to Jamestown. During the development process, I think that there were actually two moments driven by that goal.

The first of those moments was the decision to structure the museum through the ways in which people experience comedy – as the creator, the performer, or the audience. The next moment was the decision to use a combination of RFID

and interactive media to provide visitors to the museum with a personalised experience completely customised to their own unique humour profile.

**How important was technology in shaping the museum?**

**DF:** Technology is the most important part of the museum. The sharing of a comic moment is very ephemeral but has often been captured on film or video, so much of it needs the vehicle of the computer to relate those expressions.

A lot of comedy has also been created in print and drawings, but we needed to catalogue and allow the guest to experience any or all of it that we could document. The creative team always wanted to use technology as a way of organising and presenting those moments effectively.

**Where did the idea of the Blue Room come from?**

**DF:** From the earliest fart jokes to today's risqué humour, blue comedy is an important part of our collective culture. To not feature it would have been a miss.

Fortunately, the building – a former train station – had a lower level that was not restored, so it inspired the team to seat the experience there. It totally feels like an alley or basement and creates a perfectly seedy environment for the genre.

**What kind of reception has the museum had?**

**SM:** It's been embraced both by the comedy industry and by the media because it celebrates comedy as an art form to be as highly regarded as any great work.

Our goal was to show audiences just how much effort, talent and intelligence it takes to create and deliver comedy. We believe those who've visited certainly have a better understanding of this and, most importantly, a better appreciation for these artists. ●



● JRA provided masterplanning, design, project management and art direction for the Center

PHOTO: JAY ROSENBLATT PHOTOGRAPHY

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# FROZEN DELIGHTS

San Francisco's popular Museum of Ice Cream is making its stay in the city permanent, following a hugely successful first year



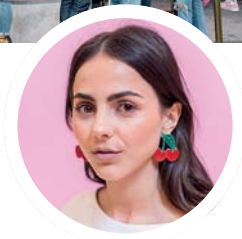
**T**he Museum Ice Cream – a pop up experience celebrating ice cream – has proven such a success that it's making its San Francisco residence permanent.

In 2019, the museum will unveil a 2.0 version of its immersive, multi-sensory experience, where ice cream – a “universal symbol of joy, a personal pleasure, and a transportive vehicle for anyone’s imagination” – is the star of the show.

Attractions Management takes a photographic look back at the first year of the Instagrammer's paradise, which saw 500,000 people flock to the city's Bay Area to explore the sweet treats on offer.

Visitors are invited to indulge in multiple ice cream tastings during their museum experience



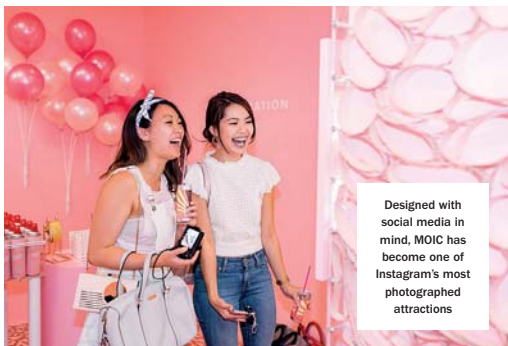


More than half-a-million visitors from 65 countries around the world have visited the museum



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THING IS WATCHING  
ALL OF OUR VISITORS  
HAVE THEIR OWN  
MAGICAL MOMENTS

*Maryellis Bunn, founder*



Designed with social media in mind, MOIC has become one of Instagram's most photographed attractions

## MUSEUMS

▶ After a successful run at its New York pop-up, the museum's San Francisco location recently launched The Pint Shop – a publicly accessible and experiential retail space inside MOIC



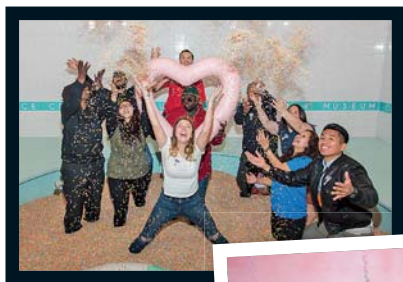
“

MOIC IS AN EXPERIENCE-FIRST BRAND FUELED BY THE POWER OF IMAGINATION. WE LEAD WITH THE HONEST BELIEF THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

”



The San Francisco site was originally a bank, with its historic elements playing into the museum's modern and fun design aesthetic





Immersive installations  
at the museum celebrate  
the sweeter side of life



Since opening, MOIC has led  
with the intention of providing  
fun and inclusivity to all

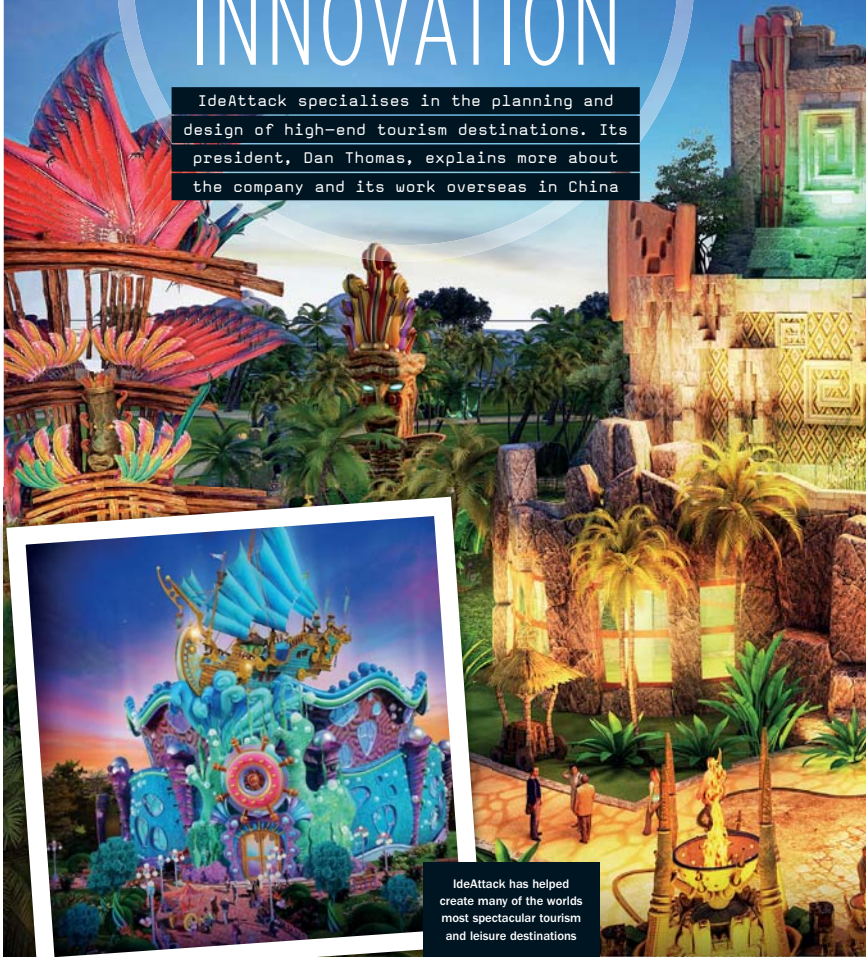


PROMOTION

IDE**A**TTACK®

# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY INNOVATION

IdeAttack specialises in the planning and design of high-end tourism destinations. Its president, Dan Thomas, explains more about the company and its work overseas in China



IdeAttack has helped create many of the world's most spectacular tourism and leisure destinations





Based in Pasadena, California, IdeAttack is a world leader in the tourism and leisure design industry, with projects in more than 28 countries. Among its offerings, the company specialises in custom theme parks, cultural attractions, water parks, ocean parks, entertainment centres, large scale mixed-use developments, destination resorts, immersive entertainment environments and immersive entertainment environments.

Dedicated to creating guest experiences of the highest order, combining excellence in storytelling with cutting-edge placemaking technology and dazzling visual effects that will redefine the art of themed entertainment, it's currently working China, where it has two major projects on the go.

Evergrande, one of the largest real-estate companies in eastern Asia, has exclusively partnered with IdeAttack on several theme parks set to open within the next few years, following a rigorous round of bidding and concept pitches by many of the top design firms in the industry. ►

Along with Natasha Varnica,  
Dan Thomas co-founded  
IdeAttack in 2004

## PROMOTION

► “We’re the general contractor for two Evergrande theme parks, located in cities of Kaifeng and Changsha,” says company president Dan Thomas.

“As a part of these projects, we’re in the process of designing and producing 34 rides, attractions and shows. These include various dark rides, flume rides, boat rides, 4D and 5D simulators and theaters, as well as interactive walkthroughs, special effect shows and stunt shows.”

The company’s mission is simple. Since its inception, Thomas says its had one goal: to create new forms of innovative tourism and entertainment destinations for global market.

“We’re developing new ideas and approaches that will combine existing industry experience with new tourism project models that will cater the current and near future audience,” he says.

“We’re doing this for a number of sectors, including theme parks, waterparks, themed resorts, tourism and leisure zones, entertainment centres, cultural attractions, mixed-use retail and lifestyle centres.

Building on more than a decade of successful partnerships around the globe, IdeAttack can work on a project of any scale. Combining design, detailed development, and quality production, the company has helped to create some of the world’s most impressive visitor attractions.

“For a project we offer a number of services,” says Thomas. “These include planning, concept design, schematic design, design development, architecture, attraction design and production, brand development, signage and graphic design, character design and feasibility studies.”

IdeAttack can include among its clients Busch Gardens, Paramount Parks, Universal Studios, SeaWorld, Warner Bros and Royal Caribbean International. With such an impressive list, it’s no wonder the company is in demand.

“Our key clients are real-estate developers, tourism developers and government organisations, says Thomas. “There’s a need for quality leisure and entertainment spaces where people can spend quality time with their families, friends or partners, out of their homes. In today’s global, growing, fast developing world, there’s increasing lack of such spaces. IdeAttack can supply that.

“One of our strongest goals is to always create unique visions that are financially viable and highly marketable: delivering one of a kind projects, on budget and always on schedules.

“With new and exciting ideas being generated all the time, Ideattack continues to lead the charge for bold and innovative entertainment solutions, well into the 21st century.”



Since its foundation, the company has developed major attractions over six continents



IdeAttack offers comprehensive project development from start to finish

## Mastering the planning and design of entertainment destinations in China

One of the company's key markets is China, which is currently experiencing a boom in theme park and wider attractions development. With great knowledge of the region, Thomas explains the challenges and solutions of working in this part of the world.

"Working in China for more than 15 years, we had the opportunity to follow the development of the country's theme park industry from its beginnings in the early 2000s to today's booming period," he says.

"Our company's main development period overlaps with that of China's theme park industry, meaning that in certain ways we grew together.

"This enables us to be a conscious participant in Chinese theme park industry today, and not just a 'foreign design' import, which is very important because the Chinese theme park industry has its own characteristics and differences."

With more than 200 theme park developments currently

“  
We've had the opportunity to follow the development of the country's theme park industry from its beginnings in the early 2000s to today's booming period

underway in China, scrutiny has been placed on some of these projects, with the country's government raising concerns over potentially unpayable debts and low grade or copycat developments. That can prove a tricky situation for developers but one the Ideattack is prepared for.

"As a company striving to help bringing top quality projects to the region as its full participant, we analyse the advantages, disadvantages and peculiarities of this process in China today, and take action to achieve the best possible results," says Thomas.

"IdeAttack believes the Chinese theme park market is now at the turning point of the development. All necessary aspects for the successful theme park development are now there and we're convinced that when the market can overcome its issues, it will thrive as our projects in the region have done."

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**What is the best way to make heritage engaging and relevant to young people? Give them a voice and put them in charge.**

**Kath Hudson reports on a fresh approach from the heritage sector**

# KICKING THE DUST

A group of young people; a range of museum exhibits; exciting digital tools; expert guidance and free rein to interpret the exhibits in a way which is relevant to them and their peers. These are the ingredients of a ground-breaking new lottery-funded project in Northern Ireland, which is part of a UK-wide campaign to engage young people in heritage by putting them in the driving seat.

Northern Ireland's Reimagine, Remake, Replay programme is one of 12 projects to win funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund's Kick the Dust campaign. Being co-ordinated by The Nerve Centre, the £900,000 (US\$1.2m) programme will give 4,000



Jo Reilly is head of participation and learning at the Heritage Lottery Fund

young people aged 16-25 across Northern Ireland the chance to curate their own exhibitions, take over museum and gallery spaces and interpret existing exhibits.

The project will span four years, with seven museums and galleries opening their collections of fine and applied art, furniture, costumes, textiles, maritime and industrial heritage for young people to explore.

They'll learn a host of new skills as they reimagine these collections, using tools such as 3D scanners and printers, VR and filmmaking technology to create new interpretive materials for the displays.

David Lewis, director of digital content and communications at The Nerve Centre, says the partners are delighted to





The campaign makes funding available for youth projects across the UK

get funding: "Reimagine, Remake, Replay is an ambitious, regional project which will create exciting opportunities for young people to engage with heritage in ways that are relevant to their lives and aspirations.

"Young people will have unique access to the fantastic collections of the Ulster Museum, a range of local museums and Northern Ireland's Screen Digital Film Archive. We're working with our partners to bring the project to life and to bring a creative approach to collections."

## Youth engagement

Reimagine, Remake, Replay is one of 12 projects which has been made possible thanks to a new funding pot from the



Each Kick the Dust project is aimed at enaging young people in heritage activities

## THE 12 SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

■ The Nerve Centre in Northern Ireland was awarded £949,600 (US\$1.2m) for Reimagine, Remake, Replay, which will allow 4,000 young people the opportunity to curate collections and learn new multimedia skills.

■ Norfolk Journeys is a multi-agency project, which will work with 8,000 young people in hard to reach groups to engage them with heritage through museum work and archaeological experiences. It's been awarded £776,500 (US\$1m).

■ The Y in Leicester has been awarded £707,500 (US\$934,500) to fund a *Dragon's Den*-style practise. Representatives from the city's heritage sites and organisations will be able to pitch to a panel of young people who are disengaged with heritage, for project funding.

■ Groundwork UK's Futureproof Parks initiative made a successful bid for £900,000 (US\$1.2m) to engage young people with friends of parks groups to protect and maintain its heritage parks.

■ Keeping It Wild, from the London Wildlife Trust, won £868,000 (US\$1.15m) to empower and inspire

600 young people to learn about and help conserve the capital's wild spaces.

■ Awarded £994,000 (US\$1.3m), Shout Out Loud, from English Heritage, and other partners including Girlguiding and the National Youth Theatre, will enable young people to tell hidden stories through their eyes and in their voice.

■ Led by Curious Minds, Hope Streets has received £1m (US\$1.3m) for a five year project, to create a strategic partnership between the heritage and youth sectors in the north west. The programme has been designed to bring about transformational change by helping young people see local heritage as their own, through working with artists and other experts.

■ The Scotland 365 programme, from the National Museums of Scotland, will benefit from £776,000 (US\$1m) to work with young people to explore Scottish heritage. The museum service is teaming up with a number of partner organisations, including The Prince's Trust, to enable hard to reach groups to work alongside creative professionals to explore their creativity in workshops.

■ A three year project led by Beatfreaks Arts, Don't Settle has been awarded £696,700 (US\$920,000) to improve the representation of young people within heritage organisations. It aims to rethink Birmingham and the Black Country's heritage, by reflecting young people in the displays.

■ With its £962,300 (US\$1.3m) grant, IGNITE will partner with organisations to inspire a passion for the culture and heritage of Yorkshire, placing their ideas at the centre of heritage development.

■ Hands on Heritage has received £875,000 (US\$1.15m) to allow the National Museum of Wales to give young people access to its collections to handle and conserve objects, animate displays and get involved with enactments, marketing and digital activity.

■ The British Council has received £868,600 (US\$1.15m) for its Our Shared Cultural Heritage programme which will allow hundreds of young people from around the UK the chance to develop new methods to share collections and learn new skills through training and workshops.

Young people taking part in the Digital Makers Club, part of a Kick the Dust project from Nerve Centre



WE NAMED THEM YOUTH AMBASSADORS. IN THE FIRST MEETING THEY RENAMED THEMSELVES THE DUSTKICKERS. THEY KNEW WHAT THEY WANTED AND WERE CLEAR AND ARTICULATE



► Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), which was created last year. The intention of the £10m (US\$13.2m) Kick the Dust initiative is to create high quality, sustainable projects to engage 11 to 25-year-olds.

"Previously we had a youth-focussed grant programme, which awarded smaller grants of up to £50,000 (US\$66,000)," explains Jo Reilly, head of participation and learning at the HLF. "We knew the youth work sector was under pressure, so we went to consultation and found there was an appetite for funding for more ambitious projects."

### The Dustkickers unite

On the industry's advice, and to ensure funding was allocated in ways which truly represented the needs and opinions of young people, the HLF took the unprecedented move of creating a panel of 16 young people from the UK, who were given a big say in how funding was spent.

"We named them Youth Ambassadors, but in the first meeting they renamed themselves the Dustkickers," says Reilly, "they knew what they wanted and were very clear and articulate."

Three main themes emerged as important to the Dustkickers. They wanted

to see greater diversity and inclusivity, with heritage being more proactive to engage the BAME, disabled and LGBT markets. They also felt strongly that young people should be involved with co-producing the offer. Thirdly, they wanted to see more paid opportunities in heritage, with more jobs aimed at young people which do not require a degree to participate.

"Although they agreed on those points, which underpinned their decisions, they were a diverse group, who tended to champion different things," says Reilly. "Some were passionate about green space and climate change, others about offering opportunities to young working class people. They debated very seriously and we were struck by the quality of their discussions and the responsibility they showed for their task."

### Further responsibilities

Initially the Dustkickers were recruited in April 2018 in order to make the funding decision in June a couple of months later, however, their performance was so good that their role evolved.

"It was an unexpected pleasure in how it developed," says Reilly. "Initially we only wanted to involve them with awarding the

grants, but it became more than that. They got involved with social media and other events, including taking an exhibit about the campaign to Parliament and hosting a Heritage Soapbox day with speakers."

They've also been involved with picking the evaluation committee, who will assess the success of the 12 programmes. One Dustkicker has gone on to be recruited by the HLF South East Committee and another had a blog published by the DCMS.

"They really stepped up, displaying a sensible, analytical approach," says Reilly. "Two of the 12 projects were chosen because they succeeded in turning around the view of the room. It was a heartwarming project to be involved with."

Following funding being awarded last year, the development money is now in place for all of the projects which are starting to get underway with the recruitment of staff. With some valuable experience under their belts, the Dustkickers are now going their separate ways. Reilly says the success of this campaign will be assessed, allowing the 12 projects to get up and running and be evaluated, before the HLF decides whether or not to run another similar campaign in the future. ●



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# DUNDEE DESIGN

London's Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) is the world's leading institution for art and design, with a collection of more than 2.3 million objects that span over 5,000 years of human creativity. Now, the institution has opened a new home in Dundee, Scotland – its first to be built outside London

**T**he wild landscape of Scotland's north-east coast has inspired the design of the new V&A Dundee, by architect Kengo Kuma.

The highly anticipated £80m (US\$103m) museum, which stands on the banks of the River Tay, opened to the public in September amid huge fanfare.

"The building is created from two inverted pyramids that join at the upper levels, creating an archway that acts as a frame through which visitors can see the city from the river, and vice versa," says Kuma, explaining his vision for the project.

"The building acts as a connector between the river and the city. Dundee was a city built on trade and the river played a vital role. The museum acts like a gate through which the city can once again access the world."

The museum has been created with a focus on the international importance of design, as well as presenting a history of Scotland's design achievements.

At the heart of the museum, the Scottish Design Galleries feature 300 exhibits drawn from the V&A's rich collections of Scottish design, as well as from museums and private collections across Scotland and the rest of the world.

The ambitious international exhibition programme opens with *Ocean Liners: Speed and Style*, organised by the V&A and the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, US. It's the first exhibition to explore the design and cultural impact of the ocean liner on an international scale.

As well as being one of the most high profile public buildings to open in the UK in recent years, it's also the first V&A museum to open outside the capital and Kengo Kuma's first building in the UK.

"I hope the museum can change the city and become its centre of gravity," says Kuma. "I'm delighted and proud that this is my first building in the UK." ►

## WHO DID WHAT

Architect: Kengo Kuma

Project architect: Maurizio Mucciola

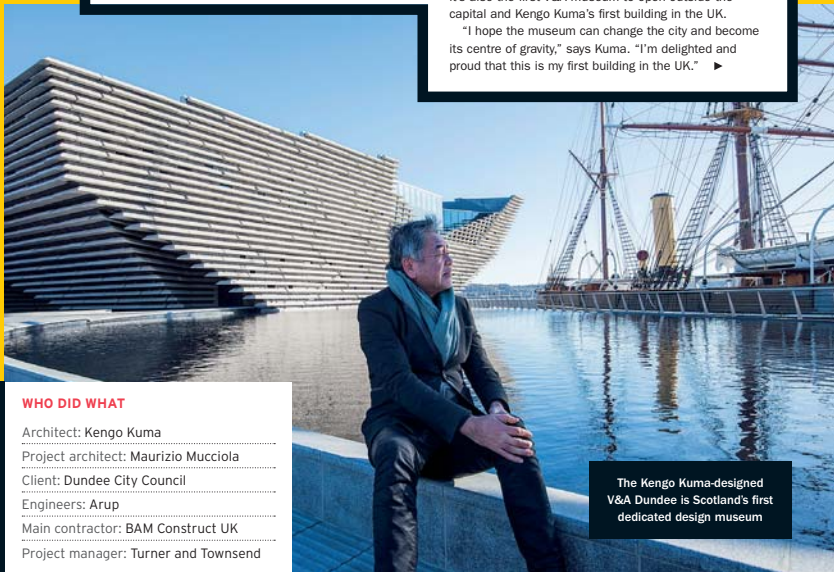
Client: Dundee City Council

Engineers: Arup

Main contractor: BAM Construct UK

Project manager: Turner and Townsend

The Kengo Kuma-designed V&A Dundee is Scotland's first dedicated design museum



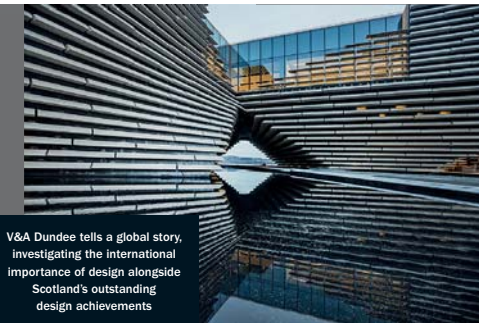




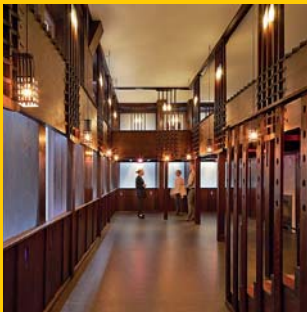
The Scottish Design Galleries feature 300 exhibits drawn from the V&A's collections of Scottish design, as well as artefacts from museums and private collections around the world



*Ocean Liners* is the first exhibition to explore the design and cultural impact of the ocean liner on an international scale



V&A Dundee tells a global story, investigating the international importance of design alongside Scotland's outstanding design achievements



## THE OAK ROOM - RESTORING A MACKINTOSH MASTERPIECE



The Oak Room has been restored through a partnership between V&A Dundee, Glasgow Museums and Dundee City Council

One of the museum's main features is the Oak Room, which was created by Charles Rennie Mackintosh in 1907.

It's been brought back to life within the museum thanks to a £200,000 (US\$260,000) grant from the British not-for-profit Art Fund.

Mackintosh, a Scottish architect, designer, water colourist and artist died in 1928. His work, alongside that of his wife Margaret Macdonald, influenced many European design movements, including Art Nouveau, Arts and Crafts and Secessionism.

The Oak Room – the complete interior of the celebrated Ingram Street Tearooms in Glasgow – was carefully dismantled in 1971, when a team of enthusiasts numbered the 800 wooden components used to build it. These were then packed away for more than 50 years, until a partnership between V&A Dundee, Glasgow Museums and Dundee City Council, saw the room meticulously restored,



conserved and reconstructed within the new museum.

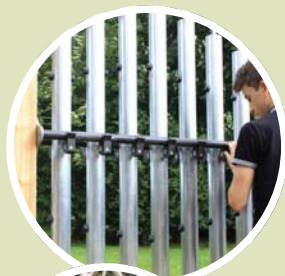
Although the original leaded glass windows, which would have glazed the building, have not survived, photographs of the room enabled restoration experts to accurately replace them in partnership with specialist glass blowers.

"It's a very wonderful interior with sophisticated use of space, light and shadow," says Charles Taylor, who oversaw the woodwork conservation. "The whole Oak Room is a theatre set – a foil for the lighting scheme."



Charles Taylor runs the workshop that restored and rebuilt the historic Oak Room





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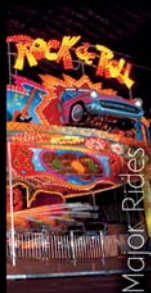
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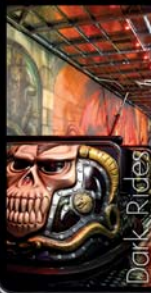
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INTERVIEW

## PHILIP LONG

### DIRECTOR: V&A DUNDEE

With a career spanning two decades, Philip Long has worked at a number of museums across Scotland, including a high profile stint in Edinburgh as senior curator at the National Galleries of Scotland, which oversees the Scottish National Gallery, Scottish National Portrait Gallery and Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art.

In his new role as director of the recently-opened V&A Dundee, Long speaks to *Attractions Management* about his position and what the institution has in store for its visitors.



Born in Edinburgh, Philip Long has a wealth of experience in arts and culture, having spent his 20 year career working in museums across the country

#### Why was Dundee chosen as a location, versus, say, Edinburgh or Glasgow?

The very first conversations about V&A Dundee were the result of a close relationship between the museum and the University of Dundee. The two institutions have worked together for many years, largely due to university's wonderful Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, which is ranked as one of the top schools of art and design in the UK and has an outstanding reputation in teaching and research.

The suggestion that Dundee would be the perfect city to open a new V&A sparked a remarkable series of events that have led us to where we are today. I often say the city chose the V&A, not the other way around.

#### What will V&A Dundee bring to Scotland?

V&A Dundee is a new idea and a new institution for people to discover and explore. At the same time, it benefits from the support and expertise of the V&A in Kensington, London.

When people visit us, they will find the same extraordinary standard they've come to expect from any V&A institution.

As a design museum, our focus is the impact design has on everyone.

Our building holds exhibitions developed by our team here in Dundee, in partnership with our colleagues in London and with other institutions from around the world.

It's also home to our permanent galleries, telling the largely unknown international story of Scottish design. We also have a team whose role is dedicated to promoting design through learning.

V&A Dundee is focused on design, on making connections between the historical and the contemporary, building international connections, and on inspiring new creativity. For the local community, the new museum will form a deep-rooted connection with them.

Its setting is also special, standing at the centre of the Dundee waterfront, jutting out into the River Tay.



● A Dennis the Menace strip by Scottish cartoonist David Law is included in the exhibits

#### How do you plan to engage the local community?

Through experiencing the work of designers, I want to help people understand how important design and creativity is to us all. It will be vital to make opportunities for people – especially the youth community – that might change their lives. People can excel in so many ways – that may not always be through the conventional education system, but by seeing great design and getting involved in design and creativity, they may find ways to transform their future.

#### How many visitors are you projecting in the first year?

The visitor number estimates are 350,000 a year, and 500,000 in the first 12 months after opening.

#### What are your initial aims as the attraction opens?

There are very practical ways we can measure success and there are very important intangible ways too. Of course, we want as many people as possible to visit V&A Dundee, getting involved in our programmes and all the other great things on offer here in the city and in the wider region. As I walk through the galleries and spaces of the museum, I want to keep seeing people being excited and inspired, talking together about that experience.

I'm really looking forward to welcoming new people to the museum. The team behind it has worked passionately on it for many years. It becomes a museum because people are in it, taking part, being inspired, getting involved and planning to come back again and again.





THE  
**PRODUCERS**  
GROUP  
INTERNATIONAL THEME PARK PRODUCTION EXPERTS



# FORWARD THINKING

**F**ounded in 1989, Simtec has spent the last three decades establishing itself as a leader in its field.

Based in Braunschweig, Germany, the company develops and manufactures simulator systems for various applications such as automotive component testing and driving simulation. The majority of its business is done within the entertainment industry, where it develops simulator attractions for customers worldwide. Simtec Asia – a subsidiary of Simtec – was created specifically to support its customers in East Asia, with a marketing and sales office in Shanghai, China, and a service location in Wuhan, China.

“Our most successful product is our HexaFlite Flying Theater system, as well as our Funride closed cabin simulators,” says company CEO, Bernd Kaufmann.

“We have a powerful focus in the development of simulator attractions with our own engineering teams.

**Simtec is a flying theatre and simulator ride supplier for the attractions industry, as well as a manufacturer of driving and flight simulation applications. With its new digital signage system Simtec also offers advertising solutions. Its CEO, Bernd Kaufmann, is leading the company forward as it continues to be a leading supplier in the attractions industry.**

Beside this engineering focus we do the system integration and can offer turnkey solutions for several simulator systems.”

## High-profile clients

Simtec has focused its business on three different industries. The first is the entertainment industry, serving customers including theme parks, museums, zoos and expos. The second is the automotive

industry, where it creates test systems for automotive components, driving simulators, and test systems for other applications.

Digital signage is the third arm of Simtec, with its new moving advertising system for airports, shopping malls and other places.

Working primarily in these three areas, over the last three decades Simtec has built up an impressive client list.

In the attractions sector, major clients include Volkswagen Autostadt, the Mercedes Benz Museum, Cinecittà, Wanda and Evergrande. Simtec has also worked for research institutes such as the German Aerospace Establishment, universities, museums and multiple Expos, including World Expos in Hannover and Shanghai.

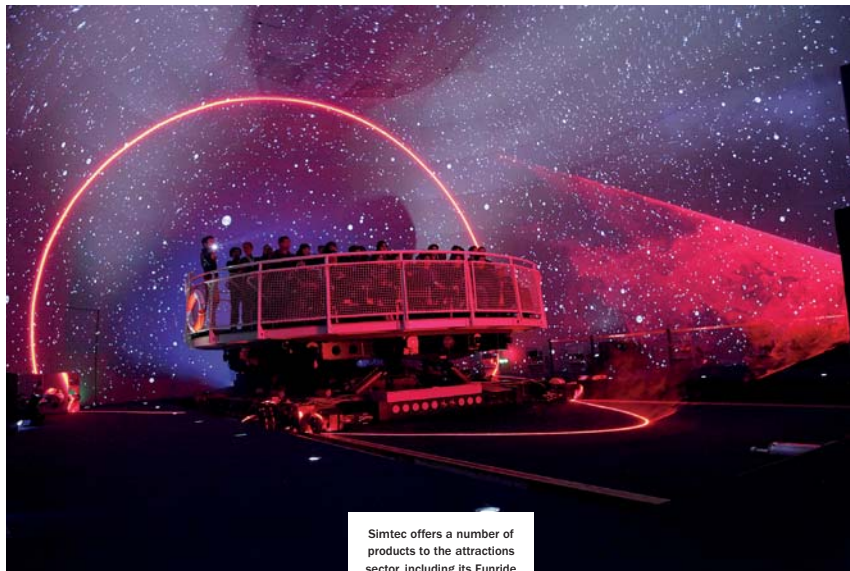
In the automotive industry, these include the likes of Volkswagen, Audi, BMW and Mercedes, as well as a number of different automotive suppliers. ▶



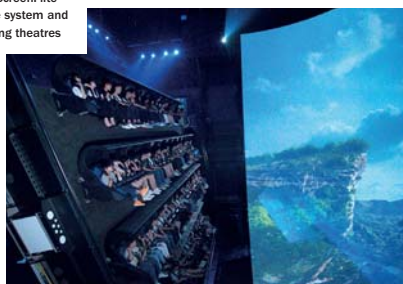
Bernd Kaufmann  
leads Simtec as  
its CEO and owner



**MAJOR CLIENTS  
INCLUDE VOLKSWAGEN  
AUTOSTADT, THE  
MERCEDES BENZ MUSEUM,  
CINECITTÀ, WANDA  
AND EVERGRANDE**



Simtec offers a number of products to the attractions sector, including its Funride simulators, ScreenFlite digital signage system and HexaFlite flying theatres





Simtec's interactive dark ride combines a traditional dark ride concept with the fun of competing each other of modern video games

► The company has installed its ScreenFlite digital signage system at Aeroporto di Roma and can offer similar solutions for locations including airports and shopping malls.

"We're supplying our customers with customised, as well as small series, products. We also do special development projects of unique systems," says Kaufmann. "We take this worldwide, with a focus on Europe, the Middle East, China and East Asia."

### Always innovating

With the slogan "German innovation in motion", it's no surprise Simtec likes to offer custom-designed products, created on-site within 7,000sq m (75,000sq ft) of system integration halls and offices.

"We have our own technology development capabilities and don't depend on others to develop innovative products," says Kaufmann. "We like to work with customers on a long term perspective, so having everything in-house is perfect."

When working with new clients, Kaufmann says that Simtec management will work with their client to understand their ideas, targets and vision for a new system or attraction, so they can create a bespoke final specification matching their needs.

A current project is the HexaFlite flying theatre, which is being installed in China for both Wanda and Evergrande.

### An industry perspective

As the business grows and evolves, Simtec always has its finger on the pulse.

## MANAGEMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS

Led by Bernd Kaufmann, Simtec's team of around 90 employees is made up of different groups, including mechanics, hydraulics/pneumatics, electric and software and project management.

Within these teams, Simtec delivers its projects based on the Prince II system, which is a structured project management method based on seven key principles: Continued Business Justification, Learn From Experience, Defined Roles And Responsibilities, Manage By Stages,

Manage By Exception, Focus On Products, Tailor To Suit The Project Environment.

The company also holds an ISO 9001 quality approval, a globally-recognised management system based on Customer Focus, Leadership, Engagement of people, Process approach, Improvement, Evidence-based decision making and Relationship Management.

Simtec also holds several other key qualifications for special applications in areas such as the automotive industry.

"We have an internal team that analyses the market and tries to summarise different needs in the industry," Kaufmann explains. "As we've been in the market for about 30 years now, we've gained much experience and have designed our own new products to fit different demands."

Not only does Simtec analyse its own customers, but it keeps an eye on the global attractions market. Identifying different strengths and weaknesses in various world regions, Simtec does this so that it can deliver the best product possible to each individual market.

"China is the strongest market at moment," says Kaufmann. "Due to the economic war between the US and China, a German supplier such as Simtec is more and more interesting for our customers in China and in wider Asia.

"We're prepared in that market with our fully-owned subsidiary. We also have a very good and experienced team in both our China and Germany locations, with our staff able to take additional business for our entertainment systems, as well as our automotive test systems and digital signage systems."

### Reliable business

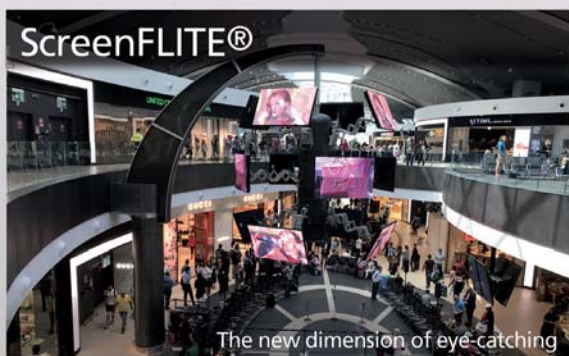
Simtec can provide a multitude of solutions for the visitor attractions sector, whether that be in creating rides, working in the automotive sector or creating digital signage. But why choose this company?

"If you're a customer who's looking for a reliable, family-owned supplier with a 30 year track record in the industry call Simtec," says Kaufmann. "Here we expect the unexpected."





[www.simtec.de](http://www.simtec.de)  
[info@simtec.de](mailto:info@simtec.de)



**Turning visions into attractions**





More than 35,000 people are expected to attend this year's show

# IAAPA ATTRACTIONS EXPO

The 2018 IAAPA Attractions Expo kicks off on 12 November. Here's what to expect from the show – plus, news from a selection of exhibiting companies

**T**his year's IAAPA Expo celebrates 100 years of the organisation and is expected to draw more than 35,000 industry professionals from more than 100 countries to the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida, US.

The expo is the world's largest conference and trade show for the attractions industry, which has an estimated US\$360bn global economic impact. Alongside its vast show floor, IAAPA offers a programme of more than 100 educational sessions and presentations by leading operators on industry trends, new technology, marketing and communications, entertainment, government relations, safety and security, food and beverage, games and merchandise, facility operations, human resources, and more.

This year's keynote speaker is Disney's Parks and Resorts chair Bob Chapek, who will talk at the GM and Owners' Breakfast on 14 November, offering insight into his more than 25 years of leadership at the global entertainment giant.

The conference takes place from 12-15 November and the trade show

## NEED TO KNOW

**What:** IAAPA Attractions Expo 2018

**When:** 12-16 November 2017

**Where:** Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida, US

**How much:** US\$50 (US\$100 non-member student; US\$219 (US\$399 non-member)

**Register:** [www.iaapa.org/expos](http://www.iaapa.org/expos)

**IAAPA**  
Attractions  
Expo



from 13-16 November. Buyers and decisionmakers from the world of theme parks, waterparks, FECs, zoos and aquariums, and museums will all be in attendance for the event.

The trade show floor will fill 560,000sq ft (52,000sq m) of exhibit space with more than 1,100 exhibiting companies displaying the latest products and services. For the first time in Expo history, the show floor will extend beyond the walls of the convention center into outdoor structures created just for the event. Dubbed the "Exploration Station," this area creates new exhibit space for more than 100 exhibiting companies.

## JRA

## Booth #1369

JRA is providing masterplanning, design, and project management for the Mascot Hall of Fame, located in Whiting, Indiana, US. Set to open in early 2019, this 25,000sq ft (2,300sq m), family fun zone aims to make people laugh and draw them closer to the teams they love, while educating families on the art and science of mascots.

Offering permanent exhibits, activities, and plenty of fuzzy, feathery shenanigans, this whimsical attraction is expected to welcome 50,000 visitors each year. See this project and more at the JRA booth.

## Zamperla

## Booth #2224-2231

Zamperla is set to present new rollercoaster concepts at this year's IAAPA, with new openings at Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi and Wuxi Wanda Theme Park.

The other focus of the company is Z+ – the new business division of Zamperla born to create new experiences using the latest hi-tech developments applied to rides. A new VR Box is also coming, while a new version of Windstarz will be presented too. This eight arm version of

the model is a more compact version of the ride and is perfect for malls and FECs.

## Vekoma

## Booth #5134

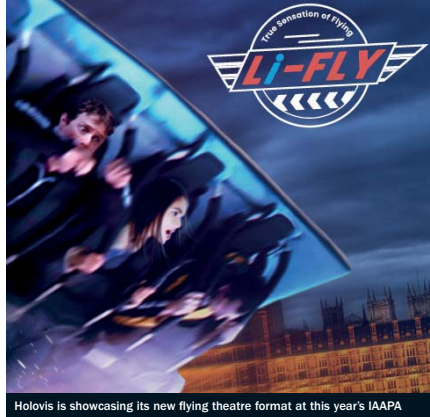
Every year, millions of people across the globe are delighted, thrilled and profoundly moved by the coasters and attractions that bear the Vekoma brand. Some of the world's most popular visitor attractions work with Vekoma to us to create unique experiences that move their business to the next level. Vekoma management will be on hand to discuss its biggest and brightest projects, and everything it can do to help you boost your attraction.

## Holovis

## Booth #778

Holovis is 're-volving' Flying Theatres by advancing this attraction format from a traditional passive lean-back experience into an active one that actually delivers true sensations of flying.

A uniquely developed 5-DOF motion system securely holds up to 100 guests tilted into a prone position before elevating them over a highly immersive, ultra-high-resolution dome screen to deliver the single most compelling and completely unique flying experience ever created.



Holovis is showcasing its new flying theatre format at this year's IAAPA

This is a complete multisensory experience combining visuals, audio, perfectly synched motion, SFX and real-time media.

## Simtec

## Booth #1059

Simtec is presenting its ScreenFlite media information system under the name of Le Chandelier at Rome Fiumicino Airport.

ScreenFlite puts ads, information and messages in motion, and is an kind eye-catcher for passers by. Twelve LED-displays are mounted on individual scissor arms, which are mounted on three horizontal rings. The three rings are stacked at the centre of the system and can be rotated jointly or against each other.



JRA is masterplanning the Mascot Hall of Fame in Whiting, Indiana, US

## Huss

## Booth #4624

Huss Park Attractions GmbH has announced that its Explorer film based attraction will open at Cancun's Riviera Maya in Mexico in 2019 at the new Amikoo Resort Destination Theme Park, currently being developed and scheduled to open next year. Presented at IAAPA, visit the Huss Booth to find out about all it can offer your visitor attraction.

## CentreEdge Software

## Booth #1846

Stop by the CentreEdge booth to discuss your point of sale software needs. Offering the total package when it comes to software that drives your FEC or amusement park, CentreEdge has created an affordable, best-in-class



Vekoma's Boomerang ride gives the experience of riding both forwards and backwards

IAAPA  
Attractions  
Europe

## EXHIBITOR NEWS

solution to bring reliability, consistency and efficiency to visitor facilities, helping run your business smarter.

**iPlayCO & FEC Builders****Booth #4063****Booth #6062**

iPlayCO and FEC Builders are global designers and manufacturers of fun indoor playground equipment and interactive play structures. Their latest installation is Ant World. iPlayCO also offer FEC development and turnkey solutions, and are showcasing their new Super Heroes booth featuring the cityscapes, turbo slide and a Tuff Stuff soft sculpted foam themed car.

**Vortex****Booth #1373**

For the first time, Vortex International is introducing RiverQuest – a family adventure attraction that combines the thrills of traditional river rides and waterslides with multi-sensory dreamscapes. It offers multiple

discovery routes, multimedia tunnels and stimulating passageways that maximise thrills in ways even young children will enjoy. Featuring a serpentine current that veers off into different paths, RiverQuest employs special effects and multimedia water-theaters to broaden family demographics and simplify theme integration.

**Aquatic Development Group****Booth #2646**

ADG successfully designed and built two of their Water Rides in 2018. In Ohio, the company opened their second Adventure Lagoon at Zoombezi Bay. Dubbed "Otter Banks", this project was the third expansion that ADG worked on for the park. Canobie Lake in New Hampshire chose ADG's Tidal River water ride to be their anchor attraction for its waterpark expansion, along with a new slide tower, kids play area, and increased decking for lounge, cabanas and food and beverage outlets.



The Lagotronics' team will be on-hand to discuss its portfolio

**Lagotronics****Booth #5103**

Lagotronics Projects' team has announced plans to open a new GameChanger attraction. Coming to an FEC with an "amazing and well known IP" more information will be released as IAAPA approaches. At its booth, Lagotronics Projects will be showing a wide range of interactive experiences. From interactive dark rides for theme and amusement parks, to immersive interactive experiences for FECs and museums.

**Intamin****Booth #3424**

Intamin's record-breaking Rapids Ride "Infinity Falls" (see p58) successfully started operation at SeaWorld Orlando in October. Infinity Falls features roaring rapids, soaking fountains and a record-setting 12m (39ft) drop, all against the backdrop of a rainforest utopia. At this year's show, Intamin will be presenting a number of new LSM launch coasters, family launch coasters, tower rides and several different water rides.

**The Producers Group****Booth #260**

The Producers Group (TPG) specialises in turnkey attractions, production management, technical design and content development for everything from small projects to entire theme parks. TPG creates attractions and guest experiences worldwide, maintaining a full-time, in-house staff of highly trained show producers, project managers, technical directors, technical managers, technical documentation support staff, and specialised designers of all disciplines. Visit TPG's booth to find out more about their services.



iPlayCO and FEC Builders are leading global designers and manufacturers of interactive play structures





Vortex is introducing RiverQuest – an attraction that combines a traditional river rides and waterslides with multi-sensory dreamscapes

#### Walltopia

##### Booth #1346

Walltopia will debut its newest product in Orlando – Ropetopia Curves. It's a next generation ropes course with an entirely new belay line that unlocks limitless design possibilities. Ropetopia Curves leads to a much higher throughput than the standard ropes courses due to its single-direction progression. The modernistic design also solves architectural problems with its easy implementation in otherwise unusable spaces with complicated footprint.

#### Intercard

##### Booth #1324

Intercard will introduce its new Edge Mobile App Collection at the IAAPA. The collection includes the popular iService arcade management tool and new apps for card replenishment and inventory management.

The iService app makes it simple to track and manage every game at one or more locations. Users can remotely put a game out of service for maintenance and technicians can use it to track repairs and when the game was placed back into service. All information is automatically updated on the server and in the cloud.

#### Proslide

##### Booth #2054

Proslide has reinvented racing with two of its latest innovations for 2018: the RallyRacer and Dueling Pipeline. Both feature new RallyPoints – low separator lanes within the waterslide that allow riders to see and hear competitors during the race. Available in 2 to 10 lanes, the RallyRacer rockets riders through tight high-speed loops.

#### Triotech

##### Booth #1578

Triotech's Team Battle is a first-of-its-kind high capacity dueling interactive attraction. This unique experience features two teams battling it out in an oversized multi-sensory arena. Team Battle is based on Triotech's award-winning XD Dark Ride Interactive theater. Using new technology and game-play design, the experience features both team and individual scoring elements which drive interactivity and provide high replay value.

#### Rocas & Design

##### Booth #275

As a worldwide leader in providing turnkey theming



Team Battle is based on Triotech's award-winning XD Dark Ride Interactive theater. The dueling attraction is themed on the popular Rabbids IP

solutions, Rocas & Design, is introducing its latest projects at this year's IAAPA.

In Middle East, "Angry Birds World" recently opened its door in Doha with great success. Rocas will also present the design and theming of "Island of Legends" in Sharjah and its participation in major project currently underway in Qatar.

#### Penny Press

##### Booth #806

Penny Press Factory continues to supply its GEM penny press to theme parks and attractions around the world. The innovative Penny Press features contactless payment, internal token dispenser and wireless income reporting. The latest installation was at the QE2 in Dubai, UAE. Penny Press Factory are actively searching for distributors around the world.

#### Simex-Iwerks

##### Booth #2281

Come see Simex-Iwerks' flying 4D Vertical Experience demo and learn about the company's exciting new film partnership that combines new content with the thrilling sense of flight.

The company will also introduce a number of new attractions films, including three Warner Bros titles – *Wonder Woman*, *IT*, and the family-friendly adventure, *Smallfoot*.

Visit the Simex-Iwerks booth during this year's show to learn how you can bring these blockbuster titles to your visitor attraction.

[PICSOLVE]

# SUPER SELFIE

Capturing your visitors and destination in one shareable moment



Whenever a guest visits an iconic destination, they want to share great photos from their day, but picking the best image can be hard. They want to show their excitement but also how amazing the destination is. This isn't always possible with a typical selfie, but thanks to the new 'Super Selfie', this can be achieved.

Thanks to Picsolve's exclusive partnership with *Panora.me*, the Super Selfie takes the stunning backdrop of any destination and combines it with a 'selfie' of the guests to create a short video with a fantastic zooming out effect.

## How does it work?

Visitors pose for a camera located in a distant location. The camera captures the visitors and the backdrop using multiple cameras. It's then stitched together to create a piece of video content that starts with a close-up of the visitors and dramatically zooms out to reveal a panoramic backdrop.

## Key Benefits

For Picsolve's partners, it produces a short, shareable piece of video content that is effective for social reach, ideal for brand activation, and something visitors cannot capture themselves.



The Super Selfie uses multiple cameras to create a close up shot zooming out into a panorama of the attraction



The Super Selfie technology has already been installed in multiple locations, including Studio City Macau

For visitors, it creates unique and instantly-shareable content that captures a memorable and enjoyable experience.

The Super Selfie is now live in multiple locations, including Studio City Macau.

"We wanted to offer our guests an engaging way of capturing the scale and the beauty of our resort in one amazing piece of content, that guests would also want to share again and again," says Aaron Glade, assistant director, Entertainment Operations at Studio City Macau.

"The Super Selfie was the perfect piece of technology to do this and we are really pleased to be the first in Asia to have this installed. The response from our guests has been brilliant." ●

# PRODUCT INNOVATION

Suppliers tell *Attractions Management*  
about their latest product, design  
and technology launches

For the latest supplier  
news and company  
information, visit

[attractions-kit.net](http://attractions-kit.net)



● Assassin's Creed: The Temple of Anubis was announced at the 2017 IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando, Florida

## Assassin's Creed VR Maze will widen attraction's appeal, says Triotech founder Ernest Yale



● Ernest Yale, Triotech founder

Media-based attractions developer Triotech has partnered with Ubisoft to create *Assassin's Creed: The Temple of Anubis* – a new free-roaming virtual-reality experience, developed exclusively for Triotech's VR Maze attraction.

The hotly-anticipated experience, which was announced at last year's IAAPA in Orlando, Florida, is based on the *Assassin's Creed* videogame franchise.

"We're really excited to partner with Ubisoft on *Assassin's Creed*," said Triotech founder

and CEO Ernest Yale. "Already more than 100,000 people have experienced our VR Maze all over the world and this next chapter will definitely widen its appeal."

The experience, which is set in ancient Egypt, allows guests to step into the shoes of the hero, Bayek.

In the game, players can explore temples, dodge arrows and experience the iconic leap of faith made famous in the franchise.

As the attraction is set inside a maze, players are able to

physically touch the walls and obstacles that appear in the VR.

"We're continuing our expansion into other areas of entertainment, leveraging our popular game brands such as *Assassin's Creed* to create new experiences for fans and to capture the imagination of new audiences," said Deborah Papiernik, senior VP of New Business at Ubisoft.

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORD

**TRIOTECH**

## Alterface founder **Benoit Cornet** on the creation of Le Kinétorium for the Jardin d'Acclimation, Paris

Working with longtime collaborator Jora Vision, interactive and media-based attractions provider Alterface has created a new interactive attraction at the Jardin d'Acclimation in Paris.

Tasked with designing a ride in keeping with the park's theming, Alterface and Jora Vision created Le Kinétorium,

an interactive dark ride that takes guests on an adventure through the abandoned greenhouse of a mad scientist.

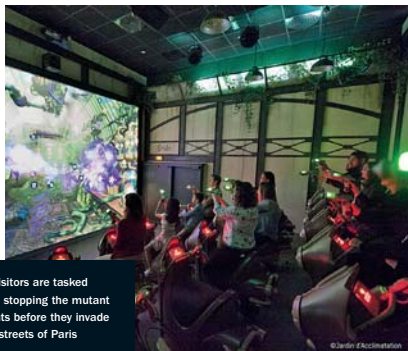
In the ride, the scientist has lost control of his creations – an army of mutant plants.

Alterface project managed the ride, which was brought to life with video and projection mapping. It features the company's Saito! show control management solution, as well as its shooting technology.

Jora Vision was responsible for the design and build of the queue line, pre-show and main theatre.

"Le Kinétorium combines both technology and theming to make a strong attraction for young and old," says Benoit Cornet, founder and CEO of Alterface.

"The capabilities of our shooting technology have allowed us to place some little gems, which are making a true



● Visitors are tasked with stopping the mutant plants before they invade the streets of Paris



● The attraction includes Alterface's latest shooting technology



● Benoit Cornet, Alterface founder

difference. This adds a challenge and more dimension to the game for advanced players.

"More than creating some sort of emotional overload, we have worked on fine-tuning the attraction and this is what is generating most of the fun. It's a great addition to Jardin d'Acclimation's offering."

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORD

ALTERFACE

## New waterpark will transform resort into one of Dominican Republic's top family attractions, says Vortex president **Stephen Hamelin**

The upcoming Circle Resort from Meliá Hotels International will feature a waterpark outfitted by Vortex International.

Located in Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic, the waterpark will feature four pools with three Vortex Elevations multi-level structures and four standalone water slides, as well as ground-level Poolplay elements to create a highly-immersive play area.

"We're delighted to develop our aquatic play installations for Circle At Paradisus Palma Real and help make the resort a top destination for families," says Stephen Hamelin, president of Vortex International.

Vortex was selected by both Sans and Meliá Hotels, due to the company's expertise in creating imaginative and interactive aquatic play experiences, as well as its "sophisticated and elegant" designs.



● Stephen Hamelin, Vortex



● Architect and concept designer Alvaro Sans created the waterpark

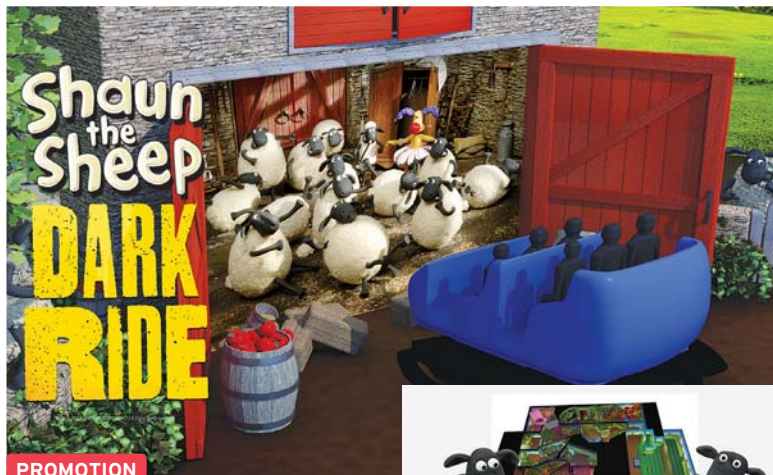
"We're convinced that the collaboration between Vortex and Meliá will enrich the experience of our clients," says William Bernal Wall, VP of works and maintenance for Sol Meliá. "This agreement will bring them the joy of playing with

water and creating memorable experiences for the whole family with innovative, sustainable, and recreational water features."

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORD

VORTEX





## Sally Corporation partners with Aardman to create a Shaun the Sheep dark ride

### What is it?

Aardman, the world-famous animation studio has partnered with dark ride specialists, Sally Corporation, to develop an array of dark ride concepts based on the stop motion series, *Shaun the Sheep*.

The *Shaun the Sheep*-themed dark ride is being marketed to any park looking for a fun, family ride.

### What to expect

Riders will step aboard custom-themed vehicles that will transport them through the rural, rustic and

colourful world of *Shaun the Sheep*. Guests can expect an adventure filled with slapstick humor and all the playful antics that Shaun (the leader of the flock) can conjure up in a four minute ride experience.

Immersive sets and scenery and custom animatronics will mimic iconic scenes from the movie and series. Buyers can choose from a classic storytelling dark ride or a repeatable interactive gaming experience.

### Who's it for?

With Sally's ability to custom design dark rides, this attraction is suitable for any size park, or FEC looking to satisfy their family sector/demographic and gain a marketable IP for their location.

"From farm-themed attractions and play parks, to cafés and stage shows, people are noticing the universal appeal of this popular IP and integrating it into attractions world-wide. Now, Sally gets the opportunity to join in the fun and create a fully immersive Shaun the Sheep dark ride that will be nothing short of a flockin' good time."



says Lauren Weaver, director of marketing, communications and business development at Sally Corporation.

### Benefits

- Family ride
- Internationally popular IP
- Funny, slapstick humor
- Cross-cultural appeal
- Bonus holiday animation
- Loved by all ages

### Background

Aardman Attractions and Live Experiences department specialises in creating immersive experiences which appeal to and engage the whole family.

Sally's experience of creating family dark rides for parks around the world, makes this a perfect partnership.

"Shaun the Sheep loves new adventures," says Ngaio Harding-Hill, senior manager of attractions and live experiences at Aardman.

"We're thrilled by the opportunity to provide Shaun's global family audiences with a unique way to immerse themselves in the world of our characters."

### Contact Sally Corporation today to learn more

- [info@sallycorp.com](mailto:info@sallycorp.com)
- +1 (904) 355-7100
- Visit [www.sallycorp.com](http://www.sallycorp.com) to learn more about our 40 years of destination-quality dark rides



● Lauren Weaver, Sally Corporation

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORDS

**SALLY CORPORATION**



**simworx**

# A DAY IN THE LIFE

Simworx is a media-based attractions specialist acknowledged as one of the world's leading suppliers of Dynamic Motion Simulation Attractions and 4D Effects Cinemas for the entertainment, education and corporate markets worldwide. It's CEO, Terry Monkton, takes us through the life of a ride, from conception to creation



## GET TO KNOW SIMWORX

### What products do you offer?

Our offering includes 3D/4D effects theatres, Immersive Tunnels, the Immersive Adventurer, VR 4D Rides, the Stargazer motion ride, Mini Flying Theatre, AGV (Advanced Guidance Vehicle) dark rides, the Cobra motion ride and our ParadrupVR system.

### What sectors do you work in?

We work mainly with amusement and theme parks, family entertainment centres, museums, aquariums, safari parks, zoos, retail malls, and in the education and corporate sectors.

### What projects are you working on at the moment?

We're working on a multitude of projects in various parts of the world. Many are subject to NDAs so we can't give share this information yet. Two we can talk about, however, are the Immersive Superflume for Trans Studio in Indonesia and the first example of our Mini Flying Theatre for Baosun Wildlife Park in Vietnam.

For the Simworx team, which has designed, built and installed its products in locations worldwide, including in the UK, Europe, North America, South America, Asia, New Zealand and the Middle East, quality and innovation are key.

"We strive to be the leading global supplier of media based attractions," says company CEO Terry Monkton.

"At Simworx, we're renowned for our quality products, performance, technical expertise and creative attraction solutions. The idea that we can successfully work with a client to achieve their aspirations and develop a ride they're truly happy with inspires us. On opening day, seeing the client and their customers enjoying the ride experience and hearing their comments just adds to that."

The Simworx service book includes full turnkey solutions, custom attractions, product development, manufacturing and service support, to film content, motion programming and complete



Four of Simworx's Stargazer units have been utilised within Gaffe À Gaston at Parc Spirou





We continue to evolve the product range and adopt the very latest in advancements in technology

► themed attractions. For Monkton, as a leading technology company, Simworx always has to be at the forefront in every part of its business.

"We continue to evolve the product range and adopt the very latest in advancements in technology," he says. "We're also mobilising the sales team to be truly global so that we can be proactive in territories where demand is high."

### The development process

Focussing on the Stargazer and Immersive Tunnel rides completed for the recently opened Parc Spirou in France, Monkton explains how a new attraction goes from conception to reality and the steps that have to be taken to ensure it reaches the highest quality standards.

"We were originally approached in June 2013 by a company called Parexi," says Monkton. "They had developed the concept and masterplan for Parc Spirou and were looking for Simworx to produce a number of media based attractions for the park based on the Spirou IP."

"After several meetings this culminated in the Stargazer and Immersive Tunnel attractions being ordered and subsequently opening at the park in June 2018."

For Simworx, the project management team was made up of Richard Monkton and Tony Whaley – overseen by head of projects Martin Booth – along with mechanical and electrical engineers, software and AV technicians. Outside of the company, Simworx worked with a number of different parties, including Parc Spirou's management team, Parexi's project management team, IP provider Média Participations, the local authority, shareholders, investors and the park's safety inspectors Socotec.

"Before signing the contract, we discussed the final ride choices, and produced concepts and first draft layout drawings," Monkton explains. "Once the contract was signed, we moved to the

### KEY CLIENTS

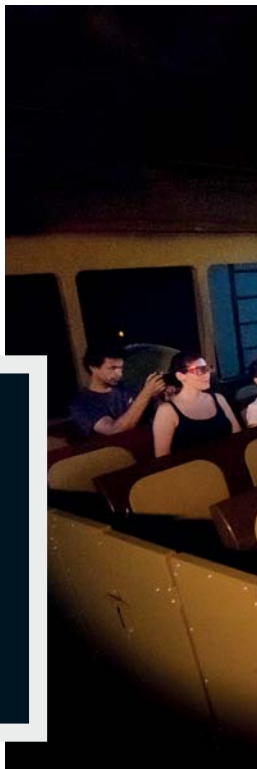
- Parc Spirou, France
- National Geographic
- Ferrari Land, PortAventura, Spain
- Dubai Parks and Resorts - Motiongate Dubai and Bollywood Parks Dubai
- Hub Zero, Dubai
- Movie Park Germany
- Trans Studio, Indonesia
- Parques Reunidos
- Companie De Alpes, Futuroscope, France

design stage, which typically features preliminary design and detailed design.

"During these stages we work with our partners to design the rides, to meet their technical needs and to match their creative aspirations. The design then goes through a third party safety design review process and once all parties are happy with this, we enter the procurement and manufacturing stage."

During the design phases, Simworx will work with the client's architects to provide layout drawings and information for facility load details and power requirements. This means the architects can then make a start on creating a structure to house the ride, queuing areas, pre-show area and the plant room. Through the entire process, quality and safety are always placed at the forefront of the process for Monkton.

"The client is invited to check the work in progress throughout







Accompanied by a pre-show  
starring Spirou, the Dinosaur  
Island Immersive Tunnel  
is a totally immersive  
experience for all ages





**For a complex,  
bespoke ride  
we offer a 'hand  
holding' service  
where we have an  
expert technician  
on site for 30  
days after the  
attraction opens**

► the process," he says. "We carry out a strenuous factory acceptance test, which the client is invited to attend before the ride's shipping.

"Once the rides have been delivered to site, we carry out mechanical and electrical installation elements and install the AV components. Once hardware has been fully installed, we programme the ride's motion profile and special effects cues, something we do in conjunction with the client."

#### IP creation

When working with intellectual properties, an extra layer is added into the process. Typically, the park arranges a licence

agreement with the IP provider. Simworx will then custom-design a ride tailored to the park and the IP's requirements.

"When we produce a ride related to an IP, we produce an initial concept and send these to the parks, who in turn send them to the licensor for approval," says Monkton.

"Depending on feedback received, we'll then tweak the designs until they're approved by the licensor."

Simworx's Stargazer ride, as an example, is based on the character Gaston from the Spirou universe. The ride sees guests seated in replicas of Gaston's car and taken on a wild ride with the character, who is an enthusiastic inventor.



IMMERSIVE SUPERFLUME

Simworx has recently partnered with water ride specialist Interlink to create a brand new attraction concept – the Immersive Superflume.

Featuring a motion base and immersive screens added to a traditional flume ride, the experience at Trans Studio in Indonesia will be a world first for any visitor attraction when it opens in December 2019.

The under development ride will use 16-seater boats and a conveyor loading system, with riders leaving the loading/unloading station to travel through a dinosaur-themed area. On the ride, they enter an immersive tunnel where their boat will stop and huge screens on either side of them bring the dinosaurs to life. On the ride, the movement of the boats

will sync up with the action on-screen as riders escape the prehistoric beasts.

Having escaped, the ride will then continue through another dinosaur-themed section before entering a vertical lift, which will include further theming and various special effects.

At the ride's 12m (39ft) peak, the boats will plunge into a final splash pool, before heading back

The ride's motion base and immersive screens are added to a flume ride for what will be a totally unique, world first visitor experience

along another section of the ride to the station.

Throughout the ride experience, large screens built to accommodate 3D and 4K projection will be used in combination with an audio system to place riders at the centre of the action.

The Mini Flying Theatre concept offers a model more affordable for smaller visitor attractions



## MINI FLYING THEATRE

**D**esigned to entertain guests of all ages, the first example of Simworx's recently-introduced Mini Flying Theatre will open in Q1 2019 at the Baosun Wildlife Park in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Developed as a smaller option to the 60-seat Flying Theatre also offered by Simworx, the Mini Flying Theatre brings this popular

type of attraction into the reach of smaller operators, with a more accessible price range and smaller overall footprint but still utilising cutting-edge ride technology.

The ride features an immersive, large format, one quarter dome screen concept, with 20 seats and an hourly capacity of up to 250 guests. Riders are seated in four rows of five – two on

each side of a central holding structure – on a normal horizontal plane. As the ride cycle begins, the seats are lifted into the air in a smooth transition to panorama mode, with the rear rows moving above those in front.

Guests experience movement, matched to the on-screen footage. This includes programmable weave and tilt along with forward

and backward motion, while the sensation of flying is enhanced with the riders' legs dangling freely below them.

In-theatre effects are also included, with riders experiencing water spray, wind, snow, smoke and special effects lighting. The Mini Flying theatre is also supplied with surround sound audio and an HD or 4K 3D projection system.

"These are highly dynamic, 6DOF, eight-seater vehicles. Four are used in the attraction," Monkton explains.

"We created the design for the vehicles and then the moulds which again have to be approved by both the licensor and the park. It's imperative that everything we do is approved by the IP owner."

## Client relationships

While some levels of involvement from the client are obviously expected, how much involvement during the development process is up to the client and what the project entails.

"It differs between whether the ride is a standard ride from our portfolio or is a custom ride," says Monkton.

"The client is involved through the preliminary design phase – and possibly, once complete, the final detailed design stage.

"We stay in touch with the park's project management team continually, keeping them informed of the development and build of the ride, as well as installation and commissioning planning.

"Once installed, the ride is reviewed with the client with a view to obtaining the final signed handover certificate."

As a company with vast experience and many high-profile projects, Monkton says the key to success is to be aware of, and subsequently avoid, any potential obstacles you could encounter through the entire process – from start to finish.

"The key to the successful delivery of any project is to ensure you don't have challenges," he explains. "We've installed hundreds of rides over the years, so we know what can crop up. We've learned to ensure the project process runs as smooth as possible, so any issues are addressed before they become challenges."

Once the ride has been delivered and is up and running, Simworx continues its relationship with the client, ensuring it remains of the highest quality and is fully operational for visitors.

"For a complex, bespoke ride we offer a 'hand holding' service where we have an expert technician on site for 30 days after the attraction opens," says Monkton.

"When it's been running for a month or two, we review the attraction with the client for any minor adjustments.

"We also provide an after sales service support contract so that any prospective client knows Simworx will always be on hand to support them."

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