

Attractions

MANAGEMENT NEWS

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IAAPA 2018: 35,000 gather in Orlando

More than 35,000 buyers, suppliers and representatives of the attractions sector – from more than 100 countries – have landed in Orlando, Florida, for this year's IAAPA Attractions Expo.

Hosted inside the Orange County Convention Centre, the Expo got into full swing on 13 November, with the event's opening ceremony. The conference started a day earlier on 12 November, with Monday entirely dedicated to education sessions.

Showcasing more than 1,100 exhibiting companies, the trade show floor is the largest in IAAPA history, with more than 52,000sq m (560,000sq ft) of exhibition space. For the first time in Expo history, the show floor will extend beyond the walls of the convention centre into outdoor structures created just for the event. Dubbed the "Exploration Station", this area creates new exhibit space for over 100 companies exhibiting at IAAPA for the first time.



■ This year's event marks IAAPA's centenary and is expected to attract 35,000 visitors

The expo is the world's largest conference and trade show for the attractions industry, which has an estimated US\$360bn (€315bn, £275bn) global economic impact.

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=7u2c2_A

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This year's event showcases more than 1,100 exhibiting companies



PEOPLE

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IAAPA 2018: **Karen Staley** joins Triotech's leadership team following 18-year career at IAAPA

Karen Staley has joined media-based attraction developer Triotech as regional vice president of sales in the US.

She assumed the leadership role on 12 November. Her appointment was announced at the IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando Florida.

Staley was formerly senior vice president of IAAPA EMEA and in September 2017 was appointed IAAPA's senior vice president of North American operations, at which point she relocated from the association's European HQ in Brussels to IAAPA's global offices in Orlando, Florida.

Commenting on the appointment, Gabi Salabi,



■ Staley joined IAAPA in 2018 and was senior VP of North America

"Triotech has a proven track record, offering some of the most creative immersive experiences in the industry"

chief commercial officer at Triotech said: "Karen Staley has deep knowledge

of the global entertainment and attractions industries, including more than

seventeen years in senior management and business development roles at IAAPA EMEA and IAAPA North America.

"I'm looking forward to her bringing her energy and passion for our industry to Triotech".

Staley, who had been with IAAPA since 2000, added: "Triotech has a proven track record, offering some of the most creative immersive experiences in the industry.

"The company has been on an exceptionally strong growth track for two decades and I look forward to supporting and expanding the company's continued growth on the United States market."

IAAPA 2018: former Premier Parks and Sox Flags boss **Gary Story** among 11 pioneers inducted into Hall of Fame



■ Gary Story, co-founder of Premier Parks and former president of Six Flags Entertainment

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) has inducted 11 global attractions industry pioneers into its IAAPA Hall of Fame.

The latest cohort includes Dr. Harry Wegeforth, creator of the San Diego Zoo and Gary Story, co-founder of Premier Parks and former president of Six Flags Entertainment.

The inductees were revealed during a ceremony held during the opening day of the IAAPA Attractions Expo 2018.

"We're honouring some of the finest and most esteemed leaders in the history of the IAAPA Hall of Fame"

Other pioneers to make it to the Hall of Fame include Edward Joy Morris, considered the industry's first large-scale manufacturer of attractions and Irving Rosenthal, who helped globalise the attractions industry by being among the first to import European rides for his amusement park Coney Island.

The IAAPA Hall of Fame was established in 1990 to

"honour legends and pioneers" for their "significant and lasting contributions" to the growth and development of the global attractions industry.

"In celebration of IAAPA's centennial anniversary, we are honoring some of the finest and most esteemed leaders in the history of the IAAPA Hall of Fame," said Jack Morey, 2018 chair of the IAAPA Hall of Fame.



■ Reilly is SeaWorld's interim CEO & chief parks operations officer

"We are particularly pleased with our third quarter attendance growth during the peak summer season"

CEO **John Reilly** reveals big gains for SeaWorld in Q3 2018

SeaWorld Entertainment's interim CEO John Reilly has revealed that the company saw increases in revenue, net income and pre-tax profits (EBITDA) during Q3 2018.

Total revenue for the quarter increased by 10.4 per cent to US\$483.2m (€423.8m, £370.7m) from Q3 2017, which Reilly said was a result of strong increases in attendance and in-park per capita spending. He added that attendance was generally the underpinning of the sizeable jumps. An extra 700,000 guests attended its parks – a 9.7 per cent uplift to 8.3 million total visitors – in Q3

2018. Reilly put the attendance spike down to a more competitive approach and new additions to SeaWorld Parks in a conference call on the figures.

"We believe that these results were driven primarily by our new strategic pricing initiatives, new marketing and communication initiatives and the positive reception of our new rides, attractions and events," he said.

"We are particularly pleased with our third quarter attendance growth during the peak summer season, which we believe was driven in part by our calendar of popular events."

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IAAPA 2018: **David Rosenberg** to become first aquarium/zoo executive to take up IAAPA chair



■ Rosenberg is vice president at the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California

David Rosenberg will become the first representative of the zoo and aquarium sector to lead IAAPA, when he takes over the role of chair of the board for 2019.

Rosenberg, vice president at the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California, will take over the chairmanship of the attractions industry's international trade association in early 2019.

Rosenberg took the stage as the incoming chair during the introduction of the 2019 IAAPA officers, which took

"I'm humbled to be selected to help lead our global association during this exciting time for the sector"

place during the Kickoff Event at the IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando, Florida on 13 November. Amanda Thompson, managing director of Blackpool Pleasure Beach, was named first vice chair and Ken Whiting, president of Whiting's Foods at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, US, was confirmed as second vice chair.

Rosenberg is an attractions industry veteran, having

started his career at Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. Prior to his role at Monterey Bay Aquarium, he also served in leadership positions at Hyatt Hotels Corporation.

"I'm humbled to be selected to help lead our global association during this exciting time for the worldwide attractions industry," said Rosenberg.

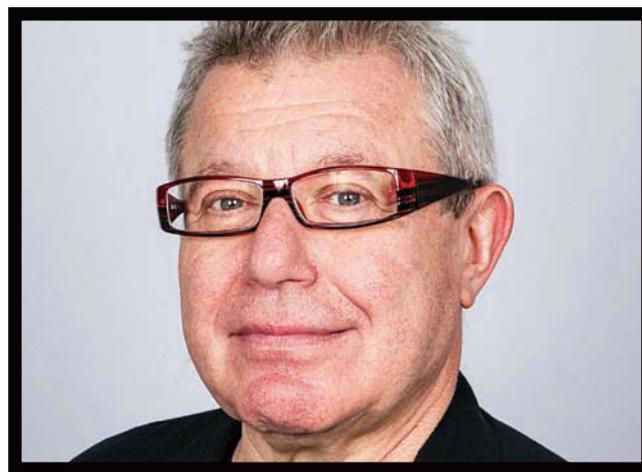
Daniel Libeskind creates "cultural gateway" in Lithuanian capital Vilnius with opening of MO Museum

A new modern art museum, called MO Museum, has opened in Vilnius, Lithuania showcasing the 4,000-work private collection of local philanthropists Viktoras and Danguole Butkus.

Viktoras sold his biotechnology firm, Fermentas, to Thermo Fisher Scientific in 2010, which gave the couple "the financial platform to bring our concept to life", he said.

Describing their concept as a "museum without walls", the couple have been advised by Lithuanian curator Raminta Jurenaite and the museum centres on mainly Lithuanian works.

New York-based architect Daniel Libeskind designed



■ Libeskind's previous work includes the Jewish Museum in Berlin

"I have a true appreciation for the history of Vilnius and believe the building is a wonderful place"

the museum, which sits near Vilnius's historic medieval city. Libeskind said of his

design: "It is conceived as a cultural gateway connecting the 18th-century grid to

the medieval walled city.

"As someone who has a true appreciation for the history and beauty of Vilnius, I believe the building and its architecture will become a wonderful place to enjoy art and the spirit of the city."

The museum held a four-day opening ceremony with various celebrations across that period, marking it out as a landmark for Lithuanian art.

"The MO Modern Art Museum is a cultural milestone for the city of Vilnius and Lithuania as a whole. This new world-class institution will showcase local art and will explore its links with the global art scene," said its director Milda Ivanauskiene.

MEET THE TEAM

For email use:
fullname@leisuremedia.com



■ Steve Norris, conservative MP and chair of the LRCH

" Over the next five years, this project will become one of the largest construction projects in the UK"

Kent 'mega park' chair **Steve Norris** says project still on track

The proposed theme park project in Kent, England – formerly called the London Paramount Entertainment Resort, until the Hollywood film studio pulled out – has had a £25m (US\$32.5m, €28.7m) cash injection via a deal with construction firm Keltbray.

The financiers behind London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH), the firm behind the project, have set up a joint venture with the construction giant LR Keltbray JV Holdings.

The project has been in the plans since 2012 and construction was due to begin in October 2016, but LRCH is yet to submit a planning application for the theme park, which has a price tag of around £5bn (US\$6.5bn, €5.7bn).

LRCH chair and Conservative MP Steve Norris said the Keltbray deal means the project is very much still on track.

"We have been discussing for some time the best way to harness Keltbray's expertise alongside their ability to act as a catalyst for further industry participation and investment.

"Over the next five years, this project will become one of the largest construction projects in the UK and their involvement takes us a significant step closer to delivering a world-class resort."

Keltbray CEO Brendan Kerr added: "At 7 million sq ft (650,321sq m), this new theme park won't be an easy project but that is why the formulation of this joint venture with LRCH is an ideal partnership."



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THEME PARKS

Patents hint at Jurassic attraction for Universal

Universal Studios has applied for a new patent that suggests it could potentially build a Jurassic World attraction at one of its theme parks.

Several patents Universal has applied for have been published by website DIS Universal and one in particular – Annular Motion Simulation Amusement Park Attraction – seems to mimic the iconic "gyrosphere" vehicles that appear in the film, pointing to the possibility of creating a Jurassic World ride.

The shape and interiors of the gyrosphere would allow passengers to experience the effects of g-force and several other air-based sensations, which could lead to an exhilarating

experience for visitors.

As the patent states: "Movement of the passenger support system, and thus, the passenger, within the annular structure, causes the sensation of airflow around the passenger's body (e.g., arms and legs) and may allow the passenger a heightened amusement ride experience."

All of this comes amid some signs Universal could be gearing up for a fourth theme park. It already has a Jurassic Park area at its Islands of Adventure theme park in Florida, so the gyrosphere patent could well appear there, or it could be being mooted for the new park.

MORE: <http://lei.sr?a=f9Y4c>



■ One of the patents Universal has applied for seems to mimic the gyrosphere vehicles that appear in the film



Universal could be gearing up for a fourth theme park

PARTNERSHIP

IAAPA 2018: WhiteWater and Cirque du Soleil join forces



At Cirque de Soleil we're always looking for the next breakthrough

Martin Boudreau

WhiteWater West and Cirque Du Soleil have announced a brand new partnership to bring Cirque-themed waterparks to life in multiple locations worldwide.

Revealed during the IAAPA Attractions Expo, plans for Cirque du Soleil attractions created by WhiteWater are currently being developed, with multiple parties interested in the concept.

"At Cirque du Soleil we're always looking for the next breakthrough," said Martin Boudreau, president and executive producer of Parks and Hospitality at Cirque du Soleil.

"In our respective industries, WhiteWater and Cirque du Soleil have always pushed



■ Whitewater is planning to create waterparks based on the Cirque du Soleil brand

the limits of what we can do. Together, we will redefine the waterpark experience by delivering a spectacular attraction and entertainment experience to our guests.

"It's not just about bringing wonder and excitement to the masses, it's also about taking live entertainment to the next level."

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=E8C5R_A



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WATERPARKS

US\$250m waterpark plans for Minneapolis

Plans for what could become North America's largest water park have been revealed for a plot next to the world-famous Mall of America (MOA) shopping centre and theme park in Bloomington, Minneapolis.

Working together with City of Bloomington, Triple Five, the mall's ownership group, has laid out plans for a 250,000sq ft (23,226sq m) indoor facility with a transparent roof that would be a "tropical paradise throughout the year", according to Dan Jasper, VP of communications for MOA.

The plans, which also include space for a hotel, outline that the water park would be run by a separate non-profit organisation, which would lend money for its

construction, and would "bear no burden to taxpayers".

The land on which it is to be built is owned by Triple Five. That land would be leased by the City of Bloomington and subleased to the nonprofit, which would then operate the park for 30 years.

Triple Five expects ticket sales to pay for operation costs and the project's debt, with a caveat that, if sales are low, the city could structure a new sales tax regime on Mall of America customers to cover the shortfall.

Speaking on the slightly complicated structure of the deal, Bloomington mayor Gene Winstead said: "It looks like we found a viable solution."

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=r4K2e_A



■ The park would be adjacent to Mall of America and include a 250,000sq ft indoor facility with a transparent roof



It looks like we found a viable solution

Gene Winstead

NEW OPENING

Lego Movie World to open at Legoland Florida in Q2 2019



The sights and sounds will be fully immersive

Rex Jackson

Legoland Florida Resort's largest-ever investment to date will see the opening of a Lego Movie World area at the theme park.

The area is being built in collaboration with Warner Bros Entertainment and Lego System and will place guests in the middle of Bricksburg, the city where the character Emmet lives in the movie.

Aimed at children aged two to 12, the new area will feature three new rides, character meet and greets and a giant themed playscape.

Additionally, the interactive boat ride, The Quest for Chi, will be



■ The new area will feature three new rides

transformed and will offer guests a new experience when it reopens as an attraction in the Lego Movie World.

"The sights and sounds will be fully immersive bringing The Lego Movie franchise to life in a way that only a Legoland Park could," said Rex Jackson, general manager of Legoland Florida Resort.

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=h2T7y_A

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EXPANSION

Australian Museum plans AU\$57.5m expansion

The Australian Museum in Sydney has revealed plans to extend its Crystal Hall exhibition space to allow the museum to put on more "world-class" exhibitions.

The expansion, which will cost AU\$57.5m (US\$41.9m, €36.7m, £32m), is being designed for exhibitions such as Tutankhamun: Treasures of the Golden Pharaoh, which is scheduled for Q1 2021 – and expected to draw in large visitor numbers.

The museum has suffered from space constraints when hosting large-scale displays and the extended exhibition space will allow for up to 900,000 visitors in the six months that the Tutankhamun exhibition is planned to run for.

As well as the increase in exhibition space, the works will add a new café and improve the institution's green credentials, with solar panels being added to generate some of the energy needed to maintain the new areas.

"We are transforming the Australian Museum for the future," said Kim McKay, director and CEO of the Australian Museum.

"As we continue to improve the visitor experience at the Museum, we want to ensure it remains one of Sydney's iconic natural science and cultural attractions,"

The plans have now been put out for public comment and stakeholder consideration.

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=k9T4a_A



■ The extended pace will increase the museum's visitor capacity



We are transforming the Australian Museum for the future

Kim McKay

BRAND ATTRACTIONS

UK's biggest beer attraction prepares for grand opening



The Tennent's story is at the heart of Glasgow's history

Alan McGarrie

Scottish beer brand Tennent's Lager is to open a new immersive visitor attraction that will trace the history of the Wellpark brewery – where the beer is made – from the 1500s to the present day.

Located in the East End of Glasgow, Scotland, Wellpark is the city's oldest brewery and the new visitor centre will have artefacts on display that date back to 1556 when brewing was first carried out on the site. It will be the UK's biggest beer-themed attraction when it opens on 22 November 2018.

The main exhibition, the Tennent's Story, will be centred on the story



■ The centre will have artefacts dating back to 1556

of Hugh Tennent and the first brew of Tennent's Lager in 1885.

"The Tennent's Story is at the heart of Glasgow's history and with this significant company investment at our home at Wellpark, we are bringing the story to life," said Alan McGarrie, group brand director for Tennent's Lager.

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=9w5b3_A

VISITOR EXPERIENCES

Harris Museum to undergo £10.7m revamp

The Harris Museum in Preston, UK is to merge its museum, art gallery and library as part of plans to "revolutionise" the regional attraction's visitor experience.

According to Tim Joel, the museum's deputy head of culture, the creation of a more joined up space will mean visitors can "come on a journey of discovery throughout the building rather than being in the bitty pockets as they are at the moment".

"People are wanting us to bring our collections together more cohesively. It's about using our spaces creatively so that we can display more of our collection," Joel added.

Bosses at the Harris hope to increase visitor numbers

by 100,000 each year to 460,000 through the project and exhibit objects that have not previously been displayed at the museum.

Elsewhere, a dynamic central hub for activities will sit on the ground floor, alongside the addition of improved exhibition, event and meeting spaces and a new entrance, stairway and lift.

The move will mean that the library, which is currently run by the wider Lancashire County Council, will be run by the more centralised Preston City Council and comes as a £4.7m (US\$6.1m, €5.4m) financing bid is in front of judges at the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=j2S8n_A



■ The work could increase visitor numbers from 100,000 to 400,000



It's about using our spaces more creatively and innovatively

Tim Joel

AUGMENTED REALITY

Disney working on AR costumes for theme parks



The software has the capability to leave heads and hands free, placing the person in the photograph in the costume

The research and development (R&D) team at Disney are working on a concept that could see visitors wearing augmented reality (AR) costumes of their favourite IPs in souvenir photographs.

Using "AR Poser" technology, a costume of the guest's choice is projected onto a digital image of a person. The technology approximates the dimensions of the person and matches the costume to the body's joints.

In a research paper published by Disney Research, the R&D team said they had a major challenge when creating the software – such as the different shapes



■ Disney plans to use the tech to create souvenirs

and sizes of people. This is where the mapping to joints came in, meaning the software hits certain points of the body and becomes more malleable.

The software also has the capability to leave heads and hands free, placing the person "inside" the costume.

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=u9j3S_A

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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. F

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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www.intamin.com

**CROWD
PULLING
SENSATIONS**



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 ParadropVR 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 Á 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 Whiley – 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

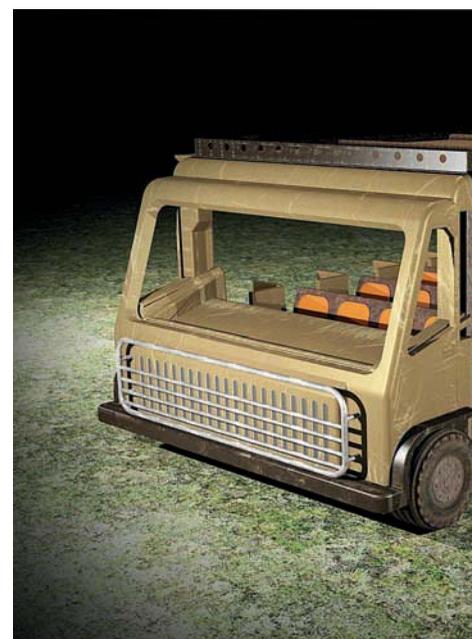
- Parc Spirou, France
- National Geographic
- Ferrari Land, PortAventura, Spain
- Dubai Parks and Resorts - Motiagate Dubai and Bollywood Parks Dubai
- Hub Zero, Dubai
- Movie Park Germany
- Trans Studio, Indonesia
- Parques Reunidos
- Companie De Alpes, Futuroscope, France

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

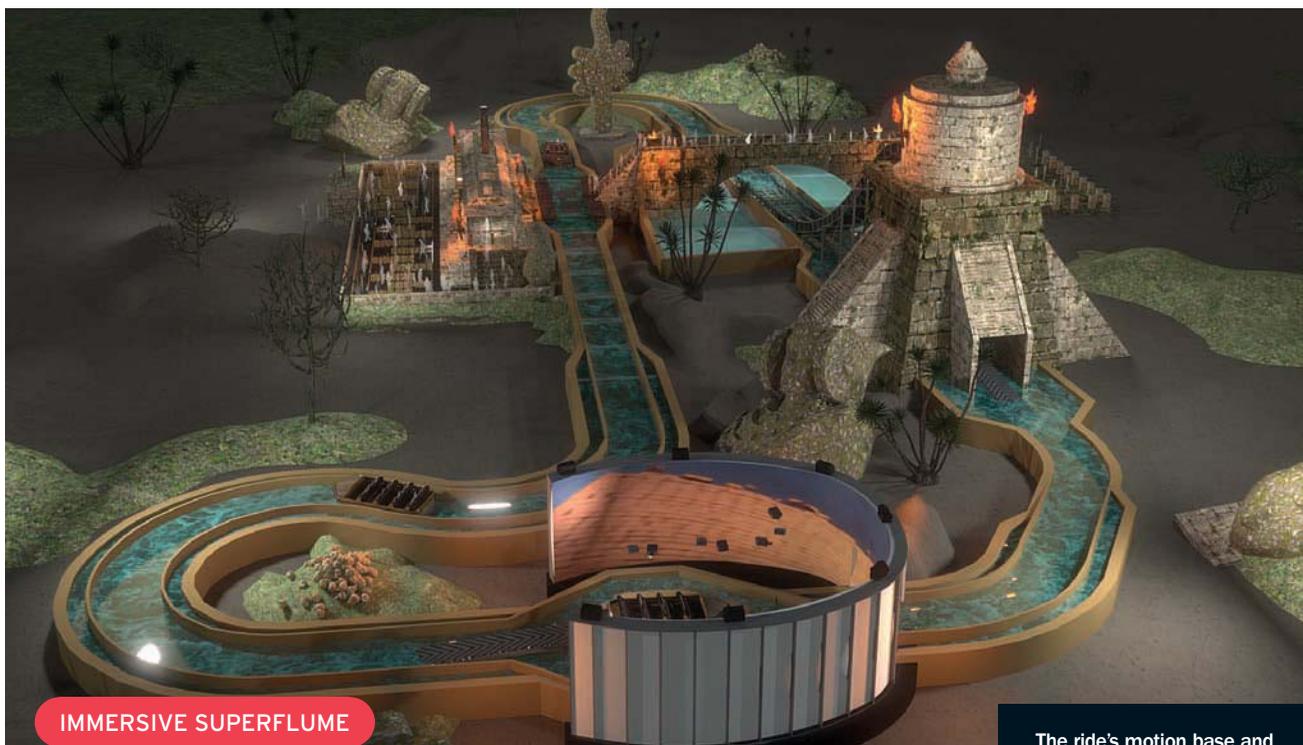
When working with intellectual properties, an extra layer is added into the process. Typically, the park arranges a licence

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

Designed 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 heave 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."

CONTACT SIMWORX

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PRODUCT INNOVATION

Suppliers tell Attractions Management News about their latest product, design and technology launches

For the latest supplier news and company information, visit attractions-kit.net



● MK Themed Attractions designed a 'crazy chicken coop' theme that would appeal to the whole family

MK Themed Attractions creates 'crazy' chicken coop on world's first Roller Ball ride



● Lars Nielsen, themed attraction Specialist at MK Themed Attractions

MK Themed Attractions has created the theming for the world's first ever Roller Ball attraction at Schwaben Park in Germany.

Called Wilde Hilde, the ride, which was developed by Ride Engineers Switzerland, stands at 25m (82ft) tall and lasts for approximately 90 seconds.

It features a fun 'crazy chicken coop' theme, created by MK Themed Attractions, that is designed to appeal to the whole family, and features several fibre glass chickens, placed strategically throughout to accompany riders on their journey.

"One of our specialties is our ability to produce decoration for themed attractions using the client's technical specifications, and we were thrilled when Schwaben Park chose us to turn their vision into reality for this original theme," said Lars Nielsen, themed attraction specialist at MK Themed Attractions.

Schwaben Park MD Thomas Hudelmaier said: "We wanted a roller coaster that would be fun for the whole family and a theme that matched."

"MK Themed Attractions had demonstrated their high standard for themed

production at many other parks in Germany, so we felt safe by choosing them as our supplier for this brand new ride, the first of its kind in the world," Hudelmaier added.

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORD

MK



Digital Projection's planetarium brings universe to life at Bell



● Paul Tetu, project director at Sciss

The Bell Museum in Minnesota has undergone an extensive renovation, worth \$79m, which has seen the addition of a state-of-the-art dome planetarium, the first in the US, supported by Digital Projection's INSIGHT Dual Laser 4K projection system.

Provided by Sciss, a Sweden-based provider of digital planetaria, the 120-seat planetarium, called The Whitney and Elizabeth MacMillan Planetarium, will combine cutting edge technology with the University of Minnesota's latest data research to create



● The planetarium is powered by the Insight Dual Laser 4K system

data visualisations that will take audiences from the far reaches of the universe to deep inside the human brain.

It features a 16m Astro-Tec Ulteria Seam Dome onto which real-time renderings and full-dome videos, custom-created for the planetarium are projected, using Digital Projection's INSIGHT projectors.

Paul Tetu, project director at Sciss, said: "Digital Projection's 4K laser was the right choice because the customer was very interested in reduced operation costs. We did our research, ran some in-house tests and felt comfortable."

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORD
DIGITAL PROJECTION

customer tracking

Universe Science Park adopts Veovo BlipTrack technology

Universe Science Park in Denmark, has installed the Veovo BlipTrack queue and flow management system.

The solution combines WiFi sensors, 3D cameras with data procession software, to provide attractions operators with a comprehensive image of how guests move

through and use their parks and attractions.

It collects and analyses data in real-time enabling the park operators to tackle flow issues before they happen, as well as ensure optimal staff placement and provide live updates on attraction wait times,

as well as delivering insights into planning for future park designs.

The technology is expected to guide both daily and long-term operation and business decisions as well as improve staffing utilisation, while ensuring guests get the best experience out of the park.

Jonas Lutterman, COO of Universe Science Park, said: "We are delighted to introduce this kind of innovative solution at our park."

"The park is all about learning about science and technology, and we believe in a data-driven future, so it is natural for us to also use cutting-edge technology to run the park optimally and give guests an unforgettable experience.

"The solution will allow us to accurately measure peak and waiting time at attractions, improving our ability to manage guest expectations.

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORD
VEOVO



● Universe Science Park is a popular science attraction in Denmark

5-7 DECEMBER 2018

Parx Expo

Tokyo, Japan

A specialised exhibition of facilities and services for development and operation of theme park and leisure facilities, Parx represents the largest theme park expo to take place each year in Japan.

Tel: +81 3 6273 0403

www.leisure-japan.jp

15-17 JANUARY 2019

EAG/Visitor Attractions Expo

ExCeL Exhibition

Centre, London, UK

Both EAG International and Visitor Attraction Expo are presented by the industry's trade associations bacta and BALPPA. The event will showcase more than 300 manufacturers from around the world, with well over 100 leisure brands represented. Bringing the industry together with two shows, both EAG and VAE have their own distinct identities but benefit enormously from crossover between their target markets.

Tel: +44 (0) 1582 767 254

Contact: karencooke@swanevents.co.uk

www.attractionsexpo.co.uk

25-27 JANUARY 2019

HAuNTcon

New Orleans, Louisiana, US

HAuNTcon, the leading event for haunted attractions, is a trade-only event that brings industry professionals together each year. Owned by Urban Expositions, a Clarion Events Company, the event provides a platform for sourcing, learning, and networking. The event is co-located with the Halloween and Party Expo.

Contact: esaunders@urban-expo.com

www.hauntcon.co



■ The 2019 event will bring new technologies and networking possibilities under one roof

26-28 MARCH 2019

Amusement Expo International

Las Vegas Convention Center,
North Hall 1, Nevada, US

The three-day Amusement Expo International, targeting the amusement and FEC sectors, will

consist of a one-day conference and educational schedule – covering a number of topical issues – followed by a two-day exhibition.

Tel: +1 708 226 1300

Contact: info@amusementexpo.org

www.amusementexpo.org

6-8 MARCH 2019

IAAPI Expo

Bombay Exhibition Centre,
Goregaon East, Mumbai, India

The three day exhibition will provide a platform to share and learn new ideas. Big players from the industry will share their learning, innovative ideas, schemes and experience. As well as a large show floor, there is also a seminar programme which will see a wide range of topical issues related to the amusement industry being discussed in depth.

Tel: +1 703 836 48007

Contact: iaapa@iaapa.org

www.iaapa.org/expos

means that it brings in some of the biggest names across the US, Europe, Asia, Africa – and of course the Middle East to participate and exhibit.

Tel: +971 4 3435777

Contact: lilia@iecdubai.com

www.dealmiddleeastshow.com

09-11 MAY 2019

Asia Amusement & Attractions Expo (AAA) 2019

China Import & Export
Fair Complex (Area A)

This year's event is set to cover an exhibition area of more than 100,000sq m, with 3,000 booths and more than 500 exhibitors. AAA – which as integrated with the CIAE & TPAE shows – has become the largest event of games, amusement, theme parks and attractions in Asia. It is an exciting market, as China is poised to surpass the US and become the largest theme park market in 2020. As a result, In 2019, AAA is expecting to double the turnout of international exhibitors.

Tel: +86-20-22106418

Contact: grand.ti@grahw.com

www.aaaexpos.com

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IAAPA ATTRACTIONS EXPO 2019



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Orange County Convention Center | Orlando, FL, US

www.IAAPA.org/IAAPAAttractionsExpo

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MANAGEMENT NEWS



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We work in partnership with you to get your job vacancies in front of qualified, experienced industry people via specially customised recruitment campaigns.

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We position your job vacancy listings right next to our popular industry news feeds, so your career opportunities catch the eye of those hard-to-reach candidates who aren't currently job hunting.

In addition, to celebrate the 100th issue of AM News, we've also relaunched the website with fantastic enhanced search functionality which enables you to target the best candidates with a laser focus.

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We offer everything you need, from rolling Powerpack campaigns which earn you extra job marketing goodies and discounts, to targeted ad hoc campaigns, reputation management promotions, executive job marketing and open day and schools and apprenticeship marketing.

Is there more?

Yes, we also offer a range of HR services through our sister company, HR Support, such as cv screening, shortlisting and interviewing to final shortlist.

What now?

We have packages to suit all budgets and requirements and we'd love to talk to you about how we can partner to bring inspirational people into your organisation to give you that competitive advantage you know will make a difference.

Meet the Attractions Management News recruitment team



Liz Terry



Julie Badrick



Paul Thorman



Sarah Gibbs



Chris Barnard



Gurpreet Lidder

Hope to hear from you soon on **+44 (0)1462 431385** or email **theteam@leisuremedia.com**



Namco UK Ltd. is part of the Bandai Namco group of companies a listed company that operates across the globe. The main business units of the worldwide group are toy and hobby products, game software and amusement facilities however in the UK Namco UK Ltd operates leased large scale multi leisure facilities and significant revenue share contracts.



We're currently recruiting for the following roles, based at The Trafford Centre, Manchester;

Food & Beverage Manager

An experienced F&B Manager is sought to work within a diverse leisure business working at the busy Flag Ship site Namco Funscape The Trafford Centre

Within the role your responsibilities will include:

- Increasing current F&B sales on site and pushing the business forward
- Training and Development of onsite staff
- Improving the delivery and standards of the F&B operation
- Full P&L accountability of F&B sales
- Managing Costs of Sales to ensure profitability remains in line with company targets
- Weekly stocktakes & line cleaning
- Health and Safety compliance

To find out more and apply;
<http://lei.sr?a=R6x1P>

Bowling Technician

An experienced Bowling Technician is sought to work within a diverse leisure business working at the busy Flag Ship site Namco Funscape The Trafford Centre

Within the role your responsibilities will include:

- Daily routine maintenance of the GS98 pinsetters
- Instil and maintain high standards of pinsetter maintenance
- Ensure the pinsetters remain operationally sound especially during peak periods
- Ensuring Health & Safety procedures are adhered to at all times

To find out more and apply;
<http://lei.sr?a=f7t7E>

Sales & Events Manager

An experienced Sales and Events Manager is sought to work within a diverse leisure business working at the busy Flag Ship site Namco Funscape The Trafford Centre

Within the role your responsibilities will include:

- Proactively drive and increasing corporate events and party sales
- Achieving set sales targets and goals for the site
- Striving to increase and develop customer numbers/sales opportunities through a variety of route's
- To event manage parties/corporate functions, with a strong focus on upselling products/offers
- Attend off-site exhibitions, marketing and networking events
- Telesales, cold calling and client visits is a key part of the role
- To deliver, manage and measure promotional activities including staff incentives.
- Ensure you have a current knowledge of competitor activity
- Working closely with the location management team to ensure all sales opportunities are ceased and driven.

To find out more and apply;
<http://lei.sr?a=j2B4z>

Operating in the leisure environment the business opens and operates daily 364 days a year with key trading times being evenings, weekends and school holidays. As a result, the roles demand flexibility.

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- Home entertainment system sound system supplied as standard
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- The software is open source and rFactor2 is Stream based allowing for the possibility of gaming on line as well LAN racing between all ten simulators

PERFORMANCE

- The simulators have multiple track and car combinations available
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PC SPEC – CUSTOM BUILD

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CPU: Intel i7
Motherboard: ASUS P9X79
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- SRL Race Control System license (expires end of 2018)

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