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VOL.19 Q4 2014

THE STORYTELLING ISSUE

Experience
economist Joe Pine
on the reveal

Author Jonathan
Gottschall on
storytelling as
science

SATE 2014
conference report

Tim Smit

Exporting the
Eden Project
to China

Thrill rides
uncovered
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KATIE PRICE

Celebrity mum puts disabled access in the spotlight

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ACCESS FOR ALL

Our cover star this issue, Katie Price, has been outspoken in support of the rights of people with disabilities – especially children.

We ask whether enough is being done to ensure access for all to attractions and what practical steps can be taken to improve things

In this issue, we ask our panel of experts how attractions can better cater for people with disabilities – how they can engage with them and enable them to enjoy the enhanced quality of life that comes from great days out with friends and family (see page 28).

Our feature was inspired by comments made by former glamour model Katie Price, who has a 12-year-old son with disabilities. Price is putting her fame to good use in calling for better provision of facilities for children with disabilities and their families.

Disabled people can be vulnerable to poverty, so provisions need to be made so they can both afford and access attractions. We've written before about Morgan's Wonderland, the amazing US-based theme park built by Gordon Hartman – who's

contributed to our feature. Hartman made his theme park free for children with disabilities and their families. He has funded it by setting up an American football team and building a stadium next to the theme park, so the profits from the sports team subsidise the park.

There are plans for more Morgan's Wonderlands and it would be exciting if this was the start of a new generation of purpose-built attractions that enable wider access.

Our experts raise important points about addressing the challenges of supporting and accommodating people of all ages with a wide range of disabilities. They discuss ways to help people with disabilities to feel comfortable and at ease and ensure their safety, while also avoiding segregation.

These include having dedicated staff, specialist training, targeted marketing and adapted physical environments.

It's a substantial challenge, but one we must rise to for a whole host of reasons – some practical, some ethical and some commercial – if real change is to be achieved.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) says more than 1 billion people worldwide are permanently disabled – that's around 15 per cent of the total population. The number is growing due to the ageing of the population, increases in chronic health conditions and – shockingly – war.

Although it's tough to contemplate, the WHO says war is a cause for this number escalating: "for every person killed, many more are permanently disabled."

There are also millions who struggle physically but aren't categorised as disabled: older

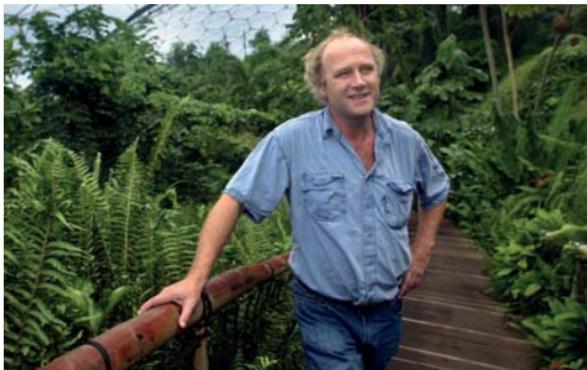
people, or those whose challenges are less severe but still limiting and those who are injured or have a temporary challenge or disability. All need support, which gives operators the opportunity to develop an additional visitor stream, while offering assistance to groups who need it.

The WHO says attitudes against disability are the main barrier to people leading better lives, but that this can be changed through better education, training and integration.

As attractions grow across the world, we have the opportunity to make a contribution to what is increasingly seen as a basic human right by the WHO: a full social life.

We have the opportunity to contribute to something which is seen by the WHO as a basic human right: a full social life

Liz Terry, editor, twitter: @elizterry



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the team

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Science Centres

Sharing the excitement as Rosetta meets comet 67P/C-G

AUDREY KORCZYNSKA

Rosetta, the space probe, woke up from a 957-day hibernation on 20 January 2014 and steadily made her way towards comet 67P/C-G, arriving at its orbit on 6 August.



The media has regularly reported on the probe's progress. The potential of the data gathered to help us unravel the mysteries of the origins of the solar system has been discussed too.

The Rosetta blog, run by the European Space Agency (ESA), posts daily pictures and attracts an enthusiastic audience. Public attention is reaching its peak in November as Rosetta dispatches the lander, Philae, that has accompanied her since her launch in 2004. If successful, Philae's landing will mark the first ever controlled touchdown on the surface of a comet's nucleus.

Events like this offer a wealth of opportunities for science centres and museums to attract audiences and spark interest in space science. For example, Ecsite, ESA and Ecsite Space Group members developed "Hook-up with Rosetta", a ready-to-use, ready-to-share kit of activities for science centres and museums to cover the space venture. The kit comprises activities to educate about comets and space science and an exhibition to discover facts about Rosetta and comets.

Different organisations and attractions have been helping create the Rosetta buzz around Europe. Blackrock Castle Observatory in Ireland ran a space summer camp using the toolkit and has been reaching out to schools. Czech Republic science centre Technmania decided to hold a space season this autumn, and at Pavilhão do Conhecimento in Portugal, students were set to follow the lander's arrival on the comet live on 11 November, with commentary from an astronomer – and the Ecsite Rosetta exhibition on hand.

Audrey Korczynska,
project manager, Ecsite

US science centre partners zoo

A proposed joint venture between the Palm Beach Zoo and Conservation Society and the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium could see a \$123m (£76.6m, €96.3m) ecotourism park and complex built over the next decade, attracting up to 2.2 million visitors annually.

Plans for EcoPark include a butterfly haven, rope canopy tour, IMAX theatre, outdoor Everglades exhibit, environmental education centre and more, with the building taking between five and 10 years to complete.

A preliminary study suggested the annual economic impact of the project could be worth as much as \$300m (£187m, €235m) to the local area.

"If built as planned, EcoPark would be the largest destination



South Florida Science Center plans to build an ecotourism park

in the US focused on conservation and the environment, and [could become] the most visited destination in South Florida," said the science centre's president and CEO Lew Crampton, speaking at a Palm Beach Chamber of Commerce breakfast.

Both facilities are currently undergoing individual upgrades, with the science centre scheduled to open a new west wing in February, while the zoo is doubling the size of its Malayan tiger habitat, to be completed by the end of the year. Details: http://lei.sr?a=7K9w4_A

Queen launches Science Museum gallery

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh were in attendance 25 October for the landmark launch of the London Science Museum's new £16m (\$26m, €20m) Communications Gallery – the first in the UK dedicated to the history of information and communication technologies and the largest in the museum's history.

Part of an ongoing £60m (\$96m, €76m) redevelopment of the Science Museum, *Information Age: Six Networks That Changed Our World* explores the technological breakthroughs that have transformed communication over the past 200 years. The gallery, by architecture firm Universal Design Studio, features more than 800 objects from the Science Museum's collections,



The queen sent a tweet to mark the opening of the new gallery

as well as interactive displays to illustrate the stories of those whose lives were changed by each new wave of communication technology.

The evolution of the Science Museum is well underway, with high-profile

architects named to design further new galleries.

The next development will be architect Zaha Hadid's mathematics gallery, expected to open during 2016, in the Science Museum's main building. Details: http://lei.sr?a=r3X8n_A

Visitor Attractions

Pop up Marvel attraction prepares to tour the US

Dates and locations for a highly anticipated pop up Marvel theme park tour have been announced. The Marvel Experience: The World's First Hyper-Reality Tour will travel the US. The schedule was revealed by the company's chief creative officer Joe Quesada at New York Comic Con.

The 2-acre (0.8-hectare) travelling attraction – which encompasses seven domes, a life-size Avengers Quinjet, the world's only 360-degree, 3D stereoscopic full-dome attraction and a 4D motion ride – has been produced by Los Angeles-based entertainment company Hero Ventures.

The Marvel Experience tour will preview in Phoenix, Arizona, from 12 December 2014 to 3 January 2015, before making its world premier at Fair Park in Dallas, Texas, on 9 January. It will stay there for three weeks before moving on to San Diego and San Francisco, before heading back towards the east coast of the US, with future dates to be announced on a rolling basis.

The attraction will feature an array of interactive games and original animated short films associated with the Marvel brand. These include – amongst others – *Spider-Man*, *Iron Man*, *The Incredible*



The travelling attraction will spend about three weeks at each location, with rolling dates to be announced

Hulk, *Captain America*, *Thor*, *X-Men*, *The Fantastic Four*, *Wolverine* and *The Avengers*.

"With this dynamic new way to experience entertainment, you're actually in the middle of the action from start to

finish," said Hero Ventures CEO Rick Licht.

"We know that there's an extensive Marvel fan base over the age of 25 – and we've created this event with them in mind." Details: http://lei.sr?a=y8R3n_A



Investor potential? London's disused tunnels

Underground eyed for new attraction venues

Up to 34 Transport for London (TfL)-owned "ghost" train tunnels running beneath the UK capital could be transformed into an array of attractions and leisure sites, according to reports.

It's understood that TfL is preparing to invite companies to bid to take part in the transformation of several disused Underground and Overground stations, as well as old horse tunnels that run beneath the city. TfL's disused subterranean assets have been valued at around £3.6bn (\$5.8bn, €4.5bn). Details: http://lei.sr?a=z4h6X_A

Halloween fright nights prove big business

Attractions worldwide took advantage of Halloween 2014, with a selection of seasonal shows designed to shock, terrify and amaze those in search of a fun-filled fright in October.

Horror attractions have become popular in recent years as operators increasingly seeing the value in giving their customers a seasonal scare. Among the many fright nights and scare events on offer, Universal Studio's annual Halloween Horror Nights – at Orlando, Hollywood and Singapore – is one of the industry's leading events, with attractions such as a horror maze based on AMC's hit TV show *The Walking Dead*.

In October, the entire RMS Queen Mary cruise vessel – retired from active service in 1967 and now a



Queen Mary's Dark Harbor event boosted visitor numbers for October

hotel and visitor attraction docked in Long Beach, California – was transformed into a horror attraction with Queen Mary's Dark Harbor, an event comprising two new mazes and an array of new attractions including a Voodoo Village.

Meanwhile, in its fifth season, the Denver, Colorado-based 13th Floor Haunted House is planning to expand to new markets across the US following a merger with fellow horror operator House of Torment. Details: http://lei.sr?a=p4W9B_A

MORE OF THE TOP ENTERTAINMENT COMPANIES TRUST US TO TURN THEIR BRANDS INTO WORLD-CLASS EXPERIENCES



CCTV Dream Factory Theme Park
Shanghai, China



CCTV Dream Factory Theme Park
Shanghai, China



BBC Entertainment Centre
Chongqing, China



BBC Entertainment Centre
Chongqing, China



Simpsons Springfield
Universal Studios, Orlando



Simpsons Springfield
Universal Studios, Orlando



Universal Plaza
Universal Studios, Hollywood



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Waterparks

WhiteWater strikes record deal

Zhengzhou Yinji Kaifeng Waterpark in Henan, China, has made a \$25.7m (£16m, €20.2m) order for WhiteWater products – the largest ever single order for the global waterpark sector.

Guests to the Yinji Dynasty waterpark will be in line for nine separate water-slide complexes featuring nearly 50 waterslides, three custom-themed AquaPlay structures, a Shoot the Chute water ride, three wave pools, two types of Wave Riders and a FlowRider Double.

Scheduled to open in Q3 2015, Zhengzhou Yinji Kaifeng Waterpark will be the largest waterpark in China. The waterpark will have both an outdoor and indoor section. At peak capacity, those areas will be able to hold 32,000 and 15,000 guests respectively.



FlowRider is one of the WhiteWater rides that will be installed

WhiteWater's CEO and founder Geoff Chutter said: "Since 1980, we've been committed to creating world-class, entertaining waterparks and this order is a testament to our commitment and growth."

WhiteWater's Phil Zhong, regional vice president of operations in Asia added:

"This deal demonstrates that WhiteWater doesn't just provide waterslides, but delivers a complete customer experience. With this client, we designed an entire park, with engineering services, construction management and after-sales service and maintenance." Details: http://lei.sr?a=F4g3B_A

International water safety event sees worldwide growth

ALEATHA EZRA

According to the Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) UK,



"accidental drowning causes around 400 UK deaths every year, the equivalent of one person drowning every 20 hours. Thousands more suffer near drowning experiences, some resulting in life changing injuries. Drowning is still the third highest cause of accidental death in children in the UK."

This year, the RLSS UK joined the World Waterpark Association (WWA) and dozens of other international water safety organisations, including STA UK and Irish Water Safety, to support the fifth World's Largest Swimming Lesson (WLSL) event, on 20 June 2014. The aim of the event is to build awareness about the importance of teaching children to swim to prevent drowning.

The WLSL set a new Guinness World Record with 36,564 participants from 22 countries around the globe. Thanks to the excellent support offered by organizations like RLSS, STA UK, as well as media partners located within Europe, the 2014 event saw a robust increase in international host locations. In 2013, events were hosted in 13 countries, while 22 countries participated in 2014, representing a 70 per cent increase that year.

Since its inception in 2010, the WLSL event has set five Guinness World Records and produced more than 100 million media impressions. It helps to spread the WLSL word: Swimming Lessons Save Lives. In addition, more than 120,000 individuals have participated in WLSL events and many millions of individuals have learned why it is so crucial that we teach swimming lessons to children.

Next year's WLSL event is scheduled for 18 June 2015. Visit WLSL.org to learn more about the event and its supporting organizations.

Aleatha Ezra, director of park member development, WWA

India's first world-class waterpark opens

India's first international-standard waterpark has opened, meaning that for the first time ever, Indians can enjoy world-class aquatic amusement facilities without having to travel abroad.

Adlabs Aquamagica Waterpark, in Khalapur, Raigad, approximately 90km (56 miles) from Mumbai, is designed to be an "all-weather entertainment destination".

The park features 14 waterslides and is aiming to become "a hangout for young party-goers," according to Adlabs CEO Kapil Bagla. Throughout the year, Indian and international artists and DJs will perform under the banner Go With The Flow, in an effort to attract a hip, young audience to the park, while Bollywood actor Sidharth Malhotra has



A view of the Adlabs Aquamagica waterpark in Khalapur, Raigad, India

been named as Aquamagica brand ambassador.

All rides across the 138-acre (55-hectare) site have been supplied by international waterpark manufacturers including WhiteWater West and Polin. A four-star hotel, due to

open by the end of the year, is being built on-site.

"With the launch of Aquamagica, we are one step closer to creating the biggest entertainment destination in India," said Manmohan Shetty, Adlabs chair. Details: http://lei.sr?a=U3N6_C_A

Theme Parks

Details revealed for Dubai's \$2.7bn mega-resort

Dubai-based property company Meraas Holding has revealed details of its three major theme parks coming in the first phase blueprint of its mega-resort development, Dubai Parks and Resorts. The \$2.7bn (€2.1bn, £1.7bn) project is expected to open in 2016.

The first theme park, Motiongate Dubai, will include a Sony Pictures Studio and a Smurfs Zone as part of the Hollywood-inspired theme park, with 12 themed attractions inspired by popular Sony Pictures releases, including *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*, *Ghostbusters*, *The Green Hornet* and *Zombieland*. The Smurfs will get their own dedicated zone.

The Bollywood theme park will host 16 rides within five Bollywood-themed areas, featuring content developed in partnership with India's major film studios. The five areas will be known as Bollywood Film Studios, Mumbai Chowk, Hall Of Heroes, Regal Plaza and Rustic Ravine. Guests will enter the park on Bollywood Boulevard, with live entertainment, dancers, character interactions and street theatre. Retail outlets and themed restaurants will be situated throughout the park.

At Legoland Dubai, which is set to become the world's seventh Legoland, there'll be



The Hollywood-inspired Motiongate theme park is set to open in Dubai, UAE, in late 2016

more than 15,000 Lego structures and models and 40 interactive rides, shows and attractions. The park will have six distinct areas: Lego City, Adventure, Lego Kingdom, Create, Lego Factory and Miniland.

Alongside the trio of theme parks at the Meraas mega-resort, a Riverpark, a grand entrance plaza and a Marriott hotel are also planned for phase one. Details: http://lei.sr?a=26c45_A



Thrillseekers have been flocking to Europa-Park

Europa-Park set to top 5 million park visitors

Germany's Europa-Park looks set to smash its previous attendance record after a bumper summer season, with the visitor attraction expected to pass the 5 million guest mark for the first time in its 39-year history.

Speaking to *Attractions Management*, a representative for the park said: "It's been our best season ever and we're expecting to pass 5 million visitors by 11 January 2015, our end of season.

"Assuming we have at least an average winter season, we will comfortably break the 5 million visitor barrier."

Details: http://lei.sr?a=t5T2q_A

Universal makes \$3.3bn leap into China

Universal Studios has confirmed plans to open a \$3.3bn (€2bn, £2.6bn) theme park in China after more than a decade of trying to enter the market.

The park, to be located in Beijing, will be designed in-part by film director Steven Spielberg and is being developed in partnership with local state firm Beijing Tourism Group.

More than 60 theme parks are now under development in China – including parks from Disney, Dreamworks and Merlin – with IAAPA CEO and president Paul Nolan recently calling the nation "the fastest growing market in the world."

The company did not reveal an opening date, though reports suggested the launch will be around 2019. Site clearing in Beijing has already begun.



Universal has been attempting to enter the Chinese market since 2001

Growth in China's media and entertainment market is expected to more than double from 2013's figures to around \$148bn (€93bn, £117bn) by 2015, according to a recent study by published by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Universal Studios has also reportedly signed a deal to invest \$2.43bn, (£1.44bn, €1.81bn) in Zhuhai, though it has still not yet given any confirmation on the rumoured city project. Details: http://lei.sr?a=c2Y2g_A

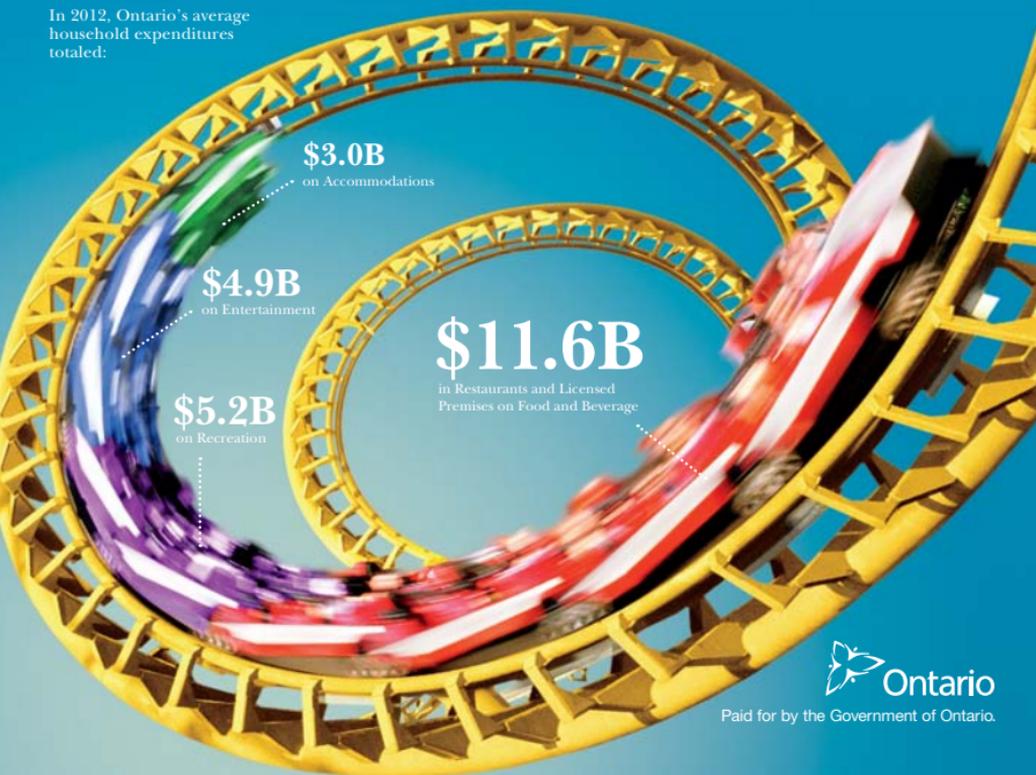


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Data shows impact of zoos and aquariums on conservation

CLARE GREENBERG

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) works towards

species survival, engaging in research and education and playing a key role in encouraging the public to take action to protect species and their habitats.

AZA's *Annual Report on Conservation and Science* (ARCS) details facilities' field conservation activities, education programming, mission-related research and sustainable business practices. A *Highlights* publication is also available from the AZA website, describing the community's efforts as a whole.

Highlights from each area include:

Education Programming: 26,217,288 instances of programming that educated visitors about a conservation action directly related to a wildlife concern. More than \$10m (£6m, €8m) spent on STEM education.

Green Practices: 73 per cent of facilities have a Green Team providing ways for guests to participate in green practices during their visit, as well as at home. 96 per cent of aquariums integrated green practices into public programming. Facilities were found to track their usage of an array of resources, with energy and water being the resources most frequently monitored.

Research: More than \$23m (£14m, €18m) was spent on approximately 1,000 research projects conducted in 66 countries. Research most often focused on animal care, health, welfare and species and habitat conservation.

Field Conservation: AZA-accredited facilities contributed \$160m (£99m, €124m) towards more than 2,000 field conservation projects in 127 countries.

The AZA community provides unique venues for informal learning, sets examples in sustainable business practices, makes contributions to science and works towards securing the future for the world's wildlife.

Clare Greenberg,
communications intern, AZA



BBC show boosts Chester Zoo

Chester Zoo's managing director Jamie Christon has said the hit BBC show, *Our Zoo*, has provided the equivalent of around £30m (\$48.1m, €38m) in free PR for the visitor attraction in the north of England.

Our Zoo tells the tale of zoo founder George Mottershead, who decided to set up the establishment, and depicts the challenges he faced. The show's first season – which ran for six episodes airing every Wednesday on the BBC in a prime time slot between September and October – garnered an average 5.1 million viewers an episode. "Response has been fantastic," Christon told *Attractions Management*. "We've had about 5 million viewers every week and visitor numbers for the month of September are



Our Zoo is based on the true story of the founder of Chester Zoo

52 per cent up on last year. A combination of a good month of a weather and the airing of *Our Zoo* is what I think has made it happen.

"£30m is about the PR equivalent," he said. "If we were out there buying space to promote the zoo it would have cost us £30m to get the same sort of

media exposure with the amount of publications and media outlets *Our Zoo* has appeared in."

The zoo launched a number of new offerings in conjunction with the show, including tours around George Mottershead's home.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=q5c2H_A

SeaWorld president firm against activists

San Diego SeaWorld president John Reilly said the company won't back down to activists who oppose the park's decision to continue to keep cetaceans in captivity.

"The wild is a threatened place," said Reilly, speaking to political leaders and businesspeople at the South County Economic Development Council's 24th annual economic summit in San Diego on 10 October. "I'm very proud of SeaWorld, and we're not backing down. We have no intention of allowing anyone to close all zoos and aquariums."

This year marks SeaWorld's 50th anniversary, but the brand hasn't had much to celebrate recently, coming under heavy criticism in the wake of the controversial documentary *Blackfish*,



If legislation passes, SeaWorld will not be able to hold Orca shows in California

which led to a significant drop in share value and proposed legislation for California, which would mean SeaWorld could no longer host orca shows in that state. Big name sponsors have also been withdrawing their support for SeaWorld, with Virgin America the most recent firm to cut ties with the under-pressure attraction.

SeaWorld has actively fought back against the criticism, recently revealing plans for a \$100m (£62m, €78m) redevelopment that would double the volume of the orcas' tanks to 10 million gallons at the San Diego park for 2018, with similar upgrades to follow at parks in Orlando, Florida, and San Antonio, Texas. Details: http://lei.sr?a=D765J_A

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Smithsonian fundraising scheme seeks \$1.5bn

The US-based Smithsonian Institution is looking to raise \$1.5bn (£1.2bn, £928m) in an organisation-wide fundraising campaign – the largest in history for a cultural body.

A “quiet” phase of the campaign has been ongoing since October 2010, with the initiative set to continue through to 2017. So far the Smithsonian says it has raised two thirds of its target, accruing \$1bn (£619m, €781m) over the past four years through gifts from individuals, foundations, corporations and other donors.

To appeal to the public, the campaign is spotlighting the institution's focus on history, science, art and culture using messages directed at the public, such as “spark discovery”, “tell America's story”, “inspire lifelong learning” and “reach people everywhere”.

The main complex in Washington, DC, still needs about \$100m (£61.9m, €78.2m) a year for maintenance, but federal funding has fallen below that sum. Since its founding in 1846, the Smithsonian has been supported by public and private finance. It has historically received federal taxpayer funding for about 70 per cent of its annual budget for both staff salaries and



Two Smithsonian museums occupy the Old Patent Office Building in Washington, DC

building maintenance, but that amount has recently declined to around 60 per cent.

The \$1.5bn sum is a joint effort between the Smithsonian complex in Washington, DC, as well as the 19

other museums in Washington and New York City, the National Zoo (also in Washington) and nine research facilities in various locations around the world. Details: http://lei.sr?a=M5I2Y_A



Tintin is one of Belgium's most popular brands

Belgian comic museum to expand overseas

Much-loved Belgian cartoon characters such as Tintin and the Smurfs are about to go on a world tour. Belgium's Comic Strip Centre has announced plans for the museum to travel abroad as part of an international expansion.

The museum, which draws around 200,000 visitors annually, recently celebrated its 25th anniversary by opening two new exhibitions and revealing it plans to expand into other countries.

While the museum did confirm the expansion plans, it did not yet say where or when that would happen.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=6Q8k3_A

Helsinki Guggenheim concepts unveiled

Multiple images for each of the 1,715 entries for the Guggenheim coming to Helsinki, Finland, have been released by the museum, with a huge number of anonymous stage-one entries showcased.

The €126m (£100m, \$160.5m) waterfront project is officially the most popular architectural contest in history, attracting more entries than the contest for the Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza, won by Ireland-based architects Heneghan Peng, from 1,557 submissions.

Competition organiser Malcolm Reading said the 12,000sqm (129,000sq ft) project had received a significant number of UK application among the submissions. Applications came from 77 countries,



Over 1,700 designs were submitted for Helsinki Guggenheim

with considerable interest shown from the US, Italy, Finland, France and Japan.

An 11-member jury must now delve into each project and is scheduled to meet in November to select a shortlist of six projects to be announced 2 December.

Finalists will then have until March 2015 to make their submissions. The winner will be awarded €100,000 (\$129,000, £79,000), while the five runners up will walk away with €55,000 (\$69,000, £43,000). Details: http://lei.sr?a=n3I9R_A



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UNESCO threatens to place Venice on danger list

UNESCO has threatened to put Venice on its Heritage at Risk list after expressing concern over development projects relating to shipping near the city.

The Italian government has decided to deep-dredge a channel through the Laguna Veneta so cruise ships can enter the port without having to sail through the city.

The plans have come up against a crescendo of objections since the decision was announced in August. In that time, a petition signed by more than 27,000 people has been presented, 40 senators have questioned the move and environmental scientists have also expressed concern.

Those against the plans believe that if the dredging goes ahead, the degradation of the lagoon could be accelerated, putting the waterways and buildings of Venice at risk.

At UNESCO's World Heritage Committee meeting in Doha in June, the heritage body passed important resolutions indicating it would call the Italian government to account and put Venice on the List of World Heritage in Danger if the government could not allay its concerns. UNESCO has requested the Italian government host a UNESCO monitoring mission in 2015 to assess the



Venice is already featured on the World Monuments Fund's 'at risk of destruction' list after being added in 2014

condition of Venice and its lagoon, including the potential impact of development proposals. The government has also been asked for a report on the conservation of Venice and the lagoon by 1 February 2015

and an account of what action had been taken by 31 December 2015. The danger list is intended to increase awareness of threats and to encourage counteractive measures. Details: http://lei.sr?a=n6H2F_A



HMS Caroline was in active service for 97 years

Former battleship to be turned into museum

The last surviving battleship of World War I is to be transformed into a £12m (\$19.3m, €15.1m) museum, dedicated to the history of the vessel.

With the majority of funding supplied by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the currently derelict HMS Caroline will be turned into a visitor attraction in time for centenary commemorations of the 1916 Battle of Jutland. The museum will sit alongside other maritime attractions in Belfast, Northern Ireland's old shipyards, including the Titanic Belfast. Details: http://lei.sr?a=Q3N4M_A

Kerry leads call to protect heritage from IS

US Secretary of State John Kerry has spoken out to highlight the destruction of Iraq and Syria's cultural heritage by violent extremist groups, including the Islamic State of Iraq (IS) and the Syrian regime.

Alongside representatives from the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art (MoMA), Kerry presented the US case for protecting cultural elements in Iraq and Syria, which are in danger from attempts by IS to deliberately target and destroy a number of heritage sites in Iraq.

Syria's heritage sites have been the target of deliberate shelling and general chaos in the past couple of years, with recent satellite imagery showing that five out of six of Syria's UNESCO World Heritage sites have been "significantly" damaged.



Kerry lost out on the US Presidency to George Bush in the 2004 election

A statement from the US Department of State said: "As the United States responds to the violence in Iraq and Syria that has destroyed millions of lives and caused enormous suffering to the region's people, we also remain deeply concerned about the destruction of cultural heritage in these areas

of tragic conflict. Ancient treasures have now become casualties of continuing warfare and looting and are targets for destruction.

"Historic monuments, which enrich modern societies by connecting all of us to our cultural origins, must be preserved for the future," the statement said. Details: http://lei.sr?a=n3Y4D_A

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TIM SMIT

Thirteen years after launching the Eden Project in the UK, the team is proposing Eden-style attractions around the world. Its founder, Dutch-born entrepreneur Tim Smit, tells us what's happening

Kath Hudson, Journalist, Attractions Management



♦ Sir Tim Smit says Eden-type projects abroad must be supported by a robust Eden brand at home

◆ The famous biomes, the work of Grimshaw Architects, are a template for Eden attractions in China



PHOTO: THE EDEN PROJECT

The Eden Project was a badly needed shot in the arm for the tourism industry in Cornwall, UK, when it opened in 2001. It gave the southwest county new vigour and found it a fresh audience.

Now, the ideas behind the project are being exported to an international market.

In New Zealand, where an earthquake hit Christchurch in 2011, proposals for an Eden-like attraction suggest it would also bring tourists and boost the economy. Projects are under way in China, where Eden's green credentials and ability to educate could make a major difference in the world's most populous country.

To date, more than 16 million people have visited the original Eden Project and many local businesses have benefited from the knock-on effects of having a high-profile attraction on their doorstep. Eden – conceived by Sir Tim Smit and designed and built by architects Nicholas Grimshaw and engineering firm Anthony Hunt and Associates – has thus far contributed more than £1.2bn (\$2bn, €1.5bn) to the Cornish economy.

It's a story of transformation: of bringing an opencast mine pit, left like a derelict lunar landscape by the china clay industry, back to life. Its two transparent domes – steel and ETFE plastic biomes housing plants from the Mediterranean and the tropics – have iconic status globally.

However, it hasn't always been easy. As a consequence of the recession, poor weather and the Olympic effect, there

“WE HAVE TWO AMBITIONS: TO CREATE A GLOBAL CHAIN OF MAJOR EDEN-TYPE PROJECTS; AND, TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE THAT THERE'S ANOTHER WAY TO RUN THE PLANET”

have been some tough years. Visits were down by around 20 per cent in 2012, with prospects of further public funding weak, and for the first time, Eden was forced to make redundancies – a difficult move in a rural location, which led to local criticism. Sixty-eight jobs were cut and 50 people left voluntarily and were not replaced.

The attraction bounced back with two good years, and the low points sparked changes which will help it weather future storms. “It's now on a sound financial footing and I think it's well run. Visitors are voting with their feet to come and we're making ourselves more secure with different revenue streams,” says Smit, executive chairman of Eden Regeneration and co-founder of the Eden Project. “If there's another summer like the Olympic year, when everyone stays glued to their televisions, we'll be able to take the pain.”

Today, with an exciting development pipeline both locally and overseas, the Eden Project has got its mojo back.

HOME DEVELOPMENTS

One of the difficulties with Eden is the seasonality of the attraction, combined with the pressure from funding bodies to provide year-round employment. To counteract this, Eden is this winter scheduled to open 58 modern en-suite bedrooms – made from repurposed shipping containers – capable of sleeping up to 228 people. These developments are in partnership with the Youth Hostel Association and Snoozebox. A campsite opened in summer 2014 and is expected to run next year, and Eden is talking to German sustainable house-building company LiWood about creating accommodation to cater for conferences.

“Organisations don't want delegates staying in different hotels. On-site accommodation is going to help us develop Eden quite a lot,” says Smit.

An initiative with Cornwall College involves Eden developing apprenticeships and foundation degrees with various partners, including Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's “real food” and cookery venture River Cottage, and Jamie Oliver's social enterprise restaurant Fifteen.

“The courses will cover holistic horticulture and holistic cookery, and include historic landscapes, entrepreneurship and food production,” says Smit. “We're really excited about it. We'll be partnering with Tresco in the Isles of Scilly, the Lost Gardens of Heligan and some of the other world-class gardens in Cornwall, so



PHOTO: JAMES RAM, THE EDEN PROJECT



➤ (Clockwise from top left) Eden's Dinosaurs Unleashed; Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall; Heligan Gardens; Abbey Gardens, Tresco



PHOTO: JULIAN STEPHENS, HELIGAN GARDENS



students will have the chance to work in unbelievably varied circumstances and get real training in the best places."

It's not just higher-level students who'll benefit: local independent primary school Roselyon has also approached Eden about running a free school at the site, which would be informed by the Eden approach.

Additionally, the Building Research Establishment has brought its solar business to Eden and the Cornwall Sustainable Buildings Group is also relocating to the site, building on Smit's vision of a hub for environmental activities.

Despite all this activity, Smit says Eden is first and foremost a visitor attraction and, as the team prepares to delve into other businesses worldwide, it's important the Eden brand stays strong. In 2013, he established a new business, Eden Regeneration, a wholly owned subsidiary.

EDEN ABROAD

Anthony Kendle, Eden's creative director, is one of a number of Smit's Eden colleagues who has moved to Eden Regen, which helps to fund new projects. Smit's excited about the challenge: "It's my favourite thing to see the people I work with, who thought that their big adventure

was behind them, getting that smile in their eyes that they're on another one."

The Eden Regen team currently has six projects on its books: three in China, one in New Zealand, one in Canada and one in central Europe. All the partners are embedded in their respective communities and each project will have Eden as the cultural glue, without being carbon copies of the UK project. And they won't necessarily be about plants – each will reflect its local geography and culture.

Smit says Eden gets invited at least once a month to open other Eden Projects, but it's always said no. As an educational charity and social enterprise, it has to be choosy about who it associates with.

"We're not interested in copying what we've done in Cornwall. What we've recoiled from is people who say, 'Give us your business model and run it for us and we'll give you a percentage of the turnover.' That doesn't make us want to get out of bed in the mornings," he says. "We have two ambitions: to create a global chain of major Eden-type projects which share a culture yet transfer their different cultural perspectives; and, we want to influence as many people as possible that there's another way to run the planet."

Many of the projects are in the early stages and still under wraps. The most advanced project is in Beijing – a partnership with Vanke, the world's biggest house builder, to create a botanic institution. Feasibility studies are under way, central government approval has been given and work is expected to begin early next year.

"Eden uses plants as a canvas to tell stories, illustrating that humans are part of nature. In Beijing we'll use plants in a slightly different way," says Smit, adding that the Chinese projects will all be different, but each will reflect aspects of Chinese culture. "We're going to China because it's the biggest country in the world, with the biggest environmental problems. They're about to confront those problems with a force no other industrial nation could muster. We want to be part of that journey."

Ki Uta Ki Tai, meaning "from the mountains to the sea", is the New Zealand project that's on the table. It's part of efforts to regenerate Christchurch after the devastating earthquake. The aim is to create an attraction of global standing, drawing visitors and making the city a destination in its own right.



PHOTO: TRAVELLIGHT VIA SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

◆ Christchurch, New Zealand, hopes to win approval to build an Eden-inspired tourist attraction

A riverside site has been identified and themes discussed, but at the time of our interview, Eden Regen was waiting for the New Zealand elections before progressing the project further in order to make sure the government would still support it.

Ki Uta Ki Tai is being led by the Maori community and will reflect Maori culture, explain how the landscape has been shaped by snow, ice and water, and show the relationship between humans and the land. "It will discuss the meaning of living life in a place where the fragility of nature is always on view," says Smit. "And we've been talking to universities to provide a facility which adds value to them."

Although Eden Regen is going to take Smit abroad frequently, he doesn't want to be away from his beloved Cornwall for too long. The success of overseas attractions relies on Eden. "As we take it around the world, the Eden brand remains dependent on how good the mothership is," he says.

The Lost Gardens of Heligan, also in Cornwall, were the precursor to Eden and Smit's first project after leaving the music industry (when he worked with Barry Manilow and the Nolans). He moved to Cornwall in 1987 and was soon involved with Heligan, charming Victorian gardens

KEY FACTS

- In 2002, Eden featured in the James Bond film *Die Another Day*
- Since 2005, Eden has hosted an ice rink between October and February
- 4.85 million people took part in the Big Lunch this year, an outreach programme that fosters community spirit by encouraging people to hold street parties with their neighbours
- Eden is the 2nd-most trusted environmental brand, after the WWF
- In 2007, the project failed in its bid for £50m (\$81m, €63m) from the Big Lottery Fund, losing out to green journey charity Sustrans
- 87 per cent of Brits recognise the Eden domes
- Sited 30 metres below the water table, Eden was extensively damaged by a



◆ Staff clean up after floods hit Eden

- flash flood in November 2010
- Eden has attracted 16 million visitors since opening in 2001, and brought £1.2bn into the Cornish economy
- Eden has won the Best UK Leisure Attraction Award three times and, at the time of going to press, was in the running for a fourth time

that over the years became lost beneath the overgrowth. Smit was part of the restoration team. "Heligan gets stronger all the time and our ambition is to make it the best productive garden in the world." As Smit starts on an exciting new

journey - or journeys - he reflects on the past 16 years working on Eden as being extraordinary. "There have been a heck of a lot more high points than low points, but the low points have actually made us stronger. I've learned a lot from them." ●

How can attractions be more inclusive?

Does the industry need separate attractions for disabled people, or can all attractions effectively cater for those with disabilities? What can attractions do to make sure everyone feels included?

Kath Hudson, Journalist, Attractions Management

Katie Price, the former glamour model Jordan, who's mum to a 12-year-old son with disabilities, has said that she'd like to create a theme park where both disabled and able-bodied children are able to have fun.

Speaking on her internet radio show earlier this year, Price claimed there's a need for visitor attractions that are aimed at disabled children, but which able-bodied children can enjoy as well.

"When you've got kids who are able-bodied and can do things, there are loads of choices," she said. "But where are the facilities for disabled kids and adults? There are no rides for wheelchairs. Sometimes there's disabled access but I wish they'd add a theme park on the side that stimulates their brain too."

There are many reasons for improving disability access. The most important is moral – everyone with a disability has a right to quality of life and equality.



Model Katie Price has always been frank about life with her son Harvey, who has a number of disabilities

Responding to the disabled market also makes sense commercially – it's a sizeable and growing sector which has considerable potential to scale up if accessibility is improved.

If you can offer a good experience, you'll discover this is also a loyal market: disabled people tend to revisit places where they know they'll have a positive experience.

In many countries, legislation makes it illegal to discriminate against disabled people – which also means they're entitled to sue if they're not treated equally – so it's vital to offer experiences which everyone can participate in and enjoy across all disabilities.

So how difficult is it for visitor attractions to make sure they're universally accessible? What changes need to be made to both operations and facilities? What are the specific needs of disabled people and what are the main steps to take to be inclusive? We ask the experts for their advice.

TRACEY PROUDLOCK

Founder, Proudlock Associates, Disability and Inclusive Design Consultants



Visitor attractions should aim to include rides which offer lift access, equipment which gives space for wheelchair users and stimulating activities which are based on what you

feel when you take part, rather than on what you do. These are all important to enable and allow social interaction and to foster play relationships.

Site layout is important too. Visitor attractions need to have appropriate seating, waiting areas and queue systems. Allowing seats to be removed to provide access for a wheelchair – or space for an assistance dog – could greatly improve things for everyone involved: carers, support workers and the child's family and friends.

In order to become more inclusive, I suggest visitor

attractions carry out an access audit and perhaps engage an access consultant to help inform a plan to remove barriers. In the UK, for example, the National Register of Access Consultants can help.

Staff should be trained in disability awareness and be confident to offer help to those who need it. Attractions should also get feedback from disabled customers about their experiences and talk to suppliers about new inclusive play equipment options.

■ proudlockassociates.com
@TraceyProudlock

Children need to share experiences and have fun together and I think it's more important for existing attractions to focus on being more inclusive, rather than focusing on building new attractions aimed exclusively at disabled people.

Being able to go on rides and play with other children is an essential part of growing up.



An ultra-accessible family-oriented fun park was the vision behind Morgan's Wonderland

Being accessible means much more than building ramps. It's about developing the environment and culture of inclusion. Inclusion is so important to people with special needs – it increases their self esteem

GORDON HARTMAN

Owner, Morgan's Wonderland theme park, San Antonio, Texas

I'd love to talk to Katie Price about developing another theme park. Morgan's Wonderland, which we opened in 2010 and was inspired by my wonderful daughter Morgan, was designed for people with special needs, but we also made sure it would be a park for everyone. Many theme parks require people in wheelchairs to sit and watch everyone else having fun, whereas at our theme park

everyone can do everything.

We worked with Chance Rides to develop rides which people can go onto in wheelchairs and these are now beginning to be incorporated at other theme parks.

But, it's not just about the rides, it's about the culture of inclusion which we've created.

Morgan's Wonderland looks like any other park, but there are subtle differences: we don't have fluorescent lights or latex, for example. That's because fluorescent lights can be overstimulating for children with autism, and many children with special needs have an increased propensity

for allergies – latex is one. Children with spina bida in particular can have severe allergies to latex that can be life threatening. We also limit the number of visitors because if the park gets too crowded and loud it can also become overstimulating.

The park has developed beyond what we set out to do. We thought we'd be lucky to get 50,000 visitors a year but, without advertising, we're getting over 100,000. Visitors have travelled here from 50 US states and 49 countries.

We'll be extending the park with an ultra-accessible waterpark in 2016. We're just

finalising the design phase and we'll start construction within six months. We want to take this concept elsewhere. Of 6.5 billion people in the world, 1 billion have special needs.

Being accessible means much more than building ramps. It's about developing the environment and culture of inclusion. Inclusion is so important to people with special needs – it increases their self-esteem. Then they try harder to participate, which leads them to do more and is a major plus in their lives. ●

■ morganswonderland.com
@MorgansWndrld



Children's museum Eureka! offers free admission to essential carers, free holiday clubs for disabled children and a free "Extra Pair of Hands" trained guide service. A Changing Places washroom will open soon

Disabled people and their families make up a huge section of society, but at the moment only 20 per cent take a holiday. This could be much higher if they felt confident about venues' accessibility

KIKI MACDONALD

Co-founder, Euan's Guide, Edinburgh



Disabled people and their families generally want to do the same and be treated the same as everyone else. They make up a huge section of society, but at the moment only 20 per cent take a holiday. This could be much higher if they felt confident about venues' accessibility.

There's a lot of fear around accessibility. Many venues assume it's too costly or fear negative feedback. But small, simple improvements can

make a huge difference, for example, hanging a door to open out rather than in, or having better signage.

Talking to disabled people and taking on their feedback is an obvious place to start.

Publicising information about a venue's accessibility is a good idea – which areas are accessible, and where the accessible toilets and disabled parking are located.

While disabled toilets are required by law, the reality is that a number of venues and attractions don't provide them. Toilets can make or break a visit for a disabled guest.

Some theme parks in the US are introducing rides where you don't need to transfer from a wheelchair to go on them, while the Eureka! Children's Museum in the UK runs clubs aimed at disabled and non-disabled children, and

offers a helper service to make families' visits easier.

Chessington World of Adventures – also in the UK – has introduced a hi-tech toilet, which has space for two carers, a changing table and a hoist. Hopefully more attractions will follow this example.

Having staff provide a warm welcome and give details about navigating the attraction, such as how to get around the site or where to find the toilets, is hugely helpful. Many sports events do this well too, by employing Access Buddies to assist disabled visitors.

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Sandcastle Waterpark has been praised for being highly accessible and offering activities and support



Currently, some visitor attractions invest in accessibility but then don't promote it. If accessible businesses become a member of Tourism for All, we can help to promote them to disabled customers

CARRIE-ANN LIGHTLY

Information service manager, Tourism for All

One of the main things attractions can do to be more inclusive is to adopt a blanket policy financial concessions for disabled visitors and their carers.

Good accessibility, disabled toilets and having mobility equipment on site for guests to borrow is also important. Theme parks can be big and exhausting places, so even some who don't usually rely on a mobility aid might need it for a day at a theme park. There should also be some



specific experiences aimed at disabled people: being able to take wheelchairs onto rides would be helpful for those who struggle to transfer.

Providing an access guide which can either be posted or downloaded from the website

is always hugely helpful.

Giving staff disability awareness training is also important: if I go to a place where the access isn't easy but the staff go out of their way to help me, then I'm more likely to go back.

Some visitor attractions invest in accessibility and then don't promote it. In the UK, if businesses become members of the Tourism for All scheme, we help promote them to disabled customers.

Finally, think of ways you can take the stress out of the day. Sandcastle Waterpark in Blackpool, UK, which has a Gold Award for accessibility [from UK

tourism organisation Visit England], employs water ambassadors to provide one-on-one support. This means a family of mixed abilities can leave their disabled child with a member of staff while they take other children to other areas. There are places for wheelchairs and the pool is easily accessible. Evening sessions for autistic children are offered, with lights dimmed and music turned off, making it less stimulating and crowded. These are things we'd like to see offered more broadly across the industry.

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JONATHAN GOTTSCHALL

Story is behind every great attractions experience, but sometimes we forget just how powerful narrative can be. We spoke to literary scholar and author of *The Storytelling Animal* Jonathan Gottschall, who shared his views on the logic and science of storytelling and the business opportunities it can afford attractions great and small

Alice Davis, managing editor,
Attractions Management

Can you explain what you're talking about when you talk about the "science of storytelling"?

People think storytelling belongs to the humanities, the world of art and culture. It's not usually thought of as a field that can be studied scientifically, brought into the lab. That's what a lot of my work has been about. There are all these questions about storytelling, but because we couldn't figure out a way to look at them scientifically we really couldn't make a huge amount of progress answering them.

Why do you think it took a long time before we approached storytelling from a scientific point of view?

We have all these questions: What are stories for? What effects do stories have on us? How do we react to stories emotionally, mentally, physiologically? And all we had - up until recently - was armchair speculation. Yet a lot of these questions are just basic lab questions and basic psychology questions. It's a direct application of basic psychology

methods, and not really all that radical, but there's been resistance to doing scientific work in the humanities in general and in storytelling in particular. There's a sense that stories must be protected from science because they're people are afraid of losing that sense of mysticism and wonder, and if you explain the magic you'll end up explaining it away - and I think that's kind of crazy.

Can you talk us through some potential applications of storytelling science?

There's things stories can do that other forms of messaging can't do. Stories are really good at getting attention. Attention spans are all over the place these days, but stories are the one thing that can reliably still the wandering and restless mind. You can pay attention to a story for hours on end - nothing else can do that.

It's emotional, and people make decisions on the basis of emotion, not on



Jonathan Gottschall, distinguished research fellow at Washington and Jefferson College, is author of *The Storytelling Animal*

the basis of logic. Because it's emotional, it's persuasive, so you lose yourself when you go into story world. People get really open-minded, or a meaner way to say it they get kind of gullible. They drop their scepticism and cynicism and let the story and the message wash over them.

The information in a story is sticky, it's more memorable. Stories have been used since time immemorial as a way of conveying information to people, and that's more memorable than just throwing facts at them. So there's a bunch of things like that which are really important to communication in many different fields but particularly in business fields. There's a number of ways that a story can't be equalled by other forms of communication. ►



The Warsaw Uprising Museum uses storytelling to convey the experiences of the residents who fought for Poland. The exhibition depicts what life was like during the weeks of the uprising



PHOTO: JAKA SEŁKOVA, WARSZAWA UPRISNIENIA MUSEUM





Walt Disney World visitors "almost literally walk into the storybook," Gottschall says

PHOTO: WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORTS

► It's interesting that MRI scans show we're participants when we read or watch stories, rather than spectators. That can be useful for experience businesses, where you want people to be actively engaged and participating, whether it's a museum exhibit or a theme park ride.

Disney World's a great example. You walk into Disney World and enter this alternate dimension of reality, almost literally walking into a storybook. That's a huge part of the appeal. There are all the great rides, but there's this very familiar world and Disney lets you live these stories that you love. Other attractions have rollercoasters – what sets Disney apart is this incredibly rich story universe that you enter when you pass through the gates.

You've said our minds can easily flutter to something else, and that our attention spans are notoriously short. This is not good news for an experience designer. What must they do to keep the audience hooked?

If you look at a novel, the story doesn't happen all at once. It's gradually built up in the reader's mind, detail by detail, character by character, plot point by plot point, over hundreds of pages.

Events and attractions can be designed the same way. You walk into a distinct world and the story is built up, experience by experience, plot point by plot point, with the accretion of detail just like you'd have in a novel. The more you do that the more you tap into this unique

IN AN ATTRACTION THE STORY IS BUILT UP, EXPERIENCE BY EXPERIENCE, PLOT POINT BY PLOT POINT. STORYBUILDING DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN; STORIES ARE BUILT GRADUALLY

power of story to grab attention, rouse emotion and persuade. In an attraction or ride, your hero might be the guest, and the attraction is centred around a problem the character is attempting to solve.

There are museum experiences where the exhibit designers have just understood, carefully building the story piece by piece. Storybuilding doesn't just happen; stories are built gradually. The narratives you get at a museum can be very story-like.

I gave an events industry talk and the audience asked about how literal you can be. The question is, are we making a weak connection between what happens during an event [or in an attraction] and what happens in a novel, but not a literal connection? No, I think the more literal you can make the connection the better.

When have you visited an attraction and felt you were being told a story?

Disney has stuck with me since my childhood. It's been many years since I've been, but I still remember the magical wonder of the place and walking around slack-jawed. The feeling of being inside the story, of seeing the Disney princesses I recognised from the stories and saying, "There's Snow White!" That stuck with me and made a tremendous impression on me.

At Universal Studios, it used to be the Back to the Future ride. These days it's Harry Potter, and the ride's about you being the hero inside the familiar stories.

I recently had a wonderful experience at the Museum of the Warsaw Uprising in Poland. It was utterly astounding – one of the best museums I've been to, partly because it's so focused. It's about the weeks during World War II when the Varsovians rose up against the Nazis, and were utterly crushed. Warsaw afterwards looked like Hiroshima, reduced to rubble, depopulated, with almost everyone dead or sent to concentration camps.

There are a few key characters who the curators keep returning to, and you follow them through their struggles. There are incredible images of people – not great heroes of warfare or great generals, but regular men, women and children (as the whole population was mobilised). It was very story-like and had a powerful impact on me. I left feeling eviscerated, emotionally destroyed. I'd just walked through an epic tragedy. It's the sense of entering into that world for a few hours – as if getting lost in a novel – you disappear in that world and get swept along by the narrative. It was very powerful. ●



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3D/4D ATTRACTION AND RIDE FILMS



The experience business is theatre and an attraction is a stage, which needs actors, a dramatic structure and a reveal. Experience economist Joe Pine explains why time is what you design, and how to build up to the all-important moment

THE

When Jim Gilmore and I began writing *The Experience Economy* in the mid-1990s, we needed to determine the unique essence of this newly identified economic offering that we were calling “experiences”.

Initially we used *created*, but that wasn't right. All offerings were created, after all; so what was unique about experiences? What did experiences do for people that no other offering did? The answer came when Gilmore and I hit on the fact that when you're in the experience business, your work is theatre. It isn't a metaphor, work as theatre. No, it's a model: work IS theatre!

Whenever you're in front of your guests, you're acting. Whether you know it or not, whether you do it well or not, you're acting and you must act in a way that engages the audience.

Another way of saying it is that you're on stage. Stage! Yes, that's the economic function for this offering: experiences are staged, the bringing together of disparate elements – backgrounds, sets, stories, scripts, costumes, props and so forth – to engage people in a production, and thereby create a memory. Experiences are therefore inherently personal – no two people can have the same experience, for the actual experience resides inside them as their own reaction to the events that are staged in front of them.



B. Joe Pine II

REVEAL

DEPICTING DURATION

That also means you can't really create an instantaneous experience, for experiences take time to unfold. Whereas commodities are stored in bulk, goods are inventoried after production and services are delivered on demand, experiences are *revealed over a duration of time*. From the customer's standpoint, time is the key differentiator between a service and an experience. If customers don't want to spend time with you, then you're a service probably on its way to being commoditised. But if customers do want to spend time with you, and if they view it as time well spent, then you're in the experience business.

Almost as important from the producer's standpoint is the first word in that phrase: *revealed over a duration of time*. That means experiences, to be truly engaging and memorable, must have dramatic structure. I don't just mean the *reveal* – that big moment at or near the end where guests are surprised, amazed, frightened, shocked, awestruck, thrilled or otherwise astounded. In many attractions – as well as experiences such as movies or the occasional gastronomic event – the reveal is crucial for delighting guests and cementing memories, but it's crucial that any reveal get a suitable set-up and a fitting finish. Otherwise, you'll never achieve the right effect from your reveal. ▶



The BIG Maze

National Building Museum

A pop-up panopticon-inspired maze was erected at the Washington, DC, museum by architects Bjarke Ingels Group this summer. Designed to "reveal itself", the maze and the hall gradually come into view as the visitor navigates towards the middle. "Inside, the walls slowly descend towards the centre, which concludes with a grand reveal – a 360-degree understanding from where you came and where you shall go," Ingels said.

► FATHOMING FREYTAG

The first to explicate dramatic structure was the 19th-century German performance theorist Gustav Freytag. Theatre students still learn Freytag Diagrams and we can learn from him to this day.

From his study of plays, Freytag identified seven stages of dramatic structure:

Exposition: This gives the context of the experience, introducing the world, or situation, where the experience happens, and the characters who inhabit that world.

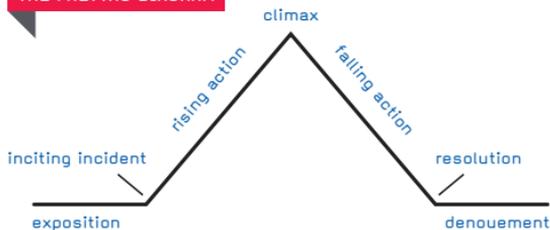
Inciting incident: Here a precipitating event causes the drama to take off.

Rising action: The drama increases in intensity and anticipation as the action takes off. Complications ensue as the characters (in many attractions, this includes the guests) determine to resolve the issues caused by the inciting incident.

Crisis: While in the previous segment the plot thickens, to use a theatre cliché, here the possibilities steadily fall away as the characters overcome (or not) the obstacles before them. Intensity rises at an accelerated pace, yielding suspense and excitement as the audience awaits and anticipates a resolution to the crisis.

Climax: The height of the experience, where of all the things that could happen, only one does – the characters either do or do not achieve the goal they formed at the moment of the inciting incident.

THE FREYTAG DIAGRAM



■ The Freytag Diagram is a visual representation of the seven stages of dramatic structure identified by performance theorist Gustav Freytag

Falling action: The consequences of the climax play out for the characters.

Dénouement: The plot threads resolve themselves while the dramatic action exhausts itself and the characters – not to mention the guests of the experience – return to normalcy, although it's meant to be a new and quite different status quo than when the experience started.

Now, your attraction is not a play, and may operate under different constraints and expectations. Nonetheless, you should note how the drama builds through each stage to the climax, and then comes down again. Too many experiences forget the

build part – they move too quickly to the climax, don't set it up properly, or have too flat a structure. Others think that once you've had the big reveal, it's: "OK, show's over, ride's done, go home!" No, you need to bring your guests back down again and let that climax play out through your attraction and in their minds.

In an example from our own work, Gilmore and I stage an annual event called thinkAbout – it's our chance to practice what we preach. The big reveal is the winner of our Experience Stager of the Year (EXPY) award. Past winners include American Girl, the Geek Squad, Joie de Vivre Hospitality, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Tough Mudder and, in 2014, Santa Park.

To bring drama to it, we go through the top 10 experiences that our participants should take in the following year, with a postcard exercise to apply lessons to each ►

"Experiences are revealed over a duration of time and, to be truly engaging and memorable, must have dramatic structure. It's crucial that any reveal get a suitable set-up"



Visitors to Machu Picchu, Peru, climb for hours before the "big reveal" at the top of the hill

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The Great Hall

Warner Bros Studio Tour

The Leavesden, UK, attraction is famous for its grand reveal. Visitors are taken inside a darkened room, where they watch a short film. A screen drops to uncover the enormous doors that, when opened, reveal the Great Hall of Hogwarts



PHOTOS: WARNER BROS STUDIO TOUR

▶ visit. The anticipation builds to our EXPY winner at #1 – especially since at least all alumni (around half the group have been there before) know the winner is a fellow participant. A few figure it out in advance and are very proud of themselves if right (drama in itself). Others are still to guess who it will be, but as they've already got to know the winner during this experiential and participative event, the excitement at this climactic moment is palpable.

The falling action is interviewing the winner, after which we close thinkAbout, leading into the dénouement: everyone reliving the event as they say goodbye.

You don't have to follow the seven stages of the Freytag Diagram religiously. The most important thing is to think of the rising action and crisis as the building of intensity, suspense or anticipation. Don't just spring your reveal on your unsuspecting guest – you may get shock, but never awe. Rather,

Members of the British royal family enter the Great Hall during a tour of the Warner Bros Studio in Leavesden

consider how you can ratchet up the intensity bit by bit. Let guests figure out that something is coming, but they ... don't ... yet ... know ... WHAT! Fuel their expectations. Get them leaning forward with their senses alert, anticipating what is to come, expectant, hopeful, worried,

wide-eyed, and almost ready, ready, ready, for the big reveal.

SIMPLIFYING THE STRUCTURE

If seven stages of drama are too many, a five-stage model was popularised by Doblin, a Chicago-based group of innovation consultants:

- **Enticing**
- **Entering**
- **Experiencing**
- **Exiting**
- **Extending**

The EXPY Award winners



The Experience Stager of the Year creates a new kind of experience, redefines an existing experience or stands above its industry in exemplifying the principles of the experience economy. Some EXPY winners do all three

► This model helps you focus on the fact that your experience does not begin when guests enter your attraction nor end when they exit. Think about how you entice them in advance – including online before they ever arrive. Think of your website, as experience designer Peter Chernack once suggested to us, as a pre-show that entices people to visit you and begins the process of anticipation for the live experience. Use the web or mobile technology to extend your experiences, encouraging guests to relive the reveal.

My favourite example is the Walt Disney PhotoPass system, where professional photographers take photos of guests at key moments in the theme park. At home, guests relive the experience. First, they go online and enter their PhotoPass number to see the photos. They can also access stock photos, upload their own and place them in numerous styles of photo albums. They order their customised book – for close to \$100 (£61, €78) – and the receipt of it in the mail greatly extends the experience and provides tangible memorabilia to show friends. The chances they (and their friends) will go back increases with this extending activity.

If five stages are still too much, recognize that your attraction tells a story and, therefore, it must at least have these three simple stages: beginning, middle, and end. Always keep the end in mind, but understand how much better an end is when you build it up from the beginning.

We can also encapsulate dramatic structure into the one-stage model of the signature moment. It's the reveal itself: the moment people remember and talk about afterwards, the moment they anticipate before. At EXPY-award winner the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, for instance, the Ghosts of the Library show has a live host who discusses the Civil War while photograph-like images bring the story to life. At the very end the host reveals that he was there himself, disappearing into smoke as if a ghost! That's its signature moment.

Whatever your such moment, never forget that guests will remember it longer, talk about it more and anticipate it more highly if, and only if, you build to it properly – it's how you reveal the reveal.●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Author B. Joseph Pine II co-founded Strategic Horizons, a thinking studio that helps businesses add value to their economic offerings

2014 SANTA PARK

At our 2014 thinkAbout event in Cincinnati, Ohio, for only the second time, we gave our Experience Stager of the Year award to a European company, SantaPark of Rovaniemi, Finland. Managing director Ilkka Länkinen accepted the award.

I first met Ilkka, now one of our Certified Experience Economy Experts, over a decade ago through his high-end Joulukka experience in Rovaniemi, a town right on the Arctic Circle whose tourism is based on being the Official Home of Santa Claus. He and his wife Katja then bought SantaPark, hoping to turn the theme park around – and turn it



around they have!

With the theme of "Christmas Every Day", the joys of Christmas, including meeting Santa, are available year-round. It's the only place in the world you can walk underneath the Arctic Circle. No one leaves without a smile on their face.

SantaPark welcomes visitors from over 40 countries. It recently announced that it's bringing its expertise for authentic Christmas experiences to China, with the first SantaPark concept-based theme park opening in Floraland, Chengdu, in May 2016.

2013 TOUGH MUDDER

Tough Mudder stages a more experiential event than any race on earth – except it's not really a race; it's a personal challenge across a 20km (12-mile) course that tests every participant's strength, stamina and determination. It redefines the obstacle course by encouraging an unprecedented level of collaboration and camaraderie, with almost everybody, unworried about their own personal time, stopping to assist those behind them so that everyone makes it to the end. The result is a new kind of experience,



which the company says is "probably the toughest event on the planet".

Outside the military, there's no "probably" about it. Participants sign a "death waiver" – not an idle occasion, for once

in its history someone did die during the event. Despite that unfortunate occurrence, the company continues to grow, and that's because of its experience – well worthy of our EXPY award.



2012 826 NATIONAL: The San Francisco group built a network of innovative tutoring centres to help children learn to write



2011 TECHSHOP: TechShop workshops provide their members with the tools and knowhow to build and construct things



2010 BUILD-A-BEAR WORKSHOP: This global retailer offers an interactive experience to make a personalised product



2009 US ARMY: The army adopted a pioneering approach to recruitment through its American Army website and centre



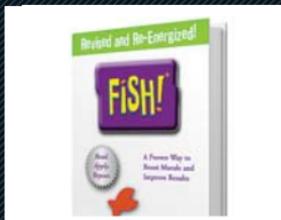
2008 ABRAHAM LINCOLN MUSEUM: A history-based experience invigorated by the introduction of cutting-edge technology



2007 TNT INC: The community design firm transformed its offices for an engaging, performance-driven B2B experience



2005 HOK SPORT (NOW POPULOUS): Recognised for placemaking, specifically combining the natural with the artificial



2004 CHARTHOUSE LEARNING: Its line of Fish! products and Fish! philosophy are designed to help businesses train staff



2003 CERRITOS LIBRARY: Strikes the right chord on exterior and interior design, theming, technology and human contact



2002 LEGO GROUP: Denmark's toy-making powerhouse meets all 10 levels of Strategic Horizons' Placemaking Portfolio



2001 JOIE DE VIVRE HOSPITALITY: The hotel group's approach to theming helps to create a unique guest experience



1999 AMERICAN GIRL PLACE: The doll retailer offers a day out that includes a visit to dolls' salon and a photo session

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER

Using your attraction as a stage set and building the momentum before a big reveal can help to increase the wow factor, says the UK National Trust's Ben Cowell

Ben Cowell, regional director East of England, National Trust

Many new visitor attractions are highly theatrical in their design, so that guests experience plenty of wow factor. This is true, for example, of somewhere like the Warner Bros Studio Tour London, where visitors begin their tour of the making of Harry Potter by entering the doors onto the set of Hogwarts' Great Hall. Similarly, the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern in London is filled regularly by contemporary art installations, conceived on a grand scale. Experiences of these places often hinge around the reveal – the moment where the metaphorical stage curtains are drawn back and the set design is displayed for the first time.

LANDSCAPE DRAMA

But there's nothing new about this. Artists and architects have long integrated theatrical elements into their work. Indeed, many famous 18th-century garden designers worked on the stage. Landscape designer Humphry Repton (1752-1818) had a fascination with the theatre, a narrative apparent in many of his plans for the grounds of country houses. Repton developed a unique method of illustrating his designs by means of paper flaps in the pages of his famous Red Books. The flaps showed "before and after" views of



Humphry Repton's design shows the Sheringham Park landscape before his work and, by peeling back the flap, how it would look when completed



■ A view of Sheringham Park in Norfolk

the landscapes he was commissioned to work on, so that landowners could visualise the changes he was proposing.

Sheringham Park, on England's North Norfolk coast, was one of Repton's favourite designs. Subtle planting schemes gave a sense of depth and vitality to the views, seen from a long drive towards the house at the centre. The drive travels along a high ridge before turning dramatically to reveal the house at Sheringham, designed by Repton's son.

This point in the park, the sudden turn in the path, is still called the reveal, and it continues to delight thousands of visitors each year, long since the idea was first conceived in 1812. Explaining the meaning of landscapes in this way is not at all easy. At Sheringham, we've done it with an exhibition placing Repton's design in its context. It is located in a converted barn at the visitor reception, and the theatrical influences on Repton's work are evident in the layout of the exhibition itself.



Actors recreate servants' daily lives during a Living Histories event the National Trust's Ickworth House in Suffolk, UK

LIVING DRAMA

Heritage is such big business because it's a principal driver for tourism around the world. Millions of people visit heritage sites every year and they do so to connect with authentic experiences of past lives.

The National Trust has been on a mission in recent years to reinvent its properties by breathing life back into them. No more are our properties mere relics of yesteryear, frozen and lifeless. Instead, we're growing the appeal of our places by introducing much more interactivity and engagement. Fires are being lit, pianos are being played and visitors are

No more are our properties mere relics of yesteryear, frozen and lifeless. we're introducing much more interactivity and engagement. Fires are being lit, pianos are being played and visitors are invited to interact

encouraged to interact with what they see far more than they ever were before.

In our larger country houses, we're trying to make people feel as though they're house guests, able to sit on the furniture and read facsimiles of old newspapers and books – sometimes the real thing, if

conservation standards allow. Sometimes actors help recreate scenes from the past.

At Ickworth House in Suffolk, UK, we've invested in a visitor experience that brings the basement rooms back to life. Ickworth Lives is an innovative hands-on experience that focuses on the period between 1911 and World War II – a time which saw huge changes in society, marking the start of the gradual decline of life in service and the role of the country house.

Visitors have the chance to explore and experience what life would have been like for the servants at this magnificent country house, home to the Bristol family for centuries. They can explore the maze of corridors and rooms, the living quarters and the kitchen where the luxurious meals were prepared for the marquess and marchioness. During Living Histories, a monthly event, actors portray servants to give visitors a taste of working life in the kitchen and basement rooms.

As the National Trust's chair, Simon Jenkins, puts it: "The point is that you're using the place not as a house but as a stage set for explaining history." ●



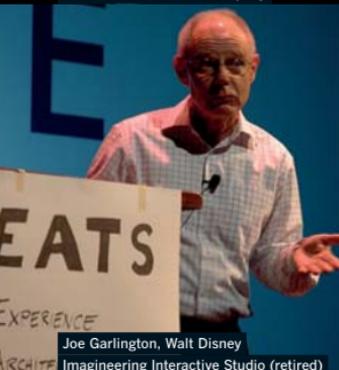
■ The National Trust uses actors to create a more engaging experience for its visitors



Adam Bezak, Bezak Company



Christine Kerr, TEA president



Joe Garlington, Walt Disney
Imagineering Interactive Studio (retired)



Phil Hettema, Hettema Group



Abigail Rosen Holmes, NYXdesign

SATE 2014

From emotional landscapes to communal experiences, the annual SATE conference provides plenty of food for thought

Christine Kerr, president, Themed Entertainment Association

This year's TEA SATE (Storytelling, Architecture, Technology and Experience) conference inspired and tested the attendees, regardless of their backgrounds or work. A common theme revolved around the definition and use –

or overuse – of the word "story". Ideas of community and shared experiences echoed across discussions and the opportunity and challenges technology represents was a returning theme. Creating end-to-end experiences for guests, that start before they arrive and continue after they leave, blurs the lines between what's typically been the

marketer's role and merges into the realm of experience design.

STORYTELLING

The Storytelling segment started with Phil Hettema of the Hettema Group challenging delegates by saying "story" was the elephant in the room. He suggested it had replaced "interactive" as the most overused word in the industry.

Raul Fernandez, CEO of Brainwave Thoughtproducts, continued on this track with a deconstruction of story in the world of experience creation. He referenced an essential truth of storytelling: that story is what the character wants to happen, while plot is what the author wants to happen.

Fernandez presented five elements of story – theme, premise, promise, storyline and plot. He emphasised the importance of simplicity in developing all of these elements in order to be understood by the guest in the context of their overall visit to the attraction or event.

According to Fernandez, the theme is the reality that the elements of the story represent, while the premise is situational – and should be summed up in one sentence. The promise represents what the guests expect and it's made up of an explicit promise – what's printed in the park map and guide, for instance. Add to this the implicit promise that creates expectations, which you might



Stephan Villet, Smart Monkeys



Raul Fernandez, Brainwave Thoughtproducts



Delegates attend a SATE talk



Peter Weishar (left), Florida State University and James C. Oliverio, Digital Worlds Institute



A lively discussion wrapped up SATE 2014

PHOTOS: MARTIN PALICKI, ON BEHALF OF THEMED ENTERTAINMENT ASSOCIATION

have no control over because they come from the guests' own interpretations.

The plot should be uncomplicated, he said and it's important to remember that guests want to make meaning out of everything they see – so don't include things that will distract from this. Plot can give an experience a broader appeal, provide an opportunity for wish fulfillment, build on pre-existing desires and immerse you to the point that you believe you're doing what you're actually only pretending to do. If all of these things are in place, participants will experience a deeper range of emotions because the storyteller is leveraging the guests' own expectations with a truly shared story context. Ultimately, it's about the guests' stories – how they will make their own stories out of the stories we tell. One final comment was critical – whether it's a story based on historical events, an existing brand or IP or an original premise: design as if people know nothing.

Next, Denise Chapman Weston of Cool Inventions, Aaptivations and WhiteWater West said guests' experiences are linked to how guests tell their own stories. Weston used the example of making a

THE THEME IS THE REALITY THAT THE ELEMENTS OF THE STORY REPRESENT WHILE THE PREMISE IS SITUATIONAL – AND SHOULD BE SUMMED UP IN ONE SENTENCE

video to record a personal story and document a shared experience.

A feature of SATE was the inaugural installment of the Conversation With.... series, featuring Kenneth Feld, chairman and CEO of Feld Entertainment, with Hetteema. They explored Feld's 30-year career, from working for his father as a young man to the reported billion-dollar entertainment company he leads today. Feld's stories, from the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus, to how he secured the first Disney on Ice contract, to the production of Marvel Universe Live – the group's most ambitious arena show so far – held the audience rapt.

ARCHITECTURE

Launching the Architecture segment of the conference, chair Al Cross of PGAV Destinations introduced the thinking of Philip Johnson, the 20th-century architect whose goal was to focus on

“what a building feels like” as a way to set the stage for an exploration of architecture beyond the typical aesthetic thinking. Dr Timothy Parker from Norwich University, Vermont, provided some wonderful context through a presentation that journeyed through time looking at how space and scale contribute to the emotional impact of iconic and recognisable structures. Layering natural light and decoration builds impact and demonstrates the resourcefulness of the great architects of the ancient and more recent past.

Lighting designers Abigail Rosen Holmes of NYXdesign and Zack Zannoli of Fisher Marantz Stone presented thought-provoking examples of using light – or the absence of light – to create unexpected results. Holmes shared a series of possible approaches to a recent Las Vegas project before showing the final design – more impactful in the clutter of the glitter ▶

SHOW REPORT



Mark Francis, BaAM Productions, during the Sports Technology panel



Delegates attend a networking event



Denise Chapman Weston, Cool Inventions, WhiteWater West



Architecture segment presenters on stage



Cory Rouse, Walt Disney Imagineering

► of the Vegas strip because of its effective use of the absence of light.

Zannoli presented an illustration depicting natural light streaming into Grand Central Station in New York City before any of the surrounding buildings were constructed. The image was powerful because it depicted something that was clearly intended by the architect and is simply no longer possible. Zannoli also discussed the lighting design for the 9/11 Memorial – as sensitive and emotional a project as one might ever work on.

The architecture segment concluded with a presentation on emotional landscapes. Jeff Sugar, who trained as a landscape architect, reminded us that landscape is a constant, and it's a guide to the guest experience. Sugar shared his perspective on the contribution of shapes, colours and textures which planted materials bring to the overall design and storytelling of any project.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology chair MK Haley, WDI and FSU Entrepreneur-in-Residence, and the segment's panel offered new perspectives to SATE attendees. One panel discussed

technology in Las Vegas and how new technologies and developments can be transferred into the creation of experiences for theme parks, museums and other attractions. Moderated by Martin Palicki of InPark, the panel included Tommy Bridges of ATI, Stephan Villet of Smart Monkeys and Eric Cantrell of Medialion. They focused on trends in integrated media experiences in Las Vegas and beyond – at clubs and in previously mundane places such as hotel lobbies or airports.

The new control systems are driving the trend in creating intelligent environments – controlling media and audio. From an audio perspective, there are new technologies that provide the ability to better control outdoor amplification, enable the creation of quiet zones and design for optimal speaker placement using better quality speakers. For theme parks and attractions, the applications are far-reaching, from background music to rides, retail and restaurant spaces and, of course, media-based attractions.

Building on this, they shared some examples of integrated media systems that manage and deliver dynamic content

to create seamless and immersive environments. Villet talked about the complex technology and content that make up the new experience at the new Tom Bradley International Terminal at LAX. The control system is integral to the built environment, connecting thousands of square feet of LED tiles, hundreds of LCD screens, and more than 50 ultra-high-resolution multimedia content segments. The show is comprised of more than four hours of original, high-resolution, multimedia content in seven display areas. Imagine the possibilities for theme parks, museums and other attractions to use networked infrastructure to manage and deliver content that enhances and customizes the guest experience by creating or layering in a dynamic visual and audio environment.

EXPERIENCE

Experience segment chair Adam Bezark of the Bezark Company drew together the ideas and themes shared across storytelling, architecture and technology, to look at experience from various perspectives.

Joe Garlington, retired Walt Disney Imagineering Interactive Studio vice- ►

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SHOW REPORT



TEA members gather for a group photograph



Mixer events provide the chance to network and socialise



SATE has become an annual tradition for TEA members



Networking is an important aspect of the SATE experience



TEA has over 1,000 industry members

► president, suggested the acronym should be EATS, not SATE. Not everything is about story, he said. He suggested play is just as important and that we're stuck on stories as a holdover from the film industry. He went on to share with the delegates that not only is play older than story, but mammals are the only species that play. Garlington talked about how in a story the protagonist is controlled by the author, but in play scenarios the protagonist is controlled by the user. He explained it as "showing" versus "doing" and suggested the word interactive - while overused - is code for personalisation.

James Anderson and Matthew Dawson from Forrec talked about what they have learned about the context of experiences. Having worked on projects and with clients outside of North America for more than 20 years, they had lots of great insight to share on how to understand the experience clients really want when there are cultural and language barriers. They emphasized careful listening and total immersion in cultures as being critical to success. And they also talked about their secret weapon - being really Canadian.

ONE COMMENT WAS CRITICAL - WHETHER A STORY IS BASED ON HISTORICAL EVENTS, AN EXISTING IP OR AN ORIGINAL PREMISE: DESIGN AS IF PEOPLE KNOW NOTHING

Narrative experiences present perfect opportunities to expand on the idea of living characters by building a world and the community in it. Cory Rouse from Walt Disney Imagineering shared the background on a project that was based on a simple premise - what if Frontierland were a real town? A construct where guests assume roles and interact within the land, guided and inspired by a group of actors cast in key roles? The resulting interactions are more meaningful because the guests were part of the story, writing it in realtime as part of the action, not just as observers. The idea was to see what would happen if Frontierland was a real town and the sense of community was evident. Presented with a problem and then given permission to solve it, guests built relationships with each other and deeper connections with the place. They created a community, connecting place and content to create a memorable experience.

Conference co-chairs Aram Ebben of exp and Stefan Lawrence of ReThink Leisure Entertainment reunited the team of segment chairs from SATE 2013 in Savannah, Georgia. As the finale to the conference, they joined the chairs and many of the speakers on stage to draw out conclusions from the group on how storytelling, architecture, technology work together to create experiences.

Out of these conversations, clear themes emerged. All agreed extraordinary experiences change the way we feel, even if we're also focused on having an impact on others. This emotional impact is critical. The other key to creating great experiences is that they're shared. Whether you're part of a large group sharing something exciting and emotional in person or you're using technology to share, you're part of the story - with your larger community of friends and family. ●

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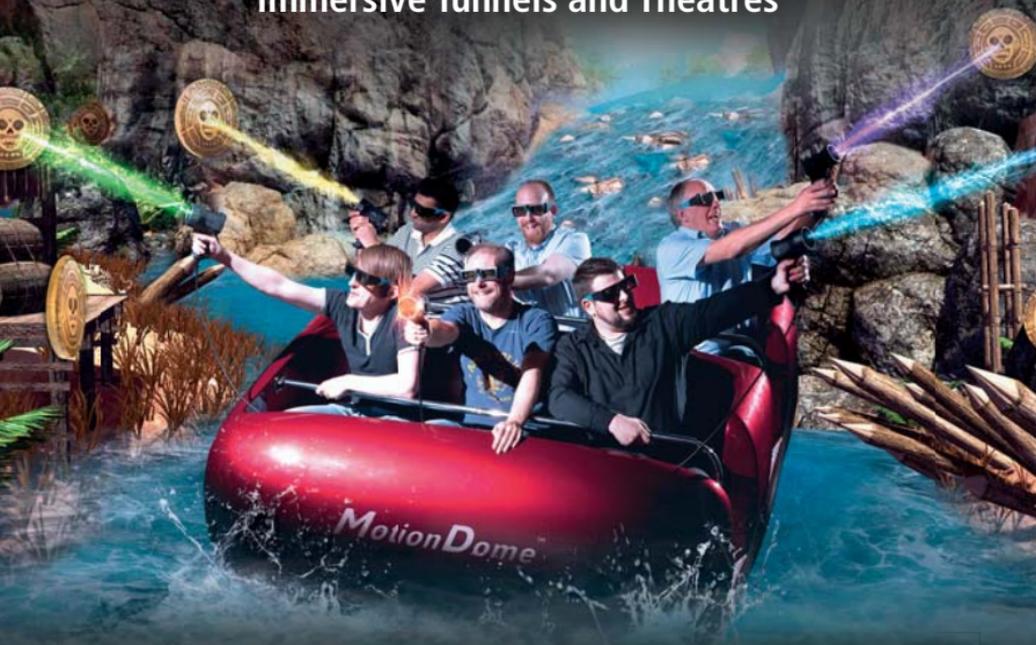
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TELL ME A STORY

Technology has become second nature to many young people, but children's literature centres are more popular than ever as they work to stop traditional storytelling ever becoming a lost art

Catherine Larner, Journalist, Attractions Management

Whether it's listening to a joke or hearing an after-dinner talk, scanning a newspaper or reading a novel, we all love a story. Early memories of being read to as a child by a parent or teacher are among the most powerful. While the pace of technology means stories can be delivered today in a multitude of ways, there's still nothing to match the magic of opening the pages of a book, sitting at the feet of a storyteller or stepping inside a theatre (whatever our age).

The model for story centres and children's literature venues hasn't changed significantly since they were first introduced around 20 years ago – but they have never been so popular.

"I think it's because life is so techy," says Cathy Agnew, project director of Peter Pan Moat Brae – the place where JM Barrie conceived Neverland – due to open in Dumfries, Scotland, in 2017. "We want person-to-person contact. There's nothing more comforting than having someone read to you, that one-to-one engagement."

"Bells and whistles have their place," according to Ruth Weyman, who works alongside a team of "story builders" who lead a variety of events at Discover Children's Story Centre in London.

"But, there's nothing as challenging or rewarding as being able to interact with a child when you're telling them a story."

Visitor figures for these venues are growing year on year. Centres are expanding their reach through touring exhibitions; book clubs, book festivals and events at bookshops are thriving and new storytelling facilities are opening. Internationally, there's a great collaboration of resources and expertise.

CHANGE IN STATUS

"There's been a change in the status of children's literature in the cultural landscape," says Kate Edwards, CEO of Seven Stories in Newcastle, England.

Opened in 2005, Seven Stories is perhaps one of the key contributing factors to this growth in the sector. Attracting 80,000 visitors a year, it's housed in a converted Victorian warehouse and

was the idea of two forward-thinking women who had long championed children's literature locally through their jobs in education and bookselling. Their vision was to establish an archive of work from children's writers and illustrators in the modern period. "There was no organisation which saw its role as saving and celebrating the literary heritage for children," Edwards says.

Focusing on original material from the 1930s onwards, Seven Stories is a national and international resource, loaning its exhibitions to numerous venues across the world. Its seven floors house galleries for exhibitions, performance and creative spaces, a children's bookshop and café.

"Look at the popular arts, film and theatre and you'll see children's literature plays a huge role in driving the cultural economy. But we also hold the firm belief that children's books change lives; we believe they bring about better life chances," she says.

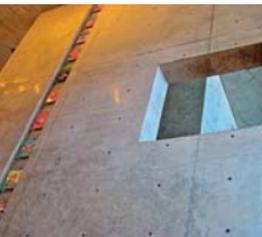
Edwards acknowledges that the change in use of libraries, which have fallen in number as a consequence of our shift



PHOTO © GAIL KERRIN / ANSEL

Eric Carle poses for a photo at the Museum of Picture Book Art (top) and the archives of Seven Stories





PHOTOS: KEN LEE

▲ Japanese architect Tadao Ando inadvertently created an attraction with his concrete, wood and glass library



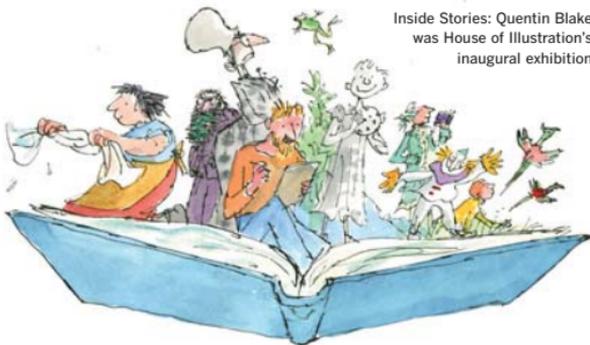
The Story Museum in Oxford opened in April 2014

► to digital media, has perhaps played a part in the development of story centres. "Twenty years ago it would have been inconceivable that there'd be any other place than a library to experience a wide range of children's books and storytelling." It seems that the threat posed to libraries has helped increase demand for these physical venues where parents and children can interact with one another.

DIGITAL STORYTELLER

In Japan, a modern library built to serve three local preschools became a surprise visitor attraction. Created by the architect Tadao Ando in 2003, the Museum of Picture Books in Iwaki City proved hugely popular and in response now opens to the public every Friday. The 6,500sq ft (600sqm) building houses 1,300 picture books, each displayed face-out on the walls, like exhibits, and with the bright book covers bringing the colour to the space.

In London, an archive of illustrators' work opened as a visitor attraction this year. The House of Illustration attracted huge attention through its launch exhibition of the work of founder Quentin Blake. In April, the Story Museum opened in Oxford, UK, a centre which started life as a virtual museum in 2003.



Inside Stories: Quentin Blake was House of Illustration's inaugural exhibition

"Telling a story may not seem like education, but you're learning language, sentence structure, speaking skills," says co-director of the Story Museum, Kim Pickin. "Our educational programme is a bit like strawberries rather than spinach. One's good for you but you don't enjoy it, and the other's good for you and delicious."

Now the museum is being turned into a visitor centre. Currently it offers the immersive, multi-sensory 26 Characters exhibition, which tours next year. "We have a 'digital storyteller' in residence,"

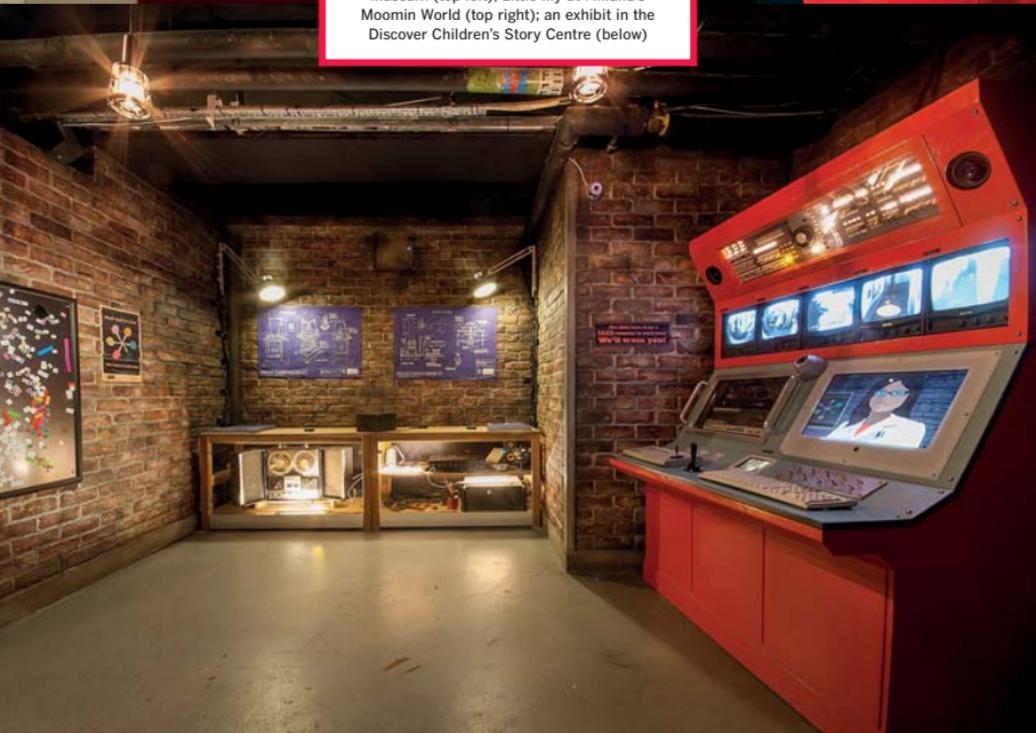
says Pickin, "to help us find new ways to engage digital natives who've grown up with technology."

There's also a tablet in each room, which plays extracts of different stories read by well-known actors or interviews with authors. "The digital revolution is all the more reason to support older forms of storytelling, such as oral storytelling and reading; children still need to develop their imaginations," she says. "Our aim is to excite people of all ages about story."

See more story centres on page 58 and 60 ►



A child on the Talking Throne at the Story Museum (top left); Little My at Finland's Moomin World (top right); an exhibit in the Discover Children's Story Centre (below)



Case studies



The park has enjoyed 20 years of success

Moomin World

One of the most loved literary-themed visitor attractions, this year Moomin World celebrated 100 years since the birth of author Tove Jansson, who created the strange creatures. The attraction is situated on an island near the small town of Naantali, Finland, and spans 323,000sq ft (30,000sqm). Opened in 1993, it regularly attracts between 200,000 and 230,000 visitors over its three months of opening. There are no rides, but a changing programme of events and shows to entertain visitors who mingle with the Moomin characters and scenes. Popular with Japanese visitors, there is also a Moomin-inspired theme park in Saitama, Japan, and a dedicated Moomin theme park is due to open in the country in 2015.



Newcastle's Seven Stories aims to make a difference to the lives of families living nearby

The Seven Stories collection

Seven Stories was established in Newcastle, UK, in response to original manuscripts being sold to overseas collectors. It aims to act as a "custodian" of British children's literature from 1930s onwards. Over 70,000 people visit the centre, which is located in a restored Victorian warehouse, every year. Seven Stories won a National Lottery Award in 2013 and was named the UK's favourite education project.



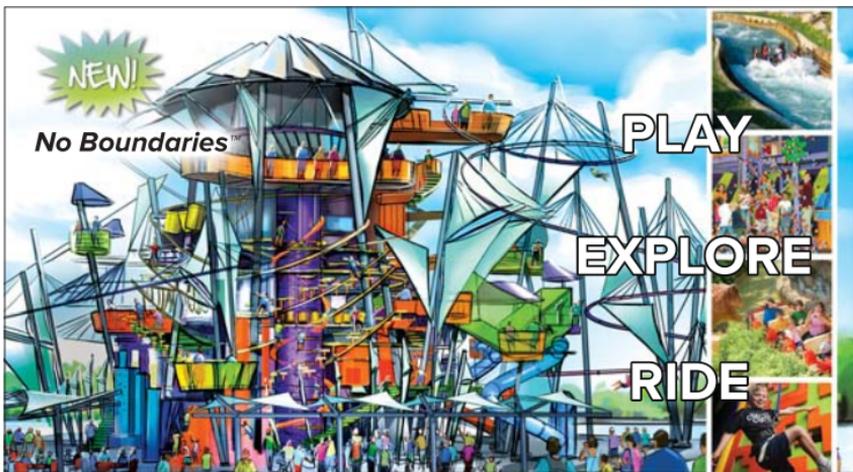
A Georgian villa and gardens in Dumfries will be developed into a literary centre

Peter Pan Moat Brae

Scotland's National Centre for Children's Literature and Storytelling is due to open in 2017 at a cost of up to £7m (\$11.4m, €8.9m). Moat Brae was where the author JM Barrie played as a child, and its grounds inspired him to create Peter Pan and Neverland. Having saved the building from demolition, the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust is engaging in further fundraising to bring the project to fruition. When complete the centre will have a Neverland garden; offer a year-round programme of activities and exhibitions; encourage imagination in reading and recounting stories, and celebrate the history of Peter Pan. ►



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The Eric Carle Museum

The 43,000sq ft (4,000sqm) Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art opened in Amherst, Massachusetts, in 2002 and has a collection of more than 12,000 illustrations, attracting 50,000 visitors annually. Founded by the creator of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, it aims to inspire a love of art and reading through picture books. The Carle collects picture books from around the world.

"For many children, we're the first art museum they ever experience," says executive director Alexandra Kennedy. Video, music and digital screens support or supplement the exhibitions, yet she insists "the Carle is fairly low-tech".

"We offer hands-on art projects, story readings, theatre, live music and film. We engage people through art and then let them engage with one another," she says.



The famous *Very Hungry Caterpillar* was first published in 1969



Discover offers literature programmes led by children's writers and illustrators

Discover Children's Story Centre

Discover Children's Story Centre opened in Stratford, East London, in 2003. There are 110 languages spoken within its catchment area but, while some of the installations reflect this diversity, the team has found that people relate to their connections through stories. CEO Sally Goldsworthy says: "Families are interested in what they have in common rather than what separates them."

Discover has numerous themed play areas where children can make crafts, dress up and explore. Members of staff, called Story Builders, act as facilitators

and storytellers, singing songs and helping children create stories of their own. There are temporary exhibitions about generic themes, such as space or secret agents, or celebrating the work of a particular illustrator. Each year the centre hosts a children's literature festival called the Big Write, when well-known authors and illustrators visit to give talks and read from their books.

For next year, there are plans to extend the building, which is a converted Edwardian hotel situated close to the Olympic Park, and to tour its exhibitions.



The Solo gallery at the Roald Dahl Museum

The Roald Dahl Museum

The Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre is one of the best-known and successful literature venues in the UK. It initiates a national Roald Dahl Day each September and is planning to collaborate with many venues in 2016 to mark the centenary of Dahl's birth. ●

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VISITOR ATTRACTION EXPO

AN EVENT FOR THE UK ATTRACTIONS INDUSTRY BY THE UK ATTRACTIONS INDUSTRY

Preparations for the inaugural Visitor Attraction Expo (VAE) are in full swing, with ExCel London ready to host an entirely new event for those involved in the UK attractions market.

From 13 to 15 January 2015, VAE opens its doors to visitors representing leisure parks, zoos and piers, as well as an incredible variety of static attractions.

VAE is presented by BALPPA in association with EAG International. The free-admission show is open to the entire leisure industry.

WHAT IS VAE?

EAG International chairman Martin Burlin welcomed VAE, saying: "The Visitor Attraction Expo will give the leisure park, piers, zoos and static attractions sector an annual event which it can call its own, right here in the UK. We're experiencing increased crossover between the amusements and attractions sectors, so this move is reflecting what's happening in the market. There's strong interest from potential exhibitors and EAG's



5,000-plus visitors will help in delivering a robust start for this exciting new event."

VAE takes place alongside EAG International, an established gathering for the European amusements and coin-op industries. EAG International is already a firm favourite with many from the attractions industry, who come to view the latest innovations from the amusements sector. Visitors can access both shows with a single badge.

EAG International 2014 attracted 5,460 visitors, with 70 per cent from the UK. Overseas visitors travelled from 63

countries, including Italy, France, Belgium, Spain, Poland, Greece and Germany.

VAE is initially focusing on the UK market, with a European outreach. As with any new venture, the opportunity exists to get back to basics so that the event can naturally evolve to meet the precise needs of visitors, exhibitors and other stakeholders.

BALPPA chief executive Paul Kelly explains: "The Visitor Attraction Expo will exist to support our members, trade suppliers, operators of visitor attractions and the industry at large. Our role is to assist them in their business ventures and every aspect of the show has been developed with this in mind."

With its early January dates, VAE will provide the perfect opportunity for discussing the events of the previous year, reviewing the latest products on display, and planning purchasing and investment for the forthcoming season.

WHAT WILL I SEE?

Visitors to VAE and EAG will be treated to an impressive line-up of products to thrill



From dodgem cars to cotton candy: products from more than 180 manufacturers will be on show

VAE is designed to accommodate the needs of manufacturers, operators and suppliers



VAE WILL GIVE THE LEISURE PARK, PIERS, ZOOS AND STATIC ATTRACTIONS SECTOR AN ANNUAL EVENT WHICH IT CAN CALL ITS OWN, RIGHT HERE IN THE UK

and entertain, plus the latest technology for optimising and securing revenue. Products from over 180 represented manufacturers include: 6D motion theatre, admission and crowd control systems, air hockey, amusement rides, AV systems, battery-powered cars, carpeting, cash-handling technology, change machines, cotton candy, cranes, dodgem cars, financial services, go-karts, inflatables, kiddie rides, laser games, licensed and generic plush, music programming, photo booths, pool, pushers, redemption and loyalty systems, shooting galleries, simulators, ticketing and couponing solutions, vending, video games and more.

Find the elusive "killer" product with the potential to transform your business.

WHAT CAN I LEARN AT VAE?

VAE will shortly announce an extensive program of seminars and master classes conducted by leading industry professionals. Organised by BALPPA, the sessions will focus on highly topical issues

WHO WILL I SEE?

From the start, VAE has been designed with networking in mind. Expect to see

operators, buyers, sellers, key influencers, educators, trade associations, lobbyists, regulators and special interest groups.

On the first evening, the networking focus is the First Night Party, with more than 1,000 exhibitors and visitors gathering to enjoy great food, drink and entertainment at ExCel's Fox Bar.

HOW DO I GET TO VAE?

London's ExCel is world class, having won many awards for the breadth and high standard of its facilities and ease of access by road, rail, air and even cable car. Visit the VAE website for useful links, maps and advice on getting to ExCel.

HOW DO I GET A GOOD HOTEL DEAL?

ExCel has 2,300 hotel rooms within walking distance, last-minute bookings inevitably come at a high premium so booking early is advisable.

The historical areas of Greenwich or Tower Hill are interesting alternatives for those who wish to stay off-site. Greenwich, with its rich nautical history, is a short river bus trip or cable car ride away, whilst travel from Tower Gateway to ExCel on the DLR takes around 17 minutes.

VAE has teamed up with exhibition accommodation specialists Event Express, who have negotiated the best possible rates for VAE attendees. Event Express can be contacted via the VAE website.

HOW DO I REGISTER FOR VAE?

Register for your free ticket to VAE on the VAE website. With early registration, badges will be mailed to you, and you'll be kept up to date with show, event and exhibitor news. Register now and give your business a great start to 2015!

VAE is organised by Swan Events Ltd. For further information contact Karen Cooke on +44 1582 767254 or at karencooke@swanevents.co.uk

www.visitorattractionsexpo.co.uk

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REINVENTING THE NERD

Technical and mechanical knowledge infused with originality and enthusiasm:
Two Bit Circus inspires everyone from attractions insiders to schoolchildren

Kath Hudson, journalist, Attractions Management

Since 2012, Two Bit Circus, a group of entertainment engineers, has been playing around with robots, lasers and fire, creating quirky, exciting, interactive experiences for wide-eyed audience and co-founders Brent Bushnell and Eric Gradman have been steadily challenging the assumption that science and engineering are boring.

We talk to Bushnell to find out more about the Los Angeles-based collective.

How did Two Bit Circus come about?

I met Eric about seven years ago. We were both STEM [science, technology, engineering and maths] guys. He was building robots for the military and I was making video games, but we both wanted to be playing with other tech. The first night we met in person we stayed up until 4am building things. We began to find other people in LA who got similar enjoyment out of fabrication and all that stuff, so we formed a little band of nerds.

You don't seem like nerds in the way you present and engage with audiences. Has the world got nerds wrong?

One of the opportunities we have at the moment is to rebrand what it is to be a nerd. There's a negative cultural narrative around the sciences and maths. There's a traditional thinking that engineering is all pencil ties and lab coats, but that's all wrong; there are lasers and fires and robots and all sorts of neat things which make engineering, maths and science



Brent Bushnell (top) and Eric Gradman, the founders of Two Bit Circus and the STEAM Carnival



really exciting. People who fit the role of engineer are still playful and fun.

You want to inspire a future generation of inventors, so who inspired and continues to inspire you?

On many levels, Eric and I inspire each other. My dad was a big inspiration and it's fun to be back around my family as a peer. [Bushnell's father is entrepreneur and engineer Nolan Bushnell, founder of Atari and other video game companies].

I read an interesting study which underscored the fact that there's no shortage of hard problems to work on, and that's where the genesis of inspiring inventors came from: how could us nerds inspire an army of inventors and what impact could they have on the world?

You and Eric shared a vision of making STEM fun, but how easy was it to find a way of bringing that idea to fruition?

It extended from our core team pretty naturally. Leading up to the creation of Two Bit Circus, we were always playing with technology. We didn't have a business model in the beginning. We were just playing with stuff and taking it to parties. We did fundraisers and parties for companies like Amazon and Intel, with up to 10,000 guests.

Then we made a music video for the band Ok Go's single This Too Shall Pass. We built a huge Rube Goldberg Machine in a warehouse and the video went viral with 45 million views. Loads of parents and teachers called us to say the kids loved it. ▶



Human Asteroids, by Two Bit Circus for STEAM Carnival, is a tribute to the Atari game Asteroids. In this version, the player himself is the ship



The Arcade Road Show is an amusement event that can host between 50 and 5,000 people



The focus of STEAM Carnival is to convert non-STEM kids into STEM kids. We decided to do that by putting art into the mix. Adding art – fashion, music, games – was a pretty powerful shift: those things appeal to most kids

- We ended up also being on-camera inventors for a home makeover TV show, ABC's *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, building a new invention for each house. We were having a lot of fun with engineering and we were going into schools to talk about it. Statistics show America is ranked 47th in maths across the world, but we saw kids getting excited about this stuff, which made us think about how we could take this show on the road. That's how STEAM Carnival came about, it's our biggest undertaking to date.

What does STEAM carnival involve?

We want the focus of STEAM Carnival to be to convert non-STEM kids into STEM kids. We decided to do that by putting art into the mix, turning STEM into STEAM. Adding art – fashion, music, games – was a pretty powerful shift: those things appeal to most kids.

The STEAM Carnival involves a lead-up element at school, where kids learn about design, creation, programming and fabrication. This culminates in a live event at the show. The children create a fashion show of wearable electronics, a battle of the bands for musical robots and an arcade made of indie-group games.

About Two Bit Circus

Two Bit Circus is a collective of inventors, developers and engineers that's full of imagination. The group's mix of innovation, technological know-how and creativity translates into a variety of pop-up interactive amusements. Two Bit Circus brings its productions – immersive story games, stunt shows, plus an arcade roadshow that showcases its one-off games and activities – to parties and events, as well as running the educational, hands-on touring platform STEAM Carnival.

It's aimed at 11 to 14-year-olds, as this is the age they often opt out. We're aiming to create a curriculum for under-12s as well.

Was it easy to get schools on board?

Our Kickstarter campaign received a lot of media and internet coverage which enabled us to trial the concept. From that we had teachers and schools call us.

Do you have plans to take the STEAM Carnival overseas?

Yes, it's just a question of timing. We're in talks with a group in Poland and also in China, as well as about 10 other cities around the US to take it on the road.

Could this be adapted for an attraction?

We would love to do that. We've talked about modifying it to become a touring museum exhibit and spoken with science museums about what it could look like.

We've got all the games we've been making: one of the original ideas with the carnival was we'd test and trial ideas under our own control and then sell them to theme and amusement parks.

Can you tell us about any new projects you have on the go?

We've been working on virtual reality and filming in 360, and we're looking at mixing that with a story adventure.

Is there ever anything you want to do, but can't make happen?

We have to consider safety and the size of things, making sure they're portable, but we try not to put the brakes on too early. However, I do wish we had more time. ●

TWO BIT CIRCUS CONCEPTS

THIS TOO SHALL PASS MSUIC VIDEO

This music video is a showcase for Two Bit Circus's skills and humour. A warehouse was transformed into a Rube Goldberg Machine, a giant sequence of events. Starting off with a domino run, four minutes of action are perfectly synched with the music, including water pouring, metal balls dropping, a sledgehammer crashing into a TV, a piano dropping, a flock of umbrellas – culminating with the Ok Go members being splattered with paint. Watch it and smile.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyBUFnY7Y8w>



The finale of the video *This Too Shall Pass* by the band Ok Go

STORY ROOM

Like many of Two Bit Circus's concepts, Story Room started as a bit of fun. Set in a themed room, players become part of the story and must collaborate with others in a process full of surprises and mysteries. In order to work through the story, they must unlock a sequence of clues and puzzles. The narrative behind the original version set the participants in a scientist's laboratory, where they had to work together to stop a virus from escaping. The concept can be re-themed countless ways: a crash landing on a strange planet, an adventure under the sea...

LA ARTWALK

The Two Bit Circus workshop is in one of the biggest artist communities in the world and twice a year artists open their doors to showcase their wares to the public. Two Bit Circus creates an arcade of all their latest games and ideas. Last year, one of the most popular games involved a laser projector, a tracking camera and a basket of balls. People had to throw balls at the walls to hit the moving hoops. It was a real hit. "There was no start, no finish, and no scorekeeping, but people loved it – 10,000 balls were thrown at the wall over the weekend," says Bushnell.

Gradman (left) and Bushnell make it their mission to create a positive narrative around the STEM subjects



Two Bit Circus creates hands-on games, which could be used in the attractions markets



SEEING IS BELIEVING WITH BARCO VISUALISATION

Barco offers state-of-the-art visualisation technology and a holistic solution uniquely tailored to suit any attraction

Richard Marples, strategic marketing director at Barco, believes impressive digitised experiences can transform a visitor attraction. "Attractive visualisation engages customers via technology, creating memories that will make them come back again," he says. Aside from the cutting-edge visuals that the company builds with its range of projection technology, video walls and LED displays, Barco provides digital signage and works extensively behind the scenes. Networked visualisation technology is also part of the company's education and collaboration portfolio and central to its security and monitoring portfolio. We talked to Marples about Barco's growth.

Can you give us an overview of Barco?

Barco is a visualisation technology company at its heart, and over a number of years we've developed products in various markets. The company is split into



Richard Marples (left); Barco's 60,000 lumens, cinema-optimised, commercial laser projector, the DP4K-60L

three main businesses: Entertainment and Corporate, Industrial and Government and Healthcare. We focus on projectors and displays, but we also offer lighting, digital signage, networking, image processing – these are all adjacent technology sectors which fit into those markets.

When was the company founded?

Barco was founded in 1934. The name BARCO stands for the Belgian American Radio Corporation. An entrepreneurial Belgian named Lucien de Puydt did a deal with an American component supplier to bring radio components into Belgium and he began making traditional wooden cabinet valve radios. It was very much a consumer product company.

Once you're making radios with valves, it isn't a big leap to make televisions and record players. As the technology developed and more people started making radios and televisions, Barco found a niche in the broadcast industry.

From those valves and the radios came the CRT with the television, and then CRT projectors. During the 70s, the projectors had the red, green and blue guns and 500 to 700 lumen projectors. You had to have a completely dark room and they were difficult to set up and maintain – certainly not like the projectors we make today.

Then there was a gradual move by Barco to become exclusively involved

in professional markets – both niche and mainstream businesses – which are usually centred around some sort of visualisation application with its associated add-ons.

Who are your key customers?

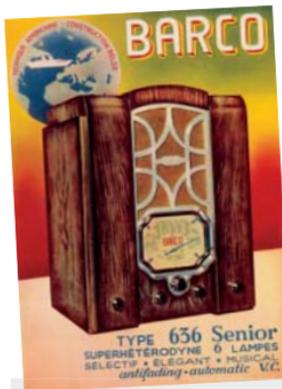
Barco's largest division today is Entertainment and Corporate. The biggest market within E&C is digital cinema. There are only four suppliers worldwide who deliver a Hollywood-compliant projector and as one of those we've amassed just over 40 per cent of the worldwide market of about 130,000 screens. The digital cinema market continues to be one of our core activities. We've also developed an offering for media servers, audio systems and control systems. A cinema owner can now run the whole cinema from the lobby, and that's revolutionised cinema.

What solutions do you offer attractions?

It's the same visualisation solution for a number of different applications.

With our attractions customers there's always an **entertainment or experience** part, whether that's a 4D ride or dark ride or the end of day show at a theme park.

Another market is **security and monitoring**, a key element of all visitor attractions. We have complete security monitoring technology and display walls, allowing the security team to monitor



Belgian company Barco started out by making traditional wooden-cased radios for the consumer market



PHOTO: ATERRACE

Maus aus Chocolat dark ride is powered by 86 Barco F22 projectors

IF YOUR VISITOR IS IMMERSIVE AND ENGAGED, YOU'VE CREATED AN EXPERIENCE. PROVIDING ENTERTAINING VISUALISATION IS A GREAT WAY OF DOING THIS

and get feedback on what's happening in the park. All the data an attraction owner needs can be displayed on a single screen.

We have a range which is **signage and promotion**, great for F&B outlets or souvenir shops. Our displays can give realtime information about queue times, promotions and so forth.

Lastly, there's a **meeting and collaboration** element, so where there's an educational focus, then we can get involved. Those are the four main elements. The solutions you need depend on the size and the number of visitors.

You bought projectiondesign in 2012?
We bought the Norwegian projection technology manufacturer in December 2012, giving us a complimentary set of products to target a broader market.

Where in the world is Barco working?
Everywhere. We have about 4,000 employees in 90 offices and factories around the world. We produce projectors in Belgium, China and Norway now because of projectiondesign. We have a lighting factory in Austin, Texas, and factories in California, India and Taiwan.

What are your immediate plans?
We're always developing our product range to be relevant to our markets. There are certain technologies that are coming through into all our markets, such as laser light sources for projectors or more powerful computers and graphics cards.

What are the advantages of laser projectors?
Using laser, we can generate very pure colours. We can make them brighter because we're not primarily producing heat, like with a lamp, but light. They're very long-lasting and a laser will last 30,000 to 40,000 hours in the future. It's more attractive in terms of running costs. The downside is lasers are expensive at the moment which is why we don't see them universally yet. We're developing the products and as the technology is used more the costs will come down, as happens with all new technology.

Has Barco overcome any challenges?
The success of Barco as it is now comes from when Eric van Zele joined as our CEO. He came in at a crucial time, in the middle of the financial crisis. He says

openly that Barco had lost its way a little at that time. He quickly recognised we needed to change a number of key things and, at a time when there was no investment at all, he invested heavily in the cinema business. That turned out to be crucial. His foresight and vision turned the company around. Heading up the E&C division, Wim Buysens was looking after digital cinema and his strategy to develop cinema and parts of the entertainment business such as visitor attractions has got us to where we are today.

What's the best thing about working for Barco?
We get involved in so many fascinating projects and see so many different ways of using our equipment. We never cease to be amazed by the creativity of our customers and the way they use our products to create brilliant projects. All attractions are competing for visitors, and they want repeat visitors and visitors who tell their friends about what a fantastic day they had. Providing entertaining visualisation is a great way of doing this. If your visitor is immersed and engaged, you've created an experience. ●

THE RIDE MAKERS

From glow coasters to boomerangs, thrillseekers are never short of options thanks to the work of the ride makers. We talk to four of the companies who set the bar for the industry

Alice Davis, managing editor, Attractions Management

INTAMIN

SASCHA N. CZIBULKA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

What coasters are popular right now?

There's strong demand for thrilling signature coasters, which have a high marketing value. There's also demand for "thrilling" family coasters, such as our coaster Juvelen at Djurs Sommerland.

What makes Intamin different?

You'll almost never hear from Intamin that something cannot be done.

What have been the biggest changes for ride makers in recent times?

Probably one of the biggest changes is that IP and brands are more and more the basis for new attractions. Then, the ride system itself often represents only a small portion of the overall investment for a new ride or attraction. The cost for the IP is defined before the creative design for the ride system begins and to stay within the budget, it's the ride system where savings are expected to be made.



Do you have any concerns about the industry?

One of the biggest challenges is the various standards in different countries and regions. A worldwide harmonisation of standards (ISO) as well as of the rules for third party inspection bodies is vital.

To some extent there's a safety concern with new park developments, mainly in the Mid- and Far East. These parks are getting high-end equipment, especially rides, which are designed at the edge of the possible and those rides require a professional operation and maintenance, which in some cases is just not there.

From our point of view, bigger threats for the entire industry – maybe excepting the very big players such as Disney

and Universal – is a potential lack of innovation. Nowadays more and more parks are operated and owned by large corporations who are less willing to carry a portion of the prototype risk.

Basically, all the ride manufacturers are small companies and cannot afford to develop new attractions and ride systems on their own. Master agreements with huge penalties and/or unreasonable clauses are not supportive in this context. If we don't see a change in the near future we may run into problems when it comes to innovation in the years to come.

Finally, an issue for ride makers is the growing problem of IP infringement.

In terms of engineering, design or manufacturing, what's exciting?

There are three major developments in rollercoaster technology we can mention.

The first is the significant improvement in the efficiency of our linear motor technology in combination with power storage systems that result in considerably lower power connection requirements.

The second is Intamin's newly developed single and double backbone track, which complies with the very latest EN standards, and also results in less columns and a very smooth ride, even though the layout features high g-forces and high speeds.

Third is implementing special effects to combine a coaster with a dark ride. With our most recent work done for a major park in the US, we've incorporated special effects on motion bases, which together with top-notch media creates a state-of-the-art rollercoaster dark ride experience.



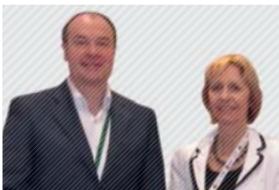
Intamin's launch coaster Nefekesen – or, Breathtaker – has opened at Vialand, Istanbul, Turkey. Trains are launched to 110kph in 3.5 seconds



Quantum Leap, an inverted boomerang coaster, at Sochi Park Adventureland

VEKOMA

PETER VAN BILSEN & CHARLOTTE VAN ETEN SENIOR VP, ACCOUNT MANAGER MARKETING & SALES



Tell us about your most recent thrill coaster.

We've just installed the Giant Inverted Boomerang (GIB) coaster in Sochi, Russia. The GIB is a cutting-edge ride, designed to draw rollercoaster connoisseurs from afar. True to the nature of Vekoma's boomerang rides, it puts as much thrill into a park as possible within a compact space. It's a cost-effective investment because it combines three rides into one: a freefall, a looping coaster and a forward-backward trip. Despite its impressive height and heavier gauge construction, the GIB is easy to install. An ingenious feature is the patented catcher system that picks the train up on the fly as it climbs up the second lift hill on the opposite tower.

What have been the most exciting breakthroughs at Vekoma lately?

Our achievements in Asia are very advanced, since we have offices and

factories in China and Singapore with local teams of specialists to facilitate communication with customers in their time zones and various languages. The 24/7 service we offer in Asia is very much appreciated and local production is beneficial to the customer in terms of saving on transport, duties and taxes.

Where do you see trends going?

New ride experiences need to offer new elements and interactivity in combination with the right theming and branding – that's the way to an ultimate "wow" ride experience.

Can you describe the market climate?

The industry is a niche market; however, it is booming. Every company has its specialism. Offering good quality and a safe product, a long-lasting design and good service is important for our customers in making the right choice.

What are you doing that other coaster makers aren't?

Vekoma Rides manages all of its disciplines in-house, from its sales and marketing to the concept and creative design of the rides, through to engineering, production, installation, testing and commissioning and parts and service. Therefore, our company's expertise and the service that we provide is a huge advantage for our customers, especially with regard to communication and coordination.

A 360-degree view of Vekoma quality includes the highest safety standards, durability and low maintenance costs, cutting-edge technology, creative solutions and customised designs, highly qualified staff, project management and full 24/7 after-sales service provision.

What have been the biggest changes for ride makers in recent times?

From an engineering point of view, safety and quality are continuously updated and implemented. From a creative point of view, more custom designs and interactivity are requested.

What's on the horizon for Vekoma?

Like most ride manufacturers, we have a very good portfolio and there are continuously investments in new parks and expansions in existing parks. ▶

MAURER-SÖHNE

WOLFGANG BROST
VICE PRESIDENT SALES & MARKETING, AMUSEMENT RIDES

Tell us about your most recent thrill coaster offering.

The first coaster equipped with our new X-Train will soon open in Ningbo, China. With X-Train, we're aiming for a niche between classical coasters with lots of elements on a compact footprint and the big hypercoasters which typically have a lot of camelbacks, (which I find rather boring). Our train is developed according to the latest global standards, withstanding high g-forces and running through very tight radii. Our aim is to create coasters for customers who want a hypercoaster with heights of 50 metres-plus (164 feet) and high capacities.



Hersheypark's indoor, spinning, glow coaster is due to open soon (left); the new 24-seat X-Train is the next generation of the X-Car

What have been the major developments at Maurer lately?

The all-new X-Car Evolution, equipped with our Multimedia X-Seat. With these new products we're not only fulfilling the latest standards but also future standards. We'll see general improvements like king-pin-steering, spring-loaded side wheels and enhanced theming possibilities. Moreover, we'll enable customers to use sound and light effects and interactivity on new rides.

Where do you see trends going?

We're beyond the time when everybody tried to break records – the fastest,

highest, most thrilling, most inversions. At some point riding these coasters becomes more like a test of courage than fun! I see a trend to more theming and storytelling, creating immersive, appealing attractions rather than pure coasters.

Our Saturn V project, which we made in collaboration with Raven Sun, is an example of this. We show that you don't need Disney budgets to create a fully themed attraction. The space theming is one example of how this can be very affordable (and with low maintenance costs) even for family and mid-size parks.

Hersheypark will be opening this attraction, Laff Trakk, in 2015 and it's

the first project born out of this idea, with completely different theming.

Another trend is parks focusing on areas instead of single attractions. We're seeing makeovers of areas using famous brand IPs and in some cases complete parks are branded. In response, Maurer has teamed up with One World Studios and Porsche and can offer a very interesting concept for a fully themed park area featuring the Porsche Iconic Ride.

How is the market climate?

The aftermath of the recession is finally behind us, and new investment's coming into the market. The industry's in a stronger position than ever. Speeding up with products and concepts is imperative, and staying ahead of the competition means being innovative and coming up with new ideas to fill niches in the market.

What are you doing that other coaster makers aren't?

Our business division is totally focused on rollercoasters. We have all competencies and capabilities in-house from the first sketch for a new ride until its grand opening. We cover the whole process of innovating, engineering, manufacturing, erecting and commissioning the rides.

Do you have any concerns about the industry?

With the new standards released lately, my only concern is that there might be manufacturers in other parts of the world who do not follow these standards and harm the overall image of our industry. ►



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Number of inversions
5



First 9 seats vehicle and new patent pending lap bar restraint.





MACK RIDES

MAXIMILIAN ROESER
MARKETING MANAGER

Tell us about your most recent thrill coaster.

Our most recent high-speed coaster is Helix at the Swedish theme park Liseberg in Gothenburg. With two launch segments, seven inversions and a total ride time of about two minutes this rollercoaster is one of the best in the world. Theme park enthusiasts are excited to ride this coaster. The setting for this rollercoaster is truly unique: a large hill in the centre of the park lifts Helix into the spotlight for the visitors. However, as nice as the view is from up there, it was difficult to erect the steel structure on the hillside.

In terms of engineering, design or manufacturing, what developments have you had lately?

Our latest developments include the suspended powered coaster, Arthur, at Europa-Park, as there's a lot of technology included in the car. For the first time, we've created a vehicle that has light, sound, seat shakers, drive motors and an interactive control system on board. It's the most complex ride vehicle we've ever created. Visitors love the feeling of flying over the village of the Minimoys.

What coaster experiences are popular?

Currently our rollercoasters are doing very well. The launch coaster has been sold multiple times all over the world, as well as our mega-coasters. Our free-spinning coasters are also in high demand. In the coming years we expect



The Helix coaster at Liseberg park in Sweden has two launch segments (left); the suspended Arthur ride is new to Europa-Park

to see more of these rollercoasters for the whole family being built.

Can you describe the current market climate? Is business fast or slow?

Business is pretty fast as we see increased demand from new destinations and a high volume of requests from existing customers. Mack Rides is known for bringing new ideas to the market and we're planning new rides and ride systems for 2015 and 2016. We're a company whose strength is in being very innovative but never losing our tradition and heritage.

What are you doing that other coaster makers aren't?

Mack Rides invests a lot in the quality of its products. When it comes to track engineering, vehicle design and new technologies we are very motivated and always push ourselves further. Of course, with the Mack family and Europa-Park we have a strong partnership where we can get ideas and feedback from each

other. That's definitely a huge advantage compared to other coaster makers.

What are challenges do you face?

We could see some changes in the near future. The way people spend their time at the weekend or on vacation could shift again. With technological changes, the competition between consumer electronics and high-end experiences will shift everything to a new level. As an example, 3D cinemas were a highlight of the 1980s, but now everybody can enjoy a 3D movie at home with the newest TV set. Keeping up with these developments and always being a step ahead is probably the most challenging. People get used to experiences, so we think the next big thing will be giving them a totally new adventure every time they go on a ride.

What's next for Mack Rides?

Mack Rides is in a position of healthy growth. We have strong demand right now and for the coming years, but we're aware that this demand can be subject to external influences such as economic fluctuations. We want to invest sustainably, not just for a high growth rate, but you'll certainly see spectacular new ride ideas from us in the future. ●

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KOOZA CAME TO TOWN

An experiment between PortAventura and Cirque du Soleil proves mutually beneficial, as the park offers its guests a theatrical diversion with the Kooza show and the circus company gets a regular European base to pitch its big top

Alice Davis, managing editor, Attractions Management

PortAventura, the biggest theme park and resort in southern Europe, aims to be a first-class international destination that appeals to a market far beyond its Spanish borders.

This vision is an integral part of the theme park's DNA.

The park is effective at promoting itself to the wider world and it has worked hard to target overseas customers.

That's paid off, with 40 per cent of its 4 million visitors coming from outside Spain in 2014.



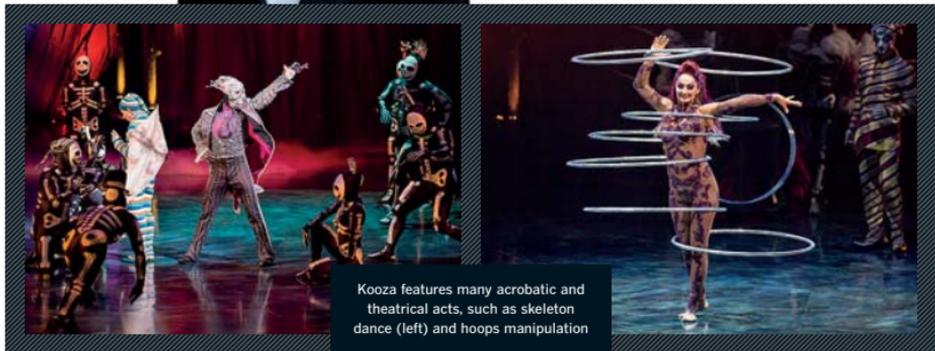
PortAventura's Fernando Aldecoa

The Salou-based resort is aiming to increase that number to 50 per cent, and it knows how to do it: by investing in new and more innovative attractions.

The destination manages a diverse and changing portfolio in order to sustain this appeal and reach new audiences.

It's for this reason that PortAventura approached renowned Canadian performance troupe Cirque du Soleil and suggested they partner for the summer season, with a view to making it a long-term commitment. It turned out to be a fruitful

The Trickster, who created the magic world of Kooza



Kooza features many acrobatic and theatrical acts, such as skeleton dance (left) and hoops manipulation



PHOTOS: MATT BEARD COSTUMES, MARIE GHANTALE WILLANCOURT / ©2012 CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

A unicycle pas de deux is a highlight of the Kooza show. The choreography is a twist on the classic unicycle act



The Kooza cast at PortAventura. The entire Cirque du Soleil company today employs 5,000 staff, including 1,300 artists

► proposal, as the Cirque du Soleil big top at PortAventura sold more than 101,000 tickets over its 10 July to 30 August 2014 run. Negotiations are underway for the collaboration to continue, with the Canadian company bringing a different show to the park next year.

"One of the keys to the success of PortAventura is that we present a new project every year," says Fernando Aldecoa, the park's general manager. In 2012, the Shambhala rollercoaster launched; in 2013, the new-look Costa Caribe aquatic park opened, and the ride Angkor followed in 2014. Since 2009, the park has invested over \$158m (£99m, €125m) in its "internationalisation strategy". "We want something to make people come back for the summer season. We needed a good hook for the international visitor who mainly comes in summer. If people stay for a week we have to provide enough activities," he says.

Increasing stay time at the resort, which now has four hotels, is vital to the family-oriented park and increases the spend of the captive audience. The location is conducive to a multi-day destination. On the Costa Daurada on Spain's east coast, PortAventura is bathed in the Catalan sun throughout the summer, with daily temperatures averaging 26°C and long hours of daylight through the peak months from May to August. With the beach, the city of Barcelona and the chance to watch Cirque du Soleil, tourists have a full



Two performers maintain hand-to-hand contact throughout a routine that shows incredible balance

menu of activities easily accessible from their accommodation.

PAST EXPERIENCE

Cirque du Soleil agreed to the partnership, marking the first tie-up between the Canadian company and a European theme park and the first time the troupe

has positioned itself closely with a theme park outside its partnerships with Disney at Walt Disney World, Orlando, and previously at Tokyo Disney Resort, Japan.

"We were looking for a place to go regularly in the summer and PortAventura was looking for the best quality entertainment it could get, so the marriage happened from there," says Heather Reilly, company manager for the Kooza show, who oversees the logistics of the \$35m (£20m, €26m) tour and its 130 staff. "Furthermore, the collaboration partners two strong A-brands together."

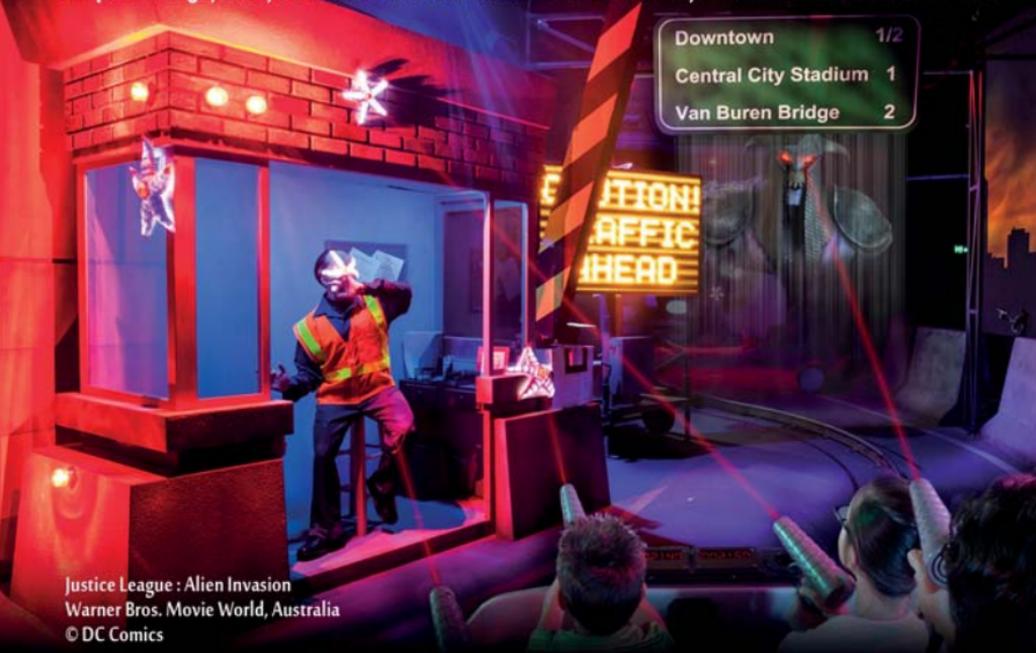
Reilly is right – they're certainly two big players, with the park worth an estimated \$556m (£348m, €439m) at the end of 2013, and the entire global Cirque du Soleil outfit generating more than \$900m (£564m, €711m) in revenues last year.

For PortAventura these partnerships – which are typically bold – have always been carefully selected. In 1997, when the park was just a few years old, it decided that a widely recognised IP would help boost the visibility of its brand.

A partnership with NBC Universal ensued, with famous Universal characters licensed to the park, making it more recognisable to overseas customers. The US entertainment giant then bought up the majority of shares and renamed the park Universal's PortAventura, before Universal bowed out in the mid-2000s. By then, Woody Woodpecker, in particular, had become synonymous with the park. The well-known mascot and his friends ►

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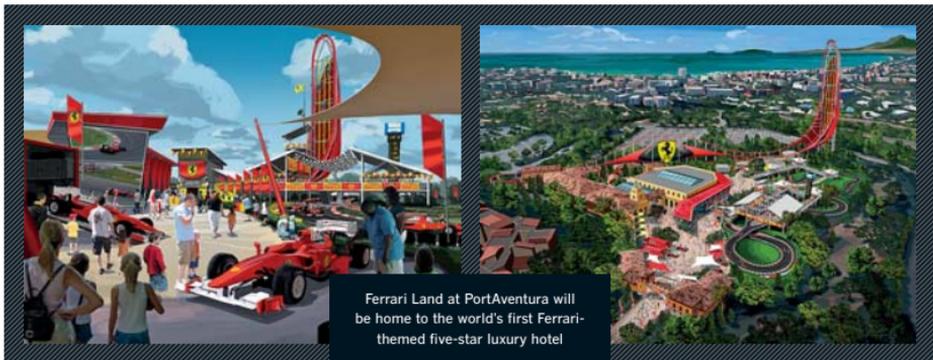
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To develop the international market, one strategy is to build up partnerships with top brands, Aldecoa says. Ferrari is one of these brands, and Cirque du Soleil is another

▶ still drive marketing campaigns and retail offerings. (Today, US investment fund KKR holds a 49.9 per cent stake in PortAventura, while Italian private equity firm Investindustrial, who came on board in 2009, owns 51.1 per cent.)

In 2008, the park teamed up with Sesame Street – one of the most widely watched children's shows on the planet, with 8 million US viewers each week, and localised versions of the programme broadcast in 120 different nations. Characters like Elmo, Bert, Ernie, and the Cookie Monster were introduced at PortAventura. In 2011, the IP got a whole area to itself when SésamoAventura opened, and became the park's most popular attraction, Aldecoa says.

The future will bring Ferrari Land, a 75,000sqm (807,000sq ft) addition, which is currently under construction and due to open in 2016. It's no coincidence that Ferrari has been declared the most powerful brand in the world for two consecutive years by the *Brand Finance Global 500* report. "Our priority is developing the international market," Aldecoa says. "There are different strategies that we follow to achieve this, but one of them is to build up partnerships with top brands. Ferrari is one of these brands, and Cirque du Soleil is another."

NEW EXPERIMENT

Despite its alignments with other partners, bringing Kooza to Salou was a new kind of experience and a new way of working for both PortAventura and Cirque du Soleil.

Both sides took a relaxed view, deciding to see how well the eight-week run of shows was received before making any further commitments. "Of course, the first time was an experiment for us and for them. It was the first time we'd collaborated with an external company on a thing like this. Our plan was that if it worked we'd keep collaborating and they'd have a permanent base in summer at the resort. We could even extend the season," says Aldecoa.

Working side by side was key to the partnership. While PortAventura led the marketing campaigns, they were agreed with Cirque du Soleil first. Ticketing was primarily through the Canadian company's website, while PortAventura sold tickets from the resort, Salou and surrounding areas. "We expected Kooza to be a big success not only with the international market but with the local market," Aldecoa says. "It was possible for local people to buy a ticket and spend the day in the park and then go to the show."

Reilly, whose 65-trailer operation travels from city to city carrying the entire infrastructure of the Kooza show, agrees that it's about maximising potential audience members. "As well as PortAventura's guests there's a permanent population base," she says. "We've got Reus, we've got Tarragona. We've got a big fan base in Barcelona. From our point of view, they come for the show, and from PortAventura's point of view, they stay and go to the park, so it's a win-win."

The joint venture involved up-front investment in the site – including

improving the terrain – from PortAventura, who provided the land for the big top rent-free. For Cirque du Soleil, the initial investment was getting the tent, stage, equipment and staff to Salou. That undertaking in itself is a logistical behemoth, but the well-oiled operation runs like clockwork.

"Our regular transfer takes us 10 days," she says. "It's two days to tear everything down, pack it on the trucks and get it on the road. It's about seven days to put it all together. It's very well organised. Everything has its place and its timing."

That professionalism was important. "One of the reasons we chose them and no other circus or show is because they are perfect. We don't have to worry about logistics because they are the best in the world at logistics," Aldecoa says.

Both he and Reilly used the fledgling season to figure out the best ways to reach their diverse audience, be it international or local, on-park or far-flung. Moreover, they wanted to persuade people that this theatrical, acrobatic extravaganza at PortAventura was a fantastic reason to come back next year – and it looks like they succeeded.

"We can be pretty sure that the show was a key factor that contributed to the rise in the number of visits this summer," says Aldecoa. "And, if I'm asked to describe the audiences' reaction to Kooza, they were completely astonished. The families with small kids were absolutely surprised. Everybody described the show as 'incredible' and 'breathtaking'." ●

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Tom Falvey in the newly opened antique telescope gallery at South Carolina State Museum

TOM FALVEY

A state-of-the-art planetarium and observatory is the latest addition to the South Carolina State Museum. We talk to the director of education about the project

Alice Davis, managing editor, Attractions Management

This August, the South Carolina State Museum (SCSM) opened a new planetarium, observatory and 4D theatre. The \$23m (£14m, €18m) expansion, known as Windows to New Worlds, places the prestigious museum at the forefront of science, technology and astronomy education. The project is expected to drastically increase tourism to the area.

The new additions are the BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Planetarium, the Boeing Observatory, the Rev Dr Solomon Jackson Jr 4D Theatre, an antique telescope gallery, a NASA gallery and a museum shop, café and meeting spaces. The lobby of the original 1894 textile mill that houses the SCSM received extensive renovations. Visitors now walk through a new glass entrance below 36,000 pounds (16,000kg) of steel

telescope legs, which support the refractor in the fourth-floor observatory above.

Attractions Management spoke to the director of education and curator of science and technology, Tom Falvey, who's been with the museum since 2000.

Can you tell us about the observatory?

The 2,500sq ft (232sqm) observatory has a terrace with views of the city. We installed a 1926 Alvan Clark refractor, a 12 3/8-inch telescope that was in Columbia University, New York City, until 1997. We put new drives on it, fit it with computer controls and go-to technology. Boeing funded the STEM programming, and the goal is for schools to have remote access to the telescope so they can control it and take pictures from their classrooms. It's a simple MITC solution, but I think we must be the only people in the world who would do this with a vintage instrument.

There's an antique telescope gallery?

Yes, the telescope gallery is home to 50 antique telescopes, dating from 1730, and one of the best collections of American refractors in the world, with many Alvan Clarks. The London instruments are spectacular – we have Jesse Ramsden and Dollond instruments, some of the most beautiful European instruments you'll find.

Were they acquired since this process began?

They were part of the whole idea. Our donor, Robert Ariail, promised to donate his collection in 2004. He was on our board of directors when the observatory and planetarium plans began.

How about the planetarium?

The planetarium is a 55-foot (17-metre) Spitz screen dome housed in a big glass cube, similar to the idea behind the



PHOTOS: BRETT FLASCHNICK / SEAN RAYFORD



▲ The interior of the BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Planetarium (left) and the view from outside

Our goal is to bridge the access gap and stream content into 14,000 schools across the state. That appealed to Boeing, and the company was very excited to put its name on the observatory

Hayden Planetarium at the Rose Center for Earth and Space, though definitely a different look. The planetarium is next to the textile mill, so one of the interior walls is the exterior wall of the mill. It's lovely to have the juxtaposition of this historic 60-foot (18-metre) wall with the modern glass and steel cube.

What hardware is the planetarium equipped with?

Two Sony SRX projectors with fisheye lenses; that's a 4K system. It's an E&S Digistar 5 system and the sound system is Bowen Technovation. We have 145 seats, five wheelchair accessible, provided by American Seating.

How did the project come about?

There was a planetarium in Columbia until the early 1990s which was part of the Gibbes Art Museum. When the art

museum moved, it didn't want to take the planetarium and so it gave the equipment to the State Museum. Seventeen years later, we opened this planetarium!

We have the old (1971) MinoIta MS10 star projector, which will be an exhibit piece. I'd love to put it in the dome but sadly we don't have the right wiring.

The museum has said it hopes the Windows to New Worlds expansion will help place the institution at the cutting edge of STEM education.

Education is a big part of the State Museum's mission. Our new facility and programs will put STEM resources in the hands of students – both at the museum and in their classrooms. It's a university town in the heart of a state that has a lot of science industries and businesses like Boeing, BMW and Michelin. Focusing on those key industries is part of what

we're trying to do to get kids excited about going into the fields of science and technology. Hopefully we'll inspire future engineers, scientists, educators and perhaps even astronauts.

Is that how Boeing came on board?

Boeing was very excited about our distance-learning components, especially since South Carolina has several pockets of rural and poor areas, with many students unable to travel to the museum. Our goal is to bridge this access gap and stream content into approximately 14,000 schools across the state. That appealed to Boeing, and the company was very excited to put its name on the observatory.

What shows are you playing?

We opened with *Seven Wonders*, an E&S feature. We have *Two Small Pieces of Glass: The Amazing Telescope* [Interstellar ▶

PLANETARIUMS



PHOTOS: BRETT FLASHNICK / SEAN RAYFORD

▲ Following the grand opening on 16 August, up to 1,000 people a day were visiting the new attractions at the SCSM

► Studios], about Galileo and the telescope, and *Back to the Moon for Good* about the Google Lunar XPRIZE competition. We have *Violent Universe* after Christmas, another E&S feature. We'll purchase *Earth, Moon and Sun* [Morehead Planetarium Production distributed by Sky-Skan].

We're also doing laser shows with our laser projector. We'll show these during extended hours. Special programmes are a chance to appeal to different audiences.

Will you do live shows?

Yes, at the end of most planetarium shows we'll take a trip to outer space in the museum's Sky Tour, a 10-minute live presentation about the night sky. During the show, guests learn how to identify constellations and planets that are currently visible from Columbia and take a trip to other places in our Solar System, such as Saturn, Jupiter and Mars.

What makes this planetarium different?

First, we're connected to a multi-disciplinary museum with history, art, natural history and science and technology. Add the observatory, 4D theatre and telescope gallery and it's massive. I don't think there's another place like this in the world.

Second is the interactivity we have on offer. We've put in new AV functions; we've put in a fibre connection to a router that allows us to bring content in or out from the planetarium. We can originate live content that can go elsewhere and we have a video input so we can stream directly from the observatory (or anywhere else) into the planetarium – that's going to be perfect when the eclipse happens in 2017.

We have a nice ability to move content throughout and beyond the building.

It must help to be part of the wider museum.

Definitely. The state's budget is always fluctuating, but we've given ourselves the opportunity to start raising more revenue and to be more self-sufficient.

What staff structure do you have?

Our planetarium has one full-time manager, with additional part-time astronomy educators to follow. Our observatory manager supervises three educators, which allows us to keep the observatory open all through the weekend and for select hours on weekdays. Our STEM education manager coordinates the science activities.

How do you feel about the role of planetariums currently?

Some changes to digital systems have been met with resistance. There's still a lot of love for traditional astronomy content. I enjoy a traditional show; it's wonderful to sit in a dome theatre and see a star show. But it's inevitable the digital systems have taken over, because of budget and ease of use. It's interesting to see the competition between the traditional planetarium experience and the pre-recorded aspect. A blend is good. It's good to be able to revitalise our content on a periodic basis.

What's the best part of this project?

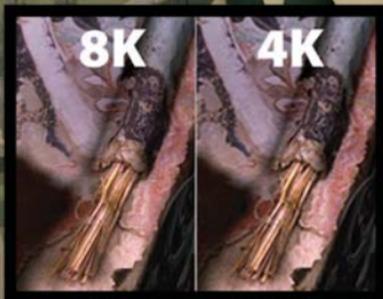
We've been waiting for this planetarium for many years. I hear people say how the old planetarium inspired them to go into science, or got them excited about school.

With the observatory, when someone climbs the ladder and looks through an eyepiece at a distant object for the first time, seeing what Galileo saw 400 years ago, it's cool – simple and beautiful. The glass came from Zeiss back in 1925 and there's a poetic beauty about a large refractor and a beautiful image coming through it. It's rare that people get close to an observatory, let alone stumble on one in a museum. It's really neat. ●

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Mogao Caves Visitor Center, Dunhuang, China

Twin 18-meter domes



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IAAPA ATTRACTIONS EXPO

IAAPA returns to the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida, from 18-21 November, with more than 1,000 exhibitors and an expected 27,000 attendees. Here's a sneak preview



A still from nWave's latest release *Knights Quest*, a 4D medieval caper

NWAVE

Knights Quest is a 12-minute 4D attraction film produced by Red Star, directed by Ben Smith and distributed exclusively by nWave. It tells the story of two medieval knights and their comical quest to rescue a princess. In a fast-moving battle of wits, with stunning visuals, will they manage to enter the castle and defeat the enemy inside?



EmpeX products at LeisurePlex, Lisburn

EMPEX

EmpeX has transformed Northern Ireland's largest leisure pool. For the major renovation to the LeisurePlex facility in Lisburn, EmpeX Watertoys supplied an exciting waterplay area. Dominating the family fun pool area, the colourful Aquadek adds interactivity and a waterslide. EmpeX has added exciting interactive features to suit children up to 12. Fun and educational, the new design adds a vibrant visual to this facility.



Immersive Rides' bespoke offering

IMMERSIVE RIDES

Immersive Rides is a new venture between the Juice and Themesparx which embraces new technologies to create a unique experience in dark rides. Riders customise their experience and choose from bespoke content, they select the style of the ride and the adventure before they embark on the journey so that every ride will be a different experience.



Racing coaster with 911 GT3 theming

MAURER SÖHNE

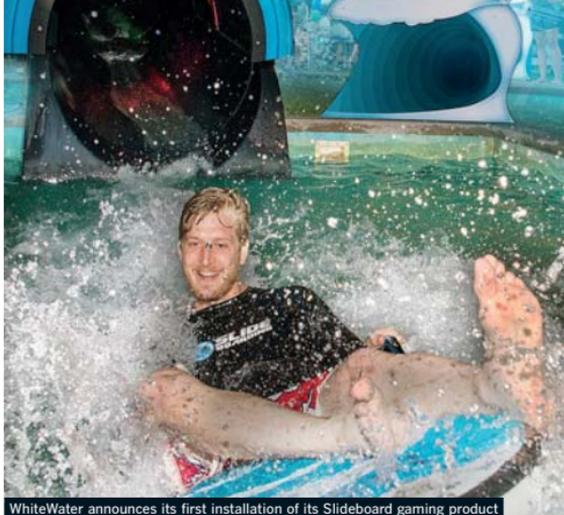
Porsche City is a new proposal for state-of-the-art theme park attractions, branded facilities and merchandising, food and beverage, and with the Porsche rollercoaster as its crown. With Porsche, Maurer Söhne and German design studio One World, the Porsche City concept can be brought to life. The Porsche coaster is themed like the 911 GT3, with multiple launch and brake zones and two racing coaster trains for an immersive motor race experience.



SimEx-Iwerks opens at Madame Tussauds

SIMEX-IWERKS

SimEx-Iwerks debuts 10 new blockbuster 4D titles at IAAPA this November. This year, SimEx-Iwerks has opened at several new locations including Madame Tussauds Hollywood and Las Vegas and the Museum of Science in Boston. On 18 November, in partnership with Nickelodeon, SimEx-Iwerks is launching a new laser maze attraction at the Nickelodeon Suites Resort, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle Laser Lockdown.



WhiteWater announces its first installation of its Slideboard gaming product

PHOTO: PAUL ROMEN

WHITEWATER WEST

WhiteWater is developing its new Slideboard product offering, having sold the first iteration to Village Road Show Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas for the 2015 season. Slideboarding uses tech-embedded rafts, boards and other tracking technologies to keep score, challenge and bring a new layer of interactive play to the industry.



Hybrid water rides are popular at ProSlide

PROSLIDE

ProSlide is presenting its bestselling hybrid rides. These hybrids combine iconic rides like funnels, bowls and walls into a single ride path. This type of ride makes a perfect anchor attraction: a one-of-a-kind ride that creates immediate buzz and helps ProSlide customers stand out. The company has installed over 25 hybrid ride installations since 2008.



Intamin's Flume Ride 6

INTAMIN

Intamin's six-minute flume ride with backward drop was installed this year at Phantasialand in Germany. The state-of-the-art flume ride offers a breathtaking ride experience full of surprising, enjoyable, and unique moments for the family, and the world's steepest drop on this type of attraction.



The Lost Cove is the latest interactive game title in the DomeRider series



The Condor rejoins the Huss portfolio

HUSS

Huss has redesigned a classic ride and is introducing the second-generation Condor to the market. The original Condor had great success in the 1980s and 90s, and returns to the company's active portfolio with revised, improved design elements. The first Condor 2G opened in June at Happy Valley Beijing and a second is soon to open in Shandong Province, China.

PICSOLVE

Picsolve is showcasing its new consumer-facing app and image-sharing platform. As 400,000 have already signed up, there's the potential to reach over 15 million people through social media. The app allows guests



immediate access to their ride and experience images, and it's available via iOS and Android devices in 14 languages including Arabic. The app is the latest addition to Picsolve's platform which operates in 100 attractions worldwide. The company has invested in its innovative digital platform to stay ahead of consumer demand.

HOLOVIS

Holovis presents a dynamic technology showcase which demonstrates how next-generation dark ride and immersive theatre attractions can be created using "building blocks IP technology" for unique and completely scalable experiences. The Lost Cove, an immersive themed experience for multiple players. The players are immersed in a virtual ride experience using the latest motion technology.

SHOW PREVIEW



Angry Birds Universe, which has travelled to Dubai, UAE, and Doha, Qatar

JACK ROUSE ASSOCIATES

Angry Birds Universe: The Art and Science Behind a Global Phenomenon is a hands-on, STEAM-focused, educational tour. Users can even “be the bird” in a full-body demonstration of Angry Birds physics. Angry Birds Universe has visited the UAE and Qatar. Imagine Exhibitions, Rovio Entertainment and Jack Rouse Associates developed the exhibition as an interactive attraction unlike any other on the market.



Seascape visuals for the Powerboat 5CTR

CRUDEN

Motion simulator company Cruden introduces its fully integrated powerboat simulator, the Powerboat 5CTR, a new experience for up to five guests. Cruden worked with the Dutch military on its fast interceptor vessels and security boats as well as Florida powerboat specialists and drivers to perfect the motion of the Powerboat 5CTR.



A still from *Rome Racer*, one of the latest releases from Niceberg



Geodesic domes are highly customisable

HILO

HILO is indoor/outdoor attraction housing. Its Geodesic domes can be customised to include a range of offerings, from a choice of 45 different elements and challenges, such as high ropes courses. Covers are completely customisable, and the dome is available in sizes up to 70 feet (21 metres). A high ropes course in a 70-foot HILO creates 34 activities on three levels, and a ropes course within its own structure is a unique concept for the industry.



A Jeep-style vehicle takes Lost Temple ride guests on a dinosaur adventure

SIMWORX

Simworx installed its first ever immersive tunnel at Movie Park's Lost Temple ride in Germany this year. The dinosaur adventure takes place on board a 30-seat, Jeep-style dynamic 3 DOF simulator, travelling along a track from a themed loading bay into the main show area with 360-degree 3D projection and dramatic 4D effects. Simworx this year also installed the 326-seat Angry Birds' 4D theatre at Thorpe Park in the UK. Angry Birds 4D is now available as a complete 4D turnkey attraction, with film licensing. Simworx and RoboCoaster have also co-developed a new generation of RoboCoaster products, including variations of a new RCX passenger-carrying robot and trackless AGV dark ride vehicles. The Viper 360 simulation ride also launched.

NICEBERG

New from Niceberg, *Rome Racer* is a 2D/3D ride film set in Ancient Rome, where the rider's chariot must race against the Roman Gods. This four-minute ride film fits motion-based theatres and simulators.

Meet the *Dinos* is a family-friendly 3D/4D attraction film for theme parks or science centres. It stars a baby pterosaur who leaves the nest to encounter bizarre, amazing creatures, with a running time of 10 minutes. ●



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ART PROJECT

IN THIS MULTIMEDIA ROUND-UP, LEADING-EDGE PROJECTORS PUT
AN INSPIRING SPIN ON CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY ART

Jason Holland, product editor, Attractions Management

CAVERNS AS CANVAS

Multimedia art exhibits at France's Carrières de Lumières commissioned supplier, Optoma, to project images onto the walls, ceilings and ground of a huge underground stone quarry in Les Baux-de-Provence.

Carrières de Lumières – operated by Culturespaces – is an established cultural entertainment site, showing works by a range of artists, from Gustav Klimt to Leonardo da Vinci.

The cavern is more than 16 metres (52 feet) high in places and features irregular rock formations, so the installation required the projectors and lenses to be extremely flexible. Culturespaces selected a range of more than 60 Optoma projectors to create the show, which comprises thousands of digitised images of historical works of art moving to the rhythm of a soundtrack in an immersive multisensory experience. The projectors had to be



unobtrusive, bright, able to project high-quality video images in both landscape and portrait, and capable of running 10 hours a day. Among the projectors, the Optoma ProScene EH7500 and WT1 lens was chosen for its ability to produce a high-quality large image from a short throw distance.

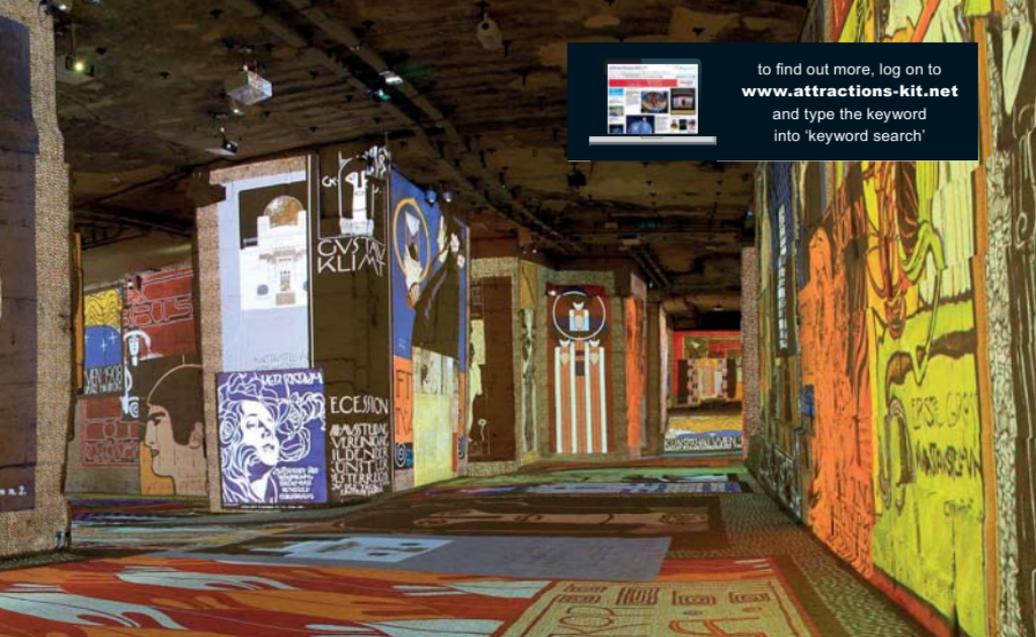
■ attractions-kit.net keyword: Optoma



Over 30 Optoma LED+ ZW212ST projectors are used in the quarry



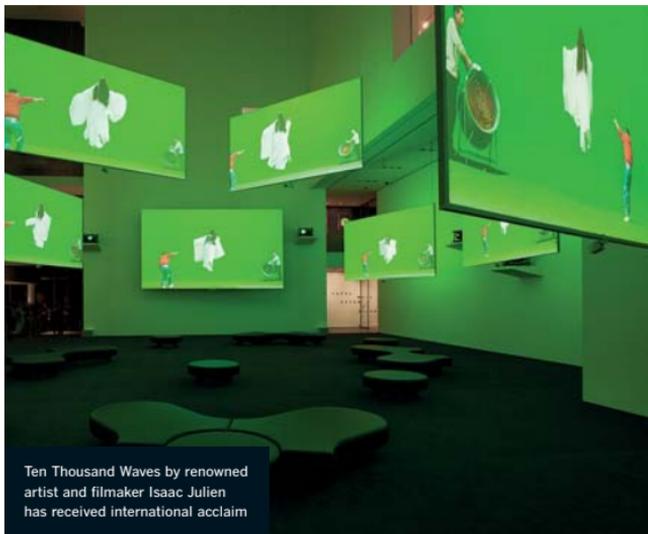
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The M Series is able to match colours from challenging angles

MAKING WAVES AT MOMA

New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) used Christie projectors for its presentation of a touring moving image installation by renowned artist and filmmaker Isaac Julien. Nine projectors were installed for the exhibition *Ten Thousand Waves*, an example of advanced visual display technology being used to help facilitate an artist's creative vision. The installation features a 50-minute presentation based on the Morecambe Bay tragedy of 2004 in which 23 Chinese cockle pickers drowned on a flooded sandbank. Julien's visuals incorporate archival footage and audio recordings, while interweaving images of contemporary Chinese culture and its ancient myths. Eight Christie WU14K-M WUXGA DLP projectors and one Christie HD14K-M 1080 HD DLP projector were



Ten Thousand Waves by renowned artist and filmmaker Isaac Julien has received international acclaim

selected for the project, displaying the work on nine double-sided screens ranging in size from 16 to 23 feet (5 to 7 metres) wide. The screens were hung at multiple levels and locations throughout the Donald B and Catherine C Marron

Atrium exhibition space. The museum also made use of Christie's InControl app to individually control and calibrate every aspect of the projectors wirelessly.

■ attractions-kit.net keyword: Christie

Wang Gongxin and his wife Lin Tianmiao were pioneers of the Chinese video art movement



The projectors' built-in edge blending feature ensures seamless presentation of multiple images

UNSEEN DETAILS REVEALED

Large installation projectors from Sony helped bring the immersive video works of Chinese artist Wang Gongxin to life at the National Gallery of Victoria in Australia. The exhibition Wang Gongxin: Video Artist featured three works on themes of contemporary and traditional Chinese culture. Wang is one of China's first and most influential video artists. The works

were projected by 14 Sony VPL-FH31Bs in vibrant colour. The artist said the high-quality technology in the projectors allowed details that would have been lost in the past to be revealed, meaning the works could be presented at their full potential. Sony's VPL-FH31B projector offers a native WUXGA (1920x1200) resolution with 4,300 lumens as well as full HD compatibility.

■ attractions-kit.net keyword: Sony



Sony's VPL-FH31B projector offers 4,300 lumens brightness

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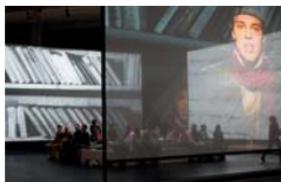
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The exhibit, at Moscow Manege Museum, was part of the UK-Russia Year of Culture 2014

RUSSIAN IMMERSION

Polyscreen installations incorporating the latest projection, light and sound equipment have helped display more than 400 Russian avant-garde paintings and sculptures in a new way. Film director Peter Greenaway and Saskia Boddeke created the Golden Age of Russian Avant-garde exhibition at the Moscow Manege Museum, which compiled artworks from a range of museums and private collections. Barco was chosen as the visualisation partner and, through its local distributor CTC Capital, provided 12 ultra-bright HDX-W20 projectors to fully immerse visitors in the exhibition. The projectors offered a light output of 20,000 lumens each, reproducing the works in high resolution on 12 different screens.

■ attractions-kit.net keyword: Barco





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Polin rides are installed at Aqua Magica

Adding a waterpark is a growing trend, says Polin

The \$6.5m (€5m, £4m) addition of a new waterpark at Spain's Isla Magica theme park is the latest example of a growing trend in Europe, says Polin.

The new Aqua Magica waterpark has been added as a major part of a strategy to ensure long-term guest interest at Isla Magica. Several of Polin's rides have been installed at the waterpark, including Racer Twin Hybrid, Rafting Slide + Flying Boats and Freefall.

Keyword: Polin



The KIPS zones at Turtle Beach Resort

Tennis court becomes a play installation at resort

Australian Waterslides & Leisure has completed a KIPS (Kids Interactive Play Structure) installation at Turtle Beach Resort on the Gold Coast, Australia. The project took 12 weeks to complete besides planning and design, and was created on a disused tennis court in the middle of the resort. KIPS comprises five zones that can be integrated or installed separately as standalone units dependent on budget and available space.

Keyword: Australian

WATERPARKS



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Lotte World recorded 18,000 guests per day

WhiteWater supplies successful Lotte World opening

South Korea's Lotte World has officially opened the first phase of a Polynesian themed waterpark, with WhiteWater serving as the exclusive supplier of waterpark products. It's the first of three phases of construction of the waterpark at the Seoul recreation complex, with attendance of 18,000 guests per day recorded in

the first four months of operations. Whitewater rides at the park include Abyss and Surf Wave Pool – the third largest of its type in the world. A 2,000sqm AquaPlay structure and an indoor Rattler ride also feature. The completion date of the park's third phase has not yet been confirmed.

Keyword: Whitewater



Accesso's Qband queuing solution

Enhanced wristband queuing solution unveiled

An updated version of a wristband that lets guests wait for popular waterslides without standing in line has been unveiled. The new version of Accesso Technology Group's Qband queuing solution – specifically designed for waterparks – features enhanced display technology, improved battery life, expanded RFID capability and a new design.

Keyword: Accesso

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The 4D cinema at Cadbury World

Creating chocolate heaven at Cadbury World cinema

Triotech has supplied the seats and motion systems for Cadbury World's new 4D Chocolate Adventure.

The recently inaugurated zone at the Birmingham, UK, visitor attraction features a 4D immersive cinema experience. Seating 60 people, the auditorium offers modern production, motion seats, surround sound and surprise special effects. The new zone opened to the public on 20 June.

Keyword: Triotech



Inbursa Aquarium in Mexico City

A sea of happy faces as Elation lights up aquarium

A new 11,500sq ft (1,068sqm) aquarium in Mexico has been lit by Elation Professional products.

The company's Mexican partner, Adimsa, supplied Elation LED lighting fixtures to Inbursa Aquarium, where it fulfilled product specification, on-site supervision, and lighting fixture programming duties. Located in Mexico City, the aquarium opened in June and features 230 species of marine life across the site's four levels.

Keyword: Elation



Animatronic DC character Cyborg demonstrates how to use the laser blasters

Sally details DC Comics project for Six Flags parks

Sally Corporation is developing a DC Comics universe dark ride for Six Flags theme parks. Justice League: Battle For Metropolis is set to open in 2015 at both Six Flags Over Texas and Six Flags St. Louis.

The attraction features superheroes such as Superman and Batman "battling alongside park guests" as they attempt to defeat notorious villains The Joker and Lex Luthor and save Metropolis from destruction.

Guests are recruited by the character Cyborg, and the animatronic figure

demonstrates how to defeat the villains with laser blasters.

Interface is providing interactivity for the project, while Oceanengineering, who built the ride system for the Transformers ride at Universal Studios, is providing the dynamic ride system for the attraction. The four-minute ride incorporates five large interactive 3D screens, an interactive 3D fog screen, multiple custom vehicles equipped with laser blasters, and a custom musical score.

Keyword: Sally



The all-new Zone dome is available for use across the attractions sector

Fitness tech adapted as immersive display

An open platform dome display that began life as a high-end running experience for treadmill users is set to provide the latest in immersive audience experiences for the attractions industry. Running Unlimited has adapted its Zone domes after discovering there was currently only a "limited choice of expensive, proprietary immersive dome solutions" for visitor attractions operators.

Keyword: Running Unlimited

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