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# Attractions management

ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT  
15TH ANNIVERSARY

VOL 17 Q3 2012

## THE POWER OF FILM

How 3D/4D content  
impacts audiences

## TEA/AECOM THEME INDEX

Which parks had the highest  
attendances in 2011?

## fashion forward

V&A DIRECTOR MARTIN ROTH ON DEVELOPING THE MUSEUM  
TO INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION OF DESIGNERS

## DAN SNOW

THE TV PRESENTER AND  
HISTORIAN OUTLINES HIS  
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## SAVE WATER

Advice from waterpark suppliers

## EURO ATTRACTIONS SHOW

Exhibitors talk trends, challenges  
and exciting developments

ON THE COVER Ballgowns: British Glamour Since 1950 on display at the V&A

PHOTOGRAPHER: TIM WALKER. MODEL: COCO ROCHA

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# EDITOR'S LETTER

## DEFYING THE DOWNTURN



### ON THE COVER:

Balloons exhibition at the V&A, p20

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**A**ECOM, which tracks growth in the global theme park market, reported heartening trends recently in its annual global parks report, which is carried out in partnership with the Themed Entertainment Association (see page 30).

The good news is the new numbers show many parts of the theme park industry have been resilient in the face of the global downturn, with growth across all world regions. The highest levels were experienced in Asia, where Ocean Park, Hong Kong had a 28.7 per cent increase in visitors, Hong Kong Disneyland, 14 per cent and Nagashima Spa Land in Japan, a massive 30.3 per cent. Amazingly, the two Disney parks in Tokyo came in as the fourth and fifth most visited parks worldwide, in spite of the massive disruption of the tsunami which meant that they were closed for more than a month.

The only other top 25 parks in the world to hit this level of growth were SeaWorld in San Diego, California and Islands of Adventure, Florida – both in the USA.

The very impressive growth in Asian theme park performance meant attendances at the top 20 parks in Asia broke the 100 million barrier for the first time and although North America is still at the top of the geographic ranking, Asia is closing the gap quickly and analysts believe it will overtake North America sometime soon.

**Global franchises such as Harry Potter and Hello Kitty are giving the operators the opportunity to scale their businesses quickly, with almost a guarantee of success and we can expect to see more of them**

Europe has also seen an uplift, with both Port Aventura in Spain and Gröna Lund in Sweden reporting excellent growth levels at 15 per cent and 12 per cent respectively. The top 10 theme park chains had a good year too, experiencing an increase in business of almost 5 per cent to 337 million visits.

A few years back all eyes were on the Middle East as being the place where the theme park market would experience its next big growth spurt. However, the majority of projects there are still on hold, while those that are stirring from their slumbers are still a long way off setting opening dates and many have been abandoned.

Instead, suppliers and designers are turning their attentions to markets in Europe and Asia, where people appear to have an appetite for fun and the money to indulge it. Our 2012-2013 development pipeline (see [attractionshandbook.com/digital](http://attractionshandbook.com/digital)) backs up this trend, listing numerous planned developments across Asia and Europe in all the various attractions sectors. A revival is expected eventually in the Middle East market, but the overall feeling is that it will be a while coming.

The market is consolidating further around a smaller number of operators with big portfolios, and global franchises such as Harry Potter and Hello Kitty are giving the operators the opportunity to scale their businesses quickly with almost a guarantee of success and we can expect to see more new brands of this type coming to market.

Liz Terry, editor, twitter: @elizterry

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### BUYERS' GUIDE:

For suppliers of products and services in the worldwide attractions industry, turn to page 84



## Disneyland Resort expansion completed

Cars Land is among four new attractions to open at Disney California Adventure – marking the completion of a five-year expansion of Disneyland Resort, US.

The addition of Cars Land – themed on the Disney/Pixar movie *Cars* – has expanded the Disney California Adventure area of the resort by 12 acres (4.9 hectares).

Guests will be taken to the town of Radiator Springs, with Cars Land including three immersive attractions showcasing settings and characters from the film.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=j4L9l>



The park is themed on the popular mobile game

## First Angry Birds Land launches in Finland

The first Angry Birds-themed attraction has opened to the public at the Särkänniemi theme park in Tampere, Finland.

Based on the popular mobile game, the Angry Birds Land includes a number of themed rides and a large play area.

The attraction was designed in collaboration between Särkänniemi, the games developer Rovio Entertainment and exhibition and attractions design company BDR Design Group. Finnish playset manufacturer Lappset also worked on the project.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=S6Q2a>

## Legoland Malaysia due to open in September

The finishing touches are being added to the Legoland Malaysia attraction ahead of its opening on 15 September.

Located in Nusajaya, Johor, the park will feature more than 40 interactive rides, shows and attractions and will be Merlin Entertainments' sixth Legoland park worldwide – its first in Asia.

A themed hotel within the grounds of the attraction is scheduled to open in 2014. It is hoped that the park will attract more than 1.5 million people a year.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=A2m7G>

## Work starts on Warsaw project

A groundbreaking event has taken place in order to mark the start of construction work at Adventure World Warsaw – a new theme park at Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Poland.

The development of the 240-hectare (593-acre) attraction is intended to provide Poland with a comparable experience to other European theme parks, such as Europa-Park in Rust, Germany.

Companies involved with the development include JoraVision, Vekoma Rides Manufacturing and AGS Architects – all based in The Netherlands, as well as Poland-based RCK and Imtech.

German water ride manufacturer Hafema and consulting firm Tebodin will also work on the construction of the €400m (US\$490m, £312m) Adventure World Warsaw, which is due for completion in 2014 and is being funded by



Adventure World Warsaw aims to become one of Europe's leading parks

a consortium of private and institutional investors registered in Luxembourg – La Palm.

Adventure World Warsaw executive managing director Steven Shaiken said: "The scale of Adventure World Warsaw is without precedence in Eastern Europe."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=S3N5N>

## Kanye West reveals ambition to open theme park

American rapper Kanye West has revealed his dream of opening a theme park.

Speaking to *GQ* magazine, West – also a music producer, film director and actor – said he was looking to further expand his ventures within the "experience economy".

He said: "I want to work on amusement parks, I want to change entertainment experiences or life. Something like if McQueen or Tarsem Singh was to meet the entertainment value of a Cirque du Soleil or a Walt Disney."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=y6c3n>

## IMG Group secures deal for Marvel park

Ilyas and Mustafa Galadari (IMG) Group has signed a new licence deal with Marvel Entertainment to develop a branded attraction in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Marvel Adventure will be an indoor family entertainment centre and is due to open in late 2013 as part of a new 1.2 million sq ft (111,484 sq m) themed destination in the City of Arabia development.

Work has now started on constructing the 350,000 sq ft (32,516 sq m) Marvel Adventure complex, which will include retail and dining facilities.

A number of interactive experiences based on Marvel characters also form part of the plans for the new attraction, in addition to expansive common areas and facilities.



Work has started on the Marvel-branded family entertainment facility

Marvel Entertainment International president Simon Phillips said: "We are thrilled to be working with the IMG Group to bring some of Marvel's most popular characters to Dubai." Details: <http://lei.sr?a=d9xoT>

# Theme Park News

## Kidzania opens largest location

"Edutainment" brand Kidzania has opened its largest kids' theme park yet, with the new Kidzania Cuicuilco in Mexico City, Mexico.

Visitors to the attraction enter through a mock airport into the 150,000sq ft (13,935sq m) city complex, which boasts 90 establishments such as a city hall, a hospital and a bank.

The scaled-down city environment provides children with the chance to choose from around 120 trades and professions as part of the Kidzania role-playing experience. It is expected that Kidzania Cuicuilco will attract more than one million visitors each year.

KidZania president and founder Xavier Lopez Ancona said: Ancona said: "We've brought the most authentic and fun real-life experiences to life to help children understand and manage their ever-changing world."



The new Cuicuilco attraction is Kidzania's largest yet

To read a mystery shopper review of KidZania's recently-opened theme park in Kuala Lumpur, see *Attractions Management* 2012 Issue 2, p56: <http://lei.sr?a=g1Pox>  
Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=3C4eo>



An environmental impact assessment is needed

## Queensland's Tropical Paradise Resort on hold

Plans for the AU\$3bn (US\$3.1bn, €2.6bn) Tropical Paradise Resort – a themed entertainment destination in Queensland, Australia – have been put on hold owing to difficult economic conditions.

Other contributory factors to the delay have been the tourism downturn in Cairns and the high Australian dollar.

The promised funding for the project has been withdrawn due to the economic climate, which in turn has prevented the Environmental Impact Assessment from being carried out.

However, a Tropical Resort Developments spokesperson said the team is still dedicated to bringing the project to fruition. He said: "The consortium remains committed to the project, but until funding becomes available we're not in a position to proceed with the Environmental Impact Assessment."

"Cairns needs a project of this nature to underpin its long term future. Everyone agrees this is the right project for Cairns, but the funds to proceed with further studies are just not available."

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=e8A2c>

## TEA/AECOM reports admissions growth

The international theme park industry continued to grow in 2011, with total admissions to the world's top 25 theme parks increasing by four per cent on the previous year.

The figures come from the annual *Global Attractions Attendance Report*, published in partnership by the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) and analyst AECOM. In total, the world's leading parks attracted 196 million visits last year – a new record level.

Asian parks performed particularly well during 2011, with the top 20 attractions reporting an increase of 75 per cent in total visits. Overall attendance passed the 100 million mark (103.3 million visitors) for the first time.



Hong Kong Disneyland posted double-digit growth

In Asia, Ocean Park in Hong Kong, Hong Kong Disneyland and Nagashima Spa Land in Japan all reported double-digit growth.

To read more on the report, see p30, or visit: <http://lei.sr?a=a1b2A>

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## Building support for conservation

TIM LEWTHWAITE

**A**ccredited zoos and aquariums have been long-time champions for the conservation of Multinational Species Conservation Fund (MSCF) species, such as Asian elephants, African elephants and great apes among others, while offering millions of visitors the unique chance to learn about them,

Because of this, AZA has backed efforts in the 112th Congress to reauthorize the MSCF programmes in the US. On 28 July 2011, the House Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs held a hearing about legislation including: H.R. 50, the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Reauthorization Act of 2011; H.R. 1760, the



"Accredited zoos and aquariums have been long-time champions for the conservation of MSCF species"

Great Ape Conservation Reauthorization Amendments Act of 2011; and H.R. 1761, the Marine Turtle Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2011.

Witnesses included representatives from AZA institutions including John Robinson (Wildlife Conservation Society) and Dr. Tara S. Stoinski (Zoo Atlanta and The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International). As a member of the Multinational Species Coalition, AZA joined a letter in November 2011 urging Natural Resources Committee chair Doc Hastings (Wash.) to hold a mark-up on the bills to move them forward in the legislative process. To add your name in support, please visit the AZA Legislative Education Center - <http://lei.sr?a=c9RzK>

Additionally, AZA has supported the creation of the Save Vanishing Species stamp, which provides an engaging way for the public to contribute to MSCF initiatives. The stamp may be purchased at US Postal Service locations across the US, as well as online - <http://lei.sr?a=asb8S>. For further information, visit: <http://lei.sr?a=ciBoF>

Tim Lewthwaite, AZA publications manager

## Sydney Aquarium to rebrand

Sydney Aquarium is to relaunch as a Sea Life-branded attraction in September following a six-month overhaul - its first major redevelopment since opening in 1988.

Merlin Entertainment has invested AU\$10m (US\$10.5m, €8.6m, £6.7m) as part of its efforts to bring the Darling Harbour-based aquarium under the Sea Life banner.

The transformation has included the creation of 14 newly-themed zones, such as the Shark Walk; a Tropical Bay of Rays habitat; an interactive Touch Pool; and a Shipwreck area.

Sea Life Sydney Aquarium will also be home to one of the world's largest Oceanariums - holding 1.5 million litres (396,258 gallons) - and a new walk-through ocean tunnel.

The attraction joins Merlin's portfolio of nearly 40 Sea Life-branded aquariums located



The Tropical Bay of Rays habitat is among the 14 newly-themed zones

in 14 countries around the world, including the UK, Europe and North America.

Merlin is also responsible for operating attractions such as Madame Tussauds, Legoland parks and the UK's Alton Towers amusement park among others.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=V9Z2U>

## Saint Louis Zoo debuts sea lion experience

A new US\$18m (€14.7m, £11.5m) experience taking visitors up close to swimming sea lions has launched at Saint Louis Zoo in Missouri, US.

Sea Lion Sound is a new habitat and arena for 11 Californian sea lions and was funded through the zoo's US\$120m (€98m, £76.5m) Living Promise Campaign.

Sea Lion Sound features two marine mammal exhibits - Enterprise Rent-A-Car Family Sea Lion, which boasts a 35ft (11m) underwater tunnel that allows visitors to view sea lions swimming around them.

Meanwhile, the Lichtenstein Sea Lion Arena is home to the First Bank Sea Lion Show and includes an 811-seat amphitheatre, the Ann Lux Family Stage and a see-through pool.



A 35ft underwater tunnel is at the centre of the new sea lion experience

Saint Louis Zoo president and CEO Dr Jeffrey P. Bonner said: "Visitors will be able to interact directly with these magnificent marine mammals and learn from that contact."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=T9A4V>

## Edinburgh Zoo plans new £750k penguin enclosure

Edinburgh Zoo, UK, has announced the launch of its new Penguins Rock Appeal to help fund the construction of a new £750,000 (US\$1.2m, €961,000) enclosure for its penguins.

The attraction's existing outdoor penguin pool - one of the largest in Europe - is around

60 years old and will now undergo a major programme of maintenance and modernisation.

Plans include a complete visual makeover with interactive elements, slides and diving boards, as well as enhanced interpretation. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=a8b2v>

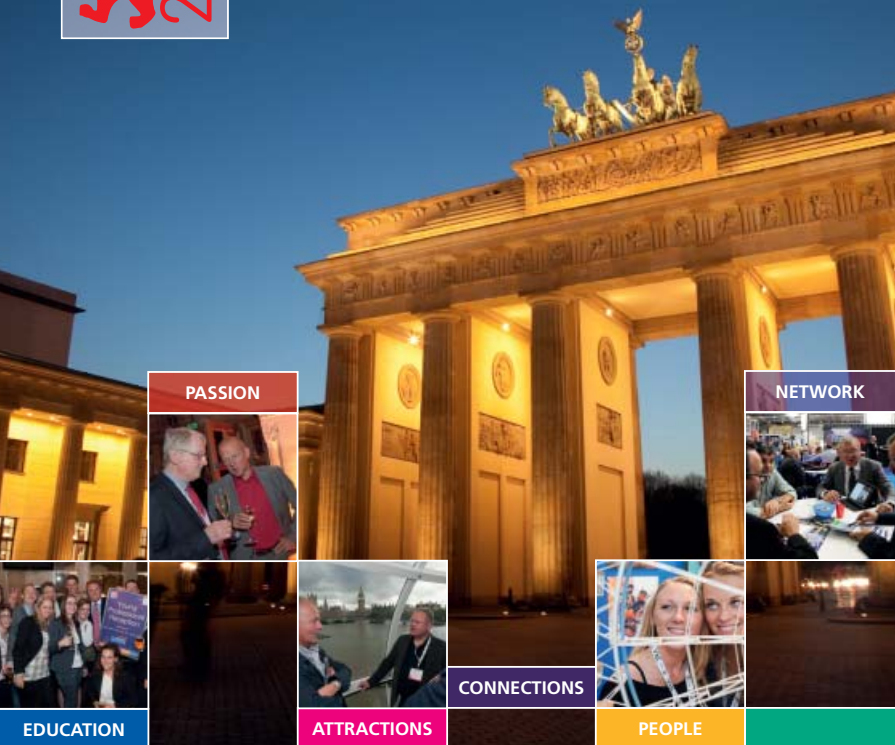




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## Ecsite conference a huge success

EMMA WADLAND

An impressive 950 delegates travelled to Toulouse, France, for Ecsite's 23rd Annual Conference

– Space and Time, Unlimited – between 31 May and 2 June at Cité de l'espace.

As the quintessential yearly meeting for those who initiate public engagement with science, the Ecsite Conference showcased the latest developments in science communication through dynamic sessions, debates, workshops and the Business Bistro trade show. Topics spanned creating cities of scientific culture in Europe and heightening learning experiences in science centres, collaborative online resources and helping the public understand complex health issues.

"More than 3,000 tweets during the event... shows how receptive the Ecsite community is to exchanging new ideas"

Features of this year's conference included a keynote speech by Carlo Ratti – an Italian architect and engineer who opened up a new world of possibilities for the use of data when discussing his work at the Senseable City Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston, US.

Have you ever thought how far and wide the contents of your waste basket travel after being collected? According to Ratti's data, our garbage travels farther than we would have ever thought. Makes a person think about making more sustainable choices.

The event's Twitter hashtag (#Ecsite2012) was abuzz, with more than 3,000 tweets during the event. It shows how receptive the Ecsite community is to exchanging new ideas – and an indicator that Toulouse 2012 accomplished what it set out to achieve.

Keep an eye out for the Ecsite Annual Conference 2013 Call for Proposals – <http://lei.sr7a=B2U2D>. The next edition, themed Dreams: The Spirit of Innovation, will be hosted by Universeum in Gothenburg, Sweden, between 6 and 8 June 2013.

Emma Wadland, communications officer

## HMNS opens palaeontology hall

A US\$85m (£69.4m, £54.1m) Hall of Palaeontology – housing more than 30 dinosaurs – has now opened at Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS) in Texas, US.

The 30,000sq ft (2,787sq m) facility forms part of a wider expansion – the Dan L. Duncan Family Wing – designed by Gensler and features 60 major mounts, which includes prehistoric mammals in "action" poses.

The exhibition area itself was designed entirely by the museum's own exhibits department, led by Judd Swanson.

Exhibits will also include a Tyrannosaurus Rex with the "best preserved and most complete hands and feet of any Tyrannosaurus Rex ever found", as well as touchable specimens.

The expansion of HMNS will also create more than 115,000sq ft (10,684sq m) of



HMNS' new Hall of Palaeontology forms part of a wider redevelopment

additional exhibition and education space – doubling the number of classrooms currently available for educational programmes.

Following the expansion, HMNS will also have double the amount of exhibition space for temporary and permanent installations.

Details: <http://lei.sr7a=E2i8C>

## UK's Thinktank opens Science Garden

A new outdoor interactive exploration space – the Thinktank Science Garden – has been launched at Birmingham's Thinktank science attraction in the UK.

Features include a human-sized hamster wheel; an 8m (26ft)-tall Terminus machine; and an 'elasticated squirter' – a water piston that uses elastic potential energy.

The 2,750sq m (29,601sq ft) Thinktank Science Garden contains 42 zones and entry will be included in the cost of a ticket to the attraction.

Janine Eason, director of learning and operations, said: "The Thinktank Science Garden offers a fresh and exciting way of experiencing firsthand how science and engineering have shaped Birmingham and the world."



Thinktank Science Gardens has activities for all members of the family

"After three years in development, we are eager to see the fun zones and exhibits in action and look forward to welcoming visitors of all ages on site."

Details: <http://lei.sr7a=P6x8K>

## US science centre to open Indiana Jones experience

Indiana Jones and the Adventure of Archaeology – a new themed experience – is to open at the Discovery Science Center (DSC) in Santa Ana, California, US on 12 October.

The National Geographic Society is presenting the new multimedia and interactive

adventure at the attraction, which immerses visitors in the world of Indiana Jones.

X3 Productions has produced the 10,000sq ft (929sq m) experience by using Indiana Jones film materials from the Lucasfilm Archives. Read more: <http://lei.sr7a=8n1F2>

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## Mosaic to develop new USS Yorktown masterplan

Mosaic Design Group is to develop a new museum experience masterplan for *USS Yorktown* – the floating attraction located at Patriots Point, South Carolina, US.

The Patriots Point Development Authority said the US\$2m (€1.6m, £1.3m) scheme will revitalise the visitor experience over the next three to four years.

*USS Yorktown* was commissioned in 1943 and will celebrate its 70th birthday next year, with the new masterplan to encompass a wide range of elements.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=C3t8b>



The historic cathedral was Paris' most visited site

## Notre Dame 'most popular' Paris tourist attraction

Paris' Notre Dame Cathedral was the French city's most popular attraction during 2011 with 13.6 million visitors, according to the Paris Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Sacré-Coeur Basilica and the Louvre also featured among the most visited, welcoming 10.5 million people and 8.9 million respectively over the course of last year.

The landmark Eiffel Tower attracted 7.1 million visitors and the Pompidou Centre received 3.6 million visitors – a 15.4 per cent increase on 2010's figures.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=d5A5P>

## New strategy for managing Australia's heritage assets

The Australian Government has announced its intention to draw up a new framework for the present and future management and promotion of cultural heritage assets.

A public consultation has taken place in order to receive ideas and comments from members of the public towards the Australian Heritage Strategy.

The strategy is being prepared in consultation with all state and territory governments, as well as key stakeholder groups from the public and private sectors.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=W6e7l>

## Work starts at UK's Stonehenge

English Heritage has revealed that Vinci Construction UK has moved on site to start work on a £27m (US\$42.4m, €34.6m) overhaul of visitor facilities at Stonehenge, UK.

A visitor centre designed by Denton Corker Marshall is to be built at Airman's Corner – 1.5 miles (2.4km) west of the World Heritage Site.

Haley Sharpe Design will work on the interpretation of the new exhibition spaces, which will explore the history of the site and its relationship with its surroundings.

The visitor centre will house important items excavated near Stonehenge on loan from local museums, along with education rooms and amenities with full disabled access.

English Heritage chief executive Dr Simon Thurley said: "A new dawn at Stonehenge is truly upon us. Though the stones themselves



The new visitor complex has been designed by Denton Corker Marshall

have never failed to awe visitors, their setting has been a national embarrassment.

"The restoration of the landscape, together with a major new exhibition on site, will finally give our greatest and most famous monument the treatment it deserves."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=X8QoN>

## New additions to World Heritage List

A number of international cultural attractions feature among 26 new additions to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage List.

It follows the World Heritage Committee's latest session in Russia and has seen the addition of sites including Margravia Opera House in Bayreuth, Germany.

A UNESCO spokesperson said: "It is the only entirely preserved example of its type where an audience of 500 can experience Baroque court opera culture."

Other cultural sites inscribed by UNESCO include the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro and the Moroccan city of Rabat, as well as Belgium's Major Mining Sites of Wallonia.



The Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro – one of 26 new World Heritage Sites

According to minister for Wallonia heritage Carlo Di Antonio, the inscription of the mining sites is "a real opportunity for the development of heritage and tourism" in the region.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=ox7A2>

## Shannon Heritage to operate Malahide Castle

Shannon Heritage has been appointed to operate Malahide Castle and Gardens in County Dublin, Ireland, in the company's first move outside the Shannon region.

It follows a deal between the group and Malahide Castle and Gardens – formed by Fingal

County Council to oversee a €10.5m (US\$12.9m, £8.2m) investment in the attraction.

Shannon Heritage will be responsible for running the redeveloped castle, including a new museum and interpretation area.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=v7E6H>

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# Waterpark News

## Water safety initiatives abound

ALEATHA EZRA

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the only thing that causes more deaths in children than drowning is road traffic accidents. This means drowning is a more serious threat to a child's life than choking, smothering, falls or even war. In addition, WHO estimates that children under five have the highest drowning mortality rates worldwide.

The good news for water leisure operators is that drowning is preventable. Even better news is that there are some fantastic programs out there that are leading the way to spread the important message about water safety and learning to swim.



"The water leisure community has an opportunity to be a vocal advocate for drowning prevention"

- The World's Largest Swimming Lesson, which is supported by more than 12 lifesaving groups, was held 14 June. Waterparks, aquatic centres, swim schools and pools in countries such as the UK, the US, Brazil, Japan and Mexico, among others, held events with nearly 25,000 taking part.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=d3MoK>

- Water Safety Awareness Week (16-24 June) is a week-long water safety initiative created and supported by the Royal Life Saving Society UK. Now in its second year, this event saw nearly 17,000 participate in events like the Top Trunks challenge and other water safety fairs and activities. In addition, Facebook followers increased by more than 21 per cent and the event website received in excess of 5,000 visits.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=m9D3l>

The water leisure community has an opportunity to be a vocal advocate for drowning prevention and safer water practices. By supporting such initiatives, they can positively impact these statistics.

Aleatha Ezra,  
director of park member development

## Splash Country to open coaster

Dollywood's Splash Country, the waterpark adjacent to the Dollywood theme park in Tennessee, US, has unveiled plans to open the state's first water coaster in May 2013.

RiverRush will be a hydro-magnetic ride experience combining the climbs, drops, twists and turns of a land-based coaster with water and will stand four storeys tall.

The coaster will feature four-person toboggan-style boats, which will be propelled by high-speed conveyor belt to a height of 237ft (72m) followed by a 25ft (8m), 45-degree drop.

Visitors will continue along the 1,175ft (358m) track through three additional drops driven by linear induction motors, before experiencing multiple hairpin turns and dark tunnels.

Pro-Slide Technology, the Canada-based engineering firm and manufacturer, is involved



RiverRush will combine aspects of land-based rollercoasters with water

with the project, while Dollywood is responsible for the design and development.

Dolly Parton said: "At Dollywood, we made history with Wild Eagle, the country's first wing coaster, so I thought, why not do it again at Dollywood's Splash Country?"

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=4p4Y>

## TAM plans new waterpark in Malaysia

Themed Attractions Malaysia (TAM) – the leisure arm of the state-owned Kazanah Nasional's – is investing RM267m (US\$84.7m, €69.2m, £54m) in the construction of two theme parks in Desaru.

One of the new attractions will be a marine park with an aquarium called Ocean Quest, while the other is a traditional water park called Ocean Splash.

Both parks are scheduled to open in 2014. The attractions

are one of a number of planned developments for TAM. It is also spearheading the expansion of the KidZania portfolio and is to open the Puteri Harbour Entertainment complex in Nusajaya.

The indoor facility is one of the five flagship zones at Puteri and will comprise The Little Big



The two new waterparks are scheduled to open in 2014

Club, designed around HIT Entertainment's popular characters; Hello Kitty Town, the first Hello Kitty attraction in south Asia; and a themed restaurant of local cartoonist LAT.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=C2a2z>

- To read an interview with TAM's COO Steve Peet, see AM Q1 p20: <http://lei.sr?a=w14q>

## WhiteWater unveils latest office in Barcelona

Canada-based waterpark design and manufacturing group WhiteWater West Industries has announced the opening of its latest international office in Barcelona, Spain.

It is the firm's 18th office worldwide, with locations already established in countries such

as the UK, Australia, the United Arab Emirates and Russia, along with five in the US.

The office will be a new hub for WhiteWater and Prime Play operations in Europe, Russia, the Middle East, India and Africa.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=F7S2V>



## The Tanks open at Tate Modern

London, UK's Tate Modern has announced the launch of one of the world's first permanent exhibition spaces for live art, installation and performance works in the former power station's oil tanks.

A commission from Korean artist Sung Hwan Kim is the first to be installed in The Tanks – opened as part of the London 2012 Festival.

The Tanks had been vacant since the Bankside Power Station was decommissioned in 1981 but is hosting Art in Action – a 15-week festival of live art, installation and film works.

The creation of new galleries is also the first stage of the £215m (US\$337m, €275m) Tate Modern Project, with the UK government contributing £50m (US\$78.4m, €64m) and the Greater London Authority investing £7m (US\$11m, €9m). Other donations have been



The Tanks provide one of the world's first exhibition spaces for live art

secured in support of the scheme, which will see exhibition space increase by 60 per cent.

Herzog and de Meuron are behind the design of the redevelopment of Tate Modern, which also includes a new building adjoining the existing site to the south.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=j9z8G>

## Louvre to unveil new Islamic Art Galleries

More than 2,500 objects contained within the Louvre's collection of Islamic art will go on display across nearly 3,000sq m (32,292sq ft) of new gallery space at the Paris attraction on 22 September.

The opening of new Islamic Art Galleries – designed by architects Mario Bellini and Rudy Ricciotti – is the first major addition since IM Pei's glass pyramid in 1989.

Spanning two levels within a glass pavilion, the galleries are covered by a gold iridescent steel roof and open up

the courtyard of the Cour Visconti for the first time. Renaud Piarard's interior design concept will allow visitors to place the works on display – historically, geographically and within the original context of the pieces.



The gold iridescent steel roof covers the Louvre's Islamic Art Galleries

The objects on show come from 15,000 works within the Louvre's collection, as well as the 3,400 items on permanent loan from the Collection of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=D6p4v>

## Kunsthalle Zürich opens following major renovation

Kunsthalle Zürich, one of Switzerland's leading art attractions, has opened following a transformation of its home at the Löwenbräukunst.

A team formed of Swiss architectural practices Gigon / Guyer and Atelier wvw was chosen to lead the redesign of the Löwenbräu

complex. Work started in late 2010, with Kunsthalle Zürich having been housed at the Löwenbräukunst on a temporary basis for 14 years. The redevelopment has now provided the institution with a new permanent home. Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=dov6E>

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# Museum News

## New-look Ypres museum opens

In Flanders Field Museum, the heritage attraction examining the events of World War One (WWI), has reopened its doors in Ypres, Belgium, following an extensive renovation and expansion.

The 5,000sq m (53,819sq ft) museum is housed in the town's iconic Cloth Hall and its redesign has been led by Brussels-based design practice noAarchitecten.

A new WWI research centre has been created at In Flanders Fields Museum, which itself is 50 per cent larger following the expansion.

In order to offer a more "intense" visitor experience, multimedia exhibits have been used to explore general and military viewpoints of the conflict.

Among those involved were Tijdsbeeld and PieceMontée; Bruns; Klaus Verscheure and



noAarchitecten led the redesign of In Flanders Field Museum in Ypres

Filip Martin; and UK-based band tinderssticks, which produced the museum soundtrack.

Birger Stichelbaut's aerial photography research led to the creation of the In Flanders Earth application, while Kiss the Frog worked on the computer elements.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=Uoh8q>

## Green light for £41m V&A development

The Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum in London, UK has received approval from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea for its £41m (US\$64.4m, €52.5m) Exhibition Road project.

Amanda Levete Architects (ALA) were appointed in March 2011 to work on the scheme, which will lead to the creation of a new purpose-built underground gallery.

Work will start this autumn, with the project to include a new entrance allowing access to the gallery via a staircase offering views of the museum's façade.

Work will also include opening up a previously inaccessible back-of-house space to create a new open courtyard for installation, events and a café. See p26 for full details.



Amanda Levete Architects were appointed to design the project in 2011

The V&A has now raised £25m (US\$39.2m, €32m) towards the total cost of the Exhibition Road project, which is due for completion in late 2015 and will open to the public in 2016.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=qoloh>

## Google maps indoor spaces at Smithsonian museums

A collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and Google has now allowed visitors to virtually explore spaces at its 17 US museums and the National Zoological Park.

Visitors who use Google Maps for Android are now able to access more than 2.7 million

sq ft (250,838sq m) of interiors, which aims to allow for easier exploration of the sites.

Attractions to have been mapped so far are the National Museum of American History and the National Museum of Natural History.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=05u7P>

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# Martin Roth

Maintaining the excellence of the V&A while seeing through its FuturePlan project and bringing the museum into a digital world are just a few of the new director's objectives

KATHLEEN WHYMAN • MANAGING EDITOR • ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT



**T**his is Tomorrow' states a poster on the office wall of Professor Martin Roth – director of the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A).

Used to promote a 1956 exhibition of the same name, its message is a symbol to Roth, both of his life – “I was born in 1955, so 1956 was my tomorrow” – and of what the V&A represents: a collection of art and design that inspires the creators of our future.

Having taken on the role of director in September last year from Sir Mark Jones, Roth's tomorrows are challenging ones. Funding needs to be raised for the V&A's ambitious ongoing FuturePlan programme, which is transforming the London museum through contemporary new settings and restoring much of the building's original Victorian architecture. While implementing and overseeing this project, Roth's aim is to maintain the museum's excellent performance – last year it welcomed 3.3 million visitors across its sites, the highest number in its 155-year history.

To achieve this, Roth plans to keep the majority of things as they are. “I don't want to be one of those directors who walks in and changes everything, especially in an institution where it's working,” he says.

Something he does want to change though is a return to the ideology behind Prince Albert's The Great Exhibition in 1851 – of a museum that's made for everyone. “It was conceived as a beautiful museum that was open to different com-

**Cate Blanchett as Elizabeth I. The Hollywood Costume exhibition explores the central role costume design plays in cinema storytelling**





## ROTH'S CAREER HISTORY

**1989-91: Curator**

German Historical Museum, Berlin

**1991-2000: Director**

German Hygiene Museum, Dresden

**2001-2011: Director General**

Dresden State Art Collections

munities and was a social institution," he says. "We need to be more of a platform of debate, leading from the front. Of course we'll show the innovations of the past, but if there's a new innovation, I want it in the V&A. I want to show the innovations of tomorrow. Even if it's just an idea, we need to discuss it." Roth is in constant communication with companies, individuals and research groups who are on the forefront

of innovation and invention. "Many famous designers, including Terence Conran and John Sorrell, have a connection with the V&A. I want to safe guard that tradition and see young designers crediting the V&A for their inspiration in 20 years' time."

## FUTUREPLAN

The ongoing FuturePlan strategy demands much of Roth's time. Starting in 2001, FuturePlan projects have been revitalising visitor facilities at the museum and redisplaying the collections, bringing modern design and innovation to the heart of the V&A. "Unlike other museums, our architecture is our business card," explains Roth. "We can't exhibit style and architecture as our core offering without being a showcase for it ourselves. We have to be more than perfect in what we do."

**More than 300 objects in British Design 1948 – 2012 highlight significant moments in the history and creativity of British design**

The next major opening will be the Europe 1600-1800 Galleries. The existing exhibits have been dismantled and the original Victorian splendour revealed and reinstated. "We opened the windows again and let the daylight in," says Roth. "The ongoing reinvention of the V&A is really important. It means we'll always have a fresh attraction for visitors and a new experience, as there'll be a new part of the gallery that's been redeveloped. We have great topics planned for the next eight years. It's all very exciting."

► The largest part of FuturePlan Phase 2 is the Exhibition Road building project, which has been designed by AL\_A (Amanda Levete Architects – see p26). The project will create a large, underground exhibition gallery area, a public courtyard with a café and spaces for events and installations, and an improved entrance into the museum from the newly landscaped Exhibition Road. This will all be set within the historical facades on the west side of the V&A's Grade 1 listed buildings, which have never before been on public view.

"It's a new V&A," says Roth. "I hate to say that, because it's so easy to label something as new and improved, but in this case it's true. The visitor will have a completely different experience walking into the museum, with its beautiful courtyard, staircase and exhibition space."

## BRITISH IMPORT

Roth has been interested in museums since he joined the industry in 1989 in his home country of Germany. His role at the V&A is his first job in the UK – he was director general of the Dresden State Art Collections for the last decade, where he reconstructed four museums, reinstalled many collections and created an international role for the museum, leading to numerous overseas exhibitions.

Roth loved his time at Dresden but had reached the stage where he felt he needed a fresh challenge. The call from the V&A was perfectly timed and also extremely unexpected. "I thought they must be ringing me about something else," recalls Roth. "My first reaction was 'But I'm German', and they said 'It doesn't matter, we want to talk to you'." Roth was "thrilled" to be offered the post and didn't hesitate in accepting, moving his family to Islington and starting a new life here. His wife grew up in London and has family here so they have settled in quickly. "The way I was received over here is one of my highlights," he says. People are so warm and welcoming. And to be the first non-British director is extremely brave. Not for me," he stresses, "but for the board. It's a great statement for Europe, for the world community in London and for the UK. I don't take that for granted – I feel as though I've been given a medal."

**"TO APPOINT A NON-BRITISH DIRECTOR IS EXTREMELY BRAVE OF THE BOARD AND IS A GREAT STATEMENT FOR EUROPE, FOR THE WORLD COMMUNITY IN LONDON AND FOR THE UK. I DON'T TAKE THAT FOR GRANTED. I FEEL AS THOUGH I'VE BEEN GIVEN A MEDAL"**

## ABOUT MARTIN ROTH



**What are your hobbies?** Actually, my hobby is my work

**What's your favourite food?** Cake. Preferably home made

**What's your favourite film?** *Billy the Kid* with Pat Garrett and the score done by Bob Dylan

**What drives you?** Passion for my profession

**How would you describe yourself?**

Energetic, with a healthy curiosity

**How would others describe you?**

I never eat and I drive too fast

**What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?** Someone

once told me: "The higher you get, the deeper you fall." I've never forgotten it

Roth credits the support and professionalism of the team to helping him feel completely at home in his new role. "When I walked into the V&A on my first day, I felt as though I'd been here for years," he says. "I've never had that before in a new position. It gave me a lot of confidence, as I knew I was where I should be."

## PRIVILEGED POSITION

Martin views his position at the V&A as a privilege rather than a job, despite a 4.30am start and a working day that rarely ends before midnight. "I get up very early

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID HUGHES



The Ballgowns exhibition showcases 60 years of a strong British design tradition

PHOTOGRAPHER: TIM WALKER; MODEL: COCO ROCHA



so I can have some time at the beginning of the day for myself – running or writing – and then I take my 15-year-old daughter to school," he says. "I work through the day till about 8pm without a break. Six out of seven evenings there's an event at the museum or a dinner or reception, so I don't get home until 11 or 12pm. It sounds horrible, but I love it. It's so interesting and I meet great people. I've been a museum director since I was 36 and I enjoy it all. Of course there are bad moments," he continues. "When I worked in Dresden in the early 1990s, after unification, there was still a problem with people working for the Secret Service. I had to fire people. It was brutal and I hated it. Unfortunately, with sunshine there is always some shadow. But in general, it's a great job."

"Our role is to deliver complex information – history, architecture and design – in a way that makes it easier to understand," he goes on to explain. "The public has



## ABOUT THE V&A

The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) houses a permanent collection of more than 4.5 million objects. Named after Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, it was founded in 1852, and has since grown to cover 51,000sq m and 145 galleries. Its collection spans more than 2,000 years of human creativity in virtually every medium, from the cultures of Europe, North America, Asia and North Africa. The museum is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the UK government's DCMS.

The holdings of ceramics, glass, textiles, costumes, silver, ironwork, jewellery, furniture, medieval objects, sculpture, prints and print making, drawings and photographs are among the largest, important and most comprehensive in the world.

an interest, but maybe not the means to receive that information. Museums are the translators. That's why they're important."

Roth's keen to work with other museums although he acknowledges that when they do, there's an element of competition between the national museums. "There's enough intellectual space and real space and even money for all of us," he says. "I think we can do more together." An example of such a collaboration is the Passion for Porcelain exhibition that has just opened at The National Museum in Beijing, China, which Roth worked on with the British Museum's Neil MacGregor.

Although at pains not to start a competition within British museums, Roth's pride in the V&A and its staff is impossible to conceal. "The way the V&A changed its management under Mark Jones' directorship is rare. I'm not telling other museums to copy it because all the institutions are different, but the V&A model is fantastic."

**The V&A is celebrating the opening of the newly renovated Fashion Galleries with an exhibition of ballgowns and red carpet evening dresses**

## BALANCING ACT

One of the elements that Jones changed, which Roth reveres, is the museum's programme, much of which now focuses on creativity. "Our society is changing. People want to learn about the history of making things and how they can apply that," he explains. "It's a very welcome change from being passive to being active. Many of our exhibitions have exactly that message."

Last year's Power of Making was one of the V&A's most popular exhibitions and the current display of British Design is following suit. "That's part of our success," Roth says. "We have a balanced programme. The V&A's a great institution for those who ▶



► want to see The Best Of, but we're also there for people who have a specific interest in a particular style or time or object."

Roth and the rest of the team will be lending their experience and support, both intellectually and with collections, to the V&A at Dundee project – a place for Scotland to celebrate its design heritage and promote its emerging creative talent.

Currently in the planning and fund raising phase, the museum has an estimated

opening date of 2015. While happy to help, Roth's main focus is on the V&A itself, as this too needs a large injection of cash to fulfil FuturePlan Phase 2. Exhibition Road alone will cost £41m (€52.4, \$64.3m), although pledges totalling £25m (€32m, \$39.2m) have helped enormously. The museum has also received a match-funding pledge of £5m (€6.4m, \$7.8m) from Heritage Lottery Fund to support its ambitions to build a £100m (€128m, \$157m) endowment over the next 15 to 20 years.

## VIRTUAL REALITY

As if this isn't enough to be juggling, Roth's also keen to add a department of project design. "London is a city of architecture with so many well-known architects, but there isn't a museum dedicated to it. The Royal Institute of British Architects is more of an archive," he says. "The V&A already has quite a remarkable collection, but we'll collect more and work with architects."

This in itself creates challenges for the future, as much of the work that architects do is now created digitally. "What will a museum's archive be in 10-years' time?"

**British Design 1948 – 2012 shows the best of British post-war art and design from the 1948 'austerity' games to the summer of 2012**

asks Roth. "We're working on a concept to solve this problem now. We also need to think about our own digital programme," he continues. "We already have a digital V&A to some extent with the website and V&A Channel, but it'll be even more important in the future." Roth isn't worried that the invention of virtual museums will have a negative impact on the industry. "The first 360-degree cinema in Paris was shown in the 1900s and the newspaper headlines were 'This is the end of the museum'," he smiles. "When we introduced media in the 1980s, people said it was the death knell for museums. Then computers were introduced and they again said it signalled the end. But museums are booming. Instead of being dead, they're more alive than ever."

Roth loves the fact the V&A is very much alive both around the globe and to the people who live in South Kensington and see it as their local museum. "A woman introduced herself to me when I first started and said, 'I'm 83. I wanted to say hello to my new neighbour,'" Roth recounts. "She's been coming to the V&A every Sunday since her parents first brought her when she was three-years-old. Our audience is both that woman and the tourists who plan their trip around a visit here."

Roth loves his own visits as much as the visitors. "I've got more out of the last 10 months than some people get in a position they've held for 20 years," he says. With an outlook like this, the V&A appears to be in safe hands for all its tomorrows. ●



**Design highlights include a Torsion Box Shell Chair created by Brian Long**


## FUTUREPLAN PHASE 2

FuturePlan Phase 2 is the V&A's second 10-year period of restoration and redesign, which aims to reinforce its position as the world's greatest museum of art and design. The crucial project in achieving the long-term aims of Phase 2 is the Exhibition Road Building Project.

This will provide a large, underground exhibition gallery for its world-class exhibitions with an open public courtyard and café and an improved entrance into the museum at street level.

Other highlights of Phase 2 include: the creation of a furniture gallery, providing a permanent home for the V&A's extensive furniture collection for the first time; the restoration of the Cast Courts; and the complete redisplay and reinterpretation of seven galleries that tell the story of European art and design from 1600 to 1800. Offsite projects being developed include the Clothworkers' Centre for Textile and Fashion Study and Conservation at Blythe House.



The background image shows the interior of the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum. It features a large, modern space with a high ceiling. On the left, two large model rockets are displayed vertically. In the center, a green, translucent, vertical structure resembling a DNA helix or a molecular model is illuminated. To the right, there is a balcony with a glass railing and a large digital screen displaying blue information. The floor is polished and reflects the lights. Several people are visible, including a man and a woman in the foreground looking at a display, and other visitors in the background. The lighting is a mix of warm and cool tones, creating a high-tech atmosphere.

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Amanda Levete

PHOTOGRAPH BY GUY A. ROBERTS

# LIGHT TOUCH

BRINGING DAYLIGHT INTO THE GALLERIES AND MAKING THE VISITOR THE HERO WERE AL\_A'S DESIGN AIMS FOR THE V&A EXHIBITION ROAD PROJECT, AS STIRLING PRIZE-WINNING ARCHITECT AMANDA LEVETE EXPLAINS

KATHLEEN WHYMAN • MANAGING EDITOR • ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT

## WHAT IS YOUR DESIGN?

Our design process started by negotiating a relationship between the Victoria & Albert Museum and Exhibition Road that doesn't currently exist. We're creating a physical permeability between the two by opening up the Aston Webb Screen [see right]. This was put up in 1909 to mask the original boiler house yard, but after the changes it will no longer serve to hide, but

to reveal. This visual openness will encourage people to enter, while still retaining the important notion of a threshold between the street and the museum.

We're placing a new courtyard at its centre – an outdoor room bounded on four sides by architecturally significant façades. It'll be a place to go for a coffee or a drink after work, a space for installations and events, but above all a space for the public.

The descent to the gallery below is celebrated as an important part of the visitor's journey and is woven into the historic fabric of the museum. We've designed it with a focus on the theatre of the journey and the interplay between old and new. Visitors will be drawn down by natural light, which lessens until they reach the bottom, where a dramatic pool of daylight appears – seemingly magically – so far underground.

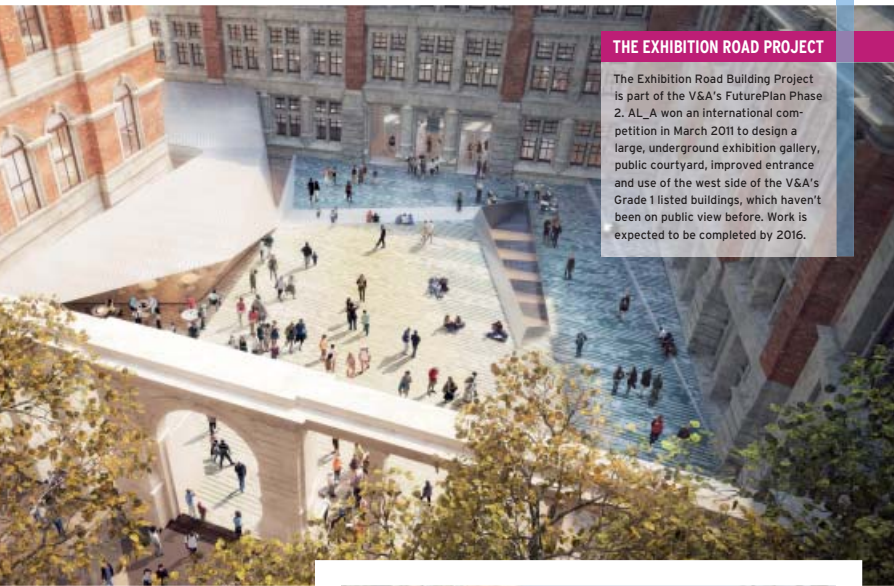


A dramatic pool of daylight appears almost magically through the ceiling

PHOTOGRAPH BY GUY A. ROBERTS

## ABOUT AL\_A

AL\_A is the international design and architecture studio of Stirling Prize-winning architect Amanda Levete, a former partner of Future Systems, and directors Ho-Yin Ng, Maximiliano Arrocet, Bruce Davison and Alice Dietsch. Founded in 2009, AL\_A's portfolio includes: a 145,000sq m luxury retail outlet and six-star hotel in Bangkok; a cultural centre in Lisbon commissioned by EDP; a residential tower on the City fringe for developer LondoNewcastle; and a project with Anish Kapoor for the Naples Subway.



## THE EXHIBITION ROAD PROJECT

The Exhibition Road Building Project is part of the V&A's FuturePlan Phase 2. AL\_A won an international competition in March 2011 to design a large, underground exhibition gallery, public courtyard, improved entrance and use of the west side of the V&A's Grade I listed buildings, which haven't been on public view before. Work is expected to be completed by 2016.

Above: The new courtyard's design turns the space into an outdoor room; (right) the Aston Webb screen will now reveal the view rather than conceal it

The gallery itself will be a new home for a full programme of world-class exhibitions. The expression of the folded plate ceiling is derived entirely from its function – it spans the whole 30m (98ft)-width without columns and soars over the visitor, despite being underground. The structural solution of the ceiling generates the pattern of the courtyard above, making visitors in both the gallery and the courtyard conscious of the energy and rhythm above and below.

### WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION?

The museum itself. As the home of the very best in contemporary design, the V&A has long been a rich inspiration for all of our studio's work. We used it as a source book and reference point for the design – not only its collections and programme, but also the architecture and design of its beautiful buildings.

We were inspired by the V&A's role in promoting the art and craft of manufacture. Our use of ceramics across the project,



from the courtyard to the café roof, is the direct result of exploring the museum's collections. Our design for the gallery follows in the neo-Gothic and neo-Classical tradition of ornate ceilings.

### WHAT DID AL\_A ADD TO THE BRIEF?

Our design is a response to a visionary brief from the V&A. We wanted the focus from the street to be on the creation of a new public space rather than a building. We envisioned the visitor as the hero. We imagined the experience of their journey and what would delight and inspire them.

Bringing daylight into the new gallery wasn't part of the brief, but we thought

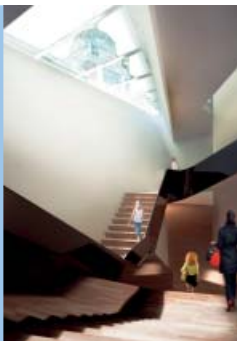
it would be a missed opportunity if the potential remained untapped. We've incorporated an oculus into the courtyard to provide daylight into the gallery below and offer visual interest in the courtyard above.

This provides moments of drama in exhibitions and enables exhibition changeover to be carried out with daylight. It also helps create that relationship between the courtyard and the gallery.

The oculus is reconceived as a vitrine, offering partial views of the folded plate and exhibition gallery below.

### WHY WAS YOUR DESIGN CHOSEN?

Because it was the best!



(Top) the descent to the gallery below is part of the visitor's journey; (above) A vitrine offers natural light into the gallery and an interesting view from above



The folded plate ceiling spans the whole 30m-width without columns and soars over the visitor, despite being underground

#### WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES IN DESIGNING FOR SUCH A FAMOUS BUILDING?

The V&A buildings are historically significant, being Grade I and II\* listed, but more than that, they're well loved and respected the world over. So the challenge for us, as architects, is to create a design that's a natural part of the museum's.

We wanted it to be sensitive and respectful, looking to the past for inspiration, but also to the future, using the latest tools and materials we have available. Its place in the history of the V&A will stretch both backwards and forwards.

#### HOW DO YOU MIX MODERN ARCHITECTURE WITH HISTORICAL CHARACTER?

The V&A has always been about the very best of contemporary design and no false compromise is required between modern architecture and historical character. Our design is woven into the fabric of the V&A's

heritage. We're revealing views of architecturally significant facades, which have been hidden until now. The creation of a new public space in the form of a courtyard will radically alter perceptions of the museum and how its layout is apprehended by the visitor. Not simply an additional entry point, it has the potential to change the visitor journey through the museum – to bring them to more places and enable them to discover more of the collections.

It's the duality of tradition and progress that gives London its edge and life.

#### WHICH PART OF THE DESIGN ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

There's a paradox in-built to this project: a scheme that revolves around a vast new gallery space hidden below ground. How do you draw people in and make them aware of the exhibition space beneath their feet? The structural form and geometry

**"The creation of a new public space has the potential to change the visitor journey through the museum"**

of the gallery ceiling seeps through to the pattern of the courtyard above, making the visitor conscious of the energy and rhythm of the gallery directly below.

In turn, the structural solution of the ceilings generates the paving pattern of the courtyard, becoming a subtle but readable expression of what's below. In this way we have made the invisible visible. ●



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- brings members together at three worldwide Expos. The Euro Attractions Show 2012 will take place in Berlin from 9 - 11 October - providing access to new products, innovative ideas, and unique solutions
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- helps with press and public relations support when needed
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DAVID CAMP • DIRECTOR,  
ECONOMICS • AECOM

# RECORD RESULTS

Admissions to the world's top 25 theme parks rose to a new record volume in 2011. Dave Camp analyses the results of the 2011 TEA/AECOM Theme Index

**D**espite, or perhaps due to, the tough economic times, the global theme park industry is continuing to go from strength to strength. Total admissions to the world's top 25 theme parks rose to a new record volume in 2011. More than 196 million visits were made to these parks, almost four per cent more than in 2010 and a growth of more than six per cent since 2007.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the industry is that through the longest, deepest recession that the world has ever encountered, the theme park industry is one of the few sectors that has exhibited sustained growth.

As shown in the Leading Global Parks table, Disney parks remain the most popular parks in the world and are still the only ones that can attract more than 10 million annual visits. The impact of the Japanese tsunami can be seen in the figures for the Tokyo Disney parks. They were closed for more than a month following the disaster, yet they remained the third and fourth most visited theme parks in the world.

Disney parks remain  
the most popular  
parks in the world



(Left) Harry Potter continues to draw visitors to Universal's Islands of Adventure; (right) Attendances to Ocean Park in Hong Kong grew 29 per cent

Most of the top 25 parks increased their visitor numbers in 2011, with some parks showing exceptional growth. The ongoing appeal of Harry Potter increased visitors to Universal's Islands of Adventure by 29 per cent in 2011, on top of a 42 per cent increase in 2010. In two years, Harry Potter has added almost 3.5 million visits to Islands of Adventure. No wonder Universal is looking to add Harry Potter lands to its parks in Hollywood and Japan.

The big growth in 2011 took place in Asia. Ocean Park in Hong Kong (29 per cent), Hong Kong Disneyland (14 per cent) and Nagashima Spa Land in Japan (30 per cent) all reported double-digit percentage attendance growth. The only other of the world's top 25 parks to achieve this was SeaWorld California in San Diego.

The impressive growth in Asian parks has led to attendance at the top 20 parks

**In two years, Harry Potter has added almost 3.5 million visits to Islands of Adventure. No wonder Universal's looking to add Harry Potter lands to its parks in Hollywood and Japan**

#### LEADING GLOBAL THEME PARKS

Rank	Park and Location	% Change 2010/2011	Attendance 2011	Attendance 2010
1	Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, FL, US	1.0%	17,142,000	16,972,000
2	Disneyland, Anaheim, CA, US	1.0%	16,140,000	15,980,000
3	Tokyo Disneyland, Tokyo, Japan	-3.2%	13,996,000	14,452,000
4	Tokyo Disney Sea, Tokyo, Japan	-5.8%	11,930,000	12,663,000
5	Disneyland Park at Disneyland Paris, Marne-La-Vallée, France	4.7%	10,990,000	10,500,000
6	Epcot at Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, FL, US	0.0%	10,825,000	10,825,000
7	Disney's Animal Kingdom at Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, FL, US	1.0%	9,783,000	9,686,000
8	Disney's Hollywood Studios at Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, FL, US	1.0%	9,699,000	9,603,000
9	Universal Studios Japan, Osaka, Japan	4.2%	8,500,000	8,160,000
10	Islands of Adventure at Universal Orlando, FL, US	29.0%	7,674,000	5,949,000
11	Ocean Park, Hong Kong SAR	28.7%	6,955,000	5,404,000
12	Everland, Gyeonggi-Do, South Korea	-4.6%	6,570,000	6,884,000
13	Disney's California Adventure, Anaheim, CA, US	1.0%	6,341,000	6,278,000
14	Universal Studios at Universal Orlando, FL, US	2.0%	6,044,000	5,925,000
15	Hong Kong Disneyland, Hong Kong SAR	13.5%	5,900,000	5,200,000
16	Nagashima Spa Land, Kuwana, Japan	30.3%	5,820,000	4,465,000
17	Lotus World, Seoul, South Korea	4.1%	5,780,000	5,551,000
18	SeaWorld Florida, Orlando, FL, US	2.0%	5,202,000	5,100,000
19	Universal Studios Hollywood, Universal City, CA, US	2.0%	5,141,000	5,040,000
20	Walt Disney Studios Park at Disneyland Paris, Marne-La-Vallée, France	4.7%	4,710,000	4,500,000
21	Europa Park, Rust, Germany	5.9%	4,500,000	4,250,000
22	SeaWorld California, San Diego, CA, US	13.0%	4,294,000	3,800,000
23	Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, Tampa, FL, US	2.0%	4,284,000	4,200,000
24	De Efteling, Kaatsheuvel, the Netherlands	3.1%	4,125,000	4,000,000
25	Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen, Denmark	7.2%	3,963,000	3,696,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.8%</b>	<b>196,308,000</b>	<b>189,083,000</b>

Source: TEA and AECOM.

#### KEY FACTS

- 196 million visits to world's top 25 theme parks in 2011; 3.8 per cent rise
- 337 million visits to attractions run by top 10 operating groups in 2011; 4.6 per cent rise
- 127 million visits to top 20 North American theme parks in 2011; 2.9 per cent rise
- 103 million visits to top 20 Asian theme parks in 2011; 7.5 per cent rise
- 58 million visits to top 20 European theme parks in 2011; 2.8 per cent rise
- 24 million visits to world's top 20 water parks in 2011; 8.2 per cent rise

- in Asia breaking the 100 million figure for the first time. North America still tops the geographic rankings, but Asia is catching up fast and if the pace of growth continues, Asia will overtake North America soon.

## EUROPE GROWS DESPITE RECESSION

European theme parks have continued to grow attendance levels, despite the ongoing problems in the eurozone. An increase of almost three per cent over the top 20 parks in 2011 was something of a story of two halves. Most of the top 10 parks saw admissions increase, while the majority of those in the bottom half of the table saw declining or stable visitor levels.

The biggest growth was at PortAventura where new owners InvestIndustrial opened a Sesame Street-themed kiddie area, Sésamo Aventura, which helped the park achieve a 15 per cent increase in visitors over 2010. Gröndalund, Tivoli Gardens, Europa Park and Disney's Paris parks all saw above average increases in attendance in 2011.

An ongoing feature of the European market is the growth in the on-site offer. The majority of the top 20 parks have their own hotels and these have helped many parks increase visitor volumes. The recession has worked to the benefit of these hotels – where families may have cut back on summer holidays, theme park visits can become an extra special treat by including an overnight stay at an on-site hotel.



The biggest growth for attendances to parks in Europe was at PortAventura in Spain



PortAventura saw a 15.5 per cent increase

The majority of the top 20 European parks have their own hotels and these have helped increase visitor numbers

### LEADING EUROPEAN THEME PARKS

Rank	Park and Location	% Change 2010/2011	Attendance 2011	Attendance 2010
1	Disneyland Park at Disneyland Paris, Marne-La-Vallée, France	4.7%	10,990,000	10,500,000
2	Walt Disney Studios Park at Disneyland Paris, Marne-La-Vallée, France	4.7%	4,710,000	4,500,000
3	Europa Park, Rust, Germany	5.9%	4,500,000	4,250,000
4	De Efteling, Kaatsheuvel, the Netherlands	3.1%	4,125,000	4,000,000
5	Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen, Denmark	7.2%	3,963,000	3,696,000
6	Port Aventura, Salou, Spain	15.5%	3,522,000	3,050,000
7	Liseberg, Gothenburg, Sweden	0.0%	2,900,000	2,900,000
8	Gardaland, Castelfranco Del Garda, Italy	1.8%	2,850,000	2,800,000
9	Alton Towers, UK	-5.5%	2,600,000	2,750,000
10	Legoland Windsor, UK	0.0%	1,900,000	1,900,000
11	Thorpe Park, UK	2.7%	1,900,000	1,850,000
12	Phantasialand, Germany	-5.4%	1,750,000	1,850,000
13	Futuroscope, Jaunay-Clan, France	-4.6%	1,741,000	1,825,000
14	Legoland Billund, Denmark	-3.0%	1,600,000	1,650,000
15	Parc Asterix, Plailly, France	-4.1%	1,595,000	1,663,000
16	Puy Du Fou, Les Epesses, France	2.0%	1,500,000	1,470,000
17	Mirabilandia, Savio, Italy	-1.6%	1,481,000	1,505,000
18	Gröndalund, Stockholm, Sweden	12.1%	1,464,000	1,306,000
19	Slagharen, Harderberg, the Netherlands	-4.4%	1,400,000	1,464,000
20	Heide Park, Soltau, Germany	0.0%	1,350,000	1,350,000
TOTAL		2.8%	57,841,000	56,279,000

Source: TEA and AECOM.





Legoland operator Merlin Entertainments consolidated its number two position with a 13 per cent increase in visitor volumes in 2011

## OPERATING GROUPS GROW

Transactions have slowed down over the past few years, but the strength of the theme park operator groups still grows.

An increase of almost five per cent in 2011 saw almost 337 million visits made to parks and attractions run by the top 20 operators.

Merlin has consolidated its number two position with a 13 per cent increase in visitor volumes in 2011. A similar growth rate at Universal parks saw them move into a clear third position. The only change in the order from 2010 was SeaWorld Parks overtaking Cedar Fair to move into sixth place.

Merlin is continuing to expand, with the development of new midway attractions in various locations around the world and OCT is building new parks in China, but most of the other groups are holding steady at the moment. We don't expect much in the way of transactions until the economy shows signs of picking up and capital becomes more readily available. The challenge facing the market is that the frenzy of activity pre-recession drove prices

up to higher multiples than are currently considered appropriate, so for deals to start happening again, some form of value correction may be needed.

## WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2012?

Well, the five-year-old recession remains with us and shows little sign of ending. Indeed, there are worrying signs from

Europe that may, if the doom-mongers are to be believed, indicate a further five years of hurt there.

But, if the past five years are anything to go by, as long as theme park operators continue with their ongoing investment and strong marketing, they should have less to worry about than businesses in other parts of the economy. ●

TOP TEN GLOBAL GROUPS				
Rank	Group name	% Change 2010/2011	Attendance 2011	Attendance 2010
1	Walt Disney Attractions	0.7%	121,400,000	120,600,000
2	Merlin Entertainments Group	13.2%	46,400,000	41,000,000
3	Universal Studios Recreation Group	13.7%	30,800,000	27,100,000
4	Parques Reunidos	1.6%	26,218,000	25,800,000
5	Six Flags Inc	0.0%	24,300,000	24,300,000
6	SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment	5.4%	23,600,000	22,400,000
7	Cedar Fair Entertainment Company	2.6%	23,400,000	22,800,000
8	OCT Parks China	12.6%	21,731,000	19,300,000
9	Herschend Entertainment	-1.0%	9,500,000	9,600,000
10	Compagnie des Alpes	2.4%	9,212,000	9,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4.6%</b>	<b>336,561,000</b>	<b>321,900,000</b>

Source: TEA and AECOM.

# The SKY'S the LIMIT

Shambhala, Europe's tallest and fastest rollercoaster, opened in May at PortAventura. CEO Sergio Feder explains why the ride's so important to the park

TOM WALKER • NEWS EDITOR • ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT

Inside his cool, air-conditioned office, Sergio Feder, the CEO of PortAventura theme park, talks in a calm but excited manner. He outlines the importance of the following day – 12th May – which is the official launch date of the park's new rollercoaster Shambhala. It's set to be a flagship ride and a record-breaker – the tallest and fastest in Europe – which will cement PortAventura's position as one of the continent's premier parks.

"We want to become the leading park within Europe, in terms of both innovation

and breaking records," Feder says. "It's imperative to do this so we can attract more visitors, not only from Spain, but from all over Europe, especially from markets such as the UK, France, Russia, Germany and the Benelux countries." Make no mistake – when it comes to competing for foreign visitors to theme parks, Feder is turning up the heat on his European rivals.

Located in Salou, on Catalonia's Costa Dorada, PortAventura first opened to the public in 1995. It was established initially (and somewhat unusually) as a



It's hoped that the new ride will increase visitor numbers to four million a year

## THE PARK'S HISTORY

**1995**

Park opens

**1997**

Universal acquires majority share. Park renamed Universal's PortAventura

**2002**

PortAventura develops into a tourist destination, thanks to the launch of two hotels and an aquatic park

**2003**

The Caribe Resort hotel opens its doors for the first time

**2005**

The arrival of the signature free fall tower, Hurakan Condor





**Shambhala, Europe's fastest and tallest rollercoaster, opened at PortAventura in May**

joint venture between two major players – The Tussauds Group (40 per cent) and Anheuser-Busch (20 per cent) – with Spanish bank LA Caixa (30 per cent) and energy company Fecsa (6.8 per cent) also holding stakes. Since then the park's ownership has changed a number of times. Universal Studios bought a share in the park in 1997, leading the park to be first called Universal's PortAventura from 1997 to 2001 and then Universal Studios PortAventura from 2001 to 2004.

The latest change in ownership, three years ago, has been the most significant, not least because it's what brought Feder over to the park from his native Italy. Despite the economic turbulence experienced across Europe, Spanish private equity firm Investindustrial saw potential in PortAventura and acquired a 50 per cent stake in the park for around €95m (£75m, US\$117m) in September 2009. The other half remains under the control of Criteria Caixaholding SAU – an investment company controlled by La Caixa.

## GOOD INVESTMENT

Shortly after securing the deal, Investindustrial announced that it would invest €80m (£63m, \$99m) over the next four years in improving PortAventura's facilities as part of a strategy to establish it as a leading European park. To drive these ambitious plans, Investindustrial hired a leader it was very familiar with – Sergio Feder. At the end of 2009, Feder had spent 16 years as the CEO of Italy's Gardaland – a theme park that Investindustrial had bought in 2005 before selling it on to Merlin in November 2006 (Investindustrial still holds a minority stake in Gardaland).

As a theme park veteran, Feder, who also holds a degree in economics, was seen as the perfect person to take PortAventura to the next level. "I built up a great relationship with Investindustrial while at Gardaland and in 2009 they offered me a new challenge here at PortAventura," Feder recounts. He adds that while the cultural differences between running a park in Italy and Spain are minimal, there have been operational differences that he's had to adapt to.

"Gardaland is a very attractive theme



## ABOUT SERGIO FEDER

### What are your hobbies?

Skiing and horse riding

### What's your favourite food?

Mediterranean cuisine and ethnic cuisine

### What's your favourite film?

*Dances with Wolves*

### What drives you?

Self-improvement spirit and willingness to create emotions and dreams

### How would you describe yourself?

I am a dreamer, generous and very demanding with myself and others

### How would others describe you?

Reliable, loyal and very demanding

### What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

Firstly, never surrender. Secondly, behind the clouds, it's always sunny

park, but its main markets are national and regional visitors. The park has one hotel, which can more than deal with demand. PortAventura, meanwhile, has a much more international focus and is a genuine destination resort. We not only have a large theme park with six individual areas, but a waterpark and four hotels offering 2,000 rooms. We also have a conference centre, so it's a much more complete offer."

## 2008

Opening of the golf courses, designed by Greg Norman

## 2009

Opening of the hotel Gold River and PortAventura Convention Centre

## 2011

Opening of SesamoAventura

## 2012

The arrival of Shambhala: Expedition to the Himalayas.





(Left) SesamoAventura is a Sesame street-themed zone for families; (above) Furios Baco, one of the park's rollercoasters

## ► EUROPEAN FOCUS

The four hotels play a significant role in the plans to establish PortAventura as a genuine challenger to the likes of Disneyland Paris and Europa Park. While the launch of Shambhala will no doubt appeal to groups of hard core coaster enthusiasts and a younger generation looking for a white-knuckle adrenaline rush, Feder still sees parents and their children as the park's main target group – and that often means overnight stays.

"First and foremost we're a family park, proved by the fact that more than 70 per cent of our visitors are families," Feder says. One of the first investments made using the €80m provided by the new owners was to bolster the family offer. "In 2011 we introduced an entirely new area in the park purely for families – SesamoAventura. The €15m (£12m, \$18.5m), 13,000sq m Sesame street-

themed zone features 11 attractions with the focal point being a 12m-high magic tree. As a result, we saw attendance increase by 500,000 to 3.7 million visitors, which was the park's best year ever."

The success of SesamoAventura and the record crowds vindicated the investment made in the park. It also helped ensure that future investment plans would go ahead as planned. While Shambhala breaks speed records, Feder and his team came close to breaking spending ones. "In total, €30m (£23.7m, \$37m) was invested in 2012 – the most the park has spent in one single year for a decade," he says.

"We spent €25m (£19.7m, \$40m) on Shambhala and also created a caravan park (€0.6m, £0.5m, \$0.7m), the driving school (€0.5m, £0.4m, \$0.6m) and redesigned 500 rooms at Hotel PortAventura (€2.5m, £2m, \$3m). Then there were the new catering and shop

fittings and updating 80 per cent of our live shows. Our strategy is very simple: we want something brand new for every year."

## LOOKING AHEAD

The future of the park has no doubt been secured by the arrival of Investindustrial. In the short term, Feder has his eyes on attracting four million visitors a year. The park might even achieve that during 2012, as the launch of Shambhala was supported by a massive marketing campaign in Spain and generated great media interest around Europe. Feder isn't, however, planning to add another landmark ride just yet.

"We have no desire to beat Shambhala with another ride. Shambhala is unique," Feder says. "Our plan is to continue to develop what the park has to offer, to give visitors a reason to keep coming back, and focus on new attractions that will serve as a benchmark for the rest of Europe."

"The key to our success is that the park has become an all-round leisure and holiday destination to suit everyone, particularly families, with a clear focus on customer service and quality. At a branding level, the main aim of PortAventura will always be to offer a range of experiences, which are reflected in the diversity of the park and its six zones."

As I leave the offices and enter the warm Catalan evening sun, I cast my eye at the imposing silhouette of Shambhala, towering above everything else at the park. The prospect of riding it the following day thrills me. But not as much as Feder will be thrilled if it helps him reach his goal for PortAventura – to tower above other European parks, as a destination for all. ●

## ABOUT SHAMBHALA


Feder describes the challenges: "The location of the ride was a considerable challenge. We wanted it to cross Dragon Khan, the park's other steel roller coaster, to create a new skyline and emotions different to those of other hypercoasters.


"The job of intertwining the two structures has been almost like a surgical operation, starting with the foundations, some of which are up to 18m (59ft) deep. Then it was necessary to execute an incredible logistics operation to posi-


tion all the columns, as they had to be integrated with the structure of the other, existing rollercoaster."


- Ride manufacturer: Bolliger & Mabillard
- Build engineer: PGI-Boma
- Theming: Claudio Mazzoli
- Height: 76m (249ft)
- Track length: 1,650m (5,410ft)
- Top speed: 134kmh (83mph)
- Capacity: 3 trains, with 32 seats each
- Approximately 1,680 riders per hour




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# GO WILD

Protecting exotic and endangered animals as well as helping visitors understand the importance of conservation are among the aims of the latest zoo design projects

KATHLEEN WHYMAN • MANAGING EDITOR • ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT



Islands will be connected by a boat ride

## Islands, Chester Zoo, UK

The Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Bali, Sumatra, Sumba and Sulawesi will be celebrated in Islands, a £30m (€38.2m, US\$46.6m) project due to open at Chester Zoo, Cheshire, UK in 2015.

The development, which is the biggest of its kind in the UK, will showcase the zoo's conservation fieldwork. Connected by a boat ride, Islands will bring together some of the most endangered animals on the planet including Anoa, Banteng, Babirusa, Bali Starling, Cassowary, Rhinoceros Hornbill, Lorikeet, Sumatran Orang-utan, Indonesian crocodile (Sunda Gharial), Sulawesi Macaque, Sumatran Tiger and the Visayan Warty Pig.

Designed by architects from the Dan Pearlman group in Germany, visitors will be taken on a highly themed, atmospheric and immersive journey, which includes educational exhibits, play areas, restaurants and village-style food stands. They can travel through the Islands by boat or on foot and will navigate mangroves, swamps, bamboo and tropical forests.

"Our intention is to create a world-class zoo exhibit, which will set the standard for future zoological exhibits, both in the UK and worldwide"

Covering five hectares, the series of islands will be landscaped to mimic the habitat of that island through the horticulture and the architecture. A themed show house on each island provides indoor viewing of certain species and there'll be a series of adventure paths, bridges and adventure routes for children. A central river adventure ride will give different views of the islands and the animals.

Simon Mann, development director at Chester Zoo says: "Our intention is to create a world-class zoo exhibit, which will set the standard for future zoological exhibits, both in the UK and worldwide."

Islands is the first part of a long-term Natural Vision project, which includes a themed hotel and a series of five animal-based zones: Islands; Savannah; the Asian Plains; Rainforests; and Cheshire.



## African Elephant Crossing, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, USA

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo's African Elephant Crossing features two sprawling outdoor elephant yards for roaming and foraging, a deep-water swim channel, waterfall, interactive visitor centre, five African elephants, meerkats, naked mole rats, African birds and an African rock python.

The five-acre, \$25m (£15.6m, €17.5m) exhibit opened last May and was inspired by a safari in Africa that the zoo's director, Steve Taylor, had been on 10 years ago.

One of the main themes of the exhibit is that people and elephants need to share space in Africa in order to survive. To symbolise this, the Crossing Gate was designed so that visitors and elephants use the same path at various times throughout the day. During most of the day, visitors use the crossing to go from the Welcome Plaza to the interior sections of the exhibit. At certain points though, the gates swing out to protect the guests and allow the elephants to migrate from one of the outdoor ranges to the other.

The building from the old exhibit, a pachyderm house from the 1950s, was used in the new exhibit to reinforce one of the institution's main goals – reduce, reuse and recycle.

## Sea Lion Sound, Saint Louis Zoo, USA

Visitors to the Saint Louis Zoo now have dramatic underwater views of seals and sea lions in the new Sea Lion Sound attraction, created by PGAV Destinations.

Opened in July to replace the original sea lion pool built in 1915, the \$18m (£11.6m, €14.9m) exhibit was inspired by the rocky shores of the American Northwest coast.

Guests can now watch the sea lions as they glide by a large flat acrylic panel or over a 37ft long (11m) walk-through acrylic tunnel. The site occupies 1.55 acres with



Zoo guests and pinnipeds provide entertainment for each other at the new exhibit

"By filtering and recirculating the new exhibit's water, the sea lions will be living in salt water that is controlled to the temperature of their liking"

a 6,000sq ft (557sq m) pool and a water system that comprises more than 250,000 gallons. The exhibit is designed to display up to 25 pinnipeds, or seals and sea lions, and aims to further guests' understanding of the two lives of pinnipeds – above and below water. Presentations by curators educate guests about the lives and behaviours of individual animals in an 850-seat amphitheatre and show pool.

Design challenges included the coordination and construction of complicated components, such as an aquatic life support system that balances salinity, temperature, turbidity, ozone, and clarity for animal health and public perception. As well as being better for the animals and guests, the attraction's also good for the Earth's water system, as it avoids dumping 215,000 gallons of water weekly.

## Polar Land, Legoland Billund, Denmark

Polar Land, Legoland Billund's biggest-ever attraction, combines live penguins with Lego polar animals and a thrilling roller coaster.

The attraction was themed by Theming and Animatronics Industries (TAA), and takes visitors on a polar expedition through Arctic wildlife. They can enjoy the experience at a leisurely pace on foot or board a snowmobile on the Polar X-plorer free fall coaster ride, which includes a 5m (16ft) drop. Riders are taken inside an iceberg



Polar bears made from Lego greet visitors on the ride

where Lego-shaped ice cubes, icicles and sculptures create a winter wonderland, based on Legoland's Tom Christiansen's design. The last leg of the Polar X-plorer

ride takes visitors past 17 penguins in a pool behind display glass, which has been created to closely resemble the penguin's natural habitat. The penguins can also be viewed

through a large window inside the theme park's Polar Pizza and Pasta restaurant.

The decoration works took TAA's team of 18 specialists 15 weeks to complete.



Guests learn how challenges to arctic environments affect the wildlife

► Designed as an imaginary town on the edge of the arctic wilderness, Glacier Run is modelled on the real town of Churchill, Canada, the polar bear capital of the world where people and wildlife have learned to co-exist. The exhibit offers spectacular views, captivating stories of the arctic and opportunities for close-up encounters with polar bears, grizzly bears, seals and sea lions.

Guests can interact with zookeepers, learn about current challenges to arctic environments and animals and discover how incremental changes in our everyday activities and behaviours can make a difference to the planet and wildlife. The exhibit's story shows how melting glaciers

## Glacier Run, Louisville Zoo, USA

destroyed a roadway in the town and flooded the old mine quarry, which has become the bear pool.

The idea for the \$25m (£15.6m, €17.5m) town came from PGAV Destination Planning. The company worked with the staff at Louisville Zoo and Polar Bears International, a research association based in Churchill. Weber Group designed

and built the town and the branded and themed environments, working with local architect Arrasmith, Judd, Rapp and Chovan and Whittenberg Construction.

The exhibit includes immersive media content, providing information on bear behaviours, habitat, conversation and climate change. The bears are housed and exhibited in habitats designed to engage visitors and provide opportunities for interaction. For example, a vintage Ford truck holds polar and brown bears in the back. Visitors sitting in the cab can view the bears up close and feel their weight on the truck's shocks, though they are separated by a thick glass wall.

## Drusillas Park, UK

Drusillas Park, East Sussex, UK only covers 16 acres of land, so everything about the design has been geared to limited space and younger children. Its owners, Laurence and Christine Smith, have concentrated on small exotic animals such as meerkats, monkeys, lemurs and penguins and ensured that everything is child orientated, from the animal viewing opportunities to the easy and accessible zoo route. The furthest walk from one enclosure to another is 150ft (48m).



The 120 species include squirrel monkeys

Drusillas opened in 1925 as tearooms with a few animals, including Tarzan the chimpanzee and Georgina the ring-tailed lemur. The Smiths bought the park in 1997 and have spent the last 15 years creating a child-friendly zoo with an emphasis on hands-on learning. Now the zoo has more than 120 different species and attractions

including a Thomas & Friends ride and a new interactive maze called Eden's Eye.

The Smiths have updated the zoo, working with suppliers and designers including Western Log Group and Meticulous Ltd.

"Change and improvement is essential in this business," says Laurence Smith. "Good design is also essential in today's competitive marketplace. Visitors rightly expect a high standard of design, from the toilets through to new animal enclosures and attractions."

Smith believes that the zoo's design oriented attention to detail was one of the main reasons that Drusillas won the South East England Large Visitor Attraction of the Year Award in 2011. "Good design is a more expensive route to go down," he says, "but it's an important route." ●





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# DAN SNOW

**Encouraging museum and heritage operators to embrace new media and attract the next generation are among the topics the British historian and tv presenter will address in his keynote speech at VAC**



Snow at ancient heritage site Stonehenge

KATHLEEN WHYMAN • MANAGING EDITOR • ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT

## How did you get involved with VAC?

The Visitor Attractions Conference (VAC) is the biggest conference of its kind in the UK and hugely well known. I met Ken Robinson, the chair of the Tourism Alliance, through my work with the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu House, Hampshire and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. I recently released an app about World War II and am helping museums with their new media strategies, so Ken thought it'd be good if I came along.

## What will be in your keynote speech?

I'll give a sense of what I've learned from making television programmes. Historical documentaries, museums and visitor attractions have the same agenda. We're all trying to appeal to a very wide audience,

who can have a limited attention span if they're out with their family. Writing a script is similar to writing interpretation – you have to get the key facts across without wasting vocab. We have to pitch our message just right and grab their attention.

I'll also talk about the work I'm doing in new media with museums, such as a project with the Battle of Hastings site. Visitors can now download films about the battle that I made for my TV shows.

## Why are heritage attractions so important to the British?

This country takes its past very seriously. Two thirds of visitor attractions in Britain are heritage-based and more people go to heritage properties than football matches every weekend. This is partly because of our extraordinarily rich, well-documented and well-protected industry – we have the buildings, the artwork, the documents and the museums. We've wisely preserved much of our past over the past few generations, which not all countries have done.

## How can we get the younger generation interested?

We have to work out how they communicate and get information and use different tools, such as Facebook pages and games.

There are some good examples – the Museum of Modern Art in America has millions of likes on Facebook and there's a multiplayer online game dedicated to armoured warfare in the mid-20th century, which a relevant museum could link in with.

## What work are you doing for kids in Museums?

Kids in Museums is a forum for young people to express how they aren't always made to feel very welcome in museums. I'm a trustee and have chaired a few meetings and brought people together to discuss how to make museums more accessible for kids.

Sometimes we introduce children to curating teams to talk about what they find difficult in museums. That's a very valuable thing. I have a baby daughter and am

## ABOUT TIMELINE WW2



The Timeline WW2 app is a definitive history of the Second World War. Using an interactive timeline, it brings to life the cataclysmic events of 70 years ago for a 21st century audience.

More than 100 films from the archives of British Pathé and US broadcasters, commentary by Dan Snow and Robert MacNeil, 600 still images and 1,500 written entries give the viewer an insight into the events of WW2 in a completely new way.



The Simply American exhibition at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu House, UK

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard is among the heritage attractions Snow is working with



"HOW ARE OPERATORS GOING TO WORK WITH THE ASIAN MARKETPLACE IN THE NEXT 30 YEARS? WE NEED TO MAKE SURE WE'RE READY FOR THE RUSH WHEN IT COMES"

looking forward to taking her to museums. Hopefully they'll all be child-friendly by the time we get there.

#### What can heritage operators do better?

They don't do much badly. There's still a tendency for a 'don't touch, don't shout' atmosphere, which can be difficult for young people and kids. I like taking my nephews to places and they want to run around and make noise – that's easier on a battlefield than it is in an art gallery.

One thing operators do need to improve is their new media strategy, such as building up their Facebook and Twitter profile. People aren't doing that nearly as much as they should be at the moment.

#### What sparked your interest in apps?

Tablet computers are the future. People love them and apps are very easy to use on tablets. It's an exciting way of taking information and delivering it directly to an audience. With an app, I'm talking directly to the person who bought it – it's just between me and them; it's almost a personal relationship.

Also, apps are flexible. Once a book's been written, there's nothing you can do about the inevitable errors. With an app, you can just amend, adapt and update as new information becomes available.

#### What feedback have you had about your app?

The [timelineww2.com](http://timelineww2.com) app has been widely reviewed and has an average rating on iTunes of five stars.

We've sold many thousands and hope that schools start to adopt them. We have plans to release a few more apps in the autumn. I'll be revealing more at VAC.

#### How can heritage-based attractions use new media?

Too many heritage attractions simply put information about the ticket price and opening hours on their website. That's just turgid. You need to create an unusual, funky vibe. If you operate a castle, put incredible facts about your past up each day to keep people interested. Tell them about the ghosts and other horrible history-type facts. Be brazen about things that will bring people to the attraction and the website. Use clues, quizzes, and treasure hunts to keep them logging on. Create buzz on the internet – very few operators do that.

The Imperial War Museum is doing really well now. People submit photos online of their ancestors who fought in the wars and they're being made into an online exhibition. Many visitor attractions could do this.

And once you've done something, plug it aggressively so that people know about it.



Portsmouth UK's Historic Dockyard's Action Stations Helicopter experience

#### What do you want to learn at VAC?

I'm interested to find out how operators are going to work with the Asian marketplace in the next 30 years. What plans are there to make our sites accessible to the potentially vast audience who want to come and see European castles, Tudor stately homes and the Crown Jewels?

We need to make sure we're ready for the rush when it comes, which I've no doubt it will. ●

#### ABOUT VAC

The Annual National Conference of Visitor Attractions takes place on 11 October 2012 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London, UK.

To book, go to [www.vac2012.co.uk](http://www.vac2012.co.uk)



Bart Dohmen

Not knowing who would be participating, and making a business park masterplan more fun and guest-orientated were among the planning challenges for BRC Europe's managing director Bart Dohmen



# FLORIADE 2012

KATHLEEN WHYMAN • MANAGING EDITOR • ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT

## WHAT WAS BRC'S ROLE?

BRC was appointed six years ago to be the creative masterplanner for Floriade 2012. We created the story-led masterplan that engages visitors in the expo's theme of how horticulture can move society towards greener, sustainable living environments.

The goal is to tie the region of Venlo, in The Netherlands' natural environment, attractions and leisure activities together through a series of compelling stories and experiences to attract tourism and business, and contribute to the local economy.

## HOW DID BRC GET INVOLVED?

Floriade's managing director, Paul Beck, is a former executive of Efteling, so he's from the entertainment business. (See *interview in AM Q2 '10*.) When he was appointed

in 2006, an architectural masterplan had already been created, which allowed for the site to become a business park once the expo had finished. However, the concept was for a typical architectural vision, as opposed to an attractions masterplan.

Beck knew that to attract people to Floriade, the layout needed to be more relaxed and guest oriented. He asked BRC to create a storyline and adapt the masterplan. We couldn't physically change it, because of the long-term vision for the business park, but we were able to add walkways and visual lines to guide, steer and control visitors and tell the story.

## WHAT IS FLORIADE'S DESIGN?

We worked with the Floriade 2012 Planning Organisation to create five zones centered

on eco-friendly themes. We then divided the country and commercial pavilions over the different zones to effectively give guests a cohesive, immersive experience.

The five zones are: Relax and Heal; Green Engine; Education and Innovation; Environment; and World Show Stage. Each has a different landmark to help guide visitors in a direction, such as the dome in the Environment zone and the water exhibit in the Relax and Heal zone.

The zones are designed to look slightly different, but the overall theme is nature. It's a beautiful site with a forest in the middle and former architectural lands that we could use. We've ensured that there are clear views over the open spaces so that visitors can easily identify where they are on the park at any time.

We didn't want to make the walking distances between zones too long. Floriade 2002 was held on a huge open field and people still talk about how it was unmanageable, so we wanted to avoid that.

## WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION?

Nature and horticulture were the two obvious ones, but the third was theatre.

We really wanted the expo to be a more theatrical space with live entertainment to make the event sparkle with life. The opening show was very theatrical so fitted in well with the theme.

## WHAT ARE THE KEY DESIGN FEATURES?

The main thing we were hired to do was develop a storyline which shows Floriade's vision. Beck's aim was to transform

BRC's design has turned the expo into a theatrical space with live entertainment to make the event sparkle



One of the expo's aims is to educate visitors about how fruit and vegetables are grown and how we eat them





The expo is on target for its estimated audience of two million people during its six months



Floriade from an old fashioned show into something more compelling and theatrical, which would inspire people and get them involved. We wanted to make it interactive rather than just showing them things.

The stakeholders' priority was to create a better impression of horticulture in Holland and the region and to ensure the main sponsors should benefit from the expo. That's logical, these are the underlying factors, but our main focus is the guest. The story strategy we developed for Floriade is to give visitors the feeling that they are the stars in the theatre of nature. They become the main players in a drama about the planet and get closer to the quality of life.

#### HOW DID YOU TELL THAT STORY?

Normally when you do theme work, you take people by the hand and lead them on a personal journey through the story.

Floriade's storyline is about the beauty of life and nature, but we couldn't present it in the same way at the expo as we would in a theme park. Instead we've created more of a themed statement about how horticulture plays a role in all of our lives and how it can lead to dramatic changes in the earth's sustainability.

(Above) fun is a big factor; (right) the site will become a business park when the expo ends

#### WHAT HAVE BEEN THE CHALLENGES?

The difficulty with planning an expo six years in advance is that you don't know who the participants will be and what they'll bring. We had to develop an open space that's flexible, will be attractive to visitors and fits in with the theme – without knowing what's going to be in that open space. That's quite a challenge.

Beck is a person with extraordinary vision. He was adamant that every participant fitted in with the theme. Of course they want to do their own thing, but overall it's better if everyone focuses in a certain direction. Floriade is the theatre of nature – that's part of the statement we developed – and the pavilion owners have had to fit in with that, which they've done.

Another challenge was dealing with different stakeholders. The main one is the Dutch Horticultural Organisation, which organised the expo. Then there are the local authorities that are spending money



#### ABOUT FLORIADIE 2012

Floriade World Horticulture Expo is an international exhibition of flowers and gardening that's held every 10 years in the Netherlands. Spanning 35 hectares (86.5 acres) and featuring gardens, national pavilions, educational attractions and a theatre, Floriade 2012 runs from April to October. On the 6th July, exactly halfway through its run, 1,174,623 tickets had been sold, putting the expo on target for its estimated audience of two million people during its six months.

The five zones are: **Environment** – experience how horticulture can improve daily life; **Green Engine** – industry meets nature; **Relax & Heal** – horticulture is revealed as a healing force; **Education & Innovation** – learn about the future; and **World Show Stage** – a showcase of several international pavilions, focusing on folk stories and culture.

on this, and hope to benefit from it, and also the participants. So, we had three different stakeholders, who aren't used to developing this kind of visitor attraction.

Our challenge was to get them all thinking in a new way, which wasn't easy. Floriade 2012 is far more story-led than any of the previous expos for this reason. ●

# CHANGING TIMES

ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT  
15TH ANNIVERSARY

In the third part of our series, industry experts outline the impact the last 15 years' worth of changes have had on the industry, plus what they miss

KATHLEEN WHYMAN • MANAGING EDITOR • ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT



Deqing Senbo Green Forest, an eco-sensitive leisure complex in China, includes a large, indoor waterpark plus retail, dining, entertainment and adventure areas

## Gordon Dorrett

President and CEO, Forrec

“Early on, attractions were nearly always associated with larger theme parks. Then they began to develop a separate identity, which has now grown into a thriving independent business. Meanwhile, the attractions industry has expanded and diversified, drawing talent that didn't exist before, or existed in some other industry – talent that not only serves the industry, but leads it in previously unimaginable directions.

It's not just about theme parks any more, but every conceivable kind of entertainment and cultural venture. The IAAPA conferences now have a special day for museums. Who'd have thought that museum administrators would want to show up at the same conference as theme park operators?

Fifteen years ago, simulations, virtual worlds and 3D holography were exciting and new. We thought: 'From now on, the entire experience can be simulated'. Well, that didn't happen, although a lot of other amazing things did. And virtual worlds are still some distance off,



Dorrett has been with 40-year-old Forrec for 25 years

waiting for a breakthrough in science or economics that will make them the next new thing. So, looking ahead, it's impossible to predict what undiscovered technologies might make possible. If an idea is strong, it will survive, flourish and feed the industry. If it's weak, it will quickly fade.

What seems certain is that as political and economic power shifts, Central Europe and Asia will play an increasingly important role in the development of entertainment of all kinds, including

“Fifteen years ago, who'd have thought that museum administrators would want to show up at the same conference as theme park operators?”

the attractions business. My strong suspicion is that these regions will become the innovators – not the followers, building on current ideas – but developing in new and unexpected directions.

One thing that seems to have disappeared, and that I miss, is the sense of recognition for the difficult work that serious practitioners do. Yes, it's enjoyable and there's nothing we'd rather be doing, but most people don't realise that designing a theme park is as complicated as designing a hospital.”

## Adrian Mahon

### BALPPA chair

**I**'ve been chair of BALPPA since January 2011 and have been with the Tussauds Group, which is now Merlin Entertainments, for 17 years.

During this time, there's been a big improvement in the overall quality of offer and an increased use of technology for access to the product, such as booking systems, the internet and delivery of the experience. There's also more focus on safety, especially in the rides business, through schemes such as ADIPS for rides and PIPA for inflatables.

Customers have changed too. People have become time poor, more demanding and set their expectations and standards at a higher level. They want more varied leisure experiences and their attitudes and actions are increasingly influenced by social media. They expect great value for money, but are prepared to pay for great experiences and compelling propositions.

Operators responded by increasing their focus on customer experience and differentiation of brands, including use of intellectual property. Poor quality and poor value offers don't survive – they're quickly found out. There have



Mahon became BALPPA chair in January 2011

also been structural changes in the routes to market, consolidation within the market and more focus on destinations and resort development.

BALPPA members have, on the whole, embraced these changes. I see many examples of the application of technology around the members' attractions, such as 3D/4D, digital photography and queuing systems.

Changes that are definitely not welcomed are free entry to museums and increased taxation and business rates. The UK attraction industry's competitive position versus most of Europe has been eroded with VAT now at 20 per cent, compared with as low as five per cent on the Continent. The

Gambling Act has also brought significant changes, which have caused many small operators and suppliers of games machines to go out of business. As a result of BALPPA's lobbying, prize games are exempt from the new Machine Gaming Duty, but it will still impact many operators, particularly those with mixed-use locations.

BALPPA's biggest challenges over the past 15 years have been to maintain its relevance and value for its members at times when members have many competing cost drivers. The organisation has to keep up to date with changes and understand how they impact the members' interests. We then support members by lobbying on their behalf to try and effect change in regulations or proposed regulations. Lobbying has always been a priority objective of BALPPA and this has steadily increased.

Over the next 15 years there will continue to be improvements in the customer experience, both from new technology applications and in personal service delivery.

After all, people are at the heart of our delivery. There has to be continuing improvement if we're to prosper against all the other forms of leisure, which are competing for the leisure spend and leisure time."

## David Willrich

### Founder, DJ Willrich

**T**he continued improvements and understanding of audio technology and DLP video projectors are very positive changes. The majority of attractions and displays in museums use both and have a very high dependency on these technologies. Unfortunately, not all have the budgets to use them to the best effect.

However, I get frustrated when a new technology comes out almost too early in the development cycle. People then believe the hype and embrace it before it has made it through the technology equivalent of puberty. The replacement of CRT video projectors with LCD projectors was a disaster for the best part of five years – it's only in the last two or three years that we've got back to

reasonably priced projectors that can provide a high quality image reliably, and with the same features in terms of geometric correction that CRT projectors had from day one back in the 80s.

Flat screen display had a similar issue – it was a few years into their use before the image quality exceeded that of a good CRT display. The most recent is the use of LED in lighting. It's definitely the way ahead, but it isn't the answer to all lighting requirements yet.

On a positive note, technology is now so reliable, and so much can be done to support systems over the internet, that there's a very low dependence on maintenance and, therefore, a reduction in the cost of ownership. This makes it easier to do projects on the other side of the world. Smaller attractions benefit too, as they can install a technology-dependant attraction without having to employ an army of technicians and engineers for support.



Willrich established his company in 1986

Dependency on technology will continue to grow and will still need creativity. I'd like designers to trust and respect technology companies more, as they're an important part of the equation." ▶



## Rob Smith

Culture entertainment and leisure  
sales manager, Electrosonic

“Improvements in technology allow us to do so much more, with bigger screens, brighter projectors, nicer graphics and better quality images. Information can be presented in a more exciting and dynamic way and can even be personalised to the visitor. I’m seeing a move away from standard rectangular projected images on the wall to a more creative use of projection on irregular shapes and objects – often using multiple projectors.

A constant challenge in our industry is keeping abreast of technological change. Many new products and designs appear every year, which



Smith joined the industry 20 years ago

change the way we engineer a project and expand the range of effects and techniques we can employ to deliver a client’s dreams. There are many products that promise to do this, but

“New products and designs appear every year, which change the way we engineer a project and expand the range of effects and techniques we can use”

for one reason or another are totally unsuitable. Distinguishing between them, and being able to advise our clients accurately, is one of the most important services we provide.

Looking ahead, there’ll be more convergence of technologies in both the real and virtual world. There will also be more opportunity to extend the experience beyond the four walls of the attraction and allow interaction of groups of people remotely through web interfaces and social media.

In these times of austerity, there will be a focus on value and getting back to basics. It’d be good to see people using more of the facilities and countryside local to them.”



Parliamentarium – The European Parliament’s Visitors’ Centre in Brussels, Belgium



## Ray Hole

Managing director,  
Ray Hole Architects

“The scale of investment into new and mature attractions in the past 15 years has resulted in a broader range of higher quality attractions in every sector. This has led to greater competition, but has also provided career paths for a new generation of managers and operators.

The belief that careers can be created in this industry, which are rewarding and sustainable, is possibly the best change.

Over the next 15 years the best attractions will flourish because of their real understanding of operations



Hole’s first role in the industry was 30 years ago

and visitor experiences and how the experience economy works. However, those that don’t maintain this focus will struggle. Austerity will certainly

“The belief that careers can be created in this industry, which are rewarding and sustainable, is possibly the best change”

impact the next 10 years and those that survive this period will continue to flourish – visitors will always be attracted to quality and value.”





MET Studio's design for the War Horse exhibit at the National Army Museum in London was shortlisted at the Museum & Heritage Awards

## Lloyd Hicks

Design Director, MET Studio

**T**he obvious change in the past 15 years is the growth of AV technology. 3D and 4D experiences are now common in visitor attractions and I've seen a 5D experience advertised.

The push for CGI or Hollywood-style immersion is relentless. Subtlety is often lost because of the impatience of the Playstation generation. Sadly, it's increasingly rare to see an experience where visitors are allowed to absorb compelling stories at a variety of paces.

We're saturated with so many multi-dimensional experiences that they all seem to blend together in the subconscious. And bigger budgets from film studios will always set benchmarks that are nigh on impassable. The Spider-Man ride at Universal Studios



Hicks has been with MET Studio for 15 years

Florida is a true 4D ride. Not only is it 3D, it's also a rollercoaster and uses every theatrical trick in the book plus live action as well (see p56).

Put that up against a 4D ride that blows a bit of smoke around your legs and squirts water at you and there's really no contest.

While most changes are good, I miss the clunky dark ride. You could completely control the visitors' arc of vision while playing spatial games with the environment to trick and delight visitors. Many of the surviving dark rides technologies have been replaced with hanging pods full of AV tricks and smells. The problem is that it changes the visitor's perspective of the scene.

Dioramas were looked up at from a low level. Now they're viewed from high level within hanging pods that block the onward views of the visitors travelling behind. A football match is shot at low level, as it forces the perspective of the players and the action. If the match was shot above eye level, that dynamism would be lost. I think we've thrown the baby out with the bath water at some attractions.

In the future, live action will become more common so the experience can respond to visitor expectation beyond the capacity of any AV interactive. ▶



Nugée co-created Imaginear in 2009

## Andrew Nugée

Founder and CEO  
imagineear ltd

“I can only speak for interpretation in attractions, but there have been several changes in the 11 years I've been in the industry. A decade ago, the only tour option was a pre-loaded player provided onsite. The iPod didn't make much of an impact, but iPhones and other android phones are broadening the choice to visitors.

Now visitors can download before they get to the attraction and keep the tour afterwards on their own device. They don't even need to be physically

present, so the site operator can reach a much broader audience courtesy of the app store and android's Play store.

Ironically, the new technologies have often made life more complex for site owners, and more expensive. This wasn't the plan! But the majority of visitors either don't have or won't use their smartphones to take the tour, so a site needs to provide the players as before, and build apps as well. This is a manageable, but slightly more complex, process for the industry to digest.

Visitors increasingly expect the interpretation content to be in their own language and on a variety of platforms, including the web. Going online before a visit to check times and facilities or book tickets is called a Logistical visit. At the attraction, people look for an Emotional visit. Going online afterwards to further their research is an Educational visit. Our task has been to provide the emotional content together with a platform to deliver it, and to link this into educational materials.

The best change over the past decade is the greater availability of knowledge at the point it's needed. This has required the tools to search for and display content, which have developed greatly in this time.

For things to be perfect, we need to have free or subscription broadband wifi available indoors and out and for all visitors to have smartphones with long battery life and vast memory



The Beatles story in Liverpool, UK

“Ironically, the new technologies have often made life more complex for site owners. This wasn't the plan!”

capacity. Then we'll be able to provide a great personal interactive service over the phone network. However, these things always take longer to develop than you think they will.”

## Manfred Meier

Founder and CEO of Kraftwerk Living Technologies GmbH

“Over the past 15 years, increasingly stringent quality requirements have driven investors into big investments and shorter investment cycles. The development of media based attractions was one of the reactions to these changes.

Investment in high quality hardware is the key to success. Costs for revitalising attractions can then be minimised, as operators only have to change the content. We think this is why the readiness to invest in media based attractions has had a significant boost.

Technological advances, including the development of digital high-per-

formance projectors, high-performance video playback servers and ground breaking alignment systems, have made it possible to display ultra high-res images in 2D and 3D on almost all surfaces. Thanks to these advances, media components, such as high-end projection systems, have become a very important factor in the industry.

In the future, we'll see more conventional rides combined with media components. An example of this is the new Manta rollercoaster in SeaWorld San Diego. Featuring a launch station, passengers start the ride enclosed in a tunnel with images of rays projected onto a 270-degree enveloping screen.” ●



Meier founded Kraftwerk in Austria in 1992



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## SPECIFICATIONS THE FAMILY BOOMERANG

Track Length	185 [m]
Lift Height	20 [m]
Max Speed	60 [km/h]
Footprint	60 x 22.6 [m]
Min. Height requirement	1.00 [m] and 4 years old
Nr. Trains	1
Nr. Coaches per train	8/10
Nr. Passengers per train	16/20
THRC	640/750 [pph]

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# SIGHTSEEING

Legendary landmarks are being celebrated with the release of audioguides and apps for Titanic Belfast, Statue of Liberty, Louvre and London Eye

KATHLEEN WHYMAN • MANAGING EDITOR • ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT

## TITANIC BELFAST, UK

**T**itanic Belfast commemorates 100 years since the Titanic disaster. Built in the new Titanic Quarter, beside the historic site of this world-famous ship's construction, Titanic Belfast is the world's largest Titanic visitor experience.

Housed in an iconic, six-storey building, the visitor experience tells the story of the Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, through her construction and launch, to her famous maiden voyage and subsequent place in history.

On-site visitors can hire Acoustiguide Ltd's Opus Click™ multimedia guide in six languages – English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Mandarin. The tour takes the visitor on a journey through the nine galleries that tell the story of Titanic on the exact spot where it was built. The attraction relives this world-famous story using contemporary interactive technology and special effects. A shipyard ride

includes the sound of riveting and the smells of melting steel to recreate what it was like to be a shipyard worker in Belfast more than 100 years ago. Designed to complement the text panels within the attraction, the multimedia guide gives an insight into the stories behind the Titanic.

The team at Acoustiguide was delighted to be awarded the contract to write and produce the tour and manufacture the equipment. They worked with Event Communications on the interpretative scripting to ensure all the facts were accurate and that the tour enhanced what was already available in the attraction.

A visually impaired (VI) tour is also available, which gives detailed audio descriptions for VI visitors. This tour can be used as a stand-alone or with the main audio tour, enabling a VI visitor and sighted companion to share the experience.

Titanic Belfast's Acoustiguide app can be used with a visitor's own smartphone on-site or at home by those who are unable to visit, but want to discover more about

Acoustiguide's Opus Click™ guide is available in six languages



Belfast's role in the Titanic story. The app is available in six languages on iTunes and features a video of the architect Eric R Kuhne drawing the Titanic Belfast building. This is an exclusive feature available on the English version of the app. Additions to the audio tour will continue in the future. Titanic Belfast: <http://bit.ly/NemrOH>

"Titanic's iconic story is international in its reach, as evidenced by the many thousands of overseas visitors who have flown in to be part of its celebrations," says Tim Husbands, CEO Titanic Belfast.

"The development of its audioguides, produced in partnership with Acoustiguide, is a critical factor in the success of its interpretation provision, enabling the visitor both to engage with and learn more about the story. The team at Acoustiguide used their knowledge, experience and professionalism to provide the reassurance needed so that the outcome for the visitor would be a world-class service and product – and the feedback from the customers has been exactly that."

The nine galleries include The Aftermath (below left) and Boomtown Belfast (below right)





## STATUE OF LIBERTY AND ELLIS ISLAND, US

In the largest program of its kind in the world, Antenna International™ is providing up to 12,000 audioguide player devices to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, enabling every visitor to receive a guide with the purchase of a ferry ticket.

On Liberty Island, a 30-minute audio tour explores the history of the Statue of Liberty and its status as a global symbol of freedom and opportunity, while in-depth interviews with architects and historians provide additional background.

On Ellis Island, a 45-minute audio tour immerses visitors in the immigrant experience, through narration and first-hand accounts, allowing them to relive the experience through the eyes of a new arrival. Interviews with historians, architects and archaeologists further complement the museum's exhibits and galleries.

Launched in June, the audioguides complement the National Park Service's ranger-led tours on both islands. The tours are available in nine languages – English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Russian and Arabic. An interactive children's tour, narrated by an animal character, is available in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

Also new for 2012 is a range of bespoke software solutions, multi-platform digital distribution services and handheld multimedia guides. Software packages Antenna Publisher™ and Antenna Publisher Pro™ enable clients to create, update and publish content to multiple platforms, including user-owned devices and Antenna's new XP-Iris™ multimedia player. The XP-Iris™ handset incorporates touchscreen technology and is wi-fi enabled.

Visitors to Ellis Island can now hear first-hand immigration accounts, allowing them to relive the experience

"These products and services are set to push the boundaries of cultural and heritage interpretation," says Matthew Vines, global marketing and communications manager. "They infinitely expand the possibilities of what visitors can experience in front of an object and outside of the museum's walls. As well as pushing content out to multiple platforms, Antenna Publisher™ produces mobile experiences with images, videos, interactive games and mapping. The software offers the functionality to connect to social media, so visitors can tweet or post on Facebook. It can also incorporate m-commerce (mobile commerce), so they can browse the attraction's shop and buy a souvenir of what they're looking at."

## HERKENRODE ABBEY, BELGIUM

The new experience centre at 600-year-old Herkenrode Abbey, Belgium tells the tale of its fascinating past. Visitors can enjoy an immersive chronological tour, told by the Abbess, and a combination of re-enactments and 3D movies of architecture. The installation combines Dataton Watchout visuals and Dataton Pickup audioguides.

Visitors approaching the visuals, point and click at the

network transponder with their Pickup audioguide unit and are synched into the sound track of the Watchout show. If the show isn't already running, the Pickup acts as a trigger.

Antwerp-based Mimesis installed the 17-channel Watchout multi-display system and the 100 strong Pickup audioguide system. The tour is offered in four languages with further tours in development for children and outdoor exhibits.



The new tour includes re-enactments and 3D movies of architecture



## AUDIOGUIDES AND APPS



The London Eye app includes audio, augmented reality experiences and infotainment

### THE EDF ENERGY LONDON EYE, UK

The world's tallest cantilevered observation wheel, the EDF Energy London Eye, UK, has introduced an app plus interactive touch screen guides to further enhance the experience of its flights.

The app, created by Dogli.sh Mobile, includes Voices of London audio pieces, which provide exciting new perspectives of London, as told by three inspiring London figures: Henry Stuart, a photographer who offers the perspective of the view through a camera lens; Geoff Dyer, a British author and novelist who offers a historical journey through the capital; and David de Rothschild, an environmental-

ist who discusses nature and the London Eye's position in its environment. As well as augmented reality experiences and "infotainment" pieces, the app offers users the chance to watch the dramatic London New Year's Eve fireworks over the Eye. A time-lapse film captured from the top of the London Eye enables guests to experience 24 hours in less than two minutes.

Each of the London Eye's 32 capsules now feature four Samsung interactive touch-screen guides, which are available in five languages. Visitors can gain access to key information on the landmarks that can be seen from the London Eye, including

their historical importance. Round-the-clock, 360-degree filming has provided footage of the first ever multi-dimensional views of the spectacular sights of the capital and 3D technology allows guests to take a virtual tour of the buildings' interiors.

The guides run on Samsung Galaxy Tab 10.1 devices and were developed with Dogli.sh Mobile using Appcelerator's Titanium platform. The application runs on a cloud based CMS allowing the content to be managed by the London Eye staff with little or no involvement from the development team. The tablets can be updated remotely over wi-fi.

### THE LOUVRE, FRANCE

Visitors to the Louvre will no longer need to worry about getting lost, thanks to a new audioguide which uses Nintendo 3DS™. An innovative localisation feature, jointly developed by teams from the Louvre and Nintendo, allows visitors to see their exact position within the museum's four floors and three wings on an interactive map.

Additional functions include 3D models of major works, 3D images of the museum galleries and high definition photos to accompany more than 700 commentaries about the artworks. Delivered by the museum's curators and lecturers, these conversations provide a fresh perspective on the Louvre's collections and the story behind the building.

Over the past few years, the Louvre has made a conscious effort to develop its digital offer. Using multimedia tools, it has specifically targeted people who don't usually visit museums. The aim is to combine its rich heritage with the cre-

The new audioguides lead visitors step-by-step through the tour



ative world of interactive entertainment. The Nintendo 3DS console was seen as a natural fit and chosen for its accessibility and ease of use.

Available in seven languages, there is a choice of tours, devised for first time visitors to the Louvre. Each tour lasts approximately 45 minutes. The Masterpieces tour allows visitors to discover or rediscover the museum's most famous pieces, such as the Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci, the Venus de Milo and the Winged Victory of Samothrace, as they're guided through some of the Louvre's most prestigious rooms.

Soon to be added is family tour The Egyptians. Also coming soon is an adapted tour with commentaries accessible to handicapped visitors. Visitors who are hearing impaired can access a video-guided tour in French sign language, which focuses on the Louvre's major works. Visitors with visual impairment can visit the special touch gallery. ●

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## THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF SPIDER-MAN

**H**undreds of new details and effects have been added to The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man, which reopened in March at Universal Orlando Resort, US.

The new 4K digital high-definition animation, combined with highly sophisticated Infitec 3D projection, allows guests to experience details such as flames spewing from Hobgoblin's pumpkins, electricity arching through Electro's body and the stitching on Spider-Man's glove. Visitors can even see the movement of the characters' muscles and the changes in their facial expressions. Live special effects including heat blasts,

water surges and the motion of the ride vehicle are calibrated to match the animation. To add to the excitement, Spider-Man co-creator Stan Lee makes a 3D animated cameo appearance inside the attraction.

Shown across towering visual spaces – some of which are more than four storeys-tall and wide – guests experience the ride wearing 3D lenses made of dichroic filters for colour and clarity.

The ride vehicle's audio system has been upgraded from eight-channel to 16-channel and lighting, sets, graphics, props and scenic detail have been updated to further enhance the animation's improvements.

PHOTO: UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

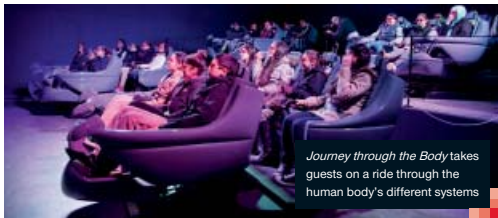


## THE RIDE'S SHOWN ACROSS TOWERING SPACES, SOME OF WHICH ARE MORE THAN FOUR STOREYS-TALL AND WIDE

## SIMWORX

**H**ands-on science theme park Danfoss Universe, Denmark, has increased its offer with the Stargazer 4D motion theatre. The first film to be shown is *Journey through the Body*, an educational film that takes guests on a ride through the various systems within the human body and makes full use of the dynamic motion and 4D effects available to enhance the story.

Installed by 4D effects theatre specialist Simworx, the theatre features 28 seats in four seven-seater pods, each incorporating a six DOF dynamic hydraulic motion base. The film is played through a Panasonic digital circular polarising 3D projection.



*Journey through the Body* takes guests on a ride through the human body's different systems

The 4D effects include on-board wind and water spray along with bubbles, smoke machines, special effects lighting and 5.1 surround sound.

Danfoss Universe opened in 2005 in Nordborg in the south of Denmark. Aimed

at both children and adults, the centre's aim is for visitors to "play their way to a knowledge of science". Guests experience the world of science and technology and fun-filled natural phenomena within a host of different buildings and areas.



The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man reopened in March revealing hundreds of new details and effects

## D3D CINEMA

**D**3D Cinema recently converted the giant screen theatre at the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS) to digital 3D. HMNS' opening film, *Tornado Alley 3D*, was produced by D3D's sister company, Giant Screen Films. Lasting for 43 minutes, the film takes viewers on an epic chase into the heart of a storm.

Narrated by actor Bill Paxton, the film follows the largest tornado-research project

ever assembled on separate missions to encounter the birth of a tornado.

The theatre at HMNS has been an important part of the museum's offer for 25 years. The upgrade from 15/70 mm film projection to a digital 4K 3D system demonstrates the team's commitment to remaining at the forefront of the industry.

Charlotte Brohi, vice president of giant screen operations and film production at HMNS, says: "When we saw a demonstration of the Barco twin projector system, coupled with the potential of the Qube server in January, we believe we found a viable solution to a great digital presenta-

tion. We wanted to give our audience the image quality they were used to with 70 mm film. With the D3D system, the images are picture-perfect and steadier and the artefacts we used to get from the wear and tear on film are gone."

Brohi estimates annual savings with the new system will be greater than \$250,000, which can be directed back into new programming and exhibits. Founded in 1909, HMNS continues to offer museum-goers travelogues and natural-history documentaries, but has opened up to increase attendance during non-museum hours through event programming.



*Tornado Alley 3D* follows the largest research project assembled on separate missions into the heart of a storm

## THE JUICE

**A** modern twist on Elvis' music and a futuristic thriller are among the latest film offers from The Juice Films Ltd.

*Elvis Rocks* features several iconic Elvis tracks and tells the story of Memphis teens Aaron and Mindy, whose marriage is stopped by the conniving local sheriff. The 10-minute animated film was officially licensed by Elvis Presley Enterprises, Inc (EPE) and follows Aaron on a madcap journey from Memphis to Las Vegas in a bid to win back Mindy.

The aim of the film is to provide a fun story with music and entertainment that can be enjoyed by grandparents, parents and children alike. Pauline Quayle, director for The Juice Films Ltd, says: "We've been pleased to work with such a famous and legendary icon as Elvis Presley and to have the full support of EPE to create a film that truly offers such wide appeal. Uniting generations and enabling them to enjoy a common link through the film has been a goal from the beginning. We're grateful to EPE for allowing us to have the artistic flair to achieve the ultimate attraction experience."

The film's 4D elements include seat rumbles, water and leg ticklers. "It's all about people having fun," Quayle continues. "We're providing a feel good factor and we all need a bit of that right now." *Elvis Rocks* is available for immediate release.

The Juice is also distributing *Ruin*, a futuristic thriller that combines cutting edge technology to produce a 4D attraction with the look and feel of a Hollywood movie.

In the seven-minute film, from Attraktion! Entertainment, a war between machines and the last human survivor takes audiences on a chase through the ruins of a forgotten world, as the hero attempts to escape the continuous assaults from the deadliest of weapons.

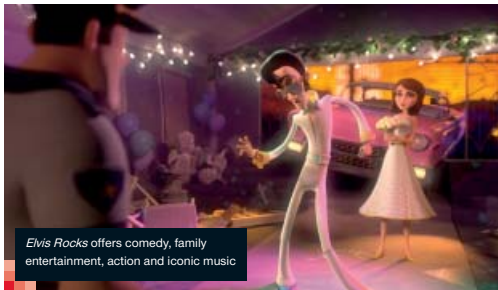
"The quality is amazing," says Quayle. "The opening scene looks as though it's actual film

footage, with incredibly life-like trees, bushes and sky. It's very dynamic and powerful. We didn't create it, but we recognised that it was something completely different."

To date, the film has been to attractions in Sweden, Estonia and Israel and proved popular at the recent IAAPA Asia show. The Juice Films Ltd is also the distributor for *The Chase*, a version for the ride simulator market, which combines the film with a ride experience.

Quayle is currently in discussion about more branded films for the future.

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*Elvis Rocks* offers comedy, family entertainment, action and iconic music





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TURN ON UNITED TECHNOLOGIES.



## GLOBAL IMMERSION

Visitors to the Centre for Life in Newcastle, UK can now experience the region's only 4D motion ride in the science centre's newly upgraded digital cinema, installed by Global Immersion.

Currently showing is *Hover Chase*, a high octane adventure during which hover bikes and their riders vie for poll position in a race that sees them travelling through

tricky terrains and landscapes. During the five-minute film, riders are taken on a journey negotiating hazardous city streets, a pine forest, a disused mine, caves and lakes. The 4D elements include water spray, wind, mist, smoke, smells and moving seats. A 15-minute Dracula-themed film is planned for the autumn, followed by a Santa Claus movie for Christmas.

The seats in the 48-seater theatre are similar to rollercoaster seats with four seats in each pod and a lap bar coming down across the riders. The pods rise 3ft

off the ground when the ride begins. The attraction has six-axis motion, so as well as moving forwards and backwards and side to side, it can move diagonally too, giving a fluid and natural movement.

Global Immersion installed a fully digital cinema initiative (DCI) compliant system complete with the latest high performance digital 3D projectors and 4D effect generators. The company also replaced the screen and upgraded the control system for improved performance of audio, lighting, media, 4D effects and display systems.

Visitors compete on virtual hover bikes at the Centre for Life's new 4D motion ride

## SPITZ, INC

Dynamic Earth is a new, 24-minute, full-dome documentary, which explores the inner workings of Earth's climate system. Narrated by actor Liam Neeson, audiences follow a trail of energy that flows from the sun into the interlocking systems that shape our climate – the atmosphere, oceans, and the biosphere.

Using visualisations based on satellite monitoring data and advanced supercomputer simulations, highlights include ultra-high-resolution visualisations of giant eddies spun up by the Gulf Stream, a supercomputer recreation of Hurricane Katrina, microscopic ocean creatures blown up to giant size, and the most detailed recreation of the surface of Venus ever produced.

Dynamic Earth is the result of a two-year long collaboration between: Spitz Creative Media, which was responsible for much of the photorealistic animation in the film, including a micro-to-macro view of the marine food chain; the Advanced Visualization Lab at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) at the University of Illinois; NASA's Scientific Visualization Studio; and Thomas Lucas Productions, Inc. The film was produced in association with the Denver Museum of Nature & Science and NASA Earth Science, which provided access to its cutting-edge databases and global views of ocean currents and sea ice.

The NCSA team used topographical data to inform its Venus visualisation. Artistic choreography, camera paths, colour schemes and cinematic treatment show the surface of Venus and demonstrate its truly hellish nature.

Topographical data gets the cinematic treatment to show the hellish surface of Venus

## KRAFTWERK LIVING TECHNOLOGIES

Kraftwerk's first Waterplexx 5D theatre will open in September at Sunway Lagoon Waterpark in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The 36-seat theatre is one of two attractions to be added to the Asian waterpark and is 4D specialist Kraftwerk Living Technologies' latest development. Created like a traditional 4D theatre, the main special effect is, unsurprisingly, water, in the form of fountains, water guns, rain and flat water jets with water being fired at guests from all directions, even the ceiling.

Additional elements are wind, fog, strobes, lasers, LED lighting and moving seats, which Kraftwerk has enhanced to work in totally wet environments. In cooperation with Polin, Kraftwerk developed backlit wall and ceiling panels made of fibreglass reinforced plastic.

Kraftwerk's Waterplexx 5D theatre provides high tech cinema technology including 3D HD projection. However, the main focus is on safe water effects. Using reverse-osmosis systems, UV treatment and, if necessary, heat sanitation ensure no bacteria can survive in the system.

The theatre has waterproof pneumatic motion base and antibacterial seats





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## TRANSFORMERS: THE RIDE - 3D

**F**light simulation technology and cutting edge special effects have been combined with 3D HD media to create Transformers: The Ride - 3D at Universal Studios Hollywood.

The motion-based thrill ride, which opened in May 2012, propels guests along 2,000ft (610m) of ride track, where they're surrounded by 14 gigantic screens, many at heights of 60ft (18m). Hailed as Universal Studios Hollywood's most ambitious ride ever created, it tells an original Transformers story using photo-realistic 3D



HD media, sophisticated special effects masterminded by Industrial Light & Magic and a roaming flight simulator ride system.

In the Transformers films, Earth's humans are caught in the middle of an intergalactic war between alien robots, the heroic Autobots and the evil Deceptions

that physically convert from common mechanical devices, such as cars, trucks and planes to robotic warriors.

The ride is a collaboration between creative consultant and filmmaker Michael Bay, Industrial Light & Magic, the brand stewards at Hasbro, Inc and Universal Creative.

## MACGILLIVRAY FREEMAN FILMS

**T**o *The Arctic 3D* tells the ultimate tale of survival. Narrated by Oscar winner Meryl Streep and directed by two-time Oscar nominated filmmaker Greg MacGillivray, the film takes audiences on a journey into the lives of a mother polar bear

and her twin seven-month-old cubs as they navigate the changing Arctic wilderness.

Captivating, adventurous and intimate footage shows the family's struggle in a frigid environment of melting ice, immense glaciers, waterfalls and snow-bound peaks.

MacGillivray Freeman Films (MFF) made the film, shot entirely in 15/65mm, in co-production with Warner Bros and Imax Filmed Entertainment. Produced on loca-

tion in Alaska, Canada, and Norway, the MFF crew spent eight months in the field over the course of four years. As well as being the first Imax 3D film ever made about the Arctic, it's also the first time a filmmaker has tracked and filmed a mother polar bear and her family at such close range for five consecutive days.

*To The Arctic 3D* is presented by One World One Ocean, a campaign started by Greg MacGillivray to change how people see and value the ocean and inspire them to take action to protect it. ([www.oneworld-oneocean.org](http://www.oneworld-oneocean.org)). MacGillivray says: "The changes we're witnessing in the Arctic are a warning of the global changes to come if we don't find a way to mitigate rising temperatures. We want to transport people to the Arctic with this film, make them fall in love with wildlife like polar bears, and motivate them to become part of the solution." ●

## "WE WANT TO TRANSPORT PEOPLE TO THE ARCTIC AND MAKE THEM FALL IN LOVE WITH THE POLAR BEARS"



The film shows how keeping alive is now more difficult for polar bears because of warming temperatures



# Designing Success

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Landscape architecture  
Attraction design  
Exhibit design  
Design management  
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# ILLUMINATING PROJECTS

The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi, the Empire State Building and Buckingham Palace and are among the attractions being lit up around the world



A 3D animation display on the Mosque and Fort marked the 40th anniversary of the United Arab Emirates National Day

## SHEIKH ZAYED GRAND MOSQUE

Lighting experts Obscura Digital of San Francisco, US illuminated the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi with a show using 44 projectors with a combined brightness of 840,000 lumens.

The display, which marked the 40th anniversary of the United Arab Emirates

National Day, featured a series of designs and visual representations illustrating the artistic styles of the mosque. Obscura Digital's team generated a laser scan of the surface area of the Grand Mosque to create a 3D model, mapping its hand-carved details. This included the façade, four minarets and 12 domes for a projection area of 600ft (182m)-wide by 351ft (107m)-high.

The Al Jahili Fort in the oasis city of Al Ain was simultaneously brought to life with imagery of the founding of the UAE. This included scenes of the former president Sheikh Zayed's and the ruling leaders' lives, Bedouin life and agriculture. Sheikh Zayed's vision for the mosque was a centre of cultural collaboration promoting understanding between world communities.

## THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE CONCERT, LONDON

The world watched as Buckingham Palace in London, UK was lit up by colourful projections as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee concert.

Wowing crowds and royals, the variety of animations ranged from flowers to rain by a number of artists. The palace projections were managed by XL Events and were delivered by 36 projectors, 12 Barco image pros and two lightware DVI matrices. The images were complemented by concert



Buckingham Palace's light show celebrated the Queen's Jubilee celebrations with colourful projections

stage wraparound LED screens fed with images of the superstars performing, which included Stevie Wonder, Tom Jones,

Kylie Minogue and Paul McCartney. The entire set was built around the Queen Victoria Memorial in front of the palace. XL Events

also provided the monitoring, which was used by D3 Technologies for the video mapping and playback of video on the Palace.

## EMPIRE STATE BUILDING, NEW YORK

Philips Color Kinetics is creating a state-of-the-art, dynamic lighting system at the iconic Empire State Building.

The building's tower lights are being switched to light emitting diodes (LEDs) to allow the building's facade and mast to change lighting scenes in real-time. The LED lights will be used to recognise key milestones, events, charitable organisations, countries and holidays.

The new computerised system provides a palette of more than 16 million colours, including hard-to-achieve pastels, in almost limitless combinations. Before, the traditional lighting fixtures allowed for 10 colours, but needed a team to spend several hours replacing each of the building's nearly 400 fittings. Ripple, cross-fade, particle and burst effects, previously not possible, can be easily automated to create unique lighting designs. The lighting system will also allow the building to minimise light spill, ensuring that light is



The Empire State Building's LED changeover will be completed in September

focused on the facade and mast, while providing enough light to allow the building to be seen from anywhere in New York City. This feature not only respects the night

sky, but the building's neighbours as well. The update is part of a \$550m (£354m, €442.5m) Empire State ReBuilding program to help make it more energy efficient.

Lighting is integral to the 3m-wide sculpture. Fixtures have been installed in the sculpture's base, pointing upwards and outwards to the east and west

## THE DROPLET, AUSTRALIA

A 6m (20ft)-tall droplet-shaped sculpture in Canberra, Australia has been lit up by LED.

Perth-born artist Stuart Green created the gleaming 3m (10ft)-wide sculpture, which has been installed with Anolis ArcPad 48 LED fixtures. The piece is made from laser-cut marine grade stainless steel and has a 10-degree tilt. It was commissioned by the Australian Capital Territory Government.

Lighting is integral to the sculpture. Fixtures have been installed in the sculpture's base, pointing upwards and outwards to the east and west. A colour changing sequence morphs from blue to pink to white over five minutes. The fixtures give slightly varied hues of the same colour throughout the sequence, providing a richer and rounded chromatic experience.

The ArcPad 48s were specified by Light Application in Australia and supplied by The ULA Group. Light Application's David Sparrow says the project required a flexible, high powered LED fixture that was compact, well-priced and maintenance-free.



The Droplet illuminates the night in Canberra



Sound and light helped reinforce the impact of the Tate's paintings

## THE TATE, BRITAIN

Early Victorian art at the Tate Britain has been brought to life with music and lighting effects. Mid-19th century artist John Martin's biblical panoramas were centre stage during the 11-minute sound and light show exhibition, which ran from February to April.

The aim was to recreate the impact the paintings – which have inspired movies, video games and other media – had when they first toured Victorian Britain. The son et lumière project used a range of sound effects including music, narrative and historical documentation over 16 JBL loudspeakers and three digital projectors. Speakers were wall-mounted behind the audience and low down near the paintings. A rubber buffer behind the mount gave additional protection.



A unified sound system links the world's largest automobile distribution centre and automobile museum

## AUTOSTADT WOLFSBURG, GERMANY

The world's largest automobile distribution centre and automobile museum has got a new sound system.

The Autostadt Wolfsburg and its automobile museum the ZeitHaus, built near the Volkswagen works, is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Germany. Since its opening in 2000, the theme park and out-of-school learning centre has attracted more than 23 million people. Its art, architecture and design ranges over a 25-hectare landscaped park and stages many cultural events each year.

Work began on a technical upgrade to Autostadt's sound reinforcement system in 2011. During the installation, the team built on an existing system, providing various brand pavilions and catering areas with background music and announcements.

The newly installed system now combines sound for 13 different buildings using the world's largest Dynacord installation. A feature of the installation is the Autostadt's integrated studio, which plays 12 different music programmes simultaneously. In addition, separate announcements can be made in individual buildings from the master control centre.



The world's largest Dynacord installation combines sound for 13 buildings



Stories are triggered when visitors approach a photo montage of the history of the yard

## BROOKLYN NAVY YARD, NEW YORK

The history of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, from the Revolutionary War to the 21st century, has been bought to life at a visitor centre.

The exhibit and visitors centre features exhibits showcasing the history and innovation of the Brooklyn Navy Yard where many warships, including the USS Monitor, were built. The centre offers interactive exhibits and videos, which use machines from Alcorn McBride, a manufacturer of show control, audio and video equipment for the themed-entertainment industry.

The ground floor features a photo montage of five 46in (117cm) Samsung displays driven by Alcorn McBride Digital Video Machines. Each display contains a motion detector, so when visitors approach, they trigger the story of the photo showcased.

Other information is delivered through handsets. The third floor includes models of ships with embedded video monitors triggered by motion detectors. A rugged-style theatre space, built from corrugated aluminium and cyclone fencing, tells the story of the yard's reinvention using a 70in (178cm) monitor fed by a video player.

## BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATIONS, UK

A 9m (29.5ft)-wide LED heart has been installed on Blackpool Tower, UK to shine on the Promenade. The heart structure at the top of the iconic Merlin Entertainment's attraction is covered in 900 programmable LEDs, which can be controlled to change colour, rotate, fade and shimmer.

Developed by Blackpool Illuminations and Worldwide Lighting, it has a palette of 16 million colours to choose from and off-site programming. It can operate as a standalone feature or link to specific ceremonial activities. For example, it can easily turn from a simple red beating heart, to a green St Patrick's Day special, to the Union Jack colours. The grade 1 listed building rules meant that during the project no support brackets could be drilled or welded onto the structure. Instead, all the lighting was sprayed to match the overall colour of the Tower and mounted onto brackets which were then clamped onto the structure. As the system is built around the tower, other intelligent lighting, such as lasers, can be added in the future. ●



Facing west and mounted on the tower at 165ft, the heart overlooks the headland



# EURO ATTRACTIONS SHOW 2012

As Europe's largest trade show for attractions, EAS brings industry suppliers and experts together. Here, some of them give their views on trends, challenges and exciting developments

KATHLEEN WHYMAN • MANAGING EDITOR • ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT



**SEAN HINTON**  
VP of Business  
Development  
WhiteWater  
West

## What are the current trends?

Innovations in both theme park and individual attraction design are at the forefront of our focus, as are new concepts and attractions business models.

Finding better ways to operate parks, such as adding additional retail space and integrating parks for night time and non-peak hours use, is also a big topic right now. At WhiteWater West, we believe we'll also see a convergence of wet and dry play across the industry. Integrating these elements provides a variety of experiences for guests and allows them to create and enjoy their own adventures.

## What are the challenges?

The challenge is to continue to drive guests to parks in a tough economic climate. This directly impacts a park's ability to generate revenue. These revenues will be dedicated to capital spending, which is necessary to continue to enhance guest experience and keep them coming back time and again.

## What's new and exciting?

The most exciting thing that's going on across the board is convergence. For example, we're seeing the combining of various waterslide 'slide paths' to create new, unique combinations of sensations. There's also the integration of signature



WhiteWater West's AquaCourse™ is among the products on display at EAS

waterslides with equipment like AquaPlay™ multi-level interactive play structures. The most recent innovation is the convergence of wet and dry attractions to create new experiences for guests. I believe we're now in the most creative, innovative period this industry has ever seen and it's exciting to witness projects all over the world where convergence is being explored and developed.

## What are you showing at EAS?

A number of products including will be showcased at EAS, including the AquaCourse™, an exciting wet/dry course of ropes, towers, bridges and zip lines plus our signature waterslides – Abyss™, AquaLoop™ and Family Python™.

We'll also be promoting our new fibre-glass, which has a 10-year warranty against fading and chalking.



Mack Rides' Blue Fire ride at Europa Park is a combination of a dark ride and a launched rollercoaster



**JOHN DAVIES**  
Director of UK  
operations,  
OmniTicket

#### What are the current trends?

The trends are to try new ways to attract visitors to attractions in the current economic climate. In terms of ticketing, it's a matter of using technology to attract the guest to purchase their ticket in advance and guarantee their attendance.

These elements encourage us to be innovative with technology to provide the attractions with the best ticketing sales and marketing platforms for both B2C and B2B clients.

We're doing this with the use of mobile phone technologies and unique distribution capabilities.

#### What are the challenges?

Convincing operators that investing in comprehensive ticketing systems can greatly enhance their visitor numbers in the long term, just as much as investing in other more guest-facing areas of the business.

#### What's new and exciting?

The continually advancing technology being introduced into smart phones. Guests can book a place in a virtual ride queue and use their phone as an admission ticket, either through bar-code delivery to the phone, or NFC (Near Field Communications) technology, which means merely holding their phone close to the admission scanner to gain entry.

#### What are you showing at EAS?

We'll be showing the latest version of our BOS ticketing application, which is being rolled out to attractions worldwide. The latest version includes a fully integrated food and merchandise application.



**CHRISTIAN VON  
ELVERFELDT**  
CEO,  
Mack Rides

#### What are the current trends?

The current trend in theme parks is for family rides. Operators understand that a park purely for young people won't bring in the revenue they want, so they're investing in attractions that are suitable for the whole family. Rollercoasters that can be enjoyed by all ages are currently in high demand.

#### What are the challenges?

The most important challenge at the moment is the diversity of standards. We believe that safety is a global issue and

should be treated as such. As chair of IAAPA, Roland Mack is focusing heavily on this issue.

#### What's new and exciting?

At Mack, we're very excited to be providing a launch coaster for a new theme park in Dubai. It will feature a launch from 0 - 110 km/h in 2.5 seconds, a 32m-tall loop, two corkscrews and a heart-line roll. It's good to see projects in the UAE being worked on again. On a general note, the market in China is expanding quickly and producing some great rides and it's exciting to see the growing markets in Asia and Russia.

#### What are you showing at EAS?

In Berlin we'll announce several projects for 2013 in Europe. We'll also highlight our compact MegaCoaster - our current installation at Etnaland, Sicily - and the spinning coaster, which is opening at Towerland, Netherlands in the autumn.



**SOHRET PAKIS**  
Marketing  
manager  
Polin Waterparks  
& Pool Systems



Polin's slide at the South Australian  
Aquatic and Leisure Centre, Australia

## ► What are the current trends?

In waterparks, clients are looking for more technology in slides and rides. This includes special effects, fog systems, water sprays, lasers and media features, such as music and videos. For example, we've incorporated big projectors into our ride Magic Sphere so users have a cinematic experience while they're on the ride.

Effects and technology-integrated waterslides are key. These can be integrated automated systems, such as waterslide traffic control/signal lights/sensors, interactive sensor systems, waterslide timing systems and control units plus visual and audio effects.

## What are the challenges?

Our clients demand interactive rides that provide a heart-pounding experience. Combining this with spectator appeal is a challenge to park owners. Using translucent and transparent slides is one way to make the rides interesting to watch.

## What's new and exciting?

Our most exciting developments include natural light effects in resin transfer moulding manufactured slides. To achieve this, we build rides that allow natural daylight to go through the slide and create

colour effects inside the tunnel when combined with the flow of water.

## What are you showing at EAS?

We'll be showcasing our patented King Cobra slide, which made its debut in America at Six Flags on July 24th. Already in a number of waterparks around the world, the ride is going to be installed under the name The King Dragon slide in the Great Mall of China.

We're also heading up the construction of the very first Cartoon Network themed waterpark in the world, which is currently being built in Thailand. Scheduled to open in 2013, the park will feature signature attractions including a gigantic family wave pool, a winding adventure river, speed-racing slides, family raft slides and one of the world's largest interactive water play areas for children. It's one of the most exciting projects I've ever worked on.

"Combining interactive rides that provide a heart-pounding experience with spectator appeal is a challenge to park owners"

## CASE STUDY

### P&P Projects, The Netherlands

**T**urnkey specialists P&P Projects will be showcasing an interactive, 3D dark ride that they're designing for Parques Reunidos' theme park Tusenfyrd in Norway.

The team at P&P Projects is currently developing the scenes, audiovisual scripts and scenic elements for the ride, which will be built in an unused cavern in the park.

The ride will have the capacity for 800 guests per hour and will target teenagers and young adults, which is a new direction for the primarily family-focused park. Unlike a traditional dark ride, the attraction will incorporate audiovisual and film sequences.

Created to mark the park's 25th anniversary, the ride will open in 2013 and will be Tusenfyrd's largest indoor attraction.



The ride will be  
built in an unused  
cavern in the park



**DOUG SMITH**  
VP Business  
Development,  
Prime Play

### What are the current trends?

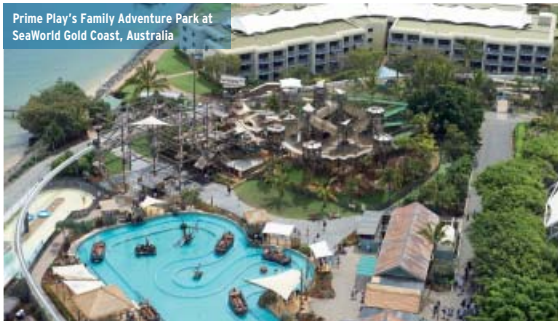
The current trend is to add more family attractions, rides and active areas.

Theme parks are researching ways to enlarge the demographic range that are visiting parks. Creating interactive and physically active areas create new experiences, which draw in new visitors.

### What are the challenges?

Attracting both repeat and new visitors. This is a mature industry that's been innovating new rides and attractions for many years. Visitors are always looking for the next new attraction. In this challenging economic environment, it's even more difficult to attract new visitors. This is overcome by focusing on the end client and working with park operators to create new and innovative interactive rides and zones that draw new and regular

Prime Play's Family Adventure Park at SeaWorld Gold Coast, Australia



visitors in, giving them reasons to return to the park multiple times.

### What's new and exciting?

The redevelopment of the FEC market, where the FECs are larger and higher quality. There's an increasing inclusion of FECs in amusement and theme parks as new fun zones for very hot, wet or cold weather days, allowing the seasonal parks to extend the length of their season. Interactive wet and dry experience zones

are an exciting active family experience. Families interact together, climbing and zip lining, in partially wet adventure zones, while in street clothes.

### What are you showing at EAS?

We'll be highlighting the continued development of our Family Adventure Park concept and line of products.

We'll also be showcasing AquaCourse™, the world's only aquatic ropes course, and a new top secret ride.



**SIMON FOULKES**  
Sales and  
marketing director  
Rainbow  
Productions

### What are the current trends?

Theme parks are tailoring their offer towards a much more targeted audience, rather than a one park suits all approach. This trend is enabling multiple attractions with the same owners to operate parks in similar catchment areas, as they're not in direct competition for guests. For example,

one park may specialise in pre-school attractions and entertainment, another may target thrill-seeking teenagers.

Another trend which seems to be on the increase is the emergence of more themed and licensed attractions and zones within parks. We recently worked with Twentieth Century Fox to deliver Ice Age character costumes to Merlin Entertainment's Alton Towers Resort and Gardaland in Italy.

### What are you showing at EAS?

We'll be displaying projects we created, including a branded character costume for Legoland Discovery Centre Duisburg, Germany. We'll also be showcasing the licensed children's characters that operators can book through us.

Costumes created for Edinburgh Zoo to celebrate the arrival of two pandas from China



### CASE STUDY

## SimEx-Iwerks Entertainment, US

San Diego Zoo



**S**imEx-Iwerks Entertainment's immersive attraction *Ice Age Dawn of the Dinosaurs* - The 4D Experience launched in the US this summer. Visitors to EAS will be able to find out more about the film that SimEx-Iwerks created with Twentieth Century Fox Consumer Products. The attraction was recently installed at the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago and San Diego Zoo, following its success in Merlin Entertainment's Alton Towers in the UK and Gardaland in Italy.

In the 14-minute, 4D experience, 3D footage from the third film in the *Ice Age* series is combined with synchronised physical effects.



**JONATHAN  
PLACHE**  
CEO, Vecto

## What are the current trends?

Micro additions to already established attractions seem to be very popular at the moment. While in some circumstances this will still represent sizeable investment, the risk of total change, and therefore the requirement for an expensive relaunch at a venue, is lowered.

Operators will be very aware of what works for them and they're thinking much more carefully about where they'll get the best return for their investment.

## What are the challenges?

The lack of capital investment, while facing a demand for a much higher quality product, is a challenge for all suppliers.

Communication in this environment is key. We're finding it's taking a great deal

more time to discuss what the client is looking for and reassure them they're getting the best possible solution. Clients are looking for guarantees of income, but there's a limit to how this can be achieved.

The best products on the market will still fail to generate profit for the centre operator if the centre itself is run poorly, the customer service is lacking in quality and the product isn't promoted properly.

## What's new and exciting?

The side effects of a move to greater quality, as operators ramp up their demands and look for something different and more creative, is an exciting development in the industry.

## What are you showing at EAS?

Vecto will be showcasing its interactive electronic treasure hunt, SniggleHunt. The



## Electronic treasure hunt SniggleHunt

treasure hunt was launched last year at EAS in London and since then has been installed in a range of locations in the UK and US. The next stage will be the release of the full-blown solution for the European parks market.

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Register at [www.iaapa.org/EAS](http://www.iaapa.org/EAS)

## CASE STUDY

### Sally Corporation, US

**S**ally Corporation will be displaying two new dark rides at this year's EAS – Power Blast and Forbidden Island.

The company's stand will host fully detailed models of both Power Blast – an interactive dark ride concept featuring unique Viper SixD video technology – and Forbidden Island, which is an Indiana Jones-type adventure.

Power Blast is a space-age adventure with interactive video game-type design elements, interactive animatronics, fixed and moving targets, rotating vehicles, seat vibration and other special effects. Additionally, the shooting device, which is equipped with an electro magnetic sensor, allows the rider to track six degrees of motion giving the video images a 3D quality. Images can be moved forward/backward, up/down, left/right, or rotated about three perpendicular axes.

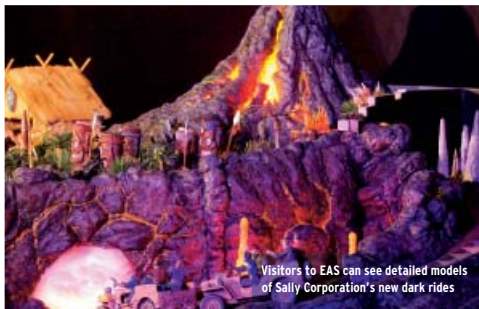
Vehicles pause to engage the virtual characters in four major play areas with 16ft x 9ft (5m x 3m) screens. Although

the size is flexible, the ride has a footprint of only 8,000sq ft (743sq m), and has 10 four-passenger vehicles with a throughput of 644 people per hour.

Forbidden Island is an interactive adventure. Visitors are sent on a journey to a mysterious volcanic island to rescue

the island's treasure and free two scientists from the clutches of the evil Volcanikus before the volcano erupts.

Covering an area of 12,000sq ft (1,115sq m), with a track length of 564ft (172m), the ride has 13 four-person cars and a capacity for 720 people per hour. ●



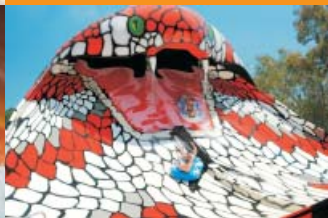
Visitors to EAS can see detailed models of Sally Corporation's new dark rides





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## WHETTING THE APPETITE

Advice on how to market new rides and save water in droughts, plus details of their dream installations are among the results of our virtual round table for waterpark suppliers



**POLIN, TURKEY**

Sohret Pakis,  
Marketing Manager

### What would your dream installation be?

To create a waterpark for deprived children in a poor area of the world, such as South Africa, for children who have never had the privilege of visiting a waterpark before, or experienced the delight of playing in a clean, sanitary swimming pool.

### What new technology are you using?

We've invested in composites manufacturing technologies, simulation and computer-aided design and development, material technology, such

as surfacing materials, non-slip surfaces and pleurae coatings on soft surfaces, splash pads, and special effects and technology-integrated products.

As a pioneer in resin transfer moulding (RTM) composites manufacturing technology, we plan to focus on this area more in future. We're also focusing on our Natural Light Effect (NLE) technology.

### What's the most exciting new product?

RTM-manufactured waterslides, because they create the best-looking slides.

Also, effects and technology-integrated waterslides are very exciting. Automated systems for slides include waterslide traffic control or signal lights, interactive sensor systems, waterslide timing systems and control units. Special effects can include visual and auditory effects and the integration of media-based attractions.



Polin's Turbulance at Aqualand, Bassin d'Arcachon, France

### What's the biggest challenge for operators?

Guests constantly demand novelty, so waterpark operators need to make sure they keep offering new, exciting rides to entice them to come back again.

Our research shows that guests want interactivity, originality and rides that allow them to share the fun and overall experience with others. Plus, they want rides that offer the most heart-pounding experiences.

### Where are the future markets?

The Asian market is growing and is open to new ideas and concepts.

### What's next for waterparks?

We'll see the synchronisation of various aspects of attraction design. Manufacturers will integrate manufacturing and material technologies, design programs, media-based attractions and special effects.

"I want to create a waterpark for deprived children who have never experienced the delight of playing in a clean, sanitary swimming pool"

### How should operators market a new ride?

Start promoting the new ride as soon as you've finalised the plans. Use social media to build enthusiasm with customers. Operators can post images of what the ride will look like, as well as details of its construction and statistics about how fast riders will move on it. Also encourage guests to comment on it and share the information with friends online. Advance ticket sales and competitions can work too. ▶

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**NEPTUNE  
BENSON, USA**  
Dave Grebowski,  
marketing director

## What would your dream installation be?

A dream installation is one where we're able to fully demonstrate the capabilities of our Defender filter to save water and other consumable resources, provide a clean, healthy, enjoyable environment for swimmers and deliver significant financial advantages for our customers.

## What's the new technology?

Our Defender Regenerative Media Filter is still our flagship product and hasn't been equaled since its debut in 2004.

Compared with traditional sand filtration, Defender eliminates 90 per cent of backwash water waste. We estimate the Defender filter has saved more than 1.7

billion gallons of water worldwide. It can also reduce chemical consumption by 30 per cent, energy consumption by 50 per cent and mechanical space by up to 75 per cent. However, because it delivers pristine water quality, the avoidance of health incidents may well be its most valuable benefit.

## What's the biggest challenge for operators?

Continuing economic constraints, coupled with the escalation of energy and other operating expenses, continues to challenge the solvency of waterparks worldwide. As we work with new and existing facilities to help improve their operations, more and more are, rightfully, focusing on their total life cycle costs rather than just the initial purchase expense.

## What are the future markets?

Fountains and water features are starting to emerge as logical opportunities, as health and conservation concerns become a bigger focus for these installations.

We've also seen the "splashpad" segment become more stringent in its control of water quality and waste.

## How can operators run waterparks during droughts?

There's no need for operators to be mired in traditional water management practices that result in the excessive waste of important economic and environmental resources. We've demonstrated the water savings that an operator can achieve using Defender's advanced technology.

This allows waterpark operators to partner with local authorities and become advocates of water conservation, rather than targets of special interest groups.

## What's next for waterparks?

A trend towards expansion into the less saturated global markets, where waterparks and similar attractions are less prevalent. We also anticipate a number of planned domestic projects will be freed-up once the US economy ultimately stabilises.



**WATERPARK  
TOYS, CANADA**  
Craig White, president

## What would your dream installation be?

Any installation outside of the typical paid entry commercial facility. As our industry grows, it's exciting to share new products and services with clients who typically

don't have access to waterparks, either because of financial or geographical exclusions. Not all waterpark rides and features can, or should be, restricted to such facilities. I believe it's up to suppliers to educate end users on all potential applications.

## What's the biggest challenge for operators?

Product quality. As our industry grows and expands, so do the number of new companies and markets.

As a result of this, and economic conditions, waterpark operators will be subjected to sub-par quality and standards in the goods they purchase.

## Where are your future markets?

Private markets. Not all consumers have the ability to access large scale waterparks, whether as a result of financial or geographical restrictions.

Also, smaller resorts and facilities will add features to their destinations to attract and retain local and visiting guests.



## WHITEWATER WEST, USA

Geoff Chutter,  
president and CEO

### What would your dream installation be?

In 2011, we received a WWA Innovation Award for creating the first acrylic Master Blaster, which went into our dream installation – the Disney Dream Cruise ship.

Many unique engineering challenges had to be overcome, such as ensuring the 360-degree view of the ship's deck wasn't lost. To compensate for the lack of slope on board, we customised a gravity-defying Master Blaster to provide the necessary acceleration. The transparent flume that has to endure harsh and unpredictable conditions, including thermal expansion, is uniquely made with 10 acrylic sections held together with specialised connectors.

### What's the biggest challenge for operators?

In the US market, the biggest challenge will be the economy. While the 'Greek' situation isn't likely to replicate itself in North America, the American economy is in for a significant restructuring. This will result in people holding onto their money, creating a negative impact on admissions.

### How can operators run waterparks during droughts?

Combat public perception that waterparks are water hogs. Between 97 and 98 per cent of waterpark water is reclaimed or reused after the initial fill, so the focus should be to educate people on this fact.

Other advice to consider – fix leaks in flumes, pipes or pool basins. This just makes good sense financially and visible leaks look bad on the facility. Cut back on landscaping materials that require lots



WhiteWater West's  
Extreme River at China  
Long Waterpark in China

of water. Utilise more rock and natural grasses versus flowering seasonal plants. Also, do deck washing as needed, as opposed to standard operating procedure.

### How should operators market a new ride?

Get free publicity. Put press releases out to the industry and community media, but make sure your stories are newsworthy and have great photos. There are tons

of resources online that can assist you. Younger guests are on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Consider how to get the word out in ways they can relate to, especially video.

### What's next for waterparks?

We'll see a convergence of wet and dry play across the industry. Integrating these elements provides a variety of experiences, allowing guests to have their own adventure.



## AUSTRALIAN WATERSLIDES

Annette Matthews,  
managing director

### What would your dream installation be?

To design and develop a waterpark in my hometown of Coffs Harbour, NSW, Australia for the local children and families.

### What's the new technology?

We've recently developed a high quality waterpark attraction called KIPS (Kids Interactive Play Structures). These are made up of five zones – either stand-alone or fully integrated. They're made from 316 electro-polished stainless steel and colourful fibreglass, so the structures will look good for a long time.

### Where are your future markets?

China, Africa and the Middle East.

### How can operators run waterparks during droughts?

Alternate operation of rides through the midday time to offset evaporation and drag-out. Review the filtration system in place and change to filters that don't require standard backwash procedures.

### What's next for waterparks?

Installations in smaller, resort-type hotels and accommodation and the upgrade of older council swimming facilities.

## WATERPARKS



### WATERPARK TOYS, CANADA

Craig White, president

#### What new technology are you using?

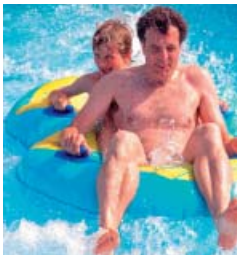
Our focus is on enhancing the user-experience of our rides while keeping the cost to operators the same. It's important in these challenging times to give operators the chance to recover their capital investments much faster.

#### Where are your future markets?

We see a lot of excitement in India and China. We're also starting to see demand for our slides in the Middle East and African countries. We're working on several projects in Iran, Congo, Ghana and Nigeria.

#### What's the biggest challenge for operators?

Waterpark operators in different countries are facing different challenges. In India,



The current trend is for family experiences

waterparks are growing increasingly larger and the operators are facing serious capacity problems. In Europe, waterparks are struggling due to the economic situation. In the US, several parks are still struggling to get financing for their expansion plans.

#### What's next for waterparks?

There's more focus on family rides where more than one person can enjoy them.



### LO-Q, UK AND USA

Ryan Dixon,  
marketing manager

#### What new technology are you using?

We've invested in making a virtual queuing technology, called Q-band, for waterparks. Customers rent a waterproof RFID wristband and reserve the slide that they want to go on next at a touchscreen kiosk located in the park. The small digital display on the wristband counts down to their reserved slide time. The Q-band adds revenue to an operator's bottom line from customers renting the Q-bands because it unlocks the guest's ability to spend in the park. We're currently finalising a new version of the Q-band that allows guests to load cash onto their waterproof RFID wristbands, so they don't need to carry cash around the park.

"Children's water playgrounds are an important component of a waterpark. Teens get dropped off at the park with a few dollars, but the little ones pull the whole family to the facility"



### EMPEX WATER TOYS, CANADA

Wyeth Tracy, president

#### What new technology are you using?

EmpeX continues to develop the use of composite plastics for use in chlorinated water. This material offers properties preventing corrosion and offers low heat and electrical conductivity for safe children's play. Being a lighter, yet very durable material, no elaborate foundations are needed, therefore construction costs are reduced.

#### What's the biggest challenge for operators?

The world economies continue to splutter in many parts of the world. This will be a challenge for parks and suppliers.

#### How should operators market a new ride?

Children's water playgrounds are an important component of a waterpark. Teens get dropped off at the park with a few dollars, but the little ones pull the whole family to the facility.

#### Where are your future markets?

Future markets will be active in the Middle East, China, India and Brazil. The US market is a huge economy and should be considered a future market once the economy turns the corner.

#### What's next for waterparks?

Waterparks will continue to evolve with larger and more elaborate water attractions. Water playgrounds, once not an important focus in the waterpark, will continue to evolve and play an increasingly important role in making these venues a continued success.



### GATEWAY TICKETING, USA

Michael Furman, director  
of sales and marketing

#### What new technology are you using?

We've invested in developing a customer loyalty program, which is designed to increase per cap revenue from a park's repeat customers. We've also developed a seamless mobile phone ticketing module that enables a waterpark to sell and deliver tickets generated from their ticketing system, instantly, to smartphone users.

#### What's new and exciting?

RFID-stored value offering. When combined with our loyalty offering, waterpark operators now have access to an incredible amount of consumer purchase behaviour detail, which can be used to make strategic and tactical decisions that impact revenue. ●



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# LEISURE INDUSTRY WEEK

Leisure Industry Week (LIW) returns to the Birmingham NEC, UK this September, showcasing a variety of exhibitors and 150 hours of free educational sessions and features for the active leisure sector

BRIEFING BY LAURA DAGG • LIW TEAM

**L**IW is the only UK trade show to cover the entire out-of-home leisure industry, incorporating play and attractions, health and fitness, sport, pool and spa, eat and drink and leisure facilities. These sectors combine to offer business solutions, from product innovations to retention tips and secondary spend opportunities.



Visitors can road test the products

## STAYCATION

Despite family budgets feeling the strain of the recession, domestic attractions can take heart from the fact that many will choose to stay in the UK and take advantage of its rich visitor attractions and play facilities. It's essential that operators consider how best to spend their budgets to ensure maximum efficiency throughout the procurement process, allowing the provision of destinations, which will attract visitors again and again. At LIW, visitors can meet specialists in their fields around the exhibition floor and research the newest innovations all under one roof.

This year's trade show will see the introduction of the Association Lounge where visitors can seek advice from some of the leading leisure associations. These include the Play Providers Association (PPA) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).

## KEYNOTE SPEECH

As part of the Play Providers Conference, Scott Brown, from WDD online (Website Design and Development), will deliver a keynote entitled Magic of the Mouse: Bringing the Florida theme park experi-

## ABOUT LIW 2012

**Dates:** 18 – 20 September 2012

**Venue:** Birmingham NEC, UK

### Opening times:

Tuesday 18th Sept 10:00 – 17:00

Wednesday 19 Sept 10:00 – 17:00

Thursday 20 Sept 10:00 – 16:00

### Register:

Visitors can register for free entry at [www.liw.co.uk](http://www.liw.co.uk). LIW is also on Twitter @L\_I\_W, LinkedIn and Facebook/leisure-industry-week

**To exhibit,** contact Joel Willmore on [joel.willmore@ubm.com](mailto:joel.willmore@ubm.com) or +44 (0)20 7955 3968.



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18-20 Sept 2012 • NEC Birmingham UK

ence to your guest. Attendees will discover what one of the world's favourite theme parks can teach them about creating success, embracing change, leading their team and growing their business.

The line up also includes a return for Tim Fearon from the Extraordinary Coaching Company and a session highlighting the

## EXHIBITOR PROFILE 1

### Innovative Leisure

**D**elegates can soar above their colleagues heads at LIW, as they travel along a Mobile Zip Line. Making its debut appearance at the trade show, the ride starts at Innovative Leisure's stand inside the NEC and takes visitors to the show's outdoor exhibit area where a Water Wars water balloon game will be set up. The play and attractions section inside will also feature a fully operational SkyTrail High Ropes course and a Climbing Wall.

The Mobile Zip Line is being distributed exclusively in the UK and Europe by

Innovative Leisure. Access is via a steel staircase, which takes riders to a height of 8.3m (28ft). At the end of the attraction, patent-pending brake technology, the Auto-Retract®, is employed to slow the last part of the ride in a smooth, controlled action.

The company's central exhibit will be the Sky Trail High Ropes. The Sky Trail Navigator is one of a range of major high ropes courses offered by Innovative Leisure, which distributes the attractions in the UK on behalf of US manufacturer Ropes Courses, Inc.

Also on display will be the Grip-A-Rock climbing wall. Built onto a galvanized trailer, the wall is moulded from real rock, resulting in a very realistic climbing surface.



Climbing walls will feature on Innovative Leisure's stand at LIW



Innovative Leisure's Sky Trail High Ropes course will be a larger format to the one on show at LIW last year

► health benefits of play in children, including the results of research with York St John's University.

The Play Advice Clinic, led by RoSPA, an association established 90 years ago to help prevent accidents, will provide visitors with crucial legislation updates and the opportunity to ask the experts

about specific queries and concerns. The play and attractions sector will be well represented, with exhibitors showcasing a diverse range of products and solutions.

These include Hippo Leisure, Innovative Leisure, Monster Parties Ltd, Omniticket, Southwest Play, Timberplay, Taylor Made Play Equipment and The Theme Team. ●



9,000 people are expected to attend LIW

## EXHIBITOR PROFILE 2

### Timberplay

The team from children's play equipment suppliers Timberplay will be showcasing their play spaces, which present natural timber play equipment alongside playful landscaping, at LIW. They will also be offering advice on installation and maintenance services, play space design and landscape works.

The company recently worked on the prestigious Jubilee Gardens project, on the playground designed by Frosts Landscapes and situated next to the River Thames. Overlooked by the



Play equipment by Timberplay at the Jubilee Gardens in London, UK

London Eye, the play area features a Timberwood Tangle, a climbing structure and a flock of wobbly sheep, all supplied by Timberplay. Other recent installations include a climbing structure at Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, which is aimed at teens and adults. Two exciting developments in Cornwall, UK – Kidzworld and Heartlands – also use Timberplay equipment to create original and engaging play spaces to suit their destination's play attractions.

The team at Timberplay will be introducing one of their new partner brands at LIW, Santa & Cole from Barcelona, which present urban lighting and street furniture to enhance outdoor spaces.





### Severn Lamb locos heading for the east

Severn Lamb has completed two more turnkey projects, one in Qatar and the other in India. The former involved the supply and installation of a 1.6km-long rail track and the design and manufacture of a 24in gauge Arrow River locomotive and three coaches in a contract for the Al Khor Park. The latter saw the supply of a new 24in gauge Lincoln locomotive and two coaches to the Urban Improvement Trust in Kota, with delivery having taken place in May.

**fun-kit.net** KEYWORD

severn



### Gamma LeisurePOS modules for SeaCity

Southampton's new SeaCity Museum saw the installation of a range of LeisurePOS™ software modules from Gamma Dataware. Among these were: Admissions & Ticketing; Booking & Event Management; Membership/CRM; and Integrated Chip & PIN at point of sale. The museum is part of the development of the city's Cultural Quarter and tells the story of the people of Southampton across the ages.

**fun-kit.net** KEYWORDS

gamma dataware

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### July debut for Intamin's new Despicable Me ride

Universal Studios Florida's newest attraction is debuted in July in the shape of Despicable Me: Minion Mayhem. The new simulator ride, built by Switzerland-based Intamin and based on Universal Pictures and Illumination Entertainment's 2010 animated film *Despicable Me*, takes visitors on a 3D adventure in the company of Gru, Margo, Edith and Agnes and a variety of other "mischievous minions". It's situated in Production Central and replaces Jimmy Neutron's Nicktoon Blast, which closed last August.

**fun-kit.net** KEYWORD

intamin

### Mediamation 4D cinema for New York Legoland

MediaMation is to provide a turnkey 4D theatre for Merlin Entertainment's new US\$12m Legoland Discovery Centre in Yonkers, NY, US. Set to open in 2013 at the city's Ridge Hill Mall, the 98-seat Lego® 4D cinema will feature custom seats and include wind, rain, lightning and snow effects. The project will comprise installation and integration of the lighting and 16-channel sound system as well as 3D digital projection, show control and integration.



**fun-kit.net** KEYWORD

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