The fifth annual Spa Life UK event took place recently at Center Parcs Woburn Forest, featuring a jam-packed schedule of expert talks. The event comprised three main parts: the Conference; the Spa Life Forum; and the invitation-only CEO Summit, where BBC business guru Dr Paul Thomas provided insights into increasing effectivity in the workplace without losing front-line staff. The Good Spa Awards were also incorporated into this year’s event, with a live ceremony held for the first time.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=8p2S7

Marketing and ops top agenda at Spa Life UK

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Business boom for suppliers at IAAPA

“Big starts here” was the official theme for this year’s IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando, Florida, and big was certainly what was delivered as millions of pounds worth of contracts were signed at the event last month. Many UK suppliers were present as attendees shared insight, sparked new relations and viewed new innovations on the trade floor.

This year’s event saw more than 1,000 companies exhibiting products, 225 educational speakers giving talks and more than 27,000 people from all over the world in attendance. Some of the more notable unveils from the trade floor included Sally’s £64,000 Joker animatronic for the upcoming ride Justice League: Battle for Metropolis 4D, while Triotech offered new details on the Voyage to the Iron Reef dark ride and US Thrill Rides unveiled its record-breaking Polercoaster. Details: http://lei.sr?a=K5W4A

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énergie set for ‘biggest growth ever’ in 2015

énergie chief Jan Spaticchia started the fitness franchise in 2003 and has set his sights on leading the fitness franchise company through its biggest growth phase yet, with a raft of new gym openings planned in the UK and Europe during 2015. Due to conclude 2014 with around 90 clubs open or in presale, the group aims to open 36 clubs between January and December next year, across its three core brands: Fit4less, énergie Fitness for Women and énergie Fitness Clubs. In the first three months of 2015, énergie will open two clubs per month, which will increase to three per month from April and four from October. The first quarter will see openings of low cost brand Fit4less in Preston, West Ealing, Epsom, Manchester, Aylesbury and Bedford.

“The fitness franchise market is at a confident high as we enter 2015,” said Spaticchia, whose group reports a network turnover of £26m per annum. “The énergie Group has invested considerably in improving services, training and systems right across the board, which has put us in a strong position as the market leader. Next year is set to be a pivotal year for the group as its looks to create a platform for unprecedented growth.”

énergie will also extend its international portfolio in the New Year, as well as continuing its expansion in the Irish market. Having opened its third Fitness for Women franchise in Latvia in October, énergie will open its first Fit4less clubs in Plavnieki, Latvia, and Gadansk, Poland in Q1 of 2015.

“We have mainly been focusing on ensuring that our existing clubs are well supported, introducing a new support structure and management team,” added Spaticchia. “Next year, we will continue to build on this, but with additional personnel we will also be able to focus on growth abroad.”

Meanwhile, énergie recently unveiled its latest Fit4less club in Lincoln – the 34th gym in the brand portfolio and the first to occupy a purpose-built new premise. The 7,500sq ft (697sq m) building features all the latest Precor equipment, a large free weights section, a Hampton training rig and a spacious studio that offers a wide range of classes. Details: http://lei.sr?a=y9X4M

Sally Corp won a Brass Ring award for its booth

League: Battle for Metropolis 4D, while Triotech offered new details on the Voyage to the Iron Reef dark ride and US Thrill Rides unveiled its record-breaking Polercoaster. Details: http://lei.sr?a=K5W4A

Carbon Management Specialist at Condor Golf

Condor Golf is looking for a high calibre Carbon Management Specialist to join our growing team. This role will involve overseeing and managing all aspects of our golf courses’ carbon management. You will be required to report to the Director of Sustainability and work closely with various departments across the business. Details: http://lei.sr?a=9R2uS

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IOC explores future of the Olympics

The International Olympic Committee has published its long-awaited Olympic Agenda 2020 report – a strategic roadmap for the future of the Olympic Movement.

The report consists of 40 proposals aimed at transforming and “future proofing” the IOC and its operations.

Varying from changes to the bidding process and improving ethics to the launch of a new Olympic TV Channel, the proposals will be discussed and voted on by the full IOC membership at the 127th IOC Session on 9 December in Monaco.

One of the key suggestions is to make the initial stages of the bidding process for Summer and Winter Olympic Games more attractive by adding an “invitational phase.”

During the new process, first phase cities considering a bid will be advised about the opportunities an official bid offers – in particular to legacy and sustainability.

Speaking at the launch of the Agenda 2020 document, IOC president Thomas Bach called it the “culmination of a year of open, transparent and widespread debate and discussion”.

He added: “These 40 recommendations are like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. When you put them together, a picture emerges that shows the IOC safeguarding the uniqueness of the Olympic Games and strengthening sport in society.” To read the full report and recommendations, follow the link below.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=N3z4h

SNI launches mental health programme

Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) has launched a Mental Health and Wellbeing pilot programme, aiming to increase awareness of the importance of mental health among the region’s sports operators.

The scheme will “target all aspects of positive mental health” from grassroots to high performance level and also help sports clubs and governing bodies build a mental health support structure and education programme.

Building on the success of the Sport Northern Ireland Mental Health Awareness initiative delivered in partnership with the Public Health Agency, the SNI pilot will deliver programmes that will have a direct impact on the coaching and playing population of sports clubs. SNI will work with a number of partners on the initiative, such as the charity Sporting Chance, founded by former Arsenal and England football captain Tony Adams.

CEO Antoinette McKeown said: “To strengthen mental health resilience in the sporting community is an essential building block, but when a time comes that an individual asks for help, they need to receive this as quickly as possible. Sport is a vital component in building resilience, both personally as well as within the club setting. Our programme aims to build mental resilience in our athletes and provide support when it is needed.”

The initiative will be rolled out in phases, with the first starting in November 2014. Details: http://lei.sr?a=G2y7f
UK Sport chair hails lottery fund

UK Sport chair Rod Carr has warned of complacency over Team GB’s recent Olympic successes and called for continued investment in elite sport using National Lottery money.

Describing lottery funding as “the fuel that feeds the engine”, Carr said that the decision to set up UK Sport and to invest in the system in 1997 has transformed the fortunes of British sport.

“Since National Lottery funding began it has turbo-charged the sporting system in Great Britain to such an extent we are now among the sporting super powers at the Olympic and Paralympic Games,” he said.

“The funding has supported more than 4,500 athletes on UK Sport’s World Class Programme and between them they have won a staggering 633 Olympic and Paralympic medals.

“The sustained investment has allowed this country to attract and retain some of the world’s best coaches and support staff. It has help develop elite training centres and deliver, alongside our science medicine and technology arm, the English institute of Sport, the talent ID campaigns that have fast-tracked athletes like Helen Glover, Lutalo Muhammad and Lizzy Yarnold to Olympic glory.”

Carr added that Team GB’s transformation has been nothing short of remarkable since the introduction of lottery funding, with the nation coming 3rd at London 2012, as opposed to 36th at Atlanta 1996. Details: http://lei.sr?a=e8w4s

Grimsby confirms £200m stadium plans

Grimsby Town Football Club (GTFC) is hoping to take proposals for a new community stadium to the next level by securing a lease for the Peaks Parkway site south of the town.

The ambitious plans include a 14,000-capacity community stadium as well as housing and retail developments worth around £200m.

GTFC director John Fenty said that while the five-year lease on the site was not a green light for development, it would be a clear statement of intent and would allow the club to have further talks with businesses that could help underpin the plan and offer financial backing. The move comes as a year-long exclusivity agreement with North East Lincolnshire Council runs out.

The council and GTFC had the agreement in place so the club could do initial assessments on the viability of the site. The club had previously planned a new stadium for the Great Coates area in the town, but failed to secure council backing for the scheme.

Fenty added that after more than 115 years at Blundell Park, the club is desperate to provide the new facility that will be a springboard for the club to re-enter the Football League.

Grimsby was relegated from the Football League in 2010 for the first time in 100 years and has so far failed to gain promotion back.

Fenty said: “If successful, this project will leave a lasting legacy, deliver a flagships project, the first for generations. It would also secure the vast array of community schemes currently being delivered by Grimsby Town Sports and Education Trust, the club’s delivery arm, all of which are as at much risk as the club itself, should this scheme not come to fruition.” Details: http://lei.sr?a=e2y3U

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**Exercise to be used to help manage blood pressure**

New figures from Public Health England (PHE) reveal that diseases caused by high blood pressure are estimated to cost the NHS more than £2bn a year, and exercise could prove to be part of the solution.

A collaboration between a number of health agencies in the UK will result in people being urged to get a blood pressure check and take preventative measures.

According to Professor Huon Gray, national clinical director for heart disease for NHS England, lifestyle plays a large part in managing blood pressure: “Over half of all strokes and many heart attacks could be prevented by ensuring people take steps to get their blood pressure into the normal range, but unfortunately, high blood pressure often goes unrecognised.”

Dubbed the silent killer, more than five million people are not aware that they have high blood pressure. It affects one in four adults and is one of the biggest risk factors for premature death and disability in England and accounts for 12 per cent of visits to GPs.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=q6E6U

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**STA appoints new CEO as Roger Millward steps down**

Swimming Teachers’ Association (STA) CEO Roger Millward has announced that he will retire next summer, with his son Theo set to take over the reigns.

Millward senior announced that he would be stepping down at the STA’s recent national conference, having spent 20 years at the helm. He will continue to play an active part in STA, working in particular on an international level with IFSTA members.

Millward junior joined STA full-time in 2011 and is the current operations director and said it was an “enormous honour” to be appointed CEO of the world’s largest swimming teaching and lifesaving organisation.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=r2Y3a

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**LA fitness ‘premiumising’ London**

LA fitness has outlined plans for growth and potential future investment as the operator confirms it is near the end of its CVA process.

Speaking exclusively to Leisure Opportunities, LA fitness CEO Martin Long confirmed that, of the 33 clubs originally earmarked for disposal, 18 have since been sold and an additional five landlords have found new tenants, including the site in Chester which is now trading under the Nuffield brand.

An agreement was due to be reached on the final nine or 10 clubs by the end of November, with some due to transfer to new owners.

The remaining clubs – of which there were to be “approaching 50 once everything is tied up by the end of the month” – will be predominately in London and the south-east. The core group of clubs has performed well, in spite of “significant disruption” to the estate since the CVA was announced in March, with joiners up 10 per cent and revenues up 4 per cent.

Capital will begin to be released to the entire estate towards the end of Q1 2015, with all clubs due to receive investment.

In addition, throughout the course of 2015, a further seven of the 13 central London clubs will be upgraded and rebranded to the LAX by LA fitness brand – the operator’s premium offering. These will join the existing three LAX clubs – St Botolph’s, South Kensington, and London Wall, which is due to be relaunched as LAX in the first half of December.

“We’re ‘premiumising’ our offering in London,” confirmed Long. “At this stage I don’t plan for any more than 10 LAX clubs in total, all in prime London locations. However, even those clubs that remain under the LA fitness brand will be brought up a level in terms of their offering. “In 2015 most of the investment will be within the M25, but the entire estate will have received a facelift by January 2016.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=c3A5R

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**Serco to sell leisure arm during restructure**

Up to 70 UK leisure and sports facilities face an uncertain future after operator Serco announced plans to sell its leisure arm.

Services giant Serco is looking to offload several of its ‘non-core’ businesses as part of a strategy overhaul, ahead of a planned £550m rights issue. One of these businesses is Serco Leisure, which manages 70 UK locations including Bisham Abbey and Lilleshall National Sports Centres, the National Water Sports Centre and Manchester Aquatics Centre.

Livingstone Partners is understood to be handling the sale of the leisure unit, which has more than 66,000 members across its facilities. A Serco Leisure spokesperson told Leisure Opportunities that the process is ongoing and that it “wouldn’t be appropriate” to outline a timescale for the completion of the sale at this stage.

Serco recently cut its profit forecast for 2014/15, and wrote off £1.5bn from the value of the business following a review by new group CEO Rupert Soames, who is the grandson of Winston Churchill. The move prompted a negative response from investors and the company’s share price has almost halved in recent weeks.

In a statement, Soames said that his review had encompassed “much turning over of stones” as he bids to bring long-term stability to the ailing business, adding: “There are a tough couple of years ahead as we make this transition, but it will be worth it.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=Q8j4M

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**LA fitness CEO Martin Long is targeting London**

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Roger Millward (right) and his son Theo

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Bisham Abbey is among the leisure sites operated by Serco

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Details: http://lei.sr?a=Q8j4M
MPs pledge to tackle inactivity

MPs attending the first ever Parliamentary Debate on physical activity have agreed that the government has a large role to play in kickstarting a reversal of the current trend towards inactivity.

The well attended debate took place on 18 November and was the first time Parliament has talked about inactivity in its 800 year history.

ukactive, whose latest report, Steps to solving inactivity, was referred to throughout, has campaigned tirelessly to get physical inactivity onto the public health agenda and is buoyed by the debate.

CEO, David Stalker, said: "Parliament is now on board with the physical inactivity narrative – that's a clear indication of how far the pendulum has swung. We look forward to driving focus further in 2015 and beyond."

Minister for Public Health Jane Ellison said physical activity is now "more important than obesity" and that physical inactivity should cease to be "seen in the narrow prism of obesity."

Nick Smith said there has been great success in turning the tide on smoking and the same priority should now be given to inactivity. We must "walk, dance and play our way to wellbeing," now he said, rather than maintain such a strong focus on competitive sport.

MPs also highlighted that the government has to respond to lifestyle disease if the NHS is to remain financially viable, that not enough usable open space for activity is available and that PE confident teachers in primary schools are lacking. 

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=X4R8V](http://lei.sr?a=X4R8V)

Research from Southampton Solent University has found that just two 15-minute strength training sessions a week can take decades off our biological age, reversing the most debilitating effects of ageing.

Southampton Solent senior lecturer James Fisher and his team found that regular strength training led to participants enjoying increased bone mineral density – reducing the risk of the brittle bone syndrome. As one might expect, the sessions also led to muscle mass gains and higher cardiovascular levels.

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=n4r6k](http://lei.sr?a=n4r6k)

JD Gyms poised for growth during 2015

Retail megabrand JD Sports, which announced its entry into the gym market with the launch of its new JD Gyms brand in early 2014, has outlined plans for expansion in 2015.

The chain is due to launch its second club in December 2014 in Liverpool city centre – within a Grade II listed three-storey property.

"We’re looking to roll out further sites for the next year. However, we’re also open to expansion through acquisition," said JD Gyms MD Alun Peacock. JD Gyms will generally be 15,000 to 35,000sq ft sites located in high population centres, with a variety of equipment from different manufacturers rather than a reliance on one as part of a ‘best in class’ strategy.

"For the time being, the gyms will not be located within JD Sports stores, but this is not ruled out," added Peacock. Memberships will cost between £15 and £20 a month, with innovative décor using retail shop fitting experience, and a big emphasis on group exercise. "

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=k8D2n](http://lei.sr?a=k8D2n)

Is it time to go Danish in childhood obesity battle?

A pioneering Danish health scheme that enforces a series of strict lifestyle changes is being touted as a potential solution to the global childhood obesity epidemic.

The programme, being rolled out across Denmark, sees overweight children designated with a personalised treatment plan targeting 15-20 daily habits in a bid to transform their lifestyle. Exercise in the form of walking or cycling to school, in addition to regular organised physical activity, forms a central tenet of the scheme. To ensure the lifestyle changes stick, the child’s family is also required to follow the regime.

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Weekly strength training sessions can reverse ageing

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Southampton Solent senior lecturer James Fisher and his team found that regular strength training led to participants enjoying increased bone mineral density – reducing the risk of the brittle bone syndrome. As one might expect, the sessions also led to muscle mass gains and higher cardiovascular levels.

Details: [http://lei.sr?a=n4r6k](http://lei.sr?a=n4r6k)
The Magnum Double MEGA Rack can be customised with a range of accessories to support group functional training as well as power and traditional strength training.
The arrival of a New Year inevitably heralds a period of reflection and retrospection but more importantly a series of new beginnings. 2015 will bring with it opportunity aplenty for both the industry and the BHA. In January, Nick Varney from Merlin Entertainments will become the new BHA chair, bringing with him a wealth of experience and new resolve which will strengthen our remit to focus on building the hospitality and tourism community beyond expectation.

Looking back over 2014, it is clear that this has been a pivotal 12 months for the hospitality and tourism industry, and the BHA has seen greater involvement from its members than ever before. A particular high point was the launch of the Tourism Council at the 2014 Hospitality & Tourism Summit. A partnership between government and industry to focus on improving skills, increasing the quality and quantity of jobs and boosting enterprise, the council is a demonstrable commitment from both parties that hospitality and tourism are important to the economic and social foundation of our society. This collaborative partnership will surely provide fresh impetus and gravitas for our work in 2015, especially important with the general election just around the corner.

Underpinning all our work is the need to attract talent towards hospitality and tourism careers. 2014 has seen real progress in job creation thanks to the collaborative actions of industry leaders. Now in its second year, the BHA’s Big Hospitality Conversation continues to establish hospitality and tourism as the driver of growth, and 2014 has seen the creation of over 35,000 work placements, apprenticeships and jobs across 22 regional events. With a target of 60,000 by 2016, there is still some way to go but our industry knows that proactive action is a necessity for growth. It is no longer enough to expect that young people will naturally gravitate towards a career in hospitality and tourism; we have to find ways to demonstrate career paths which develop these future stars.

London is the most attractive hotel investment destination in Europe according to a Deloitte study, published ahead of the Deloitte European Hotel Investment Conference last month.

A survey of senior hospitality figures by Deloitte found more than half (51 per cent) rank London ahead of Paris (33 per cent) in terms of appeal for investment, followed by Barcelona (30 per cent) and Amsterdam (23 per cent). In terms of value, opinions are mixed. 52 per cent believe London is over-valued and 45 per cent said it was fairly valued. North American, Chinese and Middle Eastern investors are set to show strong interest in the European hotel sector in 2015.

Outside of London, respondents favoured Scottish cities as those of most interest in the UK next year. Edinburgh is the most favoured (60 per cent), followed by Aberdeen (38 per cent), then the English cities of Manchester (33 per cent) and Bath (19 per cent).

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“There is significant appetite for hotels in Europe and the UK in particular,” said Deloitte’s global head of hospitality Nick van Marken. “In recent months, US private equity buyers have taken advantage of low interest rates and a strong uptick in sentiment. After the trough of 2009, a number of deals were done, in the UK in particular, and some of these may well come back to the market.”

Details: http://lei.sr7a=G9A3h

Ramside Hall to add new £18m spa

The Ramside Hall Hotel in Durham has unveiled artists’ impressions of spa facilities that will be added to the estate as part of an £18m investment plan to upscale the offering. £3m of the total has already been used to create an 18-hole golf course, which was launched earlier this year. The remaining £15m will be spent on the construction of 47 additional luxury guestrooms – taking the total number of hotel rooms to 128 – plus the development of a spa.

Expected to be officially opened in May 2015, the spa will feature a wide range of wet facilities, including a 25m swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool, saunas and a range of steamrooms. Plans for the project include an outdoor balcony with an infinity pool, a caldarium and a rasul mud chamber.

The newly-designed spa will offer 12 treatment rooms. Other leisure facilities to be developed include a gym, dance studio, hair salon and an Asian-style restaurant and bar.

“This is a huge development for the hotel and will be a massive boost for the north east,” Tim Boyd, general manager at Ramside Hall Hotel, told local newspaper The Northern Echo. “We’re creating an amazing state-of-the-art leisure facility which will be suited to everyone, from visitors who want to get fit and keep in shape, to anyone who just wants some rest and relaxation.” He added: “At the same time, the addition of the extra rooms give the hotel even more capacity to cope with leisure and business travellers. This investment will cement our reputation as one of the most exciting destinations in the region.”

Details: http://lei.sr7a=8u9e3
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The UK Pool & Spa Expo 2015

The countdown has begun to next year’s edition of the UK’s fastest growing Pool & Spa show

The UK Pool & Spa Expo at Hall 10 of the NEC, Birmingham will commence on Thursday 22 January. The doors will be open for business from 10am to welcome national and international trade visitors to come and see over 100 exhibitors showcasing their new product lines, best sellers and most competitive pricing structures. The next two days will be filled with technical content seminars, a new product zone entry way display, networking opportunities for visitors and exhibitors alike, on the stands, in the central hub and at the end of day one drinks party. On the second night, there will be the prestigious Pool & Spa Awards Ceremony.

On the third day, the event will be opened up to consumers, and with non trade magazines and prime time TV documentaries telling us that the market is still very much alive and growing, UK Pool & Spa Expo will be the place for these savvy consumers to see the best of the industry, with products from around the world and a host of new launches.

The New Product Zone will have a new home at the 2015 show in the entrance foyer to the event and every visitor will be met by the latest designs and innovations being brought to market. L.A. Spas, GMT International, Groundscare Products, Wellis and Darlly Europe are some of the many big exhibitors that will be showcasing here.

Registration is now open for the event and both trade and consumers can apply for their free tickets now by visiting www.ukpoolspa-expo.co.uk

The NEC Birmingham is a venue that works perfectly for our formula and we are sticking with it, with great access by rail, road and air, it makes it the ideal choice to attract as many visitors as possible. With parties, bars and hotels all on-site, this really allows us to blend a strong business platform with the important social and more relaxed side of the event. The networking opportunities are priceless and never will buyers or sellers get to speak to so many people in one setting at one time – it is truly an invaluable prospect for signing business.

The location and venue also make the arrangements for our international visitors and exhibitors much more accessible. From its conception, UK Pool & Spa Expo wanted to open the UK wet leisure industry to the world, offering an independent and professional event for global buyers and companies to develop relationships – and this has worked. In 2014 we had visitors from over 49 countries from every continent making up almost 20 per cent of our visitor list.

On top of all this we want to ensure our visitors have a great onsite experience. With FREE WIFI, FREE CAR PARKING, networking and the widest range of pools and spas in one setting – UK Pool & Spa Expo is THE place for your company to do business.
Operators ‘key’ to wellness tourism

John Bevan, managing director of Spafinder’s European division, has outlined his vision for the future of the wellness tourism sector and believes that tour operators have a key role to play in promoting it to the wider market.

According to the Global Wellness Tourism Economy Monitor Report – conducted by the Global Wellness Institute (GWI) and research partners SRI International – annual wellness tourism expenditure in Europe is expected to grow by 7.3 per cent over the next three years. Globally, the projected annual growth is 9.1 per cent through to 2017 – a growth rate that is nearly 50 per cent higher than that of overall global tourism. Bevan, however, believes the wellness tourism market can be grown.

“I believe wellness tourism can be expanded beyond the organic growth led by consumers who are already fans of holistic health trips,” said Bevan, speaking exclusively to Leisure Opportunities. “Tour operators can be the starting point of this growth. They need to provide advice to people who are enquiring about what holiday to take that year. “It is my wish that ‘wellness holidays’ become a category of their own in tour operators’ and travel agencies’ vacation brochures,” said Bevan. “I intend to provide training for travel tour operators, via Spafinder, to help them understand that ‘wellness’ feeds into all sorts of holidays – that they need to start marketing.”

Details: http://lei.sr?u=c8H4E

Photo media vital to drive business: ISPA

Spa treatment discounts have the biggest influence on the decision of spa-goers to visit a spa, according to the latest Consumer Snapshot study conducted by the International Spa Association (ISPA) Foundation in collaboration with PwC.

The fifth volume of ISPA’s Consumer Snapshot study focuses on social media usage trends and preferences among today’s consumers – including insights into spa-goers and how they use social media to research spas and share experiences.

The study involved 1,014 responses from a sample of US consumers representative of the age, income and regional distributions of the population as a whole. The study defined ‘spa-goers’ as people who have visited a spa at least once in the past 12 months. A ‘non-spa-goer’ is defined as either an ‘inactive spa-goer’ – a person who has visited before but has not been to a spa in the past 12 months – or a ‘non-spa-goer’ – a person who has never visited.

“The ISPA Foundation commissioned PwC to take a deeper look into social media usage trends and preferences among today’s consumer, covering a variety of topics from popular social media platforms, peak usage times to advertising and marketing on social media,” ISPA president Lynne McNees told Leisure Opportunities. “This report provides exciting insights into today’s social media user that can help strengthen the global spa industry.”

A significantly higher percentage of spa-goers frequently interact with the main social media sites against non-spa-goers and some social media platforms appear to be particularly appealing to spa-goers, the study found. Instagram and Pinterest are more than three times more popular with spa-goers than non-spa-goers. Details: http://lei.sr?u=M6r7T
Huge tourist attraction abandoned by Fife Council

A pipe dream of turning a former open-cast coal site in Kelty, Scotland, into an iconic landscaped art project headed up by Charles Jencks, has been scrapped.

The multi-million pound scheme, the ‘Fife Earth Project’, would have seen the former mining site transformed into a major tourist attraction explaining Scottish history and diaspora. Four different landscaped mounds across the 665 acre park would have been used to represent the continents that Scotland had influenced.

The attraction would also have featured approximately six miles of walkways, a large open body of water acting as a Scotland shaped loch, and would have been a major tourism driver for the area.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=b5g6C

British Museum releases first ‘downloadable collection’

The British Museum is embracing a range of technologies, with the move of CT scanning technology from analogue to digital, capabilities for safely scanning live subjects in more detail is at a much more advanced level, according to David Hughes, manager of solutions at Swedish ICT.

Swedish ICT has previously worked with the British Museum for a major exhibition on mummies, which saw mummified remains dating back more than 4,000 years scanned to reveal previously unknown secrets. The exhibition then used that data on installations featuring state of the art 3D x-ray CT scans, captured by the museum’s science imaging team combined with expert 3D technology to create virtual specimens that can be explored interactively using zoom, pan, rotate and peel functions on an interactive touch screen.

While scanning on live animals has been done for medical purposes, nothing has ever been released for public appreciation and with the move of CT scanning technology the ideal opportunity to showcase the project to the rest of the attractions industry and provide an overview of its progression.

"We have received nationally significant status from the government and are pressing ahead with our planning application for the project, to be submitted in autumn of next year," he said. "We’ve also progressed discussions with prospective commercial partners, in addition to Paramount Pictures."

Details: http://lei.sr?a=d9S9n

Paramount resort team hits IAAPA

London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH) – the company behind the proposed £2bn entertainment resort in the south east of England – is hoping to drive the project forward after its debut at the recently-held 2014 IAAPA Expo in Orlando, Florida.

The resort – scheduled to open in 2020 and currently moving through the planning process having been classified as a project of national significance by the government – will feature a theme park, waterpark, sports facilities, an entertainment street, staff training academy and 5,000 hotel rooms.

Speaking exclusively to Leisure Opportunities, LRCH director Fenlon Dunphy said the company delegation - also comprising director David Testa and IP expert Teri Ruffley - would use its week at IAAPA to have a small number of meetings with potential suppliers, exchaneg ideas and continue to build momentum behind the fast moving project.

Dunphy added that the week would provide the ideal opportunity to showcase the project to the rest of the attractions industry and provide an overview of its progression.

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Details: http://lei.sr?a=V5m2N

3D animal scans bring new opportunities

With scanning technology becoming ever easier and more comprehensive, the potential for 3D-scanned interactive models of live animals in zoos and aquariaums is wide open, according to research firm Swedish ICT.

"The technology is moving on quite rapidly, certainly in regards to reducing radiation dosages that allow you to get better images," said Hughes. "If you reduce the signal to noise ratio, you can use lower dosages because you don’t have to turn the signal up. "

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Details: http://lei.sr?a=d9S9n

The Paramount Park is expected to feature plenty of themed attractions

Swedish ICT recently collaborated with Kolmården Zoo in Sweden

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Details: http://lei.sr?a=d9S9n

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Details: http://lei.sr?a=d9S9n

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Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has announced £10m of additional funding for tourism in the north of England.

Speaking on the eve of the recent Northern Futures Summit in Leeds, Clegg said: “It’s absurd that our great north is missing out on visitors, when it boasts such stunning countryside, history and culture. I’m putting funding in place for there to be a clear strategy for tourism.”

The announcement comes on the back of Clegg’s Northern Futures Project – an economic consultation which was launched in July to deal with a range of issues from transport to technology and training. The £10m will be used to “bring harmony” to the 29 individual tourism bodies of the north to enable them to more effectively market the region and its cities.

The money will come from the Regional Growth Fund and will be channelled through VisitEngland via the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. VisitEngland chief executive James Berresford said he welcomed the additional boost which comes on the back of £19.8m from the Regional Growth Fund in 2012, saying: “This programme has generated £537m in additional tourism spend and a record number of 9,800 jobs.”

Berresford added the new initiative “clearly demonstrates tourism is being recognised as a key driver of the economy which creates important jobs throughout the country.”

The Northern Futures Summit called for ideas to build a strong economic core in the heart of the region, with tourism one of nine themes chosen. Details: http://lei.sr?a=P7R7W

Liverpool’s Beatles Story is one of many popular northern attractions

As part of Visit London and StudioCanal’s campaign for the new Paddington Bear film, out on the 28th November, 50 statues of ‘the world’s most adventurous bear’ have been unveiled across London. Each bear has been individually designed by a celebrity or architect.

From 4 November to 30 December, tourists can follow in the footsteps of Paddington via a series of trails – leading to statues situated in famous locations such as museums, parks and shops – showcasing the best of London.

As part of the initiative, architect Zaha Hadid has created ‘R;G;B’ Paddington, with a stripy design, located outside the Royal Exchange.

In keeping with the architectural theme, London-based firm Robin Partington & Partners have masterminded a brick-covered bear, showcasing London’s ability to create international icons with local materials.

Architects and designers are not the only people involved with the Paddington Trail. The mayor of London, Boris Johnson and supermodel Kate Moss are among the 50 celebrities and architects who have lent their design talent to the trail. The bears will be auctioned off throughout December and January, with all proceeds going to the NSPCC.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=s7B8B
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Shortlist announced for £90m Bristol Arena

A shortlist has been announced consisting of five top architectural firms to design the Bristol Arena, a £90m venue on an old oil depot site near Temple Meads Station.

Following the announcement of a design competition from the RIBA and Bristol City Council, a shortlist has been released.

The following multi-disciplinary design teams have been shortlisted:
- A consortium of; Grimshaw, MANICA Architecture, Thornton Tomasetti, M-E Engineers and Neil Woodger Acoustics
- A consortium of; Populous /Feilden Clegg Bradley/Buro Happold/Vanguard
- White Arkitekter with Arup
- Wilkinson Eyre with Arup
- IDOM (in collaboration with Foreman Roberts and Nagata Acoustics)

Bristol’s mayor, the former architect George Ferguson, said: “We now have five very capable and talented design teams, with a wealth of experience between them, drawing up proposals for an arena that will contribute to the regeneration of the Bristol Temple Quarter.” The Arena is part of a wider Allies and Morrison masterplan for the area. When complete, it will be a multi-entertainment venue with 12,000 seats. The winning team will be announced in February 2015, with the opening planned for 2017. Details: http://lei.sr?a=x7h5T

Glass walkways give bird’s eye view of Tower Bridge

Two giant glass floors 42m (138ft) above the Thames have opened at Tower Bridge for an attraction marking its 120th birthday.

The scheme by Purcell Architects took a year to implement and now offers visitors a completely new view of the bridge, the river and the lifting process from high-level walkways across the Thames.

The reinforced glass will allow visitors a ‘bird’s eye view’ down onto the road and river beneath, but the bigger draw will be at lifting times, when they will get the chance to see the bridge raise up beneath their feet to allow ships up and down river. Details: http://lei.sr?a=t2M8K

£9m double transformation of leisure centres underway

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is to invest £9m into improvement works for two leisure centres as part of a drive to boost participation levels across all ages and abilities in the region.

Parklands Leisure Centre, in Oadby, and Wigston Pool and Fitness Centre will receive facelifts, with AFLS+P Architects overseeing both projects. The council’s cash injection comes after awarding Everyone Active a 20-year contract to operate both. Parklands Leisure Centre will benefit from more than £4m worth of refurbishment work. This will include an enlarged 115-station gym with the latest interactive Precor CV equipment, WattBikes, Lateral Ellipticals from Octane Fitness, plus dedicated stretching and free weights areas. There will also be an outdoor training zone with a functional rig on the courtyard based in the centre of the building.

Meanwhile, Wigston Pool was demolished in October and a new six lane swimming pool is replacing it. There will also be a 60-station gym with Precor CV equipment and functional training kit. Both sites are to be complete by autumn 2015. Details: http://lei.sr?a=9p5g9

Wasps complete Ricoh takeover deal

Wasps Rugby Club has completed a deal to become the sole owner of Arena Coventry, the company that owns the Ricoh Arena in Coventry.

The club secured the remaining 50 per cent stake from the Alan Edward Higgs Charity, having already acquired the other 50 per cent of ACL from Coventry City Council in a deal last month.

The deal is part of Wasps move from current home Adams Park in Buckinghamshire to Ricoh Arena in Coventry. The club has shared Adams Park with Wycombe Wanderers Football Club since 2002 and had in recent years been looking to build its own stadium.

After Wasps’ plans to build a permanent home ground at Wycombe Air Park were turned down by the council, however, the club was forced to look for alternative locations for its new home – and a decision to acquire Ricoh Arena was made earlier this year. Speaking to Leisure Opportunities, Wasps CEO Nick Eastwood said the club faced a “move or go bust” situation, with annual losses at around £3m. He added that the move to Ricoh would mean that Wasps will own the most extensive club rugby facility in Europe and help it to “re-establish itself as one of the best clubs in world rugby”. Details: http://lei.sr?a=j5G3k

Adventure operator launches £2m urban sports park

A £2m indoor urban sports and trampoline park has opened in East Kilbride.

AirSpace, a ‘spring loaded urban playground’ will be a second brand for growing adventure high wire experience company Go Ape, and Scotland’s first indoor facility of this type.

Set to be the largest freestyle jumping arena in Europe, the centre will feature more than 100 interconnected, wall to wall trampolines. The operators also plan to introduce ‘team sports with a twist’ including dodgeball, basketball and football. Details: http://lei.sr?a=R5B8k

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Active Training Awards winners announced

The physical activity sector’s leading training providers gathered in Marlow at the end of November to celebrate 2014’s top achievers at the Active Training Awards.

More than 150 of the industry’s top training companies, employers, higher education providers and commercial vocational providers were on hand to hail exceptional performance and commitment to vocational training and development.

There was a rigorous three stage assessment process for the awards, initially comprising a submission and then feedback stage from employers and learners. The final stage included a presentation to a panel of experts. “Training and development is rapidly changing to meet demands to today’s workforce,” said ukactive CEO and CIMSPA chair David Stalker.

“We’ve focused this year on driving a discernible shift in training standards and it’s great to be able to recognise top players across the breadth of the industry as they continue to deliver the best-in-class vocational training that is the bedrock of our sector.”

Fitness firms urged to upskill young staff

Active leisure employers are being urged to grasp the opportunity to improve the skills and expertise of more young people in the sector through a free scheme provided by Focus Training.

The health and fitness training provider now has funding available for modern apprenticeships to streamline training pathways and proactively address skills shortages.

Training is delivered through distance learning and workshops supported by Focus Training tutors and workshop attendance at one of its many UK venues. With the Modern Apprenticeship scheme, this training is free to employers and can be applied to existing and new staff aged 16 to 18 years old.

Focus spokesperson Darren Chadwick said: “We would urge employers to upskill their young members of staff and recruit new starters to take advantage of this funding opportunity.” Physical activity apprenticeships recently received a welcome shot in the arm as the industry secured trailblazer status, meaning active leisure employers can tailor apprenticeships to streamline training pathways and proactively address skills shortages.

Details: http://lei.sr?r=a=m8y8r

Training is delivered through distance learning and workshops

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• Special Programmes Programme of the Year - Aspire / InstructAbility
• Supplier of the Year – Schwinn Cycling
• Apprenticeships & Traineeships Provider of the Year – Lifetime Training
• Most Inspiring Physical Activity Professional - Gary Paish, Everyone Active

Details: http://lei.sr?r=a=n8y8r
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You will be confident working at strategic level and have a background that includes successful delivery of large scale programmes of work. Experience of engaging with a range of funding bodies would be beneficial, as would experience of using RIBA and Prince 2 framework.

The successful candidate will possess excellent communication, consultation and negotiating skills, all of which will be tested as this programme develops.

For an informal discussion about the post please contact
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Closing date: 7 January 2015 | Interviews: w/c 19 January 2015
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<tr>
<td>Duty Manager</td>
<td>Everyone Active</td>
<td>Melton Mowbray, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant General Manager</td>
<td>The Gym Group</td>
<td>Barking, UK</td>
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<td>Swimming Instructors</td>
<td>Finesse Leisure Partnership</td>
<td>Hatfield, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centre Manager</td>
<td>Climbing Centre Group Ltd</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Performance Officer</td>
<td>Aspire</td>
<td>Gloucestershire, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation Assistants</td>
<td>Finesse Leisure Partnership</td>
<td>Hatfield, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Recreation Assistant</td>
<td>GLL</td>
<td>Ealing, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beauty Therapists</td>
<td>Center Parcs Ltd</td>
<td>Woburn, Bedfordshire, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Fusion Lifestyle</td>
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<td>Waltham Abbey, Essex, UK</td>
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<td>King’s College London</td>
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<td>GLL</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Senior Recreation Assistant</td>
<td>GLL</td>
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<td>2 x Sports Administrator</td>
<td>The Royal Parks</td>
<td>Regents Park, London, UK</td>
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<td>Personal Trainer</td>
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<td>Leisure Attendant</td>
<td>Everyone Active</td>
<td>North Wembley, London, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Club Manager</td>
<td>énergie group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Trainer</td>
<td>Pure Gym Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>Club Manager</td>
<td>énergie group</td>
<td>Gloucestershire, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 x Leisure Assistant</td>
<td>Chesterton Community Coll</td>
<td>Woburn, Bedfordshire, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Manager</td>
<td>Fusion Lifestyle</td>
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<td>Personal Trainer &amp; Nutrition Coach</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area Managers
Company: Club Training
Location: Various locations, UK

Personal Trainers
Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: England

Recreation Assistant x2
Company: Scarborough Borough Council
Location: Whitby and Scarborough, UK

Lifeguard
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Hertford, Herts, UK

Group Health & Fitness Manager
Company: Trafford Community Leisure
Location: South Manchester, UK

Team Leader - Lifeguard
Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: London, England

General Manager
Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: London, England

Sales Manager
Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: London, England

Sports Activity Apprentice
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Melton Mowbray, UK

Fitness Apprenticeship
Company: énergie group
Location: Greater London, UK

Fitness Apprenticeship
Company: énergie group
Location: Preston, UK

Fitness Apprenticeship
Company: énergie group
Location: Wallington, UK

Account Manager
Company: Zoggs
Location: Central/South West, UK

CrossFit coach position
Company: CrossFit Flare
Location: Kuwait

Fitness Apprentice
Company: énergie group
Location: Fit4Less Chaddle, UK

Principal Consultant
Company: Max Associates
Location: Nationwide, UK

Membership Consultant
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Watford, UK

Aztex Manager
Company: TLT Leisure Resort
Location: Torquay

Club Manager
Company: The Gym Way
Location: Kensington, London, UK

General Manager
Company: Xercise 4 Less
Location: Nationwide, UK

Sales and Marketing Manager
Company: Xercise 4 Less
Location: Nationwide, UK

Receptionist
Company: Xercise 4 Less
Location: Nationwide, UK

Housekeeper
Company: Xercise 4 Less
Location: Nationwide, UK

Personal Trainer
Company: Xercise 4 Less
Location: Nationwide, UK

Membership Consultant
Company: Xercise 4 Less
Location: Nationwide, UK

Swim Teachers
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Nuneaton, UK

Member Services Advisor
Company: Pure Gym Limited
Location: Leeds, UK

General Manager - Southeast London
Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: London, England

Sports and Community Development Manager
Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: London, England

Customer Relations/Sales
Company: Fusion Lifestyle
Location: London, England

Programme Manager
Company: Warwick District Council
Location: Warwick, UK

General Manager
Company: Parkwood Leisure
Location: Bristol, UK

Assistant Health and Fitness Manager
Company: University of Nottingham
Location: Nottingham, UK

Impact Sales Consultant
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Various - Field based, UK

Fitness First Middle East
Company: Premier Training Int. Ltd
Location: Middle East

Personal Trainers
Company: Everyone Active
Location: Nuneaton, Warwickshire, UK

Spa Manager
Company: Thanas Hotels Ltd
Location: Polis, Paphos, Cyprus

Spa Manager
Company: Gomiersal Park Hotel
Location: West Yorkshire, UK

Spa Manager - Full Time
Company: Sopwell House
Location: St Albans, UK

Sales Manager
Company: Whitewater West
Location: Barcelona, Spain

Hotel Resident Manager
Company: Gardaland Resort
Location: Castelnuovo del Garda, Italy

Internal Sales Representative
Company: Gardaland Resort
Location: Castelnuovo del Garda, Italy

Hotel Operations Manager
Company: LEGOLAND Florida
Location: Florida-Winter Haven, US

Marketing Coordinator
Company: Sea Life
Location: Minnesota-Bloomington, US

General Manager
Company: Sea Life
Location: Missouri-Kansas City, US

Operations Manager
Company: Legoland Discovery Center
Location: Georgia-Atlanta, US

Duty Manager
Company: The Orlando Eye
Location: Florida-Orlando, US

Visitor Welcome /Sales Manager
Company: National Trust
Location: Sevenoaks, Kent, UK

Maintenance Manager
Company: The Dreamland Trust
Location: Margate, UK

UK sales agent
Company: ROCAS & DESIGN
Location: Nationwide

Addetti Front Office,
Company: Gardaland Resort
Location: Castelnuovo del Garda, Italy

Internal Sales Representative
Company: Gardaland Resort
Location: Castelnuovo del Garda, Italy

Attractions Supervisor
Company: Legoland Malaysia
Location: Johor, Malaysia

Internship - Marketing
Company: Legoland Malaysia
Location: Johor, Malaysia

E-Commerce Executive
Company: Legoland Malaysia
Location: Johor, Malaysia

Trade Sales and Marketing Coordinator
Company: Legoland, Discovery Centre
Location: Ontario, Canada

Hotel Operations Manager
Company: Merlin
Location: Florida-Winter Haven, US

Studio Wax Assistant
Company: Madame Tussauds Orlando
Location: Florida-Orlando, UK

Guest Service Liaison
Company: LEGOLAND Florida
Location: Florida-Winter Haven, US

Chef
Company: Grosvenor Casinos
Location: London, UK

Catering Assistant
Company: GLL
Location: Manchester, UK

Area Sales Manager
Company: Grosvenor Casinos
Location: Regional, UK

Sales Consultant
Company: Grosvenor Casinos
Location: Glasgow, UK
UK architect receives top IOC honour

Geraint John, an established senior advisor at architecture practice Populous, has been awarded the Pierre de Coubertin medal for outstanding services to the Olympic Movement.

Populous is a global sports design and architecture firm that has worked on several Olympic projects including Sydney 2000, London 2012 and Sochi 2014.

John is the first architect, and indeed Briton, to ever receive the Pierre de Coubertin medal. Named in honour of the man who founded the modern Olympic Games, the medal is awarded by the IOC to individuals who have demonstrated an outstanding contribution to sport and the legacy of the Olympics.

This is more than the case for John, who has made a "significant contribution to the IOC’s promotion of environmental and sustainable sports facilities that deliver lasting Olympic and Paralympic legacies" according to a statement. Commenting on the award, Geraint

John said: “Architecture has and will continue to provide exceptional service to the Olympic Movement and I accept this award on behalf of all the talented people from so many countries that I have been fortunate to work alongside.”

Details: http://lei.sr?a=B4D8Z