

WELCOME^{to} the Revolution^{NZ!}

By Wendy Hernandez

My existence is solely to search new and innovative things. In spite of the fast-paced world of Entertainment, it is often a surprisingly difficult proposition. It's not often that you come across something that would be classified as "Revolutionary."

Recently I heard the latest buzz about a new attraction that is being launched at IAAPA this year, and is being described as "Revolutionary!" When I heard this, I let out a disgruntled sigh as I recalled many times when I'd been jazzed with anticipation about a "revolutionary" new idea, only to discover that it fell short of the industry shaking wonder-thing it was touted to be. But, in search of a good story, I shook off my instinctive apathy.

The name of the product is: "Aktion AttraktioNZ, featuring Krush KushioNZ technology." Cute play on words, I thought, but wondered, "What is a Krush KushioNZ?" Then I heard the "out of this world" claim, similar to claims that "revolutionary" products make: "...Aktion AttraktioNZ require no safety gear; you can fall into the Krush KushioNZ from 20 feet or better and not get hurt." My eyes rolled back.

That claim took hold, and started to repeatedly loop around inside my head. I said out loud, "Naaa, can't be." I checked out the Sans Gear NZ Web site. Skeptically intrigued, I investigated further. I clicked the product video, watched the Aktion AttraktioNZ in action, and my jaw dropped. "They weren't kidding," I thought outloud, as I watched scene after scene of kids of all ages falling every which way into a funky airbag. I was now on a mission to discover more.

I spoke with Jan Shaw and Jim King of WyldBlue Productions, Creative Consultants whom I had happened to meet years before. They explained that this new classification of attraction is centered around an invention from New Zealand called the Krush KushioNZ, an award-winning safety landing system that is expected to "revolutionize" (there's that word again) safety in the attraction and stunt industries. Jim and Jan launched Sans Gear NZ LLC to market and distribute these new products.

In 2004, we consulted on a small action theme park in Paihia, New Zealand. "A call rang out of the blue from a guy who said, 'I have invented a landing system that you can fall into, even on your head, and not get hurt,'" explained

CEO, Jim King. "My reaction was, Suuuurre...Show me. and he did! We received a tape showing this humongous Trapeze with adults and kids swinging and falling from 18+ feet, then popping up smiling and laughing hysterically. I couldn't believe my eyes."

That guy from New Zealand turned out to be world-class Trapeze Artist Freddy Osler of the famous "Flying Oslers." With 40-years of experience, Freddy, who had broken 11 bones in his body and dislocated his shoulder from landing in the hopelessly misnamed "safety net", had dreamt of a safer way to land. Krush KushioNZ safety landing system is described as a uniquely patented air bag system. The top sheet disbursts the weight, while finger-like tubes, filled with air, have a "crumple" effect, which takes the energy out of the impact, and safely cushions the fall.

Freddy developed the pro-sized Trap-EZE, safe for the general public and professionals without restraints or harnesses. (Okay, at this point I have to admit, they had me. All I could think was, "I have got to try this thing.") After two years of successful testing and operations, Freddy, along with his wife, Carol, broke ground on Action World, a small action adventure park which is enjoying its third successful season with no insurance claims or losses. (I had them repeat that to make sure I heard right.) A second Action World is in the works for Auckland.

Jim continued, "We helped in the master planning of Action World



Falling has never been so fun....or so safe, with Aktion AttraktionNZ. Photos Courtesy SansGearNZ



"When Freddy called, ready to offer Aktion AttraktionNZ products to the industry, we jumped at the chance to get involved in marketing and distribution. This is by far the most exciting and unique guest experience attraction we have seen. The response so far has been staggering," said Jim.

"These products not only have a wide range of uses in the Amusement, Themed and Water Park industries (as safe attractions and stunt show landing bags), but they also have potential in the gymnastics, sports and motion picture stunting industries. With all the safety issues going on in the industry today, these are products whose time has come," explained Jan.

and consulted on developing new applications for Aktion AttraktionNZ to create unique guest experiences, and imagined the possibilities of interactive attractions that did not require ropes, harnesses and belay systems. Even for Creative types like us, who make our living developing new ideas, this was really fun!"

Jan Shaw, President/COO said, "It's got to be seen to be believed. Freddy is completely dedicated to the safety of these products. Not being able to think of a better way, Freddy flung himself off a two-story balcony at the factory repeatedly, not knowing if the early designs would work or not. Now, that's dedication!"

Sans Gear NZ is offering several, highly customizable, Aktion AttraktionNZ products this year, including the Trap-EZE, Jungle SwingZ, RopeWalkZ, LowWireZ, BIGAir SlideZ (only wet/dry slide that launches the rider into the air), FreeKlimbZ (world's only belay-free climbing wall), FACEoffZ! (face-to-face jousting activity), 77' Weee-Longo! SlideZ and the 300' EEEE-Longo! SlideZ (longest soft, wet slide in the world).

My faith in the "Revolutionary" idea has been restored; and I can't wait to try them first hand!

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