



fall 2010

in park

MAGAZINE



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Wild Rivers
Halloween Horror Nights
Calypso Waterpark
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I generally try not to get too deep in the arena of product endorsements. But I had such a wonderful time at Noah's Ark (doing "research" for this issue) that I have to talk about it. As you can read about on page 12, this summer Noah's Ark built the first U.S. version of Whitewater West's AquaLoop waterslide.

Each rider climbs into the secured drop chamber. After a quick countdown, the floor disappears and the rider drops down a nearly vertical drop before traveling up and through an angled loop, splashing down at the end. Everything about this ride is amazing.

The translucent slide allows guests to see the shapes of their fellow riders as they slide through the attraction, giving them a hint of what's to come. Stepping into the chamber is in itself exhilarating, and almost every person lets out at least a small scream when the floor drops out quickly and smoothly. The actual trip down the slide is smooth and fast. It's over almost as soon as it starts. But at the bottom of the slide, the desire to go again is immediate.

That's what makes the AquaLoop such an ideal attraction. It has all the elements of an extreme thrilling ride, but in reality it isn't extreme at all. So many thrill rides provide a moment or two of excitement, but are too rough or intense as to encourage all but the most serious thrill junkies to try something more tame.

So kudos to Whitewater West for bringing the AquaLoop to market and to Noah's Ark for building it. If you haven't had the opportunity to ride one yet, I'm fairly certain one will be coming to a water park near you soon.

On a completely different note, it was 6 years ago that the ideas for InPark were starting to come to reality. I considered it a "sign" that I was invited to the Halloween Horror Nights media event even before the magazine had started. The event provided the inspiration for issue one of InPark. I am eternally grateful to Universal Orlando and their PR staff and happy to continue to report on that one-of-a-kind event (above photo).

-Martin Palicki

people

BRC Imagination Arts, a global leader in the design, creation and production of immersive educational, entertainment, and brand experiences, has named **Greg Lombardo** as Creative Director, Brand Experiences.

Lombardo, an integral member of the BRC team since 2008, has spent the last two years heading up the company's development of the USA Pavilion at Shanghai World Expo 2010. One of the most popular pavilions at the Expo, the USA Pavilion has welcomed more than five million visitors since opening its doors in May.

A 20-year veteran of the entertainment industry, Lombardo has spent his professional life telling great stories as a writer, director and producer for feature films, theater and commercials. During his tenure with BRC, Greg has worked for many prestigious brands including GM, EMI, Abbey Road, China Mobile, Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation, Guinness, and SyFy Channel.

As Creative Director, Brand Experiences, Lombardo oversees creative development for companies looking to create corporate brand centers; cities, states and regional governments that are investing in area attractions for economic development; and governments and corporations seeking an amazing presence at a World Expo.



Merlin Entertainments Group, the leading name in location-based family entertainment, formally announced today that **Benjamin (Ben) Sweet** has been named General Manager of **LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Chicago**.

"We are thrilled to welcome Ben to LEGOLAND Discovery Center Chicago," said Rob Smith, marketing director of LEGOLAND Discovery Centres. "With a proven track record of creating unforgettable guest experiences, Ben will provide LEGOLAND Discovery Center Chicago with exceptional leadership during an exciting period of growth for the attraction."

"It's a great honor to join LEGOLAND Discovery Center Chicago," added Sweet. "I'm looking forward to several very exciting events in the coming months – including October's Toddler Tuesdays and Halloween Brick or Treat; and our LEGO STAR WARS™ days. I am committed to building on LEGOLAND Discovery Center's status as one of Chicagoland's premier family destinations."

projects

GURNEE, IL - **Six Flags Great America** announces plans to add a 3 acre water park expansion for the 2011 season. Riptide Bay at Hurricane Harbor will boast more slides and attractions than any other in the state featuring the only place to surf on Lake Michigan. The new double-sided surf simulator, Surf Rider, sends out 8 foot waves with 24,000 gallons of rushing water a minute. Just like waves on a real ocean, now anyone can learn how to carve a bottom, do cut backs and learn amazing trick maneuvers as they build their surfing skills. The water park expansion will also include a Caribbean-inspired activity pool with additional lounging areas, high-speed waterslides, luxury cabanas and more attractions still to be announced. Construction is expected to begin this Fall east of the existing water park. Riptide Bay at Hurricane Harbor is set to open Spring 2011.

"From our coasters and shows to our four children's areas and free water park, there is no other theme park in the world that offers the tremendous amount of thrills we do for one price," said Hank Salemi, Six Flags Great America park president. "Since opening Hurricane Harbor in 2005 the water park has grown in popularity. We felt the Riptide Bay expansion was the best way to kick off the 2011 season. The new double-sided Surf Rider is an amazing attraction that our guests will have just as much fun watching as participating. Plus the new activity pool, speed slides and lounge area will make a great water park even bigger, better and wetter."

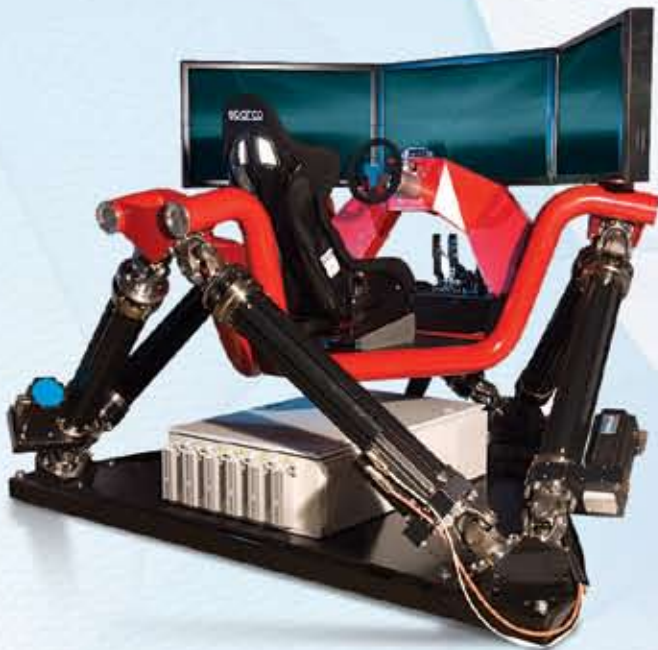


VALDOSTA, GA – **Wild Adventures Theme Park (WA)** announced today it celebrates its 15th anniversary in 2011 with one of its biggest expansions to date. In the past fifteen years, the park has grown from a petting zoo to the area's largest tourist attraction. In 2011, WA plans a \$4 million expansion of its water park, Splash Island. Already considered the area's largest water park, Splash Island opens two new major family rides in March 2011, the biggest expansion ever made to the water park.

"Since Wild Adventures first opened its doors in 1996, it's always been a central gathering spot for South Georgia and North Florida families. Today, we are a large-scale 170-acre theme, water and animal park all rolled into one. Plus, we're committed to featuring top family-friendly acts in the area's largest outdoor amphitheater," said Bob Montgomery, WA's general manager. "With this Splash Island expansion, we will have invested more than \$10 million in improvements and upgrades since 2007."

WA's 2011 improvements and upgrades include two new water attractions and VIP comforts in Splash Island. The two water rides provide thrills for the entire family in tubes accommodating 3 to 5 guests. Guests seeking the VIP treatment can relax in exclusive private cabanas, for an additional fee. The park confirmed more details to be announced soon.

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products

C. Cretors and Company, the leading designer and manufacturer of food processing and concession equipment for 125 years, offers the Ringmaster Cotton Candy machine. The energy efficient Ringmaster is ideal for use in the amusement industry, schools, carnivals and concession stands.

The lightest weight floss line in the industry, the Ringmaster uses either standard cotton candy mix or regular granulated sugar. To accommodate venues with varying volumes of production, the Ringmaster is available in either 5" or 7" floss head sizes. Able to hold 50% more sugar than the 5" floss head, the 7" floss head is ideal for high volume production applications. Each machine contains stretch-proof compression springs that will not stretch out during heavy use.

The Ringmaster is comprised of a welded stainless steel cabinet equipped with two handles for easy transport and an aluminum bowl and stabilizer for product production. Each floss head is designed with easy operation and cleaning in mind. The stainless steel spinner head comes with a mesh screen containing a custom Incoloy heating element that eliminates the need for replacement ribbons and bands. Lastly, the floss head's motor is outfitted with shielded ball bearings to prevent it from coming into contact with the sugar.



POLIN Waterparks and Pool Systems is proud to announce the launch of its patent pending waterslide, KING COBRA. KING COBRA is a gorgeous waterslide that offers one of the most "intense" riding experiences of the industry while proving itself as the number one attraction in terms of visual impact and spectator appeal. It creates a truly different experience both for the riders and for the spectators. With its unique design configuration, fiberglass theming, coloring and its unique riding path, it will surely be the most attractive attraction in your park.

The core feature of the patent pending KING COBRA is its unique configuration that enables 2 double tubes racing through a circular path with twists, turns, surprises and experiencing the drop of their lives still racing and entering into the valley part together at the same time with a heart pounding influence.

places

TAMPA, FL- After a six-year run of more than 10,000 shows, the curtain is closing on KaTonga: Musical Tales from the Jungle at **Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's** Moroccan Palace Theater. KaTonga's last performance will be September 6. With KaTonga, Busch Gardens brought Broadway performances to theme parks. The elegant show delivered inspiring songs and a rich tapestry of color and sound. It took guests on a journey to the heart of Africa in a musical celebration of animal folklore. Masterful costume design, energetic original music and spectacular African-inspired dance combined to create a performance that always left guests cheering for more.

More is coming this winter -- the groundbreaking Broadway hit created and directed by Neil Goldberg -- Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy. Experience this exotic encounter inspired by nature's unpredictable creations and brought to life by an international cast of soaring aerialists, spine-bending contortionists, acrobats, musicians and spectacular costumes beyond your wildest imagination. Nominated for "Best Costume Design" by the American Theatre Wing, this inventive theatrical journey is action-packed with astounding feats that will leave audiences spellbound.

Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy will usher in more of what fans have come to love and expect from Busch Gardens -- incredible stage shows, the likes of which cannot be found at any other theme park in the nation.



SAFRA's newest state-of-the-art clubhouse; Kidz Amaze in Jurong, Singapore is the tallest Foam Factory play system in Asia, this three story indoor playground stands over 40 feet (12.2m). A unique combination of traditional soft-modular play integrated with the interactivity of a Foam Factory's ball play system creates maximum playability for fun seekers of all ages.

The Kidz Amaze attraction is the most popular of all the clubhouses in Singapore and has exceeded the anticipated volume of participants. The 400 person capacity contemporary tree canopy theme is loaded with over 45 interactive elements, multi-level platforms, ball blasters, wave and spiral slides, mazes, and opens the imagination with intriguing ball elevators and transporters. Participants can propel, throw, raise, vacuum and dump 50,000 foam balls throughout the attraction providing hours of entertainment for families, groups and special events.

With one of the largest indoor playgrounds in Singapore and a wide range of other family-oriented facilities, SAFRA Jurong being the 'Playground at the Canopy', will be the venue of choice to captivate you with an exciting experience focusing not only on fun-filled activities but also on family interaction and development of new skills.

For more information on Safra Clubhouse; please visit: <http://www.safra.sg/>

BURBANK, CA – Exploration Space, the first attraction at **Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex** to examine the future of space exploration, combines live theater, interactive exhibits and new media components to engage and inform audiences about the next 20 years in space exploration. Electrosonic provided the AV systems for the exhibit designed by BRC Imagination Arts, Inc. in collaboration with Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. The Electrosonic team designed, integrated, programmed and installed the exhibit's entire AV system, including projection, audio, video and show control.

The 10,000-square foot Exploration Space features among the most technically complex exhibits at the Visitor Complex. Guests are invited to become space travelers and test their skills at docking their vehicle with the International Space Station and achieving a smooth lunar landing while discovering the dangers that lurk in space and on the surface of the moon and Mars. A live show, Explorers Wanted, inspires visitors to become a part of the NASA mission and play an active role in the future of space travel.

Destination in Sight as Visitors Test Their Skills

The introductory exhibit, "Your Destination," provides a portal into the universe. Visitors peer through a giant 12x8-foot window to a 224x168-inch rear projection screen; a Christie DS+6K-M projector displays enormous images of the moon and Mars, giving the impression of viewing these destinations from deep space.

Alongside the window is a 46-inch LCD monitor with audio attached that details possible missions during the voyage. Both the portal and the monitor audio and video content are sourced from Extron MPEG2 HD video players.

"On The Shoulders of Giants" points out how the next generation of spacecraft will improve upon the work of previous generations including the space shuttle and the Saturn V moon rocket. Featuring extensive animation, this content is displayed on a 65-inch LCD monitor and sourced from Extron MPEG2 HD video players.

Next, visitors test their maneuvering skills at interactive kiosks featuring Dell game stations. Using throttles and shifters, players attempt to dock their vehicle to the International Space Station in "ISS Rendezvous" and try to achieve a safe and soft moon landing in "Lunar Lander."

Exploration Space is configured with a live theater environment and numerous exhibits that engage visitors when no live show is underway. For example, five 15-foot acoustically transparent screens display an informative video loop on space and the stars. Two additional 15-foot screens demonstrate "Space Dangers," such as an asteroid hit or an oxygen leak in the spacecraft, and "Surface Dangers," such as dust and wind hazards on the moon or Mars. Visitors trigger these short animations with a button push on a small kiosk; a Medialon show control system accesses WATCHOUT media storage.

Multi-Screen Live Show Makes Everyone Feel Part of the Team

Twice every hour, the exhibit space transforms into a live theater environment for the show Explorers Wanted. During the pre-show, visitors sit on bench seats as a presenter takes the stage to inspire the audience to become part of a NASA mission and the future of space exploration. Then the main show is displayed on a series of fixed, geometrically-shaped screens. The primary content is shown on a large center screen and a secondary circular screen, stage right. Two additional projectors also display content on four trapezoidal screens, which grow progressively larger in size as they arc over the top of the main screen.

For the live show, "Our primary challenge was creating a smooth interface among the equipment and the onstage presenters," notes project manager Guy Fronte. "We spent a lot of time on custom programming the Medialon software to interact with the WATCHOUT server, the projectors and the presenters who take visitors through the show." Additional WATCHOUT programming was required so

each of the two projectors could display content on the trapezoidal-shaped screens without images bleeding onto the wall.

As visitors prepare to exit the attraction they are invited to "Stay Connected" at sign-up stations in four interactive kiosks. Their images are captured by webcams and composited inside astronaut helmets in shots showing them performing various space-related activities. Visitors get to see their astronaut selves on 24-inch monitors in portrait mode and can email the fun shots back home or to friends.

Electrosonic Design Consulting was hired by the exhibit designers to provide the AV designs from concept through design development.

All areas of the attraction use Omega I sensors to monitor for temperature and humidity; this information is fed to Medialon which can warn technicians if the indicators rise above the level for satisfactory and safe operation of equipment. Electrosonic trained the Visitor Complex technical staff on the operation and maintenance of the system.

Toni Losier was Electrosonic's sales person on the project. Exploration Space was designed and produced by BRC Imagination Arts in conjunction with **Delaware North Companies Parks & Resorts** and NASA.



rivers gone wild

classic park works with the community to maintain competitive edge

By Kimberly Rily

Wild Rivers is a Southern California staple, having been open for 25 years. Each and every year, some theme parks add to their repertoire of rides and attractions. Another Southern California park has a new "colorful" show. A large park down in Florida recently opened an "island" of magic. Wild Rivers hasn't opened a new ride this season, but is still enjoying a healthy attendance. A classic doesn't need fancy new technology, or even a new addition every season. Over the years, Wild Rivers has grown from the four attractions it held in 1986 to a water park with 23 attractions of various levels of excitement, and it still invites locals and out-of-towners to enjoy its fun, cool, splashy entertainment.

Wild Rivers doesn't need high-tech. Because when the weather's hot, there's nothing better than a place to cool off. And Wild Rivers gives that and more. They've got exciting water slides too fast for some, the traditional lazy river and wave pool and in addition, a great kid's area, Typhoon Lagoon. Pair all that with a seat in the shade-- The cabanas with their wait staff are total luxury-- And you've got the recipe for a heavenly summer day.

After talking to Kevin Kopeny, the Chief Operating Officer at Wild Rivers, to see how

he felt about the park, one really feels that this park is almost a family business to him. He "feels a sense of ownership." Kopeny started working at Wild Rivers as a teenager and says, "Now I'm hiring the children of people I worked with in the '80s." There is a sense of love and community with this park. No secret that the State of California is having financial problems, Wild Rivers has started furlough days. On the days when many government offices and schools closed due to budget issues, Wild Rivers opened its gates on days it would have otherwise been closed. They took a chance, hoping that the locals would show up, and they did.

Wild Rivers gives back to the community in other ways. They hold the annual Mighty Rubber Ducky Derby, -which raises funds for the Children's Bureau child abuse prevention programs in Southern California. (The Derby is quickly approaching this October.) Kopeny also told InPark they raised money to help out local schools, hurting in this economy. They donated "something like \$4 for each adult ticket and \$2 for each child ticket purchased." And in the recent weeks, with back-to-school time in full effect, Wild Rivers donated a free ticket for each person who purchased 20 dollars' worth of school supplies at the local

Chino Spectrum Towne Center and donated the supplies to the City of Chino Community Outreach.

It was reported in the L.A. Times last year that Wild Rivers would possibly be replaced by a new park, Splash Canyon. Mr. Kopeny, the Vice President, the President and some of the partnership have started the process of opening new parks in Bakersfield and Temecula, but Kopeny states that, "This park will be Wild Rivers as long as it's open."

With all the financial challenges going on in the state of California and across the country, Wild Rivers remains strong. They still have 3,000-4,000 guests showing up daily. They have Monday Night Carloads and Season Pass Sundays that keep people coming in. The only thing that's having an effect on the attendance in the mornings is Southern California's "June gloom" which continued well into July this year. However, by the time the sun comes out around noon, attendees are ready to cool off. Wild Rivers is a Southern Californian classic water park that is staying popular due in part to its rides and attractions, but largely due to its relationship with the community.

Over 10,000 yellow rubber ducks will race to the finish at this year's 17th Annual Mighty Rubber Ducky Derby on Sunday, October 3. Event Chair Lori Irving is pleased to announce the top race prizes: Grand Prize is a 2011 Nissan Versa 1.6L; First Prize Disneyland World of Color Package, a multi day Disneyland Resort Staycation; Second Prize is a Corum Admiral's Cup Trophy Watch; Third Prize is his and hers Nirve Beach Cruisers. The event is expected to raise over \$175,000 for Children's Bureau, a nonprofit leader in the prevention of child abuse.

To participate, "adopt" a duck for \$10. This includes a duck in the race and entrance to Wild Rivers Waterpark for the day. The park is closed to the public and all rides will be open. Over 200 additional prizes will be awarded, and all proceeds benefit Children's Bureau's proven child abuse prevention programs. For more information, or to adopt your duck, visit www.duckyderbyoc.com



Hundreds of ducks round the corner at the Wild Rivers Mighty Rubber Ducky Derby in 2009. Photo courtesy of Children's Bureau.

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hallowed ground

universal studios orlando celebrates twenty years of halloween horror nights.

by Martin Palicki

I am always a little bit surprised at how many amusement industry professionals have never been to Halloween Horror Nights at Universal Orlando. The annual show is the quintessential Halloween event, blending Universal Studios' thrilling rides with six themed scare zones, eight meticulously detailed haunted houses and the inimitable Bill & Ted's Excellent Halloween Adventure Live Show.

What started off as a small holiday event has grown into a seasonal powerhouse that reportedly is responsible for a good portion of the park's annual revenue (Harry Potter notwithstanding).

Even for those not terribly interested in Halloween, it's a lesson in crowd management, event panning, and how to run a hard ticket evening event that does not detract from regular daily operation.

But even beyond all that, it's just plain fun.

For the uninitiated, each year's event follow some sort of storyline, with haunted houses and scare zones adhering to that theme to varying degrees. Over the years, certain event personalities, or "icons" have emerged, and return periodically to cause further mayhem.

2010 marked the 20th year of Halloween Horror Nights, and as such the creative minds behind HHN unleashed Fear, a demon-like creature who has been lurking behind the scenes of the event and the force behind each of the icons. Each icon represents a different theme, such as Death and Legend, that all support the evil missions of Fear.

The storyline is hyped up on the HHN website, which typically starts being updated in June with details about that year's event. The website continually evolves and can itself be scary at times. This year's iteration offers several online games guests can challenge themselves with to learn more about the event. The virtual world of HHN helps to promote the real one,

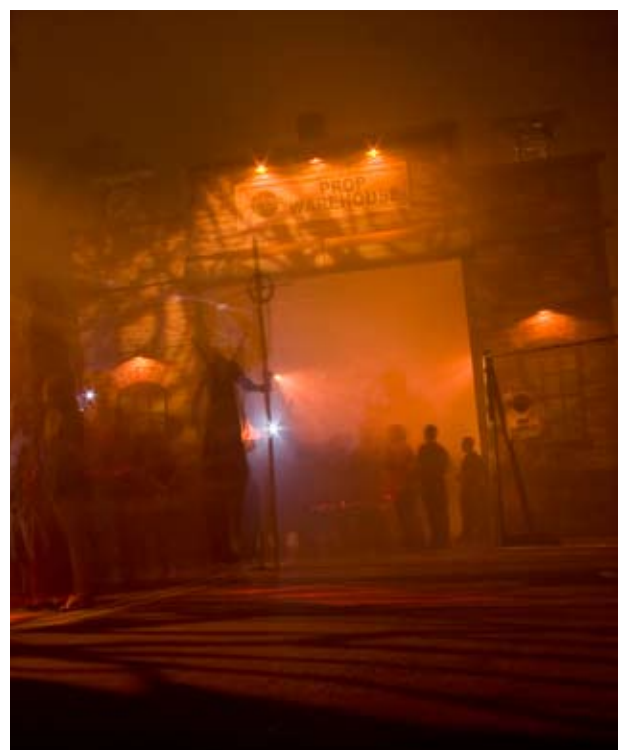
and supposedly also contains clues and riddles to special events and locations within the actual parks – something even a diehard fan such as myself hasn't had the time or patience to try and sleuth out.

By far the two most rewarding haunted houses this year are Legendary Truth and HHN: Hallowed Past. The former takes guests inside a supposedly haunted house, which has been wired for monitoring by a ghost hunting agency. Built inside one of the studios' soundstages, the attention to detail is impeccable. Even though most guests don't take the time to understand the backstory of each house, the narrative is played out in the props and artifacts within the house. The house is populated by a cast of scare-actors that jump out and startle guests from every nook and cranny.

Legendary Truth comes closest to achieving the one thing that seems to elude HHN: creepy suspense. Universal excels and blood and guts as well as loud scary noises. But they rarely

L to R: The spooky pumpkin patch, entrance to Legendary Truth, the fog filled entrance to the 20 Years of Fear Scare Zone.

Photos by Eric Sandigo



pull off that quiet suspenseful feeling of knowing something bad is going to happen. This is mostly due to HHN's own success. Crowds easily overwhelm the haunted houses, easily causing 45-60 minute waits on the slower nights. Little attempt is made to "pulse" groups through a haunted house and instead a continuous line of guests cycle through. Attempts at creating some space are met with stern commands from a flashlight-ed attendant to keep up with the group!

Hallowed Past is set up as a warehouse of old props and artifacts from past Horror Night events – a terrifying walk down memory lane. Of course, plenty of undead subjects also inhabit the warehouse halls which start to come to life as you venture deeper within. This house is scary AND nostalgic, usually a difficult combination to pull off. Even though Senior VP of Entertainment Jim Timon said during his event-opening comments that they didn't want to just re-hash everything from the past twenty years, in a way, after experiencing this house, I sort of wish they had.

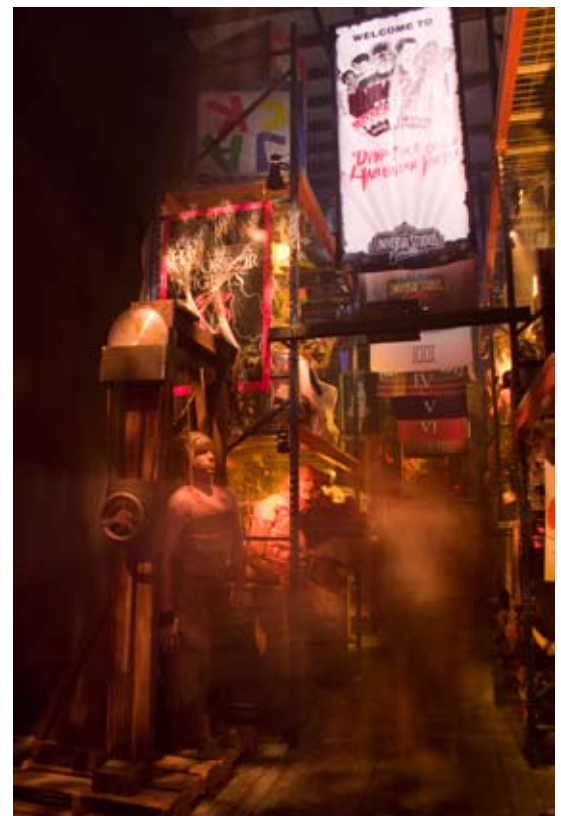
The perennial show Bill & Ted's Excellent Halloween Adventure is the one piece of the HHN puzzle that I have always thought

doesn't quite fit. Though extremely popular with the young crowd that HHN attracts, the show serves as a lampoon of pop culture icons and news stories, thrown together in a loose story line and with a fair amount of bikini-clad girls and shirtless men dancing around the stage avoiding pyrotechnics. Funny, irreverent and certainly R-rated, the show has never gelled as a Halloween production.

The scare zones, however, are always a perfect complement to the haunted houses, and this year was no exception. Although the themes never change all that much (one can always expect zombies and chainsaws) this year also included burning Puritans in The Coven and dancing skeletons in the delightfully frightening Esquelato Muerte.

But really, ALL of the haunted houses and scare zones are worth experiencing, ideally twice – once to take it all in and a second time to notice the incredible detail and handiwork that goes into creating the spectacular event that is Halloween Horror Nights.

HHN runs select nights throughout October. The equally frightening website is www.halloweenhorrornights.com.



Entering Horror Nights: The Hallowed Past requires guests to shuffle past shelves of old props. Photo courtesy of Eric Sandigo



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a little bit loopy

noah's ark waterpark unveils the first U.S. version of the AquaLoop with Scorpion's Tail

by Martin Palicki

Noah's Ark Waterpark in Wisconsin Dells unveiled one of their most thrilling rides this summer with the debut of "Scorpion's Tail", a looping waterslide from Whitewater West. The attraction opened with the park in May and was an instant success.

"This is the most groundbreaking water attraction since the launch of 'Black Anaconda' in 2005," says Tim Gantz, co-owner of Noah's Ark. The ride is the first looping waterslide in North America and also the tallest and largest of its kind in the world. Smaller versions exist in Slovenia, Germany and Japan. The ride features a launch rocket that plummets into a freefall down an enclosed chute at a top speed of

nearly 40 mph and enters a looping slide. It stands 10 stories high and is visible from afar in the Dells. The slide replaced one of the park's twin Point of No Return speed slides.

Perhaps one of the best descriptions of the new attraction comes from the ride's manufacturer, Whitewater West: If you jump out of an airplane you have a cord to pull to open the parachute. If you bungee jump off of a bridge you have a band tied to your ankles that will catch you. If you fall down a 300-ft. tower at an amusement park you sit on a seat and there's a brake to stop you. If you go head first over a steep drop on a roller coaster you are strapped into a car on a track. At Noah's Ark this summer,

riders have nothing to grab onto... nothing to sit on...nothing to pull...and no restraints. The floor falls out and you fall, feet first, straight down a 10-story tower. Just your body, the water and the air around you, whooshing as you fall through it, taking you up, over and around the loop before you come to a stop at the end of the ride.

Riders climb to the top of an 80-ft tower and wait to enter the launch rocket. After stepping on a scale to ensure they fit within the range of weights that will ensure a safe ride, the attendant opens the door and the rider leans back against the slightly tilted wall. An automated countdown initiates and then the



A rider exits the loop and prepares to splash down after taking on Scorpion's Tail at Noah's Ark. Photo courtesy of Noah's Ark.



Whitewater West recently installed its first four-slide version of the AquaLoop at Wet 'n' Wild waterpark in Australia. Photo courtesy of Whitewater West.

trap door suddenly and swiftly drops open. The transition is smooth, though most riders tend to let out a little scream or yell as the floor disappears beneath them.

During this time, the door to the capsule is locked, preventing anyone from walking into the floorless tube. After the riders pass a sensor, the trap door closes and the door unlocks for the next passenger.

The drop down the slide is almost immediate. Before knowing exactly what is happening, the rider levels out and begins the ascent up into the tilted loop. Larger riders slide faster and tend to go more vertical in the loop, although at no time is the rider ever actually upside down (though some do get seemingly close!).

At the top of the loop, the rider is doused with a spray of water and begins the downward drop to the end of the ride and the splashdown. The whole experience takes about four seconds, but it truly is an exhilarating four seconds.

The ride is incredibly smooth, even while transitioning between the various elements

of the slide, and the translucent tube helps alleviate any feeling of claustrophobia as well as provides entertainment to waiting guests.

While lines can get long for the attraction, the throughput is really not much different from similar types of slides. Riders must clear the splash down pool before another slider is sent, but with a quick ride time, the line moves. The entertainment factor of watching other people slide also helps to soften the waiting experience. At Noah's Ark the drop portion of the slide runs along one side of the stairs, so guests are able to see just how steep the drop is and how fast the ride moves as each blurry body drops past them at speeds of up to 40 mph.

Construction on the \$1 million ride began in September 2009. The ride is just over 400-ft long, including the 45 degree angled loop. The new ride has been successful for Whitewater West, with over 20 installations worldwide so far, including a four-slide version at Wet 'n' Wild Australia.

The Travel Channel's Bert the Conqueror visited Noah's Ark to try Scorpion's Tail for himself. You can find photos and information from his visit at http://www.travelchannel.com/TV_Shows/Bert_the_Conqueror/Episodes_Travel_Guides/Wisconsin



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cana-ribbean beach

ottawa's **calypso waterpark** celebrates first season of bringing the **tropics** north

by *Martin Palicki*

This summer, Canada welcomed its newest aquatic destination when Calypso Waterpark opened its doors in Ottawa. The park exudes a warm and enchanting Caribbean atmosphere from its ticket booths to its restaurants. The Calypso Palace, home of the Goddess Calypso, features an enormous fresco of seashells and statues of sea dwellers – and all of this overlooking Canada's largest wave pool, which is as big as three NHL rinks. Throughout the day, Calypso will control the waves of the giant wave pools to the enjoyment of her guests and friends.

The park is populated by colorful characters who came from all over the world to establish themselves at the park and share their passion for everything watery: Calypso, Queen of the Waves, the corsair Captain LaPlank, Sarah Max, thrill-seeker extraordinaire, the mysterious Dr. Dunk and nature enthusiast, Wildman Jack.

Those with a taste for aquatic adventure can float down the wild and twisted Jungle Run River under its thick, luscious green canopy and lifelike screams of wild-animals heard from overhead. With a little luck, bathers might get a glimpse of the fearless adventurer Wildman Jack in action, taming a wild beast or even learn a little about ecology.

Curious guests who wonder what goes on in a scientist's lab can experience firsthand how it feels to be twirled and mixed in a bowl as they race down one of Turbo Lab's four dizzying slides from Whitewater West.

Young kids are enchanted by the Zoo Lagoon as they play on its mini slides, enjoy its various water toys and meet friendly animated characters. It's a watery world of wonder – engineered for fun and safety at the same time. Children – and the young at heart – can join

Captain LaPlank in the Pirate's Aquaplay and experience adventure and thrills in its many slides, water cannons, and on the wooden walkways with over 100 water features for hours of fun.

Thrill seekers can take up Sara Max's challenges as they zip down the park's various watery speed ways. They have plenty to scream about thanks to the Turbulence and Blackhole waterslides, which feature tight turns and steep drops; all in total darkness. Speed freaks scream their hearts out as they reach maximum velocity plunging down the Adrenaline and Vertigo slides, or race head-to-head against their friends in the multi-lane Fast Track. The daring can experience the high-seas firsthand as they are propelled up the huge walls of the Boomerango and Zoomerang from Whitewater West.

Turbo Lab slides give guests four grunge-ified bowls to choose from. Photo courtesy of Whitewater West.



The Calypso Theme Waterpark also offers a wide array of entertainment; two international-calibre beach volleyball courts and grassy areas landscaped for total relaxation, such the area around the wave pool, with room for nearly 4,000 sunbathers. At the Hawaiian Beach Bar, guests can enjoy plenty of refreshments plus the music of a live tropical band, or enjoy delicious food at one of the many restaurants.

Park visitors also benefit from the very convenient Money at my fingertip payment method. Using biometric technology, Money at my fingertip gives guests access to their money all day, at all park food and beverage sales points and at the Calypso Friends Boutique, without the need to carry a single dime. "We implemented this system for the first time at our Village Vacances Valcartier sister location in 2009," explains Guy Drouin, President and CEO. "It lets visitors upload money to their index finger and use it everywhere on-site with a single touch of their finger."

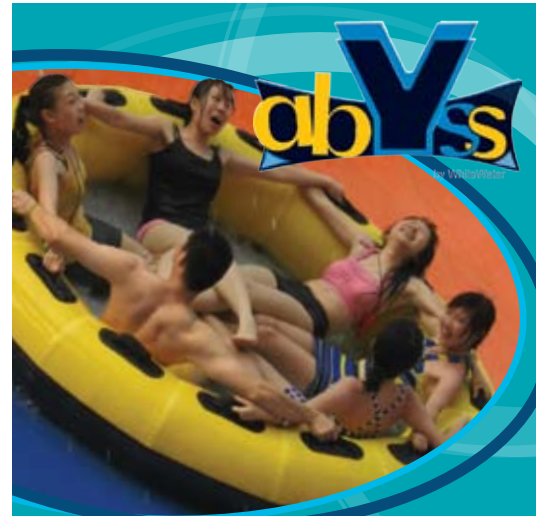
"We've spent two years on research and development for our Money at my fingertip, technology," adds Drouin. "This is unique to our two theme waterparks, and we are very pleased with the outcome. It has been a resounding success, and we've received a lot of positive feedback from our clientele, who appreciate the freedom it offers." Any unused balance is fully refundable at the end of the day's visit, or can be used throughout the season.

The new theme park is located just 20 minutes from Ottawa and 75 minutes from Montreal. The 35-waterslide theme waterpark is projected to generate \$750 million in spin-offs over a 10-year period for the entire National Capital and Eastern Ontario regions.

Calypso is the result of an investment of more than \$45 million, including \$2 million from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Pirate's Aquaplay offers water-inspired activities for kids of all ages.

Photo courtesy Whitewater West



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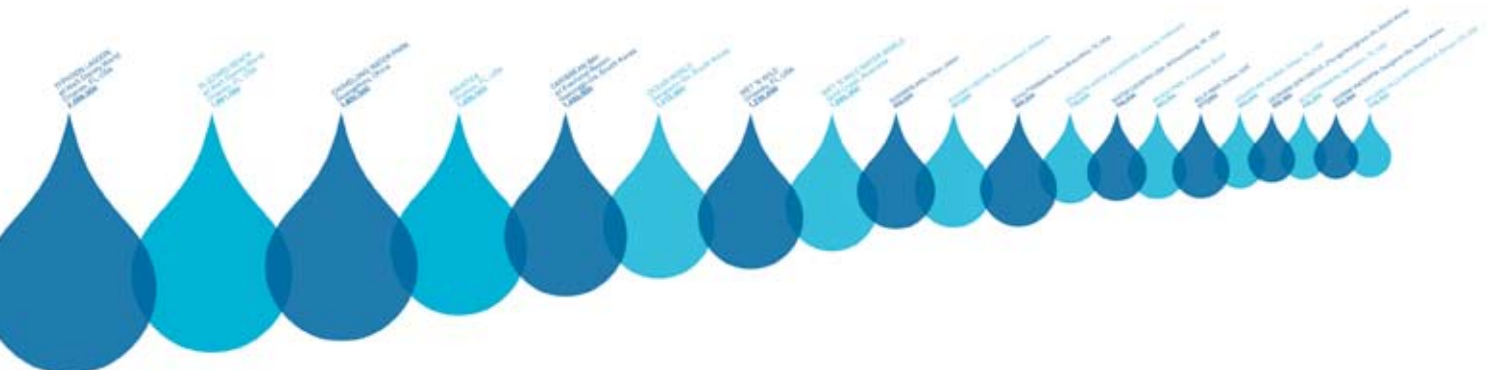
tea and aecom release their annual report on attractions attendance figures, including these highlights from the world of waterparks

Courtesy of TEA and AECOM

TOP 20 WATERPARKS UNITED STATES

1	TYPHOON LAGOON at Walt Disney World Lake Buena Vista, FL	2,059,000 visitors	↔0%
2	BLIZZARD BEACH at Walt Disney World Lake Buena Vista, FL	1,891,000 visitors	↔0%
3	AQUATICA Orlando, FL	1,600,000 visitors	↓6.8%
4	WET'N WILD Orlando, FL	1,235,000 visitors	↓5.0%
5	SCHLITTERBAHN New Braunfels, TX	900,000 visitors	↑2.0%
6	WATER COUNTRY USA Williamsburg, VA	700,000 visitors	↓2.2%
7	ADVENTURE ISLAND Tampa, FL	600,000 visitors	↑9.3%
8	SCHLITTERBAHN Galveston, TX	530,000 visitors	↓5.0%
9	HYLAND HILLS WATER WORLD Denver, CO	515,000 visitors	↓3.4%
10	SPLISH-SPLASH Riverhead, NY	495,000 visitors	↓1.0%
11	NOAH'S ARK Wisconsin Dells, WI	490,000 visitors	↓8.1%
12	RAGING WATERS San Dimas, CA	466,000 visitors	↓3.1%
13*	SIX FLAGS WHITE WATER Marietta, GA	450,000 visitors	↓8.2%
13*	SIX FLAGS HURRICANE HARBOR Arlington, TX	450,000 visitors	↓1.1%
15	DOLLYWOOD'S SPLASH COUNTRY Pigeon Forge, TN	446,000 visitors	↓2.0%
16	WET'N WILD EMERALD POINT Greensboro, NC	390,000 visitors	n/a
17	SOAK CITY CEDAR POINT Sandusky, OH	375,000 visitors	n/a
18	SIX FLAGS HURRICANE HARBOR Jackson, NJ	360,000 visitors	n/a
19	CAMEL BEACH Tannerville, PA	350,000 visitors	n/a
20	ZOOMEZI BAY Powell, OH	325,000 visitors	n/a

Note: ** indicates a tie. Attendance figures are estimates, based on company information, annual reports, published information and from reliable TEA/AECOM industry and tourism sources. Percent changes for 2009 for certain parks are based on adjusted/updated figures for 2008, thus not directly comparable to published TEA/AECOM list for 2009/07. Source: TEA/AECOM





Greatest waterslide
I've ever been on
in my entire life!



Wet 'n Wild, Australia



Actopan de la Sal Waterpark, Mexico

TOP 20 WATERPARKS

1	TYPHOON LAGOON at Walt Disney World Orlando, FL, USA	2,059,000	visitors	↔ 0%
2	BLIZZARD BEACH at Walt Disney World Orlando, FL, USA	1,891,000	visitors	↔ 0%
3	CHIMELONG WATER PARK Guangzhou, China	1,800,000	visitors	↑ 12.5%
4	AQUATICA Orlando, FL, USA	1,600,000	visitors	↓ 6.8%
5	CARIBBEAN BAY at Everland Resort Gyeonggi-Do, South Korea	1,450,000	visitors	↓ 3.3%
6	OCEAN WORLD Gangwon-Do, South Korea	1,310,000	visitors	↑ 4.0%
7	WET 'N WILD Orlando, FL, USA	1,235,000	visitors	↓ 5.0%
8	WET 'N WILD WATER WORLD Gold Coast, Australia	1,095,000	visitors	↑ 6.8%
9	SUMMERLAND Tokyo, Japan	920,000	visitors	↑ 1.9%
10	SUNWAY LAGOON Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	907,000	visitors	↓ 17.5%
11	SCHLITTEBAHN New Braunfels, TX, USA	900,000	visitors	↑ 2.0%
12	ATLANTIS WATER ADVENTURE (Taman Impian Jaya Ancol) Jakarta, Indonesia	720,000	visitors	↓ 10.0%
13	WATER COUNTRY USA Williamsburg, VA, USA	700,000	visitors	↓ 2.2%
14	BEACH PARK Fortaleza, Brazil	683,000	visitors	↑ 29.4%
15	WILD WADI Dubai, UAE	677,000	visitors	↓ 17.9%
16	ADVENTURE ISLAND Tampa, FL, USA	600,000	visitors	↑ 9.3%
17	DECKSAN SPA CASTLE Chungcheongnam-Do, South Korea	555,000	visitors	↓ 7.5%
18	SCHLITTEBAHN Galveston, TX, USA	530,000	visitors	↓ 5.0%
19	SEORAK WATERPIA Gangwon-Do, South Korea	525,000	visitors	↓ 16.0%
20	HYLAND HILLS WATER WORLD Denver, CO, USA	515,000	visitors	↓ 3.4%

ABOUT THIS STUDY

The TEA/AECOM Attraction Attendance Report identifies the top commercial theme parks and waterparks around the world and reflects their performance for the previous year. Global attendance data are broken down by geographic region, by chain and by type of venue. The report is a valuable business reference and resource for the industry.

This vital report is issued annually and jointly produced and distributed by the TEA (Themed Entertainment Association) – the leading international trade alliance for the creators of compelling experiences and places – and the Economics practice at AECOM, formerly Economics Research Associates (ERA) – the world leader in economic consulting for the entertainment and leisure industry. The Economics practice at AECOM began producing the report in 2004 (as the Amusement Business-ERA Year End Attendance Report), which became the TEA-ERA Year End Attendance Report as of 2006, and is now produced by TEA and AECOM.

AECOM obtains the figures used to create the TEA/AECOM Attraction Attendance Report through a variety of sources, including statistics furnished directly by the operators, historical numbers, financial reports, the investment banking

community and local tourism organizations, among others. The global market is studied as a whole, and each of its four main regions is also studied separately: North America, Mexico/Latin America, Europe and Asia. There is also a table of the top waterparks in the world and in the United States, and of the top global chain operators.

To be included in the study, a facility must be gated (entry ticket required). North American parks must have annual visits above one million. To be included on the top chains list, a chain operator must have theme parks in its portfolio. Both external and internal factors including development costs, pricing, customer service, weather, demographics, investment/expansion, and other dynamics impact the estimated numbers.

TEA and AECOM express thanks to the numerous park operators who graciously and generously furnished attendance information, enabling this report to be as complete and accurate as possible.

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water falls?

the **upward flow** of waterparks

by George Walker

In the wake of a veritable tidal wave of water park construction in the past decade, it is more important than ever before that new parks stay fresh, original, and competitive. Water parks are popular. They draw a broad, family demographic, and now there are more than ever before. The question is: will the market become saturated, or can this be prevented?

The cautionary tales of the over-expansion of the Hard Rock Café chain offer a great comparison. Each new location built further diluted the uniqueness of the Hard Rock experience until guests started to realize that eating a hamburger next to a guitar screwed to the wall in New York City feels just about the same as it does in London. The same fate could befall water parks. There are only so many times that a collection of colorful, twisting plastic tubes and a wave pool are worth the money. In short, water parks could be headed upstream, swimming against a current that leads to “predictable” and “ordinary.” So what is the solution?

In their evolution, water parks have come a long way. The formula which dictated that only larger-sized regional parks could afford a comprehensive collection of water attractions substantial enough to draw a crowd has changed. Resort hotels are also making a bid to rule the water park market with properties like Great Wolf Lodge or Kalahari Resort. But even smaller venues are appropriating the water park nomenclature. This summer, for example, a moderately-sized Holiday Inn in Batavia, NY (population 16,256), announced that it was adding a “water park,” including “two twenty foot water slides, an activity pool with a basketball hoop, a ‘tiki house’ with small water slides, and a dumping bucket.” This from a one hundred ninety-five room hotel sitting at an unexceptional exit of the New York State Thruway.

Given the dilution of the very meaning of the phrase “water park,” the best way to stay competitive is through skillfully crafted theming. The secret to a solidly themed water park is to find a simple, story-driven reason why the pools and slides are there. It’s the environment that takes the same experience of going down the same waterslide that you can find anywhere, and makes it different. The story of the storm-torn beach of Typhoon Lagoon, or the melting snow of Blizzard Beach, make each of these parks a truly unique experience,

despite the fact that they offer a similar collection of water attractions. You’re so busy taking in the environment that the individual water attractions become completely different experiences.

Sometimes the story can even lead to a new attraction. At Wild Wadi, Dubai, the “Flash Flood” storyline of the park is recreated every half hour when the sky fills with rain, claps of thunder, and flashes of lightning. In minutes the narrow rocky canyon is flooded in this popular and unique experience. This simple story-telling device creates the foundation for all the attractions that follow, and inspires the environment in which they exist, thus making Wild Wadi unlike any other water park.

Thinking outside the box in the design also helps. The Aquaventure at the Atlantis Resort, Paradise Island, is perhaps the strongest example of this that I have found. To start, it isn’t technically a water park! It offers many of the attractions that you would expect at a water park, and yet it isn’t one. There is no ticket gate, no extra charge. It is simply a perk of the resort. But the differences don’t stop there. Rather than locating the park on some gated, adjacent property, here the designers completely integrated Aquaventure into the resort’s environment. In this way, the slides and pools serve both as attractions and as water features for the resort. In addition to great theming, however, the innovation of the design is taken even further with the creation of a unique master plan that all but eliminates

queue lines. Water parks across the country are notorious for their long waits, but at the Atlantis, this problem is handled differently. For a major section of the water park, once you have entered the river with your inner tube, you do not have to get out again to be able to experience other attractions – because they are all connected to the river! Like a Venetian waterway, you can access several other areas of the park by simply floating to them on your tube. My personal experience there further demonstrates how effective this design is. I remember drifting into a channel that ultimately led to a water coaster. As I slowly floated along with at least a few dozen guests ahead of me, I remarked to myself how brilliant it was that there were no lines. At the time, it never occurred to me that I was, in fact, in a line. The master plan of connected waterways had completely fooled me.

Though not every project can enjoy the luxury of Disney or Atlantis-sized budgets, the secret lies in the story and the environment. A clever design with a few new twists and well-told story is a lot better than an expensive design that simply offers more of the same, predictable products. The secret, then, is not to begin by shopping for the products, but by imagining the “story” first.

George Walker is a “Story Builder” and creative consultant. His most recent project was “Space Fantasy the Ride” for Universal Studios Japan.



Wild Wadi Waterpark in Dubai. Photo courtesy of ProSlide.



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