



Theme Park

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Acknowledgement

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Module III - Destination Geography

Theme Park

Contents

	Page
1. The fundamental concepts of theme parks	<u>10</u>
1.1 Types of theme park	12
1.2 The features of a theme park	17
2. Factors contributing to the success of theme parks	<u>21</u>
2.1 Overall attractiveness and visitors' experiences	21
(I) Unique and interesting theme	22
(II) Value for money / Variety of on-site attractions	23
(III) Clean and pleasant environment	24
(IV) Motivated and well-trained staff	26
(V) Good location	26
(VI) Quality and consistency in services and facilities	27
2.2 Adapt to market changes	28
(I) Senior segment	28
(II) Environmentally-friendly	29
(III) 'Edutainment'	30
(IV) Interactive experiences	31
2.3 The management	35
(I) Pro-active management	35
(II) Strong financial resources and on-going investment	36
(III) Strong marketing team	36
(IV) Maintenance	37
Links	<u>40</u>
References	<u>45</u>

1. The Fundamental Concepts of Theme Parks

Generally speaking, theme parks can be defined as a subset of visitor attractions (Goeldner, 1999).

Although theme park is a subset of visitor attractions, there are attributes that distinguish theme park from other kinds of visitor attractions in particular the entertainment attractions (Kemperman, 2000). The attributes are:



- (i) pay-one-price admission charge or pay-one-price attractions (^{**} *admission charge for amusement parks is usually very minimal, and generally adopted a pay-as-you-go attractions pricing structure*);
- (ii) attractions are mostly man-made;
- (iii) high capital investments (Kemperman, 2000) ; and
- (iv) a combination of entertainment, food and beverage outlets, shops, and an environment that is different from that found outside its gates.

Definitions

In view of the above unique attributes, definitions of theme park written by the tourism industry and academic are presented:

Industry's definition of a theme park:

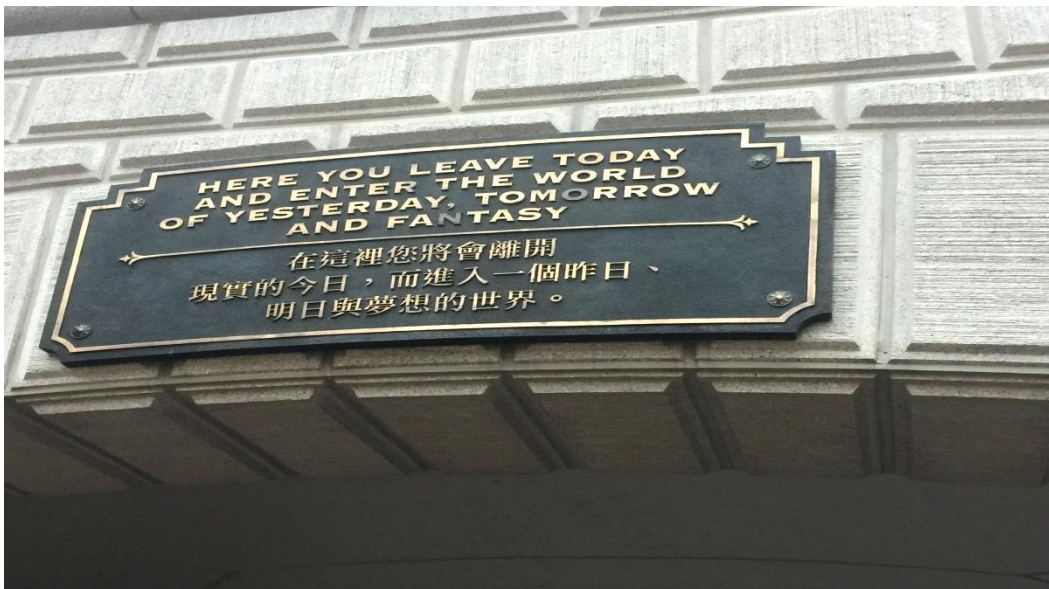
1. According to the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), a theme park is 'an amusement park that has themed

attractions, be it food, costumes, entertainment, retail stores and/or rides' (IAAPA).

2. According to Forrec, the theme park is a place of escape – a chance to step away from the big burdens of the everyday. (Forrec, 2015)

Academic definition of a theme park:

1. Theme park as an aggregation of themed attractions, including architecture, landscape, rides, shows, foodservices, costumed personnel, and retail shops (Heo, 2009).
2. Theme parks are extreme examples of capital intensive, highly developed, user-oriented, man modified, recreational environments (Pearce, 1988).
3. A theme park is a destination in its own right, which combines entertainment, food and beverage and shops, and an environment that is different from that found outside its gates (Ap and Ho, 2009).




Despite a number of different definitions of theme park are presented, a common attribute is shared among them. Theme parks, in general, apply themes to provide visitors with interesting experiences different from daily life (Heo, 2009).

1.1 Types of theme park



The theme is the main part of the visitors' experience which is chosen when the park is planned to provide a focus for the design, development and operation of such a park. Therefore, the selection of the theme is extremely important to the operations of the park. In general, theme parks attempt to create an atmosphere of another place and time, and usually emphasize one dominant theme around which architecture, landscape, rides, shows, food services, costumed personnel, retailing are orchestrated (Kemperman, 2000).

Although theme parks were thought of offering visitors one major theme, today most of the theme parks contain multi-themes in terms of different attraction points or themed areas (Wong & Cheung, 1999). For example, Ocean Park Hong Kong major theme is nature but it has multi-themes including wildlife animals and marine life.

Theme parks can generally be classified into seven theme types and related attributes as follows:

Type of theme park	Attributes
1. Adventure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excitement and action• Frightening• Mysterious• Thrill rides

Type of theme park	Attributes
<p data-bbox="256 342 448 376">2. Futurism</p> 	<ul data-bbox="759 342 1318 629" style="list-style-type: none"> • Advances in society and technology • Discovery • Exploration of science and technology • Robotics • Scientific • Science fiction
<p data-bbox="256 678 512 712">3. International</p> 	<ul data-bbox="759 678 1082 920" style="list-style-type: none"> • Flavours of the world • International village • Miniature replicas • Scenic spots • World expositions
<p data-bbox="256 1014 411 1048">4. Nature</p> 	<ul data-bbox="759 1014 1082 1391" style="list-style-type: none"> • Animals • Floral displays • Horticultural gardens • Landscaping • Marine life • Natural wonders • Ocean • Wildlife
<p data-bbox="256 1485 448 1518">5. Fantasy</p> 	<ul data-bbox="759 1485 1126 1883" style="list-style-type: none"> • Animation • Cartoon characters • Childhood enchantment • Children's play park • Fairy tales • Magic • Make believe • Myths and legends

Type of theme park	Attributes
<p>6. History and culture</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal • Authentic • Cultural heritage • Cultural village • Gold rush • Historic ambience
<p>7. Movies</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Wild West shows • Comedy • Motion pictures • Show business • Stunt shows

Types of theme park

(Source: Wong & Cheung, 1999)

Discussion Questions

1. Link to the website of TEA - Themed Entertainment Association

http://www.teaconnect.org/images/files/TEA_235_103719_170601.pdf , and using the

information to give two examples for each types of theme park listed in the below table:

Type of theme park	Examples
1. Adventure	
2. Futurism	
3. International	
4. Nature	
5. Fantasy	
6. History and culture	
7. Movies	

2. Refer to “Photo A” and “Photo B” below:
How are the two pricing structures different from each other?

Date 15 July - 7 August 2016 (Friday - Sunday)

Time Monday - Thursday: 11:00am - 8:00pm
Friday - Sunday : 10:00am- 8:00pm

Ticket Price

	Monday - Thursday		Friday - Sunday			
Lai Yuen Opening Hours	11:00am - 8:00pm		10:00am - 8:00pm			
Admission Period	Applicable all day		10:00am - 12:00nn		12:00nn - 8:00pm	
Package ticket	HKD\$140	10 tokens	HKD\$140	10 tokens	HKD\$180	12 tokens
Age of 65 years or above	HKD\$70	10 tokens	HKD\$70	10 tokens	HKD\$90	12 tokens
Age of 3 years or below	Free (Does not include any tokens)					

	Monday - Thursday	Friday - Sunday
Electric go-kart opening hours	11:00am - 8:00pm	10:00am - 8:00pm
Admission ticket price per person	HKD\$280	HKD\$280

* Each token costs HKD\$10

Photo A

Source: The website of AsiaWorld-Expo

http://www.asiaworldexpo.com.hk/html/en/eventcalendar/EventDetail_1146C0F622DC4D3882ABCC72A795D4A9.html

The screenshot shows the 'Park Tickets' section of the Hong Kong Disneyland website. It features a navigation bar with 'Park & Tickets' selected. Below the navigation, there are three tabs: 'Park Tickets', 'Magic Access (Annual Pass)', and 'Disneyland Tour Services'. The 'Park Tickets' tab is active, displaying the text 'Experience the magic of Hong Kong Disneyland Park with a 1-day or 2-day ticket.' Two ticket options are listed:

- 1-Day Ticket: Standard Day**: Standard Day Tickets are valid on all days. Valid for one visit during the 6-month period beginning on the date of the purchase.

Prices:	General Admission (Ages 12-64)	Child (Ages 3-11)	Senior (Ages 65+)
	HKS 589	HKS 419	HKS 100
- 2-Day Ticket**: Visit on any 2 days within a 7-day period. First visit must be on or before the last day of the validity period printed on the back of the ticket.

Prices:	General Admission (Ages 12-64)	Child (Ages 3-11)	Senior (Ages 65+)
	HKS 759	HKS 539	HKS 170

Prices in Hong Kong dollars. Total calculated at checkout.

Photo B

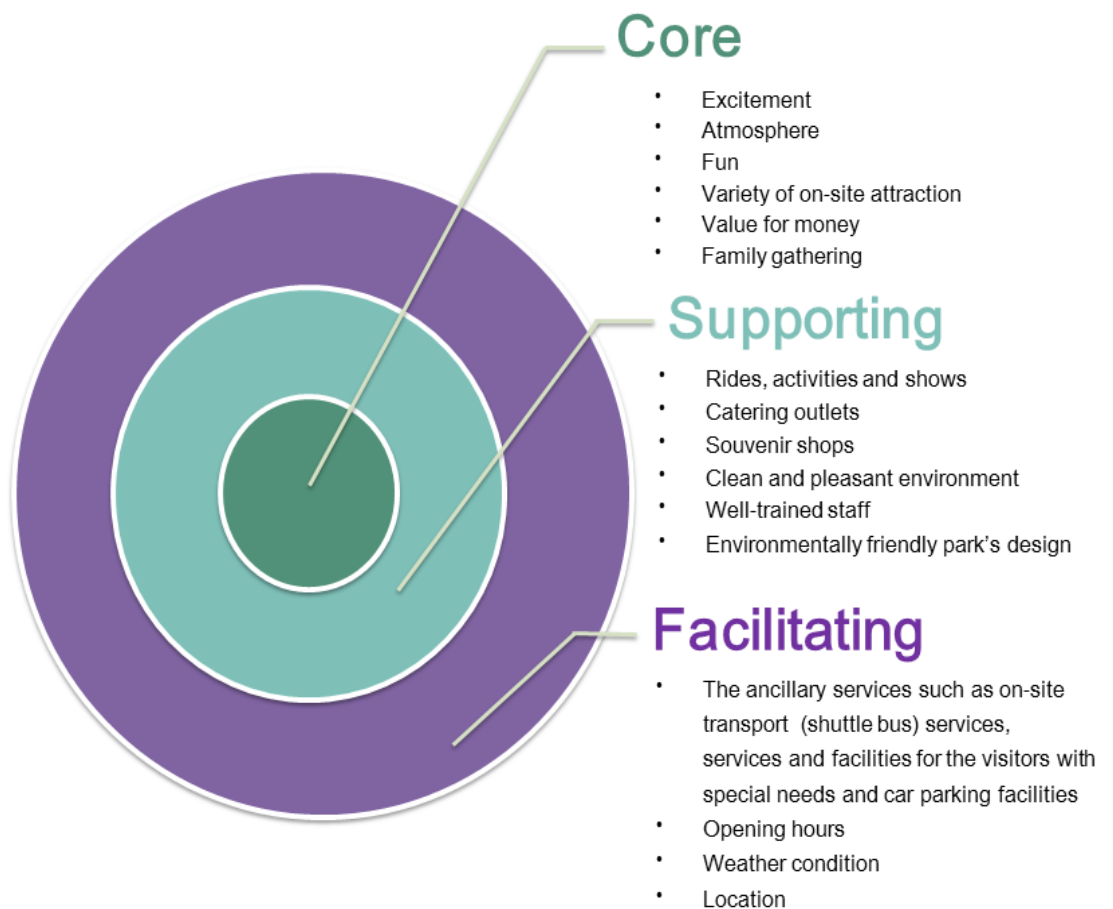
Source: The website of Hong Kong Disneyland <https://www.hongkongdisneyland.com/ticketS/>

1.2 The Features of a Theme Park

According to Kotler and Swarbrooke, there are three levels of product in a theme park, and each level has its own features:

- Level 1: Core product;
- Level 2: Supporting (Tangible) product; and
- Level 3: Facilitating (Augmented) product.

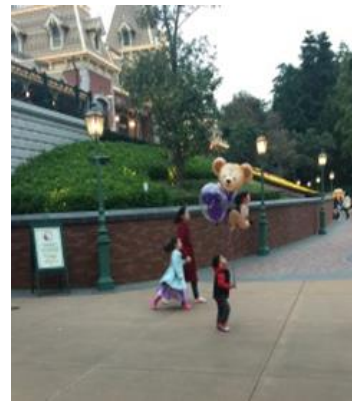
In fact, visitors visit a theme park for an expectation of a wonderful experience that combines all the features from the three levels of product.



(Source: Kotler,1994; Swarbrooke,1995)

Level 1: The Core Product

The core product is the most fundamental level and is what the visitor is really buying. The product consists of benefits sought by the visitors but they are intangible in nature, such as:



- ✧ Excitement
- ✧ Atmosphere
- ✧ Fun
- ✧ Value for money / Variety of on-site attraction
- ✧ The company of others / family gathering

Level 2: The Supporting Product (Tangible Product)

Theme park's management needs to turn the core product in Level 1 into tangible product. Furthermore, supporting product is extra products to offer the added value to the core product itself and to help to differentiate it from the competitors (other theme parks). The supporting product includes:

- ✧ Rides, activities and shows
- ✧ Catering outlets
- ✧ Souvenir shops
- ✧ Clean, pleasant and safe environment that visitors can enjoy their experiences:



- washrooms, exits, seating areas, customer service counters are convenient located for visitors

- easy to understand signage for visitors
- sheltered walkways and covered queue-up areas for wet-weather as well as sunny-weather; and set up cooling and warming equipment in the queuing areas for visitors during hot summers and cold winters
- ✧ Well-trained staff – see Section 2.1 (IV)
- ✧ Environmentally friendly theme park's design - see Section 2.2 (II)



Level 3: The Facilitating Product (Augmented Product)

Facilitating product is not the core product that visitor is buying, but it helps to make the experience more satisfying and enjoyable. This includes all the additional services and facilities that enhance the visitors' experiences, and they are both tangible and intangible in nature:

- ✧ The ancillary services such as:
 - on-site transport (shuttle bus) to move visitors around the theme park
 - facilities for the visitors with special needs and physical challenges such as ramps and elevators for access by wheelchairs and baby strollers
 - lockers for visitor convenience and safekeeping of belongings
 - car parking facilities



✧ Opening hours

- Some theme parks have special opening hours such as offer early-entry days for visitors to visit a specific attraction in the theme park. This arrangement is welcomed by visitors who want to avoid the crowds, and it may help to ease the overall physical capacity of the theme park. For example in Universal Orlando Resort, visitors purchase special package can enjoy early park admission to The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ and Universal's Volcano Bay™ one hour before the park opens.

✧ Weather condition

- According to Perkins (Perkins, 2016), tourism sector is particularly sensitive to weather, and it can affect visitor attendance decision. Despite many sheltered areas are built to protect visitors, weather still affect park hours and attractions may be suspended due to poor weather conditions. This will affect visitors from experiencing an enjoyable time at the park or simply discourage visitors from visiting the theme park.



✧ Location

- see Section 2.1 (V)

2. Factors Contributing to the Success of Theme Parks



Visitors have been becoming more demanding for park experiences. In order for theme park successfully meeting its visitors' demands, it should have the following factors:

- ✧ Major features of a theme park that contribute to enhance overall attractiveness and visitors' experiences;
- ✧ Adapts to market changes; and
- ✧ Overall management strategies.

2.1 Overall attractiveness and visitors' experiences

Theme parks should have the following major features to maintain viable in a highly competitive market environment:

- (I) Unique and interesting theme;
- (II) Value for money / Variety of on-site attraction;
- (III) Clean and pleasant environment;
- (IV) Motivated and well-trained staff;
- (V) Good location; and
- (VI) Quality and consistency in services and facilities.

(I) Unique and Interesting Theme



All successful attractions have unique and interesting themes, making it fun for all ages. According to Forrec's report, the best theme parks are completely immersive, always entertaining and, through clever creative execution, are able to sustain the feeling of getting away from it all (Forrec, 2015). Visitors will not go to or pay extra money for theme parks with a similar theme unless there is something unique about it (Hatt, 2015) , such as:

✧ Innovative

- Innovation in the design of supporting product. In particular, the application of technology of Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality and Mixed Reality in developing high-tech attractions.



✧ Immersive

- Deepening visitors' experience through the senses including:
 - Visual: Architectural buildings, scenery, interactive shows, and theme park's characters
 - Sound: Music, sound from rides and noises from the crowds.
 - Tactile: Games involve throwing or hitting things, petting animals, and the strong wind blowing to the face while riding the mechanical rides.



✧ Interactive

- Increasingly allowing visitors to become active. See 2.2 (IV) for details.

✧ Inspiring

- It is all about combining education and entertainment (*called Edutainment*). See 2.2 (III) for details.

(II) Value for money / Variety of on-site attraction



Visitors are concerned about the theme park ticket price, so they seek value for money when they visit a theme park. Therefore, visitors care about the experiences they gained from visiting the theme park. Those experiences formed the standards for visitors to evaluate whether the

theme park offers value for money. However, these perceived values vary from person to person. Here are some of the experiences for visitors to evaluate on value for money:



- Feel excited and experience something new
 - Rides, activities and shows including parade, fireworks display, and special events which have something special and unique about them.

In addition to mechanical rides, interactive experience showing its theme story involving all five senses are popular among visitors. Special events such as events and themed activities are also a useful tool to add variety as visitors will be more likely to come back if they can expect something new on their next visit.



To accommodate different types of visitors with different tastes, there should be a variety of on-site attractions ranging from rides to entertainment shows performed by people or machines. Nowadays, theme parks not only offer on-site attractions but also unique atmosphere and services to enhance visitor experience:



- Enjoy high quality service
 - A good combination of supporting and facilitating products including clean and pleasant environment, well-trained staff, good accessibility to the park, and other ancillary services.
- Feel secure, in particular, the entertaining facilities have a high safety standards
 - Theme park as being professional and caring in terms of visitor's safety.

In addition, food offers at theme park is important as food and beverages are an integral part of an overall park experience. Park food offering constitutes of food itself that includes food quality, food variety and value, as well as food service attributes that include restaurant cleanliness, waiting times and food employee courtesy. According to Geissler, these features provide an overall theme park experience to visitors that can greatly contribute to the revenues and profits of a theme park (Geissler and Ruck, 2011).



(III) Clean and pleasant environment

Visitors will not visit a park if it was old or tired looking, untidy and generally unpleasant. Cleanliness and pleasant of the park is the first priority for visitors to have an enjoyable experience at the theme park. Hong Kong Disneyland, for

example, has more sheltered spaces than at other Disney Magic Kingdom Parks because of its location in a sub-tropical climatic zone with high rainfall.



(IV) Motivated and well-trained staff



Having a motivated workforce is essential to ensure high standards of customer service as the service production process, which involves staff and visitors is inseparable. Staff should be enthusiastic, well-trained to provide efficient and reliable services from the

heart. No matter how good the physical facilities and elements are, people do not like to visit a theme park if they receive rude and unfriendly service.



(V) Good location



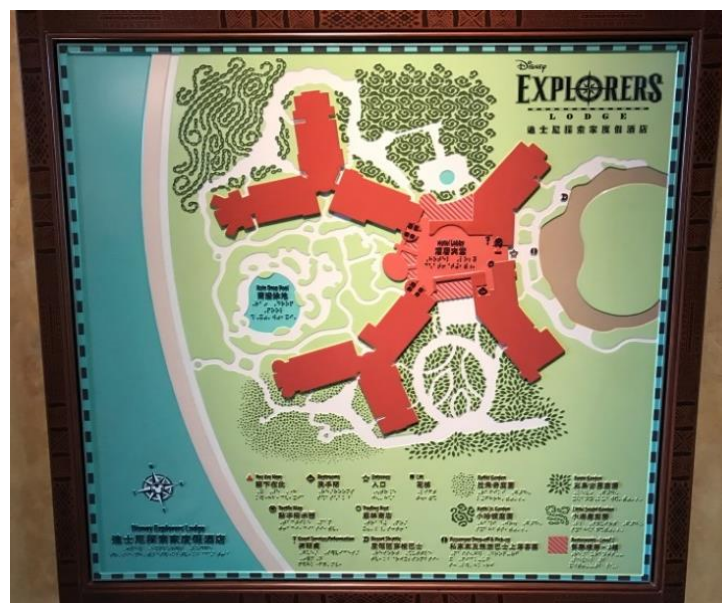
A good location is vital to the survival and accessibility of a theme park because it is crucial for theme park to attract a significant number of visitors to fully utilize all capacities due to its perishable service characteristics.

A good location should be located in a popular tourist destination with high accessibility that can capitalise on the destination's inbound tourist market as

well as likely to increase the number of potential day trippers. In addition, theme park should be easily accessible by visitors using public and private transportations. According to a report by Colliers, theme parks close to or with easy access to the city centre can expect a high percentage of attendance from day visitors, as observed in Disneyland Hong Kong and Sentosa Singapore (Colliers, 2014).

(VI) Quality and Consistency in Services and Facilities

Basically, it talks about the essence of the five service dimensions in RATER. To ensure that every visitor is delighted and satisfied with the visit, consistency and quality in services and facilities must provide throughout the theme park. All the elements, including (i) movement of people and goods, are carefully studied and planned in advance to ensure that every visitor is delighted and satisfied with their visit, (ii) back-up or contingency plans and arrangements are prepared to accommodate any non-routine or unexpected incidents such as adverse weather conditions which may affect the normal operations of the attraction, and (iii) special services and facilities for the physically challenged visitors in meeting their visual, hearing and accessibility needs.



2.2 Adapt to market changes

Not all theme parks succeed when they are built. Some theme parks may start, but close in the first few years due to declining business, poor management or an inability to respond to market changes. Closure of theme park happens even at popular one if visitors are disappointed with their inconsistent service quality or unchanged aging attractions.

Today, visitors are becoming more and more demanding. It means visitors' preferences and tastes also change easily. A successful theme park should therefore be pro-active in the market to focus on meeting existing visitors' preferences and, more importantly, also to identify emerging markets. Here are some examples of the emerging market segments:

(I) Senior segment

More and more attractions are aimed at senior visitors who generally have higher disposable income and leisure time. This group of visitors usually requires activities with lower energy levels such as:

- ✧ offer indoor attractions like shows and special events where they can enjoy while remaining seated.
- ✧ arrange special queues to shows and other facilities
- ✧ experience different kinds of delicacies
- ✧ relax in spa
- ✧ enjoy beautiful garden landscape
- ✧ offer soft rides that are not stomach-turning
- ✧ provide plenty of places to just sit, rest and enjoy the atmosphere





(II) Environmentally-friendly

People are now more aware of the need to preserve and conserve the environment with key focuses on water and energy conservation, greenhouse gas emission reduction, waste minimization and ecosystem conservation. According to an article from Entertainment Designer (Alton, 2015), in the next 10 years a new generation of theme park consumers will be seeking adventure along with high eco-friendly expectations. Therefore, the elements of environmentally-friendly will be part of the theme park's overall design. The elements include:

- ✧ Construction of green buildings: Incorporating architectural green features and seek for green certification awards. (See Manual on Module V - Trends and Issues in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry. Section 6: Environmental Aspect - Accommodation Sector)
- ✧ Use of green transport: The vehicles used to move the crowd from one attraction to another attraction within the theme park should be energy efficient, minimal carbon dioxide emission and capable of moving a large crowd of visitors in a short period of time (vehicles operate by biofuel, hybrid or electricity)
- ✧ Management of waste and waste water: The management of food wastes generated from restaurants, physical wastes and water wastage from the daily

operation of the theme park (See Manual on Module V - Trends and Issues in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry. Section 6: Environmental Aspect - Food & Beverage Sector)

✧ Use of renewable energy: Commitment to use renewable energy such as converting the sun's light energy into electricity for its subsequent use in theme park's operation. The following are examples from theme parks in the U.S. :

- Six Flags Great Adventure theme park at New Jersey, U.S.A. announced that it will be the first theme park in the country to be entirely self-powered by solar energy in 2017 (Pantsios, 2015).

- The Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida, U.S.A. switches to solar energy and its generated energy provide enough energy for the whole World Resort. For more information on how Walt Disney World Resort switches to solar energy, visit the website of Student – The Standard http://stedu.stheadline.com/pri/pri_news.php?aid=15502.



(III) 'Edutainment'

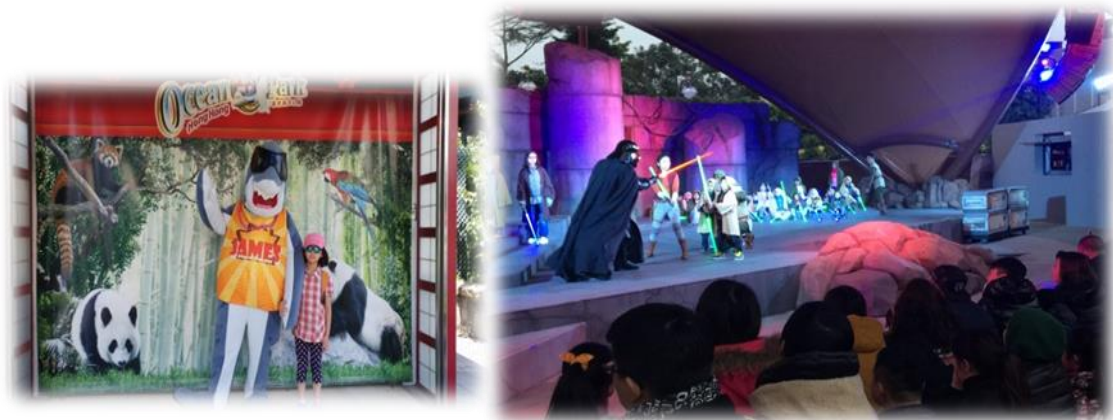
Visitors are no longer only looking for fun and excitement when they visit the theme park. There is a growing trend among visitors wanted to learn new things. If developed and managed correctly, theme park that combines education and entertainment will have a competitive edge.

A good example is Ocean Park Hong Kong, its management designs a theme park that provides "edutainment" – a mix of thrilling entertainment and educational encounter with animals. Rain Forest, incorporates a thrilling water rapids ride, entertaining while educating visitors on the importance of the conservation of these incredibly diverse parts of our world. In addition, it organized and offered

workshops for visitors in particular children and students to gain educational learning experiences. (HKTDC, 2015)

(IV) Interactive experiences

Instead of visiting theme park passively, visitors are expecting a more interactive



and participative experience such as feeding the animals, photo-taking with park's characters and participate in activities such as "Get Closer to the Animals" at Ocean Park Hong Kong, "Jedi Training: Trials of the Temple" at Hong Kong Disneyland and "Frozen: A Sing-Along Celebration" at Shanghai Disneyland.

With the advance of technology, some theme parks offer visitors with multisensory interactive movie experience beyond 3D. They offer movies with 5 dimensions (5D) consist of vision, sound, smell, touch and an immersive experience of motions and thrills. An appropriate example of 5D movie is "Kaka's Great Adventure" at 5D Castle Theatre in Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, Zhuhai (Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, 2015)



Another example of technological application to enhance visitor's interactive experience is at Wizarding World of Harry Potter, Universal Orlando in Florida,

U.S.A. With the opening of Wizarding World of Harry Potter, the theme park has created a new way for guests to get involved in the magic of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Diagon Alley: interactive wands. These wands allow guests to directly influence their environment and “cast spells” to produce effects in Diagon Alley. (Universal Studios, 2017)

The rapid developments in the technology of Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR) and Mixed Reality (MR) are likely becoming important forces of providing visitors to theme parks a range of exciting interactive experiences.

What is VR? It is a computer enabled medium for people to explore new worlds, share ideas and have new experiences within digital space (Nelson, 2016). Quite simply, VR is a digital environment that shuts out the real world. Through closed visors or goggles, VR blocks out the room and puts our presence elsewhere (Curtin, 2017). In Six Flags Magic Mountain, California, U.S.A , it provides VR headsets to riders of its New Revolution roller coaster. This is an example of how VR can enhance visitors' interactive experiences and adding multiple dimensions to theme park's attractions (Eades, 2017) and (MacDonal, 2016).

✧ **New Revolution Classic** - Six Flags Magic Mountain in California, U.S.A.

<https://www.sixflags.com/magicmountain/attractions/new-revolution-classic>

What is Augmented Reality (AR)? Computer generated content, and it could be text, images, video, audio or haptic information but it is superimposed over a physical view of the world - places digital content on top of the physical world you see around you (Nelson, 2016 and Curtin, 2017). AR supplements what people can see in the real world with digital content, thus augmenting reality (Nelson, 2016). In this connection, the technology of AR can merge the digital and physical worlds and it could give visitors a fascinating and exciting interactive experience in the future.

AR could be more appropriate to be adopted by theme parks because a visitor's desire to visit a theme park could be easily replaced by VR technology. According to experts, many of us visit theme parks to be drawn out of our reality without the need for a VR headset. When you don a VR headset at a theme park, you could arguably just do the same thing in your living room (Boyle, 2017). According to Walt Disney CEO Bob Iger, he believes augmented reality is the key technology to be found at future Disney attractions, and he thinks a VR headset completely block out the real world for a virtual one is something he considers "ersatz." (Brennan, 2017).

Finally, the application of Mixed Reality has become very popular at major theme parks. What is Mixed Reality? A hybrid of both AR and VR, it (MR) is far more advanced than Virtual Reality. It combines the use of several types of technologies including sensors, advanced optics and next gen computing power (Curtin, 2017). In fact, it is an environment in which real world and virtual world objects are presented together within a single display (Nelson, 2016).

In Theme Park's, this often manifests in a "Dark Ride" attraction containing interesting, indoor physical spaces, sometimes using high definition 3D screens, illusions and animatronic figures and variable lighting to enhance the guests feeling of immersion in a story world, full of surprises and entertainment (Trevor, 2016). The following examples of Dark Rides adopted the technology of Mixed Reality:

- ✧ **Transformers The Ride: The Ultimate 3D Battle** - Sci-Fi City of Universal Studios Singapore in Resorts World Sentosa, Singapore
<http://www.rwsentosa.com/language/en-US/Homepage/Attractions/UniversalStudiosSingapore/SciFiCity/TRANSFORMERSTheRideTheUltimate3DBattle>

- ✧ **Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey** - The Wizarding World of Harry Potter of Universal Studios Osaka, Japan
https://www.usj.co.jp/e/attraction/att_detail/the-wizarding-world-of-harry-potter.html

- ✧ **Pirates of the Caribbean** - Adventureland of Tokyo Disneyland in Tokyo, Japan
http://www.tokyodisneyresort.jp/en/attraction/detail/str_id:al_carib/

- ✧ **Challenge of Tutankhamon** - Walibi Belgium in Belgium
<https://www.walibi.com/belgium/be-en/attractions/family/challenge-of-tutankhamon>

- ✧ **Justice League: Battle For Metropolis** - Movietown of Six Flags Great Adventure & Safari in Jackson, New Jersey, U.S.A.
<https://www.sixflags.com/greatadventure/attractions/justice-league-battle-metropolis>

2.3 The management

A systematic and professional management approach benefits theme park in all areas of operation. Its implementation requires a well-qualified and experienced management team. This management team comprises of specialists across all aspects of the operation including (I) strategic planning, (II) finance, (III) marketing and (IV) maintenance.

(I) Pro-active management

Management and staff should be pro-active to respond more quickly and effectively than their competitors to changes in the business environment. Management needs to be sensitive to the market place and changes in the business environment, i.e. political, environmental, social and technological. Having this knowledge and sensitivity enables more effective planning for the future. Following example shows the management of the two large theme parks in Hong Kong demonstrates their pro-active approach to deal with the expected increasingly competitive landscape among different theme parks in Asia

Ocean Park Hong Kong has embarked on developing an all-weather indoor with outdoor waterpark at Tai Shue Wan. The construction of the Park's first hotel has also commenced. Both development projects are expected to be completed in 2017 and 2018. The Hong Kong Disneyland has a new themed area "Iron Man Experience" featuring the Marvel characters in early 2017. Added to this, a new hotel is opened in April, 2017. Both managements



recognize the importance for Hong Kong's theme park industry to continue developing novel and distinctive elements (The Legislative Council Commission, 2016).

(II) Strong financial resources and on-going investment

Unlike other small and medium-size enterprises, building up as well as running a visitor attraction involves huge capital investment and on-going funding. Strong financial resources are required to periodically invest in the provision of new attractions, offer a



major new ride as well upgrade or replace the rides, facilities and services to keep up with changes in visitor preferences. Otherwise the business will gradually decline with falling attendance due to the lack of repeat visits and with visitors thinking there is nothing new.

(III) Strong marketing team

There should be a strong marketing division which is good at:



✧ Identifying potential market segments – it is easier to satisfy target customers by developing special features at the park for specific potential segments as there are lots of different market segments with different needs and preference. For example, theme park often provides several types of tickets for visitors to suit their plans and budgets such as a one or two-day pass or annual pass.



- ✧ Long-term strategic planning in marketing rather than focusing only on short-term tactical approaches – it is necessary to spend a significant proportion of fund each year in promoting competitive advantages.

(IV) Maintenance

Meticulous attention to detail, especially in the area of maintenance, is extremely important to ensure safety and a high quality experience. According to Jim Reid-Anderson, President and CEO of Six Flags, USA, “At Six Flags, nothing is more important than your safety. It is our absolute highest priority” (Six Flags, 2014). In particular, parents will prefer taking their children to theme parks having a good record of park’s safety and security. Therefore, theme park needs to have a safety programme to ensure it has a safe environment where visitors can

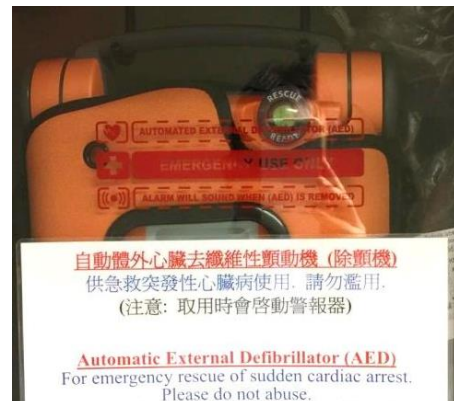
enjoy the experience and staff can be satisfied with their workplaces. A safety programme usually has the following objectives in mind:

- ✧ To maintain a safe work environment through hazard recognition and removal;
- ✧ To ensure that staff are following proper safety procedures while working; and
- ✧ To determine which operations meet or exceed acceptable safety level and government standards.



Areas that should be considered in a safety programme include:

- ✧ In full compliance with the local laws with respect to
 - Electrical and mechanical equipment and facilities
 - Fire protection systems including alarms, sprinklers and fire extinguishers.
 - Structural infrastructures such as buildings, walkways, roadways, fire exits and mechanical rides.
 - Transportation systems provide shuttle services for visitors within the theme park or shuttle services between theme park and its affiliated hotels.
- ✧ Medical services such as nurse stations, Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) and emergency medical services.
- ✧ Security is an important ingredient of safety. It is a necessity to provide security protections for visitors, employees and vendors.
- ✧ Weather conditions – Some attractions and



entertainment may be suspended due to poor weather conditions. Special safety procedures will be undertaken during poor weather conditions.

✧ Last but not least, theme park's safety programme is to ensure it has a safe environment where visitors can enjoy the experience and staff can be satisfied with their workplaces. In this connection, theme park's management must be in full compliance with the local laws, in particular

- Protection to staff - The Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance which provides for the safety and health protection to employees in workplaces, both industrial and non-industrial. It is basically an enabling ordinance setting out requirements in general terms.

(Source: <http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/legislat/content4.htm>)

- Protection to visitors - the food law laid down in the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance, Chapter 132, and its main provisions cover general protection for food purchasers, offences in connection with sale of unfit food and food hygiene. (Source: http://www.fehd.gov.hk/english/publications/code/allc_1.htm#top)

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