
Global Certificate in Theme Park and Amusement Park Management

Entertainment Programming in Theme Parks

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Entertainment programming is a crucial aspect of the overall guest experience in theme parks. It encompasses a wide range of activities, shows, events, and performances designed to engage, entertain, and delight visitors of all ages. In this course, we will explore the key terms and vocabulary related to entertainment programming in theme parks.

Theme Park

A theme park is a type of amusement park that focuses on a specific theme or concept, such as fairy tales, movies, or adventure. Theme parks often feature rides, attractions, shows, and dining options that are all connected to the central theme.

Amusement Park

An amusement park is a recreational facility that offers a variety of rides, games, and attractions for visitors to enjoy. While amusement parks may not have a central theme like theme parks, they still provide entertainment and thrills for guests.

Entertainment

Entertainment refers to any activity or performance that is designed to engage and amuse an audience. In theme parks, entertainment can take many forms, including live shows, parades, fireworks displays, character meet-and-greets, and interactive experiences.

Programming

Programming in the context of theme parks refers to the planning, scheduling, and coordination of entertainment offerings. This includes selecting shows and events, creating a daily schedule, and ensuring that everything runs smoothly.

Guest Experience

The guest experience encompasses all aspects of a visitor's time in a theme park, from the moment they arrive to the moment they leave. Entertainment programming plays a crucial role in shaping the guest experience and creating lasting memories for visitors.

Atmosphere

The atmosphere of a theme park refers to the overall ambiance and mood created by the park's design, music, lighting, and landscaping. Entertainment programming can enhance the atmosphere by adding live music, street performers, and other interactive elements.

Themed Entertainment

Themed entertainment refers to attractions, shows, and experiences that are designed to immerse guests in a specific theme or story. This can include themed lands, rides based on popular movies or TV shows, and interactive experiences that bring a fictional world to life.

Character Meet-and-Greet

A character meet-and-greet is an opportunity for guests to meet and interact with costumed characters from movies, TV shows, or the park's own intellectual property. These experiences are popular with families and provide a chance for guests to take photos and get autographs.

Parade

A parade is a procession of floats, performers, and characters that moves through the park at scheduled times. Parades often feature music, dancing, and elaborate costumes, and they are a favorite among guests of all ages.

Fireworks Display

A fireworks display is a pyrotechnic show that lights up the night sky with colorful explosions and special effects. Fireworks displays are a staple of theme park entertainment, especially on holidays and special occasions.

Live Show

A live show is a theatrical performance that features actors, singers, dancers, and other performers. Live shows can range from Broadway-style musicals to stunt shows to comedy acts, and they are an important part of the entertainment lineup in many theme parks.

Interactive Experience

An interactive experience is an attraction or activity that allows guests to participate in the story or action. This can include virtual reality rides, escape rooms, scavenger hunts, and other hands-on experiences that engage visitors in a new and exciting way.

Ride Queue Entertainment

Ride queue entertainment refers to the activities, videos, and interactive elements that are designed to entertain guests while they wait in line for a ride. This helps reduce perceived wait times and keeps guests

engaged and entertained.

Entertainment Staff

Entertainment staff are the employees responsible for performing in shows, interacting with guests, and ensuring that entertainment offerings run smoothly. These staff members may include actors, dancers, musicians, technicians, and other performers.

Entertainment Manager

An entertainment manager is a staff member responsible for overseeing the planning, scheduling, and execution of entertainment programming in the park. This role involves coordinating with various departments, hiring performers, and ensuring that shows meet quality standards.

Entertainment Technician

An entertainment technician is a skilled worker responsible for setting up, operating, and maintaining the technical equipment used in shows and attractions. This can include lighting, sound, special effects, and audiovisual systems.

Entertainment Budget

The entertainment budget is the amount of money allocated to cover the costs of producing and presenting entertainment offerings in the park. This budget may include expenses for hiring performers, purchasing costumes, renting equipment, and marketing shows.

Entertainment Contract

An entertainment contract is a legal agreement between the park and a performer, group, or production company outlining the terms and conditions of their engagement. This contract may include details on payment, performance dates, intellectual property rights, and other important considerations.

Entertainment Schedule

The entertainment schedule is a daily or weekly plan that outlines the times and locations of shows, events, and performances in the park. This schedule is typically posted online, in park maps, and on signage throughout the park to help guests plan their day.

Entertainment Audition

An entertainment audition is a casting call where performers showcase their talents in front of entertainment managers and casting directors. Auditions may include singing, dancing, acting, or other skills relevant to the specific show or role.

Special Event

A special event is a one-time or limited-time offering that is designed to attract guests and create excitement in the park. Special events may include holiday celebrations, festivals, concerts, and themed weekends.

Seasonal Entertainment

Seasonal entertainment refers to shows, events, and activities that are tailored to specific times of the year, such as Halloween, Christmas, or summer. Seasonal entertainment helps keep the park fresh and exciting for repeat visitors.

Entertainment Marketing

Entertainment marketing is the process of promoting shows, events, and attractions to attract guests and drive attendance. This can include advertising campaigns, social media promotions, press releases, and partnerships with local media outlets.

Challenges in Entertainment Programming

While entertainment programming is a key driver of guest satisfaction in theme parks, it also poses several challenges for park operators. These challenges include:

- **Scheduling**: Coordinating the timing and locations of multiple shows and events can be complex, especially during peak seasons when crowds are high.
- **Budgeting**: Balancing the costs of producing high-quality entertainment with the need to stay within budget can be a constant challenge for park managers.
- **Talent Management**: Recruiting, hiring, and retaining talented performers and technicians can be competitive, especially in areas with a strong entertainment industry.
- **Safety and Compliance**: Ensuring that shows and attractions meet safety standards and regulatory requirements is essential to protecting guests and staff.
- **Audience Engagement**: Keeping guests engaged and entertained throughout their visit requires creativity, innovation, and a deep understanding of guest preferences.

Conclusion

In conclusion, entertainment programming is a vital component of the guest experience in theme parks. By understanding the key terms and vocabulary related to entertainment programming, park managers can create memorable and engaging experiences that keep guests coming back for more. This course will provide valuable insights and practical strategies for planning, executing, and evaluating entertainment offerings in theme parks around the world.