

CHESSINGTON'S HISTORY

Chessington Zoo was opened in July 1931 as a private venture by Reginald Goddard who invited the public to view his private animal collection. After the War Chessington soon became known for the different types of entertainment it could offer:- a circus, a funfair and a miniature railway as well as the zoo. Despite this in the early 1970's the attendance figures of over 800,000 began to decline. The Zoo was in need of further investment.

In 1978 the Pearson Group bought Chessington and when they later bought Madame Tussauds, they put all their leisure interests together to form the Tussauds Group.

1981 saw the beginning of the planning for the transformation of Chessington. Six years and £12m later the Park was ready. It was opened in July 1987 by H.R.H. Prince Edward. The opening coincided with the opening of the M25 which gives easy access to the Park from various parts of the country. Approximately 18m people live within a 2 hour drive of the Park.

On 19th October 1998 it was announced that Pearson had sold the Tussauds Group to Charterhouse Development Capital for £352m.

The Tussaud's Group Vision and Mission

Vision: "Entertaining People".

Mission: To deliver real growth in profits to take Europe's leading entertainment world-wide".

Other Attractions in The Tussauds Group

- Madame Tussauds London
- London Planetarium
- Warwick Castle, Warwick
- Alton Towers, Staffordshire
- Thorpe Park, Surrey
- The Tussauds Studio, London

And in association with British Airways - The London Eye

And Internationally

- Madame Tussauds Scenerama (Amsterdam)
- Madame Tussauds (Hong Kong)

- Madame Tussauds (Las Vegas)
- Madame Tussauds (New York)
- Heide Theme Park, Germany

MARKETING FACT SHEET: Chessington World of Adventures

The Marketing Department are a small team who work across both Chessington World of Adventures and Thorpe Park. It is the overall responsibility of the Marketing department to ensure that the brand identities of the two Parks are maintained in all communication both on and off the Parks.

They do this through first identifying the brand identity, target market, and visual representation of the brand, i.e. the logo. For Chessington the target market is families with children under 12.

Each year the marketing department will put together a marketing plan that covers the following areas:

Product. Although almost without exception a new attraction is launched each year, and the main launch communication will focus on that, general communication about the rest of the Park is required. Theme Parks provide a whole day out for the family and it's not just about the rides. The other attractions, places to eat, games, photography, the atmosphere, all play an important part in delivering a great day out.

Pricing. There is a complex pricing structure for the Park which looks to maximise the revenue the Park can achieve with it's targeted number of visitors. Marketing will review the pricing each year and along with the finance department look at how the budgeted targets can be achieved through the pricing matrix. Advanced sales are important to the business and for this reason tickets booked in advance are discounted, also those booked via the Internet are further discounted as this is a more efficient way for us to produce the tickets. Advanced tickets reduce the queues at admissions as visitors already have their tickets and can go straight in to the Park.

Promotion. Promotion of the Park happens via a number of different communication channels.

Advertising. This is generally broken down into two areas, the creative production of the advert and then the choice of where to place that advert, TV, Radio, Press etc. For the year 2002 communication for Chessington will focus on the new attraction, Hocus Pocus Hall. The main creative idea is all based around 'The New Adventure Starts Here'. This new creative idea will be adapted for use on TV, Radio, Press and in Children's comics, ie The Beano.

Promotions. Promotions are very important in incentivising visitors to come to the Park. The incentive is generally either a Buy One get One Free mechanic or a discount off the full adult or child price. Chessington ran promotions on it's own or in conjunction with the Tussauds Group, ie Tesco. Promotions can be run with a wide variety of partners, Esso, News of the World, KP Skips or solus via a direct mail campaign to surrounding homes.

Public Relations. This area is all about getting positive exposure in the media, TV, Radio and Press. This is generally achieved through issuing Press Releases and conducting interviews with journalists.

Measuring the Success.

Throughout the year, how the Park is doing against its financial targets is constantly reviewed, but in addition Marketing conducts ongoing research into how the Park is performing on a daily basis. Questionnaires are handed out to visitors as they leave asking them to rank the rides' experiences, eating places, how friendly and helpful the staff were, etc. This provides information on where things may be going wrong and how to put them right.

New Media is a crucial area for involvement now and in the future. In addition to maintaining its own site: www.chessington.com, the Marketing department looks to exploit other opportunities for advertising, promotions and PR on other sites.

Use of agencies. Chessington uses a wide variety of agencies as they bring different areas of expertise and experiences to the department. We use an advertising agency to create the TV, Radio adverts etc. and also for all the design work for the Gate Map. The space for the TV, Radio slots etc. is purchased by a Media Buying agency. We also use a Sales Promotion agency, PR agency and Internet design agencies.

Corporate Hospitality makes it possible for businesses to entertain their guests at Chessington World of Adventures. Up to 3 000 corporate guests can be catered for at any one time.

Education. An establishment like Chessington World of Adventures offers the opportunity for students studying the leisure industry, business or animals to visit the Park and find out more about their subject. For this reason, it is possible for groups to incorporate an educational talk into their visit. The Zoo enables guests to learn about the wildlife at Chessington World of Adventures. The Marketing Department ensure that the signage for the animals and around the Park are of a high quality and accessible by all the guests.

Most often asked marketing questions

Q Is the price of a new attraction affected by the viability of the ride?

A Careful research is undertaken before a new attraction is bought. The attraction may be put in place to address a gap in guest numbers for a particular age range. The new attraction will encourage that element to visit the Park and therefore increase guest satisfaction.

Q Are ticket prices changed when a new ride is introduced?

A Ticket prices are reviewed annually. Any adjustments will consider the new attractions in the Park and other attractions in The Tussauds Group, and competition in the market place.

Q How often do you introduce a new ride?

A It is our intention to introduced a new attraction every year. The nature of this attraction is dependent on a number of contributing factors based on research results.

Q What is the time from conception to the completion of a project?

A Once a need has been identified, it may be as much as three years before the project is completed, depending on ground work and the size of the finished attraction.

Q Are there any discounts or special offers?

A Yes and these vary throughout the season. Discounts are available all season on those tickets that are booked in advance. Promotional offers/discounts vary throughout the year and are generally conducted with third party partners, i.e. ESSO.

Q What is the company's mission statement?

A "To deliver real growth in profits to take Europe's leading entertainment business world-wide".