

Europa Park blaze destroys historic ride

A major fire broke out at Germany's Europa Park over the weekend, destroying a historic ride and consuming a large part of the park's Scandinavia and Norway-themed areas.

Starting on the Pirates of Batavia water dark ride, the fire created a huge plume of smoke that could be seen for miles.

According to local police, seven firefighters were slightly injured during the operation, and were treated for smoke inhalation. No park visitors or employees were injured during the event, with more than 25,000 people safely evacuated.

Created by Mack Rides, Pirates in Batavia opened in 1987 and was situated in a large hall in the park's Dutch themed area.

"The cause of the fire is still unclear, however the police have started their investigation," said the park in a statement to *Attractions Management News*. "Europa-Park cannot give any



■ The fire created a thick plume of smoke that could be seen for miles

information yet regarding the exact amount of damage. It is in the millions. 200 employees are employed in the damaged Dutch and Scandinavian theme areas. They all will keep their jobs."

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=w4e2C_T



The cause of the fire is still unclear, however the police have started their investigation

Europa Park



IAAPA

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IAAPA chair **Andreas Andersen** looking forward as association breaks ground on new Orlando headquarters

IAAPA chair Andreas Andersen has expressed his hope that the organisation's new international headquarters in Orlando, Florida, will act as its home for at least the next 100 years, following the project's groundbreaking.

Covering 22,000sq ft (2,000sq m), the site on Vineland Road is slated to be completed by the third quarter of next year, with development costing US\$14m (€11.8m, £10.4m). IAAPA announced its move from Washington, DC, to Orlando in 2016, setting up temporary headquarters last year ahead of the organisation's permanent move in 2019.

"I think it makes a lot of sense, especially to all



■ The organisation broke ground on the headquarters in May

"I do hope that this will become IAAPA's home for the next centennial"

the international members of IAAPA because Orlando is really the heart of the

attractions industry," said Andersen, speaking following the groundbreaking ceremony.

"This is the place we all go to for inspiration and events to see everything in the industry which is new and exciting. Orlando is also the home to the IAAPA Attractions Expo, which takes place every November."

The new headquarters will feature dedicated member space, with meeting rooms, special event space and a lounge, as well as a library for the association's archives.

"This is not just an office, it's a home," said Andersen. "I think a lot of our members will visit the headquarters – not only our committees but also because we will have our new member events space and library. I do hope that this will become IAAPA's home for the next centennial."

Ferrari Land delivers for **Fernando Aldecoa** as PortAventura targets 5 million visitor mark



■ Fernando Aldecoa is managing director of PortAventura World

PortAventura has expanded its offering at Ferrari Land, introducing a new children's area for visitors to the popular destination as it attempts to reach 5 million visitors in 2018.

In 2017, PortAventura World reached 4.7 million visits, with growth of 19 per cent compared to 2016. This season, the forecast is expected to grow and surpass 5 million visits.

"The figures for the year so far demonstrate how the park has already established

"The figures for the year so far demonstrate how the park has already established itself as a dynamic force within PortAventura"

itself as a dynamic force within PortAventura World's offering," said Fernando Aldecoa, managing director of PortAventura World.

"The park also strengthens our existing position as a world-class holiday destination that currently offers three theme parks, five themed hotels, a convention centre, three golf courses and a beach club."

Featuring five new rides manufactured by Italian company the SBF Visa Group, the new kids' area is anchored by Junior Red Force – a steel family rollercoaster sitting within the shadow of the record-breaking Red Force launch coaster. PortAventura's Ferrari addition has also had a significant effect on hotel stays for the operator, with a 27 per cent increase in bookings.



■ Alan Shearer is Newcastle United FC's record goalscorer

"It's just what the city needs – a new iconic attraction that celebrates our rich history and culture"

Iconic Newcastle footballer **Alan Shearer** backs 'Whey Aye' wheel

Alan Shearer, former Newcastle and England footballer and current TV pundit for the BBC, has backed plans to build Europe's tallest observation wheel in the heart of Newcastle.

Called the Whey Aye, the 140-metre-tall (459-foot) attraction, which will be located at the east end of the city's Quayside and offer 30-minute "flights", will be five metres taller than the London Eye and takes its nickname from the oft-heard Geordie phrase, "Whey aye, man".

Around the observation wheel – which is expected to welcome 800,000 guests in its first

year – a pedestrianised area with bars, restaurants and a brand new visitor attraction will be built. The attraction, Giants of the North Experience, will use state-of-the-art technology to tell the stories of some of the northeast's greatest citizens, including sports stars, musicians and artists, and pioneers of industry.

"It's just what the city needs," said Shearer – the Premier League's all-time record goal scorer. "A new iconic attraction that celebrates our rich history and culture, while creating jobs and income for the people. A development like this would have my full support."

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Six Flags acquires five new US parks as CEO **Jim Reid-Anderson** hails 'milestone' for company



■ Jim Reid-Anderson, chair, president and CEO, Six Flags

Six Flags is expanding its US reach, announcing the acquisition of five new parks to bring its North American portfolio up to 25 properties.

The operator has a purchase agreement with Premier Parks, acquiring the lease rights to operate the five attractions, located in Texas, Arizona, New York State and Oklahoma.

With the five additional properties, Six Flags will increase attendance by roughly two million visitors,

“These are all fantastic properties that complement our existing portfolio and provide tremendous added value”

with an additional 20 million guests within a 100-mile radius of a Six Flags park, significantly expanding the company’s national footprint. On completion of the acquisitions, Six Flags will become the largest waterpark operator in North America.

“This represents another milestone in our strategic North-American growth initiative to seek

out park acquisitions that expand our addressable market,” said Six Flags chair, CEO, and president, Jim Reid-Anderson.

“These are all fantastic properties that complement our existing portfolio and provide tremendous added value and cross-visitation opportunities for our extensive membership and season pass base.”

Kalahari Resorts Owner **Todd Nelson** celebrates with groundbreaking for US\$550m waterpark and resort in Texas

Kalahari Resorts and Conventions has finally broken ground on its US\$550m (€464m, £407.7m) African-themed waterpark and resort in Round Rock, Texas – Kalahari’s first venture in the southwest of the US and fourth property overall.

Opening in 2020, the resort will feature a waterpark, which at 223,000sq ft (20,700sq m) will be the largest in the US. An adventure park is also included in the offering, with the 80,000sq ft (7,400sq m) space set to include thrill rides, ropes course, climbing walls, indoor zipline, bowling, laser tag and mini-golf. A selection of outdoor pools covering 130,000sq ft (12,100sq m) will also be on offer.



■ The resort has broken ground and will open its doors in 2020

“When we design our resorts, we stay focused on adding amenities that everyone can experience and enjoy”

The resort will have more than 990 guestrooms made up of 1,2 and 3 bedroom

suites and residential suites. A 200,000sq ft (18,600sq m) convention

centre will also be included in the development. It will also offer a spa, five restaurants and 10,000sq ft (929sq m) of retail space.

“When we design our resorts, we stay focused on adding amenities that everyone can experience and enjoy – not only our overnight guests,” said Todd Nelson, owner of Kalahari Resorts and Conventions.

“As the Round Rock property begins construction, we look forward to contributing to the local economy and sharing our beyond-expectations approach to hospitality with area vacation goers, conference attendees and local guests throughout the region.”



■ Pye will be responsible for eight venues

“We want to continue to be the leading example of an inclusive museum service”

National Museums Liverpool names **Laura Pye** as new director

Laura Pye has been named director of National Museums Liverpool (NML), with the current head of culture for Bristol City Council to take up her new position in August.

Returning to her hometown of Liverpool, Pye will be responsible for eight venues, including some of the most visited museums in England outside of London. Pye joins following a career in the sector focused mainly on museum education.

"We've recently had our highest annual visitor figure ever, and with ground-breaking exhibitions including

China's First Emperor and the Terracotta Warriors and Double Fantasy: John & Yoko it's an incredibly exciting time for Laura to be joining us," said NML chair, Sir David Henshaw.

"We want to continue to be the leading example of an inclusive museum service, and Laura will be an inspiring director for our passionate and committed team here at National Museums Liverpool."

She replaces David Fleming, who retired in March after taking up the position in 2001. During his lengthy run, he supervised the completion of several major capital projects.

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ACQUISITIONS

Comcast potentially hijacking Disney-Fox deal

Disney's acquisition of Fox is in jeopardy, after Comcast confirmed plans to top Disney's US\$52.4bn (€44.27bn, £39bn) offer for the company.

Announced in December last year, Disney and Fox reached a deal for Disney to acquire Twentieth Century Fox Film and Television studios, along with Fox's cable and international TV businesses.

The Fox acquisition would see Disney acquire a huge media library and the distribution rights to many IPs.

Comcast has confirmed plans to prepare a higher, all-cash offer for the company, which it said would be "superior" and "at a premium" to Disney's all stock offer.

"While no final decision has been made, at this point the work to finance the all-cash offer and make the key regulatory filings is well advanced," said a Comcast statement.

In December, Disney made its stock offer of US\$52.4bn (€44.27bn, £39bn), which was accepted by Fox. Since then Disney share value has fallen by 3.3 per cent – reducing the offer to just over US\$50bn.

Either way, the move will have significant impact on the theme park industry, with Disney likely planning to bring its new Fox IPs to its parks. Comcast owns Universal, which would almost certainly want the Fox library to bring to its parks instead.

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=a9K4S_T



■ Bob Iger (left) and Rupert Murdoch following the original Fox deal



While no final decision has been made, at this point the work to finance the all-cash offer and make the key regulatory filings is well advanced

Comcast

VISITOR ATTRACTIONS

FC Barcelona confirms plans for branded attractions worldwide



This will help us to project our image in strategic territories

Manel Arroyo

Spanish football giant FC Barcelona has reached a deal to open a number of Barça-themed "experience spaces" around the world.

Parques Reunidos is behind the project, which will see indoor parks up to 10,000sq m (108,000sq ft) in size opened in busy shopping malls and iconic establishments in the centres of cities with high numbers of pedestrian traffic.

"The agreement with Parques Reunidos will help us to project our image in strategic territories, offering our supporters a 100 per cent Barça experience, and at the same generating



■ Five attractions will initially open in the US and Asia in 2020

a major source of income," said club vice president Manel Arroyo. "Parques Reunidos have worked with Nickelodeon and Lionsgate on indoor entertainment parks like the ones that Barça will have. We'll be able to continue to set new trends in the entertainment industry."

MORE: http://lei.sr/?a=Z6r6t_T

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THEME PARKS

Jurassic Park to evolve at Universal Studios

Universal Studios Hollywood's iconic *Jurassic Park* attraction is getting a redesign, with the attraction reopening in 2019 with a *Jurassic World* theme.

Set to close on 3 September, the park's popular water ride – inspired by the original 1993 *Jurassic Park* movie – will be rethemed to reflect the newer *Jurassic World* movie. The new version will include all new audio-animatronics and special effects.

"This next-generation thrill ride will be a fully reimagined iteration of the ground-breaking adventure, elevating every facet of the experience," said Universal. "With the introduction of never-before-seen dinosaurs, enhanced storytelling, lush

scenic design, an entirely new colour scheme, and uncompromised state-of-the-art technology, the ride will capture elements never experienced within a theme park."

The original ride opened in June 1996 and was manufactured by Vekoma, with a design from Universal Creative. Following its success, duplicates of the ride were built at Universal's Islands of Adventure and Universal Studios Japan. In 2010, Universal opened a river rapids version of the attraction at Universal Studios Singapore.

The latest release in the franchise, *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* comes out this summer.

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=V8p7g_T



■ The attraction will be updated to match the later films



The ride will capture elements never experienced within a theme park

Universal

SCIENCE CENTRES

Poor ticket sales force closure of Portland Science Center



The science centre has suffered from lagging attendance in recent years

The city of Portland in Maine, US, has lost its science centre after just three years of operation, owing to poor ticket sales.

The Portland Science Center made its grand debut in September 2015, bringing German anatomist Gunther von Hagens' famed *Body Worlds* exhibit to the city.

Its owner – the Massachusetts-based edutainment firm The Gold Group – has closed the attraction, which it said has suffered from lagging attendance in recent years.

The science centre, which occupied 15,000sq ft (1,400sq m) over two floors, was situated on Maine Wharf,



■ The science centre was situated on Maine Wharf

near the Maine State Pier. Renovation works and bringing in *Body Worlds* originally cost the operator US\$1m (€850,000, £742,000). The centre had since brought travelling exhibitions on sharks, pirates and the *Titanic*.

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=6f9h6_T

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AQUARIUMS

Hope for waterfront aquarium plan in Memphis

A US\$125m (€107m, £93.3m) proposal to create a leisure development – featuring a world-class aquarium and cultural centre in Memphis – has moved a step closer, after the Tennessee city won state approval to expand its downtown tourism zone.

In October last year, Jim Strickland, mayor of Memphis, revealed plans for the Mud Island area, focused around the aquarium on Mud Island itself and the cultural centre across the river, with the two projects connected by a pedestrian bridge.

In May, the State Building Commission approved the expansion of the city's Downtown Tourism

Development Zone (TDZ) to include Mud Island. The significance of this is that any potential developments can be financed through state sales taxes from within that area, providing a significant boost to proposed projects.

"My goal was to make sure that this concept is real and didn't just gather dust on a shelf, and this is real progress toward building the riverfront worthy of a great city like ours," said the mayor.

"By leveraging sales tax dollars in the TDZ that would otherwise have gone to Nashville, we can do this without using the general fund dollars that pay for basic services like police and fire."

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=n2w7y_T



■ The aquarium would be connected by a pedestrian bridge



This is real progress toward building the riverfront worthy of a great city like ours

Jim Strickland

THEME PARKS

Disney reveals opening dates for Star Wars attractions



The new lands will transport guests to a never-before-seen planet, a remote trading port and one of the last stops before Wild Space, where Star Wars characters and their stories come to life

Disney

Disney has released a new video for its Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge attractions, confirming the additions will come first to California in the Summer of 2019 and then to Florida just a few months later.

Having been "cleared for arrival", the cinematic trailer shows animated concept imagery of the Star Wars-themed attractions, complete with TIE fighters from the franchise flying through the sky. On the right of the video is the Millennium Falcon – already confirmed to be a ride where guests pilot the starship and a battle with the First Order. Both Star Wars-inspired lands



■ A cinematic preview shows the park concepts

at Disneyland in Anaheim and Disney World in Orlando will, according to Disney, "transport guests to a never-before-seen planet, a remote trading port and one of the last stops before Wild Space, where Star Wars characters and their stories come to life."

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=n9j9K_O

WORLD HERITAGE

Third of world's protected areas under threat

New research has suggested that a third of the world's protected sites – an area covering roughly 2.3 million square miles – are under intense pressure from human activities.

The study – published in the journal *Science* and carried out by the University of Queensland, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and University of Northern British Columbia – revealed that protected areas worldwide are now under intense human pressure from activities including road building, grazing, and urbanisation.

Looking at global human footprint maps, the study's authors revealed that 32.8 per cent of protected land is "highly degraded", with 55

per cent experiencing human pressure increases since the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) – a measure designed to halt biodiversity loss through protected area creation – was ratified in 1992.

"The study is a reality check for nations striving to meet commitments under the CBD to halt biodiversity loss through protected area creation," said the paper's lead author, Kendall Jones of the University of Queensland.

"A well-run protected area network is essential in saving species. If we allow our protected area network to be degraded there is no doubt biodiversity losses will be exacerbated."

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=m8B7E_T



Protected areas are still being damaged by human intervention



The study is a reality check for nations striving to meet commitments under the CBD to halt biodiversity loss

Kendall Jones

ZOOS

Omaha Zoo launches US\$22m Asian Highlands exhibit



It might be one of the most immersive outdoor projects we've done

Dennis Pate

The Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo has opened the first phase of its brand new US\$22m (€18.8m, £16.4m) Asian Highlands Exhibit, taking visitors to the Himalayan mountains and grasslands of Northern India.

Covering 8 acres (32,000sq m), the new area opened on 25 May. In the addition, visitors enter a replica of Himalayan temple ruin, walking through areas representing northern India and northeastern China.

"The higher up you go, it becomes more evergreen forest, so you're climbing in elevation as you walk



Red pandas are among the new animals on display

through the project," said zoo director Dennis Pate. "It might be one of the most immersive outdoor projects we've done here because of the architecture from the Himalayan highlands and the village ruins that we've used."

MORE: http://lei.sr?a=2z3z8_T

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Concert venues, sports arenas, summer/music festivals, carnivals

Attractions Management News breaks down this year's TEA/AECOM Theme Index and Museum Index



THEME PARKS

Disney breaks 150 million visitor mark as operator rules over theme park world

Disney continues to reign supreme in the world of theme parks, with the operator gaining close to 10 million additional visitors through the year – 84 million ahead of its nearest rival in the latest TEA/AECOM Theme Index

Disney saw a 6.8 per cent increase in visitors – up to 150 million in 2017 from 140.4 million in the previous year.

Merlin Entertainments came a distant second, upping its visitation year-on-year to 66 million visitors – a 7.8 per cent or 5 million visitor increase. Universal rounded out the top three, with a 4.4 per cent increase of just over 2 million

visitors as its closes in on 50 million for the year across its theme park portfolio.

For the top 10 theme parks overall, attendance growth was up a combined 8.6 per cent to 475.8 million visitors – an increase of 37.5 million. Within the top 10, fourth-placed OCT Parks China enjoyed the biggest growth, increasing visitation by 32.9 per cent to 42.9 million visitors – a staggering rise of 10.6 million people.

For individual theme park attractions, Disney also sits on top of the pile, with the top three most-visited all its properties and eight of the top 10 also Disney attractions.

The most-visited park – Magic Kingdom in Orlando, Florida – saw a slight increase of 0.3 per cent to 20.4 million visitors. Disneyland in California was second with 18.3 million visitors – a 2 per cent rise – while Tokyo Disneyland upped its

Theme Park Groups Worldwide

Rank & Group name	% Change	Attendance 2017	Attendance 2016
1 WALT DISNEY ATTRACTIONS	6.8%	150,014,000	140,403,000
2 MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS GROUP	7.8%	66,000,000	61,200,000
3 UNIVERSAL PARKS AND RESORTS	4.4%	49,458,000	47,356,000
4 OCT PARKS CHINA	32.9%	42,880,000	32,270,000
5 FANTAWILD	21.7%	38,495,000	31,639,000
6 CHIMELONG GROUP	13.4%	31,031,000	27,362,000
7 SIX FLAGS INC.	2.3%	30,789,000	30,108,000
8 CEDAR FAIR ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY	2.4%	25,700,000	25,104,000
9 SEAWORLD PARKS & ENTERTAINMENT	-5.5%	20,800,000	22,000,000
10 PARQUES REUNIDOS	-1.1%	20,600,000	20,825,000
TOP 10 ATTENDANCE GROWTH 2016-17	8.6%	475,767,000	438,267,000



■ Visitor numbers at Disney parks continue to rise each year



■ Minions are a big draw for Universal Studios Japan – the most visited non-Disney park on the list

visitor figures by 0.4 per cent in third, welcoming 16.6 million people to its park.

Outside of Disney, fourth-placed Universal Studios Japan saw its visitation rise by 3 per cent, with 14.9 million visitors in 2017. Universal Studios in Orlando also saw a slight rise of 2 per cent, with numbers up to 10 million.

Due to being opened for the first time in 2016, Shanghai Disneyland breaks the top 10, coming eighth with 11 million visitors in its first full year of operation.

Mainland China, which is currently the focal point for theme park development in Asia, helped buoy the region in terms of attendance growth by 5.5 per cent. Many new parks, Shanghai Disney leading the way, experienced double-digit growth year-on-year.

"We have forecast for several years that China would become the largest theme park market in the world by 2020," said Chris Yoshii, vice president of Asia-Pacific for AECOM.

"The success of Shanghai Disney has been very encouraging, showing developers that they should invest in world-class and best-in-class projects,

Top 20 Amusement/theme parks Worldwide

Rank, Park & Location	% Change	Attendance 2017	Attendance 2016
1 MAGIC KINGDOM AT WALT DISNEY WORLD, LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL, U.S.	0.30%	20,450,000	20,395,000
2 DISNEYLAND, ANAHEIM, CA, U.S.	2.00%	18,300,000	17,943,000
3 TOKYO DISNEYLAND, TOKYO, JAPAN	0.40%	16,600,000	16,540,000
4 UNIVERSAL STUDIOS JAPAN, OSAKA, JAPAN	3.00%	14,935,000	14,500,000
5 TOKYO DISNEYSEA, TOKYO, JAPAN	0.30%	13,500,000	13,460,000
6 DISNEY'S ANIMAL KINGDOM AT WALT DISNEY WORLD, LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL, U.S.	15.30%	12,500,000	10,844,000
7 EPCOT AT WALT DISNEY WORLD, LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL	4.20%	12,200,000	11,712,000
8 SHANGHAI DISNEYLAND, SHANGHAI, CHINA	96.40%	11,000,000	5,600,000
9 DISNEY'S HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS AT WALT DISNEY WORLD, LAKE BUENA VISTA, FL, U.S.	-0.50%	10,722,000	10,776,000
10 UNIVERSAL STUDIOS AT UNIVERSAL ORLANDO, FL, U.S.	2.00%	10,198,000	9,998,000
11 CHIMELONG OCEAN KINGDOM, HENGQIN, CHINA	15.50%	9,788,000	8,474,000
12 DISNEYLAND PARK AT DISNEYLAND PARIS, MARNE-LA-VALLEE, FRANCE	15.00%	9,660,000	8,400,000
13 DISNEY CALIFORNIA ADVENTURE, ANAHEIM, CA, U.S.	3.00%	9,574,000	9,295,000
14 ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE AT UNIVERSAL ORLANDO, FL, U.S.	2.00%	9,549,000	9,362,000
15 UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD, UNIVERSAL CITY, CA, U.S.	12.00%	9,056,000	8,086,000
16 LOTTE WORLD, SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA	-17.60%	6,714,000	8,150,000
17 EVERLAND, GYEONGGI-DO, SOUTH KOREA	-9.50%	6,310,000	6,970,000*
18 HONG KONG DISNEYLAND, HONG KONG SAR	1.60%	6,200,000	6,100,000
19 NAGASHIMA SPA LAND, KUWANA, JAPAN	1.40%	5,930,000	5,850,000
20 OCEAN PARK, HONG KONG SAR	-3.30%	5,800,000	5,996,000
21 EUROPA-PARK, RUST, GERMANY	1.80%	5,700,000	5,600,000
22 WALT DISNEY STUDIOS PARK AT DISNEYLAND PARIS, MARNE-LA-VALLEE, FRANCE	4.60%	5,200,000	4,970,000
23 DE EFTELING, KAATSHEUVEL, NETHERLANDS	8.70%	5,180,000	4,764,000
24 TIVOLI GARDENS, COPENHAGEN, DENMARK	0.00%	4,640,000	4,640,000
25 UNIVERSAL STUDIOS SINGAPORE, SINGAPORE	2.90%	4,220,000	4,100,000
TOP 25 TOTAL ATTENDANCE 2017		243,926,000	232,525,000
TOP 25 ATTENDANCE GROWTH 2016 -17	4.7%	243,926,000	233,057,000

After a fairly flat 2016, the industry resumed its historic pace of growth in 2017

and the market will respond. Having a theme park is still seen as an important asset to a modern city in China, and we are going to continue to see new projects and new announcements."

Mapping theme parks worldwide, Florida is still the major hotbed for theme park goers, with 75.6 million people visiting its six major parks. Japan follows in second with 51 million visitors spread over four major operations, while California and its three parks welcomed 36.9 million visitors.

"The mega-destination that is Orlando saw major attractions open at both

Disney (Pandora – The World of Avatar) and Universal (Volcano Bay) in 2017," said John Robinett, senior vice president, economics, Americas for AECOM.

"After a fairly flat 2016, the industry resumed its historic pace of growth in 2017 fueled by Disney, China, and Indoor Entertainment Centers.

"Representing a third of North American attendance Orlando should continue to develop with US\$10bn (€8.6bn, £7.5bn) of investment in future attractions, RDE (retail, dining and entertainment zones), and hotels slated for the next five years." ►



WATERPARKS

Success in Europe as waterpark attendance tops 30 million

Waterpark attendance has for the first time broken 30 million visitors among the world's top 20, with particularly strong performance at some of Europe's top waterparks

Across the world's top 20 most-visited waterparks, attendance increased 1.6 per cent between 2016 and 2017 – breaking the 30 million visitor barrier for the first time in the report's history.

Chimelong in Guangzhou, China, retains the title of world's most-attended waterpark, with a 6 per cent increase year-on-year, up from 2.5 million visitors in 2016 to 2.7 million in 2017. Making its debut on the list is Orlando's Volcano Bay,

as the Universal waterpark ranked sixth with 1.5 million visitors in its first year. The largest attendance rise came for 16th-ranked Siam Park on the Canary Islands, which recorded a 20.9 per cent, 200,000 visitor rise to 1.2 million visitors in 2017.

In Latin America, waterpark visits totalled 9.9 million visitors, raising expectations that 2018 will for the first time see that region cross over the 10 million mark. While there were increases at several properties in Brazil, last year's earthquake in Central Mexico

led to declines, particularly for Six Flags Hurricane Harbor Oaxtepec – a newly acquired and renovated Six Flags water park operating in its inaugural season.

For the EMEA market, overall attendance was up 3.2 per cent to 9.6 million, though visitation in the Middle East declined. According to the report, this drop was due to "the significant increase in competition for leisure time and spend" in the region, which has had an impact across the board in that area, felt by the region's most visited – Dubai's Aquaventure – which



■ (lef to right) Chimelong and Typhoon Lagoon are the two most visited waterparks



■ Thermas Dos Laranjais and Blizzard beach rank third and fourth for visits

Top 20 Waterparks Worldwide

Rank, Park & Location	% Change	Attendance 2017	Attendance 2016
1 CHIMELONG WATER PARK, GUANGZHOU, CHINA	6.00%	2,690,000	2,538,000
2 TYPHOON LAGOON AT DISNEY WORLD, ORLANDO, FL, U.S.	-5.00%	2,163,000	2,277,000
3 THERMAS DOS LARANJAIS, OLIMPIA, BRAZIL	2.50%	2,007,000	1,959,000
4 BLIZZARD BEACH AT DISNEY WORLD, ORLANDO, FL, U.S.	-7.00%	1,945,000	2,091,000
5 BAHAMAS AQUAVENTURE WATER PARK, BAHAMAS	-2.00%	1,831,000	1,868,000
6 UNIVERSAL'S VOLCANO BAY, ORLANDO, FL, U.S.	NEW	1,500,000	NA
7 HOT PARK RIO QUENTE, CALDAS NOVAS, BRAZIL	7.20%	1,481,000	1,381,000
8 AQUATICA, ORLANDO, FL, U.S.	-10.00%	1,382,000	1,536,000
9 CARIBBEAN BAY, GYEONGGI-DO, SOUTH KOREA	-3.50%	1,380,000	1,430,000*
10 AQUAVENTURE WATER PARK, DUBAI, U.A.E.	-5.60%	1,350,000	1,430,000
11 OCEAN WORLD, GANGWON-DO, SOUTH KOREA	-9.70%	1,330,000	1,473,000
12 THERME ERDING, ERDING, GERMANY	6.00%	1,320,000	1,245,000
13 SUNWAY LAGOON, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA	2.40%	1,300,000	1,270,000
14 KAIFENG YINJI WATER PARK, KAIFENG, CHINA	46.10%	1,300,000	890,000
15 AQUAPALACE, PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC	18.80%	1,215,000	1,023,000
16 SIAM PARK, SANTA CRUZ DE TENERIFE, SPAIN	20.90%	1,209,000	1,000,000
17 WUHU FANTAWILD WATER PARK, WUHU, CHINA	17.60%	1,204,000	1,024,000
18 SHENYANG ROYAL OCEAN PARK – WATER WORLD, FUSHUN, CHINA	2.60%	1,200,000	1,170,000
19 WET 'N' WILD GOLD COAST, GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA	-5.00%	1,180,000	1,242,000
20 TROPICAL ISLANDS, KRAUSNICK, GERMANY	3.10%	1,168,000	1,133,000
TOP 20 ATTENDANCE GROWTH 2017		30,155,000	27,980,000
TOP 20 ATTENDANCE GROWTH 2016-17	1.6%	30,155,000	29,688,000

declined 5.6 per cent to 1.35 million visits. The report says that a tourism increase and growing demand from that market would help to absorb the supply that has recently entered the industry.

In addition to the success of Siam Park, in Europe, Prague's Aquapalace in the Czech Republic has had an excellent year, increasing its attendance by 18.8 per cent to 1.2 million visitors. Therme Erding in Germany is Europe's most visited waterpark, with numbers up 6 per cent to 1.3 million. This does not include an additional 500,000



In Latin America, waterpark visits totalled 9.9 million visitors, raising expectations that 2018 will for the first time see that region cross over the 10 million mark

visitors who paid to enter Therme's spa so as to make an equitable waterpark comparison on an international basis.

The top 20 waterparks in the US suffered this year, with a 2.9 per cent decline equating to 500,000 visitors lost. Down to 15.3 million among the top operators, the results, says the report, were driven by lack of re-investment to drive new traffic at some parks, and bad weather plaguing others – with many forced to close due to severe storms such as Hurricane Harvey.



MUSEUMS

Louvre regains top spot as Paris recovers and London dips

France's museums have shown significant recovery following a tumultuous 2016, with the Louvre reclaiming top spot as the world's most visited museum in the latest TEA/AECOM Museum Index



■ The National Air and Space museum is the most visited in the US

Tourist numbers in Paris and wider France suffered in 2016 in the wake of multiple terrorist attacks, with attendance at the Louvre dropping by 1.3 million visitors to 7.4 million, with the world-famous institution falling behind the top-ranked National Museum of China in Beijing and the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC.

Reflecting the recovery of its tourism sector in 2017, the Louvre enjoyed a 9.5 per cent increase in visitor numbers, rising by 500,000 visitors to 8.1 million. Similarly, the Musée D'Orsay – which last year experienced a double-digit drop in attendance to 3 million visitors – experienced significant recovery, with a 5.9 per cent increase in visitation to 3.2 million people. There were also rises in Paris for the Centre Pompidou, which increased visitation 2.2 per cent to 3.4 million, and the Cite des Sciences et de L'Industrie,



■ New York's Met (top) ranks second in the US, while the National Museum of China loses its top spot

Top 20 Museums Worldwide

Rank, Park & Location	% Change	Attendance 2017	Attendance 2016
1 LOUVRE, PARIS, FRANCE	9.50%	8,100,000	7,400,000
2 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF CHINA, BEIJING, CHINA	6.80%	8,063,000	7,550,000
3 NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM , WASHINGTON, DC, U.S.	-6.70%	7,000,000	7,500,000
4 THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK, NY, U.S.	4.50%	7,000,000	6,700,000
5 VATICAN MUSEUMS, VATICAN, VATICAN CITY	5.90%	6,427,000	6,067,000
6 SHANGHAI SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM, SHANGHAI, CHINA	1.70%	6,421,000	6,316,000
7 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, WASHINGTON, DC U.S.	-15.50%	6,000,000	7,100,000
8 BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON, U.K.	-8.00%	5,907,000	6,420,000
9 TATE MODERN, LONDON, U.K.	-3.10%	5,656,000	5,839,000
10 NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, DC, U.S.	22.80%	5,232,000	4,261,000
11 NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON, U.K.	-16.50%	5,229,000	6,263,000
12 AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, NEW YORK, NY, U.S.	0.00%	5,000,000	5,000,000
13 NATIONAL PALACE MUSEUM (TAIWAN), TAIPEI, TAIWAN	-4.90%	4,436,000	4,666,000
14 NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON, U.K.	-4.10%	4,435,000	4,624,000
15 STATE HERMITAGE, ST PETERSBURG, RUSSIA	2.50%	4,220,000	4,119,000
16 CHINA SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM, BEIJING, CHINA	4.00%	3,983,000	3,830,000
17 REINA SOFIA, MADRID, SPAIN	6.90%	3,897,000	3,647,000
18 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY, WASHINGTON, DC, U.S.	0.00%	3,800,000	3,800,000
19 VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON, U.K.	25.40%	3,790,000	3,022,000
20 CENTRE POMPIDOU, PARIS, FRANCE	2.20%	3,371,000	3,300,000
TOP 25 ATTENDANCE GROWTH 2017		107,967,000	107,424,000
TOP 25 ATTENDANCE GROWTH 2016-17	0.2%	107,967,000	107,798,000

which saw its numbers jump 11.7 per cent to 2.4 million visitors.

Across the channel things aren't looking so rosy, with uncertainty over Brexit and renewed security concerns affecting Britain's museums particularly in the capital, where of the five London museums that made the top 20, four suffered declines in visitation.

The highest-ranked British Museum – which came in 8th – saw its numbers drop from 6.4 million in last year's report to 5.9 million in 2017. In 9th, the Tate Modern, which last year increased its visitor numbers by 23.9 per cent, this time dropped 3.1 per cent, welcoming 5.6 million visitors through its doors. The National Gallery lost one million visitors, dropping outside of the top to 11th spot with 5.3 million people coming to the institution. There was a 4.1 per cent decline at the Natural History Museum, which saw 4.4 million visit.

Museums in the region recorded the fastest growth worldwide in 2017, with an 11 per cent increase

Bucking the trend in the British capital was the Victoria & Albert Museum, which following an expansion and three major exhibitions, upped its attendance by a quarter to 3.8 million, welcoming an additional 800,000 visitors through 2017.

Attendance across the top 20 museums remained relatively flat – up 0.2 per cent from 107.8 million to 108 million. Regionally, however, the report says that museums had a strong year with 5 per cent growth fed by new entries and strong performance in Asia.

Exemplified last year by the National Museum of China taking the top spot from The Louvre, Asia's culture sector has experienced rapid growth in recent

years, with 2017 being no different. Museums in the region recorded the fastest growth worldwide in 2017, with an 11 per cent increase in visitation. Of the top 20 museums, seven were in China, the newly-opened Chengdu Museum entering the Index for the first time with 3 million visitors.

This strong performance, says the report, has been fuelled by multiple factors, including "an emerging middle class with rising levels of education, cultural awareness and disposable income, exposure to global cultural trends through online and social media, as well as increased international travel to destinations with high-quality museums". ●

PRODUCT INNOVATION

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● In the works since 2013, the Mack-manufactured Icon serves as the park's sixth steel roller coaster and tenth rollercoaster overall

Blackpool Pleasure Beach debuts Mack Rides' £16.25m Icon rollercoaster



● Blackpool Pleasure Beach managing director Amada Thompson

Blackpool Pleasure Beach has debuted its highly-anticipated steel launch coaster – Icon – which opened to the public on 25 May.

Designed by German rollercoaster engineer Werner Stengel and manufactured by Mack Rides, the £16.25m (US\$21.75m, €18.5m) ride is the first multi-launch coaster to come to the UK.

In the works since 2013, Icon serves as the park's sixth steel rollercoaster and tenth rollercoaster overall. The ride has a Japanese theme, with visitors entering through a large Japanese-style set of gates,

before walking down landscaped pathways. At its peak, the ride, which lasts 80 seconds over 1,143m (3,750ft), reaches heights of 88.5ft (30m), with drops of 82ft (25m).

Amanda Thompson, managing director of Blackpool Pleasure Beach, said that the addition of Icon would help to re-energise the resort, bringing in a new thrill seeking audience.

"We have to keep investing in our resort because everyone comes back to Blackpool time and time again," she said.

"We have to keep making it different, we have to keep making it new, we have to

keep making it exciting.

"It is a simply stunning ride and I'm delighted with the look and style of it. We have created a totally unique experience here at Blackpool Pleasure Beach confirming our continued commitment to make it one of the world's greatest amusement parks.

The park's deputy managing director, Nick Thompson, added: "We have done a fantastic job in creating what I believe is one of the best rides in the country, if not the world."

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORD

MACK RIDES

Red Raion revamps immersive attraction at Cinecittà World



● The revamped attraction opened on 19 May

Virtual reality movie production company Red Raion has created a custom-made film to revamp the immersive tunnel attraction at Cinecittà World in Rome, Italy.

Opened on 19 May, Jurassic War was designed to transform the park's existing immersive tunnel ride, and pays tribute to classic sci-fi movies centred on the resurrection of dinosaurs through cloning.

The experience begins with an immersive pre-show walk-through, featuring lifelike animatronics, and



● Jurassic War takes guests on a thrilling dinosaur adventure

reenactments, designed to prepare them for the action that is about to take place. Once onboard guests are taken on a tour of the forest, and shown the dinosaurs in their natural habitat, before the ride is suddenly derailed by a vicious Tyrannosaurus Rex attack.

The film - which has a resolution of 14976px by

1080px - is displayed on an enormous 70m by 5m (230ft by 16ft) screen, which surrounds the guests, while the vehicles, which were programmed by Red Raion, are synced to mirror the movements of the action taking place on screen.

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORD
RED RAION

Yas Waterworld

Attraktion makes waves with new Cinesplash experience

Austrian media-based attraction developer Attraktion has created a brand new multimedia experience for Yas Waterworld in Abu Dhabi.

Combining an immersive 4D theatre attraction with a traditional waterpark experience Cinesplash 5D

submerges guests in 50cm (1.7ft) of water as they experience the immersive film, *Legend of the Lost Pearl*.

Based on the region's rich pearl diving heritage, *Legend of the Lost Pearl* takes visitors on a quest with the young protagonist Dana, as she journeys across Abu Dhabi to find the Mother Pearl.



● Attraktion CEO Markus Beyr

fog, seat vibrations and leg ticklers, are used throughout.

"The development of Cinesplash for Yas Waterworld took several years. Besides building the full attraction, our studio also produced the custom movie for the waterpark, bringing their original characters to life and telling the story of the park," said Attraktion CEO Markus Beyr.

Yas Waterworld's general manager Bianca Sammut, added: "Cinesplash 5D is undoubtedly one of the most exciting new additions to our lineup of experiences and we are very proud to be the first waterpark to introduce this attraction to our guests in this region".

ATTRACTIONS-KIT KEYWORD
ATTRAKTION



● Cinesplash 5D combines a 4D cinema with a waterpark experience

As the action unfolds on screen, the cinema floods, with a number of water effects, including rain, waterfalls, water explosions, sprays, fountains, water guns and neck blasts, which are deployed to fully immerse viewers in the experience. Additional effects, including wind effects, ground

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Tenders need to be submitted by 2.30pm, 20th June 2018

To register your interest on eTender Wales and access the documents please use this link:

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OJEU Reference: 2018/S 085-191704

eTender Reference: ITT_67206 / Project_38625





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