

Chapter Nine Outline Attractions and Entertainment

- i. Quote: St. Augustine
- ii. Chapter Opener: So Many Things to Do and So Little Time
- I. Introduction
 - A. People have always traveled to experience the special attraction of distant places
 - B. Attractions and entertainment (A & E) are only two of many ways we can choose to spend our leisure time
- II. A World of Opportunities
 - A. Attractions and entertainments will be grouped into heritage attractions, commercial attractions, and live entertainment
 - B. Recreational activities discussed in Chapter 10

Identifying and Classifying Leisure-Time Tourism Activities

We have devoted two chapters (9 and 10) to exploring the wide array of leisure-time activities from which travelers may chose. After several semesters of presenting this material to students, we have found it to be helpful to begin our discussion by critically thinking about the differences between attraction and entertainment alternatives and recreational activities. We have found that students enthusiastically participate and gain valuable knowledge from the following exercise.

You can set the stage by introducing students to the idea that tourists have a finite amount of leisure time. Although tourists who are traveling on vacation will have a great deal more leisure time than business and professional travelers, they are still faced with choices about what to do with their available leisure time. As professionals in the tourism industry, we are interested in

(1) providing a selection of alternatives which meet tourists' needs and wants, (2) communicating the availability of these alternatives, and/or (3) understanding why leisure-time choices are made.

The balance beam diagram can be used to depict the fact that tourists must make leisure-time choices. On one end of the balance beam, you will find the major categories of attractions and entertainment options presented in Chapter 8 — heritage attractions, commercial attractions and live entertainment. On the other end of the balance beam, you will find recreational activities which are presented in Chapter 9. Once again, it is important for students to recognize that travelers are faced with decisions about how to use their leisure time.

The accompanying worksheet has been designed to allow students to practice their understanding of these different categories. You can either use brochures from a selected destination or tap into the Internet to highlight a favorite location. Based on available information, students can begin filling in the worksheet by indicating the “Tour Destination” and themselves as the “Tour Planners.” Next, they are challenged to place all the available alternatives into three categories – heritage attractions, commercial attractions, and live entertainment. Point out that recreational activities are not included on this list.

As students think about the placement of each attraction and entertainment venue into these categories, they will begin to discover similarities and differences. Encourage them to review the information provided in Chapter 8 to assist in making placement decisions. After your students have completed their explanation at the bottom of the worksheet, have them share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

We have found it helpful to create a bit of competition, encouraging students to find as many examples as possible. In small classes, this is an effective individual assignment. Consider using groups in large classes. We encourage you to use several different locations to highlight the wide array of choices facing travelers.

Tour Destination _____

Tour Planners _____

Planned Visitation to Attractions and Entertainment Venues

Heritage <u>Attractions</u>	Commercial <u>Attractions</u>	Live <u>Entertainment</u>

Explain the similarities and differences among the attraction and entertainment alternatives you have placed in each of the three categories.

III. Foundations for Understanding Attractions and Entertainment

- A. Attractions: Natural locations, objects, or constructed facilities that have a special appeal
- B. Entertainment alternatives are usually temporary: Events are always temporary
- C. Seasonality often a major characteristic of demand for attractions
 - 1. When seasonality is severe, attractions may only operate during part of the year
 - 2. Managers try to increase attendance during shoulder and off-season
 - 3. Recruiting, training, and retaining employees is a special challenge for highly seasonal attractions
 - 4. Cash flow needs to be carefully planned to have funds when operating expenses are incurred
 - 5. Mature travelers and year-round-education families are attractive target segments when managers try to boost non-peak season revenues
 - 6. Managers also add complementary activities to try to generate visitors; e.g., mountain biking at ski resorts
 - 7. Strategies for staffing for seasonality
 - a. Implement wage scales which increase as season progresses
 - b. Pay season-completion bonuses to retain employees for entire season
 - c. Hire retirees who want to supplement retirement income
 - 8. Strategies for seasonal cash flow management
 - a. Sell season passes at a discount when purchased at close of previous season
 - b. Negotiate lines of credit and extended payment terms with suppliers

IV. Heritage Attractions

- A. Museums and historical sites
 - 1. Societies display collections of goods to pass important information to future generations and “outsiders”
 - 2. Number of museums increasing and come in all shapes and sizes, displaying a vast array of history from art to science
 - 3. Curators often use large number of volunteers (docents) to staff museums
- B. Zoos and Aquariums
 - 1. Zoos were major attractions during ancient times and are still popular today
 - 2. Many zoos are nonprofit preservation societies, but many U.S. operations are for-profit tourist attractions including Animal Kingdom at Walt Disney World
 - 3. Aquariums have been increasing in number, size, and attendance
 - a. Like zoos, many aquariums are nonprofit societies, but some are for-profit enterprises, such as the new Ocean Journey in Denver, CO
 - b. Recently, cities have been funding aquariums to revitalize waterfront areas and draw tourists and residents
- C. Parks and preserves
 - 1. Each park/preserve is different in appearance and purpose but all are dedicated to protecting natural beauty and flora and fauna
 - 2. National parks are the most important parks and preserves in countries of the

- world; many are the most important tourist attractions of their respective countries
- 3. National parks are funded with government funds and revenues generated through fees and the sale of services and concessions
- 4. Botanical gardens are a special type of park dedicated to live displays of plants
- D. Fairs and festivals
 - 1. Fairs and festivals contain some heritage attractions, commercial attractions, and live entertainment
 - 2. Originally fairs were a temporary marketplace while festivals were gatherings at a time of celebration
 - 3. Both fairs and festivals feature food, shows, and musical entertainment
 - 4. World's fairs bring together exhibitors and visitors from all over the world
 - 5. More frequent are county, state/provincial, or regional fairs which still revolve around agricultural and livestock displays
 - 6. Festivals are focused on some special occasion such as a religious holiday or some annual occurrence; e.g., Mardi Gras, winter carnivals, strawberry festivals
- V. Commercial Attractions
 - A. Amusement parks
 - 1. Amusement parks evolved from pleasure garden parks, often located at the end of trolley lines
 - 2. Invention of Ferris wheel heightened interest in amusement parks
 - 3. When cars replaced trolleys, amusement parks lost business
 - 4. Traveling carnivals an extension of amusement park idea, popular in first half of 20th century
 - 5. Disneyland's opening in 1955 ushered in the theme park
 - B. Theme parks
 - 1. Theme parks are more planned, simulated environments than amusement parks
 - 2. New rides, food, and entertainment are crucial ingredients to park success
- VI. Gaming
 - A. Gaming has become increasingly accessible and popular in North America
 - B. Five primary reasons for the increase
 - 1. Voters have viewed gaming as a voluntary tax
 - 2. More people view gaming as an acceptable leisure activity
 - 3. Retirees are the single largest gaming segment and their number is increasing
 - 4. Casinos are appealing to segments other than the traditional "high rollers"
 - 5. Casinos are now located near more and more populations centers
 - C. Four broad categories of gaming alternatives
 - 1. Traditional full-scale casino gaming; e.g., Las Vegas, Atlantic City
 - 2. Historic, limited-stakes operations; e.g., Colorado's mining towns
 - 3. Dockside (riverboat) casinos
 - 4. Native American reservation gaming operations which vary from small to large-scale Vegas-style casinos; e.g., Foxwoods in Connecticut
 - D. Gaming regulated at local, state/provincial, and federal level
 - E. Gaming segments

1. High rollers: Sophisticated gamblers who often play internationally and focus on games of skill rather than luck
 2. Day-trippers: Typically retirees, making short-duration trips to operations within easy driving distance, and tend to play slots and video gaming options
 3. Low-stakes/new adopters: Both baby boomers and Generation Xers who have recently accepted gaming as a leisure alternative
 4. Family vacationers: Families who gamble as an off-shoot to other family vacation activities provided at gaming venues
- F. Gaming attractions have much higher profit margins with margins approaching 35 percent

Mini-Lecture

Responsible Gaming

With the phenomenal increase in gaming since the 1990s have come major economic impacts in the form of job creation and tax revenues. Unfortunately, another result of the escalation of gaming is problem gambling.

A Harvard Medical School study found that approximately 1 percent of North American adults are addicted gamblers, while the rate among young people is about 6 percent. The high rate of addictive (or compulsive) gambling among the youth is especially alarming because, prior to the 1990s, the problem was almost unheard of among young people. While in the past gambling was rarely shown in the media (except for a James Bond movie or two), now gaming is portrayed through all advertising media as an exciting, even exotic, adult pastime that can yield instantaneous wealth, power, freedom, and status. The increase in gaming's popularity continent-wide has, unfortunately, increased its popularity with those who are not yet of age to play. Sociologists suggest some teens become compulsive gamblers for the same reasons many drink and use drugs:

1. Problems at home and with role modeling,
2. Low self-esteem, and
3. Avoidance of pain and grief.

In response to problem gambling, especially among the underage, government officials and industry members have joined forces to educate the public about responsible gaming practices. Some of the solutions being tried include:

- Public education/awareness campaigns
- Training and certification for select gaming industry staff in recognizing problem gamblers and the resources available to help them
- Development of "800" number help lines staffed by professionals who provide referral services

- Distribution of brochures and news releases which outline the warning signs of problem gambling
- Arranging for knowledgeable speakers to discuss the issue on talk programs and newscasts
- Provision of educational materials to school districts and youth programs

For more information, see:

Fortune, E.E., & Goodie, A.S. (2010). The relationship between pathological gambling and sensation seeking: The role of subscale scores. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 26, 331-346.

Hodgins, D. C., Currie, S. R., & el-Guebaly, N. (2001). Motivational enhancement and self-help treatments for problem gambling. *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology*, 69, 50-57.

Howard S., Hall, M. and Vanderbilt, J. (1997). *Estimating the Prevalence of Disordered Gambling Behavior in the United States and Canada: A Meta-Analysis*, publication of Harvard Medical School's Division on Addictions.

Thygesen, K., & Hodgins, D. C. (2003). Quitting again: Motivations and strategies for terminating gambling relapses. *Electronic Journal of Gambling Issues*, 9, 1-21.

VII. Shopping

- A. Shopping can be one part of traveling or the reason for a trip
- B. Foreign travelers to U.S. very likely to shop during their visit (89 percent)
- C. Many malls are transforming themselves into tourist attractions by adding rides and other entertainment attractions
 - 1. Canada's West Edmonton Mall
 - 2. Minnesota's Mall of America is the #1 attraction of MN
 - 3. Mega-malls in Asia
- D. The importance of shopping to tourism has become so significant that it has given rise to a distinct category of travel, shopping tourism

VIII. Live Entertainment

- A. Sporting activities
 - 1. Long history of the attraction of sports; e.g., Greeks and the Olympics
 - 2. Professional and intercollegiate sporting events draw millions of visitors each year
 - 3. Special sporting events are fought for by host communities to gain the vast revenues generated by attendees
 - 4. Non-team sporting activities are also important tourist draws
 - 5. Stock car racing the fastest growing spectator sport in the U.S.
- B. Performing arts
 - 1. Performing arts also has a long history of popularity
 - 2. Classical performing arts
 - a. Live theater
 - b. Ballet

- c. Opera
- d. Concerts (including symphony)
- 3. Contemporary performing arts
 - a. Contemporary versions of all of the above
 - b. Comedy shows
 - c. Musical concerts, band appearances
- 4. Performing arts can be performed in specially designed facilities or simply large capacity halls or arenas

IX. Summary

You Decide

Major Topic: Casino marketing to groups

Suggestions for In-class Discussion:

This You Decide describes a common marketing practice by many casinos. It is common, especially with senior citizens clubs, for casinos to pay a “bounty” on the number of group members who come to play at the casino. The bounty increases as the size of the group increases.

Restrictions are placed on the members, primarily, that they remain in the casino for a certain length of time, often 5 hours. To ensure that group members are captive for that period, groups are brought to the casino by bus.

As stated, some groups use the bounty money to raise money for the group or some worthy cause. However, the casino pays the group leader who may do as he or she sees fit with the cash. Frequently group members do not know that the organizer is making money off of their participation.

There are several ethical dilemmas in the situation described.

Is it ethical for the Pot O’ Gold casino to pay a bounty for players?

Is it ethical to require players to remain in the casino during their visit?

Is it ethical to give people money with the express purpose of tempting them to gamble, especially since most groups are composed of senior citizens, many on fixed incomes?

Should group leaders tell their group members that the leader received cash for organizing the outing? Should the leader turn the bounty money over to the group?

Discussion Questions

1. Why are attractions and entertainment important components of the tourism industry?

Attractions and entertainment options serve as reasons to travel to certain locations. Travelers, whether for business or pleasure, have some amount of leisure time that they often fill by visiting attractions and entertainment venues. Attractions and entertainment options entice visitors to stay in an area for additional days, thereby generating more revenues for hotels, restaurants, souvenir shops, etc.

2. How does seasonality create marketing, management, and financial challenges for attraction and entertainment operators?

When seasonality is severe, attractions may only operate during part of the year. Demand fluctuations mean that managers need to try to increase attendance during shoulder and off-seasons. Mature travelers and year-round-education families are attractive target segments when managers try to boost nonpeak season revenues. Managers also add complementary activities to try to generate visitors; e.g., mountain biking at ski resorts.

In addition, recruiting, training, and retaining employees becomes a special challenge. Strategies for staffing for seasonality include implementing wage scales which increase as the season progresses, paying season-completion bonuses to retain employees for the entire season, and hiring retirees who want to supplement retirement income with part-year jobs.

Cash flow also needs to be carefully planned to have funds available when operating expenses come due. To generate funds early, businesses sell season passes at a discount and negotiate lines of credit and extended payment terms with suppliers.

3. Explain the similarities and differences between heritage attractions and commercial attractions.

Heritage attractions exist to preserve the past or to preserve the present for those of the future. They are often nonprofit organizations although more and more for-profit attractions are arising because of the increased interest in this type of attraction.

Commercial attractions can be heritage attractions or other forms of attractions, such as theme parks. The key difference is the primary goal of the enterprise that owns the operation. Commercial attractions exist to make a profit.

4. Why has gaming experienced a surge in growth and participation?

Much of the growth can be credited to new and expanded gaming opportunities. This ease of access, combined with the social acceptance and novelty of gaming as recreation, has attracted many first-time players and continues to attract repeat visitors. There are five primary reasons for the increase in gaming.

1. Voters have viewed gaming as a voluntary tax.
2. More people view gaming as an acceptable leisure activity.

3. Retirees are the single largest gaming segment and their number is increasing.
4. Casinos are appealing to segments other than the traditional “high rollers.”
5. Casinos are now located near more and more population centers.

How have shopping malls been turned into tourism attractions?

The importance of shopping to tourism has become so significant that it has given rise to a distinct category of travel, shopping tourism. Shopping is an activity that crosses all market segments. Malls have been adding more forms of attractions and entertainment to their mix of retailers. Malls are now offering such a wide variety of services that some have become destinations in and of themselves; e.g., West Edmonton Mall. The massive destination malls that can be found in Asia attest to the power of shopping as a destination. Many of the attractions noted in this chapter can be found at mall locations.

Additional Short Answer Questions

1. Describe the difference between attractions and entertainment.
2. Explain why seasonality has such a significant impact on attraction marketing and operations.
3. Describe the primary revenue sources for parks and preserves. How do these disparate revenue sources impact managerial decisions?
4. Describe the basic requirements that must be present for a successful theme park.
5. Why does gaming continue to grow in popularity?
6. Why should sporting activities and shopping opportunities be considered for marketing synergies?
7. Describe the differences between classical and contemporary performing arts. Do both categories of performing arts attract the same segments of tourists? Why or why not?