

Pleasurewood Hills Theme Park: Case Study

BACKGROUND

Pleasurewood Hills is East Anglia's largest family theme park. It opened in the early 1980s and was taken over in January 2011 by a French company, Looping Holding, providing over £1.1million investment for new rides and further cosmetic enhancements to take place over winter 2011.

JPR has worked closely with the new management for eighteen months, to re-position the theme park as 'New Broom Sweeps Clean' with new rides and a new outlook for a top day out.

CAMPAIGN BRIEF

- To re-position Pleasurewood Hills as a popular place for a great day out for the whole family
- To market the 'new look' Pleasurewood Hills
- To boost visitor numbers
- Educate the public about the work going on behind the scenes at the theme park and the ongoing investment to the park

STRATEGY & TACTICS

From day one JPR became part of the Pleasurewood Hills family, attending regular team building meetings as part of the extended marketing team.

Within one month of winning the PR account, JPR organised a day-long Press Event. 45 journalists attended from all over the UK.

For 2010 – 2011 JPR highlighted key tactics as:-

- Focus on family fun
- Organise on-site press visits with their families resulting in reviews
- Place positive business pieces, highlighting the takeover, the investment into the park and recruitment
- Promote charity work, Woody Bear (the park mascot) in the community, opening school classrooms
- Encourage the press to come to JPR for fast and accurate information
- Organise an annual 'VIP, Press & Media Day' inviting national and regional journalists and their families to enjoy a complimentary day out at the park. The day includes lunch, activities and entertainment shows to showcase the best of the park.
- Become an extension of the marketing team – writing award entries

IMPLEMENTATION

- Drafting a range of press material covering:-
 - event press releases
 - latest refurbishment / new ride announcements
 - tourism round-ups
 - charity fundraising projects
- Issuing press releases to contacts across newspapers, magazines, family and children's press, bloggers, leisure industry magazines and social media.
- Lobbying the local, regional and national media for features and What's On listings.
- Placing bespoke business stories and profile pieces with local press.
- Placing competitions in target regional publications to win tickets to the park.

EVALUATION

- Since June 2010, JPR has secured hundreds of press and online articles including a review in The Sun, Halloween event listings in The Sunday Times, a picture-led story in the Times Educational supplement, interviews across BBC Radio Suffolk and Norfolk and business profiles in the Eastern Daily Press. The new ride and announcement takeover stories were covered in key Theme Park titles such as G-Force Magazine, Leisure Management and Travel Daily UK.
- In a year of government cuts affecting the tourism and leisure industry, Pleasurewood Hills has experienced record numbers visiting the park.
- The geographic location of visitors to Pleasurewood Hills covers the width and breadth of the country and beyond, with a number of visitors from Europe each year!
- The park anticipates in the region of 240,000 visitors before the end of 2011.