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Part 3

An important phase in theme park development is marketing. What do I mean by ‘important phase’? Well, let’s take a look at the brochure I’ve given you for the new Goldorama Theme Park in Bristol. This will open in six months’ time from now. Marketing is a key area which must begin well before you open a park. You need to develop public relations programmes, get group sales going, and advertise. As you can see, Goldorama is doing all that, so everybody already knows about the park before it has even opened its doors.

In terms of marketing, it’s very important to add value. Add value for the visitors and for the company. The ingredients for making a theme park – location, rides, events, staff, catering, et cetera – create something much more than just a day’s visit to an amusement park. They create an experience which visitors will remember for a long time.

Looking at it another way, when you run a theme park, you are in the business of keeping people happy. It’s a funny business, hey? In financial terms, value can be added for the company. It’s easy to calculate: the lower the cost of ‘production’, the higher the added value or profit can be. The happier people are, the quicker they’ll come back or tell their friends.

The difference between a successful and an unsuccessful theme park lies not only in the choice of theme and the rides and events it offers. Say you don’t pay enough attention to staffing. You’ll soon find your customers are unhappy because there aren’t enough people to pay attention to them. In fact, the point is that to a large extent the way in which the park is run makes or breaks it, and to run a park successfully, finance, marketing, sponsorship, sales, operations, entertainment, administration, personnel, maintenance and general services need to work together. In this way, theme parks keep on developing and offering attractions to people which make them return.

And don’t forget, typically, people living or staying within one and a half to two hours from any park will account for 80% of visitors. So, there’s a lot of work to do to also attract tourists from abroad and maximize their enjoyment.

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Answers

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