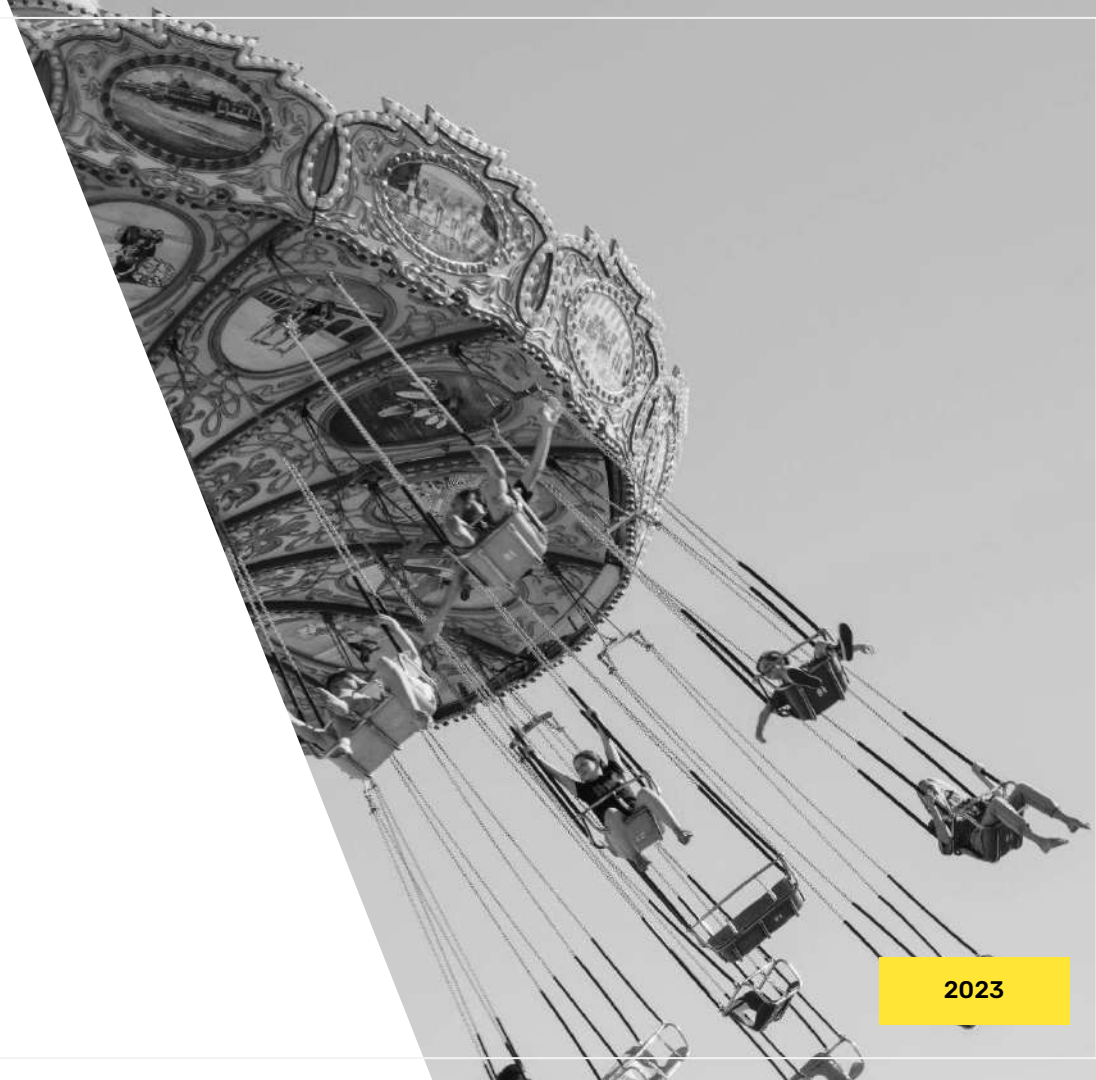




The pursuit of happiness beyond profit.

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The Global Association
for the Attractions Industry

2023



Happiness, experience and purpose: the attractions' industry is shifting

Open minds and assertive strategies combined with collaboration spirit are key to a more sustainable attraction industry worldwide, building an ecosystem based on fidelity, communities and purpose asking ourselves: ***what does having fun mean?***

In a rapidly evolving attractions industry, open minds and assertive strategies are crucial for success. A journey of collaboration and purpose as we explore the key to a thriving ecosystem built on fidelity, communities, and a deeper understanding of what it truly means to have fun.

Insights that open up to a future where attractions are more than just entertainment – they are unforgettable experiences and catalysts for positive change – and **happiness**.

Identity, purpose and cultural values for sustainable businesses

Happiness is a cherished value for people worldwide, particularly in the attractions industry. With globalization, happiness has become more universal, transcending cultural boundaries. In this industry, understanding what happiness means to visitors is crucial for creating meaningful experiences that attract and retain customers. So, it's time to explore: **what is happiness?**

When it comes to attractions, one universal truth is that experiences matter. However, in the attractions industry, **we face the challenge of creating experiences that go beyond mere transactions.** It's important to acknowledge that there is no consensus on what happiness, fun, and entertainment truly mean.

So to address this, it is crucial to understand people on various levels – by their profiles, audiences, cultures, generations, personalities, and identity factors – in order to create meaningful experiences for them.

To stay relevant and meet the evolving needs of consumers, it becomes crucial to identify their preferences, influences, and values. Today, people are actively seeking products and services that align with their **identity, purpose, and cultural values.** Understanding these behavioral shifts is essential for building an ecosystem that **fosters consumer loyalty, cultivates local communities, and contributes to a sustainable future for our industry.**

By studying the evolving behaviors of our audiences, we can gain valuable insights that allow attractions to build an ecosystem that values consumer loyalty, fosters local communities, and contributes to a more sustainable future for the industry.

We collected three key insights on how this can be applied effectively.

INSIGHT #1

**Purpose-driven
experiences and the
importance of "why"**

Purpose-driven experiences and the importance of "why"

Having fun has taken on a new meaning in today's post-pandemic world, where people are questioning the purpose behind their choices. They are seeking experiences that go beyond mere enjoyment - they want something meaningful, something that aligns with their values and identity.

As the attractions industry, we have the opportunity to provide them with the "why" behind our offerings.

People are willing to pay for experiences that deliver something amazing and exceed their expectations. But now, they are thinking more deeply before making decisions. They want to understand why they should choose our attractions over others, why it makes sense for them personally.

Studies in branding have shown that people connect with brands based on **identification, emotion, and shared values** – and purpose encompasses all of that. People are seeking happiness in places that welcome them and reflect who they are. It's about more than just buying an experience; it's about finding comfort in self-awareness and self-assurance.

To remain relevant and build strong brand awareness, attractions businesses need to **create meaningful experiences for the right audience**. By concentrating on what truly matters and establishing an **honest, shared-purpose relationship with customers**, we can continue to thrive now and in the future.



**By focusing on the why,
we can engage people on
a deeper level and give
them clear motives to
choose us.**

INSIGHT #2

Repurposing places and attractions for financial sustainability

A black and white photograph of a concert crowd. In the foreground, the silhouettes of many people's heads and shoulders are visible, some holding up phones to record. In the background, a stage is lit with several spotlights, creating beams of light that cut through the air. The overall atmosphere is that of a large-scale entertainment event.

INSIGHT #2

Repurposing places and attractions for financial sustainability

In the attractions industry, there's a growing trend of repurposing places and attractions to accommodate different experiences, people, and possibilities. This involves **rethinking businesses** and utilizing spaces that were once obsolete during certain seasons or periods.

For example, parks that traditionally focused on summer attractions are now hosting year-round experiences such as events, food and beverage festivals, and music concerts. These experiences attract and communicate with different people or niches, expanding the park's reach and generating additional revenue.

The positive outcomes of such repurposing efforts include **longer operational periods**, **increased brand recognition**, and the **ability to attract new customers**.

By keeping an open mind to new possibilities and timing these efforts strategically, leaders in the industry can reap these benefits.

Approaching innovation with a mindset focused on finding creative solutions is essential for **staying relevant, differentiating from competitors, and ensuring financial sustainability** in the attractions industry.

This approach encourages experimentation and a willingness to work with imperfect conditions to bring ideas to life. When there is a genuine intention to embrace new ideas, it creates an environment where **innovation can flourish**. Attractions that adopt this mindset can stay ahead of the curve and thrive in an ever-changing landscape.

INSIGHT #3

Building communities for authentic customer loyalty

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Building communities for authentic customer loyalty

Creating a deep, meaningful, and long-lasting relationship with customers is a vital goal for the attractions industry. The question becomes, **how can we foster authentic fidelity?** The key lies in building communities around attractions that inspire customers to attend, return, and even spontaneously promote them.

Take, for example, a family that lives two hours away from a park. It's natural for them to plan a yearly visit for a fun family experience. Many people, couples, and families return to the same attractions out of nostalgia, tradition, and convenience, demonstrating their loyalty. **These loyal customers must be nurtured and valued.**

Many players in the industry, including attractions, hotels, and transportation companies, have successfully implemented loyalty programs to keep these customers close. By leveraging technology and data, businesses can better understand and target the right audience.

However, the focus has now shifted to going beyond loyalty programs to **engage local communities on a deeper level.**

The challenge lies in creating a genuine sense of belonging for community members. It cannot be superficial; it must be felt authentically, similar to any genuine emotion. When this bond is established, customer fidelity becomes undeniable. A strong relationship with a community means they will not only return consistently but also bring more people and spread positive word-of-mouth about their experiences. In doing so, they become powerful advocates for the brand.

By investing in **building communities and fostering a sense of belonging**, attractions can **create a loyal customer base that goes beyond individual transactions.** This deep and meaningful relationship with customers has the potential to yield long-term success and a positive brand image.



IAAPA Expo Europe



25 - 28 September



In-person event



**Messe Wien Exhibition
& Congress Center
(Vienna, Austria)**

About the event

IAAPA Expo Europe is an annual event owned and produced by IAAPA. IAAPA is a diverse and dynamic community of global attractions professionals.

As the largest international trade association for permanently located attractions, IAAPA unifies the attractions community, connects people to learn and grow together, and strives to promote the highest professional standards for excellence and safety around the world.

It will host more than 17k net square meters of show flow and 600+ exhibitors that offer a wide range of solutions to elevate experiences and operations.





IAAPA is a diverse and dynamic association for the global attractions industry.

Bringing people and companies together, the organization inspires the attractions industry to move forward and provide meaningful experiences for guests around the world.

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We are part of Menlo Media, and work closely together with our sister-brand, **EU-Startups**, one of the leading online platforms about startups in Europe.



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