

7 Key Destination Attraction Strategies

According to The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), 43 percent of Americans plan to visit an amusement park in the next 12 months. Amusement parks and other destination attractions produce an annual economic impact of \$219 billion. That's a big opportunity for your big attraction. But does marketing your destination attraction feel too much like a rollercoaster ride, with unexpected twists, turns and drops? If your marketing feels a little off the rails, it may be time to review your efforts and make sure they are aligned with these key strategies.

What's an Attraction?

- > Amusement Parks
- > Theme Parks
- > Water Parks
- > Family Entertainment Centers
- > Zoos
- > Aquariums
- > Museums
- > Resorts

~30,000 Attractions in the U.S.
Annual Economic Impact: **\$219B**

1. Tell a Consistent Brand Story

Your branding should effectively convey your attraction's unique personality and appeal. And it should do so consistently and ubiquitously. This applies to all branding on signage, merchandise, etc., throughout the attraction and throughout all marketing channels including your website, broadcast advertising and social media presence.

2. Focus on Seasonality

For many attractions the peak season is summer. With kids out of school and looking to be entertained, that's when families are free and focused on having fun. It makes sense for your main marketing efforts to lead up to and through the summer season. But don't ignore opportunities for "shoulder" seasons. Often times this means pricing incentives and tie-ins to holidays such as Halloween or through the holiday season.

3. Target Families & Other Groups

People don't generally go to a destination attraction alone. They come in groups, so focus your marketing on attracting groups. For most attractions, the main group is the family. And the gateway to the family is often the mom. Other groups to target include schools, teams and clubs.

4. Encourage & Enable Visitor Social Media Posts

When someone posts on social media a picture of their family having fun, you're getting free, effective word-of-mouth advertising. So make sure you're doing everything you can to encourage such posts. Run social media promotions, set up places for great photo opportunities. Do whatever you can to motivate Likes and positive reviews, including directly asking for and encouraging them. And you should have a program in place for responding to and rectifying negative reviews.

5. Make it Easy for Your Guests

Whether it's finding their way around your attraction or your website or app, make it easy for your guests to get where they want to go and receive the information they need. Establish clear signage, have staff ready to help, and provide tools and offers that enhance the guest experience, such as priority ticketing and loyalty rewards.

6. Leverage the Local

Smaller attractions, particularly in off-seasons, should look to focus on local promotions. Opportunities include setting up sponsorships with local teams, businesses, communities and charities. You should advertise on local platforms, publications, billboards and targeted social media.

7. Work with People Who Understand Your Industry

Find a marketing firm or advertising agency that understands the destination attraction industry and is able to help you identify what makes your attraction unique and compelling to its various target audiences.

Caldwell Zoo



South Street Seaport



Lake Austin Spa Resort



St. Louis Union Station



SullivanPerkins has extensive experience helping destination attractions reach the visitors they need, whether for a zoo, a destination spa resort, or destination marketplaces throughout the U.S.

For a no-obligation consultation to discuss whether or not we may assist you in meeting your revenue goals, please contact mark.perkins@sullivanperkins.com