UTOPIAN EXPECTATIONS AS OBSERVED USING SWOT ANALYSIS AT BUSCH GARDENS WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

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ABSTRACT

The investigation applies the intelligence cycle and researches the degree of Utopian development, as observed at Busch Gardens Williamsburg (BGW), Virginia, utilizing a common business and competitive intelligence tool, known as the SWOT. The research uncovered numerous aspects apparent at the target, BGW, many of which served to re-classify the theme park development from that of a premier theme park to a themed amusement park. The research question was concluded on by indicating that there was no apparent sincere or consistent attempt being made to perfect the numerous venues at the park, and that no specific cause or reason was identifiable as to the intentionality or unintentionality of the neglect of the research question, in terms of design intent toward constant improvement, as in Utopian-driven expectations of development.

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APPENDIX

RESEARCH/INTELLIGENCE PLAN

The following research documents apply the intelligence cycle by utilizing a popular business intelligence tool which looks at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Secondly, the effort is an exploration into design as applied to a populous resort, specifically, the Busch Gardens Williamsburg theme park development (BGW). The SWOT forms the data set from which a new knowledge domain can be assembled for the investigator/ analyst to use during the research/intelligence analysis process. This was then concluded on and analyzed as a data set, as would an informed and knowledgeable landscape architect, who has been given the additional preparation in theming and the environmental design of destinations.

Furthermore, comparisons were made and conclusions drawn operating under the effort's working definition of Utopian expectations, which is as follows: Utopian experiences are experiences planned-for, or incidental to, moments and progressions which are experienced in a theme park, as defined by the literature, but being further illuminated and defined as meaning that Utopia as a process is the seeking to maximize the positives and minimize the negatives while giving careful consideration to the engaging of the five human senses. This is the working definition of Utopia, as used in the research/intelligence inquiry.

Professionally, the research landscape architect may occupy a generalist footing, with a bias which emphasizes sensitivity to man-made constructs and natural occurrences, particularly in non-enclosed environments. It has been said that architects design buildings, and landscape architects design "everything else!" Whether this statement is fair or simply self-serving is not important, but it serves here to illustrate the broad context in which this discipline can make an inquiry with authority. Since this writing is from the perspective of a destination design landscape architect, by background and qualification, it should be pointed out that this focus platform is both an analytical one, and one from the perspective of a creative driven practice that is well-versed in theme development, as only one of many sectors in the destination landscape.

THESIS STATEMENT, AS A QUESTION: How is the notion of an idealized world, Utopia (maximizing the positives and minimizing the negatives), revealed in the landscape architecture of a representative theme park?

APPROACH: Use a popular competitive intelligence analysis tool, SWOT, to assess the "Most Beautiful Theme Park in the World" (Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Virginia).

PRODUCT: A SWOT analysis performed by a landscape architect, looking for evidence or absence of Utopian elements, is not currently found in professional literature.

IMPLICATION: A successful and beautiful theme park might be a likely place to find effective design choices made for theme parks, generally. Because Busch Gardens Williamsburg had 2.8 million visitors in 2010, and had previously maintained awards from a variety of industry-watchers and the public, including "Most Beautiful," it was situated in an ideal position for this study.   If the SWOT analysis reveals presence of efforts towards idealized development of visitor attractions, as in Utopia (attempting perfection of the visitor experience, through minimizing the negatives and maximizing the positives), in its design, then Landscape Architects working in and for theme park developments, and similar "attraction" entities, may be armed with additional knowledge to guide their design choices in the future.

CONSTRUCTING PLACE

Christopher Tilley (1994) wrote about how "place" is constructed. In his explanation, the way a person experiences a physical location lends meaning to it. Putting his idea another way, two realms exist: reality and fantasy. In reality, concrete matter defines what is tangible. In fantasy, and with "best possible" conditions, the human mind imagines a "Utopia."

How can the "real" can be documented, that give potential for Utopia, which is abstract?

REAL	ABSTRACT
place/location	Utopia (un-place)
environment	show, story
characteristics are scattered:	elements are condensed,
distinct, "dirty" with	distilled: gathered into
involvement in	amalgamation
everydayness	of specialness
remembered as...	fulfillment of...
memory/myth	memory/myth
place of memory	memorable moment
physical progression:	storyline sequence:
actual timeline	timeless
product	experience
stimulus	response
communicate/language	thought, emotion

DEVICES OF DESIGN	PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN
line, form, space, time,	proportion, balance, rhythm,
movement, light, color, texture	emphasis, unity, harmony
object, landscape	destination, brandscape
where, tangible	imagine, intangible
stage to accommodate/house	story development, entertain, visit
schematics/program	concept development
blend indistinctly into "other"	isolated/bounded from "ordinary"
chaos	order, control; perfect
physical	psychological

In a place, a physical location that has designated itself "theme park" by name, as Hoelscher (Agnew and Duncan, 2011) suggested, the name itself is a good start, in the establishment of "place." But more than just naming various zones of the park "England" or "Germany," there must be supporting elements or "parts" that communicate the look, feeling or essence of those actual places. Rather

than the *actual* place, it is perhaps an *idealized* version of it, as in a story. Just as a theatrical production puts together enough "parts" for the purpose of communicating a story, a theme park must know what those essential parts are.

FINDING THE PARTS

When the parts come together that correspond with Utopia, one might conclude they are important for the design of the entity for which they came together. For any particular kind of place (i.e. theme park), what is the ideal, optimum or perfect?

How close does the theme park, Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Virginia, come to that? With this question, one is willing to accept getting "as close as you can get," since we will never really quite reach perfection!

There is a necessity to distill, or extract, the essential components that signify this experience; how can you tell, for instance, that you are in _____? So, the *real* parts of a place, the design elements, indicate an *imagined* dream world.

One should be able to identify/quantify/describe the various parts previously listed, to the degree that they satisfy enough of the qualities suggested by the theme for which visitors have been prepared. The expectations can be personal, established by popular culture, marketing media or historical accounts. Ideally, *all* expectations would be fulfilled (utopia). A well-designed theme park will allow guests to "fill-in" some grey areas with their own imaginations, and come "close enough" for a meaningful experience.

HISTORICAL RELEVANCE TO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

In 1954, when Walt Disney was proposing a new idea for a different kind of amusement park, the so-called "experts" of the day gave ten reasons why his plan would not work (Rogers, 1997). One of them was the expense of *design details* necessary to create the themed experience. Another was the cost of maintaining "lush *landscapes*." Several of the reasons referred to *landscape* or *townscape* features that created a *sense of place* with familiar or iconic elements, like a pirate ship or a town square. The experts were convinced these "parts" were unnecessary since they were not income-producing rides.

As it turned out, Disney chose an innovative approach that created a new genre of amusement park which became known as a theme park. Some of the key design choices that distinguished this genre were clearly landscape architecture. For instance, in addition to the features mentioned above, Disney also insisted that entry points be carefully-chosen to create a transition zone that would

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prepare the visitor via the "best" approach; landscape architects recognize this technique as uniquely landscape architecture (LA).

Another LA consideration was the "year 'round" potential of theme parks; getting the outdoor park to be desirable during the shoulder season was totally new for traditional amusement parks. Material choices for surfaces of the grounds and structures became more durable and vandalism-resistant in the new theme park, as well.

One of the most amazing statistics concerning the new genre was the time spent in the park. When amusement parks had been satisfied with visitors spending three or four hours, Disney's new park averaged an un-heard-of seven hours! Many attributed this longer stay-time to the "pleasantness of the grounds." Evidently, the "lush landscapes" were so irresistible to visitors, they didn't want to leave.

In the decades that followed the first theme parks, the business-savvy of Disney has been admired; but perhaps some of the *LA* focus of this new genre of amusement park has yet to be fully explored. Sharon Zukin, author of *Landscapes of Power* (1991), commented: "Disney's fantasy both restored and invented collective memory. 'This is what the real Main Street should have been like,' one of Disneyland's planners or 'imagineers' says. 'What we create,' according to another, 'is a "Disney realism," sort of Utopian in nature, where we carefully program out all of the negative, unwanted elements, and program in the positive elements.'"

One possible direction for LAs to investigate is the presence or absence of this notion of Utopia. This paper will attempt to address the topic, and analyze a celebrated Virginia theme park with a popular competitive intelligence tool, SWOT.

THEME PARK

In the introduction to his book on the theme park industry, Salvador Anton Clavé (2007), indicated that academic writing on such a topic "…was not an easy task… difficulties increase when, undervaluing their real territorial, economic, social and personal effects, it may be stated that a certain intellectual aversion exists to the scientific treatment of a subject, that of theme parks, and of consumerist leisure in general, which many academics tend to consider as either 'superficial' or 'little engaged.'" Almost incredulously, David Lowenthal observed: "Knowing that a site has been themed (that is, *invented* or *copied*), far from provoking cynical scorn, makes visitors *more* appreciative; after all, it is for their sake that history has been recreated. Indeed, themed sites improve on those that are merely faithfully preserved. .. We crave imagined locales more than we do actual ones (Young and Riley, 2008)."

Anton Clavé (2007) reminds us: "…it should not be forgotten that theme parks as a metaphor are seated on theme parks as a material and spatial reality." In *Theme Park Landscapes*, the editors, Terence Young and Robert Riley, echoed the same thought, indicating that a theme park – so much more than a naturally-occurring landscape – has the ability to bring pieces of a myth or story together into one tangible place, and thus produce a more unified presentation of that storyline (2008).

In the current writing, this researcher also struggled with the same realities as Anton Clavé: the difficulty in obtaining technical material from the park, itself (top-secret information in a very competitive business), and the fact that literal landscapes change rapidly from season to season, making data obsolete. Additionally, many authors have alluded to a philosophical conflict they have with the whole topic; Marc Treib (Young and Riley, 2008) summarized it well:

> We can call it exotic; we can call it phony; we can call it escapist; we can call it bizarre. But we cannot dismiss the power of the image and the power of a themed environment to provide a comforting barrier between everything we think is wrong with the world right now, and everything we think was right with the world back then—wherever in the world that "then" might happen to have been.
> -- p. 234, in *Theme Park, Themed Living: The Case of Huis Ten Bosch*

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

> "The great European garden is an idealized world separated from both nature and the city… Human beings have always been tempted to envisage a world better than the one they know. The literature on Eden, paradise or utopia is vast… after all Heaven itself had its gate, guarded by Saint Peter, and only a small portion of individuals could enter."
> - Yi-Fu Tuan and Steven D. Hoelscher, 1997

This was the opening of Anton Clavé's chapter which traced the history of the theme park, with a multitude of collective voices, from authority to authority, back to European traditions of "elaborate outdoor" spaces that developed some three hundred years ago (perhaps the sixteenth century), referred to as "pleasure gardens" (Anton Clavé, 2007).   These were places for dining, theatre, and other extravagant productions, like fireworks. Universal expositions, or World's Fairs, were, according to several authors, more about encouraging consumer behavior and highlighting technological developments. An interesting detail about the Chicago exposition revealed that the most profitable portion of the huge park was the area dedicated to miniaturizing a variety of foreign locales, plus it contained the iconic Ferris wheel (which truly captured this nation's imagination). Similar historical timelines were outlined in *Theme Park Landscapes* (Young and Riley, 2008), and Gregory Beck's article in *Architectural Record* (1999).

And just for clarification, note that distinctions may be drawn about various word choices used in this research. "Entertainment" venues are typically less participatory, and more the notion that others are providing an "audience" with some form of production or performance (Beck, 1999). One may think of entertainment in terms of theatre, movies, and other more spectacular shows. "Amusement" venues are typically more participatory, more about game-playing and active pursuit of fun. One may think of amusement in terms of physical rides like roller-coasters and Ferris wheels.

"Theme" venues typically blend these ideas into one, incorporating landscape features to support the storyline of entertainment, while encouraging participation through physical activity. What *exactly* is meant by "theming?" David Rockwell (Kaplan, et.al., 1997) said, "Theming is …[a] word for evocative design that is narrative and transports you to another time and place." Tuan (1998) insisted that we, humans, are "constitutionally incapable" of letting our physical world alone, and must constantly modify or change our geography to fit imagined places.

Botterill (Anton Clavé, 2007) saw theme parks as the "contemporary manifestation" of a place which has been created "across time and space" by people for "ritual, entertainment, amusements and spectacles, while consuming and exchanging foods, goods, and services." He referred to such a place (from fair to amusement park) as simply an "amusementscape."

On a personal note: an ancestral member of the researcher's own family, William George Bean, founded the "first" such European park (which is now Pleasure Beach Blackpool), in 1896, after residing in the United States, and noting the success of similar venues there. Bean's idea was to establish in the UK "his version" of an American-style amusement park, "…the fundamental principle of which is to make adults feel like children again and to inspire gaiety of a primarily innocent character." Today, this theme park is an important tourist attraction, with over 6.2 million people visiting every year! Former park director and IAAPA chairman, John Collins, noted that it "attracted the attention of Walt Disney during his fact-finding trips to Europe in the 1950s" (Toulmin, 2011).

Anton Clavé (2007) brings additional clarity to the current status of theme parks:
> This new conception of leisure involves the consumption of products that generate experiences and emotions. Leisure has become a consumer product and, therefore, an object of production and commercialization, which is fully integrated in the most conventional systems of the functioning of capitalism. Corporations devoted to entertainment, tourism and culture are making an effort to create recreational products and amenities. Two apparently contradictory alternatives give form to these needs. The first is the bid to create products based on the specificity of places and their authenticity. The second is the one that tends towards

artificiality and imitation as a final referent for all recreational experience.
– p. 158

Although Anton Clavé (2007) used the phrase "apparently contradictory alternatives," he later noted that theme parks "… revive architecture as a narration that aims to create a complete world, a special place, a new land…" and, "…building in a theme park is always subordinate to a script." Later, he reminds the reader that, "…normally the details refer to the utopian or familiar versions in respect of the place to which they refer. Therefore, the design of an imaginary world goes beyond just the theme: it is a technical procedure…," which he described as atmosphere, meaning and the familiar minimization of negatives, while maximizing positives.

Literally, a recurring theme among all of these type parks seems to relate back to the notion of "utopia." Understanding what this word means, and how essential or irrelevant it has been, or may become, to successful landscape architecture application in theme park design, ought to be enlightening.

UTOPIA

The word "Utopia" was coined initially in a book by Sir Thomas More, in 1516, but the concept has been very universal, being found before and after his famous political writings. More wrote in Latin, but used Greek to name an imaginary place; he also emphasized a variant of the spelling, "eu" instead of "u" later referring to a "good place." To obtain an authoritative understanding of the word, itself, from the perspective of a storyteller, Outi Fingerroos (2008) is cited here:

> The word "utopia" comes from the Greek words *topos* and the negative *ou*. Therefore, the word "utopia" means a place that does not exist. It is on the one hand an impossible fantasy and on the other hand a romantic plan for the betterment of the world. –p. 235

According to Fingerroos, memories and stories of an ideal place can give rise to development (DESIGN) of a physical location. Even if the "ideal place" was completely constructed mentally by reading or hearing about the aspects of that place, the desire to pilgrimage to that destination is strong when the desirability of the place is powerful. From abstract to concrete: making an un-place into a place. Perhaps this is the power of utopia. Myth *can* become reality. As Walt Disney would have said, "Dreams really do come true!"

The role of a storyteller (narrator of the theme) seemed to be a natural fit for Disney, as well; he was an effective communicator of a wide variety of stories. Utopia has been an idea shared across many worldviews. It includes:
1. universal language
2. dialogue with imaginary narrator

3. central point of view: objective, which simplifies perspective
4. victory of good over evil, right over wrong, etc.
5. characters, symbols, etc. all support the first four items

One of the things that Disney did so well was to find or create a compelling story, tell it well (famously, as animated movies), and then present a tangible place that represented the story for average people. Working from Disney's process, one might say that designers of the theme park experience should attempt to devise increasingly better and consistently-improving (perfected) places; this design process is fundamental to the meaning of utopia, as applied in this research. All the time, never failing or neglecting to reinforce the theme, so the story is told, and the narrator is never silenced.

Human beings have historically enjoyed a good story, and the opportunity to physically enter a place that reminded them of a story has had strong attraction for a certain percentage of our population. Tourism researchers have worked out formulas they use to determine the economic value of particular stories within an ideal geographic range of metropolitan centers.

SWOT INSTRUMENT

Another tool that is frequently used by those in competitive intelligence (tourism and other enterprises) is a SWOT. In order to perform a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, businesses must identify aspects of their enterprise critical to success (http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1049.aspx). For the current research, tourism, theme park and business literature was "mined" for specific "pieces" contributing to utopia; and these "pieces," as they relate to landscape architecture, were included as part of the SWOT for Busch Gardens Williamsburg (BGW). As Larry Kahaner, licensed private investigator/competitive intelligence agent (1996), wrote, "…companies compete with products. They strive for quality, market share, performance of their product…", and it was this "product" that was analyzed for this research.

As an example of the "pieces" or factors discovered in the research, Pine and Gilmore (1998) listed *five key experience-design principles* for establishments to use.
1. Theme the experience. "The theme must drive all the design elements and staged events of the experience toward a unified story line that wholly captivates the customer."
2. Harmonize impressions with positive cues. Impressions are the memories a customer takes away from the experience. The positive cues are what make the lasting impressions on the customers' mind because of the positive experience maintained throughout the time the individual was experiencing the space.

3. Eliminate negative cues … "anything that diminishes, contradicts, or distracts from the theme." Negative cues can leave an unhappy impression or memory that the customer would take away with them.
4. Mix in memorabilia. Consumers make many purchases while on vacations – physical reminders of the time or experience they had. Establishments design symbols or motifs as a part of their marketing theme to provide for those consumers who purchase memorabilia.
5. Engage all five senses. "The sensory stimulants that accompany an experience should support and enhance its theme. The more senses an experience engages, the more effective and memorable it can be."

A total of forty specific "pieces" were assembled into a comprehensive SWOT with the intent to analyze a successful theme park, BGW. Refer to the Appendix for the SWOT form that served as this researcher's instrument. With each different "piece," the internal and external workings of the park were considered. The first two letters, "S" for "strength," and "W" for "weakness," were used to look inside the organization of the park, focusing in on the conditions that have been established within the enterprise. The last two letters, "O" for "opportunities," and "T" for "threats," were used to examine the larger business environment in which the park was operating, to anticipate potential consequences.

In typical competitive intelligence use, the SWOT might serve as a brainstorming tool for managers, to help them plan for their organization's future direction. As Kahaner (1996) suggested in his book on competitive intelligence, companies need a SWOT to especially focus on the "factors…crucial to …success." For this LA research, a SWOT was used to identify, when possible, the "pieces" of utopia-centric design in BGW. Presence or strength of such factors would imply its significance for this theme park to have the success it has enjoyed. Absence or weakness of these "pieces" would indicate that utopia had little or no role to play in its success. As business experts caution, all organizations have some strengths and some weaknesses; the goal is to use the SWOT to think through potential consequences of them. Kahaner (1992) also pointed out that not every item in the analysis will see a "one-to-one correlation," but instead, helps corporations see the "big picture," and should be used as a "preliminary analysis" tool; the results of which are "qualitative" – NOT numerical or statistical.

To demonstrate the instrument completion process for this research effort, the first topic, "Overall Theme," has been extracted on the next page from the SWOT, with notes filled-in, indicating how the researcher approached each "piece" of the BGW investigation. Strengths and weaknesses were considered as internally or independently representative of how well the park achieved its overall theme, that of a collection of European countries. Opportunities and threats from sources outside BGW, that result from these strengths and weaknesses were then delineated in the next boxes on the instrument.

Although business literature on SWOT indicates a wide variety of approaches to this type of analysis tool, they all generally pointed out the time-consuming aspect of doing the analysis properly. Kahaner (1992) described the SWOT as "one of the basic, but not necessarily simple" business tools. Anyone could have completed the instrument, but the advantage of a design researcher having done this particular research was that landscape architecture features or elements were less likely to be overlooked or minimized. Had the tool been used by managers within the organization of the company, they may have tended to focus on aspects of the park that had little to do with the "pieces" involved in building the notion of utopia.

The formulas, equations, patron surveys or other very relevant theories of consumer behavior were not part of the resolution of the current research. Although an excellent discussion of hedonic versus utilitarian purchasing patterns can be revealing, in terms of understanding why customers buy products and services (as in Chang, 2007, exploring newness of elements), his research direction did not address "utopia." Also, the research regarding "visitor satisfaction" and "loyalty" (for instance, Yoon and Uysal, 2005), is extremely important for understanding how consistency is attained in general tourism businesses, but did not investigate theme park landscapes, specifically. The many pieces of utopian experience discovered in industry sources were combined in the following instrument to facilitate a comprehensive investigation of a theme park's design choices.

OVERALL THEME:

	INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	In regard to this topic, "overall theme," what did BGW do well? How did the "overall theme" succeed?	What are the implications of these successes, and how can BGW maximize its strengths in the larger business environment?	What threats exist in the local, regional, national and global environment that could result from these strengths & successes?
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	In regard to this topic, "overall theme," what did BGW not do well? How did BGW fail?	What are the external opportunities that BGW can use to improve its standing in regard to these weaknesses? How could BGW benefit from its failures, in order to succeed in the larger environment?	What threats from outside could further damage BGW, based on these weaknesses? How could the larger business environment potentially take competitive advantage of these weaknesses?

BACKGROUND OF PARK

Busch Gardens Williamsburg (BGW) opened in 1975, as Busch Gardens The Old Country, near the Anheuser-Busch brewery outside of Williamsburg, Virginia. Situated within a short drive of both the state capital, Richmond, Virginia, and the Hampton Roads/Norfolk metropolitan center; in 2010, it was within an hour's drive of nearly three million people. The original theme developed several European hamlets within the park, including England, Italy, Germany and Ireland. Additional countries had been added since to include Scotland and France by 2010; the park has been re-named, and ownership transferred from Anheuser-Busch to Sea World.

Members of the National Amusement Park Historical Association have consistently named BGW the "Most Beautiful Amusement Park;" Amusement Today's International "Golden Ticket Awards" survey have given BGW the award "Best Landscaping – Amusement Park" each year since that award category was established. In 2003, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) and Amusement Business Magazine gave BGW the Applause Award, a biennial award, to honor a park's "management, operations, and creative accomplishments that have inspired the industry with foresight, originality, and sound business development." [Sources: Amusement Park World website, Amusement Today, and others]

Williamsburg, Virginia is an historically-significant town in southeastern Virginia. It was, at one time, a center of government and commerce; that role is revealed in Colonial Williamsburg, a living-history park within the city limits, which has a continuing evolution as archaeological discoveries have been made in the old town site. The resident population of Williamsburg was just over 14,000 in 2010; but its location about 55 miles from the state capital, Richmond to the west, and a similar distance from the metropolitan center of "The Hampton Roads Area," to the east, has been ideal for the success of both the historic park and the theme park, Busch Gardens Williamsburg.

An east-west interstate corridor links together these three localities, plus there are nearby north-south interstate corridors. In 2010, Hampton Roads metropolitan area was home to around 1.7 million people, including many military families. The state capital metro census of 2010 exceeded 1.2 million. So, the transportation and population mix has helped facilitate the success of both parks in Williamsburg, in that the requisite number of interested people were in close proximity to the venues, and ease of access was assured via public highways.

USE OF INSTRUMENT AND OUTCOMES

The SWOT analysis instrument was completed over a period of time, after site visits to the theme park during its operating seasons from 2008 to 2010 with a design documentary production occurring on labor-day weekend 2012. Photographic records, website sources, and professional journals, where applicable, were referenced to assist in analyzing BGW. Understanding what the SWOT has revealed, in terms of relevance of utopia was the actual purpose of the analysis; therefore, the final part of this paper was only possible after completing all forty blocks of the instrument.

The following summary is an overview of the results of the forty-item SWOT for Busch Gardens Williamsburg, from the study period. Each topic of interest in "looking for utopia" is given a brief review, to help determine whether BGW revealed enough of the "pieces" of utopia to be considered important or significant in the park's landscape architecture development.

Planning/design notes from SWOT

Overall theme:

>1. The culture of each country could be exhibited to a greater extent through more menu selections which are authentic to the themed destination.
>2. Any efforts put into authentication could potentially increase prices at the counter level (menu), or ticket level, producing some economic hardship.
>3. Themed country exhibits need more products which are authentic, and service personnel appropriately-dressed, perhaps with "faux-accent" as in re-enacting.
>4. Monolithic experience is less diverse than desirable in its characterization of a multi-country park, with lines being blurred between what should be stark contrast between cultures.

Story development:

>1. As the story was of a visitor traveling to Europe, the staff participants should have been trained to help develop a more European feeling, with some effort to emulate attitude, accent, etc. Germany was the strongest venue overall in this respect.
>2. Costumes were well-done in certain locales within the park; other areas were less convincing, or had no attempt to develop or contribute to the story. Menus in some areas were appropriately country-sensitive, others

were lacking; quality goods from the host country helped retain sales value inside the park. Although not all visitors were capable of high-ticket purchases, just having a few of these items on display helped with story development.

3. Americans and foreign visitors have become more and more aware of the actual locales represented in BGW, with advances in communication, etc. Therefore, the park will need to keep up with the increasing sophistication of this changing audience.

4. For the ticket price, value certainly did go beyond "pleasant place with fun rides and interesting shows." The theme of "here we are in Europe" was supported with architecture and landscape choices, as well as rides and shows, satisfying most visitors' internal story development.

Format captures essence:

1. The format of the park generally captures the essence of a theme park, which was the planning and design intent for which it was developed.

2. More should be invested in the thematic content, emphasizing the live performances, culinary experiences and arts/crafts to a greater degree than currently pursued; this will, of course, cost money.

3. Park is currently trending toward minimal offerings in live entertainment, becoming heavily skewed toward thrill rides that are not architecturally-cloaked to support the theme; they can correct this by immediately redesigning the rides to include such.

4. Becoming ride-centric will have diminishing returns from theme retail, culinary and live entertainment as a visitor draw, while risking degeneration into thrill ride amusement park.

Addresses target audience:

1. Without having details on target market, one could estimate the park is meeting its projections for stereotypical markets, attracting the intended demographic.

2. BGW should look for holes in their attendance fabric, and focus marketing campaigns toward filling those; failure to market to new demographics could eventually result in the park's demise.

3. International visitors seemed low for the size park; special marketing with programs and offers could increase this demographic.

4. When the market is expanding to international travelers, the park will need to serve language needs and be sensitive to culturally-specific

potential insults/issues in their offerings; backlash from failing to address these could result in word-of-mouth black-listing of the park.

Elements present strong show through good use of budget:

1. The show respected the authentic, but did not attempt to be historically-accurate. This can be seen as inauthentic by "purists," but for the budget of this venue, it seemed "about right." As the public's taste changes, the park must make adjustments.
2. Some exhibits were not coming up to their potential to pull away part of the park audience from popular venues within the park to reduce queues. Most visitors can be happily lured away from long lines at roller coasters or dance shows, etc.   By not doing their job well, these "side-shows" demonstrated a poor use of the BGW budget.
3. Queue by-pass tickets have been introduced in many parks, to allow patrons willing to pay premiums a shorter line, no line at all, or special seating at shows. While some visitors perceive this as a good value, it is almost an admission by management that their park is not well-organized enough in its design to keep visitors happily-occupied!
4. All public areas of a well-designed park ought to have value to visitors. Minor enhancements to under-attended venues can increase traffic in some instances.

Emotional response made possible by design:

1. The design associated with world travel is exciting, as many BGW visitors would have loved to travel to Europe, but could not actually afford the time and/or expense of international travel. So, this park satisfies, or promises to satisfy, the natural urge to have such a trip, which is a very emotional response potential.
2. Taking advantage of the historic success of World's Fairs, in their miniaturizing of places like Europe, BGW could further enhance their interpretation of some locales.
3. The focus on rides and simpler amusement-satisfaction, over time, could erode the European locale focus. Although there is an emotional response from pure amusement, the depth of emotional experience from world travel is much more in line with the traditional direction of this particular park…it is hoped they will retain and build on it.
4. The entry zone fell flat, becoming simply a visitor orientation area. The first impression left by this part of the park could have heightened

expectations for the rest of the visit; for instance, in a respectful way, by emulating idealized street dynamics, referencing the British royal family and showcasing London's iconic landmarks.

Three-dimensional use of landscape as "stage:"

1. Design awards can be aimed at ecological/environmental responsibility.
2. Major clients, like BGW, have a spill-over effect on local community's landscape choices and trends; why not make it more eco-friendly?
3. Stability of local support industries can be assured by wise park resourcing practices.
4. Soil amendments to support landscape materials can be managed by variety in design choices.

Myth/Story elements in landscape:

1. The landscape relied on façade and sculptural elements; landscape choices should be more diverse; formal engagement with local/regional academic and hobbyist parties interested in these elements may accelerate implementation.
2. Competitive climate of theme park development precludes some "sharing" of information with these groups, due to the potential for "trade secret" leaks.
3. Any lack of variety in developing the story with landscape elements could be resolved with attention-getting stand-alone landscape features.
4. Vigorous oversight is essential to prevent introduction of undesirable plant materials or soil/disease problems when bringing in new species.

Differentness in time (travel forward or back in time):

1. One possible source for strengthening the time travel effect in transition zones may come from coordination with human rights or environmental associations.
2. Overuse of darkness, curves and walled perimeters can be replaced by talent within the park and community, finding new ways to communicate time periods.
3. Sensitive, political or controversial participants' potential would require careful oversight.

4. Although time travel need not be stereotypical, it should be consistent with overall philosophy of the park, and support the theme well.

Differentness in space (we are somewhere else):

1. Because of the high believability of building surfaces, and cultural sounds, the average visitor is convinced of being somewhere else; BGW will do well to remember this is its strongest theme.
2. Some zones of the park did this better than others; internally, the park can inform itself on what has worked well, and what needs improvement.
3. Performing arts interests, regionally-based and otherwise, could bring a level of authenticity and excitement to this aspect of place.
4. Invitations to design talent with ideas for new transition approaches may help bring in ideas and foster ownership and sponsorship.

Boundary (how space is delineated from "everyday"):

1. As vehicles enter the park property, they were assisted by friendly, efficient staff; while this progression from highway to gate was fairly predictable, the way large vehicles were visually separated from small retained a delineated space.
2. The boundary of wall and plantings did not effectively communicate the high quality that was actually found inside the park; it was non-distinct.
3. Provision of some information to potential visitors, without revealing too much detail, is partially a marketing responsibility, but must promote the park's distinct quality feel more effectively than current practice.
4. Physical barrier should have communicated the park's contents.

Anticipation (how it is built): i.e. restricted views

1. Park's skyline was visible from most approaches, but was roller coaster-focused; anticipation was built with glimpses, but relied too heavily on rides.
2. Waiting in a long line of cars did not succeed in building anticipation; just a sign that said BGW is the "World's Most Beautiful" gave some promise of spectacular things to come, but needed reinforcement with other elements.
3. Visual barrier was not particularly attractive; a diorama built into the approach perimeter might present a more interesting way to build anticipation.

4. Some potential patrons may second-guess their choice of the BGW park venue from the time of car waiting to front gate; a possible strategy for theme engagement might be re-enactors interacting with guests in perimeter area.

Circulation develops storyline sequence and progression:

1. Circulation does encourage exploration, so a heightened sense of discovery is produced, creating excitement and euphoria in the initial staging zones.
2. Guests that engage this touring mode of discovery are likely to stop at performance venues along the way; BGW may make good use of this tendency and thus reduce queues in other, popular rides and shows.
3. Stronger attractive power could be given to some marginal interest zones with more potent use of themed surfaces and atmospherics, thus drawing crowds away from long queues; too many people stopping may congest major walkways.
4. Side story development must be fresh and relevant to avoid monolithic feel.

Transportation (move crowds quickly and act to stimulate excitement):

1. Sky-ride at BGW was exceptional in length, height and route; but the ride was often under-utilized by visitors. By increasing attention to this travel option, crowds could be dispersed more quickly and excitement stimulated.
2. Some cable car enthusiasts may queue-up to travel right back to point of origin, thus defeating the crowd-dispersing effect of this ride.
3. The train was very popular, but may not have been the best choice for crowd movement; if train rides remain so attractive, BGW may need to introduce additional engines with cars on a regular schedule to efficiently disperse crowds.
4. On the negative side, any train operation is generally expensive, noisy and reduces air quality.

Scale condensed for ease of comprehension:

1. Multiple structures throughout the park were designed applying foreshortening (i.e. Disney's Main Street scale was 90% at street level, 60% on third floor).
2. An epic architectural edifice could add excitement without intimidating visitors. This is in contrast with the "rule of thumb" that structures throughout a typical park should not vary more than 25% in height.
3. Without exceptional man-made environments, the park may appear as a low-investment development.
4. Placement of a vertical architectural element has some potential to cast shadows onto other park areas, create wind shear or other negative consequences.

Scale gives visitor feeling of control:

1. Outdoor and indoor building design schemes captured a sense of coziness; in such a large park, with visitor massing, this is a real accomplishment.
2. BGW could highlight this cozy factor in comparing themselves with other theme parks; however, the counterpoint is the park may be perceived as a leisure destination (not exciting), and attract a market demographic that will not serve the park well.
3. For parks of this size and category, BGW failed miserably to excite guests architecturally with any colossal or mind-boggling edifice that stirs the imagination. In keeping with the travel to Europe theme, many options exist to introduce a "wow" factor, visible from any point in the park, and generate architectural excitement.
4. Ordinary architecture, interspersed with great rides, only connected by beautiful grounds, could result in BGW sliding from theme park to amusement park over time.

Visual magnets:

1. Lush garden environment is BGW's main visual magnet.
2. European whimsical garden tradition could be strengthened with landscape-driven surprises; not overdone, so as to prevent paranoid responses by guests.
3. Visual magnets of many uncloaked rides imparted an amusement park atmosphere, as opposed to theme park.

4. More attention to rides with horizontal and vertical architecture could support theme well, add interest and build excitement as visual magnets.

Symbolism/icons/brand identity:

1. Resident enthusiasts represent the highest point of attainment for public relations; the park can maximize that loyalty by hiring local admirers.
2. Regional recognition may lead to in-breeding effect, eventually resulting in the park becoming classified as a regional attraction, not the national or international reputation they should enjoy.
3. Development of a new master-plan may re-direct branding to compete with more recognized parks; "beautiful" is great, but still needs to support the European theme. Some uncertainty was detected with "new" ownership.
4. Becoming a non-player in the theme park world could happen if the amusement category became stronger than the European theming.

Landscape materials' texture/color support theme:

1. Colors support resort context, which supported general character of park, and BGW can capitalize on the grounds as effectively communicating luxury with generous massing of an abundance of color.
2. Theme development is not clearly connected to color; so color theory can be more effectively-applied to incite emotional response relating theme, and reinforcing story.
3. Sensory-overload may result in failure to communicate the theme to visitors.
4. Landscape has become the focus in some places, competing with the theme, rather than supporting it.

Transition zones shift theme:

1. Effective for most patrons; opportunity for educating and entertaining casual engagement with compelling subject matter could happen in transition zones.
2. Content can become silly or distracting, rather than enlightening, if not properly designed.
3. More sophisticated patrons likely found transitions too predictable; park could try-out new test content for in-fill of transitions and margins.

4. Transitions could become bottlenecks or points of interest in their own right; shifting the theme should not distract or lose the theme focus in the process.

Overall form:

1. Highly-naturalized form with green industry well-represented through "best practices" in horticulture; but they can go beyond, becoming a leader of green design technology.
2. In the incorporation of ecological sensitivity, the park needs to strike a balance that does not alienate any visitor groups by perception of an activist agenda.
3. Epic characterizations were not prevalent as attention-grabbing elements; a lost opportunity to heighten the effect of existing features through simple embellishments.
4. Over-stimulation can result in visitors dismissing these elements as background "white noise."

Overall staging concept development (support of theme):

1. Staging was very well done; Ireland delivered a sense of community.
2. Celtic heritage could be distributed to other zones in the form of a parade; but the increased popularity of that zone may require additional venue space.
3. Quality of some staging venues suffered from poor material selection or maintenance issues; detailed protocol could resolve these issues.
4. Cost associated with quality materials on the front end, or adequate maintenance may not translate into increased ticket sales or profitability.

Specific attractions:

1. Principal attraction types were roller coasters; the lack of theme emphasis in the engineering of these thrill rides could be weakening the park's theme.
2. Stronger themed cloaking of an architectural nature could strengthen the theme, and also add to the dynamics of the ride experience.
3. The thrill-seeking crowd, running from ride-to-ride could become the primary market; such a transition could alienate other markets (i.e. families with young children, older retirees).

4. Any business should be constantly monitoring customer preferences and seek to expand their market; however, if specific attractions shape the visitor profile to such an extent that more loyal patrons, who traditionally spend money on meals and gifts, are reluctant to return, a valuable customer base would be lost.

Stage design (background stimulus in support of theme):

1. Near environment was strong in some locations, but the distant vistas were poorly-developed; pasture area behind Clydesdale pavilion set the stage well for rural UK/Ireland theme.
2. Larger grounds could be developed for highland games, following through with traditional Celtic theme; such an athletic field would need extensive maintenance and be restricted to competing athletes in order to preserve the turf.
3. Because no altered distant backgrounds supported the near theme environment, there was weaker support of theme; vista analysis could be conducted in order to develop supporting distant views.
4. One unfortunate result of distant vistas being non-supportive, was that visitors continued to "see ahead" into the next theme, much like seeing portions of Act II of a play during Act I. This weakened the theme effect at BGW; more attention should be given to this aspect of stage design.

Management of visitor flow (basic needs met):

1. Visitor flow was exceptional, offering guests opportunities to pause, reconsider and rest; personal space allowance was generous, and restroom and other needs met.
2. Some areas could be enhanced with additional profit-generating amenities, like street-vendors, to a greater extent, meeting refreshment needs.
3. Street performance space was limited in some cases, to the extent that even small crowds congregating represented an obstruction to visitor flow; this could be managed with temporary stages placed over landscaping, so the space occupied by "impromptu" performers never takes up traffic flow space.
4. Familiarity with potential "bottle-necks" in pathways has led to some avoidance by visitors taking alternate routes; fast-pace walking may not serve the goals of theme.

Management of visitor flow (lengthens/intensifies experience):

1. Since some paths do not follow contours/topography, there was some slowing of visitor flow, indirectly lengthening visit by increasing stop and rest periods.
2. Down-hill approach to these zones resulted in more rapid pace of travel, especially for youngsters; the faster patrons walk, the less likely they are to "soak-in" the ambience of the theme.
3. Visitors may become fatigued from exhausting climbs, or frustration of "keeping up" with young children running downhill; future development should attempt to follow contours, create landings or establish alternate routes for travel.
4. Inclement weather increases trip/fall hazards on steep slopes; plus, maintenance needs for these areas is problematic (street-sweeper issues, water-induced erosion).

Use of visitor background (prior experience):

1. Park used good understanding of prior experience by providing food and souvenirs near the front gate in the first themed country, England; taking advantage of the high level of excitement early in the day, BGW could present visitors with more options for higher-end souvenirs, and fine dining.
2. Prior experience of some visitors would encourage them to eat early, before they go too far into the park, allowing them to "soak-in" this optimistic feeling and get oriented with a map over a relaxing, quality meal. BGW could develop a reputation for culinary arts by offering "high tea" in England.
3. By setting a high standard of service at the beginning of the park visit, they could go beyond prior experiences, with special attention to geriatric or restrictive diet needs of patrons with medical problems.
4. For visitors who prefer to eat on-the-go, BGW could go beyond prior experience by providing healthy food options; menu-engineering could replace junk-food.

Use of visitor background (expectations):

1. BGW raised an expectation that they provide thrilling rides; this expectation was met with standard and exciting new rides.

2. Maximizing this aspect of the park, they could develop a new expectation of providing roller-coaster "geeks" the "inside story" of their design and engineering.

3. In meeting the expectation for thrilling rides, the park must be careful to balance their attention to the themes established in the various European zones, and not focus solely on the roller-coaster crowd, to the exclusion of senior citizens and young families.

4. Re-assertion of the multiple countries in Europe travel theme can re-focus the park design direction for ride development *and* architectural attention; plus, assure loyal park fans that they are still family-friendly, offering MORE than just thrill rides.

Effectively hidden back-lot (magical):

1. Carefully-hidden service areas helped present a magical, utopian feel; but the popular train ride allowed visitors to see the back-lot, with no comment from the "conductor" about what was seen.

2. They could turn "accidental" glimpses into a sneak peak, and sell VIP tickets for a back-lot tour, thus helping dress-up this oft-forgotten area of the park.

3. With no attention given to this area, it could deteriorate into a real eyesore: currently, it is just a nap opportunity.

4. Once discovered, some curious or mischievous visitors may try to gain unauthorized access, with potentially dangerous consequences.

Flexibility (allows for changing demands over time):

1. European travel is a compelling venue for flexibility, allowing exploration of several countries; drawback was that established theme limited park to Europe.

2. Research could truly enrich the depth of discovery for visitors, by adding layers of understanding over time through design choices.

3. In flexing over time, the designers should retain the qualities that have high emotional content for visitors seeking a return feeling year after year.

4. Allowing for changing demands need not substitute or take away meaningful parts of the park; it doesn't have to be "out with the old, in with the new!"

Persons with disabilities or allergies:

1. One could generally discern "normal" expected adherence to government-required laws/policies that address disabilities and allergies.
2. If BGW has not already begun to seek certifications, awards and recognition from certain organizations involved in establishing "best practices" for these issues, they should immediately actively pursue such.
3. Failing to have special populations' third party verification of "higher standards" will leave BGW vulnerable to liability; but attaining such could give them "bragging rights."
4. Planting design to clean-up the air in sensitive areas of the park, like outdoor dining and pedestrian rest areas, could also result in reducing desirable summer air flow.

Clean, maintained "perfect appearance:"

1. Pedestrian walkways and restrooms were clean and well-maintained.
2. Indoor and outdoor theatre areas seemed dusty and tended to be littered.
3. Consider cross-training for staff that excel in maintaining clean zones with staff in trouble-spots.
4. Should street-sweeping crews be reallocated to this cross-training purpose, it might overtax the main concourse staff.

Emotional experience worth remembering:

1. Simulated rides and live productions were high quality; BGW should market these strengths more fully.
2. When attendance to performances grows beyond seating capacity, capital improvements become necessary.
3. Food quality was sub-standard for the price, with the exception of the German pavilion; culinary experience could be enhanced by re-engineering the menus.
4. Lack of quality food at reasonable prices resulted in a singular meal eaten within the park, or patrons eating off-premises, reducing sales potential.

Unique singular attraction (cannot get this anywhere else):

1. Christmas Town train had sing-along; holiday landscape lighting was tasteful; special live holiday productions with dinner theatre could be more developed.
2. As the park markets itself as a premier Christmas destination, they may inadvertently stifle other, more traditional holiday pastimes.
3. Thrill-ride enthusiasts were a growing sector of park expansion; but, their short attention span and focus on rides caused dissatisfaction during shut-downs due to mechanical or weather problems.
4. Ride queue could be improved with air-conditioning, heating and entertainment highlighting the ride's engineering and construction to respond to longer queue times, as popularity increases rider-ship.

Eliminate the "negative" (how potential negative cues are addressed):

1. Wait staff engaged guests during meals with questions regarding their "favorite" part of the park visit; these responses should have formal compiling process to gain information for park improvements.
2. Guests may get tired of repeated survey-type questions as they return to a dining venue over several days' time.
3. Complaints did not appear to be handled formally with any attempt to forward information to the appropriate authorities; protocol should be established to ensure timely transfer of data up chain-of-command.
4. As with any visitor survey, there can be insincere or manufactured responses that fail to give valid information to those that need it.

Memorabilia (what can visitors literally take home?):

1. Typical for theme developments, only the most positive aspects of the developed theme have been targeted for memorabilia; these positives should be further embellished, adding additional depth to representative countries at BGW.
2. The danger remains that sophisticated visitors perceive this approach as "Polly-Anna-ish," synthetic and otherwise idealistic.
3. One reality of the "take home" opportunity was that the time period established by the park early-on locked-in exclusively historic items, which inhibited the park's potential to use more current European themes i.e. 007, Harrier jet, BBC TV, etc.

4. More progressive memorabilia may cause the theme to become less distinct, and could push the park to be even less theme park and more amusement park.

Five senses engaged:

1. Visual and performing arts were the strongest asset for sensory input; more musicians, vocalists and dancers should be used across the park's venues.
2. BGW has an opportunity to build its reputation as a live entertainment venue, but the level of authenticity and frequency of shows must be consistent.
3. Culturally-compelling content varied quite a bit from zone to zone; the depth of which could be boosted with a cultural arts exchange program for student interns from European schools to contribute authenticity and freshness in their historic presentations.
4. Legitimacy as a travel theme venue demands a minimum level of achievement in stimulating the senses; when the reality "on the ground" fails in this respect, the "experience Europe" theme is invalidated.

Additional notes:

1. There were no purveyors of tobacco products, as in a men's club with cigars, etc., nor related usury venues, like casinos; a case could be made for completely smoke-free park, or even an alcohol-free park.
2. Marketing would be affected, both positively and negatively in both instances; some customers gained, others lost.
3. Intoxicating beverages present several potential problems in regards to intoxicated patrons, which raises liability; also, interest in de-alcoholized products represents the fastest-growing sector of this industry, due to health awareness.
4. Smoke-free, drug-free, and alcohol-free marketing has powerful draw potential for some patrons, who may currently not consider the park suitable for their families.

Final comments:

1. BGW was successful as a theme development, enjoying a reputation of maintaining quality grounds and facilities.

2. A new country, like Greece could be added; such a colorful location as Athens might be a great potential venue for architecture (i.e. Parthenon & Acropolis), art, and cloaked rides (which could be inside/around buildings mentioned above).

3. Regardless of plans for new areas of the park, future emphasis on interior fine dining and overnight accommodations would build a hospitality reputation.

4. With the park currently trending toward an amusement park rather than theme park, the need for architecture to support the country themes, along with culinary arts and depth of performing arts, all require focused attention.

RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE TO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

There is a four-fold reason why the information gained from this research has intrinsic value for Landscape Architects and all parties affected. Obviously, there are many specific gains, but I feel these can be best covered in four broad general designations.

The first designation being that of positioning: it is important for information that might be pertinent to an ongoing enterprise, such as BGW, be made available for this type of inquiry. When landscape architects pursue research regarding corporate and commercial design entities, whose holdings are driven by populace entertainment venues, there is the potential for mutual benefits for the theme developments, as a type of park design, and for landscape architects, as a type of destination park designer. Within this first justification for the research, it can further be said that both the industry within the theme attraction sector and the landscape architect, can benefit practically from the engagement of mutual interests in what amounts to a major vacationscape and valuable tourism resource, which enriches its location in multiple ways. To leave such a major landscape development without the advantages that a landscape architect can bring to the triple-bottom-line (addressing people, the planet and profit), would in effect be a disservice to millions in the general public for whom architects have a binding professional manifesto to serve.

The second designation is that of influence. Landscape architects should not shy from opportunities to exert professional influence in a positive way on such themed commercial capital developments. As landscape architects engage such industries and project types that may, at some level, represent philosophical conflicts with any number of inharmonious comparisons that can be made between it (i.e. theme park) and the basic *modus operandi* of landscape architecture, then landscape architecture will grow in its reputation for willingness to address all problems, free of bias or indifference.

The third designation is that of opportunity. When landscape architecture expands its outreach to evolving types of clients and design problem-sets, as they arrive on the scene, remaining pro-active and on the front-lines of design futures, the more relevant we, as a discipline will remain, and the more distance we will put between ourselves and our detractors. Additionally, such research could enrich clients like BGW in ways that will serve well landscape architecture public relations concerns, for instance, that of "do no harm;" we cannot allow public perceptions that are contrary to such valid philosophical limits on design practice. However, not to concern ourselves with dilemmas faced by the theme park industry, would only lead to failing to pick up the gauntlet and, in the worst case scenario, allow the gauntlet to be picked up by perhaps less qualified disciplines who may not share our sensitivities and concerns.

The fourth designation is that of relationships. Landscape architects should desire more, not less, relationships with client types, project types, development types, industry types and inquiry types. In other words, less is not more for a profession wishing to continue in making a difference, when the largess of a profession's ability to contribute is affected in negative ways by the arbitrary placement of service limits on what constitutes a valid landscape architectural design client.   Such dominating notions push the field back-in-time, rather than serving as an aide to progress. Landscape architecture is a comprehensive and broad discipline, capable of doing extraordinary things, and has done so with an eye to the future. It is not only possible that this research intent and approach could be applied again to multiple destinations, but, in fact, desirable that such should occur, as a means of forging stronger ties and relationships between landscape architects and theme park moguls, who, in fact, by their site management decisions bring a lot of positive attributes to the human condition and strengthen the economic fabric of society.

RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE TO STAKEHOLDERS

Multitudes are affected by Busch Gardens Williamsburg, whether their experiences have been positive or negative, perfect or imperfect. This reality extends beyond key players and enterprise owners and investors. It could be said that there are other stakeholders, such as geographic proximity patrons of the park, who visit frequently, given their geographic nearness to the park, and socio-concentric patrons, whose orbits of influence include park-related relationships with individuals, businesses or political connections – all of which would suffer should the park meet an un-timely demise.

These secondary and unknown tertiary stakeholders are in a symbiotic relationship with the culture, tourism energy, economic by-products and opportunities that BGW naturally engenders, and directly generates, as a thriving economic engine for the region which it influences. Indeed, the park characteristically has impacted everyone who resides in the east-coast region or has expended time, money and energy within the park's perimeter or satellite offerings.

Unfortunately, conclusions from this research have the potential to either benefit all stakeholders, if acted on, or (if not acted upon) unequally-impact the park's stakeholder population, creating either an opportunity to stabilize the park's near-term prospects, or simply expend the park's long-term potential for a far-less sustainable future of satisfying near-term profits, at the expense of long-term universal gains for all key players and all stakeholders. To clarify, the park's management can continue seeking to meet niche market demands in the near-term, such as ever-intensifying ride development for thrill-seeker fans and ride enthusiasts at the cost of theming and storyline; or they can choose a more balanced approach, which would see performance and culinary developments,

including quality retail, leisure and edutainment options increasing while making substantial investments in the architectural cloaking of existing and new rides, to work more effectively with theme and storyline. The park is now part of the cultural fabric of the regional east coast, in which it is situated, and being so situated should no longer make far-reaching and potentially-detrimental near-term decisions that could adversely-effect the park's ability to fulfill the needs of the social context in which it sought to "belong," and from which it has won favor.

BGW going forward should not entertain decisions which, if perused, would mean acting as if operations where in an enterprise vacuum – BGW should know that at this juncture in history, it now has more than ever-before -- with the passing of time -- an established responsibility to secure a sound future for the community outside its corporate perimeter. Equally, it should be a given to design professionals that this study can elucidate issues concerning private interest versus local stakeholder interests that are common to a wide range of landscape architecture projects. Therefore this investigator desires that landscape architects, as well as development executives and other interested parties, in general, will infer applications to their own work from this material.

ACTIONABLE DATA ASSESSMENT

First, this writing asserts that BGW is dual-themed: that of a European travel theme, and that of a garden. It concludes that the "prime theme," never-the-less, is European travel through select countries. It further implicates that the landscape (garden theme) is competing with the travel (European country) theme by not complementing the "prime theme" through efforts which would make each landscape zone supportive of any given travel locale within the park (any one of the several countries).

In addition to theme competition, this paper implicates a re-directing of the park away from that of "theme" to that of "amusement" through the ill-conceived handling of ride venues, which allows them to become dominant and intrusive on the theme features within the park. This writing is – by default — suggesting that mere painting of roller-coasters sky-blue (sky-cloaking) is not effectively mitigating this negative interaction between theming and rides. It also needs to be pointed out that Utopian expectations (where it is expected that negatives will be minimized and positives will be maximized) has been deleteriously-affected by ride development, in the manner in which it has been accomplished.

It could be argued that BGW desires to compete with amusement parks (i.e. King's Dominion) and therefore, has elected to make ride experiences its Utopian expectation for itself, and such an argument would further assert that the park management now wishes to maximize ride enthusiasts' pleasure, while accepting the minimization (as a consequence) of the theme park experience for visitors seeking such distractions. Therefore, they have developed a heightened Utopia,

rather than lowered Utopian outcomes. By this, I mean, they now wish to be an Utopia for ride enthusiasts FIRST, and theme enthusiasts SECOND. If this, indeed, is the case, then they have decided to become an amusement park FIRST, and a THEME PARK, SECOND.   However, earning the title "theme park" has a different set of Utopian expectations; has a different set of criteria to be met than that of earning the title "amusement park."

In the case of BGW, the amusement (i.e. rides and arcades) has substantially diminished the theme (i.e. live entertainment, culinary, retail and experience venues). Therefore, although it is, indeed, possible to have a vibrant ride offering as a theme park without losses and costs to theme development, the research demonstrates, and the conclusions drawn illustrate that BGW has not succeeded in doing so, as ride dominance clearly illustrates, and the damage from the same is clearly visible on the theme operations.

The research conclusively draws attention to the fact that BGW has within its sights the line at which, once crossed, will re-classify the locale as amusement-centric park, and no longer the richer and broader venue of a theme park. However, certain things can be altered and certain considerations can be designed for that would re-surface the dominance of the themes within the park. It is my hope that this research might inspire BGW introspection and correction. In such an event attention needs to be given to ambient noise from ride venues. Just the attempting to mask ride noise with high decibel white noise (i.e. mood music) from speaker placements in the landscape only adds to the noise level component. Additionally, recognition needs to be given to the fact that ride engineering infrastructure is impeding persuasive theme development, and sky-cloaking is not working. Some rides simply must be re-located, while others require cloaking, architecturally.

Re-evaluation is due for outdoor dining venues, to heighten the eating experience from that of a feeding trough, to make fine dining available with table-side service a visitor option. In other words, all meals should not be self-service at a queue, or food bar; in addition, all locales – as distinct countries – should not be offering the exact same desserts, sausages, etc. There ought to be a generous offering of authentic culinary experiences from that country for which the outdoor theme dining is developed.

Further, transitions should be representative of something other than just exhibiting the same plant-scaping selections at pedestrian intersections and way-finding paths carrying guests between themed country venues. In other words, plantings should reflect the theme or reflect a travel motif, suggesting that one is in-transit between one country and the next, or a fantasy time-travel event; something entertaining needs to occur which aides in the illusion of European travel.

The park must also increase its sensitivity to "creature comforts" and amenities for normal and necessary rest points and loitering by park guests in and around park walkways, as there are currently minimal seating provisions formally in-place. In addition, outdoor cooling methods are minimally-applied, such as misting machines. In the winter, guests tend to run between propane patio heaters in order to warm themselves; there are more effective heating technologies for outdoor applications, but they are not being utilized. Also, in reference to steep grades, the most extreme are not situated adjacent to sales and service zones, but even less severe grades tend to encourage guests NOT to linger at that locale, diminishing attendance to some venues and visitation of shops adjacent to them.

Presently, the park does not have sufficient opportunities for visitors to gain first-aid assistance (one on the "far-side" of the property). In terms of more serious medical conditions, such as food allergies, there is an obvious attempt to address this concern for their guests (signs and pamphlets at some food establishments). I would further recommend installing bio-filter plant types on the windward side of pedestrian circulation and dining areas (for air-borne allergy mitigation).

Another lack of consideration for guest comfort exists in the absence of sufficient rain-cover during inclement weather, which often frequents coastal zones such as this. In regard to this, dining areas could be obvious points of "escape" for guests during storm events. Currently, outdoor dining venues are predominantly only trellised for shade by vines, or minimally-protected by sun-slats, or simply table umbrellas – all of which offer little or no foul weather protection to guests eating at tables.

Park visitors (paying guests) should be able to reasonably assume some weather cover at the park without sacrificing their entertainment time. Clearly, a minimum expectation of a visitor to any park includes foul weather options and rainy day venue availability. It was observed, however, in both the case of rain, and the case of thunderstorms that shut down rides, visitors soon determined the only option remaining for them was to leave the park, prematurely. This response is directly proportional to the lack of foul weather cover and entertainment options.

Conclusions drawn from direct study using the SWOT are supported by sound observations of the research questions in the instrument. And as revealed in this post-research analysis of the research/intelligence data collected, I can also conclude on certain indirect findings that were observed while performing the formal research endeavor. These informal findings also underscore a general failure of BGW toward the consistent effort to seek to maximize the positives and minimize the negatives.

Any research findings and intelligence data is only as good as the abilities of the analyst to conclude with actionable information that can be given to management and designers, to aide in making decisions. The analyst can also offer

clarification as to what would be the most effective approach to be taken in addressing the "bits and pieces" of new knowledge gleaned during the research and intelligence observations. In this way, it is made clear to the reader what the problems are and how they can be managed or corrected in order to achieve the desired outcomes. This researcher and analyst intent is to be a catalyst for positive enhancement of Utopian experiences in BGW by visitors and thereby increase profitability.

Secondly, universal Utopian aspirations include the development of heightened receptivity by visitors of the five human senses fundamental to increasing profitability. The preceeding included the effects on visitors concerning what is seen, heard, felt and tasted. The remaining sense is that of smell, and is most keenly associated with emotional response for human beings.

One of the most disconcerting aspects that make BGW unique, but in a negative way, is the lack of effort to create a market for their culinary venues that are street-side. The only food offerings that (intentionally or unintentionally) compelled visitors to be interested in their product through the sense of smell were Trappers Smokehouse (abundant smoke from preparation of meats) and Grogan's Tavern (beer).

It seems obvious that one profits from creating a market for goods and services. In the culinary venue of theme parks, this is accomplished by purposely directing kitchen venting or creating "artificial" food odors, which grabs the attention of the passer-by and initiates salivary gland function, creating hunger and desire for that which is smelled. Initiating hunger that may not have previously existed, or enhancing a heightened response to an existing taste or thirst-craving can engender increased purchases.

By way of example, in the Italy venue, one could see baked goods being prepared seemingly from scratch, going into the ovens, but there was no smell at all on the street! The unfortunate response was: "Isn't that quaint and interesting!" But, simultaneously, there was no desire to purchase the product, given the absence of baked bread fragrance. Not to labor this point too long, but the absence of outdoor culinary fragrances in the park is a major drain on financial gains from high-end products, and reduces the pleasure points of a BGW park visit. All of this reality dramatically affects subconscious visitor ascension to Utopia.

Non-culinary olfactory responses, which were present, but produced negative experiences, were few, but one epic venue stood out: the Pirates 4-D venue in England. This was definitely a high-quality 4-D film, with excellent cameo appearances and integrated blasts of air and water, synchronized well with the action. However, failure to properly de-humidify and dry surfaces between presentation times left the theatre space with a strong damp and moldy/rotten

smell. It was so unpleasant upon sitting down, one was almost compelled to NOT STAY for the presentation.

Finally, there was little or no intentional outdoor odor therapy or fragrance theming in the park. Essential oils and synthetic air modification, in terms of enhancing the fragrance of a given point of interaction with visitors were not observed being applied at any point visited in the park, with the exception of a faint electro-mechanical exhaust from the supposed "wreck" exhibit at Verbolten.

Now that I've reviewed the research in a more conversational manner in hopes of it being more communicable, and thereby more likely to be actively-addressed by BGW owners/operators, for this same readership, I would like to make one additional comment. When the practical, whether fiscal or physical, takes empowerment over theme park intent (generically defined as maximizing the positives in addressing the five human senses, also termed Utopian experience), the associated consequences of such re-strategizing of park intent is failure to meet subliminal Utopian expectations of visitors.

Additionally, in the case of BGW, such re-prioritizing of the park is re-classifying the park over time as an amusement park, principally. In addition to re-purposing of the park, the park's returning customer base will "mono-culture" to the extreme ride enthusiast population, which is the amusement park client set. This is engendered because of subconscious and emotional content that park visitors take with them when leaving the park. When comparing BGW in the future with other theme park experiences, the wealthier, high-end purchaser of park offerings and products will not sense as high of a preference for BGW as for other, more refined and less-adrenaline-centric parks which have worked hard to keep this group of park attendees, through offering consistent experiences that satisfy Utopian expectations. Therefore, whether BGW will "own-up-to" their status in this regard (intentionally-arrived-at or unintentionally-arrived-at) has no bearing on the demographic of attendees over time. The only thing that is going to change the looming mono-culture threat is for BGW to act on these research findings and advice, or find alternate points upon which it can end its now-growing entanglement with the lower-end amusement industry.

A snapshot that involves all five senses, that any member of management or designer at BGW can elect to participate in, which I would anticipate as being highly-illustrative of the trending of the park, would be to sit-in on Celtic Fyre, with (at the time of this research) its rather lewd attempts to appeal to the least denominator in park attendees, by setting-up a parody with over-indulgence – from bar life to body gestures – and on this point more could be said, but let the reader's imagination fill-in appropriately. Perhaps it might be suggested that even the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company, as owner/operators, would have found it less than stellar product placement.

INVESTMENT DATA ASSESSMENT

Concerning BGW and its investment worth valuation for future markets, it's the opinion substantiated by conclusions drawn during the research, that stakeholders should guard against compelling forward-looking business planning for BGW that, in its character and make-up, includes the fallacy perspective that a theme park's competitor is the amusement industry. Such a mis-conception has been demonstrated to perhaps exist from the outcomes of inquiries conducted in this research; it is apparent that management of investors' capital maybe taking un-necessary risks, operating under the aforementioned fallacy.

Executive direction #1: Investors/asset managers should not pursue positioning of BGW in a marketing campaign which is directed towards the low-end/low-spend demographic characterized by principally ride enthusiasts, value menu purchasers, and local market patrons.

Executive direction #2: Investors/asset managers should not mis-classify regional attendees to park venues as their primary market; rather, the park must maintain national appeal, if not international.

Executive direction #3: Investors/asset managers should not misinterpret a local amusement industry (King's Dominion) threat to BGW, in terms of ticket sales, but only in terms of in-park secondary expenditures on retail and culinary venues, and special events requiring additional price being charged.

In a research view, the past performance of BGW would no longer be a reliable indicator forecasting future performance gains for investors, if BGW continues in its trending, towards the frugal consumer market-base. Curtailing of such shifts in BGW can only occur if owner/operator and park management embrace theme development as the primary medium for profitability. Cavalier and/or entrepreneurial or misplaced passion for the business model of increasing investor's gains through a strategy of alternative destination dynamics for BGW outside of a theme park characterization may only put at-risk the investment futures of stakeholders. It could be demonstrated and shown that a theme development may not be made successful and capital investment may not be increased through a bottom-line accounting agenda; rather, entertainment business sectors may manage business cycles best through a "triple-bottom-line" philosophy. However, in BGW's case, it is apparent in the perspective of the research that management maybe failing to realize the potential fiscal impact of losing a reputation in the high-end theme experience market.

This is particularly made more impactful by the reality that this very same market sector, which seeks out parks that offer quality entertainment, interesting dining experiences and distracting theme environments, spend per capita, more revenue on inside, secondary venues at parks than the ride enthusiast market, over time.

INVESTIGATIVE SUMMATION

The research endeavor utilizing competitive intelligence tools was to develop a SWOT that would help in ascertaining BGW's status in regard to the research question, as defined concerning Utopia, where observations conducted critiqued various park offerings, as to whether attempts were apparent towards the maximizing of positives, and the minimizing of negatives, in regards to the five human senses. Numerous venues within the park were reviewed and numerous suggestions made as to means or methods which might aide in the enhancement of venues considered and the mitigation of problems observed. The following conclusions, however, do not concern themselves with constructive criticism or actionable intelligence recommendations, rather, will address BGW's positioning with regard to the Utopian question, as defined previously in this writing. It is determined and demonstrated by the research, that BGW has diminished overall Utopian potential due to the establishment of dual theming, the first being European locations travel, and the second being a pleasure garden, which is then contradicted by a robust culture of thrill ride development, in particular, roller-coasters, for which the park is, in fact, well-known.

By means of explanation, theme parks are governed by storylines; pleasure gardens are governed by the history of such development which can easily be referenced by park developers. Roller-coasters, thrill ride/extreme venues and arcades are governed by the history of amusement park development which can be easily referenced by park developers. If BGW's intent was to be a hybrid of all three park characterizations, then the governance for the development process has caused conflicting development philosophies to coexist during the design process, resulting in a non-unified and conflicting location environment, and such design management of three dissimilar design philosophies (theming, recreational garden, and amusement development) can be clearly seen on the ground as resulting in a non-harmonious vacationscape.

Such multi-tasking and the juggling of mutually-distinct developmental processes have not been successfully done by BGW. It can also be pointed out that this failure to integrate these three distinct processes has resulted in a non-holistically-developed and disingenuous park experience in the theme-park aspect of BGW, as well as a non-impactful or particularly notable garden experience; while roller-coaster development has taken dominance, occupying a principal position in regards to the park's reason for being. Clearly, BGW is more known for roller-coasters, as can be ascertained by its word-of-mouth reputation, and active marketing of its roller-coaster prominence to the travel public. Therefore, absent sincerity on the part of BGW to embrace, fully, any one of the three development strategies, it has become a jack of all three trades (theming, pleasure garden, and amusement development), but a master of none. This disposition being apparent, BGW without reservation has unfortunately failed to ask the right questions which would have helped in maximizing the positives and minimizing the negatives. The utopian question – maximizing the positives and

minimizing the negatives – was not well-answered in the theming of the park, in the garden elements of the park, nor in the amusement elements of the park.

The above realizations of fact can only point to the further realization that all development within the park suffers from the divided attentions between theming and pleasure gardens, which is further exacerbated by the preferential and biased focus on thrill rides (specifically roller-coasters), even if this is at the cost of the European travel storyline or good garden ecology practice. It can be seen in the way ride development was allowed to interrupt theming and garden development, making no attempts, beyond minimum sky-cloaking, to mitigate the disruptions that ride dynamics inject on other park venues through architecturally-cloaking ride infrastructure conforming to the theme of a location, plus disrespecting the ecology of place in garden zones like the Rhine River leisure development.

An authoritative conclusion can be drawn from the aforementioned disparities, as to the question of Utopia at BGW: intentionally or unintentionally, they failed to minimize negatives and maximize positives, and failed to give the necessary attention to the five human senses that would be normally required to become a truly-premier theme park, from a design perspective. Therefore, Busch Gardens Williamsburg, based on considerations made, has become a themed amusement park, with a peculiarity towards organic gardening, which is absent any role within the park other than in-fill with natural plantings and greenery. Only cursory attempts were made to conform with the theming and/or being authentic to a particular European locale in the planting selection, which is not surprising, given that many merely-cursory attempts were made concerning a multiplicity of Utopian issues throughout the park, over varying venue types, which is a symptom of the insincere use of story and the non-utopian handling of these venues, as mentioned earlier, and is a systemic problem at BGW. At the point of this inquiry, BGW can reverse the reclassification of it by the foregoing evidence, but this would require the full enactment of all recommendations within this writing, particularly those in the actionable data directives preceding this conclusion.

INVESTIGATIVE CONCLUSION

In attempting to understand the development of a landscape after the fact, one set about using an instrument to aide in critiquing its existence as a physical reality in the landscape. The abstract virtues in the idealistic design realm imply attempting perfection (utopia) through a process of maximizing positives and minimizing negatives. In this regard, as documented on the SWOT, and summarized above, BGW had many successes observed, which are exemplary in their execution, and for these successes, they are commended. But this critiquing was made more difficult by the intentional or unintentional loss of story,

or principal theme (European travel), which had been implied as the venue in which the visitor was supposedly immersed.

In the Busch Gardens Williamsburg theme park, the original intent of this European experience in miniature has been slowly losing validity to competing forces. The first competing force resulted from positive recognition; the principal reputation meriting awards was that of landscape recognition and related honors, such as "most beautiful theme park." Here one can sense the development of an alternate theme, implicated in the name of the park, defining the grounds as a garden. It could be said that Busch Gardens has dual theming: that of "garden," in addition to "European travel."

Another force working within the park, against the theme, was that of serving the ride enthusiast market, without proper theming of the ride venue, either to cloak it as to not be intrusive on the theme, or cloaking to reinforce its location theme. A third force was that of disingenuous offerings which were not representative of the theme location, in terms of dining authenticity to a given country, and provision of country-specific items in shop or craft pavilion venues. With the introduction of exotic animals (some not from the European continent), there is a theming failure only because they were not cloaked in the great tradition of a European circus event (easily implemented; but neglected, it represents yet another competitor with the established theme). The final force was the management of transitions between one themed experience and the next, causing a monolithic continuum which underserved the travel theme contrast between countries in the park.

It should be pointed out that all of these competing forces are landscape architecture concerns. The first competing aspect of the park was its status as a pleasure garden, clearly an LA softscapes and hardscapes consideration. The second had to do with LA relationship-forming of designs with its context and surrounds, where ride engineering developments have superseded LA concerns, with pragmatic applications of functional designs devoid of sensitivity to the holistic design intent of the park (i.e. supporting the theme and storyline). The third was clearly LA as well, since the majority of theme park dining and many retail venues are outdoor rooms/pavilions, being comprised of non-fully-enclosed landscape architectures. The inappropriate consideration of exotic animal exhibit expansions failed to appropriately "cloak" wildlife edutainment within a traditional European circus theme, via LA buildings of permanent fabric structures, thereby emulating temporary circus tenting and grounds, as only one of many means to this end. Finally, the fourth competing force is no less an LA concern, as well; having to do with the transition between one "country" and the next; which, being underdeveloped, diminished not only good entertainment design, but also effective wayfinding, which is a classical stronghold among LA considerations.

Competing forces work against the story, and fail to support the theme, by not working in harmony with it. As Anton Clavé (2007) said, "Everything starts with

a story. The script is the creative technique that serves to coordinate the work of the designers and technicians to ensure that everyone is committed to the same project."

Many architects in the theme industry have philosophies of design that embrace the development of "story"… one short excerpt from a design firm website summarizes the idea:

> "Design doesn't begin with a blank piece of paper, it begins with an open mind. Before we can draw it, sculpt it, or build it, we have to imagine it. Many times the one skill that can best communicate an idea is the one we take for granted… our ability to talk about it, to put it into words. In essence to script a person's interaction and response to the environment they are going to occupy." - Rick Solberg, AIA (2012)

Clearly, architects who work "in the industry" understand that theme parks have a narrative, or story that's being told. In such scripted environments, the visitor becomes also an "actor" as the story unfolds. Too often, the visitor at the aforementioned theming failure points within the park, has been reduced to just becoming a spectator. This transition of the visitor from the appropriate role of actor within the thematic storyline, to that of stander-by or passer-by, works in deleterious ways, resulting in entertainment moments lost, and mere spatial enjoyment is the only remaining experiential gleaning by what is now best described as a visitor, NOT a story participant, because the surrounds (structural and altered landscape), fail to tell the story consistently. Therefore, the venue was de-cloaked of the mystery and fantasy which otherwise would have been experienced by strict adherence to the story by appropriate and consistent theming.

Briefly, other inquiries outside of the competing forces as observed concerns, which were analyzed in the instrument as LA topics, varied from desirable and undesirable vistas, color theory to promote desired design response in harmony with theme, pedestrian circulation, and environmental quality in regards to human factors. The foregoing were just a few of the many LA concerns covered by the SWOT, during this research.

Before completion of this research, and prior to filling-in the SWOT, BGW turned down multiple requests by the researcher, for interaction with cast, management and design staff, as to effect clarification and gain their feedback responses. Representatives of Busch Gardens declined invitations to participate in this research, citing "no interest" in the design investigation. This produced a pro and con result: "pro" being, the instrument responses and analysis are truly third-party assessments, without owner/operator/developer bias; but "con" being, the conclusions have also not been informed by their actual intent, whether public domain or trade-secret, in character or make-up. However, their decision not to participate did not diminish the quality of the research, which was based purely on observations made, and as such, conclusions are uninfluenced and

objectively-considered, maintaining fair-play with a willingness to critique honestly and to compliment appropriately.

To be fair, it should be acknowledged that most creative professionals do not particularly "like" research, in general; citing David Ogilvy of Ogilvy & Mather, New York, speaking to researchers: "You must also be able to work sympathetically with creative people, most of whom are stubbornly allergic to research" (Perrin, 1992). The creative staff at BGW is not alone; "research" is often considered by management to be quite useless. Perrin, to creatives (1992): "Too many times findings are interesting but impossible to implement. As a result, the study gathers dust on the back shelf and is of little value in making decisions. It's not that researchers have their heads in the clouds; they want action, too, but they get wrapped up in the nuances of methodology and neglect to ask the right questions." Hopefully, this researcher has asked the right questions, has not gotten side-tracked by the methodology, and the findings will be implemented.

To "get along" with creative professionals, Jack Foster, in *Adweek*, recommended one should REACT, that creative people need to see and hear how others respond to their work (Perrin, 1992). It is this reaction or response that is at the heart of theme park design. Just as a storyteller wants his audience to respond emotionally to his story, a theme park designer hopes park visitors will do the same. In order to be more effective in this aspiration, landscape architects working with theme park designers may use the findings of this research to help them identify and analyze parts of utopia to more reliably deliver opportunities for utopian experience in these landscapes.

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APPENDIX – COMPLETED SWOT AND EVIDENTIAL IMAGES

COMPLETED SWOT

OVERALL THEME:

	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]	
INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Surfaces, textures, and architectural edifices were convincing for its intended impression for each country zone. Some structures were of high quality materials and workmanship.	Visitors can get a contextual taste of Europe without leaving the country. Travel time, frequency and expense are favorable for more visitors from the US. European visitors may find this charming and flattering.	Impression is not comprehensively compelling or deep enough for more sophisticated visitors to return for this purpose, alone. Familiarity with actual locale from European visitors may be disenfranchised with efforts, or regard for their icons.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	The spatial context was less convincing due to the need to accommodate for large crowds. Accessory pathways lack sufficient compression to emulate side-streets for some themed zones, giving it a public mall feel, rather than a city street feeling for visitors.	Larger crowds can be accommodated; plus, security may be enhanced by more open spaces, which also aides way-finding. Many Americans find generous alleyways more inviting, and less threatening.	More sophisticated visitors will not be as immersed in a simulated visit experience, potentially causing dissatisfaction. The overall persuasiveness of the park in replicating actual destinations is impaired by the failure to use spatial planning that is representative of the actual locale.

STORY DEVELOPMENT:

	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]	
INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	"You, the visitor, are on a trip to Europe;" this comprises visitor expectations of the park. Plus, the normative expectations of a theme park context remaining constant.	Cultural outreach to authentic European heritage descendants, to engage park staff and participate in park dynamics in regards to transmit their culture to the re-enactors.	Time period as "olden times" could not wear well in future. As Americans actually become more cognizant through media and travel to Europe, they may begin to exert modern EU culture expectations on park representations.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Ticket price being "some-what high," the theming falls short of fulfilling all expectations of a travel experience, in menu, accent support through staff re-enactors. Staff does not carry-through with story development as "cast."	Cultural facilitator on staff could instruct team members in proper story delivery for context and dialect of that locale. Larger Williamsburg business context can take advantage of this weakness to support ancillary entrepreneurship.	Park visitors may choose more authentic menus and product purchase opportunities outside the park food and retail service offerings, thus BGW loses sales that it has generated an interest in (desire for European-heritage food and wares results in other vendors "cashing-in").

FORMAT CAPTURES ESSENCE:

| | INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
		OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Typified the planning and design of its intended format, which is that of a theme park.	Invest more heavily in thematic content, emphasizing live performance, culinary experiences and arts/crafts to a greater degree than currently pursued.	Additional capital outlays from budget to fund the on-going costs associated with theatrical, culinary and skilled trades; both casting and facilities.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	It is trending toward minimal offerings in live entertainment, outdoor and indoor; seated dining, and becoming skewed heavily by new developments which emphasize thrill rides which are branded outside of park theming, without themed cloaking.	Redesign all extra-theming elements in their ride venues, bringing them back in line with their siting and location theme, with themed architectural cloaking.	Becoming ride-centric with diminishing returns from theme retail, culinary and live entertainment as a function of visitor draw, while degenerating into a thrill-ride amusement park venue.

ADDRESSES TARGET AUDIENCE:

| | INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
		OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Not being privy to their exacting detail on intended target audience, estimates based on stereotypical targets, they are meeting their projections in attracting intended demographic.	Looking for holes within their attendance fabric, based on income disparities, socio-geographic, etc., seek to fill deficits through focused marketing to minority shown to be lacking in park attendance.	Forecasts for parks who fail to grow their market base of intended consumers, and parks failing to attract new classes of attendees, typically experience negative growth at some point in time.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	International visitation by function of density count among those attending (simple visual observations) seems lower than typical for park of similar size.	Market to international visitors through special programming and offers.	If park is ill-prepared through language-barriers and management of potential insults to different cultures, then a backlash could occur where word-of-mouth "black-lists" the park with certain groups.

ELEMENTS PRESENT STRONG SHOW (GOOD USE OF BUDGET):

| INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia) The elements are of good quality; with attention to treatments that appropriately emphasize the intended communication of a specific locale.	Development of reputation as a conservator of authenticity, being respectful of a locale's icons, traditions and practices. Shows' elements can be constantly re-evaluated for "freshness" and "novelty" in order to pull audience in.	Becoming less themed, and more historic preservationist, thus losing entertainment value by the failure to accentuate positives and capitalize on unique entertainment offerings of locale.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark") Waste is evident in the inattention to visitor experience which caused particular attractions to fail as sufficient detractions from heavily-visited prime attractions, producing longer cues. Example: Clydesdale equine exhibit & petting area.	By maximizing all park exhibits fully, cue time could be reduced at major attractions, thus alleviating potential park visitors' cue anxieties prior to ticket purchases, without increasing visitor admission cost via "cue passes."	Sense of value being diminished regarding park offerings as the perception shifts towards hassle factors instead of happiness factors. Dependence on "cue passes" as a quality visit advantage for purchaser has the effect of increasing entrance cost.

EMOTIONAL RESPONSE MADE POSSIBLE BY DESIGN:

| INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia) From the "get-go," the design programming associates itself with one of the highest human desires, that of travel to far-flung destinations. Natural compulsion to travel has energized this component of the park.	Efforts could be taken to make BGW truly an international destination in the World's Fair tradition, capitalizing on the "Europe in Miniature" design concept. Purveyors of fine goods have opportunities for high-end sales, delivering additional emotional response.	Amusement park reputation for new rides could overshadow the park development intent as a travel experience venue. This is particularly true when such rides are only marginally-related to the park's zoned European locale, in terms of theming.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark") First impressions were at a level which failed to meet newcomer expectations, as the "opening show" was British communal space, absent the dynamics of British culture. There was little street-life.	Epic celebrity and dignitaries could be enlisted periodically from the UK, including exhibitor space, occupying relics from the royal family heritage in facsimile; i.e. crown jewels, Big Ben chimes, royal guard, and a wide variety of UK street vendors.	Because these entry dynamics were lacking – veering toward utilitarian visitor-center atmosphere – it may have diminished emotional response and anticipation of a heightened experience for further points in the park. It became primarily a point for orientation only.

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THREE-DIMENSIONAL USE OF LANDSCAPE AS "STAGE":

| | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
	INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Approach from the perspective of the viewer delivers interest which is often choreographed and in-harmony with the specific theatrical moment of a given attraction opportunity. Winner of "Most Beautiful" sets high standard for all landscape features.	Recognitions are afforded to parks that make strong connections between entertainment venues and environmental and ecological zones in a responsible way, including landscape design awards. Certain visitors come for this aspect, alone.	Unintended consequence, but clearly indicated by casual observers, is the spill-over effect into the surrounding community in plant selection preferences or options, as influenced by major clients like BGW. Loss of this winning status would be deleterious.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Landscape elements: plantings, hardscapes and amenities, lacking in variety.\n\nBlooming or "show" from live materials is limited/seasonal; some use is made of artificial plant materials.	Satellite industries supporting park needs can represent stable employment due to efficient grower operations.\n\nVariety could support satellite operations in a more divergent manner.	Soils may become destabilized, requiring heavy amendments, over time, due to the limited variety of cultivation.\n\nIntroducing variety may translate into expense of research and trial & error.

MYTH/STORY ELEMENTS IN LANDSCAPE:

| | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
	INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	In this capacity, there were moments exhibiting well-executed story-boarding, and coordination with the landscape elements.	Making connections with community assets for interested parties, including horticultural societies, clubs and university researchers, to promote purposeful landscape architecture.	Proprietary or competitive knowledge could be "leaked" to third parties via new awareness of the efforts of BGW to integrate storyline into landscape.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	There were several moments where the story failed to be embraced by discernible theming, clearly applied to landscape elements.\nAs much as possible, everything ought to support the story.	Opportunity to introduce variety, given storyline and choreographed theming is not being pursued, as a stand-alone design which supports story indirectly by adding interest.\nCreative opportunity to "think outside the box" for new way of supporting story.	Inadvertently introduce invasive species, with lax management; also, new plant and/or soil health threats.\n\nPoisonous, noxious or aggressive growth consequences may require additional expense, trial & error experimentation, or even litigation, in "worse case."

DIFFERENTNESS IN TIME (TRAVEL FORWARD OR BACK IN TIME):

INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]	
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	The framing of transitions between one station-point in a moment in time and the next station-point in an alternative moment in time via the use of limiting views by appropriately-placed elements was apparent.	Integration of knowns, like political, social and demographic concerns could be supported, if not sponsored, by the close coordination of BGW with human rights and environmental associations.	Political activism and rogue elements could demand equal representation in transitions along with compatible park interests.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	A tendency to rely heavily on darkness between time sequences, as a cloaking element; and a tendency towards curves and walled perimeters exclusive of other methods were noted.	Park and greater community artists and guilds could be granted access to time transition zones, and elements applied to enhance otherwise stereotypical mediation zones between time periods.	The philosophy of participants enhancing of zones could develop into controversial content without careful oversight. When technology is used to facilitate time transitions, it can become predictable and boring to visitors.

DIFFERENTNESS IN SPACE (WE ARE SOMEWHERE ELSE):

INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]	
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Believability of spatial intent was high with building surfaces and atmospherics. Façades reflecting representative architecture of the European locale; typical music of that culture.	Outside dramas from community theatres and movie production crews could be granted license to pursue their craft on-site, adding energy to the park, and underwriting the performing arts through BGW making their premises available for such.	Theatrical use for third-party ventures could create unintended consequences and litigation/copyright concerns. Other parks may gain an advantage in strategy to create a "better feeling" of another place.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Depending on the type of entertainment venue and the level of technology being applied, the viewer or ride participant experienced varying levels of quality regarding spatial transitions. Some spaces felt the "same."	Sponsorship of field trips and design ventures with the intent of assessing and uncovering methods for representing spatial movement at a new level for the viewer. Local visitor may prefer the feeling of being at home.	The venue could lose relevance in regard to its attempt to differentiate between different spaces. If the park failed to "feel like" somewhere else, it may cease to attract an interested audience.

BOUNDARY (HOW IS SPACE DELINEATED FROM "EVERYDAY"):

| | INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
		OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Parking and traffic assistance was friendly and efficient. Large vehicle and small vehicular parking were visually separated from one another. Predictability of progression on all approaches served to establish boundary clearly.	Encourages visitors to take personal vehicle, rather than mass transit options, to park. Physical barrier could be more effectively engaging of park contents and surrounds.	More environmental impact than using commuter transference or ticketed/ package transportation options.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Boundary did not communicate the actual high quality of the park, in the design, management or operation of that boundary. It was non-distinct.	Provide more information kiosks in the extended community surrounding the park, which would serve dual purpose of information and marketing domains.	Additional promotional expense would be borne by park, distributed to the community at large, may not be met with satisfactory follow-through by third parties.

ANTICIPATION (HOW IT IS BUILT): i.e. RESTRICTED VIEWS

| | INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
		OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	from Park skyline was visible most approaches, and gave glimpses of roller coasters. Outdoor ads boasted of the park's awards.	Night-time enhancement of skyline, with lighting effects. Draw attention to park for passers-by.	Could be perceived as visually-invasive by nearby community. Considered gaudy by elite classes, if not appropriately-managed.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Waiting in long line of cars did not succeed in building anticipation, nor did it communicate the character of the park and its theme. Visual barrier into park is not particularly attractive, but the sign reads, "Most Beautiful."	Diorama of park in perimeter area approach might be a way to build anticipation. Character depictions that are peculiar to the park, and theatrical murals. Live re-enactors walking in perimeter area could add anticipation.	Second-guessing of the venue being selected can occur between the car and front gate. Lack-luster start-up point can set a derogatory perspective and low expectation with certain personalities.

CIRCULATION DEVELOPS STORYLINE SEQUENCE & PROGRESSION:

	INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Circulation tended to encourage exploration, which produced a heightened sense of discovery in the touring aspects of each park zone. Initially, this had the potential to create some euphoria and excitement for guests.	Those with this mode of touring have a high potential of stopping for concourse entertainment venues like street performers, so increasing such theatrical moments could occupy enough visitors to relieve cues to major attractions.	Park tended to have persons engaged in walkways and pathways within park as high-volume/high pace movement between major attractions. In-filling this with "touring traffic" for entertainment hot-spots could further congest flow.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Storyline is not fully engaged by casual visitor or destination-intended walkers-by on their way to major attractions.	A stronger case can be made for theming having relevance for average visitor, if stronger impacts are made through use of surfaces and atmospherics, captivating the visitor's attention.	Park becomes monolithic, losing its travel thematic by virtue of lack of attention.

TRANSPORTATION (MOVE CROWDS & ACT TO STIMULATE EXCITEMENT):

	INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Sky-ride was exceptional cable car ride. Height, with vistas, length of travel exceeded expectations. Points of destinations were more numerous than typical for this type of conveyance.	This somewhat under-utilized feature could be maximized by publicizing it's a-stereotypical offerings as a cable-car, and increase its potential as a means of conveyance.	Increased public awareness will lead to increased use, potentially causing visitor drift, meaning they arrive at distant point, only to re-cue to return to other point of departure, thus usurping its potential as a means of dispersing crowds.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	High popularity of the train ride surprisingly compromised other means of conveyance, as the train (as a device for crowd movement) is inefficient and costly.	If rail continues to be crowd preference for movement, second and tertiary engines with cars should be launched on regular schedule.	These actions would increase ambient noise within the park, and there would be some negligible loss to air quality.

SCALE CONDENSED FOR EASE OF COMPREHENSION:

| INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Structures were applying fore-shortening.	Higher structural wonders can be attained by modified height scale, in that a normalized building with some visual "trickery" could appear as a super tower for epic represen-tation of period skyscraper of other tower.	Shadow casting, wind reams and sheer force or other altering environmental consequences.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	No epic architectural edifices. German pavilion was the largest for visitors, yet was poorly-executed, and seemed almost an after-thought.	Other park edifice of massive scale could increase park's sense of resort, and epic destination.	Could cause the park to appear as a low-investment development, without resources to produce exceptional man-made environments that excite the imagination.

SCALE GIVES VISITOR FEELING OF CONTROL:

| INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Both outdoor and indoor building design schemes for a majority of the park captured a sense of coziness, which is a difficult accomplishment in such a large development with the visitor massing being what it is.	The park would do well to capitalize on this value of coziness it possesses, in comparing themselves with their competition; making it a one-of-a-kind among others in the theme park classification.	Being perceived as a leisure location is not its principal threat, but being combined with other tendencies discussed, could unintentionally package BGW for the "wrong demographic" in terms of market size.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	The park failed miserably, more than any park this researcher has visited for the type and category of park, to deliver any colossal or mind-boggling component. The effect was that it failed to stir the imagination.	There is a great opportunity here to design and erect a centerpiece of vertical architecture and character which can be seen from any point in the park. It would serve to inject a "wow" factor in the skyline from multiple station points.	For a park of its type, within its competition, this scale is unacceptable; it is approaching "ordinary" in its architecture and engineering dynamics, pushing it from theme park into amusement park category.

VISUAL MAGNETS:

| | **[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]** | |
INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	The lush garden environment is the park's main visual magnet.	BGW could tie-in more strongly with the European whimsical garden tradition, and have more landscape-driven surprises and entertainment opportunities.	Shock and awe elements of surprise, as visitors are not expectant of landscape-based events occurring, could produce paranoic engagement of all landscape in the park.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Un-cloaked rides impart an amusement park and county fair feel. To clarify: Six Flags is an amusement park; Disney World is a theme park.	Study Disney World's integration of rides with horizontal and vertical architectures, and bring this to BGW, especially faux landscapes.	There is a danger in the future, of becoming just a beautiful amusement park, and no longer a theme park.

SYMBOLISM/ICONS/BRAND IDENTITY:

| | **[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]** | |
INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Local popularity among resident enthusiasts is their highest point of attainment in public relations.	Focus hiring practices on local admirers, for loyalty to the brand, and consequently, best members of the cast.	Becoming in-bred and classified as a regional attraction.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Extended demographics, nationally and internationally is weaker than it should be in the park's history, in terms of popularity.	Developing a new masterplan, directing branding to compete with more recognized parks.	Becoming a non-player in the theme development world, and taking residence in the amusement category indefinitely.

LANDSCAPE MATERIALS' TEXTURE/COLOR SUPPORT THEME:

	INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Colors are supportive of heightened resort context which improves the character of the park.	Park can capitalize on the ground's effective communication of luxury, as entrained into the landscape by generous plan massing of an abundance of color.	Sensory overload caused by not carrying or communicating to the viewer any particular relationship to the location or its theming.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	There is no discernible connection between color and the theming elements.	Color theory can be applied more effectively to incite particular emotional responses that could be related to the theming, to reinforce the story.	Landscape competes with theming, rather than reinforcing it.

TRANSITION ZONES SHIFT THEME:

	INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Transition zones are effective in shifting themes for most patrons.	Provide for edu-tainment and casual engagement or interaction with compelling subject matter between zones.	Content becomes silly and distractive rather than enlightening or entertaining.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	More sophisticated patrons would find the transitions predictable to the point of being boring.	Assess sophisticate preferences by trial and error, as a test for in-fill content in transition zones and margins.	Creation of bottlenecks, and transitions become popular as points of interest or attractions in their own right.

OVERALL FORM:

| INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Highly-naturalized and green industry is prevalent in park, speaking well of conservation and "best practices" in horticulture.	Naturalist and green design technology could be applied to the park to a greater degree than currently exhibited.	Remaining politically-correct as not to alienate any visitor could present itself as a damage-control issue if park is perceived to be activist in its agenda.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Epic characterizations are not prevalent as attention-grabbing elements, or are less prevalent than what would actually benefit the park.	Embellishment of existing features that comprise a form to heighten their effect of observer, listener or participant.	Heightened levels of stimulation may become dismissed by visitors, becoming "white noise" relegated to the background.

OVERALL STAGING CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT (SUPPORT OF THEME):

| INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Staging is done extremely well at BGW, particularly Ireland delivered a sense of community.	The Celtic heritage is colorful and has advantage over some locales because of that culture's dynamism, which can be applied in parade fashion to heighten experiences throughout park, holistically.	Successful staging events applied across the park as a tool for enhancing fully all areas of the park, by extension, could market the successful staging zone beyond its capacity to manage.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Quality of some staging venues suffered in either materials applied or regular maintenance being adhered to.	Establishing a facility's management protocol that actively gives oversight to the most minute details of up-keep.	The cost of high-quality maintenance would increase operating expense without necessarily increasing park attendance and profitability.

SPECIFIC ATTRACTIONS:

INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia) Sensationalism is the principal attraction, as the theme/story-line is punctuated with ride engineering feats. Other attraction types would be simulation rides of a high, convincing quality.	Stronger theme cloaking of an architectural nature for rides would serve the dual purpose of tying ride back into park storyline and increase ride's dynamics by its proximity to simulated structure.	Park may degenerate into adrenalin-driven clientele, who go from ride-to-ride; they do not participate strongly in retail and cuisine purchases, thus hurting park sales opportunities.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark") Dominance of thrill attractions, primarily roller coasters, can supersede the holistic theme of European travel, as the rides are not consistently tied back to the park storyline.	As demographic preferences differ, this aspect could be heavily-marketed to thrill-seeker markets.	The relative disparity between markets in terms of varying personality types, could provoke leisure visitors to reconsider park attendance; and these patrons are actually more likely purchasers of high-profit foods and gifts.

STAGE DESIGN (BACKGROUND STIMULUS IN SUPPORT OF THEME):

INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia) Ireland had strong "near" background; equine grounds and pasture behind Clydesdale pavilion was an effective stage for rural UK theme.	Grounds could be used for highland games events, which are steeped in Celtic tradition, and as such would become an actively-engaged theme, rather than a passive one.	Grounds maintenance and care of softscapes would be a prevailing problem, as field sports must happen on turf. Feasible if only the athletes are allowed on grass.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark") No prevalent attempts to establish environs or vistas at "inaccessible distances" from visitor as a perspective. No altered distant background to support theme happening in the near environment.	A vista analysis can be conducted to prepare planned augmentation of distant views in such a way as to support local theming for each country zone.	Persuasive power of local theme will be less successful as distant vistas are non-supportive of viewer's theme location. In theatre, it is tantamount to seeing Act II, while Act I is in progress!

MANAGEMENT OF VISITOR FLOW (BASIC NEEDS SATISFIED):

[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]

INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Flow was exceptional; offered visitor opportunity to pause, reconsider and rest. Personal space allowance was generous. Restrooms and other basic needs were met.	Areas could be enhanced with additional profit-generating amenities, like street vendors, to a greater extent. Attention to supporting theme could be built-in to these enhancements.	Trip/fall hazards could become more prevalent as movement through park does allow for a quick pace of travel.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Areas around "impromptu" performances were not adequate for even modest crowd congregating without impeding traffic flow.	Street performances should occupy non-patron-traversable square-footage; for instance, elevated platforms situated temporarily over landscaping rather than the middle of the concourse.	Visitation to known points of congestion due to impromptu street performances could cause visitor avoidance of these zones at certain times.

MANAGEMENT OF VISITOR FLOW (LENGTHENS/INTENSIFIES EXPERIENCE):

[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]

INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Because some paths did not follow contours/topography, circulation was mechanically slowed, depending on the demographic occupying the space. Grade indirectly caused longer visit by increasing stop and rest time.	Future development should try to follow contour since slopes' positive and negative effect on visitor flow cancel each other out, when applied across the entire visitor massing.	Fatiguing the clientele on the uphill side through exercise exhaustion; and downhill, by negotiating gravity needs to keep pace with youngsters.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Although up-hill grades serve to slow pedestrian flow, when to approach of the same grade is from the downhill side, young visitors tend to run down the slope, and accompanying adults pick-up pace, reducing "lingering time."	Landings could be created that are not potential slip/fall hazards; or, alternate routes around inclines can be established.	Inclement weather and street sweeper needs increase problem set and maintenance difficulties.

USE OF VISITOR BACKGROUND (PRIOR EXPERIENCE):

[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]

INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Most visitors to theme parks are accustomed to finding food and souvenir options early in their visit; BGW does provide both needs with England at the entry gate area, which is well-placed for front-end sales taking advantage of visitor energy.	Menu engineering improvements could make nourishing foods available, with options that can be eaten-on-the-go, for those that want to move quickly on into the park. Souvenirs and food available for taking out at end of day.	With trends toward more healthy food selections, internationally; plus, aging demographics with medically-important diet needs, sales may suffer if menu engineering does not find suitable options.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	There were not enough high-end souvenirs, and no top-notch restaurant options at the beginning point of the park when optimism is high and prior experience encourages some visitors to have a more relaxed, but expensive, meal for the day.	Establish a fine food British tavern-style restaurant, with UK menu selection options, near the front gate. Possible option for "high tea." Royal heraldry could raise sales options.	Loss of sales and loss of premium reputation in culinary arts category. First impressions are important in opening zone of theme parks…without high-end options, the park failed to excite.

USE OF VISITOR BACKGROUND (EXPECTATIONS):

[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]

INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Clearly, the positive is they are exhibiting and meeting expectations which have been developed by marketing in the thrill-ride category. Rides were featured in all advertising.	Taking advantage of the roller-coaster enthusiast, BGW could run a tertiary marketing campaign that provides special perks with separate ticket, for the "inside story" of their engineering, etc., on low-attendance days.	Some threat of a mono-culture attendance of "hyper" ride-dominated groups which could clash with the leisurely older patrons and younger-family-oriented demographics.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	They did not step-up to parallel marketing campaigns which assert the themed attractions of multiple European countries; trending instead toward mono-marketing to thrill-seekers.	BGW should re-assert the European travel theme to six countries, to the market. Raise the expectations of guests, but also raise the design emphasis of the park.	By emphasizing one or the other of the marketing angles, of thrill rides, or European travel, too much, they may cancel out BOTH markets, and thus fail to establish their niche in either market.

EFFECTIVELY HIDDEN BACKLOT (MAGICAL):

[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]

INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia) — Means of access to and from service streets and lots were well-concealed, for the most part.	Back-lot passes and VIP tours could produce desirable attraction value if these zones were amended with additional considerations to appeal to certain groups of visitors.	If not opened-up to visitors, back-lot character could degenerate beyond current condition, supplying no profit to enterprise.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark") — Train ride allowed for some back-lot areas to be fully-exposed.	Train ride could introduce edutainment dialogue on train's traditional PA system, discussing statistics on activity in this part of the park. This aspect could become a "sneak peak" or teaser for special back-lot packages.	Familiarity with back-lot may unintentionally encourage unauthorized use of this area; consequences could be as minor as kids taking a short-cut through restricted zone or as serious as criminal activity.

FLEXIBILITY (ALLOWS FOR CHANGING DEMANDS OVER TIME):

[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]

INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia) — Compelling venue with many options for flexibility, in six different countries available for exploration.	Conduct further research with the intent of integrating even more variety borrowed from these six countries.	Flexibility needs to be additive, not subtractive in nature; growth features of a changing park must be mindful that substituting or replacing a popular or memorable piece may disappoint visitors returning to the park.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark") — It is limited thematically to European destinations and cultures, to the exclusion of other parts of the world and other cultures.	Really attempt to embellish attributes from those countries to maximize their impact on the visitor. Strive to be the best, biggest, etc. in portrayal of representative countries.	If not managed for variety over time, and no enhancements are made, this could become redundant as an attraction. "Been there, done that!"

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OVERALL MATERIALS' SELECTION (AESTHETIC/SUPPORTS THEME):

INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]	
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Good overall aesthetic; BGW achieved a nominally-expected level of design in a sense of appropriateness to theme as it related to some counties, especially England and Ireland.	Because the park demonstrated they have the ability, they have the opportunity to "step-up" to the standard set in England and Ireland in the other country zones.	Patrons will notice over time the difference in treatment of the various countries, consciously or subconsciously; there will be diminishing returns for repeat visits to certain areas; time spent translates to sales.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Phenomenal job in good category was not followed-through in ALL countries; fell short of the same level of attainment, resulting in mediocre treatment in other countries.	Opportunity to make other areas as aesthetically-appealing; bring these countries up to this level, shifting to more quality materials, applied with more design prowess to support theme. Lingering effect can result from beauty alone.	Lack of visitation in some areas will result over extended periods of time; which will affect retail sales and meals. This effect will be more noticeable as the park ages.

(Note: STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES labels appear as row headers; INTERNAL is the first data column.)

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES OR ALLERGIES:

INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]	
	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Could discern only "normal" degree of following expected local protocol prescribed by numerous government agencies; generally adhered to requirements mandated by law.	Seek, if not already pursuing, the following: take action to gain certain safety certifications and health accreditations in regards to on-site food and environmental "best management" practices.	Without these additional awards, the park is vulnerable to liability, they lack third-party verification, offer no evidence of "going beyond" expectations, and lose potential for "bragging rights" from others.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	No known-of attempts to mitigate air-borne allergens and toxins.	Planting designs could incorporate micro-climates through plants known to be hypo-allergenic upwind of key park zones, especially near outdoor dining and rest areas.	Density of some plants in this classification may restrict natural air flow that may result in some negative effects during certain times of the year, i.e. summer breezes.

CLEAN, MAINTAINED "PERFECT APPEARANCE":

	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]	
INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Pedestrian walkways, alleys and corridors were clean and well-maintained. Restrooms were clean, upon approach and interior spaces were maintained.	Consider reallocating street sweepers to in-service train the venue service personnel, and theatre space venue staff to a greater degree of attention to detail, as already exhibited in main concourse.	Street and sanitary cast who are doing a good job, if reallocated to cross-training with venue/theatre up-keep crews, could overtax the main concourse staff.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Outdoor amphitheatres and indoor theatres appeared to be dusty and littered.	Cross-training; see above.	Consequences; see above.

EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE WORTH REMEMBERING:

	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]	
INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Simulated ride which showcased alternating shows and live productions, as theatrical elements, as media and performing arts experiences, were of a high quality.	Market live performances and media experiences to a greater degree than currently pursued.	Attendance could overflow capacity, producing a need to expand seating in these facilities, requiring additional capital investments.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Food quality, with the exception of German pavilion, was sub-standard to the normal expectation for the menu price.	Begin to enhance culinary emotional response of visitors, by re-visiting and re-engineering menus.	Patrons prepared to eat at a singular venue inside the park; or exit the park to eat off-premises.

UNIQUE SINGULAR ATTRACTION (CANNOT GET THIS ANYWHERE ELSE):

| | INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
		OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Christmas-edition train ride was particularly-engaging with a sing-along during the trip. Christmas display of tasteful landscape holiday lighting was very well done.	Special live productions, including Santa's Workshop re-enactors and holiday musicals as dinner theatres should be increased.	The park can position itself and should do so, as the premier Christmas destination for holiday travelers, which can stifle more traditional pastimes during the Christmas season.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Increasing population of ride enthusiasts who are short-attention-span for non-ride-focused venues, and are becoming growth segment of park's attendance.	Potential to develop cues which are air-conditioned and heated, with entertainment monitors relating the history of ride's engineering and construction.	If ride cues move slowly and increase in size, or shut-downs occur, this population of park attenders are less likely to be made happy with their visit by non-ride offerings.

ELIMINATE THE "NEGATIVE" (HOW NEGATIVE CUES ARE ADDRESSED):

| | INTERNAL | [EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] | |
		OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Observed some attempts by staff to inquire with guests while dining, concerning their enjoyment of the park and "what was your favorite?" survey of guests.	Responses to "impromptu" surveys could be compiled, and utilize information to enhance offerings.	Guests become tired of blatantly-obvious repetitive interactions with wait staff, if survey questions are repeated on return visits to dining venues.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Complaints were not handled formally with any attempt to forward the information to the appropriate authorities.	Formalized methods of procedure should be applied to ensure valuable feedback from guests is appropriately considered.	Information gathered may be insincere or manufactured.

MEMORABILIA (WHAT CAN VISITORS LITERALLY TAKE HOME?):

[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]

INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	The "best" souvenirs, cuisine and entertainment are exhibited, that distinguishes each country from the others. As is often the case in theme developments, only the most positive experiences from each country are presented to visitors.	Further embellishment of countries' positive attributes, while mitigating all negatives, should be continued without causing asymmetry by introducing too much contrast via the interjection of uncomplimentary content.	Exhibits could be perceived by some sophisticates as "Polly-Anna-ish," synthetic or otherwise idealistic.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Fails to provide a realistic presentation of what the culture looks, smells, feels and sounds like in the modern context; decisions early in park planning locked BGW into a more historic time period classification.	Because of the inability to reference more modern content, they need to make up for this loss by making every effort to truly capitalize on the countries' heritage. For example, UK has lost the opportunity to reference 007 and other modern themes.	The only progressive content they can develop in the long term will abandon central theming to an extent that they lose identity, or classification as a theme park as they seek more ride-centric ventures.

FIVE SENSES ENGAGED:

[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES]

INTERNAL	OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	Visual arts and performing arts are their strongest sensory engagements.	More performing arts and more musicians, vocalists and dancers need to be entrained into each country venue.	Loss of reputation as a live entertainment venue if quality of performing arts is inauthentic or trending toward infrequency.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Culturally-compelling content having a saturation of music, food and arts/crafts was inconsistent from country-to-country.	Start or revitalize a cultural arts exchange program with academic institutions in Europe, infilling park with student artist interns in country venues.	Legitimacy as a travel theme venue that achieves the minimum expectation that it espouses (experience six European countries) could become invalidated by realities on the ground.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

	INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	B GW has responsibly avoided establishing several usury venues, like cigar store, or men's smoking club; also there are no casinos in park, which reinforces the family-focused theme.	They may choose to make a case for being a completely smoke-free park; plus, they could become an alcohol-free park.	They could make marketing use of being a smoke-free institution, rather than maintaining smoking areas, losing SOME customers. Similar loss with alcohol-dependent customer base.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	Intoxicating substances in several areas available for visitor purchase and consumption is a social stimulant that carries consequences for the park too numerous to discuss in this research.	Adopt a new product line of high quality de-alcoholized wines, spirits and beers are the fastest growing sector of the distilling and brewing industry, given heightened health concerns.	Encouraging and supplying alcoholic substances in a hyper-environment, such as a theme park carries increasing liability over time.

FINAL COMMENTS:

	INTERNAL	[EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES] OPPORTUNITIES ☺	THREATS ☹
STRENGTHS (how close to Utopia)	BGW is successful as a theme development and enjoys a reputation of maintaining quality grounds and facilities.	Opportunity for expansion, which would be the seventh country, Greece, focused on the city of Athens.	If future development doesn't include interior fine dining and overnight accommodations for VIP guests then park's reputation for hospitality will diminish over time.
WEAKNESSES (where it "misses the mark")	The park is trending toward amusement park classification due to lack of cloaking of rides within architectural constraints which are appropriately themed for their location.	By way of example, in my proposed Greece destination, the ruins of the Parthenon and Acropolis would tower above and cloak rides within a Greek storyline of the city of Athens, capitalizing on Greek lore and history.	Loss of purpose, as engendered by the founding developers.

Please view the research commentary video (by the researcher) for additional intelligence insights.

EVIDENTIAL IMAGES

The following evidential images (by the researcher) are representative of issues mentioned in the SWOT, as examples. For further imaging of factors discussed, view the documentary "Introspection" (by the researcher) – special edition produced for this academic inquiry.

Failed human scale and outdoor spatial context lacking compression.

Poor compression.

Good compression.

Failed outdoor feature color theory. Not varied by venue and/or story.

Germany Feature Colors.

Italy Feature Colors.

Failed ride overlays. Not supporting outdoor theme or venue story.

Poor Sky/Land/Arch. Cloaking.

Good Sky/Land/Arch. Cloaking.