WEEK 12: AMUSEMENT PARKS

98-186: Spring 2015 – Jordan Zink
Amusement Parks

- A place with rides, coasters, and other attractions
  - Distinct from fairs – Permanent location
  - Distinct from recreation areas like parks – Rides
- Sea Lion Park (1895) at Coney Island was first real amusement park
- Early amusement parks small and in cities
- Now-a-days, larger and outside of cities (must drive there)
Within amusement parks are theme parks, distinct for focusing on theming rides and the park environment.

- Disney parks are great examples
- Synonymous in English
- 98-186 won’t focus on the distinction
  - 98-206 does!
    - Well, use to…
Amusement Parks Chains

- Most big amusement parks are parts of larger chains
- Chains allow for better brand recognition, management, and more capital for improvements like roller coasters
  - At the price of local / family-owned feel of park
Amusement Parks Chains

- Two dominant roller coaster centric chains
  - Six Flags
  - Cedar Fair
    - + Former Paramount Parks
Chains – Six Flags

- One of the oldest chains; well known due to name
- First park was Six Flags Over Texas in 1961
- Originally some small rides and shows, but later added roller coasters
  - 1966, Runaway Mine Train, one of the first steel coasters
- It, like Disneyland, helped show amusement parks as profitable
The name “Six Flags” comes from the six national flags that have flown over Texas

- Spain, France, Mexico, Republic of Texas, CSA, USA
Chains – Six Flags

- Built Six Flags Over Georgia and Six Flags Over Mid-America (now Six Flags St. Louis) in 1967 and 1971 respectively
- Only three parks built by Six Flags; rest bought
Chains – Six Flags

- Began buying parks in the 70s and 80s, like Magic Mountain (CA), Great Adventure (NJ), and Great America (IL)
  - They added the “Six Flags” name to all properties
- In late 80s, Looney Toons theming began at Six Flags parks
Chains – Six Flags

- In 1998, Premier Parks (which had been buying many properties in the 90s) bought Six Flags, adding the name to all of its parks.
- At the turn of the millennium, Six Flags had roughly 30 amusement parks worldwide.
- Invested lots of money in massive improvements to their parks.
  - E.g. adding 4 coasters to Six Flags Ohio in 2000 alone.
Chains – Six Flags

Six Flags at its peak; 2002
Chains – Six Flags

- Having grown too fast, Six Flags began selling parks in 2004 to stop a share-holder revolt, and more in 2007

- This and the recession forced Six Flags to declare bankruptcy in 2009
  - Ended in 2010
Chains – Six Flags

- Today, Six Flags operates 13 parks (all in USA except Six Flags Mexico)
- Six Flags used to have negative reception with enthusiasts, especially for poorly themed / though out additions
  - In recent years has been better received

Scream! @ Six Flags Magic Mountain
- “The Parking Lot Coaster”
Chains – Paramount Parks

- Started as Kings Entertainment Company (KECO) with Kings Island (remember Racer in 1972) and Kings Dominion (VA)
  - Later acquired 3 other major parks
- In 1993, bought by Paramount Communications, became Paramount Parks
Chains – Paramount Parks

- The parks were meant to be movie advertisements as well as amusement parks
  - Rides themed after movies were built
Chains – Paramount Parks

- Parks were generally well run, but enthusiasts criticized repeating of rides and purchasing of half-baked rides (*cough* Son of Beast *cough*).
- Viacom sold the chain to Cedar Fair in 2006.
  - All parks dropped the Paramount name and theming.
Chains – Cedar Fair

- Began as Cedar Point (more on Cedar Point later); began Cedar Fair after buying Valleyfair (MN) in 1978
  - Name comes from Cedar Point and Valleyfair
- Didn’t buy any more parks until the 90s; then bought 4
  - Notably Knott’s Berry Farm
Chains – Cedar Fair

- Similar to Six Flag’s Looney Toons and Paramount’s Nickelodeon, Cedar Fair have the Peanuts gang (Charlie Brown) as mascots
  - Criticized by some due to out-datedness
Chains – Cedar Fair

- In 2006, bought Paramount Parks, bringing park inventory to 12
- Now operate 11 major parks
Chains – Cedar Fair

- When they bought Paramount Parks, were viewed as the “best” chain due to quality and Six Flag’s financial troubles
- Over time, criticisms have arisen
  - They basically killed Geauga Lake (OH)
  - Famous “Locker Nazis”
Amusement Parks Chains – Non-USA
Chains – Merlin Entertainment

- Largest attraction group in the world after Disney
  - Still less than half of Disney’s attendance
- Centered in Europe, specifically UK
- Runs many of the big European theme parks
Chains – Merlin Entertainment

- Most likely heard of Legoland; they run those
  - 6 exist with 3 more on the way
Chains – OCT Parks

- Full name: Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town Holding Company
- China’s main amusement park chain
- Runs the Happy Valley parks
  - 6 of them
Amusement Park Design
1920’s Philosophy
Disneyland
Park Layouts
Midway
Hub

Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom
Interactive Trading Card Adventure

Imagine the Magic Kingdom comes to life with this magical adventure. Meet the Magician and learn to cast magic spells. Then, you'll be off to find Merlin's magic spells and defend the Magic Kingdom Park from an army of Disney villains.

Celebrate the Magic
Sea Grilled Chicken Tenders and a variety of sides. See TIMES GUIDE for menu details.

Celebrate A Dream Come True Parade
Celebrate your way with your favorite Disney characters and their Classic tunes.

Tomorrowland
ATTRACTIONS

37 Tomorrowland Speedway
Drive a racecar. Minimum height 40".

38 Space Mountain
Indoor roller coaster. Minimum height 40”.

39 Astro Orbitor
Fly among the spacehips.

40 Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover
Ride through Tomorrowland. Presented by Mars® Car Rental

Dining

Ceramic Cafe: L & D
Burgers, chicken breast, wraps, and sides. Next to Tomorrowland Transit Authority People Mover.

Chef Mickey's: L & D
Rotisserie chicken, roasted leg of lamb, and more. Available by reservation.

Main Street Electrical Parade
View the sights as your favorite Disney characters perform and solve the mystery of Magic Kingdom Park! See TIMES GUIDE

Wishes nighttime spectacular
See the skies of the Magic Kingdom light up with the nightly fireworks display that can be seen throughout the entire Park! See TIMES GUIDE

Celebrate A Dream Come True Parade
Celebrate your way with your favorite Disney characters and their Classic tunes.

Another View
Arc
“Gimmick”
“Gimmick”
Other Considerations
Business Ethics
Business Ethics
Know your Audience
Kids
Bonus: Fairs and Carnivals!
München Oktoberfest
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