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Newsletter of the TEA Western Division

AN ENLIGHTENING TOPIC

THE BENEFITS OF SHARED KNOWLEDGE WITHIN THE TEA

As the number of new attractions opening worldwide seems to grow each and every year, it becomes a challenge to keep up with it all, let alone to try and visit them all. As members of the TEA and the themed entertainment industry, I feel that it is our responsibility as professionals to get out there and see what others are doing. What works? What doesn't? What new or old technology is being used in new and exciting ways? How are stories and emotion being expressed through the built environment?

Being open to new experiences, and making the effort to travel to new or familiar places not only broadens your horizons, it fosters curiosity and respect

for the efforts of others. It can build new relationships.

Since the inception of the TEA, we have been proudly sharing our work with each other through special events, open houses, and educational sessions for our members around the world. Facilitating special access, panels and behind-the-scenes tours ticks all the boxes of helping to create a community by sharing knowledge and experience. Seeing things first-hand and talking to those who created the thing has always been the best way to learn. Looking back in history, Europeans in the 18th and 19th Centuries had "The Grand Tour" in which they saw the ruins of antiquity, music from the renaissance, experienced art, architecture, sciences

and cultures that were new and foreign. This was a form of cultural improvement and enlightenment, but the most important part of this was that the effort of curating these elements was seen not only as beneficial, but necessary.

This sharing and spreading of knowledge and experience continues today, and we are responsible for helping each other along on the journey of discovery, learning and sharing. The role of the TEA in this is invaluable and for me is one of the most valuable elements of membership.

Andy Garfield
TEA Western Division Member

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GO SEE SOMETHING!

Something great has been steadily growing these last ten years. Each Halloween, more and more amateur haunts and Halloween-themed attractions pop up in the most random of places. What really began as a Southern California phenomenon, the "Yard haunt" has quickly spread across the US. These days you can find a good haunt in almost every city across the country, and many are of incredible show quality.

A new generation of maker culture has created an entire subgenre of domestic, completely ephemeral attractions. Add in the availability of programming and prototyping technologies like Raspberri Pi and Arduino, and you get incredibly well designed shows with impressive show control, interactivity, and automation. Many of these attractions don't attempt to be "scary" or "frightening." Most just want to put on a good and professional show.

Attractions like Boney Island in Sherman Oaks, and House of Restless Spirits (No longer operating, unfortunately) have inspired a wave of D.I.Y. attraction making that has now made its way across the country.

If you're a themed entertainment professional living in a Halloween hot spot like Los Angeles, San Diego, or the Bay Area and you're NOT going out and seeing this stuff.. well then you're seriously missing out on some of the best, most subtle and creative work currently going on.



Jason McManus
Vice President - TEA
Western Division

SPEND WISELY

THE BENEFITS OF INTEGRATED COST MANAGEMENT

In themed entertainment, we focus heavily on the safety of our guests. We spend hours upon hours to make sure a certain ride system or show runs smoothly. But when it comes to our own project health, sometimes (and probably frequently) our costs get out of control. What would happen if we treated our project planning with the same care and thought as guest safety?

It's not exactly thrilling to consider the numbers when you're working on an innovative and exciting design, but when not managed correctly, the unfortunate alternative is loss of control over scope, schedule and budget, and this can significantly impact the viability of your project.



PHOTOS FROM SATE 2015

So why bother with cost management? Simple - because you can't afford not to when developing one-of-a-kind attractions! Unlike other industries, most themed entertainment projects are completely unique, which makes accurate cost forecasting and management that much more critical to the project's eventual success. Failing to manage costs effectively from the very start can end up costing your

organization millions of dollars – ultimately busting your budget and making for one unhappy owner.

Most projects have a set budget. Even if you're lucky enough to have an unlimited budget (And who really does?), everyone wants to get as much value for the client's investment as possible. To help ensure the highest ROI, detailed cost estimates are a key tool for our industry, and help achieve overall cost transparency throughout the design and construction process. A budgetary number is broken down into easier-to-understand components to help determine what's included and what isn't, and highlights items which appear out of line with expectations.



PHOTOS FROM SATE 2015

Successful projects are the ones that exceed expectations. One of the key benefits when incorporating cost management practices throughout all phases of a project's development is that it allows clients to track where the money is being spent. Strategically spending more money on highly visible and

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SOUNDING OFF

Sound and music are just a couple of the many tools at the disposal of the themed entertainment professional. Yet sound plays such an important role in the emotional tone of an attraction. As we get closer to Halloween and as I explore the year's new bigger and better haunted attractions, I'm reminded just how much of an impact a good sound design can have on the overall success of an attraction's creative intent. Many of the larger and more popular haunted attractions wouldn't be nearly as convincing without the carefully crafted and masterful sound design landscapes that make these places truly believable.

As you're exploring attractions this Halloween season, pay attention to how the sound affects your perception. It never hurts to rediscover the tools within your available kit.

ANDY GARFIELD

Member

TEA Western Division



SPEND WISELY

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creative elements that help provide unforgettable entertainment experiences are generally the most appreciated by the property guests and in turn, makes the biggest impact to the project's ROI.

But what if you're already underway with your project? For one, if your project is over budget, wouldn't you rather know how big the problem is now rather than later? No one wants unpleasant surprises, and having detailed up-to-date data means more informed decision making, allowing the project team to anticipate cost increases rather than just react to them down the road.

Changes on any project are inevitable, but you can at least be proactive and make informed decisions to reduce the overall risk. To help mitigate project risks, managed contingencies are one of the critical components to consider throughout a project - by implementing an integrated cost management process with contingencies allows for more accurate forecasting to manage risks throughout the development lifecycle. An integrated cost management process helps project leaders see how costs are trending against targets in real time and view current EFC (estimated forecast to complete) to ensure project cash flow. Earlier is always better when it comes to tackling budget issues as the number of available options to correct any red flags that pop up decreases as the design phase progresses.

As with almost all things, beginning earlier is always better, however it's never too late to start managing costs and gaining control over your project. So how about you? Is your project right for cost management?

When implementing an integrated method, using the target value approach and utilizing cost estimates as decision making tools instead of static reports, helps keep those involved with the design process informed with the latest information. This often-overlooked element provides a basis for sound decision-making and eliminates unpleasant project surprises from wasteful re-designs and painful scope cuts, to other major budget busting headaches.

Heather King/Jessica Busch/Jeremy Ulmer/Lisa Sachs
The Cumming Corporation



PHOTOS FROM THE TEA WESTERN DIVISION MIXER AT PANASONIC LABS

WESTERN DIVISION EVENTS

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING TEA WD EVENTS AND MIXERS

BE SURE TO CHECK WWW.TEACONNECT.ORG FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

GET CONNECTED

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK - Our goal is to better serve the needs of the many companies, individuals, and NextGens who make up our Western Division membership. If you have any ideas or suggestions for new events, mixers, or ways we can improve communication, please let us know by emailing Dave Price dprice@priceleisuregroup.com

GET INVOLVED - The many great events and mixers that you see are only made possible through the wonderful people who dedicate their time and efforts. We are always looking for new volunteers to help set up and staff events, plan events, and get involved. Contact Tricia Rodriguez tricia@madsystems.com if you are interested in volunteering.

GET CONNECTED - Have you set up a member profile on the new www.TEACONNECT.org? Member profiles are a great way to expand your reach and visibility within the industry. Log in today and try it out for yourself!

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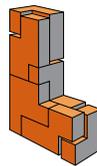
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