



Western North America Candidate

Ken Neville

Executive Producer
Manager, Story Experience Interactive
Meow Wolf
Primary Location: United States
Running for 1st term



ABOUT THE APPLICANT:

As an Executive Producer and manager of Meow Wolf's Story Experience Interactive team (following 15 years as a producer at Walt Disney Imagineering), I embrace story-first experience development and the adage that "no one is smarter than everyone". The MW mantra is to "Reimagine the paradigm of art and storytelling to make a positive difference in the world". A tall order for sure, but it will only happen by focusing on the power of many creative voices whose collective impact is greater than the sum of their parts. I believe the same can be said for the opportunities at the TEA. I view the TEA board as a two-way street. I hope to share my own expertise in developing both large and small experiences, and at the same time learn from others on the board and the passionate folks who make up the Themed Entertainment Association at large. I am constantly awed at how much there is to learn from others' experiences past and present. For most of my career, I have harnessed new technologies in creative ways to innovate new experiences. I am a proud member of the Producer's Guild and have an MFA in Screenwriting from the American Film Institute. A smattering of projects: interactive development for Meow Wolf exhibitions in Grapevine, TX, Denver and Las Vegas. Executive Producer for five years on the forthcoming "Fantasy Springs" expansion at Tokyo DisneySea. Producing the Thea award-winning Nemo & Friends SeaRider attraction for Tokyo DisneySea.

VISION FOR THE TEA

I bring a unique combination of work history to the TEA from having recent deep experience at both a niche art immersive and a global entertainment behemoth, working with internal experts and external vendors along the way. For 15 years at Walt Disney Imagineering, I managed large budgets and teams of experienced veterans. Internal teams often had decades of experience working in a specific specialty and optimized results through time-tested processes. For the last two years, I have witnessed magic in the MW development where the power comes not from the size of the budget

but from the ground roots assembly of collective voices, where systems are being instituted to smooth the production process but where the overwhelming goal is to keep the freshness of the voices of many. This has been a refreshing reminder to me of the power of “everyone”. I believe the combination of living in these two diverse worlds for the last 20 years has put me in a unique place to work with the many varied companies and individuals that comprise the Themed Entertainment Association.

SKILLS AND CORE COMPETENCIES

Not sure if this counts as a skill, but since most of my career has been spent on projects that use new technologies in creative ways to craft new forms of stories and experiences, I have developed a comfort with the unknown and encouraging teams to explore new experiences while managing risk to acceptable levels. For example, for My Magic +, we explored new ways to engage guests by catering experiences to their story preferences. On Spaceship Earth, we developed new methods of extracting a guests’ image from a ride photo and using that image in the development of the entertainment experience. On Buzz Lightyear Astro Blasters, we used an old system in a new way to capture guests’ scores and overlay them onto digital postcards from the attraction. In each of these cases, we prioritized innovation over invention, which is to say that we connected existing reliable systems into new experiences rather than inventing completely new processes, creating a safety net for development even while we explored new paths.