

Alton towers marketing post accident



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ALTON TOWERS REPORT

Alton Towers has been heavily suffering from the bad reputation of the accident happened on 2nd June 2015 which made “two young women on the Smiler ride suffered leg amputations and others suffered severe injuries when their carriage collided with a stationary carriage on the same track” (Health and Safety Executive, 2016). The company has lost a lot of money and their market value because of this incident:

- According to Peter Campbell for The Daily Mail (Alton Towers crash wipes £100 million from owner’s value as it looks set to lose millions in lost bookings, 2015), Alton tower has wiped almost £100 million from its value by this week’s crash and the company is set to lose millions in lost bookings. The company’s market value fell by £160million but it has since recovered some of the losses.
- Alton Towers saw a “significant” fall in visitor numbers after the accident, which resulted in the park shutting for four days. This means it makes £464, 000 a day on average – even it will be higher because it is summer. It is reported that Alton towers lost almost £1million fees in 2 of the days that the park closed. Moreover, many analysts and experts have also warned that people may lose their confidence in the firm could by the incident, leading to fewer people booking tickets in following seasons. Peter Campbell also mentioned that “There are also worries that it could knock appetite for theme park visits, which is crucial for Merlin as attractions including Thorpe Park and Chessington World of Adventures make up a significant part of its business” (Alton

Towers crash wipes £100 million from owner's value as it looks set to lose millions in lost bookings, 2015).

- The BBC News also reported the financial result to the owner that the sales at the group's resort theme parks division, which includes Alton Towers, fell 12.4% (Merlin see profits rise despite Alton Towers accident, 2016)
- Lack of using social media networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
 - Social media networks are one of the most effective and easiest ways to get to people all around the world. The number of social media networks users in the UK is extremely high with 32 million Facebook users, 15 million people using Twitter, 14 million people having an Instagram account and more users of other social networks. This is a big channel to the market and customers that Alton Towers has not invested and developed well enough to take the advantages. The Facebook fan page of Alton Tower has almost 1,4 million followers, especially only 5,5 thousand people follow Alton Towers Theme Park fan page, which is very low. As a result, Alton Towers has missed a lot of opportunities to widen the company's image and brand through social networks.
- Lack of promotion
 - Because Alton Towers theme park is only open for part of the year, it is difficult for them to carry out different events and promotions. In 2016, Alton Towers theme park was open from 29th March to 6th November, which means mostly summertime.

The ticket price is also high and people find it really expensive to attend at peak times. Moreover, Alton Towers theme park is located in a fairly rural location which may cause people difficulties to get there.

- Poor service
 - There have been a number of complaints from customers who had bad experiences at Alton Towers and Alton towers theme park on many reliable websites like tripadvisor. com. Most of them were about the poor customer service and interaction when they need. This may leave Alton Towers a negative reputation and bad impression when someone looking for the information to plan their trip at Alton Towers. Also Alton Towers does not provide a service after use well enough to satisfy customers.

A brand new marketing campaign is suggested for Alton Towers theme park to increase the company image after suffering the bad reputation from the last incident as well as to solve current marketing issues. The topic for the marketing campaign is a PHOTO CONTEST. It is all about sharing the pictures of the funniest moments in Alton Towers theme park and winning attractive prizes. The name of this campaign is “ Let’s laugh” and the hash tag is #letslaughatthemepark.

3. 1 CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

- Attract more customers:
 - Since the last accident in Alton tower theme park has caused a decrease in the number of visitors to the park, the company needs to fix this and get more people to here. Beside targeting

families in group as usual, this campaign will widen the target customers to the young people with the age from 15 to 40, especially social networks users to take advantages from this big channel to customers.

- Raising Alton Towers' image and brand through social network and modern techniques:
 - By sharing picture taken at Alton tower theme park with the hash tag #letslaughatthemepark , participants will help the company to introduce the brand and image to their friends and other people. Alton towers theme park will become popular not only in the UK, but also outside of the country and this can attract foreigners to come and visit the park. Because it is hard for people in the local areas to visit Alton Tower theme park after the unexpected incident, the company need to spread the brand and image outside the area or even go internationally to make it better.
- Reducing the bad reputation from last incident:
 - It is very hard to decrease the negative effects from that incident in a short time, but by carrying out a new campaign, Alton Towers theme park will have a chance to introduce the new and more advanced products, services and techniques to everyone. Gradually customers may accept it and continue to visit Alton Towers theme park and take part in the photo contest with attractive prizes.

3. 2 HOW TO TAKE PART IN AND WIN PRIZES

To take part in the “ Let’s laugh” photo contest, the contestants need to follow these rules to keep the contest clear and fair to everyone:

- Entry method:
 - Participants have to send their pictures taken at Alton Towers theme park to the official mail of Alton Towers with their information.
 - The photos will be uploaded everyday and kept in a daily album on Alton Towers theme park Facebook fan page weekly.
 - There will be 3 chosen photos each week based on the likes and shares. Then there will be an announcement about the winners and their prizes.
- Rules:
 - Every contestant needs to take at least one picture at the gate of Alton Towers theme park as a proof for their appearance on that day. This photo will be attached with others when the contestants send them to the official mail of Alton Towers. This weill keep the contest clear and fair to everyone.
 - The contestants need to like and follow Alton Towers theme park Facebook fan page and check their photos after they are uploaded. Then they have to tag at least 5 friends to the photos with the hash tag #letsclaughatthemepark and share them in public.
- Prizes:

- 1st : £3000, Free for 2 people all activities at Alton Towers theme park in their next visit, Free 1 double room 3 days and 2 nights at Alton Towers resort in their next visit.
- 2nd : £2000, Free 1 double room 2 days and 1 night at Alton Towers resort in their next visit.
- 3rd : £1000, Free for 2 people all activities at Alton Towers theme park in their next visit.
- All other participants will get discount 50% all activities for one person at Alton Towers in their next visit.

To carry out the campaign, the company needs to apply different ways to promote and attract attention from people.

- Banner and flyers:
 - It is a traditional way but always useful to get people notice.
- E-mail and direct mail:
 - Alton Towers will inform the photo contest to their previous customers by mailing them according to the information they provided when booking in the past. This not only helps to inform to the customers, but also makes the previous feel that they are treated well although they are not using the company service. It can fix the issue about poor customer service and service after use.
- Social media networks:
 - This is the key way to reach to people in this campaign because of the importance of taking advantages from social networks. By advertising on social networks and the official website as well,

Alton Towers can get a lot of attention and more followers when people want to looking for more information.

- Cooperation:
 - Alton Towers can let food and beverage brands hire space to set their retailers in Alton Towers theme park with discount cost as long as these brand agree to promote the “ Let’s laugh” photo contest on their website or fan page. On the other hand, Alton Towers can set a partnership with local schools and universities to offer trips for a large amount of student with lower price than usual if these schools and universities let Alton Towers promote inside the campus. Furthermore, the company can invite celebrities come and perform in the theme park to attract more visitors. Last but not least, the company can cooperate with some charity organizations to offer free trips for orphan kids. This is a smart step to increase the company image and brand after suffering bad reputation from the last accident.

- Timeline:
 - Because summer is a peak times for everyone to have a vacation, there are a lot of places for people to go beside Alton Towers theme park. This can limit the effectiveness the campaign so that winter will be a potential choice to set up the campaign. To be more specific, the campaign will be carried out in 1 month, from 1st December to 31th December which is in the Christmas Break.

- Measurement:

- By carrying out the campaign, Alton Towers theme park is open in at least 2 months in winter, which can get more customers in Christmas vacation. It is expected that Alton Towers theme park may collect £20 million fees in this part of the year.
 - More people will know about Alton Tower theme park with an increase of followers to 5 million expectedly. This means the company brand and image will become popular through social networks.
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- Prizes: £9 million
 - Banners and flyers: £1 million
 - Online advertising: £2 million
 - Total: £12 million

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