

Exploring the Career of a Theme Park and Entertainment Marketing Manager

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by James Alexander Traynham

Introduction: An Overview

The role of marketers in the entertainment and attraction industries is to create engaging narratives and experiences to boost brand value. In simple terms, marketers promote products and services to build brand loyalty through emotional connections and memorable interactions (Rivera, 2015, p. 14). Brand loyalty and long-term engagement depend directly on a term called relationship marketing. Relationship marketing has been shown to increase customer satisfaction by building trust, commitment, and loyalty (Rivera, 2015, p. 68). The Walt Disney Company has perfected this type of marketing. The whole brand identity of the company is based on their deep personal relationship with the consumer. Ben May, a former director at Disney said the company

is “a brand of emotional loyalty.” (personal communication, April 9th, 2024) Through this relationship, organizations like Disney can personalize experiences, build rapport, and boost customer satisfaction through customer relationships. Companies can tailor their offerings and services to meet and exceed customer expectations by using relationship marketing strategies to understand customer needs, preferences, and feedback.

By personalizing interactions and meeting customer needs, relationship marketing is a very effective way to build commitment and satisfaction in the minds of customers. Front-line workers often represent the brand to customers, shaping their opinions and delivering on brand promises. They can boost customer satisfaction, increase loyalty, and increase brand equity by supporting values and providing excellent service. Empowering and training front line workers well can be a long-term solution for improving the perceived image of the brand.

To maximize growth in their industry, attractions and entertainment marketers consistently and diligently base their decisions on market research and consumer insights. Marketing strategies and customer experiences depend on understanding consumer preferences, behaviors, and overall expectations (Rivera, 2015, p. 7). Market research helps marketers identify growth and innovation opportunities by revealing data points such as market trends, competitor analysis, and consumer demographics.

Market research and consumer insights are invaluable tools for marketers in the attractions and entertainment industry. By utilizing data-driven insights and understanding consumer behavior, marketers can make strategic decisions that drive brand growth, enhance customer satisfaction, and maintain a competitive edge in the dynamic entertainment market (Rivera, 2015, p. 28). Using these research methods, entertainment companies like Disney and

Universal have been able to expand their reach far beyond what was thought possible, in no small part due to the data collected by these guests.

To grasp a full understanding of theme park brand equity, it requires collaboration with many different departments, which includes company stakeholders like executive managers, front-line workers, and their customers. Collaboration with stakeholders allows for the exploration of different perspectives, identification of key challenges the company faces, opportunities they can act upon, and co-creation of knowledge that informs strategic decision-making and allows operational improvements (Rivera, 2015, p. 15). The tracking of brand perception, customer engagement, and market share can be accomplished through the use of quantitative analysis of customer feedback, surveys, and financial data. This can assist businesses in evaluating marketing campaigns (Rivera, 2015, p. 40).

The purpose of this paper is to explore a career as a marketing manager for theme parks and the broader entertainment industry. The topics investigated include job responsibilities, as well as an overview of the industry. This paper will include market trends, as well as knowledge and skills that are necessary for success. There will also be websites and publications that are related to the industry, along with their benefits. The paper will also have an action plan to pursue this career. A thorough self-analysis is conducted based on the research findings. This research is based on websites, books, databases, articles, trade publications, and an interview with an industry professional.

Job Responsibilities

Entertainment marketing managers in the industry oversee advertising the business, its goods and services. (Elhajjar, 2023, p. 4). This entails showcasing the features and advantages

of the product to the intended audience. Marketing managers utilize advertising, public relations, and digital and social media platforms in order to expand their reach to new audiences.

To effectively promote the company's products and services, entertainment marketing managers analyze market trends, consumer behavior, and key competitor activities. They develop strategies for marketing, public relations, and media in order to entice customers and give an explanation of the value of their product (Elhajjar, 2023, p. 4). promotions to new markets and customer acquisition by understanding target audience needs and preferences. Back in 2023, Disneyland Resort added a new feature to its mobile app that lets park visitors see where other guests have been. The collection of this kind of information not only reveals the number of people who are visiting and the attractions that are most popular, but it also enables the company to leverage that data to make recommendations and provide promotions that are specific to each individual visitor.

One of the most important responsibilities of entertainment marketing managers is to develop an organizational marketing strategy (Elhajjar, 2023, p. 4). This requires understanding business goals, target markets, and deep collaboration with key stakeholders. In order to achieve their goals, marketing managers create a detailed marketing plan. The contents of the plan can vary from company to company, but typically they include the overall budget for ad spend, how much is allocated to each platform, and how long the campaign is in effect for.

Due to the massive size of the operation, theme park marketing necessitates effective allocation of advertising funds and management of available resources. To plan strategies and campaigns, marketing managers must look at both short and long-term schedules, budgets, and resource needs (Elhajjar, 2023, p. 11). These managers make sure that the theme park's needs are met and that the company's financial goals are achieved each year. By dividing monetary

resources among an assortment of projects, marketing managers get the best return on investment (ROI). Marketing managers make sure that their efforts are in line with the organization's overall goals. They also help the company grow and succeed by contributing to the creation of the overall strategy of the company.

As is widely known, cultures vary from country to country, even city to city, Because of this, campaigns must be altered depending on where they are shown, Marketing managers, especially in experiential sectors like entertainment, have to make separate operational marketing plans for each area in which the campaigns are run (Elhajjar, 2023, p. 4). It is very important for marketing managers to make detailed operational marketing plans that spell out the exact steps, deadlines, and materials that are needed to carry out marketing strategies successfully in multiple locations.

Entertainment marketing managers are responsible for supervising public relations and social media campaigns. These marketing managers plan, implement, and oversee a variety of marketing initiatives aimed at promoting products and services, increasing brand awareness, and engaging target audiences. By developing and implementing marketing campaigns, marketing managers aim to create awareness, generate leads, drive sales, and build brand loyalty. Furthermore, PR activities are critical for managing the company's public image, handling media relations, and communicating key messages to stakeholders (Elhajjar, 2023, p. 4). Social networking strategies use social media to get in touch with customers, build relationships, and spread the word about a brand.

The best way for marketing managers to carry out their plans, make campaigns successful, and meet business goals is to put together a skilled and harmonious marketing team. Recruiting the right talent with diverse skill sets and expertise is essential for building a high-

performing marketing team (Elhajjar, 2023, p. 4). Once the team is put together, marketing managers are very important for making sure that everyone on the team is working together on the overall marketing strategy and goals. By nurturing a talented and motivated marketing team, marketing managers can enhance productivity, creativity, and innovation within the marketing department. It can be very stressful working in marketing, late nights with strict deadlines and mounting pressure to deliver results to your employer, fostering employees with a strong work ethic is paramount for success. “More than anything, you have to have a good work ethic” (B. May, personal communication, April 9th, 2024). With the rapid change in the market that happens day to day you the team always needs to be on their toes and be ready to adjust accordingly.

With that team that you put together; you need make sure you are getting an acceptable ROI, in physical experiences, like theme parks, it is essential to demonstrate the value of marketing initiatives. By analyzing key performance indicators such as ticket sales, streaming numbers, social media interactions, website traffic, and audience feedback (Elhajjar 2023, p. 5). Employees with direct interaction with guests nearly always represent the brand to customers and shape their overall opinions. Employees play a significant role in delivering on the brand promise and creating memorable experiences for customers (Rivera, 2015, p. 15). Front-line staff can boost customer satisfaction, loyalty, and brand equity by supporting brand values and providing excellent service. How they interact with customers, address their concerns, and exceed expectations can greatly impact the brand's market perception. Thus, organizations need to empower and train front-line staff to act as brand ambassadors to ensure consistency and improve the image of the brand.

By fostering teamwork, communication, and synergy among team members, entertainment marketing managers can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of their

campaigns, leading to better outcomes and results (Elhajjar, 2023, p. 4). When the team works well together and is on the same page, they can make plans that are cohesive and effective with the target audience and shape the business as a whole.

When it comes to marketing for theme parks, working with the sales department to come up with custom plans for new and existing products both inside and outside the park is key to making more money and giving customers a better experience (Elhajjar, 2023, p. 4). By allowing for flexibility in questioning and encouraging open-ended responses, semi-structured interviews have provided valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of managers, employees, and customers within amusement parks. Semi-structured interviews added nuance to the research and provided practical recommendations for improving attraction and entertainment brand equity and customer engagement. These interviews enhanced our understanding of relationship marketing, brand equity, and customer satisfaction, revealing how part-time marketers affect brand perception and loyalty (Rivera, 2015, p. 68). By working on strategies for new products and making existing products more visible, these employees play a key role in getting people interested in and going to the parks, which directly helps the business succeed and thrive.

A Day In The Life

TIME	ACTIVITY
6:30 AM	Check emails and review industry news on websites like Marketing Dive and Theme Park Insider.
8:00 AM	Morning huddle with the marketing team to discuss ongoing campaigns, review insights, and prioritize tasks for the day.
9:00 AM	Brainstorm marketing ideas and strategies based on market research and

	consumer behavior analysis
11:00 AM	Coordinate with PR and social media departments to plan upcoming campaigns and partnerships.
1:00 PM	Budget planning and resource allocation for marketing initiatives, including securing sponsorship deals and funding.
3:00 PM	Review performance metrics and analyze the effectiveness of recent marketing campaigns. Adjust strategies based on the data.
5:00 PM	Debriefing session with the team to discuss accomplishments, address challenges, and outline priorities for the next day.
6:00 PM	Check the calendar for tomorrow's meetings and deadlines. Browse industry publications for late-breaking news and insights.
After 6:00 PM	Wrap up the day, leave the office, and prepare for the next day's tasks and challenges.

Industry Overview

People who want to work in entertainment marketing usually start with entry-level jobs such as market research analysts or digital marketing assistants. In these roles, they handle social media platforms, track digital campaigns, and broad consumer trends. In the theme park industry, there are many roles regarding sales, which can be directly tied to marketing. Many companies, like Universal Orlando, lump their marketing and sales departments together. There are some jobs that are in the field, such as the service and guest relations desk, which can be opportunities to increase sales from individual guests by offering upgrades to their experience.

As individuals acquire more knowledge and experience, they may be able to advance to jobs that are of a more intermediate level, such as digital marketing specialists or guest experience managers. If they were to take on these positions, they would be responsible for developing additional campaigns, managing guest services, and managing online advertisements.

In the future, some professionals may have the opportunity to advance their careers and take on more senior positions, such as Chief Marketing Officer, Director of Corporate Marketing, or, in the case of the man I interviewed, Ben May, a Global Director of Corporate Alliances. In these roles, they are responsible for leading strategic marketing initiatives like creating the direction for major projects like entire corporate rebrands, managing large teams, and establishing the overall brand identity and position of the company in the market. (PR Newswire) Despite the fact that there has not been a significant change yet, this is something that is likely to change in the future as a result of technological advancements in areas such as artificial intelligence, which can streamline the process of campaign production.

Trends

These days, it is all about social media influencer partnerships in digital entertainment marketing. The theme park industry is no exception. Sponsored content featuring the influencer's experiences, images from their travels, and advice for their followers is commonplace among these partnerships (Herup, 2013, p. 14). Companies like Disney and Universal can reach a wider audience and engage with potential customers on a more personal and relatable level by collaborating with social media influencers who have a big following and impact on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok.

Currently, interactive mobile apps are essential for improving the visitor experience at theme parks and giving guests useful information and entertainment. These apps offer a wide

variety of features and functionalities to cater to different aspects of the guest experience, including in-park activities, itinerary planning, and navigation. “A mobile application, a form of digital marketing, promotes the tourism destination in a way that allows for user interaction where marketing meets a fairly new medium: the smartphone” (Herup, 2013, p. 9).

Theme parks are embracing interactive social media campaigns to engage with followers, showcase user-generated content, host contests, and provide sneak peeks at what goes on behind the scenes. This helps to build excitement and a sense of community among fans. Disney Parks sets itself apart by using dedicated Facebook pages, Disneyland Today and DCA Today, for the Disneyland Resort theme parks located in Anaheim, California (Herup, 2013, p. 24). Real-time updates on park events are available on these specific pages, along with information on visitors' expected wait times and brief wait times for popular rides. In addition, the pages frequently have posts that highlight the variety of food options found within the parks, with an emphasis on unusual desserts and treats that might not be available frequently. By providing park visitors with timely and relevant updates, this real-time information improves the overall guest experience and makes for a more enjoyable and informed visit to the Disneyland Resort.

With an emphasis on content marketing and storytelling, carefully selecting themes, architecture, costumes, and settings, theme parks can build a distinct image and differentiate themselves from competitors (Wong & Cheng, 1999, p. 3). Memorable themed experiences increase the likelihood of visitors sharing their experiences with others, leading to effective word-of-mouth advertising, which is the most effective type of marketing. Content storytelling and marketing, along with effective theming, allow for the coordination of retail merchandise, potentially increasing guests' retail spending within the park. Universal Orlando Resort famously

set a new level of expectations with these kinds of experiences with their Wizarding World of Harry Potter, which led to record breaking profits and attendance for the park.




Professional Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes Necessary for Success

Skills	Explanation On Why It Is Necessary for Success
Creativity	A key component of a successful marketing strategy for theme parks and entertainment is creativity. To create memorable campaigns and experiences, the industry mainly relies on creative thinking. Marketers use their imagination and inventiveness to create interactive projects, events, and themed campaigns that improve visitors' experiences at parks. Creativity is key to drawing in customers, whether it is used to create immersive attractions or captivating social media content.
Environmental Awareness	Theme Park marketers need to show that they are committed to environmentally friendly practices and initiatives considering the growing concerns about sustainability and environmental conservation. Encouraging eco-friendly behavior, putting green initiatives into action, and informing visitors about the park's sustainability efforts can all help to improve brand reputation and draw in eco-aware tourists.
Data Interpretation and Analysis	Making informed marketing decisions and attaining optimal performance require the processes of data interpretation and analysis. Data analytics tools and techniques are employed by entertainment marketers to improve their comprehension of visitor demographics, behavior patterns, and preferences. Through the implementation of data-driven marketing strategies, they are able to efficiently target particular demographics with customized promotions and messaging. Creating these types of promotions is crucial, as 73% of consumers only engage with marketing messages tailored to their interests (ADFIXUS, 2024).
Effective and Efficient Communication	Marketers must possess the ability to communicate their ideas clearly and concisely to park management and creative teams, ensuring comprehension and alignment with the overall vision (Capuzzo, 2021). Additionally, developing compelling campaigns and promotions requires effective collaboration with outside partners like sponsors and media agencies. Collaborative efforts are facilitated, and successful marketing campaigns are realized when there is effective communication.
Flexibility and Adaptability	In the past, I have had trouble with this, but I have worked very hard at it with some success. Adaptability is essential in an industry that is constantly changing, such as entertainment marketing. In order to stay ahead of the competition and satisfy guests, marketers need to be nimble enough to

	quickly adjust to shifts in consumer preferences, technological advancements, and trends. Being adaptable allows marketers to seize new opportunities and overcome challenges effectively.
Customer Service Skills	Theme park marketers need to have great customer service skills to make sure visitors have a great time and build strong relationships with them. Marketers need to know and predict what guests will want, respond quickly to complaints, and give guests memorable experiences that go above and beyond what they expect. This will ultimately make guests loyal and likely to recommend your business.
Brand Management	For a strong and consistent brand identity across all touchpoints, it is important to have good brand management. To build brand loyalty and trust among guests, marketers must stick to the park's brand values, personality, and messaging in all their work. Brand management that is consistent helps the park's unique position in the market and improve or maintain its reputation.
Ever-Evolving Technology Skills	To stay competitive and come up with new ideas, theme park marketers need to be able to use new technologies and platforms. Marketing professionals should use technology to get guests more involved and make experiences they will remember, like virtual reality (VR) experiences, mobile apps, or augmented reality (AR) attractions.
Attention to Detail	Marketers at theme parks need to pay close attention to the little things to make sure that campaigns, events, and guest experiences go smoothly. From scrutinizing promotional materials for accuracy to meticulously planning logistics for events, marketers need to maintain high standards of quality and precision in their work.
Networking	Theme park marketers need to build and keep strong professional networks in order to stay up to date on industry trends, make partnerships, and get to useful resources and opportunities. Networking well helps marketers get to know their peers in the industry, media reps, influential people, and other important people, which makes it easier to work together and share information.

Websites, Blogs, or Publications to Follow

Title of Publication	Explanation of the site.	Why is it important to read?	Photos

<p>Theme Park Insider</p>	<p>Theme Park Insider provides up-to-date information on theme parks, including news about newly opened attractions and buzz from fans. The website offers incredibly in-depth analyses, sneak peeks, and forecasts regarding the industry.</p>	<p>Marketing professionals in the theme park and entertainment sectors can find information and data on what attracts guests, creates conversation for their product or service, and can find new attractions that may influence competition within the industry.</p>	
<p>Blooloop</p>	<p>Blooloop looks into the attraction industry from a business angle. Articles on guest experience design, technology trends, marketing tactics, and eco-friendly projects can be found on the website.</p>	<p>Blooloop allows theme park marketers to stay informed about industry advancements, learn how to manage successful parks, and process information to develop effective campaigns.</p>	
<p>IAAPA News Daily</p>	<p>The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) publishes a newsletter called IAAPA News Daily, which covers global news about the attraction sector. Topics covered include new laws, industry conferences, park expansions, and developing "best practices."</p>	<p>Marketers stay updated about global industry events and acquire insights into the possible effects of new laws or trends on advertising strategies, which helps them stay relevant and adjust to changes.</p>	

Organizations To Join

<p>Name of Organization</p>	<p>The Benefits of Membership</p>
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IAAPA	IAAPA is a trade association that promotes innovation and safe operations in the amusement sector. For those who work in or want to work in the attractions and entertainment industry, joining this group is a great way to get access to a large professional network. Notably, IAAPA organizes the largest trade show in the world for the attraction industry, the IAAPA Expo, which takes place in Orlando every year.
Themed Entertainment Association	The Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) represents the attraction industry, offering a broader focus on themed entertainment compared to IAAPA. Positioned as a nonprofit representative body, TEA membership is accessible with minimal eligibility requirements. Student membership, which is priced at \$55 annually, is significantly lower than the standard rate of \$255 per year. The only requirement for membership is that "the member must be involved in creating immersive themed entertainment, experiences, or educational content, including the planning, design, development, construction, and/or the creation of content" (Themed Entertainment Association, Membership applications).
American Marketing Association (AMA)	There are several benefits for professionals in the theme park and overall entertainment industry when they become members of the American Marketing Association (AMA). Members of the American Marketing Association (AMA) have access to a large network of marketing experts, which offers chances for networking, collaboration, and even mentoring. White papers, webinars, articles, and other exclusive resources covering a broad range of marketing trends and topics are available from AMA. UCF has its own chapter of the AMA, of which I am currently an active member.
Future Theme Park Leaders Association	The FTPLA (Future Theme Park Leaders Association) isn't necessarily a typical organization to join for marketing, but it does help immensely if you want to focus on theme parks and entertainment. There are no significant ties to any parent branches outside of UCF, such as the American Marketing Association, and it is solely a student-run club. All of FTPLA's connections come from within its former alumni.

Self Analysis

Financial literacy is one of the skills I have that is a necessity to work as a marketing manager in the theme park and entertainment business. By "financial literacy," I mean that I need to know how to make a budget, how to divide up resources, and how to figure out how much some assets are worth compared to others. Personally, I believe that everyone should have that level of knowledge. I believe it is necessary to be successful in this field since it is one of the

main things I will have to deal with when I am trying to get projects going. It is important to know how much advertising costs on different platforms and decide if that makes sense for my promotion. My campaign's success depends on being resourceful with the budget I have to spend and choosing the option that will hopefully bring in the most return.

Secondly, I believe I would need to be very good at data analysis if I wanted to work in theme park marketing. This and financial acumen sort of go hand in hand. Marketing is all about taking data, figuring out what it means, and seeing what works best. To make well-informed marketing decisions and achieve peak performance, data interpretation and analysis are essential processes. Marketers can enhance their understanding of visitor demographics, behavior patterns, and preferences through the utilization of data analytics tools and techniques. With the use of data-driven marketing strategies, I can reach out to certain demographics with tailored messages and promotions. Since 73% of consumers only engage with marketing messages tailored to their interests, marketers want to personalize their promotions (ADFIXUS, 2024). In fact, I think that this skill set is just as important, if not more so, than being financially aware, since it is what someone in my ideal position will be doing all day.

Thirdly, I believe that in order to work as a theme park marketer I need to be able to think strategically. It is not often that marketing is done in response to something. It is all about what my projects can accomplish over time. There are some exceptions, but overall, entertainment marketing is a long-term game. That's why teaser trailers for big budget films start showing up around a year or so before release. A few years before a new park opens, I can start a conversation before I even make an announcement by placing my ads strategically. For instance, Universal has been doing this with their theme park, Epic Universe, for years. To create a marketing campaign that is successful, what I essentially need to do is strategically place ads that

will remind consumers to choose my brand over my competitors. I think that I usually think about the big picture as much as possible. That is one of my strengths: I can take my emotions out of a situation and then look at it logically and strategically to figure out how to move forward.

Then I think an important skill is being able to manage projects. When there are a lot of people who need to approve something, marketing can take a long time. For some projects to go through, it is very important to keep everything in order and make sure that all the parts stay where they belong and on time. I consider myself to be someone who lives and dies by their calendar, and I make it a point to be very timely, so it is a very useful skill. In my opinion, having strong time management abilities is closely related to having strong project management abilities, and vice versa.

The next thing we should talk about is I.T. skills. Now, one does not have to be great with computers and know everything there is to know about how the Internet works to work in entertainment marketing, but it helps. A lot of people don't know everything about technology, and that's okay, but having up-to-date knowledge does make a lot of the processes that used to be slow and meticulous exponentially faster. I am a tech guy at heart, and I try to stay up to date on the latest events in that sector. This knowledge allows me to understand certain changes in the entertainment marketing ecosystem that I wouldn't otherwise have.

Lastly, I think education is a crucial factor for success. The majority of entertainment marketers eventually earn their master's degree in business administration or marketing to broaden their employment prospects. Although it's not necessarily required to have a master's to work in the sector, it is essentially necessary in order to obtain some of the higher-paying

professions. I plan on getting a master's degree in either business administration or marketing eventually after I complete my undergrad.

Conclusion

The role of a theme park and entertainment marketing manager is a dynamic and demanding one. It requires strong creative, analytical, and communication abilities, along with an in-depth understanding of the industry itself. Successful theme park marketers must stay up to date on the latest trends, technologies, and consumer preferences. This entails being adaptable in the face of changes and constantly innovating to attract and retain customers.

Marketing managers play a critical role in fostering brand loyalty and driving growth in the entertainment industry. Their work helps to shape the guest experience and create lasting memories. It is essential for individuals aspiring to enter this field to acquire the necessary skills, gain industry-specific knowledge, and develop a robust professional network.

Furthermore, to ensure that my knowledge and skills are constantly evolving, I am actively involved in organizations such as the American Marketing Association. Continuing my education, attending industry events, and reading relevant publications will ensure an up-to-date skill set that allows me to remain an asset in the ever-changing world of theme park and entertainment marketing.

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Appendix A - Interview

**Note: My video interview with Ben May went far longer than expected, and he gave delightful answers. During our conversation, Mr. May generously shared insights into his background and

offered valuable advice for my career journey. I genuinely appreciated his openness and willingness to provide guidance. Considering the extensive nature of our discussion, I'll be condensing certain segments and paraphrasing key points to align with the question-and-answer format required for this paper.

Traynham: What was your job title before your retirement?

May: I worked as The Global Director Corporate Alliances at The Walt Disney Company

Traynham: When you look for somebody to hire them for a team, are there any types of personality traits that you look for in a candidate?

May: Well, adaptability is one, I think. You know, the word that just hit me is acceptance. I would like somebody who understands what we're trying to do, who believes in it, and who has the skill set to be able to support it. So, you have to have the skill set. But more than anything, you have to have a work ethic and be someone who wants to contribute, because that's what people look for. They look for passion. So, you want to have passion, but it can't be unbridled. You have to be able to have that. Also, I would say that they want to be part of the team that gets it done. The first thing I would say is, have you studied our mission? Do you know what our vision is? Do you know what we're trying to do, you know?

So anytime you're in an interview, or whatever it is, it isn't what you're going to get. It's what you're going to give. And then I would ask that question to whoever's going to get on that team? What is your contribution? What could your contribution to us be? How would we measure the value that you bring to us? You may know how to do a lot of different things, but uniquely, what's got your name on it?

Traynham: Talk to me about your new venture with The Leadership Crucible.

May: I sit on a board of a group of us called the Leadership Crucible. I worked with a fire chief on a textbook about marketing and stuff. And he said, “Hey, you know I want you to be- I want you to come on board with me and see if we can make this thing work.” And I said, “I want the right people plugged into the right places... Let's get her cause she knows finance. I'm going to get this guy. He's a big legal guy, this guy knows branding. He knows this, this, and this. And when you put all these people together, you have this freaking brain trust of people. They're so damn smart, and you just get out of the way. Just let them go and do their thing. You know, there's nothing more gratifying than when you have a group of people when I can do my part, but I know someone else has got my back. And that last part is so important.

Traynham: You worked in the wine business in sales and marketing, can you tell me a bit more about that experience?

May: I'm a wine guy, right? So I go to a restaurant and I say “Hey, look! Let me see your wine list” Right? “So here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to analyze this wine list for you. And I'm going to increase your profitability. I'm also going to increase the quality but I'm going to put a few of my products on your menu and I'm going to demonstrate to you how they work.” I used to call it a profit synopsis. No one else did that. They always used to go “Oh, we got 5 gold medals, and my cabernet is better than his.” I went “no dude that's not going to do it. There are a million cabernets, that's not it. I want to know who's going to make money for me?” Right? So then what I would say is, “Okay, well, this has a slow turn profit. We'll take that one out, you know this one's high profit, but it didn't turn fast enough” So I'd start plugging them in. Then what I would

do is an extension and say, “Okay, well, here's where you are today, but here's where you will be in a year. When you start applying these numbers it's going to turn over a lot faster.”


Traynham: You mentioned earlier that you like to be in your own lane, can you elaborate?

May: That's one thing that I did my whole career. It was like, if everyone's going in this direction, I'm not going with you guys, I don't want to be with you guys, because now you're going to put me into a category with all you guys, and I don't want to be part of you guys. Why? Because I'm so competitive, I just don't want to be in that. I don't want to be with you guys and when they say, “Okay, now, you're the regional director of whatever. And we have 5 directors, and every year we get together and we measure you guys.” I’m like, you're not measuring me. I'm going to go over here. I'll create my own. Then when someone starts getting close and I think I'm going to get competitive, then I go create another one. But it's like as long as you can uniquely create your own thing, you're always going to get more money for it, as long as you can prove the value of it.

Appendix B - Action Plan

Semester	Details	Associated Photo
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<p>Spring 2024</p>	<p>Continue with my courses at UCF, continue discussing with my advisors about making an exemption of the new 75 credit hour rule switching from theme park management to a broader and expedited entertainment management degree to support the vision of my future career.</p> <p>Join and continue to participate in clubs like the American Marketing Association and FTPLA.</p> <p>Apply for internships at both Universal Orlando and beyond</p>	
<p>Summer 2024</p>	<p>I hope to get started with an internship with Universal Orlando with their Innovation Marketing team.</p> <p>I will consistently read publications like IAAPA Daily and Bloolooop to stay up to date with industry information</p> <p>I plan to continue my independent research with Digital Entertainment Marketing in relation to theme parks.</p>	
<p>Fall 2024</p>	<p>After the summer is over, I am hopeful that my performance during my internship that I will secure a part time job or an extension of my internship in the Dugal Marketing department at Universal</p> <p>When I finish my internship I will have gain my skills such as improved project and time management, better my analytic interpreting skills and increase my knowledge of the timeline of launching a campaign.</p>	
<p>Spring/ Summer 2024</p>	<p>During this time my current housing lease ends. I plan on moving out to an apartment closer to both work and school, my current commute is 45 minutes each way and this change will allow me to be more productive due to the less time driving to industry events.</p> <p>I will also finalize memberships with IAAPA and the TEA to secure broader industry connections</p>	

	and expand my network.	
Fall 2025	This will be the semester that I graduate, during the semester, I am hopeful I can find a full time job working at one of the theme park local to Orlando, or beyond, I do have interest working with Universal on their Las Vegas experience, and I am hopeful that my continued experience in the parks division will allow me to move around as I please.	

Proof of Writing Center Appointment

To: James Traynham <alextraynham@ucf.edu>

Dear James,

The following is a summary of your UCF visit on Monday, 04/01/24.

Visit login/logout: 12:02pm to 12:53pm

Subject: HFT1000

Reason: Consultation required for class

Notes: Hello James!

Thank you so much for joining me today to go over your HFT career research paper on entertainment marketing. After explaining your paper holistically, you were concerned with your paper meeting the specified requirements and APA citations. We decided to compare the rubric to your paper and found a few missing requirements that you can easily add: you were missing a few tables that you already had the content for, you just need to format them into tables. We also found that your introduction was a bit long so we discussed condensing that to up to 2-3 paragraphs.

Once we reviewed the rubric, we moved into APA formatting and you'll have to adjust the In-Text citations after the session to add in the commas and delete the periods before the parentheses (Author, Year, Page #). ← Like that. After all the formatting was done, we noticed your paper was 18 pages long. Once you add in the tables, your paper should be shorter but if it's still too long, we discussed condensing the paper wherever necessary. Your next steps (after implementing these adjustments) is to begin working on your Plan to Action timeline and interview transcription. The format of the timeline should be similar to the Day-In-The-Life table and have similar content to your Self-Analysis.

I wish you all the best with your career paper and I cannot wait to see you in the UWC soon!

Thank you for visiting the University Writing Center at UCF,
Hannah

University Writing Center
<http://uwc.cah.ucf.edu>

Professor Deb's Feedback on Rough Draft

1. Remove the outline format and convert it into the final paper format.
2. Utilize the video instructions provided in the video assignment.
3. Fully justify the paragraphs.
4. Tighten up the spacing between paragraphs.
5. Introduction: The introduction is comprehensive; consider condensing some content.
6. Strong in-text citations.
7. Job Responsibilities section: Consider tightening paragraphs.
8. Day in the Life section: Ensure clarity and coherence.
9. Industry Overview: Include theme park industry statistics and a list of Theme Park Management positions.
10. Trends: Provide thorough analysis.
11. Knowledge, Skills & Attitudes section: A table is needed; comply with all rubric directions. Tighten up the first column in the table.
12. Association to Join section: A table is needed; comply with all rubric directions.
13. Websites, Blogs, and Industry Publications to Follow: A table is needed; comply with all rubric directions.
14. Self-analysis: Use only first person. Move References to the top of the page. Utilize APA resources for final submission. References need formatting edits (indents, capitalization, italics).