Port Aventura: From Theme Park to Resort

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Abstract

Since its inception as a theme park in 1992, and aiming to adjust to a seasonal adjusted demand, Port Aventura had invested heavily in new shows, rides, hotels, golf courses, a convention centre, and a shopping mall. Yet, such evolution from a theme park to a resort had posed new challenges for the executive team of Port Aventura. In particular, whereas as a resort the commercial activity had focused on aggregated statistical information from customers, as a resort they needed to know and target individual customers. However, this new one-to-one marketing focus was not supported by the existing information systems of the company. The case is situated in the mid-2009 when the CEO requests the CFO and the CIO to find a solution that addresses the commercial needs of the resort. The case discussion takes students to discuss and assess the business problems and relate them with the existing information systems. Students will also have to analyze different alternatives for the information systems proposed in the case and develop a deployment plan for the alternative they chose.

Keywords: data integration; marketing one-to-one; customer relationship management; data warehousing; theme park, resort

1 The teaching note is available from joan.rodon@esade.edu to instructors
Introduction

It was Saturday, May 23, 2009 and the weather forecast predicted a clear, sunny day. With the Spanish school year having just ended, it was one of the first days of a large influx of visitors to Port Aventura. The resort was operating at full capacity. It was past noon and Fernando Aldecoa, Director of Finance of Port Aventura, was on watch duty walking through the park. Watch duty was a practice that had been implemented years ago and affected all managers and directors, who rotated duty—a watch duty every 4 weeks—in order to spend an entire day inside the theme park, and watch duty didn’t end until the last car left the parking lot. Watch duty was recognized as hard but extremely useful in order to “live the business”: walking through the theme park, attending shows, eating at the restaurants, visiting the golf courses and the hotels. In short, it put you in the customer’s shoes.

Fernando walked by one of the areas of amusement park known as China, one of the five areas of the theme park next to Mediterrania, Polynesia, the Far-West and Mexico. The China area recreated the landscape and the buildings of the Asian giant. China is where the biggest attraction of the park was located: Dragon Khan. In the vicinity of Dragon Khan, Fernando had agreed to meet Mercedes de Pablo, Managing Director of the resort, who was also on watch duty that day.

“Boy is it hot today, Fernando! What a day to have watch duty.” commented Mercedes amicably.

“With the wind coming from the west today, we’ll have the water and ice cream trolleys working at full capacity”, joked Fernando.

Both had agreed to meet for lunch and they headed to La Hacienda restaurant, located in the area of the park set in Mexico. On the way to the restaurant they consulted their PDA’s which told them the number of visitors who were then inside the park as well as a forecast at closing and a comparison of these figures with the daily budget estimates made by the Planning department.

“What a day!” commented Fernando. “If we have 31,000 visitors now, we’ll reach 36,000 with afternoon ticket sales. I think Planning has hit the target again.”

Meanwhile Mercedes looked around her. The way she was dressed, with PDA in hand and a walkie-talkie dangling from her belt, as well as the fact that she wasn’t soaked, was peculiar. But it wasn’t as peculiar as the 8 guests in the line opposite hers. They were wearing pleated pants, immaculate polo shirts and ID tags from a well-known insurance company.

“I believe next year’s budget is ambitious given the current crisis environment.” commented one of them.

“Yes.” replied his partner. “But the chance to develop our national expansion can be a great leap forward for the company. We must be ready.”

Mercedes was listening to the conversation when Fernando said, “They rented the Chinese theatre for the day and are presenting the company’s strategic areas for the coming years. They’ve brought together all the territorial delegates and the department heads, which should be around 200 people. The CEO comes here every summer with his family. He lives near Tarragona. He’s a regular customer. He wanted to bring his entire team here to give a different feel to the meetings that they do every year.”

“When we inaugurate the convention center”, continued Fernando, “we’ll be able to hold a greater number of corporate events and offer differentiating services.”

“What makes us different”, replied Mercedes, “is that they can spend the rest of the day in the park, ride rides, carry out group activities, spend all day outdoors; in short, they can work and really disconnect at the same time!”

“Good day. Will there be two for lunch?” asked the restaurant receptionist.

Fernando replied shaking his head yes, when the girl replied, “We’ll have your table ready in a minute; wait here please.”

“Fernando”, commented Mercedes, “I’ve been thinking about the different types of customers we currently have. I think it’s time that we know them a little better.”

“We’ve been adapting our commercial strategy to the different customers”, replied Fernando, “we have park customers, hotel customers, golf customers, corporate customer who hold events. The commercial department is
doing a great job of knowing them better: they conduct surveys, they know the customer segments by nationality, age, length of stay by park zone, family units…they even know if the customers have liked the rides or not! We know the customer profiles very well and we are doing a great job of adapting to them.”

“I am not referring to the work of the commercial department.” said Mercedes. “What I mean is that we don’t need averages, majorities or standard deviations. We need to know each customer! Where do they eat? How much did they spend? Did they stay at the hotels? Do they come to the park 5 times every season? Do they play golf? We have to be able to recognize them when they arrive at hotel reception. And then, send an e-mail when they return home in order to know if they have had a good stay. And in addition, we need to send them a greeting on their child’s birthday. Are you following me?”

“Mercedes, look around you. How many of these visitors we know their names? Maybe 5 or 10% perhaps? It’s difficult to know every customer. The technologies we have weren’t designed for that. We’re not a bank! And you’re not only talking about knowing their names, but also their preferences, their opinions, how much they spend …” replied Fernando.

“We have to reach a point where we know all the corporate event participants and be able to offer them special deals so they come to play golf. We have to make sure they know about the hotels and then bring their families on vacation. Another example is customers who have season passes. I don't believe that we don’t know which season pass holder comes the most during the year, or which one has eaten most often in our restaurants. We should have some details about some of them!” responded Mercedes.

“We have that type of information.” replied Fernando. “But the volume of information this generates is huge and we are still devising ways on how to collect it. Right now we’re considering different application scenarios that could help with this type of cross cut view you’ve mentioned. But on the other hand, we want something that will serve for the whole resort. Customers who have season passes are a small group.”

“Come with me, please. Your table is ready,” interrupted the frightened waitress

“Serving 4,000 meals would be enough to frightened anyone”, thought Mercedes, “especially if it’s your first day at work as it appeared to be the case with the poor girl.”

“Poor thing. Today’s her baptism by fire” commented Mercedes out loud.

But Fernando wasn’t listening. While passing through the different dining areas and tables he was thinking about what Mercedes had requested. Perhaps we do need to know our customers better, but… Is it possible? Is the information we have reliable? Which customers do we start to work on? One thing was clear, first thing Monday morning I need to have a meeting with the Information Systems Director, Robert Magí, to look for a solution.

History of Port Aventura

In the mid 1980s The Walt Disney Company (Disney) had plans to build a theme park in Europe similar to those they already had in the US. Many European countries, including Spain, had approached Disney about setting up the park in its own territory. But in 1988 Disney decided definitively that the park would be located outside of Paris.

The Catalan government did not pull back from their determination to build Spain’s first theme park in Catalonia and to this end they contacted Anheuser Busch, owner of Busch Gardens theme parks, about building a park in Catalonia together with a consortium of Catalan companies. In 1992, and with an investment of about 300 million Euros, construction began on the park. Construction lasted approximately two years and on May 1, 1995 the park named Port Aventura and located in Tarragona province in the northeast of Spain and approximately 100 km for Barcelona was officially opened. At its inception, the theme park was organized into five different thematic areas: Mediterrania, Polynesia, China, the Far-West and Mexico (exhibit 1). Each of these areas had at least one outstanding ride led by the star ride, Dragon Khan, whose peculiar shape formed the park skyline.

Since its inauguration, the park’s management policy was to continue investing in new rides and other attractions and expand the park (exhibit 2). In mid-1998, and having made a major renovation of the majority of the park attractions, the park accepted an offer from the American company, Universal Studios, to become a shareholder in Port Aventura in order to build its European holiday destination. After the arrival of Universal Studios, the park continued its development plan and built two 4 star hotels and a water park, the Caribbean Coast. The theme park, together with the hotels and water park, was to be the first major Universal Studios Resort in Europe and it was
renamed Universal Mediterrania. In 2004, Universal Studios sold their shares of Universal Mediterrania to the financial institution La Caixa (giving La Caixa control of 80% of the stock). Through the sale of shares Universal Studios stopped being a shareholder and La Caixa was the maximum shareholder and project manager. But by contract and in exchange for a fee Port Aventura was guaranteed continued commercial exploitation of the Universal brand and its products and technology.

In order to adjust to a seasonal adjusted demand Port Aventura continued promoting shows. Likewise, they kept the investment in new rides (exhibit 2) and the consolidation of the offer through new businesses: 3 golf courses, a convention center, a shopping mall, and hotels. In 2008 Port Aventura reached 3.7 million visitors (exhibit 4). The visits were divided among: Port Aventura theme park (3.3 million visitors), the Caribbean Water Park (260,000 visitors), the Beach Club complex (60,000), and the hotels with 250,000 visitors who had generated 780,000 overnight stays. These numbers meant achieving sales of EUR 166 million. At that time Port Aventura had nearly 4,000 employees.

The successive park enlargements and future projects had changed the initial park idea (exhibit 3), by changing both the type of customer, as well as their behavior and the type of stay.

**Port Aventura’s Organization**

Since taking over as Managing Director in 2004, Mercedes de Pablo focused on imprinted her vision of an integrated resort throughout the organization. Accordingly, she designed a matrix organization (see Figure 1) that enabled the departments to provide service to the diverse lines of business (park, hotels, golf, events).

Following this philosophy Mercedes created the area of “Analysis and Strategic Planning”, which reporting to the Commercial Director Betim Budzaku, would centralize the management of revenues of the park. At “Analysis and Strategic Planning” they decided and fixed pricing and resort commissions: the price of a day ticket (44€ in 2009), the price/night of each overnight stay (which varied daily on the basis of the actual and estimated occupation), park food prices, commissions paid to agencies and tour operators, event prices, etc. Under the responsibility of Betim Budzaku, a sole interlocutor was established in relation to group income generation, promoting cross sales and the packaging of services.

With this same global vision Mercedes de Pablo also restructured the Operations department in areas tied to the diverse service lines and responsibility: hotels, shops, restaurants, golf, entertainment and park operations (admissions, parking, cleaning). Each group was specialized in the operational management of an area, from the processes and procedures to recruitment and training, thus promoting specialization and rotation regardless of the business to which they provided service to. For instance, the hotel restaurant resources were able to exchange positions with the park or golf restaurants on the basis of needs, since they all had a single manager – Restaurants & Food Services.

The support areas were structured among: Human Resources - responsible for carrying out the hiring processes and the specific training for many of the areas of the park (each summer requires more than 3,000 employees when the park is operating at full performance); Administration and Finance - responsible for the back-up support to billing and the deployment strategy, implementation and maintenance of information systems; Legal and Central Services - in charge of general purchases and legal and logistics management; Technical Services - responsible for preventive maintenance and emergency repairs; and Resort Development - which was to take a global vision of the projects that were being carried out in the expansion process while maintaining a vision outside of the day to day operation of the park.
Information Systems

The department of Information Systems (IS) of Port Aventura was part of the Administration and Finance Management, which was led by Fernando Aldecoa. Robert Magí, Director of IS, commented that he had seen the growth of the resort since its beginnings. His 14 years of experience had enabled him to follow the evolution from theme park to resort as few within the organization had. During his experience at Port Aventura, Robert had adapted the information systems to each of the changes the company had decided to undertake by following a strategy of looking for reliable, robust, and flexible tools for the changing environment which he had become accustomed.

In 2009 the IS department had 3 sub-areas:

- Infrastructure: Responsible for the installation and maintenance of hardware and data and voice communications and for providing support to the management of infrastructure-related incidents. In 2009 there were 9 employees.
- Administration and exploitation of Information Systems team: Responsible for the management of the data processing center. They administered the servers and run the help-desk. This sub-area had 9 employees.
- Information Systems team: Responsible for the design, planning, development and maintenance of the new applications required by the business areas. The 9 employees in this sub-area were specialized by application. Hence they tried to implement applications with a high degree of standardization in order to outsource their management and maintenance.

Information Systems Architecture

Port Aventura was one of the pioneers in the sector that implemented SAP R/3. Port Aventura decided to undertake this innovative project in 1995 in order to lay the foundations for back-office administration in the future and thus provide a solid base for the integration of future applications. They implemented various modules: Financial Accounting, Controlling, Sales and Distribution, Human Resource, Materials management, Investment Management. In 2009 the SAP application had 260 users.
The IS architecture in 2009 (see Figure 2) was characterized by a hospitality management tool (Prestige), which was running in all the hotels of the resort and in the center of reservations (or contact center). Prestige allowed the integrated management of hotels, from the reservation process, guest management (room assignments, allocation of rooms, check-in process, charges management, and billing) and the internal management of the hotel (housekeeping and maintenance control, etc). Maintenance and updating of Prestige was outsourced to an IT partner.

Another of the key applications for resort management was Galaxy. Galaxy supported the sales and printing of park tickets and read the bar codes at the park entrances which consisted of 20 turnstiles. With the introduction of Galaxy in 2005, Robert Magí was able to develop an agile ticketing system using various sales channels (ticket office at the park, agencies, internet) and at the time exercise greater control over the visitors since Galaxy, through the reading of the bar code, allowed one to know the type of entry: day, afternoon, second consecutive day, free pass, season pass, etc. and the time of entry. Galaxy also provided on-line information about park visitors (Flash-attendance) via PDA’s to all operations managers and area directors, as well as providing daily attendance forecasts as established in the area of “Analysis and Strategic Planning”, and daily maximum attendance estimates based on forecast calculations made by a custom-made application.

Other resort applications were: Concept Golf, used for the management of the 3 golf courses; the Clients Club which was a database of customers with season passes; Storeflow, used for shop and restaurant sales; and Presence, used for the management of the contact center.

In view of the mixture of applications needed to cope with the different activities of the resort, one of Robert Magí’s main concerns had been the integration of the applications in order to promote resort single management and to remove the inter-business barriers that might be perceived by customers. In this area, Robert had led several projects such as the development of hotel room keys that allowed entry into the park through the access turnstiles, payment in the park shops and restaurants, purchase golf course greens-fees and, of course, entry to the hotel rooms.
Each of the company systems was geared to the operative specialization of each one of the areas. The following are the different applications, the department in which they are used, and the approximate number of users of each application:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Department / Area</th>
<th>Number of Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Galaxy</td>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept Golf</td>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients Club</td>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storeflow</td>
<td>Shops &amp; Restaurants</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence</td>
<td>Contact Center</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Commercialization Model

The media plan had always been characterized by its targeting of mass media communication channels (television, newspapers, radio and outdoor advertising). On a segmented basis promotional campaigns (basically discounts on prices) were carried out which focused on large collective groups (Carnet Jove, LaCaixa, Coca-Cola...). Most of the promotional campaigns involved a call-to-action (902 telephone number) and the product Hotel+Ticket.

The significant publicity efforts were concentrated on low visitor months such as March and April, and on Autumn using the appeal of Halloween and Christmas. The Halloween and Christmas shows were new proposals which had the aim of seasonally adjusting park appeal and lengthening the typical season until December. On the other hand, they also attempted to lengthen the visitors same day stay by introducing fireworks, nightclubs and discos.

In recent years they relied on the implementation of viral communication campaigns via the Internet, but the exploitation of one-to-one communication channels (e-mail, telephone) remained low, and was limited to those members who had joined the Clients Club area on the corporate web site. Accordingly, the commercial department faced the huge challenge of having to extract and exploit the maximum amount of customer information possible in order to know the customer better and implement personalization services.

Knowledge about the Customer

This necessity for information in order to better know the customer led the Commercial Department to use customer data obtained at the different touch points –i.e. hotel reservation, check-in information. And when this was not sufficient, they adopted strategies for obtaining new information from entry and exit surveys (some 200 daily) and, recently, obtaining visitor “migratory movements” inside the park and hotels by giving GPS to specific customers. By exploiting the information that Port Aventura already had and with the support of market analysis consulting specialists, they were able to identify different behaviors, profiles and origins, which were structured in 13 resort customer segments (clusters):

Spain : 5 clusters
- Enthusiastic Parents
- Independent Youth
- Fans
- Farsighted Parents
- Halloween

UK: 4 clusters
- Beach families
- Party- living Youth
- Whimsical/Impulsive
- Slow Families

France: 4 clusters
- Enthusiastic Parents
- Independent Youth
- Whimsical/Impulsive
- Escapists

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2 Fidelity card promoted by the state government and aimed at youth
3 Global Positioning Systems
However, although identifying the various clusters was a first step, the sales and marketing areas had always expressed regret over the low traceability of the information since it was impossible to link each of the clusters with individuals. The surveys were anonymous, and the process of obtaining information from personal data (hotel reservations, check-ins) was incomplete or inaccurate – for instance, lack of complete information on all family members, no contact information such as e-mails – thus limiting the ability to do specific and personalized promotional campaigns. As the Commercial Director said, “The most reliable information that we have is from the Clients Club - customers with season passes. However, the new businesses that we are launching will change our customer structure and it’s necessary know the customer better.”

The Collection of Customer Data

(a) Clients Club

During 2008 approximately 35,000 season passes were sold among the 3 available types: Silver, Gold (customers who have had a Silver Card for 4 years) and Platinum (includes golf). The prices ranged from 130€ (Silver/Gold) to 330€ for a Platinum Card. Buying a season pass allowed unlimited access to park facilities, free parking, shop and restaurant discounts, a bi-monthly magazine called Port Aventura, and attendance to exclusive events (movie sneak previews, children’s workshops, treasure hunts, etc). The market for this product was concentrated in Tarragona and Barcelona provinces and was geared to families with children.

The Clients Club information was very precise because in order to acquire a season pass, customers had to go to booths located at the park entrance and, later on, in urban centers of the principal cities where the product was focused (Tarragona, Reus, Vila-seca) at the start of each season (February-March). At each booth registration and payment forms were provided as well as the data needed for linking season passes to family groups. The sales process through the registration form allowed obtaining high quality data: personal information, contact data, family group, which was very of welcomed by the commercial department. But at the same time they acknowledged that it received some complaints from customers who weren’t able to renew and pay for their season passes rapidly and easily via the web, making them repeat the same process every year as if it were their first year.

In addition to the registration form, members of Clients Club were registered in Galaxy each time they came to the park or bought something inside the park (they had to swipe their season pass through a point of sales terminal in order to obtain the Clients Club discount). However, none of the applications (Galaxy and Prestige) was able to cross reference information with the Clients Club database, as the only reports generated by these systems were limited to aggregated sales volume by product type (they were able to know how many Clients Club members had entered the park that day, but not who).

(b) Hotel

The process of obtaining customer information at the hotels varied depending on the moment at which the it was generated.

• Reservations: The high dependency on travel agents and tour operators limited the volume and quality of information received. Many times the information was adjusted to only what was strictly necessary in order to reserve a room. The reservations were done through the contact center where operators (approximately 40) attended calls from travel agencies and introduced the information received by fax from tour operators. In order to expedite administrative tasks with these intermediaries (travel agencies and tour operators) it was decided in early 2007 to implement communication systems that allowed the intermediaries to directly reserve a room in the Port Aventura system through a web interface. The main problems with the management of reservations by contact center operators came from the need for agility in making reservations; agility that many times required entering customer data again without previously looking up the customer’s historical information. This limited the possibility of identifying repeating customers, and made it more difficult to make queries on the customers’ historical records. Additionally, and in order to reduce dependence on intermediaries, the team that managed the reservation web, attempted to enhance direct booking through a web page from which they could monitor the type of information to request and evaluate the quality of the information.
Check-in: The check-in process was also influenced by tour operators: the unloading of buses, massive check-ins, and the need for agility and flexibility led to the execution of pre-check-in which expedited the issuing of hotel keys and park entry tickets as quickly as possible. Finally, the knowledge about the behavior of the hotel customers in the park was limited to global data provided by Galaxy (park entry but not when the customer left the park since there are no exit turnstiles with bar code readers) and some data derived from the charges made to the room while in the park (which as only used by 3-5% of the hotel customers).

c) Park

The consumers of the theme park generated the most revenue, and, they even after the expansion and diversification plan would continue to do so. Park consumers generated 3 of every 4 Euros invoiced by Port Aventura. However, the park customer information, which was generated from Galaxy, was limited to global data by ticket type sales and to aggregated data on sales generated in shops and restaurants. From within this context the commercial department became interested in conducting interviews inside the park as well as at both the entrance and exits. Through these actions they could identify geographic origins, family units, length of stay and different levels of satisfaction inside. However they still had no personalized information by customer in order to implement personalization of services.

(d) Golf

The three golf courses were inaugurated in 2007. In the development of the strategy for the golf courses and the deployment of the Golf Concept application, Port Aventura management took the opportunity to implement some data gathering processes geared to increasing customer data reliability. At the resort level, golf customers had certain specific characteristics –whether they were members or not, their golf handicap, their preferred tee time, etc. This information should be known by the rest of businesses as well as the golf customer contact points with Port Aventura so as to provide the desired integral service.

The New IS Scenario

The transformation from a theme park to a resort had generated an explosion of the type of customers and a great disparity of information systems. The request for more knowledge about the individual customers that Mercedes had just made to Fernando and the desire of the commercial department to implement personalization services required making changes to Port Aventura’s information systems. Fernando was aware of this new reality, and accordingly, had already asked Robert Magí to think about a solution. Robert Magí had submitted four options to Fernando:

Option 1: Implementation of a CRM system

The first option was to implement a standard CRM system. This option would allow Port Aventura to have a single customer contact point from which to sell any type of product. Through the introduction of a CRM system and its integration with the back-office system (SAP R/3), the commercial department would be able to have a 360º vision of the customer as well as being able to manage sales and promotions in a centralized and homogeneous way. Additionally they could establish promotions in-situ and make agile segmentations.

The implementation would entail replacing the sales support systems of most of the transactional processes as well as the contact center with a single CRM system. It would also require providing a high level of integration with already existing transactional applications at Port Aventura. Robert Magí estimated that project licensing, implementation and integration would cost 180,000 € (consulting fees included), and it would take 9 and 12 months to implement. If the level of standardization was high, maintenance and management of the software could be externalised. Regardless of the level of standardization they estimated the maintenance of the application at 12,000 € (20% of the cost of licences). Finally, this option entailed an investment in infrastructure (data server, base software, and telecommunications) of 30,000 €. Likewise, as it happens with most of the on-premise solutions, in the fourth year they should upgrade the CRM system. The amount of such upgrade was expected to be the same as the maintenance cost of a year.
Option 2: Contracting an on-demand CRM service (SaaS)

This system would require the same core structure of modules and features as in the previous option but it would be housed on a remote server with access via the Internet. This system would have a high level of standardization which would limit adaptation and customization in relation to customer particularities, and it would nurture and generate a single database. With regard to the costs of this option, there were three aspects. On the one hand, there was the cost of implementation, which amounted to 50,000 €. Next, Port Aventura would have a monthly cost per user (the new system would have 15 users) of 200€. Finally, this option would require an investment in infrastructure (computer for the 15 users and telecommunications) of 5,000 €.

The system would run at the same time that Port Aventura provided the information to load into the application and, in addition, the supplier maintained, updated and supported the application. Robert considered that the system could be functioning in 3 months and the level of usability would allow the commercial department to be responsible for its configuration and exploitation.

Option 3: Development of a custom built CRM system

The option of developing a custom made CRM system, in addition to providing a unified system for the introduction of customer information and sales, it would provide a tool adapted to features required by Port Aventura. It would also permit implementing the system gradually according to the consolidation of Port Aventura’s needs. It also had greater flexibility for the management of the current and future businesses –one could develop customized modules or transactions as requested by area or business-. The development of this system would require 2,200 hours of work (at an average cost of 60€/hour), and an annual maintenance that would amount to 22% of the development cost. The investment in infrastructure was estimated at 30,000 €.

On the other hand, its limitations were marked by the loss of robustness in the standard processes of other CRM’s on the market. In addition, the implementation was estimated to take between 12 and 15 months. It would also require contracting additional internal resources dedicated to its development and maintenance.

Option 4: Implementation of a Business Intelligence system

The fourth option was to implement a business intelligence tool that would allow them to have a homogeneous database with information coming from different sources and tools. The tool would aggregate the customer information gathered by each of the transactional sales systems which then would be added into a single database for exploitation. Robert knew this type of solution because he had a similar system from SAP for the generation of daily and monthly park activity reports, and he knew that the system would be useful for the commercial department when they crossed data between tools. But it could not provide on-line information at the time of making a hotel reservation or checking-in. On the other hand, Robert knew this option entailed leaving to the existing transactional applications the gathering of data, and this concerned him.

Implementing a business intelligence tool would cost about 150,000 € (design and implementation consultancy included) and it would take around 4-6 months. With regard to maintenance, this could amount to 15% of the implementation costs. Likewise, this option required an investment in infrastructure of 15,000 €. As with the first option, they estimated that in the fourth year they should upgrade the business intelligence tool. The amount of such upgrade was expected to be the same as the maintenance cost of a year.

It was 9:00 a.m., Monday, May 25. Fernando Aldecoa had called a meeting with Robert Magi to discuss the commercial management systems strategy for the resort for the following years. In a couple of days they needed to submit their proposal to Mercedes de Pablo. Which of the four options should they bet on? What would be the cost benefit of such a measure? Which customers should they target and begin to work on? Would the organization be prepared for a one-to-one marketing approach? Was the IS department prepared to deal with the new challenge?
Exhibit 1. Theme Park Structure 1995
### Exhibit 2: Evolution of main investments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rides &amp; Hotels &amp; Golf Courses</th>
<th>Investment (million €)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>(initial investment)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Stampida</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Fiestaventura</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Sea Odissey</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Temple of Fire</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Caribe Aquatic Park, Port Aventura hotel and El Paso hotel</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Caribe hotel</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Hurakan Condor</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Beach Club and Update of Shows</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Furius Baco</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Golf Courses (45 holes)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Convention Center, and Gold River hotel</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Port Aventura
Exhibit 3. Structure of the resort in May 2009
Exhibit 4: Port Aventura’s Competition

Since its inauguration, Port Aventura knew that the theme park they should be a mirror of would be Disneyland Paris (Eurodisney). The latter, as well as Port Aventura, sought to be more positioned as a holiday destination rather than as a recreational area or a day trip destination. In 2008 the French resort had 14 hotels, golf courses, movie theatres (even an IMAX theatre), and it had generated 14.5 million visitors with a turnover that exceeded 1.2 billion Euros. In the Iberian peninsula there were other theme parks that competed with Port Aventura: Terra Mitica in Benidorm, Warner in Madrid and Magic Island in Seville had developed a business environment of the major rides and in-park shows, however, none had entered the hotel business or in other leisure services businesses (spa, golf, convention centers, etc.) thereby limiting their positioning as full holiday destination, and their growth and profitability. Port Aventura was the only theme park that generated enough visitors in order not incur losses.

(millions of Euros)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Data 2008</th>
<th>Port Aventura</th>
<th>Warner</th>
<th>Isla Magica</th>
<th>Terra Mitica</th>
<th>Eurodisney</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of visitors</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoicing</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>20 (*)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1220.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Result</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td>19.65 (**)</td>
<td>-41.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) Estimate
(**) Extraordinary because of land sale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park data</th>
<th>Port Aventura</th>
<th>Warner</th>
<th>Isla Magica</th>
<th>Terra Mitica</th>
<th>Eurodisney</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convention Center</td>
<td>yes (4,000 people)</td>
<td>5 auditoriums</td>
<td>5 meeting rooms</td>
<td>TM Even</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Hotels</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf courses</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movie Theatres</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Park</td>
<td>Caribe Water Park</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>W.D. Studios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities outside the park</td>
<td>Beach Club</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet ticket sales</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Season Passes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Tarragona (Spain)</td>
<td>Madrid (Spain)</td>
<td>Sevilla (Spain)</td>
<td>Benidorm (Spain)</td>
<td>Paris (France)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>