

PROPOSED NEW ATTRACTION IN ENCHANTED KINGDOM: JUNGLE THEMED LABYRINTH MAZE

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ABSTRACT

Enchanted Kingdom is known to be a world-class theme park in the Philippines with variety of rides and attractions it offers. The theme park has 10-year expansion plan that serves as an opportunity to propose a new attraction. The proposed new attraction in Enchanted Kingdom will be a jungle themed maze called EKscape the Maze. The new outdoor attraction is measured to be 1,600 square meters and is expected to be the first and biggest outdoor maze attraction in the Philippines. The concept of EKscape the Maze will be basically a breakout type of game and requires coordination of both mind and body, which is currently relevant not only in this generation but also to all the thrill-seekers out there. Furthermore, only a few in the entertainment industry and among other rival theme parks have tried this concept. EKscape the Maze being a new proposed attraction in Enchanted Kingdom may also come with certain risks which includes it, not being able to withstand its competitors. Good thing, Jungle Themed Labyrinth Maze is rarely found here in the Philippines, thus, the researchers think that having this kind of attraction will get people's attention. Included also in this project are tournaments that can take place inside the maze – it is made so that the players can enjoy and experience something different. The maze is projected to be visited by 200,000 people and is forecasted to increase by 10% each year. The rate of revenue is expected to be 35% to 40% which shows that the maze will be profitable. The financial statement of the study comprises of income statement, cash flow statement, and the balance sheet.

Keywords: maze, theme park, labyrinth, jungle-themed, outdoor game

INTRODUCTION

Tourism significantly contributes to the development of one's economy. Tourist visitors in a country affect directly not only the growth of the tourism industry, but also indirectly affects in creating economic activities. In a study regarding the impact of tourism in a country, it was cited that tourism is said to be an element of community enrichment – thanks to the meeting of diverse cultures. In addition, tourism produces social benefits to the region such as development of the small and medium-sized enterprises, creation of new jobs, and improvement of infrastructure etc. (Zaei, M. E., & Zaei, M. E., 2013). There are many managed attractions in the country, such as historical places, museums and art galleries, and leisure parks and gardens. Among them are amusement parks that is also considered as a main attraction for both local and foreign guests. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), theme park is one of the three trends of the growth of global tourism right now and in the future (Hu, G., 2013).

Theme parks in the Philippines are a key tourist attraction for visitors touring the country. The tourist arrivals in the Philippines third quarter of 2017 is 474,854 visitors, with a forecast of 560,000 visitors for the first quarter of 2018 and 830,000 by year 2020 (Trading Economics, 2017). In a study made on Hongkong Disneyland, owned by one of the largest global company operated theme park, its shows that responsiveness and access, assurance, and empathy are the critical predictors of visitor satisfaction (Tsang, N. K., Lee, L. Y., Wong, A., & Chong, R., 2012). Aside from the lively and energetic vibe from the rides and attractions in a theme park, the differently themed concept per area is also a factor that dwells the tourists to visit them. The top among the well-known theme parks in the Philippines arguably is Enchanted Kingdom.

Enchanted Kingdom is a theme part often abbreviated as EK. It is situated in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, with a total area of 30 hectares – 16 of which is being used and occupied. The park is composed of seven (7) themed-zones namely: Victoria Park, Midway Boardwalk, Jungle Outpost, Spaceport, Brooklyn Place, Portabello, and Boulderville. The idea of themes is critical to the operation of the parks, with rides, entertainment, and food, all used to make quite a few different environments (Dridea Catrinel Raluca and Strutzen Gina). In an article of USA Today about Disneyland, the theme park's eight themed areas called lands. Each of these lands have such distinctive designs, music

and even smells that visiting them all is like touring eight very different places – each more magical than the last (Walsh, K., 2018).

The feasibility study is a proposal for a new attraction in Enchanted Kingdom. The main concept would be a Jungle-Themed Maze, wherein the guests will enter into a labyrinth maze type structure and find their way out past the confusing walls and path while facing various tricks and challenges on their way. The researchers got the idea of proposing a human-sized maze after the BIG Maze in Washington D.C., which intends to bring clarity and visual 360 degree understanding of navigating the path in and how to get out. This attraction caters everyone, not just the thrill-seekers or the youngsters. In fact, one study suggested that maze tests might contribute to the monitoring of premature cognitive and motor alterations in the elderly. (Sousa, D. E., Oliveira, D. C., & Campos, T. F. (2013). Currently, there is no known outdoor game, even for theme parks, that involved a human sized-maze launched in the Philippines. There are some with the same maze-like structure like a garden maze attraction and other games with similar concepts like escape the room, playing detective, and mystery solving but there is yet no maze structure like the one being proposed that is interactive and requires both critical thinking and physically skills.

The researchers designed their own maze in such a way that it would allow the players to enhance their cognitive skills through path navigation, at the same time have fun and be entertained while playing inside the maze. This study proposition intends to contribute to the 10-year expansion plan of Enchanted Kingdom that will boost their standing in the entertainment industry, and be the first one to have the largest outdoor maze adventure attraction.

Objectives of the study

This feasibility study aims to identify the physical and economic opportunities of building a new attraction in Enchanted Kingdom. Also, the researchers should determine set of circumstance that will make the proposed project possible. After identifying the opportunities, the researchers need to define the proposed new attraction properly, then, state the applicable marketing strategies for the project. Another objective of the study is to identify the relevant location and size of the new attraction inside Enchanted Kingdom. The study also needs to

define the possible risks and then suggest an action plan to mitigate it. The objectives also include the projection of number of visitors of the new attraction and its rate of revenue for the next five years of operation. Lastly is to prepare a complete projection of financial statement for five years of operation.

Review of Related Literature

According to David L. Malmuth (2010), a managing director of the development services group stated that "People are not just interested in buying things. They want an experience, adding that the keys to providing successful experiences are authenticity, fun and participation." This proposed maze in the Enchanted Kingdom located at Sta. Rosa, Laguna is something that the researchers have created to test the ability and patience of the player on how they will survive inside the maze. Playing maze seems to have helpful effects on the brain and on a person's ability to think as fast as they can. In fact, maze may function as an significant, if not vital, manner for learning.

According to Geissler and Rucks (2011), theme parks are commonly differentiated from amusement parks in terms of design features, including the architecture, landscaping, stores, rides and food services. Theme parks typically take family appeal; some form of entertainment such as costumed characters; high investment in rides and show capacity; high standards of maintenance; activities that encourage visitors to stay longer; and a one price admission policy. A theme park is a public entertainment zone where people enjoy themselves due to the setting provided in the parks, where most of the entertainment links to one idea or subject. Theme parks are the main promoter for tourists to visit the city where they are situated and appeal such visitors to an atmosphere of amusement, entertainment and new experiences.

Collin's, B.R. (2011), a game runner, stated that running the maze includes the player entering an walled tank and donning a cap to permit the virtual world's sensations to be conveyed to the player's brain while their actions control their avatar's actions. Rick has little life outside the maze and gets uninterested when locked out of it in the long hours. Despite the hours he spends playing, he has an ambivalent attitude towards the real and virtual worlds.

According to Lee Konstantinou (2011), regression frequently takes place in individuals as a means of dealing with anxiety and there is good cause to suspect that the popularity of a game like "Pac Man" shows that our young people, who play the game, are managing with their anxieties by regressing (in the service of their egos). This may be because they are, for some reason, now afraid of taking on responsibilities and feel anxious about long-term relationships and mature interpersonal sexuality. When we regress to more child-like phases we escape from the anxieties of adulthood--but we pay a substantial price.

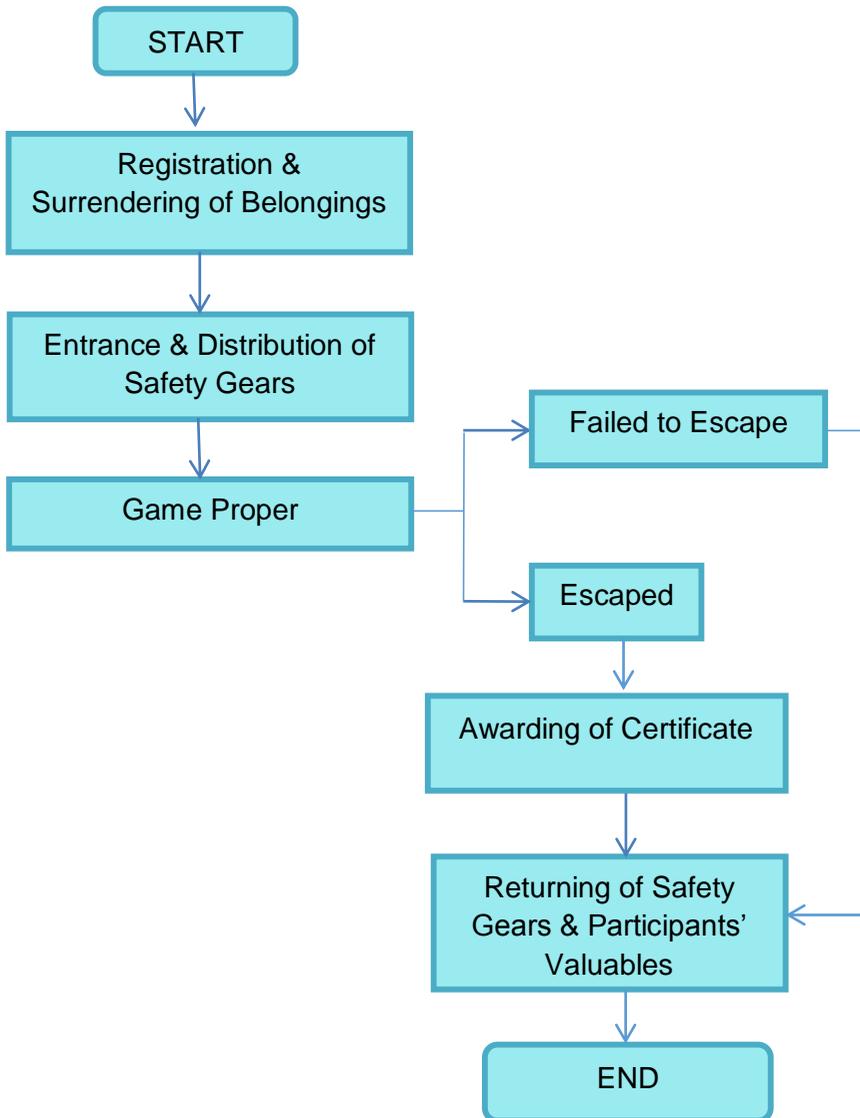
Likewise, according to Abhishek Sharma (2014), the maze game is one of the most loved as well as commonly played games globally. It is loved by children as well as adults. This has gained a lot of credit and popularity as it challenged the mental abilities and capabilities of an individual as you need to cross and solve puzzles in order to reach the target. This enables an individual's brain to assume, think and reflect in many different angles and perspectives, allowing them to think creatively and innovatively. Even if this game looks quite simply, the amount of thinking that has to be put behind it makes the game very interesting. Hence, it proves to be a great and successful way of recreation and relaxation of the mind from the daily stress.

According to Dewar (2014), playful behavior looks to have positive effects on the brain and on a child's capability to learn. In fact, play may function as a significant, if not vital, method for learning.

Aside from the Enchanted Kingdom, one example of an entertainment place is the Rave (2016), a rainforest adventure park experience located at the Pasig City since 1977 owned by Emiliano Caruncho. It's a vast city out there and it's growing at an exhausting pace. It is similar to a maze that when you find yourself always ensueing the same crowd, sometimes it aids you to follow your own trail.

To sum up, entertainment industry has become a buzzword in this generation, According to June Song (2017), the leading and professional amusement park manufacturer and supplier, she stated that amusement parks are planned to be a mixture of thrills, chills, and delights for crowds across the world every summer and occasions.

Flowchart of the maze



There are procedures to follow in order for the participants to join the maze experience. The first step is to sign up and pay for the additional ride fee in the registration booth beside the actual maze. The registration is only allowed for walk-in visitors and tickets are only valid

within the day. If it's the scheduled time for the participants to play, they need to present their ticket upon entrance, then proceed to the baggage counter to leave their belongings. They will be issued safety gears to be surrendered after the game. The second step is the entrance of participants and distribution of safety gears, which includes the protective headwear with flashlight, knee-pad, elbow-pad, knee-high boots and gloves. The third step would be the game proper. Maze watchers will observe the game and the participants from their posts above the maze structure. The ending point of the game is when the participants reach the exit. The participants who can make it to the exit within the given period of time will be issued a certificate for validation of escaping the maze. In case there are still people inside who cannot finish the game within the given time limit, there would be staffs that will assist them to exit the maze through the emergency doors. The last step in the procedure is the returning of safety gears and participants' valuable. The guests will then surrender their safety gears back upon exit and pick up their belongings in the baggage counter.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

EKscape the Maze

EKscape the Maze is a proposed project to Enchanted Kingdom, a well-known theme park in the Philippines. Enchanted Kingdom has a 30-hectare land area which is one of the key tourist attractions in the country that has seven theme zones of rides and attractions. The theme park has a 10-year expansion plan that becomes an opportunity for the researcher to come up with the project.

The main concept of the "EKscape the Maze" project is a jungle themed labyrinth maze that will serve as the first largest outdoor maze adventure attraction in the Philippines. It has a size of 1,600 square meters that can accommodate 25 participants and the game will last for 10 minutes. There are traps and jungle characters that are located inside the maze which will distract the players during the game. The first trap is the Mine field with bomb sound effect, a trap that will make creepy or ridiculous bomb sound which will terrify the participants when stepped on sensor radar. The second trap is the Beast's Lair which is the den of the most terrifying creatures and animals inside the jungle, the scary beasts will wake up and get out of their dungeon when the sensor radar was reached. The third trap is the Cuckoo Birds which

when a person stepped on a censor on the floor, there are scary cuckoo birds that will suddenly appear on the wall, it will pop in and out to confound the players. The last trap is Jungle Net Trap, when a person stepped on a censor on the floor, a thin net trap will be thrown over covering the whole body. There are also six mad hunters that are trapped in the maze and are now trying to hunt down the participants of game.





The name “EKscape the Maze” came from the words escape and maze which is associated with the abbreviation of Enchanted Kingdom, EK. The main concept of the project is for the participants to escape the maze. The name is also part of the marketing strategy of Enchanted Kingdom to have attractive and witty way of naming the rides and attractions inside the theme park.

Part of the standard operating procedure of the attraction is to make sure that all participants are properly wearing their safety gears provided by the management to secure the safety of the people. In addition, to ensure the security of the participants while inside the maze, CCTVs are placed in different locations to monitor the happenings inside. Maze watchers are also present to overlook the participants while playing. In case of emergency, there are emergency exits available for easier access. Part of the training of the staffs is the first aid training to educate them on what to do in case emergency situations occurred.

The cost per single entry starts with Php 85.00 for the first year of operation and eventually, the price will decrease every year since the pricing strategy used is price skimming. This strategy is chosen because it is useful when there are enough prospective and it can help to recoup the incurred cost in the maze. The income statement of the first five years shows that the net income of EKscape the Maze is 30% of the total sales of the year, the net income decrease every year due to the fact that the pricing strategy used is price skimming, therefore, the price decreases every year, but the net income is still consistent to be 30% of the sales.

Table 1. EKscape the Maze income Statement, 2018 – 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Sales in Units	200,000.00	210,000.00	220,500.00	231,525.00	243,101.00
Price	85	81	78	74	70
Total	17,000,000.00	17,010,000.00	17,199,000.00	17,132,850.00	17,017,070.00
Sales Event	90	90	90	90	90
Price	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
Total	45,000.00	45,000.00	45,000.00	45,000.00	45,000.00
Total Sales	17,045,000.00	17,055,000.00	17,244,000.00	17,177,850.00	17,062,070.00
Less: VAT	2,045,400.00	2,046,600.00	2,069,280.00	2,061,342.00	2,047,448.40
Sales(VAT Exclusive)	14,999,600.00	15,008,400.00	15,174,720.00	15,116,508.00	15,014,621.60
Less: COS					
Direct Labor	2,224,560.00	2,291,328.00	2,360,030.40	2,430,854.40	2,503,737.60
Employee Benefit	206,161.80	211,725.80	217,451.00	223,353.00	229,426.60
Supplies	31,058.75	31,058.75	31,058.75	31,058.75	31,058.75
Utilities	1,423,750.00	1,466,462.50	1,510,456.38	1,555,770.07	1,602,443.17
Mainten- ance	170,000.00	170,100.00	171,990.00	171,328.50	170,170.70
Prize	26,283.00	26,283.00	26,283.00	26,283.00	26,283.00
Dep, Equipment	164,894.98	164,894.98	164,894.98	164,894.98	164,894.98
Dep, Building	419,026.77	419,026.77	419,026.77	419,026.77	419,026.77

Table 1 continued

Dep, Equip, Event	6,604.87	6,604.87	6,604.87	6,604.87	6,604.87
Total: COS	4,672,340.17	4,787,484.67	4,907,796.14	5,029,174.33	5,153,646.44
Gross Margin	10,327,259.83	10,220,915.33	10,266,923.86	10,087,333.67	9,860,975.16
Less: OPEX					
Selling Expense	588,800.00	588,800.00	588,800.00	588,800.00	588,800.00
Admin Expense	356,777.90	367,411.90	378,363.10	389,636.70	401,256.10
Total OPEX	945,577.90	956,211.90	967,163.10	978,436.70	990,056.10
Income Before Tax	9,381,681.93	9,264,703.43	9,299,760.76	9,108,896.97	8,870,919.06
Income Tax	2,814,504.58	2,779,411.03	2,789,928.23	2,732,669.09	2,661,275.72
Net Income	<u>6,567,177.35</u>	<u>6,485,292.40</u>	<u>6,509,832.53</u>	<u>6,376,227.88</u>	<u>6,209,643.34</u>

CONCLUSION

In conclusion for the proposed new attraction for Enchanted Kingdom which is the 'EKscape the Maze', the project is feasible and reasonable. The study is realistic, considering all the aspects of the study such as marketing, operation, organization, and financial. The demand for entertainment fits with the processes of the project, there are no existing outdoor maze in the Philippines like the "EKscape the Maze" proposal.

After analyzing the pricing objective which is to minimize the cost and maximize the profit, the researchers decided to use a price skimming strategy. It was concluded that the use of this strategy will allow Enchanted Kingdom to set a high price for the maze initially and then decrease the price as time passes by so as to recuperate cost of a product quickly. One of the main objectives of the project is to provide additional entertainment to the visitors of the theme park, and for that reason, the researchers decided to design a challenging layout for the maze to escape the maze, the maze is composed of five entrances but there's only one exit, with that, the players are tend to be excited, challenged and motivated to reach the exit within the given time. The researchers make sure that the costs of materials used in construction are low prices, and these operational costs are recovered within one year.

The employees for the project proposal are given the right compensations and the mandatory employee benefits which are the SSS, PhilHealth, and PAG-IBIG. The researchers conclude that every year the salary of each employee will be increasing by 3%. It is also required to undergo trainings and attend seminars for the development and improvement of performance. The training includes the orientation training, first-aid training, and interpersonal training and if the contractual employees are seen to be credential and competent, there are high possibility of regularization of contract.

The source of financing would be Enchanted Kingdom. The projected financial statements for five years includes the income statement, which show that the net income of EKscape the Maze is 30% of the total sales of the year, the net income decrease every year due to the fact that the pricing strategy used is price skimming, therefore, the price decreases every year, but the net income is still consistent to be 30% of the sales, the cash flow indicates that even if the net income decreases every year, the cash ending is still increasing every year, and the balance sheet indicates that the total assets increases and it also shows the depreciation of the building and equipment of the maze. The EKscape the Maze payback period is only one year, therefore the researchers conclude that the study is feasible in terms of the financial aspects due to it showing that it can generate high net income with low capital and fast payback period.

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