

PROBLEMS: DISNEYLAND IN HONG KONG



According to John Robinett, the Senior Vice President of Themed Entertainment Association, the year 2007 was a “steady as she goes” year with healthy, modest growth across most sectors and geographies. It was not so for the smallest Disney theme park in the world, for the Hong Kong Disneyland. The park was funded largely by governmental money; it has cost some 3.5 billion USD. The theme park has witnessed a significant drop in number of visitors compared with the year 2006. It has been the 18th most popular theme park in the world in 2006 but in 2007 it has dropped to the 21st place. Its fierce rival, Ocean Park, has moved from the 21st place in 2006 to the 16th place in 2007. The Hong Kong Disneyland has in fact received 20 per cent less tourists in 2007 than it did in 2006. In 2006 some 5.2 million people visited the park but only 4.15 million in 2007.

The Hong Kong park was criticized ever since its foundation in 2005 for its high prices and the shortage of attractions. Joseph Tung Yao-chung, the Travel Industry Council executive director, claims that the Hong Kong facility faces problems because it is “too primitive”. He says they have failed to bring latest attractions from their overseas counterparts. He said that the facilities and games in Hong Kong Disneyland were like the first generation US Disney theme parks. The big rival of the Hong Kong Disneyland, the Ocean Park, on the other hand is proactive in bringing new attractions and therefore offering fresh experience to its visitors.

This year, however, the Hong Kong Disneyland plans to introduce four new entertainment initiatives. The new attractions will include; Muppet Mobile Lab, High School Musical Celebration, Nemo Submarine “Turtle Talk” and The Art of Animation. In April they also plan to launch a Disney classic attraction: “it’s a small world”.

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