

**IABC DETROIT RENAISSANCE AWARDS 2018 NOMINATION:
Bringing the World of Peppa Pig to Life at Great Lakes Crossing Outlets**

Katie Higgins, Identity
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Katie Higgins, Teddy Wingert, Andrea Trapani

Division 1: Communication Management
Category 9: Media Relations

DESCRIPTION:

As the newest family-friendly attraction at Great Lakes Crossing Outlets in Auburn Hills, Mich., Peppa Pig World of Play is an immersive, interactive and charming experience for preschool children. Peppa Pig World of Play takes families on an unforgettable journey through safe and colorful playscapes that have been lovingly recreated from the popular Peppa Pig animated series, like Peppa Pig's iconic family home, Rebecca Rabbit's Underground Adventure, George's Tree Fort, Madame Gazelle's School Bus trip, and more! The attraction includes a cinema to enjoy episode screenings, facilities for families to relax and play and plenty of photo opportunities. And yes—lots of imaginative muddy puddle jumping! Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan is only the second attraction of its kind to open in the U.S. and the third worldwide. The attraction is operated by global leisure giant Merlin Entertainments under a license from Entertainment One, the owner of the Peppa Pig brand. Building on a successful long-term partnership with Merlin Entertainments to open SEA LIFE Michigan Aquarium and LEGOLAND Discovery Center Michigan in the Detroit Market, Identity was tasked with bringing the oink-tastic world of Peppa Pig and her friends to life in a big way.

NEED/OPPORTUNITY:

There are very few preschool age children who are not already in love with Peppa Pig, the cheeky little British pig who traverses through everyday adventures to have fun and learn lessons with her lovable family and friends. Since the show launched in 2004, it has gained massive popularity and is quickly becoming one of the biggest brands for children's entertainment around the world. While the animated show is well known, the indoor play place concept has not been tested in a broad way.

As a brand-new indoor attraction concept, Peppa Pig World of Play is still a relatively unknown entity. The first attraction opened in Shanghai in October 2018 and the second opened in Dallas in February 2019. Identity, an integrated public relations agency driving strategic communications programs for a diverse portfolio of clients across the United States, was brought on board in January 2019 with the attraction's grand opening date set for April 2019. With such a short timeline from the very first attraction opening to the Michigan attraction, it was critical to develop and implement a strategy to establish broad awareness and brand equity, set visitor expectations and provide key visitor information to ensure a smooth and successful Grand Opening.

The goal was to generate sustained visibility in the community before, during and after the grand opening of Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan. Identity developed a comprehensive integrated PR strategy to generate high impact earned media exposure that would showcase the attraction and tell Peppa's story—while ensuring that potential visitors understand what the attraction offers, the timeline for opening and how to purchase tickets, etc.

By developing and executing a four-month long visibility plan that featured two strategic celebration events—Media Preview and Grand Opening—including event development, planning, promotion, social engagement and a robust media relations plan—Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan and Identity were able to expand brand awareness beyond Detroit to a regional audience of potential guests, and showcased Peppa Pig World of Play's commitment to becoming an integral and valued part of the Southeast Michigan landscape for families.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

- New consumer audiences (families with preschool aged children from 6 months through age 8) from Southeast Michigan and across the region.
- Returning visitors, teachers, school groups, families and members of the public who have previously visited the other two Merlin attractions at Great Lakes Crossing Outlets and are looking for a reason to come back.
- Members of the general public.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

GOALS:

- Celebrate the launch of Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan through high impact earned media, community engagement and visual storytelling.
- Drive awareness for Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan's message and brand experience.
- Engage, educate and inspire local audiences through an exciting Media Preview and Grand Opening event.

OUTPUT OBJECTIVES:

- Cultivate event ideas and corresponding initiatives to generate audience awareness and excitement.

- Develop, plan and execute two high-profile events—Media Preview and Grand Opening.
- Secure high-impact, on-site local media coverage (print, digital and broadcast) surrounding the launch of Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan.

OUTCOME OBJECTIVES:

- Brand recognition and positive perception of the organization improved through media relations outreach targeting a local and regional readership of at least 5 million.
- Secure onsite broadcast TV coverage from at least two stations featuring high-impact visuals.
- Host two onsite events with at least 50 attendees and unique visuals to celebrate the attraction opening.

SOLUTION OVERVIEW:

In order to achieve Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan's goals for the attraction's opening, Identity leveraged a variety of tactics to tell the story with stakeholders, which included crafting creative messaging, planning and executing two exciting onsite events, attracting media, and developing engaging content for before, during and after the opening. Identity developed and delivered media materials, including a fact sheet, talking points and Peppa Pig-themed media kit invitations to a segmented media list.

We chose to make the initial announcement by timing the distribution of our initial announcement press release immediately following the soft opening of Peppa Pig World of Play Dallas. This allowed us to capitalize on a spike in media placements, digital conversations and engagement around Peppa Pig. We leveraged approved imagery and b-roll from the Shanghai attraction to secure eight broadcast TV and radio mentions, articles in 10 digital and print publications, posts in 12 blogs and 29 placements in local social/digital outlets.

As a step along the road to grand opening, we highlighted Peppa Pig World of Play key messaging and its role in the community by promoting their official job fair, which was featured on air by WDIV, and in 11 additional media outlets.

We narrowed our media list to the top 12 targets and mailed out our themed media kits two weeks prior to Media Preview—which came complete with Peppa Pig and George plush keychains, treats, photos and engaging event content on a customized flash drive—to a variety of print, digital and broadcast media outlets both in and out of the Detroit market.

We leveraged Media Preview as a relationship building opportunity to invite our full target media list segmented by local and out-of-market outlets and family/mom bloggers and influencers. All attendees were invited to bring their own children as well, in keeping with the inclusive and fun spirit of Peppa Pig. Our Media Preview invitations paired the event invitation with the announcement of tickets going on sale.

In order to maximize onsite media coverage for the first look at the attraction, Identity opted to host a Media Preview event that gave all of our key media contacts, bloggers and influencers equal and simultaneous access, instead of providing an exclusive to one outlet. This allowed us to tease the story in advance and drive anticipation throughout the community—while controlling the message, timing and imagery. The event include access to our key local spokesperson, but was primarily positioned as a first look at the attraction. By offering an exclusive, invite-only opportunity to attend the event, we were able to secure well over 100 local children and families, including a day care center, to bring the attraction to life and create charming and interactive visuals. As a result, we were able to secure a total of 9 broadcast TV and radio placements, 7 articles that ran online and in print, and 12 blog posts, reaching an overall audience of 2.63 million.

Understanding that the Grand Opening event would come just two weeks following our initial Media Preview push, our team developed new and engaging visuals to draw media attendees back to the attraction. We provided a compelling reason for media to return by coordinating an exciting program featuring remarks from several local dignitaries set against a rainbow balloon arch backdrop, and introduced the Peppa and George mascots to the public for the first time. We invited a few local children to participate in media photos. In addition to advance pitching and onsite media management, the Identity team captured dynamic images and video from the event in order to pitch and secure additional coverage from media outlets that were unable to attend. Our Grand Opening media results included a total of 4 broadcast TV and radio placements, 2 articles that ran online and in print, and 7 blog posts, reaching an overall audience of 345,737.

With a multi-faceted integrated public relations approach to the launch of Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan, Identity was able to engage with the community and drive broad brand awareness for the new attraction concept. The team's creative strategy and execution delivered two high-profile media events that created sustained visibility and wonderful experiences for families that will last.

IMPLEMENTATION AND CHALLENGES:

Working with Merlin Entertainments and Entertainment One: One of the ongoing challenges in developing and implementing creative media pitches and events was working with two global entities—Merlin Entertainments and

Entertainment One. We had to do a lot of coordination simply to coordinate schedules, conduct meetings and work with team members based in the UK and New York, who also utilize a number of different software programs not common in the U.S. However, the biggest challenge was in requesting and receiving approvals from eOne, who maintains an extremely tight control over everything related to the Peppa Pig brand. We had instances in which our team had secured in-studio TV interviews that we had to cancel because we could not receive eOne approval in time. We also ordered Peppa Pig World of Play branded t-shirts in a series of rainbow colors for the participating children to wear, only to be told we could not use them. We decided to give these away to participants as a gift instead.

Event rescheduling challenges: The Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan attraction was designed and constructed with breathtaking rapidity in just a few months. The goal was to officially open the attraction to guests prior to Oakland County’s spring break to allow families the chance to visit. However, once the attraction was complete, there were still several processes, approvals and certifications to acquire, which forced us to reschedule Media Preview the day before it was set to happen. This required a massive amount of rescheduling—with more than 100 children and parents who were planning to attend and a half a dozen reporters, videographers and bloggers committed to attend. We were able to provide clear and prompt information to all attendees and managed to make the rescheduled date a success.

Media and event fatigue: Hosting two onsite events within two weeks—and securing media and participants—is no small task. Identity was very specific about how to approach each event with our media targets and through the lens of community engagement. We focused in on two key differentiators between the events in order to provide media with a compelling reason to return. Our approach to Media Preview was essentially to get a first look at the brand new attraction, while the Grand Opening served as an opportunity to showcase Peppa Pig World of Play’s economic impact in the region through the program and speaker selection, which included Dawn Priebe, Merlin Entertainments General Manager of Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan, Jack Bennett, Merlin Entertainments Global New Brands, Project Operations Manager, Gary Neumann, General Manager of Great Lakes Crossing Outlets, Cheryl Verbeke, City of Auburn Hills Council Member. We also reserved several unique visuals including the rainbow balloon arch, official rainbow ribbon cutting, and the introduction of mascots Peppa and George.

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION:

OUTPUT OBJECTIVES:	RESULTS:
Cultivate event ideas and corresponding initiatives to generate audience awareness and excitement.	Achieved. Identity implemented an internal ideation to develop creative ideas for Peppa Pig World of Play Grand Opening and how to get the community involved and excited. We developed and executed a beautiful media kit and key visuals such as a rainbow balloon arch as the backdrop for the program.
Develop, plan and execute two high-profile events—Media Preview and Grand Opening.	Achieved. From initial planning to design, development, ordering, assembling and onsite management, Identity drove the strategy and execution of two high-profile events. Our team was onsite hours in advance to manage details from blowing up over 150 balloons to checking in guests and managing onsite media interviews.
Secure high-impact, on-site local media coverage (print, digital and broadcast) surrounding the launch of Peppa Pig World of Play Michigan.	Achieved. Utilizing key media relationships and strategic outreach, Identity secured a myriad of coverage onsite including: reporter and photographer from the Detroit News, Detroit Free Press and Oakland Press, three TV stations (WDIV, WJBK, WXYZ). Additional coverage (from reporters and media outlets not onsite) included: Daily Detroit, Daily Tribune, Little Guide Detroit, WWJ, WCRZ FM, BuzzTellers, WOTV 4 Women.
Secure engaging social/digital and blog coverage among at least three local mom influencers.	Achieved. Identity utilized standing influencer relationships and conducted research and outreach into new blogs in order to pitch, secure and facilitate coverage from 8 different mom bloggers.

OUTCOME OBJECTIVES	RESULTS
Brand recognition and positive perception of the organization improved through media relations outreach targeting a local and regional readership of at least 5 million.	Achieved. Through more than 152 earned media placements in print, digital and broadcast media placements, Identity shared the launch of Peppa Pig World of Play with an audience of more than 24 million (24,198,677+) in local, regional and statewide media markets.
Secure onsite broadcast TV coverage from at least two stations featuring high-impact visuals.	Achieved. Secured onsite coverage featuring high-impact visuals in live and recorded segments from three Detroit TV stations, including live morning shots with FOX 2 News. Overall broadcast results include a total of 25 individual broadcast clips airing throughout Michigan.
Host two onsite events with at least 50 attendees and unique visuals to celebrate the attraction opening.	Achieved. More than 120 individuals attended the Media Preview event and over 50 attended the Grand Opening, including local dignitaries and business leaders, local families, and dozens of reporters and photographers, bloggers and members of the community.