

concession

NEWS

UPDATE

CHRISTMAS, IT'S THE MOST PROFITABLE TIME OF THE YEAR!



In this week's edition of Concession News, we examine how the UK's leading entertainment suppliers are looking to provide garden centres with the ultimate Christmas experience, and increase footfall over the most important trading period of the year.

As a result of the increasing importance of Christmas to garden centres, new ideas and events are required to attract children and their families to sites, in order to secure their custom over the crucial, family friendly period.

In the past, garden centres have created exceptional Winter Wonderland scenes through the introduction of 'Grottos,' 'Santa's Arrival' and 'Breakfast with Santa.' These events which, coupled with their exceptional displays made up of animations, decorations and fresh trees, elevated garden centres to the first choice for customers looking to experience their own piece of Lapland.

However, as a result of the increasing competition for destination purchases (such as trees), improvements to Christmas displays in the High Street and the increasing amount of seasonal events hosted by Shopping Centres (etc), garden centre owners now need to rejuvenate their Christmas experience.

Grottos have traditionally helped to enhance the visit for the children that visit but JBL Leisure have developed the next best thing, the 'Snow Globe.' The 'Snow Globe' enables garden centres to offer their customers a photographic keepsake of their visit with a festive backdrop.

JBL Leisure was founded in 2004 and the 'Snow Globe' appeared in the 2010 series of Dragon's Den, after its initial launch in 2007. There are six types of 'Snow Globe' in



various sizes, and it has become a global success.

The 'Snow Globes' enable garden centres to provide their customers with an attraction that generates revenue as the customers purchase a family photo within the globe. A one off payment secures a photo, then often customers purchase add-ons maximising the revenues available.

Alistair Heelas Founder of JBL Leisure explains more *"We are looking to provide something different to the Christmas grotto and the 'Snow Globe' is a perfect alternative. The non religious, non age specific, revenue generating addition pays for itself, as a result of the photos that are taken and promotes a family friendly attraction."*

The 'Snow Globes' are proving to be a major hit with retail destinations such as Shopping Centres and High Streets as event organisers are looking to invest their budgets in revenue driving initiatives rather than tired animations and decorations. The globe can also be used throughout the year as a promotional display area and creates an excellent draw as customers enjoy their day out.

As a result of this demand for new ideas and attractions, one of the most successful additions to a garden centres Christmas experience has been the introduction of ice rinks.



Ian Tregaskis of Stage Electrics, providers of Ice Rinks to garden centres and other retail venues comments *"Christmas is the most important time of the year for retailers as they look to attract customers to their sites and away from the alternative. As a result, we have seen an increased demand for ice rinks and other attractions which are designed to provide a Christmas "experience" rather than simply a shopping trip for this year's tree."*

Stage Electrics are one of the UK's leading suppliers of Ice Rinks to the leisure sector as they manage the full installation of real ice rinks, as well as, skates and infrastructure, including lighting and PA equipment.

The introduction of ice rinks has provided garden centre's with a local focal point that creates a family orientated environment, repeat visits and excellent awareness of the sites activity as a result of the 'word of mouth' within the community.

Customers can enjoy the rink by either, booking parties in advance or showing up on the day to skate. Garden centre's get the benefit of the footfall and thanks to the added dwell times the rinks create, customers are more likely to spend more on site, as they can perceive garden centre's as their 'one stop shop' for everything Christmas.

David Brown of **Beckworth Emporium** said *“We were looking to improve the Christmas experience for our customers and felt that the introduction of an Ice Rink would create an excellent day out experience. We wanted to promote a local, family activity that could be enjoyed by all and felt that an ice rink would help provide this. Christmas is a massive part of our business and we are very aware that we need to provide our customers with something special.”*



Stage Electrics have previously placed an Ice Rink within a garden centre which was 600 square metres allowing up to 200 skaters to use it per session. Sizes of the rinks vary, but the minimum in order to make the proposition viable, would usually be based on a 300sqm rink which would accommodate 100 people per session.

Ian Tregaskis adds *“We can tailor the size to fit the space available within a garden centre as we appreciate that each site is different. The rinks can be best used under the Covered Areas within the Plantaria but really, we can place them anywhere on site.”*

Offering to provide full Health and Safety guidance and advice, before, during and after the hire of the rink, Stage Electrics work with the personnel at the garden centre to ensure everything runs smoothly. In addition, Stage Electrics also provide onsite training, and a workshop which is set up at their offices, with an operational rink for key personnel to work with prior to the event starting.

In order for customers to fully appreciate and make use of the Christmas experience that garden centres can offer, the site as a whole must be marketed in the correct way. Raising awareness of the day out and maintaining the promotional calendar throughout the period is essential to its success.

Alistair Heelas, added: *“In order to secure the customers, all retailers have to get their marketing and promotions right in addition to providing customers with a unique reason to visit, which offers excitement and fun which the whole family can enjoy, together. We can offer marketing support to our customers to ensure the ‘Globes’ generate new footfall to the garden centre.”*

Simon Allison of **Promotional Space Ltd** adds *“With Christmas so important to retailers, it is essential that they offer their customers something new and different to enhance the day out experience. Therefore, introducing initiatives that drive revenue as well as footfall enables site owners to invest their budgets in a manner that ensures as many opportunities to profit as possible. Communicating your activity to customers is as important as the activity itself as there is a lot of competition to attract customers over this crucial trading period.”*

For more information about these Christmas ideas, **Contact Us now**, 01737 735041, simon.allison@promotionalspace.com



Concession News is published by First Franchise Limited and Promotional Space Limited.

Head Office: Castle Court, 41 London Road, Reigate, Surrey RH2 9RJ.

Telephone: 01737 735041 | Email: info@firstfranchise.com | www.firstfranchise.com | www.promotionalspace.com

ff
first franchise


PROMOTIONAL
SPACE