

Stronger in Second Half

Most traffic at Six Flags comes in last six months of the year

Guest Traffic. Sixty percent of Six Flags attendance comes in the last six months of the year. Still, they had a late start to the season as many rides were delayed in opening between one and four weeks beyond the Memorial Day weekend due to weather.

Party Is Over. Liquor, particularly Cognac, is not selling in China. LVMH Moet Hennessy Wines and Spirits sales dropped significantly in the quarter having been impacted negatively by both of the destocking by distributors in China, following the anti-extravaganza measures being taken there and by the impact of the strong Euro.

Old School. Ninety-five percent of U.S. restaurants still order via telephone and paper menus. Now, online restaurant provider GrubHub connects 30,000 restaurants with over four million hungry diners; 48 percent of orders are via mobile



Larissa Faw
The Business Roundup

devices. “Even if you think about the all the buzz that’s going on around the same day deliveries, there is a much higher bar when you order from a diner and you get frustrated within 60 minutes if you don’t have the food yet,” says GrubHub’s Matthew Maloney.

Aging Down. NASCAR fans are getting younger. Dover Motorsports says its youth ticket sales to kids 14 and under grew

another 7.5 percent on a Sunday race, continuing a three year trend. Youth sales were 5.7 percent of Sunday’s sales whereas three years they were just 1.5 percent.

Quick Sale. Sonic Automotive is introducing the Sonic-One Experience to “put the power into the customers’ hands” where they can purchase a car with one associate at one price and in one hour. A full version of One Sonic-One Experience is now in beta testing at pilot store, and the concept will be fully implemented in the Charlotte market by the end of 2014. The company expects that the companywide implementation will take approximately 18 months. The company currently sells 9,500 cars a month with about 7,800 cars online.

Cargo Space. Hawaiian Airlines is minting money off of passengers. Since March, the

airline has made more than one million dollars in revenue by charging for preferred seats. Now, it will introduce “extra comfort product” that charges for extra leg room.

Game Time. In the last quarter, gamers played more than 13.6 billion online sessions of Electronic Arts games, for a total of nearly 2.4 billion hours played across console, mobile and PC experiences. To put that in context, that’s more than 3,000 years of game play every single day. More than 53 million matches were played in FIFA Ultimate Team World Cup mode alone, during the quarter. That’s the equivalent of more than 830,000 World Cup tournaments.

Gourmet Burgers. McDonald’s is going upscale. The fast food chain recently started a restaurant on the West Coast and created a learning lab to help better understand what

matters most to customers when it comes to delivering the absolute best burger experience. “It definitely starts with great ingredients like our high quality burger, 100 percent beef with a pinch of salt and pepper but it’s more than that,” says McDonald’s Don Thompson. Still, its menu priority will half concentrate on updating classic favorites, such as McNuggets, while the other half will focus on new innovations.

Quality Video. In the U.S., the average bandwidth is about 9 megabits per second, with most of the world getting a little more than that. HD quality typically needs 4 megabits a second and it take 2 megabits per second to offer YouTube quality video.

Larissa Faw covers business trends for Forbes, The Motley Fool and other outlets. Contact her at larissafaw@gmail.com.

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