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IAAPA 2010 - ORLANDO

Waterpark suppliers busier than ever at IAAPA

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Amusement Today

Jim Goldhardt, general manager for Z-Pro Watersports, has seen the waterpark industry grow for 29 years now. "I was the guy who introduced PVC inner tubes in 1981," reflects Goldhardt, remembering when the origins of waterparks were simply body flumes. "I created the figure 8 tubes, the bullet shaped tubes, pear shaped tubes..." If the 2010 IAAPA trade show was any indication, the waterpark industry, along with Goldhardt, will continue to see amazing growth.

Comparing the show to the previous year in Vegas, Goldhardt comments, "I'm not sure if the traffic has been tremendously better, but it is heavier." He also was of the opinion that the business attitude was much stronger in Orlando.

In addition to their large array of tubes available, Z-Pro was also proud to introduce new upgraded life jackets. The new baby-safe life jacket is geared toward those young children up to 30 pounds. "It's much more comfortable than a traditional 50 pound vest," says Goldhardt, mentioning the other various aspects that make it a better vest for toddlers. "It's a great retail item for shops, as well."

All over the trade show floor there were many new concepts and products to permeate the waterpark industry. Polin Waterparks & Pool Systems was introducing Splashcinema, an interactive 4D film for waterparks. Polin is working with Kraftwerk of Austria, a leader in 4D/5D systems. Splashcinema uses movies based on water themes that guests experience

while in their swimsuits. Obviously, the idea is to get wet. "We were looking for something different, something innovative," says Sohret Pakis of Polin. Movies based on motion, using moving platforms, typically run about five to seven minutes. When spoken language is added, movies last 10-12 minutes. A minimum of 12 seats is required for the project, but Polin recommends at least 24. There is no limitation to the maximum number of seats. Guests get wet with water coming from in front of them and above. Of note, there is no electricity in the theater room containing the guests. All films are themed to water: fish, turtles, submarines, pirate ships, etc. The first Splashcinema is going into Aquapulco Waterpark in Austria, opening in May. Pakis reports, "Systems using 24 seat theaters cost ap-

proximately 300,000 euros."

Among Polin's impressive waterslides are also dynamic new sellers. Their first King Cobra dual waterslide was sold to Russia and two more contracts were about to be finalized in France and the Ukraine at the time of the trade show. A new variation available called Racer Twin Turbulance elongates the experience with a racing theme. Family slides and black holes are still the company's strongest sellers. Polin uses a resin transfer molding (RTM) process termed Magic Shine that not only makes the surfaces shiny on both sides, but delivers visual effects such as colored stripes using only natural sunlight without the need for any electricity or maintenance. Polin reaches a milestone of 35 years of service in 2011.



Polin's 35th year of service will debut the massive Twin Turbulance, a variation on their recent King Cobra attraction, but with a different finish added.