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Quality and Time at EuroDisney

By João on September 15, 2014 at 10:47 am
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Attraction "Cars", at EuroDisney

My repeated visits to EuroDisney (previous post on EuroDisney's fixed costs [here](#)) always make me think about the "duo" of quality and time. When you think about the visitors' satisfaction due to the "quality" of the venue and of particular attractions, you probably think of the fun you get out

of it, be it based on the beauty of the scenarios, the appeal of the characters, the thrills of some attractions or something else. But, particularly if you choose the most popular dates, a major source of dissatisfaction is likely to be waiting times. And just to make it more frustrating, you may have to wait for 30, 60, 90 minutes or more, for a very brief ride of a few minutes. In some attractions, the "real activity" may actually only be of about 1 minute, if you don't consider the "slowing down" period – which may be particularly long in some attractions. So, I decided to do some "accounting for time" in my last visit.

In some attractions, the entrance, sitting and safety checking of the new riders may take more than 1-2 minutes. Individual checks by staff members that each rider has correctly placed the safety devices may take a substantial amount of time, particularly in some attractions in which all riders start and stop at the same time, like in the "Cars" attraction you can see in the photo. Could that time be reduced substantially, therefore reducing overall waiting time? Yes, by adding another person to make the safety checks (which would increase costs) or by leaving that responsibility up to the riders (which would not be safe, even for adults!). The "slowing down" period could also be made shorter – but again, safety could be compromised.

What does Disney make to reduce the waiting time and resulting dissatisfaction? Here are some examples. It places all the people going in the next ride near the direct entrance. It provides a "FastPass" to the most popular attractions, hence scattering riders across the various hours of the day. It announces the expected waiting time for each attraction, both next to each one and at the entrance of the park, so that visitors select the attractions by trading-off "expected fun" vs. "expected waiting time". It created the "single rider" entry lane, in which visitors willing to go solo can have a shorter waiting time (one advantage is to use the capacity of each car in full, without empty seats).

Time is definitely key for customers' overall quality perception and ultimate satisfaction. What seems clear is that, to increase perceived quality through shorter waiting times, and therefore customer satisfaction, there is one thing that Disney is unwilling to compromise: safety. Of course, ethical reasons are enough to justify this, but avoiding incidents (whose news travel fast in today's connected world) is also crucial to maintain the appeal to millions of people to visit the "Land of Princesses" (as my daughters call it) and improve EuroDisney's long term business and financial performance.

So, you really have to wait until the staff checks all safety belts – just when you wanted to start spinning around...

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