

Universal appeal

Universal Space will once again be showcasing a flurry of eye-catching new products at IAAPA



IAAPA is one of the most globally important exhibitions for the leisure industry," says Steven Tan, international sales manager at Universal Space.

"It is extremely well attended from all over the world. Being held in the US, it will of course attract the majority of attendees from the nearby continents, but we find year on year the number of international attendees keeps increasing.

"It is, for sure, the international show that has our focus throughout the year."

Like a lot of exhibitors in Orlando, UNIS centres its delivery programme around the show and will use its presence at IAAPA to unveil a range of new products. "We are showcasing around 10 new exciting product lines at the IAAPA show," says Tan.

"The products will include a variety of video, sensory and 'fun with water' games. We are very excited about the new range of machines, which builds upon our successes and development of ideas over the past 20 years."

With the benefit of that two decades' experience, UNIS feels a major trend for many of the manufacturers at the event will be a focus on equipping FECs and venues catering for families.

"Along with the array of new products in the various categories," continues Tan, "the show will be demonstrating the massive variety of entertainment being developed for the whole family for the 'out of home' experience."

More broadly, Tan sees the continuing and growing popularity of home

entertainment, console games and mobile games, offering significant competition to the amusement sector. "Everyone in the coin-op industry has been affected by this over the last decade.

"Like many industries we have had to reinvent ourselves a little and look at the unique selling points that we offer. Players and operators still look for appealing products with good game play and rewards such as tickets or prize redemption and there is still very much the appeal from players to interact with friends and families in a social environment as well as receiving instant rewards like redemption prizes.

"This atmosphere is very hard to be replicated in a home environment and so we focus on these main two aspects when designing our games at UNIS," says Tan.

Which of the company's recent launches then are proving the most successful? "We are extremely pleased with the success of our Pirate's Hook series.

"We have launched the one-player, two-player and four-player machines in the span of a year-and-a-half and we are delighted to have announced that we have sold more than 2,000 units globally - a massive achievement in such a short time," he continues.

"Although we hoped that Pirate's Hook was going to be a winner, I do not think we ever dreamed that it would be so successful across the whole globe, it is a truly international success for us."

IAAPA brings together companies from across the leisure industry - is such an event more useful to UNIS than an event solely focused on coin-op amusements? "The leisure industry is massive and overlaps many types of different venues. Although some of these types of venues may not be our primary target market, many operators that run parks might have a small section that caters to coin-op amusements and therefore at IAAPA we have the opportunity to meet them; this is vitally important to UNIS," says Tan.

"IAAPA is a major global platform; it has a massive footfall and is therefore an important event for any

manufacturer within the leisure industry."

Within that industry, Tan is clear on UNIS' main markets. "FECs without a doubt," he says. "Our primary focus is on the indoor amusement centres and we design and manufacture just the right products to equip these centres.

"Our range of products do of course penetrate other segment markets, but nothing like in the quantity at FECs."

