

**Thursday 12 January 2012 – Morning**

**AS GCE LEISURE STUDIES**

**G182/01/CS** Leisure Industry Practice

**CASE STUDY**

**Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes**



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## Paintball Power

Paintball Power operates four paintball centres in various parts of England. Paintball Power centres are the place for people who enjoy the thrill of high energy, adrenaline sports. All of the centres are branded and present a corporate image. Paintball Power operates a website through which bookings for all four centres are taken (**see Fig. 1**).

Paintball Power is owned and managed by Tony Farrer. He tries to visit all of the business' paintballing sites on a regular basis. However, as he is based at the south west of England centre, his visits to the other three centres are much more limited. Tony feels that his trust in the staff at each centre is such that they always keep him updated on how things are going at that centre. 5

The majority of the staff who run the paintballing events are employed on a casual event by event basis. Tony contacts them to arrange an event which has been booked through the website. The staff turn up at the centre, do their jobs and then leave at the end of each event. Most of the instructors have other jobs – they fit their Paintball Power commitments around these other jobs. 10

Paintball Power offers a range of packages to its customers. The most popular are full and half day paintballing activities with food provided. Paintball Power also offers corporate events and can cater for specific groups such as 'stag parties'. 15

Paintball Power operates its business through the Internet – which is its main method of promotion, as well as the way in which all bookings are taken. Paintball Power is very price competitive and it offers a range of pricing strategies. It offers 'early bird' discounts of up to 50% for groups which book up to two months in advance. Paintball Power also provides a 'price check guarantee' whereby it will match the price offered by any competing paintball organisation. Although Paintball Power's pricing remains very competitive, the number of customers has fallen over the recent recession. 20

In addition, other promotional methods are also used by Paintball Power. 25

Paintball Power also uses its website as its main source of customer feedback.

The North Yorkshire Paintball Power centre is the oldest of the four centres. It is located on the edge of Bollilhope Forest. This location is very rural and the nearest village is four miles away. The centre can only be accessed by minor roads – in fact, the only signs directing participants to the centre are 'homemade'. Quite often visitors get lost on their way to this centre. 30

Although the Paintball Power website features all four centres, all of the images used are of the other three centres which are much more up to date.

The North Yorkshire Paintball Power centre is very basic. No paintballing equipment is stored at the location; it is brought to the centre for each individual booking. Equipment needed for the event is distributed from the back of a van, including the gas canisters to power the paintball guns. Usually this works well; however, there have been times when vital pieces of equipment have been left behind and customers have had to wait whilst the equipment is collected. Customers also question the safety of storing the gas in such a way. 35

The changing facilities are very limited with a portacabin provided, which has to be shared by both males and females. The cabin has no solid floor as such, as it is placed straight onto a gravel floor. This is not an issue on dry days, but on wet days customers struggle to change without getting their clothes wet and dirty. There is also no secure storage for belongings whilst customers are playing. There are no shower facilities and the only toilets are two portable toilets, which are used by staff and customers. These are often not cleaned or emptied between different groups using the centre. As with the rest of the centre, quality checks are lacking. Tony is aware of these issues and has been reviewing the finances of the business through the relevant documents to identify if the North Yorkshire centre can be upgraded. 40

The North Yorkshire Paintball Power centre has a range of landscapes in which the games take place including woodland, moorland, swampland and a simulated cityscape. This choice of different gaming areas attracts customers as it provides more variety for them to play in; however, the gaming areas have not been updated for the last two years. 45

Lunch is provided as part of the package. It is made in a makeshift kitchen, on a barbeque which has seen better days. Burgers and sausages are cooked and given to the customers along with hot drinks. The paintball instructors are the people who prepare the food. This is often done without them changing from their paintballing clothing. 55

Prior to 'taking to the field' all customers taking part in the paintballing activity are given instructions on how to operate the equipment safely, and what to do should the equipment fail. The instructions are very clear and are acted on to the letter by the staff. Risk assessments are carried out every year and updated as necessary.

Customers at the North Yorkshire Paintball Power centre are often disappointed by its lack of facilities and Paintball Power receives more complaints about its facilities and the lack of care from the staff than from all of the other three centres. There are very few repeat customer visits to the North Yorkshire centre. 60

The future for Paintball Power in North Yorkshire is unclear. As an established centre it is moving quickly through the product life cycle. Tony recognises that there are issues which need to be addressed in order to ensure the future success of the centre. 65

## Website Booking Form

BOOKING INFORMATION							
Name:							
Address:				Home Phone no:			
				Mobile Phone no:			
Postcode:				Email Contact:			
PLEASE INDICATE CHOSEN GAMES							
South West		North Yorkshire		South East		Northumberland	
Swampland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Swampland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Swampland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Swampland	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cityscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cityscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cityscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cityscape	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trenches	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moorland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supershot	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trenches	<input type="checkbox"/>
Woodland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Woodland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Woodland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supershot	<input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Visit:			Time Of Arrival:				
Total number in party:		Male:			Female:		
Special Dietary Needs:							
Additional Insurance needed: Yes / No				Advanced Paint gun needed: Yes / No			
Number Required:				Number required:			
Where did you hear about us?	Friend <input type="checkbox"/>		Website <input type="checkbox"/>		Advert <input type="checkbox"/>		Other <input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>We will confirm with your total price and availability, shortly.</b></p> <p><b>Thank you for choosing Paintball Power</b></p>							

Fig. 1

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