

**ADVANCED GCE UNIT
APPLIED TRAVEL AND TOURISM**

Unit 15: Marketing in Travel and Tourism

CASE STUDY

Pre-release case study for examination June 2007

To be opened on receipt

G734/CS

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- This case study **must** be opened and given to candidates on receipt.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- You **must** make yourself familiar with the case study before you take the question paper.
- You **must not** take notes into the examination.
- A clean copy of the case study will be issued with the question paper.

This document consists of **8** printed pages.

THE DEEP

Introduction

The focus of The Deep, Hull's aquatic visitor attraction, is to explain the history of the world's oceans through time, depth and latitude. This is achieved through the use of many different media including audiovisual presentations, physical interactives, graphic panels and computer interactives as well as living displays.

Each exhibit has a very specific theme and if animals are used to aid this explanation then the species used are chosen to illustrate a particular point.

For this reason the collection plan is varied and does not concentrate on a particular species or group of species.

Fig. 1

LOCATION OF THE DEEP

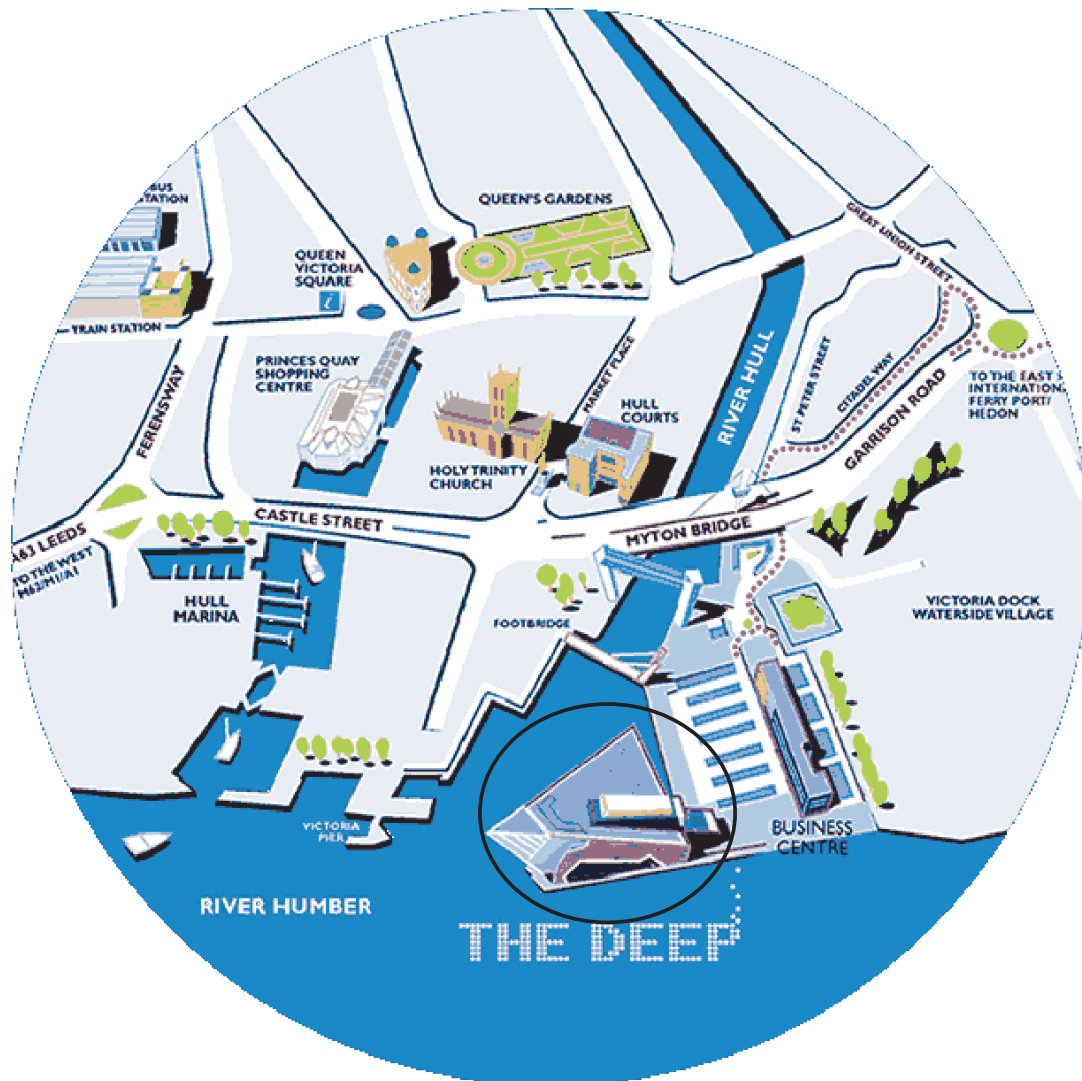
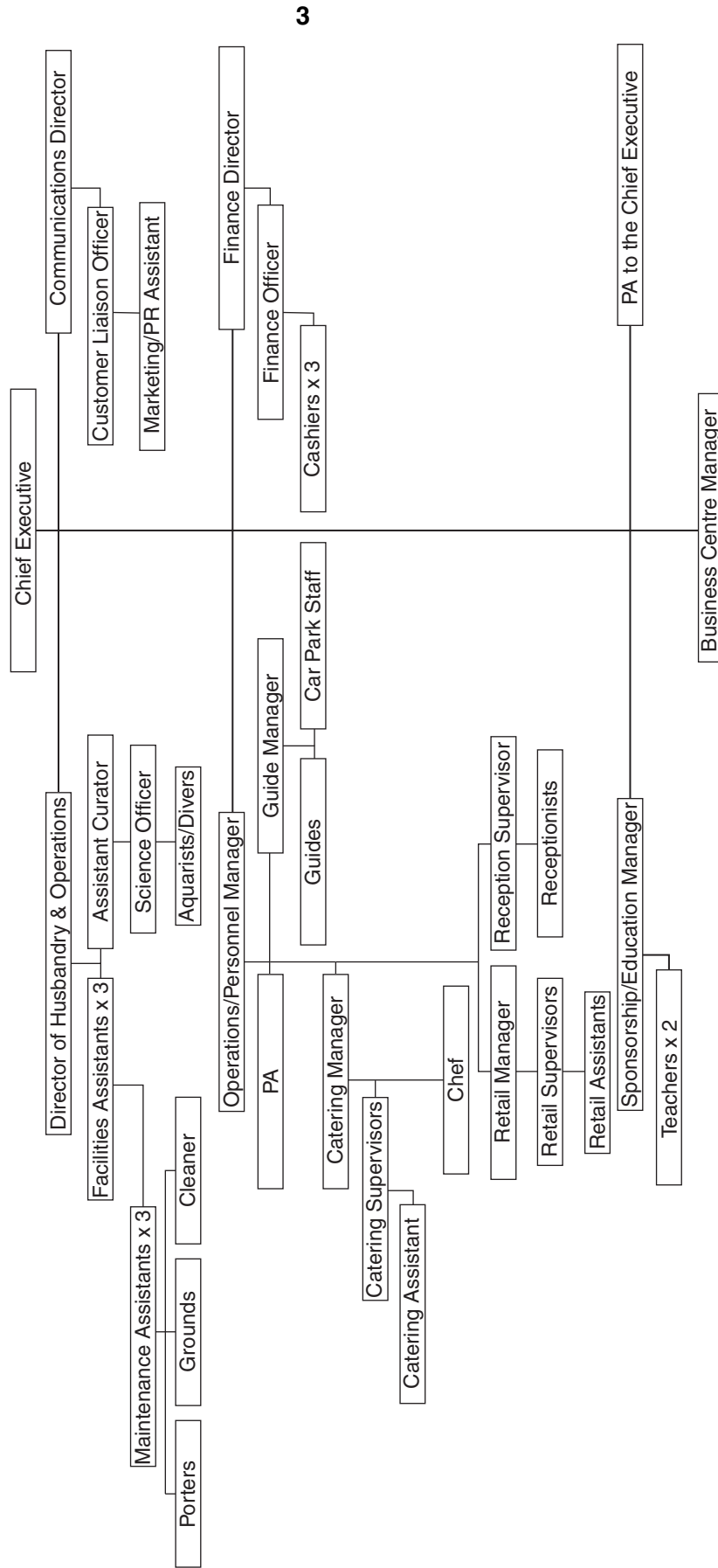


Fig. 2

**ORGANISATIONAL CHART FOR
THE DEEP**



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Fig. 3

MARKETING AND PR STRATEGY FOR THE DEEP 2002–2006

Summary and Overview

The Deep enjoyed unparalleled success during its first trading year of, 2002, boosted enormously by a strong brand, successful marketing initiatives and positive national and international PR. 500,000 visitors came to The Deep in the first five months of opening.

The period March–October of each year is traditionally the busiest for visitor attractions and The Deep is no exception, with about 80% of all visitors coming in these eight months. It is, therefore, important to ensure that a strong marketing and PR plan is put together to ensure we maximise visitor numbers.

Although the summer months will always be our busiest time, the winter months require our commitment to keep the attraction sufficiently busy to break even as a minimum. Our prime market during these off-peak periods is older people who are not in full time paid employment. Although many visitors who fall into this group travel independently in cars, a higher proportion use public transport or join coach parties. Ensuring efficient transport links and keeping regular contact with group organisers will be key to securing this market.

Although discounting will be necessary as the 'catch' in some publications and to encourage joint initiatives, these will be kept to a minimum.

PR may require a more proactive approach. We need to achieve follow-up features in selected magazines and first articles in similar publications within specific genres. The key to success is continued relationship building with newspaper and freelance journalists, and careful planning to ensure we take advantage of publication schedules.

Education groups are more prolific in the Summer term, with up to 40 groups each week in June and July, falling to an average of 10 in the September–December term. The quieter period attracts a higher proportion of students from colleges and sixth forms, which denotes that this is a market we should tap to increase our educational groups in off-peak periods.

Fig. 4

Situation analysis

The Deep achieved 700,000 visitors in the first eight months of trading; this number is expected to follow industry norms and drop by 50% in subsequent years.

The majority of visitors come to The Deep between the hours of 11am and 2.30pm, with Saturdays, Sundays and school holidays being the most popular times. Marketing is, therefore, focused on:

- maximising the busy periods by making them even busier;
- encouraging those who can avoid busy times to come in our off-peak periods;
- pricing (see below).

Competitor Survey Winter 2002/2003

The Deep will continue to provide excellent value for money when compared against other Millennium attractions and other aquaria.

Attraction	Adult	child
Blue Planet Aquarium, Cheshire	£7.75	£5.50
Plymouth Aquarium	£8.00	£4.50
Sea Life, Scarborough	£6.50	£4.75
Magna	£7.99	£5.99
Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh	£7.95	£4.50
THE DEEP	£6.50	£4.00

Marketing The Deep – SWOT analysis

Strengths

- 850,000 visitors in our first year will produce repeat custom and recommendations;
- competitively priced;
- an efficient and effective customer care system;
- on-going press interest;
- a strong brand;
- established 'friends' in the media who support The Deep.

Weaknesses

- Hull's end-of-the-line location;
- poor rail links from the west and north;
- Hull as a city is not offering enough quality 'extras' to make Hull a day out after visiting The Deep;
- we will not be as newsworthy after our first year.

Opportunities

- extending the brand via e-retailing;
- audio tours will produce revenue and reduce complaints;
- new road developments from the east will make getting to The Deep easier from the east and the P&O North Sea terminal;
- the new park and ride facility from Hessle will make access from the west and south easier;
- joint PR and promotional initiatives with other attractions;
- new "Into The Deep" style documentary run by Yorkshire TV, and sold to other regions too will give almost nationwide coverage on TV;
- new developments at The Deep such as the introduction of new species will generate press interest;
- these new developments will encourage repeat and new visitors;
- launching the Kid's Crew Club.

Fig. 4

Threats

- another attraction opening nearby would divert our market elsewhere;
- continuing budget cuts by Hull City Council of its tourism budget;
- that the press lose interest in us and we become ‘just another attraction’.

Market Research

In the pre-opening Marketing Plan we asked five key questions.

- (i) Who are our customers?
- (ii) Where do they come from?
- (iii) What are the unique selling points (USP) of The Deep?
- (iv) How do we achieve and exceed our targeted visitor numbers?
- (v) How do we communicate with our visitors?

The first three questions were answered when we conducted market research after we opened. This information was supplemented by informal conversations with visitors whilst on site.

Who are our customers?

- families with children aged 4–14;
- those who are over 55 and probably retired;
- school groups booked by teachers or school office staff;
- all other sections of the community.

Where do they come from?

- within a 2.5 hour drive-time from Hull eg. Manchester to the west, Nottingham to the south and Newcastle to the north. This time is reduced to a one hour drive time during quieter months, with visitors coming from Leeds, Sheffield and York;
- visitors drive from further afield at weekends and school holidays;
- 80% arrive by car;
- 10% by bus;
- 3% by train;
- 7% on foot.

What prompted visitors to visit The Deep?

- 67% saw it on television or read about it in a newspaper;
- 20% like aquariums and/or love anything to do with fish/sharks;
- 13% said The Deep was a new attraction so hadn't been before.

What are the unique selling properties of The Deep?

- the story – not just another aquarium with lots of tanks;
- the live species especially the sharks are a ‘wow’ factor;
- the scenic lift is unique and the ice wall popular;
- the easy route through the attraction, with good disabled access;
- the relatively high number of car parking spaces for a city centre attraction;
- our ability to plan for minor and major changes to the exhibits, keeping the attraction fresh for repeat visitors.

Fig. 4

Please complete this questionnaire and return it to Reception.

Date of visit

 / /

Have you visited The Deep website?

Yes No

How did you travel to The Deep?

Car Train Bus Foot Other, state below:

How far did you travel?

- less than 1/2 hr
 1/2 to 1 hr
 1 to 2 hrs
 more than 2 hrs

How long did you spend in The Deep?

1 hr 1-1½ hr 1½-2 hrs more than 2 hrs

How many people were in your party?

Please rate the following on a scale of 1 - 5 (1 poor, 5 excellent)

How would you rate The Deep on value for money?

1 2 3 4 5

How did you find the signage within The Deep?

1 2 3 4 5

How would you rate the attraction on cleanliness?

1 2 3 4 5

If poor, please comment

How much did you enjoy the visit overall?

1 2 3 4 5

If applicable, how did you find the quality of food in the Café?

1 2 3 4 5

How did you find the Café in terms of value for money?

1 2 3 4 5

If you visited the shop how did you find the product range?

1 2 3 4 5

How did you find the shop in terms of value for money?

1 2 3 4 5

How would you rate our staff overall?

1 2 3 4 5

What was your favourite part of the attraction?

What was your least favourite part of the attraction?

Would you recommend the Deep?

Yes No

How did you hear about The Deep?

How did you purchase your tickets for The Deep?

- On arrival
 Jacksons Supermarkets
 Telephone
 Hotel
 Tourist Information Centre
 Internet
 Other, please state below

Fig. 5

latest news

TWILIGHT ZONE LATEST

The Deep, Hull's £52 million Millennium Commission lottery project will be opening its Twilight Zone on 19 March 2005. This exhibition, which explores life in the twilight zone of the ocean is the largest of its kind in the world. Giant spider crabs, nautilus, wolf eels and giant Pacific octopus are just some of the weird and wonderful inhabitants on display.

BACKGROUND

The Deep is the world's only submarium, telling the story of the world's oceans using a unique blend of interactives and stunning aquaria. The Twilight Zone enhances the visitor experience of this award winning visitor attraction which has already welcomed over 1.6m visitors since opening in March 2002.

GRIFF VISITS THE DEEP

The Deep was shown in BBC2's Restoration programme. Stunning footage of The Deep including aerial shots of the show's presenter - Griff Rhys Jones were used in the programme featuring buildings from the North.

Restoration programme makers Endemol UK, (also makers of Big Brother) specially selected The Deep to kick off the North of England programme as they felt it represented The North's vibrant renaissance.

Presenter of the show Griff Rhys Jones commented:



"I am very excited about the new series of Restoration, the first was an enormous success and I am thrilled to be on board again for the second. The Deep is not only a unique and spectacularly designed building in its own right but represents so much more. It was a pleasure to experience it for myself."

Fig. 6

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