

IN GERMANY

More 'Action' For WB's Movie World

By Juliana Koranteng

If you're taking Hollywood to Europe, don't do it half-heartedly; go the whole hog. That's the branding strategy of Tim Ruedy, general manager of Warner Bros. Movie World Germany, this season.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS



The tagline for the new marketing campaign, created with U.S.-based ad agency Ackerman McQueen, is "Hollywood in Action."

Ruedy, who joined Six Flags Inc.'s Bottrop-Kirchhellen-based park in September 2001 from Six Flag Marine World in San Francisco, felt the previous tagline, "Hollywood in Germany," lacked the pace that Hollywood's populist repertoire brings to European cinemas.

"Hollywood in Action," on the other hand, evokes the spark of movie blockbusters that run the gamut from Arnold Schwarzenegger to Renee Zellweger.

"We didn't think the [former tagline] conveyed the en-

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ergy we have in the park. So we've tried to accentuate the Hollywood atmosphere, which is our unique selling point," he said.

To that end, the park is introducing two new Hollywood action shows this season which runs April 12-Nov 2.

The Real Hollywood Stunt Show replaces the Police Academy Stunt Show, which had been a regular feature since the park opened in 1996. The new show aims to dazzle audiences with movie stunts (from pyrotechnics, explosions to car tricks) linked to a variety of Hollywood action films, as opposed to just one movie.

The second new show, The Wild West Screen Test Show, takes place in the park's Western Theatre.

Centered on "Rio Bravo," the 1959 John Wayne-Dean Martin Western classic, the screen test show invites spectators to be cast, and then placed in Western costumes and make-up backstage, before filming them within a sequence of the movie, which is shown to the rest of the audience.

The two shows were created by Utopia Entertainment, the Los Angeles-based company with offices in Madrid, Spain and the Dutch capital Amsterdam.

Having already worked with Warner Bros. Movie World Madrid, another Six Flags operation, Utopia pitched for and won the contract for the new shows meeting with Bill Muirhead, Six Flags Europe's CEO.

"Their goal was to bring



BIG JUMP – Daily stunt spectacular shows play a big role at Warner Bros. Movie World Germany

more Hollywood back to the show; they needed a bigger statement of bringing out the magic behind the scenes," explained, Daniel Burzlaff, Utopia's president.

Ruedy dismissed rumors that the new show's generic brand names indicate Six Flags might soon stop using specific Warner Bros. Brand names or film titles for rides and shows.

Two existing Warner Bros. Branded attractions are The Wild Bunch, the 198-foot tall free-fall tower by Intamin AG. It is named for the 1969 infamous Sam Peckinpah Western, and the Wild Wild West (Germany's first wooden coaster from the Roller Coaster Corp. of America Inc.) is based on Will Smith's 1999 movie.

On occasions, the park will license the title or theme from another studio, such as the water ride The NeverEnding Story, named for the 1984 fantasy film made by Munich-

based Bavaria Studios.

"We'll carry on with the Warner Bros. Names or themes, apart from circumstances when Warner Bros. May not have the rights to the title of the film," he said to explain the complexity involved in gaining movie rights. "For example, Universal Studios made the first two 'Terminator' movies, while Warner Bros. made the last one.

"If we wanted to use Terminator 2, we couldn't, but we could do a Terminator 3 [attraction]."

His other marketing push is to emphasize the family experience offered by the park, as opposed to focusing on just the rides and the shows.

However, while there are elements of local entertainment, such as magician/hypnotist Andreas Ahnfeld, there are no plans to subtract any of the Hollywood focus.

Admission prices remain the same this season at \$26 for adults and \$21 for kids.