



The Official Magazine of The International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions

[ADVERTISING](#) |
 [EDITORIAL CALENDAR](#) |
 [SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION](#) |
 [ARCHIVES](#) |
 [CONTACT US](#) |
 [INDUSTRY LINKS](#) |
 [IAAPA](#) |
 [TRANSLATIONS](#) |
 [SEARCH](#) |
 [HOME](#)

Innovation Station

by J.B. Elderkin

Cutting-edge technology was the star of this year's IAAPA Attractions Expo

There was plenty of action and excitement at the IAAPA Attractions Expo 2005, and as always, one of the major thrills out on the floor was the unveiling and introduction of new products. Technology seemed to be the watchword this year—cutting-edge innovations were the hallmark of the new rides, products, games, and food on display throughout the Georgia World Congress Center.



A great example of the kind of new technology that is coming to define the industry was obvious in ProSlide Technology's new Rocket. Rocket is an "extreme uphill boating" ride, a combination of the traditional flume and roller coaster. The ride is now operating as the "Black Anaconda" at Noah's Ark in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin. Meanwhile, ABC Rides of Switzerland, which bills itself as the "engineers of new rides," also introduced a number of technological marvels, including a Grand Flume and a Tilt Tower. The Grand Flume runs for a remarkable 1,600 feet and operates 17 boats that each hold up to eight passengers. That translates into a theoretical capacity of 1,370 riders per hour. The pirate-themed Tilt Tower stands 42 feet tall and tilts eight passengers at five feet per second.

FreeStyle Slides Inc. introduced The Hippo, the world's largest inflatable water slide. Standing three stories tall and almost 170 feet long, The Hippo can compete with permanent attractions, but it is categorized as a temporary structure. This means it can operate in previously untapped markets—for example, Royal Caribbean Cruises recently purchases two Hippos.

American Wave Machines launched a surfing/standing wave machine, which allows surfers and bodyboarders to ride as if they were maneuvering in real ocean waters. The new device, called the SurfStream, promises to be truly revolutionary—wave riders claim it will allow people anywhere, even in land-locked areas, to enjoy surfing as it really feels. The SurfStream offers the most sought-after surfing experience, something people travel the world in search of—the long ride.

Back on dry land, Kinder-State 90 LLC brought a unique virtual driving experience for children to the show in Atlanta. The Kinder-State 90, named after the interstate that runs from Maine to Washington, is a four-foot-wide wooden track that offers young children a chance to pretend they are driving. The original landscape art, a wonderful hand-designed set, gives a fun-filled geography lesson that depicts cities, farms, forests, and mountains. An attractive alternative to go-karts, the Kinder-State is also responsibly safety conscious. Automatic Toys Modena (A.T.M.) offered children's rides with interactive

elements. Long a maker of traditional rides, A.T.M.'s newest creations—such as the American Chopper—will accelerate, brake, and even pop wheelies at the command of their little riders

For faster-paced action, FCS Racing Simulation introduced its Hexatech, a “real” race experience that offers g-force pull, feedback steering, and exact car dynamics. Extensive test driving by professional drivers helped deliver the true sense of motorsport competition that the Hexatech offers. And it can entertain a variety of realistic levels—from rookie to expert.

Advancing technology within the industry is also creating an exciting new hybrid experience—part ride, part virtual reality—that was on full display in Atlanta. For example, 3DBA's new 4-D theater and Sky Glider offer state-of-the-art thrills.

The Sky Glider simulates hang gliding. Riders are “launched” to fly over a park at a speed of 80 kilometers per hour (about 50 miles per hour) and a distance of 700 meters (about 2,300 feet). The 4-D theater lets visitors immerse themselves in a visual and physical experience. Simworx also debuted experiential breakthroughs. Its new flight simulators work with motion system technology that was originally developed for the mainstream flight simulation industry. The flight simulators, which are configured around the Stargazer and T-series, operate in conjunction with cylindrical or flat screens and offer vibration and drop sensations, aromas, 3-D vision, and surround sound.

CDRide addressed another growing technology—the on-ride DVD market. Its new digital video system captures dynamic videos of the riders in every car of installation rides, from the moment the ride begins through all the thrilling twists and turns, until they disembark at the end. Excited riders can purchase their personal DVDs at the point of sale, and they leave not only with their point-of-view videos, but also a movie with edited clips of the ride atmosphere that makes them the stars of the show.

Another software product receiving rave reviews was BounceAtMyHouse, the real-time reservation software. BounceAtMyHouse is the first all-in-one, browser-based software package built specifically for inflatable product sales and rental business owners. Real-time reservations, dynamic administrative controls, online storefront, built-in marketing tools, and customer database features make BounceAtMyHouse an indispensable software solution.

Ask Advatar Inc. grabbed plenty of attention as it rolled out its ever-present mobile kiosks. Propelled by the Segway human transporter, the nine-foot-tall display kiosks take advertising messages directly to consumers, wherever they gather to play, shop, or dine—including trade shows. The Ask Advatar team said sporting events, zoos, shopping centers, boardwalks, and amusement parks have all expressed interest in this newfangled advertising technique. Another technology-based product, Screen Yo Body's Sunscreen Spray Station, allows waterpark visitors to stand in a booth and receive full-body coverage of kid-friendly sunscreen. Completely self-contained and requiring no utilities, the Spray Station can boost the bottom line while allowing parks to advertise that they are now “burn-free zones.”



Atomic Products announced at the Expo its new line of Electro-Luminescent Fiber sunglasses with clear lenses.

Some new products combined high tech with old-school sensibility. H&H Manufacturing Inc. offered Metal Flower Lights, a variety of simulated, lighted flowers with bendable leaves and stems. Lights are emitted from tips of the flowers, providing a pleasing atmosphere wherever they are displayed. Roto Industries Inc. unveiled its Automated Litter Receptacle, a fully automated progressive litter receptacle with built-in gutters, four-color graphics, and 58-gallon capacity, while Standard Change-Makers Inc. debuted its versatile MC550RL-TIK. This ticket and change machine works with cash, credit card, and token acceptance paired with ticket dispensation.

Sensio introduced its new Sensio Pro, a high-definition stereoscopic video processor that sets a new standard for 3-D attractions. LSG Systems generated rock-show atmosphere with its new Power Fog Industrial 9D fog machine. And Radio Boss's new 99-channel, two-way radios are some of the most durable on the market.

Atomic Products announced its new line of Electro-Luminescent Fiber sunglasses with clear lenses, and SLP Enterprises brought 100 percent UV-protective eyewear—multicolored sunglasses with Velcro-adjustable bands. New gear for kids of all ages was introduced by Aeromax, the winner of numerous toy and design awards last year. Meanwhile Skullbone Inc. showed T-shirts made of cotton with water-based screen prints of wildlife and fantasy images.

Ablestone LLC's Single DJ machines displayed musical simulation machines, while Ketchum Manufacturing offered plastic

tags for admission, parking, and coat check needs. Australian Airbrushed Tattoos Inc. brought a new airbrush tattoo kit designed to give retailers a new offering beyond merely tattooing. Fast Signs introduced event and park signs that can be made to match amusement park programs, and Niagara-on-the-Lake's dancing fountain garnered attention all week. Sigma Services offered its Firewater Flame System, which produces rapid-fire flames without the use of gaseous products.



Other clever devices included Multi-Reach International's new reaching tool, and Ocean Optics' Sea Changer Color Engine, a dichroic filter, is a dynamic new CYMG hexachromic color changer for ETC Source Four Ellipsoidals.

InSpeck's 3-D Stereo Portraits create images that appear to jump out of the picture frame, and Electro-LuminX Lighting's Light Tape is an extremely thin, luminescent lamp that can bend around corners. And the Digital Audio Machine by Alcorn McBride Inc. is a book-sized music trigger mechanism that sets off sound or announcements within designated geographic areas. L&P International offered the PowerMate, a handheld lifting device for use with stairs, on and off vehicles, or onto platforms. And Open Air Cinema LLC introduced the Cinebox, which

allows anyone to produce small-scale outdoor movies.

Building facades were displayed by Scene Work Inc., which will design, fabricate, and install the facades, and OpenAire's new retractable roof/pool enclosures and skylights can allow customers to enjoy "outdoor" facilities year-round at the touch of a button.

A variety of new games was also on display. Namco introduced the "Rockin' Bowl-O-Rama," a computerized table-top bowling game, and the new version of "MarioKart," in which players test their driving skills against a cast of video game stars. Mario, Pac-Man, and Donkey Kong are some of the opponents available, and the game's NamCam captures the player's face and inserts it onto the screen during the action.

S&B Candy and Toy brought a number of new items to Atlanta, including the "Prize Rocket" and "Candy Depot"—variations on the traditional crane machine. Bay Tek introduced the "Chameleon Paradize," an interactive, two-player game for young children, and the "Ticket Troopers," a three-player police-themed game that challenges players to roll coins across a spinning playfield and into targets while maneuvering across a miniature bridge. Coast to Coast Entertainment featured the "Single Dip," a game in which children compete to fill animated ice cream cones.

As always, new food products were of great interest to IAAPA Attractions Expo attendees. A perpetual line formed near the free samples for Chef Penny's Gator Fritters. Packed with a flavorful punch, these hand-rolled, light panko-crusted treats are a blend of chopped alligator meat, breading, vegetables, and seasonings. Tuxedo Chili introduced salsa in a pouch, which stores at room temperature and is great for boating, camping, traveling, and hiking. Freshpop America came with a new Popcorn Coin Machine that offers air-popped popcorn, and Spudmasters brought the popular Spudmaster, an educational, crowd-pleasing attraction that produces incredibly tasty—and large—Colossal Chips.



© Copyright 2005 International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions FUNWORLD MAGAZINE. All rights reserved under copyright. Use of any content contained herein prohibited without the expressed consent of the publisher.