

HOW AN AIRPLANE RAISES VISITOR FREQUENCY

theleisureway is dedicated to the creation of leisure experiences in shopping centers. A case study carried out by the Spanish company shows how it optimizes malls' leisure offers for children and boosts visitor numbers. IMAGES: THELEISUREWAY

ABOUT THELEISUREWAY

theleisureway is a company devoted to the implementation of leisure solutions in new shopping centers or in existing ones that wish to introduce an innovative concept. The creative team and the strategic team work together to offer integral solutions by creating a leisure space adapted to the needs of the mall. In some cases, this intervention will be extensive because it will require an architectural project to change the space; in another cases, only targeted interventions are needed in order to create and install products that become an icon in the center. The key for the success of leisure solutions is to develop a proposal that benefits the customers and therefore the mall's performance a well. This benefit is achieved by analyzing the center's characteristics, customers, environment, competitors and thus determining the center's needs to improve its offer. But what is an even more important part of the company's projects and makes them unique is the imagination applied to the creative process. This is the engine of theleisureway and its main competitive advantage, enabling it to offer its customers innovative solutions.



The case study is on a project called "The Plane." After an exhaustive analysis of the shopping center with which theleisureway was working and its area of influence in this project, the company noticed a high population density of children from four to 12 years old compared to other areas of the city, as well as a lack of innovative public leisure offers for the area. At the same time, the mall's objective of being a destination for families made the target clear: to create an iconic leisure concept to increase customer footfall in the shopping center and develop a strategy to attract families living the area.

DEVELOPING THE IDEA

Ball pits have always been popular since they boost children's interaction, improve their psychomotor activity, and are comfortable and safe. The basic idea was to use one of these, but to develop it into

something new. So far, the experts at theleisureway knew that installing a ball pit would be attractive for children, but the company's philosophy goes further: to creating unique and unforgettable experiences so that leisure becomes an icon for the mall.

The location for the ball pit was reminiscent of a hangar, so the idea was to "land" a plane in this shopping center with a play area inside. After all, planes in general are some of the most striking objects from the adult world for children. To be as attractive as possible means playing in an environment similar to the real machine. Building on this idea, the leisure experts had to determine what type of plane to develop. The designers started to work on a concept inspired by the structure of the first triplane aircraft in service during the World War I, the Fokker Dr.I, piloted by the famous Red Baron.

WHAT DOES THE PLANE LOOK LIKE?

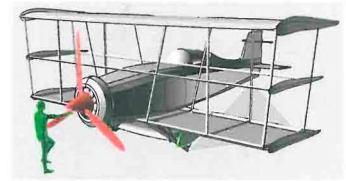
The plane has an inner play surface of 20 sq m in the wings and 9 sq m in the fuselage and an outer surface of 90 sq m. The material used to build the plane was aluminum painted in red. It weighs more than 3,000 kilograms and has a resistance of 17,586 kilograms. The play area is divided into two sectors, so there are two leisure areas adapted to the age of the children and the types of games.

The small area is composed of softer and lower elements more appropriate for younger children. For older children, there is a multi-adventure area with a ropes course, exploration area, and a ball pit. New activities will also be added. The project was realized in approximately five months, from the formation of the team to the design, approval of materials, construction, pre-assembly, certification, transport, and final assembly.

RESULTS

Since it was installed in December 2014, the plane has been well received by center's customers. The footfall from families with children in the area where the plane was installed has increased exponentially and the plane has become a popular destination for the youngest kids. This space has become a gathering place for children and parents and is now a reference point and hallmark of the mall.

The approach of making the shopping center revolve around leisure has proven long-term benefits because it invites visitors to experience malls more intensely. They become a meeting point for families and friends to enjoy leisure time. If people feel comfortable in a mall, they generally stay longer – and the best thing is that they come back. The more visitors it has, the more sales there are. In conclusion, factors like the capacity to generate footfall and lengthen stays lead to higher consumption, better results, and increased revenue sustainability in the long term.



ABOUT THE METHODOLOGY

3D modelling is part of the concept development phase. The entire working process is as follows:

- 1. Diagnosis and first ideas*
- 2. Concept development*
- 3. Technical development*
- 4. Manufacturing and start-up*

