

Merlin Entertainments Appoints Chief Strategy Officer

Linda Zou Announced as Latest Executive Member to Join Global Leader in Branded Entertainment Destinations

London, 08 January 2024: Merlin Entertainments, a world leader in branded entertainment destinations with over 140 attractions globally, today announced the appointment of Linda Zou as Chief Strategy Officer, effective February 2024. Zou will report directly to CEO Scott O'Neil and will work closely with the rest of the Executive leadership team in designing and executing the company's strategic vision and driving the continued growth of Merlin's strong brand portfolio.

Zou joins Merlin from Boston Consulting Group (BCG), where she was a Managing Director & Partner in London. While at BCG, she led the development and execution of business strategy, commercial transformations, proposition design, and artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced analytics programmes for leading consumer companies in the UK, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Prior to joining BCG in 2013, Linda worked in global health and set up large-scale health programmes in southern Africa.

Scott O'Neil, CEO of Merlin Entertainments, said:

"As Merlin transforms into a premium positioned, innovative and data driven company focused on driving enterprise value, we will continue building capabilities to be world class in dynamic pricing, optimising trade, exploring the future of branded accommodation, maximising retail opportunities and investing in technology to drive efficiencies. Linda is the perfect executive to lead our organic growth plans and ambitious plans and trajectory. Linda is intellectually curious, a driving force of will and has proven to be an extraordinary teammate. She will be an instant value add to Merlin as she brings a wealth of experience and expertise in strategy, innovation, and transformation in the retail and travel sectors which translates directly into our business and allows her to hit the ground running. This is an exciting time to be at Merlin and it just got better with Linda coming onto the scene."

Linda Zou, Chief Strategy Officer at Merlin Entertainments, said:

"This is a dynamic time for the leisure and entertainment industry. Customer sentiment and tourism patterns are evolving. New technologies bring new opportunities for innovative guest experiences. Advanced analytics tools can make it easier for frontline teams to respond effectively to the market. I am excited about the opportunities ahead for Merlin, as we bring more data-driven insight to enhance our guest experience, strengthen our core commercial capabilities across the portfolio, and expand our avenues for growth. Merlin has a fantastic set of assets and a passionate, experienced team, and I look forward to working with Scott, the Executive team, and broader Merlin community to grow our brands and bring memorable experiences to even more guests around the world."

As Chief Strategy Officer, Zou will spearhead key programmes to accelerate growth and improve effectiveness within the core business. She will also lead the business in building industry-leading, future-fit capabilities in core functions.

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Notes to Editors

About Merlin Entertainments

Merlin Entertainments is a global leader in branded entertainment destinations. As the UK and Europe's Number 1, Merlin operates over 140 attractions, 23 hotels and 6 holiday villages in 24 countries and across 4 continents. Merlin's purpose is to deliver memorable experiences to its millions of guests around the world, through its iconic brands and multiple attraction formats, and the commitment and passion of its employees. See www.merlinentertainments.biz for more information.
