
PRESS RELEASE



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MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS WELCOMES CRAIG INGLIS AS INAUGURAL CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER

Merlin completes transformative leadership team line-up with appointment
of renowned marketer Craig Inglis



Merlin Entertainments, the global leader in branded entertainment destinations with over 140 global attractions across 23 countries, including LEGOLAND® Resorts, the London Eye, Madame Tussauds, and SEA LIFE aquariums, today announced the appointment of Craig Inglis as its inaugural Chief Marketing Officer (CMO), effective 17 June 2024. This addition to Merlin's executive team signals a shift in the company's approach to global marketing for experiences and branded entertainment destinations.

With an illustrious career in leadership roles spanning marketing, digital and customer experience at household brands like TUI, Virgin, John Lewis, Sage and The Entertainer Group, Inglis brings a wealth of expertise to Merlin. He is well-known for leading an overhaul of John Lewis's customer and marketing strategies, including moving the brand to a more emotional positioning. The campaigns launched during his tenure at John Lewis, particularly at Christmas, became much anticipated cultural moments, delivering market-beating effectiveness and winning numerous awards, including Cannes Creative Lions, the Marketing Society, and IPA Effectiveness awards. Most recently, he has spearheaded global campaigns at Sage and driven transformation at The Entertainer Group as Chief Customer Officer. Craig is a Fellow of the Marketing Academy and non-executive Global Chair of The Marketing Society.

As the first-ever CMO at Merlin Entertainments, Inglis will spearhead transformative initiatives to elevate the company's global brand presence and drive guest engagement across Merlin's diverse portfolio of brands and attractions spanning four continents.

Fiona Eastwood, Chief Operating Officer for Resort Theme Parks and Gateway Attractions, said:

"We are thrilled to welcome Craig to our executive leadership team as we continue to innovate in the ever-evolving landscape of entertainment. Craig's visionary leadership and strategic prowess will be instrumental in redefining how we connect and communicate with our guests worldwide, before, during and after their visit. The role will be integral as we redefine our own Merlin brand as well as the brands we bring to life in our attractions. Craig's credentials and his leading role at The Marketing Society highlight his award-winning knowledge and experience. Craig understands the power of consumer engagement and I know he will challenge, drive, and revolutionise how we market and advertise to our guests in the future."

In the role, Inglis will oversee all aspects of Merlin's brand and marketing strategy, leveraging cutting-edge technologies, data-driven insights, and unparalleled creativity to deliver customer and brand impact. From iconic theme parks and world-renowned attractions to unmissable resort and hotel experiences, Inglis will lead the charge in bringing Merlin's beloved brands to life in new and exciting ways.

Craig Inglis, incoming Chief Marketing Officer at Merlin Entertainments, said:

"I am delighted to join Merlin Entertainments as the company's first Chief Marketing Officer. With a purpose to create joy, connections, and memories, this was an easy decision to make in taking up such an exciting role at a true global leader in branded entertainment. Merlin's commitment to innovation aligns perfectly with my own passion for harnessing creativity to reimagine brands. Together, we will push boundaries, challenge conventions, and create experiences that captivate the hearts and minds of our guests and audiences around the world."

As Merlin Entertainments continues to expand its global footprint and cement its position as a leader in the branded entertainment sector, the appointment of Inglis marks a significant milestone in the company's evolution. Inglis is the last appointment to complete the full Executive line-up under CEO Scott O'Neil, following the recent appointments of Karim Hajar, Chief Financial Officer; Spencer Holt, Chief People & Experience Officer; Sarah Venning, Chief Digital & Data Officer; Asha Amster, Chief Transformation Officer; Linda Zou, Chief Strategy Officer; the promotion of Fiona Eastwood, Chief Operating Officer – Resort Theme Parks, and Gateway Attractions; Paul Moreton, Chief Development Officer all joining previous Exec members John Jakobsen, Chief Operating Officer for LEGOLAND and Chief Corporate Officer Matt Jowett.

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Media Enquiries

Brunswick Group
Fiona Micallef-Eynaud / Greg Dawson
+44 (0)20 7404 5959
merlin@brunswickgroup.com

Merlin Entertainments
Chloe Couchman
Director of Corporate Communications
+44 (0)7885 827836
chloe.couchman@merlinentertainments.biz

Notes to Editors

About Merlin Entertainments:

Merlin Entertainments is a world leader in branded entertainment destinations, offering a diverse portfolio of resort theme parks, city-centre gateway attractions and LEGOLAND Resorts which span across the UK, US, Western Europe, China and Asia Pacific. Dedicated to creating experiences that inspire joy and connection, Merlin welcomes more than 62 million guests annually to its growing estate, with over 140 sites across 23 countries. An expert in bringing world-famous entertainment brands to life, Merlin works with partners including the LEGO® Group, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Peppa Pig, DreamWorks and Ferrari to create destinations where guests can immerse themselves in a wide array of brand-driven worlds, rides and uplifting learning experiences.

See www.merlinentertainments.biz for more information.

About Craig Inglis

Craig started his career as a marketing graduate trainee at TUI. Craig then joined Virgin as a Product Manager in their fledgling rail business, and after launching thetrainline.com, he became Sales & Marketing Director of Virgin Trains. He joined John Lewis in 2008 as Head of Brand Communications, became Marketing Director in 2010 and joined the main board as Customer Director in 2015, leading 600 people across all aspects of the end-to-end customer proposition and taking responsibility for all digital channels and a £2.1Bn P&L.

He presided over an overhaul of the retailer's customer & marketing strategies and led on digital transformation. The brand went from strength to strength under his tenure, and perhaps most famously, he moved the John Lewis brand to a more emotionally connected positioning. Their marketing campaigns became the benchmark for effectiveness, driving brand success and market-beating commercial performance, as well as numerous awards including multiple Cannes Creative Lions, the Cannes Lions Effectiveness Grand Prix, the Marketing Society Brand of the Year twice, the Marketing Society Award for Long Term Marketing and the only brand to ever win the much-coveted IPA Effectiveness Grand Prix twice.

In 2020, John Lewis was voted Campaign magazine's Advertiser of the Decade, and won a Gold IPA Effectiveness Award for a decade of outstanding marketing effectiveness. After 12 amazing years, he decided it was time to move on and left in 2020.

Craig then joined Sage as EVP of Brand & Integrated Marketing, where he built a new global team, developed partnerships with the likes of The Hundred, Six Nations, TikTok and Major League Baseball, and launched the brand's first ever global campaigns. In 2023, Sage was awarded its first ever Marketing Society award, as well as being shortlisted at Cannes Lions 2023.

He left Sage to develop his own consultancy, advising a range of organisations in the retail, digital and marketing sectors. In early 2024, he joined TEAL Group, owners of The Entertainer and Early Learning Centre brands, as a consultant, covering the role of Chief Customer Officer.

Craig is a Fellow of The Marketing Academy and non-executive Global Chair of The Marketing Society, where he leads the Board and works with the Executive team to develop the organisation's global strategy.