

Navigating Climate Change and Extreme Weather: A Case of Walt Disney World



Source: Unsplash (2024)

Background

In October 2024, the landfall of Hurricane Milton in Orlando led to the temporary closure of all four of Walt Disney World's theme parks and the Disney Springs shopping area for one and a half days (MSN, 2024). This closure was estimated to have reduced the park's annual attendance by 4%, resulting in a US\$125 million loss of net profit for Disney, excluding the cost of restoring park facilities after the storm (Deccan Herald, 2024).

As climate change intensifies, the frequency and severity of extreme weather events are increasing, presenting significant challenges to theme parks. These challenges disrupt operations and affect visitor safety and overall experience. Disney World's proactive response to these extreme weather events illustrates how theme parks can effectively manage crises and minimize disruption.

While some hotels, such as the Fort Wilderness Campground, were forced to close due to potential flooding, most hotels within Walt Disney World remained open to accommodate both reserved guests and locals who had to relocate because of the extreme weather (KHOU, 2024). Moreover, Disney kept guests informed of the situation through its mobile application, while also offering discounted rooms and meals to those needing to extend their stay (Business Insider, 2024). Additionally, cast members played a crucial role by volunteering to stay overnight, distributing lunchboxes, ensuring guest safety, dressing up as characters to comfort scared young guests, and clearing obstacles to help get the park up and running again (KHOU, 2024).

On the other hand, Disney's commitment to robust infrastructure, including reinforced power lines and backup electricity, further underscores the importance of governance in managing climate risks (The Cut, 2024). Similarly, parks have begun using more steel in ride designs to make them more durable against heat waves and other extreme conditions (CNN, 2023). Such

investments are essential for enhancing the resilience of theme parks against future extreme weather events.

Challenges

Beyond Disney's strategies, it has been suggested that theme parks could develop more indoor attractions, such as virtual or augmented reality experiences, to maintain guest engagement even during bad weather and reduce the necessity for park closures (LinkedIn, 2025). Furthermore, there is an increasing trend of theme parks revising their ticket policies in response to the frequent occurrence of extreme weather. For instance, SeaWorld has updated its weather guarantee policy to include not only rainstorms but also extreme heat, allowing guests to return on another day if weather conditions are unfavorable (Theme Park Insider, 2023).

Disney's experience with Hurricane Milton once again demonstrates that climate change poses significant risks to business operations. While the strategies implemented by Disney and other theme parks can help mitigate some of the impacts, they are not sufficient to fully protect a theme park's assets and future. This underscores the broader responsibility of companies to adopt sustainability initiatives and address the root causes of climate change (Deccan Herald, 2024).

Discussion Questions

1. What lessons can other theme parks learn from Disney's approach to accommodating guests in the event of extreme weather?
2. What role do cast members play in crisis management during extreme weather events?
3. How might Disney incorporate changes in park facilities to maintain guest engagement during adverse weather?
4. How can Disney adapt its ticket policies or pricing strategies to accommodate the increasing frequency of extreme weather events?
5. Given the increasing occurrence of extreme weather events, what other strategies can theme parks adopt in the future to combat the impact brought by climate change?

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Keywords

- Theme Park
- Extreme Weather
- Climate Change
- Crisis management
- Guest Experience
- Sustainability

应对气候变化与极端天气：华特迪士尼世界案例



Source: Unsplash (2024)

背景

2024 年 10 月，飓风“弥尔顿”在奥兰多登陆，导致华特迪士尼世界所有四个主题公园以及迪士尼泉购物区暂时关闭了一天半（MSN，2024）。据估计，此次闭园使该公园的年客流量减少了 4%，给迪士尼带来了 1.25 亿美元的净利润损失，这还不包括风暴后恢复公园设施的成本（Deccan Herald，2024）。

随着气候变化加剧，极端天气事件的频率和严重程度都在增加，这给主题公园带来了重大挑战。这些挑战会扰乱运营，并影响游客安全和整体体验。迪士尼世界对这些极端天气事件的主动应对，说明了主题公园如何能有效管理危机并最大限度地减少干扰。

虽然一些酒店，例如荒野堡垒露营地，因可能发生洪水而被迫关闭，但华特迪士尼世界内的大多数酒店仍保持开放，以接待已预订的客人以及因极端天气而需要转移的当地居民（KHOU，2024）。此外，迪士尼通过其移动应用程序向客人通报情况，同时为需要延长住宿的客人提供折扣房和餐食（Business Insider，2024）。此外，演职人员发挥了关键作用，他们自愿通宵留守、分发午餐盒、确保客人安全、装扮成卡通角色以安抚受惊的小客人，并清理障碍物以帮助公园恢复运营（KHOU，2024）。

另一方面，迪士尼对坚固基础设施（包括加固的电线和备用电力）的投入，进一步凸显了治理在管理气候风险中的重要性（The Cut，2024）。同样，各公园已开始游乐设施设计中使用更多钢材，使其更能耐受热浪和其他极端条件（CNN，2023）。此类投资对于增强主题公园抵御未来极端天气事件的韧性至关重要。

挑战

除了迪士尼的策略外，有建议认为主题公园可以开发更多的室内景点，例如虚拟或增强现实体验，以便在恶劣天气期间也能保持游客参与度，并减少公园关闭的必要性（LinkedIn, 2025）。此外，针对极端天气的频繁发生，主题公园修订门票政策的趋势日益明显。例如，海洋世界更新了其天气保证政策，不仅包括暴雨，还包括极端高温，允许游客在天气条件不利时改日再来（Theme Park Insider, 2023）。

迪士尼应对飓风“弥尔顿”的经验再次表明，气候变化对业务运营构成了重大风险。虽然迪士尼和其他主题公园实施的策略有助于减轻部分影响，但不足以完全保护主题公园的资产和未来。这凸显了企业更广泛的责任，即采取可持续发展举措并解决气候变化的根本原因（Deccan Herald, 2024）。

讨论问题

1. 其他主题公园可以从迪士尼在极端天气事件中安置客人的做法中学到什么？
2. 在极端天气事件中，演职人员在危机管理中扮演什么角色？
3. 迪士尼可以如何改变公园设施，以便在恶劣天气期间保持游客的参与度？
4. 面对日益频繁的极端天气事件，迪士尼应如何调整其门票政策或定价策略？
5. 鉴于极端天气事件日益频发，主题公园未来还可以采取哪些其他策略来应对气候变化带来的影响？

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关键词

- 主题公园
- 极端天气
- 气候变化
- 危机管理
- 宾客体验
- 可持续性

應對氣候變化與極端天氣：華特迪士尼世界案例



Source: Unsplash (2024)

背景

2024 年 10 月，颶風“彌爾頓”在奧蘭多登陸，導致華特迪士尼世界所有四個主題樂園以及迪士尼泉購物區暫時關閉了一天半（MSN，2024）。據估計，此次閉園使該樂園的年客流量減少了 4%，給迪士尼帶來了 1.25 億美元的淨利潤損失，這還不包括風暴後恢復樂園設施的成本（Deccan Herald，2024）。

隨著氣候變化加劇，極端天氣事件的頻率和嚴重程度都在增加，這給主題樂園帶來了重大挑戰。這些挑戰會擾亂營運，並影響遊客安全和整體體驗。迪士尼世界對這些極端天氣事件的主動應對，說明了主題樂園如何能有效管理危機並最大限度地減少干擾。

雖然一些酒店，例如荒野堡壘露營地，因可能發生洪水而被迫關閉，但華特迪士尼世界內的大多數酒店仍保持開放，以接待已預訂的客人以及因極端天氣而需要轉移的當地居民（KHOU，2024）。此外，迪士尼透過其行動應用程式向客人通報情況，同時為需要延長住宿的客人提供折扣房和餐食（Business Insider，2024）。此外，演職人員發揮了關鍵作用，他們自願通宵留守、分發午餐盒、確保客人安全、裝扮成卡通角色以安撫受驚的小客人，並清理障礙物以幫助樂園恢復營運（KHOU，2024）。

另一方面，迪士尼對堅固基礎設施（包括加固的電線和備用電力）的投入，進一步凸顯了治理在管理氣候風險中的重要性（The Cut，2024）。同樣，各樂園已開始在遊樂設施設計中使用更多鋼材，使其更能耐受熱浪和其他極端條件（CNN，2023）。此類投資對於增強主題樂園抵禦未來極端天氣事件的韌性至關重要。

挑戰

除了迪士尼的策略外，有建議認為主題樂園可以開發更多的室內景點，例如虛擬或擴增實境體驗，以便在惡劣天氣期間也能保持遊客參與度，並減少樂園關閉的必要性（LinkedIn, 2025）。此外，針對極端天氣的頻繁發生，主題樂園修訂門票政策的趨勢日益明顯。例如，海洋世界更新了其天氣保證政策，不僅包括暴雨，還包括極端高溫，允許遊客在天氣條件不利時改日再來（Theme Park Insider, 2023）。

迪士尼應對颶風“彌爾頓”的經驗再次表明，氣候變化對業務營運構成了重大風險。雖然迪士尼和其他主題樂園實施的策略有助於減輕部分影響，但不足以完全保護主題樂園的資產和未來。這凸顯了企業更廣泛的責任，即採取永續發展舉措並解決氣候變化的根本原因（Deccan Herald, 2024）。

討論問題

1. 其他主題樂園可以從迪士尼在極端天氣事件中安置客人的做法中學到什麼？
2. 在極端天氣事件中，演職人員在危機管理中扮演什麼角色？
3. 迪士尼可以如何改變樂園設施，以便在惡劣天氣期間保持遊客的參與度？
4. 面對日益頻繁的極端天氣事件，迪士尼應如何調整其門票政策或定價策略？
5. 鑒於極端天氣事件日益頻發，主題樂園未來還可以採取哪些其他策略來應對氣候變化帶來的影響？

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關鍵詞

- 主題樂園
- 極端天氣
- 氣候變化
- 危機管理
- 賓客體驗
- 永續性