



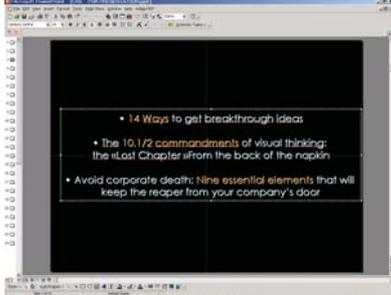
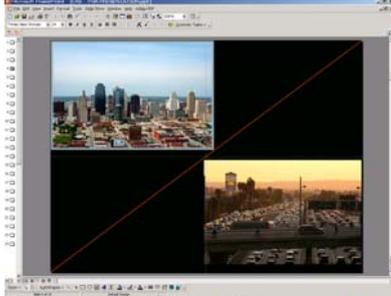
## Euro Attractions Show

How to Design and Operate Success:  
Five Golden Rules  
Speaker: Simon Opie

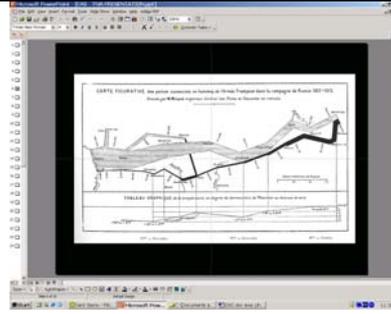
Euro Attractions Show

September 30 – October 2, 2008  
Munich, Germany

Presentation material is also available at: [www.iaapa.org](http://www.iaapa.org)

<p>EAS – TEA Presentation</p>	
<p>Abstract:</p> <p>Lists are everywhere – for instance I subscribe to an excellent website called Change This (<a href="http://www.changethis.com">www.changethis.com</a>) and each month there are articles published such as:</p>	
<p>14 ways to get breakthrough ideas</p> <p>The 10.5 commandments of visual thinking : the ‘lost chapter’ from the back of the napkin</p> <p>And my personal favourite...</p> <p>Avoid corporate death: Nine essential elements will keep the reaper from your company’s door</p>	
<p>And just as I recently learned (in Wired magazine) that Kansas City is the best and Los Angeles is the worst major US city to evacuate in event of an emergency, I have good news and bad news...</p>	
<p>The bad news is that I cannot give you 5 golden rules for success. As a start, we would have to define success – which is not as clear cut as one might hope. For example Napoleon’s Russian campaign is generally considered a failure by historians but at the time Napoleon himself cast it a great success – and in fact he won the Battle of Borodino and entered Moscow in triumph only to find the Russians had departed and burned the city before they left.</p>	

This graphic gives the statistics of the campaign but Napoleon considered it was the loss of reputation, rather than any actual loss that was the most serious effect. I leave you to make up your own minds up on the subject...



Then again – who really likes success when failure seems so much more interesting; certainly to the media. Take the development of terminal 5 at London's Heathrow airport.... which received so much bad press



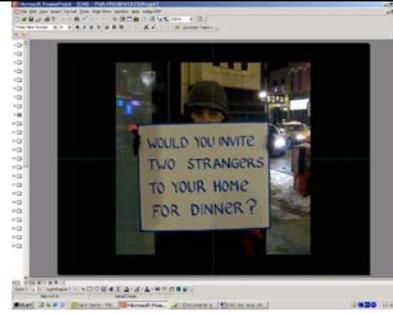
That there is now an advertising campaign to try to persuade people that it is in fact working.



So the good news is that I'm going to give you 3 sure fire ways to ensure your project fails...

I'm indebted to the late Professor Barry Turner of Middlesex University for the origins of my own interests in the characteristics of failure – he is the author of a book called Man Made Disasters (which I recommend), and gave a lecture some 20 years ago entitled '7 ways to ensure your project fails' which I found fascinating and developed through working with him into a module for the Tussauds Group's in house project management training programme (which I was responsible for at the time).

So here goes:  
SFWTEYPF 1: **Invite Strangers:** the most important resource in any project is the people and so the less familiar they are with each other the more the chances of misunderstanding and miscommunication multiply exponentially. Even the most talented individuals can be neutralized by being confronted with a bunch of strangers – even better if they lack a common language.



I was fortunate recently to attend – virtually – a very inspiring talk given by Ed Catmull, the president of Pixar and Disney Animation Studios, and a great source of wisdom on running a creative business. He gives a really great example of this in an article in Harvard Business review concerning the creation of Toy Story 2.

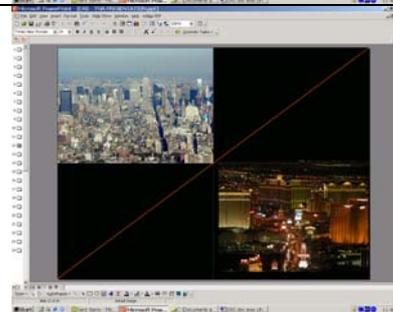


Of course we cant always work with people we know well but if no effort is made to establish a common culture and to build strong relationships amongst the team members then the Reaper is surely knocking at the door

SFWTEYPF 2: **Set up a decoy:** the easiest way to lose focus is to start a subsidiary project into which disproportionate resources are diverted away from the main goals. In a corporate environment it is always good to suggest that the sub project is an initiative of the CEO.



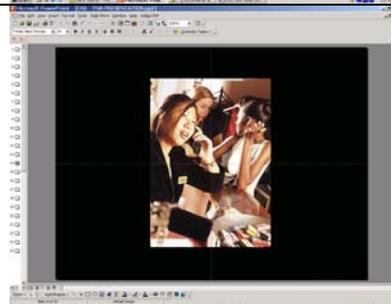
For example, when the Tussauds Group was first owned by private equity the main goal was to grow the company and – ultimately – sell it. Part of the growth strategy was a Madame Tussaud in New York, which soon became one in Las Vegas as well – but the resources were all focused on these two projects and in the meantime Madame Tussaud in London was beginning to decline.



Only by a re-emphasis on our primary goal was MTL brought back on track – and developed to become a major growth engine for the company.



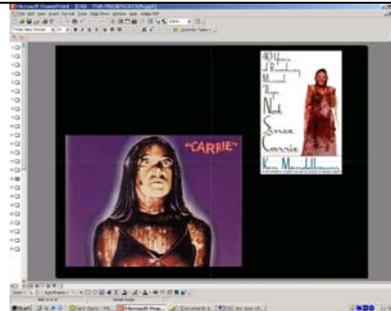
**SFWTEYPF 3: Ignore your customers:**  
Development projects tend to be goal focused but sometimes those goals may not relate to the customer.



Build it and they will come – it works in the movies (Field of Dreams) but not necessarily in real life.



A long while ago I worked on what was then – and may still be – the biggest flop in Broadway history. There's even a book about it. The musical version of Carrie. Trialed in the UK at Stratford on Avon and previewed in NY but still only ran 4 days and lost 13 million dollars. Focus on goals not related to what audiences were saying and not enough time to turn it round, even if realization existed.



So there you have 3 sure fire ways.....

**Invite Strangers, Set up a decoy, Ignore your customers**

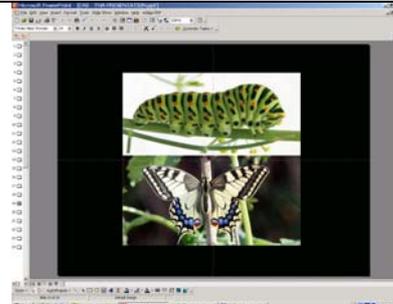
...to ensure that the Reaper knocks at your projects door. But now here is the twist – for each of these rules from the dark side, there is a way of the Jedi...



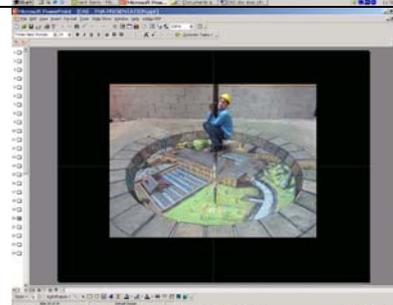
So Invite Strangers if you must but also **Seek fresh talent**.... The creative process can only be sustained by an influx of new thinking. Rock bands can only make a few good albums, Television series die eventually (some are reborn), even Presidents of the USA can only serve two terms. New perspectives – particularly in the age of technology – are necessary for progress.



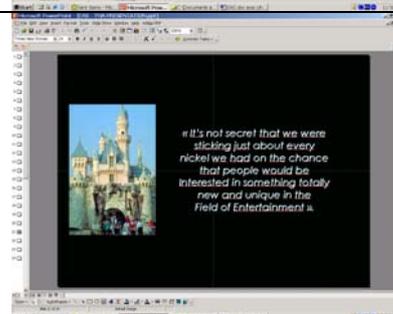
By all means Set up a decoy but also **Be open to change**... Goals shift, and our business needs to be nimble enough to accommodate the changing environment. Customers' needs change as their lives change – be sure you adapt your strategy accordingly.



And why settle for Ignoring your customers, when you can **Keep creativity alive at all costs**... Creativity is the essence of what differentiates your product from everyone else.

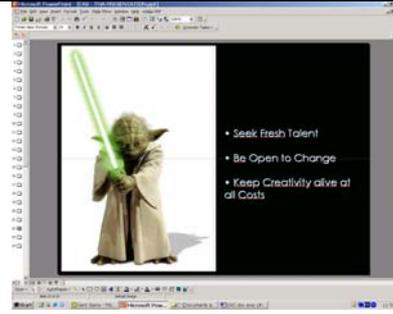


It should be the cornerstone of your activity and in the driving seat of your decision making.



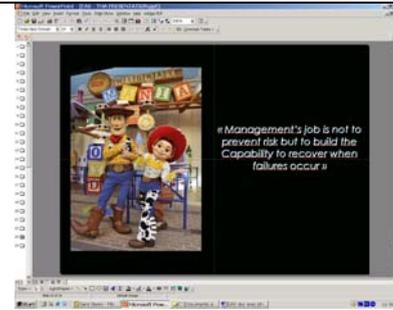
And that is really the final point I want to make. Success and failure, as Napoleon may indeed have said, are two sides of the same coin. There are no golden rules for success as such. There are strategies:

**Seek fresh talent...., Be open to change...., Keep creativity alive at all costs...**



Which involve risk – without which nothing new can be created – indeed they are right at the root of why things fail. The trick is to recognize this and to keep on the right side of the coin and so I'd like to close with a great quote from Ed Catmull which I really believe to be true:

'Management's job is not to prevent risk but to build the capability to recover when failures occur'



Thank you.

