



WANTED: G-FORCE JUNKIES FOR A THRILLING FUTURE **Alton Towers launches groundbreaking study of thrillseekers**

September 3rd: The future of thrills is set to reach new levels as Alton Towers joins forces with the world's only thrill engineer, Brendan Walker, to capture the essence of thrill-stimulation with the launch of the UK's first theme park 'Thrill Lab'. The live 3-day experiment is designed to ensure that the next generation of theme-park rides push even more of the right buttons.

On September 19, 20 & 21, volunteer riders will be subject to psychological and physiological tests to help establish a definitive 'thrill factor' across thrill rides worldwide, and provide Alton Towers with invaluable insights on how to inject maximum thrills into future rides.

Centred around the iconic Oblivion ride, which features a hair-raising 180ft vertical drop, author of 'The Taxonomy of Thrill' and ex military aeronautical engineer, Brendan Walker, will use the internationally recognised Sensation Seeking Scale and rider monitoring equipment to assess the thrill seeking tendencies of each rider and deliver a unique, groundbreaking insight into the essence of thrill-stimulation.

He commented: "Genuine thrillseekers only need apply to take part in this experiment at Alton Towers. Oblivion's success as one of the world's most exciting rollercoasters relies on a perfect synergy between extreme physical and dark psychological experiences, giving us a unique opportunity to study the science of thrills and shape the future of theme park rides."

Marketing Manager Rebecca Farrer, added: "We have always been committed to taking thrills to their limit and this live experiment is genuinely exciting. We want to translate people's gut reactions, moans and groans of delight and ecstasy into a blueprint to push our future coaster riders beyond their existing thrill limit."

How Thrill Laboratory Works

Each day, different groups of 24 Oblivion riders will attend the Thrill Laboratory for profiling sessions. Each of the three daily Personal Thrill Profiling sessions includes:

- Psychological Profiling - using the internationally recognised Sensation Seeking Scale to assess the thrill seeking tendencies of each rider.
- A ride on Oblivion, assisted by Thrill Technologists. Riders create their own Personal Ride Video, which captures facial expressions, audio commentary, heart rate showing patterns of stress, and the G-Forces experienced on the ride.
- A review of riders' videos in the laboratory, with analysis and discussion conducted by Thrill Technicians.
- Mug-shot photographs, exploring riders' ability to lie through facial expressions.
- Spot the difference competition from Oblivion, to assess focus and concentration.
- Creating memory maps of each rider's emotional journey on Oblivion.
- An exhibition of all Thrill Dossiers will be available allowing riders to compare themselves against other Thrill Seekers with access to statistics from others tests.

NB: Participants must be over 16 years old and must pre-register to participate at thrill.lab@alton-towers.com.

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For further information and photography please contact:

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Notes to Editor:

- Park entrance tickets start at £24 for adults and £16 for kids under 12, or visit with friends and take advantage of the new group rate - £22 adults or £15 kids for groups of 5 or more when booked in advance at altontowers.com.
- Hotel rooms are available from just £33.50 pppn based on four sharing a family room.
- www.altontowers.com for tickets, information and park opening times
- All rides and attractions are subject to availability.
- Merlin Entertainments Group is the leading name in location based, family entertainment, and has seen the most successful and dynamic growth of any company in the sector over the last five years. The world's No 2 visitor attraction operator, Merlin aims to deliver memorable and rewarding experiences to its 30 million visitors worldwide, through its iconic global and local brands, and the commitment and passion of its managers and 13000 employees.

Bigger than Universal and second only to Disney, Merlin Entertainments brings together LEGOLAND, Madame Tussauds, British Airways London Eye, SEA LIFE, Gardaland, Dungeons – as well as national brands such as Alton Towers, Thorpe Park, Warwick Castle and Heide Park. All brands which are distinctive, challenging and innovative – and which have great potential for growth in the future.