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مجلس الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا للترفيه والجذب السياحي  
Middle East and North Africa Leisure & Attractions Council

## VENDOR TALK – MARCH 2025

### CREATING UNFORGETTABLE GUEST EXPERIENCES HOW BUILD-YOUR-OWN PLUSH EXPERIENCES CAN DRIVE REVENUE AND ENGAGEMENT IN ATTRACTIONS

*An article by:*



### The Rise of Customisable Experiences in Attractions

In today's competitive leisure and attractions industry, operators are constantly searching for innovative ways to enhance guest engagement, increase footfall, and boost revenue. One trend that has proven successful worldwide is the interactive "Build-Your-Own Plush" experience.

This immersive, hands-on activity is now making its way to the MENA region, presenting a fresh opportunity for attractions to captivate their audiences while unlocking new revenue streams. From hotel kids' clubs to branded theme parks, snow venues, water parks, and outdoor events, the potential for bear making is as diverse as the region itself.





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### Why Personalisation is Key to Guest Engagement

Customisation has become a major trend in entertainment and retail, with guests seeking experiences that allow them to create something uniquely their own. Interactive activities like Build-Your-Own Plush have already demonstrated immense success in North America, Europe, and Asia, drawing families and fostering brand loyalty.

Now, theme parks, water parks, family entertainment centres, and other leisure venues in MENA can leverage this concept to enhance their offerings and deliver experiences that resonate with guests of all ages.



### How Build-Your-Own Plush Drives Business Growth for Attractions

Build-Your-Own Plush is more than just a fun activity - it's an experience. For attractions looking to maximise profitability while enhancing the guest experience, incorporating a Build-Your-Own Plush experience can provide multiple advantages:

- **Increases Per Capita Spending:** Guests are willing to pay for unique, customised experiences. Plush-making stations encourage additional spending, as customers purchase accessories, outfits, and themed plush add-ons.
- **Enhances Brand Loyalty & Repeat Visits:** When guests take home a plush version of an attraction's mascot or a custom character, they create a lasting emotional connection to the venue. This connection encourages return visits and word-of-mouth recommendations. A keepsake that becomes a powerful marketing tool, driving brand loyalty and encouraging repeat visits.



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- **Expands Revenue Streams Through Merchandise:** Operators can introduce exclusive plush merchandise tied to their brand's identity. Special edition, seasonal, or event-based plush offerings can drive additional retail sales
- **Drives Engagement in Themed Environments:** Interactive experiences fit seamlessly into themed attractions. Whether integrating with a fantasy kingdom, an underwater adventure, or a winter wonderland, plush-making can add to the story-driven experience of the venue.
- **Provides Low-Maintenance, High-Profit Opportunities:** Unlike large-scale rides and attractions that require extensive upkeep, Build-Your-Own Plush setups require minimal space, are easy to operate, and generate high-margin sales.
- **Flexible & Scalable:** incorporating a Build-Your-Own Plush Experience is a flexible and scalable activity with strong revenue potential. Businesses can adjust their offerings to suit their space, audience, and season, while participants leave with a cherished memento that reinforces their connection to the venue or event.



### Maximising Revenue with Custom Plush Mascots & Branded Merchandise

Attractions can take this experience a step further by offering custom plush versions of their mascots or iconic in-park characters. Here's how:

- **Exclusive Park Mascots:** For branded theme parks and other IP-driven venues, Build-Your-Own Plush experience offers an exciting opportunity to create exclusive products that tie into popular characters and stories. Imagine children building their own plush versions of their favourite characters - whether it's a superhero, princess, or a mascot unique to the park. This not only enhances the guest experience but also generates additional revenue streams through merchandise sales.





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- **Seasonal & Limited-Edition Collections:** Introduce plush characters that align with seasonal events, such as winter-themed or summer festival plush collections, driving urgency and repeat visits.
- **Event-Exclusive Souvenirs:** Special plush designs for birthday parties, corporate events, and holiday celebrations offer guests a personalised keepsake while increasing in-attraction spending.
- **VIP & Loyalty Programme Tie-ins:** Offer a plush redemption programme where frequent visitors can collect accessories, outfits, or exclusive plush figures as part of a loyalty incentive.



### Versatility Across Locations & Events

One of the greatest strengths of the Build-Your-Own Plush experience is its adaptability. It seamlessly fits into a wide variety of settings and events, offering a unique and memorable experience for all participants:



- **Hotel Kids' Clubs:** Give young guests a special vacation memory by letting them design and build their own plush companions. Customisation options can even include resort-specific themes, making them exclusive keepsakes.
- **Theme Parks:** Build-Your-Own Plush experience aligns perfectly with the immersive experiences offered at theme parks. By using intellectual property (IP) products, branded parks can incorporate beloved characters into the activity, enhancing brand engagement and guest satisfaction.





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- **Water Parks:** Build-Your-Own Plush experience can provide a refreshing and unique activity for families visiting water parks, giving guests a break from the sun and water while enjoying a creative indoor or shaded experience.
- **Snow Venues:** Adding Build-Your-Own Plush experience to snow-themed venues or indoor winter experiences provides an engaging, warm activity that complements the environment.
- **Indoor Play Centres and Birthday Parties:** Build-Your-Own Plush experience brings an interactive and creative element to kids' parties, making the occasion unforgettable for children and parents alike.
- **Outdoor Events and Festivals:** With portable setups, Build-Your-Own Plush stalls can draw crowds at festivals, outdoor markets, and seasonal events.
- **Holiday Events in Attractions:** Build-Your-Own Plush experience fits perfectly into seasonal and cultural holiday celebrations throughout the year. Guests can create holiday-themed bears, complete with iconic outfits, adding to the magic or meaning of the holiday.



- **Corporate Events:** As a family-friendly activity, Build-Your-Own Plush experience can enhance corporate family days or community outreach programmes.
- **Educational:** Children can learn about animals from different regions through the Build-Your-Own Plush experience and can open discussion about diverse cultures and ecosystems. The activity can also highlight the importance of wildlife conservation and environmental care.





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### The Future of Interactive Attractions in MENA

As family-friendly entertainment continues to grow in the MENA region, the demand for unique, immersive experiences will only increase. Incorporating a Build-Your-Own Plush experience into attractions presents an exciting, low-risk opportunity to boost guest satisfaction, create additional revenue, and ensure that visitors leave with a tangible memory of their time at the venue.



For attractions ready to take guest engagement to the next level, the time to embrace this trend is now.

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CEO of Teddy Mountain

**Fun Fact About Author:** When not talking about bears Ryan's passion is music and has been a DJ for over thirty years having performed at The Sky Lounge Hilton JBR and on Al Maya Island Abu Dhabi in the past.



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### About the company:



**Teddy Mountain** specialises in interactive Make-A-Bear experiences, where kids (and let's be honest, adults too!) can bring their very own stuffed animal to life. With adorable plush companions, endless outfit choices, fun accessories like voice boxes, and even birth certificates, Teddy Mountain transforms retail stores, theme parks, and holiday resorts into heartwarming hubs of creativity. Their playful lineup also includes Sand Art, StuffaSquishies, and Coloring Masks, ensuring endless fun beyond the fluff.

With a commitment to innovation, quality, and customer satisfaction, and from custom branding to exclusive licensing opportunities, Teddy Mountain helps businesses craft unique, engaging and memorable experiences that guests will cherish forever.

Now with a new office in Dubai, Teddy Mountain is ready to offer the MENA region cuddly, plushed memories.

Visit: [www.teddymountain.ae](http://www.teddymountain.ae) for more information