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**THE PULL FACTOR FOR ZOO NEGARA**

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***Abstract***

Zoo Negara is an attraction icon which has been established in Malaysia to create awareness for the wildlife with beautiful landscaping. The challenge for Zoo Negara is to sustain with the funding received from various sources and the revenue received from the public so as to remain significant. A comparative study of Zoo Negara and other successful zoos around the world in terms of viability and marketing can help improve the public attractiveness to visit the zoo. The pull factors to maintain the profitability such as online marketing, value added services, awareness on wildlife will be discussed. The paper also discusses the challenges faced by the Malaysian zoo and areas to improve. The significance of this study is to help the increase in revenue and provide new ideas in marketing for Zoo Negara. As the technology improves the use of this technology should also be used to create value to the various ways of marketing as to improve relevance for visitors to enjoy their journey in the zoo.

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**Keywords:** Comparative study; Viability; Marketing.

## 1. Introduction

Zoo Negara Malaysia is a major zoological park in Malaysia, located on about 110 acres situated only 5km from Kuala Lumpur. Zoo Negara was formerly known as the “Zoo in the Jungle” due to the greenery that surrounded the area ("from: <http://www.malaysiacentral.com/information-directory/zoo-negara-malaysias-national-zoo-in-kuala-lumpur/#sthash.pUXh7J2L.aNiiXyJB.dpbs> - Zoo Negara - Malaysia's National Zoo Negara in Kuala Lumpur," n.d.) It is managed by the Malaysian Zoological Society (MZS), a non-governmental organization established to set up the first zoo in Malaysia. Zoo Negara started operations in a land area of 42 acres and now have expanded to 110 acres, housing a total of over 5,137 specimens from 476 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish. Over the years, the zoo has transformed to an open concept zoo with over 90% of its animals housed in spacious areas with landscapes befitting nature. Additional facilities were added over the time, such as the Aquarium in 1972, the Reptile House in 1985 and the Bird Park in 1987. In 2014, MZS had extended cooperation with China Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA) in the Giant Panda Program which led to the arrival of two giant pandas to Malaysia.

The vision of Zoo Negara is to be one of the world’s premier zoological park dedicated to conservation, recreation, education, training and research of various animals and plant species. The foremost mission of Zoo Negara is, to provide an outstanding and dynamic habitat for animals and plant life while maintaining a high standard quality on animal health care and husbandry. Secondly, it aims to be the leader and innovator in wildlife conservation, recreation, education, training and research. Lastly, Zoo Negara strives to collaborate and disseminate out wildlife management to local, regional and worldwide zoos ("from: <http://www.zoonegaramalaysia.my/zoo.html> - Zoo Negara - About Us," n.d.).

The source of funds for Zoo Negara are from gate collections and support from sponsors. All animals in Zoo Negara are allowed to be adopted by the public and the corporate sector. The sponsorship covers the aspect of food, enrichment and veterinary care ("from: <http://www.zoonegaramalaysia.my/adopt.html> - Get Involved - Adopt Our Animals," n.d.)

## 2. Problem Statement

### Financing

Over the years, the major funding for Zoo Negara was derived from the sales of entrance tickets, rental income and income from sponsorships as well as subscriptions. Apart from that the zoo relies heavily on the grants provided by the government. With the declining economy, the number of visitors may decline, thus decreasing their sales revenue. Zoo Negara may face major shortfalls in its funding and income as with the declining economy, the government may impose cutbacks on the amount of grants provided and compiled with declining corporate sponsorship and tickets sales, Zoo Negara may face a major funding issue. In 2014 income from visitors made up 90.6% of the total income. Furthermore, the income from sponsorship and subscription may fluctuate from year to year thus hampering the normal activities of the zoo. Other income such as interest on short-term deposits, unit trust dividends and miscellaneous income makes up only 2.2% of the total income in 2014.

For Zoo Negara to be able to sustain itself in the future as well as meet all the 3 mission statements mentioned earlier stable funding plan is necessary, besides containing its expenditure. As such, to understand how Zoo Negara can perform better, we will look into the strengths and weaknesses in its financial position and provide commendations as to how Zoo Negara can look for other sources of funding and to have better expenditure management.

### **3. Research Questions**

Would Zoo Negara continue being viable as an attraction?

- What are the external factors that affects the viability of Zoo Negara?
- What other value added services that Zoo Negara can incorporate to increase revenue generation?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

This paper aims to evaluate the practices done by reputable zoos around the world in terms of two aspect: financing and marketing and to provide recommendation on areas of improvement for Zoo Negara.

### **5. Research Methods**

This research was conducted by using comparative study with secondary data of reputable zoos around the world.

### **6. Findings**

#### **6.1.Strengths of Zoo Negara**

One of Zoo Negara's strength is the fact it is are one of the icon of Malaysia. It is one of Malaysia's top attraction and landmark to visit. It is also the largest zoo in Malaysia which spans over 44 hectares (110 acres). Over the years, Zoo Negara (National Zoo) has transformed itself to an open concept zoo with over 90% of its animals confined in spacious exhibits with landscapes befitting its habitats giving the animals the freedom to move around whereby the visitors would be able to get a clear view of the animals. On top of that, Zoo Negara is the only place one can view the giant pandas in Malaysia. A pair of 8 years old giant panda called Xing Xing and Liang Liang is the new star attraction in Zoo Negara. The "panda diplomacy" is a way of fostering better relationship between China and Malaysia. This attraction also doubles up as a booster in increasing the visitor numbers and raise much needed revenue for Zoo Negara.

Next, the zoo's strategic location also make it is easily accessible as it is located not far from Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC). Even for those without their own transport, public transportation makes it easier for visitors to access the zoo. Various public transportation mode such as LRT, taxi or buses are available for locals and foreign visitors.

Furthermore, Zoo Negara relies heavily on donations to run its operations. The ability of Zoo Negara to portray itself as a non-governmental, non-profit organization, allows them to be able to collect huge sum of donations. In 2013 alone, they received more than RM300,000 in donation from the public.

Besides, the entrance fees are reasonable and affordable to all. The normal rate for visiting the zoo is RM11 for children, RM32 for adults and RM16 for senior citizens. There will be a group discount, for a minimum of 30 people, which means RM2 will be off from the normal ticket price. Foreigners are charged RM27 for children up to the age of 12 years and RM53 for adults. In contrast the Singapore Zoo the entrance fees is SGD 33 for adults which is equivalent to RM72 per person and children are SGD22 (RM48) whilst senior citizen pay SGD15(RM33).

## **6.2.Sponsorship for Zoo Negara**

Sponsorships is one of the sources of income that support the management and operation of Zoo Negara. The Zoo currently has over 30 corporate sponsors, individuals and schools. Their main sponsorship program is the adoption of animals in Zoo Negara. This program is offered to the public or corporate sponsors in order to maintain annual animal food, enrichment and veterinary care. Besides that, the income from sponsorship is used towards upgrading animal exhibits, acquiring new animals and acquiring new expertise. The contribution is also critical for wildlife and nature conservation, research and public education programs. For example, with the arrival of the pandas, Zoo Negara took the opportunity to organize a campaign to highlight the importance of bears around the world, including Malaysia's local sun bears and produced table calendars with various facts regarding the bears around the world. This helped to create awareness among the public on understanding the importance of wildlife.

In 2013, Zoo Negara received a total of RM391,138 from their sponsorship programs. In 2014, the sponsorship increased to RM1,031,035, which was a huge increase for their funding. Government grant amounting to RM765,109 in 2014 and RM916,202 in 2013, was also received for the construction and upgrading of the Giant Panda Conservation Centre.

Zoo Negara received various support from the donors and sponsors since the inception of the zoo, such as Sekolah Sri KL, 7 Eleven Malaysia and UMW Corporation. In 2014, Senheng Electric Sdn. Bhd. was one of the largest contributor, contributing RM400,000 for the Giant Panda Conservation Project. Malayan Banking Berhad sponsored 10 tigers with a total amount of RM267,020, while AmBank Group entered its 29th year in sponsoring Zoo Negara's Dromedary camels which amounted to date RM40,000. It has been an annual practice of the company since 1985 and has contributed in excess of RM745,000 for the sponsorship of the program to date.

## **6.3.Sustainability of Zoo Negara in the Long Run**

Zoo Negara Malaysia will not be able to survive without government support or grant. The following are the justification of the above mentioned statement.

Foremost, Zoo Negara is a non-profit organization managed by Malaysian Zoological Society. The upkeep and maintenance cost of the zoo is mainly funded by corporate sponsorships and entrance ticket collection. The construction fee for building the zoo (capital development) was by way of a Federal grant

amounting to RM1.25 million over the three years (“from: <http://www.zoonegaramalaysia.my/journeythroughtime> - Zoo Negara – Journey Through Time”, n.d.).

Secondly, according to “New Straits Time” article, Zoo Negara was said to be facing funding difficulty in 1981 and was nearly shut down due to lack of funds. There was a drastic fall in the number of visitors during that year probably due to increase in entrance fees. The then President cum Chairman of Zoo Negara, Tan Sri Hutson commented that zoo position may lead to a negative cashflow and predicted it will be facing another drop of 30% in the following year. In such situation, Selangor State Government has donated US\$10,000 to Zoo Negara to help overcome the plight of the zoo. (New Straits Time, 1981).

Thirdly, government has been funding or supporting Zoo Negara for all these years despite the losses. According to Zoo Negara Director, Dr Mohamad Ngah who was appointed in 2005, Zoo Negara was incurring about RM2 million losses each year prior to 2005. However, in 2012, Zoo Negara made a net surplus of RM1 million. However the running costs such as food for animals, staff salaries, medical supplies and other miscellaneous expenses is rather high amounting to RM12 million annually. In the year 2014, the expenditure on the two pandas “Xing Xing and Liang Liang” cost approximately RM25 million inclusive of the panda exhibition housing. Other major expenses are maintenance cost, replacement of pumps and repair cost.

In fact, in 2009, The Ministry of Tourism under the Tourism Minister Datuk Seri Azalina, approved a sum of RM1.5 million for the upgrading work of the zoo’s entrance.

Lastly, in order to encourage more sponsorship from the public, government has given out certain tax exemptions to the sponsors. The sponsors that adopt animals in Zoo Negara by maintaining the animal’s annual food, enrichment and veterinary care, will be receiving tax exemption based on the amount sponsored with the criteria that complete cost will be covered.

In short, with all these supports provided by the government, Zoo Negara is able to survive without fail even though it has been incurring losses all these years.

#### **6.4. Alternative Financing Methods Available**

Based on the information extracted from the Zoo Negara official website, the amount donated varied between RM300,000 and RM600,000 per year, and this amount could only support a very small part of the operation costs of Zoo Negara. It is also noted that most of the institution only donate periodically and not repeatedly in the subsequent years. Zoo Negara is in a very passive position currently in term of merely receiving funds from public. Therefore, Zoo Negara will not be able to sustain in the long term just by receiving government support.

Most of the zoo’s operating budget comes from admission, food, beverage and gift sales, grants, contributions and other smaller revenue-producing activities such as rental of venue from the Kancil Hall and Tunku Abdul Rahman Hall for events.

#### **6.5. Financial Weaknesses, Zoo Negara as a Non-Profit Organisation (NGO)**

Zoo Negara is at a dangerous financial position as corporate sponsorships and ticket collection fees are getting lesser these days. This is probably due to the change in lifestyle whereby families prefer to visit the shopping malls and recreational malls rather than places like the zoos. Moreover, the 2014

annual report of the zoo showed a reduction in government grant from RM916, 202 in year 2013 to RM765, 109 in year the 2014. On the other hand, YAB Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia is trying to make Zoo Negara a world class zoo through the Panda project which is symbolic of the cordial relations between Malaysia and China. (from: <http://www.zoonegaramalaysia.my/annualreport.html> - Zoo Negara Annual Report 2014) This project had led to higher maintenance costs which are one of the significant costs components in its financial statement. Besides, staff expenses (highest component of expenditure) also increased about 18% in 2014 as compared to 2013.

Being solely dependent on sponsorship and the downward trend of ticket sales is too risky as the operating margin is still below average level. Zoo Negara would not sustain in future if they are not able to seek alternative financing to fund its operations with high expenditure burden.

### 6.6. Financial weakness, overspending on staff cost

According to the financial statements of Zoo Negara, the staff expenses are approximately RM5.8 million in year 2014. However, the number of employees including executive directors during the financial year is 154 people. This includes expenditure related to staff training, staff activities and staff incentives. Based on the 2014 annual report, in order to enhance staff knowledge and generate new ideas for Zoo Negara, the staffs were sent overseas for training and observations. The incentives for staff in the year 2014 included awards and allowances such as laundry allowance, meal allowance and special allowance for its staffs. (from: <http://www.zoonegaramalaysia.my/annualreport.html> - Zoo Negara Annual Report 2014)

### 6.7. How Other Zoos' Operations are Financed, Funds Acquired and Investments Made

**Table 01.** Funding methods of Zoos other than Zoo Negara

Zoo	How operations are financed, funds acquired and investments made
Lincoln Park Zoo	<p>40% of the zoo's budget is contributed by its members and donors. In 2013, it amounted to USD 9 million of the USD 22 million budgeted by the zoo. There are however individuals who donate to support the zoo's education and conservation activities. Local residents contribute in the hope of ensuring the zoo remains free in the long term.</p> <p>Revenue for the zoo is also funnelled through cafes, refreshments, rides, show tickets, parking fees and gift shop' souvenirs. Through the sale of such goods, USD 8 million was obtained by Lincoln Park Zoo, which makes up of 35% of the operating budget. Figures for this element of funding fluctuate in relation to the season and corresponding weather. For instance, in summer, visitors throng to the zoo with numbers decreasing in the colder spring months of January and February. Rainy seasons and heat waves also reduce the number of visitors at the zoo concurrently reducing revenues.</p> <p>The zoo receives annual subsidies from the Chicago Park District to the tune of USD5.5 million in addition to utility services. With increasing costs due to inflation and varying economic conditions, the figure has growingly become inadequate in supporting the zoo's budget. In 1995, the USD5.5 million covered 46% of the annual budget of the zoo. This figure plummeted in 2013 to merely 25%. Thus, donations remain a prime and vital source of revenue for the zoo.</p>
Chester Zoo	<p>Chester Zoo Enterprise Limited which is a subsidiary of Chester Zoo provides catering and retail services among other services generated. The turnover from these activities contributes to the zoo's budget. The amount decreased from 29% to 27% of the budget in 2013 and 2012 respectively. However, this decrease in percentage is due to an increase in the value of grants and other donations from the government and corporations from £304,000 to £515,000.</p> <p>Visitors' admission contributed 49% of the zoo's budget in 2013 and 2012, bringing in approximately £14million and £12million respectively. Another major income source is annual</p>

	<p>membership fees which totalled up to £2,751,000 in 2013, a 10% increase compared to 2012. Besides, donations and aid from individuals also has been an important source of resources. It increase from 9% to 10% for 2013 and in 2012, there has been an increased by £374,000.</p> <p>Other funds are from short term investments, animal adoptions, and monorail and boat operations. These resources have an aggregate amount of £1,301,000 which makes up to 6% of the total resources obtained.</p>
San Diego Zoo (SDZ)	<p>ZSSD Foundation was formed in 2007. It is a related organization; conducts fund raising activities for SDZ Global. Funds raised by the ZSSD are channelled directly to SDZ Global. ZSSD is supported by volunteers. SDZ received fund from The Seaver Institute amounting to \$110,000</p> <p>SDZ Global's endowment funds were established by donor-restricted contributions to provide a permanent endowment, which is to provide a permanent source of income. The portion of a permanent endowment that must be maintained permanently.</p> <p>SDZ has a total investment of \$104,040 derived from international mutual fund, equity securities from both domestic and international, and limited partnership. Majority of the funds to be invested in public equity securities or equity mutual funds.</p>
Singapore Zoo	<p>The Zoo of Singapore is owned by the Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS) which owns Jurong Bird Park, the Night safari and River safari. The WRS is a self-financed organization with donations comprising less than 5% of its total revenue.</p> <p>According to WRS's CEO Mr Lee Meng Tat, he is mindful about the profitability of the zoo, park and safari as they do not receive subsidies and they have to ensure they make enough to maintain their premises.</p> <p>From the financial highlights of WRS for 2013/2014, we notice that admission and rides make up the largest part which is 60.7% of total revenue. Food and beverages come in second with 23.6%. Third would be retail with 11.6%. Most of WRS's funds come from the number of tourist they attract, thus they have to ensure that the attractions are interesting and always up to date.</p> <p>In 2014, WRS launched a new attraction, the River Safari. This attraction, which costs approximately SG128 million, was financed by a bank loan. It was the first time WRS obtained a bank loan.</p>

### 6.8. Marketing Strategies by Zoos Overseas

**Table 02.** Marketing Strategies of Zoos other than Zoo Negara

Zoo	How operations are financed, funds acquired and investments made
Australia Zoo; Queensland	<p>Australia Zoo, which relates to the late Steve Irwin, has been established as the “ultimate wildlife destination”. It differentiated itself from other Queensland theme park attractions with the focus of its wildlife as well as developing its brand name as the ‘home of the crocodile hunter’ (Searle, 2014). The zoo has gain competitive advantages over its primary competitors by offering unique and superior products and services. It is not in the objective of establishing a conventional zoo; it is in the objective of making people happy and offering memorable wildlife experiences. Its marketing strategy is customer-focused, with customers’ satisfactions being its priority (Pride, Ferrell, Lukas, Schembri, &amp; Niininen, 2012).</p> <p>The zoo target audience analysis involves two key areas which are family friendly activities, attractions and the second being adventure and thrill filled activities and experiences. Australia Zoo has recognized that children have more influence over household decisions (Tinson, 2011). Therefore, they use exciting and attention grabbing commercials to attract children. For instance, the zoo advertised i the Crikey Magazine, school programs, children’s community support programs, and informative E-commerce websites. Australia Zoo also advertised through television such as the family fun television program featuring Bindi and Bob Irwin combination interacting with the zoo animals. This has been used to attract family with young children whereas more action packed advertisements, for example, crocodile wrestling are used to gain interest of young adults (Searle, 2014).</p> <p>Australia zoo also offers real wildlife experiences which allow children and young adults to get up close and personal with animals. This allows visitors to gain a multi-sensory experience by seeing and touching the animals at the zoo. Such activities include hand-feeding wombats, giant tortoise, red kangaroos, grey kangaroos, and elephants. Moreover, the zoo has organized “Zoo Keeper for a Day programs” so that visitors of all ages have the opportunity to experience the life of a zoo keeper and enjoy interactions with the animals. To ensure continuous visits to the zoo, visitors can enjoy different experiences with different animals according to the season and programs available (“from <a href="http://www.australiazoo.com.au">http://www.australiazoo.com.au</a>- Australia Zoo,” 2015).</p> <p>In addition, Australia Zoo has also introduced an annual pass system that permits visitors unlimited entries into the zoo at a lower price. Annual pass holders are able to enjoy free daily animal shows. Besides, education program was introduced as part of the zoo’s programs and activities offered. This provides an outdoor classroom for the students of all age which enables</p>

	<p>them a chance to explore more about nature and real wildlife environment as well as applying theories learned from school into practice, such as recycling, wildlife preservation and conservation. Consequently, Australia Zoo will be able to benefit in term of sales when teachers bring their students there for such programs ("from: <a href="http://www.australiazoo.com.au/">http://www.australiazoo.com.au/</a>- Australia Zoo," 2015).</p>
<p>Singapore Zoo</p>	<p>Singapore Zoo also known to locals as Mandai Zoo was first opened in 1973. It covers 28 hectares of land. This strategic location for tourist is surrounded by other wildlife attractions such as Night Safari, River Safari and the Orchid Gardens. Out of all the attractions, the most popular being the Singapore Zoo presents various animals roaming freely in its natural wild habitat favoured by open space of glass shields ("from: <a href="http://www.riversafari.com.sg/">http://www.riversafari.com.sg/</a>- Wildlife Reserves Singapore," 2015). It attracts nearly 1.6 million visitors annually ("from: <a href="http://richeast.com/singapore-zoo-one-of-the-most-beautiful-in-the-world/">http://richeast.com/singapore-zoo-one-of-the-most-beautiful-in-the-world/</a> - Singapore Zoo – One of the Most Beautiful in the World," 2013).</p> <p>One of Singapore Zoo’s marketing strategies is promotion. The zoo relies a lot on promotion to attract visitors. Heavy promotion was carried out to advertise Singapore River Safari as Asia’s first and only river themed wildlife park attraction ("from: <a href="http://www.riversafari.com.sg/">http://www.riversafari.com.sg/</a> - Wildlife Reserves Singapore," 2015). This was done by using creative promotional tactics which was named the “out of home campaign”. The campaign was featured across the city of Singapore on public transportation services, for example, advertisement graphics featuring animals such as Crocodilians the Gharial appearing to bite taxi passengers and a school of piranhas gathering on the corner of a bus stop. The purpose of the campaign is to allow citizens to interact with the advertisements and attract them to visit the River Safari (from: <a href="http://www.mumbrella.asia/2014/01/singapore-zoo-">http://www.mumbrella.asia/2014/01/singapore-zoo-</a> "Singapore Zoo gets creative with out-of-home to promote new River Safari attraction," 2014). Singapore Zoo expanded its operation by establishing the Night Safari. The Singapore Night Safari opened on 26 May 1994, papers as the world’s first wild life night park; it provides local residents and tourists an insight of the tropical jungle at night by displaying a wide range on nocturnal animals. To celebrate the Night Safari’s 20th Anniversary, Singapore Zoo, officially introduced a pair of white lions in addition the Asiatic black bears and Malayan tigers that would be the finale to the park’s 35 minute tram experience ("from: <a href="https://wrscomsg.wordpress.com/2014/05/24/20-years-of-fun-in-the-dark-with-night-safari/">https://wrscomsg.wordpress.com/2014/05/24/20-years-of-fun-in-the-dark-with-night-safari/</a> - Singapore Zoo - 20 Years of Fun in the Dark with Night Safari," 2014) and promoted this through the social media and the traditional media.</p> <p>Besides, special discount are given to students when they booked as a school. Discounts are also given to those registered under the development disability registry (DDR) and voluntary welfare organizations. Moreover, admission fees will be given a discount up to 30% if the tickets were to be bought online. Membership plans were also introduced by the zoo. Membership holders are able to enjoy unlimited access and free tram rides on weekdays as well as a host of exciting privileges. To appeal more to the public, Singapore Zoo provides free admission and 10% off all retail purchases and food and beverages (F&amp;B) to a birthday person. In line with Singapore’s Jubilee Celebrations, the zoo offered a special discount of 50% from admission and ticket bundling for Jurong Bird Park, Night Safari, River Safari and Singapore Zoo ("from: <a href="http://www.riversafari.com.sg/">http://www.riversafari.com.sg/</a>- Wildlife Reserves Singapore," 2015).</p> <p>Attractions used by Singapore zoo comprised of animal photography, guided tours, feeding times, foods and beverages, shops in zoo, Kidzworld, camps, jungle breakfast with wildlife, rides, friendly facilities for the disabled and shows organized according to the season. Another attraction is Kidzworld, which was created in the year 1973. It consists of Play land and Animal Land ("Singapore Zoo," n.d.). Animal land allows children to have real life experience to play with domestic animals such as chickens, rabbits and sheep. Play land on the other hand provides conventional play equipment. Other than that, children are also given the chance to become a keeper of animals for a day. This program includes activities like brushing the glossy manes of the zoo’s flabella and feeding its lovable giant rabbits (from: <a href="http://www.riversafari.com.sg/">http://www.riversafari.com.sg/</a> - "Wildlife Reserves Singapore," 2015).</p>
<p>Chester Zoo, Cheshire, England</p>	<p>Chester Zoo is 125 acres of award-winning zoological garden hosting over 12,000 animals of more than 400 species. It is widely acknowledged as the largest conventional zoo in the United Kingdom (UK) ("from: <a href="http://homeeducationcard.co.uk/chester-zoo.html">http://homeeducationcard.co.uk/chester-zoo.html</a> Chester Zoo," 2015). In addition, according to TripAdvisor, it was named the best zoo in the UK, voted second best zoo in Europe and placed sixth in the world’s top zoos ("from: <a href="http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/chester-zoo-best-zoo-uk-7562682">http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/chester-zoo-best-zoo-uk-7562682</a> - Chester Zoo named best zoo in the UK," 2014). It attracts more than 1.4 million visitors annually, thus, it is certain that marketing strategies employed by the zoo is reason for its success.</p> <p>Zoos target market is predominantly children and families with children; hence, this limits opportunities in growth and market sales. As stated by Whitworth (2012), the main motivation in visiting zoos were children orientated (75% of zoos visiting groups contain at least one child) and not having children was the leading reasons of not visiting a zoo within the past three years. As a result, to increase market share, Chester Zoo has expanded its target market to senior citizens and</p>



	<p>the disabled community. This was done by providing many unique services, for example, providing disabled parking bays, free wheelchairs and electronic scooters for hire, hearing loops to assist in better hearing for partially deaf visitors, wheelchair elevators in enclosures and exhibition houses and free admission for visitors' registered assistant dogs ("from: <a href="http://www.chesterzoo.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility-for-disabled-visitors">http://www.chesterzoo.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility-for-disabled-visitors</a> - Chester Zoo - Accessibility for Disabled Visitors," n.d.). The innovative initiatives provided by Chester Zoo in order to meet the needs of its new target market would act as an incentive and attract them to visit the zoo as many other zoos may not provide and meet the needs required by these communities. Moreover, to attract more visitors for the whole year round remains a challenge for zoos. In countries such as the UK, where it rains constantly, Chester Zoo has developed a program known as the 'Wet Walk' and constructed its layout to suit rainy days. Thus, encouraging visits and attracts crowds even during unconventional weather conditions ("from: <a href="http://www.chesterzoo.org/~media/Files/Plan%20your%20visit/Wet%20Weather%20trail.ashx">http://www.chesterzoo.org/~media/Files/Plan%20your%20visit/Wet%20Weather%20trail.ashx</a> - Chester Zoo, Welcome to Chester Zoo Wet Walk," n.d.). Besides, to offer other different zoo experiences, Chester Zoo has constructed various inventive facilities and activities. This includes the Zoofari monorail station; which provides a "giraffe eye view" of the zoo and its animals, the waterbus; offering visitors a less frantic and relaxing way to observe and witness its animals and visitors can also embark on a tropical wildlife expedition of 6 South East Asian islands in the newly opened Islands in Danger ("from: <a href="http://www.visitmanchester.com/articles/attractions/chester-zoo/">http://www.visitmanchester.com/articles/attractions/chester-zoo/</a> - Chester Zoo - A Wild Day Out for All.," n.d.). Such activities can be viewed in Social media is a tool widely used by Chester Zoo, such as, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr. This is done to further increase interest in target audiences not only locally but globally, thus, assisting in building public awareness and the Chester Zoo brand name. Such activities include live streaming of animals, view of the zoo's facilities, updates on new additions to the species and activities at the zoo. For example, Chester Zoo was gaining numerous media attention after uploading, on its social media platforms, a rare hatching video of one of the world's rarest duck which took place at the zoo (Moodley, 2015). The ducklings will be on display to visitors when they are older. By using social media to illustrate the happenings of Chester Zoo, it is able to constantly update and draw potential visitors worldwide to visit it in the near future to gain new experiences and see exotic animals that are offered by Chester Zoo.</p>
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## 7. Conclusion

### Recommendation

#### 7.1.Co-operate with the travel company

In addition, Zoo Negara has to increase their revenue from visitors to cover their expenditure. In order for Zoo Negara to generate higher income in the long term, they have to come out with more innovative ideas. Zoo Negara can co-operate with travel agents to create interesting tourist packages. Zoo Negara can form partnerships with other tour companies and package other attractions as a promotion for Zoo Negara. For example, Zoo Negara can have a partnership with the Kuala Lumpur Hop-on Hop-off Double-decker bus making Zoo Negara one of its stops. This is a good practice for Zoo Negara because it can help the visitors to access the zoo with ease. Therefore, it can help to increase the number of visitors to the Zoo Negara (Martin, 2011).

#### 7.2.Regularly organize function and events and having a theme park within the Zoo

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Double-decker bus making Zoo Negara one of its stops. This is a good practice for Zoo Negara because it can help the visitors to access

### **7.3.Reduce maintenance costs and staff costs**

As in the year 2013, Zoo Negara had a surplus of approximately RM1.9 million, but in year 2014, Zoo Negara had a deficit of RM271,320. This critical decline was due to insufficient cash receipts for their cash payments. One of the crucial factors that drove up their payments were the Panda project which resulted in high expenditure for the zoo. Yet, this might bring a huge impact to Zoo Negara in the long-term. The costs to care for a Panda is very expensive (Mott, 2006), therefore Zoo Negara should find ways to reduce the expenses of caretaking of the Pandas. As Pandas require more of the keeper's time (Mott, 2006), hence Zoo Negara has to put more effort in finding lower salaried expert keeper. In addition, Panda have very specialized food needs (Mott, 2006), so Zoo Negara should try to seek sponsors from food suppliers or source for lower priced suppliers.

The staff costs has always been the largest component of expenditure for the zoo. They should lower the cost spent on overseas training for enhancement of knowledge and innovation but instead they should try to encourage such activities from within the organization or within Malaysia. For instance, Zoo Negara also spent much on staffs' recreation, incentives, and allowances. These are also one of the factors that led to high staff cost. Therefore, they should curb these expenses by reducing those cost according to the staffs' position and performance.

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