

SeaWorld mixes virtual reality in roller coaster

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SeaWorld Entertainment Inc. on Tuesday unveiled a new virtual reality experience on a roller coaster, a new presentation on orcas, and a shareable entrance pass.

The Orlando-based company has faced falling attendance and revenue as people's feelings about using animals for entertainment has soured. SeaWorld has been under fire from animal rights activists over its treatment of [killer whales](#) in captivity, and it announced earlier this year it would end its killer whale breeding program and that stop using killer whales for theatrical performances.

The new orca presentation will focus on how the killer whales live, and not on the splashy theatrics that once defined SeaWorld.

The new program, starting at SeaWorld San Diego next year, will show what killer whales eat, how they communicate and how they navigate, according to a company news release. The program will open at the company's Orlando and San Antonio SeaWorld parks by 2019.

The theme park company also announced a virtual reality experience to its Kraken coaster that will debut next year. Riders will wear a headset that provides a digital overlay while riding the coaster.

The company also introduced a first-of-its-kind new transferrable pass. The \$208 annual pass can be shared among people, as long as they are accompanied by regular pass-holders who act as "hosts."

SeaWorld also said a new jet ski-inspired coaster would open next year at its San Antonio park, and a 3-acres realm consisting of multiple aquariums would open next year at its San Diego park.

SeaWorld announced earlier this month that it would soon stop paying its shareholders a quarterly dividend.

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