

TAG Active relies on tough enclosures for new Center Parcs attraction

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TAG Active, a designer of obstacle course activity games, has been commissioned by Center Parcs to gamify the Adventure Nets at Longleat Forest holiday village. With a format that has been rolled out at venues worldwide, players tag a wristband against an illuminated RFID transponder to score points. At Longleat, Adventure Nets are set high in the trees, so TAG Active's electronics must be protected in a durable, rain-proof enclosure that prevents condensation.

Obstacle-course challenge events have grown rapidly in popularity in recent years. While competitors can test their physical and mental capabilities, the creators of these dedicated arenas are harnessing technology that can enhance the experience, enabling friends and families of all ages to compete together.

To date, TAG Active, based in Wrexham, has installed 78 active game venues around the world, including Europe, North America, the Middle East, and Asia. To make the events inclusive, instead of a race format, gamification of the concept involves points collection, spread over obstacles ranging from trampolines to climbing walls.

Players collect points by 'tagging' an electronic transponder with their wristband. These transponder 'tags' are positioned in high and hard-to-reach areas, as well as low and easier-to-access locations, with points awarded according to difficulty.

TAG Active technology

The success of TAG Active Arenas has also spread to the Center Parcs range of holiday villages, including a TAG Challenge Arena indoor venue at its Nottinghamshire site. Now, for the first time, Center Parcs has expanded its TAG Active games to an outdoor location with the gamification of Adventure Nets at Center Parcs Longleat Forest. High up in the trees, Adventure Nets hosts a series of suspended nets, tunnels, a ball zone and treehouses. Within this maze of activities, points can be collected from 'tags' positioned throughout the course.

The proprietary technology behind TAG Active's games involves a transponder that runs on Power over Ethernet (PoE), enabling a single, low voltage cable to carry power to the unit, as well as data communications. This removes the distance or interference challenges of Bluetooth or WiFi. A player's wristband communicates with the transponder via RFID, comprising a microprocessor with a custom-designed aerial.

To signal a successful 'tag', an LED colour matrix presents a range of graphics, while the transponder communicates with management software. This not only manages the game in terms of players, teams, and points, but it can also present data based on user profile. This valuable analysis can help venues better understand player behaviour, matching games for the target audience to enhance commercial success.

All-weather protection

To protect the custom electronics of the transponder for all-weather, outdoor use, a durable enclosure was required.

"For the demands of Center Parcs Longleat Forest, we needed an entirely new enclosure for our transponders," says Stuart Smith, Technical & Product Director at

TAG Active. “The box had to be waterproof and able to protect the electronics from impact, and, considering the importance of the Center Parcs brand, the look had to fit as well.”

TAG Active turned to Spelsberg and partnered with the industrial enclosure manufacturer directly to benefit from its engineering expertise for this high-profile project. To house the transponder, Spelsberg specified a TK enclosure.

Manufactured from polystyrene, this lightweight material would enable easy handling during installation but would also achieve robust IK07 impact resistance to protect from player collision – potentially involving fully grown adults, running at speed – damaging the electronics inside. To protect in all weathers, the housing also achieves IP66 to prevent the ingress of high-pressure water streams. This sealing is maintained even with a rear cable entry point, which is protected by a specially designed flange.

During extensive, six-month winter testing, the waterproofing of the sealed unit when faced with the sun’s heat, inevitably caused an element of condensation, but this challenge was quickly resolved.

“Spelsberg installed a one-way grommet, allowing traces of moisture to escape, and this effective design removed the issue. Engineering advice like this was an advantage of working directly with Spelsberg,” says Stuart.

Rapid enclosure availability

The project required the rapid availability of 24 enclosures, required to fit Center Parc’s constrained time window. The existing Adventure Nets area had to be closed while installation of the TAG Active hardware could take place, but reopening in time for the busy holiday season was an essential business need. With a large

warehouse at its central England location, Spelsberg UK was able to quickly fulfil the order.

“Working with our installer, the enclosures were fast to integrate into the Adventure Nets, and they’ve provided the protection we need since then,” says Stuart.

The new TAG Active installation was launched at Center Parcs Longleat Forest in July, and the location has received a high number of players. As a result of this success, Center Parcs is looking to expand the TAG Active concept across other locations within its family of holiday villages.

Image captions:



Image 1: TAG Active design a obstacle course activity games at the Adventure Nets at Longleat Forest holiday village.



Image 2: TAG Active design a obstacle course activity games at the Adventure Nets at Longleat Forest holiday village.



Image 3: Spelsberg TK Enclosure is water-resistant and capable of protecting the electronics from impacts.



Image 4: Spelsberg TK Enclosure is water-resistant and capable of protecting the electronics from impacts.

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About Spelsberg

Spelsberg is one of the largest manufacturers of electrical enclosures in the world. With over 4,000 enclosures available as standard and further customisation possible, it offers solutions for almost any application.

With the largest supply of non-metallic enclosures, ex-stock in the UK, its products are often available for delivery within 24 hours; customisation is possible on any product, including bespoke entries, engraved corporate logos or fitted terminals, within 48 hours. Products can be ordered direct from Spelsberg or from most leading supply specialists including RS, Rapid, Farnell and CPC.

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