

**Universiti Teknologi MARA**

**STRATEGIC APPROACH TO REJUVENATE AND  
POSITIONING OF LA-STELLA WATER THEME  
PARK (WTP) AS A “CHOICE AND  
AFFORDABLE” WATER RECREATION CENTER  
IN JOHOR BAHRU**

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The tourism industry continued to contribute towards generating foreign exchange earnings, employment and income to the country. Although the industry was affected by the economic crisis in 1997 and 1998, its quick rebound contributed to the strong economic recovery of the nation and revitalized the tourism industry. Among the tourist attraction to Malaysia are the water theme parks.

The water theme parks have family appeal and provide a trip into a world of adventure and excitement. The existing water theme parks such as the Genting Highlands Theme Park, Sunway Lagoon, Mines Wonderland, Bukit Merah Laketown Waterpark and A'Famosa Water World were upgraded to provide better quality services to attract more visitors. These parks, which involved substantial private sector investments, were equipped with a critical mass of attractions to draw domestic and international tourists. These tourism-oriented water theme parks, which provided integrated and complementary services from shopping centres to hotels and restaurants, continued to generate economic value

Starhill Golf Resort operates the La-Stella Water Theme Park (La-Stella WTP), the only company that operates such park in Johor Bahru area. The water theme park which was built with a Roman Ruin Theme Architecture has several features and facilities and actually a family entertainment center comprising of the children's swimming pool, swimming lagoon with sand beach and ship wreck, water flume ride and slide, waterfalls, jacuzzi, tennis courts and souvenir shops. The La-Stella WTP will

give visitors something more to do and thus will add to Johor Bahru's attractiveness as a tourist destination.

Investment opportunities lies in the fact that there are lack of avenue for leisure and entertainment of the water theme parks in Johor Bahru. The large number of tourists especially the Singaporean who came into Malaysia via Johor Bahru to have entertainment and leisure at water theme parks such as A'Famosa (Malacca), Sunway Lagoon (Selangor) and Genting Highlands (Pahang) which are 200 km, 360 km and 400 km respectively. The closest water theme park is the Kota Tinggi Waterfall Resort, Kota Tinggi, Johor which is 60 km away and the facilities are lesser than what La-Stella WTP have.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Starhill Golf Resort main business is the golf course. The La-Stella WTP was built for the purpose to accommodate golfers who bring along their family. So, while they play golf, their family can have fun at the water theme park. But the La-Stella WTP was not opened to public except on certain designated schedule only. Because of the small numbers of users, the revenue generated from fees and charges of the water theme park is just enough to support the cost of maintaining the water theme park. In fact, the revenue from the golf course activities is supporting the maintenance cost of the water theme park.

The management of Starhill Resort is contemplating a plan to upgrade the existing facilities, to reposition it as a choice and affordable water recreation center to both local and foreign tourist especially Singapore. The ultimate goal is to turn the water theme park as a self-financed and profitable business unit of the company, beside to continuously providing recreational facilities to club members. Thus the management of Starhill is earnestly