



ValoArena Case Study

Chris Kimlingen, Manager of Operations
RPM Raceway
Farmingdale, New York, USA



Overview

With five locations and almost a decade in business, RPM Raceway is not a new kid on the block. In addition to offering a state-of-the-art racing experience, over the last several years RPM has invested heavily in the second two-thirds of its tagline: "PLAY" and "MORE."

In a fittingly speedy ascent, RPM has poured resources into its non-racing offerings, and as 2023 gets underway the east coast-based FEC is proud to offer an extremely competitive set of non-racing attractions across all five of its locations.

Following a failed experiment with a VR sports installation, RPM decided to take a calculated risk by making their Farmingdale, Long Island location

the first in the US to install Valo Motion's pioneering mixed-reality playground, ValoArena.

Enter Chris Kimlingen, Operations Manager across all five RPM locations. Communicating with Valo Motion's Sales team via video call, Kimlingen asked all the questions one would expect an Operations head to ask to satisfy due diligence on a brand new, unproven (in the US market) attraction.

"I had to trust that Valo Motion was being honest with me," Kimlingen recalls, "and I'm so glad I did because after 4 months with ValoArena open to the public, it turns out they were true to their word."

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– Chris Kimlingen

Based on the success of the first attraction, RPM ordered a second ValoArena

Installed in October 2022, ValoArena has already exceeded RPM's wildest expectations. "ValoArena is now our top attraction," Kimlingen said. "It's destroying our other VR experiences and by my calculations, it's doing far better than even a number of top-tier arcade machines would do in the same space.

"What's so impressive about ValoArena is that it generates more than enough revenue to substantiate its large footprint," Kimlingen said.

RPM was so impressed by the first ValoArena that they moved to buy their second ValoArena straight off the floor of November's IAAPA Expo trade show.

"The numbers don't lie," said Kimlingen. **"The great numbers we saw in the first month continued, so investing in a second ValoArena was really no brainer."**

Four months later the numbers have indeed continued and what was initially a gamble is becoming a remarkably short return on investment, and a solid foundation for future growth.



Why ValoArena?

RPM Raceway's decision to become the first location to install ValoArena in the United States was one they didn't take lightly. "We took a big risk on something before that was new to the states. It was a major amusement product and it failed miserably," Chris said, recalling a VR product that failed to return RPM's investment. When asked what it was that convinced the RPM team to go with ValoArena, Kimlingen's answer focused on two important areas: ValoArena is a totally new type of fun, and it requires little-to-no intervention by staff.

"ValoArena gives us something unique to offer our customers; it has a WOW factor," Kimlingen said. "People get curious when they see it for the first time. When they watch someone playing it on the screens, they start laughing because it's really funny."

Funny and extraordinarily easy to operate. "VR has fallen off for us a little. Especially after COVID, a lot of people don't want to put a face mask on," Kimlingen said. "The fact that ValoArena is self-automated and headset-free is a game changer for us. The customers handle themselves, swipe their card, enter their name on the touchscreen and then they go in there and just have fun."

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The future has no parts (or attendants)

Expanding on the ease-of-operation topic, Kimlingen was eager to discuss parts. Specifically, how “thrilled” he is that ValoArena distinctly lacks the hardware, controllers, and accessories expected with a VR or mixed reality attraction. “We pull our hair out several times a month waiting for replacement parts for stuff that breaks. **There are always those fluky things that break when you don’t expect them to and you’re at the mercy of the manufacturer to get a replacement,**” Kimlingen said. **“With ValoArena, there’s none of that, which is a huge deal and just really nice.”**

Also nice is that while Valo Arena is a very active, physical experience, the fact that it can be played with just the players’ body—without the need for a headset, wires, or even a controller—reduces the risk of injury dramatically. **“With VR you have wearables or a gun, or you’re swinging a lightsaber and people get hit,”** Kimlingen said. **“With Valo Arena that risk doesn’t exist. Yes, people are jumping around, but it’s safe.** Everyone can see each other. It’s much less likely that someone will sustain an injury.”

One key factor in RPM’s decision to invest in ValoArena came down to staffing. At least one but often multiple attendants have become a firm requirement to successfully operate any other virtual reality product of this size on the market. But when there are fewer peripherals and controllers, there’s also less of a need to hold customers’ hands or spend time acclimating them to the game environment. Add in a staggeringly easy-to-navigate new game

sequence and just like that, ValoArena runs itself, shuffling new players in and out faster than an attendant could because it isn’t deterred by conversation or questions.

“Valo Motion has created an experience that is so simple, customers can figure out what they need to do with no intervention whatsoever,” said Kimlingen. “We don’t even get questions about ValoArena. **We could easily have 15-20 people overwhelming staff with questions about a VR attraction on a Saturday or Sunday, but with ValoArena we just don’t. From an operational standpoint, that frees up a HUGE number of resources.**”

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The glue that makes it all rock solid: Valo Motion Support

Perhaps the most common subject of positive feedback Valo Motion receives across its products concerns the high level of technical support it provides its customers. Valo Motion customers make a point to call out the outstanding support they've received, which is a testament to Valo Motion's belief in the quality and promise of the products it offers and a powerful selling point to businesses contemplating a large investment in new technology.

Case in point, RPM Raceway's decision to install the first ValoArena in the country and then double down on that decision by investing in a second installation just one month later. It's a timeline no business would undertake without a safety net. As Chris details, Valo Motion began putting that safety net out well before the first sale was finalized. "I was completely unfamiliar with ValoArena and after hearing the basics, I thought 'this is all well and good' but I had a lot of questions," said Kimlingen. "Valo Motion responded with good, honest information. They detailed issues that have occurred and how they corrected them. I had to trust them, but they were true to their word."

Chris went on to detail the level of support his Long Island location has received to date. "Valo Motion was super responsive to the very few issues that we've experienced. If we see a problem, we'll reach out and receive a response within minutes," said Kimlingen. **"They've been hands down the best customer service we've received. No running around in circles. No phone tag. They're responsive and quick and they get it done."**



RPM agreeing to their second ValoArena at IAAPA. (left to right: Marissa Kiella, Valo Motion salesperson, Eyal Farage, owner and CEO of RPM, and Eldad Givon, head of business development for Valo Motion)

It's just fun (and social!)

Another bit of feedback that is ever present with ValoArena locations revolves around one word: fun. It's a common refrain from everyone who's had a chance to experience ValoArena, and it's a key component of Valo Motion's stated goal to deliver "the future of active fun." RPM's experience so far is no exception; Chris used the word "fun" nine times over the course of the interview. Continuing a thought touched on earlier, he cut straight to the bottom line: "ValoArena games are really funny. You're watching people jumping around looking ridiculous and just having fun."

While on the topic of fun Chris added that RPM's ValoArena has also turned out to be quite a social experience. "You'll get a group of kids ready to play and another group of kids will walk over and all of a sudden you have a bunch of kids who don't know each other laughing and jumping around together," he said, "and who knows, maybe they're friends now."

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