

Latest News

Richard Pawley awarded prestigious 'Industry Icon (Operator)' at the 2025 Park World Excellence Awards

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Richard Pawley, Vice Chairman and Director of Rides and Safety at VTP Global was presented with the prestigious *Industry Icon (Operator)* at the Park World Excellence Awards at IAAPA Europe (Barcellona) on 24 September 2025.

This accolade recognises not only achievement but a lifetime of passion, leadership, and dedication to the theme park and entertainment industry. Richard is recognised as a leading industry figure and someone who has inspired colleagues, shaped countless guest experiences, and left an indelible mark on the attractions sector.

Richard is recognised as one of the world's leading authorities on ride operations and safety. As Operations Director at Drayton Manor Theme Park, he set the benchmark for excellence, always putting guests at the heart of everything he did. His influence extends far beyond one park: he has held prominent positions including Chairman of BALPPA, founder member of ADIPS, and has represented IAAPA across Europe. His career is marked by innovation – such as overseeing the world's first stand-up freefall tower.

Richard continues to shape the industry as Vice Chairman of VTP Global and through his leadership of the Operating and Safety teams the company is now embarking on Phase I of their landmark Vertical Theme Park (VTP) projects in China, the UK and the Middle East.

The title of *Industry Icon* is not given lightly. It is reserved for those who embody the very best of what our sector stands for: creativity, integrity, resilience, and above all, a commitment to delighting visitors.