

Monthly Report

March 2021

During March I received news from Spitz that their parent company, Evans & Sutherland were bought out, and that the whole company is now under new management. This event can be looked at from the perspective of what is changing, and how does that affect us. As for what is changing, I was informed by Spitz that the company will be halting the production, installation, and support for SciDome systems, which is the digital system that manages the planetarium and the projectors.

How this affects us is very little, at least at the moment, but as the SciDome system ages, it will be increasingly pertinent to the operation of the planetarium. For the time being though, Spitz will remain in the form that it currently is in, and we will still be able to receive Spitz support for any issues we may have with our system. In the near future (1-2 years), this means that we will no longer be receiving updates, upgrades, or bug fixes for the SciDome system as a whole. In the far future (5-10 years) the computer system will need to be entirely replaced for a new Digistar system, which may cost \$30k-\$50k. This new system will be similar, but will run different software, it is almost certain that new training will be needed for the planetarium coordinator and any operators currently working at the planetarium. What this ultimately means, is that we should start planning for this inevitable switch, as it is only a matter of time before it becomes necessary. In the meantime, we will be left an aging system that will continue to slow and crash more in the future, all the while, the computer will become an increasing cyber security risk for the museum.

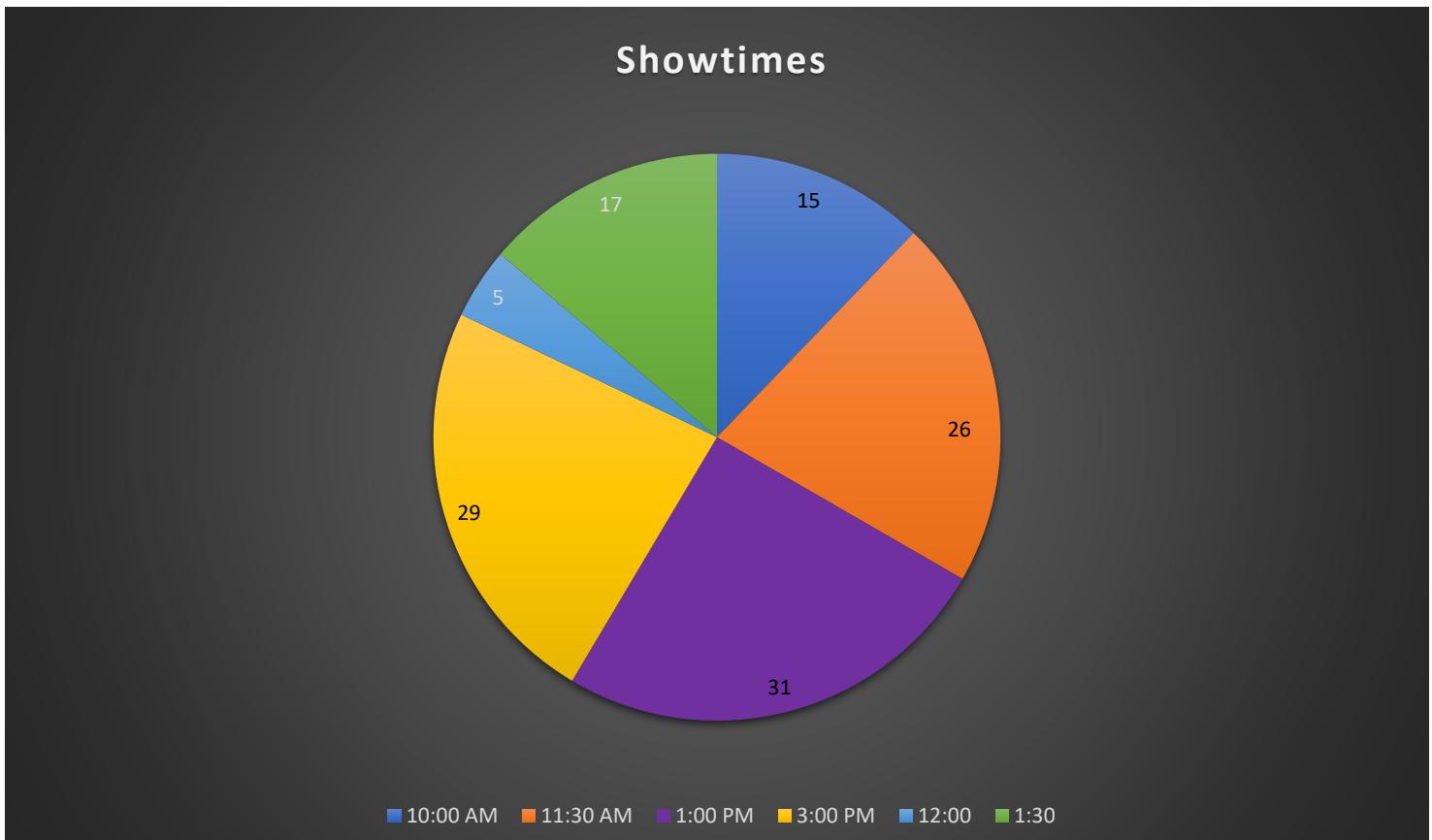
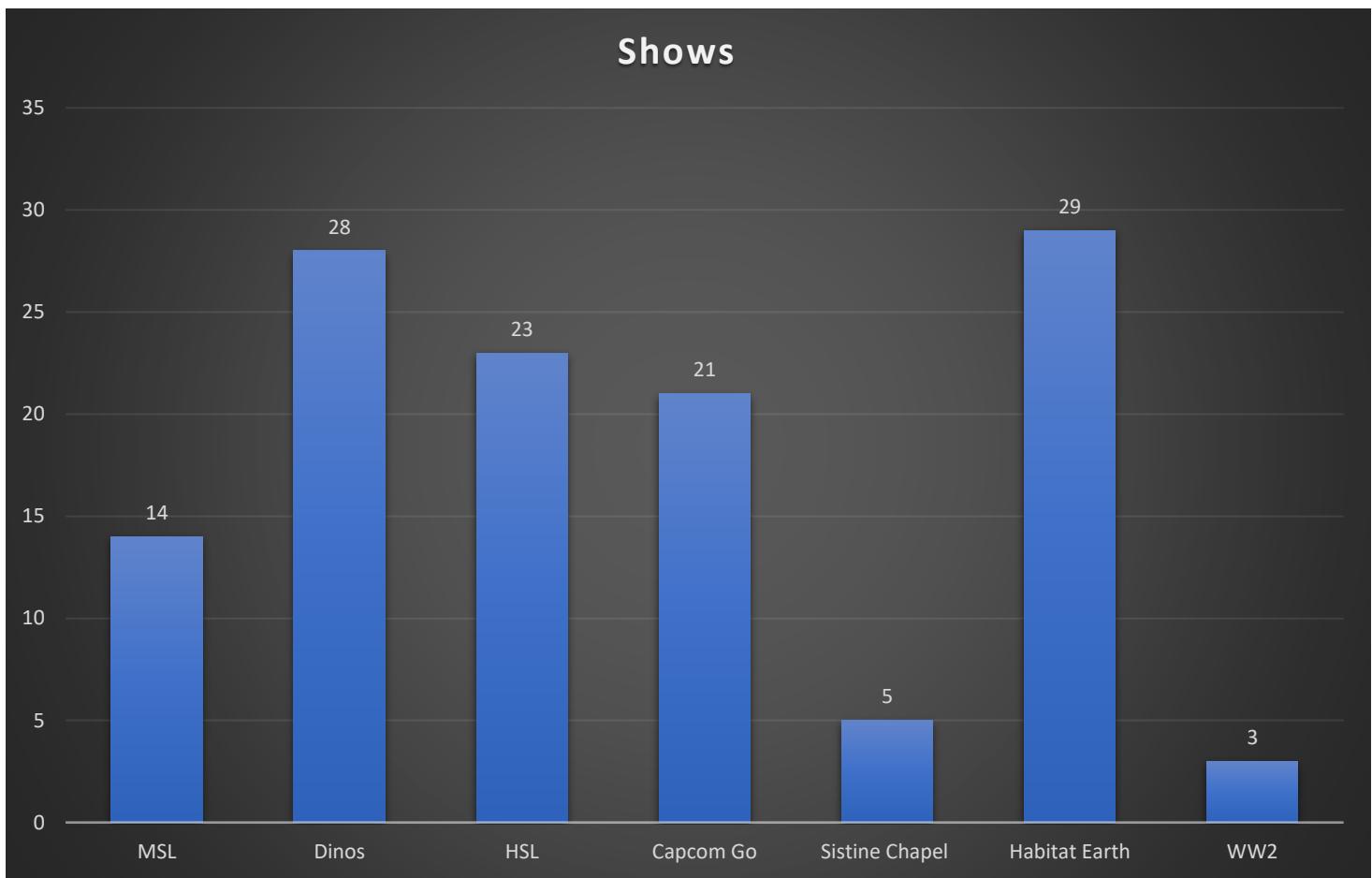
In summary, there is going to come a day in the next decade when we will need to replace the computer system in the planetarium, and it is best to start planning and accumulating funds for this swap once that day comes.

In other planetarium news for March, I had my first audience members attend Hawaiian Skies Live in the planetarium. While it can be hard to gauge audience thoughts at times, I believe that overall, people seemed to enjoy the program, with their only issue being that I needed more visuals for what the discussion was focusing on. I will continue to work on and enhance this show for the time being, as I believe it has potential for being just as engaging as MSL is.

In March, I also released my first 360 video on YouTube, and it received almost 200 views. I recorded this using our new 360 camera, with the focus of the video being about Nicholas Copernicus's method for measuring the orbital periods of the planets. It was my first time using the 360-video format instead of a normal format, so there were a few things I had to learn and

figure out, especially the editing, but overall, I would say that with 200 views, this was a successful first foray into this type of video. I also acquired a microphone in March, which will allow me to have better audio for my videos, something that I have heard mentioned a few times by commentators. With this new microphone and my better understanding of 360 videos, I want to make another 360-video later this month when I have time, and hopefully, it will surpass the former video in terms of quality and engagement.

Attendance for March was surprisingly high considering how we lost a week due to lockdown. In total, there were 123 guests in total attendance for the month, a considerable increase from February. I believe that a mix of nice weather, the seeming end of the pandemic, and also a lack of alternatives attributed to these numbers. If this persists, we can expect the attendance numbers to continue to increase as summer approaches and more tourists enter the area. This is a sign to me that come May, I will reopen the planetarium to normal hours to the public, returning to our older schedule, with the exception of keeping Wednesday as an office and planning day, do greatly enjoy having a full day to not worry about the planetarium's attendance.



ATTENDANCE

