UNIT 10

PG 58

FLASH MOB FUN

42

Imagine it's Saturday at a busy shopping centre. People are doing all the things you'd normally expect – chatting on phones, looking in shop windows and so on. Then suddenly, the people in front of you stop moving. They're completely still, frozen in the middle of whatever they were doing. You look around. There are more of these people – perhaps a hundred or so. Other shoppers look just as confused as you are. Several minutes go by and the frozen people remain in exactly the same positions. Then, as suddenly as they stopped, they begin moving again, as if nothing had happened. You've just experienced a flash mob!

The definition of a flash mob is 'a group of people who meet suddenly in a public place, perform an unusual act for a brief time, then quickly leave'. A US man, Bill Wasik, came up with the idea. [1] _____ They shouldn't say anything to the assistants or each other, he told them. They didn't need to buy anything. They just had to browse for precisely seven minutes and then leave. It would have been the world's first flash mob. However, someone had warned the police, and when Bill and his friends arrived, the police were waiting, and the flash mob couldn't go ahead.

Bill wasn't put off by this failure, however, and started planning the next event. [2] _____ Each time, Bill's friends received their invitations by email. They met at an exact time, carried out their instructions, such as forming a queue or just clapping, and then they left.

Before long, stories and videos of these funny and often bizarre events appeared online. Wasik's idea instantly captured the attention of creative people everywhere. [3] _____ These methods of communication helped spread the message far and wide. Flash mobs quickly became part of modern urban culture and the phrase was even added to the Oxford English Dictionary.

One of the most popular events has been the annual international flash mob pillow fight. [4] _____ However, the event in San Francisco left a park covered in thousands of feathers! It was estimated that it would cost thousands of dollars to clear up the mess. The organisers posted a message online. 'We shouldn't have left such a mess,' they wrote. 'We're sorry.'

Flash mobs are not only potentially costly, though. There is also a danger that they can get out of control. When a 'silent disco' was advertised at a London station, the instructions to anyone who saw it were to bring music, wear headphones and dance. The organiser needn't have worried whether anyone would come: 12,000 people turned up! After 45 minutes, the station was closed, trains were delayed and thousands of passengers were furious. [5] _____

Since the early days of flash mobs, the events have developed into commercial opportunities for companies. [6] _____ In one mobile phone advertisement, for example, a crowd of 500 singers and dancers flooded into Heathrow Airport's arrivals hall to greet people who had just got off flights. The performers had rehearsed in secret for months before the day, and the company was terrified it would go wrong. However, the resulting advert more than lived up to everyone's expectations and has been seen by millions.

Activar Windows

LIVEWORKSHEETS