AIP Conference Proceedings

RESEARCH ARTICLE | MAY 04 2020

Atmospheric design in business success FREE

K. E. K. Jusuf ✉; A. Gamal

AIP Conf. Proc. 2230, 040022 (2020)
https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0006689

View Online Export Citation

Articles You May Be Interested In

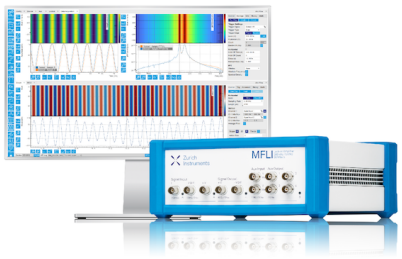
Proxemic as spatial strategy on social space for deaf community
AIP Conf. Proc. (May 2020)

Using games in teaching preschool: The case study of pre-school teachers in Malaysia
AIP Conf. Proc. (August 2023)

The effect of rhythm in music and interior on people's movement
AIP Conf. Proc. (May 2020)

20 October 2024 17:55:45

Challenge us.
What are your needs for periodic signal detection?
Zurich Instruments
Find out more



AIP Publishing

Atmospheric Design in Business Success

K.E.K.Jusuf [1, a)] and A.Gamal[1, b)]

[1]*Universitas Indonesia, Jl. Margonda Raya, Pondok Cina, Depok, Indonesia*

[a)] Corresponding author: keziaesmeralda08@gmail.com
[b)] gamal@eng.ui.ac.id

Abstract. This study explains how atmospheric design affect the success of café business. We formulated three questions for this study, namely: 1) why architectural design, especially atmospheric design, should be considered when starting a café business; 2) how to use atmospheric elements in café design, and 3) how atmospheric design and cafe brand becomes major factors into building a successful business. We collected data through field observation, interviews, and desk study, and then we analyzed them using descriptive qualitative analysis. We found out that atmospheric design helps to emphasize the image of the café that will attract customers, thus increasing monthly profit for the business owners. We concluded that 1) the right atmospheric design makes customers feel comfortable; 2) atmospheric design is implemented by stimulating five human senses whether it's visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, or tactile elements; and 3) there is a relationship between atmospheric design and business success.

20 October 2024 17:55:45

INTRODUCTION

Food and beverage business are considered as the most profitable business compared to other business types, hence the large numbers of restaurants or café in big cities like Jakarta. Business owners need a strategy to differentiate themselves from their competitors to become successful. The success of a business is generally defined by financial profit and financial loss (Masuo et al. In Aqeel, Awan, & Adnan, 2011, p.100). In addition, a successful business can also be measured by two criteria, namely intrinsic and extrinsic criteria (Paige & Littrel in Aqeel, et al., 2011, p.100). For this reason, a business owner should be able to plan a strategy to attract more customers to visit their restaurants or cafés.

Among many food and beverage businesses spread across the city, there are some cafés that manage to stand up and attract a consistent number of customers each day. These cafés offer a unique atmosphere through their interior design and decorations that create a special ambiance that entices people to come and visit them, even those who live far away from their location are willing to travel and spend their time there. This is the effect of atmospheric design. Atmosphere can influence shopping behavior, which mean atmospheric design can greatly influence customer consumption behavior (Turley and Miliman, 2000).

A good design is important because it's the business' initial contact with the customers (Lofrano in Ertzberger; 2009: 13). It does not only facilitate its customers, but also shows the building function through its design and has low visual complexity (Cherulnik in Ertzberger, 2009; Ertzberger, 2009; Jang et al., 2018). We need to realize that the atmosphere affects our subconscious (Bitner in Jalil et al.; 2016: 498). For these reasons, atmospheric design is an important factor to consider when planning a business place especially a café since the success of a café is measured by customer satisfaction regarding their experience when they spend their time there (Zeithaml & Bitner in Omar et al., 2015: 2).

Atmospheric elements that can be designed not only visual elements, but also non-visual elements. The atmosphere – the 'air in the field' as Kotler claimed (Kotler in Heide, Lærdal, & Grønhaug; 2007: 1316) – can serve

Recent Progress on: Energy, Communities and Cities
AIP Conf. Proc. 2230, 040022-1–040022-6; https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0006689
Published by AIP Publishing. 978-0-7354-1989-6/$30.00

as the advantage of a store possess against another store (Omar, Ariffin, & Ahmad; 2015: 1). The elements that make up the atmosphere are decoration, noise level, temperature, odor, lighting, color, and music (Ertzberger, 2009). Cleanliness and spatial planning are also significant in the atmospheric elements and can affect customer's comfort (Gogoi, Bidyut, & Jyoti, 2017: 181). Atmospheric design is more important in consumer service business rather than consumer good business (Heide et al.; 2007: 1315).

Atmospheric design is a factor to have a successful business because designs can greatly influence customer consumption behavior. To understand more about atmospheric design, we formulated three research questions, namely: 1) why architectural design, especially atmospheric design, should be considered when starting a café business; 2) how to use atmospheric elements in café design, and 3) how atmospheric design and cafe brand becomes major factors into building a successful business.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Business is an activity that provides goods needed by the community or other people by generating profits for the providers of these goods (Schlais, Davis, & Schlais, 2011, p.22). Businesses need creativity, so they can make and offer something completely new and different from the existing idea and innovation. One of the ways to differentiate themselves is by designing a unique space that can offers a new atmospheric experience to its customer. An attractive and comfortable atmosphere will leave a good impression on the customers, which will shape their view on the café's brand. Attractive exterior design can be used to grab the customer's interest in the store and make them aware of its existence (Lofrano in Ertzberger, 2019, p.12). Good design also creates a smooth transition between business spaces that will affect customer satisfaction (Ertzberger, 2009, p.12). In the cafe business, designed spaces are needed to accommodate owners, workers, and customers especially considering different users have different space requirements. That is why it's also important to consider the interior atmosphere within a café.

There are many atmospheric elements that should be taken into consideration when designing a restaurant or a café namely design, employees, food, drinks and entertainment music (Guines in Omar et al., 2015, p.1). Understanding how to use those elements is a key factor to improve the brand image of a café and increase its profit (Omar et al., 2015, p.1). By meeting customer satisfaction, business quality also increases, and ultimately can increase business success. The atmosphere, technically, is defined as 'air that is in a field' which is also used to describe the quality of the environment (Kotler in Heide, Lærdal, & Grønhaug, 2007, p. 1316). When talking about a café design, the quality of the environment is the situation around the customers, such as the level of lighting, smelling, perceived air temperature, noise level, and others. The atmosphere is processed by our senses as we receive stimuli from our surrounding whether it's visual or omnon-visual (Purnomo & Gamal, 2017, p.7). These visual and non-visual elements will create a unique cafe atmosphere that can provide different experiences to customers, improve their comfort level, and increase their willingness to revisit cafés (Collins in Jalil, Fikry, & Zainuddin, 2016, p.498).

When someone eats their food, they employ their five senses. The visual, taste, smell, and texture of the food will leave a certain impression. The atmosphere around them while they eat will affect their experience (Gustaffson et al. in Ertzberger, 2009, p.18). Fast tempo music and large volumes will drive the customer to eat their food faster. Meanwhile, slow tempo music played in a low volume will create a relaxed atmosphere so that invites them to stay a longer. Besides, visual complexity which can be seen by the elements, colors and materials, can also affect consumers' pleasure and comfort. Atmosphere design with lower visual complexity will be preferable because lower complexity will make the store feel more spacious.

Restaurant temperature affects the customer physiologically (Omar et al., 2015, p.3). High temperature or low temperature will reduce their comfort, resulting in their immediate departure from the premise. In addition, cleanliness is also a crucial factor since it's closely related to hygiene and health. Lighting is one of the important characteristics of intangible dimensions that greatly influences the consumers' perceptions when they choose which café they would visit. Lighting can help regulate speed, tone, and atmosphere. In dimly lit rooms, people will speak in lower volume (Jordan & Prinsloo in Omar et al., 2015, p.3). In addition, in dimmer lighting, people will feel more freedom in expressing themselves. Color is also important. The bright colors, especially those that support the concept of the café, can create the type ofenvironment that suits its customers (Omar et al., 2015, p.3). Cold colors like green, blue and purple give a formal impression that more suited for workplace environment. Warm colors like red, yellow and orange leave a warm and more suited for service environment because they can be accepted by any age group (Schaie & Heiss in Ertzberger, 2009, p.20).

Layout arrangement helps to build an atmosphere in a café as well. It includes seating arrangements, equipment

20 October 2024 17:55:45

arrangement, and furniture compilation. A well-arranged layout will increase customer satisfaction and encourage them to spend more time in the café. Customers always prefer a spacious café to avoid the feeling being overcrowded or having a limited space to do anything. That is why should keep seats arrangement in mind as well as every decorative element placed on the table. This will create a neatly arranger atmosphere that will reduce the effect density (Gogoi, Bidyut, & Jyoti, 2017, p.181). Crowded atmosphere will chase customers away while spacious atmosphere will attract more customers.

Restaurants that provide a pleasant atmosphere are more likely to attract customers to spend more time and money (Omar et al., 2015, p.1). Nowadays, most people go to cafés or restaurants not only for their food but for their atmospheric environment. Customers take beautiful pictures of the café, meet their business partners, or simply hang out with family and friends. Design influences consumers' view towards a business whether it is a store or a café, while brands in a business can determine consumer loyalty to the brand (Gorsi & Mahmood, 2015). Atmosphere and design concepts will become a brand that will solidify public opinion on the café. Establishing a good business brand is a way to make a successful business (Pambudi & Gamal, 2017, 20). Generally speaking, a successful café business can make its customers to come back. This success can be achieved by offering an atmosphere that is designed and meets customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is the feeling happiness and contentment when their needs are met because they can get what they expect to get from attractive products and services (Pizam & Ellis in Omar et al., 2015, p.2). Satisfaction also reflects the impact of service provider performance on customer feelings (Oliver in Omar et al., 2015, p.2).

METHODS

The three methods used to answer this study questions are observation, desk study, and interview. To find out the atmosphere in the cafe through lighting, music, smells, decoration, and spatial planning, we observe a café name Take A Bite, Pluit, North Jakarta. We also conducted interviews with cafe managers to find out about everyday life in cafes and the growth of the cafe business. We also did the desk study to find out customer opinions and customer satisfaction with cafes from *Zomato* application.

FINDINGS

Take A Bite café changes their design at certain seasons to attract customers who have come to come back to find different atmosphere and cannot be found in other cafes. Take A Bite cafe designs both outside and inside use the elements of the Harry Potter movie, so there is a smooth transition between the rooms. Most customers come to this cafe because of the unique cafe concept or they like the concept of harry potter, so they enjoy their experience with this harry potter cafe concept. after the cafe underwent a change in decoration, the café become more crowded, and more people would come to the café. However, based on the desk study of the Zomato application, there are customers who feel disturbed by the decoration that is too crowded.



FIGURE 1. Take A bite café Halloween decoration source: café's social media



FIGURE 2. Take A bite café Christmas decoration source: café's social media

This café uses three types of lighting, which include chandelier lights, hanging lights, and wall wash light. Each

20 October 2024 17:55:45

type of lamp is used to accentuate the dim and gripping effects according to the theme of the *Harry Potter*.

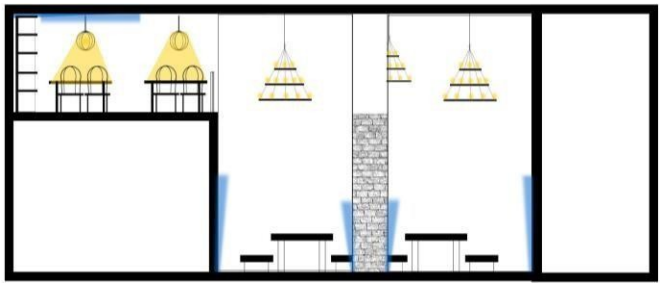


FIGURE 3. lighting in Take A Bite Cafe, Pluit source: personal illustration

The first floor of the cafe uses chandeliers, which are multi-story lights that are adapted from *Harry Potter* films. The chandeliers serve as decorative elements rather than for lighting purpose since they are located far above the table. On the 2nd floor dining room, each table has a perpendicular lamp on the middle of the table that provides enough dim light for customers. Wall-wash lightings use blue light and are placed on walls, columns, and ceilings and uses blue to create a combination between orange and blue lights. The dark color from the lighting creates a dark and tensed atmosphere that you are expected from a *Harry Potter* themed cafe.

Although this cafe has the theme of *Harry Potter*, the music that is playing does not use that theme, because songs with the *Harry Potter* theme are not suitable to be played in the dining room. This was also explained by Mr. Hendy, Take A Bite café manager. Customers are more preferring to have a cozy feeling with a good song/music rather than a wizard experience which music are more annoying. Base on my direct observation and can be seen from figure 01 and figure 02, Take A Bite cafe has a high visual complexity, seen from 1) colors diversity (yellow, orange, brown, and gray), 2) elements diversity, and 3) material diversity. High visual complexity causes the consumers to have difficulty in processing information that disrupts their pleasure or comfort (Jang et al. 2018: 107). Although that may be true, there are still many customers who come to the café due to its unique atmosphere. Despite the claim made by Jang, we can only find one review that expresses a dislike for the overcrowded atmosphere among hundreds of other reviews that claim to like the *Harry Potter* atmosphere.

"... the interior for Christmas is too overwhelming that I feel too crowded by the ambience" - Stella Kurniawan, Reviewer on Zomato

In our opinion, most customers who come to Take A Bite cafe are the ones who like *Harry Potter* or those who can tolerate visual complexity in Take A Bite. Customers are willing to accept the complex atmosphere elements because they think it represents the *Harry Potter* atmosphere they are looking for. With this in mind, we can assume that cafes with high complexity might be well received if they are themed cafes.

The chart below shows the good and bad rating number of from August until now provided by customers through the Zomato app. The number of reviews each month also varies.

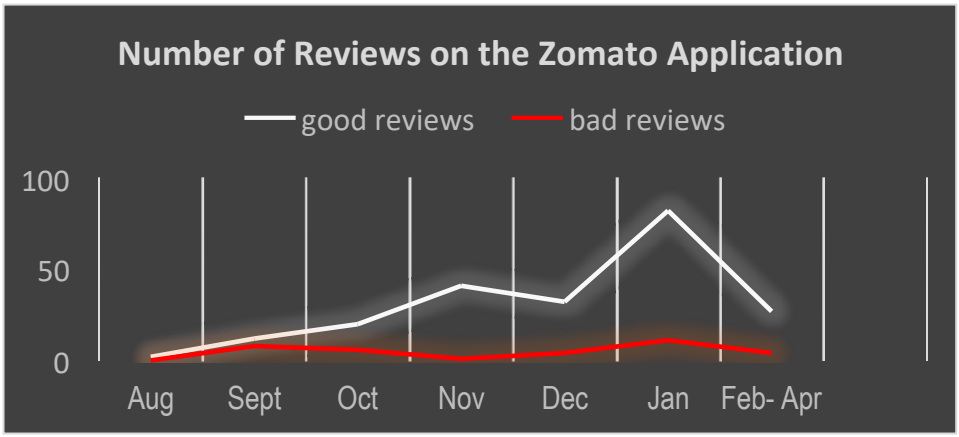


FIGURE 4. Good and bad review charts from the Zomato app Source: personal illustration

20 October 2024 17:55:45

Take A Bite just opened a Zomato app account in August so there were only 2 customer reviews that gave good ratings for the cafe. In September, Take A Bite cafe became widely known and there were 20 people who gave their reviews with 12 people giving good ratings and 8 people gave poor ratings.

–Been here. The place was cozy for hangout with friends...The food…The drinks were okay… Parking lot was a bit small…‖ - Imelda Kozaly, a reviewer on *Zomato*

This customer gave almost perfect score (4/5 stars) for Take A Bite as a comfortable place to meet with her friends. Based on the reviews given, customers reduce one star due to a lack of service for parking. Turns out, the small parking space had a negative effect on her satisfaction.

Reviews in September shows a few reviews that expressed uncomfortable to visit the Take A Bite cafe. Customers felt that the exterior of the Take A Bite cafe was attractive and there were good customer reviews that got through social media. The customers stated that the decoration and atmosphere were visually attractive and worthy of being a photo booth. But then again, small parking spots and the slow food and drink service disappointed some customers who gave a poor rating in its review, which was 2 out of 5 stars.

–Holiday… (I) tried (to visit) the most happening place in Pluit. The ambience was ok... The wizard concept like *Harry Potter* was ok... There were some interesting photo spots. (I) ordered. Turned out it was out of stock so (I) ordered something else. Unfortunately, we needed to wait for a long time for our drinks… I was disappointed (and almost got angry)...‖ - Kartika Sari, a reviewer on *Zomato*

Customers found the actual atmosphere created from the *Harry Potter* theme was visually pleasing (decoration) and the menu was interesting (light bites), but unfortunately there was a shortage in the availability. In addition to that, slow services also made customers uncomfortable. There was an emergence of negative reviews from these bad experiences and it reduced customer confidence in Take A Bite. Customer confidence in the business should be taken into consideration since it is a part of the customer satisfaction criteria (Heide et al.; 2007: 1317).

In October 2018, Take A Bite changed the atmosphere of the cafe with a Halloween theme. There was an increase in customers compared to previous months. The Halloween atmosphere at the cafe lasted until mid-November, then in mid-November until the end of January, it was replaced by a Christmas decoration.

During the Christmas season, the customers also gave many reviews on Zomato. A total of 114 people gave reviews with good ratings while 15 people gave reviews with poor scores.

–… very recommended, the place was very cozy and (I) had a chance to chat with the friendly manager. I'll come again for sure.‖ - Charles Saputra, a reviewer on *Zomato*

According to his review, Take A Bite Cafe offered a comfortable atmosphere for customers to enjoy their time while doing their activities. In addition, the friendliness of the service provided by the cafe also added positive value to the café. According to the interview with Mr. Hendy, Take A Bite had the biggest number of customers in the Christmas season and increased Take A Bite's cafe turnover rapidly. But from the two reviews above, the design of the Christmas atmosphere was only liked by some people. Some felt that the Christmas atmosphere in the Take A Bite cafe was too excessive and too dense and it could disturb their activities (Gogoi et al.; 2017: 181).

–(During) Halloween and December, we were swamped with customers... Our highest sales were in December. Our turnover reached 1 billion. That's the only information we can share.‖ – Mr. Hendy, the manager of Take A Bite

CONCLUSION

Business success seen from financial characteristics is certain to occur when cafes generate revenue in accordance with the target cafe. However, business success besides being measured by financial criteria can also be seen from customer satisfaction criteria. Customers who have a pleasant experience, show satisfaction by buying a lot from the cafe or maybe buying a little, but with the frequency of buying more.

The atmosphere unconsciously influences customers' level of comfort. Atmospheric design is done to provide comfort to the users of the space so that consumers can enjoy their time to do their activities. Before customers can enjoy what's inside the cafe, customers will see from the visual aesthetic of the cafe. Unique and interesting atmospheric design in the community will attract prospective customers to come inside the store or the café. Atmospheric design is done to increase customer satisfaction. In atmospheric design, customer satisfaction is influenced by several elements, 1) decoration or visual aesthetics, 2) lighting, 3) music, 4) temperature, and 5) spatial planning (seating, furniture, equipment). Cafe business must fulfill the comfort of each element of the atmosphere. Failure to utilize one element will reduce the value of satisfaction given by the customer.

20 October 2024 17:55:45

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This article's publication is supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Sustainable Higher Education Research Alliance (SHERA) Program for Universitas Indonesia's Scientific Modeling, Application, Research and Training for City-centered Innovation and Technology (SMART CITY) Project, Grant #AID-497-A-1600004, Sub Grant #IIE-00000078-UI-1.

REFERENCES

1. Aqeel, A.M.B, Awan, A.N, Adnan, R. (2011). Determinants of Business Success (An Exploratory Study). *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 1(1), 98-110.
2. Bititci, U. S, Muir, D. (1997). Business process definition: a bottom-up approach. International Journal of Operations & Production Management, 17(4), 365-374.Ertzberger, B.K. (2009). The Effect of Ambient Factors in the Design and Branding of the Restaurant Environment: A Business Approach Model Exemplified in "Café Cabernet", Tallahassee, Florida Sttate University. *A Thesis submitted to the Department of Interior Design in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts.*
3. Gogoi, B. J. (2017). Effect of Store Design on Perceived Crowding and Impulse Buying Behavior. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 7(2), 180-186.
4. Gorgievski, M.J., Ascalon, M.E. and Stephan, U. (2011). Small business owners' success criteria, a values approach to personal differences. *Journal of Small Business Management*,*49,* 207-232.
5. Gorsi, H.M, Mahmood, K. (2015). The Role of Ambience in Building Brand Image. A Demographical Study of Pakistani Restaurants. *Management and Administrative Review*, 4(4), 698-708
6. Heide, M., Lærdal, K., Grønhaug, K. (2007). The design and management of ambience—Implications for hotel architecture and service. Tourism Management 28, 1315–1325.
7. Jang, J. Y., Baek, E., Yoon, S. Y., & Choo, H. J. (2018). Store design: Visual complexity and consumer responses. *International Journal of Design, 12*(2), 105-118.
8. Mariotti, S, Towle, T. (2009). *Entrepreneurship: Owning your future* (11th ed.). United States. MA: Prentice Hall
9. Mindrut, S., Manolica, A, Roman, C.T. (2013). Building Brands Identity. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 20(11), 393 – 403.
10. Schlais, D.E, Davis, R.N, Schlais, C.A, (2011). *Introduction to Business* (3rd ed.). United States of America
11. Pambudi, P. R., Gamal, A. (2017). Arsitektur Restoran Tematik. *Architectture-Property Universitas Indonesia Thesis.*
12. Prasad, P. (2015). *Senior Secondary Course: Business Studies* (319). India: Sahibabad, Ghaziabad.
13. Lorenza, A., Gamal, A. (2017). Outdoor Atmosphere as Added Value of Retail Property Product. Guangzhou, China. ICCREM 2017: Project Management and Construction Technology. 131862, 19-30.
14. Omar, M., Ariffin, H., Ahmad, R. (2015). The Relationship between Restaurant Ambience and Customers' Satisfaction in Shah Alam Arabic Restaurants, Selangor. *International Journal of Administration and Governance,* 1, 1-8.
15. Turley, L.M., Millliman, R.E. (2000). Atmospheric Effects on Shopping Behavior: A Review of the Experimental Evidence. *Journal of Business Research*, 49(2), 193-211.

20 October 2024 17:55:45