

The Influence of The Search for Experience in the Perception of Innovation in Servicescapes¹

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RESUMO

This work aims to study how people recognize innovation in servicescapes and to identify the process of delivering the experience to customers and how they face it. In this context, it was investigated how the perception of innovation affects costumers. Also, how they seek for experience. Qualitative and quantitative analyses have been done from an online survey and an in-depth interview to understand the relationship between the experience, the main focus of service customers as innovation in these environments since this factor is proposed as the difference between companies to impact and maintain their targets.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: servicescape; branding; lovemarks; relationship; retail.

TEXTO DO TRABALHO

Servicescape can be understood as the man-made environment, the physical and built surroundings, everything opposed to the natural and social environment. This term describes how the physical surroundings and its framework can affect a customer and their experience inside the retail. This concept helps assessing which aspects bring more attention to the customer inside the retail facilities, how to involve them with the physical facilities and interacting with the employees (BITNER, 1992).

In order to analyse how costumers search for innovation in servicescapes, the brand management must work hard mixing all the physical surroundings with the

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organization's purpose, such as its beliefs, its history, its marketing and storytelling strategies (BITNER 1992; KOTLER 1973).

The cornerstone of a well-conceived holistic marketing orientation is strong customer relationship (Kotler, 2012). It is not enough just bringing customers into the retail, it is necessary to make them interact with the servicescape and – if it is an organization's purpose – the physical framework. In addition, the attention given to the consumer by the employees is a relevant characteristic that make the difference between a fast food franchise and a fresh ingredients family run restaurant, for example (KOZINETS et al., 2002).

Previous studies in this field have tracked how the stakeholders of major industries and themed flagship brand stores are related. The main goal of this project is to address the effects of servicescapes in the consumer behaviour. Searching for what is innovative inside the consumer's point of view, how they react, how they relate to it, if they like it or not, if they notice an innovative servicescape when they are inside one and report all this information using quantitative and qualitative survey method. The servicescape analysed was Heineken Experience. To conduct this paper, the student himself attended to Heineken Experience located in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Finally, to achieve the paper's goals, a qualitative and quantitative research were designed and its data, analysed.

Some variables help bringing costumers attention to the organization servicescapes. For Bitner (1992), either it can be by pricing, advertising, special promotions and added features or by the employees' services, once they must be fully satisfied with their position in the organization to provide a high-quality service. To achieve this goal, – having a high-quality service mixed with an attractive and memorable servicescape – retailers can use variables such as pay scales, promotions and benefits with their employees.

It is noteworthy the employees' motivation, satisfaction and operational efficiency when the retail depends on its staff to achieve the goals towards the perfect or the most memorable experience in the servicescape. Kozinets et al (2002) addresses that markets are more diverse and fragmented than ever because costumers have access over tons of

information and for Dalton (2011) in the post-industrial world, marketers' dominance is being replaced by influence, that is related to what builds a brand's reputation.

Back to Kozinets et al (2002), to attract consumers, retailers have turned to change the retail atmospherics to create a more memorable and attractive consumer experience. Pine and Gilmore (1999) coined the term "experience economy" to address that competition takes place between different experiences rather than services and products, taking away the usual definitions of marketing as we all know. Defending this idea, Holbrook and Hirschman (1982, p. 132) defined "experimental consumption" as a comprehension of a playful leisure activity, sensory pleasures, daydreams, aesthetic enjoyment and emotional response.

Kotler (2007) attributes to the digital revolution the increase in consumer purchasing power. This empowerment is a result of the user's ability to generate goods, services and events due to the large amount of information about what is online or not. These independent and well-informed individuals are increasingly fragmenting the markets, since mass-produced products no longer meet their needs seeing that their search is constant and frequent for what is distinctive, innovative and original (LEWIS and BRIDGES, 2004).

For Dalton (2011), consumers now expect brands to behave in a fair and reasonable manner, it is not just related to having a brand promise and core values, but about delivering this promise/values. Big companies need to speak with their targets and involve them with senses inside the companies' speech. The smell and taste are intimately connected. It is hard experiencing one without the other. Together they speak more directly than the rest of the emotions, memories and dreams. And companies need to take advantage of this fact, learn the most they can to impact their audience in the servicescape, to make the visit remarkable (ROBERTS, 2005; BITNER, 1992).

METHOD

It is relevant to the understanding of this work, the detailing of the research's type and the method used to read the data and hypotheses obtained (LAKATOS and MARCONI, 2017). To comply with the previously defined objectives of the present study, the used methodology was the analysis of the data obtained through a conclusive descriptive research whose objective, according to Malhotra (2011) is to test specific

hypotheses and analyse specific relationships. In general, this research method is more formal and structured than exploratory because it specifies in detail the steps of the research project. In data collection, this method uses large and representative samples and then is analysed with statistical techniques.

According to Malhotra (2011, p.59), descriptive research is commonly used when describing market phenomena, mapping relationships, describing frequencies of purchase and use of services. In this model, the researcher has previous knowledge about the problem and the problem itself is usually clear and well defined. This study was elaborated in three stages: the first consists in the research and elaboration of theoretical background. The second, consists on the in-depth interviews with individuals who visited Heineken Experience and from there, the third stage was developing the questionnaires in English and Portuguese along with the scales of measures provided by the analysis of the report from the visit to Heineken Experience in Amsterdam.

To delve into this subject, the first part of this paper resulted in the background research, looking for definitions of servicescapes and relationships of brands and its targets. As mentioned above, the second part of this survey, consisted in a qualitative research, the in-depth group interviews. For Malhotra (2011, p. 120), qualitative research serves to define the problem more precisely, since it uses an analysis of external and internal sources of secondary data to define the problem more precisely. It helps elaborating hypotheses and to identifying or clarifying the main variables to be investigated in the quantitative phase.

In-depth interviews involve a trained interviewer who asks a set of semi-structured questions to a respondent or a group who is generally knowledgeable about the subject matter. This kind of interview, usually, requires contact face-to-face, or online using video calls. The interviewer usually uses specific techniques to make certain subjects be discussed with the interviewee (HAIR, 2014). For the development of this work, four people were interviewed, some weeks after their visit to Heineken Experience.

For the last stage of research, it was conducted a quantitative research through the online platform Qualtrics. The quantitative method uses formal options with predetermined questions and answers addressed to big samples of respondents (HAIR, 2014, p. 79). The questionnaire created focused on the two main objective questions of this paper: Identify innovations in servicescapes and analyse the influence of the search for experience in the perception of innovation in servicescapes.

The questionnaire was designed for two types of respondents: those who have ever been to Heineken Experience and those who have not. Those who knew, answered questions based on their visits and were asked if they identified the innovation present in the servicescape and if the price paid for the visit was worth it. And those who have never been to Heineken Experience, were shown photos and a video and answered questions with the objective of analysing the perception of innovation in the images and in the video, the question was if they found the environment interesting and attractive and at the end of the questionnaire they answered how much they would pay if they had the opportunity to visit the Heineken Experience.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

The study was initiated with a qualitative research focused on in-depth interviews, which according to Malhotra (2001), the sample is smaller and develops an initial understanding for the research. For this project, 4 people were interviewed - as previously described in in the Method. Taking into consideration that the servicescape analyzed was Heineken Experience, all interviewees are Brazilian and have already visited the site. Among them, three people were surprised by the environment, finding it innovative. Only one respondent did not find the environment appealing, since their expectations were not met. Similarly, three agree that the price paid for the experience matches a good cost X benefit, and one interviewee says that the price is higher than it should. All respondents consider the brand innovative in their field, and after the visit everyone would buy more products of the brand, either by who was used or not to buy Heineken's products before the tour.

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

In total, the survey registered 250 respondents of which 206 finished all the questions, the majority is composed by Brazilians. The survey took responses in a time space of 12 days and 20 of all the respondents were students at Fontys Academy for Creative Industries, university located in Tilburg, the Netherlands. Those students were from various parts of the world, for instance: Canada, Mexico, Scotland, Germany, Denmark, The Netherlands, Spain and South Korea. The combination of Brazilians and

international students were used to have a different type of sample since the writers of this paper were studying at the university mentioned above. To analyse the data obtained through Qualtrics, it was used the IBM SPSS, which is a predictive analyses software used to read the results from quantitative questionnaires with multiple purposes and variables.

Out of all the respondents, 136 were female and 81 males, the highest frequency was for the complete and incomplete graduation - those who still are at university and the ones who graduated already, the income with highest frequency was between R\$3,748.00 to R\$9,370.00 (39.6%) and R\$ 9,370, 01 to R\$18,740.00 (23.6%), and the mean age was of 22.3 years. Based on the survey data, 83% consume beer, and 47% drink beer on an average of 1 to 3 times a week. Out of the respondents who drink beer, everyone knows the Heineken brand and 17% identify the brand first when the word "beer" is heard, followed by Skol 14% and Budweiser with 10%. When asked about the values related to Heineken, the most voted choices were: respectable (24%), credibility (22%), modern (20%) and innovative (15%).

When it comes to Heineken Experience, 50.5% have never heard of the servicescape, while 49.5% have heard about it. Out of all the respondents, 92% have never been there, only 18% have and out of them, 64.3% affirmed the price paid worth it. From the respondents who have ever visited the place, 85.7% stated that the environment - taking into consideration colours, lighting, and technology - is innovative, 7% did not know how to respond to the question and 7% did not consider innovative. When asked about the emotions during the visit, the ones that excelled were the feelings: enthusiastic (85.7%) and happy (57%).

Since most of the respondents have never been to Heineken Experience or have never heard about it, the research used a *jump logic* to distinguish those who have visited the servicescape from those who have not. For the group that have never been there, the questionnaire had a question with photos of the servicescape for analysis, and from that question 92.3% of the respondents agree or totally agree that the environment, technology and the designs are interesting. 91.2% considered the environment presented as innovative, 92.9% considered the environment creative, 90.6% considered the environment different.

Also, for the respondents who have never visited the servicescape, a question was made from a video teaser about the tour, and out of that it was obtained that the most

chosen option was: “this video makes me want to know Heineken Experience” (82 respondents from 167 valid answers) then: “this video is appealing to me” (69 respondents). From those who have never been to Heineken Experience, 67% would pay to visit the place.

Based on the results from the correlation between the variables about the respondent’s interest in interaction with their preferred brands and if they considered the environment interesting and innovative, the result was -0.152^* , that means an inversely proportional and weak correlation. After that, a regression analysis was performed, but no relative significance was obtained. Then, a correlation was obtained between respondents who like to interact in environments such as Heineken Experience and their respective analyses based on the photos presented. As shown in the following table, strong correlations are from respondents who find it "interesting," "creative," and "boring." However, the last one presented a negative correlation, which means, inversely proportional.

From this, three regressions were found among the question when the respondents are asked if they like to interact in servicescapes (as Q35 in the questionnaire) as the independent variable and three dependent ones from the question where is asked what the respondents think about the images presented (as Q22 in the questionnaire): interesting, creative and tedious.

Variable analysed: Interesting

Resumo do modelo

Modelo	R	R quadrado	R quadrado ajustado	Erro padrão da estimativa
1	,229 ^a	,052	,047	,915

a. Preditoras: (Constante), Você gosta de interagir com suas marcas favoritas em feiras, museus ou espaços como a Heineken Ex...

ANOVA^a

Modelo		Soma dos Quadrados	df	Quadrado Médio	Z	Sig.
1	Regressão	7,749	1	7,749	9,259	,003 ^b
	Resíduo	140,604	168	,837		
	Total	148,353	169			

a. Variável Dependente: Com base nas fotos a seguir, o que você acha da tecnologia e design dos ambientes apresentados? Interessante

b. Preditoras: (Constante), Você gosta de interagir com suas marcas favoritas em feiras, museus ou espaços como a Heineken Ex...

Variable analysed: Creative

Resumo do modelo

Modelo	R	R quadrado	R quadrado ajustado	Erro padrão da estimativa
1	,159 ^a	,025	,020	,734

a. Preditores: (Constante), Você gosta de interagir com suas marcas favoritas em feiras, museus ou espaços como a Heineken Ex...

ANOVA^a

Modelo		Soma dos Quadrados	df	Quadrado Médio	Z	Sig.
1	Regressão	2,360	1	2,360	4,375	,038 ^b
	Resíduo	90,634	168	,539		
	Total	92,994	169			

a. Variável Dependente: Com base nas fotos a seguir, o que você acha da tecnologia e design dos ambientes apresentados?&nbs-Criativo

b. Preditores: (Constante), Você gosta de interagir com suas marcas favoritas em feiras, museus ou espaços como a Heineken Ex...

Variable analysed: design and tecnologia

Resumo do modelo

Modelo	R	R quadrado	R quadrado ajustado	Erro padrão da estimativa
1	,250 ^a	,062	,057	1,422

a. Preditores: (Constante), Você gosta de interagir com suas marcas favoritas em feiras, museus ou espaços como a Heineken Ex...

ANOVA^a

Modelo		Soma dos Quadrados	df	Quadrado Médio	Z	Sig.
1	Regressão	22,591	1	22,591	11,165	,001 ^b
	Resíduo	339,933	168	2,023		
	Total	362,524	169			

a. Variável Dependente: Com base nas fotos a seguir, o que você acha da tecnologia e design dos ambientes apresentados?&nbs-Entediante

b. Preditores: (Constante), Você gosta de interagir com suas marcas favoritas em feiras, museus ou espaços como a Heineken Ex...

The last one, related between Q35 and Q22 about the imagens making the respondent feeling tedious, presented a negative correlation, which means it is inversely correlated. Respondents who like to interact with brands in servicescapes are the same ones who do not find the images boring, that is, the opposite: interesting, lively.

DISCUSSION

As mentioned in the theoretical background, consumers are constantly looking for values and options that differ brands and give them the best cost benefit. The seeking for experiences has increased more and more over the years. Said that, it is possible to affirm

that this paper's objectives have been achieved based on both analysis made. The in-depth interviews shown us what was already expected: most of the visitors who went to Heineken Experience, do find it interesting and innovative. Besides that, they can relate the aspects about innovation in the servicescape such as technology and interaction between the staff, the media presented and the audience – this is the objective *A* of this paper: *identify innovation in servicescapes*.

About the quantitative analysis, the objective *a* was achieved in a simple frequency analysis, where both groups of respondents identified the innovation in Q26 (for those who have visited the servicescape) and Q28 (for those who have not but did it by looking the images presented).

And the second objective: regarded a correlation made from the relationship between the respondents' identification of innovation in question Q35 (when is asked if they like to interact with brands in servicescapes) and Q22 (when it is asked for them to rate the innovation presented in the images on a Likert scale), that showed through a regression analysis the respondents who have never been to the servicescape mentioned can identify the innovation and they can relate values to it – these values are the ones with strongest correlation significance – such as “interesting”, “creative” and “tedious/boring” but for this one, it was showed a negative correlation, so it comes “interesting” again since the opposite of tedious is interesting. Thus, the objective *b* was achieved.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned countless times during this work, the changes in the relationship between costumers and their brands are increasingly strong and evident. In the end, it only survives the brand that offers greater added value for the client. And prices are no longer a choice in certain sectors because customers want to feel unique, close to their lovemarks.

The two objectives of this work were fulfilled, through quantitative and qualitative research. The greatest difficulty was to find the number of respondents who have already attended to the mentioned servicescape. The intention was to find at least 10 people for the in-depth interviews and for the online questionnaire, 20% of the total respondents.

The data collected and analysed were of foremost importance for elaboration and conclusion of this work. It was not possible to identify any significant differences between

Brazilian and foreign responses, which at first was an objective to be related to the present study. Also, it was not possible to identify any relationship between the identification of innovation from the respondents as a value in the question Q22 since the correlation significant coefficient was not strong enough.

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