

Session 2.16.8 Room: S109

## Retailing, Channel Management and Logistics

Store Environment /Atmospherics

Chair: Sara Rosengren, Stockholm School of Economics

### Which Dimensions of the Store Environment Irritate Customers? Evidence from three Retail Settings

Nathalie Demoulin, IESEG School of Management

Kim Willems, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Gilbert Swinnen, Hasselt University

Most previous studies on store atmospherics have focused on their impact on positive emotional customer responses. However, less pleasurable shopping experiences may also generate negative affective responses. This research investigates the effect of shopping environment on customers' irritation level and satisfaction across three retail sectors. We survey customers after a shopping experience in either a grocery- ( $n = 150$ ), fashion- ( $n = 183$ ), or electrical appliances retail stores ( $n = 156$ ). Our results demonstrate that design and social aspects of the store are the most irritating. Customers' irritation decreases their satisfaction. However, these effects depend on the retail sector considered.

*Keywords: Irritation, Store Environment, Cross-Sectorial Comparison*

### Does Creativity Matter for Store Window Displays?

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Store window displays are highly important for retailers since they have the potential to draw traffic to the stores. Still, little is known about their influence on consumers. In this study we investigate the impact of store window creativity on consumer perceptions. The results of two experimental studies indicate that store window creativity positively affects attitudes towards the display and the items in it, willingness to pay for the items on display as well as attitudes towards the store and store entering intentions. This implies that retailers might profit from using a creative store window design.

*Keywords: Creativity, Retailing, Perceptions*

### Aesthetics: Luxury or Necessity? Patronage Decisions in Conditions of Severe Economic Crisis

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The aim of this paper is to examine the influence of store's aesthetics on consumers' emotions and how these emotions, in turn, influence patronage intention through the moderating effect of crisis and store's familiarity, by comparing this impact on privileged and under-privileged area. The research took place in six supermarkets from which three of them are located in up market area and the other three in down market area. The findings showed that the aesthetics have an almost equal positive effect on the customer's emotional state and on their patronage intention for both areas. The store familiarity is indicated as moderator between emotions and patronage intentions for under-privileged area and as determinant indicator for privileged area. It should be noted though, that even if the privileged area were not much affected by crisis, they would like to go for shopping in a pleasant environment like the consumers from the underprivileged area, who regard it as a necessity.

*Keywords: Retailing, Crisis, Aesthetics*

### Bargain Effectiveness in Differentiated Store Environments: When a Good Deal Goes Bad

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Differentiation is necessary to survive in today's homogeneous retail landscape. One way to differentiate is by making use of store atmospherics. However, other marketing tools such as offering a bargain might conflict with this store differentiation strategy. In study 1, an experimental consumer lab survey ( $n = 50$ ) confirms that store environment differentiation generates positive consumer affect, evaluations and approach behaviour. In study 2, a  $2 \times 2$  between-subjects lab experiment ( $n = 121$ ) furthermore demonstrates that in a highly differentiated store the presence of bargains negatively affects consumer reactions, supporting the assumption that bargains do not fit with a premium strategy.

*Keywords: Store Atmospherics, Store Differentiation, Bargain*

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