

# Analysis of Atmospheric Variables and Consumer Behavior in the Presence of Branding Appeal to Consumers Senses

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**Abstract:** *This essay centers on sensory marketing, a strategic approach aimed at influencing consumer behavior and emotions. The customer desires an emotional and unique experience associated with their purchases, rather than simply acquiring a product or service. Consistent with previous research, our survey study demonstrates how diners evaluated the atmosphere of restaurants by considering their cognitive and emotional reactions. The combination of environmental stimulation with the four senses creates a synergistic effect that elicits an internal cognitive and/or emotional response in customer-facing employees. These senses include sound, sight, touch, and scent. The survey results highlight the importance of comprehending the impact of sensory marketing on customers' emotional (increased pleasure) and cognitive (enhanced perception of quality) responses*

**Keywords:** clientele, dining establishments, advertising, branding, consumer senses

## I. INTRODUCTION

Businesses are compelled to allocate funds on sensory marketing because to the prevailing economic conditions. The importance of human senses has often been overlooked, or at best considered as a field separate from marketing. Every individual perceives their surroundings by utilizing all five of their senses. The efficacy of a firm's marketing plan and the personalized nature of a customer's sensory experience can be enhanced by having knowledge about the individual's sensory faculties.

In order to differentiate themselves in the current or target market, organizations largely employ sensory marketing methods. Historically, organizations have mostly relied on visual elements such as colour schemes, graphics, and logos to conduct their operations (Dosquet 2015).

Consequently, sensory marketing has been utilized to offer the customer a unique and memorable encounter. According to Daucé and Rieunier (2002), retail atmospherics refers to the deliberate use of elements in the point-of-sale environment to elicit emotional, cognitive, and behavioural reactions from consumers, with the aim of motivating them to make purchases. The authors identified several components that contribute to the atmosphere of selling points. These include tactile elements such as materials and temperature, gustatory elements such as gourmand scents and product smells, visual elements such as colors, lights, and design, auditory elements such as background music and ambient sounds, and social elements such as the category of customers and sellers. Sensory marketing is a kind of marketing that aims to connect with customers by targeting their subconscious mind, which involves their sensations, memories, perception, and emotions, all of which are personal aspects of each individual. Sensory marketing aims to leverage customers' emotions and behavior as a strategic marketing tool. Individuals exhibit varying responses to environmental signals at the moment of sale, hence influencing their respective perceptions.

Companies face significant challenges in achieving a consistent and cohesive experience for all their customers in terms of tone and touch. Nevertheless, several studies, including those conducted by Schiffman et al. (1995) and Villemure et al. (2003), have shown the positive impact of sensory stimuli on mood and purchasing behavior. These studies conducted experiments that demonstrated how a pleasant scent can enhance mood and alleviate certain symptoms, such as physical discomfort.

The role of the customer in business and marketing has seen a transformation over time, progressing from a passive individual with little influence to an active participant in the company process, possessing thoughts, emotions, and a sense of connection. He possesses keen perception and experiences emotions. The distinction between perception and experience is the key factor that grants sensory marketing its influential capabilities. The correlation between perception and mood can be utilized to illustrate how consumers' emotions and cognitive processes are impacted by their mood.

The consumer is provided with a customized experience through sensory marketing in addition to a service. The consumer's sensory faculties, encompassing their tactile, visual, auditory, olfactory, and gustatory faculties, are subsequently leveraged as a marketing tactic through the implementation of sensory marketing (Rieunier 2016). The gustatory and tactile senses, which are integral to traditional marketing, have emerged more recently compared to the olfactory sense (smell) and the auditory sense (sound). Sensory marketing originated with the use of aroma and sound into the marketing process. Sensory marketing is based on the concept that firms can influence consumers to make purchases by appealing to one or more of the five human senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell), while still meeting their expectations.

The first inquiry regarding client behavior is why this business sells a greater quantity of same items compared to another business with similar merchandise. The rationale for the shop's appeal to clients is in the experience it can offer. Consumers are inclined to compensate for a delightful encounter. Sensory marketing, as defined by Rieunier and Jallais (2013), refers to the use of ambient variables in close proximity to the selling point, such as music, scent, color, touch, and taste sensations, to promote a favorable psychological reaction in the buyer towards the act of making a purchase. Environmental psychology, as defined by Moch and Moser (1997), is the study of how individuals or groups develop attitudes, perceptions, representations, and behaviors in relation to their physical and social surroundings. Experiments, such as those inspired by Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs, have shown that an individual's environment or atmosphere can influence their emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses (1970). The research problem might be defined as follows: What is the impact of sensory marketing, specifically through the ambiance at the point of sale, on consumer response? Due to a scarcity of comprehensive literature on the systematic documentation of the impact of sensory marketing on customer response, there is a dearth of generalized material available. The essay aims to examine the impact of sensory marketing on consumer behavior through its influence on the environment at the point of sale.

## **II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Sensory marketing aims to influence a customer's behavior towards a specific product, service, or selling point by appealing to their senses and enhancing their overall well-being (Daucé, Rieunier 2002). In today's market, individuals who recognize the significance of sensory perception in marketing and business as a whole have a distinct advantage. Implementing sensory marketing as a strategy offers firms the opportunity to enhance the profitability of their products. The food industry has already made some use of sensory marketing, with many restaurants, bars, and bakeries attempting to enhance and stimulate specific senses through the use of artificial systems, such as the artificial fragrance of newly baked bread. Lindström (2005) argues that considering an individual's sensory experiences is crucial for creating a favorable shopping experience, stimulating their imagination, enhancing product development, and fostering customer loyalty. Delivering a customized stimulation that is relevant to the brand's specific target audience.

Lindström (2011) argues that brands that leverage several senses will achieve more success compared to those that focus on only a limited number. A brand's distinctive feature can take the form of several elements, such as a specific color (like Coca-Cola's red or Pepsi's blue), a logo, a tagline, or it can be an inherent characteristic of the product itself, such as the design of Lamborghini cars, the aroma of fragrances, or the flavour of a product like Nutella.

Marketers now recognize the significance of the senses in both the marketing and purchase processes of clients. The efficacy of a message and the subsequent internal reaction are heightened when a brand engages several senses, regardless of whether the response is positive or negative. Several scholars, such as Daucé and Krishna (2012), have focused on a specific aspect of sensory marketing, namely the point-of-sale environment, building upon the earlier work of Kotler (2018).

An effective method to define the field of sensory marketing is by examining the interplay between perception and sensation. After the sense organs are stimulated, the subject's brain will generate an internal response depending on the manner and circumstances in which the stimuli are received. The internal response refers to the emotional and/or

cognitive reactions that determine whether an individual has a positive or negative attitude towards a brand or product. This posture is essential as it decides whether the answer would be favorable or unfavorable. Indeed, the atmospheric components have a direct correlation with the study conducted by Daucé and Rieunier (2002) on the ambiance of the selling point. The environmental variables were defined using scent, vision, sound, and touch, and all of these elements were integrated into the sensory marketing process. Yoo, Park, and MacInnis (2018) defined the environment as a combination of auditory, olfactory, and visual stimuli. These atmospheric conditions excite the sense organs. Through stimulation, the brain receives sensory transmissions and processes them to generate internal responses in individuals. According to Krishna (2012), the internal response consists of two components: the cognitive reaction, which can impact the perception of quality, and the emotional reaction, which can influence consumer satisfaction. Sensory marketing, as described by Krishna (2012), refers to the strategic use of sensory stimuli to impact customers' perception, judgement, and behavior. Atmospheric conditions actually influence the internal responses of customers. These cues have the potential to impact individuals' perception of quality, their judgment, behavior, attitude, and overall experience at the point of sale.

Several hypotheses were formulated based on theories about sensory marketing, specifically focusing on how the sales environment affects consumers' internal reactions. These hypotheses were developed by analyzing previous studies and conceptual frameworks, including the works of Mehrabian and Russell (1974), Bitner (2015), Yalch and Spangenberg (2000), Lindström (2005), and Krishna (2012).

Sensory marketing primarily influences customer behavior, namely their level of preparedness to make a purchase. Daucé and Rieunier (2002) assert that the ambiance at the point of sale has the potential to profoundly influence customers' opinions. Several studies undertaken by researchers such as Hui, Dube, and Chebat (1997) have demonstrated that environmental factors, including music, can have a positive impact on mood and behavior. Typically, sounds and music have the potential to elicit positive emotions and enhance memory, hence increasing the likelihood of individuals making additional purchases or prolonging their stay at the point of sale. Due to its ability to evoke strong emotional responses, the smell has a significant impact on the recollections of consumers, whether they be positive or negative. (Lindström, 2005) The researchers discuss the concept of sensory memory. The aroma may evoke a longing from the sensory recall or induce a soothing state of mind. Previous research indicates that researchers in the field of sensory marketing universally agree that the environment, as well as sensory marketing as a whole, has an impact on customers' behavior and views. In his study, Krishna (2012) proposed that when a consumer is influenced by their surroundings, it leads to two distinct internal responses: a cognitive response and an emotional response.

The cognitive response pertains to the consumer's perception of quality, whereas the emotional response refers to the customer's joy and satisfaction resulting from sensory stimulation. The brand often seeks to enhance the customer's satisfaction, well-being, and stimulation by managing the environment at the point of sale. According to Bitner's (1992) paradigm, the emotional reactivity of individuals is influenced by two factors: their mood and attitude. As to Bitner's (1992) definition, the environment refers to a set of external stimuli, both real and intangible, that have an impact on how individuals perceive and behave. These stimuli synergize to create a global climate that would elicit a beneficial response from clients. According to Mehrabian and Russell (1974), emotional state refers to an individual's reaction to their environment. The PAD idea, developed by Mehrabian and Russell in 1974, is a framework used to describe and assess emotional states based on the surrounding climate and surroundings. It serves as a reference for understanding the emotional responses of both employees and consumers. Multiple studies have investigated the impact of a specific dimension on customers' emotional reactions. Lemoine (2012) illustrated the impact of light on the customer's level of enthusiasm and pleasure during the point of purchase. Unfavorable lighting causes customers to feel more active and anxious, while pleasant lighting significantly enhances an individual's sense of satisfaction. Multiple studies, including those centered around ambient music, have demonstrated that the various components of an environment can influence individuals' emotional states. The research findings indicate that a business can influence a customer's mood by playing a diverse selection of lively and invigorating music. The results indicated that the customer's level of satisfaction could be influenced by the manner in which the music is handled. Clients experience an enhancement in their mood when they are able to derive pleasure from the music being played. Furthermore, the diffusion of the surrounding scent has an impact on the level of satisfaction that consumers experience at the point of sale: specific pleasant aromas stimulate a positive emotional response, but if the customer is exposed to an unpleasant odor, they may feel dissatisfied and

experience a decrease in mood. Lemoine (2002) has shown that both the social environment and design environment influence customer satisfaction and their level of excitement at the point of sale. This was achieved by taking a comprehensive approach to the overall atmosphere. Research in the fields of psychology and sensory marketing has shown that individuals have physiological responses to environmental stimuli. This response may be evident by an elevation in heart rate, sweat of the skin, or even heightened muscular tension. Lemoine's (2002) research suggests that the arrangement of the business, music, and lighting can synergistically enhance a customer's satisfaction and enjoyment. The correlation between the music and the staff's helpfulness will impact the customer's ability to experience tranquillity, relaxation, and revitalization.

### III. CONCLUSION

This study aims to build upon and duplicate previous research conducted on sensory marketing. This study, like others, illustrates how the cognitive and emotional reactions of diners to the ambiance of a restaurant affect their behavior. Consumer behavior is influenced by rational and emotional factors. The combination and overlay of the five senses result in the internal response (cognitive and/or emotional) of customers to the environmental stimuli. Although recent research have shown that individuals often make rapid decisions based on their experiences and memories, marketers and psychologists have long held the belief that people make judgments and decisions in a logical manner. The sensory organs detect information from the surrounding environment, namely at the location of purchase, and both the sense of touch and the process of understanding are activated by atmospheric stimuli (sensations). Subsequently, these sensations are transmitted from the nervous system to the brain, where they undergo analysis, interpretation, and transformation into perceptions. Therefore, the brain generates an internal response based on these perceptions and experiences. Internal response refers to the manner in which individuals react, either emotionally or cognitively, to stimuli from their surroundings.

This work provides a theoretical addition by focusing on sensory marketing in a more comprehensive manner. The investigation findings indicate that environmental cues exert a direct influence on individuals' emotions, behaviors, and cognitive processes. Research has demonstrated a correlation between the customer's perception of quality and the level of enjoyment or sensation they may derive. To effectively respond to evolving needs, trends, and consumer behavior, it is necessary to choose, integrate, and enhance different sensory stimuli to exert a stronger impact on the customer experience. Research revealed that the emotional response triggers the pleasure experienced by consumers during sensory marketing encounters, while the cognitive response influences the perception of the sales process and its quality. It has been found that environmental factors such as visual, auditory, and olfactory stimuli activate consumers' sensory organs.

Undoubtedly, there are further areas to investigate within the realm of sensory marketing. Gaining insight into the correlation between the senses, the environment, the brain, and behavior can greatly advantage organizations and marketers as they anticipate the rise in the utilization of digital marketing by enterprises. Furthermore, when technologies like as augmented reality, virtual helmets, and touch displays in stores grow more widespread, it is reasonable to consider doing a study that demonstrates a correlation between these novel advancements and human sensory perception. More precisely, this pertains to utilizing digital technology to offer customers a unique and immersive experience during the purchasing process, while also considering the influence that sensory stimuli, such as virtual tables at restaurants or simulated noises and scents, may have on customer behavior.

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