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The concept of Sensory Marketing

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INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND

This report will deal with marketing strategies in the out-of-home food market. As this sector is huge and diversified, giving an introduction and precisions about its components is necessary.

Consumers eating habits keep evolving every day, away from the three meals eaten within traditional windows. Less time allowed cooking or eating, because of an increasing distance to the place of work or more leisure, out-of-home food consumption is constantly increasing. According to Datamonitor studies (2005), the part of the alimentary budget of households for this consumption gets bigger every year: 18% this year in France for example. Those studies also noticed that, today, this market is worth more than 480 billions € in Europe and 350 in the US.

The out-of-home food consumption can be provided in many ways, which can be grouped in 2 distinct main categories: the collective and commercial (or traditional) catering¹.

The first one tries to offer meal for the lowest possible price to the highest number of persons. It is the catering in school, hospitals, companies etc. This category of meals providers is composed by a few big groups, which can realize economies of scale, and represent the half of all global market².

The second one regroupes all the meal suppliers such as:

- Traditional restaurants, with various services and clientele (includes hotels restaurants).
- Theme oriented restaurants (Mexican, Italian), life style or product focused (vegetarian food, sushi bars).
- Fast food suppliers: fast-food restaurants like Mc Donald's, sandwich shops (in kiosks, bakeries...), snacks or vending machines. The fast food market is defined as the sale of food and drinks for immediate consumption.

¹ According to the French CNRS (Scientific Research National Center)

² According to Eurostat studies in 2007

The traditional catering is characterized, in opposition to the collective one, by a huge competition between plenty of different actors on many different possible positioning. However, the competition is dominated by the big fast-food companies, as their restaurants are the most rentable and more and more successful: +5% from 2006 to 2007 in Europe³.

In Sweden, the out-of-home food market is healthy, with a recent acceleration of the grown-up, fast-food restaurants and kiosks increasing their shares quickly. An increasing interest in healthy food is impacting positively on traditional restaurants: Swedish consumers regard them as more genuine and of higher quality⁴.

Thus, now a day, restaurants and, more generally, the food industry cope with the obligation of attracting more and more customers, developing loyalty and at the same time keeping their brand image for the customer. The marketing tools used in order to do those obligations are wide-ranging into the general Marketing Mix. But, for instance, as traditional restaurants and fast-foods do not have the same budget to develop their marketing strategy, they have to find new tools beyond the ones they commonly use such as low-prices strategy or timesaving for instance. Indeed, it can be quoted as basic tools already used the low-prices strategy⁵ mostly used in the fast-food industry and targeting urban workers and students all around the world. For instance, a regular meal at McDonalds costs around 10\$⁶. In other restaurants, prices are also important as it gives a good brand-image: gastronomic restaurants or renowned bakeries can display high prices because they provide high quality products, service, reception and atmosphere. Those two different strategies are indispensable for them to stay competitive on their respective market and to differentiate themselves from the others. It could also be quoted another important tool in the food industry: timesaving. In a fast-food, for instance, the customer will expect to be served as fast as possible because it is one of the aim of that kind of restaurant⁷. In a traditional restaurant, the customer expects to wait longer because of the cooking-time, the quality of the cuisine and the atmosphere of the restaurant. There are a lot of other common marketing tools used in the food industry such as advertisements and sales promotions⁸.

³ According to Eurostat studies in 2007

⁴ According to Euromonitor International studies in 2005

⁵ http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m3190/is_n30_v25/ai_11086492

⁶ <http://www.mcdonalds.com>

⁷ http://www.euromonitor.com/The_Fast_Consumer

⁸ According to the article "Sales promotion – a missed opportunity for services marketers?" by Ken and Sue Peattie - 1995

Nevertheless, marketing tools innovations are overriding today, due to the evolution and the characteristics of the food industry. Indeed, restaurants have constantly to add new tools in their marketing strategy in order to get a real competitive advantage on the market. For instance, Internet⁹ is one of those new tools: a restaurant can have his own website where it presents the restaurant room, menus, contacts information. They can also suggest to the customer a booking page or even a delivery service.

Another tool that the restaurants are using more and more but that the customer is not inevitably aware of is **the sensory marketing**.

Have you ever been attracted by the delicious scent of a bakery? How do you react at the hands of the kind of music in a restaurant? What if that galvanization of your senses would be a part of a general marketing strategy put in place by the restaurants and, more generally by the companies, in order to attract customers as much as possible?

According to samresearch.com¹⁰ which gives a general definition of the concept, **sensory marketing** is an effective tool in gaining sensory consumer insights for a marketing strategy. It measures and explains emotional consumer decision-making by variability of products, concepts, packaging, and marketing mix scenarios to ensure long-lasting success.

Sensory marketing is defined as a way of:

- measuring and explaining consumer emotions
- spotting and capitalizing on new market opportunities
- an opportunity to maximize product profitability
- ensuring first and repeat purchase (loyalty)
- ensuring long-lasting product success

It is an effective marketing application which gives to companies a real opportunity to maximize product profitability. In the food industry, sensory marketing has already been used partially. Indeed, many restaurants, fast-foods and bakeries try to galvanize our five senses by artificial systems.

⁹ <http://www.softwareforrestaurants.com/WallStreetJournal.php>

¹⁰ <http://www.samresearch.com/sensory-marketing.html>

PURPOSE

In conducting an inquiry close to the food-industry in Halmstad, the report will call for the following specific information:

- The current characteristics of the promotional strategy used by restaurants, bakeries and fast-foods in Halmstad
- The general awareness of those actors for a specific promotional tool: sensory marketing
- Companies-usage patterns for sensory marketing: how do they use it? What are their short-term and long-term objectives in using this tool?
- General thought about sensory marketing from the food-industry in Halmstad

Thus, the report will try to give an answer to the question:

How the food industry can use sensory marketing as a promotional advantage?

1. DEFINITIONS

Sense: Any of the faculties, as sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch, by which humans and animals perceive stimuli originating from outside or inside the body.

(Oxford English Dictionary)

Sensory marketing: Marketing techniques that aim to seduce the consumer by using his senses to influence his feelings and behaviour.

(American Marketing Association)

Ensemble of all the variables of action controlled by the producer or retailer to create, around the product or service, a specific multi-sensory environment, either through the product itself or the communication or the environment in the point of sale

(S. Rieunier)

Atmosphere: The physical characteristics of the store such as architecture, layout, signs and displays, color, lighting, temperature, noise, and smell creating an image in the customer's mind.

(American Marketing Association)

2. FRAME OF REFERENCE

According to Rieunier (2002), the sensory marketing approach tries to fill in the deficiencies of the “traditional marketing” which is too rational.

Classic marketing is based on the idea that the customer is rational, that his behaviour is broke up in defined reasoned steps, according to the offer, the competition, the answer to his needs...

By contrast, sensory marketing put the experiences lived by the consumers and his feelings in the process. These experiences have sensorial, emotional, cognitive, behavioural and relational dimensions, not only functional. It aims to create the adequacy of the products with their design and their packaging, and then to valorise them in a commercial environment to make them attractive.

There, the consumer is behaving according to his impulses and emotions, more than his reason.

For many marketers (and consumers), the affectivity, perception and pleasure are more important than the price, since many products are now technically similar: they have to be differentiated in another way¹¹. In the catering marketplace, this point is highly true. What can differentiate two bakeries, two pizzerias? The good taste of the product is not enough: the surrounding, the sensation of pleasure created by stimulating the senses of the consumer will give a competitive advantage.

Kotler (1973) had already mentioned the need for brands to position them differently that according to the price or the assortment. He started to explain the influence of the point of sales physical environment on the behaviour of the customers and gave a definition of the atmosphere as “the creation of a consumption environment that produces specific emotional effects on the person, like pleasure or excitation that can increase his possibility of buying”¹². He considered the creation of this atmosphere as the most important strategic way of differentiation for retailers.

According to Rieunier (2000), the components of atmosphere are:

- Visual factors:
 - Colours of the surrounding
 - Materials
 - Lights
 - Layout (space, cleanness)
- Sonorous factors:
 - Music
 - Noises
- Olfactory factors
 - Natural smells
 - Artificial smells
- Tactile factors
 - Materials
 - Temperature
- Gustative factors
 - Sampling

Across the time, senses progressively appeared in marketer’s strategy. In the 50’s, brands first worked on the colours, the design of the products or the advertisements (colour and design of

¹¹ *Broad sensory branding*, by Martin Lindstrom, Journal of Product & Brand Management, Volume 14, Number 2, 2005, p. 84–87

¹² Kotler P. (1973), *Atmospherics as a marketing tool* - Journal of Retailing, p. 49

the Coca-Cola bottle for instance, to remind the consumer the forms of a woman) as most of the promotion was made by posters.

Then, music has been introduced, in commercials (with the apparition of TV spots) as in the point of sales. Today, there is no point of sales without music in the background, and 99% of advertising is focused on what we see and hear¹³.

The first blind-test appeared in the 70's: thanks to scientific advancement, brands were more and more able to modify the savour of their products and to adapt it to the taste of consumers. The use of smells is the latest technique to reach the consumer: from the first artificial smell in the 90's to the new USB "smell-printer"¹⁴, olfactory marketing is still growing up and is getting more and more used.

Today, marketers understood that the more senses you appeal to, the stronger the message. Applied to the catering marketplace, appealing the senses of the consumers is the core activity. Sensory marketing is then an efficient tool for who wants to ameliorate his offer, as all the senses can be mastered:

2.1. Visual marketing

Sight is the most used sense in marketing, as it is the most stimulated by the environment. The choice of colours and forms in the conception of a product, the layout of a point of sale, the realisation of promotion campaign are key factors of success (or failure), well understood by marketers.

Colours and shapes are the first way of identification and differentiation. Many brands are associated to a specific colour, then it is memorised more easily in the consumers' unconscious: Coca Cola is red, Kodak is yellow... The company can be identified even though the customer didn't see the name! According to memory retention studies, consumers are up to 78% more likely to remember a message printed in colour than in black and white¹⁵. In the food and beverage industry, the impact of colours is obvious and sharply defined.

¹³ *Broad sensory branding*, by Martin Lindstrom, Journal of Product & Brand Management, Volume 14, Number 2, 2005, p. 84–87

¹⁴ www.exhalia.com

¹⁵ Pantone Institute, 2000

The following statement sums up the characteristics of each colour and their impact on consumer behaviour¹⁶:

Red	Highest stimulation hue: strong excitation power. Red increases the pulse and heart rate, as it raises blood pressure, and stimulates appetite.	Really popular in restaurants as it increases appetite. However, due to its exciting properties, red is more likely to be used in bars.
Orange	Orange is friendlier than red, but still stimulate appetite and attract attention, especially among kids and teenagers.	Companies like Burger King or Dunkin Donuts use orange as main colour.
Pink	Sweet and appealing. The perfect colour for sweets.	Mainly used by candies producers as Sweet’N Low, and sweet shops.
Yellow	Comforting colour. It can also mean tangy, creamy or delicious connected to aliments.	Popular hue for tea houses or pastry shops.
Green	Meaning of refreshment and nature. Connected to vegetables, it is means healthiness for the consumer.	Green is a delicate colour, as if not used in the right environment it is not appealing but can be repelling.
Blue	Associated with sea and sky calmness, suggest trust and serenity.	As blue icy hues refer to purity and coolness, this is the ideal colour for products like bottled water.
White	Sign of purity, cleanness and coolness. White is the basic colour, as it brings out everything else.	In a restaurant, white is used everywhere the customer expects for cleanness (plates, kitchen...)
Black	On a packaging, black is symbol of top-of-range, quality and sobriety.	As it is the darkest colour, black is exclusively used to create a very specific environment.

The light is also a major component of the environment. According to Rieunier (2002), the differences come from the light source and its intensity: natural light, or softened artificial one, will increase the well-being sensation and the time spent in a point of sale. On the other hand, artificial and intense lights will increase customers’ dynamism.

In the food-industry market, this sense is one of the most important: the vision gives the first impression of the quality, for the product as for the environment.

¹⁶ Leatrice Eiseman, Impact of colours on consumer purchase behaviour, April 17, 2000.

2.2. Auditory marketing

To use sounds is known in advertising: to associate music to a message is a good way to make the consumer remember it. However, music is also important for sensory marketing users, since researches underlined the impact of music on behaviour, in a point of sale for instance.

The effectiveness of a selling environment depends on its capacity to manage the subjectivity of the potential customer (Céliér, 2004). Music is in every point of sale or restaurant, and is an integrant part of the atmosphere, so are lightning or design, and whatever its place (discrete speakers or video-clips in a big flat TV) has a role to play in the customer perceptions. Background music is the cheapest and the easiest factor of atmosphere to manage (one button and it is off or a track is skipped, another one and sound is louder...), but it is definitely not the less powerful.

The power of music is in its capacity to contextualize the different articles and support emotional states and poses (Gumperz 1977; DeNora 1986). Music aims to put customer in a state of mind corresponding to the articles that are sold: play rock music in a guitar shop and the person will imagine himself playing with what could be his future purchase. Music can then, if connected to the product, be a way to act on the buying behaviour of the customer. It is also proved that high volume music in a bar will increase the consumption of the customers (North & Hargreaves, 1996).

Studies have been made to find what kind of music fits the best with the different kind of places: for instance, classical music will increase the quality sensation of a wine cellar (Areni & Kim, 1993) or a tea house (North & Hargreaves, 1996).

But music can also act on the “crowd management”, by influencing the time spent inside by the customer. For example, according to two studies from Roballey & Ali (1985) and Milliman (1986), a fast-tempo music will push the customer to leave earlier. In the other hand, a slow music played at low volume will increase the time and the money spends inside.

Same studies revealed also that clients will eat faster and consume less with a loud volume and fast tempo music. Another research from Smith & Curnow (1966) revealed that in a point of sales, customer adopts his walk speed according to the tempo of the music.

Music offers a wide range of possibility to the marketers to influence customers' behaviour and complete the atmosphere to create a coherent sales environment.

2.3. Olfactory marketing

Scientific studies have shown that 75 % of our emotions are generated by the smell¹⁷. This is maybe the reason why the use of smells in a commercial way is increasing every day. The most famous technique of olfactory marketing in the food industry is the use of artificial smells to appeal to customers in the street, subway or supermarkets.

Paradoxically, there are only few studies in this field, in comparison with researches on visuals or sonorous stimulus. Researches on the smells started these last 15 years, especially in the United-States, so many questions are still unanswered.

However, the impact of smells on customers' behaviour has been definitely certified.

First, searchers proved the positive impact of a smell on the evaluation of a product (Laird, 1935; Cox, 1969). According to Spangenberg, Crowley & Henderson (1996), a pleasant smell influence positively the evaluation of the customer on a point of sale (and some of its products), the intent of walk-through, of buying, as on the time spent inside (real and perceived). But the precise olfactory characteristics that could be at the origin of these influences are not yet determined.

It is difficult in the way that perception of smells is different from a person to another, and there are plenty individual variants that marketers have to take in account.

The first one is the sex of the person: Hirsch & Gay (1991) have noticed that women are more sensitive to smells than men. However, each sex doesn't have the reaction faced on the same smell: for instance, men stay longer than women in a shelf perfumed with spicy scent (Wall Street Journal, 1990), when women are more sensitive to shampoo smelling than men.

The age of the customer modify his perception, as according to (Doty 1984, 1985), the sense of smell break up as the person gets older.

In this way, there is also a difference between generations: persons born before 1930 are more likely to call up natural smells, when youngest report more food or artificial smell (Hirsh, 1992).

¹⁷ *Broad sensory branding*, by Martin Lindstrom, Journal of Product & Brand Management, Volume 14, Number 2, 2005, p. 84.

So the use of olfactory marketing can be interesting for a brand, provided that it knows how its target, to avoid a bad perception and then a negative impact.

2.4. Gustative marketing

This refers to the intrinsic attributes of a product which account for being an efficient way of differentiation notably in the alimentary market, but not only: many researches and innovations have been led by toys, baby's bottles pacifiers, cigarettes or medicine producers (Célier, 2004).

Thanks to scientific advancements, this sense is now highly mastered and exploited by producers in order to adapt their products to regional preferences: e.g. German consumer likes the sweet-salty mix, softly sour for the British one (Célier, 2004).

Recent studies aimed to understand better the mechanism of taste and explore the existing relations between, for instance, taste and colours. Thus, scientists now know that the 4 basic gustative sensations, sweet, sour, bitter and salty, are respectively linked by consumers to the red, green, blue and yellows colours (Célier, 2004). This might be important in the packaging design process of a product for instance.

In a promotional way, companies often use gustative marketing to convince customers, by making blind-tests (through comparatives advertisements for instance) or directly with sampling or free-tasting promotional operations. According to Rieunier (2002), such operations can be determinant in the food industry, as customers are more disposed to purchase a product that they already tasted and liked.

2.5. Tactile marketing

Marketers try to take in account the emotions sparked off by this touch during the conception of the product (pen, clothes, car steering wheel...) or its conditioning (perfume bottle, crisps pack)¹³. For instance, the bottle of the French mineral water brand *Valvert* evocates through its rough touching the natural origin of its source in the heart of the mountains¹⁸.

¹⁸ *Marketing sensoriel, provocateur d'émotion* - Faire Savoir Faire Magazine – 2004

In a restaurant, the weight of the cutleries, the softness of the napkins, the comfort of a chair can affect the perception the customers has of the atmosphere since, according to Rieunier (2002), the touch is one of the major determinant of the well-being sensation.

Thus, sensory marketing is a deep and complex concept, as it deals with the unconscious of the consumers: their perceptions, feelings and tastes. This approach is necessary as it allows controlling the atmosphere factors.

Then, the aim of our research will be to sum up the different techniques used by catering marketers which appeals to the senses of the consumer.

3. METHOD

This part of the report will present the method that is going to be applied in order to carry through the empirical analysis which is going to be done. Indeed, there are different ways of presenting and analyzing the problem the dissertation came across with but only one research method will guide to the answer which is looking for. In order to achieve this task, it will be used as a guide the explanations and writings of authors who will give theoretical information about academic research. It will help the research to follow an organized research process and, this way will give coherency, reliability and relevance to the empirical analysis. Then, in order to define what kind of research method it will be used and why this method fit the best with the objectives, it will first be defined the problem. Secondly, it will be explained the choice for a specific research method. The, it will be presented the different types of research and explain why it has been chosen this way. Finally, this part will explain the plan for the sampling of the research and what kind of instruments it will be used in order to achieve this task.

3.1. Defining the problem

Defining the problem and research objectives is often the hardest step in the research process.¹⁹ Thus, the formulation of the research problem will be done in respecting the general problem of the dissertation which is *“how the food industry can use sensory marketing as a promotional advantage?”*

Indeed, the analysis has to give answers to questions such as *“do restaurants and fast-foods use sensory marketing among their promotional tool and how?”* and then *“what do they think they can reach with it (attract more customers through energizing their five senses, etc.)*. In fact, as a concrete action, the report will try to know if the food-industry’s actors in Halmstad (a 54000 people Swedish city), first of all, know the concept of sensory marketing, then if they use it, how they do it or, in the case they are not aware of it, why they do not use this tool. In short, it is sought to know how this tool, which is known in a theoretical way, is used in the real professional world.

¹⁹ Philip Kotler - Principles Of Marketing (2nd European Edition 1999) – p.321

3.2. Research methods

Generally, research methods fall into two major groups, qualitative and quantitative. According to Gummesson (2005), quantitative techniques are mostly used to try to pinpoint causality, usually between two or a few variables where the independent and dependent variables are defined. The objective of quantitative research is to develop and employ mathematical models, theories and/or hypotheses pertaining to natural phenomena. The process of measurement is central to quantitative research because it provides the fundamental connection between empirical observation and mathematical expression of quantitative relationships. In the case of the report and according to the research objectives, a quantitative method is not adapted because the research is not going to measure phenomena or create statistics.

According to Richardson (1989), a qualitative approach objective is to collect information with the help of discussion and observation of the studied subject. A qualitative approach will help the researcher to measure a small sample of customers or companies' views and to focus on gathering information in depth, explores feelings, motivations, purchase drivers and inhibitors, purchase behaviour, and much more such as exploring restaurants feelings for a promotional tool. According to Mattar (1996), a qualitative method is a good method to work on attitudes, values, perceptions and motivation of the researched public (of restaurant for instance) with the main objective of understanding them deeply. The process of data collection, analysis and theory generation are much more closely linked in qualitative than in quantitative research (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Jorgensen 1989). According to those premises, it has been decided to develop a qualitative research method.

3.3. Types of research

After the problem has been defined and the research method has been chosen, it must be set the type of research. According to Yin (1993), a research methodology starts by identifying some specific types of research: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive.

Exploratory researches are sometimes considered as a prelude to social research for instance. According to Aaker (2001), the exploratory research will help to understand the problem, make primary hypothesis in order to draw a kind of directions that has to be followed but without giving conclusion as an exploratory research will just give a few knowledge about what can be expected. The objective of exploratory research is to gather preliminary information that will help to define the problem and suggest hypotheses. This kind of research helps to determine the best research design, data collection method and selection of subjects. Related to the analysis, those research objectives are exactly what has been done. The second other type of research is an explanatory research which may be used for doing causal investigations. Finally, a descriptive research will require a descriptive theory to be developed before starting the project. According to Webb (1992), if the primary aim of an exploratory research, as mentioned previously, is to discover the important variables in a given situation, then the aim of descriptive research is to provide an accurate and valid representation of those variables; where exploratory research discovers something of interest and gives directions, descriptive research summarize it. Importantly, descriptive research does not attempt to show or establish any causal links between variables, it describes them. Wright (1995) describes descriptive research to mean any research where number counting and statistical techniques are not the central issues, where an attempt is made to get close to the collection of data in their natural setting. Therefore, it does fit with the kind of objectives the dissertation mean to obtain: as before-mentioned, a qualitative research and a descriptive type of research is appropriated as what is going to be studied which is “the companies’ side” and not “the customers’ one” which could give figures for instance.

Finally, the report started with an exploratory research and, then, in order to collect the data, it will be used a descriptive type of research. The report will use at the end both of the types: exploratory and descriptive.

3.4. Population and sampling of the research

The next step of the marketing research process calls for determining the information needed and developing a plan for gathering it efficiently. The plan outlines the population who is sought and then the type of sampling that has to be done.

3.4.1. The population: as the research is a qualitative one, it does not look for a large population to make the sample. Furthermore, the analysis is concentrated on a specific segment of the companies' population. It is sought either companies who know sensory marketing or others who do not. Indeed, it is important for the analysis to get information reflecting the reality in order not to give partial and biased results and conclusions. Therefore, the population is every restaurant in Halmstad.

3.4.2. Sampling plans: according to Webster (1985), a sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole. When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey: indeed, the most important thing to keep in mind is that the population is defined in fitting with the objectives of the study. Then, sampling methods are classified as either probability or nonprobability²⁰. According to Samara (1997), in probability samples, each member of the population has a non-zero probability of being selected. Probability methods include random sampling, systematic sampling, and stratified sampling. In nonprobability sampling, members are selected from the population in some nonrandom manner. These include convenience sampling, judgment sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling. The advantage of probability sampling is that sampling error can be calculated. Indeed sampling error is the degree to which a sample might differ from the population. Still according to Samara (1997), in nonprobability sampling, the degree to which the sample differs from the population remains unknown when choosing the elements that would be part of the sample.

As before-mentioned, the first type of sampling among probability methods is random sampling which is the purest form of probability sampling. The second one is systematic sampling which is often used instead of random sampling. The third type is stratified

²⁰ <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/sampron.php>

sampling which is commonly used probability method that is superior to random sampling because it reduces sampling error.

According to Webster (1985), the first type of nonprobability methods is convenience sampling which is used in exploratory research where the researcher is interested in getting an inexpensive approximation of the truth. Judgment sampling is a common nonprobability method as well. The researcher selects the sample based on judgment. This is usually an extension of convenience sampling. Another type is quota sampling which is the nonprobability equivalent of stratified sampling. Finally, snowball sampling is the last type from nonprobability methods which is used when the desired sample characteristic is rare.

In order to make a sample for the research, it has been chosen a judgement sampling. Indeed, judgement sampling is a form of non-probability in which the researcher selects potential respondents on the basis that they conform with some basic criterion specified as relevant to the population to be sampled (e.g.: age, ownership of an article, activity etc.). Judgement samples are selected on the basis of what the researchers think particular sampling units or elements will contribute to answering the particular research question or problem in hand²¹. When using this method, the researcher must be confident that the chosen sample is truly representative of the entire population. Therefore, this kind of sampling fit with the research objectives and the definition of the population as it seeks 2 restaurants in Halmstad per kind of restaurants: in short, 2 restaurants for the traditional segment (*Pio Matsal & Bar* and *Yoss Restaurang & Bar*), 1 for the fast-food one²² (*Mc Donald's*) and two for the coffee/bakeries one (*Espresso House and Vattenporten 6*). Indeed, having actors in those three kinds of restaurants is really important for the report: then, the sample is representative of the general population: *Pio Matsal* is a well-known gastronomic restaurant in Halmstad an *Yoss Restaurang & Bar* is a smaller one, less reputed. It is the same with *Espresso House* and *Vattenporten 6*: one big chain in Sweden, one smaller. Indeed, the criterion used to select them was the status of the restaurant on the local market: the report has to show facts from well-known and reputed restaurants as much as smaller ones in order to be representative.

²¹ <http://www.westburnpublishers.com/marketing-dictionary/j/judgement-sample.aspx>

²² Another fast-food interview appeared impossible because of the overbooked schedule of their owner

3.5. Instruments of data collection

In order to make the research as relevant as possible, an interview is the best way. Indeed, according to Aaker (2001), one useful technique to collect data in the qualitative method is a deep interview which is going to be applied in this multiple case-study. In fact, it is also one of the most common instrument and, therefore, a well-known instrument by companies. The interview which is going to be done will consist of a set of questions presented verbally to respondents for their answers.

As the interview is very flexible, there are many ways to ask questions: it has been decided to make it as a **semi-structured interview** which is perhaps the most commonly used interview technique in qualitative research. Indeed wanted information are those which can be compared and contrasted with other information collected in other restaurants. As it is a semi-structured interview, it will be created a **guideline**. It will obviously be created this set of questions in respecting carefully the research objectives which are sought in order not to have irrelevant information for the general aim of the thesis. The kind of questions will be **open-end questions**, which means that it allows as much as possible respondents to answer in their own words. According to Philip Kotler (1996) writings, open-end questions often reveal more than closed-end questions because respondents are not limited in their answers. Indeed, it is wanted to know what companies think about sensory marketing, but not measuring how many people think this way as the sample is too tight to generalize to a larger population. Furthermore, those interviews will involve talking with people (managers, marketing officers or directors) in their “point of sales”, in their restaurants. Indeed, the most important requirement for a person to be interviewed is the experience in the restaurant as this person must be aware of the general marketing strategy of the restaurant he is working for. Furthermore, this person has to be involved in this marketing strategy: a waiter for instance can have an important experience but is often not in contact with those strategies.

Those interviews will be recorded on a tape-recorder in order to transcribe them on a paper to analyze it deeply.

4. DELIMITATIONS

As before-mentioned in the frame of references, the concept of sensory marketing is divided into 5 groups which refer to the five senses:

- Visual marketing
- Auditory marketing
- Olfactory marketing
- Tactile marketing
- Gustative marketing

But it is important to say that we will limit our case research questions on **visual, auditory and olfactory marketing** concerning the restaurants in Halmstad.

5. EMPIRICAL STUDY

5.1. Collection of empirical data

As planned previously in the methodology part, the data have been collected by interviewing different actors of the catering industry. At the end, 6 persons were polled, from 6 different businesses in Halmstad. 4 interviews have been realised on appointment, 2 others by visiting directly the persons. The directors or main managers exclusively have been interviewed, for the answers to be valuable and credible.

Guideline: our interviews followed a precise guideline to direct respondents toward main themes we wanted to address. It can be broken up in 3 different parts.

Identification of the respondent: to widen the results as much as possible, different kinds of restaurants have been selected. This first part has been made to get information about their organisation and functioning, in order for to facilitate the classification and compare them later. This part gathers questions about the restaurant itself (how many seats, employees), but about the respondent too (for how long has he been working here)

Awareness of the sensory marketing concept: before going deeper on the techniques using the customers' senses that the respondents can have, it has been asked if they know what the sensory marketing concept is. This is in order to verify their awareness, knowledge about it, and then determine the level of consciousness they have toward the promotional techniques they use. There are two possibilities after this question, according to the answer of the respondent:

- The persons don't know the concept: then it is explained to them, before asking if they use it in their restaurant.
- The persons know what sensory marketing is: then, they can be questioned to know if they use it. Why if not, how if yes.

Orientation toward the sensory marketing techniques: excepted if the respondent admitted to use sensory marketing and detailed everything he does or not (and why), was asked through this part precise questions about the environmental factors in the restaurants.

As respondents are maybe using unconsciously tools of sensory marketing, this part is important since it will reveal if yes or no the respondent is appealing to the senses of the customer.

The first group of questions deals with the sight: why did you choose those colours, materials, lights, decoration and layout?

Then come sounds and the choice of the music: do you pay heed to the music? Are you selecting it? If yes, what are the criteria to choose the music and what do you expect from it?

Finally, the smell is addressed: How do you manage the smell in your restaurant (do you try to neutralize, spread them?) Have you got a system to spread smells outside of your restaurant? All these questions have been asked, however according to the answers of the respondents, few others came to bring more precisions.

5.2. Different empirical data sources

In order to achieve the collection of the empirical data and respecting our sampling plans, it was interviewed the followings restaurants and fast-food. This part will present those actors and their point of sales. They are all located in Halmstad in Sweden, the “study case place”. Thus, according to our sampling plans, we interviewed 4 restaurants (also called here in Halmstad “Café – Bar – Restaurant” that means that they provide some basics bakeries, home made coffees and teas) and 1 fast-food.

5.2.1. The two traditional restaurants:

- **Pio Matsal & Bar:** located on the main street of Halmstad, Pio Matsal & Bar is a reputed gastronomic restaurant. It is a place where the



decoration is of importance (and thus the general visual marketing they use there): well designed giving a subdued atmosphere to the main dining-room. The restaurant has been created in the 70's. It is today a modern, fashion and gastronomic restaurant. With a capacity of 250 persons divided on two floors, the restaurant plays an important role nowadays in restaurants competition in Halmstad.

Pio Matsal & Bar
Storgatan 37
30243 HALMSTAD
Contact information : 035 21 06 69

- **Yoss restaurang & bar: located on the main street:** located on main street of Halmstad too, Yoss Restaurant is a traditional restaurant. The dark colour' walls give to the central room a housebound atmosphere. Yoss Restaurant is divided up in two dining rooms: one inside around an old bar in the centre of the room, one outside (covered in the winter, it becomes a terrace in the summer).



Yoss restaurang & bar
Storgatan 35
30243 HALMSTAD
Contact information: 035 21 18 76 49

5.2.2. The two coffee/bakeries:

- **Vattenporten 6:** Vattenporten 6 is a Café – Bar – Restaurant which received the price of The Swedish Fashion Boutique of the Year 2005. Indeed, we found inside an uncluttered style with a few decorations and arts but yet giving to the place a special modern atmosphere. Most of the walls are painted in yellow. One other thing was really attractive when entering the restaurant: the smell. **Vattenporten 6** targets young, youths and young active people. Located on the main street of Halmstad.



Vattenporten 6
Storgatan 42
30243 HALMSTAD
Contact information: 035 17 58 00

- **Espresso House:** located in Eurostop, the biggest shopping centre in Halmstad, Espresso House is a coffee which sells product such as



sandwiches, salads, bakeries, coffees and teas. The walls painted in brown and the big couches make the place cosy and modern. The walls are decorated with paintings which become more and more famous among Espresso House marketing strategy: fashion and classic at the same time, it shows generally a smart person drinking a cup of coffee (from Espresso House) in some out of the ordinary places. Those pictures and the colours used remind often Italy and, thus, coffee.

Espresso House
Storgatan 22
30243 HALMSTAD
Contact information: 035 10 55 95

5.2.3. The fast-food:

- **Mc Donald's:** In Halmstad, there are two Mc Donald's, one in the city centre, on the main street (the one interviewed), on in Eurostop, the biggest shopping centre in town. The one in the city centre is perfectly situated on the corner of the main street and the central place of the city. The restaurant is divided in two floors. 45 up to 100 employees work in this restaurant. As every Mc Donald's, the restaurant is decorated with modern furniture and light colours.



Mc Donald's City Center
Storgatan 13
30243 HALMSTAD
Contact information: 035 21 45 60

5.3. Description of empirical data sources

5.3.1. Awareness and use of the sensory marketing concept: This statement presents the answers of the respondent to the first questions: do they know the sensory marketing concept? Do they think that they use it in their restaurant?

Pio Måtsal	The interviewed did not know the concept of sensory marketing. After explanations, the manager admitted using it in her restaurant on certain points. <i>“I didn’t know that name before, but I see what you mean”</i> . Thus, it appears that sensory marketing is used on purpose in this restaurant.
Yoss Restaurant & Bar	The respondent did not know the concept of sensory marketing. It also appeared that sensory marketing techniques are not used on purpose in the restaurant.
Mac Donald’s	The manager interviewed did not know the concept of sensory marketing: <i>“I didn’t know this before”</i> . Once he understood what it is, he admitted not being sure to use it: <i>“I don’t know”</i> .
Vattenporten Café	The respondent did not know the concept. However, after explanations, he declared using sensory marketing techniques for his restaurant. <i>“Yes, then for the smell I have to say that we manage the smell of the restaurant”</i> .
Espresso House	The manager of this coffee place was not aware of the sensory marketing concept. But, after explanations and examples, she realised that her restaurant is using sensory marketing techniques.



5.3.2. Sensory marketing techniques: the use of the sight: Will be gathered in this part all the results that concern the visual techniques: colours, materials, lights, layout or decoration.

Pio Måtsal	<p>Managers of the restaurant used the help of a professional designer to manage the lights in the restaurant room: <i>“He told us that the lights have to be soft and comfortable”</i>. Thus, the lighting is composed by several small, non aggressive, lights and natural light (during the day) thanks to wide windows. By this way, they want the customer to feel more comfortable and relaxed.</p> <p>Concerning the colours and the materials, it has been chose according to the tastes of the staff members: <i>“we chose them because we liked it”</i>. The staff wanted a modern and fashionable design. <i>“It is not too flashy, not too dark. It looks modern and fashion”</i></p> <p>The respondent explained underlining and putting recommendations in the menu, concerning special wines or dessert, in order to make customers purchase them.</p>
Yoss Restaurant & Bar	<p>The manager chose the colours of his restaurant room because he likes them. However, he has some expectations from them: <i>“the colours are not too light, not too aggressive”</i>, <i>“maybe the customer feel more comfortable and enjoy more”</i>. The fact that the restaurant is also a bar, the manager think that <i>“it is important not too have too light colours”</i>.</p>
Mac Donald’s	<p>The choice of the internal design of the restaurant room doesn’t hinge upon the manager. If a new MacDonald is open, the choice is given between 8 defined styles, designed by the professionals from the direction of the MacDonald Swedish subsidiary. Once the main style chosen, a designer is appointed to set up the layout.</p> <p>According to the manager, it is designed to <i>“make it looks modern, fashion”</i>, <i>“to make people enjoy”</i>.</p>
Vattenporten Café	<p>The manager adopted the colours of the restaurant <i>“because it’s nice”</i>. The idea was too create <i>“a place that looks modern, modern decoration”</i>, with <i>“nice colours, nice seats, nice pictures”</i>. The respondent thinks that it fit with the young and active clientele of its place.</p>
Espresso House	<p>The layout and design of every Espresso House in Sweden is standardized and defined by the chain direction, in order to facilitate the recognition from the customers: <i>“if you enter a Espresso House in Stockholm, you know that you are in a Espresso House because it’s the same feelings, the same colours”</i>. Big pictures decorate the walls: <i>“they are from Italy, so it reminds coffee”</i> according to the respondent.</p>

5.3.3. Auditory marketing techniques: is music inside the restaurant important of the restaurant manager? What are his general feelings about that? Do they put special music at different period of the day to interact with the behaviour of the customer?

Pio Måtsal	<p><i>“We choose it ourselves; we have CDs that we like [...]”</i>. Pio Matsal does not really use special music according to different period of the day. But in a way, they put music which fit with the general spirit of the restaurant: <i>“for the people not to be stressed out”</i>, they only play <i>“soft music”</i>. This way, they are trying to put the customer in his best disposition while he his enjoying a meal in the restaurant. <i>“It is important that they take their time, they appreciate the meal, drinking a good wine”</i>: Pio Matsal manager tries to make the customer feeling comfortable and <i>“relax”</i>.</p>
Yoss Restaurant & Bar	<p><i>“we have CDs but it’s CDs that we like”</i>: Yoss restaurant does not have special CDs to interact with the behaviour of the customer at different time of the day. As Yoss restaurant is also a bar at night, they still have two kind of music: one for the day (restaurant atmosphere) and one at night (bar atmosphere, louder music): <i>“At night when we open the bar, we put the music louder than in the day but...we don’t have special CDs”</i>. But still it is just music they like: <i>“it’s just at night, we change the music for the bar, that’s all...but, yes, just music we like.”</i></p>
Mac Donald’s	<p>Mc Donald’s manager explained that they <i>“have a contract with one radio station”</i>. Despite using the CD provided by Mc Donald’s for all the restaurants in Sweden, they use their own music by playing this radio (Rix FM) which plays <i>“regular music, like Justin Timberlake”</i>. The music on Rix FM is, according to the manager, quite the same as the one on the CD which makes this process easier.</p>
Vattenporten Café	<p><i>“We put a famous radio [...] because it is popular”</i> In Vattenporten, the music is playing from the radio, a famous one. According to the manager, this music fit the best with the kind of customer his restaurant is used to. For him, music is normal in a restaurant or a café, it is not something that can make the difference: <i>“Every café has to play music”</i></p>
Espresso House	<p>In Espresso House, they have an Ipod which plays songs that <i>“are the same everywhere in every Espresso House.”</i> The kind of music is background, chill out, lounge music reminding coffee relax places. They also use, according to Ms. Nielsen, different music for three different time of the day: a relax “morning mix”, special music for the lunch and <i>“in the afternoon, it is just up-tempo music.”</i> They try to interact with “the mood of the customer” then, which vary from relaxes in the morning to more accelerate at the lunch. This effort to reach coordination between the mood of the customer and the period of the day can help to <i>“get more customers.”</i></p>

5.3.4. Olfactory marketing: Do restaurants use artificial smell diffusers to attract people inside the restaurant? What do they think about the influence of the smell on the customer?

Pio Måtsal	<p>“We don’t use anything like that”. As it said, Pio Matsal does not use olfactory diffusers or any smelling strategy to attract customer. They even try “to block it as much as possible, for it not to enter the restaurant room when the customers are here [...]”. They want the customer to appreciate as much as possible what they have in their plate, in their glass: “it’s not good if you have too strong smells in the restaurant room. When customers are here, they drink expensive wines; they have to fully appreciate it”. For Pio Matsal manager, the smell from the kitchen could even be a weakness for the customer satisfaction.</p>
Yoss Restaurant & Bar	<p>“We have an aeration system to change the air in the kitchen”. In Yoss restaurant, everything is done to change the air of the kitchen. The door of the kitchen is closed, there are two different systems of aeration: one for the dining room and one for the kitchen without any links between them: “The aeration of the kitchen is going directly outside; it is not diffused in the restaurant”. About the smell diffused outside by the aerations, Yoss restaurant seems not doing that in order to attract customer or, at least, not on purpose. And actually, the aeration system ends in a little street behind the restaurant, without a lot of passing.</p>
Mac Donald’s	<p>According to what Mc Donald’s manager said about the smell in the interview, it appeared clearly that Mc Donald’s does not use that kind of strategy: “No we don’t do that”. At least, it seems that it is not done on purpose at all: “we really don’t do anything for that.” Yet, the manager thought that it could help, help getting the customer and then, that he should “think about it”.</p>
Vattenporten Café	<p>“We manage the smell of the restaurant”. In Vattenporten Café, the manager explained clearly that they used a smell strategy inside the restaurant with the help of an aeration system: “we use this aeration system [...] and the smells go outside and inside the restaurant”. Because of this aeration system, a part of the smell from the kitchen is released in the main room of the restaurant. Coffees and sandwiches are cook in the kitchen and, according to M.Teslim, “people like this smell.” It was also clear that the manager expected something from that kind of strategy: “People remind the smells; maybe they will buy more than a coffee.” Yet, if the manager said that he does something on purpose for inside, for outside, it is not done on purpose</p>
Espresso House	<p>“We don’t do anything like that”. Even though Espresso House does not apply such strategy, Ms.Nielsen admit that “it is really important”.</p>

5.3.5. Summary of the 4 data collection's statements:

The general concept of sensory marketing, in theory, is something that interviewed restaurants' managers do not really know or at least, are not aware of. But, still when talking with them, it appeared that the problem is just related to the concept's name. Indeed, after having explained the concept with practical examples, some of the interviewees admit using it, in a way. Most of the respondents knew how the five senses' stimulation can be important for the customer general satisfaction.

The first sense the report suggested was **the sight**: every interviewed restaurants explained that the decoration, the colours, the paintings were set to give personality to the restaurants. Furthermore, it creates a special atmosphere which is either unique or in line with other restaurants (for Espresso House and Mc Donald's). Find the right atmosphere which can fit the best with the kind of customers the restaurant want to reach is one of the aims suggested. Facilitate the recognition of the restaurants (of the brand) is another one. Some of the respondents even hire special designer on this task.

Concerning the auditory marketing techniques, the answers were diversified again. The music is of importance and some restaurants interviewed have even a special CD for their place. The most caring of them plays different music at different time of the day in order to interact with the customer mood, to fit with it. Whatsoever music from a radio, from their personal choices



1. Outside Vattenporten 6 aeration system

or music imposed by the company owning the restaurant, the aim of it is, according to managers' thought, to make the customer feeling in the right place, well-being.

Except for one of the respondent (Vattenporten Café), the use of the smell is not done on purpose among the interviewed restaurants. They are aware of the importance that such techniques can have for the customer. Still one of the

respondents (Pio Matsal Restaurant) even tries to keep the customer away from the smell of the kitchen. They see that as something that could affect the feelings of the customer for the food, or the wine.

Finally, the concept of sensory marketing, although being used partially among the restaurants interviewed, collected the agreement of everyone: it is important; it can play a role in giving a particular atmosphere to the restaurant.

5.4. Analysis of the empirical data

5.4.1. Concordance with the main theories

In many different ways, studied restaurants appeal to the senses of customers, sometimes on purpose, sometimes not. Among them, some illustrate the theories exposed in the frame of references.

First, the fact that every respondents admitted to care about the atmosphere of their place, by managing some of the factors of environment, endorse the Kotler's point of view²³ about its major importance in the differentiation process. Atmosphere is one of the most important ways of differentiation: in the highly competitive catering market, restaurants are attentive to it.

Visual marketing techniques: Mostly, the choice of the visual factors is pertinent. *Vattenporten Café* for instance, chose the yellow colour for its walls: even if it is not on purpose, this colour is highly adapted to this kind of coffees, tea houses²⁴. The dark colours used in *Espresso House*, that softened the luminosity of the place, fit with the will to increase the well-being sensation of the customer.

The manager of *Yoss restaurang & bar*, by selecting “*not too light*” colours and associated with soft lights, chose the right visual factors of atmosphere for the comfortable feeling he wants to give to the customers. The lights are also an important part of the *Pio måtsal* atmosphere: they let natural light come in and use a soft artificial lightning. This is determinant in the relaxing environment managers created.

²³ cf. page 9, line 10

²⁴ cf. statement page 11

In *MacDonald's*, the strong artificial lights and the light colours of the restaurant room give an intense luminosity to the place: according to Rieunier²⁵, this increase the dynamism of the customers. This is coherent in a fast-food, where customers shall not spend a lot of time.

Auditory marketing techniques: All the respondents revealed having music in their restaurants. As shown previously, music is an important factor of atmosphere and is the most appropriate for marketers to manage real-time customer's feelings.

In 2 cases, the respondents admitted managing the music according to the time of the day, with expectations on the customers. First, in *Yoss Restaurang & Bar*, the manager augments the volume of the music at night, when the bar is open: in such a place, Hargreaves (1996) showed that high volume music increases the consumption of the customers²⁶.

Then, *Espresso House* provides a special sound system to its managers, who played in their coffee places 3 different selections according to the time of the day: the slow-tempo music in the morning to make the customer take his time is pertinent (Milliman, 1986).

The same strategy is developed in *Pio Måtsal*, where the manager plays "soft music", for customers to "take their time". However, no evolution in the music tempo as time passes.

Olfactory marketing techniques: Among all the sensory marketing techniques referenced, olfactory ones appeared to be the less mastered by respondents. In only one case, *Vattenporten Café*, an olfactory strategy is used. By diffusing coffee and sandwiches smells from the kitchen to the restaurant room, the managers expect the customers, by liking it, "to buy more": this concords with Spangenberg, Crowley & Henderson (1996)²⁷ work that says that a pleasant smell influences positively the evaluation of the customer on a point of sale and some of its products, the will of buying, as the time spent inside.

In another way, the will from the *Pio Måtsal* managers to block the odours from the kitchen can be considered as a pertinent olfactory strategy: since the smells are the major source of sensorial emotions (75% are generated by the smell)²⁸, give a smell-neutral atmosphere to the customers in order for them to "fully appreciate" their eating and drinking experience is a grounded strategy.

²⁵ cf. page 11, line 33

²⁶ cf. page 12, line 17

²⁷ cf. page 13, line 12

²⁸ cf. page 13, line 1

5.4.2. Discordances with frame of reference

Through the collection and the analysis of the empirical data figured out several “mistakes” from marketers regarding to the use of sensory marketing techniques.

Vattenporten Café and *Yoss Restaurang & bar* are spreading smells from their kitchen in the street thanks to their aeration system, but not on purpose. *Vattenporten Café*'s manager is appealing to the smell sense of the customers inside the restaurant but does not think that it is important for outside, neither does *Yoss Restaurang & bar*'s manager. However, according to Spangenberg, Crowley & Henderson (1996), a pleasant smell has a positive influence on the intent of walk-through of customers. By not managing the smells they release around their business, these two managers may be losing customers.

In MacDonal'd's for instance, managers use the music of the local radio instead of the music compilations given by the chain, since the music are almost the same on both of them. However, the problem is not only about the kind of songs, but mostly about the tempo, as showed the studies from Roballey & Ali (1985) and Milliman (1986)²⁹. By not using the compilations, managers are respecting the spirit the chain wants for its restaurants, but they are certainly breaking a rhythmic dynamism that interact with the customers.

In *Vattenporten Café*, utilisation of the music diverges from the developed theories. The respondent admitted playing music that people like, as he plays the most famous radio station. But then, the random selection songs can provide negative impacts on customers: according to Roballey & Ali (1985) and Milliman (1986), a fast tempo music decrease the consumption of customers as it reduce the time spent inside.

5.4.3. Critical examination of the results

Correlation between sensory marketing and success

Is sensory marketing a way of increasing success for a restaurant? It is important to remind that sensory marketing could be an additional success key's factor but is not something fundamental for a restaurant. It actually depends on variables such as the size of the restaurant, its position on the market and its objectives.

²⁹ cf. page 12, line 25

Chains such as Mc Donald's or Espresso House are huge, with important obligation to achieve current objectives and to get results constantly. The two chains interviewed have already a well-developed marketing strategy. Sensory marketing, which is not inevitably done on purpose in their restaurants, is still important and even stir up a particular attention from one of them (Mc Donald's). Those chains have the obligation to maximize their strategy to stay competitive, to stay leader. In Mc Donald's for instance, it is possible to say that the presentation for a new sandwich with a nice picture must play a role in the decision making process of the customer and then, is one of the reasons for his success. In another case for instance, the smell can play a role in the recognition of the restaurants, of the brand: in Halmstad city center, it is possible to smell the kitchen from Mc Donald's 20 to 30 meters far from the restaurant. This must be strength for them: then, the customer is able to spot the restaurant among the others and even to recognize it from what he has already seen.

It appeared that other restaurants, which are not part of a franchise for instance, are not really aware of such a technique. Yet, in almost all cases, the five senses' stimulation is of importance among interviewed restaurants' managers. Indeed, they all admitted that the role played by the music, the paintings, the colours and the smell in a restaurant is of importance to create a coherent atmosphere which is the identity of the restaurant, in a way, a part of its added value. Those points confirm also the general definition of the concept as an additional promotion tool which comes to fill out a general marketing strategy.

Competition and sensory marketing

Restaurants can use sensory marketing as a promotional advantage. With such techniques, they can appeal to customers and create an atmosphere which is their main way of differentiation. Then, does it mean that the use of sensory marketing increases as competition is getting more intense?

Examples of MacDonal'd's and Espresso House indorse this supposition: both are big chains, having restaurants in the all Sweden (world for MacDonal'd's), thus facing a high competition, and they both use sensory marketing in an advanced way.

If sensory marketing can be correlated with success for a restaurant, the link with the competition is obvious, since restaurants don't need to differentiate in a non-competitive

environment: why would a restaurant spread artificial smells in the air to appeal to customers, if it is the only one?

This theory reflects to the limits of this survey. Halmstad is not a highly competitive environment, thus is the sample shrunken. Since the number of restaurants is quite low, is it easier for managers to differentiate their business, without especially developing sensory marketing techniques.

It would be possible to measure the impact of competition on the sensory marketing use, by realising this survey in a bigger city (Stockholm for instance), or the extremely competitive environment of French cities' restaurants streets (in Paris, Lyon). If this correlation is proven, the lack of competition can be an explanation why sensory marketing in Halmstad restaurant is still not well developed.

The awareness problem

If the research revealed positive points regarding to the use of sensory marketing techniques, a real lack of investment in these techniques from managers of the catering marketplace figured out. Indeed, even if the respondent showed taking care of the atmosphere of their places, few are voluntarily trying to influence customers by appealing to his senses. This part will explain this lack of developed sensorial strategy from marketers by the low-level of sensory marketing's awareness.

Among the respondents, no one knew what sensory marketing is: it seems surprising in an industry where its use is important. As marketers do not know the concept, it is then difficult to set up sensorial techniques to impact customers; therefore the use of some of these techniques is not done on purpose, or wrong utilisations are done.

The illustration of this theory is the sensorial strategies set up by chain as *Espresso House* and *MacDonald's*. The manager of Espresso House did not know the concept: however, the chain developed a sensorial strategy since it imposes a wrought design to its restaurants, special music compilations... It showed that higher in the company's organisation, sensory marketing has been studied and applied: specialists conceived a strategy; local managers just have to follow the instructions (in Espresso House case, play the music that is given).

On the other hand, traditional restaurants have a highly pragmatic conception of sensory marketing, based on the cause and effect connection they perceive, without knowing any of the basic theoretical concepts.

Therefore, it appears that better knowledge of the sensory marketing concept from restaurant's managers would increase its use in the catering market place.

CONCLUSION

In conducting this inquiry, the main sought information was information such as knowing the general awareness of the food industry's actors for a specific promotional tool: sensory marketing. Then it was discovering the companies-usage patterns for sensory marketing: how do they use it? At the end, the dissertation targets the general thought that the food-industry in Halmstad can have about sensory marketing.

Then, according to the analysis' results, the concept of sensory marketing is known among those actors. Not exactly as “**sensory marketing**” that is still a scientific word for them but as what they would perhaps call: creating and developing a special atmosphere for the restaurant. Indeed, every interviewed restaurant was aware that the atmosphere of the place is of major importance in the differentiation process. But they were not especially aware that this could lead to sensory marketing.

Everybody admit to say that the stimulation of the senses (in this case, the stimulation of the sight, the smell and the hearing) was of importance but still, the use of specific marketing techniques for each senses is not equally developed. The most unused techniques are the ones referring to the smell. Nobody used techniques such as artificial diffusers for instance. Even if they know that this is of importance in the perception of the place to the customer, they just take advantage from the natural smell to create an atmosphere, but they do not try to stimulate that, to develop a way of attracting customer by those techniques.

How the food industry can use sensory marketing as a promotional advantage?

That was the research question of the dissertation. Both frame of references and analysis of the data helped the report to answer this question. It is important to give an answer in dividing the restaurants in two different groups: the first group concerns food-industry actors which maximize sensorial techniques to attract customers and the second group concerns those which use sensory marketing in its basis, more to create a specific atmosphere for existing customers than to attract new ones.

In the first group, sensory marketing is fully used as a promotional advantage: the main aims are attracting people, create preferences by stimulating the senses of the customer, and develop tools such as artificial diffusers, different type of music at different time of the day,

specific decorations. In the second group, where Halmstad's restaurants belong to, sensory marketing is not really used as a promotional advantage yet, it is something that comes with the will to create a specific atmosphere. It is then more in order to keep existing customers in a comfortable environment than to attract new ones. In this group, restaurants develop more or less sensorial marketing techniques and, at least, develop it inside the restaurant (for customers enjoying the restaurant) and not outside (for potential customer to be attracted by it).

In conducting this survey, those interviews and in writing this dissertation, it has been learned a lot about the concept of sensory marketing. An interesting point that has been discovered in making this report is that sensory marketing, which is still partially developed in companies strategies for the moment, could be integrated in many marketing strategies in the future as it gives to companies "something more" than others, than the competition.

It has also been learned a lot when it came to make interviews to restaurants' managers as well. Managers have a tight schedule and then, short time to allow to those interviews: to find ways of making the interview as interesting as possible was the first aim. As sensory marketing is a really interesting subject, it has helped on this task. What was also really impelling was the subject itself: it is always interesting to study upcoming techniques, something that has not been fully used so far but that has his future in front of itself.

Finally, questions posed by this study and the results it revealed figured out the necessity of leading a survey on a bigger scale (biggest town, biggest competition, biggest sample). To go further in the concept of sensory marketing, it could be also interesting to lead this survey in another marketplace. Fields such as retailers could give another point of view of this marketing tool.

The study revealed that the use of sensory marketing suffers of a lack of awareness from the catering marketplace's actors. In order to make this tool gain in better knowledge, would not it be interesting to develop formation and practicing on this concept?

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APPENDIX

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Pio Matsal Restaurant

The interviewers: First we would like to ask you few questions about you: can you please talk about your restaurant and yourself?

Sofia Jönsson: About me? Ok, I'm the manager of the restaurant; I've been working here for 8-9 years, well, mmhh...

Were you here since the opening of the restaurant?

No, no, the restaurant has been created in the 70's, so it's an old restaurant, and the current owner, they have it for like 12 years, so no, I'm not here from the beginning.

It is quite a big restaurant! How many customers can you have?

Well, about 190, up to 250. We have 2 floors...

Ok. Do you know what sensory marketing is?

Sensory marketing? No, what is it?

It is all the marketing techniques you can use to reach the customers by using its senses. You see what I mean?

Oh yes, ok. I didn't know that name before, but I see what you mean.

Do you think that you use it in your restaurant?

Yes we do, we use the menu to sell more, by recommending special wines or dessert...

The menu?

Yes, we put some special wines or desserts in evidence, to sell them more, and it's working. We write suggestions, like this is a new wine, it is good to drink it with this meal. Then people know better what to choose, so they buy some.

Ok, can you tell me how did you choose the colours of your restaurant?

Oh, actually, about 2 years ago, this floor (the upper one) was a night club. We decided to make it a part of the restaurant, and we all agreed about the colours to choose.

Did you expect something special from these colours or not? Why these ones?

Ah ah, no! We choose them because we liked it actually, that's all. It is not too flashy, not too dark. It looks modern and fashion, this is what we wanted to have.

And what about the lights?

Well, when we build this part, we took a professional designer to help us with that. He told us that the lights have to be soft and comfortable, so he suggested us to do this way.

So what kind of light do you use?

We have big windows downstairs, for the main room. So we don't have a lot of lights during the day, we let the natural light come in, it is enough to see clearly.

What about the music: do you have music in your restaurant?

Yes, we choose it ourselves; we have CDs that we like. We only play soft music, for the people not to be stressed out.

For the people not to be stressed out...

Yes, it is important that they take their time, they appreciate the meal, drinking a good wine. So soft music, for them to be relaxed you know... We don't put the sound too loud. Everything for people to enjoy and relax.

The music is the same at any time of the day?

Yes, yes.

What about the smell? Smells are really important to appeal customers, by spreading smells in the street for instance. Can you tell me how do you manage them?

No, we don't use anything like that. Well, the kitchen can smell a lot. But we try to block it as much as possible, for it not to enter the restaurant room when the customers are here.

Ok, you try to block the odours from the kitchen?

Yeah exactly. You know, I think it's not good if you have too strong smells in the restaurant room. When customers are here, they drink expensive wines, they have to fully appreciate it. It's the same for the meal, you have to smell it.

You sell special wines?

Yes, this is one of our specialities.

Ok, thank you very much.

Yoss Restaurant

The interviewers: Good afternoon sir, we are here today in order to ask you a few questions. We are making a report for Halmstad University on the marketing strategy of restaurants in Halmstad. But, first of all, would you like to define your position in the restaurant?

Wang Jian Tang: I am Mister Tang, I am the manager of the restaurant. This restaurant is a restaurant and a bar at night. We are six employees working here...and... [blank]...what else would you like to know?

For how long have you been working here?

I've been working here for 7 years now...but I did not open the restaurant, it was a restaurant before.

Ok. So we are making a survey for our University which the subject of it deals with marketing strategies of restaurants and, more precisely, on "sensory marketing among those restaurants". Do you know what "sensory marketing" is?

No, no...

Sensory marketing is a way of attracting your customers by the stimulation of the five senses of the customer. To precise a bit our subject, we are doing this report about three of the senses: the smell, the sight, the hearing. We will start with the smell. For instance, some restaurants are used to using artificial smell created by diffusers outside the restaurant in order to attract customers inside. Did you know that fact? Do you use that kind of strategy yourself?

No, no...the kitchen is...We have the smell of the kitchen, it is the only smell we have but...it is in the kitchen, not in the restaurant.

Then, would you let the door of the kitchen open on purpose to release a nice kitchen smell in the restaurant?

No, no. We have an aeration system to change the air in the kitchen. So it doesn't smell too much in the kitchen because sometimes, it smells too strong. But it's not the same aeration system as the restaurant one [he shows the dining room], there are two different systems. The aeration of the kitchen is going directly outside; it is not diffused in the restaurant.

Ok. If the smell of the kitchen is going outside, do you think that "potential" customer can be affected by that and then can be attracted inside your restaurant?

Hum...I don't know [blank] no, I don't know

You don't do it on purpose?

No, no. We just change the smell of the kitchen, that's all.

Ok. We would like also to talk about the sight, the second sense we are studying. How do you manage the decoration here, the color? What kind of spirit do you want to show?

I put colors that I like actually. But there are dark colors. At night, we are a bar so it's important not to have too light colors I think.

Do you think it is important for the customer?

Yes, for the colors...The colors used here are not too light, not too aggressive. So may be the customer feel more comfortable and then enjoy more the restaurant and...yes...

Finally, we would like to talk about the hearing with you. Do you have special music; Do you put a special kind of music for the customers?

No, not really, we have CDs but it's CDs that we like. At night when we open the bar, we put the music louder than in the day but...we don't have special CDs.

You don't use for instance a calm music for the customer to stay longer in the restaurant or something like that?

No, no, it's like...more Rock & Roll and...it's just at night, we change the music for the bar, that's all...but, yes, just music we like.

So we could say that you use sensory marketing in a way but not really on purpose. But for instance, in the future, would you try to develop your marketing strategy around this theory of sensory marketing? Do you think it's interesting, that it could work in your restaurant?

Yes, may be. Here it's working, the customers are happy in my restaurant, I don't really have a reason to change, may be if I would be a bigger restaurant but...no...no...for the moment it is ok.

Ok, thank you very much for your answers, it will help us a lot.

You're welcome

Have a nice day, goodbye

The same to you, bye

Vattenporten 6 Café

The interviewers: Good morning, we are students at Halmstad University and we are making a survey about sensory marketing in restaurants. We have few questions to ask you, but first can you please talk about yourself and your restaurant?

M.Teslim: Yes, sure, so I'm Mr Teslim, I'm the manager here. What do you want to know?

How many employees work here, when did you arrive here?

Ok, we employ 6 persons here. And concerning me, I've been working here for 4 years now in this restaurant, before I was working in Göteborg for 3 years in another bar.

Great. So now we will ask you few questions about sensory marketing. Do you know what the concept of sensory marketing is?

No, not really.

Actually, sensory marketing is all the techniques that use the senses of the customers to influence their behaviour, like maybe coming in your restaurant, want to stay longer inside, make them consume more maybe... It can use all the senses, like the sight, the earring, the smell. Do you see what we mean?

Yes, yes ok.

So do you think that you use that kind of techniques in your restaurant?

Yes, then for the smell I have to say that we manage the smell of the restaurant, I don't know if it's what you mean, but we use this aeration system. So there is aeration from the kitchen, and the smells go outside and inside the restaurant. This is sensory marketing?

Yes, you mean that you use the smells from the kitchen? You spread it in your restaurant?

Yes. Then here it smells coffee a bit, and also the sandwiches that we cook in the kitchen, because of this aeration.

And you told us that the aeration goes outside too.

Yes, it's an aeration system, it takes fresh air and release the inside air outside.

Ok. What do you expect from these smells?

It is good to have a good smelling, we are in a coffee, so people like this smell.

Yes, it is for people to feel more comfortable.

Yes, more comfortable. People remind the smells, maybe they will buy more than a coffee, a sandwich maybe.

And how do you think that the smells can influence the customers outside? Even if you don't put in on purpose...

I don't know if it influences the customers, the street behind is really small, few people pass here, so no I don't think so.

Now for the sight, so everything about the lights and the colours inside the restaurant, how did you choose this decoration for instance?

Yes, we choose it because it's nice. We wanted to have a place that likes modern, modern decoration. We put with light colours, nice pictures, not too many pictures, you see we have these few pictures on the wall.

Ok. Do you think that customers like this modern style?

Yes, yes. You know, our customers, they are young, they are people who work, they just come, take something to drink or a sandwich. Well, we are on the main street of Halmstad, so they are a lot of active people.

Yes, persons who work and want to take a break come here...

Exactly. For the lunch, you know, we open at 11:00am.

Ok. How do you manage the music in your restaurant? Do you pay attention to that?

Well, we put the music of the radio.

Do you think that music can have an influence on customers?

Yes, maybe. We put the radio to have music inside, because every coffee has to put music. We put a famous radio, normally Rix FM, because it is popular, I think it's the kind of music that our customers can like. But, the music is not loud, so it is not really determinant. Just for people who come alone maybe. Every café has to play music, to make people feel comfortable.

You mean that people don't come here for the music?

No, we are not a bar, people don't care about music I think.

Ok. Thank you very much.

Espresso House Interview

Interviewers: Good afternoon, we are making a report which the subject of it is “how restaurants, coffees and bakeries attract customers to their point of sale?” So first, could you introduce yourself and your restaurant? For how long have you been working here?

Lise Nielsen: I’ve been working here for 2 years, before I worked for the Espresso House in the center but not as a manager but as a waitress only. Here in Eurostop, Espresso House is a coffee place. We have over there Coop [*she shows coop Forum which is a supermarket and restaurant in front of the Espresso House*], you know the Coop Restaurant, that’s a lunch restaurant where you can eat lunch and...yes, and they have more food. We are more a coffee, we have cakes, bakeries and we sell coffees, teas...

Do you sell sandwiches here as well?

Yes sandwiches but not the warm food

You do not make food in a kitchen for instance

No, no, not warm food, but just salads and more sandwiches

So in order to precise a bit our thesis subject, it is about “sensory marketing” exactly, I don’t know if you know what it is?

How we... [*blank*]..No, not really...

It is like how you make your coffee attractive in stimulating the five senses of the customer. Do you use the senses of the customer in order to make it attractive?

You know in Espresso House, we have, generally for all the Espresso House in the whole Sweden...they don’t like a...do commercials and stuff because we want...huh...we don’t do commercials in newspaper, advertising, not, not anything because we want to sell ourselves just like people talk about that and people come here and talk to there friends about us. So we don’t have anything in the newspaper and stuff.

Ok. So for instance, to define “sensory marketing”, you have the five senses: the sight is obvious actually, it concerns pictures, wall-arts in the place, which colors are there and so on...

Yeah, we have, we have like art style inside and outside just small signs to say that we are here just for the people around us to see us but still nothing in newspaper.

And do you know for instance if inside the restaurant, is there a kind of spirit that Espresso House has to respect? Do you have the choice for the “visual organization”, the colors, the pictures and the general atmosphere of your place? Or is it up to Espresso House?

Yes, it's Espresso House. Yes, we have the same everywhere, if you come here or if you come in the Espresso Houses in Stockholm, you can know that you are in Espresso House because it's the same feelings and the same...huh...colors so you can know when you walk in.

So do you know for instance why they have chosen those colors, those pictures? When they told you to do this way for the decoration and so on, do they tell you why?

No, no...I think it is different...each Espresso House is the same for the background but some stuff in the interior are different. But I don't know why they choose those colors or those pictures. I know that they have those pictures for instance [*she is showing pictures on the wall*], really original. They are from Italy so it reminds coffee and stuff.

Ok. Then, the two other senses we would like to discuss are the smelling: there are for instance sometimes some restaurants that put artificial smelling system like diffusers for the customer to be attracted from outside to inside the restaurants. Do you use that kind of strategy?

No, no. We don't do anything like that, but...huh...as I work here everyday, I do not really feel the smell of the coffee.

Yet, do you think it is important for the customer?

Yes, that's really important. I know myself that if I go to a bakery or a restaurant, if I smell the smell of a new bred or a good kitchen, I would tell myself: "*hmmm, I want to go there*". Yeah, that's really important. Here, the only thing that smell is may be the sandwiches.

But you don't do that on purpose?

No, no no.

You don't especially try to keep this good smell inside the coffee? For instance, when you cook the sandwiches, you do it just behind the bar; you don't go in special places like a little kitchen in the back of the coffee?

No, we have the grill just behind there [*she shows the bar*] and we cook everything there.

So when you do it everybody can smell it?

Yes, yes. But nothing is on purpose.

Then we would like to discuss the music. Do you have special music you have to put? Is it your choice?

No it's not my choice.

Have you got special CD given by Espresso House then?

Yes, we have an Ipod with many songs on it. Those songs are the same everywhere in every Espresso House. Most of them are like background, chill out, lounge music. And we have a CD that we sell too. So, yes we have a special music. [*blank*] Actually we have also special

music in the Ipod for the morning, a morning mix, then lunch music and then in the afternoon, it is just up-tempo music.

What is it for?

It is like for the mood of the customer. In the morning, it is more cool music, relax music. In the morning people come here, want a quiet place while drinking there coffee, reading their newspapers...and then in the lunch, it is getting faster and faster.

In order to get more customers?

Yes, yes

And do you think that it can affect the time they spend here or even the number of drinks that the customer can take? For instance, in the morning, if you put up-tempo music, do you think they would leave faster?

Yes, yes. I know some people when they come in the morning they say: *“oh, what a great music you have, really relaxed, you can sit down and enjoy yourself a coffee in the morning, really relaxing place”*. But if you have an up-tempo music, they have bad feelings about that. It doesn't fit with the morning.

And do you think that, because of the music, people stay longer in the morning than in the afternoon?

Yes, for sure. People in the morning take their time, read newspapers but in the afternoon, most of them take a coffee and go. But if they enjoy the music, they can sit down longer.

Ok, thank you very much. The interview is over. Thanks for your help on our task. Hope we didn't disturb you too much.

No, no, thank you for coming and, yeah, good luck for your thesis.

Yes, thank you. Bye.

Bye

The interviewers: First, can you tell me who you are and describe your restaurant?

Martin Hatskjär : Ok, my name is Martin Hatskjär, I'm the general manager of this Mac Donald's. There are 200 hundreds Mac Donald's in Sweden, 2 in Halmstad.

How many employees do you count? How many seats?

We have more than one hundred seats, I don't know the exact number. We also provide food to take away. And for the employees, it depends of the period. In the winter we are around 45, and in the summer we reach 100. So now we are around 70.

For how long have you been working here? How did you arrive here?

I've been working here for 2 years and ten months. I come from Gothenburg, and I moved here in 2004, I've been one year in a military. Then I studied one year in Halmstad Högskola, to be a civil engineer, but I didn't like that one so... Then I started to work here, but I was about to start to study something else, I just needed to work for a short period. But today I'm still here.

Ok. So now I'd like to ask you if you know about the sensory marketing concept. Have you already heard about it?

Sorry, about what?

Sensory marketing. It is to use the senses of the customer, like the sight, the hearings, etc... to influence his behaviour. Do you understand?

Yes, ok. No I didn't know this before.

Ok. But do you think that you are using techniques of sensory marketing in your restaurant?

I don't know. No I don't think so. Is it legal?

Yes of course! It is just promotional techniques, like spreading smells outside to attract customers, make them know that there is a Mac Donald's somewhere, make them hungry...

Yes, ok, no we don't do that.

Ok, can you explain me the design of your restaurant? How did you choose the colours, the layout, the lights...?

Oh, you know you don't have the choice when you open a Mac Donald's. You have to choose between several defined styles, I think there are 8 different styles.

8 different styles...

Yes, you have to choose between these remodelling. So if you go in all the 200 Mac Donald's in Sweden, you will find these 8 models.

Ok, do you know who designed these models? Do you know what is expected from them?

Do you mean, with sensory marketing? I don't know if there is something expected from that, I don't even know who designed the models. I think it's just a guy who try to put everything together, try to make it modern, fashion, a good design you know to make you enjoy, I don't know...

Yes, you think that it is important.

Of course yes (silence). I think that customers enjoy the modern design, it's cool. The seats, everything...

Great. And what about the music? Do you have some in your restaurant?

Yes of course. We have a contract with one radio station, but just for this restaurant. For others restaurants, we have our own Mac Donald's CDs, but we don't use it here. But it is just regular music, like Justin Timberlake or something, it's nothing special.

Which radio do you have a contract with in your restaurant?

Oh, we have a contract with Rix Fm.

And why this special contract?

It's just because the owner of the restaurant is a good friend of the director of the radio in Halmstad. So, we're working a lot with them, we have a good relationship. We have commercial on their station for free, or not for free, but for cheaper.

Don't you think that it is a problem not to use the Mac Donald's CDs?

No, no I don't think so, you know the music are the same, it is new songs, famous ones. The music we have on the CD, you can hear it on the radio, most of them.

Ok. Finally, for the smell, how do you manage smells in your restaurant?

What do you mean?

I think you know it, but there are some special machines that can spread odours over the air outside. Do you use one here?

No we don't. I've never heard about it (silence).

Ok, maybe you have an airing system in your kitchen that releases outside?

(Laughing) No we don't.

Because sometimes during the day, it is smelling a lot in town: it is easy to know that there is a Mac Donald somewhere around...

(Stop laughing) Really? No, I'm not sure, we really don't do anything for that, but that is an idea maybe we could make people hungry (smile). Maybe something smells but I'm quite sure that we're not using anything. We have to think about it!

Maybe you know if in others Mac Donald's restaurant they use such techniques?

No, I don't know and I don't think so.

Ok. So I think that is over for us.

Ok, great.

Thank you very much.