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**“Sensory Marketing and Branding:
Exploring the Power of the Senses, a Review”**

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***“Sensory Marketing and Branding:
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Abstract

Background: The marketplace of today has undergone a significant change, where from selling and promoting products and services market has gone to selling and enticing consumers through experiences. Consumers are spending more time making decisions about what to consume and the number of products to choose from, has increased tremendously, making it harder and more-time consuming to decide what products to buy. The human senses have been identified as important factors in consumer behavior, where they have been acknowledged as powerful cues influencing our emotions, perception and purchase behavior.

Purpose: The main purpose of this review is to explore the potential of sensory marketing and its effects on consumers and branding. Furthermore, to highlight the power of human senses and how they are stimulated by marketing aspects and using real and successful examples, to provide deeper insights in sensory marketing and brand experience in practice.

Method: In order to meet the purpose of the current review, the author employed a qualitative content analysis methodology. The review unfolded first by searching top-ranking journals in the area of marketing, and second by searching sciences books for successful examples of sensory marketing practices.

Conclusion: The significance of the human senses, relating to seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting was justified through a critical review of literature and the incorporation of several applications. In building the argument, given that individuals perceive and experience goods and services as brands, image contribute to brands' success and competitive power by providing the opportunity to create and deliver meaningful, powerful, and memorable experiences.

Keywords: Sensory marketing, sensory branding, consumer behavior, consumer psychology, human senses, retail atmospherics, brand experience, multi-sensory branding, brand equity

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

As the flow of information in society is increasing and companies work harder to influence their consumers, discussions and research regarding consumer behavior and the perceptual process related to human senses has widened (Sweeny and Weber, 2002; Wilson, 2003). Companies strive to get their products and services associated with positive moods. Understanding how humans perceive and interpret information and sensations is important in order to be able to manage consumers' perceived feelings and attitudes. Humans' impressions of surroundings may therefore be regarded as a fundamental part of sensory marketing (Raz et al, 2008).

The commercial environment has a strong impact on both consumers and employees, and is a much discussed topic among companies. The subject has become an important element in marketing as well as retailing. Companies plan, design, change and constantly check its organization's commercial environment in order to influence the behavior of their visitors. It may be argued that the traditional mass-market approach is fading and is being replaced by hyper-fragmented markets where individualization is a key word. This trend is making firms rethink their marketing strategies and forces them to find new ways to successfully reach potential consumers (Rodrigues et al, 2011; Gordon, 1998).

The marketplace of today has undergone a significant change, where from selling and promoting products and services market has gone to selling and enticing consumers through experiences (Brakus et al, 2009; Hulten et al, 2008; Lindstrom, 2005; Schmitt, 1999). Consumers are spending more time making decisions about what to consume and the number of products to choose from, has increased tremendously, making it harder and more-time consuming to decide what products to buy (Ekstrom, 2010). Despite having such a huge spectrum of choices in regards to products and services, the customers of today have proven to be dissatisfied (Pralahad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Further, the above practitioners' explain that the consumers of today want to be involved and shape their own experiences, both individually and together with other customers and experts. The importance of not forgetting the brand is therefore

emphasized, where it is stated that “*the experience is the brand*” (Pralahad and Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 13).

As a response to sensory marketing, Krishna (2010) underlines a growing need to use the senses as a way to compete. Companies should appeal towards customers feelings, enabling faster responses (Pham et al, 2001), but also providing an opportunity to create an unforgettable experience where both mind and body is involved (Joy and Sherry, 2003). Creating an experience through the use of sensory design has been trigger emotions and responses within the consumer that creates a willingness to purchase (Reimann et al, 2010). Russo and Chaxel (2010) discuss the effect of different sensorial cues in form of persuasive messages as a successful way to alter a recipient’s feeling toward an informational message, which has the ability to create an additional change of behavior. The authors underline that these messages can affect consumers in both conscious and unconscious ways (ibid).

Taking a starting point in the experience logic, it has been recognized that the human senses play a crucial part for the experience as well as the emotional connection (Krishna, 2010; Hulten et al, 2008; Schmitt, 2003). The human senses have been identified as important factors in consumer behavior, where they have been acknowledged as powerful cues influencing our emotions, perception and behavior (Krishna, 2010; Peck and Childers, 2008). With this in mind, Hulten et al (2008), has emphasized the importance to create customer experiences through the human senses, where Kotler (1974) underlined that sensorial cues can affect consumers’ decisions in regards to purchase.

1.2 Issue Delineation

Nowadays, consumers are inclined to take functional features, benefits, product quality and positive brand image for granted, which makes the formation of a new marketing strategy even more vital (Schmitt, 1999). In an age characterized by information overload and lack of time, factors such as emotional, cognitive or symbolic values become increasingly valuable in marketing (Hulten et al, 2009). Companies and retailers try to influence the consumers’ shopping patterns in numerous ways; through commercials, advertisements, sponsoring and so forth, to convey a message of what one should and needs to buy (Kaijser and Ostberg, 2010).

New products are failing at a rapid rate and most advertising campaigns do not register anything distinctive or memorable in the consumers' mind, making most products seem as interchangeable commodities rather than prevailing brands (Lindstrom, 2005). In fact, if products and advertising wish to survive another century, they need to change strategy and direction by delivering full emotional and sensory experience (Lindstrom, 2005). Consumers demand satisfaction and something extra in addition to the core product and service, forcing companies to find new ways to communicate with them.

It is no longer meaningful for consumers to carefully evaluate different products when most of them seem identical at a first comparison. Due to competitors copying each others' product ideas, the comparison becomes even more difficult. Many retail chains in particular struggle with differentiating themselves from their competitors, when price and quality is the only competitive weapon. As a result the possibilities for differentiation among brands become smaller, affecting the individual's options when making a choice. The human brain, in the human cognitive system, acts consequently as a filter to remove all the irrelevant information (Hulten et al, 2009).

Krishna (2010) explains that it is through the senses that data are gathered from the environment and are compared with previous experiences for the sake of categorization. By understanding the experience logic, companies are able to use sensory marketing as an approach to communicate with their consumers through the five senses, thereby bypassing the white noise of information overload.

Further, the human senses have almost been exclusively recognized individually and therefore rarely been acknowledged in regards to the sensorial interaction (Elder et al, 2010; Hulten, 2011). The importance of understanding the interaction between multiple senses is highly underlined by Elder et al (2010) who argue that it is much needed to fully understand these interactions in order to know how they affect consumer's perception, preferences and attitudes. According to Hulten (2011, p.10) a multi-sensory brand-experience "*refers to how individuals react when a firm, in offering and delivering brands, goods and/or services, participates in their purchase and consumption processes through the involvement of the human senses*". It is also argued that a multi-sensory brand-experience should provide consumers with an experience of consumption that appeal to the human senses and their mind in an emotional way (Rodrigues et al, 2011). Creating an experience should thereby be directed towards

“fantasies, feelings and having fun” (Holbrook and Hirshman, 1982) where products should be considered *“...artifacts around which customers have experiences”* (Pralahad and Ramaswamy, 2000).

To sum up, living in a society that is characterized by the third wave, where globalization, variety and pluralism are important features in combination with experiences and emotions (Hulten et al, 2008), it is becoming highly important to better understand the less researched area of a sensory marketing according to retail atmospherics, sensory branding and the multi-sensory brand-experience. Krishna et al (2010) discusses the need to include a combination of sensory inputs to provide the consumer with an experience that can be enjoyed in full force and states that sensory pleasure is a result of a combination of sensory inputs. Rodrigues et al (2011) highlights that sensorial strategies can be possible for a company to use as a differentiation factor, but also as a means to impact consumers' behavior in their purchase and consumption process by testing the individual mind.

1.3 Purpose

Lindstrom claimed in 2005 that within five years, in 2010, the world's top brands using a sensory brand platform would increase from less than 10 percent to 35 percent. Today, sensory branding is recognized in the field of marketing and the presence of it can be noticed, as the amount of companies applying it is growing. So, the purpose of this review is to explore the potential of sensory marketing and its effects on consumers and branding. With more details, the purpose of the thesis is to:

- Describe the concepts of sensory marketing, retail atmospherics and sensory branding in relation to consumer behavior
- Explore the power of human senses and how they are stimulated by marketing aspects
- Using real and successful examples, to provide deeper insights in sensory marketing and brand experience in practice
- Investigate the opportunities could gain a brand, using sensory marketing applications

The final goal is to be able to give managerial applications to companies in terms of sensory marketing and branding.

1.4 Methodology

In order to meet the purpose of the current review, the author employed a qualitative content analysis methodology. Qualitative data refers to all non-numerical data or non-quantified data. Using qualitative techniques to gather information is preferable when the researcher aims to understand the meaning of the phenomenon rather than the frequency (Saunders et al, 2009). As the aim with this review was to analyze how sensory marketing can influence consumers and brands, the author believed that utilizing a qualitative approach of collecting data was necessary. By using a qualitative approach the author expect to assess the problem from different perspectives and obtain personal reflections, which will contribute to a broader knowledge of the phenomenon sensory marketing. The review unfolded first by searching top-ranking journals in the area of marketing such as, *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Business Review*, *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *Journal of Retailing*, *Journal of Brand Management*, *International Journal of Retailing and Distribution Management*, *Journal of Service Marketing*, etc, using as basic key words sensory marketing, sensory branding, consumer behavior, consumer psychology, human senses, retail atmospherics, brand experience, multi-sensory branding and brand equity. The author also examined reference lists of the articles chosen, especially the review articles, to locate additional studies missed during the keyword searches. Additionally, for the appropriate structure of the review the author used science books, searching for extra information and successful examples of sensory marketing and branding practices.

1.5 Significance

Nowadays, sensory marketing becomes so popular. More and more firms are interested in using the human senses for marketing purposes, providing their consumers with experiences and co-create their brand image. Before using sensorial strategies, it would be helpful for a firm to have an integrated view about the impact of sensory aspects on the consumers and on the brand, either. So, this sensory marketing review

could offer them the opportunity to investigate sensory marketing and have an idea about how they could organize a more fruitful strategy and manage to differentiate from their competitors.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

Through the thesis, the concept of sensory marketing will be expressed, focusing on the theoretical framework, and moreover on real examples, in order to get the reader to know better this charm-way of “doing” marketing. The further structure of the thesis is as follows:

Chapter 2 In this chapter the reader is informed what exactly sensory marketing is, and moreover its impact on consumer behavior and psychology. Theories regarding consumer perception and sensation, sensory judgment, emotional engagement, memory and imagery are introduced.

Chapter 3 Further, it is explained deeply the concept of sensory marketing by detailing each human sense from scientific and marketing perspective.

Chapter 4 The emergence of environment experience is presented, as well as the importance of retail atmospherics. Specific, are featured atmospherics in hedonic services and online atmospherics.

Chapter 5 In the fifth chapter, sensory marketing and sensory branding are connected. Meanings such as brand equity, brand loyalty and brand image are highlighted and a strategic sensorial brand approach is presented linking the human senses with the multi-sensory brand-experience.

Chapter 6 Main conclusions and managerial applications are drawn in the final chapter as well as recommendation for further research.

CHAPTER 2: Sensory Marketing

2.1 Welcome to the Sensory World

7 o'clock in the morning...the alarm clock is ringing with her favorite, classic i-phone ringtone. She tries to wake up, washes her teeth with her new toothpaste, which gives her the pleasure of freshness with a strong taste of mint. The breakfast is ready...vanilla flavored coffee and a bowl of crunchy Kellogg's cornflakes. Opening her PC, she hears the Microsoft tune that plays every time she starts Windows. One hour later, on the road to work, she smells the irresistible aroma of fresh bread from the bakery, she goes in and of course she feels confused, she cannot decide what to buy, the variety of attractive products is huge. The same happens when it's time to buy a new coat...she cannot decide which one she prefers, if she doesn't touch them...

We are unconsciously controlled by the thousands of sensory inputs we receive every day as we see, hear, smell, touch and taste products, and this is exactly the suggestion of Sensory Marketing (Lindstrom, 2005). Beyond the intrinsic attributes of the product, Sensory Marketing suggests to explore all the facets of our five senses to use it for marketing purpose. Additionally, as Yoon and Park (2012) claim, emerging behavioral economists have begun addressing this need for "sensory marketing", which emphasizes the sensory impressions that usually accompany optimal emotional responses to cause changes in purchasing behavior.

For decades, marketers used Sensory Marketing techniques without even knowing it or doing it on purpose. Analyzing the recent history of product marketing, one can identify the main changes. The 1940s to 1960s, i.e. the post Depression period, was "*a no-nonsense's era in terms of products*" (Krishna, 2010). People were buying products for what they offered in themselves and were digging out for cheap prices. Around the 1970s, when the economy started to prosper again, appeared the branding concept. Famous companies realized that having a strong brand name and image, could gain success and so they focused on marketing and mass communication. The traditional markets are slowly disappearing and are being replaced by fragmented markets with numerous segments, where individualization and tailor-made products are the key (Krishna, 2010). Nowadays, consumers seem to be weary of classical marketing and

aggressive approaches. They need new, innovative and amazing approaches. They want to live experiences through consumption. Marketers noticed that and this is how Sensory Marketing is born. The purpose of inventing this technique was to affect consumers' emotions, perceptions, memories, preferences, choices and consumption by offering a sensual product or selling it in a pleasant atmosphere (Krishna, 2010). Filser (2003) defined Sensory Marketing as a group of key levers which are controlled by the producer and/or by the distributor to create a specific multi-sensory atmosphere around the product or the service either by focusing on sale outlet environment or product environment, and the communication or characteristics of the product itself.

Hulten et al (2008) studied the evolution of Marketing, from Transaction Marketing and the mass production of standardized consumer goods, to the Relationship Marketing and the interactions between the buyer and the seller (Rodrigues et al, 2011). Finally, they proposed that Marketing should have its point of departure in customer experience through the human senses, which referred to as Sensory Marketing. Three years later, Hulten (2011) with his article "Sensory Marketing: the multi-sensory brand-experience" proposes a Sensory Marketing Model that takes its point of departure in the human mind and senses, where mental flows, processes and psychological reactions lay the ground for a multi-sensory brand-experience. His research is in accordance with the Marketing strategy continuum hypothesis, since it combines both Transaction and Rational strategies in facilitating a multi-sensory brand-experience (Table 1).

	Transaction marketing	Relationship marketing	Sensory marketing
Marketing	Goods logic Exchange perspective Transaction marketing	Service logic Relationship perspective Relationship marketing	Experiential logic Brand perspective Sensory marketing
Strategic marketing	Product focus Customer acquisition Transactional strategies	Customer focus Customer retention Relational strategies	Multisensory focus Customer treatment Sensorial strategies
Tactical marketing	Persuasion and promotion One-way communication Production technology	Interaction and interplay Two-way communication Information technology	Dialogue and on-line interactivity Multi-sensory communication Digital technology

Table 1. From Transaction and Relationship to Sensory Marketing, Hulten (2011)

Aradhna Krishna, pioneer of Sensory Marketing, defines Sensory Marketing (2010) as "Marketing that engages the consumers' senses and affects their behaviors" This could even be broadened that Sensory Marketing implies "Marketing that engages

the consumers' senses and affects their perception, judgment and behavior". From a managerial perspective, Sensory Marketing can be used to create subconscious triggers that define consumer perceptions of abstract notions of the product (e.g. its sophistication, quality, elegance, innovativeness, modernity, interactivity)-the brand's personality. It can also be used to affect the perceived quality of an abstract attribute like its color, taste, smell or shape. From a research prospective Sensory Marketing implies an understanding of sensation, perception, cognition and emotion as it applies to consumer behavior. At Figure 1, Krishna (2010) presents the framework of Sensory Marketing.

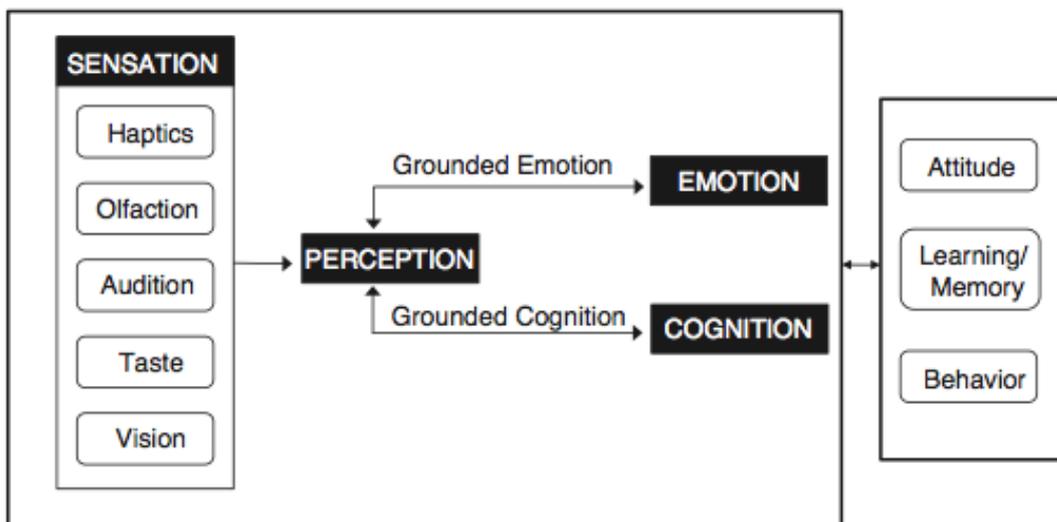


Figure 1. The Sensory Marketing framework, Krishna (2011)

Growing interest in Sensory Marketing among practitioners, consultants and researchers means that all five human senses are today receiving increased attention. More often than not, the interest is in making customers more aware of a product or a brand in order to reach tactical, short term sales target. In contrast to this, Sensory Marketing should be viewed strategically as a way to clarify a firm's identity and values with the long term goal of creating brand awareness and establishing a sustainable brand image (Hulten, 2009; Brakus et al, 2009).

Table 2, provides a synopsis of the “Sensory Marketing” definitions, according to above researchers and practitioners.

Author	Title	Definition
Lindstrom (2005)	<i>Brand Sense</i> , New York: Free Press	<i>...explores all the facets of our five senses to use it for marketing purpose</i>
Yoon and Park (2012)	Do Sensory ad Appeals influence Brand Attitude? <i>Journal of Business Research</i>	<i>...emphasizes the sensory impressions that usually accompany optimal emotional responses to cause changes in purchasing behavior</i>
Krishna (2010)	<i>Sensory Marketing: Research on the sensuality of products</i> . New York: Taylor and Francis Group.	<i>...engages the consumers' senses and affects their perception, judgment and behavior”</i>
Filser (2003)	Le Marketing Sensoriel: la qukte de l'intigration thiorique et managiriale. <i>Revue Frannaise du Marketing</i>	<i>... is defined as a group of key levers which are controlled by the producer and/or by the distributor to create a specific multi-sensory atmosphere around the product or the service either by focusing on sale outlet environment or product environment, and the communication or characteristics of the product itself.</i>
Hulten (2011)	Sensory Marketing: The Multisensory Experience Concept. <i>European Business Review</i>	<i>...offers a firm the opportunity to differentiate and express a brand as image through sensorial strategies, including sensor, sensations, and sensory expressions, based on cognitive, emotional, or value based elements in relation to the human mind and senses.</i>
Brakus et al (2009)	Brand Experience: What it is it? How is it measured? Does it affect Loyalty? <i>Journal of Marketing</i>	<i>...should be viewed strategically as a way to clarify a firm's identity and values with the long term goal of creating brand awareness and establishing a sustainable brand image</i>

Table 2. A synopsis of “Sensory Marketing” Definitions.

The present development of Sensory Marketing illustrates the emergence of a new epoch in Marketing, one in which the five senses will be at the center of a firm’s strategy and tactics. For that reason it becomes more important for firms, whether they are selling traditional consumer goods or a service, to affect and influence consumer in new, provocative, imaginative ways in order to seize grab hold of the human senses. Extant research in Sensory Marketing suggests that sensory aspects of a product such as looks, smell, touch, sound and taste influence consumer evaluation of a product (Alpert et al., 2005; Bone and Jantrania, 1992; Bloch et al., 2003; Hangtvedt and Patrick, 2008; Morrin and Ratneshwar, 2000; Peck and Childers, 2003; Nowlis and Shiv, 2005), and affect behavior (e.g. impulse buying, more time spent at the store, longer stimulus viewing time, more money spent and greater in-store traffic).

In a way, Sensory Marketing is an application of understanding of sensation and perception to the field of marketing-to consumer perception, cognition, emotion, learning, preference, choice or attitude. These elements analyzed at the next paragraph, which constitute from important issues on consumer psychology and behavior.

2.2. Consumer Psychology and Behavior

As a research field, consumer behavior mainly focuses on behavior in relation to the purchase and consumption of products, a focus that more and more is moving its attention to factors that precede and follows the buying behavior (Ekstrom, 2010). According to Broniarczyk (2008) consumer behavior is connected to the process where the consumer makes a decision to purchase. Supporting this reasoning Blackwell et al (2006) explain that “*consumer behavior is the activities people undertake when obtaining, consuming and disposing products and services*”.

Our sense of sound, sight, smell, taste and touch have a powerful effect on us, and psychological research is trying to explain some of the physical, cognitive, social and emotional effects. Sensory stimuli can influence environments, improve the shopper experience and change the nature of behavior in ways beyond our consciousness. People perceive the world through all their senses simultaneously, so the more sensory experience, the more engaging it will be. The right sensory stimuli, if applied appropriately, can calm, relax, de-stress, energize, improve mood, influence decision-making and hence the propensity to spend. According to Wanger (2002) there is a close link between consumer psychology and consumer behavior, where the first is the science of consumer behavior with both its inner and outer prerequisite.

Motivation is a fundamental term when it comes to human behavior (Evans et al., 2006, Weiner, 2000) and can be identified as a driving force that encourages people to act in specific ways. This is agreed upon by Hoyer and MacInnis (1997) who explains that consumer behavior is depending on different motivating factors, which can be defined as inner forces that are directed toward individual goals. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) were among the first to recognize that consumers often seek products or services at least partially for the product symbolism, anticipated physical and sensory stimulation, including appreciation of beauty and fun during purchase and usage of the product. The feeling of this kind of aspect of consumer behavior came to be termed as the “hedonic” perspective (Jones et al, 2006; Wertenbroch and Dhar, 2000; Babin et al, 1994). Emotional arousal, seen as a type of consumer response related to hedonic consumption, is considered a major motivation for preferring at least some products, and hedonic value as determining the level of involvement with the purchase of these products.

Consumer's hedonic satisfaction suggests their senses will have to be titillated while accommodating consumer's inimitability in product composition that requires the provision of a more cognitive-rational, problem-solving, information-processing environment (Miranda, 2009). On the other hand, the information-processing model regards the consumer as a logical thinker who solves problems to make purchasing decisions. The information processing view conjures up an image of the consumer as a problem solver engaged in the goal directed activities of searching for information, retrieving memory cues, weighting evidence, and arriving at carefully considered judgmental evaluations (Bar and Neta, 2008).

2.2.1. Perception

Within the field of psychology, perception is viewed to be our process of acquiring sensory information, interpreting it, selecting what is of interesting and then organize it (Peck and Childers, 2008). While sensation refers to an early process of both detecting and encoding the environment around us, perception is referring to what is called the product of psychological processes including context, relationships, meaning, past experiences and memory as key factors (Schiffman, 2001). Groome et al. (2010) makes a clear distinction between sensory impression and perception, where sensory impression is referred to as "*raw-material*" that we receive from our sensory organs, while perception is stated to be our subjective experience of the sensory impressions.

Our perception of the environment is through specialized sense organs, or sensory receptors. The eyes are used for determining appearance and color, the nose for the sense of smell, the tongue for taste, skin for touch and the ear for any possible sound effect. Stimuli are defined as factors from the environment that elicit sensory impressions or perception (Davis and Murphey, 1994). Each sense organ responds to a particular range of stimuli and transmits information to the brain via the central nervous system. When we perceive a stimulus, our response does not occur as a one-step process. The chain of sensory perception has been described as follows (Schiffman, 1996):

Stimulus → Sensation → Perception → Response

In this scheme, a stimulus generates a response via nerve to the brain. The nerve response suffices as a function of the frequency of the nerve's electrical discharge; the

higher the frequency, the stronger the sensation. All human sensory receptors vary in their sensitivity to stimuli (Solomon, 1990). We naturally and spontaneously organize the similarities and discontinuities we perceive in any stimulus array using perceptual heuristics referred to as “*Gestalt principles of perceptual organization*” (e.g. similarity, good continuation, proximity or nearness, common fate, meaningfulness or familiarity, figure ground, common region, element connectedness, synchrony) (Palmer and Laungani, 1999).

In the area of psycho-physics two types of sensitivity to stimuli are apparent, the first one is called Absolute threshold and describes the lowest level of stimuli that can be perceived by our brain (Occelli et al, 2011). The lower the Absolute threshold is, the higher the sensitivity to stimuli. The second type of sensitivity is the Differential threshold, which refers to the smallest difference between two stimuli that can be detected, also described as the smallest noticeable difference (Campbell, 1999). Human’s ability to find differences between two stimuli is relative and is influenced by the environment. The German psycho-physicist Ernst Weber noted that the intensity of stimulus is needed for the perceived difference the first time we are exposed to it. This means that the larger the stimulus is the first time of exposure, the greater the difference must be for it to be perceived. This is called Weber’s Law (Monroe, 1973; Passer and Smith, 2011).

The process by which the senses handle raw information is called the perceptual process (Figure 2). During this process sensations are selected, sorted and interpreted in order for us to ascribe them meaning (Ozanne et al, 1992). Human beings add or remove certain factors from the sensations to make them more understandable and graspable (Passer and Smith, 2011; Solomon et al., 2010). Figure 2; further explain the process of perception.

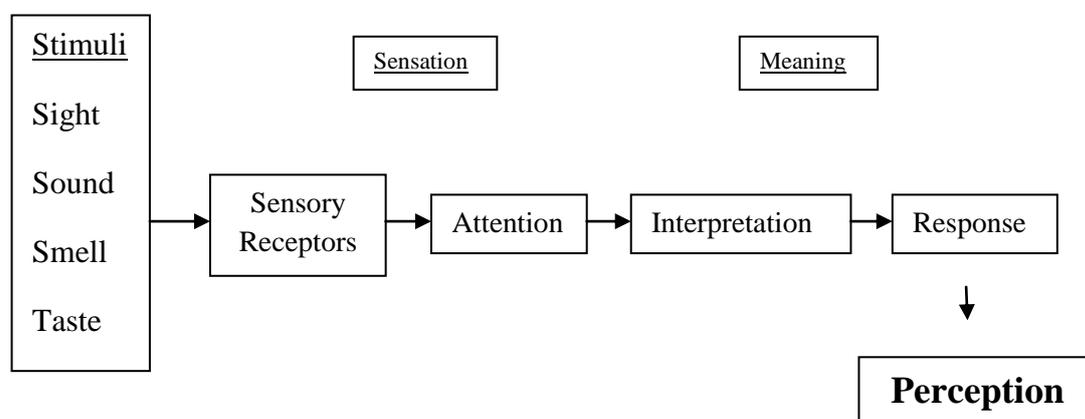


Figure 2. The Perceptual Process (Solomon et al., 2010)

The first step in the perceptual process is labeled exposure and is the initial phase where the nervous system receives information from our sensory organs (Solomon et al., 2010). Groome et al. (2010) labels this as sensory impression, and suggests that this phase is where the “raw material” from our senses is collected. The concept of selective exposure concerns how much of a certain stimuli a person can process is correlated with the persons past experiences (Solomon et al., 2010). The second step in the perceptual process has been labeled attention, which explains to which level consumers focus on stimuli within the range of exposure (Solomon et al., 2010; Davenport and Beck, 2002). Humans rarely focus on only one single stimulus, even though one specific stimulus can be found stronger and thereby draw the majority of attention (Groome et al., 2010). Attention has been labeled as an important aspect of social psychology and has further been identified as a determinant factor when consumers are making their purchase decisions (Argyriou and Melewar, 2011; Ajzen, 2008). The final stage, is labeled interpretation, which refers to the meaning consumers assign to sensory stimuli, the stimuli consumers are exposed to is not objectively treated, but treatment of stimuli is influenced by the individual’s unique biases, needs and experiences (Ozanne et al, 1992).

Sensory information is dominantly linked to consumer’s perception of products and services (Krishna, 2010). It is argued that individuals react instinctively and subconsciously to sensory stimuli such as smell as opposed to learnt stimuli such as a brand name or logo (Clarke and Macrae, 1988). This is evidenced in the marketers attempt to use consumer’s sensory perception to build sensory “signatures” whereby unique identity for a brand like “Aroma of Singapore Airlines” is created (Balaji et al., 2011). Thus, understanding the role of sensory perception in evaluation of products and services is becoming increasingly relevant from both theoretical and managerial perspectives.

2.2.2 Perception versus Sensation

In psychology and the cognitive sciences, perception is the process of acquiring, interpreting, selecting and organizing sensory information (Grohol, 2005). Perception is one of the oldest fields within scientific psychology. Many cognitive psychologists hold that, as we move about in the world, we create a model of how the world works. That is, we sense the objective world, but our sensations map to percepts, and these percepts are

interpreted within the context of the environment we find ourselves in, such as the atmospherics of a retail store, for example. As we acquire this new information and consider it relative to the knowledge we have in memory from prior experiences, our perceptions shift as we select further pertinent information to aid our judgments and purchase decision. (Pickett-Baker and Ozaki, 2008).

But, which is the difference between sensation and Perception? Sensation is the process by which physical energy (e.g. electromagnetic waves, sound waves, chemical molecules, tactile pressure) is detected and transformed into electrochemical energy by the various sensory receptors, enabling the physical organism to notice and be aware of objects and events in the physical world. The stimulus energy is initially unassociated with anything meaningful and exists in what is called a raw, unanalyzed, ambiguous, pre-categorical form. In this stage, anyone might see “a small white moving shape”. Perception takes up where sensation leaves off (Figure 3). Perception is the process of organizing and interpreting these raw, unanalyzed, ambiguous, pre-categorical sensations so that we experience not just size, color, motion and form, but an identifiable, recognizable, familiar, and meaningful object. The mind, having existence within the scope of physical matter by its connection with the material brain but independent of it, organizes and interprets the sensations into perceptions according to the individual self’s unique perspective, memories, concepts, expectations, prior knowledge, beliefs, purposes and intent (Matlin, 2005; Spelke, 1990). The brain then reacts and signals the physical organism via efferent nerve pathways to act in response.

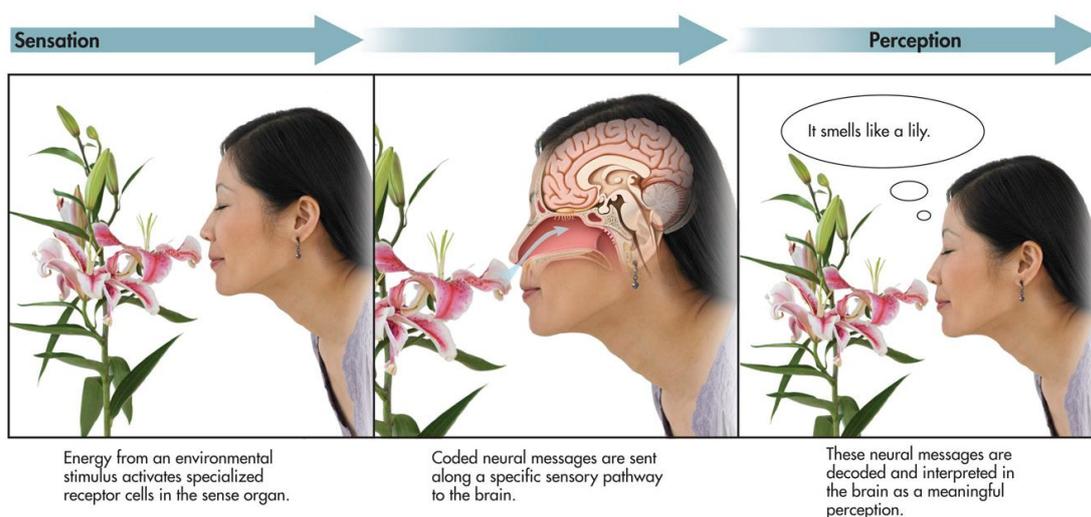


Figure 3. Perception versus Sensation, Hockenbury and Hockenbury, Psychology (2009)

One reason for researchers of general psychology to pay attention to paranormal events is the very nature of psi phenomena. Parapsychology investigates those characteristics of mind and body in which mind seems to operate and at least partially exist independently of the body and has access to nonphysical sources of information. As such, parapsychological phenomena, collectively referred to as psi, are examples of transpersonal experiences and behaviors that reveal the existence of what may be called “inner senses” which allow for perception without sensation and permit actions at a distance. Those phenomena or psi can be classified into three categories:

- ESP (telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition)
- PK (psycho kinesis, materialization, dematerialization, psychic photography, psychic healing)
- Psi-related phenomena suggestive of survival of bodily death (out-of-body experiences, near death experiences, reincarnation, channeling, etc) (Griffin, 1997; Radin, 1997)

2.2.3 Sensory Judgment

Perception, sensation and the perceptual process constitute the basic elements of the sensory judgment process. In literature, there are 3 basic models for sensory response processes.

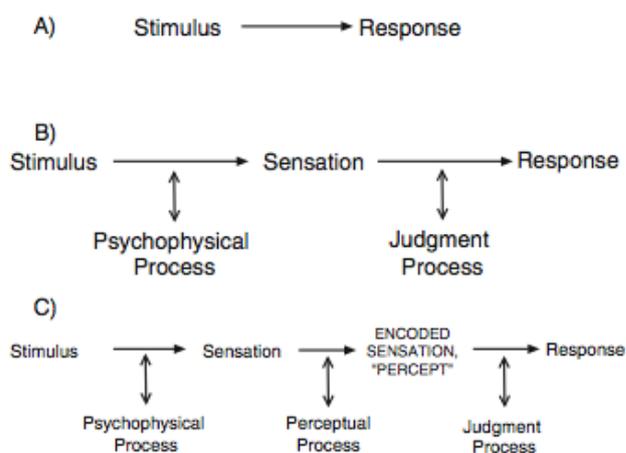


Figure 4. Models for Sensory Response Processes. Lawless and Heymann (2010)

The first (see Fig. 4.A) is a psychophysical process by which stimulus energy is translated into physiological events that result in a subjective experience of some

sensory intensity (Lawless and Heymann 2010). The second, equally important process is the function by which the subjective experience is translated into the observed responds, i.e. how the percept is translated onto the rating scale (see Fig. 4.B). Many psychophysical researchers now consider a “judgment function” to be an important part of the sequence of stimulus to respond (MacBride and Anderson, 1990; Schifferstein and Frijters, 1992). This process also sometimes referred to as a response output function. A third intermediate step is the conversion of the raw sensory experience into some kind of encoded percept, one that is available to memory for a short time, before the judgment is made (see Fig. 4.C).

There are several points at which stimulus context may influence the sensory process (Lawless and Heymann 2010). First, the actual sensation itself may change. Many sensory processes involve interaction effects of simultaneous or sequential influences of multiple items. An item may be perceived differently due to the direct influence of one stimulus upon another that is nearby in time or space. Sensory adaptation weakens the perception of a stimulus because of what has preceded. The psychophysical process itself is altered by the milieu in which the stimulus is observed because of physical effects or physiological effects in the peripheral sensory mechanism. A second point of influence is in case of two sensations, which have the same subjective intensity under two conditions, but because of the way the observer places them along the response continuum, they are rated differently. A third process is sometimes added in which the sensation itself is translated into an implicit response or encoded image that may also be affected by context (see Fig. 4.C). This would provide another opportunity to influence the process if contextual factors affect this encoding step (Lawless and Heymann 2010).

2.2.4 Emotional Engagement

Emotions are an important factor in today’s marketing where advertising and marketing of different kind is characterized by a content that is used with the purpose of putting us individuals in a specific emotional state (Soderlund, 2003; Lindstrom, 2005). Examples of emotions that are used to attract and affect customers are humor, joy, beautiful people, sex or elements of surprise (Soderlund, 2003). The reason for applying emotions to marketing is according to Lindstrom (2005) that they can help us to better understand consumer behavior and why consumers chose to be loyal to a specific brand.

Hulten et. al. (2008) emphasizes the importance of emotional segments by explaining that they are of great importance for the consumer's experience.

The definition of emotion, as opposed to affect, mood or feeling, for example, has been widely discussed and several attempts have been made to tighten the construct (Rosenberg and Fredrickson 1998; Ashkanasy et al, 2002). However, there is a considerable agreement that emotional responses are relatively brief, phasic events that are accompanied by physiological processes, often expressed physically and may result in specific actions to affirm or cope with the emotion depending on its nature and meaning for the person experiencing the emotion (Laros and Steenkamp, 2005; Bagozzi et. al, 1999). Most theories of emotion that examine cognitive causes of emotion indicate that positive emotions arise from goal attainment or at least progress toward goal attainment and negative emotions arise from failure to achieve a goal or insufficient progress toward goal achievement (Russel, 2003). As per Lavarie et al (1993), emotions arise from experiences with events that are appraised as having positive or negative consequences for the individual's concerns. Similarly, according to Lazarus (1991), the theory of emotions is in effect, a theory of how motivation and cognition produce emotions in adaptationally relevant experienced situations (Bigne et al, 2008).

According to Baumgartner et al (2006) emotions are managed in the right side of our brain where an emotion can be explained as a subjective experience that only is available for the individual that experiences that specific emotion. This reasoning is supported by Soderlund (2003) who states that some emotions bring life to previous episodes of our life, where an interaction between the previous experienced emotions and currently felt emotions occur. This means that every individual will respond in different ways to the same stimuli. Our emotions are stimulated by our human senses that activate our amygdale and sent out signals that determine how our body should react (Gazzaniga et al. 2009). Martin (2008) underlines that it is our emotions that let us know what is worth noticing and remember, emphasizing that is important to become aware of the emotional components that affects and attract us.

Further, the emotions provide information which is of a major importance for consumer's attitude and behavior. The experienced emotion can influence mood and therefore, behavior. Carver (2003) states that if a person is in a good mood, positive emotions have the ability to create bigger attention and give them positive associations

to what they experiencing. Bagozzi (1993) separate emotion to mood, explain that moods are considered to be of a longer duration than emotions, lasting from a few hours up to a few days, and have a lower intensity than emotion. Moods are usually unintentional and global or diffused (Lavarie et al, 1993) whereas emotions are typically intentional, i.e. they have an object or referent. Clore and Glasper (2006) argue that emotions play an important part in regards to where we direct our attention. According to Gecas (1989) emotions have a motivational effect on people's behavior, where they are capable of influencing perception, learning and performance. How people react to different stimulus around, will therefore affected by previous experiences and taught stimuli as well as social situations. Finally, according to Soderlund (2003) people's reactions to emotional messages are an important part of everyday decision making. This makes emotionally charged marketing a powerful tool that can trigger many kinds of actions and feelings that leads to the consumer making a purchase of a product that was part of the emotional marketing.

2.2.5 Memory

To fully understand human behavior, it is important to create knowledge about the human memory and how it works. Our memory helps us to hold on to information that we have gathered at previous occasions (Bear et al. 2001). And according to Mantonakis et al (2008) our memory can be seen as the record of every person past. Jones (2003) adds that *"memory is "on" and working all time, in our bodies, our subconscious, through our emotions. It reconfigures moment by moment who we are and how we function. Memory is not just a retrieval of the past, it is always a fresh, new creation where memories are retrieved into the conscious realm and something new is created in that context"*. Besides being useful in remembering what has happened, our memory is contributing to our ability to learn, to behave different in different situations influencing us by prior experiences. The central function of memory, according to Mantonakis et al. (2008), is construction. Construction not only records, but also imposes selection, organization, and ascribes meaning to the environment. Construction function contains two aspects:

- *"Production of psychological events controlled by the interaction of the stimulus, task, and context with representations of previous experiences in memory"*

- “*Evaluation of the significance of that production given the stimulus tasks context*”

Production results in performance, the manifestation of all cognitive, perceptual, and motoric events. Evaluation leads to phenomenology, subjective reaction that causes people to feel that they are completing cognitive processes either correctly or incorrectly.

Hoyer and MacInnis (1997) connects the ability to our memory to consumer processes, where the memory process can be about remembering specific products, services and customer experiences. In agreement with this, Martin (2008) underlines the importance that marketers and managers understand the relation between emotions, memory and decision making, since customers are looking for shortcuts that makes their existence easier.

Nature and structure of memory

Encoding

Encoding depends on the level at which people process information, ranging from preattentive to elaboration (Puccinelli et al, 2009; Gist and Mitchell, 1992; Craik and Lockhart, 1972). The dominant type of processing depends on the motivation, ability and opportunity to process information (MacInnis and Jaworsky, 1989), and people typically encode information according to its sensory meaning (Solomon, 2008). Various retailers capitalize on the power of memory by creating a strong link between the brand and a color or icon (e.g. Mac computers and the apple).

Storage

In the storage stage, memory is sensory, short-term or more long-term (Solomon, 2008). Our memory is consisted of many different processes, where one of them is our sensorial memory, which becomes activated when our sensory organs receives knowledge through stimuli (Puccinelli et al, 2009; Hasselmo, 1995). The sensory memory is usually exposed to stimuli that only last for a couple of milliseconds (Gazzaniga et al. 2009). High-capacity sensory memory often is automatic and based on simple perceptions. Philippe et al (2009) address that emotional memories can be defined as memories of previous experiences or events, that have been emotionally triggering which have led to the memory being stored. Our experiences are throughout

life registered in our memory, meaning that previous experiences that have ended up in our sensory memory can be of tremendous meaning for future experiences and how we will react and respond to them. The amygdale, which is part of the brain's limbic system plays a key role for how we react to and remember experiences that affects us emotionally (Nyberg and Backman, 2007). This system is very important for our memory as well as our capacity to learn new things.

Humans also have what is referred to as the short-term memory. In comparison with sensory memory, which only holds information for a very brief time, short-term memory is able to hold information somewhat longer. Instead of a millisecond to a second, this memory has the capacity to hold a memory for seconds up to minutes (Gazzaniga et al. 2009). Once the information has been treated by the sensory memory, information of interest is picked and forwarded to the short-term memory. This memory also referred to as working memory that allows people to remember newly received information at the same time as they perform other tasks (Gazzaniga et al. 2009).

Just as the name indicates, the long term-memory allows humans to remember information for a longer period of time, which can include a couple of hours or days but also up till several years. Thanks to our long-term memory we can remember specific events that occurred during our childhood (Gazzaniga et al, 2009). According to Larsson (1991) long term-memory has an unlimited duration and capacity and Wolf (2009) adds that long term-memory can be negatively affected by stress, where it can interrupt our interpretation of different signals, making it harder for us to remember certain events.

Retrieval

Retrieval may depend on factors such as psychological attributes (e.g. age), situational factors (e.g. pioneering effects, mnemonics), contextual factors (e.g. primacy, recency) and psychological states (Solomon, 2008). Older adults tend to use retrieved memory schemas to process incoming information, whereas younger adults process in a more detailed manner (Yoon, 1997). Descriptive brand names lead to better retrieval and agreement with the benefits claimed by a brand (Keller, Heckler and Houston, 1998) and well-placed retrieval cues enhance memory for brands and evaluations of previous advertising (Keller, 1987).

Consumer research also differentiates short- and long-term memory effects according to their processing. Age may affect short-term memory capacity, which can influence subsequent choice processes and decisions (Bettman et al, 1998). Thompson and Hamilton (2006) find that advertising imagery often succeeds when consumers use low-level processing and base their reactions on short-term memory. Another recent study indicates that capacity limitations have downstream effects on memory-versus stimulus-based choice decisions (Rottenstreich, 2007). A rich tradition of consumer research indicates that for marketing stimuli to affect consumer behavior, they must induce enduring thoughts and evaluations.

2.2.6 Imagery and Influence

Petrova and Cialdini (2008) show that the use of imagery in marketing exerts a strong influence over consumer's perceptions of a product or brand. Research cited by them, reveal them "information processed using imagery is stored in a sensory code and a semantic code" thus creating multiple associations in memory. Green and Brock (2000) found that imagery "transports" individuals into a different reality, which is highly effective in changing attitudes and beliefs. The process of transportations is likened to being "lost in a story". Adval and Wyer (1998) state that when transportation occurs, consumer's process the imagined experience hostically, thus reducing favorability to product information. However, low relevance to the self and individual differences may undermine the effects of imagery.

2.2.7 Summary of chapter 2

Growing interest in Sensory Marketing among practitioners, consultants and researchers means that all five human senses are today receiving increased attention. Sensory marketing is born the time, the traditional markets were slowly disappearing and were being replaced by fragmented markets with numerous segments, where individualization and tailor-made products are the key and defined, according to Krishna, as “*Marketing that engages the consumers’ senses and affects their perception, judgment and behavior*”. Because of that, it becomes more important for firms, whether they are selling traditional consumer goods or a service, to affect and influence consumer in new, provocative, imaginative ways in order to seize grab hold of the human senses. Our sense of sound, sight, smell, taste and touch have a powerful effect on us, and psychological research is trying to explain some of the physical, cognitive, social and emotional effects. Sensory stimuli can influence environments, improve the shopper experience and change the nature of behavior in ways beyond our consciousness. People perceive the world through all their senses simultaneously, so the more sensory experience, the more engaging it will be. The right sensory stimuli, if applied appropriately, can calm, relax, de-stress, energize, improve mood, influence decision-making and hence the propensity to spend. The process by which the senses handle raw information is called the perceptual process. During this process sensations are selected, sorted and interpreted in order for us to ascribe them meaning. Sensory information is dominantly linked to consumer’s perception of products and services. Moreover, significant element related to sensory marketing is the emotional engagement creation. Emotions provide information which is of a major importance for consumer’s attitude and behavior. Additionally, they have a motivational effect on people’s behavior, where they are capable of influencing perception, learning and performance. Finally, consumer processes are strongly connected to memory, where the memory process can be about remembering specific products, services and customer experiences. So, it is of a major importance for marketers and managers to understand the relation between emotions, memory and decision making, since customers are looking for shortcuts that makes their existence easier.

CHAPTER 3: A Scientific and Marketing Approach of the five Senses.

The human senses have long been overlooked in the field of Marketing. However, during the last decade they have received more and more attention, emphasizing their meaning for consumers' experience and behavior (Hulten et al. 2008; Hulten 2011). Explained by Schmitt (1999) the purpose of using the human senses in marketing is to provide consumers with excitement, satisfaction and pleasure, where the sensory experience is on focus. Each of the five human senses-smell, sound, sight, taste and touch-contributes to an experience. Each of the five senses and all the senses together, also form the foundation of what is called the “**Sensory experience**” (Hulten et al, 2008). A sensory experience is the result of the reactions of the senses to different elements or triggers in marketing, called stimuli.

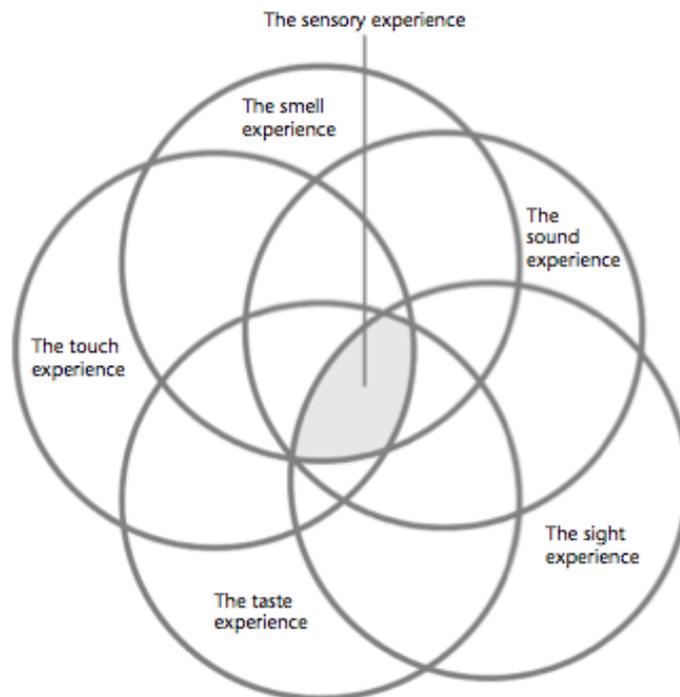


Figure 5. The Sensory Experience, Hulten et al (2008)

The human senses are of vital importance to our experience of our existence, and without the senses no impression could be formed. It would not be possible to understand, feel, learn or think without senses (Schmitt, 1999). They give invaluable information about different objects through smell, sound, sight, taste and touch. The five human senses are of crucial importance for an individual's experience of different purchase and consumption processes. It is through the senses that every individual becomes conscious of and perceives firms, products and "brands". Because of this, further knowledge about the human senses might make a firm's marketing more successful and an individual's experience more personalized (Schmitt, 1999).

Academic research has shown that different sensory impressions impact consumer behavior and perceptions of goods and services (Hulten, 2011). Empirical studies relating to sight impressions have been discussed by, for instance, Orth and Malkewitz (2008) and Smith and Burns (1996). The sense of sight is the most powerful one for discovering changes and differences in the environment and is the most common sense in perceiving goods or services. Impressions of sound have been analyzed empirically by Garlin and Owen (2006), Sweeny and Wyber (2002). The sense of sound is linked to emotions and feelings and the sense impacts brand experiences and interpretations. Impressions of smell have been discussed by Goldkuhl and Styfven (2007) and Fiore et al. (2000). The sense of smell is related to pleasure and well-being and is closely connected to emotions and memories. Taste impressions have been analyzed empirically by Biedekarken and Henneberg (2006) and Klosse et al (2004). The sense of taste is the most distinct emotional sense and often interacts with other senses. Finally, touch impressions have been discussed by Peck and Wiggins (2006) and Citrin et al (2003), among others. The sense of touch is the tactile one, related to information and feelings about a product through physical and psychological interactions.

3.1 Sense of vision

Vision is the most powerful sense since the connection between eyes and brain is actually fast: it takes 45 milliseconds for humans to detect a visual object (Herz and Engen, 1996). Sight is indeed a sense that seems to be the most important, as 80% of the information that humans get are transmitted through this sense. In the visual based world we are living today, the sense of sight has been described as our most seductive

sense having the power to convince us despite no logic (Lindstrom, 2005). Vision also, is not only regarded as the human's most significant sense but also the most dominant sensory system (Schiffman, 2001) where the consumers more or less rely on visible and tangible cues that attract and draw attention (Ward et al. 1992).

According to Henderson et al (2003), visual stimuli includes logos, names, packages, product design etc. and are regarded as a critical part that should be included in any strategy that concerns branding. Colors and lights are fundamental in the perception of a brand and can highlight the most important attributes and associations to a product or a brand (Gobe, 2001). It is further argued that the use of graphic information can make it easier for a product to stand out in the competitive clutter, having a positive impact on the consumer's consideration of a possible purchase (Kahn and Deng, 2010). Further, visual stimuli have been shown to be of importance when verbal material is absent, creating a perception of quality which has a direct impact on the building of a strong brand (Henderson et al, 2003).

According to Lindstrom (2005 p. 19) "*Vision is all about light*" and is the transmitting of light patterns that is useful to us when translating these patterns into information. This is supported by Ackerman (1990) who explains that the sense of sight is used to gather huge amount of information from the environment around us, where we are stimulated by light in numerous ways that are then affecting our behavior, feelings as well as our well being. Besides the impact on consumer's behavior, there are also physical benefits, where a good choice of lighting can relieve tension on the eyes or even fasten up the process of noticing objects (Hsu, 2010). The author explains that lighting should be used to meet the customer's physical and psychological requirements in order to affect perception of the atmospherics (see chapter 4).

Apart from light, color is also pointed out as being a very important element of vision that provides us with a broad range of visual dimensions (Schiffman, 2001). It is for example through color that the sense of sight can detect the environment around us, making it more intense where contrasts of colors can make an object stand out. Further, Gorn et al (1997) explain that it is well known that people's feelings can be influenced by color. It is stated that customers are influenced by the visual stimuli of color which can affect consumers in how they evaluate products as well as how activated they become (Babin et al, 2003). It is therefore important to consider the choice of color closely so that not only attention is maximized, but also that feelings are evoked leading

to favorable attitudes toward a brand (Gorn et al, 1997). Color is often used in retail settings to create a desired atmosphere with the attempt to influence the customers buying mood in appositive way (Michon et al, 2005; Bellizzi et al, 1983). The liking of different colors and their effect on feelings are connected to cultural differences (Chattopadhyay et al, 2010), where research has shown that colors effecting people differently. According to Greenleaf (2010) color can be important when the marketing communication becomes too demanding, since it might be more demanding to process in comparison to color. Furthermore, memory retention studies have shown that consumers are up to 78% more likely to remember a message printed in color that in black and white, colors which are associated with elegance as well as artistic refinement (Greenleaf, 2010). The following statement sums up the characteristics of each color and their impact on consumer behavior:

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 environnement.

Table 3. Impact of colors on consumer behavior, Eiseman (2000)

In a more scientist outlook, visual perception is tough to analyze because of its complexity of process. To understand the visual processing, Figure 6 portrays it briefly:

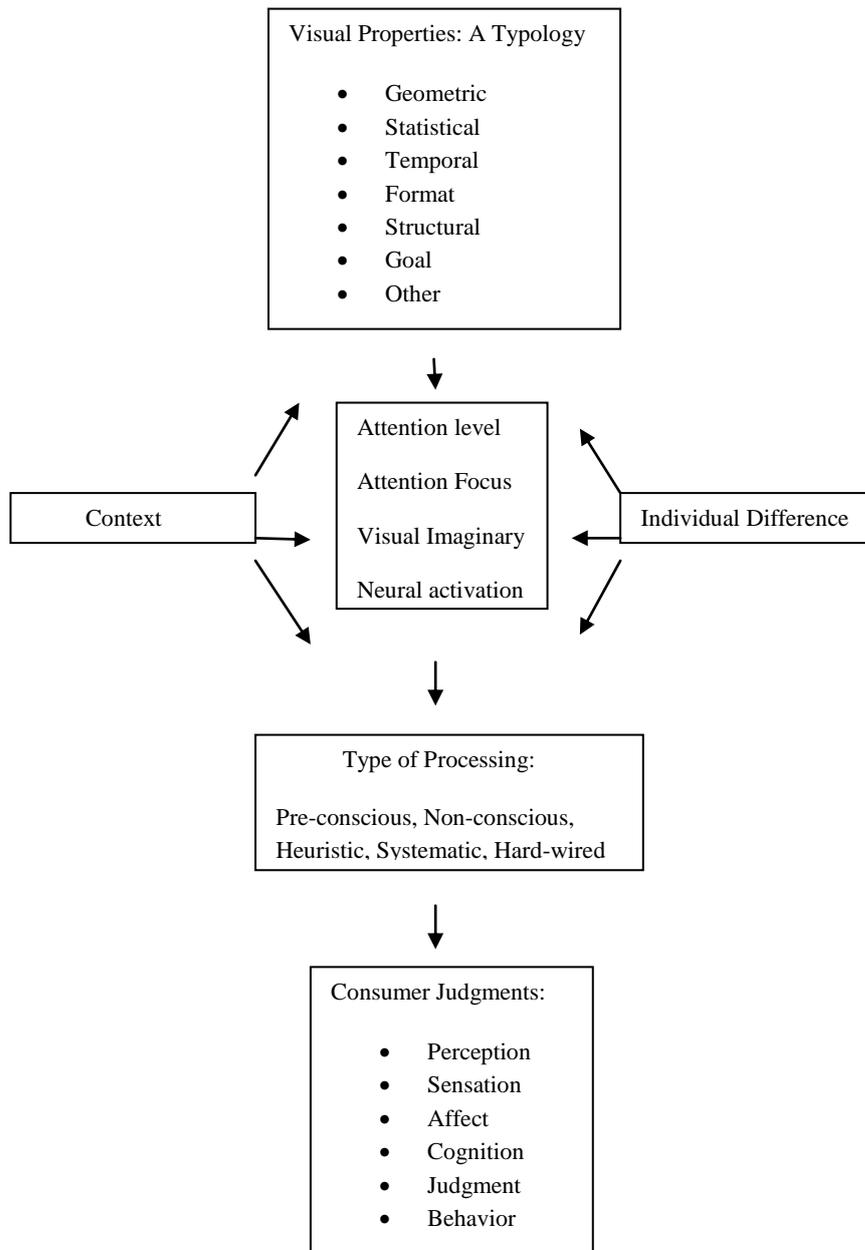


Figure 6. A model of visual processing, Krishna (2010)

The model represents the different processing possibilities of vision. Seven diverse visual cues can be identified that imply different reactions and types of processing. Depending on the visual property that has been sought, three constructs are following: attention, imagery and neural activation (Krishna, 2010). *Attention* combines the level of visual information awareness and the specific focus on an aspect of visual

information. *Imagery* is the process by which an individual visualizes information in the absence of the visual stimulus and *neural activation* is the brain activity driven by visual and other sensory stimuli (Raghubir, 2010). The effect of the visual signals can be differently interpreted depending on the context (market norms, point of view, position, amount of information, etc) and the individuals (culture, gender, beliefs, etc). All these elements discussed previously have an impact on the type of information processing. Five types of processing can be listed according to Krishna:

- **Pre-conscious:** Consumers are unconscious of the presence of stimuli, so a subliminal persuasion occurs and the judgment is assimilated in a positive way toward the visual stimuli.
- **Non-conscious:** Consumers are conscious of the presence of stimuli but unaware of its influence.
- **Heuristic:** Consumers make their decision based on “easy-to-use” cues available due to their low level of motivation or cognitive resources to examine the visual information in detail.
- **Systematic:** Consumers do have a high level of motivation, opportunity and ability to make their judgment based on the visual information provided.
- **Hardwired:** Processing results are dependent on the awareness of the stimulus. The key difference between the hardwired model and the four others is that the first one is controllable. People can control the influence of stimuli on their own judgment.

Consumer’s judgment will be made depending on the type of processing (Krishna, 2010). The types of judgment are: perception, sensation, affects cognition and judgment and finally behavior.

3.1.1 Visuals in Advertising

Historically, advertising research has been dominated by investigations that focused on the verbal content of advertisements. With regard to magazine advertising, this has generally referred to investigations involving the headlines and body copy and how specific linguistic elements affect the processing of advertising information (Toncar and Fetscherin, 2012). Illustrative studies are the works of Leigh (1994), who investigated the use of figures of speech in magazine headlines, McQuarrie and Mick

(1996) who examined the use of figures of speech in advertising language, Djafarova (2008) who investigated the use of puns in advertising, and Mothersbaugh et al (2002) who explored the effects of rhetorical figures on consumer's processing effort and focus.

Visual elements of advertisements, such as pictures or symbols are also an important component of many advertisements, and the role of imagery in shaping consumer response and behavior has only recently begun to receive the same degree and sophistication of research attention as the verbal elements in advertising (Fetscherin and Toncar, 2009, McQuarrie and Mick, 1999). The importance of visual imagery in advertising has been recognized since the 1970s when Rossiter and Percy (1978, 1980, 1983) proposed the visual and verbal loop theory which showed "that visual content in advertising is just capable if increasing the consumer's product attitude as is verbal content" (Rossiter and Percy, 1980, p.15). Since then it has become clear that visual elements can be effective tactics to achieve a range of advertising objectives, including belief acceptance and change (Perracchio and Meyers-Levy, 1994; Miniard et al, 1991) and memory. Messaris (1997) discusses in his book that "*magazine ads, and other forms of advertising, often convey meanings that cannot be expressed as well, or at all, through words*". As the book title suggests "Visual persuasion" is an exploration of these unique aspects of advertising.

There are different interpretative theories and approaches to analyze visual elements of advertising (McQuarrie and Mick, 1999). The four most common are the following:

- The archival tradition is perhaps the oldest one whereby large samples of advertisements are gathered and content analysis is used to examine the frequency with which various types of visual elements appear (Seitz, 1998; Scott, 1994)
- The "experimental tradition systematically varies either the presence or absence of pictures per se" (McQuarrie and Mick, 1999)
- The reader-response approach that seeks to uncover the meanings that consumers draw from the ads (Mick and Buhl, 1992)

- The “text-interpretive perspective draws on semiotic, rhetorical and literary theory to provide a systematic and nuanced analysis of the individual elements that make up the ad” (McQuarrie and Mick, 1999)

Phillips and McQuarrie (2002), who used visual rhetoric, show that metaphors and hyperbole, which are figurative expressions that involve intentionally exaggerated statements, appear in 17.3 % of pictures in ads and 44% of headlines and have increased steadily since the 1960s. Like rhetoric analysis, semiotic analysis can also be used by the researcher to assess the effects of images and symbols. Both are text-centered approaches (McQuarrie and Mick, 2002). As such “ *they make relatively simple and straightforward assumptions about the human system, concentrating instead on development of elaborated structures that can be used to differentiate types of visual content in advertisements*” (McQuarrie and Mick, 2003, p. 192).

3.2 Sense of Sound

The human sense of sound is second to be developed of our senses (Montagu, 1986, Gallace and Spence, 2010) and is vital for communication and learning and is the only sense that can provide us with warning signals from all positive directions (Tardif et al, 2006). The frequency of the human hearing is tremendous, with a range of more than nine octaves, topping the otherwise remarkable range of vision (Rosssing et al, 2002). Being so sensitive and being able to pick up such a range of frequency, the ear is a remarkable psychological mechanism (Schiffman, 2001) where the sense of sound cannot be shut off and instead humans are living in symbiosis with the sounds around them (Hulten et al, 2008). How someone experience sound is highly individual and different people will respond differently to the same sound (Rossing et al, 2002). It is also explained that the sense of sound is more acute in children that adults, where children have the capacity to recognize a greater variety of noises that are also more easily memorized (Lindstrom, 2005).

Life is a constant cacophony of auditory information. Each day individuals are exposed to an incredible quantity of sounds, which make sears an over developed organ. From a jingle of a radio station to the familiar Microsoft tone, marketers succeeded in arousing our subconscious, shaping our thoughts, judgments and behaviors (Mayers-Levy et al, 2010). Sounds have an important role in product features and in retail

environments and companies can resort to auxiliary sounds that are attached to them. There are two sub-sounds-categories: ancillary and ambient sounds.

As for the first category, ancillary sounds; sound is an element that tells a lot about the features and the performance of a product (Yorkston, 2010). For example, the slam of a door is a signal of the quality (Kuwano et al, 2006) and the noise made by the engine of a Harley Davidson has been studied to be unique and to give a feeling of power. Beside, humans have good hearing capabilities: they are able to, when hearing an unknown sound, predict and recognize the features of the source of noise such as shape, material and hollowness (Rocchesso et al, 2003). Consequently, when sound does not match expectations, it can deteriorate the perception of the physical characteristics of the object. An excellent example is the experiment with the chips: they seen less fresh and crispy if the sound was not crispy enough when eaten.

Some sounds are not directly related to the product, service or advertisement but to the retail environment itself, to create a good atmosphere and enhance purchases. These sounds are ambient sounds, and centre on three music dimensions: music tempo, music type and music volume. Studies have shown that “*tempo of music in store is often correlated with the pace of shopping*”. Indeed, a slower tempo leads to a slower pace. When slow tempo music is displayed in shops, shoppers tend to spend more time and also more money, increasing sales by 38% (Milliman, 1982; Janakiraman et al, 2006). Slow music is mostly associated with a relaxed atmosphere and produces a calming effect (Yorkston, 2010). However, fast tempo can also have favorable effects such as creating a state of arousal among listeners and foster the intention to smile, say hello and chat with the employees. The type of ambient sound influence consumers and affect product choices, and can also be chosen to attract a particular target demographic. Top 40 music is liked by young shoppers but not so much by older ones (Yalch and Spangeberg, 1990). Retailers can even act as a music distribution channel, using cross-promotional strategies when promoting and selling musical genres. For example, Starbucks sells a range of music to enables customers to listen to songs they heard in the coffee shop (Leeds, 2008). Similarity, the lingerie retailer Victoria’s Secret released a compact disc of Spiced Girls to display an image of sexy and empowered women (Yorkston, 2010). Dissuading a target demographic entering the shop, can be done by the use of loud music. Abercrombie and Fitch employ this tactic to avoid that adults come in the store (Baker et al, 2002). This strategy can be risky as loud music affects negatively the time spent in a store: an experiment showed that customers spent less

time in a store when the music was loud compared to when the music was soft (Morrison et al, 2011).

Sound helps to generate mood by creating feelings and emotions. It has “an immediate and, to a large extent, cognitively unmediated effect on recall and emotions” (Gobe, 2001) and can thus be used as a trigger for creating desired reactions when building an emotional attachment to a brand. Together with sight, sound is used as the traditional element in brand-building process (Lindstrom, 2005). The combination of these is referred to as audiovisual branding and it is the ground of marketing efforts for most of the companies today.

3.2.1 The sound of Music

Stated by Schiffman (2001) music is one type of sound that is integrated psychologically, providing humans with “*intensively experiences of aesthetic pleasure*” and sound is therefore said to be able to influence where we chose to direct our visual attention. It is argued by Wallin (1991) that the organism of sound helps us to evaluate the world around us through emotion, memory, attention and learning where the link to emotions is especially emphasized. Orbach (1999) further supported this, stating that feelings are well connected to both the pursuit and the experience of music, where feelings evoked by music can include calmness, excitement, fear, satisfaction and sadness to mention a few.

Sound has long been used in the field of marketing (Hulten et al, 2008) and has been recognized as an important component that triggers and influences the consumer’s mood, behavior and preferences (Bruner, 1990; Alpert et al, 2005). According to Kellaris and Kent (2001), music has the reputation to be the “*shorthand of emotions*” and has been used to evoke emotional responses in the consumer. With this in mind, music has been identified to play an important role in the lives of the consumers, where it is said to touch them in many different ways and contexts (Kellaris and Kent, 2001), where the mood and perception towards a specific product can be influenced by the music played (Gorn et al, 2003).

3.2.2 Music and Consumption

Use of background music to influence consumer behavior in modern retail stores is widely recognized. Music has been observed as a powerful stimulus in shaping retail experience. It is widely used for attention, identification, association and remembrance in retailing (Jain and Bagdare, 2011). Musicscape has emerged as an integral part of the retail environment in a number of studies. As a key ambient factor in retail environment, music engages, entertains, energizes, refreshes, involves and creates a pleasurable and memorable experience for the shoppers. Background music has a direct impact on shopping experience by influencing the purchase needs, overall effective evaluations, and service evaluations (Herrington and Capella, 1994). Studies on the effect of background music in retail stores on consumer behavior have highlighted its importance as one of the key atmospheric variable in determining overall store effectiveness and reported a range of cognitive, affective and behavioral consumer responses (Oakes and North, 2008).

Review of literature clearly brings out that both empirical and conceptual researches have been carried out in the area of music and shopping behavior in different contexts. Bruner (1990) reviewed a few studies on music and categorized them on non-behavioral outcomes of music in marketing context (e.g. changes in effect, purchase intention, and recall) and studies examining behavioral issues (e.g. sales volume, product selection and shopping time). He found that music is a powerful emotional stimulus capable of evoking affective and behavioral responses in consumers.

The presence of music influences outcomes, as it reinforces the holistic quality of servicescape, makes the provider stand out, and moderates the contribution of provider-mediated servicescape effects (Jain and Bagdare, 2011). Comparing the academic theories with industry based interactions, Areni (2003) found that atmospheric music creates right image, makes customer stay longer, draw them in or drive them off, manage perception of time, encourages or discourages antisocial behavior, and blocks out annoying and intrusive background music. Pleasant music has favorable effects on service outcomes in terms of service evaluations and purchase intentions (Morin et al, 2007).

However, the effect of music on consumption is moderated by a large number of independent variables present in the external environment. These include:

- Customer profile in terms of demographic, psychographic and cultural characteristics
- Store profile in terms of product categories, format and positioning
- Ambience of retail store in terms of sight, smell, touch and air quality
- Time of shopping in terms of morning, afternoon or evening (Jain and Bagdare, 2009)

Music differentiates a store from its competitors and reinforces the store's image (Sweeny and Wyber, 2002). It also influences customer expectations and store evaluations. The intensity of pleasure induced by background music exerts influence on store evaluation through a network of relationships. It is further reported in a large number of studies that customer perception of time in the store is significantly influenced by the background music (Yalch and Spangenberg, 1990; Oakes, 2003; Bailey and Areni, 2006). Vida et al (2007) reported that shoppers' liking of music in the natural retail setting and the perceived music fit with the store image positively affected the length of shopping time, which in turn, indirectly influenced consumer's expenditure. Happy and liked music is found to significantly affect the purchase intentions and patronage behavior of retail customers (Broekemier et al, 2008).

Music is a powerful emotional stimulus, an efficient and effective means for triggering moods and communicating nonverbally (Bruner, 1990). Donovan et al (1994) reported that shopper's emotional states within the store predict actual purchase behavior and affect the money that consumer spend in the store. The effects of the emotional factor of pleasure and arousal are found to be additional to cognitive factors such as variety and quality of merchandize, price and value for money. Moreover, Kaltcheva and Weitz (2006) found that experienced pleasantness of the in-store environment was a significant predictor of willingness to spend time in the store and intentions to spend more money than originally planned. It has been observed that atmospheric music influences approach behavior and impulse purchasing (Mattila and Wirtz, 2001). Music can alter moods and mood changes alter behaviors (Oakes, 2000). Additionally, it helps motivate the subconscious and can create a lasting impression on existing and potential customers (Morrison, 2001).

Shopping in modern retail stores is essentially a sensory experience which attempts to engage, entertain, involve and absorb the customers through all five senses. Music acts as a powerful sensory stimulus to trigger emotional and behavioral responses leading to a unique, memorable and pleasurable shopping experience (Figure 7). It is not only sets the mood and motivate people to buy, but also allows for creating brand image and resulting into real action (Jain and Bagdare, 2009).

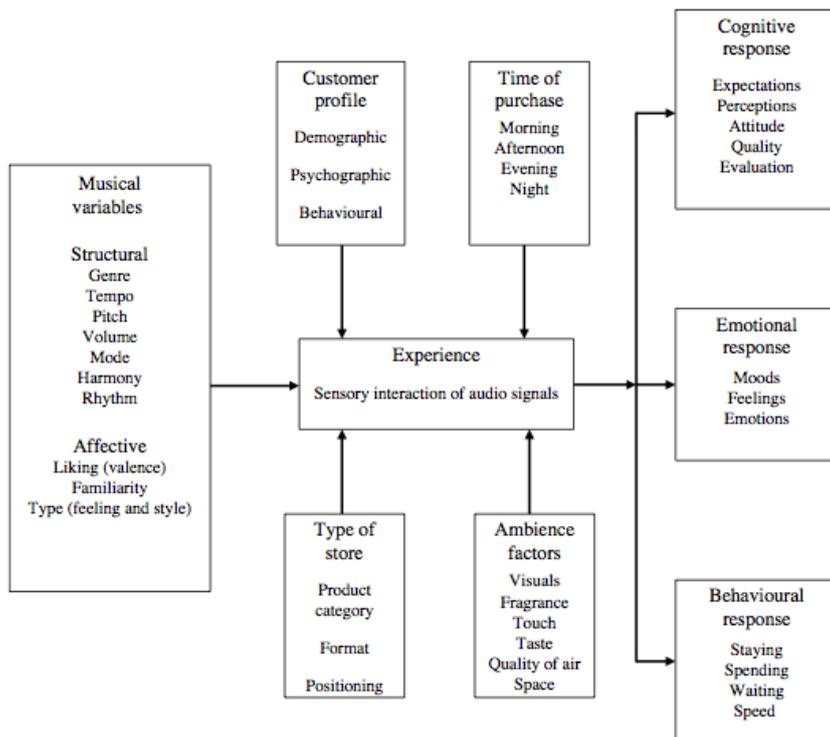


Figure 7. Effect of Music on Shopping Experience, Jain and Bagdare (2011)

3.3 Sense of Smell

“You can close your eyes, cover your ears, refrain from touch and reject taste, but smell is a part of the air we breathe” (Lindstrom, 2005, p. 24). As Lindstrom emphasized, smell is certainly one of the most important and sensitive senses. 75% of our emotions are generated by this sense, which has a strong impact on human memory (Lindstrom, 2005). That plays an essential role and can become an asset in brand differentiation, and in creating a signature scent. Indeed, the use of scent in a retail market place promotes products, sets a mood and positions a brand (Vlachos, 2007). This statement has been discovered in recent years only and is now largely used through ambient scent. Kotler believes that ambient scent has the potential ability to create

positive mood states, so a favorable store, and products evaluation, which leads eventually to higher sales revenues (Kotler, 1973; Eroglu and Machleit, 2005).

Smell is the only sense that cannot be turned off. It is the sense with the greatest emotional impact since smell transfers directly to the limbic system, the part of the brain where the emotions are handled, which is the most ancient and primitive part of the brain (Fox, 2006). A scent is persistent, long-lasting and will still be familiar even a long time after experience (Morrin, 2010). Scent cues evoke much more emotional memories than the ones evoked by the other senses. Indeed, memories associated to odors are most of the time emotional and highly evocative; people feel “*brought back to the original time and place*” (Herz, 1998). That can be called the “Proust phenomenon”. The famous eponymous author started a book, “The Remembrance of Things Past”, by recounting his recent experience of dipping a Madeleine in a cup of tea. The smell of the biscuit he did not eat since his childhood had the power of bring him back in his child memory. Proustian memories are described as “*emotionally, rich, vivid and sudden autobiographical recollections that re triggered by a scent*” (Herz, 2010). However, even if smell appeals to memory and scents are assessed by the past experiences, odor preferences are also learned (Figure 8). Humans are born with a predisposition to learn to like or dislike various smells. The best example is that, depending on cultures, people do not like the same odors. While the high emotive scents with a happy connotation are Christmas smell, Christmas food and cookies for French people, it will be spices, herbs and oil lamps for Indians (Lwin and Wijaya, 2010).

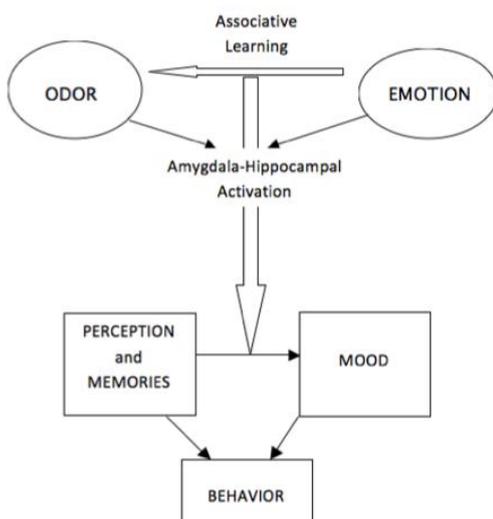


Figure 8. The Process of Associative Learning, Herz (2010)

As mentioned previously, odor preferences are learned and impact our hedonic perception by a process of associative learning. This is a phenomenon by which individuals associate an odor to an emotion, due to their prior exposure to this scent, their past experience (Herz, 2010). The amygdala is a part of the brain which triggers emotions and memories. Odors and emotions felt activate this part of the brain, influencing then the perception of odors, memories associated, and finally the behavior (Figure 8).

The impact of smells on customer's behavior has been widely certified. First, searches proved the positive impact of a smell on the evaluation of a product (Richardson, 1994). According to Spangenberg et al (1996), a pleasant smell influence positively of the customer on a point of sale, the intent of walk through, of buying, as on the time spent inside (real and perceived). It is difficult in the way that perception of smells is different from a person to another, and there are plenty individuals variants that markers have to take in account. The first one is the sex of the person: Hirsch and 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, when women are more sensitive to shampoo smelling than men (Spangenberg et al, 1996). The age of the consumer modify his/her perception, as according to Scholder and Fitzgerald (1998), the sense of smell breaks 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).

3.3.1 Scent Marketing: Areas of Application

Scents are used to enhance sales through the customers' positive feelings or associations. Mostly aromas are used to make the customers feel relaxed, in queues, waiting rooms, comfortable and at home-or create a sense of familiarity (MacDonnell, 2007). These feelings calm people down and make them act slower i.e. spend more time at stores, which normally lead to impulse shopping, feel comfortable in airplanes, at home in hotels (no matter where on the globe) or just associate a specific product with added value.

Smells are useful as a marketing tool as they are so closely linked to our memory which in turn connects to emotions. Branding plays on emotions at large (Lindstrom, 2005). Scent marketing can be used to sell all types of products and services and help enhance experiences and associations in all kind of contexts. Some areas of use are more conventional than others, but with some imagination the areas of use are almost unlimited.

Car Industry

When the car manufacturer, Rolls Royce, started to receive complaints regarding the new model not quite living up to expectations, it was concluded that the only difference was the smell. The customers felt that Rolls Royce had lost that particular feeling, associated with the cars and the brand. Older Rolls Royce cars were built using real wood, leather, wool and other natural materials, but today these materials have been replaced by others, such as plastics and foams, partially due to safety regulations. When fragrance experts had analyzed the smell of the old 1965 Cloud Silver Rolls Royce, they were able to produce a chemical blueprint of a perfume that gave that sought after impression of an old Rolls Royce. The Rolls Royce perfume contains a total of 800 elements. Some traces were more expected than others such as that of leather and mahogany but traces of oil and petrol were found as well. So, nowadays each new car that leaves the factory has the Rolls Royce perfume applied under the seats (Lindstrom, 2005).

General Motors' Cadillac is also aiming at the same customer loyalty, leaving nothing to chance. Everything that can be heard, felt or smelt by the customer is manufactured to perfection.

The leather in cars have been processed, colored and tanned for years, all in order to neutralize the natural smell. Then it was injected with industrial aromas, a process called re-tanning which put fragrant oil back into leather. Research within this area has now shown that the preference regarding the smell of leather has changed. People of today prefer the artificial smell of leather to the real deal. Car manufacturers are trying to satisfy this preference and have created an artificial leather aroma for cars (Lindstrom. 2005).

Airline Industry

Singapore Airlines has managed to create a perfect example of sense marketing, breaking through the barriers of traditional marketing. Singapore Airlines has invented the “Singapore girl” (who even has a spot at Madame Tussauds). Singapore Airlines introduced new coloring to the interior of the planes, and gave the flight attendants the choice of two make-up palettes in order to be color coordinated. Moreover, the flight attendants need to fit the existing size, and live up to the expectations of a Singapore girl’s beauty. The cabin is fragranced with a scent called Stefan Floridian Waters, an aroma specifically designed for the airline. The flight attendants wear the perfume, which is also applied to the hot towels handed out before take-off and landing (Lindstrom, 2005).

Retailing

Every store has a smell, regardless if it is monitored or not. *“You either decide to actually control the scent in your store or you don’t. Every environment has a smell. It’s up to you to take it on”* (Power, 2008). The difference with a monitored smell is that it can be adapted according to the tastes of the typical consumers and be changed for congruity to seasonal fragrances, such as pine needles, cinnamon and gingerbread for Christmas, and chocolate for Valentine’s Day (Lindstrom, 2005).

In research conducted regarding Nike shoes, two identical pairs of shoes were placed in two identical rooms, where one of the rooms was scented with a floral fragrance and the other was not. The participants examined the shoes in both rooms and were then asked to fill out a questionnaire. 84% of the respondents favored the pair of shoes in the scented room. In addition, they estimated the price of that pair to be, on average, \$10.33 more expensive than the shoes in the unscented room (Lindstrom, 2005). The results were unchanged even when the scent was so faint people did not notice (Goldkuhl and Styven, 2007).

The most evident form of scent marketing which is surrounding us all the times, is so frequently occurring we do not even think about it, that is to add an aroma to a product. Many items are scented, even though the fragrance as such is not part of the

core product. Examples of such products are washing detergents, fabric softeners, shampoos, soaps, deodorants and lotions (Kharif, 2005).

Food and Beverage Industry

Taste and smell are tightly linked, where the sense of taste is depending on smell. This makes smell an effective tool to allure the taste buds. The aroma of drinks and foods can be used to sell other things as well, initially not associated to one another, for instance popcorns in movie theaters. In similar cases, the absence of an expected smell can make impacts as well, not realized until it is gone (Lindstrom, 2005). Grocery stores and bakeries regularly use the smell of freshly baked bread, in order to attract potential customers from outside. Once inside there is a possibility that more things are brought, although not part of the consumer's initial part.

Healthcare Industry

The smell of hospital and dental waiting rooms is recognized by most people. Some associate this particular smell with negative associations or even fear. Conducted studies have shown that when the smell is replaced by another, the negative associations are diminished. This has by some been taken even further, including more senses in e.g. Florida Hospital's Seaside Imagine Center, where the MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) exam space has been designed as a beach. The floor has been made to imitate a boardwalk and the MRI unit a sand castle. The patients are met by sounds from waves and birds accompanied by smells from ocean and coconut. Vanilla has been shown to have a calming effect and helps people less claustrophobic, and is therefore used in the MRI room. These changes to the environment are said to have lowered the cancellation rates with 50%. In addition, less time is spent comforting and calming patients (Goldkuhl and Styven, 2007).

Hospitality Industry

The use of scent in the market for hotels, is normally aiming at providing a comfortable surrounding with help from aromas, so the customer should feel relaxed

and at home. If a particular hotel chain decides to use a certain scent in their hotels this can provide customers with a feeling of familiarity, no matter where on the globe. Moreover, the British architect Usman Hague, has experimented with the use of fragrances in hotel, so that the customers staying at the hotel could navigate and find their floor through the special scent added to that level (Goldkuhl and Styven, 2007).

Other Industries

Fragrances have been used in the Metro in Paris and in the London Underground. A refreshing scent was used, for the more crowded platforms, with the aim to provide the commuters with a break from other fellow passengers that did not smell as pleasantly (Lindstrom, 2005).

The Japanese NTT Communications Corporation has promoted “*SMS...Scent Message Service?*” for the new campaign, called “mobile fragrance communication” system. During the trial of promotion twenty male and female users had the opportunity to send scents to one another via a programmed cartridge within the phone (Goldkuhl and Styven, 2007). Simultaneously, a Japanese credit card company, JCB, has already introduced a scented credit card, with the belief that it would stimulate purchasing power, attracting among female customers. The card “*Minsheng Lady Flower*” is fragranced with a citrus flavor, promised to last a minimum of three years (Kharif, 2005).

3.4 Sense of Touch

The sense of touch is referred to as the most sensitive of our body’s organs (Montagu, 1986) and is the very first of our human senses to be developed (Field, 2001). Covering all of our body, the human skin is the largest of our organs, where an adult human being, that is average in both height and weight, has a skin area of about 2 m^2 that usually weights around 4-5 kilos (Schiffman, 2001). Further, it is through the skin, as our receptor organ for touch, that we are in contact with the world around us (Gallace and Spence, 2010; Serino and Haggard, 2010). Even if all of our skin responds to touch or pressure, we are most sensitive in our hands, fingers, around our mouth and on our tongue (Ackerman, 1990, Hulten et al, 2008). With the use of our fingers, which

are highly sensible to tactile stimulation, we are able to explore the physical world around us (Birznieks, 2003).

The skin is not only important for the physical development of human beings, but also plays an important role for our behavioral development (Gallace and Spence, 2010). Rolls (1999) develops this reasoning by stating that touch can create a tactile information that creates a rewarding feeling of pleasure that activates our brain, impacting our feelings and behavior. It can therefore be important to stimulate the skin in more profound ways, creating a more versatile surface that activates and stimulates the sense of touching connecting with the individual's feelings (Schiffman, 2001). The sense of touch is also the most important one for blind people. Through their high developed sense of haptics, term which refers to the "*active seeking and perception by the hands*" (Peck, 2010), they can capture information and have a clear idea of how the environment looks like.

The main characteristic of touch is that, compared to vision or other senses that can bring much sensory information simultaneously, it can perceive only one input at time. However, cutaneous receptors are highly sensitive and rich in delivering elementary information. The special perpetual abilities of the hands through particular hands movements are called Exploratory Procedure. More simply, it is the action of judging a product or a material by rubbing it to obtain some haptic product information (Krishna and Morrin, 2008; Klatzky and Lederman, 1987). Experiments have shown that people often do the same hand movement when assessing a characteristic of a product. To judge hardness they exert pressure, to estimate temperature they touch with a large skin surface and remain steady, to guess the weight they are hefting the object repeatedly etc (Krishna and Morrin, 2008; Klatzky and Lederman, 1987).

Taxonomy of touch, explained partly thanks to the Exploratory Procedure can be presented to distinguish between different types of touch in consumer's behavior:

Instrumental Touch

There is three level process in this kind of touch. At the first one, a consumer is touching the product with the only objective to make a purchase. He knows the product and is used to buy it. At the next level, a consumer touches the product to obtain information that is not related to haptic. If undecided which brand of daily cream

choosing, he may touch the package to read the ingredients. It can also manifest itself by smelling body milk or getting lipstick to taste the flavor (Peck, 2010). Finally, the last level consists in touching a product to gain product knowledge concerning material properties. These properties such as weight, texture or hardness can influence the purchase.

Hedonic Touch

Unlike the instrumental touch, this type of touch is done as an end itself. People may touch for their pleasure, because they are curious, to get sensations, to have fun. Hedonic touch seems to be the best procedure for marketing. Eliciting touch appeals to emotion and potentially increases purchases. Creating an attractive atmosphere and products that make people like touching is an asset that companies should not forget when developing their marketing strategies (Peck, 2010).

Incidental Touch

Besides touching a product for fun or to get information, there is a third type of touch, the incidental touch. Actually, consumers may observe other consumers touching items, action that can have an impact on purchase intention or product evaluation. Morales speak about a “*law of contagion*”. This is “*the idea that when a person or object (the source) touches another person or object (the target) the source will continue to influence the target even after contact has ceased*” (Rosin et al, 1990). Thus, positive and negative effects are identified (Peck, 2010).

3.4.1 “Touch Hunger”

Several years ago, Dr Tiffany Field, director of the Touch research Institute in Miami, Florida, coined the phrase *touch hunger* to describe the absence of tactile stimulation being reported by many people in society today (e.g. Field, 1998, 2001). Since then, the true extent of the marketing opportunity offered by means of appealing to a consumer’s skin, and the promise of delivering to that need, has become ever more apparent. Importantly, researches have shown that consumers experience a greater need

to touch certain classes of product prior to purchase than others (Citrin et al, 2003, Lindstrom, 2005; Spence and Gallace, 2011). For example, a survey study of more than 270 undergraduates on a university campus in the U.S. conducted by Citrin and colleagues revealed that the only product that students reported a significant need to touch was clothes.

According to Underhill (2009) we are living in a society that is “*tactile-deprived*” where shopping has become a chance to “*experience the material world firsthand*”. Consumers have a need to physically interact with products (Citrin et al, 2003), where touching has been found to have a positive impact on customer attitudes as well as intentions to purchase a product (Peck and Childers, 2003). This is also underlined by McCabe and Nowlis (2003) who state that consumers like to evaluate products and gather information about them and their properties by using their hands and fingers, i.e. the sense of touch.

While previous studies are about touching products, touching people can also have interesting consequences. In an interpersonal touch setting in the U.S., it has been shown that when the waitress physically touches a customer, her tip increases, even though her service is not judged to be any better (Lynn et al, 1993). Similarly, library service is considered to be when students checking out books are touched (Hornik, 1992); and if touched by the requester, a person is more willing to taste a new snack in the supermarket (Hornik, 1992) or take part in mail intercept interviews (Hornik and Ellis, 1988). According to Evolutionary biologists Morhenn and colleagues (2008) this happened not only because the act of touching is making the relationship more “friendly” but also due to the fact that oxytocin levels increase after touch. Higher oxytocin levels have shown to lead to greater generosity towards strangers, and also present during childbirth contractions and orgasms.

Peck and Childers (2003) have created the Need-for Touch scale which picks up individual differences in need-for-touch. The scale is made up of two sub-scales, instrumental and autotelic. The instrumental need for touch, as the name denotes, is for functionality, i.e., for a specific objective, generally to buy a product. The autotelic need for touch on the other hand, captures compulsive touch or the emotional component of touch, touch for the sake of touch alone. Both the functional and pleasure dimensions have six questions each. The scale has been used widely and has been able to discern

differences in judgments based on differences in need-for-touch (e.g. Krishna and Morrin, 2008; Peck and Wiggins, 2006).

People with a high need to touch are more likely to be positively impacted by marketing that incorporates touch. Peck (2010) and Hulten (2011) state that there are three categories of factors that motivates consumers to touch. Illustrated below (figure 9), these factors are: Individual factors, Product/object factors and Situational factors.

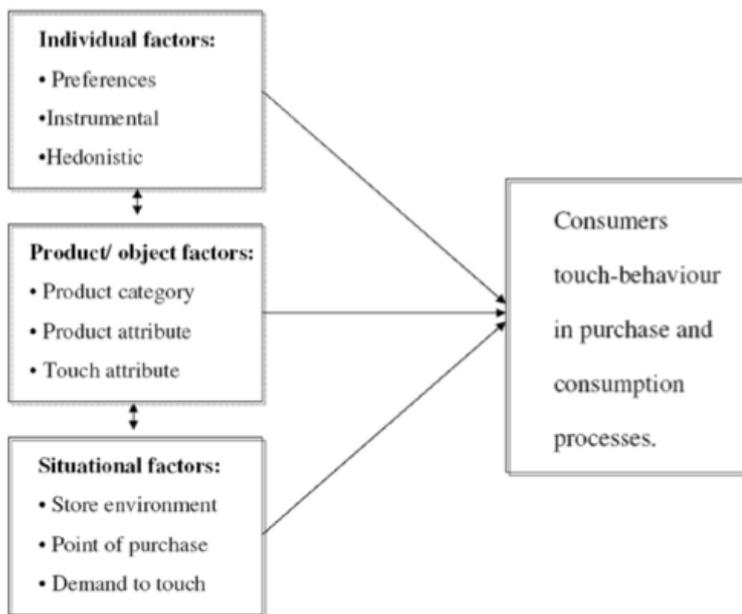


Figure 9. Motivation factors of touch, Hulten (2011)

Hulten (2011) suggested that individual factors include preferences, instrumental and hedonic factors are these can all differ from one individual to another. Product/object factors are related to the product category, product attributes and touch attributes, where a product can differ in its hardness or texture. This category can for example include product categories such as electronics and clothes. The third factor of the figure is situational factors and is often related to the store environment as well as the point of purchase and demand to touch.

3.4.2 Touch as a useful Tool in Retailing

Although available evidence suggests that tactile information is relevant to people's evaluation of products, it is important to point out that even within a particular product category, there are likely to be significant differences in the relative importance of the tactile attributes of the product as a function of the brand concern. For example, Martin Lindstrom (2005) has pointed to the distinctive tactile branding of the traditional glass bottle of Coca Cola, registered as a trademark by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in 1977, and to the satisfying weight of a Bang & Olufsen remote control when held in the hand (see also Lindstrom, 2008). That is, the consumer's need to touch objects that he/she might want to buy varies markedly as a function of both the specific class of product and the particular brand.

In another study, McCabe and Nowlis (2003) reported that consumers proffered to select those products from retailers who allowed their products to be touched, especially products for which tactile input is important for evaluation (e.g., clothing, or portable electronics; cf Gentile, Spiller and Noci, 2007). The clothing store "The Gap" has been very successful in making the most of such opportunities for tactile appraisal by their customers. Walk into any Gap store and you will see tables piled high with clothes, all positioned at any easy-to-touch height. What's more, someone will see many of the store's clientele, happily touching the merchandise (Robinson, 1998; Underhill, 1999; Spence and Gallace, 2011). That said, one also needs to be aware that there is a flip side to allowing tactile exploration, namely the possibility of "*tactile contamination*". That is, while people like to touch certain product, that doesn't mean that they like to purchase products they believe to have already been fingered by another customer (Argo et al, 2006). Furthermore, Robinson (1998) has estimated that people actually buy less than 25% of the items that they touch in store.

Peck and Wiggins (2006) also point out that touch has potentially significant implications for store atmospherics, in the form of in-store and point-of purchase displays. In many studies stated that displays can encourage touch and result in an interaction with products that customers would otherwise have ignored. This could increase impulse and unplanned purchases (Peck and Childers, 2010). Professor Alan Penn (2005) of UCL, in his paper on the complexity of the elementary interface, reflects on the impact Ikeas store layout has on its shopper's missions: "they accept a power exchange as they step over the threshold". In fact they are channeled on a set route, which delays their mission, with visual messages and touching opportunities formulated

around design, and the whole experience finally culminates in a marketplace and generally a queue for the checkout. Due to this process, along the way shoppers buy so much on impulse as they feel they should treat themselves due to the delay and in many cases due to time limitations they don't want to repeat the experience again too soon. It has been found that 67% of purchases in Ikeas market place are made on impulse (Kazim, 2004).

In a touch environment such as physical stores, consumers rely on sense of touch to make more accurate product judgments. Similarly, touch was found to increase the confidence in purchase behavior (Peck and Childers, 2003) and enhance product evaluation of high-quality products (Grohmann et al, 2007). Indeed, for some individuals, touching products can lead to increased affective response and positive effect on attitude and behavior (Peck and Wiggins, 2006). In addition, hedonic aspects of touch influence consumer decision even when product related information was not provided in the advertising contexts. In a recent study, Peck and Shu (2009) showed that for both buyers and non-buyers, merely touching a product or imagining the touch experience can increase perceived ownership of the product. These results suggest that for material products, tactile information is necessary and contribute to their choice process.

3.5 Sense of Taste

Food and taste sensations have an important role in human lives, on a physical, survival, social and even emotional level. Eating and drinking are associated to happiness and positive memories, which stress that taste aspects should not be neglected by marketers (Gobe, 2001). Moreover, adding taste or offering food or drink in a store increases the value and the perceived benefits by customers, which differentiate the brand positively in their mind. In this extend, gustative marketing is a fruitful area which is promptly growing (Celier, 2004).

The first image that comes up to people's mind when talking about taste is the mouth. It is indeed the organ detecting and identifying what we eat, thanks to the many taste receptors (called taste buds) we have on the tongue. These buds are spread over the entire surface of the tongue and count 50 to 100 taste cells each (Krishna and Elder, 2010). Chemical qualities of food pass through those cells and are transmitted to the

brain. Human can distinguish between four tastes: sweet, sour, bitter and salty. A fifth taste has recently been discovered by a Japanese researcher “umami” and refers to deliciousness or savoury (Krishna and Elder, 2010). However, even if the mouth is the first taste receptor, taste is much more complex. Actually, all the tastes that human perceive are related to the other senses, vision, audition, smell and touch.

First, taste is strongly linked to smell. The odor of a product is an important driver of taste perception (Small and Prescott, 2005) which is mostly due to the proximity between the nose and the mouth. “*When we cannot smell or see the food, it is difficult to tell a potato apart from an apple or red wine apart from coffee*” (Herz, 2007). The smell generates the concept of flavor and, combined with taste; it recalls memories and past experiences.

Research regarding the interaction of vision and taste showed that color can have on taste perception (Krishna and Elder, 2010). An experiment conducted by DuBose, Cardello and Maller (1980) showed that participants blind to a color of a fruitful drink could only identify 20% of the flavor, whereas they could identify 100% when they were allowed to see the color of the drink. The color intensity increases the taste intensity (Garber et al. 2000).

As surprisingly as it can be, sound is also related to taste. Zampini and Spence (2004) ran an experiment with chips. Participants were asked to eat chips in front of a microphone and had headphones to hear themselves. It appeared that the loudness has an impact on the perception of freshness: the louder the sound of the bite, the fresher the chips were in people’s mind. The sound made by the eaten food is important to enhance the perceived quality and taste.

The tactile stimuli of a product can influence taste perception as well, especially for consumers with a high need for touch (people who need to touch to evaluate a product). Krishna and Morrin (2008) showed through several experiments that depending on the quality of glass; the same water was not assessed in the same way. Water drunk in a solid disposable glass tastes better than the one drunk in a flimsy disposable glass.

Finally, the brand name plays an important role in the taste preferences. Indeed, Allison and Uhl’s experiment with beer drinkers demonstrated that participants could not really discriminate the beers when not labeled. However, when the beers were labeled, all the drinkers rated their favorite higher than others. This illustrates the fact

that when a brand is known and learned, people tend to have preferences, although without knowing the brand they would find any difference (Krishna and Elder, 2010).

To strengthen the perception of a brand all the senses should ultimately be included, but there are limited number of brands, which actually include taste in their branding strategies today (Lindstrom, 2005). However, taste should not be deserted in branding process since adding this extra dimension will lead to a stronger emotional connection for the consumer. Even if a product is not directly to oral use, the taste aspect could still be included by offering something to eat or drink at the point of purchase, or by including cafes and restaurants within a store, which create a pleasant atmosphere around the brand resulting in the consumers feeling more relaxed (Gobe, 2001).

3.5.1 Product quality versus “Brand” quality

In the case of food consumption, surveys indicate that consumers explain that their choice is mostly influenced by the taste of the product, or its nutritional properties, rather than by more extrinsic cues such as the brand or the packaging (Fornerino and Hauteville, 2010). At the same time, these consumers are also ready to pay more for branded food products, and indeed demonstrate brand fidelity because they believe that their brand offers a good “value for price” balance.

In the mind of consumers, there is a link between perceived quality and brands. As a matter of fact, in his book *Building Strong Brands*, Aaker (1996) states that perceived quality explain “80% of the perceived value of a brand”. Perceived quality is one dimension of the brand equity, defined by the Marketing Science Institute (Lauthesser, 1988) as the associations and behaviors of the consumers that lead branded products to obtain higher volumes and margins than those that would be obtained without the brand.

In their paper on brand equity, Keller and Lehmann (2006) cover a range of findings and pending issues, with a specific focus on the relative role of tangible and intangible attributes in the constitution of brand equity. These two constituents of the brand are of a different nature. The former relates to functional and intrinsic attributes of the product itself, whereas the latter tends to be global and relates to the benefits perceived (Keller, 1993; Park and Strinivasan, 1994). Myers (2003), among others, suggest that the effect of these two sets of attributes should be distinguished. “How can we measure the share of the utility of the brand not explained by the product attributes?”

Dealing with food and beverage products, the taste and its sensory dimensions are usually mentioned by customers as determinant constituents of perceived quality. Indeed, Anselmsson et al (2007), experimenting on grocery products, conclude that “taste”, “texture”, “odor”, “appearance” of the products and their package are indeed explicative of the brand equity. It should be considered, however, with Zeithalm (1998) that the perceived quality is the global outcome of the experience of the different sensory stimuli (i.e. acidity, sweetness, bitterness, aromas, etc), that the consumer is rather unable to analyze, but that can be used as a global assessment of the competitive quality of the brand, even when they state that these sensory constituents are important in their decision making. In reality, two difficulties are being faced here.

The first one is that many of the findings are based on the declarations of the customers, who do not result from actual exposure to the product (Anselmsson et al, 2007). When asked about their choice making, it is quite expected that a consumer would rationalize their preference by resorting to sensory attributes. However, a great number of studies in the field of food preference and liking show that consumer assessments of experienced quality differ from expected quality. Expected quality is defined here as the level of quality attributed to a product where extrinsic cues such as the brand, the region of origin, and the components included (Fornerino and Hauteville, 2010). The second difficulty is that the experimental design of much research does not allow for a distinction between the product attributes and the brand attributes.

The procedure by which many researchers (Schifferstein et al, 1999; Deliza and McFie, 1996; Lange et al, 1999, i.e.) have analyzed the influence of the consumer's perceived quality of a food or beverage product is as follows: First, products are tasted in blind conditions. The respondents are then asked to give an assessment of the expected value of the information under test, such as the brand, the region of the origin, product-specific components or production processes (Paasovaara et al, 2012)). Finally, the same subjects taste the products with the information. The researcher measures the effect of the expected value of a brand on the changes of quality perceptions between the blind and the information test. This effect can be considered to reflect the brand equity value.

Important findings related to previous procedure, consist:

- The extrinsic information stimulates positive or negative expectations towards the product.

- It is assumed that the blind testing allows for the true evaluation of the hedonic value of the product.
- An unknown brand, or a brand that is considered as low quality, may create a surprising experience and hence entail an over-evaluation of the product.
- The taste of a brand with a good reputation may be so disappointing that the subject will exaggerate the downgrading of the product.
- Not only the direction of the effect is indicative (assimilation/contrast) but also its intensity, which provides a picture of the influence of the brand on the product evaluation.
- For some products (such as champagne) consumers are more sensitive to brands because of the level of social involvement (Fornerino and Hauteville, 2010).

3.6 Summary of chapter 3

Human senses, the last decade, have received more and more attention, emphasizing their meaning for consumers' experience and behavior and this is exactly the intention that highlights chapter 4. Each of the five human senses-smell, sound, sight, taste and touch-contributes to an experience. Each of the five senses and all the senses together, also form the foundation of what is called the sensory experience. Academic research has shown that different sensory impressions impact consumer behavior and perceptions of goods and services. Hence, further knowledge about the human senses might make a firm's marketing more successful and an individual's experience more personalized. Vision, is not only regarded as the human's most significant sense but also the most dominant sensory system where the consumers more or less rely on visible and tangible cues that attract and draw attention. Light and color are pointed out as being the basic elements of vision that provides humans with a broad range of visual dimensions. The sense of sound is linked to emotions and feelings and the sense impacts brand experiences and interpretations. Therefore, music, used widely for sensory marketing purposes, is one type of sound that is integrated psychologically, providing humans with intensively experiences of aesthetic pleasure. The sense of smell is related to pleasure and well-being and is closely connected to emotions and memories. A scent is persistent, long-lasting and will still be familiar even a long time after experience and because of that, scents are used from brands, to enhance sales through the customers' positive feelings or associations. Furthermore, the main characteristic of touch is that, compared to other senses, can bring much sensory information simultaneously, it can perceive only one input at time. In consumer behavior, humans usually have a need for touch either to get information for a purchase (instrumental touch), either for pleasure (hedonic touch), or because they see others "touching" (incidental touch). Finally, the sense of taste is the most distinct emotional sense and often interacts with other senses. Taste is strongly connected to the odor of a product, as it is an important driver of taste perception, and to the brand name, since branded products, usually leads to a stronger emotional connection for the consumer.

CHAPTER 4: Retail Atmospherics

As early as the 1970's Kotler (1974) argued that the atmosphere of a place can be more influential than the product itself, underlining that the atmospherics can be viewed as the primary product. Store atmospherics are said to affect consumers behavior through interaction with their perception (Parsons, 2011; Puccinelli et al, 2009) and the thought of atmospherics is to create a positive experience that influences the consumer's perception, allowing them to expect positive things, including the possibility to try new things (Wanger, 2002). Atmospherics is defined as "*...an effort to design buying environments to produce specific emotional effects in the buyer that enhance his purchase probability*" (Kotler, 1974, p.50).

In connection to the above stated definition by Kotler, Sharma and Stafford (2000) state that design, ambience and social factors together makes out atmospheric cues. They further explain that environmental factors can have what they refer to as synesthetic properties, meaning that the factors can influence the persons in the environment by working together in a synergistic fashion (ibid). The retail environment is therefore never neutral; instead it is full of cues and different messages communicating with consumers (Greenland and McGoldrick, 1994). These cues, referred to as sensory cues, are of great importance in attracting the consumer, creating an emotional relationship (Hulten, 2011).

In retailing, store atmospherics emphasize the sensory qualities of servicescape, often designed and formulated to attract consumer interest and response, as well as to generate a positive retail experience in a B2C or B2B context (Noad and Rogers, 2008). As with sensory stimuli like displays, colors, employees, lighting, music or scents, atmospheric cues are intended to create positive emotions and increase sales through appealing to the human senses (Soars, 2009). Moreover, atmospheric cues are significant for a hedonic retail experience in terms of attractive stimuli and facilitating stimuli (Ballantine et al, 2010).

Since the store environment is becoming more and more important, with increased attention from both consumers and store managers, the stores should be designed with different styling elements in a conscious way with the aim to attract consumers,

affecting the buyers in different ways (Rodrigues et al, 2011; Solomon et al, 2010; Turley and Milliman, 2000). Kotler (1974) specifies that atmospherics are used to create a designed environment where consumers are emotionally affected. This reasoning is further developed by Summers and Hebert (2001) who state that atmospherics express specific sensory qualities of a store environment that can be used to evoke explicit consumer responses. The atmospherics are directly linked with our senses, excluding taste, through which people experience different sensory channels like color, shape, scent, volume or temperature (Hulten, 2012).

Store atmospherics are linked to a number of stimuli and different cues, where color, lighting, scent and music are included (Solomon et al, 2010; Wanger, 2002, Spangenberg et al, 1996), with the aim of impacting consumer's in a positive way through emotional responses at an unconscious level. The surrounding aspects mentioned above, are tools for providing the image and the impression a company wants to convey to its consumers. The results from the influence of these stimuli, can lead to a wide range of behavioral responses, such as spending more time in the environment, impulse buying and sales (Reimer and Kuehn, 2005).

4.1 Design, Ambient and Social cues

Research on the retail environment identifies three primary sets of cues: design, ambient and social (Baker and Cameron, 1996). Researchers consider external variables such as window displays, internal variables such as flooring and decoration within design cues (Puccinelli et al, 2009; Turley and Milliman, 2000, see Figure 10). To enhance this aspect, Crate & Barrel, the home equipment company, retains a designer for each store, charged solely with managing the store display and merchandise layout, despite the loss of central control. Layout, equipment, furnishings, signage and the style of décor can effect consumer's perceptions of a retail environment and thus their likelihood of approaching or avoiding the product or store (Puccinelli et al, 2009). For example, Trader Joe's and Starbucks' "handwritten" signs may attract consumers by signaling a more authentic experience. Store layout may also influence consumer's expectation about search efficiency (Titus and Everett, 1995), such that a large store with long, tall aisles may lead consumers to believe they need longer to find what they want.

Ambient cues influence merchandise value and store patronage intentions (Baker et al, 2002); for example a wine store playing classical music sells more expensive wine than when it plays top 40 music (Areni and Kim, 1993). Such ambient cues may signal the identity of the store’s clientele to other consumers (Sirgy et al, 2000). According to Soars (2009) at Principles Stores the introduction of a tailored music policy, increased sales by 12-18 percent within three weeks of introduction, and stores with music were rated 15 percent higher than Principles’ stores without music. A key element was the “tailored” approach-one size does not fit all. Lighting that is too bright can increase perceived wait times and the scent of apple pie may remind shoppers of home and prompt the purchase of brands from their childhood (Baker and Cameron, 1996). Lipman (1990) found that ambient aromas increase consumer dwell time. Moreover, Gueguen and Petr (2006) diffused lavender essential oils and lemon essential oils in a restaurant over three Saturday evenings. When lavender essential oil was dispensed both dwell time and the money spent increased. Lemon essential oil saw no improved productively at all. This is related to the psychological effects of the oils, as generally lavender is considered to be calming whilst lemon is refreshing and energizing.

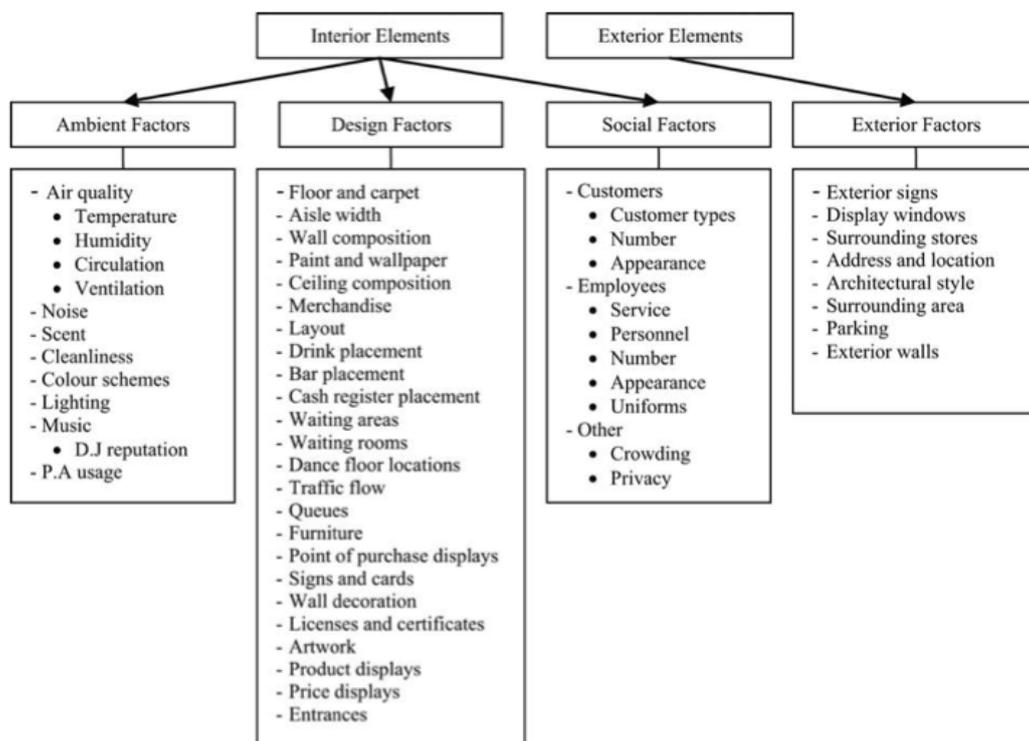


Figure 10. Elements used in Atmosphere Creation, Turley and Milliman (2000)

Social cues have been investigated only modestly (Puccinelli et al, 2009), mostly in terms of crowding, too few or too many staff can negatively affect consumer experiences. Employee attributes also may be important and signal service quality (Baker et al, 2002), and consumers' perceptions and interpretations of employees' behavior alters expectations (Cowley, 2005). If consumers perceive that employees listen to them, they may develop trust, though effective listening requires actively sensing, interpreting and responding, which can enable the employee to empathize more with consumers (Stock and Hover, 2005). The interpersonal nature of the interaction between the consumer and the employee, may be the key to consumer satisfaction in retail environment (Goodwin, 1996). Recent research further indicates that reading consumers' nonverbal cues enables employees to identify and respond to consumer needs (Puccinelli, 2006). To create a more satisfying experience, high consumer contact retailers have developed programmatic conversation starters, such as including the employees' country of origin on their nametags. Similarly, produce managers identify "my favorites" among their products and waiters at Macaroni Grill write their name upside down on the tablecloth when they greet a table. These actions prompt consumers to register greater personalization, which may enhance their retail experience (Verhoef et al, 2009).

4.2 The Importance of atmospherics

As explained by Kotler (1974), firstly, atmospherics is a significant marketing tool in situations where the product is purchased or consumed and where the seller has design options. Consequently, the utilization of atmospherics becomes relevant for retailers and less relevant for wholesaler and manufacturers. Retailers are more prone to give the most thought to atmospherics since consumers tend to have a large choice in where they buy and because atmosphere is part of the total product. It is important to point out that even within retailing atmospherics vary in importance on the line of business and selling approach.

Secondly, as Soars (2009) suggests, atmospherics become more significant as the number of competitive outlets increase. When only one outlet exists where a certain type of good is sold, the merchant is not under pressure to invest in atmospherics, trusting that the demand will keep the consumers coming. As the amount of outlets for a

given product increase, the more likely is for the competitors to increase their use of atmospherics, as a tool to attract and hold a certain segment of the market.

Thirdly, atmospherics is a more important marketing tool in industries where product and/or price differences are small (Countryman and Jang, 2006). As a rule, buyers tend to make use of product and price differences as key factors when choosing retail stores. When these differences are minimal, consumers will look for further discriminative criteria, which might be provided by location convenience, parking facilities, owner personality or atmosphere (Kotler, 1974).

The process of designing the in-store environment should be adapted to the market segment a company is aiming to address, as the environment has to reflect the consumer expectations (Countryman and Jang, 2006). The atmospherics must be selected with the target group in mind, by considering what they are supposed to feel and experience. According to Soars (2009), of a great importance is understanding the shopper, who arrives in a particular state of mind and with a specific purpose. There are three principal types of shopper purposes (see Figure 11):

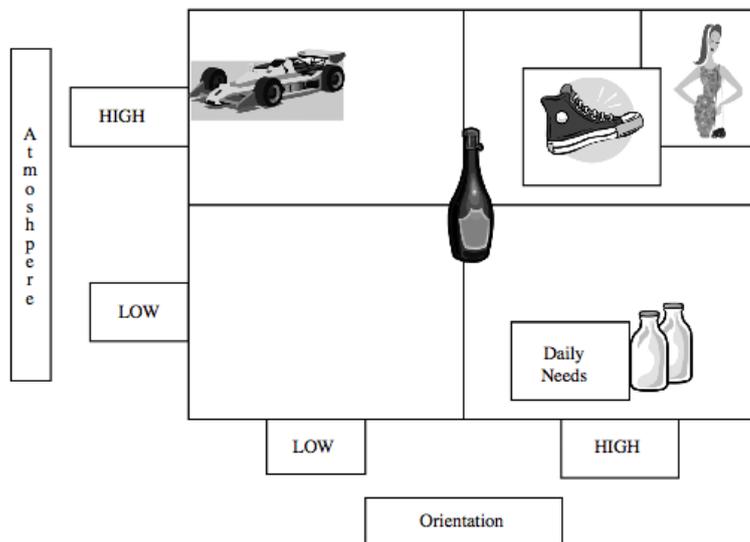


Figure 11. The interplay of Atmosphere and Orientation, Lombart (2004)

- *Task/needs shopper*: the mindset is driven by need and therefore requires a pathway to purchase and perhaps some inspiration along the way. Decision-

making tends to be driven by frequency and/or complexity of purchase, for example, milk being a frequent purchase would require little decision-making. The behavior of shoppers in auto-mode can still be influenced by external stimuli.

- *Complex purchase shopper*: champagne is more complex decision, so the shopper is likely to benefit from the right atmospherics. Similarly, to purchase a car, there are three dramatically different stages: research, deliberation and confirmation, followed by the purchase process.
- *Recreational/browsing shopper*: this mindset is actively seeking inspiration; orientation is not such a big deal and there's a huge opportunity to provide the correct atmospherics to entice the shopper to linger and purchase. It is often argued that browsers are of no intrinsic value to retailers but browsing has been proven as a significant form of consumer behavior and a big opportunity for retailers (Lombart, 2004).

4.3 Environment Experience

It is no longer just about the purchase; instead it is becoming more important to provide the consumers with an experiential factor of the store environment (Solomon et al, 2010). It is therefore central that retail environments are created where superior consumer experiences is at core (Verhoef et al, 2009). Stated by Kamaladevi (2010) retailers can only compete in a successful way by focusing on the consumers buying experience, where the goal should be to move satisfied consumers to loyal and finally to advocate consumers.

In providing consumers with an environment experience it is important to include a composed mixture of clues that are detected by people in the buying process (Schmitt, 1999), where the environment often is filled with aesthetic expression which can all affect the experience in a positive but also negative way very quickly (Schmitt and Simonson, 1997). Further, the need to provide consumers with artificial environments that are attractive is underlined by Kotler (1974), who also suggests that there is a difference between intended atmospherics and perceived atmospherics. The author explains that intended atmospherics is the sensory qualities that the artificial

environment is thought to provide, while the perceived is how the consumer actually experience it (Kotler, 1974).

According to Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004), it is also becoming more important for companies to enable consumers to co-create their experiences, providing them with unique experiences that make out a competitive advantage. Creating experiences in the retail environment has the purpose to create an emotional engagement for the consumers (Backstrom and Johansson, 2006). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) also emphasized that consumption should be looked upon from an experiential point of view, where feelings, fun and fantasies should be included. It is also important to recognize that how an experience is perceived is dependent on different personal variables, where individuals will have different experiences of the same situation (Harris and Ezeh, 2008).

In a society where the consumer is referred to as experience-seeking, it is highly important to recognize that retailers need to have a focus on environment experience (Backstrom and Johansson, 2006). Atwal and Williams (2009) continue this discussion by explaining that consumers interested in experiences should be offered memorable events that engage them in a personal way making them willing to pay for the possibility to spend extra time in the environment. With this in mind, a store has the possibility to create a physical manifestation of the brand, and the store surroundings should be designed in order to capture the essence of the brand identity (Floor, 2006).

Floor (2006) states that stores need to become their own brands if they are to sustain the ever increasing competition, and that the emotional connection a consumer can receive with a brand by interacting an a store environment is of a great importance in order to built a positive image of the brand in the consumers mind. It is acknowledged by Puccinelli et al (2009) that retail performance is at core a means for companies to enhance their consumer's satisfaction and the authors further emphasize the importance to recognize that consumers are interested in achieving goals, which affects their experiences.

4.3.1 Some outstanding Sensory environments

According to Tarlok Teji, Lead Partner UK Retail at Deloitte "*linear thinking and refinement worked in the 90s, but will need to change in order to engage the 21st*"

century shopper. Retailers have got to build in some innovation of value to meet the needs and wants of today's consumers". Being more thoughtful about creating experiences using the senses is clearly outside of linear mode (Soars, 2009).

Recent research has revealed that a consumer who dwells for 40 minutes is more than twice as likely to purchase as someone who spends 10 minutes. Additionally, shoppers who hang around longer spend, on average, twice as much. Successful experience strategies to get shoppers to hang around and spend more at Macy's in the US included expansion and visual enhancement of fitting room waiting areas (Maynard and Co, 2007).

Some companies have clearly begun exploring sensory enhancement to their retail space, for example, the music, colors, lighting, décor and coffee aroma of upmarket coffee outlets such as Starbucks and Café Nero are designed specifically around consumer needs. Research by Nespresso found that 60 percent of sensory experience of drinking espresso comes from the retail environment, so they launched a chain of upmarket coffee outlets partially to enhance the appeal of their home-prepared product (Soars, 2009).

Harrods recently ran an exhibition of the senses - an innovative means of increasing footfall to the store. Each of six lifts was treated with a different sensory experience. The "sound" lift had a specially commissioned piece by Michael Nyman to demonstrate the physical effect of a confined space; micro lasers directed beams of light on Swarovski crystals in another; different smells, including the scent of a new car, were emitted at the touch of a button in a further lift; the "taste" lift provided the opportunity for consumers to create their own ice-cream flavors; the "tactile" lift demonstrated the challenges that face the sight impaired; and the "sixth sense" lift was for "Cosmic Ordering"- the potential to grant wishes (Lindstrom, 2005).

Apple with its "come and play" feel and Nike with its sporty imagery both express their brands superbly through their store environments. Shoppers feel they are inside the brand; it is like an interactive emporium where they are welcome to browse at their leisure (Maynard and Co, 2007). The fruit drinks company Innocent has launched grass and daisy chillers, which have already doubled sales for many of their stockists. This "touchy, feely" approach adds differentiation and excitement to a fast growing category. Finally, Louis Vuitton gained much media coverage when they used a giant LV valise to hide the scaffolding during the construction of their Champs Elysee Store in Paris.

Such a high impact attraction generated free publicity, with a positive impact on the launch budget (Soars, 2009).

4.4 Atmospheric and Hedonic services

Hedonic meaning attaches to the fantasy and emotive aspects of a consumptive experience and relates to sensory pleasures, daydreams, emotional response and esthetic enjoyment. Hedonic components in a consumption experience emphasize the enjoyment or pleasure the experience offers, separate and apart from realizing any utilitarian benefit (Mathews et al, 2009). These definitions help explain why hedonic services represent a multi-million dollar business.

Baseball games, spa visits, theme park trips and symphony concerts all represent hedonic services. With such a large variety of entertainment options at a consumer's disposal, managers are increasingly challenged to augment the fringe benefits associated with their core service (Hightower et al, 2002). One such fringe benefit many service providers have focused on is the physical environment. The physical or "service" environment has become an opportunity to aid in the "affective gratification" (Kempf, 1999) consumers actively seek out in a hedonic service or product. In an effort becoming more competitive, many service providers are investing in new construction or extensive remodeling efforts of prominent hedonic facilities.

For example, in January of 2004, Norwegian Cruise Lines launched a multi-million dollar renovation on one of their cruise ships; *Pride of Aloha*. The refurbished luxury cruise liner boasts a Hawaiian theme and depicts the history, art and culture of Hawaii. In May 2005, Six Flags reopened the Largo Theme Park under its new name "Hurricane Harbor" after spending millions on a new facility which featured new restaurants, rides, private cabanas and swimming pool for kids. Six Flags considered it to be its largest renovation ever (Art Business News, 2004). Renovations at leisure attractions like these represents big business, and hedonic institutions worldwide are investing millions annually on renovation and refurbishment (Mathews et al, 2009).

Bitner (1992) argues that an organization's physical environment creates a virtual metaphor for that organization (Keng et al, 2007). Furthermore, by creating a unique physical environment, service providers are able to differentiate themselves from their competitors and create brand equity in the mind of the consumers. Thus, the physical

environment becomes a mental cue for a more significant variable: its image (Kotler, 1974). Via bold furniture, wooden floors, dim lighting, and signage, the physical environment creates a brand image by encapsulating an emotional personal in physical attributes.

The service environment can connote both explicit and implicit cues that serve as communicators to the users (Eroglu et al, 2000). These atmospherics can be used to fashion distinctive brand personality in the mind of the visitor and by extension make emotional connections with consumers. The personnel responsible for manipulating the environmental stimuli within any specific environment is then able to orchestrate brand leverage and create lasting brand meaning for the facility in the eyes of the consumer (Pauyruen and Miller, 2007; Bitner, 1992). Consequently, professionals can create specific brand meanings through direct manipulation or atmospherics (such as product displays and spacious display areas, lighting, sounds, power aisles and bold clear signage) in an effort to break through the clutter of the marketplace, defy convention and create a unique experience for the consumer (Mathews et al, 2009). In creating these unique brand associations, atmospherics are able to contribute to an overall positive consumer response, which can manifest itself in positive purchase behavior (Kotler, 1974)

4.4.1 Understanding the Bar environment

Bar environment constitute an excellent example selected for hedonic reasons. At most bars tend to sell a similar range of products, they differentiate themselves from competitors by manipulating elements of their environment to create a unique atmosphere. Through careful planning of design, ambient and social elements (Figure 12), bar managers have the ability to create an atmosphere that generates moods and emotions in patrons, which can dictate their approach and avoidance behaviors in that environment (Gardner, 2001).

The atmospheric variable used most commonly in bars is music (Figure 12). In creating their atmosphere bar managers have the freedom to manipulate the tempo, genre, familiarity or volume of the music (Yalch and Spanenberg, 1993). Through these manipulations of the music played, desired emotional responses such as pleasure, arousal and dominance can be created to engender approach behaviors. Also, for bar

managers who wish to deter a certain crowd, music can be used to create avoidance behaviors, simply by playing music that unwanted patrons do not feel comfortable listening to (Orth and Bourrain, 2005).

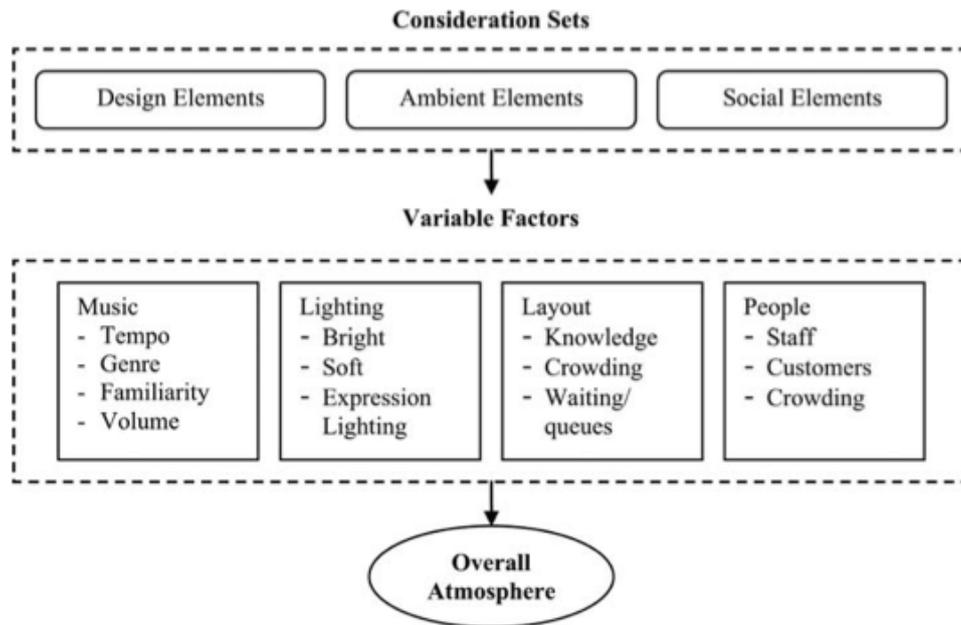


Figure 12. Framework for bar atmosphere creation, Grayson and McNeill (2009)

Often used in combination with music, lighting is another element used in bars to create an atmosphere. Lighting is particularly important in settings such as bars as it is required to fulfill two functions: a functional role of enabling patrons to see, and an atmosphere or mood creation role (Grayson and McNeill, 2009). Usually dependent on the music and the style of the environment, bars have a wide range of lighting options to create their desired atmosphere, ranging from mood lighting in traditional style pubs to strobe lighting and colored lasers used in nightclubs (ibid).

One of the most important concepts when designing a bar is to ensure it creates the right flow and spreads the crowd to the right places. Designers must create a bar layout to ensure areas such as the bathrooms and exits are visible and accessible even when the bar is full (Grayson and McNeill, 2009). The effect of layout on the creation of a bar atmosphere can in some ways be considered subconscious, because if a bar has a good layout, a consumer may not consciously be aware of this, whereas patrons in a bar with poor design or flow will notice the crowding problems or inability to find and access

certain areas of the bar. This is important, as some atmospheric research note that crowding is a positive aspect of social environments and can enhance consumer enjoyment (Pons et al, 2006).

Another primary reason for consumers to patron bars is to engage in social interaction, whether it is with staff or other customers. Human elements in atmosphere creation are particularly important in bars, as they involve prolonged social interaction, with patrons often spending several hours in a chosen bar environment (Eroglu and Machleit, 1990). This aspect of an atmosphere is important, as factors including staff service, consumer characteristics and crowding can dictate the decision to patron a bar and the time (and often money) spent in that bar (ibid).

Finally, because bars use all of these atmospheric elements simultaneously, the integrated effects must be considered. For example, when running a bar, owners and managers must consider how the music played and lighting, interact with social elements such as consumer characteristics, and how this will dictate perceptions of crowding, which influences the assessment of layout elements such as bar waiting queues (Grayson and McNeill, 2009). Each of these elements' effectiveness will differ depending on the situations and the other atmospheric elements being interpreted, which means an understanding of how they are perceived as an integrated whole is required.

4.5 Atmospherics and e-tailers

Online retailing has attracted a great deal of attention in recent years due to its potential and implications for both buyers and sellers. From the retailer's perspective, on line commerce as a way of doing business offers a number of advantages (Eroglu et al, 2001). With consumers' premium emphasis on efficient use of time and their declining interest in traditional shopping formats, combined with technology improvements that provide greater convenience and more information than traditional retailing, more retailers are considering the online as a way of doing business. From the consumer point of view, online shopping offers convenience (temporal and spatial), value (through price comparison opportunity) and hedonic consumption possibilities. "With online retailing, constraints of time and space disappear" (Kalakota and Whinston, 1997, p. 219).

Retail customer interface, commonly termed store atmospherics, may account for up to two-thirds of in-store purchases (Bandyopadhyay et al, 2000). Key elements of atmospherics in traditional brick-and-mortar stores differentiate retailers' offerings (Baker et al, 2002). In an online context, atmospherics are subsumed in the computer interface, yet little is currently known about how this interface affects consumers' purchase intentions (Richard, 2005). This may be because website design issues have traditionally been evaluated within an information technology paradigm (Yang et al, 2003). A consequence is websites that employ features indiscriminately and ones whose features pass from competitive advantage to minimum consumer expectations rapidly (Piccoli, et al, 2004). Recent studies prescribe building an understanding of how potential consumers view the computer interface as a way to sustain competitive advantage (Richard, 2005).

Several research areas provide insights toward building a theoretical model of web interface features. For instance, Chen and Wells (1999) have identified elements contributing to consumers' positive assessments of websites; namely entertainment, informativeness, and organization. In general, these elements fulfill consumer needs for information and entertainment, while containing organizational elements that facilitate these experiences. Empirical evidence supporting the importance of these elements in effective websites is mounting (Montoya-Weiss et al, 2003). Alternatively, Wolfinbarger and Gilly (2003) present evidence for a large number of potential elements desired by online consumers. In addition, interactivity and convenience are posited as critical for web effectiveness (Piccoli et al, 2004). Finally Richard (2005) divides environmental cues into high task relevant like navigation, organization and structure, and low task relevant ones, like entertainment.

Within the web environment, computer factors are those providing functionality (Liang and Lai, 2001). In their study, these elements categorized including technical aspects, navigation, impartiality and information content as computer factors. Human factors are those hedonic elements that add value to the website by contributing to user satisfaction (Zhang and Von Dran, 2000). These authors identified five categories of human factors on the web, specifically enjoyment, cognitive outcome, user empowerment, credibility, visual appearance and organization of informational context. Generally, research in this direction suggests that providing richer media with a more real environment (providing improved human factors) has a more positive influence on user involvement with the content over improved computer factors. For instance, Fogg

et al (2002) found that nearly half of all consumers paid far more attention to the superficial aspects of a site, than to its content. Similarly, Rosen and Purinton (2004) demonstrate that sensory stimuli play a significant role in promoting online sales and repeat visits.

4.5.1 Apparel Online Retailing

Online retailing has been one of the fastest growing retail sales channels. US retail e-commerce sales reached \$136.2 billion in 2006, up 26 percent over 2005 (Brohan, 2007), and total online spending in 2008 is expected to reach €146 billion, which represents an increase of 11.1 percent over estimates for 2007, and €182.5 in 2010 (Kim et al, 2009). Among many product categories sold online, apparel is a major purchase category (Murphy, 2000). However, few studies have investigated the impact of atmospheric cues in online shopping (ibid).

Retail web sites contain a vast amount of information that retailers deliberately provide to satisfy need for information. Researchers have conceptualized two types of cues that make up an online apparel store atmosphere (Eroglu et al, 2003); one is a high task relevant cue which is designed to facilitate the utilitarian shopping motive and enable consumers to achieve their shopping goals, and the other is allow task-relevant cue that is irrelevant to shopping-oriented goals but rather enhances hedonic value by making the shopping experience more pleasurable (Childers et al, 2001).

Eroglu et al (2001) included descriptions of merchandise, price, terms of sale, return policies, and site map is the high task-relevant category. On the other hand, colors, background patterns, icons, typestyles and fronts, animation, music and entertainment were included in the low task-relevant category. In a similar way, flash intro and symbols of professional affiliations are examples of low-task-relevant cues since these cues make internet shopping more pleasurable and increase shopper confidence.

In online shopping, even when people are knowledgeable about products, they may perceive high risk due to uncertainty in product judgment (Fiore et al, 2000). Effective product presentation in this context can play a role in positively facilitating the decision-making process by reducing perceptions of uncertainty and risk associated with purchasing and increasing purchase intent in online shopping (Park et al, 2005) In an online apparel shopping context, the effect of visual product presentation has received

recent empirical support. Research shows that 3D virtual product presentations provide a stimulating experience due to vivid sensory information and the psychological sensations on being present in the online environment (Kim and Forsythe, 2008). The ability to simulate trying the product on one's body using a 3D virtual model may also be an important interactive feature for apparel websites because consumers frequently state the inability to try on the product leads to hesitation to purchase apparel online (Abend, 2001). According to Sam Taylor, Vice president of e-commerce for Lands' End, virtual model technology used on landsend.com contributed to a 34% increase in conversion rate of shoppers to buyers and more apparel purchases (DesMarteau, 2004). Various apparel retailers have adopted this virtual model technology to enhance the online shopping experience. Currently, Lands' End, Sears, L.L. Bean, Adidas, Speedo, H&M, and iVillage utilize "My virtual Model" technology on their web sites (Kim et al, 2007). For example one of the largest online apparel retailers, Lands' End, claimed that the use of 3D virtual presentation allows consumers to use their specific body measurements when creating the virtual model makes shopping for Land's End apparel online even easier and more accurate by providing size recommendations (ibid). Researchers found that simple technologies providing interactivity have positive effects on consumer responses and increase the desire to browse and purchase online (Klein, 2003).

According to Kim et al (2007) the interactive and vivid nature of presentation of products may evoke mental imagery drawing on past ideas, feelings and sensations. Fiore and Jin (2003) proposed that technologies used of apparel online retailers, such as mix and match feature and virtual model feature, provides consumers with more information about the product, which evokes a sense of control, enjoyment and involvement. Fiore and Jin (2003) indicted that these features provide more of the visual sensory information (how the products look together) and behaviors (checking the side and back views of the product on the body) found when shopping for the actual product. Li et al (2001) qualitative study supports that 3D virtual product presentations result in consumptions experiences characterized as offering rich product information and generating involvement along with control and enjoyment as compared to 2D graphics of the product. Moreover, 3D product presentation has been reported by developers and retailers to attract consumers, increase sales and decrease returns (Joins et al, 2003).

Dailey and Heath (1999) found that web site atmospherics significantly influence shoppers' behavioral intentions through altering consumer affect, especially pleasure.

More recent online atmospherics research demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between the design of website and pleasure experienced by online shoppers of apparel products (Mummalaneni, 2005). Moreover, online store layout producing easy navigation leads to a higher level of online entertainment (Vrechopoulos et al, 2004) Consumer shopping enjoyment culminates from pleasure and excitement triggered by the store environment. In another study, Griffith et al (2001) reported that the interface design of an online retailer's web site, which created a vivid experience (i.e. sensory and behavioral experience similar to that with the actual product) affected consumer involvement with the online shopping. In turn, online shopping involvement positively influenced approach responses toward the product. Shoppers who are highly involved with a web site are more willing to search for information on the site, to explore new stimuli (Balabanis and Reynolds, 2001) and more likely to purchase products online than others (Kwak et al, 2002). More recent internet atmospherics research showed that surfers who had high involvement with the web site had high purchase intentions on that site (Richard, 2005).

Customer loyalty and patronage towards a retailer are keys for the success of the online retailing (Harris and Goode, 2004). When consumers experience the enjoyment of shopping and, in turn, have a desire to stay longer on a retail web site, they be more likely to revisit the online retailer to repeat the enjoyable shopping experience.

4.6 Summary of chapter 4

The purpose of chapter 4 is to present the basic elements of retail atmospherics. In retailing, store atmospherics emphasize the sensory qualities of servicescape, often designed and formulated to attract consumer interest and response, as well as to generate a positive retail experience. As with sensory stimuli like displays, colors, employees, lighting, music or scents, atmospheric cues are intended to create positive emotions and increase sales through appealing to the human senses. Atmospherics become more significant as the number of competitive outlets increase, in situations where the product is purchased or consumed and where the seller has design options and in industries where product and/or price differences are small. Moreover, atmospheric cues are significant for a hedonic retail experience in terms of attractive stimuli and facilitating stimuli. Hedonic components in a consumption experience emphasize the enjoyment or pleasure the experience offers, separate and apart from realizing any utilitarian benefit. Nowadays, many companies have already realized the great importance of atmospherics and have clearly begun exploring sensory enhancement to their retail space. With consumers' premium emphasis on efficient use of time and their declining interest in traditional shopping formats, combined with technology improvements that provide greater convenience and more information than traditional retailing, more retailers are considering the online as a way of doing business. In case of online store atmospherics, researchers have conceptualized two types of cues that make up an online store atmosphere, one is a high task relevant cue which is designed to facilitate the utilitarian shopping motive and enable consumers to achieve their shopping goals, and the other is a low task-relevant cue that is irrelevant to shopping-oriented goals but rather enhances hedonic value by making the shopping experience more pleasurable.

CHAPTER 5: Sensory Branding

The fundamental of sensory branding is to establish a connection between a consumer and a brand on an emotional level through interaction of the five human senses; sight, sound, smell, taste and touch in the buying process (Lindstrom, 2005; Hulten, 2011; Cian and Cervai, 2011). Even though the importance of human senses has been known for a long time, it is not until recently that the senses became a crucial element in strategic marketing. In fact, it is the acceptance of sensory marketing's distinct conceptualization by both the academicians and practitioners that has facilitated its practical implementation and raised its status as one of the most essential aspects of a firm's marketing mix strategy (Brakus et al, 2009; Chang and Chieng, 2006; Choi et al, 2011; Shamim and Butt, 2013). Today, it is a "hot topic" within the world of marketing, and the amounts of companies employing it are rapidly increasing. Hulten et al (2008) claimed that in the individualistic, contemporary society, consumers tend to take functional attributes such as price and quality for granted. Given the information-overload implying that consumers are faced by thousands of messages every day, it is harder to attract the attention of the consumers (Lindstrom, 2005). In addition, technological improvements, such as Internet have made it possible to purchase products or services and get them delivered to your home, without having to move from the house. Consequently, stores have to offer something more than just the core product so that consumers will make the effort to actually come to the point of purchase (Ha and Parks, 2005).

This chapter begins with explaining the concept of brand equity. Brand equity is analyzed from a consumer perspective in order to offer deeper insights the impact of sensory branding on consumers. Further, brand image and brand loyalty are presented, which constitute significance components, strongly connected to branding and consequently, to sensory branding. Moreover follows the relation between brand experience and multi-sensory brand experience, which are basic elements in sensory branding theory, with sensorial strategies. Finally, the sensorial strategy model portrays the connection between the senses, the sensations, sensory expressions, branding and consumer equity.

5.1 Brand Equity

“A brand is a distinguish name and/or symbol (such as logo, trademark or package design) intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors” (Aaker, 1991, p.7). Branding enhances the value of a product beyond its functional purpose (Farquhar, 1989; Lassar et al, 1995; Aaker, 1997; Schmitt, 2012) and making product characteristics uniquely associated to a brand strengthens the brand identification and differentiates the brand towards competitors, which in turn can generate a competitive advantage (Aaker, 1991). When there is a risk involved in buying a product, a brand can act as a safety for the consumers by reducing anxiety and assuring a certain level of quality (Kapferer, 2004; Schuiling and Kapferer, 2004). Hence, the trustworthiness of a brand is of major importance since it could facilitate the decision-making progress for a consumer during a purchase. The consumer expects to get the same benefits as with previous purchases and is therefore willing to pay more for this extra value perceived which in turn makes it easier to choose among different products (Ind, 2003; Muzellec and Lambkin, 2006).

Brand equity refers to an added value that a brand name, and associations related to it, gives to a product compared to a product without this brand identification (Elliot and Percy, 2007; Keller, 2008). In effect, it is the added value that makes the distinction between the commodity and a brand. Branded products can be priced above corresponding non-branded products as a result of these added values (De Chernatony and McDonald 1992). The concept of brand equity has been defined and discussed by numerous marketers resulting in a complexity of the term. Consequently, several aspects to assess brand equity exist today and in short it can be described as “*the marketing effects uniquely attributable to the brand*” (Keller, 1993. P. 1; Aaker, 1997; Chaudhuri et al, 2001; Bart et al, 2005) relating to “*how consumers, customers and stakeholders feel about a brand*” (Knapp, 2000 p.3) beyond its functional purpose (Elliot and Percy, 2007).

Keller and Aaker (1992) divided brand equity in four categories; brand associations, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and perceived quality and argued that in achieving high brand equity maintenance of each aspect of the brand is vital since the combination of these factors will result in a stronger total value added. The value of the brand is founded on the complete perception, and the overall esteem towards the brand in the minds of the consumers (Ghodesnar, 2008). In fact, these aspects creating brand

equity are strongly related to each other and can be seen as a chain reaction; from awareness to creating attitudes that is affected by emotional associations which leads to brand loyalty if the brand is positively associated. All these four categories have the same meaning of evoking memories with the brand thus relating strong emotions to a brand creating brand equity (Esch et al, 2006).

How consumers decide the preference of a brand is based on their perception of the added value, generating a picture of the brand in the consumer's mind (Desai and Keller, 2002). Customer-based brand equity exists when the consumer is "*familiar to the brand and hold some favorable, strong and unique brand associations in memory*" (Keller, 1993 p.2). The author continues by stating that customer-based brand equity implies the alignment of marketing actions to match consumer brand knowledge rather than making numerical analysis of the consumer brand equity. If the consumer does not have brand awareness, thus does not recall and recognize the brand, no customer-based brand equity exists either.

5.2 Brand Image

Keller (1993, p.3) defines brand image as the "*perception about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory*". The brand image involves a deeper sense of the brand in terms of different associations in the mind of the consumers (Lassar et al, 1995; Keller, 1993). Each individual have numerous associations that together make up the total picture of a brand from their perspective. Naturally, these associations vary from person to person, yet, and they are classified into three major groups; attributes, benefits and attitudes (ibid).

In literature, the symbolic dimension of the brand image has been recently highlighted; the one that goes beyond the rational side and that generates the emotional one (Cian and Cervai, 2011; Randazzo, 2006). The symbolic dimension takes shape through the creation (and the representation) of possible "mytho-symbolic worlds" based on the brand fundamental story-telling capacity (Randazzo, 2006). The capacity to create a semantic universe, a "world of meaning"-through utopian or excessively simplistic – remains possible to achieve, in the consumer's imagination. These "mytho-symbolic worlds" also called "possible worlds" (Cian and Cervai, 2011), because they are presented as scenarios (far and close at the same time) able to give rise to the

consumer's mechanism of projection or identification (Ballantyne et al, 2006; Escalas and Bettman, 2005; Hogg and Banister, 2001). Consequently, some products could appear very similar to others if they are analyzed in an analytic and functional way (i.e. nowadays many cars are technically equivalent). Nevertheless, they are perceived by the consumers in a very different way due to the "universes of meaning" which a brand can portray (Hosany et al, 2006). Thus, the emotional side of a brand image is derived from its symbolic universe (Randazzo, 2006).

Some authors try to examine the brand image by analyzing the brand personality (Ang and Lim, 2006; Caprara et al, 2001; Aaker 1997), in order to shift the attention on the brand's symbolic side. In consumer behavior research, since the late 1950s, a considerable attention has been given to the construct of brand personality, which refers to the set of human characteristics that can be also associated with a brand (for example, Harley Davidson can be perceived as "wild" and "daring"). This is due to the fact that consumers often imbue the brands with human personality traits (Aaker, 1997). For some scholars, brand personality and brand identity are two antecedents of the brand image (Heylen et al, 1995). Brand identity is a unique set of brand associations implying a promise to consumers and includes a core and extended identity (Ghodeswar, 2008). Core identity is the central, timeless essence of the brand that remains constant as the brand moves to new markets and products, Core identity broadly focuses on product attributes, service, user profile, store atmospherics and product performance. Extended identity is woven around brand identity elements organized into cohesive and meaningful groups that provide brand texture and completeness, and focuses on brand personality, relationship and strong symbol association (ibid).

5.3 Brand Loyalty

Loyalty, as defined by Oliver (1997), is "*a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same-brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior*" (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). In marketing literature the term loyalty, has often been used interchangeably with its operational (measurement) definition to refer to: repeat purchase, preference, commitment and allegiance. In addition, loyalty has been referred

to in a variety of market-specific contexts, for example, service, store and vendor loyalty, contexts that reflect the unit of measurement; customer and brand loyalty (Algesheimer et al, 2005).

The consumer-brand relationship is critical to the building of brand loyalty (Ching and Chang, 2006). Brand experiences lead to brand loyalty, active referral of the brand and increased profitability for the brand (Morrison and Crane, 2007). Brand experiences encourage loyalty by creating emotional connections through an engaging, compelling and consistent context. The context is the environment in which the service encounter occurs; it encompasses the physical and relational characteristics of the setting in which the consumer consumes the service as well as everything that the consumer interacts within that setting (Sahin et al, 2011). This definition of context indicates two primary components of context, physical and relational. The physical context is made up of the “clues” generated by the sights, sounds, textures and smells of the environment; the relational context is composed of those “clues” that emanate from people and behaviors in which they engage (Morrison and Crane, 2007).

Brands which are capable of delivering a superior brand experience can achieve preference over and differentiation from other brands and built brand loyalty and foster evangelism – favorable “word of mouth” (Brakus et al, 2009). This relationship between brand experience and loyalty appears to be mediated by satisfaction (ibid), which is already known to be a major mediator of the consumption experience (Iglesias et al, 2011; Mano and Oliver, 1993). In fact, some authors have proposed that satisfaction is linked not only to cognitive judgments but also to emotional and affective reactions to the consumption experience. Moreover, satisfaction has even been conceived as “an affective summary response” (White and Yu, 2005) emphasizing its emotional dimension.

5.4 The Concept of Sensory Branding

Lindstrom (2005) argues that the aim of sensory branding is to stimulate the bond between the consumers and a brand and that it “*optimizes impulse purchasing behavior, and allows emotional response to dominate our rational thinking*” (p. 104). He claims that creating an emotional engagement between consumer and a brand with the use of sensory branding can lead to an optimized match between perception and reality and

create a brand platform for future product extensions. The ultimate goal of sensory branding is to create synergies between the senses resulting in a chain reaction where the involvement of one sense activates the use of another, referred to as synesthesia (Thompson et al, 2006). In effect, the use of senses evokes strong memories in the receiver, which can facilitate the marketing efforts to create desired brand image (Martin, 2008). *“Emotional impulses lead to action, bridging the gap between consumers’ unconscious needs and the behavior required to satisfy them”* (Robinette et al, 2000, p.33).

Robinette et al (2000) claim that by adding emotional value, organizations can achieve and sustain long-term competitive advantages. The strongest enhancement is attained if the action becomes intuitive, and if managed correctly, sensory branding can create the strongest possible bond between a consumer and a brand. This will be obtained when the sensory stimulus is unique and consistent making it familiar and recognized by the consumers resulting in a “routine” choice. If the brand succeeds in stimulating the senses in an inimitable manner, the consumers will remain loyal and the brand can be seen as distinguished from its competitors (Thompson et al, 2006; Lindstrom, 2005). The sensory brand pyramid in Figure 13 below explains the relation between loyal consumers and the “smashability” of a brand.

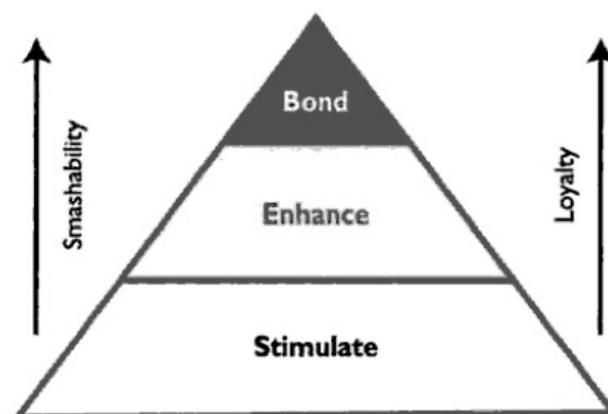


Figure 13. Sensory Brand Pyramid, Lindstrom (2005, p. 104)

When consumers are influenced by the sensory stimulus their loyalty towards the brand increases, the relationship with the brand gets enhanced and the consumer moves up in the pyramid towards the top. Simultaneously, the “smashability” of a brand increases as the brand moves up and the sensory pyramid implying that the higher the “smashability” of the brand, the stronger the bond between the consumer and the brand (ibid).

5.5 The Brand Experience

Brand experience is conceptualized as sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand’s design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments (Shamim and Butt, 2013; Sahin et al, 2011; Brakus et al, 2009). According to Alloza (2008), brand experience can be defined as the perception of the consumers, at every moment of contact they have with the brand, whether it is in the brand images projected in advertising, during the first personal contact, or the level of quality concerning the personal treatment they receive. Brand experience is created when consumers use the brand; talk to others about the brand; seek out brand information, promotions, and events, and so on (Ambler et al, 2002).

Brand marketers must bond with consumers by staging holistic brand experiences (Shamim and Butt, 2013; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Schmitt, 1999). The marketing activities associated with the brand, effects the consumers “mind-set” with respect to the brand – what they know and feel about the brand. The consumer mind-set everything that exist in the minds of consumers with respect to a brand; thoughts; feelings; experiences, images, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and so on, that is, brand equity as defined by Ambler (1997). When consumers search for, shop for, and consume brands, they are exposed to utilitarian product attributes. However, they are also exposed to various specific brand-related stimuli, such as brand-identifying colors (Gorn et al, 1997; Meyers-Levy and Peracchio, 1995), shapes, typefaces, background design elements (Mandel and Johnson, 2002), slogans, mascots and brand characters (Brakus et al, 2009). These brand-related stimuli constitute the major source of subjective, internal consumer responses, which is referred as “brand experience” (ibid). Thus, brand experience is conceptualized as subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related

stimuli that are part of brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments.

Brand experiences vary in strength and intensity; that is, some brand experiences are stronger or more intense than others. As with product, brand experiences also vary in valence; that is, some are more positive than others and some experiences may be negative (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010; Brakus et al, 2009). Moreover, some brand experiences occur simultaneously without much reflection and are short-lived; others occur more deliberately and last longer. Over time, these long-lasting brand experiences, stored in consumer memory, should effect consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Sirdeshmukh et al, 2002). Most importantly, the concept of brand experience includes various dimensions (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010):

- *A sensory dimension*, which refers to the visual, auditory, tactile, gustative and olfactory stimulations provided by a brand
- *An affective dimension*, which includes feelings generated by the brand and its emotional bond with the consumers
- *An intellectual dimension*, which refers to the ability of the brand to engage consumers' convergent and divergent thinking
- *A behavioral dimension*, which includes bodily experiences, lifestyles and interactions with the brand

Depending on how many of these dimensions are evoked and the intensity of the stimulation, the resulting brand experience can be more or less intense (Brakus et al, 2009).

5.5.1 The Multi-Sensory Brand Experience

Most of everyday experiences, at least the pleasant ones, are multisensory (Spence, 2012). A consumer's brand and product experiences are no exception, as many sensory marketers are increasingly coming to realize (Hulten, 2011a; Krishna, 2010; Lindstrom, 2005).

Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) stated that contemporary consumers have a need for fun, emotions and imagery, where consumptions experiences are sought after in the everyday life. It has also been acknowledged that brands are a useful tool in establishing a closer relationship to the consumers where individualization as a lifestyle is becoming more prominent (Hulten et al, 2008). It is therefore becoming more evident that both cognitive and emotional needs can only be fulfilled if a brand's personality is built on sensorial strategies that provide consumers with a multi-sensory brand-experience (Rodrigues et al, 2011).

A multi-sensory brand-experience occurs when we perceive more than one of our human senses during a consumption experience (Hulten, 2011) and according to Elder et al (2010) it is important to study and understand the interaction of different sensory cues. All individuals experience both products and services though human services (Rodrigues et al, 2011) and by performing research on how the sensory cues interact and interferes with one another, researchers and practitioners can gain important understanding on how this interplay can affect consumers in their attitudes, preferences and perceptions (Elder et al, 2010). Further, sensory marketing creates a possibility to attract consumers in a more personal way, where emotions are produced and where memories can be both activated and created (Hulten et al, 2008). A multi-sensory brand-experience is therefore an important factor to consider as it creates meaning by attracting the human senses, creating an experience for consumers that enable them have fun, live out fantasies and have feelings (Rodrigues et a., 2011; Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982).

The link between sensory appeals and brand effectiveness has been demonstrated by the studies of Lindstrom (2005), who argued that each brand must incorporate sensory appeals specific to its product features. Lindstrom's pioneering research proposes a multi-sensory branding strategy that encompasses a consumer sensory experience. According to the results of focus group studies in thirteen countries and research on brand sense in global markets, each brand has a sensory profile related to at least one distinct and positive sensory characteristic. Some brands have several sensory characteristics simultaneously. For instance, Coca-Cola appeals to various senses through sight (its curvy bottle), touch (the feel of its cool package), hearing (the sound created when pouring), and taste (its invigorating flavor). Lindstrom (2005) also suggests that consumer brand loyalty results from sensory perceptions of superior brand experience, leadership and clarity. In a study of nine different brands, sight had a

significant relationship with brand leadership and clarity and played a supplementary role in the other functions. Taste, touch and smell all enhanced brand loyalty through superior brand experience. In addition, all five senses have different levels of impact on loyalty, with taste exerting the greatest influence, followed by smell, sound, touch and sight. The more sensory stimuli provided by a product, the greater the product's perceived value (Yoon and Park, 2012). Therefore, developing a multi-sensory branding strategy has important implications in a consumer market characterized by individuals' emotions and experiences.

5.6 A Strategic Sensorial Brand Approach

Research has shown that the consumer has become “a sense producer” (Garu and Cova, 2006), feeling both positive and negative experiences through purchasing and consumption processes. The consumer no longer relates to utilitarian and cognitive values, but also to the symbolic, hedonic and aesthetic values of consumption (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Brakus et al, 2009; Hulten, 2009; Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010). In this way Rodrigues, Hulten and Brito (2011) propose that sensorial strategies are directed towards emotional and cognitive responses, aiming at creating sustainable and congruent brands in a sensory marketing context.

Sensorial strategies aim at differentiating and expressing a product, service or firm's identity in relation to the human mind and senses. A strategy is defined as sensorial, when it appeals to a certain sense or senses in a consumer's mind (Hulten, 2011). The reason for a firm to develop sensorial strategies is to distinguish a brand from competing ones, especially when such functional/rational attributes as price or quality are often the same (Ericson, 2010). Hence, sensorial strategies are based more on emotional/psychological elements than functional attributes in clarifying a brand's identity and values. The main purpose of sensorial strategies is to facilitate the multi-sensory brand-experience expressed through means as sensors, sensations, and sensory expressions in relation to the five human senses (Figure 14).

As Hulten (2011) explains sensors aim at communicating sensations and sensory expressions that reinforce the multi-sensory brand-experience for the consumer. A sensor is defined as a communicative means (Hulten, 2011, Krishna, 2010), when it transmits sensations or sensory expressions (stimuli) or receives information (signals)

via devices, equipment, material, or employees in relation to the consumers. Rodrigues et al (2011) claim that the reason for a firm to use sensors is to obtain a multi-sensory communication platform in differentiating a brand, including promotion, such as traditional advertising. This reinforces the multi-sensory brand-experience on a daily basis in servicescapes, as well as in virtual settings (Schifferstein and Desmet, 2007).

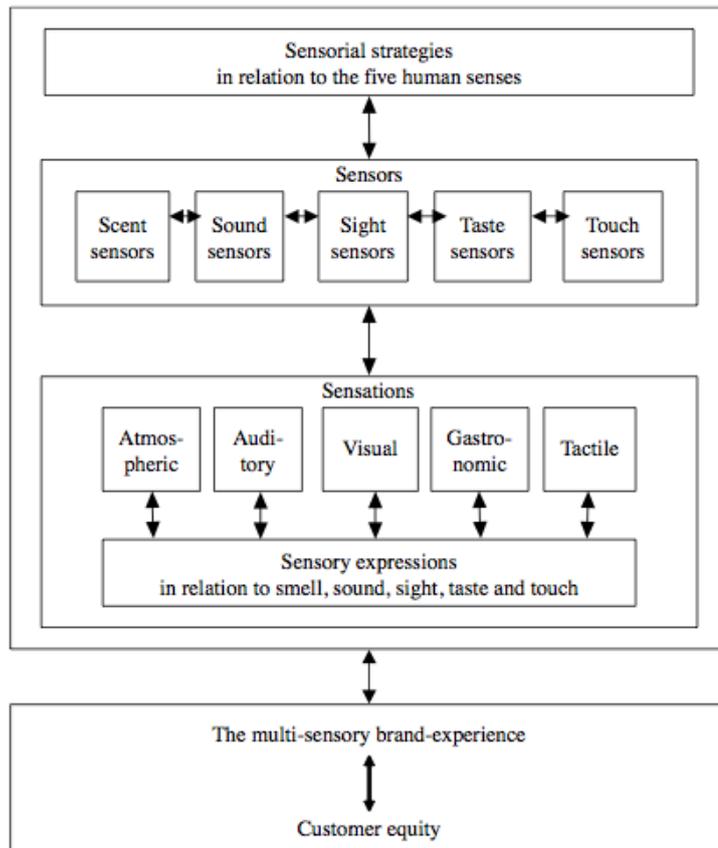


Figure 14. A Sensorial Strategy Model, Hulten (2011)

Sensations aim at expressing a brand's identity and values as something distinctive and sensorial, in facilitating the multi-sensory brand-experience (Hulten, 2011). The reason for a firm to distinguish and express a good or a service as a sensation is to be observed by consumers. This is especially relevant, since the human senses continually notice every small change in the environment, either as a threat or an opportunity (Schiffman, 2001). Another reason is the difficulty that brands have in attracting attention in the crowded, global marketplace (Ericson, 2010).

Furthermore, sensory expressions aim at characterizing a brand's identity and uniqueness in relation to each of the five senses (Krishna, 2010). A sensory expression is defined as an experience trigger that clarifies a brand's identity and values, and leaves an imprint in the consumer's mind. The main reason for a firm to apply sensory expressions is to be closer and more deeply imprinted in the consumer's mind in terms of an image (Rodrigues et al, 2011; Hulten, 2011).

Generally, it has been observed that more and more firms are building emotional linkages to their brands in addition to rational ones in attracting the human senses, according to the work of such practitioners as Gobe (2001) and Lindstrom (2005). Based on anecdotal evidence, companies like Starbucks, Apple and Absolut Vodka illustrate how it is possible to apply sensorial strategies in order to enhance the consumer's multi-sensory brand-experiences in a sensory marketing context. The following examples are highlighted from the above practitioners.

- As early as the 1980s, Starbucks developed sensorial strategies for creating and developing an in-store consumer experience through multiple sensory expressions related to the smell of coffee, the relaxing sound of music, the pleasant and restful interiors, the shape of the armchairs and the taste of the freshly ground coffee served to consumers. All of these sensory expressions create a multi-sensory atmosphere and consumers perceive sensations that impact on their emotional state and mood. Differentiation at an individual basis is created to provide the multi-sensory brand-experience within a branding perspective following a service-dominant logic.
- Apple is another example of a symbiosis between a brand and its consumers in terms of sensorial strategies for sight, sound and touch. All of its products are sensory and designed to create tactile sensations by touching the screens, shapes and materials. All Apple's products reach the consumer's mind at a deep level, combining utilitarian functionalities with fantasies, feelings and fun towards a holistic consumption experience, which constantly renews itself in the form of multiple transactions.
- Absolut Vodka interacts with its consumers, using sensorial strategies based on sight, touch and taste, applied to the unique shape of its bottle and its innovative forms of communication and events, inspired by art and other cultural expressions. Add to this the Absolut Vodka bars, where sensory expressions are

combined in a creative and congruent manner. As a brand, Absolut Vodka combines transactional strategies based on its product characteristics, and on relational strategies through adding new emotional dimensions to a tribalized consumption that derives from the product's ability to link individuals a unique multi-sensory brand-experience in a sensory marketing context.

Following this anecdotal evidence, it is argued that all of these brands have been able to increase the quality of consumer treatment and enhance brand recognition and brand image by developing a strategic sensorial branding approach (Rodrigues et al, 2011). By doing so, these brands establish durable and profitable relationships with individuals, based on the brand as image, as the heart of the strategic process of the firm. This interaction is neither transactional nor relational, but sensorial, in relation to the human mind and senses, and built on a dyadic relationship between the brand and the individual (Rodrigues et al, 2011; Hulten, 2011; Brakus et al, 2009).

5.7 Summary of chapter 5

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the Sensory Branding concept which establish a connection between a consumer and a brand on emotional level, through interaction of the five senses; sight, sound, smell, taste and touch – in generating consumer experience and loyalty. The emotional linkage between brand and consumer has been proposed as important in building strong brand equity and furthermore, in creating a deeper sense of the brand in the mind of the consumer, known as brand image. In order to maintain loyal consumers, the brand should create and provide experiences such as sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments. Brand experience is created not only when consumers use the brand, but also when they talk to others about the brand. Moreover, of a great interest is the multi-sensory brand-experience, which occurs when consumers perceive more than one of human senses during a consumption experience. The multi-sensory brand-experience constitute an important factor to consider as it creates meaning by attracting the human senses, creating an experience for consumers that enable them have fun, live out fantasies and have feelings. Nowadays, most renowned brands aim at differentiating and expressing a product through sensorial strategies, including sensors, sensations, and sensory expressions in relation to the human mind and senses. Hence, sensorial strategies are based more on emotional elements than functional attributes in clarifying a brand's identity and values. By doing so, brands build a strong emotional relationship with the consumers, distinguish effectively and gain a competitive advantage.

CHAPTER 6: Conclusions

6.1 Critique of the Review

The idea that consumers are looking for unique and memorable experiences, resulting from sensory appeals, is by now, well-established in the marketing literature. Today's consumers are not just interested in buying products for functional benefits; they increasingly make choices on the basis of experiential aspects of the offers. As a result, both academics and practitioners have expressed great interest in the concept of sensory brand experience and have acknowledged its importance for developing marketing strategies for goods and services. For services, it has been demonstrated that the creation and delivery of an emotional-rich experience provides brand differentiation and influences sales, consumer loyalty and promotion of the brand.

Researchers such as Krishna (2010), Hulten (2008, 2009, 2011), Brakus et al (2009) and Lindstrom (2005) all emphasize the need for new conceptual thinking related to brands, experiences, and human senses. Sensory marketing constitutes the starting point of this review, and the basic aim was to understand the reader the brand perspective within a sensory marketing model, in contrast to transaction marketing and relation marketing. The significance of the human senses, relating to seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting, where individuals perceive and experience goods and services as brand as image raises the issue of how companies can create and deliver meaningful and powerful personalized experiences.

Brands operating in developed economic environments and in mature markets face fierce competition, making it difficult to obtain a solid and sustainable position. In such a complex environment, the possibility of differentiating brands depends largely on their ability to deliver top sensory consumers experiences that succeed in engaging consumers in a long-term relationship. As such, proactively managing the sensory brand experience is undoubtedly one of the biggest challenges marketing managers currently face. However, little conceptual and empirical research has been done on this topic which is of extreme importance for practitioners.

This review explores academic knowledge on the sensory marketing and its effects on consumers and on branding, providing outstanding examples as evidence that

contributes to the development of the theory itself. In parallel, this review also offers interesting new prospects for marketing managers in terms of how to lead sensory brand management in order to obtain better consumer experiences and loyal customers.

This review makes three main contributions. Firstly, we have explored existing academic knowledge on sensory marketing, human senses, retail atmospherics and branding and we have tried to connect the different streams of research on consumer behavior and psychology, customer experience, and consumer equity and image in order to offer a comprehensive understanding of this new concept and its possible relationships with other marketing constructs. The analyses of the five human senses and how they related with marketing perspectives, is an essential part for the sensory marketing theory, which contributes to a better understanding of retail atmospherics and consumer experiences.

Secondly, in order to further contribute to the development of the theory itself, this review presents the significant sensory marketing model developed by Hulten (2011), which emphasizes a branding perspective, based upon sensors, sensations and sensory expressions as means of enhancing consumer value and brand image. The model, basically, portrays the whole concept of sensory marketing, from consumer sensations and senses to multi-sensory brand experience and brand equity, using sensorial brand strategies. This approach extends existing branding theory and marketing theory, so as to consider the deliberate involvement of the human senses to construct an image of a brand, based on individual perceptions and experiences in purchase and consumption processes.

Finally, the main contribution of this review is that provides the sensory marketing and branding concept, through successful examples and cases, that help the reader to completely understand the basic elements of this fruitful marketing tool. Visuals in advertising, music and consumption, atmospherics and hedonic services, online atmospherics and specific famous brand cases which stand out for their outstanding experienced environments are some of the examples the reader has the opportunity to investigate.

The above contributions thus have extremely important managerial implications because they suggest that, if brands want to create loyal consumers, they need to work better on the affective dimension of the communications as well as f the entire sensory

brand experience in order to generate and consolidate affective bonds with their consumers.

6.2 Managerial Implications

The review suggests how practitioners in retailing can use sensory marketing as a means to enhance consumers' emotional response and behavior. Foremost the review's analysis prove that sensory cues and styling elements have a positive impact as effective ways to connect with consumers by offering a stimulating environment that creates attention leading to acknowledgement of products or services that might otherwise have been missed. The review has also shown that the sensory impact of human senses individually can be highly influential, as can the multi-sensory stimuli of human senses combination in creating a multi-sensory brand-experience. It is also deduced that sensory cues and styling elements are inexpensive ways to create stronger brand images where B2C relationships are in focus.

Practitioners should become aware of how their store appeals to the consumers' through the human senses, where they should decide more specifically how they want the store to appeal to the consumers. Becoming aware of the human senses impact on consumers' behavior and overall experience provide managers and other practitioners with the ability to create a store atmosphere that is different from their competitors, making them stand out on a crowded market.

Reactions to retail atmospherics, however, are not universal. Different categories of consumers appear to behave differently when presented with the same atmospheric stimulus. Researches show that reactions to environmental elements apparently vary by gender, age or lifestyle. Therefore, retail environments should be crafted with a particular consumer in mind. This probably means that smaller specialty stores for example, usually aimed a narrower target markets are more likely to be able to induce more consistent behavior from consumers. It is very important too, the fact that the consumers may not always be aware of particular facets or the retail atmospherics, even when it is influencing their behavior. This means that particular elements of the atmosphere do not always have to be blatant to have an effect on consumers. Sometimes, understated and subtle changes to the retail environment are all that is required to change how shoppers behave inside a store.

As such, managers should not only try to assure cross-functional coordination and operational consistency at all touch points, which has been the focus of many companies lately. They should also strategically plan and promote the affective dimension within the overall experience. The subsequent implications are that sensory brand management needs to be the focus of the entire organization and that it will be extremely difficult to build positive experiences and the consumers' affective commitment if employees are not committed and live the brand's values. All in all, recruitment, training and internal communication policies appear as essential issues to be managed if brands aspire to deliver superior sensory brand experiences that may lead to high levels of consumer satisfaction.

6.3 Limitations and Further Research

This review summarizes the contributions of various important sensory marketing and branding theories. The key domains we discuss are not exhaustive, yet they offer a wealth of insights for the sensory marketing arena. This constitute and the limitation of this thesis, the fact that the available sources (journals, etc) we had access are limited, so there are fields that the author did not have the opportunity to investigate.

The exciting exploration on sensory marketing and branding presented in this review is just the foundational beginning upon which to build future research. There are myriad unexplored questions and innumerable directions in which to take this research. Our goal is not to provide an exhaustive array of these future directions, but rather to stimulate the reader into exploring new ideas. Below, we present possible future directions related to the framework of the review:

Senses

Imagery is defined as a process by which sensory information is represented in working memory (McInnis and Price, 1987). Research on imagery on consumer behavior and psychology has predominantly focused on the visual aspect of imagery in picturing and visualizing the object as opposed to a multisensory process. Imagery is utilized in processing product information to facilitate memory and persuasion (Bone and Ellen, 1992). Conversely, a lack of imagery-facilitating visual input may have negative effects on persuasions (Petrova and Cialdini, 2005). For example, when a

product or ad is not presented in a visually vivid way, this impairs the fluency of consumption imagery, or the ease with which consumers can generate imagery of the consumption experience, leading to a negative effect of imagery appeals (Elder et al, 2010). To enhance the fluency of consumer imagery, we suggest a novel approach of supplementing the visual cue with other sensory cues for further research.

An interesting field of research in addition is the sounds that are inseparable from product usage. For example the sound a car door makes when it shuts, the sound a DVD player makes when it opens or even the sound an electronic device (e.g., an air conditioner or a car alarm) makes when switched on. It is possible that through phonetic symbolism, people infer product attributes from these sounds, in the same way that they do so from the sound of a brand name (Yorkston and Menon, 2004).

According to the senses, other valuable fields of research would be a final point that merits attention is if and how speech can create inferences for a product, the study of individual differences should also constitute a further step in smell research, the impact of culture on motivation to touch, what characteristics of individuals make their taste experiences susceptible to marketing actions and of course further research about interaction of the senses that is still in its infancy.

Atmospherics

In a more ecological point of view, researchers should also question the impact of different sources diffusing scents simultaneously. Considering that smells used in stores and on products spread among the market, it is likely that in the future, it will be relevant to deal with the question of the interaction of these smells coming from different sources, with consideration of potential temporal or spatial effects. The point would also rely on revealing whether ambient scents have a superior or inferior impact than product-based scents or complementary effects of both could happen.

Similarly, another suggestion on further research is to compare the male and the female perspective of the impact of ambience, by for instance choosing typical male and female stores to compare how the genders perceive the ambience; and in addition see how the managers choose to market their brand/product/ service to each gender with the help of ambience.

Of a great interest, would be a further research related to artistic and seductive atmospheres. Artistic atmospheres can be seen as laboratories for people to develop

their sensuality, enabling them to experience a mood, to dwell on an ambience, to experiment with bodily perceptions, and maybe to reflect critically on diverse issues (Missal and Saren, 2010). Moreover, other practices of aesthetic work in carefully designed retail atmospheres are seductive in that they are intended to increase people's consumption. The above themes have received little attention in the marketing literature.

Brand Experiences

Finally, further research should focus on the antecedents and long-term consequences of brand experiences. For example, regarding antecedents, how exactly are brand experience dimensions evoked by brand-related stimuli? Moreover, how brand experiences affect customer lifetime value? Other fields, for further research, could be based on following questions:

- How do companies create and deliver multi-sensory brand-experiences?
- How consumers are influenced by sensorial strategies in purchase and consumption processes?
- What sensory cues and stimuli for seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting impact significantly on how consumers perceive and experience different brands?

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