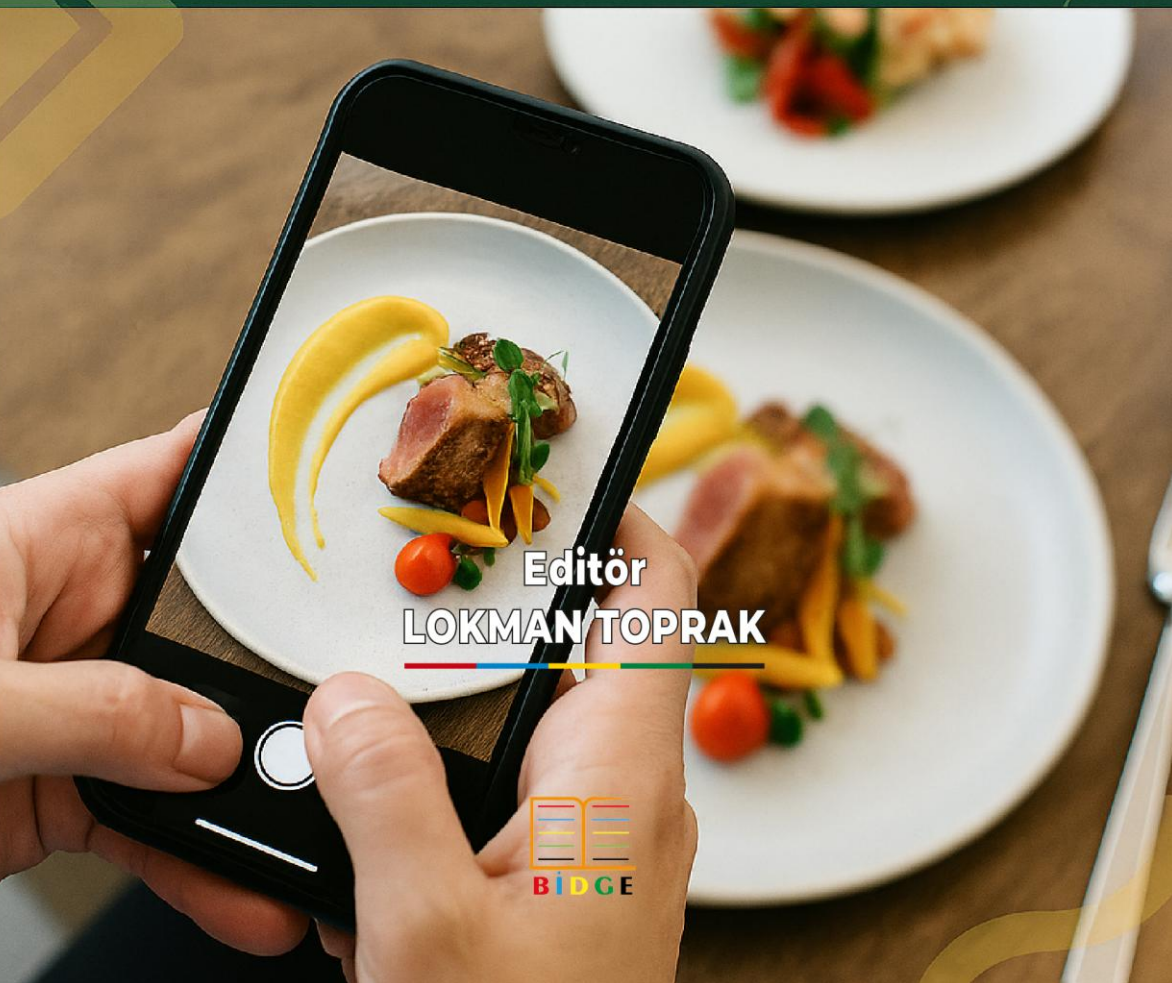


Strategic Marketing Perspectives in Gastronomy Enterprises:

Green, Digital, Experiential, and Sensory Approaches



Editör
LOKMAN TOPRAK



BIDGE Publications

STRATEGIC MARKETING PERSPECTIVES IN
GASTRONOMY ENTERPRISES: GREEN, DIGITAL,
EXPERIENTIAL, AND SENSORY APPROACHES

Editor: PROF. DR. LOKMAN TOPRAK

ISBN: 978-625-372-666-9

Page Layout: Gözde YÜCEL

1st Edition:

Publication Date: 05.06.2025

BIDGE Publications,

All rights of this work are reserved. It cannot be reproduced in any way without the written permission of the publisher and editor, except for short excerpts to be made for promotion by citing the source.

Certificate No: 71374

Copyright © BIDGE Publications

www.bidgeyayinlari.com.tr - bidgeyayinlari@gmail.com

Krc Bilişim Ticaret ve Organizasyon Ltd. Şti.

Güzeltepe Mahallesi Abidin Daver Sokak Sefer Apartmanı No: 7/9 Çankaya /
Ankara



CONTENTS

GREEN MARKETING STRATEGIES IN GASTRONOMY BUSINESSES: A THEORETICAL MODEL PROPOSAL.....	4
ÇİĞDEM KIZILGEÇİ	4
FLAVORS HIDDEN IN DIGITAL NARRATIVES: MEMORY-ORIENTED STRATEGIC NARRATIVE MODELS FOR GASTRONOMY BUSINESSES	37
TUĞBA ARIK YÜKSEL	37
GASTRONOMY AND EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING	60
MUHAMMET ABDULMECİT KINIKLI	60
A THEORETICAL MODEL PROPOSAL FOR SENSORY MARKETING STRATEGIES IN FOOD AND BEVERAGE ENTERPRISES.....	103
ÇİĞDEM KIZILGEÇİ	103

GREEN MARKETING STRATEGIES IN GASTRONOMY BUSINESSES: A THEORETICAL MODEL PROPOSAL

ÇİĞDEM KIZILGEÇİ¹

Introduction

The twenty-first century is characterized by environmental challenges of an unprecedented scale in human history. Problems such as climate change, global warming, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, and the depletion of natural resources not only threaten the ecological balance of our planet but also create deep and irreversible impacts on societal and economic systems (IPCC, 2023; United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP], 2023). These crises have fundamentally altered the approach of businesses, governments, and individuals to the concept of sustainability, necessitating the reshaping of traditional business models in line with the principle of environmental responsibility (Elkington, 1997; Porter & Kramer, 2011). The increasing environmental awareness of consumers and civil society is creating strong pressure on businesses to adopt more ethical and environmentally friendly production and operational

¹ Assist. Prof. Dr., Mardin Artuklu University, Department Of Gastronomy And Culinary Arts, Orcid: 0000-0001-7984-270X

processes. Under this global environmental pressure, food systems, and particularly the food and beverage sector, are at the center of the sustainability agenda. Along the extensive supply chain, from agricultural practices to food processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management, the gastronomy sector has a significant carbon footprint, water consumption, and food waste generation (FAO, 2021; Poore & Nemecek, 2018). For example, approximately one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions originate from food systems, which highlights the urgency of improving the sector's environmental performance (IPCC, 2019). These data indicate that food and beverage businesses play a key role not only in achieving economic sustainability but also ecological and social sustainability goals. With this awareness, environmental sensitivity in the gastronomy sector is gradually increasing. Consumers are no longer paying attention only to the taste of food or the quality of service, but also to the environmental and social responsibilities of businesses (Chen & Chang, 2013; Ottman, 2017). Practices such as sourcing local and seasonal products, using products from organic and ethical sources, reducing and recycling food waste, energy and water efficiency, and sustainable packaging have ceased to be merely cost-reducing measures for gastronomy businesses and have become tools for meeting customer expectations and strengthening brand image (Gustavsson et al., 2011; Sloan et al., 2013). Businesses that adopt these "green" practices, in addition to improving their environmental performance, become the preferred choice for an increasing segment of "green consumers" and gain a differentiation advantage in the market. In response to this rising environmental sensitivity, the concept of green marketing has emerged as an important strategic area in the marketing discipline. Green marketing refers to the process of designing and implementing all marketing mix activities, from product and service development to pricing, distribution, and promotion, in line with the goals of minimizing

environmental impact and increasing environmental awareness (Polonsky, 1994; Peattie, 1995). Initially referred to as "ecological marketing" and generally focusing on the environmental attributes of products, this field has evolved over time under the umbrella of "sustainable marketing" with a broader corporate social responsibility and sustainability perspective (Kotler, 2011; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995). Green marketing is a dual-faceted approach aiming to both create environmental benefits and increase the business's profitability and competitiveness. This requires businesses to not only "be good" but also adopt the philosophy of "doing well by doing good" (Carroll, 1991; Porter & Kramer, 2006).

Green marketing practices in the gastronomy sector are complex and multi-dimensional due to the nature of food and the dining experience. It is no longer sufficient for a meal to be merely delicious or nutritious; questions such as "how it was produced," "where it came from," and "how much harm it caused to the environment" have also become determinant in the consumer's perception (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Gastronomy businesses that transparently integrate their environmental practices into their communication strategies, shape their menus according to sustainability principles, and involve customers in this green journey will strengthen their brand image and increase customer loyalty. However, despite the potential in this area, there is a significant gap in the literature regarding how green marketing strategies can be systematized within a model specifically for gastronomy businesses and how the effects of this model on consumer behavior can be theoretically explained. Existing studies generally focus on individual green practices or general consumer trends but do not sufficiently provide a holistic theoretical framework that brings together the unique ecosystem of the gastronomy sector and the multilayered interactions of green marketing.

The main objective of this study is to develop a comprehensive theoretical model based on green marketing strategies for gastronomy businesses to integrate their environmental responsibilities into their marketing strategies and thereby gain a sustainable competitive advantage. This proposed model will explain how green marketing practices (e.g., environmentally friendly menus, zero waste policies, carbon footprint reduction initiatives) influence customer perceptions (e.g., environmental attitudes, perceived environmental sensitivity), intentions (e.g., purchase intention, revisit intention), and ultimately behavioral outcomes (e.g., customer loyalty, word-of-mouth communication). This model will be supported by relevant theoretical frameworks (e.g., Theory of Planned Behavior, Value-Attitude-Behavior Model, Corporate Social Responsibility Theory) and will reflect the specific dynamics of the gastronomy sector.

The unique contribution of this study is to propose a theoretical model by combining the green marketing literature with the specific context of gastronomy businesses. Thus, this study will not only fill the academic gap but also provide practical guidance and a strategic perspective to practitioners in the sector for effectively integrating environmental sustainability goals into their marketing strategies. The empirically testable structure of the model also provides a solid foundation for future research.

Literature Review and Theoretical Background

This section presents the literature review and theoretical background that form the basis of the proposed theoretical model addressing green marketing strategies in gastronomy businesses. A wide range will be covered, from the classical definition of the marketing concept to its evolution today, from the characteristic features of various types of marketing to green practices in the gastronomy sector, and the theoretical foundations of this study. In

this way, the intellectual ground upon which the model is built will be presented.

The Concept of Marketing

Since its emergence as an economic activity, marketing has continuously evolved in parallel with the changing needs of businesses and societies. The definition and scope of the concept have expanded over time, transforming to include not only commercial transactions but also societal benefit, ethical values, and sustainability.

Classical Definition and Approaches of Marketing

Marketing has typically been defined as a set of activities encompassing the processes by which businesses deliver goods and services to consumers. The American Marketing Association (AMA) has generally used the following phrases in the classical definition of marketing: "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large" (AMA, 2007). Leading figures in marketing science, such as Philip Kotler, have defined marketing as "the art and science of meeting profitable needs" (Kotler & Keller, 2016). This classical approach is generally based on the elements known as the "marketing mix" or "4P," which are Product, Price, Place, and Promotion (McCarthy, 1960). While the classical understanding of marketing is based on fundamental principles such as customer orientation, value creation, and achieving competitive advantage, its focus has generally been on sales and profitability.

The Evolution of Marketing: From Production-Oriented Approach to Customer Experience and Value-Oriented Marketing

The concept of marketing has passed through different philosophical approaches throughout its historical process:

Production-Oriented Approach: Adopted after the Industrial Revolution, during periods when demand exceeded supply, this approach focused on the cheap and widespread production and distribution of products (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Product-Oriented Approach: With increasing competition, the quality, performance, and innovativeness of products came to the forefront. Businesses aimed to gain market share by offering the "best product."

Sales-Oriented Approach: Driven by the belief that production capacity exceeded demand and consumers needed to be forced to buy, intensive sales and promotion efforts marked this period.

Marketing-Oriented Approach (Customer Orientation): Prominent since the 1950s, this approach emphasized that for businesses to succeed, they must understand customer needs and wants and satisfy these needs better than competitors (Levitt, 1960). Customer orientation forms the basis of modern marketing.

Societal Marketing Approach: With the increase in environmental and social problems in the 1970s, the idea emerged that businesses should consider not only customer satisfaction and profitability but also societal well-being (Kotler, 1972). This approach gave the first signals of the social responsibility dimension of marketing.

Relationship Marketing Approach: Focused on building long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with customers instead

of one-time transactions. Customer loyalty and customer lifetime value are key terms of this period (Grönroos, 1994; Berry, 1995).

Value Co-creation and Experiential Marketing: With digitalization and increased consumer access to information, consumers have become part of not just the product or service but also the buying and using experience. Businesses have focused on co-creating value with customers and providing them with unforgettable experiences (Schmitt, 1999; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

Redefining Marketing in Terms of Social Responsibility, Ethics, and Sustainability Today

Today, marketing has ceased to be merely a tool for achieving commercial goals and has been redefined within a broader framework of corporate social responsibility (CSR), ethics, and sustainability (Carroll, 1991; Kotler & Lee, 2005). Businesses are expected to act responsibly in economic, social, and environmental dimensions (Elkington, 1997). In this transformation, concepts such as corporate citizenship awareness, stakeholder value creation, and environmentally conscious practices (green marketing) play a central role. Sustainable marketing aims not only to reduce environmental impacts but also to provide long-term social and economic benefits (Charter & Polonsky, 2017). This new understanding requires marketing strategies to include elements such as reducing environmental impacts throughout the product lifecycle, adopting fair trade principles, and establishing transparent communication.

Types of Marketing

Marketing has evolved in response to customer needs and social changes, and it has diversified according to different fields and

objectives. Some prominent basic types of marketing in the literature include:

Classic Marketing: Aims to increase sales and profitability with a product-oriented approach. It is based on the 4P marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion) (McCarthy, 1960). The focus is on introducing the product to the market and reaching the target audience. Traditional mass media (TV, radio, newspapers) are the main promotional tools of this type.

Service Marketing: Focuses on the marketing of intangible services. Due to the characteristics of services such as intangibility, simultaneity, variability, and perishability, the 7P approach is adopted (Bitner & Booms, 1981). According to this approach, in addition to the 4Ps, the People, Physical Evidence, and Process elements are also included in the marketing mix. Customer-service provider interaction and the design of the service environment are critical in this type of marketing (Grönroos, 1990).

Experiential Marketing: Aims to provide customers with unforgettable experiences on an emotional and sensory level, not just a product/service. It focuses on the multidimensional interaction with the brand (Schmitt & Munn, 1999; Pine & Gilmore, 1998). It defines the consumer's relationship with a brand not just through rational benefits but through the experiences they have with it (sensing, feeling, thinking, acting, relating).

Social Marketing: Aims for behavioral changes to increase social benefit. It is generally associated with public interest campaigns and awareness-raising efforts (Kotler & Roberto, 1989). It aims to find solutions to social problems in areas such as health, environmental protection, and education, and uses marketing principles to achieve social goals.

Digital Marketing: Aims to increase customer interaction through digital channels such as the internet, social media, and

mobile applications. It provides advantages of personalization, data analytics, and instant feedback (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). It allows reaching the target audience in a more direct, measurable, and interactive way.

Sensory Marketing: Aims to create brand perception in the consumer's mind through the five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) (Krishna, 2012; Lindstrom, 2005). Especially in the gastronomy sector, the senses of taste and smell are prominent. Elements such as venue design, music, lighting, and menu presentation are fundamental components of sensory marketing and enrich the consumer's experience.

Green Marketing: Based on an environmentally conscious production and marketing approach. It aims to increase brand value by offering consumers both ethical and environmentally friendly products and services (Polonsky, 1994; Peattie, 2012). Green marketing not only promotes the "green" attributes of a product but also requires integrating environmental responsibility into all of the business's processes and transparently communicating these values.

Green Practices in Gastronomy Businesses

Gastronomy businesses can adopt various green practices to reduce their environmental impact and achieve sustainability goals. These practices, in addition to increasing operational efficiency, strengthen the environmental reputation of businesses and attract consumer segments with green awareness (Sloan et al., 2013; Gustavsson et al., 2011). Gastronomy businesses can implement various green practices to reduce their environmental impacts and achieve sustainability goals. Within the scope of these practices, environmentally friendly menus can be created; the use of local and seasonal products reduces the carbon footprint from food transportation and supports the local economy (Morgan et al., 2010), while the inclusion of organic, fair trade, and responsibly

sourced/farmed products in menus demonstrates a commitment to environmental and social sustainability, and increasing plant-based menu options also carries the potential to reduce the carbon footprint (Poore & Nemecek, 2018). Secondly, adopting zero waste policies is critically important from both environmental (landfill space, methane emissions) and economic (raw material costs) perspectives; gastronomy businesses can approach the zero waste goal by adopting waste hierarchy principles (prevention, reuse, recycling, composting), and food waste tracking, portion control, donating surplus food, and composting systems form the basis of these policies (WRAP, 2018). Thirdly, within the scope of carbon footprint reduction initiatives, businesses can significantly reduce their carbon footprint through practices such as reducing energy consumption (LED lighting, energy-efficient equipment), investing in renewable energy sources, increasing water efficiency (low-flow fixtures, water recycling systems), and utilizing waste heat (Juul et al. 2018), and working with suppliers with high environmental performance in the supply chain is also an important part of this initiative. Lastly, to encourage customer sensitivity and green conscious consumption behavior, gastronomy businesses can increase customers' environmental awareness and promote more conscious consumption behaviors by transparently and effectively communicating their green practices to customers (Leonidou et al., 2011); highlighting green options on the menu, displaying sustainability certifications, or informing customers about waste reduction are examples of this communication, as green consumer behavior encompasses the complex interactions between environmental concerns, attitudes, values, and behavioral intentions.

Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical model to be proposed in this study is based on various theoretical frameworks in the consumer behavior, marketing, and sustainability literature. These theories provide a

strong foundation for understanding the interaction mechanisms of green marketing strategies on consumer perceptions and behaviors.

Green Consumer Behavior Theory: This theory focuses on explaining how consumers' environmental concerns and values influence their product and service choices (Schwartz, 1992; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). It examines the effects of factors such as environmental attitudes, perceived effectiveness, social norms, and personal values on behaviors such as purchasing green products or preferring environmentally friendly businesses. This theory assumes that consumers' perception and valuation of environmental benefits shape their responses to green practices in gastronomy businesses.

Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991): Developed by Icek Ajzen, this theory proposes that individuals' behavioral intentions (e.g., intention to eat at a green restaurant) are the strongest determinant of their behavior. Behavioral intention, in turn, is influenced by three main factors:

Attitude Towards the Behavior: The individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing that behavior (e.g., belief about whether eating at a green restaurant is good or bad).

Subjective Norm: The individual's perception of whether important people around them (family, friends) approve of that behavior.

Perceived Behavioral Control: How capable or in control the individual feels about performing that behavior (e.g., how easy or difficult it is to get to a green restaurant). This theory can be used to explain how green marketing strategies influence consumers' attitudes, perceptions of subjective norms, and perceived control.

Value-Attitude-Behavior Model: This model explains how consumers' basic values (e.g., environmental values) influence their attitudes on specific issues (e.g., attitude towards sustainable food)

and ultimately their behavior (e.g., going to a green restaurant) (Rokeach, 1973; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The model emphasizes that consumers' purchasing decisions are based not only on product features but also on their alignment with personal values and belief systems. In the gastronomy sector, the alignment of green practices with the values of green-conscious consumers can lead to positive attitudes and behaviors.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Theory: CSR is a framework that argues businesses should fulfill not only their economic and legal responsibilities but also their ethical and philanthropic responsibilities (Carroll, 1991). Green marketing strategies are an important part of the environmental dimension of CSR. Businesses adopting environmental responsibilities and reflecting them in their communication strategies can positively influence consumer perceptions, brand reputation, and customer loyalty (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). This theory emphasizes the importance of businesses associating their green practices not only with the pursuit of profitability but also with a sense of social responsibility.

These theoretical frameworks provide a strong basis for a deeper understanding of the interactions of green marketing strategies on consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions in gastronomy businesses. In the next section, building upon these theoretical foundations, the proposed theoretical model based on green marketing strategies for gastronomy businesses will be presented in detail.

Theoretical Model Proposal

This section presents the theoretical model that systematically explains the interactions of green marketing strategies in gastronomy businesses on consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral outcomes. The model is built upon the evolution of

marketing concepts, the type of green marketing, and the fundamental theoretical frameworks (Green Consumer Behavior Theory, Theory of Planned Behavior, Value-Attitude-Behavior Model, Corporate Social Responsibility Theory) discussed in the previous section. The proposed model aims to theoretically explain how gastronomy businesses can integrate their sustainability efforts into marketing strategies and how this integration shapes customer behavior.

Conceptual Framework and Components of the Model

The proposed theoretical model treats Green Marketing Practices implemented in gastronomy businesses as independent variables (Figure 1). These practices influence final consumer behaviors and relationship marketing outcomes such as Purchase Intention, Revisit Intention, Word-of-Mouth (WOM), and Customer Loyalty, through mediating variables such as Perceived Environmental Sensitivity, Consumer's Green Attitude, and Perceived Green Image. The model reveals the complex nature of these interactions and the potential benefits they provide for the business. The S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) forms the basis of the model, where the green marketing practices of gastronomy businesses represent environmental stimuli (Stimulus). These stimuli influence the consumer's internal states (Organism) – their perceptions, attitudes, and image evaluations – and these internal states ultimately lead to behavioral responses (Response). Furthermore, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Theory (Carroll, 1991) offers an important perspective in understanding how a business's adoption of environmental responsibilities affects brand perception. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), by explaining the mechanisms of intention formation, sheds light on the purchase intention and revisit intention relationships in the model. The Value-Attitude-Behavior Model (Rokeach, 1973) provides a strong foundation for

this dimension of the model by demonstrating how consumers' basic values influence their environmental attitudes and ultimately their behavior. These theoretical frameworks provide a strong basis for a deeper understanding of the interactions of green marketing strategies on consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions in gastronomy businesses. The next section will present in detail the proposed theoretical model based on green marketing strategies for gastronomy businesses, building upon these theoretical foundations.

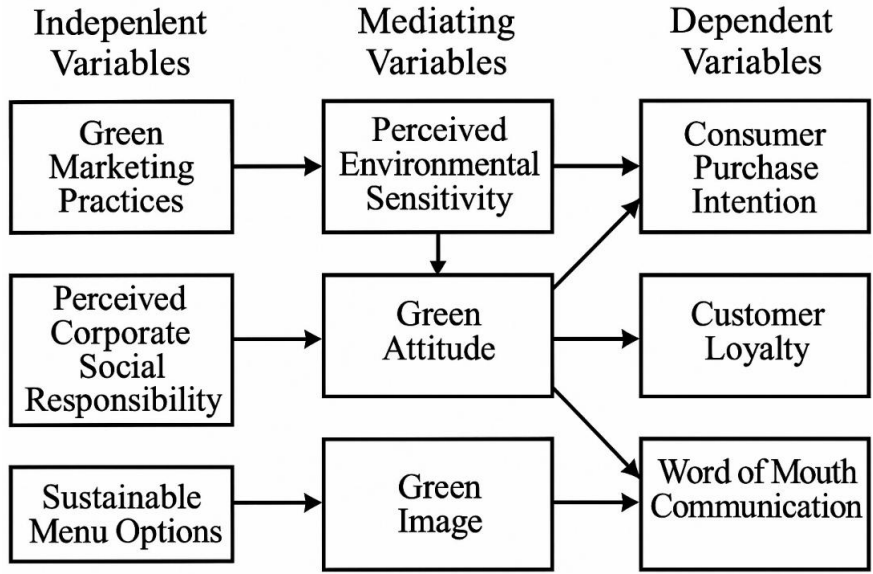


Figure 1: Green Marketing Strategies in Gastronomy Businesses: A Theoretical Model Proposal

Components of the Model and Theoretical Foundation of the Relationships

Each component in the model and the relationships between them are supported by relevant academic literature and theoretical frameworks:

Green Marketing Practices in Gastronomy Businesses (Independent Variables)

This encompasses a series of operational and strategic practices that reflect the environmental sustainability commitments of gastronomy businesses. These practices aim to reduce the environmental impact of businesses and at the same time appeal to consumers with green awareness (Chen et al., 2010; Polonsky, 1994).

Environmentally Friendly Menu Policies: Practices such as sourcing local and seasonal products (Morgan & Morley, 2010), using products from organic and sustainable sources (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006), and increasing plant-based options (Poore & Nemecek, 2018) reduce environmental impact while supporting consumers' healthy and ethical choices.

Waste Management and Reduction Initiatives: Practices such as reducing food waste, recycling, composting, and food donation significantly decrease the environmental footprint and demonstrate the business's environmental responsibility (WRAP, 2018).

Energy and Water Efficiency Practices: Practices such as using energy-efficient equipment, investing in renewable energy, and water efficiency technologies reduce the business's carbon footprint and reinforce its sustainability commitment (Grünfeld & Sørensen, 2017).

Transparent Green Communication: Communication strategies such as displaying the business's green certifications, publishing sustainability reports, and providing environmental information on the menu increase consumers' awareness of and trust in the business's green efforts (Leonidou et al., 2011).

Consumer Perceptions and Attitudes (Mediating Variables)

Green marketing practices trigger consumers' cognitive and emotional responses, shaping their perceptions and attitudes. These mediating variables form the basis of the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Value-Attitude-Behavior Model (Ajzen, 1991; Rokeach, 1973).

Perceived Environmental Sensitivity: This is the consumer's perception of how committed a gastronomy business is to environmentally friendly practices and how sensitive it is to environmental issues (Chen & Chang, 2013). The business's transparent green communication efforts directly influence this perception.

Consumer's Green Attitude: This is the consumer's overall positive or negative evaluation towards businesses adopting green practices or towards environmentally friendly products and services (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). These attitudes are influenced by personal values and perceived environmental sensitivity.

Perceived Green Image: This is the general impression and reputation associated with environmental responsibility that the business or brand creates in consumers' minds (Schultz & Hatch, 2006). In the context of CSR theory, green practices and communication play a significant role in creating a strong green image (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Consumer Behaviors and Relational Outcomes (Dependent Variables)

Consumer perceptions and attitudes, shaped through mediating variables, ultimately influence consumers' behavioral intentions and outcomes such as purchasing, revisiting, and loyalty towards the business.

Purchase Intention: This is the consumer's inclination to purchase or prefer a gastronomy business that offers green products or services (Ajzen, 1991).

Revisit Intention: This is the consumer's desire to visit a gastronomy business that adopts green practices again in the future (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996).

Word-of-Mouth (WOM): This is consumers' positive or negative sharing of their green experiences and the business's environmental efforts with others (friends, family, social media) (Bansal & Voyer, 2000).

Customer Loyalty: This is the consumer's psychological attachment to a gastronomy business that adopts green practices and their consistent behavior of preferring it over competitors (Oliver, 1999). This loyalty includes both behavioral and attitudinal dimensions.

Theoretical Foundation of the Relationships in the Model

Each hypothesized relationship in the proposed model is supported by relevant theoretical frameworks and empirical findings. In this section, general relationships are explained; detailed hypothesis formulations will be presented in the next section.

Green Marketing Practices → Consumer Perceptions and Attitudes: The green practices adopted by gastronomy businesses and transparent communication efforts directly influence consumers' perceptions of the business's environmental sensitivity and their attitudes towards it (Chen & Chang, 2013; Leonidou et al., 2011). Corporate Social Responsibility Theory (Carroll, 1991) forms the basis of this relationship, as businesses fulfilling ethical and environmental responsibilities positively influence stakeholders' (consumers') perceptions and trust.

Consumer Perceptions and Attitudes → Purchase Intention / Revisit Intention: Consumers' perceived environmental sensitivity, green attitudes, and the business's green image increase their intention to purchase green products/services and revisit the business (Ajzen, 1991; Kim & Han, 2010). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, positive attitudes and perceived control are the strongest determinants of behavioral intentions. The Value-Attitude-Behavior Model explains how consumers' personal values (e.g., environmental values) guide their attitudes and intentions (Rokeach, 1973).

Consumer Perceptions and Attitudes → Word-of-Mouth Communication / Customer Loyalty: Strong perceptions of the business's green efforts, positive attitudes, and a solid green image increase consumers' satisfaction and attachment to the business, which encourages positive word-of-mouth (WOM) and customer loyalty (Oliver, 1999; Lee et al., 2011). Consumers tend to recommend businesses they value and find environmentally conscious to others and remain loyal to them (Bansal & Voyer, 2000). These relationships are also supported by the effects of CSR on brand reputation and relationship marketing outcomes (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001).

The theoretical model presented in this section theoretically explains the complex interactions of green marketing strategies in gastronomy businesses. In the next section, the main hypotheses derived from this model will be presented with more concrete examples, reinforcing the model's empirical testability.

Hypothesis Examples

This section will detail the main hypotheses derived from the theoretical model presented in the previous sections. The hypotheses represent the assumed relationships between the independent variables (Green Marketing Practices), mediating variables

(Consumer Perceptions and Attitudes), and dependent variables (Consumer Behaviors and Relational Outcomes) in the model. Each hypothesis will be explained by supporting it with theoretical and empirical findings from the relevant literature.

Formulation of Hypotheses

In scientific research, hypotheses allow for the translation of relationships proposed in the theoretical model into empirically testable statements. These hypotheses are the researcher's predictions about the hypothesized direction or relationship between specific variables (Hair et al., 2014). In this study, the main relationships regarding how green marketing strategies in gastronomy businesses influence consumer behavioral intentions and loyalty through consumer perceptions and attitudes have been hypothesized. Each arrow in the model represents a relationship established between concepts and is an empirically testable hypothesis. The hypothesis numbering has been arranged according to a general structure to increase the clarity of the model.

Relationships Between Green Marketing Practices and Consumer Perceptions/Attitudes: Green marketing strategies implemented by gastronomy businesses play a fundamental role in shaping consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and the green image of the business. The green efforts of the business trigger positive cognitive and emotional responses in consumers.

H1: Green marketing practices of gastronomy businesses have a positive effect on consumers' Perceived Environmental Sensitivity, Consumer's Green Attitude, and Perceived Green Image.

Justification: Green marketing practices (e.g., environmentally friendly menus, waste management, energy efficiency, and transparent green communication) increase consumers' awareness of and commitment to the business's

environmental responsibility (Chen & Chang, 2013; Leonidou et al., 2011). Consumers tend to perceive environmentally conscious businesses as more responsible, ethical, and trustworthy (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2021). These perceptions positively influence their general environmental attitudes and their green image towards the business. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) theory (Carroll, 1991) supports how businesses adopting environmental responsibilities strengthen stakeholder perceptions and corporate reputation. Consumers feeling the business's commitment to the environment increases their overall perceived environmental sensitivity. For example, a restaurant explicitly featuring local and organic products on its menu or displaying waste reduction certifications allows the consumer to believe in the business's green efforts and develop a positive green image.

Relationships Between Consumer Perceptions/Attitudes and Consumer Behaviors/Outcomes: Consumers' positive perceptions of and attitudes towards green marketing practices play a mediating role in shaping their behavioral intentions and final relational outcomes towards the business.

H2: Consumer's Perceived Environmental Sensitivity has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.

Justification: Consumers perceiving that a gastronomy business is highly sensitive to the environment significantly increases their intention to purchase products/services from that business (Kim & Han, 2010). The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) supports this relationship; as a positive attitude towards a behavior and perceived environmental benefit strengthen purchase intention. Environmentally conscious consumers tend to frequent businesses that reflect this sensitivity (Chen & Chang, 2013).

H3: Perceived Green Image has a positive effect on Customer Loyalty.

Justification: A gastronomy business having a strong and positive green image increases the trust and attachment consumers feel towards that brand, which reinforces customer loyalty (Hur et al., 2014; Luchs et al., 2010). CSR theory suggests that businesses' social and environmental responsibilities increase brand attachment and loyalty by building emotional bonds with consumers (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004). Consumers tend to be more loyal to businesses that align with their own values (in this case, environmental values).

H4: Consumer's Green Attitude has a positive effect on Revisit Intention.

Justification: Consumers' positive attitudes towards gastronomy businesses adopting green practices strengthen their intention to revisit that business in the future (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Consumer satisfaction and alignment with green values are important factors influencing the revisit decision. The Theory of Planned Behavior states that positive attitudes directly influence behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991).

H5: Perceived Environmental Sensitivity has a positive effect on Word-of-Mouth (WOM).

Justification: Customers tend to share their positive experiences about businesses they perceive as environmentally sensitive and whose efforts in this regard they appreciate with others (Bansal & Voyer, 2000). Specifically, the differentiation and positive perception gained through green practices constitute a strong source of motivation for consumers to recommend the business to those around them.

Direct Relationships Between Green Marketing Practices and Consumer Behaviors/Outcomes (Specific Hypothesis): In some cases, certain green marketing practices may also show a direct effect on specific behavioral outcomes, in addition to influencing through consumer perceptions/attitudes.

H6: The offering of sustainable menus has a positive effect on Word-of-Mouth (WOM).

Justification: Environmentally friendly menu policies (e.g., local, seasonal, organic, or plant-based options) in gastronomy businesses can offer consumers a unique and differentiated experience (Gustavsson et al., 2011; Poore & Nemecek, 2018). When consumers experience such innovative and ethical menu options, their likelihood of sharing these experiences in their social circle increases. Sustainable menus not only offer environmental benefits but also become a "talkable" feature, triggering positive word-of-mouth about the business (Keller & Fay, 2012). This leads consumers to appreciate these efforts and recommend them to others, especially when supported by transparent communication strategies.

The hypotheses presented in this section ensure the empirical testability of the proposed theoretical model. In the next section, the theoretical and managerial implications of this model and hypotheses will be discussed in more detail.

Discussion and Strategic Recommendations

This section discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the Theoretical Model Proposal for Green Marketing Strategies in Gastronomy Businesses presented in the previous sections. The proposed model explains the interaction mechanisms of green marketing practices on consumer perceptions, attitudes, and ultimate behaviors, providing significant guidance on how gastronomy businesses can integrate their sustainability missions

into marketing strategies. In this section, strategic recommendations derived from the model will be detailed, particularly under the headings of integrating the sustainability mission, adapting to customer segments, and emphasizing green values in corporate communication.

Integrating Gastronomy Businesses' Sustainability Missions into Marketing Strategies

The proposed model, by hypothesizing that green marketing practices (environmentally friendly menus, waste management, energy/water efficiency, and transparent communication) positively influence consumer perceptions and attitudes (perceived environmental sensitivity, green attitude, green image), emphasizes that gastronomy businesses should place their sustainability missions at the core of their marketing strategies. This integration should be seen not just as a marketing tool but as a reflection of the business's core values and way of operating (Peattie, 2012; Porter & Kramer, 2011).

Sustainability in Product and Service Design: Menus should be designed not only based on taste and cost but also on environmental impact (carbon footprint, water footprint) and ethical sources (local, seasonal, organic, fair trade) (Chen et al., 2013). Increasing plant-based menu options, creative solutions for reducing food waste (e.g., "nose-to-tail" or "root-to-stem" approaches), and responsible supplier selection directly reflect the business's sustainability commitment in the product (Poore & Nemecek, 2018).

Value-Oriented Pricing: Instead of directly passing on the additional costs incurred by green practices to consumers, pricing strategies should integrate these costs through the "green value" and "ethical advantage" created. Consumers may be willing to pay a premium for products that provide environmental benefits, but this premium must be proportional to the perceived benefit (Vermeir &

Verbeke, 2006). Businesses should align the long-term environmental and social benefits of sustainable practices with their pricing strategies.

Green Transformation in Operational Processes: Adopting green practices in all processes, from kitchen operations to customer service, not only reduces environmental impact but can also enhance the overall perception of the business's service quality. For instance, practices such as using energy-efficient equipment, water-saving measures, and separating and recycling waste allow customers to concretely see the business's environmental sensitivity (Juul et al. 2017).

Distribution and Supply Chain Optimization: Working with local suppliers reduces carbon emissions from food transportation and increases access to fresh products (Morgan et al. 2010). Implementing sustainability criteria at every stage of the supply chain reinforces the business's green identity and enhances food safety and traceability.

Green Strategy Adaptations According to Customer Segments

Since the model shows the effects of green marketing practices on consumer perceptions and attitudes, it is important for gastronomy businesses to understand that not all customers are equally sensitive to green issues. Marketing strategies should be adapted according to the environmental awareness and expectations of different customer segments (Ottman, 2017).

Segmentation and Targeting: Consumers differ in terms of environmental concerns, purchasing behaviors, and values. Segments such as "deep green" (highly committed), "light green" (moderately concerned), and "low environmental concern" can be defined (Kotler, 2011; Peattie, 1995). Gastronomy businesses should develop messages and offerings suitable for each segment. Detailed

certifications and environmental reports can be provided for the deep green segment, while the light green segment can be targeted with more benefit-oriented emphases (e.g., fresh, healthy, local).

Personalization of the Value Proposition: Consumers' willingness to pay for green products and services may vary (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Businesses should create attractive value propositions for different segments by highlighting the added value offered by sustainable practices (e.g., healthier options, support for the local economy, contribution to the future). For example, special menu or communication emphases such as "From Our Local Producers" or "Zero Waste Kitchen" can be made.

Avoiding Greenwashing: Businesses should avoid exaggerating their green practices or making misleading claims (Lyon & Maxwell, 2011). "Transparent Green Communication," emphasized in the model, is critically important at this point. Consumers may question the sincerity of businesses, and the perception of greenwashing can severely damage the brand's reputation. Credibility and accuracy are fundamental to green marketing communication.

Emphasizing Green Values in Corporate Communication

Since the model shows the effect of green marketing practices on consumer perceptions and attitudes, particularly through "Perceived Environmental Sensitivity" and "Perceived Green Image," it is vital for businesses to effectively integrate their environmental values and efforts into communication strategies.

Storytelling and Transparency: Gastronomy businesses can build emotional connections with consumers by narrating their sustainability journey as a story. For instance, sharing the stories of local suppliers, visualizing waste reduction processes, or transparently announcing sustainability goals helps customers

understand and appreciate the business's values (Denning, 2011). Certifications (e.g., organic, MSC, Leed) are tangible ways to increase credibility.

Multi-channel Communication: Green values should be consistently emphasized not only on the menu or within the establishment but also through various communication channels such as the website, social media, email newsletters, and press releases (Keller, 2013). Social media is a powerful platform that encourages customers to share their experiences (e.g., green menu options, waste reduction efforts) and increases word-of-mouth communication.

Encouraging Customer Participation: Businesses can increase customers' environmental awareness and create a sense of shared purpose by involving them in sustainability efforts. For example, providing waste sorting points, offering discounts to those who bring their own containers, or organizing donation campaigns to support local community projects increases customer participation and encourages WOM (Bansal & Voyer, 2000). This participation deepens the customer's connection with the business, strengthening loyalty.

The strategic recommendations presented in this section aim to help gastronomy businesses translate the green marketing model from theory into practice. Integrating the sustainability mission into every dimension of the business and communicating this transparently will enable businesses not only to achieve environmental benefits but also to positively influence consumer perceptions, attitudes, and ultimately long-term customer loyalty.

REFERENCES

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179-211.

Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (1980). Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior.

American Marketing Association. (2007). Definition of Marketing.

Bansal, H. S., & Voyer, P. A. (2000). Word-of-mouth processes within a services purchase decision context. *Journal of service research*, 3(2), 166-177.

Berry, L. L. (1995). Relationship marketing of services—growing interest, emerging perspectives. *Journal of the Academy of marketing science*, 23, 236-245.

Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2004). Doing better at doing good: When, why, and how consumers respond to corporate social initiatives. *California management review*, 47(1), 9-24.

Bitner, M. J., & Booms, B. H. (1981). Deregulation and the future of the US travel agent industry. *Journal of Travel Research*, 20(2), 2-7.

Carroll, A. B. (1991). The pyramid of corporate social responsibility: Toward the moral management of organizational stakeholders. *Business horizons*, 34(4), 39-48.

Carroll, J. M. (Ed.). (1991). Designing interaction: Psychology at the human-computer interface. CUP Archive.

Carroll, J. M. (Ed.). (1991). Designing interaction: Psychology at the human-computer interface. CUP Archive.

Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2019). Digital marketing. Pearson uk.

Charter, M., & Polonsky, M. J. (Eds.). (2017). Greener marketing: A global perspective on greening marketing practice. Routledge.

Chen, J., Sloan, P., & Legrand, W. (2010). Sustainability in the hospitality industry. Routledge.

Chen, Y. S., & Chang, C. H. (2013). Greenwash and green trust: The mediation effects of green consumer confusion and green perceived risk. *Journal of business ethics*, 114, 489-500

Denning, S. (2011). The secret language of leadership: How leaders inspire action through narrative. Wiley+ ORM.

Elkington, J. (1997). The triple bottom line. *Environmental management: Readings and cases*, 2, 49-66.

F. Hair Jr, J., Sarstedt, M., Hopkins, L., & G. Kuppelwieser, V. (2014). Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) An emerging tool in business research. *European business review*, 26(2), 106-121.

FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). (2021). The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021: Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all.

Grönroos, C. (1990). Service management and marketing (Vol. 27). Lexington, MA: Lexington books.

Grönroos, C. (1994). From scientific management to service management: a management perspective for the age of service competition. *International Journal of service industry management*, 5(1), 5-20.

Gustavsson, J., Cederberg, C., Sonesson, U., Van Otterdijk, R., & Meybeck, A. (2011, May). Global food losses and food waste.

Hur, W. M., Kim, H., & Woo, J. (2014). How CSR leads to corporate brand equity: Mediating mechanisms of corporate brand credibility and reputation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 125, 75-86.

IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). (2019). *Climate Change and Land: An IPCC Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*.

IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). (2023). *Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*.

Juul, S., Monrad, M., Grünfeld, M., Dyrberg, T. B., Sørensen, P. K., & Hansen, A. D. (2017). Kritisk Dialog-Kritik i samfundsvidenskaben. *Social Kritik: Tidsskrift for social analyse & debat*, 149, 59-73.

Keller, E. B., & Fay, B. (2012). *The face-to-face book: Why real relationships rule in a digital marketplace*. Simon and Schuster.

Keller, K. L. (2013). *Keller: Strategic Brand Management eBook GE 4e*. Pearson Higher Ed.

Kim, Y., & Han, H. (2010). Intention to pay conventional-hotel prices at a green hotel—a modification of the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 18(8), 997-1014.

Kotler, P. (1972). A generic concept of marketing. *Journal of marketing*, 36(2), 46-54.

Kotler, P. (2011). Reinventing marketing to manage the environmental imperative. *Journal of marketing*, 75(4), 132-135.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). A framework for marketing management.

Kotler, P., & Lee, N. (2005). Best of breed: When it comes to gaining a market edge while supporting a social cause, “corporate social marketing” leads the pack. *Social marketing quarterly*, 11(3-4), 91-103.

Krishna, A. (2012). An integrative review of sensory marketing: Engaging the senses to affect perception, judgment and behavior. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 22(3), 332-351.

Leonidou, L. C., Leonidou, C. N., Palihawadana, D., & Hultman, M. (2011). Evaluating the green advertising practices of international firms: a trend analysis. *International Marketing Review*, 28(1), 6-33.

Levitt, T. (1960). Growth and profits through planned marketing innovation. *Journal of Marketing*, 24(4), 1-8.

Lindstrom, M. (2005). Broad sensory branding. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 14(2), 84-87.

Luchs, M. G., Naylor, R. W., Irwin, J. R., & Raghunathan, R. (2010). The sustainability liability: Potential negative effects of ethicality on product preference. *Journal of marketing*, 74(5), 18-31.

Lyon, T. P., & Maxwell, J. W. (2011). Greenwash: Corporate environmental disclosure under threat of audit. *Journal of economics & management strategy*, 20(1), 3-41.

McCarthy, J. (1960). Recursive functions of symbolic expressions and their computation by machine, part I. *Communications of the ACM*, 3(4), 184-195.

Meadows, D. H., Meadows, D. L., Randers, J., & Behrens III, W. W. (1972). *The Limits to Growth*. Universe Books.

Mehrabian, A., & Russell, J. A. (1974). A verbal measure of information rate for studies in environmental psychology. *Environment and Behavior*, 6(2), 233.

Morgan, S. L., Marsden, T., Miele, M., & Morley, A. (2010). Agricultural multifunctionality and farmers' entrepreneurial skills: A study of Tuscan and Welsh farmers. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 26(2), 116-129.

Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence consumer loyalty?. *Journal of marketing*, 63(4_suppl1), 33-44.

Ottman, J. (2017). *The new rules of green marketing: Strategies, tools, and inspiration for sustainable branding*. Routledge.

Peattie, K. (1995). *Environmental marketing management: Meeting the green challenge*.

Peattie, K. (2012). Sustainable marketing: Marketing re-thought, re-mixed and re-tooled. In *Critical Marketing* (pp. 209-226). Routledge.

Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1998). Welcome to the experience economy (Vol. 76, No. 4, pp. 97-105). Cambridge, MA, USA: Harvard Business Review Press. Kotler, P., & Roberto, E. L. (1989). *Social marketing: Strategies for changing public behavior*.

Polonsky, M. J. (1994). Green marketing regulation in USA and Australia: The Australian checklist. *Greener Management International*, 44-52.

Polonsky, M. J. (1994). Green marketing regulation in USA and Australia: The Australian checklist. *Greener Management International*, 44-52.

Poore, J., & Nemecek, T. (2018). Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers. *Science*, 360(6392), 987-992.

Poore, J., & Nemecek, T. (2018). Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers. *Science*, 360(6392), 987-992.

Porter, M. E., & Kramer, M. R. (2011). Criação de valor compartilhado (Creating shared value). *Harvard Business Review*, 89(1/2), 62-77.

Prahalad, C. K., & Ramaswamy, V. (2004). Co-creation experiences: The next practice in value creation. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 18(3), 5-14.

Rokeach, M. (1973). *The nature of human values*. Free press.

Rokeach, M. (1973). *The nature of human values*. Free press.

Schmitt, C., & Munn, A. (1999). Against the nominal mapping parameter: Bare nouns in Brazilian Portuguese. In *PROCEEDINGS-NELS* (Vol. 29, pp. 339-354).

Schultz, M., & Hatch, M. J. (2006). A cultural perspective on corporate branding: the case of LEGO Group. In *Brand culture* (pp. 13-29). Routledge.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 25, pp. 1-65). Academic Press.

Sen, S., & Bhattacharya, C. B. (2001). Does doing good always lead to doing better? Consumer reactions to corporate social responsibility. *Journal of marketing Research*, 38(2), 225-243.

Sheth, J. N., & Parvatlyar, A. (1995). Relationship marketing in consumer markets: antecedents and consequences. *Journal of the Academy of marketing Science*, 23(4), 255-271.

Sloan, P. L., & Legrand, W. W. & Chen, JS (2013) Sustainability in the Hospitality Industry: Principles of Sustainable Operations.

UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme). (2023). Global Environment Outlook – GEO-7: A Healthy Planet for All, A Healthy Future for All.

Vermeir, I., & Verbeke, W. (2006). Sustainable food consumption: Exploring the consumer “attitude–behavioral intention” gap. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental ethics*, 19, 169-194.

Vermeir, I., & Verbeke, W. (2006). Sustainable food consumption: Exploring the consumer “attitude–behavioral intention” gap. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental ethics*, 19, 169-194.

WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) (2018). <https://www.wrap.ngo/eu>

Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of marketing*, 60(2), 31-46.

FLAVORS HIDDEN IN DIGITAL NARRATIVES: MEMORY-ORIENTED STRATEGIC NARRATIVE MODELS FOR GASTRONOMY BUSINESSES

TUĞBA ARIK YÜKSEL¹

Introduction

Food is not merely a physiological necessity; it is also one of the most powerful narrative tools of identity, memory, and culture (Levenstein, 1997; Counihan & Van Esterik, 2013). It is difficult to find a medium as layered and meaning-laden as food in the transmission of cultural elements, as food not only evokes memories of the past but also builds bridges of meaning between individuals and across generations (Holtzman, 2006). Therefore, food is not simply something that is consumed, but also something that is narrated, shared, and interpreted. Especially on digital platforms, this narrative takes on new forms; food is reconstructed through visual, auditory, and textual elements (Lupton, 2020; LeBesco & Naccarato, 2008).

With digitalization, gastronomy has evolved beyond being an experience confined to physical spaces, becoming a cultural practice

¹ Assist. Prof. Dr., Mardin Artuklu University, Department of Tourism Management, Orcid: 0000-0002-3113-9721

that is reproduced through visual-auditory narratives across platforms such as social media, blogs, YouTube, and podcasts (Johnston & Goodman, 2015; Spence, 2022). Particularly on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, food narratives play a central role both in the personal identity construction of individuals and in the brand strategies of businesses (Abidin, 2016; Gvion, 2009).

In this context, cultural memory (Assmann, 2011; Halbwachs, 1992) serves as the foundational carrier of narratives. Stories conveyed in digital gastronomy narratives refer to local cuisines, traditional recipes, geographically indicated products, and regional food rituals, offering not just flavor but also a form of collective memory (Seremetakis, 1994). At this point, food becomes a means of connecting with personal histories and reproducing social identity (Heldke, 2015; Bell & Valentine, 2013).

For local gastronomy enterprises in particular, blending digital narratives with cultural memory contributes not only to product marketing but also to grounding brand identity in an authentic and emotional context (Mossberg, 2008; Kladou et al., 2017). These narratives establish an emotional bond between the brand and the consumer while simultaneously promoting the sustainability of local values (Carù & Cova, 2003; Pine & Gilmore, 2011). Accordingly, digital food narratives do not merely provide aesthetically pleasing and appetizing content; they also become strategic tools of cultural communication for gastronomy businesses.

This study aims to analyze how digital food narratives are structured by gastronomy enterprises within the framework of strategic narrative models based on cultural memory. To this end, original gastronomy narratives shared on digital platforms will be examined through thematic narrative analysis, revealing how these narratives are positioned along the axes of identity, memory, and

cultural transmission. In doing so, the potential of digital narratives in the field of gastronomy will be discussed in terms of cultural sustainability and brand strategy.

Theoretical Framework

Narrative Theory and Digital Storytelling

Narrative plays a central role in making sense of human experience. While Gérard Genette (1980) examines narrative structures through categories such as time, narrator, and perspective, Walter Benjamin (2019) argues that modern narratives have lost their connection with lived experience, yet cultural narrative forms (such as stories related to food) compensate for this rupture. In digital media environments, these narrative forms are reshaped, acquiring a hybrid form through textual, visual, and auditory elements and establishing multisensory communication with users (Ryan, 2004; Dawson & Makela, 2023).

Digital food narratives, especially on social media platforms, are not only a means of content creation but also identity construction and emotional engagement (Abidin, 2016; Choe & Kim, 2018). In this context, digital storytelling becomes an experiential marketing tool for both individual and institutional users (Woodside, 2010). These narrative forms build an "emotional bridge" between the consumer and the brand, creating an impact that goes beyond traditional advertising (Escalas, 2004).

Cultural Memory and the Meaning of Food

The concept of cultural memory is shaped by symbols, rituals, and narratives that enable individuals to maintain a connection with the collective past (Assmann, 2011; Halbwachs, 1992). In this context, food serves as a vessel for both individual and collective memory. While Seremetakis (1994) emphasizes the effect

of food on sensory memory, Sutton (2001) demonstrates how food-related memories shape the perception of time and space.

Local gastronomic elements (e.g., regional recipes, culinary rituals) are transformed into narratives through digital platforms, contributing to the sustainability of cultural memory (Bell & Valentine, 2013). Thus, digital food narratives are not merely presentations of flavor, but also a means of carrying the past into the present (Heldke, 2015).

Identity, Locality, and Gastronomic Representation

Food plays a significant role in the construction of both individual and collective identity. While Levenstein (1997) analyzes the historical, economic, and socio-political layers of food, Lisa Heldke (2015) relates the “desire for other cuisines” to practices of cultural meaning-making. The representation of local cuisines through narratives produces both spatial and identity-based belonging (Trubek, 2008).

Food stories shared in digital spaces are not merely tools for business promotion, but also means for marketing locality and authenticity (Everett, 2008; Sims, 2009). In this respect, food narratives form a multilayered narrative ground intersecting gastronomic tourism, cultural sustainability, and local identity.

Narrative Strategies and Brand Communication in Digital Media

Digital media offers gastronomy businesses new narrative strategies based on interaction with consumers. Storytelling is no longer merely a literary practice; it is now a central tool in experiential marketing and brand communication (Fog et al., 2010; Escalas & Bettman, 2005). Especially on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, narratives are strategically constructed

through elements such as aesthetics, authenticity, and emotional resonance (Cwynar-Horta, 2016; Ginsberg, 2020).

In this context, narrative models function along three fundamental axes:

- Identity construction (brand/local/cultural),
- Emotional interaction (nostalgia, belonging, tradition),
- Marketing strategy (product, story, experience presentation).

Mossberg (2008) demonstrates how storytelling transforms consumer experience, while Pine & Gilmore (2011) emphasize the emotionally driven and narrative-centered structure of the experience economy.

Methodology

Research Method: Thematic Narrative Analysis

This study employs the thematic narrative analysis method to examine the effects of digital gastronomy narratives on cultural memory and identity. Thematic narrative analysis is used to explore themes, symbols, and structures of meaning embedded within narratives. This approach is particularly effective in deconstructing how gastronomic narratives transmitted through digital media relate to cultural memory, identity, and consumer experience (Riessman, 2008).

Thematic narrative analysis focuses on identifying the core building blocks of storytelling (e.g., events, characters, settings) and the relationships between them, while also extracting the main themes of a narrative. By decoding the cultural codes within stories and visual elements, it becomes possible to determine the types of messages conveyed in their social, historical, and cultural contexts. Since the role of narratives involves components such as cultural

memory, identity, and social belonging, this analysis sheds light on how these elements are restructured in the digital space (Ezzy, 2013).

Thematic narrative analysis is closely linked to theories of cultural memory. Drawing from the work of Jan Assmann and Maurice Halbwachs, this study examines the impact of narratives on collective memory. Assmann (2011) argues that cultural memory is formed through shared memories of the past among individuals and communities, which in turn shape their identity. This perspective is significant for understanding how the cultural meanings of food are reconstructed in digital gastronomy narratives.

Analyzing narratives in this way reveals how identity formation, cultural belonging, and social memory intersect. Scholars such as Riessman (2008) and Ezzy (2013) have discussed the methodological flexibility of narrative analysis and explored how storytelling is employed across various social contexts. In digital gastronomy narratives, food transcends its basic function as a source of taste or nourishment and carries collective and individual meanings related to social and cultural identities.

Data Collection Process

The data collection process was conducted through four primary case studies representing businesses operating within the context of gastro-tourism and digital gastronomy. These cases were selected based on content shared on digital platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and official websites. The selected cases allow us to understand how traditional food cultures are reproduced in digital environments and the strategies through which cultural memory and identity are constructed in this process.

Regarding data collection, Flick (2022) emphasizes the importance of content and narrative analysis in qualitative research and recommends thematic sampling during the data gathering stage.

In line with this recommendation, food recipes, chefs' personal stories, visuals, and video content were analyzed based on specific themes. Additionally, Morrison (2022) notes that analyses conducted through digital platforms offer an effective means of uncovering narratives embedded with cultural meanings. The selected cases demonstrate the potential of digital gastronomic content to construct culturally meaningful narratives.

Data Analysis Process

Data analysis was carried out using the framework of thematic narrative analysis and involved the following steps:

- **Data Organization:** The collected digital content was categorized (e.g., food visuals, recipe texts, chefs' statements, storytelling elements, video content, etc.). Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasize that data organization is a critical step in thematic analysis.
- **Coding:** Specific themes were identified for each piece of content and classified accordingly. The themes were grouped under categories such as cultural memory, identity, nostalgia, modern interpretations of traditional recipes, locality, and branding. The coding process followed open and categorical coding techniques as recommended by Saldana (2021), who highlights that researchers should analyze textual details carefully to generate meaningful themes.
- **Thematic Analysis:** The role, function, and cultural significance of each theme within the context of digital gastronomy narratives were examined. In addition, the contribution of each narrative type to the branding process was analyzed. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) stress the importance of in-depth coding and the

exploration of thematic interconnections in thematic analysis. Identifying relationships among emerging themes enables a better understanding of the cultural and commercial strategies embedded in digital gastronomy storytelling.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the study, the data were meticulously selected, and the analysis process was continually reviewed. Each case was analyzed consistently in terms of both content and theoretical framework. To enhance the reliability of the findings, coding and analyses were conducted by three independent researchers, and methodological consistency was ensured through cross-comparison. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016) emphasize the importance of validity and reliability in qualitative research and explain how incorporating multiple perspectives offers a mechanism for verification in the analysis. This approach was a key strategy in establishing the reliability and validity of the study.

Case Analyses

This section presents a thematic narrative analysis based on four distinct case studies selected to examine the impact of digital gastronomy narratives on cultural memory, identity, and cultural transmission. These case analyses aim to explain how gastronomy-themed narratives on digital media platforms are shaped and their role in the process of constructing cultural memory.

Case 1: Digital Narratives of Chefs – Gastronomy through Personal Identity and Cultural Memory

Case Summary: In this case, a world-renowned chef shares not only recipes but also personal stories on digital platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. The chef's content combines modern interpretations of traditional recipes with visual and textual

narratives that reflect his culinary culture and personal identity. These digital narratives serve as a medium through which the chef establishes a connection with the past, evoking nostalgia and contributing to cultural memory.

Example Digital Content: YouTube Video Series: In the series titled “Modernizing Turkish Cuisine at Home”, the chef presents traditional dishes with his interpretations while also sharing the historical origins of each dish and their place in his family heritage. The narratives are enriched with nostalgic anecdotes such as, “My mother used to make this dish all the time when I was a child.”

Instagram Posts: The chef’s posts include step-by-step visuals of the cooking process along with written narratives explaining the cultural and historical context of the dishes. For example: “I’m modernizing this baklava inspired by my grandmother’s recipe.”

Thematic Analysis: Nostalgia and Traditionalism: The blending of traditional dishes with personal memories offers the audience a nostalgic connection to the past while also presenting a contemporary culinary experience.

Identity and Personal Story: The personal stories within the digital content reveal the chef’s identity and cultural roots, establishing a strong emotional connection with the audience.

Tension between Tradition and Modernity: The modern reinterpretation of traditional dishes reflects the reconstruction of cultural continuity within the digital space.

Case 1 Conclusions: This case demonstrates that digital gastronomy narratives function not merely as recipe-sharing tools but also as mediums for constructing cultural identity and

reconnecting with the past. The chef's narratives serve as a powerful vehicle for both cultural transmission and audience engagement.

Case 2: Local Dishes and Cultural Memory – The Digital Representation of Social Memory in Gastronomy

Case Summary: This case examines a restaurant operating in southeastern Turkey that, through digital platforms, introduces traditional dishes while simultaneously presenting their historical and cultural contexts. The digital content emphasizes not only recipes but also the cultural origins of these dishes, their place in local memory, and their intergenerational transmission.

Example Digital Content: Instagram & Facebook Posts: Alongside visuals of dishes like “kısır” and “baklava”, informative texts detailing the history and cultural significance of these dishes are shared. For example: “Kısır is a staple of Middle Eastern cuisine. We offer this recipe inspired by old cookbooks.”

YouTube Series: A video series titled “Cuisine of Southeastern Turkey” showcases the preparation of dishes while also narrating the historical and cultural background of the recipes.

Thematic Analysis: Locality and Identity: The restaurant's narratives present the dishes as representations of local culture and aim to transmit this identity to broader audiences via digital media.

Social Memory and Cultural Transmission: Each dish symbolizes a specific social memory and contributes to cultural continuity through intergenerational transmission.

Sense of Belonging and Connection: The digital narratives foster a sense of belonging to local culture among audiences and offer a means to reconnect with cultural roots.

Case 2 Conclusions: This case highlights how local gastronomic elements contribute to processes of cultural memory

and identity formation through digital storytelling. The dishes function not only as recipes but also as cultural narratives and vessels of memory in digital spaces.

Case 3: Modern Fast-Food and Cultural Adaptation – Local Interpretations of Global Brands

Case Summary: This case analyzes the digital marketing strategy of a global fast-food chain operating in Turkey. The brand appeals to local consumers by combining global flavors with local tastes in its digital content, thereby developing a gastronomic strategy of cultural adaptation.

Example Digital Content: Instagram Ads: Messages like “Our black cumin burger is inspired by Turkish cuisine” present global products reimagined with local elements.

Facebook Event Announcements: Participation in Turkish food festivals and related event promotions reflects the digital manifestation of the brand’s localization strategy.

Thematic Analysis: Globalization and Localization: The digital content forms a hybrid identity where elements of global gastronomy are blended with local culture.

Modern Food Culture and Digital Reflections: Fast-food products are represented not merely as items of consumption but also as symbols within digital culture.

Case 3 Conclusions: This case demonstrates how global brands digitally redefine cultural identity within their gastronomy strategies and support localization efforts through narrative-driven content.

Case 4: The Digital Reflection of Traditional Cuisine – Preserving and Reconstructing Cultural Heritage

Case Summary: This case examines a Turkish restaurant’s strategy of promoting traditional Turkish cuisine on digital platforms. The restaurant’s aim is not only to present dishes physically but also to communicate its historical and cultural values to audiences. The digital narratives enable the reinterpretation of these dishes as elements of cultural heritage.

Example Digital Content: Instagram Video Posts: Videos such as “Making İçli Köfte” portray the cooking process alongside cultural practices, with each stage symbolizing a facet of cultural memory.

Facebook Articles: Long-form posts detailing the historical journey of dishes and the cultural background of Turkish cuisine contribute to the formation of digital memory.

Thematic Analysis: Traditional Cuisine and Cultural Heritage: Digital narratives present traditional dishes not only as items of physical consumption but as components of intangible cultural heritage.

Cultural Transmission and Memory: The intergenerational transmission of culinary traditions through digital storytelling plays a crucial role in ensuring cultural continuity.

Cultural Memory on Digital Platforms: Traditional culinary narratives are reshaped within digital platforms, becoming part of collective cultural memory.

Case 4 Conclusions: This case reveals how traditional culinary cultures can be preserved in digital spaces and how digital narratives possess the potential to reconstruct cultural memory. Traditional dishes are presented as narratives that carry both cultural and brand value within the digital environment.

Conclusions

This study has examined the effects of digital food narratives on cultural memory, identity construction, and strategic narrative models for gastronomy enterprises. Digital media has created a new domain in which food narratives are shaped, shared, and consumed. Within this space, gastronomy businesses have developed digital storytelling strategies to emphasize cultural identities and establish strong connections with their target audiences. The main findings of the study reveal that digital food narratives play a significant role not only in the transmission of gastronomic experiences but also in processes of cultural memory and identity formation.

- **The Role of Digital Content in Identity and Cultural Memory:** The analyses indicate that digital content serves as an effective tool in reinforcing gastronomic identities and preserving cultural memory. Particularly, food recipes and gastronomic experiences do not merely serve the purpose of nourishment; they also convey historical, cultural, and social contexts, providing audiences with insights into the cultural origins of the dishes (Mintz, 1986; Assmann, 2011). This allows for the transmission of gastronomic heritage to younger generations through the digital sharing of traditional dishes. For instance, recipe videos on YouTube not only offer instructions but also present the cultural background of the dishes to viewers. This finding emphasizes the potential of digital media in preserving cultural heritage in a manner consistent with Assmann's (2011) understanding of cultural memory.
- **Interaction and Engagement with Digital Content:** The interaction between digital content and audiences plays a critical role in determining the success of such

content. Platforms like Instagram facilitate greater engagement through visual content, while video-based platforms like YouTube encourage deeper audience participation. Audience engagement through activities such as commenting, liking, and sharing enhances the impact of content (Jenkins, 2006). In this context, the interactive nature of digital storytelling enables audiences to move beyond passive consumption and establish a more dynamic relationship with content creators. This, in turn, reinforces the role of digital media in the sharing of food cultures and the construction of identities.

- **Cultural Reflections and Strategic Narrative Models:** The strategic use of digital food narratives by gastronomy businesses has emerged as a key approach that foregrounds identity and cultural memory transmission. This study specifically investigated how digital content is employed by businesses to construct brand identities. Such strategic narratives are effective tools for defining a brand's gastronomic identity and offering target audiences a deep cultural meaning (Anheier, 2014). By highlighting the historical and cultural contexts of dishes, businesses can appeal to diverse audience groups at both local and global scales. This demonstrates how digital media provides opportunities for gastronomy businesses to convey cultural values and establish meaningful connections with their audiences.
- **General Assessment and Consistency with the Literature:** In conclusion, digital food narratives hold an important place in the processes of cultural identity formation and memory transmission for gastronomy enterprises. The findings are consistent with existing

literature (Mintz, 1986; Halbwachs, 1992) and digital media studies (Jenkins, 2006). The study underscores the function of digital media as a platform where gastronomic content is shared and cultural values are constructed. Moreover, it was found that the linguistic, visual, and auditory features of content combine interactively to establish stronger bonds with audiences and play an influential role in the formation of gastronomic identities.

Future research may further explore the effects of digital food narratives within different cultural contexts to develop a deeper understanding of how food cultures are shaped at both global and local levels. Additionally, gathering more data on how social media platforms influence food culture can offer valuable insights into the future of digital gastronomy.

Recommendations

This study has revealed that digital food narratives serve as a significant tool in the construction of gastronomic identities, the transmission of cultural memory, and the development of strategic narrative models for gastronomy businesses. However, in order to better understand the potential of this field and to develop applicable strategies, several key recommendations are proposed.

Recommendations for In-Depth Examination of Digital Narratives in Cultural Contexts

Future studies should examine the impacts of digital food narratives in various cultural contexts in greater detail. Such research could focus on how food is digitalized not only as a recipe but also as cultural heritage, and how this heritage is transmitted through digital platforms. Furthermore, differences between societies and

cultures can be explored through the ways in which they are reflected in digital food narratives.

Recommendations for the Use of Digital Content Strategies by Gastronomy Businesses

Gastronomy businesses should not only share recipes on digital platforms but also create content that highlights the historical and cultural contexts of the dishes. Rather than simply presenting recipes, emphasizing their cultural background provides businesses with the opportunity to build a stronger and more meaningful connection with their target audiences. In doing so, gastronomy enterprises can offer more than just a food experience—they can also communicate the cultural and historical significance of that experience.

Recommendations for Increasing Audience Engagement

Audience engagement is a key factor in the success of digital content. Gastronomy businesses can encourage deeper interaction by integrating interactive features such as commenting, liking, and sharing. Additionally, designing digital content to reflect viewers' personal experiences will further increase participation. Such interactive content transforms the viewer from a mere consumer into an active participant who becomes “a part of” the narrative.

Recommendations for Enhancing the Quality of Visual and Auditory Content

The visual and auditory aspects of digital food narratives have a significant impact on the audience. Gastronomy businesses should carefully curate visual and auditory elements in their content with an emphasis on aesthetics and the presentation of food. Videos and photographs should be designed to reflect the cultural meaning and gastronomic identity of dishes. Visual elements should not only

convey recipes but also evoke the culture, culinary tradition, and social context to which the dish belongs.

Recommendations for the Development of Multimedia Content

Diversifying multimedia content on digital platforms is a powerful way to strengthen engagement with audiences. Gastronomy businesses can enrich user experience by incorporating elements such as video, audio narration, and interactive content alongside visual materials. This type of multimedia content enables audiences to go beyond simply viewing a recipe, allowing them to explore the preparation process and the cultural context of the dish in greater depth.

Recommendations for Education and Awareness in Digital Narratives

Gastronomy businesses' success can be enhanced by becoming more conscious in their production of digital content. Training programs and workshops aimed at businesses can offer guidance on how to more effectively use digital platforms. Additionally, in crafting digital marketing strategies, businesses should focus not only on recipes but also on the cultural, historical, and social dimensions of the dishes in order to develop more compelling and meaningful narratives.

Recommendations for Integrated Content Strategies Across Platforms

Digital food narratives may have different effects on different platforms. Gastronomy businesses should adapt their content with platform-specific strategies. For example, on visually driven platforms like Instagram, the aesthetic appeal of food can be emphasized, while on video-based platforms such as YouTube, greater focus can be placed on the storytelling and demonstration of

recipes. Each platform requires that content be tailored to its unique audience and format.

Recommendations for Methodological Diversity in Future Research

To explore digital food narratives in greater depth, it is important to diversify research methodologies. In addition to qualitative analyses, quantitative data collection methods can also be employed. For example, tools such as surveys and interaction analyses can be used to measure the impact of digital content on audiences. In this way, the effects of digital food narratives can be assessed across broader demographic groups.

This set of recommendations underscores the need for further research on the role of digital food narratives in the transmission of gastronomic identities and cultural memory. It also provides practical suggestions for how gastronomy businesses can strengthen their digital media strategies and how these strategies can support the development of cultural identity.

Policy Implications

The findings of this study offer valuable insights for policymakers in the fields of cultural heritage, tourism, and digital communication. Governments and cultural institutions should recognize the role of digital food narratives as a tool for preserving and promoting intangible cultural heritage. Policy frameworks could support the development of digital storytelling initiatives, particularly in regions with rich culinary traditions that are at risk of being forgotten. In addition, support for small and medium-sized gastronomy enterprises in digital capacity building could foster sustainable tourism and local identity preservation. Integrating culinary heritage into digital cultural policies may strengthen national branding and contribute to intercultural dialogue.

Research Agenda

This study opens up several avenues for future academic exploration. Comparative studies across different cultural and national contexts could shed light on how digital food narratives function in diverse environments. Longitudinal research could track the evolution of digital food storytelling practices and their impact on collective memory over time. Moreover, interdisciplinary approaches combining media studies, gastronomy, anthropology, and digital marketing would offer a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon. Finally, studies focusing on audience reception, algorithmic visibility, and platform-specific content dynamics would enrich the discourse on digital gastronomy and cultural identity formation.

REFERENCES

Abidin, C. (2016). "Aren't these just young, rich women doing vain things online?": Influencer selfies as subversive frivolity. *Social media+ society*, 2(2), 2056305116641342.

Anheier, H. K. (2014). *Nonprofit organizations: Theory, management, policy*. Routledge.

Assmann, J. (2011). *Cultural memory and early civilization: Writing, remembrance, and political imagination*. Cambridge University Press.

Bell, D., & Valentine, G. (2013). *Consuming geographies: We are where we eat*. Routledge.

Benjamin, W. (2019). *The storyteller essays*. New York Review of Books.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

Carù, A., & Cova, B. (2003). Revisiting consumption experience: A more humble but complete view of the concept. *Marketing theory*, 3(2), 267-286.

Counihan, C., & Van Esterik, P. (2013). *Food and culture* (Vol. 367). New York, NY: Routledge.

Dawson, P., & Mäkelä, M. (Eds.). (2023). *The Routledge companion to narrative theory*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Escalas, J. E. (2004). Narrative processing: Building consumer connections to brands. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 14(1-2), 168-180.

Everett, S. (2008). Beyond the visual gaze? The pursuit of an embodied experience through food tourism. *Tourist studies*, 8(3), 337-358.

- Ezzy, D. (2013). *Qualitative analysis*. Routledge.
- Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 5(1), 80-92.
- Flick, U. (2022). *An introduction to qualitative research*.
- Fog, K., Budtz, C., Munch, P., & Blanchette, S. (2010). *Storytelling: Branding in Practice* Springer.
- Genette, G. (1980). *Narrative discourse: An essay in method*. Cornell UP.
- Gvion, L. (2009). What's cooking in America? Cookbooks narrate ethnicity: 1850–1990. *Food, culture & society*, 12(1), 53-76.
- Halbwachs, M. (1992). *On collective memory* University of Chicago Press. Chicago IL.
- Heldke, L. (2015). *Exotic appetites: Ruminations of a food adventurer*. Routledge.
- Holtzman, J. D. (2006). Food and memory. *Annu. Rev. Anthropol.*, 35(1), 361-378.
- Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collid*. New York, NY: New, 1-2.
- Johnston, J., & Goodman, M. K. (2015). Spectacular foodscapes: Food celebrities and the politics of lifestyle mediation in an age of inequality. *Food, culture & society*, 18(2), 205-222.
- Kladou, S., Kavaratzis, M., Rigopoulou, I., & Salonika, E. (2017). The role of brand elements in destination branding. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 6(4), 426-435.
- LeBesco, K., & Naccarato, P. (Eds.). (2008). *Edible ideologies: Representing food and meaning*. Suny Press.

Levenstein, H. A. (1997). Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 71(3), 567-569.

Lupton, D. (2020). Understanding digital food cultures. In *Digital food cultures* (pp. 1-16). Routledge.

Mintz, S. W. (1986). *Sweetness and power: The place of sugar in modern history*. Penguin.

Morrison, A. M. (2022). *Tourism marketing: in the age of the consumer*. Routledge.

Mossberg, L. (2008). Extraordinary experiences through storytelling. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 8(3), 195-210.

Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (2011). *The experience economy*. Harvard Business Press.

Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Sage.

Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*.

Seremetakis, N. (1994). *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity* Boulder. CO: Westview.

Spence, C. (2022). Gastrophysics: Getting creative with pairing flavours. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 27, 100433.

Sutton, D. E. (2001). *Remembrance of repasts: an anthropology of food and memory*. Berg.

Trubek, A. B. (2008). *The taste of place: A cultural journey into terroir* (Vol. 20). Univ of California Press.

Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2016). Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri [Qualitative research methods in social sciences](11. b.). Edition.

GASTRONOMY AND EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING

MUHAMMET ABDULMECİT KINIKLI¹

Introduction to Gastronomy and Experiential Marketing

Experiential marketing (EM) represents a distinctly customer-focused approach that seeks to significantly enhance products, services, or destinations through a variety of sensory, emotional, cognitive, or social experiences. In recent years, gastronomy has emerged as an increasingly vital component of EM, particularly within the tourism industry (Dixit & Prayag, 2022; Richards, 2021). It provides local destinations not only with memorable food experiences that linger in the minds of tourists but also plays a crucial role in promoting their unique cultural narratives and traditions. This focus on exceptional gastronomic experiences serves to enhance tourists' overall involvement and satisfaction during their travels (Kovalenko et al., 2023; Batat, 2021). Consequently, attention to these gastronomic experiences and their invaluable contribution to EM has noticeably increased in tourism studies and discussions. Despite this heightened interest, research

¹ Dr., Mersin University, Department of Tourism Management, Orcid: 0000-0002-7789-7974

examining gastronomic experiences specifically as an effective marketing tool remains surprisingly scarce, indicating a significant gap in the current literature (Michael and Fusté-Forné, 2022; More, 2023).

Visual merchandising and event marketing serve as platforms to prominently showcase gastronomy as a pivotal object of experiential marketing (EM). Food and wine festivals that actively celebrate the unique flavors and dishes of local gastronomy significantly enhance the overall marketing experience and foster deeper connections with potential visitors (Solunoglu & Orgun, 2024). The involvement of residents, their long-standing cultural traditions, and the coherent pre-existing emotional connections they have towards these experiences play a crucial role in improving their participation and overall satisfaction. Destination marketing places a strong emphasis on fostering emotional engagement during celebratory festivals and ongoing celebrations, providing both stimulation and entertainment for attendees (Rachão et al., 2021). This comprehensive study seeks to enrich the existing literature by thoroughly exploring how gastronomy plays a vital role in enhancing the experiential marketing experience. Unlike traditional EM experiences, gastronomic experiences are often perceived as more remarkable and impactful. The concept of gastronomy is intricately connected to personal and emotional perceptions, which shapes the symbolism of local culture for various destinations (Lee & Kwon, 2021). Consequently, food should be considered an indispensable part of any cultural experience, playing a central role in how local traditions and identities are expressed to the broader audience (Yu, 2022)

This chapter provides a basis for future studies exploring the dimensions that enhance EM experiences across other aspects. Overall, this study enhances the customer experience in the gastronomic point-of-view and augments knowledge in gastronomy

and EM. Since customers are crucial to business survival, focus should shift to their emotional engagement (Cifci et al., 2021). The concept of emotional consumption is elaborated at the tourism destination level, adapting consumer behaviour in a new context (Antón et al., 2019). Creating memorable gastronomic experiences enhances the overall marketing experience. By embracing gastronomy, more advantageous results are attained, and other aspects considered vital parts of the experience broaden the understanding of the success of EM (Kahraman & Cifci, 2023; Mora et al.2021).

Historical Perspectives on Gastronomy

The concept of gastronomy, often understood as the art and science of good eating and drinking, has roots that stretch back to antiquity, though the term itself is more modern. Ancient civilizations, far from viewing food solely as sustenance, imbued it with significant cultural, social, and even religious importance. In ancient Greece, thinkers like Archestratus, a poet from Syracuse in the 4th century BCE, wrote about the pleasures of food and where to find the best ingredients, demonstrating an early appreciation for quality and regional specialties (Dalby, 2000). Roman society, particularly during the Empire, was renowned for its elaborate banquets and sophisticated culinary practices, as documented in texts attributed to Apicius, which provide insights into the ingredients and techniques of the era (Alcock, 2005). These early periods laid a foundation by recognizing food as a domain of pleasure, skill, and cultural expression.

The Middle Ages in Europe saw a different trajectory, with culinary developments often shaped by feudal structures, religious observances dictating feasting and fasting, and the burgeoning spice trade which introduced exotic flavors to aristocratic tables. Culinary knowledge was often preserved and transmitted within monasteries

and noble households. However, the Renaissance marked a significant shift, with a renewed interest in classical learning extending to the culinary arts. This era witnessed a greater refinement in cooking techniques and presentation, particularly in Italy, which then heavily influenced French cuisine, notably through figures like Catherine de' Medici whose arrival in France in the 16th century is often anecdotally credited with introducing new dishes and a higher standard of dining (Flandrin & Montanari, 1999). This period saw the beginnings of a more structured approach to cuisine, with an emphasis on balance and the quality of ingredients.

The professionalization and codification of gastronomy accelerated from the 17th century onwards, especially in France, which began to establish its dominance as the center of Western culinary arts. Landmark culinary texts began to appear, standardizing recipes and techniques. Figures like François Pierre La Varenne, with his 1651 publication *Le Cuisinier François*, heralded a move away from medieval heavy spicing towards an emphasis on the natural flavors of ingredients (Mennell, 1996). This trend continued with Marie-Antoine Carême in the early 19th century, who is considered one of the first celebrity chefs, renowned for his elaborate *pièces montées* and his systematization of French cuisine into what became known as *haute cuisine*. Later in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Auguste Escoffier further refined and modernized Carême's work, simplifying dishes, emphasizing seasonal ingredients, and famously organizing professional kitchen structures through the "brigade de cuisine" system, profoundly shaping modern professional cooking (Escoffier, 2013; James, 2006). These developments firmly established a codified, teachable, and professionalized approach to gastronomy that would influence global culinary standards for generations.

An Overview of Experiential Marketing

Experiential marketing is an approach that aims to provide consumers with holistic, memorable, and emotionally engaging experiences, rather than merely presenting the functional benefits of products or services (Schmitt, 1999). While traditional marketing often concentrates on product features, price, and functional benefits, viewing consumers primarily as rational decision-makers, experiential marketing seeks to establish a deeper and more meaningful connection between the brand and the consumer by appealing to their senses, emotions, thoughts, actions, and relationships (Schmitt, 1999; Armstrong, Adam, Denize & Kotler 2014; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). This approach encourages the consumer to transition from being a passive recipient to an active participant in the experience offered by the brand, co-creating value in the process (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

Bernd Schmitt (1999) identified five distinct Strategic Experiential Modules (SEMs) that form the foundation of experiential marketing: Sense, Feel, Think, Act, and Relate. Sense experiences aim to create aesthetic pleasure and excitement by appealing to the senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Feel experiences target the generation of positive emotions towards the brand in consumers (e.g., happiness, pride, nostalgia). Think experiences encourage consumers to engage in creative thinking, problem-solving, and to satisfy their curiosity. Act experiences aim to influence consumers' lifestyles and behaviors by facilitating their physical participation. Finally, Relate experiences strengthen the sense of belonging by allowing individuals to feel part of a social group or culture.

The rise of experiential marketing is closely linked to fundamental shifts in consumer behavior and transformations in market dynamics, signaling a move towards an 'experience economy'

(Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Schmitt, 1999). Factors such as easier consumer access to information, an increase in brand and product variety, and the perceived declining effectiveness of traditional advertising amidst media clutter have pushed businesses to seek differentiation beyond functional benefits (LaSalle & Britton, 2003; Rust & Oliver, 1994). At this juncture, experiential marketing stands out as a powerful tool that provides brands with a significant competitive advantage by creating unique and engaging customer encounters (Schmitt, 1999). A successful experiential marketing strategy not only aims to increase sales but also to strengthen brand loyalty (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009), trigger positive word-of-mouth marketing (Smilansky, 2017), and enhance the overall brand image.

This marketing philosophy emphasizes that the context in which a product or service is presented, the atmosphere created (i.e., the servicescape), and the interaction established with the consumer are as crucial as the product or service itself (Bitner, 1992; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Experiential marketing can find a wide range of applications, from meticulously designed in-store events and engaging pop-up experiences to vibrant brand communities and interactive digital campaigns (Smilansky, 2009; Schmitt, 1999). The fundamental aim is to create lasting impressions in the minds and hearts of consumers, thereby fostering an emotional connection that transcends purely rational benefits (Schmitt, 1999; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Consequently, the experience design process necessitates a deep understanding of the target audience and the generation of creative, strategically aligned solutions (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Smilansky, 2017).

Theoretical Framework of Experiential Marketing and Its Relationship with Gastronomy

The Experience Economy and Gastronomy

The concept of the experience economy, representing a significant stage in the evolution of economic value, was first popularized by B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore (1999) in their work, "The Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre & Every Business a Stage." Pine and Gilmore proposed that the offering of economic value has progressed from commodities to goods, then to services, and finally to experiences. According to this approach, companies should no longer merely sell tangible products or intangible services but should also gain a competitive advantage by offering memorable, personal, and engaging experiences to their customers (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Experiences are defined as the set of internal and personal responses that occur in an individual's mind and emotions during their participation in an event, and these experiences leave lasting impressions in the customer's mind, thereby fostering a strong bond with the brand (Schmitt, 1999).

The gastronomy sector is one of the primary fields where the principles of the experience economy find natural application. The act of eating and drinking inherently possesses the potential to offer a sensory and emotional experience (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982); however, in the context of the experience economy, gastronomy transcends far beyond the mere satisfaction of a basic physiological need (Quan & Wang, 2004). Consumers now visit restaurants not only to satiate their hunger but also to immerse themselves in a special atmosphere, discover new tastes, socialize, become part of a story, or experience a particular lifestyle, with the physical environment itself significantly influencing their perceptions (Bitner, 1992). Therefore, gastronomy businesses must meticulously design all experiential elements surrounding the meal (e.g., venue

design, service style, music, storytelling, etc.) with as much care as the quality of the food they offer (Zhang et al., 2022; Richards, 2021).

Creating experiences in gastronomy can manifest in various ways. For instance, thematic restaurants (e.g., those evoking a movie or a historical period) offer customers the chance to step into a specific fantasy world. Through storytelling, the origin of a dish or a chef, relationships with local producers, or the unique histories of ingredients can add depth and meaning to the experience (Mossberg, 2007; Green & Brock, 2000). "Co-creation" practices, where customers become part of the experience—such as options to create their own salad or pizza—offer a personalized and participatory experience (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Such approaches allow the customer to move from being a passive consumer to an active participant, and even a co-creator, of the value and the experience (Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

The fundamental implication of the experience economy for gastronomy businesses is that differentiation and value creation are achieved not by focusing solely on the functional benefits of a product or service, but by offering holistic and engaging experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Customers are more inclined to pay a premium for positive experiences, share these experiences with others through word-of-mouth, and remain loyal to the brand (Berry, Carbone, & Haeckel, 2002; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). Consequently, experience design for gastronomy businesses is no longer a luxury but a strategic imperative for sustainable success (Schmitt, 1999). This necessitates the adoption of an experience-oriented mindset in every aspect of the business, from menu planning and staff training to venue design and marketing communications.

Schmitt's Strategic Experiential Modules (SEMs)

One of the most significant models forming the theoretical foundation of experiential marketing is the Strategic Experiential Modules (SEMs) developed by Bernd Schmitt (1999). Schmitt defines experiential marketing as an approach that enables customers to interact with brands on sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational levels, going beyond merely rational and functional benefits. This model offers businesses a framework for providing holistic and varied experiences to their customers. SEMs help marketers understand how they can deliver different types of experiences to customers and comprehend the effects of these experiences on brand perception and customer behaviors.

Schmitt (1999) identifies five fundamental strategic experiential modules: Sense, Feel, Think, Act, and Relate. These modules can be used individually or in combination to create rich and multidimensional experiences for customers. For example, a restaurant might not only offer delicious food (Sense) but also combine elements such as a warm atmosphere (Feel), information about the story of the dishes (Think), an interactive presentation (Act), and a connection with the local community (Relate) to deliver a much more powerful experience. The integrated use of these modules enables the brand to establish a more lasting and impactful position in the customer's mind.

Sensory Experiences (Sense) and Gastronomic Applications

Sensory experiences (Sense) are a type of experience in marketing that aims to create aesthetic pleasure, excitement, satisfaction, and a perception of beauty by appealing to the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell) (Schmitt, 1999). Gastronomy, by its very nature, is a field where sensory experiences are central, offering inherent opportunities for sensory and emotional engagement (Quan & Wang, 2004). While the taste and smell of food

and beverages are fundamental sensory elements, factors such as the presentation of the food (visuality), the ambiance and physical environment of the venue (e.g., sounds, layout, textures – often termed the 'servicescape'), and even the texture of the tableware used also significantly influence the overall sensory experience (Krishna, 2012). A successful sensory marketing strategy aims to leave positive and memorable impressions on the customer by harmoniously combining these elements to create a holistic sensory brand experience (Hultén, Broweus, & Van Dijk, 2009).

In gastronomy, sensory experiences can be designed in a multitude of ways to create a cohesive and appealing customer journey. Visual experiences are multifaceted, extending from the aesthetic presentation and plating of food, which can significantly impact taste perception and enjoyment (Spence, Okajima, Cheok, Petit, & Michel, 2016), to the restaurant's overall decor, lighting, and even staff uniforms, all of which contribute to the perceived servicescape (Bitner, 1992). Indeed, the strategic use of colors and lighting can influence the customer's mood and appetite (Wansink, 2004; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Olfactory experiences, such as the aroma of freshly baked bread, the scent of freshly brewed coffee, or the strategic use of specific spices as ambient scents, can also shape the customer's experience and product perception from the moment they enter the establishment (Spangenberg, Crowley, & Henderson, 1996; Krishna, 2012). While the gustatory experience undoubtedly forms the foundation of gastronomy, this core experience is significantly enriched and modulated by the quality of ingredients, culinary techniques employed, and the harmonious balance of different flavors (Delwiche, 2012).

Auditory experiences in gastronomy encompass a range of sounds, from the type and volume of music played, which can significantly influence the venue's ambiance and consumer behavior such as dining duration and expenditure (Milliman, 1986; Areni &

Kim, 1993), to the sounds emanating from the kitchen (e.g., in open kitchen concepts), which can even modulate taste perception (Zampini & Spence, 2004). Tactile experiences, conversely, relate to the haptic properties of objects encountered, such as the texture of tablecloths, napkins, chairs, and even the menu; the perceived quality of these tactile cues can influence broader judgments, for example, with high-quality, natural materials potentially creating perceptions of luxury and comfort (Krishna, 2012; Peck & Childers, 2003). Ultimately, when all these sensory elements converge, they contribute to an overall perception of the gastronomic experience, and this holistic perception directly impacts crucial outcomes like customer satisfaction and revisit intention (Ryu & Jang, 2007; Hultén, 2011).

In conclusion, for gastronomy businesses, investing in sensory experiences transcends merely enhancing product quality; it involves curating a holistic and appealing atmosphere or 'servicescape' that envelops the customer (Bitner, 1992; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). The meticulous planning of details that appeal to each sense not only enriches the customer's immediate experience but also strengthens the brand's identity and creates a significant point of differentiation in a competitive market. Ultimately, sensory marketing influences customers' perceptions, often at a subconscious level, creating positive associations and fostering a deeper, more affective bond with the brand (Schmitt, 1999; Hultén, Broweus, & Van Dijk, 2009; Krishna, 2012).

Emotional Experiences (Feel) and Gastronomic Applications

Emotional experiences (Feel) encompass marketing strategies aimed at evoking specific emotional responses in customers towards a brand or product, such as joy, pride, nostalgia, excitement, a sense of belonging, or relaxation (Schmitt, 1999). Gastronomy is a field deeply connected with human emotions; food

and dining experiences can revive past memories, serve as a means to celebrate special moments, or simply offer an escape from the stresses of daily life (MacCann & Roberts, 2008). Therefore, for gastronomy businesses, establishing an emotional bond with customers is one of the key elements in building brand loyalty and creating a positive image (Thompson, Rindfleisch, & Arsel, 2006).

There are numerous ways to create emotional experiences in gastronomy. For instance, the atmosphere, decor, and music of a restaurant—elements of the servicescape—can evoke romantic, intimate, or joyful feelings in customers (Bitner, 1992; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The friendly, sincere, and helpful attitudes of staff contribute significantly to positive emotional experiences by making customers feel valued and comfortable, especially during service encounters (Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990). Storytelling is also a powerful tool for forging emotional connections; an authentic story behind a dish or restaurant (e.g., a family recipe, a local legend, or the chef's personal journey) can facilitate narrative transportation, enabling customers to emotionally invest in the experience (Green & Brock, 2000; Mossberg, 2007).

Nostalgia marketing is an emotional experience strategy frequently employed in gastronomy. Menus that reinterpret childhood flavors or venues reflecting the atmosphere of past eras can evoke warm and positive memories in customers, fostering sympathy towards the brand (Holbrook & Schindler, 1991). Personalized services and small, unexpected positive gestures for special occasions (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.) can also create strong emotions such as gratitude and happiness, making the experience unforgettable and contributing to customer delight (Oliver, Rust, & Varki, 1997). Furthermore, a brand's authentic support for specific social responsibility projects or adherence to ethical values (e.g., sustainability, fair trade) can reinforce feelings

of respect, admiration, and appreciation for the brand among customers who share those values (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001).

The success of emotional experiences depends on the business's accurate understanding of the target audience's emotional needs and expectations. Empathizing with customers, identifying the types of emotional experiences they seek, and providing an atmosphere and service that meet these expectations enhance the effectiveness of emotional marketing (Goleman, 1995). It should be remembered that customers who have positive emotional experiences not only tend to return but also contribute to the brand's awareness and reputation by sharing their experiences with others (word-of-mouth marketing) (Westbrook, 1987; Nyer, 1999). Therefore, cultivating emotional intelligence within the organization and implementing well-designed emotional marketing strategies are becoming increasingly crucial for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage in the gastronomy sector.

Think Experiences (Think) and Gastronomic Applications

Think experiences are marketing efforts aimed at intellectually engaging customers, arousing curiosity, prompting creative thinking, and encouraging the use of problem-solving skills (Schmitt, 1999). Such experiences aim to teach customers something new, surprise them, or lead them to question their existing assumptions. In the field of gastronomy, think experiences are predicated on the idea that food can be an instrument of intellectual discovery and learning (Mak, Lumbers, Eves, & Chang, 2012), transcending its role as a mere physical necessity. This enables customers to participate in the gastronomic experience in a more conscious and engaged manner.

There are various ways to create think experiences in gastronomy. For instance, providing detailed information on menus about the content, origin, nutritional values, or preparation

techniques of dishes can help customers better understand what they are eating and make informed choices (Wansink, 2004). Wine tasting notes, information about the regions where coffee beans are grown, or the story behind a special ingredient can capture customers' curiosity and encourage them to learn more. Some restaurants incorporate elements that stimulate cognitive engagement, such as small puzzles, interesting facts, or anecdotes related to local culture into their menus, fostering a more interactive service experience (cf. Grönroos, 2008).

Interactive workshops and training sessions also offer powerful think experiences. For example, cooking classes led by chefs, wine or cheese tasting workshops, and barista training events provide participants with new skills while also offering an opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge about products and processes (Hall & Mitchell, 2000). Such activities can help customers form a more personal bond with the brand and view it as a source of expertise. Furthermore, restaurants that use innovative cooking techniques, such as molecular gastronomy, can create strong think experiences by presenting novel and surprising dishes that challenge expectations and prompt reflection on the nature of food (Spence & Piqueras-Fiszman, 2014).

Another important aspect of think marketing for gastronomy businesses is transparency and education. Informing customers about issues such as sustainability, local supply chains, or ethical production practices can increase their trust in the brand and empower them to make more conscious consumption decisions (Thøgersen, Jørgensen, & Sandager, 2012). For example, a restaurant adopting and clearly communicating a "farm-to-table" philosophy not only highlights the brand's values but also offers customers an opportunity to reflect on the provenance and processes behind the food they consume (Counihan, 2013). Such intellectual engagements can enable customers to form a deeper bond with the

brand, viewing it not just as a place to eat but also as an arena for learning and discovery. viewing it not just as a place to eat but also as an arena for learning and discovery.

Act Experiences and Gastronomic Applications

Act experiences are marketing strategies that aim to influence customers' lifestyles, behaviors, and habits by encouraging their physical participation (Schmitt, 1999). This module seeks to transform customers from passive observers into active participants in the experience, often involving them in the co-creation of value (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004a). Act marketing intends to inspire customers to try new behaviors, experience different lifestyles, or take action on a particular issue. In the field of gastronomy, act experiences enable customers to establish a more interactive and participatory relationship with food and the dining process.

There are many creative ways to offer act experiences in gastronomy. One of the most common examples involves interactive stations that allow customers to prepare or customize their own food or beverages, thereby co-creating their product (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004a). For instance, concepts such as "make your own salad," "decorate your own ice cream," or "mix your own cocktail" offer customers the opportunity to create a personalized product and actively participate in the process. The performance of a chef cooking in front of customers and interacting with them at Teppanyaki restaurants, where the preparation itself is a form of entertainment, can also be considered a type of act experience, aligning with the theatrical aspect of the experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Such experiences provide customers not only with a product but also with an entertaining and participatory activity.

Cooking courses and workshops represent another significant application of act marketing in gastronomy. These types

of events offer participants the chance to learn new skills while simultaneously experiencing the brand's products or philosophy, which can be seen as an educational experience component (Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007). For example, a pasta-making workshop organized by an Italian restaurant or a bread-baking course offered by a bakery allows participants to both have an enjoyable time and establish a deeper connection with the brand. Furthermore, some businesses adopting the "farm-to-table" concept offer customers experiences such as picking their own vegetables or participating in harvest events, thereby involving them directly in the food production process and enhancing their connection to the food's origin (Gilg & Battershill, 1998).

Act marketing can also be utilized to encourage customers towards a specific behavioral change or to take action for a social cause. For instance, a restaurant promoting healthy eating might not only offer healthy options on its menu but also distribute brochures with healthy lifestyle tips or organize healthy cooking demonstrations, thereby engaging in social marketing principles (Andreasen, 2002). A café that prioritizes sustainability can create an act experience by encouraging customers to bring their own cups or by participating in waste reduction campaigns, fostering pro-environmental behaviors (Steg & Vlek, 2009). Such efforts can increase customer loyalty by demonstrating that the brand aims not only for profit but also for societal benefit, a key aspect of effective corporate social responsibility (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Relate Experiences and Gastronomic Applications

Relate experiences are marketing strategies that enable individuals to situate themselves within a broader social or cultural context and to connect with their ideal self or with others, such as a subculture or a reference group (Schmitt, 1999). This module addresses not only customers' individual needs but also their desires

to be part of a community, share particular values, or express an identity, often using consumption as a means of self-expression (Belk, 1988). Gastronomy, being an arena where people gather, socialize, and engage in cultural exchange (Finkelstein, 1989), is highly conducive to the creation of relate experiences.

One way to create relate experiences in gastronomy is by establishing a brand identity that reflects a specific lifestyle or value system. For example, a restaurant that uses organic and local products and supports sustainability and fair trade can become an attraction for customers who value these principles; these consumers may seek out brands that align with their ethical considerations (Valor, 2008). By choosing such an establishment, these customers not only enjoy good food but also feel part of a community that aligns with their own values, reflecting a form of tribal consumption (Cova & Cova, 2002). In this way, the brand can function as an "identity badge" or a symbol of the self for its customers (Belk, 1988).

Building customer communities is another important element of relational marketing and fostering relate experiences. Organizing loyalty programs, exclusive membership clubs, themed dinners, or events targeted at specific interest groups (e.g., wine lovers, vegetarians) can create a bond and a sense of belonging among customers, characteristics central to brand communities (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Such communities facilitate interaction among customers and with the brand, thereby strengthening brand loyalty. Social media platforms also offer effective tools for creating and managing these online brand communities, enabling brands to maintain a continuous dialogue with their customers through forums, groups, or exclusive content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Cultural themes and ethnic cuisines also play a significant role in creating relate experiences. A restaurant that offers authentic

dishes from a particular culture and reflects that culture's music and decor can become a meeting point for people interested in or originating from that culture. This allows customers both to connect with their own cultural identity through food and to experience different cultures, a key aspect of culinary tourism (Long, 2004). In conclusion, relate experiences help gastronomy businesses establish deeper, meaningful, and long-term bonds with their customers that go beyond mere commercial transactions. Such bonds differentiate the brand from its competitors and provide a sustainable competitive advantage through enhanced customer loyalty and advocacy (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990).

Successful Experiential Marketing Strategies in Gastronomy Storytelling and Brand Identity Creation

Storytelling is an ancient art of communication that enables brands to establish an emotional bond with consumers, convey their messages more effectively, and strengthen their brand identity (Fog, Budtz, & Yakaboğlu, 2005). The gastronomy sector possesses a rich heritage filled with stories; every dish, every ingredient, every chef, and every venue can have a story worth telling. In the context of experiential marketing, storytelling transcends merely offering a product or service; it is a powerful tool for involving consumers in the brand's world, arousing curiosity, and creating memorable experiences. A successful story imparts personality to the brand (Aaker, 1997), differentiates it from competitors, and helps it secure a meaningful place in the consumers' minds.

In gastronomy, storytelling can be constructed through various elements. The first of these is the "founder's story" or "brand heritage." Elements such as how a restaurant was established, what challenges were overcome, and the founder's vision and passion add authenticity and sincerity to the brand (Gilmore & Pine, 2007). Secondly, there are "product or ingredient stories." Details such as

the origin of a special local ingredient, the traditional recipe of a dish, or the production process of a wine convey the labor and value behind the product to consumers (Mossberg & Eide, 2018). For example, phrases like "meatballs made with a grandfather's secret recipe" or "mezes prepared with herbs collected from the Ida Mountains" both arouse curiosity and add emotional value to the product.

A third type of story is the "chef's story." The chef's passion for gastronomy, their training, sources of inspiration, and culinary philosophy can be a significant differentiating factor, especially in chef-driven restaurants. When customers know the story of the person who prepared the meal, they may attribute a more personal meaning to the experience. Fourthly, there is the "venue's story." The history of a restaurant located in a historic building, the meaning of objects used in its decoration, or the cultural characteristics of the area where the venue is located can offer stories that enrich the atmosphere and add depth to the experience (Bitner, 1992). Finally, "customer stories" are also important; special moments, celebrations, or positive experiences that customers have at the venue can be shared via social media or other platforms, becoming part of the brand's story and fostering a sense of community (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001).

An effective storytelling strategy must be consistent, authentic, engaging, and aligned with the brand's core values (Fog, Budtz, & Yakaboylu, 2005). Stories can be conveyed to consumers through various channels, including menus, websites, social media posts, the venue's decor, and through personnel. For example, a menu can transform from being just a list of dishes into a booklet that tells a short story for each dish. Staff can make the experience more personal and sincere by telling customers interesting anecdotes about the food or the venue, enhancing the service encounter (Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990). Successful storytelling enables

consumers to form an emotional bond with the brand that goes beyond rational benefits, thereby significantly increasing brand loyalty and stimulating word-of-mouth marketing (Escalas, 2004).

Creating Atmosphere: The Power of Venue Design (Servicescapes)

The physical environment of a gastronomy business, namely its atmosphere or, in academic literature, the "servicescape," is a critical element that profoundly affects the customer experience (Bitner, 1992). Atmosphere, first conceptualized as a marketing tool by Kotler (1973), encompasses all sensory inputs perceived by customers from the moment they enter the venue (visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile) and the overall impression created by these inputs. A successful atmospheric design should reflect the brand's identity, appeal to the target customer base, and be complementary to the gastronomic experience offered. Indeed, a well-designed atmosphere can encourage customers to stay longer, spend more, feel more comfortable and happy, and increase their likelihood of revisiting the establishment (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Bitner, 1992).

The fundamental components of the servicescape include ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality, and signs, symbols, and artifacts (Bitner, 1992). Ambient conditions comprise background characteristics such as temperature, lighting, noise level, music, and scent. For example, dim lighting and slow-tempo music might be suitable for a romantic dinner, promoting leisurely dining (cf. Milliman, 1986), whereas bright lights and energetic music could be more appropriate for a fast-service restaurant aiming for quicker turnover. Spatial layout and functionality pertain to the arrangement of furniture, distance between tables, spaciousness of pathways, and overall ease of use. A well-planned spatial layout enhances both customer comfort and staff efficiency.

Signs, symbols, and artifacts include decorative elements, artworks, signage, and other visual cues that reflect the venue's identity, style, and can contribute to perceptions of authenticity (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). For instance, an Italian restaurant might use rustic wooden tables, murals of Italian landscapes, or Italian terms on the menu to support the aim of providing an authentic Italian experience. Color psychology also plays a significant role in atmospheric design; for example, warm colors like red and orange are known to stimulate appetite, while cool colors such as blue and green are understood to have a calming effect (Singh, 2006). All these elements must be congruent with the story the brand wishes to tell and the overall experience it aims to create, as they act as stimuli that influence customers' internal states and subsequent behaviors (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

For gastronomy businesses, atmosphere design is not merely an aesthetic concern but a strategic marketing tool. The atmosphere shapes customers' quality perceptions, expectations, and behaviors. For example, a luxury fine-dining restaurant endeavors to justify high price expectations by offering sophisticated decor, high-quality materials, and meticulous service. Conversely, a cozy and intimate café aims to make customers feel at home with comfortable seating, warm colors, and friendly service. The consistent and holistic design of the atmosphere aids in the brand's positioning and creates a clear image in the minds of the target audience, influencing perceived value and patronage intentions (Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal, & Voss, 2002).

Creating Unforgettable Moments Through Events

Event marketing is a strategy wherein brands directly interact with their target audiences to provide them with special, participatory, and memorable experiences (Getz & Page, 2008). The gastronomy sector, by its nature, is highly conducive to organizing

events, and such activities serve as powerful tools for increasing brand awareness, attracting new customers, strengthening relationships with existing ones, and achieving differentiation (Schmitt, 2010). A successful gastronomic event should transcend the mere presentation of food and beverages, offering participants an entertaining, educational, or emotionally enriching experience, aligning with established dimensions of the experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Such engaging experiences are potent catalysts for word-of-mouth marketing and can significantly help the brand gain greater visibility on social media platforms (Shawky, Kubacki, Dietrich, Weaven, 2019).

The types of events that can be organized in gastronomy are quite diverse. Tasting events (e.g., wine, cheese, olive oil, coffee) offer customers the opportunity to sample different products and learn about them, fostering both sensory and cognitive engagement. Chef's table events allow customers to converse with the chef over a special menu and gain a close-up view of kitchen processes, offering an exclusive and interactive experience. Pop-up restaurants or dining events create curiosity and buzz by offering short-term, unique experiences centered around a specific theme or concept, often instilling a sense of privilege and scarcity due to limited participation (Yu, Jung & Oh, 2025). Cooking workshops and courses not only impart new skills to participants but also enable them to establish an interactive bond with the brand, providing an educational and participatory experience (Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007).

Gastronomy festivals and thematic days/weeks (e.g., "seafood week," "local flavors festival") are effective methods for reaching large audiences and promoting specific products or cuisines (Getz, 2008). Such events often involve the participation of multiple businesses or producers and offer visitors a rich array of experiences. Furthermore, themed dinners or celebrations organized for special occasions (e.g., Valentine's Day, Mother's Day) provide customers

with the opportunity to experience unforgettable moments with their loved ones, thereby strengthening emotional bonds. Integrating gastronomic experiences with cultural activities such as live music performances, art exhibitions, or literary talks can also add a distinct dimension to the venue, enhancing its appeal and experiential value (Zhukova & Sarvilova, 2024).

The planning and execution of a successful gastronomic event require careful strategic effort, encompassing clear objectives, target audience definition, concept development, budgeting, and a robust marketing strategy (Shone & Parry, 2019). Every detail of the event (venue selection, menu, decoration, entertainment, staff, etc.) should align with the overall concept and offer participants a holistic experience (Schmitt, 1999). Gathering feedback from participants during and after the event is crucial for the improvement of future events. It should not be forgotten that a well-planned and executed event can enhance the brand's reputation, reinforce customer loyalty, and provide tangible commercial benefits and return on investment to the business (Wood, 2009).

Integration of Technology: Combining Digital and Physical Experiences

The rapid development of technology offers new opportunities that transform and enrich experiential marketing strategies within the gastronomy sector. Digital technologies can facilitate and personalize the interaction between gastronomy businesses and consumers at every stage of the customer journey (e.g., information search, reservation, ordering, experience sharing) (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). Successful technology integration aims to provide customers with a more fluid, interactive, and holistic experience by supporting or merging the physical (offline) gastronomic experience with digital (online) tools, creating a "phygital" environment (Grewal, Roggeveen, & Nordfält, 2017).

This can both enhance operational efficiency and elevate customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Among the most common examples of technology use in gastronomy are online reservation systems and mobile applications. These systems enable customers to easily book tables, view menus, read reviews, and even pre-order (Okumus, Ali, Bilgihan, & Ozturk, 2018). For restaurants, these applications allow for the optimization of table management, collection of customer data, and execution of personalized marketing campaigns. Tablet menus or digital menus accessed via QR codes offer a more hygienic, easily updatable, and interactive alternative to paper menus; visuals of dishes, ingredient information, and even allergen warnings can be presented in detail on these menus. Self-order kiosks, particularly in quick-service restaurants, expedite the ordering process, thereby reducing customer waiting times and potentially improving service perceptions (Kimes, 2011).

Newer technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) also present potential for enriching the gastronomic experience. For instance, through AR applications, customers can access additional information about a dish—such as its ingredients, story, or a video of the chef preparing it—by simply pointing their smartphones at it. VR technology, on the other hand, can offer immersive experiences like a virtual tour of a vineyard, experiencing the food culture of a distant geography, or previewing a restaurant's atmosphere, thereby influencing expectations and visit intentions (Yung & Khoo-Lattimore, 2019). Social media platforms are significant tools for customers to share their gastronomic experiences with photos and videos, make comments, and interact with other users. Businesses can actively utilize these platforms to increase their brand awareness, gather customer feedback, and build a loyal online community (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

The most crucial point to consider in the integration of technology is that technology should be viewed as a tool that enhances the experience, not as an end in itself. Technology should not replace human interaction and sincerity but rather support it, maintaining a "high-tech, high-touch" balance (Naisbitt, 1982; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988, on the human element in service). For example, even if an automated ordering system is used, the friendly and helpful demeanor of the staff remains critically important for customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the privacy and security of collected customer data must be diligently respected, and personalized marketing efforts should be conducted with a balanced approach so as not to inconvenience customers (Martin & Murphy, 2017). Successful technology integration strikes the right balance between operational efficiency and a warm, personal service experience, thereby adding value for both the business and the customer.

Personalization and Customer Centricity

Personalization, one of the cornerstones of experiential marketing, refers to tailoring products, services, or communications according to individual customer needs, preferences, and past behaviors (Vesonen, 2007). In the gastronomy sector, personalization aims to make customers feel special, understood, and valued, thereby fostering deeper and more meaningful bonds with them. In the face of increasing competition and the progressively sophisticated expectations of consumers, the "one-size-fits-all" approach has lost its validity (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Instead, gastronomy businesses must focus on effectively utilizing customer data to offer customized experiences tailored to each customer or specific customer segments (Peppers & Rogers, 1993).

Personalization practices in gastronomy can be implemented at various levels. At the most basic level, small gestures such as

addressing customers by their names, remembering them from previous visits, or knowing their favorite beverages can create a positive impact. More advanced personalization relies on the analysis of data collected through customer loyalty programs and CRM (Customer Relationship Management) systems. For example, information such as a customer's past orders, allergies, dietary preferences (e.g., vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free), or special occasions (e.g., birthday, wedding anniversary) can be used to offer them special menu suggestions, discounts, or celebratory gestures, often leveraging technology for effective implementation (Kimes, 2011).

Dynamic menu creation is another example of personalization. Changes can be made to the menu, or special recommendations can be offered, based on the customer's current mood, the weather, or a specific event. For instance, hot soups and hearty main courses might be highlighted on a cold winter day, while light salads and refreshing drinks might be recommended on a hot summer day. With the aid of technology, personalized content, promotions, and reservation options can be offered to customers via mobile applications or websites. For example, if a customer has previously preferred a specific type of wine, a special notification can be sent to them about newly arrived similar wines, enhancing perceived relevance (Vesanen, 2007).

A successful personalization strategy necessitates a customer-centric corporate culture (Shah, Rust, Parasuraman, Staelin, & Day, 2006). It is important for all personnel to be trained in maintaining the highest level of customer satisfaction and showing individual attention to each customer. Actively collecting and analyzing customer feedback, and continuously improving services and products based on this feedback, forms the foundation of customer centricity. However, a crucial point to be mindful of in personalization efforts is customer privacy. Transparency regarding

how collected data will be used is essential, and customers' privacy must be respected (Aguirre, Mahr, Grewal, de Ruyter, & Wetzels, 2015). Personalization, when implemented with a balanced and ethical approach, increases customer loyalty, encourages positive word-of-mouth marketing, and provides gastronomy businesses with a sustainable competitive advantage.

Conclusion and Future Evaluations

Summary of Main Findings and Contribution of the Chapter

Throughout this book chapter, the increasing importance of experiential marketing in the gastronomy sector, its theoretical foundations, successful application strategies, and the contributions it provides to businesses have been comprehensively examined. The primary findings reveal that contemporary consumers are no longer merely seeking functional benefits and quality products; they also place significant value on holistic, unique, emotional, and memorable experiences offered to them (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Gastronomy, being an inherently sensory and emotional domain, offers an exceptionally conducive ground for the application of experiential marketing principles. When considered within the framework of Schmitt's (1999) Strategic Experiential Modules (Sense, Feel, Think, Act, Relate), it has been observed that gastronomy businesses can differentiate themselves in a competitive market by offering multidimensional and rich experiences to their customers.

Another crucial point emphasized in the chapter is that strategies such as storytelling, atmosphere design (servicescapes), event marketing, technology integration, and personalization play a critical role in enriching the gastronomic experience and forging deeper bonds with customers. Case analyses (e.g., the "Spirit of Local" restaurant example) have demonstrated that when these strategies are successfully implemented, they can enhance customer

loyalty and brand value. Conversely, when applied in an unbalanced or incorrect manner (e.g., the "Taste of the Future" cafe chain example), they may not yield the expected results. Particularly, the notions that technology should not overshadow the human touch and that personalization efforts must respect customer privacy have emerged as important lessons.

The primary contribution of this chapter to the literature and practice is its holistic examination of the relationship between gastronomy and experiential marketing, offering a strategic roadmap for professionals and academics working in this field. It has been underscored that experiential marketing is not merely a trend but rather a fundamental marketing philosophy shaping the future of the gastronomy sector. It has been demonstrated that businesses can achieve a sustainable competitive advantage and enhance their brand value by meticulously designing and managing every touchpoint of the customer experience.

In conclusion, this chapter has elucidated, with theoretical and practical examples, the importance of gastronomy businesses transitioning from a product-oriented approach to an experience-oriented paradigm, and how this transition can be successfully managed. Experiential marketing not only provides economic returns for businesses but also brings a new dynamism to the world of gastronomy by offering the potential to create cultural and social value.

Future Trends in Gastronomy and Experiential Marketing

The field of gastronomy and experiential marketing is in a state of continuous evolution, driven by technological advancements, changing consumer behaviors, and global dynamics. Several important trends are expected to become prominent in this area in the future. The first of these is the increasing prevalence of hyper-personalization. Through artificial intelligence and big data

analytics, businesses will be able to understand customers' individual preferences, habits, and even their current moods in greater depth, enabling them to offer entirely personalized menus, recommendations, and experiences (Davenport, Guha, Grewal, & Bressgott, 2020). This holds the potential to elevate customer loyalty to a new level.

A second significant trend is the greater integration of immersive technologies into gastronomic experiences. Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) applications will offer innovative possibilities such as allowing customers to interactively experience the stories behind dishes, cook with virtual chefs, explore the food cultures of distant geographies, or preview a restaurant's atmosphere (cf. Yung & Khoo-Lattimore, 2019). These technologies will particularly attract the interest of younger generations and provide brands with opportunities for differentiation by creating unique experiences. However, the cost and applicability of these technologies are factors that could influence the speed of their widespread adoption.

Thirdly, sustainability and ethical consumption are expected to play a more central role in experiential marketing. Consumers are becoming increasingly conscious about where their food comes from, how it is produced, and its environmental and societal impacts (Barber, Taylor, & Strick, 2009). Therefore, gastronomy businesses that present elements such as local sourcing, a zero-waste philosophy, fair trade practices, and transparent supply chains as part of their experiences will earn the trust and appreciation of consumers. This should be adopted as a fundamental way of doing business, rather than merely a marketing strategy.

Finally, an increase in "phygital" (a combination of physical and digital) experiences is anticipated. Hybrid models, in which online and offline channels are seamlessly integrated and customers

benefit from both digital conveniences and the warmth of the physical space, will come to the fore (Grewal, Roggeveen, & Nordfält, 2017). For example, experiences such as ordering via a mobile application and then dining in a designated area of the restaurant, or participating in an online cooking course followed by an in-person workshop with the chef, may become more widespread. These trends will require gastronomy businesses to be continuously innovative, closely monitor customer expectations, and make strategic investments in experience design.

Research Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

While this book chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of gastronomy and experiential marketing, it possesses certain limitations. Firstly, the case analyses presented are hypothetical examples; supporting them with in-depth empirical research conducted on real businesses would enhance the generalizability of the findings. Secondly, the applications and effects of experiential marketing in different sub-sectors of gastronomy (e.g., quick-service restaurants, catering services, food retailing, etc.) could be examined in greater detail. The unique dynamics and customer expectations inherent to each sub-sector may necessitate distinct experiential marketing strategies.

The theoretical frameworks and strategies discussed in the chapter offer a general perspective; however, comparative studies on how experiential marketing is perceived and implemented in different cultural contexts could add a richer dimension to the subject. As consumer expectations and perceptions of experience can vary across cultures, such research would be particularly valuable for international gastronomy businesses (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). Furthermore, the standardization of metrics used to measure the return on investment (ROI) of experiential marketing initiatives and the development of more sophisticated measurement models

represent an important area for academic and practical research (cf. Wood, 2009, on evaluating event marketing).

Several key suggestions can be offered for future studies. Firstly, the long-term effects and ethical dimensions of technology (especially artificial intelligence, AR/VR) on gastronomic experiences should be investigated more thoroughly, including issues of data privacy and the potential for technology to dehumanize service encounters (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Martin & Murphy, 2017). Secondly, research should examine how sustainability and ethical consumption concerns (Barber, Taylor, & Strick, 2009) can be more effectively integrated into experiential marketing strategies and the consequent effects on customer behavior and brand trust. Thirdly, studies could focus on the gastronomic experience expectations of different demographic groups, such as Generation Z with their digital nativism and desire for unique experiences (Priporas, Stylos, & Fotiadis, 2017), or elderly consumers with potentially different accessibility and comfort needs, and the development of tailored experiential marketing strategies for these segments.

Finally, research examining the relationship between experiential marketing, employee motivation, and business performance would also be beneficial. It is widely acknowledged that happy and engaged employees deliver better customer experiences (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1994); therefore, the concept and applications of internal experiential marketing, building on principles of internal marketing (Berry, Parasuraman, & Zeithaml, 1994), could also be an important topic for future studies. Deepening these areas of research will contribute to the advancement of knowledge in gastronomy and experiential marketing and to the further development of practices within the sector.

REFERENCES

Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of marketing research*, 34(3), 347-356.

Aguirre, E., Mahr, D., Grewal, D., de Ruyter, K., & Wetzels, M. (2015). Unraveling the personalization paradox: The effect of information collection and trust-building strategies on online advertisement effectiveness. *Journal of Retailing*, 91(1), 34-49.

Alcock, J. P. (2005). *Food in the Ancient World*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

Andreasen, A. R. (2002). Marketing social marketing in the social change marketplace. *Journal of public policy & marketing*, 21(1), 3-13.

Antón, C., Camarero, C., Laguna, M., & Buhalis, D. (2019). Impacts of authenticity, degree of adaptation and cultural contrast on travellers' memorable gastronomy experiences. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 28(7), 743-764.

Areni, C. S., & Kim, D. (1993). The influence of background music on shopping behavior: Classical versus top-forty music in a wine store. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 20(1), 336-340.

Armstrong, G., Adam, S., Denize, S., & Kotler, P. (2014). *Principles of marketing*. Pearson Australia.

Baker, J., Parasuraman, A., Grewal, D., & Voss, G. B. (2002). The influence of multiple store environment cues on perceived merchandise value and patronage intentions. *Journal of marketing*, 66(2), 120-141.

Barber, N., Taylor, D. C., & Strick, S. (2009). Wine consumers' environmental knowledge and attitudes: Influence on willingness to purchase. *International Journal of Wine Research*, 1, 59-72.

Batat, W. (2021). The role of luxury gastronomy in culinary tourism: An ethnographic study of Michelin-Starred restaurants in France. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 23(2), 150-163.

Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of consumer research*, 15(2), 139-168.

Berry, L. L., Carbone, L. P., & Haeckel, S. H. (2002). Managing the total customer experience. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 43(3), 85–89.

Berry, L. L., Parasuraman, A., & Zeithaml, V. A. (1994). Improving service quality in America: Lessons learned. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 8(2), 32–52.

Bitner, M. J. (1992). Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of marketing*, 56(2), 57-71.

Bitner, M. J., Booms, B. H., & Tetreault, M. S. (1990). The service encounter: diagnosing favorable and unfavorable incidents. *Journal of marketing*, 54(1), 71-84.

Brakus, J. J., Schmitt, B. H., & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand experience: what is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty?. *Journal of marketing*, 73(3), 52-68.

Buhalis, D., & Sinarta, Y. (2019). Real-time co-creation and nowness service: Lessons from tourism and hospitality. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 36(5), 563–582.

Cifci, I., Atsız, O., & Gupta, V. (2021). The street food experiences of the local-guided tour in the meal-sharing economy: the case of Bangkok. *British Food Journal*, 123(12), 4030-4048.

Counihan, C. (Ed.). (2013). *Food in the USA: A Reader*. Routledge.

Cova, B., & Cova, V. (2002). Tribal marketing: The tribalisation of society and its impact on the conduct of marketing. *European journal of marketing*, 36(5/6), 595-620.

Dalby, A. (2000). *Dangerous tastes: The story of spices* (No. 1). Univ of California Press.

Davenport, T., Guha, A., Grewal, D., & Bressgott, T. (2020). How artificial intelligence will change the future of marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(1), 24–42.

Delwiche, J. F. (2012). You eat with your eyes first. *Physiology & behavior*, 107(4), 502-504.

Dixit, S. K., & Prayag, G. (2022). Gastronomic tourism experiences and experiential marketing. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 47(3), 217-220.

Donovan, R. J., & Rossiter, J. R. (1982). Store atmosphere: An environmental psychology approach. *Journal of Retailing*, 58(1), 34–57.

Escalas, J. E. (2004). Narrative processing: Building consumer connections to brands. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 14(1-2), 168-180.

Escoffier, A. (2013). *A guide to modern cookery*. Cambridge University Press.

Finkelstein, J. (1989). *Dining out: a sociology of modern manners*. Polity Press, England

Flandrin, J. L., & Montanari, M. (Eds.). (1999). *Food: a culinary history*. Columbia University Press.

Fog, K., Budtz, C., & Yakaboylu, B. (2005). *Branding in practice*. Springer.

Getz, D., & Page, S. J. (2019). *Event studies: Theory, research and policy for planned events*. Routledge.

Gilg, A. W., & Battershill, M. (1998). Quality farm food in Europe: a possible alternative to the industrialised food market and to current agri-environmental policies: lessons from France. *Food policy*, 23(1), 25-40.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. Bantam Books.

Grayson, K., & Martinec, R. (2004). Consumer perceptions of iconicity and indexicality and their influence on assessments of authentic market offerings. *Journal of consumer research*, 31(2), 296-312.

Green, M. C., & Brock, T. C. (2000). The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(5), 701–721.

Grewal, D., Roggeveen, A. L., & Nordfalt, J. (2017). The future of retailing. *Journal of retailing*, 93(1), 1-6.

Grönroos, C. (2008). Service logic revisited: who creates value? And who co-creates?. *European business review*, 20(4), 298-314.

Hall, C. M., & Mitchell, R. (2000). Wine tourism in the Mediterranean: A tool for restructuring and development. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 42(4), 445-465.

Heskett, J. L., Jones, T. O., Loveman, G. W., Sasser, W. E., Jr., & Schlesinger, L. A. (1994). Putting the service-profit chain to work. *Harvard Business Review*, 72(2), 164–174.

Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of consumer research*, 9(2), 132-140.

Holbrook, M. B., & Schindler, R. M. (1991). Echoes of the dear departed past: Some work in progress on nostalgia. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 18, 330–333.

Hultén, B. (2011). Sensory marketing: The multi-sensory brand-experience concept. *European Business Review*, 23(3), 256–273.

Hultén, B., Broweus, N., & Van Dijk, M. (2009). Sensory marketing. Palgrave Macmillan. Krishna, A. (2012). An integrative review of sensory marketing: Engaging the senses to affect perception, judgment and behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 22(3), 332–351.

James, K. (2006). *Escoffier: The king of chefs*. A&C Black.

Joseph, P., & Gilmore, J. H. (1999). *The experience economy*. Boston: Harvard Business School, 7.

Kahraman, O. C., & Cifci, I. (2023). Modeling self-identification, memorable tourism experience, overall satisfaction and destination loyalty: Empirical evidence from small island destinations. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 6(2), 1001-1023.

Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.

Kimes, S. E. (2011). The current state of online food ordering in the U.S. restaurant industry. *Cornell Hospitality Report*, 11(7), 6–18.

Kotler, P. (1973). Atmospherics as a marketing tool. *Journal of retailing*, 49(4), 48-64.

Kovalenko, A., Dias, Á., Pereira, L., & Simões, A. (2023). Gastronomic experience and consumer behavior: Analyzing the influence on destination image. *Foods*, 12(2), 315.

Krishna, A. (2012). An integrative review of sensory marketing: Engaging the senses to affect perception, judgment and behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 22(3), 332–351.

LaSalle, D., & Britton, T. A. (2003). *Priceless: Turning Ordinary Products into Extraordinary Experiences*. Brighton, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Lee, W., & Kwon, H. (2021). The influence of personal involvement on festival attendees' revisit intention: food and wine attendees' perspective. *Sustainability*, 13(14), 7727.

Long, L. M. (Ed.). (2004). *Culinary tourism*. University Press of Kentucky.

Mak, A. H. N., Lumbers, M., Eves, A., & Chang, R. C. Y. (2012). Factors influencing tourist food consumption. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31(3), 928–936.

Martin, K. D., & Murphy, P. E. (2017). The role of data privacy in marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 81(1), 136–155.

Mehrabian, A., & Russell, J. A. (1974). A verbal measure of information rate for studies in environmental psychology. *Environment and Behavior*, 6(2), 233.

Mehrabian, A., & Russell, J. A. (1974). *An approach to environmental psychology*. M.I.T. Press.

Mennell, S. (1996). *All manners of food: eating and taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the present*. University of Illinois Press.

Michael, N., & Fusté-Forné, F. (2022). Marketing of luxurious gastronomic experiences on social media: The visual

storytelling of luxury hotels. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 24(6), 827-838.

Milliman, R. E. (1986). The influence of background music on the behavior of restaurant patrons. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13(2), 286–289.

Mora, D., Solano-Sanchez, M. A., López-Guzmán, T., & Moral-Cuadra, S. (2021). Gastronomic experiences as a key element in the development of a tourist destination. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 25, 100405.

More, A. B. (2023). Implementing digital age experience marketing to make customer relations more sustainable. In *New Horizons for Industry 4.0 in modern business*. 99-119. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Mossberg, L. (2007). A marketing approach to the tourist experience. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 7(1), 59–74.

Mossberg, L., & Eide, D. (2018). Storytelling and meal experience concepts. In *Nordic Food Transitions* (pp. 84-99). Routledge.

Muniz Jr, A. M., & O'guinn, T. C. (2001). Brand community. *Journal of consumer research*, 27(4), 412-432.

Naisbitt, J. (1982). *Megatrends: Ten new directions transforming our lives*. Warner Books.

Nyer, P. (1999) Cathartic complaining as a means of reducing consumer dissatisfaction. *Journal of Consumer Dissatisfaction, Dissatisfied and Complaining Behavior*, 12, 15-25.

Oh, H., Fiore, A. M., & Jeoung, M. (2007). Measuring experience economy concepts: Tourism applications. *Journal of travel research*, 46(2), 119-132.

Okazaki, S., & Taylor, C. R. (2013). Social media and international advertising: Theoretical challenges and future directions. *International Marketing Review*, 30(1), 56–71.

Okumus, B., Ali, F., Bilgihan, A., & Ozturk, A. B. (2018). Psychological factors influencing customers' acceptance of smartphone diet apps when ordering food at restaurants. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 72, 67–77.

Oliver, R. L., Rust, R. T., & Varki, S. (1997). Customer delight: foundations, findings, and managerial insight. *Journal of retailing*, 73(3), 311-336.

Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12–40.

Peck, J., & Childers, T. L. (2003). Individual differences in haptic information processing: The "Need for Touch" scale. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 30(3), 430–442.

Peppers, D., & Rogers, M. (1993). *The one to one future: Building relationships one customer at a time*. Doubleday.

Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (2007). *Authenticity: What consumers really want* (p. 299). Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Prahalad, C. K., & Ramaswamy, V. (2004a). Co-creation experiences: The new competitive advantage. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(3), 5–14.

Priporas, C. V., Stylos, N., & Fotiadis, A. K. (2017). Generation Z consumers' expectations of interactions in smart retailing: A future agenda. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 77, 374-381.

Quan, S., & Wang, N. (2004). Towards a structural model of the tourist experience: An illustration from food experiences in tourism. *Tourism Management*, 25(3), 297–305.

Rachão, S. A. S., Breda, Z., Fernandes, C., & Joukes, V. (2021). Food-and-wine experiences towards co-creation in tourism. *Tourism Review*, 76(5), 1050-1066.

Reichheld, F. F., & Sasser, W. E., Jr. (1990). Zero defections: Quality comes to services. *Harvard Business Review*, 68(5), 105–111.

Richards, G. (2021). Evolving research perspectives on food and gastronomic experiences in tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 33(3), 1037-1058.

Rust, R. T., & Oliver, R. L. (1994). Service quality: Insights and managerial implications from the frontier. In R. T. Rust & R. L. Oliver (Eds.), *Service quality: New directions in theory and practice* (pp. 1–19). Sage Publications.

Ryu, K., & Jang, S. (2007). The effect of dining atmospherics on behavioral intentions through perceived value. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 31(3), 351–378.

Schmitt, B. (1999). Experiential marketing. *Journal of marketing management*, 15(1-3), 53-67.

Schmitt, B. H. (2010). *Customer experience management: A revolutionary approach to connecting with your customers*. John Wiley & Sons.

Sen, S., & Bhattacharya, C. B. (2001). Does doing good always lead to doing better? Consumer reactions to corporate social responsibility. *Journal of marketing Research*, 38(2), 225-243.

Shah, D., Rust, R. T., Parasuraman, A., Staelin, R., & Day, G. S. (2006). The path to customer centricity. *Journal of Service Research*, 9(2), 113–124.

Shawky, S., Kubacki, K., Dietrich, T., & Weaven, S. (2019). Using social media to create engagement: A social marketing review. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 9(2), 204-224.

Shone, A., & Parry, B. (2019). *Successful event management: a practical handbook*. Cengage learning.

Singh, S. (2006). Impact of color on marketing. *Management decision*, 44(6), 783-789.

Smilansky, S. (2017). *Experiential marketing: A practical guide to interactive brand experiences*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Solunoglu, A., & Orgun, E. (2024). Gastronomy festivals in the development of event tourism and the current situation in Turkey. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 16(4), 464-473.

Spangenberg, E. R., Crowley, A. E., & Henderson, P. W. (1996). Improving the store environment: do olfactory cues affect evaluations and behaviors?. *Journal of marketing*, 60(2), 67-80.

Spence, C., & Piqueras-Fiszman, B. (2014). *The perfect meal: The multisensory science of food and dining*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Spence, C., Okajima, K., Cheok, A. D., Petit, O., & Michel, C. (2016). Eating with our eyes: From visual hunger to digital satiation. *Brain and cognition*, 110, 53-63.

Steg, L., & Vlek, C. (2009). Encouraging pro-environmental behaviour: An integrative review and research agenda. *Journal of environmental psychology*, 29(3), 309-317.

Thøgersen, J., Jørgensen, A. K., & Sandager, S. (2012). Consumer decision making regarding a “green” everyday product. *Psychology & Marketing*, 29(4), 187-197.

Thompson, C. J., Rindfleisch, A., & Arsel, Z. (2006). Emotional branding and the strategic value of the doppelgänger brand image. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(1), 50–64.

Valor, C. (2008). Can consumers buy responsibly? Analysis and solutions for market failures. *Journal of consumer policy*, 31(3), 315-326.

Vargo, S. L., & Lusch, R. F. (2004). Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 68(1), 1–17.

Vesanen, J. (2007). What is personalization? A conceptual framework. *European Journal of Marketing*, 41(5/6), 409–418.

Wansink, B. (2004). Environmental factors that increase the food intake and consumption volume of unknowing consumers. *Annual Review of Nutrition*, 24, 455–479.

Westbrook, R. A. (1987). Product/consumption-based affective responses and postpurchase processes. *Journal of marketing research*, 24(3), 258-270.

Wood, E. H. (2009). Evaluating event marketing: Experience or outcome? *Journal of Promotion Management*, 15(1-2), 247–268.

Yu, B. A. (2022). Marketing tools for promoting gastronomic brands in tourism. *Современные проблемы сервиса и туризма*, 16(3), 7-15.

Yu, J., Jung, H. J., & Oh, K. W. (2025). The Impact of Experiential Shopping Value in Fashion Pop-Up Stores on Post-Experience Brand Awareness, Preference, and Loyalty Behavior. *The Korean Fashion and Textile Research Journal*, 27(1), 53-66.

Yung, R., & Khoo-Lattimore, C. (2019). New realities: A systematic literature review on virtual reality and augmented reality in tourism research. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 22(17), 2056–2081.

Zampini, M., & Spence, C. (2004). The role of auditory cues in modulating the perceived crispness and staleness of potato chips. *Food Quality and Preference*, 15(4), 347–363.

Zhang, Q., Dhir, A., & Kaur, P. (2022). Circular economy and the food sector: A systematic literature review. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*.

Zhukova, A., & Sarvilova, T. (2024). Anticipated emotions and consumer behavior in pop-up restaurants: the impact of regret and attitudes on dining intentions. Master Degree Thesis.

A THEORETICAL MODEL PROPOSAL FOR SENSORY MARKETING STRATEGIES IN FOOD AND BEVERAGE ENTERPRISES

ÇİĞDEM KIZILGEÇİ¹

Introduction

In today's rapidly changing and competitive business environment, consumer purchasing behavior and brand loyalty have evolved beyond traditional marketing variables such as price or basic product features, becoming more complex and multi-dimensional. People no longer buy products or services solely to fulfill a need; they also seek experiences, emotions, and personal meaning (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 2000). This fundamental transformation in consumer behavior has compelled all sectors—particularly service-based businesses—to rethink their marketing strategies and adopt new approaches that enrich customer interactions and create memorable experiences. In this context, the concept of the “experience economy” emphasizes the importance of making personal and meaningful experiences for consumers, going beyond

¹ Assist. Prof. Dr., Mardin Artuklu University, Department Of Gastronomy And Culinary Arts, Orcid: 0000-0001-7984-270X

the mere provision of physical goods or intangible services (Pine & Gilmore, 1998).

The food and beverage (F&B) sector inherently represents one of the most fundamental and multi-sensory domains of human experience. Dining in a restaurant or café involves far more than simply satisfying hunger or thirst; it is a holistic act that engages all five senses—from visual and auditory to olfactory, tactile, and, of course, gustatory—while also encompassing social, emotional, and aesthetic elements (Spence & Piqueras-Fiszman, 2014). Today's consumers expect more than just high-quality food and good service; they also evaluate the ambiance, music selection, food presentation, and even the texture of the cutlery as integral parts of the overall experience (Bitner, 1992; Krishna, 2012). This situation necessitates the development of innovative strategies that place sensory experience at the core of differentiation and customer loyalty efforts for F&B businesses.

While traditional marketing approaches have often focused on the functional benefits of products or the rational attributes of brands, it is increasingly understood that the human brain and decision-making processes are largely shaped by subconscious and emotional impulses (Zaltman, 2003; Damasio, 1994). Within this understanding, the concept of sensory marketing has emerged as a new paradigm in the marketing discipline. Sensory marketing encompasses strategies that aim to enrich the product or service experience, deepen brand perception, and ultimately influence purchasing behavior by appealing to all five senses of consumers (Hultén, 2011; Lindstrom, 2008). This approach transforms a consumer's interaction with a brand or product into a multi-sensory journey, aiming to leave lasting impressions and foster emotional connections.

Each sense has its distinct language of communication and influence:

Visual Marketing: Elements such as the restaurant's decor, lighting, food presentation, and brand identity directly influence consumers' initial impressions and perceptions (Orth & Malkewitz, 2008). The psychological effects of colors and shapes play a vital role in creating appetizing environments.

Auditory Marketing: The music in the venue, ambient sounds, and even subtle kitchen noises can shape a consumer's relaxation, energy, or enjoyment levels, as well as influence perceived time and consumption speed (Milliman, 1982; North & Hargreaves, 1998).

Olfactory Marketing: As one of the senses most strongly linked to memory, scent can instantly transform the atmosphere of a space, stimulate appetite, and evoke positive memories (Spence, 2017; Krishna, 2012). Natural aromas like freshly brewed coffee or baked bread can enhance the attractiveness of an F&B establishment.

Taste Marketing: The cornerstone of the F&B sector, taste not only determines flavor perception but also reflects food quality, freshness, and the degree to which expectations are met. Taste is a complex experience shaped by the interplay of other senses, particularly smell and texture (Spence, 2017).

Tactile Marketing: The texture of tablecloths, the weight of the menu, the ergonomics of cutlery, the grip of glassware, and the mouthfeel of food (consistency, chewiness) all affect consumer comfort and overall enjoyment (Peck & Childers, 2006; Krishna, 2012).

An increasing number of studies in the literature investigate the effects of sensory marketing on consumer behavior. However, many of these studies focus on individual sensory dimensions or

specific industries (e.g., retail). In the context of food and beverage businesses, there is a limited number of theoretical models that comprehensively examine how sensory marketing strategies function holistically and how they directly and indirectly affect consumers' perceived service quality (Grewal et al., 2017). Furthermore, the relationship between sensory marketing and perceived service quality—and how this relationship influences consumer emotional experiences, word-of-mouth (WOM) communication, and ultimately, key outcomes such as customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and brand loyalty—has not been sufficiently clarified. This gap highlights the need for scientific guidance to help F&B businesses implement sensory marketing strategies in a more deliberate and goal-oriented manner.

The main objective of this study is to propose a comprehensive and original theoretical model that explains how sensory marketing strategies employed in food and beverage businesses affect consumers' perceptions of service quality, and how this perceptual influence, in turn, leads to ultimate consumer outcomes—such as customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and brand loyalty—through intermediary outcomes such as revisit behavior, emotional experience, and word-of-mouth marketing. The proposed model aims to provide a solid theoretical framework for the sensory marketing literature, specifically within the F&B sector, while also offering practical insights to business managers and marketers on how to strategically utilize sensory elements to gain a competitive advantage.

The Concept and Dimensions of Sensory Marketing

This section provides a comprehensive examination of the concept of sensory marketing, including its definition, historical development, and theoretical foundations. Additionally, the five sensory dimensions that form the basis of sensory marketing

strategies—visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile marketing—will be discussed in detail. The impact of each sensory dimension on consumer behavior and experiences will be supported by relevant literature and practical examples.

Definition and Development of Sensory Marketing

Traditional marketing approaches have primarily focused on the functional attributes of a product, its price, distribution channels, and promotional activities—commonly known as the 4Ps (McCarthy, 1978). However, with the expansion of the service sector and increasingly sophisticated consumer expectations, marketers have realized the need to address not only rational benefits but also the emotional and experiential aspects of consumer engagement (Schmitt, 2000; Berry et al., 2006). This shift has paved the way for the emergence of new paradigms in the marketing discipline, such as experiential marketing.

Conceptual Definition: Sensory Marketing

Sensory marketing is a strategic approach that aims to enrich the product or service experience, deepen brand perception, and ultimately influence consumer behavior positively by appealing to all five human senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch (Krishna, 2012; Hultén, 2011). This strategy enables brands to establish deeper, more emotional, and lasting connections with consumers, as sensory input plays a critical role in memory, emotions, and decision-making processes (Lindstrom, 2008; Zaltman, 2003). Sensory marketing seeks not only to sell the functional benefits of a product but also to convey the atmosphere, emotional engagement, and holistic experience associated with the brand by facilitating subconscious interaction.

Historical Development and Theoretical Foundations of Sensory Marketing

The roots of sensory marketing can be traced back to mid-20th-century research on the influence of retail environments and atmospherics on consumer behavior (e.g., Kotler, 1973 – the concept of “atmospherics”). However, the modern development of the concept gained momentum in the late 1990s and early 2000s with the emergence of Bernd Schmitt’s “experiential marketing” and Pine and Gilmore’s “experience economy” frameworks (Schmitt, 2000; Pine & Gilmore, 1998). These works emphasized that consumers no longer merely purchase products or services but seek experiences that engage them, create emotional bonds, and hold personal meaning.

The theoretical foundations of sensory marketing are rooted in several disciplines, especially psychology and neuroscience. One of the key frameworks underpinning sensory marketing is the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). According to this model, environmental stimuli (e.g., sensory cues in a store environment) affect the organism’s internal states (emotional, cognitive, physiological), which in turn lead to specific responses (e.g., purchase behavior, satisfaction, intention to revisit). Sensory stimuli serve as powerful tools in marketing due to their influence on these internal states.

Advancements in neuromarketing and consumer neuroscience have further reinforced the scientific basis of sensory marketing (Morin, 2011). Brain imaging technologies (e.g., fMRI) have revealed how sensory cues activate areas of the brain responsible for emotion, memory, and decision-making, offering valuable insights into how marketing strategies operate at the subconscious level. For instance, since the olfactory sense is directly linked to the limbic system—the part of the brain responsible for emotion and memory—olfactory cues have been shown to exert a strong influence on consumer emotions and recall (Herz & Engen, 1996). These scientific findings demonstrate that sensory marketing

is not merely a marketing trend but a strategic approach grounded in robust scientific principles.

Dimensions of Sensory Marketing

In marketing environments, five primary sensory dimensions are utilized to influence consumer perceptions and behaviors. These are detailed as follows:

Visual Marketing

Visual marketing refers to appealing to the sense of sight through the aesthetic and design elements of a brand or product. As humans, we receive the majority of external information through our visual sense, and visual stimuli play a central role in shaping first impressions, establishing brand identity, and influencing perceived product quality (Orth & Malkewitz, 2008). The main components of visual marketing include:

Colors: Colors are powerful tools in marketing due to their psychological and emotional effects. For instance, red can evoke energy and appetite, blue suggests trust and calmness, and green symbolizes nature and freshness (Singh, 2006). In food and beverage (F&B) businesses, color selection can influence consumers' moods, appetite levels, and the duration of their stay in the venue.

Design and Aesthetics: The architecture of a space, interior decoration, furniture style, lighting, and overall ambiance directly affect perceived value and enjoyment of the experience (Bitner, 1992). For example, table arrangements, the comfort of seating, and overall cleanliness in restaurants determine customer comfort and length of stay.

Presentation and Layout: The presentation of food and beverages (plating), menu design, packaging, and even employee uniforms enhance brand image and product appeal. Aesthetic

presentation can even influence the perceived taste of food (Michel et al., 2014).

Lighting: Lighting significantly affects the ambiance and warmth of a space. Soft, dim lighting creates a cozy and relaxing environment, while bright lighting may convey a more energetic or modern feel. Lighting choices influence how long customers stay and how they feel in the environment.

Auditory Marketing

Auditory marketing involves using sound and music to influence consumers' emotions, perceptions, and behaviors. The sense of hearing profoundly shapes the atmosphere and often affects the consumer experience subconsciously (North & Hargreaves, 1998). Key elements of auditory marketing include:

Music: Background music reflects the identity of a business and can affect customers' mood, perceived waiting time, spending tendencies, and length of stay (Milliman, 1982; Yalch & Spangenberg, 2000). Fast-paced music may prompt quicker consumption and earlier departure, while slow and relaxing music can encourage longer stays and greater spending. The genre and volume of music should align with brand image and target audience expectations.

Ambient Sounds: Sounds such as conversations, clinking glasses, gentle kitchen noises, or the sound of water can influence the overall atmosphere and comfort level. Excessive noise may cause discomfort and reduce the quality of experience, while well-managed ambient sounds create a lively and welcoming environment (Bitner, 1992).

Product Sounds: Some F&B products have distinctive sounds that contribute to their marketing appeal. For example, the fizzing sound of an opening carbonated drink or the grinding of

coffee beans can shape consumer expectations and perceptions of product freshness or quality.

Olfactory Marketing

Olfactory marketing refers to the strategic use of scents to influence consumers' emotions, memories, and behaviors. Unlike other senses, the sense of smell is directly connected to the limbic system—the brain area responsible for emotion and memory—allowing olfactory cues to create powerful subconscious effects (Herz & Engen, 1996; Chatterjee & Bryła, 2022). Key applications of olfactory marketing include:

Ambient Scent: Pleasant and appropriate ambient scents used in F&B establishments, such as restaurants or cafés, can enrich the atmosphere, improve consumer mood, and alter time perception (Spangenberg et al., 1996). For example, the smell of freshly brewed coffee, vanilla, or chocolate can make a place feel inviting and warm. Scents may enhance perceived product quality and even increase willingness to spend.

Product Scent: The natural scents of food and beverage products are critical to their appeal and the expectation of taste. For instance, the smell of freshly baked bread or the aroma of specific spices can directly impact the likelihood of purchase.

Brand Scent: Some brands develop unique signature scents to strengthen brand identity and establish emotional connections with consumers (Morrin & Ratneshwar, 2000).

Gustatory Marketing

Gustatory marketing refers to the use of taste, aroma, texture, and consistency in food and beverages to influence consumer experience and perception. In the foodservice industry, taste is undoubtedly the most central and defining sensory dimension of the experience (Spence, 2017). However, taste is not perceived in

isolation; it interacts in a complex way with other senses, particularly smell and touch.

Flavor and Aroma: The flavor of a food or beverage is the primary factor that directly impacts consumer satisfaction and the intention to revisit. Flavor results from the combination of taste (sweet, salty, sour, bitter, umami) and aroma (olfactory perception). Well-balanced and distinctive flavor profiles ensure the brand's uniqueness.

Texture and Consistency: The texture (or mouthfeel) of food, such as its chewiness, smoothness, or crunchiness, is as important as flavor perception (Spence, 2017). For instance, the creaminess of a sauce or the crispness of a cookie can significantly affect the overall experience.

Temperature and Intensity: The temperature (hot or cold) and intensity of food and beverages also influence the taste experience. A dish or drink served at the proper temperature allows the full expression of its flavor profile.

Tactile Marketing

Tactile marketing aims to influence the perceived quality, comfort, and experience of a product or service through the sense of touch. Touch enables consumers to physically interact with a product, influencing their emotional responses and purchasing decisions (Peck & Childers, 2006). The components of tactile marketing in foodservice businesses include:

Tactile Features of the Space: The comfort of restaurant chairs, the texture of table surfaces, the feel of materials on the walls, and the overall ambiance directly affect customer comfort. Soft fabrics, natural wood, or stone materials play a role in creating a specific atmosphere.

Product Texture: The texture of food (as mentioned earlier, its consistency), the ergonomics and weight of utensils, the feel of glasses in hand, and the quality of napkins or tablecloths are essential tactile components of the experience. For example, a heavy and high-quality fork can enhance the perceived value of a meal.

Heat and Cold: The proper temperature at which a beverage or dish is served not only affects taste perception but also contributes to tactile comfort. For cold drinks, ice-cold glasses, and for hot beverages, heat-resistant cups are part of the tactile experience.

In conclusion, sensory marketing is a powerful strategy for creating a competitive advantage in the foodservice industry. The conscious management and harmonious integration of each sensory dimension is key to offering consumers an unforgettable and holistic experience. These sensory inputs are deeply linked not only to the product itself but also to the quality of service delivery, and the details of this relationship are at the heart of the concept of "Perceived Service Quality," which will be addressed in the next section.

Perceived Service Quality and Its Importance in the Food and Beverage Sector

In the previous section, the fundamental concepts of sensory marketing and the effects of its five sensory dimensions on consumer experience were discussed in detail. This section, however, will delve into the concept of perceived service quality, which is a direct outcome of sensory marketing strategies and a critical mediating variable shaping consumer behavior. The nature of services, the dimensions of perceived quality, the primary measurement models, and particularly the vital role of perceived service quality in the food and beverage (F&B) sector are the main focal points of this section.

The Concept of Perceived Service Quality

Unlike tangible products, the concept of service represents a more complex structure due to its focus on performance, processes, and experiences, making it harder to define and measure (Grönroos, 1990). Service quality refers to the consumer's judgment regarding the extent to which the service meets or exceeds their expectations (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Definition of Service and Service Quality

Service is generally defined as "an economic activity that primarily involves intangible attributes, where production and consumption occur simultaneously, and ownership is not involved, aiming to provide benefits or advantages" (Wirtz & Lovelock, 2021). Based on this definition, services differentiate themselves from physical products due to their intangible nature, the necessity of customer participation, and the inseparability of production and consumption.

Service quality, on the other hand, refers to the overall evaluation a consumer makes regarding a service delivery. This evaluation results from comparing the consumer's expectations before the service with their perceptions after experiencing the service (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Therefore, service quality is largely based on the consumer's subjective perceptions rather than an objective standard. A service is perceived as high-quality when it meets or exceeds consumer expectations, whereas low-quality perception arises when expectations are not met.

Characteristics of Service Quality

Four fundamental characteristics of services complicate the management and measurement of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Parasuraman et al., 1988):

Intangibility: Services do not have a physical existence; they cannot be touched, seen, or felt. This intangibility makes it difficult for consumers to assess service quality before purchase, and they often rely on post-experience perceptions.

Inseparability: The production and consumption of services typically occur simultaneously. In other words, the service provider and consumer need to be present at the same time and place. This situation allows the consumer to be involved in the service process, and service quality is shaped during the interaction between the customer and the service provider.

Variability: Services may vary depending on the person delivering them, the time, and the location. Even when the same service is provided to different customers or the same customer at different times, variations in quality may occur. This variability makes it challenging to standardize service quality.

Perishability: Services cannot be stored or inventoried. They must be consumed at the moment of production; any unused service capacity is lost. This characteristic makes demand and supply management critical for service businesses.

These features differentiate service quality from product quality and require service providers to rely more on indirect methods, such as sensory cues, to guide consumer perceptions.

Dimensions of Perceived Service Quality and Measurement Models

The complexity of the concept of service quality has led researchers to break it down into more tangible and measurable dimensions. Although various service quality models have been proposed in the marketing literature, two of the most widely accepted are Grönroos's model and the SERVQUAL model developed by PZB.

Grönroos's Service Quality Model

Christian Grönroos (1984, 1990) approached service quality through two main dimensions:

Technical Quality (What): This dimension refers to what the customer gains from the service process, i.e., the outcome of the service. For example, the taste of a dish in a restaurant or the accuracy of a transaction at a bank pertains to technical quality.

Functional Quality (How): This dimension concerns how the service is delivered, i.e., the service delivery process itself. Elements such as the courtesy, attentiveness, and speed of staff, as well as the atmosphere of the space, make up functional quality. Grönroos argued that functional quality has a strong influence on how consumers perceive technical quality.

Grönroos's model emphasized that service quality is not solely about the result but also the process, providing a significant perspective for service managers.

PZB's (SERVQUAL) Service Quality Model

A. Parasuraman, Valarie Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Berry (1988, 1990) made one of the most significant contributions to the service quality literature by developing the SERVQUAL (Service Quality) model and its associated measurement tool. This model is based on a gap model that defines service quality as "the difference between expectations and perceptions of performance." Service quality is determined by measuring the gap between customers' expectations (what they think the service should be) and their perceptions of the service (how it is). PZB identified five core dimensions of service quality:

Tangibles: The physical appearance of the service; this includes facilities, equipment, personnel appearance, communication materials, and other visible aspects. For example,

cleanliness, decoration, table arrangement, or staff uniforms in a restaurant.

Reliability: The ability of the business to consistently and accurately perform the promised service. Keeping promises, delivering consistent and error-free service fall under this dimension. For example, ensuring that an order arrives correctly and on time in a restaurant.

Responsiveness: The willingness and ability of employees to assist customers and provide quick service. This includes responding immediately to customer inquiries and resolving complaints swiftly. For example, a waiter promptly addresses a customer's request.

Assurance: The knowledge, courtesy, and ability of employees to instill confidence in customers. This dimension concerns the expertise, politeness, and security that employees convey. For example, a chef provides detailed information about the menu items.

Empathy: The business's ability to provide personalized and attentive care to customers. Understanding the customer's needs, offering individual attention, and being accessible are part of this dimension. For example, accommodating a customer's special dietary requirements.

SERVQUAL has become a widely used and valid tool for measuring service quality across various industries, supported by numerous studies.

Other Service Quality Models

In addition to SERVQUAL, various service quality models are presented in the literature. For instance, the SERVPERF model, developed by Cronin and Taylor (1992), proposes measuring service quality based solely on performance perceptions and questions the

need for an expectation gap. Although SERVQUAL is more widely used, SERVPERF can also offer a preferred alternative in certain situations. Furthermore, there are more niche service quality models developed specifically for particular sectors.

The Importance of Perceived Service Quality in the Food and Beverage Sector

The food and beverage sector is one of the industries where service quality is of critical importance for the sustainable success of a business. The intensity of competition, increasing consumer expectations, and the nature of the service experience have made quality service delivery not just a necessity but a fundamental differentiation tool (Kivela et al., 1999; Gupta & Zeithaml, 2006).

Service Quality as a Competitive Advantage and Differentiation Tool

Today's food and beverage market is a highly competitive field, with many businesses offering similar products and services. In such an environment, businesses need to differentiate themselves not only by menu variety or pricing but also by the quality of the service they provide (Mattila, 2001). A high perceived service quality gives a business a significant competitive advantage over its rivals. Customers tend to prefer businesses that offer quality service, strengthening the business's brand image. Service quality is a source of competitive advantage that is difficult to imitate, as it relies on elements like human interaction and process excellence.

The Impact on Consumer Satisfaction and Loyalty

There is a direct and strong relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction (Oliver, 1980; Gupta & Zeithaml, 2006). When consumers perceive service quality as high, it increases their satisfaction with the experience. High satisfaction, in turn, forms the foundation for increasing customer loyalty. Loyal

customers return to the business repeatedly, spend more, and recommend the brand to others (Reichheld, 1996). In the food and beverage sector, customer loyalty is crucial for repeat visits and a continuous revenue stream.

The Relationship Between Word-of-Mouth Marketing and Business Reputation

Positive perceived service quality leads to strong word-of-mouth (WOM) activities (Bitner, 1990). Satisfied customers are likely to share their experiences with friends, family, and on social media platforms. Positive WOM boosts the business's reputation, helps attract new customers, and reduces marketing costs. Conversely, low service quality can lead to negative WOM and damage the business's reputation. In the food and beverage sector, personal recommendations and online reviews significantly influence consumers' decisions to try new places (Ye et al., 2011).

In conclusion, perceived service quality is not only an operational necessity for food and beverage businesses but also a strategic tool for creating sustainable competitive advantage, customer loyalty, and a strong brand reputation. Sensory marketing strategies directly affect this perceived service quality, enhancing the consumer experience and promoting positive outcomes. In the next section, we will discuss the interactions of service quality and sensory marketing with final consumer behaviors, such as customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and brand loyalty, which will form the foundation of the proposed theoretical model.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is one of the most frequently studied concepts in marketing and management literature and is considered fundamental for the success of businesses. Satisfaction refers to the consumer's positive or negative judgment regarding the extent to

which the experience obtained from using a product or service meets or exceeds expectations (Oliver, 1980; Parasuraman et al., 1990).

Definition and Importance of Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a cognitive and emotional response that results from comparing consumer expectations before purchase with performance perceptions after purchase (Oliver, 1980). Satisfaction can be cumulative (overall satisfaction with the use of a product/service) or transaction-specific (satisfaction with a particular interaction) (Oliver, 1999). High customer satisfaction provides various benefits for businesses: it increases customer loyalty, promotes word-of-mouth marketing (WOM), reduces price sensitivity, and enhances the profitability of the business (Oliver, 1999; Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994).

The Formation Process of Satisfaction (Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory)

One of the most widely accepted explanatory theories of satisfaction is the Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980). According to this theory, satisfaction forms in a three-stage process:

Expectations: What the consumer expects from a product or service. These expectations are influenced by past experiences, personal needs, marketing communication, and WOM.

Performance Perception: The consumer's perception of the actual performance of the product or service after experiencing it.

Disconfirmation: The difference between expectations and performance perception.

Positive Disconfirmation: When performance exceeds expectations (Satisfaction).

Negative Disconfirmation: When performance falls short of expectations (Dissatisfaction).

Confirmation: When performance meets expectations (Satisfaction or Neutral).

This theory demonstrates how factors such as perceived service quality and sensory experience affect expectations and performance perceptions.

The Role of Satisfaction in the Service Sector

In the service sector, particularly in food and beverage (Yİİ) businesses, customer satisfaction plays a critical role. Due to the intangible nature of services and the simultaneity of production and consumption, customers tend to perceive service quality as they experience it. In the case of dissatisfaction, the difficulty of service recovery accelerates the likelihood of customers switching to alternative businesses (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2018). Therefore, for food and beverage businesses, satisfaction is the foundation for repeat business and building a positive reputation.

Intention to Revisit

Intention to revisit refers to the consumer's planned behavioral inclination to use a particular business, brand, or service again in the future (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). This intention is a strong indicator of actual revisit behavior and serves as an early sign of customer loyalty for businesses.

Definition and Role of Intention to Revisit in Consumer Behavior

Intention to revisit refers to the subjective probability or likelihood that a customer will visit a particular restaurant, café, or food and beverage establishment again in the future (Kim & Baker, 2014). In marketing literature, intentions are often considered strong

predictors of actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991 - Theory of Planned Behavior). Consumer satisfaction, perceived value, and positive experiences are the primary determinants of the intention to revisit (Chang & Chen, 2005).

The Relationship Between Intention and Behavior (Theory of Planned Behavior)

One of the most effective theories explaining the relationship between intention to revisit and actual behavior is Icek Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). According to TPB, the closest predictor of a behavior is the intention to perform that behavior. Intention is shaped by three main factors:

Attitude Toward the Behavior: The individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior.

Subjective Norm: Whether the individual believes that significant others (family, friends) think they should or should not perform the behavior.

Perceived Behavioral Control: The individual's perception of their ability or ease in performing the behavior.

This theory provides an important framework to understand how sensory marketing and service quality affect consumers' attitudes toward revisiting a business, and thereby influence their intentions.

The Importance of Revisit Intention in the F&B Sector

In the F&B sector, the intention to revisit is crucial for sustainable profitability and business growth. Acquiring new customers can be costly and time-consuming, whereas retaining existing customers is much more economical (Reichheld, 1996). Returning customers provide a stable revenue stream for the business and tend to be more loyal. High service quality and positive

sensory experiences strengthen consumers' desire to return to these businesses.

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is the positive attitude a consumer has towards a brand and their consistent purchasing behavior of that brand over its competitors (Aaker, 2009; Oliver, 1999). Loyalty is one of the most important indicators of long-term success and competitive advantage for businesses.

Definition and Dimensions of Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is generally examined in two main dimensions:

Behavioral Loyalty: Focuses on the consumer's consistent and regular purchasing or reuse of a specific brand (Oliver, 1999). For example, always purchasing coffee from the same coffee chain.

Attitudinal Loyalty: Refers to the psychological attachment to a brand, positive attitude, preference, and indifference to other brands. This involves not only purchase behavior but also liking, trust, and willingness to recommend the brand (Keller, 1993). True loyalty represents a strong commitment that encompasses both behavioral and attitudinal dimensions.

Benefits of Loyalty

Brand loyalty offers several important benefits for businesses (Aaker, 1991; Reichheld, 1996):

Revenue Stability: Loyal customers provide a steady revenue stream by making regular purchases.

Increased Profitability: Loyal customers have lower service costs, tend to buy more, and are less sensitive to price changes.

Word-of-Mouth Marketing (WOM): Loyal customers become the strongest advocates of the business, spreading positive WOM.

Competitive Advantage: Makes it harder for competitors to attract customers and strengthens the brand's position in the market.

Support for New Product Launches: Loyal customers are more willing to try new products or services.

The Role of Experience in Loyalty Formation

A rich sensory service experience and high perceived service quality play a central role in the formation of brand loyalty (Oliver, 1999). Every positive sensory and service experience that consumers have in an F&B business reinforces their trust, satisfaction, and emotional attachment to the brand. This can gradually evolve into both behavioral and attitudinal loyalty.

Emotional Experience

Emotional experience refers to the totality of emotional reactions that a consumer experiences during their interaction with a product or service (Carbone & Haeckel, 1994; Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009). The role of emotions in marketing is increasingly recognized because emotions significantly affect decision-making processes, memory, and customer loyalty (Damasio, 1994).

Definition of Emotional Experience and the Role of Emotions in Marketing

Emotional experience involves feelings such as pleasure, relaxation, excitement, happiness, frustration, or anger that consumers experience during their interaction with a brand or service (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Emotions are powerful motivators that guide consumer behavior. Positive emotional

experiences lead to consumers developing favorable attitudes toward the brand, increasing their satisfaction, and fostering a desire for a long-term relationship (Brakus et al., 2009).

Hedonic and Utilitarian Consumer Responses

Consumer experiences are typically classified into two main dimensions:

Hedonic Experiences: Focus on emotional and sensory aspects such as pleasure, fun, aesthetic appeal, and sensory enjoyment. The F&B sector, by nature, offers an intense hedonic experience.

Utilitarian Experiences: Based on efficiency, functionality, practicality, and task-oriented benefits. Sensory marketing particularly aims to enhance hedonic experiences by triggering positive emotional responses from consumers.

Formation of Emotional Experience in the Service Environment

Service environments (servicescapes) and interactions with service personnel play a critical role in shaping consumers' emotional experiences (Bitner, 1992). Sensory cues (such as music, scent, lighting, etc.) and perceived service quality create specific emotional states in consumers. For example, a warm atmosphere and friendly service can trigger feelings of relaxation and happiness. These emotional responses affect consumers' overall satisfaction, intention to revisit, and brand loyalty.

Word-of-Mouth Marketing (WOM)

Word-of-mouth marketing (WOM) refers to the informal communication that consumers have with each other about a product, service, or business (Arndt, 1967; Westbrook, 1987). Unlike traditional marketing communications, WOM is considered more

reliable and persuasive because the person recommending the business is typically not involved with the business's interests.

Definition and Importance of Word-of-Mouth Marketing

WOM can be either positive or negative. Positive WOM serves as a free and highly effective promotional tool for businesses (Keller & Fay, 2012). Consumers often rely on recommendations from friends, family members, or others in their social circle when making purchasing decisions (Bansal & Voyer, 2000). In the digital age, WOM has evolved into Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), reaching much wider audiences through social media platforms, online forums, blogs, and review websites (Cheung & Thadani, 2012).

Mechanisms of WOM Diffusion

Several factors influence the spread of WOM:

Satisfaction and Excitement: Extreme satisfaction or dissatisfaction motivates consumers to share their experiences with others (Oliver, 1999). Emotionally rich experiences increase the likelihood of WOM dissemination.

Trust and Credibility: The trust consumers place in the recommending individuals enhances the persuasiveness of WOM (Bansal & Voyer, 2000).

Social Ties: WOM spreads more quickly and effectively among individuals with strong social connections.

Online Platforms: Review sites (e.g., TripAdvisor, Zomato) and social media allow consumers to instantly share their experiences and reach large audiences (Sen & Lerman, 2007).

The Impact of WOM in the F&B Sector

The F&B sector is one of the domains where WOM is most influential. In restaurant selection, personal recommendations and online reviews significantly affect consumer decisions (Ye, Law, & Gu, 2011). High perceived service quality and positive sensory experiences provide a strong foundation for generating both WOM and eWOM. Positive WOM helps businesses attract new customers, strengthen brand image, and gain a competitive advantage.

The outcomes examined in this section—such as customer satisfaction, revisit intention, brand loyalty, emotional experience, and word-of-mouth marketing—are critically important for the sustainable success of businesses. In the following section, we will present our theoretical model that explains the relationships between sensory marketing strategies, perceived service quality, and these consumer outcomes in detail.

Theoretical Model Proposal

This chapter presents the theoretical model that forms the core of this book, explaining the complex relationships between sensory marketing strategies, perceived service quality, and key consumer outcomes. The previously discussed dimensions of sensory marketing, the concept of perceived service quality, and critical consumer behaviors such as customer satisfaction, revisit intention, brand loyalty, emotional experience, and word-of-mouth marketing are brought together in this section to offer an integrated conceptual framework. Each component of the model and the hypothesized relationships between them will be supported by theoretical and empirical findings from the relevant literature.

Conceptual Framework of the Model

This section introduces the central theoretical model of the book, which elucidates the intricate interactions among sensory

marketing strategies, perceived service quality, and significant consumer-related outcomes. The model integrates the sensory dimensions previously examined with perceived service quality and downstream variables such as customer satisfaction, revisit intention, brand loyalty, emotional experience, and word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing. Each construct and the hypothesized pathways connecting them are grounded in established theoretical frameworks and empirical research.

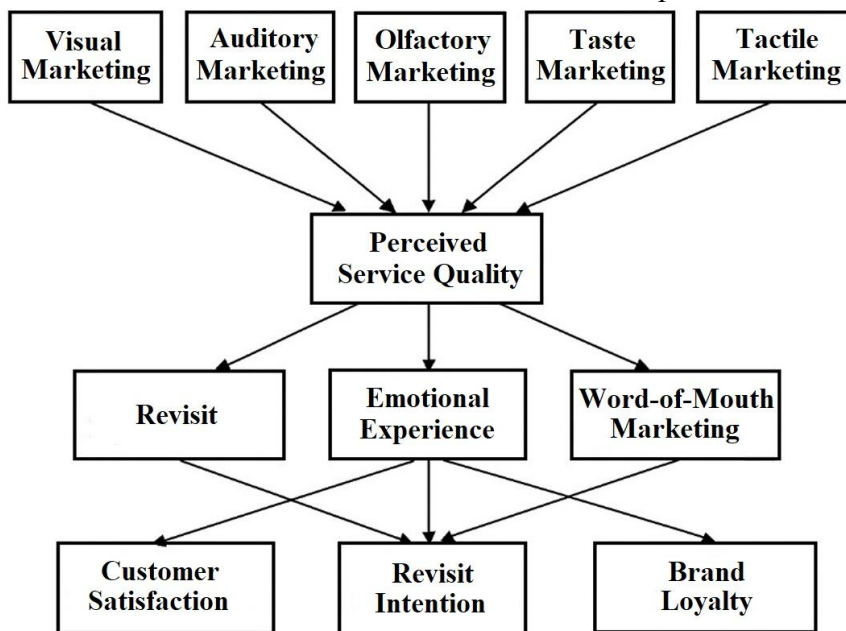
Structure and Purpose of the Model

As illustrated in Figure 1, the proposed theoretical model aims to explain how sensory marketing strategies implemented in food and beverage (F&B) establishments influence consumers' perceptions of service quality, and how this perceived quality, in turn, drives key outcomes such as emotional experience, revisit behavior, and WOM. These intermediate outcomes ultimately influence final behavioral responses, including customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and brand loyalty.

The model underscores the central role of service quality as a mediating variable and highlights the significance of sensory stimuli in shaping the consumer experience. It draws upon the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theoretical framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Within this context, sensory marketing strategies—visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile—constitute the environmental stimuli (S); perceived service quality, emotional experience, and WOM represent the organism's (O) cognitive and affective responses; and customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and brand loyalty serve as the ultimate behavioral responses (R).

This model offers F&B businesses a holistic perspective on how the strategic management of the sensory environment can profoundly affect customer experience and long-term engagement.

Figure 1: Sensory Marketing Strategies in Food and Beverage Establishments: A Theoretical Model Proposal



Hypotheses of the Model and Explanation of Relationships

Each arrow in the model represents a hypothesis that establishes a testable relationship between the concepts. These hypotheses are detailed below:

The Effect of Sensory Marketing Dimensions on Perceived Service Quality

Sensory marketing elements constitute the physical and atmospheric cues of a service experience and directly influence consumers' perceptions of service quality (Bitner, 1992; Berry et al., 2006). In an F&B establishment, the quality of a sensory dimension contributes to the overall assessment of service quality by the customer.

H1a: Visual marketing strategies have a positive effect on perceived service quality.

Justification: The visual design of the space, cleanliness, appearance of staff, and food presentation shape consumers' first impressions and quality expectations regarding the establishment and its services (Orth & Malkewitz, 2008). A clean, aesthetic, and hygienic visual environment reinforces the perception of high service quality (Baker et al., 2002).

H1b: Auditory marketing strategies have a positive effect on perceived service quality.

Justification: Ambient music, sound levels, and other auditory stimuli influence the atmosphere of the service environment and the comfort experienced by consumers (Milliman, 1982; North & Hargreaves, 1998). A pleasant and appropriate auditory setting contributes to higher perceived service quality.

H1c: Olfactory marketing strategies have a positive effect on perceived service quality.

Justification: Ambient scents affect consumers' mood, recall, and their perception of the atmosphere (Spangenberg et al., 1996). In F&B establishments, pleasant and appetite-enhancing smells improve the overall experience and positively impact service quality perceptions (Krishna, 2012).

H1d: Gustatory marketing strategies have a positive effect on perceived service quality.

Justification: In the F&B sector, the taste, quality, freshness, and presentation of food and beverages are fundamental components of service quality (Spence, 2017). Flavors that appeal to the customer's palate and meet expectations enhance perceived service quality.

H1e: Tactile marketing strategies have a positive effect on perceived service quality.

Justification: Physical touch-based elements such as the texture of the environment, comfort of furniture, quality of materials, and the texture of food influence consumers' comfort and their perception of the service environment (Peck & Childers, 2006). High tactile quality can positively affect perceived service quality.

The Effect of Perceived Service Quality on Intermediate Outcomes

Perceived service quality is a central factor that shapes consumers' post-experience reactions and behavioral intentions (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). A high perception of service quality triggers various intermediate outcomes that strengthen the relationship between the business and the customer.

H2a: Perceived service quality has a positive effect on Revisit Behavior.

Justification: Consumers are more likely to revisit establishments where they believe they have received high-quality service (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). A positive service experience increases the likelihood of future repeat behavior.

H2b: Perceived service quality has a positive effect on Emotional Experience.

Justification: Service quality directly affects the emotional responses felt by consumers (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991). High service quality leads to the formation of positive emotions such as satisfaction, pleasure, relaxation, and happiness, thereby enriching the overall emotional experience.

H2c: Perceived service quality has a positive effect on Word-of-Mouth (WOM).

Justification: Satisfaction and high perceived service quality motivate consumers to share their experiences with others and engage in positive WOM (Bitner, 1990; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1996). Satisfied customers become the most effective brand advocates.

The Effect of Intermediate Outcomes on Final Outcomes

The intermediate outcomes in the model (Revisit Behavior, Emotional Experience, Word-of-Mouth) significantly influence key outcomes for F&B establishments, such as customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and brand loyalty.

The Effect of Revisit Behavior on Final Outcomes

Revisit behavior, as an actual behavior, strengthens the customer base of the business. These repeated experiences reinforce consumers' attitudes and future intentions.

H3a: Revisit behavior has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Justification: Positive and repeated past visit experiences reinforce consumers' overall satisfaction with the establishment and increase positive disconfirmation (Oliver, 1999). Returning customers typically establish a more favorable relationship with the business.

H3b: Revisit behavior has a positive effect on Revisit Intention.

Justification: Positive past revisit experiences strengthen consumers' intentions to revisit the same establishment in the future. This occurs through habit formation and reinforced positive evaluations (Ajzen, 1991).

H3c: Revisit behavior has a positive effect on Brand Loyalty.

Justification: Repeated visit behaviors are an indicator of behavioral loyalty and, over time, also enhance attitudinal commitment to the brand (Oliver, 1999). Consistent and positive interactions reinforce the consumer's attachment to the brand.

The Effect of Emotional Experience on Final Outcomes

Positive emotional experiences lead consumers to form stronger bonds with the brand and foster loyalty that goes beyond rational evaluations.

H4a: Emotional experience has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Justification: Positive emotional responses derived from a service significantly increase overall satisfaction with that service (Oliver, 1999; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991). Emotional fulfillment complements cognitive satisfaction.

H4b: Emotional experience has a positive effect on Revisit Intention.

Justification: Memorable and pleasurable emotional experiences increase the consumer's desire to relive that experience and positively influence future behavioral intentions (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009).

H4c: Emotional experience has a positive effect on Brand Loyalty.

Justification: Emotional experiences contribute to the development of emotional attachment to the brand. This attachment creates a level of loyalty that transcends rational benefits and differentiates the brand from competitors (Oliver, 1999; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005).

The Effect of Word-of-Mouth on Final Outcomes

Word-of-mouth is not only a result in itself as a dissemination mechanism but also has indirect and direct effects on outcomes for all parties involved (both recommenders and recipients). In this model, WOM is positioned as a result of marketing efforts and customer experiences in F&B establishments, as well as a factor influencing final outcomes.

H5a: Word-of-mouth has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Justification: Positive WOM creates favorable expectations among recipients, and when these expectations are met, satisfaction increases (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Additionally, the act of sharing one's experience reinforces satisfaction for the recommender.

H5b: Word-of-mouth has a positive effect on Revisit Intention.

Justification: Positive WOM enhances consumer trust in the business and positively affects their future purchasing or visit intentions. For recipients, WOM strengthens the intention to try the business; for recommenders, it reinforces their own positive experience (Bansal & Voyer, 2000).

H5c: Word-of-mouth has a positive effect on Brand Loyalty.

Justification: Positive WOM increases the brand's reputation and trustworthiness, which reinforces consumers' commitment and loyalty to the brand (Reichheld, 1996). WOM contributes to the formation of a loyal customer base by enhancing the brand's acceptance and value in the social environment.

Integration of the Model and Theoretical Contribution

The proposed theoretical model provides a significant theoretical contribution to the sensory marketing literature by

offering a comprehensive and integrated framework specifically for food and beverage (F&B) businesses. The model systematically reveals how sensory stimuli, through a central mediating variable such as perceived service quality, lead to final consumer loyalty (satisfaction, revisit intention, brand loyalty) via emotional experiences and behavioral outcomes. This integrated approach brings together fragmented knowledge in the literature and allows for a better understanding of the complex mechanisms of sensory marketing.

At the same time, the model offers marketing managers a concrete roadmap on how to use the sensory environment as a strategic tool. By understanding the interactions of each sensory dimension and mediating variable, F&B businesses can design customer experiences more consciously, increase their service quality, and ultimately build long-term customer relationships. The empirically testable structure of the model also provides a strong basis for future research.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications of the Model

This section discusses the important contributions of the theoretical model, which was presented and explained in detail in the previous chapters of the book, both to the academic literature and to practical applications for food and beverage (F&B) businesses. Additionally, the internal and external limitations of the proposed model and how these limitations present opportunities for future research are also addressed.

Theoretical Contributions of the Model

The proposed theoretical model provides significant theoretical contributions to the literature on sensory marketing, service quality, and consumer behavior in several respects:

A Holistic Perspective to the Sensory Marketing Literature

Most of the existing studies on sensory marketing in the current literature generally focus on a single sense or a limited number of sensory dimensions (Krishna, 2012). This model addresses visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile marketing dimensions in an integrated way, emphasizing the multi-dimensional and holistic structure of the sensory experience in F&B businesses. This integration moves away from the fragmented nature of sensory marketing and conceptually presents the simultaneous and interacting role of all senses. In this way, it offers a more comprehensive perspective in sensory marketing studies and provides researchers with a rich basis for future theoretical and empirical studies. The model also helps position sensory marketing not merely as an aesthetic element but as a strategic management tool.

Emphasis on the Mediating Role of Perceived Service Quality

One of the most important theoretical contributions of the model is the clear positioning of perceived service quality as a central and mediating variable in the relationship between sensory marketing strategies and final consumer outcomes. Although there are studies that directly associate sensory stimuli with outcomes such as customer satisfaction or loyalty, our model explains how sensory cues primarily affect consumers' perception of service quality and how this perception reflects on other outcomes. This brings a new dimension to the discussions in the marketing literature on "service quality" and "perceived value." While service quality represents the operational and interactional excellence of a service, sensory elements strengthen how this excellence is perceived. By clarifying this mediation relationship, the model emphasizes that service quality is shaped not only by rational and functional dimensions but

also by sensory and emotional dimensions (Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, 1990; Bitner, 1992).

Integration of Relationships Among Final Consumer Outcomes

The model presents the complex relationships among various consumer outcomes—critical for F&B businesses (such as customer satisfaction, revisit intention, brand loyalty, emotional experience, and word-of-mouth marketing)—within an integrated framework. In particular, intermediate outcomes such as revisit intention, emotional experience, and word-of-mouth marketing are hypothesized to have multiple effects on final outcomes. This integration offers researchers deeper insights into how these outcomes are not formed in isolation but rather interact with one another to influence business success. For instance, a positive emotional experience not only enhances satisfaction but also strengthens revisit intention and brand loyalty, demonstrating that customer relationship management requires a multidimensional approach (Oliver, 1999; Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009).

Managerial Implications

The proposed model provides concrete and strategic implications for F&B managers and marketers seeking to improve customer experience and gain a competitive advantage:

Strategic Design and Management of Sensory Marketing:

The model highlights the need for managers to design their business's sensory environment consciously and strategically. Each sensory dimension (visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile) must be managed both independently and in harmony with the others to enrich the overall customer experience and reinforce perceived service quality. For example, a restaurant should not only focus on the taste of its dishes but also invest in aspects such as lighting, music selection, ambient scent, and seating comfort to enhance the holistic

customer experience. Sensory cues must align with the brand identity and the expectations of the target audience (Lindstrom, 2008).

The Role of Sensory Elements in Service Quality Management: By emphasizing the impact of sensory marketing on perceived service quality, the model urges managers to integrate sensory components into their service quality management programs. For instance, while evaluating SERVQUAL dimensions (Tangibles, Reliability, etc.), attention can be given to how these dimensions may be reinforced through sensory inputs. In customer service training, it is essential to focus not only on the operational competence of employees but also on behaviors that positively affect customers' sensory perceptions (e.g., presentation of dishes, tone of voice, organization of the space).

Practical Recommendations for Customer Loyalty and Word-of-Mouth Marketing: The final outcomes of the model shed light on F&B businesses' efforts to foster customer loyalty, revisit intention, and positive word-of-mouth (WOM). By focusing on creating positive emotional experiences, managers can increase customer satisfaction and the likelihood of repeat visits. Customers who are both satisfied and emotionally connected will not only remain loyal but also become powerful brand ambassadors, attracting new customers through positive WOM (Reichheld, 1996). Therefore, providing a sensory-rich and high-quality experience is a fundamental investment for building long-term customer relationships and achieving sustainable profitability.

Limitations of the Model

Like any theoretical model, the proposed framework also has certain limitations. These limitations offer important insights regarding the scope and applicability of the model, while also providing a roadmap for future research.

Conceptual Limitations

Scope Limitation: The model focuses on the five core dimensions of sensory marketing. However, there may be other factors that are not directly included in the model, such as additional sensory interactions (e.g., smell and taste) or more complex interactions between sensory cues and other cognitive processes (e.g., attention, learning) (Spence, 2017). The model does not directly include these additional factors.

Industry Limitation: The model has been developed specifically within the context of food and beverage businesses. Since the effects of sensory marketing may vary across different sectors, the generalizability of the model to other service or product sectors may require further research.

Mediation and Moderation: The relationships indicated in the model are presented as direct or indirect mediation relationships. However, the effects of moderating variables, such as cultural differences, individual sensory sensitivities, demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender), or prior experiences, which may influence these relationships, are excluded from the scope of the model.

Methodological Limitations

This model is a theoretical framework proposal and has not been empirically tested. Therefore, the extent to which the relationships hypothesized in the model are supported by real-world data or under what conditions they hold is not within the scope of this study. Empirical testing of the model would require appropriate research design, sample selection, and data analysis methods.

Suggestions for Future Research

The proposed theoretical model offers rich potential for future research. Below are some suggestions for further development of the model and its contribution to the marketing literature:

Empirical Testing and Application in Different Contexts:

Empirically testing the proposed model in different food and beverage businesses (e.g., luxury restaurants, fast-service restaurants, cafes, hotel restaurants) through survey-based or experimental designs would enhance the validity and generalizability of the hypotheses.

Exploring Applicability in Other Service Sectors:

Investigating the applicability of the model in other service sectors where sensory marketing plays a significant role (e.g., retail, tourism, healthcare) would expand the scope of the model.

Examining the Moderating or Mediating Effects of Additional Variables: Researching how variables such as cultural differences, individual sensory sensitivities (e.g., olfactory thresholds), demographic characteristics (e.g., age, income), or personality traits moderate the relationships between sensory marketing, service quality, and other outcomes.

Investigating the Mediating Role of Psychological Factors: Examining the role of psychological factors such as customers' mood, expectations, or prior experiences in mediating how sensory cues are perceived and interpreted.

Qualitative and Mixed-Methods Research: Qualitative research methods such as focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, or ethnographic observations could be used to gain a deeper understanding of the effects of sensory marketing on consumers.

Using Mixed-Methods Research: Combining quantitative and qualitative methods to enhance both the conceptual richness and empirical robustness of the model. For instance, sensory experiences could be explored qualitatively to develop quantitative scales.

Neuro-Marketing Techniques: Using neuro-marketing techniques (e.g., fMRI, EEG) and eye-tracking technology to examine the effects of sensory stimuli on brain activity and attention, which could provide deeper insights into the micro-level mechanisms of the model.

In conclusion, the theoretical model proposed in this book addresses the importance and impact of sensory marketing strategies in food and beverage businesses from a holistic perspective. Its theoretical foundations and managerial implications will contribute to opening new research avenues in academia and provide valuable strategic guidance for industry professionals to improve customer experience.

Conclusion and General Evaluation

This study addresses the importance of sensory marketing strategies in the food and beverage (F&B) sector, their effects on perceived service quality, and how they ultimately influence key consumer outcomes through a proposed theoretical model. In today's highly competitive and experience-driven market, the central thesis of this study is that F&B businesses must focus not only on the quality of the product but also on the holistic sensory experience they offer to their customers.

The main arguments and emphases presented throughout the study form the foundation of the proposed model:

The Role and Importance of Sensory Marketing: Sensory marketing is defined as a critical strategic tool for enhancing the quality of customer experience in F&B businesses. The distinct

effects of visual, auditory, olfactory, taste, and tactile marketing dimensions on consumers' perceptions, emotional responses, and overall atmosphere perception are emphasized. These senses are shown to help create deeper emotional connections with the brand by influencing consumers' subconscious processes.

The Central Role of Perceived Service Quality: The study theoretically substantiates the central and mediating role of perceived service quality in the relationship between sensory marketing strategies and ultimate consumer outcomes. It explains how sensory stimuli influence consumers' perceptions of service dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. This highlights that service quality is shaped not only by operational competencies but also by enriched sensory experiences.

Interaction and Importance of Consumer Outcomes: The study details the complex relationships among critical consumer behaviors and attitudes, including customer satisfaction, intention to revisit, brand loyalty, emotional experience, and word-of-mouth marketing. Specifically, the study highlights how high perceived service quality reinforces customer loyalty through intermediary outcomes like positive emotional experiences and word-of-mouth marketing.

The Value of the Proposed Model: The theoretical model provides a holistic framework that integrates fragmented insights from sensory marketing literature, specifically for the F&B sector. The model's systematic explanation of the complex interactions of sensory stimuli and their mechanisms in influencing service quality perception and customer loyalty holds significant value for both academic research and industry applications.

This study is expected to make significant contributions to the integration of sensory marketing into both theory and practice:

Theoretical Contribution: By combining the interactions of sensory marketing dimensions with perceived service quality to form a comprehensive model of customer outcomes, this study offers a holistic perspective to the literature. It enriches the S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) model in the service context, especially by explaining how sensory cues shape service quality expectations and perceptions, thereby deepening the customer experience.

Managerial Contribution: The model offers F&B business managers a tangible roadmap to strategically use the sensory environment as a competitive tool. It emphasizes the importance of investing not just in traditional elements like menu and pricing but in all sensory touchpoints, from the ambiance of the space to employee interactions. Businesses that effectively apply sensory marketing strategies will significantly enhance customer satisfaction, strengthen intentions to revisit, build brand loyalty, and promote positive word-of-mouth marketing.

The food and beverage sector will continue to occupy a central role in the experience economy, driven by ever-evolving consumer expectations and the new dynamics brought by digitalization. The theoretical model proposed in this book serves as a critical guide for F&B businesses looking to succeed in this dynamic environment. By consciously and integratively adopting sensory marketing strategies, businesses can go beyond serving delicious food and leave lasting impressions in consumers' minds and hearts.

In conclusion, sensory marketing is not just a trend but a scientifically grounded strategic necessity that deeply influences consumer experiences. As F&B businesses better understand and apply this sensory power, they will build loyal customer bases, enhance their reputations, and strengthen their positions in the sector, achieving sustainable success. Future research, through empirical

testing of this model in different contexts and examining the effects of additional variables, will further deepen the contributions of sensory marketing to marketing literature and practical applications.

REFERENCES

Aaker, D. A. (2009). Managing brand equity. simon and schuster.

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179-211.

Anderson, E. W., Fornell, C., & Lehmann, D. R. (1994). Customer satisfaction, market share, and profitability: Findings from Sweden. *Journal of marketing*, 58(3), 53-66.

Arndt, J. (1967). Role of product-related conversations in the diffusion of a new product. *Journal of marketing Research*, 4(3), 291-295.

Baker, J., Parasuraman, A., Grewal, D., & Voss, G. B. (2002). The influence of multiple store environment cues on perceived merchandise value and patronage intentions. *Journal of marketing*, 66(2), 120-141.

Bansal, H. S., & Voyer, P. A. (2000). Word-of-mouth processes within a services purchase decision context. *Journal of service research*, 3(2), 166-177.

Berry, L. L., Wall, E. A., & Carbone, L. P. (2006). Service clues and customer assessment of the service experience: Lessons from marketing. *Academy of management perspectives*, 20(2), 43-57.

Bitner, M. J. (1990). Evaluating service encounters: the effects of physical surroundings and employee responses. *Journal of marketing*, 54(2), 69-82.

Bitner, M. J. (1992). Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of marketing*, 56(2), 57-71.

Brakus, J. J., Schmitt, B. H., & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand experience: what is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty?. *Journal of marketing*, 73(3), 52-68.

Carbone, L. P., & Haeckel, S. H. (1994). Engineering customer experiences. *Marketing management*, 3(3), 8-19.

Chatterjee, S., & Bryła, P. (2022). Innovation and trends in olfactory marketing: A review of the literature. *Journal of Economics and Management*, 44, 210-235.

Chen, C. F., & Chang, Y. Y. (2011). Impact of brand awareness, perceived quality and customer loyalty on brand profitability and purchase intention: a resellers' view. *Interdisciplinary journal of contemporary research in business*, 3(8), 833-839.

Cheung, C. M. K., & Thadani, D. R. (2012). The impact of electronic word-of-mouth communication: A literature analysis and integrative model. *Decision Support Systems*, 54(1), 461-470.

Cronin Jr, J. J., & Taylor, S. A. (1992). Measuring service quality: a reexamination and extension. *Journal of marketing*, 56(3), 55-68.

Damasio, A. (1994). *Descartes' error: Emotion, rationality and the human brain*. New York: Putnam, 352.

Grewal, D., Roggeveen, A. L., Sisodia, R., & Nordfält, J. (2017). Enhancing customer engagement through consciousness. *Journal of Retailing*, 93(1), 55-64.

Grönroos, C. (1984). A service quality model and its marketing implications. *European Journal of marketing*, 18(4), 36-44.

Grönroos, C. (1990). *Service management and marketing* (Vol. 27). Lexington, MA: Lexington books.

Gupta, S., & Zeithaml, V. (2006). Customer metrics and their impact on financial performance. *Marketing science*, 25(6), 718-739.

Herz, R. S., & Engen, T. (1996). Odor memory: Review and analysis. *Psychonomic bulletin & review*, 3, 300-313.

Hultén, B. (2011). Sensory marketing: The multi-sensory brand-experience concept. *European Business Review*, 23(3), 256-271.

Keller, E. B., & Fay, B. (2012). *The face-to-face book: Why real relationships rule in a digital marketplace*. Simon and Schuster.

Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of marketing*, 57(1), 1-22.

Kim, S., & Baker-Jarvis, J. (2014). An approximate approach to determining the permittivity and permeability near $\lambda/2$ resonances in transmission/reflection measurements. *Progress In Electromagnetics Research B*, 58, 95-109.

Kivela, J., Inbakaran, R., & Reece, J. (1999). Consumer research in the restaurant environment, Part 1: A conceptual model of dining satisfaction and return patronage. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 11(5), 205-222.

Kotler, P. (1973). Atmospherics as a marketing tool. *Journal of retailing*, 49(4), 48-64. Krishna, A. (2012). An integrative review of sensory marketing: Engaging the senses to affect perception, judgment and behavior. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 22(3), 332-351.

Krishna, A. (2012). An integrative review of sensory marketing: Engaging the senses to affect perception, judgment and behavior. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 22(3), 332-351.

Lemon, K. N., & Verhoef, P. C. (2016). Understanding customer experience throughout the customer journey. *Journal of marketing*, 80(6), 69-96.

Lindstrom, M. (2008). *Brand sense: Sensory secrets behind the stuff we buy*. Simon and Schuster.

Mattila, A. S. (2001). The effectiveness of service recovery in a multi-industry setting. *Journal of services marketing*, 15(7), 583-596.

McCarthy, E. J. (1978). *Basic marketing: a managerial approach*.

Mehrabian, A., & Russell, J. A. (1974). *An approach to environmental psychology*. the MIT Press.

Michel, C., Velasco, C., Gatti, E., & Spence, C. (2014). A taste of Kandinsky: Assessing the influence of the artistic visual presentation of food on the dining experience. *Flavour*, 3, 1-11.

Milliman, R. E. (1982). Using background music to affect the behavior of supermarket shoppers. *Journal of marketing*, 46(3), 86-91.

Morin, C. (2011). Neuromarketing: the new science of consumer behavior. *Society*, 48(2), 131-135.

Morrin, M., & Ratneshwar, S. (2000). The impact of ambient scent on evaluation, attention, and memory for familiar and unfamiliar brands. *Journal of Business Research*, 49(2), 157-165.

North, A. C., & Hargreaves, D. J. (1998). The effect of music on atmosphere and purchase intentions in a cafeteria 1. *Journal of applied social psychology*, 28(24), 2254-2273.

Oliver, R. (1999). Exploring strategies for online teaching and learning. *Distance Education*, 20(2), 240-254.

Oliver, R. L. (1980). A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. *Journal of marketing research*, 17(4), 460-469.

Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence consumer loyalty?. *Journal of marketing*, 63(4_suppl1), 33-44.

Orth, U. R., & Malkewitz, K. (2008). Holistic package design and consumer brand impressions. *Journal of marketing*, 72(3), 64-81.

Parasuraman, A., Berry, L. L., & Zeithaml, V. A. (1990). Guidelines for Conducting Service Quality Research. *Marketing Research*, 2(4).

Peck, J., & Childers, T. L. (2006). If I touch it I have to have it: Individual and environmental influences on impulse purchasing. *Journal of business research*, 59(6), 765-769.

Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1998). Welcome to the experience economy (Vol. 76, No. 4, pp. 97-105). Cambridge, MA, USA: Harvard Business Review Press.

Reichheld, F. F. (1996). Learning from customer defections. *Harvard business review*, 74(2), 56-67.

Schmitt, B. H. (2000). Experimental marketing: how to get customers to sense, feel, think, act and relate to your company and brands. *European Management Journal*, 18(6), 695.

Sen, S., & Lerman, D. (2007). Why are you telling me this? An examination into negative consumer reviews on the web. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 21(4), 76-94.

Singh, S. (2006). Impact of color on marketing. *Management decision*, 44(6), 783-789.

Spangenberg, E. R., Crowley, A. E., & Henderson, P. W. (1996). Improving the store environment: do olfactory cues affect evaluations and behaviors?. *Journal of marketing*, 60(2), 67-80.

Spence, C. (2017). *Gastrophysics: The new science of eating*. Penguin UK.

Spence, C., & Piqueras-Fiszman, B. (2014). *The perfect meal: the multisensory science of food and dining*. John Wiley & Sons.

Westbrook, R. A. (1987). Product/consumption-based affective responses and postpurchase processes. *Journal of marketing research*, 24(3), 258-270.

Westbrook, R. A., & Oliver, R. L. (1991). The dimensionality of consumption emotion patterns and consumer satisfaction. *Journal of consumer research*, 18(1), 84-91.

Wirtz, J., & Lovelock, C. (2021). *Services marketing: People, technology, strategy*. World Scientific.

Yalch, R. F., & Spangenberg, E. R. (2000). The effects of music in a retail setting on real and perceived shopping times. *Journal of business Research*, 49(2), 139-147.

Ye, Q., Law, R., Gu, B., & Chen, W. (2011). The influence of user-generated content on traveler behavior: An empirical investigation on the effects of e-word-of-mouth to hotel online bookings. *Computers in Human behavior*, 27(2), 634-639.

Zaltman, G. (2003). *How customers think: Essential insights into the mind of the market*. Harvard Business Press.

Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of marketing*, 60(2), 31-46.

Zeithaml, V. A., Bitner, M. J., & Gremler, D. D. (2018).
Services marketing: Integrating customer focus across the firm.
McGraw-Hill.

Strategic Marketing Perspectives in Gastronomy Enterprises:

Green, Digital, Experiential, and Sensory Approaches

