

The Study of Night Pub Culture in Taipei Night Pub

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ABSTRACT: *In the leisure activities of the business community, Pub is one of the most popular leisure activities in Taipei. In today's busy life and industry particularly under the competitive pressure of the working environment, making many people accumulated pressure during the day, to think of night pubs at night, through drink and relaxing space, or even enjoy dancing to release the spirit pressure of a long day of tight. First of all, this study is to understand the motives and purpose of the young people go to night pub, night pub exactly what mysterious force can attract young people stay long night and do not choose to rest at home, and would rather sacrifice their sleep out to night pub to play. Choosing one Taipei night pub as an example case, using marketing 8P (product, price, place, promotion, personnel, physical environment, process of service assembly, and philosophy) to discuss their operating policy and mode, using interview method (including customer and night pub manager), by means of the marketing 8P and interview of customers and night pub managers, to explore the customers demand and satisfaction. Study found that customers thought the night pub was the improper place in the past. For the first time of going to nightclubs reasons mostly are to meet their friends, join party, and a taste of first try. Through interview research, consumer moderate mental relaxation and stress release can bring positive feedback. From the industry point of view, to increase the opportunities for customers to patronize, the first way is to give consumers a good first impression, meet the needs of customers seeking change. On the security using a more stringent management and control will improve customer confidence. Through the diversity service contents can enhance the pub customers' loyalty and satisfaction.*

Keywords: *Night Pub, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction*

I. INTRODUCTION

Nightclubs are everywhere in Taipei city and each has its unique style and theme. Nightclubs with different styles attract different age groups and people. According to Williams' research (1997), pubs are not only a kind of lifestyle for British people but also an important tourist attraction. The annual sales revenue (including alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, food and miscellaneous) of the pub industry is even larger than that of the automobile industry.

An article in Da-Cheng News (2002) mentioned that now people face greater and greater pressure so that the pub craze keeps flourishing within a year that the number of pubs increases and the monthly revenue reaches NT\$3 million dollars by their decoration, atmosphere, wine and music. If the dining profits in the day time are included, the sales revenue can break NT\$5 million dollars which is higher than the restaurants' profitability. Statistics from Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Executive Yuan also tell that whether on the week days or holidays, the sleeping activities before 6 in the morning and after 9 in the evening are decreasing. On the contrary, the sleeping rate in the day time is increasing. These indicate a phenomenon of living in the night time. Wu and Fang (1998) mention that the gross profit of wine and beverages are higher than those of foods and normally reaches 60% to 70% or is even higher than 75%. In the touristic hotels, the gross profit of wine and beverages can even reach 80%. These reliable statistics show that the foreign nightclub craze has swept Taipei—life in the city jungle. And our main purpose of doing this research is to find out why current young people are so attracted by such kind of places while in news coverage, nightclubs are always more negative than positive and carry a low social moral image. What's behind the mysterious curtain and what's the hidden charm? These are all our motivations to do the research.

From another perspective, another subject of our research is to investigate the management skills of running nightclubs. What are the selling points to attract people to those places filled with music and noises? What makes nightclubs sustainable? Do nightclubs simply make money by wine and admission fees? How do the current players survive among competitions?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Pub is defined as "Public House" in the British online encyclopedia. It is a place provided wine and beverages in England and its influential areas. In such kind of places, only wine was sold in the beginning and then seats were provided so that consumers could drink there. Later on, these places evolve to be a drinking space for social activities, get-togethers, and public area. In the early stage, British pubs continued the tradition of selling

wine in Saxon areas and people got together in these places for social activities and entertainments. Xiao (1995) puts pubs into 3 categories according to the business contents (Table 1). And Wu research (1997) shows the business content of Disco Pub is different from other categories, so that there are 4 kinds of Pubs.

Table 1 PUBCategory

Category	Business	Target Customers
Comprehensive PUB	Wine Drinking, Dancing Floor, DJ	Mostly young people
PUB with bands	Wine Drinking, Band Singing	25-35 year-old office workers
(pure)PUB	Wine Drinking, Music Listening	25-45 year-old office workers

Pubs, to fulfill different needs, are also divided in to hybrid PUB, pure PUB, club PUB, lounge bar, TV PUB to solicit customers by providing different functions. As the changes among the age groups, customers will have different choices: usually younger customers prefer populous pubs with dancing floors while middle-aged groups with business achievements prefer pure pubs because of less crowd and they are likely to relax and listen to music. From the classifications by the age groups, we could also find the changes in the needs of leisure vary in different state of mind.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Pubs are the recreation spots running in the nighttime. Usually they sell alcohols but don't include KTV, wine clubs or erotic business. There are several pub styles in Taiwan: first, a lounge bar whose music is softer with unique decoration and the spending is higher. The second kind is pubs that are often seen. The music they play is easier, and more casual. Some places will play sports games but the spending is lower than that in lounge bars. Our investigation objective is a famous domestic hybrid nightclub, PLUSH.

The research uses informal interview, without structures. Interviewer and interviewee have good interaction. The interviewer has to inquire in a specific direction to avoid interviewee digressing from the topic so that the interviewee can fully express his/her opinions, attitudes and value judgments without much limitation. Under one-on-one interview, researchers lead the dialogue and further explore what the interviewee is interested in. Through the on-the-ground talk, without structural interview, with the planning department manager, we have a preliminary understanding of the company's internal operations. And each of our research team members finds people or friends who have been to nightclubs to conduct oral interviews. Questions are all discussed by the members. The objective of the interview is to understand the interviewees' motivation to go to nightclubs so to further find out the possible new utilities that nightclubs can bring to consumers.

We have visited the pub 3 times and each takes 3 hours. We are there to feel its decoration and design, the services and serving attitudes, music played and activities held in the pub, wine& beverages and food provided, and the main consumer groups, the consumption overview and so on.

Our interviewees are mainly young people who often go to pubs because they understand the pub business better. Our method is to collect materials in a phased and sequenced manner that questions are asked one by one and we find out information that is needed. Via the field study, we hope to understand in depth what expectations and recommendations in terms of the business model these young people have and will make for the pubs. In other words, to understand the interviewees' ideal nightclubs and how pubs should operate are to attract their willingness of consumption so that they are willing to visit the pub again. Through these findings, we hope to provide PLUSH with proper recommendations for improvements of its operation. We also hope these customers' experiences, by Q&A, will unveil the mysterious mask of the nightclubs for those who have never been to pubs.

IV. CASE STUDY AND ANALYSIS FOR PLUSH

Located on the top of the trendy landmark, Living Mall, PLUSH has become a lingering spot for night owls since its opening. The smooth route makes people feel excited upon entering, and the lights, sofas, dancing floor and the bar counter all express different styles. In addition, a new VIP lounge area makes PLUSH stand out from other newly open nightclubs.

On the 12th floor in Living Mall, a sheet of bright peach color will catch your eyes. That is PLUSH. Built by former @live owner and the British interior designer, Mark, PLUSH has a round ambient space and an elevation of 3 floors. The owner, a former DJ, has great music taste from his previous experiences in Kiss, Live A Go Go, and @Live; therefore, music in PLUSH becomes the most powerful attraction which includes R&B, House and Jazz brought from Japan and England. Music induces various atmospheres among different people in different times.

The isolated VIP room has its own DJ counter. Sometimes the owners' celebrity friends, such as Orange Chang, George Chang etc. come to visit, they will play electronic music or hip hop to make it a small music party. The strikingly different food and beverage choices and the intoxicating music light up the nights in Taipei city. PLUSH's current business concept, also its future positioning, is to hold parties and use new methods to attract younger customers. PLUSH also throws a series of theme parties such as bikini party, costume party and so on. The heat of bikini party is ignited by PLUSH. PLUSH invites DJ and Mr. 500 to perform and keeps launching new activities to maintain the edge. Table 2 shows the SWOT analysis.

Table 2. PLUSH's SWOT Analysis

Strength	Weakness
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Located on top of Living Mall so that the consumers can go directly after shopping. 2. Inviting foreign DJ to perform 3. Song's replacement rate is high so there are more latest songs 4. Inviting domestic and foreign celebrities to perform on an irregular basis 5. Customizing decorations to create a desired atmosphere following customers' opinions on a regular basis 6. PLUSH has both official website and blog 7. The mover and shaker in throwing a bikini party 8. Run by celebrities, so that it is easier to create revenues by their visibility 9. Keep launching new activities (ex: miniskirt night) 10. VIP discounts 11. Lend the venue for advertisement shooting so to increase TV exposure 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inconvenient transportation, lack of mass transportation to arrive. 2. No nearby restaurants available in the early morning 3. Comparing with other nightclubs, the space is not big enough so that sometimes seats are not enough to accommodate the customers
Opportunity	Threat
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chinese tourists will increase the traffic 2. Tourists will enhance cultural communication among countries 3. Working pressure is mounting therefore the population that needs relaxation increases and the spending goes up 4. Utilizing modern technology to provide diversified services 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Other companies or followers hold similar activities 2. Media coverage

V. CONCLUSION

1. Ideas from customers who have never been to night pubs: from the interviews, we know the first impression about night pubs is that these are unhealthy places and most people are negative about these places. Therefore, the priority to increase the opportunities to attract customers is to establish a good image for the customers.
2. The reason to go to night pubs and afterthought: Reasons have appointments with friends (most), special occasions (such as: birthday celebrations, college activities), and curiosity. Afterthoughts show that most interviewees say they don't have further motivation to visit night pubs again. Few think they do have the cost-to-value utilities. Summarizing from the above, we find most people go to night pubs because of friends. For this reason, strengthening loyal customers' benefits could create unlimited business opportunities via word of mouth marketing. There are also quite some people go to night pubs for its special settings, from such perspective, PLUSH can provide more attracting promotions or activities to build brand image for first-come customers.
3. Whether PLUSH brings positive utilities (relaxation and release): from interviews, most who have been to PLUSH think they did release their pressures which means going to pubs brings not a negative but positive feedback to customers. It's a public area as its definition of "public house" that provides customers mental relaxation and pressure release.
4. Reasons for coming back to PLUSH: interviewees think music style is the main influential reason for consumption. Therefore, PLUSH should first distinguish and position its own target customers, and then work on the music to their tastes and periodical replacements to satisfy customers' novelty seeking desires.
5. Things that customers are afraid of in PLUSH: most interviewees mentioned they worry sexual harassments,

fighting after drinking and drugs which tell PLUSH to have stricter food safety and security control to increase customers' trust and that can effectively improve PLUSH's image.

6. To have more services: proper adjustments should be made according to interviewees' needs (i.e., reduce the male consumptions and wine promotions) which will make customers feel PLUSH's sincerity and increase the sense of trust and loyalty. Also deepening image identification via services so that customers are more than happy to be loyal.

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