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IRISH THEME PUBS: AN EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CUES

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ABSTRACT

A major phenomenon in hospitality retailing in recent years has been the growth in Irish theme pubs. These pubs consist of a collection of both tangible and intangible attributes referred to as environmental cues or *atmospherics*. Although environmental cues have been found to have a significant influence on consumer behaviour, little research has been conducted into their effects within Irish theme pubs. Using an established research framework, the aims of this study were to identify and evaluate environmental cues within Irish theme pubs and to establish how the dimensions of this framework influenced customers of Irish theme pubs in Melbourne. Qualitative interviews were conducted with customers of six selected Irish theme pubs and with the owners of these establishments. Whilst confirming the importance of environmental cues to Irish theme pub customers, the study also provides information that has application for hospitality retailers.

KEYWORDS: Atmospherics, Theme pubs, inanimate environment, environmental cues

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, Irish theme pubs have been exceedingly popular and profitable entities within the leisure and hospitality sector both at the national and international level (Goldsmith 1996; Walkup 1997; Brown and Patterson 2000, West 2001). In Australia, the financial success of Irish theme pubs in Melbourne has been documented by O'Mahony (2002) and by O'Farrell (2000) who reports that, sales of Guinness increased 181% in the decade 1990-2000.

Despite rapid growth in this sector, little research has been conducted into the Irish theme pub phenomenon. A UK study by Knowles and Howley (2000), however, proposes that the success of Irish themed pubs can be attributed to the added value experience that is provided at very little or no extra cost. A major aspect of this added value is the environment in which the product is sold. Indeed, early research into sales environments has established the ability of particular buying environments to produce specific emotional effects in buyers (Kotler 1974). Using the term *atmospherics* to describe environmental cues, Kotler (1974) asserted that *atmospherics* is an appropriate management tool in situations where (i) the product that is purchased is consumed within the purchasing environment, (this becomes more relevant as the number of competitive outlets increase), (ii) where product and/or price differences are small, and (iii) when the product is aimed at specific groups of buyers. Whilst Kotler's suppositions have been advanced in subsequent research, most studies focus on the design of shopping precincts and store layout (Donovan and Rossiter 1982, McGoldrick and Pieros 1998, Turley and Millman 2000).

Nevertheless, theoretical and empirical studies in the literature have established that retail environmental cues, or *atmospherics*, influence a wide variety of consumer evaluations and behaviours. (Bitner 1990, Turley and Furgate 1992) In a comprehensive review of the literature in this area Turley and Millman (2000) clearly establish that further research is warranted. It is further noted in this review that, of the fifty-five studies dealing with *atmospherics* that were conducted between 1964 to 1997, none have direct relevance to pubs, entertainment venues, food and beverage facilities or any other forms of hospitality retailing.

Berman and Evans (1995) have developed a theoretical framework for these types of retail encounters, which was subsequently modified by Hoffman and Turley (2002) to incorporate a number of theoretical aspects of *atmospherics* that can influence the consumer experience. (Refer to Fig. 1). This model was deemed appropriate to guide this study because many of the dimensions incorporated in the model have a significant influence on attracting, serving and satisfying the needs of consumers (Hoffman and Turley 2002).

Research within the retail hospitality industry, for example, found image and atmosphere to be one of the most critical factors in the selection of restaurants (Auty 1992, Kivela 1997, Babbitt and Attaway 2000). Moreover, the growth in 'theme' restaurants worldwide provides evidence that a standardised experience and controlled ambience is attractive to a large sector of diners (Kotler 1996). However, apart from these studies, and a publication by Brown and Patterson (2000) that concludes that theme pubs are all about 'excessiveness' and 'capturing the essence of the represented phenomenon' (p.658), little is known about the influence of atmospherics within the hospitality sector.

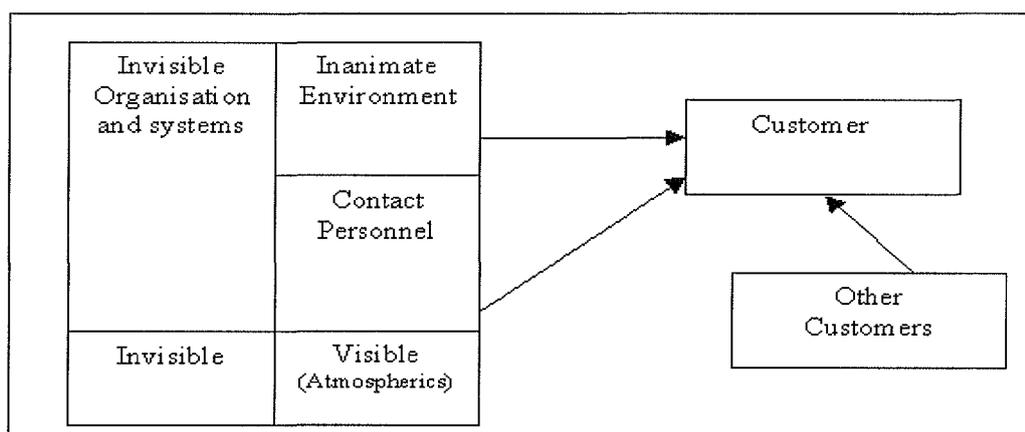


Figure 1: Atmospheric Influence on the Consumer Experience (Hoffman & Turley 2002, p.40)

COMPONENTS OF THE HOFFMAN AND TURLEY MODEL

The principal components of the model are the visible and invisible environmental cues also referred to as the atmospherics. An outline of these dimensions is provided below.

Invisible atmospherics

In the Hoffman and Turley model, the term "invisible atmospherics" incorporates two elements. Firstly, there is the invisible organisation and systems, which involves managing the environment, the provision of goods and services and the selection, training and management of personnel. This might involve various management styles as well as the, often extensive, documented management procedures that form part of the system of management. These procedures can vary greatly between different entities within the hospitality sector. At McDonalds restaurants, for example, the major management focus is on implementing a rigid set of management principles; recipes and guidelines in order to ensure that both the product and service are uniform and consistent. It is important to note, however, that consumers are often not aware of this controlling influence.

The second element of the invisible environment includes intangible environmental cues, such as perceptions of service quality, friendliness of staff and general atmosphere. These dimensions have also been found to be influential in the service quality literature where they are associated with the willingness of staff to respond to customers needs as well as product knowledge and competency (Zeithaml et al. 1990).

Visible atmospherics

Visible atmospherics include the inanimate environment as well as contact personnel. In themed environments this can include colours such as known national colours (e.g. the green, white and orange associated with Ireland) posters, artefacts, and other theme-related decorations. The pint-sized

glasses used for beer in pubs in Ireland for example, are currently used to enhance the perception of authenticity in Irish theme pubs in Melbourne.

Inanimate environment

The inanimate environment includes both the exterior and the interior of the sales environment. The exterior environment in the atmospherics model operates on two levels. The first of these relates to the location of the outlet, the provision of parking, windows, colours and signage. The second is concerned with the macro environment of the venue including issues like whether the sales environment is located within a shopping centre and what kind of other businesses surround the sales environment.

The interior environment includes the overall interior environment as a whole (image), music and sounds, ambient colours, lighting, design and layout, product displays, internal signage, decorative style and provision for patron comfort. Within Irish theme pubs each of these components is strongly connected to the notion of authenticity (O'Mahony 2002).

Contact personnel

The term "contact personnel" includes the number of service providers, their appearance, and skill level or ability to perform the retail task. There are recognised links between this dimension of the atmospherics model and the "tangible" dimension of service quality outlined by Zeithaml et al. (1990). In the hospitality industry in general the tangible aspects of the environment can include uniform and grooming with a strong emphasis on those aspects of employee presentation that relate to hygiene such as hair, makeup and the amount of jewellery worn by contact personnel. In Irish pubs, however, the uniform can be seen as a measure of authenticity (costume) as can a number of other visible or tangible aspects of the service environment.

Customer

A central part of the model is customers and their interaction with other components of the model including the environment and the type and level of interaction with other customers. As the findings of this study show this is exceedingly important in Irish theme pubs.

Other customers

The manner in which customers' interact is a key aspect of the retail experience as well as issues such as crowding, or the lack of customer numbers.

AIMS OF THIS STUDY

The aims of the study were to identify and evaluate environmental cues within Irish theme pubs. Specifically, the study aimed to establish how each of the dimensions of Hoffman and Turley's model (Figure 1) influenced customers of Irish theme pubs in Melbourne. Whilst the importance of tangible or visible aspects of hospitality retailing are relatively well known, this study also covered the 'invisible organisation and systems' in place within these retail outlets.

METHODOLOGY

According to Strauss and Corbin (1990) 'qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little yet is known' (p.19). Since few studies have been conducted into Irish theme pubs, qualitative procedures were appropriate. Data collection procedures in this methodology can include '... group and individual interviews, direct observation and written documents, including questionnaires, personal diaries and program records' (Patton 1987, p.280). In this study, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 24 customers of Irish theme pubs as well as the owners or managers of six of these pubs.

The main focus of the investigation was the relatively new Irish theme pubs because these pubs were perceived to have set a particular trend in terms of environmental cues. Consequently, five of these pubs were selected for the study, however, for the purpose of comparison, one of the older, established Irish pubs (The Dan O'Connell) was also included. A further sampling consideration was that some Irish theme pubs are located in the city of Melbourne while others are in the suburbs. In this study three pubs were chosen from within the city of Melbourne and the other three were suburban. Table 1 outlines the six pubs that were selected for the study.

Bridie O'Reilly's (An Irish theme pub in the Melbourne suburb of Brunswick)	Pugg Mahone's (An Irish theme pub in the city of Melbourne)	Finbar's (An Irish theme pub in the Melbourne suburb of Brighton)
The Quiet Man (An Irish theme in the Melbourne suburb of Flemington)	P.J.O'Brien's (An Irish theme pub in the city of Melbourne)	The Dan O'Connell (An established Irish pub in the inner city of Melbourne)

Table 1: The Six Selected Irish Theme Pubs.

A non-probability, convenience sampling method was used to select four respondents from each pub for interview (24 in total) and a gender-balanced sample was achieved. A profile of respondents is provided as an appendix to this paper (see Appendix A). Whilst respondents have been given code names on this list, in each case the code name was culturally aligned with the respondents' original name. For example if a respondent's name was John Smith, an obvious Anglo name, a similar Anglo name was given as the code name, for example, David Jones. This allowed for some tracking to occur during the analysis so that those of Irish heritage, for instance, could be grouped if necessary.

The following table shows some of the characteristics of respondents in the sample. Although the sample was a purposeful, non-probability quota sample, Table 2 highlights the gender balance, the range of age groups and the occupational status of respondents.

Code Name	Gender	Age	Occupation	Name of Pub
Anne Brennan	Female	34	Entertainer	Finbar's
Chris Brennan	Male	36	Entertainer	Finbar's
Katrina Womax	Female	20	Secretary	Bridie O'Reilly's
Daniella Rhodes	Female	19	Student	Pugg Mahone's
Jane Williams	Female	19	Students	Bridie O'Reilly's
Jonathon Harvey	Male	20	Barman	The Dan O'Connell.
Trevor Edwards	Male	20	Service station attendant	The Dan O'Connell.
Anthea Stuart	Female	26	Employment consultant	Pugg Mahone's
Robert Hill	Male	20	Bar manager	P. J. O'Brien's.
David Phillips	Male	39	Business consultant.	Bridie O'Reilly's
Kevin Richards	Male	37	Tour operator	Bridie O'Reilly's.
Lawrence Hopkins	Male	34	Economist	Finbar's
Liz Steiner	Female	41	Office administrator	P. J. O'Brien's
Stephanie McEvoy	Female	34	Social worker	The Dan O'Connell
Lauren Davison	Female	33	Public servant	The Quiet Man
Jack Parker	Male	55	Lecturer	P. J. O'Brien's
Paul Murphy	Male	23	Retail manager	Pugg Mahone's.
Rosemary Martens	Female	47	Teacher	P. J. O'Brien's.
Ben Davison		30	Plumber	The Quiet Man
Ron McIntosh	Male	41	Business Manager	Finbar's
Deirdre O'Sullivan	Female	36	Home Duties	The Quiet Man.
Vincent Flood	Male	19	Student	Pugg Mahone's.
Richard Ellis	Male	28	Manager	Bridie O'Reilly's
Patricia Jones	Female	24	Student	The Quiet Man

Table 2: Age, Gender and Occupational Status of Respondents

RESULTS

The resulting data were transcribed and analysed and a summary is presented thematically under the headings of the Hoffman and Turley model. Selected quotes from theme pub customers are presented throughout and respondents' code names have been used to protect their identity (see profile of respondents provided as appendix A). Interviews were also conducted with the owners or managers of the six selected Irish theme pubs. Once again, qualitative quotes are presented, however, the pub owners and managers have been named with their consent.

Invisible organisation and systems.

The invisible organisation and systems includes the way the environment is managed and one issue related to this is the level of authenticity that is achieved. While all of the respondents were positive about the Irish theme pub environment, authenticity was raised as an important theme in this study and also permeated a number of other themes. One respondent, code named Ron, offered a view on the issue related to Bridie O'Reilly's in Chapel street. Although this pub was not in the study, its similarly styled, sister pub of the same name located in Brunswick was included. Ron observed that it was bright and clean but not new looking which he believed was a deliberate attempt to make it look old. 'It's like an artifice of what these pubs are expected to be but at the same time appealing to peoples sensibilities' he asserted. Ron was one of a number of respondents who compared Bridie O'Reilly's to McDonald's asserting that it was contrived as a marketing exercise rather than any effort to share Irish culture. Several other respondents also felt that Bridie O'Reilly's in Brunswick was overdone leading them to conclude that it is not authentically Irish. Curiously, a number of these respondents had never been to Ireland and so they were expressing their perceptions of what an authentic Irish pub *might* be like.

Nevertheless, all of the respondents expressed the view that Irish theme pub owners have created a point of difference from other pubs that is recognisable to customers. Indeed, Jack reported that there are a number of visible distinguishing features about these pubs that identify them as distinctly Irish. He went on to say:

I think if I were blind folded and taken into a pub and it's revealed to me I could tell immediately that it is an Irish pub. So in saying that I think that, yes, I think that they have tapped into something that's recognisable. Whether it is fair dinkum Irish or not is a bit hard to say.

Invisible

The invisible environment is different from the invisible organisations and systems in that it includes intangible environmental cues such as friendliness. When questioned about the reasons for the popularity of Irish theme pubs all of the respondents stated that a major attraction was the atmosphere. This invisible aspect that was perceived to be positive and was summarised positive by Robert who reported that 'there was no trouble [which he believes was] probably because of the atmosphere that was generated. It's happy, there's no negativity in there whatsoever'. Liz concurs with this view stating 'I have never been in a situation in an Irish pub where I felt uncomfortable or have seen any problems. I'm sure that they have their problems but it's never been obvious to me'. Rosemary shares this view but also notes a cultural element advising 'I don't like pubs. Going to an Irish pub from outside the culture is a different kind of experience than going to a pub within your own culture'.

Robert also believes that the positive atmosphere in Irish theme pubs is created and enhanced by interaction between customers and the bar staff. '... If they [the staff] see someone sitting there they'll go up and they'll most likely talk to them, they'll chat to them ...' he reported, asserting that there is something unique or special about the way Irish people interact with others. Jack was also impressed with the interaction he had with a non-Irish staff member when he visited an Irish theme pub. When he asked what the word *shibín*, written on the waitresses apron, meant she replied 'it's an illegal drinking house, if you hear the police coming run out this door'. He had enjoyed the joke and remarked how this kind of humour adds to the Irish atmosphere.

Inanimate environment

In this study, the external environment was not rated as important by respondents, however they placed a great deal of emphasis on the interior decoration, particularly in relation to fabrics, tones and materials, the design and positioning of the seating and the artefacts and memorabilia that are incorporated. When asked about décor Anne advised '... that each pub that I have seen, so far, has been quite unique, to a degree'. Despite her Irish background, she was impressed by the decor in a number of city and suburban Irish theme pubs noting that one had a printing press and all sorts of books while another seemed to concentrate on agricultural implements. The major similarity between them, she felt, was the antiquity of the items that were on display. She firmly believes that this is a sharing of Irish

culture. She also felt that the open display of Irish culture in the form of historical artefacts provides an insight into Irish history.

Lauren also reported that the Irish theme pubs that she has visited ‘... have all been quite different’ whilst Kevin appreciated the manner in which these pubs have been designed, advising that the booths or nooks, as he referred to them, were an attraction for him because they offer ‘a little privacy for your own conversations and a sense that “this is my area” and you can invite people into that little area’.

Another aspect was the music and the majority of respondents expressed the view that the music that they wanted to hear in Irish theme pubs is authentic Irish music. They specifically noted, however, that they did not want token Irish jigs and reels insisting that they wanted to hear both traditional and contemporary Irish music especially that which is currently available in Ireland. This would seem to suggest that, at least with respect to music, respondents are seeking authenticity rather than some romantic notion of Irishness contrived purely for their benefit. Siobhan believes that one of the attractions of Irish music, whether it be traditional or contemporary, is that it is ageless.

Contact personnel

As previously noted, contact personnel would include the number of service providers, their appearance and the skill level required to perform the retail task. In this study, all of the respondents reported that the service personnel were an important aspect of the Irish theme pub especially in terms of the creation of a positive, friendly atmosphere. This was seen as different to other entertainment venues. As Jonathan noted ‘its different—you can chat to the security guys at the door and they’re friendly—not like at the clubs’. Robert also advised that the atmosphere is ‘mainly due to the staff. The staff there they’re always friendly, always bubbly, always wanting to have a joke and that’s just part of the service that I’d go back for ...’.

Jack was adamant that ‘in an Irish pub you have to have Irish staff or you lose everything you’ve tried to set up’. Several other respondents shared this view and identified Irish accents as an attractive component of Irish theme pubs. This was linked to the issue of authenticity and led to the question of whether the staff in Irish theme pubs should be Irish. According to the Irish Pub Company (2000, p.1) ‘friendly, efficient, Irish bar staff ...’ are among the success factors in the creation of an authentic Irish theme pub. This was confirmed in this study. Indeed, many respondents expressed the view that at least some Irish staff ought to be present to complement the theme. For example, Liz reflected, ‘I think Bridie O’Reilly’s must have some policy where they only appoint people with an Irish accent and that certainly adds to the atmosphere ...’. Rosemary supported this view asserting that the Irish accent ‘... is a very highly valued attraction’. Siobhan, who is Irish, felt however, that it is vital to have Irish bar staff. She explained that:

very often it’s the bar staff who set the tone of the pub itself, be they male or female. You know, the welcome that you get from them is crucial and I think that the Irish have a very particular way of welcoming, particularly strangers. They seem to know how much to give and how much to reserve so there’s a welcoming but they’re not totally ‘in your face’. There’s an invitation to friendliness but it’s not overpowering ...

Customer

In this study, the behaviour and disposition of customers were linked to a notion of Irishness. Lauren believes, for example, that part of the attraction of Irish theme pubs is the Irish attitude to life. When asked what she perceived this to be she stated that ‘...it is a “such is life” attitude, “I’m here to have a good time, if I have one beer, I have one beer, if I end up under the table, well that’s life”’. Most respondents felt that Irish people know how to have fun and those respondents who had either been to Ireland or had some experience of Irish culture used the Gaelic term *Craic* when describing their reasons for going to, or their experiences at, Irish theme pubs. Siobhan believes that people have fun at Irish theme pubs because:

there is an unwritten code amongst Irish people that when you are in the pub you’re there to have a good time. She explained that when you go into a pub ... you

take everything in with you, you know, you take your problems and everything but there's a certain kind of expectation that you'll have a relaxed sort of jovial time.

One thing that can quickly transform a fun atmosphere, however, is drunkenness. One of the most significant themes that emerged during the interviews was a perceived lack of drunkenness in Irish theme pubs. Katrina attempted to articulate this stating that 'there wasn't any drunk, I mean they were drunk but they weren't like, do you know what I mean?' This statement seems contradictory, however, Katrina explained that Irish theme pubs didn't seem to have customers who were drunk or sleazy or drowning their sorrows in a drunken depression. 'People were there to have a good time' she stated. 'I don't like pubs [she continued], the whole pub atmosphere does nothing for me but this is not your typical average corner pub. Daniella agreed and suggested that security is unnecessary at Irish theme pubs because 'you just never really see anybody getting feisty about anything, everybody's pretty happy-go-lucky'. Like Katrina she felt that people didn't go there to get drunk.

Other customers

Several respondents identified other customers as important especially in the creation of atmosphere. Lawrence noted for example, that 'everybody's up and moving and talking and laughing out loud, so it's got that pub atmosphere where you know people are more likely to mix and move through the room.' Lauren also believes that '... it's the attraction of the clientele—it's drawing a crowd that actually just want to go and have a conversation and a drink'.

This begins with the welcome, which respondents' believe creates an atmosphere in which one can relax and have fun. Indeed, every respondent reported that they had fun at Irish theme pubs. Even Katrina, who confided that she is '... not a pub person', had enjoyed her recent visit because she found that the Irish theme pub '... just had something that other pubs don't have ...'. Jonathon explained that there is a level of inclusiveness about the atmosphere in Irish theme pubs. He reported that the atmosphere at the Dan O'Connell 'is just unreal. Its not like your classy pub crowd where it's "who are you" [he reported] it's sort of "hey come on", it doesn't matter who you are, if you're 60 or 18 ...'. Inclusiveness was important to Liz as well. She advised, for example, that 'you don't have to feel like you're a member of a club or that you come from a particular country, to feel comfortable there'. In contrast, she felt that some other pubs and clubs in Melbourne were a bit more exclusive and she feels that this openness and inclusiveness was one of the most attractive aspects of Irish theme pubs.

Pub owners' views

In order to corroborate consumers' perceptions, the owners (or managers) were presented with a number of findings and interviewed using a semi-structured interview format. Most of them were aware that the people and, more importantly, the kinds of people, who frequent Irish theme pubs are in fact an essential ingredient in these pubs.

They also recognised the value of Irish accents in enhancing the authenticity of the venue. When asked if it is important to customers to be served by Irish bar staff, for example, one publican stated that 'in a perfect World we'd have all Irish staff but unfortunately it's not a perfect World'. By this he meant that the current Equal Opportunities Legislation was restrictive because 'you need to get the staff that relate to the country that its from [the theme pub]'. He asserted that '...if you can't get them it looks a bit silly. If you have 99% Australians in an Irish bar, it might as well be just another bar'. Almost all of the Irish theme pub operators felt that it would be unfair not to employ Australian bar staff as well but that they had difficulty in achieving a balance. One pub manager reported that he was currently employing 80% Australian bar staff because he couldn't advertise for Irish born staff.

An important aspect of Irish theme pubs is the manner in which they are designed. On behalf of Bridie O'Reilly's, Des Healy asserted that creating an authentic, recognisable environment was vital '... so that when they [the customers] come in, it is recognised as an Irish pub'.

Authenticity in the design of the pub was also seen as an important feature. At Finbar's Irish theme pub in Brighton, for example, Paul Morgan explained that:

it's just the way they're done and the owner of this place has done a really good job, I think, in the way that he's actually set it out. 90% of the Irish pubs that are

in Melbourne have got that old feeling, I mean all the old bric a brac and stuff, I mean it's got to be put in the right way to have effect and it does.

He went on to caution that 'you can't just open an Irish pub and put stickers up and flags up and think you've got an Irish pub ...'

This issue was also explored with Kevin Webb of the Dan O'Connell, an established Irish pub. Kevin stated that he doesn't need to rely on artefacts because the long and rich history of that establishment resonates within it creating a vibe that is almost tangible. He reported that he has seen some of the toughest of men who are known in the local community for their violent tendencies, become calm and respectful because the atmosphere in the pub is pervasive. He went on to say that each night is targeted towards a community of people in the city that is diverse in age range and professions. 'In here the "Wharfie" rubs hands with the labourer, the doctor and the lawyer'. Finally, Kevin was asked why the atmosphere in the Dan O'Connell was so spellbinding. Revealing a spiritual dimension he answered 'I just believe that there's been a lot of souls in this place that have been very well respected and very well judged by their creator'.

IMPLICATIONS

There are clear implications for hospitality retailing and the development of themed hospitality venues. The manner, in which customers interact, for example, was found to be an extremely important factor, as was the friendliness of staff. One important dimension of the staffing of Irish theme pubs was the expectation that staff not only needed to be skilled in aspects of bar work but also needed to have a sense of humour, be able to answer customers questions about Ireland and Irishness and be gregarious.

It is also concluded that security and the screening of patrons is essential to maintaining the special Irish theme pub atmosphere. This may seem incongruous considering most respondents suggested that security was not an issue because they had never witnessed any incidents that required the presence of security at an Irish theme pub. However, it is not just the security of the premises or the customers within the premises that needs to be protected, it is in fact the security of the product.

Another notable aspect of the Irish theme pub experience is the product lifecycle. The visible or tangibles aspects, such as the old-world décor and layout as well as the respondents desire for traditional Irish music suggests that, unlike nightclubs, Irish theme pubs will not need to be updated or refurbished on a regular basis. Indeed, the older they are the more authentic they are perceived to be, a factor that could have substantial benefits in terms of fit-out costs.

In summary, Hoffman and Turley's framework was a useful guide in identifying the environmental cues that are important to customers of Irish theme pubs. The dimensions and dynamics of these cues have also been uncovered allowing hospitality retailers to customise the atmospheric environment to their specific needs. The study is limited, however, by the local focus (Melbourne) and by the sampling criteria and size. Nevertheless, rich data were presented that provide insights into the nature of environmental cues within Irish theme pubs whilst providing implications for further research. There is an opportunity, for example, to look at issues of security and gender within the Irish theme pub environment and to compare the findings with similar research in non-Irish pubs. The issue of authenticity is also worthy of further study.

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APPENDIX A PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Background information on the respondents that were selected to take part in the study, using their code names, is provided below.

Respondent number 1 Anne Brennan was born in Ireland and migrated to Australia in 1988 with her husband Chris. Anne and Chris are entertainers and tour Australia regularly as a two-person show. Anne visits Irish theme pubs in Melbourne once a month and was selected for interview as a result of her visit to Finbar's Irish theme pub in Brighton. At interview she drew on her experiences in pubs in Melbourne, country Victoria and Ireland.

Respondent number 2 Chris Brennan is a fast-talking Dublin man who migrated to Australia with his wife Anne in 1988. A talented entertainer he visits Irish theme pubs once a month for business meetings. When he visits Irish theme pubs he is interested in food as well as beverages and feels that some Irish theme pubs in Melbourne are more Irish than others and that they are representative of pubs in Ireland. He was interviewed following a visit to Finbar's Irish theme pub in Brighton but also offered comment on several other Irish theme pubs in the city and suburbs.

Respondent number 3 Katrina Womax is 20 years of age, does not visit pubs very often, and does not have an Irish background. She visits Irish theme pubs for special events such as friends birthday parties and perceives that there is a difference between Irish theme pubs and pubs where people go to get drunk. She was selected for interview following a visit to Bridie O'Reilly's.

Respondent number 4 Daniella Rhodes is 19 years of age and hails from country Victoria. She is a student at a Melbourne university and has lived in Melbourne for two academic years spending vacations at home. She does not have an Irish background but is a regular patron of Pugg Mahone's. She was interviewed in connection with her visits to this Irish theme pub.

Respondent number 5 Jane Williams is a 19-year-old business studies student living in Geelong on an income of less than \$20,000 a year. She is a guitarist in what she describes as an all girl rock band and visits pubs once a week. She does not have an Irish background but visits Irish theme pubs on special occasions spending \$50 per visit on beverages. She was interviewed in connection with her visit to Bridie O'Reilly's.

Respondent number 6 Jonathon Harvey is 20 years of age of Portuguese background and migrated to Australia when he was six years old. He currently works as a barman, although not in an Irish theme pub, a perspective that was seen as valuable at this exploratory stage of the study. He visits Irish theme pubs once a month spending between \$50 and \$60 per visit on both food and beverages. Although not a Guinness drinker himself, he fraternises with members of the 100 Pint Club at The Dan O'Connell.

Respondent number 7 Trevor Edwards is 20 years of age and works in a service station. He does not have an Irish background but is a big fan of Irish rock bands. He visits Irish theme pubs once a month spending \$30 per visit on beverages. He also celebrates special events such as, friends birthdays at Irish theme pubs. He was interviewed following a visit to The Dan O'Connell.

Respondent number 8 Anthea Stuart is 26 years of age and works as an employment consultant. She does not have an Irish background but visits an Irish theme pub about twice a month and for birthdays or get togethers. She speaks affectionately of Pugg Mahone's and was interviewed in connection with her visits there.

Respondent number 9 Robert Hill is a 20-year-old bar manager who visits Irish theme pubs once a month and spends anywhere in the region of \$100-\$200 per visit on food and beverages. He has a Scottish background and visited Ireland once as a toddler. Many of his friends are migrants and he believes that Irish theme pubs in Melbourne are representative of pubs in Ireland. He was interviewed in connection with a visit to P. J. O'Brien's.

Respondent number 10 David Phillips is a 39-year-old business consultant. He was born in Australia of Irish lineage and visits Irish theme pubs once a month, usually in the company of his wife. He makes a point of celebrating St. Patrick's day and also visits Irish theme pubs on special occasions. He was interviewed in connection with The Dan O'Connell, however, he also offers insights in respect of Bridie O'Reilly's.

Respondent number 11 Kevin Richards is a 37-year-old tour operator and fitness fanatic who is heavily involved in white water rafting. He was born in New Zealand of Irish heritage and visits Irish theme pubs once every three months, mainly to catch up with friends. He has definite expectations in relation to how things ought to be done in Irish theme pubs and has an intense liking for Guinness. He was interviewed in relation to his visit to Bridie O'Reilly's.

Respondent number 12 Lawrence Hopkins is a 34-year-old economist born in Canada. He does not have an Irish background but visits Irish theme pubs about once a year for food and beverages. He has visited Ireland and does not believe that Irish theme pubs in Melbourne are representative of pubs in Ireland. [Others who visited and some from Ireland have said that they are. Perhaps it depends on which part of Ireland you visit. These pubs represent a non-mainstream Ireland]. He was interviewed in relation to his visit to Finbar's Irish theme pub.

Respondent number 13 Liz Steiner is a 41-year-old office administrator who was born in Australia of Irish heritage. Originally from North East Victoria, she has lived in Melbourne all of her working life. She visits Irish theme pubs once a month and on special occasions particularly Irish celebrations. She was interviewed following a visit to P. J. O'Brien's.

Respondent number 14 Stephanie McEvoy is a 34-year-old social worker living in the Western suburbs of Melbourne. She has a Scottish background having migrated to Australia at the age of 16. She visits Irish theme pubs for special occasions and points out that with two children to care for, any night at a pub is a special occasion. She has visited several Irish theme pubs and offers an opinion on the differences between the new Irish theme pubs and the more established, in particular The Dan O'Connell, a regular haunt of hers when she was a student at the University of Melbourne.

Respondent number 15 Lauren Davison is a 33-year-old public servant from Clarkefield. Some years ago she cycled around Ireland with a friend and recounted some of her experiences in Irish theme pubs there during the interview. She rarely goes to pubs to drink but often chooses to dine in pubs and visits Irish theme pubs for special events such as birthdays and reunions. She recently attended a birthday celebration at The Quiet Man and was interviewed following this visit. She does not have an Irish background.

Respondent number 16 Jack Parker is a 55-year-old university lecturer who was born in England and migrated to Australia at the age of 4. He enjoys visiting Irish theme pubs for special occasions, to explore Irish culture and to partake in food as well as beverages. He has visited a number of Irish theme pubs and was particularly taken with P. J. O'Brien's. He was interviewed in connection with his visit there.

Respondent number 17 Paul Murphy is a 23-year-old retail manager who was born in Australia of Irish heritage. He visits an Irish theme pub once a month and enjoys draft Guinness. He has cousins in Ireland who he has visited and continues to keep in touch with by email. He believes that Irish theme pubs in Melbourne are representative of pubs in Ireland and was interviewed in connection with a visit to Pugg Mahone's.

Respondent number 18 Rosemary Martens is a 47-year-old teacher from Essendon. She does not have an Irish background but visits Irish theme pubs for special occasions such as celebrations with friends. She reported at interview that she didn't like pubs but was very much taken with the Irish theme pubs that she visited to celebrate special events. She was interviewed following a visit to P. J. O'Brien's.

Respondent number 19 Ben Davison is a 30-year-old plumber who recently returned from a three-year visit to Ireland where he worked as a barman. During his time in Ireland he discovered that he has an Irish background and, since returning, he visits Irish theme pubs once a month spending \$40 per visit on beer. He was somewhat amazed at the number of Irish theme pubs that had opened in Melbourne during his absence and enjoyed visiting The Quiet Man in Flemington. His interview was based on his visits there.

Respondent number 20 Ron McIntosh is a 41-year-old business manager of Scottish heritage. Ron previously owned a restaurant and he visits Irish theme pubs once every three months and for St. Patrick's and Bloom's day celebrations. He has been to a number of Irish theme pubs in Melbourne and offers a view on the differences between the old and the new Irish theme pubs. He also shares insights about Irish theme pubs he frequented while on holiday in Italy and Spain. He was interviewed following a visit to Finbar's Irish theme pub in Brighton.

Respondent number 21 Deirdre O'Sullivan is a 36-year-old Irish woman who emigrated to Australia with her husband in 1986. She is convinced that Irish theme pubs have something special to offer and that Australians could learn a lot about Irish culture by visiting Irish theme pubs. She offers a view on the social role of pubs in Ireland and was interviewed in connection with her recent visit to The Quiet Man.

Respondent number 22 Vincent Flood is a 19-year-old student who is not particularly interested in Irish culture but enjoys the surroundings of Irish theme pubs. Although he hasn't developed a taste for Guinness he enjoys Irish draft beer and was interviewed following a visit to Pugg Mahone's.

Respondent number 23 Richard Ellis is a 28-year-old manager who enjoys visiting Irish theme pubs with his wife. He is interested in food as well as beverages and enjoys sharing in the cultural aspects of Irish theme pubs. He was interviewed following a visit to Bridie O'Reilly's.

Respondent number 24 Patricia Jones is a 24-year-old university student of Welsh heritage. A self-professed feminist she believes that Irish theme pubs provide a comfortable environment for women. She enjoys Irish music and the privacy afforded by the design of Irish theme pubs. She was interviewed in relation to her recent visit to The Quiet Man in Flemington.