

## Influence of Store Atmosphere on the Shopper's Behavior: The Case of Yves Rocher

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**Abstract:** Why some shops attract more customers than others? At the heart of an increasingly competitive environment in which the products are less differentiated, retailers must find new ways to exist in the minds of consumers. They play, to do this, the sensitivity map to create and maintain a link with customers. A successful strategy tribal brand management via consumer tribes or the creation of an atmosphere in the image of the brand by the dramatization of the shop atmosphere appears as key success factors can enable retailers to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. Although research has already highlighted the links between the shop atmosphere and consumer behavior, it has rarely done holistically and still face many problems. Through this study we try to analyze the influence of the atmosphere on shopper behavior, particularly through the study of loyalty to the brand and purchasing behavior.

**Key words:** shop atmosphere; direct marketing; retail; shopper behavior

**JEL code:** M3

### 1. Introduction

At the heart of an increasingly competitive environment in which products are less and less differentiated (Lemoine, 2003; Lemoine & Badot, 2008; Filser, 2001), brands have to find new means to exist in customers' mind. To do so, they opt for sensitivity in order to create and maintain a connection with their customers (Hetzl, 1996). Adopting a successful tribal management of the brand through consumer tribes (Lemoine & Badot, 2008) or creating an atmosphere corresponding to the brand image through retail design appear as key factors of success allowing stores to show a long-term competitive advantage.

According to Filser (2001), customers' shopping experience is what gives retail spaces their main competitive advantage against the web. Defined as "a personal — often emotionally-charged — experience based on the interaction with stimuli represented by the products and services made available by the consumption system" (CARU, COVA, 2002), the customer's shopping experience in the retail space is an opportunity to affect the sensitivity of a person towards the brand. If "*the distribution of a good product at a good price is not enough anymore*" to satisfy consumers (Filser, 2001), it must be because today's customers are expecting more than simply having their needs fulfilled; successful concepts such as Nature & Découvertes, Planète Saturn or Abercrombie & Fitch have showed that it is essential for brands to offer a rewarding customer experience.

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Besides, Rieunier (2000) stresses that “the life cycle of stores have been reduced by half in 20 years”. There are 3 main reasons for this: the increasingly harder competition; the will to re-enchant the customer and the quest for pleasure through purchase; and the increasing importance of retail design, which has become the first communication medium of major retailers. Badot and Dupuis (2001) remind us, for that matter, the significance and growth of investments linked to retail design.

Although studies have already showed connections between store atmosphere and the shopper's behavior (Rieunier, 2000; Bakini Driss, Ben Lallouna Hafsia, Jerbi, 2009; Hetzel, 2000, 2002; Lemoine, 2003 for example), they rarely did it with a holistic approach and remain confronted to many questions. This study will attempt to analyze the influence of atmosphere on the shopper's behavior, especially through a survey on brand loyalty and buying behavior.

## **2. Concept of Atmosphere in Marketing**

### **2.1 Store Atmosphere**

Kotler (1973-1974) defines store atmosphere as “the effort to design buying environments to produce specific emotional effects in the buyer such as pleasure or stimulation that enhance purchase probability”.

Later, Derbaix (1987) specified this definition and described atmosphere as “an arrangement of the retail space with an emotional orientation in order to produce feelings of well-being, welcome, joy, discount, etc.”

Then, Rieunier and Dauce (2001) developed the idea that atmosphere are made of all the intangible elements “linked to physical (music, scents, colors, lights) and social environment (style of retail clerks and customers, management of the crowd)”.

Therefore, we will keep in mind that store atmosphere refer both to the structure of the store and the atmosphere created by the presence of other customers and store employees (Lemoine, 2003).

Authors define atmosphere according to six variables (Rieunier, 2000) and three dimensions (Lemoine, 2003). Atmosphere are composed of six variables. Five of them are physical ones corresponding to the five senses (touch, hearing, taste, smell and sight), which can be managed by the brands themselves; and the last variable is social (personality of the retail clerks, type of customers, interactions, etc.) and much more difficult for retailers to control.

Moreover, Lemoine (2003), building on the works of Baker (1986), Greenland and McGoldrick (1994) and those of Baker, Grewal and Parasuraman (1994), defines atmosphere according to three dimensions: the background environment (music, light, etc.), the architectural design, and the social environment (kindness, availability, etc.).

If the background dimension was the first to be integrated by retailers, it must be noted that the design and social dimensions have been taken into account comparatively recently even though researchers have advised for a long time that they should be added to sensory elements.

According to Lemoine (2005), store atmosphere are considered by brands as a “*strategic variable*”: these specific buying environments aim at offering a unique customer experience and have one major goal: to influence the shopper's behavior.

Besides, Lemoine (2003) reminds us that Kotler (1973) identified three important situations when atmosphere prove to be a strategic variable: atmosphere are used all the more so as the products or services offered are homogenized; it is especially important to control atmosphere if competitors are numerous; arranging

atmosphere is even more relevant when the target is clearly identified and accurately defined.

Therefore, setting up a pleasant and enjoyable environment for the shopper allows the retailer to create a “re-enchantment axis of the consumer’s everyday spaces” (Hetzl, 2002).

Moreover, the social dimension of atmosphere is difficult for competitors to imitate. If retailers can perfectly control this dimension and manage to establish the same quality service and good reception in every store, creating favorable interactions with shoppers, they will be able to show a long-term competitive advantage allowing the brand to be differentiated.

Market saturation and the homogenization of offers are two major reasons for the appearance of atmosphere stores (Lemoine, 2004). Indeed, retailers can organize stores in favor of an experiential positioning or a combined experiential/functional positioning (Filser, 2001; Lichtle & Plichon, 2005) in order to help consumers to differentiate and remember brand positioning according to extrinsic features — and not only intrinsic features anymore (Lemoine, 2004).

Kotler (1973-1974) supports this conclusion by underlining in his model that atmosphere have an effect on shoppers’ cognitive process and allows them to identify the target of the retail space, the quality of products and services, as well as the values of the brand. Filser (2001) insists on the fact that brands such as Armani, Decathlon or Expand use strategies and positioning which enhance customer experience, and create value through the brand differentiation.

As the number of retailers using atmosphere increases, the goals linked to atmosphere as a strategic variable have changed: first developed to influence sales in a transaction marketing perspective, these goals were then more and more rooted in a logic of relationship marketing (Lemoine, 2005). This was based on the results of surveys that, although not all of them have led to the conclusion that atmosphere influence shopping behavior, assess the effect of atmosphere on the shopper’s satisfaction and emotional states (Lemoine, 2005).

If shoppers enjoy their time in the retail space, this can be a major argument to justify investments linked to the creation and development of atmosphere stores (Rieunier & Dauce, 2002). Retailers use atmosphere because they are willing to offer their customers a pleasant shopping experience and want to create/reinforce the customers’ relationship and affect to the brand.

## **2.2 Shopping Motivations**

Two approaches have been drawn by authors to justify the act of shopping: the utilitarian aspect and the hedonic aspect.

The utilitarian approach is described by Lombart (2001) as “duty shopping”: the shopper behaves in such a way as to optimize the information and find the product or service needed. Utilitarian shoppers are not sensitive to the idea of enjoyable shopping and choose the retail spaces they go to “rationally” according to the ratio cost/profit. Shopping motivations, then, can be the geographical situation, the offer, the price and discounts, easy-to-find products (Cottet, Lichtle & Plichon, 2005) or the necessary time to complete the shopping process, which often correspond to the motivations given by customers for choosing one retail space or another. This question has also been treated by Bouchra (2003) who determined four variables influencing the choice of a retail space: the extent of products, the price, the quality of products, and proximity.

In the hedonic approach, Lombart (2001) states that the main motivation of the shopper is the quest for pleasure. As Bakini Driss, Ben Lallouna Hafsia and Jerbi (2009) said, building on the works of Hirschman and Holbrook (1982): “all shopping experience turned towards this kind of value is rather linked to freedom, fantasy fulfillment, the feeling of escape, and stimulation”.

This concept is related to the works on experiential marketing, defined by Hirschman & Holbrook (1982) as “a subjective conscious state with diverse symbolic meanings, hedonic responses, and esthetic criteria”, and its goal is to give to the shopper a rewarding and pleasant customer experience. Just as she suggested different types of shopping motivations through the utilitarian aspect, Lombart (2001) drew three perspectives of consumption through the hedonic approach: “**enjoyable shopping**” when the shopper gets the reward by the act of buying in itself: here, as Zouari (2005) points out, “shopping is a goal”; **window-shopping**, where the shopper can be willing to buy or not; and **wandering**, where the recreational motivation is dominant and for which the shopper has no intention of buying.

By underlining the effects of the “shopping value” on consumers’ satisfaction and identifying the variables linked to it, Cottet, Lichtlé & Plichon (2005) showed five factors that brands can handle to influence the shopper’s satisfaction:

- atmosphere
- peripheral services
- store employees
- products availability
- crowding.

In 1972, Tauber suggested his first typology of shopping motivations. His works show two major reasons, each of them with different shopping motivations. According to him, there are six personal motivations: “role playing”, “diversion”, “self-gratification”, “learning about new trends”, “physical activity”, and “sensory stimulation”. And there are five social motivations: “social experiences outside the Home”, “communication with others having a similar interest”, “peer group attraction”, “status and authority” and “pleasure of bargaining”.

According to Black and Westbrook (1985), the retail space is not only selected for the products it offers, but also for its fun aspect and its ability to give pleasure to the shopper. Authors have suggested a classification of buyers in three categories: “buyers oriented towards the product” who think the most important variables are the offer, the level of prices, or the quality; “experiential buyers” for whom the shopping environment and services are more important than the characteristics of the product itself; and “buyers both oriented towards the product and looking for a pleasant shopping experience” for whom all elements linked to shopping are significantly important.

Building on Black and Westbrook’s typology, Dawson, Bloch and Ridgway (1990) defined in 1990 two types of shopping motivations: utilitarian motivations and recreational motivations.

Arnold and Reynolds (2003) put forward the idea that, apart from the satisfaction consumers get from playing their role, they also get personal satisfaction from buying for others.

If we base our work on Tauber’s typology (1972), we can establish the following parallels:

- “**Physical activity**” is one of the rare variables that is not taken into account by other authors;
- “**Sensory stimulation**” corresponds to the notion of quest for stimulation;
- “**Learning about new trends**” is similar to the notions of selection of products, unique products, new items, and novelties;
- “**Role playing**” corresponds to the idea of playing a role in society;
- “**Self-gratification**” and “**Diversion**” are similar to the variables of reward and leisure;
- “**Social experiences outside the Home**”, “**Communication with others having a similar interest**” and “**Peer group attraction**” are 3 reasons comparable to variables such as looking for interactions, the need for advice, etc.;

- “**Status and authority**” is close to the notion of “power and authority”;
- “**Pleasure of bargaining**” can be associated with the satisfaction of making a good deal.

Beyond the differences and limits of each typology, we can clearly see parallels between the works of the main authors.

### **2.3 Store Atmosphere and Influence on the Shopper's Behavior**

As explained by Rieunier, many authors studied the influence of store atmosphere on the shopper's behavior and suggested models integrating this influence as a situational variable.

Early works go back to environmental psychology studies published in the early 1920s and focused on the influence of a sensory variable on people's behavior. In 1963, SERRAF extended this research to marketing by analyzing the effect of background music on retail customers. But it is only in 1975 that BELK published a study with a wider thinking framework.

Belk (1974) defines situational variables as “all those factors particular to a time and place of observation which do not follow from a knowledge of personal (intra-individual) and stimulus (choice alternative) attributes, and which have a demonstrable and systematic effect on current behavior”.

Belk suggested a typology in five groups to facilitate analysis work: Physical surroundings which include factors such as surface area, configuration of the retail space, sensory stimuli, geographical situation; Social surroundings integrating interactions with other customers and with the selling power of the retail space; Temporal perspective, defined by the author as a period ranging “from time of day to season of the year” (Belk, 1975) and corresponding in fact to all temporal dimensions affecting the shopper such as time since last meal, last purchase, or last visit at the retail space; Definition of the task to be carried out; and Antecedent states of the individual.

Psychology researchers Mehrabian and Russel (1974) have established a model within which the shopper's emotional reactions to the influence of atmosphere play an important role. They identified three emotional variables described by the authors as *pleasure*, *arousal* and *dominance*. According to Mehrabian and Russel (1974), these three dimensions explain the many possible emotional responses of the shopper.

Presenting some similarities with Mehrabian and Russel's model (1974), Kotler's model (1973-1974) shows the effects of environmental stimuli on the production of internal responses in shoppers which influence their shopping behavior in the retail space.

Kotler's model remains a very simplified and direct model of the influence of atmosphere on the shopper and do not take into account the moderator variable of “individual perception”.

Bitner (1992) suggested a relevant model presenting “an important conceptual improvement for the research field dedicated to the influence of atmosphere on customers' and store employees' responses” (Rieunier, 2000).

Seen today as the most exhaustive model on the influence of atmosphere variables on individual responses, Bitner's is one of the rare models analyzing the influence of atmosphere as much on customers as on store employees.

Moreover, Bitner (1992) thinks that shoppers first perceive their environment as a whole and then produce responses by interacting with the employees. These responses, determining whether the customer will approach or escape the retail space, are classified in three categories: cognitive responses, emotional responses, and physiological responses.

Finally, this model underlines the influence of moderator variables in the relationship between stimuli perception and customers' reactions, such as character variables, the shopping goal, the expectations, and the initial mood of the shopper.

When studying consumer behavior, authors organize responses in the following manner: “cognitive > emotional > behavioral”.

Besides, as Lemoine (1997, 2003) explains, store atmosphere induces cognitive, conative and emotional responses in the shopper; this influence must be understood through an emotional approach and a cognitive approach.

The cognitive approach states that *«atmosphere appear to be a set of indicators treated differently according to the individual, depending on their perception processes»* and allows us to observe behaviors such as a greater purchase probability (Kotler, 1973-1974) after changing the informational environment of the shopper.

Lemoine and Plichon (2000), building on Howard's (1963) and Zajonc and Markus's (1982) conclusions, explain that “first seen as a result of the cognitive process, emotional states have been gradually associated with an independent concept likely to influence the individual's behavioral responses”. Besides, Frijda (1989) underlines that cognitive processes generate emotional reactions after shoppers perceive and understand their environment.

As for the role of atmosphere towards the shopper, it “should allow, for instance, a new customer to know the target of the brand, to estimate the quality of service as well as the values of the brand” (Rieunier, 2000, building on the work of Kotler, 1973-1974).

Lichtle and Plichon (2005) remind us that store atmosphere can affect the shoppers' behavior in the retail space by influencing their emotional states. By creating and offering the shopper “a unique, positive and emotional experience”, retailers aim at improving customer satisfaction.

Authors also put forward the variety of emotional reactions that can be generated in a commercial environment and stress that emotional states can be:

- represented by six dimensions: fullness, escape, pleasure, nervousness, relaxation, freedom,
- of varied intensity,
- generated by physical environment and social elements.

Moreover, Derbaix and Pham (1989) give a typology of the affect in seven categories: shock emotion, feeling, mood, disposition, preference, attitude, judgement.

It should also be noted that Derbaix and Pham (1989) have identified four dimensions through which an emotional response must be defined: intensity, direction, content, and the awareness of having a response.

Finally, the emotional dimension is not only a factor of choice and behavioral decision for the shopper, but also influences the time spent in the retail space, the increase of perceived value and the affect of the shopper towards the brand. Understanding and controlling this emotional aspect seems even more important to retailers because Lichtle and Plichon (2005) highlighted that this dimension also had an effect on purchase intentions and communication with employees.

Even though many studies focused on the effect of isolated sensory variables — such as music, colors, lighting, or crowding — on the shopper's behavior, results were often “different, or even contradictory” Lemoine (2003) — indeed, if authors agree on stressing the positive influence of store atmosphere on shoppers' emotional states, conclusions often differ concerning its impact on buying behaviors.

Despite their fundamental contribution to the understanding of the influence of physical environment variables on the shopper's behavior, studies present a huge limit: they have been focusing on the connection between one of the atmosphere's variables and the shopper's behavior. Yet, as Lemoine (2003) reminds it, based on Divard and Urien's work (2001), managers need to be able to evaluate the influence of atmosphere as a whole on

customers' behavior. Retail space managers work on store atmosphere in a holistic manner; so it seems necessary that studies should focus on the influence of atmosphere with the same perspective. Indeed, it is by creating a specific shopping environment (Lemoine, 2003, 2004, 2005; Hetzel, 1995 for example) that the brand is trying to influence customer behavior, and not by handling isolated sensory variables.

For this reason, if the influence of one isolated factor is verified, the same result is not necessarily true when results of the influence of two variables, initially isolated, are added or combined (Dauce & Rieunier, 2002). Moreover, human beings perceive and analyze their environment as a whole, so it seems logical to use the same approach when studying the influence of store atmosphere.

Thus, Lemoine (2003) advises that the influence of store atmosphere on the shopper's behavior should be analyzed through the three following dimensions: physical, architectural and human.

### **3. Do Store Atmosphere Influence the Shopper's Behavior?**

#### **3.1 Methodology**

This survey focuses on the influence of atmosphere on the shopper's behavior in the retail spaces of the brand Yves Rocher.

It focuses on 197 shoppers, divided in two groups as follows:

- 98 customers of an old concept shop — Levallois Wilson
- 99 customers of a shop called “Atelier de la Cosmétique Végétale®” — Paris Ternes.

Results of these two groups will then be compared in order to point out in-store behavioral differences — especially shopping behavior through purchases in volume and value, as well as emotional reactions — between both shops.

The sample will be selected in an empirical way for convenience. The sample's parent population corresponds to the customers of the brand Yves Rocher. Because of a lack of time and means, we won't be able to extend the survey to the whole network.

To ensure the quality of data and to guarantee the parity of customers between the old concept and the shop “*L'Atelier de la Cosmétique Végétale*”, data will be collected face to face with shoppers on their way out of the shops and by the same pollster.

#### **3.2 Assessment Scale**

Constructs and items on which the questionnaire has been created come from scientific publications. Our questionnaire is based on a Likert scale from 0 to 10 for several reasons:

- A range from 0 to 10 allows us to determine “5” as average — so that it is not a “forced choice” scale — and allows the respondent to give a “neutral” opinion.
- A scale with 11 points of measurement gives us a better moderation of the respondents' answers than a scale with only 5 points.
- Answers are easily provided by the respondents.
- It allows us afterwards to have data that are easy to process and understand through the SPSS software, unlike a visual analog scale.

The questionnaire has been tested on a group of 12 people in order to check:

- The correct understanding of the questions. Respondents have to understand the meaning of the questions they are asked in order to give relevant answers.

- The average time of questioning, estimated at 5 minutes per person.

### **3.3 Data Processing**

Collected data have been processed through the SPSS software. To do so, we used the following methods for quantitative analyses:

- Analysis through descriptive statistics in order to qualify our two samples
- Bartlett sphericity test
- Factor analysis — more precisely, a principal component analysis (PCA) — allowing us to establish an account of both similarities between individuals and links between quantitative variables
- Correlation analysis through Pearson's chi-squared test and/or Spearman's rho.

In order to analyze our results, we will define our samples as follows: Be "A" the general sample, including data from the 197 respondents; be "B1" the sample of 98 customers of the old concept shop; and be "B2" the sample of 99 costumers of the new concept shop.

Results show that whichever concept is studied — old or new — costumers come to the shop generally for the same reasons:

- 56% (B1) and 58% (B2) of costumers come for a utilitarian motivation.
- 44% (B1) and 42% (B2) of costumers have a hedonic motivation.

We can see that both samples B1 and B2 have almost the same characteristics and almost the same proportion of costumers coming to the shop for utilitarian reasons and costumers having hedonic motivations: respectively 56% and 58%, then 44% and 42%.

Analyzing the volume of the average shopping basket of both samples shows that:

- costumers of the old concept shop bought an average of 1.5 product,
- costumers of the new concept shop bought an average of 2.4 products.

The median of a sample can be defined as  $m$  so that the number of values of the group superior or equivalent to  $m$  equals the number of values inferior or equivalent to  $m$ . In this case, analyzing the median of both samples shows that:

$$med(B1) < med(B2).$$

We can see that:

- There are as many baskets of 0 or 1 product as baskets from 2 to 7 or more products in sample B1 (costumers of the old concept shop).
- There are as many baskets of 0, 1 or 2 products as baskets from 3 to 7 or more products in sample B2 (costumers of the new concept shop).

Analyzing the standard deviation and the variance allows us to compare both samples in a more accurate manner.

Sample B1 is more dispersed than sample B2, because:

- $\sigma(B1) > \sigma(B2)$ ;
- $Var(B1) > Var(B2)$ .

Data from both old and new concept samples show dissimilarities that underline the difference in shopping behavior — in value — according to the type of shop.

Analyzing the value of the average shopping basket of both samples shows that costumers of the old concept shop bought an average basket of "10 to 14 Euros", whereas costumers of the new concept shop have an average basket of "20 to 24 Euros". In this case, analyzing the median of both samples shows that  $med(B1) < med(B2)$ .



We can see that:

- There are as many baskets from 0 to 14€ as baskets from 14 to 45€ or more in sample B1.
- There are as many baskets from 0 to 24€ as baskets from 24 to 45€ or more in sample B2.

Sample B1 is more dispersed than sample B2, because:

- $\sigma(B1) > \sigma(B2)$ ;
- $Var(B1) > Var(B2)$ .

We established a correlation test through a bivariate analysis in order to determine whether the type of shop and the intention to come back to an Yves Rocher store were related. This test will be confirmed thanks to the chi-squared test. Below are the results we obtained:

**Pivot Table Type of Concept \* Do you intend to come back?**

Number

		Do you intend to come back?								Total	
		0	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		10
Type of concept	1	1	3	1	11	6	8	7	9	52	98
	2	0	1	1	6	3	8	2	6	72	99
Total		1	4	2	17	9	16	9	15	124	197

**Chi-squared test**

	Value	Degrees of freedom	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson's chi-squared	11.069(a)	8	0.198
Likelihood ratio	11.726	8	0.164
Linear association	6.964	1	0.008
Number of valid observations	197		

We can observe that 10 cells (or 55.6% of all cells) have a number inferior to 5. In order for the chi-squared analysis to be valid, this threshold should be under 20%.

To know whether the type of concept influences or not the shopper's intention to come back to a Yves Rocher store, we will operate a Pearson's rho analysis:

**Correlations**

	Type of concept	Do you intend to come back?
Type of concept	Pearson's correlation	1
	Sig. (2-sided)	0.188(**)
	N	197

Note: \*\* Correlation is significant at level 0.01 (2-sided).

We obtained a correlation coefficient of 0.188 (N = 197) for a level of significance  $p = 0.008$  ( $p < 0.01$ ).

After verification in Spearman's rho table ( $p$ )<sup>1</sup>, we can note that:

- recorded rho ( $= |0.188|$ ) > theoretical rho ( $= 0.2333$ ).

Thus, we cannot say that the correlation between both variables is positive: the two variables are not correlated. In both cases, the shopper's intention of coming back to a Yves Rocher shop is very strong. However, we cannot confirm the correlation between both variables "type of concept" and "intention to come back".

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<sup>1</sup> Spearman's rho table is available at the end of this memoire.

## 4. Results and Limits

### 4.1 Results

The first assumption we made was this:

H1: "Store atmosphere favorably influence the shopper's behavior", with our hypothesis H1a being "the more shoppers are stimulated by pleasant atmosphere, the higher the value of their basket", is then invalid. Our hypothesis H1b, "the more shoppers are stimulated by pleasant atmosphere, the bigger the volume of their basket", is then valid.

In addition to our research hypothesis H1, we put forward the hypothesis H2: "Store atmosphere favorably influence the shopper's emotional responses". Given the results, our hypothesis H2 is valid.

### 4.2 Limits

The first limit of this survey would be the use of Likert scales; indeed, even if they have the advantage of synthesizing efficiently the respondents' opinion, they cannot fully grasp the real perception of individuals. They give no information about possible additional clues related to the person.

Besides, the fact that — although it was known from the beginning — our survey only compares two retail spaces is biased in itself because we did not confront results on the same retail space before and after. Some variables are specific to each retail space (work team, usual retail traffic, location, opening hours, surface area ...). We learned for example, during our survey, that the Levallois shop was one of the retail spaces with the lowest profits in the Ile de France region, whereas the one in Paris Ternes was among the shops with highest retail traffic and best results.

Moreover, our work was based on two samples of 98 and 99 individuals, which are still small numbers for a quantitative data analysis. Although it would have been difficult to work on larger samples (particularly because of a lack of time to collect data on location), the scale of our samples remain relatively small and this contributed to increase the margin of error of our results. It would be interesting to carry out this survey again with larger selected samples.

Finally, even though our questionnaire had been tested before being used on Yves rocher costumers, we realized that some of them did not always understand it very well and could not differentiate some questions. Moreover, despite the explanation I gave on the context of my work, some people were convinced that I was working on behalf of the brand Yves Rocher, and that they had to give favorable answers to my questions, in order to "be nice to me". This represents another bias to the results we obtained.

## 5. Conclusion

How do store atmosphere influence the shopper's behavior? This central question we asked followed on from several interrogations. As the environment becomes increasingly competitive, brands have to find new means to exist in customers' mind. To do so, they opt for sensitivity in order to create and maintain a connection with their customers (Hetzl, 1996). Creating an atmosphere corresponding to the brand image through retail design appears as a key factor of success allowing stores to show a long-term competitive advantage.

This study allowed us to better understand the factors influencing shopping processes and emotional responses of shoppers in the retail space or on their way out.

If the works carried out by different scientists helped identifying different shopping motivations and creating

typologies of these motivations, it seems today that a “general typology” have appeared which could be analyzed in its own right. A shopper's choice of store can be analyzed in two complementary ways: a utilitarian approach and a hedonic approach.

These two shopping motivations generate different responses in shoppers in the retail space or on their way out.

Shopping in a certain retail space is a source of value in itself when emotions are stimulated. Customers do not go to a retail space only to optimize their profits, but also for their own pleasure on location.

Our work confirmed that a good management of store atmosphere is not only favorable to the shopper's well-being, but also presents significant marketing and financial advantages. Store atmosphere help influencing the shopper's emotional states during and after shopping. Atmosphere also allow brands to “sell more” especially through their effect on the volume of the average basket of shoppers.

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