



Sensory Marketing, Consumer Psychology and The Future of Branding Within The Airline Industry: Singapore Airlines

Research Methodology



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Abstract:

In this postmodern world, the marketplace is concentrated with many forms of media with the average person being exposed to 4000+ every day. Brands have been forced to innovate and create new and improved forms of adding value to consumers lives. As Martin Lindstrom states “up to 90% of consumer behaviour/buying decisions are subconscious which leaves marketers to target the remainder 10%”. It’s time to change marketing tactics and attempt to break the clutter via sensory marketing. Targeting the subconscious could be the key to future of effective branding.

Taking a step back and studying the marketplace I was able to single out the Airline Industry as the perfect place to start. Incorporating the five components of sensory marketing (Touch, Taste, Sight, Sound, Smell) I will be able to highlight aspects of sensory marketing that’s making a difference. Singapore Airlines stood out as the powerhouse of the sensory experience and so I developed an integrated brand identity and sensory analysis to investigate the relationship between the two.

Sensory marketing within Singapore Airlines is a major focal point and transports the brand value into tangible experiences. The future of which can only be developed even more. Various research methods were put into play with in-depth interviews being at the heart of the study. This revealed many interesting aspects surrounding the development and effectiveness of sensory marketing, not only within the airline industry but in the marketplace as a whole.

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Title:

Sensory Marketing, Consumer Psychology and The Future of Branding Within the Airline Industry: Singapore Airlines

Introduction:

The importance of selecting a defining a research question of which I will completely immerse myself in for the duration of 2017 was a tricky concept to wrap my head around. I was looking for a topic that will not only help me in my future career but also highlight some key trends and aspects relating to the industry and its consumers. Consumer psychology immediately jumped out at me along with the concept of sensory marketing – ultimately unlocking and targeting consumers through their subconscious. Telling people how to feel, what to think and how to act – imagine the possibilities of utilising such a concept. The airline industry and the brands within act at the perfect case study to which I can apply and research these aspects in a captive audience making the old phrase “it’s not about the destination but the journey” become more relevant than ever. This study highlights the five aspects of sensory marketing in a form of a case study. This case study revolves around Singapore Airlines as the soul of the research. Theorists, employees, consumers and marketing experts have all played vital roles in making this study come to life.



Problem Statement:

In this postmodern ¹ world (Anderson, 1997), the marketplace is concentrated with many forms of media with the average person being exposed to 4000+ every day (Marshall, 2015). Brands have been forced to innovate and create new and improved forms of adding value to consumers lives. Brands need to break through the clutter to develop a unique brand identity. Countless methods have been tried and tested to break this clutter, yet few hold substantial proof of doing so. The Post Disruptive Advertising Era (Kay, 2014) disregards the evidence compiled by the IPA Effectiveness Database as all information was supplied by the advertising agency/client boasting their own success. With over 1000 campaigns claiming effectiveness over the past 30 year – a percentage so small, it's hard to even begin to comprehend. This constantly changing environment is desperate for rebirth, a new idea and defining purpose. As Martin Lindstrom states “up to 90% of consumer behaviour/buying decisions are subconscious which leaves marketers to target the remainder 10% - marketers simply cannot afford to do this and need to start tapping into that 90%”. Targeting the subconscious could be the key to future effective branding within the airline industry.

Purpose Statement:

The purpose of this study is to explore and assess the methods of sensory marketing and their effects on consumer psychology and its relevance to the future of branding within the airline industry: Singapore Airlines (Case Study).

Rationale:

The concentrated marketplace is filled with brands desperately trying to break the clutter and build a unique identity, being able to understand the effectiveness of sensory marketing ² and the effects on consumer psychology might very well be the key to differentiation and the future of branding. A recent study by Microsoft Canada revealed that the average human attention span is 8 seconds, dropping the previous studies 12 seconds. (Guasby, 2015). Humans attention spans are becoming shorter and shorter and so brands will need to target the human subconscious through their senses and deeper narratives. Human Senses and the effects they have on one's psychology ³ has always interested me. What if you could tell people how to feel, act and what to remember but triggering certain synapses in the brain? Applying this to branding in general, could not only increase the brand appeal and positive perceptions but future sales. Over my lifetime there has been a colossal growth in media materials over the turn of the century with the birth of technology. The future of marketing has become extremely competitive and will continue to grow each day. To build brands of the future I strongly believe we will need to target the 90% subconscious (Lindstrom). Examining current sensory marketing methods and theories of human psychology I will be able to highlight elements and compile an exploratory thesis that will be useful not only to my own career but those of my colleagues. The case study I have selected to evaluate and improve where possible will be of Singapore Airlines. I am very familiar with airlines such as Singapore, Thai, Emirates, Silk Air and SAA, an exploratory study on either one of these brands would be extremely captivating especially in terms of identities and brand experience. Discovering how airlines can trigger consumer senses with unique scents, colours, textures and sounds, pairing this with the resulting psychological effects they have on the consumer could prove to be ground-breaking. Senses create emotion, an example of this would be watching a horror movie without sound. Sound helps interpret the feelings and thrills making the movie have layers and depth. Now, imagine this concept applied to branding. Exciting stuff. Sensory Marketing is a fairly new marketing method and one with stacks of potential for the future. Personally, I think Singapore Airlines can be the vanguard of this new and exciting endeavour of future branding.

Objective:

The objective of this research proposal will be that of determining the effectiveness of sensory marketing currently within the marketplace as well as highlighting psychological theories that could improve them. This will be done by conducting various primary and secondary research methods of the duration of the year. It's vital to plan and set objectives to reach your end goal. I have divided this into two comprehensive phases of which I have been/shall be following. The first phase is The Iteration Phase – this involves discovering and refining the research question, research design/plan, building on the literature review, methodologies and preparing for the execution of the next phase. The second phase is The Action Phase – this phase overlaps with the Iteration phase as each work and intertwines with each other – evolving for the benefit of each other. The Action Phase outlines mainly the primary research methods and execution of the research document and other aspects of the project that lead up to the final hand in deadline. Below I have set a list of key objectives of which need to be fulfilled but the stipulated time-period.

The Iteration Phase:

Proposal 1 & Proposal 2 – Complete by 17th February 2017

Concept Document – Complete by 2nd March 2017

Literature Review – Complete by 18th April 2017 (**Secondary Research**)

Research Proposal – Complete by 8th July 2017 (Concept Document & Lit Review)

The Action Phase:

Conduct Interviews with Marketers – Complete by end of July (**Primary Research**)

Conduct Surveys and Questionnaires – Complete by end of August (**Primary Research**)

Conduct Interviews with Singapore/Industry staff – Complete by mid-September (**Primary Research**)

Gather researched data, refine, process and apply theory from Literature Review

Export work into document including interviews, questionnaires, surveys, appendix's, diagrams, references, a copy of signed ethical code of conduct (if required). This will be created in Microsoft Word or an Adobe InDesign document. – Completed 2 weeks before final deadline day. The final hardcover will be printed and embossed with adequate time for proofreading and editing. A digital version of this will be available to those who requested it and or those who took part in the research process.

These objectives and two phases are followed as guidelines of which I can pace myself with. However, I am aware that unforeseen circumstances may occur during this process and so these phases will act a model like that of The Big 6 Information Literacy Model (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 2000) – a model that is flexible, and non-linear. These aspects applied my research, branding and a comprehensive Singapore Airlines case study will highlight the building blocks of future branding.

Literature Review:

In the spring of 2015, Microsoft conducted a thorough study on attention spans as a consumer insight. Previous studies found a 4-second decrease in attention span between 2000 (12 seconds) and 2013 (8 seconds), However, Microsoft has revealed it's not as bad as we think. Although our attention spans are getting shorter due to digital exposure and bombardment of media on a day to day basis our brains are adapting (Brain Plasticity) – decreasing prolonged focus but increasing their appetite for more stimuli. The marketing industry must change to suit these changes in their audiences. Microsoft highlighted these vital points for change. Marketers need to be relevant and to the point, defy expectations and become more interactive. This research proves that brands need to break away from traditional media and tap into new methods of marketing to break the clutter and build differentiation within their brand ⁴ identity. This encouraged me to take on a study of Sensory Marketing as an effective brand identity tool focusing on its use within the commercial airline industry. Targeting something that can't be turned off and is always analysing and adapting, our subconscious. Singapore Airline has been my choice of travel

for many years having travelled to the East on several occasions, their service and style of travel creates an environment that is unique, making the trip itself a holiday not just how you get from A to B. Singapore as a nation is constantly leading the way in new innovations in futuristic studies and developing ahead of its time. Airlines have a captive audience for hours on end with many competitors in the marketplace, one must always keep evolving and creating a differentiation in identity. How does Singapore Airlines do it? Is this the future of marketing and brand identities? This will be the building blocks of my case study.

Firstly, to fully understand the basis of my study I must uncover and analyse the seminal sources surrounding my research question. There are two fundamental sources that gave birth to the topic. The first, *Brand Sense: Build powerful brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight and Sound* (Lindstrom, 2005) a comprehensive evaluation of sensory marketing in the 21st Century. Lindstrom begins by studying the evolution of branding, focusing on the strategies behind targeting and engaging with consumers. The 1950's saw the need for brands to develop their Unique Selling Point (USP) honing this as the brand's major point of differentiation. As this become stagnant and differentiation became indistinguishable, the strategy evolved, tapping into the consumer's emotions as the basis of their campaigns. At the turn of the century, brands were shock up by the technological revolutions, the dawn of social media, smartphones and virtual reality devices. The Me Selling Proposition (MSP) saw consumers take control and ownership of the brands, designing customized shoes, jeans and suits to match their needs, all from the comfort of their own home. So, what's the way forward? Sensory Marketing, creates a 'soul' (Rieunier, 2009) bringing the brand to life, create a tangible five-dimensional sense of branding, Let the consumer live the brand.

Lindstrom continues in saying that the future of branding will evolve into the Holistic Selling Proposition (HSP), building brands around the idea of sensory experiences, in forms of touch, taste, smell, sight and sound - establishing a well-rounded holistic brand with its very own sensory identity. This sensory identity is one that can create the ultimate bond between consumers and brands through the five senses. Brand Sense looks at all

five-senses uncovering their uses within the industry by big name brands such as Coca-Cola, Intel, Singapore Airlines and Colgate. These brands have all made use of unique the senses to target consumer via their brands patented colours, jingles, perfumes and product taste. All these elements come together to form The Smash Your Brand Philosophy Model (**Appendix A**) creating a comprehensive brand analysis including all aspects of sensory marketing. This model will be linked to The Brand Identity Model (Enslin, 2010) as a deeper element of the Singapore Airlines branding.

Applying these senses to the world of air travel effectively could change the way we experience our journey and the brand. Singapore Airlines, a member of The Star Alliance was relevant in Lindstroms study back in 2005. The depth of the Singapore Airline brand involves major tangible and sensory elements. Lindstrom found that all airhostesses and stewards not only dressed in the brand's colours but all went through extreme training in terms of how to act, move, speak and serve customers. Furthermore, each member of staff on average was 26 years old or younger, the same size in terms of dress and personally styled in hair and makeup. The staff is without a doubt Singapore Airlines most important touch point regarding the interacting with consumers and they do so brilliantly (Chong, 2007) The whole experience of the brand comes to life, the staff, the unique perfume sprayed within the cabin and on the hand towels, they went as far as having all cabin announcements scripted by their advertising agency. Singapore Airline lives up to their tagline 'A Great Way to Fly'.

"You can close your eyes, cover your ears, refrain from touch and reject taste, but smell is part of the air we breathe" (Lindstrom, 2005). Smells play a role in our buying ability and as stated by Lindstrom 75% of our emotions can be generated by our sense of smell. We can remember smells for long periods of times allowing us to recollect how our favourite bakery smells, our grandparents home and even the unique smell of holiday destinations – The strong Fynbos of The Garden Route. This, however, can largely depend on the individual, as one person's positive experience can be another's negative. The perfume sprayed within Singapore Airline Cabin was introduced in the early 1990s and has since established and built upon this scent.

It's been more than ten years since Lindstrom's study many things have changed and grown in terms of industries and marketing strategies. My study aims to dig deeper into Lindstrom's study of Singapore Airlines evaluating the effectiveness of their sensory marketing campaigns and general brand experiences, highlighting the elements that are successful and those that are overlooked by the consumers. Understanding the right colours, smells, tastes, textures and sounds to use will be a huge game changer in terms of the effectiveness of sensory marketing overall. Although Lindstrom states that Sight is, in fact, the sense of most importance (**Appendix B**) it's still a highly debated. Therefore, it's vital to evaluate these current sensory methods to studies on consumer behaviours to identify what stimuli trigger positive emotions on which one can build a brand on.

Martin Lindstrom's second text to be taken under evaluation is his 2010 publication *Buyology: The Truth and Lies About Why We Buy*, like that of his previously mentioned work, however, while studying this I highlighted a key relationship between the use of branding archetypes (Jung, 1919) and Lindstrom links in terms of these capturing the subconscious of consumers. Lindstrom estimates that up to 90% of consumer behaviour/buying decisions are subconscious which leaves marketers to target the remainder 10% - marketers simply cannot afford to do this as each day the marketplace is becoming more and more cluttered. Supporting this is *Archotyping the Brand: Strategy to Connect* (Siraj & Kumari, 2011). This article highlights all of Carl Jung's 12 defining archetypes (**Appendix C**), all of which can be applied to brands across culture, race and languages. They are of universal meaning.

A brand is a metaphorical story that...connects with something very deep – a fundamental human appreciation of mythology...Companies that manifest his sensibility ...invoke something very powerful (Spink, 2003)

Nike isn't just selling shoes; it is selling life meaning that no one else can offer. Similarly, Harley-Davidson doesn't just sell motorbikes, but the story of you as a Hell's Angel on the wide, open roads of America...even if you live somewhere completely different (Spink, 2003)

These extracts highlight the effectiveness of archetype branding and how these connotations can be the main driving factor behind brand purchasing behaviour. Archetyping will play a decisive role in this study as well as building the brand identity.

The second seminal source is one that is constantly evolving with the introduction of new technologies and theories. Sensory Marketing and its effectiveness have a direct link to scientific studies of sensory memory. A study from the 1960s made huge strides in understanding the capabilities of the human consciousness in terms of recalling symbols, letters and sounds. George Sperling studied the relation between memory recollection and stimuli, more specifically that of Iconic (Visual) and Echoic (Sound) memory. He did this by flashing images and playing sounds while testing how much the candidate can remember. Since this study, it has given rise to similar constructs. Daniela Sammler, of the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences and Music Psychologist Vicky Williamson, studied the effects of music and lyrics with regards to memory recollection in 2010. The study found that lyrics and music are processed by two different portions of the brain, and the reason for such impressive recollection of songs from your childhood is due to three elements. The first being bombardment, the mere repetition of the melody or lyric lines, the second tapping into the emotional side of human psychology – this can cause the listener to recall high/lows, special events or experiences from one’s past. Lastly, motor memory, the most advanced stage where the listener is so inclined with the melody or line of lyrics that it can be subconsciously recalled by small triggers such as “Oops, I did it again” or “Imagine” both can will remind the person of its respective song, a Britney Spears hit or a John Lennon masterpiece. An example of motor memory would be remembering how to walk, swim or ride a bike – this is all processed together.

Colour and the effects on human emotion is another highly studied sense helping in many fields such as design, therapy and child psychology. “When looking at personality types, extroverts are attracted to warm invigorating colours (e.g. Orange and red), whereas, introverts are attracted to calming, cooler colours (e.g. green and blue)” (Withrow, 2004) applying this to target markets that suit your brand would be hugely successful, Virgin Airlines makes use of red suiting its outgoing and adventurous personality. “Regardless

of language and culture, there are 11 basic colours that all of us can see” (Howie, 2013) these 11 colours are all based off shades of 6 colours. These 6 colours each have their own unique connotations and emotions that reflect onto the viewers subconscious **(Appendix D)**. Shapes and signs play hand in hand as a method of communication and connect with both our sense of sight. Signs and shapes can hold subliminal messages such as FedEx’s Logo **(Appendix E)** an arrow is seen within helping to carry the purpose and function of the brand. Semiotics, a term coined by Charles Sander Peirce in the 1800s promotes the study of signs as a form of communication, embodying meaning. It’s rare today to be able to find a single person who is not familiar with the McDonalds logo or the Apple logo, both may just be made up of simple shapes but speak a worlds worth of words. Senses apply to everyone; it’s an international medium of which communication can be bases off no matter where you are from whether it’s a symbol or a sign (e.g. road signs – are international), a tone of voice or colour we are able to understand and react to this stimulus.

Taste, supported by Dr Vinnit Dani’s article on *Branding Through Sensory Marketing* (2013) he highlights the importance of taste, often the overlooked sense. He reiterates by saying how almost every person first question when getting back from a holiday is “How was the food?” it creates memorable moments whether the food was good or bad. Airlines are renowned for having very basic choices of food and the ingredients normally involve processed and powdered eggs. Singapore Airlines has transitioned their Eastern culture and cuisine into their food, offering a unique menu that changes monthly. Noodles, rice, pork and vegetables make up most their menu with an added selection of Eastern beers and cocktails (e.g. Tiger Beer, Singha Beer, Chang Beer, Singapore Sling) products that can only be imported from Eastern countries. The smell lingers in the cabin, a huge improvement from the nauseating smell of powdered egg and sausage. The smell and sight of the food build up to the taste. The menu places you within your destination before you even arrive. Once again, your holiday starts the minute you get on board.

An Integrated Review of Sensory Marketing: Engaging the senses to affect perception, judgement and behaviour (Krishna, 2012) is another useful piece of literature focusing on

elements of packaging, the relationships between sensation and perception as well as a review of a sensory study based around animals. Packaging, builds suspense and the flashier the paper the more the connotation of Christmas are subconsciously brought upon the consumer. Krishna makes use of a Hershey's Kiss chocolate (**Appendix F**) it's the same chocolate as the bar version yet the packaging appeals to the buyer. Singapore Airlines Packing in terms of food, tickets, complimentary comfort kits etc. may hold the same connotations. Krishna dives into the primal roots of our psychology, looking at a study on baby monkeys conducted by Harry Harlow highlighting the importance of touch. The study showed how the baby monkey would choose a cloth with its mother's scent over a dispenser of milk. This shows the importance of comfort over nutrition. We are more inclined to choose comfort and relaxation than the food an airline offers, it's a point that needs to be evaluated. Krishna then explores the effects of ambient music on human behaviour within supermarkets. French and German music were interchanged within the Liquor Store showing a tendency of consumers by French or German wines. The consumers are more active when pop music is played, shopping at a faster pace than they are when classical music is played. The general outcome was that shoppers would stay in store for long if familiar or softer genres of music were played than that of shopper's exposure to heavier genres – even if the music was being interpreted by the shoppers subconsciously. The senses are pivotal to the buyer's experiences and all aspects of the senses affect the buyer even if its slightly. Aeroplanes cabin are no different to a shopper's in-store environment, you are selling an experience.

These instore environments are already in place whether the brand intentionally creates them or not. Referring to *An Emerging Marketing Technology: Sensory marketing applied in the retail industry*. (Tien Minh, 2016) highlights how cosmetic brands such as Lush have developed their instore environment and benefited from this. Lush exaggerate their products colouring and shapes making these generic cosmetic products look appetising as if selling food. The store's smell takes over the shopping centre and can be a lure attracting consumers. No music is played within the store, instead, they rely on the very vocal staff to bring the store to life creating a market like environment. Touch, the minute a consumer step into the store they are almost compelled to touch the product and are in

fact encouraged to. The displays are interactive with a wide range of free samples. Sensory Marketing for Lush has broken away from the hugely concentrated market of cosmetics and given the brand, a differentiation that's value is beyond measure. Lush continues to grow because of these factors. An example of successful sensory marketing that is setting a new tone in the marketplace.

Taking a step back and looking at other historical Ideologies, events and theorists that might come into play in the development of my study. Firstly, John Locke, in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) the essay supported Aristotle's idea of that at birth the human mind is that of a "Clean Slate". We are born and learn through association or "Cause and effect" these can be events that we experience in early life as well as the people we spend time with (Family, Friends, Teachers) these mould us to how we see the world later in life. This theory can be related to marketing in terms of brands we buy. Brands we grew up with have the sentimental and nostalgic value attached to them, therefore those positive or negative connotations shine through and affect our buying behaviours. Jean Piaget (1960) has also studied and produced works surrounding developmental psychology and human lifecycles.

Sigmund Freud's One Grand Theory (1896) a theory that can tackle of human behaviour that was developed over many years and broken into 5 major aspects. 1) Conscious/Pre-conscious/Unconscious Mind. 2) The Libido 3) The Id, Ego and Super Ego 4) The Stages of Psychosexual Development 5) The Defence Mechanism. These 5 theories, in short, define and address the reasons behind human behaviour according to Freud and how individuals interact as they age. Ivan Pavlov's Experiment and Lectures (1897) he too supported Locke and Aristotle's theories of Association and development. Pavlov is iconic in his experiments with dogs and sound. Feeding dogs whenever a bell was rung then ringing the bell but removing the food. The dogs showed signs of salivation and hunger. The association was developed and the dogs became trained to sound. Similarly, how humans can react and recognise brand jingles and start thinking of food. Once again, these subconscious connotations are triggered by the senses. Abraham Maslow and the

hierarchy of needs the seven stages of the human condition (**Appendix G**) many brands address these needs and move their consumers higher up the pyramid.

A brand is essentially a marketer's promise to deliver a specific set of features, benefits and services consistently to the consumer (Kotler, 2009). The promise and value of the brand are intangible and conjured up within the minds of the consumer – what they see the brands worth to be. It's because of this that brands need to build strong and maintained and managed for greater equity. It's important for the brand to understand their own identity in the marketplace. *Brand Leadership* by David A. Aaker & Erich Joachimsthaler (2009) successfully developed a Brand Identity Model to which I will be able to develop my research of Singapore Airlines brand identity upon (**Appendix H**). Other identity models that can be used to compare/support each other are Dr Carla Enslins (Brand Management, 2010) (**Appendix I**) as well as Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism. Each Identity model is different to one another highlighting aspects of brands their creators felt vital to differentiation. That being said I feel that Dr Carla Enslins Model will be the best suited to fully understand and portray the Singapore Airlines Brand Identity. In understanding the brand's Identity, I will be able to determine whether Singapore Airlines has been successful in using their forms of Sensory Marketing as an identity tool. Are their methods being overlooked or are consumers really picking up on these suitable elements being portrayed around them.

Ethnography is at the heart of this research topic, the consumers are the key to the outcome as their behaviours, habits and reasoning of their reactions to the stimuli will build the basis of my research. This is where Qualitative methods of research come into play. *The First Steps in Research 2* (Maree, 2016) will be used as a guide in conducting and putting my research question to the test. Qualitative methods of research will allow me to observe human behaviours and perceptions regarding Singapore Airlines. An Interpretive paradigm of research will act in understanding how people interact with the world around them by accessing the meanings people assign to objects (Orlikowski & Baroudi 1991). The case study will firstly utilise an intrinsic stance to determine the findings, theories and matters at hand. Instrumental method of research will be followed

to put these findings to the test in the real world. Making use of surveys, interviews, observations and focus groupings taking place in both airports and other environments. This will evaluate what airlines have stuck in the minds of the consumers away from air transport related surroundings. Fortunately, I can conduct some of these research methods with members of the Official Singapore Airlines Head Office in Claremont as well as personally interviewing two Emirates Airline staff members as a comparison to justify my findings. The first a veteran of 35 years' flight experience and has climbed the ladder within the Emirates hierarchy to an A Grade pilot of Airbus – flying major routes from The United Kingdom, Dubai and Singapore. The second, a good friend of mine who has successfully studied his private and commercial license over the past 4 years. Previously working near Sun City as a small reconnaissance pilot to battle rhino poaching but now hoping to settle into Emirates or SA Link respectfully. The third has been a first-class stewardess for Emirates over the past 8 years, holding a wealth of knowledge with regards to in-flight branding and creating a comfortable travel safe environment. The fourth individual is a retired stewardess previously working for British Airlines in her youth. She will be able to highlight fundamental changes within the airline industry since her retirement – providing some frame to what to expect from the future. The final interview will be a direct face-to-face with a Singapore Airline employee to tie up any loose end and finalise the study. This first-hand knowledge of the evolution of airlines, branding and training will be priceless in terms of first-hand personal interaction. These comparisons with Singapore Airline's will prove to be vital in the identification of Singapore Airlines unique identities in terms of their sensory elements. This thesis will be given to Singapore Airlines head office as a respective source of information for the airline to utilise and evaluate at their own leisure.

Sensory marketing is still a very new concept but one that has huge potential in this postmodern world. In-store environments are vital in the selling and differentiation of brands, giving the brand a tangible element and the consumer an experience. Applying this theory to commercial airlines and nursing the concept to suit the airlines brand identity will create a new uncharted differentiation in the industry. Making use of *Brand Sense: Build powerful brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight and Sound* (Lindstrom, 2005)

as a seminal source to build my argument accompanied by the evolving study of sensory memory first studied by George Sperling in the late 1960s. I will be able to unveil a link between sensory marketing and their effects on the consumers. The study will be focused on Singapore Airlines, a brand that boasts a mountain of awards and in many ways, leads the way in air flight technology. Evaluating Singapore Airlines brand identity and in-flight experience, I will be able to determine if their sensory marketing has been successful and or where they can improve. Utilising my qualitative research methods and sources spoken of above I will be able to evaluate the abilities of sensory marketing as an effective brand identity tool.

Research Methodology:

Ethnography ⁵ is the method to which I will focus my study around. Discovering the reasoning's behind the consumer's actions, emotions and behaviours in relation to sensory marketing in relation to branding. The interpretive paradigm of research with an anti-positivist stance will allow me to openly evaluate the human conditions, these outcomes may vary. The case study will firstly utilise an intrinsic stance to determine the findings, theories and matters at hand. Instrumental method of research will be followed to put these findings to the test in the real world. These research methods will help refine and focus the study for a better and more successful outcome.

Qualitative Research – To determine the outcome of this study I will be focusing on Qualitative methods of research. These methods will allow me to understand and observe human behaviours and the perceptions they hold to branding and sensory marketing elements (Maree, 2016). The idea of mixed method research design is always a good idea in terms of triangulating the evidence and outcomes of my study. Quantitative research will play a minor role if any in the development of study as the key concepts/questions are focused on human psychology/behaviours. This method will be used to interpret and rating or numerical questions I pose to individuals.

Primary and Secondary Research will be hugely beneficial in the development of my study in terms of psychological data previously conducted on humans as well as studies in the field of marketing. Investigative research methods such as face-to-face, sampling, surveys and interviews will be used in determining the consumer's and employee mind-set in terms of the Singapore Airlines case study and other branding perceptions – a minimum of 65 respondents will be included in the study. Most of these will be done via survey/questionnaire with a handful of in-depth interviews with key individuals within the industry. The questions being asked will be opinion based and open-ended allowing the respondent to express their own experiences and avoid generic answers.

Secondary research will be gathered from archives of literature I have gathered over the course of the year – all of which has been highlighted within my Literature Review. Making use of both human psychological theorists and experts in the marketing/branding field regarding the future and development of the concepts at play. The entire study will be that of exploratory means as many concepts are new and evolving/merging into the marketplace. All research will be undertaken with a zero-based, outside-in mind-set and be evaluated in terms of credibility and dates published. This will ensure a fair and nonbiased study, handling and testing the credibility of all information equally.

Limitations & Delimitations:

All research was conducted in 2017, Cape Town South Africa. The findings have all been sourced from both secondary and primary methods. All primary research was conducted from local professionals and consumers. In no way can the research results be generalised as international findings or applied to other airline companies not mentioned within the study. I was unable to travel on a Singapore Airline flight during the duration of this research project. I am however a veteran when it comes to travelling having flown with Singapore Airlines over 14 times over the past 10 years. This personal experience will come into play when refining survey questions and trends within the airline industry. This study focuses primarily on Economy Class flyers but does mention higher class in related aspects. This class acts as the focus as it is the most popular and frequently flown.

I am fortunate enough to have successfully sourced a wide variety of professionals within the airline industry. These professionals range from pilots, stewardesses and agents. These professionals are each involved with 3 separate international airline companies (British Airways, Singapore Airlines and Emirates). The Cape Town International Airport was involved within my study having visited the location 4 times to conduct primary research. Observational research in terms of airline staff as well as the consumer's survey/questionnaires were sourced from this location.

Seven Key Concepts:

Breaking down the research question into key concepts and 3 defining questions will help guide and build my study in a comprehensive and logical way. I have highlighted 7 key concepts that will be addressed and broken down within my thesis. These concepts relate directly to the 3 defining questions listed below.

1. Sensory Marketing
2. Branding/Brand Building
3. Consumer Perceptions/Behaviour
4. Human/Environmental Psychology
5. Breaking the Clutter
6. Singapore Airlines (Case Study)
7. The Future of branding

Three Major Research Questions:

Sensory Marketing, Consumer Psychology and The Future of Branding within The Airline Industry: Singapore Airlines.

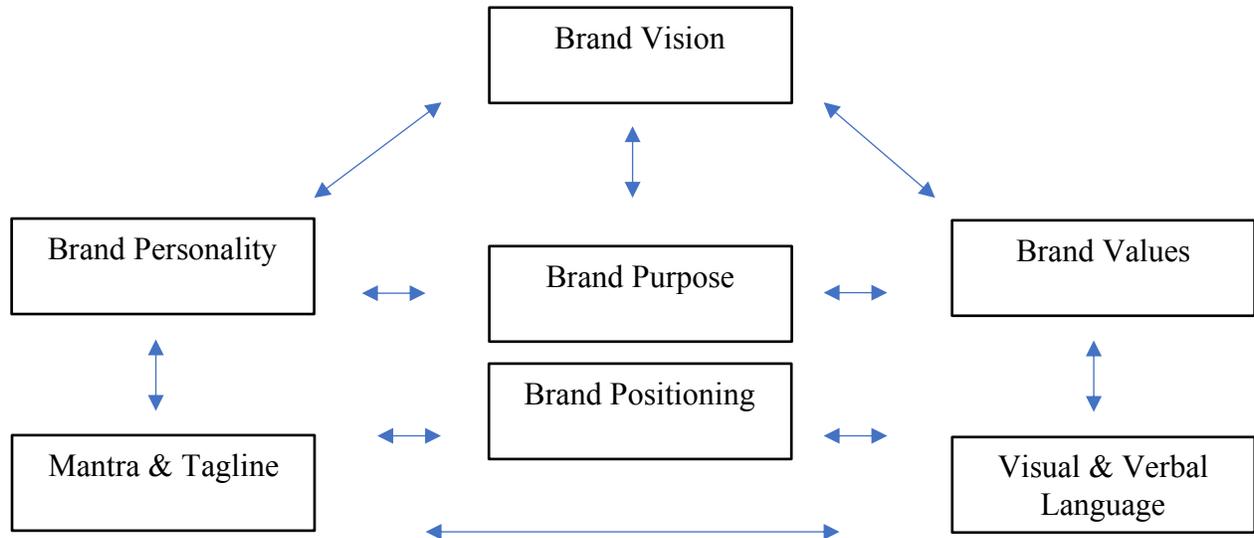
1. What is sensory marketing and how does it affect consumer psychology?
2. How has Singapore Airline utilised sensory marketing and does it reflect their brand identity?
3. What can we expect from the future of branding within the airline industry?

Findings & Discussion:

The findings of this study will be portrayed in 3 main sections. The first, A Singapore Airlines Brand Identity Analysis – this was completed before any primary research was conducted. I did this to establish a basis of what Singapore Airlines Brand Identity is and then highlight whether this shines through in the primary research collected. The Brand Identity model being used will be Dr Carla Enslins (Brand Management, 2010). I feel this model gives the best overall identity and addressed all the aspects of which my study will focus upon. The Brand Identity Model will be accompanied by an analysis on Brand Archetypes (Jung, 1919) identifying Singapore Airline's primary and secondary archetypes embedded within the brand. This will become clear for the extensive Brand Identity model. The second will be a discussion based on the results sourced from my primary research. This section will be separated into 5 distinct subsections (Touch, Taste, Sight, Smell, Sound) the fundamental aspects of Sensory Marketing. This will be the focus in terms of insights between the brand and their consumers. Extracts from interviews, questionnaires' and surveys will come into play as evidence of my findings.

The third section will address the future of branding with direct reference to Sensory Marketing and branding within the Airline industry. This section will debate whether disruptive marketing or experience marketing will be the way of the future as well as aspects that can change the way we fly and the way in which we experience our journeys.

Singapore Airlines Brand Identity:



(Enslin,2010)

Brand Vision

“Singapore Airlines has a responsibility not only to be an excellent company, but also to be an excellent citizen of the world by enhancing the lives of the people we touch. With that aim in mind, we have made many commitments to the arts and education, to our communities, and the health and welfare of our country's citizens, and those in countries we fly to. With this goal in mind, we've also made a strong commitment to preserving the environment - and our world for future generations.”

Brand Purpose

“Singapore Airlines is a global company dedicated to providing air transportation services of the highest quality and to maximizing returns for the benefit of its shareholders and employees.”

Brand Positioning

For all those who travel, Singapore Airlines is the only airline to give you a fully integrated cultural experience by making the journey a joy before the destination.

Brand Values

- **Customer First**
The heart of what they do. They are never afraid to go the extra mile for customers.
- **The Pursuit of Excellence**
A desire to achieve excellence in all aspects of their brand
- **Safety**
Singapore Airlines constantly makes safety check on all aircraft ensuring the safety of both staff and passengers.
- **The Welfare of Staff**
They recognise the importance of a happy cabin crew and focus effort in supporting them both on and off the job.
- **Integrity**
They strive to be a fair and understanding entity in all business they conduct.
- **Teamwork**
They operate as a worldwide and unified brand while working for each other for the benefit of all.

Visual and Verbal Language

- **Iconic Gold Kris/Keris**
The Singapore Airlines Logo is derived from a mythical dagger (The Keris/Kris) featured in many of the region's folklore. The symbol was then fused with a bird and creates the iconic logo we see today.
- **Purple - #4301A0**
- **Gold - #EFBF4C**
- **Blue - #294B88**

- Friendly
- Elegant
- Graceful
- Confident
- Ambitious
- Luxury

Brand Personality

- Friendly
- Helpful
- Respectful
- Understanding

Mantra and Tagline

“Refer to your training”

“A Great Way to Fly”

Singapore Airlines Brand Archetypes:

A brand is a metaphorical story that...connects with something very deep – a fundamental human appreciation of mythology...Companies that manifest his sensibility ...invoke something very powerful (Spink, 2003)

Firstly, one must understand the 12 Archetypes (Jung, 1919) (**Appendix C**). these 12 archetypes represent different personalities of which brands align themselves with to become relatable to consumers. Making use of the Singapore Airlines Brand Identity Model above it becomes clear that the primary archetype that the airline aligns themselves with is The Explorer, this archetype captures the consumers desire to explore and experience a better, more authentic and fulfilling life. Singapore Airlines does this not only in allowing consumers the freedom to travel but to travel in a better and more meaningful way, making the journey as an experience of its own. The Secondary archetype that Singapore Airlines encapsulates is that of The Sage, these consumers are intelligent, and yearn to understand the world around them. This desire for knowledge and respect for different cultures and answering the deeper questions in life is the driver. Singapore Airlines is handing consumers that opportunity to challenge these desires and build upon the individual's soul.



Sensory Marketing:

Sensory Marketing is a type of marketing that appeals to all the senses in relation to the brand. It uses the senses to relate with customers on an emotional level. Brands can forge emotional associations in the customers' minds by appealing to their senses. A multi-sensory brand experience generates certain beliefs, feelings, thoughts and opinions to create a brand image in the consumer's mind.

(Hulten, 2011)

Sense: Any of the faculties, as sight, sound, smell, taste, or touch, by which humans and animals perceive stimuli originating from outside or inside the body.

Sensory Marketing: Marketing techniques that aim to seduce the consumer by using his senses to influence his feelings and behaviour.

Sensory Marketing, creates a 'soul' bringing the brand to life, create a tangible five-dimensional sense of branding, Let the consumer live the brand.

(Rieunier, 2009)



Sight:

The power of sight can change an individual's mood and can be one of the most pivotal aspects to consumer behaviours. Colours have the ability to greatly influence these aspects and take the human subconscious by storm. Singapore Airlines works predominately with 3 base colours, Purple, Gold and Blue. These colour tones are inspired by the brand's traditional heritage capturing the culture and portraying it to the consumers. This is reflected in their logo and general branding from their menus to the aircraft's colour design. The first and most prominent contact point would be the brand's logo (**Appendix J**) the logo is strong, defined and promotes connotations of luxury, grace and Asian heritage. The font being used is sharp, uppercase and strong. This resembles the Lucida Sans Regular typeface. The logo is placed on a deep purple backdrop with the secondary colour being gold. These colours are both traditionally associated with royalty and complement each other effectively. These colours are reflected in most promotional materials along with blue and white. These colours all fall within Howie's 11 colours that transcend language and culture – universal and identifiable.

The most iconic aspect of Singapore airlines contact points is their staff, known as The Singapore Girl. The traditional Silk Kebaya was adopted in the 1970s and become a powerful branding campaign in years to come. The kebayas create an aura and grace, both practical and complementary to the stewardesses. (**Appendix K**)

“These colours are carried forward and become a symbol or rank within the aircraft. Purple and blue represent cabin stewardesses, green represents the leading stewardesses with red representing the cabin supervisors”

The stewardesses are all required to be of Asian descent, each will have 5 hairstyles to choose from all of which are neat and traditional. These hairstyles each suit certain facial structures and work to create a sense of perfection and glamour. Male employees have their own protocol to follow. All employees are monitored and trained in appeared. Makeup palettes are fixed, red lipstick and eyeshadow (relevant to rank) these Lancôme products. The males are required to have no facial hair and controlled sideburns. All

employees must make sure their skin is properly moisturised due to the aircraft's air-conditioning making the environment very dry. It's important to mention that these stewardesses each undergo a lengthy 4-month full time training regime involving a 3-stage interviewing process. The longest than any other airline. The training doesn't stop there, each member is required to continue training as they move through the ranks and establish themselves within the company.

"...stewardesses trained for lengthy periods of time not only in safety and service protocols but in more refined skills such as verbal and behavioural subtleties, posture, eye-contact and social interaction skills... The core values of the brand need to be embodied within each individual..."

The training is taking as far as pocket-size Outlook Magazines containing the brand's values, mission, vision as well as cultural gestures stewardesses might need to know e.g. Facial expressions, body language, posture, personal space, breathing, empathy and patience.

"Service Over and Above the Rest... trains employees that they are all a single unit, working together...pilot swap roles with flight controllers, this teaches patience and empathy between employee roles"

These aspects all build into the employees making them the living embodiment of the Singapore airlines brand. A contact point which acts as a major point of differentiation, one that other airlines are constantly striving to keep up with.

Singapore Airlines boasts a fleet of 102 aircrafts (March 2014) each with the average age of 6 to 9 months of service. These aircrafts are frequently cleaned, serviced and repainted as the presentation of these aircrafts will directly give passengers peace of mind in terms of safety and value for money. This fleet is the youngest to date and featured as the most fuel-efficient globally.

“It’s amazing how many planes you can see that have noticeable ‘dings’ below the cockpit (Nose)”

“...my seat was broken broke, they moved me to first class but still it’s slightly concerning”

Presentation is a simple but powerful tool in establishing a value for money, safety and loyalty. Singapore Airlines tagline ‘A Great Way to Fly’ is certainly reflected in the major contact point passengers will be exposed to. This, however, isn’t enough, the brand as established even finer visual details to make passengers truly believe in their tagline. Aircraft seats are featured in the branded colours with patterns similar to those that the stewardesses Kabayas. The cabin is clean, seats in an upright position and table trays are up – you’d never guess this aircraft just landed 45 minutes earlier. In the seat pocket in front of you, you’d find branded ‘barf’ bags, Kris World (**Attachment 1**), Kris Entertainment and Kris Shop magazines. All designed in the brand colour scheme and values once again carrying the concept of the Keris/Kris that is featured within their logo. The branded headphones, menus, cutlery, cups and gift bags enhance the experience as well as act as a memento to which remind the passenger of their journey.

Singapore Airlines newer aircraft are all fitted with mood reflective cabin lights. These lights are engineered to coincide with time zones as well as mealtime. The lighting prevents strain on passenger’s eyes, as well as help, prevent jet lag. The lighting within the cabin, like those in restaurants, also soothe and relax passengers.

All aspects of visual influences are present and build onto the passenger’s experiences. The detail is phenomenal and portrays the brands needs to live up to their values in a visual sense that will complement all other aspects creating a fully rounded sensory experience.

Smell:

“You can close your eyes, cover your ears, refrain from touch and reject taste, but smell is part of the air we breathe” (Lindstrom, 2005).

Smell, the only sense that the subconscious can't ignore. It's a powerful sense in which can directly influence brain chemistry. Scented candles can make us relax while blocking our nose can help us down the most potent of health shakes. Cologne can claim to make you irritable to women yet the smell of McDonald's can bring back the symptoms of your food poisoning. The nose is a sensitive and hugely influential sense.

The moment you take a foot onto the plane a unique smell hits you. The cabin crew are all wearing official branded Singapore perfume as scent designed to bring the brands heritage and values to your nose. The perfume is also pulled into the cabin via the planes air-condition system. The perfume is known to be a Stefan Floridian Waters fragrance. This scent is created to trigger connotations of freshness, luxury and relaxation. Passengers have indicated that the air conditioning is one of the worst aspects of flying. In my various interactions with frequent flyers, they indicated that the air-conditioning makes their skin dry up as well as many passengers complain about getting the flu after long durations of airtime. Singapore Airlines has designed air filters to counter these issues by removing impurities within the air every 2 to 3 minutes.

The scent is also laced within the hot towels passengers receive when boarding and departing the aircraft. These towels not only refresh the passengers but also transfer the scent onto their hands and face making it last for a longer period – something that stays with you during and after the flight. Scents can be stored and recalled for years after their original intake. This will help trigger further positive connotations in follow up flights.

“They (British Airways) did make us wear a specific perfume and the cabin did have a distinctive smell, however, I'm sure they've changed it since then to something more modern”

Singapore Airlines isn't the only brand in the industry to utilize this sense to their advantage but have a major advantage in terms of a rich distinctive Asian culture to ride on. Incense, spice and food are all aspects to which Singapore can base their scent upon. British Airways is unable to adopt such a scent as it would be off-brand instead they will need to work with scents and connotations relevant to their heritage to successfully align the scent to their traditional values.

The airline menu changes constantly depending on destinations with new and exciting flavours. These meals are rich in aromas and bring the local Singapore cuisine to the far reaches of the world. The Airline purposely heats the meals in a manner to flood the plane with oriental aromas. Meals are of high quality ranging from Cajun Roasted Chicken, Braised Beef, Stir Fried Kong Pao Chicken to Seafood Fried Rice. The culinary mixtures create a cauldron of welcoming smells. The Questionnaire resulted in many passengers agreeing that their most dominant sense is their sense of smell (Figure 1)

"...I prefer the airlines (Singapore) food choices, there's nothing worse than the smell of powdered eggs and sausage...Singapore at least mixes it up a bit. It's a nice change."

The menu helps create bring Singapore to the passengers before they actually arrive. This is effective as many people see air travel as a manner to get from 'A' to 'B' whereas Singapore Airlines has created an experiential environment in the travelling itself. It links back to that old saying "It's not about the destination it's about the journey" the adventure begins the moment you step on-board the aircraft.

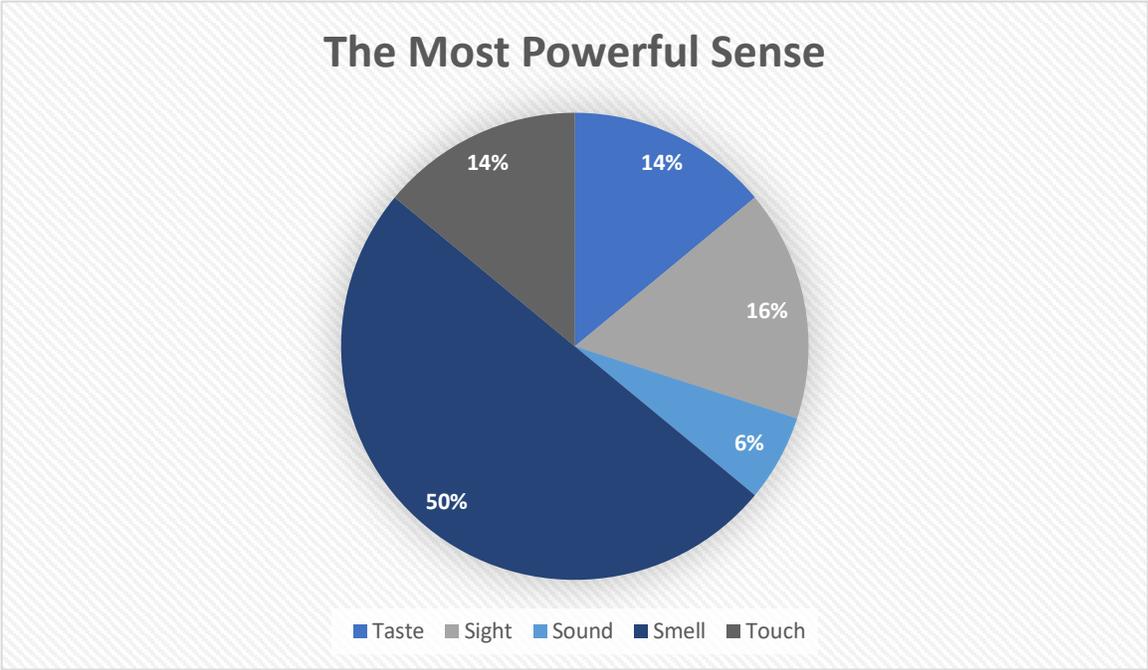


Figure 1

Touch:

Textures, fabrics and paper all play a role in the Singapore branding both on-board and off the aircraft. The KrisWorld, KrisEntertainment and KrisShop magazines all are printed on high-quality A4 gloss paper with heavier cover pages. These are similar to the magazines such as *Garden & Home*, *Glamour Magazines* and *Woman & Home*. These magazines are all made for the wealthier LSM (7-10) groups by brands that also target the connotations of luxury, quality and modern within the minds of their consumers. The menus (**Attachment 2**) are in the form of A5 simplistic booklets, the themes of which change from flight to flight. The menu is made from gloss paper, making them more durable and easier to clean if spilt on. These items are popular as mementoes.

"I like taking home various items from my travels for my albums... plane tickets, menus, baggage stickers..."

The cabin interior is designed with a heavyweight plastic shell that insulates the cabin preventing the external freezing temperatures from penetrating. The cabin floor is carpeted in short fibre carpets that colours vary depending on which aircraft model they are in. The colours do however stick to the general Singapore Airline brand colours. The carpet is not only easy to clean (As presentation is important) they are made to feel soft and welcoming to passengers as many remove their shoes when travelling. Socks are also provided within the gift bags made from similar materials to prevent slipping and static between the two. This links directly to Krishna's 2012 study of the importance of comfort above all other needs. Your surrounds are hugely influential.

"The seats are covered in a heavy-duty fabric that can be removed by the seams. A fabric cover is also placed on the seat behind the passenger's head before the flight...all are cleaned and replaced if necessary."

As mentioned above the seats are made from a heavy-duty fabric due to frequent use and wear and tear. These are covers over the seats interior cushioned body. These can

be seen in the A350 brochure (**Attachment 3**). The seats vary as one moves through the classes within the aircraft. The cutlery is made from stainless steel and take on a modern design, smoothed edges, sleek and lightweight – much like the aircraft itself.

The stewardesses Kabayas are noticeable not only because of their design but their fabric, Silk. Silk is a high-quality fabric that is appealing due to its reflective and soft attributes. Silk is a fabric that has the same appeal as velvet does, a fabric that's natural feeling is comforting to the human touch. These Kabayas are for sale in many Singapore airline planes and large airports. The Singapore Girl once more attract attention from another touch point.

Many of these aspects vary depending on which class one sits in ranging from Economy Class – Raffles (First) Class, however, as mentioned before Economy Class is the primary focus of this study.

Sound:

Sound frequencies have dramatic effects on the human condition. A great example of this is *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, the show famously makes the competitor feel nervous, uncomfortable chairs, dim lighting, not to mention the background music. The music composed by Matthew Strachan intentionally increases a semitone as the game progresses. For Singapore Airlines to successfully live up to their tagline 'A Great Way to Fly' they will need to calm the nerves of all passengers, especially those afraid to fly. The noise within the cabin can be very nerve-racking, to say the least.

"I fly often, about 3 times a month to places throughout Africa. (Angola, Kenya, Morocco). I am a nervous flyer...just the idea of being so high feels uncomfortable to me. I wear headphones and take a sleeping pill...it helps me escape"

The Airline cannot do too much about the sound of the aircraft cruising at extreme highs however they do supply some countermeasures to prevent nervous passengers to frenzy. Singapore Airlines supplies all their passengers with a set of Headphones rather than the more compact Earphones. These headphones are more hygienic and easier to repair but they are also more effective in blocking external sounds from being channelled into the ear canal. Whether this is intentional or not I was unable to discover but the fact of the matter is headphones do block out white noise better than earphones making them a preferred choice (Figure 2). The A350, however, has extremely quite twin-engines making the cabin noise greatly reduced.

The Singapore Girls as mentioned before all are required to originate from Asian descent. Most of which speak English as their second language. In my study, it became clear that people prefer hearing foreign speaking individuals that local accents (Figure 3). This grabs people's attention and curiosity. The Singapore Accent isn't drastically apparent compared to other Asian countries but the essence of Mandarin is defiantly there. It is also important to mention that Singapore Staff are all able to attend free language classes to increase their vocabulary and make their job easier. This aligns with the brand's value 'Welfare of Staff' – the betterment of their personal skills.

“In addition, Singapore Airlines offers free language-and-culture classes aimed at enhancing crews understanding of their passengers.”

Hearing a foreign accent as you board the plane once again enhances the concept that the travelling from 'A' to 'B' can also be about the journey – your adventure starts the minute you step on-board, throwing you into a cultural experience bringing the destination to you before you arrive.

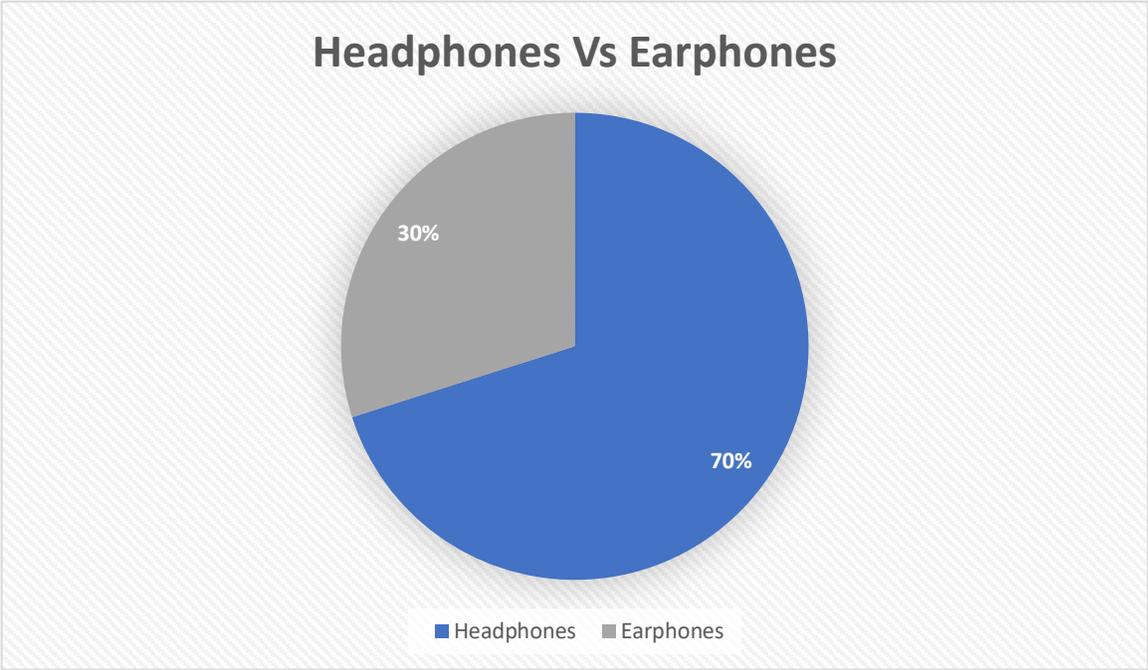


Figure 2

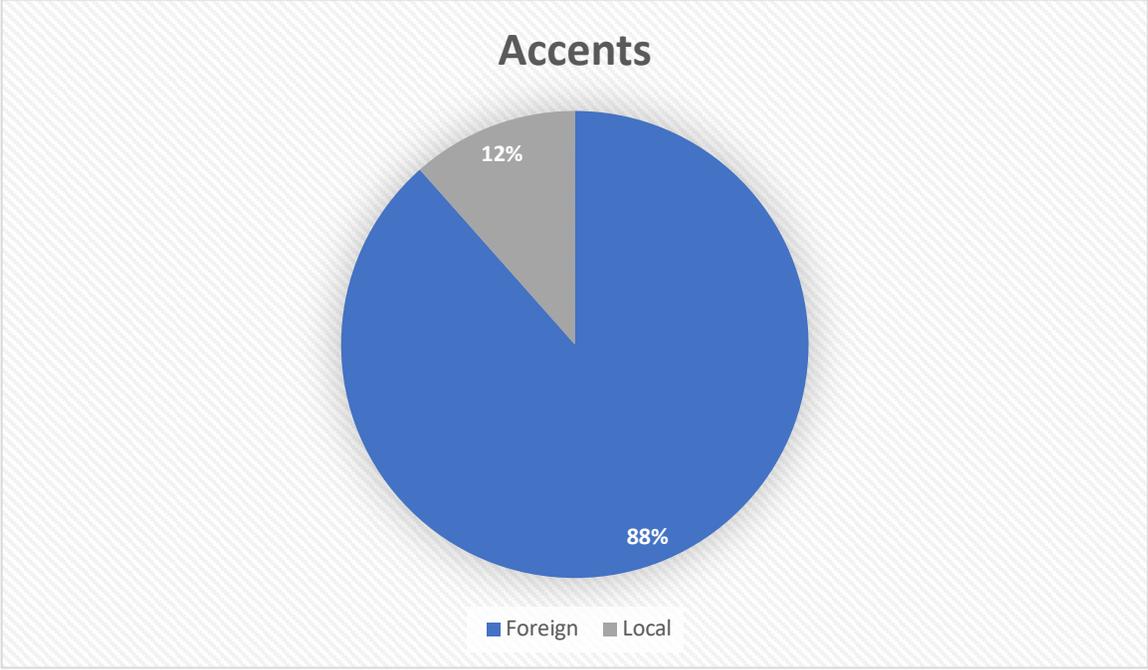


Figure 3

Taste:

“Cabin pressure changes the way you perceive taste. Rich flavours become mild. Aromas are subtle. Nuances are missed. That’s why we test all our chefs’ creations under pressure, literally. We bring their dishes into a simulated pressurised cabin, and spend hours there, sampling and adjusting the flavours, so our food can taste its best for you to enjoy at 30,000 feet. Make a reservation for your trip soon.”

(Singapore Airlines Website, 2017)

The lengths Singapore Airlines goes to in bringing the flavours and aromas back to passenger’s meals is no overlooked task. ‘The Customers First’, an important value to which they take very seriously. Since many of the meals are oriental and traditional they rely heavily on flavour and aromas – the experience just isn’t the same without them. Looking at the Economy Class menu (**Attachment 2**) as mentioned before the menu is donned with unconventional airline foods. The food is all supplied by the award-winning air caterer SATS, operating for 70 years and offering wide varieties of dietary requirements, whether religious or allergy related. 80 thousand meals are served every day and offered to local Singapore based airline Silk Air – a member of the Singapore Airline brand portfolio. As well as one of the largest varieties of beverages to choose from. This list includes a world-renowned, beers and cocktails and originating from Singapore itself – The Singapore Sling.

“...a concoction of dry gin, Dom Benedictine, orange liqueur, and cherry brandy, shaken with lime and pineapple juice, a dash of Angostura bitters, and Grenadine”

The cocktail was invented at the Long Bar within The Raffles Hotel, a place still reflecting the Colonial influences. Fortunately, I was lucky enough to dine at the bar, enjoying a Singapore Sling, eating peanuts while pigeons feed off the shells at your feet. The origins of the cocktail are becoming more of a legend now, as The Long Bar was also the spot where the last tiger in Singapore was shot – beneath the very bar. The cocktail is so much more than the taste but an experience, an item of heritage and legend. This creates a

more meaningful and memorable experience to share on-board – not many Airlines have an official cocktail up for offer.

“I’ve been flying with Singapore for years now and my holiday starts the moment I get on the plane and order a Singapore Sling.”

The variety of tastes and preferences Singapore Airlines has to offer is huge and always accommodating to passenger’s requests. Meals of high quality ranging from Cajun Roasted Chicken, Braised Beef, Stir Fried Kong Pao Chicken to Seafood Fried Rice. This is reflected in the survey results with the airline receiving a majority rating of 7 out of 10 from frequent international flyers. (Figure 4) Dr Vinnit Dani agrees with the importance of taste as a major driving sense. Bad food can ruin your holiday, this will be passed along via word of mouth and be hugely influential in passengers purchasing decisions.

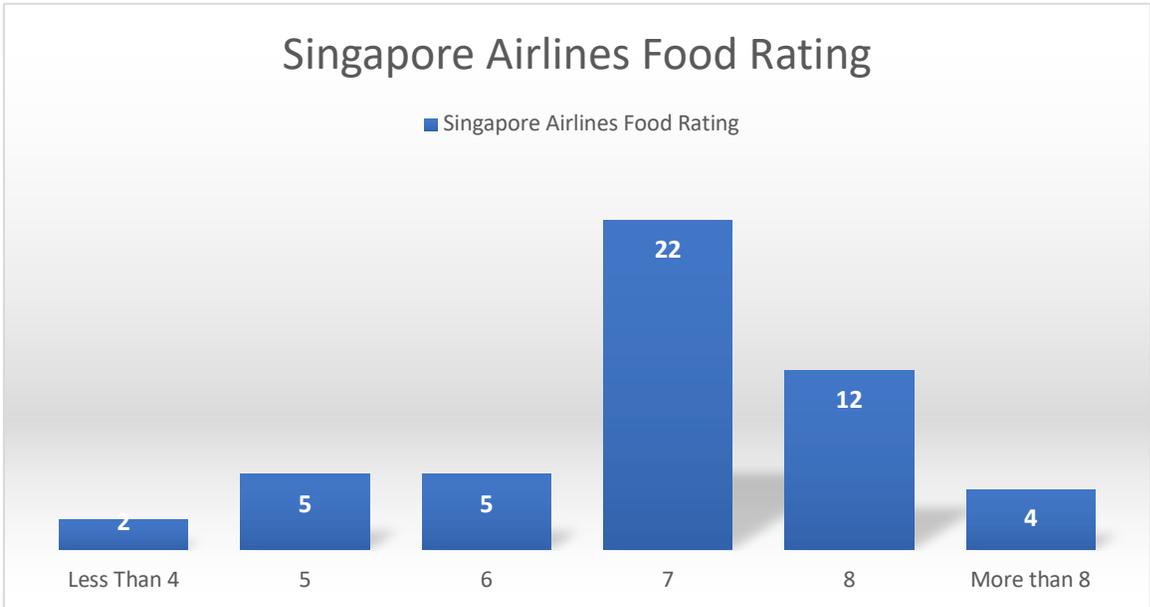


Figure 4

The Future:

The future of branding is a concept directly linked to the evolution of technology. Innovations such as Virtual Reality and 360° cameras have proven that experiential branding seems to be the new trend in the 21st century. These aspects in relation to the Airline industry, including economic trends and the information gathered from those within the airline industry have highlighted 2 concepts that prove to stand out amongst the data gathered. Transcripts One and Two contain rich information about these concepts.

The first is on the practical side of branding, that being the increased focus on aircraft comfort and design. Taking Singapore Airlines new A350 into account, one can already see these strides being implemented within the industry (**Attachment 3**). This new aircraft is not only the most modern craft in the sky but also the most environmentally conscious. The A350 design is focused on relaxation and comfort. The aircraft can only transport roughly 250 passengers and crew, its built for the experience rather than capacity. The cabin made of a lightweight carbon fibre ensure the aircraft is light, fast and eco-friendly. The wingspan is curved and noticeably different to other aircrafts. This new design reduces air resistance giving the passengers a smoother ride. The twin-engines are 68 times more powerful than a Formula One race car but much quieter.

“Newer aircraft. I think luxury, space and comfort will be important. Faster, safer travel with increased environmental concerns. Things change very fast.”

Although Airbus are pushing the limits of the number of passengers they can carry, the more popular aircraft is the small aircraft such as the A350 – especially with Singapore Airlines. To them, air travel seems to be a more of a ‘Quality’ than ‘Quantity’ kind of business. Retaining this tagline ‘A Great Way to Fly’.

The second concept takes a step back and looks at the bigger picture surrounding the Airline Industry. Since the inception of commercial airlines in the mid-1900s, it’s been a growing industry with a huge spike in airlines emerging between the 1960s – 1980s. My study, however, has gained a major insight into the future of airlines companies. This

involves many of the international airlines we know today completely shutting down. Issues of safety, terrorism, environmental concerns, bad publicity and economic issues are at the heart of the reason why the future will look very different. Examples of this would be the issues surrounding Malaysian Airlines, the last few years have been tough to say the very least. The connotations of the brand are now surrounded by disappearances and terrorism. This damage hugely effects the brand equity and foundation for the future. United Airlines, now famous for their violent eviction of passengers has also had a jagged past. Dave Carroll's hit 'United Breaks Guitars' racked up 17 million views on YouTube as a protest to his bad experiences. As of this month, Ryan Air has cancelled a handful of flights due to employee issues. These issues all highlight the negative trends within the industry. The questionnaires' resulted in passengers feeling their choice of airline was influenced more by their own personal experiences of service than brand reputation/size (Figure 5).

"There's a lot of airlines going under so I think, well certainly in terms of international airlines, that there will be 4 or 5 kingpins that will buy out the smaller airlines... there's so much that can change technologically but I can't see a lot of these smaller companies staying. It's going to be a 4-horse race."

"Emirates, I hope! Umm, probably British Airways because it's central to hop to Europe from. Singapore as the gateway to Asia. Then American Airlines, I think roughly one from each continent."

The Insight as highlighted above shows 4 to 5 airlines to capitalise on these negative issues and gain control over the skies. These airlines will become superpowers within the industry buying out other international brands and controlling the majority of domestic flights with sub-brands. E.g. Singapore Airlines (International) and Silk Air (Domestic). Both these concepts are very much intertwined and will develop together to shape the future of branding within the Airline Industry.

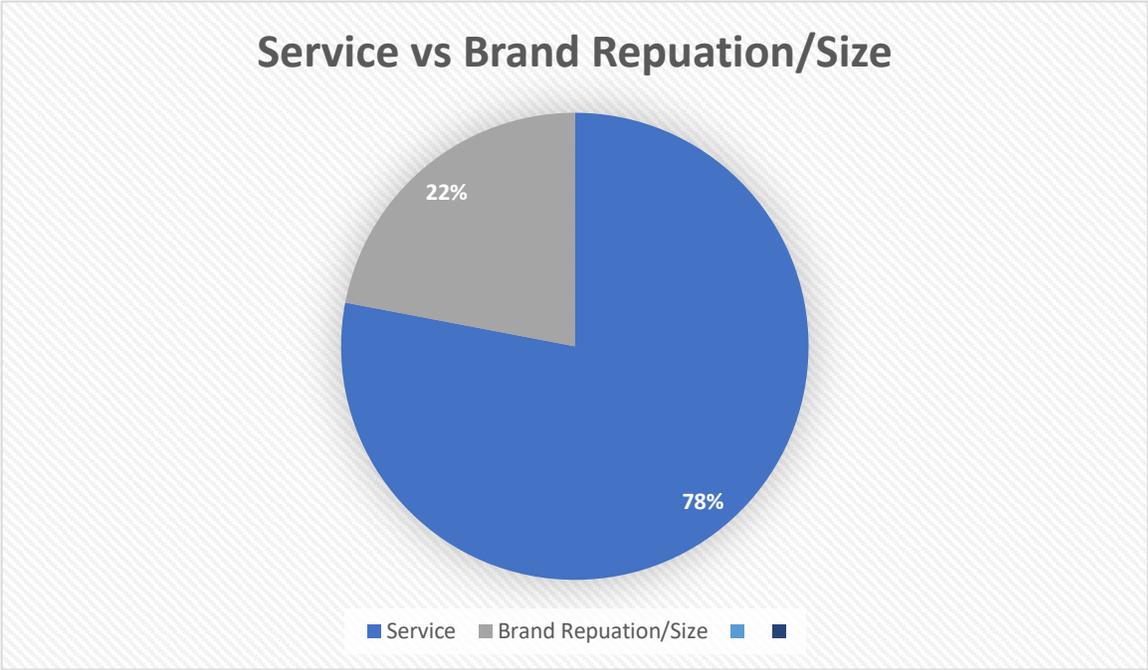


Figure 5

Validity & Transferability:

There are various aspects of this study that rely on valid and trustworthy sources. These sources have been vetted in terms of their credentials in relation to the research topic at hand. The fundamental interviews conducted were selected in terms of their experience and roles within the industry. These interviews form the basis of my study and have greatly influenced my research results. The candidates were all interviewed under an anonymous stance, this allows the candidates to freely and effectively share their experiences without fears of repercussions. This safe environment helps truthful feedback to come to the surface, feedback that contains insights. These insights are valid due to there being no reason for the candidates to give false information. That's being said, all interview, questionnaires and surveys have all been conducted in 2017 and reflect the current situation within the airline industry.

Transferability, in terms of this study being applied to different/similar industries. This topic is something that can be debated, as much of the findings regarding sensory marketing can be transferred into other industries e.g. restaurants, shopping centres and stores. The findings gathered cannot apply to other airlines not included within the study, these finding may differ. The evolution of technology will change much of what was studied in this research, aircrafts and many sensory aspects can be improved and changed within months. This may result in different findings that can affect the way passengers experience their flight and airline brands.

Ethical Concerns:

The Codes of Conduct and Ethical Principles have been published by the APA (American Psychological Association, 1983) and the BPS (British Psychological Society, 1990) these are universal and should be followed in respects of all research-based endeavours (Particularly Qualitative). These have evolved over the years with the growth and awareness of human rights and other movements. Since my study will be based on human opinion/behaviours/psychology it's important to highlight all 7 Main Ethical Concepts that have been derived from a recognised research-based union. These 7 main ethical concepts should be recognised even if one's study does not relate to all directly. They there for safety and should be treated in a respectable manner by both the interviewee and candidates.

The Seven Main Ethical Concepts:

1. Voluntary Participation
2. Informed Consent
3. Deception
4. Debriefing
5. Confidentiality
6. Physical and Mental Harm
7. Professional Conduct

1) Voluntary Participation: Research will be undertaken with an 'outside – in' and 'zero-based' mentality. Answers of those who have been studied will be confidential and not released to future candidates to prevent bias or peer pressured responses. The answers of airline/travel agents/public interviewed will be confidential to ensure honesty and freedom to opinions. None of this information will then be given to their respected employers. All participants have the right to opt out of the research study at any point during the study and will be allowed to without hesitation.

- 2) Informed Consent: All participants must understand the purpose of the study, how their input will be used and later informed of the results (if requested). Depending on the nature of the information participants will be allowed to deny any printing and publishing of this information. It's important that this consent includes all 7 ethical concepts so the participant understands where they stand.
- 3) Deception: I will not be allowed to deceive any participants in terms of false information/incentives. Claim to be working for superior offices or inform participants of previous participant's answers. In doing this I cannot break any other of the 7 ethical concepts that myself and the participant have agreed to adhere.
- 4) Debriefing: All participants have the right to a debriefing after the study have been completed and have the right to request to view the final document after all studies have been taken place and published.
- 5) Confidentiality: This is one of the most important ethical concepts. Participants have the right to protect their information and psychological identity. Their name, residence, job title, age, contact details etc. cannot be published or given out to other parties if consent is not obtained to do so. The participant's appearance in videos, recording, photographs etc. cannot be published online without consent.
- 6) Physical and Mental Harm: Although my study doesn't include in elements that will harm the participants it's important to acknowledge this concept to ensure participants feel protected and the study is undertaken in a professional manner.
- 7) Professional Conduct: I will conduct myself in a professional manner in terms of dress code, manners, diligence (Time Keeping) and conduction of each interview. The final product will be respectful of these 7 ethical concepts and will be reflected in all aspects of the research.

All Secondary research will be checked in terms of date of publishing and credibility of sources. These sources should also have been conducted under similar ethical concepts. In no way will the results of other studies be amplified or manipulated to gain a sounder result to support my findings. The results will not be generalised and placed upon other international brands/industries/persons that were not focused on in the study. The overall

results are for strictly academic purposes and have no intention to discredit any participants/brands involved. All form of research will be acknowledged and credited to the respective sources. The identities of those who had partaken in any secondary research by other institutions in terms of interviews, focus groups and observations will remain nameless. Videos, audio and artworks will not be published without the knowledge and approval of those featured/creators.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the research question will be undertaken in accordance with the 7 ethical concepts in all aspects from beginning to the end of the process. Not only do I wish to highlight and discover new innovative ways in breaking the clutter I wish to grow my own knowledge and experience within the industry that I shall build my career in.

Sensory Marketing has so much potential as an effective branding tool, especially within the airline industry. This study has revealed very subtle subconscious elements that impact passengers in more ways than one. Singapore Airlines has mastered and refined these elements to create an experience, unlike any other airline. The brand values are created into sensory aspects and the embodiment of the brand itself. It's these finer details that can build a greater and more meaningful brand experience and loyalty. The concept of sensory marketing is something that can only grow as we make advances in technology and human psychology – there still so much unknown. I know that the future will reveal more and more interesting aspects of human senses and brand. Only time will tell but one thing is for certain, Singapore Airlines will be at the vanguard of these innovative methods.

The key factor every researcher wishes to achieve is 'the truth', the defining truth behind every action and unanswered questions we have in life. In accordance to this, I would like to end with a quote by the English preacher, writer and poet Charles Spurgeon. This shows how we as individuals can be so caught up trying to find the answers in life while those answers can be right there in front of you in our subconscious.

"A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes"

- Charles Spurgeon

Glossary:

1. Postmodernism:

We are in the midst of a great, confusing, stressful and enormously promising historical transition, and it has to do not so much with what we believe as with how we believe. (Anderson, 1997)

2. Sensory Marketing:

Sensory Marketing/ Branding is a type of marketing that appeals to all the senses in relation to the brand. It uses the senses to relate with customers on an emotional level. The 5 basic human senses smell, sight, touch, taste and sound.

3. Psychology:

The science of the mind or of mental states and processes.

The science of human and animal behaviour.

The sum or characteristics of the mental states and processes of a person or class of persons, or of the mental states and processes involved in a field of activity:

4. Brand/Branding:

Kind, grade, or make, as indicated by a stamp, trademark, or the like:
the best brand of coffee.

A mark made by burning or otherwise, to indicate kind, grade, make, ownership, etc.

A kind or variety of something distinguished by some distinctive characteristic:

The movie was filled with slapstick—a brand of humour he did not find funny.

5. Ethnography:

A branch of anthropology dealing with the scientific description of individual cultures.

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