

Developing consumerism through design



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Consumerism

All over the place, from the popular culture to the propaganda system, there is constant pressure to make people feel that they are helpless, that the only role they can have is to ratify decisions and to consume.

Consumerism is a way of life and an ideology which is developed further by mass phenomenon. In Singapore, consumerism has become very much a way of life with the popular Great Singapore Sale, major IT Exhibitions, perpetual discounts in most retail outlets nations wide and many delicious restaurants with culture involved. Thus, it is important for us to recognize the value of consumerism that is within and around us. People are consuming in different aspects, and Food & Beverage is taking a big part in the society. However, people need to consume, people consume also because of the thousands of designed space which attract them to go and explore more for their life. In another word, consumerism is becoming design driven.

According to dictionary, the meaning of consumerism is that the movement seeking to protect and inform consumers by requiring such practices as honest packaging and advertising, product guarantees, and improved safety standards; the theory that a progressively greater consumption of goods is economically beneficial; and attachment to materialistic values or possessions: deplored the rampant consumerism of contemporary society.

Consumerism is known as an action where people purchase goods, which are more than necessary for their lives, but it can affect more than buying habits and personal and family life. Sometimes, it may even make people less aware of their own emotional reactions, as they seek to buy yet another item

that will distract them. On the other hand, consumerism also keeps people up-to-date and modern as consumerism globalized.

In fact, consumerism has been around human civilization at the first place. It had a great turn in consumerism arrived just before the Industrial Revolution.

In 21st century, consumerism is one of the arguments of scientists, and researchers, they try to find out how and why do people waste money in such expensive things, such as clothing, electronic items, cars, technological devices ...etc. One of many reasons that makes consumer spend lots of money for their consumption is advertisement. According to research, Billions of companies throw their commercials into market as many ways as they can. They will show their brand names on TV, magazines, in movie theaters, malls ...etc. To attract consumer, companies have million ways to entice people by advertising. If a company wants people know about its name or products, they then try to make an attractive poster or a nice page in magazine to advertise their products to the public. Containing a nice explicit picture and attractive colors, the poster is made to send an implicit message -the key- to consumers; this key convinces people to buy products. This has become a trend internationally. Indeed, a company advertised themselves is a way of designing themselves looks better and sounds greater to sell the product.

From a design perspective, will a good design bring more consumers to the place? The answer is definitely yes.

Designing a place is designing an experience, and how to leave people with a memory. It is the atmosphere that provides for the customers, which has a

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significant impact on them, and make them want to come back and hang out.

Moreover, consumerism is not only happened in the fashion world as motioned before, Consumerism is also applied for other industries as well. For Singapore, tourism and food & beverage are the most important industry which makes the income for the whole country. Food & beverage industry is the basic needs for people, how good the basic industry is, and it reflects how well the country has developed. In another world, the fundamental shows all. However, food & beverage is not lonely the food and drinks, it is a place where provides the feel of gathering; the atmosphere and the environment which design dress them up together. For some of Singaporeans, they consume on food & beverage as a lifestyle to eat fine food at well designed restaurants.

Based on research from Singapore Tourism Board, the busy life that Singaporeans have, the among of tourists come to Singapore keep growing year by year and the mixed culture background, all of these determine that there is a demand to open more fine dining restaurants. Singapore especially has a strong influence of western culture, the percentage of Singaporeans who drink wine has grown over 214 present during last 10 years, so that it is a potential to open a wine shop here as well. .

As a result, the proposal for the Utopia project is to design a wine appreciation club and fine dining restaurant which aims to add on more value to the Singapore society, to adopt a wine culture to Singaporeans. According to the chosen site at South beach building which is located at the

CBD area, the target market would be businessmen, tourists and local Singaporeans. The design intention is to create a space which carries the knowledge about the wine culture, the process of making wine and history of wine etc.

The design concept is based on the process of making wine, the three key steps are harvest, crushing and ageing. The idea behind these three key words is that: harvest is a place to gather people and collection of grapes, it will become the reception and welcoming place at first when people get into the space; following by the crushing step, it is translated to the whole design language of the entire space, after reaching welcoming space, the crushing step forms a wine process gallery, normally, a gallery should be open and big space, yet in this case, in order to feel more about the crushing step of winemaking process, the space is designed to be narrow and low-volume space; Now ageing, this key word is designed as a journey in the space, why? The reason is ageing is a matter of time, a space that is changing or transforming like the wine making process, from grapes to wine, from sugar to alcohol; As people walking in the space, the space is able to speak and lead people through the designed journey. The space will be changing in term of volume, proportion, scale, lighting and different materials of the space.

Through designing the space to bring people's attention and draw people into the place to purchase and enjoy, it is a way of consumerism. Indeed, consumers come to the place not only to dine, but to also engage with new things, to experience the space, to add on value to them, to spend time with

friends in the atmosphere of wine knowledge. Leave a wonderful memory to the consumers.