

Executive Summary

As a member of the crowded pub marketplace in the city of Calgary, the Kilkenny Irish Pub finds itself in a challenging position. With a local population made up largely of post secondary students, management at the Kilkenny need to consider the potentially unique needs of this market, and their opinions of the products and services offered by the pub.

In our analysis, we take a look at the current comment card offered by the Kilkenny. This is a comment card which can only be found online and not in the restaurant itself. We administered this card in person to a small convenience sample, and examined the results. Some of the key findings were that patrons typically visited the establishment during the evening, that they found the music choice was sub-par and that these patrons did not necessarily order food to accompany their drinks.

Following our analysis of these comment card results, we used the information to structure moderators' guides for a set of focus groups. Based on the market examined, our focus group participants were Kilkenny patrons aged 18-25. Our focus groups were asked a series of questions regarding their experiences as Kilkenny clientele. The general consensus of our two focus groups was that people have a fairly low expectation regarding the quality of both food and service. Although some of these characteristics caused people some concern, in general, people visited the bar to spend time with their friends and thus cared less about the service.

With information gained from the customer comment card and focus groups, we were able to create a survey to obtain more detailed data. The survey was developed in order to understand certain attitudes and perceptions regarding pubs and how this information related to Kilkenny specifically. The majority of respondents were of a similar age as our focus group participants with a large portion of them currently attending the University of Calgary. A total of 61 surveys were collected with the majority of respondents being male. In addition, we did not bias based on income, race or age, but we were looking for a relatively even split of people 22 and over and 21 and under. This was to answer our research question of whether more experienced patrons had higher expectations regarding service and product quality. Additionally, we studied some of the differences between males and females regarding expectations of the service and products of pubs.

In general, those 21 and under and those 22 and over had similar expectations and attitudes toward Kilkenny, and pubs in general. Similarly, males and females had similar expectations towards their dining experience with pubs and Kilkenny. For the two different age groups, some differences occurred such as those 21 and under placing a higher emphasis on being able to find available seating. Regarding gender, females placed a higher emphasis than males on customer service.

Overall, expectations regarding pubs and Kilkenny were fairly low. Some differences occurred between the different groups that we tested, but people saw these establishments as a social setting not a formal one. That said, there are some characteristics that management of Kilkenny should look into in order to ensure that they are maximizing service and product expectations.