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A lesson in coffee beans... Commoditized. No organization wants the word to be applied to its products or services. The mere mention of commoditization sends shivers down the thorns of executives and entrepreneurs alike. Differentiation disappears, margins fall through the floor, and customers buy solely on the basis of price. Consider, however, the true commodity: coffee beans. Companies that collect or trade coffee in the futures market receive (at the time of writing) just over 75 cents per pound, which means 1 or 2 cents per cup. When the production is roasts, grinds, packs, and sells these beans in the grocery store, turning them into good, the price for the consumer jumps between 5 and 25 cents per cup (depending on the brand and the size of the packaging). Brew ground beans at a snack diner, a fast-food restaurant, and this coffee service now sells for 50 cents to \$1.50 per cup. But wait: serve that same coffee at cafes such as Starbucks - where ordering, creating and consuming cups embody an increased atmosphere or sense of theater - and consumers are happy to pay \$2 to \$5 per cup. Businesses that rise to this fourth level of value establish a distinctive experience that envelops the purchase of coffee, increasing its value by two orders of magnitude relative to the original product. Previous paragraphs come from Experience economics, an updated edition written by Joseph Pine and James Gilmore in 2011. The book (excellent, by the way) establishes the concept of experience, and why it is so important to organizations of all types today - ChurchWorld included. After reading the first issue of The Experience Economy in 2002, I became fascinated with the coffee bean lesson and how it could be applied to ChurchWorld. In particular, how Starbucks created the experience. At Starbucks, the usual product - coffee - turns into EXTRAORDINARY. ChurchWorld can learn a lesson from two - or three or four - from Starbucks. You can turn the usual process - welcoming guests - into an extraordinary experience. Today is the fourth session of the Summer Semester II program GsD 2013 with Applied Hospitality 201, a review of some of the leading organizations that deliver exemplary guest experience with application to ChurchWorld. To learn more about the secrets of the EXTRAORDINARY customer experience at Starbucks, I started investigating Starbucks (now this is a study I really got into!) to see what ChurchWorld leaders can learn. My quest to explore the secrets of serving Starbucks guests began with Hot White Chocolate Mocco on a cold January day a few years ago. I settled in a comfortable place, watching the friendly, welcoming interactions between the barista behind the counter and their customers when they walked in. I didn't know I was in for Guest Experience 101. The only episode that sticks in my head to this day was this. While I was watching the barista With customers, a young mother and her 2-year-old daughter entered the store. As they walked through the door, the barista came out from behind the counter, said hello to his mother, and then knelt in front of her daughter, calling her by name and engaging in conversation for a few minutes - all while other customers kept coming to the store. The store was well staffed, so no one was caught up by the barista's actions. It would seem a small gesture? Maybe so, but he talked a lot for me. Later I asked the barista what motivated her actions. She replied: It's in basic training all partners take when they start working at Starbucks. It's called the Starbucks Experience, and it's all in that. With that, she handed me a Green Apron book. Containing no less than the basic philosophies and values of Starbucks, Green Apron Book presents a 2000 small package with great influence. Its simple but powerful structure contains the guidelines of the environment Starbucks baristas hope to create and legendary service that they seek to provide. But it really is leadership at its best: simple instructions provided in an attractive way, with a spirit that encourages baristas to make each Starbucks experience uniquely their own. The central theme is called Five Ways of Being. Here's an example: Be welcoming - Offer everyone a sense of belonging To provide an uplifting experience that enriches the daily lives of your customers Greet customers when they go through the door Make eye contact with your customers Start a conversation Start a conversation To know your customers by drink or name Anticipate and respond to the needs of your customers Make sure your customer is your number one priority to be genuine - connect , answer Always be aware that customer service is transmitted verbally and nonverbally Remember that the basic service meets the expectations of customers; The legendary service exceeds the expectations of customers Focus on the positive, on what you can do, and not on what you can not do, enthusiastic about the experience of your customers, and invite them back to the next visit Exceeding expectations. Look for ways, both large and small, to let customers know that they value using your common sense and common sense by doing everything right to be knowledgeable - Love what you do. Share it with others Know what's special in how Starbucks chooses, roasts, and packages of our coffee Learn from different regions of coffee growing Learn how to describe coffee - your customers expect you to be a coffee expert It's ok not to always know the answer. If you don't know, learn Remember that learning coffee is an everyday adventure To share your knowledge of coffee, passion and excitement with partners and customers through coffee tasting. Enthusiasm is contagious Be careful - Take care of yourself, each other and our environment View shop from a customer's perspective. What does it look and feel like? Take the lead. when you see something that needs to be done, do it recognize recognize For effort and quality work Always be punctual - it affects customers, partners and shop businesses to contribute to a safe, safe and accident-free environment for all communicate with partners with the openness and sincerity to participate - In store, in the company, in the community make sure that our goals and values are reflected in everything you do at work Apply our guidelines As you do business Consider ways to participate in your community Be aware of your community Be aware of your community tone, spirit and energy store Be a model of positivism Enjoy taking on new challenges with your team store Along with the primary purpose, values and mission statement, the book provides partners with specific ideas on how to personalize customer relationships by giving connect with, and enhance customer interaction. It culminates in three simple sentences: Creating an experience that keeps people coming back relies on the magical combination of three things: our products, our places, and our people. They come for coffee, stay for invitation heat, and return to a very human connection. Now go ahead, welcome your next new regular! Don't you want you to be able to say the same thing about your guest experience process? I was hooked! From that day on, I've been to and from dozens of Starbucks across the country, I've read all the books about Starbucks, I've talked to many baristas, and I've even had basic training materials used by Starbucks for new team members. Starbucks gets it when it comes to guest experience - why shouldn't the church? You don't need to copy the Green Apron Book for your Guest Experience team, but you need to understand the principles behind it, develop concepts that will encourage your team to be fully engaged with the people they welcome on your campus, and apply them in your context. How do you serve guests in your church? Despite all the promises of digital media to bring people together, I still believe that the most sincere, enduring forces of human connection come from looking directly into the other people's eyes, with no screen in between. - Howard Schultz, Starbucks CEO Love It or Hate It (and it seems that not much middle) Starbucks has started to revolutionize third place, creating an experience (with a price to match) that consumers flocked to the crowd. Even over the past few years, with rising prices, store closures, and increased competition, Starbucks has some great lessons on the guest experience that the church can learn. Central to the experience at Starbucks is the barista, smiling face who greets you when you come to the store and accepts your order. I frequent Starbucks across the country (it's a favorite meeting place for church leaders) and I'm amazed by the knowledge, uniformity of the service, and the general attitude displayed by the barista. Starbucks understands the importance interaction of their barista with his clients. They understand that can go almost anywhere to get a cup of coffee, but the experience that Starbucks delivers is not commonplace. In fact, Starbucks will even reduce its effectiveness (and the risks that entails) to make sure that the experience supplied is extraordinary. An appendix to ChurchWorld I recently spoke with a group of Church leaders about the importance of guest services and creating great experiences that leave WOW! First impression. During time, one leader asked me this: All this is good, but my church has limited resources - we can't do all these things at once. My quick answer is always the default for people. In the equation Creation of Experience - Product - Process - Place - People, the most important part, the starting point, the foundation on which everything is built - are people. Starbucks can have a good product line; it can have its maintenance processes down to science, and it can offer the most convenient, friendly place to hang out alone or with friends. But neither the product, nor the process, nor the place have traction without people greeting you with a smile, asking what you would like (perhaps offering something new) and then serving you with speed, superiority, and always a smile. You have to have an excellent team in place before you can start delivering a great experience. The same is true in ChurchWorld: the experiences you are trying to create, the places and spaces in which they are placed - both literally and figuratively - are important. But without people, you can't go anywhere. When an organization helps its team members bring pride, excellence, and playfulness to all aspects of their mission, these team members literally have the opportunity to change the lives of others. People want to be part of something bigger than themselves. They want to be part of something that concerns their hearts. Everything matters, but everything matters. Recommended reading for this session: Starbucks Experience, Joseph A. Michelle Pour Your Heart Into It, Howard Schultz Forward, Howard Schultz (for full reading list, see Essential Guests Experience Library) Guestology - The Art and Science of Knowledge and Understanding of Your Guests - is a term coined by Bruce Laval of the Walt Disney Company. The use of GsD is a tongue-in-cheek recognition that organizations that really want to understand and deliver the WOW Guest Experience need to learn the best practices and principles that are used today and then adapt them to the context of their own environment. GsD (Dr. Guestology) Journey: 2nd Term Summer 2013 2013

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