Accounting for pleasure:
An attempt to improve experiential consumption modeling

by

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1. Introduction

Consumers buy in order to solve a problem or make themselves feel better (Underhill, 2000). In fact, more and more consumers are choosing to purchase hedonic "experiences" as they believe those will make them happier than material possessions (Van Boven and Gilovich, 2003). Today, experiential branding has emerged as a useful and efficient way to forge strong and lasting relationships with consumers (Pine and Gilmore 1999). Experiential branding refers to the strategic positioning of a brand by promising (and then delivering!) a memorable experience focused on a specific type of pleasure. Yet, as central as pleasure is in the design and delivery of commercially successful experiences, consumer research and decision science have made relatively little progress in uncovering and accounting for the qualities of pleasure. This issue is important not only to experience marketers but also to those in the service industries where emotions borne of the delivery process, especially from interactions between actors (c.f., Bitner 1992) are particularly crucial (Schmitt and Simonson 1997; Dubé and Renaghan 2000).

Both managerial practice and scientific research have much to gain by achieving a clearer understanding of the nuanced differences and similarities between pleasurable experiences. Notwithstanding recent advances in psychology and consumer research, we believe that emotional reactions, especially the notion of pleasure, warrant more in depth analysis. The unidimensional view of pleasure has so far produced useful insights but from an experience marketing perspective, a more comprehensive and differentiated view is necessary. We believe that the qualities of pleasure, and not merely its quantity, as utility theory holds, have important implications on consumers' actual enjoyment as well as on their decision making processes.

A more in-depth understanding of pleasurable experiences could be beneficial to managers across a variety of industries. For instance, in the hospitality and tourism sectors, managers must carefully orchestrate a consumption context to meet consumers' lodging needs and to delivery an emotionally impactful experience. This preoccupation extends to every aspect of the guest experience (even to prospective customers during a website browsing episode) before, during, after the actual stay. A more comprehensive understanding of pleasurable experiences may also be of interest to restaurant owners and designers, but also professionals working in spas, hospital, Nursing homes, tourism marketing bureau, cultural events, conventions and event management, etc. That is, in consumption situations where experiential benefits are the key motivator of purchase.

In this article, we first review recent developments in strategic experiential branding. Next, we examine the literature for evidence on the qualitative differences between types of experiences. Then we outline how assessments of consumer experiences may be improved by accounting for different types of pleasures, and the benefits of doing so for practitioners and academics. We also report on an exploratory qualitative analysis intended to surface the various qualities of different types of pleasures.

Experiential Branding

In this section, we briefly outline key developments and findings pertaining, directly or indirectly, to experiential branding. Either intuitively or scientifically, prior writings on experiences have surfaced important features and dynamics of such market offerings that bear mention as they will later be echoed in some of our propositions regarding how the qualities of pleasure shape experiential decision making.

Experiential branding, of increasing popularity as a means to achieve a differentiating advantage in the marketplace, owes its roots and beginning to forward looking thinkers. Kotler (1974; Kotler and Levy 1969/1999) first pointed to the benefits of attending to the intangible aspects of consumption and using "atmospherics" essentially to put consumers in a buying mood. Ten years later, Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) defined hedonic consumption as those "multisensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of product usage experience." Notably, the treatment of pleasurable experiences was still rooted in product usage. Also of note, Hirschman and Holbrook pointed out the importance of mental constructs and images in shaping and influencing hedonic consumption behavior. Carbone and Haeckel (1994) attempted to elevate experience design from an intuitive art form usually left to designers and creative souls into a more systematic and disciplined approach. These authors emphasized the importance of environmental clues that shape consumers' enjoyment and decision making. In their typology, context clues include "mechanistic" clues which refer to the multi-sensory aspects of tangible elements involved in supporting the delivery of an experience and "humanistic" clues come from the careful planning of the appearance and behavior of employees. By opposition to context clues, performance clues refer to the functionality of supporting products and services, especially in relation to customers' expectations. Lastly, Carbone and Haeckel pointed to the importance of "*sticktion*," that is, clues that stick with consumers and are remembered long after the experience technically ends. These sticky clues also help to generate desired behavioral outcomes such as word of mouth and other dimensions of consumer *stickiness* (Diesbach and al. 2007; Diesbach and Midgley 2008; Diesbach 2010).

Until then however, experiences were typically conceptualized from a goods- or service-dominant logic, that is, experiences were seen as merely a consequence of product usage or a dimension of services. Pine and Gilmore (1998, 1999) and Schmitt (1999) brought further legitimacy and more attention to the challenges and opportunities of *staging* consumer experiences, a reference to the theatrical world. In such staged experiences, consumers become part of the cast and play an important role, whether they are passively waiting in queue for an SNCF train during a strike, or more actively interacting with a caring check-in clerk. In the late 1990s, experiences as a form of market offering became considered in their own right, and not defined as a dimension of product usage or a consequence of buying a service. In fact, pioneering experiential providers such as Disney, Four Seasons Hotels and others, had already realized the potential of crafting memorable and pleasurable experiences for the sake of the experience itself, and not merely as added benefit to a product or service. Under an experiential branding perspective the experience *per se* becomes the core of the offering.

Today, designing and delivering memorable and pleasurable experiences is being done with impressive sophistication. Moreover, experiences as a form of market offering in and of itself, are now central to the strategy of many companies or brands. The shopping place or the waiting

area can provide positive or negative transient emotions, which can impact customer experience of the process per se, and her behaviour (Donnovan & Rossiter 1982; Donnovan & al. 1994).

Consider also for instance the latest entry by Virgin in to the lodging market. The brand owner, Virgin, crafted a lodging offering in keeping with its slightly off-beat, irreverent and provocative brand identity or DNA. The new hotel brand's website asks "*Fancy getting to bed with Virgin?*". In an equally noticeable way, W Hotels in the Starwood portfolio has crafted a distinguished offering with an emphasis on sensual design, even extending the experience by crafting a language unique to the brand where the gym is a "sweat lounge" and promotional packages are designed to appeal to the preferences of targeted consumers (such as the "Wired" packaged for technologically-savvy travelers).

Memorable experiences can also owe much of their character to the sense of place. To illustrate, consider the town of Hershey in Pennsylvania, the birthplace and headquarters of the chocolate company by the same name. The entire town is designed to provide an experience to tourists, one that appeals to a variety of market segments and involves chocolate naturally but also fun and a noticeable dose of learning and education, leaving visitors with a "I didn't know that about Hershey" impression. Similarly, the sense and identity of a place is part of the core offering of destinations such as Las Vegas (Badot & al. 2007) or the Edmonton Mall in Alberta, Canada (Badot 2005; Badot & al. 2009).

Bourgeon and Filser (1995) open rich avenues in the cultural area, a sector of great interest, and still largely ignored, by the professionals of the hospitality sector; thus, it is typically an experiential "consumption" process.

In all the various contexts evoked here-above, a key concern for experience designers is the impact of specific attributes under their control, tangible or not, in shaping the consumers' subjective experience and behaviours (Kotler 1974) developments in experiential branding suggest that it is possible to orchestrate different objective elements or clues to shape customers' perceptions in a manner that creates pleasurable experiences with uniquely identifiable and differentiated qualities. Importantly, some clues can have significant impact on behavioral reponses such as loyalty and repeat purchase (Pullman and Gross, 2004). Moreover, these clues must be consistent throughout the various portions of consumers' interaction with the brand (from purchase, to use, to detachment). This brings to the foreground the importance of 'touch points' or points of contact with the brand, on site (as in the physical plant of a hotel, museum, spa, etc.) or outside of the physical plant, as in the case of marketing communications on a website. Online, recent web 2.0 applications such as avatars create attractive opportunities for enriching consumers' browsing experiences. Touch points can also include post-experience communications such as mail-in surveys or other forms of correspondence design to emphasize but also shape consumers' memories. Successfully differentiated brand experiences share common characteristics (Milligan and Smith, 2002). We now turn to consider various types of experiences and the characteristics of successful brand experiences.

2. Types and Features of Consumer Experiences

A pervasive and recurrent issue in the literature on experiences is the notion that there exist different types of experiences. More than a purely scientific or academic notion, the possibility that experiences vary in quality in significant ways has important managerial implications.

Importantly, many authors have reduced the "experiential" approach and the nature of value created in such context, to the delivery of benefits of an affective nature. But the success of experience providers such as Starbucks, Diney, or Four Seasons Hotels suggest that experiential benefits are not merely affective in nature (Schmitt & Simonson 1997; Lindgreen & al. 2009). The nature of experiential value requires conscious or partly conscious awareness. This conscious awareness may be concomitant with the actual experience or retrospective as in the case of delayed or hindsight appreciation.

Holbrook proposed eight possible types of experiential value based on the combinations of three dimensions: Self vs Other-oriented x Active vs Passive x Intrinsic vs extrinsic value (Holbrook 1984, 1986). Such typology is tested online for some of its sub-dimensions (Mathwick & al. 2001) but the literature has not really insisted much afterwards in testing, or enriching it. Pine and Gilmore (1999) distinguished experiences on the basis of consumers' role (active vs passive) and involvement (absorption vs immersion), leading to four possible "realms" of experiences: entertainment, education, escapism and esthetic. Similarly, Schmitt (1999) proposes five experiences: sense, feel, think, act, and relate. Schmitt invites experience marketer to blend these five experiences in order to deliver more experiential value.

One common feature of these typologies is that the nature of experiential value cannot be summarily reduced to mere affective benefits or affective responses, as in the S-O-R paradigm (c.f., Mehrabian and Russel 1974). Rather, a more comprehensive understearding of experiential value (and consequently of how to create and deliver it) can only come from appreciating the key features of experiences. Across the now expanding literature on commercial experiences a number of recurrent features emerge, such as:

- Experiences are temporally defined or ephemeral: with a beginning, a more intensive phase, and an ending or detachment phase. This implies that experiences cannot be relived directly, but only in memory (thereby making the "memorable" aspect important for managers to focus on (LeBel 2005);
- Experiences involve subjective and idiosyncratic internal responses (Brakus, Schmitt, Zarantonello, 2009);
- Experiences are private internal responses with observable behavioural manifestations or consequences;
- Experiences are focused on a specific and differentiated pleasure;
- Experiences are memorable.

Let us turn to perhaps most defining and important features of successful experiences, from a commercial point of view at least: the idea that experiences are pleasurable and memorable.

2.2 Experiential Consumption is Pleasurable

Successful commercial experiences either solve consumers functional needs or problems, thereby reducing negative emotions or stress, or by creating uplifting and positive emotions. This brings to the foreground the central role and nature of pleasure. But is pleasure a single undifferentiated phenomenon that can simply be boiled down to an evaluative summary or are there different qualities or types of pleasure?

Pleasure has been conceptualized as either a unitary or a differentiated phenomenon. Within the unitary perspective, pleasure has also been named valence, hedonic tone, or utility. Unitary pleasure is akin to a summary evaluation, ranging from low to high, bad to good. Here, the qualities of a pleasurable experience do not matter. To illustrate, according to the unitary view, the pleasure of playing with a cuddly pet, for instance, is comparable to the pleasure one may derive from other alternatives such as a walk in the park, eating a snack, reading a good book, or meeting with friends, which may all be rated equally intensely and cost approximately the same (see also Holbrook and al. (1984) on *Play as a consumption experience*). The unitary perspective of pleasure can be found in various scientific disciplines. In psychology, pleasure is a basic, pancultural dimension underlying human emotional experience (Russell, 1991). In decision science, pleasure has been equated with experience utility that individuals seek to maximize (Kahneman, Wakker, and Sarin, 1997). Utility-maximizing decisions are believed to be independent of the sources from which pleasure arose and from the affective qualities that were associated with its experience. In physiology, Cabanac (1971; 1992) defined pleasure as the pleasant sensation that arises when hunger, bodily comfort, or other visceral drives are satisfied, thereby reestablishing homeostasis. Cabanac further argued that it is the *intensity* of such pleasant sensation that guides choice between alternative, sometimes conflicting courses of action. The bulk of modern research on decision-making relies upon this unitary view of pleasure.

Contenders of the unitary view do not challenge that it may result from different antecedents and be associated with a variety of affective experiences. However, they assume that capturing such components in an organized fashion is doubly useless since antecedents and experiential qualities are idiosyncratic and untractable, and get distilled anyway into a Good/Bad summary, which ultimately drives decision-making and behavior (Kahneman, 1999). For instance, Bentham (1781/1988), whose ideas have fueled modern utility theory, recognized the diversity of hedonic experiences when he outlined no less than 14 different kinds of pleasures such as pleasures of sense, wealth, skill, and memory. As a further sign of nuances between pleasures, he listed nine subtypes under the "pleasures of the senses" category. However, neither Bentham, nor the behavioral economists and decision scientists whose work he inspired, have integrated any of this experiential richness in their theoretical formula for computing the utility derived from different hedonic experiences. Still, we cannot understand the communication pattern choices nor the nature of the value delivered to consumers by, e.g. brands such as Breitling, Tag Heuer or Patek-Philippe, or major hotel brands, if we ignore those different types of "pleasures" (Diesbach 2010b).

Modern thinkers have recently proposed their own typologies of pleasure, again founded on theoretical arguments. For instance, Duncker (1941) proposed three types of pleasure: *sensory pleasures*, for which the immediate object of pleasure is the nature of a sensation (e.g., the flavor of the wine, the feel of silk); *aesthetic pleasures*, derived from sensations expressive of something, offered by nature, or created by man (e.g., sunsets, music); and *accomplishment* pleasures represent the emotional, pleasant consciousness that something valued has come about (e.g., mastery of a skill, sport performance). The latter type of pleasure is conceptually close to Csikszentmihalyi's (1989, 1990, 1996, 2000) concept of flow, studied in different contexts such as playing, sports, working. Kubovy (1999) defined pleasures of the mind as collections of emotions distributed over time. He also acknowledged the pleasure of nurture and of belonging

to a social group as an additional variety of pleasure. Kubovy's typology parallels the one by Tiger (1992) who identified four pleasure types: *physio*-pleasures (sensations or physical impressions obtained from eating, drinking, lying in the sun), *socio*-pleasures (borne of the company of others), *psycho*-pleasures (satisfaction from individually motivated tasks or acts), and *ideo*-pleasures (borne of ideas, images, and emotions privately experienced).

Tiger's typology, like previous ones, had never been tested empirically until Dubé and LeBel (2003), building on categorization theory, demonstrated that consumers readily classify pleasurable experiences as one of four possible types: (1) *sensory (or physical) pleasure* that is chiefly borne of the pleasant sensations induced during the experience; (2) *social pleasure* derived from one's interactions with others (or lack thereof, as in the pleasure of solitude); (3) *emotional pleasure* borne of feelings, ideas, or mental images; and (4) *intellectual pleasure* from appreciating the complexity and subtleties of things around us. Moreover, these authors also showed that each pleasure is accompanied by a different portfolio of emotions and different approach strategies. For example, sensory, social and emotional pleasures are usually anticipated with relish and joy, but the post-experience often involves regret, guilt, sadness. On the other hand, intellectual pleasures (such as writing a conference paper!) show an opposite emotional composition: typically approached with doubt, procrastination, uncertainty. The positive emotions (such as accomplishment, pride, relief) associated with such intellectual pleasure typically come towards the later portions of the experience (i.e., when the paper is submitted or delivered to an audience's acclaim). That is, they are even more complex as they encapsulate both positive and negative valence. In a way, it may even be *because* an individual suffers, fights, makes efforts and reaches some objective that pleasure exists. Csikszentmihalyi for instance (1990, 1997; interview with one of the authors in 2002), insists on the fact that there must be both a high level of challenge, and the adequate (but not too high) level skills, for such pleasure to arise.

This typology of four pleasures also offers a way to think about the focal theme of experiences or what Dewey (1934/1980) called unity. This notion of unity, which for Dewey is what enables an experience to come together is akin to the idea of a theme which Pine and Gilmore (1999) argue is essential for experiences to leave a memorable impression. As Dubé and LeBel (2003) pointed out, these pleasures are not mutually exclusive (in categorization theory, this refers to the fuzzy boundaries between categories) and a single experience may well involve more than one type of pleasure. But when all is said and done, when the experience is over, consumers are likely to abstract and summarize the experience along the lines of a single pleasure. To illustrate, a meal can be remembered as a unique experience, but when probed further, a consumer might remember the exquisite sensory stimulations of the aromas and taste of the dishes he or she ate. Or another consumer may remember the social interactions amongst friends and barely remember what was eaten. For experience designer, the question then is how to position the brand experience and orchestrate the desired pleasure or "take away".

2.3 Experiential Consumption is Memorable

The four pleasures outlined earlier also offer a way to think about and manage the memorable qualities of an experience or the "take-away" that consumers may have of it. Well-crafted and successfully delivered pleasurable experiences tend to 'stick,' (Carbone and Haeckel, 1994) to be remembered by the customer. Although a single experience may involve multiple pleasures and

consumers may very well remember many small details throughout their experience, the overall meaning or 'take away' from an experience can often be summarized quite succinctly. In fact, the human brain automatically distills the succession of stimulations involved in a single experience into a gestalt focused on the overall meaning or theme. Noted philosopher John Dewey pointed out that without such a unifying theme, an experience has no rhyme or reason, and is just a succession of disjointed stimulations (Dewey, 1934). An experience that has a unifying theme is more likely to 'stick' and be remembered. When designing brand experiences, there is a temptation to add multiple stimulations in an effort to attract and "wow" consumers. However, when such components are not woven around a clear unifying theme (i.e. a distinct promise), consumers can easily be confused and the brand drifts into an experiential "black hole" and is quickly forgotten.

A memorable 'take away' must tie back to the brand promise and thus be strategically designed to meet customers' needs.
Pine and Gilmore (1999) suggest a process for engineering effective, memorable experiences. First, positive memorable experiences have a unifying theme that helps the consumer know what to expect from the experience. Second, cues and impressions must be harmonized (made congruent) to reinforce the positive nature of the experience. Third, negative cues must be eliminated. Fourth, mixing in branded memorabilia (at a price premium supported by the value attached to the experience) serves to extend the experience well after the customer has gone back home. Finally, engaging all of the senses creates a more memorable environment.

3. Assessing Hedonic Experiences: Why qualities of the experience matter
The literature on measuring pleasure or hedonic experiences has typically focused on summative retrospective evaluations. This literature shows that individuals do not remember every detail of an experience but rather summarize their experiences and remember only key features, namely the most intense and the ending moments of the experience. For instance, Redelmeier and Kahneman (1996) showed that patients undergoing colonoscopy who were asked to rate their pain every 60 seconds subsequently provided overall ratings of the entire procedures that were best described by an average of the peak discomfort and the pain at the ending moment of the procedure. This "peak-and-end" averaging also has important corollaries. First, duration of an experience does not bear on its evaluation, this is known as duration neglect (Fredrickson and Kahneman, 1993). Secondly, people tend to prefer experiences that increase over time in intensity or where the components are aligned so to create an ascending trend, this is known as sequence effect (Loewenstein and Prelec, 1993).
Notably, all this research has been performed using rather painful experiences as stimuli (e.g., hospital stays, colonoscopy, eating low fat plain yogurt). It is more than likely, though never empirically demonstrated, that in the case of truly pleasurable experiences, quantity or averaging of peak and ending moments are most likely not the sole determinants of consumers' assessments.

Early works on memory (e.g., Bartlett 1932) suggest that qualities of an experience matters, not merely in its recollection but during the actual enjoyment itself. Consider the case of Proust' *madeleine*. Obviously, qualitative features of his earlier experience mattered and were deeply imbedded in his memory, only to be triggered years later. Moreover, the nature of the recollection, the focus on the smell, taste, nostalgia also speak to the specific type of pleasurable

feeling, triggered or reinforced by the process of retrieving the souvenir, and the leverage effect created by both: the feelings of love and tenderness related to the souvenir of the mother.

Do consumers recall features of experiences and can those be somehow accounted for? To explore this question, we report now on the results of a qualitative study.

4. Exploratory Study on Pleasurable Experiences

This study was carried out to uncover lay people's scripts of everyday pleasurable experiences and examine features of pleasurable experiences. The study was performed in a large bilingual Canadian city. Participants were recruited via mass media and invited to log on to a special website in order to complete an online questionnaire that prompted to provide a brief demographic profile (via close-ended questions) and to provide rich descriptions of a recent pleasurable experience of their choice (via open-ended questions). In total, 652 participants fully completed the online questionnaire. Participant profile appears in Table 1.

Table 1   Profile of Participants

• Native language
    ○ 339 English, 304 French
• Gender
    ○ 34% men
    ○ 66% women
• Age:
    ○ 35.3% ≤ 24
    ○ 43.4% 25 - 44
    ○ 19% 45 - 64
    ○ 2.3% ≥ 65
• Marital status:
    ○ 53.2% single
    ○ 46.3% married once
• Education
    ○ High school: 38%
    ○ Bachelor: 41.3%
    ○ Graduate: 20.2%

The structure of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) was inspired from Shaver et al. (1987) who investigated lay people scripts of various emotions. The first portion of the online survey prompted participants to share demographic information; in the second portion they were invited to recall and describe via a set of specific prompts (inspired from Shaver et al.), a recent pleasurable experience. The prompts (see Appendix A) were: sources of pleasure, antecedents of pleasurable episodes, experience proper, post experience, and context of the identified event. These prompts were intended to capture as much and as richly vivid and detailed information as possible, without biasing the recollection process.

After completing the description of the event, a brief description of each pleasure type by Dubé and LeBel (2003) was provided. Participants were then asked to select the type that best fit their own evaluation or gestalt of the experience they had just described. They were also provided

with two additional options: 1) Combination (the experience cannot be reduced to a single pleasure type and involves a combination of these) and 2) Other (where participants were invited to provide a label of their own if none of the four types adequately captured the essence of their experience).

To code the narratives provided by participants in a parsimonious but representative manner, a list of features of pleasurable experiences was produced. This list was assembled using 1) 113 features of pleasurable experiences obtained from a review of the literature, and: 2) a list of features produced by 3 coders, who independently read a randomly selected sample of 60 scripts, and achieved consensus via discussions, in order to enrich the list of features from the literature. The resulting list of 255 features was then used to code the verbatim narrative of participants (Patton, 2002). The coding procedure followed closely that of Shaver et al. (1987).

Then, each account was read by 3 coders working independently. Two teams of coders were used, one team for each language. Each coder read the accounts and indicated whether each of the 255 features where present or not. A feature was deemed present in a script if two of the three coders agreed that it was present. Codes with one or fewer mentions were discarded from consideration (per Shaver et al.), leaving a concise profile of potential pleasure experience descriptors which could be sorted by relative frequency for pleasure type. Intercoder agreement was 94%. In all 643 scripts were coded, with a total of 9,360 features or 14.6 features per script.

Table 2 includes a frequency of pleasures as per participants' own label, using Dubé and LeBel (2003) pleasure types. Noticeably, the vast majority of participants (90.5%) found the four pleasure types adequate to capture the essence of the experience they had just described. This lends further credibility to these authors' typology, and the suggestions that consumers are able to freely and automatically categorize experiences as belonging to one of the four types of pleasures. Only 13 respondents selected the option "combination of pleasures" to label their narrative and when asked to elaborate, the majority indicated that combination to be sensory and emotional pleasures.

Table 2   Pleasure Types in the Corpus of Narratives

- 142 Sensory (22.1%)
- 295 Emotional (45.9%)
- 110 Social (17.1%)
- 35   Intellectual (5.4%)

- 13 Combination (2%)
    - where the most frequent combination was "sensory + emotional"
- 28 Other (4.3%)
    - where the most frequent label provided was "spiritual"
- 20 Missing entries (3.1%)

Table 3 contains the top 10 most popular pleasure experiences by order of frequency. Noticeably food and eating, often cited as one of the most important pleasure in life in the literature, appears at the top of the list in second position, after being with a loved one (not in a sexual encounter, which was a separate code).

Table 3   Top 10 most popular sources of pleasure

Sources of pleasure	Frequency	%
Being with loved one / partner or romantic interest	124	19.3
Eating / Food	86	13.4
Being with People / Socializing	83	12.9
Sexual Experience	66	10.3
Family affair, seeing family members	63	9.8
Sports and/or Physical activity	55	8.5
Leisure Travel / Vacation	52	8.1
Nature / Beauty of natural surrounding	43	7.0
Drinking	43	6.7
Celebration (e.g., birthday party, baby shower, etc.)	37	5.8

5. Conclusion: Future Research Directions

We have tried to propose here one more step in the literature on emotions and marketing, to better understand the nature of the emotions that may trigger, come together with, or come as a result of, consumption situations in an experiential approach.

It is important to highlight in which aspect Experiential value is related to emotional outcomes, but also that under different aspects, the marketing literature on affective reactions give only a limited, maybe narrow, view, about which emotions, and how emotional reactions, can create value and impact consumption behaviours such as buying/choosing, becoming loyal, affiliating, etc.. We actually believe that a major difference between how the emotions are studied in the affective literature in marketing and psychology, and in experiential marketing, is that consumers seem to have a higher level of understanding, consciousness, of their very emotional reactions, in experiential contexts. This is why a black-box model can hardly, or cannot, hold in an experiential context – but that very point would deserve per se another literature review, and it will be the subject of a next article. And this is also probably why the nature of such emotions can be analysed more in-depth in the case of experiential consumption. We point out that in particular, the emotion called Pleasure would deserve far more attention and deepening. This would be beneficial for a better conceptual understanding by academics, and also for helping

practitioners to better monitor the consumption experience, with products or with services (LeBel 2005; Diesbach 2010).

We have then presented some piece of literature that help to better capture qualitative nuances of pleasure. Several typologies are commented, and we believe that the most supported from a scientific point of view, in an experiential context, is composed of 4 dimensions: *Sensory*, *Emotional* (the name could probably be improved in the future), *Social* and *Intellectual* pleasures. Further study, deepening on the concept, integrating very different consumption situations, and capitalizing on some methodological issues not addressed in the latest publications on the issue by the literature (e.g. in Brakus and al. 2009), will be conducted in the next years. We will also try to verify the robustness of such typology in online, and not only in offline, contexts.

As a conclusion, we state that a better understanding of the nature of emotions and particularly of Pleasure, in an experiential context, will be useful from a scientific and managerial point of view. As the authors show a particular interest into the hospitality-related, experiential value, clear applications can be immediately seen, such as better understanding consumer choices among alternative options: choosing between two experiential categories with similar costs (e.g., a trip to a Casino vs a day at the spa) but also understanding choices within a category (out of 2 spa choices, which one do I select?). Here anticipated pleasure (cite Mellers papers) is not the only determinant... mental images, specific qualitative features matter in shaping choice and preference.

Lastly, we highlight the fact that it is important to capture qualitative nuances to understand retrospective judgements, crucial in consumer repeat and affiliation behaviours. And again, quality matters, that is, "valence" is not enough - again, quantity is not the sole determinant.

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APPENDIX A
Online Survey

Demographic Questions:
• Your age
• The highest level of education you've completed so far
• Which language do you speak most frequently at home?
• What is your main occupation?
• What is your marital status?
• How many children do you have?
• If you have children, how old is your oldest child?
• Height, Weight
• How many people do you currently live with?
• In what country did you spend most of your childhood?
• How would you characterize the cultural background in which you grew up (i.e., the background that marked your childhood and teenage years)?
• How would you characterize the cultural background with which you most closely identify at this point in your life?
• How would you describe the religion or faith that you currently adhere to?
• How often do you attend religious service?
• What is your total individual income?

Now, take a few minutes to recall a recent experience that brought you pleasure. This may be any object, activity, person, event, purchase, or anything else that brought you pleasure. This may be something you consumed or experienced in private or in public, alone or with other people. Try to recall in as much detail as possible how you came upon this experience, what exactly happened during that experience, how you felt emotionally or physically, how you interacted with others if applicable, how you felt afterwards, etc. Every detail counts.

DO NOT RUSH THROUGH THIS. Take your time and try to recall as many details as possible. Now that you have a clear recollection of the experience, please provide:

1. A description of your experience: Write down in detail what happened to cause you to feel pleasure.
2. How did you come upon this experience (what mood were you in? how did it start? Etc.)
3. What were you feeling and thinking, if anything, at the time of the experience?
4. What did you say? What did you do? How did you react?
5. What physical signs or changes in your body occurred during this experience?
6. Who was there? Were you alone? Accompanied?
7. How did you feel when it was over? How did you feel after the experience?
8. What pleasure label would you give your experience?