HOW COULD EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING BE THE FUTURE OF FRENCH CONVENIENCE STORES?

The Implication of Experiential Marketing on Customer Consumption

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this Master's Thesis is to study the overall atmosphere of retailers and to analyse the relationships between them and their customers. In a fast-moving environment more and more challenged by new competitors and the amount of retailers existing, the evolution and transformation of supermarkets became unavoidable. Is the experiential marketing the supermarket of tomorrow? Then how could experiential marketing improve the results of French supermarkets or convenience stores? And what would be the implication of Experiential Marketing on Customer Consumption? This is what this Master's Thesis tries to find out

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Paris, 2nd of December 2017,
Harold WINLING

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Background

In ten years, the number of supermarkets was multiplied by two in the French capital (307 in 2005 vs. 649 in 2015). This number reflects the dynamism and the huge increase of offer in France. Nevertheless, the increasing number of supermarkets doesn’t mean that there is a true differentiation among retailers. Indeed, there are only a few differences between two competitors (such as Carrefour and Auchan for instance).

During a very long time the only difference between two retailers would be the difference of private label (own by this or this specific retailer). In this specific framework, how could a consumer voice a preference for one or another retailer? Simultaneously to the multiplication of retailers, French consumers tend to watch out for the products they are consuming. Three main trends can be evoked: favour a short cycle (be close from the producer), eat better (according to the ingredients of the food) and eat healthier.

This three trends will probably influence the way retailers manage their offer: not only because they should offer better products that will suit the consumption habits of the shoppers, but also because they must differentiate themselves from other retailers. Of course, some specialized supermarkets already have alternatives offers (Biocoop, Bio c Bon, Naturalia, …) but they represent a very small part of the market share. One of the limits of these retailers is that they don’t fulfil the role of classic supermarkets. Indeed, they don’t offer a very large range of products and may not offer the choice customers are expecting.

This awareness could have two effects on the average basket of a consumer. On the one hand, it could reduce the share of unhealthy snacks (chips, candies, chocolate, …). On the other hand, it could also reduce the share of impulse buying. Indeed, consumers think more about the products they buy and are more suspicious towards the products they find in store.

Eventually, retailers are also challenged by new emerging competitors that know a two-digit growth: the ecommerce. Indeed, even if the Drive is developing in France, giant of the internet start to provide customer new solutions. As instance, Amazon decided to open a new concept stores without any checkout. An application automatically calculates the products customers put in their baskets and the payment is made automatically by the application once the shopper exit the supermarket. Even if this offer is only available in one supermarket in the USA. Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon confesses his volunteer to challenge every market in the world.

But, retailers are not the only one affected by the increase of offers and shops. Specialized stores also face a tough competition in their markets. In order to differentiate themselves from the competitors, they decided to offer customers an immersive experience. Thereby, some groups such as Starbucks, Nespresso or Natures & Découvertes (in France) decided to create a special atmosphere in order to please their customers. In order to do so, firms arouse the senses of the shoppers to immerse themselves on a new universe. Most of the time, firms focus on a sense to develop this atmosphere. This technique known as sensorial marketing can be very useful to attract new shoppers, but also to increase the fidelity of customers. As an example, a lot of bakeries broadcast a perfume of fresh breads or pastries in order to attract people from the street in the bakery (by arousing their hungriness).

But in the case of the three groups mentioned before, they even go further by playing with several senses of the customer (sometimes the five) in order to improve their immersion. In this case, sensorial marketing becomes experiential marketing. In this new "world" created by the brands, shoppers are not passive, but actors of their purchasing action. Indeed, several senses are in a state of alert. This immersion will build the image of the brand and will induce (or not) loyalty of the customer.

Whereas traditional stores understood the need of a differentiation among them, hypermarkets and supermarkets don't understand yet the importance of this concept. It is necessary to say that the role of hypermarkets is before all to offer a wide range of products in order to satisfy the customer by offering the product he wants. But people are changing their mind: more and more people perceive going in a supermarket as a chore. According to Kantar Worldpanel, time spent in store decreased from 90 to 35 minutes in the last thirty years (1971 vs. 2011). People are fleeing the huge hypermarkets and prefer going shopping in a convenient store next to their place. One of the other problems of hypermarkets is the space non-food products are taking up (vs. their turnover). The archaic model of the aseptic hypermarkets and the lack of changes and adaptability of hypermarkets (it takes up to three months to integrate a new SKU in a store) dissuade customers to go shopping. (Deluzarche, 2011)

2. Research Question and Objective

Attract more people and increase the time they spent in supermarkets appears as the cornerstone of growth and consumption. In order to succeed, supermarkets should lead to a burst from the retailers. They should overhaul their offer and propose a new and differentiating concept that will take fidelity up again and bring back people in store. If this solution appears as particularly difficult for the biggest stores, it should be the top priority of convenient store whose role is to offer daily fresh products for city-dwellers.
Of course one of the limit of the renewal of such big stores is the price renovations cost. It would not be that benefit for hypermarkets to reinvent the concept of every store (or at least it would take a lot of time to pay off this works). But it will be an increasing pressure with time and growth of the e-commerce sector.

As we saw previously, people are favouring short cycle and convenient stores next to their place. The real challenge for retailers is to attract more people in convenient stores. In order to do so, they must differentiate themselves and offer a fresh new concept that will catch customer’s attention. Many stores succeeded to arouse interests of shoppers thanks to their concept stores and thanks to experiential marketing. Would that be possible in supermarkets? What could be the future of convenient stores? Is the supermarket of tomorrow an experiential store? Should supermarkets re-enchant the process of shopping by offering a new shopping experience where the customer is actor of his shopping process through the experience he is living in store? Eventually, how could experiential marketing improve results of French supermarkets or convenience stores?
Finding an answer to this question is crucial if retailers want to keep growing and want to increase their market share in a more and more competitive universe.

3. Theoretical Framework

By studying the future of supermarkets, it is important to take into consideration a lot of different factors. I assume that the future of convenient stores is experiential marketing. Experiential marketing is the result of the retailer's strategy and goes through renovation of existing selling points. It involves a lot of different functions such as strategy planners, but also store managers or marketers. The aim is to create a new environment to please the customer and to win his loyalty. By re-enchanting the point of sale and earning loyalty, retailers will improve their turnovers and their results thanks to the raise of consumption.

Even if the schema seems easy, customer behaviour should be taken into considerations. Indeed, it is not as easy to plan consumer behaviour. Of course, several studies were lead to analyse the reaction of customers for a stimuli. Nevertheless, it is harder to predict and to be sure that every customer will follow the same behaviour. Indeed, everybody perceives senses a different way and the reaction depends of a lot of factors (mood, culture, image of the brand, …). Moreover, there is almost no study that takes an interest in a multisensory atmosphere. One of the biggest gap of the literature is the analysis of a retail environment where several senses may be aroused. What would be the strongest sense? Would this sense influence more the purchasing act?
I think that it could be interesting to study consumer behaviour and experiential marketing in a whole. As a consequence, I would focus more on a global atmosphere in store rather than focusing on a single sense. Whereas it is very difficult to pervade a special atmosphere in a huge place such as a hypermarket, it is easier to create a special and pleasant atmosphere in convenient stores (and this is what most of the stores are trying to do). Consequently, my thesis will mainly focus on these convenient stores where experiential marketing is more pushed than in big point of sales.
The figure 1. Shows what is the thesis focusing on. This schema enables to understand a little better what will be done before and is an introduction to the next section.

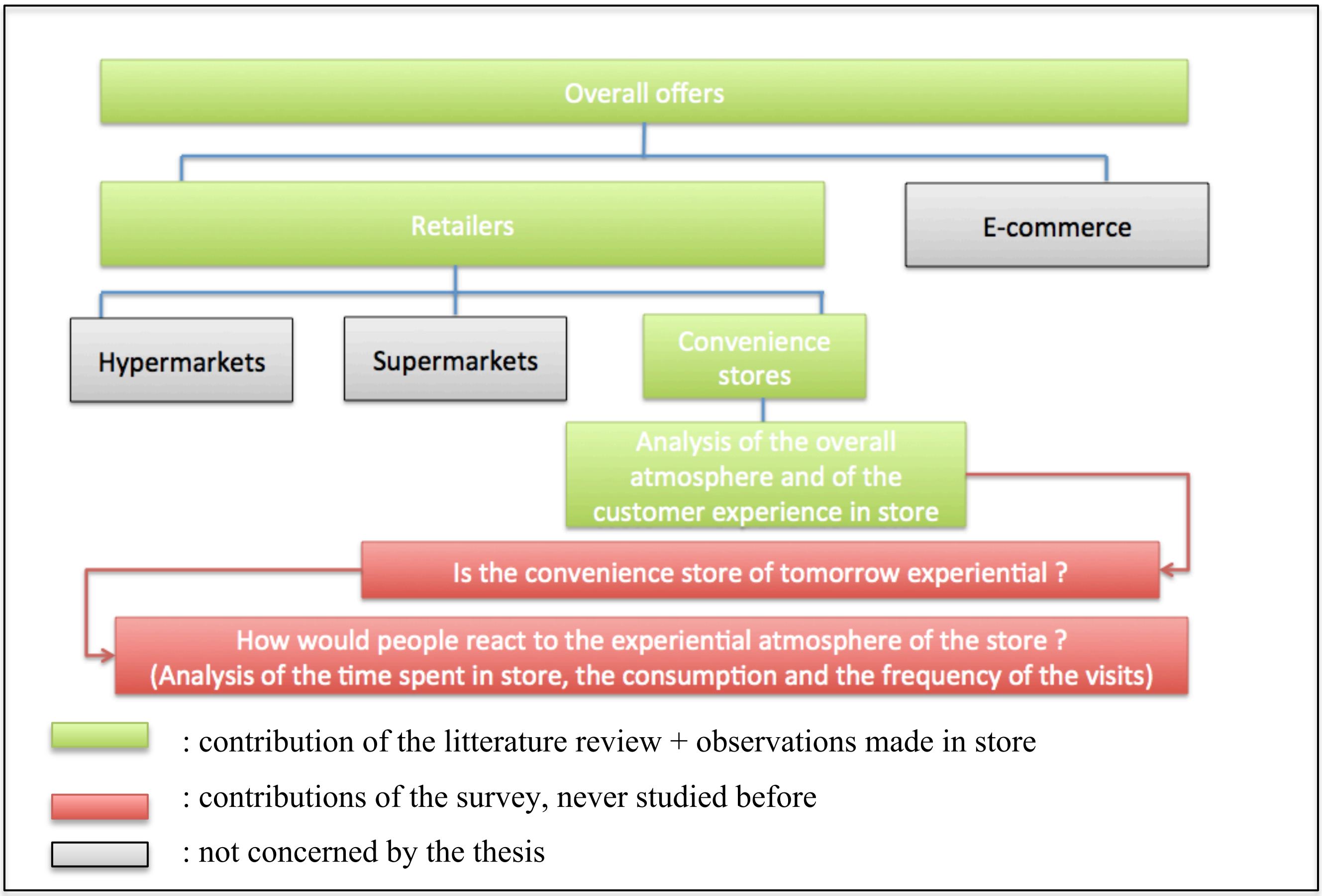

Figure 1. Conceptual & Theoretical framework of the thesis

4. Definition and Delimitation

First of all, it's important to understand what is "Experiential Marketing" and what is the difference between Experiential Marketing and Traditional Marketing.

Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) are the first one to talk about the concept of "experience" in the field of consumer behaviour. In this first model they integer the notion of unconsciousness during the decision process, but they also highlight the symbolic and hedonic elements of consumptions. As a consequence, it is important to underline the difference between the experiential approach (based on the sensorial, hedonic and emotional dimensions of the consumption) and the cognitivist one (based on economics principles)(Hetzel and Volle, 2002).

Same and Larimo (2012) describe Experiential Marketing as a “marketing planning tool [...] concerned on tactical and operational level actions where the main question is how to do marketing (campaign) experientially. “

But it may be interesting to go a little further and to dress a real frame for the Experiential Marketing and its implication.

1.1. Difference between Traditional Marketing and Experiential Marketing

Bernd Schmitt (1999) establishes strong bases of what is Experiential Marketing. He tried to set a strategic framework for the Experiential Marketing and intended to underline the differences it may exist with Traditional Marketing.

On the one hand, Traditional Marketing is characterized by four main characteristics.

First, Traditional Marketing is focused on features and benefits. Brands just try to find the key features that customers prefer and want to satisfy them as much as possible by providing them the best features. Features is one of the main point of differentiation between brands. That’s the reason why this characteristic is so important in Traditional Marketing.

Second, the product category and the competition is narrowly defined by traditional marketers. As I experienced in one of my previous experience, brands only focused on their main competitors and decide not to have a wide vision of competition. Then, during my internship for Kellogg’s, more precisely for the brand Pringles, I only had to focus on some categories of products. As a consequence, Kellogg’s decided to compare Pringles performance only vs. other “biscuit tiles” which is a very narrow category vs. the whole appetizer offer.

Third, customers are perceived as Rational Decision Makers. In this framework, customers are supposed to follow five steps well-defined: recognition of a need, search of information, evaluation of the products answering the needs, purchasing the best product according to their needs and consumption of the products.

Four, methodologies of analysis are Analytical, Quantitative and Verbal.

On the other hand, Experiential Marketing is based on four other characteristics.

First, experiential marketers focus on customer experiences. Experience is defined as "an economic offering and an interaction between the company/brand/service, and customer, who perceive and meaningfully experience it" (Same & Larimo, 2012). As a consequence, Experiential Marketing is way more based on emotional perceptions than rational ones. Experience is supposed to offer emotional, cognitive, behavioural and relational values rather than functional values delivered by Traditional Marketing.
Second, Experiential Marketing is more related to a context than to a category of products. As a consequence, a group like Mondelēz would provide a greater experience for the customer by thinking "after-school snack" rather than product category by product category (chocolate, biscuit, beverages, candies, …). We could perfectly imagine a huge Point Of Sales (POS) in store providing solution for a full and balanced snack offering different brands and product of Mondelēz. And indeed, this is the case of Mondelēz that realizes cross POS during their big highlights (such as « Back to School » or « Delice Days »).
Third, Customers are not only rationally driven, but also emotionally driven. Nowadays, all the brands understood this point. This is the reason why we can see more and more in-store samplings.
Four, contrary to Traditional Marketing, Experiential Marketing uses a wide quantity of tools and methods to evaluate the satisfaction of customers.

Now that we fixed the differences between Traditional Marketing and Experiential Marketing, why not explaining more in depth what are the concepts of the Experiential Marketing?

1.2. Characteristics of Experiential Marketing

Bouchet (2004) describes consumption experience as a social construction, which would be the product of an interaction between individual(s), place and consumption practices.

For Schmitt (1999), there are two main characteristics: the Strategic Experiential Modules (SEMS), broader than the Sensitive Marketing, and the Experience Providers (ExPros), which is linked with the brand (logos, adds, packaging, advertisings, websites, etc.)

As mentioned before, SEMs include Sensitive Marketing, but also affective, cognitive, physical, behavioural and cultural experiences.

Sensitive Marketing induces to use different atmospheric factors to arouse emotional or cognitive reactions of consumers or employee in order to favour the act of purchase. (Daucé and Rieunier, 2002). The atmosphere may be defined as “the effort to design buying environment to produce specific emotional effects on the buyer that enhance his purchase probability” (Kotler, 1974). Kotler adds that atmosphere affects four of our five senses (the view, the hearing, the touch and the sense of smell) experienced at the same time. Kottler also makes a distinction between “intended atmosphere”, the one that a marketer tries to imbue in a space; and the “perceived atmosphere”, the one actually experienced by the customer that will vary from a customer to another (and from a culture to another).

Derbaix (1987) describes the atmosphere as “an organisation of the space in an emotional way in order to create feelings of well-being, welcome, pleasure, discounts, etc.”

SENSE is considered by Schmitt as one of the SEMs. The idea is to create different experiences through the five human senses. This experience should be obvious, but always renewed to intrigue the consumer.

FEEL is another of the SEMs of Schmitt. The aim of experiential marketer is to create affective experiences that will induce at least small positive moods regarding the brand, and maybe strong positive emotions. The most difficult part is to understand how a particular emotion can be provoked thanks to a particular stimulus. Schmitt also raises the question of international campaign. Indeed, stimuli will differ from a culture to another, making it difficult to create global « feel » campaigns.

THINK is the third of the SEMs. Think Marketing is commonly used for high-technology products. The aim of Think Marketing is to call out to customer and to actively engage him in a creative way by surprising him or provoking him.

ACT Marketing is a SEM that tries to show customer another way to do things or to have interactions.

Finally, RELATE Marketing gathers all the previous SEMs and tries to set a product or a brand up as a full way of life. Relate marketing links customers to a social group, positively perceived by other individuals, and pushes them to improve themselves.

According to Schmitt, several successful companies use and combine two or more SEMs to turn the experience more appealing.

For Poulsson and Kale (2004), to provide meaningful utility, an experience should be "perceived as personally relevant and should include elements of novelty, surprise, learning, and engagement". These are the key of a successful marketing experience.

As with Traditional Marketing, Experiential Marketing tries to target customers. Nevertheless, targeting consumer is even more difficult due to individual differences of culture, perception, etc., I will try to express the existing differences in the second point of the second part.

Experiential Marketing tries to induce changes in attitude or behaviour. The attitude of customers is based on three components: cognitive (mental images, understanding and interpretations), affective (feelings and emotions), and conative (intentions, actions, behaviour). Most of the time, attitude is driven by the sequence cognitive → affective → conative (Clow and Baack, 2007). Many studies have shown that Atmosphere may influence the customers regarding their behaviour, but also regarding their emotions. Would it be possible to forecast and decide customer behaviour in store?

Experiential marketing is a very wide topic. Nevertheless, retailers should really give importance to this subject, which is more and more omnipresent in our daily life. As the topic is broad, it is important to focus a little more in order to have more precise results. Experiential marketing calls on several senses (sometimes the five) to create a special atmosphere where customers will be plunged into an experience through its shopping session. As a consequence, I will only focus on the global atmosphere of stores and not on a sense in particular. I will try to synthesize and to establish the experience retailers want to provide to their customers. On the other hand, for my observations, I will only focus on a kind of point of sales: French convenience stores.

Convenience stores are defined as stores next to city-dweller places where customer can go shopping 24/7. One of the biggest groups of convenience stores is the monster 7-Eleven. Convenience stores are a little different in France, especially due to the law. As example, opening a shop on Sunday is subject to a strong regulation: there is a very few store that are allowed to open every Sunday. Moreover, there is also a strong regulation about late hours in France. French convenient stores may be better defined as a compact food market selling also daily life products (such as hygienic products, cleaning products, …)

These French Convenience Stores perfectly understood the loss of impetus of hypermarkets and decided to focus on a smaller number of products next to the door of its shoppers. Some retailers also try to create a special atmosphere on these stores. This is the reason why I will focus on the convenience stores.

5. Research Method

I decided to conduct two studies in order not only to certify the evolution of the French convenience stores and the fact that they truly are creating an atmosphere, but also to measure the impact of this experiential marketing on the customers.
The results of the thesis will consequently be divided on two axes: first the observations, its results and its implications. Second, internet surveys to make sure that people are really looking for experiential marketing when they go shopping and the impact experiential marketing may have on their traffic and consumption. The survey will also try to find in which store consumers enjoy going shopping and what are the most important criterion during the purchasing act according to them.

5.1. Observations

Convenience store are a little late regarding experiential marketing and regarding the immersion of customers in an experience. As a consequence, I will first focus on the existing stores that are offering a truly innovative experience. I decided to focus on famous brands known by almost everybody. This fame confirms the success of their experiential marketing or at least the fidelity of the customers. Moreover, some of them are very well known by customer as a place where you are living a full experience (e.g. Abercrombie & Fitch). By benchmarking and looking at the atmosphere these experience stores are providing, I will try to portrait the typical experience store. Could these practices be applied on supermarkets or convenience store? Are these practices the future of convenience store? I will try to find out the answer of these questions.

Then, I will go on two different retailers to analyse the reality of the field and to see if they are applying sensitive, potentially experiential marketing. The two retailers I will visit are Franprix and Simply Market.

Franprix was an old-fashioned convenience store. Franprix belongs to the group Casino and had trouble to attract people in store due to the old furniture. Jean-Paul MOCHET (director of the retailer) put a lot of effort to renew the image of the brand. Franprix offers now a big park of renovated stores based on services. By the end of the year, the group Casino should renovate all the Franprix. The results are astonishing: sales grew averagely by 8.5% and up to 20% in some stores. The “Mandarine” concept (in reference to the dominant colour of the retailer) is successful in Paris. Service is the cornerstone of this redesigned concept. Indeed, Franprix offers special “racks” such as a rotisserie or an orange juice machine now very characteristic of the store. They count seventeen different “racks” available. Every store chooses between 3 to 8 “racks”. Moreover, some stores are even testing “flying checkout” where employee cash people while they are queuing. Another characteristic of these “Mandarine” stores is the share of private labels (private labels knew a growth of 16% in value in 2016) that increases a lot the turnover of the stores. Eventually, Franprix decided to ban every form of display, hook marker or POS. Franprix is described as one of the most successful store renovation. But this renovation has a price (around 1000€/m²) that every retailer is not willing to pay.

On the contrary, Simply Market is still an old-fashioned range of stores. It belongs to the group Auchan. Auchan is planning to renew little by little the Simply Market into “Auchan Supermarché”. Nowadays, Simply Market do not make any effort regarding the furnitures. There are mainly constituted of classical white shelves customers used to see in the 1990’s and quite a lot of POS. It brings extra storage and increase the number of SKU in store but it limits the consistency of a global atmosphere.

5.2. Surveys

The survey will be conducted after the observations made in the stores providing experiential marketing and the observations made in convenience store.

The survey must validate several points. First it must make measure how high people enjoy going shopping. Then, it should show in which kind of stores people like going shopping. Afterwards, it should also emphasize the most important criterion for customers when they go shopping. Plus, the survey should make sure what people are expecting regarding convenience store and how they see supermarket evolving (would they become experiential stores or not). Eventually, it should establish how consumption, frequency and time spent in store would evolve if the supermarket of tomorrow is an experiential one.

6. Structure of the study

The first chapter, which is very close from the end by now, tries to give a portrayal of experience marketing, what have be done so far and what should be done in the future. This chapter clearly underlines the problematic French convenience stores are facing. Shopping is perceived as a duty by customers who do not take any pleasure to go in supermarkets. On the one hand we have convenience store that are less and less appealing and takes a lot of time to renovate them. On the other hand, some stores already understood the importance of the atmosphere on customers and use (maybe go to far) with experience marketing. Key concepts, objectives of the thesis and delimitation of the research have been voiced in this first chapter.

The second chapter is way more theoretical than the other ones. This part tries to summarize most of the researches that have be done regarding experiential marketing and the reaction of customers that are facing the atmosphere in store. It also raises the problem supermarkets are facing by implementing experiential marketing.

The third chapter is the cornerstone of the thesis. Indeed, the third part of the study focuses on research context, the case description, but also on the research strictly speaking. This chapter is divided in two parts. The first one is about the observations I made in experiential stores and in the actual convenience stores. The second one is about the survey I created consequently to the observations I made before. The aim of the survey is to confirm (or not) what should be done in convenience store and what people enjoy while going shopping. Even if I doubt that a model could emerge from the survey, I think that we will have a broad picture of the way supermarket should evolve and what it will induce regarding consumption, frequency and duration of shopping.

The fourth and the fifth part of the thesis explain the findings and results of the study (thanks to the observations and to the survey ensued from it). There is also a part focusing on the limit of my thesis.

II. THEORY (LITERATURE REVIEW)

1. The Influence of Atmosphere on Customers

There are three main cases for which the atmosphere of the point of sales is particularly important (Kotler, 1973):

- This is a more and more important marketing tool due to the increase of competitors in the market. Atmosphere may be a way to attract clients and to win their loyalty.
- Atmosphere is a differentiation tool between brands and companies that may explain price differences.
- Atmosphere is a powerful marketing tool when the target of a product is very accurate.

Now that we have a clear overview of what is Experiential Marketing, let's focus on the research that were done regarding the atmosphere in store. As we already saw before, there are two big families of reaction due to the atmosphere: behavioural reactions and emotional & cognitive reactions.

1.1. Behavioural Reactions to Atmosphere

Regarding the behavioural reactions, two kind of customer behaviour may be examined: physical reactions and reactions linked with the purchasing act.

1.1.1. Physical reactions to Atmosphere

Many people studied the influence of different atmospheric factors on consumption. Would a parameter such as music or perfume have an influence on consumers in store? Many studies demonstrated that customer would stay longer in a place thanks to music broadcasted by the store (Yalch & Spangenberg, 1993; Rieunier, 2000). The same assessment was made with fragrance diffusion (Knasko, 1989; Hirch, 1995). More than staying longer, a study also shown that customers consume faster when they hear background music than when there is no music (Roballay et al., 1985).

As mentioned before, it is difficult to measure the relationship between a stimuli and an emotion. Nevertheless, some researchers looked for the link between atmospheric stimuli and behaviour reaction in store. The conclusion of those studies were pretty interesting. Milliman (1982) showed that people move faster in store when the music tempo is high, when McElrea and Standing (1992) demonstrated that people consume faster when the tempo of the music was high. Sight was also studied by researchers: Areni and Kim (1993) concluded that consumers subjected to strong light in a wine cellar take more products in their hand than those who are subject to a weak light.

Nevertheless, Experiential Marketing is sensitive. This is one of the issue raised by Schmitt (1999): if one of a SEMs is too intense, it may exist a risk of overdoing that can reject customer instead of appealing him. A study of Smith and Curnow (1996) confirmed the doubts raised by Schmitt. Indeed, they demonstrated that people shorten their shopping if the music broadcasted is too strong (vs. low music). As a consequence, Experiential Marketing rests on balance.

Such examples can suggest that people are more or less receptive to Experiential Marketing and that they can be appeal or not by concept stores using sensitive marketing. It is before all a question of Emotional Reaction to Atmosphere that I will develop later (2.2.1.)

1.1.2. Purchasing Reaction to Atmosphere

Atmospheric factors do not have only an impact on traffic, but also on the consumption and on the kind of product customer purchase due to the atmospheric stimuli. Thus, consumer not only consume more if the stimuli are appropriated, they also spend more money. Areni and Kim (1993) showed that light is not the single parameters that influence customers in a wine cellar. Consumer will tend to spend more money if they listen to classical music. According to the researchers, the explanation comes from the symbolic content of the music: classical music would be related to the universe of luxury and would have raised the acceptability level of the prices. Unfortunately, they also show that this model was not applicable to the supermarket universe: broadcasting classical music dissuaded purchasing instead of encouraging it. As a consequence, we should keep in mind that codes used in the retail network are not the same than those used in specialized networks.

Others studies were conducted to show that the amount of money spent on money and food were higher with a low tempo of music rather than with a speedy one (Caldwell and Hibbert, 1999). Based on these observations, Daucé and Rieunier (2002) took the example of the French refined supermarket "Bon Marché" in Paris. This top retailer use all the codes linked with the luxury industry (classical music, noble materials, etc.) in order to different itself from the competition and gain market shares.

1.2. Emotional & Cognitive Reactions to Atmosphere

Experiential Marketing not only arouses physical and observable reactions on people, but also internal reactions. These internal reactions can be split in two different categories: emotional reactions and cognitive reactions.

1.2.1. Emotional Reactions to Atmosphere

The environmental psychologists Mehrabian and Russell (1974) created a three dimension emotional system measure: Pleasure / Arousal / Dominance (PAD). They wanted to study the effects of store atmosphere on shopping behaviour. They came with the conclusion that every single person react to a specific environment and adopt either a approach or avoidance behaviour for this environment. These two behaviours are the results of a personal and emotional reaction to the atmosphere. Then, these emotional reactions can be classified according to two main dimensions (Pleasure and Arousal), and, for some cases, a third one: Dominance. Pleasure and Arousal attract or not customers in pleasant environments (vs. unpleasant). This PAD model considers that people feeling pleasure and arousal will spend more time and money in retail stores.

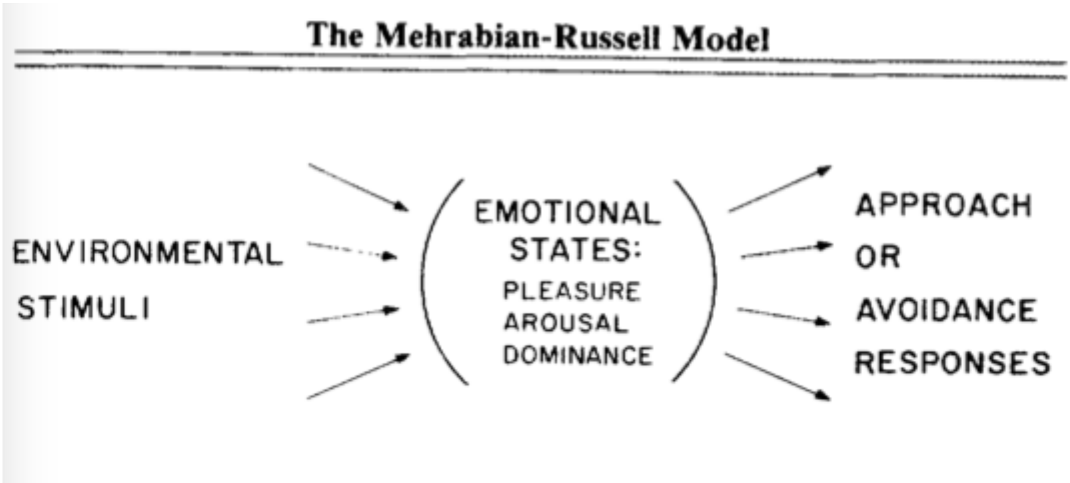

Figure 2. The Mehrabian-Russell Model (PAD)

Donovan and Rossiter (1982) wanted to test the Mehrabian-Russell model in a real retail environment. They came to the conclusion that Arousal can, indeed, increase the time spent in store and the willingness to speak with sales persons. They underlined that the stimulus creating Arousal are identifiable as play of light or music. Nevertheless, this arousal feeling only works in pleasant store atmosphere. On contrary, in unpleasant atmosphere, arousal may have a negative influence on consumption and time spending. They conclude that by mastering the in-store environment, retailers can predict in-store behavioural intentions based on the Pleasure-Arousal part of the model. The two researchers also showed that Dominance parameter does not really apply for the retail store environments and prefer to requalify the term as “Persuasiveness” of store atmosphere. That would induce that the model turns a little more cognitive than emotional.

Daucé and Rieunier (2002) divided Emotional Reactions to Atmosphere in three categories: approval reaction, euphoria reaction and stimulation reaction.

(1) The approval reaction is especially true for hearing and scent marketing. The purpose is to create a certain atmosphere in order to create a pleasant feeling for the customer. Sibéril (1994) demonstrated that music may influence client enjoyment, and that when the music please customer, they spend more money, especially on unplanned purchases. Yalch and Spangenberg (1993) also showed that people would spend more time in-store if they like the music they hear. Regarding the scent marketing, the same conclusion was made. Leenders, Smidts and Langeveld (1999) concluded that a lemon-

flavoured odour (vs. none) enjoyed more customers. Moreover, those customers would also perceived better the store and rate better the quality of the products sold.

(2) Daucé and Rieunier (2002) took the example of the fashion store “Le Printemps” in Paris to explain what is euphoria reaction and how retailers used it. They claim that Le Printemps plays Disco or Dance music during the Crazy Day (a discount day) in order to exhilarate customer and stimulate impulse buying.

(3) Many researches in psychology showed that people have physiological reactions to environmental stimulus. This is called stimulation reaction. Ledoux (1986) and Westen afterwards (2000) demonstrated that environmental stimulus might end in two kind of processes that may create an emotion.

The first process is instinctive and generates innate answers shared by all the individuals. Those intuitions push people to act a stereotypical way. As a consequence, marketers are trying to reach this instinctive point to raise its impulsiveness (and impulse buying).

The second process is slower, controllable and different from a person to another. In this process, environmental stimulus is send to the cortex where they are deciphered. As a consequence, everyone lives a different experience due to its prior experience and culture.

Tisserand (1988) succeeds to create an inventory of the scents ranked according to their soothing or stimulating capacities. For instance, jasmine and mint are used as stimulators when chamomile and lavender are relaxing.

1.2.2. Cognitive Reactions to Atmosphere

There is two kinds of Cognitive Reactions to Atmosphere according to Daucé and Rieunier (2002): (1) Inference Reaction and (2) Evocation Reaction.

(1) When the consumer cannot evaluate the intrinsic quality of a product or has no reference to a previous experience with the product or the retailer, he realizes inferences thanks to the extrinsic characteristics of the product (Zeithaml, 1988). Yalch and Spangenberg (1993) underlined that a cloth store diffusing light music will be considered as bottom of the range. In the same vein, people placed in perfumed room rate merchandises better than those in a not-perfumed atmosphere (Spangenberg, Crowley and Henderson, 1996). Eventually, touch sensitiveness may help retailers to reach their target positioning: fabric evokes intimacy, stone reminds solidity, wood makes people think to heat and iron calls customer back technical nature (Declairieux, 1998).

(2) Experiential marketing, and more precisely, sensitive marketing can create a special atmosphere and a strong power of evocation. It exists a significant relationship between the music broadcasted in a supermarket and the products customers will choose to buy (French vs. German music), this was especially true for wine origins (North, Hargreaves and McKendrick, 1997). Regarding scent marketing, the odour diffusion of a product produced a raise of the sales (10 to 25%) and raise customer awareness on the category of product (Daucé, 2000). This is the reason why a supermarket such as Leclerc of Saint Sever in France gives of a tide odour in the fish shelves to raise consumer willingness to buy oysters (Pierrot, 1999).

Even if of all of these sensorial studies are very interesting from a theoretical or operational part, they all face a big limit: they only focus on a single environmental dimension (music, odour, colour, etc.)

Guichard, Lehu and Vanheems (1998) invite marketers to be careful regarding the conclusion of olfactory researches and are among the first researchers to explore the trail of a polysensorial consumer. On the same vein, Divard and Urien (2001) question the results of the studies on Colour marketing due to the differences of results and interpretation but also due to the differences regarding the experimentations.

Mattila and Wirtz (2001) are among the firsts to study the importance of the atmosphere in its whole. They came with the conclusion that a good combination of music and odours (in term of arousal degree) improve the perceived experience of shoppers. The holistic approach was already studies by Bitner (1992) through the conceptualization of Servicescapes. He showed that customer perceived environment in its whole, but that they are able to distinguish a specific arousing dimension from the environment.

Lemoine (2003) studied the effect of the atmosphere on customers, not only by exploring the sensorial dimensions of the store, but also by looking at the social and design environment of the store. Atmosphere of the point of sale should be considered as multidimensional concept with three main components: ambient factors, design factors and social factors. Atmosphere is an excellent tool for transactional marketing (raise of the time spent in store and raise of the amount of money spent) and relational marketing (experiential positioning thanks to the hedonic situation provoked by the atmosphere or raise of the loyalty degree of customers thanks to the good perception of the environment in store) (Lemoine, 2003).

2. The uniqueness of the Experience

Experiential Marketing urges Brand Manager to create and provide for customers brand experiences. Marketers can create experiential contexts where customers can immerse themselves to live a brand experience. Nevertheless, marketers cannot create and manage customer experience due to the uniqueness of the experience (Carù and Cova, 2006).

As mentioned at the end of the 1.2., every experience is unique due to prior experience but also differences of culture and perceptions among customers. Nevertheless, we can divide differences in two big groups: individual differences and situational differences.

2.1. Individual differences

I think that it is commonly admitted that everybody has a different perception of the environment. Some people wear glasses, others are colour-blinds, some may have a sense of smell underdeveloped, … As an example, who does not remember the “war” about the colour of the dress? Is it black and blue or white and gold (see Figure 3.). Our brain tricks us and this is one of the reasons why everyone is experiencing something different in the same condition.

Figure 3. What is the colour of the dress?

Many researches were done about individual differences in term of perception. If we look at the olfactory sense, it exists a difference between men and women: women seem to be more sensible to odours than men (Moch and Bonnefoy, 1997). Moreover, it appears that after 30-40 years, the detection threshold of the olfactory sense decreases (Guichard, Lehu and Vanheems, 1998).

There are not only sensorial differences, but also psychological differences linked with the culture, the entourage, the formation, etc. or what we call socio-demographic and psychographic differences among people. Consequently, the level of study may be one of the reasons to explain musical taste as well as the age (Donnat, 1998). On the same spirit, introvert persons will prefer cold colours when extrovert people will prefer hot colours (Drugeon-Lichtlé, 1998).

According to Vézina (1999), the experiential consumption is characterized by several points.

Consumer is not only a consumer; he has other roles in the society that will influence his consumer behaviour.

Consumer acts inside of different situations (personal ones such as money or time-related) or environmental. A consumer may act a different way according to the situation; he is called the "chameleon consumer" (Dubois, 1996). This point will be developed in the 3.2.

Consumer is looking for senses. Customer is looking for an identity, for the symbol of a brand, for the role a product is having in the society.

Consumer does not limit himself to purchase. There are a lot of activities that will influence the decision and the future actions of the consumer. Arnould et al. (2002) listed 4 main steps regarding consumption experience:

- The Anticipated Experience: looking for, dreaming, budgeting or fantasising the experience;
- The Purchasing Experience: choosing, paying, meeting the service and the atmosphere;
- The Experience itself: Feeling, Satisfaction (or not), transformation of the product;
- The Memory Experience: reviving the experience through photos, stories or discussions with friends.

2.2. Situational differences

Belk (1975) tried to define how a situation could be characterized. It exists five groups of situational characteristics.

First, the *Physical Surroundings* (location of the store, organization of the space and sensitive marketing).

Second, the *Social Surroundings* (persons present, roles, interpersonal interactions)

Third, the *Temporal Perspective* (since last purchase, since next or last meal, since next or last payday, etc.)

Four, the *Task Definition* (the context in which consumer go shopping, the shop, the information about a purchase)

Five, the *Antecedent States* (moods, conditions such as illness or fatigue).

All these elements complete the physical and social situation of a customer, but none of these different elements of situation are controlled by the marketer, which makes Experiential Marketing very hard to control.

3. The problems that Supermarkets are facing

Filser (2001) distinguished two axes of positioning regarding retail stores: a functional positioning (as the convenient stores or hardware shop that offers a solution with laying included) or an experiential positioning (as Décathlon offers in France).
Filser claims that offering a good product for a good price is no longer sufficient to attract people. Excepted for the Hard Discount framework, customers are looking for living an experience through the shopping activity. Creating a pleasant atmosphere will improve customer mood, which is a very important factor for the supermarket chain (Plichon, 1999). Nevertheless, Filser (2001) underlines the paradox of the atmosphere for a retailer: sales will not improve for every visit in-store, but will satisfy and win customer loyalty thanks to the pleasant atmosphere. Moreover, the theory of the re-enchantment of the consumption way strengthens this analysis by assuming that theatralisation of the offer may procure hedonistic gratifications enabling customer to avoid monotony. (Ritzer, 1999)

Filser (2001) formulates two main kind of competition: inter-model competition, opposing different forms of sales (hypermarket vs. Hard Discount) and intra-model competition, for retailers using the same form of sales (drive on the internet, distribution of leaflets, etc.). In this classical framework, transactional marketing may preserve the retailer position (this is the reason why hypermarkets only look at their result in term of sales and turnover). Nowadays, retailers must take into consideration a third type of competition: the competition between supermarket chains. As a consequence, retailers must have a relational strategy by developing the atmosphere of the stores in order to strengthen the fidelity of their customers. This will also enable supermarkets to create a differentiation strategy that can appeal more customers.

Three main qualities will help the immersion of the customer in an Experiential Context. First, the context should be isolated to provoke a rupture and evasion of the customer in another world. Second, the context should be secured to release customer stress of his daily life. Third, it should be thematic and strongly distinctive thanks to a decor, odour or music, etc. (Firat and Dholakia, 1998).
Nevertheless, these three rules do not warranty a successful immersion in the experiential context. For instance, isolation may create artificial barriers for novices who will avoid the

context and the store instead of enjoying the moment as an expert would do. Three approaches enable to ease the immersion of consumers. (Carù and Cova, 2006)
First, the consumer should be guided. A guide or an interactive support will help the consumer to immerse in the experiential context. The more friendly the guide is, the most easily novices will be immersed. This characteristic would mean that supermarkets hire more salesperson to offer help in every department.
Second, immersion can be facilitated by the collective action. The notion of group will help novices to take the plunge and fully participate to the experiential context. Some stores may become a social place where experts help beginners in their experiences. Carù and Cova (2006) question the possibility to create this community in supermarket. Indeed, this characteristic is not really compatible with supermarkets where the shopping action is way more individual than in other retailing channels.
Third, self-determination will help to live a full experience thanks to training or seminaries (Carù and Cova, 2006).

Filser and Plichon (2004) discerned three main trends that pinpoints the shopping experience lived by regular customers in a point of sales: Researches on the atmosphere of the point of sales (studied in the 2. of the Literature Review), Analysis of the social function of the store, and the Re-enchantment of the consumption means. It implies that supermarket should change and adapt their model to appeal new and more customers in their shops.

Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991) claim that "customer choice is a function of multiple independent consumption values". They set five values influencing customer choice while shopping:

- Functional Value: physical and useful performance of the product. It refers to the rational economic man;
- Social Value: the image conveyed by the consumer inside of a particular group;
- Emotional Value: the emotion aroused by the consumption;
- Epistemic Value: the capacity of the product to evoke curiosity, interest for novelty and/or satisfy the needs of knowledge;
- Conditional Value: depends on the circumstances of purchase and consumption.

Nowadays, more and more retailers are using atmospheric factors. Nevertheless, they are not used an optimal way due to several reasons:

- The installation and the use of these atmospheric factors is expensive (without counting the price of sensorial marketing society or the price of copyrights);
- Retailers may not know how to use atmospheric factors to produce an accurate desired effect on customers. A bad use of atmospheric effects may have a terrible effect on customers. As an example, customers spend less money in store when they realize that music broadcasted by the retailer is a famous one (vs. unknown) (Rieunier, 2000). This is the reason why some store such as Darty or la Fnac refuse to diffuse music or odours in their stores to encourage the concentration of the clients on their products (Nacher and Couval, 1990)
- Atmospheric management of the store may be contentious between employee and the firm hiring them. For instance, it would seem that the clothes retailer Abercrombie & Fitch does not allow its salesperson to have the haircut they want. (Provost, 2013). It allows the firm to control the image they want to convey to their customers.

As we saw, there is still a long way to adapt and change the model of our classical French supermarkets. Would Experiential Marketing be the future of our supermarkets? Would that be a way to attract more consumers, trigger impulse buying and improve results of French supermarkets?

Another barrier of supermarkets is the lack of studies regarding the whole atmosphere. Indeed, almost every studies focus on a single sense. It would be interesting to ask people about the entire atmosphere. Would a sense be more influential than another? Would that sense be the same for every customer? And finally, would a certain combination of sense push to purchase, or conversely, not to buy?

III. RESEARCH DESIGNS & METHODS

1. Research Context & Case Description

In these last years the face of French large retailers is changing a lot. The barrier between Hard Discounters and classic hyper or supermarkets is dwindling. Big retailers are always trying to lower the prices they buy products in order to offer customers the smallest price possible. Nowadays, there are three main group purchasing organizations negotiating for the best price or condition possible for them. These war prices have consequences not only on the retailers but also on the producers. As an example, a lot of milk producers are selling their products whereas they lose money for every litter of milk they are selling. The other consequences are for the Hard Discounters. As hyper and supermarkets are fighting in a war price, Hard Discounters no longer have competitive advantage. Some has changed their strategy (Lidl for instance), others pay through the nose (such as Dia : the Spanish retailer disappeared of the French territory).
But, the problem Hard Discounters were facing begins to hit hyper and supermarkets. Indeed, going shopping in physical stores is a lost of time and new competitors in the market can even lower more their price than the big retailers. Indeed, ecommerce is growing a lot in France and may create difficulties or problem to supermarkets if they do not react. Even if the Drive is a solution to counter the attacks of the e-commerce (at least thanks to the time gain), they cannot compete with the price giants like Amazon can negotiate. According to me, if you cannot face a problem or be better than a competitor, then you have to change your strategy and play on a different field. That is what Lidl did by shifting its strategy from low price. Nowadays Lidl tries to improve their image and the image of their quality thanks to the numerous advertising waves they are realizing. Supermarkets have to take it as an example and change their strategy. If people hate going shopping because of the atmosphere in store or because of the lost of time, why not changing the supermarket itself to change the image people have of it. By improving the experience customers are living in supermarkets and by changing their vision of the shopping, supermarkets may be able to attract more and new customers in their stores, and as a consequence, compete with ecommerce. One of the best ways to do is to implement experiential marketing in these stores and this is the point this thesis is focusing on.

2. Data Collection Methods

There are two main data collection methods depending on the case we are studying.

The first method will be an observation of the stores I selected. I picked stores from different horizons in order to compare their marketing strategy and the atmosphere they create. It would be interesting to know if the atmosphere created by the stores is different according to the product they sell or if every store tend to create the same special atmosphere that will trigger the consumption act. Once the observation done and if there is a global atmosphere that waft from these stores, I will create a survey in order to confirm that this special atmosphere is the one customer are expecting (especially regarding the Fast Moving Consumer Goods) in retail. The observations are made by my own. It is important to underline that it may exists some bias that we will talk about a little later.

As a consequence, the second method will be the construction and the collect of information from an online survey build thanks to the observation I made before. The aim is to confirm (or not) that retailers have to make deep changes in order to adapt themselves from the demand of customer. This survey will try to draw the global atmosphere consumers are expecting, the one that push consumption and the one that increase fidelity. In a nutshell, the survey should be able to build the scheme of the supermarkets of tomorrow.

3. Data Analysis

3.1. Observations

In this chapter, I will develop the observations of every store I went in by presenting the overall context of the store, their market, talking about every sense, mentioning the specificity of the store and finally bring the general atmosphere out.

3.1.1 Nature & Découvertes

Nature & Découvertes is a French chain of stores founded in 1990. Most of the stores are French, but they also have some in Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg and Swiss. This store directly inspired by the Californian store "The Nature Company" offers a large range of products linked with : well-being, toys, sciences, hiking, astronomy, …

The company is very close from the nature and the animal world and they want the consumer to know it. The stores knew a lot of changes before adopting a totally new concept with the opening of a very refined store in Paris in 2015.

I chose to visit this new store in the neighbourhood of "Le Marais" in Paris and the store of Dijon, France. Even if the store in Le Marais pushes the experiential marketing a little further thanks to some decorations, they are very close from each other.

Nature & Découvertes offers a relaxing atmosphere to its customers thanks to a zen music and sweet odours broadcasted by the odour diffuser they sell. The objective is double: calm the customers who go shopping and push the sales by proposing demos of the products. Nature & Découvertes also offer the opportunity to taste some of the beverages a classic customer would not purchased (e.g. yuzu herbal tea in the Dijon's store). Once again, it enables the store to push their sales by surprising the customers and making them buying the product they taste. The big quantity of wood present in store (furniture, shelves, etc.) provides a luxury and class atmosphere to the store.

No doubt that all these elements justify the 6th rank of Nature & Découvertes as favorite retailers of French people.

3.1.2 Lush

Lush is an English company founded in 1995. They offer a large range of handmade cosmetics using only vegetarian or vegan recipe.

The first thing that strikes the customer by entering the store is the very strong (probably too strong) perfume of their products. Lush offers a beautiful range of products in a black packaging with handwritten information. Even if the packaging offers proximity to the customer, it is a little difficult to understand from a single look the function of a product. Nevertheless, the lack of visibility of the products is balanced by the strong presence of salesmen in store who give information to the customers who ask. Moreover, it is possible to try some products and to use it in store for a personal use. As instance, it is possible to make up thanks to an area dedicated to it or to try the product in a bowl to understand how the product reacts in somebody's bath. Lush also offers an original presentation for cosmetics by comparing them with food. The cosmetics are presented in the middle of the store in a tray full of ice. Lush broadcasts a pop and dynamic music in order to accelerate the moves of the customers in store.

Figure 4. Original presentation of the products

Figure 5. It is hard to understand the use of some products

3.1.3 Starbucks

Starbucks is an American company founded in 1971 in Seattle by three pationates of the coffee. Since the beginning they sold coffee, tea and spices. Nowadays, the brand counts more than 26 000 coffee stores worldwide and broad their offer by selling also pastries, coffee machines, utensils, but are before all looking for delivering a customer experience. Starbucks wants to offer a unique experience that anyone cannot find in another place. If in the collective imagination, Starbucks is only a coffee store, its CEO (Howard Schultz) decided to build a "Starbucks Reserve Roaster and Reserve Room": in a few words, the temple of the coffee. I couldn't visit it due to its localization (in the USA), but it is important to have in mind that Starbucks wants to provide an experience to its customer and do its best to provide it.

If we go back to the classic coffee stores of Starbucks, they use all the codes of a luxury environment thanks to the subdued light and the wood. The products and the ingredients are visible by the customers. Every employee wears a green apron enabling him or her to be more recognizable and to confer an expert status on him or her. Moreover, by asking the customer its name and writing it on the cups, the salesmen seem more friendly and closer to the customer (as well as the brand). Starbucks has a very large offer of drinks with a lot of new offers (according to the seasons or to the innovation of the group). In addition to their classic products, and thanks to their very strong fame, Starbucks also offer a large range of by-products.

By renewing very often its offers and providing a customer experience through the journey of the coffee drinkers, Starbuck establishes itself as one of the favourite coffee store of French customers.

3.1.4 Abercrombie & Fitch

Abercrombie & Fitch is an American brand of clothes founded in 1892. They target adolescent and young adults. They master their communication in-store thanks to a full control of the atmosphere and a strict process of recruitment. Abercrombie & Fitch is a model of experiential company studied in every business school. Indeed, the stores interact with almost all the senses of customers. First, A&F wants to inspire the American Dream through the Californian way of life: the store looks like a typical Californian house, the light is subdued and panels broadcast videos of surfers. Moreover, the models of the brand in front of the store also attract the sight. Then, hearing and scent are also raised thanks to the strong pop American music and the (not less) strong odours of their perfume. The aim is here again to immerse the customer in a unique experience and to push the sales of their products.

Despite the first success of the strict control of the experience in-store, A&F is now facing several scandals. On the one hand the CEO multiplies the scandals by discriminating people because of their physique. On the other hand, the strategy of A&F is subject to criticize from the salesmen: the conditions of work are from being ideal (strong music and strong perfume all day long, lack of light leading to eyes problems, etc.). Is Abercrombie & Fitch losing customer because of their willing to provide a unique experience to their customers to the detriment of their brand image and their staff? Is there a limit of experiential marketing? These are questions that must be evoked and voiced a little further.

3.1.5 Nespresso

In the frame of this thesis, I succeed to interview a former part-employee of Nespresso concept stores of Bordeaux. Chloé LIBIS used to work as receptionist for the Nespresso boutique of Bordeaux during her studies in Bordeaux. Thanks to her testimony, we may have a clearer view of the overall atmosphere of the Nespresso concept stores.

As an employee of the brand, Chloé was asked to behave as an employee of a luxurious store (smile, formal language, asking for entering customers if she cans help them, etc.). Nestlé also put a lot of attention about the furniture they offer in their Nespresso stores. As a consequence furniture are very class and must attract the eyes of the passer-by to invite them to enter in the boutique. The atmosphere class and distinguished can also be felt due to the location of the store (in fancy neighbourhoods). Moreover, regular customers are "Members of the club", and consequently, are feeling special, even privileged. Memberships enable to fasten visit of the customers thanks to the habit of consumption memorized by the store. Receptionists can also advises new flavours for the consumers since they know their preferences regarding the coffee they consume.

Unlike most of the stores, Nespresso also offer a range of services to welcome the customers and to make them feeling relaxed like at home. Thereby, coffees are offered after a purchase. Some stores even have their own bars and offer customer the ability to consume a coffee in situ. Nespresso is also appearing as a green brand as every single of their stores offer a recycle place where people can give their old capsules and their coffee ground in order not to waste these resources. Eventually, some Nespresso stores organize special events called "Expert Meetings" where regular customers can register to follow a workshop. It lasts thirty minutes during which customers learn a little more about the story of the coffee, its production, the difference between the different kinds of coffees, the way it is roasted, etc. Workshop is punctuated by the sampling of a recipe that an expert realized during the whole meeting.

All these little elements contribute to the experience people are living when they go in Nespresso stores. The experience is pleasant for all these reasons and it explains why their products have such good results.

3.1.6 Maille

Thanks to my visits in the two Maille's concept stores and to the answers of Chloé BASTEN in a face-to-face interview, we can draw a clear vision of the experiential marketing and the overall atmosphere of these stores.

First of all, Maille concept stores are always situated in very nice and fancy neighbourhoods and are inspired by the luxury environment. Indeed stores are a lot influenced by designer houses (such as Chanel or Dior), but also by the social trends (based on Instagram tendency). The store itself is far away from what retailers look like, but the products Maille is selling in its stores are also luxurious. Indeed, Maille really tries to offer products of very high quality with a very strong know-how and prestigious ingredients selected by the marketing team. Consequently, there are products previously unseen in supermarkets and only purchasable in these concept stores.

Regarding the atmosphere, Maille's stores take the codes of luxury brands. The furniture are very class and the light is subdued not to blind customers, but to confer a cocooning atmosphere, the perfect mix between a gourmet place and between a very high quality seller. Merchandisings are perfectly arranged in small wooden shelves. The colours in store are chosen according to the brand's colours (black and gold) and to the seasonality (colours change all the year long). In order to attract people, a subtle perfume is broadcasted in the store but even in the approach of the boutiques for attracting people. This technique is particularly used during Christmas when truffle odours can be smelled. Once the customer in the store, his other senses are also stimulated. As instance, customers may ask to taste any products they want (oil, vinegar or mustard). Once the customer conquered by the taste of the product, he can even be involved in the "production" of the mustard. Actually, customers may chose between pre-filled glasses ready to buy, or fill himself a sandstone jar thanks to the mustard available at the counter. The premium image of Maille is also reinforced by the gift boxes that a lot of customers purchase especially for some events (Christmas, birthdays, etc.).

The objective for the brand is triple. It enables to promote French food and the French "art de vivre" that foreigners liked a lot (and as a consequence to boost the sales of the products Maille is selling). Tourists who come to France want to bring back small reminders such as gustative products. Then, the boutiques also increase the visibility of the brand. Eventually, the cornerstone is to improve the image of Maille and to associate Maille's mustard to a premium product with a very strong know-how that customers may buy again in a supermarket.

3.1.7 Simply Market

Simply Market is an old-fashioned kind of stores belonging to the group Auchan. Simply Market is destined to disappear. Indeed, Auchan wants to replace every Simply Market by "Auchan Supermarché" before the end of the first quarter of 2018. Nevertheless, change of store does not mean improvement of the store: Simply Market was created to replace the Atac supermarkets perceived as cheap and old-fashioned. The bet is a failure for Auchan since I assume that the image of Simply Market is not really better than the one of the Atac. Let's hope for the group Auchan that the new metamorphosis will be more successful than the first one.

First of all, there is no real effort put on the furniture in store. The shelves are pretty similar from the one of the last decade and the offer is not highlighted. There are a lot of POS destroying the global coherence of the supermarket's shelves and pushing promotion with low prices. The trolleys and / or baskets were not renewed either. Even if there are some automatic pay stations, they also belong to the previous generation, are not reactive at all and still have a problem with the control of weight of a product. The addition of all these small details deteriorates the image of Simply Market, which was unable to establish itself as a must-see convenience store. This is why Auchan has to renew its offer by creating a new brand and a new offer to appeal customers again in its convenience stores.

Regarding services, the minimum amount of effort is done to satisfy the customers.

3.1.8 Franprix

Franprix is the convenience store that succeeded to renew its image. Thanks to the effort of Jean-Pierre Mochet, Director of the convenience store sector in Casino (that is to say, Franprix), the stores knew a growth of 8.5% of their turnover (in average) thanks to the implementation of the "Mandarine" concept. On the programme of the renovation, vivid colours, development of services, development of the appealing, etc. The bet is risky, but the results are here: 95% of the customers prefer the new stores. The emphasis is placed on the service, the quality of the products and the pleasure to go shopping. The shopping experience is pushed further than in other stores: customers can progress in a clear environment without any POS and with clear shelves and organization. Salesmen are easily identifiable thanks to their orange apron. Customers are also actors of their shopping experience: they can squeeze their oranges; serve themselves from the rotisserie and the bakery. Moreover the bakeries and the grill broadcast sweet odours that will push customer to consume.

According to me, Franprix is the archetype of the new grocery store. They perfectly understood how to adapt their offer to the demand of an audience who are very active, have a little time to go shopping but who go daily shopping.

3.1.9 Franprix Noé

Before entering the store, you know you will experience a new concept store. Even if some specialized retail stores already offer this kind of organic offers in France (Naturalia, Biocoop, etc.), this is the first time a big retailer tries to specialized itself in organic, fair trade or a more responsible consumption.

Franprix Noé is the most recent creation of Franprix in store. They open their first store in Paris (82 Rue Mouffetard, 75005 PARIS) and project to open a second one in the 16th suburb of Paris. This creation is the result of the assessment of a study: French people prefer to eat better products even if it means paying more for these products. This is why Casino investigated this niche and decided to be the first of the main retailers to offer a store dedicated to the “Better Eating”. Exit all the industrial products, only a few organic products of big groups are listed. Regarding the Mondelez products, the only ones present are the Organic Côte-d’Or chocolates. We can voice a limit: Organic products and fair trade does not go with local food network if we pay attention to the origin of the fruits and vegetables (only a minority came from France).

Franprix Noé takes the codes of the classic Franprix up again: very clean store without POS but with some loose products. The store has also the possibility to pick some tables (juice maker, rotisserie, bakery, etc.). They put services even further in the store by offering a caterer area, fresh condiments to pick at the checkout, etc. Finally, Franprix Noé also offers a comfy place where you can eat or spend some times as if you were in your place. Coffee machines and microwaves enable people to have lunch there and enjoy a nice place. There are even colouring kits to keep children busy. The purpose is to appeal

customer and to make convenience store shopper’s new home and to erase the image of boring and chore place that people wants to avoid.
But, the distinction with classic Franprix only comes from the difference of offer (more qualitative and more expensive products in Franprix Noé) and services (a little more pushed as mentioned earlier): nothing that another retailer cannot do. Is it then just a question of willing to provide a full new experience to customer?

3.1.10 Conclusion / Generalization

The table below tries to summarize the specificities of every store and tries to clarify the general atmosphere of every store. Are these atmospheres answering the expectations of customers?

Store	Market	Sight	Sense of smell	Hearing	Taste	Touch	Miscellaneous	Overall atmosphere// Customer Experience
Nature & Découvertes	Well being / Close to nature products / Organic products	A lot of wood Subdues light	Ambient perfumes (the ones they are selling)	Zen music among the top sales in France	Possibility to try some beverages (especially tea)	Possibility to try the products and to play with it	Advices of the salesmen (books, beverages, ...)	Zen and relaxing atmosphere
Lush	Soap / Well being	Handwritten slates All the products may be seen	Very strong perfume (probably too much)	Pop and dynamic music	Not concerned as they are selling cosmetic products or soap	Possibility to try the products to see the effects on the bath	Friendly salesmen in the middle of the customers	Very perfurmed and dynamic atmosphere
Starbucks	Beverages	Lot of wood Subdues Lights Possibility to follow the creation of the beverage Name of the baristas on a badge	Diffusion of odors of coffee	Calm and chill music	Offers such as free coffee for someones birthday Not a lot to try	Different cups for different beverages to protect customer from heat or cold	Name of the customer on the glass	Chill and classy atmosphere Working atmosphere
Abercrombie & Fitch	Clothes	Subdued light TV screen broadcasting surf movies in adequation with the Californian image of the brand	Diffusion of their own perfume	Pop and dynamic music	Not concerned	Not really concerned	Salesmen have to be "gorgeous" and not extraverted to follow the model of Abercrombie & Fitch	Californian and young atmosphere Idea of the American way of life
Nespresso	Beverages	Subdued light Good exposition of the products to attract passer-by	Diffusion of a slight odor of coffee.	No music at all (as for the luxurious environments)	Free coffee for customers Possibility to taste special coffees during workshops	Possibility to touche products during workshops	Customers are "Members of the Club" (making them thinking they are specials) Possibility to take part of workshops to discover the universe of coffee	Very luxurious atmosphere where people think they are special and belongs to a certain elite
Maille concept store	Food	Lot of wood Noble materials (inspired by the luxury environment)	Slight odor of mustard, odors of special products during special events (such as truffle)	Calm without any music	Possibility to try a lot of different mustards	Possibility to fill its own jar in stoneware	Skilful salesmen who speaks several languages Located in famous places next to luxury stores	Very class store where customers are immerged in the presitigious universe of the mustard
Franprix	Consumer Goods Small amount of choice to favour the quality. Fond of new healthy products (e.g. gluten free, vegan, etc.)	Bright colors of the brand everywhere (most of the time orange, sometimes brown) Clean supermarkets (no POS)	Nothing noticed	Commercialized musics	Free tasting from time to time	Realization of its own orange juice Possibility to buy loose products (cereals, pastas, rice, etc.)	Lot of different services depending on the choice of the supermarkets (between 4 to 16 different services offered to customers)	Fresh and new supermarkets very dynamic with healthy but expensive products.
Simply Market	Consumer Goods	No color A lot of white spaces with a lot of different POS No coherence	Nothing noticed	Commercialized and famous French musics	Nothing noticed	Nothing noticed	Asepticized supermarkets without specific features	Old supermarkets with old colours (similar to Hard Discounters)

Table 1. Analysis of the overall atmosphere of stores after observations

3.2. Analysis of the survey

The survey I made was realized in English and in French because most of the persons who answer the survey are French due to the focus of the thesis (French supermarket and convenience stores). Moreover, some of the people who answer didn't have any knowledge in English. As a consequence, it was easier to make two surveys to collect a maximum amount of answers and to get a study as objective and valid as possible.
Most of the answers were given in French. In order to facilitate my work, I just transposed English answers in the French survey to have a clear extract and clear statistics from the Google Form I made.

4. Reliability and Validity

4.1. Reliability and Validity of the observations

As I said before, observations were made by myself directly in stores. By using this technique, I was not influenced by anybody (bloggers, shoppers, …)
Nevertheless, this data collection faces some limits and some bias.
First of all, observations depend on the feelings and on the sensibility of someone. As mentioned in the literature review, we have to take into account the uniqueness of the experience (especially for experiential marketing). The global atmosphere I experienced in store may change from a day to another. As an example, Nature & Découvertes often offers to taste teas or infusions. The perfume of the samples may vary daily. The same changes may be experienced in the Maille's store (where the mustard someone can try may change). As a consequence, the experience may change due to the store that chose to offer this or this product to try.
Then, perception varies from a person to another. It is rare to be on an equal footing regarding the senses. Someone may be very sensitive to the odours when another may have a better sight than the first one. These individual differences may also explain the difference of perceptions.
Eventually, the mood may also impact the perception of a store, or at least, the purchasing act. Feelings may vary according to your mood and the global atmosphere someone is immersed in.

Nevertheless, I think that the big features of a store are almost perceived the same way by every customer. This is, at least, what every store tries to do. It is hard to imagine that stores are expecting a diversity of experiences of consumption, and, as a consequence, a diversity of behaviour in store. Indeed, if experiential marketing is the future of retailers and of general stores, the aim is to provide a global and mastered experience that customers may share together. And this mastered experience goes through the control of every sense in order to provide a standardized atmosphere (with slight differences among customers).

As a consequence, I would say that the observations are reliable in the sense that I went in store to immerse myself in the little "world" created by every store: I really experienced the feelings I mentioned. But on the other hand, the experience I enjoyed may not convince and please everybody.

This is why I created and submitted the survey: to make sure that people are expecting experiential stores regarding their daily shopping and make sure that they would enjoy this new experiences in store. Survey should also show a little how people would react in an experiential environment (especially regarding their consumption, frequency and the time spent in store).

4.2 Reliability and Validity of the survey

In order to be relevant, 100 persons should answer the survey at least. To facilitate the broadcasting of the survey in France I chose to edit it in both French and English language. In order to get the best survey possible I asked some of my friends to be "beta-testers" in order to try it and avoid mistakes (especially in English).

I decided to close the survey on November 18th with 111 answers (by combining the French & English survey). I am quite happy with the number of answers, as I didn't get as much time as I needed to ask a large amount of person the questions. Nevertheless the amount of answers is big enough to have a vision of what people think about experiential marketing.

IV. FINDINGS

1. Observations

The observations I made in the diverse stores were very interesting for several reasons.
First it enables me to draw a scheme of the typical experience store consumer may know today. In France, two stores pushed the experiential marketing further than the other. In the one hand we have Abercrombie & Fitch, a strong American brand that reproduced in France a strategy that worked in the USA. Indeed, by offering to the customer strong stimulus to their customers, they become one of the most famous clothes brand (especially thanks to its concept stores). The American brand perfectly inspires the American way of life of the Californian coast and developed a lot its sales. By assimilating their brands to the liberty of young Californians, Abercrombie succeed to make the consumer they would have the same liberty once their clothes purchased.
On the other hand, there is Nature & Découvertes a French stores close to the nature offering a bundle of different products (from detox products to telescope including development toys). As for Abercrombie & Fitch, they become a very famous store thanks to their concept. By offering consumers the possibility to test their products or to play with them, it pushes the consumption of their shoppers who are conquered by the products they try.
Then, we have groups of stores that developed a little the experiential according to me. As instance, Franprix is, for me, the store with the strongest experience in store. Thanks to the different service they offer to the consumer, Franprix tries to improve the customer experience in store by offering them a new vision of the convenience stores. As instance, they provide loose products or offer the possibility to squeeze you an orange. These little revolution in the groceries world is for me good steps if we want the convenience store of tomorrow to be experiential.
Second, I used this very typical scheme in order to build the survey I asked people to answer. This technique enabled me to test if these marketing strategies are developed enough (especially regarding Franprix willing to develop experience in store thanks to some services). Moreover, it will verify that people knows experiential marketing or never realized about it in stores.

Anyway, all experiential stores (or sensitive stores if the concept is not developed enough in some stores) present similarities that it is important to underline. The first thing, which is common to every store, is the clothes of the sales assistant of every store. Indeed, they all have branded clothes in order to facilitate their recognition. The aim is to identify them easily in case of question from the customers. As they truly plays a role of advisors, they should be easy to find and be friendly since they often are the first and very favoured contact of the shopper with the brand or the store. Afterwards, every store offered stimulus to their consumer (some stores more than others). For example, all the stores create a certain atmosphere thanks to the light (sometimes vivid, others subdued, depending on the situation). Most of the stores play with the furniture to create an atmosphere. The wood is often used to share a luxury image or, at least, a high quality image. All the stores also broadcast music adapted to the world they want to create. Nature & Découvertes broadcast zen music, when Nespresso or Maille broadcast a more "elitist" music. Some stores stimulate the nose of their consumers by broadcasting perfume of their products (such as Abercrombie & Fitch that tries to trigger impulse buying). And eventually, some stores offer the possibility to try the products (for food) or to play with the products. Maille selects a range of products that shoppers can try in their concept stores according to the season. Lush offers the possibility to try your bath products in a tray if you ask the sales assistant to show you what would be the reaction of a product in a bath.
In a nutshell, the Table 1. shows the difference and the similarity among the stores I visit.

2. Survey

All the participants of the survey were older than 18. It means that regarding the question about their consumption (amount of money, shopping experience, etc.) will be individual. Indeed, minors can be influenced by their parents as, most of the time, they will not pay for their own consumption. Parents go shopping for the whole households, meaning that children will not buy freely what they want to consume. This study is not concerned by this kind of bias.
Most of the answers come from women (62% vs. 38%), but the repartition among age is pretty balanced (cf. diagram)

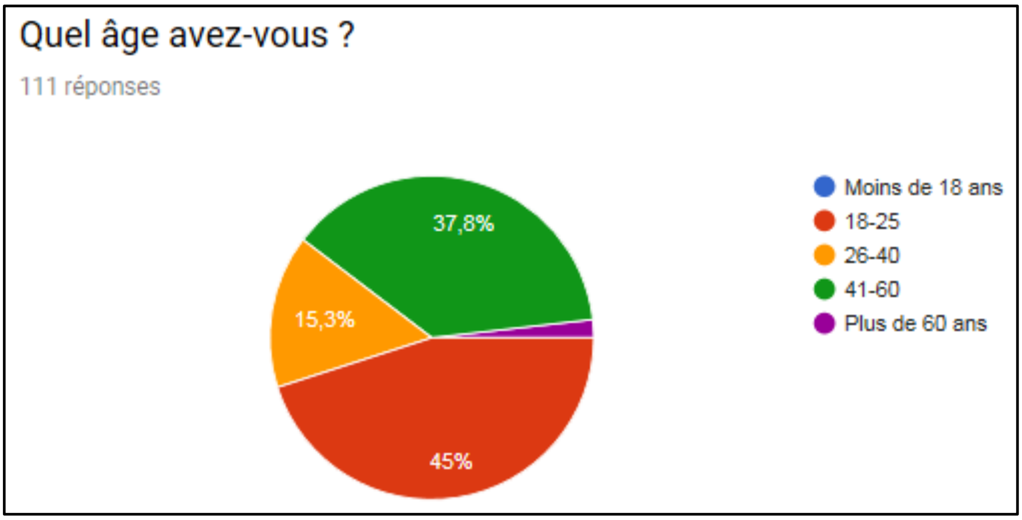

Figure 6. Repartition of ages in the survey

Regarding their residence areas, people mainly come from town (84.6% vs. 15.4% living in the countryside). One third of the participants come from Paris, which is very interesting for us due to the concentration of groceries in Paris (around 650 stores in the French capital). The majority of the participant goes shopping once a week (54%). If the viewpoint is widening, 82% of the people goes shopping at least once a week that is to say on a regular basis. Nevertheless, most of the people don't enjoy going shopping. Indeed, only 21% assimilates shopping, as an enjoyment when 56% perceives shopping as a duty and a necessity. This information is pretty important. It means that most people go shopping with a "bad" mood. They know that they do not really like go shopping but they have to do it in order to fill their fridges or because they need daily life stuff. This one of the main point that retailers have to work on if they want to improve their offer (especially if they want to differentiate themselves from competitors).

If we compare the different point of sales, the results are contrasted regarding the enjoyment. We can clearly distinguish three groups of stores. (See Table 2.)

First, we have two stores where people like going shopping: the supermarkets and the specialized stores. People are rather agreeing with the fact that they like to go shopping there (more than 58% are agree with this sentence). On the other hand, there is a very small amount of people who are rather disagreeing with this same fact (less than 25% per cent of person does not like to go shopping in these two stores). It is easy to understand that people like to go on specialized store since they decide to go in this store in particular and not another. If someone wants to consume organic products, he knows that if he goes to

Naturalia, Biocoop or any other store he will have good products coming from organic growth and he will find the perfect product he is looking for. Along the same lines, if somebody wants to have good meat, he will go to the butcher, etc. These stores are more human and the contact between the consumer and the producer is smaller than in a classic retail channel. The rate of people enjoying to go on specialized stores is higher than for any other store because the persons who are going there made the effort to go in this very particular place since they are looking for a very particular products or quality of products. This in this sense that people prefer going shopping there than in other stores. Regarding the supermarket the explanation probably comes from the fact that products are cheaper than in specialized stores but also that people can find the range and the quality of products they want thanks to the choice supermarkets offer. But, contrary to what I thought, experience in store is one of the criterions the less important for people (only 46% of persons care about the experience in store). This data may explain why convenient stores are in the second group of stores where people enjoy going shopping.

The second group of store is made of hypermarkets and convenience stores where around 40% of people agree with the fact that they enjoy going shopping there. The results regarding the approval are close (less than 2 points of difference) contrary to the results about the reluctance to go shopping in these stores (32.4% in Hypermarkets vs. 26.1% in Groceries). As a consequence, we can conclude that people prefer to go shopping on a convenience store rather than in a hypermarket.

Finally there is a third “group” composed only by the Hard Discount stores. Thanks to the Table 1. we can clearly see that the Hard Discounters receive worst results than any other stores. Only 20.7% confess that they like going shopping there. Even worst, almost 40% does not like to go shopping in these stores. Even if people grant price as an important criterion (83% of people care about the price, see Table 2.), which is the basis of the Hard Discounters, people confess not to like going shopping there.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Rather agree
Hypermarket	15,30%	27%	**42,30%**
Supermarket	17,10%	43,20%	**60,30%**
Hard Discount	7,20%	13,50%	**20,70%**
Convenient Store	9,90%	34,20%	**44,10%**
Specialized Store	24,30%	34,20%	**58,50%**
	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	**Rather disagree**
Hypermarket	13,50%	18,90%	**32,40%**
Supermarket	17,10%	6,30%	**23,40%**
Hard Discount	15,30%	24,30%	**39,60%**
Convenient Store	14,40%	11,70%	**26,10%**
Specialized Store	11,70%	2,70%	**14,40%**

Table 2. I enjoy going shopping in this store

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Rather Agree
Price	32%	51%	**83%**
Quality products	47%	46%	**93%**
Large choice	16%	50%	**66%**
Time spent	15%	35%	**50%**
Ease of access	28%	49%	**77%**
Distance to the store	35%	47%	**82%**
Respect of the Environment	20%	30%	**50%**
Experience in store	10%	36%	**46%**
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	**Rather Disagree**
Price	3%	6%	**9%**
Quality products	0%	3%	**3%**
Large choice	4%	11%	**14%**
Time spent	7%	14%	**21%**
Ease of access	3%	6%	**9%**
Distance to the store	1%	4%	**5%**
Respect of the Environment	5%	19%	**23%**
Experience in store	11%	14%	**24%**

Table 3. When I go shopping, I care about

Three groups of stores are well defined thanks to the answers of people to the survey. Nevertheless, it is important to underline what are the differences among these stores, but also to show what people are looking for when they go shopping.

As mentioned before, specialized store have very strong characteristics as they only sell a small range of products depending on the specialization of the store. Even if people give

importance to the large choice of products in store (66% are rather agree with the fact that they do care about the choice in store), specialized stores does not seem impacted by this factor. The reason is pretty simple: the persons who chose to go shopping there chose this store in particular since they want a special product. As a consequence, the focus should not be on the large amount of choice, but on the quality of the products. Shoppers go in specialized stores to have a high quality of products, which is the most important criterion according to the survey (93% of persons care about the quality of the products vs. only 3% who does not care about it). This high quality is the big strength of these specialized stores.
This willing to eat healthier is a strong trend in the French society. Every company understood that French people care more and more about the quality of the products. As an example, McDonald's redesigned all their fast foods by turning the legendary red of the logo in green. This simple change of colour improved the image of the American Giant. More than a simple colour change, they also redesigned all their fast foods with new furniture, new services (e.g. serving the food at the table, placing electronic terminals to order, etc.) but before all by improving the quality of the products they sell. Indeed, they provide vegetables coming from France and they created a new line of hamburgers dedicated to France ("Signature" with French meat and bigger steaks inside, but also "Le Grand Veggie", a new hamburger for vegetarian). With all these strategic choices, McDonald's renew his image and succeed to stay the favourite hamburger chains of French people (1st before the other competitors: Quick (2nd), KFC (3rd), Burger King (4th), Promise Consulting Inc / the HuffPost).
Fast foods are not the only one trying to change their images. Retailers also perfectly understand the importance of the brand image and the importance of the high quality of products. As instance, Lidl which had a few years ago a strong image of Hard Discounter refused to do advertising on TV pretending that it was too expensive and that was not on harmony with its image. The choice was made to focus on private labels and to sell only the best sellers next to these products. Lidl was known in France (as in Germany) as a very cheap store where a lot of modest households went shopping there. But since 2012, Lidl has changed its strategy. Lidl does not want anymore to be considered as a Hard Discounter. They invested a lot of money in order to renew its store pool, in order to renew its image and to seem more modern. Indeed, due to price war between the other retailers (such as Carrefour or Leclerc), Hard Discounters do not have a very strong competitive advantage compare to the classic supermarkets or hypermarkets. The program of this

strategic change: an extension of the majority of the stores, but before all a strong advertising campaign. Results: in September 2017, Lidl was the 2nd retailers in terms of “share-of-voice” (volume of advertising when on-air vs. competitors) just behind Carrefour. Since its renewal, Lidl earned almost 1 points of market share (4.5% in 2012 vs. 5.3% in 2017, Kantar). In a nutshell, the key points Lidl was focusing on are: Gallicisation of the products (exit the German products replaced by French products), reforms of the stores and finally… the use of special displays!! Pale lights are changed to give way to vivid colours attracting the shoppers.

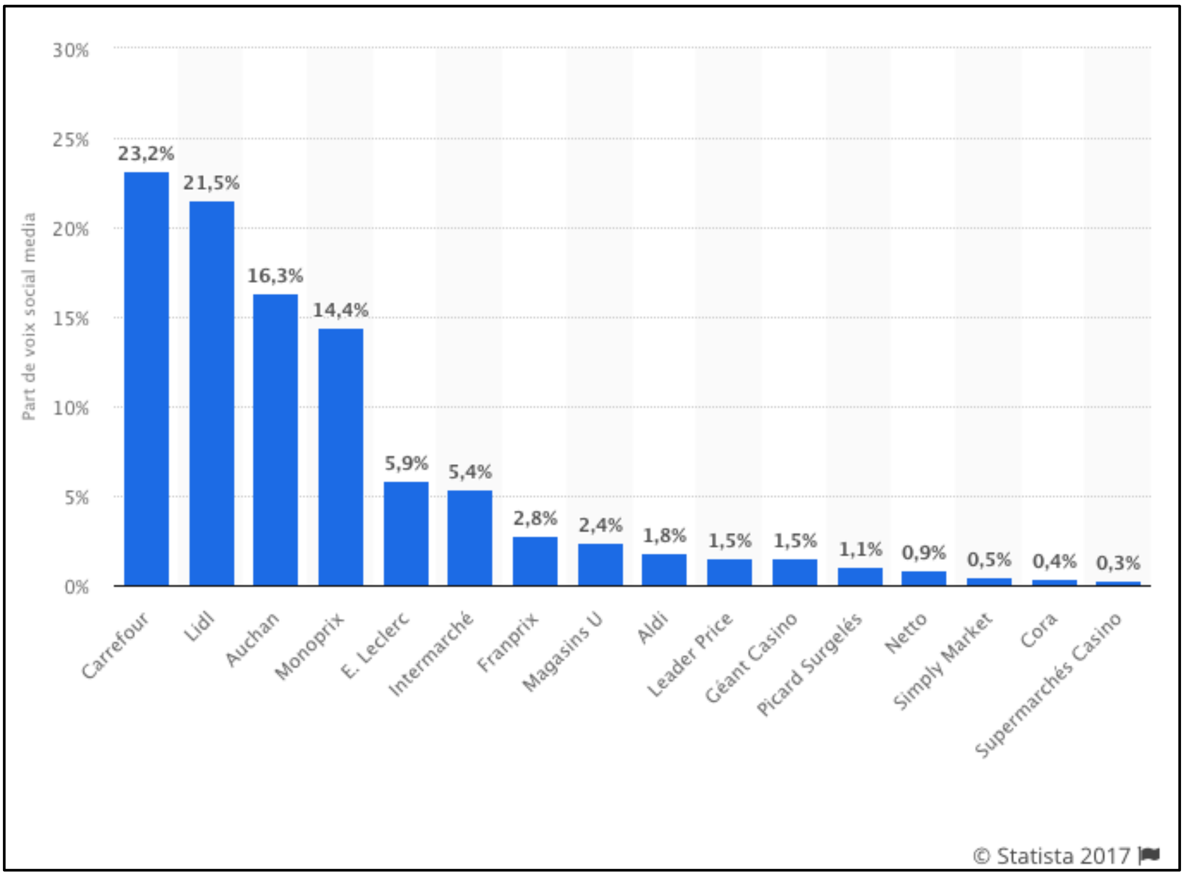

Figure 7. Share of voice of French retailers between April and June 2017 - Statista 2017

Through the Lidl example noted above and by remembering the example of Franprix mentioned before, we can easily imagine that people give importance to the experience in store. Indeed, by changing their price-focused strategy into an experience-focused strategy Lidl and Franprix earned market shares, loyalty of customers and improve a lot their results. Franprix is considered as an expensive retailer since according to 68% of the participants of the survey, Franprix is rather expensive. As a consequence, Franprix is not playing anymore on the same playground than the other retailers (which is the war price), but on the experience in store. Nevertheless, experience in store is the criterion which is the less important for people when they think about what they care when doing shopping (only 46% of persons care about the experience in store, which is the smallest average compared to the other criterion)… These surprising results may come from different bias.

First of all, experience in store is a subjective criterion compared to the other criterion, which are objective. It is way easier to evaluate the price or the quantity of choice in a store rather than the experience in store. As we saw, experience in store depends of a lot of factors: every customer perceive senses a different way, but a single customer may also react differently to the same stimulus according to their feelings, their mood, etc. Moreover some customers are more sensitive to sounds when others react more to a taste stimulus.

Second, the conditions of answers are not optimum: persons answering the survey were at home or at work in a very different environment than the supermarkets one. As a consequence, they may have difficulties to remember what they experienced in store and to what extend they pay attention to the experience in store.

Third, the reactions to an atmosphere or to an experience in store are not predictable, but most of the time not even aware. Indeed, sensitive marketing, and in a larger extend, experiential marketing should be soft, even unconscious for the customer. If strong odours such as hot breads, or pastries may attract the customer and push him to purchase bakery relative products, other sense stimulus are very more discrete. As an example a full atmosphere with subdued light, furniture with a certain colours, material or light may push the customer to buy a product without any awareness. This is the strength of experiential marketing: triggering the impulse buying. So, here is one of the limits of the survey. Observation of customers in store, or in recreated conditions should be very interesting to study the customer behaviour and their reaction to the different stimulus. Then we could have a statistic reflecting the importance of experience in store.

But if we continue with a focus on Franprix, it seems that shoppers does not perceive the store as an experiential one. Even if the renewal of the stores was successful regarding the results (growing incomes, increase of the fidelity, etc.), people do not recognize it as an experiential marketing effort. Only 9% perceives Franprix as an experiential store when 43% does not perceive it as an experiential one (48% does not know how to answer this question) and only 13% confesses to live an experience in store in Franprix. Did Franprix do not push enough the concept? Do the shoppers not recognize the efforts of Franprix? These are unsolved questions that could be studied in further researches. Anyway, if we just have a look on factual elements, Franprix already presents elements strongly linked with sensitive marketing, almost experiential marketing. As we already seen, Franprix offers a bundle of services such as loose products; cosy corners where customers can eat or chill, etc. These services even go further with the new concept of Franprix Noé and its organic products. Franprix Noé offers a full immersion in a universe where organic products are everywhere (from soap to food) and new services more developed than in classical Franprix stores (like free herbals on checkouts). Maybe it exists a gap between facts and objective criterion, and between subjective criterion such as feelings or emotions.

But Franprix cans count with other strengths such as the quality of the products they sell. If we now have a look on the perception of the products quality in Franprix, half of the participants are agree with the fact that Franprix offers good quality products when one fourth rather disagree with this sentence. As precised on the Table 3. ,quality is the most important criterion according to the shoppers. 93% of the participants really care about the quality of the product when only 3% does not care about the quality of the products (4% of neutral answers). Nevertheless, the products sold by Franprix in their stores are very similar with the products sold by other retailers. Monoprix, another French convenience store is even more careful regarding the quality of the products they sell. As instance, they focus a lot on small artisans by offering them good facings in their shelves. Regarding their chocolate shelves, they bet a lot on French producers or on small companies such as “Carré Suisse” for the chocolate confectionery. The company was created in 2013 and offer a new range of chocolate halfway between luxury chocolate and mass consumption products. Nowadays, Carré Suisse is present in several retailers (even Franprix), but Monoprix was the first retailer to believe in their chocolate and to integrate their range in the delicatessen area. In the same vein, Monoprix was the first retailers to bet on the soya chips by referencing the brand “too good”. These chips are way healthier than classic chips and use less olive oil than classical potatoes chips. These two products are the perfect example of innovations that increased the value of the shelves and of the average range of products. This is exactly what people are favouring in their buying in France since one or two years. Indeed, people are more and more looking for healthy and good products even if it costs a little more than classical products. By following the model of Monoprix and by referencing more and more organic product or original products coming from French producers, Franprix earned market shares and improve its image. This is particularly true if we have a look to the estimation of the quality of the products. Yet, this high quality of products happens at the expense of the choice of the products. Franprix still are convenience stores, meaning that they do not have big departments. By multiplying the number of brands and choosing top products, Franprix increased its price (this is perfectly perceptible in the price appreciation), but also reduces the choice. Indeed, a same brand cans offer different products. But if you focus on the diversity of brands, then you have a certain unity of products regarding the taste as instance.

Finally, another part of the survey was focusing on the heart of the thesis: Experiential Marketing. 31,5% of persons heard about this notion; 27% heard about it but can't describe what it stands for and 41,4% of the participants never heard about it. Then, thanks to a small description of Experiential Marketing, people were asked to react to some affirmations and the results were pretty convincing. Indeed more than 75% of persons think that the supermarket of tomorrow will be experiential (see Figure 8.) when only 3,6% totally disagree with this statement.

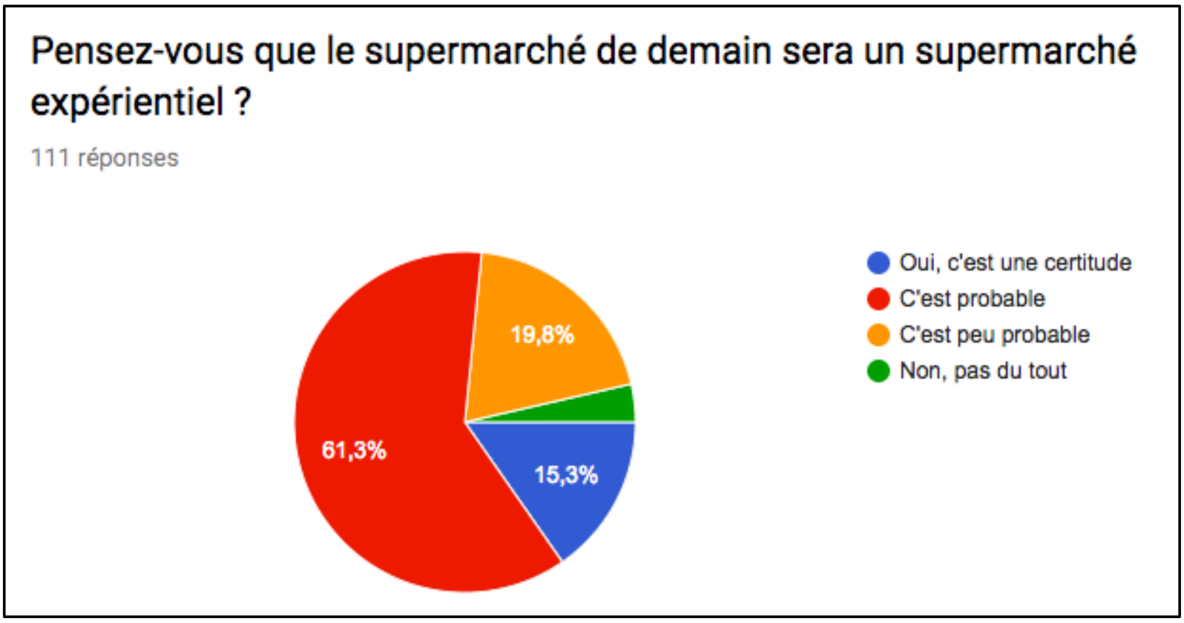

Figure 8. Do you think that the supermarket of tomorrow will be experiential?

Once we know that people think that the supermarkets of tomorrow will be experiential and that they are aware of this, we can take an interest in the implications of the experiential marketing regarding consumption, fidelity, etc.

If we focus on the frequency, answers are split between those who thought that they would go shopping more often and those who do not think that it will change anything in their frequency. Most of the people confess that they go shopping once a week and make stocks for the whole family and for the whole week. If we add those who go only once every two weeks and once every month shopping, the rate even reaches 72%. Then experiential marketing will not really change the frequency people go shopping. But it is also important to underline than 5,4% of people go shopping at least once a day, it seems difficult to increase their number of visits in supermarket.
The results are slightly better if we have a look at the average basket of the shoppers. Indeed, to the question “Do you think you would consume more products in an experiential supermarket or convenience store”, people are rather agreeing with this statement at 55%. But I think that bias exists regarding theses question. Effectively, it is hard to imagine and to project him in a store that does not exist yet. Moreover, even if shoppers can project themselves in the departments of a store, they will not be subject to the experiential marketing they might face in the stores. For instance, the shopper might have answered the survey without listening to music contrary to the situation in supermarkets was music is often broadcasted. Another example: shoppers might be influenced by the odours they smell in store (like pastries or bread odours), which was not the case when they answered the questions of the survey. It has to be underline that experiential marketing is not only a strategy to improve the experience in store by enjoying the moment of shopping. No, the purpose of experiential marketing is to boost consumption, time spent in store and loyalty of customers. The first cornerstone may be done thanks to sensitive marketing. People may react to a stimulus by impulse purchasing. All these elements were surely not taken into account when people answered the survey.
Eventually, people were asked about the time they would spend in store if their retailer were offering an experience in store. And here the results are more convincing. 65% of the persons agree to say that they would spend more time in the departments of the supermarkets. This result goes in the right direction for stores that wants to become experiential ones. We saw before that it was difficult to imagine himself in a situation in the department of a store, so the results are a little underestimated compared to the reality. But one thing is sure, the more time people spend in store, the more products they will purchase since they will be influenced by the different marketing strategies (sensitive and experiential marketing or not). As a consequence, by confessing that they would spend

more time in store, they also are proving that they would buy more products. Not necessary the products that were on their shopping lists, but products they will buy because of promotion, impulse buying or for other reasons. This statement is particularly true for the groceries where people go shopping more often than in super or hypermarkets and without shopping lists most of the time.

Nevertheless, renewing stores is a very expensive operation. Two main reasons explain the cost of such step. First, the works itself cost money: the whole store should be modified (ground, furniture, lights, extras such as odour diffuser, etc.). Second, the time spent to the renewal may be long and generate a big loss of earnings that cans slow the renewal down.
An equilibrium should be find between the closing time of the stores and the money spent on renovation and between the earnings generated by the new concept of the stores. There are several facets of the earnings: money people spend in store, fidelity of customers that will come back again and against in the store and good feelings released by the stores that can be useful for the word of mouth. These are important factors that should be studies in further researches.

V. DISCUSSIONS & CONCLUSIONS

1. Summary

Many studies were done about Experiential Marketing and about its implication. Nevertheless, none studied the relationship between customers, supermarkets and experiential marketing. This thesis tries to answer a tricky question: is the supermarket of tomorrow an experiential store? Once we have answered this question, it is important to figure out, how they will do it, how they will look like, and, more important, what are the implication of Experiential Marketing on the Customer Consumption.
If we have a look on French stores, the huge majority does not use experiential marketing at all. Almost all of them are not even using sensitive marketing (which stimulate only one senses among the five). But if we have a look on innovative stores or brands that tries to differentiate themselves from other, we may find interesting examples of experiential stores or stores using sensitive marketing. Some brands use their stores to promote their brands or their products. This is the case of Unilever and Nestlé. Unilever created a Maille

concept store in order to promote their mustards. Their stores present the mustards as a very luxurious product thanks to different combinations of taste. Surprising products can be tasted by the customers thanks to a mustard bar (white truffle mustard, gingerbread mustard, etc.). Tastes change all along the year to be in harmony with the season. The quality of the products is reinforced by the special atmosphere of the store that uses a lot of woods and lights in order to create a luxurious store. The idea is pretty similar for Nestlé that creates Nespresso stores where people can purchase their precious capsules for their coffee machines. Customers also have the possibility to try special coffees on some stores or to take part of workshops to learn more about the coffee and its production. Once again, all the codes of the high society are used in these stores to assimilate coffee as a luxurious product.

Then, there are stores with very strong concepts trying to appeal customers thanks to the experience they provide in store. In these stores customers spend a lot of time losing themselves in the different departments. Lush, the cosmetic store appeals customer thanks to their colourful stores where the shopper can try all the products as if he was at home. They also can ask for makeup tips or offer products that are different from the products they can find elsewhere. Lush adopted the codes of the handcraft by handwriting the name of the products on slates and being close to the customer by answering their questions. Furthermore, Abercrombie & Fitch is the example of clothes store studies in every business school. Their model of experiential marketing is successful as they stimulate the five senses of the customers during their shopping experience. Loud and pop music galvanise the customers during their shopping. Subdued lights and TV broadcasting surfers makes people think about the sunlight of California in a cosy atmosphere. Nose of the shopper is also stimulated thanks to the perfume broadcasted in the whole store. In this very particular shopping experience, customers are immersed into a new world completely different from their daily life. This experience is the most disruptive one and is the cornerstone of the American brand. Eventually, Nature & Découvertes also offer the customer an immersion in a special atmosphere linked with the nature. The experience is lower than the one of Abercrombie & Fitch, but as interesting. They use the same artificial elements (perfumes, subdued light, possibility to taste or to try products, etc.) to immerse the shopper in a new world.

If some classic stores perfectly understood the usefulness of experiential marketing and the power of the immersion in a new world, this is not the case of classic retailers. However, French people spend more time in hyper, supermarkets or groceries than in other stores. As instance, Simply Market an old chain of retailers owned by Auchan is pretty far from experiential marketing. Even if music is broadcasted in these stores, no effort at all are put on the light (very vivid everywhere), on the furniture (old fridges, old white shelves that are looking very cheap) or on the perfumes (no odour broadcasted on the supermarket). Yet, this is not the case of every retailer. Carrefour with its "Planet" concept was the first retailer trying to innovate by providing an experience in store. Their purpose was to divide the store in different areas to recreate a small universe where people can find their products by poles (see Figure 9.)

Figure 9. Organization of a Carrefour Planet

This new concept offered previously unseen services such as a kindergarten or a hairstyle service. Unfortunately this concept was way too expensive and abandoned in 2012 due to its bad results and the lost of market share of Carrefour during the same period.

Even if Carrefour failed with its new concept, Franprix bet on the renewals of their store to take growth up again. With a very strong concept, Franprix changed their entire store pool by developing services in store, implementing vivid orange colours and re-organizing their departments. The "Mandarine" concept of Franprix claims to be minimalist. No more POS in store, shelves have to be clean to improve shopper experience and to avoid sight "contamination" due to POS or displays that are not in harmony with the store. Just as for Carrefour Planet, Franprix developed services in store, but not pushed as much as

Carrefour Planet (the price of services such as kindergarten may be very expensive compared with the results). Moreover the lack of space in convenient stores automatically limits the number of service that can be implemented in stores. Yet, every Franprix has to chose between several “workshops” (bakeries, rotisserie, orange squeezing machines, loose products, etc.). Thanks to these installations, Franprix transformed the classical shopping experience. Customers are no longer passive during their purchasing but they turn actors of their own shopping experience. Furthermore, Franprix perfectly understood the concerns of French people about the products they consume. Indeed, more and more French people are looking for the origin of the products (location and way of farming it). More and more French people are also adopting a healthier living style by limiting their meat consumptions, increasing their vegetables consumption and consuming a responsible way. Once this framework analysed and understood, it was obvious for Franprix to develop a new retail channel. This how Franprix Noé was created. The promise of the store: offering fresh products from organic origin enabling customers to eat better and in harmony with the rhythm of the season. Franprix Noé also offers a bundle of new services unseen in other stores before. As example, Franprix Noé offers free herbals on cash desks that shoppers can pick freely.

Based on all these observations, it was necessary to build a survey to test and to analyse what people are expecting regarding the large retailers.
Three main results were underlined thanks to the survey.
First of all, the survey enabled to draw three groups of store according to the preference of the shoppers. A first group is made up of the supermarkets and the specialized stores (bakery, rotisserie, market, etc.). These two stores are the favourite of the respondents. Supermarkets seem to ally the entire criterion customers are looking for when they think about going shopping. They offer a large quantity of choice, and consequently different quality of products and interesting prices thanks to the size of this store. On the other hand, specialized stores are the favourite retailers of people. This is kind of “normal” since when people go in a specialized store such as Naturalia or Biocoop (two stores specialized in high quality organic products), they perfectly know that they go there in order to purchase a particular product (in terms of quality or in term of speciality). Moreover, there is a bigger proximity between a small storekeeper, a butcher or a baker and a customer than between a cashier of a hypermarket and a shopper. Even if the idea of proximity were not

studied in the survey, it would be interesting to test this link in further researches. The second group of store is composed by hypermarkets and convenience stores. The limits convenience store is the price and the choice in the departments. Indeed as they have a smaller surface, they have more difficulties to offer a wide range of products to the shopper at an interesting price. Yet groceries have strengths such as the small distance between the shopper's home and the store. They also are more frequented than bigger retailers. Hypermarkets strengths is the large amount of choice and the price which are smaller than for any other stores. But hypermarkets multiply the weaknesses: they are far from customer's home, they are sometimes too big (shoppers lose a lot of time by filling their baskets) and there is no real link between the shopper and the producer. Finally a third group is made up of the only Hard Discounters that are not liked at all by shoppers. This may be explained by the poor experience and the strange atmosphere emerging in these retailers. There are three main Hard Discounters in France: Aldi, Leader Price and Netto. Lidl used to be part of this group, but as mentioned before they decided to switch their strategy in order to improve their brand image and increase in quality. This is clear that these stores should change their model if they want to continue attracting customers. Even if they have a strong basis of households that cannot go shopping in other stores (this is the case of modest households), Hard Discounters will not be able to recruit new customers. It should be interesting to study the rate of fidelity of such stores in order to know if they can rely on their group of current customers.

Secondly, the study enabled to underline the priority of customers when they think about going shopping. The very first priority of shoppers is the quality of products (93% of respondents agree to say that they care about the quality of the products when they go shopping). This may explain the very good results of specialized stores where the quality of the products is really one of the top priorities. The second priority of the shoppers is the price (83% of person confesses that they care about the price when they go shopping). Yet, even if the price is very important in the eyes of customers, stores that only bets on prices (such as Hard Discounters) are not in the heart of shoppers anymore. Indeed the war price increased a lot these last years (even between super or hypermarkets), which impacted a lot result of Hard Discounters that lost a lot of market shares. Eventually the third priority of customers when they think about their shopping experience is the distance to the store. This criterion explains in part the very good appreciation of convenience stores in the survey. Indeed, the proximity of the store is one of the biggest strengths of groceries. This is particularly true for convenience stores of the capital where people go shopping at least once a day. Since Parisians are lacking of time (they go shopping quickly for noon since they do not have enough time to come back at home), it is very important for the to have stores close from their workplace. Moreover, Parisians also lose a lot of time in the transports. This is the reason why they do not want to travel a lot when they go shopping. In this sense, proximity of the store is very important, especially for the persons who live in the capital (and who do not have cars to go shopping in super or hypermarkets).

Finally, the survey also tackles another angle of the customer experience, which touches the heart of the subject. Three out of four respondents think that the supermarket of tomorrow will be experiential and improve the customer experience all along its shopping process. The implications for the supermarkets are pretty clear: half of the persons think that experiential stores would push them to go shopping more often. A slight majority even thinks that they would even consumer more products in experiential stores. Eventually, two thirds agree to say that they would spend more time in store. Even if the results were not as convincing as expected, bias should be voiced and keep in mind. Indeed, the people who answer the survey were not in situation. It is often harder to imagine him in situation and we can kind of change the answers we give (either because the reality is not as good as expected or either because they do not realize that they would react to stimulus). Moreover, experiential stores are very theoretical since they do not exist yet. Indeed, according to the customers who answered my survey, Franprix is not an experiential store. In this condition, this is difficult to image how people would react in an environment they never visit. It would be interesting in further researches to study the reaction of people in departments or to create departments using experiential marketing to see how people would react in such atmosphere.

2. Theoretical Contributions

This thesis tried to find how the supermarkets or convenience stores would look like in a close future. Over a first phase, observations enabled to create a scheme of what classic stores are doing in terms of sensitive, even experiential marketing.

Thanks to these notes and observations, a survey was build in order to determinate the expectations of customers when they go shopping in a larger surface selling FMCG. The questionnaire showed the favourite stores of French people. Specialized stores are loved by

French people who are more and more looking for qualitative products, the promise of such stores, when Hard Discounters are not anymore in the heart of French consumers.
The survey also determines the priority of shoppers when they go shopping. Quality of the products, price and distance of the store are the keywords of consumers when they think about shopping. Nowadays, consumers grant more and more importance to quality (only 3% of the respondents says not to worry about the quality of the products). This is why convenience stores and supermarkets should emphasize this aspect and increase the value of the products they sell even if the products turn more expensive.
Eventually, the survey also shows that, indeed, the supermarket or the convenience store of tomorrow will be experiential. These stores should be thought as multidimensional stores as defined by Lemoine (2003). In this case, the good perception of the overall environment will increase loyalty degree of customers among time. Even more promising, the survey showed: shoppers think that an experiential store would push them to go shopping more often or to buy more products (for half of them). Yalch and Spangenberg (1993) and then Rieunier (2000) assumed in previous surveys that people stay longer in store if there is music. Sibéril also demonstrated that pleasant music increases consumption. If we have a look back on the survey, two thirds of the customers also think that they would spend more time in store if their supermarket is experiential. Increasing time spent in store induce a raise of the consumption as the shopper will be subject to more stimulus and be more likely to do impulse purchasing. It emphasizes the founding of Kotler (1973) who said that atmosphere is really important to attract clients and win loyalty, but is also a differentiation tool.
Moreover, in his studies, Filser also made the distinction between Inter-model competition (as instance Hypermarkets vs. Hard Discounts) and intra-model competition (retailers using the same techniques to attract customers). According to me, the inter-model competition between retailers will disappear as every retailer is trying to reduce prices as much as possible. The top priority of Hard Discounters is now the top priority of every store. The war price will have several consequences. First, it will destroy the Hard Discounters (unless they reinvent themselves, as Lidl did in France). Second, once the Hard Discounters out of the market, other retailers will lose market shares against the giant of the e-commerce (that has the lowest prices and are way more practical). This explains why hyper, supermarkets and convenience store should create a differentiation strategy to attract new customers and compete with retailers but also with e-commerce. As underlined

by Firat and Dholakia (1998), if the retailers want to survive, they have to be strongly distinctive by offering a new experience in store unseen before. If customers are reluctant, it is the role of retailers to facilitate their immersion. It may be done thanks to three approaches underlined by Carù and Cova (2006). If we refer to them, shoppers should be guided, they should be part of a collective action and they should be self-determined thanks to seminaries for instance. Why not taking the example of Nespresso and apply it in supermarkets or convenience stores. Thanks to workshop, retailers may include and attract new customers and immersed them in a new “world”. Moreover, shoppers may think that they belongs to a special group (as for Nespresso) and feel privileged or specials. This would increase even more the fidelity and the consumption of these customers.

3. Practical Implications

It is clear than hyper and supermarkets environment is changing in France. The arrival of the drives already changed a little the climate and the way people consume in France. But the atmosphere is changing even more with the raise of the e-commerce.

The only solution to fight against this new way of consumption is to rethink the entire shopping act. Indeed, it will not be possible to fight on the same field. E-shopping provides faster deliveries of products with unbeatable prices. As a consequence, shopping in a supermarket should not be considered anymore as a duty and a necessity but as an enjoyment and a pleasant moment for customers. French supermarkets still have a long way to go : most of the people assimilate shopping as a duty and a necessity. But things are changing a little thanks to initiative of little stores who try to reinvent the consumer experience.

Even if Franprix is not considered yet as an experiential store, the Casino brand heads in the right direction with its concept of Franprix Noé. Indeed, Franprix perfectly understood all these threats and tries to create strengths in order to fight with the new giant of the e-commerce. Yes, Franprix is considered as an expensive store for most of the people, but they try to improve the quality of the products they offer to the consumers by betting on new handcrafts. Customers of Franprix Noé are maybe a niche today, but the concept is rich in experience.

Thanks to the survey we can conclude that, yes, the supermarket of tomorrow will be experiential and it has to be experiential to renew the image of the old supermarkets. Shopping has to evolve to become a moment of enjoyment that surprises the consumers.
Indeed, the Filser (2001) was right in distinguishing two families of stores (functional positioning vs. experiential positioning). As mentioned, Hard Discounters are losing a lot of market shares since every retailer is challenging the prices and customers are no longer satisfied by the unique price/quality ratio. Shoppers are more and more looking for living an experience when they go shopping as explained by Filser. As a consequence, if a retailer wants to survive (especially against the giant of the e-commerce incoming in the retail segment), he has to evolve and adopt experiential positioning. But contrary to what claimed Filser, customers do not voice experience in store as a top priority. Even if they do not voice it, it does not mean that experience in store does not have its importance. It may be an unconscious factor not taken into account if we ask customers to think about it. But, implementing experiential marketing in hyper, supermarkets or convenience stores is one of the only ways for them not to lose market share against the giant of the e-commerce coming to France.
Some retailers already start to ally with the big players of the e-commerce. As instance, Casino starts working hand in hand with Ocado, the leader of the eating e-commerce. The arrival of the e-commerce in France will totally reshuffle the cards regarding FMCG in France and raise new problems for the hyper and supermarkets.

4. Limitations and future researches

4.1. Biases

This thesis faced many bias during the process of collection of data.
First, a single person did the observations in store. This may be a problem since the reaction to stimulus is different from a person to another and the feelings someone gets from the atmosphere differ from a person to another but also to a place and a moment to another. Even if the observations try to be as objective as possible, there is necessarily a part of subjectivity in these observations.
Then, other bias come from the survey and the way people fill it. Indeed, some people will answer how they hope to behave in a supermarket and not how they actually are. As

instance, regarding the topic about the respect of the environment, people want to say that they do care about the nature and they want to improve their consumption. But, in the fact, some of them do not really care about the origin of the products or the respectable aspect of the production. Another bias is the way the survey was filled. It is pretty obvious than nobody filled the survey in the department of a store. Consequently, they had to remember themselves in a store when they answered the question. Our memories may be transformed and not reflect the reality, especially regarding our behaviour in store. Moreover, when people are asked about experiential stores, they have to think about a concept that does not exist yet. It is even more difficult to project him in the departments of a hypothetic future store. Then, people are not always aware of the stimulus they are facing in store and its reactions (most of the time, impulse purchasing). As a consequence, it is very difficult to project himself in an inexistent store with an atmosphere they were never in contact with. This is why I think that the bias is pretty strong and that all the results about experiential marketing must be reconsidered upwards.

4.2. Further researches

One of the ways to test the last bias mentioned could be to test customer behaviour in store. Due to the lack of time, but before all to the lack of means, I was not able to conduct such experience. But it would be interesting to study three situations with similar persons in every case. First, a group of persons may go shopping in a department without any marketing. Second, another group of people with similar attributes would go shopping in a department with sensitive marketing (only one sense stimulated). Third, another group again who would go shopping in a new "universe" living a shopping experience thanks to experiential marketing (every senses aroused thanks to the marketing). It would be interesting to study how people react in the shelves and to compare their behaviours regarding every situation. It would be interesting, especially regarding the amount of products they buy, the time they spend in the store, their enjoyment when they exit the store and their likelihood to go in such stores another time. This test could be coupled with neuromarketing in order to track eyes of the consumers, but also to see how the brain reacts to the different stimulus customers are facing in the shelves. The study can even be complicated a little by asking customers to write a shopping list before going in store. Then, we could compare consumer behaviour in the three different kind of stores and estimate the power of experiential marketing on impulse purchasing (products that would not be present on the shopping list).

Another aspect that was not studied in this thesis is the fidelity relation between a consumer and a retailer. It would have been interesting to study how loyal consumers are to their stores. Would that rate be correlated with the experience in store, with the price or the quality of the products? This is an interesting question that should be studied in further researches. The aim is simple: to determinate if experiential marketing is useful not only for the instant consumption but also regarding the future and the frequency of visit of customers.

Then, it also would have been interesting to the study the price elasticity of the products in general but also the price elasticity regarding experience in store. Would customer be agree to pay a little more its products in exchange of a great experience in store? The answer of this question is interesting for retailers that are planning to renovate their stores. Indeed, if the price elasticity is very low, they could reverberate the cost of renovation and make people pay for the experience they are living in store.

Eventually, we saw it, e-commerce is growing more and more in the world (thanks to the arrival of Amazon in the market) and in France (thanks to the drive, but also thanks to the new cooperation between Casino and Ocado). Then, studies should be lead to analyze the relationships between French people and e-commerce. Would their consumption habits change in the coming years? Would they prefer to shop online? These are decisive questions that should be answered in order to prepare the transition of supermarkets in the coming years.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1. Interview with Chloé LIBIS a former part-time Nespresso employee

"Question : Hello Chloé, can you present yourself briefly and the work you have done for Nespresso during your previous experiences ?

Answer : I am a student in law. I worked for Nespresso some times during my studies thanks to a temporary work agency. I worked as receptionist. I was in charge of welcoming Nespresso's customers, of the presentation and explanation of the new products (capsule, machines and accessories). I also had to offer a coffee to welcome the customers (this service is only offered in some French stores including Bordeaux). I had to do all these tasks respecting the brand image of Nespresso (expert assessment, perfect service, availability, formal language, etc.)

Question : Can you present generally the Nespresso stores ? (Who are the targets of such stores, where are they located, what are the benefits for Nestlé ?)

Answer : Nespresso presents itself as a luxury brand trying to attract high class clients (coffees are called « Grands Crus » as for the wine, customers are called « members of the club », which reflects a feeling of exclusivity). Moreover, stores are often located in stylish neighbourhoods of big cities.
But in facts, customers come from different horizons : students, families, tourists, well-off persons, etc.

Question : Are these stores a way to appeal new customers for the brand ? Why are they so different from other stores or from retailers ?

Answer: By creating regularly new capsules, machines and accessories, Nespresso may try to attract a broader public from different social classes. Furthermore, stores are always very well situated, beautifully furnished and organized. All these elements attract the eye of the passer-by and potential new customers. They also offer a range of services wider than most other stores.

Question : Is there any special services propose for the customers in store ?

Answer : As mentioned before, some Nespresso stores offer a free degustation to their customers after a purchase. It exists in the store having a Nespresso bar. Some stores, such as the one in the Champs-Elysées in Paris, sell degustations to their bar. Others does not offer this services.

Moreover, Nespresso offers « expert meetings » to their customers. It is a thirty minutes experience in store, in a room dedicated where Nespresso experts (sellers) meet customers registered for the event. It is a small workshop where customers will learn a lot of things about coffee production, about Nespresso, about roasting, about differences among coffees, etc. During this workshop, they can see the experts preparing a recipe with coffee base that they will taste at the very end.

Finally, Nespresso stores have a recycling service enabling customers to bring back their old and used capsules in a space dedicated in order to recycle the aluminium and the coffee grounds.

Question : How would you summarize the global atmosphere of the store ?

Answer : Thanks to the prestigious image of Nespresso and to the setting of the stores, the atmosphere in store is class and distinguished even if the customers come from different social categories but always friendly and welcoming.

Thank you very much for your time Chloé, this was a very rich exchange. We learned a lot on Nespresso stores thanks to you."

APPENDIX 2. Interview with Chloé BASTEN a former intern for Unilever, working on the Maille concept stores.

Question : Hello Chloé, can you present yourself briefly and the work you have done for Unilever during your previous internship ?

I'm Chloé, I'm 23 year old and I am currently in SKEMA's PGE program. I've done my first gap year internship in Unilver for Maille Boutiques. I was assistant brand manager for all the boutiques in France and overseas (2 in USA and 1 in UK). During my internship I've done a lot of things from helping to develop a new product to implement it in our boutiques and deal with everyday business issues and activation.

Question : Can you present generally the Maille's concept stores ? (Who are the targets of such stores, where are they located, what are the benefits for Unilever ?)

The idea of Maille boutique is to create a store dedicated to high quality dressings and especially premium mustard.
You can find 2 types of mustard:

- Prefilled: this mustards are already in glasses. You can chose your preferred ones among a large range. For most of them you cannot find them in supermarket or in any other place than Maille boutiques.
- At the counter: these mustards are uniques. They are served in front of you from a pump directly in a sandstone jar you choose. You can chose among few flavors from two Sauternes to Black or White Truffle. These mustards are very specials: all the different ingredients were under a very strict selection among the best ingredients we can find (White Truffle from Alba, Italy; Sauternes wine from France etc). These products are luxury products, devised from enhance every flavors and create an extraordinary and gourmet dish.

Basically the target is everyone interested in cooking, with an attraction for good and gourmet food. These boutiques are located in big cities such as London, Paris, New York or also Dijon, the iconic city of the French mustard and so Maille.

According to me the benefits for Unilever are multiples:

- First it enhances and reinforces the brand image of Maille : in retail Maille is already considered as a premium brand but this boutiques are the proof that beside any Maille product, there is a real know-how and a true quality of the products.
- Increase visibility and make the brand known
- Promote French “art de vivre” / gastronomy threw gourmet products and high quality recipes.

Question : Are these stores a way to appeal new customers for the brand ? Why are they so different from other stores or from retailers?

On the one hand, yes, I think that it is also a way to appeal new customers because the bulk of consumers are tourists. This tourist are often people who are seeking for iconic and high quality French products such as wine, champagne and also mustard. This customers are obviously not those targeted by retail Maille products.
But I think that it is also more than just recruit new customers.
However, even customers who are used to go in supermarkets for buying their FMCG products can be considered as potential customers. Indeed, the mustards are so different compared to those sold in supermarket that the basic mustard customer could be attracted by our products for big occasions such as Christmas or Easter dinner.
Moreover, Maille offers a large range of gift boxes. It can be surprising to see how many customers are interested in offering premium mustard or premium gift boxes for special occasion (birthday, father’s day ect).

Question : Can you tell me a little more about those stores : have you worked on the global atmosphere on the stores ?

The general aspect and atmosphere is a huge concern for Maille’s top management. Indeed, we tried to combine different aspect in order to create a unique atmosphere and a unique shopper experience.
First, Maille boutiques get inspired by luxury cosmetics brands (such as Chanel, Dior, Louis Vuitton etc.) in order to communicate around the quality and know-how of Maille. Moreover, the idea in Maille boutique is also to follow trends in order to provide to our

customer a real unique and unexpected experience (getting inspired by Instagram as instance). According to me, a boutique is a subtle mix between

Question : Can you describe the Experiential Marketing taking place in the Maille's concept stores ? (Describe every sense)

Experiential Marking takes place in every corner of the boutique. Before you even enter, the boutique is always located in a beautiful building and mostly situated in a fancy neighborhood (see Madeleine or Piccadilly boutique!). Then, when you cross the door you are immersed in a luxurious but comfortable environment.

The light is not too strong, but you can easily recognize each mustard and its potential flavor. The colors are a mix between neutral undertones, black and gold sometimes embellished with some color tones regarding the season/special activation. The merchandising is clear,
For information, black and gold are the historical colors of the brand.

Then you also have the olfactory and taste dimension: indeed, you can test every mustard, oil or vinegar just by asking to an advisor. You can experiment every products, it is a good way to project the customer into a product or a recipe. Moreover, it is a way to involve the customer in your brand and so to convince him that your product are savory and reliable.
Also, every day advisors cook a short and easy, but very chic, recipe in order to propose degustation to customers (crab meat with white truffle mustard on blinis for example). Once again, you feel involved, even pampered by the brand. For example, Truffle have this recognizable and unique smell: during Christmas time, the whole boutique (and street) smells Truffle. Consequently, passers are intrigued, they come in and the trip in mustard land starts.

So at the end, you can see, smell and even taste every product. Your senses are stimulated and so you feel involved even before buying any product.

Thank you very much for your time Chloé, this was a very rich exchange. We learned a lot on Unilever and Maille's concept stores thanks to you.

APPENDIX 3. Google Forms used for the interview

Experiential Marketing

The aim of this study is to find out if experiential marketing is the future of supermarket and convenience store or not.

*Obligatoire

Adresse e-mail *

Votre adresse e-mail

SUIVANT

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Experiential Marketing

*Obligatoire

Who are you ?

How old are you ? *

- Under 18
- 18-25
- 26-40
- 41-60
- More than 60

What is your gender *

- Male
- Female

What is your Socio-Professional Category *

- ◯ Farmer
- ◯ Craftsperson, Shopkeeper or Business Owner
- ◯ Executive, Intellectual profession
- ◯ Employee
- ◯ Worker
- ◯ Student
- ◯ Retired

Where do you live ? *

- ◯ Paris
- ◯ Big City (more than 300 000 inhabitants)
- ◯ Small City (less than 300 000 inhabitants)
- ◯ Countryside (less than 2 000 inhabitants)
- ◯ Abroad

How often do you go shopping ? *

- ◯ Once a day or more
- ◯ Twice or three times a week
- ◯ Once a week
- ◯ Once every two weeks
- ◯ Once a month

Regarding your total incomes, what is the part you spend in supermarkets ? *

- ◯ 0 to 25%
- ◯ 26 to 50%
- ◯ 51 to 75%
- ◯ 76 to 100%

Shopping for you is *

	1	2	3	4	5	
A duty and a necessity	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	An enjoyment

I enjoy going shopping in this store *

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I never go shopping there
Hypermarket	○	○	○	○	○	○
Supermarket	○	○	○	○	○	○
Convenience Store (Franprix / Monoprix / etc)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Hard Discount	○	○	○	○	○	○
Specialized (Biocoop, Naturalia, Butcher's shop, bakery, market)	○	○	○	○	○	○

When I go shopping, I care about *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	I don't mind	Agree	Strongly agree
The price of the products	○	○	○	○	○
The good quality of the products	○	○	○	○	○
The large amount of choice	○	○	○	○	○
The time I spend in store	○	○	○	○	○
The ease of acces to the store	○	○	○	○	○
The distance to the store	○	○	○	○	○
The respect of the environment regarding the products	○	○	○	○	○
The shopping experience in store	○	○	○	○	○

RETOUR SUIVANT

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Experiential Marketing

*Obligatoire

Do you know Experiential Marketing ?

Have you heard about experiential marketing and could you describe it ? *

- ○ Yes
- ○ I heard about it but I can't describe it
- ○ No

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Experiential Marketing

*Obligatoire

Experiential Marketing

Experiential Marketing is a concept that immerses the customer in a universe by providing him an experience thanks to the use of the five senses of the customers. The aim is to create an atmosphere of well-being that will link the customer with the brand and improve the image of the brand in customer's mind.
As an exemple, Abercrombie & Fitch or Nature & Découvertes are two exemples of stores using experiential marketing.

Do you think that the supermarket or the convenience store of tomorrow will be experiential *

- ○ Definitely
- ○ Probably
- ○ Probably not
- ○ Definitely not

Do you think experiential stores would push you to go shopping more often ? *

- Definitely
- Probably
- Probably not
- Definitely not

Do you think you would spend more time in an experiential supermarket or convenience store . *

- Definitely
- Probably
- Probably not
- Definitely not

Do you think you would consume more products in an experiential supermarket or convenience store ? *

- Definitely
- Probably
- Probably not
- Definitely not

Do you perceive Franprix as an experiential store ? *

- Definitely
- Probably
- Probably not
- Definitely not
- I don't know

How often do you go in Franprix ? *

- Once a day or more
- Twice or three times a week
- Once a week
- Once every two weeks
- Once a month
- Rarely
- Never

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Experiential Marketing

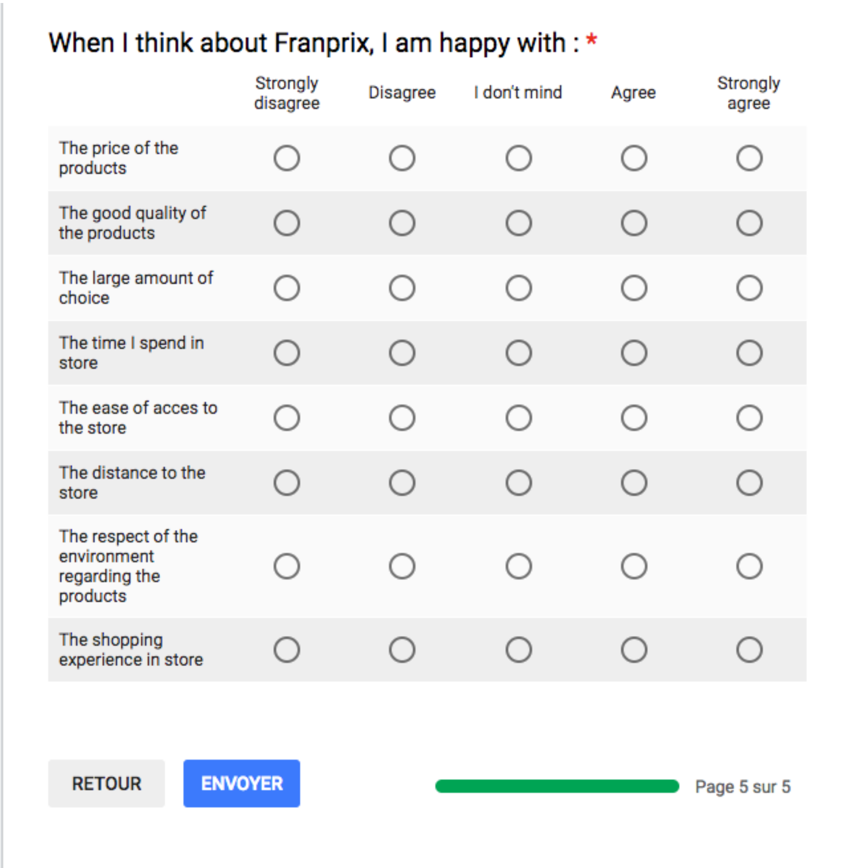
*Obligatoire

Focus on Convenience Stores (also called Grocery Shopping)

In this part we focus on Grocery Shopping, more precisely about Franprix

According to me, *

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not less or more than another store	Agree	Strongly Agree
Whenever I can, I do my grocery shopping at Franprix	○	○	○	○	○
Franprix is the best place to do grocery shopping	○	○	○	○	○
I tell my friends they must do grocery shopping at Franprix	○	○	○	○	○
When I think about grocery shopping, Franprix combines all the criterion I am expecting	○	○	○	○	○
When I go shopping at Franprix, I live an experience in store	○	○	○	○	○



When I think about Franprix, I am happy with : *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	I don't mind	Agree	Strongly agree
The price of the products					
The good quality of the products					
The large amount of choice					
The time I spend in store					
The ease of acces to the store					
The distance to the store					
The respect of the environment regarding the products					
The shopping experience in store					

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APPENDIX 4. Date of visit of the different stores

All the visits were done in September 2017. Apologies if concept or overall atmosphere of the stores changes between these dates and the moment you read the thesis.

Franprix: 18th of August 2017 // 15 minutes spent in store
Simply Market: 18th of August 2017 // 15 minutes spent in store
Franprix Noé: 9th of September 2017 // 25 minutes spent in store
Nature & Découvertes (Le Marais): 10th of September 2017 // 30 minutes spent in store
Lush: 10th of September 2017 // 20 minutes spent in store
Maille concept store: 17th of September 2017 // 25 minutes spent in store
Nespresso concept store: 17th of September 2017 // 25 minutes spent in store
Abercrombie & Fitch: 23rd of September 2017 // 30 minutes spent in store
Starbuck: 24th of September 2017 // 30 minutes spent in store