



The World of Word-of-Mouth (WOM)

– The Factors Influencing WOM

Communication

Kristianstad University
The Department of Business Studies
Bachelor Dissertation
International Business Program
November 2007

Tutors: Christer Ekelund
Lisa Källström

Authors: Canan Ibraimovska
Kamila Weremko

TABLE OF CONTENT:

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	5
1.1 BACKGROUND	6
1.2 PROBLEM	7
1.3 PURPOSE	8
1.4 LIMITATION	8
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	8
1.6 THE OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION	9
CHAPTER 2 METHOD	10
2.1 CHOICE OF METHOD	10
2.2 APPROACH	10
2.3 PHILOSOPHY	11
2.4 DATA	11
CHAPTER 3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	13
3.1 DEFINITION OF WORD-OF-MOUTH	13
3.1.1 WOM as Network Hubs	13
3.1.2 WOM as Input and Output	14
3.1.3 Organic and Amplified WOM	14
3.1.4 Everyday and Institutional WOM	15
3.1.5 Summary	15
3.2 DEFINITION OF WORD-OF-MOUTH MARKETING	16
3.2.1 Summary	17
3.3. COMMUNICATION MODELS	17
3.3.1. Berlo’s SMCR model	18
3.4 THE FACTORS INFLUENCING WORD-OF-MOUTH MARKETING COMMUNICATION	20
3.4.1 Message	20
3.4.1.1 The Six Buttons	20
3.4.1.2 Elements of a Good Story	22
3.4.1.3 Summary	24
3.4.3 Service	24
3.4.3.1 Intangibility	25
3.4.3.2 Inseparability	25
3.4.3.3 Variability	25
3.4.3.4 Perishability	26
3.4.3.5 Quality of service	26
3.4.3.6 Employees	27
3.4.3.7 The Product	28
3.4.3.8 Summary	30
3.4.5 People	31
3.4.5.1 The Characteristic of the Network Hubs	31
3.4.5.2 Network Hubs	32
3.4.5.3 Characteristics of talkers	33
3.4.5.4 Talkers	34
3.4.5.5 Summary	36
CHAPTER 4 THE MODEL	37
4.1 INTRODUCTION	37
4.2 TRANSFORMATION OF SMCR MODEL FOR WOM COMMUNICATION PURPOSE	38
4.2.1 Source	39
4.2.2 Message	39
4.2.2 Channel (Service)	40

4.2.3 Receiver (People).....	41
CHAPTER 5 EMPIRICAL METHOD	44
5.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY.....	44
5.2 SAMPLING.....	45
5.3 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....	46
5.4 LIMITATIONS.....	47
5.5 RELIABILITY	48
5.6 VALIDITY.....	48
CHAPTER 6 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS.....	49
6.1 SVEA.....	49
6.1.1 Background.....	49
6.1.2 WOM	49
6.1.3 Message	50
6.1.3.1 Anticipation.....	50
6.1.3.2 Hero	50
6.1.3.3. Secret, Behind the Scenes.....	50
6.1.4 Channel (Service).....	50
6.1.4.1 Employees	51
6.1.4.2 Interior.....	51
6.1.4.3 Food.....	51
6.1.5 Receiver (People).....	51
6.1.5.1 Happy Customers.....	51
6.1.5.2 Online Talkers.....	52
6.1.5.3 Eager Employees.....	52
6.1.5.4 Fans and Hobbyists.....	52
6.1.5.5 Professionals.....	52
6.1.6 Additional information.....	53
6.2 SMAK.....	53
6.2.1 Background.....	53
6.2.2 WOM	53
6.2.3 Message	54
6.2.3.1 Anticipation/Secret.....	54
6.2.3.2 Hero	54
6.2.3.3 Behind the Scenes.....	54
6.2.4 Channel (Service).....	54
6.2.5.1 Quality.....	55
6.2.5.2 Employees	55
6.2.5 Receiver (People).....	55
6.2.3.1 Happy Customers.....	55
6.2.3.2 Online Talkers.....	56
6.2.3.3 Eager employees	56
6.2.6 Additional information	56
6.3 JOHAN P.....	56
6.3.1 Background.....	56
6.3.2 WOM	57
6.3.3 Message.....	57
6.3.3.1 Anticipation/Secret.....	57
6.3.3.2 Hero	58
6.3.3.3 Behind the Scenes.....	58
6.3.4 Channel (Service).....	58
6.3.4.1 Quality.....	59
6.3.4.2 Employees	59
6.3.5 Receiver (People).....	59
6.3.5.1. Happy Customers.....	59
6.3.5.2 Online Talker	60
6.3.5.3 Eager Employees.....	60
6.3.5.4 Fans and Hobbyists.....	60

6.3.5.5 Professionals	60
6.3.6 Additional Information	61
6.4 SALT&BRYGGA	61
6.4.1 Background	61
6.4.2 WOM	61
6.3.1 Message	62
6.3.1.1 ANTICIPATION/SECRET	62
6.3.1.2 Hero	63
6.3.1.3 Behind the Scenes	63
6.4.4 Channel (Service)	63
6.4.4.1 Employees	63
6.4.4.2 Interior	63
6.4.4.3 Food	63
6.4.5 Receiver (People)	64
6.4.5.1 Happy Customers	64
6.4.5.2 Online Talkers	64
6.4.5.3 Eager Employees	64
6.4.5.4 Fans and Hobbyists	65
6.4.5.5 Professionals	65
6.4.6 Additional Information	65
6.5 PIM'S RESTAURANT	66
6.5.1 Background	66
6.5.2 WOM	66
6.5.2 Message	67
6.5.2.1 Anticipation/Secret	67
6.5.2.2 Hero	67
6.5.2.3 Behind the Scenes	67
6.5.4 Channel (Service)	68
6.5.4.1 Employees	68
6.5.4.2 Interior	68
6.5.4.3 Food	68
6.5.5 Receiver (Network)	68
6.5.5.1 Happy Customers	69
6.5.5.2 Online Talkers	69
6.5.5.3 Eager Employees	69
6.5.5.4 Fans and Hobbyists	70
6.5.5.5 Professionals	70
6.5.6 Additional information	70
6.6 SUMMARY	70
6.6.1 Message	70
6.6.2 Channel (Service)	71
6.6.3 Receiver (People)	72
CHAPTER 7 FINAL DISCUSSION	74
7.1 CONCLUSIONS	74
7.2 MODIFICATION OF THE MODEL	75
7.2.1 Message	75
7.2.1.1 Anticipation/Secret	76
7.2.1.2 Hero	76
7.2.1.3 Behind the Scenes	76
7.2.1.4 Concept	76
7.2.1.5 Event	77
7.2.2 Channel (Service)	77
7.2.2.1 Employees	77
7.2.2.2 Interior	77
7.2.2.3 Food	78
7.2.3 Receiver (People)	78
7.2.3.1 Happy Customers	78

7.2.3.2 Online Talkers.....	79
7.2.3.3 Eager Employees.....	79
7.2.3.4 Fans and Hobbyists.....	79
7.2.3.5 Professionals.....	79
7.2.3.6 Personal Network.....	79
7.2.3.7 Companies.....	80
7.3 METHODOLOGICAL CRITICISM.....	81
7.4 FURTHER RESEARCH.....	82
7.5 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS.....	82
REFERENCES.....	84
BOOKS:	84
ARTICLES:	85
APPENDICIES.....	86
APPENDIX I.....	86
<i>Questions/frågor</i>	86
APPENDIX II.....	88
<i>Svea...</i>	88
<i>SMAK – Nina Christensson</i>	93
<i>Johan p – Niklas</i>	98
<i>Salt och Brygga- Björn Stenbeck</i>	103
<i>Pim’s restaurang - Pim Sahlgren</i>	112
FIGURES:	
FIGURE 3.1 BERLO’S SMCR COMMUNICATION MODEL.....	19
FIGURE: 3.2 NETWORK HUBS.....	33
FIGURE 4.1 COMMUNICATION MODEL.....	38
FIGURE 4.2 THE MODEL OF WOM INFLUENCING FACTORS.....	43
FIGURE 7.1 THE MODEL OF FACTORS INFLUENCING WOM.....	80

Chapter 1 Introduction

The main task of the first chapter is to give the readers an overview of the subject of the dissertation. Furthermore, the introduction chapter aims to clarify the purpose and problem of the dissertation. The chapter will begin with the background of the dissertation followed by the problem definition of the dissertation. Finally, the limitation and research questions will be presented.

1.1 Background

The importance of exchange of opinions among people about different businesses has been widely researched during recent years. Nowadays, the marketing tools for increasing publicity have been developed and much more engines are utilized to increase the demand for the companies' products. An engine that has become more customary is Word-of-Mouth (WOM) (Rosen, 2004). Silverman (2001) argues that WOM is a phenomenon that has existed since far back in time, but it is not until now that the phenomenon has attracted a lot of attention. He even claims that “[w]ord of mouth is THOUSANDS of times as powerful as conventional marketing” (Silverman, 2001, p.22). The customers' scarcity of time represents attenuation in the significance of conventional marketing because the customers don't have time to absorb them. Because of that, WOM becomes a time saver and will stimulate the decision easier among people (Silverman, 2001). W. Mangold, F. Miller and R. Brockway (1999) bring up that WOM is more powerful and important in the service sector than in the business sector. Since purchasers of services have greater perceived risk and insecurity, they rely more on WOM to reduce those risks than the purchasers of products. This may show that WOM plays a significant role in service purchasing processes.

This inspired us to take a closer look at importance and awareness of WOM marketing methods within the restaurant industry. We assumed that the restaurant

business is successfully reflecting the service business, where good publicity and WOM are crucial, winning factors. WOM is especially interesting within the service industry because interactive marketing (Grönroos, 1996) which embraces WOM plays a distinctive role in this industry sector.

A lot of experts give different definitions of what WOM actually is. In the current circumstances there is a dissonance whether WOM is a phenomenon occurring only naturally or is it something that could be generated through companies marketing efforts. The experts like Rosen (2000), Silverman (2001), and Stokes & Lomax (2002) suggest different types of engines to stimulate and control WOM. Due to the obscurity of the WOM phenomenon, we have decided to write a dissertation about WOM and different factors that could activate it on the behalf of the company. As it is assumed that WOM is especially vital for the service industry we chose to investigate restaurants in search for the answers. We believe that restaurants reflect the service industry characteristics and can be successfully used in this dissertation. We hope to clarify dissonances and get more knowledge of the subject since we found it to be interesting.

1.2 Problem

The methods and research about controlling and stimulating WOM have been created recently, although this approach is old as the human existence (Sernovitz, 2006), there are many tools that could be used to stimulate WOM. Gremler, Gwiner and Brown (2001) suggest, for example, that good service is one of the tools that could stimulate WOM among the service receivers. There have been many discussions whether WOM can be influenced by the companies or not. Silverman (2001) and Sernovitz (2006) agree that WOM can be controllable by using different engines. Grace and O’Cass (2005), on the other hand assert that WOM is a source which can not be controlled.

Furthermore, the problem of finding the right factors by which the WOM can be influenced is brought up. Theoretical material written among others by Rosen

(2000), Silverman (2001), Sernovitz (2006) suggests different factors in different models. The difficulty is to find out a model of factors that combine the theoretical research findings with empirical findings from the interviewed restaurants.

1.3 Purpose

The main purpose of our dissertation is to clarify if WOM is a controllable source among the restaurants, and if it is which factors are used to stimulate and control the WOM. Finally, we also want to create a model which gives insight into which engines that are most used to stimulate and control WOM in the restaurants

1.4 Limitation

We have chosen to limit the research to the restaurants in Malmö city. Another remark that should be made is that we also are going to have a limitation among the restaurants, since fast food and take away restaurants are not included in the research. We are going to research controlled WOM and the factors that are used to stimulate it, thus interviewing the restaurants managers should give us more relevant facts. Actually, the controlled WOM would also be interesting to investigate and conduct research on from the customers' perspective. Due to the time limit, we unfortunately can not investigate the uncontrolled WOM.

1.5 Research Questions

- ✓ If and how can WOM communication be controlled by the restaurants?
- ✓ Which WOM factors found in the literature are used in the reality by the restaurants?
- ✓ Are there any new factors influencing WOM in the restaurants besides the factors mentioned in the theoretical framework?

1.6 The Outline of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 – Introduction

The background, problem, purpose, limitations and the research questions are presented.

Chapter 2 – Method

The method, the research approaches and the strategies are presented

Chapter 3 – Theory

The theory chapter includes description of general communication process, WOM and WOM marketing definitions, followed by investigation of existing factors influencing WOM referrals.

Chapter 4- Model

The model of factors assumed to be influencing WOM referrals is presented.

Chapter 5 – Empirical method

The empirical method is presented. Insight on how and why the research was performed.

Chapter 6 – Empirical Findings

The analysis of the survey; results from the interviews and the evaluation of gathered data.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

The conclusions based on theoretical and empirical are presented with help of the existing model. Furthermore, modifications of the model, propositions for further research and criticism are presented.

Chapter 2 Method

This chapter describes the methodology of the dissertation. It is presenting the approach, philosophy and choice for collection of the primary and the secondary data. Finally describing the approach used in the dissertation.

2.1 Choice of Method

In recent years marketers have become more interested in the Word-of-Mouth (WOM) phenomenon. Earlier studies have shown that WOM can be influenced by companies to work in their advantage. Our aim is to find and set up a map of WOM factors used to influence customers within the restaurants business. To reach this goal, the research began with examining *previous studies* around the WOM, with the focus on service industry. It was soon discovered that WOM theory needs to be backed up with the general information about *communications strategies*. In addition, the brief presentation of communication models was created. By using both previous research and literature on the subject the most frequent factors influencing WOM were introduced. Furthermore, the presentation of the service industry was made to introduce characteristics of the business. This dissertation is built on an *exploratory research* to reach insight and better understanding for the phenomenon using restaurant management to determine activities connected and used to influence WOM. Information needed for this dissertation is gathered using *in-depth, pilot interviews*. The questions are derived from factors received during theoretical research.

2.2 Approach

The research approach used to create the dissertation is deductive. This means gathering a theoretical framework to confirm it is relevance by using empirical studies is used to create an understanding for the subject and measure the significance between theory and reality. Furthermore our study is qualitative with

quantitative elements. Because of the small number of non-representative interviewees used to develop initial understanding, the dissertation is seen as qualitative. At the same time, to some extent structured interview questions are created to help generalize the results of the research. This can be seen as an attempt to quantify the project (Malhotra, 2004).

2.3 Philosophy

As the dissertation is built to introduce theory that will lead to empirical findings and analysis, the approach is deductive. The philosophy used in the dissertation is an *interpretivistic epistemology*. We assumed that subject explored in the research is concerned with attitudes and feelings that in a sense cannot be measured, but can be interpreted. According to Saunders (2007) interpretivism comes from two traditions: *phenomenology* and *symbolic interactionism*. Combining these two intellectual sources results in understanding how surrounding is seen by the people connected to it and how interactions in it change and adjust peoples' views of the reality. As the dissertation topic is about people and influencing their attitude forward the business that will result in positive referrals, we chose to use the interpretivistic view to characterise our effort to understand the Word-of-Mouth phenomenon (Saunders, 2007).

2.4 Data

This dissertation contains findings from both primary and secondary sources. The first part of the dissertation is a review of the secondary data findings that will furthermore guide the development of the empirical part of the dissertation, where primary data is gathered and analyzed. *Secondary data* is connected to the three concepts: the WOM phenomenon, communication strategy and the service industry. The findings will contribute to create a model of factors and interview questions that will be reviewed during the process of analyzing data. The data is used in two ways, first to provide key information on the subject and to compare the empirical findings with theoretical framework. The secondary data used in this dissertation is of a written, documentary type, where books, articles, organizations websites and

journals were greatly explored (Saunders, 2007). Secondary findings on WOM are gathered from the previous research, mostly using Stokes & Lomax (2002) research and literature by Rosen (2000) and Silverman (2001).

The primary data is derived from interview findings gathered from the restaurants' managers. Given the exploratory research approach the data used in the dissertation should be providing information that will give better understanding, test existing model and create additional factors to the existing theory. To be able to reach these goals the need of primary sources is crucial. Furthermore, the data collection should also give respondents the opportunity to explain their actions and not be constrained to closed questions that can result in not fully exploring the field of the study. That is why the primary data selection is qualitative with semi-structured interview questions (Saunders, 2007).

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework

To develop a better understanding of the research, the theoretical chapter aim is to provide objective information about Word-of-Mouth and different approaches that can help to control this phenomenon. Furthermore, a communication model is described. The end of this chapter pays specific attention to the service industry and a theoretical introduction to prove the relevance and importance of Word-of-Mouth within this market sector is presented.

3.1 Definition of Word-of-Mouth

Grönroos describes Word-of-Mouth (WOM) as “*the message about a company (its services, staff, reliability, etc) communicated from one person to another*” (Grönroos, 1993, p.21). There are many other definitions of WOM than Grönroos is describing. The text above is going to bring up more definitions of WOM.

3.1.1 WOM as Network Hubs

Emmanuel Rosen (2000) defines WOM as follows: “*Buzz is all the word of mouth about a brand. It’s the aggregate of all person-to-person communication about a particular product, service, or company at any point in time*” (Rosen, 2000, p.7). The author is referring to WOM as the *buzz*. Rosen (2000) is explaining WOM as travelling comments, which are exchanged through different channels (i.e. phone lines, e-mails, dinner table). The phenomenon is described as an idea, created in someone’s brain which travels through above mentioned channels to the listeners. According to the author, buzz travels via invisible *networks* that include *hubs* such as people with essential knowledge and capability to transfer the message further. Besides hubs, networks are also built with clusters where the concentration of people is especially condensed. Furthermore, clusters are connected to each other as well. Finally, the author stages that, “*everyone is somehow linked to everyone else*” (Rosen, 2000, p. 8). The travelling messages can be exchanged between people and create conversation. Sometimes the message is passing between two people, other

times it may reach enormous amount of people at the same time (Rosen, 2000). The more detailed description of Rosen's (2000) networks will be presented later on in this chapter.

3.1.2 WOM as Input and Output

Other contributors to the WOM definition are Stokes and Lomax (2002). According to the article, WOM is an “*Oral person-to-person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the person perceives as non-commercial, regarding brand, product or a service*” (Stokes & Lomax, p.1). With help of this description Stokes and Lomax (2002) further in their article draw conclusion about differences between WOM and other forms of marketing communications. First of all, it requires oral contact between communicator and receiver and secondly the communicator is “*perceived to be independent of the product or service under discussion*” Stokes and Lomax (2002) present another contribution to WOM definition, by dividing WOM in *Input* and *Output* WOM. Input WOM embraces recommendation that may lead to the purchase decision and create expected value of the product or service for the customer, while Output WOM is the post-purchased recommendation or opinion built upon experienced value. In other words the Input WOM is a pre-purchase recommendation received from other people and Output WOM is the reference gain after the purchase that will be forwarded to others (Stokes & Lomax, 2002, p.1).

3.1.3 Organic and Amplified WOM

The Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) is the official trade association for the Word-of-Mouth industry in the USA. According to the association, there are two types of WOM which could be applied to the business, *Organic* and *Amplified* WOM. Organic WOM occurs naturally when the costumers are pleased with the service of product provided by the company, that they have a great need to share their opinion and enthusiasm with others. While the Amplified, occurs when different engines are involved to influence the new and existing customers to talk about a product or service. (WOMMA, 2007)

3.1.4 Everyday and Institutional WOM

WOM is described by Walter J. Carl as "... informal, evaluative (positive or negative) talk between two or more people, online or offline, about an organization, brand, product, or service, which may or may not include a recommendation" (Carl, 2006, p.6). The author is suggesting different types of WOM: Everyday WOM which occurs without any involvement from discussed company's side and institutional WOM which contains the attempts to supervise, evaluate and facilitate activities conducted to people assembled in organized marketing campaign (Carl, 2006).

3.1.5 Summary

Different authors provide different definitions and details contributing to different characteristics of WOM. Although, common descriptions can be found, for example, WOM is frequently described as the person-to-person communication (Rosen, 2000 & Stokes & Lomax, 2002), *talk* (Carl, 2006) or *message* (Grönroos, 1993). Furthermore, common for all authors is the subject of the message which includes information about company's brand, product, service or other characteristics related to the company's activities. In addition, WOM is an oral communication and exchange of opinions about a product, brand or service. WOMMA has divided the phenomenon into Organic and Applied WOM. In this dissertation, it is assumed that Organic is the actual WOM while Amplified is a result of different marketing approaches used to influence the WOM. For that reason, the Amplified WOM will be subscribed to the WOM marketing. It is assumed that the same limitation should be applied to the everyday and institutional WOM presented by Carl (2006). The institutional will be considered as a contribution to WOM marketing definition.

In this dissertation it is assumed that WOM occurs when individuals share their opinions and experience about a product or service with other individuals. Furthermore, the comment, or with other words the message, is identified as "*independent of the product or service under discussion*" (Lomax & Stokes, 2002, p.1) and that the message can be forwarded both thru intimate dialogue within small

groups of people and through reaching large clusters of people at the same time (Rosen, 2000).

3.2 Definition of Word-of-Mouth Marketing

Although, “*Word-of-Mouth has for long been recognized as a powerful force affecting consumer choice, loyalty and switching*” (Wangeheim & Bayón: 2004, p. 6) there is still too little knowledge of the practical implication that can be used to stimulate Word-of-Mouth (WOM) within different business areas. The following definitions are presenting different points of view of the WOM marketing objectives, used by different authors.

According to Stokes and Lomax (2002) there are many entrepreneurs that are missing opportunities to effectively use WOM by limiting their influence on customers only to providing the best service. In the recent years, there have been developed techniques that enable the companies to influence WOM. These types of tools and strategies create WOM marketing that will be presented later on in the chapter (Stokes & Lomax, 2002).

The WOMMA association has the task to help companies to use the WOM marketing. According to WOMMA, “*Word of mouth marketing encompasses dozens of marketing techniques that are geared toward encouraging and helping people to talk to each other about products and services*”(WOMMA, 2007). Further contribution explaining WOM marketing used by WOMMA is that marketing efforts should be focused on supporting pleased customers and creating platforms for communication between different groups of people (WOMMA, 2007).

Furthermore, Sernovitz (2006) makes another contribution to definition of WOM marketing. According to the author, this kind of marketing is a B2C2C communication. The marketing takes place between a business and a customer and evolves into pure WOM, when the message created by business is sent from one

customer to another customer. This type of marketing is set to aggregate WOM due to achieving marketing goals. It can be planned and when tracked, it enables the company to learn how to join and participate in the conversation to increase the exchange of opinions and thoughts between the people (Sernovitz, 2006).

3.2.1 Summary

WOM was recently seen as something that can not be harness or influence by the objects of the conversation. Researches on WOM showed that the WOM can be influenced with help of marketing strategies and tools, creating WOM marketing. Definition of WOM marketing can be summarized as a set of tools and techniques that influence and encourage communication between people. These marketing approaches are endorsing companies' attempts to aggregate positive referrals (Stokes & Lomax, 2002; WOMMA, 2007). The WOM communication is created on the B2C2C bases, where the link between business and customers is all of the WOM marketing (Sernovitz, 2006).

3.3. Communication models

The description of Word-of-Mouth (WOM) presented earlier in this chapter shows that WOM builds upon communication between people (Stokes & Lomax, 2002), message traveling through channels (Rosen, 2000) or B2C2C communication (Sernovitz, 2006). In order to influence people to share their opinions with others, the company can use a set of different factors. This attempt to enhance WOM referrals is presented as WOM marketing technique and may be seen as a communication between the company and people it's trying to reach. To better understand the factors that may have influence on communication between the company and the people the model of communication needs to be introduced.

The Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver (SMCR) model showed by Figure 3.1 was created by David Berlo and presented in his book, "*The Process of Communication*" in 1960(Cultsock, 2007). The SMCR models consist of **four communication factors:** Source, Message, Channel and Receiver. There are other models describing

communication in a more precise way, for example the Shannon's (1948) model of the communication process. In this model besides source of information, transmitter which is assumed to be the channel, message and receiver, Shannon describes also noises, signals and destination which may influence the flow of message between the source and the final receiver and destination. There is also an extension of Shannon's model, called An Interactive Model, which is enriched with the feedback given by destination to the source (Foulger, 2004). Due to the topic of this dissertation, where the factors influencing WOM communication and not the communication process as a whole will be researched, the authors find the Berlo's model suitable for introduction of the factors.

3.3.1. Berlo's SMCR model

The model presented in Figure 3.1 is divided into four influencing factors: *source* (Berlo, 1960) or sender (Ladner, 2001), message, channel and receiver. Each of these four factors have given characteristics that are used during the communication process.

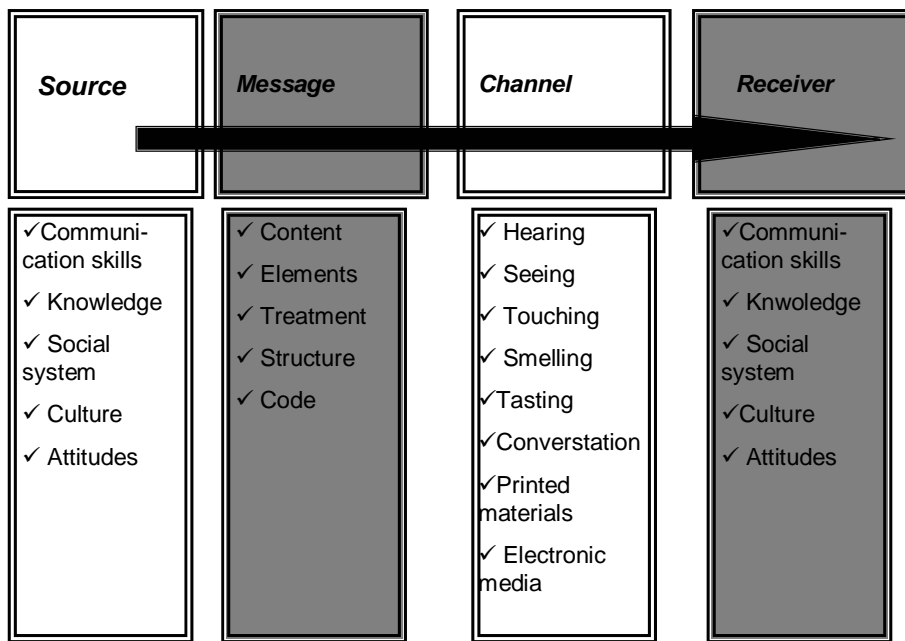


Figure 3.1 Berlo's SMCR communication model

The source is responsible for creation of the message and sending. The message travels through channel to reach a receiver. Sources and receivers characteristics are alike. The skills, knowledge that they poses, culture and attitudes they have as well as the social system they live in influence their capabilities to create, send, receive and understand the message. The message is what the sender wants to transmit to the receiver. The message building blocks are: content and treatment. The message content can be the arguments while the treatment is the way the message is arranged. The channels are divided into two categories the sensory and institutionalized channels. The sensory uses the senses to help the message to travel, while the institutionalized uses the media, print, paper etc. as a message carrier. Finally, the choice of message and channel depends on sources qualities mentioned in the model (Ladner, 2001).

The more detailed description of the model is presented in Chapter 4. This general introduction is made to create a better structure and understanding for the further theoretical framework. The communication model provides general factors

influencing communication. The attempt is to use these general factors and set them into the WOM marketing situation within the restaurants to find factors that may influence communication between the restaurants and the people that will result in WOM referrals.

3.4 The Factors Influencing Word-of-Mouth Marketing Communication

Following chapter is divided into three factors mentioned in SMCR model. This part of the theoretical framework include following key terms: the message, channel and the receiver that are assumed to be influencing communication. The absence of the source factors is described later on in the dissertation.

3.4.1 Message

Sernovitz (2006) regards that the conversation should be about the WOM topic, what people are interested to talk about and not what company wants to speak about. Furthermore, the messages should be objective and not focused on the company's product. The idea is to make people curious and stimulate people to seek the message sender and find the company and the products on their own. But at the same time, the sender must present himself and tell exactly which company he is working for. The message can contain the latest news, gossips about the product, company or brand. But also engaging the participants in the process of message creation will make them feel important. This feeling is a very effective pushing tool for spreading Word-of-Mouth topic (Sernovitz, 2006). The following text will go into a deeper definition of the message and will bring up different types of messages by to different authors.

3.4.1.1 *The Six Buttons*

The company's key to encourage conversations is giving people something to talk about. The prescription is to give them a story about the company's product or service; after all, people love to tell stories. By telling people something, the narrator creates a value, because it allows him or her to be in the center of a conversation. In other words, the story aims to catch attention of people and media. The efficient

story makes the product, brand, company or service a great topic for conversation: “*entertaining, fascinating and newsworthy. A conversation starter*” (Hughes, 2005, p. 27). Huges (2005) created so called, six buttons tactic which incorporate characteristics of a good story that can stimulate people to share it and start a conversation with others. This tactic distinguishes following factors: *the taboo, unusual, outrageous, hilarious, remarkable and secret*.

The taboo is consistent with topics as sex, lies and bathroom humor. These three items are included in the taboo button. Each one of them is considered as taboo, but despite that, people talk about it. For example, even a boring product like shampoo could use *taboo* as a button to start a conversation. Herbal Essence is a shampoo which exploited the taboo button. “*Every time you see their commercial you see playful (but taboo) images of women enjoying their shampoo...as much as an orgasm.*” (Hughes, 2005, p.30).

The second is *the unusual* button. This approach may be used to attract attention from the media. It gives accuracy to the people and the media to start a conversation. Ian Klein, the founder of a site called OverweightDate.com started his site by pushing the unusual button. Having “*a sister who was one of the 64 percent of overweight Americans and also one of the eighty million single people in America*” gave him the idea to start an online dating business (Hughes, 2005, p. 31).

When a company has the ulterior motive to push the *outrageous* button, it is important to be aware that there should be a connection between the service and the stunt. It certainly works if there is not a connection, but it will work approximately ten times better if there was a connection.

To use *hilarious* as a button is one of the hardest forms. Careful thinking is necessary to make the hilarious button work. If not, the button can be to the company’s disadvantage and go wrong. Giving people something to laugh about is a way to start a conversation and spread it further. A funny story and experience is not

only spread through word, it's also spread through pictures and clippings which have been taken from people.

A commercial is classified as a good commercial when it has been fed into the individuals' consciousness. This type of commercial often needs a boost. The in-store campaign is one of the external organs which can be used as reinforcement tool, for example sending DVDs of the commercial to the stores. This type of boost gives an individual the opportunity to associate a certain product or service with the commercial they viewed, it's *remarkable!* In this course of event, the remarkable button has been pushed and the word of mouth has been generated.

The last button is the *secret*, both kept and revealed. The secrets are practically currency; it's the production of the spread of word of mouth. The recipe for making people talk is to make them disclose a secret. It is one of the most effective approaches that could be used to create gossip. "*Since the people endeavour to talk or get things that are limited and secret.*" Being first to have the exclusive, hot information makes people eager to share their knowledge or gained secrets with others. "*Being the first one to discovering an unknown gem of a restaurant gives you currency*" (Hughes, 2005, p.29).

3.4.1.2 Elements of a Good Story

According to Rosen (2000), the elements of a good story contains factors such as *scarcity* and *mystery*, building *anticipation*, taking people *behind the scenes*, being *outrageous* and giving people a *hero*. Getting hold of people's attention with *scarcity and mystery* is one of the factors. Those two factors are threads which could be withholding information and spreading it slowly but surely over time. The companies that use them have to be aware of how much they use it, because there is a limit and people can get tired of it. Scarcity and mystery have a tendency to start wonders and speculations which cause people to talk. (Rosen, 2000)

Furthermore, capturing the attention of people occurs through the building of *anticipation*. By giving information to a specific number of people, is the starting shot. One example is the BMW Company that has worked with this tactic, revealing one of their newest models of sports cars through a movie. The BMW Z3 was shown in the movie called Golden Eye with James Bond. The flourishing method of the anticipation was to show the car and the movie, before it was released, to a selected group of 40,000 customers. This generated gossip amongst the people who did not see the movie. Two other ways to build anticipation are “*Sneak preview to Mega-hubs*” (Rosen, 2000, p.176) and “*Go beyond the obvious*” (Rosen, 2000, p.177). BMW can be used again as an example. They created a preview of Z3 in the Central park in New York. This drew more than 200 media representatives to emerge in the park. The journalist had the chance to drive the Z3 around the park as well as to interview the actors from the movie and the BMW managers. When it comes to “*Go beyond the obvious*” (Rosen, 2000 p.177), the unexpected feature is a fundament to succeed with the message. Instead of using obvious connections and use well known relation and referrals the company should try to use new channels and associations (Rosen, 2000).

The good story should include a main character. In addition, the last factor for giving people something to talk about is, using a famous face. Having a famous face that uses the company’s product or service is a generator to word of mouth. The company’s product or service is going to be associated with the famous face and generate the talk. Finally, it is worth to mention that the other messages have also the tendency to be associated with the company’s product or service.

Rosen (2000) make a contribution to Hughes (2006) sex buttons by mentioning also *behind the scenes, outrageous, curious*. As mentioned before, people are curious and have a need to feel engaged and provided with exclusive information about topics. Letting people behind the scenes”... *prompt them to share knowledge and excitement with others.*” (Rosen, 2000, p.179). Rosen makes a contribution to Hughes (2006) tactic by making a statement about the noise within the networks.

Because of a high level of noise in the network the outrageous message have better chance of attracting referrals than the quiet one. The message stimuli must be unlike any others messages and should be unrepeatable. The goal is to make people wonder and speculate: what will come next? What are the next steps of the company? What stunt will they pull out in the future to overcome the present one? (Rosen, 2000). An important word that the company should not forget in order to encourage the people to talk is curiosity. Giving people inside information and getting knowledge on how things work makes them talk, an example of this could be going backstage. This event makes them feel involved in a special course of events (Rosen, 2000).

3.4.1.3 Summary

A message is the main thread to give people a story about the company's product or service. There are different types of messages but with same characteristic, giving a good story that can stimulate people to share the story and start a conversation with others (Hughes, 2005). Hughes (2005) defines that there are six different messages which have a tendency to stimulate WOM. He calls the six messages for the six buttons, *the taboo, unusual, outrageous, hilarious, remarkable and secret*. Rosen (2000) agrees with some of the Hughes (2005) messengers, but he is also mentioning other types of messages; *scarcity and mystery, building anticipation, taking people behind the scenes and giving people a hero* are some of the messages he brings up. Sernovitz (2006) did not use any buttons techniques but he is as well as Rosen (2000) and Hughes (2005) talking about bringing the secrets and hot information about company. And the emotion that is influencing people to join the referral of WOM is curiosity.

3.4.3 Service

Kotler (1991), Grönroos (1996) and Lovelock & Gummesson (2004) agree with each other, that services have four major characteristics, *intangibility, inseparability, variability and perish ability*. All the mentioned qualities determinate the high degree of post-purchased referrals needed to convince customers. "When the product is predominantly intangible and high in experience and credence qualities,

buyers find it more difficult to evaluate and therefore seek input WOM to reduce their perceived risk” (Stokes & Lomax, 2002, p.2).

3.4.3.1 Intangibility

Since the services are intangible, they can not be seen, tasted, felt, heard or smelled before they are bought. The buyers often look for signs of the service quality considering avoiding uncertainty. They are reproducing the quality from place, people, equipment and price that they can see. With that, the service providers’ task is to make the service tangible in one or more ways (Kotler, 1991). The degree of recommendation needed is depending on product qualities. Tangible products with qualities that can be measured before purchasing need fewer recommendations than products with high experience qualities (Stokes & Lomax 2002). These products are often intangible, like services and they can be observed and measured only during production and consumption process which often coincide. (Grönroos, 1996).

Edvardsson, Gustafsson and Roos (2005) agree with the above authors that the service can not be seen, tasted or felt before they are purchased. Intangibility distinguishes that services are activities and not physical articles as the goods. They also claimed that there is something tangible to the customers’ perspective, for example knowledge, experience and memories.

3.4.3.2 Inseparability

Kotler (1991) declares that the physical goods are first produced, then stored and later sold and still later consumed. Unlike the physical goods, the services are first sold, then produced and consumed at the same time. In other words, the services are inseparable from their providers. Once the individuals have provided the service, they are classified as a part of the service.

3.4.3.3 Variability

Kotler (1991) defines the service as variable where the services quality depends on who the providers are, when the services are provided, where and how they are

provided. Each employee's service quality varies for every single customer contact according to the employee's energy and the spent of time for each customer. By using different tools, the service firms can control the quality. The firm can select and train their personnel to give good service. They can stimulate the employees who accentuate quality by having Employee-of-the-Month. Lovelock and Gummesson (2004) agree once again with one of the characteristics that Kotler (1991) suggests. The only difference is the expression of the characteristic where Lovelock and Gummesson (2004) use heterogeneous instead of variability. Since the service is heterogeneous, the standardisation can have a negative influence on the customers' value. On account to the customers who oblige non-standardization.

3.4.3.4 Perishability

Furthermore, the intangible product cannot be stored (Grönroos, 1996). According to Kotler (1991), the services are perishable. They can't be stored since the service value exists only at the point when the service is going to be delivered. If the demands are not stable, the perishability of the services can be met with obstacles. To prevent such problems, the service firm can use different strategies for engendering better match between the demand and the supply. On the demand side, the time and the price can be weaved together by offering different prices at different times. For example, restaurants which have cocktail lounges where the customers can sit and wait for a restaurant table, is one way. This is another type of strategy that the service could be offered during a peak time. On the supply side, for example, the restaurants could employ part-time employees during the peak time. Edvardsson, Gustafsson and Roos (2005) define that the perishability, from the service firm's perspective, means that the service can't be stored. On the other hand, the memories and experiences can be stored in the customers' mind. The customer's experience can be stored when the service is produced, delivered and consumed.

3.4.3.5 Quality of service

The quality is the most important factor that influencing consumers' experience of the service. Berry & Parasuraman (1991) define quality service as the engine of the

customers' experience value. The relations between the company and the customers as well as the experience quality are the two tools that form the value of the quality of the service. They also state that the company has to live up to the customers' expectation on the service. This is presented with two types of quality, the wished quality level and the accepted quality level. The wished quality level is equivalent the quality service the customers hope to receive, while the accepted quality level is equivalent the quality service the customers reasonably consider to receive (Berry & Parasuraman, 1991).

Edvardsson (1998) agrees with Berry and Parasuraman (1991), he defines the service quality as the sum of the customers' expectations before purchasing the service and the customers' satisfaction after the purchase. He further assumes that the service quality is a factor which should be seen from the customers' perception and not from the company's perception (Edvardsson, 1998).

Kotler & Armstrong (1991) assume that the service businesses are more difficult from the product business, where the service providers' service quality is less certain and more variable. Furthermore, that there are three types of marketing in the service industries, internal marketing, interactive marketing and external marketing. The customers' service quality perceptions are considered in the interactive marketing where the buyer-seller interaction is the tool of the quality. The service quality consists both of the service deliverer and the quality of the delivery. Kotler & Armstrong (1991) agree with the above authors that the service quality is based on the comparison of the customers' perceived service and their expected service. They also mention that expectations are often based on Word-of-Mouth (WOM) (Kotler & Armstrong, 1991).

3.4.3.6 Employees

According to the Gremler, Gwinner and Brown (2001) providing the service that is satisfactory for the customer do not necessary means that there will be a follow up in form of WOM positive referral. According to the authors the need of developing

relationship between the customer and the employee (service provided) is vital. There are four suggestions of how it can be done which include: service design, support system, employees and customers. These propositions build on four dimensions: trust, care, rapport and familiarity.

The first key area focuses on creating favourable environment for customer-employee interactions both formal and informal. This can be done by assigning a specific employee to a specific customer in order to give them an opportunity to meet, it can be also done by designing the interior to minimise the role status differences. The next proposition is the support system, which is subscribed to the technological solutions that enable to save time and use it to bond with the customers. This solution can also be used to increase knowledge about the customer or help to recall already possessed information.

Finally the authors mention two last key concepts of focusing on employees and customers. To encourage employees to build relationship the company should give them freedom of building relationships and decision-making. The employees should be trained in creating interpersonal links. The focus on customer means encouragement for developing relations. However it must be marked that, not every customer has the need to begin relationships with the company's employees (Gremler, Gwinner & Brown, 2001).

3.4.3.7 The Product

This part of the theoretical framework considers the products as both the tangible, physical goods and intangible subjects like services. **Since the restaurant is a part of the service industry, it can be seen as intangible.**

WOM can be created by products special qualities. Besides advertising and PR campaigns, the company can use attributes that are imbedded in the product. Rosen (2000) divided this attributes into six categories: *“Products that evoke an emotional response, advertise themselves, leave traces, become more useful as more people*

use them, are compatible and products that “do the rest”” (Rosen, 2000, p. 104). First of all, products can gain positive WOM by creating an *emotional response*. People experiencing feelings of excitement or delight connected to the product often share the experience with their friends. The experienced feeling are often pleasant and surprising, but sometimes the positive buzz can be created by negative emotions like fear. But, fear works only for a couple of types of products. The example of fear used to generate positive WOM is a horror movie “*Blair Witch Project*”.

Furthermore, products can *advertise themselves* by visual attributes. If something is looking different, it evokes curiosity among people. Many new products based their advertising on different appearance. That is why the design stage of product creation should be playing a very important role. Perfect examples of products that advertise themselves are MP3 players and computers created by Apple Company. These products have similar qualities as their competitors, but different designs and colors made them special.

Leaving traces is another form of influencing the conversation people have about the products. This kind of contamination strategy is especially suitable for products that help people to express themselves but no means limited to them. Developing photographs on the Kodak paper leaves traces of the moment captured on the picture and Kodak’s logo on the back side. In this case, people are marketing their work with help of the product and the product on the other hand is marketed via created piece. The next attribute builds on the need for partnership.

Products that become more useful as more people use them are often the communication tools. People benefit more from them when more people become users. People are creatures of habit and if the products are created to be compatible with the “*pre-existing structure*” (Rosen, 2000, p. 110) people will appreciate it. The compatibleness should be acquired to habits and other products or services. These kinds of products are often found in the technology industry. The software is expected to be compatible with the hardware or other types of programs. Finally, the

products that will likely spread WOM are products that are easy to use and simple. The sophisticated products take longer to explain and additionally, it will take longer to spread the WOM about them (Rosen, 2000).

3.4.3.8 Summary

There are many authors who agree with each other that there are four characteristics of service, *intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability*. Kotler (1991), Grönroos (1996), Lovelock and Gummesson (2004) are some of the authors that have been mentioned in the text. Service is intangible, it can be observed and measured only during production and consumption process which often coincide (Stokes & Lomax, 2002). Furthermore, the intangible product cannot be stored (Grönroos, 1996). Kotler (1991) declares that service is first sold, then produced and consumed at the same time. In other words, the services are inseparable from their providers. The service is also variable because the employees service quality varies for every single customer contact according to the employee's energy and the spent of time for each customer (Kotler, 1991). Perishability is the final characteristic of service, it can't be stored. (Edvardsson, Gustafsson & Roos, 2005).

As a result of the four characteristic of the service, the most important factor that stimulates that influencing consumers' experience of the service is the service quality. The service quality is the sum of the customers' expectations before purchasing the service and the customers' satisfaction after the purchase (Berry & Parasauraman, 1991). According to Grönroos (1996), the company should be aware of the quality gaps and trough this fulfill or exceed the customers' expectation.

According to the Gremler, Gwinner and Brown (2001), employees' relationships should play an important role in developing WOM referrals for the service company. Building trust, connection, and care for the customer, the company encourages closer relations that may result in positive WOM communication.

This part of the theoretical framework, the product, can be seen as both tangible, physical goods and intangible subjects like services. The product is also the engine of WOM by its special qualities (Rosen, 2000). Rosen (2000) claims that the company can use six different attributes that are imbedded in the product; “*Products that evoke an emotional response, advertise themselves, leave traces, become more useful as more people use them, are compatible and products that “do the rest”*” (Rosen, 2000, p. 104). He defines that the easiest and the simplest product is the product that likely will spread WOM.

3.4.5 People

According to the definition presented by Rosen (2000) Word-of-Mouth (WOM) is traveling via invisible networks which are the connections between people. Within the networks people called network hubs are operating. It is assumed that in order to influence WOM the company should identify and make connections to influential people. Network hubs are an example of such a people (Rosen, 2000).

3.4.5.1 The Characteristic of the Network Hubs

According to Rosen (2000) the network hubs are distinguished thru the rule called *ACTIVE*. “*The hubs are Ahead in adoption, Connected, Travellers, Information-hungry, Vocal, and Exposed to the media more than others.*” (Rosen, 2000, p. 49). It means that people that are characterised as network hubs are probably not the first to try out new products but at least ahead of the rest of the network members. Furthermore, they can be recognized by their strong and visible connection to other people both within and outside their own network. The network hubs are people eager to get more information, constantly searching for news and not afraid to voice their opinions in public. The interesting patterns stated by Rosen (2000) are that characterise hubs are the travelling and exposure to media outline. It is assumed that network hubs can be recognized by their tendency to travel more often than regular people. When it comes to the media exposure, it seems that network hubs, as they are information-hungry, open themselves to media more willingly than other people. In other words, they tend to consume more information from media than others

(Rosen, 2000).

3.4.5.2 Network Hubs

Network Hubs are, according to Rosen (2000), the people that stand out from their networks and are eager to talk about things they are interested in. The hubs can be divided into two categories of influence: *the scale of influence* and the *source of influence*. Hubs relying on the scale of influence are divided into two categories depending on the number of connection the Hub is supervising. In this category, Hubs are characterized as *Regular* and *Mega Hubs*.

✓ Regular Hubs are the ordinary people that can be connected to the few or dozens of other people to serve as a source of the information and influence about a specific kind of product. Regular Hubs operate mostly in two-way communication creating dialogue with receivers of the message (Rosen, 2000),

✓ Mega Hubs are the public people like celebrities, analysts or politicians, in other words, highly influential people. These people have two-way communication links with few other people, but mostly reach great amounts of people via one-way communication thru mass media or other channels reaching to the masses (Rosen, 2000).

In addition to earlier hub models, Rosen (2000) makes a division between hubs that are listened to for different reasons; this is the second type of hubs depending on source of influence. The Hubs are divided into two categories: *The Expert Hub* and *Social Hubs*.

✓ Expert Hubs are listened to because of their specific knowledge; these are the people that often are specialized on a certain area and are consider being a credible and reliable source of information and recommendation within their expert category (Rosen, 2000).

✓ Social Hubs are those people that are listened to because of their social status. People considered as social hubs are within every network. These hubs are often charismatic, socially active and trusted by other people. These people often have a very wide social net, connect people with each other and make friends easily

(Rosen, 2000).

SOURCE of INFLUENCE	SCALE of INFLUENCE	
	<i>Regular Hubs</i>	<i>Mega Hubs</i>
<i>Social Hubs</i>	X	X
<i>Expert Hubs</i>	X	X

Figure: 3.2 Network Hubs

Figure 3.2 shows that there is a correlation between different hubs. Hubs depending on scale of influence can be at the same time those depending on sources of influence and vice versa. Social Regular Hubs are the people that are considered important because of their social skills and are in contact with other people on a personal basis, it can be for example, a very charismatic friend who is known for very quickly adopting new fashion trends. The second type of Hubs is the Social Mega Hubs which contain people that are connected to large number of other people, often by different media types. Oprah Winfrey is a perfect example of Social Mega Hub. Following, the next type is the Expert Regular Hub, someone that has a great knowledge about a special topic of interest and likes to share this knowledge with friends, co-workers, family etc. The last type is the Expert Mega Hub, a person with tools that enable communication with a great social sphere, thru articles, TV-shows and more (Rosen, 2000).

3.4.5.3 Characteristics of talkers

Sernovitz (2006) listed seven types of *Talker* that in definition are similar to the people called by Rosen (2000) as *network hubs*. These people have to be identified in order to make it possible to send the message thru the influential people to others in their network. Although the talkers have different sets of interest, there are common characteristics that a good talker must have undependable of their origin. It is the *Passion*, *Credibility* and *Connection* they possess. They should be passionate about the product or service the company is providing, as a person they are

optimistic and talkative. As it comes to the credibility, it is the grade of their knowledge about the topic they should represent by their knowledge and appearance they are interested and good on. Finally, the connection talkers are supposed to be very communicative and have great networks of people that are fond of listening to the talker. Sernovitz (2006) is mentioning the travelers as a great source of connected talkers because they are constantly traveling to new places to meet people they will probably take their opinions and recommendations with them(Sernovitz, 2006).

3.4.5.4 Talkers

Following examples are seven types of talkers which according to Sernovitz (2006), could be identified and connected to the companies WOM marketing. *Following types are: The happy customers, Online talkers, Logo Lovers, Eager employees, Listeners, Fans and hobbyists and Professionals* (Sernovitz, 2006).

✓ The Happy Customers

According to Sernovitz (2006), one of the most confidential individuals are the happy customers of the company. Those customers are classified as the regular customers. They are so delighted with the company's service that they give recommendation about the product or service to their large circle of friends. The happy customers don't just talk about the company, they are also trying to make their friends buy the product or service.

It's important for the company to find out and take care of the happy customers. They often have characteristics of coming back frequently when they recognize and remember the names of the employees and are buzzing with enthusiasm. The happy customers' buzz is one of the most important creators of WOM. By giving them attention, WOM can be generated and little controlled of what they are talking about.

✓ Online Talkers

The online talkers are the individuals who have time to mail a review, raves and responses since they have a special interest in the company. These individuals are often the individuals who are extra motivated to share their opinions to their friends

and the company. By listening and talking to the online talkers via email and blog, the company will motivate and stimulate them to spread the WOM.

✓ **Logo Lovers**

Logo lovers are the easiest individuals who are visible that they are the company's talkers. Wearing the company's logo is the total sum that they like your logo so much that they are advertising the company's brand for free. This is an insight of being a part of the company's evangelists. Once the company has identified and influenced them to talk, the company's next task is to, for example, give out goodies with the company's logo. This makes the logo lover feel supportive of the company and powerful.

✓ **Eager Employees**

The company's employees can also be seen as effective talkers. They are one of the generators of WOM. Eager employees have a zeal and enthusiasm for the store and insider knowledge and information that makes them to great talkers. But, it's important to make a remark that not every employee is a talker. The eager employees can be identified by having bumper stickers on their cars and briefcases with the company's logo. They are buzzing among the customers and the friends, though the eager employees can be seen as one of the engines of WOM.

✓ **Listeners**

People who are extra curious about the company and eager to learn more about things are called by Sernovitz (2006) for listeners. They search for interesting information that they can pass along to others. They are often very passionate about knowing more, and like to share information with others. Listeners are not afraid to ask questions directly or gain them thru other forms of knowledge sources like newsletters, interviews, newspapers, seminars or workshops.

✓ **Fans and Hobbyists**

Another group of people that the company may benefit from are the fans and hobbyists. These people are passionate about the topic. The most common fans and hobbyists are connected to the fashion and high experience industries (cars, movies, music, clothes). But even less spectacular products have their fans. The fans and hobbyists are quite easy to find, because they are presented in places where they can

express their passion and interests about things they like.

✓ **Professionals**

People who generate talk about certain products or services for living are called professionals. These can be found among i.e. reporters, critics or authors. These people rely heavily on their image as credible, trustworthy and objective and that is why they often put the information they get from different sources under the microscope. Their skepticism about a message is on the other hand a blessing, because if it will be forwarded by professional it will have a high grade of credibility for the receivers. Convincing the professional to talk about the company gives it both high credibility and great range of influence, reaching many people (Sernovitz, 2006).

3.4.5.5 Summary

Sernovitz (2006), claim that there are seven types of Talkers while Rosen (2000) uses different conception for the similar account of people, using ACTIVE model. According to Rosen (2000) people that have tendency to spread WOM are called for network hubs. These people may have different interests but they have a common characteristic. It is the *Passion*, *Credibility* and *Connection* that they possess. They are passionate about the company's product or service and they gladly present their knowledge, opinions and references for other people. Finally, the talkers (Sernovitz, 2006), network hubs (Rosen, 2000) should have great networks of people that are fond of listening to the talkers. Once the company has established contact and built a good connection with these people, it has a possibility to influence WOM thru these people.

Chapter 4 The Model

The authors have in the theoretical framework focused on three main factors, people, message and service. Within the factors there are numerous types of characteristics that can be used to find those especially suitable for influencing WOM. The model presented in this chapter introduces the factors considered by the authors of this dissertation to be the most suitable for the service industry.

4.1 Introduction

According to the literature (Kaminski, 2002) the model is a simplified version of reality built to make observations about certain factors. Mortenssen (1972) makes a contribution to this description by introducing models in following way:

“In the broadest sense, a model is a systematic representation of an object or event in idealized and abstract form. Models are somewhat arbitrary by their nature. The act of abstracting eliminates certain details to focus on essential factors.”(Mortnesen, 1972).

These definitions explain that the model is a simplification of the reality and point out that the real relationships are more complex. Working on a specific subject demands generalization in order to make the problem clear and visible. In our dissertation we used existing communication model and adjust it to our findings.

WOM marketing as mentioned in the beginning of the dissertation is a form of communication. With help of the SMCR model the authors make an attempt to create new model of communication. This modified version of SMCR model may be used for WOM marketing purposes. The theories explaining WOM marketing can be fitted into the SMCR model. The model (see Figure 4.1) consists four parts included in the communication process: *Source, Message, Channel and Receiver.*

For the dissertation purpose these types are transformed to cover the WOM factors that were mentioned in the Chapter 3 and will be investigated during the research.

1. The Source - the creator of the message and a sender
2. The Message – content and treatment, arrangement and transmitting of the arguments
3. The Channel –the carrier of the messages
4. The Receiver – recipients of the message

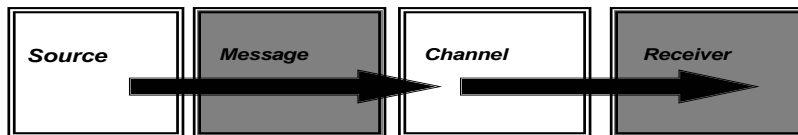


Figure 4.1 Communication model

4.2 Transformation of SMCR model for WOM communication purpose

Figure 4.1 shows the SMCR communication model. To fit the WOM communication into the SMCR model some adjustments must be made. According to the definition WOM is an oral person to person communication and by trying to influence it the company interferes in this flow of information reshaping the communication model. The Figure 4.2 shows the adjustments we made to fit the SMCR model with WOM influencing factors gathered in theoretical framework. Not all of the factors presented in the earlier chapter will be put into the model and explored during the research study. Due to the limited amount of time and number of existing factors we assumed that by limiting the factors the research will be more outlined and clear. In addition, some of the factors are alike e.g. curiosity, secret

mentioned by Huges (2005) and anticipation and mystery referred by Rosen (2000). Furthermore, some of the factors were found to be too general e.g. remarkable or outrageous (Huges, 2005) to investigate and make them useful in such heavily limited research study.

4.2.1 Source

The first factor in the model is the source. According to the theory (Berlo, 1960) the source's capability to send a message is depending on five factors: *communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, position in the social system and culture*. Although we find these factors very interesting we are not able to research them in depth. As our work focus on finding out the factors influencing WOM and not the ability to send the message, we disregard the characteristics of the source from our model. The authors decided not to bring up the qualities influencing the source of the communication, and concentrate on remaining three factors instead. Investigating the qualities of the source requires further studies in communication strategies and the restaurants. The authors believe that given amount of time is not enough to efficiently and deeply research both topics on behalf of WOM communications. For the dissertation purposes it is assumed that communication is undependable of sources qualities.

4.2.2 Message

Following research builds on the *message topic* (message) something intangible, the feeling that customers get. The pinch that is created in the restaurant and evokes emotions followed by need to share the message with others. The message is the attempt to transmit information about the topic. The message the restaurant wants to share with the people is seen as a stimuli connected to the restaurant and influencing people to share it with others. This dissertation will contain following message characteristics: *anticipation/secret, hero, behind the scenes*.

✓ *Anticipation/ secret*

The authors have decided to merge two messages called anticipation and secret. It is assumed that elements of the message worth telling to others contain something unexpected. By building anticipation, revealing secrets or surprising, people become eager to share the information with others.

✓ *Hero*

The main task of using a hero, also called a famous face is to create association with the restaurant. The hero may be the argument for visiting the restaurant and worth mentioning among friends. **By using hero's image and characteristics the company creates a message connected to the restaurant's activity. Although hero is a person, in this model he is used as a message not as a receiver.**

✓ *Behind the scenes*

Behind the scenes is the message which makes people part of the restaurant activity. The authors of the dissertation claim that engaging people in the process make them feel special. This feeling is assumed to be a strong force of creating referrals.

4.2.2 Channel (Service)

The focus in this dissertation is on the characteristics of the restaurant service brought up under the factor called channel. The *service* (channel) attempts to make intangible experience visible. The food, design of the restaurant or employees are assumed to make the service valuable and worth talking about. In addition, the channel can be the sensory channel based on the five senses or institutionalized based on media. In this dissertation it is assumed that those types overlap each other because in order to understand i.e. printed material the receiver uses the senses. The channel helps the message to travel. The authors assumed that channels **through** which the message can travel in the restaurants are: *the employees, the interior and the food*. These three characteristics are introduced under *the service quality*.

✓ *Employees*

Service is provided mostly by the employers. In the restaurant the service plays an important role. Employers were chosen to be the channel mentioned as conversation

(see Figure 4.1). Here they will be researched in a deeper meaning as service providers. The relevance of using the employees is presented in the theoretical framework. The research will concentrate on how well the restaurants are developing the opportunities to encourage employees to build relationships with the customers, build on trust, familiarity and care.

✓ *Interior*

The design of the restaurant is connected to the sensory channel of seeing, smelling, hearing or touching. The interior brings the intangible character of the service a physical form and that is why it is assumed to be an important carrier of the message. It is also briefly mentioned as a factor that may encourage customer-employee relations.

✓ *Food*

The cuisine is the reason why people visit the restaurants. The food carries messages connected to the restaurant concept. It is assumed that the restaurant get a voice through its dishes.

4.2.3 Receiver (People)

The last factors are the *people* (receiver). Receiver is a person who can attend, interpret and respond to the message to complete the communication process. Our research focus on finding the right people that may be a part of WOM communication process in the restaurants. By people we mean different types of humans that may have special qualities of spreading the WOM messages to others.

The receiver of the message in the WOM model is also a transmitter of the message. In other words, the factors mentioned earlier are brought to stimulate people to create referrals and share message with others. Sernovitz (2006) describes very clear this relationship by defining it as Business to Consumer to Consumer (B2C2C) communication. The model consists of five types of people: happy customers, online talkers, eager employees, fans and hobbyists and professionals. These people are assumed to have right communication skills, attitudes and knowledge to be a part of communication process of making WOM referrals.

Happy customers

The happy customers in the dissertation are classified as the regular customers. Also Sernovitz (2006) is classifying the happy customers as the regular customers. The regular customers are important for every company. The authors of this dissertation assume that the regular customers of the restaurants are the most credible source of information, since they are well aware about the intangible qualities of the service. Due to the fact that the regular customers already adore the restaurants, it is much easier to stimulate them.

✓ *Online talkers*

Nowadays, Internet is becoming increasingly common tool for the exchange of opinions and the experiences. Online talkers are assumed to have great power of reaching great amounts of people during a short time. The message travels faster with the help of the Internet. Furthermore, the online talkers are assumed to be independent of the restaurant itself and due to that the level of their credibility arises. The authors hope to achieve information whether the online talkers are used as an engine of the stimulation.

✓ *Eager employees*

According to the authors the employees may be a credible source of information as well. Employees can be a credible source of information, because they are working in it, they know all the details and can share the inside information. On the other hand, they can only tell the positive things to help the restaurant because they feel more connected to it than to the people they share their information with.

✓ *Fans and hobbyists*

From the authors point of view the fans and the hobbyists in the restaurants are the people who have passion for something connected to the field of the business, in this case it can be the interest of wine and cooking etc. They have characteristic of gather information because of their interest. With that, they have a tendency to share their knowledge and opinion with other people. According to the authors, the restaurant can start WOM by generating the fans and hobbyists to talk about the restaurants.

✓ *Professionals*

The authors claim that the restaurants can achieve a strong WOM by using the professionals as an engine. The professionals' awareness about specific objects creates credibility among the people. Thus the authors found the professionals to be important engine since the professionals have a great influence on the general public.

To summarize, the model of this research builds on:

1. Source - The restaurant – the message creator
2. Message – something to share
3. Channel - Service – something to talk about
4. Receiver - People – somebody that can talk

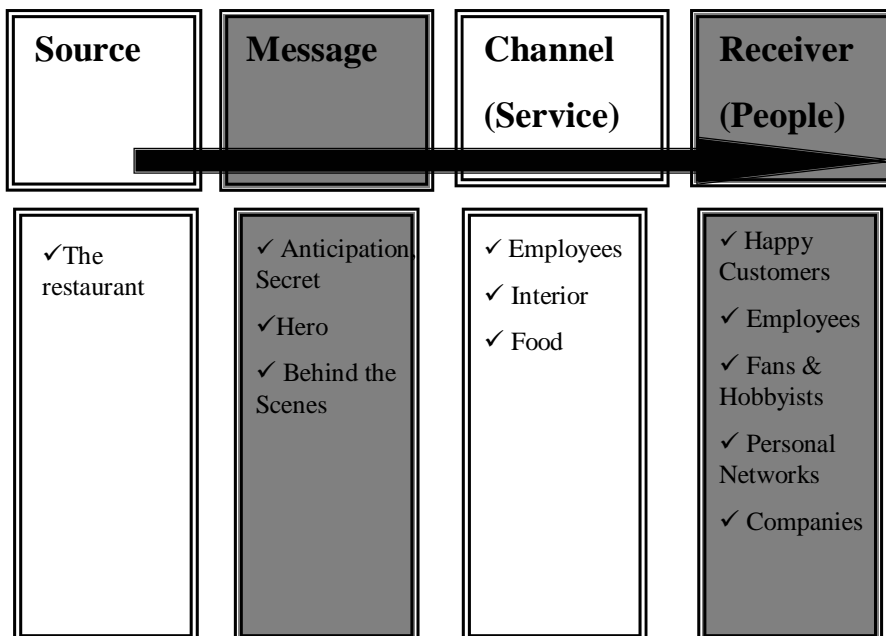


Figure 4.2 the model of WOM influencing factors

Chapter 5 Empirical Method

The empirical method chapter presents information about the background, participants, materials and the procedures that have been used during the research. The chapter will also provide a more detailed limitation that may influence the research outcomes. Furthermore, the chapter contains presentation of estimated reliability and validity that are hoped to be achieved with chosen research methods.

5.1 Research Strategy

The knowledge about Word-of-Mouth (WOM) possessed by the restaurants' managers may be limited, that is why we chose to approach the research with *interpretivistic epistemology*. Our research will rely heavily on interpreting the answers that can lead us to conclusion that can be useful for developing model for factors influencing WOM (Saunders, 2007).

The purpose of the research is to test the model in the real environment. The result may lead to changed set of influential factors. But as mentioned before the study is purely exploratory and flexibility as well as adapting to changes is a part of the research.

The research strategy, given exploratory character, relies upon the *theoretical search* for information and better understanding of the subject and the *empirical search* for answers in the reality. The outcomes of these two will lead to the analysis and comparison of the theory with the reality. The point of the exploratory study is to gain better understanding for the phenomenon. Our literature review leads to the creation of a common model of factors influencing WOM marketing. **To evaluate**

our empirical findings, the in-depths interviews with restaurant were set up (Saunders, 2007).

In-depth interviews give better understanding of the beliefs, the attitudes and the feelings surrounding the factors influencing, in our research the WOM marketing. The interviews on One-to-One basis uncover underlying motivation as well. An interview unstructured form gives the power to settle the course of the conversation to the respondent. The only structured questions are those initiating the interviews, the rest is depending on respondents answers (Malhotra, 2004). Our initial questions are completed with the support questions that will help to lead us through the interview and to some extent prepare for the unstructured form of the research. This kind of interviewing technique is called *semi-structured*. The list of the topics and the questions to covers during the conversation are constructed, but the order of questions and question itself may vary from one interview to another. Another reason why the research will be conducted by the semi-structured interviews is the freedom and the opportunities which this form of gathering primary data gives. We hope that during the interviews we will be able to see new areas, factors or objectives that were not taken into a consideration before, but are significant and vital to the research (Saunders, 2007). WOM marketing is a relative new phenomenon which misses clear theory and models and in-depth interviews may help to further develop the existing model.

5.2 Sampling

In our marketing research we chose to use *samples* of the population. According to Malhotra (2004) samples are used to measure population parameters with help of selected subgroup which make it possible to estimate population's characteristics and draw conclusion or test a hypotheses. The choice of the *sampling technique* is a *nonprobability* sampling method, to be more exact we chose to use *judgmental* sampling. According to Malhotra (2004) the judgmental sampling is another type of convenience sampling method which requires the least time and expenses. The judgmental sampling is based on decision made by researchers. The choice of the

sample relies on researchers assumptions that the chosen sample is representative for the population (Malhotra, 2004).

To identify a *sampling frame* (Malhotra, 2004) the following criteria were used:

1. Restaurant located in Malmö – given the time limitation the authors chose to focus on the restaurant nearest the place of living
2. Restaurants with Internet homepage – given assumption that homepage may indicate restaurants eagerness to be up to date by online visitors with information
3. Restaurant with dinner menu – designating that the business concept is about more than just a food, consumed rapidly during one hour lunch time

The restaurants were chosen from the *White Guide 2007*. This is the book published annually by SHR, the Swedish organization for Hotel and Restaurant owners. Every year the White Guide is listing the best restaurants in Sweden. They have few factors which must be fulfilled to be mentioned and graded in this book: *good service and product quality, pleasant atmosphere, consistency of the concept, development and that something extra* can general describe the criteria. We assumed that the factors are connected to the field of our work.

Out of thirteen restaurants we found suitable for the research the already first five agreed to be interviewed. As five restaurants were the planned *sample size* we did not have to ask remain eight listed at the beginning. The size of five restaurants is assumed to be the optimal number that can be interviewed during given time. The sample size is often determinate by the research characteristics. For *exploratory study* with *qualitative* research approach, *small budget* and importance of the *precision* the research sample should be small (Malhotra, 2004).

5.3 Interview Questions

As mentioned above we chose the semi-structured interview form. Our questions are divided into the same categories as the theory chapter, and cover every factor described in the model of WOM marketing strategy. The question sheet is based on *essential* questions and *supporting* questions. **Although, not all of the supporting**

questions are included into the sheet. Due to the semi-structured interview technique we our presumption of how the interviews will look like are limited. Consequently we are not able to predict all of the possible way the interviews may develop. Some of the supporting questions have to be adjust to the moment, interviewee and his or hers knowledge on the topic. We chose to gather the questions in five different categories: *Introduction, WOM, Network, Message and Service*. Each category is responsible for different part of the research topic and all of them will lead to the final analysis and conclusions. The categories were developed to see a clear purpose of each group of questions e.g. questions under the Network category will be responsible for gathering information about people subscribed to the communication factors for receiver and questions committed to the Service group are connected to the Channel factors in the WOM communication model.

Because chosen interview technique is to some extend unstructured there may be questions that will exists only in verbal form, appearing during the meetings with the respondents. That is why the interviews will be recorded and rewritten. The results of the recording material are marked as Appendix 2.

5.4 Limitations

In depth-interviews should be performed by professionals. As business students we are not able to perform the interviews as well as highly skilled interviewer. The lack of adequate education may lead to some imperfection and mistranslation of the answers.

The questions will be based on the model of WOM influencing factors, see figure 4.3. It means that the questions will be asked on the basis of the factors called the message, the channel (service) and the receiver (people). The main reason to this structure of the questions is to clarify the scarlet thread between the interview questions and the theoretical framework.

Interviewer bias is another limitation that can lead to decreased *reliability* of our research. As unskilled interviewees we may influence our respondent by verbal or non-verbal activities, and show our hopes and expectations that we wish to get from the research. Following is the *response bias* that is often appearing during in-depths and semi-structured interviews. The respondents' fear of exposure may lead to limited answers that are only partially explaining the reality (Saunders, 2007).

Other limitation is connected to the type of sampling technique chosen for this dissertation. The efficiency of convenience sampling method may be limited by *respondent self-selection* or other type of *selection bias*. Although it may successfully generate ideas and insights (Malhotra, 2004).

5.5 Reliability

The research reliability relies on the data collection techniques and analysis approach will result in the consistent findings. To achieve high reliability our research should be possible to repeat in different time and by different people, at the same time the result are clearly supported by the raw material (Saunders, 2007). Our reliability can be jeopardised by the research technique we have chosen. The semi-structured interviews are especially exposed to the bias described earlier.

5.6 Validity

Validity is about the correlation between the findings and the objectives that the findings were supposed to show. The good research has a high validity (Saunders, 2007). The research question should measure the real objectives of the research. We hope to get a high validity and that our questions will measure the factors we want to examine and analyse. Due to the subject immaterial nature which at the same time is hard to isolate from the environment the validity may be decreased by factors not included in the research and not detected during the interviews. Furthermore, having a great amount of freedom while dividing gathered empirical information may have lead to subjective analyse of the information. Our own hopes and expectations for the research outcomes could influence the processing of the empirical findings.

Chapter 6 Empirical Findings

This chapter presents the empirical findings which contains the gathered primary data from the interviews. The data presents each response from each different restaurant. Furthermore, the responses will be divided under the headlines Background, Word-of-Mouth (WOM), Message, Channel and Receiver.

6.1 Svea

The interview was conducted with Simon Holmgren, one of the restaurant's owners on the 12th of the November 2007.

6.1.1 Background

Simon opened the doors to Svea restaurant with his partner Jonas Liljegren about one year ago. The restaurant was christened after owner's father's patisserie Svea. The name of the restaurant is also associated with mother Svea. Svea is situated in the old western downtown in Malmö. It has one of Malmö's longest bar in the middle of the dining room, which also surrounds the kitchen. Svea is a bistro restaurant with Swedish plain fare which is cooked without any difficulties in a simple way. The offer of the Swedish plain fare is one of the reasons to the increased revenue in the restaurant. This is thanks to the small range of Swedish plain fare in Malmö. The wide mix of customers depends mostly on the price level, *"with our prices, you get much value for your money"* (Holmgren, 2007).

6.1.2 WOM

Simon Holmgren claims that another reason to why the restaurant goes well is because of the strong Word-of-Mouth (WOM) among the general public. The owner observed that the first customers came back with new customers. Later on he heard that some of them had got recommendation from their acquaintances. Due to this, the WOM is the most important advertising for Svea, this because they have never

spent money on advertising. “*Svea has been in an advertisement just once; it was the day when we had inauguration for the restaurant when a reporter mentioned the inauguration in the newspaper for free*” (Holmgren, 2007), claims the owner of the restaurant.

6.1.3 Message

Svea’s strongest message is the range of beer and the Swedish plain fare with a sophisticated quality. Especially the beers can be seen as a sort of secrete where people gets curious on the wide range of beer and the taste of the beer.

6.1.3.1 Anticipation

A message that is quite strong among the customers is the anticipation. According to the owner the anticipation can be created by surprising the customers. A customer who drank second or third beer can sometimes be surprised by the snack which the house is inviting them on.

6.1.3.2 Hero

Holmgren further claims that he however never uses a famous face to create an association between Svea and the customers. He does not find it relevant as he thinks that Svea should be associated with itself.

6.1.3.3. Secret, Behind the Scenes

When Svea develops new course of food, some of the customers get involved in this. Svea gives them chance to taste the food and notify their opinions about it.

6.1.4 Channel (Service)

Since the restaurant was new, the customers’ expectations were at the start exceeded; this was because they did not have any expectations. Eventually, the expectations became higher and higher. Due to this, it gets more challenging to exceed them.

6.1.4.1 Employees

The service quality is different during the lunchtime and the dinnertime. The service quality during the lunchtime is simpler since the customers do not have so much time to eat. Unlike dinnertime, the customers have more time to eat which makes the service quality higher. Simon claims that the most important thing in service is the flexibility of the service among the employees, “*We are trying to take good care and listen to both the satisfied customers and the dissatisfied customers*” (Holmgren, 2007). Being service oriented is a part of the service quality. Simon means that it is important to actively give the customers attention and make them feel seen.

6.1.4.2 Interior

The atmosphere in the restaurant is also simple with a modern furnishing. It gives lifestyle without feelings of stress and disturbances.

6.1.4.3 Food

Like mentioned before, Svea is a bistro restaurant with Swedish plain fare. Svea is cooking with few ingredients and the courses of food are simple, without any difficulties. Simon explains that the hardest part of cooking is to cook something simple and tasteful. The courses of food are Swedish as it can be.

6.1.5 Receiver (People)

Svea has a wide mix of customers which contain families, as well as people in wide age range. Since Svea is a restaurant with Swedish plain fare, the tourists are a part of the customer segmentation. In this case, the hotels are the messengers of the WOM among the tourists.

6.1.5.1 Happy Customers

The owner adds that the regular customers, especially the customers during the lunch time, are one of the generators of WOM in Svea. According to the owner

“The customers during lunch time were our first customers and those are the customers who have brought along new customers by taking them out for a lunch or giving them recommendations.” (Holmgren, 2007). The concept of attention is the most important to stimulate the regular customers to talk about the restaurant.

6.1.5.2 Online Talkers

The owner has a homepage but he does not update it often and he does not even use it to write to people. Holmgren admits that he sometimes is reading the bloggs about Svea on other homepages but never respond them. He is satisfied by just taking information about what those people think about the restaurant; he does not found the influence of people via internet relevant.

6.1.5.3 Eager Employees

Holmgren has together with his partner, five employees who work in Svea. According to the owner, the employees are just as important as the regular customers when it comes to the spread of WOM, *“an employee who loves his/her work, talks about the restaurant among the general public”* (Holmgren, 2007).

6.1.5.4 Fans and Hobbyists

The people who expend their leisure time in pubs are also other important generators. Those people are well aware of the restaurant with pubs in Malmö city. Furthermore, Simon says that the pub people are likely to talk about where they have been eating and drinking. Other individuals who know the pub people have a tendency to ask them where to eat and drink because they are well aware about the different restaurants.

6.1.5.5 Professionals

Svea has some customers that are journalist and experts, but those have never been used as engine of WOM. Those people are seen as people who know what they want to talk about. As a matter of fact, those people can not be influenced just like that.

Simon claims that the journalist and experts are coming to them when they find Svea to be interesting. The managers themselves can not influence those people.

6.1.6 Additional information

Other way of stimulating WOM in Svea is the experience of the Swedish concept. The offer of the Swedish plain fare draws the people to the restaurants and generates them to talk. The Hotels is also one of the engines when it comes to give recommendations for the restaurant.

6.2 Smak

The interview was conducted with Christensson, the owner of the restaurant on the 13th of the November 2007.

6.2.1 Background

Smak is a restaurant situated in the art gallery of Malmö and the history of the restaurant goes 15 years back. The newest owner of the restaurant, Nina Christensson has been running the restaurant since 2001. Smak is a lunch restaurant and also serves brunch during the weekends. Today the restaurant can also be used as an arrangement place during the evening. Due to this, Smak is serving dinner. A lot of medicine companies and banquets are hiring it as a party place. Furthermore, the restaurant has begun to be open during the evening on Wednesdays and when there are activities in the art gallery.

6.2.2 WOM

According to Christensson (2007), WOM is a phenomenon that certainly can be *controlled*. She claims that WOM is the most important thing for a company. Once the company has made something good, WOM can be controllable. “*getting good publicity, means that the people begun to talk about you and if you have been influencing them means that you simple have control of it*” (Christensson, 2007). However, Christensson (2007) also commented that a wide network is an important factor to stimulate WOM, “*I have been living in Malmö my whole life and have a*

wide network, everything from rock and roll to the nice ladies with fur” (Christensson, 2007). Working with the wide network by listening and talking to the people is one way of stimulating WOM and controlling it.

6.2.3 Message

Smak’s special message is “*our food is for the aware public and we never lie to our guests*” (Christensson, 2007) Despite if Smak is working ecological, it is nothing that is used to be sent as a message. Christensson (2007) claim that, “*you can not call everything ecological because it is technically impossible*”. On the other hand, she adds that if the customers ask about the products, they do mention that it is ecological.

6.2.3.1 Anticipation/Secret

Giving them discount and dessert without being prepared of it are the tools to surprise people.

6.2.3.2 Hero

According to Christensson (2007), they got the best chefs in Malmö. Due to this, she does not think it is necessary to use special people to create a message. But the main reason to why they do not use special people is because of too much work.

6.2.3.3 Behind the Scenes

Smak also arranges a party once in a year where the local famous people, friends and the regular customers are invited. The party is a way to start a word among those people and to give them something back. During the party, the guests are served with champagne, oysters and homemade hotdogs.

6.2.4 Channel (Service)

From Christensson’s point of view, the menu is a part of the stimulation of WOM. In Smak, the menu is changing each day, have vegetarian food, warm soup and a fresh salads table. The menu can be seen as a catch to draw the customers to the

Smak and a way to create word among them. Smak is also drawing the customers through the furnishing, “*we have a reserved furnishing which infuses the people with confidence when they are going to talk*” (Christensson, 2007). This is one of the reasons to why many people comes to Smak when they have interviews and meetings.

6.2.5.1 Quality

Finally, the service quality is an important engine of WOM and the relationship for each customer. According to Christensson (2007) their service “*is the best*”. The service quality is customized to each client since each customer has different experiences. A problem can come up when a customer is not used to waiting 15 minutes in Smak’s long school queue. With that, it is especially important to take care of customers who are irritated or disappointed. The employees can achieve it with follow up of the entire visit process of those customers and be more engaged.

6.2.5.2 Employees

The three key words of employees’ requirement are personal, human and pleasant. Swiftness is the employees main characteristic to have the same service level, no mater if its peak time ore not. “*We most have a sight of on helicopter*” (Christensson, 2007)

6.2.5 Receiver (People)

The customers of the restaurants are people from the culture life considering the location of the restaurant. Other customers would be business men and the ladies from the higher social class.

6.2.3.1 Happy Customers

Happy costumers, the regular customers are something that actively is used in Smak. By talking, listening and giving them attention are one way to generate them to talk. Smak has created such contact that some of them call the restaurant to inform that they unfortunately can not come. Clear evidence that WOM has been generated

among these customers are when they are coming with new customers to the restaurant or when Christensson (2007) hears from new customers that they have been recommended from a specific individual. The customers who recommended them are sometimes honored with a piece of chocolate as thanks. Keep in memory what more than 50% of the regular customers are called creates a unique feeling among each customer.

6.2.3.2 Online Talkers

According to Christensson (2007) the online talkers are irrelevant for the creation of WOM in Smak. Due to this, she does not try to contact or write back to these people, “*bloggs etc is a sensitive issue*”. Online talkers are invisible individuals, who can not be stimulated; this is because Smak can not see who the writer is. It can for example be a competitor who writes as a vandalize method for Smak.

6.2.3.3 Eager employees

In Smak, the eager employees can not be seen as an effective engine of WOM. Christensson estimates that only three of the ten employees work as her, i.e. to stimulating WOM. She also adds that she does not try to affect them. She thinks that each employee should decide by themselves if they want to stimulate WOM.

6.2.6 Additional information

The wide network gives great opportunity to spread the WOM. According to the manager of SMAK the private as well as professional contacts are an advantage that should be used as marketing tool. It's also about the people outside the company.

6.3 Johan P

The interview was conducted with the manager of the restaurant on the 13th of the November 2007.

6.3.1 Background

Johan P restaurant was built in 1981 and is situated on the Lilla Torg in Saluhallen. The first owners of the place lived in Spain where they had a simple fish and seafood restaurant called Juan Peres. As they moved back to Sweden the restaurant concept followed them. Although the name was changed to Johan P (Persson) which was assumed to be more suitable to the Swedish culture, the fish and seafood cuisine concept remained. The restaurant changed the owner in 2001, but the concept and restaurant's image remained the same. Johan P has a strong label which advertises itself. Additional advertising is made with help of the Internet homepage as well as the advertisements in the pages of the newspaper, the Sydsvenska. Furthermore, the restaurant owns a client register. Registered customers are provided with information about new food arrivals and about events and arrangements happening in the restaurant. The newsletters are sent by email to all of the registered customers.

6.3.2 WOM

According to the manager of the restaurant, the people can be influenced to talk about the restaurant. The people visiting the place are provided with great food and service which leave traces in their minds. The restaurant will be remembered as the one with good product delivered with good service. These two factors are the most important fundamentals for influencing people to spread information to other people. Johan P strategy to influence customers is to be positive, happy and nice to each customer. Furthermore the restaurant is giving away flyers and visiting cards which the customers can take with them from the restaurant. In this way customers take a bit of the restaurant and the information which they can share with others.

6.3.3 Message

The unique for Johan P is that it serves fresh fish and seafood. These raw products can also be purchased in restaurant's own delicacy shop. The food prepared in the restaurant include only fresh never freeze ingredients.

6.3.3.1 Anticipation/Secret

The restaurant is surprising the evening guests with snacks before receiving main course. Another unexpected thing is the placement of the restaurant's business cards in the rest rooms. The previous practise in the restaurant has shown that customers take cards more frequently from the rest rooms than other place in the restaurant.

6.3.3.2 Hero

Johan P is the restaurant visited by famous people and celebrities, but their identities are kept anonymous. The restaurant manager does not want to use their appearance in the restaurant as a marketing tool to capture attention of the people.

The manager of the restaurant is considering the idea of creating Johan P character that will be introduced to the guests. The plan is to make a story surrounding the Johan P creature that will be presented at the restaurant. The Johan P will be the face of the concept to the outside world. Already now it attempts to bring the character to life by making the character visible on the restaurant's tables. The tablecloths have written messages, which could be connected to the Johan P writing them.

6.3.3.3 Behind the Scenes

The restaurant is letting their customers behind the scenes most frequently under the crayfish season. The custom of eating crayfish is well-known among Swedish people. On the other hand many tourists that are visiting Johan P are introduced to the culture and techniques of eating crayfish. It is assumed to be a very popular feature of the Johan P activities. Furthermore, the employees of the delicacy shop are encourage to help customers to find interesting ways of preparing dishes with help of purchased products. Finally the famous lobster soup, the specialty of Johan P was immortalized on the postcards that people could take from the restaurant.

6.3.4 Channel (Service)

The restaurant has fish and seafood as a specialty. The focus is on the freshness of the products that also could be bought in the shop which belongs to the restaurant.

The restaurant is known for the unique, market-hall atmosphere with classic black and white glazed tiles, white table clothing and sea themed paintings on the walls.

The place is very raw and strict. The service in the restaurant is assumed to be classic and correct not any different from other restaurants. Although, according to manager the restaurant receives a lot of attention from the service they provide. The important thing according to the manager is the individual approach. Every customer is different and the service staff should be able to interpret customer needs when it comes to service. Some of the guests need a lot of attention and information while other guests want to be left alone.

6.3.4.1 Quality

The restaurant owner does not pay a lot of attention to see the differences between the expected and the experienced service quality among the customers. But he often gets information from dialogue he have with guests and from emails he receives.

6.3.4.2 Employees

Service staff in the restaurant is paying more attention to the customers visiting the restaurant during the evenings. While service level during lunch time is less sophisticated depending on limited amount of time the people have and number of people that must be served.

6.3.5 Receiver (People)

The age of the people visiting Johan P begins with thirty year olds. During daytime there are a lot of people working nearby the restaurant. The restaurant is serving lunch to the advocates, advertisers and architects to name a few working groups. During evenings Johan P serves food to tourists and other foreigner guests of the nearest hotels as well as to the organized groups of business people and other bigger meetings.

6.3.5.1. Happy Customers

Regular customers are often those visiting the restaurant during lunchtime. They often bring new customers. After awhile these new customers invite new ones. The restaurant tries to influence regular customers by opening a dialogue with them. The

feeling of recognition and attention may influence in referrals. According to the manager the engagement from employees' side will result in engagement from customer side.

6.3.5.2 Online Talker

The restaurant has its own homepage (www.johanp.nu) which is updates as soon as something new is happening in the restaurant. The news is also sent by electronic flyers to the customers. The manager is trying to follow what is written about the restaurant on the Internet, but he does not response to these opinions. According to the manager the Internet is a tool for people to express their opinions. The manager does not want to interfere in people opinion statements on the Internet. On the other hand customers' opinions in the restaurant are carefully listened and respond by the employees.

6.3.5.3 Eager Employees

The restaurant consist of nine employees and an extra personal during rush seasons. The internal marketing strategy is to make employees feel important, the manager try to create warm atmosphere among employees. During personal meetings the importance of influencing people to make referrals about the restaurant are decussated. The employees are an important bit of marketing and they should be able to satisfy the customers.

6.3.5.4 Fans and Hobbyists

The restaurant is organising cooking courses for groups of business people and companies. Furthermore the restaurant is having contact with people interested in wine and champagne trials.

6.3.5.5 Professionals

As far as the manager of Johan P is concerned the restaurant has not been visited by any journalist or expert in the field of interests.

6.3.6 Additional Information

The service must constantly be evolved. Nowadays, the customers are more aware of the food, drinks and service. The expectations are higher because customers are more up to date and the staff working in the restaurant must be more and more sophisticated to meet expectations of the fastidious clientele.

6.4 Salt&Brygga

Interview conducted with Björn Stenbeck, the owner of Salt&Brygga restaurant in Malmö on 13th of November 2007.

6.4.1 Background

The concept of the restaurant was born during the trade fair for ecological products in Malmö. The owner has had previous experience with ecological products and was eager to open the first entirely environmentally friendly restaurant in Sweden. The building of the restaurant has been adapted to this idea. Care for the environment is visible in the whole interior; beginning with electrical wires that are free from PVC and finishing with lack of stairs which in the long run can develop injuries among employees. The restaurant is created to be a place with healthy atmosphere both for the employees and the guests. Factors influencing the idea are the architecture, the furnishing, the food and the practices connected to the business. Restaurant opened its doors on May 17th 2001 in highly discussed area, Bo01 in Malmö.

6.4.2 WOM

According to the owner people can be influenced to talk about the restaurant with others. The owner tries to encourage people to share their opinion by giving them something to talk about. By starting a discussion with the customers the manager tries to ensure them that they made a right choice by coming to Salt&Brygga. The feeling of making something valuable for themselves, the environment and the

inspiration the owner gives to his customers are important for building referrals. The dialogue with customers is very important in the restaurant. The owner is found of telling stories about his ideas and restaurant history for the guests. According to him restaurants have for many years now used customers to sell new brands of alcohol and cigarettes. He is making use of Salt&Brygga to sell something good and healthy, not only the food but the whole lifestyle he is passionate about. The other factor that the owner sees as an efficient WOM marketing tool is the surprise. The restaurant is not strongly displaying their ecological and environmental concept. The restaurant may look as a regular dining place for many visitors at the beginning. The customers are rather amazed with the idea after entering and ordering the meals. Furthermore the idea of being first on the market is a very strong tool to create publicity and referrals. The restaurant was the first to introduce slow-food restaurant in Sweden and then first to be marked with the Svan (ecological mark) in southern Sweden. Finally Salt&Brygga was one of the first in Sweden to introduce smoking free restaurant concept.

6.3.1 Message

The biggest message from the restaurant is the ecological concept. According to Stenbeck regardless of what people think about the idea they talk about it anyway. This is the concept that evokes emotional response. The other thing that makes the restaurant special is the view from the place, where the guest can see the bridge to Denmark, the ocean and the beautiful surrounding scenery.

6.3.1.1 Anticipation/Secret

The anticipation in the restaurant is built by surprising dishes that customers are curious about and surprised by them. According to the owner ecological food is associated with boringness and lack of taste. Salt&Brygga is assumed to create colourful, astonishing and delightful meals. This creates WOM referrals with help of surprised people. Using products like blue carrots, white beetroot and beans instead of iceberg lettuce Salt&Brygga makes food that inspire to talk.

6.3.1.2 *Hero*

Although not mentioned directly under the interview it is assumed that following characteristic can be interpreted as connected to the Hero factor.

Hero in the restaurant is visible through the owner. The man with the passion shares his passion with guests by food creations and frequent personal dialogues with the guests. The Hero may also be the honourable cause the restaurant is serving.

6.3.1.3 *Behind the Scenes*

The activities that could be connected to the Behind the Scenes factor were not mentioned during the interview. It is assumed that the restaurant is not using the factor.

6.4.4 Channel (Service)

There are differences between the expected and experience service. In Salt&Brygga people expect higher service because of the luxurious placement of the restaurant. The expectation are higher that the experienced one.

6.4.4.1 *Employees*

Employees have different service quality during lunch and evening time. It is strictly connected to the time given to the customers. Salt&Brygga service builds on making guests remark. To be presented and focused on consumer needs are the key factors of the good service, according to the owner.

6.4.4.2 *Interior*

Service includes the unique interior of the restaurant which was made environmentally friendly. According to the owner the interior is an important ingredient to the whole food experience as well as the music inside the place.

6.4.4.3 *Food*

All the dishes are prepared from ecological raw products and served on simple, kind to environment plates. The meals' colours and taste is surprisingly characteristic and well defined. Blue carrots, lenses instead of iceberg salad and potatoes as well as white beetroot are perfect stories to tell.

6.4.5 Receiver (People)

People visiting the restaurant are both business people on the company dinner and private persons celebrating different events. Salt&Brygga location is crowded with tourists and these are also a major group of guests visiting the restaurant. There is not a clear group of people visiting the restaurant, the age, gender, education and other classification are not acknowledge in there. The one thing that is often common for these people are the awareness of why they want to eat in Salt&Brygga.

6.4.5.1 Happy Customers

The restaurant managed to make their regular customers proud to be the regulars. The restaurant is serving an important cause and the people like to be part of it. At the same time the owner visits different media for interviews and the regular customers are happy to tell their friends that they are dining at the place of the man who talked on the radio yesterday.

6.4.5.2 Online Talkers

The restaurant is constantly updating information on their website. The news, new dishes and work ads are place on the Internet. Besides the owner search for information written about the place and find it very interesting when people are devoting their blogg space to the pictures and opinions from the restaurant. Although he appreciates the thought the owner do not comment on posted information.

6.4.5.3 Eager Employees

The owner of the restaurant considers that employees are more likely to talk about the place when they are learning and developing in their workplace. Furthermore, the talk about the restaurant among employees and their friends and family can be

triggered by something amusing and funny that occurred. Due to this is, the owner tries to provide both development and excitement for the employees and again pass on the employees the passion for the idea.

6.4.5.4 *Fans and Hobbyists*

Meetings with schools, students are one of the activities that focused on the people interested in the ideas provided by the restaurant. Furthermore, the owner is learning cooking personal at schools how to prepare ecological meals and still stick to the given budget. On the other hand guests of the restaurant are often already interested in environmental friendly solutions and more ecological lifestyle. The owner tries to stimulate their interest in the concept by motivating them to shop more ecological products.

6.4.5.5 *Professionals*

The owners motto “*Life is a challenge*” (Stenbeck, 2007) is visible in his strive for constant development. The restaurant is *surprising* with new things and finding the ways to be the first in something. This is a very efficient way of drawing attention of media people and experts. According to the owner, the journalists want to write about extraordinary things and by development of the concept of Salt&Brygga he is providing amusement. The restaurant as well as the owner itself gathered a lot of free publicity from media. Many experts in the field and local as well as international journalists have visited the restaurant. The restaurant is also visible in many international tourist guides. Finally the owner visited the radio station for an interview connected to the newly collected Svan mark. All of this attention was initiated by media themselves, never by the restaurant.

6.4.6 Additional Information

The supply chain of the restaurant is well-known by the owner. He keeps choosing suppliers that follow the natural way of taking care of the products that end up in the restaurant. Another thing important for the restaurants WOM is the networks of

friends, business partners and other acquaintances that the restaurant have contact with. They are a possible way of spreading the publicity to theirs contacts.

6.5 Pim's restaurant

Interview conducted with Pim Sahlgren the owner of Pim's restaurant in B01 in Malmö.

6.5.1 Background

The restaurant has recently gotten a new owner and was christened Pim's restaurant. The former name of the restaurant was Smak vid havet. Pim's restaurant is situated in B01, in one of Europe's most famous places. It is a place in front of the ocean with a lot of architecture and potential. Despite everything, it is not until now there are happening things in this area. It was especially stubborn during the winter season but with time more and more movement is coming around this area. Last but not least, the summer season takes the golden crown considering that the restaurant is beautifully situated, *"we are going to use the city's best berth with our outdoor café which has a wonderful view"* (Sahlgren, 2007). The latest phase of the restaurant was to change the concept and draw new and more customers to the restaurant. Pim's is divided in two secluded parts. One of the parts, the restaurant is going to serve lunch and dinner. In the other part, delicates are going to be served *"here the people can sit with threadbare jeans and a t-shirt"* (Sahlgren, 2007). Enough is a good as a feast, that's why the price level of the dishes is going to be sufficient. Sahlgren (2007), the owner of the restaurant explain that the main dish has a price of 160Swedish heads and the delicates are going to have a price of 100 Swedish heads

6.5.2 WOM

According to Sahlgren (2007), WOM can be controlled by keeping an eye on the service and the customers. Giving a personal and a good service is a way to make a mental note of the customers about Pim's restaurant. He further assumes that the

concept is an important factor to influence WOM. Tourist represents a part of the restaurant's clientele who are a pressure group of Swedish plain fare. In this case, the hotels are one of the engines of WOM. Sahlgren is thinking to give out the menu to the hotels and though this be recommended. Furthermore, Sahlgren is personal giving away flyers to different companies with the restaurant's menu instead of sending it by mail like the most of the restaurants. The personal distribution of menu attracts an attention among the companies than with a mail. It also creates a better relationship with them. He claims that the chance is bigger to stimulate them to come to his restaurant and talk about it.

6.5.2 Message

The *personal receive* to the customers is the unique message. Preparing food with *fresh products* means that the dinner is unique; it is dinner that can be classified as a fine dinner. Finally the result of becoming better and better is the sum of constant develops.

6.5.2.1 Anticipation/Secret

Knowledgeable is the word that is the key to the surprise of the customers. The customers are surprised of when they see that the employees are competent with their work. Different menu and drinks are also surprising for the customers, for example the ecological wine "*the customers talk gladly about things they have been fascinating on*" (Sahlgren, 2007).

6.5.2.2 Hero

Sahlgren (2007) claims that he is the *hero* which the restaurant is associated with. This is because Sahlgren is the restaurant's manager and shows his face among the customers by working a lot in the restaurant. The restaurant has some customers who are famous, but they are not used to create a message.

6.5.2.3 Behind the Scenes

Arranging an inauguration is a method that is going to stimulate the people to talk. An inauguration is equal sign of involvement of the restaurant. The invitation is a possibility to create a worthy relationship and making them feel special, “*I see this as a possibility to not making them feel as customers, but also as a friend to the restaurant*” (Sahlgren, 2007).

6.5.4 Channel (Service)

According to Sahlgren, the service quality is *exceeded* in the restaurant. They offer a higher service quality because it exceeds the customers’ expectations. In the restaurant business, the service is one of the most important generators of WOM.

The WOM referrals are most likely to occur when the service quality is exceeded .

6.5.4.1 Employees

Giving the same service quality during the peak time is quite hard; the reason is that the time is not enough during the lunch. The people have a *time limit* during the lunch which is the peak time for the restaurant. The service quality is higher during the dinner time, this because the people has more time. With that, the employees have more time to give attention to the customers and spend more time with them.

6.5.4.2 Interior

The classic furnishing gives calm and a groovy atmosphere. Sahlgren (2007), claims that the furnishing is timeless. Due to this, the furnishing does not need to be changed like the modern design. The simplicity and casualness are the essentials of the interior. Plans for the delicates store are made to enrich the interior.

6.5.4.3 Food

Pimp’s restaurant has an uncomplicated Swedish fare plain as a specialty.

6.5.5 Receiver (Network)

Pim’s restaurant’s network consists of customers with an age of twenty five plus. Like mentioned before, the tourist is a part of the restaurants clientele as well as

local people who live near the restaurant and people who want to get away from the city to experience a nice view and a feel of no stress is a part of the network. Furthermore business people and visitors of B01 (new, luxurious part of the Malmö situated in the West Harbour) is a part of Pim's restaurant's network

6.5.5.1 Happy Customers

According to Sahlgren (2007) "*the regular customers are the greatest marketing*" (Sahlgren, 2007). They have the characteristic of coming with new customers to the restaurant or by recommending them to come to the restaurant. The stimulation can be done by being personal as possible, but he adds that each customer is important to stimulate since the restaurant has a new owner and a new concept. Stimulating more customers means that more people can talk about the restaurant "*each customer is just as important as the regular customers*" (Sahlgren, 2007).

6.5.5.2 Online Talkers

In this moment the restaurant is working with a creation of a homepage. Sahlgren (2007) is going to use the homepage effective for the creation of WOM. The online talkers have possibility to read the menu and write commentaries in the forum. The forum is a way to communicate with customers, but also giving the customers a coincidence to talk to other customers. The homepage is a way to give information and through this stimulate WOM. Finally Pim's restaurant is going to create a list of customers to influence the customers easier by having a stronger contact with them.

6.5.5.3 Eager Employees

Sahlgren (2007) assumes that employees who like the job automatically talks about the restaurant among the customers and friends. As an owner he thinks that he has the task to create a pleasant working environment which in some cases stimulates the employees to talk.

6.5.5.4 Fans and Hobbyists

Pim's restaurant is giving *recipe* for different course since it has customers who are interested in cooking. The recipe is for the moment only available at the homepage, but in the near future it would be available in the restaurant.

6.5.5.5 Professionals

The journalists and experts are people who have ability to create WOM. Despite that, Pim's restaurant is not working with those groups. The manager of Pim's restaurant claims that those people are taking contact by themselves when they find something interesting to talk about, "*they are sharks which are swimming around the restaurants who knows when they want to write about something*" (Sahlgren, 2007).

6.5.6 Additional information

Creation of contact with more people by for example personal giving away flyers to the companies another type of engine of the simulation. The manager tries to start and create a personal contact example among the companies which he personal gives out flyers. Furthermore, the Hotels give recommendations about Pim's restaurant which draws a lot of tourists to the restaurant. Finally, the Swedish concept stimulates in it turn for the creation of WOM.

6.6 Summary

To make the empirical findings more understandable, the findings from each restaurant will be summarized in three parts, the message, the channel (service) and the receiver (people).

6.6.1 Message

It appeared that each of the managers use anticipation as a message and through this stimulates WOM. The five restaurants use especially the products as a tool to create

the anticipation. On of the way is to surprise the customers by giving them snacks before or after the dinner.

It can be established that meaning of the *hero* as a factor is seen more as a famous face among the managers. The response of the different managers resulted to another conception of the word hero. They point out that they have famous people who are their customers but they are not used as a message of the creation of WOM. Two of the managers claim that they use themselves as a hero among their customers. While these two managers try to associate the restaurant with themselves by frequent personal communication with the guest, other two managers claim that they do not use hero as an engine for the stimulation of WOM. The restaurant called Johan P is the only restaurant that is going to use a unique type of hero. The last type of the message called *behind the scenes* is used by four of the restaurants. Each of the restaurants has their own way of stimulating WOM by using behind the scenes. The restaurant Svea makes some of their customers involved in the restaurant by letting them to taste new course of dishes. It is a possibility to make them feel a part since the restaurant wants to hear their opinion of the new food. In the restaurant Johan P, famous lobster soup, the specialty of Johan P was immortalized on the postcards that people could take from the restaurant. The final two restaurants arrange party as a generator of WOM. Smak arranges party once in a year and Pim's restaurant is going to arrange an inauguration because it has recently opened the doors.

6.6.2 Channel (Service)

The restaurants offer different menus, service and have different furnishing to draw customers to the restaurants and to generate them to talk about the restaurants.

Two of the restaurants, called Svea and Pim's restaurant are exceeding the customers' expectations. Svea claims that the expectations at the start were exceeded since the customers did not have any expectations. On the other hand Smak and Johan P claim that the service should be adjusted to different customers' since each

customer has different expectations. The final restaurant Salt&Brygga claim that the customers of the restaurant expect higher service because of the luxurious placement.

The majority of the restaurants, four out of five restaurants agree that the service quality is different during the lunchtime and the dinnertime. Each of them claims that service level during lunch time is less sophisticated. The reason is the customers' timer, which means that the customers have less time to eat during lunchtime than dinnertime. The eliminated restaurant called Smak claim that the employees should give the same service no mater the peak time or not.

The furnishing is a way to show the restaurants' characteristics and to give insight of the atmosphere. The customers can trough this talk and tell stories about restaurants design.

The restaurants menu is classified as one of the restaurants strength for the stimulation of WOM, this because the menu gives a picture of the restaurants' concept.

6.6.3 Receiver (People)

Each manager of the restaurants agrees that the *happy customers* (regular customers) are an important part in the stimulation of WOM. Three of the managers claim that the happy customers can be stimulated by paying *attention* to them. Furthermore, two of them also claim that the feeling of recognition may influence in referrals. The manager of Salt&Brygga claims that by serving an *important cause*, the people can like to be a part of it and though this making them proud to be the happy customers. The manager of the restaurant Pim's restaurant is the only one who claims that being *personal* is a way of stimulating the happy customers.

Online talkers are only used as an engine in one of the restaurants, Pim's restaurant. The manager explains that having *forum* at the homepage is one way of stimulating

WOM among the people who are spending time on the internet. The other four managers are only *taking information* about what the online talkers are writing about i.e. the online talkers are not used as a generator of WOM.

Four of the five managers are stimulating their *employers* to talk about the restaurant. Furthermore the managers have a common method on how the employers can be stimulated. All of them mention that they are creating a *pleasant working environment* because an employee who loves his work talks quite simple about the work. Some of them comment a few other methods of the stimulation by for example talking to the employees during the *personal meetings* and by *provide development* and *excitement* among them. The manager of Smak doesn't agree with the other managers since she thinks the employees should decide by themselves if they want to talk about the restaurant among the people.

Each manager claims that *fans and hobbyist* are a part of the stimulation of WOM. Every restaurant has different fans and hobbyists. With that, they use different methods for the stimulation. Two of the managers are giving cooking courses. The other managers give for example recipes for different courses.

Only two of the restaurants are using *professionals* as a generator of WOM. In addition to this, the managers deliberately try to stimulate professionals by doing something good and extraordinary. They also point out that by generating professionals the restaurant can get publicity which in its turn leads to the spread of WOM. The other managers claim that professionals can't be stimulated since the professionals are taking contact with the restaurant when they find something to be interesting.

Chapter 7 Final Discussion

In the final chapter, the author will present their conclusions from the empirical findings. Furthermore, the modification, methodological criticism, future research and practical implications will be presented.

7.1 Conclusions

The results gathered from the restaurants have shown that the managers are aware of the opportunities to influence people to talk about the company. The managers do not use the terms of Word-of-Mouth (WOM) communication, but they are conscious about the importance of the referrals, and use it as a primary marketing technique. The traditional advertising is made occasionally or not at all. The research have shown that the managers find that the great food and the effort of making service more personal are the most important factors of making people remember and talk about the restaurants. But besides the great food and the exceptional service, they use other forms of creating publicity. Restaurants are using their unique qualities to make the restaurant worth talking about. By *unique qualities* we mean the extraordinary design of the restaurant i.e. SMAK – is situated in Malmö Konsthall (art gallery), Pim's Krog and Salt&Brygga have tremendous view from the restaurant, Öresundsbron and a bit of Denmark can be seen from their windows. Special quality is also the *food*. These qualities are most visible for the customers of

the restaurant and probably that is why the biggest *receiver* of the restaurants' message is the *customer*. These qualities are channels linking the restaurant with the customer. According to the managers a lot of effort is put into making the customer feel special, engage and recognized. The empirical results have proven that the theory about making customer engaged, surprised and curious is working in the reality. Besides the customers, the people mentioned by managers to be important during the WOM communication process are their own personal networks of people and the companies that are somehow related to the restaurant business.

Furthermore, we have discovered some interesting opinions that were connected to the WOM influencing factors i.e. according to Salt&Brygga manager being first in something, like the first slow-food restaurant in Sweden and the need of constant improvements and development makes people talk about the company. Johan P manager is convinced that leaving personal cards in interesting places and giving away the flyers make people remember the restaurant. And finally, the owner of the SMAK sees restaurant's publicity in media as a perfect way of stimulating people to talk. We found these factors worth mentioning; however these are not sign into the final communication model. The appearance of these factors was too limited to be a scientifically reliable factor in the model.

7.2 Modification of the model

After conducting the theoretical part and analysing the empirical findings, we came to conclusion that the model of factors influencing WOM presented in Chapter 4 needs to be modified. After the research it appeared that some of the factors in the model were not supported by the research. Due to this, those factors can be excluded from the model. Furthermore, new factors appeared during the research which can be added into the model. We also believe that the extended version presented in Chapter 4 is reliable however for the dissertation purpose the shorter version presented in Figure 7.1 is clearer.

7.2.1 Message

The conception of message in our dissertation is reflected in the same way as Huges (2005), Rosen (2000) and Sernovitz (2006). The message is a factor which is created in the company and the ulterior motive is to stimulate the receivers. Before our research we assumed that the restaurants used three different factors as the message, using *anticipation/secret, hero and behind the scenes*. After completing the research it appeared that the restaurants use their restaurant *concept* and *event* as a message for the stimulation of WOM as well.

7.2.1.1 Anticipation/Secret

It appeared that gathered information after the research was supporting our opinion about anticipation/secret. Each of the restaurants claimed that they were surprising the customers to make them spread WOM.

7.2.1.2 Hero

The hero can be excluded from our WOM model since the restaurants considered to not using the hero as an engine. On the other hand, two of the restaurants claim that they see themselves as a hero, who the people can associate the restaurant with. Despite their comment, the hero can not be included in the model since it only is two of the five restaurants that consider it.

7.2.1.3 Behind the Scenes

Behind the scenes are used in four of the restaurants, thus it can remain in our WOM communication model.

7.2.1.4 Concept

The restaurant concept is messages that can be added into the model since the restaurants claim that the concept is a way of encourage people to talk and in that way spread the WOM. Each of the restaurants has a unique concept which is harnessed on purpose to stimulation of WOM. The history of the restaurant is a part of the concept, example Salt&Brygga which essentially has an ecological history; it

is for example ecological built. Furthermore, by creating a menu which for example serves only Swedish plain fare like in Svea is a part of the restaurants' concept.

7.2.1.5 Event

The majority of the restaurants arrange events for people who want to rent the restaurant for, dinners, meetings and parties. The event can be seen as a message which has the task to stimulating WOM by making the restaurant available as more than a restaurant. It creates a feeling of gratitude among the people who have the possibility to rent the restaurant and get help for the arrangement of dinners etc.

7.2.2 Channel (Service)

The message sent by source travels through channels that are assumed to be the environment within the restaurant. As the SMCR model shows channels built so that they can be detected and interpreted by receivers' senses. This research focused on three types of channels by which the message between the restaurant and the people may be sent: the employees, interior of the restaurant and food. These three types are the main characteristics of service which defines the restaurants.

7.2.2.1 Employees

Employees are the personalisation of the restaurant and the link between the source and the receiver. The research has shown that in order to influence people by the employees the service should be individual, putting the customer in centre. The need to understand the customers' different requirements is the key term to better service.

7.2.2.2 Interior

Each of the interviewed restaurants has something unique in their interior. Beginning with long bar with open kitchen to the entirely environmental friendly made furnishing. The two types of approaches to make interior a WOM influencing factor were found. The first approach is to build an environment that is strongly connected and works as an extension of the restaurant concept. In this case the Johan P with fishermen theme and Salt&Brygga with ecological interior are the examples

of concept based interior. The second type is more general, and less intimate but still working. Generating positive emotions and developing positive feelings with the interior makes people talk about it. The feeling of confidence mentioned by Smak owner or tranquillity and relaxation based environment (see Pim's and Svea) are examples of feelings that can build pleasant atmosphere in the restaurant which is worth talking about.

7.2.2.3 Food

Again, uniqueness is a key component to the creation of food worth mentioning. There is no place for mediocrity. Each of the restaurants has something special: a wide list of beers from all around the world, ecological food, the best cook in town etc. Food connects all of the senses a human have; the smell, taste, seen and hearing and it is a reason why the people go to the restaurant in the first place. As it comes to the service the experience is less profound during lunch breaks, but very vital to the whole service outcome during the evenings and weekends. Food can be surprising (see Salt&Brygga blue carrots) and it is the feeling of astonishment that is similar to every restaurant.

7.2.3 Receiver (People)

The final factor of our WOM communications model is called receiver (people). We utilize five different types of people *happy customers, online talkers, eager employees, fans and hobbyists and professionals*. After our research we could indicate that not all of these five people were exploited among the restaurants for the stimulation of WOM.

7.2.3.1 Happy Customers

The happy customers, also classified as the regular customers were of a great importance and a great source. Each of the restaurants considered the regular

customers to be a part of the stimulation of WOM. Thus, the regular customers can remain in our model as a factor.

7.2.3.2 Online Talkers

Unlike the happy customer, the online talkers can be excluded from the model. According to the restaurants' managers, the online talkers are useful for gathering of information on the Internet. Four of the managers declared that they do not have WOM purpose with the online talkers.

7.2.3.3 Eager Employees

Only one of the restaurants does not influence the employees for the stimulation of WOM. The other restaurants claims that provide a pleasant working environment is the method for influencing the employees.

7.2.3.4 Fans and Hobbyists

There is no doubt that fans and hobbyists are an engine of the stimulation of WOM. Each of the managers claimed that they influence the fans and hobbyists but there are different ways of doing it. Furthermore, the managers agree that the fans and hobbyists are people with wine and cooking interests.

7.2.3.5 Professionals

The professionals can be excluded from the model since three of the managers claim that professionals can not be stimulated. On the other hand they agree with our statement that they have a great influence on other people, but the professionals themselves can not be influenced according to the managers. The managers maintain that the professionals are taking contact with the restaurants when they find something to be interesting.

7.2.3.6 Personal Network

During our research, it appeared that personal network is a new type of receiver. The personal network is so called friends, business partners etc that are used as engine of the receiver (people) factor. This engine is applicable to the model of the factors influencing WOM since the majority of the managers in the restaurants claim the personal network to be an important part in the stimulation of WOM. The personal network has a special contact and a more personal contact with the restaurants. Thus, these receivers have a tendency to talk about the restaurant. It is also easier for the restaurant to stimulate them considering the close relationship between the restaurant itself and these receivers.

7.2.3.7 Companies

After our research, we found companies to be a part of the stimulation of WOM. Due to this, companies are added in our model. Hotels can be classified as a company which provides the restaurants with WOM. The restaurants managers claim that a lot of hotels recommend the tourists to visit their restaurants. Thus, the Hotels are classified as a receiver.

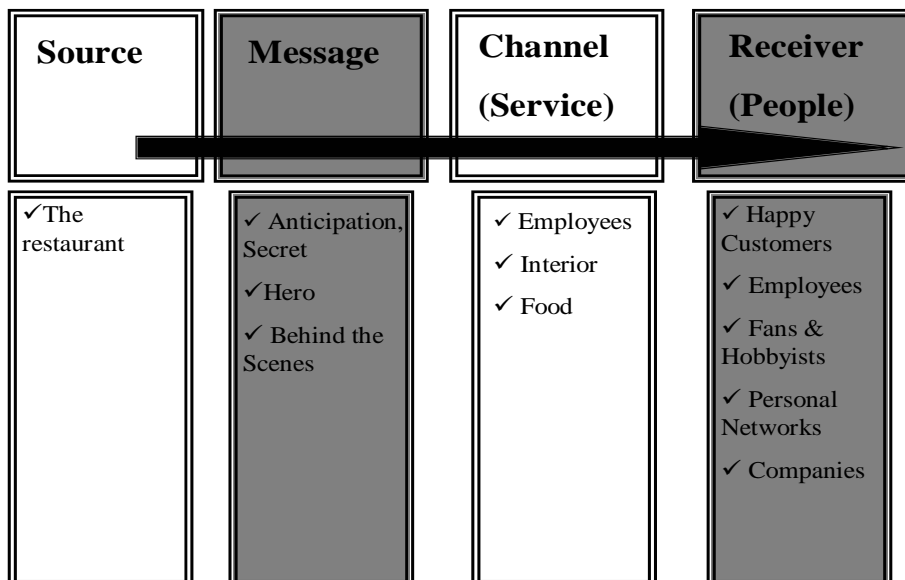


Figure 7.1 The Model of Factors Influencing WOM

7.3 Methodological Criticism

Our research was based on pilot, semi-structured interviews. The general aspects and questions were prepared before the interviews, but during the questioning the order of questions asked and the questions itself were changing. The questions and the need of additional questions were depended on the interviewees' answers. These types of interviewing gave us opportunity to look for additional information which could come up during the interview and had been relevant for the research topic. On the other hand, every interview look slightly different and the problem of comparing and standardising the data emerged. Given our limited knowledge and experience about the semi-structured interview technique the analysis and the results of conducted interviews may lose some of the credibility. Furthermore, leading a semi-structured interview is a demanding process, where skills in interviewing techniques are crucial for the outcomes quality. There is a risk that we may have miss out some of the important information because of the incorrect questioning technique and behaviour.

The semi structured interviews take a longer time to process, due to the limited time the number of restaurants interviewed had to be small. We have interviewed five restaurants and found some common factors that are used to influence WOM referrals. But given number of the sample can not be seen as represent able for the whole population. To prove the significance of the results the sample should be enlarged. The geographical location of the restaurants is limited to the Malmö region, and there is a chance that the results would be different if the research were conducted somewhere else.

The result of the research includes new findings. Interviews provided the research with additional factors influencing the WOM communication process. There is a chance of finding more factors if the research sample were larger. At the same time

the larger sample could prove or reject the significance other factors assumed to be reliable as WOM influencing factors.

7.4 Further Research

The research in this dissertation is quite limited since the investigation only has covered five restaurants in one area, central Malmö. Due to this, it would be interesting to investigate a larger number of restaurants in different areas. The different areas could be other cities in Sweden but also other cities in different countries. Especially investigation on how WOM is controlled and which of the factors that are used in different nations are interesting considering different culture. Furthermore, the authors could create an international model which gives insight on similar factors that can be used from an international perspective when WOM is controlled. At the same time the larger sample could give the model a higher degree of credibility.

Furthermore, the research is investigated from the restaurants perspective. A further research would be an investigation combining both the customers' and restaurants' perspective. It would be interesting to obtain which of the factors that actually are stimulating the customers to the spread of WOM. With that, the authors could merge the investigation of the restaurant and the customers into one model. With that the WOM communication model could be developed.

Finally, the developed model would give more virtual information of the factors and the controlled WOM. The communication model, called SMCR model brings up five different factors used to send message; communications skills, attitude, knowledge, position in the social system and culture. The authors found these factors to be important but they were not able to investigate them. Consequently a further research would be to investigate the factors and discover if the factors are significant for the stimulation of WOM.

7.5 Practical implications

The dissertation can be read by restaurant managers, but also by people planning to open a restaurant. This research paper may provide inspiration for marketing purposes. The factors listed in the SMCR model give an outline of how to get in control over the company's assets in order to increase publicity.

As using the factors mentioned in the dissertation do not require great financial investment this kind of marketing communication seems appropriate even for smaller firms. Small enterprises, with no great marketing budget can benefit from the dissertation by getting to know alternative marketing techniques.

Finally, the dissertation provides general information about the WOM phenomenon in the service industry. However, it is still a lot of questions that has to be answered in order to find this paper complete. We believe that our work can be used by other students, interested in WOM marketing to develop their knowledge and be inspired to look for further information about the topic.

References

Books:

Devine, R. & Misner, I. R. (1999) *The world's best known marketing secret*. Austin Texas: Bard Press.

Grönroos, Ch. (1996) *Marknadsföring I tjänsteföretag* Göteborg: Grafiksystem AB.

Huges, M. (2005) *Buzzmarketing, get people to talk about your stuff*. Unites States of America: Penguin Group.

Malhotra, N.K (2004) *Marketing research*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Mortnesen, C.D.(1972) *Communication: The Study of Human Communication* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Rosen, E.(2000) *The anatomy of Buzz*. New York: Doubleday.

Saunders, M.N.K. & Lewis, P. & Thornhill A. (2007) *Research Methods for Business Students*. England, Essex: Prentice Hall.

Sernovitz, A. (2006) *Word of Mouth Marketing: How Smart Companies Get People Talking*. United States of America: Dearborn Trade, A Kaplan Professional Company.

Silverman, G. (2001). *Secrets of Word -of Mouth Marketing: How to Trigger Exponential Sales Through Runaway Word of Mouth*. United States of America: AMACOM.

Articles:

Berlo, D.K (1960) *The process of Communication*. New York, Holt, Rinhart & Winston.

Berry, L. L. & Parasuraman, A. (1991) *Marketing Services*. New York: The Free Press.

Culturesock. (2007 11 22) *Communication channels*

<http://www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/introductory/smcr.html#channe>

Edvardsson, B. (1998) *Service quality improvement*. Managing Service Quality. Emerald.

Gremler, D.D. & Gwinner, K.P.& Brown S.W. (2001) *Generating positive word-of-mouth communication through customer-employee relationships*. International Journal of Service Industry Management.

Kaminski, S, (2002) *Communication Models*. www.shkaminski.com/Classes (2007 11 21).

Ladner D. (2001) *Communication/Diffusion-Adaptation Process*. Agricultural Information Science and Education, Mississippi State University
http://www.ais.msstate.edu/AEE/Tutorial/comm_process.html (2007 11 22).

Lovelock, C. and Gummesson, E. (2004) *Whither services marketing? In search of a new paradigm and fresh perspectives*. Journal of Service Research.

Skåtar, K. (2004) *Factors that Initiate and Influence Word of Mouth in Long-Term Relationships*. Publications of the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration nr 133:Helsinfors.

Stokes, D. & Lomax, W. (2002) *Taking control of word of mouth marketing: the case of an entrepreneurial hotelier*. Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development.

Wangenheim, F.V. & Bayon, T. (2004) *The effect of word of mouth on service switching*. European Journal of Marketing, Emerald Publishing Limited.
Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) (2007) *Theoretical Framework*. www.womma.com.

Appendicies

Appendix I

Questions/frågor

INLEDNING

Skulle ni vilja berätta lite om restaurangens bakgrund och historia?

Hur marknadsför ni er restaurang?

WOM

Försöker ni påverka människor att prata om er restaurang och i sådana fall hur?

NETWORK

Vad har ni för typ av kunder i restaurangen?

Happy Customer

Vilka är era stamkunder?

Försöker ni påverka dem att prata om er?

Hur försöker ni påverka dem?

Har ni märkt om era stamgäster kommer med nya gäster till restaurangen?

Online Talkers

Har ni en hemsida?

Följer ni det som skrivs om er på Internet?

Hur följer ni det som skrivs på Internet?

Brukar ni svara på det som skrivs på Internet om er?

Eager employees

Försöker ni motivera era anställda att prata om restaurangen för vänner och familj?

Vad försöker ni göra för att smita de anställda med engagemang och passion för att på så sätt stimulera dem att prata om restaurangen?

Fans and Hobbyists

Brukar ni göra någonting som riktar sig till människor med intresse för mat, vin etc?

På vilket sätt gör ni det?

Professionals

Har ni fått besök av journalister eller experter inom restaurang branschen som vill skriva/prata om restaurangen?

Försöker ni dra in experter och/ eller journalister till er restaurang?

Hur försöker ni dra till er dessa experter och/eller journalister?

MESSAGE

Använder ni er av något unikt som skapar intresse för just er restaurang?

Anticipation/ secret

Har ni gjort något överraskande för kunder eller andra människor?

På vilket sätt skapar ni överraskningar till dem?

Hero

Har ni använt er av en speciell person (kändis, expert, fantasi figur) som kan förstärka restaurangens, image?

Har ni delat ut information om en speciell människa som kommer att besöka, eller hade besökt er restaurang?

Behind the scenes

Gör ni saker som engagerar kunden i er verksamhet

- kunden blir delaktig

Brukar ni göra något som får kunden att bli och engagerad i er restaurangens verksamhet?

SERVICE

Food

Vad särskiljer er matsedel från andras?

Interior

Vad särskiljer er inredning från andras miljöer?

Service Quality

Försöker ni se om det finns skillnader mellan den förväntade och upplevda servicekvaliteten i er restaurang?

Vad särskiljer er service från andras service?

Anställda

Försöker ni hålla samma servicekvalitet oberoende på rusningstiderna?

Vilka krav ställer ni på anställda?

Appendix II

Svea

Inledning

Skulle ni vilja berätta lite om restaurangens bakgrund och historia?

Jag och min kompanjon Johan öppnade restaurangen för ett år sedan. Vi föll för just denna lokal och bestämde oss då för att satsa allt här. Sveas lokal har ett av Malmös längsta bar och det speciella med är att den täcker hela köket som ligger i mitten av restaurangen. Restaurangens namn tog vi från min pappas konditori som kallades för Svea. Vi valde också Svea för att den ska ha anknytning till moder Svea. Vår restaurang är en enkel restaurang, mer bistro och den ligger på ett bra läge, i gamla västern i Malmö centrum. Vi serverar svensk mat som är enkelt tillagat. Utbud av svensk mat är inte så stor i Malmö, det är en stor anledning till varför restaurangen går så bra. Jag kan påpeka att vi aldrig har haft behov att göra reklam på grund av att restaurangen går så bra. Våra maträtter är tillagad utan konstigheter och det svåraste är inte att laga något komplicerat. Tvärtom, så är det svåraste att laga något på ett enkelt sätt med få ingredienser. Svea är

känd för enkelheten och prisnivån. Den breda mixen av kunderna beror på prisnivån, med våra priser så får du mycket valuta för dina pengar.

WOM

Försöker ni påverka människor att prata om er restaurang och i sådana fall hur?

Jag tror alla företag påverkar människor att prata om deras företag och jag är en av dem. Vår restaurangs ekonomi rullar på och blir bättre för varje gång och det är på grund av snacket bland folket. Jag kan bara ta ett bra exempel, vi har aldrig använt oss av reklamer eller något sådant. Svea har bara varit med i reklam en gång, det var den dag som vi hade invigning för restaurangen som en journalist nämnde i tidningen helt gratis. Vidare så kan jag säga att vi inte hade hängt upp skylt till Svea under de första veckorna, men folk kom in till restaurangen. Vi såg hur mer och mer folk började dyka upp. Vi la speciellt märke till att de första kunderna kom in med andra kunder. Vidare så fick vi höra att några av kunderna blivit rekommenderade av deras vänner. Jag anser att människors snack är den viktigaste reklamen för ett företag. Det är av en egen upplevelse eftersom vi aldrig har använt oss av marknadsföringar.

Network/people

Vad har ni för typ av kunder i restaurangen?

Låt mig säga så här, familj, unga människor och äldre människor, det ger en klar bild av att vi har en bredd mix av kundgrupp. Vi har till exempel en liten 40 års middag vid ena sidan av restaurangen och lite längre bort så kan vi se en familj. Sedan så har vi många turister som kommer för att de har blivit rekommenderade deras Hotel. Vi blir rekommenderade för att vi har svenska maträtter.

Happy Customers

Vilka är era stamkunder?

Våra kunder som vi får under lunchtid är våra stamkunder. De ses speciellt som våra stamkunder för att de kommer till oss och de pratar mycket om oss. Kunderna under lunchtid var våra första kunder och dessa kunder har gett oss nya kunder genom att ta ut folk på lunch eller rekommendera oss.

Försöker ni påverka dem att prata om er?

Det gör vi, ge dem uppmärksamhet är den bästa medicinen som finns.

Online Talkers

Har ni någon hemsida?

Vår hemsida är www.svea.se. Men vi är inte aktiva eller duktiga med att använda den eftersom vi inte uppdaterar den ofta.

Följer ni det som skrivs om er på Internet?

Någon gång så har det hänt att jag läst om Svea i olika bloggar i olika hemsidor. Men i vår hemsida så kan man inte skriva till oss. Även om jag läser om vad som skrivs om Svea i andra hemsidor så är det inget som lägger tid på att svara tillbaka. Den information jag tar till mig räcker, jag helt enkelt nöjer mig med det och jag vill inte påverka människor på något sätt via olika hemsidor eller rättare sagt via Internet.

Eager Employees

Försöker ni motivera anställda att prata om restaurangen för vänner och familj?

Allt som allt så är vi sju personer som jobbar i Svea. Jag anser att en anställd som älskar sitt jobb kommer pratar om restaurangen för andra människor. Våra stamkunder var viktiga för vår restaurang och vi motiverade dem att prata om restaurangen genom uppmärksamhet. På samma sätt försöker vi göra med de anställda.

Fans and Hobbyists

Brukar ni göra någonting som riktar sig till människor med intresse för mat, vin etc?

I Svea så hänger det mycket krog folket med tanken på vårt breda utbud av öl. Krog folket älskar att prata om var de har ätit och druckit och därför är det viktigt att få dem att prata om oss. Att hänga ute i olika pubar och restauranger är en del av deras vardag. Med tanken på att de spenderar tid i olika restauranger och pubar så vänder sig många till dem då de vill ut för att äta. Vår speciella utbud av öl och av vi får nya öl sorter gör att vi skapar större intresse bland våra krog folk.

Professionals

Har ni fått besök av journalister eller experter inom restaurang branschen som vill skriva/prata restaurang?

Visst har Svea journalister och experter som är kunder, men inga som har velat skriva om vår restaurang. De kommer komma till Svea när de tycker att det finns något intressant att skriva om. Så länge de inte anser att något är intressant så tar de inte kontakt med dig. Att veta vad man vill prata eller skriva om gör att det blir svårt att påverka dem, så vi i Svea försöker inte påverka dem.

Message

Använder ni er av något unikt som skapar intresse för just er restaurang?

Det unika med Svea är de svenska maträtterna och de är väldigt enkla. Vårt bredda utbud av öl är också något som är unikt i vår restaurang. Många människor som kommer hit på grund av ölen är väldigt nyfikna och förvånade av de olika öl sorterna.

Anticipation/ secret

Har ni gjort något överraskande för kunder eller andra människor?

Vi brukar överraska vår krog folk genom att ibland bjuda dem på snacks efter att de köpt deras 2-3 öl. Det händer att de har blivit överraskad på snacks några gånger och när de då berättar detta för sina vänner så förväntar de vännerna tur på att bli bjudna när de köpt 3 öl.

Hero

Har ni använt er av en speciell person (kändis, expert, fantasi figur) som kan förstärka restaurangens, image?

Nej det har vi inte och det vill vi inte göra. Jag tycker Svea ska vara Svea och inte bli associerad med något annat.

Behind the scenes

Brukar ni göra något som får kunden att bli och engagerad i er restaurangens verksamhet?

Vi låter en del av våra kunder att bli engagerade i verksamheten genom att göra dem delaktiga när vi utvecklar nya maträtter. De får tillfälle att smaka på nya maträtter innan vi har börjat servera dem till andra kunder. De får efter att ha smakat maträtterna säga deras åsikter och tankar om vad de tyckte.

Food

Vad särskiljer er matsedel från andras?

Vår mat sedel är så väldigt svensk. Vi serverar svenska maträtter som är tillagade med få ingredienser på ett enkelt sätt. Och som sagt, det svåraste är att tillaga på ett gott och enkelt sätt.

Interior

Vad särskiljer er inredning från andras miljöer?

Inredningen är modern och atmosfären är också svensk, allting är väldigt enkel.

Vår inredning skapar en så kallad ”ikke stressig livsstil” eller oroligheter.

Service Quality

Försöker ni se om det finns skillnader mellan den förväntade och upplevda servicekvaliteten i er restaurang?

Jag har lagt märke till det och jag ser att där är skillnader. I början när vi öppnade restaurangen så översteg service kvaliteten eftersom de inte hade några förväntningar. Men det blir allt svårare att överstiga det med tanken på att förväntningarna blir högre för

varje gång. Och dessutom så tror jag att nivån på själva servicen kan bero på klockan, det vill säga vilken tid det är under dagen.

Anställda

Försöker ni hålla samma servicekvalitet oberoende på rusningstiderna?

Under lunchtid har kunderna inte så mycket tid på sig och då brukar vi ge en enklare service. Och under kvällarna så har kunderna mer tid på sig. Då blir ju service kvaliteten högre. Så vi har olika service kvalitet beroende på klockan. Flexibilitet bland de anställda är det viktigaste för vår service. Vi ser också till att bemötta både de nöjda och missnöjda kunderna. De anställda måste därför vara flexibla. De ska kunna hantera de olika tiderna under dagen där det ibland krävs mer eller mindre stress, men också hantera de olika kunderna. I service kvaliteten ingår då själva service orienteringen. Vad jag menar då är att vi ska få kunderna att synas och ge dem uppmärksamhet.

SMAK – Nina Christensson

Inledning

Skulle ni vilja berätta lite om restaurangens bakgrund och historia?

Restaurangen har funnits här sedan 15 år tillbaka, men jag själv har drivit den sedan 2001. Innan jag tog över restaurangen så jobbade jag i byrå, hotell och restaurang, men är i botten är jag utbildad till marknadsekonom. Jag har tidigare haft eget där jag drev kartering. Restaurangen gick ut på anbud på konsthallen och då jag vann detta anbud, tog jag över restaurangen. Smak är en lunch restaurang med kvälls verksamhet i den mån man vill, dvs. att man kan hyra in sig då man vill ha fester. Det handlar då om mycket läkemedelsföretag som hyr in sig och 50 års middagar. Men, det händer att restaurangen är öppen på onsdag kvällar och kvällar då det händer aktiviteter med huset. I övriga tider är restaurangen öppen på lunch tid och på beställningar. Vidare har Smak också brunch under helgerna.

Hur marknadsför ni er restaurang?

Vi marknadsför oss inte, vi har inte behov av det med tanken på att vi har fått en hel del publicitet och folk pratar ju en hel del om oss.

WOM

Försöker ni påverka människor att prata om er restaurang och i sådana fall hur?

Helt klart, det gör jag. Det är det viktigaste för ett företag. Det gäller att göra bra saker, för gör man bra saker så får man mycket publicitet. Vi har bland annat varit med i Bong och olika artiklar. Får man bra publicitet så får man människor att prata om dig, och om det är du som har skapat snacket så har du kontroll över vad de pratar om. Dessutom så skapar du kontakter och du får journalister att prata om dig och får du ju publicitet. Jag har bott i Malmö hela mitt liv och har en bredd kontaktnät, allt från rock and roll till de här fina damerna i päls. Mitt nätverk är väldigt stor och jag jobbar mycket på det sättet att jag lyssnar, tar in och förändrar utifrån synpunkter och vad folk säger till mig. Jag frågar ofta om vad människor tycker om och inte tycker om, vad jag kan göra bättre osv. på det sättet försöker jag också att påverka dem att prata om restaurangen. Det gör att jag på någorlunda sätt har koll på läget.

Network/people

1. Vad har ni för typ av kunder i restaurangen?

Det är mycket brett, vi har konsthallens besökare som skjuter på bakifrån från kultursidan. Jag jobbar en hel del med business gubbarna "slipsarna" och de fina damerna som jag gullar med en hel del. Det är då mycket kultur och "slipsarna" som kan inbringa pengar på kvällarna. Sedan är vi väldigt barnvänliga med tanken på att man kan ha barnvagnar här och jag försöker gulla med barnen och med mammorna.

Happy Customers

Vilka är era stamkunder?

Våra stamkunder är mellan 35-70 år. Men våra största stamkunder är de som kommer varje dag och när de inte kommer så brukar de ringa och berätta att de inte kommer.

Försöker ni påverka dem att prata om er?

Självklart gör vi det. Vi vet till exempel vad mer än 50% av stamkunderna heter. Detta får dem att känna sig speciella, det är vad alla människor önskar sig. Som sagt, det gäller att lyssna, prata och visa uppmärksamhet till dem.

Har ni märkt om era stamgäster kommer med nya gäster till restaurangen?

Vi märker när våra kunder kommer med nya gäster. Men våra kunder bruka dessutom påpeka att de kommer med nya kunder. Vi brukar dessutom få höra av nya kunder att de blivit rekommenderade av stammisarna.

Online Talkers

Har ni någon hemsida?

www.smak.se är vår hemsida som vi håller på och ändrar om för tillfället.

Följer ni det som skrivs om er på Internet?

Vi har ingen räknare som visar hur många som har varit inne och besökt oss, men Smak är med i gastrogatet, lunch koncept guide, en allmän hemsida där folk kan gå in och titta på luncher. Där ligger vi nästan alltid i topp med antal sök och medlemmar som vill ha våra menyer. Men mer en det följer jag inte med på vad som skrivs i Internet sidor om Smak. Vi har inga bloggar i vår hemsida och det är bara de allmänna bloggarna där jag har chans till att läsa och se vad människor tycker, men jag är anti sådana saker. Det blir mycket riktat och det räcker med att en annan restaurang vill smutsa ner din restaurang så kan de bara skriva till eniro och andra restauranger, fy fan vad maten var äcklig! Man kan inte veta vem som skriver. Bloggar mm är känsligt, därför har jag inte kontakt eller skriver inte tillbaka till människor som skriver om restaurangen i Internetsidor.

Eager Employees

Försöker ni motivera anställda att prata om restaurangen för vänner och familj?

Vi är 10 anställda där bara 3 av dem arbetar som mig genom att påverka vänner, kunder och familjer till att prata om restaurangen och få dem att komma hit. Men, jag själv försöker inte påverka de anställda till att prata om restaurangen på något sätt.

Fans and Hobbyists

Brukar ni göra någonting som riktar sig till människor med intresse för mat, vin etc?

Nej, det gör jag inte. Vi har inte tid att engagera oss så mycket för dessa människor, men däremot som jag tidigare nämnde så försöker vi skapa kontakt och anpassa oss för mammor med barn. Dom riktar vi oss till och försöker vara så barnvänliga så möjligt och då brukar vi som jag tidigare nämnde att skapa plats för barnvagnar.

Professionals

Har ni fått besök av journalister eller experter inom restaurang branschen som vill skriva/prata restaurang?

Vi har fått och brukar få en hel del besök från journalister som vill skriva om oss. Det är en av anledningarna till varför vi får gratis publicitet. Men det gäller ju att göra bra saker för att få dem att skriva om restaurangen. Som sagt, gör man bra saker så lockar man dem till att komma. Det gäller att komma på nya saker och utveckla restaurangen hela tiden för att skapa intressanta saker som får dem att vilja skriva om just din restaurang.

Message

Använder ni er av något unikt som skapar intresse för just er restaurang?

Jag brukar säga att vår mat är mat för en medveten publik och vi lurar aldrig gästerna. Vi försöker jobba närproducerar, men vi skriver ingenting på näsan. Det går inte att kalla allting för ekologiskt, för det är nästan tekniskt omöjligt. Men då folk dricker kafé och frågar var det kommer ifrån så säger vi att det är kravodlat och ekologiskt, men jag skriver inte ut det överallt eftersom det handlar helt enkelt om förtroende.

Anticipation/Secret

Har ni gjort något överraskande för kunder eller andra människor?

Våra överraskningar är att ge dem rabatt utan att berätta det och ge dem desserter utan att berätta det genom att säga på skoj ”men det är för att du är snygg idag”. Vi brukar också bjuda de kunder som kommer in med nya kunder på en chokladbit som tack för att de gett oss nya kunder. Kunderna blir då ofta överraskade med den belöning de får från oss.

Hero

Har ni använt er av en speciell person (kändis, expert, fantasi figur) som kan förstärka restaurangens koncept, image?

Vi använder oss inte av sådant. Men jag kan exempelvis säga att några av Malmös bäst kockar jobbar här. Men inte mer än det. Eftersom det är fullt upp i restaurangerna väljer vi att inte lägga ner mycket tid på att använda oss av kända personer. Dessutom så har vi duktiga killar så vi känner inte behov av sådant. Dessutom vad säger att någon är bättre än det andra? Är det kokar som har varit med i tidningar och det pratas om dem eller är det kokar som kan sitt jobb men skrivs inte mycket i tidningar?

Behind the Scenes

Gör ni saker som engagerar kunden i verksamhet

- *kunden blir delaktig*

En gång om året har vi fest i restaurangen där vi bjuder stammisar, vänner och lokala kändisar. Vi brukar då bjuda på ostron, champagne, hemlagad och grillad korv. Vi gör det mest för att ge något tillbaka till dessa människor, men också för att marknadsföra och få kunder att prata mer om oss.

Service

Food

Vad särskiljer er matsedel från andras?

Att vi byter meny varje dag och att vi alltid har vegetarisk mat och varm sopa. Vår nish är dessutom att vi har ett bra salladsbord som vi är mycket generösa med. Dessa saker lockar människor och får människor att prata om vår meny eftersom menyn förblir aldrig det samma.

Interior

Vad särskiljer er inredning från andras miljöer och är det något som skulle kunna få folk att prata om det?

Vi har en stram inredning som inger förtroende när folk ska prata med någon. Det är många som intervjuar här, mycket kultur och business möten brukar göras här. Det är då enkelt hänt att det sprids att vi har bra miljö där intervjuer kan göras.

Service quality

Vad särskiljer er service från andras service?

vi är bäst!

Försöker ni se om det finns skillnader mellan den förväntade och upplevda servicekvaliteten i er restaurang?

Med tanken på att du kommer hit och får ibland stå i kö som skolan, dessutom får vänta i kön ca i en kvart kan detta uppfattas som trist. Har du inte varit här innan så bli du oftast besviken, du är liksom halvt sur när du kommer fram till kassan. Då gäller det för den som står där att veta att han har stått i kö 15min och är väldigt sur så nu måste den som står där vara extra trevlig mot honom. Den som tar hand om denna kund får då vara extra engagerad i kunden genom att följa upp det till att kunden dricker kafé och man frågar om allt är okej. När sådana saker uppstår då får man vara extra engagerad i dessa kunder än stammisarna.

Employees

Vilka krav ställer ni på de anställda?

De anställda ska vara personliga, mänskliga, trevliga

Försöker ni hålla samma servicekvalitet oberoende på rusningstiderna?

Vi försöker hålla samma standar, men vi måste ha helikoptersyn, de e snabbhet som gäller. Det gäller att inte missa något och någon. Med en lång syn så är man bered på allt och då är det lättare för de anställda att ge samma service kvalitet. Vi försöker lära upp de anställda som saknar detta.

Johan p – Niklas

Inledning

Skulle ni vilja berätta lite om restaurangens bakgrund och historia?

Johan P byggdes 1981 och vi köpte upp den 1981. Det är fisk och skaldjur rakt upp och ner. Men vi har även en delikates butik vid sidan om. De första ägarna hade en fabrik restaurang vid den spanska kusten som hete Jean Peres och när de öppnade en restaurang i Sverige med det konceptet Jean Peres, fisk och skaldjur, men eftersom Jean Peres inte funkar på svenska så fick det istället bli Johan P, Johan Persson. Vi har en kundgrupp som börjar från 30 år och det är bara mat, vi har ingen bar i vår restaurang.

Hur marknadsför ni er restaurang?

Det är ett varumärke som vi har köpt och vi försöker bygga vidare på den hela tiden. Sedan marknadsför vi oss ofta via hemsidan och annonser i Sydsvenskan. Vi marknadsför oss mycket på det sättet att vi pratar med våra kunder och bygger upp våra kontakter. Vi har tex. kundregister där vi ger ut information om vad som händer på Johan P. just nu. Vi skickar till exempel ut besked om att vi har hummer hemma eftersom det är hummersäsong. Då det är jul och nyår så skickas email ut om vad som händer under de säsongerna. Vi skickar ut informationen med pdf fil via email.

WOM

Försöker ni påverka människor att prata om er restaurang och i sådana fall hur?

Det är då människorna är här som det är störst chans att påverka dem, genom att man ge dem bra mat och bra service. På det sättet så sprider det ringar på vattnet. Levererar man en bra produkt det vill säga bra mat och service så kommer kunderna komma ihåg detta och berätta detta vidare till andra människor. Vi försöker påverka kunder att prata om oss medvetet genom att laga bra mat och ge bra service. Vi tror att detta är det viktigaste. Vidare så handlar det om att vi är glada, positiva och trevliga, detta får dem att komma ihåg Johan P och därmed prata om det. Sedan försöker vi påverka genom att ge dem flyers och visitkort från restaurangen. Vi försöker hela tiden lämna spår efter oss genom sådana saker.

Network/People

Vad har ni för typ av kunder i restaurangen?

Vi har en äldre kundkrets, 30 plus. Under dagtid så är det en hel del jurister, advokater, reklamare och arkitekter som lunchar. Medan under kvällarna är det mycket mer jobba med hotellen där utländska gäster är våra gäster. Men också affärsmänniskor och representationsmiddagar förekommer under kvällen.

Happy Customers

Vilka är era stamkunder?

Våra stamkunder är människor som jobbar runt omkring och människor som tycker om havsdjur och fisk.

Försöker ni påverka dem att prata om er?

Vi påverkar dem genom att själva prata med dem. Starta en bra dialog med dem, ge dem bra service, visa dem uppmärksamhet osv. Om vi engagerar oss, så engagerar sig stamkunderna, då engagerar dom sig på det sättet att de tar med sig nya vänner till vår Johan P som i sin tur drar med sig nya .

Online Talkers

Har ni en hemsida?

www.johanp.nu

Följer ni det som skrivs om er på Internet?

Vi brukar läsa om vad som skrivs, men vi brukar inte svara. Vi läser så vi vet vad människor tycker och tänker. Jag anser att forum är till för att människor skal skriva sina kommentarer, därför ger vi inte respons till dem. Men i det verkliga livet så brukar vi ge respons till kunderna. Däremot så uppdaterar vi hemsidan då något nytt händer i restaurangen för att folk ska bli uppdaterade om det. Vi skickar också ut flyers som är tryckta och elektroniska.

Eager Employees

Försöker ni motivera anställda att berätta om restaurangen för vänner och familj?

Vi har 9 heltidsanställda och sedan har vi också extra personal. Vi har personal möten där varje anställd måste komma till. Och där diskuterar vi varje gång om att få människor att prata om restaurangen, vi försöker skapa detta genom de anställdas försäljning på gästen. Eftersom det är ett familjeföretag så är alla en viktig pusselbit i det hela och därför anser jag att våra anställda också skal vara förmedlare av restaurangen. Det gör vi genom att ha bra personalmöten där vi påverkar de anställda att prata om oss bland kunderna, familj och deras vänner.

Fans and hobbyists

Brukar ni göra någonting som riktar sig till människor med intresse för mat, vin etc?

Vi brukar göra matlagningsskurser för företag men vi har även kontakt med människor där vi brukar ha vin och champagne provningar. Detta medför att människor pratar om oss. Men vi delar även ut menyer till Hotel som rekommenderar vår restaurang till en hel del turister till oss.

Professionals

Har ni fått besök av journalister eller experter inom restaurang branschen som vill skriva/prata om restaurang?

Vad vi vet så har vi inte haft någon journalist eller expert inom restaurang branschen som har velat skriva eller prata om restaurangen. Och vi lägger inte ner tid på för att locka dem till vår restaurang.

Message

Använder ni er av något unikt som skapar intresse för just er restaurang?

Det unika med vår restaurang är att vi serverar färsk fisk och skaldjur, vi serverar aldrig frysta råvaror. En annan sak som är unikt är atmosfären i restaurangen. Det är en saluhall miljö, med vit och svarta kakel, vita dukar och tavlor. Strikt men ändå stilrent.

Anticipation/Secret

Har ni gjort något överraskande för kunder eller andra människor?

På kvällarna får de ett tilltugg innan maten, det är en form av överraskning. Detta tilltugg får alla gäster. En annan rolig sak som kunderna blir överraskade med är att vi har visitkort i toaletten. Det har visat sig att många fler gäster tar våra visitkort efter att ha placerat dem i toaletten än då de placerade i matsalen.

Hero

Har ni använt er av en speciell person (kändis, expert, fantasi figur) som kan förstärka restaurangens image?

Det förekommer en hel del att vi får kända ansikten på besök i restaurangen, men det är inget som vi använder oss av för att förstärka Johan P's image.

Behind the Scenes

1. Gör ni saker som engagerar kunden i verksamhet

- *kunden blir delaktig*

Det brukar hända då det är kräftsäsong att vi visar hur man äter kräftor, speciellt bland turisterna. Vi brukar även ge matlagningstips om hur man ska få bästa. Vi har till exempel gjort vykort med vår hummer soppa

Service

Interior

Vad särskiljer er matsedel från andras?

Endast fisk och skaldjur finns med i vår meny. Många andra restauranger brukar ha en mix av allt. Men vi håller oss bara till havets läckerheter och alla råvaror är färska.

Food

Vad särskiljer er inredning från andras miljöer?

Jag ser vår inredning som en del av påverkan till att folk kommer hit med anledning till att vi håller oss till en saluhall miljö. Som jag nämnde innan at vi har en inredning med vita och svarta kakel.

Service quality

Vad särskiljer er service från andras service?

Vi har en klassisk och korrekt service som inte skiljer sig från konkurrenterna, men trots detta så pratar kunder mycket om oss genom att nämna en den service som vi ger dem.

Jag själv anser att service upplevelsen är väldigt personlig eftersom visa vill vara ensamma och inte få mycket uppmärksamhet, medan andra är mer pratglada. Därför är det viktigt att läsa kunden för att veta på vilket sätt servicen skal ges till dem för att få dem att sprida detta vidare till sina vänner.

Försöker ni se om det finns skillnader mellan den förväntade och upplevda servicekvaliteten i er restaurang?

Vi försöker inte se men vi märker det ofta vi då vi talar med gästerna i restaurangen eller då de skickar in email. Därmed ser vi ett tillfälle med att ge respons och påverka kunderna till att föra vidare information om oss. Att kunderna är mer medvetna om mat, dryck och service gör att vi hela tiden måste kämpa med att öka service kvaliteten i restaurangen. Kunderna blir mer och mer kunniga i allt och därför måste vi bli ännu duktigare för att möta kundernas förväntningar.

Employees

Försöker ni hålla samma servicekvalitet oberoende på rusningstiderna?

Servicekvaliteten är inte lika bra under lunch som under kvällen. Detta beror på att under lunchen så är det minde tid och under middagarna så har man mer tid att prata med gästerna om mat och vin. Vi brukar uppmärksamma att kunderna är i restaurangen under kvällstid då folk lägger mer tid till att äta men också för att vi har mer tid till våra kunder.

EXTRA

Har ni aldrig tänkt på att skapa en varelse Johan P?

Jo vi har diskuterat om att göra det, men vi har aldrig gjort det. Däremot har vi tänkt skapa en fiktiv människa som ska tala med kunder.

Salt och Brygga- Björn Stenbeck

Inledning

Skulle ni vilja berätta lite om restaurangens bakgrund och historia?

Restaurangen öppnade 17maj 2001 och jag tog kontakt med detta när jag såg att det skulle bli en ekologisk bomässa. Jag hade en annan restaurang tidigare och har alltid jobbat med ekologiska råvaror. Jag var den första som visade intresse här nere, för att jag har nämligen bott i California och tänkte varför har man inte något i Malmö som finns i California. När det skulle byggas vid havet var jag den första som visade intresse för detta. Jag fick på så sätt se hur tomterna skulle delas ut och se ut. Jag tänkte då västerläge, är perfekt läge och där är ett stort hus på höger sida som tar emot norda vinden. Därmed fick jag vara med och bygga restaurangen. Normalt när man bygger en restaurang, så är det ju en gammal lokal som brukar byggas om och då blir den som den blir. Men denna lokal fick jag vara med att planera tillsammans med bygg herrarna och arkitekterna. Den som ritade var Mosen Dahlbeck, duktiga arkitekter som också har ritat Wasa museet i Stockholm. Helt enkelt kända arkitekter. Alla var med på mina tokiga idéer om att det skulle vara ekologiskt, material som inte är allergiframkallande, allting skulle bli återvinnbart och elkablarna skulle vara fria från pbc. Allt skulle byggas i ett plan så att det inte blir några trappor som man springer upp och ner från, och får bära massa tunga saker ner från trapporna. Det skulle vara välplanerat från början. Jag skulle inte bara ha ekologiska potatisar utan jag skulle ha så ekologiskt som det bara går att ha och då inkluderar det att ha en bra arbetsmiljö. Vilde ha högt i taket såg att det blir bra volym och luft härinne. Jag har även ljudabsorberande matta här inne så det blir bra arbetsmiljö. Bra musik och bra högtalare är viktigt. Borden är gjorda av svensk alm, tillverkad i ett litet snickeri i Malmö. Stolarna tillverkades i gamla Småland och skinnet är garvat med bark istället för olika gifter. Hela min tanke med denna restaurang är att det skal åldras med behag precis som oss som jobbar här. Det ska vara samma inredning som skal hålla länge. Exempelvis lamporna är också tidlösa och kommer att hålla länge.

EXTRA

Är dina gäster medvetna om konceptet som ni kör i er restaurang?

Vi köper inte tiger räcker eller utrotningshotade fisk. Vi har även ekologisk bomull på våra små handdukar som varje gäst får att torka sina händer med i toaletten. De tvättas

här och all rengöringsmedel är svanenmärkt. Även restaurangen är svanenmärkt, det betyder alltså att vi försöker sänka elförbrukningen hela tiden. Vi byter ut alla lampor mot energisnåla och helt nya spotlight kommer att sättas upp om några veckor som drar tiondel av den energi som vi har nu.

WOM

Försöker ni påverka människor att prata om er restaurang och i sådana fall hur?

Jag påverkar dem och uppmuntra dem att prata om restaurangen genom att prata med gästerna. Om jag kan lära dem någonting och ge dem något så känner gästerna att det är mervärde att gå på Salt&Brygga. Jag bevisat mina gäster att det finns bra ekologiska vin och öl. Då känner gästerna att de lär sig något av att komma hit och man får ut någonting av att vara här. Jag har haft gäster som har sagt att de har börjat köpa in ekologiska ägg nu och de har pratat om restaurangen bland vänner som tycker det låter intressant att komma hit för att äta en dag. Jag ville inte ha en vanlig restaurang, jag ville visa att man kan göra en ekologisk restaurang som är intressant, fin och att det finns glädje i restaurangen. Men däremot så skyltar jag inte med att vi är ekologiska eftersom människor kan uppfatta det som präktigt och folk kan bli irriterade om man ska tala om att man är ekologisk. Vi väljer istället att överraska dem med det då de kommer in i restaurangen. Men, att komma till oss är ett medvetet val, man ramlar inte in här bara så. Man har ju bestämt sig att göra något och oftast har man fått tips om detta från deras vänner. Vad jag mer brukar göra för att påverka gästerna att prata om restaurangen är att vi varje dag pratar om Salt&Brygga. Gästerna brukar fråga mig till exempel att berätta om restaurangen. Många restauranger utnyttjar folk till att tala om dem genom att sälja cigaretter eller nya öl märken. Jag själv känner då att jag lika bra kan utnyttja det genom att tala om något positivt. Vi har haft ekologisk och rättvis kaffe redan från första dagen. När jag började med det så fanns det inte rättvismärkt espresso kaffe och 10 olika te sort mm. Utan det tog de istället fram speciellt till mig. Men nu har många börjat använda det mer och mer. Folk pratar mycket om oss på grund av vår restaurang koncept och om maten. Det har skrivits enormt mycket om oss i olika tidningar, vi är fruktansvärt omskrivna och omtalade. Vidare så har vi vunnit priset för årets krog ide, det är första slowfort restaurangen i Sverige, första svanenmärkta restaurangen i Skåne,

Gastronomiska Akademin i Skåne har delat ut en del priser till mig. Vara först med något nytt skapar bra publicitet och det får folk att prata om restaurangen. Om man hamnar på andra plats så blir man så omskriven, därför är gället det att komma först till mål. Det var därför jag fick årets krog ide eftersom jag då var först ut med nya idéer. Jag var också den första som gjorde en rökfri restaurang och det fick folk att skratta åt mig, men det gick hur bra som helst. Jag köper mycket från bönderna runtomkring, morötter och kycklingar mm så jag vet var det kommer ifrån och skapar en hel del kontakter med mina leverantörer också.

Network/people

Vad har ni för typ av kunder i restaurangen?

Vi har en blandad kundgrupp, jag vill inte att det skal vara segregerad med unga gamla eller trendiga. Jag vill ha en mix. Majoriteten av våra gäster är stamkunder, och de brukar rekommendera oss till sina nya vänner och de brukar även ta med sig nya gäster till oss. Men under lunchtid så har vi mer stammisar. Kvällarna är mer företag som kommer eller om man ska ut och fira någonting. Vi har väldigt många turister som besöker oss med tanken på att många besöker B01. Vi är även med i väldigt många internationella guider som rekommenderar oss.

Happy Customers

Försöker ni påverka era stamkunder till att prata om er?

Men jag kan punktera att vi har lyckats göra våra stamgäster stolta över Salt&Brygga som gör att de pratar en hel del om oss. Många är också stolta över att ha upptäckt oss först. Jag var med i radio igår på grund av att Salt&Brygga är svanenmärkt och då var det flera gäster som sa ”ja men du var på radio” och då får man ju en viss status bland sina kunder som får dem att bli stolta över restaurangen.

Online Talkers

Har ni en hemsida?

Ja, det har vi www.saltobrygga.se

Följer ni det som skrivs om er på Internet?

Ja, jag brukar följa om det som skrivs om oss. Här om dagen läste jag om en gäst som hade suttit i restaurangen föra veckan med sina små barn och då hade de fotograferat maten och skrivit att det var trevligt att äta här.

Brukar ni svara på det som skrivs på Internet om er?

Vi läser om vad som skrivs, men vi brukar inte kommentera eller svara på människor som skriver på Internet. Vad vi istället gör via Internet är att uppdatera hemsidan hela tiden där vi varje vecka lägger ut matsedeln. Vi lägger även ut ansökan när vi söker anställda och då vi får diplom eller priser.

Eager Employees

Försöker ni motivera de anställda att prata om restaurangen för vänner och familj?

Både jag försöker påverka de anställda, men de anställda försöker också prata om restaurangen så mycket så möjligt. Men som sagt, Salt&Brygga är väldigt förknippat med mig.

Vad försöker ni göra för att smita era anställda med engagemang och passion för att på så sätt stimulera dem att prata om restaurangen?

Med ekologiska saker blir det mer arbetskrävande, men så länge man lär sig någonting på jobb så är det ju roligt. När något är roligt så pratar man automatisk om det. Därför skapar jag en så roligt arbetsmiljö som möjligt.

Fans and hobbyists

Brukar ni göra någonting som riktar sig till människor med intresse för mat, vin etc?

Ja, vi har många skolor som kommer på studiebesök och jag själv personligen har varit ute på skolor och undervisar kökspersonal hur de ska laga ekologisk och hålla budgeten. Jag försöker lära dem att använda rotfrukter istället för isbergssallad mm. Många kommer ju till Salt&Brygga på grund av att de är intresserade av ett ekologiskt koncept. Det får ju

folk att prata om oss. Vi har även kunder som kommer hit och då påverkar jag dem att köpa mer ekologiska produkter. Sverige är ju sämst med det ekologiska, det är bara 3% av Sverige är ekologisk. Då ska man veta att den största delen av de här 3% är offentligsektor så som sjukhus och skolor. I Sverige är man väldigt dålig på att köpa ekologiska produkter. I Irma i Danmark är 1/3 av all deras försäljning ekologisk. Vi lagar ju mat idag som vi gjorde för 500 år sedan, det finns mycket att utveckla i restaurangbranschen, men många är rädda för att utveckla detta. Detta med ekologisk tror många är hokus pokus och många är rädda för det.

Professionals

Har ni fått besök av journalister eller experter inom restaurangbranschen som vill skriva/prata om restaurang?

Journalisterna kommer till en eftersom de vill skriva och berätta något nytt, inte allmogliga saker. Jag har varit först med allting som jag nämnde innan och detta lockar dem att komma hit för att få ut information som är intressant för människor. Livet är en utmaning och därför försöker jag utveckla nya saker hela tiden. Har man inga utmaningar så är det inte roligt längre. Den senaste utmaningen som jag har är att sänka elförbrukningen.

Försöker ni dra in experter och/ eller journalister till er restaurang?

Vi själva gör inte det, men många experter och journalister väljer själva att komma till oss.

Message

Använder ni er av något unikt som skapar intresse för just er restaurang?

Det är ju det ekologiska konceptet som är vårt största budskap. Men det är ingen jag vill tvinga på folk. Det finns t.ex. många ”snobbmän” som skrattar och säger men vi är inte

ekologiska . Men efter hand så smälter de in i det och märker att det inte var så farligt som de trodde. Vi har ekologisk whisky som det brukas skrattas om, men all whisky före 1950 var ju ekologisk. Så konstigare än så är det egentligen inte. Så vårt budskap ”ekologisk” tilltalar inte alla, men det pratas ändå om det då de går ut från restaurangen eftersom det är också en upplevelse. Många kommer också för vår fina utsikt som vi har här.

Anticipation/ Secret

Har ni gjort något överraskande för era kunder eller andra människor?

Det som brukar överraska kunden är att det står på matsedeln var det kommer ifrån och detta väcker intresse bland gästerna. På det sättet kan man starta en konversation med dem.

Gästerna blir även väldigt nyfikna på vår matsedel. Vi jobbar mycket med böner, rotfrukter och linser vilket är väldigt överraskande för gästerna. Jag har ett bra exempel, vi serverade fisk en gång med ugn bakad rödbeter. Dessa människor var väldigt överraskade över detta. De hade aldrig ätit rödbeter förutom de rödbeter som finns på burk. Gästerna frågade först vad är detta? Men efter att ätit det, sa de ”vi hade kunnat hoppa över fisken för dessa rödbeter var så goda”. Själva maten är överraskande här. Vi har svarta linser, som också är väldigt överraskande för kunden. Sedan så följer vi säsongen i restaurangen, hur roligt är det egentligen att äta sparris under julafton? Utan, sparris serverar vi under midsommar då det finns skånska sparris. Blåa morötter, vita morötter servera vi också, randiga rödbeter och vita rödbeter är också överraskande för kunden, trots att morötterna var blåa från början och kommer från Afghanistan. Det som mest chockar kunden är vit rödbetsoppa, det doftar rödbeta, smakar rödbeta men den är vit. Kunder brukar reagera med att säga ”vad är detta?” Dessa saker får kunderna att prata en hel del om oss. Någon gång händer det att vi bjuder stamgäster på kaffe vilket uppskattas.

Hero

Har ni använt er av en speciell person (kändis, expert, fantasi figur) som kan förstärka restaurangens koncept, image?

Vi använder oss inte av kända personer för att förstärka restaurangens koncept. Vad jag däremot kan påpeka är att många människor skapar en förbindelse och association av restaurangen och mig.

Behind the Scenes

Har ni gjort någonting som får kunden att bli delaktig i restaurangen och på så sätt få dem att prata om restaurangen?

Som jag nämnde innan så försöker vi få människor att bli delaktiga genom att få skolor på studiebesök, men sedan så pratar jag och berättar till kunden hur de kan laga ekologiska maträtter. Det gör att de blir delaktig i restaurangen eftersom de visar ett intresse för ekologiska maträtter och jag visar intresse genom att ge råd på hur det kan lagas på bästa sättet.

Service

Food

Vad särskiljer er matsedel från andras?

Vi har speciell mat som gör att man mår bra när man ätit här, vi har till exempel lite fett och grädde i maten. Istället använder vi oss mycket av linser, bönor och rotfrukter så man känner att kroppen mår bra av att äta här. Vi har hur många gäster som helst som har gått på läkarundersökning i företagen som det då har visat sig ha fått lägre blodfetter sedan de började äta här. Vi är väldigt billig med tanken på den kvalitet och den goda maten som serveras. Men å andra sidan så köper vi inte det dyraste produkterna. Jag köper en hel del från bönderna för då vet jag varifrån varorna kommer. Men jag väljer också att köpa från bönderna eftersom de får dåligt betalt. På det sättet så hjälper jag dem. Man kan skapa en helt annan dialog med kunderna genom att veta var produkterna kommer ifrån. Många har fördomar om ekologisk mat, de tror att det är lingongryta, jord skor och lite halv flummigt. Men då de kommer in här blir de överraskade av allting och att det ligger en medvetenhet i det hela. Detta är ett sätt att ta bort fördomar om ekologisk mat. Jag hade exempelvis en tysk tv team som gjorde program om Salt&Brygga. Då hela gänget kom in i restaurangen så sa de ” men detta ser inte ut som en ekologisk restaurang, men oj varför

sa vi det? Hur ska en ekologisk restaurang egentligen se ut?” Många som väljer att äta här är ju utbildade människor och människor som vill må bra.

Interior

Vad särskiljer er inredning från andras miljöer?

Som jag tidigare nämnde så har vi gjort en hel del med inredningen, det är ekologiskt. Inredningen är också mycket viktig, eftersom man kan sitta här i tre timmar. Äter man i en timme så innebär det att de andra två timmarna sitter man och tittar runt. Det ska vara rent, snyggt att titta på, bra och skön musik.

Service quality

Vad särskiljer er service från andras service?

Vi försöker hålla en normal standard service trots att servicen är viktig. Servicen är ju viktigare än maten. Direkt när gästen kommer är servicen den viktigaste upplevelsen, att de blir sedda när de kommer. U never got the second chance to make the first impression.

Försöker ni se om det finns skillnader mellan den förväntade och upplevda servicekvaliteten i er restaurang?

Ja, det brukar vi. Jag kan säga som så att en del tror att det är finare än vad det egentligen är. Restaurangen är vacker i sig och då tror många att det är en guld krog, här spelar utsikten också en roll. Men jag vill inte ha en guld krog eller Stjärne Gunnes värld. Jag vill ha en naturlig krog. Det händer då att servicen förväntas vara bättre med tanken på att den i början uppfattas som guld krog.

Employees

Vilka krav ställer ni på anställda?

All personal som är här är rökfri och jag försöker få all personal att cykla till jobbet eller ta allmänna kommunikationer. Jag vill att mina anställda ska vara medveten om

konceptet och ingå i den, därför så ställer jag visa krav till den som söker ett jobb här. Vi källsorterar allting. Det gäller helt enkelt att ha en helhets tänkande, från inredningen till de anställda.

Försöker ni hålla samma servicekvalitet oberoende på rusningstiderna?

Det är svårt eftersom under lunchen ska allt gå fort, medan under kvällen har man mer tid till varje kund. Men de som kommer hit har ju mer tid än på andra ställen eftersom här kommer man för att äta och njuta. I andra restauranger kommer man för att få något snabbt i sig, det skal gå fort. Men här jobbar vi inte på det sättet. Har man den här helhetstänkande om att djuren har haft det bra, grönsakerna har vuxit långsamt gör ju att miljön också blir behaglig. På samma sätt är det med servicen. Hela atmosfären är ju så inbjudande och lugn.

EXTRA

Vad tror du människor pratar om er restaurang emellan varandra?

Jag har gäster som äter både lunch och middag under samma dag, och dessa gäster är ju stolta över Salt&Brygga. Jag menar, vi har fått vänner genom detta, gästvänner. De pratar mycket om vi har blivit svanenmärkta, är ekologiska med mera. Det handlar om att utveckla något nytt hela tiden och inte fastna.

Då du började med detta koncept, var du medveten om att det skulle skapa väldigt mycket publicitet?

Dels att jag skulle öppna här nere var ju något väldigt nytt. Jag startade konsthallens restaurang en gång och där fanns ingenting. Den byggde jag då upp under 14år. Från början har jag jobbat i barnfamiljterapi så detta med restaurang är bara självlärd sak.

Pim's restaurang - Pim Sahlgren

Inledning

Skulle ni vilja berätta lite om restaurangens bakgrund och historia?

Jag har nyligen köpt upp den. Den har ett bra läge och ligger på ett av det mest omtalade stället i Europa. Det är mycket arkitektur runt omkring och man kan känna att här är potential. Det är ett område i Malmö som utvecklas och byggs ut. På sistone så har det talas mer och mer om den som den nya stadsdelen i Malmö. Innan var det dött under vintern, men nu kan man se att det har börjat hända saker. Vad vi försöker göra nu är att loka till oss nya och mer kunder på ett enkelt sätt och ha ett rätt begripligt koncept som är lättillgänglig.

Lokalen är indelad i två delar som är skilda från varandra. I den ena delen finns delikates där folk kan sitta i slitna jeans och T-shirt. Känna att man kan komma efter ett arbete och ta en öl. Medan den andra är det lunch och middagar som serveras med dukade bord. Vi vill även kunna ge folk tillfälle att hyra in sig för att kunna fira något extra. Under sommaren så kommer vi att utnyttja stans bästa läge med vår uteservering som har en fantastisk vy. Man ska kunna känna att det alltid finns tillfälle att komma hit. Våra priser är lagom, en varmrätt kommer att ligga runt 160 kronor. Medan de enklare i den andra delen där delikatesser kommer serveras kommer att ligga under 100 lappen. Folk ska kunna ta en öl och en macka för under 100lappen.

Hur tänker ni marknadsföra er restaurang med tanken på att ni nyligen har tagit över restaurangen?

Vi får kolla mycket på vem som kommer hit. Vi har mycket turister som kommer hit, då försöker vi nå dem genom att marknadsföra oss på ett speciellt sätt under vår och sommar. Vi tror att vi kommer dela ut menyer till hotellen för att loka till oss turister. Det är då lätt hänt att hotellen rekommenderar oss och pratar om restaurangen bland turisterna som stannar på deras Hotel. Det är oftast under dagtid som turister kommer på besök med tanken på att det blir väldigt mörkt under kvällen. Många kommer ju hit för arkitekturen, titta sig runt byggnaderna och vyn. Inför vintern är det väldigt viktigt att ta kontakt med lokala boende som bor runt omkring. Speciellt under kvällarna, dels för att det är långt och för att det är kallt och mörkt.

WOM

Försöker ni påverka människor att prata om er restaurang och i sådana fall hur?

Det är en självklar sak att jag gör det. Vi försöka göra det genom att vara personliga och genom den goda servicen som vi ger till kunden. Men eftersom jag precis har tagit över det så har jag rätt koll på servicen och kunderna. Själva konceptet i sig är också viktig, som jag nämnde innan, ett rätt begripligt koncept som är lättillgänglig är viktigt. Vi har svensk husmanskost och detta får ju en hel del turister att komma hit för att smaka på något nytt. Vad jag mer brukar göra är att dela ut vår meny till olika företag. Många företag skickar deras menyer via mail och då är det liten risk att de läser just din meny. Därför brukar jag själv gå runt och dela ut det. Det blir mer personligt eftersom jag kommer dit med dem och att de får det i handen. Det är ju inte många som kommer med menyerna själva. Man får en helt annan kontakt och uppmärksamhet genom att göra det på detta sätt. Risken blir ju större att de kommer just till vår restaurang eftersom de läser vår meny som de har i handen än i mailen där det kommer flera mail från olika restauranger. Dessutom så är detta ett sätt att få dem att prata om restaurangen.

Network/People

Vad har ni för typ av kunder i restaurangen?

Vi har en kundgrupp som börjar från 25 plus. En hel del av våra kunder är turister, människor från området och företagare. Vi har också människor som vill komma bort lite från inre staden, de som söker en restaurang med fin vy och lugnt atmosfär. Vidare så har vi kunder som kommer från olika företags kretsar och människor som kommer på besök i området för att titta på arkitekturen mm.

Happy Customers

Vilka är era stamkunder?

Våra stamkunder är den lokala befolkningen runt omkring restaurangen och företagare.

Försöker ni påverka dem att prata om er?

Vi peppar dem till att prata om restaurangen genom att vara så personliga som möjligt. Men eftersom jag nyligen har tagit över den så gäller det att påverka alla kunder överhuvudtaget. I detta fall så är stammisar en del av det. Men ju mer folk som vi påverkar, desto mer prat blir det om oss. Vad jag däremot kan säga är att jag trots allt

försöker behandla alla lika, spelar ingen roll om det är stammis eller inte. Vi vill att alla ska behandlas på samma sätt, vare sig om de pratar om oss eller inte.

Har ni märkt om era stamgäster kommer med nya gäster till restaurangen?

Det är lätt att märka av när våra stamkunder kommer in med nya gäster och jag kan säga som så att stammisar är den bästa marknadsföringen. Antingen så kommer de hit med nya gäster eller så rekommenderar de oss vidare till andra människor.

Online Talkers

Har ni en hemsida?

Vi håller på att ändra om vår hemsida som kommer vara mer användbar för mig och kunderna.

Följer ni det som skrivs om er på Internet?

Ja det gör jag. Jag tror de flesta företag gör det. Jag själv brukar följa om vad som skrivs i Internet genom att läsa i olika bloggar och forum som folk brukar skriva i.

Brukar ni svara på det som skrivs på Internet om er?

Det gör jag, för mig är det en chans till att få kontakt med nya människor men också bättre kontakt med de personer som skriver om restaurangen i Internet. Vad jag nu kommer att göra är att vi skapar ett forum där människor och vi som arbetar i restaurangen har möjlighet till att kommunicera med varandra. Dessa människor som kommer att skriva på hemsidan kan ju kontakta oss och skriva kommentarer om restaurangen. Vi kommer också att informera dessa personer och påverka dem med olika saker om det som angår restaurangen. Det är för att få dem att prata om oss, skapa ett nätverk med oss osv. Men vi kommer även att skapa oss ett kundregister och på så sätt få ett bättre nätverk med våra kunder. Det är lättare att påverka människor när man vet vilka de är och har en stark kontakt med dem. Menyn kommer också att vara tillgänglig i vår hemsida.

Eager Employees

För tillfället så har jag inte många anställda, men de få anställda som jag har försöker jag motivera. Det bästa sättet är ju att skapa en rolig atmosfär och arbetsmiljö. Men det är ju trots allt viktigt att den anställda själv också trivs med sitt jobb, för trivs hon eller han med sitt jobb så pratar de automatisk själva om restaurangen.

Fans and hobbyists

Brukar ni göra någonting som riktar sig till människor med intresse för mat, vin etc?

Vi har kunder som är intresserade av olika maträtter. Vi lägga då ut några recept på hur en viss maträtt kan lagas i vår hemsida. Vi har också funderat på att lägga ut det i själva restaurangen. Ibland händer det att de direkt frågar oss om hur något tillagas. Då brukar vi direkt förklara det till dem.

Professionals

Har ni fått besök av journalister eller experter inom restaurang branschen som vill skriva/prata om restaurang?

Nej det har jag inte, men jag förmodar att vi snart kommer få det.

Försöker ni dra in experter och/ eller journalister till er restaurang?

Nej, det gör vi inte. De själva brukar ploppa in när det kommer till sådant, men inget som vi lägger ner tid på att dra till oss. Även om dessa skapar prat om ens restaurang så är det inget vi jobbar med. Dessa människor kommer själva när de tycker att någonting är intressant. De är hajar som simmar runt i restaurangerna och vet när de vill skriva eller prata om något.

Message

Använder ni er av något unikt som skapar intresse för just er restaurang?

Det som jag tycker är unikt är det personliga bemötandet. Den ständiga utvecklingen i restaurangen är ju också unik, vi blir bättre och bättre med tiden. Vi serverar fin middag med så bra produkter som möjligt.

Anticipation/secret

Har ni gjort något överraskande för kunder eller andra människor?

Överraskande för kunden är att man är kunnig med det man jobbar med. Vi har några viner som är ekologiska och det är överraskande för vissa kunder men även att vi är kunniga om det.

Kunder pratar gärna om något som de blir fascinerade av.

Hero

Har ni använt er av en speciell person (kändis, expert, fantasi figur) som kan förstärka restaurangens image?

Visst händer det att vi får kända människor som gäster, men det är inget som vi skyltar med.

Men jag själv kan nog förknippas med restaurangen med tanken på att jag äger den. Jag arbetar en hel del här och jag menar automatisk så blir de ju att man förknippar restaurangen med mig. Pratar man om mig så pratar man om restaurangen.

Behind the Scenes

Gör ni saker som engagerar kunden i verksamhet

- *kunden blir delaktig*

Det senaste jag kommer att göra för att få kunden engagerad är att bjuda dem till invigningen. Det får dem att känna sig speciella och man skapar en helt annan relation med dem. Inbjudning av invigningen kommer att innebära att de är viktiga för restaurangen och därmed binder man en kontakt som får dem att prata om vår restaurang. Jag ser också en möjlighet genom att inte låta dem känna sig som kunder, utan också som en vän till restaurangen.

Service

Food

Vad särskiljer er meny från andras?

Vi har ett väldigt enkel koncept av svensk husmanskost. Vi vill inte vara för komplicerade. Sedan så utvecklar vi våra maträtter för att få det att smaka så bra som möjligt. Vidare så har vi våra standarder maträtter som folk alltid kan äta hos oss, men sedan så har vi andra maträtter som byts ut en gång emellan för att ge möjlighet till de kunder som vill pröva på något nytt.

Interior

Vad särskiljer er inredning från andras?

Den lugna och mysiga atmosfären beror på att vår inredning är speciell med den klasiska stilen. Det är en inredning som man inte tröttnar på och kan ha det i flera år utan att modet går ut på den. I de mer moderna inredningarna så har man den i typ två år och sedan är det dags att byta, men vår inredning är oändlig.

Vad särskiljer er service från andras service?

Det är helt enkelt att vi är personligt glada och ska ge dem ett personligt bemötande.

1. Quality

Försöker ni se om det finns skillnader mellan den förväntade och upplevda servicekvaliteten i er restaurang?

Jag kan säga som så att under lunchtid så skal allt gå snabbare. Vad jag menar då är att man automatisk inte hinner lägga ner lika mycket tid på sina gäster som under kvälltid. Människor har mer tid på kvällen då de väljer att äta ute för att ta det lugnt och njuta av maten.

Employees

Försöker ni hålla samma servicekvalitet oberoende på rusningstiderna?

Jag tycker att vi överstiger den service som kunden förväntar sig och det innebär helt enkelt att vi har en hög servicekvalitet. Ju högre servicekvalitet desto mer prat uppstår bland gästerna som förmedlar detta vidare. Service är ju en viktig del i restaurangbranschen för att få folk att prata om en.

