

## **Research On The Positive Impact Of Music In A Business Environment**

### **Summary**

In response to requests for existing studies related to the impact of music in a retail and/or business environment, Muzak has assembled the following overview of relevant scientific data and conclusions. Research has been gathered that demonstrates the positive impact of music in a business environment in the following areas. Any use of this information should cite the original source.

### **Stress Reduction**

Studies have shown that music can promote a less stressful and more enjoyable customer experience. People who are exposed to music experience reduced blood pressure, score higher on emotional wellness tests and experience reduced levels of anxiety and lower levels of stress.

### **Brand Perception**

At least one study showed a positive correlation between the characteristics of the music used in a business location and the customer ratings of that business. For example, the more that customers perceived the music as being optimistic, the more the business was perceived this way.

### **Brand Loyalty**

The cost of keeping existing customers happy is significantly lower than acquiring new customers. Using music to reinforce a positive experience can lead to increased loyalty to a brand.

### **Environment**

Many studies exist to show the impact of store environment and atmosphere in relation to perception of customer service and satisfaction. The studies linked below show the connection between music and customer feelings about their environment.

### **Sales**

Empirical evidence exists which shows the link between music in retail environments and increased sales, in both planned and impulse purchasing behaviors.

### **Employee Productivity**

The benefits of music extend beyond the customers. Increased employee satisfaction and productivity can have a significant financial impact for business locations, as well as result in increased customer satisfaction.

## Research Results

### **Stress Reduction:**

#### Studies used:

"Music Therapy Results for ICU Patients" – P. Updike

"Effects of Music Treatment on Salivary Cortisol in Patients Exposed to Pre-surgical Stress", Miluk-Kolosa, B., Obminski, S., Stupnicki, R., and Golec, L.

"Schweizerische Medizinische Wochenschrift", Escher, J., Hohmann, U., Anthenien, L., Dayer, E., Bosshard, C., and Gaillard, R.C.

#### Findings:

Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing reports that intensive care patients who listen to music reduce their blood pressure and score higher on emotional wellness tests.<sup>1</sup>

A study measured cortisol levels in patients in conjunction with informing them that they would undergo surgery the following day. **The patients who listened to music experienced reduced levels of anxiety.**<sup>2</sup>

A research team selected a group of patients undergoing gastroscopy. The patients listened to the type of music they preferred during the procedure. Because of the music, the patients exhibited significantly lower levels of stress hormone.<sup>3</sup>

### **Brand Perception:**

#### Study used:

"The Effects of Music on Atmosphere in a Bank and a Bar", North, A., Hargreaves, D. and McKendrick, J.

#### Findings:

In 2000, a study was done to determine the effects of music on atmosphere in a bank. Results showed **a positive correlation between the characteristics of the music and the customer ratings of the bank.** For example, the more that customers perceived the music as being optimistic, the more the bank was perceived this way. In addition, the bank was perceived as less dynamic/upbeat when no music was played.<sup>4</sup>

### **Brand Loyalty:**

#### Study used:

"The Effects of Background Music on Consumers' Desire to Affiliate in Buyer-Seller Interactions" Dube, L., Chebat, J.C., Morin, S.

#### Findings:

Pleasant music, by contrast to unpleasant music, is associated with **increased consumer desire to affiliate with the service provider.**<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Updike, P. "Music Therapy Results for ICU Patients", *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*, 9 (1990), 39-45

<sup>2</sup> Miluk-Kolosa, B., Obminski, S., Stupnicki, R., and Golec, L., "Effects of Music Treatment on Salivary Cortisol in Patients Exposed to Pre-surgical stress", *Experimental and Clinical Endocrinology*, 102 (1994): 118-120

<sup>3</sup> Escher, J., Hohmann, U., Anthenien, L., Dayer, E., Bosshard, C., and Gaillard, R.C., "Schweizerische Medizinische Wochenschrift", *Journal Suisse de Medecine*, 6 (1998): 717-33

<sup>4</sup> North, A., Hargreaves, D. and McKendrick, J., "The Effects of Music on Atmosphere in a Bank and a Bar", *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 30 (2000), 7: 1504-1522

<sup>5</sup> Dube, L., Chebat, J.C., Morin, S., "The Effects of Background Music on Consumers' Desire to Affiliate in Buyer-Seller Interactions" *Psychology and Marketing*, 12 (1995), 305-319

## Environment:

### Studies used:

"The Effects of Temperature, Music, and Density on the Perception of Crowding and Shopping Behavior in a Retail Environment", Timmerman, J.E.

"The Impact of Music on Consumers' Reactions to Waiting for Services", Hui, M., Dube, L., Chebat, J.C.

### Findings:

People feel less crowded in shopping situations when background music is present.<sup>6</sup>

In a study exploring the impact of musical valence (degree of attractiveness and enjoyability of music to its listener) in a banking environment, the group with positively valenced music reported the most positive perceived servicescape, the least negative emotional state during waiting times, and the **most positive service evaluation**.<sup>7</sup>

## Sales:

### Studies used:

"Using Background Music to Affect the Behavior of Supermarket Shoppers", Milliman, R.E.

"Business Music: a merchandising tool for the retail industry" Muzak LLC

"Congruency of scent and music as a driver of in-store evaluations and behavior" Matilla, A. and Wirtz, J.

### Findings:

R.E. Milliman studied the effectiveness of music in a national chain of supermarkets and discovered that the use of slow music increased sales more than the use of fast music. The length of shopper stay expanded, and **more items were purchased ranging in increased sales** from \$12,112.35 per store to \$16,740.23 (an increase of 39.2%)<sup>8</sup>

In a 1991 study commissioned by Muzak, it was reported that sales to shoppers under age 25 increased 51%, age 26-50 increased 11%, and over age 50 increased by 26% when music was present.<sup>9</sup>

The addition of low arousal music in a retail environment results in an 18.9% increase in impulse purchases.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Timmerman, J.E. "The Effects of Temperature, Music, and Density on the Perception of Crowding and Shopping Behavior in a Retail Environment", *DAI*, 42-03A (1981): 11293

<sup>7</sup> Hui, M., Dube, L., Chebat, J.C., "The Impact of Music on Consumers' Reactions to Waiting for Services", Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Library

<sup>8</sup> Milliman, R.E. "Using Background Music to Affect the Behavior of Supermarket Shoppers", *Journal of Marketing*, 46 (1982): 86-92.

<sup>9</sup> "Business Music: a merchandising tool for the retail industry" Muzak LLC (1991)

<sup>10</sup> Matilla, A. and Wirtz, Jochen, "Congruency of scent and music as a driver of in-store evaluations and behavior" *Journal of Retailing*, 77 (2001), 273-289

## Employee Productivity:

### Studies used:

"Have You Tried Working to Music?" article, *Readers Digest*, Antrim, D.

"Effects of Background Music on Anxiety, Satisfaction with Communication, and Productivity", Blood, D.J. and Ferriss, S.J.

"Musical Tempo, Productivity and Morale", North, A and Hargreaves, D.

### Findings:

"The Muzak Corporation, which has its wired service in hundreds of business offices, sent a special questionnaire to workers and found that only 1.6% felt that music interferes with work. In contrast, **60% report less fatigue, and 83% found their work more enjoyable**. Researchers have discovered that tonal stimuli sharpen perception. In clinics at Dartmouth and other colleges, it has been found that reading and comprehension are speeded with music. In an experiment at De Pauw University, waltzes stepped up the speed and accuracy of students doing arithmetic problems."<sup>11</sup>

Research shows that people find their conversations more satisfying when music is playing in the background, **increasing their productivity while lowering their anxiety levels**.<sup>12</sup>

A study performed within a British high street bank demonstrates that repetitive, mundane or undemanding tasks will generate a better level of performance if engaging music is played to the works. Results showed that **workers in the check clearing department were able to clear 22.3% more checks** than they did with no/very slow music.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Antrim, Doron K. "Have You Tried Working to Music?" *Readers Digest* (1946)

<sup>12</sup> Blood, D.J. and Ferriss, S.J. "Effects of Background Music on Anxiety, Satisfaction with Communication, and Productivity", *Psychological Reports*, 72/1 (1993), 171-77

<sup>13</sup> North, A.C. and Hargreaves, D.J. "Musical Tempo, Productivity & Morale", *unpublished manuscript*, (1999)