

## THE SPACIAL MEANING OF NEW TYPE STARBUCKS NEIGHBORHOOD AND COFFEE

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### ABSTRACT

*The meaning of an interior space is various according to this root function, the object and the perception of the user. There are an amount of literature exist related to the space of Starbucks. However, there were few studies that discuss the new type Starbucks shops which named as "Neighborhood and Coffee". The main purpose of this study is to realize the spacial meaning this new generational Starbucks. The aims are including what differences between these new type and the normal shops and what the intention of Starbucks in the field of marketing and strategy. The Field Investigation Method was employed to realize these new type shops together with the theoretical analysis which including Healing Environment, Third Place, Personal Environment and Sense of Coherence, simultaneously. The results showed that these new type shops exist the intentions of Starbucks expand their business into the neighborhood just beside everyone. However, it's successful or not might depend on the lifestyle and culture of these citizens. The spacial meanings of these new type shops represent strong imagination of family and personal style. These differences between new and original type Starbucks are shown in the various direction and elements in interior design, furniture, material, color, and decoration.*

**KEYWORDS:** Starbucks, Neighborhood and Coffee, Spacial Meaning, Interior Design

### INTRODUCTION

Arguably, the influence of Starbucks affects our lifestyle deeply. Now, everyone might find the coffee shop around you everywhere from bargain coffee chains to convenience stores, from urban to the rural area. Starbucks always set up a business district to provide service for office workers daily (Figure 1). It's convenience for Taiwanese to enjoy a cup of coffee from Starbucks due to the residential areas almost mixed with business districts in urban area. However, the situation in Japan will be quite different compared with Taiwan. Residential areas in Japan are rare shops to provide any service for residents, coffee shop particularly.

Normally, the Japanese routine life pattern is husband work to be main economic supporter and wife play as a householder to support the whole family. Thus, Japanese wife always has not rest until preparing everything for their children to school and husband for work at every daily morning time. Consequently, business worker, homemaker, university students and SOHO (Small Office, Home Office) business worker and will become the main targets for Starbucks.

Starbucks new type shops developed based on the Residential areas and named as Neighborhood and Coffee within these two or three years (Figure 2). Up to date, there are eight shops in Japan, seven at Kanto area and one at Kobe. The initial five shops were set up at Setagaya district, Tokyo.



**Figure 1: Original Type of Starbucks Meguro Shop**



**Figure 2: New Type of Starbucks Tamagawa 3 Chome Shop**

The main purpose of this manuscript is to realize the spacial meaning this new generational shops by Starbucks. The main aim is to identify the differences between these new type and the normal shops and what the intention of Starbucks in the field of marketing and strategy. The method of field investigation was employed to realize and interpret these new type shops together with the theoretical analysis which including Healing Environment, Third Place, Personal Environment and Sense of Coherence, simultaneously.

## **THE SPACIAL EXPERIENCE AND OBSERVATION**

Approaching the new neighborhood conceptual shops, you will find the appearance present charming and graceful hues, exhibit fresh style which is completely different with our familiar Starbucks. Green sign disappear and replaced with a landing blackboard with English “Neighborhood and Coffee” and a deep gray goddess sign. It is more elegant and quietness than before. The menu beside the door and waiting seats together with a lot of art and color can be a kind of hipster Starbucks. It seems easier to approach these new conceptual shops with pleased mood.



**Figure 3: New Type of Starbucks Komazawa 1 Chome Shop**



**Figure 4: New Type of Starbucks Ikejiri, 2 Chome Shop**



**Figure 5: New Type of Starbucks Komazawa 1 Chome Shop**



**Figure 6: New Type of Starbucks Okusawa, 2 Chome Shop**

Get into the shops, a bright and spacious space arrange with numerous seating. There exist high chair just beside window or bar counter for the single user and the area can be shared with friends, there also have a big table for everyone to share. The arrangement of these chairs can be a single line or L shape. The utilization of these seats are quite a freedom, it can be group use or single person. The customer might enjoy their breakfast or just a cup of coffee, they can read, networking and creativity. The drink provided here not only coffee but also tea and alcohol drink i.e. wine or beer. Consequently, it is a place for interaction and communication with friends or family. The most special character is it is possible to bring your pet with you to enjoy these space in particular shops and constrained area (Figure 10).

The drinks, sweets, and foods provided by these new conceptual shops are also different compared with traditional shops. For example, a customer can order their coffee within the coffee beans they preferred every day according to the emotion of them. The customer also might choose different apple tea, ice cream, milk with banana chocolate, roast pork sandwich and assorted cheese plate for alcoholic beverages. Cup, tray, and container also have their own characteristics in these new conceptual shops.

For example, a vanilla latte is made by the vanilla syrup and fresh vanilla planifolia with special rich flavor taste. Moreover, cremebrulee latte was put the granulated sugar on the surface of latte, and then burns it to become hard caramel. That is a kind of special taste with the mixture of sweet from caramel and bitter from coffee. The customer can enjoy apple pie, cheese ham sandwich and even baked cheese macaroni here.

The most special key point is the method of coffee making. Starbucks reserve means you can choose your own particular coffee beans for making which are quite popular within these years for some coffee hobbyist. All new conceptual shops have this kind of service for community residents. These kinds handmade coffee with various taste i.e. smooth, depth, flavor, body, acidity, bitter and aroma are completely different.



**Figure 7: New Type of Starbucks Okusawa, 2 Chome Shop**



**Figure 8: New type of Starbucks Daizawa, 5 Chome Shop**

Community activities will be held in the shop every month to gathering neighborhood residents come with interest for increasing the interaction among all residents and shop. That is the principle of these new conceptual Starbucks shops. Whatever what day it is, order a cup of special favorite coffee and a piece of apple pie which with an apple from Aomori. Choose a preferred seat located at on calm corner and everyone can enjoy whole leisured afternoon time. It is wonderful time to quieten our busy mind and thinking. Every new conceptual shop has their special style, but almost deco with wood and amount of sofas. However what you order is breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea or just a cup of drink, all of these can provide a relaxing environment and easy time for every visitor.

### THE DIFFERENCE AND CHARACTERS OF SPACE

The main differences between these new types shop compare with normal shops are various but can be concluded as below:

- **Location:** These neighborhood and coffee are located among the residential area rather than business district. It's really neighbor and just beside your home.
- **Style:** Green goddess sign were disappear and replace with a low intensity color sign which place on the wall wood board. French casement exist in the almost shop to provide the opportunities connect with nature and neighborhood. It's really comfortable to set on the outdoor furniture and enjoy a cup of special order coffee in the nature environment (Figure 2, 6 and 8). The ceilings of new shops are limited around service counter. Almost ceilings are kept its original condition of construction.
- **Plan:** The plans between these two types of Starbucks have a little difference. The main variance is arrangement of the layout. Bar table play a significant role in new type shops. It means the interaction and communication between staff and customer will the focus of Starbucks neighborhood and coffee (Figure 3 and Figure 5). Another character of new type shops is big table which can co-seating and share by several person are design as main furniture for customer in the center of the shops.

- **Decoration:** Almost elements of decoration in Starbucks are related to coffee. However, these elements in the new type shops become family style. It means what you can see it in the home might also appear in these new shops. Light, mural and paint also represent so familiar style relate to our life (Figure 9 and 10).
- **Material:** Woods become the main and only material used in these new neighborhood and coffee shops. A lot of wood are used to construct almost furniture, showcase, bar table and chairs.
- **Equipment:** Coffee make machine of Starbucks neighborhood and coffee were different compared with normal business shops (Figure 7). It seems more light and compact. The possibility of this situation might be the main coffee product become pour over coffee not make by auto-machine.
- **Furniture:** Furniture adapted by new shops with various styles and cover with different material to provide comfortable depend on the diverse requirements. It can be bench, sofa or chair with many styles and surface materials such leather, wood, especially fabric.
- **Service:** The services of staff work in these new Starbucks are happy to share their knowledge of coffee with customer. Customer can choose their favorite coffee beans with various level roast i.e. light ∙ medium ∙ deep or dark roast. Customer might taste many special selected coffee beans from particular staff who called coffee master with black apron.
- **Products:** Except special edition coffee, cakes are also different compare with original shops, especial these new type shops also provide alcoholic drink including beers, wine, whiskey and sake. It means the worker might enjoy their off time with their friend in these new shops except traditional izakaya. Most residents also can receive this service from new Starbucks - Neighborhood and Coffee. The hand makes coffee provide best and delicious taste for customer under accurate time, thermal and disturbance by coffee master.
- **Customer:** Student, housewife, normal or SOHO business worker and even everyone all can enjoy their leisure time in this kind of familiar environment. All customers can enjoy their time here along or share with best friends or classmate, even dogs also in particular shops and area. In the meantime, it is most convenient and suitable for SOHO worker who can work and enjoy their own thinking and world.
- Obviously, Starbucks intent expend their business into residential through these new conceptual shops based on the analysis above. However, it still limited by the local lifestyle and culture. However, we believe it can be adjust to accommodate the local characters if these new conceptual shops are successful completely. Community will be the big market i.e. blue ocean strategy for Starbucks.



**Figure 9: New Type of Starbucks Daizawa 5 Chome Shop**



**Figure 10: New Type of Starbucks Daizawa, 5 Chome Shop. Pat Area is Located at the Left of the Photo**

## THEORIES AND ANALYSIS

Compare with the observation by field investigation; interpret these new conceptual shops based on the academic theory are also vital. That is because the results of this kind let us realize why these differences affect our perception related to these conceptual shops. This analysis will base on the theory of healing environment, sense of coherence, third place, and personal environment.

- Healing Environment:** Healing environment has been defined as “A functional environment can trigger self-therapy and positive transition to increase the completely health of user’s body, mind and spirit [2]”. What kind of space can be a healing environment? Trinket. al. (2005) think a healing environment is a place can heal human’s body, spirit, and mind; it is a place that all things full of respect and dignity; it also a place support the events and situation when it is critical timing related to birth, ageing, illness, and curing [3]. These new conceptual shops as familiar as our home that will provide and support all the requirements we need to be a restorative environment for every user here.
- Sense of Coherence:** The sense of coherence theory by Antonovsky based on the salutogenic which is adverse of pathogenesis. Simply speaking, Antonovsky encourages everyone to treat the nature of the problem with positive thinking to solve the problem for long-term solution [4]. Antonovsky’s sense of coherence indicate that human realize their life experience, response to the needs of life and percept the meaning of living will be based on the variety of their personal knowledge, cognitive and comprehensive experience and positive attitude and present personal best adaptability. Thus, there are three elements of SOC, that are comprehensibility、manageability and meaningfulness. It means these three factors of someone to any person, event, and substance are limited by the constraint of themselves. These new shops can fully comprehensive by any users however he is work, life or leisure over there based on where they choose to seat earphones on or not. These neighborhood and coffee shops also provide meaningful space for any residents around them together with the excellent arrangement of furniture and design including counter bar, detail, and color.
- Third Place:** Sternberg (2004) has indicate that optimistic, resistance, competent, and environment control are connect with health [5]. This connection is related to personal belonging and privacy in the space, it means he can fill with competent and ability of environment control when in “one’s own space”. This own space can be home, lovely workspace and the third place. This third place can be a corner of

community, park or bookstore. It also always is a seat located at a corner in a favorite coffee shop, particularly. You can quietly be reading, to enjoy the sight of people walks pass through the window or concentrate on own beloved work. Sometimes, it will happen that you wouldn't want stay in the shop when you find the seat was already occupied by someone else. That's because it is the third of your third place. These new conceptual Starbucks shop full of these kinds of the seat can be candidates of third place for the particular person.

- **Person-Environment Theory:** The relationships connect person-to-person and the interaction between human and surrounding environment will be called the person-environment theory identified by Lang (1987) [6]. Simply, one should be able to function in the environment to be competent to handle the demands of the environment and to have congruence (harmonious) environment (Lawton, 1986; Linda, 2009) [7] [8]. Consequently, function; competent and congruence can be three factors of person-environment theory. Any particular one who can to identify him or herself with an environment and enable handling daily activities in a supportive environment with all resources available. These new Starbucks neighborhood and coffee shop not only provide drinks and foods but also held a lot of activities for the community and provide a lot of message for anyone who visits here to support your daily rich and colorful life.

## CONCLUSIONS

Neighborhood and Coffee are the new conceptual shops develop by Starbucks, Japan. It has shown so many various characters are totally different compared with traditional Starbucks shops after investigation and observation. These key differences and characters can be concluded as below:

- **Marketing Intention:** Starbucks intent to expand their business into the residential community, obviously. This blue ocean strategy with infinity possibility and rich potential for them to interact with any possible customer i.e. student, white-collar or blue-collar worker, SOHO worker, housewife, even children, at any time available without any time limited.
- **Spacial Meaning:** These kinds of warm and familiar spaces can heal anyone who has already themselves into the environment. Every customer can find out their own third place to adapt themselves to special persons, objects, and environment.
- **Potential Strategy:** Starbucks may make a lot of different type shops like "Neighborhood and Coffee" according to local culture and lifestyle at any nation. That's because the operation of this kind of shops should connect to the community very closely and deeply.

Coffee, place and people, these three objects will consist of new type conceptual shops for everyone's daily community life, however when you are at work, rest or leisure time.

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