



Considerations Before Renovating A Hospitality Venue

First impressions count in the competitive hospitality sector. If you do not catch a potential patron's eye immediately they will usually be drawn to an attractive competitor close by. It is important to grab attention quickly, particularly if they are deciding whether to walk on in or walk on by.

Historically, patrons have placed high importance on service and quality of food and beverage. In recent times, however, it seems that there is also an ever-increasing importance on the quality of fit out and the sense of environment. It seems like their attraction to a venue is equally split.

Post pandemic seems to have created a need for those venturing out to receive a rewarding experience that adds to their lifestyle rather than just for convenience.

So how do you attract attention and deliver an uplifting customer experience?

Below are some design elements that appear to have longevity and remain on trend.

Location and concept

The location of your venue and the demographics that surround you are critical in determining your

concept. A laid-back beach theme might work well near the ocean but not in a rural area. It's important to understand why patrons are coming to your area and what they are expecting when they arrive.

Design

Determining where your establishment will sit in the market is critical in determining the design of the venue.

- Is it going to be an up-market whiskey bar or a casual dining experience?
- Who are your likely competitors and how can you differentiate yourself from them or gain a competitive edge?

The key is not always to deliver the best of everything. It can be about creating a particular feel that is inviting or draws attention. The design also needs to be consistent throughout the venue.

Overlooked considerations

The most common areas overlooked are those not in immediate view, for example the restrooms and mechanical services within the venue.

This is not uncommon and is likely associated with the relatively high costs of these services relative to other front of house areas.



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Items like ventilation and air conditioning play a critical part in patron comfort levels. It's easy to allocate money to the facilities that patrons do see, however this should not be at the cost of delivering the overall customer experience.

Best materials

Balancing design elements with practicality are key.

Surfaces need to be hard wearing and easy to maintain but still have visual appeal. These surfaces can include ceramic tiles, engineered timber, reconstituted stones, high rub count fabrics and vinyls.

It's important to consider where the material will be used. High traffic areas are going to be more demanding on surfaces than other destinations in your venue. With surface selection it is also important to consider the acoustics of the venue. Too many hard surfaces are likely to accentuate noise levels within the venue. The harder the surface the more likely noise is going to resonate within the venue.

Remember, when things look worn your venue will very quickly start to look dated.

Lighting

Sometimes overlooked, lighting is critical in creating atmosphere. It is important to consider a successful lighting plan that not only creates ambience but is also functional in design.

Consider how the lighting plan responds to both day and night and within each defined area within the venue. Depending on the theme of the establishment, if there is too much light it will reduce intimacy, but too dark and your food and its presentation may be lost.

Not only are light levels important, so too is light placement. Strategically placed lighting can be key in highlighting featured design elements and also be critical for staff functionality.

Lighting design can be one of the more challenging elements of your fit out, however one that should definitely not be overlooked.

Current trends

There has been a noticeable move towards more detailed and high-end design. Patrons are placing greater focus on overall customer experience from the moment they enter the venue to the moment they leave. It is no longer only about the dining experience.

There also seems to be a return to the fun '60s and '70s mod era.

Timing

Never underestimate the amount of time required to design, gain approvals, prepare and respond to tenders and complete the work.

To obtain the best quotes, design and tendering activities are best undertaken by you during construction peak seasons in readiness for your work to be done during off peak periods..

Remember time is money and periods of closure also hit the bottom line. It is important to be well planned, timely and efficient in your delivery.

Source:

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