

The effect of social density in the travel-retail-sector: Insights from real world data

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Abstract

In the dynamic landscape of retail, practitioners aim to enhance the in-store experience. Using advanced sensor tech, this research analyzes data from 600,000+ customers in a major European airport's duty-free shop over six months to investigate non-linear effects of social density. The analysis includes customers' velocity, dwell time, distance covered, shelf interactions, and shopping basket dynamics. Findings show a positive linear correlation in distance covered, a U-shaped function in dwell time, and a cubic function in velocity. Increased shelf interactions indicate a contagion effect, and shopping basket analysis suggests an inverted U-function for product prices and a cubic relationship for spending. Implications stress the need for optimizing social density for a balanced shopping environment, especially in duty-free settings. This study provides insights, laying the bases for future research on psychological mechanisms and enhancing our understanding of social density.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Retailing*

Track: Retailing & Omni-Channel Management