



COMMUNICATION CAPABILITY OF SIGNAGE IN HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

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ABSTRACT: *The study determined the “Communication Capability of Hotel and Restaurant Signage” in Tuguegarao City. It examined the effectiveness and capability of signage’s elements which include function, content and form and the customers’ attitude on the signage. Results reveal that restaurant signage in fast food is very capable in communicating to customers while signage in fine dining is capable. Customers marked signage as generally very effective in providing their safety and security, reducing perceived wait time and easing their exit, creating their connection to the products and services and reflecting the restaurant’s care for customers. They also see signage in restaurants as effective in communicating aspects such as the menu, weekly specials, and general information about the business, motivating customers to buy product and altering customer behavior at point of sale. Hotel signage was also marked as very capable in function and content and capable in form. Typography, pictograms and arrows were rated very capable, while symbols and diagrams were capable. Maps were noted to be slightly capable. Also, customers very much agree that regulatory signage along with directional, informative and descriptive **very effectively** communicate. Both restaurants and hotel customers **very much agree** on signage.*

KEYWORDS: *communication, capability, signage, hotels and restaurants, customers attitudes*

INTRODUCTION

Signage is the design or use of [signs](#) and symbols to communicate a message to a specific group, usually for the purpose of marketing or a kind of advocacy. A signage also means signs *collectively* or being considered as a group. It is documented to have been popularized in 1975 to 1980. Signs are any kind of visual [graphics](#) created to display information to a particular audience. This is typically manifested in the form of [way finding](#) information in places such as streets or on the inside and outside of buildings. They vary in form and size based on location and intent, from more expansive [banners](#), [billboards](#), and [murals](#), to



smaller [street signs](#), [street name signs](#), [sandwich boards](#) and lawn signs. It is a communication tool, a presentation of visual messages.

Signage is made because there is information ought to be delivered or messages to be conveyed. It is created to stand out, to appeal, to gain attention and interest from its viewers. The creation of sign can be traced back to the very early age of human civilization, as a social being, human always has the intention to communicate with each other, visually as well as verbally.

Calori (2007) then asserted that based on this very basic intent to communicate visually, human then create marks on objects and in their surrounding environment citing cave painting as one of the earliest examples. Human started making signs, and these marks carry meaning that can be understood and shared among them.

The creation of signs also fosters indirect communication between people. Nowadays signs are used everywhere, both outdoor and indoor, we can easily encounter signs anywhere because they are the inseparable component that is huge part of our surrounding, for instance simple letter signs of shopping mart, shop, restaurant, as well as road signs.

Signage can be classified into several different categories based on its location, purpose, theme, content, and form. In interpretation, signage is a very important factor due to the basic nature of information receipt share of human sensory organs.

Furthermore, Mollerup (2005) divided the categorization of sign based on its **functions** into four divisions, which are **identification, direction, description, and regulation**. Identification signs refer to signs which content consist of title or name, this type of signs functions to identify certain position or the object located at the particular position. Directional signs refer to signs that show and point viewer to certain destination and mention what will be found in the indicated direction. Arrow signs are simple example of directional signs. Descriptive signs refer to signs that provide explanation of certain location or object. Both directional and descriptive signs are explanatory kind of signs. Regulatory signs refer to signs which contents are usually notification, warning, command, and prohibition. Rules which



usually become part of regulatory signs content are displayed to maintain order and safety of a certain location.

Many signs are constructed by typography alone, or consist of only body of text. As mentioned before the usage of typography should follow the rules of legibility, clarity, readability, and eligibility. Legibility factor is extremely important factor in sign design and become even more crucial in the case where viewer only have limited amount of time to read the sign, for example road signs are read while the viewers are moving, they can't stop and move backward to reread the sign for the second time.

Pictograms, symbols and arrows, are picture and sign at the same time, they're able to stand alone and carry their meanings to the viewers. Pictograms work best as a sign when they're used to overcome problems of language barrier, for example icon for toilets and icon of wheelchair for the disables are the most recognizable pictograms. However, since pictograms are basically icons or images, they should be standardized enough for people to understand. Furthermore, one significant point needs to keep in mind while designing pictograms is that the comprehensible factor of pictograms is far more important than its artistic factor. Diagrams and maps are other elements that construct signs. The term maps are usually associated with topographical maps while diagrams stand for structural maps. Maps signs deal with issues of projection, scale, and signatures, as well as orientation.

Orientation is essential issue in map signs related to the viewers' directional sense, maps signs should not only enable viewer to know exactly their location in the area but also enable viewers to know the direction they are facing, triangular shape symbol followed by „you are here“ text are usually used to aid this issue.

Typography, pictograms, symbols, arrows, diagrams, and maps are communicative graphic elements that construct the content of signage. Other graphic elements such as color, size, shape, grids, and grouping are useful to help constructing the form of signage.



Lee (2003) mentioned about result of the aforesaid study as followed, the gustatory nerve accepts about 1% of the entire information, the organ of touch accepts 2% of the entire information, the organ of smell accepts 4% of the entire information, and the auditory organ accepts 10% of the entire information, meanwhile visual organ accepts 83% of the entire information. From this finding, it can be deduced that visual objects are enormously influential and important in human life.

The main purpose of signs is to communicate, to convey information such that the receiver may make cognitive decisions based on the information provided. In general, signs may be classified according to the following functions:

- *Information*: signs conveying information about services and facilities, such as maps, directories, or instructional signs.
- *Direction*: signs showing the location of services, facilities, functional spaces and key areas, such as sign posts or directional arrows.
- *Identification*: signs indicating services and facilities, such as room names and numbers, restroom signs, or floor designations.
- *Safety and Regulatory*: signs giving warning or safety instructions, such as [warning signs](#), [traffic signs](#), [exit signs](#), or signs conveying rules and regulations.

Signage helps the customers to easily reach their desired destination or locate a building by simply following the instructions displayed on it.

Signs are of utmost importance in the restaurant industry as they serve to communicate aspects such as the menu, weekly specials, and general information about the business. When signage is used correctly in this regard, it can serve to accomplish three things; a) improve branding, b) reduce perceived wait time, and c) ease a customer's exit.

Customers expect to have signs in a restaurant environment and are more accustomed to accepting them as important pieces of information. Signage serves as a way to instantly engage customers by attracting attention within seconds. Effective signage in a restaurant will help increase brand awareness as well as influence purchase decisions.



There are several different ways that signs can be used within the context of a restaurant – to communicate the menu or menu specials, to feature special events that are being put on at the restaurant, and/or to help influence the atmosphere of the venue.

Placement of the sign is key as well as in order to maximize its effectiveness. Many restaurants choose to place their signs at the front desk or in the walk-way towards the tables. This gives the customers an opportunity to distract themselves with the signage as they wait to enter or to exit as well as can help inform them of restaurant specials or events coming up.

Signage in quick service restaurants and cafes can allow businesses the opportunity to alter customer behavior at the point of sale and allow for huge up-selling and cross-selling.

In addition, signage in hotels is not a new concept. It is most often thought of as the in room TV and entertainment (hotel channels). Every business wants the ability to better communicate with its customers and hotels are no different. As with retail, the customer journey is becoming increasingly important for hotels.

The reception area of any hotel is often its centerpiece, and also where the customer experience starts so owners make it stand out with stunning video wall arrays and appealing content which will set the tone and expectation of a worthy establishment whether for a conference or a holiday.

Room rates fluctuate depending on the time of day or year, or the demand due to a conference. Increased competition and special promotions are catered through signage. In 24 hour receptions when the concierge is not on duty, a kiosk can be used to provide information to travelers on the go. This will avoid having long queues for those frequently asked questions and add to the customer journey. Kiosks can also take the form of self-check in areas for those business travelers who may wish to bypass reception and possible long lines.

Signage can also highlight local attractions and or events happening within the hotel. Guests can track adoption of how useful the information for specific promoted events. They can



also incorporate weather or stock market information, and even display special messages for attending guests or a wedding party to make their day extra special.

Many hotels are situated nearby airports and so it is imperative that guests are always kept up to date with the latest flight information, any potential delays or cancellations. Having flight information display systems (FIDS) is an excellent way of adding further value to the customer journey.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Generally, this study determined the communication capability of restaurants and hotel signage in Tuguegarao City.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the attitude of the customers on the following:
 - A. fast food restaurant signage,
 - B. fine dining restaurant signage
 - C. and hotel signage?
2. What is degree of capability of the restaurant and hotel signage in terms of:
 - A. Function
 - B. Content
 - C. Form
3. What is the degree of effectiveness of the signage to communicate to restaurant and hotel customers?

SCOPE AND DELIMITATION

This study determined only the communication capability of restaurant and hotel signage in Tuguegarao City with 300 respondents. Fifteen respondents from each of the establishments were considered.

Hotels included were Roma, Holiday, Pulsar, Valley, Carmelita, Kimikarlai, Mango Suite, Lorita, Crown and Ivory. Fast food restaurants included were Jollibee, Chow king, Mang Inasal, Greenwich, McDonalds; Café Michelle, Lorita, Max's, Crown and Patio Enrico were fine dining.

This research was conducted from January to October 2017.



METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilized a descriptive quantitative method of research in determining the communication capability of restaurants and hotel signage in Tuguegarao City. Quota sampling was used and 15 customers from each of the 10 restaurants and 15 guests from the 10 hotels in Tuguegarao City were involved as respondents. Data were gathered through the use of questionnaire drafted by the researcher. They were distributed and gathered personally on the same day. For the purposed of interpreting and analyzing the collected data, weighted mean and average weighted mean were used to determine the level of the customers on restaurant and hotel signage as well the communication capability and the effectiveness of this signage.

The following Likert scale was used.

Part I scale. Level of Agreement on Signage

Scale	Limits	Description
5	4.20 – 5.00	Very much agree
4	3.40 - 4.19	Agree
3	2.60 – 3.39	Slightly agree
2	1.80 – 2.59	disagree
1	1.00 – 1.79	very much disagree

Part II scale. Communicative capability of signage

Scale	Limits	Description
5	4.20 – 5.00	very capable
4	3.40 - 4.19	capable
3	2.60 – 3.39	slightly capable
2	1.80 – 2.59	incapable
1	1.00 – 1.79	Very incapable

Part III scale. Level of Effectiveness of signage

Scale	Limits	Description
5	4.20 – 5.00	Very Effective
4	3.40 - 4.19	Effective
3	2.60 – 3.39	slightly effective
2	1.80 – 2.59	ineffective
1	1.00 – 1.79	very ineffective



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter includes the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data gathered by the researcher.

TABLE 1.A. Attitude of Customers on Signage of Fastfood Restaurants

ITEMS	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
The signage is located in appropriate location	4.6	Very much agree
The signage is attractive.	4.3	Very much agree
The signage is easy to find.	3.8	Slightly agree
The content of the signage is easy to read.	4.4	Very much agree
The information contained in the signage is easy to understand.	4.3	Very much agree
The information provided is useful.	4.2	Very much agree
Average weighted mean	4.26	Very much agree

They **very much agree** that signage is placed in proper location, attractive, easy to read and understand and useful. However they slightly agree that signage is easy to find with 3.8 which implies that customers are not so familiar with the establishment. Generally, customers **very much agree** on fast food signage with an average weighted mean of 4.26 which means that that they are impressed on the elements of signage.

TABLE 1.B. Attitude of Customers on Restaurant Signage (Fine Dining)

ITEMS	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
The signage is located in appropriate location.	4.45	Very much agree
The signage is attractive.	4.33	Very much agree
The signage is easy to find.	3.53	Slightly agree
The content of the signage is easy to read.	4.37	Very much agree
The information contained in the signage is easy to understand.	3.94	agree
The information provided is useful.	4.30	Very much agree
Average weighted mean	4.15	agree

The table 1 B shows the attitude of customers on signage of fine dining restaurants. They **very much agree** that signage is placed in proper location, attractive, easy to read and



useful. However they agree that signage is easy to find and useful, slightly agree that signage is easy to find with 3.53. Generally, customers **agree** on fine dining signage with an average weighted mean of 4.15.

TABLE 1.C. Attitude of Customers on Hotel Signage

ITEMS	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
The signage is located in appropriate location.	4.53	Very much agree
The signage is attractive.	4.37	Very much agree
The signage is easy to find.	3.74	Slightly agree
The content of the signage is easy to read.	4.75	Very much agree
The information contained in the signage is easy to understand.	3.97	agree
The information provided is useful.	4.14	agree
Average weighted mean	4.25	Very much agree

The table 1 C shows the attitude of customers on signage of hotels. They **very much agree** that signage is placed in proper location, attractive and easy to read. They agree that it is easy to understand and useful. However, they slightly agree that signage is easy to find with 3.53. Generally, customers **very much agree** on hotel signage with an average weighted mean of 4.25.

TABLE 2. A. Communicative Capability of Restaurant Signage to Customers (Fastfood)

ITEMS	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
A. FUNCTION		
1.informative	4.54	Very capable
2.directional	4.65	Very capable
3.descriptive/ identifiable	4.40	very capable
4. regulatory	4.8	Very capable
Average weighted mean	4.59	VERY CAPABLE
B. CONTENT		
1. Typography	4.49	Very capable
2. pictograms	4.2	Very capable



3. symbols	4	Capable
4. arrows	4.09	Capable
5. diagrams	3.52	Slightly capable
6. maps	3.4	Slightly capable
Average weighted mean	3.95	CAPABLE
C. FORM		
1. color	4.74	very capable
2. size	3.54	Capable
3. shape	4.30	very capable
4. grid	4.14	Slightly capable
5. grouping	4.22	Capable
Average weighted mean	4.18	CAPABLE
AWX	4.24	VERY CAPABLE

Table 2A shows the capability of signage in fast food restaurants. It is manifested that signage of fast food restaurants is **very capable** in communicating to customers. On its elements, the following were the marks:

A. FUNCTION

Customers rated the function of restaurant signage as **very capable** with an average weighted mean of 4.59. Signage was also rated as **very capable** in informing, directing, describing and regulating with an average weighted mean of 4.54, 4.65, 4.40 and 4.8 respectively.

B. CONTENT

The customers generally marked the content as **capable** with an average weighted mean of 3.95. Typography and pictograms were rated **very capable** with 4.49 while 4.2, symbols and arrows were marked as **capable**.

C. FORM

Customers rated the form of signage as **capable** with an average weighted mean of 4.18. Its elements like color and shape were very capable, size and grouping were capable while its grid was slightly capable. Color stood out which supports the claim of Samara 2006 that



color is a very effective communication tool to deliver information without using words or text. Thus, its capability.

TABLE 2. B. Communicative Capability of Restaurant Signage to Customers (FINE DINING)

ITEMS	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
A. FUNCTION		
1.informative	4.2	Capable
2.directional	4.08	Capable
3.descriptive/ identifiable	3.53	Capable
4. regulatory	4.65	very capable
Average weighted mean	4.07	CAPABLE
B. CONTENT		
1. Typography	4.4	very capable
2. pictograms	4.04	capable
3. symbols	3.38	slightly capable
4. arrows	4.29	very capable
5. diagrams	3.53	Slightly capable
6. maps	3.38	Slightly capable
Average weighted mean	3.83	SLIGHTLY CAPABLE
C. FORM		
1.color	4.24	Very capable
2. size	4.09	capable
3. shape	3.85	Slightly capable
4.grid	4.18	capable
5.groupin g	3.96	Slightly capable
Average weighted mean	4.06	CAPABLE
AWX	3.98	CAPABLE

Table 2B shows the communicative capability of signage in fine dining restaurants. It is noted that signage is communicatively **capable** with 3.98 weighted mean. On its elements, the following were the marks:

A. FUNCTION

Customers rated the function of restaurant signage as **capable** with an average weighted mean of 4.07. Signage was also rated as capable in informing, directing and describing and while it is very capable in regulating with an average weighted mean of 4.65.



B. CONTENT

The customers marked the content as slightly capable with an average weighted mean of 3.95. Only typography and arrows were rated very capable, pictograms were capable while symbols, diagrams and maps were slightly capable.

Generally, the restaurant is very good with the general total average mean of 4.21.

C. FORM

Customers rated the form of signage as **capable** with an average weighted mean of 4.18. Its elements like color and shape were **very capable**, size and grouping were **capable** while its grid was **slightly capable** which manifests that customers are equally concerned with all the elements.

TABLE 2.C : Communicative Capability of Hotel Signage to Customers

ITEMS	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
A. FUNCTION		
1.informative	4.70	Very capable
2.directional	4.80	Very capable
3.descriptive/ identifiable	4.42	very capable
4.regulatory	4.63	Very capable
Average weighted mean	4.63	very capable
B. CONTENT		
1. Typography	4.2	Very capable
2. pictograms	3.92	Very capable
3. symbols	4.75	capable
4. arrows	4.49	Very capable
5. diagrams	4.49	Capable
6. maps	3.72	Slightly capable
Average weighted mean	4.26	very capable
C. FORM		
1.color	4.20	Very capable
2. size	4.38	capable
3. shape	4.14	Very capable
4.grid	3.68	Slightly capable
5.grouping	4.59	Capable
Average weighted mean	4.19	CAPABLE
AWX	4.36	VERY CAPABLE



Table 2C shows the capability of signage in hotels. It is seen that signage is very capable in communicating to its customers with an average weighted mean of 4.36. On its elements, the following were the marks:

A. FUNCTION

Customers rated the function of hotel signage as **very capable** with an average weighted mean of 4.63. Signage was also rated as very capable in informing, directing, describing and regulating with weighted means of 4.70, 4.80, 4.42 and 4.63 respectively.

B. CONTENT

The customers generally marked the content as **very capable** with an average weighted mean of 4.26. Only typography, pictograms and arrows were rated very capable, while symbols and diagrams were capable. Maps were noted to be slightly capable.

C. FORM

Customers rated the form of signage as **capable** with an average weighted mean of 4.19. Its elements like color and shape were very capable, size and grouping were capable while its grid was slightly capable.

Table 3. A Effectiveness of Restaurant Signage to Customers (fastfood)

ITEMS	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
A. communicating aspects such as the menu, weekly specials, and general information about the business	4.92	Very Effective
B. motivating customers to buy the restaurant's product.	4.61	Very effective
C. reflecting the restaurant's care of the customers.	4.30	Very Effective
D. creating customer's connection to the products and services.	4.24	Very Effective
E. reducing perceived wait time and easing customers exit	4.21	Very Effective
F. providing their safety and security.	4.65	Very Effective
G. alter customer behavior at the point of sale	4.37	Very Effective
Average weighted mean	4.47	Very effective

The table 3 shows the effectiveness of fast food signage to customers. Signage is generally seen to be **very effective** with a weighted mean of 4.47. It is very effective in



communicating menu specials and general information about the business which got the highest with 4.92, providing safety and security with 4.65, motivating customers to buy product with 4.61, altering customer behavior at point of sale with 4.37, reflecting the restaurant's care of the customers with 4.30, creating customer's connection to the products and services with 4.24 and reducing perceived wait time and easing customers exit with 4.21.

Table 3.B Effectiveness of Restaurant Signage to Customers(Fine dining)

ITEMS	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
A. communicating aspects such as the menu, weekly specials, and general information about the business	4.02	Effective
B. motivating customers to buy the restaurant's product.	3.81	effective
C. reflecting the restaurant's care of the customers.	4.28	Very Effective
D. creating customer's connection to the products and services.	4.48	Very Effective
E. reducing perceived wait time and easing customer's exit.	4.72	Very Effective
F. providing their safety and security.	4.73	Very Effective
G. altering customer behavior at the point of sale	3.52	Effective
Average weighted mean	4.22	Very effective

The table 3B shows the effectiveness of fine dining signage to customers. Customers marked signage as generally very effective with a weighted mean of 4.22. It is very effective providing their safety and security which got the highest with 4.73, reducing perceived wait time and easing customers exit with 4.72, creating customer's connection to the products and services with 4.48, reflecting the restaurant's care of the customers with 4.28. Communicating aspects such as the menu, weekly specials, and general information about the business with 4.02, motivating customers to buy product with 3.81 and altering customer behavior at point of sale with 3.52 were rated as **effective** only.



Table 3.C: Effectiveness of Hotel Signage to Customers

ITEMS	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value
A. communicating aspects such as promotions, discounts	4.83	Very Effective
B. providing easy access of customers to other parts of the hotel, like pool, halls and recreation area	4.74	Very effective
c. creating customer's connection to the establishment.	4.45	Very Effective
D. motivating customers to repeat visit	4.56	Very Effective
E. informing the customers of their policies and regulations	4.03	Effective
F. providing safety and security	4.91	Very Effective
G. maximizing customer's stay	4.74	Very Effective
Average weighted mean	4.60	Very effective

Customers rated hotel signage as generally **very effective** with a weighted mean of 4.60. It is very effective in providing safety and security which got the highest, communicating aspects such as promotions and discounts, maximizing customer's stay, providing easy access of customers to other parts of the hotel, like pool, halls and recreation area, motivating customers to repeat visit, creating customer's connection to the establishment and **effective** in informing the customers of their policies and regulations

CONCLUSION

Signage has become an indispensable communication tool for hotels and restaurants in communicating to customers in different ways. Customers anticipate signage in a restaurant and hotel environment and are more adapted to accepting them as important pieces of information. Customers rated the restaurant signage in fastfood as very communicatively capable and, they very much agree that signage is very effective in communicating aspects of the establishment such as menu and other services. Signage in fine dining was marked as communicatively capable. Hotel signage was also marked as very communicatively capable and very effective in communicating to customers. In addition, they very much agree that regulatory signage along with directional, informative and descriptive **very effectively** communicate.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Hotels and restaurants in the city should be commended by the DOT and other concerned agencies for keeping their customers and guests safe, satisfied and informed through their signage.
2. Relocate maps
3. Correct mistakes and update the signs.
4. Maximize the usage of illustration, photos, images and color.
5. Consider using bigger fonts.
6. Consider re-designing old signs so that there will be unity in overall design.
7. Incorporate local version of content to more signs.
8. Similar studies should be conducted along this line

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