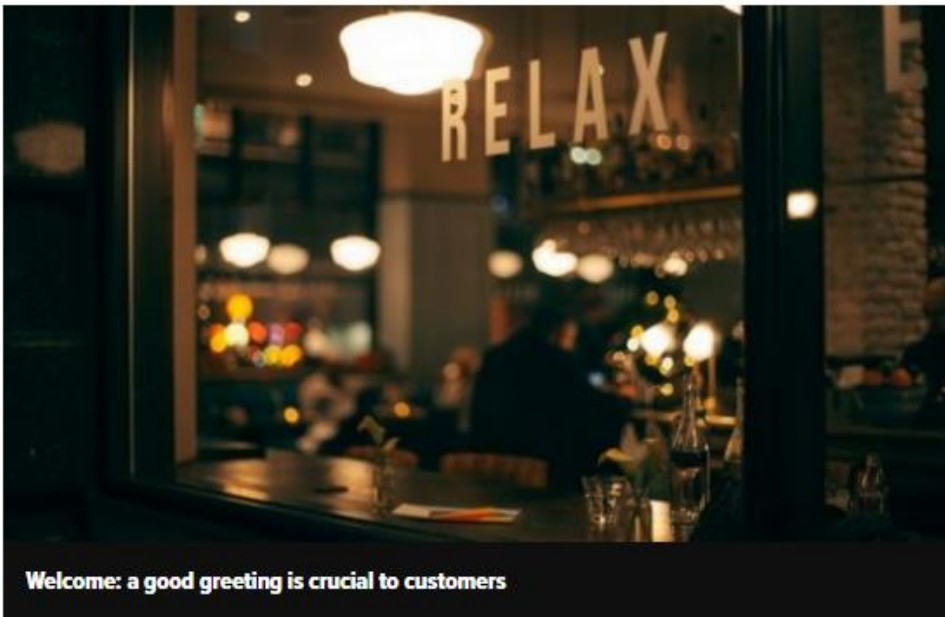


More than 80% of customers want a warm welcome

By Nikkie Sutton , 01-Feb-2017



Welcome: a good greeting is crucial to customers

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A warm welcome is important to more than three quarters (83%) of consumers, according to guest management experts Hospitality Guest Experience Management (HGEM).

The research also revealed that 79% of respondents would be deterred from making a return visit to a pub, hotel, bar or restaurant if they received a poor welcome.

More than a third of guests said employees who exceeded expectations was essential for a great welcome.

Almost a quarter (24%) of those aged 55 and over were most prominent in suggesting an impersonal or generic greeting had a negative impact on the welcome.

A slow greeting would deter a return visit

Almost half (42%) of respondents claimed not being greeted with a smile or a lack of eye contact would make them feel uncomfortable, while 28% said a slow greeting would deter a return visit.

When considering which outlets led the way in making guests feel welcome, just 7% of those surveyed said pubs and bars delivered the best welcome.

HGEM managing director Steven Pike said: “The results are indicative of the demand for personalisation within the **hospitality** sector, a continuation of a trend that we expect to see more of throughout 2017.

“While personalisation has been gaining popularity recently in the context of products, it will always be important in a service context and particularly as diners look for a move from routine or disingenuous greetings to a sincere and personalised welcome.”

Personalisation is becoming the norm

He added: “A focus in recruiting the right people and investing in their development will encourage genuine, welcoming behaviours and memorable guest interactions to encourage repeat visits and convert customers into brand advocates.

“As consumers become increasingly perceptive to what makes a great welcome, with personalisation becoming the norm, there are lots of examples of creative practice throughout the industry.

“At HGEM, we encourage guest experience managers to seek inspirations from other businesses across a variety of foodservice outlets whether or not they are considered a direct competitor.

“Given that the welcome represents such a small proportion of the experience, in terms of time, focusing attention on nailing greetings every time will pay dividends.”