

5 ESSENTIAL FACTORS

TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING
BACKGROUND MUSIC FOR YOUR BRAND



AMBIANCE iQ™

INTRODUCTION

Every element of your business environment influences a customer's decision to step inside your business, how much money they spend once there, and if they ever return again. And background music, just like the products you stock and staff you hire, plays an essential role in immersing buyers in your brand.

With all the background music options available, including satellite radio, streaming media, DJ-designed playlists, and neuroscience-based solutions like Ambiance iQ, deciding which to choose must be determined strategically in terms of price, goals and outcomes. But as you'll quickly discover, not all music services are created equal.

If you're considering different background music for a new location or want to upgrade your current system, here are five essential questions to ask yourself when comparing services:



#1 - WHAT ARE MY GOALS IN TERMS OF CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR?

#2 - WHAT ARE THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF MY BUSINESS?

#3 - HOW ARE PLAYLISTS DEVELOPED?

#4 - CAN PLAYLISTS BE CUSTOMIZED FOR DIFFERENT LOCATIONS OR FRANCHISES?

#5 - CAN PLAYLISTS BE MODIFIED FOR DIFFERENT TIMES OF THE DAY?

#1

WHAT ARE MY GOALS IN TERMS OF CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR?

Background music is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Every business is different as are the customers they serve, and choosing the right music—or unfortunately the wrong music—can have long-term consequences in terms of consumer behavior. In fact, according to The Gallop Organization, 86% of customers say overhead music reflects the atmosphere of a retail outlet and impacts their purchasing decisions¹.

Therefore, it's important to determine what outcomes you want your background music to deliver. Some of these may include:

- **Aligning your brand with a consumer's emotions, desires and social identity to motivate a purchase** – A high-end car dealer, for example, will often play classical or electronic music to distinguish itself as a luxury brand from one that focuses on more rugged, off-road models.
- **Stimulating word-of-mouth marketing** – Because 50% of Americans rely on recommendations from family and friends when choosing a place to dine², creating an unmatched experience through the combination of food, service and music is critical. That positive “take-away” dining memory can bring in a new stream of consumers when tastemakers share it with others.
- **Increasing sales to maximize profits** – Studies show that when the right music is played, consumer spending increases by 12.6%³. In bars and pubs, that number can be as high as 44%⁴.

These outcomes paired with elements of your branding can impact every facet of playlist selection, including genre, tempo, tonality, and volume, helping to establish your company's musical voice. Just as important, the music needs to blend into your environment instead of serving as the main attraction. Music that's off-brand, too loud or misplaced has the opposite effect on the desired customer outcome you want—suggestive lyrics in a family-friendly environment or candy-coated pop music in an athletic store, for example, can send your customers running for the door.

#2

WHAT ARE THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF MY BUSINESS?

Building a profile of your most critical customers can help base your selection around

what music they want to hear, when they want to hear it, and how loud they want to hear it.

For instance, one of our favorite Ambiance IQ client case studies is a gym that caters to an older crowd in the mid-morning, focusing on rock hits of the 1970s and 80s before switching over to recent Top 40 hits once teens and young adults flood in after school and work. Moreover, a survey by the Consumers Guild of America found that millennials gravitate toward retail and restaurants that use music to create a distinct customer experience⁵.

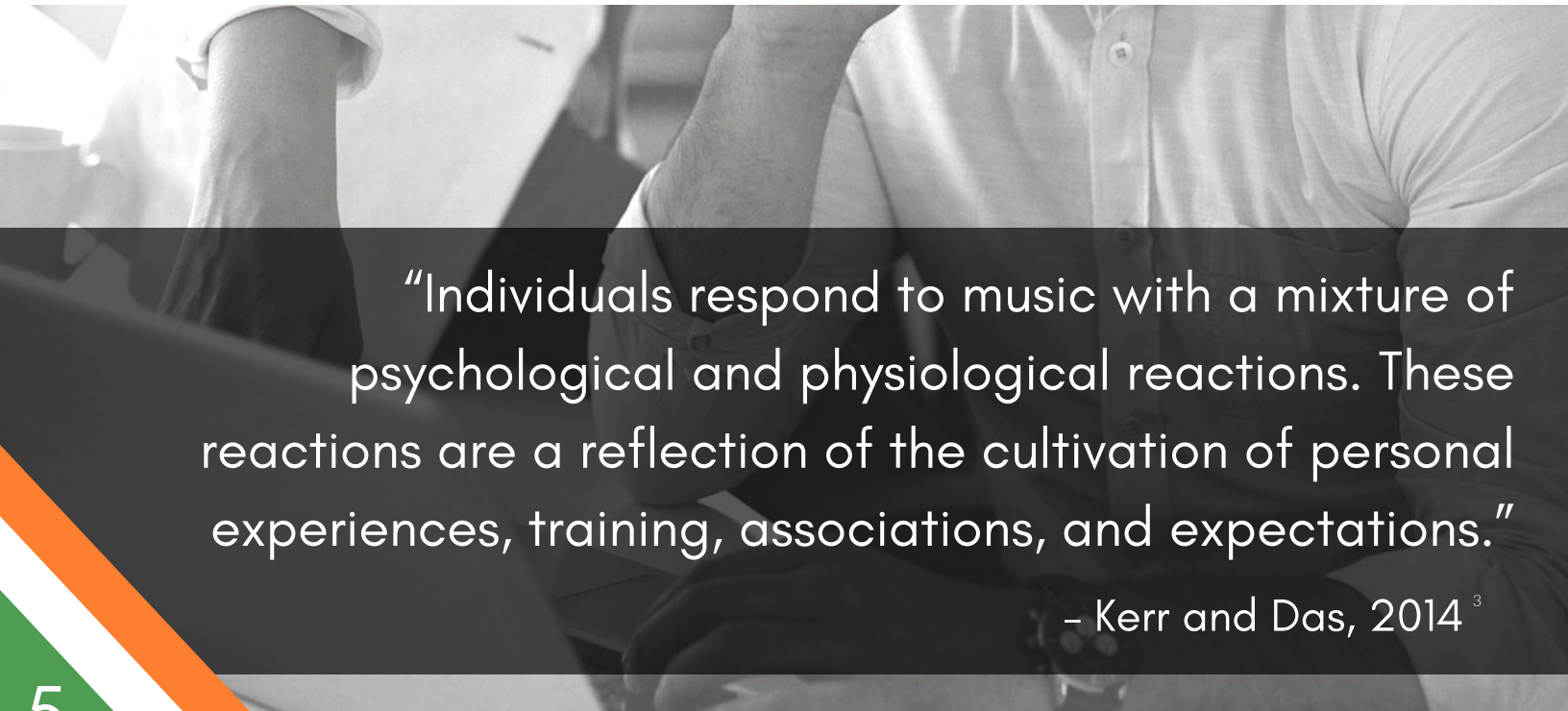
Just as with age, gender plays a role in the selection of overhead music. Males, for instance, react more positively to loud, fast tempo music while females favor softer, slower music⁶. By keeping their preferences in mind, the music your service provider programs can help steer their behavior in the direction you want it to go.



HOW ARE PLAYLISTS DEVELOPED?

As previously mentioned, there are numerous music services to choose from, each one curating playlists in their own way. But no matter which resource you land on, it's safe to say you can find a genre that aligns with the atmosphere of your business. If your BBQ restaurant is known for St. Louis-style ribs, for example, turning on a streaming blues station will resonate with customers who over time have learned that both the food and the music reflect the history and culture of life along the Mississippi River. It creates a level of familiarity and authenticity.

Neuroscience-based playlists take this association one makes with music a step further, offering something no other services does—delving into mindsets of the different demographics to meet select goals over the long and short-term. By understanding what drives consumer behavior and integrating this knowledge into an in-house sensory marketing component, the music in that BBQ joint can be altered to steer consumers toward spicier dishes on the market, decrease the frustration of long lines during lunchtime, or even entice them to purchase extra beer to go along with their meals.



“Individuals respond to music with a mixture of psychological and physiological reactions. These reactions are a reflection of the cultivation of personal experiences, training, associations, and expectations.”

– Kerr and Das, 2014³

#4

CAN PLAYLISTS BE CUSTOMIZED FOR DIFFERENT LOCATIONS OR FRANCHISES?



Let's face it, if you've been to a chain restaurant in one city, it's going to have the exact same interior and menu when you visit its sister restaurant a few states over. However, while the facilities themselves may appear similar, the guests at their tables can look very different.

For example, one of our restaurant clients is a well-known sandwich shop whose location near the retirement communities of Phoenix has a much different audience than the one on the university campus a few miles away. Someone walking into our client's hotel in downtown Chicago in the middle of winter is going to have a different experience than if they were checking in to the same brand in Miami later that summer.

The best music services allow you to customize your music feed by location to reflect the diverse communities you serve while respecting your need for overall consistency on a national—or even international—level, ensuring you deliver on your brand promise no matter where your customers visit.

#5

CAN PLAYLISTS BE MODIFIED FOR DIFFERENT TIMES OF THE DAY?

The music you play should reflect how consumers' moods and needs shift throughout the day.

Dayparting allows you to alter playlists to target specific audiences when they are most likely to step into your business.

Our coffee shop client pumps up the volume and speed of their music selection in the morning to motivate customers as they caffeinate for the day ahead. But when evening rolls around, the soundtrack may slow as guests wind down for the evening or relax with a cup of coffee and a good friend. Another business owner who runs a trendy athleisure clothing chain plays a downtempo mix on slow Monday morning to encourage shoppers to linger around the shop, but breaks out the EDM on a Saturday afternoon to get crowds in and out quickly.



THE RIGHT MUSIC CHOICE FOR TODAY'S BUSINESSES

Compared to other music services, only neuroscience-based solutions like Ambiance iQ hit everything on your checklist. By basing every song selection on customer location, demographics, and most important, psychographics, Ambiance iQ strikes a chord with your customers by subtly touching the sensory receptors in their minds. The moment that perfect song is played, customers feel a heightened positive connection to your business and a drive to act on their emotions.



"In some cases, the place, more specifically the atmosphere of the place, is more influential than the product itself in the purchase decision."

– Philip Kotler⁷

To discover all the benefits of music-applied neuroscience and learn how we can build a custom soundtrack for your business and customers, contact Ambiance iQ today at **805-512-9825** or **info@ambianceiq.com**.



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