
Editorial

The journal of retail and leisure property — A tool for industry

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I am delighted to welcome you to a new era for the *Journal of Retail and Leisure Property*.

As the new Editor I have been engaged by Palgrave Macmillan to further develop the Journal as a tool for business and as a medium for new ideas to be placed before the property industry.

Those of you who follow the *Guardian* newspaper university league tables will know that Liverpool John Moores University was recently placed in the top 20 UK higher education establishments for the application of its research to industry. The team here is equally committed to delivering that relevant research through this Journal. The Journal has full support of the Director of the School of the Built Environment, Mike Riley, and I will be assisted in the editorial duties by one of my research assistants, Matthew Tucker.

Our scope will be wide and varied. We are interested primarily in the retail and leisure sectors but we are keen to ensure that we do not exclude areas where lessons can be learned or where retail and/or leisure have some impact.

‘Shops, for example, can now be found...’: in most developments. The new Royal Bank of Scotland headquarters in Edinburgh contains its own shopping street and we now accept shopping as part of the hotel and airport experience. Shopping malls in airports have certain unique characteristics that make their strategic management very different from a city location and ‘... the journal exists to enable the exploration of these and other similar differences’. The transient customers of airports can be contrasted against those found on, for example, an ocean liner who may be described as both closed and fixed. There are lessons to be learned from understanding the management of such operations that are not property in the usual sense.

Similarly the question of customer service can be explored with reference to almost any environment. In the summer of 2007 I spent a month exploring China. The most interesting example of cultural differences impacting upon service happened in an aircraft. I was flying on China Eastern Airlines in business class between Xian and Beijing. Seated at the very front of the aircraft next to the front galley curtains my wife and I were approached by one of the flight attendants and were offered a choice of three meals. The tray was placed between our two seats while we made our selection. After a few seconds a hand appeared through the curtains and simply removed one of the selections from under



our very noses. Of course, we had already decided that one of us wanted that dish and so we pointed to the gap only to be told that this was the last one. For a European this was highly insulting as my food had been removed and given to another passenger, but it soon became clear that the flight attendants had absolutely no concept of what they had done. This set the tone of customer service throughout China. Even the great Marriott Hotel chain failed to deliver.

In summary, we are looking to make the Journal a learning tool for all and we would welcome your feedback or contributions at any time and on any subject that may enable us to identify new and better ways of working in property.

I hope you enjoy our first selection of articles.

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