

How the Floor Plan Layout of a Casino can Improve Customer Relations and Revenue for the Central and Eastern European Market

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree

Bachelor of Science in

International Management

Submitted to David A. Osho MBA

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Affidavit

I hereby affirm that his bachelor's thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

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Abstract

The casino industry has always tried to keep its knowledge regarding what makes a good casino private. While this silence is often mistaken as the casino trying to hide something, it is due to the highly competitive environment they are operating in. Even though there has been research concerning the psychology of casinos, the importance of the floor plan layout is still a well-kept secret. Due to this instance, this thesis will evaluate how the floor plan layout of a casino can improve customer relations and revenue. Primary data has been collected via interviewing top management as well as casino customers across the central and eastern European markets. Furthermore, research concerning major psychological tricks that casinos use are stated and explained. Lastly, customer relationship management practices and their significance to running a successful casino have been analysed.

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List of Abbreviations

ARGIS – At-Risk Gambling Intentions

CRM – Customer Relationship Management

GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation(s)

HR – Human Resource(s)

LS – Landing Strip(s)

LTV – Life-Time Value

MD – Macro Design(s)

PGSI – Problem Gambling Severity Index

REST – Restoration

RI – Restorative Image(s)

WHO – World Health Organization

1. Introduction

1.1 Problem Statement

The floor plan layout of a casino and its psychological characteristics are critically important for management (Keibler, 2016). The placement of live game tables, slot machines, the general arrangement of the interior, and thus created atmosphere has always been a significant concern to top management (Griffiths, 2009).

Concerning the layout, there are two main designs for casinos. The first one is called the "playground design." Characteristics of such casinos include high ceilings, a lot of space, and elements of nature, such as plants or flowers. The second type is called the "gaming design." This one can be described as the opposite of the "playground design." It is characterized by low ceilings, no extraneous décor, and a maze-like layout of slot machines (Finlay-Gough et al., 2015). As it is arranged less spacious, the arrangement of slot machines results in narrow corridors.

Those two designs have a long history that traces back to when the first casinos were opened in Las Vegas. There have been found several psychological factors that influence gambling behaviour. One of the most common is to remove clocks from walls inside a casino. The goal of this measure was to make customers lose track of time. Another unwritten rule was not having windows in the casino and dimming the lights. The goal of this measure was also to make customers lose track of time (Kilby et al., 2005).

Even though there has been research that found the floor plan layout of a casino to be a critical factor, the extent to which it contributes to improve customer relations

and revenue has not been studied in detail. The goal of this thesis is to fill this research gap.

1.2 Purpose and Objective of the Thesis

The purpose of the study is to find new or expose existing psychological factors that contribute to customer satisfaction. Besides the old psychological tricks that casinos use to make customers stay and ultimately gamble longer, more recent research has found further measures that can be taken by management. There have been studies conducted in casinos in Las Vegas that examined the effect of different odours on the gambling behaviour of customers. The research has found that using the right odour can increase the number of gambles in a certain slot machines area by up to 45,11% (Hirsch, 1995). Using such psychological tricks creates a certain casino atmosphere that can positively influence customers' gambling behaviour.

According to a study by Mayer and Johnson titled "A Customer-based Assessment of Casino Atmospheric" which was conducted in 2003, five main elements are essential in defining a casino's atmosphere:

- the casino theme,
- the height of the ceiling,
- employee uniforms,
- the noise level and
- the floor plan layout.

The casino theme:

The management of the corresponding casino usually conceptualizes the casino's theme along with a room architect. Different elements make up a particular theme. The two main elements are décor and lighting.

The height of the ceiling:

As already mentioned, there are two main macro designs for a casino (playground and gaming design). Usually, the ceiling height is an indicator to distinguish between those two designs, as casinos with a high ceiling are mostly considered playground design (Finlay-Gough et al., 2015).

Employee uniforms:

Employee uniforms are trendy within the casino industry. However, there are many different types of uniforms. While some casinos only want their employees to wear a white shirt and black pants, others demand a full suite combined with a company tie. Generally, casinos with a strict guest dress code will have a corresponding employee uniform.

The noise level:

Most casinos in Europe play pop music in the background or even have live musicians performing. However, the loudest noise in the casino will always be the slot machines. Slot machine manufacturers pay special attention to the sounds of their machines and how loud they are (especially when winning) playing music or sound effects. The sounds of slot machines can indeed manipulate players, as losses can be disguised as wins (Kim, 2013). One example would be that slot

machines will always play certain sounds when the player has won money, despite whether the amount won exceeds the initial bet.

The floor plan layout:

The floor layout and theme generate the overall atmosphere of a casino. However, it has been found that the floor layout is more important than the general theme (Finlay-Gough et al., 2015). As a result, the floor plan becomes a critical factor to consider for management.

In addition to Mayer and Johnson (2003), Finlay-Gough (2015) also supports the importance of these elements concerning the casino atmosphere. Furthermore, a re-examination of the study done by Mayer and Johnson (2003), which was conducted by Johnson, Mayer and Champaner (2004) also approved their previous results.

The floor plan of a casino defines the overall design. The two types of casino designs mentioned seem to attract different kinds of gamblers. Customers who want to experience the feeling and atmosphere of going to a casino, tend to prefer playground designs, while customers who come to play slot machines and care less for the atmosphere prefer the gaming design. Even though slot machines generate most of the income for a casino, casinos with a playground design tend to have higher revenues than casinos with a gaming design (Finlay-Gough et al., 2015). This is especially interesting considering that most gaming design casinos have a higher number of slot machines. As already mentioned, their arrangement of slot machines generates a narrow corridor system. As a result, one goal of this thesis is to examine why this can be the case.

The setting is another factor that contributes to the overall customer experience. Further factors that influence customer satisfaction for repeat business within a casino can be distinguished by analysing customer relationship management (CRM) practices. CRM is much deeper than casino hosts offering a regular customer their favourite drink. Often, management develops specific strategies that are specialized for different customers to increase customer satisfaction. One example includes bringing regular gamblers their favourite pack of cigarettes once the reception has registered that they are inside the casino. As for most casinos, the pareto rule holds (20% of customers bringing 80% of the business), such CRM practices become a crucial tool to ensure having a long and positive customer relationship.

As already mentioned before, emotions are fundamental to consider when influencing gambling behaviour (Finlay-Gough et al., 2015). As such CRM practices generate positive emotions, this can ultimately be reflected in revenue (Hendler & Hendler, 2004).

Another CRM practice that is commonly used by casinos for high-rollers (customers that bet extremely high amounts of money) is to reserve their favourite slot machines. The duty managers of a casino usually perform these two CRM practices. Other CRM practices must be performed by frontline employees, such as dealers or waiters (Lam, 2011). Those practices must be taught by special employee training. Organizing such training is usually the gaming manager's or CEO's responsibility.

Due to casino customers' expectations, the floor plan layout must fit the general theme of the casino for generating a welcoming atmosphere. As casinos induce a particular setting, the emotions that they will generate have to be carefully examined, as it directly influences gambling behaviour (Mayer & Johnson, 2003).

In order to analyse and expose the extent to which the floor plan layout influences customer satisfaction as well as revenue, this thesis will take a deeper look into the topic.

1.3 Research Question

As there has been found a positive correlation between the floor plan layout of a casino and the overall performance, hence an impact on customer relations and revenue, this thesis is going to answer the following research question:

“How the Floor Plan Layout of a Casino Can Improve Customer Relations and Revenue for the Central and Eastern European Market.”

To answer this research question, interviews have been conducted with higher management of several different casinos as well as gamblers.

1.4 Structure

The thesis is structured in different sections with corresponding subsections. The first section is the literature review, which is further divided into three subsections. The literature review will examine the existing literature in the research field and show how this thesis's research will fill a research gap.

The first subsection talks about the history and psychology of casinos as well as the importance of atmosphere and guest satisfaction. Gambling has a long history that shaped the perception of a casino until today.

As already mentioned, casinos use many different psychological tricks to influence their customers. Such tricks will be analysed in this subsection. Furthermore, the subsection includes two studies that will be evaluated. The first study was conducted by Mayer and Johnson (2003). The second study re-examined the first one and was done by Johnson et al. (2004).

The second subsection of the literature review talks about the importance of the casino floor plan by considering the impact of casino architecture. The effect of different physical elements and the atmospheric perception of players will be evaluated. A study by Finlay-Gough et al. (2015) will be discussed in detail.

The third subsection of the literature review concerns Customer Relationship Management (CRM) within the casino industry and the benefits of informal learning according to an article, which was written by Lam (2011). Furthermore, the importance of management changes when implementing CRM will be evaluated based on an article by Kale (2005).

The next section of this thesis will be the methodology, which is further divided into three subsections to evaluate the research design, data collection process, and the interview development of this qualitative research study.

The following section will analyse the data collected for this thesis and interpret the results. After that, the findings of the study will be discussed, followed by an overall conclusion. Lastly, limitations, recommendations and implications will be discussed.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The History and Psychology of Casinos

Gambling has a long history that reaches back to ancient times. To demonstrate how old gambling is, consider the circus, which was invented in ancient Rome around the 6th century BC. People would go to the circus to play craps and simultaneously make bets on the outcome of the game. The first real and legal casino in the world was called Il Ridotto and opened in Venice, Italy, in 1638 (World Finance Review, 2019).

Furthermore, according to World Finance Review (2019), the word "casino" originated from Italian meaning "a small house." Besides the word "casino," some other characteristics of a gambling establishment are still present today. For example, the first casino in the world (Il Ridotto) had house rules that included how visitors should dress and how guests should behave. Even though most casinos nowadays do not include a dress code, many do not allow some aspects of clothing such as jogging pants, shorts, or caps.

Nevertheless, most casinos do not have a mandatory dress code, yet most visitors will follow the recommended dress code. One example would be the Casino de Monte Carlo. Male guests are recommended to wear a suit and female guests to wear a dress or a cocktail dress. Despite the fact that this is not a mandatory dress code, most guests still follow it.

To give another example, Casino Austria AG has twelve casinos across Austria. Their so-called "Jackpot Casinos" do not have a dress code at all. The Jackpot Casinos are in Baden, Bregenz, Graz, Innsbruck and Vienna. Their remaining seven casinos do, on the other hand, have a dress code that reaches from business

only to are the more relaxed one that only forbids casual wear (Casino Austria AG, 2022).

While the first legal casino in the world was considered "a small house," modern casinos can be enormous. The largest casino in the world is the WinStar World Casino in Oklahoma, the USA, with 55741.82 m². According to their website, they have a total of 14000 employees.

The second-largest casino is Venetian Macau, located in Macau, China, with 50725.06 m². Despite that the casino is slightly smaller than the WinStar World Casino, they have a total of 15000 employees.

The third-largest casino in the world is also located in Macau, China. The City of Dreams casino is 39019.28 m² big and holds 6000 employees (Keaton, 2020). It is essential to highlight that in the 21st century, casinos do not necessarily put all their focus on gambling but the overall experience.

As a result, casino resorts offer far more to their guests besides gambling. Most casino resorts offer a hotel, restaurants, a spa, and much more to ensure their customers will stay for longer than just one night.

As already mentioned, the world's first legal casino (Il Ridotto) had several house rules. One of them was the dress code. The reason for this rule was to attract a higher clientele, hence high society.

Nowadays, many stereotypes surround the casino industry. House rules like this and, to give another example, the James Bond movie "Casino Royale" has shaped how people perceive casinos.

Besides a dress code influencing the general atmosphere in a casino, there are also other elements that must be considered when trying to establish a certain atmosphere.

2.1.1 Casino Atmosphere and its Importance

In the study “A Customer-based Assessment of Casino Atmospherics” by Mayer and Johnson, published in 2003, the researchers aimed to explore the certain elements of casino atmospherics and their importance from the point of view of a slot machines player.

The data for this study were collected at a Las Vegas strip casino. Guests were asked to complete a 39-question survey (using a 5-point Likert scale) that covered a total of eleven atmospheric elements of the corresponding casino.

The atmospheric elements were as follows: theme, décor, noise level, colour, ceiling height, light, floor layout, temperature, employee uniforms, smell, and smoke.

For the quantitative analysis of their study, they used 195 survey responses. Exploratory factor analysis, which is a statistical technique, was conducted to reduce the database that has been collected and to determine the underlying factors then, hence crucial variables. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Factor Analytic Results – Rotated Component Matrix

	<i>Enjoyment</i>	<i>Décor / Colour</i>	<i>Floor Layout</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Employee Uniforms</i>	<i>Ceiling Height</i>	<i>Noise Level</i>
Theme1				.859			
Theme2				.877			
Theme3				.697			
Décor1		.647					
Décor2		.514					
Décor3	.609						
Noise2							.831
Noise3							.853
Colour1		.824					
Colour2		.812					
Colour3		.664					
Height1						.792	
Height2						.747	
Height3	.672						
Light3	.580						
Floor1			.782				
Floor2			.810				
Floor3			.690				
Temp3	.529						
Uniform1					.790		
Uniform2					.747		
Uniform3	.656						
Smell1	.557						
Smell2	.729						

Source: A customer-based assessment of casino atmospherics (Mayer & Johnson, 2003).

Factors below 0.45 have been dismissed in Table 1 as they would not be significant and allow a more straightforward interpretation of other significant results, hence values. After performing exploratory factor analysis, a seven-factor solution was established by the researchers. As shown in Table 1, the factors are enjoyment,

décor (and colour), floor layout, theme, employee uniforms, ceiling heights, and noise.

To validate their findings, the researchers calculated Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient, a measure used to determine internal consistency between the individual values. It is commonly used to test the reliability of values. Values above 0.70 are considered acceptable. Any value higher would be good (>0.80) or excellent (>0.90) and below questionable (<0.69) to poor (<0.59) or unacceptable (<0.59). Each alpha value was .80 or above, except for employee uniforms, 0.74. All scale reliability measures can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Scale Reliabilities Measured by Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Alpha Value</i>
Enjoyment	0.80
Décor / Colour	0.88
Floor Layout	0.84
Theme	0.88
Employee Uniforms	0.74
Ceiling Heights	0.80
Noise	0.84
Atmosphere	0.85

Source: A customer-based assessment of casino atmospherics (Mayer & Johnson, 2003).

Following up, linear regression was calculated using the seven-factor elements as independent and atmosphere as the dependent variable. Linear regression illustrates the relationship between one scalar response and explanatory variables, which have been determined before (the seven-factor elements). From the researcher's calculations, it can be concluded that only the theme and floor layout were significant. As décor, noise level, ceiling height, temperature, colour, lighting,

and employee uniforms cannot be considered significant determinants of the overall casino atmosphere, and the researchers concluded that “the design elements of floor layout and theme may be closely aligned with the concept of casino atmosphere from the perspective of a slot player” (Mayer & Johnson, 2003).

One major limitation of this research study is that it only included data from one casino. Despite the relatively big sample size (n=195), further research should be conducted by having participants from different casinos. Additionally, the study did not elaborate on the casino design. There are two main casino designs, playground, and gaming (Finlay-Gough et al., 2015). The convenience sampling method of the study is another limitation that the researchers have discussed. All survey participants were slot tournament players, which do not represent the general casino slot player as they are likely to be more experienced.

2.1.2 Casino Atmosphere and Guest Satisfaction

In the study "Casino Atmospherics for a Customer's Perspective: A Re-Examination" by Johnson, Mayer and Champaner, published in 2004, it is stated that the researchers aimed to examine the factors that generate either a positive or negative atmosphere in a casino gaming setting to explore its correlation with the satisfaction of guests in terms of their overall gaming experience.

The data for this study had been collected by using a convenience sampling procedure. Casino employees surveyed slot players over a period of one month.

The study was conducted in a casino in Colorado, USA. The self-administered survey included 37 questions. The researcher made the following table (Table 3) to propose ten elements that contributed to the overall atmosphere of the casino.

Table 3: Ten Proposed Elements of Casino Atmosphere

<i>Number of Element</i>	<i>Atmospheric Element</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	Theme	A unifying concept that conveys a sense of space, place, or time in the mind of a casino guest.
2	Décor	The furnishings and fixtures that are part of the built environment in the casino.
3	Noise Level	The amount and type of sound that is audible to a guest on the casino floor.
4	Colour	The colours that are part of the built environment in the casino, which are visible to a casino guest.
5	Ceiling Height	The height of the casino from floor to ceiling.
6	Light	The lighting effects that are part of the built environment in the casino, which are visible to a casino guest.
7	Temperature	The ambient temperature level in a casino, as perceived by a casino guest.
8	Floor Layout	The design of the casino floor space, including aisles and walkways, pit areas (live game area) and locations and slot machine areas.
9	Employee Uniforms	The costumes that are worn by employees in the casino.
10	Smell	The ambient odours and aromas that are present in the casino, which can be detected by a casino guest's olfactory senses.

Source: Casino atmospherics from a customer's perspective: A re-examination (Johnson et al., 2004)

The researchers used a 5-point Likert scale for all questions related to the casino atmosphere, hence the ones listed in Table 3. A 5-point Likert scale enables participants to answer on a scale from one to five.

Overall, the researchers collected 299 valid surveys, and the participants for this study can be considered reasonably representative of average slot players. A representative study population is crucial to increase the study's overall validity.

In the previous study by the researchers (Mayer & Johnson, 2003), the study population was not representative of average slot players. This limitation of the previous research has been eliminated for this one.

As this research study is based on the previous research that has been conducted by the authors (Mayer & Johnson, 2003), the same survey has been used for this study. However, two questions regarding smoking have been removed, decreasing the survey from 39 to 37 questions. The reason for excluding these two questions was that the casino management argued that most of their customers are non-smokers.

The researchers used SPSS software to analyse the database. After conducting exploratory factor analysis, a five-factor solution had been concluded by eliminating 13 out of 29 variables that create casino atmospherics. The factor analysis results can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Factor Analytic Results – Rotated Component Matrix

	<i>Component 1</i>	<i>Comp. 2</i>	<i>Comp. 3</i>	<i>Comp. 4</i>	<i>Comp. 5</i>
<i>Theme 1</i>	0.853				
<i>Theme 2</i>	0.837				
<i>Theme 3</i>	0.787				
<i>Décor 1</i>	0.715				
<i>Décor 2</i>	0.583				
<i>Noise 2</i>					0.865
<i>Noise 3</i>					0.829
<i>Height 1</i>			0.842		
<i>Height 2</i>			0.782		
<i>Height 3</i>			0.789		
<i>Floor1</i>		0.796			
<i>Floor2</i>		0.857			
<i>Floor3</i>		0.777			
<i>Unifor m1</i>				0.752	
<i>Unifor m2</i>				0.838	
<i>Unifor m3</i>				0.854	

Source: Casino atmospherics from a customer’s perspective: A re-examination (Johnson et al., 2004).

Factors below 0.5 had been dismissed in Table 4 to interpret the data more easily. The same approach had been used in Table 1. The results showed that only five of the ten proposed elements contributing to the casino atmosphere play a significant role. The five-factor solution includes a theme (and décor), floor layout,

ceiling height, employee uniforms, and noise level. As this is a re-examination study, four factors have shown to be relevant in both studies (theme, floor layout, ceiling height, and employee uniform).

The five factors found in this study were then used as an independent variable comprised of the containing factors by using summated scale. The calculations for scale reliability, which turned out to be significant, can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5: Scale Reliabilities Measured by Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient

<i>Factor Name</i>	<i>Number of Scale Items Included</i>	<i>Alpha Value</i>
Theme (and Décor)	5	0.875
Floor Layout	3	0.892
Ceiling Height	3	0.852
Employee Uniform	3	0.854
Noise Level	2	0.883

Source: Casino atmospherics from a customer’s perspective: A re-examination (Johnson et al., 2004)

Lastly, linear regression has been calculated with the same five independent variables (theme, floor layout, ceiling height, employee uniforms, and noise level), and satisfaction has been used as a dependent variable. The following variables were found to be significant: Theme (including décor), employee uniforms, and noise level.

The remaining variables were not found to be significant for guest satisfaction (floor layout and ceiling height).

As this study is a re-examination, the two goals were to determine the significant elements of casino atmosphere and to examine if there is a relationship between casino atmospherics and player satisfaction (in terms of the overall gaming

experience). Both goals have been achieved. Therefore, management should continuously aim to keep up the desired atmosphere (Johnson et al., 2004).

According to the researchers, there were three main limitations to their research, which must be considered when evaluating the study's overall validity or for future research. The first limitation was the use of a convenience sampling method, as in their first one (Mayer & Johnson, 2003).

Furthermore, the data collection has only been conducted in one casino. As already mentioned before, collecting data from more casinos would increase the overall validity.

The last limitation was that this study only examined the casino atmosphere from the point of view of a slot player. As live game is represented in most casinos, the casino atmosphere of the point of view of a live game table guest should also be considered.

2.2 The Importance of the Casino Floor Plan Layout

2.2.1 The Impact of Casino Architecture

As already mentioned, the floor plan layout of a casino plays an essential role in generating the atmosphere of a casino. There are two macro types of casino design (Finlay-Gough et al., 2015):

1. the playground design (high ceilings, spacious layout, inclusion of elements of nature), and
2. the gaming design (low ceilings, maze-like layout of slot machines).

These two types of design as well as different décor elements and their effect on gamblers (both non-problematic and problematic) have been examined in a study conducted by Finlay-Gough, Marmurek, Kanetkar, and Londerville titled "The Influence of Casino Architecture and Structure on Problem Gambling Behaviour: An Examination Using Virtual Reality Technology," which was published in 2015.

The goal of the study, which was conducted in Ontario, Canada, was to examine the effect of different décor elements within the gambling environments and if/how they influence or generate emotions, thus affecting non-problem and problem gambling behaviour.

The researchers conducted three different studies. The participants of the studies originated from the first one. If participants agreed to participate further, more research has been conducted with the same but reduced study population. Participants for data collection were searched via newspaper and posting flyers in Ontario, Canada.

The first study conducted was conjoint. Overall, the data base of the study included the responses of 275 participants. The following elements as part of casino architecture and their influence on participants were tested and examined:

- Both macro designs (playground and gaming),
- sounds (noise level or music),
- décor variations (e.g., flashing or static lights), and
- travel distance to the casino (30km or 90km).

While travel distance to the casino is not considered a décor element, it has been included in the study since it is relevant for determining problem gambling behaviour.

Several clinical screening tools can be used for determining problem gambling behaviour. The two most popular ones are the Gamblers Anonymous 20 Question (GA-20) and the Lie-Bet Screen (Caler et al., 2016).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) report in 2017, the impact of gambling disorders and other gambling-related harm is increasing. Different studies suggest that the problem gambling rate in Europe was between 0.12% and 3.4% in 2015. On a global scale, the estimations ranged from 0.12% to 5.8% (Calado & Griffiths, 2016).

Coming back to the research study by Finlay-Gough et al. (2015), participants had to watch ten videos (each one minute long) that randomly combined the following elements:

- Macro Design: either playground or gaming design.
- Noise: either music or ambient noise.
- Décor: ten micro décor element variations.

After watching those ten videos, participants had to respond to At-Risk Gambling Intentions (ARGIS) and Restoration (REST) questions on a 7-point Likert scale.

ARGIS questions could have been answered by, for example, choosing "in this place, I would gamble," or "in this place, I would not gamble."

REST questions, on the other hand, could have been answered by choosing "I would feel refreshed in this place," or "I would not feel good in this place."

The data collected in the conjoint study was then analysed by calculating coefficients to determine the importance of the attributes in explaining both ARGIS and REST. The coefficients for the independent variables can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Importance Coefficients of each Independent Variable for ARGIS and REST

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>ARGIS Coefficient</i>	<i>REST Coefficient</i>	<i>Coding</i>
Macro Design	-0.348	-0.540	-1 = playground, 1 = gaming
Distance to Casino	-0.214	-0.055	-1 = 30km, 1 = 90km
Sound	0.315	0.740	-1 = ambient, 1 = music
Chunking	0.029	-0.097	-1 = not chunked, 1 = chunked
Colour	0.211	0.040	-1 = monotone, 1 = multiple colours
Lights	0.094	0.141	-1 = static, 1 = flashing
Symmetry	0.113	0.044	-1 = asymmetrical, 1 = symmetrical
Crowding	0.039	0.059	-1 = not crowded, 1 = crowded

Source: The influence of casino architecture and structure on problem gambling behaviour: An examination using virtual reality technology (Finlay-Gough et al., 2015)

As it can be seen in Table 6, macro design (ARGIS -0.348, REST -0.540) and sound (ARGIS 0.315, REST 0.740) had the most notable effect. Concerning the macro design, the playground design scored higher in restoration and on ARGIS compared to the gaming design.

Another interesting find was that bright colours can be associated with an increased gambling intention and that music impacted restoration.

Following up, 32 previous research participants agreed to participate by forming focus groups further. Five focus groups were established based on the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI) (Ferris and Wynne, 2001). The PGSI assesses problem gambling behaviour and adverse consequences of gambling and is

considered more accurate than other tools used, such as the South Oaks Gambling Screen (Holtgraves, 2008).

One of the five groups was formed as the individuals were considered non-problem gamblers while the remaining four groups only included individuals that are considered moderate to problem gamblers.

A total of four videos have been shown to the different focus groups, which varied in the macro design as well as décor elements. After watching these videos, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, which assessed both ARGIS and REST.

Results have shown severe differences between the non-problem gamblers and moderate to problem gamblers. Theme analysis showed that moderate to problem gamblers commented far more on gambling motivations and gaming strategies. For the non-problematic focus group, the most common theme was concerning the atmosphere of the casino.

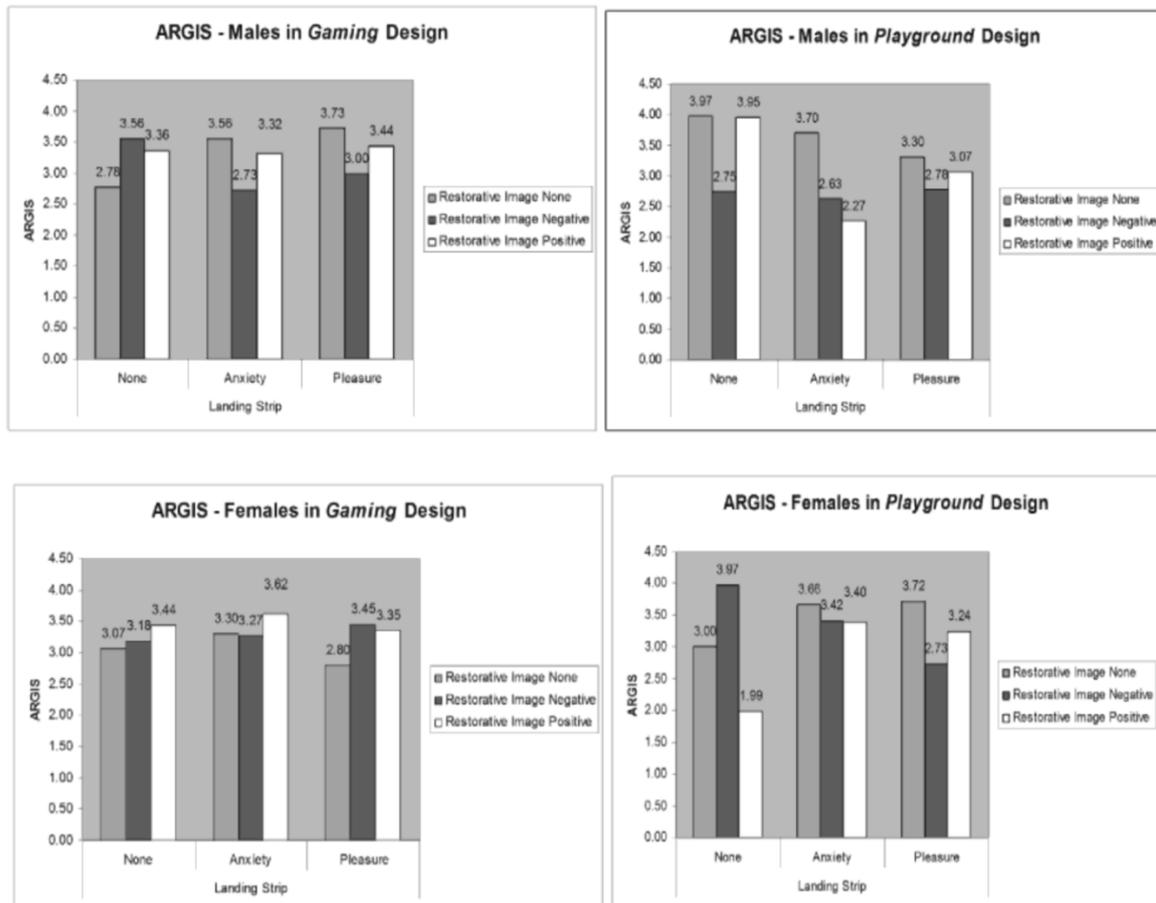
Furthermore, the qualitative analysis revealed that the playground design and corresponding décor elements (such as the higher ceiling) had been recognized and mentioned by all focus groups. However, the word frequency analysis has not shown significant differences between the playground and gaming design.

Lastly, the researcher used virtual reality to find combinations of casino design and décor that achieves a restorative experience but lowers the probability of at-risk gambling. Participants had to watch a three-minute video (one of 18 experimental conditions) and answer a survey afterward. The videos shown to the participants varied in the following aspects:

- Two Macro Design (MD) levels (playground and gaming),
- three Restorative Image (RI) levels (none, positive or negative), and
- three Landing Strip (LS) levels (none, pleasure, or anxiety-inducing).

The survey questions were again concerned with ARGIS and REST. The results for ARGIS in a playground or gaming design for males and females can be seen in the Figure 1.

Figure 1: Interaction among LS, RI, MD and Gender on ARGIS Intentions



Source: The influence of casino architecture and structure on problem gambling behaviour: An examination using virtual reality technology (Finlay-Gough et al., 2015)

As shown in the graphs in Figure 1, a restorative image had a significant effect. ARGIS (males) is low in a playground macro design but includes an anxiety-inducing landing strip and positive restorative image. Furthermore, males and females being exposed to a gaming design did not affect the landing stripe or restorative image. Also, there has been no interaction between the landing strip and the restorative image.

Overall, the study concluded that casino design does affect ARGIS and REST in a casino, hence gambling setting. The playground design, for example, scores high on both ARGIS and REST.

Therefore, the study suggests that casino visitors would rather gamble more than intended in a playground setting. Due to this instant, the playground design seems to be a more effective design for generating higher revenue.

To conclude, all three research methodologies of the study confirmed that the casino design (playground or gaming) affects ARGIS and REST.

As already mentioned before, problem gambling is an increasing problem that has been ignored for a long time. Several reports and studies have questioned or denied that problem gambling, hence gambling behaviour, can be influenced by the casino environment. Others have claimed that there might be some correlation between problem gambling behaviour and the casino environment, but its significance is low (William et al., 2012).

The research study conducted by Finlay-Gough et al. (2015) provided empirical evidence that casino design has significant effectiveness potential for preventing problem gambling. As a result, casinos can no longer deny their essential role and responsibility in preventing problematic gambling behaviour.

2.3 Customer Relationship Management within the Casino Industry

2.3.1 Frontline Employees and Informal Learning

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has gained popularity among companies in the past decades. One reason for this instant is that the amount of data that can be collected from customers has increased with the rapidly advancing technology, hence technological possibilities.

The goal of CRM in the casino industry is to create long-term customer relationships. This practice can be incredibly complicated within the casino business as personnel must communicate and handle all kinds of customers.

The gaming industry “has championed the practice of CRM” (Hsieh & Barnes, 2006). There are seven main objectives of casino CRM (Kale, 2003):

1. Using customization as a tool for providing better customer service,
2. enabling grading customers via coding,
3. subjective customer targeting via special offers,
4. sharing relevant customer reports across the enterprise (such as customers who have been found cheating),
5. improving cost management,
6. routing, and
7. increasing profitability.

Due to the extreme competition within the casino industry and the rapidly growing online sector (online gambling), retaining new customers has become increasingly difficult. Therefore, CRM became a vital factor in operating a casino (Hsieh & Barnes, 2006).

Besides the well-known casino CRM practices, new ones are emerging that can be extremely valuable and should be considered or investigated by management.

Mr. Lam has conducted a research study within this field titled “Frontline Employees’ Informal Learning and Customer Relationship Skills in Macao Casinos: An Empirical Study.” This study was published in 2011 and aimed to examine how informal learning of frontline employees (front desk, hosts, dealers, etc.) influenced their customer relationship skills.

The study used a qualitative approach by conducting in-depth interviews with casino employees. Overall, 49 frontline employees were interviewed from a total of six different casinos in Macao, China. The six casinos included a hotel, and interview participants had a full-time employment contract. 40.8% of the participants were male, and 59.2% were female. 55.1% of the interview participants have worked between one and five years in the casino industry. The other ones worked for up to 20 years within the casino industry. The length of the interviews varied between 45 and 105 minutes. Therefore, the study population can be considered representative for general casino frontline employees. Table 7 shows the positions of the frontline employees from the study population.

Table 7: Positions Held by Study Sample

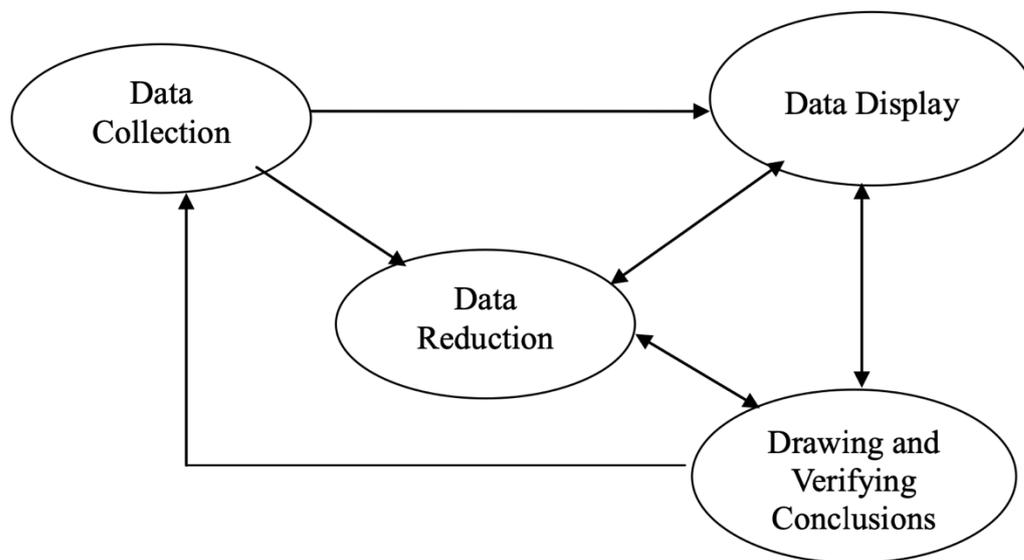
<i>Position</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Dealer	17	34.7
Dealer-Inspector^x	6	12.2
Supervisor	19	38.8
Pit Manager	7	14.3
TOTAL	49	100

Source: Frontline employees’ informal learning and customer relationship skills in Macao casinos: An empirical study (Lam, 2011).

^xNot a common position, hence not existing in all casinos that were examined.

The data gained from the interviews was then analysed by calculating descriptive statistics for the sample as well as by using the Miles and Hubermann (1994) framework. Figure 2 shows the individual components of the Miles and Huberman framework as well as their interaction with each other.

Figure 2: Components of Data Analysis



Source: Qualitative data analysis (Miles & Hubermann, 1994).

Using the Miles and Huberman framework, the researchers were able to identify higher-order concepts by coding the responses of participants and comparing common themes. The researchers observed patterns in frontline employees' informal learning process from the established categories and identified themes.

One limitation of the study was that the data collection via interviews relied on the self-reporting of participants. The validity of self-reporting can be questioned, however, the possible methods to collect data regarding informal learning of employees are limited.

According to the results of the study, informal learning among frontline employees has taught them four different strategies:

1. To be both polite as well as respectful.
2. To read body language to uncover emotional status.
3. To manage emotions in their gaming pursuit.
4. To self-regulate emotions.

The study concluded that casino management should focus on the development of informal knowledge of frontline employees as it can be highly effective for CRM. They recommended this, especially for casinos in Macao, as competition will increase (Lam, 2012). As mentioned before, casino CRM is a vital aspect of casino operations that enables the casino to stick out from competitors.

The specific customer segments for casinos (not considering online) are prime customers, valued customers of tomorrow, and incidental customers (Kale, 2003). The most valuable customer for a casino is usually prime customers. To establish a long-term customer relationship, such customers have first to be identified and then targeted by the casino employees.

Superior CRM can be achieved through, for example, evaluating the customer Lifetime Value (LTV). LTV is the overall profitability of a particular customer during the relationship with a company. Increasing customer retention by only 5% can increase profits by up to 85% (Kale, 2003).

As a result, casinos with efficient CRM tend to have increased profits. One example of such a casino would be MGM Mirage (Kale, 2003).

MGM Mirage is a casino resort in Las Vegas, which is part of MGM Resorts International. The purpose of combining a casino with a restaurant, a five-star hotel, and spa is to offer superior value over competitors. By offering more than a casino, customers tend to stay longer, which results in increased profits for the casino.

2.3.2 The Importance of Management Changes in CRM

The Pareto principle applies to many casinos, meaning that 20% of customers generate 80% of the total revenue. Therefore, retaining customers via customer relationship management practices such as loyalty programs or special treatment plays a crucial role within the casino industry. While implementing CRM practices seems like a logical consequence to achieve customer relationships, the efficiency of the CRM practice can depend on how it is implemented.

The article "Change Management: Antecedents and Consequences in Casino CRM," written by Kale, published in 2005, argues that implementing new CRM strategies within a casino might often only be successfully achieved through conducting change management.

The article defines change management as "getting users to adopt new business processes, practices, and technology to achieve the results that the change management initiative was intended to accomplish" (Kale, 2005).

Implementing CRM involves several aspects (such as cultural changes in the company and training) that can cause difficulties. The failure rate of CRM undertakings in companies is around 70% (Kale, 2005).

Therefore, the whole company, hence all employees, must be considered and involved when making change management to facilitate CRM.

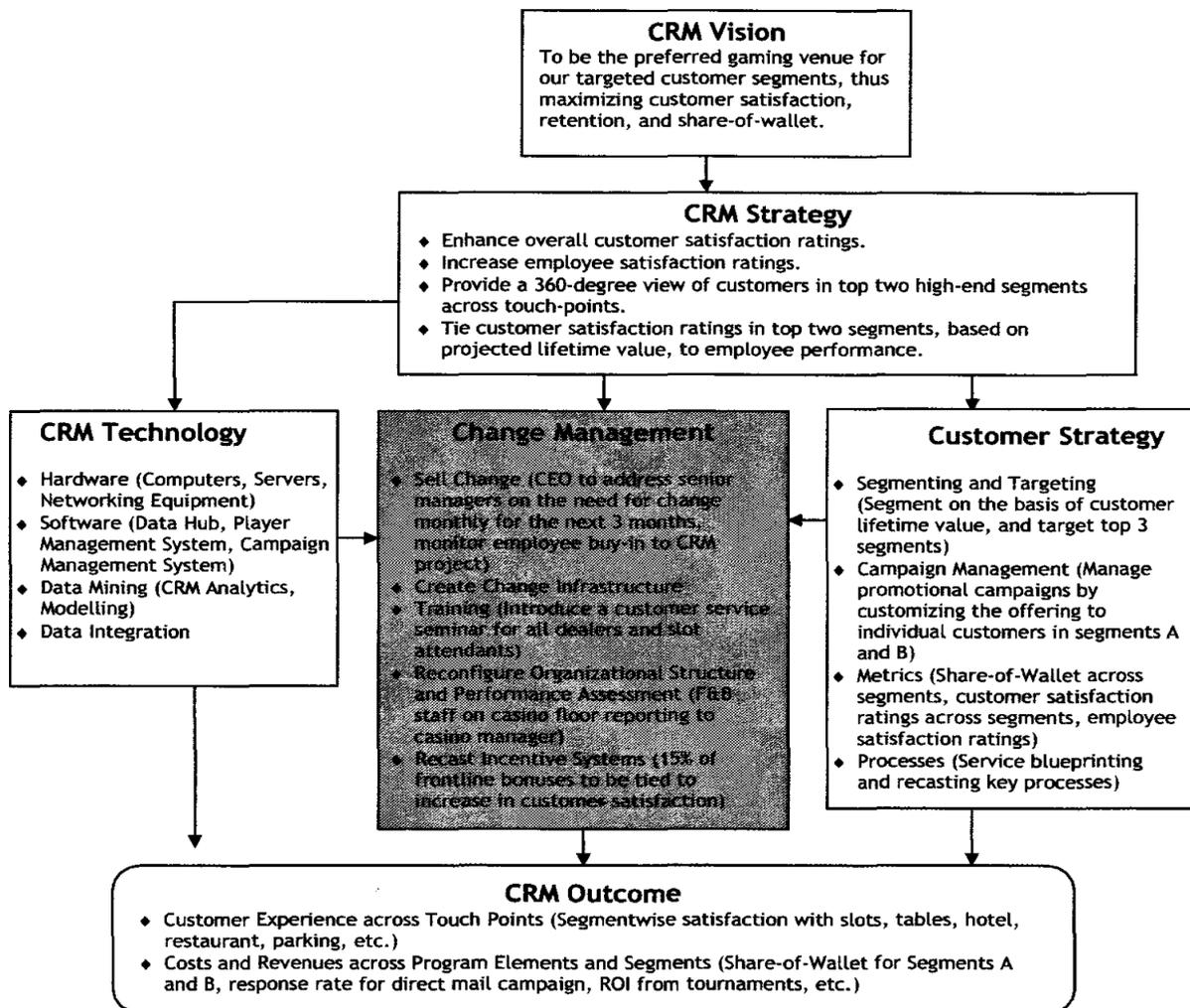
The article states that there are two approaches that can be used to deliver change management. The first one is called the engineer's approach. In this approach, the focus is on the process and the systems. Often, employees are not considered in this approach, making it likely to be insufficient. The second approach is called the psychologist's approach. Here, the focus is more on the Human Resource (HR) side. The meaning of change management is more important than the process and the systems.

According to Mr. Kale, there are five initiatives involved in change management:

1. Internal selling of change.
2. Establishment of required infrastructure for change management.
3. Training that is relevant for the CRM.
4. Reconfiguring the structure and performance assessment measures of the company.
5. Recasting of the existing incentive system.

To successfully implement CRM, change management should be seen as a part of the whole process. Figure 3 uses a CRM initiative to illustrate the role of change management.

Figure 3: CRM and Change Management in a Casino Setting: A Representative Scenario



Source: Change management: Antecedents and consequences in casino CRM (Kale, 2005).

Once a CRM vision has been communicated, the corresponding strategy should be delivered by expressing the CRM technology available, the change management, and the customer strategy.

Overall, implementing CRM strategies should also include handing out formal documents to employees to communicate how the CRM strategy can be achieved.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Three research approaches can be used to answer the research question: a qualitative research approach, a quantitative research approach, and a mixed-methods approach.

A qualitative approach focuses on the “why” and seeks an in-depth understanding of the problem. Data can, for example, be collected through interviews. There are three ways of structuring an interview:

1. Unstructured,
2. semi-structured, and
3. structured.

As already mentioned, the goal of a qualitative research approach is to gain an in-depth understanding of the problem. As a result, unstructured and semi-structured interviews are preferable when choosing a qualitative research approach, as structured interviews can produce quantitative data (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The different characteristics of the three interview methods and examples are provided in Table 8.

Table 8: Differences between Unstructured, Semi-structured, and Structured Interviews

<i>Type of Interview</i>	<i>Unstructured</i>	<i>Semi-structured</i>	<i>Structured</i>
<i>Description</i>	Guided conversation	Open-ended questions with the possibility of follow-up questions	Strict set of questions, often with scales
<i>Example</i>	“How did you feel about what happened?”	“Describe what happened”	“On a scale from 1 (very bad) to 7 (very good), how did you feel about what happened”

Source: Author’s own

Data analysis can be complex when choosing a qualitative approach and ideally coincides with the data collection (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The three most popular ways of collecting data using a qualitative research approach are in-depth interviews (semi-structured), expert interviews (have to be transcribed), and focus groups (for discussions).

A quantitative research approach involves collecting and analysing numerical data in a structured way. Besides a qualitative research approach, quantitative focus on explaining a particular phenomenon by analysing the data collected mathematically. There are four main types of quantitative research (Sukamolson, 2007): survey research, correlational research, experimental research, and causal-comparative research.

Here are some examples of common approaches to quantitative research: surveys, self-administered questionnaires, exploratory research, descriptive research, and experimental research.

Quantitative survey research can be done via self-administered, personal-administered, and telephone-administered surveys.

Quantitative experiment research can be conducted by designing a field experiment or a laboratory experiment. When choosing an experiment for data collection, the internal and external validity must be considered carefully.

A mixed methods research approach combines collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data. Combining these two research approaches enables the researcher better to understand the problem (Bulsara, 2015) and is therefore popular among researchers.

Depending on the research question, a researcher can choose between the aforementioned three research approaches. The research question for this thesis reads: “how the floor plan layout of a casino can improve customer relations and revenue for the central and eastern European market.”

A qualitative research approach has been chosen to answer this research question as solely collecting numerical data would not be sufficient to understand the essential aspects of a casino floor plan and customer relations. Therefore, expert interviews have been conducted with crucial casino personnel (such as managers) and casino visitors (such as professional poker players).

The data has then been analysed by using qualitative data analysis tool such as word clouds, which have been created using free software (<https://www.wordclouds.com>).

As a qualitative research approach has been chosen by conducting expert interviews, the sample sizes can be considered a limitation of the study as it usually

varies between ten to twenty interviews. For this thesis, a total of 17 experts have been interviewed. Therefore, the sample size cannot be considered a limitation. Another potential limitation of conducting expert interviews would be the possibility of the researcher influencing the outcome. To overcome this potential risk, research ethics have been considered carefully for this thesis, and principles such as integrity, confidentiality, and objectivity were incorporated into the data collection process.

3.2 Data Collection

Data can be either collected primarily or secondarily. Primary data collection involves the researcher gathering data through, for example, interviews. Secondary data describes data that has already been collected (primarily) by someone else but is used again. For this thesis, primary data has been collected via conducting twenty expert interviews from four different casinos in Europe (Czech Republic, Liechtenstein, and Albania).

Different layers of management, professional poker players, as well as regular casino guests have been interviewed. The interviews were (if the participant gave consent) recorded. The interviews with the casino management took between eight and nineteen minutes, depending on the information participants agreed to share. Ten out of twenty participants did not agree to be audio recorded. The occupation or relation to a casino of the participants can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9: Participants and their Occupation / Relation to a Casino

<i>Occupation / Relation to a Casino</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>
General Manager or CEO	5
Duty Manager	2
Surveillance Manager	1
Marketing Manager	2
Pit Boss ^x	1
Poker Dealer	1
Professional Poker Player	4
Regular Casino Guests	4
TOTAL	20

Source: Author's own

^xA person responsible for monitoring and controlling all actions of dealers (croupiers) and players of a designated area of live game tables.

Before conducting the interviews, participants had a chance to look at the interview questions and then had to sign a participation form, which informed them about the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw, and how the data would be used.

Due to privacy and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the names of the participants will not be published. However, all interview transcripts can be found in the appendices (Appendix 1: Interview Transcripts).

Furthermore, the interview guideline, which has been used by the researcher when conducting the interviews, can also be seen in the appendices (Appendix 2: Interview Guideline).

3.3 Interview Development

The purpose of conducting the expert interviews was to gain an in-depth understanding of how the floor plan of a casino can improve customer relations and, ultimately, revenue. The interview included 19 questions (mostly open-ended) plus four follow-up questions. The first question asked for consent to be recorded. All interview transcripts can be found in the appendices. If participants disagreed with being recorded, the researcher took notes of their responses.

After that, five questions followed that aimed to gather personal information about the participant (gender, occupation, completed education, casino visits, and experience in the casino industry). The purpose of these questions was to acknowledge the expertise of the individual participants. Furthermore, the questions clarified the relation of the participants to casinos by asking how often they visit a casino and if they have worked in the casino industry (if so, how long?).

The following five questions aim to evaluate the importance of a casino floor plan for the participants by first generally asking how important it is to them and then bringing in two more factors: slot machines and live game tables. The importance of a casino to include a variety of slot machines and live game tables is questioned with two corresponding sub-questions that ask the participant to state their most and least liked slot machine and live game.

The next question asks about the importance of a casino, including a restaurant. A restaurant in a casino takes up a lot of space that could be used for slot machines or live games. Therefore, this question aims to clarify the importance of a restaurant, especially for customer relations.

Following up, three questions are being asked to evaluate the effectiveness of two different types of casino design: playground design and gaming design. The questions ask about the participant's personal preference and which they think would instead attract high rollers.

The next question asks the participant if they have experienced casinos (management) adjusting their floor plan layout for customers. The question includes an example: "such as a separate VIP high-roller area." Also, a follow-up question asks about other adjustments they have observed (as the example is a common adjustment).

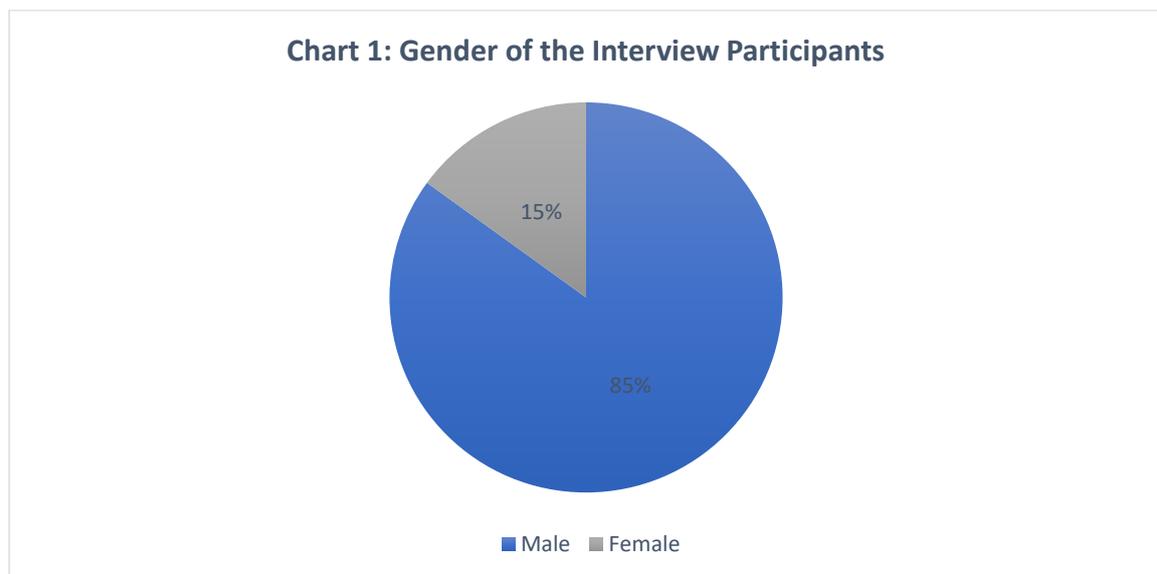
The last four questions of the interview are concerned with customer relationship management, asking about the importance of CRM for the participant, experiences they have had (positive and negative), and practices they have experienced. While these questions are not necessarily related to the floor plan of a casino, the literature review has shown that these two factors correlate, as an effective floor plan seems to incorporate customer feedback.

After finishing the interview questions, the researcher asked the participants if they had any questions and then thanked them for their participation and time.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Twenty expert interviews were conducted in this study with people who either work in the casino industry or casino guests. Twelve participants were currently working in a casino, most of them as managers. They are referred to as Group 1. Two out of the eight casino guests interviewed, referred to as Group 2, had already worked

in a casino before, and the remaining majority were professional poker players. The number of casino visits among them varied between one and twenty times a month. As the casino industry is a male-dominated sector, the number of female participants is comparably low. For the casino guest group, a random sampling method has resulted in a similar situation, which is not surprising considering that most casino guests are, in fact, male. The genders of both groups combined can be seen in Chart 1.

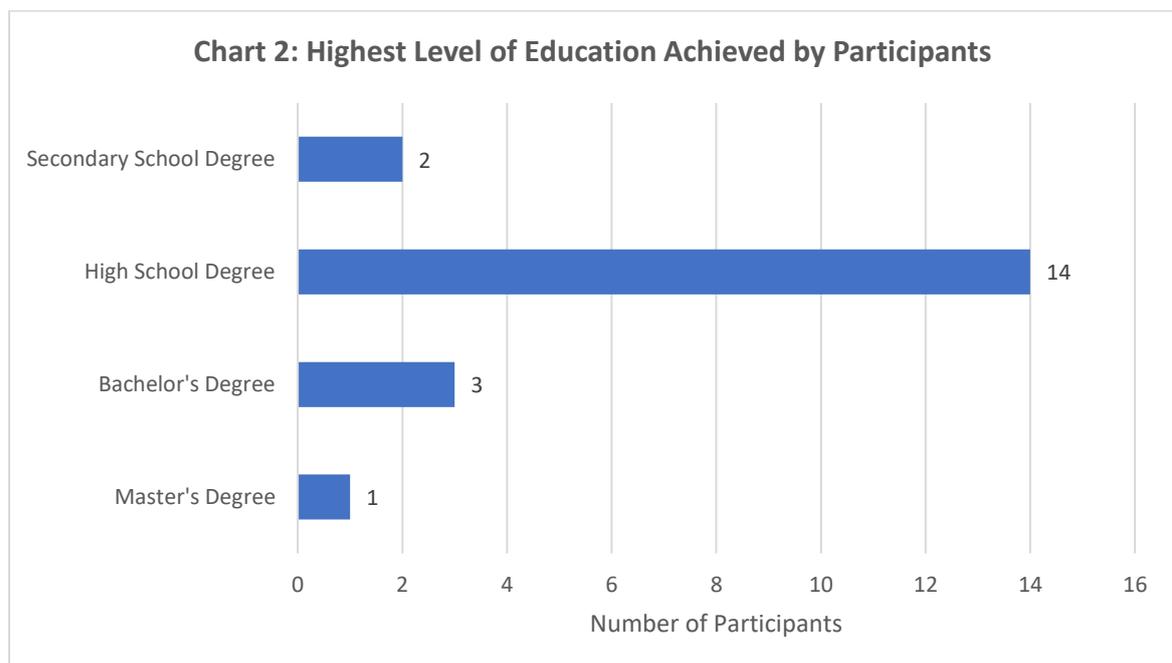


Source: Author's own.

As shown in Chart 1, 85% of the interview participants were male and only 15% female. Two female participants were from Group 1 and one from Group 2.

The level of education among the participants was a surprising factor as only 20% have obtained a university degree. The highest level of education completed by a participant was a master's degree of someone in Group 2. The lowest level of

education completed was a secondary school degree, which applied to two participants, both from Group 2. Three participants had a bachelor's degree, and 70% had a high school degree. A visual representation of this information can be seen in Chart 2.

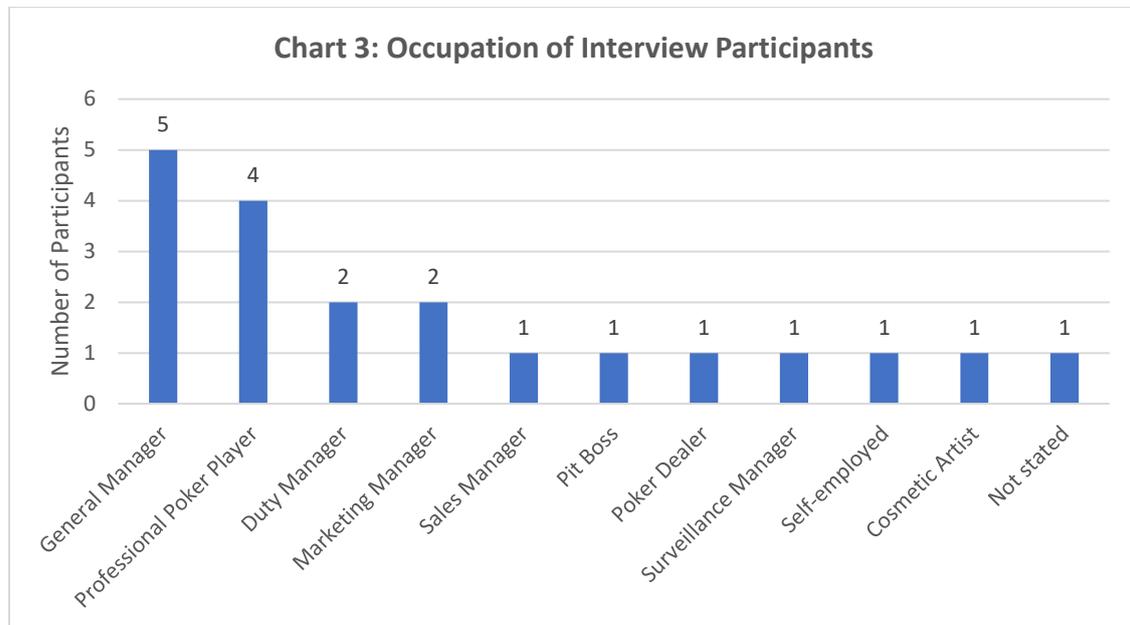


Source: Author's own.

The occupations in Group 1 were general manager, duty manager, marketing manager, surveillance manager, pit boss, and poker dealer. For Group 2, the occupations were professional poker player, sales manager, self-employed, cosmetic artist, or not stated.

As illustrated in Chart 3, only one out of all interview participants did not state their occupation. The participant was from Group 2. 25% of participants were general managers of a casino. 20% were professional poker players. 10% were duty managers, and another 10% were marketing managers of a casino. The remaining

35% had a different profession (sales manager, pit boss, poker dealer, surveillance manager, self-employed, cosmetic artist, or not stated).



Source: Author's own.

The occupations of participants, combined with their number of casino visits per month (concerning Group 2), show that all participants have expertise in the casino industry. Furthermore, regardless of which group (1 or 2), 55% of participants work as a manager in different occupations.

In the following section, “word clouds” will be shown at five different questions the interviewer asked the participants. Word clouds are visual representations of the most frequent words used in a text and are a standard tool for qualitative data analysis. For each word cloud, the responses of all participants to that question have been put together. After determining the frequency of words, some have been eliminated, such as “yes,” “or,” “to,” and “as.” It is essential to highlight that word

clouds only illustrate how often a word is said. They do not indicate the significance of the word. However, they help get an idea of shared ideas and concepts among the participants. Furthermore, the expertise of the participants will be shown by quoting some of their responses.

The following question has been asked to participants: “In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?” The corresponding word cloud is illustrated in Chart 4. After conducting a word frequency analysis, the researcher identified that many participants often mentioned the word “important.” Overall, the term has been mentioned 22 times. This indicates that many participants talked about how important the floor plan layout of a casino is.

“Floor plan of a casino is really important because on that depends if the casino will be successful or not” (Interview 1, 2022).

Other frequently used terms were atmosphere, impression, feeling and wow-effect.

“The first impression and the feeling the guest has when entering the casino is the most important” (Interview 2, 2022).

“(…) You have to be able to provide a good atmosphere” (Interview 7, 2022).

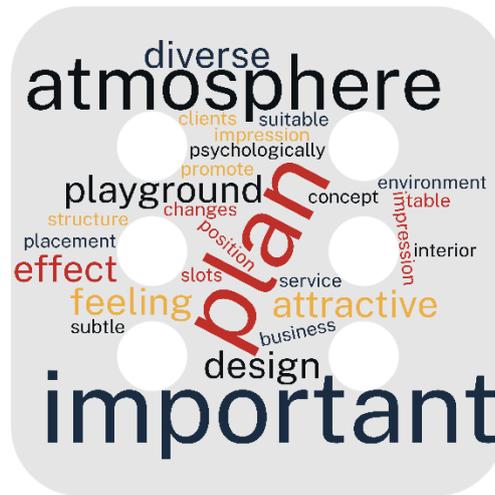
“(…) To create a familiar atmosphere” (Interview 4, 2022).

“I prefer, as I saw in Las Vegas, to generate a wow-effect” (Interview 8, 2022).

One participant of Group 1 gave an excellent example to stress the importance of the floor plan. He compared the casino floor to a grocery store and how customers are forced (by the corridors) to walk through the entire store.

“(…) Guide them in a way that you want them to walk through” (Interview 5, 2022).

Chart 4: Word Cloud based on Importance of the Floor Plan



Source: Author's own

One of the other questions that has been asked by the interviewer was: “In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines on the casino?” The corresponding word cloud is illustrated in Chart 5. The most frequently used term was “important.” It has been used 18 times, implying that most participants agreed that it is important to include a wide variety of slot machines. Other frequently used terms were choice, games, popular and diversification.

“I think it is important to have different slots as you have different guests” (Interview 7, 2022).

“Could be a value added to the casino (...)” (Interview 20, 2022).

“Variety is always good it gives more choices” (Interview 13, 2022).

“Market research has to be conducted before acquiring the slot machines (...)” (Interview 8, 2022).

Chart 5: Word Cloud based on the Variety of Slot Machines



Source: Author's own

Another question that the participants were asked was: “In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?” The corresponding word cloud is illustrated in Chart 6. The word “casino” has been used 35 times. Many participants made claims like:

“It is not a casino if you do not have live game” (Interview 4, 2022).

“A casino without live game is not a casino” (Interview 1, 2022).

Further frequently used words were attraction, service, and atmosphere.

“It creates a better atmosphere. Customer service can be increased via that due to the engaging environment” (Interview 8, 2022).

“It is a typical image – the atmosphere of a casino” (Interview 11, 2022).

Chart 6: Word Cloud based on the Importance of Live Game



Source: Author's own

The following example of a question that the interviewer asked was: “In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?” The corresponding word cloud is illustrated in Chart 7. The most frequent words in the responses to that question were guests, good, offer, service, benefits, and VIP. Casinos that include a restaurant can offer increased service and benefits, especially for VIP guests, as a CRM marketing tool.

“To offer the most comfort and best service experience – it is necessary to include a restaurant” (Interview 11, 2022).

“It is once of the tools that you have to use for the customer relationship” (Interview 5, 2022).

“That increases chances to keep your customers inside the casino (...)” (Interview 20, 2022).

“Each has its advantages but I think the gaming casino design is more effective. The playground casino design is more practiced in Las Vegas” (Interview 9, 2022).

“A maze-like layout, where people have to go past everything when entering or leaving the casino” (Interview 19, 2022).

“More effective is playground. I do not think VIPs like gaming casino design” (Interview 6, 2022).

“The best would be a combination of both. Like having a maze-like layout but high ceilings” (Interview 5, 2022).

“Playground casino design looks more aesthetic and beautiful, but gaming casino designs are more efficient” (Interview 19, 2022).

“I would say high rollers would prefer spacious casinos with playground casino design because they look elegant, prestige, graceful, upper class” (Interview 11, 2022).

Participants' responses show no clear preference between the two macro designs (MD). However, many mentioned certain aspects that make the floor plan more effective, as can be seen in Chart 8.

“In general, I think Roulette because it is the fairest game. For me, it is Blackjack”
(Interview 15, 2022),

“Best I would say Roulette (...)” (Interview 19, 2022)

One manager elaborated that Roulette is not only popular among the general casino customers.

“The experienced players, of course, they will play Roulette and Blackjack, on Roulette they have the highest pay-out (...)” (Interview 4, 2022).

These responses and comments on Roulette emphasize that in the central and eastern European market, such a live game table should be prioritized over others, such as poker.

Coming back to the macro casino designs, one goal of this study was to gain further evidence to approve previous study results. One question the interviewer asked was, “In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?” This and the follow-up question are not open-ended questions; hence they serve the purpose of finding further evidence for research that has been conducted in the past.

The next question asked, “in your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high rollers?” Previous research has suggested that the playground design would instead attract high rollers. However, the casinos in these research studies were in the United States of America. The casinos in this research study are all located in Europe. While most participants agreed that the playground design would rather attract high rollers, some more experienced managers evaluated that there are two kinds of high rollers. The first high roller “want(s) to have (his) own

area in a casino where he gets a special service (...)" (Interview 4, 2022), and the other "wants to be seen from the other guests how high and how much money (they play)" (Interview 4, 2022).

Other participants did not consider differentiating between those two types and argued that high rollers would, of course, prefer the playground casino due to its aesthetics. One participant said, "if you think about a high roller player, he does not go eat in a three-star restaurant, you know that he will eat at the fancy restaurant (...)" (Interview 8, 2022).

This view contradicts what some participants said about the importance of a restaurant in a casino. One participant explained that he, as a professional player (and high roller) does not need a restaurant in the casino but "at least some kind of snacks (...)" (Interview 19, 2022).

This example shows that the answer to the research question is more complex than hypothesized.

The interviewer gained the following insights concerning CRM by asking about the participants having experienced management making adjustments in their floor plan for high rollers. Here are some responses:

"I did not experience adjustments in the floor plan layout but adjustments in promotions (...)" (Interview 10, 2022).

"No, I did not" (Interview 14, 2022).

"Yes, VIPs got special tables for their own, and they put an extra Baccarat table in the casino for VIPs to play separately" (Interview 19, 2022).

According to one manager, the customer is always stated as “the absolute priority for the casino and therefore must be treated as such” (Interview 3, 2022).

5. Discussions of Findings

Concerning the importance of the floor plan, participants mentioned that the casino has to create it in a way that would guide them through the casino (Interview 5, 2022). The casino can dictate how the customer moves through the casino by the way they create corridors. Therefore, the placement of machines and tables is an essential component.

Furthermore, the first impression, the overall atmosphere, and the feeling generated matter to the customer. A "wow-effect" would be desirable. (Interview 8, 2022). This can be achieved through the overall design. Many participants talked about the pleasing aesthetics of a playground design (Interview 19 & 6, 2022). Also, the playground has been considered preferable by most participants.

Regarding including a variety of slot machines in the casino, most participants agreed that this was an important aspect. However, the popularity of specific slots depends on the casino's location, hence the market (Interview 10, 2022). As a result, market research is recommended before buying slot machines (Interview 8, 2022). This is vital when opening a new casino, as slot machines are an expensive investment.

As discussed in the literature review of this study, the atmosphere of the casino is essential. A critical aspect of the atmosphere is the floor plan. Participants stressed the importance of atmosphere and simultaneously evaluated what makes this

atmosphere. The live game has been mentioned several times (Interview 11 & 8, 2022). Most casinos do not generate much revenue with their live game (Interview 4, 2022). Therefore, casinos in Europe seem to underestimate the importance of the live game and its effectiveness. One of the general managers mentioned how this casino performs outstandingly in the European market due to its unique focus on live game. Many participants of Group 2 (not casino employees) agreed with Group 1 (casino employees) that it contributed immensely to the atmosphere. As a result, the correct placement is essential. Apparently, the most preferred location for live game is somewhere where it appears to be the first thing customers see when entering the casino (Interview 11, 2022).

Restaurants are usually in every Las Vegas casino, as most are casino resorts (Interview 8, 2022). However, casinos in Las Vegas and Europe cannot be compared easily. Most Las Vegas casinos are playground casino designs. This is not the case in Europe. As a result, customers in Europe, especially eastern Europe (Interview 4, 2022). While most participants agreed that it is good to include a restaurant in the floor plan of a casino, it is not necessary. Many casinos in Europe offer snacks at bars. This is considered enough by many participants of Group 2 (Interview 19, 2022). However, to stick out from competitors, a restaurant can be a great marketing tool that can be used for CRM (Interview 5, 2022).

As just mentioned, the preferred casino design in Las Vegas is a playground design (Interview 9, 2022). The researcher also hypothesized this for the central and eastern European markets. However, the findings suggest that it is neither of the two MDs (playground and gaming design). Instead, most participants suggested combining the two designs (Interview 4, 5, 10, 11 & 19, 2022) to achieve an efficient

floor plan. Interestingly, despite the differences between Group 1 and Group 2, most participants agreed that a floor plan must deliver a certain feeling to be considered efficient. While most casinos use CRM practices such as events to create feelings and emotions, the floor plan might be a more effective tool that can be used to achieve even higher results.

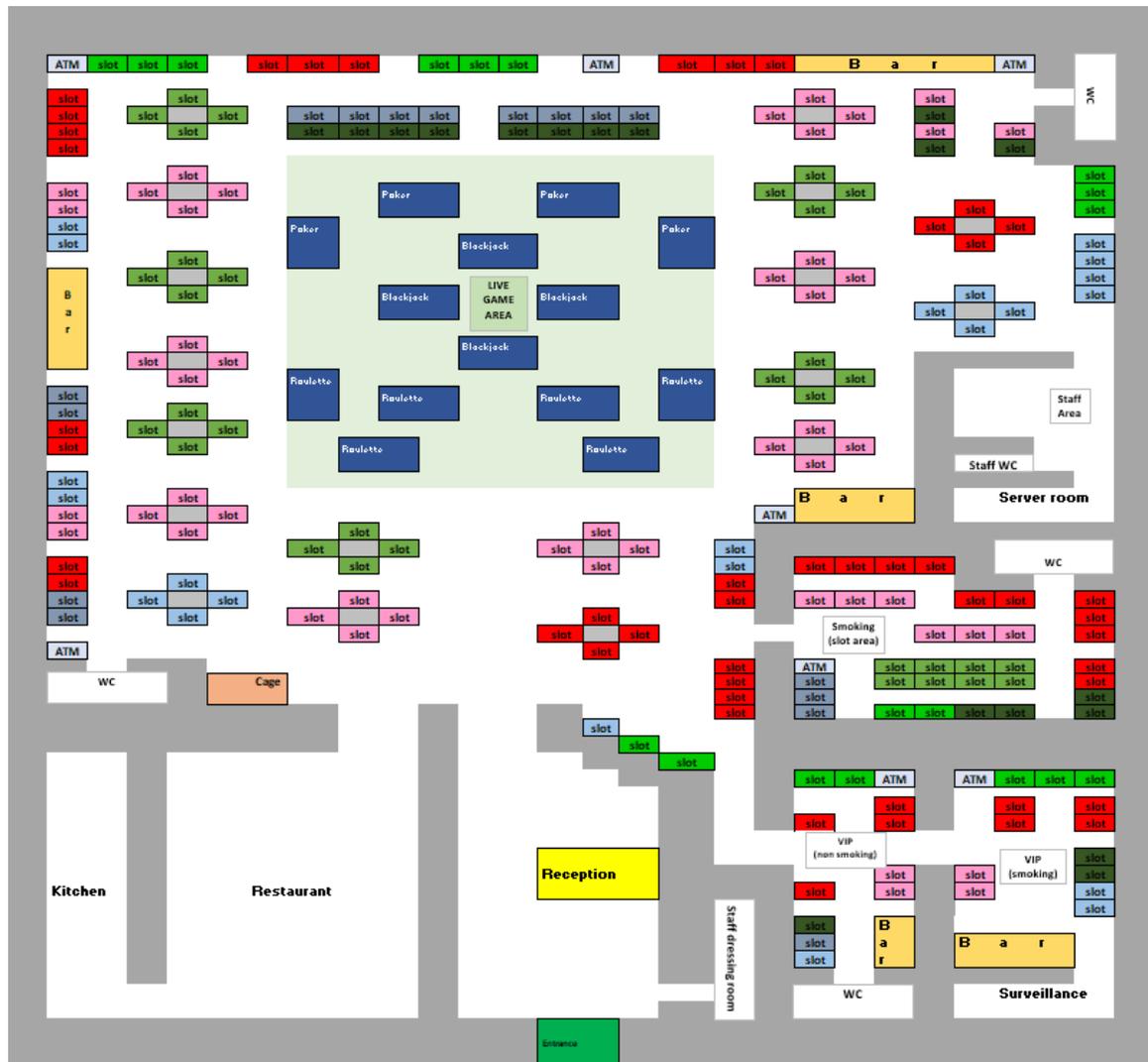
A critical aspect of the floor plan of a casino that has to be considered is the use of space. Several participants mentioned that Roulette is the most popular live game. As the space in a casino is limited, the floor plan layout of a casino can improve customer relationships by offering a live game that gives customers the most satisfaction. According to these findings, it would be Roulette.

One participant evaluated that there are two types of high rollers (Interview 4, 2022). This is an essential factor that must be considered, especially when planning to construct separate VIP areas for high rollers. Many other participants were not aware of this. They assumed or generalized most high rollers to either have privacy, prefer a gaming design, or want to be seen, thus preferencing the playground design.

The floor plan layout, hence adjustments for unique customers, can improve the customer relationship. Depending on the management's awareness of customer Lifetime Value (LTV), if requests from valuable customers include layout changes, then the floor plan can be used even as a tool to increase customer relationships.

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher has designed a casino floor plan layout that incorporates all aspects discussed. The floor plan can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Casino Floor Plan Layout based on Findings



Source: Author's own

The casino in Figure 4 has been designed for the central and eastern European markets. The floor plan was created using Microsoft Excel. Once the guests enter the casino, they will be greeted in a large entrance hall at the reception. The large entrance hall is typical for playground design casinos. Past the reception, the guests can already see the live game area, which has been placed in the centre of the casino so that it can be seen from almost everywhere inside.

As Roulette has been found to be the most appealing live game in this market, six tables have been placed, of which four look towards the entrance. Overall, fourteen live game tables have been included (Roulette, Blackjack, and Poker). Participants most mentioned those three.

The casino includes a large restaurant and five bars. Two bars are located in the separate VIP area, further separated into smoking and non-smoking (to attract different types of high rollers).

There is also a separate slot area where smoking is permitted for customers. The macro design of the casino is a mixture of playground and gaming design as slot machines have been placed to form narrow corridors at the top of the casino and in the smoking slot area. Most participants had recommended this arrangement.

Restrooms have been placed relatively far from each other, and the customer will always pass an ATM when going there in the main casino area.

Seven different slot machines can be distinguished on the floor plan concerning the slot mix. However, as previously discussed, market research must be conducted before committing to the final slot mix. Seven different slot machine types would not be sufficient, especially considering the size of the casino. Usually, different slot colours represent different games on casino floor plans. Participants have mentioned two crucial slot machine manufacturers in the central and eastern European markets, which would certainly be included in the slot mix: Apex and Novomatic.

However, further research has to be conducted to determine if the floor plan in Figure 4 works, hence determining its effectiveness.

6. Conclusion

Several ways in the floor plan layout of a casino can improve customer relations, and thus revenue in the central and eastern European market have been found and discussed. As the atmosphere of a casino has been distinguished to be an essential aspect of customer satisfaction; therefore, the casino design has to be chosen with great attention to detail. This has been evaluated in the literature review by testing different décor element combinations and by participants from this study's methodology. The feelings and emotions created by the atmosphere are important for new customers to achieve a "wow-effect" and for existing customers to establish long-term customer relationships.

The European casino market has been found to lack the focus on the live game that could improve the overall atmosphere and, thus, customers' feelings. Live game is an essential part of the casino that is highly valued by all participants interviewed—especially Roulette, as it has been found to be the most popular live game in Europe. While an excellent live game can make a casino stick out from the competition, having a restaurant inside the casino that is being used for CRM purposes can even be considered a competitive advantage. Despite this being considered standard in other markets, it is not in Europe. Especially not in the eastern European market.

Concerning the casino design, a mixture of the playground and gaming design has been found to be the most efficient in this market environment. The most mentioned combination includes a high ceiling, a lot of space, separate rooms with even narrow corridors, and a maze-like slot layout but an open live game area. As this

can positively affect the atmosphere, it can increase customer relations, and more customers usually result in higher revenues for the casino.

Furthermore, the preference for having a casino design that is considered to have a lot of space has been found to be the result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, the preference was not as straightforward as now. However, as the area is limited in a building, the space has to be used efficiently. Many participants of Group 1 have also stressed this.

Another critical factor to consider is the customer LTV. According to the results of this study, layout changes can be used as a CRM practice for high rollers. However, the customer LTV has to be carefully determined by management.

Additionally, a casino floor plan was created that incorporates the significant aspects of a casino floor plan mentioned by the participants.

7. Limitations, Recommendations and Implications

7.1 Limitations

Several limitations were evident due to the nature of in-depth interviews, hence the chosen qualitative data collection approach. Conducting twenty in-depth interviews can be costly. Also, it is a time-consuming process but necessary for investigating how the casino floor plan layout can improve customer relations and thus increase revenue.

Furthermore, the analysis and extraction of data that can be compared are even more time-consuming. Another limitation was that most interview participants did not speak English as their first language. The interviewer had the impression that

most participants could communicate their ideas. However, this can only be assumed as the discussions might have been more valuable in the participant's first language.

Other limitations have occurred during the data collection process. In-depth interviews with experts are generally voice recorded and then transcript. However, ten participants did not give consent to be recorded. As a result, the interviewer had to take notes of the participants' responses, which means that their responses are likely to be less detailed than the ones by participants that agreed to be recorded.

Another limitation that occurred during the data collection was that one participant (of Group 2, hence not a casino employee) did not want to answer several questions. This can be considered a severe limitation to the study due to the small population size (20 participants). However, in-depth interview data populations typically include between ten and twenty participants. Therefore, this is not considered a significant limitation.

Additionally, as the researcher used a random sampling method for Group 2 (casino guests), this group only contained one female participant. However, as the casino industry is male-dominated, an equal male/female ratio in the data would not necessarily increase the validity. Including the female participants of Group 1 (casino employees), the study had 15% female participants.

Some limitations occurred after the data had been collected and analysed. As already mentioned, the study population included four professional poker players. Even though poker players are casino customers, it appears that their opinions can significantly differ from regular casino customers. The weight of the data collected from these participants can be high concerning factors such as décor but lower in,

for example, slot machine-related topics (as many of them do not play slots or have only tried it a couple of times). Another limitation that was identified after the data had been collected and analysed was that the participants were not asked for their age. Although some participants told their ages, the researcher did not ask all participants. This limitation should be considered for further research.

7.2 Recommendations

Due to the limitations that have been evaluated, the researcher provides several recommendations for future research within the field. First, the researcher would recommend using multimethod research. Besides conducting qualitative in-depth interviews, a structured survey to gather quantitative data regarding casino guests' preferences would enable a more profound analysis.

Another recommendation would be only to conduct in-depth interviews with participants that agree to be recorded, as the information, hence the data collected, would be more detailed.

Furthermore, the difference between the floor layout preferences of casino guests that predominantly play poker (or generally live game) and the ones that mainly play slots could be an exciting topic for future research.

Also, as the interviewer did not ask the participants about their age, this is another recommendation for future research.

Additionally, the researcher recommends similar research in a different market (not central and eastern European) to compare the results and highlight market-specific differences.

7.3 Implications

As this research study investigated the central and eastern European casino market, the findings might not apply to others. Many participants mentioned variations depending on the market, especially between the South American and East European markets (Interview 4 & Interview 5, 2022).

Therefore, individual casinos or perhaps even the industry could benefit from further research on the topic, both in the market research in this study and potential new research in a different market. As casinos are highly engaged in CRM, their service, overall guest satisfaction, and ultimately revenue could be increased.

Another implication of this study is the relevance for people that do not operate a casino currently but want to in the future. They can benefit from these valuable insights. Besides existing operators, managers can also benefit from the information that has been obtained and evaluated. This does not only account for the primary data and author's work but also for the literature that has been discussed, as they conducted valuable research for atmosphere, design, and CRM.

Furthermore, several participants of this study mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the layout preferences of many customers that previously favoured a maze-like slot machine layout and now prefer a playground design (Interview 4 & Interview 10, 2022). This is another implication that should be considered by both existing casinos and potential new ones.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Transcripts

There are twenty interview transcripts. Group 1 refers to participants that (currently) work in a casino and Group 2 participants do not work in the casino.

The questions asked (including follow-up questions) by the interviewer always start with the letter “Q.” The response of the participant always start with the letter “A.”

Interview 1 from (Group 1)

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: I am 25 years old male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: I am currently working as a pit boss in a casino.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: I did graduate at high school.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: If I am (in) work then I visit (other) casinos approximately one time in a year (in) the holidays or something like that.

Q: And when you work 5 days, no?

A: Four to five days in a week.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: As a pit boss you said, since when?

A: As a pit boss this is my third year so since 2019.

Q: Okay, and before other positions?

A: I worked in the casino as a dealer since 2016

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: Floor plan of casino is really important because on that depends if the casino will be successful or not.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: It is very important to diversify the games and so because some people like different types of the games than another, so it is important.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: The best for customers is with the one with jackpots because customers have feeling that with a lower bet you can win a lot of money so that's the best one with the jackpots.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: Casino without live game is not a casino.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: In my opinion the most played and entertaining for the guest is roulette but in the last years here in our casino, (what) is really popular (is) Russian poker.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: It is really important you really don't want that hunger will take your guests away.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

To give some background, like there is basically two types. There is like playground (casino design) which is high ceilings a lot of space, plants and then there is like the gaming (casino) design, which is like narrow corridors or a lot of slot machines. Which one do you think is better?

A: Better is the (one) with the high ceilings (and) with the more space was so that people doesn't feel like they are under pressure or something like that.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: As I said, in my opinion, the first one with the high ceilings.

Q: Did you experience casinos making

s in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

For example, having your own slot machine or your own area for one guest.

A: I did not experience that but we did some adjustments for the VIP players or for the players at those slots because after we saw the statistics, we did know that people like more privacy on the slots, so we just moved (a) maximum of four slots near (next) to each other.

Q: So, for both people that make high bets and low bets?

A: Yes.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: It is very important because while customers have feeling that they are important even the low bet players, for us, for management, they will more likely come back.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Both positive and negative it depends on the situation with the customers.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes, I did, first like once in my life when the customer was in the really bad mood, he was losing money and one of the managers did not know about that and he made some bad jokes so that situation was not really good in my opinion.

Q: Anything really good you noticed also from management with customers?

A: Yes, but for me it is like (a) normal thing when someone won some big amount or something like that then manager come and shake their hand (to) show them that we are interested in this situation.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: The most effective in my opinion is being polite to the guests even if they are rude or something just to be professional with them and stay polite.

Interview 2 from Group 1

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: I am 44 years old male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: I am working as a manager in a casino.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: I have (done) high school with graduation.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: If not counting it if I am working in casino, no visits of other casinos.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: About 24 years and I started as a dealer.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: The casino floor plan (is the) most important business and the best is one floor only.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: It is (a) very good (thing) for customers because (they will) visit us not only (from) Germany but others from the world and if you have more types of slot machines it is better for the customers.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: Now the best (are) which have the jackpot (system).

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: Before five years (the) live game was 80% and slot 20% (revenue of the casino). Now it is 40% for live game and rest slots but a casino with no live game is no casino.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: The (most) interesting is roulette and young customers like to play cards and what is interesting (for them) is Russian poker, for young players.

Q: And which one is played the least?

A: Classic poker.

Q: In your opinion, is it important for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: If you want a full (whole) casino you have (to have) three things, restaurants, event (space) and slot area.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: The most (effective) is one with one floor, only one floor. If your casino has two or more floors, it is a big problem because (for example) in FB is a very nice casino but (it) has too many small rooms and this is not good for players because (for example) if too many players played card table and if (they) pause and (want to) play roulette (there is no space).

Q: So, you mean one big room (is the most effective)?

A: Yes.

Q: And also separate smoking areas, right?

A: In live game not.

Q: And generally?

A: For slot area yes. It is better but live game (should be) in round (shape) or ellipse.

Q: So, big rooms with smoking area, slot area and a big room for live game area?

A: Yes, this is the best.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

Q: You answered this question basically (in the previous). So, playground (casino design) with high ceilings and a lot of space.

A: Yes.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: If there are many customers, we saw that many do not like it if the others see their credits (money put on in the machine).

Q: And in live game?

A: We do not have many high rollers.

Q: How many slot machines have to be taken on average that you would increase the number of slot machines?

A: Depends. More slots mean more money for the casino.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: For VIP?

Q: For VIP and also for regular customers.

A: We did a new slot layout due to us incorporating a new system. Most players want to play privately. More than four slot machines next to each other can result in a problem.

Q: Did you ever reserve slot machines for customers?

A: We never really had players that wanted that. We have middle-bet players.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: The customer is very important!

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Good and bad depending on the customer.

Q: Can you give some examples?

A: A customer was drunk and pushed a slot machine and it fell on him.

Q: How did you remain?

A: We sent him home and next time he gets no alcohol.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes, I even made.

Q: Can you give examples – fault of management?

A: A member once came back after a long time and he previously had a platinum card (the highest available in the casino) but the customer is a known-person, an important one. The system deleted his access and we had issues with management as it was a hassle until he got back the card, hence access and appropriate treatment.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: There are briefings for employees if an important customer comes and what his preferences are. This is important. Some have to be treated with extra care.

Interview 3 from Group 1

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: I am male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: I am working as a duty manager for GCL.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: I studied at the gymnasium in (the) Czech Republic.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: I am working in a casino, so I am almost every day in the casino.

Q: And if you are not working?

A: If I am not working, if I have the opportunity to visit another casino and (to) compare them – I am happy to do so. For me as a manager it is important what the competition is doing.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Notice: Answered by the interviewer (“yes you have”).

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

Q: What is your position again?

A: I am working as a duty manager.

Q: Since how long? Since when?

A: 2017 in the Czech Republic, here in Liechtenstein I am working as a manager since two years.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: In my opinion it is very important. The first impression and the feeling the guest has when entering the casino is the most important. So, in my opinion, it is the most important thing.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: So, it is very important. Probably the most important thing to (offer) a good selection of slot machines and especially games. I noticed myself that in each region there are other games more or less popular and played more than (in) other(s).

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

Like, for example, slantops or multi-roulette. Which one do you think is the one that customers like the most?

A: So, the most customers want is from the slot machines.

Q: From which manufacturer? Which company?

A: So, it is difficult to say. There are people or customers that like to play the games from Novomatic and on the other side the people or the customers want to play slot games from Apex, you know – so it is difficult to say if any Novomatic or Apex is most popular because anytime (it can be) that the customer wants to play another game.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: In my opinion, it is very important to have live game tables in the casino. Live game is just part of the casino, you know – it makes the casino and generally many guests playing slot machines started with the live games and only later turned to slot machines. So, it is very very important to have the live game tables in the casino because from the other side there are two customers, some play just the live game.

Q: And is it often in casinos that they make, for example, poker - that (the customer who) wants to leave (the casino) has to go through the live game area and the whole casino – is the reason that the poker player (for example) will play maybe some money he won (in poker)?

A: Yea, that is possible. For example, here in GC, the poker area is on the third floor and what you just said happens here.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: That is hard to say. We have all kind of players with special preferences. In general, I say that Roulette is still the most popular.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: It is very important to offer something more than just a casino. Slot machines and live game is in every casino. The most important thing is good customer service. Therefore, the restaurant is.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: Depends where the casino is how the capabilities are.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: I think generally it depends on the size of the casino. Like small ones can be comfortable if done properly. I would not pick one as being preferable. It depends.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: There is different type of high rollers. Some like it small and private and others like it big and to show off.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: I have never experienced this in casinos where I worked – separate VIP area. But I think it is important to have.

Q: Do you reserve slot machines for high rollers?

A: Yes, of course.

Q: Also for normal players?

A: Only high rollers.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: This is the most important thing. The guest is the absolute priority for the casino and therefore he must be treated as such. Look at it this way: the guest pays our wage.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous response.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: As I can compare different casinos from the Czech Republic and Liechtenstein, I can say that I have seen a lot. I experienced management decisions not being the right ones (I observed) but I also made wrong ones, which I could have done better. That is part of management. Sometimes even right decisions can have a negative impact or result.

Q: Did you experience management treating guests in the wrong way?

A: Yes of course. People can just not have sympathy. That happens. But I also experienced managers making decisions not based on factors that matter or are important.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

Note: The interviewer gave examples and asked if the casino takes notes of preferences that guests have.

A: I do that yes. There is a limit though but cigarettes for high roller of course. However, the other guests have to be considered. It is not just high rollers. People should be treated equally but of course for some there are special benefits (like the free cigarettes).

Interview 4 from Group 1

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male, I am male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: My current occupation is (that) I am now CEO of two casinos and yea, that is my current status.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: I was doing a handels (trade) academy and I (did) matura (high school diploma), that is the highest.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

Q: When working and also when not.

A: When I am working then I do an opponent research and when I am on holiday and there is a casino nearby of course I will visit it just to know what they are offering for the customers.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Note: The questions were already answered by the participant.

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: 1990. I started as a dealer. I was learning from French roulette to classics such as craps. Then I was poker manager for Casino Austria. All together I worked for 16 years in the industry. After poker manager, I worked free-lance (floor man, etc.) in many different countries and after that for shuffle master (responsible for Africa in Europe). Then I also did certifications for casino equipment in South Africa, England, like almost all over Europe. I also once was casino manager in Czech, responsible for 14 casinos. After that I started as Gaming Manager here in Liechtenstein and now I am CEO of two casinos here.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: It is one of the most important things in a casino and it is always developed. If you take over a casino that is the first thing to look at. Especially why it was sold.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: Depends on the region of the casino. It could be a very important thing (factor). In central Europe you need to have to have the most popular machines for being profitable.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

Especially here.

A: Here is Novomatic-land. In Switzerland, however, you will not find as many Novomatic machines. Casino Austria has a big mix but the most popular are Novomatic machines

especially with book of rar and lucky lady. Each region has different top-games. Here it is lucky lady. However, those two and sizzling hot are the most popular in central Europe.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: A casino is not a casino if you do not have live game. Considering the development of the past 30 years, live game lost percentage on the casino floor. Here we got 20-25% revenue from live game. That is unique in Europe.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: Depending on the group of customers, experienced players – of course they will play roulette and blackjack because on roulette is the highest payout if you play on number and blackjack is more mathematical, they know the bank advantage is 0.5% and following mathematical rules the chances of winning increase. The most boring game in my opinion is casino war. I saw it in England but I would not offer that in a casino but that is only my opinion. In England it is a successful game.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: I have worked in many different casinos with and without restaurant. I would prefer a casino with a restaurant due to the increased service and benefits you can offer to customers and VIPs.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: What do you mean with type?

Note: The interviewer mentions the next question.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: In these times, especially with the COVID crisis, it is good to have more space. The ceiling high is not important but up to three meters. Higher than that makes the air quality better of course. It should not be a casino design set-up. Customers want to visit a casino!

Q: So playground design?

A: A lot of space yes but depending on the region you got two types of high rollers. One who wants his own area where he gets special service, an example would be in south Africa you got separate VIPs area as they would not even want to be with other guests. In Europe it is different. They want to be seen (show off). All high rollers are different but generally here they want to be seen but you cannot generalize. I cannot make claims about their individual preferences. In some regions you can do special rooms for high rollers like minimum bet 10000-euro, Monte Carlo for example but here 90% of the people want to be with the crowd.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

Note: The participant answered this question in this previous answer.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

Note: The interviewer gave more examples and talked about immediate adjustments.

A: Immediate is difficult due to surveillance regulations. I experienced that if you have VIP or regular customers and they play always one machine, then the casino cannot move the machine. Two meters is already too much. They want this specific place – unchanged. No

matter who uncomfortable the place seems. If you change something you will lose the customer. Generally immediate is anyways not possible anywhere by law.

Q: If a customer calls to reserve a slot machine and says he comes in 1h, would you reserve it?

A: If it is not currently taken than yes.

Q: For all players?

A: No, only for customers we know. On the telephone everyone can tell anything. If we know the customer and it is not occupied than of course we will follow his request.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: This is the most important thing in the casino. The priority is to keep the customer and to create a familiar atmosphere. Know the customer, drinks, food, favorite game – this is important.

Q: So, the casino takes notes of this?

A: Definitely. The most important thing is that the customer comes because of you. You have to know him. I tell that to all new employees. Know your customer is the most important thing and it satisfies them.

Q: Is it hard to balance disturbing the customer from keeping him form playing and just engaging in a conversation?

A: It depends on the customer. There are two types. One type is happy if you just great them when they come and he arrives at his machine his favorite coffee is there. Other customer come here because they expect a certain service, like a 10-minute chat for example. Duty managers have to know what they want. I would never ignore a customer if I know he wants a chat before he plays and visa verse. Here we got two customers that follow a specific routine

and the first thing they want is a chat. The best is to give them a chat with the manager. After that they are relaxed and go play. You have to get a feeling for what a customer wants.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous answer.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

Note: The interviewer gave examples.

A: Of course, I experienced that in 30 years working in the business. For me the worst was a regular customer playing thousands of euros in every visit. He always played the same game with the same bet on multi roulette. Once he played his game, his favorite number hit and a server connection issue resulted in him not receiving the credit and management decided to not do anything about it and that they did not really care. This is a proper example of management failure. This customer always loses thousands in every visit and still he is treated like this.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: We try to give the customer the feeling that he is home and welcome. That is the most important thing. Do not make them feel like they are just customers. It does not matter if he bets high or super high. One can consistently bet high and the other rarely but when he comes, he plays a lot. Now you have to decide who is more important. I think both are. They are equal in importance and that is how you have to treat them. I always say where many people are, many people will come. That is the best advertisement – word-of-mouth.

Interview 5 from Group 1

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: I am a male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: I work as a duty manager for the GCL.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: Abitur (high school diploma).

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: When I work 5 days a week and outside work I would say maybe 8 times a year, for research, for example.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Obviously yes. I worked in almost every position that is on the floor. It is my 13th year.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: It is very important. If you would like it to compare it with a retail store supermarket, you can obviously create an environment that you would like to have for the customer experience and also kind of guide them in a way that you want them to walk through the store (slots and tables).

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: It should be a wide variety in order to seek attraction. Diversification is important. People are creatures of habits. They want to stick with what they are used to but they also want to have choice.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: Depends on the market you are in. Here I would say the most popular ones are the ones with jackpots. In general, visually appealing slots are the ones that attract customers.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: My personal opinion is that it is important as I am a casino romantic. Also, I think this is how people that are not in touch with the casino imagine it. They know this from movies, advertisements, etc. To attract new guests, you need live game as it is the dream you are selling. Yes, slots have jackpots and big payouts but the general stereotype of a casino includes live game.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

Note: The interviewer said that the participant can also just answer based on this casino.

A: Here it is fast games that are more appealing, hence faster results trigger their joy. One good example is roulette. You can easily get attached to this game due to the fast results. Card games are concerned with knowledge such as strategies. This might be a barrier for some people. Therefore, most prefer fast live game.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: In my opinion it is very important. It is one of the tools that you have to use for the customer relationship.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: Can you provide layouts to choose from?

Q: Can you first state what should be seen first when entering and just give a general layout?

A: Obviously you can provide a floor plan that is on a subtle way tailoring to your needs and not always to their need. For example, placing stuff so that you have to walk through the whole casino. As already said, live game represents the casino, so it should be close to the entrance. In terms of smoking, the majority of people, in Switzerland, are non-smokers but there should be a few tables in a smoking area. This would even provide a better service but it is not mandatory.

Q: Would a VIP area than be with or without smoking?

A: It is a difficult question. You can argue for both but I would do it in a smoking area.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: You can argue for both. Let's combine this question with the next.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: Here we got people with high finances. So, people are used to a standard here but many also seek for privacy. The best would be a combination of both. Like having a maze layout but high ceilings.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: Yes, we did make adjustments. We changed the setup of the VIP slot machines so that people have more privacy there and there is a higher frequency on the machines being played now.

Q: Is here also high rollers that want to be seen?

A: There is but not the majority.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: It is probably the most important thing for a casino because you want to establish long-term relationships. Relationships have to be maintained.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

Note: The participant has answered this question in his previous answers.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

Note: The interviewer gave an example given by a previous participant.

A: I have experienced situations that are not easy to handle but sometimes you have to evaluate if the compensation and if it is worth to lose a customer. Mostly, it is not worth it, so you should compensate.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: It is the first-name relationship that matters. Small things can be really effective.

Interview 6 from Group 1

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male, male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: Surveillance manager and manager of compliance.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: Uhm, Matura (high school).

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Maybe once a year when I do not work otherwise 5 days a week.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Yes, 22 years. I started as a security office.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: Very important. It is important where you position the live game and slots. It has to look appealing and attractive to the customer.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: It is important. Here the best working ones are the old super cherry (mechanical wheels). So, it depends in what country you are.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous answer.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: In a grand casino it is important to have also live game. Here we do not require it by law but in other countries you require it by law (slot-live-game-ratio). For customers it is attractive to play live with a dealer. The tangible benefits. The feeling of the casino – I cannot imagine a casino without live game.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: I think roulette and blackjack. The least liked in this part of Europe is punto banco. Asian customers like it but here people do not and we do not have that many Asian customers.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: It is important because you can give goodies by that to customers. It is a marketing tool. Casino restaurants are not designed to make money. It is purely for customers service, hence to have extra benefits.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

Note: The interviewer gave some examples but not the casino designs.

A: It depends on the law. Casino customers like to smoke but it depends on the law. However, you need a smoker area and a slot area where you allow guests to smoke. However, most countries do not allow a smoking area where live game is (due to dealer – smoke exposure).

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: More effective is playground. I do not think that VIPs like gaming casino design. You want a big place with high ceilings and increased entertainment. Of course, customers differ. Therefore, you need space to provide for a broader audience of customers.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous response.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: Yes of course. If a good guest wants something, then it is in the interest of casino management to fulfil the wish. The casino always has to consider the VIP wishes. If it is possible to fulfil the wish then you have to do it.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: It is the most important thing out of everything. Know your customer. Make their wishes come true, if you can. Especially in a competitive environment. Loyal customers are desirable but to establish that you have to know your customer. Speak with them and observe them. CRM is important.

Q: So, the casino makes notes of what the player likes?

A: Yes, it is important and there is many tools.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous response.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes, in Europe we have a strong gaming law. It is important to fulfil customer wishes but the law is the most important thing. Sometimes this can contradict with VIP customer wishes. This has to be communicated clearly. The law has to be followed always.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous response.

Interview 7 from Group 1

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: CEO in this casino.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: I am a graduate engineer.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Private?

Q: Private or working.

A: Well, I do every day to the casino.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Yes, since 5 years. I started as a poker dealer.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: It is really important because when the guests are coming to the casino, you have to be able to provide a good atmosphere.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: I think it is really important to have different slots as you have different guests.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: I think the best one is Novomatic VIP terminal but the Apex Glover Links too.

High rollers only play Novomatic VIP (book of rar or lucky lady six).

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: It is also really important for the casino. You can make money here. Especially as the live game players will also play slots.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: The best live game is roulette and the least punto banco.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: Oh, this is really important. It provides more options to the guests and thus creates a better atmosphere.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

Note: The interviewer combined this and the next question.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: More space is the best. We have the biggest casino here in a dense casino network and we are the best and space contributes to that.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: High roller like space.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: A high rollers want space but also be gamble private. This is especially in Liechtenstein. It is not a European thing though. People generally like to be seen when playing.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: For me, the customer is the number one. If you have good customers, you have a good casino. That is my philosophy.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Make events. That is important. Speak with the guests if they have ideas for the events. We make the events for them so incorporate them.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes. Not in this casino but in others the casino excludes slot machines due to high variances and customers want that. So management should provide it.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: Get to know you customer. The guest should come because of the employees. If every employee has customer relationships, then the guests will come.

Interview 8 from Group 1

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: I am male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: I am the casino manager of REC in Tirana, Albania.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: I have a bachelor's degree in business administration and management.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Depends on the country. Because of licensing I cannot visit many. If I did then for training. I do not gamble myself but it is important to see what the competitors do.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: I started when I was 18 as a part time dealer. When I turned 19, I worked full time. I became floor manager in south Africa (Caesar Entertainment). After that I had to do a bachelor in order to become General Manager. Then I was in Cyprus as an operation manager for eight years. Then Apex hired me and I became a casino manager here in Albania.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: It depends on the building. I prefer, as I saw in Las Vegas, to generate wow-effect. It has to be a clear path where customers can find what they are looking for. The floor plan does affect your revenue. If you put table games against a wall or a corner then it will not work. It has to be in the center of attention.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: Depends on your market. They are expensive. Choosing the right product is important. Market research has to be conducted before acquiring the slot machines but I do believe in variety.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: I only have to products and both are played. Apex and Novomatic. I think the older generation of gamblers seem to stay away from too technologically advanced slot designs. I saw survey on that in the past.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: For me it is not a casino if it has no live game. It creates a better atmosphere. Customer service can be increased via that due to the engaging environment. It also depends on the customer.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: Roulette. In most casinos I worked at roulette is the best game.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: You know I spent all my career in resort casinos. I am used to this standard. Maybe it is a bias opinion but I think it is very important.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: High ceiling and wow-effect.

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous response.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: Luxurious environment, wow-effect. If you think about a high roller, he does not go to a three-star restaurant. He eats at the fancy restaurant. He goes there for the quality.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous response.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: I have in Cyprus yes. They requested a new private entrance and different table positioning and it was done accordingly.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: Extremely important. A relationship management program is important. However, you have to draw a line. The law is the line. This has to be communicated.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: I implemented a table where marketing invited diamond card holders once a month and the casino CEO with a manager, plus a chef to cook for them. This creates customer relationship. I have done this with all level of management. It is important for duty managers to have this too.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes, in South Africa we did a concert for Indian guests and some of them got offended for non-Indian guests wearing their religious clothes. Ethics is important to consider.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: You know it changes. The biggest challenge can be a language barrier. It is important to then have good CRM with guests that you are able to communicate with. For me the best practice is to be honest and strict at the same time. Do not over-do it. You can anger guests by that. Make the connection and keep it up.

Interview 9 from Group 1

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: I am a female.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: I am a marketing manager.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: I visited the high school with focus on design.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Since I work here rarely. Before about once a month.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Before I did not. Now I am here for two years.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: In my opinion it is very important as it dictates how long a customer will stay. I think the best is a maze layout.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: It is important. Depends on the guests. But more games give more options.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: I think it varies between the customers. My favorite is lucky lady charm.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: It is also very important. That is the place of customer interaction.

Q: What is your favorite live game?

A: Blackjack.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: Roulette is the best and here also poker, of course.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: That is very important as some guests like to combine the casino experience with others such as a nice dinner. It increases customer satisfaction.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous response.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: Each has its advantages but I think the gaming casino design is more effective. The playground casino design is more practiced in Las Vegas.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: Playground design.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: A separate VIP area but I would make a very exclusive one with even a separate floor.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: It is very important. Especially in a casino. Only that way you can create long-term relationships.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Here?

Q: During your two years but also generally if you have.

A: Direct guest contact is important. A newsletter is also good. We make this, for example. Events are also important. Exclusive experience is important. Quality over quantity. Also, we open the live game earlier to have a competitive advantage. We take complaints very seriously. Does not matter how much the customer bets.

Q: You work closely with casino management as a marketing manager?

A: Yes, very closely.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: No, I did experience that since I work here. Of course, there are sometimes complaints by guests but we take them seriously and try to resolve them as quickly as possible.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

Note: The participant answered this question in his previous response.

Interview 10 from Group 1

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: General manager.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: Matura (high school degree).

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Daily.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Yes. 33 years.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: One of the most important things.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: Depending on the market where you operate.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: Depending on the market where you operate.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: Without live game it is not a casino.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: American roulette, BJ, poker variants and baccara.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: Yes, it is a nice marketing tool.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: Preferable to have all on one floor, no steps down or up - like a box.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: High ceilings and spacious. Now more than before – thank to COVID.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: Low ceilings and maze-like (meaning a combination).

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: Yes. In GCT.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: The better the relationship the higher the customer loyalty.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Customer loyalty programs.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes. Abusing the rules for personal advantages.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: The customer loyalty program should be easy understandable for customers and staff too.

Interview 11 from Group 1

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Female.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: Marketing and graphics employee.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: High school diploma.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Twice a year, in the past more frequently.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: I have been working in a casino for more than 4 years. I have been employed at Swiss casinos for more than two years as a casino attendant and bartender. I have worked almost a year at GCL as a casino host and over a year in the marketing department of GCL.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: I would guess a floor plan is strategically and psychologically significant, but it is not my expertise.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino? Furthermore, what type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: Personally, I feel attracted to new slot machines with wide and curved displays. The more colorful the game looks - like the better it is. I think a large selection of different games is important to cover many interests. I experienced that Book of Ra and Lucky Ladys Charm are the two most popular games of all time in Europe. It is also important to have enough slot machines, so the customer does not have to wait for a free slot machine in times of high visitor numbers.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: It is essential for a casino to have live game tables. It is a typical image – the atmosphere of a casino. In every advertising you see live game tables and croupiers. Live game tables should be placed in the first area when entering the casino. They are the big difference between a casino and a game room. Game rooms have a bad reputation because they offer less service and not such a good atmosphere and seem cheap.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: It really depends (on) the personal preferences of each customer. I have got to know many people. Some of them were blackjack players only, some of them were only playing roulette, some of them were playing all of the live games, even at the same time.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: To offer the most comfort and best service experience – it is necessary to include a good restaurant. High quality food, great and professional staff, (and) memorable dishes.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: Not my expertise but I would guess the live game has (to) be placed at first when entering the casino. They create the typical atmosphere. I would include a lounge to calm down and I would include the restaurant in the casino. So, the guests do not have to leave the building or casino area. I think they will faster continue gambling if the restaurant is in the casino area. If there is a VIP area, I would place it separately on a higher level (1st floor, 2nd floor) – psychologically to make the guests feel special and “higher class.”

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: I have been to the casino in the Marina Bay Sands in Singapore. A huge and spacious casino with the typical interior and I kinds felt overwhelmed and lost. Gaming casino designs tend to feel constricting when they are on a high number of visitors. I recommend something in between. My personal and my customer experiences are that most of the customers prefer their little private space while gambling. Most of them do not want to feel watched.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: I would say high-rollers would prefer spacious casinos with playground casino designs because they look elegant, prestige, graceful, upper class.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: I did not experience adjustments in the floor plan layout but adjustments in promotions, different treatments and benefits for VIPs. My reference is casino Bregenz. It is divided in two areas. One the lower levels (is) an area for all kind of customers, no dress code, (and a) smoking area. On the higher level a classier area with dress code (suits for men), a lounge, a piano, great atmosphere, (and a) non-smoking area.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: It is a service for our customers and important for customer loyalty.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Interview 12 from Group 2

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: Self-employed.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: Matura (high school diploma).

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Once or twice a month.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: No.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: A good mix in the layout is very important to guarantee customer satisfaction.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: For professional players it is more important, for amateur players not really.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: The most appealing machines are from Novoline (Novomatic), then the other machines.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: For me it is the most important thing in a casino. It is the “adventure” in a casino.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: (1) Roulette, (2) Blackjack, and (3) Poker.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: It depends on the casino, if it is a luxury (hence resort) casino, then yes. If there (are) only slot machines (then) it is not necessary.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: High ceilings, a lot of space, (and) different gaming floors.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: I prefer the playground design.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: The gaming casino design will attract more high-rollers.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: I know some casinos with separate VIP areas. Otherwise, there (are) separate rooms for smokers and special live games.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: Like in every business it is very important.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Personal contact, (and) bonuses.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: No.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Interview 13 from Group 2

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

Note: The participant plays poker on a professional level.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: Matura (high school).

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Two to three times a month, maybe.

Q: And online?

A: Does poker count as going to the casino? If yes, then three to four times a week.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Yes for 6 months as a poker dealer.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: Very important. It gives structure to the casino and it depends (dictates) where customers are moving and spend their time. So, it has a high importance.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: Variety is always good it gives more choices. So, it has a positive effect.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: I guess the jackpot slot machines with big price pools and old-school slots as my experience is limited (with slots).

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

Including poker.

A: Definitely important. You should not be limited and have choices. For me poker is the most important but blackjack and roulette can also be fun.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: Good question, I would say probably blackjack the most as you can influence the game, apart from poker of course, I would put poker in a different category. Roulette is boring for me. Card games are interesting as you can influence the outcome.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: Also, very important. If you spend a lot of time in a casino, which people usually do, having food or drink choices is also a nice option.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

Note: Both questions were answered in one.

A: I have been to Vegas casinos and I like it there a lot as you can move around freely and nothing is in your way. Also that you can see other areas. That is pretty good. In a maze area you are limited and you do not get the whole vibe and that is not good for me.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: High rollers tend to like their privacy, I think. An excluded area is probably better but generally they would like to have space but, as I said, in a separate (VIP) area.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: Yes definitely. Not only in big but also small casinos. In Vienna, for example, there is always an exclusive area and they definitely try to adjust to their high rollers (wishes).

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: Definitely very important. It plays a big role for customer coming back because casinos have a hard time retaining customers – especially if they had bad experiences. Offering special benefits or some things to keep them coming is important.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: It ranges from free drinks, to free food, even a whole hotel stays and stuff like that. In the US is way more options than in Europe. In Austria, for example, you hardly get anything for free or as a bonus if you spend a lot of time and money there. So depending on the location of the casino it can range from hardly anything to getting two months hotel stay for free due to the money and time spent there by customers such as my friends.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes, for sure. Especially as a poker player – you are always treated a little bit worse than a regular casino customer I would say. Because you do not bring in a lot of money so you are always the least important one when there is a problem. We had a situation two months ago in a poker tournament where the casino miscalculated the prize pool and already made payouts to the people that already left the tournament and it was up to us to cover the costs of the casino mistake and we did not understand why we should pay for that. There was a one-hour break in the tournament because of that and that really was bad CRM. It was insane.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

Note: The interviewer listed some examples.

A: Loyalty programs are definitely a good idea – depending on what they can offer and what benefits you get. Personal relationship is important. The manager has to be an easy-going person. There are variable options but loyalty programs are a good start. It is easy to implement but you can easily track customers and thus give awards.

Interview 14 form Group 2

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: (Professional) poker player.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: Bachelor of Advanced Sciences.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Between one to three times a week.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Only as a self-employed power player, but not as a casino employee.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: It is certainly of great importance.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: Not me (personally) it is not important but for the casino it is very important.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: I do not know.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: Very important.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: Poker tables, but that comes with my profession.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: It depends on various factors such as the size of the casino and its location.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: I do not know.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: I do not know.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: Probably the first (playground design).

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: I did not.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: Very important.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: I have experienced casino's that treat all customers the same, and others that treat key accounts (customers) better than the rest.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes (as already mentioned – customers not being treated equally). I think every guest should be lovely welcomed and treated well.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: I do not know.

Interview 15 form Group 2

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: Project Manager (30% of my work) and (professional) poker player (70% of my work).

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: Master (in) Informatic and Robotic.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: 20 times a month.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Yes, as a gaming manager for three years.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: Very important! (It) has to be conceptualized by a professional (interior design, placement of games, etc.).

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: Should be very high. Players are very selective.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: Slots with multiline and free bonus games.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: For a real casino it fulfills my needs of options.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: In general, I think Roulette because (it) is the fairest game. For me, (it) is Blackjack.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: Yes (it is important), to hold customers in the area.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: Lives games (tables) at (the) entrance, promotions too, and latest slots.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: High ceiling are more preferable. I prefer spacious designs (so playground design).

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: Spacious and classical (so playground design).

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: Yes. (Players) like to eat dinner at the (live game) tables.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: Personal contact at the casino to be a good host.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Free vouchers (for slot machines or restaurant). Buying of casino packages (like to pay 50 CHF and receive 55 CHF).

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes (I did). Bad reception and bad ruling by floor.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: Lotteries and point system for goods.

Interview 16 from Group 2

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: Normal school.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Ten times a month.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: No.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: Yes.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: Very (important).

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Interview 17 from Group 2

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Female.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: Cosmetics.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: High school.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Three to four times a year.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: No, but my husband does.

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: From one to ten, I would say eight.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: From one to ten, I would say ten.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: (The ones) with funny “free games” (bonus games) or with jackpots.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: From one to ten, I would say ten.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: I do not know, but I think different tables are important. More to choose for players.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: Yes! From one to ten, I would say ten!

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: I do not know. Nice ones with enough space.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: High ceiling and spacious (so playground design).

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: High ceilings and spacious (so playground design).

Q: Did you experience casinos making in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: No (I did not).

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: From one to ten, I would say ten.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Cash for free, free drinks and (free) food.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Small players (small bets) easily get overlooked (so unequal treatment of guests, depending on their bets).

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: Sometimes free things and (to be) friendly at any time.

Interview 18 from Group 2

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: Sales Manager.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: Middle school.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: two times in a month.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: No (I did not).

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: It is very important.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: For me, it is not important.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: Very important.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: It depends on where people win or lose.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: Yes.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

Notice: Question was not answered!

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: Gaming design.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: Gaming design.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: Yes.

Notice: Question was not fully answered!

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: Very important.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Drink invitations and short chats (small talk).

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: No (I did not).

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: If a player wins some bigger money, the casino staff should celebrate (with) him or her.

Interview 19 from Group 2

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: Professional poker player.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: High school diploma.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: Once a month.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: No (I did not).

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: Very important.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: Very important.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: Most appealing I would say big jackpot ones, high stakes slots and least appealing low chance jackpot ones, simple (not colorful ones).

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: Very important.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: Best I would say Roulette, Blackjack and Poker. Worst I would say Baccarat, Easy Holdem and Tropical Poker.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: Maybe not a restaurant, but at least some kind of snacks and food.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: A maze like layout, where people have to go past everything when entering or leaving the casino. Put your best income slots or live games at choke points, where people have to walk past but also with enough space between the different games.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: Playground casino design look more aesthetic and beautiful but gaming casino designs are more efficient.

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: Playground casino design.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: Yes. VIPs got special tables for their own and they put an extra Baccarat table in the casino for VIPs to play separately.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: If you think long-term, it is essential because people are more likely to come back and loose more money if they had a good time and get the feeling of being someone special.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: Drinks on the house, special offers, complimentary services (cheaper rooms, free food and drinks).

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Yes. Not engaging with the customers and ignoring their wishes. Not standing up for obvious mistakes the casino made and tried to put the blame on the customers.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: Deals where you get like 30 chips for 26 chips, free or cheaper drinks and food, special deals, cheaper entry, cheaper or free (hotel) stay.

Interview 20 from Group 1

Notice: The participant did not agree to be recorded!

Q: Are you male, female or diverse?

A: Male.

Q: What is your current occupation?

A: Poker Dealer.

Q: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A: High school diploma.

Q: How often do you visit a casino?

A: I work since 2008 in the live gaming industry. Let's say very often, 20 days a month.

Q: Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

Q: If yes, in what position and for how long?

A: Yes, like I said, since 2008. As a freelancer poker dealer from 2008 to 2021 and as an employed poker dealer from 2022 (ongoing).

Q: In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?

A: Let's say 25%, rest 50% is for the gaming offer and the other 25% for customer service.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

A: Could be a value added to the casino, I mean, I do not see downsides in that, so why not.

Q: What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to customers?

A: Sorry, I do not really know much about slot machines. Instinctively the ones with more chances of winning big jackpots.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

A: Usually, big part of casino's earnings come from slot machines, but as form of entertaining, I think that the live game is the most important aspect.

Q: In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?

A: I think the Roulette is the most fascinating.

Q: In your opinion, how important is it for a casino to include a restaurant?

A: That increases chances to keep your customers inside the casino, instead (they would) go out for a meal.

Q: In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?

A: The gaming casino design.

Q: In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-like layout) preferable?

A: I will choose the second one (gaming casino design).

Q: In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?

A: Maybe (gaming) casino design are better, just for the privacy.

Q: Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)? If yes, which?

A: No.

Q: In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?

A: Very. Customers should feel like at home.

Q: What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?

A: I just try to get customers comfortable and let them enjoy the game.

Q: Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management? If yes, which?

A: Well, sometimes is just hard to keep situations fair for everyone (casino or customer side), but I think that this kind of situation could happen (line) in every kind of work.

Q: In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

A: Room/hotel services, bar services, and good employees at the live game tables.

Appendix 2: Interview Guideline

Interview Guideline – The Significance of a Casino Floor Plan Layout for CRM

Hello, thank you for taking the time for this interview. My name is Nico Weissengruber and I am a BSc student at Modul University Vienna. As part of a research thesis, I am trying to better understand the importance of a casino floor plan layout. I approached you since I am interested in your experiences and input regarding this topic. Is it OK for you if this interview is recorded on tape?

If **yes** → no need to take notes

If **no** → make notes

1. Are you male, female or diverse?
2. What is your current occupation?
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
4. How often do you visit a casino?
5. Have you ever worked in a casino or within the casino industry?

If yes → in what position and for how long?

6. In your opinion, how important is the floor plan layout of a casino?
7. In your opinion, how important is it to have a wide variety of slot machines in the casino?

If so → What type of slot machines do you think are the most and least appealing to

customers?

8. In your opinion, how important is it to have live game tables in a casino?

9. In your opinion, which live game tables offer the best and least customer satisfaction?
10. In your opinion, is it important for a casino to include a restaurant?
11. In your opinion, what type of casino floor plan layout is most effective?
12. In your opinion, are playground casino designs (high ceilings and spacious) or gaming casino designs (low ceilings and maze-line layout) preferable?
13. In your opinion, which of the two casino designs would rather attract high-rollers?
14. Did you experience casinos making adjustments in their floor plan layout for customers (such as a separate VIP high-roller area)?

If yes → which?
15. In your opinion, how important is good customer relationship management within a casino?
16. What customer relationship management practices have you experienced?
17. Have you experienced or observed bad customer relationship management?

If yes → Which?
18. In your opinion, what customer relationship management practices are most effective within a casino?

Thank you very much for your responses and for taking the time. You help us kicking off further research on the importance of a casino floor layout plan. Do you have any questions? If not, we are done with the interview. Goodbye and have a nice day!