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The Secret of 50-Lan

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Introduction

Sometimes we walk on the street, and we feel thirsty. Then we buy the drink from the drink shops to quench our thirst. When we wait for the drink, and take a look at the street, you can see that almost everyone has a drink held in their hands. We can't help but think about the drink shops' past. As there wasn't any drink store when the place was not so prosperous, a question comes to our mind - how did the business start? Why does it become so popular?

In Taiwan, business of the drink has experienced great changes. In the beginning, we only had breakfast shops. Then they changed to black tea stands and at last changed to drink shops. In the past, the traditional drink shops sold only black tea, green tea, and wax gourd tea. Now, drinks come in different types. Customers have many choices, and quality service and clean environment are also provided. Nowadays, drink shops are common. If they want to keep the business, they need to keep themselves competitive in order to be alive and acquire consumers' love.

Motivated by the popularity of drink stores, we decided to do a research project on "50-Lan", one of the most famous chain stores of drink in Taiwan. We would like to know why customers prefer 50-Lan than the other drink shops when the price of 50-Lan is more expensive. That is, we'd like to find out how 50-Lan keeps itself competitive and how it sustains its quality. Out of our curiosity, we decided to take a look at the story behind 50-Lan.

Overall, the purpose of the study is to introduce the story of 50-Lan. We'd like to find out the answers to the following questions. First, why is 50-Lan so popular? In addition, why would people like to spend more money on the drink of 50-Lan even though the capacity of it is the same as the others?

In detail, the primary research questions that we address are as follows:

1. What's the story behind 50-Lan?
2. Why is 50-Lan so popular?
3. How does 50-Lan keep its quality?

Methodology

In order to understand the questions mentioned above, we first looked for some information about different drink stores from some websites. Second, we distributed some questionnaires to people so as to understand their feeling about 50-Lan.

Besides, we also had an interview with 50-Lan's shopkeeper to deeply research the secret of 50-Lan.

Results and Discussion

A. About 50-Lan

Recently, 50-Lan rose quickly, and no one doesn't know about its name. But do you know how 50-Lan was started? What is the shop's notion of management? Let's research the story behind 50-Lan.

1. Origin of 50-Lan

50-Lan was founded by a southern person named Rwei-dung Ma (馬瑞東). Because his father liked to make tea when he was a child, he followed his father's habit of drinking tea. Because he has drunk tea for 20 years, he can tell from good and bad tea. When Mr. Ma left the army, his family was selling fried chicken. Because the business was great, he thought that if he sold drinks, the business could become even better. For this, he designed a drink station and started selling drinks with his sister. The first month, they sold three hundred thousand dollars from drinks, and earned sixty thousand dollars. In fact, Mr. Ma first wanted to sell juice, but because he is not good at picking the fruit, he decided to sell tea.

Mr. Ma named the store "50-Lan", which is originally a Japanese name. He found this name in a book. He thought that it is unique to be used as the name of the store. Because his mother easily forgot things, he tested her. He told her the name of 50-Lan, and after a few days, he asked his mother again. To his surprise, his mother remembered it and said "50-Lan". As a result, the clear, easy-memorized and famous name was popular anywhere.

He had worked hard for six years and had brought up and trained hundreds of stores of 50-Lan. Mr. Ma developed it from Kaoshiung to Taichung and Taipei. There are now over 300 store of 50-Lan in Taiwan and it is still developing.

2. Management

a. Notion of management

In order to understand the secrets behind 50-Lan, we interviewed the

shopkeeper at Dazhi branch in Taipei. These are the words he mentioned during our interview. “For me, 50-Lan keeps advancing the quality of drinks, and years lately, we emphasize more on our serving attitude. We not only provide our customers with good feeling but the high quality drinks. Further, we also pay much attention to our educational training,” he said.

According to what he said, we can surely know that they put much emphasis on the quality rather than the quantity, and they strongly insist good services and quality. For service, they emphasize the need of smile and enthusiasm, and they emphasize the efficiency of serving the drink. For quality, they always professionally control the quality of drinks. It is no wonder that they have a good fame and popularity among many guests.

In addition to the notion of management, innovation is also one of the important factors. Some people say, “Growing is impossible without the creativity.” The products they create are always unique, and always keep getting ahead.

b. The good environment

The color of the shop sign, yellow, is a feature of 50-Lan. The yellow color makes the sign bright and clear, so most people usually pass the store without forgetting the sign, and may have an impression of it. In addition, you can clearly see the kitchen of 50-Lan because of the open counter. With the good and comfortable environment, the guests can enjoy it during the waiting time. As the shopkeeper said, “the environment and atmosphere are the two reasons for me to work here.”

B. The fascination of 50-Lan

1. Questionnaire investigation and analysis

To understand the reasons why 50-Lan has its popularity, whether it is their fame or good services, we distributed questionnaires to understand people’s views on it. First, according to the results of our questionnaire, we found that among 85 participants aged 10 to 20, 29% of them prefer to buy the drinks of 50-Lan. With the results, we can be more sure that 50-Lan is the most popular of all.

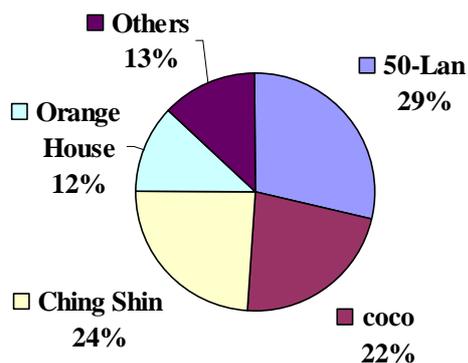


Figure 1 popularity of different drink stores

Before buying the drink, people usually think over or compare different drink stores. In order to understand the reasons why people buy at 50-Lan, we analyzed the results. Among all 50-Lan buyers, it was founded that 37% of people think of the “quality” as the main reason. Therefore, we can know 50-Lan’s fascination is not just the popularity or store’s decoration, but the good quality. In other words, the reputation of 50-Lan is well supported by the fact.

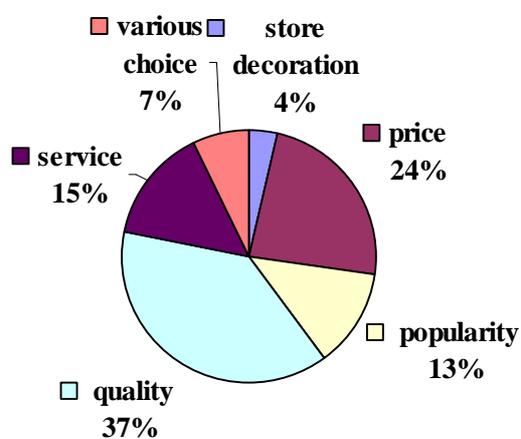


Figure 2 Reasons of buying the drinks of 50-Lan

According to Figure 3 below, we can see that milk tea is the most popular drink of 50-Lan, and the next is tea. Therefore, milk tea is a large attraction in the store.

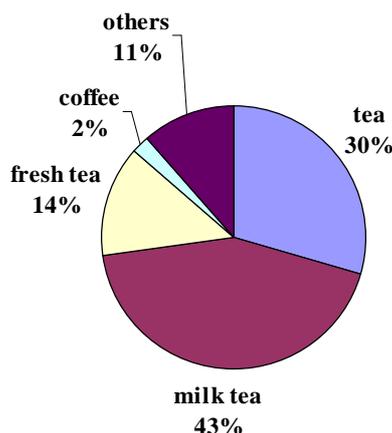


Figure 3 Popularity of different kinds of drink in 50-Lan

2. Appreciations of the guests

Based on our results, we also found some good and bad points made by the customers. Because of the wide results, we divided them into two parts. One is its advantages, and the other is the defects. The following results are the appreciations of the guests.

Table 1

	Drinks	Others
Advantages	(1)The pearl tastes good and it is small and elastic. (2)The drink tastes better than others, especially the milk tea. (3)The flavors are satisfied and special. (4)The tea is fresh.	(1)The choices are various. (2)The quality is good. (3)If the guest asks for more pearls, the price is the same. (4)The service is good. (5)The environment is clean. (6)The popularity is high.
Defects	(1)The capacity of the drink is less. (2)The taste is too sweet. (3)Some of the workers' attitudes are bad.	(1)The price is too expensive. (2)The waiting time is so long.

According to our results, most of the people agree that the drink of 50-Lan taste good but the price is too expensive. However, some people think that although the

price is higher than other drink stores, the good quality prove the price is worth it. 50-Lan was rated “7” (1-10 scale) by most customers. Therefore, it proves that 50-Lan is good in most people’s views.

C. Behind 50-Lan

1. The making process

The process of making drinks includes not only making drinks but also boiling tea and cooking ingredients. After we interviewed the shopkeeper, we took some pictures at the store so that we can learn how they make a cup of drink. Let’s see their process of making tea and drinks. (Because some steps and pictures are their secrets, we only explain some parts of the process.)

At kitchen – boiling pearls



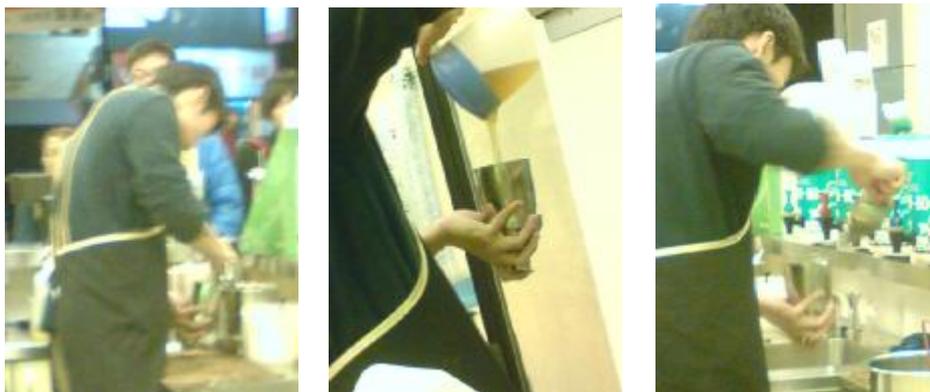
→Picture 1 Prepare the pearls and sieve out the small pearls

→Picture 2 Boil the pearls, and then stir them to prevent them from sticking to the bottom of the pot

At open counter – making tea



↑Picture 3 & 4 Add sugar, or cream



↑Picture 5 to 7 Put tea in the shaking cup, and add the ice



↑Picture 8-10 After the machine shakes the drink, the drink will be shaken again by hands by the workers

Because 50-Lan's drinks have a ratio requirement, they can always make people drink with satisfied smile.

2. The management of quality

According to the questionnaires, many guests gave some good appreciations to 50-Lan. Some said the pearl is elastic, good-tasted, and smelled good; others said the drink has a special flavor and it is satisfying. With these appreciations and the pictures of their making process, we can know that they seriously manage the quality. With the interview, we know more about how they keep the good quality.

On management of quality, it has control of all the ingredients. First, the preservation time of tea is only two hours; if the time is over, it will be replaced. The preservation time of other ingredients like pearls, bobas, and sweet potato noodles is only half an hour, two hours, and three hours. After closing the store for the night,

they will all be preserved in the refrigerator. Besides, grass jelly isn't put in the refrigerator over five days, and coffee jelly is not over three days. If time is up, all of them will be thrown away. Of course, other things like milk and pudding are also paid attention to. This can prevent the guests from the bad qualities of drinks. Although the management is basic, it cannot be ignored.

Since 50-Lan started the drink career, it has insisted on good quality all the time. "If the drink is unqualified, it can't be served for the guests; they have to use the best ingredients and facilities to make drinks." In Taiwan, the drink market is strongly competitive. Some stores lower the price to compete with others. But for 50-Lan, they insist the high quality, and put the emphasis on quality rather than the quantity, and they never imitate other stores. Because of these insistent principles, 50-Lan can keep growing in the marketplace, and always receive more guests' support.

Conclusion

Opening drink stores is easy, but making it competitive in the market is a difficult mission. Patience and creation are needed. If the drink stores want to be alive, they have to always keep a good fame and ensure the quality.

Compared to many drink stores, obviously, 50-Lan is more expensive than other drink stores. Despite the high price, there are still many people willing to buy the drink. The condition interested us, so we chose "50-Lan" as our research topic. When 50-Lan started the drink career, many drink stores had existed. In order to better understand 50-Lan, we researched the origin of it first. Besides, we tried to understand its notion of management and found that they emphasize the environment, services, and quality. Since 50-Lan started, they have had to face many challenges, and transitions. However, 50-Lan succeeded to be competitive in the market.

In our study, we first talked about the origin of the drink stores. We researched the origin of 50-Lan. In order to deeply search for more information of it, we had an interview with one of the 50-Lan's shopkeepers. After the interview, we found that their notions of management are "quality, service, and creativity". Without each of the notions, their drink can't attract many people.

In addition, because we are curious about the reasons why 50-Lan is so popular, we distributed the questionnaire to find the answers. We only gave out 85

questionnaires to people whose ages are between 11 to 20. According to our results, it shows that 50-Lan is the most popular chain stores among all. Besides, we find the key point why it is so popular is its good quality. Many people like to buy drinks of 50-Lan just because of the good quality. Therefore, it doesn't surprise us that 50-Lan is so popular.

Last, we interviewed the shopkeeper and also took pictures of their making of tea. From the pictures, we can see that from boiling the tea to finishing the tea, they always carefully make the drink with no mistake. The shopkeeper told us some tips for keeping the quality. As he said, if the ingredient is kept for too many hours, it can't be used and should be thrown away. They emphasize the quality very much, and they especially watch out some small details. Originally, 50-Lan is just a small drink store, but now, they keep growing up. They always insist on their managing notions, and never give up. No wonder they can succeed and receive a good fame from many people.

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