

Getting interior acoustics on the 'menu' of restaurants – To-Do's for acousticians

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ABSTRACT

The impact that bad indoor acoustics can have on a restaurant's bottom line is documented in more and more studies. Still the Lombard ("cocktail party") effect is a severe problem in this industry.

A 2018 survey shows that noise is now the number one complaint of diners. Nearly 80% of people have left a restaurant due to noise and 91% said they wouldn't go back to a venue where noise levels were too high. This year another survey measured the highest noise level of 50 restaurants above 85 dB at each of them. While average noise levels of the five top-rated restaurants were between 75 – 83 dB.

Maintaining the current aesthetic trend of hard surface floors, minimalistic interior and open kitchen, there are still ceiling and wall surfaces that can look monolithic and at the same time absorb.

The presentation will focus on the latest room acoustic measurements in restaurants and diners feedback. This is then linked to the current status of acoustic requirements for restaurants in national building regulation and a hands-on way forward of acoustic capacity calculations (number of seats in a restaurant) to still maintain a comfortable environment.

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