Report on the Cleanliness, Quality and Services of Maxim Express at CityU

Prepared for
Charles Chan
Chief Executive Officer
Maxim Group

Prepared by
Cindy Chu
Lawrence Wong
Shirley Yeung
Assistants of the Chief Executive Officer
Maxim Group

26 November, 2004

1. Introduction

Recently, Maxim Express at City University of Hong Kong (CityU) has received many complaints about the cleanliness, quality and services. This department was requested to investigate on the complaints and find out the solutions of the problems.

The aim of this report is to find out the problems of Maxim Express at CityU and the possible improvement of the restaurant quality. The report was to be submitted by 26 November, 2004.

This report examines factors that can improve Maxim Express's quality including the followings:

- Quality of service
- Quality of food
- Serving time
- Cleanliness
- Violation of Policy

Data of this report was collected by the following 4 ways:

- Interviewing 30 customers of the Maxim Express.
- Studying records of complaints of the past months.
- Making personal observation.
- Collecting databases and other electronic resources.

2. Findings

2.1. Description of the premises site

2.1.1. Name of Restaurant: Maxim Express

2.1.2. Site: Food canteen at City University of Hong Kong

2.1.3. Opening hours: 7am-9pm

2.1.4. Number of staff

During non-peak hour (before 12pm): 13 staff at food counter, 2 staff in

the cashier counters, 1 supervisor, and 5 cleaners are on duty.
During peak hour (from 12:00pm to 2:00pm): 24 staff at food counter, 6 staff in the cashier counters, 1 supervisor, and 3 cleaners are on duty.

2.1.5. Numbers of people can be seated

1000 people can be seated in the restaurant at maximum.

2.1.6. Numbers of Sections in the restaurant

There are 6 (has to be counted later), namely noodles, fast food, drinks (has to be recorded later).

2.1.7. Others

Peak hours are from 12:00pm to 2:00 pm and from 2:45 pm to 3:30pm.

During peak hour, 95% of the restaurant is occupied.

During non-peak hour, 35% of the restaurant is occupied.

2.2. Cleanliness

2.2.1. Messy Tables

According to the Food Business Regulations by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), tables are part of the structures of the food room and they need to be effectively cleaned.

However, during the non-peak hour, 50% of the tables were occupied with food trays (See Appendix 4), with an average of 3 trays per table. Also, 25% of the tables were wet.

A complaint has been posted on the discussion board regarding the messy table issue, but the canteen manager did not respond to it.

2.2.2. Placement of rubbishes

According to the Food Business Regulations by FEHD, food premises should keep their place of business as clean as possible so that infestations by rats, mice and insects can be prevented.

However, it was observed that rubbishes were placed adjacent to the kitchen (See Appendix 1&2). It was noted that food sauces were spilling out from two trash boxes (See Appendix 3).

2.2.3. Placement of washed cups

It was seen that all washed cups were placed near the floor (See Appendix 6). It was also observed that food wastes were commonly found on the floor in peak hours (See Appendix 10).

2.2.4. Others

It was seen that the kitchen had reached a standard hygienic level because the floor was swept and dry and the food were placed on the shelves.

2.3. Quality and service

2.3.1. Poor staff attitude in peak hour

The manner of the staff during peak hour (from 12pm to 2pm) is poor. They are not aggressive and they are long faced. 50% of them work without smile and give the food to the customer rudely.

During non-peak hours, the manner of the staff is not as poor as peak hours, but they are still not aggressive and 50% of them also work without smile.

In the customer interview, a customer said that our service was very poor, he pointed out that the staff was impolite. He also mentioned that the staff did not tell him if the food had been sold out or not while he was ordering the food. After he ordered the food he then found out that the food had already been sold out for a long time.

2.3.2. Poor food quality

In the interviews, 20% of the customers thought that our food quality was not good. They mentioned that the noodles and the sausages in our shop tasted bad. 80% of the customers pointed out that our soup was too salty.

2.3.3. Lack of food variety

60% of the customers thought that our shop had too less food to choose from the menu. 55% of the customers said that it was boring to eat in our shop as there is little variety of food. 70% of the customers said that they could not found what they wanted to eat from our menu because the choice was too limited.

2.4. Time needed to be served

2.4.1. At food counter

During the non-peak hours, about 4 minutes is need for each customer to be served. During the peak hours, about 10 minutes is need for each customer to be served. 60% of the interviewees complain that the waiting time is too long. (See Appendix 7&8)

2.4.2. At cashier counter

During the non-peak hours, about 30 seconds are needed to order food. During the peak hours, about 2 minutes is needed to order food.

2.5. Violation of policy

Gloves wearing among food providing staff

It is observed that 5% of the staff did not wear gloves when they were providing food to the customers. A customer complaint that one of staff did not wear the gloves when she provided food to him and her thumb had a contact with the food. That customer questioned the degree of hygiene in the Maxim's restaurant.

3. Conclusions

Based on the findings above, this report concludes that:

3.1. Tables are messy because 50% of them were occupied with food trays and

25% of the tables were wet even in non-peak hours.

3.2. No response from customer’s complaint about the messy tables.

3.3. Rubbishes are placed too near the kitchen, and food sauces were spilled out from the rubbish boxes. The canteen may break the FEHD’s regulation.

3.4. Washed cups were placed too near the floor.

3.5. During the non-peak hour, the staff is not aggressive and 50% of them also work without smile. During peak hour, the manner of the staff is even worse. They are long faced and 50% of them give the food to the customer rudely.

3.6. 20% of the interviewee is satisfied with the quality of the food provided by the restaurant.

3.7. There is little variety of food.

3.8. The waiting time at the food counter is too long during the peak hour while the waiting time at food counter is acceptable.

3.9. The waiting time at cashier counter during peak hour and non peak hour is acceptable.

3.10. 5% of the staff does not wear gloves which violates the restaurant hygiene policy.

4. Recommendations

The report recommends the Maxim Group to take actions on the followings:

4.1. Assigning more staff to be on duty. They should clean up the tables once the customers have left. Also, the floor needs to be swept more frequently.

4.2. Rubbishes should be placed outside the canteen instead of in the canteen.

4.3. The staff should make sure the rubbish boxes have been closed tightly.

4.4. Washed cups should be placed on shelves or cupboards. There should be placed in a closed condition.

4.5. Canteen Manager should response to customers’ complaints more

immediately.

4.6. Training programmes should be provided to staff so that they become more alert of their courtesy of customers and the necessity of having a clean working environment.

4.7. A reward scheme can be implemented by giving bonus salary to the staff who has the best performance and courtesy of the month.

4.8. More inspections from the management team should be done.

4.9. More variety of food should be added to the menu. This could be done by conducting a marketing research by the marketing team.

4.10. More cashier counters should be added at the entrance of the restaurant, and they should all accept Octopus card payment so that transactions can be made faster.

5. References

Food Business Regulation (2004). *Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. Retrieved 11 November, 2004,* from http://www.fehd.gov.hk/safefood/foodlaw_fb.html.

6. Appendices

Photos taken from Maxim Canteen on Monday 10, 2004

1. Garbage bags and container boxes were placed near the kitchen door.

2. Used food trays were placed near the kitchen.

3. Some food sauces spilled out from the containers.

4. Food trays occupying the table.

5. Staff emptying food wastage and a trolley pilling up with containers.

6. Cups were placed near the floor.

7. A long queue of customers waiting to be served in one non-peak hour.

8. A long queue of customers waiting to be served in one peak hour.

9. Paper boxes obstructing the corridor.

10. Food wastes were found on the floor.