A Simple Cup of Coffee: What Starbucks Can Teach the Church About Hospitality In How We Reach Our Neighbors

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Abstract
This dissertation explores a local church's implementation of Christian hospitality through the examination of a local Starbucks coffee house that successfully offers hospitality to its customers both in and outside its community. A critical problem facing mainline churches today is a decline in overall membership and worship participation. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has experienced a significant decline over the last 40 years. This decline is now being experienced even in larger evangelical churches. In this dissertation the researcher plans to explore whether a local Presbyterian Church can more effectively reach out to its neighboring community by renewing and implementing outward acts of Christian hospitality while adopting the practices of a Starbucks coffee house. Section One will address the problem with Christian hospitality that is focused inwardly towards those within the church. Section Two identifies and evaluates alternative solutions to the ministry problem of hospitality. Section Three explores hospitality as implemented by a local Starbucks coffee house using "Four Pillars of World Class Customer Service" and the possible benefits for the local church in implementing "The Four Pillars" as a form of outward Christian hospitality. Section Four is an artifact description of a fictional novel meant to offer the local church a practical application to hospitality using tools employed by Starbucks through “The Four Pillars of World Class Customer Service.” The final section offers the artifact specification. The artifact concludes the dissertation.

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No matter how you feel about the company, Starbucks likely succeeded in polarizing you even further last week when they introduced a new $7 cup of coffee. No, seriously! The thing is seven bucks for a grande! Despite the absurdity of a $7 cup of coffee, Starbucks has been generating a lot of buzz with their new brew. Their marketing department clearly knows what they are doing. As I've written here before, scarcity and exclusivity are almost irresistible pulls on our psyche, and this new "Geisha" coffee has both. Although coffee experts agree that the rare brew's taste is unique and complex, t Starbucks drink offerings can be divided into four categories: Espresso drinks, Drip coffee, Frappuccinos, and Tea drinks. Espresso drinks use shots of espresso as a base to build upon. Drip coffee is common coffee, hot water percolated through ground coffee beans. Experienced customers may suggest new variations to friends and teach the language to beginners. Why does it matter? Learning the language gives the customer more control—the power to order a drink precisely to preference. I'd always been put off by Starbucks over complication of a simple cup o' coffee, so I avoid the place. Yet, the idea of training customers to utilize a particular language in order to make them feel part of a system is good marketing. Take a sound idea and overwork it is what they have done.