

DESIGN ELEMENTS FOR LUXURY BRANDING FOR A RUSTIC BOURBON  
DISTILLERY

by

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### **Abstract**

Using research discovered in a literature review and a market survey, elements to establish bourbon as a luxury product were determined. Also investigated was how to market bourbon as a luxury product and how to design a space that would reflect this luxury standing. Results indicated that creation of an atmosphere providing a memorable experience could be established through luxury finishes and furnishings and the inclusion of such elements as cigar bars, private tasting rooms, and high-end restaurants.

## **Design Elements for Luxury Branding for a Rustic Bourbon Distillery**

Bourbon distilleries are hard to miss while driving through Kentucky. Travelers can find route maps at most rest stops that define the “Bourbon Trail” (Kentucky Bourbon Trail, n.d.). The citizens of Kentucky are proud of their bourbon and boast that true bourbon is only made in Kentucky. Approximately 95% of bourbon is made in Kentucky, but bourbon can be made anywhere in the United States and still be considered true bourbon (Siemens, 2015). That said, Kentucky is not the only state with bourbon distilleries. There are distilleries in all 50 states, but some of the most famous, such as Jim Beam and Maker’s Mark, are in Kentucky (Flicker, 2018). Because many people recognize these names, they may see bourbon as a commodity, making it hard for some to see bourbon as a luxury product. Many companies create a selection called “small batch bourbon” that can be priced significantly higher. Why would people pay more money for these items if they do not understand their worth? The consideration of specialized products, like “small-batch bourbon,” is where marketing and luxury design become relevant. A good design education and relevant design experience provide the underlying framework for development of design features to highlight luxury brands.

The impact of the built-environment on human behavior often goes unnoticed. Designers, however, attempt to truly understand the effect that surroundings will have on users of spaces. Every color, fabric, and structure can influence thoughts. Colors, such as the stimulating properties of red, can especially alter mood and thought. Many design projects, such as those in retail and hospitality, have failed because of the poor-quality design.

Consider the lighting of retail spaces where merchandise is not seen clearly or the layout of the store that did not influence the consumer to purchase, or even locate, the product.

Effective design is key to retail store and product success. Retail design is similar to the layout of a website. If a person were to go to a website searching for a particular product, many features would contribute to staying on or leaving the site. If the colors and layout were eye-pleasing and organized, the consumer might continue to shop. However, the consumer might come across disorganized links and not find a particular item. The lack of organization might cause frustration that results in leaving the site before making a purchase. Every part of the design equation needs to flow, and without that, success is not likely.

Luxury design involves nuance that contrasts with more ordinary design. Yet with all retail and hospitality design, the primary goal is to influence the customer to purchase the product or service. Customers would not walk into a small, worn-out boutique in a typical tourist area and convince themselves to purchase an \$800 purse. Consequently, store owners must recognize the impact of location and reputation. Retail stores such as Louis Vuitton and Gucci are placed in areas like uptown New York to ensure that neighboring stores have similar status in promoting a luxury, high-end brand.

Along with neighborhood, a second thing that luxury design must focus on is the design of the store itself. While some brands might sell on a street corner, new brands must be presented in ways similar to products in other luxury stores. Not only should the products reflect their price, but the design of the atmospherics should as well. The materials and finishes should reflect high-end choices. The display systems should be well made with apparent craftsmanship that is correlated with the product price. The architecture of the space

should also be well designed and should be influenced by the brand and the product display, while not distracting the consumer from the distinctive features of the product. The lighting must be flattering not only to all the products but also to the consumer's self-image.

The experience in a luxury store is also part of the luxury design. It should be an experience that makes you seem like you are the only person in the store that day. Spaces should be available to cater to each individual's needs, including features such as comfortable seating for companions, light refreshments, and options for greater privacy. If consumers have good outcomes, then they will describe their experiences to other potential customers.

The design of the space must be cohesive with the marketing of the product. Space and product must work together, so the consumer sees the flow between the two and does not misunderstand what the company is trying to portray. If space is designed for a luxury product, then the product must be marketed as a luxury item. The photographs of the product must be done in a professional style. Forms of marketing can include public relations, broadcast advertising, point of purchase, digital, and many others and must portray a cohesive message. Some luxury brands express who and what they are through a specific digital strategy. An example is to omit prices with their product because if someone is buying their product, then the price should not matter.

Overall, due to the lack of information available to design a successful, luxury bourbon distillery, this research was conducted. Some of the information relates to whether bourbon can become accepted into the luxury market. Some of the information suggests what features should be added to a space to create a luxury experience and then how to market

those features. For purposes of creating a design of a luxury distillery, the focus of the investigation relates to bourbon as a luxury product. The challenge of marketing luxury products involves pre-design strategies to gather relevant information. Among these strategies are review of relevant primary-source literature and direct questioning of potential purchasers.

### **Research Questions**

Two questions comprised the focus of this paper:

1. What information is available from review of primary-source literature on the topic of luxury branding, specifically in regard to wine and spirits?
2. What information is available from a direct survey of potential users of a particular luxury product, specifically in regard to wine and spirits?

### **Part 1: Review of Literature on Luxury Branding of Wine and Spirits**

Before design work for a luxury distillery begins, a review of literature regarding luxury, in general, and, more specifically, how to market luxury provides a relevant background. While varied definitions of luxury exist, applying the definitions to bourbon as a luxury product is challenging. Different countries have different beliefs and societal norms (Godey et al., 2012). Other issues center on the growth of luxury experiences. The more the luxury market expands, defining what it means to society or any one person becomes harder. Companies often create lines within their products that could be bought across a wide economic spectrum, yet still make them appeal to the high-end luxury consumer (Kapeferer & Laurent, 2016). Does this mean that luxury items are always true luxury products? A

decrease in quality generally must occur to manufacture a lower-priced product. Does this take away from its defining luxury characteristics?

Luxury characteristics can be debated, though many do agree on some of the primary characteristics of a luxury product. The product must be valuable in not just private spaces but also public ones (Cristini, Kauppinen-Räsänen, Barthod-Prothade, & Woodside, 2017). Consumers must be able to enjoy the product in the privacy of their own homes, while knowing it is a luxury product. The product needs to make consumers feel the benefits of owning a luxury good. The product also must be valuable to the public. If a person were to go out in public with a luxury product, the product must be recognizable to the world as a luxury product and bring recognition to the person.

Another commonly agreed upon characteristic is the quality of the product (Cristini et al., 2017). This is where the issue of opening new lower quality lines can cause problems. Is the quality of that product still just as good as the higher-end line? Is it still made well with specific care to avoid mistakes? The more variation in quality, the harder it is to define what is a luxury good. Creativity can go hand and hand with quality, but it is its own characteristic (Cristini et al., 2017). Individualized products are “unique, custom-made creations” (Cristini et al., 2017, p. 103). The more mass produced the brands are, the harder it is to prove that they are each unique in their own right. Can it be confirmed that bourbon distilleries can accomplish all of these characteristics, determining whether the bourbon is a luxury product?

Another issue that the luxury sector faces is the reasons why people buy luxury products. According to Godey et al. (2012), the two main reasons are “for their own pleasure and as a symbol of success” (p. 1463). Sometimes the reason can be to give a gift as well.

This can be characterized as simply needing the product to be functional and needing or wanting social connections to a person's peers. Can bourbon accomplish this?

### **Marketing Considerations of Bourbon**

“Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large” (American Marketing Association, n.d.). Three things need to be considered when developing a marketing plan: the marketing of the brand, the marketing of the experience advertised, and the marketing of the type of product. When marketing a brand, there must be a distinction between the brand and other brands that produce the same type of product. Just like characteristics in luxury, marketing materials express the concepts of high quality, scarcity and uniqueness, history, and high aesthetics (Wiedmann & Hennigs, 2013). Marketing includes different facets, so there are different ways to express luxury. One way is through the label, in the case of bourbon, on the bottle. This is the only advertising many companies give outside of the distillery. The label must make a sophisticated statement for the brand. This is the primary opportunity to show the world what the brand can do for them. The direction they want to go needs to be expressed in the label and other advertising. For example, does the company want their consumers to make their lives clean and simple? Then that needs to be shown as a part of the design of the label (Ko, Costello, & Taylor, 2017). Another way to ensure quality in the brand is to talk about the different awards and distinctions the brand has received. There are many different bourbon and whiskey awards to win, which will help the consumer identify a good product (Beverland, 2006).

Part of marketing the brand is the pricing. The more limited the product is, the higher the price might be. This is a common practice with luxury brands. It is common practice for bourbon to come in small-batch brands due to the limitations that brands place upon barrels. When that batch runs out, then it is gone. There is no replicating that particular batch. This is a very marketable feature of bourbon, making it easy to explain the pricing of the brand (Vigeron & Johnson, 2004).

While the company is marketing the product and brand, they also need to market the experience that consumers receive while at the distillery. Companies must make sure that the marketing allows customers to know they will be getting a luxury experience. Because people are looking for an experience that caters to them personally, they need to be shown that a personalized experience is provided just for them. The information and experience must be obvious (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003). Because many people travel frequently and see other experiences that are offered, the company needs to market the experiences as a new, curious opportunity. This makes it enticing not just to the local traveler but also to the world traveler.

Marketing the product itself might feel redundant after marketing the brand, but it involves different considerations. Many people do not know the difference between whiskey and bourbon. Some might even think they are the same thing. Teaching the public about a product through marketing might be necessary to get them interested. By educating customers about bourbon, the company can use the sense of the past to help. Part of what makes a great product is the history behind it. Using nostalgia to draw the new customer in may seem weird but it makes sense. Bourbon has a rich history in America. Bourbon cannot

even be called bourbon unless it is made in America. Bourbon can take a person back to a time where life was simpler and the world had less commercialization. It can be enticing (Brown, Sherry, & Kozinets, 2003). Talking about how certain families lived off the making of medicinal whiskey and bourbon during Prohibition can draw in new customers. Other companies can talk about how they had to close down their facilities because they were not given rights to produce for medicinal use, causing them to struggle financially. These are the types of stories that allow the company to teach about the product and its history while giving the consumer an emotional connection. Educational materials can explain the ingredients used and the growing market for production of bourbon. Further materials can explain the luxury features: types of barrels for aging, length of time for aging, and limited amounts set aside for aging.

### **Marketing Luxury in a Rustic Bourbon Distillery**

Think about the problems that distilleries face as a luxury brand experience. The first problem distilleries face is the issues behind conveying what their brands are through the experience that they are presenting to the customer. Luxury for products such as wine and bourbon have different needs than a company selling clothes or shoes. Needing the customer to make a personal connection to the brand means that the experience must include a connection to the history of the company in ways that connect to a person's emotional side. Examples include: how did the company evolve, possibly overcoming some form of adversity; how is the company managed, possibly through a family heritage; and how has the brand struggled? This also leads the company to make the customers feel at home in the

space. The more connection consumers have, the better the chance of a return to the property and sales outside the property.

If a rustic facility, such as a bourbon distillery, is to make a connection to their customers, a connection between the consumer and the company that brings out their emotional side, forming brand loyalty, must develop (Atwal & Williams, 2009). This is similar to the love sports fans have for their teams. Fans would spend hours arguing with someone about why their team is better and how they have the best players. There needs to be that same connection to the brand of bourbon. According to Chandon, Lauren, & Vallette-Florence (2016), “socialwearers,” those who display brand identity via use of the brand name and logo, are becoming one of the most impactful categories of luxury buyers. If companies can provide an emotional connection, through names and logos, repeat buyers will remain loyal to the brand, making its choice a priority. Giving an emotional connection sometimes is not enough, however. This is because the customer must be able to understand the brand and backstory. If customers, even those who live locally or those on vacation, visit a bourbon distillery, they will probably learn all about that specific bourbon and what distinguishes one brand from another. What a company cannot do is reach consumers at home. Consumers must form an attachment, through personal experience with a luxury product, in order to justify the cost (Ko, Phau, & Aiello, 2016).

Along with the need for an emotional connection, customers must feel that they are receiving the “total experience” (Atwal & Williams 2009, p. 341). The world of luxury goods is changing, and brands must make a move from preference for “...long-term, retained luxury goods (e.g., real estate, islands, diamond watches, jewelry) to experience goods and

services in the short term (e.g., alcohol, food, travel, hotels, cruises)” if they want to continue surviving (Chandon et al., 2016, p. 300). Luckily, bourbon is within the short-term experience category and can easily make the shift. However, how is that shift going to be successful? Every situation must be adaptable for specific customers and their needs, making them successful customers of the company. The need for a “creative” experience that allows customers to express themselves with the product is important (Atwal & Williams, 2009). This means the customer will feel a part of the brand, making the customer invested in the outcome of the product.

One of the hardest parts about designing can be making sure that the furniture, materials, and finishes express the concept of the space. The space adds to the experience in making the customer believe in the luxury product. There must be defining parts that will help make the brand a perceived luxury item. Great examples of this are in luxury flagship stores, such as Apple stores. Special attention is given to all parts of the space to help create a memorable experience. It is evident that great work and time is put into these locations, showing that the company believes in the value of their brand (Wigley & Nobbs, 2012). If consumers see the money that has been put into the environment, they would understand the high prices as well. There must be key elements to the experience that embody the luxury experience and that flow seamlessly through space. There must also be creative and emotional elements that would help the customer make a connection to the company (Huang, Wu, & Zhiqing, 2014). For example, most people know the story of Steve Jobs and how he developed the Apple brand and the design concept of the Apple store (Isaacson, 2011).

## Part 2: Market Research on Luxury Bourbon

### Procedure

**Instrument development.** A market survey was created and distributed using a program called Qualtrics. The survey instructions first included operational definitions for the phrases “private tastings” and “luxury experience.” The definition given for private tastings was “a tasting event where an individual or small group is located in a private area with a dedicated server, with the option of food along with the tasting. Private tastings generally allow for more time to be spent on the tasting experience.” The definition of luxury experience was “experiences that help user/participant feel that the higher price of the experience provides added value; in other words, it was worth the extra money spent.” The survey had three different categories of questions: demographics, luxury experiences, and marketing. The full survey and responses can be found in the Appendix.

The first item type included the *Basic Demographic* questions. These included questions like “What is your gender?” This question allowed the other questions to be reviewed as to whether the answer was coming from a man or a woman so that appropriate marketing could be applied after research. Another general question was whether they had visited a distillery or winery in the past two years. If they answered “no,” then the survey took the respondent to the end, and no other questions were available. This was done to make sure that the data came from respondents who could answer the questions based on direct experience. The survey also asked them if they had stayed in a bed and breakfast during the past two years. This allowed further comparisons of men’s and women’s responses.

A second category included *Luxury Experience* questions. These questions included questions about different amenities that could be provided on site and whether or not they made the respondents feel as if they were receiving a luxury experience. These were created from literature review findings on luxury design and experiences that related to what had made the experiences seem more luxurious. The list included the following amenities: a bed and breakfast, cigar bar, a high-end restaurant, bar service throughout the facility, behind-the-scenes tour of the facility, private tasting experiences, and “create your own” personalized spirits. The questions asking about these amenities included the following, “Has your previous visits included \_\_\_\_\_?” “How much did you spend on \_\_\_\_\_?” “Would you take advantage of \_\_\_\_\_ if it was provided?” “Would \_\_\_\_\_ make you feel a part of a luxury experience?”

The third and last category of questions was *Marketing*. These were created to help understand why people spend money on a product along with finding out what they are willing to pay and how much money they would spend. These items allow companies to see where to improve for the best revenue gain. The survey asked, “How many times you have visited (a distillery or winery) in the last two years?” This was accompanied by questions about how much money they spent at the distillery, on souvenirs, and on wine or spirits. There was also a question about the use of the bed and breakfast facility and whether or not respondents would bring business associates there to stay.

The survey was reviewed multiple times by both the Thesis Director and the second reader. Every time the questions were discussed, changes were made to avoid being vague and to add more depth to ensure the best quality data collection possible. The questionnaire

was also checked to make sure that the question flow was correct and that all questions included plausible response options. Appalachian State University's Institutional Review Board, after survey review and consideration of respondent profile, declared the research to be "exempt" from IRB review.

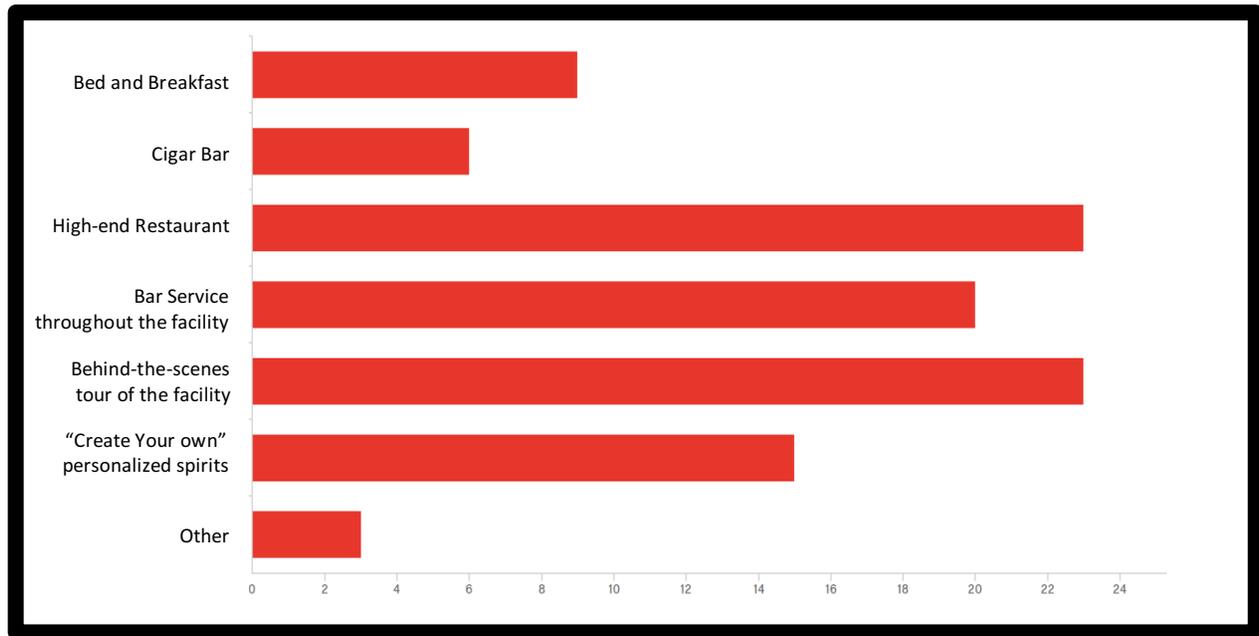
**Respondents.** Those who answered the survey represented a purposive sample based on the recommendations of an individual with an extensive bourbon collection used for tastings. The survey targeted respondents who are drinkers and experienced visitors of bourbon and other liquor facilities such as wineries or breweries. The survey was emailed with a link containing a message explaining the study's purpose. The link was made available for a total of three weeks after it was sent. A reminder email was sent out towards the end of three weeks to prompt non-respondents. Most people completed the survey during the first and the third week of the open period. The final number of respondents was 38. There were no respondents who indicated lack of experience with visiting a distillery within the last two years.

## **Findings**

**Demographic questions.** There were 18 men and 20 women who completed the survey. The survey respondents included 36.11% who had visited a distillery five or more times in the last two years, 27.78% who had visited 3-4 locations, and 36.11% who had visited 1-2 locations. The responses to the visitation question were encouraging because the more time spent in wineries and distilleries, the more helpful the data. Additionally, 40% of

the respondents said that they did stay in a Bed and Breakfast in the past two years, thus providing a possible connection associated with a luxury distillery.

**Luxury experience questions.** The most crucial issue when it comes to luxury design is whether or not the respondents feel something is a luxury experience. When asked if they had ever been provided with a luxury experience in a distillery, 61.11% said “no.” Also, 55.56% said that they had never had a private tasting experience and only 8.33% said that is something that would not interest them. When asked if they would spend more money on the private tasting experience, only 5.71% answered they would not. While only 25.71% of the respondents said they would take advantage of an on-site cigar bar, 54.29% of them said that it would make the facility have more of a luxury experience. The biggest agreement among the respondents was that 77.14% would take advantage of a formal, on-site restaurant. Figure 1 shows the responses to the question, “Are there other ‘luxury’ features that would make you more likely to visit a distillery?”



*Figure 1.* Interest in luxury features that would attract respondent to a distillery. N=38

**Marketing questions.** The marketing questions allowed the data to show where the respondents are spending their money in this type of facility. This provided information about areas that are lacking in revenue and where a distillery should focus efforts to get the best revenue gain. The survey revealed that 14 of the 36 respondents (38.89 %) spent \$10-29 on average at prior visits to this type of facility, 30.56% spent \$30-49, 16.67% spent \$50-69, and 13.89% spent \$90 or more in general. In addition, 28.57% did not purchase any wine or spirits at all while on site. Among respondents who had visited a bed and breakfast, 35.71% of people spent \$201-300 per night. Further, 48.57% said that they would consider bringing a group of business associates to the facility if it had luxury elements. The final marketing question allowed for a cross-tabulation, and the study revealed that out of 14 males, 12 of

them said that they would only be staying at the bed and breakfast for their significant other.

This allows for more knowledge about the appropriate marketing direction. See Table 1.

Table 1  
*Cross-tabulation of Interest in Bed and Breakfast by Gender*

<b>Would taking advantage of the Bed and Breakfast be more for your own enjoyment or to make the experience appeal more to your significant other?</b>		<b>Gender</b>		<b>Total</b>
		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	
	<b>Myself</b>	2	5	7
	<b>Significant other</b>	12	1	13
	<b>Total</b>	14	6	20

## Discussion

Is bourbon a luxury product? The main characteristics of luxury can be met by bourbon. The first characteristic is that a product must be valuable in not just private spaces but also public ones (Cristini et al., 2017). Bourbon can bring joy to consumers while in the privacy of their own homes. Having a drink at night while enjoying the rich taste of bourbon can provide joy for those who recognize the worth of the product and can enjoy it to its fullest. They can also use it as a luxury social factor in public. Having a glass of bourbon at a bar surrounded by one's peers can convey social status. Most drinkers know how much certain brands cost, and by ordering a luxury brand the consumer is making a statement of their social and financial situation.

Another formerly mentioned characteristic is the quality of the product (Cristini et al., 2017). While it is true that certain bourbon companies have lower-end products, their product still represents quality. The rules and guidelines that protect the bourbon industry continue to ensure this fact (Siemens, 2015). Some customers would say that some companies make better bourbon than others, but the quality is still apparent in all brands. The higher the price,

the more work went into creating a batch of bourbon. For example, Buffalo Trace has many different sub-brands within their company. They have everything from their Buffalo Trace brand to their Pappy Van Winkle Brand, which can be aged up to 23 years.

Quality goes hand in hand with creativity (Cristini et al., 2017). It is not hard to buy a still and make your own moonshine. It does not take long, and you just need to add the flavoring. The whiskey and bourbon part of the process is where a distiller can get creative. The selection of the wood itself can create a unique taste along with the type of charring that is done to the barrel. The barrel then must be aged for the best quality taste. Just like wine, not every barrel comes out the way distillers hoped. Sometimes that means having a better product than expected. Other times it means having to scrap a batch because it is just not good. This is how a distiller can be creative and it adds to the luxury experience.

One of the most significant parts of a luxury good is why people are buying it. According to Godey et. al. (2012), people buy a product “for their own pleasure and as a symbol of success” (p.1463). Bourbon accomplishes both of these things. Bourbon itself can bring immense pleasure to the person who enjoys drinking it, but it can also make a person feel more successful by having it in the liquor cabinet. Knowing how much it is worth and that there are others that are looking for the same bottle, but struggle finding it because of the limited supply, can bring pleasure to a person.

### **Design Solutions**

Opening a new facility for a brand can be challenging. With the help of a designer and an architect, the process does not have to be so overwhelming. One of the first things that will be discussed is what elements need to be included. Because creating a luxury experience

comes from every facet of the space, the designer and the client must consider the goal of the space. Adding certain elements can change the direction the space is heading. For example, if the client wants to put in automated tasting dispensers, they would not be looking for a luxury environment. It would be lacking the personal one-on-one time that needs to be spent with customers to ensure they are getting a complete understanding of the product. This, in turn, helps make customers feel as if they are the most important people there. An element that would achieve this goal would be private tasting rooms along with group tasting rooms. This would create a luxury experience similar to those popular in many European wineries (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003). Many wineries in Italy offer an entirely private experience. They serve wine tastings along with accompanying food, perhaps a whole meal, with a personal server who has complete knowledge of the product. Sometimes these companies use family members for these situations so that consumers feels like they are getting a secret view into the family. This is the start of building an emotional connection to the space. This is also an element that was considered a luxury additive on the survey, with 60% saying that private tastings would add to a luxury experience and only 8.33% saying they would not want to experience this element.

Adding to the “total experience” would be making the facility a place that is not meant just to be a one-time visit. It needs to become a place that people want to frequent. Adding a formal restaurant, where people in the area could make reservations, can add to the luxury space. The point is that when people are discussing where to go to dinner, the distillery is an option for formal meals, not just tours. This space would need to be complete with full-menu choices and a full-service bar. Besides the bourbon and whiskey products that

the company makes, other types of spirits would need to be available for cocktails. The restaurant can be available to the public, not just to the people paying to be on the property. This would be similar to the Biltmore House in Asheville, NC, but without an entrance fee to enter the estate. Having an entrance fee would deter people from coming just for a dining experience. Along with the dining experience, guests would experience the materials and finishes in the space that represent the sense of the luxury brand.

Another service that would add to the luxury experience is the cigar bar (see Figure 2). This is not only part of the bourbon culture but has a universal, sophisticated reputation. Not everyone will visit the cigar bar, but just the idea provides an additional feature that would bring more to the luxury experience. According to the survey, the majority of the survey respondents who said they would take advantage of the cigar bar were men. This gives luxury opportunity for the male gender whereas the female gender would not have a similar option to add to their perception of luxury.



*Figure 2.* Example of a cigar bar.

A bed and breakfast might be the perfect space for a woman to enjoy. This could be a way to attract women to the property when considering a trip. The bed and breakfast would need fine furnishings and great focus on detail. The bedrooms would need to have a personalized identity, giving each room its own concept but still representing the bourbon distillery theme. The bed and breakfast building would have access to the restaurant and bar within the facility allowing for the kitchen to provide breakfast and luncheons for guests.

One of the most important things when designing the space is the need to use architectural design to make a statement (see Figure 3). The facility does not need to be designed just like every other distillery. A grand statement, like that described in the Wigley and Nobbs (2012) article, must emerge in order to draw guests back. There also needs to be special consideration to color. People associate luxury products with certain colors, such as gold, silver, black, and jewel tones (Koetting, 2018). For example, using a color like lime green would not help the direction toward luxury that the facility is trying to achieve.



<https://www.nicholascalcott.com/client/>

*Figure 3.* Example of an architectural statement.

Luxury needs to be considered in a space as well as in retail design (see Figure 4). Creating an environment that reflects the product just as well as the product reflects the space is key to a successful design. “Shopping ambiance and physical design greatly influence consumer behavior” (Huang et al., 2014, p.1289). Lighting can make or break a sale along with color choices for a space. If the lighting is casting a shadow on a product, then it might not get as much attention. Moreover, if the color of the wall skews the color of the product, then it might not be seen in its best possible position. Another successful element of design in retail is the use of vertical cues. Psychologically, the brain interprets objects differently when put at different orientations. Creating a display shelf for the product that is oriented vertically can elevate the product in a consumer's mind. Looking up at the product can inspire “awe and respect” from the consumer. This can also provide “perceptions reflective of economic power” (van Rompay, van Hoof, Rorink, & Folsche, 2019, p.73). Additionally, the design

can change the way a consumer tastes the product. Creating an “angular shape induces perceptions of a strong taste” (van Rompay et al., 2019, p.73).



<https://insights.regencylighting.com/common-light-bulbs-and-led-upgrades-for-retail-stores>

*Figure 4.* Example of display features of a retail space.

### **Conclusions**

Two significant research findings emerged from the Literature Review and Survey Investigations. Silvenstein and Fiske (2003) explained the importance of making a luxury facility the background for a memorable experience. The survey produced results that revealed the respondents’ interest in a variety of types of venues like cigar bars and private tasting rooms. Along with the essence, nuance, and ambiance of potential design elements in the creation of a bourbon distillery, the sense of luxury and exclusivity must be prevalent.

Consider the following description of a hypothetical design for a luxury bourbon distillery. <https://insights.regencylighting.com/common-light-bulbs-and-led-upgrades-for-retail-stores>

Taking all the formerly mentioned information into consideration, a hypothetical floor plan could be designed. The proposed space would be an old textile mill that ranges around 34,500 square feet. This would allow room for all the previously mentioned luxury experience elements. The top floor would have managerial office space along with room for marketing and public relations teams. The other half of the floor could provide retail space along with a check-in desk for tours and tastings. Provided in that area would also be bar service to provide samples of the brand's products and plenty of seating inside and outside to enjoy relaxing time with friends, family, and the possible business associate. To access the downstairs, the visitor would take one of the statement freight elevators provided for an authentic experience. The bottom floor would have a full bar, a restaurant, and a cigar bar. This is a full-service space for the public. The other half of the bottom floor would be the tasting rooms. Along with group tasting rooms, there would be the private areas meant to deliver the full luxury experience. Part of the marketing scheme implemented into the space is membership benefits. This would allow for the new members to have extras during the tour and tasting. This would also provide them with complementary food during dinner. The idea of "membership" motivates the customer to continue coming back. The final element implemented would be the bed and breakfast in another building. This building would have access to the visitor center to use its amenities but would not be accessible to the public. These elements bring the luxury experience to the consumer. Without the cohesive implementation of all the different parts, the chance of success as a luxury brand decreases.

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## Appendix

### Market Survey Questions and Responses

#### Q1 - What is your gender?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Male	47.37%	18
2	Female	52.63%	20
3	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	38

#### Q2 - During the past two years, have you visited a distillery or a winery?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	92.31%	36
2	No	7.69%	3
	Total	100%	39

#### Q3 - If yes, how many times have you visited in the last two years?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	1-2	36.11%	13
2	3-4	27.78%	10
3	5 or more	36.11%	13
	Total	100%	36

#### Q4 - Did your visit(s) include a tour of the facility?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	36.11%	13
2	Some did include a tour, some did not	33.33%	12
3	No	30.56%	11
	Total	100%	36

**Q5 - How much did you spend, on average, when participating in tastings at a distillery or winery in the past two years (not including product or souvenirs bought)?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	\$10-29	38.89%	14
2	\$30-49	30.56%	11
3	\$50-69	16.67%	6
4	\$70-89	0.00%	0
5	\$90 or more	13.89%	5
	Total	100%	36

**Q6 - During those same visits, how much did you spend on souvenirs, on average?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	\$10-29	22.22%	8
2	\$30-49	11.11%	4
3	\$50-69	2.78%	1
4	\$70-89	2.78%	1
5	\$90 or more	2.78%	1
6	Did not purchase any souvenirs	58.33%	21
	Total	100%	36

**Q7 - During those same visits, how much did you spend on purchase of wine or spirits to take home, on average?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	\$10-29	17.14%	6
2	\$30-49	17.14%	6
3	\$50-69	8.57%	3
4	\$70-89	5.71%	2
5	\$90 or more	22.86%	8
6	Did not purchase any product to take home	28.57%	10
	Total	100%	35

**Q8 - Have you ever had a PRIVATE tasting experience at a distillery or winery?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	44.44%	16
2	No	55.56%	20
	Total	100%	36

**Q9 - Have you ever felt that the distilleries you visited provided you with a luxury experience?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	38.89%	14
2	No	61.11%	22
	Total	100%	36

**Q10 - Have you ever visited a distillery that you would go to again?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	80.56%	29
3	No	19.44%	7
	Total	100%	36

**Q11 - If yes, what distilleries were they?**

If yes, what distilleries were they?

Jack Daniel's

St. Augustine Distillery

Winery, not distillery - Belle Meade Plantation in Nashville, TN.

Ole Smokies

I don't own the name, but it was a distillery in France that made products from apples

Elevated in Maggie Valley

Leipers Fork Distillery

concoction distillery

Buffalo Trace, Jim Beam

Watauga lake winery Banner elk winery Grandfather mtn winery

Tumbler

Jack Rabbit

Durham Distillery

Over Mountain Vineyard

Buffalo Trace , Jim Beam

Seven springs winery, heaven hill, private distilleries.

Blues Sky, Catcoktin, Mockingbird, Bondurant Brothers Distillery

Buffalo Trace

**Q12 - If there was a formal restaurant (as opposed to a snack bar or food truck) at a distillery, would you plan to eat there while on site?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	77.14%	27
2	No	22.86%	8
	Total	100%	35

**Q13 - If there was a private tasting room that allowed you to eat while trying small batch samples, would you be willing to spend more money for this experience?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	60.00%	21
2	Maybe	34.29%	12
3	No	5.71%	2
	Total	100%	35

**Q14 - If yes, how much would you be willing to spend for the private tasting experience? (per person)**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	\$10-29	25.00%	8
2	\$30-49	40.63%	13
3	\$50-69	12.50%	4
4	\$70 or more	21.88%	7
	Total	100%	32

**Q15 - If there was a cigar bar on site, would you take advantage of it?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	25.71%	9
2	No	74.29%	26
	Total	100%	35

**Q16 - Would the cigar bar and private tasting experience make you feel that visiting the distillery is more of a luxury experience?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	54.29%	19
2	No	45.71%	16
	Total	100%	35

**Q17 - During the past two years, have you stayed at a Bed and Breakfast?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	40.00%	14
2	No	60.00%	21
	Total	100%	35

**Q18 - If yes, how many times?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	1-2	64.29%	9
2	3-4	28.57%	4
3	5 or more	7.14%	1
	Total	100%	14

**Q19 - On average, how much did you spend per night at these Bed and Breakfasts?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Less than \$50	0.00%	0
2	\$51-100	7.14%	1
3	\$101-200	50.00%	7
4	\$201-300	35.71%	5
5	\$301 or more	7.14%	1
	Total	100%	14

**Q20 - If a distillery had a Bed and Breakfast on site, would you take advantage of it?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	62.86%	22
2	No	37.14%	13
	Total	100%	35

**Q21 - Would taking advantage of the Bed and Breakfast be more for your own enjoyment or to make the experience appeal more to your significant other?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Myself	51.43%	18
2	Significant other	48.57%	17
	Total	100%	35

**Q22 - Would you consider bringing a group of business associates to a distillery that provided luxury elements like a cigar bar, restaurant, or Bed and Breakfast?**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	48.57%	17
2	No	14.29%	5
3	Does not apply to me	37.14%	13
	Total	100%	35

**Q23 - Are there other “luxury” features that would make you more likely to visit a distillery? (check all that apply)**

Other: - Text

Private Tour

Seating areas, with fireplaces. For private conversation. Not alot of metal, glass , concrete, as these surfaces make for a noisy place with everyone yelling at each other when there is alot of people. Music should be subdued and relaxed. And musicians dont need to be on stage, they need to be on the same level as visitors. Also horse and buggy would complete an equestrian area for shuffling people to different buildings for tours. An education of palate mixes with food. Everyone sit at large circular tables, with a cutout for the sommelier to stand in the middle. A bed and breakfast with private tours after hours. As well as allowing the visitor to work allong side the employees.

Gardens or other nice outdoor areas. Attractive indoor seating areas for small group conversations.

