

Drab reception areas signal rude staff and stingy company culture

Three in four people think lacklustre reception spaces are a turn off. 23 per cent think drab receptions mean unfriendly staff and businesses

MANCHESTER, GREATER MANCHESTER, UNITED KINGDOM, July 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Businesses in the retail, leisure and hospitality industries with drab reception areas risk being seen as unfriendly, uncaring and 'cheapskate' by their customers, according to a new survey from [Saturn Visual Solutions](#).

The study reveals that 75% of consumers form an immediate negative impression when greeted by tired or uninviting reception areas. More than a third (36%) see dull receptions as a sign that businesses don't care about their customers, and almost a quarter (23%) equate scruffy reception areas with unfriendly venues. For a fifth (21%) of people, a scruffy reception space conveys a 'cheapskate' quality to the entire business.

Amongst the generations, 18-to-24-year-olds are the most likely to be influenced by the look and feel of a reception area. Just 15% said their spending would not be affected by a business having a dull or uninspiring reception area, suggesting that 85 per cent would be put off if a reception space looks drab.



Image by Cottonbro Studio



Image by Polina Tankilevitch

Interestingly, the research also shows that men are more sensitive to reception aesthetics than women. Thirty per cent of women said a dull reception area would not affect how much they spent with a business, while only 22% of men in the sample group felt the same.

Across all demographics, only 26% of people said a dull reception area would not have an impact on their willingness to spend money at a venue or store. This indicates that 74% of people are deterred from spending money in venues that make a poor impression upon entry.

The survey was commissioned by Saturn Visual Solutions - a digital signage consultancy that works with the hospitality, leisure and retail sectors to help improve customer experience and increase profitability. It was carried out by OnePoll with 2,000 UK-based, adult full-time and part-time workers.

Coming at a time when technological advancements are driving people to expect more from customer-facing businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure industries, the research is intended to help businesses boost their appeal and stay competitive. It underlines how investing in the look and feel of [reception spaces](#) could transform customer experience and drive repeat visits.

Matthew Drury, Director and Co-owner of Saturn Visual Solutions said: "The findings highlight the critical role that reception spaces play in shaping customer perceptions.

"Reception areas set the tone for every interaction that follows and can define whether your business is seen as modern, engaging, and customer-focused, or outdated, unfriendly and uninspired. In competitive environments where every detail counts, a poor first impression can cost you money and repeat business.

"Increasingly, people are seeking experiences and memorable moments when they visit leisure, retail and hospitality venues. By transforming reception areas into engaging spaces, businesses can curate that first memorable interaction with their customers, drawing people in and encouraging them to return."

Saturn has used its research to produce a white paper called [The Power Of First Impressions](#)

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