

Improving our Dining Experience - Getting Interior Acoustics on the 'Menu' of Restaurants

Georg SCHÖNER¹, Pascal VAN DORT²
Rockfon, Hovedgaden 584, 2640 Hedehusene, Denmark

ABSTRACT

The impact of bad indoor acoustics 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, with nearly 80 they have left a restaurant due to a noisy atmosphere. Another study the same year measured the noisiness of 50 restaurants and found that all of them reached peak levels of 85 dB; while the average noise levels of the five top-rated restaurants were between 75 – 83 dB.

Maintaining the aesthetic trend of hard surface floors, minimalistic interiors and open kitchens should not come at the expense of acoustic comfort. There are still ceiling and wall surfaces that can provide a monolithic design and absorb reverberation at the same time.

The presentation will focus on the latest room acoustic measurements in restaurants and diners feedback. This is then linked with a status of acoustic requirements for restaurants in national building regulation and moving forward, a hands-on way of calculating the acoustic capacity of a space (number of seats in a restaurant) while still maintaining a comfortable environment.

¹georg.schoner@rockfon.com

²pascal.van.dort@rockfon.com