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Pop-up Retailing Objectives and Activities: A Retrospective Commentary

Abstract

This paper provides a retrospective commentary on a paper, "Pop-up retailing: integrating objectives and activity stereotypes" (Warnaby et al., 2015). Drawing on both published work and our empirical research carried out subsequently, the paper considers developments relating to pop-up retailing in both industry practice and perceptions and the academic literature, to ascertain how this flexible and malleable concept might develop into the future. It begins by elaborating further understanding of the characteristics of pop-up from the perspectives of practitioners, in *temporal* and *experiential* terms, before considering the broader interrelated strategic and spatial implications arising. The study here concludes by identifying avenues for further research, including: the nature of the potential interaction between pop-up and other retail activities; the context(s) within which such interaction could occur; how it might be facilitated; and possible criteria for evaluating effectiveness.

Keywords: experience; pop-up retailing; retail strategy; spatial implications; temporality.

Extended Abstract

This paper provides a retrospective commentary on a paper, "Pop-up retailing: integrating objectives and activity stereotypes" (Warnaby et al., 2015). The 2015 paper identified four (potentially interrelated) objectives to which pop-up retailing could potentially contribute towards achieving: *communicational*; *experiential*; *transactional* and *testing*. It then went on to outline four broad "stereotypes" of pop-up activity: the *product showcase/anthology*; the *brand pantheon*; the *tribal gathering*; and the *market tester*.

Drawing on both published work and our empirical research carried out subsequently, the paper considers developments relating to pop-up retailing in both industry practice and perceptions and the academic literature, to ascertain how this flexible and malleable concept might develop into the future.

It begins by elaborating further understanding of the characteristics of pop-up from the perspectives of practitioners. These perspectives are articulated in *temporal* and *experiential* terms. Thus, all respondents emphasised the temporary nature of pop-up, which serves to create a sense of urgency and stimulates purchase or other brand related activity, and which also raises the question as to how long it takes for a 'pop-up' to cease to be a pop-up. In terms of its experiential character, pop-up stores were perceived as important (albeit temporary) settings for brand communication, as much as transactional, selling-oriented retail spaces. This latter characteristic was perceived to be particularly important for online retailers, and especially pure-play online retailers, who otherwise have to rely on their website to drive customer engagement. However, a feeling was expressed that the increasing ubiquity of the pop-up concept in recent years could mean that the possible benefits of pop-ups, arising from the distinguishing characteristics outlined above, could be devalued through overuse, and become harder to realize.

The paper then considers the broader interrelated strategic and spatial implications arising, drawing on Lowe et al.'s (2018) distinction between pop-ups that are *sales-motivated* or *marketing-motivated*. Sales-motivated activities relate to financially oriented metrics, and such objectives could include testing the viability of new markets with the intention of opening a permanent location, closely monitoring sales targets, mitigating financial loss through stock clearance sales, and driving traffic to online sales channels through customer education. Resonating with pop-up's promotional/ communicational role, marketing-motivated pop-up activities would focus on such issues as brand awareness, providing a memorable experience, creating social media buzz and word of mouth etc.

Relating to strategic implications, our empirical research, which asked those responsible for implementing specific pop-up activities about the factors motivating its choice as a strategic device, identified a range of specific objectives that highlighted the importance of pop-up as a tool to achieve marketing-motivated objectives. These objectives included increasing brand awareness, enhancing brand identity and influencing perceptions of brand values. From a strategic perspective, this relates also to spatial expansion, with pop-up seen as a cost-effective way to increase regional coverage/ brand awareness, often as part of retail internationalization processes. Another manifestation of spatial expansion was evident through retailers' interplay between the physical and virtual worlds, where the flexible locational attributes of pop-up stores are further enhanced by the development of a more hybrid modus operandi, consistent with a multi-channel approach.

Recognizing the essentially exploratory nature of much of the existing research into pop-up retailing, the paper concludes by identifying avenues for further research. This is particularly apposite as pop-up seems to be becoming an increasingly mainstream retailing activity, with pop-up initiatives increasingly implemented as part of broader retailer strategies incorporating multi-channel activities. Indeed, understanding how such interaction between pop-up and other retail activities occurs and is operationalized for strategic advantage is a potentially very valuable avenue of further research. Such research could include analyzing which other elements of both marketing and communications mixes pop-up activity interacts with, and the nature of this interaction. This potentially allows retailers greater strategic flexibility and agility to compete in an environment where consumers' needs are constantly changing and evolving.

Further research could consider the broader context within which pop-up activities occur, including, for example, the policy frameworks and stakeholder perceptions which facilitate (or indeed, hinder) the ability to use vacant space for pop-up activities. Thus, perceptions of those owning vacant space as to the benefits of pop-up—and the potential impact of its use—on the value of their spatial assets need to be investigated further in order to ascertain if there are any policy initiatives needed to promote the use of pop-up more widely. In crasingly important in this are the various intermediaries that essentially act as 'brokers' between brands requiring retail space and property owners with vacant space. The role and impact of such organizations is an interesting further avenue for research in terms of evaluating the 'fit' between brands and the nature, and location(s), of the space they (temporarily) occupy.

Another associated area for research is the need to understand the various criteria by which the effectiveness of pop-up activity is measured and evaluated. More specifically, such research could investigate the perceived relative importance of the different objectives articulated for pop-up, and how this impacts upon particular pop-up initiatives. Given the importance of communicational/ promotional objectives for pop-up and the perceived importance of "buzz" in this context, further research into the associated use of social media and word of mouth for pop-up activities assumes great significance.

The inherent flexibility of pop-up, manifest in its use in a wide array of different contexts suggests that the concept could develop in numerous different ways into the future, which will provide different trajectories for research into the concept for some considerable time to come.

1. Introduction

This paper provides a retrospective commentary of a paper published in 2015 in this journal that analyzed the integration of objectives and activity stereotypes of pop-up retail activities (see Warnaby, Kharakhorkina, Shi & Corniani, 2015). At that time, pop-up retailing had attracted scant attention from academic researchers, and the limited literature on pop-up could be regarded as split between practitioner oriented 'How to…' manuals (see for example, Gonzalez, 2014; Norsig, 2011; Thompson, 2012), and a relatively small amount of more academically oriented studies. In particular, these studies focused on identifying characteristics of the consumer types that appeared to be particularly receptive to pop-up retail activity (see for example, de Lassus & Anido Freire, 2014; Kim, Fiore, Niehm & Jeong, 2010; Niehm, Fiore, Jeong & Kim, 2007; Russo Spena, Caridà, Colurcio & Melia 2012), and on initial attempts to classify different types of pop-up stores (see for example, Pomodoro, 2013; Surchi, 2011). There had been little consideration of pop-up retailing from a more overtly *strategic* perspective, and the 2015 paper was an attempt to conceptualise how pop-up (in its various forms, described as 'activity stereotypes') could potentially contribute to business success in a retailing context. In particular, the paper focused on fashion retailing, given that the application of the pop-up concept is particularly prevalent in this sector (Beekmans & de Boer, 2014; Niehm et al., 2007; Picot-Coopey, 2014).

Thus in 2015, Warnaby et al. identified four (potentially interrelated) objectives to which pop-up retailing could potentially contribute towards achieving: communicational—that is, to increase brand awareness, enhance brand identity, and influence brand values perception;

experiential—that is to facilitate the development of consumer-brand engagement and building brand communities; transactional—that is, to increase sales and market share, especially in markets characterised by an intrinsic periodicity; testing—that is, to gain market intelligence.

This led to the identification of four broad "stereotypes" of pop-up activity: the product showcase/anthology—that is, the emphasis is on the products and communicating their attributes/benefits. Pop-up is used to launch or consolidate the positioning of new products, or reposition existing ones, with a focus on in-store interaction and experimentation; the brand pantheon—that is, the prime focus is on celebrating/promoting the brand, so the primary aim is communicational. In-store space is used to formulate messages relating to brand values through visual merchandising and polysensorial marketing techniques; the tribal gathering— that is, the aim is to strengthen the sense of belonging to a community around a brand and consolidating the affective bonds between consumer and brand; the in-store focus is on ensuring a high-quality experience, sociality and entertainment; the market tester—that is, the main aim is to enable market testing of products and/or marketing mix elements, or to test the market potential of new geographical territories. In-store environments facilitate the collection of customer feedback through interaction, and experiential elements of store design.

In the intervening period since the paper's publication, many traditional retailers have faced greatly increased challenges arising from changing consumer needs and behaviours (notably the impact of online retailing). Consequently, retailers need to be increasingly flexible and agile in order to accommodate the implications arising. Linked to this, the inherent plasticity and flexibility of pop-up retailing—manifest in *temporal*, *spatial* and *material* terms (Warnaby & Shi, forthcoming)—means that the pop-up concept could become increasingly important in terms of facilitating strategic and operational flexibility and agility in order to succeed in a rapidly evolving and very competitive retail industry.

This retrospective summary considers developments relating to pop-up retailing, in both industry practice and perceptions and the academic literature, to ascertain how the concept might develop into the future. The paper continues by reporting on both published work and our empirical research carried out subsequently (which is informed by Warnaby et al.'s (2015) conceptualisation of pop-up retailing), focusing on how the pop-up concept has been defined and characterised, and practitioners' perceptions of its use by retailers and other brands. The broader interrelated strategic and spatial implications are considered, and this retrospective summary concludes with an identification of avenues for further academic research into this growing and evolving concept.

2. Elaborating the characteristics of pop-up

Warnaby and Shi (2018) define pop-up in terms of an ephemeral, retail oriented setting that can facilitate direct experientially oriented interaction between customers and brands for a limited period. As noted above, pop-up is characterised by an underlying plasticity and flexibility, meaning that it can be conceived in various different ways (i.e. the 'activity stereotypes' briefly outlined above).

Our subsequent empirical research suggests that, when asked to define pop-up, industry experts emphasise different, yet interrelated, aspects, depending on the perspective from which they view the concept and its related activities in the context of their particular brand(s). The various aspects articulated by these practitioners serve to highlight pop-up's inherent flexibility and malleability, and can be synthesised in terms of two key themes—*temporality* and *experiential orientation*—through which brand-related objectives can be achieved, and are discussed in more detail below.

2.1 Temporality

The ephemeral nature of pop-up is readily acknowledged in the academic literature as one of its fundamental distinguishing characteristics, and the practitioners interviewed reiterated this. For example, a Director of a Printing Company that used pop-up stores stated, "For me, the idea of pop-up is about temporary engagement, it requires less commitment from the pop-up owner, whatever they do. And it requires a shorter attention span from a consumer."

He went on to elaborate on the strategic implications arising, where using pop-up could potentially be seen as a staging-point in an organization's developmental trajectory, dependent on the success – or otherwise – of the pop-up activity (especially for what Warnaby & Shi, 2018, term smaller, 'emergent' brands): "Because we are able to pop up, if it doesn't work out, we pop down again. It did work for us, so we popped up and stayed up. Probably it's not a pop-up anymore" (Director, Printing Company).

This raises an interesting question as to how long it takes for a 'pop-up' to cease to be a pop-up. The academic literature highlights the variation in the physical temporality of different pop-up activities, from 'hyper-temporary' shops that open for a few hours or days (Beekmans & de Boer, 2014), to pop-ups that last about a year (Pomodoro, 2013; Surchi, 2011). Indeed, the idea of specific limited duration is crucial to the definition of pop-up, as the Chief Operating Officer of a technology start up suggested, "Technically, [pop-up] is anything that is time limited…For us, we talk about being for a day to six months."

Academic literature suggests that the limited duration of a specific pop-up activity serves to create a sense of urgency—or 'buzz'—and stimulates purchase or other brand-related action (see Kim et al., 2010; Robertson, Gatignon & Cesareo 2018), and creates a sense of novelty and relevance for consumers. As the founder of an online-

based pop-up intermediary organization states, "Retail was all about the transactions, and building stores where you can convert people to sales as quickly as possible. Those stores have died. The physical retail space is becoming a halo for the digital world… people have a shorter attention span than as ever before. To keep them interested is all about 'here and now'; it is about things appearing in unexpected locations, causing a storm, and disappearing before people have the opportunity to get bored."

2.2 Experiential Orientation

Linked to the above point, another crucial characteristic emphasized in practitioner perceptions of pop-up is its experiential orientation. This was evident in the fact that the practitioners interviewed regarded pop-up activities in terms of events (see for example, Pomodoro, 2013), "It [pop-up] has a 'here today gone tomorrow' aspect about it. That means everything has to be very carefully thought-through. It is thought-through like an event, it is an experience" (Chief Operating Officer, Technology Start-up).

Such pop-up events were perceived as important (albeit temporary) settings for *brand* communication (see Klein, Falk, Esch & Gloukhovtsev, 2016; Picot-Coupey, 2014), as much as transactional, selling-oriented retail spaces, "I think pop-up is very much about engagement. And brand engagement probably more so than it is about retail commercial selling. So, it's very much about brand building and brand engagement" (Brand Concept Manager, Department Store).

Having an—albeit temporary—physical presence through pop-up activities was perceived to be particularly important for online retailers, and especially pure-play online retailers who otherwise have to rely on their website to drive customer engagement, "[Pop-up] is of enormous value to a small number of people. So, as an

online platform, we have one-and-a-half million active customers, but by its very nature, our relationship with them is fairly shallow… With real people in a real space, we get to engage with very few people but very deeply; that genuine, proper human engagement. That's a complementary thing. Our product is physical, so people can come to the space and touch the product" (Director, Printing Company).

Notwithstanding the different emphases and orientations outlined above, generally practitioners highlighted the importance of the experiential nature of pop-ups, and suggested that they were used as a cost-effective marketing tool to enhance brand engagement and broaden brand reach, "[We] believe in the original format of a pop-up which is a limited-edition 'product' for a limited-edition amount of time. Creating special experiences for our customers and making sure we're creating an experience so customers want to come back" (Event Marketing Manager, Shopping Mall).

However, a feeling was expressed that the increasing ubiquity of the pop-up concept in recent years could mean that the possible benefits of pop-ups arising from the distinguishing characteristics outlined above, could be devalued through overuse, and become harder to realize, "[Pop-up] is coming to a common place. So as more and more of this is happening; people are like 'another pop-up, whatever'. It really needs to speak to that brand about what it is they're trying to say to the world, that's a different story …" (Chief Operating Officer, Technology Start-up). "We have got to be careful here. The term 'pop-up' is just getting boring… what's happening in the industry is to fill in the empty unit, it is convenient to go "I have got a pop-up". But you've got to understand what makes the essence of a pop-up. What is a pop-up? How can you make it interesting for a customer?" (Brand Representative, Pop-up Mall).

However, notwithstanding these warnings, it seems—somewhat paradoxically—that pop-up is here to stay as far as retail brands (and especially fashion brands) are concerned. This raises some interesting issues relating to its implications, which are explored in more detail below in terms of two inextricably interlinked aspects—strategic and spatial. In doing so, we draw both on empirical research and, on the academic literature on the subject published since 2015.

3. Strategic and spatial implications of pop-up

In their discussion of critical success factors of what they term, "temporary retail activations", Lowe et al. (2018) make a fundamental distinction between pop-ups that are *sales-motivated* or *marketing-motivated*. Sales-motivated activities are "centered on achieving financially oriented metric-based objectives" (Lowe, et al, 2018, p. 76). They suggest that such objectives could include testing the viability of new markets with the intention of opening a permanent location, closely monitoring sales targets, mitigating financial loss through stock clearance sales, and driving traffic to online sales channels through customer education.

Of course, for any retailer, generating sales is of paramount importance, but in contrast, pop-up has also been seen as much as a promotional/communicational tool (Warnaby & Shi, 2018). From this promotional perspective, marketing-motivated pop-up activities would focus on "brand awareness, distribution of samples or collateral, content generation, providing a memorable experience, creating social media buzz and word of mouth" (Lowe et al., 2018: 77). Indeed, the importance of such marketing-motivated objectives for pop-up is reiterated by various studies published in the past four years (e.g., Alexander, Nobbs & Varley, 2018; Klein et al., 2016; Lowe et al., 2018; Robertson et al., 2018; Taube & Warnaby, 2018).

Our empirical research, which asked those responsible for implementing specific pop-up activities about the factors motivating its choice as a strategic device, identified a range of

specific objectives that highlighted the importance of pop-up as a tool to achieve marketing-motivated objectives. These objectives included increasing brand awareness, enhancing brand identity and influencing perceptions of brand values, thereby supporting earlier work by various authors (see for example, de Lassus & Anido Friere, 2014; Marciniak & Budnarowska, 2009; Pomodoro, 2013; Surchi, 2011). Thus, the main objective of a particular pop-up "tour" organized by an online fashion retailer (consistent with Beekmans and de Boer's (2014) notion of 'nomadic' pop-ups) was to increase brand reach and brand awareness, "…mainly it's for brand awareness to introduce the brand to people who probably don't know us. It was a perfect opportunity there for us to create a pop-up environment, bring it to the audience that wouldn't necessarily shop with us" (International Marketing Director, Online Fashion Brand).

From a strategic perspective, this relates also to *spatial expansion*, with pop-up seen as a cost-effective way to increase regional coverage/brand awareness, often as part of retail internationalization processes (see Alexander et al., 2018). Indeed, Picot-Coupey (2014: 664) notes that the pop-up store "acts as a conduit into international markets with very specific characteristics and purpose". The emphasis on using pop-up as a means of increasing brand awareness (especially in spatial terms) was highlighted by a Brand Representative for a Sportswear and Sports Equipment Retailer, who stated, "We have stores in the UK where we're not that well-known yet, so the main purpose of this pop-up is to increase the brand awareness of our brand throughout the UK… it's all to do with brand awareness; it was 30% when we arrived. We would like to try to increase it to 80-85%."

This spatial dimension also extends to virtual space, with another manifestation of spatial expansion evident through retailers' interplay between the physical and virtual worlds, where the flexible locational attributes of pop-up stores are further enhanced by the development of a more hybrid modus operandi (see Verhoef, Lemon, Parasuraman, Roggeveen, Tsiros & Schlesinger, 2009) consistent with a multi-channel approach. Thus, using

pop-up to facilitate the transition between on-line and off-line retail activities was another important objective. In our empirical research, various brand representatives from on-line retailers used pop-up to develop an, albeit temporary, real-world presence, enabling more direct face-to-face interaction with—and feedback from—consumers. For these retailers, pop-up was articulated as an important part of the marketing strategy, since it helped to create brand experience in a more effective way, through a more tangible material presence: "[Using pop-up] creates the excitement for everyone that is around, people just want to come inside and see what it is all about. I suppose for us, it gives us the opportunity to talk to the customer, we can speak to them face to face to show them the product and also to introduce [us] to people that potentially wouldn't have shopped online or wouldn't be as confident shopping online" (International Marketing Director, Online Fashion Brand).

Another important marketing-motivated objective was influencing brand associations. Some brands under study "popped-up" in unexpected locations, taking customers out of their traditional shopping environment (see also de Lassus & Anido Freire, 2014), arguably in an attempt to "leverage brand and non-purchase related behavioral outcomes for both existing and new customers" (Klein et al., 2016, p. 7). This was the motive behind one pop-up car showroom located in a shopping mall, as the Event Coordinator for the Automobile Manufacturing Company in question stated, "There's a lot of the general public that don't like to go to the car showroom, and this [pop-up in a shopping mall] is just an opportunity, in their own comfort environment, for them to be exposed visually to the brand and the new designs. The brand has moved on so much, but they are still seen as very old designs. So, they [customers] are not linking the new with the brand, for them just to have them here within their environment of shopping, they can link new designs with the brand".

The process of segmentation, targeting and positioning has been identified as a key strategically oriented contribution of marketing to overall business strategy (see for example,

Wind & Bell, 2008). Resonating with the above quote from the brand representative from the automobile manufacturer, the Brand Concept Manager of a UK Department Store Chain articulated the motive for using pop-up in terms of influencing brand perceptions for the purposes of *re*positioning to appeal to a younger customer base: "[With the pop-up], we were trying to slightly push the boundaries of what we're normally allowed to do. So, the fact that we had music playing, on Friday nights we had DJ sessions...We were trying to appeal to a crowd of people who would think it was cool".

Consistent with the testing objectives articulated by Warnaby et al. (2015), our empirical evidence also demonstrated that pop-up stores were used as test beds to gain market intelligence, and thereby more effectively inform strategic decisions. Retailers, therefore, used pop-up as a low(er)-risk and low(er)-cost method of testing new market potential for a product/brand, including new products, store designs and technology tools (Catalano & Zorzetto, 2010, cited in Warnaby et al., 2015), and also to clarify retail objectives: "Interestingly, it [using pop-up] was really to find out what our retail objective was. So, when we got the place it was an opportunity, we took it and we have been experimenting with it since. We have third party products in the shop, but we don't aim to make any money on top; we buy it and sell it at the same cost to see what our customers need. So, it is a test platform for us" (Director, Printing Company).

In their 2015 paper, Warnaby et al. emphasized that the broad categories of objectives identified—communicational, experiential, transactional and testing—"are not mutually exclusive, but constitute differences in orientation/emphasis, with differing configurations as appropriate" (2015, p. 308). This was borne out in our subsequent empirical research, with individual respondents routinely articulating a range of distinct, yet interrelated, aims and objectives as outlined above relating to the same pop-up activity, which were articulated in both strategic and spatial terms.

Linked to potential pop-up objectives (as stated above, articulated by Warnaby et al., 2015, in terms of communicational, experiential, transactional and testing objectives), recent research by Lowe et al. (2018) has identified four 'critical success factors' of what they term 'temporary retail activations', as identified by a range of actors, including brand and marketing agency representatives and consumers. These critical success factors include: relational touchpoint—that is, relationship building activities, "where brands can have the opportunity to reach new customer and raise the level of brand awareness in the market, as well as increasing the level of engagement of the current customer base" (ibid, p. 78); strategic alignment—that is, between the brand, location and the context in which the temporary retail activation occurs; surprise and delight—generated among customers, which links to experiential aspects mentioned above. Emphasizing the issue of customer engagement mentioned above, Lowe et al. state that such "multi-sensory temporary retail spaces are an effective means of engaging customers through delightful brand experiences" (ibid, p. 78); serendipity—Lowe et al. state, "it is imperative for brands to understand how their temporary retail activation fits with consumers' lives to successfully achieve consumer engagement. Despite resources invested in planning temporary retail activations, brand and agency actors acknowledge consumer experience is also created by elements outside of the retailers' control" (ibid, p. 78-79). The elements can include location, timing, and seasonality.

Lowe et al. emphasize the importance of taking a holistic perspective, and in their discussion stress that these critical success factors were commonly identified across multiple actors, and moreover, were applicable irrespective of whether the 'temporary retail activations' in question were 'sales-motivated' or 'marketing-motivated'. However, they do stress the exploratory nature of their research and identify the need for more substantive studies, and in the concluding comments of this retrospective summary, we address the potential future research avenues for this evolving concept.

4. Concluding comments: future research into pop-up retailing

Much of the existing research into pop-up is readily acknowledged to be exploratory, and thus is subject to limitations as to potential wider generalizability, and also in relation to the extent that findings are representative the population(s) in question. Consequently, there is significant scope for more extensive empirical research to inform further the development of the concept. This is particularly apposite as pop-up seems to be becoming an increasingly mainstream retailing activity, manifested in the view of the Centre for Economics and Business Research (2015: 4) that, "the lines between pop-up and traditional retail are fading fast". Pop-up initiatives are increasingly implemented as part of broader retailer strategies incorporating multi-channel activities, whereby the boundaries between the real and virtual worlds become increasingly blurred, thereby allowing retailers greater strategic flexibility and agility to compete in an environment where consumers' needs are constantly changing and evolving.

Understanding how such interaction between pop-up and other retail activities occurs and is operationalized for strategic advantage is a potentially very valuable avenue of further research. There are a number of different aspects to this. For example, with which other elements of both marketing and communications mixes does pop-up activity interact, and what is the nature of this interaction, in order to facilitate strategic and operational agility and flexibility to achieve the objectives set for the activity? How is such activity planned and implemented?

Here, further research could consider the broader context within which pop-up activities occur. This could include, for example, policy frameworks and stakeholder perceptions which facilitate (or indeed, hinder) the ability to use vacant space in traditional urban centers (and indeed, elsewhere) for pop-up activities. Thus, perceptions of those owning vacant space as to the efficacy of pop-up—and the potential impact of its use—on the value of their spatial assets

need to be investigated further in order to ascertain if there are any policy initiatives needed to promote the use of pop-up more widely. Moreover, there could be a role in this for the various intermediaries (such as AppearHere, We Are Pop Up, Storefront etc.) that essentially act as 'brokers' between brands requiring retail space and property owners with vacant space. Indeed, the role and impact of such organizations is an interesting further avenue for research in terms of evaluating the 'fit' between brands and the nature, and location(s), of the space they (temporarily) occupy.

Linked to this, is the need to understand the various criteria by which the effectiveness of pop-up activity is measured and evaluated. More specifically, such research could investigate the perceived relative importance of "sales-motivated" and "marketing-motivated" (Lowe et al., 2018) objectives, and how this impacts upon particular pop-up initiatives. Given the importance of communicational/ promotional objectives for pop-up (Warnaby et al., 2015), and the perceived importance of "buzz" (Robertson et al., 2018) in this context, further research into the associated use of social media (Warnaby and Shi, 2018) and word of mouth (Klein et al., 2016) for pop-up activities assumes great significance.

In conclusion, the inherent flexibility and plasticity of pop-up, manifest in its use in a wide array of different contexts suggests that the concept could develop in numerous different ways into the future, which will provide different trajectories for research into the concept for some considerable time to come.

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