

WHITE HOUSE

Yes, customers do like it when waiters and hairdressers wear a mask – especially if it's black

By Cihan Cobanoglu, Professor of Hospitality and Tourism, University of South Florida, Faizan Ali, Assistant Professor of Hospitality and Tourism, University of South Florida, Khuraman Shahtakhtinskaya, Financial Analyst and Researcher, University of South Florida, Luana Nanu, Ph.D. Student in Hospitality Management, Auburn University

The Conversation US
10d

Follow



You may also like



PUBLIC HEALTH

Yes, You Should Be Wearing a Surgical Face Mask—Here are 5 to Buy Right Now

BHG, 8d | 5



PUBLIC HEALTH

If You Wear Your Mask Like This, You're Not Getting 'Maximal Protection'

msn.com, 4d | 26

The authors didn't examine diners' perceptions of polka-dot masks specifically. AP Photo/Ringo H.W. Chiu

The *Research Brief* is a short take about interesting academic work.

The big idea

Customers perceive a better quality of service, feel less anxious and exhibit more trust in businesses when waiters and other service workers wear a mask, according to a new study we just submitted for peer review. And we found this to be especially true when the mask was black.

We surveyed about 4,500 Americans through [Amazon's Mechanical Turk](#)

Black, white or Asian. Further, the masks were in one of five color schemes: white, black, blue, multi-colored or clear.

We then asked participants to record their impressions of the service workers and subsequent perceptions, emotions and behavior.

We found that customers consistently expected higher quality of service from workers who wore masks compared to employees who weren't wearing face coverings. We also found that participants tended to become less anxious when they saw a service person with a mask.

Interestingly, we found that the color of the mask worn made a difference. People who wore black masks got the highest ratings, followed by white, multi-colored and blue. The clear mask – even though it allows customers to actually see facial expressions – was rated the lowest by respondents.

While we didn't ask participants about their political leanings, we did learn where they reside. And we found that those based in the West had the most positive reaction to mask-wearing, followed by people in the Southwest, Northeast, Southeast and Midw...

We found no meaningful differences in terms of race or educational level.

Next

Trending People

Salma Hayek

Salma Hayek Pinault (, Spanish: [ˈsalma ˈxajek]; born Salma Valgarma Hayek...

Trevor Bauer

Trevor Andrew Bauer (born January 17, 1991) is an American professional...

Chrissy Teigen

Chrissy Teigen is an American model, television personality, social media...

Gigi Hadid

Jelena Noura Hadid, popularly known by her alias Gigi Hadid, is a well-...

Lil Uzi Vert

Lil Uzi Vert is an American rapper and songwriter. He is best known for his...

Chris Pratt

Chris Pratt is a popular American actor who gained international fame with h...

Andrew Luck

Andrew Austen Luck is an American football quarterback who plays for th...

Ben Carson

Ben Carson, now a retired American neurosurgeon and acclaimed author,...

Learn More



These are six of the pictures that participants in the survey randomly saw. CC BY

Why it matters

working. While the primary reason for this is to [mitigate the spread of the coronavirus](#) and protect workers, little is known about how mask-wearing can affect customer perceptions of service quality.

[Wearing a mask in Asian cultures](#) has been a socially accepted practice for years. In the United States, however, wearing a mask became common only last year as the pandemic worsened in the spring. The practice [remains controversial](#) among some people who claim it violates their civil liberties or isn't actually effective, though health officials have consistently endorsed their use.

Although there have been many reports of [altercations](#) when workers asked a customer to wear a mask, our research shows most people appreciate it when waiters and hairdressers cover their own faces.

What's next

We plan to also study other effects of wearing masks. For example, are the perceptions of service staff members affected when customers and fellow employees wear a mask or not? What's the impact on tips if a mask carries a logo of a company or branding? Do customers who wear masks receive higher tips?

Next

[*You're smart and curious about the world. So are our authors and editors. You can read us daily by subscribing to our newsletter.*]

The authors do not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and have disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.

This article is from The Conversation US, which brings news and analysis from academic experts directly to the public.

- Waiters
- Hairdressers
- The Masks
- Politics
- Public Health
- Black Hair
- Salon Employees
- Hair Color
- White Hair
- AP Photo/
- Americans
- Amazon
- Mechanical Turk
- Asian
- Customers

Download News Break APP

Add to Chrome

Publishers

Creators

Advertisers

About

Mission

Careers

Contact

NEWS BREAK

Home

Local

Classifieds

Search bar with magnifying glass icon

Sign in

Joe Biden

Sponsored Stories

[Pics] Where Vice-president Kamala Harris Lives Says It All

Hollywood Tale

Forget Expensive Roofing (Do This Instead)

Roofing | Sponsored Listings

Recommended by

Comments / 3

Sign in to post a message

[View All 3 Comments](#)

Published by

Next

No joke: Using humor in class is harder when lea. remote

Most discussions about the drawbacks of online education focus on the...

The Conversation US, 8h

How the National Prayer Breakfast became an opportunity for presidents and faith leaders alike to pu...

Addressing his first National Prayer Breakfast as president on Feb. 4, Joe Bid...

The Conversation US, 8h | 5

Related

patrick brower, enterprise facilitator for the grand enterprise initiative. saury,... skyhine.com, 6d

RICHMOND HEALTH

Should you now wear two masks? Let's ask a doctor.

RICHMOND, Va. -- With a new, possibly more contagious, variant of the...

WTVR-TV, 8d | 5

News Break Local Advertising

Reach More Customers. Grow Your Business on News Break



PUBLIC HEALTH

Woman's Entire Family Dies After She Hides Positive COVID Test

The family of a Venezuelan woman who tested positive for coronavirus died...

Newsweek, 18h | 780

SOCIETY

Food stamps: how to apply and what is the income

LOW-INCOME American families can get food stamps to ensure

The Sun US, 11h | 122

Next

PUBLIC HEALTH

'Category 5' Hurricane Made Up of COVID Varia About To Hit The U.S.

"We are going to see something like we have not seen yet in this country."...

dailyhealthpost.com, 21h | 40

News Break Local Advertising

Reach More Customers. Grow Your Business on News Break



LIFESTYLE

Dog On Chains His Whole Life Saw The Ocean For The First Time

Herschel, a German Shepherd, did not have a promising start in life. He was...

ilovemydogsmuch.tv, 10h | 8

Download News Break APP

Add to Chrome

Publishers

Creators

Advertisers

About

Mission

Careers

Contact

NEWS BREAK

Home

Local

Classifieds

Search bar with magnifying glass icon

Sign in

...art by Meridix offers its Stardust Tonic in hyper-modernized packaging that ...
TrendHunter.com, 14h

HAIR CARE

The Rust Hair Color Trend Is the Prettiest Shade of Red for Winter

After the many turbulences of 2020, we're entering the new year with a fresh...
fashionisers.com, 10h

HAIR CARE

This \$2 Comb Is Responsible for All My Good Hair Days

Each product we feature has been independently selected and reviewed by...
In Style, 15h

PUBLIC HEALTH

Got vaccinated? Here's why you may want to keep that to yourself

It's tempting to tell the world as soon as you receive a coveted Covid shot. B...
CNBC, 2d | 28

PUBLIC HEALTH

Bill Gates drops a very grave warning about the global pandemic

Microsoft founder, Bill Gates has warned the public about nex...
TweakTown.com, 2d | 1344

Next

SHOPPING

Crayola Colors of the World Colored Pencils & Markers from \$2.97 at Walmart

Hip2Save may earn a small commission via affiliate links in this post. Read o...
hip2save.com, 23h

ASTRONOMY

Yes, It's Possible to Safely Jump Into a Black Hole

Scientists say humans could indeed enter a black hole to study it. Of course,...
Popular Mechanics, 12h

UNITED KINGDOM

First-time buyer excited after finding 'cheap' Glasgow home for £60,000 realises 'something's not right' when...

A first-time buyer who got excited after finding a 'cheap' property online has...
Daily Mail, 18h | 6

Download News Break APP

Add to Chrome

Publishers

Creators

Advertisers

About

Mission

Careers

Contact



Home

Local

Classifieds

Sign in

I heard you're not allowed to rent your house before the original lease expir...

justia.com, 2d | 47

DINING & RESTAURANTS

Dr. Fauci Just Said This Is the Only Safe Way to Eat at a Restaurant

Dr. Fauci Just Said This Is the Only Safe Way to Eat at a Restaurant. For many...

msn.com, 1d | 50

PUBLIC HEALTH

This COVID-19 symptom could be the very first sign of infection

A newly published study has pointed to the appearance of a specific sympto...

TweakTown.com, 2d | 36

PUBLIC HEALTH

Recommended Cities

FDA alert: this oatmeal may be life-threatening to you, don't eat it

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has added a new product to its rec...

TweakTown.com, 2d | 65

Company

- About, Mission, Contact, Careers

Legal

Do Not Sell My Info

Help Center

Topics

- Election 2020, Coronavirus

Next



Terms of Use | Privacy Policy

© 2021 Particle Media. All Rights Reserved.