

Phat Philly's Cheesesteaks **AUDIT 2019**

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Introduction

The reason behind doing this consumer behavior report is to figure out if Phat Philly's is correctly using the principles of consumer behavior to improve the quality of their business. This will include a brief history of the Philly Cheesesteak, the companies marketing mix, market segmentation, an environmental analysis, and the company's positioning. In this report, we have given Phat Philly's a recommended plan of action to follow in order to best implement consumer behavior principles to ultimately drive more sales. If the company decides to follow the plan it will maximize their opportunity to continue to grow and reach a broader market.

Before diving into the project we made sure that we understood the principles of consumer market behavior that are discussed in class. We also needed more insight into how everything was run in the business on a day-to-day basis. This helped us better understand Phat Philly's and what needed to be worked on within the business. After doing this initial research we came up with a plan to survey customers of the company as well as talk with current employees and managers within.

As a group, we created survey questions for the customers that would give us a better understanding of how they saw the business and what they liked or disliked about it. We also created a questionnaire for both managers and employees of the company. All of the surveys that were collected will be included in the appendices of this report. We surveyed 50 customers, 2 different store managers, and multiple employees hoping to collect enough data to create a very useful audit.

The goal of the consumer audit is to be able to see how the consumers feel about the company and what they think of when they see Phat Philly's. Sometimes the results of these audits can be very surprising to business owners who may not have noticed small things that could change for the better. We hope that this consumer audit can and will help Phat Philly's grow into a better business then they were before.

History

1. National

A cheesesteak is a sandwich made up of thinly sliced, sauteed ribeye beef, and melted cheese on a long crusty roll. Some of the common toppings include fried onions, sweet peppers, sauteed mushrooms, and ketchup. According to Philadelphia's official tourism site, Pat Olivieri invented the cheesesteak in the 1930s. Olivieri was a hot dog vendor in south Philadelphia who, as the story goes, decided to grill some beef from the butcher and put it on an Italian roll. A cab driver caught a whiff and asked for a steak sandwich and then the Philly Cheesesteak was born.

It didn't take long for the word to spread and before they knew it cab drivers from all over the city were visiting Olivieri's hot dog stand to try out this new steak sandwich. Eventually, Olivieri opened up Pat's King of Steaks on 9th street Passyunk Avenue. The cheese was added to the sandwich by his manager in the '40s according to Philadelphia Magazine. Soon Geno's steaks were opened across the street from Pat's and this was the start of a cheesesteak rivalry. Many believe that Geno's was actually the first store to put cheesesteak on the famous steak sandwich. Regardless of who it was, people began to pick sides and only ate at one of the two steak spots.

Interestingly enough both cheesesteak restaurants were open 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Neither store wanted to close in fear of losing its customers to the competitors across the street.

The feel of both competitors restaurants was so different that it is said that the way you ordered a cheesesteak at one was completely different from the way you would at other shops. At Geno's there is a lingo that is spoken by regular customers, you are expected to know what you want before you have reached the front of the line and if you don't want onions you are supposed to say "one wiz without" meaning you want a cheesesteak with no onions. At Pat's, it is known that you tell the cook if you want onions or not and then proceed with telling them what kind of cheese you want.

It didn't take long for this famous sandwich to become a national treasure. It began to pop up all over the country in many places other than Philadelphia. Many Philly people will say that the sandwich could never be created the right way outside of the city. Either way, over the decades it was made outside of the city and it became a popular food that many Americans continue to enjoy today.

2. Local

Jason Smith the creator of Phat Philly's was inspired by the original Cheesesteak in Philadelphia. He did not attend culinary school but after years of eating pretty much nothing but Philly cheesesteaks, he decided he knew enough about them. When Jason returned to Tulsa to open his own Philly Cheesesteak joint he created his own method. Instead of using the assembly line method of making every cheesesteak fast and the same. He decided to make them to order, so the

time to make the sandwich may take a little longer than your original cheesesteak in Philadelphia but it is worth the wait.

Locally there are not many Authentic Philly Cheesesteak restaurants so Phat Philly's is known for being the top pick around the Tulsa area. They have been open since 2005. And have won best sandwich in Tulsa for many years. They continue to be the top cheesesteak restaurant for many great reasons like their awesome hours and the amazing taste of their Philly's. Overall you can't find a better cheesesteak in the area, with the great staff and family feel you will find yourself visiting more often than your gut likes you too.

Marketing Mix

Product: Food, Philly Cheesesteak, Burgers, Wings, French Fries

<u>Price</u>: Prices start near \$8 and move up to around \$11-\$12. With these prices Phat Philly's is more expensive than most fast food restaurants. However, given its location, and staying open late people are willing to pay more.

Average Lunch Price (Tulsa): \$11

Average Fast Food Meal (Tulsa): \$7

<u>Place</u>: Near 13th and Peoria, Tulsa. This allows Phat Philly's to be near to downtown Tulsa and near the iconic Cherry Street. There is a new Broken Arrow location on the way as well.



<u>Promotion</u>: Currently Phat Philly's uses Instagram, Facebook, and their website to promote its business. Besides social media, they rely heavily on word of mouth for customers to find out about the restaurant.





Website: www.phatphillys.com

<u>People</u>: The owners of Phat Philly's genuinely care about delivering great food and a great experience to their customers. The customers that come at 4 a.m. looking for this food show the loyalty to the culture created by the owners.

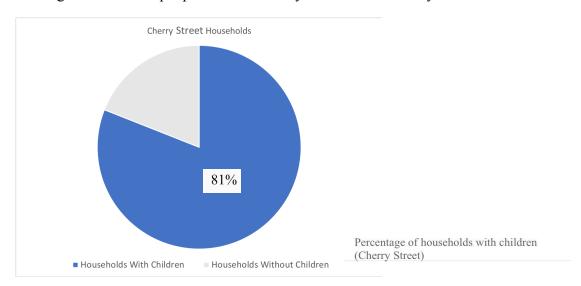
<u>Process</u>: Phat Philly's is slower than most fast food places but quality comes at a cost for time. The chefs make all the food to order, from scratch. This makes it more of a restaurant experience.

<u>Physical</u>: The restaurant is very informal. Customers come in to a long line and usual chat with others while waiting to order. The employees are outgoing and treat customers like friends.

Segmentation and Targeting

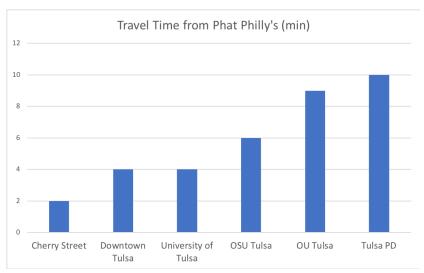
Key Segmentation Variables: <u>age</u> of people in cherry street area, <u>children</u> in households, <u>location</u>

Primarily Phat Philly's caters to the north Tulsa area. It sits between downtown Tulsa and suburban Tulsa, near Cherry Street. So Phat Philly's acts as a bridge from downtown to the rest of tulsa. This is due to Cherry Street and downtown Tulsa acting as the primary nightlife, and hangout destinations for adults in Tulsa. Geographically, Phat Philly's targets people ages 21-50 primarily. The average age of people living near Cherry Street is 33 and 81% of households have no children. No children signals that these people are more likely to be active socially and in



nightlife activities. This is also a main reason for Phat Philly's not having a kid's menu. Because of its unique location, Phat Philly's serves alcohol. This helps them target the younger, more active people in the area and set them apart from other fast food available in Tulsa. Very few fast food places offer alcohol. People that are leaving downtown after a night out have very few options late at night and into the early morning hours. Phat Philly's stays open until 4 a.m. which

also targets this demographic. There are 3 different college campuses within 10 minutes of Phat Philly's. This means that there are even more young adults in the area that are socially active and stay up late. Also within 10 minutes of the restaurant is a Tulsa Police Department. Local police, along with other business people from the downtown area, use Phat Philly's as a lunch spot. So Phat Philly's uses alcoholic beverages, late nights, and its unique location to target the demographic in the area.



Travel time in minutes from various locations to Phat Philly's

Positioning and Differentiation

In marketing terms, positioning is the place that a firm occupies in the minds of its consumers. It is also the ability for the firm to be distinguished from the products, services, or persona of the competitors. Companies need a realistic view of how customers perceive their company and offerings. Depending on what consumers think of the brand, the company can then differentiate themselves or reposition its marketing mix. Changes could be physical to the brand and its offerings all together or something as simple as promotional changes.

Figuring out what customers think about a business can be a difficult task. It needs the customers perceptions on the brand offerings and their opinions on competing brands. We did some of this formal research for the company by conducting customer surveys. Our survey was conducted on a sample of fifty customers. In our survey we asked three question in regards to positioning and differentiation.

- 1: "What do you think of Phat Philly's? Out of service, food, or location, which is most prominent to you?"
- 2: Who is Phat Philly's main competitor, in your opinion?
- 3: Compared with Phat Philly's competitors, what advantages make Phat Philly's the food stop of choice?

Overall consumer thoughts about Phat Philly's were mostly all positive. Position results revealed that around 70% of consumers thought that food quality/taste was the most prominent when asked about service, food, or location. When asked about Phat Philly's main competitor, consumers 42% suggested there is no competition. 35% said that Steak Stuffers was there only competition and 23% mentioned other restaurants, some even in other states. It should be taken into consideration that these other establishments are not directly competing with the same consumer demographic that Phat Philly's targets. These results are critical for Phat Philly's to understand because they control a large market share of the cheesesteak industry in Oklahoma. If the company can continue to stand out from the minimal amount of competitors that there are right now, they have a great chance of becoming one of the more prominent restaurants to offer cheesesteaks in the country.

See Figures:

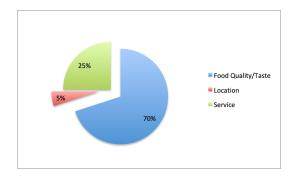


Figure _ Positioning Most important factor

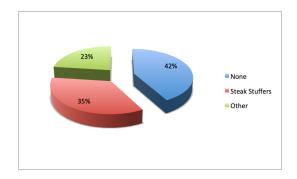


Figure _ Positioning 2 Competition

When asked questions in relation to differentiation, consumers commented these characteristics as ones that set them apart from national competitors and Steak Stuffers: food quality 26%, menu variety 20%, price 18%, location and atmosphere 14%, and cleanliness at 11%. See figure.

Moving forward, we expect to see location take a jump over price and menu variety because there will be a second location in Broken Arrow making it more convenient for people in that area.

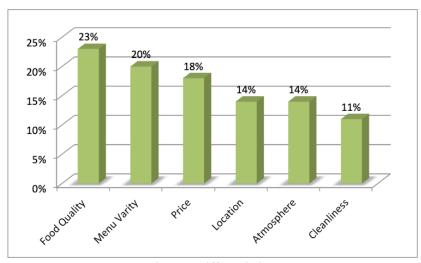


Figure _ Differentiation

Top attributes of company by consumers

Phat Philly's should make note of our findings in this area. Outcomes makes no difference if the company simply meets the standards of other competing companies. Moving forward, Phat Philly's must continue to differentiate themselves in their marketing mix compared to their competitors. Differentiating yourself makes it clear that you offer alternatives and meet the consumers needs and wants. If a consumer feels that a company is meeting their wants and needs, their position in regards to alternatives is viewed as unique, and therefore the go-to choice.

In the future, Phat Philly's should have a internal audit to see if they are ready to expand further. While they are expanding locally, the success of that expansion might spring new opportunity to expand nationally. It should be noted that the cheesesteak industry is most prominent on the east coast. Since there is no major direct competition in the local area, it would be wise to see if they can handle the local expansion before tackling nationwide franchising. Phat Philly's can clearly capitalize in the local market because there are not that many alternative restaurants that can

offer what they current can. These are all things for the company to consider amongst themselves and shareholders. Food quality, menu variety, price, location, atmosphere, and cleanliness are all things that set Phat Philly's apart as a restaurant per the customers. A successful launch of a second location will indicate that the brand and value proposition, position the company as one of local market leaders, foster new growth, and finally, reach new revenue goals. To do so, there will have to be a lot of collaborative work, creative implementation, and team effort between people in the company.

Environmental Analysis

In an effort to comprehend the general marketing/ business environment of Phat Philly's, we analyzed the business, the environment as it is generally seen, the industry that Phat Philly's operates in, and the competition for Phat Philly's. A SWOT analysis serves as a great tool for assessing the overall position of a business as well as the efforts used in its marketing. While Strengths and Weaknesses affect the internal environment, Opportunities and Threats affect the external environment. The reasoning for including a SWOT analysis is built on the idea that a company must grow on what strengths it already has, try to work around weaknesses it faces, act on the opportunities that a company has potential for, and identify and protect the company at any potential threats both now and in the future of this company. This analysis was made with the intention of serving Phat Philly's Cheesesteaks in identifying both the internal and the external factors that relate directly to their business. The next purpose serves to show the opportunities they may or may not have been aware of as well as the treats to their operation.

SWOT Analysis

*The following questions were posed in relation to each of the four sections comprising the

SWOT analysis.*

Strengths:

What makes Phat Philly's stand out?

What advantages does Phat Philly's have?

What do customers see as the biggest strengths of Phat Philly's?

Weaknesses:

What could Phat Philly's improve on?

What are they receiving complaints on?

Where are they unprotected?

Opportunities:

What opportunities do we see for Phat Philly's?

What opportunities can Phat Philly's dive further into?

Threats:

Are there specific weaknesses that are likely to hurt Phat Philly's?

What Threats does the new location pose?

Are the weaknesses of the company dangerous?

Strengths

Phat Philly's stands out for many reasons, and as mentioned in the product differentiation section, our survey results revealed that 70% of consumer thought the food was most important, over 42% see Phat Philly's as having no competition whatsoever. The other 58% breaks down as either indicating that the competition they do have was either only Steak Stuffers in terms of the product or that their only competition being back in Philadelphia, nowhere near Oklahoma. This isn't all Phat Philly's has to offer in terms of their strengths:

- Local restaurant builds a higher sense of community
- Good product and little competition
- Great flavor while maintaining simplicity
- Open late on weekends
- Loyal customers

The strengths of the company aren't limited to being a local restaurant. The owners who are from Tulsa and have a restaurant you can only visit in Oklahoma which makes the company stand out in the eyes of the 50 surveyed. Phat Philly's also has somewhat of a cult community in terms of their customer base. The people who love Phat Philly's really love it and want others to love it too. The product of Phat Philly's is locally and statewide recognized and many customers even prefer this philly to that of the ones in Philadelphia.

The company also has great flavors without the fuss of a crazy complex menu. The flavors of Phat Philly's have been classified as very distinct from other cheesesteaks. The owners had a lot of trial and error in making their idea of the perfect Philly and that alone resonates well with the customers in knowing that the owners take their work seriously.

The menu is simple and easy to use. As mentioned before, they have a simple menu that allows people to make quick concise decisions when ordering. Another added feature of keeping the product simple is that customers can customize their food how they actually want it. Instead of having to take away toppings the customer is invited to add the ones they actually want. Which most customers seemed to prefer.

The company is open late on Fridays and Saturdays and that help them with building community. Phat Philly's is currently located downtown and the added benefit of being open late is that concert / event goers have a fun and safe place to hang out when the party isn't quite over for them. When the company is open late people don't feel rushed and can relax.

The next thing that Phat Philly's has is multiple owners and this can be a bad thing but when there are multiple owners you have multiple things that each owner uniquely brings to the table. Specifically speaking, Thomas Regan operates as the general manager and takes care of day to day operations; Steve Santee manages the companies finances and budget; and Jason Smith the mastermind of the brand keeps the vibe going both for employees as well as customers alike. To operate efficiently, Phat Philly's needs these three and their unique talents to be the best.

Weaknesses:

The weaknesses of the company are not hard fixes for the company and if addressed could be turned into great opportunities for the business to act on. Weaknesses could include any of the following:

• Not being open on Sundays

- The second location not being open
- Brand awareness
- Multiple owners could also be perceived as a weakness

Not being open on Sundays can be seen as either a strength or a weakness. Keep in mind the principle of scarcity and how it should, if applied correctly, increase the amount of business the day before Sunday and the day after Sunday. Be mindful of the consequences created in the flipside argument. Many people eat food after church as a family and that would be a huge market to get and help cater to that crowd. Also many people eat dinners Sunday night and need a new fun place to eat food. Many people would love for a restaurant that could give them a fun experience.

The next increasing problem has been having only the one location. As Tulsa is growing in every day more and more people are staying to their communities. More people are staying in their communities the need to leave the community diminishes. Another location would increase brand awareness and make them more money in the long run. They are getting very close to opening that second location but it has been a strenuous undertaking for the owners.

Brand awareness is a big problem as more and more people are on social media and the lack of an Instagram can harm the business. With Instagram being the next social media app that has taken over the world. Before continuing with the project we recommended that phat Philly's let us create an instagram for them and that has had a huge response.

Multiple owners can be a bad thing because you can have arguments that can only be settled when there is an agreement on all parties.

Opportunities:

We identified many opportunities for Phat Philly's, that have yet to be addressed. We also recognize many opportunities that Phat Philly's is acting upon already but could go one step further in terms of implementation.

- Opportunities for employment
- New location in Broken Arrow
- Their new Instagram
- Rewards program and merchandise

The opportunities of the company are opportunities for employment in the marketplace. Which means the more companies that are able to get jobs and join workforce helps the overall economy as a whole. Phat Philly's hires anyone that is willing to work. They provide all the training you need to succeed and have even given opportunities back to employees that have made a mistake that ended them in jail or working with employees that can't read very well and developing a system for those employees to succeed.

As Phat Philly's grows and expands the need for new locations will also grow and expand. With the opening of their new location they will be presented with an opportunity to create more jobs for people who would be passed up for promotion at another job. We interviewed employees working at Phat Philly's. Many identified a great opportunity for Phat Philly's would be implementing a rewards program.. A rewards program could increase the word of mouth for the company.

Merchandise would be a great way to increase brand awareness and market the company. The quicker they can get people to be a walking advertisement the better to increase their footprint on the community. We found out while interviewing the owners that merchandise is available for sale the only problem in the sale of their merch is it not advertised ever.

Threats:

The threats of any company can be numerous. In identifying the weaknesses of the company can also better identify the potential threats:

- Multiple owners (strength / weakness/ threat)
- Not being opened on Sundays vs. restaurants that are.
- New Location
- Steak stuffers

One of the threats is having multiple owners. Multiple owners can be great and dreadful at the same time. Arguments can be really bad and cause rifts in relationships for months to come halting overall progress.

Steak Stuffers is the direct competition that Phat Philly's has and that can be a big problem for the company as they try to gain market share.

A new location can cause serious financial stress on the bottom line of the company if not done properly. With the opening of the new location there has also been a great deal of backlash from customers as they grow impatient and voice that negativity on social media. This is bad for business. To a certain degree a business should let their customers know that they are being heard an appreciated. Not responding to customers also weakens a great strength of Phat Philly's in the hearts of their customers who are so loyal. Being local makes them feel as though they are

apart of Phat Philly's growth and not responding makes them think that is not actually the case.

Recommended Plan of Action:

Given the results of the Audit, we now are tasked with recommending a plan of action for Phat Philly's Cheesesteaks. Phat Philly's offers great food to its customers in terms of cheesesteaks. wings, and other items. They have received this high recognition for the quality of the food they provide from awards and the sample population of 50 people surveyed. Customers feel taken care of in the store, however, When asked about how they feel about online communication there were some that felt it lacking. Phat Philly's has very little direct competition in Oklahoma making the recommendation as follows:

Question: Should Phat Philly's franchise?

Answer: Not now and not unless they make more strides in their social presence.

Not that we suggest Phat Philly's attempt to avoid franchising indefinitely but to understand that the reasoning for choosing to do it now simply doesn't exist right for the company right now. Phat Philly's has a new location opening soon. They need to focus on operating that additional

location just as well as they currently manage the one located on Peoria. Additionally, the New Location opening comes with the added responsibilities the owners are now tasked with. The main owners will have even less time than they did before to interact with the customers that are so loyal to Phat Philly's. Phat Philly's customers are the reason for Phat Philly's survival. Referencing the surveys, the food is fondly thought of but there are times that the customer service online differed from that of the store. Phat Philly's is still a baby relatively speaking and when the first location opened in 2005 it was then followed in 2012 with the decision that it needed to shut its doors. This decision was made because of the inability at the time to meet the market need in multiple categories, food not being one of those needs not met. The reopening of Phat Philly's and the location change to Peoria helped it sore. The original customers came back and more flocked to the store. The birth of Phat Philly's was the genius of Jason Smith, but the success in keeping the doors open is with credit to Thomas Regan, and Steve Santee for stepping in as partners. These three each uniquely bring something to the table that the other doesn't. All three keep the ideals of the cheesesteak store in check. If they were to decide to franchise, they would lose a key aspect of the Philly's charm. They would lose the local love that makes it wholesome for Oklahoman's and the visitors that come here. With the decision to franchise, the door would be opened to the current competition that poses no threat on the restaurant due to where its located by state. Going back to the localness. The customers have developed into something short of a cult following. This community has developed a deep connection with the people that live here. The way Phat Philly's positions themselves and differentiates themselves from other competition is the original reason for deciding a cheesesteak store needed to be in Oklahoma and not let's say Arkansas. With each additional restaurant Phat Philly's slaps their

name on, so to goes away with the exclusivity and magic that is slowly chipped away. Without the proper people to keep the thought alive. One day the opportunity for Phat Philly's to franchise will present itself but we recommend not acting further until all customers needs are met. The presence of Phat Philly's on social media is tremendous when compared to the sheer size of the company. It would be in the best interest of the company to engage those customers more so than they have chosen to in the past. While Phat Philly's is a small company the following is greater than franchised stores across the state. The focus now needs to be on the customers on their social media outlets such as Facebook and Instagram. There's a real opportunity to branch out the brand while still staying local for the time being. Repositioning the budget to enhance the marketing of those outlets could be the answer to Phat Philly's continued growth and the possibility of that growth revealing the opportunity to then franchise.

Survey Questionnaire

Manager Interview Questionnaire

How long have you been with Phat Philly's?

What is your current marketing strategy?

What is the total estimated revenue last year? How does that compare to your goals?

What is your mission statement?

Do you believe that employee happiness is just as important as customer happiness? Yes or No

How are your products differentiated from the competitors?

Do you feel you have any brand loyal customers if so, Who are they?

Do you have any special programs (incentive) for repeat customers? If no, why?

Who is your target market?

How do you position your products to your target market?

Overall, how can you, as a company, gain more market share and your product industry?

Which forms the media does Phat Philly's advertise through: (circle applicable ones)

TV Radio newspaper Internet Mobile phones Other

What sort of other types of promotion does Phat Philly's use? For example, sponsorship, endorsements, direct mail, personal selling, public relations, or other.

What actions have had the greatest impact on your business.

What is one aspect that has had a negative impact on your business.

What are some of the biggest consumer related issues facing a brand right now? What are strategies to tackle these issues?

Where do you see your brand in five years?

Employee Interview Questionnaire

How mu	ow much interaction do you spend with your customers when dealing in these areas? 5 being the most					
•	Service:	1	2	3	4	5
•	Delivery:	1	2	3	4	5
•	Quality management:	1	2	3	4	5
•	Sales:	1	2	3	4	5

On a scale 1 to 5, one being unsatisfied and five being satisfied how satisfied are you with your job?

1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5, one being unsatisfied and five being satisfied how satisfied are you with the job training you received?

1 2 3 4 5

*If you answered 3 or lower, please answer what would have made a difference? (If higher than 3 skip)

How do you feel about the choices you offer to your customers?

How are complaints usually dealt with? Do you feel, in comparison to your competitors, your menu prices are fair at Phat Philly's? When comparing your service with your competitors how would you rate the overall quality? (5 being excellent quality) 1 2 3 4 5 When comparing your food with your competitors how would you rate the overall quality? (5 being excellent quality) 1 2 3 4 5 Do you have any suggestions on how to improve your relationship with customers? How would you honestly rate the service YOU provide for the company: (5 being highest quality) 1 2 3 4 5 Consumer Survey What do you think of Phat Philly's? Out of service, food, or location, which is most prominent to you? Who is Phat philly's main competitor, in your opinion? Compared with Phat Philly's competitors, what advantages make Phat Philly's the food stop of choice? "When making purchase decisions what is required in order of importance? "One being most important, six being least important Menu variety Quality of food Price of food Interior design Location of restaurant Customer Service Please consider these questions with regards to Phat Philly's and circle answers based upon the scale given below: 1: Strongly disagree 2: Somewhat disagree 3: Neither agree nor disagree 4: Somewhat agree 5: Strongly agree	What do your typical customers order?								
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3: Neither agree nor disagree 4: Somewhat agree	1: Strongly disagree								
4: Somewhat agree	2: Somewhat disagree								
	3: Neither agree nor disagree								
5: Strongly agree									
	5: Strongly agree								

Customer Service I constantly receive quality customer service: Phat Philly's service is prompt to my requests: Phat Philly's has never left you feeling unsatisfied: Innovation You view the company as innovative: Menu items are fresh, new, and good: They understand the needs of the market: Quality Products are of superior quality: Phat Philly stands by the quality of their products: You're willing to refer Phat Philly's: Price That Phat Philly's offers competitive pricing: Value proposition is best in class: Phat Philly's evaluates competitive offerings: **Sales Process** Employees are outstanding: They provide the right information at the right time: Is there a need to improve some areas? How likely is it that you would recommend Phat Philly's to friends or colleagues? Not at all likely 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely likely

Are you? Male

Almost finished...

Female	
Your age?	
Under 18?	
18-25	
26-35	
36-45	

	Refe	erences	
			Thank you for your time!
Your City:			
Over \$100,000			
\$75,000-\$100,000			
\$50,000-\$75,000			
\$25,000-\$50,000			
Less than \$25,000			
Annual Salary Range	?		
Over 65?			
56-65			
46-55			

[&]quot;About." Phat Philly's, www.phatphillys.com/about.

[&]quot;The History of the Philly Cheesesteak." Fox News, FOX News Network, www.foxnews.com/food-drink/the-history-of-the-philly-cheesesteak.