

## 3.12: Closing Company Case

### Wired Coffee Bar



Figure 3.15 Recognizing an opportunity to open a coffee shop in a small community where none existed, its proprietors launched Wired Coffee Bar. (credit: reproduced with permission of Wired Coffee Bar)

During high school and college, Lisa worked in an upscale retail boutique. On the mornings Lisa opened the store, she grew to love the deep, rich smell of the coffee that would permeate the air from the local gourmet food store across from the boutique. Her love for coffee only deepened as she experienced local cafés throughout her travels while in college. In the back of her mind, she glamorized opening her own café.

Throughout her early thirties, Lisa looked at locations, talked with coffee entrepreneurs, developed business feasibility studies, and dreamed of one day having her own place. One big problem was finding the right geographical area where a small, independent coffee shop would be successful.

After moving for the fifth time, Lisa realized the new, growing community where she now lived with her two small children lacked one important thing—good coffee. The town was rapidly expanding and was the fastest-growing community in Tennessee. This might be the time and place to revisit the idea of a coffee shop.

Every feasibility study Lisa completed pointed to the need for strong community support. This new town had two important ingredients—college students and a burgeoning population. The area was abundant with many different church denominations; a few small, local colleges; and some new international businesses that had recently relocated to the community.

With no coffee shop in the town, Lisa believed her concept could be successful. Currently, if you wanted a coffee, the nearest place to grab a cup was a Starbucks, which was more than 20 minutes away. Starbucks made specialty coffee mainstream, but it seemed that sitting down to enjoy a cup of coffee was becoming a thing of the past. As more and more people began grabbing their coffee from the drive-through, could a community coffee bar with a wide variety of seating options and complimentary Wi-Fi be successful?

Going forward with the idea, Lisa began to develop Wired Coffee Bar. Before opening, Lisa went to every local community event and provided free coffee for people to sample. Once the community had a taste of the coffee and an expectation for the opening, there was an eager clientele waiting in line on the first day of business. One customer even hugged Lisa to thank her for bringing coffee to the community.

The concept took off, and soon Lisa was a purveyor of fine coffee. Wired Coffee Bar was widely supported by the community. The local churches loved to meet for a coffee drink and connect with friends and neighbors. Throughout the day, business was conducted at the tables over a coffee, and into the evening hours, college students gathered to study and talk with friends.

If you looked at the clientele throughout the day, you could see the “grab and go” customers who came every morning to get their mochas, lattes, and cappuccinos. Into the late-morning hours, the tables filled up with business meetings—builders and their new clients, PTA groups, pharmaceutical sales reps strategizing for the day and grabbing coffee for customers, and moms meeting for coffee before picking up kids at school. As the afternoon wore on, the seats would fill up with high school students meeting with tutors and friends to complete homework. The later evening hours had every seat filled with college students doing class projects or just “hanging out” with friends.

Wired Coffee Bar had a focused niche of coffee and community. The menu wasn't complex. It featured just coffee—hot, iced, and frozen. Wired also offered a variety of teas that could be served hot or iced. Along with the drink options, customers could choose from a selection of sweet or savory locally baked muffins, scones, quiche, cookies, and coffee cakes. But Wired was not a restaurant; it was a true coffee bar.

With a regular and steady customer base, Wired could see the busier times happening when school was in session, and then summers saw a lighter revenue stream as the college students left and the local families took summer vacations out of town. The coffee business definitely needed local support to offset the vacation schedules of the college students.

Just as Wired Coffee Bar was hitting its stride, new coffee shops started to enter the once-dormant community. Each new coffee location offered a drive-through, something Wired Coffee Bar never wants to be—fast-food coffee. As Lisa looked at ways to create more business, provide good coffee, and differentiate from the masses, she wondered if her concept could survive the hustle and the need for quicker service and a less laid-back atmosphere.

For further resources, visit the company [website](#). They also have a [Facebook page](#) and an Instagram account ([@getwiredcoffee](#)).

### Case Questions

1. What type of consumer buying behavior are consumers exhibiting when buying coffee?
2. Consumers are faced with many different influences when they are making purchasing decisions. What social influences have the greatest impact on the decision to purchase coffee from Wired Coffee Bar? What personal influences have the greatest impact?
3. What situational factors may influence consumers to purchase from Wired Coffee Bar rather than Starbucks?
4. How might Wired Coffee Bar further differentiate itself from other coffee bars as consumers search for alternatives in their buyer decision-making process?

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