

Competitor's Operations Analysis

Sparky's Sports Bar & Grill



East Prater Way, Sparks, NV

Location

Located in a newly built shopping center (since late 1999) on the corner of Prater & Vista, other occupants include Rite Aid, a non-competing Mexican Cuisine restaurant, a coffee house/gift shop, a gas station/convenience store and several other service businesses. The center still has a number of vacant units.

Company Profile

Sparky's has one other local unit located in downtown Reno. Sparky's is a 24-hour operation. The Sparks location is an excessive 8,400 square feet and seats approximately 175-190 people.

Happy Hour

Happy hour is from 3pm to 5pm and offers minimal discounts on beer and wine. No food discounts or specials are offered.

Conceptual Overview

Directly across the street and somewhat similar in concept, we view Sparky's as the primary competitor to the Score's operation. Sparky's is a 24-hour venue and offers food, entertainment, gaming and a sports bar theme. Due to these similarities we visited Sparky's on several occasions.

External Marketing

The only marketing observed has been coupon advertising in various local books such as Pro-Motion Coupons. Website @

Internal Marketing

Consumer frequency is encouraged via a Frequent Diner Club. A database is being developed by means of a comment card. Cocktail napkins are used (with space for name and phone number) which encourage patrons to take the napkins home. Extensive use of poster style graphics, created expressly for Sparky's, are strategically placed throughout the establishment. There was no evidence of any formal promotion of food or drink specials.

Competitive Analysis

Sharing geographic location and having a similar concept, Sparky's is the primary competitor. However, the food and service components are poorly executed. Score's higher emphasis on interesting food (well executed and delivered) via the combination of the grill/carvery, meeting and banquet rooms, coupled with the informal sports theme and gaming allows Score's to aggressively compete with Sparky's.

Operations Survey:

(Score 10 points for each)

Ambiance/Atmosphere	8
Concept Creativity	6
Menu Content & Graphics	6
Staff Presentation	5
Service Quality	5
Service Speed	5
Food Quality	4
Food Presentation	4
Perceived/Actual Value	6
Unique Selling Positions	6

Total Score (out of 100):

54

Shopper's Visit 1

Sunday, March 18 @ 12:30

Our initial visit was with children on a weekend afternoon. There was no host presence at the front door and patrons simply seated themselves. After a few minutes our server appeared and delivered menus and took drink orders. Menu graphics were fair and some attempt at engineering was apparent with a fairly extensive offering of items. Menu scripting was good, however the product delivered did not live up to the expectations created. Sparky's offered a well-rounded children's menu, hot and cold sandwiches, salads and pizzas.

Entrée delivery time was 28 minutes even though the facility was adequately staffed and not very busy. A hamburger, ordered medium rare, was delivered well done. Two of four orders were missing components and one of the children's meals was especially bad. The food was mediocre in execution and appearance and perceived value was below average. Service was extremely casual and the staff seemed to spend a great deal of time hanging out and chatting.

Clientele was varied with a few families, some singles and couples and a few small groups. During this afternoon visit pizzas were the obvious menu segment of choice.

Shopper's Visit 2

Friday, April 6 @ 8:30

Our second visit to the Sparky's operation was a Friday night about 8:30. The dining area was about 90% occupied with a mixed clientele. The arcade area was primarily parents with children, the dining area a mix of families, couples and small groups. The median age group was 25-35 with a few older couples. Alcohol service was primary with only 15% of the patrons ordering food items. Alcohol service was mainly draft beer ordered by the glass and by the pitcher. There was no presence at the front door and the table service was as poor as our first experience.

Shopper's Visit 3

Thursday, April 12 @ 5:45 pm

We visited Sparky's on a Thursday evening about 5:45 to assess the happy hour clientele. There were about 100 guests in the facility, about 65% male and most were upper 20's to mid 40's. Again, there was no front door presence so we seated ourselves. We were greeted in about 2 minutes by our server who was unable to tell us about any food or drink specials. We did finally discover that there were various alcohol discounts but no food discounts. Our beverages arrived in about 10 minutes and appetizers took 18 minutes.

Sparky's does have several beverage-based marketing programs such as free drinks for ladies on Saturday nights from 9-11 and a few sports equipment giveaways. By 6:30 the happy hour crowd had left and a noticeably different dinner crowd was arriving.

Shopper's Visit 4

Friday, April 13 @ 12:15 pm

Our final Sparky's visit was at 12:15 on a Friday afternoon for lunch. The facility was nearly full, about 75% male, and sandwiches and burgers were the primary food product. I seated myself and the server approached the table at the 7-minute mark. There were only 3 servers on the floor and each had 12-15 tables, which was clearly an overload. My server took a beverage order and never returned. The beverage was eventually delivered by the manager who completed the order taking/delivery process. My salad arrived 9 minutes later followed by my sandwich at 16 minutes. Even though I'd ordered the salad as a side with the sandwich, the sandwich still arrived with fries.

Competitor's Operations Analysis Bully's Sports Bar & Grill



North McCarran Boulevard, Sparks, NV

Location

Bully's is located in the newly built shopping center (since 1999) on the corner of Pyramid Way & North McCarran Boulevard. Other occupants include Raley's, Starbucks, Blockbuster Video, three or four small non-competing eateries, tanning, computer & postal services.

Company Profile

Bully's has 3 other units locally. Two located in Reno and one just opened unit on Highway 395 in Carson City. Bully's is a 24-hour operation serving breakfast, lunch & dinner and seats approximately 145-160 people.

Happy Hour

Happy hour is from 3pm to 6pm and offers discounted food items such as nachos, wings & hotdogs as well as minimally discounted beer and wine. There are also Saturday night beer specials between 9pm and midnight in addition to daily drink specials offered at discounted prices any time. Monday night football specials include wings & beer. Sunday night football specials offer prime rib & beer.

Conceptual Overview

The Bully's concept is similar to Score's in that it's a multi-venue, 24 hour operation offering food, beverage & video poker, which appeals to a broad range of clientele. Bully's is very well executed and we ranked it as a major competitor and visited the facility a number of times.

External Marketing

The Bully's group makes extensive use of multimedia advertising via local television and radio spots. Media is being used to promote internal events such as Survivor Night and regular sporting events.

Internal Marketing

Food specials are poorly promoted via a dry erase board in an obscure location. Verbal scripting and server promotion is non-existent. A large assortment of t-shirts, tanks, golf shirts, hats and other clothing with the Bully's logo is offered via the back of the menu.

Competitive Analysis

Bully's food concept is well executed but lacks the WOW factor. It is often poorly delivered and quality is inconsistent. Score's enhanced presentations, higher emphasis on interesting food, (well executed and delivered) via the combination of the grill/carvery, meeting and banquet rooms, coupled with the informal sports theme and gaming allows Score's to aggressively compete with Bully's.

Operations Survey:

(Score 10 points for each)

Ambiance/Atmosphere	8
Concept Creativity	9
Menu Content & Graphics	9
Staff Presentation	6
Service Quality	5
Service Speed	5
Food Quality	8
Food Presentation	8
Perceived/Actual Value	8
Unique Selling Positions	8

Total Score (out of 100):

74

Shopper's Visit 1

Friday, April 6 @ 8:00 pm

Our initial visit was a Friday night about 8:00 pm. We were greeted at the door and sent into the dining area to find our own table. There were a few empty tables scattered throughout and most of the occupied tables had some sort of food service as well as beverages. Although well staffed, there was absolutely no management presence and no one was in control of the floor or service staff. Ambience and visual marketing were very good throughout the facility and it was well maintained and inviting. The clientele was varied and included families, couples and groups.

After seating ourselves we waited over 15 minutes to be recognized by a server, this seemed to be about the normal time at the tables around us as well. The server was poorly trained, unable to answer our questions and made no attempt at suggestive selling or incremental sales building. We ordered 2 appetizers and drinks. Delivery on beverages was 2-3 minutes and food arrived in about 15 minutes. We didn't see our server again until we were ready to leave.

Food quality was good and the menu offerings were varied and substantial. Price range was \$5.00 to \$11.00 and there were numerous daily food specials. Menu engineering was poor but the menu graphics were outstanding and presented the sports bar theme very well.

As the evening progressed there was a noticeable change in clientele. By 9:30 most of the families had left and were being replaced by college students. Karaoke is the main entertainment venue on Friday and Saturday and attracts a 21-28 year old group. Bully's appears to be the entertainment destination of choice among the UNR crowd and equivalent age group in the community.

Shopper's Visit 2

Saturday, April 7 @ 10:30 am

Our second Bully's visit was a Saturday morning for breakfast. We arrived about 9:00 and stayed until 10:30, at no time was there more than 7 patrons in the building.

We were greeted by our server who was both knowledgeable and professional. She was able to answer our questions and made a couple of food related suggestions. Food quality was very good and actually surpassed *Black Bear Diner*, prices ranged from \$4.00 to \$7.00 and value was extremely high. Because the facility was empty we had an opportunity to have a running conversation with our server who was normally a lunch waitress. She stated that lunches and dinners were busy Thursday through Sunday and that weekend Karaoke was popular as a late night venue.

Shopper's Visit 3

Sunday, April 8 @ 7:00 pm

We chose a Sunday evening about 7:00 pm for our third visit. The restaurant was about 60% occupied by a varied clientele that included families, couples and small groups. There was no clearly defined age group. We again seated ourselves and waited about 10 minutes before we were recognized. The server had several tables and was obviously having problems keeping up. Once again there was no attempt at suggestive selling or check building, nor were any verbal specials offered. 15 minutes after ordering beverages, I finally got the attention of our waitress to inquire about our drinks; we also placed an order for a burger and a prime rib special. Beverages finally arrived, 5 minutes after the reminders and the food arrived about 25 minutes later. The burger, ordered medium rare, was well done but the prime rib was very well presented with a salad and steamed red potatoes. At this point the table next to us became very upset and demanded to see a manager, an individual from the bar appeared and seemed to resolve the issue at hand and also reduced the tab by \$20.00. Even though the waitress was obviously having problems he offered no help and returned to the bar. We finished our meal and waited about 10 minutes before we could get a check from the server who closed us out without any attempt at coffee, dessert or after dinner drink. The evening special was a "baseball" Sunday night prime rib for \$6.75, there was also a prime rib special on Sunday and Thursday nights, 8oz. cut for \$7.95 and 12 oz. cut for \$12.95. The portion I received was at least 12 ounces but I was charged the \$6.75 price.

Shopper's Visit 4

Thursday, April 12 @ 12:15 pm

On the fourth visit I once again, seated myself and waited several minutes to get the server's attention. The server was covering 9 tables when I sat down and was being assisted by a busser and what appeared to be a manager. Within a few minutes 2 additional servers were on the floor, however they were too late and did not appear busy for the remainder of the visit. Although there was a management presence on this visit there was no interaction with the guests and as soon as the server was caught up, the manager disappeared.