



Coffee Roastery's "Open Door" Policy Boosts Foot Traffic & Sales by 20 to 30%.

Air curtain over customer entryway saves energy and increases indoor air comfort at Fortunes Coffee Roastery in Pittsburgh's famous Strip District.

Berner International Corp.

Fortunes Coffee Roastery

Whether it's a wintery 20°F or a steamy summer day, the front doors are always propped open at Fortunes Coffee Roastery on Pittsburgh's famous Strip District.

One of the first policy changes Store Manager, Paula Sciuлло made after her family bought the 20-year-old independent coffee retailer last year was an "always open" door policy as a welcoming gesture to the many passersby on the mile-long wholesale food area near downtown Pittsburgh that's dotted with specialty shopping and nightlife establishments. Since patrons are an even mix of impulse and destination shoppers, the sales results were immediate. Foot traffic into the 1,200-square-foot store increased dramatically by 20 to 30 percent paralleled by similar sales increases, according to Sciuлло. "Just about everyone that comes through the door buys something, so any strategy such as an open door can reap benefits," said Sciuлло.

While perpetually open doors are seemingly a huge energy loser during cold or hot days, a newly-installed Zephyr air curtain manufactured by Berner International, New Castle, Pa., above the doorway minimizes any energy losses and maintains indoor air comfort within 3°F to 5°F of indoor set-point temperatures for employees and patrons near point-of-purchase entrance area.

Air curtains aren't a new innovation. In fact they've been used for decades in industrial applications. However, retail stores ranging from convenience stores and apparel outlets to large drug stores and big box merchants are now using air curtains to reduce energy losses in both front and back end doors as well as increase indoor air comfort. Most recently retailers are circumventing the huge costs of constructing vestibules by substituting with air curtain/automatic door combinations, which studies last year proved are far more efficient.

Aware of the air curtain technology's advantages, Sciuлло's father, Ray, recommended it for the store because he has bought and used them for decades in his own industrial businesses' of material handling, warehousing and trucking docks.

The 72-inch-wide Zephyr air curtain is designed to strategically discharge air from eight feet above the doorway down to the floor and split a few inches outside the threshold. Proper air velocity, volume and uniformity will successfully separate the indoor/outdoor environments. Outdoor air, vehicle emission fumes and insects can't penetrate a properly designed, manufactured and installed air curtain, according to the Air Movement & Control Association (AMCA), Arlington Heights, Ill., a trade association that certifies air curtain model specifications. In heavy traffic applications, such as coffee retailing, the air curtain also keeps the floor dry during inclement weather, which reduces accidents and floor maintenance throughout the store.

With such a big difference in traffic and sales increases, other Strip retailers plan to follow Fortunes example and install their own air curtains this year, according to Sciuлло.



Saving Energy and Creating Healthy, Comfortable Environments