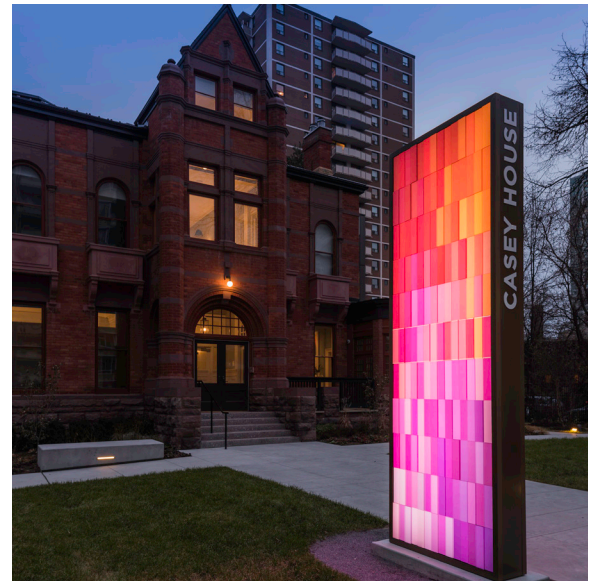


A New Bottom Line

—The Value and Impact of Placemaking



Lemay's Escape 67 historic site renewal located in Montreal, Quebec. Photo credit; Marc Cramer



Casey House, Toronto. Exterior signage by Entro. Photo credit; Gerald Querubin

“ Study shows that people are 50% more likely to spend time in spaces with placemaking interventions...

An interdisciplinary study by academic researchers and industry leaders has been able to prove the positive impact of placemaking interventions in public and private spaces. The study, conducted by Toronto Metropolitan University in collaboration with The Daniels Corporation, Entro, Lemay, and MASSIVart **found increases in personal connection, likeliness to spend time or shop, sense of safety and relaxation, emotional stimulation, and shareability of locations with placemaking interventions.** These findings help us understand the immediate and enduring benefits of placemaking for retail, real estate, transit, and public spaces.

“ ...placemaking initiatives resulted in a 63% increase in positive feelings toward locations...

The study highlights that placemaking initiatives go beyond creating curb appeal—that they have real effects on how people are likely to interact with the space. When placemaking interventions are introduced, the study noticed the following behaviours: increased time spent, which can result in more sales or productive use of a site; increased self-congruity, which strengthens brand awareness and attachment; and increased shareability of the placemaking experience, which can result in higher traffic to your destination. Placemaking interventions (that are thoughtfully designed, co-created with the community, and expertly produced) influence key behaviours that benefit communities and businesses alike.

The study measured responses from 586 participants to quantify the value of placemaking. A total of five environment types were examined: office, subway platform, public space, retail space, and residential/condo lobby. For each type of environment, two virtual versions were created. The first version was a Baseline—spaces without placemaking interventions. The second version was Enhanced—spaces with placemaking interventions, such as enhanced signage and wayfinding, public art installations, and



Study: Virtual Baseline Environment



Study: Virtual Enhanced Environment

improved spatial arrangements. Participants viewed one of the two and were asked to rate the environment on four different scales: **(1)** how the space makes them feel; **(2)** what they think about the space; **(3)** the degree to which people identify with the space; and **(4)** how likely they



Daniels Erin Mills Arc Condominiums located in Mississauga, Ontario. Photo Credit; The Daniels Corporation



The Eye of Mexico; curated and produced by MASSIVart and artist Ouchhh for Ivanhoé Cambridge, MIRA and Hines, Mexico City

are to spend more time in the space or engage with the space. Each of these categories were then compared between the Baseline and Enhanced environments.

Our environments should strive to support positive thoughts and emotions—they should be spaces where we can think big and feel good. The research **found placemaking initiatives produced a 53% increase in positive perceptions**, resulting in environments that were seen as culturally vibrant, safe, friendly, and seen as supporting an improved quality of life. Similarly, placemaking initiatives resulted in a **63% increase in positive feelings towards the locations**, resulting in environments that were more inviting, beautiful, stimulating, and comfortable.

Not only does placemaking make us think positively and feel good, but it shapes how likely we are to tell others or share information about the place. The research shows a **77% increased likelihood for individuals to recommend the site to friends, family, acquaintances, and a 74% increased likelihood for individuals to share more information about the location that has placemaking interventions**. This can translate to an increase in traffic to the place and more exposure through word-of-mouth or social media sharing. This organic conversation is a form of publicity

that can be incredibly beneficial.

With placemaking initiatives leading to places that are more beautiful, safer, stimulating, and friendlier, and places that we are more likely to share with others, the research also showed a **50% increase in likelihood of spending time in the environment with placemaking interventions.** Practically speaking, additional time spent in the environment can result in increased sales, productive use of space, and potential social and environmental benefits.

Lastly, **placemaking initiatives resulted in a 53% increase in self-congruity.** Self-congruity is described as a sense of connection between an individual's self-identity and the place—how much a person can see themselves in the place. This strengthening of self-congruity is why placemaking causes us to want to spend more time, shop, share information, and tell others about the place. **Placemaking leads to its most meaningful outcomes when individuals can relate to connect with the environment.**

Whether in a transit station, condo building, retail, public, or office space, placemaking was shown to have positive effects on emotions, thoughts, and behaviours. Consequently, placemaking interventions can support a wide range of outcomes, such as increased traffic and sales, stronger connections and interactions, and improved community engagement and awareness. Such initiatives are not only great for captivating your clients and communities, but the increased likelihood of these individuals to learn more, share their experience, feel better about, and align their self-image with the enhanced spaces can create immediate and lasting effects for any industry.



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