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Guest Relations,
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Regarding: The use of heat lamps in the Cambridge Grand Arcade branch of Costa Coffee
Sunday, 1 February 2009

To whom it may concern,

As you will no doubt be aware, the Costa Coffee branch in Cambridge's new Grand Arcade shopping mall deploys the use of heat lamps under its equally pointless (given that the housing mall is roofed) but otherwise inoffensive umbrellas to warm its seating area. I am writing to complain at this outrageous and wasteful practice. I find it difficult to express my feelings on your choice to use these appliances, as it seems such a mindless, gross unacceptability that I can not begin to comprehend the middle-management rationalising¹ that must have been employed to come up with this.

It may seem like a small and insignificant matter in the scheme of a more socially endemic problem, but this does not diminish the fact that you have made an active choice (the *wrong* choice) that is so morally unjustifiable. That it is left to me, a member of the public, to bring this to your attention when otherwise you would apparently be happy to continue as you are, I find personally insulting.

As concerned and informed persons, as I am sure you are, you are certainly aware of the scale and immediacy of the human tragedies that will² be a result of the decadence and unsustainable consumption of the wealthy and technologically developed countries of the world.

There is exactly one way in which such matters will change for the better, and that is if everyone decides to make a change. This applies more to you, as a large corporation, than to any individuals. The decisions you make will have much more of an impact. The choice is apparently a simple one: either actively reduce carbon emissions (which, in your case, requires a reduction in energy consumption) because you feel a responsibility to the lives and livelihoods of the rest of your species; or scrape around for as much revenue for your corporation as possible, without a thought to the consequences. It seems fairly clear which choice you have made, and it is for this reason that I will not be patronising any Costa Coffee retail establishment in future, and likewise encouraging others to support ethics and reason with their wallets. At this point I am not going to offer to once again become a loyal

¹ Especially when you claim to "minimise waste and the use of resources across the business, wherever possible". Laughable.

² I'm sure that as a corporation which claims to "recognise the potential scale of our environmental impact", you'll be aware of the recent report by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Colorado that (as reported in the national press: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/7852628.stm>) we have already reached the point where many of the effects of climate change have become irreversible. Damage limitation is now the only option.

customer if the aforementioned appliances are removed because, frankly, you shouldn't require such motivation.

A public copy of this letter can now be found online, where I shall also post the response I expect from you.

Faithfully yours,

Cai Wingfield

