

A midday power nap right in the CBD

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SLEEP-DEPRIVED office workers now have a new solution to their midday sleepiness.

At least two beauty and wellness companies in the Central Business District (CBD) are offering power-nap services, where customers can snooze near their offices.

They pay between \$18 and \$28 for a 30-minute nap on a massage bed.

The companies interviewed said the business idea came from office-worker customers who needed a place to catch some shut-eye to recharge during the day.

Demand for this novel service though, has been in a slumber.

An outlet receives on average just four power nap customers a month.

Retail experts interviewed said this novel service has potential but it may need to build up a strong business image to distinguish itself from hourly-rated hotel room services.

Chop! Chop! Massage Express has been offering power naps since 2004.

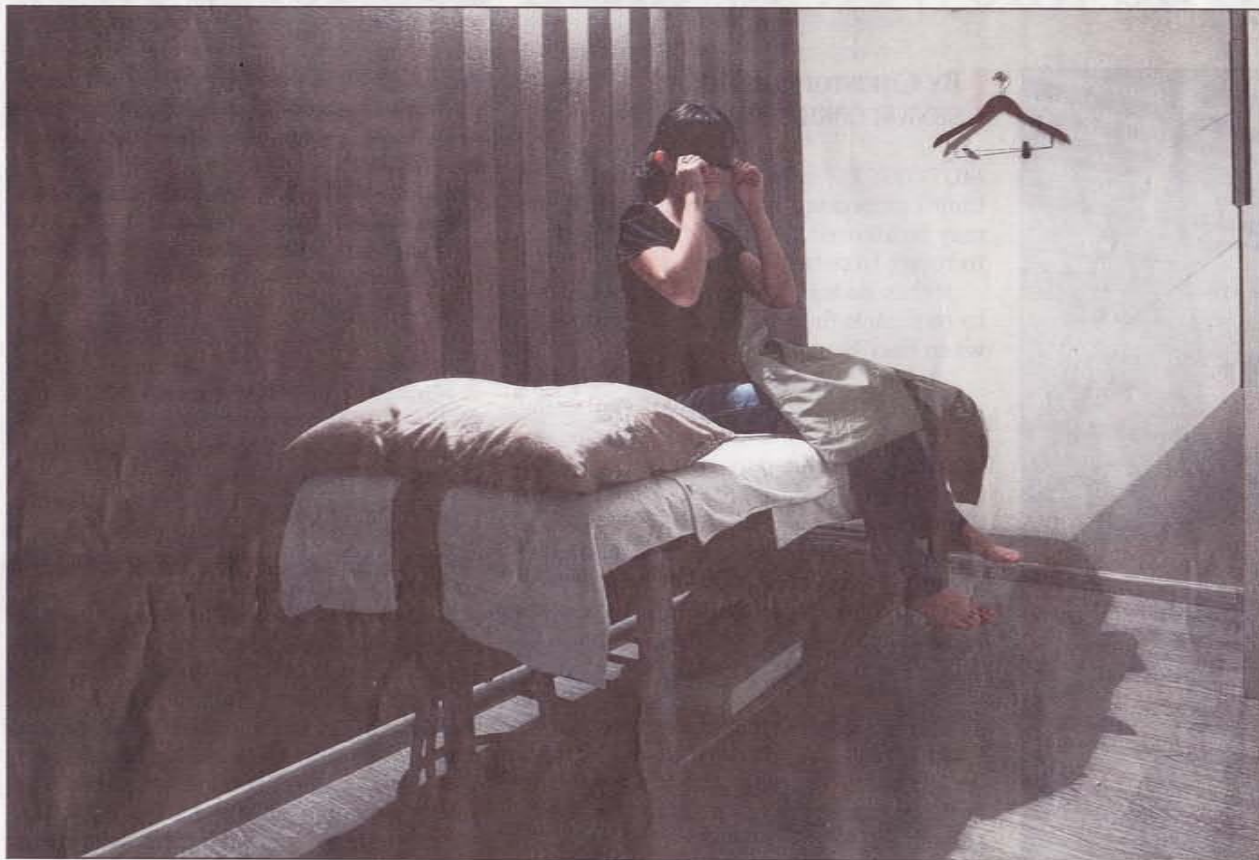
Its customers are provided pillows, comforters and eye masks, and the bedsheets and pillowcases are changed after each use.

There are two outlets: in Chevron House at Raffles Place and in the Marina Bay Link Mall.

General manager Michelle Tiong said: "There are many working executives who need to work consecutive late nights. By the afternoons, most need to take a break and find a proper resting place to lie down."

She added that some of its massage customers have also opted to extend a relaxing massage with a nap.

Beauty salon Skinhub, which opened three months ago at Robinson Road, also offers power naps.



Chop! Chop! Massage Express offers power naps at its Raffles Place and Marina Bay Link Mall outlets. Its customers are provided pillows, comforters and eye masks. The bedsheets and pillowcases are changed after each use.

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It has six rooms with single-sized beds for customers to catch 40 winks. Electric heating blankets are provided and customers have the option of changing into clean robes to prevent their work clothes from getting wrinkled.

Power napping is already popular elsewhere in Europe, Japan and the United States.

In Tokyo, for instance, there are napping salons and capsule hotels which offer workers a quick siesta.

Studies done by American researchers have shown that a 20-minute power nap can increase alertness and productivity, as well as information retention.

While demand has been slow to pick

up here, the businesses said they are not affected much because the power-nap service is not their core business, and they continue to provide it as an additional service to customers.

Adjunct associate professor Lynda Wee from the Nanyang Technological University's business school, said businesses offering power naps should appeal to office workers whose sleep patterns are disrupted because they have to work odd hours to suit clients or partners overseas.

She cautioned that these businesses, however, need to have a good image to distinguish them from hourly-rated hotels.

Financial analyst Collin Tan, 27, who works in Raffles Place, finds the service too pricey.

He said: "You can rest in the pantry or at your desk. Also, most of us have only an hour to have lunch. There's already not enough time to eat, how to take a nap?"

Finance manager Sarah Tan, 33, who power naps at Chop! Chop! about twice a month, however, finds it effective.

She said: "It's not very nice for me to nap at my desk but when work gets hectic and I have to wake up early and go to bed late, I am usually tired in the afternoon.

"So I sometimes pop by for a quick nap and I wake up more energetic."