South Florida businesses blend ideas

Ever wanted to grab a sandwich while mailing out a package? How about grab a cup of coffee and a croissant while waiting for a prescription to be filled?

South Florida is home to all kinds of business, including several with two very different concepts under one roof. The idea of blended space isn't a new one, said Florida Atlantic University professor Allen Smith, but one that seems to work in Broward and Palm Beach counties.

"It's a part of history that's been around for a long time. Think of the sweet shops and drug stores that were combined back in the 1950s and 1960s," Smith said. "What's different nowadays is how these businesses are being branded."

Sandwiches and stamps. Mark Lewis opened Mojo's Cafe and U.S. Post Office 3 1/2 years ago near the beach in Boca Raton. The store sells gourmet deli sandwiches. In another corner stands a United States Postal Service station, where customers can ship and receive packages, and mail or buy stamps and boxes.

"It was always my plan to open the store with the post office inside it," Lewis said. "People come in here to send a package or buy stamps and end up grabbing a sandwich."

Sales have grown by 30 percent this year, which Lewis attributes to the interest in the post office by residents. He said the majority of his clientele are senior residents who live in the high-rise condominiums near the beach.

"This is a destination strategy," Smith said. "He's given customers a need to visit his store. While they're there, it is convenient for them to pick up something to eat. The concepts are complementary in nature."

Prescriptions and coffee. Garden Drugs, an independent pharmacy off Andrews Avenue in Fort Lauderdale, has been a part of the South Florida community for more than 50 years, said owner and pharmacist Aneesh Lakhani.

A little more than 100 square feet of his 5,000-square-foot pharmacy is Marge's Garden Restaurant, a ma-and-pa-style luncheon counter that serves breakfast and lunch.

"Both businesses really feed off of each other," Lakhani said. "People go back and forth, grabbing a coffee while they wait for their prescription."
News and coffee. The Triton, a monthly Fort Lauderdale yachting publication, shares a two-story space off 17th street with Newsworthy Cafe, a breakfast and lunch restaurant owned by two of the four Triton founders, Lucy and David Reed.

The Triton moved to the office space upstairs on Jan. 2, David Reed said. When the space below opened up, Reed said he jumped at the opportunity to own his own restaurant.

"Everyone has to own a restaurant once in their life," Reed said.

Brews and tattoos. Kreepy Tiki, which opened as a tattoo shop on South Federal Highway in Fort Lauderdale five years ago, now shares space with a craft beer and wine bar called Five Points Lounge. Owner Jackson Valiente opened the bar in March.

The tattoo shop sells boutique-styled vintage clothing for men and women, as well. Valiente leases out a space next door to Goodfella's Barber Shop.

"Most companies these days focus on doing one thing and become competitive with that one idea," Smith said. "It's unique to see small businesses focusing on more than one thing at a time."