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Brand associations in the tradeshow industry: An application of the service brand preference model

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BRAND ASSOCIATIONS IN THE TRADESHOW INDUSTRY: AN APPLICATION OF
THE SERVICE BRAND PREFERENCE MODEL

by

Hwabong Lee

Bachelor of Arts
Hankook University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, Korea
2000

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

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THE SERVICE BRAND PREFERENCE MODEL

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MASTER OF SCIENCE IN HOTEL ADMINISTRATION

Examination Committee Chair

Dean of the Graduate College

Examination Committee Member

Examination Committee Member

Graduate College Faculty Representative

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ABSTRACT

Brand Associations in the Tradeshow Industry: An application of the Service Brand Preference Model

by

Hwabong Lee

Dr. Billy Bai, Examination Committee Chair
Assistant Professor of Tourism & Convention Administration
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

The tradeshow industry has become one of the most remarkable and rapid-growing markets in the hospitality industry. Tradeshows continue to be one of the most effective marketing tools and strategy mixes. There is no other medium that offers this multi-dimensional experience.

Tradeshows have been the one of crown jewels of a company's marketing mix. There are well-known benefits of participating in tradeshows to do marketing and there are many tips and benefits for branding the exhibiting companies at the tradeshows. However, there are limited resources of branding the tradeshow itself from the organizer's perspective.

The purpose of this study was to examine the applicable brand preference model in the tradeshow industry and identify the most effective and powerful items to measure brand preference.
However, due to the tradeshow industry’s unique characteristics and the dissimilarities of service and tradeshow industries, the service brand preference model was not applicable to the tradeshow industry. On the other hand, the multiple regression analysis was significant using number of participation as a constant variable, which gives potential tips for future studies.

The results of this study will be helpful for not only the tradeshow organizers to formulate more effective brand strategy, but it also gives a foundation for future studies regarding tradeshow branding.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

The tradeshow industry has become one of the most remarkable and rapid-growing markets in the hospitality industry. Robbe (2000) stated that "The tradeshow field is emerging as a viable and separate business category that not only facilitates commerce in all arenas of the economy, but also opens new market places at all levels, from manufacturer to wholesale and retail to customer" (p.3)

Tradeshows are events defined as a "Temporary, time sensitive market place organized by an individual or corporation, where buyer and seller interact for the express purpose of purchasing displayed goods or services, either at the time of presentation or a future date" (Morrow, 1997, p.12).

Though we are communicating more than ever through impersonal means, using high-tech electronic systems like the web, broadband, wireless, and e-mail that are convenient and effective. However, these systems lack one component: human contact (Robbe, 2000). Drastically developed internet and wireless communication systems help people communicate and even enable them enter into business contracts. However, we still demand building the trust with partners along with direct contact. Direct interfacing is the foundation of the trust in fast-pace business. What we expect more human contact from the tradeshow industry.
Tradeshows continue to be one of the most effective marketing tools and strategy mixes for companies either trying to step into or remain in a competitive market, simply because there is no other medium that offers this multi-dimensional experience.

The most common and well-known objectives of a tradeshow identified by researchers are: (a) attracting and identifying prospects, (b) servicing current customers, (c) introducing new products, (d) gathering competitive product information, and (e) enhancing corporate image and morale (Sholam, 1992; Black, 1986; Bonoma, 1983; Cavanagh, 1976). Tradeshows offer an effective way to promote business by bringing buyer and seller together in one location (Konikow, 1979). Exhibitors use tradeshows to mark their progress in comparison to other providers, keep in touch with existing customers and develop new relationships (Morrow, 1997; Shoham, 1992; Moriarty & Spekman, 1984). At tradeshows, messages are delivered to a large number of pre-qualified buyers (Parasuraman, 1981; O’Hara, 1993). In addition, tradeshows are an excellent opportunity for introducing new products and determining new product acceptance (Barczak & Bello, 1990).

On the other hand, tradeshows do have some challenges. Some major challenges of tradeshows are: (a) participation is expensive, (b) value or return per dollar spent is unknown, and (c) efficient measurement of tradeshow effectiveness is difficult (Bonoma, 1983). It is also difficult at a tradeshow to capture a prospect’s attention (Weylman, 1992: Herbig & O’Hara, 1993). Large shows are often crowded and have confusing environments. Labor problems and unions can frustrate exhibitors and increase costs from the proliferation and frequency of shows (Herbig, O’Hara, & Palrumbo, 1997; Murphy, 1990).

In spite of these challenges, tradeshow industry has been considered a effective marketing tool.
Industry Facts, Figures, Trends

According to the recent EXPO special report "Industry profile 2000", show managers report double-digit gains in net paid square feet and total gross revenue in 1999. From 1997 to 1999, most industries, except computer and general businesses, report increases in cost per square foot. Shows in medical/healthcare industries charge the most per square foot ($22.80) and report the highest increases, up 12.5% CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) from 1997. Total gross revenue of manufacturing, distributors, and the food industry are $3 million dollars and communications sector recorded $6 million dollars on average (Vasos, 2000). From the study of the International Association for Exposition Management (IAEM), respondents report their largest shows generate average total gross revenue of $1.6 million dollars, attract 10,400 attendees (excluding exhibitors) and cover 150,000 net paid square feet. In 2000, spending on tradeshows was estimated to be between $67 and $84 billion dollars. In addition, the tradeshow industry supports the equivalent of one million full-time jobs (McGlincy, 2000).

In 2000, according to Center of Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR), tradeshow management companies had total revenues of $8.98 billion dollars. Most revenues came from sales of exhibition space with $5.77 billion dollars and registration fees with $2.6 billion dollars. In addition, they earned $606 million dollars through advertising and promotion (Seitz, 2000).

The Center of Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR) conducted a census, investigating all exhibitions that occupy at least 3,000 net square feet of space and include at least ten exhibiting companies. A 2000 census reported more than 12,000 exhibitions are held in North America annually. The census currently identifies 12,188 events with 11,097 taking place in the United States and 1,091 taking place in Canada.

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Moreover, through 2004, almost 100 new and expanded venues will add more than 14 million square feet of new exhibit space and three million square feet of meeting space.

The Tradeshow Week 200 (Lewis, 2001) indicates that the tradeshow industry posted strong gains of a 40 percent growth rate in net square feet in 1990 to 69.8 million net square feet in 2000. Also the top 200 tradeshows had a 28.32% growth rate in number of exhibiting companies, increasing from 160,014 to 205,333, and a 20.47% growth rate in annual professional attendance, from 3.96 million to 4.77 million over ten years.

Expo magazine’s 2001 Reader’s Report shows substantial growth of number of shows, attendance, and exhibit space (Ingram, 2001). Table 1-1 shows the growth facts of the overall industry.

Table 1-1 2001 Show Growth Indicators (average for all shows)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>CAGR*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of attendees</td>
<td>19,926</td>
<td>7.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net square feet</td>
<td>219,000</td>
<td>9.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room nights</td>
<td>4,332</td>
<td>13.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>$2,030,000</td>
<td>18.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*CAGR (compounded annual growth rate)

Table 1-2 shows average attendance growth in the year 2001 by net square feet perspective.

Table 1-2
Average attendance by net square feet (average for all shows, 2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net square feet</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>CAGR*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50,000 nsf</td>
<td>7,371</td>
<td>5.28%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,001-100,000 nsf</td>
<td>12,642</td>
<td>2.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,001-200,000 nsf</td>
<td>14,784</td>
<td>-12.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 200,000 nsf</td>
<td>38,066</td>
<td>7.78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages indicate compounded annual growth rate
Table 1-3 shows the average number of attendees at largest show was increased from 1999 to 2001 in both tradeshow and consumershow. However, not in the trade/consumer show. Especially, average number of attendance in tradeshow was drastically increased 15.88% compared to fact in the year 1999.

Table 1-3  Average number of attendees at largest show

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradeshow</td>
<td>13,828</td>
<td>18,568 (+15.88%)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumershow</td>
<td>22,726</td>
<td>24,439 (+3.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Trade and Consumer</td>
<td>24,232</td>
<td>21,891 (-4.95%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentage indicates compound annual growth rate

Table 1-4 through 1-5 shows the facts of the industry based on the types of show organizers and shows. These tables indicate significantly constant industry growth in various perspectives. Besides number of show produced by association and as consumershow was decreased. The rest of the facts were drastically increased by showing the industry's fast growth.

Table 1-4  Industry acts based on the types of show organizers (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Associations</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>CAGR*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Shows Produced</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>-3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of attendees</td>
<td>17,053</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net square feet</td>
<td>208,000</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room nights</td>
<td>4,980</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditures</td>
<td>$1,932,000</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent producers</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>CAGR*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Shows Produced</td>
<td>7.22</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of attendees</td>
<td>22,427</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net square feet</td>
<td>228,000</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room nights</td>
<td>3,768</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditures</td>
<td>$2,119,000</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*CAGR (Compounded Annual Growth Rate)
Table 1-5  Industry facts based on the types of shows (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>CAGR*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tradeshows</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Shows Produced</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of attendees</td>
<td>18,568</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net square feet</td>
<td>224,000</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room nights</td>
<td>4,998</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditures</td>
<td>$2,330,000</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>CAGR*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consumer shows</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Shows Produced</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>-11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of attendees</td>
<td>24,439</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net square feet</td>
<td>182,000</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room nights</td>
<td>1,124</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditures</td>
<td>$1,097,000</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*CAGR (Compounded Annual Growth Rate)

To keep pace with the industry’s growth, the academic field of tradeshow study has also developed both in quality and quantity. Industry related research institutes, magazines, and associations have released many articles regarding issues of the industry. In addition, academic research has also been conducted regarding the perspective of exhibitors, exposition managers, attendees, venue managers and staffs, convention and visitors’ bureaus, and general service contractors. As industry growth has dramatically increased, the industry requires more effective marketing methods. Previous studies have been conducted regarding the effective marketing methods of each sector and units of tradeshow industry.

The Purpose/Importance of This Study

In the business overall, building a better image (branding) has gained renewed attention in recent years as one of the most effective marketing methods. The tradeshow industry is not an exception.

Mather (1998) stated that while branding has been an important marketing strategy for goods and the service industry for decades, many
tradeshow managers are just now fully capitalizing on the strength of their show name. Show organizers see branding as a good way to upsell exhibitors, capture new business and gain a competitive edge (p.4).

Show managers are finding it easier to succeed when a brand immediately conveys the type of service and value exhibitors can expect. Nowadays, branding goes beyond just spelling out the name of the tradeshow firm or an individual event. Many show management firms and associations have developed a distinctive icon with their corporate logo, which is immediately identifiable and conveys quality, value, delivery of audience, and superb service (Mather, 1998). When a show is positively branded, the brand delivers proven service and delivery of what exhibitors demand from show management, such as qualified attendees, qualified other major vendors, and an awareness of all attendance trends that are the most highly considered aspects of the exhibit decision from exhibitors’ perspective (Mather, 1998).

Research regarding branding a better image in the tradeshow industry has been conducted. However, these previous studies limited their focusing as a descriptive analysis on branding attributes within the tradeshow industry. Also, no previous studies show the comprehensive branding steps of the tradeshow industry.

This study starts from the idea of a common denominator of the service and tradeshow industry such as dealing with intangible assets and needs of human interact. This study shows briefly the types and characteristics of service brand association, which are already identified and investigated quantitatively and qualitatively by the literature previously conducted.

However, owing to the differences between the service industry and tradeshow industries and the tradeshow industry’s very unique characteristics, the brand associations and variables must be
identified in detail in order to gain a better understanding in tradeshow industry. This study also determines which brand association is most important to consumers in determining their preference on tradeshow brands. This study will find out what brand association among the consumer-identified service brand associations is a key value to consumers.

By outlining these fundamental aspects of tradeshow branding, this study contributes a theoretically and empirically-based model of tradeshow brand preference to the literature, which provides tradeshow organizers and managers with a useful framework for understanding tradeshow branding. This study will bring a strong competitive advantage and help assure success for show producers.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tradeshows have been the one of crown jewels of a company’s marketing mix. There are well-known benefits of participating in tradeshows to do marketing and there are many tips and benefits for branding the exhibiting companies at the tradeshows. However, there are limited resources of branding the tradeshow itself from the organizer’s perspective. This research will find out what is the most beneficial and effective brand association from the organizer’s perspective.

Service Industry and Tradeshow Industry
The Concept/Definition of Service

A contemporary definition provided by Kotler (1980) states that: "A service is any activity or benefit that one party can offer to another which is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product (p.624)." In an earlier work by Baker (1981), he claimed that while there appears to be a widespread consensus about the nature of services, precise definitions may be difficult to come by owing to the varied nature of the service industry. Apart from the underlying differences with products inferred from the definition, marketing scholars believe that the underlying differences provide the basis for varying positioning strategies in services (Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996).
Characteristics of the Service and Tradeshow Industries

Services have a number of distinctive characteristics, which make them different from physical goods, and subsequently affect their positioning and branding strategies (Arnott & Easingwood, 1994). These include:

1. Intangibility
2. Inseparability
3. Variability
4. Perishability

Service industries provide and deal with intangible products. Both the service and tradeshow industries are fully based on the customer's trust. With services, the company is the primary brand. The locus of brand impact differs for services because they lack the tangibility that allows packaging, labeling, and displaying. It is not possible to package and display an entertainment or transportation service in the same way Sony packages and displays the Playstation.

However, there are significant dissimilarities between the tradeshow type of industry such as concerts, festival-like special events, and service industries. In this study, those dissimilarities are explained by laying stress on the tradeshow industry.

First, timeframe must be considered. Other service industries are always available to the customers when they consider it as affordable and necessary. Customers of the tradeshow industry have to wait for a certain time period for the particular purpose. Morrow (1997) stated Tradeshows are designed for the particular purpose of displaying and selling goods to qualified buyers in a specific market take place at
regular intervals as the primary marketing medium used to bring new and innovative ideas to end users.

Second, the attitude and motivation of the customers must be considered. The customers of the tradeshow industry are very proactive in becoming part of the service and eager to get something out of the services that they purchase. Therefore, they want service to be very informative and beneficial while using it. That means the purpose of being part of the service is a bit different between the tradeshow industry and other service industries.

Third, the purchasing process. Consumers of other service industries purchase services under the individual purchasing process and needs. However, consumers of tradeshows buy services based on the group purchasing process and needs. Pre-qualified buyers are also utilizing the group purchasing process when the business is generated at the tradeshows.

Fourth, designated and restrained customers. Other service industries such as the hotel industry, restaurants, movie theaters and hair salon do not have a designated market. They might have market segments that they are trying to target. However, in the tradeshow industry, designated and restrained customers only can consume the service from a service provider. For example, CES is one of the biggest tradeshow in the computer related industry. Those customers of the service provider of CES are only computer-related companies and consumers. Not all customers can be the customer of CES customers. You have to be related to the computer industry somehow.

It becomes so obvious when it comes to the tradeshow held by the association, which consider members their only customers. If you are not in the specifically designated market, you are not going to be able to utilize any kind of service from the service provider.
Fifth, complicated business units. Unlike the service industry, original service providers in the tradeshow industry do not have the responsibility for every single factor of the tradeshow. In other words, customers might have to face with other service providers under the main service provider in one tradeshow. The main service provider of the tradeshow is supposed to be an association and organization, which holds the tradeshow. However, actual customers such as exhibitors and attendees are facing the other service provider, which provides various services under contract with an association or organization.

Those services mainly influence the customers at the show floor, although they are not the main service provider. Actual customers have to deal with the general service contractor, which operates the major part of tradeshow at the show floor and other service contractors, such as catering, floral, registration, electricity, labor union, and transportation.

These facts indicate that customers are evaluating tradeshows not only by the effort from the tradeshow association and organization, but also every single business operator in the tradeshow.

Sixth, the unique characteristics of each single tradeshow and its customers.

Morrow (1997) cited Albert, Prince Consort in her book "The Art of the Show" that says each exhibition has been a true a text and a living picture of the point of development at which the whole mankind has arrived (p.9).

Every single tradeshow is unique in the tradeshow industry. In spite of market sharing, each show is different in trying to differentiate their strategy to exploit specific markets. They know that is the only way to survive in the extremely competitive market of this industry.
Therefore, considering all these unique facts of the tradeshow industry, this study will attempt to apply a service industry brand preference model into the tradeshow industry under the assumption of the major common denominator between the service and tradeshow industries.

Brand and Branding

What is a brand and brand in services? According to the American Marketing Association, “Brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition” (Kotler, 1991, p.442). A content analysis of the branding definitions in the branding literature by de Chernatony and Riley (1997) identifies twelve ways brands are viewed in past research: as a legal instrument, a logo, a company, a shorthand, a risk reducer, an identify system, an image in the consumer’s mind, a value system, a personality, a relationship, a value enhancer, and an evolving entity.

Doyle (1990) referred that a strong brand can creates a sustainable differential advantage. Barney (1991) also mentioned that brand gives customers a reason for preferring that brand to a competitor’s brand—a reason that is not easily copied by competitors.

Strong brands may enhance market shares, increase profits, enable organizations to charge higher prices, create customer loyalty, or even help override occasional failures in the eyes of the customers. Strong brands are valuable assets to a firm (Lampo, 2001).

Even though branding has been a hot issue in the service marketing area, there are not many investigated facts regarding how customers prefer the service brand and what service providing managers should keep in mind to cultivate and manage their service brands.
Branding plays a special role in service companies because strong brands increase the customer’s trust of an invisible purchase. Strong brands enable customers to better visualize and understand intangible products. They reduce the customer’s preferred monetary, social, or safety risks in buying services, which are difficult to evaluate prior to purchase (Berry, 2000). Branding is just as relevant to services. However, product intangibility does not mean that brand development is less appropriate or important for services than goods; its application differs in certain respects. Brand development is crucial in services given the inherent difficulty in differentiating products that lack physical differences (Zeithaml, 1981).

What is brand equity? One of the most popular and important marketing concepts to arise in the 1980s was the concept of brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1998). As managers became involved in cultivating strong brands, they also became interested in monitoring the health of their brands (de Chernatony & Mcdonald, 1998). Managers became particularly interested in measuring the equity that had been built up by their brand.

The creation of a brand implies communicating a certain brand image in such a way that all the firm’s target groups link such a brand with a set of associations. Brand equity research in marketing, as exemplified by Aaker’s (1991, 1996) conceptualization and Keller’s (1993, 1998) framework, is rooted in cognitive psychology and focuses on consumer cognitive processes. Thus, this view of brand equity proposes that:

- The brand creates value for both consumers and firms.
- The brand provides value to the firm by generating value for the consumers.
- Consumer's brand associations are a key element in brand equity formation and management.

There are issues in goods and the service industry in establishing brand equity. Even though the value of the brand cannot be measured precisely, it can be estimated roughly. Because of the wide margin of error, such estimates cannot be used to evaluate marketing programs, but they can show that brand assets have been created.

Brand equity is defined as "the brand assets (or liabilities) linked to a brand's name and symbol that add to (or subtract from) a product or service" (Aaker, 1996, p.7). Keller (1993) defined brand equity as the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of a brand. The set of associations and behaviors on the part of the brand's customers, channel members, and parent corporation that permits the brand to earn greater volume or greater margins than it could without the brand name and that gives the brand a strong, sustainable, and differentiated advantage over competitors (Keller, 2001).

The goal of the strong brand paradigm is to create strong brands. According to Aaker (1996), these brand assets can be grouped into four dimensions: brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty. The Figure 2-1 indicates how brand equity generates the value. The figure 2-1 shows that how brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, and other proprietary brand assets generate the positive value to the customers and firm as brand equity.
Figure 2-1 How Brand Equity Generates Value


The figure above suggests the four dimensions guide brand development, management, and measurement towards the brand equity. Aaker (2000) defines these four dimensions:

- Brand Awareness is an often under valued asset: however, awareness has been shown to affect perceptions and even taste.
People like the familiar and are prepared to ascribe all sorts of good attitudes to items that are familiar to them.

- Perceived quality is a special type of association, partly because it influences brand associations in many contexts and partly because it has been empirically shown to affect profitability (as measured by both ROI and stock return).

- Brand associations can be anything that connects the customer to the brand. It can include user imagery, product attributes, use situations, organizational associations, brand personality, and symbols. Much of brand management involves determining what associations to develop and then creating programs that will link the associations to the brand.

- Brand loyalty is at the heart of any brand's value. The concept is to strengthen the size and intensity of each loyalty segment. A brand with a small but intensely loyal customer base can have significant equity (p.17)

As shown above, brand equity is a set of assets or liabilities. Thus, the management of brand equity involves investment to create and enhance the assets. In addition, each brand equity asset creates value in a variety of different ways like the figure above. Considering the facts, it is very important to be sensitive to the ways in which strong brands create value. Also, brand equity creates value for the customer as well as the firm. The word customer refers to both end users and those at the infrastructural level. Finally, for assets or liabilities to underlie brand equity, they must be linked to the name and symbol of the brand.
This study is limited to the brand equity asset, which suggests brand association creates various values. The extensive experiment and discussion regarding the service brand association and more about tradeshow industry brand association will be undertaken in chapter III, IV and V of this study.

The Benefits of Branding

There are benefits of branding in every kind of industry. The benefits of branding are crucial especially within a competitive market and a globalized industry.

An article (Yudkin, 1999) mentioned the benefits of branding.

The first benefit is memorability. A brand serves as a convenient container for a reputation and good will.

The second benefit is loyalty. When people have positive experiences, they are more likely to buy that product or service again than competing brands. People who closely bond with a brand identity are not only more likely to repurchase what they bought, but also to buy related items of the same brand, to recommend the brand to others, and to resist the lure of a competitor’s price cut. The brand identity helps to create and to anchor such loyalty.

The third benefit is familiarity. Branding has a big effect on non-customers, too. Psychologists’ discovery that familiarity induces liking means that people who have never done business but have encountered your company identity sufficient times often become willing to recommend you even though they have no personal knowledge of your products or services.

The fourth benefit is premium image and price. Branding can lift what you sell out of the realm of a commodity, so that instead of
dealing with price-shoppers you have buyers eager to pay more for your goods and services than for those of competitors. Branding promises that the buyer has bigger, more significant experience with your product and service.

The fifth benefit is extension. With a well-established brand, you can spread the respect you’ve earned to a related new product, service or location, and more easily win acceptance of the newcomer.

The sixth benefit is company equity. Making the company into a brand usually means that you can get more money for the company when you decide to sell it.

The seventh benefit is lower marketing expenses. Although you must invest money and effort to create a brand, once it is created you can maintain it without having to tell the whole story about the brand every time you market it.

The eighth benefit is less risk for consumers. When someone feels under pressure to make a wise decision, he or she tends to choose the brand-name supplier over the no-name one. By building a brand, you fatten your bottom line.

Issues in the Tradeshow Industry

According to an interview with industry experts by the tradeshow magazine Expo (January, 1998) "Exposition Industry Forecast", there are three hot topics that the tradeshow industry will face in the next decade. The first one is "Utilizing Technology." James M. Alic, vice-chairman of Advanstar Holdings Inc, said:

The application of the internet and electronic publishing to our business will change a lot of processes, making mundane things, such as exhibitor manuals, obsolete. But the continuous communication it offers is the more fundamental point. The internet is a way to create
continuity without the expense of being a publisher. It’ll change the whole interaction with prospective exhibitors and attendees.

Bonnie Kilduff, CEM, Director of Expositions and International Committee of the International Association for Exposition Management of Packaging Machinery Manufactures Institute, Added:

We’ll use technology, for example, a web site, so they can immediately access the information they need. Our website is up 12 months a year, so the buyer can use a product locator at no charge to identify exhibitors that manufacture a certain product. On the exhibitor side, we’ll have to increase education, by teaching them how to set goals and how to market themselves.

The second hot topic all industry experts mentioned is "Globalization of the Industry". Kilduff also stated that

As an association, we have to ask ourselves, 'How do we put our arms around the world?' Our growth will come from the international-buyer audience. We have to reach them and determine what promotion and communication methods are most effective. This is an opportunity for partnerships for promotion.

Cultural diversity will change the environment of the show, and we’ll have to respond accordingly. Our show is becoming more international, and we’ll have to prepare for that, with the design of the show-the exhibit themselves.

James M. Alic was also said:
The industry will have more multinational players. Our customers are globalizing. Would they rather go to Internet World in Asia? They’d rather go with a brand they can trust.

The last hot topic is “Branding.” James M. Alic asked:
Brand Building: How do I build a brand, not just a show? Thus I create an independent existence for that brand. Carl Pugh, President of Mecklermedia Inc., Westport, CT, said it the best way I’ve heard. He said: 'I want to run the same show 26 times.' meaning Internet World. This applies to associations also, for example, building a brand and taking it to Asia.

Don Pazour, President and Chief operating officer for Miller Freeman Inc, said:
Our shows will be much more global in nature, either through major international attendance or broad global replications of strong brand - and probably both (Skolnik, 1998).

Considering the interview results above, we would be able to consider “Utilizing Technology”, “Globalizing the Industry” and “Branding” to be the key factors for successful shows. Among the three key factors, this research will take an in-depth view on “Branding.”

There is another article regarding “Brand Makeovers” as the way of surviving the economic downturn:
Many mature shows face the challenges of reinvention - How to remain fresh and exciting to attendees and exhibitors without losing the recognition, preference of high quality and loyalty associated with a strong brand (Grubb, 2002).
This article shows how mature shows can change their outlooks considering the total brand image of the shows. Therefore, it explained the ways to change its outlook such as logo, changing the product categories, name of the show, and website as critical marketing tools. This might fall into the category of "The presented brand: The product/brands carried" in this study. However, at the end of the article mentioned, the organizers of SUPERCOMM, co-owners the Telecommunications Industry Association, said:

We believe the show is about what it stands for as well as what it delivers. They strive to make outstanding customer service part of the SUPERCOMM brand - a process that takes time. You don’t build a brand or reputation overnight. It isn’t a product on a shelf. It is the experience and reputation of the company. Experience has to be reinforced all the time. Think of your constituents and add value.

To take all these factors into consideration, this study is designed to find out which brand associations have to be applied to measure brand preference in the tradeshow industry and which brand association has the strongest impact for consumers to prefer a tradeshow brand. The main sequence of this study is finding out the brand association items with industry experts and students. The next is actually applying the idea of the first step to the actual customers of the show to find whether it is effective or not.

Conceptual Background

There is one researcher in the literature (Berry, 2000) that provides a theoretical model for conceptualizing service brand equity.
This service-branding model differs in degree, not kind, from the goods-branding models. It takes into account the human element of services and the importance of the service experience to service branding that is not prevalent in the goods-branding models. The model depicts the relationship among principle components of a service brand: the presented brand, external brand communications, customer experience with the company, brand awareness, brand meaning, and brand equity (p. 130).

To understand these components on service brand equity, the model indicates primary influences with solid lines and secondary (less powerful) influences with broken lines.

**The Presented Brand**

The presented brand is the brand message that a company conceptualizes and disseminates. It is the brand's controlled communication efforts. Berry's model suggests that the presented brand will strongly influence brand awareness (the customer's ability to recognize and recall the brand). For goods brands, the presented brand
includes advertising and symbolic associations like packaging, product specifications, logo, brand name, colors, and slogans. Service brands may also utilize advertising and symbolic associations, but service brands must also focus on some different elements. Service brands, unlike goods brands, do not have tangible products to package and advertise; they must focus on controlled communication efforts like service facilities and the appearance of employees. This is a key distinction of presenting a goods brand versus a service brand.

External Brand Communications

External Brand Communications represent communication about the brand that is essentially uncontrolled by the company (e.g. publicity, word-of-mouth). With service brands, these external communication activities play a very important role in developing a brand in the minds of consumers.

Customer Experience

Customer experience is the source of brand meaning. Although the presented brand and external communications contribute to brand meaning, the primary influence for customers who actually have experienced the service is the experience. A customer’s experience-based beliefs are powerful. A presented brand can generate greater brand awareness, stimulate new customer trials, and reinforce and strengthen brand meaning with existing customers. As with goods, in services, marketing a customer’s disappointment with the experience closes the door that traditional brand marketing helps to open (Berry, 2000).

Brand Meaning to Equity

Brand meaning refers to the customer’s dominant preferences of the brand, based on the brand associations customers have with the service. It represents "the customer’s snapshot impression of the brand and its..."
associations" (Berry, 2000, p.129). According to Berry’s model, the primary influence on brand meaning is “customer’s experience with the company,” even though the presented brand and external communication efforts contribute to brand meaning.

Just as with goods brands, a service organization’s brand awareness and brand meaning will ultimately contribute to brand equity. However, brand meaning will have a comparatively stronger influence on brand equity than brand awareness. Berry’s model depicts brand meaning as having a primary effect on service equity, while brand awareness has a less powerful influence on service brand equity.

Brand equity pertaining to goods has been well researched in the marketing literature. Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) have both provided conceptual schemes that link brand equity with various consumer response variables. Specifically, Aaker (1991) identified four major consumer-related bases of brand equity:

1. Brand Loyalty
2. Name Awareness
3. Perceived Quality
4. Brand Association

Keller (1993) proposed a knowledge-based framework for creating brand equity based on two dimensions:

1. Brand Awareness
2. Brand Image

Based on the conceptual schemes pertaining to brand equity for goods, Berry (2000) proposed four primary strategies that excellent service firms utilize to cultivate brand equity (FIGURE 2-3).
Service companies build strong brands through branding distinctiveness and message consistency by performing their core services well, from reaching customers emotionally, and by associating their brands with trust. Strong brand companies have high "mind share" with targeted customers, which contributes to market share. Strong-brand service companies consciously pursue distinctiveness in performing and communicating the service, use branding to define their reason for being, connect emotionally with customers, and internalize the brand for service providers so that they will build it for customers (Berry, 2000, p.130).

Tradeshow Brand Meaning to Equity

The tradeshow industry has a relatively shorter history than others. However, it is starting to enter a competitive market and most show organizers had to initiate the strategy of brand awareness and brand meaning to achieve brand equity in many ways. Branding is becoming a more and more crucial factor in the tradeshow industry.

James (1997) states the brand in the tradeshow industry:
Most of all, branding a tradeshow is for "Image", which is ever elusive. You cannot find it on a balance sheet. You cannot pack it in a crate and consign to freight forwarder. You can't lock it in a security cage for safekeeping. But more and more show organizers are recognizing that, when managed correctly, their image can be their most valuable and enduring asset.

Among other things, a good image:

- Puts your show first in the minds of exhibitors and attendees - and keeps it there.
- Makes exhibitors and attendees willing to spend more money on your event.
- Helps you launch new events, products, and services.
- Opens doors to new markets.
- Helps you attract and retain top-notch employees - even lure them away from your competitors (James, 1997, p.1).

Brand Preference Measurement

Despite the importance of brands, marketing researchers have not used a consistent definition or measurement technique to assess consumer preferences of brands. To address this, two scholars have developed extensive conceptual treatments of branding and related issues. Keller (1998) refers to consumer preferences of brands as brand knowledge, consisting of brand awareness (recognition and recall) and brand image. Keller defines brand image as "Preferences about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory." These associations include preferences of brand quality and attitudes toward the brand. Similarly, Aaker (1996) proposes that brand associations are
anything linked in memory to a brand.

Brand associations are important to marketers and consumers. Marketers use brand associations to differentiate, position, and extend brands, to create positive attitudes and feelings toward brands, and to suggest attributes or benefits of purchasing or using a specific brand. Consumers use brand associations to help process, organize, and retrieve information in memory and to aid them in making purchase decisions (Low & Lamb Jr, 2000).

Service Brand Preference

The primary objective in this study is identifying brand associations in the tradeshow industry, categorized as: “The presented brand,” “Employee behavior,” and “The service process” that were defined in the previous study (Lampo, 2001) using Likert scale to measure a consumer’s overall brand attitude toward a certain tradeshow in which they are participating. Each category will be measured by the detailed items. To determine what dimensions tradeshow brand is comprised of, detailed analysis will be conducted throughout the process.

According to research conducted by Lampo (2001), the employee behavior category has the strongest impact on service brands including “Hair salon,” “Restaurant,” and “Hotels” than the other two categories. However, this research will find out how this result can be applied to the tradeshow industry.

The figure below shows the variables of “The Presented Brand”, “Employee Behavior,” and “The Service Process” to measure the service brand preference.
Brand Association

- **<The presented Brand>**
  - Facilities
  - Products/Brands Carried
  - Advertising, Appearance of the employees, Policies, Price

- **<Employee behavior>**
  - Employee attitude
  - Employee competency
  - Employee relationship w/customer

- **<The Service Process>**
  - Convenience
  - Reliability

Figure 2-4 Service Brand Preference


This conceptual model above shows how customers build up brand meaning and ultimately influence their service brand preference based on the three different brand associations: the presented brand, employee behavior, and the service process.

The presented brand category addresses the tangible aspects of a service, and they represent the elements of a brand message that a company conceptualizes and disseminates (Berry, 2000). Essentially, this group of associations encompasses the service brand's controlled communication efforts.

The employee behavior category fits into the theoretical literature suggesting the importance of the employee to services brands (Berry, 1999; de Charnatony & McDonald, 1998; Sharp, 1995).

The service process, a customer's experience with a service company, represents another basic group of brand associations mentioned by the customers of the Lampo's study. This brand association mainly addressed the convenience and reliability of the service.
Research Hypothesis

This research will test the hypotheses below:

Based on Lampo's study (2001), the presented brand is defined as "the tangible aspects of a service and a company's controlled communication efforts. It has an effect on service brand preference of consumers perceiving the brand (p.64)." The first hypothesis was set up as:

H1: The Presented Brand has an effect on the consumer's (Exhibitors/Attendees) preference towards the tradeshow brand.

According to Lampo's study, employee behavior as another basic group of service brand associations. This study implicates employee as employees of organizers and service contractors who exhibitors/attendees have to associate both directly and indirectly. The second hypothesis was set up as:

H2: Employee behavior has an effect on the consumer's (Exhibitors/Attendees) preference towards the tradeshow brand.

Lampo's study also indicates the service process as the last basic group of brand associations. In this study, service is defined as all services that exhibitors/attendees might confront related with a certain show. Therefore, services are delineated as ones provided by a show organizer and related service contractor. The third hypothesis was set up as:

H3: The service process has an effect on the consumer's (Exhibitors/Attendees) preference towards the tradeshow brand.

As previously noted, Aaker (1991) defines brand associations as anything linked in memory to a brand. Three related constructs are
brand image, brand attitude, and perceived quality by definition-linked in memory to a brand- and which have been researched conceptually and measured empirically. Among those components of brand associations, this research selected the brand attitude construct.

Brand attitude is defined as "the consumer's overall evaluation of a brand - whether good or bad (Mitchell & Olson, 1981, p.319)". A consumer's attitude toward brands captures another aspect of the meaning consumers attach to brands in memory, which affects their purchasing behavior.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Design

The target population of the research is the exhibitors/attendees, who take part in consumer or retail tradeshows that are held annually by certain industry associations, corporations or entrepreneurs. The sampling frame is the exhibitors, attendees, attending consumer or retail tradeshows, which were held from January 2003 to March 2003 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Therefore, sampling method is a convenience sampling according to the schedule of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA). Fifteen different shows were listed according to the schedule plan of LVCVA from January 2003 to March 2003.

The sample size of this research is determined to be at least 150-200 usable surveys. Earlier recommendations for item-to-response ratios ranged from 1:4 (Rummel, 1970) to at least 1:10 (Schwab, 1980); therefore, the items of this research are approximately 11 (Service brand association items) or possibly more items, which could vary from 44 to 110 according to Rummel and Schwab. However, in order to obtain an accurate solution in exploratory analysis, a sample size of 150-200 observations should be sufficient.

Questionnaire Design/Development

This study consisted of two parts. First, this research will find the proper brand associations for the tradeshow industry based on the
This study consisted of two parts. First, this research will find the proper brand associations for the tradeshow industry based on the service brand preference model. This process was conducted by asking industry experts and graduate students who are majoring in the convention and tradeshow area. Second, the questionnaire from the first process was asked to actual tradeshow exhibitors in Las Vegas from January 2003 to March 2003.

To apply the service brand preference model (Lampo, 2001) to the tradeshow industry, the variables of the model might have to be modified. First, the variables of the service brand preference model have been applied to the theater, hotel, hair salon, and restaurant. However, as mentioned earlier, there are some dissimilarities between other service industries and the tradeshow industry considering the unique individual characteristic, purchasing process, time frame, and motivation of customers utilizing the service from service providers.

The tradeshow industry needs to have its own branding strategy and measurement. That is the reason this research starts with developing and designing the brand preference conceptual items for the tradeshow industry.

The first step of modifying the service brand variables was utilizing Likert scale survey questions with the industry experts, including the show organizers, service contractors, and exhibitors. At least two samples will be collected from each job category. They were hosen in a convenient way. Industry expert contact was made with the service contractor, The Freeman Company, who recommended someone in the field of show organizers and exhibitors. Presenting the service brand preference model (Lampo, 2001) to the industry experts, they were asked their ideas for improving upon the model considering industry
characteristics and their life-time experiences in the real world (Appendix 3).

The first part was the process of verifying the items used to measure the service brand preference. The variables were the presented brand, the employee behavior and the service process. Under the 3 variables, the previous research assigned 11 items. However, these items were set to measure brand preference in the service industry. Therefore, this study had an interview procedure to check whether all items are applicable to measure the brand preference of the tradeshow industry. The justification for utilizing this qualitative approach was its ability to obtain a first-hand description of experience (Haley, 1996; Hastings & Perry, 2000). In this sense, an understanding is derived from information gained directly from the service provider and consumer, rather than from the direction of theories and laws.

After the interview, the next procedure was to verify the content validity of the items mentioned by the industry experts. The analyzed result of the interview was shown to the graduate students at UNLV (University of Nevada, Las Vegas) who are majoring in conventions and trade shows. The graduate students mentioned their ideas on the interview and checked their content validity. After this procedure, the researcher of this study and the graduate students built the initial questionnaire. The second part is surveying the respondents, who are exhibitors/attendees of a certain tradeshow, with the questionnaire built by the first procedure. In this procedure, this study shows the result of which brand associations/items are the most effective to measure the brand preference in the tradeshow industry.
Interview with Industry Experts

The first, and the essential step to build the appropriate and effective questionnaire to measure the brand preference of tradeshow in this study is interviewing industry experts. By means of interviewing process, this study is checking whether the items belonging to the service branding preference are appropriate and effective to measure the brand preference of the tradeshow.

This interviewing process was undertaken at the "2003 International Homebuilders' Show" hosted by NAHB (National Association of Home Builders) from January 21, 2003 to January 24, 2003 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

The interview participants were chosen in various sectors of the tradeshow including an exhibitor, display house (Sales person, Project manager), labor teamster, association, and service contractor. The eight participants were interviewed separately, and none of their remarks were prompted by, or in response to, those of others. They have at least 5 years and up to 35 years experience within the tradeshow industry. Six were white males and two were white females. Age variance is from 27 to 59 years old.

The interviewees are

- Sarah Gyolai (Marketing Specialist from Pella - Exhibitor)
- Darrin Maxwell (Key account executive from STAR exhibit-Display house)
- Roger Triplett (I&D supervisor from Exhibit Dynamics - Display house)
- Ryan Barlow (Field Representative from Labor teamsters, Las Vegas)
• Edward Stanley (Senior group director of Tradeshows & Advertising from NAHB—National Association of Home builders)
• Jeannie Smith (Sr. Meetings Director of Convention & Meetings from NAHB—National Association of Home Builders)
• Geoffrey D. Cassidy (Assistant Staff Vice President of Group Operations, Convention & Meetings Group from NAHB—National Association of Home Builders)
• John Kenny (Regional director of Installation & Dismantle services from Freeman—Service contractor)

In order to understand the structure of the tradeshow industry, it is important to present how all the business components are related under the tradeshow.

Figure 3-1 Tradeshow Business Components Chart (At Tradeshow)
As we can see from the figure above, the tradeshow is the outcome of complicated units. The chart shows the relationships and interactions between the tradeshow components. In other words, the meaning of the "employee" would be very different from each perspective. This fact could generate a slight confusion to the industry experts from each unit. However, during the interview, "Employee" has been instructed to the interviewee by the researcher as "Association" and "Service Contractor".

However, this study defines associations and its relationship with service contractors as service provider and it defines exhibitors only as consumers and brand determinants.

Table 3-1 Operational Definitions of Service Brand Associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Brand Preference Associations</th>
<th>Operational Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Presented Brand</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Facilities</td>
<td>The place where a certain tradeshow is held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Products/Brands Carried</td>
<td>Controlled communication efforts of a certain tradeshow already has. The logo, name, and symbol of the show would be in this category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Advertising</td>
<td>The ways of advertising that the tradeshow holder chooses (MAGAZINE, E-mail, other media for exhibitors/attendees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Appearance of the employees</td>
<td>Appearance of the service providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Policies</td>
<td>The policies that the tradeshow holder regulated to the exhibitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Price</td>
<td>The price that the tradeshow holder assigned to the exhibitors/attendees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employee Behavior</strong></td>
<td>The employee of the exhibitors/attendees could be varying from display house or service contractor or association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service Process</strong></td>
<td>The service process pre/during/post the show from show organizers and Service contractors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the service brand preference model, the interview was undertaken with industry experts. These industry experts are mostly field workers, who have constant contact with many aspects of the industry at the show site. They suggested valuable ideas on the branding subject and also overall industries. Interestingly, there was a consensus of opinions between interview participants of this study and interview participants for EXPO magazine, referred to in chapter II.

Darrin Maxwell, Key account executive of STAR exhibit & Environments, mentioned various critical factors. This industry is people oriented/intensive business and also those are cost-associated factors rather than just renting a space and building a booth. 9 out of 10 cases, Good preference and preference of the company or show definitely come from the people you interact with.

He considered people as the most important asset as far as this industry being considered as a service industry.

Sarah Gyolai, Marketing specialist and exhibition project manager of PELLA corporation, participated as an exhibitor. I've seen so many competent employees from the organizer and service providers...However, if they are not committed, they mean nothing to us.

Edward Staley, Senior Group director of Tradeshows & Advertising of NAHB (National Association of Home Builders), also pointed out: No matter what, this industry, the most tangible asset
we bring is not facility, appearance, policies...but
buyers/our members to the show site. It is the greatest
asset ever in the tradeshow industry from a association
perspective. I would say it is audience, even though
it is somewhat generic terms. You can go to
lots of other shows, but we bring the most
powerful buyers in the industry. The first question
we are normally asked is - who come to this show?.
And exhibitors know what they are going to get out of
our show. It is major, major branding asset for the association. He
mentioned qualified buyers, which he called as audience,
should be added on "The presented brand" category.

All aspects of the employee are just fundamental
factors of branding.

He mentioned employees as a fundamental factor and admits this
industry is one of the most people-oriented businesses.

Jeannie Smith, Sr. Meetings Director of Convention & Meetings of
NAHB (National Association of Home builders) showed ideas on overall
items.

More important items from either side of working
a tradeshow knows the importance of the quality of
service and communication in pre-show planning and
during the show. I strongly believe communications and
negotiating skills are important factors to add.
She pointed out communication as an important factor in tangible
branding asset in the tradeshow industry.
The more detailed information of interviewing industry experts is shown in appendix 3.

After the interview process with industry experts, new items that could be utilized to measure brand preference are generated. The new items are Locations (Destinations), Qualified Buyers/Attendees as "The Presented Brand", Employee Commitment, Employee Knowledge, Employee Experience, Timely Fashioned Employee, Employee Manners as "Employee Behavior", Consistency, Communication (phone, fax, and face-to-face) and Technology (E-mail, website registration, etc) as "The Service Process."

After presenting open-ended questions to the industry experts, the modified questions with the industry experts' idea were asked to the graduate students majoring in the tradeshow and convention area as their main subject. Graduate students were asked to review and rephrase variables and the questionnaire. These graduate students were asked to revise and rephrase the answers of the industry experts and help build the questionnaire that was conducted to the actual samples, the tradeshow exhibitors.

Survey Instrument

This study used a self-administered five-page survey questionnaire, including a two-page long cover letter with informed consent explaining the purpose of the study and stating that the survey is voluntary and confidential, developed for this study to identify the effective brand association in the tradeshow industry (See Appendix 2).

The survey instrument for this study was divided into three parts. The first part starts with the opening question, "To what extent do you prefer participating in this tradeshow than other tradeshows under the same product category?" in order to measure the respondent's idea
whether the tradeshows chosen by the researchers are preferred or not from the customer’s perspective.

The second part is built in order to identify what brand association is the most effective regarding tradeshow branding. These associations were divided into three parts: (a) seven items on “The Presented Brand”, (b) eight items on “Employee (Show organizers and Service Contractors) Behavior” and (c) five items on “Service Process”. This part will measure whether respondents are satisfied with the items under the three categories. In addition to that, it addresses how these brand associations impact decision-making processes from the exhibitor’s and attendee’s perspective.

This study used a self-report approach involving a paper-and pencil-questionnaire. The main type of scale utilized in the questionnaire was a 7-point Likert scale (one (1) being least important to seven (7) being most important) and the respondents were asked to indicate their preferences by checking the appropriate answer.

Likert scale was used throughout this procedure. Likert scale is a measure of attitudes designed to allow respondents to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with carefully constructed statements that range from very positive to very negative toward an additional object (Zikmund, 2002).

Therefore, the survey questionnaire to the actual respondents of this study, who are the exhibitors and attendees of particular tradeshows, has 7 point Likert-scale questionnaire (Appendix 2).

Following the actual survey was the statistical method mentioned earlier. The next question concerns the listed items. The question was measured by a 7 point Likert-scale, asking how important the listed items are from customer’s perspective to prefer the tradeshow as a brand. The first question was “How important are the
following items that make you decide to participate this show?" Twenty
items under three categories were measured by the 7 point Likert-scale.
This might be helpful for the show organizers and managers of the
experimented tradeshow to set up their strategy to be a branded
tradeshow in their area.

At the end of the questionnaire, the respondents was asked to
provide the demographic information, company information, and the times
they participated in this experimented tradeshow.

Validity and Reliability Issues

To check the content validity, the questionnaire items were
discussed with graduate students at the University of Nevada, Las
Vegas, who are majoring in the tradeshow and convention areas. Comments
from the graduate students were used to refine the questionnaire items.
The initial questionnaire was built based on the interview with
industry experts and graduate students (Appendix 2).

During the process, some of the original items of the service-
branding model were eliminated and some new items were added to the
questionnaire.

The first phase of discussion "Appearance of employees" was
eliminated considering the tradeshow characteristics. "Facilities,"
"Employee competency," and "Employee manners" were also eliminated for
the reason of similar concepts being listed such as "Location,"
"Employee Knowledge/Experience," and "Employee attitude." In addition,
"Information" brought up from the interview was eliminated for the same
reason regarding "Communication."

However, in the last phase of discussion with graduate students,
some of the eliminated items were added back to the list for factor
analysis. "Facilities," "Employee competency," "Employee manners," were
added back. "Information" was concern whether it should be added back. "Information" could be linked to "Communication" and also could be the outcome of "Communication." Additionally, there was a debate between the graduate students in terms of the concept category of "Information". In other words, "Information" could be the tangible asset of branding in the tradeshow industry, such as brochures and manuals, which must be added back under the category of "The Presented Brand," not under the category of "The service process."

At the end of the discussion, we compromised concerning "Information" being potentially either a tangible or intangible asset depending on perspective. On one hand, "Information" is not really the causal factor that could be used to measure the brand preference. The important aspect considering "Information" would be "The ways delivering the information," not information itself. "Information" is mostly delivered by the "Communication" process. Therefore, "Information" was eliminated.

At the end, the initial tradeshow brand preference model had three concept categories: "The Presented Brand," "Employee Behavior" and "The Service Process." These are the same as the service-brand preference model conceptualized by Lampo (2001). On the other hand, the items under the three categories are modified based on the tradeshow characteristics.

Through the process of interviewing industry experts and confirming with graduate students, nine items were added under the three brand concept categories (Table 3-2).
Table 3-2 Operational Definitions of Newly Added Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Added items</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>The area where the tradeshow is held (City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified Buyers/Attendees/Vendors</td>
<td>Buyers/attendees/vendors who have purchasing power and influence on purchasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Commitment</td>
<td>The state or an instance of being obligated or emotionally impelled to the customer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely Fashioned Employee</td>
<td>Employee who provides the service when the customer wants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Knowledge</td>
<td>Employee who has knowledge on services the customer needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Experience</td>
<td>Employee who has experience in the tradeshow industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Manners</td>
<td>Employee who has well-organized characteristics or a customary mode of acting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>Harmony of conduct or practice with the profession providing the service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>A process by which information is exchanged between service providers and users through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>A manner of accomplishing a task especially using technical processes, methods, or knowledge while using the service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The conceptual model below is going to be tested to the exhibitors/attendees of a certain tradeshow, which was held in Las Vegas in March, in order to find which brand association category or certain items have the strongest impact for consumer's (exhibitors/attendees') tradeshow preferences.

This modified potential model with twenty items under three variables are subject to test the tradeshow brand preference from exhibitors'/attendees' perspective to give valuable information to the show managers, organizers, and operators.
Brand Association

**<The Presented Brand>**
- Facilities,
- Locations,
- Brand Carried-logo, symbol, etc,
- Qualified buyers/attendees,
- Advertising,
- Policies,
- Price

**<Employee behavior>**
- Employee attitude,
- Employee competency,
- Employee commitment,
- Employee knowledge,
- Employee experience,
- Timely fashioned employee,
- Employee manners,
- Employee relationship with customers.

**<The service process>**
- Convenience,
- Reliability,
- Consistency,
- Communication,
- Technology.

Figure 3-2 Tradeshow Brand Preference Model

The next was to distribute the questionnaire to the exhibitors of a certain tradeshow to be analyzed.

The validity that the ability of a scale or measuring instrument to measure its intended task (Zikmund, 2002) is a major criteria for evaluating the measurements and the reliability that the degree to which those same measures are free from error and therefore yield consistency.

This questionnaire was given to the industry experts to confirm whether the right items are listed considering the industry characteristics, and also to check for content validity. In addition,
this questionnaire asked non-experts such as students to check the validity again. According to Hinkin, Tracey and Enz (1996), naïve respondents such as students can also be used if they are able to read and understand the definitions and items in the process of content adequacy assessment.

However, this research chose the graduate students majoring in the tradeshows and conventions at UNLV. They gave insights to revise the interview with industry experts and reform the conceptual brand preference model in the tradeshow industry. Additionally, they helped to build up the initial and revised questionnaire for the survey.

The internal consistent reliability and validity issues of this research was tested by means of the Cronbach alpha test and using eigenvalue from exploratory factor analysis to confirm the variables of the research. A method for conducting content assessment utilizes both sorting and factor analytical techniques to quantitatively assess the content adequacy of a set of newly developed items (Schriesheim, Powers, Scandura, Gardiner & Lankau, 1993).

Data Coding and Editing

The data was coded by the means of the 7-point Likert-scale. During the editing process, incomplete responses was edited as missing values. Each item was coded with the number 1 to 7 using SPSS 11.0 software. The non-responses were coded with the number 9 same as the missing values. Vague responses judged by the researcher were coded by the imputation method considering the respondent's characteristics.

Data Analysis

The data analysis consisted of two parts. The first part is the
process of confirming the questionnaire itself as an effective tool for measuring the service brand preference in the tradeshow industry. The second part is the process of analyzing the data from actual samples using the various statistical methods in order to find out which specific brand association variables were more effective in contributing to the consumer's preference toward the tradeshow brand.

After collecting data from the actual sample, the data was analyzed by factor analysis. This process confirms that those items are eventually fixed and proper to be measured. The factors could be changed after conducting factor analysis on this tradeshow brand preference model on condition of different brand association items considering the tradeshow industry's unique characteristics. The newly identified factors would be named with the literature and statistical support. The next step was a reliability test using the Cronbach's alpha test and reviewing those answers with industry experts to make sure that there was content validity in the results of the survey. In addition, utilizing exploratory factor analysis tests construct validity.

This research also provides the descriptive analysis regarding demographics and additional information of the actual sample in chosen tradeshows. Hypotheses were tested by multiple regression analysis to find the most effective brand association in the tradeshow industry and the least effective brand association. The independent variables are the newly built brand association items. The dependent variable is the tradeshow brand preference.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Overview

This chapter reports the results of the analyses of data, which were collected from 233 usable subjects through surveys in four trade shows held in Las Vegas, Nevada, between February and March, 2003.

- The Glass Craft Show (February, 2003-Cashman Center)
- The International Wireless Communication Expo (March, 2003-Las Vegas Convention Center)
- The Ace Hardware Show (March, 2003-Las Vegas Convention Center)
- The ASI Show (March, 2003-Sands Expo)

The followings are discussed (a) response rate, (b) description of respondents, (c) description of item statistics, (d) reliability of measures, (e) factor analysis for verifying validity of the conceptualized tradeshow brand preference model, and (f) Multiple Regression for Hypotheses testing.

Response Rate

With self-administered questionnaire survey method, the data was collected from February to March, 2003. At "The Glass Craft Expo" tradeshow held in Cashman Center in Las Vegas, of 110 distributed questionnaires on the very first day of the show, 85 were returned on the last day of the show and 44 of them were used for statistical
analysis. This gives a response rate of 40%. At the "International Wireless Communication Expo" and the "ACE Hardware Show" tradeshows held in Las Vegas Convention Center, of 113 distributed questionnaires on the last day of the show, 91 were returned and 56 of them were used for statistical analysis. This gives a response rate of 49.5%. At "The ASI Show" held in the Sands Expo, Las Vegas, 149 questionnaires were distributed and 141 were returned on the last day of the show. 101 of them were used for statistical analysis. This gives an effective response rate of 67.7%. As a result, 201 were used in the statistical analysis and the response rate for the total samples was 54.03%.

Permission given by the organizers of the shows contacted through the support of the general manager and account executives of The Freeman Company—Service contractor— and personal contact with associations. The association regulated the days and time frame of surveys undertaken during the show days.

Descriptive Study

Table 4-1 shows the distribution of demographic characteristics among respondents. Of the 201 respondents, Exhibitors group \((n=157)\) were 78.1%. Attendees were 21.9% \((n=44)\). Even though this study was designed for both exhibitors and attendees, accessing the attendees was harder than exhibitors by regulations on this project from the association and show management company that organizes each tradeshow.

The gender of 67.7% of the respondents was male \((n=136)\) and 30.3% were female \((n=61)\). The age variance of 16.4% \((n=33)\) were from 20-29, 30-39 were 27.9% \((n=56)\), 28.9% \((n=58)\) were age 40-49, 50-59 were 22.9% \((n=46)\) and over 60 comprised of 3.0% \((n=6)\).

The job position of 31.8% were CEO levels of the companies \((n=64)\), Directors of the companies were 13.4% \((n=27)\). Managers of the companies
were 34.3% (n=59), employees of the companies were 11.4% (n=23), and others such as co-owners, co-founders, and dealers as an attendee were 8.5% (n = 17). This demographic information shows that cumulative total 80% of the respondents were upper-level management that has decision-making power of whether it is valuable to participate in the tradeshow.

The number of times of participation was asked of each company. The first time participants (n=37) over the last five years were 18.4% of the respondents. Second time participants were 13.4% (n=27). Third time participant (n=29) of the respondents were 14.4%. Fourth time participants of the sampled show (n=16) were 8.0% of the respondents. Five times over the last five years (n=90) were 44.8% of the respondents participated in the tradeshows chosen for this study.

Regarding the question of intention to return to the tradeshows held by same show management companies and associations. The 81.1% (n=163) of the respondents said that they want to come back to the show. The respondents of 3.5% (n=7) expressed they would not participate the sampled shows next time. 93.5% (n=188) were domestic (U.S.A) companies and only 6.0% (n=12) companies were international companies. The demographic characteristics of respondents were turned out to be little unbalanced in some category, which was not anticipated. Dominant answers came from exhibitors rather than attendees, and also came from domestic companies rather than international companies. In addition, more than 40% of the respondents answered more than 5 times as an answer to the question of Number of times of participation in this tradeshow over the last five years.
Table 4-1  Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibitors</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>78.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendees</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or above</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradeshow</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over Last Five Years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return Intention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Sample</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradeshow Next Year</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic (U.S.A)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were given for each measure for variables to specify attitudes of exhibitors of each sample tradeshows and their perception and evaluations of brand associations concerning tradeshow brand preference (Table 4-2).

The purpose of calculating means and standard deviations for items of the Presented Brand, Employee Behavior, and the Service Process toward outcomes was to examine which of the outcomes were more likely to be perceived as consequences of the decision making process of participating in the certain tradeshow.

Among the presented brand variable, qualified buyers/attendees had the strongest mean score and standard deviations of 1.000 ($M=6.40$, $SD=1.000$). On the other hand, policies had the lowest mean score and standard deviations of 1.683 ($M=4.28$, $SD=1.68$). In addition, brands carried item had a quite low mean score of $M=4.67$ compared to the other items.

Among the employee behavior variables, overall items had a similar range of mean score from $M=5.63$ to $M=6.01$. Also, the mean scores of items of the service process category did not have large differences.

The distinctive fact of the result of calculating mean score and standard deviations is that most items were evaluated as positive factors (Over 4 in 7 point Likert-Scale). This result indicates that most of respondents believed that the listed items were very important and influence decision making in the participation of tradeshows.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facility</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>1.473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>1.308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brands Carried</td>
<td>-Symbol, Logo, etc</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>1.808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Presented Brand Advertising</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>1.493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified Buyers/Attendees/Vendors</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.40</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>1.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prices</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>1.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>1.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Competency</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>1.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>1.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>1.131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>1.289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely Fashioned Employee</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>1.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Manners</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>1.196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Relationship w/Customers</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>1.309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>1.338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>1.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>1.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>1.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>1.338</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The open-end questions of this study also shows that the importance of qualified buyers and attendees on exhibitors'/attendees' decision making process. The question was "Are you willing to participate in this tradeshow next year?" The answers were yes or no coupled with explanations to Yes as follows:

"Valuable contacts"
"Good Industry attendees"
"Good contact with qualified leads"
"Target customer group"
"Can reach our customers in an efficient manner"
"They have active membership attending the show"
"Great response, Many leads"
"Advertising new customer acquisition"
"They draw clients that we might not normally get to see"
"Network with potential clients"

This shows how much weight must be given to qualified buyers and attendees item for making decisions. Other comments for "Yes" show the competition perspective:

"Scope out the competition"
"Must to compete, competitors are also here"
"It is a must. All competitors are attending"

There are also notes for motivation of participation from a marketing perspective:

"Good exposure to the industry where I am in"
"To promote our products and company"
"To increase exposure and educate distributors"
"Exposure to the industry"
"Recognized worldwide"
"It increases brand exposure, and put us in better standing with the association that puts this on."

Other illustrations on significance of the presented brand items were showed:

"Location, Quality traffic, Affordable"

"They bring buyers and well organized and advertising"

"Convenience-location"

"Cost effective and reasonable policies"

In addition, there were also concerns of employee behavior:

"Well organized, professional staff"

"Very pleased with audience and show organizer"

"Excellent service staff"

Other comments on "Yes" indicated various interests on motivations from the customer's perspective:

"Networking opportunity"

"To keep up with industry trends"

"Where we do a lot of our purchasing"

"It is professional and actualized"

"This is the association tradeshow. I have to"

"Always a learning experience"

On the other hand, the reasons for "No" were:

"Too close to the competitor"

"Competitor show is better in quality of leads"

"Too many duplicate tradeshows and they are better"

"Too expensive"

"Dueling tradeshow organizations result in many shows featuring lower attendance per show, which can be less cost effective for exhibitors"

"This tradeshow did not provide me with information on the tradeshow advertising, shipping, etc. in a timely fashion. Most tradeshows giving
info at least 8 months in advance*

This indicates the poor service in communication and quality of buyers/attendees would be the reasons for not participating in the show, compared to other competitors in the corresponding industry.

Reliability of the Measures

The reliability of the measurements for variables in the model was assessed through calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Tables 4-3 through 4-5 report Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all of the measurement items ranging from .63-.91, indicating that the items were a reliable measurement for measuring tradeshow brand preference as a dependent variable.

Regarding the presented brand variable, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient was examined (Table 4-3). The set of seven items (Facility, Location, Brand Carried, Advertising, Qualified Buyers/Attendees, Policies, Price) under the presented brand category had Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .63 (N=197), which is an acceptable value in social science research as the minimum criterion of factor loadings according to Diener, E., Emmons, R., Larsen, J., & Griffin, S. (1985).

The set of eight items under the employee behavior category (Employee Attitude, Employee Competency, Employee Commitment, Employee Knowledge, Employee Experience, Timely Fashioned Employee, Employee Manners, Employee Relationship with Customers) had Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .92 (N=198), which indicates the model to be very reliable (Table 4-4).

The service process category had five items (Convenience, Reliability, Consistency, Communication, Technology), whose Cronbach's alpha coefficient (.87) was also highly reliable. (N=201) (Table 4-5).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items for The Presented Brand</th>
<th>Item-to-total Correlation (N=197)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facility</td>
<td>.5603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>.5909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Carried</td>
<td>.6420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>.6020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified Buyers</td>
<td>.6654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>.5631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>.5670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of The Presented Brand: .6381
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items for The Presented Brand</th>
<th>Item-to-total Correlation (N=198)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee Attitude</td>
<td>.9007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Competency</td>
<td>.9076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Commitment</td>
<td>.9031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Knowledge</td>
<td>.9000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Experience</td>
<td>.9059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely Fashioned Employee</td>
<td>.9133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Manners</td>
<td>.9012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Relationship with Customers</td>
<td>.9049</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach's alpha coefficient of Employee Behavior .9155

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Table 4-5  Reliability Estimates of The Service Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items for The Presented Brand</th>
<th>Item-to-total Correlation (N=201)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>.8568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>.8390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>.8376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>.8471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>.8815</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of The Service Process

.8784

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Factor Analysis

In this study, exploratory factor analysis provided a tool for consolidating measures of tradeshow brand preference. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (1996), measures or variables that are correlated with one another but largely independent of other subsets of measures or variables are combined into factors. Thus, obtained factors were relatively independent of one another to represent outcomes to be measured.

In selecting the number of factors, eigenvalues were examined as Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) recommended. Most studies select factors based on the sizes of the eigenvalue greater than one (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996).

After selecting five factors based on eigenvalues, varimax—the most commonly used in the rotation method—was performed. In the factor analysis, rotation is ordinarily used to maximize the variance of factor loadings by making high loadings higher and low ones lower for each other (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Thus, rotated factor loadings were examined in order to determine which measures load on each factor.

In statistical analysis of the data, the measures loaded on five factors. The measures of eight outcomes loaded on Factor 1 (Employee Behavior), the measures for five outcomes were loaded on Factor 2 (The Service Process), the measures for four outcomes were loaded on Factor 3 (The Presented Brand), the measures for two outcomes were loaded on Factor 4 (Potential Attractiveness), and the measures for one outcome were loaded on Factor 5 (Controlled External Communications).

Factor 1 reflected employee behavior variable from the tradeshow brand preference conceptualized model (Table 4-6). All eight set of items (Employee Attitude, Employee Manners, Employee Competency, Employee Commitment, Timely Fashioned Employee, Employee Commitment,
Employee Knowledge, Employee Relationship with Customers) were loaded on the same factor.

Factor 2 reflected the service process variable from the tradeshow brand preference conceptualized model (Table 4-6). All five sets of items (Consistency, Reliability, Communication, Technology, Convenience) were loaded on same factor.

However, Factor 3 reflected four items (Facility, Location, Policies, Price) out of seven items under the presented brand variable. Two items (Quality Buyers, Advertising) were loaded on Factor 4. The last item (Brands Carried-Symbol, Logo) was loaded on Factor 5. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .68 for Factor 3 (Facility, Location, Policies, Price) demonstrates Factor 3 is also a reliable measure (Table 4-6). However, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .39 for Factor 4 indicates that Factor 4 would be a problematic measure judged by statistical outcome (Table 4-6). In addition, Factor 5 was not able to take reliability check for the reason of only one item under one factor.

Table 4-6 shows the results of factor analysis of each variable and provides the rationale of extracting five factors. Based on eigenvalues, Factor 1 (Employee Behavior) had the highest eigenvalue of 7.084, Factor 2 (The Service Process) had the eigenvalue of 2.669, Factor 3 (The Presented Brand) had the eigenvalue of 1.309, Factor 4 (Potential Attractiveness) had the eigenvalue of 1.224, and Factor 5 (Controlled External Communications) had an eigenvalue of 1.109 (Table 4-6).

Based on the eigenvalues and limitations of this study the tradeshow brand preference model does not include every conceivable facts for the industry; thus, Factor 4 and Factor 5 were included as considerable Factors.
Table 4-6  Factor Loading, Eigenvalue, Variance explained and Reliability Estimates of Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>eigenvalue</th>
<th>Variance Explained</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee knowledge</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee attitude</td>
<td>.832</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee manners</td>
<td>.785</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee commitment</td>
<td>.780</td>
<td>7.084</td>
<td>35.420</td>
<td>.9155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee competency</td>
<td>.751</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee relationship w/ customers</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee experience</td>
<td>.733</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely fashioned Employee</td>
<td>.662</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>.883</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.8784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>.878</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>.778</td>
<td>2.669</td>
<td>13.346</td>
<td>.8784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>.747</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility</td>
<td>.749</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.6866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>.738</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>.583</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>.531</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified buyers/attendees</td>
<td>.827</td>
<td>1.224</td>
<td>6.119</td>
<td>.3932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>.675</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brands Carried</td>
<td>.816</td>
<td>1.109</td>
<td>5.544</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multiple Regression for Hypotheses Testing

A multiple regression was performed in order to confirm whether the newly constructed brand associations were able to predict the tradeshow brand preference from the exhibitor/attendees perspective. Even though the Cronbach's alpha levels of two measures - Potential Attractiveness, Brands Carried- were not high, the measures were used. Other measures are named as the Presented Brand, Employee Behavior and the Service Process.

Table 4-7 showed the correlation between variables. The original independent variables from the service brand preference model had a relationship with each other (P<0.001). However, the newly loaded two factors - Potential Attractiveness, Brands Carried-had no relationship to each other but did with the original variables. In addition, only the presented brand variable showed a relationship with the dependent variable of tradeshow brand preference.

Table 4-8 showed the output for the multiple regression. A regression analysis was conducted using all participants resulted in an adjusted $R^2 = 0.027$, $F(5,189) = 1.604$, $p=0.382$. Beta values were also shown in Table 4-15. Standardized coefficient beta of Employee Behavior was 0.062, and standardized coefficient beta of the Service Process was 0.012, and the Presented Brand variable had 0.117 standardized coefficient beta. Newly loaded factor of potential attractiveness (Quality Buyers/Attendees, Advertising) had -0.069 Standardized coefficient beta and the last variable of Brand carried had 0.018 as Standardized coefficient beta. This indicates none of the independent variables are measuring tradeshow brand preference.
Table 4-7  Correlation table of variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Tradeshow Brand Preference</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Employee Behavior</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) The Service Process</td>
<td>.084</td>
<td>.385***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) The Presented Brand</td>
<td>.142*</td>
<td>.475***</td>
<td>.505***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Potential Attractiveness</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td>.235***</td>
<td>.217**</td>
<td>.226**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Brands Carried</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>.288***</td>
<td>.286***</td>
<td>.257***</td>
<td>.090</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P<0.5  **P<0.01  ***P<0.001

Table 4-8  The Results of Multiple Regression for Tradeshow Brand Preference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Behavior</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.732</td>
<td>.465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Service Process</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Presented Brand</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>1.308</td>
<td>.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Attractiveness</td>
<td>-.084</td>
<td>-.069</td>
<td>-.921</td>
<td>.358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brands Carried</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.236</td>
<td>.814</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R = 0.165, R² = 0.027
F (5, 189) = 1.064, p-value = 0.382
A regression analysis was also conducted looking at the significant differences by using the number of participation in the sample tradeshows as a control variable.

Table 4-9 shows that there is a significant difference between exhibitor’s/attendee’s preference towards tradeshow brand and the number of participation in the sample tradeshows of the exhibitors’/attendees’ (p=0.000, p<0.001). Standardized coefficient beta (Beta=0.205) of the number of participation also indicates that the more likely the higher number of participation in the sample tradeshows of exhibitors/attendees enacts higher tradeshow brand preference. However, the concepts of independent variables were not significant predictors of intent to enact tradeshow brand preference.

Meanwhile, the p value of each independent variable was lower than the regression analysis conducted without the control variable as the number of participation in the sample tradeshows. This result seemed to be caused by using the control variable.

Table 4-9
The Results of Multiple Regression for Tradeshow Brand Preference(Using Number of Participation in chosen tradeshows as control variable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients B</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.524</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.957</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Participation</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>2.881</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Behavior</td>
<td>.124</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>1.450</td>
<td>.149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The service Process</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>.554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The presented Brand</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>1.739</td>
<td>.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Attractiveness</td>
<td>-.099</td>
<td>-.082</td>
<td>-1.162</td>
<td>.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brands Carried</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.392</td>
<td>.696</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R = 0.274, R² =0.075
F (6,186) = 2.507, p-value =0.023
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overview

This chapter summarizes the key findings of each study process along with their associated implications. Following this, the managerial and theoretical contributions of this study are discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of this study and suggestions for future research on tradeshow branding.

Findings in Interview Process

The motivation for interviewing industry experts was to gain a better understanding of the possible conceptualized model of tradeshow brand preference/brand associations and how they influence consumer perceptions on tradeshow brands using exploratory interview methods. Through the logical process, the conceptualized model of the tradeshow brand preference was set up by adding and eliminating brand association items based on the service brand preference conceptualized model.

The results provided insights of industry experts' ideas on unique circumstances of the tradeshow industry regarding branding perspectives and overall industry issues. As this study anticipated from the beginning based on dissimilarities between the tradeshow and service industry, unique items were added such as qualified buyers/attendees under the presented brand category. The detailed items in the employee behavior category were added considering complicated,
mixed-business units in the tradeshow industry. The trend of the industry also reflected the service process category as technology. The outcome of interviewing shows that the measurement of brand preference in the tradeshow industry should be modified pertaining to the industry's unique characteristics.

Accordingly, this process examined the types of brand associations consumers make with tradeshow brands and twenty items under three basic categories: The Present Brand association (seven items), Employee Behavior association included eight items, and the service process addressed five items (Figure 3-2).

All of the presented facts obtained through the interviewing process enabled this study to confirm the service brand preference model would not exactly fit in the tradeshow industry. Some of the items were added or eliminated. The definitions of some items were adjusted to modify the conceptualized model of service brand preference into the tradeshow industry.

The other valuable outcome of this study was addressing the industry issues that were acknowledged during the interviewing process, such as implementing and promoting the competent technology methods from many business units involved in the tradeshow industry. Convenient registrations, ordering services without mistakes, pertinent communications regarding rules and regulations, and the motive/desire of utilizing technology to avoid bulky paper work. Also, other trends and issues in the industry were addressed during the interviewing process (Appendix 3).

Findings in Statistical Analysis

As mentioned, this study was initiated with the idea of a common denominator between the service industry and the tradeshow industry. A
key question regarding the tradeshow brand preference model was whether the service brand preference conceptualized model could be applied to the tradeshow industry under the assumption of the tradeshow categorized as the service industry. This study tried to apply the service brand preference model to the tradeshow industry. This study also attempted to find which types of associations are most important to exhibitors/attendees in determining tradeshow brand preference.

However, as identified in Chapter 4, the reformed independent variables of brand association were not capable of measuring the tradeshow brand preference.

According to the exploratory factor analysis, the reformed brand associations were loaded as five factors. Factors 1 (Employee Behavior), 2 (The Service Process), and 3 (The Presented Brand) were justified to remain as brand association categories by statistical analysis. On the other hand, Factors 4 (Potential Attractiveness) and 5 (Controlled External Communications) were not fully justified to be loaded as factors. Even though Factors 4 and 5 were not justified by reliability test and traditional interpretation of exploratory factor analysis, Factors 4 and 5 are justified to remain as essential underlying dimensions of the brand preference in the tradeshow industry.

Especially, the items of qualified buyers and attendees, which comprised the "Potential Attractiveness" factor with advertising, was considered as one of the most important items in the tradeshow industry to measure brand preference and show evaluation by the item description analysis. Qualified buyers and attendees have purchasing and decision-making power and also possess significant buying influence at the tradeshow.

The Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR) 2000 review reported significant facts of the audiences in tradeshows. It says...
first that 83 percent of all visitors to industry-specific expositions had significant buying influences. Secondly, 90 percent of attendees with final purchasing decision-making power see tradeshows as their primary source of supply, and thirdly, 76 percent of attendees arrive with an agenda outlining companies, products, or services they want to see (Seitz, 2000). The facts above indicate that the tradeshows are held for the ones sell the products or services to interact with the ones holding significant purchasing power and significant buying influence. The CEIR also reported that the potential sales audience is the single-most important statistic exhibiting companies need to develop because this one statistic dominates the decision to participate (Seitz, 2000). On the other hand, the show organizers also need to develop the strategy to exploit the new and qualified buyers market and provide those to customers.

In statistical analysis, the qualified buyers/attendees had the strongest mean score and the lowest standard deviation (\(M = 6.40, \text{SD}=1.000\)). The result indicates that the customers of tradeshows consider the qualified buyers/attendees as critical factors in making decisions whether to participate in the tradeshows.

Meanwhile, Factor 4 concerning qualified buyers/attendees and advertising were loaded on the same factor. From the show's perspective, advertising is a powerful communication tool especially well suited to attendee acquisition.

Morrow (1997) stated,

Advertising helps create an "atmosphere" around tradeshow events, making it easier for tradeshow organizers to sell registrations directly through other means (p.108).
Therefore, advertising as a marketing method and qualified buyers and attendees as a market loaded on the same factor is understandable and acceptable by the appreciation of tradeshows characteristics, a factor titled "Potential attractiveness."

Factor 5 was a very interesting result. In the service brand preference model, Brands Carried – Symbol, Logo, etc – was included in the presented brand category. However, based on the responses of the sample of this study, Brands Carried was detached from the original variable and stands out itself as one factor.

Factor analysis belongs to a family of methods, which involve what we called latent variables (David, Fiona, Irini, and Jane, 2000). Although concepts used in social science discourse as if they were just like any other variable, they differ from other variables in that they cannot be observed—which is called latent variable. In some cases, a concept may be represented by a single latent variable, but often they are multi-dimensional in nature and involve more than one latent variable.

Statistically, the Brand Carried item could be eliminated as a tradeshows brand association. According to the descriptive data of items (Table 4-2), the mean score of Brand Carried was the second lowest next to the policies and the standard deviation of it was the highest (\( M=4.67, \ SD=1.808 \)). Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was not performed because only one item was under one factor. In contrast, the eigenvalue of Factor 5 was 1.109, which is enough to be loaded as one factor.

As this study mentioned as a limitation, the enlisted brand association items are not considering all conceivable facts of the tradeshows industry. Therefore, if the other items related to the brands carried, which is titled as controlled external communication after the factor analysis, were added, then the brands carried item could be
loaded with other related items under one factor. This study also found that the brands carried item might not be as important as service industry to be categorized as the presented brand and also not very important brand association in the tradeshow industry based on the output of the statistic results.

However, this study also cannot bypass the importance of the conceptual framework for the tradeshow brand preference model. Berry’s Model (Figure 2-2) in Chapter II shows that although the primary influence to brand meaning is the actual customer’s experience with the service, the presented brand and external communication also contribute to brand meaning. In addition, the brands carried under the presented brand influence brand awareness more than brand meaning. Brand carried should be included to track the path from the brand awareness to the brand meaning. Expo magazine (Skolnik, 1993) also reported that the face of the show -Color, design, Layout- can contribute to a new look of the show and the exhibit floor could be increased and decreased by the face of the show.

This study detects that the symbol and logo might not be critical factors in the tradeshow industry to customers unlike the service industry. However, the item itself should be included as tradeshow brand association for the conceptual framework.

Managerial Implication

This research provides information for tradeshow organizers, managers, and also service contractors who are directly related to the exhibitors and attendees. Prior to this study, branding was a hot issue in the tradeshow industry but without any research or model for understanding branding issues in this industry. The reported branding aspects of the tradeshow industry were mostly constrained within the
presented brand category, which is addressed with the controllable communication efforts of tradeshows. Website design, logo, symbol, and advertising methods were mostly addressed under the name of tradeshow branding. Tradeshow organizers and managers had to rely mostly on branding strategies developed for the promotion and distribution of packaged goods.

Despite the fact that academic researchers (e.g., Berry, 2000; Blankson & Stavros, 1999; de Chernatony, 1999b; de Chernatony & McDonald, 1998; de Chernatony & Riley 1997; Dobrey and Page 1990; Kapferer, 1998; Keller, 1998; Turley & Moore, 1995) and brand practitioners (e.g., de Chernatony & Riley, 1999) have argued that service branding is different from goods branding, little research has explicitly explored the development of service brands. Service branding has remained uncharted terrain. Even divaricated tradeshow branding from service branding had no research at all.

Therefore, this study is the very first step in theoretical and empirical exploration of what the tradeshow brand means to consumers. It investigates which types of brand association should be included to initialize branding strategies and carry the accomplished brand equity to a certain level.

This study identified the other conceivable brand association items in the tradeshow industry unlike the service industry. The listed items below are the primary factors that tradeshow organizers/managers should consider as top priorities for their branding strategy.

- **Qualified Buyers and Attendees**

Qualified buyers and attendees are a significantly critical factor based on statistic analysis. Morrow (1997) cited Luckhurst's definition of the tradeshow.
Exhibitions are not just collections of interesting objects brought together at a certain place and time. They are human activities, human enterprises, and some of them very great and courageous activities, undertaken for definite reasons and in order to achieve certain specified results. They are a form of human intercourse, whereby the promoters and exhibitors on the one hand communicate with the visitors on the other. And their results can only be told in terms of further human thought and activity (p.6).

The statement suggests that the tradeshow is “The Place of Communication,” which means the industry needs objects that enable communication and interaction. In the tradeshow industry, exhibitors and buyers/attendees are the primary factors that enable communication at the places where they gather. Exhibitors need better objects to communicate. Therefore, from the association perspective, bringing the qualified buyers and attendees must be captivating to the exhibitors. In other words, if tradeshow organizers try to attract the exhibitors/attendees to their show, they must have qualified buyers and exhibitors that enable valuable “Communication” and beneficial “Interaction”. From a marketing perspective, consistent customer satisfaction brings “qualified buyers and attendees” and a strong comparative advantage in the competitive industry market. It communicates the positive brand meaning to all customers.

- Employee Behavior

Employees have been always the main assets of every other service industry, including the tradeshow industry. Outstanding customer
services from outstanding employees are unquestionably one of the core assets of a show brand and help provide an edge over competitors. However, it is not easy to provide consistently excellent service. It takes commitment and continuing effort in the interaction with customers, from the receptionists to CEOs, from show managers to subcontractors. Skolnik (1997) stated the importance of having and training the employee in the tradeshow industry. Hire service-minded people, stress the payoff, involve all people include your contractors, empower people to act, set an example from the top, learn to love complaints, and reward outstanding performance were mentioned as tips in the article.

This research shows how important employees are as a main asset of the tradeshow to the exhibitors/attendees to boost the show brand equity and power.

- Reliability and Consistency

No matter how fast the industry changes due to external factors, the customers demand "Reliability and Consistency" for their stability. "Reliability and consistency" are the very basic items and also very important items for service providers. In order for customers to accomplish their goals of participating in tradeshows and satisfying their vital interests, the conditions have to be reliable and consistent. "Reliability and Consistency" are strongly related to the "trust" between service providers and service users. Building the "trust" through reliable and consistent service brings "Brand meaning" to customers, which becomes "Brand loyalty" as a next logical step. This matter of consequences was also noted during the interviews with the industry experts.
"The Service Process" category including "Reliability and Consistency" is definitely evaluated by a customer’s experience, like the "Employee Behavior" category. Like other service industries, customers of the tradeshow industry are strongly affected by both direct and indirect experiences. A negative experience can change the positive perception of a company and good experiences can also change a previously poor perception. If show organizers and managers do not develop positive brand experiences at the show through the service process, they lose all the money spent on advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, and sponsorships.

- Technology and The Service Process

Morrow (1997) mentioned technology in the tradeshow industry. Technology is changing the face of the exposition industry just as it is changing communication throughout the world. Today’s exposition organizer has a responsibility and the opportunity to bring the buyer and the seller together using new tools available (p.567).

Technology was added under the service process category as a brand association item after interviewing tradeshow industry experts. Utilizing competitive technology has been one of the main concerns of the show organizers and managers and one of the main aspirations from the exhibitors/attendees. The key benefits among exhibitors/attendees exploiting technology are timesaving, quick response and alternatives, simplifying service ordering compared with bulky paper service kits, and reducing errors and increasing accuracy. All of these conveniences save time and money. The interviewing process of this research also identifies the importance of technology that gives other service
process aspects such as reliability, convenience, consistency, and communication under the condition of well-being used.

On the other hand, there are still roadblocks in accepting technology dominant processes in the tradeshow industry. Connectivity, security, policy, and customization issues pose obstacles within the tradeshow industry. However, as long as exhibitors perceive the service process including technology as an important brand association, the show organizers/managers should consider this fact in building their brand equity.

Explained brand associations appeared to be reformed brand associations in the tradeshow industry considering its unique characteristics and trends. The show organizers and managers must prioritize reformed brand associations to acquire advantages against competitors as a tradeshow brand.

This research also empirically shows that tradeshow organizers and managers should alter their brand-building strategies based on brand models produced by consistent study of the industry, rather than following goods branding and other service industry branding strategies.

As the tradeshow industry becomes more sophisticated and competitive, decisions based on knowledge rather than assumptions should appeal to increasingly more show organizers and managers. A lot of shows that die or do not do well fail to provide what customers expect. The show organizers and managers could take this result into considerations to reduce and narrow the risks in making decisions. Hopefully, this study gives show organizers and managers tips to reinforce reformed brand associations or create new ones.
Theoretical Implication

There is little known about service branding from a consumer’s perspective, with only one theoretical model of service branding (Berry, 2000) and one conceptualized and empirically tested model of service brand preference (Lampo, 2002). There is neither theoretically or empirically tested branding model for the tradeshow industry. This study conceptualized the brand association model and empirically tested tradeshow brand preference from the exhibitor’s/attendee’s perspective, and exhibited an effort not previously undertaken in tradeshow branding research associated with service branding.

A better understanding of how consumers perceive tradeshow brands can be developed to interpret, influence, and predict the tradeshow brands. Here are the questions: What are the appropriate and fundamental items to measure tradeshow brand preference from the exhibitor’s/attendee’s perspective? How do exhibitors/attendees perceive tradeshow brands? What determines their perception of tradeshow brands leading to the decision-making process?

This study provides possible answers to each question and ultimately lays the theoretical and empirical groundwork for future research in this area.

This study would be the foundational first step in theoretical/empirical exploration of the tradeshow brands. This study explored the possible brand associations in the tradeshow industry, which enables the empirical test on tradeshow brand preference through both qualitative and quantitative methods. Even though the result shows that the reproduced model based on service brand preference model could not fit in the tradeshow industry, this study could be the very first framework of exploiting the tradeshow brand considering tradeshow characteristics.
Furthermore, this study contributes a theoretical model of tradeshow brand preference to the literature providing academicians a framework for understanding the unique brand associations and brand preference in the tradeshow industry. Most importantly, this research identifies unique brand association items that make up a consumer’s perception of tradeshow brand meaning.

Limitations and Future Study

Owing to no previous research having been done on this topic in the tradeshow industry, this study could be the very first step to exploit the brand preference in the tradeshow industry. However, this research has limitations that might affect the generalization of this study.

The first limitation is same as what the Lampo’s research had. These categories and items enlisted under the brand association category of the tradeshow brand conceptual model might not be able to identify or classify every single brand associations of tradeshow brand preference.

The second limitation is the sample of the study. They are not categorized by tradeshow characteristics in this study. One of the shows was a corporate trade tradeshow and might have different aspects and possibly is categorized differently rather than two other shows that are categorized as retail tradeshows. The last show has the characteristics of consumer/retail mixed shows. In addition, this research does not consider the size of the show. The number of exhibitors range from 130 to 1,400 and that might influence the result of this research. However, due to the small amount of usable answers from each of the four tradeshow, the responses are combined to measure overall tradeshow brand preference. The result of this study could be a fundamental guide for measuring brand preference in different categories in the tradeshow industry.
It is possible that the customers of the different categorized shows may perceive the tradeshow brand with different brand associations. Future studies could consider the condition of different categories of the tradeshows. Future research should examine the implications of different types of tradeshow contexts on tradeshow brand associations and tradeshow brand preference to further develop our understanding in this critical area of tradeshow branding.

In other words, the generalization of the model testing turned out to be wanting in ability. Due to the unique characteristics of the every single show, such as different motivation of customers and different propensity of customers and different needs of customers, the generalization of the tradeshow brand preference model was ineffective.

Another limitation is the survey time frame. Exclusively the associations of the chosen tradeshows as samples arranged the survey timeframe. At the Glass Craft Show, the questionnaires were distributed on the first day of the show, and collected on the last day of the show. The International Wireless Communication Expo and The Ace Hardware assigned the survey time frame only on the first day of the show. In contrast, the ASI show designated the last day of the show as the survey time frame. There is a possibility for the respondents who answered the questionnaire on the very first day could have given misleading answers due to not fully experiencing the tradeshow at the time of response. In addition, there is also the possibility for the respondents who answered the very last day of the show to have perceived brand association items as tradeshow evaluation items, which cannot test the tradeshow brand preference model.

The last limitation of this study could be caused by the nature of the industry. Owing to the complicated, mixed-business units of the industry (Figure 3-1), the respondents might have been confused who and
what they were rating. Tradeshows are to be managed and held by show managers, however, during the showtime, customers have a lot more contact with service contractor rather than show managers. The service process, policies, and prices might have been confusing items to the respondents.

In order to collect more detailed and particular information, future research must consider different types of tradeshows. It will be interesting to find out whether consumer perception differs depending on the type of tradeshows. There are tradeshows managed by the association itself and by entrepreneurs. There might be different results of the brand perception on the show whose exhibitors/attendees are members of the association that might have a certain pressure of mandatory participation. On the other hand, the other shows whose exhibitors/attendees could be the pure customers from the only marketing effort of the entrepreneur show managers might lead different customer brand perception results. In other words, there must be different brand attributes and features depending on whether the show is organized by association or for profit or retail-focused or consumer-focused.

According to the Lampo’s(2001) study, the consumer’s brand perception is different depending on the types of service. In the tradeshow industry, the unique attributes such as types of the tradeshow, types of organization, types of industry, number of attendees, size of the show in paid square feet or gross revenue might be the factors that change consumers’ brand perception of the show. It must be a noteworthy research finding discrepancies based on those attributes in the future.

Therefore, this study comes to the conclusion that tradeshow industry possesses unique characteristics, which cannot simply borrow
the model from another industry to test empirically, even though there is an apparent common denominator. This study also suggests that conceptualizing theoretical models based on a practical foundation should be conducted using focus groups within the tradeshow industry. The focus group investigating method should be very consistent to absorb intricate internal perspectives and reproduce the tradeshow industry's own explicative brand preference model.

Eventually, while this research examined the brand associations for a tradeshow brand, literature also identifies brand awareness as a key component of service brand equity (Berry 2000). Other conceptual and empirical work on tradeshow brand awareness would generate interest and enhance knowledge of tradeshow branding. These unsolved inquiries are left to future study.
REFERENCES


DEFINITION OF TERMS

Attendee: One who attends tradeshows. May also be referred to as delegate or visitor, but should not be used for "exhibitor".

Brand:
- A name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors (Kotler, 1991).
- A strong brand creates a sustainable differential advantage (Doyle, 1990).
- It gives customers a reason for preferring that brand to a competitor's brand - a reason that is not easily copied by competitors (Barney, 1991).
- Strong brands may enhance market share, increase profits, enable organizations to charge higher prices, create customer loyalty, or even help override occasional failures in the eyes of the customers. Strong brands are valuable assets to a firm (Lampo, 2001).

Brand Awareness: the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of certain product category (Aaker, 1991).

Brand Association:
- Anything "linked: in memory to a brand" (Aaker, 1991).
They, as important informational nodes linked to a brand node in memory, contain the meaning of the brand for consumers (Keller, 1993).

Brand Attitude:
- Brand attitude is defined as consumers' overall evaluation of a brand /whether good or bad (Mitchell & Olson, 1981).

Brand Equity:
- The set of associations and behaviors on the part of the brand's customers, channel members, & parent corporation that permits the brand to earn greater volume or greater margins than it could without the brand name and that gives the brand a strong, sustainable, and differentiated advantage over competitors (Marketing Science Institute; Keller, 1998).
- The brand assets (or liabilities) linked to a brand's name and symbol that add to (or subtract from) a product or service (Aaker, 1991, 1996).
- The additional discounted future cash flow achieved by associating a brand with an underlying product or service (Biel, 1997).
- The differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of a brand (Keller, 1993).
Brand Meaning:
- Customers dominant perception of the brand, whether it is positive or negative (Berry, 2000).

Consumers: In this study, the consumer is defined from the perspective of show management and is the exhibitor.

Combined or mixed shows:
A combination of trade and public shows. This is an exposition that is open both to retail trade and the public. Exhibitors are typically manufacturers or distributors.

Consumer show:
A consumer show is type of exposition open to the general public. Most consumer shows provide the opportunity for the display of goods and services used directly by an end user.

Contractor:
An individual or company that provides services or materials to a trade show and/or its exhibitors. Also see Official Contractor, Exhibitor Appointed Contractor.

Dismantle:
To take apart an exhibit. Also known as Take-down, Teardown.

Display House (Builder): A company, which fabricates exhibits.

Display Rules & Regulations:
Exhibit construction specifications endorsed by major exhibit industry associations. Also the specific set of rules that apply to an exposition.

Exhibitor: One who shows or displays products or goods in tradeshows and expositions.

Exclusive Contractor:
A contractor appointed by show management as the sole provider of specified services.

Exhibit Manager:
Person in charge of a company's exhibit program.

Exhibitor Appointed Contractor:
A contractor hired by an exhibitor to perform trade show services independently of show management appointed contractors. Also called Independent Contractor, EAC.

Floor Manager:
An individual representing show management who is responsible for the exhibition area.

Freight: Exhibit properties, products, and other materials shipped for an exhibit.
General Contractor:
Show management-appointed company providing services to a trade show and/or its exhibitors. Also, called Official Contractor. Compare with Exhibitor Appointed Contractor.

I&D:
Installation & Dismantle (of an exhibit). Also known as Set-Up and Take-down.

Independent Contractor:
A contractor hired by an exhibitor to perform trade show services independently of show management appointed contractors. Also called Exhibitor Appointed Contractor, EAC.

Installation:
The process of setting up exhibit properties according to specifications. Also called Assembly, Set Up.

Labor:
Contracted workers who perform services. Also called Craftspersons.

Official Contractor:
Show management appointed company providing services to a trade show and/or its exhibitors. Also called General Contractor. Compare with Exhibitor Appointed Contractor.

Producer:
(1) Exhibit Producer: An individual or company which designs and/or builds exhibits. (2) Show Producer: An individual or company which manages trade shows.

Retail trade shows: The exhibitor is typically a manufacturer or distributor of products or services specific or complimentary to those industries. The typical buyer is an end user within the industry segment hosting the exposition. Attendance is restricted to these buyers and is often by invitation only.

Service industry: In this study, Service industry is defined as the industry that provides or deals with intangible products.

Show Manager: One who generates the ideas for trade shows, manages and analyzes the tradeshow. Identified as management companies, association staff, and entrepreneurs.

Show Producer:
An individual or company, which manages trade shows, including leasing the exposition facility, hiring official contractors, and promoting the show.

Subcontractor:
An individual or company retained by a general contractor to provide services.
Trade Shows:
Events for the specific purpose of displaying and selling goods to end
users or pre-qualified buyers in a particular market segment that
typically take place at regular intervals (Morrow, 1997).

Union:
An organization of workers formed with the purpose of protecting
workers' rights and increasing bargaining power with an employer on
such issues as wages, hours, and benefits.

Sources from www.czarnowski.com/resources/glossary-gen.html
APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERVIEWING INDUSTRY EXPERTS
To: Industry Experts

I am Hwabong Lee, a graduate student of William F. Harrah’s College of Hotel administration at University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

I am writing a thesis for the Master’s degree, titled “Branding the tradeshow - in the context of the service branding model.”

This interview process is going to provide the essential foundation for building the questionnaire for exhibitors to measure tradeshow brand preference.

Your input is very important for this study and a further understanding tradeshow industry.

Thank you very much for your dedication to and cooperation with this study.

Hwabong Lee
Graduate student (M.S)
University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
William, F. Harrah’s College of Hotel Administration
Tel: 702-461-3089
Mail: wowbonglv@lycos.com
*The categories of the service brand preference model and items*

There are 3 categories to measure the service brand preference.

1. The Presented Brand (The tangible aspects of the service brand)
2. Employee Behavior (Here, defined as the show organizers)
3. The Service Process (Customers' experience with service companies—Here, defined as Exhibitor's experience with show organizers).

1. Indicate the item(s), which is/are necessary to measure brand preference by checking in the box. Please, check all the items that apply. (1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not sure, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree)

- **The presented brand**: The tangible assets of the service brand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products/Brands Carried</td>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance of the employees</td>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: What other items do you want to add under "The presented brand" category?

2. Indicate the item(s), which is/are necessary to measure brand preference by checking in the box. Please, check all the items that apply.

- **Employee (Show organizers and Service contractors) behavior**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee attitude</td>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee competency</td>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee relationship w/customers</td>
<td>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q: What other items do you want to add under the "Employee behavior" category? 

3. Indicate the item(s), which is/are necessary to measure brand preference by checking in the box. Please, check all the items that apply.

- The service process: Customers' experience with service companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: What other items do you want to add under the "Service process" category? 

4. Besides the mentioned variables above, what other items can you consider to measure tradeshow brand preference based on your expertise/experience and knowledge within this industry.

Thank you for all your effort and cooperation.

ABOUT YOURSELF.

- PLEASE ATTACH A NAMECARD OF YOURS FOR THE FURTHER CONTACTS.
- PLEASE SPECIFY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE TRADESHOW INDUSTRY. ___________________ YEARS
APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EXHIBITORS/ATTENDEES OF ( ) SHOW
Subject: Exhibitors/Attendees of ( ) Show

The study in which you are participating is a critical part of my Master's thesis and is intended to help tradeshow organizers develop an effective branding strategy. The results of this thesis study will benefit the tradeshow organizers and clients, as well as academicians, in improving the market strategies and enhancing service quality.

Your participation is voluntary and all information you provide will remain confidential. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study or stop answering the questions at any time.

If you agree to take part in this research, you will be asked to answer the survey questions attached. Your valuable input is very important for this study and a further understanding of the tradeshow industry.

Your participation in this research will take about 10 minutes of your time. Thank you very much for your dedication to and cooperation with this study.

Contact Information

If questions and/or concerns to this research arise, please contact us at 702-895-4844. The principle investigator for this research is Hwabong Lee and the supervising professor is Dr. Bai. For questions regarding this research, you may contact the UNLV Office for the Protection of Research Subjects at 895-2794.

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research.

Principal Investigator

Hwabong Lee  
Graduate student (M.S)  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas.  
William F. Harrah's College of Hotel Administration  
Tel: 702-895-4844  
E-mail: wowbonglv@lycos.com
Questionnaire on Tradeshow Brand Preference

1. To what extent do you prefer participating in this tradeshow than other tradeshows under the same product category?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Least</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Most</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How important are the following items that make you decide to participate this show? Please choose the most appropriate response.

2-1. The presented brand: The tangible assets and controlled communication efforts of the tradeshow and its organizers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS:</th>
<th>Least Important</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Most Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locations</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brands Carried</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Logo/Symbol</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified Buyers/Attendees</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2-2. Employee (Show organizers and Service contractors) behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS:</th>
<th>Least Important</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Most Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Employee Attitude</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Employee Competency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Employee Commitment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Employee Knowledge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Employee Experience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Timely Fashioned Employee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Employee Manners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Employee Relationship w/Customers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2-3. The service process: Your experience with service providing companies (Show organizers and Service contractors).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS:</th>
<th>Least Important</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Most Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Convenience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Reliability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Consistency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Communication</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Technology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participant Information

About yourself

☐ Exhibitor ___________ Attendees ___________
☐ Male _______ Female ___________

☐ Age
  20-30 _______ 31-40 _______ 41-50 _______
  51-60 _______ Over 61 _______

☐ Job Position
  CEO _______
  Director _______
  Manager _______
  Employee_______
  Others_______

☐ Number of times of participation in this tradeshow over the last five years

☐ Are you willing to attend the tradeshow of this association?
  If yes, Why?

☐ Are you willing to attend the tradeshow of this association?
  If no, Why?

About Your Company

- Where is your company located?
  Domestic (U.S.A) _________ International _________

- How many employees do you have in your company?
  _______________________________(Approximately)

- What was the last year's revenue of your company?
  _______________________________(US $)

Thank you for all your effort and cooperation.
Interview with Industry Experts

The interviews were conducted during the "International Home Builders Show" hosted by NAHB (National Association of Home Builders) from January 21, 2003, to January 24, 2003 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

These contacts were made through the Freeman Company.

The interviewees are:

- Sarah Gyolai (Marketing Specialist from Pella - Exhibitor)
- Darrin Maxwell (Key Account Executive from STAR Exhibit-Display House)
- Roger Triplett (I&D supervisor from Exhibit Dynamics - Display house)
- Ryan Barlow (Field Representative from Labor Teamsters, Las Vegas)
- Edward Stanley (Senior Group Director of Tradeshows & Advertising from NAHB-National Association of Home builders)
- Jeannie Smith (Sr. Meetings Director of Convention & Meetings from NAHB - National Association of Home Builders)
- Geoffrey D. Cassidy (Assistant Staff Vice President of Group Operations, Convention & Meetings Group from NAHB- National Association of Home Builders)
- John Kenny (Regional Director of Installation & Dismantle Services from Freeman-Service Contractor)

Interviews were designed to talk about the items of tradeshow brand preference association. However, interviewees were also allowed to freely express current and important issues of the industry overall.
Darrin Maxwell, Key account executive of STAR exhibit & Environments, mentioned various critical factors.

"This Industry is historically dominated by white males. However, it is changing and it should be changed to keep up with the trends of this industry overall. That gives you more brand powers to the diverse customers that we have"

"Convenience wise, this industry is definitely behind the curve as far as communications, information are really Key issues in this industry. However, this industry is somewhat backwards how they do it now. Print out thick note books and Fedex that to exhibitors and they fill’em in and Fedex it back… becomes so labor intensive a process and procedure...... somewhat too much to consumers...... not enough use of Tech. There is an opportunity to utilize technology a lot more. Information from associations or service providers to the consumers doesn’t disclose all ins and outs......and all rules and regulations"

"Through the very labor intensive procedure, we anticipate misunderstanding from any side of this industry. Especially, rules and regulation are sensitively related to the price issue, which is huge to the consumers."

"Price preference standpoint, better understanding that everybody involved in this process has of the potential tradeshow event marketing. The easier for them(Association/Exhibitors) to position and justify the value of what they are doing." He mentioned price, policies and communications.
"They (Association) have to think - "Are we making it as easy form as we can?", "Do they (exhibitors) feel they are getting good value for their dollars."

"What is the association doing to really ensure the audience to be a good quality of audience for the exhibitors." He also mentioned customer service equation and qualified buyers/attendees.

Sarah Gyolai, Marketing specialist and exhibition project manager of PELLA corporation, participated as an exhibitor.

"From an exhibitor’s perspective, I weigh the hardworking employee rather than employee competency or attitude. Even though they are competent, competency itself doesn’t mean anything to us. They have to be very committed to our project and a hard worker to help us anything with what we need."

Edward Staley, Senior Group director of tradeshows & Advertising of NAHB (National Association of Home Builders), also pointed out: "Location is more important than facilities. Location is...there is expense associated with that. Especially, this industry. Cause, they know they have to pay a lot more in New York than here in Vegas...for union and every other single thing that you can imagine"

"Knowledge and experience must be considered a qualification of good employees."

Jeannie Smith, Sr. Meetings Director of Convention & Meetings of NAHB (National Association of Home builders) showed ideas on overall items.
"Appearance of the employee should not be included. Anyone working in this field knows the importance of employee appearance. It is a given in the tradeshow industry."

She also referred to ideas on the tradeshow's unique characteristics. "Relationship between show organizers and hired contractors are as important as your own family members are to you. Everyone becomes the proud parents of the show if all aspects of the show are presented to the public in a beautiful, professional manner. The ties become extremely strong between these groups year after year. This is probably one of the most important keys to producing a tradeshow and it makes no difference what city you hold the show in. The family bonds between the companies make the show attractive and complete for the attendee because of the professional manner the show is displayed."

John Kenny, Regional Director of Installation & Dismantle Services of Freeman companies, said:

"The one and only thing in this industry is people. People are the greatest asset. The only thing we need as far as people is trust and respect. If you trust and respect others in this industry, that will bring you more than you can imagine...this industry is all about people. Relationships, attitude, and competency are very important, however, without trust and respect, you'll get nothing at the end."
VITA

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Thesis Title: Brand Associations in the Tradeshow Industry: An Application of the Service Brand Preference Model

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Committee Member, Dr. Curtis Love, Ph. D.
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