

RV AND CAMPING SHOWS: A MOTIVATION-BASED MARKET SEGMENTATION

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Consumer shows are widely used throughout the world by recreational organizations. Although their use is rampant, little empirical research has been completed to understand the motivations of visitors they attract. The main purpose of this study was to identify different segments of visitors attending RV and camping shows based on the underlying dimensions of their motivations. A total of 411 attendees to four RV and camping shows conducted in Michigan during 2005 were surveyed. Factor analysis performed on the motivations for attendance showed five underlying dimensions for show attendance while subsequent k-means cluster analysis distinguished five segments of visitors. Chi-square and ANOVA tests revealed that these market segments are significantly different regarding their purchase cycle stage, product usage, and show behavior. Recognition of different types of show customers have important marketing implications, especially regarding customer retention and market development, which this article discusses.

Key words: RV and camping industry; Consumer show; Market segmentation; Factor/cluster analysis; Event management

Introduction

Every year, millions of people around the world visit consumer and trade shows focused on particular industries and product-lines (Miller, 2000). Trade shows can range from small local events to large-scale extravaganzas that draw tens of thousands of visitors (Kotler, 2002). Recreational product shows offer manufacturers and retailers the chance to present—at one time in one place—their new makes and models of recreational vehicles (RVs), boats, and snowmobiles along with accessories, services, financing, and insurance.

Recreational shows benefit manufacturers and retailers, industry associations, and consumers. They provide

manufacturers and retailers, especially small companies with limited marketing budgets, the opportunity to display their products and market their companies to a larger and more diverse market than would otherwise be accessible to them. According to the Trade Show Bureau (Tradeshow Week, 2006), almost half (44%) of firms exhibiting at business-to-business shows have fewer than 50 employees. Recreational shows also benefit industry associations organizing or sponsoring the event. Show revenues (e.g., tickets, rental space, sponsorships) are a major source of income for these associations, which in turn strengthen the recreational industry, providing technical and marketing assistance to their members and information to recreationists. Finally, these shows provide current and potential

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customers a convenient and fun way to compare shop various products and providers and to interact and learn from industry experts (Miller, 2000).

Market trends show a growth of the consumer show industry, most likely due to their marketing implications, especially for small companies. Manufacturers and retailers are investing a significant amount of money (e.g., exhibit space, staffing) to participate in these shows. Many depend on them as a major element in their overall marketing promotional mix. According to recent research, event management accounts for 20% of marketing communication budgets globally (Barker, 2005). There has also been a trend toward larger trade-shows. In 2005, the net square footage of tradeshow increased 3.2%, the number of exhibitors grew by 1.3%, and professional attendance by 4% compared to the previous year (Tradeshow Week, 2006).

Despite the wide array of benefits derived from consumer shows and trends suggesting their growth, little research has been conducted regarding show visitors, their role in the purchase process, and the return-on-investment to exhibitors. In addition, in those areas where research has been completed, little or no replication has occurred, resulting in a complete lack of theoretical development in this area. Possible reasons for this lack of research are the complexity and cost of data collection (Dekimpe, Francois, Gopalakrishna, Lilien, & Van den Bulte, 1997), the proprietary nature of trade and consumer show data, and the perceived value and strong traditions of exhibiting at trade and consumer shows. A study completed by Barczak, Bello, and Wallace (1992) is an exception and provides interesting insights into the role of consumer shows in new product adoption.

The importance of consumer shows for different industry actors, growing market trends, and limited scientific knowledge regarding consumer shows obliges for further research. This article fills a gap in the literature, profiling attendees to RV and camping shows and developing different market segments based on their attendance motivations. Significant differences found across these segments regarding their camping, show, and purchase behaviors provide some insights for more effectively targeting recreational show attendees, especially regarding customer retention and development.

Review of Literature

Literature reviewed for this study has been organized into three groups. The first group provides understand-

ing of the role of customer shows. The second group centers on the value of customer segmentation for marketing purposes from a show provider (i.e., exhibitor and organizer) perspective. The final group focuses on motivational-based segmentation of events attendees. The three groups of research are discussed to provide a theoretical framework applicable to this study.

The Role of Consumer Shows

Each year, thousands of consumers' shows are sponsored in different countries around the world (Miller, 2000). Although the number and size of consumer shows keep growing, there is not a clear evaluation tool available for practitioners and academics to determine the benefits of trade show participation (Barker, 2005; Kaplan, 2004). The most evident impact from the provider's perspective is the role these shows play in the search and decision to purchase a product or service. Because most firms' ultimate goal is to increase sales as a result of their participation in trade shows, the majority of research assessing the effectiveness of trade shows employ outcome-based indicators (i.e., sales generations). Examples include research completed by Dekimpe et al. (1997), Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995), Kerin and Cron (1987), Seringhaus and Rosson (1998), and Williams, Gopalakrishna, and Cox (1993).

This narrow focus on the sales generated during the show as an indicator of effectiveness is a twofold problem. First, it does not consider the entire product purchase process. Assessment of product purchase has long shifted from the simple dichotomous perspective, to buy or not to buy, to a more thorough analysis of the entire decision-making process (Loewenstein, 2001). Considering the entire rationality behind a purchase is especially important for products with a long purchase process, such as recreational vehicles. An RV show, for example, may develop the purchase intention for some attendees while it may encourage the final purchase decision for others. Secondly, this method does not fully take into account the range of benefits accrued through show participation. For example, an RV show may serve to stimulate the purchase of ancillary products (e.g., accessories, campground sites) or to revitalize industry enthusiasts. As a case in point, previous studies have shown that the majority of consumers who attend consumer shows have already purchased the product (Barczak et al., 1992). Although Hansen (1999) proposed a theoretical model

based on behavioral outcomes to better understand the multifaceted benefits accrued through trade show participation, failing to empirically test it reduced its value. In sum, the majority of marketing studies still utilize the actual purchase as dependant variable when assessing effectiveness of consumer shows due to the lack of an alternative theoretical model (Bazerman, 2001).

Assessing consumer shows is important for marketers because effectiveness of marketing efforts allow organizations to be more strategic and likely more successful in achieving their organizational objectives (Menon, Bharagwaj, Adidam, & Edison, 1999). Although it is important to evaluate the return on investment of trade shows, it is also critical to include show customers in these evaluations. Hence, it is critical to understand the role of recreational shows in the whole purchase process of attendees, including the formation of the RV purchase willingness (potential buyer), the in-show purchase (actual buyer), and the postshow purchase (repeated and complementary buyers) to make shows more effective to exhibitors and organizers.

Sales and Marketing Implications of Show Consumer Segmentation

According to Haeckel (1997), "Marketing's future is not a function of business, but is the function of business" (p. ix). Trade shows and consumer shows are examples of how different elements of the business can benefit from participating in various marketing activities (Hansen, 1999). Examples of these benefits include information gathering activities, image building activities, motivation activities, consumer education, and relationship building activities. Although all functions of an organization have a role in servicing customers, it is ultimately up to the marketing function to ensure that any organization is market oriented and continues to have a strong marketing function (Moorman & Rust, 1999).

A strong marketing function requires recognizing heterogeneity in their customer base to effectively service their customers. Evidence suggests that consumer and trade shows have the ability to attract a wide and diverse market. Wind and Thomas (1994) found that consumers who attend trade shows are at different stages of the buying process, while Barczak et al. (1992) segmented customers based on their rate of product adoption. Thus, using one model to explain a broad set of show customers is most likely going to be ineffective

for the firm marketing function. Organizations must be able to respond to different types of consumer requests during the trade show.

Past research in consumer shows has also found that the consumer buying process has been affected by these shows. It can be assumed that consumers also have different levels of experience in regards to trade shows. This level of experience will also have an impact on their decision whether to visit a trade show and their subsequent behavior(s) at the show (Dekimpe et al., 1997). Building on this work it can be assumed that as persons visit trade shows more frequently (exhibit loyalty behavior to trade shows), their level of knowledge of trade shows increases and their levels of perceived risk of utilizing the services offered by show exhibitors decrease. Although differences do exist between trade shows (business-to-business) and consumer shows (business-to-consumer), they are fundamentally the same in regards to the type of activities they perform at the shows. Obviously, although the buying unit composition and level of experience differ, the general process that consumers go through (especially with high-involvement items such as RVs) is parallel. Their commonalities also allow inferring that different consumer segments may exist in the recreational consumer shows. Thus, identifying different consumer segments in the recreational consumer show industry is important to provide enhanced understanding of the role of consumer shows in the sales and marketing processes. It is also critical for show exhibitors and organizers to have a strong marketing function and to effectively deliver service their customers.

Motivation-Based Market Segmentation in the Event Management Sector

It is widely recognized that leisure participation is driven by individuals' own set of motives molded by different internal and external stimuli such as personality, lifestyle, goals, and needs (Edginton, Jordon, DeGraaf, & Edginton, 2002; Iso-Ahola, 1999; McLean, Hurd, & Rogers, 2008). As a result, several studies have developed typologies of leisure participants based on their motivations. Specifically regarding event participation, gregariousness, socialization, and family/personal-related motives have been found to be important (Backman, Backman, Uysal, & Sunshine, 1995; McDonnell, Allen, & O'Toole, 1999). More recently, Yuan, Cai, Morrison, and Linton (2005) found that attendees to a wine festival

were motivated by a variety of factors while Nicholson and Pearce (2001) found similar results among four types of festivals in New Zealand. Both studies confirmed that motivations behind event participation are associated with the attraction theme.

Factor and cluster methods for segmenting travelers and recreationists have been heavily used in recent years (Kim, Sun, Jogaratnam, & Oh, 2007) using both activity-based and motivation-based approaches. This evidently responds to the benefits of these methods, especially when used together, for data reduction and classification purposes (Bailey, 1994). In the case of motivation-based segmentation of event attendees, factor analysis enables the reduction of various attendance motivations into fewer dimensions based on their internal patterns of correlations, while cluster analysis allows to develop a taxonomy of the event attendees (i.e., segments) based on the motivation dimensions obtained. Formica and Uysal (1998) combined factor and cluster analysis to segment attendees to the Spoleto festival, a cultural-historical event in Italy. Using 23 motives, this study identified six motivation factors among attendees, namely socialization and entertainment, event attraction and excitement, group togetherness, cultural-historical, family togetherness, and site novelty. Subsequent cluster analysis on the resulting factors showed two types of attendees, "enthusiasts" and "moderates," which were significantly different in their demographic composition. Similar methods were used by Lee, Lee, and Wicks (2004), who obtained four types of attendees (culture and family seekers, multipurpose seekers, escape seekers, and event seekers) based on five motivational dimensions from attendees to a South Korean cultural event.

Although the importance of consumer shows for the recreational industry and the critical role of show attendees in show performance assessment, there is a dearth of studies approaching recreational show attendees. Recognizing that attendees to events are heterogeneous in nature because they have different participation motives, this study utilized a factor and K-means cluster analysis to segment attendees of four different RV and camping shows based on their attendance motivations. Then, recognizing that consumer show participants are at different stages in the product purchase cycle, this study profiles the segments identified based on their camping, show, and purchase behaviors. The identification and profiling of market segments of recreational consumer shows will allow identifying the role that

these shows have in developing and retaining customers. This is evidently important for companies with strong marketing functions because they participate in trade shows for not only completing sales, but also for brand building, networking with partners and competitors, product testing, and customer servicing (Miller, 2000). Profiling customers of recreational consumer shows is also important to organizers and exhibitors to effectively target their event market (Lee et al., 2004).

Research Methods

Study Sample

The sample for this study was drawn among attendees of four 2005 RV and camping shows sponsored by the Michigan Association of Recreation Vehicles and Campgrounds (MARVAC). Shows took place in Michigan (USA), in four different cities: Detroit, Flint, Traverse City (for the Northwestern Michigan Show), and Port Huron. A banner asking for participants to provide their name and e-mail address for a future survey was displayed next to the entrance venue of each of the four shows. A drop-box and forms were placed beneath the banner without further assistance. As an incentive to provide their e-mails, participants were offered a chance to win US\$300 cash. A total of 630 e-mail addresses were gathered. Of these, 51 e-mail addresses were invalid, including illegible and nonexistent emails, leaving 579 useable e-mails. The Detroit show provided the larger number of valid e-mail addresses (236), followed by Flint (135), Port Huron (114), and the Northwestern Michigan (94).

Research Instrument

The survey instrument comprised 25 questions grouped in three sections: RV and camping show participation, camping behavior, and demographics. Specifically, the survey collected information on eight topics.

1. History of RV and camping show participation, inquiring about the first year the participant attended any RV and camping show and the particular show attended in 2005, and whether they were planning to attend another show in 2005.
2. The motivational topic included assessing the importance of seventeen reasons for attending the show using a 5-point Likert type scale. Reasons

included in the survey are the result of several previous studies that the authors conducted in different consumer shows in the recreational boating and recreational vehicles industries (unpublished).

3. Visit behavior assessed in this study included questions regarding party composition in terms of number of individuals and relationship of the persons who accompanied the respondent to the show. This topic also included travel information such as the distance traveled to attend the RV and camping show and the dates of attendance using fixed response categories.
4. Show behavior, inquiring specifically about the exhibits visited and the types of products (e.g., RVs, accessories) purchased.
5. Respondents' intentions to purchase an RV or other camping equipment in the future, including the types, price range, and time frame of the purchase intentions and whether the product is likely to be purchased from a show exhibitor.
6. Whether the respondents own camping equipment (tents or RVs), the types, model, and year of the equipment owned, and whether this equipment was used in 2004.
7. The camping behavior of respondents in the previous 12 months, including the location and the season when camped. It was also investigated whether the respondents rented campsites on seasonal (e.g., summer rentals) or annual bases or whether they owned a timeshare in a private campground.
8. Demographic and household characteristics of respondents including state of residence, age, gender, level of education, employment condition, and annual household income.

Based on the literature reviewed and several previous studies conducted regarding boat shows by the authors (unpublished), a draft survey was developed and distributed for review to the show sponsors and other persons involved in the recreational vehicles industry. Based on the reviews received, the survey content was modified and then pre-tested for readability and content validity.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected using a Web-based survey, designed using HyperText Markup Language (HTML) and Active Server Pages (ASP). E-mails were sent to

the MARVAC show attendees within 3 days of the end of the show they visited inviting them to participate in this study. MARVAC offered a free ticket for one of the 2006 RV and camping shows as an incentive for completing the survey. Four follow-up reminders were sent during the next 3–7 days to nonrespondents. The number of reminders follows the Tailored Design Method recommendation of establishing up to five contacts with survey recipients (Dillman, 2000). The intervals between reminders were determined based on when the percentage of responses tailed off significantly, a protocol designed and followed by the authors in previous studies (unpublished). The final response rate across all four shows in this study was 70.5% ($N=411$), a significantly higher response rate than the range (15–29%) normally observed in Web-based surveys as reported by Comley (2000). Detroit had the higher response rate (74.2%, $n=175$), closely followed by Flint (70.4%, $n=95$) and Port Huron (70.2%, $n=61$). Northwestern Michigan had the lowest response rate, although still very high (67.0%, $n=80$).

Analyses for this study were performed in three stages. In the first stage, profiles were developed based on socioeconomic characteristics and previous RV and camping show attendance history. The second stage consisted of a factor analysis of the 17 potential motivations to attend the consumer shows to identify underlying patterns of correlations. The third stage included a K-means cluster analysis based on the motivation factors identified. Finally, chi-square and ANOVA tests were conducted to identify significant differences between the motivational clusters.

Results and Discussion

Respondents' Sociodemographic Profile and Previous Show Participation History

Survey respondents were separated into four groups, based on which of the four RV and camping shows they had attended. In order, shows (one to four) correspond to Detroit, Flint, Northwest Michigan (Traverse City), and Port Huron. As was expected, these four shows tended to attract a very local market. The majority of participants lived in Michigan and traveled 20 miles or less to attend these shows (97.4% and 51.2%, respectively). The majority of respondents were middle-aged (40–59 years of age represented 63.4% of respondents), while only about a quarter (23.6%) of the survey respondents

were less than 40 years of age. Survey respondents were almost evenly divided between men (50.5%) and women (49.5%). Participants showed a high level of education with a very high percentage of participants having either a college undergraduate degree (31.6%) or graduate (20.4%) degree. Almost three quarters of respondents (73.7%) were employed and 17% were retired at the time they attended the shows. Almost half of respondents (49.8%) were in households with more than \$75,000 of annual incomes, thus suggesting a sample that has a somewhat above average household income. A relatively small percentage (18.8%) had an income of less than \$50,000. In terms of party size (number of persons in group that attended the shows) it was typically composed of two persons (46.3%); groups of three to four members were also quite high with 34.8% respondents being within this group. Table 1 displays the distributions across shows of the various key demographic variables of the respondents.

A majority of show attendees (79.0%) had visited a previous RV and camping show. On average, only 21% of the participants had not previously attended any RV and camping show (Table 2). However, there was a wide variation of first-time visitors across the different shows (17.7–29.5%). Interestingly, of the 79% who had previously attended RV and camping shows, 19.8% reported having attended their first show 3 years ago, and almost half (41.8%) within the last 6 years, suggesting that the shows included in this study are attracting a new market. The majority of respondents (94.9%) attended the show for only 1 day and tended to go to one show only as opposed to visiting multiple shows.

Motivators for Show Attendance

Respondents were asked to rank 17 motivators (reasons) for attending the show on a 5-point Likert-type (1=Not a Reason; 3=Important Reason; 5=Only Reason Why I Attended the RV and Camping Show). Table 3 displays the mean scores and the standard deviation for the importance ratings of the reasons tested. “To view new RV models” had the highest mean score, closely followed by “Just for the fun of it” and “To research RVs for a future purchase.” “To purchase a campsite,” “Financing and insurance,” and “Invited by a dealer” were the motivations with the lowest mean score and standard deviation, indicating a common agreement regarding these motivations as being of the least importance in terms of the decision of whether to attend a show.

Principal Component Factor Analysis with varimax rotation was performed on the importance ratings of the reasons for attending the shows. Three methods were considered to handle missing data: listwise deletion, pairwise deletion, and mean imputation. These methods resulted in the same factors in terms of number and composition, showing small differences in the factor loadings. Listwise deletion method was used because it showed better factor loadings. The varimax-rotated factor matrix resulted in five factors all with eigenvalues over 1 and accounting for 61.9% of the variance. A loading higher than 0.60 was the threshold for including an attendance motivation as part of a factor profile. “To research campgrounds and camping destinations” and “Show contests and giveaways” did not load on any one factor and were subsequently removed from further analysis. The five factors obtained were assigned labels based on the common characteristics of the goals that loaded on each factor. The factors were labeled as follows: (F1) Camping Equipment and RV Accessories Interest; (F2) RV Purchase Driven; (F3) Entertainment and Fun Related; (F4) Complimentary Products and Services Interest; and (F5) Dealer and Show Bonding. Table 4 shows the five factors, the attendance motivators that loaded on each factor, and their corresponding loadings, eigenvalues, and percentage of variance explained by each factor.

Market Segmentation Analysis

A cluster analysis was performed on the summative motivational factor scores to identify specific market segments among show attendees. Hierarchical cluster method was first used to identify the potential number of clusters, showing two to five possible clusters. Thereafter, subsequent K-means clustering was employed to test from two to five clusters combinations. Based on the results of the analyses, the five-cluster combination was selected as the optimal solution.

The first market segment identified (Cluster I) included 28.2% of the show attendees and was labeled “Entertainment Seekers” ($n = 115$). This group is highly loaded in the “Entertainment and Fun Related” factor and is composed by respondents who attend shows for reasons that are more leisure related, such as looking for something fun or different to do. This segment is also somewhat interested in the camping equipment and RV accessories categories. About a fourth of the respondents (22.1%, $n = 90$) compose the second market

Table 1

Permanent Residence, Distance Traveled, Demographic Characteristics, and Party Size of RV and Camping Show Participants

	Show 1 (%) (n=175)	Show 2 (%) (n=95)	Show 3 (%) (n=80)	Show 4 (%) (n=61)	Aggregate (%) (N=411)
State or province of permanent residence					
Michigan, USA	98.3	98.9	100.0	88.5	97.4
Other	1.7	1.1	0.0	11.5	2.6
Distance traveled to show					
10 miles or less	13.7	24.5	17.5	26.2	18.8
11–20 miles	33.1	31.9	32.5	31.1	32.4
21–30 miles	19.4	21.3	10.0	13.1	17.1
31–60 miles	22.3	17.0	23.8	19.7	21.0
61 miles or more	11.5	5.3	16.2	9.9	10.7
Respondents' age					
13–19 years	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
20–29 years	4.7	2.2	5.2	3.4	4.0
30–39 years	17.4	23.9	20.8	15.3	19.3
40–49 years	29.7	37.0	36.3	42.3	34.4
50–59 years	33.7	29.3	26.0	18.6	29.0
60–69 years	13.4	6.5	10.4	15.3	11.5
70+ years	0.5	1.1	1.3	5.1	1.5
Respondents' gender					
Female	48.8	45.6	58.2	45.8	49.5
Male	51.2	54.4	41.8	54.2	50.5
Respondents' employment status					
Employed	70.8	78.3	74.7	73.8	73.7
Self-employed	9.4	5.4	11.4	4.9	8.2
Own my own business	4.7	4.3	7.6	4.9	5.2
Retired	16.4	17.4	16.5	19.7	17.1
Unemployed	5.8	2.2	2.5	1.6	3.7
Respondents' highest level of education					
High school or less	15.9	12.0	19.0	21.3	16.4
Some college	27.6	37.0	35.4	29.5	31.6
College graduate	31.2	31.5	31.6	32.8	31.6
Some graduate studies	3.5	4.3	0.0	3.3	3.0
Graduate or professional	21.8	15.2	14.0	13.1	17.4
Respondents' annual household income					
Less than \$35,000	7.1	5.9	9.9	5.4	7.1
\$35,000–\$49,999	7.8	7.1	22.5	16.1	11.7
\$50,000–\$74,999	27.9	34.1	32.4	35.7	31.4
\$75,000–\$99,999	35.1	31.8	26.8	17.9	30.1
\$100,000 or more	22.1	21.2	8.4	25.0	19.7
Party size					
1 person	9.9	1.2	5.8	10.7	7.2
2 persons	41.1	56.0	47.8	44.6	46.3
3–4 persons	35.1	34.5	36.2	32.2	34.8
5 or more persons	13.9	8.3	10.2	12.5	11.7

segment (Cluster II) and was labeled the “Accessories Seekers.” This segment clearly attends shows either to see or purchase camping equipment and RV accessories as demonstrated by a high positive cluster center in the “Camping Equipment and RV Accessories Interest” factor. The third market segment identified (Cluster III) included 21.8% of the show attendees and was labeled

“RV Buyers” ($n=89$) because their predominant motivator was “RV Purchase Driven” factor. Clearly, members of this segment primarily attend shows related to their immediate or future purchase of a recreational vehicle, such as to compare prices or to see new models. The fourth segment identified, labeled “Service Seekers,” are composed of almost a fifth of the attendees (19.1%,

Table 2
RV and Camping Show Attendance History of Participants

	Show 1 (%) (<i>n</i> =175)	Show 2 (%) (<i>n</i> =95)	Show 3 (%) (<i>n</i> =80)	Show 4 (%) (<i>n</i> =61)	Aggregate (%) (<i>N</i> =411)
Previously attended any RV and camping show					
First timers	17.7	25.8	16.2	29.5	21.0
Repeat attendants	82.3	74.2	83.8	70.5	79.0
Number of years since first show attendance					
3 years or less	16.7 ^a	20.8	23.8	21.4	19.8
4–6 years	23.2	25.4	20.5	14.3	22.0
7–10 years	25.3	22.4	25.3	21.4	24.1
11–20 years	19.6	23.9	16.0	33.3	21.7
21 years or more	15.2	7.5	14.4	9.6	12.4
Number of attendance days					
1 day	92.6	94.6	97.4	98.4	94.9
More than 1 day	7.4	5.4	2.6	1.6	5.1

n=78), who are mainly motivated to look for complimentary services such as financing, insurance, and the purchase of campsites. The last and smallest cluster in size (8.8%, *n*=36) was labeled the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” because their members consider important a number of RV industry-related motivations. They not only assign a high value to the “Dealer and Show Bonding” factor but also consider important the purchase and research of RVs and accessories, camping equipment, and complimentary products. Consistently, the “Entertainment and Fun Related” factor has a relatively low importance for members of this cluster. Although staff of show exhibitors and organizers were filtered in this study, it is possible that this cluster includes people involved in the RV industry. The survey did not gather information regarding any affiliation or involvement of respondents with the RV industry, which is a limitation of this study.

A Factor Mean Index (FMI) was developed for each segment based on the mean of the original variables that each factor comprises. The FMI resulted in a 5-point continuum with 1 being the lower end (Not a Reason) and 5 the higher end (Only Reason). Table 5 displays the factor mean scores across all segments. ANOVA tests were performed to test for significant differences for the factor mean scores across the identified segments. All resulting tests were found to be significant ($p < 0.001$). Subsequent Tukey-B Post Hoc tests among segments confirmed the cluster results. The “RV Buyers” (FMI=3.08) are significantly more interested in RV purchases than the “Entertainment Seekers,” “Accessories Seekers,” and the “Service Seekers” segments, although there were no significant differences regarding

this motivation compared to the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” (FMI=2.99). The relations with the RV Dealer and the RV Show is significantly more important for the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” (FMI=3.19) segment than for the other segments. The “Entertainment Seekers” segment is significantly more oriented to entertainment and fun (FMI=3.67) than the other segments. The “Accessories Seekers” are significantly more interested in Camping Equipment and RV accessories (FMI=3.27) than the other segments. The “Service Seekers” market

Table 3
The Importance of Reasons for Show Attendance

Show Attendance Reasons (<i>n</i> =408)	Mean Score ^a	SD
To view new RV models	3.2	1.05
Just for the fun of it	3.1	1.19
To research RVs for a future purchase	3.0	1.19
To compare RV's prices	2.8	1.23
To research campgrounds & camping destinations	2.6	1.24
To see RV accessories	2.4	1.26
Special show prices	2.4	1.29
Just for something different to do	2.3	1.29
I always attend the RV and camping and shows	2.1	1.25
To see camping equipment	2.1	1.20
Show contests and giveaways	1.7	1.00
To purchase RV accessories	1.7	1.09
To purchase a RV	1.6	0.97
To purchase camping equipment	1.6	1.00
To purchase a campsite	1.2	0.54
Financing and insurance	1.2	0.57
Invited by a dealer	1.2	0.71

^aFive-point Likert-type scale: 1=Not a Reason; 3=Important Reason; 5=Only Reason Why Attended the RV and Camping Show.

Table 4
Rotated Factor Matrix of the Reasons for Show Attendance

Show Attendance: Factors and Reasons (n=408)	Factor Loadings	Explained Variance (%)	Eigenvalue
F1: Camping Equipment & RV Accessories Interest		18.02	4.33
To purchase camping equipment	0.821		
To purchase RV accessories	0.819		
To see camping equipment	0.810		
To see RV accessories	0.791		
F2: RV Purchase Driven		15.95	2.40
To compare RVs prices	0.839		
To research RVs for a future purchase	0.771		
To view new RV models	0.690		
To purchase a RV	0.622		
Special show prices	0.605		
F3: Entertainment and Fun Related		10.80	1.50
Just for something different to do	0.818		
Just for the fun of it	0.761		
F4: Complimentary Products & Services Interest		9.97	1.20
Financing and insurance	0.691		
To purchase a campsite	0.651		
F5: Dealer and Show Bonding		7.16	1.10
Invited by a dealer	0.737		
I always attend the RV and Camping Show	0.683		

segment is significantly less interested in RV purchases (FMI= 1.69) than the other four segments.

Demographic characteristics were examined to test for differences across the identified market segments. There are no significant differences across the five segments in terms of age, gender, and level of education or household gross income. Differences regarding camping behavior (or product usage) were also examined (Table 6). As it would be expected, the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” and the “Accessories Seekers” were found to be more active campers, having camped more in the last 12 months than the other segments. Interestingly, the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” rented more campsites on a seasonal or annual basis in 2004 than the other market segments. The current ownership of a recreational vehicle, the number of days camped in the last 12 months, and whether the participant owns a timeshare, condominium, or a membership in a campground were not significantly different across all five identified segments.

Differences in past show attendance behavior was also assessed. As might be expected, the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” attended significantly more RV and camping shows in the past than the other market segments (0.05 significance level). Interestingly, though, there are no differences across segments regarding when they attended any RV and camping show for the first time or

regarding the number of days they attended the particular RV and camping show they were surveyed.

There are significant differences across market segments related to show and purchase behaviors (Table 7). The types of exhibits visited and the products and services purchased at the shows were used as descriptors of the participants’ show behavior. Respondents were asked about whether they visited any exhibits displaying recreational vehicles, campgrounds, RV accessories, camping gear, financing services, insurance services, towing accessories, and towing vehicles. These categories were selected based on consultation with show organizers and included all show exhibits/exhibitors. Two-way chi-square tests show that the “RV Buyers” visited less campgrounds and camping gear booths than the other segments. As expected, “RV Industry Enthusiasts” visited a broader range (in terms of number and variety) of exhibits compared to the other segments. They visited significantly more booths of towing vehicles and accessories, insurance, and camping accessories than the other segments. The “Accessories Seekers” visited more booths related to RV accessories, although not significantly more than the “RV Industry Enthusiasts.”

The purchase behavior of the different show market segments, including the types of products and services they bought from the exhibits they visited, was also

Table 5
Factor Mean Scores Across Segments

Factors	Entertainment Seekers (n=115)	Accessories Seekers (n=90)	RV Buyers (n=89)	Service Seekers (n=78)	RV Industry Enthusiasts (n=36)	Sig.
F1: Camping Equipment & RV Accessories Interest						
Cluster Center	0.515	1.432	-0.452	-0.530	0.355	$F = 168.34, p < 0.000^b$
Factor Mean Index ^a	1.58	3.27 ^a	1.47	1.42	2.52 ^a	
F2: RV Purchase Driven						
Cluster Center	0.149	-0.013	0.753	-1.111	0.129	$F = 47.05, p < 0.000^c$
Factor Mean Index	2.70	2.65	3.08 ^b	1.69 ^a	2.99 ^b	
F3: Entertainment and Fun Related						
Cluster Center	0.982	0.091	-0.818	-0.502	-0.258	$F = 88.68, p < 0.000^d$
Factor Mean Index	3.67 ^a	2.91	1.83	2.03	2.85	
F4: Complimentary Products & Services Interest						
Cluster Center	-0.230	-0.186	-0.320	0.564	0.831	$F = 8.04, p < 0.000^e$
Factor Mean Index	1.10	1.21	1.09	1.28	1.50	
F5: Dealer and Show Bonding						
Cluster Center	-0.128	-0.253	-0.226	-0.365	2.311	$F = 78.45, p < 0.000^f$
Factor Mean Index	1.71	1.66	1.37	1.24	3.19 ^a	

^aThe Factor Mean Index was calculated based on the mean of the original variables that each factor comprises. This index has a 5-point scale, having as anchors 1 (Not a Reason) and 5 (Only Reason Why Attended the RV and Camping Show).

^bTukey Post-Hoc tests between segments (0.05 significance level) showed that the "Accessories Seekers" segment is significantly more interested in Camping Equipment and RV Accessories than the other segments. It also showed that the "RV Industry Enthusiasts" were significantly different from the other segments.

^cTukey Post-Hoc tests between segments (0.05 significance level) showed that "RV Buyers" are significantly more interested in RV purchases than "Entertainment Seekers," "Accessories Seekers," and "Service Seekers" segments. Also, the "Service Seekers" segment is significantly less interested in RV purchases than the other four segments.

^dTukey Post-Hoc (0.05 significance level) showed that "Entertainment Seekers" are significantly more oriented to entertainment and fun than the other segments.

^eTukey Post-Hoc (0.05 significance level) did not show any segment significantly different from the others regarding complimentary products/services, although significant results were found between segments (e.g., "RV Industry Enthusiasts" and "Service Seekers" segments).

^fTukey Post-Hoc tests between segments (0.05 significance level) showed that the Relation with Dealer/Show is significantly more important for the "RV Industry Enthusiasts" than for the other segments.

Table 6
Significant Differences in the Camping Behavior and in Show Attendance History Across Market Segments

Variables	Entertainment Seekers (n=115)	Accessories Seekers (n=90)	Service RV Buyers (n=89)	RV Industry Seekers (n=78)	Enthusiasts (n=36)	Sig.
Camped in the last 12 months						
Participants who camped in the last 12 months	87.7%	96.6%	90.9%	87.0%	100.0%	$\chi^2 = 10.3, p = 0.036^a$
Participants who didn't camp in the last 12 months	12.3%	3.4%	9.1%	13.0%	0.0%	
Seasonal/Annual Rental of Campsite in 2004						
Participants who rented a campsite seasonally/annually	7.8%	8.0%	10.2%	6.7%	25.0%	$\chi^2 = 11.2, p = 0.024^b$
Participants who did not rent a campsite seasonally/annually	92.2%	92.0%	89.8%	93.3%	75.0%	
Previously Attended Any RV and Camping Show						
First timers	22.6%	18.0%	24.7%	26.9%	2.9%	$\chi^2 = 9.9, p = 0.042^c$
Repeat attendants	77.4%	82.0%	75.3%	73.1%	97.1%	

^aThe "RV Industry Enthusiasts" the "Accessories Seekers" camped more than the other segments (0.05 significance level).

^bThe "RV Industry Enthusiasts" rented more campsites on seasonal or annual basis in 2004 than the other market segments (0.05 significance level).

^cLess "RV Industry Enthusiasts" were first timers compared to the other segments (0.05 significance level).

Table 7
Significant Differences in Show Behavior Across Market Segments

Variables	Entertainment Seekers (n=115)	Accessories Seekers (n=90)	RV Buyers (n=89)	Service Seekers (n=78)	RV Industry Enthusiasts (n=36)	Sig.
Exhibits Visited (n=407)						
Campgrounds	78.1%	88.9%	62.9%	79.5%	91.7%	$\chi^2 = 22.4, p < 0.000^a$
RV accessories	57.9%	93.3%	48.3%	66.7%	88.9%	$\chi^2 = 55.1, p < 0.000^b$
Camping accessories	56.1%	78.9%	41.6%	62.8%	83.3%	$\chi^2 = 35.2, p < 0.000^c$
Insurance	38.6%	37.8%	33.7%	46.2%	63.9%	$\chi^2 = 11.3, p = .024^d$
Towing accessories	43.0%	56.7%	39.3%	48.7%	80.6%	$\chi^2 = 21.4, p < 0.000^e$
Towing vehicles	45.6%	45.6%	39.3%	46.2%	72.2%	$\chi^2 = 11.5, p = 0.022^e$
Purchase Behavior at the Show						
Purchased at least one product (n=407)	7.9%	30.0%	11.2%	17.9%	36.1%	$\chi^2 = 27.5, p < 0.000^f$
Purchased a RV (n=405)	3.5%	3.3%	6.7%	3.9%	17.1%	$\chi^2 = 11.6, p = 0.021^g$
Purchased RV accessories (n=240) ^h	3.3%	25.0%	3.1%	11.9%	17.2%	$\chi^2 = 17.6, p = 0.001^i$
Purchased camping equipment (n=207) ^j	5.4%	20.0%	0.0%	7.3%	7.4%	$\chi^2 = 11.8, p = 0.019^k$
Future RV Purchase Intentions						
Plan to buy a RV	36.6%	17.8%	55.7%	30.4%	37.9%	$\chi^2 = 23.1, p < 0.000^l$
Do not plan to buy a RV	63.4%	82.2%	44.3%	69.6%	62.1%	
RV and Camping Show Satisfaction						
Satisfied attendees	82.5%	61.8%	77.9%	81.8%	80.6%	$\chi^2 = 16.6, p = 0.006^m$
Nonsatisfied attendees	17.5%	38.2%	22.1%	18.2%	19.4%	

^aPairwise comparisons show that the “RV Buyers” visited less campground booths than the other segments. The “Entertainment Seekers” visited less than the “Accessories Seekers” (0.05 significance level).

^bThe “RV Industry Enthusiasts” and the “Accessories Seekers” segments visited more RV accessories exhibits than the other segments (0.05 significance level).

^cThe “RV Buyers” visited camping accessories booths less than the other segments (0.05 significance level).

^dThe “RV Industry Enthusiasts” visited more insurance exhibits than those in segments I, III, and IV (0.05 significance level).

^eThe “RV Industry Enthusiasts” visited more exhibits of towing accessories and vehicles than the other segments (0.05 significance level).

^fPairwise comparisons show significant differences between the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” and the “RV Buyers,” the “Entertainment Seekers” and the “Service Seekers” segments; the “Accessories Seekers” different from and the “RV Buyers” and the “Entertainment Seekers” segments; and also differences between the “Entertainment Seekers” and the “Service Seekers” segments (0.05 significance level).

^gComparisons between segments show that “RV Industry Enthusiasts” bought more RVs at the show than the “Entertainment Seekers,” “Accessories Seekers,” and “Service Seekers” segments. No significant differences were found between the “RV Buyers” and the “Entertainment Seekers” (0.05 significance level).

^hOnly RV attendees that visited RV accessories booths were included in this analysis.

ⁱChi-squares between segments show that the “Accessories Seekers” bought more RV accessories than the “RV Buyers” and the “Entertainment Seekers.” The later segment in turn bought significantly less accessories than the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” (0.05 significance level).

^jOnly attendees that visited camping equipment booths were included in this analysis.

^kThe “Accessories Seekers” segment bought more camping equipment than the “RV Buyers” and the “Entertainment Seekers” segments (0.05 significance level).

^lTwo-way comparisons indicate that more “RV Buyers” plan to buy RVs than “Entertainment Seekers,” “Accessories Seekers,” and “Service Seekers” segments. In addition, the “Accessories Seekers” are less interested in future RV purchases than the “RV Buyers,” “RV Industry Enthusiasts,” and “Entertainment Seekers” segments (0.05 significance level).

^mPairwise comparisons show that the “Accessories Seekers” members are significantly less satisfied with the show than the other four segments (0.05 significance level).

examined. In general, the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” purchased more products and services (in terms of number of items) at the shows compared to other segments. Conversely, the “Entertainment Seekers” bought significantly less than the “RV Industry Enthusiasts,” the “Accessories Seekers,” and the “Service Seekers.” A more detailed examination of the products and services

purchased reveals significant differences across segments in terms of their purchase of recreational vehicles, RV accessories, and camping gear. Interestingly, the “RV Industry Enthusiasts” bought significantly more RVs than the other segments, although not significantly more than the “RV Buyers.” As expected, the “Accessories Seekers” bought significantly more RV accessories

and camping gear compared to the "RV Buyers" and the "Entertainment Seekers." No significant variations were found in the purchase behavior of campgrounds, financing, insurance, towing vehicles, and towing accessories.

Future intentions to purchase a recreational vehicle vary across segments. The "RV Buyers" segment members are more likely to have future intentions of purchasing a recreational vehicle than the other four segments, although not significantly different than the "RV Industry Enthusiasts." The "Entertainment Seekers" were the least interested in future RV purchases, although not significantly different from the "Service Seekers." The "Accessories Seekers" were significantly less satisfied with the RV and camping shows they attended than the other segments. Further investigation regarding the reasons of dissatisfaction demonstrate that the main complaint (40.0%) of all show attendees who were dissatisfied (19.4%) was associated with the limited number of booths related to camping gear and RV accessories.

Conclusions

The main purpose of this study was to identify different segments of visitors attending RV and camping shows based on the underlying dimensions of their motivations. Based on the results of this study, these shows attract five types of customers with different attendance motivations: "Entertainment Seekers," "Accessories Seekers," "RV Buyers," "Service Seekers," and "RV Industry Enthusiasts." Given the importance of consumer shows in a firm's marketing function (Hansen, 1999), this study also examined differences between these segments, finding that they significantly differ on their purchase cycle stage, product usage, and show behavior.

Recognizing that consumer shows attract customers who are at different stages of their purchase cycle (Wind & Thomas, 1994), this study also examined the role of RV and camping shows on this regard. Results suggest that RV and camping shows attract both current and potential customers and serve simultaneously in terms of retaining and developing marketing segments, which is especially important for industries with long purchase cycles such as a recreational vehicle. It is critical for these industries to develop relationships and maintain communications with potential consumers who may be in the initial stage of a future purchase process, building

the bases for a long-term relationship marketing (Kotler, 2002). Similar to the benefits derived at trade shows (e.g., networking, research, etc.), consumer shows allow consumers and companies to exchange ideas, view, and evaluate the appropriateness and value of new concepts and products, and provide postpurchase marketing opportunities.

This study also found that RV and camping shows attract a diversity of consumers in terms of product usage (i.e., exhibits visited). As expected, shows attract both primary (interested in the primary product category) and secondary markets (interested in product categories associated with primary category). A large percentage of the show attendees (62.1%) were not actively searching for an RV or other camping equipment to purchase, but rather were using the show as a method for obtaining more information in regards to the product category, including opportunities to utilize the equipment as well as the requirements and cost of ownership. Hence, the value of these secondary exhibits, while difficult to determine, should not be underestimated by show exhibitors in terms of attracting different market segments.

Of interest too is that the majority of respondents (>63.9%) did visit a high number of booths and interacted with wide variety of exhibitors, suggesting that organizers and exhibitors alike must ensure that their exhibits are relevant and applicable to a wide range of consumers, even those not interested in the primary theme or product category of the show. These findings are critical to the RV show industry. Due to the nature of current show layout and space allocation practices and the advertising of these shows, some components such as large RVs, will receive greater attention and visitation based on their location within the show space as opposed to smaller, less visible exhibits such as accessories.

Results also suggest that show attendees differ regarding their participation in other shows and in their involvement with the camping industry. Also, many respondents had attended the same show for many years. These findings suggest that exhibitors must continually refresh their show marketing mixes in order to keep customers interested and coming back each year. The variety of displays and programming appeal to consumers at different stages of the product purchase cycle is essential. This is difficult for event planners to control because exhibit space is often limited and sold on a first-come basis.

Results of this study fill a gap in the consumer show theory, providing a better understanding of visitors' motivations in recreational shows assessment. Significant differences between the five customer segments of RV and camping shows found in this study regarding purchase cycle stage, product usage, and show behavior have critical implications for show exhibitors and organizers alike. Recreational product shows appear to simultaneously serve in terms of retaining and developing marketing segments in both primary and secondary products. In this sense, exhibitors need to identify their target markets and be more adept in qualifying current and potential buyers out of the larger mix of show attendees. Likewise, organizers need to recognize the wide spectrum of attendance motivations in their advertising efforts to attract a large number of attendees.

Study Limitations

This study recognizes three limitations, cautioning for further generalization of their findings. Firstly, this study focused exclusively on consumers attending a RV and camping show. It is not clear the degree to which the findings can be generalized to other recreation product shows or other types of consumer product shows. Due to the high cost associated with purchasing an RV, long purchase cycles, and maturity of the market, it is likely that these results will differ from other consumer shows in other recreational industries. It is also not clear whether these results can be generalized to other areas of the country. The four shows were all held in the same US state and each show tended to attract a very local market. However, larger national and regional shows held in destination cities such as Las Vegas or Miami may attract a more diverse market in terms of geographic boundaries. In addition, larger consumer shows may also attract a more diverse market in terms of education, industry experience, and broader preferences as opposed to smaller/regional shows. As consumer shows have become a global phenomenon (Miller, 2000), work is needed on expanding and testing these models across multiple regions and including more diverse markets.

Another study limitation pertains to the lack of data collected on the success of the show from an organizational/exhibitor perspective. Analyzing shows from a demand-side orientation provides an important, but only one, perspective. Future research should include both visitors and exhibitors in order to identify any pat-

terns or correlations between the activities of these two groups. As previous research in this area suggests, both consumers and exhibitors have different perceptions of success—but both are most likely highly correlated with each other.

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