



RESEARCH ARTICLE

EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING AS A MODERATING AFFECT ON EXHIBITOR PERFORMANCE IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM TRADE SHOWS

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ABSTRACT

International tourism trade shows are an essential instrument in the marketing of goods and services. Trade shows establish direct relationships between supply and demand, and provide the opportunity for particular marketing activities. A growing body of academic and practitioner trade shows literature has highlighted the relationship between trade show marketing strategies and the trade shows performance. However, the effect of exhibitor experience in the international trade show marketing strategy and performance relationship has not been addressed in the literature. Thus, this paper fills the gap by examining the moderating role of exhibitor trust, commitment and satisfaction during their trading experience at selected trade shows. The purpose of this study is 1) to identify the concepts of experiential marketing in international tourism trade show; 2) to determine the dimensions of exhibitor trading experience at international tourism trade show; 3) to develop a conceptual framework regarding the relationship between the exhibitors trading experience and trade show performance; 4) to propose a new perspective to see exhibitor's performance in international trade show from an experiential standpoint. A theoretical model of exhibitors experience to trade shows performance was develop drawing on research from the realms of exhibitor behaviour, experiential marketing, government support and trade show performance. Consistent with a positivist methodology, a questionnaire was developed and tested, data collected from 100 respondents and structural equation modelling used to test the theoretical and competing models. This study will provide an initial understanding of the nature of the experiences of exhibitors at international trade shows. In reporting corresponding exhibitor responses, this study will also contribute to research on trade show performance.

INTRODUCTION

Markets and business relationships today have become global. In the meantime, it is noticed that the trade shows and exhibition industry has experienced a rapid growth. Trade shows are considered as a vital communication technique for those companies that operate in international markets. Making them an integral part of the marketing communication strategy in turbulence periods enables companies in: developing customer relationships; offering possibilities for sales and sales promotion; undertaking and maintaining good international business relations; monitoring international competition, as well as, minimizing entry barriers in new markets. Keller (2003) refers to marketing communication as the voice through which companies can start a dialogue with their target markets and other stakeholders. Due to the severe competition in the market during the last years, the importance of marketing communication has grown significantly. Importantly, as Pantano (2011) points out, the emergence of information technology and audience fragmentation have changed radically even the marketing communication environment. Moreover, in the today's market, companies have different ways available to

reach consumers, such as traditional and non-traditional media, but due to the fragmentation of the audience they are moving away from a mass communication toward a direct one. At the same time, marketers are exploring all the advantages of the other elements of the communication mix (Kotler, 2003). According to Gabrielli and Balboni (2010) the integrated marketing communication became important for companies due to the fact that the usage of different sources can confuse consumer's perception. Therefore, having a systematic and integrated message across all communication channels has consequently become a fundamental issue for marketers today. As previously mentioned, trade shows are defined as organized market events, which are held at specific periods and places, where a large number of companies present their offers and consumers' get informed or buy goods (Pantano, 2011). The main advantage of trade shows is that they have the ability to involve the visitors and interact with them in the meantime (Kirchgeorg and Kastner, 2010). Important to mention is the fact that, along with the other instruments, such as events, road shows and showrooms, trade shows too belongs in the two ways communication category. Kirchgeorg and Kastner (2010) point out that this form of communication is mostly focused on sharing experiences with specific target groups, giving to them a personal encounter, letting them experiencing the brand and encourage emotional appeals. In this context, considering the

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nature of the business, the industry where it operates and the target audience, the application of trade shows as a communication technique is aiming at creating a direct and personal interaction between the company and its target group, in order to create unique and lasting memories (Kirchgeorg and Kastner, 2010). Moreover, the companies that decide to use trade show as a communication technique need to plan all the activities that should take place before, during and after the event. In fact, the need to organize all the activities in all these steps is stressed both by academics and by marketing practitioners. Accordingly, Kirchgeorg and Kastner (2010) stated that, in order to have successfully trade shows there is a need to plan all the related activities during preparatory, implementation and follow up phases systematically. Importantly, this process must be integrated in one company's communication mix strategy. Alike with any other marketing activity, Gabrielli and Balboni (2010) state that even the trade show technique must follow specific steps:

- Situation analysis ☐
- Definition of trade show marketing objectives ☐
- Definition of the trade show marketing strategy
- Planning of the trade show marketing mix
- ☐Implementation ☐
- Control and evaluation.

One of the most common mistakes in marketing is that marketing managers consider communication activities as expenses and in economic turbulence times, this part of the marketing is usually cut off. But, according to Keller (2003), marketing communication activities should be considered as an investment. If the message that is transmitted through communication campaigns is well coordinated, in the long run it will add value to the brand. However, even though companies invest in communication campaigns, the difficult parts consist in measuring its effectiveness and understanding which element of the communication plan was the most efficient. From all the activities of the communication campaign, trade shows returns can be evaluated in a number of ways. But on this point, as Outland et al (2010), argues, what is lacking in the academic literature is not related to trade show value, but to the issues surrounding how the value of information gathered is manifested and how this value should be measured. According to Outland et al (2010), trade show value is measured in tangible and intangible benefits. ☐

Background of the Study

Trade shows are an essential instrument in the marketing of goods and services since they provide vendors a very focused platform for communication and exchange with customers of different kind (Kirchgeorg, 2010). Thus, the tradeshow business itself today has become an international multi-billion dollar industry (Hansen 2004), in which trade show organizers earn the biggest share of sales with exhibitors, who are paying fees for exhibition services. In the vast literature, although academics refer to trade shows in different ways, such as exhibitions, fairs, trade fairs, etc., all of them consider this technique as regularly scheduled events, where companies meet their customers and other important parties of their industry. Specifically, Kirchgeorg and Kastner (2010) defines trade shows as events that are held at specific days, where a large number of companies present their new products and sell them to customers and / or potential ones. But, on the other

hand, organizing trade shows is a complex issue and it requires the support of a whole industry, in order for participants to consider it as the perfect place to establish and cultivate future business relationships (Sharma and Patterson, 1999). Academics and marketing practitioners recognize trade shows as a significant marketing tool, which compared to the other elements of the communication mix, can influence considerably one company's ability to compete in the market place and especially in the global business market (Seringhaus and Rosson, 1998). Therefore, the aim of this paper is to study the effectiveness of trade shows as a marketing tool for global market competition. Important to mention is the fact that, along with the other instruments, such as events, road shows and showrooms, trade shows too belongs in the two ways communication category. Kirchgeorg and Kastner (2010) point out that this form of communication is mostly focused on sharing experiences with specific target groups, giving to them a personal encounter, letting them experience the brand and encouraging emotional appeals. In this context, considering the nature of the business, the industry where it operates and the target audience, the application of trade shows as a communication technique is aimed at creating a direct and personal interaction between the company and its target group, in order to create unique and lasting memories (Kirchgeorg and Kastner, 2010). As other services, trade shows come along with intangible elements and a high degree of customer integration as co-producer of perceived service quality at the point of service (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1988). Thus, vendors strive for achieving a high level of customer satisfaction in order to foster desired customer attitude and behavior like e.g. intention to buy, positive word of mouth and purchase or repurchase behavior (Keaveney 1995). Measurement and evaluation of customer expectation, perception and satisfaction, specifically exhibitors' and visitors' satisfaction therefore are key success factors for every trade show and public fair organizer.

Perceived value has been defined as customer perceptions of the estimated utility of a product in terms of what is received versus what is given by the customer (Zeithaml, 1988). Sanchez, Callarisa, Rodriguez, and Moliner, (2006) found that consumer behaviors vary depending on the degree of consumer perceptions related to the value of products and services. Additionally, Ryu, Han, and Kim (2008) found perceived value to be a predictor of customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Thus, measuring exhibitor expectation and perception across their trading experience in international tourism trade shows become an important element in order to increase the trade shows performance. Satisfaction has always been a crucial factor to predict positive future customer behaviors. Satisfied customers tend to have positive behavior intentions, a greater willingness to pay (Tsiotsou, 2006) and higher intentions to return (Severt *et al.*, 2007). When this is applied to the context of tradeshow it can be seen that satisfied exhibitors are more likely to have a high intention to return to a future tradeshow and a high willingness to pay for either a large booth or a better location, due to the reduced risk of uncertainty as to whether their exhibition will be a success or not (Patterson and Spreng, 1997). Exhibitors' experience also has been found to be an influential factor on tradeshow exhibitors' behaviors (Breiter and Milman, 2007). The prior experiences of exhibitors at a specific tradeshow can have an influence on the exhibitors' beliefs and attitudes related to the show as well as the exhibitors' intentions to return to the same show in the future (Kemp and Smith, 1998). Novice exhibitors

may focus on building a company profile in a new market place and creating relationships with customers and competitors, whereas experienced exhibitors may seek opportunities to support business partnerships and maintain their current market position (Motwani, Rice, and Mahmoud, 1992). Additionally, exhibitors' satisfaction with a tradeshow can be influenced by the unique experiences they have at the show, which they cannot obtain from their normal work environment (Severt *et al.*, 2007). When examining tradeshow from the perspective of marketing tools, tradeshow provide exhibitors with cost-effective opportunities for face-to-face communication, as well as product and/or service promotions (Smith, Hama, and Smith, 2003; Kozak, 2005). Literature on trade shows has also not so far adopted an experiential perspective, even if trade shows are one of the few cases of business-to-business experiential marketing cited in the most popular books on experiential marketing (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). Trade show participation represents a significant share of the promotional budget of firms operating in business markets (Shipley and Wong, 1993; CERMES, 2007) and, not surprisingly, scholars have long tried to provide industrial marketers with guidance on cost-effectiveness issues.

In general, the trade shows marketing literature has focused on understanding critical strategic exhibitor success factors to enable more efficient and effective exhibit plans (Gopalakrishna *et al.* 1995; Dekimpe *et al.* 1997; Tanner 2002; Smith *et al.* 2004; Li 2007, 2008; Lee and Kim 2008). Seringhaus and Rosson (2001) examined the impacts of prior international trade shows experience on international trade shows practices and performance of Canadian companies and compared the differences between heavy and light users, in which international trade shows usage (ie number of shows exhibited) was used as a proxy for experience. The differences between heavy and light users on international trade shows selection practices, exhibit planning, management practices, and performance levels advance the idea that experience shapes behavior and, in turn, impacts performance. However, the question of how the international trade shows experience factor affects the behavior-performance relationship remains unanswered. Brush and Artz (1999) argued that contingencies existed among a firm's international trade shows resources, capabilities, and performance, which might make the same resources valuable in some contexts and not in others. Therefore, international trade shows marketing strategies implemented to achieve exhibitor success might differ by the relative degree of international trade shows experience. However, the literature has not yet addressed this issue. This study attempts to close these gaps by presenting empirical research examining the moderating effects of experiential marketing of the exhibiting firm on the ITS and performance relationship. The empirical data will be collected from exhibitors at selected ITS, held in 2017 to 2018. Seringhaus and Rosson (2004) suggested that good marketing and project management skills are required if an international trade show exhibit is to achieve its goals and that these skills can be developed through experience (Carpenter *et al.*, 2001). Thus, this study will develop and empirically test a proposed model whereby exhibitor behavioral and exhibitor performance in international tourism trade shows relationship are moderated by experiential marketing and mediated by government support to address the following: Are exhibitor behavioral effecting the exhibitor performance in international tourism trade shows (ITTS), or is did exhibitor performance in international tourism trade show (ITTS) dependent on the

exhibitor behavioral?.

There is no clear consensus regarding trade show performance measurement in the extant trade show literature (Hansen 2004; Li 2007). Firms pursue different marketing activities at trade shows, and the measurement should reflect this diversity (Kerin and Cron 1987; Hansen 2004; Tafesse and Korneliusen 2011). Many exhibitors consider activities such as image enhancement, competitive information gathering, and improving corporate morale as equal to, if not more important than, selling (Bonoma 1983; Kerin and Cron 1987; Hansen 1999, 2004). However, earlier studies used objective performance indicators such as sales leads (Gopalakrishna and Williams 1992), lead conversion compared with major competitors (Dekimpe *et al.*, 1997), and return on trade show investment (ROTSI) (Smith *et al.*, 1999), which do not account for the performance of other activities. A more subjective approach to measuring exhibitors' performance based on their evaluation of trade shows marketing activities has been argued to be more comprehensive (Li 2007; Li *et al.*, 2011). Exhibitor performance in international tourism trade shows (ITTS) will be measured against exhibitors' perceived performance in experiential marketing activities undertaken at selected trade shows. Effective exhibition at international trade shows requires an effective and proactive strategy. Previous studies have identified salient trade show marketing strategies are critical for enhancing trade show performance (Gopalakrishna and Lilien, 1995; Dekimpe *et al.*, 1997; Seringhaus and Rosson, 2004; Li, 2008). However, (Dekimpe *et al.*, 1997) suggested that trade show strategies such as booth size and booth staff number may or may not enhance performance because different show visitors have different objectives, knowledge, and readiness to buy. Some studies have encouraged future research to examine the moderating conditions under which trade show marketing strategies affect performance (Li, 2007) because exhibiting companies obtain both valuable information and experience that may be used to improve performance at subsequent trade shows (Seringhaus and Rosson, 2001).

While the challenges in assessing economic returns from trade show investments have been noted (e.g., Barker, 2005; Gopalakrishna *et al.*, 1995), the eventual "success" of a show resides largely in its ability to meet the objectives of three primary constituents: the attendees; the exhibitors; and the trade show organizers. Across a range of industries, nearly 40 percent of first-time exhibitors do not return to the same trade show the following year and the typical exhibit reaches less than 60 percent of its prospects. Several trade shows debut every year, but the number that were cancelled or postponed rose from 98 in 1995 to 221 in 2003 (Center for Exhibition Industry Research, 2008). Industry experts agree that a key reason for show failure is the inability to provide a setting that enables attendees to fulfill their objectives. They suggest that objectives vary widely across attendees and therefore, understanding how they engage in the trade show experience is a critical element of success. Knowing the importance of international tourism trade show (ITTS) as a part of marketing tool, this study intends to explore the trade show performance by focusing on exhibitor behavior dimension. Trade shows in most cases involved considerable marketing investment by participating organizations. Costs included space rental, design and creation of stands plus displays, communication, networking, travel, accommodation, and promotion literature and give away to attendees. Given the increasingly competitive environment in which most organizations were operating in

and the budgetary constraints they found themselves, the need to ensure that organizational objectives were met became critical. Organizations were constantly looking for the lowest cost effective methods to promote their products and services. The effectiveness of trade shows, as a promotion platform to meet the firm's objectives was not known. From the dynamic capability perspective (Teece *et al.*, 1997), experience is considered to be a firm-specific asset that is difficult to transfer or replicate among companies because the assets may contain tacit knowledge and contribute to competitive success. Great international trade show experience, therefore, might constitute a distinctive capacity influencing a firm's international trade show strategies and performance (Reed and DeFillippi 1990; Day 1994; Barkema *et al.*, 1996).

According to Seringhaus and Rosson (2001), when a firm possesses enough international trade show experience, namely the number of previous exhibiting and attending occurrences at international trade show, it then has better tacit production and organizational knowledge about the shows and is more familiar with all international trade show tasks. Seringhaus and Rosson (2001) found that heavy international trade show users allocated more budget on exhibits, staffed more booth personnel, used more visitor attraction techniques, and placed stronger emphasis on analyzing contacts than did light international trade show users.

In terms of performance level, heavy international trade show users made more contacts and qualified leads and generated higher sales from the international trade show than did light international trade show users. This experience translates to improved show selection, better exhibit planning, and superior performance (Seringhaus and Rosson 2001). In recent years, there has been increased interest in building and enhancing customer experience among researchers and practitioners. Companies are shifting their attention and efforts from premium prices or superior quality to memorable experiences. Also, the value created by memorable or unique customer experiences and emotions exert significant impact on organizational performance in terms of customer satisfaction, retention and loyalty. Experiential marketing is the new approach which views marketing as an experience and treats consumption like a total experiment, by taking cognizance of the rational and emotional aspects of consumption using eclectic methods.

Having concisely discussed the issues, this study therefore aims to examine the moderating role of exhibitor trust, commitment and satisfaction during their trading experience at selected trade shows. To further explicate on the topic interest, the intermediate objectives are follows;

- To identify the concepts of experiential marketing in international tourism trade show;
- To determine the dimensions of exhibitor trading experience at international tourism trade show;
- To develop a conceptual framework regarding the relationship between the exhibitors trading experience and trade show performance;
- To propose a new perspective to see exhibitor's performance in international trade show from an experiential standpoint.

Nasermoadeli (2012); Hansen (2004); Li (2008); Lee and Kim (2008); Ling-ye (2010); Tafesse and Korneliusen (2013); Shi and Smith (2014).

Literature Review

In recent years, due to the effects of globalization and subsequent increases in tourism activities the tourism industry including travel trade shows have experienced significant growth. Travel trade shows and in particular international trade shows (ITS) are a popular medium to promote tourism, travel and hospitality services. Although, some articles examine trade shows in the tourism industry (e.g. Cleverdon, 2001; Fayos-Sola *et al.*, 1994; Makens and Gee, 1987; Telfer, 1999), research investigating the motivations for participating in international trade shows and the effectiveness of the trade shows has been scarce (Seringhaus and Rosson, 2001; Smith *et al.*, 2003). However, in light of the distinctly services nature of international trade shows and their many benefits including contacting customers at a lower costs as opposed to sales calls or advertising (Shipley and Wong, 1993), testing the acceptability and marketability of the products, understanding international competitors and investigating channel of distribution (Bello and Barksdale, 1986; Goodsell, 1996), the lack of research in travel trade shows is surprising. Already almost three decades ago, trade show expenditures were recognized as the second largest item in the business marketing communications budget after advertising, and they accounted for nearly one-fifth of the total budget for U.S. firms and approximately one-fourth of the budget for European firms (Jacobson, 1990). Though the importance of trade shows is apparent, their role in a firm's promotion mix and overall marketing program has been less clear (Kerin and Cron, 1987). Nevertheless, one major thread of research from the last two decades appears to be sales, promotion and service quality (Han and Verma, 2014).

Historically, trade shows have been viewed as an extension of a firm's personal selling effort. Smaller firms or new entrants into an industry have viewed trade shows as an efficient means of reaching a large number of prospective buyers and decision participants (Parasuraman, 1981). Cavanaugh (1976) and Bonoma (1983) point out that trade shows have developed a much broader role. That is, many firms exhibit at trade shows for reasons other than making sales. These are firms that consider sales image enhancement, gathering competitive information, and improving corporate morale as equal to, if not more important than, selling. In these firms, the role of trade shows has expanded beyond selling to include a host of function (Kerin and Cron, 1987). Exhibit marketing has been misunderstood in the past; newer perspectives see its value as a vital part of the IMC process (Pitta *et al.*, 2006). Resistances towards attending a trade show within a company's own organization can result from the lack of understanding the role. This is a result from measuring issues being too vague and talks such as going there as mostly of a matter of image (Williams *et al.*, 1993). Kerin and Cron (1987) employed subjective rating of performance by exhibit managers on several aspects such as corporate image. Thus, trade shows performance for exhibitors can be defined as effectiveness of trade show booth personnel, generation of sales leads, image-building and on-site sales (Bonoma, 1983). According to Gopalakrishna *et al.* (1995), the measurement of return on trade show investments is confounded by a number of factors. First, direct sales effects and attitudinal or cognitive results, such as creating product awareness or interest and building reputation and image. Second, attending a trade show is usually interlinked with other elements of the marketing communications mix, such as direct mail, advertising, personal selling.

Conceptual Framework

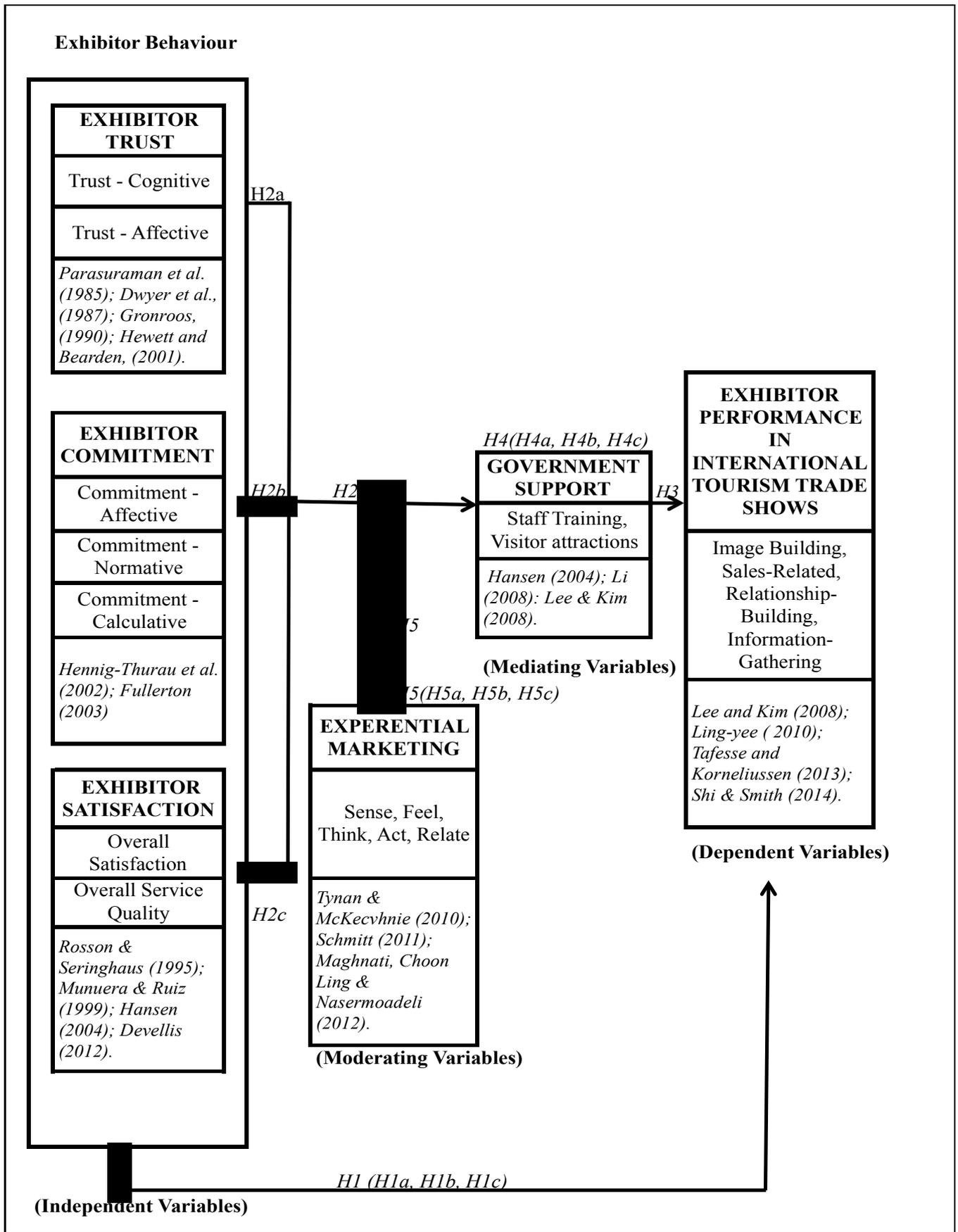


Figure 1. Conceptual framework adapted from Parasuraman et al. (1985); Dwyer et al., (1987); Gronroos, (1990); Hewett and Bearden, (2001); Hennig-Thurau et al. (2002); Fullerton (2003); Rosson & Seringhaus (1995); Munuera & Ruiz (1999); Hansen (2004); Devellis (2012); Tynan & McKeckvnhie (2010); Schmitt (2011); Maghnati, Choon Ling & Nasermoadeli (2012); Hansen (2004); Li (2008); Lee & Kim (2008); Ling-ye (2010); Tafesse and Korneliussen (2013); Shi & Smith (2014)

Theoretical Framework

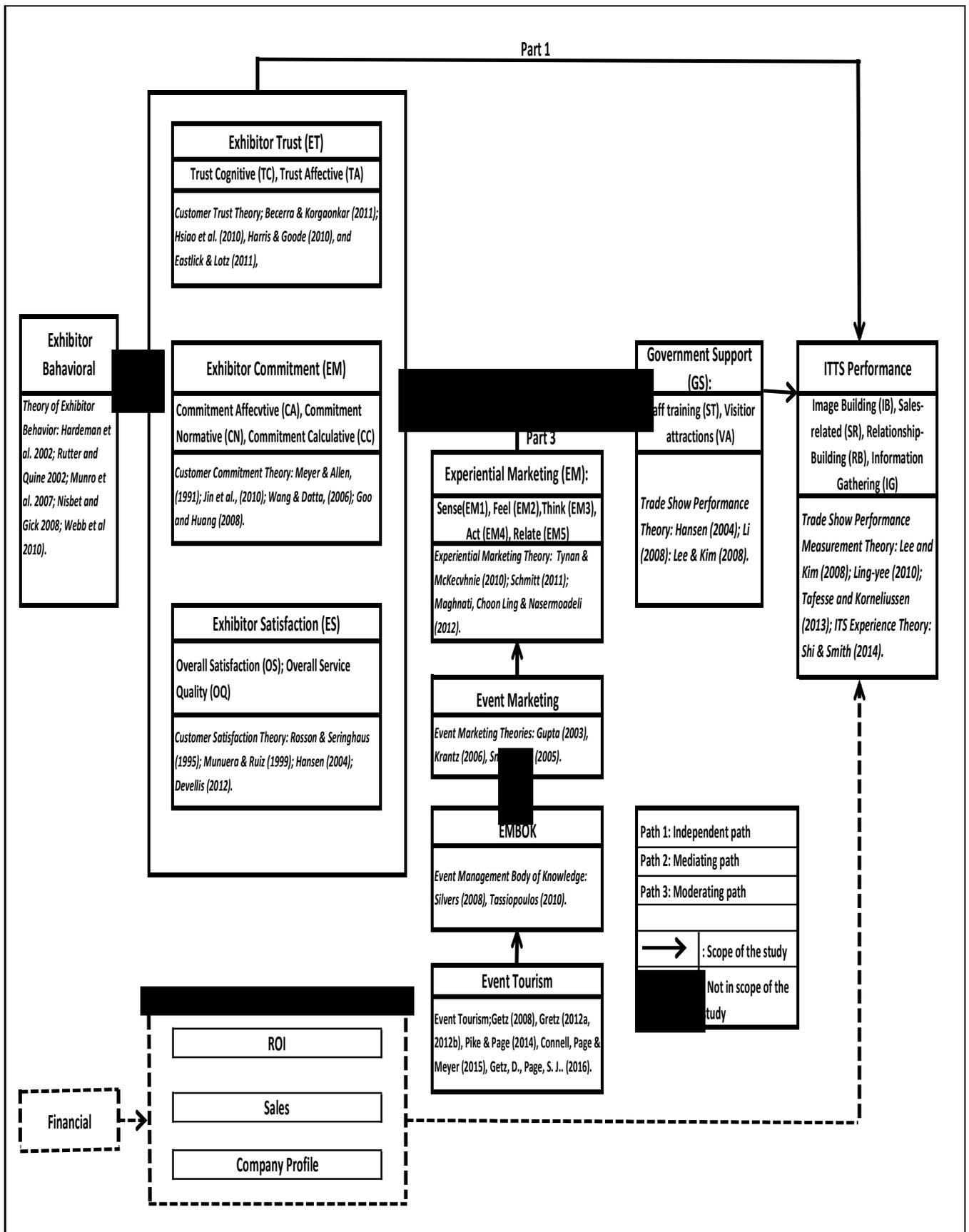


Figure 2. Becerra & Korgaonkar (2011); Hsiao et al. (2010), Harris & Goode (2010), and Eastlick & Lotz (2011); Rosson & Seringhaus (1995); Munuera & Ruiz (1999); Hansen (2004); Devellis (2012); Tynan & McKechnie (2010); Schmitt (2011); Maghnati, Choon Ling & Nasermoadeli (2012); Hansen (2004); Li (2008); Lee & Kim (2008); Ling-ye (2010); Tafesse and Korneliusen (2013); Shi & Smith (2014)

Very often, it might take a prospective customer weeks or even months to move from interest to purchase. This makes it relevant to look at interacting marketing that interfere with measuring the true impact of a trade show (Gopalakrishna *et al.*, 1995). Exhibit marketing is a rich and versatile promotional practice that has spawned new applications and has the power to adapt to changing situations. For example, a relatively new exhibit marketing form has “popped up”. Called a “pop-up store” it refers to a temporary retail establishment that might last a month or two and often used for seasonal products and services (Pitta *et al.*, 2006). The broadened perspective on trade shows indicates that they should be considered part of rather than an appendage to a firm’s total communication program and it is suggested that when other communication tools successfully attract customers, trade shows might emphasize non-selling functions (Bonoma, 1983). It is also important to take into account the effects of social media and mobile technology on trade shows, which are noticeable but still in flux, as many shows increasingly use virtual methods for information exchange and contact development (Han and Verma, 2014). This has spawned another thread of research in the past two decades from descriptive themes towards more prescriptive strategies, including the role of technology, social media, meeting scheduling, sustainability and social responsibility related to the management of trade shows (Han and Verma, 2014). Already in common use, cheaper and more efficient technology, will continue to have a big impact on the way trade shows are organized, structured, and delivered. These include: touch screens, radiofrequency identification (RFID), wireless Internet access, virtual reality, and customized apps.

According to a very comprehensive and recent study (Han and Verma, 2014), trade shows are in flux. Trade shows will be targeted to a smaller audience with a more specific agenda, making them more valuable and focused. Technology will play a more significant role, new marketing opportunities will be experimented with, and environmental sustainability will become a larger consideration. (Han and Verma, 2014). Technology will increasingly be woven into trade shows’ structure through advancements such as touch-screen displays, computer simulations, and solutions for scheduling meetings. It will aid in tracking attendees throughout the show and developing personal contacts by capturing attendees’ attention. Also, the use of mobile apps is making trade shows more interactive. Some trade shows, or parts of them, will become completely virtual, which lets an “attendee” join a meeting in a specific trade show customized to their needs. There will also be trade shows with a combination of physical and virtual components. Some exhibitor fear that technology will take away from the valuable face-to-face interaction and the relationship to follow but others believe it will only aid in developing new ways to take care of customers and facilitate the face-to-face interaction. Attendees can, for instance, be connected with each other, with exhibitors, or with a main stage representative before the show (Han and Verma, 2014). The influence of technology on marketing will grow (Berthon *et al.*, 1999) and may also be affecting other aspects of the trade shows because e-mail, online registration, and e-customer service have become commonplace. It will be possible for exhibitors to capitalize on social media and apps to get clients come to their booth. As marketers use social media, which is an effective use of time and resources for exhibit marketing, the outcome may be benefits that give companies’ additional communication channels to build brand loyalty

beyond traditional methods (Jackson, 2011). Marketers also noticed benefits such as increased booth traffic, increased brand awareness improved relationships with clients, increased event attendance, additional press coverage, and increased sales as a direct result of their social media campaigns (Han and Verma, 2014). Sustainability continues to grow in significance as a megatrend (Russel, 2012), and the trade shows industry has focused on reducing its carbon footprint. Some trade shows already have a Green Aisle, which means there is a floor for exhibitors that want to be identified as green. Based on experience, this approach has been hugely successful, as these aisles have sold out almost immediately. Sustainability can also be seen in decrease in use of paper and brochures. Instead, flash drives and quick response codes are used for collateral. This applies for marketing, public relations, and communication for trade shows, which are constantly evolving. However, traditional communication materials are not only a sustainability issue. It is also the participants who nowadays prefer to receive information via podcasts, e-mail, webinars, testimonials, and social media, which of course also creates the potential for attendees feeling spammed with mass messages. Many companies have ended up using Facebook and Bitworks, which lets you shorten messages with a link at the ends to facilitate for actionable communication on people’s phones or tablets and proven to increase response rates. “It is clear that the basic objective of a trade show remains the same regardless of trends or technology, namely, to facilitate interaction between exhibitors and attendees so that they can have a favorable business outcome.” (Han and Verma, 2014).

The meeting, incentives, convention, and exhibition business (MICE) generally comprises small to medium sized organizations, and is not as formally integrated as many other industries. The sector does, however, maintain a high degree of continuity and consistency in what is a complex and diverse area of business activity through ongoing exchanges among industry organizations and via regular forums. Tradeshow, along with other large group sessions, are part of the meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions (MICE) sector and constitute a major global economic activity. Trade shows, trade fairs or trade exhibitions may vary in their names, but the basic function of all these events is the same. A trade show is an event that brings the manufacturers of products, suppliers, distributors, potential customers, and all those related service providers who manage to set up the exhibition of their products under one roof, in a given period of time and at a specific location or venue. Trade shows performance measurement has been fragmented and haphazard and, as trade shows have come under increased scrutiny by researchers in recent years, more attention is warranted (given the substantial budget allocations companies make to these marketing activities) to redress this shortcoming in analysis methodology. In recent years, academic researchers have focused their conceptual and empirical attention in several areas, including visitor motives and interaction with exhibitors (Hansen, 1996; Manuera and Ruiz, 1999; Rosson and Seringhaus, 1995); exhibitor management and performance (Kijewski *et al.*, 1993; Tanner and Chonko, 1995); effectiveness of trade fair expenditures (Gopalakrishna and Lilien, 1995; Gopalakrishna *et al.*, 1995); and comparative research on trade fairs across industry sectors and nations (Dekimpe *et al.*, 1997; Pfeiffer *et al.*, 1997). A feature of most of these studies is the quest for better conceptual foundations and more valid measures. This paper continues in this vein: it attempts to develop a more realistic, multidimensional analysis model for evaluating exhibitor trade

shows performance and then examines the relationship between exhibitor expectation, perception and experiential marketing values.

Companies participate in trade shows with the expectation of some benefit (Sashi and Perretty, 1992). But what are these benefits? Sales are the ultimate objective of a company's presence at a trade fair and, in some cases, orders are actually written on the trade fair stand. In most industry settings, however, securing qualified leads are the principal objective for the exhibit, to be converted into sales through follow-up activity. In some industries where buying processes are complex and/or purchases involve substantial costs, conversion can take months or even years. Most writers have emphasized the selling aspects of trade fair exhibiting, with one (or a few) performance measure(s) employed. A number of researchers (Bonoma, 1983; Kerin and Cron, 1986) have argued that exhibits also serve non-sales objectives (e.g., testing the market for product acceptance, locating prospective agents or distributors). Such non-sales objectives will usually reflect a company's position in the market(s) reached by the trade fair. Accordingly, market entrants will be more interested in seeking out buyer and distributor prospects, whereas market leaders will focus to a greater extent on monitoring the activities of competitors and solidifying existing relationships. Early writers (Kerin and Cron, 1986) treated non-sales objectives as uni-dimensional. Recently, others have argued that this is unduly restrictive. Shoham (1999), for example, proposes that there are three separate sub-dimensions: gathering information, managing relationships, and psychological activities (morale and image maintenance and enhancement).

Studies on trade shows performance have become more sophisticated over time. Kerin and Cron (1987) grouped companies into high and low performance groups based on selling and non-selling achievements, and then examined the extent to which influences such as industry type, company, and trade show strategy affected performance. Only four of 13 predictors proved to be statistically significant: number of products, number of customers, written trade show objectives, and use of vertical trade shows. Interestingly, these are all trade show strategy factors, pointing to the importance of management actions in producing superior results. Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995) analyzed industrial trade show performance using a three-stage model reflecting the multi-activity nature of exhibiting. Performance indices were computed to gauge company attraction, contact and conversion efficiency. The influence of several factors on performance was modeled: pre-show promotion, booth space, used of attention-getting techniques, competition, and number and training of booth salespeople. Performance was enhanced by different factors for each of the stages examined. Once again, these results reveal the importance of company-controlled activities in trade fair performance. Dekimpe *et al.* (1997) extended this work both conceptually and comparatively. An attraction effectiveness index was employed, computed as the number of attendees from the target audience who visited the booth to talk or obtain literature, divided by the size of the target audience. The key determinants of performance were found to be pre-show promotion spending, size of booth, number of personnel per square foot, and use of vertical (as opposed to horizontal) trade shows. These and other studies demonstrate that trade show research is 'coming of age'. Starting from a base where descriptive and anecdotal writing

prevailed, in recent years research has become more analytical and empirical. Simple views of the role of trade fair exhibits have been replaced by more realistic (multi-dimensional) ideas about the objectives that companies pursue through their participation. This progress has produced a variety of individual measurement approaches assessing trade shows performance and the factors that influence outcomes. It is noted, however, that most studies focus on one or a few performance measures and at a single point in time, thus unduly restricting the evaluation process. Hansen's (2004) work is a notable exception in that he views performance along several dimensions, and examines trade fair exhibiting as a process involving numerous activities. There has been no attempt to develop an integrated analysis methodology.

The process of trade shows exhibiting involves several phases, each comprising numerous activities. The time period involved from the first notion that a company might exhibit at a trade fair to taking the final follow-up action often spans a number of years. Good marketing and project management skills are required if a trade fair exhibit is to achieve its goals. Many activities have to be planned and managed and the literature offers many views as well as some research-based findings about appropriate behaviour. A variety of pre-show activities are regarded as important to the success of an exhibit. Communication support can take different forms, ranging from the incorporation of relevant information in telephone, fax or mail messages, through the use of press releases, to paid advertising in trade magazines. Each of these avenues enables exhibitors to create awareness among clients, partners and prospects about their presence at an upcoming trade fair. As the trade fair approaches, communications activities intensify, with more direct methods employed to attract key visitors to the exhibit (Dekimpe *et al.*, 1997). Astute companies will rely not only on their own resources but also make the most of services made available by the trade fair organizer. On the company side, important prospects might be lured by personal calls from senior management or the provision of free tickets. Companies can also piggyback on the publicity efforts of the fair organizer, for example providing company/product information to be featured in promotional materials of the fair, and distributing stand location maps. Konopacki (1994) describes best practices in this regard. Noble (1994) reveals how one company's new product introduction was enhanced through the attraction of key prospects to its trade fair stand.

Marketing of services has become critical in developed countries as they move away from manufacturing industries to emphasise value-adding industries. Service industries represent 80 per cent of developed economies' gross national product. A historical examination of the key figures shows that in 1929, 55 per cent of the working populations were employed in the service sector in the USA, and services generated about 54 per cent of GDP in 1948. In 2003, services represented 81 per cent of GDP and 81 per cent of employment in the USA. It is envisaged that in the near future, the services industry will be the source of 90-95 per cent of all new jobs in developed countries. Increasingly, this trend is evident in developed countries, where they constitute up to 50 per cent of the GDP (Lovelock *et al.*, 2007; Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). Travel trade shows differ in many ways from other trade shows, particularly from other business trade shows emphasising products (Bello and Barczak, 1990; Herbig *et al.*, 1996, 1997) primarily due to the intangible nature of services (Pizam, 1990; Telfer, 1999; Yuksel and Voala, 2006). Service firms possess exceptional

features (Matthyssens and Koen, 1998; Cooper and Jackson, 1988) that require a different approach to marketing strategy, particularly in the context of the promotion strategy (Yuksel and Mermod, 2004). Services are distinct due to their intangibility (i.e. no physical existence), heterogeneity or non-standardisation (i.e. varying from transaction to transaction which makes them always different), simultaneous consumption (i.e. inseparable from production and consumption), and their perishability (i.e. they are to be consumed during production as they cannot be preserved) (Anderson *et al.*, 1997; Bolton and Alba, 2006; Lovelock *et al.*, 2007; Nijssen *et al.*, 2006; Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). These fundamental service characteristics are argued to affect international travel trade shows in that they are high in experience qualities (Lovelock *et al.*, 2007) both for visitors and for exhibitors.

Consumer evaluation framework explains the differences in the evaluation process of consumers. These different evaluation processes depend on the characteristics (i.e. qualities) of the product or service in question. A search quality is a physical product-specific quality and means that the consumer is fully able to evaluate the product prior to purchase, such as style of furniture (Stigler, 1961). Experience qualities, on the contrary, are mostly associated with services as the consumer can evaluate the quality of the service received only after the purchase and consumption (Nelson, 1970, 1974). A third quality is called credence quality and represents services which cannot be easily evaluated even after the purchase and consumption, such as the role of a lawyer during a lawsuit, the success of a surgery, the value and benefits received from a lecture(r), or auto repair. These examples involve some degree of faith in the service provider (Darby and Karni, 1973). As services are characterised by experience and credence qualities, consumer evaluation process vary in comparison to tangible products that are high on search qualities (Smith and Bush, 2000). Because services are more difficult to evaluate, there will be more risks and uncertainty involved from consumers' perspectives. The more the consumer's perceived risk prior to consumption, the more the consumer's need for further information (Murray, 1991; Guseman, 1981; Murray and Schlacter, 1990; Smith and Bush, 2000) which, will enhance the significance of trade shows as an excellent and vivid venue for first-hand pre-purchase information search and source.

The experience and credence qualities together with the underlying service characteristics signify the importance of tourism trade shows both for visitors and exhibitors. The former operates in a business-to-customer (B2C) context in which customers and consumers visit the organised tourism trade shop and shop around the stands of various exhibitors (travel organisers). The latter represents a B2B market relationship between the customer of the trade show organisation (i.e. the exhibitor, such as a hotel, tour operator, airline, destination management company, incentive house, and so forth) and the trade shows organisations company. The customer in this context buys a stand (booth) from the organiser to display its services to its potential customers (e.g. outbound tour operators) or consumers (end consumers who personally intend to come and visit the foreign country as a tourist). Specifically, the complexity of international tourism trade shows is further highlighted due to the multiple stakeholders, including tourism trade organisers and tourism trade participants (i.e. exhibitors). There are multiple layers of

markets and business relationships involved in the context of trade shows. The first one is the tourism trade organiser's relationship with participant firms as exhibitors (B2B). The organisation's name (reputation), quality, venue, invited visitors list, other exhibitors, and additional quality factors in relation to the exhibition, play an important role in participant firms' attendance as an exhibitor; including exhibition installations, decorations, product displays in the stand, maintenance, and removals. Hence, the exhibitor has to examine both their promotional strategy and the quality of the fair. This will allow for a better understanding of how to allocate sparse promotional budget and the limited budget needs to be distributed wisely among various promotional tools (i.e. choosing the best quality fairs).

The second layer of relationship revolves around participant firms' (exhibitors') relations to other travel organizers (retailers) who are visitors of the fair and buy services in order to resell them to their own customers (B2B). A third level of business relationship of services firms is between the exhibitors. For example, a tour operator as an exhibitor of a stand may visit another exhibitor of another stand in the same fair, say an airline company of a specific destination to book its travel business, or a hotel may make new business deals with a new tour operator or with an airline company to accommodate their stop-over passengers or overnight crew. These examples highlight that a buyer-seller relationship or a marketing function occurs. Another level of relationship may ensue, for example, between investors, construction firms, headhunters and hotel management companies. Finally, the last group of buyers may represent end-consumers who would visit exhibitors' stands to decide on their travel destination for next year (B2C). Specifically, this represents a B2C context where exhibitors may sell some of their services directly to individuals who come and buy these services for their personal consumption. In general, the majority of open days for most travel trade shows are just for professionals (B2B) during the exhibition; however, sometimes the last day targets individual consumers. Not only the experience and credence qualities of the services but also the very nature of services highlight the difficulty in planning for a international tourism trade show. Firstly, as there are no tangible elements to display by the exhibitors, the representatives of the exhibitor travel firms are more qualified than in shows for physical products where the visitor can see and touch the product to be sold. Therefore, hotels, airlines, travel agencies, and tour operators cannot employ a public relations officer or an outsourced workforce to man the stand. The staff manning the travel trade stands has to be very qualified and extremely knowledgeable about the service (i.e. sales managers, directors, general managers and even owners (for smaller firms) and have the authority to book and sell, and possess pricing authority. Hence, excellence in communication, by the stand staff is essential (O'Hara and Herbig, 1993). Second, the heterogeneity of the services further emphasises qualified and experienced staff as the superiority, reliability, consistency and stability of the service communicated should be at a very high level of quality (Yuksel, 2002).

Therefore, international trade show (ITS) exhibitors must ensure consistency in the delivery of quality, image and be able to manage fluctuating demands with full price authority, and design and package (bundling) services as per the retailers request in real time. Thirdly, the simultaneity and inseparability of production and consumption of trade shows

mandates top managers to exhibit ownership and decision making power. For example, the interactions require decentralized decision making and the involvement of the retailer to the terms and conditions of the sale. Lastly, the perishability of services makes it vital for the exhibitors to close sale during tourism trade, as there may be fewer opportunities to travel and make international sales calls. Selling a tourism service immediately is paramount as they cannot be held in inventory and stored to be sold at a later stage. All these features of travel trades highlight the distinctive nature and complexity of services marketing. These unique features of tourism trade shows may impact on the motivations and perceptions of effectiveness of tourism trade shows.

Companies exhibit for a variety of reasons. The market situation facing a company will be a primary determinant of its precise fair objectives, which could vary from "awareness creation" at one extreme to "seek new or repeat sales" at the other. Such objectives will shape much of the planning for the exhibit, especially the selection and training of the people who will staff the operation (Gopalakrishna and Lilien, 1995). Bello's research shows that the best results are achieved when there is a close match between the knowledge and skills of booth staff and visitor characteristics and their information needs (Bello and Barksdale, 1986; Bello, 1989). Other research has found that formally trained staff can significantly increase the conversion of targeted visitors to qualified sales leads (Tanner, 1996). These studies support the importance of pre-show planning activities. With respect to on-show activities, research reveals that product demonstrations and presentations are important factors in booth memorability among visitors (CEIR, 1997). In other words, to create a lasting impression, companies need to do more than providing a static display of their wares. The very success of an exhibit produces difficulties since attractive stands generate considerable traffic and require procedures to ensure that contacts are made and leads are correctly identified. Hoshen (1989) provides advice on how to deal with the different types of visitor a booth might attract. Booth personnel must as efficiently as possible identify those visitors who deserve close attention. At some trade shows, colour coded badges are used to denote different visitor categories. This is a good start but it does not solve the problem for exhibit personnel. Although practitioners such as Siskind (1993) speak about the necessity of employing procedures for making contact, determining interest and exploring buying intentions, it appears that relatively few companies follow this advice. Weisgal (1998), for example, surveyed companies at one exhibition and reports that only 24% used a customized lead form to capture such information. These data suggest that lead qualification practices may not be producing the information required for precise sales follow-up after the show.

In the post-show phase, a critical task is capitalizing on the potential business that has been identified at the fair. In most cases, companies pursue this business through the regular sales and distribution networks. In other cases, trade show staff is responsible for pursuing leads further. Whatever the case, timely follow-up is necessary if the 'hot' trade show lead is not to rapidly 'cool'. One problem in smaller companies is that trade shows may follow one another in close sequence. Without adequate resources, the pressure of events sometimes prevents completion of the follow-up efforts. A larger resource question also deserves mention. US research reveals that booth

size is the prime factor in explaining visitors' memory of specific trade show exhibits and, thus, may be viewed as impacting on performance (CEIR, 1997). But the scale of a booth also influences the overall cost of an exhibit, since many expenses are size-related (e.g., space, booth, salaries, product shipping). Therefore, the commitment of a company's management to a specific size of booth affects not only the sales performance of a given trade fair, but also the costs (Gopalakrishna *et al.*, 1995; Dekimpe *et al.*, 1997). The literature shows a fragmented approach to firm activities and there exists a general lack of recognition that temporally differentiated activities are likely to influence international trade show performance in different ways. Hence, a clear understanding of the process phases and distinct activities is needed, that is when they occur and how they are related to performance.

Research Methods

This part offers an outline pertaining to the technique employed in the interest to respond to the research question and to test the designed hypotheses. In this research, a mixed methodological approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods will be employed in regards to the construct as proposed in the theoretical framework. This research will adopt Johnson and Onwuegbuzie's (2007) definition of mixed methods which considered the most complete: "*Mixed methods research is the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study or set of related studies*". Mixed methods studies allow for the inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and/or analysis to achieve a range of outcomes (Creswell, 2005; Greene *et al.*, 1989). Use of mixed methods as distinct from either qualitative or quantitative methodology is growing in popularity and this approach has been more widely recognised with the publication of a number of texts dealing specifically with mixed methodologies (for example see Creswell, 2003; Greene and Caracelli, 1997; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). As for the qualitative methods, the data collection carried out through semi-structured interviews. Firstly, preliminary interviews conducted to ensure the correct focus of the study and improve the questionnaire. Further on, another interviews conducted to complement the preliminary data. The data collection carried out through semi-structured interviews with selected international trade shows exhibitors. As for the quantitative methods, the questionnaires contain seven sections (A-G). Section A-F includes six sub-sections of the constructs and Part F included questions of exhibitor profile. Only few of the questionnaires items were adopted from previous research and most of the items were design from researcher readings and understanding pertaining to the topic understudy. A pilot study conducted to assure the wording, language, phrasing and content of the item was coherent and straightforward prior to fieldwork. A total of 100 exhibitors selected randomly to complete the questionnaires. After minor amendment of the questionnaire, final fieldwork conducted at selected international tourism trade show. The method of distributing the questionnaire is a simple random sampling; thus exhibitors at the trade shows were choosing, as the respondents will randomly selected. The questionnaire were designed and adapted from various researchers. The data collection will be self-administrated, and the respondents will be assists by the researcher and her assistants in completing the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

i) Normality Assessment

Items	Skewness
TC1	-0.208
TC2	-0.538
TC3	-0.553
TC4	-0.504
TA1	-0.503
TA2	-0.313
TA3	-0.626
TA4	-0.423
CA1	-0.375
CA2	-0.480
CA3	-0.377
CA4	-0.647
CN1	-0.451
CN2	-0.600
CN3	-0.625
CN4	-0.753
CC1	-0.392
CC2	-0.324
CC3	-0.528
CC4	-0.274
OS1	-0.456
OS2	-0.582
OS3	-0.417
OS4	-0.557
OQ1	-0.510
OQ2	-0.675
OQ3	-0.516
EM1	-0.573
EM2	-0.554
EM3	-0.462
EM4	-0.524
EM5	-0.689
ST1	-0.480
ST2	-0.416
ST3	-0.595
ST4	-0.467
VA1	-0.884
VA2	-0.805
VA3	-0.834
IB1	-0.569
IB2	-0.567
IB3	-0.573
IB4	-0.710
SR1	-0.807
SR2	-0.789
SR3	-0.718
RB1	-0.676
RB2	-0.770
RB3	-0.645
RB4	-0.826
IG1	-0.856
IG2	-0.789
IG3	-0.779
IG4	-0.734

The data is normally distributed when the value of skewness is between -1 and 1 (Hair, 1995). From the table above, since all the value of skewness lies between -1 and 1, therefore the data is normal.

ii) Exploratory Factor Analysis

The KMO statistics varies between 0 and 1. Kaiser (1974) suggested that accepting values greater than 0.5 as acceptable. Furthermore, the values between 0.5 and 0.7 are moderate, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good, values between 0.8 and 0.9 are great and above 0.9 are superb (Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999). For the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, it is said to be significant when the p-value is less than 0.05. Table above shows that the result for Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure

of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for each construct. The KMO result for each construct are greater than 0.5 as suggested by Kaiser (1974). The value of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for all construct are significant because the p-value = 0.000 are lower than 0.05.

The Findings

This study aims to develop a structure to describe exhibitor performance in international tourism trade shows (ITTS). Although there is a large volume of research pertaining to trade shows performance, there are few studies that focus on the relation and affect between exhibitor behavior (trust, commitment, satisfaction), experiential marketing, government support and exhibitor performance in international tourism trade show (ITTS). The noteworthy contribution of this study will divide into two perspectives, one from the theoretical, and one more from the practical point of view.

i) Theoretical Significance

A critical review of the literature revealed various frameworks pertaining to understanding of the concept with which the present study is concerned. Among the past theories relevant to the context of exhibitor performance was the Trade show Performance Theory (Hansen, 2004; Shi and Smith, 2014), Expectation Disconfirmation Theory (J.Santos and J. Boote, 2003), Customer Perception Theory (Ziethmal et.al.,2009), Customer Satisfaction Theory (Devellis, 2012), Experiential Marketing Theory (Shmitt, 2011) and Trade Shows Performance Measure Theory (Lee and Kim, 2008). This study also referring to Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) to identify the research needed especially in event marketing. These theories will provide a comprehensive perspective for understanding exhibitor performance in international tourism trade show (ITTS). Although prior studies on exhibitor performance have concentrated on several antecedents of performance measure, the literature concerning the antecedents of experiential marketing and government support influence the exhibitor performance in international tourism trade show is scarce. Thus, these antecedents will be thoroughly addressed in this study. Theoretically, the result of this study expected to contribute to the existing literature that might be useful as a source of reference to academicians and researchers. It would also be of value as a basis for further research in the area of trade shows and exhibitions in the country. This study will also create a new knowledge through research is a significant link between academia and industry, providing students with learning opportunities and industry practitioners with data that can serve as a foundation for good decision-making, event development, and strategies for continuous improvement. In addition, this study will provide a wider outlook concerning the importance of exhibitor trust, commitment and satisfaction within the existing body of knowledge, not only providing added understanding but also showing itself to be useful for further studies in trade show performance. By the same token, the findings of this study will engender superior understanding of exhibitor behavior in trade show performance contexts.

ii) Practical Significance

In relation to the practical contribution of the present study it is expected to increase the knowledge and information of the

KMO and Bartlett's Test for each Construct

Constructs		Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity
Exhibitor Trust	Cognitive	0.790	0.000
	Affective	0.883	0.000
Exhibitor Commitment	Affective	0.823	0.000
	Normative	0.872	0.000
Exhibitor Satisfaction	Calculative	0.787	0.000
	Overall Satisfaction	0.831	0.000
Experimental Marketing	Overall Service Quality	0.686	0.000
	Sense, Feel, Think, Act, Relate	0.853	0.000
Government Support	Staff Training	0.805	0.000
	Visitor Attractions	0.782	0.000
International Trade Shows Performance	Image-Building Performance	0.876	0.000
	Sales-Related Performance	0.755	0.000
	Relationship-Building Performance	0.831	0.000
	Information-Gathering Performance	0.873	0.000

Total Variation Explain by Each Construct

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading	Total Variation Explained (%)	
Exhibitor Trust	TC1	0.715	78.164	
	TC2	0.920		
	TC3	0.927		
	TC4	0.953		
	Exhibitor Commitment	TA1	0.841	86.649
		TA2	0.958	
		TA3	0.955	
		TA4	0.963	
Exhibitor Satisfaction	CA1	0.924	88.005	
	CA2	0.941		
	CA3	0.948		
	CA4	0.940		
	Exhibitor Commitment	CN1	0.966	90.608
		CN2	0.947	
		CN3	0.938	
		CN4	0.957	
Exhibitor Satisfaction	CC1	0.948	88.725	
	CC2	0.952		
	CC3	0.951		
	CC4	0.915		
	Exhibitor Trust	OS1	0.953	82.578
		OS2	0.819	
		OS3	0.915	
		OS4	0.942	
Exhibitor Commitment	OQ1	0.937	80.047	
	OQ2	0.839		
	OQ3	0.905		
	OQ4	0.905		
Experimental Marketing	EM1	0.930	86.292	
	EM2	0.936		
	EM3	0.925		
	EM4	0.909		
	EM5	0.944		
Government Support	ST1	0.931	87.530	
	ST2	0.932		
	ST3	0.949		
	ST4	0.930		
Government Support	VA1	0.963	93.037	
	VA2	0.965		
	VA3	0.966		
	VA4	0.966		
International Trade Shows Performance	IB1	0.968	92.532	
	IB2	0.968		
	IB3	0.956		
	IB4	0.956		
International Trade Shows Performance	SR1	0.935	90.952	
	SR2	0.966		
	SR3	0.959		
	SR4	0.959		
International Trade Shows Performance	RB1	0.899	87.912	
	RB2	0.959		
	RB3	0.943		
	RB4	0.947		
International Trade Shows Performance	IG1	0.954	91.937	
	IG2	0.971		
	IG3	0.967		
	IG4	0.942		

Table above shows that the number of items with their factor loading and the total variation explain by each construct. Since that all the value of factor loading for each item are greater than 0.60, therefore there is no item that must be deleted. The value of total variation explain by each construct are greater than 60% as suggested by Hair (1998). All construct are suitable to use in the field study.

Cronbach Alpha

Constructs		Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
	Cognitive	4	0.900
Exhibitor Trust	Affective	4	0.945
Exhibitor Commitment	Affective	4	0.954
	Normative	4	0.965
	Calculative	4	0.958
Exhibitor Satisfaction	Overall Satisfaction	4	0.927
	Overall Service Quality	3	0.872
Experimental Marketing	Sense, Feel, Think, Act, Relate	5	0.960
Government Support	Staff Training	4	0.952
	Visitor Attractions	3	0.963
	Image-Building Performance	4	0.973
	Sales-Related Performance	3	0.950
International Trade Shows Performance	Relationship-Building Performance	4	0.954
	Information-Gathering Performance	4	0.971

Nunnally (1978) suggested that the value of Cronbach Alpha must be greater than 0.70. From the table above, the value of Cronbach Alpha for each constructs are greater than 0.70.

trade show exhibitor and to facilitate them in the decision-making process leading to their participation in international tourism trade shows. The present study will thus confer information to the trade show organizer, who is in particular need of the information pertaining to exhibitor trust, commitment, satisfaction, experiential marketing and government support influences in international tourism trade shows (ITTS). This research may be conducted within the academic realm as well as by associations that serve various industry sectors. Practically, research data from both sources will contribute to the body of knowledge and will serve current and future practitioners, as well as event consumers through improved standards of practice. Practically speaking, the findings of the study will provide several outstanding benefits to the government of Malaysia concerning understanding the exhibitor behavior at international tourism trade shows (ITTS). Other related bodies, which will benefit from the present research, include tourism-related agencies; trade shows organizers, tourism marketers, and tourism-related businesses notably travel agencies. Primarily, however, this study will afford invaluable information and strategies to the concerned bodies in finding suitable marketing tools to promote their product and services especially in the international tourism market. Potential exhibitors, both local and international, that might wish to use the trade shows for promotion of their products and services. Subsequently, in terms of marketing strategies, by understanding exhibitor behavior, it also promises to reduce the cost of promotion and marketing. The findings will assist the organizations to make well-informed decisions about taking a stand at a show. Participants to the shows would be in a position to determine whether the shows were appropriate to ensure that the exhibitions fitted into their overall strategy and assist them to achieve their business objectives. The trade shows could use the results to formulate strategies that would add value to participating organizations and ensure its continued existence. While the government, its agencies and policy makers might use the results for formulating good national policies for the country in the trade industry.

Summary and Conclusion

The underlying motivation for increasing trade show performance is the fact that exhibit managers in participating companies seem to fail at basic promotion goals due to the stress put on them by their organisations, as they are often responsible for multiple areas of exhibit management and have

to coordinate more than one trade show at once (Kerin and Cron, 1986). According to Rosson and Seringhaus (1995), acting on best practices is notably difficult with these preconditions, thus explaining why trade show exhibitors seldom interact with attendees before the trade show. Tanner and Chonko (1984), however, found that exhibitors staff their booths with sales managers who had previous customer contact. Nevertheless, both research groups also discovered that trade shows were seldom organised and conducted with appropriate booth personnel, thus hampering firms' abilities to achieve their selling goals. To change this predicament, exhibitors, and not trade show organisations need to understand and fix these issues, consequently increasing their trade show performance and achieving their selling goals (Lee and Kim, 2008). Another study done by Gopalakrishna and Williams (1992) discovered that firms are able to generate more leads at trade shows if they rely on vertical trade shows, design an attractive booth and hire efficient booth personnel. Various other studies found that firms, which participate in specialized foreign trade shows, fare better at trade shows in general (Greipl and Singer, 1980). Successful firms are also more committed to export business and have fewer communication difficulties due to personnel who are specially trained to close deals with foreign buyers (Bello and Barksdale, 1986a).

These findings can be consolidated into a list of actions that can positively influence trade show performance:

- Exhibitors have to plan and prepare for a trade show (Tanner and Chonko, 1984; Swandby *et al.*, 1989; Rosson and Seringhaus, 1995; Tanner, 1995).
- Exhibitors have to advertise their presence at the event with customers and prospects (Bello, 1992; Rosson and Seringhaus, 1995; Tanner, 1995, Dekimpe *et al.*, 1997).
- Exhibitors have to properly train their booth personnel (Tanner and Chonko, 1984; Gopalakrishna and Lilien, 1995).
- Exhibitors need to choose the right trade show for their needs (Greipl and Singer, 1980; Kerin and Cron, 1987; Gopalakrishna and Williams, 1992).

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