Arts and the Market

Number 1

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Multidisciplinary perspectives on arts consumption and audience behaviour

In our first editorial as co-editors, written for issue 7.1 of last year for Arts and the Market, we presented the revised aims and scope for this interdisciplinary journal. These aims and scope remain grounded in the values and aspirations that were at the core of the journal from the start. We highlighted the desire to continue the inclusive, creative, challenging, and cutting-edge nature of the work that appears in the journal, while expanding attention to research on audiences and consumers, including advancing research that focuses on the arts and related markets from the audience perspective. The tension at the core of Arts and the Market is the work that bridges, embraces, contests, and/or critiques the relationship between the arts and the market, and that also opens up possibilities for scholars and practitioners from around the world working in any number of fields to publish research that expands understanding of the arts and related markets. In that editorial, we also reviewed the high-quality pieces that had appeared in the journal to date broadly categorised under topics such as: visual arts and crafts museums, performing arts – music, theatre, opera; television (with film and cinema to come in future); literature and online content; and finally video – music-videos and videography. We not only encouraged additional submissions in these areas, but also to consider research that responds to the global interest in audience policy and research, the consumer experience, cultural and creative value, cultural tourism, among other issues.

The articles that appear in the 8.1 issue of Arts and the Market contribute to the development of knowledge across several of the requested domains, and in contexts not yet featured in prior issues, such as film and video games. In the 7.1 editorial, we also stated that we planned to foster submissions by authors and from perspectives from under-represented regions of the globe. Issue 8.1 is among the most inclusive to date based on authorship. Authors of the articles are affiliated with institutions located in Turkey, India, France, Belgium, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and USA. This current set of articles reflects the global nature and interests of academics and arts practitioners that find a welcoming community and outlet in Arts and the Market for their work. This is a positive trend that we are very eager to develop in the journal.

The first article in this issue is Zakia Obaidalahe and Nadia Steils’s “Motivation trajectory of attending performing arts: the role of knowledge.” In these times of significant competition for leisure time, complex audience behaviour and wavering organisational loyalty, this study provides some fresh insights into audiences’ motivations for engaging with the performing arts. For example, the study highlights how specific knowledge about a performance, general knowledge about an art form, and cultural capital more broadly provide a powerful stimulus for attendance and for ensuing appreciation and satisfaction. This Franco-Belgian study is based on interview with 20 audience members and three theatre professionals. The authors’ findings highlight the vital role of tailored audience communications in stimulating attendance from different audience segments but also underlines the important role of advocacy, education and mediation in audience development and cultural democratisation. These findings will prove useful not only to scholars of arts marketing and cultural policy studies, but also to practitioners working in marketing and audience development.

The second article in the issue addresses a significantly under-explored area of arts marketing. Anthony S. Rhine and Patrick M. Murnin’s “Day, duration and start time: are the arts providing what their audiences require?” investigates the impact of scheduling on
audience attendance. Many papers have been written about the conundrum that lies at the
very heart of arts marketing: namely, the age-old tension between product-led and
consumer-led marketing. But few studies have thus far explored the impact of this tension in
relation to scheduling. This particular contribution explores whether variations in factors
such as start time, duration of event, and day of presentation might lead to improved
attendance at performing arts events, in the context of the USA. Through a quantitative
study of attendance preferences of performing arts audiences, the authors produce some
interesting and sometimes counter-intuitive findings, particularly relating to the timing and
durational preferences of different age groups. Although these findings raise some implicit
concerns about the creeping instrumentalisation of artistic programming, they complement
Obaidalahe and Stell's piece nicely by offering further positive strategies for driving up
attendance in the performing arts, especially amongst new and diverse audiences.

The third article in the issue also focuses on determinants of success for the performing
arts, but approaches the question from a very different angle. Russell Thomas Warne’s
"I hope I get it": impact of Tony Award nominations and wins on Broadway production
longevity” investigates the relative impact of different Tony Award nominations and wins
on the box office performance of Broadway theatre productions. Warne’s study is the first to
investigate all 22 Tony Award nominations and winners and trace the impact of this on the
longevity of their subsequent Broadway runs and on their ultimate economic success. Given
that apparently only around one in five Broadway musicals actually turn a profit, this kind
of analysis provides a welcome addition to the relatively sparse academic literature on
commercial theatre.

Continuing the theme of audience research but overlapping with cultural tourism and
serious leisure, Markus Wohlfeil’s “Learning from the professionals: film tourists’ authentic
experiences on a film studio tour” presents an autoethnographic account of how film studio
tourists consume and negotiate the (in)authenticity of guided film studio tours. While these
tours are often conceptualised and critiqued as inauthentic, the tours provide consumers
actual backstage access to filmmaking. These audiences also appear to have the
opportunity to join a filmmaking community and to engage with the community of others
that are often similar in terms of experience as amateur or hobby filmmakers. Nevertheless,
contrary to extant scholarship on the concept of authenticity, the author finds that it is not
the tour, but the experienced feeling of belonging is the actual inauthentic or simulacrum as
there is no opportunity for these visitors to remain in the filmmaker community after
leaving the tour through the gift shop. This result may also have implications that are
worthy of further study in other arts contexts and implications for arts practice. As Wohlfeil
suggests, arts audiences may seek opportunities beyond what is currently offered to
seriously engage with art and heritage.

The second film-focused article shifts perspectives from audiences to the cultural
production side, namely, the value of cultural intermediaries and gatekeepers in the movie
industry. Roderik Smits’s “Tournaments of values at the European film market” is a case
study that positions the European Film Market as tournaments of value. The Tournaments
of Value Framework has been utilised in other contexts, but is particularly applicable to the
discussion of value creation in arts markets, such as the global film market. As Smits
suggests, film festivals and film markets offer multiple value creation opportunities.
Allocations of space and physical arrangements, such as on-site and off-site venues for sales
negotiations and deal making to take place, offer differing values for participants.
Film screenings that occur at particular days and times facilitate exposure and the generation
of positive buzz that will ascribe specific values to the sales agents and to the film, and will
ultimately impact how the film will be distributed (and perhaps financed if not complete)
all over the world. The findings of this study add to our understanding of the numerous ways
that value can be created in the market for arts products.
Elif Ülker Demirel, Ayşe Akyol, and Gülhayat Gölbaşı Şimşek’s “Marketing and consumption of art products: the movie industry” examines important aspects of production, marketing, and of consumers and consumption of movies within an integrated model to explain purchase intentions and post-purchase behaviour. Using variables that have been developed in other studies, but have not yet been tested in an integrated framework via structural equation modelling, and including new data from Turkey, the results indicate that aspects of production (such as the cast), marketing (such as distribution channels) and consumer behaviour (such as frequency of attendance at cultural events) all appear to impact purchase intention. The authors suggest several implications of their work, including the importance of considering distribution channels that audiences prefer, as well as considering the preferences of frequent and infrequent attendees to develop strategies and messages that address them. This piece complements the work of the other articles on film appearing in this issue by addressing the entirety of the production-consumption model of the arts.

The final article in this issue deals with video games. Over the past decade, with the growth of gaming, scholars have framed and debated video games as art or an art form. As with serious leisure, arts scholars are now working on topics related to serious gaming – games that have a purpose other than or in addition to entertainment. The current piece, “Game-speed influence and brand attitude: mediating role of thought favourability in in-game advertising” by Devika Vashisht and HFO Surindar Mohan, focuses on in-game advertising. The results of this work add to our understanding of the impact of (brand) advertising in video games on brand attitudes of consumers that play them. The implications of this work may also ask us to reflect upon the commercial nature of arts experiences.

As you read these pieces, we hope that they inform and inspire your ideas and understanding of the multiplicity of subjects and perspectives that are inherent to our continued call to action: to delve into frictions between the arts and their related markets; to work across art forms and fields to create new approaches to understanding and expressing experiences of audiences and consumers; and, to inform and critique the positions and principles of arts marketing and the arts market, broadly constructed and construed across the globe. We cordially invite you to continue responding to this call to action and to boldly pursue and further thought leadership within this multidisciplinary nexus of themes and issues that are located at the heart of Arts and the Market.

Ben Walmsley and Laurie Meamber
Motivation trajectory of attending performing arts: the role of knowledge

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Nadia Steils
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Abstract

Purpose – This study concerns the attendance motivations for cultural services based on the audience’s level of knowledge. The purpose of this paper is to define the role played by general knowledge (e.g. cultural education) and specific knowledge (e.g. communication around a cultural product) in the attendance motivation trajectory of a cultural service.

Design/methodology/approach – The study uses in-depth interviews with 20 visitors to two public theatres, one in Belgium and one in France.

Findings – The results identify a tripartite motivation in the decision to attend a performance, corresponding to four visitor segments defined according to their level of general and specific knowledge.

Originality/value – The recommendations arising from the study are that potential audience members be targeted according to their particular profile and that their cultural tastes be developed by raising their level of general knowledge, an element that goes beyond the suggested motivation trajectory.

Keywords Cultural services, General knowledge, Motivation trajectory, Specific knowledge

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

With the increasing popularity and diversity of cultural services in recent years, it is clear that theatres are facing increasing competition. For instance, in France, according to 2015 statistics from the ministry of culture’s department responsible for gathering statistics (DEPS), the number of cultural institutions in the country has reached 160,000 and the number of cultural associations exceeds 265,000. While cultural activity shows an upward trend, the consumption of live performance has decreased by approximately 3 per cent. The attractiveness of other entertainment and leisure options like videogames, sports, movies and travel has weakened consumers’ motivation to attend cultural institutions such as theatres. The cultural sector represents an interesting field of study from a marketing perspective, since cultural institutions usually prioritise the cultural product over consumers’ expectations. Marketing researchers have even demonstrated that customer-centric approaches are not favoured in the cultural sector (Voss and Voss, 2000). Since consumers’ expectations are given little attention, the offer as well as all communication efforts to attract visitors is based on the intuition of arts and communication managers (Bourgeon-Renault, 2000). It is therefore appropriate that we better understand the nature and the sources of consumers’ motivation to go to the theatre.

The failure of cultural democratisation – that is, political action aimed at helping lower-income and less-educated households to access art and culture (Bouder-Pailler and Urbain, 2015; Donnat, 2012) – has led managers of cultural institutions to rethink their communication strategy and their role in cultural education. Yet despite the political input, the upper classes remain the main customers of cultural institutions. Apart from its informative role, communication is an essential means of motivating people to attend cultural performances (Colbert, 2012; Faber and O’Guinn, 1984). Communication tools such as brochures or websites thus deliver specific knowledge – that is, knowledge concerning a
specific play or a particular theatrical programme. The role of specific knowledge in explaining consumer motivation is worthy of further investigation. Moreover, some researchers have been interested in the study of general drama knowledge in the cultural field — that is, cultural and theatre-related knowledge acquired over time and helping visitors evaluate theatrical works (Colbert and Courchesne, 2012). To date, the simultaneous impact of both types of knowledge (specific and general) on people’s motivation to attend cultural venues, especially theatres, has not been well investigated.

Some researchers have specialized in the study of general factors explaining the motivation to attend the theatre (Brown and Novak-Leonard, 2013; Mackellar, 2013; Walmsley, 2011, 2013), while others (e.g. Bouder-Pailler and Urbain, 2015) have been interested in the type of motivation based on Deci and Ryan’s (1985) typology, which distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. It is worth examining how individuals evolve along the so-called motivation trajectory — in other words, how they transition from one motivational state to another. The present study highlights the evolution of cultural consumers along the motivation trajectory by examining their level of specific and general knowledge.

We first present the theoretical foundations of the role of specific and general knowledge in one’s evolution along the motivation trajectory. We then discuss our qualitative study and its results, before addressing the managerial implications of our findings.

2. Theoretical background
2.1 General and specific knowledge in the field of cultural services

General knowledge has been the subject of several studies in the cultural sector, mainly as an antecedent to the cultural experience (e.g. Ateca-Amestoy, 2008; Legoux and Sears, 2005). Consumers with a large amount of general knowledge have accumulated a stock of cultural capital over time (Bourdieu, 1993). They possess the judgement skills necessary to understand and appreciate cultural objects (Ateca-Amestoy, 2008; Boerner et al., 2011; Colbert and Courchesne, 2012; Ghariani et al., 2015; Holbrook, 1999; Legoux and Sears, 2005). Ateca-Amestoy (2008) shows that education and frequency of theatre attendance influence the intention to visit a cultural institution by increasing the consumer’s cultural capital. The consumption of art is thus seen as the result of taste that is acquired over time (Throsby, 1994).

Specific knowledge has been addressed by adopting different perspectives and definitions. Some authors consider specific knowledge to be all sources of information that are available to consumers who seek external input in order to make decisions (D’Astous and Colbert, 2002). More generally, the sources of information discussed in the literature are word of mouth, television commercials, magazines and newspapers, critical reviews, blogs, previews and premières (Colbert, 2012; Eliashberg and Shugan, 1997; Faber and O’Guinn, 1984; Hausmann and Poellmann, 2016; Warne and Drake-Brooks, 2016). The sources of information that are closest to a direct a priori experience, such as previews and premières, are the most influential, followed by interpersonal sources and mass media (Faber and O’Guinn, 1984).

Some researchers (e.g. D’Astous and Colbert, 2002) have begun to investigate whether there is a potential relationship between specific and general knowledge. These researchers are interested in consumers’ search for specific information based on visitors’ level of general knowledge. While Fiske et al. (1994) do not draw clear conclusions about the relationship between the two types of knowledge, some authors find a positive link, explaining that an increase in general knowledge in one area (e.g. product category) facilitates the development and understanding of specific knowledge and the search for specific information (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987; Hoyer and MacInnis, 2001). Fiske and colleagues add that some of those with a highly developed store of general knowledge
tend to focus mainly or entirely on their own knowledge instead of embarking on a search process.

Table I summarises studies that address specific and/or general knowledge in a cultural context. We can see that the majority of research has concentrated on one type of knowledge, mainly in the film industry. Although Colbert and Courchesne (2012) and D’Astous and Colbert (2002) discuss the role of both types of knowledge (specific and general) in cultural education, they do not investigate the potential influence of both types on consumers’ motivation and behaviour. Yet it is of managerial interest to understand the evolution of the audience’s motivation.

2.2 Self-determination theory

To be motivated means to be moved, impelled or inspired to act (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Indeed, several researchers are interested in understanding the notion of a bipolar dimension to motivation; that is, motivational direction – approach vs avoid – and motivational intensity – low vs high (Gable and Harmon-Jones, 2010). Some authors have taken an effective approach, examining the effects of emotional states, with their varying degrees of motivational intensity, on cognitive scope (narrowing/broadening) (Gable and Harmon-Jones, 2010). Although some cultural marketing researchers have studied the antecedents and obstacles to motivation (Bouder-Pailler and Urbain, 2015; Brown and Novak-Leonard, 2013; Mackellar, 2013; Walmsley, 2011, 2013), the dynamism of motivation over time and its relationship to knowledge remain little explored.

A deeper understanding of the various aspects of motivation is provided by the theory of self-determination, which concerns the motivation behind choices in the absence of external influence (Deci and Ryan, 1985) and the degree to which individuals are self-motivated. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), there are three types of motivation: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation.

Intrinsic motivation is defined as individuals’ willingness to engage in an activity for pleasure and personal satisfaction rather than for rewards or because of external

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific knowledge</th>
<th>General knowledge</th>
<th>Authors making no difference</th>
<th>Authors suggesting a difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faber and O’Guinn (1984): influence on attitudinal and behavioural variables (e.g. decision making) (cinema)</td>
<td>Van Paasschen et al. (2015): influence of expertise on the appreciation and interpretation of art (art)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Colbert and Courchesne (2012): influence of cultural transmission (culture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haussmann and Poellmann (2016): role of eWOM in performing arts (theatre)</td>
<td>Boerner et al. (2011): antecedents of theatre satisfaction (theatre)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warne and Drake-Brooks (2016): influence different sources of information (theatre)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I. Studies on general and specific knowledge in the cultural sector
constraints (Deci and Ryan, 1985). An intrinsically motivated person is one who practises self-determination regarding an activity – for example, a person who goes to the theatre simply for the pleasure of being there and not for external reasons because the play has been declared a success.

Extrinsic motivation is associated with “instrumental” or controlled behaviour (Deci and Ryan, 1985). The practice of the activity is extrinsically motivated when the person is more interested in the consequences than in the activity itself. The motivation of these people is controlled by a specific purpose and by expected outcomes. However, according to the logic of “integrated control” (Deci and Ryan, 1980), the visitor could, by going to the theatre for external reasons (e.g. to see a famous actor), find self-motivational sources that are complementary to the original external source. Such a “changing motivation” provokes the passage from extrinsic to intrinsic.

Finally, amotivation refers to a lack of motivation (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Amotivated individuals are unable to predict or explain the consequences of their behaviour. An amotivated person often has doubts about his/her participation in an activity and may well decide to abandon it. For instance, in the context of this study, an amotivated visitor might attend a cultural performance only because he is invited or because he accompanies another visitor.

According to Deci and Ryan (1985), these different types of motivation can be placed on a continuum according to individuals’ degree of self-determination. Intrinsic motivation represents the highest level of self-determination because this type of motivation reflects a behaviour that is initiated by pleasure. Amotivation represents the least self-determined type of motivation, since it indicates a lack of control. Extrinsic motivation falls between the two extremes. Motivation is thus a dynamic concept that may evolve with time and experiences. According to Deci and Ryan’s (1985) “motivation trajectory”, an individual evolves from a state of amotivation to a state of extrinsic motivation and finally reaches a state of intrinsic motivation.

2.3 Cognitive evaluation theory

The literature on the concepts of knowledge and motivation indicates that both factors may be involved in the decision whether to attend a cultural performance. Therefore, we focus on the link between these two concepts in order to understand the role of general and specific knowledge in consumers’ motivation to attend a performance.

The theory of cognitive evaluation (TCE) developed by Deci (1975) and Deci and Ryan (1980) suggests a potential relationship between the two research fields. The TCE examines individuals’ intrinsic motivation and how it evolves under pressure from the environmental factors that affect the strength of the motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2004).

According to Deci and Ryan (2004), an increase in individuals’ perceived competence improves their intrinsic motivation. This has been empirically proven in several studies (e.g. Arnold, 1985; Barak et al., 1989; Malouf, 1988). The source of this knowledge improvement could be environmental factors such as informational events and communication (Deci and Ryan, 2004). Thus, all forms of information and communication become tools for improving intrinsic motivation and attitudes towards the activity (Mouratidis et al., 2008; Vallerand and Reid, 1988). Moreover, it transpires that information not only promotes the acquisition of knowledge but also improves intrinsic motivation (Malouf, 1988). A posteriori, a high level of knowledge helps to maintain a particular behaviour as opposed to encouraging its abandonment (Arkes, 1978). Thus, the development of intrinsic motivation enables one to sustain an activity over the long term (Reeve et al., 1985).

Given the motivation continuum proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985), we suggest that knowledge helps to transform amotivation into extrinsic or even intrinsic motivation. Evolution along the motivation trajectory based on increased knowledge has undeniable managerial implications, because, even though motivation is personal, the knowledge level
of the audience may be raised by cultural institutions through an effective communication strategy. A more thorough study would be useful not only for supporting these proposals but also for characterizing the motivation trajectory. This would help cultural managers to attract visitors in a sustainable fashion based on their intrinsic motivation.

3. Method: qualitative approach
To better understand the importance of specific and general knowledge in consumers’ motivation regarding cultural services, we used a qualitative approach based on semi-structured interviews in order to remain open to interpretation and capture the richness and complexity of the subject matter (Arnould and Wallendorf, 1994; Mojtahed et al., 2014). Informants were theatregoers attending the Théâtre Royal de Namur in Belgium and La Virgule in France. In total, 20 participants consisted of 9 women and 11 men with a mean age of 41.5 years (cf. Table II). Names of participants have been changed when presenting the emerging findings in this manuscript in order to protect the privacy of participants. The interviews investigated the two main topics of the study, namely knowledge and motivation, using open-ended questions such as the following: Why do you go to the theatre? Why would you consider/not consider yourself a “connoisseur” in the field of live theatre? What would encourage individuals to attend plays more often?

This was a qualitative study featuring a systematic analysis and interpretation of the data in line with previous research and existing theories (Spiggle, 1994). Therefore, we developed a structure to help generate appropriate results in line with the research questions (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988).

Coding was based on a classification procedure according to criteria defined in the literature in order to ensure the usefulness of the results for solving managerial problems (Bitner et al., 1990; Flanagan, 1954). More specifically, we classified verbatim extracts from the transcripts as representing intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation or amotivation and as referring to general or specific knowledge in a 3x2 analysis grid. This method of inductive coding has the advantage of not relying on the establishment of hypotheses and allowing for the formation of emergent patterns that are defined more rigorously than in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Regular visitor?</th>
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<td>Marie</td>
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Table II. Description of the sample of informants
other qualitative approaches (Gremler, 2004; Olson and Thomasson, 1992). While the three motivation types are clearly defined in the literature and helped in the classification of informants’ comments, the two types of knowledge lack proper distinction. Hence, our first step was to define both knowledge types based on informants’ perception of the concepts. We then classified their comments using these definitions. Table III presents the classification scheme and sample interview extracts.

Since specific knowledge is context-dependent, we classified individual verbatim extracts to generate an overview enabling a more sophisticated analysis about the importance attached to specific and general knowledge, and their consequences. Crossing both concepts helped us to better understand their combined effect on consumers’ behaviour. In Table III, the consequences of specific knowledge seem to vary from those of general knowledge. The results support a possible segmentation of the theatrical audience into four categories, depending on their level of specific and general knowledge and their type of motivation.

When the extracts were analysed in more depth, informants appear to move from one motivational state to another depending on the type and amount of knowledge they acquire over time. This observation provides support for the concept of “motivation trajectory”, as illustrated in Table IV and characterised in the following section.

Following this study, we used the verification (expert check) approach to increase the validity and reliability of the results. Verification is defined as a monitoring and confirmation process ensuring the certainty of results (Morse et al., 2002). To this end, we interviewed three experts: a director of a cultural centre in Belgium, a director of a public theatre in Tourcoing and a public relations specialist at a public theatre in France. To add diversity to the expert sample (Yin, 2011), we interviewed professionals, in both countries, with different responsibilities within their institution. Since the topic of the study requires a degree of long-term experience with spectators, we took care to interview individuals holding a position of responsibility within their institution. To avoid any influence of our findings, we did not tell them about the results of this study, but rather asked them about their experience, observations and feelings with regard to their spectators’ motivation, sources of motivation and potential changes in motivation over time. The study subject was discussed and the results confirmed by their statements.

**Table III.**

| Classification of the qualitative data according to motivation and knowledge type |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Intrinsic motivation | Motivation | Amotivation |
| General knowledge | Extrinsic motivation | “I once ended up in the theater only to please my neighbor who kindly offered me a ticket” (Florence, 26) |
| “I have been lucky that my relatives took me to musea and theaters from the early beginning. That’s why I like going there. However, my husband, who did not have this education, prefers seeing comedies. And that’s really education. It is difficult to accustom someone to love and going to the theater” (Régine, 53) |
| Specific knowledge | “It’s really the title that made me come. I don’t want to read the program, I don’t want to spoil my pleasure by reading all the details and everything that is marketing. Just the title, and there it is, I go” (Gérard, 65) |
| “I received that from my parents who made me see many plays from an early age. So as soon as I get the brochure with the program for the year, I usually choose the classics and I look at the actors, stage directors and also what will make the difference” (Gérard, 65) |
| “I know him well enough, this comedian. I know his humor, he’s a comedian, so my expectation was to have fun” (Benoit, 45) |
| “I don’t remember the play I saw. It was a play I saw last year in Namur, and there I got really bored […] The show where I was bored, we had tickets that my partner had won at a game on the Internet I think” (Benoit, 45) |
4. Results

4.1 Segmentation of the theatrical audience by level of knowledge and type of motivation

Based on the qualitative data, we define specific and general knowledge as follows:

1. Specific knowledge refers either to the knowledge about a particular play (e.g., synopsis of the play), the current programming of a theatre or the opinions of others on a particular play. This knowledge is acquired via external media (internet, newspapers, posters), internal media (theatre newsletter, internal communications), or word of mouth (colleagues, friends, family, partner).

2. General knowledge refers to theatrical culture (e.g., knowing how to appreciate and distinguish between a good and a bad performance) and general culture (e.g., topical or other issues allowing for a better understanding of the content of a given performance). This general knowledge is acquired over the long term, either through repeat visits to cultural venues or through education (family or school).

As shown in the grid in Table III, two categories of result emerged: an audience segmentation based on level of specific and general knowledge and type of motivation; and a motivation trajectory illustrating the movement from one segment to another (see Table IV).

Segment 1: low specific knowledge/high general knowledge. I happened to take a ticket without necessarily knowing what I was going to see, to just explore. I have no preferences. I’m not [interested in] the classic theme […] I’m more interested in the discovery of art. (Brigitte, 48)

When you go to the theatre, it’s like a meeting of lovers, there’s the beating heart. And when the programme places too much time between each play, you really feel frustrated." (Gérard, 65)

As illustrated by these extracts, consumers’ intrinsic motivation is found in its most intense state in segment 2. In analysing our qualitative data, we first identify those individuals with low specific and high general knowledge who are accustomed to attending the theatre and have a taste for it. According to the segmentation shown in Table IV, as evidenced in the comment by Brigitte, this category of visitor possesses a wealth of general knowledge but has poorly developed specific knowledge. Generally, these people are familiar with plays as a result of their accumulated experience from attending the theatre frequently. Possessing little specific knowledge, they go to cultural venues for the pleasure of being there.
Their motivation is intrinsic and thus is initiated by the desire to live a cultural experience, sometimes without necessarily knowing anything about the play or consulting the programme in advance.

Segement 2: high specific knowledge/high general knowledge.

[We go] because we are knowledgeable and we appreciate the interpretation of a certain actor or the work. (Marc, 50)

The classics – I love them! This is why I see the same play several times, and sometimes I wonder how it will be interpreted by another director and other actors. (Sophie, 42)

As evidenced by Marc's comment, another group of visitors are those who have both high general knowledge and high specific knowledge. This category includes people who regularly seek information about new plays being released and who also have an innate taste for theatre. Like those in segment 2, they are familiar with plays as a result of their multiple theatrical experiences. The motivation of these cultivated individuals falls between extrinsic and intrinsic, since they seek not only to satisfy an extrinsic motivation but also to have the pleasure of seeing and experiencing a play. The consequences of their intrinsic motivation can be observed in their desire to frequently attend cultural performances.

Segment 3: high specific knowledge/low general knowledge. The third segment is characterised by little or no developed theatre culture. These individuals have acquired specific knowledge regarding a play, which motivates them to visit a cultural venue. This category includes those who are informed about a particular event or about the performance of a particular comedian or actor they admire. In this segment, but not in the others, the motivation is extrinsic (integrated control); the stimulus is external, such as information about an artist and a desire to see him or her perform on stage:

If I go to the theatre, it’s more about seeing one-man shows or a group of comedians […] or people I know […]. I don’t go on my own, like, “ah, well, today I’ll go to the theatre.” No. I need to know the people. (Dominique, 23)

I don’t know the programme well, actually. When I know someone, I say to myself, “ah, he plays in Namur”. (Benoit, 45)

However, this segment also includes those who are attending the theatre for the first time. These visitors state that they are impressed more by the interpretation of the content due to their lack of understanding than by the content of the performance itself. In segment 3 also, an initial experience can arouse curiosity, encouraging the visitor to seek information afterwards. A consumer's initial theatre experience can trigger a desire to discover this environment and to develop an interest in theatrical culture (transition from the amotive to the extrinsic state). The following comment shows how repeat visits can help one to acquire a taste for theatre:

The first time you go – especially for younger people – you’re impressed. You don’t feel very comfortable. Once you’ve been several times, you feel more comfortable and you start feeling the more majestic side of it. (Marc, 50)

Segment 4: low specific knowledge/low general knowledge.

I don’t remember the play I saw. It was a play I saw last year in Namur, and I got really bored […] we had tickets that my partner had won […] on the Internet, I think. (Benoit, 45)

In this extract, Benoit describes a situation of amotivation, which in this case resulted in an unpleasant experience. The fourth and final segment is composed of those with both low general knowledge and low specific knowledge. The data show that this type of person attends cultural performances because, for example, he/she was invited by another person
or because he/she won the tickets. This audience does not have an initial intention to attend a cultural performance. In Deci and Ryan's (1985) categorisation, they are classified as amotivated individuals.

4.2 The motivation trajectory and the need to inform spectators with low general knowledge

From the above data it can be inferred that a change in the motivation trajectory is conceivable depending on the person's level of specific knowledge about the cultural product and his general drama knowledge (see the motivation trajectory in Table IV). This supports the dynamic approach of Deci and Ryan's (1985) motivation continuum based on spectators' general and specific knowledge. Some informants explicitly describe the movement from one segment to another via the acquisition of drama knowledge. The following extract illustrates how intrinsic motivation develops through “habit”, which contributes to the accumulation of general knowledge and a taste for cultural activities, leading to the development of intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan, 1980). This motivation trajectory may well be guided and encouraged by the acquisition of general knowledge:

I think if parents bring their children to the theatre regularly, when these children grow up they will probably keep that habit. I think this is perhaps where we get this image of theatres as successful. (Dominique, 23)

Interestingly, Dominique suggests that education from an early age can instil a “habit” and, more importantly, knowledge or a taste for cultural experiences. Some informants suggest that specific knowledge acquired through media and other means of communication encouraged them to attend a cultural venue. Their motivation is controlled by external factors such as receiving information about the performance of a particular artist:

[My sister and I] often choose which play to attend by reading reviews on the Internet or in the newspaper [...] [sometimes] we go to the theatre only because we’ve been missing it, but that is rare! I like to choose the performance and to take the time to read what it’s about. If not, I’m always afraid I won't understand [...] the play and end up being disappointed! (Claudine, 53)

As discussed above, frequent attendance will result in a taste for a specific type of theatre and consequently the acquisition of general knowledge that enables the transition from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation. It appears to be mainly increased general knowledge that motivates one to attend live theatre:

If I don’t go to the theatre often, it’s simply because [...] it’s mainly a knowledge problem. I'm not at all literary, so I don’t know the play, I don't know the author, I’m not attracted by that topic. I think this is another environment in which I don’t know the rules! (Marc, 50)

In this study, expert reviews helped us to identify the advanced motivation trajectory and the need to inform consumers in segment 3 to contribute to their cultural education. When asked how the audience’s knowledge was involved in their motivation, the expert interviewees spontaneously described the audience’s changing motivation, which can be influenced by their communication efforts:

Our job is to go to very different people and show them what we do, and especially to encourage them to come to the theatre. So afterwards, these people move towards becoming another type of spectator, who come to the theatre on their own and they’ll become really motivated to go to the theatre because, simply, at some point they realise that the theatre makes a positive contribution to their life. So suddenly there’s real motivation. (Anna, audience relations manager for a public theatre in France)

Finally, it is noteworthy that in some specific cases, being unknowledgeable is valued by visitors:

Two days later I had an opportunity to see the same play. The reactions were not the same, people’s laughter was not the same. And depending on the reactions of the audience [...] the communication was
different between the actors and the public [...] What I find amazing in theatre is that there are many things that are improvised [...] You never know how a play will be before it is performed. (Beatrice, 49)

In some cases, lack of knowledge can, paradoxically, become a motivator to attend live performances. This is described as the surprise aspect by Jarrier and Bougeon-Renault (2012) and as improvisation by Magerko and Riedl (2008). In our sample, we mainly find this motivation among intrinsically motivated consumers – that is, segments 1 and 2 – who tend to appreciate uncertain, unpredictable and real-time environments (Magerko and Riedl, 2008).

5. Discussion and academic implication
The results of this study highlight the role of specific vs general knowledge in the development of a motivation trajectory to attend cultural performances. The results also reveal the dynamic aspect of motivation on the motivation continuum developed in Deci and Ryan’s (1985) self-determination theory. Indeed, it appears that communication is the first determinant in the transition from a state of amotivation to a state of extrinsic motivation. When the level of specific knowledge is high, people are encouraged to patronise cultural institutions regardless of their level of general knowledge. This is the case for segments 1 and 3. The increasing number of experiences seems to result in increased general knowledge about theatre culture, its codes and its issues. Thus, a high level of general knowledge appears to play an important role in the transition from a state of extrinsic motivation to a state of intrinsic motivation. Consequently, our results extend Deci and Ryan’s (1985) findings to the cultural field.

In their study, Ghariani and colleagues (2015) stress the importance of knowledge in the field of art without considering the different types of knowledge that can influence the audience’s motivation. Our study, in contrast, highlights the need to combine specific and general knowledge in order to understand people’s motivation to attend the theatre. Furthermore, our study extends the work of Colbert and Courchesne (2012) on understanding the role of the media and cultural education in the acquisition of general and specific cultural knowledge. Finally, our research helps to enrich the work of Walmsley (2011, 2013) and also that of Brown and Novak-Leonard (2013) on the factors explaining the motivation to attend cultural performances.

6. Managerial contributions
This study serves to clarify the concept of access to art as one of the ultimate objectives of the democratisation of culture. Indeed, improving access to culture cannot be limited to using communication to attract audiences. True access involves the establishment of a public education policy, advocacy and mediation, to allow the largest number of people possible to develop a taste for culture and enrich their cultural capital. This goal necessarily requires an appropriation of works, to master aesthetic codes and cultural education.

The findings of this study therefore lead us to recommend efforts to improve the specific knowledge of segment 4, who appear to be oriented towards amotivation. Our findings also indicate that more attention should be paid to segments 3 and 4, whose motivation is weak, with the aim of encouraging them to attend cultural performances. Events that might attract low-knowledge potential visitors to theatrical venues include well-known plays featuring famous actors and popular performances such as one-man shows. Attracting this audience by means of their extrinsic motivation will help them acquire a taste for theatre with its unique and stimulating atmosphere. Continuous communication efforts centred on specific knowledge (e.g. cultural programme) or general knowledge (e.g. information about drama transmitted via newsletters or brochures) will encourage visitors to progress from one motivational state to another. Improved general theatre knowledge, in addition to incentives for returning, will help visitors to evolve beyond the extrinsic motivational path and to reach a state of intrinsic motivation.
Therefore, we recommend retaining audiences by means of content marketing and attractive peripheral services (e.g. updated website, thematic blog posts, newsletters, physical space for social encounters). Managers should also seek to attract younger people by providing cultural education and striving to increase the presence of theatre in schools.

An equally important strategy is to make use of new technologies such as the internet, and social networks in particular. Indeed, with the low costs and minimal effort associated with social media, cultural businesses can reach a larger public by using them for the purpose of communication and outreach. These tools are within the reach of managers wishing to improve the transmission of knowledge and to facilitate strategic decision making, such as by developing incentives adapted to each visitor segment.

7. Limitations and further research

Some limitations of this study are noteworthy. First, as the informants were of different nationalities (Belgian and French) the possibility of cultural bias cannot be excluded. It would be interesting to conduct a study taking this factor into account, in order to anchor observations in a cultural context. One could adopt a multicultural research orientation by extending this study to other cultures using the same methodology. Comparing the results could reinforce the present findings or lead to multiple interpretations of our observations, depending on the cultural background of theatregoers (Yin, 2011). Consequently, a more fine-grained picture could be drawn, deepening our understanding of the relationship between knowledge and motivation.

Similarly, the results of the study are generalisable only to the cultural sector, where both general and specific knowledge come into play. Since our study is limited to the theatre, it would be interesting to extend the research to other sectors, such as the wider performing arts, and also to other services, including tourism, or even to the sports sector.

Finally, the generalizability of our results is limited because of the qualitative approach used. An empirical study using a quantitative approach would help to overcome this limitation. We recommend collecting survey data regarding not only specific and general knowledge, but also the type and level of motivation of theatregoers and other visitors to cultural venues. Based on this data set, a large-scale cluster analysis could be carried out to confirm the results from the four segments identified in our limited sample and also to statistically demonstrate the effect of both types of knowledge on the motivation of spectators. A quantitative approach would also allow for the investigation and control of further relevant variables. There might be conditional effects that did not emerge from our data set but that could determine the conditions under which particular levels of specific and general knowledge might lead to intrinsic motivation – for example, the surprise effect described by Jarrier and Bougeon-Renault (2012).

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Day, duration, and start time: are the arts providing what their audiences require?

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore whether variations in factors such as start time, duration of event, and day of presentation might lead to improved attendance at performing arts events in the USA.

Design/methodology/approach – The research was conducted using a quantitative strategy. The approach consisted of a survey design that explored preference data for respondents. The data were examined to look for emergent themes in both raw data and cross-tabulations. The data collection also included survey questions for conjoint analysis, a form of regression analysis that compares consumer trade-offs for various levels of different attributes.

Findings – The researchers found that while anecdotal evidence regarding performing arts attendance largely holds up, there is room to explore the possibility that modern-day consumers require events of shorter duration, and that the utility of Saturday attendance is so overwhelming that start time preference can be manipulated within the Saturday level of that attribute with minimal effect on overall utility.

Originality/value – The study begins to fill a gap in the literature regarding attendance preference for the performing arts regarding several attributes. The study opens a discussion on how to address declining attendance figures by considering some of the factors that are likely contributing to the decline.

Keywords Arts management, Arts conjoint analysis, Arts marketing, Event duration

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Arts attendance in the USA has been declining since the late 1980s, with many contributing factors to this decline being poorly defined or existing without investigation. Nevertheless, the numbers representing these declines are substantial. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA, 2015a) reported that adult attendance to classical music performances declined from 13 percent in 1982 to 9 percent in a recent study. The same report shows declines in visual arts attendance over the same period of time from 31 to 24 percent. Musical theater attendance declined from 19 to 5 percent. Nonmusical theater attendance declined from 12 to 8 percent. Jazz music attendance declined from 10 to 8 percent (NEA, 2015a). Similarly, the Arts Index Report conducted by Americans for the Arts (2014) found that arts attendance levels decreased from 86.3 million (2003) to 77.3 million (2013) for those attending symphony, opera, theater, and dance, though the overall population during that time increased by almost 84 million. Through the 1990s, the performing arts experienced growth, which was attributed to the success of the dynamic subscription promotion model (Newman, 1977; Kotler and Scheff, 1997). The decrease in subscription sales in combination with the recession of 2008 contributed heavily to declining attendance. These issues and several others, including decreasing motivation, have combined to create less attendance to the arts.

In addition, consumerism in the second decade of the twenty-first century continues to change, and has been responded to by an increase in market segmentation in various industries, including the arts (Barnett and Mahony, 2016). This recent focus on segmentation has served to "inform more sensitive public engagement strategies that are attuned to cultural diversity and able to engage with socially excluded or under-served segments" (Barnett and Mahony, 2016, p. 375). In the present study, we have attempted to segment arts audiences based on preferences for time consumption when attending a performing arts event, in order to inform public engagement strategies.
Purpose
The present study seeks to find if performing arts events can be made more convenient, and perhaps, as a result, better attended, by adjusting the consumption of a user’s time, both when during the day it is consumed as well as the total volume of time expended. Using a conjoint analysis (a form of regression analysis), triangulated against preference questions, we evaluated if performing arts audiences would prefer performing arts events of different start times than those currently programmed, and if those audiences would demonstrate stronger preference toward some particular event duration.

Motivation and convenience as attendance factors
Recent research suggests that consumer motivation creates the environment for attendance at performances (Swanson, et al., 2008; Walmsley, 2011). For example, Swanson et al. (2008) noted that years of attendance, number of performances attended, and the time frame for planning to attend future events were significantly related to attendance. In addition, Swanson reported that significant differences in motivation to attend were linked to gender, age, income, and education. Walmsley (2011) noted that motivation is important for attendance, is determined by certain motivational factors (e.g., spiritual, emotional), and that these factors must be taken into account when trying to increase audience size. These reports suggest that market preference related to convenience factors is part of the puzzle for attendance declines, and is therefore important to investigate.

Other factors, such as alternate entertainment options, ticket pricing, and programming, affect performance attendance. An average theater ticket was approximately $80 in 2010 New York (Famiglietti and Cotte, 2010); while a movie ticket was less than $15 (Cianfarani and Begen, 2014). Research suggests that because the price of tickets has grown far beyond inflation, Americans are less likely to attend the more expensive arts programs as a result of less disposable income for these types of entertainment (Genovese, Vanderhoof & Associates, 2014). It has been suggested that above-inflation increases in ticket prices may indicate a healthy market demand rather than a financial barrier to attendance; however, the performing arts have failed to keep pace with modern productivity (it has outpaced the arts fourfold over the last five decades). That pace will inevitably contribute to sales declines (Wolff, 2003). It has also been suggested that the wider transmission of live arts performances via online and social media may also be leading to declining attendance at live performances for some target market segments who will choose to engage with the performance at a distance either for convenience or cost reasons, and, in particular, may be affecting arts attendances by Millennials (Vaux Halliday and Astafyeva, 2014).

Programming is a further important variable in attendance and many organizations routinely rotate “tried and true” performances, which discourages returning audience members who have already viewed the performance. A survey of participants from three San Francisco performing arts organizations reported that programming appeared to be the most important factor when considering why they purchased subscriptions or single tickets (Scheff, 1999). This lack of program rotation combined with other variables such as changing time consumption patterns combine to contribute toward decreases in attendance.

In a recent survey, the NEA reported that time constraints appeared to be the most important barrier to performance attendance (NEA, 2015b). Nearly 50 percent of the surveyed adults reported they could not find the time to engage in the arts (NEA, 2015b). Scheff (1999) reported similar results 15 years earlier when participants stated their changing lifestyles, with increased competition for leisure time making it difficult to
schedule events in advance, thus affecting ticket buying. One might argue that while the competition for leisure time may be a factor in declining arts attendance, there are numerous examples of commercial concert tours selling out in minutes. This suggests that for the optional art event, the public has no difficulty with the financial commitment and forward planning required, but that argument is based on both commercial trade, and capacity issues that are inequitable when considering the modern performing arts in the USA. Time constraints are important in determining attendance to performing arts performances, and there is a gap in the literature regarding how performance variables such as preference for the day of attendance and event duration affect attendance when people are time-limited. In fact, no literature appears to exist that begins to address the topic directly.

Modern audiences are plagued by inconvenience (Iyengar et al., 2009), and the composition of today’s plugged-in society may be more in line with those who could better appreciate different start times and event duration (Bernstein, 2007; Bassett et al., 2015). Research focused on start time is sparse. Hill et al. (2012) analyzed the variables that affected performance attendance with the goal of suggesting marketing strategies for gaining new audience members. They reported that start times impact performance attendance and suggest that the best marketing strategies evaluated start times in light of the intended population(s) for the individual arts organization. The implication is that randomly determined start times may not suit modern audiences.

Start time as convenience
Even as early as 1906, it seems apparent that the matinee, French for “morning,” was a product developed more likely simply as tradition rather than for practical purpose designed for greatest convenience to the consumer. The New York Times (1906) notes that the daytime performance was necessity before gaslights were introduced in the early 1800s, but the recent matinee only began its rise in popularity in the latter part of the century. Speculation suggests that matinees may have taken rise owing to old puritan ideas that the Sabbath began at sundown on Saturday, leading to Saturday afternoon performances as a replacement for the evening fare. Curtain times (typically around 2 p.m. for a matinee and 8 p.m. for an evening curtain) were likely devised to fit nicely around meal times for both audiences and performers starting in the early 1900s. There is little rationale for the designated curtain times of performances; these random start times have held as tradition without examination, and this raises interesting questions for this study, which is perhaps the first step along the road in querying whether, in a time-shifted, on-demand cultural marketplace, the static presentation of performances has a future.

The literature on the market value of start time to an arts consumer is almost non-existent, though there are some references to the value of start time in research that examines ancillary issues such as subscriber vs non-subscriber (Garbarino and Johnson, 2001) and the economics of the American theater (Bordman and Hischak, 2004). The present research begins to fill this void.

Determining desirable combinations of attributes
Kamakura and Schimmel (2013) examined factors that determine market preference based on single ticket sales volume against capacity as a dependent variable. They created a statistical model (under which marketing managers input their data) to determine which levels of certain factors (when combined in differing ways) could result in greater tickets sales. The Kamakura and Schimmel model suggests some reliability in determining factor levels at which consumers are likely to purchase single orchestra tickets, and the notion that artistic product and the associated value-added bundling can be examined in detail at the factor level to reliably predict (or at least reliably infer) market preference for certain
bundles of attributes. The current research explores the factors of duration of event and start time; conjoint analysis was considered appropriate based on the above data and used for this study. The key distinction between Kamakura and Schimmel (2013) and the current research is that the current research does not attempt to determine potential sales impact through the mediating factor of level preference, but instead explores whether there is a market preference for the performing arts based on the features of start time, duration of event, and preference of attendance day of the week. There appears to be no research to examine market value of day of week preference either as an individual attribute of a performing arts experience, or as part of the overall total utility of performing arts attendance. The present research begins to fill this gap in the literature.

Methods
The study was survey-driven and focused on the opinions of a sampling of citizens in the USA. The sample was drawn from mTurk participants, which yielded non-generalizable results, but provided richness of detail in the observation of responses, as well as serving the analyses. The intent was to examine responses through descriptive statistics, and observations of themes in cross-tabulations, as well as to incorporate a conjoint analysis, a form of regression analysis that weighs trade-offs consumers will make over the utilities of different levels of attributes. There is limited research to focus on consumer preference in the form of attribute trade-offs in the performing arts; therefore, the descriptive analysis of individual attribute preference was appropriate (Yin, 2009). The conjoint analysis was intended to provide triangulation against the preference study, to explore where preference might be distinguished from consumer trade-offs. The regression allowed for evaluation of preference based on other attributes. For example, a certain time for performance and certain day may have each overwhelmingly been the highest ranked among participants, but when times were considered as part of days in the combined analysis, a less highly ranked day and time may have been statistically the best choice.

The survey instrument consisted of eight demographic questions and seven content questions focused on preferences for attendance based on day of the week, performance start time, performance duration, and quantity of intermissions. Additionally, four questions further explored the nature of those attributes by asking for levels of preference for the conjoint analysis. The attributes examined in the conjoint analysis were: preferred day of the week to attend (7 levels, Monday through Sunday), preferred start time for an event (12 levels, one for each hour between 9:00 and 21:00), and preferred duration of event (6 levels in minute increments: less than 45, 45-60, 61-75, 76-90, 91-120, greater than 120).

The survey was built in Qualtrics, a web-based survey creation, collection, and analysis software tool. A pre-test of the survey was conducted on a small sample (n = 8) of contacts known to the researchers to allow for adjustments in wording and to clarify intent. The use of relevant contacts could pose potential conflict (e.g. poor selection of contacts for type of research, potential bias in selection of contacts); however, it is considered a valid approach in this type of research (Yin 2003). Additionally, the initial test sample was not included in the survey data set. The results of the pre-test suggested that with only minor wording alterations, the survey was sufficient.

The final instrument was disseminated via Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk), a crowd sourcing employer and labor force database designed for individuals and employers to coordinate the use of human intelligence to perform tasks. MTurk has been widely accepted for use in artistic and education research (Koblin, 2008; McMaster, 2012). In an attempt to validate MTurk, Crump et al. (2013) replicated results of a 1961 study using the platform, and did so in less time and with minimal financial incentive to participants. Paolacci et al. (2010) found experimental design and data collection through MTurk is a viable alternative to more antiquated survey collection methodology. A number of studies
demonstrate that MTurk provides more reliable results than traditional data collection methodology (Casler et al., 2013; Buhrmester et al., 2011; Chandler and Shapiro, 2016), and respondent performance tends to be superior (Hauser and Schwarz, 2016). Respondents are typically compensated < 40 cents for participation in a survey and average a completion time of approximately 3 minutes for most studies.

Our data were analyzed separately by two researchers, sorting through responses, cross-tabulations, and descriptive statistics, identifying trends and themes. The researchers compared their independent analyses, and adjusted for disparity between their observations.

The conjoint analysis was conducted to determine, based on three attributes of the start time (12 levels), duration (6 levels), and preferred day of week (7 levels), which had the highest ranked utility for the sample, and which combinations of the 3 attributes and 25 levels exhibited the greatest utility.

Results
There were 352 participants in the survey. After cleaning data for incomplete or unusable submissions, 307 responses were included in the data set. Survey respondents tended to be female (56 percent) and between the ages of 25 and 44 years (62 percent). Most respondents lived in suburban areas (53 percent) with a geographic distribution that was roughly equal to the country’s population distribution. Occupations were diverse, with teaching (8 percent), salesperson (7 percent), and managers (7 percent) at the top of the list; 8 percent of respondents described themselves as unemployed. More than 90 percent of participants reported some college-level education. Approximately one-third of participants reported a personal annual income less than $20,000, while another third reported a personal income between $20,000-$40,000. A small percentage of participants (8 percent) reported a personal income above $80,000, while a majority (59 percent) reported a household income of $60,000 or below.

Data from the survey regarding matinee preference were not unusual, with 78 percent preferring a single matinee, 18 percent preferring no matinee, and 4 percent preferring more than one matinee. Cross-tabulations showed no distinctions for matinee preference between differing groups, or in relation to any of the other attributes examined.

Saturday was the most preferred day to attend, while Monday was the least preferred. The 7 p.m. hour was the most preferred start time, while the 9 a.m. hour was the least preferred. Performance duration of 76-90 minutes was most preferred, while less than 45 minutes was least preferred. Sunday was the most preferred matinee day, while Tuesday was the least preferred. The 1 p.m. and the 2 p.m. hours were equivalently most preferred for matinee start times.

Data were evaluated by gender, age, and personal income for preferences in start time, days of performance, and duration of event. Several interesting cross-tabulations emerged. A majority of women (44 percent) preferred attending a matinee performance during the week (M,F); only 32 percent preferred weekend matinees, and 24 percent preferred evening performances over matinees. The result proved interesting against the presumption that people tend to work and/or have children to care for during what would be considered matinee times. Friday and Saturday performances were preferred by the majority of audiences (> 60 percent) regardless of age grouping. Sunday matinees were the overwhelming choice for matinee day selection (> 40 percent), also regardless of age group (25-30 percent of audiences by age group preferred Saturday, > 50 percent in all age groups preferred Sunday). Approximately 20 percent of respondents aged 25-54 preferred work weekday matinees. Not surprisingly, 38 percent of those aged 55 years and up preferred weekdays, but 26 percent of those aged 18-24 indicated a weekday attendance preference as well as 31 percent of those aged 45-54 years. The majority of the audiences with weekday performance preferences (82 percent) preferred the performances of 90 minutes or less.
A 7 p.m. hour start time was the majority choice across all age groups, including the oldest age group (64-74 years and likely retired). Most audience income groups preferred < 75 minute performance lengths, except the income group earning less than $20,000 annually. This group had even distribution preferences across the four time frames.

Saturday attendance with a start time during the 4 p.m. hour with duration of 76-90 minutes was the highest ranked combination using conjoint analysis for the top 10 utilities (Table I). Saturday was found in 90 percent of the top ranked utilities, while the 4 p.m hour was found in 50 percent of the top utilities. Event duration of 76-90 minutes was found for 40 percent of the top utility rankings. Conjoint analysis demonstrated that the level of “Saturday” for the attribute of “preferred day to attend” has a far greater utility than the start time. The utility ranks for individual attribute levels not combined can be seen in Table II.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>1600-1659</td>
<td>76-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>2000-2059</td>
<td>76-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>1700-1759</td>
<td>76-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>1600-1659</td>
<td>61-75 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>1600-1659</td>
<td>76-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>1900-1959</td>
<td>76-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>2000-2059</td>
<td>61-75 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>1600-1659</td>
<td>45-60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>1600-1659</td>
<td>&gt; 90 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I. Conjoint analysis (top ten ranked)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Utility rank</th>
<th>Attribute level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1600 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2000 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>17:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>19:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>18:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>12:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>14:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>76-90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>15:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>61-75 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>45-60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Greater than 120 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>13:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>91-120 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>11:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Less than 45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>09:00 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II. Utility ranking for individual attribute levels

24
The conjoint analysis yielded a coefficient of determination $r^2$ of 0.95319 demonstrating a good correlation between our rank based on weighted average of utilities and the model rank. Stating the null hypothesis ($H_0: m_1 = m_2 = \ldots = m_{p-1} = 0$) and the alternative hypothesis ($H_1: m_j \neq 0$, for at least one value of $j$) the null hypothesis was assumed to be true. The test statistic had an $F$-value of 224.82. Assuming $\alpha = 0.001$, for a confidence interval $I = [0,0.999]$, $(DFM,DFE) = (24,276)$, $F$-value $= 2.25$, the null hypothesis was rejected. The $p$-values for $F$-value $= 224.82$, and $(DFM,DFE) = (24,276)$ was $(1-p) = 1$, with the $p$-value lesser than the $\alpha$ level ($\alpha = 0.001$). Hence, with a much larger $F$-value and a $p$-value lesser than the $\alpha$ level ($\alpha = 0.001$)/confidence interval $I = [0,0.999]$, the results are significant, with a $T_{stat} = b/s_b = 467.619/7.036 = 66.46$.

Discussion

The analysis of the preference study demonstrates that individual participant rankings were: for the preferred day, Saturday; for the preferred start time, the 19:00 hour; for the preferred duration, 76-90 minutes. However, when looking at comparable utilities in the pairing of the three attributes, the day most heavily ranked was Saturday with a 16:00 hour start time and duration of 76-90 minutes using conjoint analysis. While Saturday held more weight in the analysis than start times, the start time of the 16:00 hour in the utilities comparison gives indication of the value of certain trade-offs to consumers. Essentially, the value of Saturday is far greater than the value of start time. The implication from these data may be that three (or more) performances on Saturday are more likely to draw audiences than on any other day. The earlier start time (akin to matinee start time) was surprising. Matinee starts times historically have begun at 13:00 or 14:00 hours, and often on Sundays, but without much data to support these choices. Sub group analyses revealed trends (e.g. many women preferred weekday matinees) that could be helpful for reinvention of the arts in terms of when to have performances and for how long to gather more audience members. Our data suggest an interesting market observation regarding start times.

Some results were surprising. For example, while it is predictable that those who are empty nest and/or retired would prefer weekday attendance, it was not anticipated that 26 percent of those aged 18-24 years and 31 percent of those aged 45-54 years would also prefer weekday attendance. Only those age 25-44 had substantially lower preference for weekday attendance (18 percent). These preferences indicate that there is a substantial, untapped market for arts attendance during weekdays.

Also striking, though possibly not unrelated, was the response to event duration, in which almost 50 percent of those aged 18-45 preferred events lasting 75 minutes or less. Nearly a third of those aged 55 and up cited preference for events lasting 75 minutes or less, and only those aged 45-54 had a demonstrably lower preference for events 75 minutes or less, with a response of about 19 percent. It may seem surprising that respondents in the age group 45-54 would be the only group most interested in lengthier performances, as this group would be likely the busiest raising children and at the peak of their careers; however, this demographic may also be more accustomed to lengthier performances than younger age groups that find shorter events more appealing. Also notable is the fact that in both the preference study and the conjoint analysis, a significant percentage prefers the events with duration of 75 minutes or less.

We anticipated that empty nest/retirees would demonstrate a greater preference for weekday matinee performances, but were surprised to find that of this group (aged 55 and up) less than 9 percent showed interest in weekday matinees, while surprisingly almost a quarter of respondents aged 18-24 demonstrated a preference for weekday matinees, and nearly a fifth of respondents aged 25-54 preferred weekday matinees. For those respondents citing a preference for attending performances on Mondays, Tuesdays,
Wednesdays, or Thursdays, a full third preferred performances of 60 minutes or less, nearly two-thirds preferred performances of 75 minutes or less, and a full 82 percent preferred performances of 90 minutes or less. Of those earning an annual income of $70,000 or less, approximately 40 percent preferred performances lasting 75 minutes or less, and nearly three-quarters preferred performances lasting 90 minutes or less. Only about 16 percent of the higher income brackets preferred performances lasting 75 minutes or less, while about three-quarters were interested in performances lasting 90 minutes or less.

Duration is an important factor in arts attendance, with the overwhelming preference for events being between 76 and 90 minutes, and that duration having a relatively strong utility against other levels of attributes. However, there appears to be a significant portion of the marketplace driven by a preference for an event duration of less than 75 minutes. These results suggest that the creation of arts events of various durations (particular in the 90 minutes or less range) could significantly impact attendance. These data further suggest that length of performance is important regardless of other variables.

Practical application and limitations
From a practitioner (venue manager/programmer/marketer) perspective, it would likely be difficult to give credence to the idea that an organizational production and event schedule should be altered on the basis of survey preferences of people who have not ever been to their specific venue. As stated earlier, the results of this study are not intended to be generalizable, but to inform and enrich the limited existing literature regarding the market value of start time, event duration, and preferred day of attendance. Additionally, it was beyond the scope of this research to determine the practicality of creating (or recreating) artistic work that would fit into the model of greatest utility for the audience. Certainly great artistic literature exists that cannot be performed in its entirety within a 75-minute or 90-minute time constraint. Further, contractual obligations, licensing, local transportation issues, and myriad other constraints could impede an ability to meet the marketplace’s desire for an artistic product that has the greatest utility to them. This research is presented with the intent of opening and enriching the discussion of how the arts can most greatly satisfy consumer needs in the twenty-first century. The suggestion here is that if there were ways to accommodate market presence regarding these attributes, attendance patterns would likely change.

Respondents were not separated by the volume of their attendance to the performing arts, though responses were only considered by those who indicated they have attended the performing arts. Further study would be required to determine if frequent performing arts attendees have preferences that are different from infrequent attendees, and why those differences, if they exist, occur.

Our data set has limitations. It is small (n = 307) and therefore may not be representative of the population. Many of the data are representative of general US population data (age, gender, and geographic distribution), but other data are not as representative, in particular occupation and salary ranges. These data did not tease out specific subsets of performances (e.g. orchestral, ballet, opera), raising the question of additional non-generalizability issues for this study. Further data collection, using a larger population with questions that associate the three variables together, would potentially tease out issues about audience preference for time, day of attendance preference, and duration of performances. Further, responses may be reinforced by a history and/or tradition, and because the society has trained audiences to attend at typically 14:00 or 20:00, those times may affect the responses. Finally, the survey was short and poorly paid, leading to issues of respondents potentially racing to finish, raising issues of reliability.
A further study is needed to examine responses of arts attendees vs non-attendees (our study made no distinction) to determine if attendance is predicated upon any of the aforementioned attributes and their various levels. Additionally, as some companies begin experimenting with the variables of start time and duration (e.g. the Detroit Symphony Orchestra has recently presented successful and fully attended public weekday matinees at 10:00), a study is needed to determine both the immediate- and long-term effects of these experiments.

This study did not consider the effects of placing any one of these attributes on the core artistic product, though we recognize that event duration, start time, and day of presentation are often associated with, and considered part of, the creation of the art itself. It was our aim to attempt to understand if there is some latent desire in the general populace regarding these attributes that might induce greater attendance levels, and our study suggests that event durations of 90 minutes or less, and various start times, particular on Saturdays, would likely lead to an improved attendance.

References


Further reading


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"I Hope I Get It": impact of Tony Award nominations and wins on Broadway production longevity

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to ascertain the relative impact of different Tony Award nominations and wins on the financial success of a Broadway theater production, as defined by the length of the production’s run.

Design/methodology/approach – Cox hazard regression was used to identify the impact of Tony Award nominations and wins (time-varying covariates), while controlling for several time-invariant covariates: type of production (play or musical, revival or original Broadway production), production costs (operationalized via the cast size), the month and year of opening, and initial marketing success (defined as the percentage of first full week’s tickets sold).

Findings – The award with the strongest relationship with production longevity was the Tony Award for Best Musical (nomination OR = 0.566, p = 0.110; win OR = 0.323, p = 0.020). Several other awards had a relationship with production longevity, but most were not statistically significant.

Research limitations/implications – The limitations include the low statistical power for many time-varying covariates and the cumulative impact of multiple awards was not investigated. Future researchers interested in the Broadway industry should not combine Tony Awards because of the varying impact on economic outcomes for a production.

Originality/value – This study is the first to investigate all 22 Tony Award nominations and wins and their individual impact on an economic outcome. This paper includes the study’s raw data and SPSS syntax to comply with open science practices. The author encourages readers to replicate the analysis.

Keywords Entertainment industry, Theatre, Broadway theatre, Cox hazard regression, Live entertainment

Paper type Research paper

Although geographically very confined, the Broadway theater industry is highly lucrative, with annual gross ticket revenue of $1.3 billion from 13.1 million attendees (Broadway League, 2016a). While smaller than other branches of the entertainment industry (e.g. the film industry), these numbers are remarkable for a local entertainment community and an important part of the New York City economy, contributing a total of $12.57 billion to the local economy (Broadway League, 2016a).

Broadway resembles other parts of the entertainment industry in the way most products fail to recoup their investment. Indeed, from 1994 to 2014, only 21 percent of Broadway musicals earned a profit (Davenport, n.d.). This makes such investing in a Broadway play or musical an inherently risky business proposition. A typical Broadway play costs $3.1 million in upfront costs to mount, with additional operating expenses of $468,000 per week. The average musical has $9 million in upfront costs and $665,000 per week to continue operating (Broadway League, 2016a). Costs can occasionally reach even higher levels, with Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark costing $75 million to mount (Flynn and Healy, 2011). With so much money at stake – and costs increasing annually (Gates, 2013) – investors are eager to find ways to reduce investors’ risk.

Conventional wisdom in the theatrical world is that the Tony Awards are often an important component of financial success of a Broadway show (Boyle and Chiou, 2009). An example of this prevailing opinion in the Broadway industry is shown in the documentary Show Business: The Road to Broadway (Berinstein, 2007), when Chris Boneau, a Broadway marketer, stated, “Frankly, you talk about the Tony Awards, there are a lot of them. The one that really counts is the one for Best Musical.”
There is some data to support this belief. Davenport’s (n.d.) analysis of musicals that recouped their investment showed that 44 percent won the Tony Award for Best Musical. However, exceptions abound to the commonly perceived wisdom. For example, the 1994 winner of the Tony Award for Best Musical, *Passion*, closed nearly seven months after winning, with a loss of about $3.15 million (Gerard, 1994). One of the “losers” for the same award, *Beauty and the Beast*, ran for 13 more years, and closed as the sixth longest running show in Broadway history (Robertson, 2007). By the end of its Broadway run, *Beauty and the Beast* grossed $429 million on a $12.5 million capitalization (Donahue and Patterson, 2010). Likewise, some of Broadway’s longest running productions lost the coveted Tony Award for Best Musical (e.g. *Wicked*, *Mamma Mia*). Thus, the view of a high-profile Tony Award being an important ingredient for financial success may be mistaken.

The scholarly literature on the Tony Awards can shed some light on this issue. Simonoff and Ma (2003) found that receiving a nomination for a major Tony Award – defined as an award for the best musical or play (whether an original production or a revival), acting, or directing – had no impact on the longevity of a show’s run. However, winning one of these major Tony Awards was associated with a prolonged run (see also Boyle and Chiou, 2009). Maddison (2004) found similar results when he found that winning the Tony Awards for Best Musical or Best Play were associated with a longer production run, though he did not investigate the impact of Tony Award nominations.

In the most nuanced study to date on the economic impact of the Tony Awards, Boyle and Chiou (2009) found that a Tony Award nomination has a positive impact on ticket sales of a Broadway production in the four weeks after the nominations are announced. After the award winners were announced, any benefits from being a “Tony nominated production” cease, and the Tony Awards only impact productions that win an award. Productions that won a “main” award (defined as the Tony Award for Best Play, Best Musical, Best Revival, any award for acting, or Best Special Engagement) had an increase in ticket sales and market share for up to a year after their Tony Award win. However, winning a non-major Tony Award (defined as all other awards) had no impact on ticket sales or market share.

1. **Consumer economics of Broadway and the Tony Awards**

   From a cultural economics perspective, Broadway is not just risky for producers; it is also risky for consumers, though in a different way. A ticket to a live performance is an example a hedonic good, which is a product purchased for enjoyment, as opposed to utilitarian goods, which are purchased for practical benefits (Reinstein and Snyder, 2005). Beyond the use of the product, hedonic and utilitarian goods also differ in the level of risk that accompanies each type of product. Whereas utilitarian goods – like cell phones, microwaves, or toothpaste – have specific features that can be logically analyzed and compared, the features of hedonic goods – like theater tickets, video games, or a gourmet meal – are often intangible or are difficult to judge before purchase. This makes hedonic goods riskier for consumers to purchase because the chances for a dissatisfying experience can be very high.

   Many consumers take steps to reduce this risk in order to maximize their chances of enjoying a hedonic good that they purchase (Warne and Drake-Brooks, 2016). With the average price of a Broadway ticket costing $103.11 (Broadway League, 2016b), Broadway theatergoers may be more eager than most consumers of hedonic goods (e.g. movie patrons) to reduce this risk. One method is to search for signaling information, which is product information that helps a consumer decide in advance whether they are likely to enjoy the hedonic good (Chen *et al.*, 2012). There are several potential sources of signaling information for hedonic goods, such as recommendations from friends, a previous positive experience with a similar product, or information gleaned from advertisements. In live theater, signaling information could include online or newspaper reviews, a play’s status as a
“classic” (Warne and Drake-Brooks, 2016), the presence of a favorite actor in the cast (Gates, 2013), and awards (Maddison, 2004; Simonoff and Ma, 2003).

As the most high-profile awards on Broadway, the Tony Awards are an important part of signaling information for audiences looking to reduce their risk when purchasing tickets. This makes the Tony Awards an economically important component of the Broadway industry to consumers, just as they are to producers. Indeed, a survey of a representative sample of Broadway patrons showed that 14.7 percent of respondents stated that a production’s Tony Award nominations and awards were a motivating factor in their choice of production to see (Broadway League, 2016b). Additionally, Simonoff and Ma (2003) and Maddison (2004) found that winning a Tony Award had a stronger influence on the length of a production’s run than even critics’ reviews – which would be a similar, ostensibly neutral source of signaling information from consumers.

2. Study goals and hypotheses
To date, the work of Simonoff and Ma (2003), Maddison (2004), Boyle and Chiou (2009), and Kulmatitskiy et al. (2015) are the only empirical investigations of the impact of Tony Award nominations and wins on the economic success of a production. However, none of these previous researchers have fully disaggregated Tony Award nominations and wins and examined their comparative impact on the length of a production’s run. My aim in this study is to build on their work and examine the impact of each Tony nomination or win on the economic success of a Broadway production. My hypotheses for this study are:

H1. The various Tony Award nominations and wins will have different impacts on the length of run.

H1a. Based on the strength of their potential signaling information, I expect that awards related to the overall quality of a production – Best Play (revival or original) and Best Musical (revival or original) – will have greater impacts than other artistic awards.

H1b. Technical awards (e.g. for lighting design, scenic design) will have little or no impact on the run of a show because of their low signaling information, in accordance with the results from Boyle and Chiou’s (2009) analysis.

H2. Also in line with Boyle and Chiou’s (2009), Kulmatitskiy et al.’s (2015), and Simonoff and Ma’s (2003) results, Tony Award nominations will generally have little or no impact on the length of a production’s run, whereas winning an award will be associated with a larger number of performances.

Providing empirical answers to these questions may help marketers, producers, audience members in the Broadway community better understand the impact of individual Tony Awards. This study may also provide important information to productions in similar economic climates, like the West End in London, touring Broadway shows, and other large cities that frequently experience open-ended productions (e.g. Chicago, Tokyo).

3. Methods

3.1 Data sources
Data on almost all Broadway productions since the 1985-1986 season are publicly available online through the Broadway League, a trade association for Broadway professionals. This information includes weekly data on the number of performances, the number and percentage of tickets sold, average and maximum ticket price, and other basic economic information. Almost every Broadway production reports this information, though there are rare exceptions (e.g. Young Frankenstein). All online data through October 23, 2017, were downloaded.
The operationalization of “economic success” in this study includes the number of performances for a Broadway production. Boyle and Chiou (2009) explained that the announced price of tickets for most productions changes little after opening, so often the only major way for producers to increase profits is to add more performances[2][3]. This makes the number of performances a suitable gauge for the economic success of a production.

However, when using the number of performances as a metric, it is important to distinguish between Broadway productions with open-ended and limited runs (Kulmatitskiy et al., 2015). An open-ended run is a production that has no pre-determined closing data and which the producers intend to keep open as long as is financially feasible. A production with a close-ended run opens with a pre-determined closing date (Gates, 2013; Kulmatitskiy et al., 2015). For close-ended productions, the number of performances would not be a useful measure of economic success if the production closed on schedule; so they were not included in this study. A production’s status as open-ended or close-ended was determined through online searches of theatrical press websites (e.g. playbill.com) and archival searches of New York City newspapers. This information is only widely available from about 1998, when the internet became a medium of disseminating and archiving press releases publicly. Therefore, only productions that opened in 1998 or later are included in the data set. Shows that had a close-ended run and ended on their originally scheduled closing date were eliminated from the data set because the length of the run was likely not influenced by award nominations and wins.

Sometimes the producers of a close-ended production change the closing date of a production because a show is losing too much money or delay the show’s closing because of a surprisingly high degree of financial success. In these cases, productions were only included in the data set if either they closed at least one week before their originally announced closing date (e.g. Sylvia), or at least two months after the originally announced closing date (e.g. Newsies). This decision for inclusion was made because the length of these types of “close-ended” productions is determined by the economic conditions similar to those of open-ended runs.

Several other variables were collected because previous research and data indicated that they may be important determinants of the length of a Broadway production’s run. Every previous researcher to investigate this topic has found that plays have shorter runs than musicals (Gates, 2013; Maddison, 2004; Reddy et al., 1998; Simonoff and Ma, 2003), so this nominal variable was recorded and coded as 0 = play and 1 = musical. Additionally, whether a show was an original production or a revival was recorded (0 = original production and 1 = revival) because revivals are less likely to close very quickly (Reddy et al., 1998; Maddison, 2005). Another variable I recorded was the percentage of tickets in the first week of performances that were sold. Reddy et al. (1998) used this variable as a measure of initial marketing success for a production, and I treated it here as such.

I also recorded the size of the cast because of Gates’s (2013) finding that plays with larger casts (though not musicals) had higher weekly grosses than plays with smaller casts. Large cast plays and musicals tend to be more expensive to mount and keep open, so I included this variable in the data set as a proxy for production costs. Indeed, the Broadway League (2016a) reported that for both plays and musicals labor costs were the largest expense of Broadway productions, totally a roughly equal percentage of upfront costs (34.7 percent for musicals and 36.8 percent for plays) and ongoing expenses (53.9 percent for musicals and 53.8 percent for plays). The large share of labor costs and the similar proportions across plays and musicals support the use of cast size as a proxy for total production costs.

Finally, the month and year of the production opened was recorded because Simonoff and Ma (2003) found that shows that opened in the Summer (immediately after the Tony Awards) had shorter runs than those that opened later in the Broadway season, possibly due to some seasonality in the Broadway industry (see also Kulmatitskiy et al., 2015). The year of the production was included because of Maddison’s (2004) finding that more recent productions...
tend to have longer runs. On the other hand, increasing costs of Broadway productions could make it more difficult for modern shows to stay open compared to shows in the 1990s[4]. The month of the show’s opening was coded, with the months being numbered sequentially, starting with July (as 0), so that higher numbers would indicate shows that opened later in the Broadway season – and therefore possibly better able to take advantage of the announcement of the Tony Award nominations in April or May and the actual award ceremony in June.

Tony Award nominations and winners were taken from the online theater news website playbill.com. A dummy variable was created for each Tony Award nomination and win (0 = not nominated or not winning, 1 = nominated or winning). Starting in 2005, the awards for lighting design, costume design, and scenic design were split into two awards, one each for plays and musicals. To be consistent, the awards in these years were coded as one variable (i.e. if a production won one of these Tony Awards in either the play or musical category). From 2008 through 2014 there was an award for sound design. This award and its accompanying nominations were included in the data set. For years where no sound design award was given, all shows were labeled as not nominated and not winning because this Tony Award could have no influence on a show’s longevity. There were 44 Tony Award variables in the data set, which corresponds to 22 awards each having a nomination variable and a win variable.

The dependent variable was the number of performances of the production, not including previews or benefit performances. Because this is a time variable, Cox hazard regression was used to estimate the impact of the various independent variables on the number of performances. Cox hazard regression is a statistical method that models the time it takes until an event occurs and the time sequence ends (Cox, 1972). In this study, the event in the statistical model is the production’s closing. All characteristics of the production’s when it begins – type of show (play or musical, original or revival), cast size, date of opening, and percentage of tickets sold in the first week – were structured as time-invariant covariates because they were characteristics of the production that applied to its entire run.

On the other hand, a show’s status as a Tony Award nominee or winner is a change in status during its run, so these variables were defined as time-varying covariates. This prevents a confounding of production longevity with Tony Award nominations or wins because it is possible that long-running shows would have a lengthy run regardless of the outcomes of the Tony Awards. Therefore, the influence of these time-varying covariates is measured as their impact beyond the time at which the Tony Award nominations or wins were announced. The number of performances that the show had before being nominated or winning a Tony Award was recorded in the data set.

All variables were included in the statistical models, and SPSS 22.0 was used for all analyses. (See the journal’s supplemental archive for the SPSS syntax used for the analyses.) Generally, researchers in the economics of Broadway agree that musicals and plays have very different financial pressures, capitalization levels, and run lengths. However, what is not clear is whether plays and musicals should be analyzed together – with a nominal independent variable distinguishing the two types of shows – or separately. Kulmatitskiy et al. (2015), Reddy et al. (1998), and Simonoff and Ma (2003) took the former approach, while Gates (2013) and Maddison (2004) chose the latter. Analyzing both types of productions together increases statistical power; however, analyzing them separately reflects the differing economic challenges of each type of show and the potentially varying benefits of Tony Awards for each. For the sake of transparency, I analyzed all productions together and then separately analyzed plays and musicals.

4. Results
4.1 Descriptive statistics
A total of 429 Broadway productions met the inclusion criteria for this study; 187 (43.6 percent) of these were plays, while 242 (56.4 percent) were musicals.
317 (73.9 percent) of these plays had their first Broadway production between 1998 and 2017, while 112 (26.1 percent) were revivals of shows that had previously played on Broadway. With multiyear runs of Broadway productions being relatively rare, it is unsurprising that 412 (96.0 percent) of these shows had closed when the data were downloaded; 17 (4.0 percent) were still open at that time, and the number of performances of these latter productions was censored.

The average number of performances (including for shows still open) was 149.5 (SD = 161.6, median = 101) for plays and 492.1 (SD = 762.5, median = 228.5) for musicals. The average cast size for plays was 7.7 (SD = 6.2, median = 6), and the average cast size for musicals was 21.1 (SD = 10.1, median = 21). The “average” month that a play or musical opened was January, which is the midpoint of the Broadway season, though more shows opened in April (50 plays and 73 musicals) than any other month. Fewer plays in recent years have had open runs. Nine of ten years from 1998 to 2007 had at least ten plays with open-ended runs; only two of the nine years from 2008 to 2016 had at least ten plays with open-ended runs. There was no apparent trend in the number of open-ended musicals each year from 1998 through 2016.

4.2 Impact of Tony Award nominations and wins: all productions
Table I shows the results of the Cox regression model with the time-varying covariates for all 429 productions in the data set. Because the model is designed to predict a “hazard,” positive β values indicate a higher likelihood that a show will close. Therefore, for people desiring a production to have longer run (e.g. producers, consumers planning a purchase) a negative β value is favorable because it indicates that a variable is associated with a higher number of performances.

Among the time-invariant covariates, the statistically significant were the cast size, month, year, and capacity variables. The odds ratios indicate that each additional cast member increases the odds of a production closing by 2.5 percent (OR of 1.000 – 0.975 = 0.025, p < 0.001). Likewise, each additional year that a production opens is associated with a 5.4 percent (p < 0.001) increase in the odds of closing, and each 1 percent increase in opening week capacity is associated with a 5.0 percent decrease (p < 0.001) in the odds of closing.

Among the time-invariant covariates, the only statistically significant variables were the nomination for the Tony Award nominations for Best Lead Actor in a Play (OR = 1.864, p = 0.032), Best Direction of a Play (OR = 0.337, p = 0.006), and Sound Design (OR = 0.504, p = 0.015) and the Tony Award wins for Best Musical (OR = 0.323, p = 0.020), Best Featured Actor in a Musical (OR = 0.350, p = 0.013), and Best Featured Actress in a Musical (OR = 2.243, p = 0.023). Odds ratios that are less than 1 are associated with longer runs, while odds ratios greater than 1 are associated with a shorter run.

When judged by conventional standards of statistical significance (i.e. p < 0.05), it may seem that most nominations and awards have no impact on the longevity of a Broadway production. However, there are two caveats to keep in mind. The first is blindly judging the importance of results by their statistical significance is not a justifiable interpretation of results (Wasserstein and Lazar, 2016). Rather, effect sizes (in this case the odds ratios) are a better basis for interpretation because they discuss the magnitude of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Thompson, 2002; Warne et al., 2012). Second, the low variance of some of the Tony Award variables makes it artificially more difficult to obtain statistical significance.

Therefore, I believe that it is more informative to examine the effect sizes for the Tony Award variables to judge their practical significance on their relationship between a nomination or win and the longevity of a production. I set an arbitrary standard of an award decreasing the odds of show’s closing by at least 10 percent. This is the equivalent of an odds ratio ≤0.900 or ≥1.111. Judged by these standards, most Tony Award nominations and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Odds ratio (OR)</th>
<th>OR 95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-invariant covariates</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.777</td>
<td>[0.562, 1.074]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revival</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.625</td>
<td>1.081</td>
<td>[0.792, 1.473]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cast size</td>
<td>-0.025</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.975</td>
<td>[0.961, 0.990]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month opened</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>1.047</td>
<td>[1.005, 1.091]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year opened</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>1.054</td>
<td>[1.032, 1.077]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>-0.051</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>0.950</td>
<td>[0.944, 0.956]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-varying covariates</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tony Award nominations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>-0.282</td>
<td>0.406</td>
<td>0.755</td>
<td>[0.388, 1.464]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Revival</td>
<td>-0.442</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>0.643</td>
<td>[0.281, 1.470]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Play</td>
<td>0.623</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>1.864</td>
<td>[1.064, 3.295]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Play</td>
<td>-0.335</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>0.715</td>
<td>[0.432, 1.183]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Play</td>
<td>0.406</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>1.501</td>
<td>[0.824, 2.732]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Play</td>
<td>-0.008</td>
<td>0.976</td>
<td>0.992</td>
<td>[0.586, 1.680]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Play</td>
<td>-1.087</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.337</td>
<td>[0.115, 0.732]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>-0.569</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>0.566</td>
<td>[0.281, 1.138]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Revival</td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>1.224</td>
<td>[0.873, 2.234]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Musical</td>
<td>-0.318</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>0.727</td>
<td>[0.441, 1.200]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Musical</td>
<td>-0.092</td>
<td>0.673</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>[0.594, 1.400]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Musical</td>
<td>-0.088</td>
<td>0.697</td>
<td>0.916</td>
<td>[0.588, 1.426]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Musical</td>
<td>-0.413</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.662</td>
<td>[0.419, 1.046]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of a Musical</td>
<td>-0.133</td>
<td>0.709</td>
<td>0.876</td>
<td>[0.437, 1.755]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Musical</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>0.725</td>
<td>1.109</td>
<td>[0.624, 1.972]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.646</td>
<td>1.127</td>
<td>[0.576, 1.879]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestrations</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>0.428</td>
<td>1.222</td>
<td>[0.744, 2.007]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Design</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>1.406</td>
<td>[0.881, 2.242]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Design</td>
<td>0.139</td>
<td>0.550</td>
<td>1.149</td>
<td>[0.728, 1.813]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Design</td>
<td>-0.300</td>
<td>0.260</td>
<td>0.741</td>
<td>[0.440, 1.249]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreography</td>
<td>-0.292</td>
<td>0.231</td>
<td>0.747</td>
<td>[0.464, 1.203]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Design</td>
<td>-0.686</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.504</td>
<td>[0.290, 0.875]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tony Award wins</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>-0.401</td>
<td>0.377</td>
<td>0.670</td>
<td>[0.275, 1.629]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Revival</td>
<td>1.074</td>
<td>0.484</td>
<td>2.956</td>
<td>[0.145, 58.976]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Play</td>
<td>-0.228</td>
<td>0.743</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td>[0.203, 3.117]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Play</td>
<td>-0.312</td>
<td>0.534</td>
<td>0.732</td>
<td>[0.274, 1.957]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Play</td>
<td>0.277</td>
<td>0.537</td>
<td>1.319</td>
<td>[0.548, 3.175]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Play</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>0.594</td>
<td>1.330</td>
<td>[0.446, 3.798]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Play</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.755</td>
<td>1.173</td>
<td>[0.431, 3.193]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>-1.130</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>0.323</td>
<td>[0.125, 0.836]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Revival</td>
<td>-0.378</td>
<td>0.445</td>
<td>0.685</td>
<td>[0.260, 1.808]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Musical</td>
<td>0.490</td>
<td>0.256</td>
<td>1.632</td>
<td>[0.700, 3.806]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Musical</td>
<td>-0.257</td>
<td>0.572</td>
<td>0.774</td>
<td>[0.317, 1.885]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Musical</td>
<td>-1.050</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.350</td>
<td>[0.152, 0.803]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Musical</td>
<td>0.808</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>2.243</td>
<td>[1.120, 4.492]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of a Musical</td>
<td>0.304</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>1.556</td>
<td>[0.536, 3.428]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Musical</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.920</td>
<td>1.044</td>
<td>[0.451, 2.419]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>-0.535</td>
<td>0.222</td>
<td>0.586</td>
<td>[0.248, 1.383]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestrations</td>
<td>-0.425</td>
<td>0.282</td>
<td>0.634</td>
<td>[0.277, 1.455]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Design</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td>1.133</td>
<td>[0.533, 2.407]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Design</td>
<td>-0.167</td>
<td>0.657</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>[0.404, 1.772]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Design</td>
<td>-0.183</td>
<td>0.627</td>
<td>0.832</td>
<td>[0.387, 1.746]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreography</td>
<td>0.547</td>
<td>0.131</td>
<td>1.727</td>
<td>[0.884, 3.514]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Design</td>
<td>-0.101</td>
<td>0.851</td>
<td>0.904</td>
<td>[0.315, 2.585]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table I.** Cox regression model with time-varying covariates: all productions
wins have at least some impact on the longevity of Broadway productions. In addition to the shows named above, Table I shows that 11 Tony Award nominations and 11 Tony Award wins are associated with prolonging a show’s run, while seven nominations and nine wins are associated with a shorter run.

4.3 Impact of Tony Award nominations and wins: plays
The results of the same analyses conducted on Broadway plays are shown in Table II. When Broadway plays are analyzed separately, the results are generally similar to the analysis of all 429 productions. The year of a production’s opening (OR = 1.055, \( p = 0.001 \)), capacity of a production’s opening week (OR = 0.956, \( p < 0.001 \)), and the Tony Award nominations for Best Leading Actor in a Play (OR = 2.903, \( p = 0.002 \)) and Best Direction of a Play (OR = 0.414, \( p = 0.048 \)) are all statistically significant. However, the Tony Award win for Sound Design was no longer statistically significant (OR = 1.090, \( p = 0.879 \)).

When examining the odds ratio by the standards above, seven Tony Award nominations and five wins are associated with a longer production run, while three Tony

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>( p )</th>
<th>Odds ratio (OR)</th>
<th>OR 95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revival</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>1.179</td>
<td>[0.789, 1.762]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cast size</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>1.017</td>
<td>[0.988, 1.046]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month opened</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>0.561</td>
<td>1.020</td>
<td>[0.953, 1.092]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year opened</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>1.055</td>
<td>[1.021, 1.090]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td>&lt; 0.001</td>
<td>0.956</td>
<td>[0.948, 0.965]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>( p )</th>
<th>Odds ratio (OR)</th>
<th>OR 95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>-0.371</td>
<td>0.302</td>
<td>0.690</td>
<td>[0.341, 1.397]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Revival</td>
<td>-0.770</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.463</td>
<td>[0.194, 1.107]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Play</td>
<td>1.066</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>2.903</td>
<td>[1.478, 5.704]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Play</td>
<td>-0.387</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>0.679</td>
<td>[0.381, 1.210]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Play</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.886</td>
<td>1.060</td>
<td>[0.536, 2.066]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Play</td>
<td>-0.341</td>
<td>0.270</td>
<td>0.711</td>
<td>[0.388, 1.303]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Play</td>
<td>-0.881</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.414</td>
<td>[0.173, 0.993]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>1.311</td>
<td>[0.165, 10.416]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Design</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>2.810</td>
<td>[0.962, 8.202]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Design</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.988</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>[0.401, 2.528]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Design</td>
<td>-0.979</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.376</td>
<td>[0.123, 1.151]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreography</td>
<td>-1.778</td>
<td>0.306</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>[0.006, 5.084]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Design</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>1.090</td>
<td>[0.359, 3.311]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>-0.577</td>
<td>0.325</td>
<td>0.562</td>
<td>[0.178, 1.773]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Revival</td>
<td>1.661</td>
<td>0.394</td>
<td>5.262</td>
<td>[0.115, 240.355]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Play</td>
<td>-0.954</td>
<td>0.427</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>[0.037, 4.050]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Play</td>
<td>-0.844</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>[0.110, 1.622]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Play</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>0.506</td>
<td>1.469</td>
<td>[0.472, 4.589]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Play</td>
<td>0.609</td>
<td>0.387</td>
<td>1.839</td>
<td>[0.462, 7.315]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Play</td>
<td>-0.358</td>
<td>0.586</td>
<td>0.699</td>
<td>[0.192, 2.538]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Design</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.968</td>
<td>1.034</td>
<td>[0.205, 5.208]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Design</td>
<td>0.894</td>
<td>0.390</td>
<td>2.444</td>
<td>[0.318, 18.775]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Design</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.977</td>
<td>1.019</td>
<td>[0.275, 3.783]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Design</td>
<td>-1.951</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.142</td>
<td>[0.015, 1.348]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Although plays are eligible, no plays in the data set were nominated for the Tony Award for Best Orchestrations. No plays won the Tony Award for Best Score or Best Choreography.

Table II. Cox regression model with time-varying covariates: plays

4.3 Impact of Tony Award nominations and wins: plays
The results of the same analyses conducted on Broadway plays are shown in Table II. When Broadway plays are analyzed separately, the results are generally similar to the analysis of all 429 productions. The year of a production’s opening (OR = 1.055, \( p = 0.001 \)), capacity of a production’s opening week (OR = 0.956, \( p < 0.001 \)), and the Tony Award nominations for Best Leading Actor in a Play (OR = 2.903, \( p = 0.002 \)) and Best Direction of a Play (OR = 0.414, \( p = 0.048 \)) are all statistically significant. However, the Tony Award win for Sound Design was no longer statistically significant (OR = 1.090, \( p = 0.879 \)).

When examining the odds ratio by the standards above, seven Tony Award nominations and five wins are associated with a longer production run, while three Tony
Award nominations and four wins are associated with a shorter run for a Broadway play. Comparing Tables I and II shows that, generally, the same award covariates have a similar impact on the run of a production, whether plays are analyzed alone or whether all productions are analyzed together.

4.4 Impact of Tony Award nominations and wins: musicals

Table III shows that when analyzing the open-ended run musicals separately, four of the time-invariant covariates were statistically significant: cast size (OR = 0.977, p = 0.013), month of opening (OR = 1.078, p = 0.006), year of opening (OR = 1.075, p < 0.001), and opening week capacity (OR = 0.935, p < 0.001). These values indicate that a longer production run is associated with a smaller cast size, greater opening week ticket sales, an opening earlier in the Broadway season, and an earlier year of opening.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Odds ratio (OR)</th>
<th>OR 95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-invariant covariates</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revival</td>
<td>−0.006</td>
<td>0.983</td>
<td>0.994</td>
<td>[0.592, 1.671]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cast size</td>
<td>−0.024</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.977</td>
<td>[0.958, 0.995]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month opened</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>1.078</td>
<td>[1.022, 1.136]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year opened</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>1.075</td>
<td>[1.043, 1.108]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>−0.067</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>0.935</td>
<td>[0.925, 0.945]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-varying covariates</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Award nominations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>−0.499</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>[0.287, 1.285]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Revival</td>
<td>0.443</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>1.557</td>
<td>[0.770, 3.149]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Musical</td>
<td>−0.234</td>
<td>0.366</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td>[0.476, 1.315]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Musical</td>
<td>−0.076</td>
<td>0.731</td>
<td>0.927</td>
<td>[0.601, 1.430]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Musical</td>
<td>−0.044</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>0.957</td>
<td>[0.611, 1.498]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Musical</td>
<td>−0.147</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>0.623</td>
<td>[0.385, 1.006]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of a Musical</td>
<td>−0.178</td>
<td>0.640</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td>[0.397, 1.766]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Musical</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.953</td>
<td>1.018</td>
<td>[0.563, 1.842]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>0.139</td>
<td>0.624</td>
<td>1.149</td>
<td>[0.660, 1.998]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestration</td>
<td>0.157</td>
<td>0.542</td>
<td>1.170</td>
<td>[0.706, 1.940]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Design</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.233</td>
<td>1.396</td>
<td>[0.807, 2.214]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Design</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>1.365</td>
<td>[0.770, 2.242]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Design</td>
<td>−0.438</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.646</td>
<td>[0.339, 1.228]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreography</td>
<td>−0.216</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>0.806</td>
<td>[0.489, 1.329]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Design</td>
<td>−0.944</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>[0.199, 0.761]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Award wins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>−1.291</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.275</td>
<td>[0.097, 0.782]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Revival</td>
<td>−0.671</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td>0.511</td>
<td>[0.179, 1.461]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Musical</td>
<td>0.608</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>1.836</td>
<td>[0.762, 4.427]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Musical</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.982</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>[0.393, 2.601]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Musical</td>
<td>−1.213</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.297</td>
<td>[0.123, 0.717]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Musical</td>
<td>0.988</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>2.687</td>
<td>[1.223, 5.438]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of a Musical</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>1.525</td>
<td>[0.596, 3.906]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Musical</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>0.720</td>
<td>1.163</td>
<td>[0.511, 2.646]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>−0.515</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>0.597</td>
<td>[0.247, 1.445]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestration</td>
<td>−0.527</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>0.591</td>
<td>[0.245, 1.422]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Design</td>
<td>0.466</td>
<td>0.365</td>
<td>1.594</td>
<td>[0.581, 4.371]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Design</td>
<td>−0.322</td>
<td>0.433</td>
<td>0.724</td>
<td>[0.223, 1.623]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Design</td>
<td>−0.642</td>
<td>0.261</td>
<td>0.526</td>
<td>[0.172, 1.612]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreography</td>
<td>0.525</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>1.691</td>
<td>[0.827, 3.459]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Design</td>
<td>0.365</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>1.440</td>
<td>[0.362, 5.726]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Among the Tony Award time-varying covariates, four variables are associated with longer production runs: the nomination for Best Sound Design (OR = 0.389, \( p = 0.006 \)) and the Tony Awards for Best Musical (OR = 0.275, \( p = 0.015 \)) and Best Featured Actor in a Musical (OR = 0.297, \( p = 0.007 \)). On the other hand, the Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Musical (OR = 2.687, \( p = 0.006 \)) is associated with a shorter production run.

When judging the odds ratios for the musicals by the same standards as above, seven Tony Award nominations and seven wins are associated with longer production runs. Yet, five nominations and seven wins are associated with shorter production runs. Just as was the case for plays, the nominations and awards that were associated with longer or shorter productions runs were generally the same when musicals were analyzed alone or when all productions were analyzed together.

5. Discussion
Because there were 44 Tony Award time-varying covariates and three different analyses, I compiled Table IV to show which the impact of the different variables on the longevity of Broadway productions. This table merely simplifies and compiles in one place the information shown in Tables I-III.

5.1 Time-invariant covariates
The impact of the time-invariant covariates supports conventional wisdom about the economics of Broadway and previous empirical research. One expected finding was that in my data set musicals had longer runs – on average – than plays. Additionally, initial marketing success, as indicated by opening week ticket sales, was associated with longer production runs.

On the other hand, one surprising finding was that revivals of plays had shorter runs than original productions of plays, while revival status had no impact on the length of the run of musicals. Maddison (2004, 2005) is the only other previous researcher to investigate the length of runs for revivals and original productions separately for plays and musicals. He found that, on average, revivals had shorter runs than original productions for both plays and musicals (Maddison, 2004), but that revivals were less likely to close very quickly (Maddison, 2005). It is not clear how the results from this study fit with Maddison’s work, though I suspect that the elimination of close-ended productions could be responsible for this contradiction.

Likewise, production costs, as indicated by the size of the cast, had a statistically significant influence on the length of the run of musicals but not of plays. When examining cast size, Gates (2013) found that plays with larger casts had higher earnings per week, but that there was no statistically significant relationship between earning and cast size for musicals. This may indicate that box office earnings for plays may compensate for the greater expense of having a large cast, but that this does not happen for musicals. However, without strong data on the capitalization for more Broadway productions, it is difficult to say for sure.

One interesting finding in this study was that for both types of productions, more recent open-ended shows have – on average – shorter runs. Additionally, musicals that open later in the Broadway season tend to have shorter runs than musicals that open earlier. This latter finding may be because Broadway producers often keep a show open until the Tony Award nominations are announced (Simonoff and Ma, 2003). Productions with a few or no nominations close quickly because the producers do not believe that the show can survive long without the additional attention and sales that the Tony Awards bring. A similar phenomenon happens after the Tony Award ceremony for productions that win few or no awards (Kulmatitskiy et al., 2015).
### Table IV.
Comparison of results for the combined sample, plays, and musicals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Combined</th>
<th>Plays</th>
<th>Musicals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cast size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month opened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year opened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Time-varying covariates (Tony Award nominations)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Play Revival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Revival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Musical</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Musical</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Time-varying covariates (Tony Award wins)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Play Revival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Revival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actor in a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actress in a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actor in a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured Actress in a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of a Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** ✓ = Variable has an odds ratio value < 0.900; X = variable has an odds ratio value > 1.111; – = variable does not apply to the data. A gray cell indicates that the variable was statistically significant (p < 0.05)
5.2 Tony Award nominations

H1 was supported by the results in Tables I-IV, which show that Tony Award nominations vary in the strength of their association with a production’s run. A slight majority of Tony Award nominations are associated with a longer run, while some nominations are associated with shorter runs. Unsurprisingly, the nominations for Best Play and Best Musical are associated with longer runs, which is in accordance with the traditional wisdom about these “marquee awards.” This supports H1a, which was that these high-profile overall nominations would be more strongly associated with a longer production run. It is also interesting to note that nominations for the directing awards are also associated with longer runs of Broadway plays but not for musicals. H1b was partially supported, with some technical nominations (for lighting design and costume design) being associated with shorter runs. However, some nominations for technical awards (for scenic design and sound design) were associated with longer production runs.

Interestingly, although actors are probably the most visible individuals in the Broadway industry, the impact of nominations for acting awards is mixed. The impact of a Tony Award nomination for Best Performance of an Actor in a Play is consistently negative on a play’s longevity (and nominations for featured actors have a less consistent impact), while nominations for Best Performance of an Actress in a Play were more beneficial to a play’s run. There is no known economic theory or characteristic of the Broadway industry that could have predicted this result for plays. On the other hand, the nominations for lead actor and featured actress are beneficial for musicals’ longevity, while other nominations have no impact on the length of a show’s run.

5.3 Tony Award wins

Like the results for Tony Award nominations, Tony Award wins are generally associated with longer production runs than shorter runs. Unsurprisingly, the award that had the strongest association with a longer production run was the Tony Award for Best Musical, with a nearly 60 percent reduction in the odds of closing. Indeed, of the 18 winners of the Tony Award for Best Musical in the data set, only one (Thoroughly Modern Millie) failed to recoup its initial investment (Hofler, 2004). Beyond this finding, the Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in a Musical is associated with a longer production run, while the Tony Award for Featured Actress in a Musical is associated with a production closing earlier. Generally, though, there was no clear pattern for either statistically significance or in effect size magnitudes for Tony Award wins compared to nominations, which contradicted H2.

5.4 Other findings

Finally, there are some minor unexpected results. One surprise was that although some Tony Award wins are associated with longer production runs, being nominated for the same award is associated with a shorter run. This is apparent in the Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Musical, Score, Orchestration (for musicals), and Costume Design (for musicals). There are two possible explanations for this phenomenon. One reason is that wide confidence intervals for the odds ratios may mean that these awards simply have randomly fluctuating parameter estimates and that there is too much “noise” in the data. Alternatively, shows that do not win these awards may be seen as “losers”, which could shorten the length of the show’s run. This latter interpretation is consistent with prior studies (Boyle and Chiou, 2009; Simonoff and Ma, 2003), which showed that a nomination for a major Tony Award did not lengthen the run of a Broadway production, but that winning a major award was associated with more performances.

An additional finding worth highlighting is the mixed impact of the awards for acting. Some prior researchers (Boyle and Chiou, 2009; Kulmatisky et al., 2015; Simonoff and Ma, 2003) assumed a priori that a Tony Award in an acting category was a “major” award that should be in the same category as the awards for best play or best musical. However, my
results show that lumping these acting awards together with the more prominent, production-wide awards (e.g. Best Musical) may make acting awards appear more economically beneficial than they really are. I suggest that later researchers investigating the economic impact of the Tony Awards should not automatically include acting awards as a “major” Tony Award in their analyses.

5.5 Implications

Although I expect very few ticket buyers to read a scholarly article about the relationship between the Tony Awards and Broadway production longevity, there are implications of this study for consumers. First, this study shows that not all Tony Awards are created equal; they have varying impacts on the length a production’s run, and this may reflect differing levels of signaling information for consumers. The high-profile Tony Awards for Best Musical and Best Play convey signaling information at a general level, indicating a high probability that the overall production will be enjoyable. Yet, other awards also convey their own form of signaling information. While this information pertains to specific parts of a production (e.g. acting, music, technical design), these parts of a production undoubtedly contribute to the overall quality – and therefore likely enjoyment – of a Broadway production. It is possible that other entertainment awards may also provide similar global signaling information about overall quality (e.g. the Olivier Award for Best New Play, the Academy Award for Best Picture).

Consumers should be aware of another implication of this study: the annual list of Tony Award nominations and wins can provide important clues to how long shows can expect to remain open. Tourists are nearly two-thirds of the Broadway audience, and many purchase their tickets weeks before their visit (Broadway League, 2016b). Audience members may use this study to decide when they should visit New York City in order to catch their preferred production. Those who are interested in a show that wins few or no Tony Awards can plan an immediate visit, while people interested in the Best Musical winner can probably delay theirs. For those working in the business of Broadway, this paper will not change many business practices. The time-invariant covariate results show productions generally have longer runs if they are musicals (instead of plays), have smaller cast sizes, open earlier in the Broadway season, and have strong marketing buzz in their opening (as measured by opening week ticket sales). All of these characteristics are surely well known among Broadway producers, as demonstrated, for example, by the trend toward smaller cast sizes in an effort to reduce costs (and therefore risk) in a highly competitive industry[5]. Still, marketers and producers will likely appreciate the confirmation that their practices are supported by empirical data.

Likewise, impressions of the impact of the various Tony Awards are also going to change little. The Tony Award for Best Musical is clearly the most important award examined, likely showing this particular award’s importance in conveying signaling information to a risk-adverse customer base. I expect that any producers and marketers in the Broadway industry who read this paper will continue their practice of emphasizing nominations and wins for this particular Tony Award. Likewise, the relatively small or negative impact of lesser-known awards (like for Best Choreography or Best Direction of a Musical) reflects the typical marketing practice of drawing little – if any – attention to these awards, even when a production wins one. But perhaps this study will refine marketing professionals’ view of the “hierarchy” of awards.

5.6 Limitations

There are a few limitations of this study that readers should be aware of. First, the low variance of all the time-invariant covariates resulted in very wide confidence intervals and low statistical power (see Tables I-III). As a result, the β estimates and odds ratios are
unstable, and additional data in future years may alter the results. Although the statistical power of this study is often low, it is important to note that the sample size of 429 productions is larger than most scholarly studies of the Broadway industry. In hindsight the low statistical power of the study seems obvious. However, it did not become apparent until the data analysis stage of this study.

Another limitation of this study is that it examines the individual impact of Tony Award nominations and wins – not their cumulative impact. Theoretically, to examine the influence on show longevity of a specific combination of awards, one could add their $\beta$ values together and then calculating $e^\beta$ to find the odds ratio. However, this procedure ignores the possibility of interactions among variables or of a unique cumulative impact of the number of Tony Award nominations or wins. While some readers may see this as problematic, it is important to remember that the purpose of this study was to compare individual Tony Awards for their impact on show longevity – not to examine combinations of awards or the cumulative result of a show receiving multiple awards. Readers who are interested in this sort of analysis are welcomed to download my data set from the journal’s archive and investigate these questions for themselves. (The data set and statistical code may be especially useful as practice for students who are learning Cox hazard regression.)

A final limitation is that this statistical model – and indeed no statistical model – can predict the existence of a “super hit” on Broadway. This is because outliers are – by definition – hard to predict (e.g. Taylor and Russell, 1937; Warne, 2018). Indeed, Maddison (2004) took note of this when he found that long-running shows have a natural decrease in their probability of closing solely by virtue of their long run. This may indicate that the very status of being a “long running production” is a source of signaling information for audience members.

6. Conclusions
The purpose of this study was to ascertain the relative influence of various Tony Award nominations and wins on the length of the run of Broadway productions. The results indicated that few nominations or awards had a statistically significant relationship (as judged by conventional $p < 0.05$ standards) with the number of performances of a production. By far, the strongest relationship among these variables, though, was winning the Tony Award for Best Musical, which supports conventional wisdom and prior research about the importance of this particular Tony Award.

However, because of low independent variable variance and a relatively large number of time-invariant covariates, statistical power was low for most independent variables in this study – despite the fact that this study had a larger sample size than many studies of this type. Therefore, it is still enlightening to consider the odds ratios for each independent variable. These effect sizes indicate that some Tony Awards have stronger associations with a longer production run than others – and that some nominations or wins are even associated with shorter production runs (e.g. the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play or Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Musical). However, for these non-statistically significant variables, it would probably be beneficial to remember the wide confidence intervals in Tables I-III and to interpret these results in a tentative fashion.

These results provide support for prior cultural economics research on the role of the Tony Awards in the Broadway industry. For producers, the awards are used as a marketing tool to encourage audience members to purchase a ticket to their production. For audience members, the Tony Awards are an important piece of signaling information that can them choose to attend a production that they are more likely to enjoy, thereby reducing the risk inherent with purchasing an expensive hedonic good. The results may also generalize to other open-ended theatrical productions, such as Broadway touring productions, West End plays, and open-ended shows in major world cities.
However, future research should investigate interactions among various Tony Award nominations and wins and the impact of the total number of nominations and wins on a production’s longevity. This may require much larger sample sizes than have been used in research on the Broadway industry. Although there are challenges in conducting these more sophisticated statistical analyses, with $1.3 billion in annual ticket sales in the Broadway industry (Broadway League, 2016a), even a marginally better understanding of the business and marketing of Broadway productions could result in large economically beneficial results for the industry.

Notes
1. At the time of this writing, Beauty and the Beast was the tenth longest running show in Broadway history.
2. There is also usually some same day discounting that often takes place in order to reduce the number of unsold seats, but this strategy rarely—if ever—produces as much income as adding a week of performances would. It seems to be more of a last-minute attempt to minimize losses that would come from unsold tickets. See Leslie (2004) for a description of this practice.
3. Beginning in 2010, Broadway producers began to use dynamic pricing, which is a type of third degree price discrimination that adjusts ticket price according to predicted demand (Healy, 2011). How producers and theater owners adjust prices according to demand is a proprietary business secret, and undoubtedly varying levels of sophistication are involved. A subjective executive decision to raise the price for some tickets by a set amount is a simple method of adjusting price to fit demand; this type of dynamic pricing is theoretically available to producers of any Broadway show. At the other extreme, Disney Theatrical Productions uses a sophisticated computer algorithm to adjust individual seat prices automatically (Healy, 2014). The latter method almost surely would only be available to productions that have a lengthy history (perhaps two to four years at minimum) of ticket sales data. Given the median length of a run for Broadway shows (see the second paragraph of the Results section), this type of dynamic pricing is not feasible for the vast majority of Broadway productions. Regardless of the type of dynamic pricing, it is unlikely that most productions see large increases in revenue from dynamic pricing unless close to 100 percent of seats are sold in a typical performance. This is because dynamic pricing can only greatly increase revenue if demand far exceeds supply and consumers see the product as being highly inelastic, with no substitutes. At the time of this writing these circumstances would only apply to a limited number of Broadway productions, such as The Lion King, Hamilton, and the 2017 revival of Hello, Dolly! starring Bette Midler. Although dynamic pricing is an interesting phenomenon that is relatively new to the entertainment industry, the potential impacts of dynamic pricing are not included in this study because dynamic pricing was not a standard business practice on Broadway for most of the time covered in the data set, and most producers do not publicly announce if and when they begin the practice, which makes the necessary data unavailable.
4. Tracking the costs of the most expensive Broadway shows is a stark indicator of how the cost of mounting a show has increased. In 1994, Beauty and the Beast was the most expensive show in Broadway history (Witchel, 1994), costing $12.5 million to mount. In 2008, the cost of the most expensive musical in Broadway history, Shrek the Musical, had doubled to $25 million (Healy, 2010). At the time of this writing, the most expensive Broadway show ever is Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark, which in 2011 cost $75 million to mount, in addition to the $1.2 million it cost each week to operate (Flynn and Healy, 2011).
5. The trend toward smaller cast sizes started long before the productions in this study, as shown by an examination of frequently revived musicals. The original 1950 production of Guys and Dolls had 38 cast members, while its 1976 revival had 30 cast members. Gypsy has likewise seen a similar reduction in cast size from its original 1959 production (44 cast members) to its first revival in 1974 (33 cast members). An extreme example is Oklahoma!, which debuted in 1943 with 56 cast members; its first revival (in 1951) had 44 cast members, and its latest revival in 2002 had a cast of 35.
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**About the author**

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Learning from the professionals: film tourists’ “authentic” experiences on a film studio tour

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Abstract
Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore how consumers perceive, experience and engage with the art of filmmaking and the industrial film production process that the film studios present to them during their guided film studio tours.
Design/methodology/approach – Drawing on the author’s own film tourist experiences, observations and participatory interactions with fellow visitors at a major Hollywood film studio, this paper takes an autoethnographic “I’m-the-camera” perspective and a hermeneutic data analysis approach.
Findings – The findings reveal that visitors experience the “authentic” representation of the working studio’s industrial film production process as an opportunity and “invitation to join” a broader filmmaker community and to share their own amateur filmmaking experiences with fellow visitors and professionals – just to discover eventually that the perceived community is actually the real “simulacrum”.
Research limitations/implications – Although using an autoethnographic approach means that the breadth of collected data is limited, the gain in depth of insights allows for a deeper understanding of the actual visitor experience.
Practical implications – The findings encourage film studio executives, managers and talent agents to reconsider current practices and motivations in delivering film studio tours and to explore avenues for harnessing their strategic potential.
Originality/value – Contrary to previous studies that have conceptualised film studio tours as simulacra that deny consumers a genuine access to the backstage, the findings of this study suggest that the real simulacrum is actually the film tourists’ “experienced feeling” of having joined and being part of a filmmaker community, which raises question regarding the study of virtual communities.
Keywords Authenticity, Simulacra, Autoethnography, Film studio tours, Film tourism, Visitor experiences

Introduction
Every year, more than 160 million consumers either travel to the distant locations they have seen on screen in their favourite films and TV shows (Batat and Wohlfeil, 2009; Beeton, 2005; Connell, 2005; Roesch, 2009) or visit film-theme parks (Beeton, 2015; King, 1981; Pettigrew, 2011; TEA/AECOM, 2015), film festivals (Unwin et al., 2007), film premieres and even the film studios themselves (Coudry, 1998; Kim, 2010, 2012) to catch a glimpse of “film magic” (Cousins, 2011) or “Hollywood glamour” (Barbas, 2001; Gabler, 1998). Contrary to popular perceptions and critical academic discourse, however, film tourism is not a recent global phenomenon but one that is nearly as old as the movies themselves (Barbas, 2001; Beeton, 2005, 2015). Indeed, from the early days of the film industry on, some film audiences have not felt content enough with only watching movies on the screen and, instead, travelled to the film premieres and the film studios in the hope of being able to see their favourite film stars in person or to witness first-hand how films are made. What is a rather recent development, though, is that the previously rather reluctant film studios have now begun to embrace and to capitalise from the growth in global film tourism by proactively catering with film-theme parks or guided film studio tours to this growing demand.

While the more popular and commercially more successful film-theme parks, such as the Disney-theme parks or the Universal Studios resorts in Hollywood, Orlando, Tokyo and...
Singapore, are thereby designed to provide consumers with an audio-visual environment, in which the fictional worlds of film texts (narrative, characters, settings and plots) are recreated as film-themed rides, shows, shops, restaurants and sceneries (Beeton, 2005, 2015; Costa and Bamossy, 2001; Firtat and Ulusoy, 2011; Houston and Meeberg, 2011), guided film studio tours offer visitors informative insights into the actual art of filmmaking and the industrial film production process of a working film studio (Beeton, 2015). But despite the growing relevance and importance of the film tourism industry to film studios, tourism boards and local communities, Connell (2012) concludes in her detailed review of the literature that we still lack even a basic general understanding of how consumers actually perceive, experience, interact with and relate to on-site film tourism destinations in general – and to guided tours of a working film studio in particular. Moreover, while the film studios officially proclaim to invite their audiences with their guided tours into the backstage of the film business, so that they can witness with their own eyes how films are really made, many cultural critics argue instead that visitors would only be presented with a “simulacrum”, a staged representation, of a film studio rather than the “real thing” and, therefore, are constantly required to negotiate the “(in)authenticity” of the presented with their visitor experiences (Beverland, 2006; Couldry, 1998; MacCannell, 1973; Tzanelli, 2007).

Thus, this autoethnographic paper takes an “I’m-the-camera”-perspective (Holbrook, 2006) to explore how consumers like me perceive, experience and engage with the world of film and filmmaking, which the film studios present to them during their guided studio tours, and, also, how they negotiate its “(in)authenticity” with their visitor experiences. Drawing on my own personal film tourist experiences, field observations, photographs and recorded conversations both with and between fellow visitors and staff at a Hollywood film studio, I shall take a closer look at what inherent consumer needs, desires and aspirations the guided film studio tour is catering to, what kind of film tourists in particular they are appealing to, and how visitors actually perceive, experience and relate to the presented guided film studio tour on location. Particular emphasis is hereby placed on examining how consumers perceive, experience and negotiate the “(in)authenticity” of what first-hand insights into the industrial film production process and the art of filmmaking is presented to them during the guided tour of a working film studio (Beverland, 2006; Goulding, 2000; Hedel et al., 2014). In so doing, it emerged that the guided film studio tour appeals especially to consumers with a serious leisure interest (Stebbins, 1982) in the art of filmmaking, who perceive it as an invitation to access the backstage of professional film production and to feel part of a wider filmmaker community. The findings of this study, thereby, suggest these consumers do not feel the need to negotiate the authenticity of the observed with their visitor experience because they know that the presented film studio is indeed the “real deal”. Instead, it is actually the visitors’ “experienced feeling” of having joined and being part of a filmmaker community that turns out to be the real simulacrum.

How the film studio became a tourist destination

Ever since the birth of the movies more than 120 years ago, many consumers have experienced and only too often followed up on their desire to visit those very locations that either they have seen on screen in their favourite movies and TV shows (Batat and Wohlfeil, 2009; Beeton, 2005; Connell, 2005; Roesch, 2009) or where those films have actually been made (Beeton, 2015; Buchmann et al., 2010; Couldry, 1998; Kim, 2012). In fact, Hollywood was barely born in the sparsely habited mangrove fields near Los Angeles, when thousands of male and female film fans already travelled every year throughout the 1910s and 1920s to Los Angeles with the desire to catch a glimpse of “Hollywood glamour” (Thorp, 1939) and to see first-hand how their favourite films were made (Barbas, 2001). However, along with them also came thousands of unaccompanied young girls, who had left their families behind and moved on their own to Hollywood in
the hope of a film career that seemed to promise them fame, glamour and, most importantly, economic independence (Barbas, 2001; Gabler, 1998).

Subsequently, influential social reformers like the Christian Temperance Union quickly accused the film industry of promoting promiscuity and vice (Gabler, 1998; Thorp, 1939). Under such pressure, the early film moguls reluctantly responded by introducing film studio tours from 1912 onwards to tackle those problems head-on. By taking consumers on guided tours around their film sets and backlots, the Hollywood studios could prove to their critics that the film industry has the same moral values and ethics as the automobile industry or any other industries for that matter (Epstein, 2005; Freedland, 2009). In addition, both film fans and aspiring actresses were able to satisfy their curiosity and desire for insights into film production and Hollywood glamour by witnessing with their own eyes the industrial process of how films were made and observing that the film industry may be not so glamorous after all but actually involved a lot of hard work (Barbas, 2001).

By the 1920s, the guided film studio tour had eventually evolved into a popular tourist attraction beyond Hollywood. For instance, the German UFA studios in Berlin were forced to run guided studio tours on weekends to appease the hundreds of film fans that were gathering outside their studio gates on any given day (Kreimeier, 1996). However, the film studio tour also started to play an important marketing role for the film moguls of the Hollywood studio era (Epstein, 2005; Freedland, 2009). Besides spending one day per week reading fan mail, studio executives like Carl Laemmle, Samuel Goldwyn, David O. Selznick, Cecil B. DeMille, Jack Warner or Irvin Thalberg begun to view their studio tours as a vital opportunity to have “a close ear to the voice of the audience” (Barbas, 2001, p. 139) and as a means of fostering strong emotional bonds between consumers and their studio brand decades before “relationship marketing” became a buzz word in the marketing literature. Nevertheless, despite their popularity and marketing value, the initial curtain call for the early film studio tours eventually came in 1929, when the arrival of sound made their continuation impossible (Epstein, 2012; Gabler, 1998; Kreimeier, 1996).

However, after the legally enforced breakup of the Hollywood studio system in 1950 led to severe economic pressures and major industrial changes within the film business (Epstein, 2005; Kerrigan, 2010), the guided film studio tours have since the 1960s enjoyed a renaissance. A new generation of studio executives has started to turn the major Hollywood film studios into today’s clearing houses that seek to maximise profits by commercialising their intellectual film properties obtained either via in-house film productions or via the acquired distribution rights for independent films (Epstein, 2012; Kerrigan, 2010). This includes the distribution of films to cinemas and auxiliary markets (i.e. TV, VHS/DVD or VoD) and the licensing of film text elements to third parties for suitable merchandising (Epstein, 2012; Kerrigan, 2010). Thus, when the Disney Corporation took the lead and began to commercialise their intellectual film properties as themed attractions in their film-theme park resorts (Epstein, 2005), Universal Studios and a few others followed suit. But despite the mass appeal of film-theme parks (TEA/AECOM, 2015) has proven to be a highly profitable way to offset the declining incomes from their traditional auxiliary markets, many global film studios like Warner Brothers, Paramount and Columbia TriStar have decided to revive their guided film studio tours as tourist attractions instead. As a result, the once reluctant film studios have started since the 1990s to cater proactively to the growing film tourism market by deliberately promoting their film studio tours as tourist attractions (Epstein, 2012).

How “authentic” are guided film studio tours?
In light of such a long history, it is quite surprising that film tourism – as a highly involved form of audience behaviour (Baumgarth, 2014; Halliday and Astafyeva, 2014) – has only in recent years received growing attention in the arts marketing and tourism literatures
Furthermore, early film tourism studies (Riley and van Doren, 1992; Schofield, 1996; Tooke and Baker, 1996) have looked primarily at what potential the either accidental or deliberate “product placement” of cities and landscapes in films may have for the marketing of tourist destinations. Soon, however, the scholarly discourse moved towards a more critical discussion about the economic, social and cultural implications that such film-induced tourism (Connell, 2005; Connell and Meyer, 2009; Hahm and Wang, 2011) or consumers’ experiences with film-induced images (Gkritzali et al., 2016; Tzanelli, 2007; Zhang et al., 2016) may have on those affected locations and local communities. From here, it does not take much extrapolation to see why the issue of authenticity and the authentic tourist or visitor experience (Goulding, 1999, 2000; Hede et al., 2014; Hede and Thyne, 2010) has caught the attention of critical scholars in arts marketing, film tourism and consumer research as well.

Traditionally, “authenticity” was perceived as an inherent property of a certain object, artwork, heritage site, local culture and practices, community or production process denoting that it is “real”, “genuine”, “truthful”, “legitimate” and even the “original” (Beverland, 2006; Beverland and Farrelly, 2010) – and, thus, sets it apart from the commercial, mass-produced “replication”, the “imitation”, the “fake” and, subsequently, the “inauthentic” (Baudrillard, 1970; Benjamin, 2006; Boorstin, 1961). Grayson and Martinez (2004), however, argue that authenticity is primarily a sociological-theoretical construct that describes what and how the real thing “ought to be”, as perceived, judged and expected by cultural critics, experts and also consumers. Since the judgement is largely based on personal expectations, a growing concern among scholars, therefore, is that the distinction between the authentic and the inauthentic becomes blurred (Hede et al., 2014). Museums and heritage sites present visitors increasingly with staged replications, imitations and “truthful” re-enactments of historic settings, cultures and everyday life or wildlife for a more “realistic effect” rather than with just displaying genuine, authentic artefacts (Goulding, 2000; Hede and Thyne, 2010). Thus, critical scholars theorise that consumers would constantly be on a quest for the authentic in life (Grayson and Martinez, 2004), but instead are only presented with false realities or staged replications and imitations of reality – so-called “pseudo-events” (Boorstin, 1961) and “hyper-realities” (Baudrillard, 1970) – and, subsequently, required to negotiate the authenticity of their visitor experiences with the presented inauthentic (Hede and Thyne, 2010). It is in this context that the critical discourse regarding the authentic visitor experience of film tourism sites is set.

Ever since the first Disney-theme park opened in Anaheim in 1954, critical scholars in sociology, cultural studies and consumer research (Baudrillard, 1970; Bettany and Belk, 2011; Boorstin, 1961; Costa and Bamossy, 2001; Houston and Meamber, 2011; Johnson, 1981; King, 1981) have been concerned with questions of whether, how and to what extent consumers would be duped into mistaking Disney’s themed and “sanitized”) hyper-realities for authentic representations of reality. In this context, Schickel (1985) often spoke of an ongoing “disneyfication” (aka “dumping down”) of society. Much of the recent critical film tourism discourse, however, is actually informed by MacCannell’s (1973) earlier work, which suggests that tourists often seek incursions into the everyday life of the visited destination’s community in order to experience its truly authentic culture and place. But although these tourists, according to MacCannell (1973), often believe that they have entered the intimacy of the visited destination’s hidden back regions, what they have really encountered would actually be a staged tourist setting (a simulacrum) that merely gave them the impression of having experienced the authentic local culture. The reason for it, as Urry (1990) and Tzanelli (2007) argue, is that the visited local community feels the need to cater to what it predicts to be the tourist’s expectation of the consumed culture (Brennan and Savage, 2012).
What has thereby caught the attention of critical film tourism scholars in particular is the fact that, due to financial and/or artistic reasons, film productions often use alternative locations as film sets to “stand in” for the fictional or “real” places shown in the film (Beeton, 2015). For example, New Zealand had famously stood in for Middle-Earth in Peter Jackson’s “Lord of the Rings” and “The Hobbit” trilogies, which have in return encouraged every year thousands of film tourists to go on organised “Middle-Earth” visitor tours (Buchmann et al., 2010; Roesch, 2009). Therefore, the critical film tourism discourse has focussed especially on the existential question of what exactly constitutes an “authentic tourist experience”, when the tourist destination is in fact a world of make-believe to start with. While much of the research has focussed so far on film locations (Buchmann et al., 2010; Connell, 2005; Roesch, 2009) and film-theme parks (Beeton, 2005; Costa and Bamossy, 2001) linked to particular film texts, even the few studio tours that have been studied are closely tied to a specific film or TV production like “Coronation Street” (Couldry, 1998), a Korean soap opera (Kim, 2010, 2012) or “Harry Potter” (Beeton, 2015). In reference to MacCannell (1973), film tourism scholars (Beeton, 2005; Couldry, 1998), thereby, argue that the primary motivation of film tourists to visit those film locations, film-theme parks or studio tours is to take a closer look behind the curtains and to enter the backstage area of their favourite film and TV productions or even the film industry in general.

For that reason, this often ideology-driven scholarly discourse views film locations, film-theme parks and even studio tours as “simulacra”, inauthentic reconstructions of reality. Although Couldry (1998) and Beeton (2015) challenge its inherent cognitive bias, this film tourism discourse seeks to examine how film tourists, in their search for a genuine backstage access to their favourite film texts and film productions, would constantly be required to negotiate the “authenticity” of their tourist experiences with visited film locations, film-theme parks and even film studio tours (Beeton, 2005; Buchmann et al., 2010; Connell, 2005). What is still missing from these critiques is an understanding of how consumers actually perceive, engage, experience and relate to on-site film tourism destinations in general (Beeton, 2015; Connell, 2012) and to guided film studio tours in particular. This paper seeks to address this deficit by exploring what kind of film tourists in terms of their personality and interests (Bachleda and Bennani, 2016) the guided film studio tour is appealing to, what inherent consumer needs, desires and aspirations it caters to and how visitors perceive, experience and negotiate the “(in)authenticity” of what is presented to them during the film studio tour.

Methodology

This paper takes an interactive autoethnographic approach (Gould, 2012; Patterson et al., 1998), which explores from an “I’m-the-camera”-perspective (Holbrook, 2005, 2006; Houston and Meamber, 2011) how consumers perceive, experience, interact, relate to and negotiate the “(in)authenticity” of the world of film and filmmaking that film studios present to them during their guided tours of a working film studio. While the overall research has studied the guided studio tour at three different film studios (Warner Brothers Studios, Paramount Studios and Babelsberg Studios), the present paper focusses exclusively on the Warner Brothers Studio Tour in Burbank/LA, which I had visited as a genuine film tourist during a short vacation in Hollywood and which is representative for the observed visitor experiences at all three sites, for reasons of detail and clarity in providing a compelling consumer story of the film tourism experience. My personal experiences, observations and conversations with or between fellow visitors and staff members were recorded during the visit as written field notes and a series of photographs (Wohlfeil and Whelan, 2012). Due to a previous research project, I was still in the habit of collecting my detailed experiences, thoughts and observations in an A6 notebook diary (Patterson, 2005), which I always kept on me at the time. As I was not the only person taking notes during the visit, neither staff
nor fellow visitors perceived the recording of field notes as intrusive. Permission for using the recorded quotes at some later time was obtained whenever the opportunity arose.

In addition, I also took 40 useable photographs during the Warner Brothers Studio Tour to gain further hermeneutic insights. While the use of photographs in marketing and consumer research is not new (Basil, 2011), their role has often been limited to supporting ethnographic observations as objective visual evidence (Heisley et al., 1991; Houston and Meeamber, 2011; Wohlfeil and Whelan, 2012) or as auto-driving devices to elicit consumer responses on their behaviour (Heisley and Levy, 1991; Scarles, 2010). The autoethnographic “I’m-the-camera” perspective, on the other hand, ascribes instead two simultaneous roles to photographs (Holbrook, 2005, 2006). First, they provide an objective representation of the observed reality (their “content”). Second, they are also subjective representations of the researcher’s personal gaze and experiences, which reveal themselves in the way the observed has been captured and framed in the picture (its “focus” and “composition”).

Hence, the photos were analysed hermeneutically with regard to their “content”, “focus” and “composition”. First, they were reviewed regarding their objective depiction of what exactly I observed during my visit. Then, the photos were interpreted in terms of what the camera angles, framing and figure-ground compositions (i.e. what is the picture’s central focus, what is pushed to the background and what is even excluded) reveal about my subjective experiences as a visitor. The field notes and recorded conversations with fellow visitors or staff members were examined in a similar pattern through part-to-whole readings (Wohlfeil and Whelan, 2012) and put into context with the photos. The following first-person consumer narrative summarises and presents the data and findings that emerged iteratively from the hermeneutic analysis, before I discuss the key findings in more detail.

Taking the Warner Brothers Studio Tour
Since my early childhood, I have not only enjoyed watching films for the pleasure they provide as an exciting way of temporary escape and a source of inspiration, but I have also been fascinated with the art of filmmaking and the film business. As a keen amateur filmmaker, I took the Warner Brothers Studio Tour during a short vacation in Hollywood to see first-hand how professionals produce their films. The Warner Brothers Studios have invited film fans like me onto their elaborate studio tour ever since Jack Warner moved them in 1918 from their original Sunset Boulevard lot to their current site in Burbank. Nowadays, the guided WB Studio Tour takes visitors around the actual soundstages and backlots of their real working film studio for between two and three hours. The tour starts every hour from the visitor centre at the studio gates that also serves as the retail outlet for Warner Brothers-themed merchandise. From here, a personal guide picks up the visitors in groups of 10-14.

Because the next tour group was already full when I arrived at 2.30 p.m., I booked instead a place with the following tour that was scheduled for 4 p.m. While waiting in front of the visitor centre, I experienced the meaning of “working studio” first-hand, when I joined a group of people watching from behind a fence when a film crew was shooting an opening scene for one of Warner Brothers’ TV crime dramas in the car park. What is particularly interesting is how film crews, with a bit of imagination, can make virtually anything within the studio grounds “stand in” for the “real” locations. An office building is quickly transformed into an airport, as in the film The Terminal, while a car park becomes a busy street along New York’s Central Park, as it was the case here. In order to create the necessary foot traffic, the crew even asked me and a few other onlookers to be extras. Thus, provided with a smart jacket and an attaché case, my film/TV debut in one of Warner Brothers’ TV crime drama required me to walk up and down the “street” looking busy.
When the studio tour started at 4 p.m., my group of 12 visitors was led into a small cinema in the visitor centre, where a 30-minute film introduced us to the history of Warner Brothers. Picking us up afterwards from here, our personal tour guide – who tends to be a scriptwriter, camera assistant, editor, art designer or sound technician employed by Warner Brothers – had a free hand in showing us whatever soundstages, backlots and other areas he thought were interesting to us or which we were asking for. Towards that end, he was constantly informed via walkie-talkie, which areas of the studio were free to visit and which ones were closed off for ongoing film shooting. Thus, every WB studio tour is different.

Sadly, taking photos is restricted to certain areas and video filming prohibited altogether. Hence, our cameras were locked into a safe on the cart tram and handed out at those locations, where we were allowed to use them. The tour guide explained this policy to us as

a) art directors hold the full copyrights for their set designs, and
b) that taking photos may also interfere with film shots.

The first thing we visited was the central backlot of a small US town’s marketplace, which is seen, e.g., in *Gilmore Girls*. Here, we were able to watch from a safe distance how a scene for a TV drama was shot. Next, we were introduced to two different types of soundstages. First, we visited the set of *Two and Half Men* on their day off, which represents the live audience set common for the half an hour TV sitcom format. Basically, the audience is seated opposite the length of the soundstage, which is divided into several sections (here from left to right: outside the front door, the living room (can be rotated), the kitchen, a bedroom and the balcony). The camera always shoots from the viewpoint of the audience. This was followed by two typical soundstages used for movies and TV dramas. Here, we learned how flexible the film sets are built to enable shooting a scene from various camera angles and lighting without the film audience noticing anything on screen.

The first stop, where we were finally allowed to take photos, was the storage room for specifically built cars and other trademarked props. Once each of us entered the storage room, it was a bit like children being let loose in a candy store, where everyone gravitated to and rapidly took photos of those cars and props that s/he recognised. The different *Batman* cars, *The Matrix* props and, of course, the *Harry Potter* car proved to be particularly popular, as Plates 1 and 2 show. And something else also happened in the moment we had access to our photo cameras and camcorders, as we began to compare...
our experiences with them. Up to that moment, there was very little interaction within the

group. But suddenly each of us seemed to realise that s/he is not the only one with a

strong interest in the art of filmmaking, but among other like-minded people. Our tour
guide also seemed to have picked up on these exchanges and led us on foot to a nearby
storage room for camera equipment, where we were able to talk to and get some

professional advice relating to lenses and lighting from members of Warner Brothers’
camera crews.

Due to the social exchanges and the earlier popularity of the soundstages with the

group, our tour guide brought us to an old soundstage, where we, as Plate 3 shows, were
allowed to take photos of the heritage-protected set design from the hit sitcom *Friends* that
Warner Brothers is not allowed to dismantle (which may also apply to the *Harry Potter*
sets in Leavesden). Interestingly, Plate 3 is the only photo taken during the tour, which
has me or any other person as its central focus. Afterwards, each of us was given the

Plate 2.
Flying car from *Harry Potter*

Plate 3.
On the studio set of *Friends*
exciting opportunity to play for the first time with a bluescreen. As can be seen in Plate 4, each visitor received a free digital photo with the Hogwarts train from the *Harry Potter* films as a reminder.

Partially on foot, the tour went on through Warner Brothers' different backlots, which everyone of us found pretty amazing and which we were allowed to photograph. At the city backlot, which serves as the background for various outdoor shots in most Warner Brothers films, we learned how these city street settings shown in Plates 5 and 6 can replicate with a few adjustments virtually any city in the world throughout all possible historical ages as well as any fictional or future settings:

Guide: We always use the same backlots for all films. If you look carefully, the streets here will be very familiar to you [...] It’s like Lego; the art directors attach a design to the facades and the streets look like NYC or Chicago in the 1930s or like London in Tudor times or like Gotham City [...] But only the outdoor scenes are shot here. All indoor scenes are filmed on soundstages.
The other backlots that we were shown included an American suburbia, where films like *The Burbs, Uncle Buck* or *Home Alone* and countless others have been shot, and the forest and lake backlot that is home to many adventure, war and horror films. As with the inner city backlot, the suburbia backlot only includes the facades of buildings shown in Plate 7 for outdoor/street shots. Only a few individual houses have a room built in, so that the camera can capture the look from the street into a house. All indoor shots are filmed on soundstages instead. The forest and lake backlot, on the other hand, is mainly a "nature" resort with a few individual cabins like the one in Plate 8, which can be turned into a farm, a diner, a petrol station or even a holiday camp. The lake has an adjustable water flow, so that it can simulate a lake, a river or even a beach (as in *The Beach*). It was particularly interesting to learn that the film studios, rather than competing with each other, share their respective backlots. For instance, a path through the woods was used for the T. Rex chase scene in...
Jurassic Park, even though the film was actually made by Universal Studios, as revealed in the following exchange between our tour guide and a fellow visitor:

Guide: This forest path was used among others for the T. Rex chase scene in Jurassic Park.

Male (30s): But Jurassic Park was made by Universal Studios. Why would they film here? Aren’t you supposed to be competitors?

Guide: It’s a paradox, I know. But the truth is that the film studios always share their backlots with each other. Columbia’s Spiderman was filmed here, too. Some Warner films are currently shot at Paramount, while […]

The Warner Brothers Studio Tour’s informal and personal atmosphere seemed to allow for a communal spirit to emerge between us visitors and the tour guide that enabled ongoing conversations to take place. During these conversations I learned that my fellow visitors ranged in age from 13 to the mid-50s, seem to come from a middle-class background and were overall well-educated. More importantly, however, every single one of us had some background knowledge of the film industry and a keen interest in filmmaking rather than Hollywood’s mythical glamour. Our personal experiences in amateur filmmaking were particularly evident in our displayed ownership and familiarity with (semi-)professional film equipment. Each visitor (including a 13-year-old girl who was very skilful with her DSLR camera) enjoyed sharing stories about their personal experiences with specific camcorder models, editing software and filmmaking practices with each other, and especially with the tour guide and other staff members as “more experienced” filmmakers:

Female (13): I just got a Sony HVR cam and I need a good editing software now. Which one is better? Final Cut or Premiere Pro?

Guide: Truth is there’s absolutely no difference between them. Editors use both of them equally. It’s mainly a question of whether they prefer Mac or PC.

Male (50s): I bet, digital technology is making filmmaking easier and much cheaper these days […]

Guide: It makes things easier for editors, definitely, and allows them more creative opportunities. But cinematographers and directors still prefer film. Better colours, better feel! But with film, a lot of expensive footage ends up in the bin – and producers hate that!
When we finally returned to the visitor centre after nearly three hours and the studio tour officially concluded with the opportunity to buy some Warner Brothers-themed merchandise, the informal and excited conversations with the tour guide and among us visitors continued for another half an hour. Like my fellow visitors in the group, I found the Warner Brothers Studio Tour a much more exciting, informative and memorable experience than the standardised, orchestrated and, especially, inauthentic counterpart at Universal Studios' nearby theme park, which – by coincidence – each of us had also visited over the previous days. But, sadly, once we left the studio grounds, each visitor also left the communal spirit behind and went their own ways.

Concluding Discussion
The consumer narrative offers some interesting insights into how consumers perceive, experience, engage with, relate to and negotiate the “(in)authenticity” of a guided film studio tour and what is presented to them, which have emerged iteratively from the hermeneutic analysis of my autoethnographic data and which would have largely been inaccessible to traditional methodologies. In so doing, this study offers a deeper understanding of a highly involved group of arts consumers – the film tourist – and how film studios might be able to benefit from catering to their aspirations. Since critical scholars have previously discussed film studios and film locations mainly as the production site for a specific film text (Beeton, 2005; Buchmann et al., 2010; Connell, 2005; Kim, 2012) and the film studio tour usually in relation to the choreographed Universal Studio Tour or the stunt shows of the old movie ranches (Beeton, 2015), it should therefore come to no surprise that the critical film tourism, arts marketing and consumer research discourse conceptualise film studio tours as staged representations of a film production’s actual “backstage”, which present film tourists with mere reconstructions of the film sets, stunts and special effects rather than the real deal (Beeton, 2005; Couldry, 1998). Hence, consumers searching for “backstage access” would constantly be forced to negotiate the “authenticity” of their tourist or visitor experiences with the inauthenticity of what has been presented and observed (Buchmann et al., 2010; Hede et al., 2014; Hede and Thyne, 2010).

But as the hermeneutic analysis of the autoethnographic data clearly shows, film studio tours like the Warner Brothers Studio Tour, whose central themes are the art and craft of filmmaking and the industrial realities of the film business, actually take their visitors on a guided tour through an actual working film studio. Therefore, consumers are indeed given a genuine temporary access to the backstage of the industrial film production process instead of being merely presented with staged reconstructions of a film studio and some film sets. As a result, the autoethnographic data have revealed that film tourists on the Warner Brothers Studio Tour do not feel the need to negotiate the authenticity of their tourist experiences with a visited inauthentic representation (simulacrum), as critical scholars have theorised, because they “know” that the working film studio they are visiting is the real deal (Beverland, 2006) – and not just a staged simulation of a Hollywood film studio. As visitors are shown in small groups around the actual film sets, soundstages, backlots and any other interesting and administrative facilities by a knowledgeable studio employee in an interactive, flexible and personalised manner while real film and TV productions take place all around them, the authenticity of the presented, observed and experienced has – for them – never been in doubt.

It should come to no surprise that the autoethnographic narrative identifies a specific type of film tourists to whom the guided tour of a working film studio appeals in particular. Unlike those studio tours that are associated with the set of a specific film or soap opera and, thus, are clearly aimed at their fans or wider media audiences (Couldry, 1998; Kim, 2010), the guided studio tour of a working film studio seems to appeal especially to those film tourists, who have a serious leisure interest (Pestana and Codina, 2017; Stebbins, 1982) in the art of
filmmaking and are keen to take a closer look behind the scenes of the professional film business and the industrial realities of the film production process. As my observations and conversations at the Warner Brothers Studio Tour reveal, many visitors at the guided studio tours of a working film studio seem to have (some) personal experiences as amateur or hobby filmmakers, which is also evidenced by the semi-professional camcorders and DSLR cameras that each of them was carrying with them as well as their understanding of advanced editing software. Hence, they tend to take the guided film studio tour with a view to pick up some useful tips, advice and practices from the professionals that could improve their own creative filmmaking skills as amateurs or hobbyists. In addition, they appreciate in particular that the informal, social atmosphere of the film studio affords them with the opportunity and site to connect with other filmmakers and to share their personal experiences with specific (semi-) professional camcorder models, editing software, etc. and filmmaking techniques in personal dialogues with each other, the tour guide and any of the film studio’s technical crews met on the tour as “kindred spirits”.

Similar to Buchmann et al.’s (2010) findings, the tour guide is thereby ascribed the role of the “facilitator”, whose knowledgeable enthusiasm and professional expertise as a “fellow filmmaker” and whose approachability as a “kindred spirit” is strongly appreciated by visitors, and this is key to their enjoyment of the film studio tour and to stimulating a feeling of community to emerge within the group (Wood and Moss, 2015). But despite the visitors’ expressed desire to continue the experienced social connection among “fellow filmmakers” beyond the guided studio tour of the working film studio itself within a creative, co-creating filmmaker community (Halliday and Astafyeva, 2014), it also is apparent that neither studio executives nor professional filmmakers working at those film studios like Warner Brothers seem to share their desire. This interesting finding, therefore, suggests that, even though film tourists are briefly granted as visitors a genuine access to the backstage of a Hollywood film studio, where they are indeed presented with a genuine, authentic representation of a working film studio, it is instead the visitors’ “experienced feeling” of having joined a filmmaker community that turns out to be the actual simulacrum. Hence, it is only fitting that the obligatory sale of Warner Brothers-branded merchandise at the end of the guided film studio tour (Brennan and Savage, 2012) symbolically closes the door again and returns everyone back into their respective place(s). Of course, such a response is not only confined to guided film studio tours, as many museums, art galleries, theatres or music venues also fail to engage with those audiences, who have not only a serious leisure interest in such arts as amateurs or hobbyists but also seek to be(come) a part of the community, beyond their immediate visit.

For film studios, such as Warner Brothers, this failure to offer a platform for those visitors, who engage in filmmaking as a serious leisure activity (Pestana and Codina, 2017; Stebbins, 1982), to sustain their experienced feeling of community as filmmakers beyond the guided studio tour itself is very short-sighted and presents a lost opportunity to build a long-term consumer-brand relationship with a very eager and highly involved film audience. Maintaining the dialogue with and among those amateur and hobby filmmakers both online and in a series of local meetings and events with a studio brand community, as Halliday and Astafyeva (2014) suggest, could result in the creative co-creation of value in terms of brand reputation and new talent development that may benefit the film studio in the long term. For example, by providing a dedicated website to filmmaking, where professional, amateur and hobby filmmakers could share their personal experiences with each other, give and receive advice with regard to their own projects and, perhaps, even to showcase their own creative works to an appreciative, but also critical audience of “kindred spirits” rather than the average YouTube viewers, the film studio could position itself as a champion for creative filmmaking and talent development among all levels of “professionalism”, gender and ages and reengage millennial consumers with the joys of cinema. This could be
supported with the provision or sponsorship of localised film festivals as an opportunity for amateur and hobby filmmakers to showcase their creative work to a broader audience, which are not only legitimated by the championing film studio but also fosters the development of new filmmaker talent and film narratives for the film studio’s future film production output.

Obviously, I do not imply that the presented autoethnographic data and the presented findings can be generalised. Nor do I pretend that my interpretation of the collected complex autoethnographic data would be the only possible one, far from it. Moreover, I do not pretend that many readers of Arts and the Market may share my interest in filmmaking, film tourism and film studio tours either. What I do suggest, however, is that some really interesting insights have emerged with regard to the authenticity of the backstage access that is presented to consumers during the guided studio tour through an actual working film studio, whereby the presented and observed is authentic while the experienced feeling of belonging now to a community of filmmakers turns out to be the true simulacrum. What I also suggest is that this finding has some implications beyond the immediate context of this study of film tourism in general that warrant further debate. And the moment, too many managers believe that audiences visiting their museums, heritage sites, theatres, music venues or art galleries would only have a casual leisure interest (Stebbins, 1997) in an entertaining front stage experience or “show”. While this would true for many visitors, they would also do well to consider offering a backstage access to those audiences with a serious leisure interest in the presented art or heritage (Pestana and Codina, 2017) and finding a way to integrate them. A further implication of the main finding is that, with a growing number of academic studies researching online communities on websites and social media as authentic representation of the actual arts audiences and co-creating brand communities, questions need to be raised whether consumers and academic scholars alike may mistake what are actually simulacra, inauthentic online representations or pseudo-events (Baudrillard, 1970/2017; Boorstin, 1961) of such communities, for the real deal.

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Tournaments of values at the European film market

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Abstract

Purpose – With film sales markets becoming increasingly popular events where the film business gathers several times each year, the purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that they should be understood as events where important gatekeeping processes are taking place. That is to say, sales markets are the point where important decisions about films are made, where sales agencies negotiate access to international markets, and where they exert influence over the sort of access given to specific films.

Design/methodology/approach – Drawing on qualitative methods such as participant observation and interviews, the author develops a case study of the European Film Market (EFM) in Berlin. The author analyses value creation processes at the EFM, focusing specifically on the disposition of exhibition space and the importance of film screenings.

Findings – Drawing on the literature about tournaments of value, the author demonstrates that sales markets endow films with significant values, exercising a powerful role over the process of enabling cultural flow. The author also demonstrates that there is a symbiotic relationship between the EFM sales market and the Berlin International Film Festival, providing a context from which films can generate attention.

Originality/value – The author provides new insights into film sales processes within sales markets, and the role of sales agents in influencing such processes. The author argues that sales markets exert an important influence over gatekeeping by creating social and cultural hierarchies that impact on the sales process of films.

Keywords Value creation, Film distribution, Gatekeeping, Independent film, Sales markets

Paper type Research paper

1. Tournaments of values

Film sales markets are important events in the film distribution business, exercising a powerful role over the process of regulating cultural flow and the ways films secure access to both national and international markets. They offer a self-contained marketplace within which sales agents introduce and promote several thousands of films to distributors and other types of buyers in the film distribution business (Smits, 2016, 2017). For sales agents, they are highly competitive events in which only few films are able to build up awareness and raise sufficient attention. As such, they impact on the process of regulating and enabling the circulation of films, as well as over the process of value creation by rendering some films more visible within the sales markets than others.

The role of sales markets and other competitive events has been analysed by scholars in media and communication studies as well as management and organisation studies. Lampel and Meyer (2008) put together a special issue about field configuring events. The focus here is on the most important sales markets and other competitive events as conventions that collectively bring about “social and economic change” in particular fields of business activity (2008, p. 1025). Moeran and Strandgaard Pedersen (2011), in addition, put together an edited collection about value creation processes at sales markets and other competitive events, focusing specifically on fields of cultural activity. Moeran’s (2011) own contribution, for instance, takes book fairs as the subject of analysis. Following Arjun Appadurai’s (1986) concept of tournaments of value, contributors to this
edited collection conceive of sales markets and other competitive events as tournaments that stand out from the “routines of [everyday] economic life” (p. 21). In order to highlight that value creation processes impact on the commodities being bartered at such events, Moeran and Strandgaard Pedersen (2011, pp. 12–14) have further developed the concept of tournaments of value, arguing that they should be understood as tournaments of “values”. In particular, they distinguish between technical/material values, social values, situational values, appreciative values and utility values at festivals, sales markets and other competitive events. Havens (2011), one of the contributors to the edited collection, is more attentive to the tournaments within sales markets through which values for cultural commodities are created. For instance, he argues that different levels of access to industry participants at sales markets create different business networks:

Global television markets permit multiple levels of participation, leading to several distinct yet overlapping tournaments of values, by constructing boundaries that only authorized participants may cross. These boundaries include the entryway to the space of the market, various sales floors within the marketplace, restricted areas of sales floors and booths and various parties and events after the markets close each day (Havens, 2011, p. 156).

Havens’ interpretation of tournaments is thus related to different organisational forms within a sales market through which values are created, rather than describing the sales market as a single tournament of value. Like Havens (2011) and Moeran and Strandgaard Pedersen (2011), I will adopt the concept of tournaments of values in this paper to analyse how values are ascribed to films at sales markets.

I will develop a case study of the European Film Market (EFM) in Berlin, Germany. The EFM is an integrated section of the Berlin International Film Festival (the Berlinale), which takes place simultaneously. It is one of the three key sales markets in the film industry where the sales and distribution community comes together each year in February, alongside Le Marché du Film in Cannes in May and the American Film Market (AFM) in Santa Monica, Los Angeles in November. Strategically located around the Potsdamer Platz commercial centre in the heart of Berlin, this is a market in which 490 trade exhibitor organisations – sales agencies (known as sales agents) and national film agencies – rented space at the 2015 edition, and worked from exhibition stands or business offices in one of the two official market venues: Martin-Gropius-Bau (MGB) and Marriott Hotel (European Film Market (EFM), 2015a). Also, a further 50-60 sales agencies were working from non-partner hotels. Altogether, they introduced their film collections to distributors and other buyers, such as television broadcasters, film festival programmers, content aggregators and digital providers, with more than 1,500 such companies participating (EFM, 2015a).

The EFM lends itself as a useful case study because values are created through both spatial arrangements and physical arrangements in the sales market. In line with the papers of Havens (2011) and Moeran (2011), factors such as the type of exhibition stands as well as the location and size of stands in the market are examples of spatial arrangements through which sales agents create values for films. In addition, values are created through film screenings at the EFM, which are important physical arrangements. Film screenings give an aural and visual presence to the films being bartered, and that is how film markets as well as television markets stand out from other sales markets in fields of cultural activity. Crucially, film screenings provide a better insight into the film sales process, since they are organised by sales agents for individual films. In other words, it provides an opportunity to take the analysis of Havens (2011) and Moeran (2011) further by linking processes of value creation within the market to the actual sales process, which is the point around which the sales market revolves. With this focus in mind, the aim of this paper is to analyse the EFM sales market as an event where important gatekeeping processes are taking place. This raises several questions. How do sales agents make use of spatial and physical arrangements within the EFM to create values for films? How are tournaments of values
supportive to the film sales process? And how do sales markets impact on processes of regulating and enabling the circulation of films?

Following a consideration of theory and methodology, I will analyse the organisation of exhibition space within the sales market to get an impression of the full range of exhibitors, and to consider their participation in terms of position-taking and visibility in the market. The purpose is to draw parallels with and further develop studies in other fields of cultural activity focussing on the disposition of exhibition space. In addition, I will analyse the organisation of film screenings in various stages of a film’s production process. Film screenings are already important during the production stage of films, when the first scenes are shot and a short promo is prepared to show to distributors at the sales market, and continues to the point where the finished film will be on show at the festival screenings, or at the market screenings, or a combination of both. The focus is on film screenings as promotional events, contributing to the process of generating all-important industry buzz. I will conclude with a consideration of how spatial and physical arrangements within the sales market can reinforce each other as tournaments of values, and how they are able to impact on sales processes, with the purpose of demonstrating how sales markets can exert influence over the circulation of films.

2. Analysing film sales markets
I will further elaborate in this section on the organisation of exhibition space and film screenings as tournaments of values. More specifically, I will consider how the organisation of exhibition space has been analysed in academic discussions and how sales markets create social hierarchies through the disposition of space. I will also provide a context through which to understand the importance of film screenings at sales markets, and how they can add values to films.

Before I start this discussion, it is worth noting that film scholars and those focussing on the film industry from other perspectives have consistently prioritised the study of film festivals above the study of film sales markets. In terms of discussions about sales markets in the film industry, there is as yet no comprehensive examination of the structure and organisation of such markets, and the impact of processes of value creation within such markets is therefore largely unknown.

Ruby Cheung’s (2011) study on film sales markets in Asia perhaps bears most resemblance to this subject. Cheung outlines the relevance of various sales markets in Asia by positioning them in relation to the bigger markets in Europe and the USA. However, rather than analysing value creation processes within those markets, her discussion remains primarily descriptive and contextual, and is therefore best understood as an introduction to sales markets.

In terms of sales markets in other fields of cultural activity, Havens (2011) and Moeran (2011) have analysed how sales agents participate in television markets and book markets. They note that the organisational structure of sales markets creates opportunities for sales agents to work from more or less exclusive exhibition stands or offices. Therefore, they observe social hierarchies between sales agents, effectively distinguishing between those presenting themselves as more or less powerful companies. Those social hierarchies created within the sales markets have an impact on the values ascribed to the films with which sales agents engage. In particular, they highlight the importance of stand size and stand location as strategies used by sales agents to enhance their presence and visibility within the sales market and stand out from competitors. Thus, Havens (2011, p. 155) notes that the most powerful sales companies hire the biggest exhibition stands or work from private offices in hotels to establish an exclusive position within the sales market, and with access only for selected buyers. Such specific spatial arrangements within sales markets reinforce social hierarchies between sales agents, and that is why they can be understood as important
tournaments of values. I will analyse the impact of such spatial arrangements at the EFM. What kinds of sales agents participate in the EFM and how do they participate? How is space allocated to those sales agents? And how does the allocation of exhibition space impact on the process of value creation?

While Havens is very attentive to spatial arrangements in television sales markets, he is less attentive to physical arrangements, such as television screenings. Like screenings at film sales markets, television screenings are a form of promotional activity through which new television series or programmes are introduced to buyers. However, there is also an important difference between film and television markets: the film markets are often organised in joint coordination with film festivals, with the festival screenings taking the form of additional tournaments of values through which films are presented aurally and visually. In terms of how film festivals and sales markets are interrelated with each other, it is possible to draw a comparison with tournaments of values in the fashion industry. Entwistle and Rocamora (2011), for instance, have demonstrated that trade fairs and fashion shows are both events where fashion companies introduce and promote new collections as part of the sales process.

In terms of the EFM, it is important to distinguish between film screenings organised within the EFM sales market (i.e. market screenings), and those organised in the Berlin International Film Festival (i.e. festival screenings). Indeed, while the EFM is a business event with restricted access for industry participants, it is also an integrated section of the publicly accessible Berlin International Film Festival. These two events are connected in the sense that some films are introduced to festival audiences through screenings as part of the official festival programme, while simultaneously being shown to the industry participants at market screenings in the EFM. This symbiotic relationship can thus add market and word-of-mouth values to films. However, the two events are distinct in the sense that films shown in the official festival programme are selected by festival committees, while films shown in the sales market are booked by sales agents (EFM, 2015b). Unlike the films selected for the official festival programme, a screening fee is required to book film screenings in the sales market, which are thus very much business transactions rather than artistic celebrations. This calls for an analysis of film screenings in relation to the value creation process. How can screenings be supportive to films? And why are some films able to raise more attention through screenings than others?

3. Observing sales agents at the EFM

The empirical analysis draws on four days of participant observation at the EFM 2015. I was able to register for market accreditation, which gave me the same access to locations and events as sales agents and distributors, including access to film screenings organised within the EFM sales market. This enabled me to observe the organisational structure of the sales market and the stands from which sales agents worked. Because I introduced myself to sales agents as an Academic Researcher, I did not participate in exactly the same way as distributors normally do. I gained access to individual stands and watched promos of films in development, but my capacity to observe meetings or the process of negotiating distribution deals was limited. For instance, I entered the hotel office of the US sales agent The Weinstein Company, where I talked about the sales market with some of their representatives and watched some of their promos, but I did not have one-to-one meetings.

In addition, I used my professional relationships with distribution professionals to observe work practices at the sales market. For instance, I joined the manager director of a Dutch distribution company for a few hours at the sales market. While we explored different sections of the sales market, she informed about the market structure and the ways in which sales and distribution professionals conduct business. Through the same contact, I obtained access to an informative meeting between her and a German sales agent in which a number
of films in development were discussed. I was introduced as someone with a key interest in film distribution, rather than as a colleague. This meeting was helpful to learn about the way films are introduced to distributors and the tone of such conversations. Such meetings are usually organised in advance of more specific meetings in which contractual terms are negotiated for films. I used my professional relationships with distribution professionals also to meet informally for drinks in the evenings to talk about my observations at the sales market and discuss attractive projects on offer in the marketplace. Such conversations were important to test and confirm my understanding of business proceedings at the sales market.

I spent much of my time in the official locations of the sales market. I consulted the exhibitor guide, which included a floor plan of the sales stands and all participating exhibitors. From my observations, it became clear that the majority of sales agents consisted of only two or three sales persons, and most participated in booths coordinated by national film agencies, the so-called umbrella stands. A much smaller group of between 50 and 80 sales agents were larger organisations, usually comprising more than five representatives, and they could afford to set up offices in individual stands or hotel rooms. While those larger sales agents represented most of the higher-profile, big-budget films for sale at the EFM, the smaller sales agents dealt with smaller, more specialist films.

I also analysed film catalogues from individual sales agents, which included information about the status of their films in various stages of the film production process. It became clear that film projects on offer at the EFM ranged from low-budget films to medium-budget films and even big-budget mainstream films. Although the majority of the projects were low-budget films, a limited number of much more high-profile films stood out. For instance, the powerful US sales company IM Global represented the $40 million budget *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016), directed by Mel Gibson, while the powerful US company Sierra/Affinity represented the $20 million budget *Gold* (2016), with film actor Matthew McConaughey in a leading role.

In addition, I analysed screening schedules of films handled by each sales agent. Such schedules included screening dates for various types of screenings – that is to say, for festival screenings accessible to festival audiences and industry participants with festival accreditation, for market screenings accessible only to industry participants with a market badge, for press screenings accessible only to registered press members, for festival premieres accessible to invited guests and press members, and for private screenings or promo reels organised for a select group of buyers. Those screening schedules of individual sales agents thus provided an insight into the way films are introduced to buyers, the trade press and festival audiences. I also consulted the daily editions of the trade journals *Screen International*, *Variety* and *The Hollywood Reporter* that were specifically produced for the EFM. Such journals were important to learn about the latest developments within the sales market and to get a sense of industry buzz through reports about film deals, reviews and advertisements.

Additional information about the organisation of the market was collated from the official Berlinale website, and from interviews with the Market Director, Matthijs Knol, and the Head of Administration, Tilmann Vierzig. The interviews provided an opportunity to learn further about the organisation of exhibition space and film screenings, and to improve my knowledge of the market structure.

4. The organisation of exhibition space
The centrally located Potsdamer Platz area in Berlin has been the centre of the EFM since 2000. The gradual growth and expansion of the EFM in the last 17 years resulted in the need to relocate to locations in and around this area. In particular, trade observers note that the EFM has developed rapidly since 2006, when the market organisers decided to move into a
bigger market building, the MGB, which is also located in the Potsdamer Platz area. Brown (2005), for instance, notes that the market capacity increased from 170 exhibitors to 300 exhibitors in 2006. Given the fact that the sales market continued to grow even further, the Marriott Hotel became the second official market building in 2009 (Pham, 2009). This marked the beginning of a new infrastructure that has remained in place up to the present.

I will now discuss how sales agents position themselves within these official locations of the sales market. As noted above, there was also a group of 50–60 sales agents that worked from non-partner hotels, and they are also included in the analysis.

4.1 Exhibition space in the MGB
The MGB is the main exhibition centre of the sales market, comprising 104 stands spread over two floors (EFM, 2015c). It is best understood as a venue where industry professionals conduct business in a relatively informal atmosphere. In terms of the creative orchestration of exhibition stands in the MGB, the Director of the EFM, Matthijs Knol (2015), noted in an interview that they exerted full control over the positioning and coordination of stands, and this allowed them to create a business environment that was supportive for sales agents large and small.

The central hall of the MGB was used as both a social space and a business space. Many industry professionals gathered there to network, but there were also two large exhibition stands. These were allocated to the Creative Europe/MEDIA programme, EU's flagship support mechanism for the audio-visual industries, and the Spanish Film Agency, which brought together various sales agents and film bodies from Spain. They had a strong presence in the market because of the central location of their booths. Most of the exhibition stands of sales agents, however, were located in the hallways surrounding the central hall of the EFM. The informal atmosphere in the MGB was also evident in terms of the arrangement of the exhibition stands in the MGB, with many stands facing each other and designed with open ends, making them very accessible for market participants. In fact, while they were integrated into the public space, they also functioned as private spaces.

Moeran (2011, p. 130) notes that such spatial arrangements in the sales market underline the importance of visibility. In particular, he notes that visibility is important in relation to the location and size of exhibition stands. Crucially, visibility is therefore a means through which power is exercised, since a bigger stand demonstrates that sales agents are prepared to invest more in their positioning in the EFM. This is underscored by the fact that the rental price of an exhibition stand at the EFM relates to the size of stands; the price of an individual stand at the MGB was €420 per square metre in 2015 (EFM, 2015a).

The size of stands also matters because bigger stands have more privileges in terms of design and equipment, which has an impact on the business experience of buyers. For instance, the Martin-Gropius-Bau (2015) guidelines demonstrate that small booths of between 9 and 15 square metres are open stands comprising one table and four chairs, while bigger booths of between 16 and 30 square metres include two tables and eight chairs, but also one closed office, which allows the sales team to conduct business with buyers privately. Then there are two even larger stand sizes: stands of between 31 and 55 square metres come with two closed offices, and stands of 56 square metres or more come with three closed offices. For stands of those sizes, wall segments are also provided as a means to further promote specific films. Beyond the fact that the bigger stands are more visible in the market than smaller stands, it is clear that they offer more flexibility in the sense that some business meetings are organised in the open space, while other meetings take place in closed offices with restricted access.

The MGB guidelines also demonstrate that the cost of exhibition stands depend on whether sales agents decide to hire an individual stand or join a so-called umbrella stand. In terms of individual stands, they are usually shared between two companies to reduce the
costs of rental, but some companies can afford the luxury of hiring such stands exclusively by themselves. In terms of umbrella stands, they are usually coordinated by national film agencies to accommodate three or more companies, which may involve sales agents and/or national or regional film institutions. For instance, I observed that the UK umbrella stand, called “We Are UK Film”, offered space to small UK sales agents such as Dogwoof, Parkland Films and AV Pictures, as well as UK film institutions such as the British Film Institute, Creative England, Creative Scotland and Northern Ireland Screen. The main advantage for those organisations is that they are able to hire exhibition space as part of a larger group, without the need to hire at least nine square metres individually. Given the limited space on umbrella stands and the relative smallness of these different companies, their sales teams usually consist of only one or two representatives. It is clear that such smaller sales companies working from umbrella stands participate in the EFM differently than sales agents working from more prestigious, individual stands.

With such diverse interests at stake for specific types of sales agents, the planning and organisation of the EFM sales market involves responding to the competing demands of these participating sales agents. In making decisions about the allocation of exhibition space in response to the requests of different types of sales agents, the EFM notes that they apply two conditions in particular (EFM, 2015d). First, they are “taking into consideration the overall layout of the EFM and the nature of the Exhibitor’s activities”. Second, while they make an effort to “fulfil the Exhibitor’s requests in terms of stand/office size and location”, they give “priority to companies returning from year to year, however, without the guarantee of the same space being available each year”. Thus, even though sales agents may be prepared to invest in an exclusive exhibition stand or office at a particular location of the sales market, the market organisers are not always able to accommodate their requests. Because the market organisers retain the right to make decisions about the allocation of exhibition space, services and facilities, the pressure on such decisions inevitably grows if competition is fierce and space is scarce.

In terms of exhibition space allocated to sales agents in the MGB at the 2015 sales market, I observed that the biggest individual stands were allocated to some of the largest and most successful European sales agents, such as Wild Bunch, Pathé and Gaumont from France, Hanway and Protagonist from the UK, Beta Cinema from Germany and Fortissimo Films from the Netherlands. Further, I observed that very few American sales agents worked from individual stands in the MGB because they preferred to work from the associated hotels in the area. Another important observation is that the biggest umbrella stands in the MGB were allocated to national film agencies from the so-called “big five” markets within Europe: Germany, Spain, France, Italy and the UK. Other large umbrella stands were taken by film agencies from Scandinavia, Russia, Creative Europe and the global film trade association IFTA.

4.2 Exhibition space in the Marriott Hotel

The organisational structure of the second market location, the Marriott Hotel, is markedly different from the MGB due to the nature of the Marriott as a high-end business organisation providing overnight accommodation and other services. Although the Marriott Hotel is thus not specifically designed for the purpose of organising a temporary marketplace for films, I observed that it is nevertheless a popular location because it offers a combination of luxury and exclusivity that appeals to some of the biggest sales agents in the distribution business.

Further, what makes the Marriott Hotel unique in its structure is that sales agents participated in “stands”, “offices” or “suites”, which were spread over four floors. Thus, on the first floor, they created a small business marketplace comprising 29 exhibition stands, which was in many ways similar to the orchestration of exhibition stands in the MGB.
Most of them were relatively small umbrella stands allocated to non-European film agencies. There was, in addition, a much more formal and exclusive way of conducting business, whereby trade exhibitors worked from private hotel rooms that were transformed into temporary offices. Such offices were allocated to about 40 sales agents spread over different floors. Knol (2015) notes that the creative influence of the EFM was very limited in terms of changing the design or decoration of those rooms. The business experience in those hotel offices was therefore very different from the way sales agents participated in exhibition stands. Thus, hotel offices are closed rooms and usually accessible by invitation only. Most of the offices were single rooms hired by individual sales companies rather than national film agencies. The rental price of a single-room hotel office was €8,000 per room, which is the equivalent of the price for a 19-square-metre stand in the MGB, but these hotel offices were smaller (EFM, 2015a).

In addition to single-room hotel offices, I also observed that some companies hired bigger suites, or several single-room offices next to each other. For instance, the French sales agent StudioCanal hired one of those suites. They used one room as a lounge where distributors and other buyers could watch promos of their films, while other rooms were more secluded to allow private business meetings to take place. The rental price of these more spacious hotel suites was much higher, starting at €16,800 on the first and second floor, while the prices for a suite on the top floor were only available upon request. It is thus clear that some sales agents deliberately hired such suites to stand out from others and present themselves as powerful companies. In this respect, the location of suites also impacted on their competitive positioning, as the biggest sales agents demonstrated: EuropaCorp (France) hired three rooms which constituted a whole wing of the second floor; eOne (Canada) and StudioCanal (France) worked from private suites on the top floor, with a view over the city centre; FilmNation (USA) was the only trade exhibitor that was located on the ground floor, close to the main entrance.

Just as in the exhibition halls in the MGB, it is clear that there is a social hierarchy between sales agents in the Marriott Hotel, demonstrating how values are created through the positioning of sales agents in the sales market. The importance of visibility is once again the decisive factor that enables some companies to stand out from others.

4.3 Exhibition space in non-partner hotels

Although much of the sales activity was concentrated around the two official EFM locations, a further 50-60 companies were based in non-partner hotels such as the Ritz-Carlton, Grand Hyatt, Maritim and Mandala, also conveniently located in the Potsdamer Platz area. The fact that this involved some of the most powerful sales companies in the distribution business, with many of them from the USA, made their participation nevertheless important. Chief among them were US sales agents such as IM Global and Relativity Media in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel and Lionsgate, Mister Smith, Sierra/Affinity and the Weinstein Company in the Grand Hyatt Hotel.

From conversations with representatives of various sales agents and distributors, it became clear they deliberately separated themselves from other companies by working from those non-partner hotels, forcing buyers to rotate between various locations. They argued that there are various reasons why they have a preference for other hotels. First, they note that such arrangements are also taking place at the AFM sales market and the Cannes sales market. Second, they note that such arrangements have developed in the past. Third, they note that some companies want to position themselves differently within the market, and indeed stand out from the companies participating in the official locations, underscoring that “prestige” is important for such companies. Havens (2011) confirms this point about the importance of prestige. Drawing on participant observation at television sales markets, he notes that the fact that some sales agents do not formally take part in the
official sales market, but nevertheless work from non-partner hotels, should be understood as a “profound statement of power and prestige” (Havens, 2011, p. 152). For such companies, he further notes that their “absent presence seems to be a more effective business strategy than skipping the market altogether” (Havens, 2011, p. 152).

In terms of differences observed between official EFM markets locations and non-partner hotels, it is clear that while the MGB resembled a business marketplace, and the Marriott Hotel combined the atmosphere of a luxurious hotel with the ambience of the marketplace, the non-partner hotels were more formal still (Table I). The atmosphere inside the non-partner hotels, for instance, was not so frantic as in the Marriott Hotel, where industry professionals used the lobby as a meeting place. The fact that these sales agents in non-partner hotels did not work from stands, but only from private offices or suites, also underscored that they operated as part of a relatively small-scale but high-prestige business network.

Various executives of various sales agents and distributors noted in conversations that many of the sales agents in non-partner hotels rely on the services of the public relations company DDA for their business office arrangements. On their website, DDA (2015) notes that they provide “fully equipped offices” at a range of festivals and sales markets, including “Sundance, Berlin, Cannes, Edinburgh, Venice, Toronto, MIPTV, MIPCOM and AFM in the film and television business”. They also note that they have developed a strong expertise in terms of organising publicity campaigns at these festivals and sales markets.

Identifying the differences between various types of sales agents reveals the scope and size of the international sales community, and the important role of tournaments of values within the sales market. The fact that this field is so fragmented supports the claim that the allocation of exhibition space is critical to the film sales process (Havens, 2011; Moeran, 2011). Those differences between sales agents played out within and beyond the official EFM locations. As already argued, those social hierarchies are by no means unique to the EFM sales market. It is, for instance, possible to draw parallels with the market structure of the Cannes film sales market. Figures provided by Le Marché Du Film (2015) demonstrate that 515 trade exhibitor organisations worked from exhibition stands and another 129 from offices in hotels or apartments in 2015, with others working from non-partner hotels and apartments.

5. The organisation of film screenings
I also observed that the positioning of sales agents at sales markets is broadly indicative of the range of films they represent. This is important for understanding how specific films are introduced and promoted within the sales market. The film sales process is organised in various stages of a film’s production. Thus, at one extreme, the distribution rights for bigger budget, more mainstream films are sold in a pre-production stage because the financing of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Martin-Gropius-Bau</th>
<th>Marriott Hotel</th>
<th>Non-partner hotels</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition space</td>
<td>Stands</td>
<td>Stands, offices, suites</td>
<td>Offices, suites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual sales agents</td>
<td>Mostly European</td>
<td>Mostly European and American</td>
<td>Mostly American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National film agencies</td>
<td>Many</td>
<td>Mainly in the exhibition area</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>EFM</td>
<td>EFM</td>
<td>DDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere</td>
<td>Casual and informal</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand size</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Flexible and fixed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Open and closed</td>
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Table I. Differences between business locations at the EFM

Notes: These categorisations should be understood in relative terms. There are, undoubtedly, exceptions and overlaps.
those films is heavily reliant on pre-sales deals. For instance, Trade Reporter Keslassy (2013) notes that the French sales agent EuropaCorp presold the distribution rights for *Lucy* (2014) to distributors in France, Benelux, Portugal, China and Japan, while Universal Pictures acquired the rights for all the remaining markets at a pre-production stage. At the other extreme, the rights for smaller productions, which make up the vast majority of films on offer at the EFM, are usually sold to distributors when films are completed. It is for those completed films in particular that screenings become an important tournament of values, further supporting the film sales process.

As noted above, films on offer at Berlin may be screened in the film festival or in the sales market. Thus, 443 films were shown in the film festival and 748 films were shown in the EFM sales market in Berlin in 2015 (EFM, 2015e). More specifically, the EFM organised 1,014 market screenings for 748 films, while another 1,098 screenings were organised for the 443 films in the festival programme (EFM, 2015e). There was some overlap between these programmes, with 132 films shown in both the film festival and the sales market. In particular, films selected for the most prestigious festival programmes, such as “Competition” and “Panorama”, were also shown in the sales market. The film festival and the sales market thus provided a context in which films could potentially benefit from an all-important buzz generated by industry, press and audience response, which in turn could immediately influence distribution negotiations about such films.

I observed that both types of film screenings were important to the process of introducing and promoting films at the EFM, but they served different purposes. Festival screenings were organised primarily for festival audiences (made up of invited guests, critics, reviewers and a self-selecting section of the general film-going public) and only involved films chosen by festival programmers. Market screenings, by contrast, were specifically organised for industry professionals with the purpose of exhibiting the newest films on offer beyond the constraints of the festival.

5.1 Market screenings at the EFM

Sales agents were required to pay screening fees for market slots within the EFM, and in return retained the right to decide how they made use of those slots and who was allowed into those screenings, as Knol (2015) noted in an interview. Most of the films in the market screenings were either finished or nearly finished, and had been introduced at other festivals and sales markets before, but market screenings were also used to introduce films in development. The bigger companies, in particular, used such slots to show “promo reels”, involving promos or trailers from several films in their catalogue, with the purpose of establishing distribution deals at this early stage of their production. Such promo reels were mostly presented at the beginning of the sales market to give buyers an impression of what is available before the negotiations about films started. For instance, large European sales organisations such as Pathé, Wild Bunch and Gaumont showed their film promos on the first day of the EFM.

Another way of introducing films was through private screenings organised by sales agents for a select group of distributors only. Those private screenings are sometimes combined with promotional activity such as a question and answer session with directors or well-known film actors. An example of such promotional activity is the $15 million film *W.E.* (2011), which was directed by the well-known American star Madonna. Trade Observer Lodderhose (2011) notes that the American sales agent IM Global had Madonna flown over to the Berlin sales market in February 2011 to show invited distributors and cinema exhibitors several important scenes of her film, and to inform them in more detail about her vision. This was a promotional strategy developed to impress those distributors and cinema exhibitors, while at the same time generating buzz for the film in the sales market. The Director of IM Global, Stuart Ford, underscores that Madonna’s presence sent
“an important message” to distributors, demonstrating that she is “willing to travel and support the film” (cited in Lodderhose, 2011).

In addition, film screenings provided an important opportunity for completed films to be shown in the sales market. The main purpose here involved convincing buyers of the film’s potential and negotiating further distribution deals, but those screenings were also important because they were attended by programmers from international festivals, who may then introduce those films to audiences in their local or national markets. In particular, such screenings provided important opportunities for small-scale, low-budget films to be picked up by festival programmers and gain access to the international festival circuit.

5.2 A case study of 45 Years (2015)
Given the important role of market screenings and festivals screenings as tournaments of values, I will develop a case study of the UK production 45 Years (2015) to analyse how the film was introduced and promoted. 45 Years formally premiered at the 2015 Berlin International Film Festival, and was also on show in the sales market. The film was directed by the up and coming British Filmmaker Andrew Haigh on a budget of less than £1.5 million, with substantial financial support from the UK public institutions Creative England, Film 4 and the British Film Institute. Trade observer Macnab (2014) notes that the German sales agent The Match Factory became involved at the pre-production stage and sold the film to the distributor Curzon Artificial Eye in the UK home market at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival, just after completing shooting. 45 Years was subsequently prepared for the Berlin Festival in February 2015, where it was selected for the “Competition” programme, the most prestigious and competitive section of the festival.

The festival nomination had an important impact on the comparative status and positioning of 45 Years as the few films selected for the competition programme were introduced within the festival in a more exclusive way than other films. Thus, they were given a special gala premiere to which the director and leading members of the cast were expected to support the film in front of the press and invited guests in the Berlinale Palast, the biggest and most prestigious screening venue of the festival. The competition films were also introduced to the press and shown publicly to festival audiences as part of the official festival programme, with three additional festival screenings and two additional press screenings for the media following the gala premiere.

The sales agent The Match Factory used the Competition selection as a means to further consolidate buzz surrounding the release. They organised three extra screening slots in the sales market and promoted the film in the trade press. The following pattern emerged from this strategy:

- On Thursday, at the first day of the EFM, the Screen International market edition opened with a cover fully dedicated to 45 Years, which announced screening dates in the festival and market programme, including one press screening on Thursday evening (Plate 1).
- The gala premiere and two other press screenings were scheduled for the next day, Friday.
- The first trade press reviews appeared on Friday and Saturday in the special market editions of Screen International, Variety and The Hollywood Reporter.
- There were three more festival screenings scheduled on Saturday, and one market screening, followed by further market screenings on Sunday and on Thursday.

In terms of the timing of those screenings, this was an almost ideal trajectory from which the film stood to benefit, particularly because most of the business negotiations about films
start at the beginning of the EFM and most of the industry participants stay only four or five days. Screening dates in the first few days of the market were therefore beneficial to the film sales process.

5.3 Positioning films in sales markets

The Head of Film Administration of the EFM, Tilmann Vierzig (2015) noted in an interview that the festival and market programmers make decisions about the programming of film screenings. In terms of the allocation of screening space, priority is given to festival screenings. Festival programmers reserve a select number of screening rooms and time slots for each of the festival sections, and the films selected for each of
those sections enjoy more or less the same privileges in terms of the location and size of screening rooms (Vierzig, 2015). For instance, 45 Years and other Competition films were shown in the bigger screening rooms of the festival. Because some of the biggest screening rooms and the most popular time slots are already reserved for festival films, Vierzig notes that the programmers of market screenings can book the bigger screening rooms only for some films, while others are shown in smaller screening rooms. Thus, a team of three film experts, including the well-known president of the EFM, Beki Probst, make decisions about the programming of market screenings (Vierzig, 2015). According to Vierzig, their decision-making is typically based on the perceived potential of films, where the reputation of the sales agent, the producers, the director and the leading actors are important factors.

Returning to the example of 45 Years, I will demonstrate in more detail how such decisions impact on the film sales process. The market programmers positioned 45 Years as one of the key films in the sales market by scheduling the first two market screenings in the opening weekend. The first screening on Saturday was organised at one of the bigger screening rooms of the CinemaxX cinema, with a capacity of 300 seats. Knol (2015) noted in an interview that sales agents generally have a preference for screenings at around 11.00 a.m. or 3.00 p.m. to avoid that films are being shown during lunchtime or dinner in the evening, and this first screening of 45 Years was conveniently scheduled at 3.00 p.m. The second screening on Sunday was programmed at a smaller room with a capacity of 182 seats in yet another big cinema, CineStar. Although the timeslot at 7.30 p.m. during dinnertime was less favourable, I observed first-hand that the room was fully packed. The scheduling of both screenings in the opening weekend was thus advantageous to the positioning of 45 Years within the market, particularly when taking into account that screenings of more than 700 films were programmed in the same week.

Thus, what has become clear in this example of 45 Years is that factors such as the location, timeslot and size of screening rooms helped to secure a strong presence within the sales market. Because the film was also well received at the festival, with positive reviews in the trade press, it attracted substantial buzz and clearly became a popular project. The Match Factory announced after the festival that it closed distribution deals in as many as 30 markets “around the world”, including the USA and key territories in Europe (Wiseman, 2015).

Although 45 Years may be an unusually successful example, it demonstrates how festival and market screenings functioned as tournaments of values and added values to the film sales process. Indeed, a combination of both types of screenings may support films considerably. On the other hand, generating buzz through film screenings remained restricted to a select number of films and was certainly not achieved by the majority of films.

6. Conclusion

What has emerged in this paper is that sales markets endow films with significant values. The case study of the EFM has demonstrated that the process of value creation at film sales markets is inextricably tied to the production context of films, beginning at the point when sales agencies develop projects and introduce films as concepts, and continuing through subsequent stages in which additional attention is generated through actual film materials and screenings. In focussing on spatial arrangements as well as physical arrangements through which values are ascribed to films, this paper has taken the discussion about value creation at sales markets further, extending to the actual sales process of films.

In line with the observations by Havens (2011) and Moeran (2011), it is clear that sales markets create social hierarchies between participating sales agencies, with the biggest sales companies working from the biggest exhibition stands or from exclusive hotel suites, underscoring the importance of visibility within the sales market. Indeed, as Havens (2011) argues, such exclusive positioning is very much a statement of prestige and dominance, a
way of exercising power, as well as providing their clientele with a specific business experience. In other words, these spatial arrangements take the form of a tournament through which the values are ascribed to sales agents and the films they represent.

What risks getting lost in this sort of discussion is an argument that ties together the importance of exhibition space with the effectiveness of film screenings, giving an aural and visual presence to the films being bartered. Given the highly competitive environment at the EFM sales market, in which thousands of films are introduced and promoted, film screenings are important to the process of building buzz and word-of-mouth interest around individual films, and generating free publicity through reviews by newspaper critics. I identified various forms of screenings, including private screenings, promo screenings, market screenings, press screenings, public screenings, with each of them serving its own purpose in relation to the value creation process of films. This analysis of film screenings demonstrated that there are more or less exclusive ways of introducing and promoting films, with some sales agents organising private screenings for a select group of distributors to promote specific films in various stages of development, underlining the importance of film screenings as tournaments through which values are created. In addition, the case study of 45 Years demonstrated the symbiotic relationship between the festival and the sales market, providing a context from which films can benefit by generating extra attention. I argued that factors such as screening location, screening capacity and screening time matter to the value creation process and the ability to secure a strong presence within the sales market. Film screenings are thus important tournaments of values through which power is exercised and some films are able to raise more attention than others.

This paper has also drawn attention to the impact of value creation on the film sales process. While there are important differences in how bigger and smaller sales agencies position themselves in the market, there are also differences in how they are selling films. It is clear that the bigger sales agencies sell the most attractive film projects, and that the financing of such films is heavily reliant on pre-sale deals in a pre-production stage. The sales process of those films relies primarily on promotional activity through private screenings and/or promo screenings. Smaller sales agencies, on the other hand, sell mostly smaller film projects. Their films are usually sold to distributors by the time that films are completed. It is for those completed films in particular that market screenings, press screenings, festival screenings become important tournaments of values, substantially supporting the film sales process if they are able to generate attention and industry buzz.

Overall, what has become clear is that sales markets are the point where important decisions about films are made, where sales agencies negotiate access to international markets, and where they exert influence over the sort of access given to specific films. It is therefore important to understand sales markets as events that impact on processes of gatekeeping.

References


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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of the importance, assigned by audiences, of factors such as people, movie features, script, price, promotion, and distribution channels (defined as a movie marketing mix) on the audience’s buying intentions, as well as the impact of their buying intentions on word of mouth (WOM). In addition, the intention is to explore the relationship between the preference and frequency of people’s cultural event attendance with their buying intention and the relationship between people with extroverted personalities and WOM.

Design/methodology/approach – The data were collected from 904 valid surveys conducted in Beyoğlu, one of the important centres for the culture and art life of the Istanbul.

Findings – The results show that promotion, actor or actress, and diversity of distribution channels have a positive effect on people’s purchase intention. In addition, the frequency of attendance to cultural events can be determinative of the audience and helpful for industry professionals.

Originality/value – Although there have been a number of studies that examine the simple relationships among some of these variables (movie marketing mix, attendance, purchase intention, WOM, extraversion), there is still a gap in the literature with regard to these variables in an integrated framework. Considering these variables in the same model and analysing the effects of each dimension individually provides a better explanation of consumer purchase intention and post-purchase behaviour in the movie industry. This study extends the previous research by incorporating the concept of movie marketing and consumption by improving the scale with data collected in Istanbul, Turkey.

Keywords Attendance, Structural equation modelling (SEM), Movie marketing, Movie marketing mix

Introduction

Over the past two decades, art organisations have shown a growing interest in the marketing concept. Because of the increased competition in the entertainment industry, the adoption of marketing strategies has taken a crucial role in reaching art consumers for industry professionals.

Marketing is a strategical process, the starting point of which is investigating and understanding consumer wants and needs (Askegaard, 1999). However, in terms of art marketing, this consumer-centric approach is still argued because of the varying nature of art as a product. A product represents a bundle of tangible and intangible benefits – including brand values purchased by the consumer (Chong, 2008). However, artistic products are rich in cultural meaning (Colbert and St James, 2014) and do not exist to fulfil a market need. The raison d’être of art is independent of the market, which makes it a particular marketing challenge (Colbert, 2003).

Art marketing is the art of reaching market segments that are likely to be interested in a product while adjusting the product to the commercial variables – price, place, and promotion.

This research was supported in part by grants from the Trakya University Scientific Research Projects Unit by No. 2013/103.
Such marketing is designed to put the product in contact with a sufficient number of consumers and reach the objectives consistent with the mission of the relevant cultural organisation (Colbert et al., 2001).

A part of creative industries, cinema has existed in our lives for more than a century. Cinema gathers from the dynamics of life and is created as a form of art that reflects these dynamisms (Silvia and Berg, 2011). Today, cinema has become a large industry and economic structure that feeds the many subsectors that have developed throughout the history of movie with a social and technological structure and that exists in the context of different forms of daily life (Monaco, 2013).

Our research uses a holistic approach to analyse the effects of the factors (e.g. people, script, features, price, promotion, and distribution, defined in this paper as the “movie marketing mix”) that could be important in terms of their relationship with audiences and audiences’ purchase intentions and word of mouth (WOM). Therefore, the paper aims to add a new dimension to the literature in terms of the integration of attendance, WOM, and the extraversion given that the existing studies are generally limited to measuring relationships between separate marketing mix elements with purchase intentions and attendance.

In addition, based on Cronin et al. (2000) suggestion in their study that partial examinations of the simple bivariate links among any of the factors and purchase intention and other constructs may mask or overstate their true relationships due to omitted variable bias, and in order for a more pragmatic picture of the underlying relationships among the variables to emerge, the present study takes a holistic approach and examines the relationships among these variables, specifically, the movie marketing mix, purchase intention, WOM, attendance, and extraversion. Although there have been many studies that examine the simple linear relationships of these constructs in various combinations, there is still to be a resolved gap in our understanding about the direct and indirect impact of these constructs in an integrated framework. Accordingly, this study aims to address this identified gap.

**The movie as a product**

This study proposes a movie marketing mix based on the traditional marketing mix (4P), which covers product, price, promotion, and place (distribution). At this point, stars and directors as people, script, and movie features will be considered as the elements of product.

**People**

According to Albert (1998), in the movie industry, a star is often the key ingredient to getting a movie made, not only because they have box office appeal but also because they represent a known part of a consumer choice mechanism. There is extensive research on the effects of movie stars on the box office success of movies in the literature (Elberse, 2007; Albert, 1998; De Vany and Walls, 1999). This study aims to explain the audience aspect of this issue to understand the influencing factors of movie preferences. Basically, we seek to answer the following question: is the star in the movie or its director important in audiences’ movie preferences?

According to the brand theories, directors can be considered to be ingredient in branding as in the case of superstars. That is, as with superstars who contribute to the box office success by attracting a persona-based audience, renowned directors are assumed to have a similar attracting power (Chang and Ki, 2005).

**Features**

According to literature, the knowledge about the country of origin stimulates consumers’ interest (Gazley et al., 2011; Hong and Wyer, 1989). In this study, the role of the country of origin on movie audiences’ choices and the foreign or domestic movie choices of audiences were determined separately.
Script
The script can be determinative in terms of audiences’ choices. Kerrigan (2010) emphasised the importance of script quality and the link between the genre and story as well as other elements of the movie marketing mix. In this study, we predict that the script of a movie, adapted from popular novels or based on real stories, may affect the audiences’ decisions. Thus, we predict that the artist or director, script, country of origin, and whether the movie is domestic or foreign, may be important factors in terms of audiences’ movie choices and may affect their purchase intention. Therefore, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1. The importance assigned by audiences on the factor of the people in a movie has an impact on their purchase intention.

H2. The importance assigned by audiences on the features of a movie has an impact on their purchase intention.

H3. The importance assigned by audiences on the factor of the script has an impact on their purchase intention.

Price
In general, in any given movie theatre, tickets are priced uniformly, regardless of the movie’s variable popularity, the day of the week, and the time of the year (Einav and Orbach, 2001). However, there are some exceptions such as reduced ticket prices for different time schedules (such as morning sessions and bargain matinees) and boosting sales for the days with low demand. Furthermore, some companies offer a discount to their customers or specific consumers on ticket prices. Thus, movie audiences can place importance on ticket prices, and the movie theatres’ different ticket-pricing strategies may be a determinative factor in terms of their decisions. Therefore:

H4. The importance assigned by audiences on the factor of price has an impact on their purchase intention.

Promotion
After the completion of a movie, promotion activities are carried out to reach the audiences. At this point, promotional tools such as trailers, movie posters may directly affect people’s decisions.

Critics
There are numerous studies that have focussed on the impact of critics’ reviews on box office success (Koschat, 2012; Wanderer, 2015; Basurow et al., 2003; Eliashberg and Shungan, 1997). There are two possible perspectives on the role of critics as “influencers” and “predictors”. First, critics could be opinion leaders who influence their audience and, consequently, the commercial box office performance of motion pictures. Second, critics could be predictors of their respective audiences. The influencer perspective implies that movie reviews directly affect the consumer’s decision-making process. The predictor perspective suggests that reviews only predict consumers’ decisions (Azuela-Flores et al., 2012; Basurow et al., 2003; Eliashberg and Shungan, 1997).

Trailers
Trailers provide unique and specific rhetorical structures that fold visual and auditory evidence of the movie production industry’s assessment of its actual audience (as well as its desires for a potential audience) into a one- to-three-minute cinematic experience (Kerran, 2004).
**Movie poster**
The poster may have more visibility than any other pieces of artwork in promoting the movie. Therefore, it must convey a succinct and compelling message. This will be the piece most likely picked up by the press for initial coverage, as well as the enduring image at the box office (Ulin, 2010).

**Social media**
Social media can reach different audience groups to create interest and thus reach social circles of audiences through pages sharing the content of the movie, including promotions, trailers, and screening dates with places. Thus:

\[ H5. \text{ The importance assigned by audiences on the factor of movie promotion has an impact on their purchase intention.} \]

**Distribution**
After releasing a movie in the theatres, it is followed by a release in DVD/Blu-ray format (home video) to retail markets. After that, it is displayed on satellite or cable channels and through internet options such as video-on-demand (VOD) or Pay TV and finally, it is made available for television. With these distribution options, which are referred to as sequential distribution, consumers have an opportunity to consume a product repeatedly (e.g. rent a movie they saw and liked in the theatre) (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2006). Today, after the theatrical release, it has become easy to gain access to movies due to the internet options for audiences. These changes in timing and order of movie distribution channels require the implementation of different strategies in terms of studios and theatre owners (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2007). They also provide different movie viewing options to audiences. However, such changes could affect audiences’ preferences for purchase.

**Movie theatres**
The distributor chooses a release pattern – the number and location of theatres where a movie is licensed to play or is "booked" – based on a priority appraisal of demand. The size of the initial release determines the number of copies that are required for the distribution to each theatre. Beyond that initial supply, the number of viewers who can see the movie can increase the capacity of the theatres (De Vany, 2004).

**Home video**
Unlike traditional distribution activities, income from DVD rentals and sales can even compete with the US box office revenues. In addition to that, in terms of independent producers and distributors, DVDs are considered to be a different source of income.

**Television**
Television is a different area for movie distribution. It is a time-based medium and focusses on time slots. Programming is primarily driven by ratings, and the product is developed to cater to the audience (Ulin, 2010).

Due to the development of internet technologies, producers have the ability to directly reach audiences through different mediums. Today, broadband internet has allowed audiences to enjoy movies conveniently at home through different channels such as VOD, pay-per-view (PPV) (Nam et al., 2015). Thus:

\[ H6. \text{ The importance assigned by audiences to the factor of distribution has an impact on their purchase intention.} \]
Attendance
In our study, we were interested in the following question: are marketing activities important for a particular movie in terms of audiences that frequently attend cultural activities? Thus, we examine the relationship between the frequency of attendance and movie marketing practices. We argue that attendance could moderate the impact of purchase intention on movie marketing mix elements. Therefore:

H7. The frequency of attendance has an impact on people’s purchase intention.

H8. The frequency of attendance has a moderating effect on the relationship between the importance assigned by audiences to the factor of people in a movie and their purchase intention.

H9. The frequency of attendance has a moderating effect on the relationship between the importance assigned by audiences to the features of a movie and their purchase intention.

H10. The frequency of attendance has a moderating effect on the relationship between the importance assigned by audiences to the script and their purchase intention.

H11. The frequency of attendance has a moderating effect on the relationship between the importance assigned by audiences to the factor of price and their purchase intention.

H12. The frequency of attendance has a moderating effect on the relationship between the importance assigned by audiences to the factor of promotion of a movie and their purchase intention.

H13. The frequency of attendance has a moderating effect on the relationship between the importance assigned by audiences to the factor of distribution of a movie and their purchase intention.

Purchase intention, WOM, and personality
A consumer’s perceived benefit and value determines purchase intention (Wang and Tsai, 2014). Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behaviour; they are indications of how much people are willing to try and how much of an effort they plan to exert to perform the behaviour (Azjen, 1991).

WOM has been examined in a wide range of studies in the marketing literature. It is an informal positive or negative communication between consumers about the objectively or subjectively perceived characteristics of products, brands, or services (Buttle, 1998; Hausmann and Poellman, 2016). From a movie industry perspective, whereas marketing plays an important role in a movie’s opening weekend, consumer WOM has been frequently cited as the most important factor that determines the long-term success of motion pictures and other experience goods. However, until recently, the reliable measurement of consumer WOM has remained elusive. The situation is changing due to the emergence of internet-mediated communities in which consumers exchange their experiences about products and services (Dellarocas et al., 2007). The most likely, and most effective, alternative quality signals that a potential viewer is exposed to the sentiments of other viewers who have already seen a motion picture. These sentiments are largely communicated informally, through personal WOM. Increasingly, online WOM on fan websites, such as www.boxofficemojo.com, contribute to the communication of consumer sentiments (Koschat, 2012).

The relationships between the people’s attendance of the cultural activities and personality traits have been examined in a broad range of disciplines. In this study, we consider the extraversion personality to be one of the big-five personality factors
structure (John and Srivastava, 1999). We planned to investigate the impact of extraversion personality on WOM. Thus, we hypothesise the following:

H14. Purchase intention has an impact on WOM.

H15. The personality trait of extraversion has an impact on WOM.

Methodology

The data were analysed and interpreted through SPSS 15 and Lisrel 8.80. This process was followed by two-step structural equation modelling (SEM). First, the measurement model was tested. By testing the measurement model, we aimed to determine the links between the indicator and latent variables, as well as the measurement properties of the model, i.e., reliability and validity (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1996). Second, SEM was used to test the proposed hypothesis relationships. In addition to this, principal component analysis (PCA) was used for "attendance" items for dimension reduction. The proposed model for this study was developed based on the above literature review and is shown in Figure 1.

As a continuation of the previous studies on the relationship between movies and marketing, our proposed model examined the variables with an integrated framework. Unlike examining simple relationships among each variable in terms of audiences’ purchase intentions and WOM, the aim of the study was to explain these relationships with an integrated concept. It is aimed to examine the effect of the movie marketing mix (4P) elements on the purchase intentions of audiences and, therefore, the indirect effects on their sharing behaviour with regard to these elements. In addition, it is aimed to examine the direct effects of the frequency of attendance of audiences to cultural activities on their purchase intentions, and this variable is included in the model as a moderating construct between 4P elements and purchase intention. In addition, extraversion was included in the model. This was done to examine the effects of having an extroverted personality on sharing behaviour. The proposed model is presented in Figure 1.

This study was conducted in Istanbul, Beyoğlu, and completed in March 2014. The sample comprises movie theatres that are located in the Beyoğlu, which is still the liveliest and oldest district of culture and art and is where cinema culture was born in Istanbul since the late Ottoman Empire. It is an intensive district where many people of different demographics and cultural backgrounds spend their time, especially on weekends. The study aimed to connect with audiences who have a good deal of knowledge about cinema. Thus, the respondents were selected based on a judgment sampling for the purpose of this study. With this purpose, the study focussed on specific individuals who can provide meaningful data with which to understand audiences’ behaviours. This is consistent with

![Figure 1. Proposed model](image-url)
the logic of judgment sampling that involves the choice of individuals who have possess requisite information (Sekaran, 2003).

The survey was conducted among 925 people at seven movie theatres that are located in Beyoğlu, and 904 usable questionnaires were obtained. These movie theatres are Beyoğlu Atlas, Beyoğlu Beyoğlu, Beyoğlu CineMajestic, Beyoğlu Pera, Beyoğlu Fitaş, Beyoğlu Yesilkam, and Cinema Pınık Takısim Demirören. The sample comprised females (52.1 per cent) and males (47.9 per cent). The ages of the respondents were 18-25 (28.7 per cent), 26-35 (43.4 per cent), 36-45 (16.6 per cent), 46-55 (8.2 per cent), 56 and older (3.1 per cent).

The educational status of the respondents was primary school (4.5 per cent), high school (21.5 per cent), university (50.7 per cent), master (15.8 per cent), and PhD (7.5 per cent).

A survey approach was used to collect the data to test the proposed model. The survey was based on multiple-item measurement scales taken from the current research (Chang and Ki, 2005; Finsterwalder et al., 2012; Gazley, et al., 2011; John and Srivastava, 1999; McManus and Furnham, 2006) and covered six sections: movie marketing mix, purchase intention, personality traits, attendance, WOM, and demographics. In measuring attendance, we drew on McManus and Furnham (2006); in measuring personality traits, we relied on the big-five personality traits by John and Srivastava (1999); to measure the movie marketing mix, the items were adapted from numerous authors, including Finsterwalder et al. (2012), Gazley et al. (2011), and Chang and Ki (2005). The items were scored on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7). Furthermore, PCA was used to obtain a single index for attendance.

To validate our measurement, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were used together. For the first step, EFA was conducted for all the items to identify multiple factor structure, item loadings, and item cross-loadings. To confirm the multiple factor structure, CFA was applied. Then, SEM was utilised to test the hypotheses. CFA and SEM were assessed by using the maximum likelihood estimation.

Results

Measurement model

In this study, nine factors conceptually meaningful were extracted by using principal components factoring with varimax rotation. The value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is 0.821 (should be larger than 0.5) indicating that the factor analysis is appropriate (Hair et al., 2009). Bartlett’s test of sphericity is 9,547,722 (p = 0.000). A ratio of 67.502 per cent of the total variance is accounted for with these nine factors. The first factor, the price factor, is 12.071 per cent of the total variance, the distribution factor is 8.448 per cent of the total variance, the intention factor is 8.073 per cent of the total variance, the promotion factor is 7.970 per cent of the total variance, the extraversion factor is 7.872 per cent of the total variance, the WOM factor is 7.626 per cent of the total variance, the script factor is 5.633 per cent of the total variance, the movie features is 5.142 per cent of the total variance, and finally the people factor explains the 4.667 per cent of the total variance. The varimax-rotated factor loadings and cross-loadings are given in Table I.

Loadings in excess of 0.71 are considered excellent, 0.63 very good, 0.55 good, 0.45 fair, and 0.32 poor (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). As shown in Table I, most of the item loadings are excellent, four of them are very good (DIST1, DIST2, DIST4, and PROM1) and, finally, one of them is good (DIST5). Therefore, all the factor loadings are very high and the cross-loadings are all low, indicating validity in terms of an EFA perspective.

Following the EFA, CFA was conducted to confirm the measurement model with the nine factors. The measurement model fit indicates the results showed a good fit to the data according to Hu and Bentler’s two-index strategy, which suggested to standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) and non-normed fit index (NNFI) (TLI), RMSEA or the comparative fit index (CFI) (Hooper et al., 2008; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Fan and Sivo, 2005).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors items</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Script</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Extraversion</th>
<th>Intention</th>
<th>WOM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>People (PEOP)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PEOP1: actor/actress in the film is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.738</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.091</td>
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<tr>
<td>PEOP2: director of the film is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>−0.011</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>−0.001</td>
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<td><strong>Script (SCRPT)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SCRPT1: film based on a novel is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>0.858</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>−0.025</td>
<td>−0.028</td>
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<td>SCRPT2: film based on a real story is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>−0.014</td>
<td>−0.002</td>
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<td><strong>Features (FEAT)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>FEAT1: being domestic or foreign of a film is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>0.808</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>−0.060</td>
<td>0.069</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEAT2: film’s country of origin is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>−0.009</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.031</td>
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<td><strong>Price (PRC)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PRC1: bargain matinee is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>−0.013</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.810</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC2: reduced prices in morning sessions are important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.801</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>−0.026</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>−0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC3: ticket promotion campaigns of GSM companies (Turkcell, Vodafone, etc.) are important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>−0.040</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.222</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC4: ticket campaigns of deal websites are important in my film preferences</td>
<td>−0.001</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.813</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>−0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC5: club membership options of movie theatres are important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.775</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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<td><strong>Promotion (PROM)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PROM1: critic reviews are important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>−0.029</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROM2: audience reviews are important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>−0.024</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.069</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROM3: my friends’ suggestions are important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>0.727</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.136</td>
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<td>PROM4: reviews in social media are important in my film preferences</td>
<td>−0.009</td>
<td>−0.025</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.711</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>0.138</td>
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<td><strong>Distribution (DIST)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>DIST1: variety of distribution channels are important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.682</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>0.066</td>
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(continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors items</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Script</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Extraversion</th>
<th>Intention</th>
<th>WOM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIST2: screening of a film in many movie theatres is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>−0.041</td>
<td>−0.108</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>0.131</td>
<td>0.662</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.141</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIST3: accessibility to DVD/Blu-ray options of a film is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.753</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.019</td>
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<td>DIST4: accessibility to a film by pay-per-view, cable channels, etc. is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>−0.019</td>
<td>0.283</td>
<td>−0.002</td>
<td>0.601</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>−0.086</td>
<td>−0.109</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIST5: accessibility to the movies via internet (download, movie watch channels) is important in my film preferences</td>
<td>−0.121</td>
<td>−0.100</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>0.120</td>
<td>0.569</td>
<td>−0.053</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>0.071</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extraversion (EXTR)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTR1: I see myself a person who is talkative</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.866</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.105</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXTR2: I see myself a person who generates a lot of enthusiasm</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.052</td>
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<td>EXTR3: I see myself a person who is outgoing, sociable</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>−0.015</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.120</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.841</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.092</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchase Intention (INT)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT1: I intend to watch such a film</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>−0.016</td>
<td>−0.005</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.808</td>
<td>0.140</td>
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<tr>
<td>INT2: I plan to watch such a film</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>−0.025</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.868</td>
<td>0.143</td>
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<tr>
<td>INT3: I want to watch such a film</td>
<td>−0.025</td>
<td>−0.033</td>
<td>−0.009</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.848</td>
<td>0.165</td>
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<tr>
<td>Word of Mouth (WOM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WOM1: I say positive things to other people about that film</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>−0.038</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>−0.010</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.818</td>
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<td>WOM2: I would recommend that film to anyone who asks about my opinion</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>−0.061</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>−0.007</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>0.872</td>
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<tr>
<td>WOM3: I would refer to my friends about that film</td>
<td>−0.024</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>−0.027</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.778</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
According to this strategy, measurement model fit was acceptable using the SRMR = 0.039 (< 0.05) as well as an additional fit index such as the RMSEA = 0.03 (< 0.05). The other fit indices were found at acceptable levels such as $\chi^2 = 639.98$, df = 314, $p$-value = 0.0, a goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.93, an adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = 0.91, a normed fit index (NFI) = 0.91, NNFI = 0.90, and CFI = 0.94.

Unstandardised loadings (i.e. with unit variance scaling of the factors), standardised loadings (i.e. with unit variance scaling of the indicator variables as well as the factors) from the latent variables to the indicator variables, $t$-values, and $R^2$ values were examined regarding the measurement model, and the results are presented in Table II. This table shows that all of the path coefficients are significant ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, the model demonstrated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Unstandardised loading</th>
<th>Standardised loading</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People (PEOP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEOP1</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>10.44</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEOP2</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>9.36</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script (SCRPT)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCRPT1</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>21.34</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCRPT2</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>20.28</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Features (FEAT)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEAT1</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>13.37</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEAT2</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>14.54</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price (PRC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC1</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>27.90</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC2</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>26.27</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC3</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>37.54</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC4</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>43.01</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC5</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>33.56</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion (PROM)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROM1</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>14.91</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROM2</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>23.88</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROM3</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>16.40</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROM4</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>20.30</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution (DIST)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIST1</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>16.80</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIST2</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>16.92</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIST3</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>20.29</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIST4</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>16.47</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion (EXTR)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTR1</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>26.50</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTR2</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>22.12</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTR3</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>23.01</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention (INT)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT1</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>17.35</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT2</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>20.27</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT3</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>15.27</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOM (WOM)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOM1</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>20.85</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOM2</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>19.34</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOM3</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>16.92</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II. Measurement model estimates, $t$ and $R^2$ values.
convergent validity. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($R^2$) indicates a measure of the variability of each item explained by the latent variable. When the $R^2$ values are examined, the minimum value is 0.23 and the maximum value is 0.76. Item DIST5 was removed from the model because the $R^2$ value was less than 0.20. This may be due to the possibility of confusion about illegal downloading behaviour. The discriminant validity of the factors was evaluated using the strategy of Fornell and Larcker (1981). This strategy recommends comparing the average variance extracted (AVE) with the variance shared between the construct and other constructs in the model (Molina et al., 2009). As shown in Table III, the square roots of the AVE values are presented on the diagonal. The Pearson’s correlations of the aggregated scores of the items are presented above the diagonal, and the latent variable correlations obtained from the measurement model are presented below the diagonal. These values are greater than the correlations between the constructs and are indicative of discriminant validity among the constructs. As summarised in Table III, the square roots of the AVEs are greater than the correlations between the constructs, which indicates discriminant validity for each construct. The results suggested a strong discriminant validity of measurements.

To examine reliability, Cronbach’s $\alpha$ coefficients of each construct are represented in Table IV, except for people and features, all above the minimum required value of 0.70 for scale acceptability consistency (Cronbach, 1951). The composite reliability values should be over 0.7 (Hair et al., 2009). As shown in Table IV, the composite reliabilities all exceed 0.70 except for two constructs (people and features). This indicates an acceptable reliability of the measured constructs. The reliability values for the “people” factor were found to be lower. It is preferred that this factor is used in the study because it is an important factor of the proposed model. Consequently, the model is valid (according to the nine-factor structure); the results are consistent and reliable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>Script</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Intention</th>
<th>WOM</th>
<th>Extraversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>0.251</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.334</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.164</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.207</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.260</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>0.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.632</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.185</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.398</td>
<td>0.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table III. Comparison of square roots of AVE’s and correlations to assess discriminant validity

Notes: Square root of average variance extracted (AVE) is shown on the diagonal and in italic; correlation coefficients are shown on the off diagonal; all correlations are significant at the 0.01 level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s $\alpha$</th>
<th>Composite reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.493</td>
<td>0.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Features</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.632</td>
<td>0.663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.797</td>
<td>0.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.888</td>
<td>0.888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.663</td>
<td>0.745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.709</td>
<td>0.730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.841</td>
<td>0.884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td>0.831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOM</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>0.805</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IV. Evaluation of the reliability of the constructs
Another variable used in this model is attendance. This variable is adopted to examine the relationship between the frequency of attendance to cultural activities and marketing practices. PCA was applied to 16 “attendance” items (shown in Table V). For the purposes of the study, these items were taken and adapted from the research of McManus and Furnham (2006). The first component explained 32.21 per cent of the total variance with an eigenvalue of 5.154. The higher values of this component score indicate the higher attendance. The component score of the first component was used as a single indicator latent variable, called attendance. As shown in the Table V, higher participation in cultural activities such as “go to classical or modern ballet/dance” and “go to the theatres (plays/musicals)”, causes a higher level of attendance score.

**Structural model**

The proposed hypotheses were tested through SEM. The structural model was tested, and it was found that the model fit was acceptable according to Hu and Bentler’s two-index strategy (Fan and Sivo, 2005; Hooper et al., 2008; Hu and Bentler, 1999). According to this strategy, the structural model fit was acceptable using $\text{SRMR} = 0.03$, as well as an additional fit index such as the $\text{RMSEA} = 0.03$. The other fit indices were found to be at acceptable levels such as $\chi^2 = 939.09$, df = 461 and $p$-value = 0.0, CFI = 0.93, AGFI = 0.90, NNFI = 0.91 and finally, NFI = 0.90. The hypothesis testing results are given in Table VI.

$H1$ and $H5-7$, which support that the importance assigned by audiences to the factors of people, promotion, place, and attendance positively affect purchase intention, have a positive impact on audiences’ purchase intention. As in $H7$, the frequency of attendance has a positive impact on purchase intention. The results of $H3$ (−2.06) suggest that scripts based on a novel or true story have a negative impact on purchase intention.

By contrast, $H2$ (−0.46), which predicts that the importance assigned by audiences to the features of a movie such as domestic or foreign and country of origin, and $H4$ (−0.77), which predicts that theatres’ ticket-pricing strategies have an impact on people’s purchase intentions, were not supported.

The moderating effects of the attendance on the impact of six hypothesised movie marketing mix items were examined. $H12$ was supported as the moderating effect of the attendance on the impact of promotion on purchase intention. The results of $H12$ show that the promotion impact on purchase intention is important for people who rarely attend cultural events and, conversely, promotion impact on purchase intention is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATT1</td>
<td>Listen to popular music</td>
<td>0.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT2</td>
<td>Listen to classical music</td>
<td>0.440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT3</td>
<td>Go to pop concerts/discos</td>
<td>0.481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT4</td>
<td>Go to classical music concerts/opera</td>
<td>0.679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT5</td>
<td>Play a musical instrument</td>
<td>0.484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT6</td>
<td>Go to museums or art galleries</td>
<td>0.681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT7</td>
<td>Go to the cinema</td>
<td>0.474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT8</td>
<td>Act or otherwise take part in theatre</td>
<td>0.504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT9</td>
<td>Read about art in newspapers, magazines or books</td>
<td>0.529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT10</td>
<td>Draw or paint</td>
<td>0.554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT11</td>
<td>Read a novel</td>
<td>0.629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT12</td>
<td>Read non-fiction books</td>
<td>0.597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT13</td>
<td>Read poetry</td>
<td>0.613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT14</td>
<td>Go to the theatres (plays/musicals, etc.)</td>
<td>0.699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT15</td>
<td>Go to classical or modern ballet/dance</td>
<td>0.706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATT16</td>
<td>Go dancing (any form)</td>
<td>0.608</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table V.** The principle component loadings on the first component
not important for people who frequently attend cultural events. However, \( H8 \)-\( H11 \), and \( H13 \) were not supported.

It is found that the importance assigned by audiences to the factor of people in a movie has an impact on their purchase intentions (\( H1 \)). However, level of attendance in cultural activities did not change the influence of the importance assigned by audiences to the factor of people (e.g. actors and actresses and directors in movies) and did not become more important in the audience’s decisions (\( H8 \)). Similarly, the importance assigned by audiences to features such as country of origin, domesticity or foreignness of a movie has no impact on their purchase intentions (\( H2 \)). However, the level of attendance in cultural activities did not change the dimension of this relationship (\( H9 \)). When \( H3 \) is examined, it is found that the importance assigned by the audiences to the script has a negative impact on their purchase intentions. Audiences tend to prefer to watch movies with an authentic script instead of movies that are based on a real story or a novel. At this point, the level of attendance of audiences in cultural activities did not affect this relationship (\( H10 \)).

Our results show that the importance assigned by audiences to the price has no impact on their purchase intentions (\( H4 \)). It is seen that ticket prices or other pricing options (e.g. bargain matinees) have no importance in terms of audiences about the movie they want to watch, and they tend to buy regardless of the ticket price. However, the level of attendance of people in cultural activities did not make them sensitive to price. They tend to prefer to watch the movies that they want to (\( H11 \)). Our results present that distribution was important in terms of audiences and has an impact on their purchase decisions (\( H6 \)). It could be indicated that the variety of distribution channels, the screening in many movie theatres, DVD, and PPV options are important for audiences and could affect their purchase intentions. However, the level of attendance did not affect the dimension of this relationship (\( H13 \)).

The results of \( H14 \) suggest that people who prefer to watch a particular movie have the intention to share their opinions about the movie. Therefore, purchase intention has a
positive impact on WOM, and H14 was also supported. H15, which predicts that extrovert, social people prefer to share their opinions and comments about the movie they preferred to watch, was supported.

Finally, the squared multiple correlation (SMC) values are shown in Table VI. As shown in Table VI, 17 per cent of the variance of buying intention was explained by people, features, script, price, promotion, distribution, and attendance factors, while 19 per cent of the variance of WOM was explained by buying intention and extraversion factors.

Conclusions
The findings show that actors and directors have an impact on audiences’ preferences. Actors and directors can be determinative in terms of movie expectations of audiences. Stars have an impact on revenue, primarily due to their ability to generate buzz and drive audiences to the theatres, especially during the opening week (Karniouchina, 2011). Similarly, Finsterwalder et al.’s (2012) study concludes that well-known directors have a strong positive influence on the expectations of the quality of a movie. Our study revealed that script as a product has a negative impact on purchase intention. This result showed that audiences prefer to watch movies with authentic scripts. A movie script that is based on a novel or a real story may have a negative impact on audiences’ movie preferences. The findings of this study showed that promotion activities can be important for audiences’ decisions regarding the movie they want to watch. Reviews by critics and the review ratings of audiences, comments on social media, and suggestions from friends create both an image and awareness of audiences’ interest in a movie.

One of the main factors to be taken into account by audiences is the variety of distribution channels. Audiences prefer to watch a movie when they want and on whatever distribution channel they prefer to use. This could be due to shifting preferences towards the home viewing of movies. Options such as VOD and PPV, which offer audiences the ability to time-shift the movies they prefer to watch, make the viewing experience easier and more comfortable for audiences. This flexibility has caused people to develop a tendency towards home viewing in contrast to movie theatres. However, when we consider the level of attendance at cultural activities, it does not affect the dimension of the relationship between the variety of distribution channels and purchase intention in terms of people who rarely attend cultural activities (for economic or other reasons). Promotion or WOM could be a supporting factor for their attendance at this point. Similarly, for people with frequent attendance to cultural activities, screening in many movie theatres, and different movie-watching options did not change the effect of their purchase intentions. It could be interpreted that they are people who follow cultural activities; therefore, they have an idea of where they can find the movie they prefer to watch and which distribution channel they prefer. Thus, this situation does not change the effect of their purchase intentions.

However, the variety of distribution channels, the accessibility through various distribution channels of a movie and reviews by movie critics, audience reviews, and comments on social media as promotional tools all can be expressed as factors that shape and influence audiences’ purchase intention. This research found that ticket prices and theatres’ pricing strategies have no impact on audiences’ preferences and purchase intention. Therefore, their decision regarding which movie they want to watch is not shaped by ticket prices and theatres’ pricing strategies. Similarly, Reddy et al. (1998) found that ticket prices do not have a significant relationship with attendance. In addition, the level of attendance of people in cultural activities did not affect the dimension of the relationship between ticket prices and purchase intention. It should be noted that for the people who frequently attend cultural activities, ticket prices or other pricing options did not become important for them. It can be interpreted that these audiences’ intentions to purchase were not affected by price options or discounts. Additionally, whether a movie is domestic or

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foreign, and its country of origin, have no significant influence on audience preferences. This could be due to cultural differences. Differences in aesthetic tastes, social and cultural values, language, and other factors may lead to different judgements of whether an individual prefers a certain a movie better than another (Lee, 2006).

This analysis shows that people who prefer to watch a particular movie have the intention to share their opinions about the movie. WOM plays an important role in the movie industry, and it provides important information that helps audiences decide whether to see a movie (Ladhari, 2007b). For experience goods such as movies, before watching a movie, audiences tend to rely on their decision according to psychological inputs (e.g. expectations), and informational inputs (e.g. WOM) (Neelamegham and Jain, 1999). Especially during pre-release and the opening week of a movie, WOM activities are high, and this creates relatively high expectations for audiences (Mohr, 2007). These activities can shape audiences’ thoughts and affect their intentions to watch a movie. They can share their opinions with friends in person or on the web about a movie they intend to watch. Thereby, they become a part of the WOM that is created around the pre-release of the movie. According to Ladhari’s (2007a, b) study, these expectations, referred to as affective expectations, also have an effect on audiences’ satisfaction and intention to share their experiences (WOM).

Finally, the findings show that extraverted people who prefer interpersonal interaction tend to share their comments about the movies they prefer to watch. Active interpersonal communication about movies can be expected to exist because they are entertainment goods, and this communication may influence audiences (Liu, 2006). Similarly, Mooradian and Swan (2006) stated that the people characterised by higher extraversion are more likely to rely on interpersonal sources of information, that is, on word of mouth, which is an important source of information for product information.

Managerial implications
Social media and reviews on websites are an effective way to reach audiences especially those who are hesitant about which movie they prefer to watch. At this point, social media tools have become a key factor in reaching audiences. It is important to develop a professional social media strategy to manage the information flow, to create awareness about the movie, and to keep this information flow updated. Similarly, generating successful “buzz” can help drive consumer interest and draw audiences to theatres (Mohr, 2007). The buzz-generating approach is perceived to be suitable, especially for blockbuster movies, to promote commercial success by encouraging enhanced market performance (Holbrook and Addis, 2008).

The results show that it is important to reach audiences through different distribution channels. In terms of audiences, there are some components that are taken into consideration about the movies, such as screenings in several movie theatres, premium channels, and PPV options. In addition to that, movie theatres’ session times can be difficult to adjust in terms of audiences. Therefore, producers and distributors should consider this issue because of the shifting preferences towards the home viewing of movies.

Movie industry professionals should consider the frequency of attendance to cultural events, which can be determinative for audiences. It is also important to consider people who rarely go to the cinema. It can be effective to pull them into movie theatres and to create a cinema experience for them. It is necessary to detect potential audiences, to develop marketing strategies according to their preferences and tastes and, finally, to manage marketing messages to the potential audiences. It is important to detect the right audience segments and understand them to more effectively create and build relationships. At this point, marketers must meet potential audience demands (Swanson and Davis, 2006). Furthermore, a strategic approach should be taken to balance the two audience groups, which are frequent attendees and rare attendees to provide a sustainable audience and long-term relationship with them for the future (Hayes and Slater, 2002).
Limitations and future research directions

Some limitations should be considered in this study. First, the sample comprises movie theatres in the Beyoğlu region in Istanbul and reflects not only the demographic and cultural diversity of Istanbul but also many movie theatres in this region. Therefore, future studies could embrace wider population samples. In addition, this research was conducted in Turkey; consequently, the results reflect the Turkish population. As a result, the generalisability of our findings may be limited.

This research is concentrated on the movie industry. Future studies could incorporate other branches of the arts. Moreover, the data used in this study were obtained during March 2014. For future research, a longer duration of data may extend the scope of the research. In the additional studies, the scales created in this study could be improved, and implications could be compared. In addition, examination of the indirect effect of WOM upon other elements of the model (e.g. purchase intention, marketing mix elements) can be considered by future studies. The reliability values for the “people” factor were found to be lower. This factor was used in the study because it directly affects audiences, and thus it is an important factor in the proposed model. In the future studies, extending the number of questions could increase the reliability values. Finally, the SMC values were relatively low. Cultural consumption may be related to many other variables in addition to the marketing concept. Therefore, these relatively low values related to marketing can be considered to be appropriate for the study.

This study contributes to the existing research by analysing the relationship between the marketing mix concept and movies, as well as movie consumption in terms of audiences’ choices, attendance frequency, and personality traits. These results can be determinative in terms of industry professionals and marketers to understand the factors that affect movie audiences’ preferences, their decision process and the marketing tools they use, as well as the factors that shape audiences’ purchase intentions.

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Game-speed influence and brand attitude: mediating role of thought favorability in in-game advertising

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the effect of game-speed on brand attitude and mediating role of thought favorability in the speed-attitude relationship in the context of in-game advertising (IGA). Specifically, this investigation employs the Limited Capacity Model of Attention and the heuristic-systematic model to explain the conditions under which in-game brand placements form favorable or unfavorable thoughts about the game and the embedded brand, and subsequent brand attitude.

Design/methodology/approach – In total, 78 student-gamers participated in the study. One-tailed independent-samples t-tests and a path analysis were used for hypothesis testing.

Findings – Results revealed that fast-paced games resulted in higher thought favorability and more favorable brand attitude than the slow-paced games. Furthermore, the results also showed that thought favorability mediated the relationship of game-speed and brand attitude among Indian gamers.

Research limitations/implications – This paper adds to advertising literature from a non-traditional advertising perspective, primarily in the context of IGA, and explains the role played by game-speed as an antecedent to thought favorability that adds value to thought favorability and brand attitude relationship. Also, the study provides an important implication for the marketers that to generate more positive brand attitudes and high favorable thoughts, advertisers and game-developers must focus on high-speed games.

Originality/value – This study is the first in its stream toward understanding the mediating role of thought favorability in determining the persuasion effect on Indian gamers’ brand attitude in the context of online advertising from attention and elaboration perspectives.

Keywords Brand attitude, In-game advertising, Game-speed, Heuristic-systematic model, Thought favourability

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The growth of the digital game industry has made marketers cognizant about the worth of digital games as a promotional tool (Vashisht, 2015). The placement of brands in games is termed as in-game advertising (IGA). In advertising literature, IGA is defined as “the integration of non-fictional products and brands within the playing environment of video & computer games through simulated real life marketing communications mechanisms” (Smith et al., 2014, p. 98). Advertising in video games is also described as an art according to the ancient, artistic, institutional, representational and expressive theories of art as video games syindicate components from narrative fiction film, music and sports. They are possibly an art or fellow art of the moving image, explicitly, a form of digital animatronics (Gee, 2006; Smuts, 2005).

In the recent times, the gaming industry has brought revolutionary changes globally which has positively affected the growth of developing nations, such as India, Mexico, China, etc. For instance, in the year 2016, it was found that, Indian game companies have changed the image of India in the global world as one of the leading game developers for global markets (IndianCEO, 2016). India has been treading in parallel with other nations in digital gaming and gaming technology. Gaming and technology aficionados are entering the market to meet the growing demand for interactive games and hit into the potential of this...
industry niche (Nasdaq GlobeNewswire, 2016). Along with the growing sales of the games, the swelling numbers of digital game players make online games an effective platform for brand placements (Takahashi, 2013; Harris et al., 2012; Telus International, 2017).

According to a Kaiser Family Foundation study, there has been an upsurge in online media use among young people, with the average youth spending an hour and a half per day on the computer (Rideout et al., 2010). According to ESA (2015) report, there is an average of two gamers in each game-playing US household and 42 percent of Americans play digital games regularly (3 hours or more per week). Also, according to a research article (Takahashi, 2013), as IGA has become a highly innovative and effective tool to endorse the brands, there is an increase in number of gamers in Asia, and 46 percent of Asian population play games on a daily basis. Thus, today, numerous big companies have increasingly shifted their focus to the internet to promote their products/brands to the customers (Thomson, 2010; Harris et al., 2012).

Given the growing use of IGA and its potential as a non-conventional promotional tool, unfortunately less investigation has been done regarding the IGA effects. Little is known about the mechanism by which IGA affects players’ attitudes toward the embedded in-game brand. Undoubtedly, gamers’ attitudes toward the brand are one of the important goals of IGA (Nelson 2002; Vashisht, 2015). Thus, the present research examines this virtually less researched area and raises the question about what factors of IGA influence brand attitudes and how, particularly among college students, in an emerging market context, India. Indeed, 70 percent of college students report playing video games (Pew/Internet, 2003). Specifically, the current study throws light on three things: does game-speed influence gamers’ brand attitude; what is the mechanism by which ad-persuasion happens among college students in an IGA context; and is there any role played by favorable/unfavorable thoughts occurring in gamers’ minds while playing the online games embedded with brand placements. Hence, this research makes an attempt to answer these questions by conducting an experiment among Indian college students to examine the roles played by the game-related factor (game-speed) and the gamers’ related factor (thought favorability) in shaping players’ attitudes toward the embedded brands by taking the insights from the Limited Capacity Model of Attention (LCMA) (Kahneman, 1973; Lang, 2000; Lang and Basil, 1998) and the heuristic-systematic model (HSM) (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994).

Furthermore, prior marketing literature (e.g., Brinol et al., 2004; Chaiken, 1980; Petty and Wegener, 1998) supported by various persuasion theories indicates that the amount of thoughts generated (i.e. the extent of thinking directed toward a persuasive message) and the direction of thoughts generation by consumers (i.e. the information that causes favorable or unfavorable thoughts toward persuasion source) affect their attitudes toward the source of persuasion (see Petty and Wegener, 1998). This aspect has not been studied in the brand placements context, specifically in the area of digital games. Though this part has been acknowledged by the scholars, it, unfortunately, has not been investigated so far. Thus, it would be very interesting to see that what role is played by thought favorability in determining gamers’ advertising outcomes. Thus, it is believed that testing the effect of game-speed on brand attitude and determining the mediating role of thought favorability in the speed-attitude relationship would benefit both scholars and marketing practitioners in this area. Also, this study would be the first in its stream toward understanding the mediating role of thought favorability in determining the persuasion effect on consumers’ brand attitude in the context of online advertising from attention and elaboration perspectives. Furthermore, the results of the study would be beneficial for the advertisers and game-developers as one can know and understand the roles of a game-specific factor, i.e. game-speed and a gamer-specific factor, i.e. thought favorability in shaping a player’s brand attitude. Accordingly, effective IGA games can be designed by considering the game- and gamer-specific factors.
The remainder of the study is structured as follows. In the next section, theoretical background is provided, followed by the hypothesis development. This is followed by a description of the research methodology used in the study. Subsequently, the results are presented, followed by the discussion and implications of the study. Finally, the limitations of the study and future research directions are provided.

Theoretical background and hypotheses development

**LCMA**

LCMA (Kahneman, 1973; Lang, 2000; Lynch and Srull, 1982) provides a conceptual-theoretical framework for cognitive processing underlying the advertising-media effects. This model was specially established to examine how individuals process television messages. LCMA is a blend of several information-processing models, established between 1970 and 2000 (Eysenck, 1993; Lachman et al., 1979). This model is based on two key assumptions. First, individuals are information processors. A main activity that individuals get involved in is the message-processing task. The process of information processing consists of observing stimuli, converting them into conceptual depictions, putting perceptual efforts on those depictions, and replicating them in the identical or in a new form. Second, an individual’s capability to process a message is restricted and narrow. Information-processing needs cognitive or attentional capacity, and individuals have only a restricted (and may be fixed) amount of attentional capacity. This model states that we can think about many things at the same time, but, ultimately, entirely our attentional capacity is being utilized, and the cognitive system cannot ponder yet another thing without letting a preceding thought go.

Also, the model says that there are three sub-processes which take place in the information-processing process. Encoding, storage and retrieval are the three sub-processes, and our brain generally does involve in all of these processes at the same time. Encoding refers to getting the message out of the environment (off the screen) and into an individual’s brain. Storage refers to loading of message or information in an individual’s memory. Retrieval applies to analyzing and recalling the information when required, i.e. it is the process of reactivating a deposited perceptual exemplification of some part of a message. The memory outcome is, therefore, a result of all these three sub-processes. Kahneman (1973) suggests that the major task which grabs most of the attention before any other task for an individual who is multitasking at a time is termed as the primary task, and the very next less important task is the secondary task. As the demands of the primary task rise, the attentional capacity (or mental efforts) also increases gradually. However, this growth is inadequate to sustain an individual’s performance at a constant level of promptness and excellence. Moreover, when the demands of the task upsurge, there is a gradual increase in the difference between the demanded-efforts and the actual supplied efforts. The attentional capacity that gets used up for secondary task is termed as spare capacity. This spare capacity drops as the attentional capacity used in the primary task rises. In the context of IGA, game-playing is the primary task and in-game brand placement processing is the secondary task (Grigorovici and Constantin, 2004). Thus, based on the LCMA theory, it can be said that the capacity which is used for the primary task (game-playing) cannot be utilized for the secondary task (processing in-game brand placements). Insights from this theory are utilized for the present study to investigate the roles of game-speed and thought favorability in forming the attitudes about the embedded brands.

**HSM**

HSM (Chaiken, 1980) is an extensively accepted communication model which postulates that how individuals accept and cognitively process persuasive messages or information. This model suggests that information processing can happen in one of the two approaches: heuristically or systemically. Heuristic information processing works on the judgmental
rules termed as knowledge structures that are learned and stored in one’s memory. The heuristic line suggests an economic advantage by demanding minimal perceptual load on the part of the receiver. Heuristic processing is run by availability, accessibility, and applicability. The availability denotes the knowledge structure, or heuristic, being stored in memory for future use. The accessibility of the heuristic refers to the capability to recover the memory for use. The applicability of the heuristic processing applies to the significance of the memory with reference to the judgmental activity. Systematic information processing comprises of wide-ranging and logical, intellectual processing of judgment-relevant information. This model states that capacity and motivation are two main factors of systematic processing, and in heuristic processing, attitudinal decisions are developed by other’s influences, such as experts’ opinions or arguments shown in the messages.

In the context of in-game brand placements, HSM best explains the attitude-formation process raised due to various thoughts that emerge in players’ minds while game-playing. Thus, the present study makes an attempt to uncover the role played by thoughts that emerge in players’ minds while playing digital games by using the insights from the HSM theory.

**IGA and brand attitude**

Assumed the collective practice of IGA and its potential as an advanced advertising medium, unexpectedly less investigation has been done about the impact of IGA. Pint sized is acknowledged about whether IGA impacts players’ brand recall, brand attitude and so forth. Visibly, players’ awareness of the brand name is one of the important goals of IGA (Nelson, 2002). Hence, the present paper discovers this unexamined part and shows whether IGA impacts the brand attitude of the players for the embedded brands, specifically among college-going students – one of the groups that repeatedly play computer games. Examining the impact of IGA on brand attitude is expected to benefit both scholars and practitioners in this area. The extant literature describes IGA as the incorporation of real brands within the game-setting through virtual concrete life promotional devices (Vashisht and Chauhan, 2017). IGA is a type of brand placement. The concept of brand placement is explained as the insertion of brand identifiers in amusement media indoctrination in return for profit-making concerns (McCarty 2004; Morton and Friedman, 2002). Brand placements have appeared in almost all kinds of entertainment media, comprising narratives, dramas, tracks, records, television shows, and movies (Gould and Gupta, 2006). As brand placement in entertainment media has become more common, inspecting how does a consumer process brand information entrenched in such entertainment media has appeared as a vital research theme in the marketing and message-processing literature (Gupta and Lord, 1998; Russell, 2002). Buyers’ information processing of brand placements in advanced media is different from their processing of traditional advertising (Gupta and Lord, 1998; Russell, 2002). Thus, it becomes important for scholars to know and find out that how does brand placements in games (IGA) affect consumers’ brand attitude. In the attitude literature, consumers’ brand attitude is described as their thinking and feelings about different brands (Whan Park et al., 2010). Hence, it becomes the need of the hour to know and understand different attention and cognitive-elaboration factors that might influence consumers’ attitude toward the in-game advertised brands.

**Game-factor and gamer-factor**

Though brand placement literature has acknowledged the importance of conducting a research on the different mixture of game- and gamer-factors, unfortunately, still there exists a big lacuna in IGA research in terms of examining the effects of various combinations of game-related and gamer-related factors (e.g., Terlutter and Capella, 2013; Vashisht and Royne, 2016). Past studies show moderating effects of various game-related or gamer-related factors in the IGA context (see Terlutter and Capella, 2013; Vashisht, 2015).
but there are very few studies which show mediating roles of game- or gamer-related factors (e.g., Adis et al., 2015; Adis and Kim, 2013). Thus, the present study makes an attempt to uncover the mediating role played by thought favorability (which is one of the gamer-related factors) in the game-speed-attitude relationship in the context of IGA from the perspectives of attention and elaboration.

The past research shows that game-speed forms a very important base in creating high or low levels of game-involvement (Vashisht, 2017), persuasion knowledge (Waiguny et al., 2013), need for cognition (Vashisht, 2017), game-product congruence (Lee and Faber, 2007), understanding of brand prominence (Vashisht and Royne, 2016) and brand recall (Vashisht and Chauhan, 2017). Thus, it becomes important to find out the mechanism through which all these effects happen. The literature on attention and capacity shows that one’s issue-related thoughts’ favorability is a very important factor in determining consumers’ attitudes in the context of service marketing (e.g., Tormala et al., 2006, 2007). Therefore, from the research point of view, it becomes important to know and find out what kind of conditions give rise to favorable and unfavorable thoughts in the context of IGA. Is game-speed one of those conditions which can give rise to favorable and unfavorable thoughts about game and embedded brands in gamers’ minds? If so, then to what extent this effect happens and why? Hence, the present study makes an attempt to answer these questions from the perspectives of attention and elaboration.

Game-speed and brand attitude

Brand attitude by description is either an optimistic or destructive decision of person’s sensitivity toward a brand (Shimp, 2000), and involves thinking, emotional and behavioral element (Lutz, 1977). Furthermore, brand attitude can also be related with becoming an essential communication influence when the brand purchase occurred (Percy and Rossiter, 1992). In the context of advertising in the advanced media, the research on brand had exhibited an outstanding advancement in contributing to the theory of consumer behavior (Cauberghe and De Pelsmacker, 2010; Gross, 2010; Lee and Faber, 2007; Nelson, 2002). In order to comprehend how players’ brand attitude get influenced by the game-factor (game-speed), one of the attentional capacity-related elements (Vashisht, 2015), a potential compelling prediction proposed that a player’s mental resources required for processing in-game brand placements is affected by the game-speed. This issue is seen from an attention perspective, i.e. to what extent a gamer can process the brand message embedded in the game while game-playing.

According to LCMA (Kahneman, 1973; Lynch and Srull, 1982), at a particular point of time, one can have a limited amount of attentional capacity. While doing multitasking, one’s total cognitive resources is fragmented into two portions. One part of the attentional capacity is used for the primary task and other portion is utilized for the secondary task. The amount of mental capacity which is used for the primary task cannot be utilized for the secondary task and the amount of the total mental capacity which is utilized for the secondary task is the spare capacity (Vashisht, 2015). In the context of IGA, gaming is the primary task and processing the in-game brand messages is the secondary task for the gamers (Grigorovici and Constantin, 2004). The more use of cognitive capacity for gaming, the less will be the spare capacity remaining for IGA processing.

Furthermore, the existing video game research on speed and attention shows that fast-paced games need more attentional resources as there is lot of steering, more movements and objects placed in the games move with a high speed which increases the perceptual load among the fast-paced game players unlike the case of playing slow-paced games (Krishnan et al., 2013; Kureshi and Sood, 2009; Vashisht, 2015).

Based on the arguments presented above, it is expected that more cognitive resources will be used in the gaming task while playing a fast-paced game and so, less spare capacity will remain for IGA processing, which is unlike the case of playing a slow-paced game.
wherein gamers need less attentional capacity for the gaming task and are left with more spare capacity which can be used for in-game brand placements. Thus, while playing a high-speed game, the spare capacity will not be enough to think much about the persuasive nature of such games, which, in turn, will lead to more positive brand evaluations resulting into the formation of more favorable brand attitudes than that in the case of playing a slow-paced game. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H1a.** Fast-paced game players show a more favorable brand attitude than slow-paced game players.

**H1b.** Fast-paced game players report higher thought favorability than slow-paced game players.

*Mediating role of thought favorability*

The research on effect of brand placements on brand attitude exhibited a significant growth in contributing to the theory of consumer behavior (Terlutter and Capella, 2013). In spite of the popularity of academic debates on numerous subjects affecting brand attitude, the mechanism through which such influences on brand attitude happens, especially in the context of IGA, has not been yet completely tested, particularly in emerging economies, such as India. The IGA literature (e.g., Terlutter and Capella, 2013) has raised many questions, such as: What is the mechanism through which a gamer’s persuasion gets influenced? Is there any mediator by which the influence of game-speed gets affected which, in turn, affects gamers’ attitude toward the embedded brand? HSM (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994) is used to explain the mediating role of thought favorability in the present study. In accordance with HSM (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994), the cognitive response approach argues that the amount and direction of thoughts generated by consumers are the two factors on which attitude change depends. With regard to amount, it has been revealed that depending on the situational factor (e.g., game-speed in the context of IGA), people can vary in the extent of thinking directed toward a persuasive communication. With respect to the direction, it has been proved that the messages which elicit primarily favorable thoughts toward a particular recommendation generate high agreement than the messages which bring out primarily unfavorable thoughts (Petty and Wegener, 1998).

Furthermore, HSM (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994) postulates that information processing can take place in two basic styles, namely, heuristically and systematically. The heuristic view “de-emphasizes detailed information processing and focuses on the role of simple rules or cognitive heuristics” (Chaiken, 1980, p. 752). Alternately, the systematic view “emphasizes detailed processing of message content and the role of message-based cognitions” (Chaiken, 1980, p. 752). In general, both processing styles occur simultaneously on judgment (Ferran and Watts, 2008). In the context of IGA, the brand message (i.e. brand logo/name/color/character) is impeccably incorporated into the prevailing milieu of digital games with brand placement. Also, according to HSM (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994), the response on one’s inner state with regard to the information source is a non-content signal that solidly impacts one’s evaluation while examining the received information heuristically; however, information quality governs the degree of informational influence as a content cue while examining the received information systematically (Chaiken 1980; Ferran and Watts 2008). In the IGA context, the non-content cue of evaluation of an in-game brand is the feedback or response regarding the internal states of gamers toward the embedded brand, and the embedded brand logo/color/character in digital games is the information source of the corresponding real brand. In line with HSM (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994) and LCMA (Kahneman, 1973; Lang, 2000; Lynch and Srull, 1982), it can be reasoned that while
playing a fast-paced game, more attentional capacity is used up for the game-playing task itself and less spare capacity remains which is not high enough to understand and elaborate on reasons of placing brands in games. Thus, this reduced elaboration leads to a less number of chances of formation of gamers’ unfavorable thoughts which, in turn, results in more favorable brand attitude than that in the case of playing a slow-paced game. Hence, based on these arguments, a potential compelling prediction is proposed that thought favorability mediates the effect of game-speed on brand attitude. Thus, the following hypothesis is derived:

**H2.** Thought favorability mediates the effect of game-speed on brand attitude.

**Research methodology**

**Overview**

The objective of the present study is threefold. First, it aims to investigate the effect of game-speed on brand attitude. Second, it examines the effect of game-speed on thought favorability. Third, it examines the mediating role of thought favorability in determining the effect of game-speed on gamers’ brand attitudes. Therefore, independent *t*-tests and a path mediation analysis are the appropriate research analysis methods to be used in the current study (Malhotra *et al.*, 2012). The following sections present the experiment in detail, including the development of stimulus materials, participants and procedure, manipulation of independent variable and measurement of dependent variables.

**Development of stimulus materials**

A pretest was conducted to develop the stimuli for the independent variable, game-speed (i.e. fast vs slow). It was performed in three stages. In the first stage, expert interviews with five advertising professionals were conducted to finalize a game theme for the present study. After selecting a racing game theme, the same expert group was asked to suggest some fictitious brand names that could be included in the games, followed by categorizing the suggested fictional brand names to match with the game context and the product category. In this way, two fictitious brands were finalized. In the second stage, a game developer agency was approached to develop two games (a very high speed game and a very low speed game) for the present study. In the third stage, randomly selected participants (*n* = 40) were called to a common computer laboratory to play the games. This was done to confirm that gamers were able to differentiate between fast vs slow games, where they rated the perceived speed of the selected games (games chosen in stage 1) on a semantic bipolar scale ranging from −3 to +3 (−3 = “very slow” to +3 = “very fast”) after playing them for a specified time frame (ten minutes). This measure was adapted from Vashisht (2015). The *t*-test results revealed that the development of experimental conditions were successful (Mean Speed (high) = 2.35, Mean Speed (low) = −1.2, *t* = 3.21, *p* = 0.000).

**Participants and procedure**

The subjects were selected from a large Indian University. According to the Pew Research Center’s (2015) Teens Survey, 72 percent of teens play digital games, which support the suitability of the student sample (between the age group of 17 and 19 years) for the present study. First, randomly selected students (*n* = 154) from a list of all the university students were asked to rate their game-playing interests on a five-point Likert scale (1 = “not at all interested” to 5 = “very much interested”). Those who reported game-playing interest more than “3” were selected for the study (*n* = 102). Subjects were then called to a computer lab where they were randomly assigned to either fast or slow games. After the game-playing task, participants completed the questionnaire which included questions eliciting their
responses to brand attitude, thought favorability as well as manipulation check items. As 24 respondents could not finish the game-task in the stipulated time (10 minutes), thus their responses were considered invalid and omitted from the analysis. This reduced the sample to 78.

**Measures**

**Thought favorability.** Following the game-playing, participants were instructed to list the thoughts they had while playing the game. Ten boxes were provided for their individual thoughts. They were asked to write one thought per box without worrying about grammar or spelling (for additional details on the thought-listing procedure, see Cacioppo and Petty, 1981) and were asked to classify each one as positive, negative, or neutral with respect to the game they played. An index ($\alpha = 0.86$) of favorability of game-related thoughts was formed by subtracting the number of unfavorable game-related thoughts from the number of favorable game-related thoughts and dividing this difference by the total number of game-related thoughts (Brinol et al., 2004). Higher values indicated a greater proportion of positive relative to negative thoughts. This measure was adapted from Brinol et al. (2004).

**Brand attitude.** Brand attitudes were measured by using a series of nine-point semantic differential scales (i.e. unfavorable-favorable, negative-positive, bad-good, boring-interesting, non-attractive-attractive, unpleasant-pleasant, undesirable-desirable, and non-useful-useful) on which they rated the brand. These items revealed high internal consistency, and responses were averaged to create ($\alpha = 0.83$) a composite attitude index. This measure was adapted from Vashisht (2015).

**Results**

**Manipulation check**
To test the manipulation of game-speed, participants were asked to rate the perceived speed of the advergame by using a semantic bipolar scale ranging from −3 to +3 (−3 = “very slow” to +3 = “very fast”) (same scale used in the pretest). The $t$-test results revealed a significant difference ($t = 1.54, p = 0.000$) between fast and slow games (Mean Speed (high) = 2.11, Mean Speed (low) = −1.4).

**Effect of game-speed**
One tailed independent-samples $t$-tests were conducted to test $H1a$ and $H1b$. Fast-paced game players showed more favorable brand attitude ($M_{fast} = 6.15, SD = 1.02$) than slow-paced game players ($M_{slow} = 3.22, SD = 0.95$), and higher thought favorability ($M_{fast} = 0.60, SD = 0.02$) than slow-paced game players ($M_{slow} = −0.20, SD = 0.01$). $H1a$ and $H1b$ were supported.

**Mediating effect of thought favorability on brand attitude**
A path analysis was conducted to test $H2$. Five criteria must be met to prove the mediation process (Baron and Kenny, 1986). First, the independent variable, the game-speed (dummy coded 0 for slow vs 1 for fast) should be a significant predictor of the mediator, thought favorability ($\beta = 0.25, p < 0.05$). Second, the mediator must have a significant effect on the outcome variable (brand attitude) ($\beta = 0.36, p < 0.01$). Third, when the dependent variable is regressed on the independent variable factor without the mediator, the independent variable should significantly predict the dependent variable ($\beta = 0.28, p < 0.05$). Fourth, when both the independent variable and the mediator are used as predictors for a regression equation, the effect of the mediator on the dependent variable should still remain statistically significant ($\beta = 0.28, p < 0.05$). Fifth, when the dependent variable is regressed on both the independent and mediating variables, the effect of the independent
variable on the dependent variable should reduce and become insignificant ($\beta = 0.16$, $p = 0.712$). Figure 1 shows the mediating role of thought favorability in the game-speed and brand attitude relationship. Thus, $H2$ was supported.

The results show that game-speed does affect players’ brand attitudes in an IGA context; however, it happens through the thought favorability factor. Playing a fast-paced or slow-paced game gives rise to various thoughts related to game. These thoughts, in turn, form a base to evaluate the brand embedded in the game and hence, ultimately, it leads to the formation of positive or negative brand attitudes. Thus, the study results provide an empirical evidence of the mechanism by which one’s capacity gets assigned and divided for two different tasks involved in IGA playing activity.

Discussion and implications
The present study investigated the impact of game-speed on gamers’ attitude toward the in-game embedded brand and thought favorability. Results revealed that individuals playing fast-paced games reported a more favorable brand attitude and higher thought favorability than the slow-paced game players. This finding supports the theory of LCMA (Kahneman, 1973; Lang, 2000; Lynch and Srull, 1982). Fast-paced game players use more amounts of mental resources for the game-playing task and are left with less spare capacity which is not high enough to comprehend the in-game brand placements. On the other hand, slow-paced game players are left with more spare capacity by which they may be able to understand the persuasive nature of the games that the games are embedded with brands in order to influence their mind. This may lead to an increased elaboration which, in turn, may give rise more unfavorable thoughts. As a result, this leads to negative evaluations about brands, and thus slow-game players will develop more unfavorable brand attitudes than fast-paced game players. Also, the results of the study support the theory of HSM (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994). As HSM highlights that people can receive and process information in two approaches: heuristically or systematically; the findings of

![Diagram](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**Figure 1.**
Path diagram of mediation analysis
the study go hand in hand with this theory. The results indicate that while playing fast or slow games, players’ knowledge structure, their capability to recover memory for use and the use of memory in judgmental activity become three main factors that affect their intellectual processing. As the HSM model says that capacity and motivation are two chief aspects of systematic processing which influence one’s attitudes, the results of the study also prove the same. In the case of fast games, less attentional capacity and high motivation results into more favorable thoughts about the game, and hence positive brand attitudes are formed. On the other hand, due to more attentional capacity and less motivation toward game, players form less favorable thoughts which, in turn, lead to the formation of negative brand attitudes.

The findings of the study give theoretical as well as managerial implications. From the theoretical viewpoint, the present study provides the insights about the mediating role of thought favorability in game-speed and brand attitude relationship and its effect on gamers’ brand attitudes in an emerging market context. This piece of work is the first in the stream of advertising research that provides the mediating role of a player-related factor (players’ thoughts about the game) in determining the effect of a game-related factor (game-speed) on gamers’ brand attitudes from attention and elaboration perspectives in the context of IGA (Vashisht, 2015). The current paper shows that in order to understand the IGA effects on brand responses, it is not only the attentional component but also the elaboration component which are important to be investigated so that effective digital games with a right mixture of features can be developed for the targeted audience. This paper highlights the importance of taking two factors together into consideration in order to better understand the IGA effect: one is the game-specific factor and another is the gamer-specific factor. Game-specific factor means an element of a game, like game speed and a gamer-specific factor means a characteristic of an individual (the player), like though favorability. The present study shows that the brand-message processing involves two elements: one is attentional element and another one is cognitive-elaborative element, these elements when taken together into consideration gives the real picture of in-game brand placement effects on affective response, i.e. the brand attitudes. Thus, this paper adds to literature of advanced advertising media by highlighting the importance of media-specific factor (here, it is a game-specific factor, i.e. game-speed) and consumer-specific factor (here thought favorability of players). Overall, the present article shows an artistic impact of video game on gamers’ brand response, i.e. brand attitude.

From a practical viewpoint, this study provides one important implication that the game-speed plays a very important role in forming thoughts about the game and attitudes about the embedded brands. Thus, to generate more positive brand attitudes and high favorable thoughts, advertisers and game-developers must focus on high-speed games. As this study shows that it is not only the game-component, which is important but also the mechanism by which the particular game-component leads to positive outcomes, thus, while developing highly effective games for brand placements, game-speed and gamers’ thoughts favorability must be taken into consideration. Since the current study shows that high game-speed can increase one’s involvement in the game and information processing and, also, the past literature shows that in-game brand placements can capture users’ attention (Vashisht, 2015; Vashisht, 2016). Thus, the longer the customers stay on a game-website, the more likely they are to encode and store the information they encounter. Therefore, game-speed should not be ignored while developing effective in-game brand placements. As it is clear from the present study that the fast-paced games help in making more favorable thoughts and, hence, more favorable brand attitudes, whereas the slow games lead toward negative brand attitudes, marketers can focus more on developing fast games. However, if there is a limitation for the marketers to develop only slow games though they aim toward positive brand attitudes of the players, in such a case, they must
identify an element that can use more of player's attentional capacity and increase motivation to play games, which may affect players' thoughts about the game. Consequently, this may result into more favorable brand attitudes. 

Other than the above mentioned implications, the study also offers some serious implications for society and regulatory bodies or the policy makers. The present study proves that games can become an effective medium in attitude formation. Thus, in order to cultivate some good habits among the young generation, games embedded with educational messages can be used as educational tools in educational institutes. To make college-going students attitudes more favorable, high-speed games can be used as educational tools rather than slow-speed games. It is not only that a brand must be embedded in the game, an educational message can also be embedded in the games and in a playful environment an easy and healthy learning can be done. Thus, for favorable learning, fast-paced games can be used.

Limitations and directions for future research

While the present study findings offer significant findings for the development of effective games for brand placements, the limitations of the study are also acknowledged. First, this study tested IGA effects by considering only one game factor (game-speed) and one gamer factor (thought favorability). Thus, along with these facts and figures, some other variables, such as brand prominence, congruence and game involvement can be considered in future studies. Second, this study considered brand attitude as an outcome variable, however, future studies can test the effect of brand attitude in IGA context as a mediator. Third, moderated mediation and mediated moderation interaction effects of various game-factors and gamer-factors can be explored and tested in future research studies. Fourth, this study made use of fictional brands. Therefore, real brands' effects can be tested in future research work. Fifth, gamers were asked to play on computer systems, hence, future research studies can be conducted in order to see the advertising effects when gamers play on different platforms, such as mobile phones, etc. Sixth, in the present study, gamers played a two-dimensional game, thus, IGA effects for 3D and 4D games can be tested in future game-advertising research. Finally, this study investigated the IGA effects only on Indian gamers, thus, in future, intercultural studies can be conducted by considering the participants not only from different countries but also from different age groups.

References


Further reading


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Ethnic and Cultural Identity in Music and Song Lyrics
Edited by Kennedy V. and Gadpaille M.
Cambridge Scholars Publishing
Newcastle upon Tyne
2017

Keywords Identity, Music, Song lyrics


There has been only limited attention paid in the literature to the way places are represented through song, and in particular to the role of song lyrics “in the construction and communication of place identities” (Skinner, 2017, p. 137). When considering how closely music is related to a sense of place and place identities, “the production of place through music” is often a highly “contested process” (Hudson, 2006, p. 627). Moreover, any research into national and cultural identity can also lead to negative connotations aligned with the rise of nationalism and identity symbols becoming re-purposed by extreme nationalist groups, although such research can also lead to fruitful explorations of ethnicity, gender and class within a national culture (Turner, 2002).

Ethnic and Cultural Identity in Music and Song Lyrics is the third so far in a series of edited texts by Victor Kennedy and Michelle Gadpaille that recognise the interdisciplinary nature of research into the relationship between words and music in song.

In the introduction to their first edited text in this series, Words and Music, Kennedy and Gadpaille (2013, p. xii) make the point that “the common thread running through the chapters of this book is that combining words with music enhances the effectiveness of the message”. Comprising 17 chapters, the first part of the book deals with “Opera and Musicals”, the second with “Popular Music”, the third with “Soundtracks” and the fourth and final part with “Using Words and Music to Teach English as a second language”. In their second edited text, Symphony and Song: The Intersection of Words and Music, Kennedy and Gadpaille (2016, p. 1) “explore the relation between words and music from a variety of critical and practical perspectives”. The book’s 15 chapters cover a range of music and song styles ranging across various operatic and classical genres, traditional songs styles, to contemporary easy listening, pop and rock.

Across 16 chapters, this third book in the series explores in depth the “multiplicity of the factors at play: lyrics, musical score, performer, performance, audience, language, paratext, and, above all, the ethnic national contextualised arena in which these factors combine” (Kennedy and Gadpaille, 2017, p. 1). The ethnic identities upon which the various chapters are focussed are not balanced in a global context. The first five chapters focus on various aspects of British national identity: Exploring the notions of Britishness expressed in mod and punk song lyrics; the pop music of Northern England; the articulation of Irishness through the music of “The Pogues”; British drinking songs; and the comparison between the Americanisation vs Cockney stylisation in the singing accent of Amy Winehouse. Two chapters then follow that deal with identity in North American music, the first focussing on the hip-hop musical “Hamilton”, the second focussing on the Leonard Cohen song “Hallelujah”. There are then five further chapters that explore the identity in the context of song lyrics from Slovenia, dealing with topics ranging from: The use of regional Slovenian dialects in song; songs of the Slovenian diaspora; the way Western bands have been received in Slovenia; and parallels between...
the concept of the universe dancing in English and Slovene literatures. The final three chapters explore the songs and poetry of both ancient and modern China.

For the most part, the music and song lyrics chosen by each chapter’s authors are purposively chosen, and few present any in-depth justification for the chosen sample or method of analysis. Thus, readers may find they disagree with the interpretations and arguments presented by the authors when confronted with works with which they are familiar. However, that said, the subjective nature of an audience’s interpretation of the way ethnic and cultural identities are portrayed in music and song lyrics is also accepted throughout this text. The insights drawn by the contributors to the chapters in the book are offered in great depth and convey an interpretation of meaning that would be of relevance to others who chose to undertake such representational readings of a similar subject matter.

Other texts examining identity in the context of music and song lyrics tend to focus only on only one type of identity, for example “Performing Black Masculinity” (Alexander, 2006), or one type of musical style, for example rap (Krims, 2000). A key strength of this book is therefore not only the breadth of identities and music styles that it covers, but also their temporal nature traced from ancient to contemporary songs.

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