

# **Co-Branding as a Market-Driven Strategic Financial Investment Option in the Hospitality Industry**

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(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this study was to examine the trends in co-branding, especially when one brand is linked with another brand through a business strategy, in order to investigate the factors that lead to co-branding as a strategic investment option in the hospitality industry. Of primary interest was whether co-branding strategies are significant issues in the hospitality industry. This study also investigated the relationship between explicit and implicit requirements and timing of entry for co-branding investment. The co-branding investment model developed for this study could be a valuable asset for the hospitality industry.

The results of this study indicated that there were some relationships among implicit and explicit requirements and the timing of co-branding entry, especially the finding that restaurateurs who had a strong market share emphasis and long franchising experience were more willing to invest in co-branding. Also restaurateurs who were not satisfied with prior sales performance were more likely to invest in the co-branding concept. We also discovered that investors in co-branding, no matter whether early or late movers, are usually satisfied with the performance of their co-branded stores. This study clearly showed that co-branding investment activities were widely practiced among franchisees, regardless of how many years of experience they had, or if they were large, or small local companies.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to my dear parents Hyung-Yul Hahm and Chung-Ja Kim, who instilled in me the determination and will to meet obstacles positively. They have given me unconditional love and support throughout my life. To my mom and dad, I love you and hope I have made you proud. To my lovely daughters, Ju-Hyun and Ju-Young, who constantly make me smile, are always eager to share special times and are truly angels, I love you. Finally, in appreciation of her unwavering support for me and this project, notwithstanding the many nights and weekends I spent paying attention to it and not her, I express my deep love for my beloved wife, Young-Sun Jang.

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