

**What Makes a Passenger Ship a Legend:
The Future of the Concept of Legend in the Passenger Shipping Industry**

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(ABSTRACT)

Cruising, a ten million plus passenger, multi-billion dollar, world-wide industry, is one of tourism's fastest growing sectors. With many new ships entering the market each year, ships must capture the public imagination in order to compete. Over the years the ships that have done this have become legends. This study investigates the qualities necessary for a passenger ship to be identified as a legendary ship and asks how companies make their ships stand out as legends.

This study proposes that legendary ships, "grand hotels of the sea," are extensions of other hospitality and tourism legends. Using the Grounded Theory Approach, in which the theory emerges from data, notable ships and their properties were identified from the literature. Integration of categories, factors, and their constituent properties under a Constant Comparative Method created a model of the legendary ship.

A Delphi Panel tested and confirmed these properties as well as the study's initial model. It also produced a pool of legendary ships and additional properties. The results were further validated by the passenger shipping public using a world-wide electronic survey. Respondents rated intangible properties such as "External Appearance," "Internal Layout," "Quality of Service and Cuisine," "Funnel Design and Shape," "Repeat Passenger Patronage," "Legacy," "History," "Media Attention," "Speed," "Marine Technology," and "Route;" and the tangible properties of "Facilities, Fittings, and Furnishings," "Size," "Speed," "Marine Technology," and "Non Marine Technology," on their importance and named up to ten ships they considered legendary.

Factor analysis was used to divide the properties into four composite factors – “Attractiveness,” “Significance,” “Power,” and “Competitive Advantage.” Cluster analysis of the ships produced four legend classifications – “Grand Legends,” “Legends,” “Demi Legends,” and “Personal/Local Legends.”

Results confirmed the thesis that legendary status is based on superiority across a combination of factors. Those with more intangible properties were found to be stronger, with “Attractiveness,” and “Significance” being the strongest. Significantly, no modern cruise ships placed in the top three legend classifications; except *Queen Mary 2*, built, marketed, and viewed as an ocean liner; indicating that the public views ocean liners and cruise ships as distinct entities.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to “those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business on the great waters. They see the works of the Lord and his wonders of the deep. (Psalm 107, 23-24)” and to those who dream of that.

And to Mrs. Lois Wright, who recognized and encouraged my love of the sea and ships from early on, and to my family, who made this journey with me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to my committee who challenged me and provided academic rigor and discipline. You worked together with the precision and smoothness of a fine Swiss timepiece.

Special thanks to Dr. Lennie Scott-Weber and Dr. John Williams for your encouragement and assistance.

Special thanks to Bill Miller, Anne Kalosh, John Maxtone-Graham, and Des Cox for your friendship and encouragement throughout this endeavor.

Last but not least, a very special thanks to my Delphi Panel members, General Survey respondents, and Martin Cox of MaritimeMatters.com ; without whose assistance this dissertation would not have been possible.

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