Using Event Attendees' Perceived Importance of Event Design to Evaluate Overall Satisfaction

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to develop a model that tests the impact of attendees' perceived importance of event design on their overall satisfaction of the event. By understanding what attendees' perceive as important and valuable to their overall experience, and thus enhancing their overall experience, researchers, planners, and managers alike will potentially have a tool for assessment and forecasting. Survey responses were collected from 373 participants who have attended an annual large music and gaming festival near Washington D.C. The study found that the perceived importance of event design has a significant and positive effect on an event attendee's overall experience. This study has established a scale for planners and designers to implement in other event evaluation circumstances to allow for them to identify their weak links according to their customer base and then enhance them in order to improve future event growth.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

At the core of every industry and the branches that fall under them, it is a necessity of life to consistently evaluate every attribute of a business in order to optimize functionality and the satisfaction of every party involved. This endeavor ensures the likelihood of both repeat and new customers and thus the survival of a company and/or product. Given that the evolution of service within the hospitality industry has evolved from a simple transactional nature into becoming that of a deeper relationship between buyer and seller, evaluations become even more essential for managing the company, its funds, and staff. With evolution of consumption and service moving away from simply consuming a product, consumers are now seeking a differentiation between experiences (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Schmitt, 1999). At the heart of hospitality is the need to attend to a guest's every need and want regardless of whether it is expressed or implied. This can become a difficult endeavor for businesses, as each customer relies on their subjectivity and past experiences to form their opinions, expectations, and perceived importance regarding products or experiences.

One such product that falls under this industry is that of events. Events serve the unique function as being periodical assets to not only a venue itself, but to their adjacent venues and destinations. Since events, such as conventions, are likely to bring in visitors from 50 miles or more away, they can be classified as one of the largest sects of the tourism industry. According to the Convention Industry Council (2014), the meetings and events industry is one of the largest contributors of gross domestic product (GDP) compared with major industries including: air transportation, motion pictures, sound recording, performing arts, and spectator sports of every variety. Crossing interdisciplinary borders, events simultaneously serve its pre-determined

purpose as well as a tourist attraction. Convention participants are considered high-yield visitors as they are likely to spend more than double than what a standard visitor would and on average stays in the area 50% longer (Lee, Lee, & Yoon, 2013). As such, conventions have the potential to create a multiplier effect on the economy that consists of hotels, restaurants, stores, attractions, and transportation (Kim & Chon, 2009). As such, it is vital to planners, venue managers, government officials, and destination managers alike to assess the effectiveness and execution of an event to as specific a degree as possible in order to enhance their attendees' overall experience in the future and thus encourage the likelihood of repeat attendance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

An evaluation of an event is made up of more than just the resulting subjective experience. It is the amalgamation of many aspects that make up an event which function synergistically to supply the overall experience. As of now event evaluation has been performed through methods, such as: qualitative approaches for evaluating social/cultural worth, economic impact assessments, triple-bottom-line and sustainability approaches to accounting, quality and customer satisfaction studies, management effectiveness/ efficiency appraisals, feasibility and needs assessments, and the forecasting of impacts (Getz, 2009). Researchers and industry professionals alike are still making efforts to establish an event evaluation toolkit that would suit.

In the past, events have been assessed with customer satisfaction studies and the evaluation of worth. However, the attendee's perceived importance of aspects of these items in relation to their level of satisfaction with the event, which would essentially merge the two aforementioned evaluative methods has yet to be assessed. Therefore, a model reflecting this

concept is needed for testing attendees' perceived importance regarding the dimensions of event design: service, atmospherics, and dramaturgy.

In the past, event design has been defined as the physical attributes of an event (Berridge, 2007). The concept of event design in this circumstance will be viewed holistically to include the servicescape, atmospherics, and dramaturgy as well as the subjective, co-created experience of the event (Nelson, 2009; Berridge, 2007). As of yet, there is no specific conceptual model assessing event design from the perspective of attendees' based on their perceived importance of each aspect at each phase of an event.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions being asked in this investigation include:

1. How does the perceived importance of each dimension of event design correlate to an individual's overall satisfaction with event design?

2. How significant is understanding the perceived importance of each dimension of event design for planners in their efforts to evaluate their final products?

3. How does the overall satisfaction with event design affect an individual's overall satisfaction with an event they are attending?

1.4 Objectives of this Study

The research objectives of this study include:

1. To investigate the relationships between: the perceived importance of dramaturgy, atmospherics, and service under the umbrella of event design and an event attendee's satisfaction with event design.

2. To investigate the relationships between: an event attendee's satisfaction with event design and their overall satisfaction with the event experience.

3. To test and determine if the proposed conceptual model is appropriate for evaluating event design and overall satisfaction.

1.5 Model

With the guidance of the proceeding literature review, the following conceptual model was developed which reflects the research questions and objectives of this study. The aim of this particular model (Figure 1; Appendix A) and study is to develop an effective conceptual model that tests the impact of attendees' perceived importance partially indicated by their perceived value of event design on their overall satisfaction of the event. By understanding what attendees' perceive as valuable to their overall experience, and thus enhancing their overall satisfaction, researchers, planners, and managers will potentially have a tool for assessment and forecasting if segments can be appropriately identified.

Figure 1.1: Perceived Importance of Event Design and the relationship between perceived importance and satisfaction with overall experience
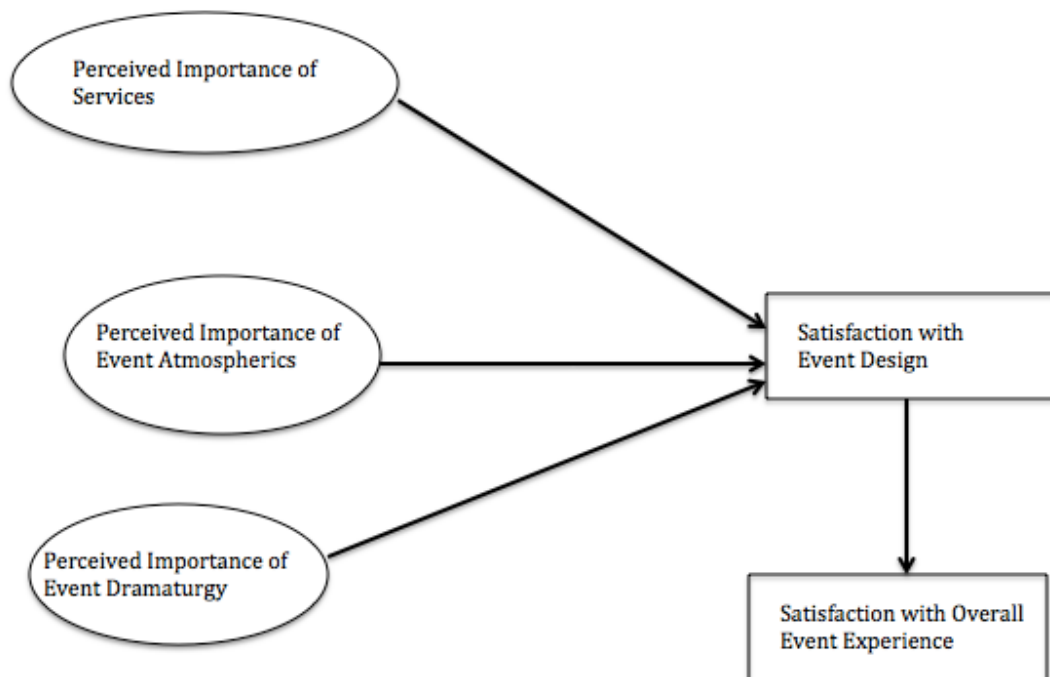
1.6 Contributions of this Study

By understanding how an attendee's perceived importance of service, atmospherics, and dramaturgy, researchers and planners alike will be able to comprehend how each event design dimension affects an attendee's level of satisfaction with each item, and thus understand not only the level of satisfaction with event design which makes up an event but also its direct impact on their overall satisfaction with the experience. This will help planners/designers assess which phase of design needs attention in order to improve or optimize their event and expenditures. It is possible to discover that a majority of attendees' perceive the importance of dramaturgy as insignificant in terms of their satisfaction in which case it will have a minor impact on

satisfaction with event design, which implies that in terms of the event itself, dramaturgy is not as high of a priority as another dimension that scored higher.

The results of this study could also lead to potential market segmentation as well as assist planners and their clients with optimizing their planning efforts, time, and spending. Additionally, once this model becomes more generalizable, other events such as concerts, sporting events, or festivals could be evaluated. Should the model assist with event design evaluation and reflect the desires of attendees, they may feel that the amount they spend to participate in the event has more value. The attendees will also feel as if their needs and wants have been catered to which could positively impact their overall sense of well-being.

1.7 Definitions of Terms

1.7.1 Events

A planned event has been described in academic literature as the "intent to create, or at least shape, the individual and collective experience of the audience or participants" (Getz, 2007, p.9). Ranging in size and type, each event provides its own experiential product. Events allow attendees the opportunity to not only engage in such an experience, but also feel the novelty of such a concept as events are infrequent and time differentiated (Tassiopoulos, 2010). Getz (2007) further supports this concept by providing a model of the planned event experience to suggest that participants attend an event and thus are there to achieve a common goal. More importantly, Getz (2007) suggests in his article that, "people create their own experiences within event settings" (p.23). Planners operate a five-stage process when producing an event: research, design, planning, coordination, and evaluation.

Events range in size, type, and occurrence. They are held both publicly and privately. For example, it is appropriate to view a birthday party as an event as it matches the basic expectations of an event. Likewise, a musical festival held on a vast campground that supports 30,000 attendees is seen as an event. All events require some sort of preparation and forecasting in order to meet the needs and expectations of the anticipated event experience. For the aims of this study, an event will be a planned experience intended for a large-scale audience (+10,000 attendees) over multiple days. This event will consist of a myriad of offerings including: panels, concerts, lectures, film festivals, and shopping, which will make for an optimal subject for analysis as it consists of so much found at various other event types. Therefore, this study will focus particularly on one type of event known as conventions.

1.7.2 Experience

In correlation with the definition of an event, Shedroff (2007) once described experience as "the sensation of interaction with a product, service, or event, through all of our senses, over time, and an both physical and cognitive levels. The boundaries of an experience can be expansive and include the sensorial, the symbolic, the temporal, and the meaningful" (p.11). This concept further supports the significance event design has on an individual's experience for part of its function is to address an individual's senses. Experiencing an event goes beyond the simple consumption of a product or service as it delves further into addressing the psychological needs of each individual.

1.7.3 Conventions

As aforementioned, conventions are the fastest-growing segment of the tourism industry. Conventions are viewed as "a forum to exchange knowledge and expertise, disseminate the latest

research, listen to keynote speakers, learn new skills, advance education in the field of interest, and network with peers" (Ramirez, Laing, & Mair, 2013, p. 165). Convention subject-areas can pertain to any subject matter from scientific innovation to music to a shared appreciation of comic books. They serve as an event experience opportunity for attendees to come together and develop shared meaning in a unified community. For the goals of this study, a convention called MAGFest will be analyzed. MAGFest is a three or four day event consisting of a variety of activities with low to high community involvement and meaning creation focused around the theme of video games and music. Its name in fact is short for "Music and Gaming Festival".

1.7.4 Event Design

The definition of event design has been established and re-established several times over the past few decades. Initially, the term was simply defined as the physical and creative nature of an event. Now, with the belief that event design is essential at every level of an event, the term is believe to consist of the form and function of an event (Brown & James, 2004; Nelson, 2009). This implies that event design consists of both intangible and tangible aspects that affect an individual's cognitive and affective responses to an experience. Event design can be further broken down into three dimensions: service/scape, atmospherics, and dramaturgy. Event design centers around the construction of the service environment for customers, the very atmosphere in which the event is set, and the content offered at the event. For MAGFest, the study will consider event design in the three aspects aforementioned. For example, for service the pre-event registration and booking service experience and on-site service experience, physical environment, content available, and overall tangible and intangible environment will be

investigated. Each of the three aspects of event design will be further explored in the proceeding literature review.

1.7.5 Perceived Value

Coining the term in 1988, Zeithaml defined perceived value as the consumer's "overall assessment of the utility of product based on perceptions of what is received and given". Within this assessment, consumers subjectively consider the economic, social, and psychological benefits of a product or service (Anderson, Jain, & Chintagunta, 1993; Holbrook, 2006). Essentially, a process occurs in which an individual determines if the product is worth its cost and benefits based on a consumer's personal opinion and background. The individual first considers if the product or service matches the price requested and if they agree move on to further assessment. They assess if the quality of the product or service likewise suits the price, and then compare the purchase experience with previous encounters to determine if they are receiving the expected value. Next, they consider the social and psychological costs and benefits of the transaction. Will this product make them feel happy or supported? Does it suit their needs and wants? If so, how valuable is that to them? Attendees further consider if the product will be of assistance to their lives and valuable for use. All of these assessments take place within the consumer's mind and assists them in the final decision of whether or not to purchase the product or service. In terms of this study, perceived value will be defined to include the previously-tested Sweeney and Soutar's (2001) consumer perceived value scale and Petrick's (2002) SERV-PERVAL scale that measures the perceived value of service.

In the marketing literature perceived value is typically defined as the perceived worth in exchange for the price. However, other bodies of literature have argued different definitions for

value and perceived value. Broader literature covers aspects such as the decision making, perception of importance, and defining value in other ways. With this caution and awareness in mind, perceived value and the defining of its scales are derived from the broader literature. Aspects of perceived value and its definitions have been incorporated into the understanding and explanation of perceived importance.

1.7.6 Perceived Importance

Simply put, importance is the level of significance an item or aspect has for an individual. With the supporting definition of perceived value, under this study's circumstances perceived importance becomes an amalgamation of aspects of attributes of perceived value and importance. Therefore, when an item is listed, a quantifiable scale is offered in order for a value to be attributed to the level of importance.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

As the utilization of assessing perceived value and importance for business evaluation increases, researchers in a variety of industries are endeavoring to generalize it in such a fashion that it is applicable to them. Scales used for measuring perceived value have emerged in service, experience, and retail literature. With this development comes the need to further explore the scales currently developed and a demand for adaptation to differentiating industries. A major question each industry must ask itself prior to using perceived value as a form of assessment is if it is truly needed to effectively evaluate their work. As the hospitality and tourism industry is so customer-focused and that events are experiential products, which are partially created based on the subjectivity of each attendee, the perceived value concept is an essential item to consider evaluating.

Researchers that are contributors to the events body of literature have used evaluative tools primarily for feasibility, economic impact, general satisfaction, and management effectiveness. Getz (2009) published a call requesting that researchers endeavor on developing an official event evaluation toolkit, which can effectively be used for any event type and size. This particular study will center on the general relationship between perceived value and satisfaction.

As the world changes both tangibly and intangibly, its inhabitants and their perceptions change with it. An example of this can be seen in the world's response to the concept of sustainability. As a fledgling concept, sustainability encouraged producers to alter their methods in a way that not only has a less negative impact on the environment, but also reduces their ecological footprint. As the concept evolved, more individuals became aware and concerned with

it and thus their perceived value of products began to change. Individuals who like the idea of sustainability began to find more value in products that were developed with sustainability in mind. Even if those products proved to be more expensive than its less sustainable competitors, customers were more likely to opt for the sustainable product because it is perceived more valuable to them socially and psychologically. This mindset can also relate to events and their design. Event planners now apply sustainable practices such as minimizing the use of paper products, increasing the use of mobile technology, encouraging recycling practices, and reducing transportation use. The concept of sustainability affecting perceived value is merely an example to explain how a change in a social, psychological, or technological environment can affect an individual's perceived value regarding a product, service, or experience. Therefore, by consistently assessing attendees' perceived value of an experience and how it impacts satisfaction, planners will be able to keep track of any changes in needs and wants and address them accordingly in the planning and design processes.

2.2 Perceived Value

Coining the term in 1988, Zeithaml defined perceived value as the consumer's "overall assessment of the utility of product based on perceptions of what is received and given". Earliest forms of perceived value first show up in pricing literature focusing primarily on perceived quality and monetary sacrifice (Dodds & Monroe, 1985). In support of perceived value, the equity theory states that, "a customer evaluates what is fair, right, or deserved for the perceived cost of the offering, including monetary payments and non-monetary sacrifices, such as time consumption, energy consumption, and stress experienced by customers" (Yang, Gu, & Cen. 2011, p.30; Bolton & Lemon, 1999; Yang & Peterson, 2004). Following the official

definition of perceived value, the term was assigned functional and affective dimensions based on the contribution of various works, which are displayed below in table 2.1 (Pena, Jamilena, & Molina, 2012).

Table 2.1: Dimensions of PV (Peña A, Jamilena D, Molina M. The perceived value of the rural tourism stay and its effect on rural tourist behaviour. *Journal Of Sustainable Tourism*, *20*(8),1045-1065. Used under fair use, 2015)

Functional Dimensions

Product and service quality: Derived from the achievement of tasks (Lapierre, 2000; Petrick, 2002; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Zeithaml, 1988).
Monetary value: The monetary benefit compared with the available alternatives (Lapierre, 2000; Petrick, 2002; Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).
Convenience value: Derived from ease, comfort, availability, ease of use or the speed at which a task can be executed effectively and conveniently (Holbrook, 1994; Lapierre, 2000; Mathwick, Malhotra, & Rigdon, 2001).

Affective Dimensions

Social: Referring to social approval and the improvement of one's own self-image compared with others. Defined as the utility derived from the capacity of a product to improve one's social self-concept. Esteem, fashion, and sociability are all associated with the social dimension (Holbrook, 1994; Petrick, 2002; Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).
Emotional: This utility is derived from the feelings or affective states generated by a product. The fun, pleasure, escapism, and aesthetic value acquired by means of participation and experiences are all related to the emotional dimension (Holbrook, 1994; Mathwick et al., 2001; Petrick, 2002; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).
Educational (referred to as "epistemic" in some works): Referring to curiosity, novelty or the acquisition of knowledge that can trigger the purchase of a product or service (Duman & Mattila, 2005; Sheth et al., 1991).

Within this assessment, consumers subjectively consider the economic, social, and psychological benefits of a product or service (Anderson, Jain, & Chintagunta, 1993; Holbrook, 2006). Essentially, a process occurs in which an individual determines if the product is worth its cost and benefits based on a consumer's personal opinion and background. By understanding an individual's perceived value of a product or service, a business is better able to predict and or guarantee certain types of consumer behaviors. Perceived value is all about the ebb and flow of giving and getting, as in does the customer feeling like they are getting back enough to match what they are giving in order to get the product or service.

Perceived value has been commonly acknowledged in the past as an antecedent to both satisfaction and customer loyalty (Chen & Tsai, 2008; Zeithaml, 1988). Numerous empirical studies have successfully supported the declaration that there is a positive relationship between perceived value and satisfaction (Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Eggert & Ulaga, 2002; Lee et al., 2007; Pura, 2005). Cronin et al. (2000) investigated six different service industries in order to ascertain if there is a relationship among perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioral intention. The researchers found that perceived value does in fact directly influence both customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in all but one industry (health care) (Cronin et al., 2000). If properly comprehending the significance of these relationships, a company could use this construct as a measurement to gain a potential competitive edge, as well as estimate the potentiality of a customer to repurchase a product or service (Petrick, 2002; Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000). Should a company wish to maintain a long-term customer relationship, they must focus on constantly endeavoring to improve their customers' perceived value (Eggert & Ulaga, 2002; Kuo, Chang, Cheng, & Lai, 2013). In most studies actually, perceived value is viewed as a moderating variable between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Anderson &

Srinivasan, 2003; Kuo et al., 2013). For example, although a customer might be satisfied with a product, if they do not feel that they received the best value for their money, they might seek other products in the future.

2.2 Event Design

Numerous efforts have been made in the past to properly define event design. Most of those times, the term was limited to consisting of only creative design (Berridge, 2007). Creative design essentially pertains to the physical decoration and set-up (i.e. tables, chairs) of the event. Several researchers have endeavored to prove the essential nature of event design, and suggest that there is more to the concept than solely the creative aspect. According to Brown & James (2004), design is essential to an event's success because it leads to various improvements at every level of development. With this in mind, event design evolves to becoming a blend of form and function, and is used as a tool for establishing the relationship between an individual and their setting (Nelson, 2009). Since event design is responsible for this relationship it inherently becomes the platform on which a person's overall event experience is constructed (Berridge, 2007).

Event designers are thus responsible for both tangible and intangible aspects of their product. They strive to design an event that produces a certain, desired, and intended experience. By making it a mission to achieve a desired experience, event designers and managers could potentially use design as a means of predicting the future (Morello, 2006). What this implies is that by planning for an intended experience the planners can thus predict the how the future event will play out. Designers should keep in mind however that no single experience can be fully designed as, like the concept of perceived value, it is made up of a consumer's personal,

social, and cultural constructs as well, therefore suggesting that people are the final piece of the puzzle for designing an overall event experience (Pettersson & Getz, 2009). Given the argument against event design being solely creative design and the support for the concept being a tool consisting of an amalgamation of tangible and intangible items, a new definition is required. According to previous studies, event design is better defined based on a combined set of tools. Based on a further review of the literature, the three dimensions presently attributed to the make-up of event design include the tangible and intangible aspects of service/scape, atmospherics, and dramaturgy (Nelson, 2009; Berridge, 2007; Berridge, 2012). Uniting these three concepts under the event design umbrella expands the responsibilities expected and attributed to event designers. Not only are the responsible for the aforementioned creative design of the event, but also they are also responsible for ensuring the design and quality of the physical and intangible nature of services. Additionally, they are responsible for the development and effectiveness of the dramaturgy available at the event. Lastly, they are responsible for creating and molding the environment that attendees' senses (sight, auditory, olfactory, touch, taste) respond to.

2.2.1 Service

The service aspect of event design consists of two dimensions: service and servicescape. The first dimension is that of actual customer service before, during, and after an event experience at varying degrees of involvement. Under this falls the different levels of service available, for example, self-service to wholly-provided for service. To follow someone through their service experience commences with them receiving initial information of the product, or in this case, the event. The next service step is the customers somehow acquiring more information

on the event and completing all relevant registration processes including: conference registration, lodging, transportation, et cetera.

The second dimension is known as servicescape. The servicescape serves the purpose of delivering a package, which conveys an overall image and suggests the potential usage and quality of the service (Solomon, 1985). Bitner (1992) developed servicescape components to better explain it. First, a servicescape is made up of the spatial layout, ambient conditions, and functionality at an event. Second, Bitner (1992) explored the stages of service involvement based on the roles required. In respect to an event, services become interpersonal given the fact that the very nature of it requires both the customer and employee to perform actions in order for it to take place (Bitner, 1992).

2.2.2 Dramaturgy

Initially investigated by Goffman (1959), a perspective was developed that viewed dramaturgy in a sales setting as 'actors' engaging in 'performances' in various 'settings' for particular 'audiences' in order to shape their 'definition of the situation' thus making meaning a product of a social act. In other words, employees are the 'actors' who engage in events or 'performances' in designated venues/ 'settings' for their 'audiences', which is their targeted customer group. The meanings derived from these performances establish the sense of social order in an event (Ziakas & Costa, 2012). Event design elements that fall under the perspective of dramaturgy include but are not limited to: floor layout, décor, theme(s), performances, and programming. As of now, no scale exists in relevant literature for measuring perceived value of event dramaturgy.

2.2.3 Atmospherics

Atmospherics was brought to the forefront of the literature when Kotler (1973) thoroughly explored the concept. Generally, atmospherics can be defined as the elements of a service environment that influence a consumer's affective reactions to a place (Foxall & Greenley, 1999). Atmospherics involves an intentional control and manipulation of environment in order to cause a response in a customer, such as convincing someone to purchase a product (Kotler, 1973). Therefore, the components of atmospherics are all sensory-derived; i.e. visual, aural, olfactory, and tactile stimulants. This construct can prove difficult to manage since when a person intends to design an atmosphere for customers, that atmosphere might not necessarily be perceived in that fashion (Kotler, 1973). For example, a spa manager may keep the lights of a spa dimmed while having New Age music playing and incense burning. The manager's intention was to create an environment of relaxation and encourage customer's to purchase spa packages. However, a customer may enter the spa with a headache which is antagonized by the dim lighting and overbearing odor of the incense and will desire to leave immediately and never participate in any spa services.

Atmospherics generally only prove useful in an environment where the product or service is being actually consumed, not developed like in a factory (Kotler, 1973). It also becomes a powerful tool when the number of competitive outlets, or in this circumstance, similar-type events increases (Kotler, 1973). Given that designing an atmosphere is intentional and an artificial manipulation of the environment, event designers have the power to create an environment that is best suited for their intended market segment. As of now, no previous studies have offered a scale to measure the perceived value of atmospherics in event design.

2.3 Service & Perceived Value

The aim and hypotheses of this study are derived from past studies, which support the linkages highlighted in the potential conceptual model. Previous studies have found and later supported a positive link between perceived value and service quality (Andreassen & Linkdestad, 1998; Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal, & Boss, 2002; Brady, Robertson, & Cronin, 2001; Petrick, 2002; Zeithaml, 1988). In fact, several scales have been developed based on this positive linkage in order to better measure service quality and perceived value of service. Initially, a scale titled SERVQUAL was designed and tested with the intention of measuring only perceived quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). This scale lacked in the ability to measure all components of perceived value given that it only looked into perceived service quality and disregarded the other four components commonly attributed to perceived value of emotional response, monetary price, behavioral price, and reputation. With this in mind, a new scale was introduced by Petrick (2002) that incorporated these aforementioned components and thus measured the perceive value of overall service. This new scale was appropriately designated as the SERV-PERVAL scale (Petrick, 2002). As of now, no studies have investigated the perceived value of service in an event environment.

2.4 Satisfaction Linkages

A key construct measured in the tested conceptual model is that of overall satisfaction. The study's conceptual model is designed to prove that each aspect of event design impacts an attendee's satisfaction with an event and is thus significant. In terms of service quality, several studies have offered theoretical and empirical justification for the link that suggests service quality impacts satisfaction (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Anderson et al., 1994; Gotlieb et al., 1994;

Rust & Oliver, 1994; Tian-Cole, Crompton, & Willson, 2002). Additionally, a study has found that the company's environment or staging has an impact on customer satisfaction (Bitner, 1990). Lastly, recent studies have produced empirical support for the direct relationship between atmospherics and satisfaction (Chang, 2000; Ryu & Han, 2010; Rajic & Dado, 2013).

2.5 Implications

2.5.1 Theoretical

If successful, this conceptual model will be one of the first attempts to contribute to the events body of literature that explores the conceptual linkage between perceived value of event design and an attendee's level of satisfaction with the overall experience which perhaps may assist in predicting return behavior as well as identify potential issues and prospective solutions to design problems for planners. Once established, further studies could generalize this measurement tool and attempt to use it in other event sizes and types. Additionally, this model could address Getz's (2009) call for evaluative additions to the events/meetings evaluative toolkit both theoretically and practically. If the conceptual linkages between perceived value of each event design dimension and satisfaction are validated and verified, the confirmation would further substantiate the arguments made in previous studies which are found in other bodies of literature including: tourism, marketing, management, service and business in general.

2.5.2 Practical

Should planners use this model and are better able to understand attendees' perceived value of event design, they have the ability to optimize budgetary expenditures and enhance their

event at every level of the process. By identifying gaps in design areas, which, unbeknownst to them, their customers value more, planners can endeavor to address these gaps and enhance their event design. By doing so, their events will achieve a new level of quality that appeals to its major audiences and could encourage repeat visitation. Additionally, if the planners are not in-house, or in other words if the planners are contracted out by companies, they make themselves more competitive and attractive for hiring if they prove to have a keener insight into the minds of the company's attendees.

On the other side of the coin, attendees who have completed this evaluative survey, or even those who share similar opinions regarding the perceived value of certain design attributes will feel like their needs and wants have been considered during the design process, and their perceived value of the event could potentially be enhanced. For example, certain event enhancements may make attendees feel that they are getting more for their dollar. With their perception that the event is of even more value to them, customers may commence with spreading word-of-mouth both personally and through social media, which could lead to free advertising and potential return and new business. Also, with an enhanced experience, the attendee might feel that their overall well-being has been considered and, with some event design alterations, improved.

2.6 Gap

Various gaps have been identified in the preceding literature review, which substantiate the need for the establishment of this study's conceptual model. Although previous linkages have been found in a few studies between perceived value, importance, and satisfaction, none of the

previous studies have tested the link in an event forum. The relationship between perceived importance/value of service/servicescape and satisfaction have been evaluated in the service body of literature, but focused more generally on it. Studying the perceived value of event design and its individual dimensions in the context of events will be useful for theoreticians and practitioners as events consist of attributes found in numerous industries.

Additionally, in the events literature, although there have been previous efforts to evaluate events from the attendee perspective, none have gone so far as to consider perceived value in the context of satisfaction, and apply that for future adaptations of the product. As no study has tested this area, there is a substantial gap in the literature.

More specifically, few researchers have looked into attempting to evaluate or even effectively define event design. This model can also address this gap. Should researchers and planners work together in establishing the research tool and the definition of event design, yet another gap will start to be fulfilled by this study.

2.7 Conclusions

Based on the previously introduced and supported linkages highlighted in the perceived value, importance, satisfaction, and event literature, a conceptual model was developed to reflect findings and adapted for the circumstance of event design and event evaluation. If successful in its testing phase and found to be potentially generalizable, the conceptual model will prove to be of practical importance.

Event planners and their designers are constantly seeking feedback and useful data in order to modify their products and services. Given the temporal nature of events, the development phase is different from simply producing an item for sale, and thus is more delicate

but malleable. Every attendee's perceived importance, satisfaction, and opinion of an event experience is important and also reflects the changing nature of the world and general expectations. For example, as technology continues to develop, the expectations of attendees and their perceived value of the product, service, or experience will alter to reflect the changes. Therefore, it is the prerogative of the planners to keep up with the times and effectively design, develop, and manage their events to reflect the changes and match the expectations of their customers.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter provides research questions, hypotheses, measurement of items, instrumentation, and an explanation of survey procedures and overall analysis.

3.1 Research Questions

The research questions being asked in this investigation include:

1. How does the perceived importance of each dimension of event design correlate to an individual's overall satisfaction with event design?

2. How significant is understanding the perceived importance of each dimension of event design for planners in their efforts to evaluate their final products?

3. How does the overall satisfaction with event design affect an individual's overall satisfaction with an event they are attending?

3.2 Theoretical Framework

Based off the above literature review and gaps, the following Figure 3.1 illustrates the theoretical framework and conceptual model for this study.

Figure 3.1: Theoretical Framework
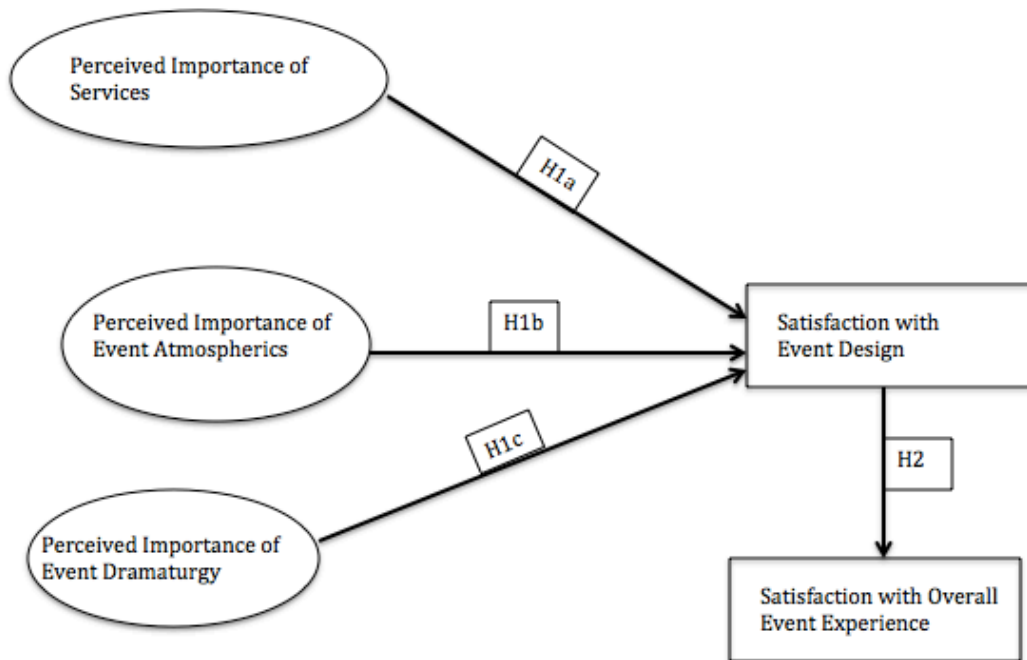
3.3 Application of the Model

This study seeks to understand the perceived importance of the three dimensions of event design as well as overall event design, and how that impacts an attendees' satisfaction with event design. It also seeks to understand the relationship between satisfaction with event design and an attendees' overall satisfaction with an event experience. No studies before have attempted to develop or apply the above model. The proposed model will be used in order to develop a survey to test the relationship between perceived importance and satisfaction in an event context. For each construct, scales will be created so that each component can be tested and measured for its influence within and over the entire model.

3.4 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable of this study based off the literature review and conceptual model is the overall satisfaction with an event experience.

3.5 Independent Variables

The independent variables based off the literature review and conceptual model include:

- Perceived importance of event service

- Perceived importance of event dramaturgy

- Perceived importance of event atmospherics

- Perceived importance of event design

- Satisfaction with event design for their overall satisfaction

3.6 Hypotheses

Based on this information, the following are the proposed hypotheses:

H1: The perceived importance of event design positively and significantly affects an attendee's level of satisfaction with the event design.

H1$_a$: The perceived importance of services positively and significantly affects the level and importance satisfaction with event design.

H1$_b$: The perceived importance of event dramaturgy positively and significantly affects the level and importance of satisfaction with event design.

H1$_c$: The perceived importance of the event atmospherics positively and significantly affects the level and importance of satisfaction with event design.

H2: Satisfaction with event design positively and significantly impacts overall satisfaction of the event experience.

3.7 Instrumentation

Screening questions were established at the beginning of the questionnaire in order to ensure that those submitting survey responses are over the age of 18. Since the questionnaire link was sent through MAGFest's own lines of communication, it was already confirmed that anyone responding to the questionnaire has attended at least one MAGFest convention in the past. In the same section as the screening questions, participants were asked if they would be interested in being considered for the raffle to receive the offered incentive of potentially being randomly selected to receive a free registration for next year's MAGFest convention. If they indicated that they were interested, they were then asked to provide their name and some form of contact information, which they were then ensured would be kept completely confidential and would only be used for the purpose of communicating with them if they won the lottery.

The next section covered the perceived importance of event services. Divided into four dimensions of quality, emotional response, monetary price, behavioral price, and reputation, the section asked for participants to rate the importance of each attribute on a Likert scale of 1-5 with 1 indicating the attribute is very unimportant to them, and 5 indicating the attribute is very important to them. Next to rating the importance of an attribute, the attendee was then asked to rate how well MAGFest achieved each attribute on a Likert scale of 1-5 with 1 indicating that the attendee was very dissatisfied with the attribute, and 5 indicating that the attendee was very satisfied with the attribute in correlation to MAGFest.

Section three covered the perceived importance of event dramaturgy, and was organized identically to that of the section preceding it in terms of asking the attendee to rate both the importance and their satisfaction with each attribute in relation to MAGFest's dramaturgy.

Section four covered the perceived importance of event atmospherics, and was also organized identically to section two. In this section, attendees were asked to rate both the importance and their satisfaction with the attributes related to MAGFest's atmospheric attributes.

Section five focused entirely on measuring the attendees' satisfaction with varying aspects of event design and their event experience. Using the same 5-point Likert scale to indicate their level of satisfaction, attendees addressed core areas in every aspect of event design and their experience. This section will help in the measurement and relationship-defining efforts between perceived importance/value and satisfaction.

The final section asked attendees for demographic information as well as their event attendance behaviors including frequency of attendance and how much they spend on average for events like MAGFest.

3.8 Population and Sample

Once an initial draft of the questionnaire was developed and IRB approved (Appendix B), it was pre-tested on a group of Virginia Tech faculty and students with the intention of cleaning up the items. Following this pre-test, the updated questionnaire was then forwarded to 3-5 event/meeting planner professionals for a pilot test. After incorporating any changes from these tests, the questionnaire was finally ready for its official distribution to the selected group.

The population consisted of any attendee who has participated in a large-sized, multi-day convention known as MAGFest. MAGFest is a multi-faceted convention with diverse offerings including: concerts, video gaming, board gaming, film festivals, discussion panels, classes, contests, and shopping. MAGFest is an ideal event to survey for it has been held annually for at least 14 years and recently occurred between the dates of January 21st and 24th of 2015.

Additionally, MAGFest has email access to at least 4,000 of its attendees, and boasts of an estimated 15,000 attendees at this year's MAGFest. However, the questionnaire screened for people ages 18 or older. Attendees will be incentivized to participate in the survey with the potential of being one of four randomly selected participants to receive a fully paid for registration for MAGFest's 2016 convention. The MAGFest planners will also benefit from this study, for any useful results will be presented to them for their professional use.

The MAGFest executive board was contacted at an early stage of the project in order to ascertain their level of interest. They expressed a strong interest in the study and its potential results, and only required a review of the questionnaire. After they reviewed the final questionnaire, they forwarded it to all attendees that they have contact with via email, which the board estimated was around 4,000 individuals. Given the 4,000 individuals in direct contact with MAGFest, the estimated goal for a sample was between 10-20% of the population, which is between 400 and 800 individuals.

The questionnaire (Appendix A) required between 10 to 20 minutes for a participant to complete and successfully submit through Qualtrics. After an initial screening phase, the survey was divided into six sections: screening questions, perceived importance (PI) of event services, PI of dramaturgy, PI of atmospherics, satisfaction, and general participant information.

3.9 Measurement

The questionnaire (Appendix A) required up to twenty-minutes for a participant to complete and successfully submit through Qualtrics. After an initial screening phase, the survey will be divided into six sections: screening questions, perceived importance (PI) of event services, PI of dramaturgy, PI of atmospherics, satisfaction, and general participant information.

All measures of the constructs were derived from scales of proven validity and adjusted to appropriately fit the study. Consumer perceived value and importance were measured using Sweeney and Soutar's (2001) scale which consists of four dimensions: quality, emotional response, price, and social aspects, which consists of 19 items that must be considered and adapted for this events focused study. In addition to this, the SERV-PERVAL scale (2002) was adjusted to reflect an event setting and used in the questionnaire. Both Sweeney and Soutar's (2001) scale and Petrick's (2002) SERV-PERVAL scale were used to design items for event services, atmospherics, and dramaturgy. Once developed, the questionnaire evaluated the level of agreement an individual had with each statement, and also the sense of importance of each line item according to the participant on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (least) to 5 (greatest). For example, under the section that measured the perceived importance of service, there was an item that stated that, "The on-site customer service was of consistent quality". First, the participant indicated on the 1-5 scale how important this item is to them when attending an event or deciding to attend an event. Next, they would indicate how satisfied they were with MAGFest's handling of that specific item at a previous experience.

Overall satisfaction was seen as uni-dimensional in accordance with the assumption that it was measured along a hedonic continuum on a Likert scale ranging 1 (least satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied) (Westbrook et al., 1991; Sweeney et al., 2001). Event design items that were derived from its three dimensions were included in the section that measured satisfaction to measure how satisfied participants were with each item in an attempt to identify any weaknesses in each dimension of event design.

3.10 Data Analysis

Following the data collection stage, the normality of the data was checked. Once checked, a descriptive analysis was run to better develop a thorough attendee profile. Knowing the age, gender, education level, financial source, and convention-related behavior will better assist in understanding how to apply results from this study in a way that is optimal. Next, an Exploratory Factor Analysis was run in order to reveal the underlying dimensions of each construct, and also reduce the scale items to a measurable group. The constructs' psychometric properties were also assessed, e.g. reliability alpha, variance for each factor, Eigen-value, and overall variance for each construct. Following these tests, a path analysis was conducted to test the hypotheses.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Results

The results of the data analysis and hypotheses are presented in this chapter. The first section explains the process and results of the pilot study, which was used to check for both quality and reliability of the item dimensions for this study. The second section will provide the questionnaire distribution method, as well as identify the official number of respondents and offer a descriptive profile. The third section will explain the path analyses used to test the hypotheses. The final section will push into further analysis for the purpose of deriving practical implications.

4.1 Pre-Test

Once an initial draft of the questionnaire had been constructed, it was necessary to have it reviewed by both researchers and event professionals. Seven professors and PhD-level students were asked to review the survey and offer comments. Several recommendations were given. The first was to re-organize the design of the survey so that "Importance" and "Satisfaction" were measured side-by-side with items. The second suggestion was to add four free response questions to Part 5. These questions included: 1) What do you not like about the current design, set-up, and organization of services?; 2) What do you like about the current design, set-up, and organization of services?; 3) What would you like to see MAGFest change in the future?; and 4) How could your MAGFest experience be improved?. The final suggestions were in reference to Part 6, which asked respondents for general information about themselves. The suggestions for this section, were to transform the questions regarding age, acceptable budget to spend for MAGFest, and number of other events attended into free response for the ability to have a stronger analysis. The final recommendation was to add a final question asking, "Do you

perceived MAGFest to be a successful annual event?" These edits were incorporated into the draft and an updated revision of the survey was available and ready to share with event professionals.

At this stage, the questionnaire draft was sent to the MAGFest event professionals for their review. Five MAGFest executives hailing from planning, marketing/promotions, research, and overall leadership reviewed the survey, and requested a minor change. The change requested was that the order of the three event design sections (event services, atmospherics, and dramaturgy) be reorganized into the following order: event services, dramaturgy, and atmospherics. This request was honored and the current questionnaire (APPENDIX A) reflects the final questionnaire with requested changes. With the newest version of the questionnaire, the entire draft was uploaded to Qualtrics, an online survey application popularly used by Virginia Tech.

4.2 Survey Method and Sample

The survey data was collected via Qualtrics, an online survey application popularly used by Virginia Tech. Qualtrics allows for respondents to access a survey through both a computer and mobile devices such as cell phones, tablets, and mp3 players with wireless capabilities. Once the final version of the questionnaire was published on Qualtrics, a unique website link was assigned to it for participants to be able to access it. This link was shared with the MAGFest promotions team. The promotions team created an online newsletter that would be sent over their email listserv of 4,000 attendees. The online newsletter was sent out on April 13, 2015 and the survey was kept open and accessible for seven days, closing on April 20, 2015. Of the 4,000

potential attendees, a total of 750 individuals responded to the survey, however only 373 questionnaires were usable, as they had completed the entire survey.

4.3 Profile of the Participants

The total sample has been explained in order to illustrate an accurate demographic profile of the 373 respondents (Table 4.1), and is representative of the MAGFest population. Of the 373 total respondents, 257 (68.9%) were male, 111 (29.8%) were female, and the remaining 5 (1.3%) classified themselves under the "Other" category. Those under the final category were not asked to specify their classification. The respondents varied in age, but the majority, 238 (63.8%) were between the ages of 21 and 29. The second largest age range was between the ages of 30 and 39, which 85 (22.8%) of the participants fell under. There were 39 (10.5%) individuals between the ages of 18 and 20, and 10 (2.7%) who were between the ages of 40 and 49. Only 1 individual (0.3%) was designated over the age of 50. In terms of education level, 206 (55.2%) of the participants have college degrees, 91 (24.4%) are either still in college or only completed a portion of college, 39 (10.5%) individuals have a high school degree or less, 33 (8.8%) have earned Master's degrees, and 4 (1.1%) have their PhD degree. Lastly, the respondents reported that in terms of their estimated annual household income that 131 (35.1%) participants earn anywhere been $21,000 to $50,000. The next largest group of 110 (29.5%) participants declared earnings between $51,000 and $100,000. The third group, which consisted of 93 (24.9%) claimed household earnings under $20,000. The remaining 39 (10.5%) participants claimed earnings over $101,000.

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n=373)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	257	68.9
Female	111	29.8
Other	5	1.3
Age		
18-20	39	10.5
21-29	238	63.8
30-39	85	22.8
40-49	10	2.7
Over 50	1	0.3
Education		
High School or less	39	10.5
Some College	91	24.4
College Degree	206	55.2
Master's Degree	33	8.8
PhD Degree	4	1.1
Annual Household Income		
Less than $20,000	93	24.9
$21,000 - $50,000	131	35.1
$51,000 - $100,000	110	29.5
More than $101,000	39	10.5

Additionally, the questionnaire requested information regarding the participant's event-related behaviors and opinions (Table 4.2). The variables that were used for this included: 'Times attended MAGFest", 'Attendees' Source of MAGFest Payment', 'Lodging at MAGFest' (where do they stay), 'Who attendees attend MAGFest with', 'Total amount willing to spend for attending MAGFest', 'How likely to attend MAGFest in the future', and 'Number of similar events attended annually'. Two of these variables, 'Total amount willing to spend for attending MAGFest' and 'Number of other similar events attended annually' had missing cases, 14 and 9 cases respectively, which were left out of the final analysis and the percentages reflect the actual number of respondents in that circumstance. In order to properly analyze the numerical data, all variables were checked to ensure the removal of confusing characters, such as "$" in the case of

the question regarding an attendee's amount they are willing to spend for MAGFest. Text versions of numbers were also converted to their numerical versions. Additionally, if the respondents replied with sentences, such as, "I have been to MAGFest 3 times", this was also converted to reflect the numerical response, i.e. 3. Lastly, if any responses presented a range of numbers, the average of this range was selected for analysis. If there were text responses that offered an uncertain response that could not be quantified, then they were left out of analysis.

Based on analysis, it was found that of the 373 surveyed that 206 (55.2%) of them had attended MAGFest one or two times as of April 2015. Next, 134 (35.9%) had attended the event three to five times. Third, 28 (7.8%) of respondents had attended MAGFest at least six to nine times. Lastly, four (1.1%) of the respondents reported attending MAGFest more than 10 times. 338 (90.6%) of the participants identified themselves as their source of funding for financing their visit to MAGFest. 13 (3.5%) participants reported that the next largest source of funding was from parents or relatives, while 11(2.9%) cited other resources. Lastly seven (1.9%) attributed their financing to friends and four (1.1%) attributed theirs to group (band, judges, vendors, etc.).

When participants attend MAGFest, 222 (59.5%) elect to reside at the Gaylord National hotel, which plays host to the MAGFest event. An additional, 83 (22.3%) opt to stay at nearby hotels and motels in the area. 48 (12.9%) of the 373 participants reported that they stay at home throughout the event, suggesting they live within a comfortable driving distance from the Gaylord National in Oxon Hill, MD. 10 (2.7%) other individuals stated that they stay with friends or family during their visit. The remaining 10 (2.7%) stated that they stay at other accommodations citing that they resided at a blend of accommodations. An example of a

response would be that one individual had stayed at the Gaylord National for a majority of the event, but then switched to another nearby hotel for the remainder.

A major percentage of individuals traveled with friend and family when attending MAGFest, in fact 329 (88.2%) claimed they did just that. An additional 24 (6.4%) stated that they attend MAGFest alone. 15 (4.0%) said that they travel with a group like a band, vendor, or judge ring. The remaining 5 (1.3%) opted to select the "other" option. The participants were also asked how much are they willing to spend in total for the MAGFest experience including registration, lodging, transportation, food, and retail. Of the 373 responses, 14 had missing responses and thus were not in the final analysis. Of the remaining 359, 160 (44.6%) claimed they would willingly spend between $200 and $499 dollars for the event. 109 (30.4%) stated they are willing to spend between $500 and $999. Forty-six (12.3%) are willing to spend up to $199 in total, while the remaining 44 (11.8%) were willing to spend anywhere from $1000 and up. Of the original sample of 373, 302 (81.0%) said they were very likely to attend MAGFest in the future, 37 (9.9%) reported that they were somewhat likely to attend, 7 (1.9%) were uncertain, 6 (1.6%) were somewhat unlikely to return, and 21 (5.6%) said they were very unlikely to return to MAGFest in the future.

Table 4.2 Participants' Event Behaviors (n=373)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Times Attended MAGFest (as of 2015)		
1-2 Times	206	55.2
3-5 Times	134	35.9
6-9 Times	28	7.8
More than 10 Times	4	1.1
Attendees' Source of MAGFest Payment		
Self	338	90.6
Parents/Relatives	13	3.5
Friends	7	1.9
Groups/Sponsorship	4	1.1
Other	11	2.9
Lodging for MAGFest		
Gaylord National (Host)	222	59.5
Nearby hotel/motel	83	22.3
Home	48	12.9
Relative/ Friend's Home	10	2.7
Other	10	2.7
Who attendees attend MAGFest with		
Alone	24	6.4
Family/Friends	329	88.2
Group (e.g. band, judges, vendors)	15	4.0
Other	5	1.3
Total Amount willing to spend for attending MAGFest*		
Up to $199	46	12.3
$200-$499	160	44.6
$500-$999	109	30.4
$1000 and Above	44	11.8
How likely to attend MAGFest in the future		
Very Unlikely	21	5.6
Somewhat Unlikely	6	1.6
Undecided	7	1.9
Somewhat Likely	37	9.9
Very Likely	302	81.0
Number of Other Similar Events Attended Annually*		
0-2 Events	243	66.8
3-5 Events	100	27.5
5-9 Events	16	4.4
10 or More Events	5	1.4
* Indicates missing cases, % used are indicative of actual responses		

4.4 Data Analysis

This section of chapter four will go in depth into explaining the results derived from a statistical analysis of the data collected from the study. Initially, the reliability and skewness were calculated for the five constructs which include: perceived importance of event services, perceived importance of event dramaturgy, perceived importance of atmospherics, satisfaction with event design, and overall satisfaction with the event. Next, given the sizable amount of items included in the survey, with the intention of developing a stronger tool in the future, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted in order to reduce items for the three perceived importance constructs of event design. Following this, all constructs were recomputed in order to run a regression for path analysis. A path analysis was used in order to test the two major hypotheses and the sub-hypotheses.

4.4.1 Reliability and Skewness

The five constructs of this study were initially tested for reliability and skewness (Table 4.3). In table 4.3, the mean, standard deviation, alpha, and skewness of each construct are displayed. These statistics reveal that each construct is highly reliable, for all relevant alpha levels are above .79. Additionally, the skewness statistic values all fall outside of the acceptable range for each construct distribution, which indicative of a normal distribution.

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics and Alphas for the Study Constructs

Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation	Alpha	Skewness	Skewness Std. Error
Perceived Importance of Event Services	4.36	.542	.893	-1.624	.126
Perceived Importance of Event Dramaturgy	4.23	.717	.958	-.974	.126
Perceived Importance of Atmospherics	4.17	.633	.976	-.765	.126
Satisfaction with Event Design	4.24	.574	.991	-.877	.126
Overall Satisfaction with Event Experience	4.22	.518	.962	-.306	.126

4.4.2 Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis is conducted in order to detect if there are any connections between the constructs. The analysis from this study proved that all of the constructs are correlated and significant at the .01 probability level (Table 4.4).

Perceived importance of event design and perceived importance of event atmospherics had the highest level of correlation at .944, suggesting a potentially powerful association between the two. This high level of correlation can primarily be attributed to the fact that the perceived importance of atmospherics, when summated with services and dramaturgy, makes up the whole of the perceived importance of event design construct. Both perceived importance of event services (.695) and event dramaturgy (.843) also revealed high correlations in particular with the perceived importance of atmospherics.

Satisfaction with event design and overall satisfaction with event design shared a high correlation to one another with a value of .766. This indicates that there is a strong correlation between the two and that this relationship must be further explored via a regression analysis.

Table 4.4 Correlation Table for the Constructs

	Perceived Importance of Event Design	Perceived Importance of Event Services	Perceived Importance of Event Dramaturgy	Perceived Importance of Event Atmospherics	Satisfaction with Event Design	Overall Satisfaction with Event
Perceived Importance of Event Design	1					
Perceived Importance of Event Services	.849**	1				
Perceived Importance of Event Dramaturgy	.927**	.667**	1			
Perceived Importance of Event Atmospherics	.944**	.695**	.843**	1		
Satisfaction with Event Design	.667**	.560**	.607**	.645**	1	
Overall Satisfaction with Event	.469**	.385**	.420**	.464**	.766**	1
**p<.01						

4.4.3 Testing the Proposed Model and Hypotheses

The primary objective of this study develop a conceptual model that tests the impact of attendees' perceived importance of event design on their overall satisfaction of the event. More specifically, the study aimed to investigate the relationships between: (1) perceived importance of event services and satisfaction with event design; (2) perceived importance of event dramaturgy and satisfaction with event design; (3) perceived importance of event atmospherics

and satisfaction with event design; and (4) satisfaction with event design and overall satisfaction with event experience.

4.4.4 Analysis of the Hypotheses

In order to properly test the two major hypotheses and three sub-hypotheses, a path analysis was implemented via SPSS. These relationships were evaluated on the basis of the significance of the model using the F-value and its associated P-value. The P< .05 significance level rule was incorporated for the purpose of analysis, therefore, if any significant values lay over .05 then the hypothesis is not supported and thus does not have a significant relationship with its dependent variable. Additionally, the standardized Beta coefficients were reported in order to indicate the relative importance of the independent variables in explaining the dependent variables.

The questionnaire was designed in such a manner that each construct could be developed. The three sections regarding perceived importance of event design asked for participants to respond in two aspects: importance and satisfaction level. The importance-related items of each of the sections were used to make up the construct of perceived importance of event design. The satisfaction-related items of each section were used to make up the construct of satisfaction with event design. Section five's first three segments which were measured with a 5-point Likert scale make up the overall satisfaction with the event experience construct.

4.4.5 Hypotheses Tests

The following are the results of the hypotheses tests.

Hypothesis 1: The perceived importance of event design positively and significantly affects an attendee's level of satisfaction with the event design.

The results of the regression analysis show that the path from the perceived importance of event design to satisfaction with event design is significant and positive (p= .000; F= 297.183). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is supported (Table 4.5). The adjusted R Square value of this model is .443, which means that 44.3% of the variance is explained. This overall construct thus proved that it is a significant predictor of satisfaction with event design (p= .000; t= 17.239). The standardized Beta coefficient is at .667 for this construct.

Table 4.5 Coefficients table for Perceived Importance of Event Design and Satisfaction with Event Design

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.407	.166		8.484	.000
Perceived Importance of Event Design	.666	.039	.667	17.239	.000
a. **Adjusted R Square= .443; p= .000; F= 297.183**					

Hypothesis 1$_a$: The perceived importance of services positively and significantly affects the level of satisfaction with event design.

The results of the regression analysis show that the path from the perceived importance of event services to satisfaction with event design is significant and positive (p= .000; F= 169.094).

Therefore, this hypothesis is supported (Table 4.6). The adjusted R Square value of this model is .311, which means that 31.1% of the variance is explained by this construct. This construct is a significant predictor of satisfaction with event design (p= .000, T= 13.004). The standardized Beta coefficient is at .560 for this construct.

Table 4.6 Coefficients Table for Perceived Importance of Event Services

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.657	.200		8.279	.000
Perceived Importance of Event Services	.592	.046	.560	13.004	.000
a. Adjusted R Square= .311; p=.000; F= 169.094					

Hypothesis 1ᵦ: The perceived importance of event dramaturgy positively and significantly affects the level of satisfaction with event design.

The results of the regression analysis show that the path from the perceived importance of event dramaturgy to satisfaction with event design is significant and positive (p= .000; F= 216.270). Therefore, this hypothesis is supported (Table 4.7). The adjusted R Square value of this model is .367, which means that 36.7% of the variance is explained by this construct. This construct is a significant predictor of satisfaction with event design (p= .000, T= 14.706). The standardized Beta coefficient is at .607 for this construct.

Table 4.7 Coefficients Table for Perceived Importance of Event Dramaturgy

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Coefficients[a]					
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.911	.160		11.929	.000
Perceived Importance of Event Design	.551	.037	.607	14.706	.000
a. Adjusted R Square= .367; p= .000; F= 216.270					

Hypothesis1c: The perceived importance of the event atmospherics positively and significantly affects the level of satisfaction with event design.

The results of the regression analysis show that the path from the perceived importance of event services to satisfaction with event design is significant and positive (p= .000; F= 263.762). Therefore, this hypothesis is supported (Table 4.8). The adjusted R Square value of this model is .416, which means that 41.6% of the variance is explained by this construct. This construct is a significant predictor of satisfaction with event design (p= .000, T= 16.241). The standardized Beta coefficient is at .645 for this construct.

Table 4.8 Coefficients Table for Perceived Importance of Atmospherics

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.090	.134		15.564	.000
Perceived Importance of Atmospherics	.516	.032	.645	16.241	.000
a. Adjusted R Square= .414; p= .000; F= 263.762					

Hypothesis 2: Satisfaction with event design positively and significantly impacts overall satisfaction of the event experience.

The results of the regression analysis show that the path from satisfaction with event design to overall satisfaction with the event experience is significant and positive. (p= .000; F= 527.607). Therefore, this hypothesis is supported (Table 4.9). The adjusted R Square value for this model was .586, which indicates that 58.6% of variance is explained. This overall construct thus proved that it is a significant predictor of overall satisfaction with event design (p= .000, t= 22.970).

Table 4.9 Coefficients Table for Satisfaction with Event Design

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.286	.129		9.976	.000
Satisfaction with Event Design	.692	.030	.766	22.970	.000
a. Adjusted R Square= .586; p= .000; F= 527.607					

Table 4.10 presents a summary of the hypotheses tests as reviewed in this portion of the

chapter. As mentioned before, all of the hypotheses were supported.

Table 4.10 Summary of Hypotheses Tests

Hypothesis	Hypothesized Path	Standardized Coefficients	t-value	Results
H1	Perceived Importance of Event Design -> Satisfaction with Event Design	.667	17.239	Supported
H1a	Perceived Importance of Event Services-> Satisfaction with Event Design	.560	13.004	Supported
H1b	Perceived Importance of Event Dramaturgy -> Satisfaction with Event Design	.607	14.706	Supported
H1c	Perceived Importance of Event Atmospherics -> Satisfaction with Event Design	.645	16.241	Supported
H2	Satisfaction with Event Design -> Overall Satisfaction with Event Experience	.766	22.970	Supported

4.5 Further Analysis

This portion of the chapter delves deeper into the analysis of the questionnaire for two goals. The first goal is to use an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) in order to identify the significant items of the survey, and as a result develop a more efficient questionnaire for future analysis. The second goal connects with the first in that, a path analysis was used again to test the overall conceptual model of the study in order to identify which particular dimensions of each construct of perceived importance of event design have significant influence over satisfaction with event design.

4.5.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Given the sizable amount of items assigned to measure three sections of the survey (perceived importance of service, perceived importance of dramaturgy, and perceived importance of atmospherics), an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was essential for reducing the items within each construct, and pulling out dimensions that assist in explaining and measuring that particular construct. By doing an EFA, the dimensions will more practically identify the strengths and weakness within the survey, as well as identify the areas and items an event designer needs to focus on in order to enhance their products.

Implementing the principle component method with a Varimax rotation for each construct was performed in order to assess reliability and identify scale dimensionality of the measurement scale. Within the analysis, the Kaise-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Barlett's test of sphericity were implemented in order to further evaluate the appropriateness of the factor analysis. When ascertaining the appropriateness, the KMO index ranges from 0 to 1, and the general rule-of-thumb recommends that a minimum value of 0.6 is

acceptable for a good factor analysis. Additionally, Bartlett's test of sphericity must prove

significant (p<0.05) in order for it to indicate that the factor analysis is appropriate and strong

(Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). Once this is done, the next step is to review the explained variance

of the items and dimensions in the factor analysis. Lastly, the rotated component matrix

identifies the dimensions derived from the construct and should have items independently loaded

under each of them without any cross loading, which occurs when an item falls under more than

one dimension. For the particular aims of this study, any items loading in under 0.5 were

suppressed.

      For the second section of the survey that measured the perceived importance of event

services, one item titled 'interaction with staff and volunteers' was removed because of over 200

missing cases which would interfere in analysis. Following the factor analysis, six dimensions

emerged explaining 74.6% of the variance **(**Table 4.11**)**. The KMO, at .908, satisfies the 0 to 1

rule for KMO interpretation. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity also proved to be significant with a

value of .000. The six dimensions of the perceived importance of event services are: 'public

opinion of event', 'economic value', 'online service quality', 'emotional response to services',

'non-economic cost', and 'on site service quality'.

Table 4.11 EFA for Perceived Importance of Event Services

Perceived Importance of Event Services	Factor loading	Eigen value	Value explained	Cronbach's alpha
Public Opinion of Event		3.395	14.146	.945
MAGFest services have a good status	.869			
MAGFest services are well thought of	.840			
MAGFest services are reputable	.826			
MAGFest services are well respected	.823			
Economic Value				
All MAGFest services are reasonably priced	.840	3.106	12.941	.896
All MAGFest services are fairly priced	.831			
All MAGFest services were worth the money I spent	.764			
All MAGFest services were a good buy	.749			
Online Service Quality		2.934	12.223	.869
Online Registration/booking services are very reliable	.791			
Online registration/booking services are very dependable	.784			
Online Registration/booking services are of outstanding quality	.733			
Online Registration/booking services are very consistent	.685			
Emotional Response to Services		2.896	12.065	.861
On site services made me feel delighted	.876			
On site services gave me pleasure	.830			
On site services made me feel content	.791			
On site services gave me comfort and a sense of security	.567			
Non-Economic Cost		2.851	11.879	.858
Registration/hotel booking services required little effort to buy/find	.776			
Registration/hotel booking were easy to shop for	.761			
The on site services were easy to shop for	.712			
The on site services required little energy to purchase/find	.693			
On Site Service Quality		2.723	11.347	.823
On site services are very reliable	.792			
On site Services are very dependable	.788			

On site services are very consistent throughout the entire event	.594			
On site services (employees, registration, directional, security, informational, sales force, etc.) are of outstanding quality	.588			
Total Variance			74.600%	
Note: 1= Very Unimportant 5= Very Important				

The next section of the survey covering the perceived importance of event dramaturgy fell into five dimensions as a result of the EFA (Table 4.12). Numerous items were removed for analysis resulting in an increase in variance explained and a logical organization of the remaining items. The dimensions were able to explain 77.33% of the variance. The KMO, at .924, satisfies the KMO rule for being between 0 and 1. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity also proved to be significant with a value of .000. The five dimensions of the perceived importance of event dramaturgy include: 'concert dramaturgical attributes', 'panel dramaturgical attributes', 'marketplace dramaturgical attributes', 'marketplace's dramaturgical economical value', and 'emotional response to event dramaturgy'.

Table 4.12 EFA for Perceived Importance of Event Dramaturgy

Perceived Importance of Event Dramaturgy	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Value explained	Cronbach's Alpha
Concert Dramaturgical Attributes		5.953	19.205	.823
The concerts are of outstanding quality	.887			
The concerts are dependable	.881			
The concerts gave me pleasure	.864			
The concerts were a good buy for registration	.863			
The concerts were worth the money	.859			
The concerts are of a consistent quality for whole event	.790			
The concerts were easy to attend	.731			
Panel Dramaturgical Attributes		5.528	17.831	.754
The panels were a good buy for registration	.849			
The panels are of outstanding quality	.837			
The panels are very reliable in quality	.807			
The panels/panelists are dependable	.799			
The panels gave me happiness	.793			
The panels were fairly priced under registration	.782			
MAGFest panels have a good reputation	.771			
The panels were easy to attend	.761			
Marketplace Dramaturgical Attributes		4.638	14.961	.754
The marketplace is very reliable in quality	.853			
The marketplace is outstanding quality	.816			
The marketplace is dependable	.769			
The marketplace is of a consistent quality for whole event	.675			
The marketplace gave me pleasure	.632			
The marketplace made me feel good	.590			
Marketplace's Dramaturgical Economical Value		4.034	13.013	.787
The marketplace was economical under registration	.791			
The marketplace appears to be a good bargain	.758			
The marketplace and options were worth the money	.737			
The marketplace is a good buy for registration	.731			
Emotional Response to Event Dramaturgy		3.790	12.226	.765

MAGFest concerts are reputable	.771		
MAGFest concerts are well thought of	.757		
MAGFest concerts are well respected	.702		
MAGFest marketplace is well thought of	.666		
MAGFest marketplace is reputable	.645		
MAGFest marketplace is well respected	.609		
Total Variance		*77.33%*	
Note: 1= Very Unimportant 5= Very Important			

The final section that required an Exploratory Factor Analysis was about the perceived importance of event atmospherics. After several attempts at perfecting the analysis, several items were removed for optimal results. Six dimensions emerged as a result of the analysis explaining 77.77% of the variance. This portion was the largest section of the entire questionnaire. The KMO, at .945, satisfies the KMO rule for being between 0 and 1. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity also proved to be significant with a value of .000. The six dimensions of perceived importance of event atmospherics include: 'opinion of concert atmospherics', 'opinion of panel atmospherics', opinion of board game atmospherics', 'opinion of hotel atmospherics', 'hotel reputation', and 'opinion of marketplace atmospherics'.

Table 4.13 EFA for Perceived Importance of Event Atmospherics

Perceived Importance of Event Atmospherics	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Value explained	Cronbach's Alpha
Opinion of Concert Atmospherics		6.046	14.747	.867
The concert ballrooms' set up quality was dependable	.820			
The concert ballrooms' set ups are of consistent quality	.806			
The concert ballrooms' set up are of outstanding quality	.789			
The concert ballrooms are of reliable quality	.788			
The concert rooms and their audio and lighting made me feel good	.746			
The MAGFest concert atmospheres are well respected	.713			
The MAGFest concerts' atmospheres are well thought of	.712			
The concert rooms' setups (lighting, stage, audio) were a good buy	.695			
The concert rooms' set ups (lighting, stage, audio) were worth the money	.692			
Opinion of Panel Atmospherics		6.025	14.695	.863
The panel rooms' set up quality are very dependable	.808			
The panel rooms' set up are of reliable quality	.799			
The panel rooms' set up are of outstanding quality	.795			
The panel rooms and their audio and lighting made me feel good	.745			
The panels' atmospheres were easy to adjust to	.739			
The MAGFest panel atmospheres are well respected	.738			
The MAGFest panels' atmospheres have a good reputation	.728			
The panel rooms' set up gave me a sense of joy	.727			
The panel rooms' set ups (lighting, stage, audio) were worth the money	.668			
Opinion of Board Game Atmospherics		5.759	14.046	.874
The board game rooms/hallways' set ups are of consistent quality	.850			
The board game rooms/hallways' set up quality were dependable	.832			

The board game rooms made me feel good	.831			
The board game rooms/hallways are of outstanding quality	.820			
The board game rooms' setups were a good buy	.797			
The board game rooms' set ups were worth the money	.779			
The atmosphere/set-up of the board game rooms felt fairly priced	.765			
Opinion of Hotel Atmospherics		4.812	11.736	.850
The hotel rooms' set-ups were worth the money	.738			
The atmosphere/set-up of the hotel felt fairly priced	.736			
The hotel appears to be a good bargain	.697			
The atmosphere/set-up of the hotel rooms seemed economical	.677			
The hotel environment gave me a sense of joy	.632			
The hotel environment gave me pleasure	.594			
Hotel Reputation		4.720	11.512	.859
The hotel MAGFest is held at is well respected	.802			
The hotel MAGFest is held at is well thought of	.798			
The hotel MAGFest is held at is reputable	.754			
The hotel MAGFest is held at has a good reputation	.701			
The hotel MAGFest is held at has a level of status	.633			
Opinion of Marketplace Atmospherics		4.485	10.938	.867
The marketplace ballroom set up is of consistent quality	.779			
The marketplace ballroom's quality was dependable	.775			
The marketplace atmosphere was easy to shop in	.772			
The marketplace atmosphere required little effort to buy in	.762			
The marketplace ballroom set up is of outstanding quality	.726			
Total Variance			*77.765*	
Note: 1= Very Unimportant 5= Very Important				

4.5.2 Path Analyses of the EFAs of the Perceived Importance Constructs

The independent relationships of the three event design constructs with the satisfaction with event design were tested using a path analysis. This analysis was run with the hopes of offering more specific practical implications for the event designers. These relationships were evaluated on the basis of the significance of the model using the F-value and its associated p-value. The $p < .05$ significance level rule was incorporated for the purpose of analysis, therefore, if any significant values lay under .05 they were not supported and thus do not have a significant impact on the satisfaction with event design construct. Additionally, standardized Beta coefficients were reported in order to see the weight of each dimension of the perceived importance constructs independently in explaining the dependent construct.

As aforementioned, the perceived importance of event services divided up into six independent dimensions. When a linear regression was run to evaluate the relationship between these dimensions and satisfaction with event design, it was found that the overall model had an adjusted R Square value of .320 and a significance level of $p = .000$ (F= 30.172), thus supporting the theoretical relationship and explaining 32.0% of the variance (Table 4.14). Three of the six dimensions revealed significant relationships with the dependent variable. The three dimensions that proved significant include 'public opinion of event' (p=.000; Std. Beta= .200), 'economic value' (p=.008; Std. Beta= .151), and 'emotional response to service' (P=.000; Std. Beta= .227). Based off an interpretation of the standardized Beta coefficient values, the 'emotional response to service' carries the most weight for the construct. The second strongest is 'public opinion of event' and the weakest is 'economic value'. This test identifies what event planners must specifically consider for their services.

Table 4.14 Coefficients of Perceived Importance of Event Services Dimensions

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.655	.221		7.491	.000
Public Opinion of Event	.159	.044	.200	3.589	.000
Economic Value	.133	.048	.151	2.792	.006
Online Service Quality	.054	.056	.057	.961	.337
Emotional Response to Services	.160	.038	.227	4.276	.000
Non-Economic Cost	.067	.042	.094	1.591	.112
On Site Service Quality	.019	.058	.021	.336	.737

a. Adjusted R Square= .320; p= .000; F= 30.172

Taking these significant dimensions into account, the path analysis was taken a step further into running a linear regression with the specific items of the three significant dimensions in order to identify from there what items are truly the most vital. From 'public opinion of event', one item pulled out as significant which was 'MAGFest services have a good status'. From 'economic value', one item pulled out as significant which was 'All MAGFest services were a good buy'. From 'emotional response to services', two items pulled out as significant which were 'on site services gave me comfort and a sense of security' and 'on site services made me feel content'. Based off these results, it can be interpreted that it is valuable to participants that MAGFest maintains a certain level of status with the services it offers, that they remain at

the price they are at, that MAGFest work on maintaining the level of security and structure of the event services, and that the services on site consistently serve to please customers.

The second analysis was run consisted of linear regression with the independent variables being made up of the five dimensions from the perceived importance of event dramaturgy construct and the dependent variable of satisfaction with event design. It was found that the model had an adjusted R square of .392 and proved significant with P= .000 (F= 48.999) (Table 4.15). For the remaining four dimensions, three proved to be significant, all with P-values of .000. These three dimensions were 'concert dramaturgical attributes' (P= .000; Std. Beta= .169), 'panel dramaturgical attributes' (P= .000; Std. Beta= .259), and 'emotional response to dramaturgy' (P= .000; Std. Beta= .322). The standardized Beta coefficients indicate that 'emotional response to dramaturgy carried the most weight, with 'panel dramaturgical attributes' carrying the second most, and 'concert dramaturgical attributes' in third.

Table 4.15 Coefficients of Perceived Importance of Event Dramaturgy Dimensions

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.842	.168		10.944	.000
Concert Dramaturgical Attributes	.113	.031	.169	3.631	.000
Panel Dramaturgical Attributes	.184	.032	.259	5.690	.000
Marketplace Dramaturgical Attributes	-.034	.049	-.046	-.696	.487
Marketplace's Dramaturgical Economical Value	.069	.045	.106	1.549	.122
Emotional Response to Event Dramaturgy	.232	.042	.322	5.536	.000

a. Adjusted R Square= .392; p= .000; F= 48.999

Taking these significant dimensions into account, the path analysis was taken a step further into running a linear regression with the specific items of the three significant dimensions in order to identify from there what items are truly the most vital. From 'concert dramaturgical attributes', the item that pulled out as significant was that 'the concerts were easy to attend'.

From 'panel dramaturgical attributes', two items pulled out as significant. These two items were 'the panels gave me happiness' and 'the panels were fairly priced under registration'. These results suggest that participants enjoy the panels with enjoyment value and feel that what they are paying for registration matches what they are receiving in content.

The third analysis was done in regards to evaluating the perceived importance of event atmospherics. The regression tested the path between perceived importance of event atmospherics and satisfaction with event atmospherics (Table 4.16). According to the results, the model had an adjust R Square value of .419, suggesting that 41.9% of the variance can be explained and proved to be significant (P= .000, F= 45.669). From this model, three dimensions proved to be significant. These three dimensions were 'opinion of concert atmospherics' (P= .000; Std. Beta= .239), 'opinion of panel atmospherics' (P= .000; Std. Beta= .254), and 'opinion of marketplace atmospherics' (P= .005; Std. Beta= .156). These results suggest that 'opinion of panel atmospherics' carries the most weight, followed closely by 'opinion of concert atmospherics', then 'opinion of marketplace atmospherics'.

Table 4.16 Coefficients of Perceived Importanc of Event Atmospherics Dimensions

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model						
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.912	.155		12.317	.000
	Opinion of Concert Atmospherics	.167	.038	.239	4.385	.000
	Opinion of Panel Atmospherics	.164	.036	.254	4.586	.000
	Opinion of Board Game Atmospherics	.026	.030	.046	.873	.383
	Opinion of Hotel Atmospherics	.076	.045	.111	1.684	.093
	Hotel Reputation	-.003	.046	-.004	-.071	.944
	Opinion of Marketplace Atmospherics	.121	.043	.156	2.849	.005

a. Adjusted R Square= .419; p= .000; F= 45.669

Taking these significant dimensions into account, the path analysis was taken a step further to see what items within the dimensions proved significant. From 'opinion of concert atmospherics', one item proved more significant than the rest. This item is 'the concert room's set ups (lighting, stage, audio) were worth the money. From 'opinion of panel atmospherics', two items proved to be significant. These two items were 'the panel rooms' set ups gave me a sense of joy' and 'the panel rooms' set ups (lighting, stage, audio) were worth the money'. From 'opinion of marketplace atmospherics', two items proved to be more significant. These two items were 'the marketplace atmosphere required little effort to buy in' and 'the marketplace ballroom set up is of outstanding quality. What event designers can pull from this is that it is valuable for customers to see the money they are spending to attend match with the atmospheric design of concerts and panels. Having poor equipment, uncomfortable lighting, or poor visuals may lead to a poor experience. Additionally, it is important that the marketplace is easy to maneuver through and that there is logic to the layout.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter aims to summarize the findings and their implications. First, a summary of the hypotheses shall be shared. Next, the practical and theoretical implications of the findings will be discussed further. After this, the limitations of the study will be reviewed and suggestions for future research and insights will be provided.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This study developed a conceptual model that suggested relationships among five constructs: perceived importance of event design, which was made up of three other constructs (perceived importance of event services, event dramaturgy, event atmospherics), satisfaction with event design, and overall satisfaction with an event experience. More specifically this model evaluated the relationship between (1) perceived importance of event design and satisfaction with event services, (2) perceived importance of event services with satisfaction with event design, (3) perceived importance of event dramaturgy with satisfaction with event design, (4) perceived importance of event atmospherics with satisfaction with event design, and (5) satisfaction with event design and overall satisfaction with the event experience.

A questionnaire was developed representing items from previous works discussed in the literature, as well as, items representing the constructs. After the questionnaire was initially drafted, it went through a pre-test review from a group of Virginia Tech faculty and PhD students. Once reviewed by these academic professionals, the draft was forwarded to MAGFest executives for their review. After refining the survey once more based off their comments, it was posted electronically via Qualtrics.

A path analysis was completed in order to test the two major hypotheses and three sub-hypotheses. The analysis proves that every hypothesis is supported under the study circumstances. Essentially, the perceived importance of event design and its three parts (services, dramaturgy, atmospherics) prove to have significant and positive relationships with satisfaction with event design. Additionally, satisfaction with event design proves to have a significant and positive relationship with overall satisfaction with the event experience. The findings are discussed further in the following chapter.

Once the hypotheses are tested, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is run for the three different portions making up event design for two goals. The first goal is to reduce items and develop clear dimensions in order to produce a more efficient questionnaire for the future. The second goal is to identify which dimensions had a significant relationship with the construct of satisfaction with event design in order to pull out practical implications, which are discussed later in this chapter.

5.2 Discussion of the Findings

The section explains the origin of the constructs that were situated into the proposed conceptual model of the study in order to explain the relationship between perceived importance of event design and overall satisfaction. The literature review presented in chapter two assisted in developing the final constructs of the model and defended the theoretical relationships proposed.

In chapter four, for data analysis, a descriptive profile of the sample is presented. Additionally, each construct is tested first for normality and its psychometric properties. This reveals that the constructs do have statistically significant reliabilities with Cronbach alpha

scores of .79 or higher based off of the decision rule. After asserting the normality of the data, the path analyses and exploratory factor analyses can be run in good faith.

5.2.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses

 As mentioned in the summary table (4.5) from chapter four, all of the proposed hypotheses were supported by the data analysis. Below are the research questions asked earlier in chapters one and three.

Research Question 1:

How does the perceived importance of each dimension of event design independently impact an individual's overall satisfaction with event design?

 The answer to this first research question has been directly answered with the results of the testing of $H1_a$, $H1_b$, and $H1_c$ respectively. When tested through a regression analysis, it was proven that each dimension does in fact have both a significant and positive relationship with an individual's overall satisfaction with event design. This answer is furthermore supported by the later Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFA) conducted, which delved further into analyzing the dimensions under each construct and testing their individual relationships with event design satisfaction. As a result, between two and three dimensions from each construct were identified as being significant for the model.

Research Question 2:

How significant is understanding the perceived importance of each dimension of event design for planners in their efforts to evaluate their final products?

By running the appropriate EFA and path analyses, these results highlight the significant dimensions and items that attendees deem valuable and significant. Furthermore, by running a regression, it can be understood how individuals felt in regards to the items they designated as valuable. This is discussed further under the practical implications section of this chapter.

Research Question 3:

How does the overall satisfaction with event design affect an individual's overall satisfaction with an event they are attending?

As a result of the path analysis, the second major hypothesis was supported which proposed that there is a significant and positive relationship between satisfaction with event design and overall satisfaction with the event. This indicates that event planners must take into consideration event design aspects in order to enhance an experience. As explained in chapter four, 58.6% of the variance can be explained, which suggests that the value of event design plays a major role on an individual's satisfaction with their overall event experience.

5.3 Summary of the Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that there is a positive relationship between perceived importance of event design and overall satisfaction with the event experience. Furthermore, this study confirms and supports the past studies highlighted in chapter two that demonstrated linkages between the different aspects of event design and satisfaction (e.g. Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Anderson et al., 1994; Gotlieb et al., 1994; Rust & Oliver, 1994; Tian-Cole, Crompton, & Willson, 2002; Bitner, 1990; Chang, 2000; Ryu & Han, 2010; Rajic & Dado, 2013). Additionally, the study also confirms and supports the past studies, which identified and proved

links between perceived importance and service (e.g. Andreassen & Linkdestad, 1998; Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal, & Boss, 2002; Brady, Robertson, & Cronin, 2001; Petrick, 2002; Zeithaml, 1988; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Further conceptual linkages were either introduced or supported and is discussed the theoretical contributions section of this chapter.

5.4 Implications

5.4.1 Theoretical Implications

As aforementioned in the previous section, this study has provided confirmatory support for previously identified linkages between the three different aspects of event design and satisfaction. However, prior to this study, there were few studies that provided links between event dramaturgy or event atmospherics with satisfaction. Therefore, this study has contributed to those bodies of knowledge.

Additionally, this study supports a link between perceived value and importance and event design. In particular, although previous studies have identified a link between perceived value and service, few, if any, mentioned the concept of a perceived value and event dramaturgy link or a perceived value and event atmospherics link. Regardless, this is only a contribution to the growing body of knowledge. The definition of perceived value is still in much debate among researchers and practitioners, as is that of event design.

The study also developed a set of scales unique to the context of the event, namely addressing specific design-items only found within an event. Most importantly, this study has proven that there is a significant relationship between an attendee's perspective of event design, their satisfaction with event design, and their overall satisfaction with event. Knowing of this

relationship might encourage other researchers working within the events body of literature to develop newer scales, which are relevant and efficient for measurement.

5.4.2 Practical Implications

Given that this conceptual model has been strongly supported by data analysis, planners can use it practically to evaluate past events or anticipate the needs for future events. As a result, planners can alter strategies and optimize spending to respond to gaps or strong areas that are identified from analysis. As presented in chapter four, the EFA and path analyses conducted, singled out the most significant dimensions of each event design variable, and went even deeper by identifying which item of each dimension were the most significant. By doing this, MAGFest executives now are aware that according to a representative sample of their attendees, there are specific areas that strongly impact an individual's satisfaction and thus likelihood of returning to the annual event.

For the perceived importance of event services construct, the analysis reveals that three of the original six dimensions established by the EFA are significant in a regression analysis. These three included: 'public opinion of event', 'economic value', and 'emotional response to services'. These three items indicate that planners must primarily focus on maintaining and marketing the reputation and status of the services offered by the event. Next, they must ensure that the cost of the event matches with the importance of the services delivered as perceived by the attendees. Lastly, it is important that planners persist in delivering a certain quality of services that received a positive emotional response from the attendees. The attendees wish to feel happy, content, and safe while at this event and when receiving these services.

For the perceived importance of event dramaturgy construct, the analysis reveals that three of the original five dimensions proves to be significant in the regression analysis model with satisfaction with event design. These three dimensions include: 'concert dramaturgical attributes', 'panel dramaturgical attributes', and 'emotional response to event dramaturgy'. These three items indicate that planners should primarily focus on the content of the concerts offered in terms of consistency in quality and type that is offered. Secondly, planners should also focus on panel content and maintaining a consistent quality. Lastly, the planners must ensure that the content provided at these offerings will please and entertain their customers.

For the perceived importance of event atmospherics construct, the analysis reveals that three of the original six dimensions proves to be significant in the regression analysis model with satisfaction with event design. These three dimensions include: 'opinion of concert atmospherics', 'opinion of panel atmospherics', and 'opinion of marketplace atmospherics'. What the MAGFest planners can take away from this is that they must focus on the intentional organization of the environments established in the concert, panel, and marketplace atmospheres in terms of lighting, sound, space, and temperatures. It is essential that they take into account any potential threats to a customer's satisfaction with the atmosphere and be prepared to maintain a certain level of quality in order to encourage the type of desired event experience.

Given that this model also proves that an attendee's satisfaction with the event's design does impact their overall satisfaction with their experience, the planners must be prepared to evaluate their design and be prepared to enhance or adapt as the times and trends change. Also, a customer base's perception of value will change between events, so by evaluating them for each the planners will be able to uniquely identify the needs and wants of their customers in regards to event design within the context of their own event.

With the questionnaire consistently being adapted to explain the optimal potential variance and items being generated that appropriately reflect the event, analyses can prove extremely useful. Planners can pluck the strings of the items that they see attendees have perceived as valuable and important, but were not satisfied with at a previous event. They could investigate further to understand why this is a weak point and invest more effort and expense into improving it. Similarly, should planners identify what attendees perceive as both valuable and that they are highly satisfied with, they will inherently understand that this is an area that does not necessarily need to be impacted and should instead either be maintained, or the budget from it could be dispersed to weaker points of event design.

This new type of event evaluation will take attendees' values into a deeper consideration then before. By doing this, when an event planner incorporates the changes they deem necessary from a previous analysis, those who participated in the analysis and then attend a future event will feel that their needs and desires have been considered and responded to. This could potentially enhance their overall satisfaction with the event and increase their likelihood of returning in the future and encouraging others to attend via word of mouth.

Additionally, attendees' who believe the event design value matches that of the dollar amount and time they are investing in attending the event will attribute more satisfaction and overall value to the event. Again this could generate return and new business for the event planners or related company.

5.5 Limitations

There are a few limitations for this study. The first that comes to mind is the potential existence of moderating variables. Moderating variables such as engagement, motivation, event

size, length of stay, or event type could alter the potential findings of a similar analysis that tests the proposed relationships.

A second limitation to consider is that perceived importance of event design and satisfaction with event design only explain a portion of overall satisfaction with the event experience. This suggests that there are other external variables, which also potentially strongly impact an attendee's overall satisfaction with their event experience.

Next, a third limitation to consider is that this study surveyed a specific group of individuals from a specific type of event. These individuals share a common interest, which is why they were part of the community that is attributed to MAGFest. In order for this study to not be limited, other event types must be analyzed and compared side-by-side.

An additional limitation attributed to the study is that efforts to preemptively prevent common method bias were not incorporated into the survey. In the past, this bias is usually managed by altering the Likert scale in some portions of the survey to ensure the respondent is attentive and answering accurately. These fail-safes allow a researcher to remove any potential responses that might not be genuine and contribute to the true results. Similarly, non-response bias was not managed and thus becomes a limitation. In general for longer studies, non-response bias can be handled by comparing the responses from the first half of the time period with that of the last half.

The remaining limitations of this study are connected. The first is that the sample size of the population was just under 10% leaving the question of would the needed 27 additional participants strongly affect the findings of this study? Secondly, the length of time for which the questionnaire was collected could potentially have been longer and thus collected a more

substantial amount of responses. Again, it is uncertain if this would substantially impact the findings or if the data would have saturated at an early part in data collection.

5.6 Future Research

Evaluation of event design as well as other aspects of events remains a growing area for potential future research. It is also essential to further research efforts in order to develop an effective evaluative tool to contribute to the overall evaluation toolkit for planners that does not currently exist in the field.

In consideration of the aforementioned limitations, moderating variables should be incorporated into the analysis in order to ascertain if they play a significant role within the conceptual model. Additionally, external variables that could also potentially impact overall event satisfaction should be considered and analyzed alongside event design. One of the limitations of the study mentioned that the research focused on a specific community of participants for particular event type and size. This same model should be tested on other event types and sizes to produce findings for comparison.

The newly tooled questionnaire derived from the EFA should be distributed to test the same model with the same community to see if the data findings remain consistent. Event design as a whole should continue to be refined and tested to further explain it and its impact on an event and different aspects of events such as overall satisfaction and return intention. This same model and dataset should include a SEM model with path analyses so that the entire model can be tested in its entirety. There are also portions of the data, such as open-ended questions that need to be thoroughly coded and evaluated and compared with aspects of the model to see how it interacts.

Another potential opportunity for analysis is to identify groups via customer segmentation and attributes event behaviors and their perceived importance accordingly. This could prove useful in allowing planners to focus their efforts on the significant items in relation to their target markets.

To overcome the common method bias, other data collection methods besides a questionnaire should be implemented. A method such as on-site interviews or focus groups at the events live could provide a deeper wealth of knowledge as to what is perceived valuable in regards to event design and how much it truly affects their experiences at the events. In the future, it would also prove interesting to analyze social media sites, such as blogs, to review the text posted by event attendees before, during, and after the event.

5.7 Conclusion

This research study attempted to introduce a new model, which proposed relationships between previously unconsidered constructs of perceived importance of event design dimensions and overall satisfaction with event experiences. Multiple studies were used in order to reliably develop the constructs that were presented in the model, and they also assisted in the development of the scales incorporated in the final questionnaire. While the relationships of some of the constructs have been tested before, none have been tested within an events context and adapted to this context specifically. By testing and supporting the proposed model, it is now proven that the questionnaire in an updated form with future revision can assist planners in identifying gaps in their event design efforts that are negatively impacting their customer base.

The findings revealed that there is in fact a positive and significant relationship between the perceived importance of event services and satisfaction, the perceived importance of event dramaturgy and satisfaction with event design, the perceived importance of event atmospherics and satisfaction with event design, the perceived importance of event design and satisfaction with event design, an satisfaction with event design, and overall satisfaction with the event experience itself.

The essential implications from this study include that this conceptual model adds to the growing body of knowledge in the area of event evaluation. Additionally, it supports previous studies' claims of linkages between different aspects of event design and satisfaction. It also supports the previous claim of a link between perceived value and importance and services as well as suggests links between perceived value and importance and dramaturgy, as well as, perceived value and importance and atmospherics. The study also supports a link between satisfaction with event design and overall satisfaction with an event experience suggesting that event design plays a major role in customer impact.

With the right questionnaire and other evaluative tools, planners will be able to identify the weak points in their event design structure and enhance them in order to improve the overall event experience. This strategy can lead to return intention of customers as well as attract new customers to future events. This model and resulting questionnaire are just a start to the long road to developing an efficient evaluative toolkit for events of all shapes and sizes.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Survey Questionnaire

Dear MAGFest Attendee:

Thank you for your interest and participation in this study. The purpose of this study is to assess the overall event design and experience of MAGFest. Specifically, this survey is designed to assess your perceptions of the individual components of event design: servicescape, dramaturgy, and atmospherics. Servicescape involves anything related to customer service, functional organization, and layout of the event. Dramaturgy involves the performances and meaning created at the event. Atmospherics involves the atmosphere that is created by MAGFest that you see, smell, touch, taste or hear. Your opinion will help the planners improve future MAGFest events and will be greatly appreciated.

This survey should take approximately 10-20 minutes of your time to complete. Your participation is entirely voluntary. Please answer all questions, as any missed questions will render your response unusable for analysis. Your responses will be treated confidentially and anonymously. Please read all questions and answer options carefully. Please try to answer as honestly as possible.

For every 50 participants, 1 individual will be selected and awarded full registration to 2016 MAGFest in National Harbor.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact the lead researcher, Meghan Beardsley, at cinemeg2@vt.edu or by phone at (804) 366-7966.

Thank you for your time and participation!

Sincerely,
Meghan Beardsley
M.S. Candidate Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Pamplin College of Business
Virginia Tech

Screening Questions:

Q1 Are you 18 years of age or older?
- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q2 Are you interested in being included in the drawing to win a free MAGFest registration for 2016?
- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q3 If you are interested, what is your first and last name?

Q4 What email can you be contacted at if you are selected?

Part 2: Perceived Importance of Event Services

The following statements are MAGFest's event services. Event services consists of anything from interactions with employees and volunteers, products, sales force, website, information provided, registration, and so on.

The first column asks for you to indicate how important each item is to you when attending MAGFest: 1= Very unimportant 2= Somewhat unimportant 3= Neutral 4= Somewhat important 5= Very important

The second column asks for how satisfied you are with the statement in regards to MAGFest: 1= Very dissatisfied 2= Somewhat dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Somewhat satisfied 5= Very satisfied

Q5

	Importance					Satisfaction				
	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)
On site services (employees, registration, directional, security, informational, sales force, etc.) are of outstanding quality (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Online Registration/booking services are of outstanding quality (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On site services are very reliable (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Online Registration/booking services are very reliable (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On site Services are very dependable (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Online registration/booking services are very dependable (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On site services are very consistent throughout the entire event (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Online Registration/booking services are very consistent (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On site services (employees, registration, directional, security, informational, sales force, etc.) made me feel good (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On site services gave me pleasure (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On site services gave me comfort and a sense of security (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

On site services made me feel delighted (12)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On site services made me feel content (13)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
All MAGFest services were a good buy (14)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
All MAGFest services were worth the money I spent (15)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
All MAGFest services are fairly priced (16)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
All MAGFest services are reasonably priced (17)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
All MAGFest services were economical (18)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
All MAGFest services appear to be a good bargain (19)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The on site services (products/games/panels/products) were easy to buy/find (20)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Registration/hotel book services were easy to buy/find (21)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The on site services required little energy to purchase/find (22)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Registration/hotel booking services required little energy to purchase/find (23)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The on site services were easy to shop for (24)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Registration/hotel booking were easy to shop for (25)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The on site services required little effort to buy/find (26)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Registration/hotel booking services required little effort to buy/find (27)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The on site services were easily bought/found (28)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Registration/hotel booking were easily bought/found (29)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest services have a good reputation (30)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest services are well respected (31)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest services are well	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

thought of (32)										
MAGFest services have a good status (33)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest services are reputable (34)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Interaction with MAGFest employees/volunteers (35)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Part 3: Perceived Importance of Event Dramaturgy

The following statements are about event dramaturgy. Event dramaturgy is the content available at MAGFest including concerts, panels, gaming competitions, etc.

The first column asks for you to indicate how important each item is to you when attending MAGFest: 1= Very unimportant 2= Somewhat unimportant 3= Neutral 4= Somewhat important 5= Very important

The second column asks for how satisfied you are with the statement in regards to MAGFest: 1= Very dissatisfied 2= Somewhat dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Somewhat satisfied 5= Very satisfied

Q6

	Importance					Satisfaction				
	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)
The panels are of outstanding quality (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts are of outstanding quality (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace is outstanding quality (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels are very reliable in quality (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts are very reliable in quality (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace is very reliable in quality (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels/panelists are dependable (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts are dependable (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

marketplace is dependable (9)										
The panels are of a consistent quality for whole event (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concerts are of a consistent quality for whole event (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The marketplace is of a consistent quality for whole event (12)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panels made me feel good (13)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concerts made me feel good (14)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The marketplace made me feel good (15)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panels gave me pleasure (16)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concerts gave me pleasure (17)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The marketplace gave me pleasure (18)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panels gave me a sense of joy (19)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concerts gave me a sense of joy (20)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

The marketplace gave me a sense of joy (21)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
These panels make me feel delighted (22)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
These concerts make me feel delighted (23)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace options make me feel delighted (24)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels gave me happiness (25)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts gave me happiness (26)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace gave me happiness (27)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels were a good buy for registration (28)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts were a good buy for registration (29)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace is a good buy for registration (30)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels were worth the money (31)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts were worth the money (32)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

The marketplace and options were worth the money (33)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels were fairly priced under registration (34)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts were fairly priced under registration (35)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace was fairly priced (36)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels were economical under registration (37)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts were economical under registration (38)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace was economical under registration (39)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels appear to be a good bargain (40)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts appear to be a good bargain (41)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

marketplace appears to be a good bargain (42)										
The panels required little effort to participate in (43)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concerts required little effort to participate in (44)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The marketplace required little effort to purchase at (45)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panels were easy to attend (46)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concerts were easy to attend (47)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The marketplace was easy to walk through (48)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest panels have a good reputation (49)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest concerts have a good reputation (50)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest marketplace has a good reputation (51)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest panels are well respected (52)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

concerts are well respected (53)										
MAGFest marketplace is well respected (54)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest panels are well thought of (55)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest concerts are well thought of (56)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest marketplace is well thought of (57)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest panels are reputable (58)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest concerts are reputable (59)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
MAGFest marketplace is reputable (60)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Part 4: Perceived Importance of Event Atmospherics

The following statements are about event atmospherics. Event atmospherics are anything at MAGFest that you can see, smell, hear, touch, or taste that affected your experience and possibly your decision to come again another year. Atmosphere includes items such as lighting, audio quality/volume, and temperatures.

The first column asks for you to indicate how important each item is to you when attending MAGFest: 1= Very unimportant 2= Somewhat unimportant 3= Neutral 4= Somewhat important 5= Very important

The second column asks for how satisfied you are with the statement in regards to MAGFest: 1= Very dissatisfied 2= Somewhat dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Somewhat satisfied 5= Very satisfied

Q7

	Importance					Satisfaction				
	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)
The panel rooms' set up are of outstanding quality (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concert ballrooms' set up are of outstanding quality (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game rooms/hallways are of outstanding quality (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The marketplace ballroom set up is of outstanding quality (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panel rooms' set up are of reliable quality (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concert ballrooms are of reliable quality (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

rooms/hallways' set up are of are of reliable quality (7)										
The marketplace ballroom is of are of reliable quality (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panel rooms' set up quality are very dependable (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concert ballrooms' set up quality was dependable (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game rooms/hallways' set up quality were dependable (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The marketplace ballroom's quality was dependable (12)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panel rooms' set ups are of consistent quality (13)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concert ballrooms' set ups are of consistent quality (14)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game rooms/hallways' set ups are of consistent quality (15)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The marketplace ballroom set up is of consistent quality (16)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The hotel	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

environment made me feel good (17)										
The panel rooms and their audio and lighting made me feel good (18)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concert rooms and their audio and lighting made me feel good (19)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game rooms made me feel good (20)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The hotel environment gave me pleasure (21)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panel rooms' set up gave me pleasure (22)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concert rooms' set up gave me pleasure (23)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game rooms' set up made me feel good (24)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The hotel environment gave me a sense of joy (25)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panel rooms' set up gave me a sense of joy (26)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concert rooms' set up gave me a sense of joy (27)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

rooms' set up gave me a sense of joy (28)										
The panel rooms' setups (lighting, stage, audio) were a good buy (29)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concert rooms' setups (lighting, stage, audio) were a good buy (30)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game rooms' setups were a good buy (31)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panel rooms' set ups (lighting, stage, audio) were worth the money (32)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The concert rooms' set ups (lighting, stage, audio) were worth the money (33)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game rooms' set ups were worth the money (34)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The hotel rooms' set-ups were worth the money (35)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The atmosphere/set-up of the panels felt fairly priced (36)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The atmosphere/set-up of the concerts felt fairly priced	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

(37) The atmosphere/set-up of the board game rooms felt fairly priced (38)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The atmosphere/set-up of the hotel felt fairly priced (39)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The atmosphere/set-up of the panels seemed economical (40)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The atmosphere/set-up of the concerts seemed economical (41)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The atmosphere/set-up of the board game rooms seemed economical (42)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The atmosphere/set-up of the hotel rooms seemed economical (43)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The board game rooms' set up appear to be a good bargain (44)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The hotel appears to be a good bargain (45)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The panel rooms' set up appear to be a good bargain (46)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

The concert rooms' set up appear to be a good bargain (47)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels' atmospheres were easy to adjust to (48)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts' atmospheres were easy to adjust to (49)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace's atmosphere was easy to adjust to (50)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The hotel atmosphere was easy to adjust to (51)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The panels' atmospheres required little energy to adjust to (52)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The concerts' atmosphere required little energy to adjust to (53)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace's atmosphere required little energy to adjust to (54)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The hotel atmosphere required little energy to adjust to (55)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The marketplace atmosphere was easy to shop in	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

(56) The marketplace atmosphere required little effort to buy in (57)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The MAGFest panels' atmospheres have a good reputation (58)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The MAGFest concerts' atmospheres have a good reputation (59)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The MAGFest marketplace atmosphere has a good reputation (60)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The hotel MAGFest is held at has a good reputation (61)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The MAGFest panel atmospheres are well respected (62)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The MAGFest concert atmospheres are well respected (63)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The MAGFest marketplace atmosphere is well respected (64)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The hotel MAGFest is held at is well respected (65)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The MAGFest	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

panels' atmospheres are well thought of (66)										
The MAGFest concerts' atmospheres are well thought of (67)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The MAGFest marketplace atmosphere is well thought of (68)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The hotel MAGFest is held at is well thought of (69)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The MAGFest panels' atmospheres have a level of status (70)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The MAGFest concerts' atmospheres have a level of status (71)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The MAGFest marketplace atmosphere has a level of status (72)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The hotel MAGFest is held at has a level of status (73)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The MAGFest panels' atmospheres are reputable (74)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The MAGFest concerts' atmospheres are reputable (75)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The MAGFest	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

marketplace atmosphere is reputable (76)										
The hotel MAGFest is held at is reputable (77)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q8 Part 5: Satisfaction

The following statements are about your satisfaction with different aspects of the event and experience.

Please select the appropriate item that indicates how satisfied or unsatisfied you are with each item below: 1= Very dissatisfied 2= Somewhat dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Somewhat satisfied 5= Very satisfied

	Very Dissatisfied (1)	Somewhat Dissatisfied (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat Satisfied (4)	Very Satisfied (5)
Registration process (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Website information about event (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Customer service during event (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Layout of floors and rooms used in hotel for MAGFest (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Crowd management at MAGFest (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Security at overall MAGFest (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Security at concerts (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Security of panels and board game rooms (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Security of marketplace (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Mobile app "Guidebook" used at MAGFest (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Schedule of events (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Content of panels (12)	○	○	○	○	○
Content of concerts (13)	○	○	○	○	○
Organization of panels (14)	○	○	○	○	○
Organization of concerts (15)	○	○	○	○	○
Organization of board game/video game competitions (16)	○	○	○	○	○
Ease of finding rooms (17)	○	○	○	○	○
Level of cleanliness (18)	○	○	○	○	○
Hotel room availability (19)	○	○	○	○	○
Food and Beverage options (20)	○	○	○	○	○
Price of registration (21)	○	○	○	○	○
Price variety in marketplace (22)	○	○	○	○	○
Print materials (schedules, maps, signs around hotel) (23)	○	○	○	○	○
On-site MAGFest staff (24)	○	○	○	○	○
Hotel staff (25)	○	○	○	○	○
Musical performers (26)	○	○	○	○	○
Variety of	○	○	○	○	○

panels (27)					
Variety of concerts (28)	○	○	○	○	○
Marketplace shop options (29)	○	○	○	○	○
Board game rentals and space (30)	○	○	○	○	○
Film festival content (31)	○	○	○	○	○
Marketplace vendors variety (32)	○	○	○	○	○
Concert lighting (33)	○	○	○	○	○
Concert audio (34)	○	○	○	○	○
Arcade lighting (35)	○	○	○	○	○
Arcade ballroom temperatures (36)	○	○	○	○	○
Arcade ballroom noise level (37)	○	○	○	○	○
marketplace booths and products available (38)	○	○	○	○	○
Panel rooms' temperatures (39)	○	○	○	○	○
Audio/visuals of panels (40)	○	○	○	○	○
Audio/visuals of concerts (41)	○	○	○	○	○
Gaylord National overall (42)	○	○	○	○	○
Creativity of MAGFest (43)	○	○	○	○	○
Overall	○	○	○	○	○

organization of MAGFest (44)					
Overall environment of MAGFest (45)	○	○	○	○	○
Overall personal experience at MAGFest (46)	○	○	○	○	○
Overall personal experience with panels (47)	○	○	○	○	○
Overall personal experience with concerts (48)	○	○	○	○	○
Overall personal experience with board games (49)	○	○	○	○	○
Overall personal experience with marketplace (50)	○	○	○	○	○
Overall personal experience with arcade ballroom (51)	○	○	○	○	○

Q9 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I believe attending MAGFest was worth my time and effort. (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel that I gained my money's worth when attending MAGFest. (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would definitely recommend MAGFest to a friend, relative, or colleague. (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I believe that MAGFest benefits me personally. (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I believe that MAGFest benefits me professionally. (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q10 Overall, how satisfied were you with your visit to MAGFest?

	Very Dissatisfied (1)	Somewhat Dissatisfied (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat Satisfied (4)	Very Satisfied (5)
Overall (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q11 What do you not like about the current design, set-up, and organization of services?

Q12 What do you like about the current design, set-up, and organization of services?

Q13 What would you like to see MAGFest change in the future?

Q14 How could your MAGFest experience be improved?

Part 6: General Information

Q15 What is your gender?
- ○ Male (1)
- ○ Female (2)
- ○ Other (3)

Q16 How old are you?

Q17 What level of education have you completed?
- ○ High school or less (1)
- ○ Some college (2)
- ○ College degree (3)
- ○ Master's degree (4)
- ○ PhD degree (5)

Q18 What is your annual household income?
- ○ Less than $20,000 (1)
- ○ $21,000 - $50,000 (2)
- ○ $51,000 - $100,000 (3)
- ○ More than $101,000 (4)

Q19 Who paid for your MAGFest experience?
- ○ Self (1)
- ○ Parents/relatives (2)
- ○ Friends (3)
- ○ Groups/Sponsorship (4)
- ○ Other: Please Specify (5) _____

Q20 How many times have you attended MAGFest? Please enter the number in digit form only.

Q21 Where do you stay when you attend MAGFest?
- ○ Gaylord National (1)
- ○ Another hotel/motel besides the Gaylord National (2)
- ○ My home (3)
- ○ Relative/Friend's home (4)
- ○ Other: Please Specify (5) _____

Q22 Who do you attend MAGFest with?
- ○ Alone (1)
- ○ Family/ Friends (2)
- ○ Group (e.g. band, judges, vendors, cosplay teams, etc.) (3)
- ○ Other: Please Specify (4) _____

Q23 How likely are you to attend MAGFest again in the future?
- ○ Very Unlikely (1)
- ○ Somewhat Unlikely (2)
- ○ Undecided (3)
- ○ Somewhat Likely (4)
- ○ Very Likely (5)

Q24 How many other events besides MAGFest do you attend on average per year that are of similar size and style as that of MAGFest? Examples include: comic book conventions, music festivals, and gaming conventions.

Q25 At most, how much are you willing to spend on an event like MAGFest, including registration, transportation, lodging, and food costs?

Q26 Do you perceive MAGFest to be a successful annual event?
- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Thank you for your response. If you have any questions or comments regarding the survey you just participated in, please feel free to contact the lead researcher, Meghan Beardsley, at cinemeg2@vt.edu or at (804) 366-7966.

 If you are one of the ones to be randomly selected for a free registration to MAGFest 2016, you will be notified via the email address you provided at the start of this survey.

Appendix B

IRB Approval Letter

VirginiaTech

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 2, 2015

TO: Muzaffer Uysal, Meghan Beardsley

FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires April 25, 2018)

PROTOCOL TITLE: Using convention attendees’ perceived value of event design to evaluate overall satisfaction

IRB NUMBER: 15-367

Effective April 1, 2015, the Virginia Tech Institution Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the New Application request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As: **Exempt, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 2,4**
Protocol Approval Date: **April 1, 2015**
Protocol Expiration Date: **N/A**
Continuing Review Due Date*: **N/A**

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

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