COMMON CITY ATTRIBUTES AND

CONTACT EMPLOYEES: A CASE STUDY

OF INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

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Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Master of Science
in the Department of Tourism, Conventions, and Event Management,
Indiana University

May 2013

Accepted by the Faculty of Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Kala McBride. Words

can't possibly describe the amount of love she

gives the world and support she provides me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The journey to this point in my life has been exceptional. It is absolutely necessary to thank those that have helped me in the completion of my thesis. If not for the support and leadership from my mentors, peers, friends and families, I would never have made it to this point.

If there is one person I owe the most thanks to, it is the chair of my committee Jinmoo Heo. It is hard to imagine that it has nearly five years since I took my first course with him. His wisdom and foresight over the years has left a deep impression on me, changing the way I will think and pursue knowledge for the rest of my life. He saw potential in my work, and took a risk giving me an opportunity to work with him as a peer. I am forever in his debt.

Carina King and Brian Culp have also been involved in a significant portion of my academic career. Their guidance and mentorship has not just helped me prepare for writing a thesis, but the continuation of my career as well. On that note, there aren't many TCEM faculty members that have not helped me continue to grow as a person and a professional over the last several years. Suosheng Wang, Amanda Cecil, Yao-Yi Fu, Brian Krohn, Jim Bennett, Susan Alvarez, Susie Benko and Sotiris Hji-Avgoustis all deserve a tipped cap and possibly a child named after them. Rose Baker, Nyree Humbert and Wendy Iskander also have my undying gratitude for putting up with what had to seem like a constantly confused and exhausted form of me. In fact, I am quite literally in the debt of the entire School of Physical Education and Tourism Management.

I can certainly not forget to thank my friends and family. Their support has been vital throughout the past two years, and there is no way I would have reached this

pinnacle without them. My parents' confidence in me has never wavered, even when I doubted myself. I would only be a shadow of myself without my dad, Leonard, and mom, Resa. My siblings Bree, Sean, Caleb, Cameron, Kelly and Paul; my wife's parents Rick and Lynn; and my friends Ian and Olivia were constantly showing interest in my work, allowing me to babble on about topics I'm sure they weren't the slightest bit interested in. I love them all for their kindness and patience. They helped keep me sane. Chris Gullion merits his own thanks for being my brother-in-arms. I don't know if it was a road or a mountain we traversed, but we traversed it together the entire way.

Lastly, I must thank my wife Kala. Somehow she married me and decided to stay married to me through all of this. I will spend the rest of my life attempting to show her my gratitude. I can't imagine life without her. She made sure I never felt alone and helped me remember to enjoy life when times were at their worst.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

It can be argued that destination marketing has been practiced for over a century,
but only over the past few decades have researchers delved deeply into this topic.
Supporting the core of destination marketing are destination marketing organizations
(DMO) that hold relationships with all stakeholders in the tourism of a particular
destination. DMOs inform, educate and advise the visitors; advocate the total visitor
experience; support and develop the destination strategy; advise and support marketers.
Together the strength of these relationships represents the strength of the destination's
brand (Albrecht, 2008).

Yet, focus on these relationships may not be equal for all destinations. While
visitor relationships, advocacy of the experience and marketing relationships may all be
easily observed, it is much more difficult to examine relationships concerning the support
and development of a destination. The relationships between the city, tourists, residents,
employees and managers are all intertwined. How significant these relationships are in
destination marketing is difficult to determine because of the nature of the tourism
industry. Cities task tourist organizations like convention and visitors associations to
create a marketing strategy. In a traditional setting, consumer relationships are be
handled in a manner which constantly promotes the marketing position. Unfortunately, a
destination (tourism within a destination specifically) is not a single organization to be
marketed. Tourism of a destination is a product made up of several competing
organizations offering different experiences, usually with profit as the bottom line
(Davidson, 2005).

Background of the Problem

Indianapolis is considered by many a competitive, large population city with incredible resources for business conferences and event tourism. The city's flagship event, The Indianapolis 500, has paved the way for the city's success. With initiative, planning, construction, and implementation the city's tourism prowess has grown over the past three decades. Indianapolis has become host to a plethora of mid-size and large conferences every year, a regular on the host circuit for the NCAA Final Four, host of the annual Big Ten basketball tournament and most recently the host of the 2012 Super Bowl. Indianapolis continuously attempts to bring in more events every year.

Not many residents get to see, or are even aware of, the associates busy at work attempting to fill hotel rooms, conference centers and stadiums. The DMOs of the city are constantly working and tweaking strategies to increase exposure and get tourists excited about visiting Indianapolis. However, it is difficult to identify what truly separates Indianapolis as a tourist destination from any other competitive, second-tier population, landlocked city. Centrality within the country and the tourism infrastructure may be argued, but a representative from nearly any city in competition with Indianapolis may make a counterpoint to most resources. Instead of running in circles with this argument, this thesis looks to probe into a resource for Indianapolis that could be turned into a strong marketing tool for tourism: its employees.

For decades Indianapolis has been considered a big city on the way to getting somewhere else, the "Crossroads of America." The term "Naptown" was coined for the city by the jazz community in the 1920s. But due to a lack of commerce and stagnation, by the 1960s travelers believed there was nothing to do but take a nap when passing through.

Indianapolis and "Naptown" took on a new meaning (Johnson, 2012; Bannon, 2012).

While the nickname was coined nearly a century ago, the moniker stuck and some people

still believe it to be true to this day.

Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of resident

contact employees in the food service and lodging industries concerning Indianapolis'

tourism attributes, and their relation to Indianapolis' destination marketing and

managerial strategies. The objectives of this research can be summarized into three

research questions:

1. Do common city attributes differ based on tourism and hospitality industries?

2. Do common city attributes differ based on tourism and hospitality employees and
   supervisors?

3. When clustered into homogenous groups based on perceptions of Indianapolis'
   common city tourism attributes, what differences can be identified between
   occupation level and industry?

Hypotheses

In order to answer the three research questions, the following null hypotheses were

tested in this study:

H_1: There is no significant difference between industries in the comparison of resident
contact employees' perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes.

H_2: There is no significant difference between occupation levels in the comparison of
resident contact employees' perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes.

H_3: Resident contact employees can be placed into one meaningful group based on their

perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes.

Significance, Justification and Feasibility

Significance in examining contact employees and destination marketing lies

within the fact that very limited research has been conducted concerning the two subjects

simultaneously. Residents and leisure tourism may be overlooked when focusing funds

on city marketing due to the fact that the sector brings in so little money compared to

conferences and event tourism. However, studies suggest that interaction with residents

and employees is a driver of tourist satisfaction and intent to return (Shonk &

Chelladurai, 2008; Marcussen, 2011). While short-term profit for leisure tourism may be

low comparatively, it is possible to argue that planners may decide to book conferences

for return most prominently on the fact that attendees enjoyed the way the city's people

facilitated their trip, treated them and enjoyed their home town. If this is in fact the case,

more funds, or perhaps alternative strategies, should be invested in to increase the well-

being and communication among employees and residents in order to align their opinions

of the city's attributes with that of its marketing strategy.

The research was time consuming, but feasible. Retrieving contact employees'

perceptions required cooperation from local tourism businesses in order to collect an

adequate sample. Time and diligence was needed, but the collection of data was

completed within a couple months.

Delimitations

The study was delimited by:

1. Only employees of food service and lodging organizations within Indianapolis' six

cultural districts were eligible for study. Employees of food service and lodging

organizations outside the cultural districts were not surveyed.

2. Food service and lodging organizations were selected using Visit Indy, Google, Bing and Urbanspoon online sources, and excluded fast food chains.

3. Data was collected in December of 2012 and January of 2013.

4. The study was a paper and pen questionnaire. The researcher traveled to businesses and requested permission for access and for participation.

<u>Limitations</u>

The study was limited by:

1. Food service and lodging organizations without an online presence with Visit Indy, Google, Bing or Urbanspoon were not surveyed, likely meaning that not all food service and lodging organizations were included in the study.

2. Participants were only surveyed during the morning hours prior to lunch, and the mid-afternoon. Food service and lodging organization contact employees that work only in the evening were not able to participate in the study.

3. Because of convenience sampling and time of day during administration, the degree to which the findings of the study can be generalized to the population is limited.

4. All participants may not have been able to correctly interpret all survey items.

5. All participants may not have been truthful or recorded perceptions accurately during time of survey.

Assumptions

Assumptions made during the study were:

1. Understanding how Indianapolis food service and lodging contact employees perceive Indianapolis' common city attributes is beyond the researchers' personal awareness, but the knowledge can be obtained.

2. Obtaining knowledge of Indianapolis food service and lodging contact employees' perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes may be done by studying "objects" from an objective point of view.

3. Understanding how Indianapolis food service and lodging contact employees' perceive Indianapolis' common city attributes may be used to successfully manipulate the choices the city makes when marketing itself.

4. Participants were honest and accurate when responding.

5. Participants were able to completely understand and interpret the test.

6. Participants formed a stratified group representative of the study population.

7. The test was comprised of items capable of accurately capturing the cognitive perceptions of food service and lodging industry employees concerning Indianapolis' common city attributes.

Definition of Terms

Basic terms integral to the understanding of this study were defined in the following manner:

Destination: Destinations are large entities, i.e., countries, regions, states, counties, cities, or towns and are discussed in the context of individual attractions within these entities (Echtner, 1991).

Destination Marketing: A proactive, strategic, visitor-centered approach to the economic and cultural development of a location, which balances and integrates the interests of visitors, service providers, and the community (Albrecht, 2008).

Destination Image: Several definitions of destination image are explained in Chapter Two. This study recognized destination image to be a constantly evolving system of cognitive and affective elements coming together to form a holistic evaluation and consequent behavior.

Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI): As the world's largest and most reliable resource for official destination marketing organizations, DMAI is dedicated to improving the effectiveness of over 3,500 professionals from 600 destination marketing organizations in over 20 countries. They provide members—professionals, industry partners, students and educators—the most cutting-edge educational resources, networking opportunities, and marketing benefits available worldwide (Destination Marketing Association International, 2012).

Tourist: A person who is does not live within 50 miles of a destination and is traveling to that destination for any purpose: meeting, shopping, events, visiting relatives, etc. (Masberg, 1998).

Resident: A person who lives within 50 miles of a marked destination.

Contact Employee: An employee, manager or owner whose job description places them in the position to coproduce a service experience while in the physical presence of the customer.

Food Service Organization: For-profit establishments serving a food and/or drink service as their main source of revenue.

Lodging Organization: For-profit establishments providing overnight accommodation as their main source of revenue.

Common City Attribute: Functional or psychological attribute of a city that can be universally represented across destinations. Examples include sports attractions, shopping, safety and crowding (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993).

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination Marketing and Services

While much debate surrounds a universally accepted definition of destination marketing, organizations practicing the art can be identified as early as the Detroit Convention and Businessmen's League in 1896 and town councils in the United Kingdom as early as 1879 (Ford & Peeper, 2007). The general term for these entities has evolved into what are today's DMOs, with each organization representing a geographically defined area. These areas often overlap at different levels of government (i.e., town, city, state). DMOs also include associations that act as resources for official DMOs around the world. These associations provide networking, guidance and education to assist in aligning the world's view of destination marketing (Destination Marketing Association International, 2012).

When examining destination marketing a portion of the marketing development itself takes place as a service during tourism activities, the experiences the destination offers for purchase. This coincides with Gunn's (1972) stance on destination image. She hypothesized it is induced during tourist experiences and/or activities, overlapping a portion of destination marketing within the field services marketing. Most commonly services are a function of time, meaning employee performance is integral in creating the desired result for which purchasers have responsibility. By offering coproduction of the product, customers demand satisfactory access to resources required to obtain their desired ending; in most cases the purchaser does not maintain ownership of any resources at any given point in time (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011).

Ultimately, satisfaction of individuals visiting a destination may be determined by the employee directly providing that service. The performance of that employee may affect not only service satisfaction, but also the gap between how a destination is marketed and what the destination is like in reality (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2009).

The way in which DMOs approach marketing services and satisfaction affects how they define their objectives and purposes, causing inconsistencies. Albrecht (2008) believes destination marketing should be "a proactive, strategic, visitor-centered approach to the economic and cultural development of a location, which balances and integrates the interests of visitors, service providers, and the community." In light of any differences between destination marketers, the roles and responsibilities that fall within the realm of economic advancement can be considered somewhat consistent. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (2004), also known as the UNWTO, determined that destination marketing "covers all the activities and processes to bring buyers and sellers together; focuses on responding to consumer demands and competitive positioning; is a continuous coordinated set of activities associated with efficient distribution of products to high potential markets; and involves making decisions about the product, branding, price, market segmentation, promotion and distribution." The UNWTO believes that the umbrella of destination marketing also encompasses positioning, vision and destination image.

<div align="center">Destination Image Research Foundations</div>

It has been over four decades since the conceptualization of destination image. Following Hunt's (1971) work on the role of 'image' in tourism, Gunn (1972),

Hunt (1975) and Mayo's (1973) publications on 'vacationscape' and regional images fostered the beginnings of what has arguably become the most heavily researched tourism topic in the past thirty years. Much research recognizes destination image to be a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional subject. In order to capture the totality of destination image, several scholars have conducted meta-analyses over the last twenty five years. Chon (1990) and Echtner and Ritchie (1991) presented the first overviews followed a decade later by Jenkins (1999), Gallarza, et al. (2002), and Pike (2002), further compiling the collection of research. Most recently, Stepchenkova and Mills (2010) surveyed another 152 studies ranging from the year 2000 to 2007. Amalgamated, these meta-analyses have assessed several key areas of study have been focal points of destination image research thus far including: a) conceptualization and dimensionality of destination image (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Jenkins, 1999; Gallarza, et al., 2002; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010); b) evaluation of destination image constructs and tests (Chon, 1990; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Jenkins, 1999; Gallarza, et al., 2002; Pike, 2002; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010); c) development and evolution of destination image (Chon, 1990; Jenkins, 1999; Gallarza, et al., 2002; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010); d) destination image's connection to consumer behavior (Chon, 1990; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010); e) residents roles in destination image (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gallarza, et al., 2002; Pike, 2002); f) tourism development and sustainability's relationship to destination image (Chon, 1990; Gallarza, et al., 2002; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010); and g) tourist satisfaction and destination image (Chon, 1990).

Items a through e are discussed in this section. Items f and g and their implications concerning resident contact are included in the final chapter.

Image and Destination Image

Image conceptualization is not exclusive to the field of tourism. In fact, when breaking it down, it may be most useful to consider what many psychologists' consider image to be. The processing of an image requires the use of any or all sensory information available to manifest a greater entity that has its own identity. In contrast, discursive processing identifies objects using specific features that make up its parts (MacInnis & Price, 1987). This thought of "image" can then be connected to its manifestation in a number of disciplines such as in marketing, behavioral science, religion, and art. The holistic concept of image can also be connected with much tourism research that seeks to answer questions on subjects such as: a) competitive destination differentiation (Qu, Kim, & Im, 2011); b) destination stereotypes (Phelps, 1986); c) travel destination choices (Sirgy & Su, 2000); and d) destination image determinants (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Tasci & Gartner, 2007).

In this continued search for knowledge, the destination image construct is constantly being molded and interpreted by researchers. Unfortunately, its various applications in study have resulted in several conflicting summations, proving destination image is far too complex for an all-encompassing definition. To compensate for this predicament, several researchers' perceptions of the destination image construct must be examined.

Collective Images and Holistic Impression

In the earlier stages of destination image's development as a topic of research, several scholars developed the belief that the field of tourism's destination image was synonymous with behavioral science and psychology's views on image. For many years,

research across various levels of branding accepted that consumer image was a collection

of thoughts that together form a holistic impression. As a result, the research concluded: a)

the brand image consists of everything people associate with the brand (Newman, 1957);

b) image is the sum total of perceptions of the corporation's characteristics (Spector, 1961);

and c) an image is not individual traits or qualities but the total impression an entity makes

on the minds of others (Dichter, 1985).

Destination image scholars adopted these views and adapted their definitions to be

aligned with their subject of study. Twenty five years later, some researchers were still

using this holistic approach. Parenteau (1995) believed destination image to be "a

favorable or unfavorable prejudice that the audience and distributors have of the product or

destination." Unfortunately, defining destination image in this manner is quite rudimentary

and amorphous, creating issues concerning the topic of what should and should not be

included as collective images in the evaluation of the holistic impression. The construct

must be more strictly defined in order to have consistent creation of measurement tools and

accurate findings.

<div align="center">Cognitive, Affective and Behavioral Elements</div>

Generally speaking, the belief that cognitive and affective elements come

together to form destination image has been accepted since research on the topic

emerged in the 1970s. Many researchers have included what one knows about a

destination (cognitive) and what one feels about a destination (affective) within the

confines of their definitions. This belief that knowledge and emotions work together to

influence ideas about a destination is an adaptation of a subcategory of psychology

called cognitive psychology, which studies how people perceive reality, recall memory,

communicate, process thought and problem solve (Feist & Rosenberg, 2010). From the earliest research to the present, studies can be found that use this cognitive/affective theory and conclude: a) image is comprised of the ideas or conceptions held individually or collectively of the destination under investigation. Image may comprise both cognitive and evaluative components (Embacher & Buttle, 1989); b) the image of a place is the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person holds of it (Kotler, Haider, & Rein, 1994); c) an expression of knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations and emotional thoughts an individual has of a specific object or place (Lawson & Bond-Bovy, 1997); and d) each person's image of a particular place is unique, comprising their own memories, associations and imaginations of a particular place (Jenkins & McArthur, 1996).

However, as Stepchenkova and Mills (2010) point out, in the myriad of destination image research conducted over the years, only a small number of studies have focused on the affective element of destination image. It is even less likely that one finds a study that includes a measure of both the cognitive and affective elements in a single study. Pike's (2002) meta-analysis counted 6 of 142 publications from the years 1973 through 2000 to measure the affect element. Stepchenkova and Mills (2010) identified 47 out of the 152 studies they surveyed to contain qualitative data, a marked increase. However, the orientation, importance and inclusion of the affect element continue to be an issue today.

In more recent research, a conative element has been included in the destination image construct (Sirgy & Su, 2000; Joppe, Martin, & Waalen, 2001; Mwaura, Acquaye, & Jargal, 2009). This further aligns the construct of destination image with major

theories of cognitive psychology, in which the cognitive, affective and behavioral elements are interdependent in forming our perceptions. Concerning destination image, Pike and Ryan (2004) state conation may be a measure of "the likelihood of visiting a destination within a certain time period." Initial cognitive and affective elements create a behavior or more precisely in the case of destination image, a travel decision. This decision then, in turn, affects the cognitive and affective elements, creating a continuous, ordered relationship (Gartner, 1993). The inclusion of the conative dimension offers strength in its connections to strongly supported psychological theory, but issues still exist. Research over the years has resulted in contrasting findings, some of which stated the cognitive element affects behavior greater than the affective element, while others stated the affective element can elicit behavior and consumption without the existence of the cognitive element (Woodside & Lysonski, 1989; Gartner, 1986; Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003; Winkielman, Berridge, & Wilbarger, 2005).

<u>Destination Image Construct</u>

With regards to the conceptualization and development of destination image, several methodologies have surfaced. Of these constructs, Echtner and Ritchie's (1991, 1993) was one of the earliest to support the inclusion of qualitative methodologies and allow for inclusion of the cognitive, affective and conative elements (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). Upon the conclusion of their meta-analysis, Echtner and Ritchie (1991:11) recommended three considerations that they utilized when forming their own construct for destination image: a) destination image should be envisioned as consisting of two main components; those that are attribute based and those that are holistic; b) each of these components of destination image contains functional, or more tangible, and

psychological , or more abstract, characteristics; and c) images of destinations can also range from those based on 'common' functional and psychological traits to those based on more distinctive or even unique features, events, feelings or auras.

Echtner and Ritchie's (1993) recommendations formed their conceptual components of destination image. Seen in Figure 1, the components were addressed by creating open-ended items to assess the holistic tangible, abstract and unique characteristics. Additionally, a common attributes scale measuring the cognitive tangible and abstract characteristics accompanied the open-ended questions. The attribute scales ranged in subject from shopping, restaurants and events to safety, crime and cleanliness in order to assess the general picture generated by any visitor while at a destination. Finally, an item to measure the behavioral element was included that addresses tourists' intentions to return to a destination in the near future. Echtner and Richie's (1993) work continues to be expounded upon, and the framework of the construct continues to be popular amongst scholars (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). Their portion of the methodology used in this study is discussed in the next chapter.

Figure 1. The components of destination image
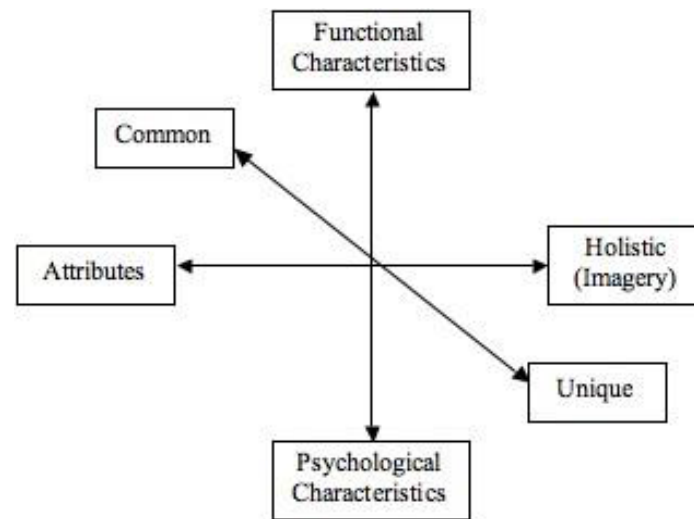
Adapted from Echtner and Ritchie, 2003

Destination Image Measurement

Due to the varying nature of the items forming the destination image construct,

several different measurement approaches have been taken throughout the course of the

subject's study. Over the past ten years, a dominant number of studies published in

major tourism peer-reviewed journals have imparted questionnaires on their subjects

meant for quantitative analysis. Consequently, the majority of items took form as 7- or

5-point Likert type items (Dolnicar & Grün, 2013). This confirms the continuation of the

trend Pike (2002) noted, revealing the girth of earlier research on destination image

employed Likert type scales and consisted of factor analysis to reduce the number of

underlying dimensions to be analyzed. Dolnicar and Grün (2013) also noted several

other methods of measurement employed in studies such as semantic-differential scales,

content analysis, word association tests, content analysis of webpages and visitor-

employed photography. However, less than one out of every four studies employed

qualitative measures or quantitative measures that were not Likert type items. The

nature of questionnaire research may be an influencing factor on this phenomenon and

issues with response and non-response bias may arise (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999).

Stepchenkova and Mills (2010) also pointed out issues arising from measure

differences, and observed that Echtner and Richie's (1993) methodology has often not

been wholly used as the framework in research studies. The common attribute scales

within the methodology has been commonly utilized for gaining insight into destination

image. Prior discussion of the destination image construct dictates that the common

attribute scales can give insight into destination marketing, but it may not provide an

accurate depiction of a respondent's destination image and caution should be taken

when using the common attribute scales alone. Echtner and Ritchie's (1993) attribute

scales consist of 35 items derived from the field of marketing (Churchill, 1979). The

scale may not fully capture destination image perceptions, but further research using the

scale may provide better understanding of relationships between destination marketers,

employees, residents and tourists.

<div align="center">Residents' Roles in Destination Image</div>

Continuous direct human interaction, exposure to marketing tools and

individual experiences create a destination image that simultaneously begins the

evaluation process and evolution (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Jenkins and MacArthur

(1996) believe that every person's image of a specific destination is unique. This

supports Gunn's (1972) initial development that provided subcategories affecting

image formation: organic image and induced image. The original theory describes

organic image as occurring naturally throughout one's life, while induced image is

formed from excerpting effort to educate and influence one's decision to travel.

Gunn (1972) explains further that induced images can be modified during a visit through

experiences, activities, accommodations and services. This development includes the

interaction with residents at the destination. Several studies have been focused on this role

of the resident in destination image formation (Schroeder, 1996; Lawton, 2005; Nunkoo &

Gursoy, 2012). Described by Gallarza, et al. (2002) as the 'passive' role, scholars have

often used this research for comparisons with visitors (Ji & Wall, 2011). Gallarza, et al.

(2002) conclude that another, 'active' role of the tourist exists that pertains to how

individuals view their place of residence and is often used in comparison with tourists'

images. Figure 2 displays Beerli and Martin's (2004) conceptual model of factors that

provide input into the destination image construct, including input from information

sources and personal experiences and attributes. The construct will be discussed later in

this chapter.

Figure 2. Model of the Formation of Destination Image
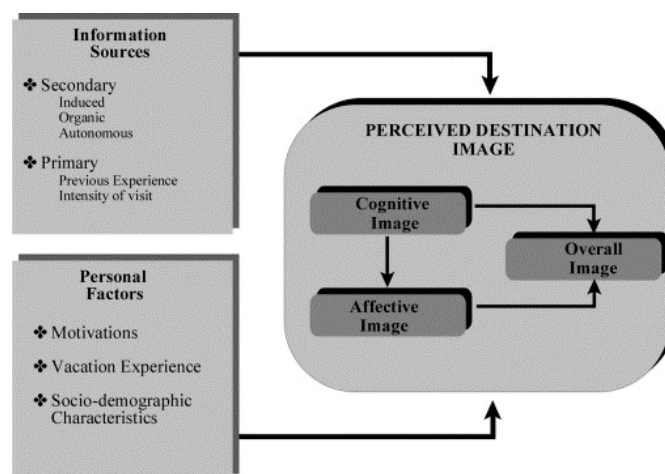
Beerli and Martin, 2004

Echtner and Richie (1991) believe that the 'passive' role residents play allows them to fall into the image elements, possibly affecting tourists' image formation and evolution. In a Denmark study, Marcussen (2011) identifies that interaction with the "friendly Danish people" is a stronger driver of intent to return than overall satisfaction with a vacation. Gartner and Ruzzier (2011) also find that good nightlife, entertainment and friendly people are part of maintaining a location's image, and that visitors' expectations of these qualities do not diminish with repeat visitation. These discoveries reinforce the notion that residents' interactions and image of their own homes may impact tourists' image of a destination. In this manner, resident contact employees within the tourism and hospitality industries of host cities may greatly influence destination marketing/managerial strategies due to their exposure to tourists (Gallarza, Saura, & García, 2002). Limited research with this primary focus was discovered during literature review.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

A vast collection of literature spanning destination marketing exists after decades of educational inquiry, with a considerable amount in reference to destination image. As the collection continues to grow by locations studied, and the number of measurement tools increase, learning about the perceptions of residents could become more important in the development of destination marketing strategies and managerial procedures. Several inferences can be made from the literature: a) there is a of lack of literature that attempts to quantify and analyze destination marketing practices on tourism's resident contact employees in reference to their occupational level; b) based on theory and newly developed forms of data analysis, further research is vital; and

c) significant research must be employed to greater understand the connection between destination marketing strategy and successful tourism development.

The argument can be made that resident contact employees are present and play a role in nearly every aspect of tourism services. However it is the customer, management and marketing that are considered the components of all services, and research is dominated by customer input with management and marketing implications (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2009). Review of several studies and meta-analyses reveals that a small portion of marketing research has been conducted in reference to residents' relation to destination image, demand, participation, information provision and tourism impacts, with the vast majority concerning destination image (Noval, 1975; Paraskevopoulous; Little, 1980; Echtner & Brent, 1991; Jenkins, 1999; Pike S. D., 2002; Gallarza, Saura, & García, 2002; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010; Arsal, Woosnam, Baldwin, & Sheila, 2010; Kwon & Vogt, 2010; Latkova & Vogt, 2012; Oom, Mendes, & Guerreiro, 2012; Novcic, Damnjanovic, & Popesku, 2012). However, a minimal amount of study has been completed with focus from the resident contact employees' perspective. Recent studies indicates that research concerning resident contact employees may provide further insight and align best with the destination image concept of destination marketing. Using the literature review, methodology was developed to extend research beyond residents' impact to resident contact employees' impact on tourist satisfaction and intent to return. The extension was meant to allow marketers and managers to better understand and capitalize upon long-term profitability and sustainability of tourism through internal marketing communication.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

<u>Geographical Site</u>

The six cultural districts of greater Indianapolis (Broad Ripple Village, The Canal and White River State Park, Fountain Square, Indiana Avenue, Mass Avenue, and Wholesale) formed the geographical borders for the population sample. Offering unique combinations of tourism and hospitality, these six districts serve as the benchmarks for experiencing Indianapolis. Since the initial districts' creation by the Indianapolis Cultural Development Commission in 2003, the city has attempted to progressively evolve the six cultural districts in order to differentiate them from each other while, at the same time, encourage inter-district travel and experience through feature installments such as the Indianapolis Cultural Trail (Indianapolis Cultural Development Commission, 2003; Indianapolis Cultural Trail: About, 2013). Figure 3 displays a map of the Indianapolis cultural districts.

<u>Figure 3.</u> Map of the Indianapolis Cultural Districts

Discover Mass Ave – all district map, 2013

Research Sample

The sample for this study was residential, contact employees of organizations in the restaurant and lodging industries located in one of the six Indianapolis cultural districts. Food service organizations were defined as: for-profit establishments serving a food and/or drink service as their main source of revenue. Lodging organizations were defined as: for-profit establishments providing overnight accommodation as their main source of revenue. Residential, contact employees were defined as: any employee or manager that may be expected to have direct interaction with a customer during the service experience. For the purpose of this study, fast food chain restaurant employees' were not included in the sample. A comprehensive list of these organizations was obtained from the Visit Indy web site, Google searches, Bing searches, Yellow Pages searches and physical searches. At the time of data collection, there were approximately 250-300 restaurant organizations and approximately 30 lodging organizations. The researcher gathered 295 surveys for analysis.

Data Collection Process

Before the administration of questionnaires, the researcher submitted an application for exempt research to Indiana University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) on November 11, 2012. The application was approved on November, 14 2012 (Appendix A). Also in compliance with the Indiana University IRB, the researcher successfully completed the Indiana University Human Subjects test prior to data collection. All of the collection process and data handling were completed with compliance to all IRB, federal and state regulations.

Managers (or other employees able to give permission, if necessary) were approached at respective research locations and permission to survey employees was received before research continued. Once proper permission was granted, employees at least 18 years of age were approached via convenience sampling, and asked if they would complete a pen and paper survey. Prior to administering the survey, participants were given a study information sheet that explained the purpose of the study, study procedure, confidentiality, compensation and research contact information (Appendix B). Participants were informed that the study was completely voluntary and anonymous, and that no compensation would be for taking part in the study. Care was taken to promote completion of the survey in the most comfortable means possible for the participant, particularly to give them privacy. If participants agreed to participate and changed their mind while completing the survey, their survey was returned to them or destroyed. If requested, results were made available. This procedure was followed consistently for every participant to ensure that his/her human rights were protected, and to increase external validity so that results could be generalized to the population of resident, restaurant and lodging contact employees within the six Indianapolis cultural districts.

<div align="center">Research Instrument</div>

The instrument was designed to assess resident contact employees' perceptions of common city attributes based on the developments by Echtner and Richie (1991). The questionnaire can be seen in Appendix C, and consisted of two parts: a) 24 common city attribute items adapted from Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) list of common attribute-based items; and b) seven demographic/predictor items. The attribute-based items created by Echtner and Ritchie (1991) were used after a review of literature from over a decade, peer

analysis and focus groups and were designed to assess the cognitive element of destination image. Items from several studies were examined and excluded based on application to tourism attributes Indianapolis' possesses. The studies created, adapted, included and removed items based on researcher knowledge of selected destination, as this study did (Harris, 1972; Crompton, 1977; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2006). The items created were designed to cover both sides of the functional-psychological spectrum (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991).

Several differences exist between this research's attribute instrument and Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) original attribute scales. Because most respondents were at their location of employment, reducing the questionnaire length without challenging the credibility was integral. The original instrument consisted of two items per attributes, which was reduced down to one item per attribute. Upon further examination of the attributes, it was determined that several questions did not pertain to the population and geographical site. For example, the item pertaining to the Degree of Urbanization was removed because the geographical boundaries are highly urbanized. This item may be better suited for a small country or state. Considerations for this included the demographics of the population sample being food service and lodging contact employees, and that outside of tourism discussions these two areas are generally identified as separate industries. The questionnaire used wording strategies offered from Echtner and Ritchie (1993) in order to provide clarity and brevity. In order to better detect response bias, every other question was constructed negatively. Response choice takes form in a 5-point Likert type scales, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Table 1 displays the survey items as they pertain to common attributes.

Table 1. Indianapolis Common Attribute Items

Question	Attribute	Item
1	Variety	Indianapolis has a large variety of attractions to visit.
2	Transportation	Local transportation in Indianapolis is not convenient.
3	Sports Engagement	There are numerous sports activities to engage in within Indianapolis.
4	Cost	Overall, Indianapolis is not an expensive city to experience.
5	Friendliness	Indianapolis residents are friendly.
6	Restaurants	Overall, restaurants in Indianapolis are not good quality.
7	Museums	Various historical attractions and museums exist in Indianapolis.
8	Scenery	Indianapolis does not have impressive scenery.
9	Festivals	Many festivals and celebrations occur in Indianapolis.
10	Authenticity	Few opportunities exist to see authentic Indianapolis lifestyle.
11	Hotels	There are many good quality hotels in Indianapolis.
12	Safety	Indianapolis is not a safe city.
13	Adventure	Indianapolis has many adventurous activities
14	Crowding	Indianapolis is a crowded city.
15	Shopping	Great shopping exists in Indianapolis.
16	Cleanliness	Indianapolis is a dirty city.
17	Architecture	There is much beautiful architecture in Indianapolis.
18	Events	Indianapolis does not have an event friendly climate.
19	Sports Attractions	There are many sports attractions and events in Indianapolis.
20	Nightlife	Indianapolis attractions are well-known outside the city.
21	Reputation	Indianapolis attractions are well-known outside the city.
22	Learning	There are not many places to have educational or learning experiences in Indianapolis.
23	Uniqueness	Indianapolis has unique attractions.
24	Flagship	The only things to do in Indianapolis are go to the Indianapolis 500, go to an Indianapolis Colts game, or go to an Indiana Pacers game.

The study analyzed several predictors commonly found in prior studies with considerable focus on destination image. The seven IVS were: a) gender; b) relationship status; c) age; d) education; e) residence length; f) zip code; g) position; and h) industry. "Gender", "relationship status" and "education" were nominal items with two, four and six levels respectively. "Age and residence" length were ordinal items with five items each. "Position" was an ordinal, binary forced response question. "Industry" was nominal data, identified upon collection of the survey in the upper right corner. Finally, "zip code" was a nominal fill in the blank question, but was omitted upon further consideration that employment provided proof of residency. A space for respondent comments was also provided.

Content validity, the ability of a test to measure what it is meant to measure, was bolstered by several means. First, prior research and development was used in creating the measure. Second, the measure was piloted to a small number of resident contact employees to ensure clarity and appropriateness. Third, convergent validity was confirmed with recent studies using varying forms of destination attribute assessment (Kwon & Vogt, 2010; Oom, Mendes, & Guerreiro, 2012).

<u>Analysis Method</u>

Data from the research was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were produced and reviewed to begin the data screening process. Normality of distribution, linearity, homoscedasticity, sphericity, reliability and multicollinearity were assessed before continuing with data analyses. Non-parametric tests were completed across DVs to determine if they had significant relationships with "industry" or "position." Afterwards, cluster analysis utilizing the

common city attributes created "homogeneous" groups, "positive" and "negative."

Cross-tabulations and mean comparisons then identified significant differences between

these cluster groups.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the considerations taken when

developing the research. Indianapolis' six cultural districts clearly define the geographic

site. Within the cultural districts, the research respondents consisted of contact employees

at food service and lodging industries. In order to protect the respondents' rights,

regulations were followed during measure development and data collection as discussed

previously. Previous studies and theory created the foundation for the study design.

Finally, several methods of statistical analysis were conducted on the data. The results of

these analyses rendered several significant results that can be generalized to the study

population. This research attempted to examine the relationship of contact employees in

the food service and lodging industries of Indianapolis with their perceptions of its

common city attributes, and present findings that could have an impact on marketing

and/or managerial strategies.

Chapter Four

DATA ANALYSIS

<u>Data Screening</u>

Prior to data analysis, recommended screening was completed (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2012). The data was evaluated in terms of problems with accuracy, missing data, normality, outliers, multicollinearity, singularity, homogeneity of variance and homoscedasticity.

Overview of item frequencies and descriptive statistics permitted assurance of accuracy across the 30 questionnaire items. The process revealed a few items outside of acceptable response range. Upon further review, these errors were identified as input errors. The researcher went back through the surveys coded for reference, and corrected the entries to their proper, valid values. Missing values were left alone and pairwise deletion for non-parametric testing was selected over mean imputation. Imputation would have created additional ranks that may have altered results by creating additional ranks for comparison. Pairwise deletion completes analysis using all available data from cases. List wise deletion was employed for cluster analysis due to fact that all item scores are required to form the value used to determine associations.

All variables and all combinations of variables must be normally distributed in order for the normality assumption to be met for multivariate statistics. This is traditionally completed by examining the skewness and kurtosis of continuous variables and conducting a Shapiro-Wilk test for samples under 2000 (Burdenski, 2000). The Shapiro-Wilk test was found to be significant at $p < .001$ for every variable. This result led to the conclusion of rejecting the hypothesis that data was normally distributed.

Examination of the skewness and kurtosis of variables confirmed this significant violation of parametric testing. Several variables' skewness and kurtosis values were outside the range of the absolute value of two times the standard error of skewness/kurtosis, respectively. These indications led the researcher to conclude use of non-parametric tests were required for the comparison of groups.

Per Tabachnik and Fidell (2012), scatterplots and residual plots of continuous variables were used to examine linearity and homoscedasticity of continuous variables, while the homogeneity of variances assumption should be assessed by Levene's test for homogeneity of variances. Once displayed as a scatterplot, nearly all variables appeared to be asymptotic in nature. However, residual plots accompanied by a fit line indicated that all the continuous variables displayed homoscedasticity. Levene's test for homogeneity of variances was significant for all variables, meaning the assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated. The results further supported the use of non-parametric testing in order to compare groups.

Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the reliability of the test. A measure of internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha should be over .7 in order for a test to be considered acceptable in most fields of study and over .9 in order to be considered excellent (Kline, 1999). For this study, Cronbach's alpha was .923.

<div align="center">Respondent Profile</div>

After completing data screening a respondent profile was created. In all, 295 surveys were collected. Of the 295 questionnaire 27 were determined to be unusable for either being mostly incomplete, or displaying patterns of response bias. The result was 268 valid questionnaires. Of the respondents, over half were female (56.3% of the

sample) and the majority were single (56.4% of the sample). Nearly 93% of the

respondents were under 44, with the majority being 30 or younger. While the respondents

were younger, the vast majority of them had at least some college education (80.4%). The

sample was made up of 197 non-managerial respondents (73.5% of the sample) and 71

manager or owner respondents (26.5% of the sample). Food service was the industry of

employment for 188 respondents (70.1% of the sample) and lodging was the industry of

employment for 80 (29.9% of the sample). Table 2 displays the respondent profile.

<u>Table 2</u>. Respondent Profile

Variable		N	%	Variable		N	%
Gender	Male	117	43.7	Education	Highschool	46	17.7
	Female	151	56.3	Level	Some College	107	41.2
	Total	268	100		Undergraduate	88	33.8
Industry	Food Service	188	70.1		Graduate	14	5.4
	Lodging	80	29.9		Other	5	1.9
	Total	268	100		Total	260	100
Relation-ship Status	Married/Partnered	69	25.9	Residence Length	< 1 year	19	7.1
	Divorced	45	16.9		1 - 2 years	44	16.5
	Single	150	56.4		2 - < 4 years	58	21.7
	Widowed	2	.8		4 - < 10 years	59	22.1
	Total	266	100		> 10 years	87	32.6
					Total	267	100
Age	18-24	170	63.7	Occupa-tion Level	Non-manager	197	73.5
	25-34	78	29.2		Manager	71	26.5
	45-54	18	6.7		Total	268	100
	54-72	1	.4				
	Total	267	100				

 * N = Frequency

<u>Common City Attributes</u>

Table 3 reveals respondents were generally positive concerning common city attributes.

The attributes were measured on a 5-point Likert type scale with 1 synonymous with

"strongly disagree," 2 synonymous with "disagree," 3 synonymous with "neutral," 4

Table 3. Respondents' perceptions of common city attributes

Attribute	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Variety	268	3.83	.924
Transportation	267	3.34	1.097
Sports Engagement	267	3.46	1.115
Cost	257	3.63	1.011
Friendliness	264	4.14	.827
Restaurants	267	3.96	.953
Museums	267	3.70	.809
Scenery	267	3.67	.835
Festivals	267	3.94	.816
Authenticity	264	3.39	1.034
Hotels	268	3.89	.836
Safety	265	3.85	.850
Adventure	268	2.99	1.125
Crowding	264	3.99	.806
Shopping	267	3.43	1.003
Cleanliness	263	3.99	.789
Architecture	266	3.54	.806
Events	267	3.96	.822
Sports Attractions	267	4.13	.737
Nightlife	266	3.35	1.106
Reputation	264	3.55	.857
Learning	267	3.59	.828
Uniqueness	267	3.83	.841
Flagship	268	4.00	.930

synonymous with "agree" and 5 synonymous with "strongly agree." The only attribute that reported an overall average of less than 3 was "adventure" (2.99). Other generally neutral attributes were "transportation" (3.34), "nightlife" (3.35), "authenticity" (3.39), "shopping" (3.43) and "sports engagement" (3.46). The most favorably viewed attribute was "friendliness" (4.14). Also among the highest favored attributes were "sports attractions" (4.13) and "flagship" (4.00). Generally positive views were held concerning

all remaining variables including "variety" (3.83), "cost" (3.63), "restaurants" (3.96), "museums" (3.70), "scenery" (3.67), "festivals" (3.94), "hotels" (3.89), "safety" (3.85), "crowding" (3.99), "cleanliness" (3.99), "architecture" (3.54), "events" (3.95), "reputation" (3.55), "learning" (3.59) and "uniqueness" (3.83). Standard deviations generally trended towards 1, with the exception of "sports attractions" (.737).

<u>Hypothesis 1</u>

Because the data did not form normal distributions, parametric tests could not be employed to test the first hypothesis. The non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test aided in the comparison of contact employees' perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes. This test enabled differences in distributions to be determined. However, the Mann-Whitney U test was unable to provide insight into the direction of the relationships because the values were converted to ranks before comparison. Once differences in distributions were identified, analyzing other empirical data such as cluster analysis and cross tabulations allowed further inference (Kruskal, 1957). The null hypothesis was rejected for all common city attributes. U statistics were not reported by SPSS.

<u>Hypothesis 2</u>

Hypothesis 2 faced a situation similar to Hypothesis 1. Because the data did not form normal distributions, parametric tests could not be employed to test the contact employees' perceptions of common city attributes across occupation levels. The non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test aided in the comparison of contact employees' perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes. This test enabled differences in distributions to be determined. However, the Mann-Whitney U test was unable to provide insight into the direction of the relationships because the values were converted

to ranks before comparison. Once differences in distributions were identified, analyzing

other empirical data such as cluster analysis, cross tabulations and mean comparisons

allowed further inference (Kruskal, 1957). The null hypothesis was rejected for all common

city attributes, except for Architecture ($p = .071$) and Transportation ($p = .055$). U statistics

were not reported by SPSS.

<div align="center">Hypothesis 3</div>

Hierarchical clustering was used to create two homogenous groups for the purposes of

demographic comparison. Cluster analysis is a powerful tool because it is not limited by

the assumption of other parametric tests. The only requirement needed for clustering is

the standardization of all variables. The hierarchical analysis utilized Ward's method,

comparing the squared Euclidean distance of variables and combining cases with the

smallest overall within-cluster increase to determine the strongest case associations. The

method was chosen because it was best suited for the sample size and the multi-step

procedure accounted for outliers (Statsoft, Inc., 2013). As seen in Table 6, the within-

cluster sums on the initial agglomeration schedule implied there were four "good"

homogenous clusters within the sample of 230 complete cases.

<div align="center">Table 4. Agglomeration Schedule</div>

Stage	Coefficients	Stage	Coefficients
229	4631.048	223	2724.992
228	3557.797	222	2639.158
227	3183.720	221	2562.833
226	3039.305	220	2639.158
225	2918.630	219	2457.118
224	2819.484	218	2404.685

Hierarchical cluster analysis was performed again. The cluster determined the group to

which each case belonged. Following this, common city attribute mean scores of

demographic data over the four homogenous groups was analyzed in order to identify the

general theme for each cluster. Of the four clusters, cluster 1 was identified as "positive."

Cluster 2 was identified as "positive/neutral." Cluster 3 was identified as "neutral."

Cluster 4 was identified as "mixed." All response means of the "positive" cluster are over

the value of 4.00. 70.8% of the response means for the "mostly positive" cluster are over

3.5. 79.1% of the response means for the "mostly neutral" cluster are between 2.5 and 3.5.

Finally, no response for the "mixed" cluster represents more than 50% of the total response

means. All common city attribute mean scores can be found in Table 5.

Table 5. Common City Attribute Mean Scores of Cluster Groups

Attribute	Cluster	Mean	SD	Attribute	Cluster	Mean	SD
Variety	1	4.45	.578	Adventure	1	3.90	.869
	2	4.01	.707		2	2.33	1.018
	3	3.20	.678		3	2.65	.647
	4	1.57	.787		4	1.57	.535
	Total	3.81	.923		Total	2.91	1.102
Transportation	1	4.07	.855	Crowding	1	4.47	.555
	2	2.97	1.219		2	4.01	.830
	3	2.99	.726		3	3.31	.615
	4	1.71	1.113		4	4.57	.535
	Total	3.29	1.116		Total	3.94	.826
Sports Engagement	1	4.26	.646	Shopping	1	4.21	.645
	2	3.37	1.183		2	3.08	.941
	3	2.85	.783		3	3.03	.854
	4	1.29	.756		4	2.14	.900
	Total	3.42	1.126		Total	3.39	1.004
Cost	1	4.19	.938	Cleanliness	1	4.48	.580
	2	3.69	.958		2	4.09	.720
	3	3.05	.715		3	3.36	.561
	4	3.86	.900		4	4.41	.535
	Total	3.65	.986		Total	3.99	.773

Table 5. Common City Attribute Mean Scores of Cluster Groups (continued)

Attribute	Cluster	Mean	SD	Attribute	Cluster	Mean	SD
Friendliness	1	4.44	.552	Architecture	1	4.12	.622
	2	4.45	.703		2	3.49	.685
	3	3.55	.827		3	3.00	.593
	4	4.43	.535		4	2.86	.900
	Total	4.15	.814		Total	3.51	.791
Restaurants	1	4.49	.580	Events	1	4.53	.529
	2	4.13	.890		2	4.07	.794
	3	3.36	.925		3	3.36	.671
	4	3.14	.900		4	3.71	.756
	Total	3.97	.948		Total	3.97	.825
Museums	1	4.38	.517	Sports Attractions	1	4.60	.493
	2	3.60	.697		2	4.36	.607
	3	3.19	.586		3	3.56	.702
	4	2.29	.488		4	3.43	.535
	Total	3.67	.811		Total	4.15	.756
Scenery	1	4.22	.583	Nightlife	1	4.07	.839
	2	3.71	.866		2	3.09	1.232
	3	3.09	.597		3	3.19	.716
	4	2.71	.951		4	3.00	.488
	Total	3.64	.849		Total	3.99	1.126
Festivals	1	4.48	.530	Reputation	1	4.07	.822
	2	3.99	.762		2	3.43	.808
	3	3.41	.680		3	3.13	.600
	4	2.43	.787		4	2.86	.900
	Total	3.91	.833		Total	3.52	.850
Authenticity	1	4.21	.623	Learning	1	4.11	.678
	2	3.24	.998		2	3.64	.678
	3	2.71	.785		3	3.09	.524
	4	1.71	.488		4	2.43	.787
	Total	3.33	1.050		Total	3.57	.821
Hotels	1	4.49	.626	Uniqueness	1	4.40	.571
	2	3.77	.746		2	4.00	.697
	3	3.51	.665		3	3.19	.711
	4	2.43	.787		4	2.57	.787
	Total	3.87	.834		Total	3.82	.857
Safety	1	4.33	.728	Flagship	1	4.66	.506
	2	3.84	.823		2	4.23	.669
	3	3.17	.623		3	3.19	.911
	4	4.57	.535		4	3.00	1.000
	Total	3.80	.869		Total	3.99	.960

*SD = Standard Deviation
*Frequencies: Cluster 1 = 73; Cluster 2 = 75; Cluster 3 = 75; Cluster 4 = 7

Because the "mixed" cluster had so few cases, chi-square tests could not be conducted. Males made up the majority of "positive" respondents (58.9%), which also represented the cluster with the highest percentage of males in it (42.6%). Females were dominant in the other three clusters, holding the highest share in the "mostly neutral" cluster (66.7%), and was also the cluster females fell in most often (38.8%). Over half of respondents were single (58.5%) and spread quite evenly across clusters. The least represented group concerning relationship status was widow (0.9%) with all representing the "mostly positive" cluster. Age is similar to relationship status in the fact that it is dominated by one category spread equally across the large clusters. 63.3% of all respondents were between the ages of 18 and 30 while only one respondent was between the ages of 54 and 72, falling in the "mostly positive" cluster. Education level does not have a group that represents the majority of a cluster, but "some college" and "undergraduate degree" combined represent over 50% of every cluster. Nearly one-third (32.8%) of all respondents have lived in Indianapolis for over 10 years, and each of the first three cluster groups is made up of nearly one-third that total.

Managers collected mostly in the "positive" (56.5%) and "mostly positive" clusters (33.9%). Non-manager employees' largest represented cluster was "mostly neutral" (41.5%) followed by "mostly positive" (31.1%). Only six managers (9.7%) were below "mostly positive". Non-managers made up 92% of the "mostly neutral" cluster, and 100% made up the "mixed response" cluster. Lodging employees accounted for 57.5% of the "positive" cluster, designating nearly two-thirds of their respondents to it. 23.4% of lodging industry employees were "mostly positive", while the remaining 7 (10.9%) were "mostly neutral." Food service employees held the minority in the "positive" cluster (42.5%), but

were the dominant in the "mostly positive," "mostly neutral" and "mixed response" clusters

(80.0%, 90.7% and 100% respectively). Table 6 displays these cross-tabulations.

Table 6. Cross Tabulations of Cluster Groups

Variable		Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Total
Gender	Male	43	31	25	2	101
	Female	30	44	50	5	129
	Total	73	75	75	7	230
Relationship	Married/Partnered	18	18	17	1	54
Status	Divorced	11	10	16	2	39
	Single	44	44	42	4	134
	Widow	0	2	0	0	2
	Total	73	74	75	7	229
Age	18-30	45	47	46	7	145
	31-43	22	22	24	0	68
	44-56	6	4	5	0	15
	57-72	0	1	0	0	1
	Total	73	74	75	7	229
Education	High School	11	13	15	0	39
Level	Some College	23	29	36	5	93
	Undergraduate	31	27	18	0	76
	Graduate	5	4	3	0	12
	Other	1	0	0	1	2
	Total	71	73	72	6	222
Residence	< 1 year	7	4	2	2	15
Length	1 - 2 years	8	16	12	1	37
	2 - < 4 years	15	15	18	3	51
	4 - < 10 years	15	18	18	0	51
	> 10 years	27	22	25	1	75
	Total	72	75	75	7	229
Occupation	Non-manager	38	54	69	7	168
Level	Manager	35	21	6	0	62
	Total	73	75	75	7	230
Industry	Food Service	31	60	68	7	166
	Lodging	42	15	7	0	64
	Total	73	75	75	7	230

Chapter Five

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

The problem of the study was to examine the perceptions of contact employees in the food service and lodging industries concerning Indianapolis' tourism attributes, and their relation to Indianapolis' destination marketing and managerial strategies. Variables for this study were determined by a review of literature. Respondents were assessed concerning the industry in which they are employed, occupation level, gender, relationship status, education level and residence length. Developing strategies within tourism related organizations to increase tourist satisfaction and intent to return indicated the importance of the study.

The research sample included contact employees of the six Indianapolis cultural districts (Broad Ripple Village, Canal, Fountain Square, Indiana Avenue, Mass Avenue and the Wholesale District) in food service and lodging organizations. Contact employees were defined as employees, managers or owners whose job description places them in the position to coproduce a service experience while in the physical presence of the customer. Food service organizations were defined as for-profit establishments serving a food and/or drink service as their main source of revenue. Lodging organizations were defined as for-profit establishments providing overnight accommodation as their main source of revenue. Questionnaires used during analyses totaled 268 versus 295 collected (90.8%).

Adapted from earlier research, the items on the questionnaire measured the cognitive perceptions of contact employees in regards to common city attributes (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Numerous studies and concepts have incorporated the items in

in relation to common city attributes, tourism and destination image. The 30-item questionnaire contained two sections: common city attribute and demographic data. The survey contained Likert type and categorical questions. One item, zip code, was omitted from the questionnaire.

Data was analyzed using SPSS, resulting in numerous variables describing contact employees within the Indianapolis cultural districts. The variables were used to create a better understanding of the sample while assessing the nature of its relationship with common city attributes. Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to examine the distributions concerning industry and occupational level with common city attributes. It was discovered that distributions across nearly all DVs were significantly different, with the exceptions of a few variables concerning occupations level, transportation and architecture. Cluster analysis was then performed to create homogenous groups based upon the perceptions of common city attributes. Cross-tabulations and mean comparisons revealed the differences between the homogeneous groups. Because one group contained too small a sample goodness-of-fit tests were not conducted on the homogenous groups, but with the other tests, inference could still be made.

<div align="center">Findings</div>

Three research problems were addressed in the study. Before completion of testing, several demographics were analyzed to reveal information concerning the sample. Two non-parametric tests were utilized to answer the first two research questions. The final research question was answered using cluster analysis.

Demographic data revealed several items worthy of note. 63.7% of the respondents were among the ages of 18 to 30. Over half the respondents were female (56.3%). Of the

respondents, the majority reported being single (56.4%). 75% of the respondents

indicated that they had either some college education or an undergraduate degree. A large

portion of respondents held non-managerial positions (73.5%), while 70.1% of the

respondents worked in the food service industry.

The sample as a whole was positive in their perceptions of Indianapolis' common

city attributes. Six attributes averaged within .5 of "Neutral" on the 5-point Likert type

scale: a) adventure (2.99); b) transportation (3.34); c) nightlife (3.35); d) authenticity

(3.39); e) shopping (3.43); and f) sports engagement (3.46). Resident contact employees

feel most strongly that residents of Indianapolis are friendly (4.14) and there are several

sports attractions (4.13), but there is more to experience than just the major sports

attractions (4.00). Average perception of all other common city attributes fell between

3.50 and 3.99. Resident contact employees indicate that they are relatively optimistic

about the tourism offerings of Indianapolis.

The data retrieved failed to meet the assumptions of normality and

homoscedasticity. Consequently parametric tests could not be used to assess the degree

and direction of common city attribute differences that were reported in relation to

industry and occupation level. However, non-parametric tests indicated that there was a

difference in common city attribute perceptions reported between food service and

lodging industry employees. Additionally, those respondents in a managerial or

ownership position had different perceptions of common city attribute than non-

managerial employees.

Cluster analysis expanded further on the findings, displaying that four like-minded

groups existed concerning perceptions of common city attributes. Four groups were

determined based on the reduction rate of squared Euclidean distance within cluster. Managers and owners dominantly in the "positive" and "mostly positive" groups about Indianapolis' attributes, however, non-managers swayed between "mostly positive" and "mostly neutral." Similar to managers and owners, the lodging industry category of respondents also fell in the groups that had higher regard for the common city attributes of Indianapolis, while the food service industry swayed between the "mostly positive" and "mostly neutral" groups. It is worth noting that all members of the "mixed response" groups included only respondents that were non-managerial employees working in the food service industry.

Of all the data, results concerning transportation in Indianapolis were the most unexpected. For several years, Indianapolis has dealt with being a city of significant population with dismal public transportation. Only non-express bus routes and taxis currently connect residents and tourists to the main commercial centers of the area, some of which are over 40 minutes apart without stops. The study hoped to reveal differences in perceptions about transportation based upon income differences between managers and non-mangers, but significant differences did not exist. When reevaluating the topic of transportation it may be discovered that nearly all resident contact employees have their own means of transportation and do not use any other means available throughout the city. This may also lead to the discovery that many local resident contact employees don't have an image of transportation that includes personal usage experience.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

The following conclusions were drawn in relation to the hypotheses used to guide this study:

Hypothesis 1: "There is no significant difference between industries in the comparison of contact employees' perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes" was rejected with concern to all DVs. Common city attribute perceptions of Indianapolis differ between employees in the food service and lodging industries.

Hypothesis 2: "There is no significant difference between job levels in the comparison of contact employees' perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes" was rejected for all DVs except transportation and architecture. Managers' and owners' perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes differ from non-managers' perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes, with the exception of transportation and architecture.

Hypothesis 3: "Resident contact employees can be placed into one meaningful group based on their perceptions of Indianapolis' common city attributes" was rejected. The reduction rate of the squared Euclidean distance in the agglomeration schedule implied that the sample consisted of four homogeneous groups: a) positive; b) mostly positive; c) mostly neutral and d) mixed response. Observable differences could be identified when further examination of the groups was completed, but testing for goodness-of-fit could not be completed due to group membership disparities.

Implications

As mentioned previously, additional research is important for the continued development and sustainability of tourism. Researchers have used several theories to evaluate the impacts of residents on destination marketing and destination image. This study attempted to look at these areas in a less observed area of the resident contact employee. Research to identify significantly different perceptions between industries and

occupation levels was necessary in order to conduct more intricate analyses with credibility. Observing significant differences between these categories allowed non-managers, managers, lodging employees and food service employees to be separately grouped based on their compared responses. While these groupings were based on rankings rather than means, their significance granted credibility to cluster groups formed. While parametric statistics could not be used to find significant differences, practical implications are found in the data studied.

This research followed the guidelines that destination marketing is a form of services marketing and encompasses destination image (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2004; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011). In terms of theory and conceptualization, it embraced Echtner and Ritchie's (1993) three-element proposal for measuring destination image. It attempted to examine resident contact employees' effect tourists' destination image, and in turn, their satisfaction and intent to return (Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008; Marcussen, 2011). This research may not be considered a complete measure of the destination image construct, but it can provide reason to include alternate perspectives and influences in future study.

Awareness of resident contact employees' perceptions of common city attributes may be a useful tool for tourism stakeholders. DMOs wishing to close the gaps of tourism service delivery may use this knowledge to promote alignment of a destination marketing strategy. Action may be taken, encouraging stakeholders to be more aware of their influence on visitors. Promotion of "local" tourism towards resident contact employees may be taken advantage of in order increase perception levels of common city

attributes. DMOs could use this information to better understand stakeholders and communicate with them to increase the chance of future endeavors.

Owners and managers of the food service and hotel industries can also benefit from this study. The difference in perceptions between occupation levels may be an issue of training. It is possible that owners and managers do not know the affect resident contact employee perceptions have on customers' satisfaction or intention to return. This study acknowledges that not only is there a difference across occupation levels, but industries as well. Employees may be trained to increase awareness and value of city attributes so that they may pass them on to tourists in a positive manner. Furthermore, food service organizations may investigate lodging organizations to identify differences in training or company culture that may be a factor in common city attributes. These differences may not only be what drives tourists to return to their business, but to the city as well.

Indianapolis is continuously positioning itself to be successful as a tourism destination for conferences and events. While DMOs work to promote the city, it is difficult to assess if the city is delivering the product that it markets. Promotion developments and facility changes may seem to evolve slowly, but the perceptions of people about a destination is arguably slower. Working to change resident contact employees' perceptions of city attributes, whether it be facilitated professionaly or experientially, may assist Indianapolis, its DMOs and businesses in creating future business and gaining a competitive tourism advantage.

<u>Recommendations</u>

The following recommendations for future research concerning resident contact employees' perceptions of common city attributes are made based on the findings:

1. Additional research should be completed with results based on different populations. Findings may vary based on geographical location, destination size and employment policies.

2. Research conducted in this manner should include a larger variety of resident contact employees. Their perceptions may be better assessed by including tour guides, attraction employees, transportations employees and others. Each destination should complete analyses to determine the best population to sample from based on their tourists' behaviors.

3. Replication is required for validity of the research. Varying populations and items based on location could increase reliability and validity of this study and those similar to it.

4. Further research, qualitative and quantitative, should be conducted to conceptualize and measure the effects of resident contact employees on tourists' destination image, satisfaction and intent to return. This study attempted to utilize a portion of destination image theory from a tourist perspective. Research that increases the understanding of resident contact employees' image construct may help in assessing how it is passed on to tourists.

5. Further study is needed to determine the impact that resident contact employees have on tourists' destination image, satisfaction and intent to return. Inclusion of interaction with residents and the direction of their results vary tremendously. More consistent assessment may bring to light the level of significance resident contact employees have on destination image, satisfaction and intent to return.

6. Research and practice must be combined in order to understand, develop and use theories. This gap must be closed in order for studies such as this to be applicable.

Appendix A

INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

To: JINMOO HEO
              TOURISM,CONVT AND EVENT MGMT

From: IU Human Subjects Office
              Office of Research Administration – Indiana University

Date: November 14, 2012

RE: **EXEMPTION GRANTED**

              Protocol Title: Indianapolis: Destination Image and Resident/Employee Perceptions

              Protocol #:   1211010021

              Funding Agency/Sponsor: None

              IRB: IRB-01, IRB00000220

Your study named above was accepted on November 14, 2012 as meeting the criteria of exempt research as described in the Federal regulations at 45 CFR 46.101(b), paragraph(s) (2) . This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals that may be required.

As the principal investigator (or faculty sponsor in the case of a student protocol) of this study, you assume the following responsibilities:

Amendments: Any proposed changes to the research study must be reported to the IRB prior to implementation. To request approval, please complete an Amendment form and submit it, along with any revised study documents, to irb@iu.edu. Only after approval has been granted by the IRB can these changes be implemented.

Completion: Although a continuing review is not required for an exempt study, you are required to notify the IRB when this project is completed. In some cases, you will receive a request for current project status from our office. If we are unsuccessful at in our attempts to confirm the status of the project, we will consider the project closed. It is your responsibility to inform us of any address changes to ensure our records are kept current.

Per federal regulations, there is no requirement for the use of an informed consent document or study information sheet for exempt research, although one may be used if it is felt to be appropriate for the research being conducted. As such, these documents are returned without an IRB-approval stamp. Please note that if your submission included an informed consent statement or a study information sheet, the IRB requires the investigational team to use these documents.

You should retain a copy of this letter and any associated approved study documents for your records. Please refer to the project title and number in future correspondence with our office. Additional information is available on our website at http://researchadmin.iu.edu/HumanSubjects/index.html.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at the below address. Thank you.

Appendix B

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

IRB STUDY #1211010021

INDIANA UNIVERSITY STUDY INFORMATION SHEET FOR

Indianapolis: Destination Image and Resident/Employee Perceptions

You are invited to participate in a research study about destination image perceptions. You were selected as a possible subject because you are an Indianapolis resident, employee of a restaurant or lodging facility and 18 years or older. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

The study is being conducted by Dr. Jinmoo Heo and Jordan McBride from the IUPUI School of Physical Education and Tourism Management. The study is an unfunded.

STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to investigate the similarities and differences among residents of Indianapolis that are employed at different levels of restaurants and lodging facilities.

PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:

If you agree to be in the study you will:

- Complete a paper survey that will last approximately 5 minutes. The survey questions will ask your opinion on aspects of Indiana as a destination. Demographic data such as age, gender, occupation, household income, education level will also be obtained. Participation in the study is anonymous and voluntary

CONFIDENTIALITY

Efforts will be made to keep your personal information and databases in which results may be stored confidential. We cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. Your identity will be held in confidence in reports in which the study may be published

Organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis include groups such as the study investigator and his/her research associates, the Indiana University Institutional Review Board or its designees, the study sponsor, Dr. Jinmoo Heo, and (as allowed by law) state or federal agencies, specifically the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) etc., who may need to access your research records.

PAYMENT

You will not receive payment for taking part in this study.

CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

For questions about the study, contact Dr. Jinmoo Heo at 317-XXX-XXXX or
xxxx@iupui.edu

For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints
or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information, or offer input, contact the IU
Human Subjects Office at 317-2783458 or 800-6962949.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the
study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to
which you are entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not
affect your current or future relations with Indiana University Purdue University
Indianapolis.

Appendix C

THESIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Indianapolis: Destination Image and Resident/Employee Perceptions

A student from the Department of Tourism, Conventions and Event Management, is conducting a survey about the destination image of Indianapolis. You must be employed at a restaurant or lodging facility in one of the six cultural Indianapolis districts, and 18 or older to participate in the study. Your name is not required, and only group results will be reported. The survey will take about 5 minutes to complete. Thank you for your time and the valuable information. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Jinmoo Heo at 317.XXX.XXX or xxx@iupui.edu.

Part 1 - I would like to know what you think about Indianapolis as a destination. For each statement, please mark only one box to represent your appropriate response: SA – Strongly Agree; A – Agree; N – Neither Agree nor Disagree; D – Disagree; SD – Strongly Disagree.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Indianapolis has a large variety of attractions to visit.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Local transportation in Indianapolis is not convenient.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. There are numerous sports activities to engage in within Indianapolis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Overall, Indianapolis is not an expensive city to experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Indianapolis residents are friendly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Overall, restaurants in Indianapolis are not good quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Various historical attractions and museums exist in Indianapolis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Indianapolis does not have impressive scenery.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Many festivals and celebrations occur in Indianapolis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Few opportunities exist to see authentic Indianapolis lifestyle.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. There are many good quality hotels in Indianapolis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Indianapolis is not a safe city.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Indianapolis has many adventurous activities (cycling, kayaking, climbing, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. Indianapolis has many adventurous activities (cycling, kayaking, climbing, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Indianapolis is a crowded city.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. Great shopping exists in Indianapolis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Indianapolis is a dirty city.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. There is much beautiful architecture in Indianapolis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. Indianapolis does not have an event friendly climate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. There are many sports attractions and events in Indianapolis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. There is not a good selection of nightlife and entertainment in Indianapolis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. Indianapolis attractions are well-known outside the city.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. There are not many places to have educational or learning experiences in Indianapolis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Indianapolis has unique attractions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. The only things to do in Indianapolis are go to the Indianapolis 500, go to an Indianapolis Colts game, or go to an Indiana Pacers game.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part 2 – Please answer a few questions about yourself. All your responses are confidential and will not be connected to you.

1. What is your gender?   ____ Male   ____Female

2. What is your relationship status? ____Married/Partnered ____Divorced ____ Single ____ Widow

3. What is your age? ____ 18-30 ____ 31-43 ____ 44-56 ____ 57-72 ____ Above 73

4. What is your highest level of education?
   ____ High School   ____ Graduate Degree
   ____ Some College   ____ Ph. D.
   ____ Undergraduate Degree   ____ Other

5. How long have you lived in Indianapolis? If you have moved away and returned, please include past occasions when you lived here.
   ____ Less than 1 year   ____ 4 years to just under 10 years
   ____ 1 year to just under 2 years   ____ 10 years or more
   ____ 2 years to just under 4 years

6. What is your 5-digit zip code?_____

7. Is the position you hold considered a supervisor or manager position?   ____Yes   ____No

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Professional Experience:
4/10 – 9/10│Services Intern│Louisville Conventions and Visitors Bureau (CVB)
        Extensively promoted Louisville as a tourist destination from satellite locations.
        Developed, planned and executed events sponsored by the Louisville CVB.

Conferences Attended:
2013│A Multi-dimensional Analysis of Tourism and Hospitality Undergraduates' Career Perceptions│International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Insititutional Education Summer Conference and Marketplace│Accepted for Presentation

2011│Uncovering the Competitive Discourses of Senior Olympic Games Athletes│American Alliance for Physical Health, Education, Recreation and Dance National Convention and Exposition│Presentation