

SATISFACTION AND IMPORTANCE RATINGS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO
ATTENDED OKTAPITFEST AT TAP IT BREWING CO. IN SAN LUIS OBISPO,
CALIFORNIA

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ABSTRACT

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Special events and festivals, within the past few decades, have become increasingly popular. Now, more than ever, there is a desire and need for new companies to emerge into the industry in order to offer special events and lifelong memories to attendees. On October 9, 2011, Tap It Brewing CO, in San Luis Obispo, California, launched their first annual OkTapItfest event. The purpose of this study was to assess attendee satisfaction and the opinion of importance of event characteristics of the OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing CO. The data collected from this study indicated that the 31 subjects were dissatisfied with the food, music, price of event, check in, and heard about OkTapItfest mainly from tasting at the brewery, or by word of mouth. The conclusion and recommendations were designed to help Tap It Brewing CO. with enough information to assist their planning efforts to improve the future OkTapItfests, or any other type of events held at the brewery.

Keywords: event, festival, satisfaction, motivation, Tap It Brewing CO.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background of Study

Breiter, Miller, Ramsborg, Reed, and Rushing (2008) defined a special event as “a unique group activity produced to celebrate a special occasion, recognize the achievement of goals and successes, or network fellow members or peers” (p. 500).

Clearly, this broad definition covers a wide range of different types of events. The first special events ranged from religious events to sporting events held at facilities like the Roman Coliseum, to the first opera houses and Olympic games. More modern events include sporting events, charitable functions, fundraisers, weddings, and concerts, just to name a few.

In recent years, the number of wine, beer, and food based events and festivals have increased significantly in popularity and attendance. Because of this, Getz has pointed out, “competition among these events and festivals are rapidly increasing” (as cited in Cetinel, Uysal, & Yolal, 1993, p. 278). Since festivals and events have developed into such a complex and competitive industry, special event planners must focus on providing something to attendees that their competitors don't. This may include the most recent trends in entertainment, providing great customer service, catering, or the décor at the event. These various aspects of the event will ultimately set them apart from competitors in the same industry. The popularity of events and festivals featuring food, wine, or beer is increasing rapidly. In order to provide the best service to customers, new restaurants, wineries and breweries should consider event and festival attendance as part

of their operations and promotions strategy. New businesses can benefit from the combination of strong networking opportunities and ‘best practice’ knowledge gained by participating in these industry events.

Event planners understand the importance of keeping up with new trends related to festivals and events. It takes much more time and investment, in terms of both budget and staff, to plan these events than ever before. According to Formadi and Mayer (2009), “there has been a large increase for the need of personnel that are qualified to create, organize, coordinate and manage events” (pp. 120-121). Since the demand for events and festivals is increasing, the need to create a great event is crucial for a company to differentiate its services to the consumer. Formadi and Mayer argue that because the popularity of events and festivals has increased in recent years, a demand for professional planning and management is required to meet these rapidly growing needs in the event industry.

One example of a new company that has fully engaged themselves in coordinating and participating in special events is Tap It Brewing CO. in San Luis Obispo, CA. Tap It Brewing CO. was established in January 2011. They started off as a family owned natural dog food company and enjoyed making beer as a hobby. When they realized that everyone who tasted their beer loved it, they decided to switch business directions and turn the dog food warehouse into a brewery. Tap It Brewing CO. immediately immersed the brand in the local community by attending special events across the Central Coast and by participating in and hosting local events in San Luis Obispo. Despite being a brand new brewery, Tap It Brewing CO. has become popular among many locals within its first year of business. As a result, this local community group comprises most of the

consumer base and market for advertising efforts for Tap It Brewing. However, as the brewery grows, the market will as well.

One event Tap It Brewing CO. has invested a lot of time and effort planning is the annual OkTapItFest in San Luis Obispo, CA. The brewery hosted almost 200 people in the tasting room and backyard area at the inaugural event. An evaluation of attendee satisfaction with the OkTapItfest will help the brewery improve future events and expand the brewery. As Ivanovic, Galicic, and Mikinac (2010) pointed out, “without centrally aimed ideas it would be tough to control the outcome of a particular goal or desire for an event” (p. 930).

Tap It Brewing CO. will benefit from this study by taking into account the feedback found from answered questionnaires. By listening to the motivations of attendees and what they liked, didn't like, or would change in the future, Tap It Brewing can improve the overall satisfaction of attendees.

Review of Literature

Research for this review of literature was conducted at Robert E. Kennedy Library on the campus of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. In addition to books and other resources, the following online database was utilized: Hospitality and Tourism Complete and Academic Elite. This review of literature is organized into the following topic areas: the planning process of events and festivals and attendee satisfaction at events and festivals.

The planning process of events and festivals. There are many reasons why an individual may choose to attend an event or festival. Some of those reasons can be

influenced by the effectiveness of the planning process of the company putting on the event and the motivation of the attendees. An event or festival always starts with some form of motivation. Motivation for guests to attend is a critical aspect in the overall success of that event or festival. Middleton (1994) defines motivation as “the internal, psychological influences affecting individuals’ choices” (as cited in Cetinel, Uysal, & Yolal, 2009, p. 278).

The success of an event relies greatly on careful planning efforts by an integrated event team across management, catering and event planners (“30 tips,” 2010). Throughout this process, planners must take time to organize and finalize all aspects of the event as well as consider the motivations of the attendees. Although reviewing the motivations to attend an event should be a large part of the planning process, this step is often overlooked. According to Cetinel, Uysal, and Yolal (2009), planners must focus on the motivations of attendees as well as the planning process that goes into these events. By understanding the motivation for attending an event, planners can tailor the event to the participant’s needs. Furthermore, people want to participate in an event that’s tailored to their desires and needs. As Delamere and Hinch claimed, people will put aside their lives for sometime if it means to submerge in a celebration, such as an event or festival, which will give meaning to their life (as cited in Culha & Gokce, 1994). This is why the motives of guests attending an event should be reviewed throughout the planning process of the event. As reported by Ivanovic, Galicic, and Mikinac (2010), ultimately, the amount of time and effort it went into establishing the plans of an event, will determine much of the outcome of a particular event. By taking the time to plan an event that is

directly related to the desires of attendees, a special event planner can secure attendance at that event for years to come.

The key to designing a great event or festival is to cater to the main motivations of attendees. The ability to acknowledge and identify the motivations enables planners to market an event correctly. As Lee and Lee pointed out, targeting the motivations of the visitors allow the planners to enhance the overall satisfaction of the experience at the event (as cited in McElroy, Van Winkle, & Woosnam, 2009, p. 501). This way, planners are able to market effectively as well as offer a great event that attendees will want to return to. In addition, attendees will notice the dedication that went into assessing their needs and desires. Knowing the motivation of attendees for an event also makes the decision-making that goes into the event a lot easier. By being aware of these motivations, planners can develop their goals and objectives throughout the planning process. Cetinel, Uysal, and Yolal (2009) noted, planners can focus on the most important aspects of the event such as; “increasing the level of enjoyment, expanding the time visitors will stay at the event, and much more” (p. 278). As many planners know, these intangible factors are crucial to an events’ success. By figuring out these motives early on, planners can identify and understand the attendees’ decision process.

Annual events and festivals are faced with challenging decisions to make changes in order to improve the event. Planners must constantly refresh the event or festival they put on. Pine and Gilmore explained that changing particular parts of the event provides a new experience each time to the same event, and makes the event desirable by attendees all over again (as cited in Patterson & Pegg, 2010). By doing this, planners are proving their responsibility to attendees by trying to better and improve the event. Since new

trends and ideas are constantly emerging in the event and festival industry, it is critical for the host to conduct annual evaluations on the event. As Kandampully and Solnet argued, by listening to the requests from attendees, events and festivals are able to differentiate themselves from other competitors in the market and as a result, can have a better customer-focused event (as cited in Patterson & Pegg, 2010). One way to show loyalty to guests at an event is by listening and understanding their motives for attending the event in the first place. As Cetinel, Uysal, and Yolal pointed out, “motives occur before the experience, and satisfaction follows it” (p. 278).

Attendee satisfaction at events and festivals. Equally important to listening to the motivations for a guest to attend an event or festival is ensuring satisfaction through the event itself. As Axelsen (2007) pointed out, for any motivation to occur during and/or after an event, the event itself must be worthwhile for the attendee. For it to be worthwhile, the event or festival must leave the attendee with a fond, memorable experience. In turn, this leads to satisfaction. Because of this, it is crucial that the management and planning committees understand the importance of creating a wonderful experience.

Getz and Jago (1997) explained that a special event provides the guests with the opportunity to escape from the daily routines of life, regardless of the duration of the event (as cited in Hede, Jago, & Deery, 2004, p. 36). As Getz and Jago further explained, the importance of providing guests with an opportunity for leisure, social, and cultural experiences beyond everyday routines, is something that is greatly valued. The ability to create an experience through a special event or festival is one that is deeply valued by attendees. According to Alonzo (2006), creating a great experience is imperative since

the purpose of the event for attendees is the experience itself. Creating an experience within an event or festival is difficult. Price (2011a) suggested “create a signature move that leaves a powerful impression on attendees and guests” (p. 36). Creating a signature move, such as superb customer service, will help attendees differentiate from other competitors in the same field of event or festival. According to Ellis and Rossman (2008) when planned correctly, “experiences can provide participants with treasured memories for a lifetime” (p. 4). Griffiths took a different approach by stating that it’s the quality of these experiences that make them so memorable” (as cited in Webber, 2011, p. 15).

There are many ways to ensure attendee satisfaction. One of the easiest approaches includes making the guest feel important and valued. As Price (2011b) noted, the “easiest way to add value is to meet one of the greatest needs of all human beings, the need to feel important” (p. 56). To show this, Price (2011b) also suggested that, “they need to feel important by being welcomed, informed, cared for, unconditionally served, and valued for choosing your business to spend their free time” (p. 56). Price (2011b) suggests a few ways to express this value to attendees and customers: “personalizing the experience; engaging guests with each and every visit, yields memorable moments” (p. 56). Engaging in these simple moves can seem obvious; however, planners often don’t take the importance of these very simple tasks into account.

In order to compete in the special events industry, there are many different organizations whose sole purpose is to provide an experience for guests. As Ellis noted, these different organizations include: private businesses, government agencies, and non-profits (as cited in Ellis, 2008, p. 3). The scale of the industry is not surprising because the result of satisfied customers at an event could result in increased profit or behavior

change to support the organizations' cause. For special events, the bottom line is not only about the numbers and profit, but more so the relationship developed with attendees. As Upbin (2011) noted, "the impact of customer service has been amplified significantly in today's event industry" (p. 344). As a result, it is crucial for organizations to keep up with trends and provide excellent customer service. Cronin and Taylor (1992) agreed that customer satisfaction is critical for building a positive reputation and word of mouth among attendees, in addition to the potential repeat attendees for upcoming events (as cited in Hede, p. 39). By providing superb customer service to guests for an event or festival can be one simple way to ensure satisfaction.

Summary The planning process of events and festivals, as well as attendee satisfaction at events and festivals are closely related. Without taking the time to carefully strategize the important aspects of the planning process, the satisfaction of attendees is at risk. However, if planners evaluate, listen, and implement the motivations, needs, and wants of the attendees, the likelihood of guests being satisfied with the event or festival is a lot greater.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess attendee satisfaction and the opinion of importance of event characteristics of the 2011 OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing CO, in San Luis Obispo, California.

Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. Were attendees satisfied with the OkTapItfest event?
2. What can be improved at the OkTapItfest event for future years?
3. What aspects of the event were attendees dissatisfied with?

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the following parameters:

1. Information about attendee satisfaction was gathered from attendees of OkTapItFest event at Tap It Brewing CO. in San Luis Obispo, CA.
2. The satisfaction of the attendees at the OkTapItFest event was analyzed.
3. The data was collected during the winter 2012.
4. Information for this study was gathered using a self-administered questionnaire.

Limitations

This study was limited by the following factors:

1. The process of conducting the questionnaire was significantly after the event took place.
2. The instrument was not tested for validity or reliability.
3. People are able to easily delete or ignore the survey since it was sent through email.

Assumptions

This study was based on the following assumptions:

1. It was assumed that the survey wouldn't go straight into a Junk inbox through email.
2. It was assumed that the participants answered honestly and to the best of their ability.
3. It was assumed that the person taking the survey did go to the event.
4. It was assumed that the Internet survey is accurate and accessible to process for people who intend to take the survey.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in this study:

Attendee. anyone who attends OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing CO.

Motivation. Middleton (1994) defines motivation as, "the internal, psychological influences affecting individuals' choices" (as cited in Cetinel, Uysal, and Yolal, 2009, p. 278).

OkTapItfest. An annual event at Tap It Brewing CO. that is a replicate of the original Oktoberfest in Munich Germany, providing games and Tap It Brewing beer, as well as selected German beer to attendees.

Satisfaction. fulfilling a want or need

Special event. a unique group activity produced to celebrate a special occasion, recognize the achievement of goals or successes, or network with fellow members or peers (as cited in Breiter, Miller, Ramsborg, Reed, and Rushing, 2008, p. 500).

Chapter 2

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to assess attendee satisfaction and the opinion of importance of event characteristics of the 2011 OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing CO, in San Luis Obispo, California. This chapter on methods and procedures is organized into the following sections: description of subjects, description of instrument, description of procedures, and method of data analysis.

Description of Subjects

The subjects of this study were the attendees at the OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing CO, in San Luis Obispo, California. The event hosted 200 attendees. A sample size of 100 attendees was selected. Attendees were determined based on the fact that they were present at OkTapItfest and 21 years old or older. Subjects were selected using convenience sampling.

Description of Instrument

The primary researcher created this instrument for Tap It Brewing CO. The instructions at the top of the questionnaire clearly indicate that it is voluntary and anonymous. It also states that the information gathered from the questionnaires were for Tap It Brewing CO. staff only. The instrument for this study was a one page online questionnaire, designed to measure satisfaction and motivation of attending OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing, CO, in San Luis Obispo, California. The online website used for this

questionnaire was Constant Contact.com. This program is used by Tap It Brewing CO. to reach out to people on the mailing list.

This instrument had eight questions. There were four questions relating to OkTapItfest and two questions relating to Tap It Brewing. Finally, there were two demographic questions. Question one was general in nature, asking how the respondent had heard about OkTapItfest. Question two asked if the respondent had ever attended an event hosted by Tap It Brewing CO. Question three asked if the respondent had ever visited the tasting room prior to this event. Question four addressed the importance and satisfaction of different aspects of the event including; event location, check in at door, price of event, customer service, variety of beer, activities offered, music, and food. Question five asked for the respondents to elaborate and explain what, if anything, they were unsatisfied with from question four. Questions six and seven asked for demographic details relating to gender and age. The final question, question eight, was an open-ended question where respondents could leave additional comments regarding the OkTapItfest event, or suggestions for future events.

A final draft of the instrument was pilot tested by eight individuals that the researcher knew who attended the event. This pilot test was conducted on a paper questionnaire with the same questions from the final online version. In addition, no modifications were made from the pilot paper instrument to the online questionnaire. The pilot test determined that the instrument would collect data on the attendee's satisfaction and importance for different aspects of the OkTapItfest event. The instrument and procedures for implementation were submitted and approved by Cal Poly's Human Subjects. A copy of the instrument can be found in Appendix A. A copy of the Informed

Consent Letter can be found in Appendix B.

Description of Procedures

Contact was made with Tap It Brewing CO's Events Coordinator, Lauren Friedman, for Tap It Brewing CO. on September 23, 2011 in order to obtain permission to conduct this study. After email correspondence regarding the details and questions to be asked in the questionnaire, the questionnaire was created and approved by the Human Subjects Committee on November 28, 2011. It was then approved and finalized by Tap It Brewing CO. on November 30, 2011.

At the first annual OkTapItfest event held on October 9th 2011, the researcher collected email addresses of individuals registering for the event. Using a convenience sampling strategy, the sample size asked was 100 out of entire population of 200 attendees. The 100 individuals provided their email address and were asked to participate in this study. No information regarding the survey was given to the attendees who provided their email during the event.

On January 3rd 2012, the questionnaires were sent via email to the attendees that provided their email address at the OkTapItfest event. The questionnaire was conducted through the online survey website Constant Contact. Giving the recipients two weeks to respond to the questionnaire, it was finally closed on January 15, 2012. Once a sample of 31 questionnaires were collected, all data was entered into a Microsoft Excel database spreadsheet. Data was evaluated and analyzed according to each question on the questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

Once the online questionnaire was closed on January 15, 2012, the responses were collected and entered into Microsoft Excel to begin analysis of the data. All of the questions on the questionnaire were created in order to help answer all four of the research questions.

The first research question sought to determine whether attendees were satisfied with the top eight areas of the OkTapItfest event. Question four of the questionnaire helps to answer this research question. This question analyzed the importance and satisfaction with the event location, check in at door, price of event, customer service, variety of beer, activities offered, music, and food. To fully analyze the data gathered from this item on the questionnaire, the researcher utilized an importance/satisfaction chart. For each of these areas of the event, satisfaction and importance were calculated and graphed according to importance (x) and satisfaction (y). The overall mean of importance and satisfaction were calculated in order to determine the position of the x and y-axis. The upper right quadrant, "maintain performance," represented items that were very important and that attendees were very satisfied with. The lower right quadrant, "possible overkill," represented items that were somewhat important and with which attendees were very satisfied. The lower left quadrant, "not important," represented items that were somewhat important and with which attendees were not satisfied. The upper left quadrant, "focus here," represented items that were very important and with which attendees were not satisfied. Question one was tabulated on a scale of 1 to 4 where any mean score over a 2.9 signified the attendees' importance level. Any score under 2.9 was deemed not important, whereas any score above is considered important. On the same rating scale,

any mean score over 2.7 signified the attendees' satisfaction level with the event segments. Any score under 2.7 was deemed as dissatisfactory, whereas anything above is considered satisfactory.

Research question number three is also answered through questionnaire number four. Question four shows Tap It Brewing CO. both what attendees were satisfied with, and also what they were dissatisfied with.

The second research question sought to determine what Tap It Brewing CO. could do in future to improve OkTapItfest and future events they host. Question five and eight on the questionnaire answer this research question. Respondents were asked why they were unsatisfied with the different areas of the event, including event location, check in, price of event, customer service, variety of beer, activities offered, music, and food. Respondents were then asked to leave comments to help improve future events. Both of these questions on the questionnaire were opened-ended questions. To measure questions five and eight, data collected was put into categories and then evaluated according to the frequency and percentage.

Question one on the questionnaire answers research question number four. Attendees were asked to report how they heard about the OkTapItfest event; radio, flyer/poster, Tap It's facebook page, Internet, tasting at the brewery, at an event Tap It Brewing CO. poured at, or word of mouth. Last were the demographic questions. These questions answer research question number five. Both of these research questions, four and five, were measured by frequency and percentage, correlations, and analysis of variances.

Lastly, questions two and three on the questionnaire were not for the purpose of this study, but rather for Tap It Brewing CO. The organizational interest was in whether there was a relation to the people that have been to the brewery and their awareness of Tap It, and coming to the event.

Chapter 3

PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to assess attendee satisfaction and the opinion of importance of event characteristics of the 2011 OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing CO, in San Luis Obispo, California. The data were collected utilizing the online questionnaire website of Constant Contact.com. The data were collected when the questionnaire was sent out through email on January 3rd, closing on January 15, 2012. From the population of approximately 200 guests at the OkTapItfest on October 9, 2012, a sample of 31 respondents completed questionnaires which were collected and analyzed.

Subject Demographics

Of the 100 clients contacted to participate in this study, 31 individuals completed the questionnaire and (n = 17, 55%) were male, and (n = 14, 45%) were female.

As shown in Table 1, a large percentage of participants didn't indicate their age (n = 18, 58.06%). The largest reported age group, 31-35, made up 9.67% (n = 3) of the responses. The lowest age groups were 26-30, 36-40, 41-45, and 46-50, all with 3.22% (n = 1). See age groups below in Table 1.

Table 1
Subjects by Age According to Mean and Percentage

Age	<i>f</i>	%
No answer	18	58.06
31-35	3	9.67
21-25	2	6.45
51-55	2	6.45
56-60	2	6.45
26-30	1	3.22
36-40	1	3.22
41-45	1	3.22
46-50	1	3.22

Note. Due to rounding of numbers, percentages may not equal 100%.

Top Three Areas of Importance and Satisfaction

The top three areas of satisfaction and importance on a one to four scale, with four being the highest, were location (Satisfaction Mean [SM] = 3.1, Importance Mean [IM] = 3.0), variety of beer (SM = 2.8, IM = 3.1), and customer service (SM = 2.7, IM = 3.2). The areas that need to be focused on the most were food (SM = 2.2, IM = 3.1), music (SM = 2.2, IM 3.1), price of event (SM = 2.6, IM = 3.0), and check in (SM = 2.6, IM = 3.1). Activities (SM = 2.0, IM = 2.9) offered were shown as the least important and possible overkill. For a presentation of the data in the form of an importance/performance chart, see Figure 1. For the presentation of data broken down by area according to mean score of importance and satisfaction, see Table 2.

Figure 1. Importance/Performance Chart According to Mean Scores of Importance and Satisfaction



Table 2
Areas of Importance and Satisfaction According to Mean Scores

Areas	Satisfaction Mean	Importance Mean
Location	3.1	3.0
Variety of beer	2.8	3.1
Customer service	2.7	3.2
Check in	2.6	3.1
Price of event	2.6	3.0
Music	2.2	3.1
Food	2.2	3.1
Activities offered	2.0	2.9

Areas of Improvement to Increase Attendee Satisfaction

In order to increase attendee satisfaction for future years, the dissatisfaction areas of importance and satisfaction was analyzed. Nearly half of the attendees were satisfied with the event, or did not leave a comment (n = 13, 41.93%). Other attendees indicated that they were unsatisfied with the activities and games offered (n = 5, 16.12%), and the music not being authentic (n = 5, 16.12%). The remaining comments were related to prices, check in, or food. For presentation of data based on dissatisfaction, see table 3.

Table 3

Areas of Dissatisfaction According to Frequency and Percentage

Item	<i>f</i>	%
No comment	13	41.93
Activities/Games	5	16.12
Not authentic music	5	16.12
Consider lowering price of event	3	9.67
Disorganized check-in	3	9.67
Consider lowering price of beer	1	3.22
Bad food	1	3.22

Note. Due to rounding of numbers, percentages may not equal 100%.

The second area of improvement was analyzed from the comments and suggestions for future reference for Tap It Brewing CO. events. The majority of the attendees did not leave any additional comments (n = 17, 54.83%). However, 8 (25.80%) attendees that left a comment that mentioned that they loved the event. In addition, others added that they enjoyed the band (n = 1, 3.22%), will come next year (n = 1, 3.22%), and loved the Tap It mug (n = 1, 3.22%). Other suggestions included working on organization

(n = 2, 6.45%), and earlier start time (n = 1, 3.22%). For a list of the responses, see Table 4.

Table 4
Comments and Suggestions for Future Events for Tap It Brewing CO. According to Frequency and Percentage

Comments/Suggestions	<i>f</i>	%
No Comment	17	54.83
Loved the event	8	25.80
Work on organization	2	6.45
Earlier start time	1	3.22
Enjoyed the band	1	3.22
Will come next year	1	3.22
Loved the Tap It mug	1	3.22

Note. Due to rounding of numbers, percentages may not equal 100%.

Marketing Methods

Frequencies and percentages were also used to measure how attendees found out about OkTapItfest. The top two ways in which attendees found out about OkTapItfest was by word of mouth (n = 7, 22.58%) and tasting at the brewery (n = 7, 22.58%). For a more complete list of marketing methods, see Table 5.

Table 5
Top Marketing Methods According to Frequencies and Percentages

Marketing Method	<i>f</i>	%
Word of mouth	7	22.58
Tasting at the brewery	7	22.58
At an event we poured at	5	16.12
Radio	4	12.90
Tap It's Facebook Page	4	12.90
Internet	4	12.90
Flyer/Posters	0	0.00
Other	0	0.00

Note. Due to rounding of numbers, percentages may not equal 100%.

Summary

The results presented in this chapter indicate that almost an even amount of male (n = 17) and female (n = 14) participated in the questionnaire. Most of these individuals chose to not to indicate their age, however, the largest reported age group was 31-35.

The results show that the attendees were dissatisfied with food, music, check in, and price of the event, and were satisfied with the location, variety of beer, and the customer service provided. The attendees either were satisfied with the event, or did not leave a comment or suggestion for changes for future events. The majority of the attendees also didn't provide any comments or suggestions in general. However, 25.8% (n = 8) mentioned that they loved the event. Lastly, the results of this study also examined how attendees heard about OkTapItfest. The majority 22.58% (n = 8) heard from either tasting at the brewery, or word of mouth.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study analyzed the importance of the satisfaction and motivational factors that go into planning an event as well as assisting Tap It Brewing CO. make improvements on specific event segments of OkTapItfest or any future events held at the brewery. This concluding chapter will include the following: summary of the study, a discussion of the findings including limitations, conclusions based on research questions, and recommendations for Tap It Brewing CO. and future research.

Summary

Due to the booming industry of special events, companies are forced to face the challenge of providing their services to consumers through events. In order for companies to successfully pull off an event, they must know, understand, and target the motivations of the individuals that come to that event in the first place. Next, companies must learn to consider these motivations in the planning process of the event with the purpose of satisfying the attendees through their needs and desires. Tap It Brewing CO. in San Luis Obispo, California faced the challenge of launching their first annual event, OkTapItfest, on October 9, 2011. This study examined the satisfaction and opinion of importance of event characteristics of the 2011 OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing CO, in San Luis Obispo, California.

To help Tap It Brewing CO. effectively plan, and operate their events, an assessment of attendee satisfaction and motivation for attending the OkTapItfest at Tap It

Brewing CO. was conducted. On January 3rd 2012, emails were sent out to the sample size to take the online questionnaire on Constant Contact.com. The attendees of OkTapItfest had to rely heavily on long-term memory of the event, as well as assuming internet access. Once the questionnaire was closed, the data was tabulated and analyzed on the top three areas of importance and satisfaction, areas of dissatisfaction, as well as the top marketing methods.

The raw data revealed that there was a small response from the attendees asked to participate in the study, 31 out of 100 individuals. The data showed that not one age group dominated significantly over any other age group. As was the same with sex, which had a balanced representation of both genders. Attendees were generally dissatisfied with the food, music, price of event, and check in. The majority heard about OkTapItfest mainly from tasting at the brewery, or by word of mouth. Room for improvement included, the food choices, music, price of the event, and check in. In addition, attendees also identified areas they were dissatisfied with including suggestions on activities and games. Overall, the subjects varied in sex and age, heard about the OkTapItfest from tasting at the brewery or by word of mouth, and expressed the need for change in various aspects of the event.

Discussion

Tap It Brewing CO. in San Luis Obispo, California, opened its' doors to the public in January of 2011. Located in the competitive microbrewery area of the Central Coast, Tap It Brewing CO. developed their personal branding, marketing, and

promotional strategies early on. Being in competition with many developed events hosted by other breweries, Tap It Brewing CO. decided to create an annual event their first year in business. OkTapItfest, an imitation of the German Oktoberfest, hosted 200 individuals on October 9, 2011, and expectedly, there was much to learn from their first large event. Based on the data collected from this study, event segments that could be improved included, music, food, price of the event, check in, and activities and games. In order to help establish this annual event, Tap It Brewing CO. management staff should take into consideration the information found from this study, including the previous research on the planning process of special events, as well as attendee satisfaction at events and festivals.

Tap It Brewing CO. must take into consideration that the success of an event starts prior to planning to event itself. An evaluation done prior to the event to target the markets' motivations for attending the event in the first place is key. Keeping the motivations in mind throughout the planning process will allow Tap It staff to direct all efforts towards the attendees and their needs and desires. Previous research, Cetinel, Uysal, and Yolal (2009), pointed out that although reviewing the motivations to attend an event should be a large part of the planning process, this step is often overlooked. This strategy can help Tap It Brewing CO. catch up to the success of local competitors offering similar events by making this approach a priority.

People want to be a part of an event that is targeted towards their desires and needs. By tailoring an event to meet the needs of the attendees, management can further insure the satisfaction of their guests. As previously researched, Griffiths pointed out that "it's the quality of the experiences that make the event so memorable for the attendees"

(as cited in Weber, 2011, p. 15). Ultimately, taking these steps before and during the planning process of the event could greatly assist Tap It management staff in enhancing satisfaction for all of their guests and thus, assure annual attendance by those guests.

After the data were collected, it was clear that Tap It Brewing CO. markets to a wide variety of age groups along with a fair balance of genders that attended. Luckily, this is not an area that needs to be focused on for future events. According to the data collected from OkTapItfest, the top three areas of importance and satisfaction at the event were the location, variety of beer, and the customer service provided. These areas will provide Tap It with the aspects in which they are doing well at their events. However, the areas that could be improved at the event including the food, music, price of the event, and check in. This information is extremely useful to the management staff of Tap It Brewing because it provides them with clear areas in need of improvement. All of these event segments with low satisfaction ratings can be easily fixed for future events. Perhaps by offering various food options and vendors, mixing up the music by having a band for a portion on the night, then a DJ for the rest of the night, considering lowering the price of the event, and creating a way to effectively check people into the event at a quicker rate.

Although there were areas for improvement to consider, there were also various factors contributing to the limitations within this study to be examined. Due to sending out the questionnaire significantly after the event took place, individuals were required to recall and evaluate various aspects of the event months later. This could have resulted in the reason why many people chose not to fill out the questionnaire in the first place. In addition, this questionnaire relied greatly on people taking the time to complete the questionnaire and not ignoring or deleting it from their inboxes. This could also be a

reason in which the response rate to the questionnaire was so low.

This study was conducted in an effort to assist Tap It Brewing CO. in moving forward in becoming one of the premier breweries on the Central Coast which offer amazing events for fans of their beer. This research will enable Tap It Brewing CO. to evaluate what is important before and during the planning process of events, as well as how to focus on the motivations of attendees in order to confirm attendee satisfaction. Overall, this study has examined the importance of several motivation and satisfaction factors for special events. The knowledge and common themes that have come up throughout this study can contribute to Tap It Brewings' planning efforts for as long as they choose to host OkTapItfest or any other special events.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Attendees of the 2011 OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing in San Luis Obispo, California were most satisfied with the location, variety of beer, and customer service.
2. The aspects of the event that could be improved upon were food, music, price of event, and check in.
3. Some of the attendees identified the areas in which they were dissatisfied with, including, activities and games offered, as well as the music not be authentic.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Continue to have events at the brewery.
2. Maintain the wide variety of beers offered at OkTapItfest or other events.
3. Continue to offer excellent customer service to attendees.
4. Provide a wider variety or different vendors for food offered.
5. Consider having authentic Oktoberfest music played, or by authentic band.
6. Decrease the price of the event.
7. Develop a quick and easy way to check in individuals at the event.
8. Provide frequent and various activities and games so that more guests can get involved.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Questionnaire

Satisfaction at OkTapItFest 2011 at Tap It Brewing, CO.

Thank you for attending OkTapItfest 2011! Tap It Brewing is interested in learning about your experience at the event to help us improve it for next year. Please consider completing the attached questionnaire. It will take approximately five minutes of your time and your responses will be kept anonymous. Thank you for your time!

1. How did you hear about OkTapItfest? *Please check all that apply.*
 Radio Flyers/Posters Tap It's Facebook Page Internet
 Coming to taste at the brewery At an event we poured at Word of mouth
2. Have you been to an event hosted by Tap It before? Yes No
3. Have you visited our tasting room before this event? Yes No
4. For the following questions, please circle your satisfaction and level of importance for each item at the OkTapItfest event, with 1 being lowest, and 4 being highest, and N/A for not applicable:

Importance					Satisfaction					
High	Low			High			Low			
N/A	1	2	3	4	<u>Event Location</u>	N/A	1	2	3	4
N/A	1	2	3	4	<u>Check in at door</u>	N/A	1	2	3	
	4									
N/A	1	2	3	4	<u>Price of Event</u>	N/A	1	2	3	
	4									
N/A	1	2	3	4	<u>Customer Service</u>	N/A	1	2	3	
	4									
N/A	1	2	3	4	<u>Variety of Beer</u>	N/A	1	2	3	4
N/A	1	2	3	4	<u>Activities Offered</u>	N/A	1	2	3	
	4									
N/A	1	2	3	4	<u>Music</u>	N/A	1	2	3	4
N/A	1	2	3	4	<u>Food</u>	N/A	1	2	3	
	4									

5. For any answers that you were unsatisfied with from question #4, why were you unsatisfied?
6. Gender: Male Female
7. Age: _____
8. Please feel free to help us improve future events by leaving any additional comments regarding OkTapItfest in the area provided below.

Thank you so much for your participation in this survey!

Appendix B
Informed Consent Letter

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A SURVEY OF SATISFACTION
AND IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUALS ATTENDING OKTAPITFEST AT TAP IT
BREWING CO. IN SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA.

A research project on the OkTapItfest event at Tap It Brewing, CO. in San Luis Obispo, California, is being conducted by Carrie Nasby in the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism, Administration at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. The purpose of the study is to assess attendee satisfaction and opinion of importance of event characteristics of the OkTapItfest at Tap It Brewing, CO. in San Luis Obispo, California.

You are being asked to take part in this study by completing this online questionnaire. Please read the questions carefully and answer them to the best of your ability. Your participation will take approximately five minutes. Please be aware that you are not required to participate in this research and you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. You may also omit any items on the questionnaire you prefer not to answer.

There are no risks anticipated with participation in this study. Your responses will be provided anonymously to protect your privacy. Potential benefits associated with the study include overall improvements to the OkTapItfest based on feedback received.

If you have questions regarding this study or would like to be informed of the results when the study is completed, please feel free to contact Carrie Nasby at (805) 428-6209. If you have questions or concerns regarding the manner in which the study is conducted, you may contact Dr. Steve Davis, Chair of the Cal Poly Human Subjects Committee, at 756-2754, sdavis@calpoly.edu, or Dr. Susan Opava, Dean of Research and Graduate Programs, at 756-1508, sopava@calpoly.edu.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research project as described, please indicate your agreement by completing this online questionnaire. Please keep one copy of this form for your reference, and thank you for your participation in this research.