AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ORGANIZER-ORIENTED POST-SHOW EVALUATION

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in
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by
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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ORGANIZER-ORIENTED
POST-SHOW EVALUATION

A Thesis
by
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Summer 2010

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ABSTRACT

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ORGANIZER-ORIENTED POST-SHOW EVALUATION

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Master of Arts in Recreation Administration

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Organizers of trade shows need to guarantee the trade shows’ potential to attract a large number of exhibitors and visitors. In order to accomplish this objective, organizers need to obtain more information from the attendees through post-show evaluation in order to evaluate their own performance and guide their future improvement endeavors.

The purpose of this study is to explore in the area of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation by conducting a key informant survey and analyzing an actual post-show evaluation data set. Experienced practitioners from two countries were surveyed to illustrate the demand side of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. An actual organizer-oriented post-show evaluation data set was processed and analyzed to explore the supply side of the evaluation. Scale reliability test, exploratory factor analysis,
multinomial regression analysis, and cross-tabulations were utilized to test how well the post-show evaluation surveys were designed and implemented and what factors were most influential on attendees’ perception of the trade show.

The key informant survey provided valuable information on what type of post-show evaluation the organizers desire and what problems the organizers confront in post-show evaluation. The survey instruments being examined were adequate, after scale reliability test and exploratory factor analysis. Several key variables were identified as the most influential on attendees’ perception of the trade show. Managerial implications are included, along with suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Problem Definition

The trade show business has been in existence since biblical times (Rudick, 2009). Trade shows in ancient times were a primary vehicle to showcase the achievement of a region, reach potential buyers and introduce products and services (Palumbo, 2008). However, during the last century, the trade show business has become much more professional, multifunctional and widespread. The trade show industry has grown from a small market into a multi-billion dollar business. The trade show industry in the U.S. is an example. In 1983, more than 91,000 firms spent $7 billion on exhibiting products and services to more than 31 million prospective buyers at more than 8,000 trade shows (Trade Show Bureau, 1986). Five years later, these numbers increased to 100,000 firms exhibiting at nearly 11,000 shows and spending over $9 billion (Herbig, Palumbo, & O’Hara, 1996). A decade later in 1998, the numbers jumped to 1.5 million companies exhibiting at 4,500 trade shows attended by 102 million people, and companies spent $12.6 billion or 17.3% of their marketing budget on trade shows (Harris, 2000). It was estimated that trade show revenues rose to $2.65 billion in the first six months of 2007 in the U.S. and Canada (Center for Exhibition Industry Research, 2007). The popularity of trade shows is evidenced by the levels of expenditures for them. About 10% of the business marketing communications budgets of U.S. firms and more than 20% of the
budgets of many European firms were allocated to this promotional activity (Sandler, 1994). In recent years, countries in other parts of the world have emerged as new rising forces in the trade show industry. As a region, Asia has made considerable attempts to capitalize on this market with extensive investment in conference and exhibition infrastructure (Weber & Ladkin, 2009). In 2008, the trade show industry of Hong Kong contributed HK$30 billion to the local economy and generated employment for 61,000 full-time employees (Hong Kong Exhibition & Convention Industry Association, 2010).

The advantages of trade shows have been discussed extensively through the years. Average total costs per contact at a show for an exhibiting company (including space rental, construction costs, freight, travel expenses, living expenses, and salaries) have remained consistently one third of the cost of a personal sales call (Trade Show Bureau, 1994). It was estimated by Trade Show Bureau in 1992 that it took an average of 3.7 sales calls to close a deal at $292 per call, versus $185 to close a deal at a trade show followed by 0.8 sales calls to follow after. These figures yield a total cost of $1,080 (3.7 x $292) for sales calls versus $419 ($185+0.8 x $292) for trade shows. Also, promotional messages can be delivered to a large number of target customers through trade shows. Normally, 79 to 90 percent of people present at trade shows have high levels of purchase influence (Rosson & Seringhaus, 1995). Additional advantages of using a trade show include: 1) trade shows can provide the opportunity to affect multiple phases of buying process in one single location; 2) trade shows can create awareness of new products or services, reinforce existing customer relationships, provide product or service demonstrations for evaluation, establish relationships between vendors and prospects, and allow sales of products or services on site; 3) trade shows significantly influence
industrial buying during the need recognition and vendor evaluation stages of the purchase process (Bonoma, 1983; Kerin & Cron, 1987).

Although crucial to the success of any trade show, organizers of such events have been mostly neglected in the literature. More theoretical discussions and empirical studies from the organizer’s perspective are needed. As the initiator and the main propeller of the trade show industry, organizers play an important role in this booming industry. The fast development of the trade show industry allows both exhibitors and visitors to choose from many offers, with a high level of competition among the organizers, who need to consider differentiation strategies by offering a user-oriented service (Berne & García-Uceda, 2008). In order to survive in this competitive environment, organizers need to guarantee a trade show’s potential to attract a large number of exhibitors and visitors (Cox, Sequeira, & Bock, 1986). In order to accomplish this objective, the organizers need to obtain more information from the attendees through post-show evaluation in order to evaluate their own performance and guide their future improvement endeavors. Thus, there is a great demand for studies conducted from the organizer’s perspective to shed some light on how to provide a better platform and attract more exhibitors and visitors to the trade show.

There have been some studies on trade show evaluation. However, no studies have been conducted from the standpoint of trade show organizers. In order to get some general ideas of this unexplored area, the author conducted a key informant survey with experienced practitioners within the trade show field on organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. All of the 25 practitioners from People’s Republic of China and United States stated that there has been post-show evaluation conducted on their trade shows before.
However, the extent to which the post-show evaluation was utilized and applied varied. The kind of post-show evaluations utilized by most of the respondents were simple evaluation surveys serving mostly for marketing purposes, which only gathered demographic information of the visitors and exhibitors. Also, there is a lack of interpretation skills from the organizers. In most cases the methods used in the interpretation process included only content analysis and frequency count. No advanced analysis method was attempted. As Scarborough and Zimmerer (2004, p. 202) pointed out,

> For most business owners, collecting useful information about their customers and potential new products and markets is simply a matter of sorting and organizing data that are already floating around somewhere in their companies. Most companies are data rich and information poor, claims one marketing expert. The key is to mine those data and turn them into useful information that allows the company to court its customers with special products, services, ads, and offers that appeal most to them.

Most of the trade show organizers are facing the similar problems in managing their trade shows. They are data rich and information poor. Due to the lack of an accepted body of knowledge and other theoretical support, some trade show organizers do not know how to utilize their evaluation data. Of the organizers who attempted to utilize the post-show evaluation, they based the evaluation process on their own experience and personal judgment, which often reflects the company’s and the organizer’s own trade show experience. The post-show evaluation in practice is greatly hindered by the lack of academic attention and theoretical support.
Need for the Study

Generally speaking, there are three groups of people involved in a trade show: exhibitors, visitors and organizers. Different groups of people have different evaluation standards of a trade show. The previous literature of trade show evaluation mainly focused on the exhibitors and visitors. Mostly, the previous research focused on how the evaluation could help the exhibitors measure the Return on Investment (ROI) from the trade shows and help the visitors choose the best trade shows that fit their own particular needs. Few studies have touched upon trade show evaluation from an organizer-oriented standpoint. In particular, little time has been spent exploring the demand and supply side of this service. Trade show evaluation is basically a service. The demand side is the trade show organizers who utilize the evaluation and benefit from the analysis of the results. On the other hand, the supply side would be the provider of the survey instrument and the analyzer of survey results. The supply side could either be a third-party evaluation firm or the organizers themselves who conduct the evaluation in-house.

In practice, most evaluations carried out by organizers are more concerned with the demographic information of visitors and exhibitors than with addressing aspects of the trade show that would help organizers provide better platforms. The lack of theory development and empirical study of measurement has made it difficult for organizers to accumulate valuable information on how to improve the next trade show.

In order for organizers to be competitive in the trade show arena, it is essential to identify the specific needs of the organizers in post-show evaluation and develop evaluation criteria that address the important aspects of trade shows and the relative
importance of each criterion. It is also important to develop statistical methods to interpret the evaluation data.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore in the area of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation by conducting a key informant survey and analyzing a post-show evaluation data set. As the literature on organizer-oriented post-show evaluation is still limited, this pilot study intends to lay the groundwork for future research on constructing an evaluation model for post-show evaluation that addresses the practical needs of the organizers in managing their trade shows. The key informant survey intends to obtain the opinions of trade show organizers on post-show evaluation, which could justify the need for post-show evaluation and provide valuable information on what kind evaluation the organizers desire. The following analysis and interpretation of an actual post-show survey focused on the supply side of the post-show evaluation, hoping to examine the quality of the trade show evaluation used in practice and provide suggestions for the construction of future evaluation models. The analyzing and interpretation methods used in this study should provide an example for the organizers on how to make the best use of the evaluation data they have collected. The statistical analysis would point out some key factors in deciding the successful performance of organizers. It also provides recommendations and managerial implications on organizer-oriented post-show evaluation, aiming to help organizers ask the right questions and ask the questions right.

Fifteen valid responses were gathered from experienced trade show practitioners in the People’s Republic of China and United States. Content analysis was
conducted to illustrate what type of post-show evaluation the organizers desire and what problems the organizers confront in post-show evaluation. Two actual post-show surveys were also examined to show how the evaluation performed in practice, what we can learn from the survey and what aspects could be improved. Scale reliability test and factor analysis were utilized to test the soundness of the survey constructs. Frequency analysis, cross-tabulation analysis, and multinomial regression analysis were used to shed some light on what factors are crucial in influencing the exhibitors’ and visitors’ perceptions of the trade show provided by organizers. Recommendations for improvement were suggested in the end.

Scope of the Study

In terms of the time when the evaluation is conducted, trade show evaluation can be divided into pre-show evaluation and post-show evaluation. And there are three parties involved in an industrial trade show: exhibitors, visitors, and organizers. Thus, the combination of the two factors comes up with six categories of evaluation (Table 1).

This study only focused on organizer-oriented post-show evaluation, which emphasizes analysis of the performance of the organizers and the aspects where the organizers could focus to provide a better platform. Since there are two groups in the attendees, visitors and exhibitors, there are two types of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. One is for visitors and the other is for exhibitors. Different groups of attendees require a different approach to get the most accurate and useful feedback.

The organizer-oriented post show evaluation surveys used in the study were provided by Semiconductor Equipment and Materials International, which was best.
Table 1

*Six Categories of Trade Show Evaluation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pre-show</th>
<th>Post-show</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exhibitor-oriented</td>
<td>Evaluate which trade show to exhibit in</td>
<td>Evaluate the activities at the show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor-oriented</td>
<td>Evaluate which trade show to visit</td>
<td>Evaluate the activities at the show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizer-oriented</td>
<td>Evaluate feasibility and the potential profit for a prospective trade show</td>
<td>Evaluate the activities at the show</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

known as SEMI, an international association serving the manufacturing supply chains for the microelectronic, display and photovoltaic industries. Specifically, the data set analyzed in this study is the post-show evaluation of SEMICON West 2009, which is the leading exhibition in the semiconductor industry. The trade show, held in San Francisco from July 14 to July 16, 2009, attracted 683 exhibitors and 17,801 visitors.

Since this study only analyzed one data set from SEMICON West 2009 and the nature of this study is exploratory, the conclusions may not be generalizable to other settings. In addition, the surveys, an exhibitor survey and a visitor survey, conducted by SEMI used self-selected samples rather than probability samples. The respondents were not chosen by probability; participation in the survey was completely voluntary and respondents participated out of their own interests. The response rates for the exhibitor
survey and visitor survey were 13.5% and 3.13% respectively. Cautions should be made in generalizing the results of this study to the non-participating attendees of the trade show. Normally, the voluntary respondents are active attendees who may tend to differ from the rest of the attendees who did not choose to complete the survey. Non-participating attendees may or may not have the same objectives and demonstrate the same levels of satisfaction as those who responded to the post-show evaluation. However, the 557 responses from visitors and 92 responses from exhibitors should provide a general picture of the attendees’ perceptions of the trade show. A future study should collect data from a probability sample and compare the results of a self-selected sample to identify any differences.

**Definitions**

**Exhibitor**

Person or firm that displays its products or services at an event (Convention Industry Council, 2004).

**Exhibitor-oriented Pre-show Evaluation**

An evaluation which is conducted before the trade show and helps exhibitors to decide which show is more suitable to exhibit.

**Exhibitor-oriented Post-show Evaluation**

An evaluation which is conducted after the trade show and helps exhibitors to measure how well they have performed at the trade show.
**Exploratory Factor Analysis**

A method of uncovering the underlying structure of a relatively large set of variables (Harman, 1967).

**Logit (Logistic Regression) Model**

A method of analyzing the statistical probability of multiple outcomes (Hilbe, 2009).

**Organizer**

A group of people who organize and manage trade shows.

**Organizer-oriented Pre-show Evaluation**

An evaluation which is conducted before a prospective trade show and evaluates feasibility and the potential profit for a prospective trade show.

**Organizer-oriented Post-show Evaluation**

An evaluation which is conducted after the trade show with an emphasis on analyzing the performance of the organizers and identifying areas where organizers should focus in order to provide a better platform.

**Probability Sample**

A sampling method that utilizes some form of random selection (Trochim, 2006).

**Scale Reliability Test**

A measurement that tests the consistency of a set of items that make up a scale.
Self-Selected Sample

Samples which are comprised of people who have put themselves in the sample (Carson, 2010).

Trade Show

An exhibition of products and/or services held for members of a common or related industry. Not open to the public (Convention Industry Council, 2004).

Visitor

Professional buyer participating in a trade show.

Visitor-oriented Pre-show Evaluation

An evaluation which is conducted before the trade show and helps visitors to decide which show is more suitable to attend.

Visitor-oriented Post-show Evaluation

An evaluation which is conducted after the trade show and helps visitors to measure how well they have performed at the trade show.

Limitations of the Study

There are six major limitations to this exploratory study:

1. The organizer-oriented post-show evaluation survey samples used in this study were self-selected samples rather than probability samples. The surveys were completely voluntary, which indicates that the respondents who participated in the survey mainly because of their own interests. The voluntary respondents are active attendees who may tend to differ from the rest of the attendees who did not complete the evaluation.
survey. Non-participating attendees may or may not have the same objectives and demonstrate the same levels of satisfaction as those who completed the evaluation.

2. The post-show evaluation surveys were conducted online. The most questionable aspect of web-based survey data is that there is a chance that a representative sample of the target population does not have the opportunity to respond through the Internet. Internet users tend to be younger and more highly educated than the general U.S. population (Purcell, Rainie, Mitchell, Rosenstiel, & Olmstead, 2010). However, web-based surveys may provide high-quality samples for populations who are likely to frequent the Internet (University of Texas, Austin, 2010). The sample population of the trade show being examined is comprised of people in the semiconductor industry who are likely to be familiar with the technology and frequent the Internet. Thus, the online method of data collection for this survey may have only slightly affected the representativeness of respondents in a negative manner.

3. The key informant survey respondents consisted of trade show practitioners from two countries. The results provided some insights into the current situation in the area of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. However, trade show practitioners from other countries were not included in the study population of key informants. Also, since there were only 15 respondents in the key informant survey and 14 of them were from the People’s Republic of China, their opinions mostly represent the situation in the People’s Republic of China.

4. Since both native and non-native English speakers are included in the key informant survey, survey translation is crucial. The most frequently used translation technique is back-translation (Brislin, 1970). In this procedure, the original version of the
survey questionnaire is translated into the target language and subsequently translated back into the source language by a second bilingual person, which increases the chances that the original meaning has been retained, ensures literal accuracy and helps to detect mistakes. However, in this study, due to the limitation of available resources, the translation was conducted by the author alone.

5. Since this study focused on one particular trade show in one industry, cautions should be made in applying the results and conclusions to other trade shows scenarios.

6. During the analysis process of the organizer-oriented post-show surveys, only quantitative methods were utilized to interpret the exhibitor and visitor survey results. The open-ended questions or the qualitative questions in the surveys were not analyzed.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

To establish the framework for the study, the literature review will cover three critical areas: the exhibitor-oriented trade show evaluation studies, the visitor-oriented trade show evaluation studies, and the organizer-oriented trade show evaluation studies.

Most of the literature on trade show evaluation are from the perspective of the exhibitors. In recent years, there have been a few articles on visitor-oriented trade show evaluation. As trade shows are an encounter between supply and demand, the reasons for exhibitors to attend trade shows should be similar to those of visitors. Thus, most visitor-oriented evaluation literatures base their research on the extensive studies conducted on exhibitor-oriented trade show evaluation (Berne & García-Uceda, 2008). The literature on organizer-oriented post-show evaluation is limited. However, the literature on visitor-oriented and exhibitor-oriented trade show evaluation could both be utilized as theoretical background for organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. As the two main customers of a trade show, the evaluation criteria of the exhibitors and visitors are crucial to organizers, which have to cater to the customers’ needs, try to better accommodate them, and provide a better platform for them. Table 2 exhibits the previous studies on trade show evaluation.
Table 2

*Previous Studies on Trade Show Evaluation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluations</th>
<th>Studies</th>
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<tr>
<td>Visitor-oriented evaluation</td>
<td>Munuera &amp; Ruiz, 1999; Godar &amp; O’Connor, 2001; Blythe, 2002; Berne &amp; García-Uceda, 2008;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizer-oriented evaluation</td>
<td>Knight, 2008</td>
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The Exhibitor-oriented Trade Show Evaluation

Although trade shows play a significant role in the marketing operations of many companies, they have been subjected to relatively little systematic examination (Hansen, 1999). Still, among the paucity of literature on trade show evaluation, most took the exhibitor’s perspective. Also, most of the exhibitor-oriented literature focused on the
post-evaluation process, which means that the studies intend to evaluate the performance of exhibitors during the trade show and try to shed some light on what the exhibitor has spent on and gained from the trade show and whether or not it is worthwhile to attend the same show next year. This is natural given that a great amount of money and human resources the exhibiting companies put in trade shows. There is a need for justification of those allocations of resources; for the exhibiting company expects that trade show participation will yield some positive results, like other business investments.

Among the studies conducted on trade show evaluation from an exhibitor’s perspective, Hansen’s work is one of the most well-organized and comprehensive (Seringhaus & Rosson, 2004). Hansen (1999) claimed that trade show performance has traditionally been evaluated using outcome-based measures, while the behavior-based measures were ignored. Kerin and Cron (1987) pointed out that conventional sales productivity measures were questionable indices of trade show performance for many firms. If the exhibitors’ most important objectives are behavior-based rather than selling-based, sales-related outcome measures are not the most appropriate index.

In behavior-based control systems, qualitative methods, rather than quantitative sales outcomes, are used to evaluate the performance of the exhibitors. In this theoretical study, Hansen (1999) set up a preliminary trade show performance construct, which included one outcome-based dimension and four behavior-based dimensions. The outcome-based dimension was sales-related activities and the four behavior-based dimensions were information-gathering activities, image-building activities, motivation activities, and relationship-building activities.
The information-gathering dimension includes all activities related to the gathering of information about competitors, customers, industry trends, new products. Conducting market research and information gathering has been identified in the trade show literature as a potential exhibitor objective long ago (Kerin & Cron, 1987). Information exchange at trade shows helps exhibitors choose better trading partners, reduce legal and contracting costs, and decide which parts of the business can be outsourced or kept in-house (Hansen, 1999).

The image-building dimension includes all activities related to building corporate image and reputation at the trade show. Barczyk, George, and William (1989) identified three important image-building motives for exhibiting at trade shows. The first was the competitive pressure. Some exhibitors need to exhibit because of their competitors’ participation in the trade show. The second was customer expectations. The customers’ expectation of a company’s participation would urge the company to participate in a trade show. The failure to do so might be interpreted by existing or potential customers as a sign of trouble. The final motive was to create or solidify an image to participants in the market.

The motivation dimension covers activities that are related to maintaining and enhancing the motivation of company employees and customers. In one of the oldest studies conducted on trade show evaluation, Carman (1968) stated that participating in a trade show is a way to build the morale of local sales representatives. Hansen (1999) claimed that enhancing and maintaining the morale of company employees and customers are especially important activities for exhibitors at international trade shows. This is a way for the home office to give the representative an opportunity to travel
overseas as a bonus. There is an industry deriving from this dimension. Incentive tourism is usually undertaken as a type of employee reward by a company or institution for targets met or exceeded, or a job well done (Shinew & Backman, 1995). Incentive tourism is usually conducted purely for entertainment or the combination of entertainment and professional duties, rather than solely professional or educational purposes.

The last dimension identified by Hansen (1999) is relationship-building activities. The conceptual domain of the relationship-building dimension includes all activities related to maintaining and developing relationships with established customers and establishing relationships with new customers. Witt and Rao (1989) stressed the need for research into the value of trade shows in the development of buyer-seller relationships. Many booths at major international trade shows have their own conference rooms and lounges, and drinks and snacks are often served to visitors (Tesar, 1988). This encourages visitors to spend significant amount of time in the booths they visit, thus lengthening interaction times and increasing sales leads.

In a more recent study, Ling-yee Li (2007) extended on this relationship-building topic. The research focused on the relationship learning process at a trade show between exhibitors and visitors. It was proposed that learning can occur between exhibitors and visitors in trade shows. The results of the study pointed to the powerful influence of relationship learning activities on relationship performance outcomes as perceived by exhibitors at trade shows.

The practical application of outcome-based and behavior-based measurements is the measurements of selling activities and non-selling activities. Companies participate
in trade shows with the expectation of some benefit (Sashi & Perretty, 1992). The benefits could include sales, qualified leads, networking, reputation-building and so on. Sales are, in some circumstances, the ultimate objective of an exhibitor at a trade show. However, in most circumstances, qualified leads are more prevalent during the trade show and could be converted into sales through follow-up activity (Seringhaus & Rosson, 2004).

The study conducted by Kerin and Cron (1987) was one of the most frequently cited articles in the trade show evaluation literature. It is a seminal research article which explored the roles of selling and non-selling activities of exhibitors. Kerin and Cron (1987) documented the selling and non-selling roles of trade shows and identified marketing and trade show strategy-related variables that affect performance. The first objective of the study was to identify whether or not trade shows have a selling versus non-selling role. An exploratory factor analysis using varimax rotation revealed that the eight trade show functions represent two underlying dimensions. The two dimensions accounted for 59.1% of the variance in the data and corresponded to the non-selling and selling roles of trade shows.

In order to further explore this area, Kerin and Cron (1987) grouped companies into high and low performance groups based on selling and non-selling achievements, and then examined the extent to which influences affected performance. Four of thirteen predictors proved to be statistically significant: 1) number of products the company provided, 2) number of customers the company attracted, 3) written trade show objectives, and 4) use of vertical trade shows. These are all trade show strategy factors, which exemplify the importance of management actions in producing better performance.
Another milestone in trade show evaluation research is the study conducted by Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995). In their study, Gopalakrishna and Lilien analyzed industrial trade show performance using a three-stage model reflecting the multi-activity nature of exhibiting. The three stages were attraction, contact, and conversion efficiency. Performance indices were calculated to measure company attraction, contact and conversion efficiency. The results showed that performance was enhanced by different factors for each of the stages and company-controlled activities in trade shows are very crucial to exhibitors' overall performance.

It is worth mentioning that Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995) took the nature of information into consideration in their model. It was stated in their study that performance measures can be subjective or objective. Subjective assessments typically use rating scales where a respondent rates some aspect of performance. In other words, subjective assessments require the respondents to rate their performance from their own perspective. However, personal judgment might influence the accuracy of the feedback. More often than not, the respondents tend to overrate their performance ratings. On the other hand, a disappointment on one aspect might lead the respondents to give low ratings to all aspects.

Objective assessments normally measure the number of sales leads or number of visitors at a booth. However, objective assessments are difficult to carry out, for the information on sales leads or number of visitors is often proprietary and not disclosed by the exhibitors.

In the study conducted by Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995), objective assessments were used to evaluate trade show performance. However, the formulas used
to calculate the three stage performance were complicated, making their methods difficult to replicate or apply in practice. The recondite mathematics used in the formulas, the difficulty of acquiring of needed data and a lack of empirical support prevent the organizers from applying the formulas into real situation.

Dekimpe, François, Gopalakrishna, Lilien, and van den Bulte (1997) extended on Gopalakrishna and Lilien’s study (1995) by using an attraction effectiveness index, which was computed as the number of attendees from the target audience who visited the booth to talk or obtain literature, divided by the size of the target audience. The key determinants of performance were found to be pre-show promotion spending, size of booth, number of personnel per square foot, and use of vertical trade shows. This study showed that selling activities and non-selling activities are both important for exhibitors, which requires the organizers to build a separate index for each category. Also, there are several factors which relate to the exhibitor’s appreciation of trade shows, like the exhibitors' marketing strategy, on-site personnel quality, and so on. Organizers should take the attributes of exhibitors into consideration in order to better interpret the results of the evaluations. Tanner (2002) also elaborated on this topic. Tanner compared the activities of successful and unsuccessful exhibitors from small companies. Results indicated very different results between the successful and unsuccessful exhibitors.

Another empirical study conducted by Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1994) was on the influence of previous participation on the appreciation of the trade show for exhibitors. Carryover effect of trade shows was significant and it varied by type of industry. The previous participation experience could be an important factor for organizers to consider when evaluating exhibitors' feedback.
To sum up, although trade shows play a significant role in the marketing operations of many companies, they have been subjected to relatively little systematic research. Still, among the paucity of the literature on trade show evaluation, most took the perspective of the exhibitors. Several sets of dimensions were identified from different aspects in the literature. The dimensions identified by Hansen (1999) were information-gathering activities, image-building activities, motivation activities, and relationship-building activities. Another set of dimensions identified by Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995) include attraction, contact, and conversion efficiency. The specific determinants of performance identified in the study conducted by Dekimpe et al. (1997) were number of products, number of customers, written trade show objectives, and use of vertical trade shows and so on. Several methods evaluating the trade show performance were also introduced. The difference between outcome-based and behavior-based control systems; selling and non-selling activities, objective and subjective assessments were discussed. Traditionally, outcome-based control systems, selling activities and subjective assessments were mostly discussed in academic literature and used in practical settings. However, the literature suggested that behavior-based control system, non-selling activities and objective assessment should be added to traditional trade show evaluation methods.

The Visitor-oriented Trade Show Evaluation

A surprising feature of the literature on trade shows is that limited attention has been paid to visitors to these events (Witt & Rao, 1989). More recently, with the development of trade show industry and the realization of the importance of visitor's
roles, there starts to be more studies on this subject. It is interesting that most visitor-oriented evaluation studies were based on the extensive studies conducted on exhibitor-oriented trade show evaluation (Berne & García-Uceda, 2008). As trade shows are an encounter between supply and demand, the reasons for exhibitors to exhibit at trade shows should be similar to the reasons for visitors to attend trade shows. The empirical findings about exhibitor's attitudes and behavior are therefore a good complement to the little research conducted on the visitors.

The majority of the literature on visitor-oriented trade show evaluation focuses on pre-show evaluation, which helps visitors to decide which show is more suitable to attend. This is different from the studies on exhibitor-oriented trade show evaluation, which mainly focuses on post-show performance evaluation. The reason might be that the visitors do not spend as much money and effort in the trade shows as the exhibitors do. There is less an incentive for them to justify the resources they spend on trade shows. Rather, for visitors, the major motivations behind trade show participation are gathering information about market access, new products, potential suppliers (Munuera & Ruiz, 1999), and alternative purchases (Godar & O'Connor, 2001). What matters most for the visitors is to participate in the right show and meet the right people. Thus, pre-show evaluation and selection process, rather than the post-show performance evaluation, is more important for the visitors. The visitor-oriented pre-show evaluation is mostly about the expected beneficial effects of trade shows for visitors. These benefits can be facilitated by some specific information about the prospective trade shows and the potential interaction between the visitors and the trade show. However, from the perspective of the visitors, there is no guarantee on whether or not visitors
would actually get such benefits in the end. Even if the visitor has previous experience with certain trade shows, this still does not ensure the predictability of the visitor’s performance at the same show next time. The literature on visitor-oriented post-show evaluation is still scarce and yet to be developed.

In a recent study conducted by Berne and García-Uceda (2008), three major criteria were identified as the main determinants of trade show performance to visitors. The three criteria were perception or information about the basic features of trade show, the marketing objectives to be attained by visitors at and after a trade show, and the perceived costs relative to trade show attendance planning and budgeting.

Visitors' perception is important in visitor-oriented pre-show evaluation because the evaluation is conducted before the trade show, which means the potential visitors can not base their judgment on actual experience. Potential visitors need to rely heavily on the information they can obtain concerning the trade shows they are interested in. For potential visitors and exhibitors, which kind of trade show is the most beneficial depends largely on the firm's objectives.

Other important factors influencing visitors’ perception of a trade show include time, location, reputation and quality and quantity of attendance. Kijewski, Yoon, and Younget (1993) confirmed that timing and location of the show was a prime driver of the evaluation and selection decision for exhibitors. Visitors’ time and location preference urge organizers to pay a higher price for organizing a trade show in prime time and in big cities in order to achieve a higher attendance. Reputation, quality, and quantity of the show are also among the main factors that are involved in the visitors’ evaluation and selection decision (Hansen, 2004; Seringhaus & Rosson, 2001).
Marketing is also a very important reason for visitors to participate in a trade show. Traditionally, marketing and selling are considered the most important goals for a company participating in a trade show. However, in the recent years, more goals have been identified and proved to be effective. There is empirical evidence confirming that the professional visitor attends trade shows not only with the aim of making a purchasing decision, but for a variety of reasons (Blythe, 2002). One is the opportunity to network, which involves establishing and maintaining relationships in the field. Another reason is the chance to get information about products, services, competitors, industry and technology. Purchases are just a complementary aim (Godar & O'Connor, 2001; Hansen, 1996). In fact, decisions to buy are relatively rare at trade shows, while preparation for such a decision is not (Rosson & Seringhaus, 1995).

Since the pre-show evaluation is conducted before the act of participation in order to help the potential visitors to make a decision to attend, it is the perceived costs rather than the actual costs to be considered. Perceived costs could help potential visitors to examine whether or not it is worthwhile to attend certain trade show and can also serve as part of the annual budgeting. Due to a lack of post-show evaluation of trade show performance, whether or not the money is well spent or wasted on trade shows is only subject to personal judgment and the objective justification of trade show participation can not be provided. Thus, costs continue to be a barrier to trade show attendance and have been identified as one of the criteria in the evaluation and selection of trade shows (Kijewski et al., 1993).

Munuera and Ruiz (1999) analyzed visitor-oriented trade show evaluation from a different point of view. They considered trade shows as services offered by trade
show organizations, with visitors as clients. Trade show organizers offer services, such as accommodation, entertainment, and business services, and the visitors are the potential buyers of those services. The aim of their study was to analyze the objectives of small and medium-sized companies who visit trade shows. In order to identify visitors' objectives, a survey of 158 representative companies was conducted. Munuera and Ruiz (1999) used a checklist of nine items to assess the goals for attending trade shows in general. The results revealed that gathering information about the market and new products, as well as contacting potential suppliers, were the most important aims for these companies. The least important factor was buying exhibited products. The reason is that there is not much trade activity during the trade show and transactions can often be negotiated in future contacts.

The managerial implication for the organizers is mentioned in this article. Munuera and Ruiz (1999) stated that objectives identified in the article will be helpful to trade show organizers and the success of a trade show depends primarily on the number of attendees, both visitors and exhibitors. By increasing the quantity and quality of the attendees, trade show organizers can develop trade shows with greater attraction capacity.

The research conducted by Munuera and Ruiz (1999) is the only one in the visitors' literature that takes organizers' perspective into consideration. Most of the evaluation studies on visitors focused on the visitors themselves and the interactions between visitors and exhibitors while ignoring the implications for organizers. Rosson and Seringhaus (1995) studied the trade show visitors' motives and behaviors before, during and after the trade show. The authors drew implications for exhibitors for each stage, so that the exhibitors could improve their strategies to cater to the needs of the
visitors, or potential buyers. The implications drawn from the visitors' motives and behaviors are also of great use to organizers, because the organizers also need to understand visitors in those three stages in order to provide a better platform. Also, the results could help trade show organizers to identify key factors that are valued by visitors the most so that they could allocate their resources accordingly.

In summary, only recently has the visitor-oriented trade show evaluation received more academic attention. As an emerging field of study, most visitor-oriented evaluation authors based their research background on the extensive studies conducted on exhibitor-oriented trade show evaluation. The evaluation criteria identified in the literature were perception or information about the basic features of trade show, the marketing objectives to be attained by visitors at and after trade show, and the perceived costs relative to trade show attendance planning and budgeting, and so on. It was also discovered that gathering information about the market and new products, as well as contacting potential suppliers, were the most important aims for small visiting companies. The interactions between visitors and exhibitors were discussed in several articles. However, few articles discussed the interaction between visitors and organizers, which could be a direction for future study.

The Organizer-oriented Trade Show Evaluation

This paper focused on organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. Unfortunately, there is little published research available on this topic. It is interesting to note that the practitioners are more interested in this topic than the academics. Although the roles of organizers were mentioned several times in previous literature (Berne &
García-Uceda, 2008; Munuera & Ruiz, 1999), few took extra effort to analyze the trade show evaluation from organizer’s perspective.

Of the dozens of articles collected by the author, only one short article discussed the trade show audit directly related to organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. Knight (2008) discussed a problem between organizers and exhibitors over attendance audits, which is the access of the proprietary attendance data. Trade show organizers collected the data in-house through post-show evaluation and want to keep it a secret. Knight (2008) claimed that less than 1 percent of shows provide exhibitors with third-party audits. On the other hand, exhibitors want the data independently verified, for some organizers intentionally exaggerate the attendance numbers to increase the appeal of the trade show. The exhibitors need a third-party audit to evaluate the potential trade shows to participate. The managerial implication for the organizers is that when conducting post-show evaluation, an audit by a third party would enhance the authority of the report and thus attract more potential attendees.

Also, the visitor-oriented and exhibitor-oriented studies on trade show evaluation could be used as references to organizer-oriented trade show evaluation. The two main customer groups of organizers, also the targets of organizer-oriented evaluation, are visitors and exhibitors. The satisfaction levels of visitors and exhibitors with the trade show are extremely important for the organizers. Some criteria in visitor-oriented and exhibitor-oriented trade show evaluations could be used in organizer-oriented trade show evaluation. An organizer of trade shows needs to know the framework of criteria used by potential visitors in their pre-show evaluation of trade shows (Berne & García-Uceda, 2008). The criteria cover the main aspects that visitors
are most concerned about so that the organizers could spend more time on the key issues and stop wasting time on minor problems. The success of an exhibition from an organizer's perspective depends on the attendees, both visitors and exhibitors. Identifying the objectives of visitors and exhibitors, organizers can develop trade shows with greater attraction capacity (Munuera & Ruiz, 1999).

The academic studies collected in the visitor-oriented and exhibitor-oriented sections include but not limit to visitor motives and interaction with exhibitors (Berne & García-Uceda, 2008; Hansen, 1996; Munuera & Ruiz, 1999); effectiveness of trade fair expenditures (Gopalakrishna & Lilien, 1995); selling and nonselling activities (Kerin & Cron, 1987; O'Hara, 1993; Sharland & Balogh, 1996); and trade shows across industry sectors and nations (Dekimpe et al., 1997). Those studies could all contribute to the organizer-oriented trade show evaluation. For example, if the visitor-exhibitor interaction proved to be a very important factor in trade show success it could be used by organizers to measure the satisfaction degree of both exhibitors and visitors in terms of visitor-exhibitor interaction. Also, the organizers should not overlook the impact of non-selling activities in their evaluation, for the non-selling activities at trade shows could perform a potentially vital cost-saving function for a company (Sharland & Balogh, 1996).

In practice, the post-show evaluation conducted by organizers often covers two main domains. The first one is marketing-related questions. For example, the number of exhibitors and visitors which attended the trade show; the rank and purchase power of the attendees, and the demographic information of the attendees. The second domain would be performance-related questions. This section intends to examine how well the organizers have served the visitors and exhibitors. Normally, this section would try to
gather the perceptions of the visitors and exhibitors on the service and environment the organizers provided before, during and after the show. Traditionally, the post-show evaluation conducted by organizers mainly focused on the first domain. The results of the evaluation only served the marketing purpose. The second domain, which is performance-related, was often ignored or not subject to further examination to provide guidance for future management.

The post-show evaluation is basically a service. The demand side is the trade show organizers who utilize the evaluation and benefit from the analysis of the results. On the other hand, the supply side is the provider of the survey instrument and the analyzer of survey results. The demand side and supply side are interactive and complement each other. The demand side justifies the need for the evaluation service and guide what the service should be like. The supply side provides the service desired by the demand side. Thus, the main goal of this research paper is to address both the demand side and the supply side of the organizer-oriented post-show evaluation by providing answers to three research questions.

The first research question is related to the demand side of the organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. The trade show practitioners’ opinions on trade show evaluation are crucial in that they justify the need to conduct post-show evaluation and provide valuable information on what factors the organizers would like to know about the most. If the organizers do not conceive post-show evaluation as vital, there is no point in studying this subject. Also, through the key informant survey, the key factors that the respondents emphasize could be used for reference in designing an evaluation construct. Thus, the first research question is:
1. What are the opinions of practitioners of the trade show industry on the organizer-oriented post-show evaluation?

   The second and third research questions are related to the supply side of the evaluation service. Since there are no academic studies focusing on this area, this pilot study would explore this brand new area by testing and analyzing two actual performance evaluation surveys, hoping to lay some groundwork for future study on the construction of the performance scale for organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. The second research question intends to examine the soundness of the survey scales. The third research question intends to examine the application of the post-show evaluation and tries to find out how organizers would benefit from the evaluation and what improvements are desired for the evaluation survey. Thus, the second research question is:

   2. How well were the post-show evaluation surveys designed and implemented?

   The third research question is:

   3. What factors would be most influential on attendees’ perception of the trade show?

   The first research question aims to obtain information on the demand side of the organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. The second and third research questions intend to elaborate on how to construct an appropriate survey and how to interpret the results.
CHAPTER III

METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore in the area of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation by 1) conducting a key informant survey and 2) analyzing a post-show evaluation data set.

In order to explore the demand side of the organizer-oriented post-show evaluation, fifteen key informant surveys were conducted. The feedback provided valuable information from experienced practitioners within the trade show industry. To construct the questions for key informants, several key factors were identified based on a literature review, available actual post-show evaluation forms and the researcher’s own interpretation of the trade show evaluation.

For the second and third research questions, two actual organizer-oriented post-show evaluation surveys was processed and analyzed. The data set was collected by SEMI. The trade show being examined was SEMICON West 2009, which is the leading exhibition in the semiconductor industry. An on-line survey system was used to conduct the post-show evaluation. The time period for the visitors and exhibitors to submit responses was from August 20, 2009, to September 9, 2009.

Data from the post-show evaluation provided by SEMI were input into SPSS 16.0. Scale reliability tests and factor analyses were run to examine the soundness of the
survey construct. Then frequencies of the data set were run to give a general picture of the subject being examined. For analysis and calculation purposes, some variables were recoded. Next, four key questions in the post-show survey were selected as dependent variables in the four logit (logistic regression) models to answer the third research question. Those four questions are key indicators of repeated purchase, which is essential for trade show organizers. The ultimate goal of organizers is to please the attendees and attract more attendees at the next show. Thus, those four questions are the most important factors that influence the success of the organizer’s performance. Finally, cross-tabulation analyses were run on paired variables within the logit model to determine significant differences in responses. The logit models could indicate what factors are important in influencing the dependent variable. The cross-tabulation analyses would reveal how the factors interact with the dependent variable. Since the data set consisted of two parts, the visitor survey and the exhibitor survey, the above procedures were conducted separately for the two attendee groups and the results are discussed in two sections.

Key Informant Survey

The key informant questionnaire was designed based on a literature review and the author’s interpretation of the trade show evaluation. The respondents were from two different countries; there were two versions of interview questionnaires, a Chinese version and an English version. All the questions were open-ended. The factors being addressed in the questionnaire include respondents’ general perception of trade show evaluation, the process of conducting of a post-show evaluation, challenges the respondents experienced in the previous post-show evaluation process, specific questions
the respondents would like to ask, and the pros and cons of qualitative and quantitative methods used in evaluation.

The key informant study relied on available subjects, a non-probability sampling method. Probability sampling was not feasible in this study. Due to the busy schedule of the practitioners in this industry and the limited personal contact of the author, only a small group of practitioners were approached and surveyed. For the same reason, the surveys were conducted via Email. A snowball method was used in order to receive more feedback. In total, twenty-two trade show practitioners in People’s Republic of China and three in United States were approached. No incentive was involved in the survey process. Fourteen out of the twenty-two Chinese trade show practitioners and one out of the three American trade show practitioners provided valid feedback. All of the 25 practitioners stated that there has been post-show evaluation conducted on their trade shows before. A further investigation of the non-respondent group indicated that the majority of this group has not been involved in the post-show evaluation process. Only one respondent refused to provide feedback because of his busy schedule.

In total, 15 valid responses were collected from experienced trade show practitioners from People’s Republic of China and United States. Since there were only 15 responses, the author coded every factor mentioned by respondents. Constant comparison method was used to create the coding sheet and analyze the findings. A coding sheet (Appendix A) was constructed by the author and reviewed by a methodological specialist in order to better interpret the content of the feedback.
Description of the Trade Show Being Examined

Founded in 1971, SEMICON West is an annual trade show for the global microelectronics industry. The SEMICON West 2009 was its 39th show. SEMICON West is the premier event for the display of new products and technologies for microelectronics design and manufacturing, featuring technologies from across the microelectronics supply chain, from electronic design automation, to device fabrication, to final manufacturing.

The SEMICON West 2009 was held at Moscone Center in San Francisco, California from July 14, 2009, to July 16, 2009. The trade show attracted 683 exhibitors and 17,801 visitors. International attendees accounted for 11% of all visitors, with large contingents from Europe and Asia.

Sample Population

The sampling unit was defined as a participant in the 2009 SEMICON West. The total number of verified visitors and exhibiting companies was 17,801 and 683 respectively, which constitute the two study populations.

Survey Data Collection Method

The post-show evaluation surveys were designed by SEMI in-house and reviewed by both Marketing and Show Operations executives in the company. Most of the questions in the surveys were used consistently year after year with no major changes so that the results could be benchmarked and trends through the years could be identified.
An Internet-based survey system was used to conduct the post-show evaluation. The time period for the visitors and exhibitors to submit responses was from August 20, 2009, to September 9, 2009. Surveys were voluntary and there was no incentive to encourage trade show attendees to participate in the survey. SEMI conducted onsite customer outreach visits and took that opportunity to remind exhibitors and visitors to complete the survey. SEMI also reminded attendees in the post-show exhibitor update, an e-mail follow-up newsletter sent to all attendees.

Survey Response Rate

There were 557 valid surveys completed by visitors and 92 valid responses by exhibitors. The response rate for the visitor survey is 3.13% of all visitor attendees. The response rate for the exhibitor survey was 13.5%. Since SEMI used a self-selected sample rather than a probability sample, the estimates of sampling error are not applicable here.

Survey Data Analysis Procedures

First, a scale reliability test using SPSS 16.0 was run on each of the two surveys in order to test the consistency of each survey. A latent variable was created for each survey, which is the general performance of the organizers. All the valid variables in the survey were included in the scale reliability test. Then an exploratory factor analysis was completed in order to test the survey construct. The aim of this test is to find out the underlying structure behind the survey and whether or not there are any redundant questions that could be removed from the survey to reduce redundancy, thus reducing respondent burden and possibly increasing response rate.
Second, frequency counts for each question included in each of the two surveys were run to provide an overview of response distribution. After reviewing the frequencies, two questions in the visitor survey and two questions in the exhibitor survey were identified as the key indicators of the perceptions of the trade show experience of visitors and exhibitors. Next, four logit models were constructed to answer the third research question, with the two pairs of questions identified above as the dependent variables. Finally, cross-tabulation analyses were run between the dependent variables and each of the independent variables within the logit model to determine significant differences in responses and to assist with interpreting the findings from the logit models. The logit models could indicate what factors are important in influencing the dependent variables. Cross-tabulation analyses would reveal how the factors interact with the dependent variable. Since there are two surveys, a visitor survey and an exhibitor survey, the results of the analyses of the two attendee groups are discussed in two sections of findings.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Introduction

Discussion of analyses is divided into three main sections:

The first section focuses on answering the first research question and exploring the demand side of the organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. The feedback from 15 respondents provided valuable information from experienced practitioners within the trade show industry.

The second section tests the soundness of the evaluation scales. Scale reliability test and factor analyses were utilized to test the visitor survey and the exhibitor survey. The results showed that the scale of the exhibitor survey is reliable and well-designed with no redundant questions. The scale of the visitor survey is reliable and well-designed with only a few questions that need further examination.

The third section describes the results of the visitor survey and exhibitor survey as well as interprets the results of the logit models.

Key Informant Survey

Since this is an anonymous survey, the demographic information of the respondents was not obtained. Among the feedback of the general perception of a trade show evaluation, a common ground was reached that the evaluation was important to
attract first-time exhibitors and visitors, it could act as guidance for next trade show, it contributed to continued improvement, and indicated whether or not the original objectives were achieved.

In Q2, the respondents were asked to explain how their organizations carry out post-show evaluation. Two out of the fifteen respondents (13.3%) indicated that they carried out the evaluation through a third-party. The majority conducted the evaluation in-house. The results showed that it has not been common practice for organizers to carry out the post-show evaluation through a third-party firm.

In Q3, the respondents were asked to give one specific example which described what they or their organizations had actually learned or benefited from a post-show evaluation. Eight examples were provided: 1) the evaluation helped to come up with a theme that is popular among exhibitors, 2) adjust time schedule, 3) provide additional service that cater to exhibitors’ special needs, 4) tell the difference between the expected target and the actual result, 5) identify the need to increase seating on the show floor, 6) identify the need to extend show hours, 7) identify potential customers, and 8) improve booth arrangement. Some of the actual benefits or lessons are difficult to describe because there are many integrated learning to be taken from the evaluation.

Also in Q3, respondents were asked about the challenges they have experienced in the post-show evaluation process. The responses were: 1) the cost of the evaluation is high, 2) the evaluation is less useful when the economic crisis hit, 3) the authenticity of data/information provided by the interviewees, 4) difficult to obtain sufficient response from the exhibiting audience, and 5) difficulty in quantifying the assignment from the government with government-sponsored trade shows. It is obvious
that cost is a major barrier for organizers when conducting post-show evaluation. Due to lack of an accepted body of knowledge and other theoretical support, it will be expensive for the organizers to conduct the post-show evaluation from scratch on their own. Also, because of a lack of advanced and comprehensive analysis methods, the effects of the evaluation are compromised. Thus, the justification for the allocations to the evaluation process is limited.

In Q4, respondents were asked to list their top three questions for the exhibitors and visitors who participated in their shows. The responses could be divided into four categories. The first category is the objectives or aims of the attendees and whether or not those objectives were achieved through the trade show. The second one is selling-related questions, such as how many letters of intent or sales leads were made through the show. The third one is related to non-selling activities, like the networking environment provided by the organizers. The last one is the questions concerning the attendees’ general perceptions of the trade show and anticipation of the next one. The first and the last category are the two on which the organizers focused the most. Some of the key informants argued that there is no point in knowing the specific selling objectives or non-selling objectives without knowing the original intent of exhibitors’ participation.

Q5 is about the pros and cons of qualitative and quantitative methods used in evaluation. About one-third of the responses preferred quantitative to qualitative methods. People who favored quantitative methods believed that the quantitative methods are more objective, more reliable, easier to tabulate and analyze than the qualitative methods. On the other hand, some respondents thought the quantitative methods lack the specific measurable back-up or support data and it will take a longer time to collect data.
The pros of qualitative methods identified in the survey were that this type of approach would help obtain general ideas about the show in future planning, the results could be produced very soon, it is simple and direct, and it could be used as a very good tool to predict trends in the trade shows. The cons mentioned for the qualitative approach by the respondents were its inherent margin of error and that the interpretation could vary depending on who conducts the analyses and the methods used to complete those analyses.

However, several key informants expressed that they prefer the combination of both methods into a holistic evaluation frame. Those key informants were from large trade show firms and thus had more capacity to conduct complicated evaluation processes.

Scale Reliability Test of the Surveys

Two scale reliability tests were run to test the consistency of the two surveys. For purpose of analysis, all of the open-ended questions in the survey were removed from the survey prior to the scale reliability tests. A latent variable was created for each survey, which is the general performance of the organizers. All the valid variables in the survey were put in the items column in the scale reliability test function in SPSS 16.0. The results indicated that Cronbach’s Alphas for the exhibitor survey and the visitor survey were 0.856 and 0.871 respectively, which both surpassed 0.7 and can be safely said to be reliable (Nunnally, 1978).

To further explore the questions individually, an additional descriptive analysis for scale reliability if an item was deleted was run. For the exhibitor survey, the
strongest questions, or the questions that receive the most consistent answers, are EQ13a (Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services _ Exhibitor Invites-free email campaign service) and EQ13d (Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services _ Web tiles/banners). Both of the questions would lower the Cronbach’s Alpha for the exhibitor survey to 0.841 if removed. On the other hand, the weakest question, or the question that received the least consistent answers, is EQ4 (Based on your experience this year, would you recommend SEMICON West to other companies?). The Cronbach’s Alpha would be increased to 0.863 if EQ4 was removed from the scale.

For the visitor survey, the strongest question, or the question that receives the most consistent answers, is VQ11b (Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 _ Pre-show planning tools). VQ11b would lower the Cronbach’s Alpha to 0.862 if it was removed. On the other hand, the weakest questions, or the questions that receive the least consistent answers, are VQ4 (Will your attendance at SEMICON West 2009 influence your evaluation, recommendation, or purchasing of products, technologies, and/or services over the next 12 months?) and VQ6 (Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you recommend SEMICON West to your colleagues or peers?). The Cronbach’s Alpha would increase to 0.873 if they were removed from the scale.

In summary, the two survey scales both have high scale reliability. It is not surprising to find the weakest questions, or the questions that receive the least consistent answers (EQ4, VQ4, and VQ6), are the ones that focus on general perceptions of the
trade show. This result further exemplifies the complexity of the performance evaluation and the various factors that influence the attendees’ perceptions about the trade show.

**Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Surveys**

Two exploratory factor analyses were completed to test the scale for the two surveys. The nature of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is to uncover the underlying structure of a relatively large set of variables (Harman, 1967). The aim of the test is to explore the underlying structure of the survey scale and to find out whether or not there are any redundant questions that could be removed from the survey to reduce redundancy and survey length and therefore possibly increase response rate.

**Exhibitor Survey**

Before the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was run, two tests were conducted to test whether or not the data set is appropriate for EFA. The first test is Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy. The value of KMO varies from 0 to 1. Field (2005) explained that a value of 0 indicates that the sum of the partial correlations is large relative to the sum of correlations, indicating diffusion in the pattern of correlations; hence factor analysis is likely to be inappropriate. On the other hand, a KMO value close to 1 indicates that patterns of correlations are relatively compact and factor analysis should produce distinct and reliable factors. According to Kaiser (1974), values greater than 0.5 were considered acceptable. The KMO value of exhibitor survey is 0.795, which is greater than 0.5 and therefore factor analysis is appropriate for this data.
The second test is Bartlett’s test, which tests the null hypothesis that the original correlation matrix is an identity matrix (Field, 2005). An identity matrix is one where all correlation coefficients are zero. However, there has to be some relationships between variables for factor analysis to work. Thus, it is desirable that this test is significant so that the null hypothesis can be rejected. For the exhibitor survey, Bartlett’s test is highly significant ($p<0.001$), and therefore it is appropriate to run factor analysis on the exhibitor survey.

Normally, loadings should be 0.7 or higher to confirm that the independent variables identified are represented by a particular factor. However, the 0.7 standard is a high one and may not be met in real-life data, which is why some researchers, particularly for exploratory purposes, use a lower criterion such as 0.4 for the central factor and 0.25 for other factors (Raubenheimer, 2004).

Table 3 is the exploratory factor analysis results for the exhibitor survey. The loading criterion used in the exhibitor’s survey is 0.4. Six factors were identified.

**Visitor Survey**

The KMO value for the visitor survey is 0.820, which is greater than 0.5 and it is then safe to say that the factor analysis is appropriate for this data set. The second test is Bartlett’s test. For the visitor survey, Bartlett’s test is highly significant ($p<0.001$), and therefore it is appropriate to run factor analysis on the visitor survey.

Table 4 is the exploratory factor analysis results for the visitor survey. The loading criterion used in the visitor survey is 0.4. Six factors were identified.
Table 3

*Exploratory Factor Analysis Results for the Exhibitor Survey*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Number</th>
<th>Factor Name</th>
<th>Questions Included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Levels of satisfaction of exhibitor and marketing services</td>
<td>EQ13a, EQ13b, EQ13c, EQ13d, EQ13e, EQ13f, EQ13g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Interaction with visitors and satisfaction with meeting objectives</td>
<td>EQ2, EQ6a, EQ6b, EQ6c, EQ6d, EQ7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Overall satisfaction</td>
<td>EQ5, EQ8, EQ12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Repeated purchase</td>
<td>EQ3, EQ4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Primary objectives for exhibiting (except for the objective of developing new sales leads and finding new customer)</td>
<td>EQ1b, EQ1c, EQ1d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Primary objectives to develop new sales leads and find new customers</td>
<td>EQ1a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Multinomial Logistic Regression Analysis and Cross-tabulation**

**Exhibitor Survey**

Two questions in the exhibitor survey were selected as key indicators of the success of the organizer’s performance. The two questions are “Based on your experience this year, would you exhibit at a future SEMICON West?” (EQ3), and “Based on your
Table 4

*Exploratory Factor Analysis Results for the Visitor Survey*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Number</th>
<th>Factor Name</th>
<th>Questions Included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Importance of the programs, features, and services</td>
<td>VQ10a, VQ10b, VQ10c, VQ10d, VQ10e, VQ10f, VQ10g, VQ10h, VQ10i, VQ10j, VQ10k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ratings of services provided at the show</td>
<td>VQ11a, VQ11b, VQ11c, VQ11d, VQ11e, VQ11f, VQ11g, VQ11h, VQ11i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Overall satisfaction and repeated purchase</td>
<td>VQ3, VQ5, VQ6, VQ7, VQ8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Primary objectives for exhibiting (except for the objective of attending technical and/or business programs, networking, and employment) and influence of the show</td>
<td>VQ2a, VQ2b, VQ2c, VQ2d, VQ2e, VQ4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Other events the visitors plan to attend in the next year</td>
<td>VQ17a, VQ17b, VQ17c, VQ17d, VQ17e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Times of previous visits and primary objective of networking</td>
<td>VQ15, VQ2g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

experience this year, would you recommend SEMICON West to other companies?” (EQ4).
First, a multinomial logistic regression analysis (LOGIT) was run for EQ3 (dependent variable). The independent variables in the LOGIT model that best explain the variance in EQ3 included:

- Please indicate your primary objectives for exhibiting at SEMICON West 2009 _ Build and strengthen customer relationships (EQ1b).
- Please indicate your primary objectives for exhibiting at SEMICON West 2009 _ Introduce new products (EQ1c).
- Based on your experience this year, would you recommend SEMICON West to other companies? (EQ4).
- Please rate your satisfaction with visitors attending SEMICON West 2009 in the following categories _ Job function (EQ6d).
- Based on your experience, please rate your overall satisfaction with SEMI staff customer service (EQ12).

These five independent variables explained 100.0% of the variance (Nagelkerke pseudo r-square = 1.000) in exhibitor survey respondents’ decision to exhibit at a future SEMICON West event.

Five cross-tabulation analyses were run in order to reveal the following differences in the exhibitor’s decision to exhibit at a future SEMICON West event:

1. The cross-tabulation result between “Based on your experience this year, would you exhibit at a future SEMICON West?” (EQ3) and “Please indicate your primary objectives for exhibiting at SEMICON West 2009 _ Build and strengthen customer relationships” (EQ1b) is not significant.
2. A significantly higher percentage of exhibitors who chose “introduce new products” as their primary objective for exhibiting at SEMICON West 2009 (96.7%) than those who did not choose “introduce new products” as their primary objective (79.0%) would exhibit at a future SEMICON West event.

3. A significantly higher percentage of exhibitors who would recommend SEMICON West to other companies (98.4%) than those who would not recommend SEMICON West to other companies (56.7%) would exhibit at a future SEMICON West event.

4. The cross-tabulation result between “Based on your experience this year, would you exhibit at a future SEMICON West?” (EQ3) and “Please rate your satisfaction with visitors attending SEMICON West 2009 in the following categories _ Job function” (EQ6d) is not significant.

5. The cross-tabulation result between “Based on your experience this year, would you exhibit at a future SEMICON West?” (EQ3) and “Based on your experience, please rate your overall satisfaction with SEMI staff customer service” (EQ12) is not significant.

Then, the same procedure was conducted on “Based on your experience this year, would you recommend SEMICON West to other companies?” (EQ4). The independent variables in the LOGIT model that best explain the variance in EQ4 included:

- Based on your experience this year, would you exhibit at a future SEMICON West? (EQ3).
• Please rate your satisfaction with visitors attending SEMICON West 2009 in the following categories _ Job level (EQ6b).

• Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services _ Monthly Exhibitor Updates (EQ13b).

These three independent variables explained 87.7% of the variance (Nagelkerke pseudo r-square = 0.877) in exhibitor survey respondents’ decision to recommend SEMICON West to other companies.

Three cross-tabulation analyses were run in order to reveal the following differences in the exhibitor’s decision to recommend SEMICON West to other companies:

1. A significantly higher percentage of exhibitors who would exhibit at a future SEMICON West event (78.1%) than those who would not exhibit at a future SEMICON West event (7.1%) would recommend SEMICON West to other companies.

2. A significant relationship was found between “Based on your experience this year, would you recommend SEMICON West to other companies?” (EQ4) and “Please rate your satisfaction with visitors attending SEMICON West 2009 in the following categories _ Job level” (EQ6b). The higher the exhibitors rate their satisfaction with the job level of visitors attending SEMICON West 2009, the more likely the exhibitors would recommend SEMICON West to other companies.

3. A significant relationship was found between “Based on your experience this year, would you recommend SEMICON West to other companies?” (EQ4) and “Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services _ Monthly Exhibitor Updates” (EQ13b). The higher the exhibitors rate their satisfaction
with the monthly exhibitor updates, the more likely the exhibitors would recommend SEMICON West to other companies.

**Visitor Survey**

The same two questions in the visitor survey were selected as key indicators of the success of the organizer’s performance. The two questions are “Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you attend a future SEMICON West event?” (VQ5), and “Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you recommend SEMICON West to your colleagues or peers?” (VQ6).

First, a multinomial logistic regression analysis (LOGIT) was run for VQ5 (dependent variable). The independent variables in the LOGIT model that best explain the variance in VQ5 included:

- Please indicate your primary objectives in attending SEMICON West 2009 _ Find solutions to specific needs, issues, questions, and/or challenges (VQ2c).
- How satisfied were you in meeting your objectives at SEMICON West 2009? (VQ3).
- Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you recommend SEMICON West to your colleagues or peers? (VQ6).
- Please rate your overall experience and satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009 (VQ7).
- Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services _ Panels/summits-Foundry Summit, Packaging Summit, Test Summit, etc. (VQ10d).
These five independent variables explained 98.2% of the variance (Nagelkerke pseudo r-square = 0.982) in visitor survey respondents’ decision to attend a future SEMICON West event.

Five cross-tabulation analyses were run in order to reveal the following differences in the visitor’s decision to attend a future SEMICON West event:

1. A significantly lower percentage of visitors who chose “find solutions to specific needs, issues, questions, and/or challenges” as their primary objective for attending SEMICON West 2009 (83.6%) than those who did not choose “find solutions to specific needs, issues, questions, and/or challenges” as their primary objective (90.8%) would attend a future SEMICON West event.

2. A significant relationship was found between “Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you attend a future SEMICON West event?” (VQ5) and “How satisfied were you in meeting your objectives at SEMICON West 2009?” (VQ3). The higher the visitors rate their satisfaction of meeting their objectives, the more likely the visitors would attend a future SEMICON West event.

3. A significantly higher percentage of visitors who would recommend SEMICON West to their colleagues or peers (99.5%) than those who would not recommend SEMICON West to their colleagues or peers (44.4%) would attend a future SEMICON West event.

4. A significant relationship was found between “Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you attend a future SEMICON West event?” (VQ5) and “Please rate your overall experience and satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009” (VQ7).
The higher the visitors rate their overall experience and satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009, the more likely the visitors would attend a future SEMICON West event.

5. A significant relationship was found between “Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you attend a future SEMICON West event?” (VQ5) and “Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services Panels/summits-Foundry Summit, Packaging Summit, Test Summit, etc.” (VQ10d). The higher the visitors rate the importance of Panels/summits-Foundry Summit, Packaging Summit, Test Summit, etc., the more likely the visitors would attend a future SEMICON West event.

Then, the same procedure was conducted on “Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you recommend SEMICON West to your colleagues or peers?” (VQ6). The independent variables in the LOGIT model that best explain the variance in VQ6 included:

- Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you attend a future SEMICON West event? (VQ5).
- Please rate your overall experience and satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009 (VQ7).
- Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services TechXPOTs/Technical presentation stages on the show floor (VQ10b).
- Which other events/expositions do you plan to attend in the next 12 months? None / no other events (VQ17a).
These four independent variables explained 82.2% of the variance (Nagelkerke pseudo r-square = 0.822) in visitor survey respondents’ decision to recommend SEMICON West to their colleagues or peers.

Four cross-tabulation analyses were run in order to reveal the following differences in the visitors’ decision to recommend SEMICON West to their colleagues or peers:

1. A significantly higher percentage of visitors who would attend a future SEMICON West event (89.4%) than those who would not attend a future SEMICON West event (3.0%) would recommend SEMICON West to their colleagues or peers.

2. A significant relationship was found between “Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you recommend SEMICON West to your colleagues or peers?” (VQ6) and “Please rate your overall experience and satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009” (VQ7). The higher the visitors rate their overall experience and satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009, the more likely the visitors would recommend SEMICON West to their colleagues or peers.

3. A significant relationship was found between “Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you recommend SEMICON West to your colleagues or peers?” (VQ6) and “Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services _ TechXPOTs/Technical presentation stages on the show floor” (VQ10b). The higher the visitors rate the importance of TechXPOTs/Technical presentation stages on the show floor, the more likely the visitors would recommend SEMICON West to their colleagues or peers.
4. The cross-tabulation result between “Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you recommend SEMICON West to your colleagues or peers?” (VQ6) and “Which other events/expositions do you plan to attend in the next 12 months? _ None / no other events” (VQ17a) is not significant.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS,
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore in the area of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation by conducting a key informant survey and analyzing a post-show evaluation data set. Three research questions were developed to guide the study:

1. What are the opinions of practitioners of trade show industry on the organizer-oriented post-show evaluation?
2. How well were the post-show evaluation surveys designed and performed?
3. What factors would be most influential on attendees’ perception of the trade show provided by the organizers?

As a pilot study, the results of this study provided valuable insights into the demand and supply side of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. First, this study collected and analyzed trade show practitioners’ opinions on trade show evaluation, which justified the need to conduct post-show evaluation and provided valuable information on what factors the organizers would like to know the most. Then an actual post-show evaluation was tested and analyzed. This study also examined the application of the post-show evaluation and tried to find out how to make the best out of the trade
show evaluation and how organizers would benefit from the evaluation. The conclusions are discussed separately for exhibitor survey and visitor survey.

Conclusions

Key Informant Survey

The feedback of the key informant survey confirmed the assumption of this study, which is that the post-show evaluation is an important and indispensable part in the trade show management process. All of the 25 practitioners being approached stated that there has been post-show evaluation conducted on their trade shows before. Among the valid feedback of 15 key informants, a common ground was reached that the evaluation was important to attract first-time exhibitors and visitors, it could act as guidance for next trade show, it contributed to continued improvement, and indicated whether or not the original objectives were achieved.

It was not surprising to find out that the majority of the organizers conduct post-show evaluation in-house. Further inquiry revealed two reasons behind this situation. The first reason is that there have been few independent evaluation firms in the market to carry out post-show evaluations. There have been some independent evaluations firms for the exhibitor-oriented trade show evaluation. As organizer-oriented post-show evaluation is still in its infancy, this market section has not been professionalized like other performance evaluation services. As mentioned earlier, Knight (2008) claimed that less than 1 percent of trade shows provide exhibitors with third-party audits. However, it is predictable that with the fast development of the trade show
industry, there would be more independent evaluation firms targeting at organizer-oriented trade show evaluation in the near future.

The second reason why the majority of the organizers conducted post-show evaluation in-house is simply about the cost. Cost is a major barrier for organizers when conducting post-show evaluation. Outsourcing to a third-party firm would be more expensive than conducting the evaluation in-house. A lack of advanced and comprehensive analysis methods would compromise the effects of the evaluation. Thus, the justification of the allocation of resources to the evaluation process is limited. The trade show organizers would not spend a lot of money on something that could not produce any identifiable positive effect. The solution to this problem is the professionalization of the independent trade show evaluation firms, which could provide a better evaluation tool that makes the best use of the attendees’ feedback. Also, the professionalization would lead to streamlined evaluation services and competition between the independent evaluation firms, which would lower the third-party evaluation cost.

As for the methods to use in the post-show evaluation, respondents were evenly divided into three groups: the supporters of qualitative methods, the supporters of quantitative methods, and the supporters of both qualitative and quantitative methods. It is interesting to note that the respondents who favored both methods were from large trade show firms and thus had more capacity in conducting very complicated evaluation processes. This exemplifies the assumption of this paper that the combination of quantitative methods and qualitative methods would be the best in conducting post-show
evaluation, provided that the capital and human resources are sufficient in providing the requirement of this holistic approach.

**Exhibitor Survey**

The exhibitor survey construct was proven to be appropriate and well-designed after scale reliability test and exploratory factor analysis.

The result of scale reliability test showed that the survey generated consistent results for a group of respondents. The ability of a survey construct to generate consistent feedback is crucial in that it decreases the effect of random error. If a survey could not provide consistent feedback, the data collected by the survey were not suitable for further analysis, for the random error plays an important role in such a situation.

The results of the exploratory factor analysis generally correspond to the grouping of survey questions and the six factors have a good face validity, which further proves that the exhibitor survey is well designed. Also, the factors reaffirm some of the key points identified in the literature review. Factor One can be interpreted as the exhibitor’s perception of the services provided by organizers (Berne & García-Uceda, 2008; Seringhaus & Rosson, 2001). Factor Two contains the questions on the exhibitor-visitor interaction and how satisfied the exhibitors were in meeting their objectives (Li, 2004; Witt & Rao, 1989). This exemplifies the importance of the exhibitor-visitor interaction in the exhibitors’ objectives. The third factor is related to the general questions on the exhibitors’ satisfaction levels on the overall experience, the contractor service, and the staff of the organizers. This indicates that the overall exhibitor’s experience depends greatly on the contractor service and the staff performance. Factor Four covers two key questions of the survey, which are “Would you exhibit at a future
SEMICON West?” (EQ3), and “Would you recommend SEMICON West to other companies?” (EQ4). This further proves that the two key questions are highly interrelated and serve together as the key indicators of the success of the organizer’s performance. Factor Five is mainly about the non-selling objectives (Dekimpe et al., 1997; Hansen, 1999; Kerin & Cron, 1987), while Factor Six contains the questions on selling objective (Dekimpe et al., 1997; Godar & O’Connor, 2001; Hansen, 1999).

All the questions in the survey were successfully loaded into the six factors with good face validity. The factor analysis revealed no redundant question and exemplified that the survey is well designed.

The multinomial logistic regression analysis and cross-tabulation analysis were conducted in order to explore what factors are important in influencing the exhibitors’ perception of the organizer’s performance.

The result of the first regression model revealed that five independent variables explained 100.0% of the variance (Nagelkerke pseudo r-square = 1.000) in exhibitor survey respondents’ decision to exhibit at a future SEMICON West event. It is very rare that 100.0% variance of the dependent variable could be explained by only five independent variables. The second regression model also yielded high pseudo r-square value. Three independent variables explained 87.7% of the variance (Nagelkerke pseudo r-square = 0.877) in exhibitor survey respondents’ decision to recommend SEMICON West to other companies. The high percentage explained in the two logit models imply the high predictability of exhibitor’s perception of the trade show provided by organizers.

Further cross-tabulation analyses showed that the independent variables that have a significant relationship with the exhibitor’s intention to exhibit at a future
SEMICON West event are: introduce new products as the primary objective for exhibiting, and recommend SEMICON West to other companies. The independent variables that have a significant relationship with the exhibitor’s intention to recommend to other companies are: exhibit at a future SEMICON West event, satisfaction with job level of the visitors attending the show, and satisfaction with monthly exhibitor updates.

Those factors mentioned above all played an important role in influencing exhibitor’s perception of the trade show. They carry a much higher weight than other factors in the survey in influencing exhibitor’s perception of a trade show. Since there are a million things the organizers need to manage for a trade show, it is not feasible to allocate the organizers’ time and energy equally among those one million things. Those factors identified in the logit models could help managers to better manage their trade shows. Also, the cross-tabulation results could serve as an implication for organizers to reflect on their performance. For example, a significantly higher percentage of exhibitors who chose “introduce new products” as their primary objective for exhibiting (96.7%) than those who did not choose “introduce new products” as their primary objective (79.0%) would exhibit at a future SEMICON West event. The numbers indicated that the organizers have done a great job in satisfying the exhibitors’ need to introduce new products. Also inferred from the cross-tabulation results, visitors with a higher average job level and better monthly exhibitor updates would influence more exhibitors into recommending SEMICON West to other companies.

Visitor Survey

The visitor survey construct was also proven to be appropriate and well-designed after scale reliability test and exploratory factor analysis.
The result of scale reliability test showed that the survey generated consistent results for a group of respondents. The results of the exploratory factor analysis also correspond to the survey questions grouping and the factors have a good face validity, which proves that the visitor survey was also well designed. Also, the factors reaffirm some of the key points identified in the literature review. Factor One can be interpreted as visitor’s perception of the programs, features, and services provided by organizers (Berne & García-Uceda, 2008; Seringhaus & Rosson, 2001). Factor Two touches upon the visitor’s appreciation level of the services provided by the organizers (Berne & García-Uceda, 2008; Seringhaus & Rosson, 2001). The third factor contains questions on the visitors’ general satisfaction levels and results of the participation. The general satisfaction questions touch on the areas of visitors’ satisfaction levels on meeting objectives, overall experience, and exhibitor performance (Munuera & Ruiz, 1999). The results of the participation touch upon areas of attending a future SEMICON West event and recommending to colleagues or peers. This indicates that the results of the visitors’ experience depend greatly on the satisfaction levels of meeting objectives, overall experience, and exhibitor performance. The fourth factor contains questions on “Will your attendance at SEMICON West 2009 influence your evaluation, recommendation, or purchasing of products, technologies, and/or services over the next 12 months?” (VQ4), and the visitor’s primary objectives for exhibiting at SEMICON West 2009 (VQ2a, VQ2b, VQ2c, VQ2d, and VQ2e) (Berne & García-Uceda, 2008). This indicates that visitor’s objectives play an important role in influencing future purchasing behaviors. Factor Five is mainly about what other events the visitors plan to attend in the next 12 months. This question intends to give the organizers a general idea of the competition
within the field, which belongs to marketing-related questions. The last factor contains questions on “How many times have you attended SEMICON West?” (VQ15) (Gopalakrishna & Lilien, 1994) and the primary objective of networking (VQ2g) (Blythe, 2002). The networking objective was loaded alone, separated from other objectives, which indicates that the networking objective is as important as other objectives and might be underexplored in the survey construct.

The questions in the survey that were not loaded into the six factors were “Primary level of purchasing authority” (VQ1), “Indicate your primary objectives in attending SEMICON West 2009 _ Attend technical and/or business programs” (VQ2f), “Indicate your primary objectives in attending SEMICON West 2009 _ Employment and job-hunting” (VQ2h), “How far in advance did you decide to attend this event?” (VQ16), “Which other events/expositions do you plan to attend in the next 12 months _ IPC/APEX (VQ17f), “Which other events/expositions do you plan to attend in the next 12 months _ ITC (VQ17g), and “Which other events/expositions do you plan to attend in the next 12 months _ DAC (VQ17g). Among the seven unloaded questions, “Primary level of purchasing authority” (VQ1) and “How far in advance did you decide to attend this event?” (VQ16) are two important questions that serve the marketing purposes. Thus, they are not dispensable. A further frequency analysis of the five remaining questions indicates that only a few respondents fell into the categories that those five questions addressed. Further investigation on the five unloaded questions is needed. Possible solutions include deleting the questions completely, rephrasing, or combining with existing questions. Although there are seven unloaded questions, the visitor survey as a whole has a good underlying structure and is well designed.
The multinomial logistic regression and cross-tabulation analyses were conducted in order to explore what factors are important in influencing the visitors’ perception of the organizer’s performance.

The result of the first regression model revealed that five independent variables explained 98.2% of the variance (Nagelkerke pseudo r-square = 0.982) in visitor survey respondents’ decision to attend a future SEMICON West event. The second regression model also yielded high r-square value. Four independent variables explained 82.2% of the variance (Nagelkerke pseudo r-square = 0.822) in visitor survey respondents’ decision to recommend SEMICON West to their colleagues or peers. As the case in the exhibitor survey, the high percentage explained in the two logit models of visitor survey imply the high predictability of visitor’s perception of the trade show provided by organizers.

Further cross-tabulation analyses showed that the independent variables that have a significant relationship with the visitor’s intention to attend a future SEMICON West event are: find solutions to specific needs, issues, questions, and/or challenges as the primary objective, satisfaction with meeting the objectives at SEMICON West 2009, recommend SEMICON West to your colleagues or peers, overall experience and satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009, and rating of the importance of Panels/summits-Foundry Summit, Packaging Summit, Test Summit, etc. The independent variables that have a significant relationship with the visitor’s intention to recommend to their colleagues or peers are: attend a future SEMICON West event, overall experience and satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009, and importance of TechXPOTs/Technical presentation stages on the show floor.
Those factors mentioned above all played an important role in influencing visitor’s perception of the trade show. They carry a higher weight than other factors in the survey in influencing visitor’s perception of a trade show. The cross-tabulation results could also serve as an implication for organizers to reflect on their performance during the trade show. One particular example is that a significantly lower percentage of visitors who chose “find solutions to specific needs, issues, questions, and/or challenges” as their primary objective for attending SEMICON West 2009 (83.6%) than those who did not choose this as their primary objective (90.8%) would attend a future SEMICON West event. The numbers indicate that some of the visitors with a primary purpose of finding solutions to specific needs, issues, questions, and/or challenges did not meet their expectations after the trade show, which resulted in a lower desire to attend a future SEMICON West event. The organizers should reflect on how they might have disappointed the visitors in that particular area and how they can improve the next time.

Managerial Implications

For the first time in the academic field, this study explored the demand side and the supply side of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. The results of the key informant survey and the quantitative analyses of an actual evaluation reveal the following managerial implications.

First, in order to get a more accurate response, a probability sample rather than a self-selected sample should be used in post-show evaluation. With a probability sample, every member of a study population has an equal chance of being selected in the sample. The survey data collected by SEMI used a self-selected sample, which was a
major limitation. The biggest disadvantage of this type of sampling is that the results cannot be generalized to the entire study population. The main reason why organizers want to conduct post-show evaluations is to gather information from all customers (visitors and exhibitors) so that they can cater to their needs in future events more effectively. However, if a survey does not reflect the general opinions of the entire population of attendees, the managerial usefulness of a post-show evaluation is compromised. Thus, one can be much more confident using a probability sample, for a probability sample would better represent the opinions of all trade show participants. However, even when conducting an evaluation survey using a probability sample, a comparison must be run between the respondents and the non-respondents to make sure that the attributes of the people being surveyed are similar to the whole population.

Second, the key informant survey revealed that there is market demand for independent trade show evaluation firms. All of the 25 practitioners being approached stated that there has been post-show evaluation conducted on their trade shows before. The respondents also expressed their challenges when conducting evaluation from scratch on their own. The high cost is a major barrier for organizers to conduct post-show evaluation. All those factors facilitate the development of independent trade show evaluation firms specializing in the organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. As mentioned earlier, it was estimated that trade show revenues rose to $2.65 billion in the first six months of 2007 in the U.S. and Canada (Center for Exhibition Industry Research, 2007). Even if the organizers only allocate one percent of their revenues on post-show evaluation, the market volume would still be enormous. The independent trade show evaluation firms should increase the awareness of organizers on conducting high quality
post-show evaluation. In the meantime, the independent trade show evaluation firms should streamline their services and lower the cost to let the post-show evaluation be accessible to more trade show organizers.

The four logit models and the following cross-tabulation analyses shed some light on the factors that are most influential on attendees’ perception of SEMICON West 2009. For the exhibitor survey, the results indicated that the organizers have done a great job in satisfying the exhibitors’ need to introduce new products. Also, a higher average job level of the visitors and better monthly exhibitor updates would influence more exhibitors into recommending SEMICON West to other companies. Thus, for this particular trade show, lessons learned are that the organizers could pay more attention to the new product launch function of the trade show, invite more high-ranking visitors, and fully utilize the monthly exhibitor updates as a promotion tool.

For the visitor survey, a problem has been revealed by the evaluation results. The results indicated that the some of the visitors whose primary purpose was finding solutions to specific needs, issues, questions, and/or challenges did not have their expectations met after the trade show, which resulted in a lower desire to attend a future SEMICON West event. Therefore, in order to keep those unsatisfied visitors coming back next year, the organizers need to reflect on their performance on serving the visitors with a primary purpose of finding solutions to specific needs, issues, questions, and/or challenges.

The quantitative methods used in this study should give organizers an example on how to make the best use of the survey data. In practice, most post-show evaluations utilized by organizers were simple evaluation surveys serving mostly for
marketing purposes, which only gathered demographic information of the visitors and exhibitors. Also, the methods used in the interpretation process only included content analysis and frequency counts. Few advanced analysis methods were attempted. The scale reliability test, exploratory factor analysis, multinomial regression analysis, cross-tabulation analysis used in this study should provide a reference for organizers when they want to fully utilize their survey data.

Limitations to the Findings

The findings of this preliminary study on organizer-oriented post-show evaluation are subject to a number of limitations.

First, since the surveys conducted by SEMI were voluntary, the survey sample used in this study was a self-selected sample rather than a probability sample. Cautions should be made in generalizing the findings of this study to the non-participating attendees of the trade show. Non-participating attendees may or may not have the same objectives and demonstrate the same levels of satisfaction as the respondents of the post-show evaluation.

Second, because the study only focused one particular trade show in the semiconductor industry in America, the results and conclusions might not apply to other trade shows in the semiconductor industry or to other industries.

Third, during the survey analysis procedure, only quantitative methods were utilized to interpret the exhibitor and visitor survey results. The open-ended questions in the surveys were not analyzed. This might lead to a partial interpretation of the exhibitor
and visitor surveys. The qualitative questions might reveal some aspects that the quantitative questions did not cover.

Fourth, this study did not examine the post-show evaluations in previous years and the effects of the previous evaluations on the trade show management and performance. For absence of data of the previous surveys, no trend analysis was conducted in the study. Thus, the actual effect of an evaluation could not be empirically examined.

Recommendation for Future Studies

The limitations of the study provide a basis for developing future studies of the subject.

Since the post-show evaluation survey sample used in this study was a self-selected sample rather than a probability sample, the responses of the participants are very likely to differ from the opinions of the non-respondents. The respondents participated in the survey out of their own interest. Some of them might be pleased with the previous experience that they want to express their gratification in the survey. Others might be unsatisfied with some aspects that they want their concerns to be heard and addressed. Non-respondents may or may not have the same objectives and demonstrate the same levels of satisfaction as the respondents of the post-show evaluation. A future study is desired to conduct the evaluation on a probability sample and compare the results between the probability sample and a self-selected sample.

The key informant survey in this study provided valuable information on organizer-oriented post-show evaluation from experienced practitioners within the trade
show industry. However, there were only 15 respondents from People’s Republic of China and the United States involved in the key informant survey. More practitioners should be approached in order to illustrate a more comprehensive and convincing current situation of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation. Also, the opinions of practitioners from other countries should also be taken into consideration in future studies.

As the pilot study exploring the field of organizer-oriented post-show evaluation, this study focused on one particular trade show in the semiconductor industry, hoping to lay some groundwork for future studies on this brand-new subject. A replication of this study on other trade shows is desired.

This study mainly focused on how to analyze the evaluation survey through advanced quantitative methods. During the analysis and interpretation of the survey, only quantitative methods were utilized. The open-ended questions or the qualitative questions in the surveys were not analyzed. Future studies could focus on interpreting the open-ended questions through qualitative methods.

Because of the absence of data from previous surveys, no trend analysis was conducted in the study. Thus, the actual effect of an evaluation could not be empirically examined. One of the aims of an organizer-oriented post-show evaluation is to improve the quality of a trade show over the years by reflecting on the findings from each trade show evaluation. A longitudinal study would better demonstrate trends in the development of a trade show based on results of evaluations.
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CODING SHEET

1. As an experienced trade show practitioner, what do you think of post-show evaluation in general? (Whether or not it is useful, practical, worthwhile, etc.)

   A. Important to attract first-time exhibitor
   B. Important promotion material
   C. Guidance for next trade show
   D. Contribute to continued improvement
   E. Indicate whether or not the original objectives were achieved

2. Does your organization carry out post-show evaluation through a third-party or DIY?

   A. Through a third-party
   B. In house
   C. Both

3. Give one specific example which describes what you or your organization actually learned or benefited from a post-show evaluation?

   A. Help to come up with a theme that is popular among exhibitors
   B. Help to adjust time schedule
   C. Help to provide additional services that cater to exhibitors’ special needs
   D. Help to tell the difference between the expected target and the actual result
   E. Help to identify the need to increase seating on the show floor
   F. Help to identify the need to extend show hours
   G. Help to identify potential customers
   H. Help to improve booth arrangement

   □ What are the biggest challenges you face in the post-show evaluation process?

   A. The cost of evaluation is high
   B. The evaluation is less useful when economic crisis hit
   C. The authenticity of data/info provided by the interviewees
   D. Hard to attain sufficient response from the exhibiting audience
   E. Difficulty in quantifying the assignment from the government
4. If you had the opportunity to chat with an exhibitor who just participated in your show and you can only ask three specific questions about their perception of the trade show, what would those three questions be and why?

A. Among all the potential trade shows that you are interested in, what factor would affect you the most in making a decision?
B. How do you feel about this show?
C. How is the turnout of your participant, any deal or letters of intents?
D. Any dissatisfaction?
E. Does the theme of the trade show fit your objective?
F. What additional service do you want from the organizer?
G. What do you think of the price of the booth?
H. What’s your desired venue for next year?
I. What do you think of the visitors flow this year?
J. What’s your main objective in this trade show?
K. What are the three most valuable aspects of exhibiting at the show?
L. How successful was the event in helping you achieve these goals?
M. What needs improvement?
N. How is the accommodation provided by the organizer?

5. Which interpretation method of a post-show evaluation do you most prefer qualitative (content analysis, focus group, interview, etc.) or quantitative (frequency, cross-tab analysis, multiple regression analysis, etc.)?

A. Qualitative
B. Quantitative
C. Both

☐ What are the pros and cons of each method respectively (qualitative and quantitative)?

- For quantitative method:
  A. It’s more objective
  B. Help optimize the organizing and operation in details
  C. More reliable
  D. Would require longer time to interpret
  E. Would require more budget
  F. It’s easier to tabulate and analyze
  G. It’s specific measureable data not open for interpretation
  H. There’s no specific measureable back-up or support data
  I. Couldn’t reveal the big picture
• For qualitative method:
  
  A. Help obtain general ideas about the show/ in future planning
  B. The result would come out very soon
  C. Simple and direct
  D. Valuable insight gained
  E. The longer time it takes for interpretation
  F. The inherent margin of error
  G. A very good tool to predict trend
EXHIBITOR SURVEY

EQ1. Please indicate your primary objectives for exhibiting at SEMICON West 2009 (choose all that apply).
   A. Develop new sales leads and find new customers
   B. Build and strengthen customer relationships
   C. Introduce new products
   D. Improve product position, build brand awareness
   E. Other _____________________________________________________

EQ2. How satisfied were you in meeting your objectives at SEMICON West 2009?
   Not satisfied                     Extremely Satisfied
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

EQ3. Based on your experience this year, would you exhibit at a future SEMICON West?
   A. Yes
   B. No

EQ4. Based on your experience this year, would you recommend SEMICON West to other companies?
   A. Yes
   B. No

EQ5. Please rate your overall satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009.
   Not satisfied                     Extremely Satisfied
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

EQ6a. Please rate your satisfaction with visitors attending SEMICON West 2009 in the following categories __ Overall quality of visitors.
   Not satisfied                     Extremely Satisfied
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
EQ6b. Please rate your satisfaction with visitors attending SEMICON West 2009 in the following categories __ Job level.

Not satisfied                      Extremely Satisfied

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

EQ6c. Please rate your satisfaction with visitors attending SEMICON West 2009 in the following categories __ Purchasing authority.

Not satisfied                      Extremely Satisfied

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

EQ6d. Please rate your satisfaction with visitors attending SEMICON West 2009 in the following categories __ Job function.

Not satisfied                      Extremely Satisfied

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

EQ7. How well did visitors at SEMICON West meet your expectations?

Did Not Meet Expectation           Meet Expectations           Exceeded Expectations

1  2  3  4

EQ8. Please rate your overall satisfaction with contractor services.

Not satisfied                      Extremely Satisfied

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

EQ9. Regarding contractor services at SEMICON West 2009, please identify any services or specific contractor with whom you were particularly delighted.

EQ10. Please identify any contractors with whom you were particularly dissatisfied and the reasons for your dissatisfaction.

EQ11. Please share any additional recommendations for improving contractor services at SEMICON West.
EQ12. Based on your experience, please rate your overall satisfaction with SEMI staff customer service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not satisfied</th>
<th>Extremely Satisfied</th>
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<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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EQ13a. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services (if utilized) __ Exhibitor Invites (free email campaign service).

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<th>Not satisfied</th>
<th>Extremely Satisfied</th>
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EQ13b. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services (if utilized) __ Monthly Exhibitor Updates.

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<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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EQ13c. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services (if utilized) __ Exhibitor education (webinars, best practice guides).

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<th>Not satisfied</th>
<th>Extremely Satisfied</th>
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<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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EQ13d. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services (if utilized) __ Web tiles/banners.

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<th>Not satisfied</th>
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<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
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EQ13e. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services (if utilized) __ Attendee list rental.

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<th>Not satisfied</th>
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EQ13f. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services (if utilized) __ Press room.

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<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 NA</td>
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EQ13g. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following exhibitor and marketing services (if utilized) __ Website (www.semiconwest.org).

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<th>Not satisfied</th>
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EQ14. What other services or marketing tools could we provide or improve that would enhance your exhibiting experience?

EQ15. What did you like most about SEMICON West 2009?

EQ16. Please share your recommendations for improving future SEMICON West events.

EQ17. In which other trade shows or conferences, if any, do you plan to participate as an exhibitor during the next 12 months?
VISITOR SURVEY

SQ1. Please indicate your primary level of purchasing authority (choose one).
   A. Final Decision Maker
   B. Recommend
   C. Specify/Evaluate
   D. No Role

SQ2. Please indicate your primary objectives in attending SEMICON West 2009 (choose all that apply).
   A. Meet with current suppliers
   B. Find new suppliers
   C. Find solutions to specific needs, issues, questions, and/or challenges
   D. See new products and technologies
   E. See products/product demonstrations
   F. Attend technical and/or business programs
   G. Network/networking
   H. Employment/job hunting
   I. Other

SQ3. How satisfied were you in meeting your objectives at SEMICON West 2009?

Not satisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Satisfied

SQ4. Will your attendance at SEMICON West 2009 influence your evaluation, recommendation, or purchasing of products, technologies, and/or services over the next 12 months?
   A. Yes
   B. No

SQ5. Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you attend a future SEMICON West event?
   A. Yes
   B. No
SQ6. Based on your experience at SEMICON West 2009, would you recommend SEMICON West to your colleagues or peers?

A. Yes  
B. No

SQ7. Please rate your overall experience and satisfaction with SEMICON West 2009.

Not satisfied  Extremely Satisfied

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

SQ8. Please rate your overall experience and satisfaction with exhibitor performance at SEMICON West 2009.

Not satisfied  Extremely Satisfied

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10


SQ10a. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ Keynotes.

Unimportant  Neutral  Important

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

SQ10b. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ TechXPOTs/Technical presentation stages on the show floor.

Unimportant  Neutral  Important

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

SQ10c. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ Extreme Electronics (specialized area for emerging technologies and markets).

Unimportant  Neutral  Important

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
SQ10d. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ Panels/summits (Foundry Summit, Packaging Summit, Test Summit, etc.).

Unimportant  Neutral  Important

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

SQ10e. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ ITRS Summer Public Conference.

Unimportant  Neutral  Important

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

SQ10f. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ Market Symposium/market data programs.

Unimportant  Neutral  Important

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

SQ10g. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ Organized networking events.

Unimportant  Neutral  Important

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

SQ10h. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ Multi-day technical conference/workshops.

Unimportant  Neutral  Important

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

SQ10i. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ Standards workshops.

Unimportant  Neutral  Important

1  2  3  4  5  6  7
SQ10j. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ EHS workshops/programs.

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SQ10k. Please rate the importance of the following programs, features, and services __ Third-party education programs (e.g., PTI Seminars).

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SQ11a. Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 __ Online Event Directory.

Not satisfied Extremely Satisfied

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

SQ11b. Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 __ Pre-show planning tools (online search, scheduling, personalized event plans/maps).

Not satisfied Extremely Satisfied

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

SQ11c. Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 __ Online/Web Registration.

Not satisfied Extremely Satisfied

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

SQ11d. Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 __ Onsite Registration.

Not satisfied Extremely Satisfied

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
SQ11e. Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 __ Hotel Reservations.

Not satisfied                            Extremely Satisfied
1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

SQ11f. Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 __ Silicon Valley/San Jose Shuttle.

Not satisfied                            Extremely Satisfied
1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

SQ11g. Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 __ Local Hotel Shuttles.

Not satisfied                            Extremely Satisfied
1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

SQ11h. Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 __ Print Event Directory.

Not satisfied                            Extremely Satisfied
1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

SQ11i. Please rate the following services provided at SEMICON West 2009 __ Pocket Guide/Show Floor Map.

Not satisfied                            Extremely Satisfied
1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

SQ12. Please offer any recommendations or suggested improvements to the visitor services offered before, during, and after SEMICON West.

SQ13. What did you like most about SEMICON West 2009?

SQ14. What would you improve at SEMICON West?
SQ15. Including this year, how many times have you attended SEMICON West?
   A. This is my first year attending SEMICON West
   B. Two/three times
   C. Four or more times

SQ16. How far in advance did you decide to attend this event?
   A. One week or less before the show
   B. 1-2 weeks before
   C. 1 month before
   D. 2-3 months before
   E. 4 or more months before

SQ17. Which other events/expositions do you plan to attend in the next 12 months?
   A. None/no other events
   B. Other SEMICONs
   C. SPIE
   D. Photonics West
   E. Productronica/Electronica
   F. IPC/APEX
   G. ITC
   H. DAC
   I. Other____________________________________________________