Announcing the Final Examination of Leonard Pollard for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Time & Location: October 1, 2010 at 9:00 AM in CL1 306
Title: Perceived Service Quality’s Impact on Behavioral Intentions in the Timeshare Industry

The purpose of this research is to develop a model to explain consumer’s perceived service quality and its relationship to behavioral intentions (recommend product and price sensitivity). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a popular multivariate technique used to assess casual relationships between variables, whether observed or latent, in theoretical models. Researchers have created tools to measure service quality and behavioral intentions but there is limited empirical research that has tested both these concepts simultaneously. While industrial engineers have addressed service quality in the manufacturing industry for decades, it isn’t until recently they have started to address similar issues in the service industry, such as in health care and lodging. The pre-existing complexities of service quality in the service industry (intangible, heterogeneous, inseparable production and consumption) make it important for research to explore ways to define their impacts and determine how they should be measured. The timeshare industry was chosen because of the limited service quality research and requests by academics and practitioners alike for more empirical studies to help make data driven decisions.

An electronic survey was created and distributed to individuals who experienced a timeshare mini vacation (sales tour in conjunction with stay). An exploratory factor analysis and SEM were performed to establish the dimensions of perceived service quality and determine the type of model that best represents the consumer’s perception of this experience. These results found a two-factor correlated first order model achieved the best combination of fit indices. This model was also confirmed through another sample. This model was then used to test hypothesis with regards to the relationship between the service quality constructs and behavioral intentions (recommend product and price sensitivity), which were positively correlated, and also with consumer demographics.

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Dr. Christopher Geiger, Industrial Engineering and Management Systems
Dr. Charles Reilly, Industrial Engineering and Management Systems
Dr. Randall Upchurch, Hospitality Management

Approved for distribution by Dr. Linda Malone, Committee Chair, on September 3, 2010.

The public is welcome to attend.