

An Exploratory Study of Exhibitors' Motivation and Business Performance in B2B Exhibitions

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Abstract

International exhibition is a critical part in the economy of any nation regarding different aspects. It also creates an extraordinary commitment to tourism areas, trade and development of local and provincial economies and it could be seen that exhibition is an immediate developing section of the tourism industry. Thus, understanding the complexity of exhibitors' motivation to attend business to business (B2B) exhibitions and their business performance assessment are of significance. The purpose of this journal article is to introduce a review and discussion of the concepts concerning exhibition motivations from international exhibitors' perspectives and their business performance measurements when participating in B2B exhibitions. Based on related studies, a dimension of exhibition motivational attributes was summarized, i.e., commercial selling activities, marketing intelligence activities, exhibition marketing communication, facilitating services and destination appropriateness. In addition, to measure exhibitors' business accomplishments, marketing and financial performance need to be clarified. The discoveries of this study could provide guidelines and meaningful implications to professional exhibition organizers and convention visitor bureaus in developing, supporting and organizing successful international B2B exhibitions. Further, it is expected that the results of this study will lay the groundwork for a new exhibition motivational attributes framework that can be used in future B2B exhibitions research.

Keywords: Exhibitors' Motivation, Business Performance, Business to Business (B2B) Exhibitions

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การศึกษาเชิงสำรวจในแรงจูงใจของผู้ออกงานแสดงสินค้า และการประเมินผลสำเร็จทางธุรกิจ ของการเข้าร่วมงานแสดงสินค้าสำหรับผู้ประกอบการ

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บทคัดย่อ

งานแสดงสินค้านำระดับนานาชาติมีความสำคัญต่อระบบเศรษฐกิจของประเทศและยังส่งผลถึงการพัฒนาเศรษฐกิจในบริเวณพื้นที่ใกล้เคียง โดยงานแสดงสินค้าเป็นธุรกิจที่มีการพัฒนาและมีความเจริญเติบโตอย่างรวดเร็วในอุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยว ดังนั้น การศึกษาเรื่องแรงจูงใจของผู้ออกงานแสดงสินค้าในการเข้าร่วมงานแสดงสินค้าสำหรับผู้ประกอบการและการประเมินผลสำเร็จทางธุรกิจจากการเข้าร่วมงานแสดงสินค้าจึงเป็นสิ่งสำคัญอย่างยิ่ง โดยบทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาและอภิปรายแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับแรงจูงใจในการเข้าร่วมงานแสดงสินค้าของผู้ออกงานแสดงสินค้านำระดับนานาชาติและการประเมินผลสำเร็จทางธุรกิจเมื่อเข้าร่วมงานแสดงสินค้า จากการศึกษางานวิจัยและงานวิชาการที่ผ่านมาสามารถสรุปได้ว่าแรงจูงใจในการเข้าร่วมงานแสดงสินค้าประกอบด้วย กิจกรรมการขายเชิงพาณิชย์ การเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลทางการตลาด การสื่อสารด้านการตลาดของงานแสดงสินค้า การบริการอำนวยความสะดวก และความเหมาะสมของจุดหมายปลายทาง นอกจากนี้ในการประเมินผลสำเร็จทางธุรกิจของผู้ออกงานแสดงสินค้าสามารถวัดได้โดย การประเมินผลด้านการตลาดและการประเมินผลด้านการเงิน ผลการศึกษาครั้งนี้สามารถใช้เป็นแนวทางสำหรับผู้จัดงานแสดงสินค้านำมืออาชีพและสำนักงานส่งเสริมการจัดประชุมและนิทรรศการในการพัฒนา สนับสนุนและดำเนินการจัดงานแสดงสินค้าสำหรับผู้ประกอบการให้ประสบความสำเร็จและสามารถใช้เป็นกรอบแนวคิดการวิจัยด้านคุณลักษณะของแรงจูงใจในการเข้าร่วมงานแสดงสินค้าสำหรับผู้ประกอบการต่อไปในอนาคต

คำสำคัญ: แรงจูงใจในการเข้าร่วมงานแสดงสินค้าของผู้ออกงานแสดงสินค้า การประเมินผลสำเร็จทางธุรกิจ งานแสดงสินค้าสำหรับผู้ประกอบการ

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Introduction

The tourism industry brings tourists and generates income to countries, and is a major force in the global economy (World travel and tourism council, 2019). In 2018, 1,401 million international travelers could be categorized in four main purposes of visit, i.e., 56% for leisure and recreational activities, 27% for visiting friends and relatives (VFR) and health or religious, 13% for professional and business travel with the remaining 4% for unspecified purposes. In addition, Thailand was claimed as one of the most famous tourism destinations in the world (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2019a). Regarding the total number of inbound travelers in 2018, Thailand was ranked the 9th most favorite travel destination among 216 nations (UNWTO, 2019b). According to Thailand tourism statistical reports, in 2018, Thailand welcomes 38.27 million inbound travelers, earning approximately 65,027 million USD (Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2019). The increase in visitor from 2018 to 2019 was 4.2% with 39.7 million inbound travelers (Thai News Agency, 2020).

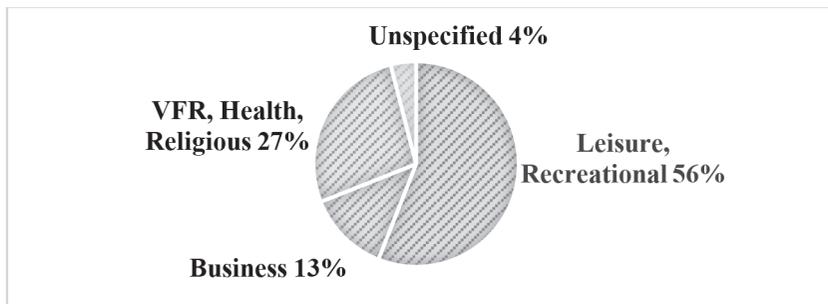


Figure 1: Global International Travelers' Visit Purposes 2018

Note. UNWTO, 2019a.

In addition, business travel incorporates people traveling for purposes associated with their careers (Davidson, 1994). Business travelers could be identified as meeting, incentive travel, convention and exhibition (MICE) travelers (Lee & Lee, 2017). The MICE industry is the quickest developing business sector of the tourism industry, both in country and worldwide (Kim, Sun, & Ap, 2008; Qiu, Li, So, & Lehto, 2015). MICE travel is considered to be a key area of growth for the tourism industry with high income travelers. When comparing expenditure between MICE and leisure travelers, MICE traveler's spending is approximately three times higher (Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau [TCEB],

2015). Accordingly, the governments of some Asian nations, such as China, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and Thailand have greatly encouraged MICE at the national level because they consider it a highly profitable industry (Kim et al., 2008; TCEB, 2018). Business travel or MICE has been strategically placed by the Thai government in its tourism destination positioning for several years. According to the National Economic and Social Development Plan, no. 12 (2017-2021) and the Thai 20-year National Strategy (2017-2036), the Thai government has established particular objectives to transform “Thailand” to “Thailand Economy 4.0” changing from a labor-intensive economy to a creative economy using innovative industries. The strategy plans to empower the nation to eliminate inequality and middle income traps and unequal economic development. Thus, high-income tourism has been identified as involving innovative industries (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2017).

Additionally, Thailand, as a prime tourism destination for MICE travelers, has been forming into an undeniably famous area to host global proceedings including conventions, exhibitions and other business special events (TCEB, 2015). MICE sector represented 3.32% of international visits to Thailand in 2018, totaling 1,255,985 persons, an increase of 19.85 percent from the fiscal year 2017.

Table 1: Total Number and Revenue of International MICE Travelers in Thailand from 2016 to 2019

Year	Number (Person)	Income (USD)
2016	1,001,803	2,424,170,485
2017	1,047,959	2,576,661,790
2018	1,255,985	3,122,325,965
2019	1,273,981	3,042,135,000

Note: TCEB, 2017; Bangkokbiznews, 2018; Yaisamsaen, 2019.

In addition, exhibitions are one essential element of the MICE industry (Borodako, 2017), and a critical part in the economy of any nation regarding different aspects (Jin & Weber, 2016; Rice & Almosawi, 2002). In previous decades exhibition businesses have obtained appreciable amounts of investing and are perceived by the government as highly profitable (Qiu et al., 2015). It has been broadly noted that exhibition travelers have higher expenditures than generally business travelers and they commonly stay

longer periods at a destination (Han & Verma, 2014) Exhibitions also have an extraordinary commitment to tourism areas, including trade and development of the local and provincial economies and it has been clearly seen that they represent an immediate developing section of the tourism industry (Çobanoğlu & Turaeva, 2014; Lin & Lin, 2013; Proszowska, 2016). Likewise, exhibitions provide knowledge, exchange of innovation, business networking and investment, strengthening and enhancing the competitiveness of various industries (Kelle & Rivza, 2012). Furthermore, exhibitions have a direct impact on host countries regarding creating financial advantages, improving destination image and building up future appearances to the destinations (Arnegger & Herz, 2016). Exhibitions are increasingly important in emerging markets, for example, Singapore and Thailand (Rice & Almosawi, 2002). The exhibition industry in Thailand has increased at a surprisingly fast rate. As stated in the Thailand MICE statistics 2017, 104 international exhibitions were held in Thailand with a total number of 215,992 participants comprising 24,800 international exhibitors and 191,192 international visitors. This constituted a total average growth rate of 19.68% and generated revenue of 552 million USD (TCEB, 2017). Additionally, Thailand was ranked 1st in the ASEAN region regarding amount of exhibition space and total number of venues and was ranked 5th in Asia and Oceania in terms of exhibition space as shown in Table 2 (The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry [UFI], 2017).

Table 2: Number of Venues and Amount of Exhibition Space in Asia and Oceania in 2017

Ranking	Country	Exhibition Space (m ²)	No. of Venues
1	China	5,761,039	112
2	Japan	373,409	14
3	India	337,392	16
4	Korea	308,368	12
5	Thailand	244,323	9
6	Singapore	219,970	4
7	Australia	172,092	12
8	Hong Kong	149,820	2
9	Malaysia	125,342	6
10	Indonesia	120,135	9

Note: UFI, 2017.

An immense amount research and a number of articles allude to exhibitions using various terms, for example, trade shows, fairs, trade fairs, expositions: all these words are used interchangeably (Kellezi, 2014; Lee, Yeung, & Dewald, 2010). The term exhibition is used more extensively to gain a better understanding of any exhibit of products and services (Jin & Weber, 2016). In fact, exhibitions could be classified in three categories (Nayak & Bhalla, 2016). These three sorts of exhibitions are particularly unique in terms of visitor profiles (Lee & Lee, 2017) and are described below.

1. Trade shows (business to business functions hereafter referred to as B2B exhibitions) are private, that is, closed to the public. They are intended only for experts working in a particular industry, for sellers and buyers from that specific industry (Fenich, 2012).

2. Consumer shows (business to customer functions) are available to the general public. The exhibitors are basically retailers selling to the public, similar to purchasing products from stores (Rittichainuwat & Mair, 2012).

3. Consolidation shows (trade and consumer shows) are a composite of the previous two exhibition types. This last classification is available to business visitors the primary days of the show (normally on weekdays) and available to general visitors the last days of the exhibition (normally on the weekend) (Robbe, 2000).

This study focused only on trade shows (business to business functions). Thus, to clear up probable phrasing perplexity, the author sets forth a definition for trade show or B2B exhibitions that is proper for this study as: “An exhibit of goods or service available only for invited business visitors and exhibiting companies from a particular industry. It is private not open to the general public. Most of the exhibitors are manufacturer, distributor, suppliers or wholesaler display their products or service, which is not hand-carry, for the primary objective of sales and marketing in large volume or large amount of money for only a business purpose. The customer is one who is buying on behalf of an organization rather than buying for personal consumption”.

In addition, three key stakeholders will be included in the context of exhibitions including visitors, exhibitors and professional exhibition organizers (hereafter referred to as PEO) (Gopalakrishna, Roster, & Sridhar, 2010; Lee & Kang, 2014). International exhibitors are the principle target clients for PEO and destination marketers (Lee, Lee, & Joo, 2015).

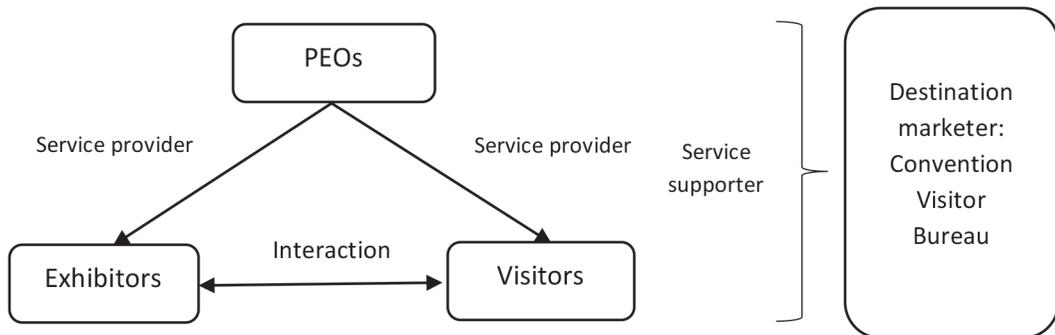


Figure 2: Key Stakeholders in B2B Exhibitions

Note: Adapted from Lin, Jiang, & Kerstetter, 2018 visitors, exhibitors, and organizers.

The sustainable accomplishment of an exhibition relies upon the quantity and quality of exhibitors at the show (Whitfield & Webber, 2011). However, some business companies decide not participate in an exhibition for the reason that the exhibition cost is too high, they could not generate enough sales volume or they were gratified with other promotion methods (Shipley et al., 1993). In the same way, Herbig, O'Hara, & Palumbo (1997) discovered that the main reasons given for business companies not exhibiting were high expenditure and unrecognized efficiency of exhibitions. Conversely, Brown, Mohan, & Eric (2017) argued that investment in B2B exhibitions is quite high because exhibition companies can obtain numerous benefits.

Currently, in the competitive exhibition market environment, PEO need to satisfy new exhibitors and retain existing exhibitors because an exhibition succeeds or becomes unsuccessful depending on exhibitors' expectation fulfillment and aspiration to attend the exhibition and their return to future occasions (Wang, Lee, & Huh, 2017). Lin (2016) identified that the primary indicator of exhibitor's positive behavioral intention was satisfaction with PEO. When the PEO could not satisfy the exhibitors, it will decrease their eagerness to be interested in the exhibition (Huang, 2016; Sarmiento & Farhangmehr, 2016). Having an inadequate number of exhibitors could not pull in visitors (Lin et al., 2018). Therefore, finding better approaches to attract exhibitors to attend international exhibitions is a challenge for PEO (Lee et al., 2015).

Concerning the exhibition business, numerous researchers have reported concerning motivation related to attending such business events (Hansen, 2004). Related studies have discovered that many exhibitor's companies set few or even no aims for

the exhibitions and they did not assess their business events or evaluate their activities at all (Blythe, 2000; Gopalakrishna & Lilien, 1995). Proszowska (2016) argued that that contemporary exhibitors are becoming more professional and determine specific exhibition objectives and deliberately arrange clear cut approaches to accomplish them. However, knowledge of exhibition performance is essential to define the decision making process for business firms because the overall cost of participating in an exhibition is quite expensive (Alberca-Oliver, Rodríguez-Oromendía, & Parte-Esteban, 2015).

According to Wang et al. (2017), their study recommended that upcoming research possibly will analyze why business companies attend in an exhibition as well as their perceived evaluation of the advantages of participating that exhibition, which may provide further insights to PEOs. Hence, understanding exhibition attendance motivation and objectives from the perspective of exhibitors could permit PEO to provide better services and obtain more exhibitors and visitors to attend their business events. To accomplish these purposes, PEO must recognize the habits of exhibitors and why and how they settle on specific choices (Lin et al., 2018) visitors, exhibitors, and organizers.

Nevertheless, little research has investigated the characteristics of exhibition attendees, especially their motivations for participating in the business events (Han & Verma, 2014). Apart from that, most studies regarding international exhibitions in Thailand have concentrated on the visitors' perspective and no research has focused on exhibition's motivation attributes and their impact on business performance. Therefore, information regarding this knowledge remains constrained and studies conducted in these areas are required. This article intends to address the research gap by determining, exhibition's motivation attributes from the international exhibitors' points of view and their business performance measurement when participating in a B2B exhibition. The investigation has constructed a determination model for PEO, which can clarify and predict exhibitors' motivation in taking an interest in an exhibition. The discoveries of this study could provide guidelines and meaningful implications to PEO and convention visitor bureaus (hereafter referred to as CVB) in developing, supporting, and organizing successful international B2B exhibitions. This article is organized in four main parts. The first part examines the concepts related to the dimension of exhibition motivation. Then the second part focuses on exhibition participation from the exhibitor's perspectives. The third part describes the criteria of business evaluation when attending an exhibition

including financial performance and marketing performance. Lastly, the final part presents the study's conclusion, implications, and limitations of the study.

Exhibition motivation from the exhibitor's perspectives

The exhibitors' motivation to participate in an exhibition and the exhibition performance have been specifically well reported in different studies (Lee et al., 2010) while exhibition performance could affect the exhibiting motivation (Kang & Schrier, 2011). The most prominent typology ordering the motives in attending as an exhibitor was presented by Hansen (2004), who identified that the exhibition performance depended on more complex approaches using outcome-based and behavioral-based methods, constructed into five measurements consisting of selling (sales-related) and non-selling (information-gathering, company image-building, relationship-building, and motivation) dimensions. Nonetheless, to investigate how conventions and exhibitions draw attention to sellers and the intentions of seller participation on business performance, Huang (2016) developed new exhibition attributes including exhibition image and extension services.

Additionally, numerous scholars have investigated exhibition objectives, exhibitor's motivation and exhibition performance to obtain a better understanding of exhibitor's satisfaction levels. In another study, Whitfield & Webber (2011) presented that exhibition attributes consisted of the exhibition's reputation, presence of competitors, access to information, and networking opportunities. In addition, Menon & Edward (2013) investigated exhibitor's objectives at a tourism trade show and their outcomes demonstrated that the three most imperative inspirations included 1) providing information concerning the organization's products and services, 2) creating and keeping up relationships with existing clients and 3) developing and maintaining company image. However, Lee, Seo, & Yeung (2012) considered and compared primary motives for exhibition participation from the perspectives of exhibitors and visitors. The five major motives for exhibitor's participation including 1) competition, 2) corporate/brand image, 3) sales and promotion, 4) networking and 5) market extension were classified through exploratory factor analyses. Moreover, Lin and Lin (2013) investigated exhibition service quality based on exhibitors' points of views. The study categorized service quality using six criteria derived from literature review, i.e., 1) exhibition marketing, 2) exhibition design, 3) surrounding environment, 4) service personnel, 5) booth management and 6) service information.

Ahead of this, Lee et al. (2015) presented the four elements of exhibition service quality that affect exhibitor fulfillment and behavioral intentions and they argued that service quality consisted of 1) booth design and layout, 2) exhibition logistics, 3) venue services and 4) show management. In 2016, Proszowska explored exhibitor's desires towards exhibition organizers and the level of exhibitor's fulfillment. Eight dimensions of cooperation between exhibition organizers and exhibitors was constructed including 1) information quality, 2) infrastructure quality, 3) service quality, 4) additional services accessibility, 5) trade fair communication and preparations, 6) additional promotion opportunities, 7) media promotion and 8) supporting the evaluation of trade fair outcomes.

Furthermore, few research studies focusing on exhibitions have addressed the significance of the exhibition's destination. Kim et al. (2008) determined the exhibition host cities' positioning, as recognized by exhibitors, who attended an exhibition held in Hong Kong. Destination attribute items were carefully chosen from the literature reviewed and classified in six dimensions including 1) access, 2) accommodation, 3) attractions, 4) exhibition services, 5) society and 6) others. Later, Jin, Weber, & Bauer (2013) and Jin and Weber (2016) stated that a key component success of an exhibition is the destination's attractiveness. They argued that one major aspect for sellers and buyers, when judging whether or not to attend an exhibition is the destination. The study's discoveries affirmed that destination attractiveness is a higher order construct comprising six components constituting cluster effects 1) host city leadership in the industry cluster effect, 2) host city/region as a source of exhibitors, 3) venue facilities, 4) accessibility, 5) destination leisure environment and 6) destination economic environment.

In another theoretical study, Lu and Cai (2009) inspected the image loyalty relationship with regards to exhibition and convention tourism. Participants' impressions of exhibition, place for exhibiting and destination were investigated as an image package correlated to their gratification and the quality of being loyal to an exhibition. The image package was composed of both cognitive and affective characteristics including destination image, venue image and exhibition image. On the other hand, Han and Verma (2014) argued that exhibitions have been influenced by such patterns as social media and mobile technology, environmental sustainability, corporate social responsibility and budgetary constraints. Successful exhibitions need to fulfill these integral arrangements of objectives. However, Wang et al. (2017) inspected what factors stimulated Chinese

outbound exhibitors traveling to exhibit in the US and examined the contrasts between the exhibitors participating in overseas exhibitions arranged by Chinese organizers and participating in those destination exhibitions arranged by US organizers. They developed five motivational aspects comprising 1) sales, 2) incentive, 3) social contacts and networking, 4) competition and 5) guanxi (special relationship with people).

Based on scanning literature, focused on exhibition objectives and exhibition performance, the author summarized exhibition motivational attributes in five dimensions including 1) commercial selling activities, 2) marketing intelligence activities, 3) exhibition marketing communication, 4) facilitating services and 5) destination appropriateness.

Exhibition motivational attributes: Commercial selling activities

Exhibitions are known as unique and possibly attractive sales and purchase vehicles for exhibitors and attendees (Lee et al., 2012). Exhibitors attend an exhibition to enhance their actual sales and to establish probable contacts and leads (Kang & Schrier, 2011). They mostly rank selling objectives high on their list of priorities (Rice & Almosawi, 2002), and also tend to set official objectives for their performance (Blythe, 2000). In addition, commercial selling activities is a buying and selling actions between business companies who is an exhibitor with other business companies who is a visitor, selling and purchasing products in large volume or large amount of money for only a business purpose. Selling activities encompass 1) identifying prospects, 2) closing sales, 3) generating leads and 4) contacting new merchandisers (Blythe, 2000; Seringhaus & Rosson, 2001). Furthermore, Kozak (2005) concluded that the four main purposes of selling related activities including 1) directly meeting the existing and new customers, 2) taking orders and actual sales, 3) making new contracts and 4) interacting with existing distributors. International exhibitions are one of a kind in making these objectives achievable, especially involving circumstances regarding global activities (Shoham, 1999).

The EIF Exhibition Effectiveness Survey asked exhibitors to classify purposes for attending an exhibition, and the findings specified that a sales oriented approach was in the first rank followed by generating sales lead, with most non-selling oriented approaches revealed lower down the list (Blythe & Rayner, 1999). Similarly, Wang et al. (2017) identified what factors motivated Chinese outbound exhibitors traveling to exhibits

in the US, and the results showed that selling activities was the factor reported by a majority of most Chinese outbound exhibitors.

Exhibition draw a large number of visitors, who willing to examine and purchase various products in a few concentrated day, whilst they are most likely to see exhibition as the best channel to achieve their buying purpose (UFI & Explori, 2018). Measson & Campbell-Hunt (2015) indicated that all business companies perceived selling, including the related activities of recruiting distributors, as a primary objective of participating exhibitions because “the main driver for attending an exhibition is sales” (p. 109), and companies anticipate their exhibitors will get sales.

Exhibition motivational attributes: Marketing intelligence activities

Marketing intelligence (MI) is about collecting and gathering information which could be transformed into action and could be applied to strategic planning, both short and long term, to remain one step ahead of the competition (Wright & Calof, 2006). Bettis-Outland, Johnston, & Wilson (2012) stated that MI is an arrangement of systems and sources used by supervisors to collect regular data about advancements in the business sector and marketing environment. The marketing department needs to observe critical micro & macro environments and gather useful information for business from clients, vendors, distributors and competitors. The accumulation of marketing information is achievable through marketing intelligence (Cacciolatti & Fearne, 2013).

Kotler, Bowen, & Makens (1999) divided external marketing information in three types comprising 1) visitor information (profile of visitors, visitors expenditures, visitation days, purpose of visit and recreational facilities desired); 2) competitive information (competitor’s marketing mix and strategic direction); and 3) innovations and trends (technological improvements in product or services). Additionally, Hansen (2004) explained three objectives regarding research-related activities including gathering information about 1) competitors, 2) suppliers and 3) visitors. The most important stage within the MI process is the information gathering procedure, where the raw material is recorded (Tsu & Ahmed, 1999). From the exhibitors’ perspectives, the main purpose for exhibiting at an exhibition is to gather information about competitors, customers, products and future trends in the industry (Blythe, 2000) as well as to collect comprehensive market research and information about the most recent technologies (Rice & Almosawi, 2002).

In addition, Cobanoglu and Turaeva (2014), reported that information gathering is necessary for exhibition performance and two-path communication amid the event and post-event follow-up have legitimate effects on information gathering execution at the exhibition. It could be clarified that the fundamental reasons business firms actually participate in an exhibition is information gathering, which can entail either details about clients, competitors, products, and new trends in the industry, because usually information gathering is supposed to develop during and after the business event. Similarly, Ladipo, Awoniyi, & Arebi (2017) investigated the effect of marketing intelligence on business competitive advantages. The conclusion of the discoveries uncovered that marketing intelligence sub-constructs data, for example, internal records, contender's business information, marketplace opportunity, and contenders' threats and rivals' risks, providing significant and positive effects on business competitive advantages of business firms.

Business information is a significant resource in business operations. During exhibitions, the exhibiting companies can gather related information of competitors, retailers, and customers (Borghini, Golfetto, & Rinallo, 2006). Sharland & Balogh (1996) pointed out that exhibition participation may offer an outstanding opportunity to collect several sorts of business information in national and international markets.

Exhibition motivational attributes: Exhibition marketing communication

Marketing communication strategy involves planning, implementing and controlling an organization's communication with target audiences; the objective being to achieve specified purposes in relation each audience (Brennan, Canning, & Mcdowell, 2014). Although many managers use the word "promotion", this is but one of various forms of "communication" (Getz, 2005). The fundamental configuration of marketing communications consist of all the methods by which an event communicates with its various constituencies and markets, comprising online advertising (websites, e-mails, text messaging); offline advertising (television, radio, magazines); sales promotions (samples, coupons, rebates, premium items) and public relations; presentations by sales representatives (Shimp, 2010).

Exhibition marketing signifies organizers setting a marketing strategy to draw in purchasers and participants to attend the exhibition including announcing the business events, contributing details on occasion activities by different channels comprising websites, trade publications advertisements, e-mails, direct mail to past participants and

potential attendees from other mailing records and public relations endeavors (Gopalakrishna, Malthouse, & Lawrence, 2017; Lin & Lin, 2013). Thus, PEO must pay serious attention to marketing communication programs that will fill their exhibition hall with both exhibitors and visitors. Without exhibitors, the exhibition will not be successful; without attendees, exhibitors will not return. In addition, Rittichainuwat and Mair (2012) suggested that visitors have multiple motivations to attend the exhibition including obtaining purchase information, being motivated by the theme of an exhibition or being stimulated to attend by media coverage.

Fundamentally, the duty of the PEO is to target and market to the correct participants. Marketing communication is regularly conducted through advertising in publication and direct mail. Frequently, educational sessions are proposed as an incentive, or noticeable industry professionals are contracted to give keynote addresses that pull in visitors. Discount programs, contests, gifts and other tools, employed to attract visitors, have been commonplace. Additionally, the internet has greatly affected how exhibitions are marketed to potential visitors. Most occasions have websites that enable visitors to enroll online. Therefore, PEO need to market two distinctly different yet inexorably linked publics. One group that must be focused on is exhibitors who need to reach potential buyers of their products and services. The other group constitutes visitors who desire to view, discuss and purchase the products and services demonstrated by the exhibitor. However, B2B exhibitions need to be informed just only in a specific area of the industry, without need to appeal to the general public (Fenich, 2012).

Exhibition motivational attributes: Facilitating services

In commercial industries worldwide, business firms that develop and produce great products but offer poor service support are critically disadvantage. To offer the best support, a producer must recognize the services that clients value most and their relative significance (Kotler, 2000).

In addition, Gronroos (1987) developed conceptual model of the service package. It is a bundle or package of services, which mainly determined what the customers are about to receive as shown in Figure 3.

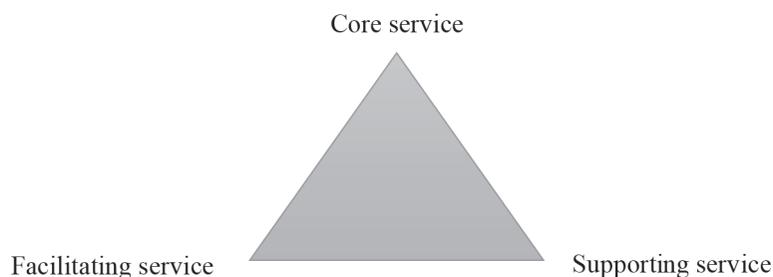


Figure 3: The Basic Service Package

Note: Gronroos, 1987.

- 1) Core services provides a focus for the business; it is the main reason for being.
- 2) Facilitating services are those services that must be present for the customer to use the core product.
- 3) Supporting services are extra services offered to add value to the core product and help to differentiate it from the competitors.

Today, in the exhibition industry, PEO offers services for exhibitors before, during and after the event and various studies have been conducted to determine exhibition facilitating services provided by PEO. Chen and Mo (2012) identified service quality of PEO as perceived by attendees. A comprehensive list of service quality determinants were constructed including six dimensions: 1) access, 2) booth layout and function, 3) booth management, 4) content, 5) exhibition and 6) booth attractiveness and registration. The findings indicated that the service quality of PEO has a positive influence on attendees' total satisfaction. In addition, Lin and Lin (2013) established service quality criteria for exhibitions from the exhibitors point of view and classified these criteria in six dimensions comprising 1) exhibition marketing, 2) exhibition design, 3) surrounding environment, 4) service personnel, 5) booth management and 6) service information.

Similarly, Lee et al. (2015) also explored exhibition service quality that affects exhibitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions from exhibitors participating in several exhibitions in Hong Kong. They constructed four exhibition service attributes including 1) booth design and layout, 2) exhibition logistics, 3) venue services and 4) show management. Moreover, Proszowska (2016) ascertained what exhibitor's expectations towards PEO are and eight criteria of cooperation between PEO and exhibitors was

constructed to evaluate the level of exhibitor's satisfaction comprising 1) quality of information, 2) quality of the exhibition infrastructure, 3) quality of services, 4) accessibility to additional services, 5) communication with the organizer, 6) promotional opportunities, 7) media promotion and 8) exhibition evaluation support. The results showed that the quality of the exhibition services proved to be the most significant.

Exhibition motivational attributes: Destination appropriateness

One of the most critical decisions that event organizers need to make is choosing an appropriate destination for their occasion (Dipietro, Breiter, Rompf, & Godlewska, 2008), and one key component of success of an exhibition is the destination's attractiveness (Jin et al., 2013). In the exhibition industry, the destination city and the venue is almost as important. So once the exhibition organizers have defined the show, the next step is choosing the suitable destination to hold the exhibition (Robbe, 2000). The exhibition and destination attractiveness together frame a coordinated exhibiting experience for exhibitors, shaping a synergistic connection with exhibition improvement.

In addition, Kim et al. (2008) evaluated the positioning of exhibition cities as perceived by a representative of exhibitors' participation in five exhibitions held in Hong Kong. Thirty destination attribute items were constructed and classified in seven domains comprising 1) access and cost, 2) exhibition services, 3) society, 4) entertainment, 5) accommodation, 6) physical environment, and 7) natural and historical resources. The research outcomes demonstrated that an intense competition exists between favorite exhibition host cities in Asia, including Beijing, Hong Kong, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore and Tokyo. The result also showed that, Hong Kong and Singapore were the two most preferred as an exhibition host destination. Likewise, Lu and Cai (2009) explored the image-loyalty relationship in the exhibition tourism context. Destinations, venues and exhibitions were explored as an image package in relationship to attendees' satisfaction and loyalty. The image package consisted of destination image, venue image and exhibition image, and the research discovered that all of the image packages influenced attendee loyalty to the exhibitions. Among these, venue image was the most influential. The results also showed that attendees' satisfactions with three constructs of image package contributed significantly to their comprehensive satisfaction with the exhibition experience.

In addition, Jin et al. (2013) examined key factors for an attractive and successful exhibition destination from the exhibitors' perspective. The findings from the 616 survey responses from exhibitors gathered at nine exhibitions in four cities in China emphasized the significance of host city leadership in the industry and host city/region as a source of exhibitors to an exhibition destination's attractiveness for exhibitors. These were followed in ranked order by accessibility, venue facilities, and the destination's leisure and economic environments. Additionally, Jin and Weber (2016) investigated organizers and visitors perspectives about exhibition destination attractiveness in mainland China. They developed five dimensions adapted from Jin et al. (2013) to measure destination attractiveness consisting of 1) destination economic circumstances, 2) destination leisure surrounding, 3) accessibility, 4) cluster effect and 5) venue facilities. Thus, it appears that the exhibition destination is considered important to motivate an exhibitor's participation and the long term growth of business special events. The success of the exhibition depends on the venue and the destination where an exhibition is held (Rittichainuwat & Mair, 2012).

Exhibition participation

It could be proposed that when exhibitors were aroused by exhibition motivational attributes, their enthusiasm to attend an exhibition would increase. Huang (2016) defines exhibition participation as the exhibitor's satisfaction with the activities offered by the PEO. The satisfaction of exhibitors performs a considerable role in the success of an exhibition (Chen & Mo, 2012). Customer satisfaction can lead to manifold indicators of business, along with positive word-of-mouth, higher profitability and intention to return (Lin et al., 2018) visitors, exhibitors, and organizers. Furthermore Lu and Cai (2009) stated that satisfaction positively affects customer loyalty (such as intention to repurchase, and positive word-of-mouth) which is a function of customer satisfaction. Similarly, Mihae (2005) identified that the two most mutual indicators of positive behavioral intentions are word of mouth and willingness to return.

Table 3: Summary of Exhibition Participation and Sources

Authors (Year)	Participate in an exhibition	Intention to return	Positive word of mouth
Mihae (2005)		x	x
Severt et al. (2007)		x	x
Lu & Cai (2009)		x	x
Kang & Schrier (2011)	x	x	x
Huang (2016)	x	x	x
Lin et al. (2018)	x	x	x

Note: Compiled by Authors.

Several studies have explored the relationship between satisfaction and produced a number of outcomes, for example, positive word of mouth and intent to return. Severt et al. (2007) explored the relationships between attendee's evaluation of convention performance, satisfaction judgment, and behavioral intention. The study exposed five criteria for convention motivation including 1) networking, 2) activities and opportunities, 3) education benefits, 4) convenience of conference and 5) products and deals. This study found that the relationships between educational activities, overall satisfaction, word-of-mouth, and repurchase intention were significant. Additionally, Kang and Schrier (2011) investigated the relationships between social values (such as improved company image and networking opportunities), size of business firms, previous experience, and behavioral intentions (such as intention to return and willingness to pay) in the B2B exhibition context. The main discoveries of this research were that exhibitors' social value affected their willingness to pay and intention to return to future exhibitions, along with satisfaction, which also influenced exhibitors' behavior intentions. Therefore, PEO need to acknowledge the fact that evaluating not only exhibition motivation but also the exhibition participation of exhibitors when measuring the success of an international exhibition is needed. This study defines exhibition participation as the satisfaction with the services offered by the PEOs including intention to return and positive word of mouth.

Exhibitor's business performance

Exhibitions are viewed as a significant component in the promotion mix (Kerin & Cron, 1991; Blythe, 1999). However, the cost of participating in exhibition is high to exhibition firms, so they have to determine what factors influence their performance and efficiency (Alberca-Oliver et al., 2015). The expression, 'business performance', is used as a general performance indicator to acquire both the financial and market features of performance. Market performance indicates measures, for example, sales volume and market share although financial performance is actually relevant to money related measures, for instance, profit margin and return on investment (Jaakkola, Möller, Parvinen, Evanschitzky, & Mühlbacher, 2010). Additionally, Morgan (2012) investigated market performance and found that it may be captured in indicators such as enhance customer satisfaction and behavioral loyalty, increase sales volume, decrease price sensitivity and expand the market share. Similarly,

Abreu-Ledón, Luján-García, Garrido-Vega, & Escobar-Pérez (2018) declared that performance has been conceptualized under two aspects: financial performance such as return on investment, return on assets, profit margin, and return on sales; and market performance such as sales growth, sales and market share. Therefore, business performance in this study refers to the sum of market performance and financial performance.

Table 4: Summary of Business Performance and Sources

Authors (Year)	Market Performance	Financial Performance
Jaakkola et al. (2010)	Sales volume Market share	Profit margin Return on investment
Morgan (2012)	Customer satisfaction and loyalty Sales volume Decrease price sensitivity Expand the market share	
Abreu-Ledón et al. (2018)	Sales growth Sales and market share	Return on investment Return on assets Profit margin Return on sale

Note: Compiled by Authors.

Conclusion and implications

This study summarized exhibition motivation and business performance measurement when participating in B2B exhibitions from the exhibitors' perspectives, which were described in related research journals and articles. The findings of this study are twofold. First, the discovery demonstrated that exhibition motivational attributes consist of commercial selling activities, marketing intelligence activities, exhibition marketing communication, facilitating services and destination appropriateness. Second, the exploration proposed that marketing performance and financial performance are business performance measurement. The contributions of this article have a number of significant implications for future study. The discoveries of this study could provide meaningful implications to PEO and destination marketers in developing guidelines to attract international exhibitors to participating in B2B exhibitions. Moreover, a better understanding of these knowledge will help in enhancing the business tourism industry in general and especially in Thailand. Further, it is expected that the results of this study will lay the groundwork for a new exhibition motivational attributes framework that can be used in future B2B exhibition research.

Limitations and Future Research

Although the study outlined here is comprehensive, some limitations were encountered that need to be considered. First, this article does not empirically test the constructs. Second, the study focused only on exhibitor's perspectives and endeavored to conclude their possible exhibition motivation. Therefore, future research should explore beyond collecting considerations and rather, establish a theoretical model to test the construct validity empirically to describe exhibitors' motivation and their business accomplishments. Even of greater benefit, future research should consider studying the motivations from the visitors' perspectives. This would contribute a more comprehensive measure of the dimension and compare the two distinct groups; and, hence, provide meaningful implications for PEO and CVB to supporting or organizing successful B2B exhibitions and attract more participants to their business events and countries.

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