

MINOR LEAGUE FAN SATISFACTION WITH THE SEASON TICKET
SELLING PROCESS

A Thesis

by

JASON DANIEL REESE

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

May 2010

Major Subject: Kinesiology

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Gregg Bennett
Committee Members,	John Singer
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ABSTRACT

Minor League Fan Satisfaction with the Season Ticket Selling Process.

(May 2010)

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Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Gregg Bennett

The purpose of this study was to assess satisfaction with the season ticket selling process administered by a minor league baseball franchise. Minor league sport organizations rely heavily on season ticket sales and retention of its fan base. Therefore, knowing the perceptions of consumers, organizations have an opportunity to fulfill consumer needs. Respondents (N=615) to a consumer satisfaction survey included season (N=365) and non-season (N=250) ticket holders of a southern Triple-A baseball team. Results indicate ineffective television and radio advertising, a favorable experience with the purchasing process and fair and appropriate pricing. Consumer ticket use in relation to perceived team connection and repurchase intention was not based on the club's win-loss record. Future investigations should distinguish if perceptions change longitudinally when managers attempt to address consumer needs.

DEDICATION

To my wife Kristin, who guides, supports, and loves me

&

To my family who always supports me in everything I do

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I would like to express thanks to my committee chair, Dr. Bennett, for his support, patience, and understanding throughout this research. Also, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Singer and Dr. Walraven, for their guidance and support.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The ticket sales process and other variables are important in an uncertain economy. In this type of economy consumers are continuously aware of what they are spending their discretionary income on. While the sports market in the United States had an estimated \$44 to \$60 billion impact on the economy in 2008, consumers are still weary of spending their discretionary income on sports (Humphreys & Ruseski, 2009). This thinking has not just affected major league sport franchises. Over the past five years many minor league sport organizations have had a decreasing number of season ticket holders (G. Miller, personal communication, June 14, 2009). Because of the season ticket holder decrease, sports teams, at all levels, continually search for ways to maximize revenues. Major league sports franchises are able to generate significant revenues outside of what can be accomplished via season ticket sales, yet minor league franchises do not always have that luxury. Thus, season ticket sales are critically important for minor league sport franchises.

There are several variables that affect season ticket sales. First, marketing activities implemented by the sport organizations affect who, and how many, purchase new season tickets. As suggested by Burton and Cornilles (1998), season tickets sales often play an important part of increasing a sport organizations bottom line, especially via new ticket sales. The second variable that affects season ticket sales is the purchase processes.

This thesis follows the style of *Sport Marketing Quarterly*.

Beccarini and Ferrand (2006) suggest that satisfaction judgments are formed through the purchase process by consumers, are dependant on organizations fulfilling consumer expectations. Third, the satisfaction consumers have with the price of the season tickets affect the number of season ticket holders. Howard and Crompton (2004) propose differentiated pricing strategies and flexible ticket packaging are commonly used by sport organizations to influence consumer decisions. Fourth, the use of all ticket within the season ticket package (referred to as full use of season tickets) affects sport organizations bottom line. Without full utilizations of tickets, sport organizations are losing the opportunity to obtain consumer discretionary income (Zhang, Connaughton, & Vaughn, 2004). Finally, without the proper management of membership, repurchase intentions of consumers can deplete the number of season ticket holders a sport organization has (McDonald & Stravos, 2007).

Because sport organizations have been losing season ticket holders, and individuals are cautious of what they spend their discretionary income on, sport marketers look for effective ways to market their season tickets. Due to the importance placed on marketing activities, this study attempts to determine if the common marketing activities of minor league sport organizations are effective or ineffective in regard to ticket sales. In addition, satisfaction levels of season ticket holders are determined by the sport organizations meeting consumer's expectations (Greenwell, 2007). This investigation is seeks to understand the overall (vertical) satisfaction with the purchase process (Oliver, 1997).

The purpose of this study was to assess satisfaction with the season ticket selling process administered by a minor league baseball franchise. Specifically, we assessed variables of fan satisfaction with the ticket sales process. By understanding the satisfaction of consumers, and identifying areas that need improvement, sport organizations are able to attract and retain the discretionary spending of consumers. Consumer satisfaction research has been conducted in various sport industry contexts; however, there is a relative paucity of original research assessing season ticket sales within the context of minor league baseball. Subsequent effects on season ticket sales were also examined.

When consumers attend games, more money is spent than just admission costs (e.g. parking, concessions, apparel, etc.). By increasing product consumption (attendance), organizations are able to increase income from other streams. The value of season tickets is also increased as consumption of games (attendance) within their ticket packages increase. To increase product consumption, organizations must understand the satisfaction season ticket holders have with the product.

Due to the level of importance consumers have placed on service, this study examines the level of satisfaction season ticket holders have with the purchase process. If discretionary income has become increasingly sparse, then sport organizations should understand the level of satisfaction their consumers have with the purchase process.

If the marketing activities were effective in bringing consumers to a purchase decision, and the satisfaction with the purchase process is superior, then the final deciding factor is the price. The relationship between the available discretionary income

and price of a product is extremely important for sport organizations. If the price of the product does not match the value received, or the price is not fair in the eyes of the consumer, they will not purchase the product.

Even if a sport organization is able to get the consumer to purchase the product, they still must be able to persuade the consumer to use the tickets they have purchased. By increasing product consumption (attendance), organizations are able to increase income from other streams. The value of season tickets is also increased as consumption of games (attendance) within their ticket packages increase. A typical season ticket holder that spends \$4,000 a year on the purchase of season tickets will spend upwards of \$100,000 on parking, concessions, and merchandise (Lachowetz, McDonald, Sutton, & Clark, 2001). This suggests sport organizations receive an incredible amount of money from season ticket holders beyond what they spend on the actual tickets. Sport organizations must understand why consumers do not come to games they have purchased tickets for, and what would cause them to come to more games.

As previously mentioned, one of the biggest problems in minor league sport organizations is the decline in season ticket holders. The reasons why season ticket holders do not repurchase their season tickets the next year must be understood by sport organizations. They must understand season ticket holder satisfaction with value, service, and loyalty. Once these reasons are examined, sport organizations can then understand what would cause a person to repurchase their tickets.

Overall, satisfaction with the purchasing process, in conjunction with price evaluations, will have a direct effect on satisfaction and intent to repurchase. In addition

to those variables, examining use of season tickets is relevant to consumer satisfaction.

This work contributes to the literature by proposing a conceptual framework in which to measure fan satisfaction with the season ticket purchasing process.

Based on the variables previously mentioned, the subsequent outcomes of their interactions, and the compilation of relevant literature, there were two questions developed to help solve our research problem:

1. Are fans satisfied with the marketing activities, purchase process, price, utilization programs to increase product consumption, and variables affecting repurchase intention?
2. Are there satisfaction differences between season ticket holders and non-season ticket holders based on the previously mentioned constructs?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to assess satisfaction with the season ticket selling process administered by a minor league baseball franchise. The basis of this study was developed from previous literature pertaining to the various constructs related to the sales process. There are five constructs covered in this review related to a minor league sport organization: (1) marketing activities implemented to increase season ticket sales, (2) the purchase process (purchase procedure, expectations, choice, service, comparison of alternatives, availability of product information, and interaction with the sales representatives), (3) price satisfaction (perceptions, value, and price fairness), (4) usage of season tickets (special season ticket holder programs and services), and (5) repurchase intentions (interactions with team personnel, loyalty, and quality of experiences).

Fan Satisfaction

Satisfaction has been conceptualized through one transaction experience, or over a series of transactions (Beccarini & Ferrand, 2006). Customer satisfaction has been defined as “a comparison of expectations against a process or outcome” (Greenwell, 2007, p. 7). Oliver (1997) suggests there are two types of satisfaction: horizontal and vertical. Horizontal satisfaction addresses the experiences with a single product transaction or event. Vertical satisfaction deals with the experiences with the brand or organization producing the product or event (Oliver, 1997). Beccarini and Ferrand (2006) suggest that these two types of satisfaction are the basis for various satisfaction surveys. For example, studies wanting to determine satisfaction experience with a single event would

be a horizontal study, a study evaluating the overall experiences with an organization would be a vertical study. In this current study we will be defining it as a vertical study because we are assessing a sales process with multiple experiences.

Greenwell (2007) suggests that satisfaction is often based on consumers' expectations being met. If a consumer has expectations that are not fulfilled, they are likely to have a poor level of satisfaction. It is also suggested that consumers increase their repurchase intention when they have a high level of satisfaction with experiences (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997).

Marketing Activities

Sport marketing is based on meeting the needs and wants of sport consumers (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2000). This is accomplished by introducing the sport product or service directly to the consumers of the sport (marketing of sport), or presenting other products or services through sport promotions (marketing through sport) (Mullin et al., 2000). Season ticket sales techniques have been an increasing concern for professional sport organizations over the past couple of decades, because of exposure to other entertainment options (Burton & Cornilles, 1998). This concern for season ticket sales techniques has focused on where and how sport consumers spend discretionary income. There has been increased competition from a growing number of professional sports teams, leagues, other entertainment options, and increases in sports programming on television (Burton & Cornilles, 1998). Unique to the sport team franchise product is the need for marketing activities that are considered "creative strategies for boosting attendance even when a team is not very good" (Dick & Sack, 2003, p. 90). To combat

the influencing factors mentioned by Burton and Cornilles (1998), team marketers must find creative ways to attract fans to purchase season tickets. According to Dick and Turner (2007), consumers prefer: mini packs (partial season ticket plans), radio and television advertising, e-mail offer via internet and website, direct mail, and word of mouth. Howard and Crompton (2004) suggest that flexible ticket packages give fans more options, instead of only picking from just a few. On the other hand, according to Dick and Turner (2007), fans do not perceive employee incentives with theme nights, booster and special membership clubs, and telemarketing to be as important when considering ticket purchases. Sweeny (2004) suggests that telemarketing has a negative perception among consumers since it does not only exist in professional sport organizations.

Purchase Process

Understanding expectations of season ticket holders is a component of identifying their satisfaction with the purchasing process. In a multifaceted purchase situation there are a variety of components which play a vital role in consumer satisfaction. Two of these components include satisfaction with the purchase process and satisfaction with the outcome (Herrmann, Xia, Monroe, Huber, 2007). The purchasing process begins with the prospect being informed of the initial information about the product and a price quote, and ends with an informed choice. The prospect learns about the buying procedure and develops impressions about the seller based on interaction with the service personnel in between these steps (Herrmann et al., 2007). Finally, the prospect makes an informed choice. Factors impacting the consumer's satisfaction with the purchasing process

include: expectations, choice, service fairness, comparison of alternatives, availability of product information, and interaction with the sales people (Herrmann et al., 2007; Greenwell, 2007).

Greenwell (2007) suggests consumers have expectations when considering a potential purchase. Oliver (1997) defines expectations as “predictions of the performance of a service or anticipations of an effective response” (Greenwell, 2007, p. 8). Consumers form expectations before purchasing a product, these expectations are compared to the actual performance and perceptions of the product to determine a satisfaction judgment (Beccarini & Ferrand, 2006). Greenwell (2007) implies that prior experiences with the service provider help shape the expectations of the consumer (how the organization is portrayed by the consumer through the organization’s external images and “secondary data,” such as word of mouth) (Greenwell, 2007, p. 8). Greenwell (2007) defines two types of expectations. “Will expectations” are events that happen in the future, such as the predicted level of service or the perception of what will occur (Greenwell, 2007, p. 8). Will expectations are based on the consumer’s past experiences. “Should expectations” are the consumer’s ideal or desired outcome (Greenwell, 2007, p. 8). These expectations reflect what consumers hope for, rather than predict. Greenwell’s (2007) findings within the ticketing process suggest that consumers are likely to use the information gathered through expectation resources to develop ideas when forming judgments of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

“Interaction with members of the staff will have a direct influence on customer’s overall satisfaction judgments” (Herrmann et al., 2007, p. 52). Consumers rely on sales

representatives for specific information about the product. Not only do consumers want specific information, but they need large quantities of information to be easily accessible for them to make the best purchase decision. Herrmann et al. (2007) suggests the friendliness of the staff, the impression obtained when purchasing accessories, the satisfaction with the information provided by the dealer, and the satisfaction with the dealer's general commitment are important variables for consumers. A positive outcome in these four variables leaves the consumer feeling more satisfied about the purchase process.

An additional component that will be used to define satisfaction with the purchase process will be satisfaction with relationship marketing efforts. Relationship marketing is building long-term, mutually beneficial relationship with consumer without focusing solely on the initial consumer purchase (Bovinet, 1999). Sport marketers often use relationship marketing to develop communication and trust with the consumer (Moorman, Deshpande, & Zaltman, 1993). Moorman et al. (1993) define *trust* as "a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence" (Moorman et al., 1993, p. 86). Communication is defined as "an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship" (Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992, p. 316). Communication with current and potential consumers, by informing them of changes and improvements to the product is essential for all sport organizations (Bovinet, 1999).

A consumer wants to have a choice when making a decision in the purchase process (Hui & Bateson, 1991). A consumer feels the need to have a certain amount of involvement in the decision-making process. When a consumer has a choice in his or

her own selection of outcomes, the consumer is more likely to leave the purchase situation with a positive attitude (Hui and Bateson, 1991; Cranage & Sujan 2004). In this scenario, the consumer becomes a stakeholder in the decision making process of the tickets, thus creating ownership in the outcomes and taking more responsibility in the outcomes whether good or bad. It is at this point in which the consumer looks for choices within the service industry and compares other choices at hand in order to make the best choice in his or her purchase. Choice was applied to the provider by finding how much stake a season ticket holder has in the decision making process of purchasing a season ticket. With these different factors of choice taken into consideration, the more choice a consumer feels like he or she has, the greater the consumer satisfaction.

Price Satisfaction

Voss, Parasuraman, and Grewal (1998) suggest the role of price in the formation of consumer satisfaction judgments has not received enough attention in marketing literature. Voss et al. (1998) likewise argue that price fairness might be the dominant determinant of overall satisfaction. Voss et al. (1998) suggests that when a perceived price-performance inconsistency exists it is coupled with strong negative effects on consumer satisfaction. Herrmann et al. (2007) also suggests that, when consumers encounter performance or quality uncertainty, they are more likely to form their expectations based on price.

Price fairness is closely related to the concept of equity, defined as “fairness, rightness, or deservingness of judgment that consumers make in reference to comparative others” (Herrmann et al., 2007, p. 50). Herrmann et al. (2007) examine

distributive fairness, perceptions of unfairness, and procedural fairness related to price fairness. The fundamental idea of distributive fairness rests in the judgment of individuals and the believed response to the contributions. Based on this judgment the consumer decides whether the relationship between the organization and the consumer is distributed fairly or unfairly (Herrmann et al., 2007; Xia, Monroe, & Cox, 2004).

Procedural fairness spotlights judgments based on behaviors and norms (Herrmann et al., 2007). The procedure (purchase process) is discussed in the purchase process construct of this study but is examined as a component of price satisfaction. Dual entitlements propose that one individual or group should not benefit from the misfortune of another (Herrmann et al., 2007). When an organization increases prices based on a high consumer demand, the consumers feels taken advantage of, and therefore perceives the prices as unfair (Herrmann et al., 2007). Herrmann et al. (2007) found that “price perceptions directly influence satisfaction judgments as well as indirectly through perceptions of price fairness” (Herrmann et al., 2007, p. 57). According to Xia et al. (2004), an organization must avoid causing consumers to feel the price to reward ratio as unequal, causing feelings of “anger or outrage” (Xia et al., 2004, p. 2).

Drawing from Herrmann et al. (2007), in effort to expand the clarity of the relationship between price satisfaction and satisfaction with the purchase process, season ticket holders of the provider were surveyed using influencer of price fairness perceptions and components that determine satisfaction judgments (Herrmann et al., 2007). The factors were discussed prior and included price perception, price fairness, and procedural fairness.

Full Use of Season Tickets

Full usage of season tickets is utilizing all tickets within the purchased season ticket package (Zhang et al., 2004). An example of this would be, “people who have paid for the tickets but fail to attend the game” (Zhang et al., 2004, p. 100). Therefore, full use of season tickets is utilizing all tickets paid for within a season ticket package. For the majority of sport organizations, 80% of consumer spending is often considered to be from season ticket holders, which constitute only 20% of the total number of consumers (Zhang et al., 2004). When sport organizations begin negotiations with potential sponsors, game attendance is a common concern. For example, sponsors do not want to advertise to an empty stadium or arena (Zhang et al., 2004). When season ticket holders do not use their tickets, they do not spend money on accompanying items (e.g. parking, concessions, etc.), and sponsors do not want to invest as much capital. Zhang et al. (2004) suggest that one of the best ways to overcome this lack of full usage is special programs and services to season ticket holders that attend games. Zhang et al. (2004) emphasize “the importance of providing quality programmes and services to season ticket holders” (p. 99).

Lachowetz, McDonald, Sutton, & Clark (2001) confirm the importance of season ticket holder attendance in their case study of the NBA’s Customer Lifetime Value (LTV). Customer LTV is defined as the “present value of the expected benefits (e.g., gross margin) less the burdens (e.g., direct costs of servicing and communicating) from customers” (Lachowetz et al., 2001, p.57). According to Lachowetz et al. (2001), a season ticket holder that spends \$4,000 a year on the purchase of season tickets will

spend upwards of \$100,000 on parking, concessions, merchandise, etc. Customer LTV is based on customer retention (Lachowetz et al., 2001).

Intent to Repurchase

Consumer retention is the renewal of existing consumers (Wilkinson, 2009). Consumer retention focuses on repeated support from a provider to the consumer. It is closely related to repeat purchasing behavior and brand loyalty (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997). The actions of the provider will directly influence the retention rates of the season ticket holders. Repeat purchase behavior, or consumer retention, is triggered by the marketer's activities, and agree that the key to consumer retention is consumer satisfaction (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997). Therefore, based on this theoretical assumption, for the provider to retain season ticket holders, it is the organizations responsibility to satisfy the needs of the consumers.

Repurchase intention is a decision made by the consumer to engage in future activity with a service provider (Hume, Mort, & Winzar, 2007). It can either be the intent to re-buy something or the intent to recommend to others by word of mouth (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). To maximize repurchase intention, the provider needs to focus on building relationships with their season ticket holders and providing functional service elements (Hume et al., 2007). McDonald and Stavros (2007) provide several predictors of member satisfaction that help organizations increase the repurchase intention of their members. If an organization effectively recognizes the member's contributions, values its members, offers its members a quality service, and builds a strong relationship with its members, then the organization is more likely to

increase its member's repurchase intention (McDonald & Stavros, 2007). To attract new consumers, it is important to spread the word about the satisfaction associated with being a season ticket holder.

Within consumer retention are the variables of the value of the season ticket, the quality of the consumer's experience, the consumer's loyalty, and the repurchase intention. These variables help lead to the measurement of consumer retention based on the satisfaction of the consumer. Hume et al. (2007) suggest that consumers need to feel a sense of value in order to repurchase a service. They state that consumers must be satisfied with their perception of value to assess the service as a quality and a satisfying experience. Hume et al. (2007) also suggest that value is a direct antecedent of loyalty and repurchase intention. Therefore, the season ticket holders must first perceive a value in their purchase before they build loyalty and ultimately the intent to repurchase.

Quality is defined as previous encounters that the consumer has with the product or service (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997). Quality is related to the consumer's opinions of the core product or service (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997). If fans view their experience as a season ticket holder as a quality one, then consumers are more likely to remain season ticket holders. Hennig-Thurau and Klee (1997) perceive that overall quality plays a key role in the relationship between consumer satisfaction and retention. If the provider builds trust between the organization and the season ticket holders, then the consumers are more likely to view the decision to repurchase season tickets as a quality decision. Trust is defined as the "willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence" (Moorman et al., 1992, p. 315). Hennig-Thurau & Klee

(1997) theorize that relationships with high levels of overall quality, as well as high levels of trust, are more stable which entails higher rates of consumer retention.

Therefore, by creating a stable relationship built on trust, the provider is more likely to provide the consumers with a quality experience which leads to higher rates of consumer retention. Also in regards to quality, consumers are more likely to repurchase a brand if it performs as expected (Rust, Inman, Jia, & Zahorik, 1999). Rust et al. (1999) suggest that it is more important for the brand to establish quality perceptions in the minds of consumers at the time that consumers have little prior experience with the brand.

According to James, Kolbe, & Trail (2002), loyal sport consumers “are people who will remain with the team over an extended period of time. Loyalty connotes longitudinal persistence and steadfast support regardless of the circumstances a team encounters” (James, et al., 2002, p. 215). In regard to a minor league baseball team, loyal fans remain season ticket holders despite what the team does on the field. Based on this notion, loyal fans are more likely to remain with a team, therefore, increasing the likelihood of retaining the membership as a season ticket holder. Less loyal fans are more likely to leave an organization, whereas more loyal fans are harder for an organization to lose (Rust et al., 1999). Based on this, minor league teams retain more consumers if loyalty amongst season ticket holders is built.

According to prior research, if the provider satisfies season ticket holders' needs based on these variables (value, quality, loyalty, and repurchase intention), then the organization will be more likely to retain their existing consumers. Overall consumer satisfaction has a positive relationship with members renewing their membership (McDonald & Stavros, 2007). Understanding season ticket holders' view on the value of a season ticket, the quality of the experience, the loyalty to the provider, and the repurchase intention will help the provider understand the satisfaction levels of their current consumers. Finally, by satisfying the season ticket holder's needs, the organization can look at different ways to increase overall consumer retention.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to assess satisfaction with the season ticket selling process administered by a minor league baseball franchise. Specifically, we assessed variables of fan satisfaction with the ticket sales process. Marketing activities, purchase process, price satisfaction, full use of season tickets, and repurchase intention were investigated to obtain satisfaction levels of respondents. Through assessing perceptions satisfaction, sport organizations can better understand how to satisfy the needs and wants of consumers.

Participant Selection

This study consisted of two different groups of individuals that responded to a web based questionnaire constructed by a research team led by the principle investigator. The two groups were: (1) season ticket holders of the Round Rock Express Baseball Club in Round Rock, Texas, a member of the Pacific Coast League (AAA-affiliates of major league baseball franchises), and (2) non-season ticket holders of the Round Rock Express Baseball Club who had an interest in the team.

Item Development

The questionnaire was developed in concert with, and supported by, the Round Rock Express Baseball Club. The questionnaire consisted of items that required a response to a seven-point Likert scale (anchored at strongly disagree and strongly agree), ranking, and fill-in-the-blank text boxes. The respondents specified whether they were a season ticket holder or non-season ticket holder in the first section of the questionnaire.

Season ticket holders were taken to a survey that asked questions about perceived satisfaction with the: (1) purchase process, (2) marketing activities, (3) ticket options, (4) price, (5) intention to repurchase their season tickets, and (6) ticket usage services.

Non-season ticket holders were taken to a survey that asked similar questions about their perceptions of the: (1) marketing activities, (2) ticket options, and (3) price. Non-season ticket holders did not respond to questions regarding purchase process, intent to repurchase, and ticket usage because of their lack of season ticket ownership.

Data Collection

There were approximately 1050 season ticket holders for the Round Rock Express for the 2009 season. From a list of season ticket holders' email addresses, the researcher requested season ticket holders to respond to a questionnaire via an email from the Round Rock Express. An email was sent to season ticket holders informing them that once the questionnaire is completed, they would receive two free tickets to a Round Rock Express game as incentive for completion.

The researcher obtained non-season ticket holders in the following manners. First, the Express mentioned the questionnaire with a link on the weekly newsletter sent out to approximately 500 individuals. The principal investigator sent invitations to individuals that were members of the Round Rock Express group on Facebook. There were approximately 500 members in this group. Finally, the principal investigator set up a booth at an Express baseball game in an attempt to obtain volunteers. Volunteers received two free tickets to a future Round Rock Express game as an incentive.

Data Analysis

Data were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for the purpose of analysis. Means and standard deviations were used to identify effective or ineffective procedures. Following the computation of the descriptive statistics (i.e. means), the researcher conducted an analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare the two groups.

In addition to the ANOVAs, the researcher conducted Cronbach's coefficient alpha to test internal consistency, as well as the test score reliability. The researcher used this test because the questions on the survey had several possible answers, allowing the respondents to answer the question the same way on the items.

All of the scale's level of reliability was determined based on suggestions made by George and Mallery (2003). They suggest reliability scores evaluations should be based on the following: " $\alpha > .9$ – Excellent, $\alpha > .8$ – Good, $\alpha > .7$ – Acceptable, $\alpha > .6$ – Questionable, $\alpha > .5$ – Poor, and $\alpha < .5$ – Unacceptable" (George & Mallery, 2003, p. 231). Any scale's Cronbach's alpha that is below .7 will be considered unreliable. All alphas above .7 will be considered reliable.

The following scales were reliable: sales personnel ($\alpha = .709$), trust ($\alpha = .765$), availability of product information for non-season ticket holders ($\alpha = .754$), price perception for both groups ($\alpha = .952$; $\alpha = .927$), evaluation of service ($\alpha = .847$), value for both groups ($\alpha = .756$; $\alpha = .774$), quality ($\alpha = .706$), and repurchase intention ($\alpha = .776$). The following scales were unreliable: expectations ($\alpha = .535$), availability of product information for season ticket ($\alpha = .560$), choice scale for season ticket holders ($\alpha = .042$), choice scale for non-season ticket holders ($\alpha = .318$), price fairness scale for both groups ($\alpha = .460$; $\alpha = .650$), utilization ($\alpha = .578$), service compared to other entertainment options ($\alpha = .131$), and loyalty ($\alpha = -.411$).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Demographics were compiled among the groups. The season ticket holder (N=365) and non-season ticket holder (N=250) respondent demographics are displayed in Table 1. Sixty-nine percent of season ticket holders that responded to the questionnaire were males (N=252), with an average age 45.5 years old, and 92% were Caucasian. Forty-four percent of respondents had completed college, while 30% had a graduate school education. The average household income of a season ticket holder was \$87,000 a year. The majority (83%) of respondents lived within 25 miles of the venue. Thirty-six percent of respondents had been season ticket holders for at least 10 years.

Fifty percent of non-season ticket holders (N=250) were females (N=126), with an average age 33 years old, and 86% were Caucasian. Forty-five percent of respondents had completed college, while 18% had a graduate school education. The average household income of season ticket holders was \$57,000 a year. The majority (77%) of respondents lived within 25 miles of the venue.

TABLE 1

Descriptive Statistics for the Demographic Variables (N = 615)

Variable	Category	N	%	ST Holders	Non-ST Holders
Age (M=37.74) (SD=18.6)	12-18 years	7	1.1	2	5
	19-24 years	14	2.3	2	12
	25-30 years	55	8.9	7	48
	31-40 years	152	24.7	58	94
	41-50 years	159	25.9	106	53
	51-60 years	133	21.6	111	22
	Over 60 years	95	15.5	79	16
Gender	Male	375	61.0	252	123
	Female	240	39.2	114	126
Ethnicity	African American	7	1.1	2	5
	Asian	1	0.2	1	0
	Caucasian	553	89.6	337	216
	Hispanic	40	6.3	16	24
	Other	14	2.3	6	8
Education	High School	36	5.9	16	20
	Some College	154	25.0	81	73
	College	272	43.6	159	113
	Graduate School	153	24.2	108	45
Household Income	Under \$25,000	23	2.8	5	18
	\$25,000-\$50,000	103	16.1	35	68
	\$51,000-\$75,000	116	17.2	49	67
	\$76,000-\$100,000	130	20.5	72	58
	\$101,000-\$150,000	135	20.8	98	37
	Over \$150,000	108	16.4	92	16
Distance From Venue	Less than 10 miles	248	40.5	159	89
	11-25 miles	243	39.8	143	100
	26-50 miles	95	15.4	52	43
	51-100 miles	18	2.9	11	7
	Over 100 miles	11	1.8	2	9

Marketing Activities

The experiences with the effectiveness of marketing activities were assessed in respect to their individual experiences and displayed in Table 2. Television and radio advertisements were not seen as effective in influencing season ticket holder purchase ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 1.60$). In addition, contact via telephone by sales representatives was not seen as effective in increasing season ticket purchases ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 1.70$). Interestingly, these two marketing activities are commonly used by sport organizations to increase ticket sales.

Non-season ticket holders were asked to rank 10 marketing activities seen as valuable and useful according to Dick and Turner (2007). The results of those rankings are also displayed in Table 2. The top three marketing activities that were recognized as valuable or useful were: email or internet offers ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 3.04$), good public relations ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 2.55$), and ticket discount strategies (i.e. group ticket discounts) ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 2.77$). The three marketing activities that were recognized as the least valuable or useful were: sales representatives telephone contact ($M = 7.04$, $SD = 3.15$), face-to-face interactions ($M = 6.04$, $SD = 2.64$), and home or business direct mail ($M = 5.79$, $SD = 2.88$).

TABLE 2
Effectiveness of Marketing Activities

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
Community Organization Membership	2.08	1.42
Booster Club Membership	2.11	1.28
Contact via Telephone	2.49	1.70
Television & Radio Advertisement	2.62	1.60
Mini-Season Ticket Packages	6.25	1.05
Special Programs/Events	6.48	0.86

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

Ranking of Marketing Activities Based on Value and Usefulness

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
Email or Internet Offers	4.21	3.04
Implementing Good Public Relations	4.85	2.55
Discounted Ticket Strategies	4.88	2.77
Community Service	4.93	2.65
Mini-Season Ticket Options	4.98	2.95
Word of Mouth Referrals	5.06	2.60
Focusing on a Target Market	5.43	2.50
Home or Business Direct Mail	5.79	2.88
Face-to-Face Interactions	6.04	2.64
Telephone Contact	7.04	3.15

Note. Ranked from 1 (*most effective*) to 10 (*least effective*)

Purchase Process

The responses regarding satisfaction with the purchase process are displayed in Table 3. Overall the respondents felt satisfied with the purchase process. Their expectations of the process were met. They were satisfied with the personnel in which they dealt with in the process. The respondents felt they could trust the sales representatives. They also felt they received sufficient amount of information about the

tickets through various methods (e.g. website, personal interactions, etc.). In addition they were satisfied with the variety of methods in which to purchase tickets, and the variety of packages available. One of the more interesting results was one of the lowest scored among this construct, their desire to purchase tickets after interactions with the sales representatives was positive. While this is a positive outcome, coupled with the previous results regarding telephone contact, this may be an issue to explore.

TABLE 3
Purchase Process

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
<i>Expectations</i>		
Team Connection	5.39	1.38
Service	5.83	1.05
Time	6.17	0.88
<i>Interactions with Personnel</i>		
Desire to Purchase Increased	4.90	1.52
Informative	6.17	0.95
Friendliness	6.38	0.98
<i>Trust</i>		
Ongoing Relationship with Representatives	4.95	1.69
Confidence in Representatives	6.13	1.00
Representatives' Trustworthiness	6.21	0.97
<i>Availability of Product Information</i>		
Website	5.31	1.42
Made Aware of New Ticket Options	5.68	1.38
Awareness of Season Ticket Options	6.27	0.89
<i>Choice</i>		
Would Like More Input Into Packages	4.45	1.48
Variety of Packages Offered	5.81	1.17
Variety of Method to Purchase	6.12	0.97

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

When assessing satisfaction with the availability of information on the team website between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,608] = 31.856, p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 4). When assessing awareness of season ticket options between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,608] = 56.209, p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 5). Finally, when assessing awareness of new or special ticket packages between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,610] = 22.171, p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 6).

When assessing satisfaction with the variety of season ticket packages between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,607] = 58.509, p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 7). In addition, when assessing satisfaction with the variety of methods to complete the transaction between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,606] = 47.646, p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 8).

TABLE 4
Analysis of Variance for Availability of Information on the Team Website

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	31.856	5.31	.000
Website Information (W)	1	10688.088	5.93	.000
S x W	2	31.856*	5.56	.000
S within-group error	608	(1.735)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

TABLE 5
Analysis of Variance for Availability of Information Awareness

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	56.209	6.28	.000
Awareness (A)	1	16007.416	5.57	.000
S x A	2	56.209*	6.00	.000
S within-group error	608	(1.284)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

TABLE 6
Analysis of Variance for Availability of Information Awareness of New Packs

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	22.171	5.69	.000
Awareness (A)	1	17258.979	5.13	.000
S x A	2	22.171*	5.47	.000
S within-group error	610	(2.060)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

TABLE 7
Analysis of Variance for Satisfaction with the Variety of Packs

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	58.509	5.83	.000
Variety (V)	1	12311.688	5.08	.000
S x V	2	58.509*	5.52	.000
S within-group error	607	(1.418)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

TABLE 8
Analysis of Variance for Satisfaction with the Variety of Purchase Methods

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	47.646	6.12	.000
Variety (V)	1	18067.061	5.52	.000
S x V	2	47.646*	5.88	.000
S within-group error	606	(1.095)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

Price Satisfaction

Two concepts of price satisfaction were assessed: price perception and price fairness. Overall, respondents were satisfied with the price, and felt the price was fair overall (displayed in Table 9). However, season ticket holders felt the price of season tickets were based on the cost of business operations (M=5.27, SD=1.28), but the price was not perceived as fair or unfair when asked if the price was independent of customers' needs (M=4.46, SD=1.35). While these two are the lowest scores of this construct, overall price was still perceived as fair.

TABLE 9
Price Satisfaction

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
<i>Price Perception</i>		
Expectations	5.82	1.19
Relative to Other Options	5.86	1.09
Value Received	5.93	1.11
<i>Price Fairness</i>		
Independent of Customers' Needs	4.46	1.35
Based on Cost of Business Operations	5.27	1.28
Fair Overall	5.75	1.11

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

When assessing perceptions of the price of season tickets relative to other entertainment options between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,612] = 48.978, p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 10). When assessing perception of price relative to the value received between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,612] = 56.756, p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 11). Between the two sample groups, when assessing whether the price meets the expectations, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,610] = 68.966, p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 12). Between the two sample groups, when assessing if price is relative to the cost of business operations, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,609] = 5.191, p < .05$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 13). When assessing overall fairness of season ticket prices between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,609] = 56.519, p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 14). Between the two sample groups, when assessing if price was

independent of customers' needs, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,608] = 4.211, p < .05$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 15).

TABLE 10
Analysis of Variance for Price Relative to Other Options

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	48.978	5.86	.000
Price (P)	1	14002.606	5.21	.000
S x P	2	48.978*	5.60	.000
S within-group error	612	(1.291)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
* $p < .01$.

TABLE 11
Analysis of Variance for Price Relative to Value

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	56.756	5.93	.000
Price (P)	1	14109.754	5.23	.000
S x P	2	56.756*	5.65	.000
S within-group error	612	(1.303)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
* $p < .01$.

TABLE 12
Analysis of Variance for Price Relative to Expectations

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	68.966	5.82	.000
Price (P)	1	12003.331	5.00	.000
S x P	2	68.966*	5.49	.000
S within-group error	610	(1.433)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

TABLE 13
Analysis of Variance for Price Relative to Business Operational Costs

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	5.191	5.29	.023
Price (P)	1	10416.225	5.06	.000
S x P	2	5.191*	5.20	.023
S within-group error	609	(1.510)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .05.

TABLE 14
Analysis of Variance for Price Fairness

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	56.519	5.76	.000
Price (P)	1	13388.916	5.06	.000
S x P	2	56.519*	5.48	.000
S within-group error	609	(1.281)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

TABLE 15
Analysis of Variance for Price Relative to Customers' Needs

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	4.211	4.45	.041
Price (P)	1	7612.700	4.67	.000
S x P	2	4.211*	4.54	.041
S within-group error	608	(1.603)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .05.

Full Use of Season Tickets

Season ticket holder respondents were asked which special programs and services provided to them affected their attendance. Fifty-one percent of responses said their attendance was affected by the level of commitment they had to continuing being a season ticket holder. Thirty-nine percent of responses stated they attended to receive savings off regular gate prices. Another large portion (37%) of respondents said they attend to take advantage of benefits afforded to them as season ticket holders.

As shown in Table 16, season ticket holders said they would not attend more games if there were more promotions and events ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.67$), or because of an attendance based rewards program (i.e. additional tickets, ticket discounts, or concession discounts) ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 1.86$). They were indifferent about donating their unused tickets to charities ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 1.54$).

TABLE 16
Full Usage

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
More Promotions or Events	3.70	1.67
Attendance Based Rewards Program	4.48	1.86
Be Able to Donate Tickets to Charities	4.83	1.54

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

Intent to Repurchase

The responses to questions regarding intent to repurchase are displayed in Table 17. Overall, according to season ticket holders, service, value, and quality were perceived with satisfaction. Compared to other entertainment options, respondents felt the provider was superior in service, especially with the time spent dealing with the representatives. Loyalty was shown to be strong among season ticket holders, especially in relation to a team's win/loss record. Season ticket holders stated that a winning season does not affect their repurchase intention ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.57$).

When assessing value compared to other entertainment options between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,609] = 119.509$, $p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 18). Between the two sample groups, the perceptions of the money saved from regular ticket prices between the two sample groups, responses differed significantly ($F, [1,612] = 99.364$, $p < .001$) (ANOVA outputs are displayed in Table 19).

TABLE 17
Intent to Repurchase

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
Service		
Timely Manner	6.22	1.06
Committed to Satisfying Needs	6.25	1.05
Comfortable Making Decision	6.48	0.86
Service Relative to Other Options		
Time Consuming	2.73	1.61
Overall Service	6.06	1.09
Knowledgeable Representatives	6.22	0.92
Value		
Saved Money Off of Gate Prices	5.14	1.78
Compared to Other Options	5.41	1.78
Overall Value	5.89	1.13
Quality		
Satisfied Needs	5.93	1.15
Expectations Met	6.24	0.90
Overall Experience	6.40	0.74
Loyalty		
Renew Based on Win/Loss Record	2.47	1.57
Renew Based on Loyalty	5.62	1.45
Renew Based on Team Personnel and Players	5.79	1.22
Repurchase Intention		
Relationship with Team Representatives	4.85	1.75
Team Recognizes Contributions	5.23	1.61
Recommend via Word of Mouth	5.87	1.18

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

TABLE 18
Analysis of Variance for Value Compared to Other Entertainment Options

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	119.509	5.42	.000
Value (V)	1	8568.487	4.27	.000
S x V	2	119.509*	4.96	.000
S within-group error	609	(1.609)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

TABLE 19
Analysis of Variance for Value Compared to Games Attended

Source	Df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	99.364	5.14	.000
Value (V)	1	3620.218	3.68	.000
S x V	2	99.364*	4.55	.000
S within-group error	612	(3.174)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this research indicate that marketing activities, purchase process, price, utilization programs, and repurchase intention play an important role in the satisfaction consumers have with the season ticket sales process. These findings suggest marketers could focus on these various constructs when examining satisfaction among consumers, especially season ticket holders. Considering the vast number of industry competitors, it is important for marketers to strive for and maintain a high level of consumer satisfaction.

Demographic results of the groups suggest a few practical implications. First, the demographics of the two groups differed noticeably in a couple of ways. Season ticket holders had a greater annual household income ($M = \$87,000$) than non-season ticket holders ($M = \$57,000$). This could be attributed to the differences between the season ticket holders age. Season ticket holders were typically older ($M = 45.5$) than non-season ticket holders ($M = 33$). Older individuals possibly have a higher income level because of the time spent in the workforce, resulting in a higher level of disposable income. Younger, non-season ticket holders may not have as much disposable income, which could be a determining factor in their season ticket purchase decisions. Second, the majority of respondents, from both groups, were Caucasian (89.6%). These results suggest minor league franchises might consider targeting other ethnicities as the focus of their marketing campaigns. Finally, 36% of respondents had been season ticket holders

for at least 10 years, suggesting the organization has been successful in retaining season ticket holders longitudinally.

Results pertaining to marketing activities reveal several practical implications. First, television and radio advertisements may not be an effective tool to increase season ticket sales. According to Dick and Turner (2007) consumers, not specifically season ticket holders, preferred radio and television advertising as a primary method of communication. This study found that radio and television advertising was not an effective method of communicating information about season tickets. Second, findings suggest contact via telephone by sales representatives was not a perceived effective tool of increasing season ticket sales. From a consumer's perspective, this confirms Sweeny's (2004) and Dick and Turner's (2007) suggestions that telemarketing has a negative perception among consumers. Third, both mini-season ticket packages and special programs/events were neither effective nor ineffective in increasing ticket purchase desire. This suggests programs implemented by marketers in the minor league context may create positive emotions among some individuals, while it may not for others.

Some of the common marketing activities which non-season ticket holders found ineffective were discussed by Dick and Turner (2007). Along with previous literature examining effective telephone contact, participants in this sample perceived this method of communication to be ineffective. Also, face to face interactions were found to be ineffective. These two findings suggest non-committed consumers (i.e. non-season ticket holders) preferred to keep the interactions with the organization's personnel at a minimum, perhaps through online transaction options. Currently, the minor league

organization does not have a method for online season ticket purchases. Despite this, season ticket holders were satisfied with the variety of methods to complete the transaction. However, when conducting the ANOVA to compare the two groups, responses differed significantly. This confirms the assumption that non-committed consumers (i.e. non-season ticket holders) prefer to keep the interactions with the organization's personnel to a minimum when purchasing season tickets. While these findings suggest consumers find contact via telephone, and face-to-face interactions, to be ineffective, it does not mean these were not effective. For example, participants in this sample may have found these types of activities to be intrusive, or annoying, they are still two of the most commonly used marketing activities of this, and many other, minor league sport organizations. This suggests that there is a difference between something being ineffective, and being perceived as annoying or intrusive.

There were also several effective marketing activities. Results showed that email and internet offers were an effective way to increase season ticket awareness and sales. This suggests that an emphasis on mass email and on internet traffic would assist in increasing season ticket sales. In addition, awareness of season tickets was found to increase with positive public relations and providing discount ticket strategies (i.e. group ticket discounts) to consumers.

Within the purchasing process, various constructs were measured. Overall, respondents felt satisfied with the purchasing process, which suggest this particular minor league organization was effective in providing an excellent purchasing experience for consumers. More specifically, this was done by providing high levels of trust and

effective communication. If organizations provide a purchase experience that leaves the consumer satisfied, it could lead to future positive experiences and purchases.

Price perceptions and price fairness of both groups were found to be positive. While this reveals that the organization was effective in pricing their product relative to numerous variables, the results of the ANOVAs conducted were interesting. Both groups felt the price was relative to the value received and was fair overall. Why, if season and non-season tickets view the price and value the equally, non-season ticket holders do not purchase season tickets. Both groups claimed the price of season tickets was less than the money spent on regular gate priced tickets. This suggests marketers should find a way to sway these consumers to purchasing season tickets. Somewhere in the decision process, these committed non-season ticket holders made the decision to not purchase tickets, even though they would save money and find value in the tickets. One possible explanation for this may be, the time needed to attend a minor league baseball season. While there are smaller season ticket packages (i.e. 19-game and half-season packages) most people do not have the time to attend the 72-game home season.

Some common methods implemented by sport organizations to increase attendance of their season ticket holders are to provide special programs and services. Many of these services are rewards for attendance. Within this minor league context, season ticket holders felt such programs would not affect their attendance. More specifically, providing special promotions/events and attendance rewards programs (i.e. discounted tickets or concession discounts). This perceived ineffectiveness of special

promotions/events and programs suggest minor league sport organizations should find different ways to increase the attendance of their season ticket holders.

Many variables affect a season ticket holder's intention to repurchase. Timeliness of service, satisfying needs, experience relative to other options, knowledge of representatives, and value received are several of these variables. The results revealed season ticket holders were satisfied with these variables. This confirms the suggestion that when satisfaction with these variables are achieved, intention to repurchase increases among consumers.

Limitations and Future Research

The primary limitation to this study is in the questionnaire design. While, many of the constructs developed rendered scales that were reliable, several were not. This lack of reliability could cause problems when replicating the study. However, the scales that were reliable could be carried on to other studies.

Another limitation within the questionnaire design was in the constructs compared between the two groups. While there were several constructs compared between the groups (choice, availability of product information, price perception, price fairness, and value) through ANOVA calculation, the results revealed limited information. If all the variables were assessed among both groups, especially the marketing activities construct, results may have shown variance between the groups on other constructs evaluated. However, the constructs compared between the two groups did rendered important information, as well as provided several valuable and practical implications.

A third limitation would be the context in which the study was administered. While minor league franchises are similar to a variety of sport organizations, they are unique. This study would be effective for other similar organizations. However, by using one minor league, Triple-A affiliated franchise, the study is contextually limited.

The final limitation to this study would be in the manner in which it was administered. Because the questionnaire was web-based, this could cause some possible negative affects. According to Galesic & Bosnjak (2009), responses to web-based questionnaire typically have more uniform answers as the respondents get toward the end of a questionnaire. This could be due to lack of supervision of the questionnaire. If this were the case, the data collected from the questionnaire could be less reliable.

If replicated, this study would be most beneficial if all constructs were assessed among both groups. The pilot study would assist in rendering large amounts of information for an analysis of variance (ANOVA). In addition, it would be most beneficial if a pilot study was done. This would assist in creating scales that would be more reliable and valid through revising questionnaire content. Also, replicating this study longitudinally would reveal various implications for season ticket holder commitment and longevity.

Future research into the motives of the various consumer groups to utilize season tickets would be beneficial. While this study found that special programs and services were perceived as being ineffective for season ticket holders, future research should attempt to determine the reasons for this ineffectiveness. While many major league

franchises use these programs to increase attendance, does this work in the minor league setting?

In addition, future research should investigate the effectiveness of marketing programs for minor league sport franchises in depth. While this study found that some of the common methods of marketing individual game tickets were not effective in marketing season tickets, future research should determine why consumers react differently in these two distinct purchase decisions.

Finally, future research into the relationship between price perception, value, and actual purchase of season tickets would be beneficial. While this study found that the perceptions of price and price fairness did not vary between the two groups, future research into why non-season ticket holders, who found value in season tickets and perceived the price as fair, did not engage in an actual purchase. Examining the behavior motives and psychological emotions with a brand and consumer could help in solving this question.

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APPENDIX A

TABLE A-1

Demographics (N = 615)

Variable	Category	N	%	ST Holders	Non-ST Holders
Age (M=37.74) (SD=18.6)	12-18 years	7	1.1	2	5
	19-24 years	14	2.3	2	12
	25-30 years	55	8.9	7	48
	31-40 years	152	24.7	58	94
	41-50 years	159	25.9	106	53
	51-60 years	133	21.6	111	22
	Over 60 years	95	15.5	79	16
Gender	Male	375	61.0	252	123
	Female	240	39.2	114	126
Ethnicity	African American	7	1.1	2	5
	Asian	1	0.2	1	0
	Caucasian	553	89.6	337	216
	Hispanic	40	6.3	16	24
	Other	14	2.3	6	8
Education	High School	36	5.9	16	20
	Some College	154	25.0	81	73
	College	272	43.6	159	113
	Graduate School	153	24.2	108	45
Household Income	Under \$25,000	23	2.8	5	18
	\$25,000-\$50,000	103	16.1	35	68
	\$51,000-\$75,000	116	17.2	49	67
	\$76,000-\$100,000	130	20.5	72	58
	\$101,000-\$150,000	135	20.8	98	37
	Over \$150,000	108	16.4	92	16
Distance From Venue	Less than 10 miles	248	40.5	159	89
	11-25 miles	243	39.8	143	100
	26-50 miles	95	15.4	52	43
	51-100 miles	18	2.9	11	7
	Over 100 miles	11	1.8	2	9

APPENDIX B

TABLE B-1

Marketing Activities

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
Community Organization Membership	2.08	1.42
Booster Club Membership	2.11	1.28
Contact via Telephone	2.49	1.70
Television & Radio Advertisement	2.62	1.60
Mini-Season Ticket Packages	6.25	1.05
Special Programs/Events	6.48	0.86

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

Ranking of Marketing Activities Based on Value and Usefulness

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
Email or Internet Offers	4.21	3.04
Implementing Good Public Relations	4.85	2.55
Discounted Ticket Strategies	4.88	2.77
Community Service	4.93	2.65
Mini-Season Ticket Options	4.98	2.95
Word of Mouth Referrals	5.06	2.60
Focusing on a Target Market	5.43	2.50
Home or Business Direct Mail	5.79	2.88
Face-to-Face Interactions	6.04	2.64
Telephone Contact	7.04	3.15

Note. Ranked from 1 (*most effective*) to 10 (*least effective*)

APPENDIX C

TABLE C-1
Purchase Satisfaction

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
<i>Expectations</i>		
Team Connection	5.39	1.38
Service	5.83	1.05
Time	6.17	0.88
<i>Interactions with Personnel</i>		
Desire to Purchase Increased	4.90	1.52
Informative	6.17	0.95
Friendliness	6.38	0.98
<i>Trust</i>		
Ongoing Relationship with Representatives	4.95	1.69
Confidence in Representatives	6.13	1.00
Representatives' Trustworthiness	6.21	0.97
<i>Availability of Product Information</i>		
Website	5.31	1.42
Made Aware of New Ticket Options	5.68	1.38
Awareness of Season Ticket Options	6.27	0.89
<i>Choice</i>		
Would Like More Input Into Packages	4.45	1.48
Variety of Packages Offered	5.81	1.17
Variety of Method to Purchase	6.12	0.97

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

APPENDIX D

TABLE D-1
ANOVA for Availability of Information on the Team Website

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	31.856	5.31	.000
Website Information (W)	1	10688.088	5.93	.000
S x W	2	31.856*	5.56	.000
S within-group error	608	(1.735)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

APPENDIX E

TABLE E-1
ANOVA for Availability of Information Awareness

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	56.209	6.28	.000
Awareness (A)	1	16007.416	5.57	.000
S x A	2	56.209*	6.00	.000
S within-group error	608	(1.284)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects

* $p < .01$.

APPENDIX F

TABLE F-1
ANOVA for Availability of Information Awareness of New Packs

Source	df	F	μ
Between Subjects			
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	22.171	5.69
Awareness (A)	1	17258.979	5.13
S x A	2	22.171*	5.47
S within-group error	610	(2.060)	

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 * $p < .01$.

APPENDIX G

TABLE G-1
ANOVA for Satisfaction with Variety of Packs

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	58.509	5.83	.000
Variety (V)	1	12311.688	5.08	.000
S x V	2	58.509*	5.52	.000
S within-group error	607	(1.418)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

APPENDIX H

TABLE H-1
ANOVA for Satisfaction with Variety of Purchase Methods

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	47.646	6.12	.000
Variety (V)	1	18067.061	5.52	.000
S x V	2	47.646*	5.88	.000
S within-group error	606	(1.095)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects

* $p < .01$.

APPENDIX I

TABLE I-1
Satisfaction with Price

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
<i>Price Perception</i>		
Expectations	5.82	1.19
Relative to Other Options	5.86	1.09
Value Received	5.93	1.11
<i>Price Fairness</i>		
Independent of Customers' Needs	4.46	1.35
Based on Cost of Business Operations	5.27	1.28
Fair Overall	5.75	1.11

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

APPENDIX J

TABLE J-1
ANOVA for Price Relative to Other Options

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	48.978	5.86	.000
Price (P)	1	14002.606	5.21	.000
S x P	2	48.978*	5.60	.000
S within-group error	612	(1.291)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects

* $p < .01$.

APPENDIX K

TABLE K-1
ANOVA for Price Relative to Value

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	56.756	5.93	.000
Price (P)	1	14109.754	5.23	.000
S x P	2	56.756*	5.65	.000
S within-group error	612	(1.303)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects

*p < .01.

APPENDIX L

TABLE L-1
ANOVA for Price Relative to Expectations

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	68.966	5.82	.000
Price (P)	1	12003.331	5.00	.000
S x P	2	68.966*	5.49	.000
S within-group error	610	(1.433)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects

*p < .01.

APPENDIX M

TABLE M-1
ANOVA for Price Relative to Business Operational Costs

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	5.191	5.29	.023
Price (P)	1	10416.225	5.06	.000
S x P	2	5.191*	5.20	.023
S within-group error	609	(1.510)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects

*p < .05.

APPENDIX N

TABLE N-1
ANOVA for Price Fairness

Source	df	F
Between Subjects		
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	56.519
Price (P)	1	13388.916
S x P	2	56.519*
S within-group error	609	(1.281)

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 * $p < .01$.

APPENDIX O

TABLE O-1
ANOVA for Price Relative to Customers' Needs

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	4.211	4.45	.041
Price (P)	1	7612.700	4.67	.000
S x P	2	4.211*	4.54	.041
S within-group error	608	(1.603)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .05.

APPENDIX P

TABLE P-1

Product Consumption

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
More Promotions or Events	3.70	1.67
Attendance Based Rewards Program	4.48	1.86
Be Able to Donate Tickets to Charities	4.83	1.54

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

APPENDIX Q

TABLE Q-1
Repurchase Intention

Concept	Mean	Standard Deviation
Service		
Timely Manner	6.22	1.06
Committed to Satisfying Needs	6.25	1.05
Comfortable Making Decision	6.48	0.86
Service Relative to Other Options		
Time Consuming	2.73	1.61
Overall Service	6.06	1.09
Knowledgeable Representatives	6.22	0.92
Value		
Saved Money Off of Gate Prices	5.14	1.78
Compared to Other Options	5.41	1.78
Overall Value	5.89	1.13
Quality		
Satisfied Needs	5.93	1.15
Expectations Met	6.24	0.90
Overall Experience	6.40	0.74
Loyalty		
Renew Based on Win/Loss Record	2.47	1.57
Renew Based on Loyalty	5.62	1.45
Renew Based on Team Personnel and Players	5.79	1.22
Repurchase Intention		
Relationship with Team Representatives	4.85	1.75
Team Recognizes Contributions	5.23	1.61
Recommend via Word of Mouth	5.87	1.18

Note. All means are based on a seven-point Likert scales anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*)

APPENDIX R

TABLE R-1
ANOVA for Value Compared to Other Entertainment Options

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	119.509	5.42	.000
Value (V)	1	8568.487	4.27	.000
S x V	2	119.509*	4.96	.000
S within-group error	609	(1.609)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects
 *p < .01.

APPENDIX S

TABLE S-1
ANOVA for Value Compared to Games Attended

Source	df	F	μ	p
Between Subjects				
Season Ticket Status (S)	2	99.364	5.14	.000
Value (V)	1	3620.218	3.68	.000
S x V	2	99.364*	4.55	.000
S within-group error	612	(3.174)		

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects

* $p < .01$.

17. Repurchase Intention

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Based on my experiences as a season ticket holder, I will recommend Round Rock Express season tickets to family, friends, and/or coworkers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My contributions as a season ticket holder are recognized by the Round Rock Express.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I repurchase season tickets because of the relationships I build with the people within the Round Rock Express organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. Some of the common reasons for which I do not attend all home games are: (Select all that apply)

- I rarely miss a game
- I own a half-season ticket
- I own a fireworks plan season ticket
- I own a full season ticket jointly with someone else
- I share my season tickets with my company
- I give the tickets to other (e.g. family, friends, co-workers, etc.)
- I do not have the time to attend the majority of games
- I usually only attend games with special promotions (e.g. giveaways, etc.)
- My work schedule interferes with the games (e.g. long hours, travel, etc.)
- Other

19. For games I choose not to attend, I typically... (Select all that apply)

- Give them away to others (e.g. family, friends, co-workers, etc.).
- Use them on another game.
- Donate them to charitable organizations.
- Try to sell them to others.
- Don't do anything with them.
- Other

20. The following special programs and services given to me as a season ticket holder affect my attendance to Round Rock Express games: (Select all that apply)

- I attend so I can take advantage of benefits afforded to me as a season ticket holder (e.g. Intel Club access, discount in the Railyard, etc.).
- I attend to receive the savings off regular gate ticket prices.
- Season ticket holder gifts affects my attendance.
- Availability of additional game tickets (e.g. playoffs) before sale to the public affects my attendance.
- Continuing to be a season ticket holder affects my attendance.
- Being part of the Booster Club affects/would affect my attendance.
- Chance to meet players affects my attendance.
- Chance to interact with players affects my attendance.
- Attending meet the team parties affects my game attendance.
- Other

21. Utilization

Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neither Agree nor Disagree Somewhat Agree Agree Strongly Agree

I would attend more games included in my season ticket package if there were more promotions and events held at the Round Rock Express games.

I would attend more games included in my season ticket package if there was a rewards program for attendance (such as additional tickets, ticket discounts and concession discounts, etc.).

I would like for the Express to set up a way for me to donate my unwanted tickets to charitable organizations.

22. Is there anything else we can do to help you as a season ticket holders utilize more of your tickets included in your season ticket package?

23. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

24. What is your age?

- 12-18
- 19-24
- 25-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- Over 60

25. What best describes your ethnicity?

- African American
- Asian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Other

26. What is your highest level of education?

- High School
- Some College
- College
- Graduate School

27. What is your annual household income?

- Under \$25,000
- \$26,000 - \$50,000
- \$51,000 - \$75,000
- \$76,000 - \$100,000
- \$101,000 - \$150,000
- Over \$ 150,000

28. How far away do you live from the Dell Diamond (Round Rock Express home stadium)?

- Less than 10 miles
- 11 - 25 miles
- 26 - 50 miles
- 51 - 100 miles
- Over 100 miles

29. How many seasons have you been a season ticket holder for the Round Rock Express (including the 2009 season)?

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

30. Thank you for participating in our survey! We would like to thank you by sending you two free Round Rock Express tickets. Please fill out the information below so we can send them to you.

Name

Address

Address 2

City

State

Zip Code

Country

Phone number

36. Value

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Purchasing Express season tickets is the best value of my entertainment dollar.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find value in Round Rock Express season tickets.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Based on the amount of games I attend, I would save more money on game entry fees by being a season ticket holder.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

37. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

38.. What is your age?

- 12-18
- 19-24
- 25-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- Over 60

39. What best describes your ethnicity?

- African American
- Asian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Other

40. What is your highest level of education?

- High School
- Some College
- College
- Graduate School

41. What is your annual household income?

- Under \$25,000
- \$26,000 - \$50,000
- \$51,000 - \$75,000
- \$76,000 - \$100,000
- \$101,000 - \$150,000
- Over \$ 150,000

42. How far away do you live from the Dell Diamond (Round Rock Express home stadium)?

- Less than 10 miles
- 11 - 25 miles
- 26 - 50 miles
- 51 - 100 miles
- Over 100 miles

43. Thank you for participating in our survey! We would like to thank you by sending you two free Round Rock Express tickets. Please fill out the information below so we can send them to you.

Name

Address

Address 2

City

State

Zip Code

Country

Phone number

VITA

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