# *Fitting Restaurant Service Style to Brand Image* for Greater Customer Satisfaction

Michael Giebelhausen, Evelyn Chan, and Nancy J. Sirianni

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customers notice when a restaurant's service style is congruent with its brand image, and a coherent interaction of these two factors influences their levels of satisfaction. Based on the idea that front-line service style is distinctive and identifiable, this report investigates the issue of matching service style with brand image using scenarios that simulate service at two different casual dining restaurants. The study finds that the evaluations of the service organization (and server's expected tips) by just over 100 student respondents are highest when the employee's mannerisms are congruent with the restaurant's brand image. The results indicate that the reason for this is that guest expectations are met and the service experience is seen as more authentic when servers adopt a brand-congruent service style. One implication for managers is that they should recruit employees whose service style "fits" with the restaurant brand. Another implication is that managers might consider training existing employees to act in a way that is consistent with the organization's brand image. That said, it seems unlikely that asking employees to fake authenticity would be a successful approach.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Michael Giebelhausen**, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of marketing at the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration (SHA). He earned his Ph.D. in marketing from Florida State University (FSU), graduate degrees from Loyola University Chicago, undergraduate degrees from the University of Illinois, and a "ductorate" from Walt Disney University. Giebelhausen teaches Marketing Management for Services and Marketing Research, and he has been honored with the FSU College of Business Ph.D. Teaching Award and the SHA Ted Teng '79 Dean's Teaching Excellence Award. Giebelhausen's research focuses on consumer behavior and signaling in service settings with a particular emphasis on the effects of green marketing. His work has been published in the *Journal of Marketing, Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research, Journal of Service Management*, and *Journal of Business Research*.

**Evelyn Chan** is an associate at MaPS/Millward Brown Analytics, where she designs and executes quantitative market research providing strategic insight into customer satisfaction, customer segmentation, brand perceptions and strategy, and product design and pricing. She works with high-level corporate clients to identify business strategy and consult on survey design. A graduate of the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration, she has also been on the food and beverage team at Universal Studios Singapore.

**Nancy J. Sirianni**, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of marketing at the D'Amore-McKim School of Business at Northeastern University. She maintains active affiliations with research centers at Arizona State University, Oklahoma State University, and Karlstad University. Her main research interests include retail and service marketing, employee-customer interactions, and integrated brand strategy.

Nancy's work has been published in the *Journal of Marketing, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Service Management, Journal of Services Marketing, Business Horizons*, and *Journal of Business Research*. Her research has been featured in *Forbes, Time, U.S. News & World Report, The Financial Express, Science Daily*, NPR, and *The Washington Post Magazine*.

Nancy serves on the editorial review boards for the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Journal of Service Research*, and *Journal of Business Research*. Honored as a Marketing Science Institute Young Scholar for her early career contributions to the field of marketing, her research recently won a Marketing Science Institute grant.

Her industry background includes eight years of service management, marketing research, and consulting experience with Insperity, BSI Consulting, and Accenture.

# *Fitting Restaurant Service Style to Brand Image for Greater Customer Satisfaction*

Michael Giebelhausen, Evelyn Chan, and Nancy J. Sirianni

Supported by academic researchers, the restaurant industry has devoted enormous effort to the task of conceptualizing and developing measures of "service quality," [1] based on the reasonable proposition that restaurant guests' satisfaction relies on quality of service. However, it has become clear to us that quality alone is not the full measure of how restaurant guests gauge or react to their servers' actions. Consequently, in this CHR report, we measure the effects of "service style," which we conceptualize as a manner of delivering guest service that is specifically identifiable on some dimension other than quality. We feel that this issue of service style has largely been overlooked, and we believe it's important to assess the effectiveness of different service styles in a particular restaurant context.

[1] Michael K. Brady and J. Joseph Cronin, Jr. (2001) Some new thoughts on conceptualizing perceived service quality: A hierarchical approach, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 65, No. 3 (July 2001), pp. 34-49.

In this report we extend recent research on employee–brand alignment as it applies to two different types of casual-dining restaurant. By controlling service styles through a simulated restaurant service experience for 104 student respondents, the results demonstrate how an "extroverted" service style outperforms a "reserved" service style at an American-theme casual restaurant, while the opposite is true for a Japanese casual restaurant where the reserved style outperforms extroverted service. We find that, overall, neither service style is universally more effective than the other, indicating that it is the congruence between brand and service style that matters. Additional analyses indicate that the reason for this effect is that when servers adopt a brand-congruent service style, the service experience is more consistent with guest expectations. This congruence increases guests' perceptions of authenticity, improves service evaluations, and boosts server tips.

## Elements of a Brand

**Brand personality.** A key building block of brand image is brand personality, which has received considerable attention in both the academic literature and popular press.[2] Just as human personality, in its infinite complexity, is theorized to originate from five fundamental factors (i.e., openness to experience, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism),[3] brand personality is also thought to originate from distinctive mixtures of fundamental ingredients. The most popular framework for brand personality was developed by Jennifer Aaker, who proposed five dimensions, namely, sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness.[4] Different formulations of these dimensions contribute to different brand identities that result in expectations regarding how the brand (and its employees) will behave.

**Expectations.** Expectations are fundamental building blocks of satisfaction judgments. As first described by Oliver,[5] satisfaction results from a process whereby expectations of an experience are compared with performances. Any resulting differences are influential in determining satisfaction. In particular, when performance is worse than expectations, dissatisfaction is often the outcome. A question relevant to this study is whether an unexpected service style will violate expectations and thereby lower service evaluations. For insights regarding this issue, we can turn to the branding-related philosophy of integrated marketing communications (IMC).

**IMC.** The integrated marketing communications philosophy recommends that marketers strategically integrate all marketing communications in a way that maintains a consistent brand image, position, and message across all consumer "touchpoints."[6] One reason for such consistency, relevant to this research, is the well-established phenomenon of cognitive dissonance, whereby humans experience psychological discomfort when they encounter conflicting information.[7] This is especially the case when the information in question is seen as highly diagnostic or relevant. Arguably, encounters with front-line employees are excellent examples of this type of highly diagnostic information. In service settings, interpersonal interaction and word-of-mouth communications are far more informative than traditional marketing communications. Thus, front-line employees are crucially important for communicating brand information. Indeed, it is often said that they *are* the brand. So, the key issue is what exactly will happen if a guest perceives a discrepancy between the brand image and the employee's service style. Recent research on the topic of authenticity can provide insight on this matter.

**Authenticity.** Brand authenticity is connected to terms such as stability, endurance, and consistency.[8] Thus, it is a concept highly relevant to situations where consumers perceive inconsistencies in brand-originated communications. More and more, authenticity is a key driver of satisfaction in service environments. For example, research has found that an authentic smile can improve service satisfaction, while a fake smile does not.[9] Particularly relevant to this study, in their recent *Journal of Marketing* article, co-author Nancy Sirianni and her colleagues found that aligning employee behavior with brand positioning only improved brand evaluations when the alignment was seen as authentic.[10] This finding strongly suggests that authenticity plays a key role into how service style affects service evaluations.

---

[2] For example, see: Martin Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013) Brand personality: A meta-analytic review of antecedents and consequences, Mark Lett, Vol. 24, pp. 205 – 216; or Rohit Bhargava (2008) Personality Not Included: Why Companies Lose Their Authenticity and How Great Brands Get It Back (New York: McGraw-Hill).

[3] Boele De Raad (2000) *The Big Five Personality Factors: The psycholexical approach to personality* (Boston: Hogrefe & Huber)

[4] Jennifer Aaker (1997) Dimensions of brand personality, *Journal of Marketing Research* Vol. 34, pp. 347-356.

[5] Oliver (1980) A Cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions, *Journal of Marketing Research* 17 (1980): 460-469.

[6] Saravudh Anantachart (2004) Integrated Marketing Communications and Market Planning: Implications for Brand Equity Building," *Journal of Promotion Management* 11.1 (2004): 101-125.

[7] Andrew J. Elliot and Patricia G. Devine. (1994) On the motivational nature of cognitive dissonance: Dissonance as psychological discomfort, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 67, No. 3, 382–394.

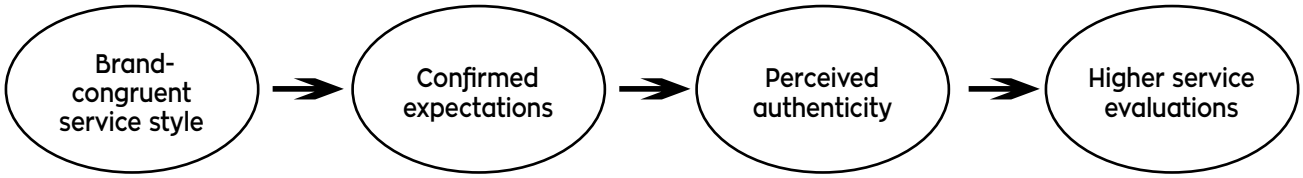
[8] Manfred Bruhn Schoenmüller, Verena; Schäfer, Daniela; Heinrich, Daniel. (2012) Brand Authenticity: Towards a Deeper Understanding of its Conceptualization and Measurement, *Advances in Consumer Research*;2012, Vol. 40, p. 568

[9] Alicia A. Grandey, Glenda M. Fiska, Anna S. Mattilab, Karen J. Jansenc, Lori A. Sideman. (2005) Is "service with a smile" enough? Authenticity of positive displays during service encounters, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, Volume 96, Issue 1, January 2005, pp. 38–55.

[10] Nancy J. Sirianni, Mary Jo Bitner, Stephen W. Brown, and Naomi Mandel. "Branded service encounters: Strategically aligning employee behavior with the brand positioning." *Journal of Marketing* 77, no. 6 (2013): 108-123.

**Exhibit 1**

Conceptual model




**Summary and propositions.** We suggest that front-line employee service style, independent from quality, can have a profound impact on service evaluations. In particular, we propose that when employees behave in a way that is inconsistent with expectations resulting from the restaurant's brand image, consumers will perceive this discrepancy in a negative light. Furthermore, we suggest that these unmet expectations will result in perceptions that the service is lacking in authenticity. In contrast, we suggest that an employee whose behavior is consistent with the overall service environment will generate perceptions of an authentic service experience and that these perceptions will result in higher service evaluations. See Exhibit 1 for a conceptual model of our proposed process.

## Empirical Support

To provide empirical support for the above propositions, we conducted a scenario-based experiment to determine what would happen when service style and brand image were congruent and when they were incongruent. The study utilized the following 2 x 2 between subjects design: casual restaurant brand image: American or Japanese by service style: extroverted or reserved. Participants were randomly assigned to the four resulting conditions. One hundred and twenty-one undergraduate students participated within a four-day period in exchange for course credit. The demographics of those undergraduate students were as follows: respondents' reported ages ranged from 19 to 25 with a mean of 20.57, and 55 percent were women. The initial sample included 30 freshmen, 50 sophomores, 26 juniors, and 15 seniors. Respondents hailed from all corners of the university, with 22 majors represented, including art history, business, hotel administration, mechanical engineering, and sociology. Of participants who gave residence information, 97 reported being United States residents, and 24 students represented ten other countries.

**Stimulus and procedure.** Two ethnic-theme casual-dining restaurants were simulated as the service context for this study, chosen for both the prevalence of these services and their distinctive identifiable characteristics.[11] We chose American and Japanese brand identities because of their substantially different norms when it comes to interpersonal interactions. Many qualities the Japanese value in interpersonal interactions (such as reserve and formality) are discouraged in the American culture, while qualities that Americans value (such as self-assertion, informality, and extroversion) are historically discouraged in the Japanese culture.[12] Also, we reasoned that our sample population would be familiar enough with these cultural norms to recognize when the behavior of the server did or did not fit with the restaurant's brand image. We should point out that there are many instances when a formal, reserved service style might be expected in America, notably in a fine-dining restaurant. This was the reason that we studied service in casual-dining restaurants: to make sure that we could effectively manipulate the congruence between the behavior of the server and the brand image of the restaurant.

A college-age Asian American actress (hailing from Texas) was hired to create audio recordings for our study. For the service style manipulation, participants listened to voice recordings of their server greeting them and telling them about the restaurant's specials. The "extroverted" service style was designed to be more energetic, talkative, informal, and relaxed. The "formal" service style was portrayed as more professional, reserved, and respectful.[13] Ambient restaurant noises (for example, sounds of clinking cutlery and muted conversations) were added to the voice recordings to create more realistic restaurant simulations. A picture of the actress, dressed in a waitress uniform accompa-

---

[11] Ebster and Guist, (2004) The Role of Authenticity in Ethnic Theme Restaurants, *Journal of Foodservice Business Research* 7 (2004): 41-52.

[12] Barnlund, Dean C. *Public and Private Self in Japan and the United States: Communicative Styles of Two Cultures*. Tokyo: Simul, 1975.

[13] Winsted, Kathryn F. "The Service Experience In Two Cultures: A Behavioral Perspective." *Journal of Retailing* 73.3 (1997): 337-60; and Manzur, Luz, and Giri Jogaratnam. "Impression Management and the Hospitality Service Encounter: Cross-Cultural Differences." *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing* 20.3/4 (2006): 21-32.

**Exhibit 2**

## Service brand manipulation

Welcome to the American Burger Bistro!
The American Burger Bistro is a casual, authentic American restaurant in New York City located along the main street of SoHo. With our comfy booths and delicious home-cooked goodness, our Bistro is the perfect place for you to indulge in authentic American classics like burgers, dogs, fries, and shakes. Our signature dish is the All-American Burger: a delicious char-grilled Angus patty topped with crisp bacon, melted American cheese, lettuce, and tomato slices on a toasted sesame seed bun.
Join us for an authentic All-American experience at the American Burger Bistro.

Irasshaimase! Welcome to the Tsurugi Sushi Bar!
The Tsurugi Sushi Bar is an authentic, traditional Japanese restaurant in New York City located along the main street of SoHo. With our Zen-inspired decor and masterful sushi chefs from Tokyo, the Tsurugi Sushi Bar is the perfect place for you to indulge in authentic Japanese classics like sushi, sashimi, tempura, and warm sake. Our signature dish is the Tsurugi Special: a delicious sushi roll made with yellowfin tuna, cucumber, and avocado, wrapped with thin slices of seared kobe beef, and topped with spicy mayo and crisp tempura flakes.
Join us for an authentic Japanese dining experience at the Tsurugi Sushi Bar.

**Exhibit 3**

## Service style manipulation

Imagine the following scenario. You enter the [American Bistro Burger *or* Tsurugi Sushi Bar] and are shown promptly to your seat. Your server approaches you at your table. This is a picture of your server:

Below is a recording of your server as she tells you about the daily specials. As you listen to the recording, please put yourself in the shoes of a customer at the [American Bistro Burger / Tsurugi Sushi Bar] (i.e. imagine that you are actually at this restaurant). Listen carefully so that you will be able to provide us with accurate feedback about your service encounter.
Press the "play" button below to begin listening to the voice recording.

Tsurugi Sushi Bar, Japanese service:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=93wKRHvYSn8

Tsurugi Sushi Bar, American service:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2f3kqKABoA

American Burger Bistro, Japanese service:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2Wt66IRgvk

American Burger Bistro, American service:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtW8TgxT8Lk

nied the recording in all four conditions. Thus, the ethnicity of the server was consistent throughout.

To manipulate brand identity, before listening to the recordings, study participants read a short description about one of two fictitious New York City restaurants, the American Burger Bistro or the Tsurugi Sushi Bar (see Exhibit 2). Participants were then asked to imagine that they were about to dine at this restaurant. The descriptions of the two restaurants were phrased similarly to provide information about their location, ambience, and cuisine. In the audio recording, background music was added to enhance the brand of each restaurant. The 1969 rock hit "Bad Moon Rising," by Creedence Clearwater Revival, was used in the American Burger Bistro recordings, and *Itsuki No Komoriuta*, a traditional Japanese folk song, was integrated into the Tsurugi Sushi Bar recordings (see Exhibit 3).

**Measurement of variables.** After they read one of the four manipulated scenarios, participants completed a questionnaire which was identical for each condition other than the restaurant names and corresponding menu items. Dependent, outcome variables collected by this questionnaire were service

**Exhibit 4**

## Factor analysis of perceived authenticity

| Please indicate the extent to which your service experience at the restaurant was … | Component | |
|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 |
| (auth1) Unauthentic—Authentic | .824 | -.036 |
| (auth2) Fake—Real | .883 | -.059 |
| (auth3) Untraditional—Traditional | .481 | .614 |
| (auth4) Atypical—Typical | .425 | .741 |
| (auth5) Generic—Unique | .461 | -.713 |
| (auth6) Not genuine—Genuine | .854 | -.160 |
| (auth7) Phony—True | .916 | -.002 |
| (auth8) Deceptive—Honest | .796 | -.025 |
| (auth9) Insincere—Sincere | .863 | -.049 |

*Note*: Items highlighted in red were removed from consideration due to weak association.

evaluations or attitudes and projected tip.[14] To measure the tip amount, participants were asked to imagine that they were particularly hungry and were ordering one appetizer (out of four selections) and one main course (also out of four selections). They were then told that their meal cost $15 in total and were asked to indicate the tip they would leave. Process variables collected included expectation confirmation or disconfirmation and perceived authenticity. The extent to which the service was consistent with expectations was measured with the following (inverse) question, rated on a nine-point Likert-type scale: "The service I received at the American Burger Bistro [or Tsurugi Sushi Bar] was very different than what I would expect." The respondent's rating number was subtracted from nine, so that the score would represent the level of confirmation of expectations (rather than disconfirmation). Authenticity was measured using a nine-item, seven-point semantic-differential scale, as described in Exhibit 4. A factor analysis (principal components with varimax rotation) showed that three of the nine items were not strongly associated with the primary factor. These three items, traditional versus untraditional, atypical versus typical, and generic versus unique, highlighted in Exhibit 4, were removed from consideration, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha of .931—a statistic indicative of a highly reliable measure.

In addition to demograpics, the questionnaire also collected several "control variables." One was designed to measure how much the participants liked the type of food featured in their scenario using the following three items, on a seven-point scale: "What is your overall evaluation regarding the type of food served at this restaurant?"; "In general, how much do you like this style of cuisine?"; and "How interested would you be in dining at a restaurant that served this type of food?" Previously published scales were used to measure: **(1)** perception of the professionalism of server, **(2)** competence of server, **(3)** friendliness of server, **(4)** the participants' level of expertise with similar restaurants, and **(5)** mood.[15] The questionnaire also included a thought-listing exercise that allowed respondents to jot down their thoughts during the experiment; a verbatim question, which asked what the participant thought the study was about; and an honesty or accuracy check, which was a seven-point scale to determine whether participant answered all the questions as honestly and accurately as possible.

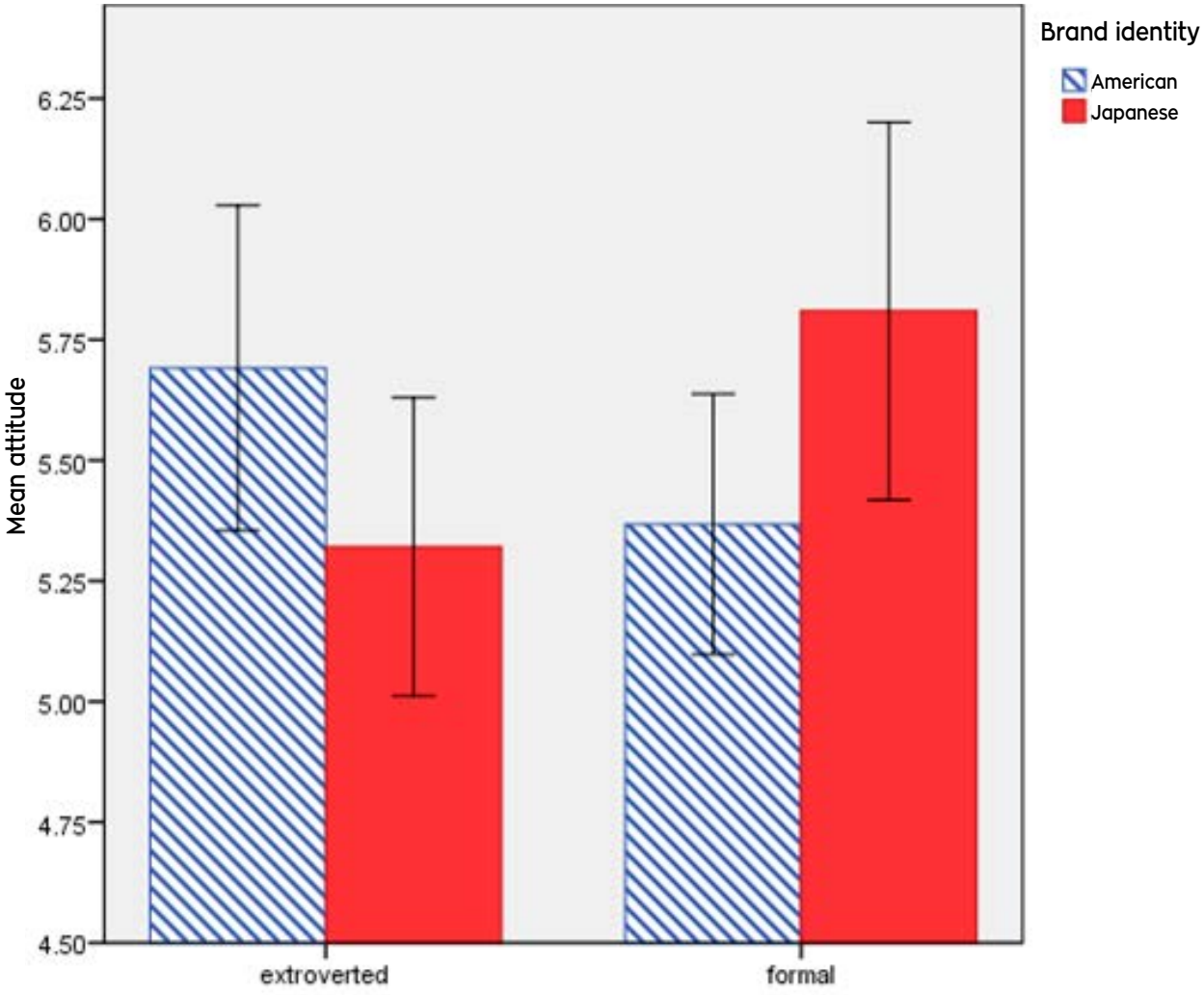
**Data cleaning.** We removed participants who clearly did not participate fully in the study, starting with the seven participants who answered "No" to the question "Were you able to play and hear the audio file?," since the aural element was an essential part of the methodology. Four participants who evidently raced through the questionnaire were removed, as well as two participants who took more than an hour to complete the survey. We judged that the questionnaire would take about ten minutes to complete, so we set a minimum of five minutes for completion. Also removed were three participants who reported on the data quality check that they did not answer as honestly or accurately as possible. We also took out two participants who reported tips of $17 and $20 on a

[14] Munch, James M., and John L. Swasy. "Rhetorical Question, Summarization Frequency, and Argument Strength Effects on Recall." *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 15 (1988): 69-76

[15] Price, Linda L., and Eric J. Arnould. "Commercial Friendships: Service Provider-Client Relationships in Context." *Journal of Marketing* 63 (1999): 38-56.

**Exhibit 5**

## Service evaluations




*Note*: Error bars show 95% confidence interval.

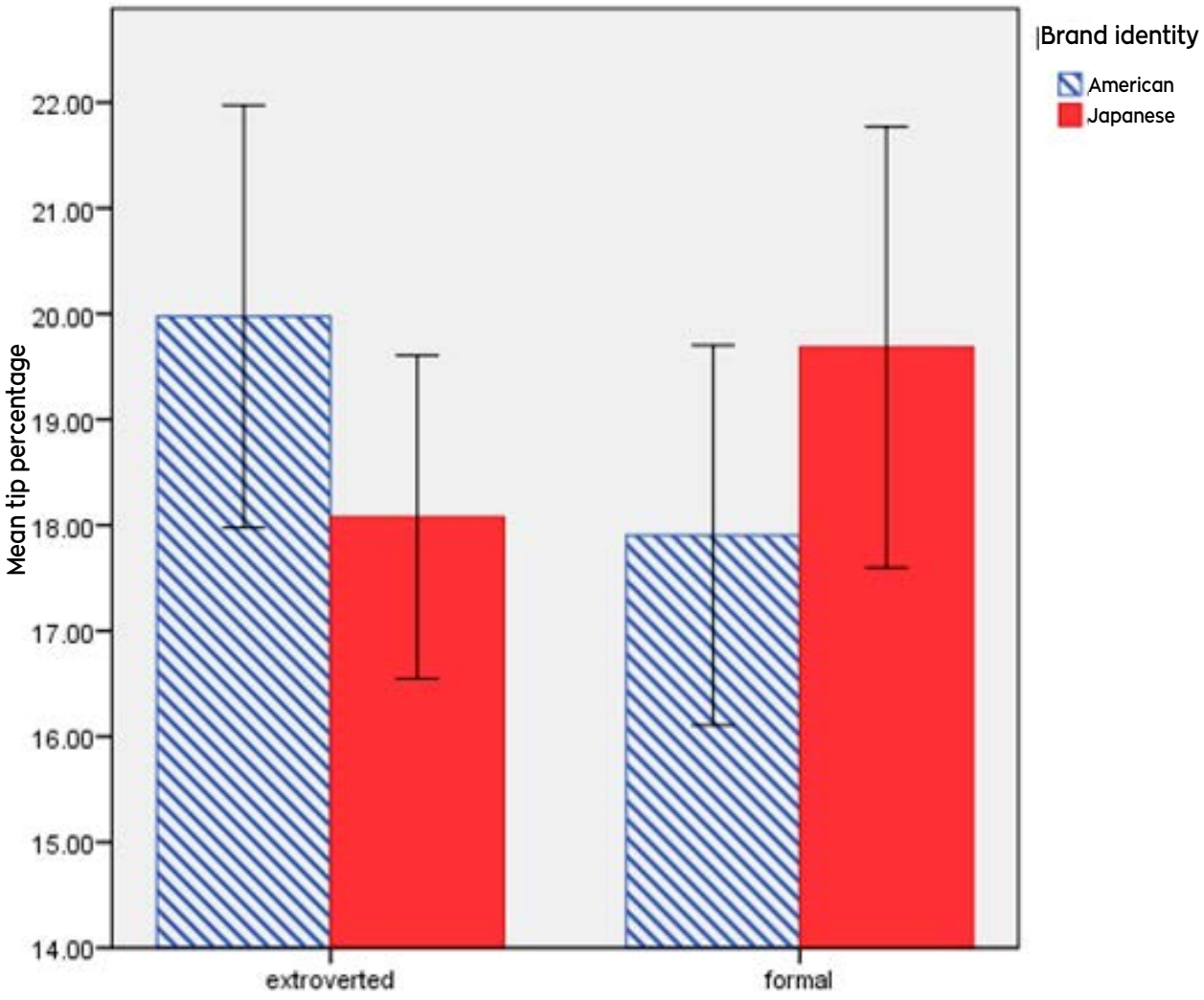
$15 dollar check. These two responses were likely typos. Those participants may have intended to tip 17 and 20 percent, but we could not determine what the actual intended tip was. Last, to reduce the influence of outliers, three responses were removed where the service evaluation scores were more than two standard deviations from the mean. This cleaning process resulted in a final sample size of 104.

**Service evaluation analysis**. An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted with service evaluations as the dependent variable while controlling for the participants' mood. The results revealed a statistically significant "interaction" of restaurant type and service style ($F(1,99) = 6.92$, $p = 0.010$), clearly indicating that the effect of service style on customers' evaluations differs across the two restaurant types. Consistent with our propositions, planned follow-up comparisons revealed that the extroverted service style resulted in directionally higher service evaluations at the American restaurant ($M_{American} = 5.66$, $M_{Japanese} = 5.32$, $p = .048$), while the formal service style resulted in significantly higher service evaluations at the Japanese restaurant ($M_{American} = 5.39$, $M_{Japanese} = 5.83$, $p = .023$). At the same time, the main effects of brand image ($F(1,99) = .10$, $p = .752$) and service style ($F(1,99) = .643$, $p = .424$) on service evaluations were not statistically significant. Thus, overall, the participants didn't rate one type of service (or type of restaurant) as being superior to the other. Exhibit 5 shows a bar chart featuring 95% confidence intervals.

**Tip amount analysis.** ANCOVA with tip amount as the dependent variable while controlling for the server's perceived

**Exhibit 6**

## Projected tip percentages




*Note*: Error bars show 95% confidence interval.

competency revealed a significant interaction of restaurant type and service style in determining tip amount ($F(1,97) = 4.95$, $p = .028$). Consistent with expectations, extroverted service delivered in the American archetype restaurant generated tips that were 2.13-percent higher on average ($M_{American} = 20.35\%$, $M_{Japanese} = 18.22\%$, $p = .039$). The formal service style, however, performed only marginally better for servers at the Japanese restaurant ($M_{American} = 17.65\%$, $M_{Japanese} = 19.37\%$, $p = .087$). Again, there were no main (i.e., overall) effects of either brand archetype ($F(1,97) = .056$, $p = .813$) or service style ($F(1,97) = .776$, $p = .380$). The bar chart in Exhibit 6 shows 95% confidence intervals for projected tip percentages.

**Mediation (process) analysis.** Next, we conducted a serial mediation-process analysis to test the conceptual model presented in Exhibit 1. As a first step, we created an effect-coded categorical variable to represent whether the service style was congruent with brand image. The assigned a code of 1 to the extroverted American condition and to the formal Japanese condition. Likewise, we coded the American formal condition and Japanese extroverted condition as -1. Regression analysis indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between having a brand-congruent service style and confirming guest expectations ($b = .280$, $t = 1.82$, $p = .036$). Similarly, there was a significant direct relationship between confirmed expectations and perceived authenticity ($b = .232$, $t = 2.95$, $p = .002$). Also, there was a significant direct effect of authenticity perceptions on service evaluations ($b = .272$, $t = 4.7734$, $p < .001$).

The mediating process was also evaluated using Preacher and Hayes's bootstrap procedure.[16] The 90-percent bias-corrected confidence interval generated by the 1,000 bootstrap iterations did not include zero (.0027 to .0503), indicating the overall serial indirect effect was statistically significant. After accounting for this indirect path, there remained a significant relationship between service style congruence and service evaluations (b = .1565, $t$ = 2.20, $p$ = .015)—indicating that other mechanisms may also be operating. In summary, we found support for our proposed conceptual model. However, the results suggest that our measured variables do not fully explain the positive relationship between brand-congruent service style and service evaluations. Thus, future research is necessary to fully understand the positive relationship between brand-congruent service style and service evaluations.

## General Discussion

The experiment presented here provides empirical support for our propositions regarding how the alignment of brand image and employee service style can affect service evaluations. In brief, the results demonstrated that a service style aligned with the concept drove higher evaluations. The "reserved" service style outperformed an "extroverted" service style in the simulated restaurant with a Japanese brand image and the reverse was true for a restaurant with an American image. It is important to note that neither the extroverted nor the reserved style was rated better overall (outside of the restaurant brand context), as indicated by the fact that we found no main effect of service style. Rather, the style's effectiveness in generating positive service evaluations (and tips) depended on the context in which it was delivered. We must note, though, that our analysis indicated a missing (unidentified) factor, as the results of our serial mediation analysis indicated that relationship between brand-congruence and service evaluations was partially explained by confirmation of expectations and perceptions of authenticity. This is an important finding as it helps to build a bridge between the satisfaction literature and recent research on the topic of service authenticity. However, future research is necessary to fully understand the effect that aligning employee service style with brand-image has on service evaluations—as well as isolating other possible factors.

The results of this research have significant managerial implications—particularly concerning the selection and training of service employees. To create better experiences, management should rigorously maintain an IMC approach and strive to ensure that the service delivered by front-line employees is consistent with the brand image created via the other elements of the marketing mix. For example, management can recruit service employees who embody the restaurant's brand and have the ability or potential to provide the expected type of service. Alternatively, management can ensure that the training and evaluation programs for service employees encourage and help them to align their behaviors to the restaurant brand. By no means, however, do we suggest that employees falsify their service approach. Care must be taken to ensure that these tactics result in an authentic service style. As mentioned above, Nancy Sirianni and her colleagues found that when service employees delivered a brand-consistent service style in an inauthentic manner, service evaluations did not go up.

Future research on this topic is clearly needed to validate and extend the results presented in this report. For one, researchers might wish to replicate this study in a field setting or with different populations and service contexts. Future research might also examine the effects of employee training programs on both service evaluations and employee job satisfaction. Additionally, there may be opportunities to find instances where violating expectations in a positive way (perhaps in a way that consumer find amusing) will increase, rather than decrease, service evaluations. Our hope is that this report and the authenticity scale it offers will be useful for both researchers and managers dedicated to creating exceptional guest experiences. ■

[16] K.J. Preacher and A.F. Hayes (2008) Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models, *Behavior Research Methods*, Vol. 40, pp. 879-891.

# Center for Hospitality Research
# Publication Index
## chr.cornell.edu

### 2016 Reports

Vol. 16 No. 8 Revenue Management in Restaurants: Unbundling Pricing for Reservations from the Core Service, by Sheryl Kimes, Ph.D., and Jochen Wirtz, Ph.D.

Vol. 16 No. 7 Instructions for the Food Preparation Scheduling Tool v2015, by Gary Thompson, Ph.D.

Vol. 16 No. 6 Compendium 2016

Vol. 16 No. 5 Executive Insights on Leader Integrity: The Credibility Challenge, by Tony Simons, Ph.D., with Kurt Schnaubelt, John Longstreet, Michele Sarkisian, Heather Allen, and Charles Feltman

Vol. 16 No. 4 Authenticity in Scaling the Vision: Defining Boundaries in the Food and Beverage Entrepreneurship Development Cycle, by Mona Anita K. Olsen, Ph.D., and Cheryl Stanley

Vol. 16 No. 3 Communication Planning: A Template for Organizational Change, by Amy Newman

Vol. 16 No. 2 What Guests Really Think of Your Hotel: Text Analytics of Online Customer Reviews, by Hyun Jeong "Spring" Han, Ph.D., Shawn Mankad, Ph.D., Nagesh Gavirneni, Ph.D., and Rohit Verma, Ph.D.

Vol. 16 No. 1 The Role of Service Improvisation in Improving Hotel Customer Satisfaction, by Enrico Secchi, Ph.D., Aleda Roth, Ph.D., and Rohit Verma, Ph.D.

### 2015 Reports

Vol. 15 No. 22 Have Minimum Wage Increases Hurt the Restaurant Industry? The Evidence Says No!, by Michael Lynn, Ph.D., and Christopher Boone, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 21 Hotel Brand Conversions: What Works and What Doesn't, by Chekitan S. Dev, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 20 The United States Supreme Court Rules in Favor of Employees in the *Young* and *Abercrombie* Cases: What Do They R Peally Hold?, by David Sherwyn, J.D., and David B. Ritter

Vol. 15 No. 19 The New Science of Service Innovation, Part 4: Select Research on People from the 2014 Cornell Hospitality Research Summit, by Cathy Enz, Ph.D., and Rohit Verma, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 18 The New Science of Service Innovation, Part 3: Select Research on Technology from the 2014 Cornell Hospitality Research Summit, by Cathy Enz, Ph.D., and Rohit Verma, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 17 The New Science of Service Innovation, Part 2: Select Research on Organizations from the 2014 Cornell Hospitality Research Summit, by Cathy Enz, Ph.D., and Rohit Verma, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 16 The New Science of Service Innovation, Part 1: Select Research on Data from the 2014 Cornell Hospitality Research Summit, by Cathy Enz, Ph.D., and Rohit Verma, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 15 Adopting the Code: Human Trafficking and the Hospitality Industry, by Michele Sarkisian

Vol. 15 No. 14 How the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Damaged the Environment, the Travel Industry, and Corporate Reputations, by Alex Susskind, Ph.D., Mark Bonn, Ph.D., and Benjamin Lawrence, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 13 Creative Capital: Financing Hotels via EB-5, by Arian Mahmoodi and Jan A. deRoos, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 12 Hospitality HR and Big Data: Highlights from the 2015 Roundtable, by J. Bruce Tracey, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 11 Cuba's Future Hospitality and Tourism Business: Opportunities and Obstacles, by John H. Thomas, Ph.D., Miranda Kitterlin-Lynch, Ph.D., and Daymaris Lorenzo Del Valle

Vol. 15 No. 10 Utility and Disruption: Technology for Entrepreneurs in Hospitality; Highlights of the 2015 Technology Entrepreneurship Roundtable, by Mona Anita K. Olsen, Ph.D., and Kelly McDarby

Vol. 15 No. 9 Hotel Sustainability Benchmarking Tool 2015: Energy, Water, and Carbon, by Howard G. Chong, Ph.D., and Eric E. Ricaurte

Vol. 15, No. 8 A Competency Model for Club Leaders, by Kate Walsh, Ph.D., and Jason P. Koenigsfeld, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 7 From Concept to Impact: Beginning with the End in Mind; Highlights of the 2015 Cornell Hospitality Entrepreneurship Roundtable, by Mona Anita K. Olsen, Ph.D., Kelly McDarby, and Joanne Jihwan Park

Vol. 15 No. 6 The Mobile Revolution Is Here: Are You Ready?, by Heather Linton and Robert J. Kwortnik, Ph.D.

Vol. 15 No. 5 What's Next in Loyalty Programs: Highlights of the 2014 Cornell Loyalty Program Management Roundtable, by Michael McCall, Ph.D.

## Advisory Board


Syed Mansoor Ahmad, *Vice President, Global Business Head for Energy Management Services,* Wipro EcoEnergy

Marco Benvenuti MMH '05, *Cofounder, Chief Analytics and Product Officer*, Duetto

Scott Berman '84, *Principal, Real Estate Business Advisory Services, Industry Leader, Hospitality & Leisure*, PwC

Erik Browning '96, *Vice President of Business Consulting*, The Rainmaker Group

Bhanu Chopra, *Founder and Chief Executive Officer*, RateGain

Susan Devine '85, *Senior Vice President–Strategic Development,* Preferred Hotels & Resorts

Ed Evans '74, MBA '75, *Executive Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer,* Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts

Kevin Fliess, *Vice President of Product Marketing,* CVENT, Inc.

Chuck Floyd, P '15, P '18 *Global President of Operations,* Hyatt

R.J. Friedlander, *Founder and CEO,* ReviewPro

Gregg Gilman ILR '85, *Partner, Co-Chair, Labor & Employment Practices,* Davis & Gilbert LLP

Dario Gonzalez, *Vice President—Enterprise Architecture,* DerbySoft

Linda Hatfield, *Vice President, Knowledge Management,* IDeaS—SAS

Bob Highland, *Head of Partnership Development,* Barclaycard US

Steve Hood, *Senior Vice President of Research,* STR

Sanjeev Khanna, *Vice President and Head of Business Unit,* Tata Consultancy Services

Josh Lesnick '87, *Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer,* Wyndham Hotel Group

Mitrankur Majumdar, *Vice President, Regional Head—Services Americas,* Infosys Limited

Faith Marshall, *Director, Business Development,* NTT DATA

David Mei '94, *Vice President, Owner and Franchise Services,* InterContinental Hotels Group

David Meltzer MMH '96, *Chief Commercial Officer,* Sabre Hospitality Solutions



*Cornell Hospitality Report*
Vol. 16, No. 9 (April 2016)



© 2016 Cornell University. This report may not be reproduced or distributed without the express permission of the publisher.



*Cornell Hospitality Report* is produced for the benefit of the hospitality industry by The Center for Hospitality Research at Cornell University.

**Michael C. Sturman,** Director
**Carol Zhe,** Program Manager
**Glenn Withiam,** Executive Editor
**Alfonso Gonzalez,** Executive Director of Marketing and Communications

Center for Hospitality Research
Cornell University
School of Hotel Administration
389 Statler Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

607-254-4504
chr.cornell.edu



Nabil Ramadhan, *Group Chief Human Capital Officer, Human Resources,* Jumeirah Group

Umar Riaz, *Managing Director—Hospitality, North American Lead,* Accenture

Carolyn D. Richmond ILR '91, *Partner, Hospitality Practice,* Fox Rothschild LLP

David Roberts ENG '87, MS ENG '88, *Senior Vice President, Consumer Insight and Revenue Strategy,* Marriott International, Inc.

Rakesh Sarna, *Managing Director and CEO,* Indian Hotels Company Ltd.

Berry van Weelden, MMH '08, *Director, Reporting and Analysis,* priceline.com's hotel group

Adam Weissenberg '85, *Global Sector Leader Travel, Hospitality, and Leisure,* Deloitte

Rick Werber '83, *Senior Vice President, Engineering and Sustainability, Development, Design, and Construction,* Host Hotels & Resorts, Inc.

Dexter Wood, Jr. '87, *Senior Vice President, Global Head—Business and Investment Analysis,* Hilton Worldwide

Jon S. Wright, *President and Chief Executive Officer,* Access Point Financial