

# An Exploratory Study of Trade Show Formation and Diversity

Jianan Wu  
Gary L. Lilien  
Aniruddha Dasgupta

**ABSTRACT.** *Purpose:* To analyze the objectives of trade show participants and to link those objectives to trade show formation and diversity.

*Methodology/Approach:* We conduct an exploratory analysis of trade show formation and diversity and link them to the differences in several seller and buyer interests across industries. We used data collected from a single large trade show to examine the nature of buyer and seller participation goals using multivariate statistical analysis. We then used a data set collected from the entire trade show industry to examine the trade show diversity via an econometric model.

*Findings:* We find that higher selling and buying propensity is linked to more vertical shows whereas higher breadth of product interests is linked

---

Jianan Wu is associate professor of marketing at the E. J. Ourso College of Business, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA (E-mail: jiananwu@lsu.edu).

Gary L. Lilien is distinguished research professor of management science at Smeal College of Business, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA (E-mail: GLilien@psu.edu).

Aniruddha Dasgupta is associate professor of international maritime business at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Buzzards Bay, MA (E-mail: adasgupta@maritime.edu).

We gratefully acknowledge financial support from the Institute for the Studies of Business Markets (ISBM) of Penn State University. We thank Hans Baumgartner, Kalyan Chatterjee, Srinath Gopalakrishna, and Arvind Rangaswamy for many useful comments on an earlier version of this paper and Exhibit Surveys, Inc. for providing the data used in the empirical study.

Address correspondence to: Jianan Wu, E. J. Ourso College of Business, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803 (E-mail: jiananwu@lsu.edu).

Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing, Vol. 15(4) 2008

© 2008 by The Haworth Press. All rights reserved.

doi:10.1080/15470620802325617

397