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Enhancing online consumers' anticipatory behavior: An application of transportation theory

Seon Jeong Lee
University of Massachusetts - Amherst

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**ENHANCING ONLINE CONSUMERS' ANTICIPATORY BEHAVIOR: AN
APPLICATION OF TRANSPORTATION THEORY**

A Dissertation Presented

By

SEON JEONG LEE

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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Isenberg School of Management

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by

SEON JEONG LEE

Approved as to style and content by:

_____, Chair

Miyoung Jeong

_____, Member

Haemoon Oh

_____, Member

Easwar Iyer

_____, Member

Craig Wells

George R. Milne, Program Director

Isenberg School of Management, PhD Program

DEDICATION

To my parents, who have instilled in me a love for learning and shown unconditional love, and to my husband and my dear son, who have shown everlasting love and support throughout all of my academic and life pursuits.

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ABSTRACT

ENHANCING ONLINE CONSUMERS' ANTICIPATORY BEHAVIOR: AN APPLICATION OF TRANSPORTATION THEORY

SEPTEMBER 2014

SEON JEONG LEE, B.S., UNVIERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS

M.S., UNVIERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS

Ph.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Miyoung Jeong

Identifying effective persuasion strategies to encourage consumers' anticipatory behaviors on the Internet is important for marketers. With the development of technology, consumers tend to access the Internet before they make any purchase decisions. However, the extant literature has not fully investigated the role of persuasion in the online environment. This study aims to explore a relatively new persuasion theory—transportation theory—in the online context to investigate the impact of sensory, brand relationship, and social review type cues on consumers' transportation experiences in the online environment.

This dissertation consists of two studies that examine how sensory attributes, and personal and situation factors influence transportation experience, based on the narrative transportation theory as a fundamental theoretical background. Sensory cues are utilized as a way to enhance narrative persuasion in both Study 1 and Study 2. Study 1 employs brand relationship norm theory to investigate the importance of relationship norms between a company and a customer that influence transportation theory. Study 2 draws on social influence theory to examine how previous customers' review formats influence

transportation experience. Both Study 1 and Study 2 employ a scenario-based experiment to investigate the effects of website attributes (sensory cues) on consumers' transportation experiences. This study further examines the outcomes of consumers' transportation experiences—online brand experience, emotions, trust, and behavioral intentions. The results of Study 1 provide evidence of the importance of sensory cues and the communal-oriented brand relationship norm to enhance transportation experience. Findings of Study 2 reveal customers are more likely to have enhanced transportation experience, when they are exposed to sensory embedded websites with narrative reviews, compared to no sensory embedded websites with statistical reviews.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
CHAPTER	
1.INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Purpose of the Study	5
1.3 Significance of the Study	7
1.4 Study Overview	8
1.5 Definition of Terms.....	9
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	11
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Role of Narratives in Information Processing	13
2.2.1 Narrative Processing as a Persuasion Process	13
2.2.1.1 Narrative Ads Versus Analytic Ads.....	14
2.2.1.2 Advantages of Narrative Processing.....	16
2.2.1.3 How Narrative Ads Work	17
2.2.1.4 Narrative Transportation as a Persuasion Strategy	19

2.3 Theoretical Background.....	20
2.3.1 Transportation Theory	20
2.3.1.1 Origin of Transportation Theory.....	20
2.3.1.2 How Transportation Theory Works	22
2.3.2 Distinction Between ELM and Transportation Theory	24
2.3.2.1 Transportation Versus ELM	24
2.4 Development of Hypotheses	26
2.4.1 Application of Transportation Theory into the Online Environment	26
2.4.1.1 Sensory Cues.....	26
2.4.1.2 Brand Relationship Cues.....	30
2.4.1.3 Social Review Type Cues	33
2.4.2 Outcomes of Consumers' Transportation Experience.....	35
2.4.2.1 Online Brand Experience.....	35
2.4.2.2 Consumers' Future-Oriented Emotion	38
2.4.2.3 Consumer Trust.....	39
2.4.2.4 Consumers' Behavioral Intention.....	41
2.5 A Conceptual Framework	42
3. METHOD	56
3.1 Study Design.....	56
3.1.1 Experiment Design in Study 1	56
3.1.2 Experiment Design in Study 2	57
3.2 Respondents of the Study.....	58

3.2.1 Pretests	58
3.2.2 Study 1 and Study 2	58
3.3 Hypothetical Websties of Study 1 and Study 2	58
3.4 Experiment Conditions in Study 1 and Study 2.....	59
3.4.1 Development of Sensory Cues.....	59
3.4.1.1 Content Analysis	59
3.4.1.2 Preliminary Tests.....	60
3.4.1.3 Sensory Cues for Study 1 and Study 2.....	62
3.4.2 Brand Relationship Cues for Study 1.....	63
3.4.3 Social Review Type Cues for Study 2	64
3.5 Development of Survey	64
3.5.1 Trait Variables	65
3.5.2 Dependent Variables	65
3.5.3 Hotel Booking Experience and Demographics.....	66
3.6 Study Procedures	66
3.7 Context of Study 1 and Study 2	67
3.8 Statistical Analyses	67
 4. RESULTS	 71
4.1 Sample Profile.....	71
4.2 Study 1 Results	72
4.2.1 Manipulation Checks	72
4.2.2 Confounding Effect Checks.....	73

4.2.3 Dependent Variables and Measurement Model	73
4.2.4 Two-Way ANOVA	75
4.2.5 Effects of Transportation	76
4.2.6 Mediation Effects of Transportation	76
4.2.7 Summary of Hypotheses	77
4.2.8 Discussion for Study 1	77
4.3 Study 2 Results	80
4.3.1 Manipulation Checks	80
4.3.2 Confounding Effect Checks	81
4.3.3 Dependent Variables and Measurement Model	81
4.3.4 Two-Way ANOVA	82
4.3.5 Outcomes of Transportation Experience	83
4.3.6 Mediation Effects of Transportation	83
4.3.7 Results of Hypotheses	84
4.3.8 Discussion for Study 2	84
5. CONCLUSIONS	100
5.1 Discussions	100
5.2 Theoretical Contributions	103
5.2.1 Extending Transportation Theory	103
5.2.2 Sensory Marketing as a Narrative Persuasion Mechanism	105
5.2.3 Brand Relationship Norm for the Positioning Strategy	106
5.2.4 Social Review Type Representing the Social Influence	107

5.3 Managerial Implications	108
5.3.1 Persuasive Online Communication Strategy	108
5.3.2 Sensory Triggering Website	109
5.3.3 Relationship Marketing.....	111
5.3.4 Social Influence Strategy	112
5.4 Suggestions for Future Research	112
APPENDIX	
Materials for the Study.....	115
BIBLIOGRAPHY	127

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
2.1 Previous Studies on Narrative Persuasion	43
2.2 From Transaction and Relationship to Sensory Marketing	53
2.3 Sensors and Perceptions.....	54
3.1 A Summary of Study 1 and Study 2	69
3.2 Statistical Procedures and Analyses.....	70
4.1 Demographics of Respondents	86
4.2 Hotel Booking Experience.....	87
4.3 Results of Manipulation Checks	88
4.4 Correlation Matrix	89
4.5 Psychometric Properties and CFA Results (Study 1)	90
4.6 Treatment Means and Standard Deviations	92
4.7 Results of Two-Way ANOVA.....	93
4.8 Effects of Transportation Experience on Customer Response	94
4.9 Results of Mediation Analyses	95
4.10 Summary of Hypotheses Testing	96
4.11 Psychometric Properties and CFA Results (Study 2)	97

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
2.1 Antecedents and Outcomes of Consumer Transportation Experience	55
4.1 Moderating Effects on Sensory Cues.....	99

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Along with the enhanced development of technology and various technological applications (i.e., mobile technology and social media), the Internet plays a more significant role than ever, serving as a core-marketing channel, as well as a mechanism for persuasion strategies. A company can encourage consumers' purchases, by providing pleasant indirect experiences (i.e., building favorable brands and anticipatory experiences). Through a pleasant online environment, consumers' indirect online experiences can be transformed into their future direct experiences with the physical environment (i.e., hotel and/or restaurant).

Due to its unique characteristics in nature, the service industry has adopted various persuasion strategies to enhance and to visualize consumers' future consumption experiences (Hill et al., 2004). Among various characteristics of the service industry, intangibility draws marketers' attention to make their service offerings and experiences perceptible to its customers. Scholars (Kronrod, Grinstein, & Wathieu, 2012) have also called for attention to investigate how to advertise service products. Responding to industry and academic needs, it is important to explore the types of website attributes that influence consumers' booking intentions rather than randomly clicking away for the development of effective service companies' websites.

According to industry practitioners (Hotel, Travel, & Hospitality news), sensory branding is marketing's next frontier in the hotel industry (Gioia, 2012). Sensory branding proposes developing one's own brand that affects a consumer's five senses.

Sensory branding has been applied to many different outlets, retail brand (i.e., Pink), food (i.e., chocolate and beverages), handmade cosmetics company (i.e., Lush), and a hotel (i.e., Westin Hotels & Resorts). For instance, Westin Hotels & Resorts incorporates sensory marketing in its properties to provide distinctive brand experiences to consumers, based on its signature scent (ScentAir, 2013). Westin Hotels & Resorts implement ScentWave scent delivery systems to greet guests with a light, refreshing White Team welcome in Westin hotels worldwide (ScentAir, 2013).

In spite of the importance of sensory branding, there is scant research on sensory branding in the online environment. More and more consumers tend to rely on the Internet to plan their trips. According to a 2012 consumer survey by Mintel Oxygen, almost 90% of the consumers use the Internet to book their transportation (i.e., airline) and almost 70% of the consumers use the Internet to book their tours and activities. Even though an increasing number of consumers rely on the Internet, it is still unclear how the online environment can incorporate the concept of sensory branding to provide pleasant browsing experiences, as well as to persuade consumers' anticipatory behaviors.

Consumers' transportation experiences can be enhanced with sensory marketing. Transportation experience occurs through a customer's convergent mental process on a story derived from an integrative attention, mental imagery, and empathetic emotion (Green & Brock, 2000). Given today's intensified competition in the service industry, it is particularly important to develop sensory appeals to form favorable consumer preferences and to distinguish one's brand experience from another brand (Gobe, 2001). By applying sensory marketing to website development, hospitality companies accommodate consumers to build pleasant, indirect experiences in their minds through

communications, consumption experiences, and interactions with others (Luo et al., 2011; Yoon et al., 2012). Scholars (i.e., Krishna, 2011; Zaltman, 2003) advocate the important roles of sensory elements on a total experience in light of a strong linkage between sensory cues and consumer preferences. According to Krishna (2011, p. 333), sensory marketing refers to the “marketing that engages the consumers’ senses and affects their perception, judgment and behavior.” Sensory experience has been well identified as a strong predictor for brand experience (von Wallpach & Kreuzer, 2012), consumer perceptions of the product (Yoon & Park, 2011), consumer attitudes (Gobe, 2001), and consumer behaviors (Achrol & Kotler, 2012).

When promoting consumers’ transportation experiences, their experiences will be influenced by situational and personal factors, such as social influence and brand relationship norms. Others’ opinions play an important role when consumers’ indirect experiences are formulated. Given the influx of Internet search engines and Web 2.0-based applications that provide information sharing and user feedback on entertainment media, it is worth understanding how such feedback impacts consumers’ indirect experiences for their decision-making processes. With the development of Web 2.0, consumers rely on others’ opinions on the Internet, along with the exponential development of social media (SM), which refers to a group of Internet-based applications, where user-generated content can be exchanged and shared (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Many of these consumer-generated websites are travel-related, influencing travel and tourism marketing, because of easy accessibility among consumers. An online environment provides ample opportunities to observe others’ reviews and experiences as

a source of information. It is not surprising to see consumers discuss with others and seek others' experiences or opinions before they make decisions through different social media platforms. The importance of social influence has been well identified for consumer decision-making (Parra-Lopez et al., 2011). For instance, Parra-Lopez et al.'s study identified consumers were willing to use social media when they plan travel, due to the perceived benefits of using social media.

In addition to social influence, consumers' existing relationship norms with brands might influence their transportation experiences. Clark and Mills (1979, 1993) distinguished two different types of relationship norms: (1) exchange relationships and (2) communal relationships. Exchange relationships are impersonal; whereas, communal relationships are typically based on friendship. Both communal and exchange relationships are characterized by norms that influence individuals' expectations for one another's behaviors and their reactions to the behaviors that actually occur.

Applying these norms in a service encounter (Aggarwal, 2004), an exchange relationship between a customer and a provider is based on a reciprocity norm, independent of the particular individuals involved in the relationship; whereas, the norms that regulate communal relationships are based on unique needs and obligations of the individuals themselves. The exchange relationship explains when a customer and a service provider are not close, and a communal relationship occurs when a customer and a service provider are friends. Based on these distinctive relationships, consumers will have different transportation experiences, even if they encounter the same online environment.

Consumers' transportation experiences influence their brand experiences. As an imperative channel for marketing communications and promotional platforms, a website provides a venue where a consumer experiences products/services, as well as the brand. A website is important to convey brand experiences because consumers can freely explore the service offerings on its website through richer and more interactive ways than other communication channels. Brand experience refers to "subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments" (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009, p. 53). Brakus et al. propose brand experience can be shaped through consumers' interactions with brand-related stimuli, such as brand identity, packaging, marketing communications, and marketing environments, where consumers are exposed to the brand. de Chernatony et al. (2006) identify consumers' perceived experiences play significant roles in providing a positive brand image, as well as to produce positive behavioral outcomes.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to answer the question of how the (service) marketer would transport consumers in the online commerce to persuade their behavior by investigating what factors influence consumers' transportation experiences, based on transportation theory (Green & Brock, 2000) as a theoretical background. Even though both visual and textual information on the website are key contents (Blanco, Sarasa, & Sanclemente, 2010), it is unclear how these visual and textual cues can be deployed to induce consumers' transportation experiences when consumers use the Internet or other mobile

technologies to purchase service offerings and products (i.e., hotel, restaurants, or tourism).

As a way of enhancing consumers' transportation experiences in the online environment, this study seeks answers from the idea of sensory cues as an important website attribute. Defined as any stimulus that influences consumer' behaviors, cues trigger consumers' behaviors (Wood & Neal, 2009). Cues can be derived from internal (i.e., moods, thoughts, or feelings) or external (i.e., anything trigger consumers' senses) stimuli. This study incorporates both external cues (i.e., sensory and social review type cues) and internal cues (i.e., brand relationship cues) that influence consumers' responses, based on transportation theory (Green & Brock, 2000), relationship norm theory (Aggarwal, 2004), and social influence theory (Fromkin, 1970) as theoretical backgrounds. Therefore, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are important online attributes to enhance consumers' transportation experiences?
2. What are personal and situational factors that influence consumers' transportation experiences?
3. What are the key outcomes of transportation experiences?

Specifically, this study investigates how consumers' transportation experiences can be enhanced, incorporating sensory marketing as important website attributes. Both situational and personal factors—brand relationship norms and social influences (i.e., social review type)—are incorporated in this study that influence consumers' transportation experiences. Consumers' exposure to websites with different brand relationships and social influence can enhance their transportation experiences. As

outcomes of consumers' transportation experiences, this study investigates consumers' experiential, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses, represented by online brand experiences, future-oriented emotions, trust, and behavioral intentions.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This research is an original attempt to apply transportation theory to an online environment by investigating effects of consumers' transportation experiences on consumers' responses. This study offers a better understanding of how consumers' transportation experiences can be linked with consumers' responses—brand experiences as well as emotional, cognitive, and behavioral perspectives. This study helps identify the attributes important to enhance consumers' transportation experiences and incorporates sensory marketing as a key website attribute, enhancing consumers' transportation experiences. Different from previous studies on brand experiences (Brakus et al., 2009), this study also aims to explore antecedents of brand experiences in relation to consumers' transportation experiences. Furthermore, this study incorporates brand relationship norms and social influences, capturing both situational and personal factors that influence the relationships between online sensory cues and consumers' transportation experiences to better understand consumer persuasion strategies.

Beyond theoretical contributions, this study helps service providers develop favorable online environment attributes that could lead to positive brand experiences and further positive consumers' responses. This is important, given consumers tend to browse the Internet first before they make decisions or develop their preferences, which, in turn, influence not only their brand experiences, but also their emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses. It is hoped this study contributes key attributes for online

persuasion strategies by providing practical insights for the service organization's online development strategies. Applying sensory marketing for consumers' transportation experiences, this study provides insightful suggestions on how to encourage consumers' forethought behaviors to industry practitioners.

Taking the service industry's unique characteristics into account, effects of consumers' transportation experiences will depend on the way service offerings are presented in the online environment, including both situational and personal factors. For example, consumers rely on others' reviews in various forms of social media (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010) and brand relationship norm (Aggarwal, 2004) to play significant roles when encouraging positive consumers' responses. Results from this study should provide insightful guidelines to (service) industry practitioners to effectively persuade consumers to process the portrayed messages in the context of service products.

1.4 Study Overview

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. First, the importance of narrative persuasion is examined in the literature review section. Next, transportation theory is reviewed as a theoretical background for this study. Building upon existing theories and previous literature, this study provides a conceptual framework, along with proposed hypotheses. Third, the method is described, including sampling procedures, study design, and study procedures in Study 1 and Study 2. Fourth, results from both Study 1 and Study 2 are presented. Further, theoretical contributions and managerial implications are followed. This study concludes by discussing limitations of this study and providing suggestions for future studies.

1.5 Definition of Terms

Brand experience: A customer's subjective response to brand-related stimuli with four different dimensions—sensory experience, affective experience, behavioral experience, and intellectual experience (Brakus et al., 2009).

Brand relationship norm: Brand relationship is different, depending on how consumers maintain the relationship with the brand, representing either exchange relationships or communal relationships. Exchange relationships are viewed as impersonal relationships; whereas, communal relationships are derived from friendships, explaining close relationships between consumers and companies (Clark & Mills, 1993).

Sensory marketing: Defined as the “marketing that engages the consumers’ senses and affects their perception, judgment and behavior” (Krishna, 2011, p. 333).

Social influence: Other consumers’ influence on a consumer’s decision-making process. A popular form of social influence is others’ reviews presented in the online environment, where e-word-of-mouth refers to “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet” (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39).

Social review type: Narrative review refers to “a message that presents information in a personal format” (Hong & Park, 2012, p. 907) and statistical review refers to “quantified descriptions of events, persons, places, or other phenomena” (Church & Wilbanks, 1986, p. 108).

Transportation: A consumer’s convergent mental process on story events as an integrative approach of attention, imagery, and emotion (Green & Brock, 2000).

Transportation is a state or experience “where all mental systems and capacities become focused on events occurring in the narrative” (p. 701).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

With the importance of consumer value creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008) and consumer experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), consumers' information processing has transformed from analytical perspective to a more holistic perspective that takes into account both rational and emotional aspects of the consumer decision-making process (Schmitt & Rogers, 2008). Narrative information processing has become a key role to enhance consumers' holistic perspective of information processing (Green & Brock, 2000). Referring to “the semiotic representation of a series of events meaningfully connected in a temporal and causal way” (Onega & Landa, 1996, p. 3), narrative explains something told or described in a story format.

Narratives are everywhere—exposed to different aspects of our lives—including movies, books, and marketing communications embedded in our consumption experiences. For instance, Schank and Abelson (1995, p. 1) support the popularity of narrative processing by stating, “all of our knowledge is contained in stories and the mechanisms to construct and retrieve them.” Adaval and Wyer (1998, p. 207) also support the prevalence of the narratives in our society, stating “much of the social information we acquire in daily life is transmitted to us in the form of a narrative.”

Service companies encourage consumers' imaginations to enhance their future consumption, encouraging them to immerse into future events (Goossens, 1995; Lee & Gretzel, 2012). Viewed as one of the persuasion strategies for service products, narrative transportation has been identified as an effective persuasion strategy to promote

consumers' future experiences. Green and Brock (2000) propose transportation theory, advocating the importance of narrative transportation. Transportation is identified as generating consumers' affective responses and reducing counterarguments, which lead to more positive attitudes towards advertisements and brand evaluations (Escalas, 2004a). Focusing on immersion and holistic engagement of the consumer's attention, imagination, and affect (Green & Brock, 2000), narrative transportation focuses on a sense of immersion that influence consumers' attitudes, beliefs, and their behaviors. This study applies transportation theory to the online environment, as a way of providing an effective online persuasion strategy for service products.

Serving as an effective persuasion strategy (Escalas, 2004b; Green & Brock, 2000), narratives play an important role for consumer decision-making because narrative advertising enables consumers to think holistically when evaluating products/services. Facilitating consumers' holistic thinking processes, narratives are valuable for changing consumers' attitudes and beliefs because narratives enable consumers to transport into a different reality and to focus less on argument quality (Green & Brock, 2000). Emphasizing the importance of narratives that intrigue consumers' future consumption experience, this literature review section attempts to answer the following research questions:

- (1) what are the roles of narratives in consumer behavior?
- (2) what is the fundamental theory for the narrative processing?
- (3) what are future suggestions as an extension of narrative processing?

To answer the proposed research questions, this section begins with the literature review on narrative processing that focuses on persuasion strategy, reviewing the current

stages of narrative persuasion. The next section reviews transportation theory as a theoretical background. Further, extension of the narrative persuasion is suggested, developing hypotheses for the study.

2.2 Role of Narratives in Information Processing

2.2.1 Narrative Processing as a Persuasion Process

Narrative has been extensively utilized in such different disciplines as communication (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2008), (consumer) psychology (Nielsen & Escalas, 2010), and marketing (Escalas, 2007). According to Packer and Jordan (2001), narratives allow the human mind to “collapse boundaries of space and time, drawing attention to previously undetected connections, creating links between disparate ideas and elements” (p. 174). Among different applications of narratives, marketing scholars and marketers are particularly interested in the role of narratives as a persuasion mechanism on consumers’ consumption experiences. Marketing scholars have applied the idea of narratives to encourage consumers’ consumption activities, by providing stories to visualize and to entice their future experiences.

Traditionally, consumers are believed to develop an overall evaluation of the product/service, based on a piecemeal of evaluative processes for their purchase decisions (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). However, consumers evaluate the product/service information in a holistic manner, taking into account different aspects. Thus, narratives play a key role to encourage consumers’ consumption experiences. Narrative processing is based on stories that provide the basis for (1) encouraging consumers’ new or future experiences; (2) making evaluations about persons, objects, or events; and (3) developing general attitudes and beliefs towards the persons, objects, or events (Adaval & Wyer, 1998).

Focusing on narrative processing, marketers can encourage consumers to imagine the future consumption or purchase scenarios. Emphasizing the role of narratives, Green and Brock (2000) developed transportation theory, advocating a direct relationship between narrative and consumer imagination on consumption.

2.2.1.1 Narrative Ads Versus Analytic Ads

Two distinctive ways of consumers' thinking processes, analytical and narrative, are proposed, explaining different mechanisms for consumers' persuasion processes (Escalas, 2007; Green & Brock, 2000). Analytical thought refers to (Nielsen & Escalas, 2010, p. 296) "a formal and analytical system of description and explanation that relies on established procedures aimed at ensuring verifiable conclusions." When consumers think narratively, they tend to create a story to process the information. Applying these different consumers' thought processes for the advertising context, Wells (1989) first proposed different types of advertising, a form of drama or a lecture advertising. Based on these two distinctive ways of consumers' thought processes, advertising can be in an argumentative type or a narrative type (Boller & Olson, 1991).

Narrative ads, also called drama ads, convey information through a story-like format to introduce the features of a product or service (Deighton et al., 1989). On the other hand, expository ads, referred to factual ads (Peracchio & Meyers-Levy, 1997), lecture ads (Wells, 1989), or argumentative ads (Boller & Olson, 1991), communicate information, based on a direct, logical, and fact-based manner to introduce the features of a product or service (Wentzel et al., 2010). Narrative advertising incorporates "actors with motives, an event sequence, and a setting that has physical, social, and temporal components" (Padgett & Allen, 1997, p. 53). Argument advertising does not include plot

or characters in the ad format; rather, it focuses on logical arguments (Deighton et al., 1989). Narrative advertising explains events and characters embedded in the story. Argument advertising tends to be processed in an evaluative manner, focusing on objectivity; whereas, narrative advertising tends to be processed in an empathetic manner, influencing consumers' subjective feelings (Deighton et al., 1989). For instance, Lien and Chen's (2013) study investigated the persuasion effects and mediation process for narrative ads. Their study identified how narrative ads were processed, which influenced consumers' attitudes towards the ads.

Based on the distinctive differences between narrative and argument advertisements, two distinctive persuasion mechanisms occur. Analytical processing is based on a divergent process, influenced by consumers' prior opinions, prior knowledge, and/or their experiences, in addition to the information provided in an advertisement; whereas, narrative processing is based on a convergent process, where consumers tend to immerse into the story provided in an advertisement (Nielsen & Escalas, 2010). When narrative ads are applied, consumers are more likely to adopt narrative processing; whereas, when expository ads are focused, consumers tend to process information, based on analytical processing. For instance, when consumers read the advertising that describes lists of attributes, they are more likely to go through the analytical thought process; on the other hand, when consumers are exposed to advertising that describes the product information, then they tend to go through the narrative thought process (Adaval & Wyer, 1998).

In addition, the persuasion process for analytical processing follows the dual cognitive response processes (i.e., elaboration likelihood model; Petty & Cacioppo,

1984); whereas, the persuasion process for narrative processing follows the transportation process (i.e., transportation theory; Green & Brock, 2000). With these distinctive characteristics, narrative advertising is superior in encouraging consumers' consumption experiences to analytic advertising, enabling them to immerse into the story. Narrative advertising further provides an opportunity for consumers to experience their future consumption experiences.

2.2.1.2 Advantages of Narrative Processing

Narrative advertising has advantages because people are naturally more comfortable to process narrative information (Chang, 2009). Narrative advertising is valuable to tangibilize characteristics of the service offerings, describing the benefits and distinctiveness of intangible products in a meaningful way (Mattila, 2000). In addition, narrative advertising takes a strong position to hook consumers and transport them into the narrative world (Escalas, 2004b). This characteristic is important for experience goods, since consumers cannot evaluate the services or products before they purchase them. Once consumers are hooked to the advertising, they tend to develop positive feelings, which result in favorable attitudes toward the ads, as well as products/companies (Escalas et al., 2004).

Narrative advertising enhances persuasion effects, compared to the persuasion effects through elaboration, because persuasion effects on narrative advertising last longer (Green & Brock, 2000). When utilizing narrative advertising, mental imagery plays a critical role that can facilitate consumers' immersion and transportation into the story (Green & Brock, 2000). In addition, vividness enhances persuasion effects in narrative processing. When vividness is enhanced with elaboration, its effects will

diminish at a certain point, resulting in an inverted U relationship between elaboration and persuasion effects. However, when vividness is promoted in narrative advertising, an inverted U relationship is not found between narrative transportation and persuasion effects (Green & Brock, 2000). Different from elaboration, high levels of vividness and self-referencing in narrative advertising do not weaken the effects of persuasion (Escalas, 2007).

2.2.1.3 How Narrative Ads Work

Consumers tend to portray themselves into a probable buying situation before they make purchase decisions (Schank & Abelson, 1995). They are likely to imagine themselves in the situation the narrative describes, engaging themselves in mental simulation, which refers to “the cognitive construction of hypothetical scenarios” (Taylor & Schneider, 1989, p. 175). Narrative thoughts are useful to provide meaningful experiences, based on the story’s format, creating an interaction between the narrative and the consumers’ own experiences.

The specific organization of narratives influences the way they are processed. Narrative advertisements rely on a chronologically and causally related sequence of events to describe how consumers consume, experience, or create a product or service (Wentzel et al., 2010). Delgadillo and Escalas (2004) identified two required components for narratives, different from other text types—(1) chronology (i.e., events described in the narrative as organized with respect to a temporal sequence) and (2) causality (i.e., text elements structured to build relationships among characters and objects, allowing for causal inference). The effects of narrative advertising are enhanced with characters, especially when those characters are related to a casual sequence of events (Padgett &

Allen, 1997). Scholars (i.e., Boller & Olsen, 1991; Fiske, 1993) have advocated the importance of chronology and causality. According to Boller and Olsen (1991), narrative advertising is characterized by a content component (i.e., actors, actions, and motives), as well as by a structural component (i.e., a casual and temporal plot) (Padgett & Allen, 1997). Fiske (1993) also proposed people store in their minds recurring narrative content and episodes with casual relations as event prototypes or casual knowledge structures.

Narrative ads are identified as leading to more favorable responses than expository ads because narrative processing elicits a consumer's cognitive process, known as "transportation." When consumers process narrative advertising, they tend to transport themselves into the imaginary world described in the ad, creating their own meanings (Bruner, 1986; Gerrig, 1993). With narrative processing, consumers are more likely to have realistic and vivid future consumption experiences, picturing themselves using the product, buying the brand, and/or receiving service offerings (Padgett & Allen, 1997). For instance, Mattila (2000) investigated the role of narratives in the advertising of experiential services. She identified story-based advertising led to consumers' affective responses, compared to attribute-based advertising. Adaval and Wyer (1998) also identified consumers evaluated vacations at unfamiliar destinations more positively when they were exposed to advertising information in a narrative format, compared to a list of attributes.

Narrative processing also intensifies the relationship between the brand and consumer's self (Escalas, 2004a). When consumers process information or advertisement narratively, they are more likely to associate the brand with their experiences, enhancing the relationship between the brand and consumers' self-identity (Escalas, 2004a).

Therefore, an increase in self-brand connections leads to more positive attitudes toward the brand (Escalas & Bettman, 2005). Once consumers store memory related to self, these memories can be easily obtained from consumers, helping to process incoming information (Schank & Abelson, 1995).

2.2.1.4 Narrative Transportation as a Persuasion Strategy

The concept of narrative transportation builds on the work of Gerrig (1993), by examining two components—“narrative” and “transportation.” Narrative transportation refers to positive evaluations of the advertised brand through a consumer’s deeper immersion into the narrative with the basis of narrative processing (Green & Brock, 2000). Research in the persuasiveness of narratives reveals narratives are effective in changing attitudes and beliefs because they transport individuals into a different world, making them not focusing on the positive and negative aspects of the message (Green & Brock, 2000).

Indeed, narrative processing has been linked to persuasion. Wang and Calder (2009) identified narrative transportation enhanced advertising effectiveness. Escalas (2004b) also identified consumers were more likely to have favorable ad attitudes and brand evaluation when advertisements encouraged mental simulation. She advocated the important role of transportation that resulted in positive emotions and reduced critical cognitive responses, influencing consumers’ ad attitude and brand evaluations. Phillips and McQuarrie (2010) further advocated the important role of transportation, since consumers tended to believe the story when transportation was in the story, reducing critical evaluation of the ideas presented in the story world.

Padgett and Allen (1997) supported the great applicability of narrative advertising to experiential products, since narrative advertising led to the most effective way of communication. When consumers were exposed to narrative ads, they tended to imagine functional consequences and sought symbolic meanings to associate meanings of the advertisement with themselves (Padgett & Allen, 1997). For instance, Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier (2008) identified the narrative structure of travel blogs enabled readers to feel empathy, so readers were more likely to associate the experiences of the blogger with their own. Lee and Gretzel (2012) also identified mental imagery processing was confirmed as an important element of persuasive communication in the context of travel planning in the context of destination websites. Reviewing previous studies on narrative persuasion, a comprehensive review is represented in Table 2.1.

2.3 Theoretical Background

2.3.1 Transportation theory

2.3.1.1 Origin of Transportation Theory

Originating from the communication discipline, Green and Brock (2000, p. 701) defined the concept of transportation as “a convergent process, where all mental systems and capacities become focused on events occurring in the narrative, enabling consumers to immerse into the situation provided in the story with an enhanced sense of realism.” The process of transportation explains the process of “immersion into a text,” and being “lost” in a story (Green & Brock, 2000, p. 702), supporting the idea of consumers’ immersion into a story. According to transportation theory, high transportation leads to more positive changes in story-related beliefs and evaluations than low transportation. Even though the persuasion effects of narratives have been documented in the literature, Green’s (1996) Transportation-Imagery Model has made significant progress for

narrative persuasion in a sense that it provides a fundamental stepping-stone for the persuasion model applicable to narrative-based belief change.

Providing a lens for understanding the concept of media enjoyment, transportation theory (Green & Brock, 2000, 2002) has been applied to different media contexts (Malthouse, Calder, & Tamhane, 2007), identifying the occurrence of the transportation process, regardless of the narratives' format. Its importance also has been recognized in different disciplines such as communication (Green, 2004), consumer psychology (Wang & Calder, 2009), marketing (McFerran et al., 2010), and tourism (Avraham & Daugherty, 2012).

The fundamentals of transportation theory has been shared with those of flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). The concept of "flow" developed by Csikszentmihalyi (1975) is to explain why some people are absorbed in some activities purely for the activity, rather than for other external activities. According to Novak et al. (2000, p. 23), flow is "defined as the state occurring during network navigation: (1) characterized by a seamless sequence of responses facilitated by machine interactivity, (2) intrinsically enjoyable, (3) accompanied by a loss of self-consciousness, and (4) self-monitoring." For example, when consumers are in the flow state, they mainly concentrate on activities found on the website and pay little attention to other things (Ghani & Deshpande, 1994). Flow theory emphasizes the pleasurable experience of flow experience. This flow theory is related to transportation theory, since people are immersed in the story, leading to their pleasurable experiences (Wang & Calder, 2009).

Transportation theory also corresponds to Gerrig's study (1993), which emphasizes the importance of "participatory responses." In Gerrig's original study, he

introduced the idea of “transportation response” as a conceptual metaphor to guide exploratory research into the broad domain of the psychology of reading. The idea of being transported in transportation theory corresponds to reader-response theory, which explains the active role of the reader when (s)he interacts with a text (Athinodoros et al., 2012). Scott (1994) applied reader-response theory to investigate the process consumer reading and response when they were exposed to advertising texts. People are more likely to engage in the information when the information is in the narrative format.

Even though transportation theory has similar characteristics to other theories, it is different from other theories (Malthouse et al., 2007). Transportation theory is mainly based on narratives, which encourage consumers’ subjective experiences, taking into account vicarious and empathetic consumers’ experiences. Extended from Gerrig’s (1993) initial idea on transportation, Green and Brock (2000) explained three components of transportation: (1) mental imagery, (2) cognitive attention, and (3) emotional involvement. Among these components, imagery is a central component of narrative stories (Green & Brock, 2000), identified as a catalyst to enhance consumers’ indirect experiences, which facilitates consumers’ information processing (Argyriou, 2012). Focusing on consumers’ subjective experiences, transportation theory encourages consumers’ active engagement with the information, which enables consumers to fill the gap in the story and to create their own meanings from the story.

2.3.1.2 How Transportation Theory Works

Transportation is considered one type of mental imagery techniques (Wyer, Hung, & Jiang, 2008) that marketing communications apply to consumers’ engagement. Imagery may influence product evaluations through a similar mechanism, by transporting

consumers into a distant reality and reducing their attention to the favorability of product information (Escalas, 2004b, 2007). When transportation is applied in the marketing context, it has been identified as an effective persuasion strategy, explaining how stories engage people and how stories influence their behaviors (Green & Brock, 2000). To explain the process of transportation theory, Green and Brock (2000) proposed “Pinocchio Circling” to evaluate questioning or doubtful reactions of the message recipients toward a story. They identified transportation led to fewer counterarguments by determining highly transported readers caught fewer false notes advocated in “Pinocchio Circling” (Green & Brock, 2000). By engaging with the story, people can imagine they become immersed into the characters in virtual and/or dynamic stories.

Transportation can influence readers via three means: (1) fostering bonds with characters, (2) decreasing counterarguments, and (3) portraying narrative events more like real experiences (Green & Brock, 2000). When a person processes information in a story format, he or she may be “transported” by the narrative, enhancing persuasion effects without increasing analytical evaluation of the message arguments (Escalas, 2007). For instance, analytical processing leads to elaboration, questioning more critical evaluation of the arguments; whereas, narrative processing leads to increased transportation, leading to a stronger emotional and experiential response to the narrative (Green, 2009). With consumers’ process of transportation, they tend to develop feelings that can be associated with the brands (Escalas, 2007). Transportation also enables a narrative experience to be perceived as more real, strongly influencing consumers’ attitudes (Green & Brock, 2000).

Different factors have been investigated that affect consumers' transportation processes. According to Green (2004), the degree of transportation is affected by message attributes, including the level of artistic craftsmanship and the degree of adherence to the narrative structure. Factors, such as an editorial type (Chang, 2009), consumers' motivation related to the themes of a story (McFerran et al., 2010), similarity with the main character (Bhatnagar & Wan, 2011), self-referencing (Escalas, 2007), empathy (Green, 1996; Green & Brock, 2000), and regulatory fit (Vaughn et al., 2009), have been shown to facilitate transportation into the narrative of a text. However, gender has not influenced the effects of transportation (Green & Brock, 2000). For instance, empathy has influenced effects of transportation. When empathy was projected, people were more likely to engage themselves into the experiences of the advertising characters in a narrative advertising with enhanced imaginations (Booth, 1961).

2.3.2 Distinctions Between ELM and Transportation Theory

2.3.2.1 Transportation Versus ELM

Green and Brock (2000) introduced an innovative conception of how persuasion occurs, different from the dual process of persuasion model. Then, how different is the persuasion process of the transportation theory from the dual-process model? The dual-process model, including Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984) or Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM) (Chaiken, 1980), has been dominant to explain for consumer persuasion process, before Green and Brock (2000) proposed transportation theory as a persuasion process. Taking into account the different perspectives on persuasion, Green and Brock (2000, p. 717) propose "the failure of mainstream attitude-change theories to offer apposite mechanisms narrative-based persuasion." They

proposed the transportation theory because elaboration has not played significant roles when explaining narrative-based belief changes (Green & Brock, 2000) and dual-process model (i.e., ELM) has not fully explained outside the realm of rhetorical persuasion, addressing the narrative mode of thought.

Analytical elaboration, a fundamental idea in the dual-process model, leads to consumers' attitude change through evaluations of the arguments and logical considerations; whereas, transportation applies "reduced negative cognitive responding, realism of experience, and strong affective response" (Green & Brock, 2000, p. 702) to persuade consumers. Transportation focuses on the 'immersion into a text,' enabling people to accept the world described in the text. The ELM is superior when predicting and explaining persuasion through argumentative advertising, explaining central or peripheral routes for persuasion. For instance, central route is comparatively more durable and resistant to counterarguments, and predictive of the subsequent belief change, compared to peripheral route (Cialdini, Petty, & Cacioppo, 1981). In addition to ELM, Chaiken's (1980) Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM) explains dual alternatives of persuasion, which are systematic processing and heuristic processing.

In the dual-process model, consumers' high involvement is critical for persuasion effects because consumers with low-involvement will not elaborate their arguments; rather, they process different types of peripheral cues to make a heuristic judgment. When elaboration occurs, the information in a message is likely to be associated with prior perceptual schemas, enabling persuasion to occur for consumers who hold high involvement (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984).

Transportation is distinct from the dual-process model because it explains consumers' temporary immersion into the narrative world away from reality. It involves consumers' cognitive attention, mental imagery, and emotional involvement, not focusing on cognitive elaboration. According to Prentice and Gerrig (1999, p. 453), neither of the dual-process models "seems to capture the phenomenological experience of reading a work of fiction." Different from the dual-process model, narrative transportation is unrelated to central or peripheral, systematic or heuristic processing; rather, narrative transportation is viewed as a different type of persuasion process.

Under high elaboration, "connections are established to an individual's other schemas and experiences"; whereas, under high transportation, "the individual may be distanced temporarily from current and previous schemas and experiences" (Gossens, 1994, p. 702). Green and Brock (2000) advocate that well-crafted and high-quality narratives are more likely to elicit consumers' transportation experiences, even though, theoretically, any text can elicit transportation. Once people are engaged in the narrative, they begin enjoying the story through voluntary suspension of disbelief (Richardson, 2013). After voluntary suspension of disbelief, people tend to change their feelings and beliefs in an enduring way; thus, persuasion occurs (Richardson, 2013).

2.4 Development of Hypotheses

2.4.1 Application of Transportation Theory into the Online Environment

2.4.1.1 Sensory Cues

Persuasive websites can influence consumers' attitudes (Morosan & Fesenmaier, 2007). The persuasion effect can be facilitated with consumers' transportation experiences, incorporating the concept of sensory marketing. Sensory marketing can be

utilized as a catalyst of consumers' transportation experiences. Unconscious sensory cues play important roles in the consumer-product relationship, because these cues influence consumers' perceptions in the online/offline environment and product/service quality. Unlike traditional consumer decision-making processes (i.e., learn-feel-act), the new marketing paradigm broadens the boundaries of existing theory, explaining consumers' behaviors are based on the sensory information they receive from the advertisement or environment (Achrol & Kotler, 2012). Based on the emerging role of sensory marketing, Table 2.2 describes differences among transactional, relationship, and sensory marketing (Hultén et al., 2009).

Sensory information in the online environment might enable consumers to be exposed to brand experiences, which might influence their emotional responses towards the brand. When consumers need to purchase experiential products, they cannot easily evaluate experiential/service products, because consumers cannot perceive or experience how these experiential products would appear. Thus, service companies differentiate themselves from competitors by effectively utilizing multi-sensory cues on advertising (Hultén, 2011).

Important roles of sensory cues are well identified in previous studies (Hultén, 2011; von Wallpach & Kreuzer, 2012; Yoon & Park, 2011). Lindstrom's (2005) study advocated the importance of sensory cues on brand management, investigating the relationship between sensory appeals and brand effectiveness. In addition, Hultén (2011) identified the importance of multi-sensory for consumers' brand experiences. Yoon and Park (2011) also investigated the importance of sensory appeals in advertisements that influenced consumers' attitudes toward the brand. Their study identified sensory

preferences not only enhanced ad effectiveness, but also led to favorable attitudes towards the brand. Furthermore, von Wallpach and Kreuzer (2012) identified how consumers' multi-senses influenced their brand knowledge, investigating consumers' conscious and non-conscious brand experiences. Derived from different applications of sensory cues, Table 2.3 describes different sensors and consumers' perception in each sense.

Sensory cues are considered an important strategy for branding creation because they positively influence consumers' brand experiences (Hultén, 2011) and corporate identity (Bartholme & Melewar, 2009). Transportation can occur utilizing a narrative focus of the online environment, expecting the multi-sensory (mental imagery) narrative environment is more likely to elicit transportation than the no-sensory narrative environment. These sensory cues also influence brand attitudes, signifying the importance of a multi-sensory communication platform (Yoon & Park, 2011). When applying this sensory marketing to the online environment, a visual cue and a textual cue can be utilized. Narrative mental imagery advocates the important role of visual images/cues that influence consumers' feelings and attitudes (Bone & Ellen, 1992; Lee & Gretzel, 2012). Lee and Gretzel (2012) applied the mental imagery technique to the destination website development, identifying presence of picture on the website significantly influenced consumers' attitude strength and attitude resistance.

When the online environment has sensory-evoking visual cues, it has positive effects on consumers' brand experiences (Hong, Thong, & Tam, 2004). A visual cue refers to a picture presentation that triggers consumers' senses in the online environment in this study. As explained in the Transportation-Imagery Model (Green, 1996),

transportation is influenced by the vividness of product depiction. Supporting vivid product description is more likely to elicit a greater degree of transportation than featuring pallid product depiction. Visual cues entice consumers to immerse themselves in imagined product/service experiences, promoting consumers' indirect experiences. Visual cues are likely to have a positive impact on consumers' perceptions and behaviors (Blanco et al., 2010).

Textual cues represent words that describe specific and detailed information about experiential product information (Blanco et al., 2010). Textual cues explain the importance of consumers' thoughts, ideas, and cognitive responses derived from message exposure through the environment or advertisement (Brock & Shavitt, 1983). Incorporating the idea of sensory mental imagery, a textual description of an experiential product might be perceived differently, depending on how many sensory cues are incorporated into the content (Jarvenpaa & Dickson, 1988). The number of senses activated in the online environment is significantly related to consumers' brand experiences (Elder & Krishna, 2010). For instance, when textual cues incorporate all five senses into the content, consumers are more likely to create positive images of the experiential products, which influence their brand image (Hultén, 2011).

This study proposes multi-sensory textual information that might have additive effects on consumers' responses, since multi-sensory textual information likely leads to favorable consumer attitudes and behaviors (Elder & Krishna, 2010). Elder and Krishna (2010) identified that multi-sensory ads led to higher taste perceptions, compared to single-sensory ads (i.e., taste alone ad). Therefore, if the online environment has multi-sensory textual information, consumers are more likely to have enhanced consumers'

transportation experiences than when they are exposed to no-sensory textual information, positing the following hypothesis.

H1: Sensory cues will influence consumers' transportation experiences. Multi-sensory narratives will elicit enhanced consumers' transportation experiences than no-sensory narratives in the online environment.

2.4.1.2 Brand Relationship Cues

Consumers have different relationships with companies/brands, depending upon their motives, driven by either intrinsic motives (i.e., consumers want to) or extrinsic motives (i.e., consumers have to). Brand relationship cues refer to the way consumers maintain the relationship with the brand in this study, either having a close (friendship) relationship or having a distant (reciprocal) relationship. Fournier (1998) asserted that relationships between consumers and companies influence and are influenced by the situation where they are focused. Bendapudi and Berry (1997) also argued the relationships between consumers and companies were contingent on how consumers would like to retain them. Following Clark and Mills' (1979, 1993) two distinctive relationships (i.e., exchange and communal relationships), this study aims to provide insights on how two different conditions of relationship norms influence the relationship between website transportation and online brand experience. Exchange relationships are viewed as impersonal; whereas, communal relationships are derived from friendships, explaining close relationships between consumers and companies (Clark & Mills, 1993).

Relationship norms have been emphasized in relationship marketing. Reciprocating norms are viewed as the primary nature of the relationship (Wellman & Wortley, 1990). According to Morgan and Hunt (1994, p. 22), relationship marketing

refers to “all marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges.” Shani and Chalasani (1992) viewed relationship marketing as the efforts designed to strengthen customer-firm networks for the mutual benefit of both sides. Derived from relationship marketing, these different relationship norms can operate in a service encounter (Aggarwal, 2004). For instance, consumers in communal relationships are motivated by the intrinsic fulfillment that results from providing for the needs of others (Clark et al., 1987); whereas, consumers in exchange relationships are motivated by the extrinsic motivations.

The norms governing exchange relationships focus on obligations between (among) parties. An exchange relationship between a customer and a provider is based on a reciprocity norm, independent of the particular individuals involved in the relationship (Wan et al., 2011). The norms that govern communal relationships focus on the unique needs and obligations of the individuals themselves (Wan et al., 2011). In communal relationships, “the norm ... is to give benefits in response to needs, or to demonstrate a general concern for the other person. In (these) relationships, the receipt of a benefit does not change the recipient’s obligation to respond to the other’s needs” (Mathwick, 2002, p. 684). Although people involved in a communal relationship often reciprocate the benefits they receive, their reciprocation is normally motivated by feelings of appreciation, rather than by feelings of obligation. Communally-oriented individuals invest in relationships for their own sake, without the expectation of repayment (Mathwick, 2002). For instance, consumers are expected to leave a tip responding to quality food and service when they go to the restaurant.

When deciding the relationships between consumers and service providers, two perspectives of relationship norms cannot occur at the same time (Hung & Wyer, 2009). Rather, one type of the relationship norm is likely to control the other, based on the magnitude of the consumer's need and motives (Wan et al., 2011). Consumers, who focus on exchange-oriented relationships maintain relationships with a company, expecting to receive future benefits as repayment; on the other hand, consumers, who are involved in communal-oriented relationships, maintain relationships with the company and do not hold any expectations of pay back (Mathwick, 2002). With these distinctive relationships, it is expected when consumers have a friendship with a service provider (communal relationship), their immersion with the website transportation would be enhanced, resulting in enhanced online brand experiences. When explaining communal and exchange relationships, norms play important roles that influence consumers' expectations for service providers and consumers' behaviors (Wan et al., 2011). Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Brand relationship cues will influence consumers' transportation experiences.

Communal brand relationship cues will increase consumers' transportation experiences more than exchange brand relationship cues.

H2-1: Brand relationship cues moderate the relationship between sensory cues and consumers' transportation experiences, such that when a website having multi-sensory information with a communal brand relationship norm will lead to enhanced consumers' transportation experiences, compared to when a website does not have sensory information and consumers have an exchange brand relationship norm with the company.

2.4.1.3 Social Review Type Cues

Other people have tremendous impact on consumers' decision-making for the service goods/offerings with the development of the technological advancements (Wood & Hayes, 2012). Corresponding to the exponential growth in social media, consumers can easily access the Internet to share their experiences. Social review type cues refer to the format of others' opinions (i.e., online reviews) presented in the online environment in this study. For example, consumer decisions about what restaurant to go tonight, where to stay, or where to travel are made after consumers hear from others in the online (digital) environment. Online consumer reviews and ratings, viewed as a key form of online user-generated content, are now widely available for many different product categories without time and geographical restrictions. Electronic word-of-mouth refers to "any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet" (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39). This study addresses how types of other consumers' online reviews influence consumers' transportation experience. In particular, insights into social influence effects on transportation experience provide actionable insights to managers, suggesting how to utilize others' reviews as a marketing communication strategy.

The effects of social cues on consumers' decision-making are based on the social influence theory (Fromkin, 1970). The social influence theory explains people's tendencies to rely on the group's consensus to develop their own opinions. Returning to Asch's (1952) classic thinking, he supported an individual's "actions and the beliefs guiding them are either an endorsement of his (her) group, and therefore a feeling of

social unity, or an expression of conflict with it” (p. 577). Myers and Robertson (1972, p. 41) also proposed “opinion leadership is two-way: people who influence others are themselves influenced by others in the same topic area,” advocating the social influence on consumers’ responses. Recently, Sridhar and Srinivasan (2012) identified the positive (negative) effects of positive (negative) features of product experience on a reviewer’s online product rating became weaker as other consumers’ online ratings increased; whereas, the negative effect of product failure on a reviewer’s online product rating became stronger as other consumers’ online ratings increased.

Consumers tend to rely on others’ reviews because consumers assume online reviews are objective and valid, due to the high consensus among others (Shedlosky-Shoemaker et al., 2011). More consumers rely on the online environment to search and review service products by using blog pages, forums, or review sites (i.e., tripadvisor.com) before purchasing service products (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Others’ opinions (i.e., online reviews) can have different effects on consumers’ transportation experiences, based on the valence of the reviews (i.e., positive versus negative) (Schlosser, 2011; Sparks & Browning, 2011) and/or how the reviews are presented (i.e., statistical versus narrative) (Hong & Park, 2012). In terms of review format, Hong and Park (2012) examined the effects of online product reviews on consumers’ attitude toward the product. He and Bond (2013) also investigated the value of different types of consumer review on consumption enjoyment. Their study investigated numeric rating and text commentary as two distinctive types of word-of-mouth information.

In terms of valence reviews, Lee, Park and Han (2008) identified negative reviews were related to consumers’ negative attitudes. Consistent with the prospect theory

(Kahneman & Tversky, 1979), Papathanassis and Knolle's (2011) study also identified negative reviews tended to have more impact than positive reviews. On the one hand, positive reviews are more likely to lead to pleasant, vivid, or novel descriptions of experiences. On the other hand, negative reviews tend to result in unpleasant experiences (Anderson, 1998; Sparks & Browning, 2011). Focusing on the review format, the following hypotheses are posited:

H3: Social review type cues will influence consumers' transportation experience.

Narrative reviews will be more likely to have enhanced consumers' transportation experience than statistical reviews.

H3-1: Social review type cues moderate the relationship between sensory cues and consumers' transportation experiences, such that a website having multi-sensory information with a narrative review type will lead to enhanced consumers' transportation experiences, compared to when a website does not have sensory information and statistical review type is available.

2.4.2 Outcomes of Consumers' Transportation Experiences

2.4.2.1 Online Brand Experience

The idea of creating unique and valuable consumer experiences has become a critical strategy among service industry practitioners as well as in the academic literature (i.e., Gilmore & Pine, 1999). Vargo and Lusch's (2004) service-dominant logic has become the foundation for customers' experiences with brands. Originated from the idea of customer experience, brand experience can produce more concrete consumers' experiences, enabling consumers to develop mental interactions with service organizations (Brakus et al., 2009). Brakus et al. (2009) define brand experience as

consumers' sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses, evoked by brand-related stimuli (i.e., a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and/or environments). Brand experience occurs based on consumers' holistic perceptions reflected by all possible exposures toward a brand (Crosby & Lunde, 2008). With increasing roles of branding and severe competition among brands, companies attempt to build a strong brand experience that can provide unique and distinctive brand perceptions for consumers; thus, managers seek to transport consumers into their online environment because transportation leads to positive outcomes for the brand (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010).

Due to the characteristics of intangibility, service (hospitality) companies should have strong branding strategies that render differentiated brand experiences to consumers. Duncan and Moriarty (2006) advocate the importance of providing distinctive experiences to consumers, stating "a brand touch point is created when a customer, prospect, or other stakeholder is expressed, in some manner, to a brand and consequently has "a brand experience" (p. 237). A direct association is identified between brand experiences and brand loyalty (Brakus et al., 2009; Frow & Payne, 2007). Thus, companies (i.e., Starbucks) articulate the importance of brand experience in their mission statement to build a strong brand loyalty among competitors (Verhoef et al., 2009). As identified in Brakus et al.'s (2009) study, "brand experience differs from evaluative, affective, and associative constructs, such as brand attitudes, brand involvement, brand attachment, customer delight, and brand personality" (p. 53), emphasizing the importance of consumers' responses towards developing brand experiences.

To enhance the narrative mental imagery process of experiential consumption, consumers are asked to imagine future experiences to elicit positive brand experiences (Brakus et al., 2009). When strong and intensified online brand experiences are created, consumers are more likely to have a strong relationship with the brand, facilitating a relationship with the brand, and enhancing consumers' satisfaction and loyalty towards the brand (Brakus et al., 2009). Similar to customer experience, brand experience involves consumers' cognitive and affective states (Mollen & Wilson, 2010). Brakus et al.'s (2009) study identifies brand experiences are associated with consumers' responses (i.e., satisfaction and brand loyalty). Since brand experience not only captures cognitive responses to a brand, but also influences consumers' emotional processing of brand experiences, both aspects should be investigated when exploring effects of brand experiences (Caruana & Ewing, 2010).

In this study, consumers' emotional (i.e., future-oriented emotion) and cognitive (i.e., trust) responses are examined, reflected by brand experiences. The relationships between consumers' experiences and emotions are well identified in previous studies (Verhoef et al., 2009), signifying the importance of brand experiences that elicit consumers' positive emotions. In addition, trust is well identified as a consequence of consumers' positive brand experiences (Ha & Perks, 2005). Furthermore, Phillips and McQuarrie (2010) supported the direct relationship between consumers' transportation experience and brand experience. Thus, this study proposes the following hypothesis.

H4: Consumers' transportation experience will positively influence online brand experience.

2.4.2.2 Consumers' Future-Oriented Emotions

Along with technological advancement, the service industry attempts to fully utilize the e-commerce market because its online environment provides unique attributes of “selling the experience” to prospective consumers without any geographical or time restrictions (Lai, Chen, & Lin, 2007). For instance, service companies describe their intangible service features on their online environment to enhance consumers' positive emotions (Magnini & Parker, 2009). When consumers evaluate new products or services, their emotional responses play significant roles, since their emotions have a direct relationship with their behavioral intentions (Wood & Moreau, 2006), as well as their behaviors (Bigné, Mattila, & Andreu, 2008). When service companies provide intangible service information on their websites, they are targeting consumers' future-oriented emotions that intrigue consumers' urges to experience their service offerings.

When it comes to consumers' future-oriented emotions, two distinctive emotions are identified—anticipatory and anticipated emotions (Baumgartner, Pieters, & Bagozzi, 2008). Anticipatory emotions refer to the emotions that occur “when people at present experience emotions, due to the likelihood that a desirable or undesirable event may happen in the future”; whereas, anticipated emotions describe the emotions that occur “when people at present imagine the emotions they would experience in the future under the assumption a desirable or undesirable event has happened” (Baumgartner et al., 2008, p. 685). Based on the characteristics of each future-oriented emotion, this study only focuses on the anticipated emotions because anticipated emotions are what consumers are likely to experience in the online environment through its mental imagery. This study proposes experiential service offerings can be both associated with positive anticipated

emotions (i.e., hope and optimism) and negative emotions (i.e., anxiety and fear), as evidenced in the previous study (Lazarus, 1991). As anticipated emotions influence consumers' likelihood of performing or resulting in positive behaviors when consumers have positive anticipated emotions, they are more likely to show higher behavioral intentions than when they have negative emotions (Baumgartner et al., 2008).

Within the context of Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action as an overarching theory, anticipated emotions increase intentions or behavioral expectations. In addition, as Taylor and Pham advocate, emotions may "provide the fuel for bringing about effective action" (1996, p. 232), signifying the role of consumers' emotions directly associated with their behaviors. The positive relationships between consumers' emotions and their behaviors are well examined in previous literature (Bigné et al., 2008). Along with increased attention in the role of emotions, scholars also investigated the relationship between emotion and trust (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005). This study proposes consumers' emotional responses are based on consumers' future-oriented emotions and consumers' behavioral responses are represented with their behavioral intentions, based on exposure to the online environment. Derived from well-identified relationship between consumers' experience and emotions, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H5: Consumers' transportation experience will positively influence consumers' anticipated emotions.

2.4.2.3 Consumer Trust

Trust occurs when customers have positive expectations toward service providers (Liljander & Ross, 2002; McAlister, 1995). Trust refers to "the willingness of a party to

be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party” (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995, p. 712). Across topical theories (i.e., relationship marketing, social psychology, organization theory, and social relationships theory), trust has been identified as one of the most critical components, which leads to the success and long-term value of the relationship (Aijo, 1996). Practitioners also advocate a critical role of trust has on consumer behavior. When consumers need to make decisions for unpredictable outcomes (i.e., experience-goods) with uncertainty, the importance of trust becomes obvious, supporting the need to provide an online environment that elicits consumers’ feelings of trust (Gefen, 2000; Shiau & Luo, 2012).

Viewed as a set of specific beliefs primarily associated with benevolence, competence, and integrity of the other party, trust has been conceptualized as a belief in companies that influence consumers’ behavioral intentions (Chiu, Huang, & Yen, 2010). Coulter and Coulter (2002) proposed trust toward a service provider was related to customers’ perceived confidentiality, honesty, integrity, and high ethical standards towards the service provider. Previous studies (i.e., Shiau & Luo, 2012) confirmed the importance of trust that influenced consumers’ satisfaction, loyalty, and purchase intention in the context online shopping emphasized. Therefore, it is predicted that consumers tend to have a higher trust when they have pleasant online experiences. Thus, the following hypothesis is developed:

H6: Consumers' transportation experience will positively influence consumers' trust.

2.4.2.4 Consumers' Behavioral Intentions

Consumers' responses can be represented by approach or avoidance behaviors, based upon the perceptions of their online environment (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Approach behaviors are represented when consumers are attracted to the sensory and social cues of the environment. On the other hand, avoidance behaviors are expected in the opposite circumstances of the approach behaviors, when consumers have negative feelings about the sensory and social cues of the environment (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Approach responses are part of the positive experience and consumers want to spend more time in the environment to explore more in depth, when they have pleasant brand experiences, represented by (1) a desire to physically stay in (approach) or exit (avoid) the environment, (2) a desire to explore (approach) or ignore (avoid) the environment, (3) a desire to communicate with (approach) or ignore (avoid) others, and (4) the degree of enhancement (approach) or hindrance (avoid) of performance and satisfaction with task performances.

As part of consumers' responses, this study aims to investigate consumers' behavioral intentions. In this study, intention refers to the degree of customers' likelihood to purchase products online and to recommend the website to others. Based on the theory of reasoned action (TRA), which confirms the positive relationship among beliefs, attitudes, and intentions (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), it is predicted that consumers will show positive behavioral intentions (i.e., purchase and recommend intentions) when they are exposed to pleasant online experiences; thus, the following hypothesis is posited.

H7: Consumers' transportation experience will positively influence their behavioral intentions.

2.5 A Conceptual Framework

Based upon relevant previous studies and the gap identified in the current literature, this study proposes a conceptual framework, depicted in Figure 2.1, which focuses on the relationships between sensory attributes and consumers' transportation experiences to better understand how consumers respond toward the online environment. In this study, situational and personal factors are also incorporated that influence consumers' transportation experiences. This study further investigates consequences of consumers' transportation experiences in a holistic approach, incorporating consumers' brand experiences, emotion, trust, and behavioral intention.

Table 2.1
Previous Studies on Narrative Persuasion

Author s	Purpose of the paper	Theoretical background	Constructs	Dependent variables	Method	Findings
Adaval & Wyer, 1998	Explore the role of narratives in consumer judgment and decision making	Story model	Narrative information format; picture format; self- generated images in information processing; affect	Overall evaluations; comparative judgments; supplementary ratings; recall	Experimental design	Vacations were more favorably evaluated when they were described in a narrative. Effects were enhanced when (1) pictures were provided with the text information or (2) participants were encouraged to imagine.
Appel & Richter, 2010	Examine individual differences in transportation	Transportatio n theory	Need for affect, transportation, fictional narrative	Beliefs; transportation experience	Experimental design 1: Story (control vs. experiment); transportation (low vs. high); need for affect (low vs. high); Experimental design 2: Story (low vs. high emotional	The magnitude of a person's need for affect influenced transportation experience.

					content); transportation (low vs. high); need for affect (low vs. high)	
Avraham & Daugherty, 2012	Examine how marketers associate their location to a state narrative, in the belief that using the state of Texas as an example	Narrative advertising	Flag, state symbols, territory, history	Frequency	Quantitative content analysis and qualitative approach to investigate the symbolic construction of Texasnicity in a large sample of advertisements and brochures	Narrative played an essential role of Texas place marketing. History was identified as the most popular component of the narrative among the marketing tools.
Bhatnagar & Wan, 2011	Investigate the impacts of audience-character dynamics and the manner of media consumption on brand and narrative evaluations in the context of magazine articles	Narrative processing	Narrative immersion; similarity; attitudes	Attitude toward the brand; attitude toward the story; aided brand memory; unaided brand memory	Study 1 & 2: A 2 (narrative immersion) *2 (self-character similarity) between subjects experiment;	Narrative immersion moderated the impact of self-character similarity on brand and story evaluations.
Chang, 2009	Investigate how Narrative processing works	Information processing theory	Argument strength; empathy; editorial context	Transportation; cognitive responses; affective responses; ad attitude; brand	A 2 (editorial type) *2 (ad type) *2 (product type) between subjects design	Narrative processing required consumers' high cognitive demands.

				attitude		
Chronis et al., 2012	Examine the role of imagination in the consumption experience; how consumers imagine important collective narratives	Mental imagery	Mental imagery; imagination	N/A	Observation at Gettysburg; In-depth interviews; photo-elicitation as a supplemental data collection	Imagination in tourism sites significantly influenced the product of cultural imaginaries.
Escalas , 2004b	Explore the notions of narrative processing and self-brand connections	Narrative processing	Narrative processing; self brand connections	Attitudes toward the brand; behavioral intentions	Experimental design	When ads increased narrative processing, consumers were more likely to have enhanced self-brand connections, brand evaluations, and purchase intentions.
Escalas , 2004a	Examine the effects of mental simulation in a print advertising context	Transportation theory	Argument strength; mental simulation; narrative transportation	Ad attitude; brand evaluations; positive affect; critical thoughts	A 2 (mental simulation) *2 (argument strength) between subject design	When mental simulation was applied in the ads, consumers tended to have a higher evaluation of that product.
Escalas	Examine	Narrative	Aspect of the	Being hooked	Experiment 1:	When people

et al., 2004	individual variation in emotional responses to advertising	processing; narrative ad	individual, affect intensity, one aspect of the ad, the degree to which the ad tells a story, I aspect of the ad0individual interface	scale; narrative structure coding scale; feelings; attitude toward the ad; attitude toward the brand	within subject design (level of AD); Experiment 2: between subject design (narrative ad)	were being hooked by an ad, they were likely to have a positive relation with upbeat and warm feelings, enhancing the viewer's attitude toward the ads.
Escalas , 2007	Examine 1) the effects of narrative and analytical self-referencing on persuasion and 2) a moderator of narrative transportation: advertising skepticism	Narrative transportation	Self-referent processing (narrative and analytical); argument strength; advertising skepticism	Transportation; thought protocols	Experimental design; Study 1 a 3(self-referencing *2 (argument strength) design; Study 2 a 2(ad processing instructions)*2(argument strength) design	Narrative self-referencing led to a favorable evaluation of the product, in both strong argument quality and weak argument quality conditions.
Lien & Chen, 2013	Examine effects of ad type, presentation form, and argument strength on transportation and self-brand connection	Transportation imagery model	Narrative ads; visual vs. verbal ad copy; argument strength	Transportation; self brand connection; mood; attitude toward the ad; attitude toward the product	A 2(ad type) *2(presentation form)*2 (argument strength) between subjects design	A narrative ad enhanced persuasive effects in both visual and verbal narratives.
Mattila, 2000	Examine how presentation	Narrative information	Narrative vs. list as ad	Attitude toward the ad; future	Experimental design: a 2 (mood)	Consumers who were less

	format and consumer expertise influence consumers' attitudes	processing	format; novice vs. expert consumers; positive vs. negative mood	purchase intention; ad-induced feelings	*2 (consumer expertise) *2 (ad format) design	familiar with a service category preferred narrative ads (story based ads).
McFerran et al., 2010	Identify factors that facilitate narrative transportation	Transportation theory	Transportation; lottery advertising; processing instruction	Transportation; desire to purchase	Experimental design; Study 1 a 2(luck prime) *2 (size of prize) between subjects experimental design; Study 2 a 3 (transportation instruction) *2 (belief in good luck) between subject design; Study 3 a 2 (processing style) *2 (belief in good luck) between subject design; Study 4 a 2(odds prime) *2 (belief in good luck) design	Ads that encouraged individuals to imagine winning outcomes had persuasion effects via transportation.
Nielsen &	Examine narrative processing of the	Transportation theory	Analytical processing;	Transportation; brand	Experimental design	When information was

Escalas , 2010	ad		narrative processing	evaluation	(easy to read vs. difficult to read)	difficult to process, consumers preferred to have narrative processing, which led to more transportation and enhanced brand evaluations.
Padgett & Allen, 1997	Examine narrative appeal for the service brand advertising	Narrative processing	Narrative representation; service brand image	N/A	Conceptual paper	Narrative ads were useful to promote service experience and to enhance service brand image.
Phillips & McQua rie, 2010	Identify a particular kind of advertising imagery, the grotesque	Aesthetic theory; narrative transportatio n	Advertising engagement	Brand experience	Interview methodology	Explained how aesthetic properties of ads led to the different modes of engagement and explored the relationship between grotesque imagery and

						narrative transportation (immersion).
Richardson, 2013	Explore the mediation effect of consumer tribalism on the concept of narrative transportation as a form of persuasion process	Narrative transportation theory; consumer persuasion theory	Perceived realism; narrative transportation; spurious tribalism	Consumer tribalism	Analysis of a reality TV show narrative	The concept of spurious tribalism had the mediation effects of tribal activity on narrative's capacity.
Rozier-Rich & Santos, 2011	Examine if participants differed based on their demographic characteristics in (1) the degree to which participants' could be transported by a narrative, and (2) participants' level of perceived skepticism towards travel articles and travel brochures	Advertising	Message cue (travel article, travel brochure, and no message cue); presentation format (a narrative, story format using paragraphs or a shortened narrative, list format using bulleted sentences)	Narrative transportation scale; advertising skepticism scale	A 3 (message cue) * 2 (presentation format) between subject experimental design	People were more likely to use various travel-related information sources more often for trip planning purposes if they were age 27-35 and 45-71 female participants. They tended to have less skepticism towards travel articles and travel brochures, and/or experienced

						greater degrees of narrative transportation.
Tussya diah et al., 2011	Investigate how narrative structures influence the narrative processing and consumer behaviors	Narrative processing	Narrative comprehension; identification	Increased knowledge about destination; intention to visit	Survey method	Characters of the story influenced the potential traveler identify.
Wang & Calder, 2006	Investigate how differences in transportation affect an ad that is presented in the context of the story	Transportation experience	Transportation; ad intrusion	Attitudes toward the product, attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the story, transportation	Study 1: a 2 (transportation: high vs. low) 2 (ad position: middle vs. end) between subject experimental design; study 2: a 2 (transportation) *2 (ad-goal relevance) experimental design; study 3: a 2 (transportation * 2 (involvement) between subject experimental design	Transportation positively influenced advertising that did not intrude on the transportation process; on the other hand, transportation negatively influenced advertising that interrupted the transportation experience.
Wang & Calder, 2009	Explore how the transportation experience affects a subsequent ad	Transportation theory	Narrative as a message frame	Attitudes toward the product; perceived ad	Experimental design; Study 1 a 2 (transportation) *2 (compatibility)	Narrative transportation increased advertising

				intrusiveness; ad evaluation; transportation	mixed design; Study 2 a 2(transportation) *2(ad position) *2 (compatibility) design; Study 3 a 2(transportation) *2 (ad position) design	effectiveness. A message frame narrative transportation enhanced processing and persuasion.
Wentze l et al., 2010	Examine how salience of manipulative intent affects the evaluation of ads that are presented in a narrative or expository format	Narrative processing; the persuasion knowledge model	Manipulative intent	Positive affect; attitudes toward the brand; self- brand connections; transportation	Study 1: a 2 (representation format) 2 (salience of manipulative intent) between subjects design; Study 2: a 2 (salience of manipulative intent) *2 (cognitive load) between subject design	When manipulative intent was not salient, narrative ads led to greater levels of positive affect, stronger self-brand connections, and more positive attitude than expository ads.
Vaughn et al. 2009	Examine how regulatory focus influence narrative persuasion	Transportatio n theory; regulatory fit theory	Regulatory focus; fit; attention; narrative condition	Story-consistent belief; transportation	Experiment 1: a 2 (fit vs. non fit)*2 (narrative condition) between subject design; Experiment 2 a 2 (fit) *2 (attention) between subject design	Feelings of rightness from an earlier experience of regulatory fit improved transportation, compared to feelings of wrongness from

						regulatory non- fit condition.
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Table 2.2
From Transaction and Relationship to Sensory Marketing

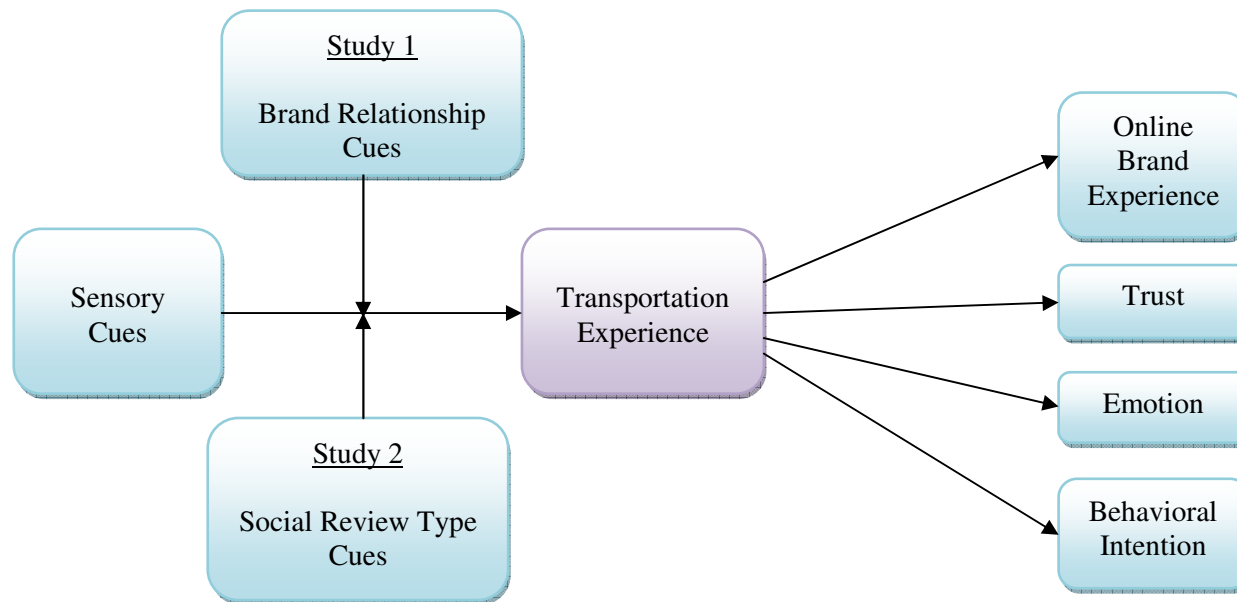
	Transactional Marketing	Relationship Marketing	Sensory Marketing
Marketing	Goods logic Exchange perspective	Service logic Relationship perspective	Experience logic Brand perspective
Strategic marketing	Product focus Customer acquisition Transactional strategies	Customer focus Customer retention Relational strategies	Mind and sense focus Customer treatment Sensorial strategies
Tactical marketing	Persuasion and promotion One-way communication Production technology	Interaction and interplay Two-way communication Information technology	Dialogue and online interactivity Multi sensory communication Digital technology

Source: Adopted from Hultén et al.'s (2009) study

Table 2.3
Sensors and Perceptions

Sensors	Type of perception
Seeing	Visual perception
Hearing	Auditory perception
Smelling	Olfactory perception
Tasting	Gustatory perception
Touching	Tactile perception

Figure 2. 1
Antecedents and Outcomes of Consumer Transportation Experience



CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter describes the study's design, study procedures, and statistical techniques used for the data analysis. In this chapter, the study design for Study 1 and Study 2 is described, explaining how each study is designed and the experiment conditions are developed. In addition, the developments of survey and study procedures (i.e., content analyses, preliminary tests, and two scenario-based experiments) are described. Data analysis procedures are further explained in this chapter.

3.1 Study Design

The present research attempted to investigate the relationship between sensory cues and transportation experience, considering the moderating role of the brand relationship norms (i.e., communal versus exchange) (Study 1) and of the social review type (i.e., narrative versus statistical) (Study 2). In both studies, real-world scenarios were replicated as closely as possible in an attempt to control for the influence of extraneous factors. Scenarios offer a sense of realism for evaluating consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors in transportation theory (Wang & Calder, 2009). Respondents were requested to imagine a situation given in the scenario of a hypothetical website for 60 seconds to complete an online questionnaire.

3.1.1 Experiment Design in Study 1

A 2 (sensory cues: yes vs. no) x 2 (brand relationship cues: communal vs. exchange) between-subjects factorial design was employed to address the proposed research questions— (1) the main effects of sensory cues, (2) the main effects of brand relationship cues, and (3) the moderating effects of brand relationship cues on the

relationship between sensory cues and transportation experience. The presence or absence of sensory hotel room descriptions and the relationship norm between the hotel and a customer were manipulated. These cues were manipulated to examine whether (1) sensory descriptions influenced transportation experience, compared to no sensory descriptions and (2) exchange-oriented relationship norm and communal-oriented relationship norm had different effects on transportation experience.

It was predicted when customers perceived the hotel brand as a close friend, they were more engaged with the website cues, thereby enhancing the transportation experience, compared to when customers perceived the hotel brand as an efficient business partner. Specifically, this study predicted when customers were exposed to the sensory cue embedded hotel website with a communal-oriented relationship norm, they were more likely to have an increased transportation experience, compared to those who had an exchange-oriented relationship norm and those who were not exposed to a sensory embedded website.

3.1.2 Experiment Design in Study 2

A 2 (sensory cues: yes vs. no) x 2 (social review type cues: narrative vs. statistical) between-subjects factorial design was used to test (1) the main effect of sensory cues, (2) the main effect of social review type cues, and (3) the moderating role of social review type cues on the relationship between sensory cues and transportation experience. The presence or absence of sensory hotel room descriptions and the social review type were manipulated. Study 2 predicted exposure to the sensory description on the hotel website, compared with no sensory description, led to transportation experience

when the narrative social reviews were presented, compared to the quantitative statistical reviews were presented. Table 3.1 provides a summary of both Study 1 and Study 2.

3.2 Respondents of the Study

3.2.1 Pretests

Using the convenience sampling method, college students enrolled in the Isenberg School of Management and Mturk users were recruited to conduct a series of pretests. Extra credit points were given to college students to increase their participation under cooperation with their instructors. For those who did not want to participate in this study, there were alternative ways (i.e., summarize articles of trade journals) to earn the equivalent extra credit points. For Mturk users, a monetary compensation was provided to invite users to participate in the pretests.

3.2.2 Study 1 and Study 2

In both studies, a self-administered online questionnaire on Qualtrics was used to collect the data. An online panel of the marketing research company was recruited to participate in both studies. The marketing research company randomly distributed the quasi field experiment survey to its consumer panels. Respondents over 18 years old, who have browsed hotel websites and booked a room during the past 12 months, were qualified to participate in these studies (Study 1 and Study 2).

3.3 Hypothetical Websites of Study 1 and Study 2

A professional website designer was hired to create a good quality of a mock hotel website. Six different versions of the hypothetical website were created to examine effects of sensory cues and social review type cues. Two mock websites included the sensory cues condition—one website with sensory descriptions and the other website

with no sensory descriptions. These two mock websites combined with brand relationship cues, generated four different scenarios for Study 1. The other four websites were created, based on a combination of both sensory cues and social review type cues to test effects of sensory cues and social review type cues for Study 2.

Other than manipulative conditions, information on the hypothetical webpage was the same. For instance, layout of the webpage and basic information of the hotel (i.e., facility features) were the same across the different conditions. After respondents were exposed to a different experiment condition, they were asked to check whether the website and situation given in the scenario were realistic to reflect real conditions for a hotel's webpage.

3.4 Experiment Conditions in Study 1 and Study 2

3.4.1 Development of Sensory Cues

3.4.1.1 Content Analysis

A content analysis was conducted to identify key sensory attributes of hotel websites, to define the concepts of sensory cues, and to develop levels of sensory cues. Twenty hotel websites were reviewed, focusing on the hotel's room description. Twenty hotels were chosen, based upon the different hotel classifications, taking into account (1) ownership (i.e., chain and independent) and (2) level of service (i.e., luxury, mid-scale, and economy).

Following the suggested content analysis procedures in Krippendorff (2012), two trained coders independently analyzed the contents of the websites to identify sensory cues. In terms of the level of service, 12 upscale hotel websites, 5 midscale hotel websites, and 3 economy hotel websites were examined. For ownership, 17 chain hotel

websites and 3 independent hotel websites were reviewed to define scenarios of sensory cues. Interestingly, few hotels (i.e., Starwood) utilized sensory descriptions of their property and rooms. Results from the content analysis were utilized to design experimental conditions of the sensory cues, describing the hotel room in the scenario. To minimize brand influence and brand effect, a hypothetical independent hotel was created to develop different scenarios.

3.4.1.2 Preliminary Tests

Since hotels did not fully utilize different sensory appeals on their websites, pretests were conducted to identify the most appealing senses in the hotel's website context. To identify the most appealing senses on the hotel website, a series of preliminary tests was conducted. A hotel room was focused for its sensory cues, as the hotel room is the core product of the hotel industry. The first pretest was focused on identifying the most appealing sensory descriptions. Two questions were asked to identify the most appealing senses in the online context, which were (1) Please rank each of the following sensory descriptions in the order of the sensory that appeals to you the most, 1 as the least arousing sensory description and 5 as the most arousing sensory description and (2) Please allocate all five sensory descriptions into a percentage, adding to 100%, based on the importance of each sensory description (if sensory 1 arouses your sense 85% out of 100%, you can allocate sensory 1 as 85% and the remaining 15% to be allocated to other sensory descriptions).

As a choice set, five sensory descriptions were provided—(1) see the stylish and modern décor of the guest room, (2) smell the signature scent of the hotel, refreshing your mind, (3) touch the soft, cotton-rich linens of the comfortable guest rooms, (4) taste

an award-winning restaurant offering gourmet dining and sophisticated lounges with expertly-crafted cocktails, and (5) hear the enlightening, relaxing, calm music that provides you with a happy mood. Fifty-nine respondents participated in this pretest. Of five sensory appeals (visual, olfactory, palate, tactile, and auditory), the visual sense (21 respondents chose the visual sense) appealed the most followed by olfactory (14 responses), tactile (9 responses), palate (8 responses), and auditory (7 responses) senses. Respondents allocated the highest percentage to visual sense ($M=32.83$) as the most important among five senses, followed by olfactory ($M=22.98$), tactile ($M=16.98$), palate ($M=17.15$), and auditory ($M=11.38$) senses. The auditory sense appealed the least, so the auditory (hear) sense was dropped.

After identifying the four most appealing sensory descriptions, another pretest was conducted to rank the importance of each sensory description among the four descriptions to choose the three most appealing senses in the online context. Respondents were asked two questions to identify the order of appealing senses in the online context—(1) Choose three sensory descriptions that appeal to you the most by order and (2) Please describe any circumstances that you feel sensory experiences (i.e., touch, smell, sight, taste, and hearing) with the hotel website. Respondents were asked to select three sensory descriptions from four different sensory descriptions. A total of sixty-eight respondents participated in this pretest. Results from pretest 2 showed visual (63%), olfactory (10%), and tactile (19%) senses were viewed as important sensory appeals on the hotel website, so these three sensory descriptions were used to describe multi-sensory conditions. Respondents described sight (i.e., catchy design), good smell, comfort, and happy feelings made them feel sensory experience when they browsed the

website. Results were intuitive in a sense that these three senses (see, smell, and feel) were applicable to the hotel room, compared to the other two senses (hear and taste).

After identifying the three most appealing sensory descriptions, a professional writer edited and revised the sensory descriptions to ensure the sensory descriptions were described as if respondents were in the hotel room and to ensure descriptions were as realistic as possible.

3.4.1.3 Sensory Cues for Study 1 and Study 2

Sensory cues were manipulated at two levels, yes and no, based on Elder and Krishna's (2010) study. Respondents were asked to imagine the situation that included multi-sensory components for the high sensory cues; whereas, the low sensory cue included no sensory component in the hotel's room description. Since it was not clear how to differentiate the magnitude of each sensory description's effects, this study differentiated sensory cues (1) yes versus (2) no condition, rather than manipulating intensity or strength of the sensory appeals. Even though sensory descriptions were able to apply to the online context, the perceived intensity would be contingent upon receivers' characteristics (Krishna, 2012), as sensory descriptions were based on hypothetical imagination of the browsers and solely relied on the computer screen.

Four questions were developed to check the degree of differences between two levels of sensory conditions—(1) rate the extent the room color was described, (2) rate the extent the comfort of the bed was illustrated, (3) rate the extent the signature scent of the room was provided, and (4) rate the extent different senses of the hotel room were described—to ensure each sensory condition was perceived differently to respondents

(Elder & Krishna, 2010). These questions were measured, based on the 7-point Likert-type scale, '1' being 'not at all' and '7' being 'very much.'

In addition, confounding effects were investigated by asking (1) rate the overall quality of the service and (2) rate the overall quality of the hotel, to ensure respondents perceived quality of the hotel and service the same between the two conditions (Elder & Krishna, 2010). These two questions were measured, based on the 7-point Likert-type scale, '1' being 'very bad' and '7' being 'very good.'

3.4.2 Brand Relationship Cues for Study 1

Brand relationship cues were manipulated at two levels, communal and exchange relationships, based on Wan et al.'s (2011) study. In the communal relationship norm condition, respondents were more towards the high relationship-oriented condition, perceiving the hotel as their best friend. On the other hand, respondents in the exchange relationship norm condition were more towards the low relationship-oriented condition, perceiving the hotel as their efficient business partner.

Differences between brand relationship norms were identified, asking (1) rate the extent of personalized service you want (1: not at all—7: very much), (2) rate the extent of friendly interactions you want (1: not at all —7: very much), (3) how important was the price factor when you stay at the HOTEL (1: not at all important – 7: extremely important), and (4) rate the extent of how you perceive the hotel (1: business partner—7: best friend) (Aggarwal, 2004; Wan et al., 2011). All these manipulation check questions were measured, based on a 7-point Likert-type scale.

3.4.3 Social Review Type Cues for Study 2

Social review type cues were manipulated at two levels, narrative review (customers' comments) versus statistical review (statistical rating review) (Hong & Park, 2012). To test the compatibility of each review type, college students enrolled in the Isenberg School of Management were asked to match the level of reviews between narrative and statistical reviews. By conducting this pretest, items in narrative reviews were confirmed to match with items in statistical reviews. For instance, respondents viewed the narrative review—The hotel room was too small. The hotel room was not what I had expected—equaled to a 2-star rating for the statistical review.

For the manipulation check, four questions were asked about the degree of narrative versus statistical reviews—(1) given the reviews outlined on the HOTEL website, how descriptive were the reviews, (2) how narrative were the reviews, (3) rate the extent the customers' comments were provided, and (4) rate the extent the star rating evaluation was provided (Hong & Park, 2012; Sparks & Browning, 2011). All these questions were based on the 7-point Likert-type scale, '1' being 'not at all' and '7' being 'very much.'

In addition, confounding effects were investigated by asking (1) overall, review ratings are neutral and (2) overall, review ratings are average, to control for the review valence. These two questions were measured, based on the 7-point Likert-type scale, '1' being 'strongly disagree' and '7' being 'strongly agree.'

3.5 Development of Survey

Both surveys for Study 1 and Study 2 consisted of seven parts—(1) a screening question, (2) trait variables, (3) an experiment condition, (4) manipulation check

questions, (5) dependent variables, (6) previous hotel booking experience, and (7) demographics.

3.5.1 Trait Variables

The 14-item communal and exchange orientation scale (Scott et al., 2013) was utilized to measure each individual's dispositional tendency to communal and exchange orientation, including the communal orientation items such as, “I am sensitive to how other people feel” and “When I have a need that others ignore” and the exchange orientation items such as, “I keep track of benefits I have given others” and “I would feel bad if someone failed to repay me for a favor.” All measurement items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being ‘strongly disagree’ and 7 being ‘strongly agree.’

3.5.2 Dependent Variables

All measurement items were adopted from previous studies to ensure validity and reliability issues, measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree). Items in the transportation experience were adopted from Wang and Calder’s (2009) study. Sample items for transportation experience were (1) I felt caught up in the hotel description, (2) Reading the hotel description was relaxing, and (3) The hotel description captured my attention. Items in the brand experience, anticipated emotion, trust, and behavioral intentions were adopted from Brakus et al. (2009), Baumgartner et al. (2008), Garbarino and Johnson (1999), and Zeithaml et al. (1996), respectively.

Brand experience was measured with four constructs—brand sensory, brand emotion, brand behavior, and brand intelligence. Items for brand experience were: (1)

This hotel's website made a strong impression on my senses (brand sensory), (2) This hotel's website induced my feelings (brand emotion), (3) This hotel's website provided me with rich experiences of the hotel (brand behavior), and (4) This hotel's website made me think (brand intelligence). Anticipated emotions were measured with bipolar items such as (1) bad-good, (2) negative-positive, (3) unpleasant-pleasant, and (4) unfavorable-favorable. Items of trust were (1) I trust this hotel and (2) This hotel seems like a reliable place to stay. Following three items: (1) I intend to visit this hotel, (2) I would like to book this hotel in the future, and (3) I would like to stay in this hotel in the future, were measured for behavioral intentions.

3.5.3 Hotel Booking Experience and Demographics

Respondents' background information and previous experiences were asked including age, gender, education, hotel website browsing and booking experience, and their involvement with the hotel brand (i.e., loyalty program) at the end of the survey instrument. For instance, to examine respondents' previous hotel booking experiences, two questions were asked: (1) What website do you prefer to use to book a hotel room? and (2) What is your main reason for browsing your preferable website.

3.6 Study Procedures

Expert reviews and a series of pretests were performed. Experts in service marketing and information technology reviewed scenarios and survey items. A series of pretests were conducted to determine whether respondents perceived the condition for each independent variable (i.e., sensory cues, brand relationship cues, and social review type cues) differently as intended. Results from pretests were utilized not only to develop

the experimental scenarios in this research, but also to modify survey items, enhancing clarification of the survey questionnaire.

Then, the actual study was launched, incorporating results of content analyses, expert reviews, and preliminary tests.

3.7 Context of Study 1 and Study 2

Companies' websites facilitate and promote consumer experiences through his/her feedback and/or experience simulation (Klein, 1998). This study applied transportation theory to the online environment, focusing on experience goods. The hotel industry was chosen for the study setting in a sense that the hotel industry is one of the most appropriate examples of experience goods where consumers search information online prior to their visit to the actual property. Customers tend to evaluate their future consumption subjectively through browsing the website. An experience good refers to “one in which it is relatively difficult and costly to obtain information on product quality prior to interaction with the product; key attributes are subjective or difficult to compare, and there is a need to use one’s senses to evaluate quality” (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010, p. 187). There seems to have clear distinctions between search and experience goods in regards that “goods can be classified by whether the quality variation was ascertained predominantly by search or by experience” (Nelson, 1974, p. 738).

Based on distinctive differences in each category, perceived quality of a search good is based on attributes of an objective nature. On the other hand, perceived quality of an experience good is contingent upon subjective attributes, relying on personal preferences. This difference is also supported in Huang et al.’s (2009) study. They advocated an objective approach would be used to evaluate attributes of a search good;

however, a subjective method needed utilization to evaluate or to compare attributes of an experience good (Huang et al., 2009).

3.8 Statistical Analyses

To address research questions and hypotheses, different statistical techniques were utilized including descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, independent samples *t*-test, a confirmatory factor analysis, two-way ANOVA, regression analyses, and mediation analyses using SPSS and LISREL statistical software. Detailed explanations on the analyses are provided in the next chapter. Table 3.2 describes statistical procedures and corresponding analyses.

Table 3.1
A Summary of Study 1 and Study 2

Study	Description	Experimental Design
1	Main effects of sensory cues	2 (sensory, high vs. low)x2 (brand relationship, communal vs. exchange)
	Main effects of brand relationship cues	
	Moderating effects of brand relationship cues on sensory cues	
2	Main effects of sensory cues	2 (sensory, high vs. low)x2 (Social review type, narrative vs. statistical)
	Main effects of social review type cues	
	Moderating effects of social review type cues on sensory cues	

Table 3.2
Statistical Procedures and Analyses

Procedures	Analysis
Sample Profile	Descriptive Analysis
Manipulation Checks	One-Way ANOVA
Confound Effect Checks	Independent Samples <i>t</i> -test
Measurement Model for Dependent Variables	Confirmatory Factor Analyses
Main and Moderating Effects	Two-Way ANOVA
Consumer Responses	Linear Regression Analyses
Mediating Role of Transportation Experience	Mediation Analyses

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This section presents results of each study—Study 1 and Study 2. The current study investigates the relationship between sensory cues and transportation experiences, moderated by the brand relationship norms (Study 1) and social review type cues (Study 2). Outcomes of transportation experiences are also investigated in both Study 1 and Study 2. Results of hypotheses tests along with main effects, interaction effects, and outcomes of transportation experiences are presented.

4.1 Sample Profile

In Study 1, a total of 322 respondents participated in the survey. Of 322 responses, 212 responses were used for further analysis due to their appropriate qualification for the study and valid responses to quality check questions—110 respondents were deleted because respondents either did not have booking experience in the previous 12 months or did not correctly answer validation questions throughout the survey. One screening question was included in the beginning of the survey—have you booked a hotel room through online in the previous 12 months—to ensure respondents were qualified to participate in this study. Throughout the survey, four different quality check questions (i.e., please click strongly agree to proceed with the survey) were included to ensure respondents were reading each survey item carefully before they answered the question. Of the 212 respondents, almost 40% of them were male, 28% were between 35 and 44 years old, and 30% had a Bachelor's degree in terms of education.

In Study 2, a total of 312 respondents participated in the survey. Of the 312 respondents, 211 respondents had valid responses—101 respondents were deleted, due to qualification or validation issues. Of the 211 respondents, almost 60% of them were female, 28% were between 45 and 54 years old, and 32% had a High School Diploma in terms of education. A detailed description of the sample profile for Study 1 and Study 2 is described in Table 4.1.

To investigate the respondents' hotel booking experience, their preferred website to book a hotel room and the main reason using their preferred website were asked. More than one-half of the respondents (61.8%) answered they used the hotel's own website to book a hotel and one of the main reasons to use their preferred website was to save money, followed by convenience, to save time, and to obtain updated information.

In Study 2, more than half of the respondents (56.4%) answered they used the hotel's own website to book a hotel and one of the main reasons to use their preferred website was to save money, followed by convenience, to obtain updated information, and to save time. A detailed description of respondents booking experience for Study 1 and Study 2 is presented in Table 4.2.

4.2 Study 1 Results

4.2.1 Manipulation Checks

In line with Elder and Krishna's (2008) study, four questions were asked to reflect sensory cues. Respondents indicated they perceived more sensory cues ($\alpha = .90$) in the sensory condition, compared to no sensory condition ($F(1, 210) = 238.89, p = .000; M_{\text{yes}} = 5.82$ versus $M_{\text{no}} = 2.85$). For the brand relationship norm ($\alpha = .83$), Aggarwal's (2004) study was followed to ensure respondents perceived the hotel brand as a best friend in the

communal relationship condition and respondents perceived the hotel brand as an efficient business partner in the exchange relationship condition ($F(1, 210) = 112.72$, $p = .000$; $M_{\text{communal}} = 5.09$ versus $M_{\text{exchange}} = 3.13$). As shown in Table 4.3, both sensory cues and brand relationship cues were perceived differently by respondents.

Two realism check questions—(1) I think the hotel website was realistic and (2) The situation was realistic—were asked to determine if respondents perceived the website and situation were realistic. Respondents perceived the website ($M = 5.65$, $SD = .99$) and the situation ($M = 5.68$, $SD = 1.03$) realistic.

4.2.2 Confounding Effect Checks

Respondents' perceived service quality as well as hotel quality were asked to ensure no differences were found between sensory and no sensory conditions. Independent samples t -tests were conducted to test respondents' overall perceptions of the hotel quality and its service quality ($\alpha = .70$). No differences were determined between sensory condition and no sensory condition ($t(210) = .22$, $p > .05$; $M_{\text{yes}} = 6.60$ versus $M_{\text{no}} = 6.51$).

4.2.3 Dependent Variables and Measurement Model

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to verify the factor structure of a set of observed variables to the underlying constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998). The LISREL 8.80 was utilized to test the measurement model. Based on the results from CFA, convergent validity and discriminant validity were also investigated (Hair et al., 1998). Relying on the model's goodness-of-fit test, this study used a χ^2 test as the main reference, along with Normed Fit Index (NFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI),

Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) (Hoyle & Panter, 1995).

Inter-item reliability, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and convergent validity were investigated to check validity and reliability. Composite reliability is the reliability of a summated scale and AVE refers to the variance in the indicators explained by the common factor. Convergent validity was investigated through composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE). Checking inter-item reliability, values of Cronbach's α ranged from 0.80 to 0.96, showing an acceptable internal consistency for all constructs. Composite reliabilities of the eight constructs ranged from 0.85 to 0.97, representing acceptable ranges (Hair et al., 1998). Construct validity was examined with convergent validity and discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The values for composite reliability were greater than 0.7 and the values for AVE were greater than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In addition, all confirmatory factor loadings were significant at the 0.001 level, resulting in satisfactory convergent validity for each construct.

According to the standardized solution of the factor loadings in the measurement model, both convergent and discriminant validities were met. The larger factor loading supported convergent validity and the moderate to low trait correlations supported discriminant validity. All AVE values were larger than the corresponding squared inter-construct correlation estimates, meeting discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Thus, a theoretically meaningful and statistically acceptable model was achieved for this study. Tables 4.4 and 4.5 represent the results for the correlation matrix and CFA, respectively.

The value of χ^2/df should be less than 3:1 (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1989). In addition, values of NFI, IFI, and CFI should be between 0.9 and 1.0 to be considered a good fit. RMSEA with a value below 0.80 is also suggested for an acceptable model fit (Byrne, 1998; Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000). According to the results of CFA, the goodness of fit indices of CFA were: $\chi^2 (374) = 609.41, p = 0.000$; $\chi^2/\text{df} = 1.61$; NFI = 0.98; NNFI = 0.99; IFI = 0.99; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.055, indicating an acceptable value for each model fit index. Therefore, it can be concluded the measurement model fitted well with the data.

4.2.4 Two-Way ANOVA

Assumptions of ANOVA were met in this study—(1) independence, (2) normality, and (3) homogeneity of variance. This study was based on a fully-crossed 2x2 experimental design, so a two-way ANOVA was employed to test two main effects and one interaction effect of the sensory and relationship norm cues on consumers' transportation experiences. Main effects of the sensory cues ($M_{\text{sensory}} = 5.90, M_{\text{nosensory}} = 4.01$; $F(1, 208) = 260.59$; $p = .000$) and brand relationship norms ($M_{\text{communal}} = 5.50, M_{\text{exchange}} = 4.41$; $F(1, 208) = 85.74$; $p = .000$) were significant, supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2. The effects of sensory cues were significant under the communal relationship norms ($F(1, 208) = 4.41$; $p = .037$), compared to the exchange relationship norms condition; thus, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

In addition, effect size for each effect (two main effects and one interaction effect) were computed, since F -tests of sensory cues, brand relationship cues, and interaction effect were significant. Effect size was computed with eta squared (η^2). Values of η^2 for sensory cues were 0.033, of η^2 for brand relationship cues were 0.011, and of η^2 for the

interaction between sensory cues and brand relationship cues were 0.00. For the sensory cues, only 3.3% of the total variability was due to a difference in means. Even though Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were supported, the effects were small since the results of effect size were close to zero. Cell means and standard deviations are presented in Table 4.6 and results of the Two-Way ANOVA are presented in Table 4.7. Figure 4.1 illustrates the results of interaction effects between sensory cues and brand relationship cues. Results of effect size are presented in Table 4.10.

4.2.5 Effects of Transportation

A series of linear regression analyses was conducted to investigate the effects of transportation on consumers' responses. Transportation experience was found to have a positive effect on brand sensory (H4a) ($\beta = .77$, $t(210) = 17.78$, $p = .000$), brand emotion (H4b) ($\beta = .75$, $t(210) = 16.77$, $p = .000$), brand behavior (H4c) ($\beta = .77$, $t(210) = 17.70$, $p = .000$), brand intelligence (H4d) ($\beta = .78$, $t(210) = 19.49$, $p = .000$), emotion (H5) ($\beta = .44$, $t(210) = 7.24$, $p = .000$), trust (H6) ($\beta = .44$, $t(210) = 7.17$, $p = .000$), and behavioral intentions (H7) ($\beta = .49$, $t(210) = 8.14$, $p = .000$).

The values of Durbin-Watson, which explained the assumption of independent errors, were acceptable. When the value of the Durbin-Watson statistic was closer to two, the results were assumed better. The Durbin-Watson values ranged from 1.72 to 1.89, close to two; thus, the assumption of independent errors was met in this study (George & Mallery, 2006). Table 4.8 represents results of regression analyses.

4.2.6 Mediation Effects of Transportation

To assess whether transportation mediated the effects of sensory cues and brand relationship cues on consumer responses, a series of mediation analyses was conducted,

based on Hayes and Preacher's (2013) mediation analysis. Transportation experience was found to partially mediate the effect of sensory cues on brand sensory ($\beta = 1.48$, 95% CI = 1.14 to 1.88), brand behavior ($\beta = 1.47$, 95% CI = 1.12 to 1.82). Transportation experience fully mediated the effect of sensory cues on brand emotion ($\beta = 1.52$, 95% CI = 0.19 to 1.12), brand intelligence ($\beta = 1.54$, 95% CI = 1.21 to 1.91), emotion ($\beta = 0.86$, 95% CI = 0.55 to 1.21), trust ($\beta = 0.67$, 95% CI = 0.38 to 0.99), and behavioral intention ($\beta = 0.92$, 95% CI = 0.59 to 1.27).

Transportation experience was also identified to partially mediate the effects of brand relationship cues on brand emotion ($\beta = 0.89$, 95% CI = 0.63 to 1.19), brand behavior ($\beta = 0.88$, 95% CI = 0.61 to 1.18), brand intelligence ($\beta = 0.89$, 95% CI = 0.61 to 1.17), and trust ($\beta = 0.42$, 95% CI = 0.27 to 0.61). Transportation experience fully mediated the effects of brand relationship cues on brand sensory ($\beta = 0.99$, 95% CI = 0.67 to 1.36), emotion ($\beta = 0.50$, 95% CI = 0.34 to 0.69), and behavioral intention ($\beta = 0.53$, 95% CI = 0.36 to 0.77). Table 4.9 describes results of mediation analyses.

4.2.7 Summary of Hypotheses

Overall, seven hypotheses were proposed in Study 1. Indeed, transportation experience either partially or fully mediated the relationship between (1) sensory cues and consumer responses and (2) brand relationship cues and consumer responses. As shown in Table 4.10, all hypotheses were supported, identifying the importance of transportation experience as a narrative persuasion strategy.

4.2.8 Discussion for Study 1

Study 1 was designed to assess the effects of sensory cues and moderating effects of brand relationship cues on consumers' transportation experiences. An objective of

Study 1 was to fill the gap in consumer research by studying sensory cues and transportation experiences derived from the literature on sensory marketing and transportation theory. Study 1 aimed to develop conceptual tools to better understand the role of consumers' transportation experiences and their effects on consumer responses. Results from Study 1 identified the significant main effect of sensory cues and brand relationship cues, and the moderating effect of the brand relationship cue. Thus, results from Study 1 suggested consumers were more likely to transport to the website when they were exposed to sensory cues and when they perceived the hotel brand as their best friend, holding the communal-oriented relationship norm with the hotel.

Based on sensory information processing theory (Krishna, 2012), this study set out to investigate the effects of sensory cues on transportation. The results supported the main effect of sensory cues, indicating when customers were exposed to the sensory embedded website, they were more likely to have transportation experiences, compared to when they were not exposed to any sensory information. Sensory systems played an important role in people's information processing—encoding, retrieving, and reconstructing information (Yoon & Park, 2011). Five senses (i.e., see, smell, hear, taste, and touch) help consumers understand product/service offerings more vividly, enabling them to fully experience the future consumption stage. With the nature of the hotel industry, sensory cues help customers visualize the property and imagine their future experiences.

This study also supported when people perceived the hotel as their best friend, they were more likely to have transportation experience, compared to when they perceived the hotel as their business partner. Supporting the idea of social relationship

theory and relationship norm theory, results from Study 1 supported the effect of brand relationship cues. Results for Study 1 identified when customers had a communal-oriented relationship with the hotel, they were more likely to have transportation experiences, compared to when they held an exchange-oriented relationship with the hotel. Given the current underexplored research areas in consumer-brand relationships, this research offered a possible answer to why consumers did not behave rationally all the time. Supported by social relationship theory, behavior norms were contingent on the relationships people carry, since these relationships influenced how customers evaluated the company (Aggarwal, 2004). As indicated in the results from this study, the hotel seems not just a place to stay, but can be viewed as part of the family.

Results for Study 1 provided moderating effects of brand relationship cues. Considering both website attributes and the personal factor, transportation experiences tended heightened when sensory cues were available and customers perceived the hotel as their close friend. Transportation experience was not only influenced by the sensory cues, but also influenced by the brand relationship norm. When customers were exposed to the hotel's website that conveyed the sensory information and when they had a communal-oriented relationship with the hotel, their transportation experiences were enhanced, compared to when they were exposed to a non-sensory embedded hotel website and they had an exchange-oriented relationship with the hotel.

A notable finding from this study was the respondents' transportation experiences were not limited to the specific moment of the website experience, but extended to their overall brand experiences, emotions, trust, and behaviors as well. As predicted, outcomes of transportation experiences were supported in Study 1. When people

engaged in the transportation experience while browsing the hotel website, they were more likely to have enhanced brand experiences, anticipated emotions, trust towards the hotel, and behavioral intentions. Indeed, transportation experiences partially or fully mediated the relationships between sensory cues and customer responses, and brand relationship cues and customer responses.

In conclusion, transportation was important as a narrative persuasion strategy that led to favorable customer responses. Since Study 1 focused on the personal factors (i.e., brand relationship norm between the hotel and the customer) that influenced transportation experiences, Study 2 was designed to test primarily for the social influences, investigating how social review types moderated the effects of sensory cues on consumers' transportation experiences and directly influenced their transportation experiences.

4.3 Study 2 Results

4.3.1 Manipulation Checks

In Study 2, similar to Study 1, four questions were asked to reflect sensory cues. Respondents indicated they perceived more sensory cues ($\alpha = .85$) in the sensory condition, compared to no sensory condition ($F(1, 209) = 185.93, p = .000; M_{\text{yes}} = 5.73$ versus $M_{\text{no}} = 3.25$). For the social review type cues ($\alpha = .80$), respondents were asked whether they have read narrative reviews or statistical reviews on the hotel website ($F(1, 209) = 61.80, p = .000; M_{\text{narrative}} = 4.86$ versus $M_{\text{statistical}} = 3.61$). As shown in Table 4.3, both sensory cues and social review type cues were perceived differently by respondents.

Two realism check questions—(1) I think the hotel website was realistic and (2) The situation was realistic—were asked to test whether respondents perceived the website and the situation realistic. Both the website ($M=5.39$, $SD= 1.19$) and the situation ($M=5.74$, $SD= 0.95$) were viewed as realistic.

4.3.2 Confounding Effect Checks

Respondents were asked to rate the perceived service quality, as well as the hotel quality to ensure respondents in sensory and no sensory conditions perceived the hotel and service quality the same. An independent samples t -test was conducted to test respondents' overall perceptions of the hotel quality and service quality ($\alpha= .70$). No differences were existed between sensory and no sensory conditions ($t(209)= .18$, $p> .05$; $M_{\text{yes}}= 6.04$ versus $M_{\text{no}}= 6.02$).

Respondents were also asked to rate the review valence to ensure both types of reviews were perceived average ($\alpha= .70$), taking into account the valence of the reviews. No differences were identified between social review type cues ($t(209)= .93$, $p> .05$; $M_{\text{narrative}}= 5.40$ versus $M_{\text{statistical}}= 5.29$), confirming respondents viewed both statistical reviews and narrative reviews as neutral.

4.3.3 Dependent Variables and Measurement Model

A CFA was utilized to test the measurement model. Checking inter-item reliability, values of Cronbach's α ranged from 0.79 to 0.95, showing an acceptable internal consistency for all constructs. Composite reliabilities of the eight constructs ranged from 0.80 to 0.96, representing acceptable ranges (Hair et al., 1998). Construct validity was investigated with convergent validity and discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The values for composite reliability were greater than 0.7 and the values

for AVE were greater than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In addition, all confirmatory factor loadings were significant at the 0.001 level, resulting in satisfactory convergent validity for each construct. Both convergent and discriminant validities were also met, based on the results of the standardized solution of the factor loadings in the measurement model; thus, a theoretically meaningful and statistically acceptable model was achieved for Study 2.

According to the results of CFA, the goodness of fit indices of CFA were χ^2 (377) = 837.95, $p = 0.000$; $\chi^2/df = 2.22$; NFI = 0.97; NNFI = 0.98; IFI = 0.98; CFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.077, indicating an acceptable value for each model fit index. Therefore, it can be concluded the measurement model fitted well with the data in Study 2. Tables 4.4 and 4.11 describe the correlation matrix and results of CFA, respectively.

4.3.4 Two-Way ANOVA

A two-way ANOVA was employed to test two main effects and an interaction effect between the sensory and social review type cues for the transportation experience. Results of ANOVA supported main effects of the sensory cues ($M_{\text{sensory}} = 5.53$, $M_{\text{nosensory}} = 3.72$; $F(1, 207) = 162.37$; $p = .000$) and social review type cues ($M_{\text{statistical}} = 4.09$, $M_{\text{narrative}} = 5.17$; $F(1, 207) = 58.23$; $p = .000$), supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2. Supporting the interaction effect, the effects of sensory cues were significant under the narrative review type condition ($F(1, 207) = 4.03$; $p = .046$), compared to the statistical review type condition; thus, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

Since F -tests of sensory cues, social review type cues, and interaction effect were significant, effect size of each effect (main effects and interaction effect) were further computed, based on eta squared (η^2). Values of η^2 for sensory cues were 0.034, of η^2 for

social review type cues were 0.012, and of η^2 for the interaction between sensory cues and social review type cues were 0.00. Effects of sensory and social review type cues on transportation experience were moderate effects. For the sensory cues, only 3.4% of the total variability was due to difference in means and only 1.2% of the total variability was due to a difference in means for the social review type cues. Even though Hypothesis 3 was supported, its effects were weak as the results of effect size were close to zero. Cell means and standard deviations are presented in Table 4.6. Results of the Two-Way ANOVA and the interaction effect are presented in Table 4.7 and Figure 4.1, respectively. Results of effect size are presented in Table 4.10.

4.3.5 Outcomes of Transportation Experiences

A series of linear regression analyses was conducted to examine outcomes of the transportation experience. Transportation experience was identified to have a significant positive effect on brand sensory (H4a) ($\beta = .75$, $t(209) = 16.63$, $p = .000$), brand emotion (H4b) ($\beta = .68$, $t(209) = 13.70$, $p = .000$), brand behavior (H4c) ($\beta = .69$, $t(209) = 13.93$, $p = .000$), brand intelligence (H4d) ($\beta = .78$, $t(209) = 18.01$, $p = .000$), emotion (H5) ($\beta = .32$, $t(209) = 5.02$, $p = .000$), trust (H6) ($\beta = .30$, $t(209) = 4.69$, $p = .000$), and behavioral intentions (H7) ($\beta = .35$, $t(209) = 5.42$, $p = .000$). The Durbin-Watson values ranged between 1.85 and 1.92, meeting the assumption of independent errors (George & Mallery, 2006). Table 4.8 describes the results of a regression analyses.

4.3.6 Mediation Effects of Transportation

Transportation experience was found to partially mediate the effect of sensory cues on brand sensory ($\beta = 1.24$, 95% CI = 0.93 to 1.56). Other than brand sensory, transportation experience fully mediated the effect of sensory cues on brand emotion ($\beta =$

1.20, 95% CI = 0.93 to 1.54), brand behavior ($\beta = 1.09$, 95% CI = 0.81 to 1.40), brand intelligence ($\beta = 1.24$, 95% CI = 0.98 to 1.54), emotion ($\beta = 0.45$, 95% CI = 0.18 to 0.72), trust ($\beta = 0.48$, 95% CI = 0.19 to 0.80), and behavioral intention ($\beta = 0.59$, 95% CI = 0.25 to 0.95).

Transportation experience was also identified to partially mediate the effects of social review type cues on brand sensory ($\beta = 0.83$, 95% CI = 0.55 to 1.12), brand emotion ($\beta = 0.72$, 95% CI = 0.48 to 0.98), and brand behavior ($\beta = 0.66$, 95% CI = 0.45 to 0.93). Transportation experience fully mediated the effects of social review type cues on brand intelligence ($\beta = 0.81$, 95% CI = 0.55 to 1.09), emotion ($\beta = 0.33$, 95% CI = 0.13 to 0.46), trust ($\beta = 0.28$, 95% CI = 0.13 to 0.46) and behavioral intention ($\beta = 0.37$, 95% CI = 0.19 to 0.58). Table 4.9 represents results of mediation analyses.

4.3.7 Results of Hypotheses

All proposed seven hypotheses were supported in Study 2, suggesting the importance of transportation experience as a narrative persuasion strategy. In addition to the proposed hypotheses, transportation experience fully and partially mediated the relationship between (1) sensory cues and consumer responses and (2) social review type cues and consumer responses. Table 4.10 describes the summary of hypotheses testing for Study 2.

4.3.8 Discussion for Study 2

The objective of Study 2 was to investigate social influence on the relationship between sensory cues and transportation experiences, by incorporating social review type cues. With advances in technologies, a plethora of businesses in e-commerce, and increases in online communications, increasing amounts of information are available to

customers. Study 2 added the important role of social review types (summary of numeric ratings as a type of statistical review versus consumer comments as a type of narrative review) to online communication strategies.

Findings from Study 2 supported both sensory cues and social review type cues influenced transportation experiences. Social review type cues moderated the relationships between sensory cues and transportation experiences, identifying when people were exposed to a sensory embedded website along with narrative reviews from previous customers, their transportation experiences were enhanced, compared to when they were not exposed to sensory embedded websites with statistical reviews. Results for Study 2 confirmed the narrative review type of previous customers' reviews resulted in enhanced transportation experiences. Outcomes for transportation experiences were also investigated, represented with brand experiences, trust, emotions, and behavioral intentions. The different aspects of consumer responses were supported as an outcome of transportation experience in Study 2.

In summary, all hypotheses proposed in Study 2 were supported. The empirical findings from Study 2 provided evidence of (1) main effects of sensory cues and social review type cues, (2) a moderating effect of social review type cues on the relationships between sensory cues and transportation experiences, and (3) positive outcomes of transportation experiences.

Table 4.1
Demographics of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	Study 1 (n=212)		Study 2 (n=211)	
Age				
Less than 19	1	0.5	1	0.5
20-24	7	3.3	6	2.8
25-34	25	11.8	32	15.2
35-44	59	27.8	47	22.3
45-54	49	23.1	59	28.0
55-64	52	24.5	47	22.3
Over 65	19	9.0	19	9.0
Gender				
Male	85	40.1	87	41.2
Female	127	59.9	124	58.8
Education				
High School or Below	65	30.7	68	32.2
Associate Degree	53	25	56	26.5
Bachelor Degree	62	29.2	60	28.4
Graduate or Higher	32	15.1	27	12.8
Income				
Under \$25,000	20	9.4	25	11.8
\$25,000-\$49, 999	45	21.2	51	24.2
\$45,000-\$74,999	63	29.7	65	30.8
\$75,000-\$99,999	38	17.9	37	17.5
\$100,000-\$124,999	14	6.6	12	5.7
\$125,000-\$149,999	15	7.1	11	5.2
\$150,000 and above	17	8.0	10	4.7

Table 4.2
Hotel Booking Experience

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	Study 1 (n=212)		Study 2 (n=211)	
Preferred Booking Site				
Hotel Website	161	61.8	119	56.4
Travel Website	69	32.5	72	34.1
Opaque Website	9	4.2	10	4.7
Others	3	1.4	10	4.7
Example	Kayak.com		Look for the best deal	
Main Reason to Visit the Preferred Website				
To save time	29	13.7	24	11.4
To save money	81	38.2	76	36.0
For convenience	68	32.1	61	28.9
To obtain updated information	18	8.5	29	13.7
To review previous guests' experience	14	6.6	16	7.6
Others	2	0.9	5	2.4
Example	See pictures of the rooms		Loyalty program; promotions	

Table 4.3
Results of Manipulation Checks

Study 1			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance
Sensory Cues			
Yes	5.82	1.06	<i>p</i> = .000
No	2.85	1.60	<i>p</i> = .000
Brand Relationship			
Communal	5.09	1.23	<i>p</i> = .000
Exchange	3.13	1.44	<i>p</i> = .000
Study 2			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance
Sensory Cues			
Yes	5.73	1.57	<i>p</i> = .000
No	3.25	0.99	<i>p</i> = .000
Social Review Type			
Narrative	4.86	1.43	<i>p</i> = .000
Statistical	3.61	0.79	<i>p</i> = .000
Measured on a seven-point scale			

Table 4.4
Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Study 1								
1. Transportation	1							
2. Brand Sensory	.77**	1						
3. Brand Emotion	.75**	.87**	1					
4. Brand Behavior	.77**	.84**	.88**	1				
5. Brand Intelligence	.78**	.87**	.87**	.86**	1			
6. Emotion	.44**	.50**	.49**	.45**	.54**	1		
7. Trust	.44**	.50**	.50**	.47**	.54**	.84**	1	
8. Behavior	.49**	.50**	.50**	.51**	.55**	.77**	.85**	1
Study 2								
1. Transportation	1							
2. Brand Sensory	.75**	1						
3. Brand Emotion	.68**	.83**	1					
4. Brand Behavior	.69**	.79**	.83**	1				
5. Brand Intelligence	.78**	.86**	.84**	.84**	1			
6. Emotion	.32**	.35**	.41**	.40**	.44**	1		
7. Trust	.30**	.38**	.37**	.43**	.41**	.76**	1	
8. Behavior	.35**	.39**	.41**	.49**	.46**	.76**	.82**	1
** $p < .01$ (2-tailed)								

Table 4.5
Psychometric Properties and CFA Results (Study 1)

Constructs and Scale Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α	Std. Factor Loading	<i>t</i> -value	CR	AVE
Transportation			.94			0.95	72.03
I felt caught up in the hotel description.	4.98	1.62		0.86	17.01		
Reading the hotel description was relaxing.	4.83	1.67		0.83	15.67		
My mind was only on the hotel description and not on other things.	4.83	1.68		0.86	-		
The hotel description improved my mood, made me feel happier.	4.76	1.55		0.89	18.14		
I lost myself in the content of the hotel description while reading it.	4.71	1.59		0.90	18.29		
I thought the hotel description was entertaining.	4.69	1.55		0.86	16.98		
The hotel description captured my attention.	4.88	1.65		0.73	12.71		
Brand Sensory			.96			0.97	92.80
The hotel website made a strong impression on my senses.	4.61	1.78		0.96	33.78		
This hotel website was interesting in a sensory way.	4.58	1.75		0.97	35.01		
This hotel website appeared to my senses.	4.61	1.81		0.96	-		
Brand Emotion			.92			0.92	79.97
This hotel website induced my feelings.	4.60	1.80		0.94	-		
I had strong emotions for this hotel website.	4.32	1.74		0.90	23.44		
This hotel website generated emotional experiences.	4.36	1.74		0.84	19.78		
Brand Behavior			.80			0.85	67.56
I engaged in physical behaviors when I looked at this hotel website.	3.72	1.86		0.65	11.81		
This hotel website gave me rich experiences of the hotel.	4.60	1.83		0.86	20.63		

This hotel website encouraged me to book a hotel room.	4.58	1.77	0.93	-		
Brand Intelligence			.90		0.90	76.06
I engaged a lot of thinking when I looked at this hotel website.	4.62	1.80	0.95	-		
This hotel website made me think.	4.76	1.77	0.92	26.74		
This hotel website stimulated my curiosity.	4.82	1.60	0.73	14.38		
Emotion			.96		0.97	90.30
Angry- Excited	5.31	1.51	0.91	26.45		
Disappointed - Glad	5.51	1.62	0.96	35.47		
Dissatisfied - Satisfied	5.70	1.64	0.96	-		
Unhappy - Happy	5.63	1.59	0.97	38.31		
Trust			.94		0.95	84.72
I trust this hotel.	5.26	1.41	0.91	25.30		
This hotel seems like a reliable place to stay.	5.64	1.42	0.93	28.66		
I rely on this hotel because it has good intentions to care for its customers.	5.40	1.53	0.96	-		
This hotel shows genuine interests in customer service.	5.31	1.45	0.88	23.06		
Behavioral Intention			.96		0.96	90.29
I intend to visit this hotel.	5.05	1.53	0.92	28.21		
I would like to book this hotel in the future.	5.30	1.51	0.97	-		
I would like to stay this hotel in the future.	5.46	1.51	0.96	35.45		
Model Fit: NFI = 0.98; NNFI= 0.99; IFI= 0.99; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.055						

Table 4.6
Treatment Means and Standard Deviations

	Sensory		No Sensory	
	Communal	Exchange	Communal	Exchange
Transportation Experience ^a	6.32	5.48	4.67	3.34
Cell Size	50	44	65	53

	Sensory		No Sensory	
	Narrative	Statistical	Narrative	Statistical
Transportation Experience ^a	5.93	5.13	4.41	3.04
Cell Size	55	48	55	53

^aMeasured on a seven-point scale; Higher number indicates greater transportation experience.

Table 4.7
Results of Two-Way ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Study 1				
Sensory Cues	186.07	1	186.07	260.59
Brand Relationship Cues	61.22	1	61.22	85.74
Interaction	3.15	1	3.15	4.41
Within	148.52	208	0.71	
Total	5485.40	212		
Study 2				
Sensory Cues	171.10	1	171.10	162.37
Social Review Type Cues	61.36	1	61.36	58.23
Interaction	4.25	1	4.25	4.03
Within	218.12	207	1.05	
Total	4978.77	211		

Table 4.8
Effects of Transportation Experience on Customer Response

Consumer Response	Standardized β	<i>t</i>-value	Adjusted R²
Study 1			
Brand Sensory	.77	17.78***	.59
Brand Emotion	.75	16.77***	.57
Brand Behavior	.77	17.70***	.59
Brand Intelligence	.78	19.49***	.61
Emotion	.44	7.24***	.19
Trust	.44	7.17***	.19
Behavior	.49	8.14***	.23
Study 2			
Brand Sensory	.75	16.63***	.56
Brand Emotion	.68	13.70***	.47
Brand Behavior	.69	13.93***	.47
Brand Intelligence	.78	18.01***	.60
Emotion	.32	5.02***	.10
Trust	.30	4.69***	.09
Behavior	.35	5.42***	.11
*** $p < .000$			

Table 4.9
Results of Mediation Analysis

	Indirect Effect		Direct Effect		Mediation Type	Indirect Effect		Direct Effect		Mediation Type
	Coef.	95% CI	Coef.	t-value		Coef.	95% CI	Coef.	t-value	
Study 1										
	Sensory Cues					Brand Relationship Cues				
Brand Sensory	1.48	1.14-1.88	0.67	3.38***	Partial	0.99	0.68-1.36	0.31	1.93	Full
Brand Emotion	1.52	0.19-1.12	0.28	1.40	Full	0.89	0.63-1.19	0.41	2.64*	Partial
Brand Behavior	1.47	1.12-1.82	0.41	2.22*	Partial	0.88	0.61-1.18	0.49	3.37**	Partial
Brand Intelligence	1.54	1.21-1.91	0.21	1.17	Full	0.89	0.61-1.17	0.43	3.03*	Partial
Emotion	0.86	0.55-1.21	0.15	0.57	Full	0.50	0.34-0.69	0.27	1.28	Full
Trust	0.67	0.38-0.99	0.32	1.42	Full	0.42	0.27-0.61	0.38	2.05*	Partial
Behavioral Intention	0.92	0.59-1.27	0.12	0.49	Full	0.53	0.36-0.77	0.21	1.07	Full
Study 2										
	Sensory Cues					Social Review Type Cues				
Brand Sensory	1.24	0.93-1.56	0.47	2.72*	Partial	0.83	0.55-1.12	0.32	2.17*	Partial
Brand Emotion	1.20	0.93-1.54	0.20	1.05	Full	0.72	0.48-0.98	0.55	3.42***	Partial
Brand Behavior	1.09	0.81-1.40	0.19	1.13	Full	0.66	0.45-0.93	0.44	3.05**	Partial
Brand Intelligence	1.24	0.98-1.54	0.26	1.67	Full	0.81	0.55-1.09	0.19	1.46	Full
Emotion	0.45	0.18-0.72	0.17	0.82	Full	0.33	0.19-0.54	0.11	0.63	Full
Trust	0.48	0.19-0.80	0.01	0.06	Full	0.28	0.13-0.46	0.12	0.70	Full
Behavioral Intention	0.59	0.25-0.95	0.17	0.69	Full	0.37	0.19-0.58	0.29	1.38	Full
*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$										

Table 4.10
Summary of Hypotheses Testing

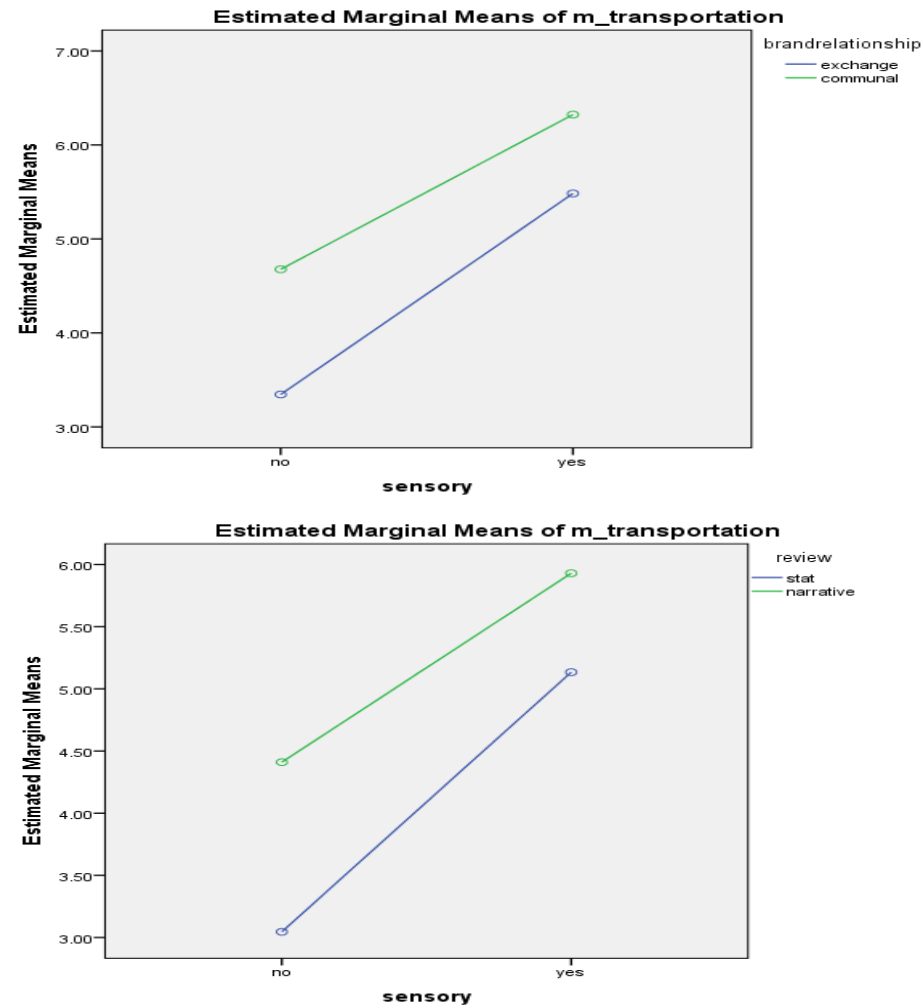
Study	Hypotheses	Description	Support	Effect Size
Study 1	H1	Main effects of sensory cues	Supported	0.03
	H2	Main effects of brand relationship cues	Supported	0.01
	H3	Moderating effects of brand relationship on sensory cues	Supported	0.00
	H4	Transportation Experience to Brand experience	Supported	-
	H5	Transportation Experience to Emotion	Supported	-
	H6	Transportation Experience to Trust	Supported	-
	H7	Transportation Experience to Behavioral intention	Supported	-
Study 2	H1	Main effects of sensory cues	Supported	0.03
	H2	Main effects of social review type cues	Supported	0.01
	H3	Moderating effects of social review type on sensory cues	Supported	0.00
	H4	Transportation Experience to Brand experience	Supported	-
	H5	Transportation Experience to Emotion	Supported	-
	H6	Transportation Experience to Trust	Supported	-
	H7	Transportation Experience to Behavioral intention	Supported	-
Support for hypotheses are based on $p < .05$ cutoff.				

Table 4.11
Psychometric Properties and CFA Results (Study 2)

Constructs and Scale Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α	Std. Factor Loading	t-value	CR	AVE
Transportation			.95			0.96	76.22
I felt caught up in the hotel description.	4.58	1.72		0.86	17.67		
Reading the hotel description was relaxing.	4.68	1.66		0.89	19.17		
My mind was only on the hotel description and not on other things.	4.79	1.69		0.84	16.98		
The hotel description improved my mood, made me feel happier.	4.45	1.63		0.86	17.67		
I lost myself in the content of the hotel description while reading it.	4.46	1.68		0.88	-		
I thought the hotel description was entertaining.	4.55	1.58		0.88	18.50		
The hotel description captured my attention.	4.88	1.59		0.90	19.55		
Brand Sensory			.95			0.95	88.36
The hotel website made a strong impression on my senses.	4.53	1.59		0.93	26.54		
This hotel website was interesting in a sensory way.	4.67	1.60		0.95	-		
This hotel website appeared to my senses.	4.64	1.58		0.94	28.37		
Brand Emotion			.93			0.93	82.81
This hotel website induced my feelings.	4.54	1.59		0.91	21.54		
I had strong emotions for this hotel website.	4.14	1.63		0.91	-		
This hotel website generated emotional experiences.	4.27	1.62		0.91	21.05		
Brand Behavior			.79			0.80	57.55
I engaged in physical behaviors when I looked at this hotel website.	3.65	1.81		0.68	10.80		
This hotel website gave me rich experiences of the hotel.	4.26	1.81		0.79	-		
This hotel website encouraged me to book a hotel	4.60	1.40		0.80	13.21		

room.					
Brand Intelligence			.87		0.87 70.15
I engaged a lot of thinking when I looked at this hotel website.	4.73	1.52		0.80	14.12
This hotel website made me think.	4.75	1.54		0.89	16.70
This hotel website stimulated my curiosity.	4.45	1.16		0.82	-
Emotion			.94		0.94 81.59
Angry- Excited	5.18	1.16		0.84	1.11
Disappointed - Glad	5.14	1.45		0.94	-
Dissatisfied - Satisfied	5.30	1.44		0.91	24.23
Unhappy - Happy	5.34	1.36		0.92	25.21
Trust			.92		0.93 77.05
I trust this hotel.	4.88	1.32		0.90	19.25
This hotel seems like a reliable place to stay.	5.24	1.37		0.89	18.56
I rely on this hotel because it has good intentions to care for its customers.	4.84	1.42		0.88	-
This hotel shows genuine interests in customer service.	4.91	1.49		0.84	16.84
Behavioral Intention			.95		0.94 85.36
I intend to visit this hotel.	4.46	1.52		0.88	23.63
I would like to book this hotel in the future.	4.75	1.60		0.93	41.08
I would like to stay this hotel in the future.	4.89	1.65		0.96	-
Model Fit: NFI = 0.97; NNFI= 0.98; IFI= 0.98; CFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.077					

Figure 4.1
Moderating Effects on Sensory Cues
Brand Relationship Cues & Social Review Type Cues



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This section includes a general discussion of the results for Study 1 and Study 2, focusing on theoretical contributions and industry implications in the perspectives of transportation experiences, sensory marketing, brand relationship norms, and social influences. Suggestions for future research and limitations of current research are also discussed at the end.

5.1 Discussions

Ever since Green and Brock's (2000) narrative transportation research, a plethora of studies have investigated how narrative transportation can be used as a tool for persuasion and enhancement of consumption experiences that influence consumers' attitudes and behaviors (Adaval & Wyer, 1998; Adaval et al., 2007; Van Laer et al., 2014). Despite various studies' focused on narrative transportation, extant narrative transportation literature still remains fragmented, in terms of its extension to the service industry and its application in the online context. Accordingly, this research identified antecedents and outcomes of transportation experiences, signifying the key role of transportation experiences that anticipated customers' consumption experiences in the context of the online environment.

Derived from narrative transportation theory, this research focused on the transportation experience as a tool for the narrative persuasion strategy to enhance consumer responses. Transportation theory postulates customers change their attitudes and behaviors by losing themselves in a story (Green, 2008). Sensory cues were utilized as a narrative persuasion to enhance anticipatory consumption experiences, serving as an

effective online marketing communication tool. Based on the results from these two studies, this research confirmed the importance of sensory cues as a narrative persuasion mechanism. As identified in both Study 1 and Study 2, when the hotel's website incorporated sensory descriptions as a narrative persuasion, customers tended to have enriched transportation experiences.

Effects of narrative transportation were different, depending upon how consumers processed narratives, which differentiated receivers' acts of receiving and interpreting the narratives (Van Laer et al., 2014). The difference might be due to how the receiver was engaged in the story, resulting in different levels of transformational experiences (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010). Since the magnitude of transportation experience was contingent upon personal and situational contextual factors, Study 1 focused on the relationship between customers and the hotel (i.e., personal factors) as an antecedent of transportation experiences, while Study 2 emphasized the importance of social influence that affected transportation experiences (i.e., situational factors).

The brand relationship norm was incorporated as a moderator that influenced the relationships between sensory cues and transportation experiences derived from the relationship norm theory (Clark & Mills, 1993). Brand relationship norm was included in this study, since narrative transportation was contingent upon how a consumer interpreted the story, reflected with his or her prior knowledge, attention, and significant others (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003). According to Weick (1995), the role of story receiver was important, since the story receiver was not just a reader of the story, but an active interpreter involved with the story-processing procedures. When brand relationship norm was taken into account in the transportation experience process, transportation experience

was more likely to heighten when customers were exposed to the sensory triggered hotel's website than no sensory hotel website, and when they held a communal-oriented relationship norm with the hotel, compared to when they had an exchange-oriented relationship norm.

Since more customers review social media before they make decisions, especially with experiential goods, Study 2 examined the persuasive effects of social review type cues—statistical versus narrative reviews—that moderated the relationship between sensory cues and transportation experiences, capturing the role of social influence on transportation experiences. The social review type cues (i.e., numerical ratings as a type of statistical review versus customer comments as a type of narrative review) were added to evaluate interaction effects of sensory cues in the online environment, influencing transportation experiences. As identified in the results for Study 2, transportation experience was the most enhanced when customers were exposed to the sensory embedded website with narrative customers' reviews, compared to when they were exposed to the hotel's website with no sensory description and statistical customers' reviews in the online context.

The present research focused on how sensory cues and different contextual factors influenced transportation experiences, which affected customers' different aspects of responses in the context of the online environment. As identified in Study 1 and Study 2, when sensory cues were embedded in the website, people were more likely to encounter transportation experiences that eventually influenced their experiential, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses. Whether transportation played the full or partial mediating role in narrative persuasion, the positive relationships between the degree of

transportation and one's experiential, affective, cognitive, and conative responses were re-confirmed in both Study 1 and Study 2 (Escalas, 2004a; Wang & Calder, 2006).

To summarize, the current study not only shed new insights into the transportation experience, but also extended the transportation experience as a tool of narrative persuasion in the online context. This research offered various ways that service marketers could enhance the degree of transportation experience in their online contexts. In particular, when the website featured sensory cues, the transportation effect was more likely elicited. In addition, two moderating factors, brand relationship norm and social review type, seemed to influence the degree of transportation experience, depending upon types of relationship norms and types of social review.

Based upon findings from Study 1 and Study 2, this research was in a good position to conclude transportation theory played an important role in constructing and predicting the effects of narrative persuasion in the online environment. To enhance customers' transportation experiences, website attributes, situational, and personal factors should be taken into account for effective narrative persuasion strategies and for favorable consumer responses.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

5.2.1 Extending Transportation Theory

A major goal for this research is to advance a more theoretical understanding of transportation theory, building upon the work of Green and Brock (2000, 2002). This research views the transportation experience as a narrative persuasion a consumer can absorb into a story (i.e., website descriptions) in a pleasurable and interactive way. The current study appears to make unique contributions to the application of transportation

theory and advance narrative persuasion theory to create effective online persuasion and communication strategies. This study suggests ways to incorporate sensory marketing in the online environment as a tool for narrative persuasion to enhance transportation experiences. This study also pinpoints two promising moderators of transportation experience, explaining a more systematic approach to apply transportation theory in the online context. This study further suggests ways online marketers can use to enhance transportation experiences that elicit favorable consumer responses. Results from this research suggest transportation experiences can be boosted by portraying sensory descriptions, featuring narrative reviews, as well as triggering customers' communal-oriented relationship norms.

Transportation theory is extended to the online environment, investigating antecedents of online transportation experiences. Even though transportation can be a common experience that everyone might have experienced to a certain degree, however, not all consumers experience transportation all the time or to the same degree (Wang & Calder, 2006). Across these two studies, different contextual factors are investigated as a way of enhancing transportation experiences in the online environment. Extending transportation theory, contextual variables are considered to prove transportation experience is dependent upon how the receiver interprets and processes the narrative in relationship with his/her personal and situational factors.

This study further examines outcomes of the transportation experience, including experiential, emotional, cognitive, and conative responses, extending the role of transportation theory. Even though positive consumer responses are well supported in previous literature (Escalas, 2004a; Van Laer et al., 2014), the composite aspects of

customer responses have not been fully investigated as outcomes of transportation experience. These different aspects of outcomes are important, since they confirm sensory cues, brand relationship norm cues, and social review type cues enable consumers to experience their anticipatory future consumption through indirect online transportation experiences. One of the major purposes for applying transportation experience in e-commerce is to persuade consumers to visit service organizations, transforming their indirect, online experiences to direct, actual experiences.

5.2.2 Sensory Marketing as a Narrative Persuasion Mechanism

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on sensory perception within marketing by showing sensory descriptions affect transportation experience and ultimately influence consumer behavior. Even though research in sensory marketing advocates its effects on consumer behavior (Krishna, 2012), sensory marketing's effects have not been fully investigated in the narrative persuasion process. Research within sensory marketing to date has mainly focused on the traditional environment (Lindstrom, 2005; Hultén et al., 2009; Krishna, 2010). Little attention has been paid to how sensory marketing can be incorporated as an online marketing communication strategy. This study extends the role of sensory marketing in the online context by showing how sensory marketing can be utilized as a way of narrative persuasion means. Through a series of two studies, the importance of sensory cues is identified. When the website contains multiple sensory components, the website leads to heightened transportation experiences, compared to no sensory embedded websites.

Results for this research provide additional support for the important role of sensory marketing in consumer behavior. Sensory descriptions in the online context can

be applied to the communication tools that influence transportation experiences. Thus, this study signifies the importance of sensory cues in the online environment and their effects on online consumer behaviors, especially examining how sensory cues influence consumers' transportation experiences. Customers' transportation experiences then lead to their favorable brand experiences, trust, emotions, and behavioral intentions.

5.2.3 Brand Relationship Norm for the Positioning Strategy

Relationship norm theory is extended to support the importance of relationship norms to the transportation experience. The distinction between communal and exchange norms (Clark & Mills, 1993) has been useful to understand consumers' relationships with brands or companies (Wan et al., 2011). Even though the role of relationship norm has been investigated in many different contexts, its effects have not been applied to transportation experiences. Since people refer to relationship norms as standards to evaluate situations and to make inferences, this study extends the role of brand relationship norm as a moderating factor that influences the relationships between website attributes and the transportation experience.

Keeping the distinctions between communal and exchange relationship norms, this study extends the relationship norm as a personal factor that influences the relationships between sensory cues and transportation experiences. When a customer views the hotel brand as his/her close friend, s/he is more likely to engage with the brand, paying attention to what the hotel describes, influencing his/her anticipatory consumption experiences. It is important to trigger a close friend or family feel relationship to customers, since they behave differently contingent upon the relationship norms they hold in their minds for a particular brand. When consumers have communal-oriented

relationship norms with the brand, they are more likely to perceive the hotel as their friend or family member, so they believe the hotel is personal to them. On the other hand, when consumers hold an exchange-oriented relationship norm with the brand, they perceive the hotel simply as the business partner. Therefore, they are less attached with the brand, resulting in less engagement with the information on the hotel's website. As supported in the relationship norm theory, this study extends the importance of brand relationship norms between a customer and the hotel as the relationship norms differentiate the level of transportation experiences, eventually affecting customers' experiential, cognitive, affective, and conative responses.

5.2.4 Social Review Type Representing Social Influence

This research extends social influences and transportation experiences by showing narrative reviews are more effective to trigger transportation experiences, compared to statistical reviews in the online context. Previous research in social reviews identifies the importance of review valence (Hong & Park, 2012) and the effects of review types on credibility (Hong & Park, 2012) or attitudes (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Focusing on the role of social review types, scholars (O'Keefe, 2004; Seiter & Seiter, 2005) have supported the importance of investigating persuasion effects in different types of reviews.

Along with exponential growth in social media, it is important how customers incorporate others' comments into transportation experiences and their responses because consumers' decision-making processes are based upon not only advertising effects, but also social influences (Yoon et al., 2012). Depending upon review types, people show different levels of engagement when they read previous customers' reviews. Thus, this study incorporates different social review types as a situational factor that influences

transportation experiences in the online context, proposing how reviews are portrayed in the online environment, influencing customers' future consumption experiences.

Online reviews have potentials to persuade people, depending upon how the reviews are presented (Hong & Park, 2012). The persuasive effects of online reviews are assessed, investigating the effects of social review type cues. Two different social review type cues—statistical and narrative reviews—are investigated. Because of the different characteristics of statistical and narrative reviews, these two types of reviews result in different transportation experiences. Narrative reviews are considered more effective in transportation experience. By nature, it includes narrative components in its reviews, fitting to narrative persuasion and easier to imagine future consumption experiences.

5.3 Managerial Implications

5.3.1 Persuasive Online Communication Strategy

With regards to industry practitioners, this research provides suggestions to service marketers on how to trigger transportation experiences to drive favorable consumer responses, such as brand experience, emotions, trust, and behavioral intentions. With the growing amount of information available on the Internet and the increasing number of hotels available to consumers, it becomes more difficult to create a persuasive online environment that transforms customers' indirect online visits to their actual visit to the hotel. Service marketers should make an effort to help prospective customers imagine their anticipatory experiences with the company (i.e., hotel) through their pleasant online transportation experiences.

The current study especially emphasizes the importance of transportation experiences as a narrative persuasion. Stories are effective to stimulate customers to

imagine this future consumption stage. For instance, Flagship retail stores (i.e., Nike Town in London) or theme parks (i.e., Disneyland) utilize narrative cues to stimulate customers' curiosity and imaginations (Van Laer et al., 2014). This study signifies the importance of narrative transportation in the online context by proposing different website attributes—sensory descriptions, brand relationship norms, and social review type cues. Even though people cannot touch or be there to experience their future consumption experiences, this study proposes by utilizing different cues in the online context, transportation experiences can be enhanced. Among the different attributes, this study confirms the key factors that influence transportation experience; thus, service marketers should consider these different factors when they develop online marketing communications and persuasion strategies.

As outcomes of transportation experience, this study signifies the importance of consumers' brand experiences, future-oriented emotions, trust, and behavioral intentions. Intriguing positive brand experiences, emotions, trust, and intentions are important in the online environment, since consumers' responses are directly related to their behavioral responses. For instance, if consumers feel delightful after they visit a hotel's website, they are more likely to visit the hotel. Therefore, service marketers should develop websites that can positively influence consumers' transportation experiences that eventually influence consumer responses.

5.3.2 Sensory Triggering Website

When consumers need to evaluate products or services with little prior experience, marketers can apply different strategies to enhance consumers' evaluations or decision-making processes. Based upon the emerging concepts of narrative persuasion,

service marketers can take advantage by applying sensory cues as a way of triggering transportation experiences because when sensory cues are effectively implemented to the online environment, customers are more likely to have enhanced future consumption experiences. The main goal of sensory marketing is to differentiate and express a product, service, or company's identity associated with the human mind and senses (Hultén, 2011).

While many marketers intuitively understand the importance of sensory components, the role of sensory cues has not been fully investigated. This study confirms sensory cues can be utilized as a way of triggering transportation experiences to provide narrative persuasion effects. The reason for a service organization to develop sensory marketing strategies is to distinguish its brand from competitors, especially when other attributes (i.e., price and functional attributes) are similar. Thus, it is significant for management of the service industry to understand the importance of sensory cues that can be incorporated into their online environment not only to create consumers' pleasant experiences, but also to successfully compete with other organizations.

Sensory marketing, as an online communication strategy, may be a relevant approach, since a sensory triggered website contributes to a multi-sensory atmosphere on the hotel's website, by communicating the sensory characteristics of the service's offerings. Based upon results of this study, marketers can apply sensory components to their online environments. Since sensory cues are embedded, people are more likely to transport themselves to the future consumption stage.

5.3.3 Relationship Marketing

Understanding interpersonal buyer-seller interactions is critical to effectively utilize this relationship to sustain the relationship between company and customers. Advances in technology in the online environment provide greater opportunities for customers to express their opinions about companies and services, the same way customers interact with their friends or family members. Service marketers need to invest in infrastructure designed to allow customers to connect with the company in more personal ways, rather than just a transactional relationship, to unconsciously inject the idea of a communal-oriented brand relationship norm. Service marketers also need to consider types of service segment because customers might prefer different relationship types, depending upon the context of the service. For instance, customers in the hedonic-oriented service industry might be more engaged with the communal-oriented relationship norm compared to customers in the utilitarian focused service industry. Different relationship marketing strategies can be applied by taking into account the service segment.

Utilizing advanced technological appliances, hotels can rely on different virtual platforms to be perceived as a customer's best friend. Results from this research suggest when an online environment is designed, it is important to keep buyer-seller interactions in a communal-oriented relationship norm. To enhance the communal-oriented relationship norm, different servicescape cues can be utilized in the online context by focusing on the interpersonal relationships between the hotel and the customer (Bitner, 1992). Friendly emails and social media friends can also provide an additional

opportunity for hotels to communicate with their customers to extend their relationships from the mere supply-demand relationship to the personal friend-friend relationship.

5.3.4 Social Influence Strategy

Managers should understand the significant impacts of social influence in the online environment. Online reviews are considered a valuable source of ‘real time’ information that influence consumers’ attitudes and experiences with the company, so managers can take prompt action to improve service quality (Dellarocas, Zhang, & Awad, 2007). Since transportation experience is contingent upon the presentation of social review type cues, it is important how customers’ reviews are presented in the online context. To enhance transportation experiences, hotels can list narrative reviews on their websites so customers have a rich immersion with their online experiences.

Since different types of social reviews result in significant differences in consumers’ brand experiences and their responses, managers should incorporate social media strategies into their daily practices. Even though many hotels have a link to third party intermediaries, not every hotel shows narrative reviews on its website. Hotels can include narrative reviews on their online environment to augment narrative persuasion effects represented with transportation experience. If previous customers vividly describe their pleasant experiences during their stay at a hotel, the hotel can capture these rich experiences from previous customers’ reviews to foster prospective customers’ transportation experiences.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Notwithstanding its theoretical and practical bearings, the current research has limitations. The present study merely explores the initial step to apply transportation

theory in the online context. To further understand the role of transportation theory, a series of follow-up studies are required. First, this study only utilized sensory descriptions as narrative persuasion to gauge transportation experiences. In addition to sensory cues, other mental imagery techniques can be utilized to influence transportation experiences, such as mental simulation (Escalas, 2004b). Different narrative persuasion cues can be utilized to trigger transportation experiences in the online context. For instance, process versus outcome-oriented mental simulation cues can be applied for the narrative persuasion strategy.

Second, this study only focused on the hotel industry as a study context, but transportation experience might be different in different product categories or different industries. Since the service industry can be divided into utilitarian- or hedonic-oriented industries, future research can incorporate different industry types to fully understand the proper narrative persuasion strategies of transportation experiences in each industry or in each product category. Since transportation experiences might be different across different virtual platforms and in various product categories, future research is also required to provide a more definite conclusion regarding narrative transportation.

Third, future research can add more variables to investigate antecedents of the transportation experience. Familiarity, existing beliefs, and prior knowledge might play key roles in developing the transportation experience (Van Laer et al., 2014), so more in-depth investigations on transportation experience are needed to provide clearer means of enriching transportation experiences.

In summary, this study poses the question of how to promote service offerings in the online environment, and seeks an answer to transportation experiences through

sensory, brand relationship norms, and social review type cues. It should be noted transportation theory is still in its incipient stage of development, compared to other persuasion theories (i.e., Elaboration Likelihood Model). Thus, different aspects of transportation theory should be further investigated and validated to develop a comprehensive persuasion model. This study provides an initial step towards understanding how transportation experience can be developed and major outcomes of these experiences in the online context. As narrative transportation explains, this research demonstrates how customers begin their online journey by transporting them to the anticipatory consumption experience, when they browse the Internet (Gerrig, 1993).

APPENDIX: MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY

Stimulus Materials

Instructions: Please carefully read the following scenario and imagine that you are in this situation for 60 seconds. While reading this description, use your imagination. Think about the hotel and about how you might feel in the situation. Immerse yourself in the scenario.

Now, you are looking at the website for “THE HOTEL,” one of the popular upscale chain hotels, to book a room. You IMAGINE that you are staying in this room. Visualize yourself in this hotel room. You will be asked to describe this hotel room.

Study 1


Exchange Brand Relationship Cues

I am a frequent guest of The HOTEL because I always receive a good economic value with competitive room rates. Price is one of the most important factors when visiting The HOTEL. I often receive special offers from The HOTEL that enable me to save money for my stay. When I stay at The HOTEL, I prefer not to have interactions with the staff because receiving personalized service from the staff makes me feel uncomfortable. I believe The HOTEL is a reasonable place to stay, like an efficient business partner. Whenever I visit The HOTEL, I always receive a good deal, having the least interactions with the staff as possible.

Communal Brand Relationship Cues

I am a frequent guest of The HOTEL because I always receive pleasant and warm interactions with the staff. Personalized service is one of the key factors to visit The HOTEL. I am always treated well and feel welcome because staff is always available for me during my stay. When I stay at The HOTEL, price is not as important as attentive service to me because I want friendly interactions with its staff. I always want to interact with the staff, since the staff is like my best friend. Whenever I visit The HOTEL, I always have memorable, nurturing, and caring service.

Sensory Cues



[Find a Hotel or Resort](#) [Meetings & Events](#) [Weddings](#) [Experience The Hotel](#)

[ACCOMMODATIONS](#) [SERVICES & AMENITIES](#) [MAKE A RESERVATION](#)


THE HOTEL, 1000 East Street, CA 94110 • Tel. 1-(800)-000-0000



Stay and relax in one of our deluxe guestrooms located in the heart of the city's arts district. Each room features a king bed, a desk and hotel stationary, two easy chairs, a mini-bar, and a deluxe bathroom with whirlpool bath and rainfall shower with multiple settings.

Experience a **multi-sensory atmosphere**. All of your sight, touch, and smell senses will be aroused as you enter the airy, modern décor, and make your way to the vast picture window where you can admire the city lights or our lush gardenscape. The pale creams and browns that surround you will provide a calm haven to come back to after a day of hard work or sight-seeing. You will melt into the soft, cotton-rich linens, with ultra-plush pillows and down comforter where comfort and well-being are complemented by our signature scent of crisp citrus and green floral notes.


No Sensory Cues



[Find a Hotel or Resort](#) [Meetings & Events](#) [Weddings](#) [Experience The Hotel](#)


[ACCOMMODATIONS](#) [SERVICES & AMENITIES](#) [MAKE A RESERVATION](#)

THE HOTEL, 1000 East Street, CA 94110 • Tel. 1-(800)-000-0000



Stay and relax in one of our deluxe guestrooms located in the heart of the city's arts district. Each room features a king bed, a desk and hotel stationary, two easy chairs, a mini-bar, and a deluxe bathroom with whirlpool bath and rainfall shower with multiple settings.

Study 2 Scenario 1



[Find a Hotel or Resort](#) [Meetings & Events](#) [Weddings](#) [Experience The Hotel](#)

[ACCOMMODATIONS](#) [SERVICES & AMENITIES](#) [MAKE A RESERVATION](#)

THE HOTEL, 1000 East Street, CA 94110 • Tel. 1-(800)-000-0000



Stay and relax in one of our deluxe guestrooms located in the heart of the city's arts district. Each room features a king bed, a desk and hotel stationary, two easy chairs, a mini-bar, and a deluxe bathroom with whirlpool bath and rainfall shower with multiple settings.

Experience a **multi-sensory atmosphere**. All of your sight, touch, and smell senses will be aroused as you enter the airy, modern décor, and make your way to the vast picture window where you can admire the city lights or our lush gardenscape. The pale creams and browns that surround you will provide a calm haven to come back to after a day of hard work or sight-seeing. You will melt into the soft, cotton-rich linens, with ultra-plush pillows and down comforter where comfort and well-being are complemented by our signature scent of crisp citrus and green floral notes.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ACCOMMODATIONS](#)

NARRATIVE REVIEWS AT A GLANCE
FROM  tripadvisor*

The overall rating is Average

I was not pleased with the service. The staff in this hotel was not very helpful.

I stayed in a room that was beyond my expectations. It had a very nice sofa and a work desk. I was very delighted to have a clean and spacious room.

The king bed in the room was okay.

The Hotel provided great service. The staff in this hotel was very professional and friendly.

The hotel room was too small. The hotel room was not what I had expected.


[SEE ALL REVIEWS](#)

TripAdvisor

[TWITTER](#)

[FACEBOOK](#)

Scenario 2



[Find a Hotel or Resort](#) [Meetings & Events](#) [Weddings](#) [Experience The Hotel](#)

[ACCOMMODATIONS](#) [SERVICES & AMENITIES](#) [MAKE A RESERVATION](#)


THE HOTEL, 1000 East Street, CA 94110 • Tel. 1-(800)-000-0000



Stay and relax in one of our deluxe guestrooms located in the heart of the city's arts district. Each room features a king bed, a desk and hotel stationary, two easy chairs, a mini-bar, and a deluxe bathroom with whirlpool bath and rainfall shower with multiple settings.

Experience a multi-sensory atmosphere. All of your sight, touch, and smell senses will be aroused as you enter the airy, modern décor, and make your way to the vast picture window where you can admire the city lights or our lush gardenscape. The pale creams and browns that surround you will provide a calm haven to come back to after a day of hard work or sight-seeing. You will melt into the soft, cotton-rich linens, with ultra-plush pillows and down comforter where comfort and well-being are complemented by our signature scent of crisp citrus and green floral notes.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ACCOMMODATIONS](#)

STATISTICAL REVIEWS AT A GLANCE
FROM  **tripadvisor**

The overall rating is Average

Service ★★ out of 5

Room cleanliness ★★★★★ out of 5

Sleep quality ★★★★★ out of 5


Service ★★★★★ out of 5

Room cleanliness ★★ out of 5

[SEE ALL REVIEWS](#)

[TripAdvisor](#) [TWITTER](#) [FACEBOOK](#)

Scenario 3



[Find a Hotel or Resort](#) [Meetings & Events](#) [Weddings](#) [Experience The Hotel](#)

[ACCOMMODATIONS](#) [SERVICES & AMENITIES](#) [MAKE A RESERVATION](#)

THE HOTEL, 1000 East Street, CA 94110 • Tel. 1-(800)-000-0000



Stay and relax in one of our deluxe guestrooms located in the heart of the city's arts district. Each room features a king bed, a desk and hotel stationary, two easy chairs, a mini-bar, and a deluxe bathroom with whirlpool bath and rainfall shower with multiple settings.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ACCOMMODATIONS](#)

NARRATIVE REVIEWS AT A GLANCE

FROM  tripadvisor®

The overall rating is Average

I was not pleased with the service. The staff in this hotel was not very helpful.

I stayed in a room that was beyond my expectations. It had a very nice sofa and a work desk. I was very delighted to have a clean and spacious room.

The king bed in the room was okay.

The Hotel provided great service. The staff in this hotel was very professional and friendly.

The hotel room was too small. The hotel room was not what I had expected.


[SEE ALL REVIEWS](#)

TripAdvisor

TWITTER

FACEBOOK


Scenario 4



[Find a Hotel or Resort](#) [Meetings & Events](#) [Weddings](#) [Experience The Hotel](#)

[ACCOMMODATIONS](#) [SERVICES & AMENITIES](#) [MAKE A RESERVATION](#)


THE HOTEL, 1000 East Street, CA 94110 • Tel. 1-(800)-000-0000



Stay and relax in one of our deluxe guestrooms located in the heart of the city's arts district. Each room features a king bed, a desk and hotel stationary, two easy chairs, a mini-bar, and a deluxe bathroom with whirlpool bath and rainfall shower with multiple settings.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ACCOMMODATIONS](#)

STATISTICAL REVIEWS AT A GLANCE

FROM  tripadvisor®

The overall rating is Average

Service ★★ out of 5

Room cleanliness ★★★★★ out of 5

Sleep quality ★★★ out of 5

Service ★★★★★ out of 5

Room cleanliness ★★ out of 5

[SEE ALL REVIEWS](#)

TripAdvisor

TWITTER

FACEBOOK

Dependent Variable Measures

Transportation Experience (7-point scale, 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)

Based on the situation described earlier, we would like to know your Overall Experiences. Please indicate how you agree with each statement.

1. I felt caught up in the hotel description.
2. Reading the hotel description was relaxing.
3. My mind was only on the hotel description and not on other things.
4. The hotel description improved my mood, made me feel happier.
5. I lost myself in the content of the hotel description while reading it.
6. I thought the hotel description was entertaining.
7. The hotel description captured my attention.

Brand Experience (7-point scale, 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)

Based on the situation described earlier, we would like to know your Overall Brand Experiences. Please indicate how you agree with each statement.

1. This hotel website made a strong impression on my senses.
2. This hotel website was interesting in a sensory way.
3. This hotel website appealed to my senses.
4. This hotel website induced my feelings.
5. I had strong emotions for this hotel website.
6. This hotel website generated emotional experiences.
7. I engaged in physical behaviors when I looked at this hotel website.
8. This hotel website encouraged me to book a hotel room.
9. I engaged a lot of thinking when I looked at this hotel website.
10. This hotel website made me think.
11. This hotel website stimulated my curiosity.
12. This hotel website gave me rich experiences of the hotel.

Anticipated Emotion

Based on the situation described earlier, this section asks you about your emotional responses. If I stay in this hotel, I would be

Angry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	excited
Disappointed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	glad
Dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	satisfied
Unhappy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	happy

Trust & Behavioral Intention (7-point scale, 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)

Based on the situation described earlier, this section asks you about your behavioral responses. Please indicate how you agree with each statement.

1. I trust this hotel.
2. This hotel seems like a reliable place to stay.
3. I rely on this hotel because it has good intentions to care for its customers.
4. Please select "Neither Agree nor Disagree" in order to continue with the survey.
5. This hotel shows genuine interests in customer service.
6. I intend to visit this hotel.
7. I would like to book this hotel in the future.
8. I would like to stay this hotel in the future.

Hotel Booking Experiences

1. Which website do you prefer to use to book a hotel room?

- ☐ Hotel's own website
- ☐ Travel website (i.e., Expedia.com)
- ☐ Opaque website (i.e., Priceline.com)
- ☐ Others _____

2. What is your main reason for browsing your preferable website?

- ☐ To save time
- ☐ To save money
- ☐ For convenience
- ☐ To obtain updated information
- ☐ To review previous guests' experiences
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

3. Do you belong to any hotel loyalty programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3-1. Have you used loyalty rewards when staying at a hotel?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3-2. Please check the loyalty program(s) you belong to.

- ☐ Hilton HHonors
- ☐ Marriott Rewards
- ☐ Choice Privileges
- ☐ Intercontinental Priority Club
- ☐ Best Western Rewards
- ☐ Wyndham Rewards
- ☐ Starwood Preferred Guest
- ☐ Carlson Gold Points Plus
- ☐ Hyatt Gold Passport
- ☐ Fairmont Presidents' Club
- ☐ Omni Select
- ☐ Accor Hotels A-Club
- ☐ Loews You First

3-3. Overall, how important is it that you belong to a loyalty rewards program when you choose a hotel?

- ☐ Not at all Important
- ☐ Very Unimportant
- ☐ Somewhat Unimportant
- ☐ Neither Important nor Unimportant
- ☐ Somewhat Important
- ☐ Very Important
- ☐ Extremely Important

Demographics

1. Your gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. What year were you born? _____

3. Your highest level of education:

- ☐ High school or below
- ☐ Associate degree
- ☐ Bachelor degree
- ☐ Graduate degree or higher

4. Your annual household income?

- ☐ Under \$25,000
- ☐ \$25,000 - \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 - \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 - \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 - \$124,999
- ☐ \$125,000 - \$149,999
- ☐ \$150,000 and above

5. The zip code or postal code of your current residence: _____

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