

**The Festival Gap: Comparing Organizers' Perceptions of Visitors to a Survey of
Visitors at the Carolina Renaissance Festival, 2005**

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty and Staff of the Department of Geography
East Carolina University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree
Master of the Arts in Geography

A Thesis
By
Justin A. Gross

July 2006

“The Festival Gap: Comparing Organizers’ Perceptions of Visitors to a Survey of Visitors at the Carolina Renaissance Festival, 2005.” Abstract. Justin A. Gross. July 2006.

In many cases, festival organizers simply “guess” at the characteristics and motivations of their visitors. The organization, planning and marketing of festivals can greatly benefit from an analysis of visitors. This particularly the case with specialty or niche type events such as Renaissance Festivals. Bridging the gap between festival organizers’ perceptions of visitors and the actual patterns in visitation is essential for marketing. This thesis seeks to explore what festival organizers really know about the characteristics and motivations of their visitors, using the Carolina Renaissance Festival in Huntersville North Carolina as a case study. Renaissance-themed festivals are a style of (cultural) heritage tourism festival that has been under analyzed in scholarly research. Interviews were conducted with the Carolina Renaissance Festival organizers and a survey was used to collect data from visitors. Using chi-square test and a t-test statistics, gaps were for various variables related to visitor demographics, motivation, the level of intensity of visit, and general opinions. Results indicate that organizers of the Carolina Renaissance Festival generally did well in estimating the demographic characteristics of visitors but did less well in predicting motivations.

**The Festival Gap: A Comparison between the Organizers Perceptions of their
Visitors and Surveyed Visitors at the Carolina Renaissance Festival, 2005**

By

Justin A. Gross

APPROVED BY:

DIRECTOR OF THESIS: _____
Dr. Derek Alderman

CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY: _____
Dr. Ronald Mitchelson

DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL: _____
Dr. Patrick Pellicane

Dedication

For Twiggles,
My Father, and Mother

Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes.
Art is knowing which ones to keep
~ Scott Adams

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest respect and gratitude to Dr. Derek Alderman, my thesis advisor and friend. He has provided countless amounts of time and energy towards the development of this project and towards assisting me in both my personal development and academic development over the six years I have known him. I have learned much from you, for that I am grateful.

Along with Dr. Alderman, my advisor, I would like to also thank my thesis committee members, Dr. Rebecca Torres (East Carolina University), Dr. Ronald Mitchelson, (East Carolina University) and Dr. Euan Hague (DePaul University) for all their assistance and guidance.

I would to send a special thank you to my research team: Benjamine Deck, Jeffrey Jessen, William “Bill” Suvak, and Maggie Robertson. Without all of you, I would not have been able to collect the (above expatiated) amount of visitor survey data in October 2005 at the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

This project would not have been possible without the assistance and permission from the organizers of the Carolina Renaissance Festival: Matt Siegel (Director of Marketing, Press, Sponsorship, & Promotions), Melissa Nagy (former Director of Marketing, Press, Sponsorship, & Promotions), and Jeffrey Siegel (Owner and Producer) and the others that assisted and participated in the organizer survey.

Without the emotional support of my friends I might have given up a long time ago. I would to especially like to thank: Jana Colgin, Jilliane Conley, Miranda Morton, and all the graduate students in the geography department from 2004-2006. Thank you all.

Lastly, and certainly not least, I would like to express the highest amount of gratitude, respect, love, and support to my parents. Both of you have help me so much with the all love and support you have shown me. You kept pushing my potential to see what would happen. Well, there is still tons of potential, and this step is complete. I love you both very much, thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Tables.....	ix
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Purpose of Study.....	4
Significance of the Study.....	4
Background Information.....	5
Study Site.....	5
Rationale for the Selection of Study Site.....	6
Pilot Studies.....	8
Researcher's Pre-Research Knowledge.....	9
Research Questions.....	10
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	13
Importance of Festivals.....	13
Importance of Visitor Analysis.....	14
"Bridging the Gap".....	16
Heritage Festivals.....	20
General Types of Heritage Festivals.....	21
Scottish Festivals, Highland Games, and Celtic Identity.....	22
Renaissance Festival.....	24
CHAPTER III: THE ORGANIZERS.....	28
Organizer Profile.....	28
Interviews.....	29
Organizers' Interviews.....	30
Organizers' Perception of Results.....	31
Visitor Origins.....	31
Demographics.....	31
Heritage.....	33
Education.....	33
Gender.....	35
Age.....	35

Intensity of Visit.....	35
Frequency.....	37
Interaction with Actors	37
Repeat Visitation	38
Visits to other Renaissance Festival.....	39
The Purchase of a Souvenir.....	39
Time Spent at the Festival.....	39
Group.....	40
Motivations.....	40
Family Togetherness.....	41
History / Education.....	43
Crafts / Shopping.....	43
Experiencing the Time Period.....	44
A Break from the Routine.....	44
Food.....	47
Socializing.....	47
Links to Your Heritage.....	49
Just something to do.....	49
Stage show Performances.....	50
Joust.....	51
Dressing-up in Costumes/Garb.....	53
Romanticism / Chivalry.....	55
Opinions.....	56
Advertisement.....	56
The Program.....	57
ATM on the Grounds.....	59
Presence of Accents from Actors.....	59
Presence of Celtic Culture.....	60
CHAPTER IV: THE VISITORS.....	61
Survey.....	61
Research Team and Sampling.....	62
Data Input.....	63
Results.....	65
Visitor Origins.....	65
Demographics.....	68
Heritage.....	68
Education.....	72
Gender.....	73
Age.....	73
Intensity of Visit.....	74
Frequency.....	74
Interaction with Actors	74
Repeat Visitation	74

Visits to other Renaissance Festival.....	76
The Purchase of a Souvenir.....	76
Time Spent at the Festival.....	78
Group.....	78
Motivations.....	78
Family Togetherness.....	79
History / Education.....	79
Crafts / Shopping.....	79
Experiencing the Time Period.....	81
A Break from the Routine.....	81
Food.....	81
Socializing.....	82
Links to Your Heritage.....	82
Just something to do.....	82
Stage show Performances.....	83
Joust.....	83
Dress-up in Costumes/Garb.....	84
Romanticism / Chivalry.....	84
Opinions.....	85
Advertisement.....	85
The Program.....	85
ATM on the Grounds.....	87
Presence of Accents from Actors.....	88
Presence of Celtic Culture.....	88
CHAPTER V: THE GAP.....	89
Quantifying the Gap.....	89
Identification of the Gap.....	90
Gap Results.....	91
Visitor Origins.....	91
Demographics.....	91
Heritage.....	91
Education.....	91
Gender.....	93
Age.....	93
Intensity of Visit.....	94
Frequency.....	94
Interaction with Actors	94
Repeat Visitation.....	94
Visits to other Renaissance Festival.....	96
The Purchase of a Souvenir.....	96
Time Spent at the Festival.....	97
Group size.....	97
Motivations.....	97

Family Togetherness.....	97
History / Education.....	99
Crafts / Shopping.....	99
Experiencing the Time Period.....	99
A Break from the Routine.....	100
Food.....	100
Socializing.....	100
Links to Your Heritage.....	100
Just something to do.....	101
Stage show Performances.....	101
Joust.....	101
Dress-up in Costumes/Garb.....	102
Romanticism / Chivalry.....	102
Opinions.....	102
Advertisement.....	103
The Program.....	103
ATM on the Grounds.....	105
Presence of Accents from Actors.....	105
Presence of Celtic Culture.....	105
CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION.....	106
Sample Bias.....	107
Implications of Study for the Carolina Renaissance Festival.....	107
Implications of Study for Festival Research.....	109
Concluding Remarks and Reflection.....	111
REFERENCES.....	114
APPENDIX A: CAROLINA REANISSANCE FESTIVAL ORGANIZERS INTERVIEW.....	120
APPENDIX B: CAROLINA REANISSANCE FESTIVAL VISITOR SURVEY.....	124

List of Figures

Figure 1.	Renaissance Festival Attendance in the United States.....	3
Figure 2.	Geographical Reference for the Location of the Carolina Renaissance Festival.....	7
Figure.3.	Factors Influencing Destination Choice.....	17
Figure 4.	The National Capital Commission Adapted Festival Management Model.....	19
Figure 5.	The Starfire Booth.....	45
Figure 6.	An Example and a Jewelry Vendor.....	45
Figure 7.	Opportunity to Rent Costumes for the Day.....	46
Figure 8.	Food Stand at the Carolina Renaissance Festival.....	48
Figure 9.	Renaissance Festival Performer, Dextre Trip.....	52
Figure 10.	The Joust to the Death.....	52
Figure 11.	Visitors Attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival in garb.....	54
Figure 12.	An Example of a Non-traditional Costume Worn by Visitors.....	54
Figure 13.	Map of Carolina Renaissance Festival Visitors Origins by Zip-code.....	69
Figure 14.	Distance Decay Graph of Festival Visitors' Origins.....	70

List of Tables

Table 1.	Sections of survey and list of data from each section.....	32
Table 2.	Festival Organizers' Estimates of Visitor Demographics.....	34
Table 3.	Festival Organizers' Estimates of Visitor Intensity.....	36
Table 4.	Festival Organizers' Estimates of Visitor Motivations.....	42
Table 5.	Questions and Estimations of the Festival Organizers for Visitors' Opinions.....	58
Table 6.	Count of Respondents per Visitor Survey Question.....	64
Table 7.	Variable Descriptions within visitor survey dataset.....	66
Table 8.	Top Ranking Origins Cities to the Carolina Renaissance Festival.....	67
Table 9.	Results of Survey of Carolina Renaissance Festival Visitors' Demographic Characteristics.....	71
Table 10.	Results of Survey of Carolina Renaissance Festival Visitor, Level of Visit Intensity	75
Table 11.	List of other Renaissance Festivals Attended by Surveyed Visitors.....	77
Table 12.	Results of Survey of Carolina Renaissance Festival Visitors, Level of Importance of Motivational Factors.....	80
Table 13.	Results of Survey of Carolina Renaissance Festival Visitors, Opinions and the Level of Importance of Conveniences.....	86
Table 14.	Identification of an Organizer vs. Visitor Gap for Demographics Variables.....	92
Table 15.	Identification of an Organizer vs. Visitor Gap for Intensity of Visit Variables.....	95

Table 16.	Identification of an Organizer vs. Visitor Gap for Visitors' Motivational Factors	98
Table 17.	Identification of an Organizer vs. Visitor gap for Visitors' Opinions	104
Table 18.	Visitor versus Organizer ranking for motivations.....	110

Chapter I: Introduction

Festivals are a type of celebration (Walterman, 1998) of life (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998) and cultural expression (Jamieson, 2004) that range from food festivals to the affirmation of certain cultural identities, rituals, or heritage(s) (Kim 2004). Festivals are events that require extensive preparation and planning given the potentially important economic benefit for hosting communities and participating companies. However, to ensure the success of a festival, organizers have to properly identify and market to audiences/visitors. Indeed, many marketers and organizers do not know how to properly promote their festivals. In contrast, academic studies have emphasized the “idea of selling places” (Ashworth and Goodall 1990), “geographical marketing” (Ashwood and Voogd 1987), and taking advantage of geo-demographic marketing (see Baker 1991; Goss 1995) which emphasizes importance of knowing where consumers are from, who they are, and what they desire.

It can be assumed that most (especially local) festival organizers cannot afford to hire a research team to conduct surveys of visitors/attendees in order to determine the festival’s “average visitor” or a general lead demographic or particular market segment. Therefore, it is quite possible that festival organizers “guess” who their attendees are or assume that people will simply consume what is produced. Arguably, there is a “gap” between what organizers perceive about the nature of festival visitors and the actual characteristics of attendees. Successful event planners and festival managers need to bridge the gap between their mindsets and the characteristics of true visitors as

documented through applied research. However, it can be also argued that after being in the business for so long, organizers may already have a feel for their market niche and what attracts visitors. My thesis seeks to explore what festival organizers really know about the characteristics and motivations of their visitors, using a southern Renaissance festival as a case study.

Within the universe of festivals, there are many different styles or themes. However, “Renaissance themed festivals are thriving in North America and the number of such carnivalesque festivals has rapidly increased” (Kim 2004, 3). Moreover, Renaissance themed festivals are a style of heritage tourism festivals that has been under analyzed in scholarly research. Renaissance festivals take place in nearly all of the fifty U.S. states, surpass 175 in number and attract over six millions visitors annually (Figure 1). The popularity of these festivals is curious, as McCannell (1976, 77) notes, because “[m]odern culture stands in sharp contrast to that of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.” Yet, it is perhaps this distinction or break from the ordinary that attracts large numbers of visitors. Given their popularity, Renaissance festivals have gained national sponsorship and sponsorship from major corporations.

There have been few studies of Renaissance festivals visitors. Kim (2004) has examined “serious leisure participation” at Renaissance festivals (as described by Stebbins (1992; 2001a; 2001b) at the Texas Renaissance Festival). However, serious participation pertains more to a “sub-culture” within the larger picture of visitors to Renaissance festivals and they represent only a small percentage of the total attendance to

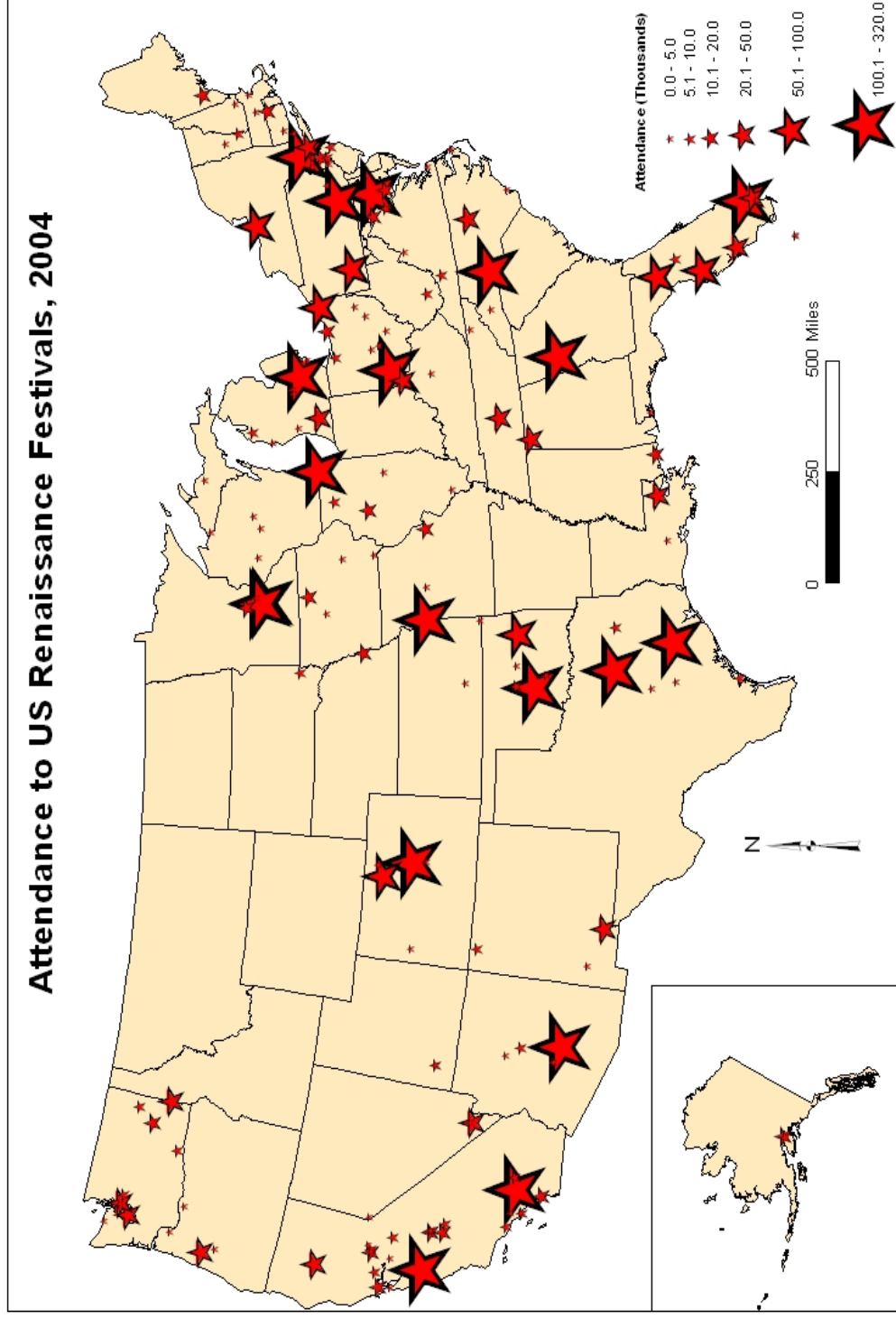


Figure 1. Renaissance Festival Attendance in the US, as of October 2004.

these festivals. The organization, planning and marketing of Renaissance festivals can greatly benefit from a broader analysis of visitors to these festivals.

Purpose of Study

Using the Carolina Renaissance Festival as a case study, the purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions that organizers hold about the characteristics and motivations of their visitors, compare these perceptions to a sample of people attending the festival, and identify to what extent a “gap” exists between the two. The overall intent is to increase understanding of the importance of applied geographical research of festivals.

By focusing on festival-goers (both their perceived and actual characteristics), the study seeks to advance a general understanding of the demographics, motivations, intensity, or as Kim (2004) notes the seriousness, of their visit, as well as visitors’ opinions of the festival. It also seeks to provide insight into how a group of Renaissance festival producers and organizers view this rapidly growing, yet grossly neglected form of heritage tourism. More broadly, this study adds to the literature on festivals and, to the almost non-existent literature on Renaissance festivals (exceptions include Kim 2004; Moore 1997; and O’Brien 1987).

Significance of the Study

This study seeks to uncover how well Renaissance festivals organizers know their visitors on several different levels, making a significant contribution to understanding one

of the most fundamental questions within tourism, festival, and marketing research—why visitors attend festivals? This study compliments but also contributes to the marketing and theoretical contributions made by Kim (2004). As Kim (2004, 5-6) notes, “[f]rom a marketing standpoint, this study can offer festival operators an insightful look at the functioning of Renaissance themed festivals. Understanding consumers (visitors) is an essential ingredient for festival managers to develop an effective marketing strategy.” However, this study offers a slightly broader look at visitors and a slightly closer look at the producer-consumer relationship and whether a significant gap exists between them and consumer. Theoretically, this study parallels Kim’s (2004) contributions to the existing academic knowledge. However, it might have greater weight within festival management and marketing circles.

Background Information

Before identifying the thesis’ main research questions, it is necessary to provide some essential background on the: (1) research study site; (2) rationale for the selection of study site; (3) pilot studies (conducted before this study); and (4) the researcher’s pre-research knowledge.

Study Site

The location of the thesis research was the Carolina Renaissance Festival. The Carolina Renaissance Festival is held annually in Huntersville, North Carolina. Huntersville is part of the Charlotte-metropolitan area located in the northern tip of

Mecklenburg County (Figure 2). Huntersville is approximately 15 miles north of Charlotte.

Established in 1994 the Carolina Renaissance Festival has increased in popularity every year and has undergone significant expansion. Annually, the festival attracts approximately 130,000 visitors over a seven-weekend period (from the start of October until mid-November). The festival has become a state and regional attraction. As far as attendance, the Carolina Renaissance Festival is the largest of four Renaissance themed festivals held in the state of North Carolina. It is the second largest Renaissance themed festival in the Southeast, the largest being in Atlanta, Georgia. The Carolina Renaissance Festival is the 16th largest in the nation according to www.faries.com. This standing suggests that Carolina Renaissance Festival is an important attraction in the Charlotte-metro area as well as being noteworthy at statewide, regional, and national levels.

Rationale for the Selection of Study Site

The Carolina Renaissance Festival has many important qualities that make it an ideal candidate for this research. First and most importantly, I had better access to this particular festival compared to other festivals in terms of geographical distance.

Additionally, several preparatory visits had been made to the festival since the year of its establishment in 1994. However, it was not until the Carolina Renaissance Festival's 2003 season that these visits became more research-oriented. The 2003 visit would provide one of two pilot studies with the other being in 2004 that would develop into the current study. Through these pre-study visits, I established an on-going contact and

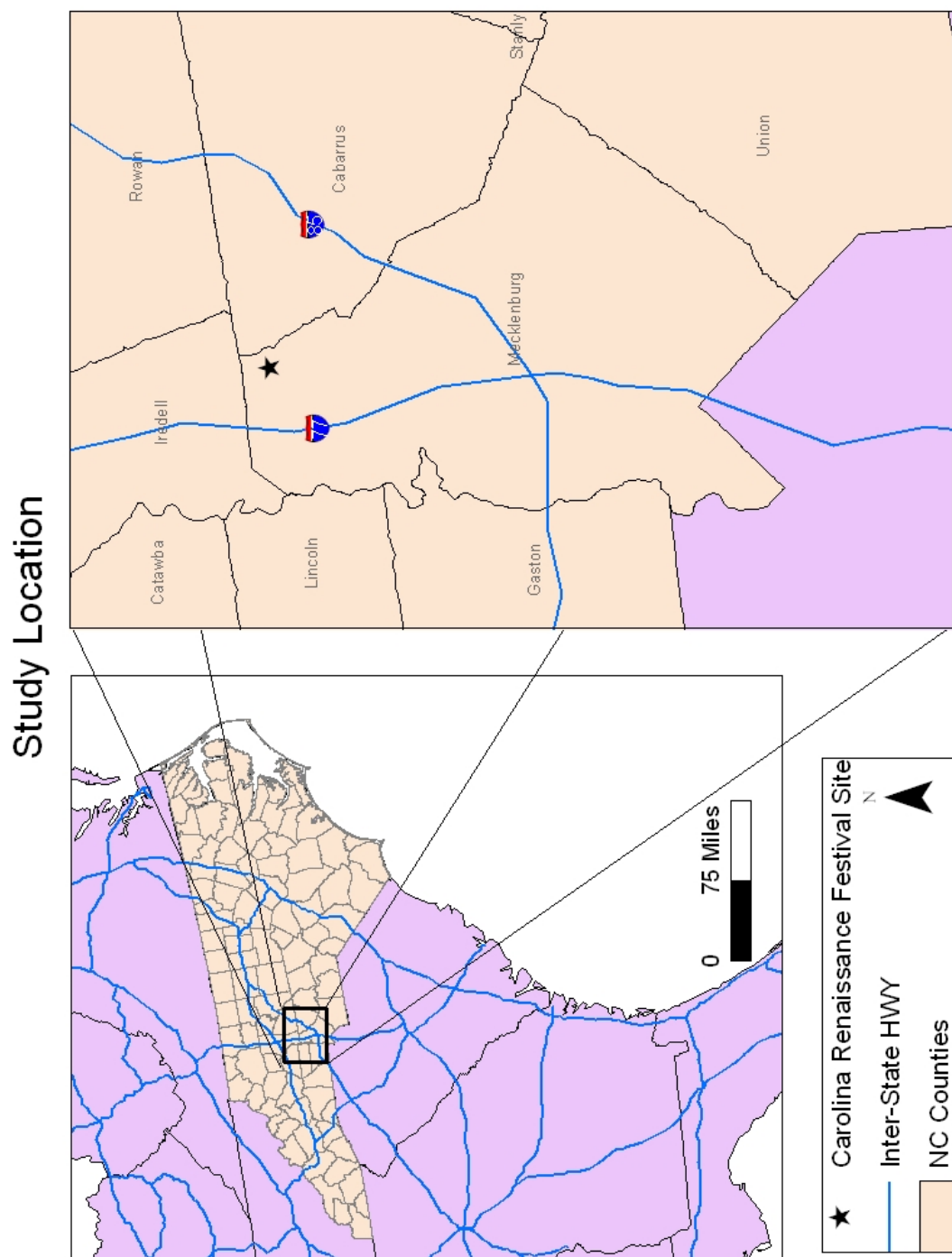


Figure 2. Geographical Reference for the Location of the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

rapprochement with the marketing director of the festival. At the time the marketing director was the primary “gatekeeper” (Cook 1997, 132) who later approved the study and also offered background information about the festival participants and visitors.

Secondly, due to its proximity to the Charlotte metropolitan area, the Carolina Renaissance Festival provided the greatest prospective sampling of a particular population for visitors (some of which were involved in serious leisure (Kim, 2004)) and greater accessibility for visitors to the festival. The geographical placement of the Carolina Renaissance festival led to high features of this phenomenon to be incorporated into the study. This rich exploration of a variety of events and people was a key element for selecting the study site (Kim, 2004).

Pilot Studies

Two pilot studies were conducted prior to the main study. These two studies were conducted at the Carolina Renaissance Festival during the 2003 and 2004 seasons, during the second weekend of October for both years. The 2003 study was not originally planned as a pilot study while the 2004 study was carried out explicitly as a pilot. Both were greatly beneficial in the research and development stage of the current study, but were merely exploratory to form a more concerted idea of the pathway along which to take the research.

While the current study is a comparison between the perceptions that organizers hold about the characteristics and motivations of their visitors and the actual characteristics of surveyed visitors; the pilot studies investigated the characteristics of

visitors. The pilot studies were also helpful in investigating and selecting appropriate research methods. The investigator explored the readability of the survey from the visitors' view point, as well as, the need for such a study from an applied research stand point. As one will learn in subsequent chapters, these pilot studies greatly influenced the molding of the current study during the 2005 season. In addition to the above reason, these pilot studies also assisted in creating a professional and trusting relationship between festival organizers and I that allowed for a more extensive study than the pilot studies.

In addition to 2003 and 2004 pilot studies at the Carolina Renaissance Festival, a smaller, side study was conducted at the Arizona Renaissance festival (held in Apache Junction, AZ) in March 2005. The focus of that study was to conduct a few interviews with stage performers (sometimes referred to as "Rennies"). These interviews were semi-structured; asking rennies about their experiences at Renaissance themed festivals as well as their perceptions as to what draws visitors to attend these festivals. While the results of that study are not completely relevant here, they did inform the development of the final visitor survey used in the current study.

Researcher's Pre-research Knowledge

"[T]he researcher is the instrument of the data collection and so, reflexivity, his or her relationship to the object of study is of paramount importance" (Kim 2004, 63).

This is the case with the current study. Since the establishment of the Carolina Renaissance Festival, the researcher has attended the festival on an annual basis. During

some years, the researcher participated as a costumed actor/character. This experience has added to the knowledge of the “rennie” sub-culture that Moore (1997) and Kim (2004) describe at Renaissance festivals. In addition to these experiences, the researcher has personal relationships with many of the people involved and/or working at the CRF. Some of these relationships are through friends or family members. Some of these friendships were extremely helpful in facilitating interviews for the smaller pilot study at the Arizona Renaissance festival. These experiences increased the researcher’s interest leading up to the current study for the 2005 season.

Research Questions

The general research questions that guide this study have emerged from my personal and research experiences with Renaissance festivals, plus a comprehensive review of related literature. Initially, two elements had to be established: first, a transition from my previous pilot studies of Renaissance festivals into a full thesis; second, a determination of what Renaissance festival related research/literature had already been conducted and where significant voids of knowledge existed. In the case of the first, interviews with the festival’s marketing director assisted me in better understanding the important role that marketing plays in the festivals, lack of visitor interaction that organizers had, and the need for a client based research project. In the case of the second issue, subsequent research found Kim’s study (2004) to be a key piece of literature. Other festival researchers had conducted visitor studies, but none linked visitors to the perception of organizers.

There are three broad research questions (with sub-questions) that guide this thesis:

1. Based on interviews with Carolina Renaissance Festival organizers, what are their perceptions of visitors?
 - a. What are the perceived demographic, social and geographic characteristics of visitors?
 - b. What is the perceived intensity or seriousness (Kim, 2004) of festival visits?
 - c. What are the perceived motivations of festival visitors and which are most important, according to the organizers?
 - d. What are perceived visitors' opinions of various aspects of the festival?
2. Based on a survey of visitors, to the Carolina Renaissance Festival, what are visitors actually like?
 - a. What are the actual demographic, social and geographic characteristics of visitors?
 - b. What is the actual intensity or seriousness (Kim, 2004) of festival visits?
 - c. What are the characteristics of festival visitors and which are most important, according to the survey?
 - d. What are visitors' opinions of various aspects of the festival?

3. What relationship (if any) can be found between perceptions of organizers and collected data on visitors?
 - a. Does a gap exist between questions 1 and 2?
 - b. If a gap exists, to how large is it and what is its nature?

These research questions are investigated in the following chapters which consist of a comprehensive literature review (Chapter II), interviews with organizers (Chapter III), survey of visitors (Chapter IV), identification of gap (Chapter V), along with conclusions and implications (Chapter VI).

Chapter II: Literature Review

In this chapter, I will review related literature on festivals, focusing on the importance of festivals, the importance of visitor analysis, and the notion of bridging the possible gap. Bridging the gap is conceptualized as a means of making visitor analysis sensitive to the perceptions of festival organizers which are often neglected in festival studies. I then discuss heritage festivals, including the general types of heritage festivals, Scottish festivals and Highland Games along with Celtic identity, and Renaissance festivals. Renaissance festivals represent a unique festival type that has received very limited analysis until now.

Importance of Festivals

Festivals have become important “cultural commodities” with contemporary society (Waltermann, 1998). This idea is affirmed by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), when it reported:

Festivals and Fairs are popular ways for travelers to experience new and interesting cultures. Four in ten (41%) U.S. adult travelers attended a festival and/or fair during a trip in the past year. This translates to an estimated 59.5 million U.S. adults. Specifically, one in five (20%) past-year travelers (28.9 million adults) say they attended a heritage, ethnic, or folk festival or fair. About one third (31%) of past-year travelers (45.8 million adults) attended another type of festival or fair, such as a state or county fair or arts and crafts fair.

Empirical studies of festivals, within the context of tourism, have focused on topics such as the motivations of visitors attending festivals (i.e. Crompton and McKay, 1997; Mohr, et al., 1993; Kim, Uysal, and Chen, 2002), community sense of place as

connected with festivals (Derrett, 2003), the cultural politics of visitors (Walterman, 1998), satisfaction (Lee, Lee, and Wicks, 2004) as well as other topics related to tourism aspects of festivals.

Festivals are, in most cases, encouraged by local communities because they bring people together and they bring tourists and the tourist dollars to local businesses. Conducting analyses of visitors and their characteristics and motivations is important, although many organizers do not collect visitor-based data and often base their decisions without the luxury of such data.

Importance of Visitor Analysis

As Pearce (1987: 1) states “[t]ourism is essentially about people and places.” As MacCannel (1976: 5) notes “[b]y following the tourists, we may be able to arrive at a superficial view of the things that interest them [...] Tourists are purveyors of modern values the world over [...] And modern tourists share with social scientists their curiosity.” Festival-going is a form of tourism. Festivals allow people to experience new and/or old places, sometimes in their own community.

Festival-going is an increasingly popular activity, whether people are interested in the food (turkey legs, funnel cakes, or corn dogs), the people (friends or carnies), the petting zoo, the stage shows, the rides, or just the festival atmosphere. While these aspects of entertainment are important, festival studies should not be limited to these. It is important for social and cultural scientists to study cultural festivals since they “are a

phenomenon in a real-life context that can be examined in a descriptive manner (Derrett, 2003: 50).”

The reasoning behind why people attend festivals varies, yet the decision to visit a festival is essentially “a decision to visit a festival is a directed action which is triggered by a desire to meet a need” (Crompton and McKay, 1997: 425) or “a combination of needs and desires, [that] affect the propensity to travel in a general sense” (O’Leary and Deegan, 2005: 247). Identifying and monitoring these motivations is at the heart a festival’s sustainability, and a study of visitor motivations can be a complex task.

Lee, Lee, and Wicks (2003) have synthesized several studies on festival motivations conducted from 1993 to 2000. According to them, the most common motivations for visitors to attend festivals are:

- escapism (Uysal, et al., 1993; Mohr, et al., 1993; Scott, 1996; Schneider and Backman, 1996; Lee, 2000);
- family togetherness (Uysal, et al., 1993; Mohr et al., 1993; Scott, 1996; Formica and Uysal, 1996; Schneider and Backman, 1996; Formica and Uysal, 1998; Lee, 2000);
- socializing (Lee and Crompton, 1992; Uysal, et al., 1993; Mohr, et al., 1993; Scott, 1996; Formica and Uysal, 1996; Schneider and Backman, 1996; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Formica and Uysal, 1998; Lee, 2000); and
- novelty (Uysal, et al., 1993; Mohr, et al., 1993; Formica and Uysal, 1996; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Lee, 2000).

Although these are the most common motivations, there are certainly other important factors during festival visitation. For example, Fesenmaier et al. (2006: 9) note that:

the literature discussing the three general forms of travel destination choice models indicates that the variables used to explain and predict one's destination choice can be classified into two broad categories: 1) personal and 2) travel personal characteristics encompass socioeconomic characteristics as well as one's psychological/cognitive traits. Travel characteristics include situational factors that make the travel distinguishable from other travel.

Figure three summarizes the above assertion graphically.

“Bridging the Gap”

As argued by Kim, Uysal, and Chen, (2002: 128) “it is essential to generate more specific information about festival and special events that may be of help to destination promoters, event managers, and organizers. Festival and special events also serve as important attractors for destinations and provide unique experiences for attendees.” In many cases, festival organizers simply “guess” why visitors attend their events. However, Kim, Uysal, and Chen (2002: 127) point out that organizers are highly interested in knowing “more accurate information about the gap or incongruity that may exist between their perceptions of the importance of festival motivations and those of attendees’ perceived motivations.” Moreover, they believe that bridging this gap will “improve the operation, profitability and the social objectives of (special) festivals.” This suggests, consequently, that organizers would benefit from having a clearer empirical picture of who attends their festivals and why.

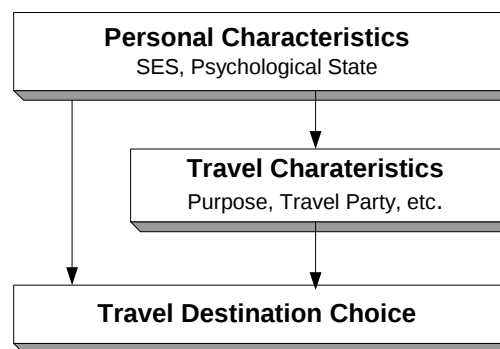


Figure.3. Factors influencing Destination Choice (from Fesenmaier, et al., 2006)

Gaps have been suggested to exist between academics and politicians (Goodale, 1991), “empirical research and pedagogical practice” among school personnel (Hallinan, 1991), in business/management’s cultural assessments (Burton, 2000), intercultural / international touristic encounters (Richardson, 1996), destination locality and market segmentation (Lee, 2001) and others.

If this is the case, then what do practitioners do? Individual companies comprised of independent researchers conduct studies with value in the “real world” of applied importance as well as the theoretical or academic realm. This research is highly competitive among “information” industries. As Goodale (1991: 172) notes, “[t]here is competition in the marketplace of ideas, so there are competing hypotheses about phenomena and relationships, especially those dealing with social phenomena.” He continues to suggest that to truly “bridge the gap” between the two, we need to become more involved in the process in order to take action, rather than take a “sideline” approach to research (Goodale, 1991).

Robinson and Noël (1991) discuss the need for festival research. They point out a festival management model (Figure 4) that is virtually unknown to festival managers and organizers. Indeed, festival managers and organizers use parts of this model, yet rarely as a whole – usually leaving out specific targeted market segments and evaluation. Most managers and organizers have a desire to reach as broad a market as possible to increase their level of profitability. Therefore, spending valuable marketing money towards a targeted demographic or area seems of little consequence. Additionally, festival organizers tend to equate profitability with festival success. Yet, it is very possible that

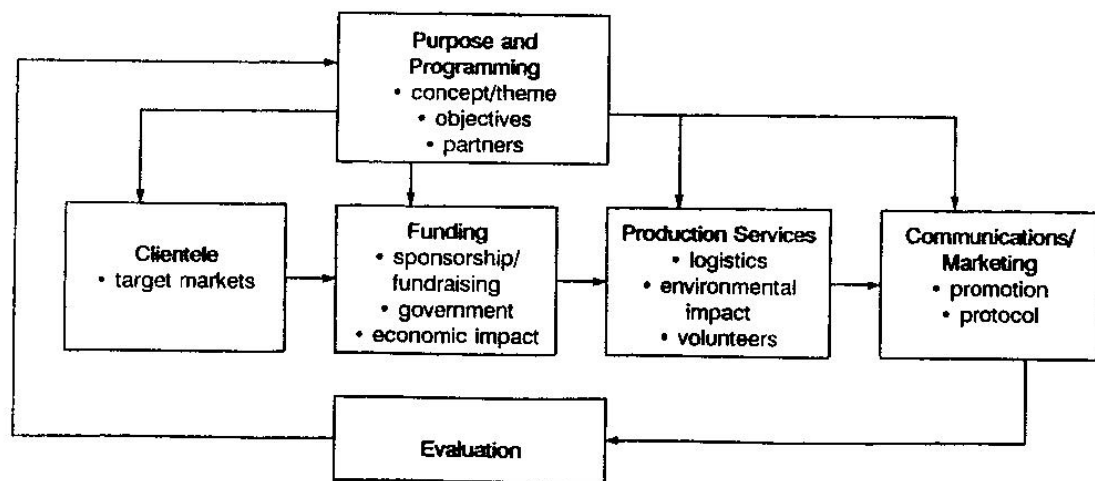


Figure 4. The National Capital Commission Adapted Festival Management Model (from Robinson and Noël, 1991).

knowing specific things about attendees could increase a festival's profitability as well (if not more) than a mere rolling of the dice to see what happens.

One of the only studies to consider both visitors' and management's perceptions is Zeithaml et al. (1990), who developed a model for identifying five gaps where quality of service construction might fail within an agency. Their five gaps are (1) the discrepancy between customers expectation and management's perceptions of their expectations, (2) the gap between management's perceptions of customers expectations and service quality specifications, (3) service quality specifications and service delivery, (4) service delivery and external communications to customers, and (5) the gap between what the customers expected and how they perceived the service. This model was used in Wicks and Fesenmaier's (1993) work. They applied the model to the Chautauqua of the Arts festival held in 1990 comparing visitors' and vendors' perceptions of service quality.

Heritage Festivals

Printer (2005: 9) defines heritage tourism as "travel that provides an authentic experience and communicates the lives, events, or accomplishments of past people." Richard Moe, President of the National Trust adds that, "[h]eritage tourism provides educational, entertaining experiences unrivaled by any other form of travel. It significantly impacts local economies and helps preserve historic places" (NTHP, 2000). Heritage tourism, as defined here, refers to travel that allows visitors to experience places, activities, and objects that offer a way of connecting with the past—whether it is for the purpose of nostalgia, creating a distinctive place or self identity, researching

family roots, or the general understanding of historical events and people (Jones and Alderman, 2003; Olsen and Timothy, 2002). As mentioned above, festivals are within this group of events defined as being apart of heritage tourism. Festivals, either community or state-wide, provide a sense of adventure to everyday life. Renaissance festivals are an increasingly popular yet under analyzed sub-type of heritage festival.

General Types of Heritage Festivals

Heritage festivals vary greatly and can include gatherings like:

- the 1825-40 fur trade rendezvous (Belk and Coasta, 1998),
- Scottish festivals and Highland Games (Hague, 2001; Lothian, 2001; Chhabra, Sills, and Rea, 2002; Chhabra, Healy, and Sills, 2003; Prentice and Anderson, 2003; Jamieson, 2004),
- urban festivals in New Orleans (Gotham, 2005),
- arts festivals (Wicks and Fesenmaier, 1993; Waterman, 1998),
- the Freedom Weekend Aloft hot air balloon festival (Mohr, Backman, Gahan, & Backman, 1993),
- Fiesta San Antonio (ethnic) (Crompton & MacKay, 1997),
- World Cultural Expo (Lee, Lee, and Wicks, 2004),
- music festivals (Formica, and Uysal, 1996 and 1998; Saleh and Ryan, 1993), and
- the birding festival (Kim, et al., 1998).

Heritage festivals are often strongly aligned with constructing and promoting a sense of ethnic identity. Coggeshall (1993) describes a typical ethnic festival as rows of booths, uniquely savory foods for families, and an ambience of folks of all ages, some in costumes, enjoying performances from dancers and other entertainers on the weekend.

Festivals are subtly underlined as an ethnic festival because of the strong Celtic identity. As Turner (1969: 94-111) notes,

festivals express a group's identity as the community offers to an often enthusiastically appreciative audience various elements of its culture in a patently obvious manner... Ultimately, festivals as rituals not only present or manipulate symbols but they also change their participants as well. By rearranging space, time, and cultural symbols, festivals create a liminal period (quoted in Coggeshall, 1993: 36-37).

Turner's (1969) emphasis on ritual has also been applied in Kim's (2004) work at the Texas Renaissance Festival.

Scottish festivals, Highland Games, and Celtic Identity

Scottish festivals and Highland games are arguably the most popular forms of ethnic heritage festivals. Scottish festivals and Highland Games are possibly the easiest to find. Hague (2001) found just over two hundred of these gatherings in the United States in 2000. The increase in Scottish identity and "popularity of Scotland [has grown so much] in the United States that in 1998 the Senate declared 6 April to be annually celebrated as 'National Tartan Day'" (Hague, 2001; Congressional Record: Senate, 1998; Linklater, 1998).

Highland Games are produced and staged for tourist consumption (Lathain, 2001). "Festival visitors are knowingly inscribed into the festival gaze as they look and are looked at in the orchestrated chaos" of the festival (Jamieson, 2004: 70). Even though

they are staged, Highland Games are a powerful and intensified ritual through which people can proclaim their identity and fashion a sense of purpose (MacRae, 2001). In the case of Scottish festivals and Highland games, there is a strong construction of Celtic identity.

Another interesting facet of Celtic cultural identity, among Scots in particular, is language. Popular culture has helped with this growing interest, with the popularity of music found in *Riverdance* and songs sung in Gaelic. Gaelic and other Celtic language, dialects, and accents are very attractive to some Americans. These can be found at Scottish festivals, Highland Games, and Renaissance festivals. This “[s]hared culture, and especially shared language are particularity important here” (MacDonald, 1999: 105). These gatherings might have also contributed to the “Gaelic Renaissance and Scotland’s Identities” (MacDonald, 1999).

Identity is complicated to measure (Burke and Tully, 1977) but some events suggest a connection between identity and role performance (Burke and Reitzes, 1981). In Scottish festivals and/or Highland Games, one sees a strong connection between Celtic identity and the festival activities. These events “offer opportunities to explore different identities, to take on ‘new role’” (Edensor, 2001: 60), to assume a Celtic identity by means of Highland Heritage an instance of “multiculturalism” (Ray, 2001) for these populations. The ‘Celtic Phenomenon’ has certainly entered modern pop culture for all to see” (Schmidt, 2004: 1).

Visitors to these festivals and events become, in part, spectators. Many of these spectators look towards Celtic identity and this can be for the Celtic and the non-Celtic

alike. “As soon as an individual gets past the first stage of Celtic, interest and wants to dig a bit deeper – a whole host of cultural artifacts (like the Celtic languages) and romantic imagery from this earlier renaissance emerge” (Schmidt, 2004: 4). As McCarthy and Hague (2004) note, Celtic identity is powerful identity to claim. The secret for Celtic identity is not confined to Scottish festivals or Highland Games but is responsible, in part, for the growing popularity of Renaissance festivals.

Renaissance Festival

One of the most popular yet under-analyzed heritage festival types are Renaissance (themed) festivals. The origin of the “modern” Renaissance festival in the United States, according to enthusiasts, was in 1963 in Hollywood, California (Norton and Rabe, 2005). However, it was not until the late 1980s that scholarly studies of Renaissance festivals emerged. Some of these studies have covered such topics as: video marketing of festivals (O’Brien, 1987), the performers and actors involved in festivals (Moore, 1997), and the role of authenticity, ritual, and serious leisure in festivals (Kim, 2004). Because of these many attributes, Renaissance festivals have been described as “a whole world in themselves worthy of guidebooks of their own (Taylor, 2000: xi).”

Although a form of entertainment like all festivals, Renaissance festivals are unique cultural celebrations. As one group of Renaissance festival performers pointed out, “it’s not just recreation, it’s about re-creation (SCA, 2005).” Renaissance festivals are exactly that – a form of historical re-creation or reenactment and entertainment in which vendors, performers, and many participants dress in period costumes and speak in

an Elizabethan dialect. Anderson (2005: 40) asserts that Renaissance festivals are a form of “Elizabethan micro-performances.” These festivals generally take place throughout the year (February to November, in particular) in the USA, however, as Norton and Rabe (2005: 2) state, “historically, the faire in Elizabethan times were held to celebrate the beginning of spring. There were artisans; musicians, [... and] [f]armers brought their first crops to hawk. Not so different from what can be found now.”

“The [Renaissance festival or] Ren Faire is an informal outing, with folks wearing everything from medieval garb to the latest fashion trends offered by teen pop idols” (Stackpole, 2005: 125). Typical activities include stage shows, artisan and craft bazaars, jousting and medieval games, improvisational skits, and eating turkey legs. Although the settings for these festivals are in Elizabethan time, they are far from historically accurate or authentic (“Clan Tinker,” 2005; Colgin, 2005; and Kim, 2004). However, the festival organizers “do a good job of inaccurately displaying what was accurate about the Renaissance” (Colgin, 2005) and they show “more of an ideal of the Renaissance” creating “a fantasy Ren Faire” (“Tinker Clan,” 2005). The fantasy aspect of Renaissance festivals are designed to draw in a wider/broader demographic, to gain as many different demographics as possible. “They [(the organizers)] want to get the normal guys to come into the festival” (“Tinker Clan,” 2005). As suggested here, understanding the characteristics of visitors, the festival organizers can seek mainstream patronage.

At Renaissance festivals, visitors participate in the performance of public memory sometimes coming to festivals in period garb and becoming part of the stage shows (Moore, 1997). These performances at festivals allow visitors to contribute to their own

sense of historical identity. Renaissance festivals are as unique as carnivals, in that they too have an interesting sub-culture(s). As Colgin (2005) and Stackpole (2005) suggest, these sub-cultures can be classified into three groups: (1) Patrons, (2) Playtrons, and (3) Rennies. Patrons would be defined as the “casual visitor,” who may or may not attend annually and are dressed in “normal” street clothes. Playtrons (a compound word from player and patron) would be “hardcore” visitors or as Kim (2004) describes “serious leisurers” of Renaissance festivals. These playtrons as defined by both Colgin (2005) and Kim (2004) are visitors who dress up in Elizabethan costumes or garb, often creating characters of their own and playing along with the employees of the festival. However, they are not employees of the Renaissance festival. Rennies (or sometimes spelled Ren’ies (Kim, 2004)) are, defined by Colgin (2005: 1), as a person who “makes their livelihood on the road with the Renaissance festival.” They could be “a performer or someone who works in a [vendor] booth... working in any fashion at the faire and does it for a living and travels” the Renaissance Festival circuit around the country. Kim (2004) and Moore (1997) provide more detail regarding some of the facets of Renaissance Festival sub-culture(s).

Many of the large (corporate) Renaissance festivals attract national sponsorship for items such as providing “free parking.” However, most of the sponsorship money goes toward advertising the festival by means of multi-media applications. For example, The Carolina Renaissance Festival has attracted national sponsorship from major corporations such as Harris Teeter and Pepsi Cola. Without these corporate sponsors, these festivals would most likely to fail (Getz, 2002). The participation of sponsors’

points to yet another reason for organizers to better understand visitors since sponsors often want to know whether the festival's market population/area matches their own.

Chapter III: The Organizers

This chapter will discuss methodology and results of data collection as related to the organizers of the Carolina Renaissance Festival. The primary propose for this chapter is to document how the festival's organizers perceive their visitors, which will then serve as a point of comparison with actual visitor data. Meeting with the festival organizers was also essential for gaining vital background information on the festival. This Chapter is organized into three major parts: (1) background interviews with festival organizers; (2) a formal interview of organizers' perceptions of the characteristics and motivations of visitors; and (3) the results of the organizers interview.

Organizer Profile

The Carolina Renaissance Festival is a corporate festival, whereas other festivals are more local/community festivals. As a corporation, this festival is a business. This business is a delicate balance between creativity and profit. However, the general philosophy, from my perspective, is focused on the latter. This focus led to a passive resistance toward this study and hence not as helpful as this researcher would like. This project was delegated to the marketing director by the head organizer of the festival. I was not given full access to all the organizers, which was an important restriction for this study.

The organizers of the Carolina Renaissance Festival are made up of a handful of people. These people are as follows: the marketing director, the entertainment director,

the director for crafts and special events, the food and beverage director, and the producer/owner of the festival. The marketing director was helpful in a limited capacity because not all the background inquiries were focused on the marketing aspect of the festival. Therefore, for these questions and the questionnaire, the marketing director discussed these with the other organizers to provide a set of parameters for this study instead of a dataset of interview responses from all the organizers.

Due in part to the location of the Carolina Renaissance Festival (just north of Charlotte, North Carolina), the timing of the festival (October through mid-November) as well as others, this festival has a very captive market/audience which led the organizers having passive resistance towards me and this study. This led to limited cooperation and limited in the level of assistance the organizers could have been.

Interviews

Informal interviews were conducted with the Carolina Renaissance Festival organizers (primarily the marketing director). Interviews started in September 2003 (for the first pilot study) and continued until February 2006. On January 28, 2005 the main interview was conducted, where organizers were asked to fill out the “Carolina Renaissance Festival Organizer interview” (Appendix A). Between September 2003 and February 2006, a professional client-based model was implemented to create a good working relationship.

These interviews meetings started in 2003 with the beginning of the pilot studies and concluded with the 2005 festival season in January of 2006. The first meetings were,

simply, to gain physical access and permission to the festival grounds for the research. Additional meetings and electronic mail (e-mail) correspondence were needed to establish times and dates for research activities. These meetings and correspondence proved useful in subsequent years to conduct additional pilot studies and the eventual thesis research. These meetings and emails provided the researcher with some essential data, such as information about the specific study site (i.e. size and growth of the festival, vendors and stage performers, as well as day-to-day operations of the Renaissance Festival). All of this data would later assist with establishing a professional, client-based relationship with the festival organizers in order to conduct the current study.

These interviews were conducted to gather information from the organizers about visitors as well as gather vital background information on the festival itself. Additionally, information was gathered about some the festival's marketing and promotion practices. During one interview, it was established that the festival organizers had done no previous formal research on their visitors. Informally, organizers have conducted only visual observations of their visitors.

Organizer's Interview

Building upon knowledge gained during the pilot studies conducted in 2003 and 2004, an Organizer's interview (See Appendix A) was constructed in order to collect data on how organizers perceived visitors to the Carolina Renaissance Festival. There are four sections for this interview, the sections are: visitor demographics, intensity of visit, motivations, and visitor opinions. Interview questions within in each section are

presented in Table 1. In answering these questions, organizers were asked to provide estimated percentages for their total visitors. These percentages would later be compared to surveyed visitors responses to identify possible gaps between the perceptions of organizers and visitors.

Organizers' perceptions of Results

Visitor origins

When the organizers were asked about the average distance that visitors traveled to attend the Carolina Renaissance Festival, they estimated that their visitors travel an average distance of 46 miles. If this is the case, then nearly all of the CRF visitors would be from the Charlotte-metro area. This area includes, but is not limited to the following counties in North Carolina: Alexander, Cabarrus, Catawba, Cleveland, Davie, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly, and Union Counties (See Figure 2). These counties could also be considered as local, since the average visitor would travel approximately 45 minutes to attend.

Demographics

“What is our key demographic?” is a question that any Director of Operations or other marketing executive wants to know in the corporate arena. Demographics are probably the most important aspect of any analysis of consumers. A casual observation of visitors' demographics are useful to festival organizers but a detailed study of demographics can be even more effective. For this study, organizers of the Carolina

Demographics	Opinions
Age	How CRF was advertised to visitors
Celtic Heritage Background(s)	Level of Importance of Show Listings in Program
Distance traveled	Level of Importance of Languages/Accents at CRF
Education Levels	Level of Importance of Presence of ATM
Gender	Level of Importance of the Map in Program
	Level of Importance of the presence of Celtic Culture
Intensity	Level of Importance of Motivations
Frequency for Attendance (Yr)	Break from Routine/Escapism
Group size	Crafts/ Shopping
Interaction Costumed Actions	Family Togetherness
Purchased Souvenir	Food
Repeat visit to CRF next year	Garb/ Dressing up
repeat visit to CRF this year	Heritage Motive
Time Spent at Festival	Joust
Visited other Renaissance Festivals	
	Just Something to do
	Learning about History
	Romanticism
	Socializing
	Stage Performances
	Wanting to Experience the Time Period

Table 1. Sections of organizer interview and list of data from each section.

Renaissance Festival were asked to estimate some key demographic characteristics of their visitors such as gender, age, education level, and heritage (See Table 2.)

Heritage

When one thinks of Renaissance times, there are one or two different perceptions as far as the style and where the Renaissance took place; either Italian or English Renaissance. For the purposes of this study we are dealing with the latter. The English Renaissance is often interchangeable with Medieval Renaissance. In this time period, historically, one imagines relationships with “Celts.”

Within this study, heritage was asked in terms of a visitor claiming to be Celtic, non-Celtic, or not knowing their heritage. Celtic, as defined in this study, are heritages of English, Irish, Scottish, or Welsh. Festival organizers estimated that a high percentage (65%) of visitors would identify with the above mentioned Celtic heritage. This high percentage can suggest a number of different things. Probably the dominate explanation would be that white Americans, in such an amalgamatory (or hybrid) society are bound to have an English, Irish, Scottish, or Welsh heritage somewhere in their background.

Education

Overall the organizers believe that their attendees are well educated and, estimate that more than a quarter (26%) of their visitors have a bachelor’s degree and an additional 8% have master’s degrees and 3% have PhD or equivalent degrees. In total, organizers expect to find well over half (56%) of visitors to have some level of college education.

Demographics		Perceived
Gender	Male	38 %
	Female	62 %
AGE	< 18	18 %
	19-29	15 %
	30-39	28 %
	40-49	22 %
	50-59	9 %
	> 60	8 %
Education	High School	24 %
	Some College	15 %
	Associates degree	4 %
	Bachelors degree	26 %
	Some Graduate Work	2 %
	Masters degree	8 %
	PhD or equivalent	3 %
Heritage	Non-Celtic or did not know	35 %
	Celtic	65 %
Distance Traveled (Miles)		46

Table 2. Festival organizers' estimates of visitor demographics.

Gender

In one of the interviews with festival organizers, we discussed marketing images geared toward gender; how some images are designed to capture the attention of the perceived 38% males or the 62% of females who attend. For example, Knights on horse back jousting are directed towards males, whereas the images of crafts and shopping such as basket weaving and jewelry are directed to women, according to organizers.

Age

One of the interviews with the marketing director revealed that festival organizers identify middle aged visitors as one of their key market segments. Indeed, as illustrated in Table 2, organizers estimated that 28% of their attendees fall between 30 to 39 years of age, while 22% are supposedly 40 to 49 years old. Combined, these two age brackets make up half (50%) of their visitors demographic as perceived by organizers of the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

Intensity of visit

This section briefly discusses selected aspects which were designed to ascertain the organizers' perceptions of visitors intensity as measured by: the frequency of visits on an annual basis, the number of interactions with costumed actors, plans to repeat the visit for this year, or plans to repeat the visit next year, attendance to Renaissance festivals other than the Carolina Renaissance Festival, the purchase of souvenir, hours spent at the current (2005) visit, and group size (See Table 3).

Intensity		Perceived
Frequency of Past Attendance	0, this is my 1 st year	30 %
	1 to 2	40 %
	3 to 5	25 %
	6 to 9	4 %
	10+	1 %
Interaction w/ Actors in Costume	Rarely (0-1 times)	5 %
	Only in passing (2-4)	40 %
	Often (5-9)	40 %
	As much as I could (10 +)	15 %
Repeat <u>This</u> Year	No	65 %
	Yes	35 %
Repeat <u>Next</u> Year	No	10 %
	Yes	50 %
	maybe / not sure yet	40 %
Visited Other Renaissance Festivals	No	35 %
	Yes	65 %
Souvenir Purchase	No	60 %
	Yes	40 %
Time Spent (Hours)		4
Group Size		4.5

Table 3. Festival organizer estimates of visitor intensity.

Frequency

Although the Carolina Renaissance Festival started its 12th season in 2005, festival organizers estimate that the vast majority of their visitors had only attended a few times in the past. The organizers perceived that nearly three-quarters (70%) of their visitors have attended the Carolina Renaissance Festival less than three other. Their estimation can be broken down into two brackets. Organizers thought that 30% of visitors attended this year (during their 2005 season) for the first time and that 40% had attended once or twice before. Organizers estimated that 25% of visitors attended 3 to 5 times but the figure falls to 4% for visitors attending 6 to 9 times.

Interaction with Actors

Visitors' interaction with costumed actors is an important factor in shaping the festival's environment and, as the organizers see it, the prosperity of the festival. In fact, organizers hire local actors to dress up in period garb to give visitors the illusion that they are in the 17th century. The actors attempt to do this by using a "Celtic" accent, usually of the English variety. Additionally, these actors conduct improvisational skits to enlist the participation and attention of visitors. Many of these actors are high school or college aged and go through a couple of weeks of training to prepare to engage visitors. When the festival organizers were asked about the level of interaction visitors had with these actors, they estimated that only 5% of visitors had an interaction level of "Rarely"—meaning none or only once. In contrast, organizers perceived that the

remaining 95% of visitors had multiple interactions with costumed actors, with 40% of visitors interacting “often.”

Repeat Visitation

Kim (2004) found that repeat visitation is a key component in determining the “seriousness” of participation at the Texas Renaissance Festival. It is important to determine the degree to which festival organizers believe that repeat visitors are significant to the Carolina Renaissance Festival. This was done by asking the organizers two questions with regards to repeat visitation: (1) What percentage of their attendees planned to be a repeat visitor for *this* year (2005), and (2) What percentage of their attendees planned to be a repeat visitor for *next* year (2006).

The festival organizers estimated that slightly more than a third (35%) of their visitors plan to be repeat visitors *this* year. In the eyes of organizers, this leaves the remaining 65 percent of visitors not to be planning a repeat visit.

As for repeat visitation for *next* year, I asked the festival organizers to estimate the percentages of visitors who plan, who do not plan, or who are undecided. Undecided was asked because (most) visitors might currently not know, a year in advance, if they plan to attend. Nevertheless, the Carolina Renaissance Festival organizers perceived that 50% of their visitors are planning to return next year, 10% were not, and 40% were undecided.

Visits to other Renaissance festivals

With over 175 other Renaissance festivals held around the US and given that the Carolina Renaissance Festival attracts over 130,000 visitors annually, the researcher asked festival organizers if they thought their visitors had attended Renaissance festivals other than the Carolina Renaissance festival. They estimated that nearly two-thirds (65%) of visitors have attended other Renaissance festivals in the past.

The Purchase of a Souvenir

The Carolina Renaissance Festival is not the full name of this festival. As the marketing director pointed out to me during one of our interviews, the festival's full name is The Carolina Renaissance Festival and Artisan Marketplace—emphasizing that a large section of the festival is dedicated to independent vendors who rent space at the festival. These vendors provide visitors the opportunity to purchase souvenirs or mementos. Options for souvenir purchases range from fantasy fairy-wings to armory and weaponry to handmade jewelry to garb. The organizers estimated that 40% of visitors purchase souvenirs.

Time Spent at the Festival

The Carolina Renaissance Festival opens its gates at 10:00 am. However, a small crowd (usually a few dozen) arrive earlier, starting at 9:30 am. During the pre-opening, some stage performers and actors greet the visitors at the gate for entertainment and to advertise their show times. At 10:00 am, visitors are officially welcomed to the festival

by means of cannon fire. When it is approximately an hour before sunset (5:30pm pre-daylight savings and 6:30 pm post-daylight savings), another round of cannon fire notifies visitors that it is closing time and they need to make their way back to their cars. Visitors can spend approximately nine hours at the festival for an all day experience. Organizers estimate that the average visitor spends only half a day or four hours at the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

Group Size

The final aspect of visitor intensity that festival organizers were asked to estimate is average group size of visitors. Organizers replied that an average group size of visitors is 4.5 people. This may be related to the large number of families attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

Motivations

Festival organizers recognize that there are many reasons why people attend festivals. But what are the levels of importance of specific motivations? After conducting research through the pilot studies and through visitor participation, I identified thirteen (13) different motivations behind attendance to the Carolina Renaissance Festival. Organizers were asked to provide their perceptions of the relative importance of these motivations in terms of percentages of visitors attached to the festival for these reasons. These thirteen (13) motivations are as follows: Family Togetherness, History / Education, Crafts / Shopping, Experiencing the Time Period, A Break from the Routine, Food,

Socializing Links to Your Heritage, Just Something To Do, Stage Show Performances, Joust, To Dress-up in Costumes/Garb, and Romanticism (See Table 4).

Family Togetherness

Based on interviews and personal observations, the Carolina Renaissance Festival appears to be a family friendly festival. Although some adult humor can be heard at some stages shows, the overall festival would be given a self-proclaimed PG-13 rating.

However, some shows pass over the line into an R rating. These kinds of shows are labeled in the festival program as LC for loose cannon. One stage show (a trio of men) has one show a day that has been given special permission from the festival organizers. The trio goes above and beyond an R rating. Indeed, that show is jokingly labeled as XXX, but is not pornographic. Instead, the performers are extremely vulgar with many sexual jokes and sexual innuendos. But again, the above show is merely one example of non-family friendly environment.

Casual observations reveal that numerous visitors attend the Carolina Renaissance Festival with family members. Yet, the fact that many families attend the festival does not necessarily mean that visitors attend mainly for the reason of family togetherness. They could be merely spending time together as a family at the festival. Organizers responded that 70% of attendees cite family togetherness as a primary motivation for attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

Motivations		Perceived
<i>Family Togetherness</i>	Not Important	30 %
	Important	70 %
<i>History / Education</i>	Not Important	70 %
	Important	30 %
<i>Crafts / Shopping</i>	Not Important	35 %
	Important	65 %
<i>Experiencing the Time Period</i>	Not Important	70 %
	Important	30 %
<i>Food</i>	Not Important	45 %
	Important	55 %
<i>A Break from the Routine</i>	Not Important	20 %
	Important	80 %
<i>Socializing</i>	Not Important	50 %
	Important	50 %
<i>Links to Your Heritage</i>	Not Important	50 %
	Important	50 %
<i>Just Something To Do</i>	Not Important	25 %
	Important	75 %
<i>Stage Show Performances</i>	Not Important	35 %
	Important	65 %
<i>Joust</i>	Not Important	35 %
	Important	65 %
<i>To Dress-up in Costumes/Garb</i>	Not Important	65 %
	Important	35 %
<i>Romanticism</i>	Not Important	65 %
	Important	35 %

Table 4. Festival organizers' estimates of visitor motivations.

History / Education

Given that the Renaissance festival is a history-themed festival, it certainly has an educational aspect. In emphasizing the educational facets of the Renaissance festival, organizers in North Carolina have developed handouts for classroom teachers as well as have “Student Days.” For the past several years, the Carolina Renaissance Festival has opened on special weekdays, known as “Student Days” to accommodate students and teachers who wish to enjoy a very distinctive field trip. “Student Days” are usually held from Tuesday to Thursday during the last week in October. “Student Days” are not open to the general public. Frequently, during these days, students take a field trip to the festival grounds and spend most of the school day (9:00am to 2:30pm) enjoying many of the Festival’s attractions. The “Student Days” program was formed to emphasize the historical legitimacy and importance of the festival as well as to market the festival to children with the hopes of bringing their parents later. Surprisingly, given the efforts made by festival organizers, it was interesting to find that they estimated that only 30% of visitors are motivated to attend because of history / education.

Crafts / Shopping

As noted earlier, the full name of the festival is The Carolina Renaissance Festival and Artisan Marketplace. This suggests that the organizers perceive that crafts and shopping are important factors in motivating visitors to attend. This was reinforced when organizers replied that they thought that crafts and shopping was an important motivational factor 65% of the time. Options for souvenir purchases range from fantasy

fairy-wings to armory and weaponry (Figure 5) to handmade jewelry (Figure 6) to garb (Figure 7).

Experiencing the Time Period

Given the importance placed on the educational and historical aspects of the festival, the researcher presumed that visitors motivated to attend because of a general curiosity about experiencing the time period to some degree. While it is fair to say that no one (from the current technological advance time period) would want to live life in the Renaissance. However, some people do seem interested in experiencing the period for a short time (i.e. a day). Nevertheless, do the festival organizers think that experiencing the time period is an important motivational factor for visitors? When asked about this issue, the organizers estimated that 70% of attendees would not find experiencing the time period a matter of importance.

A Break from the Routine

A break from the routine or escapism is an essential quality for all tourism destinations. Festival organizers estimated that four-fifths (80%) of their visitors would cite this aspect as a key motivational factor. This was the highest percentage given by the festival organizers, suggesting not only that they perceived it to be a key motivational factor, but it was perceived to be was the most important factor of all the motivations posed in the survey.



Figure 5. The Starfire booth. One of the many weaponry vendors selling their wares at the Carolina Renaissance festival. Photo taken by Justin Gross, 2003.



Figure 6. An example and a jewelry vendor and visual appeal towards having Celtic culture at the Carolina Renaissance Festival. Photo taken by Justin Gross, 2005.



Figure 7. Near the main entrance inside the festival, visitors to the Carolina Renaissance Festival have the opportunity to rent costumes for the day. Photo taken by Justin Gross, 2003.

Food

The Carolina Renaissance Festival offers visitors some unique foods. Some of these foods include the popular turkey leg or steak leg (served on-a-stick) (See Figure 8) and selections of bread bowls—a variety of soups served in a bread bowl (the beer-cheese soup is very popular). Along with these unique foods, the Carolina Renaissance Festival offers the traditional pizza, Pepsi, waffle fries, and ice cream.

The Carolina Renaissance Festival also serves beer, wines, and margaritas. Some of these beverages include local favorites, such as the Carolina Blonde. Additionally, the Carolina Renaissance Festival occasionally serves their own brews as well as some from local micro-breweries that provide demonstrations of the fermentation process and how it might have been done in Renaissance times. These alcoholic beverages are commonly (ab)used by the 21 year old and older demographic, at least once if not more by the end of the day.

Given the availability of unique and less unique foods, festival organizers were asked about their perceptions of how important food was as a motivational factor in shaping visitors' attendance. Organizers suggest that food is important 55% of the time.

Socializing

Festivals are inherently social events. Socializing occurs at the Carolina Renaissance Festival, just like any other festival and at many different levels (i.e. friends, family, business colleagues, weddings, etc.) The Carolina Renaissance Festival offers the opportunity to celebrate one's wedding day. With this package, the Festival assists with



Figure 8. One of the food stands at the Carolina Renaissance Festival. Photo taken by Justin Gross, 2003.

costumes, flowers, and other details. If a visitor would like to take part in a gathering of friends or a family reunion, the Carolina Renaissance Festival offers a party package, which includes a Renaissance style feast. In fact, the marketing director mentioned that, on average, the festival holds three or four weddings and approximately eight corporate parties per season.

Overall the festival offers various opportunities for its visitors to socialize, not just with friends and family but also with the actors and performers. This, in turn, leads one to assume that the organizers perceive that socializing is an important motivational factor. However, when asking to provide feedback, organizers responded with a 50/50 percent split as to whether socializing was important or not important.

Links to Your Heritage

As noted earlier, the Carolina Renaissance Festival organizers perceived that 65 percent of visitors have some form of Celtic heritage—being English, Scottish, Irish, or Welsh. With organizers believing the majority of their visitors have Celtic heritage, they were asked to estimate the percentage of their visitors who would say that a link to heritage was a motivational factor for their attendance. The organizers, again, provided a 50/50 percent split in terms of rating the importance of this aspect.

Just Something to Do

The motivational factor of “just something to do” can be interpreted as the “other.” In other words, “just something to do” can be considered to mean, curiosity,

bored, spontaneity, or any number of other forms compelling someone to visit a Renaissance festival. During one of the weekends in which the CRF operates, Lowe's Motor Speedway has its annual October NASCAR race. It is on this weekend that the Charlotte-Metro area has an additional 100,000 plus visitors. The race fans are generally restless before and after the NASCAR event, leading some of them to attend the festival for "just for something to do." However, this motivational factor is not solely geared towards these folks, but also includes locals as well.

Organizers perceive that a large portion (75%) of their visitors would say that "just something to do" was an important factor in motivating them to attend.

Stage Show Performances

Most, if not all, of the stage shows at the Carolina Renaissance Festival have some sort of comedic aspect. As a participant, I have had the opportunity to see five of the stage shows: Zlich the tory seller, London Broil, Thom Sellectomy, The Toruga Twins, and Dextre Trip. Zlich the tory seller, Terry Foy (his real name), is a story teller whose stories have a bit of a twist, Terry uses spoonerism, (a technical term in literature), in which he basically switches words or letter back and forth or turns one's words around. As Terry, himself, puts it, "You just have to tink thaster than you falk." (You just have to think faster than you talk.)

London Broil has, as the Carolina Renaissance Festival web site states, "a 'core audience' that cheers as three comrades juggle a variety of implements of destruction, leaving you laughing all the way" (<http://www.royalfaires.com/carolina/>).

Thom Sellectomy, taken from the surgical operation “tonsillectomy”— the operation responsible for removing of tonsils in the throat, is the perfect stage name for Geoffrey Cobb, as he is a sword-swallower. Geoffrey plays off of his audience in great fashion, even to such degree that his “wit is sharper than his swords,” as the Carolina Renaissance Festival web site declares.

The Tortuga Twins is actually, now, a trio comedy act. Scaramouche, (Ronn Bauman), Raphael, (Riki Robinson), and D' Angelo, (Jef Hall), tell tales with the participation of the audience. Adults generally enjoy the twists in familiar stories like Robin Hood.

Dextre Trip (Figure 9) is one of the classic shows that the Carolina Renaissance Festival offers. As the Carolina Renaissance Festival web site states, “with vaudevillian style, Dextre astounds his audience, executing acrobatic feats including slack rope walking, juggling fire and walking an incline rope with a deftness that belies his surname” (<http://www.royalfaires.com/carolina/>). Given the popularity of these performances, organizers estimated that 65% of their visitors would cite stage shows as an important motivational factor in attending the festival.

Joust

Another important aspect of the festival’s culture of performance is the joust, which is held three times a day. They include a joust for the Queen’s Favor, A Tournament of Champions, and a Joust to the Death (Figure 10). As the Carolina Renaissance Festival web site states, a joust is “two tons of horse, knight and armor



Figure 9. Renaissance Festival performer, Dextre Trip, balancing on a vertical ladder while juggling torches. Photo taken by Justin Gross, 2004.



Figure 10. The Joust to the Death at the Carolina Renaissance Festival. Photo taken by Justin Gross, 2004.

gallop onto the field prepared to do battle with ten-foot lances for a lady's honor. When the joust is done, you can visit the The Royal Stables and meet your champion from the era of chivalry” (<http://www.royalfaires.com/carolina/>). There are two sides to the jousting field, a good or pure (usually in favor with the Queen) and the bad or evil side (generally the “cheat to win” side), certainly a moralistic play of ritual. The winner of the joust to the death differs from year to year.

The joust is a staple for the organizers and visitors. The Carolina Renaissance Festival has its own stables and jousting arena as well as multiple images of jousting on The Carolina Renaissance Festival marketing flyers and advertisements. Similar to their perceptions of stage shows, organizers estimated that 65% of visitors would say that the joust is an important motivational factor in explaining attendance to the festival.

Dress-up in Costumes/Garb

At Renaissance festivals, some visitors actively participate in the performance of public memory by coming to festivals in period garb and interacting with stage shows and becoming a part of the shows themselves (Moore, 1997). Visitors have three primary costume styles: (1) traditional (Figure 11); (2) non-traditional (Figure 12); and (3) fantasy costumes.

From interviews with the festival organizers and performers, visitors who dress the part are called “playtrons.” These visitors would be in Kim’s (2004) words, “serious participants.” Because these visitors are so dedicated to Renaissance festivals, they often tour the festivals, either on a regional or national level.



Figure 11. Some visitors attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival in garb. Excluding the horns they are wearing, this is an example of what could be considered traditional costumes. These are not authentic, however, they show the general perception people imagine when thinking of Renaissance costumes. Photo taken by Justin Gross, 2003.



Figure 12. An example of a non-traditional costume worn by visitors. This was a visitor to the Arizona Renaissance Festival. Photo taken by Justin Gross, 2005.

Playtrons, with the option to dress-up, are given an opportunity to express themselves more than a regular visitor. Visitors can create their own Renaissance character, and many do. Some, in fact, can become obsessed with their character (Colgin, 2005). In doing so, they attend the festival every day of every weekend during the whole season of a festival. However, many of the playtrons are very “mellow” about dressing-up as a character. It can, at times, for many visitors be a great form of escapism. Because of this fact, the festival, in collaboration with vendors provide visitors with the opportunity to rent a costume for the day (Figure 5).

Given this noticeable level of “playtronage,” the organizers of the Carolina Renaissance Festival were asked to estimate the percent of visitors who would say that dressing-up in costumes/garb was an important motivational factor. The organizers perceived that only about a third (35%) of visitors would cite dressing-up in costumes/garb as an important motivational factor; suggesting that the majority of visitors (65%) would not.

Romanticism / Chivalry

“You wonder if people are seeking that sense of romanticism. And things that are missed from our society like chivalry and knights and royalty...” (Clan Tinker, 2005). This sense of romanticism / chivalry is, in modern times, a dying/dead art form according to many Renaissance Festival enthusiasts.

There are many instances in which the image of romanticism/chivalry is invoked nostalgically at the Carolina Renaissance Festival. Of course, there are knights shown on

horseback in advertisement. There are also images of escorts at the festival. In this case, the male would hold out his arm and the female would rest her arm on his. The equivalent in modern times would be either holding hands or linking arms. Another example, although rarely seen (if at all) at the festival would be laying a cloak over a puddle of water.

Given these and other examples of romanticism/chivalry, do the festival organizers estimates think that it is important in motivating visitors to attend? The organizers estimated that only 35% of visitors would say that romanticism/chivalry is an important factor in shaping their decision to attend.

Opinions

The last section in this chapter relates to miscellaneous topics and opinions with regard to organizer-visitor relationships and perceptions. This section is composed of the following sub-sections: advertisement, the importance of listing stage show times, the importance of the map within the festival's program, the presence of an ATM on the festival grounds, the presence of "European/Celtic" accents among festival actors, and the presence of Celtic culture at the festival.

Advertisement

Advertising is key in establishing the success of any commercial venture. However, it is even more important in the field of festivals. Festivals need attendees and festival organizers allocate certain amounts of money to marketing and promoting.

Generally, ads are made on television, newspapers, the internet, radio, posters and fliers, and word of mouth (friends, family, neighbors, etc.). All of these marketing devices were employed before and during the Carolina Renaissance Festival's 2005 season. As seen in Table 5, word of mouth was ranked first in the eyes of the festival organizers in terms of the most important form of advertising. Posters and flyers were ranked last.

The Program

The program is handed out to every visitor upon their entrance to the festival. Given the expense to produce 140,000 copies of the program, it is important for festival organizers to estimate the level of significance that visitors attach to having and using a program. The Carolina Renaissance Festival's program contains two large parts: (1) the stage show performances listed on the outside of the tri-folded program; and (2) the map of the faire/festival grounds on the inside of the program.

Some of the visitors, according to Colgin (2005), bring a highlighter or pen to the festival. They (and their friends or family) plan out their day in half-hour blocks to see as many shows as they can.

The organizers were asked to express their perceptions about the importance of the list of shows. They estimated that 65% of attendees would say that the list of stage show performances in the program was important.

Given that the size of the festival grounds is 30 acres, visitors may be quite dependent on having a map in the program. The festival organizers estimated that half of their visitors would find the map in the program as important.

Opinions		Perceived
Advertised (ranked)	Newspaper	2
	Television	4
	Radio	3
	Poster / Flier	6
	Internet	5
	Neighbor / Friend / Family	1
Show Listing in Program	Not Important	35 %
	Important	65 %
Map in Program	Not Important	50 %
	Important	50 %
ATM on Grounds	Not Important	20 %
	Important	80 %
Presence of Accents from Actors	Not Important	60 %
	Important	40 %
Presence of Celtic Culture	Not Important	60 %
	Important	40 %

Table 5. Festival organizers' estimates of visitors' opinions

ATM on Grounds

The Carolina Renaissance Festival has an ATM just outside the festival, next to the front gate. Asking about the importance of an ATM on the grounds had a dual purpose. First, do visitors even know that there is an ATM on the grounds? Second, do visitors bring enough money to spend at the festival? The answers to this question will be discussed in Chapter IV. Nevertheless, organizers estimate that 80% of visitors would say that it was important to have this resource on festival grounds

Presence of Accents from Actors

Approximately two weeks before the first day of the festival Carolina Renaissance Festival, local actors go through “orientation.” It is a time when actors learn about Renaissance times, the hierarchy of social structure for the time, and how to dress for their social status. One of the things that these actors can choose to do is to have an accent. The accent is, more often than not, an English or British accent. However, a few actors choose to have an Irish or Scottish accent. These accents assist in the illusion of transporting visitors to the Renaissance time period and place.

While novice actors struggle to remain in their accent, more seasoned actors, most of whom have had more extensive voice/accent training than the novices, can maintain in their accent the entire day, and usually require a time period to transition out of the accent.

Again accents assist in creating the festival's illusion, but are they important to the visitors? When posed this question, festival organizers estimated that 60% of their visitors would say that the presence of accents was not important.

Presence of Celtic Culture

The Carolina Renaissance Festival, in the eyes of most visitors, would be considered more of a fantasy Renaissance festival—having loose regulations for their employees as far as remaining in accents, having “authentic” costuming, as well as the presence of winged fairies, etc. However, some aspects of the festival (e.g. the jousts, the King and Queen, and some vendors) present solid connections to Celtic culture. Among these, vendors are probably the most visual because they boldly advertise themselves as having wares of things such as “Celtic Gold Jewelry” (Figure 4.). For some visitors who attend because of shopping, the presence of Celtic Culture may be particularly important. Yet, organizers believe that only 40% of visitors believe that the visual presence of Celtic culture is indeed important.

Chapter IV: The Visitors

This chapter discusses methodology and results of data collection from the survey of festival visitors. The primary propose for this chapter is to provide a picture of the characteristics and motivations of visitors that can be compared to the perceptions of festival organizers (provided in Chapter 3). This chapter is organized into six sections: (1) the survey device; (2) the dates of the survey; (3) the research team; (4) sampling; (5) data input and analysis procedures; and (6) results.

Survey

To collect data on visitors attending the Carolina Renaissance festival, a survey was designed and administered (Appendix B). The survey was conducted on October 15th and 22nd, 2005 at the Carolina Renaissance Festival. In order to conduct the survey at the festival with the greatest efficiency, a research team was formed (see below). This survey was designed as a KAB survey—knowledge, attitude, and behavior survey (Aday, 1996) with the intent of measuring the following items: (1) demographics; (2) intensity of visit; (3) motivations for attending the festival; and (4) opinions.

This survey and study went through the Institutional Research Board (IRB) at East Carolina University and was accepted on October 7, 2005. This study received the UMCIRB approval number of 05-0496.

Research team and Sampling

The Carolina Renaissance Festival visitor survey was the primary research method device used to collect data on festival visitors for the purpose of comparing these data with results from the Carolina Renaissance Festival organizers survey. In order to collect data, the festival organizers permitted me to set up a table outside the front gate. Consequently, the visitor survey for this study constituted an exit survey.

Given that recent annual totals of visitors attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival are roughly around 140,000, it would be impossible to survey all of them. Therefore, I set a goal of collecting a minimum of 500 visitor surveys as a sample. Collecting this number of surveys required assembling a team of researchers who would administrate the survey device.

The composition of the research team varied between the two days of data collection. On October 15th the team consisted of four people; one female and three males. On October 22nd the team consisted of three people; all males. There were two team members who participated in both data collection days. The ages of the research team members ranged from 21 years to 35 years old.

The research team was instructed to recruit visitors to fill out the survey. This was done primarily as a convenience sample. The research team was also instructed to ask for interest from anyone and everyone, regardless of: age, sex, race, manner of dress, group size, with/without children or other family members, or any other apparent characteristics. In order to solicit participants for the survey, visitors were asked a number of questions. The primary question was, “if they wouldn’t mind assisting a

college research study about festival visitors?” This question was strategic with the key words being “college research.” This phrase gained empathy from visitors, many of whom have or are going through college.

After visitors indicated a willingness to participate in the survey, the research team pointed them to the survey table. My duties while collecting data was one of multi-tasking. As the primary investigator, I (1) stood to hand visitors a clipboard with a survey to be filled out, (2) answered any questions that visitors needed for clarification about the survey; (3) talked and chatted with visitors; and (4) collected completed surveys, setting them aside from the rest.

With help from the research team, I collected a total of 822 surveys from both days of data collection. Four hundred forty-one (441) were collected on October 15th and three hundred eighty-one (381) were collected on October 22nd. It was later determined, during the data input process that 746 of the 822 surveys collected were considered valid or usable surveys (401 from October 15th and 345 from October 22nd). Usability was established by completion of total survey and/or readability of visitors’ origin. However, it should be noted that the count of respondents varied in range from 577 (advertisements) to 746 (Gender, Distance Traveled, and Interactions with costumed actors) (Table 6).

Data input

Data from the Carolina Renaissance Festival visitor survey were entered into a dataset using Microsoft Excel. The dataset of 746 respondent surveys is composed of 56

Demographics		n	Opinions		n
Age		727	How advertised to visitors		577
Celtic Heritage Background(s)		742	Level of Importance of Show Listings in Program		742
Distance traveled (miles)		746	Level of Importance of Languages/Accents at CRF		743
Education Levels		707	Level of Importance of Presence of ATMs		751
Gender		746	Level of Importance of the Map in Program		674
			Level of Importance of the presence of Celtic Culture		740
Intensity			Level of Importance of Motivations		
Frequency for Attendance (Yr)		744	Break from Routine/Escapism		745
Group size		743	Crafts/ Shopping		745
Interaction Costumed Actions		746	Family Togetherness		740
Purchased Souvenir		741	Food		738
Repeat visit to CRF next year		743	Garb/ Dressing up		743
repeat visit to CRF this year		734	Heritage Motive		740
Time Spent at Festival (hrs)		743	Joust		736
Visited other Renaissance Festivals		739	Just Something to do		739
			Learning about History		711
			Romanticism		742
			Socializing		743
			Stage Performances		741
			Wanting to Experience the Time Period		742

Table 6. Count of respondents per visitor survey questions.

different variables dealing with visitors and their origin (See Table 7). However, not all of the variables in the dataset were the primary focus for the current study.

The second half of the survey was comprised of likert-scale questions with answers coded on a 1-4 scale, where (1) corresponds to “not important,” (2) corresponds to “somewhat not important,” (3) corresponds to “somewhat important,” and four (4) corresponds to “important.” Frequencies of answers were found for numerical coded fields as well as a visual count for non-numerical coded fields, then exported into tables.

Results

Visitor origins

Where are visitors from? How far did they travel? These are questions addressed in this section. Given that the Carolina Renaissance Festival is located in the large Charlotte-metropolitan area, it is not surprising to see that nearly a quarter (24.13%) of visitors originated from this area (Table 8). However, this is just a segment of visitors who are labeled as locals (i.e., traveling 50 miles or less). In total, locals accounted for 68.36 percent of total visitors.

Day-trippers, as defined for this study, are visitors traveling a distance between 51 miles and 200 miles. This distance translates, roughly, into a trip lasting between one to three hours one-way. This distance might be approximated to the distance equal to the time a visitor might travel without an overnight stay in the area. Day-trippers account for 25.34% of total visitors.

Field name	Description
Date	date when observed survey was collected
City	City of observed origin
State	State of observed origin
Zip	Zip-code of observed origin
Latitude	latitude of observed zip-code
Longitude	longitude of observed zip-code
Dist (km)	Distance (Pythagorean) in Kilometers the observed travel to attend the festival
Dist (miles)	Distance (Pythagorean) in miles the observed travel to attend the festival
M_F	Observed gender
Year_born	year of birth of observed
Age	age of observed
Edu	Education level of observed
Job Title/type	Job Title/type of observed
Heritage	range of Celtic heritage observed has
Heritage cat.	if observed had Celtic heritage
Her_other	If observed did not have Celtic heritage. Listed is what kind they do
Advertise	how the observed heard about the festival
frequency	frequency (by year) that the observed attends the festival
repeat this	if the observed was planning on repeating their visitor to the festival again this season
how many	if yes, how many times they were planning
Repeat next	if the observed was planning on repeating their visitor to the festival next season
other fest	if the observed has attended festivals other that this one
Where	if yes where
Time	how much time (in hours) the observed spend at the festival
group #	the group size that the observed was in
interaction	how much interaction the observed had with costumed actors
Souvenir	if the observed bought a souvenir
What souvenir	if yes, what souvenir they bough
Food	what the observed had to eat while at the festival
show listing	if the listing of stage shows and times was important or not
Map	how important the map was
ATM	how important presence of an ATM
languages	how important the presence of accents was
Celtic	how important the presence of Celtic representation was
Family	how important family togetherness was as a motivation to attend the festival
learning history	how important learning about history was as a motivation to attend the festival
crafts/ shopping	how important crafts and shopping was as a motivation to attend the festival
time period	how important experiencing the time period was as a motivation to attend the festival
turkey legs/ food	how important the food was as a motivation to attend the festival
break routine	how important it was to take a break from their daily routine was as a motivation to attend the festival
socializing	how important socializing was as a motivation to attend the festival
Personal heritage	how important link to their personal heritage was as a motivation to attend the festival
something to do	how important the festival was just something to do as a motivation to attend the festival
stage shows	how important stage shows were as a motivation to attend the festival
Joust	how important the joust was as a motivation to attend the festival
Garb	how important the ability to dress-up or be in garb it was as a motivation to attend the festival
romanticism	how important romanticism was as a motivation to attend the festival
Other	additional motivations the observed listed
Notes	personal notes about encounter with the observed
ELEV.	elevation of the zip-code where the observer's origin (source: zip-codes.com)
POP	total population of the zip-code where the observer's origin (source: zip-codes.com)
HPZC	households per zip-code of the zip-code where the observer's origin (source: zip-codes.com)
AVG. HV	average home value of the zip-code where the observer's origin (source: zip-codes.com)
AVG. IPH	average income per household of the zip-code where the observer's origin (source: zip-codes.com)
W_POP	total white population of the zip-code where the observer's origin (source: zip-codes.com)
B_POP	total black population of the zip-code where the observer's origin (source: zip-codes.com)
H_POP	total Hispanic population of the zip-code where the observer's origin (source: zip-codes.com)

Table 7. Variables and description of variables within visitor survey dataset

Rank	City	State	Count	Percentage
1	Charlotte	NC	180	24.13%
2	Concord	NC	36	4.83%
3	Greensboro	NC	24	3.22%
4	Gastonia	NC	23	3.08%
5	Fort Mills	SC	21	2.82%
6	Mooresville	NC	19	2.55%
7	Huntersville	NC	17	2.28%
8	Monroe	NC	16	2.14%
8	Rock Hill	SC	16	2.14%
9	Salisbury	NC	12	1.61%
9	Hickory	NC	12	1.61%
10	Statesville	NC	10	1.34%
10	Matthews	NC	10	1.34%
11	Cornelius	NC	9	1.21%
12	Kannapolis	NC	8	1.07%
12	Albemarle	NC	8	1.07%
13	Winston Salem	NC	6	0.80%
13	York	SC	6	0.80%

Table 8. Top ranking origin cities for visitors to the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

Locals and day-trippers make up two-thirds of visitors to the Carolina Renaissance Festival, while vacationers make up the last one-third. For this study, the distance that vacationers traveled ranges from 201 miles to approximately 2300 miles, where some visitors come as far as California (Figure 13). Long distance travelers account for 6.3 percent of visitors. Within this study as well as during the pilot study, I visually observed and recorded (via surveys) that the festival also has a few international visitors. For the current study, a visitor responded that s/he lived in Mexico City, Mexico. In past pilot studies there were a couple of visitors from Germany.

Graphically, locals, day-tripper, and vacationers show a near perfect distance decay graph. Near perfect due to a hump at 101 to 200 mile interval as well as rise at the 1,201 or farther interval (Figure 14).

Demographics

Heritage

The majority (70%) of visitors attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival stated that they had a Celtic heritage (English, Scottish, Irish, and/or Welsh) (Table 9). Granted, this may be due the fact that Americans are inherently of mix ancestries and it is rare to find an American who is 100 percent of a single heritage, especially given the important role of immigration in the nation's history.

This question in the visitor survey was the most problematic due to the write-in for "other." There was an ambiguity between what was meant when visitors wrote-in "Indian," whereas, this could have meant Native American Indian or someone from the

Origins of Visitors, 2005

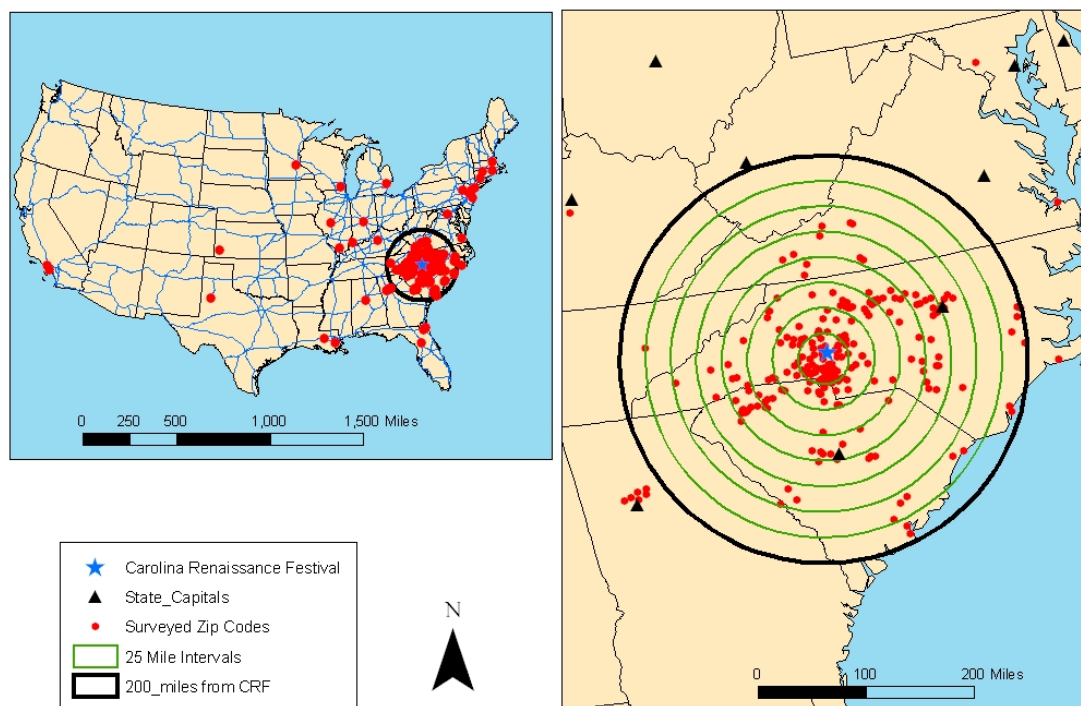


Figure 13. Map of Carolina Renaissance Festival visitors origins by zip-code

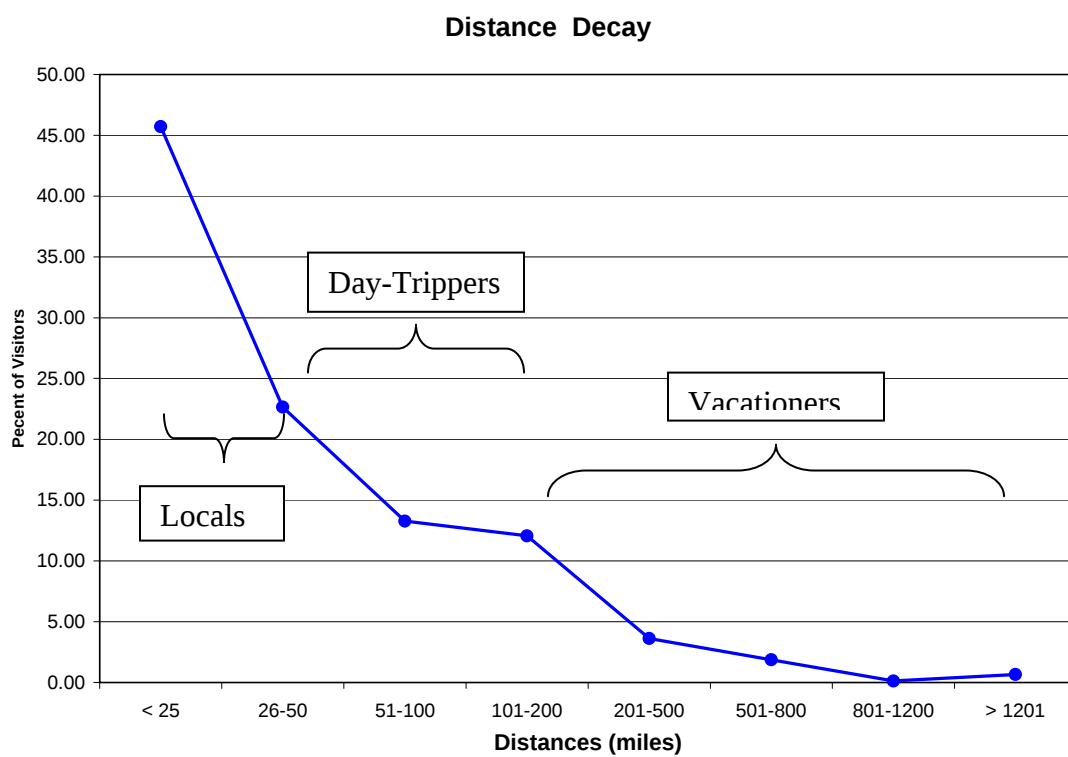


Figure 14. Distance Decay graph of festival visitors' origins

Demographics		Actual
Gender	Male	38.5 %
	Female	61.5 %
Age	< 18	7 %
	19-29	32 %
	30-39	21 %
	40-49	21 %
	50-59	15 %
	> 60	5 %
Education	High School	14 %
	Some College	31 %
	Associates degree	8 %
	Bachelors degree	29 %
	Some Graduate Work	6 %
	Masters degree	8 %
	PhD or equivalent	3 %
Heritage	Non-Celtic or don't know	30 %
	Celtic	70 %
Distance Traveled (Miles)	average <200	43 %

Table 9. Results of survey of Carolina Renaissance Festival visitors' demographic characteristics, 2005.

country of India. Indeed, some visitors were more descriptive in writing “American Indian” or “Native American.” In addition to the write-in of “Indian,” there was an issue with a few visitors who responded with “American,” “mixed,” or “mutt.” This could be interpreted as: too many different heritages to be mentioned, I don’t know, all of the above, or none of the heritages listed. Given the strong likelihood of visitors who responded with one of the aforementioned “mixed” heritage terms, the researcher aggregated these six respondents into the having Celtic heritage.

Among visitors answering with in the category of non-Celtic or “I don’t know” and writing-in an “other” response (30% of visitors), 14.15 % indicated a German heritage. While German is a non-Celtic heritage, German is represented at the Carolina Renaissance Festival through some of the food (i.e. the Beer and Brats food stand).

Education

Higher educational degrees were prevalent among visitors with 54% of visitors having some sort of degree beyond high school (i.e. Associates degree to PhD or equivalent). However, it is worth mentioning that many (31 %) of festival visitors are in the progress of higher education/college or have completed work at this level or haven’t completed enough coursework, yet to obtain a degree. This fact can be correlated to the age brackets of the visitors (See below). In some cases (34) visitors did not answer this question. This fact also is explained further in the age section of this chapter.

Gender

Gender breaks down quite straight forward. Whereas, 61.5 percent of visitors answered as being female and 38.5 percent are males. These results maybe slightly skewed because many males who were solicited to complete a survey asked their female “partner” (i.e. wife, girlfriend, friend, etc.) to fill out the survey and then they the female proceed to do so.

Age

Age was measured by asking visitors in what year they were born then subtracting the current year (2005). As Table 9 shows, a third (32%) of visitors are in the traditional college student aged bracket of 19-29. The two subsequent ages brackets (30s and 40s) had the same age share, contributing a total of 21%. The primary reason behind the fact that only 7% of respondents came from youngest age bracket (<18) is that that the research team tended to target visitors 18 years or older. Those visitors younger than 18 years old were generally not approached o fill out the survey, even though all visitors should have been targeted. However, 26 respondents younger than 18 years old were collected.

There were 19 respondents who did not answer the age question of the survey. Thirteen were female. As mentioned above, 34 respondents did not answer the education question. Of these, three respondents also did not answer “what year were you born” question. Additionally, six of those who did not answer the education question were 18 years or older.

Intensity of visit

Frequency

The frequency with which visitors attended the festival denotes, to some degree, the level of enjoyment for those who have made their attendance a “tradition.” Half of surveyed visitors had attended the festival one to five times before. First time visitors make up over a third (36%) of total survey sample. Some visitors could be labeled as “serious” (Kim 2004) or even “obsessed” (Hague 2001; Colgin 2005) with Renaissance Festivals, whereas there are “die-hard” fans who have attended ten or more times. Only 5% of surveyed visitors fall into this category (Table 10).

Interaction with Actors

One of the most important measurements for level of intensity is the aspect of fun and play. This aspect is measured in the form of interactions with actors in costume or garb. The largest percentage of visitors (40%) did in fact have some interaction with costumed actors that could have been described as “only passing by.” Only seven percent of visitors responded that they “rarely” interacted with costumed actors.

Repeat Visitation

For repeat visitation “this year,” over a third (36%) of visitors said that they were planning to attend another time during the 2005 season. This could mean that they (the visitors) didn’t have enough time that day to see everything they wanted or they are what Kim (2004) termed a “serious” participant in Renaissance Festivals.

Intensity		Actual
Frequency of Past Attendance	0, this is my 1 st year	36 %
	1 to 2	22 %
	3 to 5	28 %
	6 to 9	8 %
	10+	5 %
Interaction w/ Actors in Costume	Rarely (0-1 times)	7 %
	Only in passing (2-4)	40 %
	Often (5-9)	35 %
	As much as I could (10 +)	17 %
Repeat <u>this</u> year	No	64 %
	Yes	36 %
Repeat <u>next</u> year	No	4 %
	Yes	74 %
	maybe / not sure yet	22 %
Visited Other Renaissance Festivals	No	67 %
	Yes	33 %
Souvenir Purchase	No	42 %
	Yes	58 %
Time Spent (Hours) (averaged)		5
Group # (averaged)		4

Table 10. Results of survey of Carolina Renaissance Festival visitors, level of intensity visit, 2005.

As for repeat visitation “next year,” nearly 3/4 (74%) respondents stated that they were thinking of coming back. This, of course, leads to a higher frequency for attendance. This is another possible indicator that most visitors to the Carolina Renaissance Festival enjoyed their experience during the 2005 season.

Visits to other Renaissance festivals

Given that visitors to the Carolina Renaissance Festival are, at some level, tourists; it is quite possible that they would visit one of the 175 other Renaissance festivals in the US. Survey results indicate that, in fact, only a third (33%) of visitors have attended other Renaissance festivals.

Among the surveyed visitors who had experienced another Renaissance festival, they were also asked to provide the location of the other festival. As seen in Table 11, with southern locations depicted in gray, there is a strong regional pattern. The Georgia Renaissance Festival was the other festival most frequently visited in the past by visitors. This is with good reason, due to the fact that this festival is the highest attended Renaissance Festival in the southeast region of the USA. It should also be noted that the North Carolina Renaissance festival, held in Raleigh, NC, is ranked second in the region for visitors.

The Purchase of a Souvenir

Given the range of vendors operating at the Carolina Renaissance Festival and Artisan Marketplace, it is important to determine the popularity of visitors buying

Festivals	Percent	Count
GA	12.6	23
*Raleigh	10.4	19
FL	8.8	16
NY	8.8	16
MD	7.7	14
MI	5.5	10
PA	4.9	9
CA	3.8	7
CO	3.8	7
TX	3.8	7
VA	3.8	7
AZ	3.3	6
MA	3.3	6
OH	3.3	6
*Ashville	2.7	5
KS	2.2	4
MN	2.2	4
Ok	2.2	4
TN	1.6	3
WI	1.6	3
IN	1.1	2
CT	0.5	1
IL	0.5	1
LA	0.5	1
NJ	0.5	1
* = other Renaissance festival in North Carolina		
gray = other Renaissance festival in Southeast region of USA		

Table 11. List of other Renaissance festivals attended by surveyed visitors.

souvenirs. Fifty-eight percent of visitors said they had purchased a souvenir while visiting the festival. Of these visitors, 36% purchased a form of jewelry while 20% purchased a t-shirt. Other souvenir purchases by visitors include: garb, wax hands, weaponry, and hand blown glass.

Time Spent at the Festival

On average, surveyed visitors attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival spent over half of the day (five hours) at the festival. Hours at the festival does ensure fresh air, a good walk, and some entertainment, however, it could be argued that more time is needed to experience the festival in order to see all the stage shows and all that the festival has to offer for visitors.

Group Size

Results of the visitor survey indicate that the average group size was four people. This coincidentally is the same number of people that can usually fit in a standard car. The average family size, according to www.census.gov, is 3.14 people.

Motivations

At the heart of this study is the desire to compare the importance of certain motivational factors, as expressed by organizers versus actual visitor responses? The following section presents what I found after surveying visitors at the Carolina

Renaissance Festival. Levels of importance (important or not important) were rated for thirteen motivational factors.

Family Togetherness

As mentioned in Chapter III, family togetherness seemed to be a high motivational factor as indicated by visual observations of the researcher while at the festival. Of surveyed visitors, 81% said that family togetherness was an important motivational factor for them to attend the festival (See Table 12).

History / Education

While the festival has limited educational venues on the festival grounds, 58% of visitors replied that history/education was an important motive in their attending the festival.

Crafts / Shopping

The Carolina Renaissance Festival has nearly 100 artisan vendors advertising their wares to visitors. Categories of wares range from jewelry to candles to clothing/garb to blown glass to weaponry. Given such a wide range of wares, two-thirds (68%) of surveyed visitors stated that crafts and shopping were important enough to them to visit the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

Motivations		Actual
Family	Not Important	19 %
	Important	81 %
History / Education	Not Important	42 %
	Important	58 %
Crafts / Shopping	Not Important	32 %
	Important	68 %
Experiencing the Time Period	Not Important	16 %
	Important	84 %
Food	Not Important	40 %
	Important	60 %
A Break from the Routine	Not Important	13 %
	Important	87 %
Socializing	Not Important	23 %
	Important	77 %
Links to Your Heritage	Not Important	61 %
	Important	39 %
Just Something To Do	Not Important	33 %
	Important	67 %
Stage Show Performances	Not Important	21 %
	Important	79 %
Joust	Not Important	39 %
	Important	61 %
To Dress-up in Costumes/Garb	Not Important	27 %
	Important	73 %
Romanticism	Not Important	30 %
	Important	70 %

Table 12. Results of survey of Carolina Renaissance Festival visitors, level of importance of motivational factors, 2005.

Experiencing the Time Period

Renaissance festivals are liminal—as they are neither of this time nor the Renaissance time. Although the festival clearly exists in both time periods, it is unclear whether experiencing the Renaissance times is a factor important enough to motivate visitors to attend. Eighty-four percent of festival visitors indicated that the time period was an important consideration.

A Break from the Routine

Escapism is an important motivational factor for many forms of tourism. But is the desire for a break from the routine important to Renaissance festival visitors? Results from the survey indicate that it is. Receiving the highest level of importance from respondents, 87% of visitors suggest they were motivated to attend because of a desire to break from the routine.

Food

As mentioned earlier, Renaissance festival market a range of novelty foods such as turkey legs. These foods instill a sense of the time period as well as eliminate the need for forks and knives. However, there are other foods available for visitors who are less adventuresome. The festival food offers items for a range of visitor demographics. Sixty percent of visitors stated that food was important in motivating them to attend.

Socializing

It can be hypothesized that people attend festivals to have fun, usually with friends, and to socialize. To find out if this is the case, visitors were asked to rate the importance of socializing as a motivational factor for attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival. Seventy-seven percent of visitor respondents said that it was indeed an important factor for attending, while the other 23 percent thought that socializing was not a key motive behind their attendance.

Links to Your Heritage

Given that 70% of visitors indicated that they had some form of Celtic heritage or background and that Renaissance festival advertises a strong Celtic theme, visitors were asked if their heritage was an important motive for attending. Although a strong connection of “Celtic-ness” of themes at the festival can be seen (Figure 6), only 39% of surveyed visitors cited their heritage as an important motivational factor.

Just Something to Do

Attending festivals at times can be spontaneous. Visitors may simply drive by, see a sign, or an advertisement and think “There is nothing else going on in town this weekend, why not go to the Renaissance festival?” This type of motivation can be attributed to “just something to do.” This is perhaps not a motivational factor at all, yet it is important to understand how many visitors are spontaneous and do not have plans to

attend “ahead of time.” Two-thirds (67%) of visitors said that this fact of “just something to do” was an important factor in motivating their attendance.

Stage Show Performances

The Carolina Renaissance Festival has over 20 stage show performers on over nine stages. Clearly the festival has invested a large amount of time and resources to stage shows. But how important are stage shows as a draw for visitors? Seventy-nine percent of visitors pointed to stage shows as an important in motivating their attendance at the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

Joust

The jousting event is promoted in nearly all of the festival’s advertisements. Inside the festival, visitors have the opportunity to see three (3) jousting events throughout the day. Surrounding the jousting area are metal stands or bleachers for visitors to sit and enjoy the event. These stands hold, at most, 5,000 visitors. But, what percentages of visitors would find the joust to be an important motivation for attending? The answer is 61%. In turn, 39% of visitors responded that the jousting events were not a high motivational factor for their attendance, even though they may contribute to the festival environment once visitors arrive.

Dress-up in Costumes/Garb

Visitors are allowed to dress up in costume or garb (See Figure 9), which has great allure for some visitors. Some of those not dressing-up often wish they had the costume(s) to do so. On the other hand, some visitors have negative feelings about seeing other visitors (non-festival employees) dressed-up and perceive them as “weirdoes.” As noted in Chapter III, the visitors, who partake in dressing up are known as “playtrons” (Colgin, 2005; Blackshear, 2005; Moore, 1997). “Because they are so into it [the festival], they are better than regular patrons...” (Colgin, 2005). However, these playtrons are not as visibly noticeable compared to nearly all others who are dressed in “street clothes” (i.e. shirt and jeans). It turns out that having the opportunity to dress up in costumes or garb is an important motivational factor for most visitors (73%). In contrast, the other 27% of visitors surveyed felt that dressing up was not important motivational factor for their attendance.

Romanticism / Chivalry

Nostalgia can be experienced through re-creation of the past, such through the nostalgia for romanticism and chivalry. Nostalgia is mentioned because some visitors believe Romanticism/Chivalry has become less apparent in modern times. Therefore, the yearning for Romanticism/Chivalry may be a motivational factor for festival visitors. When asked, 70% of visitors stated that Romanticism/Chivalry was a motivational factor.

Opinions

The last section of this chapter will be used to report the opinions of visitors about selected aspects of the Carolina Renaissance Festival. The survey addressed topics such as advertising, the importance of the program (both the stage show listing and the map), the presence of an ATM on festival grounds, the presence of accents from festival actors, and the presence of Celtic culture at the festival (Table 13).

Advertisement

How are visitors hearing about the Carolina Renaissance Festival? Given the use of multiple forms of advertising, it is important to identify which media are most effective in reaching visitors. Multiple advertising, for this survey, is broken down into: newspaper, televisions, radio, poster/flyers, internet, and “word of month” (friend / family / neighbor). Visitors were asked about the primary way they heard about the festival. Sixty percent came because of about “word of month;” 12% because of newspaper, 9% because of television, 8% because of radio, and 5% because of internet and poster / flyer. As seen in Table 13, these percentages were then rank ordered in the order to facilitate a comparison with festival organizers’ perception of advertising.

The Program

Every visitor entering the festival has the opportunity to pick up a festival program at no additional charge. The program is printed on both sides of 11 X 17 piece of paper and has a tri-fold. On the outside of the program visitors can see a list of the nine

Opinions		Actual
Advertised (ranked/ percent)	Newspaper	2 / 12%
	Television	3 / 9%
	Radio	4 / 8%
	Poster / Flier	5 / 5%
	Internet	5 / 5%
	Neighbor / Friend / Family	1 / 60%
Show Listing in Program	Not Important	61%
	Important	39 %
Map in Program	Not Important	52 %
	Important	48 %
ATM on Grounds	Not Important	62 %
	Important	38 %
Presence of Accents from Actors	Not Important	59 %
	Important	41 %
Presence of Celtic Culture	Not Important	32 %
	Important	68 %

Table 13. Results of survey of Carolina Renaissance Festival visitors, opinions and the level of importance of conveniences, 2005.

stages with times for each performance. On the inside of the program visitors have a map to guide them to the location of the stage shows, jousts, food, first aid, entrance/exit, etc. Within the visitor survey, attendees were asked about the importance they placed on having both the map and the stage show listing in the program.

With regard to the importance of having the stage show listing in the program, 61% of visitors found it not to be important, while 39% did find the show listing to be important. In terms of the map in the program, 52% of visitors did not find it to be important, compared to 48% who thought stage show listing was important.

ATM on Grounds

Interestingly, while conducting the survey some visitors remarked that they didn't even know that there was an automated teller machine (ATM) on the festival grounds. The ATM is actually located outside the front gate (the only entrance and exit for visitors) beside the ticket booth.

Given that every visitor (with an ATM card) has access to the ATM (if they knew about its existence or not), respondents to the survey were asked about the level of importance they attached to having access to an ATM. As such, 62% of visitors felt that it was not important, while 38% of visitors stated that it was important to have an ATM on the festival grounds. Yet, these results are potentially biased by the fact that it was unclear if visitors even knew that an ATM existed on the festival grounds.

Results of this question could be interpreted in numerous ways. On the one hand, if visitors thought that an ATM was important, they may have not brought enough money

needed for a satisfying day in the festival or were spending more than they had originally planned. Further survey work is needed to determine what the ATM question signals about visitor financial needs and satisfaction with the festival

Presence of Accents from Actors

The Elizabethan accent or dialect is important in creating illusion of being in medieval and Renaissance times. However, street performers or actors often are not properly trained to have an accent for a long period of time and therefore play out with their normal voice at the festival to attempt to pass it off as an accent. Visitors sometimes only hear bits and pieces of accents from these actors. Does the presence of or hearing accents from actors at Renaissance festivals matter to visitors? Forty percent of visitors surveyed thought that accents were an important aspect of Renaissance festivals.

Presence of Celtic Culture

Medieval and Renaissance times are also often attributed to Celtic culture (Scottish, Irish, Welsh, or English Culture) that are frequently depicted in the media (e.g. the movie Braveheart). This depiction can lead visitors to seek these Celtic cultures at Renaissance festivals. But what is the level of importance to visitors place on Celtic culture at these festivals? At the Carolina Renaissance Festival, over two-thirds (68%) of visitors see the presence of Celtic cultural as “important.”

Chapter V: The Gap

The purpose of this chapter is to quantify the gap between the perceptions and expectations of festival organizers regarding visitors and the actual characteristics of visitors. The methodology for establishing the gap will be discussed first, followed by the results of statistical analysis that determines the extent and level of significance of gaps identified among the study's variables.

Quantifying the Gap

Quantifying the gap between the estimations of festival organizers and the measured profiles of visitors was conducted through the use of chi-square and t-statistic. Chi-square provides a goodness-of-fit between the expected frequencies and the observed frequencies of categorical answers. The equation used to calculate chi-square is:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

where: O = the observed (or surveyed result) frequencies from visitors; and

E = the expected (or the estimated result) frequencies the festival organizers.

The chi-square test was conducted on nearly all the variables tested. However, three variables were continuous (visitor origin, time spent, and group number) and required a different statistical test.

For the three variables (visitor origin, time spent, and group number) a t-statistic was used to test the gap between visitor responses and organizer perceptions. The t-

statistic is a measures the difference between the sample mean and the parameter. A t-statistic is expressed as t. The equation used to calculate the t-statistic is:

$$t = \frac{O_x - E_x}{StdEr}$$

Where O_x = the mean of the observed values (surveyed result) from visitors;

E_x = the expected values the festival organizers;

Std Er = standard error of the observed values from the visitor sample.

It should be noted that for the level of importance for motivations and opinions in the visitors survey dataset, there are four different levels of importance recorded from visitor responses (very importance, somewhat important, somewhat not important, and not important) while the organizer questionnaire responses had two levels of importance (not important and important). The responses for the visitor survey were aggregated into either not important or important later in the dataset for analysis so as to facilitate comparison with organizer responses.

Identification of the Gap

A significant gap was identified to exist between the festival organizers estimates of visitors' characteristics and surveyed characteristics of visitors when the level of significance for the chi-square test or t-test revealed 0.001. This equates a statistical significance at a very conservative benchmark. This was done to indicate a high sense of clarity or threshold for providing a gap or not.

Gap Results

Visitor origins

Given that the distance from visitor origins was provided as an average (see Chapters III and IV), a t-test was used. The t-statistic yielded -0.46 (Table 14) and, consequently, there was not a significant difference in organizers' perception of how far visitors traveled and the actual distances that respondents reported traveling to the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

Demographics

Heritage

Heritage at the Carolina Renaissance Festival is of interest due to the strong identification with Celtic Culture at the festival. Heritages of English, Welsh, Scottish, and Irish within the Celtic category were tested among attendees and organizers' perceptions of the relative importance that these heritages held for their audience. A chi-square of 8.87 was found, which indicates that there is not a significant gap between organizers estimates and the surveyed heritage backgrounds of visitors.

Education

Education levels varied greatly between organizers' perceptions of visitors and the actual surveyed characteristics of visitors. When tested for goodness-of-fit, a chi-

Demographics	n	t or χ^2	significance
Age	727	232.21	0.001
Celtic Heritage	742	8.87	0.01
Distance traveled*	746	-0.46	0.55
Education Levels	707	237.32	0.001
Gender	746	0.07	0.90

* = t-test for difference in means
 Shaded signifies identification of
 a gap

Table 14. Identification of an organizer vs. visitor gap for various demographics variables

square value of 237.32 was found. This proved to be significant and thus identified as providing a significant gap in knowledge. The festival organizers underestimated education levels of visitors, mainly within the “some college” category, which was underestimated by 2.07 times.

Gender

In terms of the gender of visitors, the goodness-of-fit test yielded a chi-square value of 0.07. This shows that the organizers’ perception for the gender of visitors generally matches the measured gender composition of festival-goers surveyed. Therefore, gender was not significant enough to be identified as having a gap.

Age

When comparing organizer estimates to the surveyed ages of visitors, a chi-square value of 232.21 was established for the goodness-of fit test. This is a significant gap. Similar to the variable of education, the gap in age is most pronounced at the 19 to 29 year old category. For the “19-29” age category, organizers had underestimated the frequency by 2.11 times, and for the “<18” age category organizers had overestimated by 2.61 times. This level of overestimation may be due to sampling bias.

Intensity of visit

Frequency

When comparing the surveyed visit frequency of respondents with organizers' perceptions of this variable, a chi-square value of 231.89 (Table 15) was found for the goodness-of fit test. This provided another significant gap. The key categories, which the organizers underestimated, were: "1 to 2", "6 to 9", and "10+". The "1 to 2" frequency was underestimated by 1.82 times, "6 to 9" was underestimated by 2.08 times, and "10+" was underestimated by 5.10 times, i.e. they underestimated the ends of the spectrum – low and high.

Interaction with Actors

There appears to be no significant gap in organizers' perceptions of the importance of visitors' interactions with actors in costume and the surveyed responses of visitors. This calculation yielded a chi-square value of 14.92 but it was not significant enough to reach the 0.001 level required here to be labeled as providing a gap. The chi-square value found for interaction with actors in costume

Repeat Visitation

Repeat visitations for "this year" (2005) and "next year" had a difference. Repeat visitations for "this year" (2005) yielded a chi-square of 0.50 and was only significant at the 0.90 level. On the other hand, a repeat visitation for "next year" yielded a chi-square

Intensity	n	t or χ^2	significance
Frequency for Past Attendance (Yr)	744	231.89	0.001
Group size of Visitors*	743	-9.67	0.001
Interaction with Actors	746	14.92	0.01
Purchased Souvenir	741	97.38	0.001
Repeat visit to CRF next year	743	171.23	0.001
Repeat visit to CRF this year	734	0.50	0.90
Time Spent at Festival*	743	12.21	0.001
Other Renaissance Festivals	739	335.08	0.001

* = t-test for difference in means

Shaded Gray signifies a gap

Table 15. Identification of a gap for intensity of visit.

of 171.23 and was significant at the 0.001 level. Therefore, repeat visitation for “next year” was labeled as providing a gap and repeat visitations for “this year” (2005) was not. The gap for “next year” was established due to two of the answers—“yes” and “maybe/I’m not sure yet.” There was an underestimation for the “yes” category, where the organizer underestimated the frequency that visitors would answer “yes” by 1.48 times. In contrast organizers overestimated the “maybe/I’m not sure yet” frequency by 1.82 times.

Visits to other Renaissance festivals

A gap was found to exist between organizers’ estimates and the extent to which visitors had attended other Renaissance festivals. Specifically, the chi-square value was found to be 335.08 and it was significant at the 0.001 level. Visiting other Renaissance festivals was labeled as providing a gap.

The Purchase of a Souvenir

The chi-square value for purchase of a souvenir is 97.38. This, too, is significant at the 0.001 level. This variable was identified as providing a gap in organizer knowledge. Again, organizers essentially have their estimates flip-flopped. The organizers had underestimated the value of respondents that responded with “yes” they did purchase a souvenir by 1.45 times.

Time Spent at the Festival

For time spent at the festival (a continuous variable), a t-test was performed. The t-statistic is 12.21. This is significant at the 0.001 level and therefore labeled as having a gap. Organizers underestimated the amount of time that the average visitor spends at the festival by 1.18 times.

Group Size

A t-test was performed to measure differences in perceived versus measured group size. The t-statistic calculated was -9.67 and is significant at the 0.001 level, leading to the identification of a gap. Organizers overestimated the average visitor's group size to the festival by 1.22 times.

Motivations

Due to the dichotomous nature of all of the motivational factors, I will focus on the "important" category rather than the "not important." For this section, I will make note of the chi-square, the under- or over-estimated level for "important," and/or the level of significance will be stated.

Family Togetherness

The motivational factor of family togetherness received a chi-square value of 43.27 (Table 16). This was found to be significant at the 0.001 level, leading to the

Motivations	n	χ^2	significance
Break from Routine/Escapism	745	22.68	0.001
Crafts / Shopping	745	2.79	0.10
Family Togetherness	740	43.27	0.001
Food	738	8.37	0.01
Garb / Dressing up	743	436.65	0.001
Personal Heritage Links	740	32.89	0.001
Joust	736	4.82	0.05
Just Something to do	739	23.65	0.001
Learning about History	711	247.10	0.001
Romanticism	742	404.48	0.001
Socializing	743	209.98	0.001
Stage Performances	741	60.98	0.001
Experience the Time Period	742	1044.36	0.001

Shaded Gray signifies a gap

Table 16. Identification of gaps for visitors' motivational factors.

identification of a gap. The organizers underestimated, by 1.16 times, the likelihood that visitors would indicate family togetherness as “important.”

History / Education

Learning about history as a motivational factor for visiting the festival received a chi-square value of 247.10, which was also significant at the 0.001 level. This variable was labeled as having a gap. Educational and/or learning about history as “important” was underestimated by organizers by 1.94 times.

Crafts / Shopping

Crafts and/or shopping as a motivational factor for visiting the Carolina Renaissance Festival received a chi-square value of 2.79 this is not significant. Therefore crafts/shopping was not identified as having a gap. Organizers only underestimated how “important” crafts/shopping was to visitors by 1.05 times.

Experiencing the Time Period

Wanting to experience the time period as a motivational factor received a chi-square value of 1044.36 and this is significant at the 0.001 level, thus identifying a gap between organizer perceptions and visitor responses. Organizers underestimated how “important” experiencing the time period was to visitors by 2.81 times. In terms of the basic ratio, this was by far the most underestimated of all the variables measured in this study.

A Break from the Routine

Having the festival as a break from the routine as a reason for attending the festival received a chi-square value of 22.68. This is significant at the 0.001 level and led to this variable to be identified as providing a significant gap. Organizers underestimated how “important” a break the routine was to visitors by 1.09 times.

Food

Food as a motivational factor received a chi-square value of 8.37 and was found to be significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, the food variable was not identified as providing a gap. Organizers underestimated how “important” food was to visitors by 1.09 times.

Socializing

The ability to socialize with friends and family as a motivational factor received a chi-square value of 209.98. This was found to provide significant gap at the 0.001 level. Organizers underestimated how “important” the ability to socialize with friends and family was to visitors by 1.53 times.

Links to Your Heritage

Visiting the Carolina Renaissance Festival as a way of linking to one’s personal heritage received a chi-square value of 32.89. The gap between organizer estimates of this factor and visitors’ responses was found to be statistically significant at the 0.001

level. Organizers overestimated how “important” links to visitors’ personal heritage were by 1.27 times.

Just Something to Do

Attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival as “just something to do” received a chi-square value of 23.65. This was found to be significant at the 0.001 level and a significant gap was identified. Organizers overestimated how “important” “just something to do” in motivating visitors to attend the Carolina Renaissance festival by 1.11 times.

Stage Show Performances

Stage performances as a motivational factor for attending the festival received a chi-square value of 60.98. A significant gap at the 0.001 level was found between organizer perceptions and survey results. Organizers underestimated how “important” stage shows were to visitors by 1.21times.

Joust

The Joust as a motivational factor for visitors received a chi-square value of 4.82. This is not significant. Therefore, the joust was not labeled as providing a gap in organizer knowledge. The organizers overestimated how “important” the joust was to visitors by 1.06 times.

Dress-up in Costumes/Garb

The ability to dress-up in costumes/garb as a motivational factor for visitors received a chi-square value of 436.65. This was found to be a significant gap at the 0.001 level. Organizers underestimated how “important” dressing in costumes was to visitors by 2.08 times. This may be biased due to the moderate volume of “playtrons” dressed in garb that completed the visitor survey.

Romanticism / Chivalry

Romanticism/chivalry as a motivation for visiting the festival received a chi-square value of 404.48 and a statistically significant gap at 0.001 was identified. Because the results from the visitor survey showed that 70.2% visitors responded that romanticism/chivalry was “important” and the organizers estimated that only 35% of visitors would respond that romanticism/chivalry was “important,” organizers underestimated how “important” romanticism/chivalry was to visitors by 2.01 times.

Opinions

This section indicates a mix of components related to visitors’ opinions about the festival. This section will be presented very similarly to the motivations section. The only exception will be advertisements.

Advertisement

Advertisements received a chi-square value of 9.10. With a significance level of 0.90 (Table 17), organizers' perceptions are closely related to the responses from visitors. The only minor discrepancy was the estimates the organizers gave for television and newspaper advertisements. The organizers indicated that television was 12% and newspaper was 9%, whereas the survey indicated television was 9% and newspaper was 12%.

The Program

The program given out to the festival-goers has two parts – the stage show listing and the map on the inside. The importance level for both aspects of the program provided interesting results. In terms of the importance of the stage show listing, a chi-square value of 6.33 was generated and it had a significance level of 0.05. As such, there does not appear to be a significant difference between how organizers perceived the importance of the show listing and visitors'. The organizer underestimated how "important" the show listing in the program was to visitors by just 1.07 times.

On the other hand, the importance of the map within the program received a chi-square value of 19.28 and this value had a significance level of 0.001. A significant gap was found between organizers' perceptions and visitors opinions. Organizers underestimated how "important" the map in the program was to visitors by 1.17 times.

Opinions	n	χ^2	significance
How CRF was advertised to visitors	577	9.10	0.90
Importance of Show Listings in Program	742	6.33	0.05
Importance of Languages/Accents at CRF	743	0.34	0.90
Importance of Presence of ATMs	751	829.97	0.001
Importance of the Map in Program	674	19.28	0.001
Importance of the presence of Celtic Culture	740	236.63	0.001

Shaded Gray signifies a gap

Table 17. Identification of a gap for visitors' opinions.

ATM on Grounds

The importance of having an ATM on the festival grounds received a chi-square value of 829.97. This value was found to be significant at the 0.001 level. This was identified as a significant gap. Organizers overestimated how “important” an ATM was by 2.11 times.

Presence of Accents from Actors

The importance that visitors place on the presence of accents from costumed actors/employees received a chi-square value of 0.34. This value has a significance level of 0.90 and indicates that organizers and visitors see the presence of accents from costumed actors/employees in similar ways. Organizers underestimated how much this variable was “important” to visitors by 1.03 times.

Presence of Celtic Culture

The importance level for the presence of Celtic culture (English, Welsh, Scottish, and/or Irish) received a chi-square value of 236.63. This value is significant at 0.001. Therefore, the presence of Celtic Culture was identified as providing a significant gap between organizers’ perceptions and visitor opinions. Organizers underestimated how “important” Celtic Culture was to visitors by 1.69 times.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the Carolina Renaissance Festival comparing how organizers perceive visitors to the actual characteristics of surveyed visitors. This study spanned three years: the first two years for pilot studies in order to identify/build the study survey devices and to get a general sense of the questions to be asked, and the third year for data collection for the main study analysis, and write-up. As the study progressed, in-depth interviews with stage performers or rennies and interviews with the festival organizers were conducted and helped to provide deeper interpretation of survey results.

The analysis of the comparison between organizers and visitor sought to determine if gaps exist between four sets of characteristics—demographics, intensity of visits, motivations, and opinions. The measurement devices designed and implemented were a visitor questionnaire and an organizer questionnaire. The quantitative methods of chi-square (goodness-of-fit) tests and t-tests were used to assist in identifying significant gaps in organizer knowledge. If the level of significance was 0.001 for either statistical test, the associated variable would be labeled as providing a gap. In this final chapter, I will note some sample biases, summarize the key findings from this study, potential applications, and some concluding remarks.

Sample Biases

There were three main biases for this study: age, gender, and gender of research team. Although people of all ages were solicited to participate in the visitor survey, age was a bias because visitors under the age of 18 years tended not to avoid participating or had another family member fill out a survey instead of them. Gender was also a bias, because many of the males solicited for surveying tended to ask their female counterpart (i.e. wife, girlfriend, or friend) if they wanted fill out a survey for them. Additionally, gender was also a bias due to the gender of the research team. The research team, primarily being males tended to attach and sometimes solicited more female rather than male visitors.

Implications of Study for the Carolina Renaissance Festival

It is apparent that this study has utility for the organizers (mainly the marketing director) of the Carolina Renaissance Festival. This section will mention some of these potential future applications for the Carolina Renaissance Festival. By understanding and knowing about their visitors, the Carolina Renaissance Festival organizers can take the data and create the best possible festival for visitors. Paths for applications of findings of the study for the Carolina Renaissance Festival are summarized as follows:

(1) The organizers of the Carolina Renaissance Festival can use this information to better serve their particular market and conduct a marketing strategy that is appropriate for their festival. The information gained from this study can, in particular, assist the

festival's marketing team; where they can provide collected demographic data to their (potential) sponsors. If the demographic data of the sponsors match up with the demographic data of visitors or perhaps find new sponsors that match the visitors attending the festival, the sponsors would be more inclined to (continue to) be sponsors of the Carolina Renaissance Festival.

(2) The Carolina Renaissance Festival organizers might consider making minor changes to the imagery that they use in their promotional material that could invoke a difference in time. This could provoke more of a sense of the era – experiencing the time period that could provide a feel of romanticism and the clothes of the time. These minor changes can instill a better sense of motivation for visitors to attend the Carolina Renaissance Festival from those factors the organizers are currently lacking in their current promotional materials.

(3) Probably the most important aspect that can assist Carolina Renaissance festival organizers is gaining a better insight into to their visitors' motives for attending.

For this study of the Carolina Renaissance Festival, thirteen motivational factors were considered. Organizers' perception of the relative strength of these motives was the least successful of the four sections measured in this study. Organizers' estimates compared with surveyed results left ten of thirteen motivational factors with a significant gap. This knowledge gap, by far, is the largest and therefore can be the most improved. The three motivational factors that did not exhibit a gap were: craft / shopping, food, and the joust. These three elements most likely make up the strongest elements for the festival itself as well as for the visitors perceptions of what generally can be expected at a

Renaissance festival. Since knowledge for the importance of visitors motivations had the highest gap, this is probably the aspect that can be most improved upon. To assist, Table 18 shows the rank order of the importance of the thirteen motivational factors. Since the organizers provided some motivations as having the same level of importance, they are duplicate rankings in the organizer rankings.

Implications of Study for Festival Research

Scholarly research has been primarily focused on the festival, visitors and organizers but not all of these elements. This study is one of few studies that have combined all of these elements. The implications of this study for future festival research are as follows:

(1) Future research needs to explore the various sub-cultures (both visitors and performers) that participate and attend Renaissance Festivals. Although this study's focus is a comparison of the festival organizers' perceptions of visitors and the actual surveyed characteristics of visitors, it has been noted in other literature that there is a diverse spectrum of visitors to Renaissance Festivals as well as other types of festivals;

(2) Future research needs to explore if similar gaps exist at other festivals;

(3) Future research needs to explore additional avenues of festivals that all connected. Much of festival research, to date, has been focused on one aspect of the festival—motivations. This is surprising since no one aspect makes for a successful working festival. There are hundreds, if not thousands of items that make up a festival—visitors, organizers, volunteers, exhibitors, vendors, sponsor, etc. Given the vastness of

Motivations	Visitor Ranking	Organizer Ranking
<i>Break from the Routine</i>	1	1
<i>Experience the Time Period</i>	2	11
<i>Family Togetherness</i>	3	3
<i>Stage Shows</i>	4	4
<i>Socializing</i>	5	8
<i>Dress-up / Garb</i>	6	10
<i>Romanticism</i>	7	10
<i>Crafts / Shopping</i>	8	4
<i>Just Something to do</i>	9	2
<i>Joust</i>	10	4
<i>Food</i>	11	7
<i>Education / History</i>	12	11
<i>Links to Personal Heritage</i>	13	8

Table 18. Visitor versus Organizer ranking for motivations.

the roles, there has been little, if any, work that has discussed the interactions between these groups and how their relations create and maintain a successful festival.

This study suggests the existence of significant gaps between the perceptions and estimates of Carolina Renaissance Festival organizers and the actual motivations, behavior, and opinions of visitors. In total twenty-one of thirty-two variables were identified as providing significant knowledge gaps.

Concluding Remarks and Reflection

This study was a growing experience which started in 2003 with a passion for tourism, Renaissance festivals, and all the people, groups, and (sub-)cultures involved at these festivals. While some festivals have become traditions among families, some (generally teenagers or college aged) have a need/desire to feed their attraction/addiction to Renaissance festivals and get their Renaissance fix.

This study brings together many aspects of tourism and production/consumerism spanning across many fields of study. This is one of the underlying reasons why this empirical study is important to real world applications—interconnectivity.

In retrospect, a few things could have occurred differently. Some of these changes would/could be:

- To collect data through the use of an internet survey, over the course of the entire seven week span in which the festival operates. This could then present a large sample and closer comparison, instead of a broad

generalization of the 130,000 plus visitors attending the Carolina Renaissance Festival;

- To conduct a more specialized study on another of many complex aspects of Renaissance festivals visitors that may include a more qualitative approach, such as on the vendor or the local actors working at Renaissance festival; and
- To revise the questionnaires. Even after, two pilot studies, there remained confusion among visitor about what some of the questions were trying to ask. This could have been resolved through an additional pilot study merely.

Additionally, one of this study's strengths is to contribute to scholarly research in the fields of tourism, festival, visitor, and Renaissance festival studies. This study has led to a greater understanding of not only visitors but also Renaissance festivals. Renaissance festivals are a unique yet complex environment. Extensive studies Renaissance festival studies are still in its infancy.

In this study, I have investigated a unique form of festival. These Renaissance festivals seem more complex than other types of festivals. Yet, Renaissance festivals share much with local the nature of community festivals, perhaps on a larger scale. Festivals are about bringing people together.

One of the motivations for the work of festival organizers is to reach as many consumers as possible. Yet, they are underutilizing the tools to reach that potential. Renaissance festivals have found their niche, yet organizers of these festivals have a hard

time explaining who occupies the niche and why. In order for organizers of the Carolina Renaissance Festival to have a more successful operation, they need to know their visitors by having a closer relationship to the facts rather than unsubstantiated perceptions. These festivals are experiences that their visitors will never forget. With small changes, visitors to the Carolina Renaissance Festival can have an even more unforgettable experience at the faire.

References

- Aday, L. A. 1996. Designing and Conducting Health Surveys: A Comprehensive Guide. 2nd edition. Jossey-Boss: San Francisco, CA,
- Anderson, K. J. 2005. "Splinter." (pp. 39-59). Renaissance Faire. Norton, A. and Rabe, J. (eds.) New York: Daw Books.
- Backman, K. F., Backman, S. J., Uysal, M. and Sunshine, K. M. 1995. "Event Tourism: An Examination of Motivations and Activities." *Festival Management and Event Tourism* (currently known as *Event Management*). 3(1): 15-24.
- Baker, K. 1991. "Using Geodemographics in Market Research Surveys." *The Statistician*. Special Issue: Survey Design, Methodology and Analysis. 40(2):203-207.
- Belk, R. W. and Coata, J. A. 1998. "The Mountain Man Myth: A Contemporary Consuming Fantasy." *Journal of Consumer Research*. 25(3): 218-240.
- Burke, P. J. and Reitzes, D. C. 1981. "The Link between Identity and Role Performance." *Social Psychology Quarterly*. 44(2): 83-92.
- Burke, P. J. and Tully, J. C. 1977. "The Measurement of Role Identity." *Social Forces*. 55(4): 881-897.
- Burton, D. N. 2000. "Corporate Culture-Gap Assessments within a Segmented Population: A Comparative Analysis of Culture norms within a Geographically Segmented Population." Unpublished D.B.A. Dissertation. School of Business and Entrepreneurship. Nova Southeastern University.
- Chhabra, D., Sills, E., and Rea, P. 2002. "Tourist Expenditures at Heritage Festivals." *Event Management*. 7(4): 221-230.
- Chhabra, D., Healy, R., and Sills E. 2003. "Staged Authenticity and Heritage Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research*. 30(3): 702-719.
- "Clan Tinker": Whistle, E., Carrio, A., Whistle, M., Whistle, S., Whistle, R., and Whistle, S. 13 March 2005. Interview by Justin Gross. Tape Recorded. Apache Junction, AZ.
- Coggeshall, J. M. 1993. "Sauerkrat and Souvlakia: Ethnic Festivals as Performances of Identity." (pp. 33-47). Celebrations of Identity: Multiple Voices in American Ritual Performance. Frese, P.R. (ed). Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.

- Colgin, J. Interview by Justin Gross. Tape Recording. 11 March 2005. Apache Junction, AZ.
- Congressional Record: Senate. 1998. 'National Tartan Day' (text of Resolution). Congressional Record – senate, Vol. 144: p. S2373.
- Cook, I. 1997. "Participant Observation." (pp. 127-149). Methods in Human Geography: A Guide for Students Doing Research Projects. (eds.) Flowerdew, R. and Martin, D. Longman, Essex, England.
- Crompton, J. L. and McKay, S. L. 1997. "Motives of Visitors Attending Festival Events." *Annals of Tourism Research*. 24(2): 425-439.
- Derrett, R. 2003. "Making Sense of How Festivals Demonstrate a Community's Sense of Place." *Event Management*. 8(1): 49-58.
- Edensor, T. 2001. "Performing Tourism, Staging Tourism: (Re)producing Tourist Space and Practice." *Tourist Studies*. 1(1): 59-81.
- Fesenmaier, D. R, Hwang, Y., Pan, B., and Gretzel, U. 29 May 2006. "Behavioral Foundations for Travel Destination Recommendation Systems." National Laboratory for Tourism and eCommerce: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Formica, S. and. Uysal, M. 1996. A Market Segmentation of Festival Visitors: Umbria Jazz Festival in Italy. *Festival Management & Event Tourism* (currently known as *Event Management*). 3(4): 175-182.
- 1998. "Market Segment of an International Cultural-Historical event in Italy." *Journal of Travel Research*. 36(4): 16-24.
- Getz, D. 2002. "Why Festivals Fail." *Event Management*. 7(4): 209-219.
- Goodale, T. 1991. "Bridging the Gap Between Research, Practice and Policy." *Journal of Applied Recreation Research*. 16(3): 169-178.
- Goss, J. 1995. "'We know Who You Are and We know Where You Live': The Instrumental Rationality of Geodemographic Systems." *Economic Geography*. 71(2): 171-198.
- Gothan, K. F. 2005. "Theorizing urban Spectacles: Festivals, Tourism, and the Transformation of Urban Space." *City*. 9(2): 225-246.

- Hague, E. 2001. "Haggis and Heritage: Representing Scotland in the United States." (pp109-129). Leisure Cultures, Consumption, and Commodification. Leisure Studies Association, University of Brighton, Eastbourne, U.K.
- Hallinan, M.T. 1996. "Bridging the gap between Research and Practice." *Sociology of Education*. Extra issue: Special Issue on Sociology and Educational Policy: Bridging Scholarship and Practice Together. Vol. 69. 131-134.
- Jamieson, K. 2004. "The Festival Gaze and Its Boundaries." *Space & Culture*. 7(1): 64-75.
- Jones, K. L. and Alderman, D. H. 2003. "Antiques Tourism and the Selling of Heritage in Eastern North Carolina." *The North Carolina Geographer*. Vol. 11:74-87.
- Kim, C., Scott, D., Thigpen, J. F., and Kim, S-S. 1998. "Economic Impact of a Birding Festival." *Festival Management & Event Tourism*. (currently called *Event Management*). Vol. 5: 51-58.
- Kim, K., Uysal, M., and Chen, J. S. 2002. "Festival Visitor Motivation from the Organizers' Point of View." *Event Management*. 7(2):127-134.
- Kim, H. 2004. "Serious Leisure, Participation and Experience in Tourism: Authenticity and Ritual in a Renaissance Festival." Unpublished PhD Dissertation. Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Sciences: Texas A&M University.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. 1998. Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage. University of California Press.
- Lee, C-K. 2000. "A Comparative Study of Caucasian and Asian Visitors to a Cultural Expo in an Asian Setting." *Tourism Management*. 21(2): 169-176.
- Lee, C.-K., Lee, Y.-K., and Wicks, B. E. 2004. "Segmentation of Festival Motivation by Nationality and Satisfaction." *Tourism Management*. Vol. 25:61-70.
- Lee, G. 2001. "Constructs of Tourists' Destination Loyalty and Market Segmentation." Unpublished PhD Dissertation. Department of Forestry and Natural Resources: Prudue University.
- Lee, T-H. and Crompton, J. 1992. "Measuring Novelty Seeking in Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research*. Vol. 19. 732-751.
- Linklater, A. 1998. "Day the US Wraps itself in Tartans." *The Herald*. p2.

- Lothain, E. 2001. "Tourism Games and the Commodification of Tradition." (pp. 93-106). Leisure Cultures, Consumption, and Commodification. Leisure Studies Association, University of Brighton, Eastbourne, U.K.
- MacCannell, D. 1976. The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class. Schocken Books: New York.
- MacDonald, S. 1999. "The Gaelic Renaissance and Scotland's Identities." *Scottish Affairs*. No. 26. Winter: 100-118.
- MacRae, E. 2001. "A Highland Gathering: A Ritual that Creates, Maintains and Reinforces Scottish Cultural Identity." Unpublished Thesis. Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, Canada.
- McCathy, J. and Hague, E. 2004. "Race, Nation, and Nature: The Cultural Politics of 'Celtic' Identification in the American West." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 94(2): 387-408.
- Mohr, K., Backman, K. F., Gahan, L. W., and Backman, S. J. 1993. "An Investigation of Festival Motivations and Event Satisfaction by Visitor Type." *Festival Management and Event Tourism* (currently known as *Event Management*). 1(3):89-97.
- Moore, J. S. 1997. "A descriptive Study of the Michigan Renaissance Festival." Unpublished Master's Thesis. Department of Theatre: Michigan State University.
- Norton, A. and Rabe, J. (eds.) 2005. "Faire Games" (pp. 1-3) Renaissance Faire. New York: Daw Books.
- (NTHP) National Trust for Historic Preservation. 2000 Dec. 19th. "Nationwide Heritage Tourism is Booming" Website.
http://www.nationaltrust.org/news/docs/20001219_heritage_tourism.html
- O'Brien, K. 1987. "The effectiveness of persuasion a promotional videotape for the Michigan Renaissance Festival." Unpublished Master's Thesis. Department of Communications. Michigan State University.
- O'Leary, S. and Deegan, J. 2005. "Ireland's Image as a Tourism Destination in France: Attribute Importance and Performance." *Journal of Travel Research*. 43(3): 247-256.
- Olsen, D. H. and Timothy, D. J. 2002. "Contested Religious Heritage: Differing Views of Moron Heritage." *Tourism Recreation Research*. 27(2): 7-15.

- Pearce, D. 1987. Tourism Today: A Geographical Analysis. New York: Wiley.
- Prentice, R. and Anderdson, V. 2003. "Festival as Creative Destination." *Annals of Tourism Research*. 30(1): 7-30.
- Printer, T. L. 2005. "Heritage Tourism and Archaeology: Critical Issues." *The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) Archaeological Record*. 5(3): 9-11.
- Ray, C. 2001. Highland Heritage: Scottish Americans in the American South. University of North Carolina Press.
- Richardson, S. L. 1996. "Understanding Tourism Encounter: A Phenomenology of the International Travel Experience." Unpublished PhD Dissertation. Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Sciences: Texas A&M University.
- Robinson, A. and Noël, J-G. 1991. "Research Needs for Festivals: A Management Perspective." *Journal of Applied Recreation Research*. 16(1): 78-88.
- Saleh, F. and Ryan, C. 1993. "Jazz and Knitwear: Factors That Attract Tourists to Festivals." *Tourism Management*. 14(4): 289-297.
- SCA. Seen on 4 April 2005. Bumper sticker. The Society for Creative Anachronism.
- Schmidt, L. 2004. "The Celtic Revival: Looking behind the Phenomenon." Unpublished Paper. <http://www-personal.si.umich.edu/~rfrost/courses/ArchivesSem/papers/LauraSchmidt.pdf>
- Schneider, I. E. and Backman, S. J. 1996. "Cross-Cultural Equivalence of Festival Motivations: A Study in Jordan." *Festival Management and Event Tourism* (currently known as *Event Management*). 4(3/4): 139-144.
- Scott, D. 1996. "A Comparison of Visitors' Motivations to attend Three Urban Festival." *Festival Management and Event Tourism* (currently known as *Event Management*). 3(3): 121-128.
- Stackpole, M. A. 2005. "Brewed Fortune." (pp. 125-146). Renaissance Faire. Norton, A. and Rabe, J. (eds.) New York: Daw Books.
- Stebbins, R. 1992. Amateurs, Professionals, and Serious Leisure. Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press.
- Stebbins, R. 2001a. "Serious Leisure." *Society*. May/June: 53-57.

- Stebbins, R. 2001b. New Directions in the Theory and Research of Serious Leisure. New York: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Taylor, N. (William Nelson Taylor). 2000. America Bizarro: A Guide to Freaky Festivals, Groovy Gatherings, Kooky Contests, and Other Strange Happenings Across the USA. St. Martin's Griffin: New York
- TIA. 2005 April 27. Website. Travel Industry Association of America. <http://www.tia.org/Travel/traveltrends.asp>.
- Turner, V. 1969. The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure. Chicago: Aldine.
- Uysal, M., Gahan, L, and Martin, B. 1993. "An Examination of Event Motivations: A Case Study." *Festival Management and Event Tourism* (currently known as *Event Management*). 1(1): 5-10.
- Walterman, S. 1998. "Carnivals for Élites? The Cultural Politics of Arts Festivals." *Progress in Human Geography*. 22(1):35-74.
- Wicks, B. E. and Fesenmaier, D. R. 1993. "A Comparison of Visitor and Vendor Perceptions of Service Quality at a Special Event." *Festival Management and Event Tourism* (currently known as *Event Management*). 1(1): 19-26.
- Zeithaml, V. A., Parasuramana, A., and Barry, L. L. 1990. Delivering Quality Service. New York: The Free Press.

9. Please estimate the percentages of if visitors are planning to attend more than once this year?

_____ (%) Yes

_____ (%) No

10. Please estimate the percentages of if visitors plan on returning next year?

_____ (%) Yes

_____ (%) Maybe / not sure yet

_____ (%) No

11. What is your perception for the percentages of if visitors have ever attended a Renaissance Festival other than Carolina Renaissance Festival?

_____ (%) Yes

_____ (%) No

11b. Where/what other Renaissance festivals do you estimate of visitors have been to?

12. How much time (in hours) did average visitor spend at the festival?

13. What is your perception for the average visitor group size?

14. Please estimate the percentages of how much personal interaction with costumed/garb people do visitors have at the festival?

_____ (%) Rarely (0-1 times)

_____ (%) Only in passing (2-4)

_____ (%) Often (5-9)

_____ (%) As much as I could (10 +)

15. Please estimate the percentages of if visitors purchased a souvenir?

_____ (%) Yes

_____ (%) No

16. Please estimate the percentages of how visitors rated the importance of the following items while at the festival:

	Not Important	Very Important
The <u>listing of shows and times</u> within their program for organizing their day	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
The <u>map</u> within their program for getting around in the festival today	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
The presence of an ATM	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
The representation of accents	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
The presence of Celtic culture	_____ (%)	_____ (%)

16b. Please explain the reasoning for your answers.

17. What is your perception for the percentages of how visitors rated the level importance of the following motivations for attended the Carolina Renaissance Festival:

	Not Important	Very Important
Family Togetherness / Activity	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Learning about History	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Crafts / Shopping	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Experiencing the time period	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Turkey legs / Food	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Break from your Daily Routine	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Socializing	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Links to your Personal Heritage	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Just Something to do	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Stage Performances	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Joust	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Garb / Dress up	_____ (%)	_____ (%)
Romanticism / Chivalry	_____ (%)	_____ (%)

17b. Please explain the reasoning for your answers.

Appendix B: Carolina Renaissance Festival Visitor Survey

Carolina Renaissance Festival Survey

Date_____

The Department of Geography at East Carolina University is doing research to better understand those who attend festivals. We are student researchers conducting this project. We value your opinions and hope that you will take a minute to complete this questionnaire. No individual results will be released. The information you provide might help to improve future experiences at the festival.

1. Where do you live?

City_____ State_____ Zip Code _____

2. Please indicate your gender.

☐ Male

☐ Female

3. What year were you born?

(If you are under 18, go to question 6)

4. Please indicate your highest education level. (mark only one)

☐ High School

☐ Some College

☐ Associates degree

☐ Bachelors degree

☐ Some Graduate Work

☐ Masters degree

☐ PhD or equivalent

5. Please indicate your job title/type below. (Please do not list business name)

☐ Retired

☐ A Student

☐ A Stay at Home Parent

☐ Unemployed

OR

Other:_____

6. What is your heritage background(s)?

☐ English

☐ Welsh

OR

☐ I don't know my heritage background

☐ Irish

☐ Scottish

☐ Other: _____

7. How did you primarily hear about the Renaissance Festival? (mark only one)

☐ Newspaper

☐ Television

☐ Radio

☐ Neighbor / Friend / Family

☐ Internet

☐ Poster / Flier

☐ Other _____

8. Not counting this year, how many years have you attended the festival in the past?

☐ 0, this is my 1st year

☐ 1 - 2

☐ 3 - 5

☐ 6 - 9

☐ 10+

9. Have/are you planning to attend more than once this year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, how many times? _____

10. Do/are you plan on returning next year?

☐ Yes

☐ Maybe / not sure yet

☐ No

11. Have you ever attended a Renaissance Festival other than this one?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, where? _____

12. How much time (in hours) did you spend at the festival today? _____

13. Including yourself, how many people are in your group? _____

14. How much personal interaction with costumed/garb people did you have at the festival today?

☐ Rarely (0-1 times)

☐ Only in passing (2-4)

☐ Often (5-9)

☐ As much as I could (10 +)

15. Did you purchase a souvenir?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, what? _____

16. In the space below, please indicate what food you purchased while at the festival today?

17. Please rate the importance of the following items while at/in the festival:

(Please check one for each)

Not Important

Very Important

The <u>listing of shows and times</u> within your program for organizing your day	☐	☐	☐	☐
The <u>map</u> within your program for getting around in the festival today	☐	☐	☐	☐
The presence of an ATM	☐	☐	☐	☐
The representation of language(s)	☐	☐	☐	☐
The presence of Celtic culture	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. Please rate the importance of the following reasons for your visit to the Festival:

(Please check one for each)

	Not Important		Very Important	
Family Togetherness / Activity	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learning about History	☐	☐	☐	☐
Crafts / Shopping	☐	☐	☐	☐
Experiencing the time period	☐	☐	☐	☐
Turkey legs / Food	☐	☐	☐	☐
Break from your Daily Routine	☐	☐	☐	☐
Socializing	☐	☐	☐	☐
Links to your Personal Heritage	☐	☐	☐	☐
Just Something to do	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stage Performances	☐	☐	☐	☐
Joust	☐	☐	☐	☐
Garb / Dress up	☐	☐	☐	☐
Romanticism / Chivalry	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please list any other reasons for your visit below: