

DEVELOPING MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS FOR PURE MICHIGAN HUNT:
A MEANS-END CHAIN ANALYSIS OF MICHIGAN HUNTERS

By

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ABSTRACT

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Pure Michigan Hunt (PMH) is a new multi-species drawing that offers its three winners a license to hunt elk, black bear, antlerless deer, spring and fall turkey, and waterfowl. Building awareness, interest and participation in the drawing is vital to the success of the campaign. Identifying marketing communications tactics and appeals that will engage Michigan hunters and ultimately increase Pure Michigan Hunt application sales is the main objective of this research.

Personal laddering interviews and focus groups were utilized to identify hunters' means-end chain knowledge structures associated with hunting, perceptions and opinions of PMH and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the barriers and facilitators to hunters' purchasing of a PMH application. The findings were used to revise previous typologies of hunters, and develop recommendations for future advertising. In addition, the findings support the value of using established consumer research methods for the development of marketing strategies. These methods can enhance the public images of state agencies such as the DNR that oversees statewide hunting and wildlife conservation, and generate more interest in specialty licensing programs. This research provides valuable insight of hunters, communication strategies, and advertising appeals that other states should also consider implementing.

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INTRODUCTION

Hunting is a popular sport across the United States, but the number of people who hunt has waned over time, most dramatically over the last decade. The number of hunters sixteen and older in the United States decreased from 14 million in 1996 to about 12.5 million in 2006 (Southwick Associates, 2007). Looking at Michigan in particular, the state has seen a major decline in the total number of hunting licenses sold: from 862,000 in 2002 to just over 750,000 in 2006 (Southwick Associates, 2007). Having primary jurisdiction over licensing and determination of species that may be hunted, some state-level wildlife agencies are creating big game hunting options as one way to address the problem. In the creation of new hunting opportunities, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR; formally Department of Natural Resources and Environment) is certainly interested in increasing hunter participation, but also increasing revenues for the department.

In fiscal year 2010-2011, the DNR's budget totaled \$719 million (Wild, 2011) that came from many sources. Most of the funding (55 percent; \$399 million) is from state restricted revenue (mainly license and permit fees) (Wild, 2011). Other sources include the Federal Government, General Fund/General Purpose (GF/GP), interdepartmental grants (IDG), and other private sources. (Wild, 2011) The GF/GP funding is money without legislative restrictions and has decreased by over 75 percent from \$174.0 million in fiscal year 1999-2000 to just \$41.3 million in fiscal year 2010-2011 (Wild, 2011).

The Game and Fish Protection Fund is the largest restricted funding source within the DNR. In fiscal year 2010-2011, \$68.4 million was appropriated from this fund and its sub funds in the DNR budget (Wild, 2011). This fund, primarily financed from the sale of hunting and

fishing licenses, is used for conservation efforts in Michigan. The DNR hopes to aggregate this fund with extra funds in the coming years.

As the number of hunters and license revenues continue to wane, there is a need for additional sources of revenue for the Fish and Game Protection Fund. Michigan's new program, Pure Michigan Hunt (PMH), offers a source of revenue for the DNR, while also providing hunters the opportunity to hunt multiple species with a single drawing win. The research presented in this paper is part of a larger program of research that seeks to identify a profile of hunters who are the best prospects for the new big game program, and best practices for marketing to them. Little research currently exists that profiles hunters for marketing efforts. My research presents a new typology of hunters using a means-end chain approach for the identification of hunter values and rituals. The findings can be used to leverage marketing communications campaigns and appeals.

The overarching objective of my research is to identify effective marketing and advertising appeals for hunters to ultimately brand Pure Michigan Hunt and increase application sales. The focus will be on the identification of a message strategy that can be translated into several communication vehicles such as brochures, websites, and magazine and broadcast advertising. The primary goal is to increase the number of hunters who participate in PMH and the secondary goal is to increase per capita ticket volume.

BACKGROUND

Pure Michigan Hunt is a unique multi-species hunting opportunity that began in 2009. Michigan is the first state east of the Mississippi River to offer a drawing for a multi-species hunting license. Three winners are selected each year to receive one license for elk, bear, spring turkey, fall turkey, and one antlerless deer. Winners may also have first selection at a managed waterfowl area during a reserved hunt period.

Applications for PMH cost four dollars and applicants may purchase as many as they desire. The application period runs March 1 through December 31. Applicants must be at least 12 years of age and completed hunter safety training. Non-residents may apply, but only Michigan hunters are eligible to harvest (or hunt and kill) an elk. In Michigan, hunters may only draw one elk license in their lives; PMH offers these hunters yet another opportunity. Those who enter are eligible for the elk license regardless of past success, and the drawing does not affect eligibility for applying or purchasing other hunting licenses.

The first year of drawing (2009), the application period ran June through December and attracted 12,693 unique applicants who purchased a total of 33,758 applications, resulting in \$135,000 raised for the DNR's Game and Fish Protection Fund. Sixty-five percent of applications were purchased online; a significantly higher proportion than any other license bought online. The second application year (2010), however, was less successful. A total of 8,719 unique applicants purchased 23,437 licenses, a 31 percent decrease in both. It is difficult to pinpoint the cause or causes of diminished sales, however results may be a reflection of inadequate branding, a sagging Michigan economy, or a combination of both.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Background

Just as people have evolved, hunting has also undergone changes over time. Understanding the evolution of hunting is important for understanding how Pure Michigan Hunt can be effectively marketed. Today, the majority of hunters are not hunting as a mean of survival, but for a recreation or sport. This transition of purpose is necessary for understanding modern hunters.

While hunting had once been primarily necessary for life, hunting has also transitioned to become an economic driver. The impact of hunting and other outdoor activities is still influential today and is discussed in more detail in the following section. As traditional hunting continues to evolve, marketing and advertising must be altered in order to cater to modern hunters. For the DNR, this means that more research on hunters as consumers is needed to understand the motivations that now drive hunting activities. This research addresses the views and motivations of modern Michigan hunters for the development of such marketing activities.

Economic Impact of Hunting

The economic impact of hunting is quite substantial. In addition to buying hunting equipment, hunters also buy trucks, and boats; they stay at motels and resorts; and they purchase new clothing relevant to hunting. In 2001, each hunter spent an average of \$1,896 per year on hunting; that is about 5.5% of the typical wage earner's annual income (IAFWA, 2002). Furthermore, a "rippling effect" of these expenditures generates three times more impact on the U.S. economy sustaining many rural communities (IAFWA, 2002).

In 2006, one out of 20 jobs (nearly 6.5 million nationwide), were supported by outdoor recreation in America; hunting alone supported 322,570 (Outdoor Industry Foundation, 2006). What's more, hunters delivered more than \$481 million to the states through excise taxes on certain equipment (IAFW, 2002). This same report (2002) names the top ten states in annual hunting-related retail sales with New York topping the list at over \$1.76 billion. Adding in the ripple effect, there is a total economic additive of \$3.63 billion to the total economy in New York alone. Michigan ranked seventh with over \$671 million in retail sales and a total ripple effect of over \$1.28 billion (IAFWA, 2002).

In 2007, there were about 20,000 sporting goods retailers in the United States that drew a combined revenue of about \$35 billion (National Sporting Goods Association, 2010). Some major players in the U.S. market include: Big 5 Sporting Goods, Cabela's, Dick's Sporting Goods, Bass Pro Shops, Dover Saddlery and Dreams. Given that sporting goods is a lucrative and specialized industry that plays a significant role in the U.S. economy, there is surprisingly little literature on modern hunters as consumers.

Although hunting participation has waned over time, it is clear that hunting plays a forceful role in the economy. For the DNR, the sale of hunting equipment is especially relevant as excise taxes are distributed to state wildlife departments. As described in more detail later, understanding consumers allows for more effective communication strategies to be developed.

Demographic Trends and Characteristics of Hunters

In a study conducted by Responsive Management in association with the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) (2008), the authors distinguish three demographic trends

having particularly strong implications for hunting: the trend toward increasing urbanization, the aging of the American population, and the declining proportion that is Caucasian.

Urbanization

It is no surprise that the U.S. population is gravitating toward urban living. There is evidence as far back as the first Census that demonstrates the migration from rural to urban housing. It wasn't until about 1920, however, that urban housing became more popular. In 2000, twenty-two percent were reported living in rural areas, and that number is expected to continue to diminish.

Because America has gravitated toward a preference for urban living, a reduction in rural lifestyles has coincided with a decreasing interest in the sport of hunting. States with low housing density (more rural) are more likely to have experienced an increase in the number of hunters between 1991 and 2001 (Responsive Management/NSSF, 2008). A data analysis from the 2000 Census indicates that Michigan ranks 38th in housing density per square mile of land area (74.5 housing units) in the country. When compared to other states in the Midwest, Michigan sits near the bottom of the list followed only by Illinois (74.5) and Ohio (116.8). These findings suggest that Michigan is more rural than most of the nation and neighboring states.

Outdoor sporting and wildlife researchers have suggested four aspects of urbanization's effects on hunting participation (Responsive Management/NSSF, 2008). One aspect is the dilution of the hunting culture itself. While increasing numbers of people move to more urban areas, there are fewer people growing up in hunter-friendly environments (Responsive Management/NSSF, 2008). The second aspect is the deterioration of a hunter's social group for hunting as people move from place to place (Responsive Management/NSSF, 2008). Because

people like to hunt in groups with friends, family, or both, a social group may deteriorate as more people move into urban areas. Third, urbanization takes away land may have been available for animal habitation and thus, hunting (Responsive Management/NSSF, 2008). As big cities continue to expand into rural areas, there is less land available for hunting; the hunted areas consequently become more concentrated with other hunters. Finally, an additional barrier limits participation: hunters must travel farther to find quality hunting grounds (Responsive Management/NSSF, 2008). When hunters must travel farther or compete for land to hunt, participation is effected.

Given the important relationship between rural residency and hunting participation, demographic trends toward increased urbanization present an additional challenge to recruitment and retention of hunters. As rural living continues to decrease, particularly in Michigan, the DNR will face challenges recruiting participation in PMH opportunity as well.

Aging

Another important demographic trend influencing hunting participation is our aging society (Responsive Management/NSSF, 2008). United States Census Bureau data indicates that the median age in the U.S. increased from 22.9 years old at the beginning of the twentieth century to 35.3 years old at the end of the century (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). Furthermore, the median age of white Americans, the demographic group most likely to hunt, increased from 31.7 in 1980 to 38.6 in 2000 (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002).

The *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau in 1991, 1996, 2001, and 2006 reported continuing decline in hunting participation, and found a rapid increase in hunting through teenage years; a steady decline after

the age of 25 followed. Increasing age is detrimental to hunting participation because young adults are more likely to hunt than are older adults.

Ethnicity

According 2010 U.S. census data, 78.9 percent of the population describes themselves as “white alone,” a decrease of two-percent from 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010b). Other ethnicities, however, have increased dramatically over the last decade: those identifying themselves as “Asian alone” increase 34.9 percent to 2.4 percent; “Hispanic or Latino” population in Michigan increased 34.7 percent to 4.4 percent since 2000. Table 1 further displays the population by race in Michigan.

The proportion of the U.S. population made up of the ethnicity group identified as white/Caucasian is declining. This demographic is also the most likely to hunt (Responsive Management/NSSF, 2008). Current scholarship has not been able to indicate why Caucasians are most likely to hunt, or why other ethnicities are less likely to participate. This information, however, is necessary for the DNR going forward.

Female hunters

A study conducted by Responsive Management (1995) found that while hunting participation among men has decreased, the number of women participating in hunting has either remained stable or increased since the 1980s. In a more recent study, the National Sporting Good Association (NSGA) (2003) also showed an increase in participation by women, while hunting for men has decreased. While this finding provides a marketing opportunity to the DNR, another

found that men were more responsive than women to numerous mechanisms encouraging them to hunt or shoot more often (Responsive Management, 1996).

From a demographic standpoint, female hunters mirror the hunting population when it comes to age, income, and area of residence, but differ from the hunting population as a whole when it comes to level of education (Responsive Management, 2005). Just as the case with the general hunting population, female hunters who have only a high school degree hunt the most days and take the most trips of all education levels; however, women who have a college degree are likely to hunt about the same number of days and take the same number of hunting trips as a female hunter with no higher than a high school diploma (USFWS, 2001). This finding is quite different from males who will hunt more when they only have a high school degree.

TABLE 1
STATE POPULATION BY RACE
MICHIGAN: 2010

Race	Percent of Population	Percent Change 2000-2010	
White alone	78.9%	-2.0%	↓
Black or African American alone	14.2%	-0.9%	↓
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.6%	6.0%	↑
Asian alone	2.4%	34.9%	↑
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	-	-3.3%	↓
Some Other Race alone	1.5%	13.5%	↑
Two or More Races	2.3%	19.7%	↑
Hispanic or Latino	4.4%	34.7%	↑

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2010b)

Demographics of Michigan Hunters

As of 2009, 86 percent (8,600,474) of Michigan residents lived in the southern-Lower Peninsula (SLP; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010a), and purchases more hunting licenses than other areas in the state in this year; a major transition from 2006 statistics that showed a higher interest in hunting from the Upper Peninsula (UP) instead (Frawley). A total of 796,684 people purchased hunting licenses in 2009, 96 percent (764,945) of licenses were sold to Michigan residents (Southwick Associates, 2010). A breakdown of hunting licenses sold in 2009 is displayed in Table 2. The percentages in this table refer the total license sold in a given year to Michigan residents; these figures exclude non-resident hunters. More than one-fifth (21.2 percent; 308,317 license buyers) of Michigan hunters reside in the Detroit-Warren-Livonia area (Southwick, 2010). About 9 percent of hunters purchased licenses for small game compared to about 6% of those in the northern-Lower Peninsula (NLP) and about 2 percent of those residing in the southern-Lower Peninsula (Frawley, 2006). Again in 2006, nearly 16 percent of residents in the UP purchased deer hunting licenses compared to 15 percent for those in the NLP and 5 percent in the SLP (Frawley, 2006). Consistent with national hunting data, about 92 percent of the license buyers were male (Southwick, 2010). The proportion of female hunters was highest among those buying elk, deer, and bear hunting licenses (Frawley, 2006). A relatively small proportion, however, (3.3 percent) of the hunting licenses for furbearers, small game, and waterfowl were sold to females (Frawley, 2006).

As previously described, the role of hunting has evolved over time. As hunting becomes less essential in the lives of Americans, the demographic of hunters also changes. The previous research described in this section suggests that hunters still reside in rural areas, but are diminishing as the country becomes more urban. Furthermore, Caucasians, the ethnic group most

likely to hunt, is becoming less concentrated in proportion to the rest of America. Despite a decline in male hunters, participation of female hunters remains relatively constant. In Michigan, most hunters reside in the eastern Lower Peninsula, but a greater proportion of hunters reside in the Upper Peninsula. Overall, Michigan hunters are demographically similar to other American hunters.

For a greater comprehension of hunters beyond demographics, wildlife researchers have investigated motivations for hunting and developed typologies based on their findings. The following section describes three different hunter typologies.

Typologies of Hunters

Past research has identified typologies of hunters (Keller, 1978; Decker et al., 1984; Norton, 2007). Kellert (1978) was the first to break hunters into groups by distinguishing them as utilitarian, nature-oriented, or sport hunters. Norton (2007) compiled a more extensive typography, or phases, that included: shooter, limiting out, trophy, methods, and sportsman. Lastly, Decker et al. (1984) categorized hunters as either affiliative, achievement, or appreciative. It is imperative to segment hunters into groups because each may have a different motivation for hunting. For PMH, it is particularly important to define a target market not solely upon demographics, but in terms of individual motivations for hunting.

Kellert's (1978) typology is fairly straightforward. *Utilitarian hunters* are only interested in the meat of the species they hunt for consumption. These hunters are not necessarily interested in the size of the game, or being a part of nature as other hunters are. They simply hunt for the sake of providing game meat for family nourishment. Conversely, *nature hunters* take part in hunting because they enjoy being outdoors. These "hunters" may not even bring a gun on a hunt,

but are considered hunters because they continue purchasing licenses. Lastly Kellert (1978) describes *sport hunters* as those who hunt for trophy animals. These hunters wait for the biggest, or highest scoring game (e.g., most spikes on antlers, longest turkey beard), they think they will see that season.

Norton (2007) expands Kellert's typologies into five phases or stages of hunting. The *shooter* is someone who simply enjoys shooting a gun, but is not particularly interested in the size of the game, or how they accomplish the kill, but plainly enjoy the feeling of shooting a gun. The *limiting out* stage includes hunters only interested in harvesting the maximum number of species allowed by their license. Again, this group is not primarily interested in the size of the game. *Trophy hunters* are essentially defined the same way as sport hunters that Kellert (1978) define: they go for the biggest and highest scoring game. Another type of hunter described by Norton (2007) is the *methods hunter*. This hunter seeks the most effective and efficient way to hunt particular species. They plan, map, and study the animal to find the best method for each specific hunt. Lastly, Norton's (2007) *sportsman* is comparable to Kellert's (1978) nature hunter in that they both enjoy being outdoors and simply hunt 'because they can.' These hunters are typically older in age and have a connection to the land they hunt. They enjoy being with nature and find pride in being able to hunt.

TABLE 2**SUMMARY OF MICHIGAN RESIDENT LICENSE BUYERS BY LICENSE TYPE (2004-2009)**

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Deer	732,121	91.6%	691,662	91.2%	713,335	91.1%	703,452	91.5%	712,442	92.2%	703,945	92.0%
Big Game	9,255	1.2%	9,412	1.2%	9,494	1.2%	9,434	1.2%	10,293	1.3%	9,098	1.2%
Turkey	116,682	14.6%	115,065	15.2%	130,996	16.7%	125,947	16.4%	122,675	15.9%	125,208	16.4%
Small Game	295,889	37.0%	278,132	36.7%	285,137	36.4%	282,616	36.7%	262,589	34.0%	255,869	33.4%
Migratory Bird	147,419	18.4%	143,331	18.9%	146,854	18.8%	147,103	19.1%	140,289	18.1%	139,030	18.2%
Waterfowl	59,787	7.5%	57,051	7.5%	57,550	7.4%	56,073	7.3%	55,224	7.1%	55,274	7.2%
Resident Total	799,288	96.1%	758,636	96.3%	782,876	96.2%	769,161	96.1%	773,012	96.0%	764,945	96.0%

(Southwick Associates, 2010)

Decker et al. (1984) take a different approach to segmenting hunters. It can be argued that these researchers come the closest to identifying the values associated with hunting. *Affiliative hunters* purely enjoy hunting in a group of friends and family because they enjoy the social interaction that emanates from hunting. They suggest that hunters may also belong to the *achievement* category that seeks to meet some sort of goal (Decker et al. 1984). This type of hunter may be most comparable to the trophy or sport hunters described by the aforementioned researchers. Similar to the nature and sportsman hunter previously described, *appreciative hunters* seek peace, belongingness, and familiarity with nature (Decker et al. 1984).

An underlying concept to each of these presented typologies is that of culture, or the meanings that are shared by most people in a social group. Hunters, while defined by different characteristics or phases of hunting, appear to share meanings of enjoyment and excitement in association with the experience.

Culture

Culture can be viewed and defined in many ways. At a macro level, it can describe a society or a nation. More narrowly, it can be analyzed among subcultures or even smaller groups (e.g., reference groups or people that share a particular interest). Here, we investigate the cultural meanings shared by hunters. Understanding these meanings can help professionals to guide marketing and advertising tactics.

It is not uncommon for marketers to analyze culture in terms of its major attributes or its content. It is, however, more than represented values (Swidler, 1986). The content of culture includes the beliefs, attitudes, goals, and values held by most people in a society, as well as the meanings of characteristic behaviors, rules, customs, and norms that most people follow (Peter &

Olson, 2005). An analysis that investigates the content of culture is useful to understand the meanings and concepts from the consumers who create and use them.

Culture can also be conceptualized as a process. In his model, McCracken (1986) displays how cultural meanings can be transferred between social and physical environments, products and services, and in individual consumers (Figure 1). The model describes how the actions of organizations and individuals in the society transfer cultural meaning between these locations. There are two ways meaning is transferred: first, with marketing strategies, and second by consumers who actively seek to acquire culture meanings in products to establish a desirable personal identity or self-concept (McCracken, 1986).

In the context of hunting we are particularly interested in the cultural meanings that are transferred from the product (the species) or the experience into the consumer. The cultural process model identifies rituals as ways of moving meanings from a product to a consumer (McCracken, 1986).

Rituals

Rituals are best defined as symbolic actions performed by consumers to create, affirm, evoke, or revise certain cultural meanings (Belk et al., 1988). There are many forms of rituals presented in the cultural process model including: *acquisition* (purchasing and consuming a product), *possession* (acquiring meanings in products), *exchange* (transferring meanings through products), *grooming* (meanings transferred through the use of personal care products), and *divestment* (removing meaning from products) rituals (McCracken, 1986). Surprisingly, there is little research that describes the rituals associated with hunting. Bronner (2004) is one exemption, having completed an ethnographic study of hunters focusing on rituals associated

with hunting.

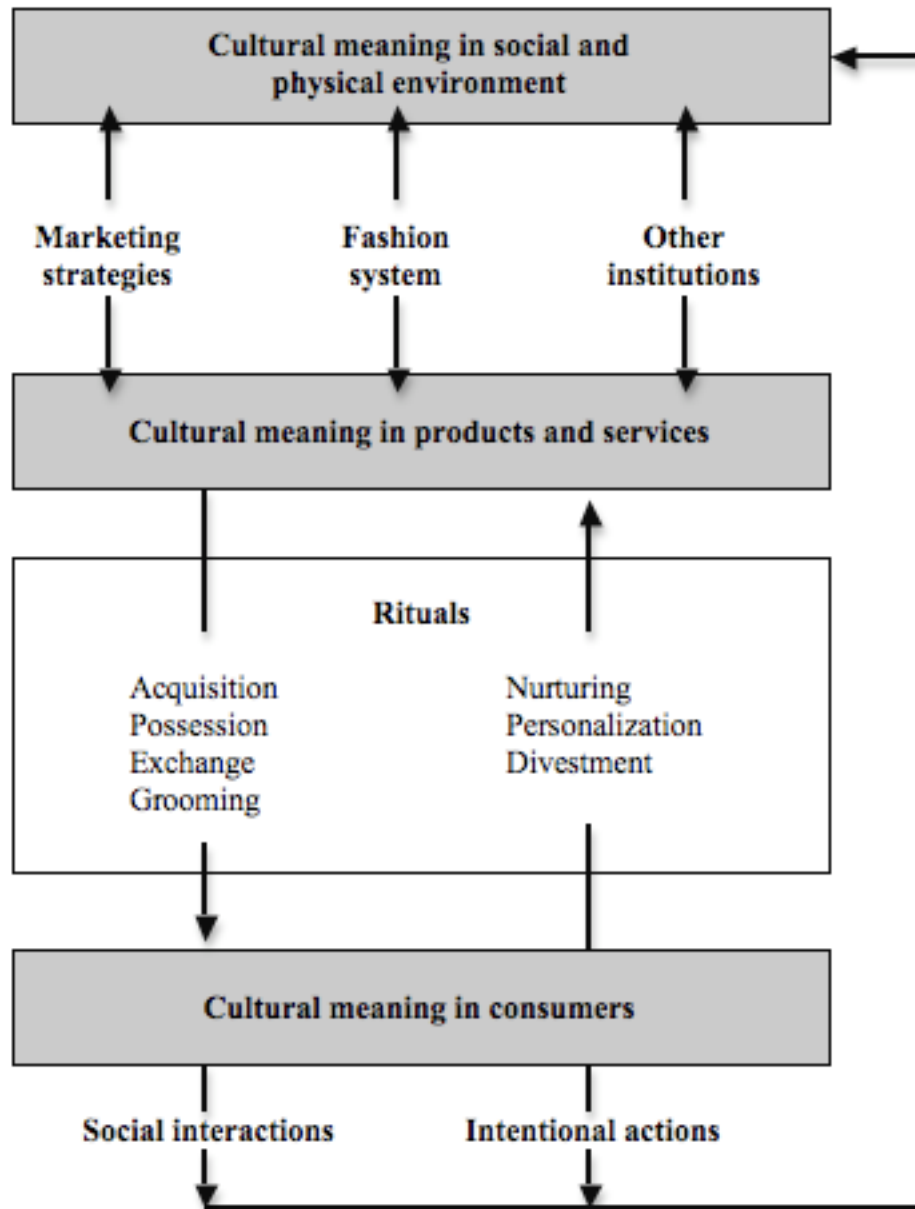
In his research, Bronner (2004) identified rituals in which hunters describe blood smearing and heart eating of their hunted species. Less ‘barbaric’ rituals included chili or venison meals, a shirttail cutting ceremony when someone misses a clear shot, and the passing down of hunting equipment as heirlooms or gifts. Each of these ritualistic examples can help explain how rituals are involved in transferring culture from the species to the hunter.

Examples of acquisition rituals include the aforementioned cases of blood smearing and heart eating in which the ‘product’ is a species. The cultural meanings transferred may include achievement, free-spiritedness, or excitement. Preparing and sharing a meal as well as the passing down of equipment are examples of exchange rituals in which people are transferring meaning of care, connectedness, and generosity to their friends or family. Shirttail cutting for those who missed a shot appears to be an example of an acquisition ritual. The meanings associated with a missed opportunity are applied to a piece of clothing with perhaps no existing meaning.

Both demographically and culturally, marketers have provided several options to understand consumers at a more micro level. Most effective, however, is the application of both demographic and cultural understandings of a target audience’s motivations in advertising and marketing schemas. Included in the *understanding* of a culture is the way in which culture is transferred from a product or environment to a consumer. With a comprehensive understanding of an audience, segmentation can be leveraged to reach an interested and engaged audience at a personal level.

FIGURE 1

TRANSFERRING CULTURE BETWEEN SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS,
PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, AND TO INDIVIDUAL CONSUMERS



(McCracken, 1986)

Market Segmentation

Typologies can be applied to market segmentation, a technique widely used in market research. It can be defined as “the process of splitting customers into different groups, or segments, within which customers with similar characteristics have similar needs” (McDonald & Dunbar, 1995). Additionally, Rowley (2000) explains that segmentation “offers a better understanding of customers and their needs... [and] more effective targeting of resources.” The aspects of understanding consumer needs and targeting resources are especially important for any business with an interest in the bottom line.

Traditionally, demographic variables such as geography and locations, age, sex, occupation and social class have been used for market segmentation... not because it is the best method, but because the data is usually readily available (Rowley, 2000). Demographic analysis is useful for the development of communication strategies designed for a specific psychographic segment of consumers.

It is outside the scope of this study to conduct a full psychographic segmentation of hunters. Wells (1975) defines psychographic research as “quantitative research intended to place consumers on psychological dimensions;” it goes beyond demographics and has the possibility to offer new insights and unique conclusions. My research is the first of its kind in segmenting hunters as consumers, and will act as the foundation for direction before pursuing a full psychographic study. However, basic hunter psychographics (i.e. lifestyle, attitudes, beliefs, values, personality, and motivations) will be examined by using qualitative methods to extend the profile of hunters beyond demographics alone.

Given that prior research seems to suggest the importance of psychographic segmentation, I seek the psychographic profile of Michigan hunters that will be useful for

guiding a quantitative study of hunters in the future:

Research Question 1: *What is the psychographic profile of today's Michigan hunters?*

Previous typologies of hunters have been able to differentiate between distinct types of hunters by behavior and motivations. These typologies alone could be used for market segmentation. However, for the development of advertising messages, these typologies would be more comprehensive by seeking the values associated with the typologies or phases of hunting. This research extends previous typologies by simply asking “why?” For example, looking at the Decker et al. (1984) description of an appreciative hunter, we will ask *why* hunters are seeking peace, belongingness, and familiarity with nature. Asking why will allow us to identify the terminal values that hunters associate with hunting to assist in the development of advertising appeals.

Values

Values are important factors to consumer behavior, and have thus been widely studied. Values are a powerful force in our everyday lives that guide actions, attitudes, and judgments. (Hetsroni, 2000). A generally accepted definition of a value has been presented by Rokeach (1973, pg. 276) as “an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of an existence is personally-psychologically or socially-culturally preferable to a converse mode of conduct or an opposite end state of existence.” Values such as maturity, pragmatism, chastity, dignity, popularity, freedom, and self-respect are considered to be among the foundational elements of personality that influence perceptions, attitudes, emotions, and behaviors (Pollay,

1987). Additionally, as Ko et al. (2010) suggest, marketers must understand the linkage between products and the consumer values those products represent; and one way to do that is with the means-end chain (MEC) originally presented by Gutman (1982). Sheth (1983) argues the linkage between consumer values and products is more useful than focusing on product attributes. Furthermore, Ko et al. (2010) suggest the MEC can “apply to new product development, brand positioning, advertising strategies, and market segmentation (pg. 452).”

As part of a typical marketing analysis of cultural content, marketers usually begin by identifying values of a social group. Our interest here is to tap into the terminal values that are end-states of existence for hunters: for use in the development of advertising appeals and psychographic segmentation. Knowing the terminal values of a social group can help marketers understand the basis for the customer-product relationship for those consumers.

A second research question was formulated to understand the linkage that connects hunting to hunters’ terminal values:

RQ2: *What does hunting mean to Michigan hunters (i.e., what are the terminal values associated with hunting)*

The values that hunters associate with hunting will be identified with the means-end chain laddering technique described in detail below.

Means-End Chain

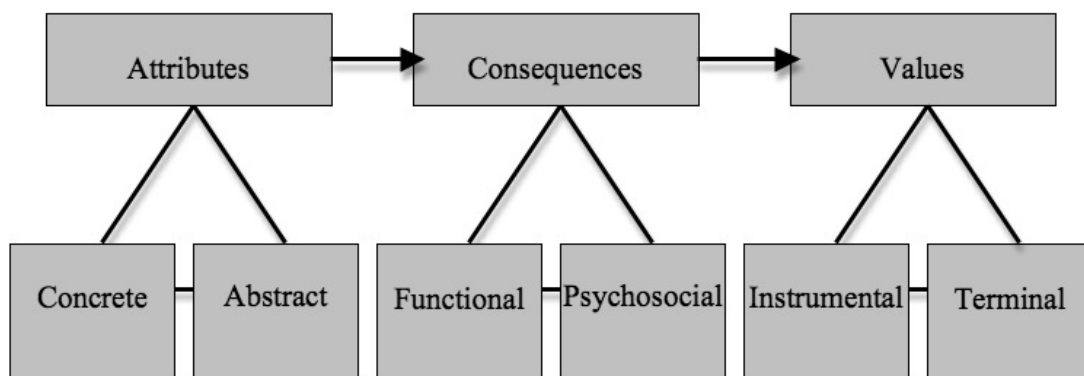
To induce product desirability, advertising should express consumer values (Pollay, 1987). In essence, marketers must understand the linkage that exists between products and the

consumer values those products represent. In this study, the ‘product’ is actually an experience, hunting. The MEC represents the linkage between hunting and the hunter’s terminal values. The MEC is a model of product knowledge structure, and suggests that consumers view products in relationship to themselves (Gutman, 1982) (Figure 2).

Structured in schema, knowledge is a collection of beliefs that the consumer creates and connects through the process of comprehension (Gutman, 1982). There are three levels of consumer knowledge – attributes, consequences and values – that together form the MEC, a simple, hierarchical chain of associations (Olson and Reynolds, 2001). The MEC model argues that consumers purchase products based on the consequences and connections to values suggested by the products’ attributes rather than from the physical attributes alone (Gutman, 1982). In other words, products are a means to an end that strengthens personal values (Olson and Reynolds, 1983).

FIGURE 2

MEANS-END CHAIN MODEL OF PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURE THAT REPRESENTS THE LINKAGE BETWEEN PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES AND TERMINAL VALUES IN CONSUMERS



(Gutman, 1982)

Here, *attributes* are perceived qualities of a hunt that refer to physical characteristics of products as well as more subjective, less tangible characteristics. *Consequences* are either functional (relatively immediate, tangible, physical experiences) or psychosocial (emotional or social and more symbolic experiences). *Values* are the beliefs that people hold about themselves; desirable values include goals that represent governing drives and motivations (Reynolds et al., 2001).

This model is critical for developing an effective communication strategy. Utilizing in-depth interviews and focus groups, I was able to further profile Michigan hunters. When these factors are realized, advertising can be created specifically around the terminal values, or what people are seeking from their hunting experiences. Identifying the ‘hook’ for advertising with the MEC leads to my third research question:

RQ3: *What are the social-psychological benefits of hunting to hunters; i.e., what is the ‘hook’ for Michigan hunters that can be leveraged into advertising appeals (identify the means-end chain connections for Michigan hunters)?*

To create an effective communication strategy for PMH, it is imperative to understand the hunting culture, the process of moving meaning from products (or experiences, like hunting) to hunters, and the core values that are linked to product purchases. MEC interviews and focus groups were conducted with area hunters to 1) understand what core values are linked to hunting, 2) what types of rituals they view as important, and 3) what messaging may be most effective for different types of hunters.

ADVERTISING

Since the beginning of PMH in 2009, the DNR has taken efforts to promote hunting license applications to prospective Michigan Hunters. To display posters and flyers as well as provide informational booklets, the DNR has utilized 1,500 licensing agents around the state. In 2009, prize money was awarded to the licensing agents that sold the most PMH applications. News releases and e-mail blasts have also been used as communication strategies. The winners for the 2010 drawing received a case of *Nuge Java* brand coffee from Evelyn Bay Coffee Company, archery equipment from Ten Point Crossbows, Horton Manufacturing and Darton Bows, as well as vests and turkey mating-call instruments from the National Wildlife Turkey Federation (NWTf).

In addition to current promotion activities, the DNR hopes to increase sales and visibility of the new opportunity with advertising. As with most new product offerings, PMH is relatively unknown, and therefore, building brand awareness and product knowledge is a key component to the communication strategy.

Social Cognitive Theory

The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) is useful for understanding advertising effects and can be particularly useful to guide appeal development for relatively unknown products. To communicate about a product or service, ads may utilize an actor to represent the product. The SCT suggests that the characteristics of the model and the audience's perceptions of that model are important to successful ad effects.

Furthermore, the SCT explains learning and behavior as a combination of behavioral, personal, and environmental interactions (Bandura, 1986). Behavioral factors refer to behavioral patterns. Personal factors include cognitive, affective, and biological events; and environmental events are events that occur outside of the individual, but affect the individual's life.

According to the SCT, learning can be either observational or enactive (Bandura, 1986). *Observational learning* refers to an individual who watches someone else and then models the behavior they have observed. *Enactive learning* occurs when an individual performs the behavior, often through trial and error. Observational learning suggests that people watch a model achieve an outcome they wish to achieve, and learn through that interaction. Because a lottery-type drawing cannot be mastered through trial and error as enactive learning suggests, it seems logical to investigate the effects of observational learning (i.e. the effects of a past PMH winner on learning). This type of learning is discussed in greater detail in the following section.

Observational Learning

According to Bandura (1986), observation is the key to learning (Lerner & Steinberg, 2004). Learning, then, is dependent on how carefully an individual perceives what the other person (the model) is doing (Ferrari, 1996). Observational learning is the first type of learning that we experience as infants. We learn language, movement, and emotion by observing someone else (Bennett et al., 2005).

Observational learning can be a very efficient mode for learning. For example, when an individual observes a model's behavior, they are left with an image on how something can be accomplished (Weeks & Anderson, 2000). Learning by observation does not require trial and error; instead, an individual can access the cognitive representation formed by modeling and base

their behavior on this preconceived mental model (Adams, 1986; Ferrari, 1996; Lee & White, 1990; Pollock & Lee, 1992). Additionally, learners gain an idea of what outcomes to expect based on the outcomes observed from the model (Bandura, 1986; Ferrari, 1996).

There are several mechanisms guiding observational learning that are important for this discussion: attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation (Bandura, 1986; Wesch et al., 2007). Attention processes determine what the individual pays attention to. Retention processes explain what an individual remembers. The action observed must then be reproduced, known as motor reproduction. Finally, there must be motivation for the individual to learn the behavior, which affects the other processes presented. For instance, the individual must be motivated to first pay attention, then remember, and finally to practice the behavior. The motivation to pay attention can be either internal or external. An example of an internal motivator may be the desire for an individual to learn something to better himself; external motivators may be physical incentives, such as money. Whether internal or external, the motivation must be strong enough for the individual to reproduce the model's behavior (Bandura, 1986).

Modeling is a type of social comparison (Berger, 1977) and similarity, therefore, between the model and the individual impacts the effectiveness of modeling (Schunk, 1987). According to Festinger (1954), people compare themselves to others for evaluation of themselves when external standards are not readily accessible. As an example, weak learners tend to learn better from weak models; better learners learn more by focusing on stronger models (Braaksma et al., 2002). Similarities, however, do not automatically enhance learning from modeling (Schunk, 1987). There are some variables that do not make much of a difference. Prior research (Leifer et al., 1971) has indicated that subjects do not learn any more from members of their own gender

than they do from the opposite sex. Other research suggests that gender constructs does play a role with regard to gender roles, or task appropriateness (Schunk, 1987; Zimmerman & Koussa, 1975).

There are several factors that do seem to influence learning. When the perceived similarity between an individual and the model is high, the model has a greater the influence on consumer behavior (Bandura, 1986). Individuals that have higher similarity to the model with regard to background produce more modeled behavior (Rosekrans, 1967; Schunk 1987).

Observational learning can affect the motivation to change, or perform a behavior (Wesch et al., 2007); increase motivation, or involvement, with the activity (Clark & Ste-Marie, 2007); and increases message effectiveness (Andsager et al., 2006). Finally, observation can increase self-efficacy in observers (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Schunk & Hanson, 1985, 1989). Watching others succeed can increase one's own belief that he or she can too succeed, which can in turn influence learning. Self-efficacy is another aspect of SCT that helps to explain how people learn.

The Role of Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy as the belief in one's capability to engage in a particular course of action to achieve important attainments. He further describes four sources of efficacy expectations: verbal persuasion, emotional arousal, vicarious experience, and performance accomplishments (Bandura, 1977). For the purposes of this paper, performance accomplishment has little relevance tot the random drawing that my research seeks to use as an advertising campaign through which to improve license applications for PMH, because a lottery-type drawing cannot be *mastered*. The other three are detailed as follows:

Verbal persuasion is simply getting people to do what is desired of them by using a few well-chosen words in a short amount of time; it is easy and readily available (Bandura, 1977). The time to achieve verbal persuasion is much shorter compared to personal experience when time is needed to actually work through the task. In contrast to verbal persuasion, vicarious learning requires more time and effort because the individual must watch someone else work through a task.

Vicarious learning explains how we learn by watching others. If an individual observes someone else being successful at some task, and observes that individual getting through the experience with no adverse effects, then that individual may feel as if they will also experience success with continued effort and improvement (Bandura, 1977). However, modeling behavior of others tends to lead to weaker efficacy expectations that are more vulnerable to change and reduction than would performance accomplishment (Lewis et al., 2007).

Of these sources of learning, persuasion is less effective because there is no authentic experience, either by oneself or by a third party (Lewis et al., 2007). Emotional arousal can also be a source of efficacy expectation. It can, however, lead to a ‘fight’ response in which the individual processes a stressful situation and then responds accordingly, or it can cause a ‘flight’ response instead, leading to avoidance and additional stress as the individual is not only upset at the initial arousal but thoughts of their personal ineptitude (Bandura, 1977).

Potential exists for self-efficacy and involvement to increase when individuals see themselves being successful. Conversely, these may also decrease if an individual views their ideal self as unattainable, thus creating a gap that may lead the individual to think that although the ideal version of self can be successful, the real version cannot. Prior research has determined that even though most consumers are unaware of it, a match between a celebrity’s projected

image and their own ideal image leads to a more positive response to persuasive messages (Choi & Rifon, 2005; Bailenson et al., 2008).

Celebrity Literature

As previously mentioned, perceived similarity increases message effectiveness (Andsager et al., 2006), but aside from the exception of Choi and Rifon's (in press) research, no prior research exists on whether the similarity must be matched to an individual's ideal or actual self. Additionally, SCT suggests that identification with a subject should lead to greater learning (Bandura, 2001; Weber et al., 2006), but again does not specify whether this refers to seeing similarity with the actual self or ideal self.

There is research suggesting that models should be similar, but slightly better, with intelligence, socioeconomic success, and competence (Bandura, 1969), similar social status (Miller & Dollard, 1941), and the power to reward (Bandura et al., 1963). This seems to point to an idealized version of an individual: similar in status but with more power and intelligence.

Research indicates an individual is more inspired by a celebrity model that is similar to their own self-image than they are by a celebrity model lacking similarity (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). Additionally, people are most likely to compare themselves to another when that other resembles them in features, structure, and purpose (Holyoak & Thagard, 1995; Markman & Gentner, 1993). If inspiration is thought of as motivation to succeed, drawing similarities between one's self and another can lead to greater motivation as well as greater enjoyment.

There is some existing research differentiating between the effects of celebrities and models as spokespeople. For instance, McCracken (1989) suggests "models can offer demographic information such as distinctions of gender, age, and status, but these useful

meanings are relatively imprecise and blunt.” Celebrities, on the other hand, offer all of these useful meanings, but with “special precision” and a range of personalities and lifestyle meanings that the model cannot provide (McCracken, 1989). Furthermore, celebrities offer configurations of meaning that models can never possess. As McCracken (1989) observed: “No mere model could bring to Bally-Matrix the properties that Cher delivers” (pg. 315).

In regards to the differences that exist between celebrities and models, McCracken (1989) states:

...Celebrities are more powerful media than anonymous models and actors. Even when they deliver meanings that can be found elsewhere, they deliver them more powerfully. Celebrities evoke the meanings in their persona with greater vividness and clarity. Models and actors are, after all, merely ‘borrowing’ or acting out the meanings they bring to the ad. The celebrity, however, speaks with meanings of long acquaintance. Celebrities ‘own’ their meanings because they have created them on the public stage by dint of intense and repeated performance. (pg. 315)

I think there is an important element missing from this research distinguishing celebrities and models as spokespeople. What happens when the model is closely connected to the product - when the models are not acting, but speaking from their own experiences? Perhaps, in this case, the model possesses more cultural meaning than the celebrity. This may have a different effect on McCracken’s (1989) findings that celebrities possess more cultural meaning and thus provoke more consumption for products they endorse.

Local Celebrity

While prior research usually conceptualizes celebrities as a national, or international phenomenon, many of the interactional dynamics associated with celebrity status also operate at the regional, local and hyper-local levels (Ferris, 2010). Ferris (2010) goes on to suggest:

“If recognizability is the central element of celebrity status, the category of ‘celebrity’ may be expanded to considerable, and comparatively minor media players – such as local newscasters, minor league athletes, or local politicians – may be defined as celebrities, at least within their local context” (pg. 393).

For this research, celebrities could be defined in a much more narrow way. We draw from Hills’ (2003) definition of a “subculture celebrity:” a more narrowcast version of a celebrity, in which people are “treated as famous only by and for their fan audiences.” (p. 61). Provided the SCT suggests using a model most similar to the consumer to enhance persuasion effects, and celebrity research suggests using a celebrity to add a cultural dimension and symbolic meaning to the product being advertised, my fourth research questions was developed:

RQ4: *What type of source (model or celebrity) will be most effective for the promotion of Pure Michigan Hunt?*

There is a gap in previous research that views hunters as consumers that my research seeks to fulfill. For consumer researchers, the current research seeks to expand the use of the MEC from durable goods to experiences (e.g., hunting). The remainder of this paper will describe the two qualitative approaches used to understand hunters at a psychosocial level and the formulation of a communication strategy for the PMH.

Overview of Research Plan

Consumers’ insights gained through personal interviews and focus groups are typically used in the development of new product ideas and for testing advertising appeals. This rich qualitative data is used to create the ‘hook’ for advertising messages and leverage appeals. To

develop advertising appeals for PMH, hunters' insights will be gained using a two-prong approach to explore the core values and motivations of hunting. First, means-end chain (MEC) interviews with area hunters were conducted. The results of the MEC interviews are used to identify the terminal values associated with hunting and develop the advertising hook that could be appropriated into re-vamped advertising methods for PMH.

Second, the focus groups are described. The discussion guide for these groups was designed to understand the hunting culture, traditions, and rituals prevalent within local hunting communities. Additionally, the focus groups were designed to shed light onto PMH as a business to help understand the opportunities and limitations of the drawing.

STUDY 1: MEANS-END CHAIN INTERVIEWS

Methods

Participant Sampling and Recruitment

A sampling frame for recruiting was developed using the 2009 DNR database of past license purchases and applications for bear, elk, turkey, and PMH. Trophy hunters (those who are very selective in their hunt and seek the largest, or most valued species) and methods hunters (those who are more specialized hunters, and seek challenge in hunting) were the primary and secondary targets, respectively, for PMH. Prior license and application purchases were used as indicators of hunter motivation in PMH. These two groups of hunters were selected by the recommendation of wildlife professionals as the types of hunters most likely to be interested in purchasing a PMH application. Trophy hunters were identified by elk and bear applications or purchases; those who purchased a spring turkey application or license identified methods hunters. Thus, a list of possible participants was generated from those who had either applied for, or purchased a bear, elk, or spring turkey license in 2009, the inaugural year for PMH.

Participants must have been at least the age of 18 for two reasons: 1) although they are eligible to apply, those under 18 are not a target market for PMH, and 2) to stay in regulation of the Internal Review Board (IRB) standards (IRB Log Number: i036517). Prior research (Norton, 2007) suggested that older and more experienced hunters generally shifted more toward nature-oriented hunters, and tended to lose interest in the actual harvest of species. Additionally, a DNR professional informed us that older hunters would continue to purchase licenses to show support for the DNR, even though they would not physically hunt. Our target age group was 35 to 65; the

group we believed to be experienced and active participants of hunting. Only men were recruited as they represent the vast majority of Michigan hunters (92%) and are a primary target for PMH.

A random sample from the local geographic area was generated from the list. Participants were eligible to participate if they had either purchased or applied for a bear or elk license (trophy hunters) or a spring turkey license (methods hunters); were over the age of 18 and under the age of 65; if a mailing address and phone number were available; and if they lived within the county (Ingham) or in one of the four surrounding counties (i.e. Eaton, Shiawassee, Livingston, Jackson). Once the above qualifiers narrowed the list, hunters were provided a random number assigned by Excel's random number generator and sorted in ascending order. The first 50 trophy and the first 50 methods hunters were sent an introductory hard copy invitation to participate through the United States Postal Service (USPS). Potential participants were advised to expect a phone call from a researcher asking for their participation. If participants did choose to participate, a time and meeting place was arranged by their convenience.

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

Six 'trophy' hunters and three 'methods' hunters were interviewed using one-on-one in-depth, laddering interviews. Interviews were digitally voice recorded, and each participant received a \$25 gift card to a local sporting goods store. Interview participants were all male and ranged between the ages of 41 and 62 (mean age: 53.30). A list of participants and their profiles appear in Table 3.

TABLE 3
MEANS-END CHAIN INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

	Hunter Id.	Age
1) Trophy Hunters	T1	47
	T2	58
	T3	62
	T4	63
	T5	41
	T6	52
	Hunter Id.	Age
2) Methods Hunters	M1	63
	M2	51
	M3	48

Each interview started with the same question: “Of these three species (bear, elk, and spring turkey), which would you choose to hunt?” In most cases, this was an easy answer for the hunters. Hunters that struggled choosing were asked to rank them in the order they would hunt, a technique suggested by Olson and Reynolds (1983). The researcher would then ask why the species was more desirable to hunt. From there, laddering-- the MEC method for depth interviewing-- began. The interviewer brought the participant through the MEC chain beginning by identifying the attributes of the hunt, then moving to functional and psychosocial benefits, and ending at terminal values by simply mirroring their answers and asking, “why is that important to you?”

Results

The researchers had planned between 15 and 20 interviews to adequately capture and map means-end chain knowledge structures, however, data saturation occurred and patterns emerged after the ninth interview. By following the MEC model as a map, values were typically identified after about 35 minutes of interviewing. However, it was often typical for the hunter to continue telling stories, even after the researcher discovered the values of hunting extending the interview about 45 minutes to an hour.

RQ1: What is the psychographic profile of Michigan hunters?

Means-end chain interviews revealed commonalities among the different types of hunters. What quickly became clear was the degree of complexity associated with categorizing hunters, which harshly contrasted the past typology trend that had placed hunters into a one-dimensional typology. The reality is that many hunters participate in hunting for different reasons. It appears that motivations for hunting were not limited to just one previous typology, but rather a combination of the typologies previously discussed. For instance, the methods hunter may enjoy the challenge of hunting, but also enjoy the camaraderie that hunting offers, and being with nature.

Also, as previously mentioned, interviews revealed values that extended beyond just being outdoors, or spending time with family. Figures 3-11 provide the MECs from each interview. The psychographic profile is best described by examining the terminal values associated with hunting displayed by the summaries of MECs in Figure 12.

FIGURE 3

INTERVIEW 1: M1, 63

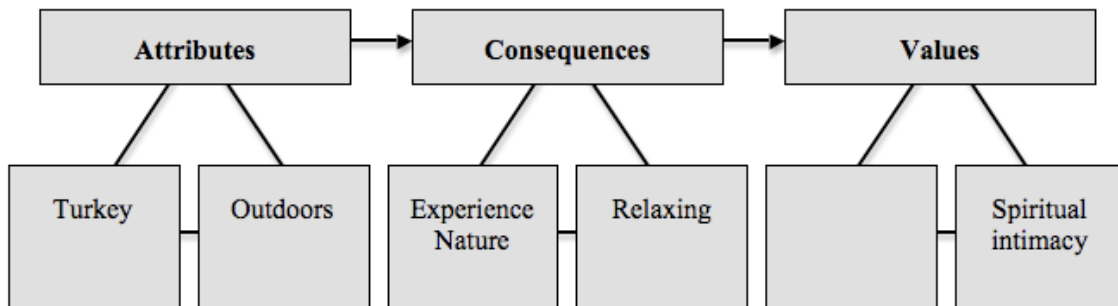


FIGURE 4

INTERVIEW 2: T2, 58

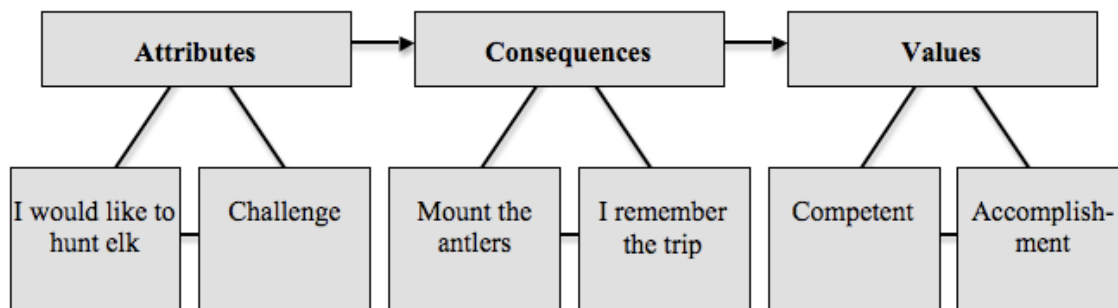


FIGURE 5

INTERVIEW 3: M2, 51

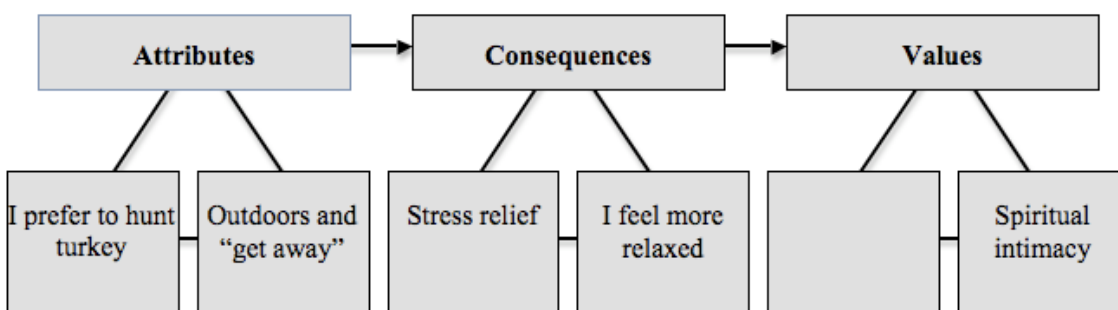


FIGURE 6

INTERVIEW 4: T3, 62

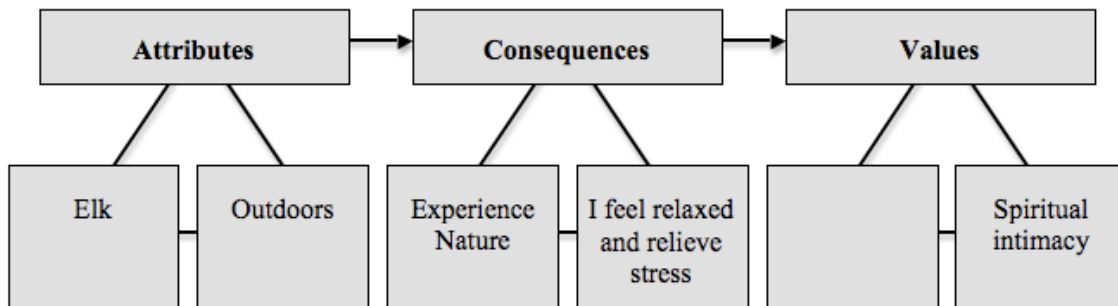


FIGURE 7

INTERVIEW 5: T1, 47

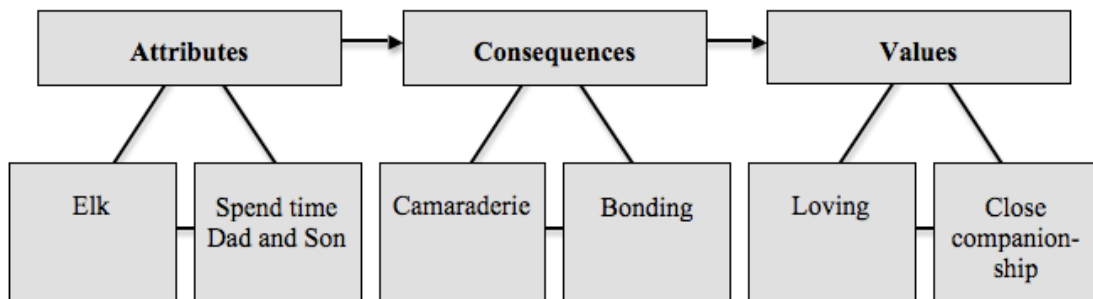


FIGURE 8

INTERVIEW 6: T4, 63

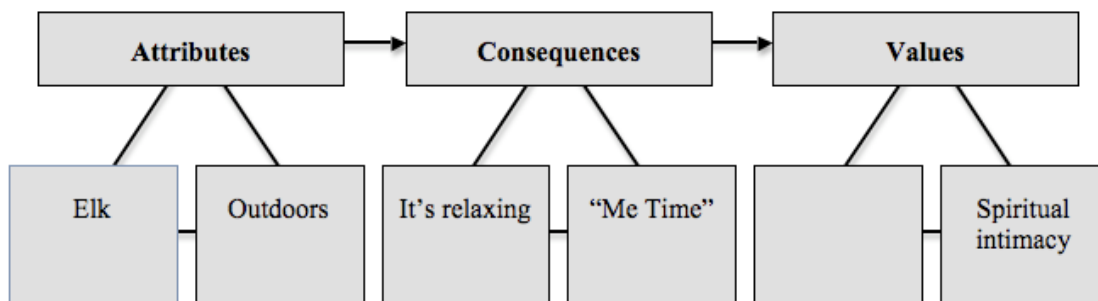


FIGURE 9

INTERVIEW 7: T6, 52

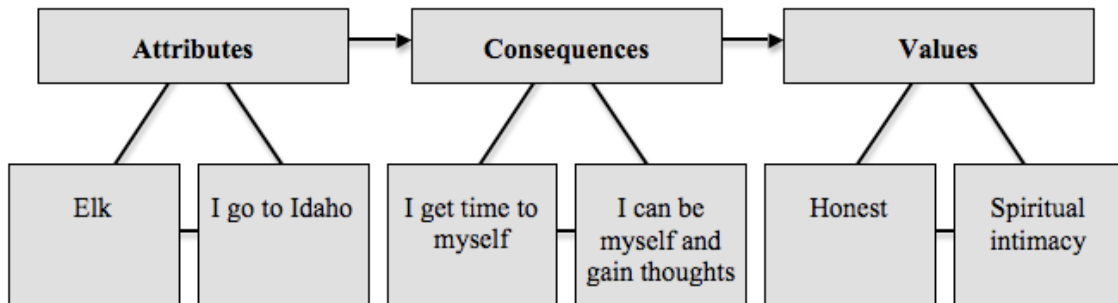


FIGURE 10

INTERVIEW 8: T5, 41

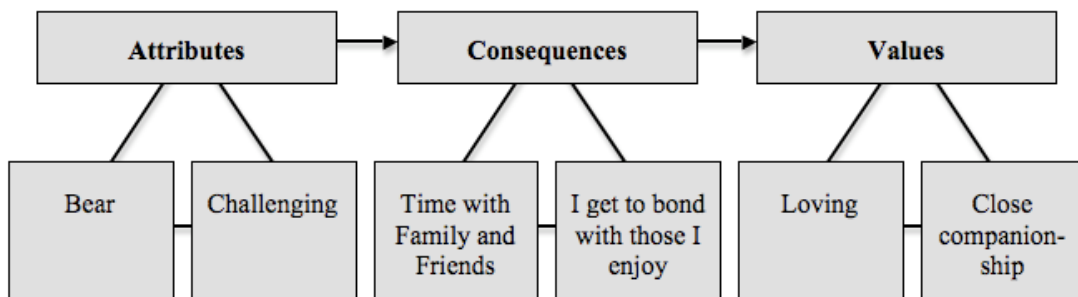


FIGURE 11

INTERVIEW 9: M3, 48

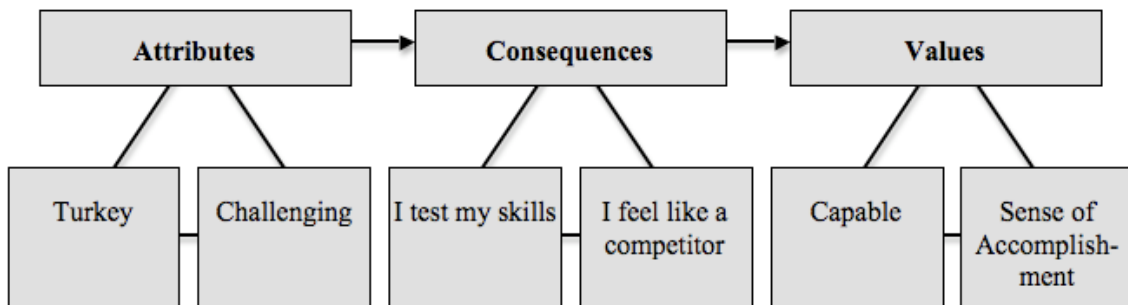
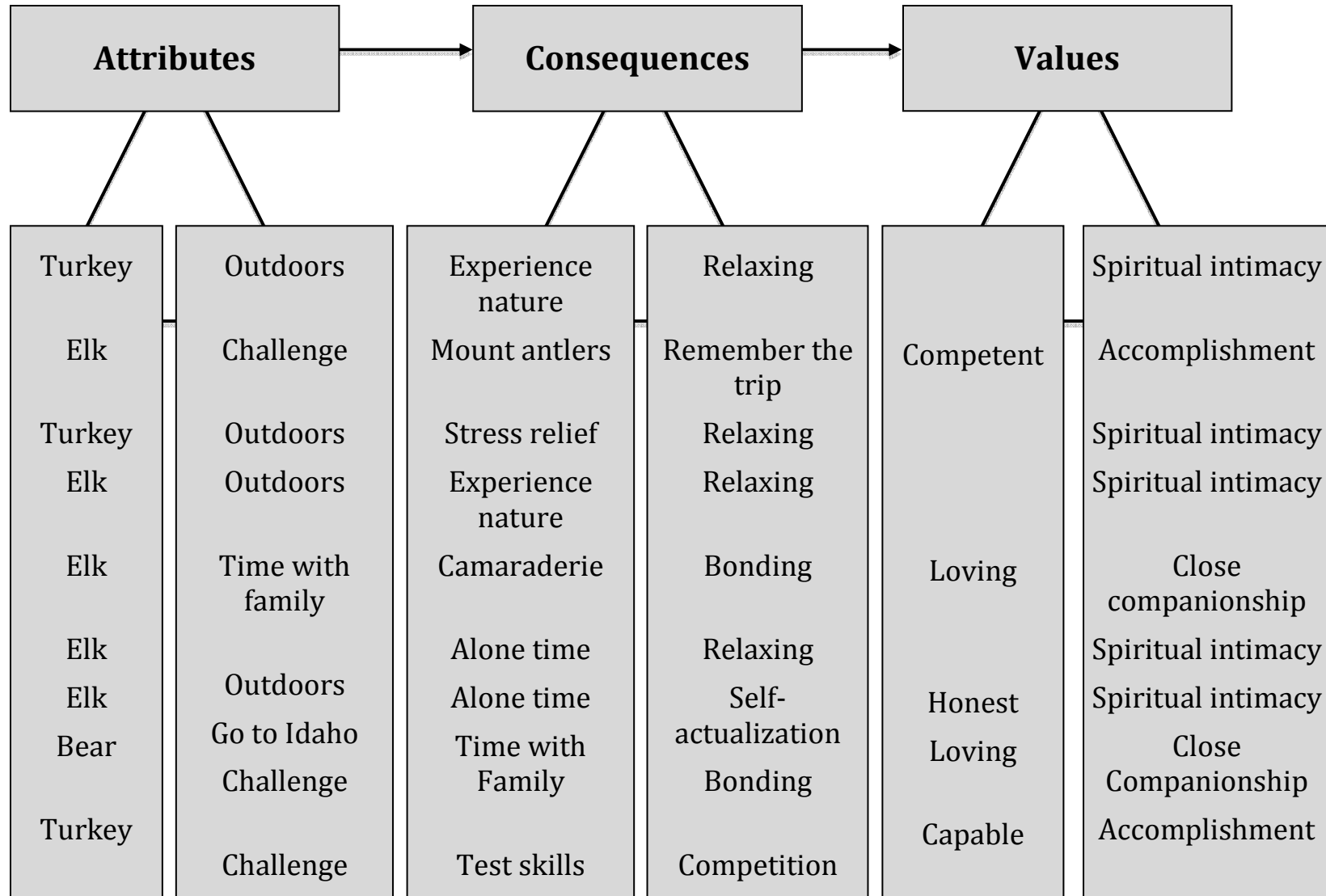


FIGURE 12

SUMMARY OF MEANS-END CHAIN INTERVIEWS



There are several terminal values that emerged from the MEC interviews. The most popular terminal value in the hunters we spoke with was spiritual intimacy, followed by close companionship, and accomplishment. These values do not appear to be dependent on the preferred species of hunt, or by the type of hunt we had assumed they were by previous hunting license purchase.

RQ2: What Does Hunting Mean to Michigan Hunters?

Prior research often stops at attributes, or at most, consequences of hunting. Here, hunters say that the reason they enjoy being outdoors is to relax, leading to the value of being a better father and/or husband at home, or for spirituality. These hunters are able to escape the everyday pressures of work and family to spend time alone in nature. Frequently hunters said that they wanted to spend time outdoors to relax, get relief from stress, and even find their spiritual time that, outside of the woods, they are otherwise deprived of. As two hunters revealed:

“If you’re stressed out you’re going to get out there and you may be thinking about being stressed out, but eventually you’re going to relax because there’s nothing to do except sit there and enjoy it. How many people go out there and sit for five or six hours in a tree stand and maybe never even see nothing. The guys I hunt with, we enjoy it. It’s not so much shooting as it is just being out there and having a good time.” *Participant 1, 64*

“I’m a Locomotive Engineer and I’m on a master list where I’m available 24/7. I need two or three weeks to just get away from everybody. The first week I go to Idaho I’ll stay absolutely by myself up in the mountains. I’ve had enough of people, and I guess it just keeps me sane... Everybody needs time alone to rethink your thoughts... In here you’re a big object, in those mountains you’re nothing more than an ant. You realize that a lot doesn’t really matter. What does matter is what you don’t think about. It’s getting back to where we belong, in my opinion... We’re all part of a machine here...” *Participant 7, 52*

Some of the hunters interviewed stated that they hunted for a sense of accomplishment. These hunters typically hunted for a challenge, to test their skills, and “win.” Having an animal

in their environment and trying to harvest it is part of the thrill. When they do win, they gain a sense of confidence and accomplishment that they would otherwise miss without hunting.

Another hunter stated:

“They (elk) are smarter than a caribou, not more than a turkey, but more than some things... I guess I just want something with a challenge to it from that standpoint... With elk, you can do the bugling if you get good at that... I think part of the hunting is being able to call and have them turn and come to their decoys, I think that makes it more exciting that you were able to trick them... It’s not just luck being in the right place at the right time...” *Interview 2, 58*

RQ3: What are the social-psychological benefits of hunting?

The individual MECs displayed in Figures 3-11 identify the social-psychological benefits of hunting for the participants we spoke to. To reiterate, the MEC approach was used identify attributes, consequences and values associated with hunting. Creating the “hook” in advertising appeals is best accomplished by identifying the social psychological consequences of hunting. The second column of Figure 12 displays the summary of these consequences. In the examination of this summary, relaxation, stress relief, being with nature, and camaraderie are major themes that emerged regardless of preferred species of hunt.

STUDY 2: FOCUS GROUPS

Methods

Participant Sampling and Recruitment

The same database used for recruiting participants for the MEC interviews was used for focus group recruitment. The same eligibility requirements were in place: they must have been at least 18 years of age to stay within IRB regulations (IRB log number: i036593); they must be within Ingham county and five surrounding counties; and finally, they must have had a mailing address and telephone number. Again, Excel's random number generator was used to assign a number, the list was sorted in ascending order and the first 100 hunters were sent a hard letter via USPS. As with the interviews, hunters were called after three days and asked about their intent to participate. They were provided the date, time and meeting location if they agreed.

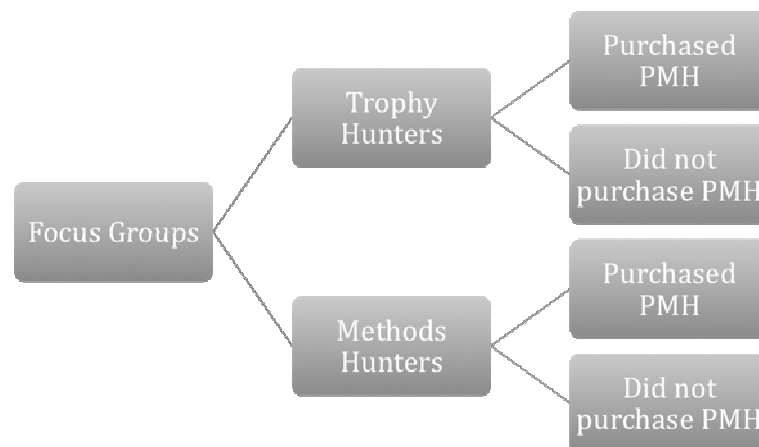
Hunters were grouped by bear and elk application purchases (trophy hunters) or spring turkey license purchasers (methods hunters), and by whether a PMH application had been purchased the year before (Figure 13). I was equally interested in understanding what people viewed as the most influential benefits of PMH, and also why people had not purchased. For those who had purchased an application, the focus groups would provide us insight as to effective communication strategies the DNR had already employed (posters, information cards, etc.). I also wanted to know how hunters had heard of the opportunity, and what they were most excited about winning the PMH drawing.

For those who had not previously purchased a PMH application, I wanted to understand what hindered their decision to do so. I had expected that some were just not aware of PMH.

However, in the cases where hunters had purposefully dismissed the opportunity, those reasons are also important for understanding the failures of the PMH marketing and advertising practices. I expected that some had opted out in opposition of the DNR or that big game hunting was not their niche. Their reasoning, in either case, would shed light to potential problems with PMH and provide other areas that advertising could focus on.

FIGURE 13

FOCUS GROUP RECRUITMENT DESIGN



To gain raw opinions and evaluations of PMH, participants were not told that we would be discussing the new opportunity. Instead, recruited participants were advised that researchers were interested in the culture and traditions of hunting and how the DNR could communicate new hunting opportunities more effectively to them.

Sample and Data Collection Procedures

The first two focus groups were conducted with trophy hunters, one of those groups had purchased a PMH application the previous year (age range: 39-63, mean age: 52.00); one of those groups had not purchased a PMH application (age range: 31-51, mean age: 43.20). The next two groups consisted of methods hunters, one group having purchased PMH applications in the previous year (age range: 27-61, mean age: 51.40), and one group had not applied for a PMH application (age range: 24-56, mean age: 43.11). In all, 39 hunters participated in the focus groups; their characteristics are displayed in Table 4. A \$50 gift card to a local sporting goods store was provided to those who participated in this part of the study.

A professional moderator was hired to conduct the focus groups. As participants entered the room, the moderator and his assistant greeted and offered refreshments and cookies. Participants then sat at a large table and were provided name cards. The moderator informed participants that cameras were in the ceiling and voice recorders were on the tables to record proceedings. In an adjacent room with a double-side mirror, the moderator's assistant sat with researchers and began typing transcripts and notes. If needed, she would pass our notes to the moderator to gain more information.

The initial moderator's guide had centered on why people hunt, how and where they hunt, with whom did they hunt, their decision-making processes, license application and purchasing behaviors (online or licensing agents), traditions and rituals involved in hunting, and attitudes and opinions of PMH. Prior to asking participants' opinions of PMH, a fact sheet was provided (Appendix A). The DNR, the researchers, and the moderator worked together on formulating questions.

Upon the completion of first focus group, the moderator's guide (Appendix B) was altered to focus discussion on the traditions and rituals associated with hunting and views of PMH. We found out quickly that hunters enjoy reflecting on past hunting experiences, so questions about hunting preferences and areas hunted were removed (e.g., "where do you hunt?" or "do you prefer to travel to hunt?") because this was already being discussed. Additionally, the closing question that asked about "any other advice for the DNR" was removed. Just as hunters seemed passionately enthralled in discussion related to hunting experiences, they seem to be equally engaged and educated in politics and policies that effect hunting in Michigan. Although the question was originally drafted for advice on marketing PMH, discussion quickly turned political and was therefore removed.

For the three remaining groups, more discussion time was spent on traditions and rituals, as well as general attitudes and opinions of PMH. This allowed us to get a feel for how aware hunters were about PMH and the general feeling and appeals that they felt PMH should adopt.

Results

There were differences observed between groups based on past purchase of a PMH application. Unexpectedly, there was little difference between trophy and methods hunters. Small differences existed only when trophy hunters discussed hunting in the West for bear and elk. This discussion also evolved in the groups with methods hunters, as also some appeared to be trophy hunters, but time spent on the topic was much less. Because the species hunted did not appear to matter in the interviews or focus groups, results will be evaluated between those who had purchased a PMH application, and those who had not. First we discuss the general findings and themes that collectively emerged throughout the focus groups.

TABLE 4

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

Focus Group	Hunter Id.	Age	Focus Group	Hunter Id.	Age
1) Trophy Hunters & PMH Buyers	1	54	3) Methods Hunters & PMH Buyers	21	60
	2	56		22	61
	3	55		23	52
	4	39		24	56
	5	58		25	48
	6	43		26	58
	7	63		27	27
	8	54		28	39
	9	51		29	60
	10	47		30	53
Focus Group	Hunter Id.	Age	Focus Group	Hunter Id.	Age
2) Trophy Hunters & Non-PMH Buyers	11	36	4) Methods Hunters & Non-PMH Buyers	31	46
	12	42		32	39
	13	47		33	56
	14	36		34	48
	15	47		35	56
	16	31		36	41
	17	51		37	27
	18	50		38	24
	19	48		39	51
	20	44		-	-

General Themes Across Groups

There were several themes that emerged across groups. Whether hunters had purchased a PMH application or not, hunters in each focus group discussed the harvest, the traditions, and the camaraderie associated with the experience. Emotions related to hunting as well as PMH knowledge that hunters possessed were observable topics. Each is described in detail and moderator's notes of themes across groups are available in Appendix C.

The Harvest. As previously stated, focus group discussion was concentrated on the traditions of hunting and general attitudes and opinions of PMH. As focus groups progressed, we discovered that hunting is not all about the harvest for most hunters. In fact, most described the harvest as 'the icing on the cake.' Quite similar to the interviews, hunters that took part in these focus groups were typically highly involved in the process of hunting and simply enjoyed being in nature. Many stories were told about watching nature wake-up and spending time with family and friends. Some hunters claimed to find peace and relaxation by sitting in a treestand or blind for several hours to clear their minds.

Traditions. Another general theme involved the traditions associated with hunting. For most, hunting began at a young age with their grandfather or father. Hunters want to bring their children and grandchildren hunting with them so they can see nature and experience everything that nature has to offer. Hunters take great pride in the traditions that have developed over their years of hunting and want to pass them on. Many discussed their experiences at deer camp, for example the sleeping arrangements, and the food and drinks. For most it seemed the company and camaraderie was most important in the experience of hunting. They hunt with each other and as a team. For some hunters, hunting season brings the family together from all parts of the state

or country. There is deep heritage in hunting, and a strong sense of accomplishment and togetherness when the hunting season ends.

Emotion. Not only are hunters I spoke to traditional, but also very emotional. During the focus groups there were non-verbal signs such as watering eyes, and emotion-driven body language. There appears to be a protective heritage in hunting itself as many voiced concerns with regard to the future of hunting and threats to hunting for future generations.

Brand Awareness. In general, hunters are not entirely familiar with Pure Michigan Hunt. Even the groups that had applied for the applications were not completely sure of all the benefits. They were not sure if they could bring others with them, how long they had to harvest the animals, and how many winners were selected each year, or what exactly was included with a ‘win.’

Furthermore, participants are not familiar with where PMH application revenues go. They were generally unaware that revenues generated from PMH were going to the Game and Fish Protection Fund that “provides revenues for the operation of the DNR's Fish, Wildlife, and Law Enforcement programs in the Department” (Michigan DNR, 2011). Uses of this fund include management, research, enforcement of fishing and hunting laws and acquisition of lands to be used for hunting and fishing purposes. This was not well communicated during early stages of the PMH program.

Camaraderie. Much like a team or group of close friends there is a supreme sense of camaraderie between hunters - even between those who had never hunted together. A further example of this is how hunters from the focus groups were observed forming small discussion pods after they were dismissed from the interviews. There seems to be a true sense of connectedness between hunters who share a passion for the sport, recreation, or nature.

Although there were many similarities between focus groups, there were also differences. The most notable differences emerged between those who had purchased a PMH application, and those who had not. The following sections described these findings.

Pure Michigan Hunt Purchasers

Many prior purchasers of the PMH application were excited about the new opportunity. Overall, hunters were most impressed by the additional chance to hunt elk in Michigan and thought that four dollars was a fair price to pay. While many were happy with the opportunity and willing to apply they following year, there was much concern for the current structure of the program.

There seemed to be a general consensus between the two groups (Group 1 and Group 3; PMH purchasers) that the rules were “unfair” for the people who could not afford to purchase an abundance of applications. One participant (*Participant 2, 56*) had mentioned that the “rich” are able to buy more applications, and he was for the “little guy” that could not afford the same luxury. To resolve this concern, participants in both groups suggested increasing the price for the application, but putting a cap on how many can be purchased. Most agreed that one application per person was fair. Additionally, hunters stated that they would like to increase the number of winners (some suggested raising it to 10) and making the stories of those winning hunting experiences readily available hunt more available; they thought this would make the hunt more equitable and enticing. It was interesting to hear that hunters wanted more of the ‘story’ behind the winners. They wanted to know who won and wanted their progress to be tracked throughout the year.

A second concern for these groups was in regards to transparency; they wanted to know exactly where the money was going and what it would be used for. They were concerned that the money was not being used responsibly and that PMH was directly profiting. Those with this concern agreed that the DNR should be more forward with where the money is going. For many, simply adding a point to the PMH FAQ (Appendix A) would resolve this issue.

The other groups (Group 2 and Group 4; non-purchasers of PMH) were much more negative in their discussion of PMH. While some mentioned a need for transparency and more fairness, conversations were not centered on those topics. Instead, non-purchasers of PMH appeared to be more concerned about what would happen *after* they won the PMH drawing.

Non-Purchasers of Pure Michigan Hunt

There was a very different vibe around the discussion of PMH with hunters who had not previously purchased applications. Participants in these groups were very concerned about the amount of time and money required to actually enjoy being selected. Most of the hunters stated that they could not take the amount of time off work to enjoy each of the hunts; they suggested extending the hunting period for the winners to three years instead of one. Many also mentioned that they would need to hire a guide for bear hunting since they had not done it before. Hiring a guide can be very expensive and some suggested that the DNR could include a guide in the win to make it more feasible. While not a dominating topic, some mentioned concerns about mixing gambling and hunting. When others consequently mentioned other drawings (i.e., bear), the conversation ceased. This topic though should not be overlooked. When PMH starts conflicting with preexisting values (i.e., gambling), there will be no contest; these hunters will not likely

partake in the opportunity. Identifying conflicting values presented in new hunting opportunities could use more research.

Overall, the groups had many overlapping concerns about PMH. The differences, however, between those who had and those who had not purchased an application were obvious. Hunters who had not purchased were more concerned with what *would* happen as opposed to the structure of the program. For the DNR, this finding may have important implications for marketing and advertising.

RQ4: What type of source (model or celebrity) will be most effective for the promotion of Pure Michigan Hunt?

As expected, participants in focus groups were generally unfamiliar with PMH. When the moderator asked how to better promote PMH with spokespeople, some hunters mentioned Ted Nugent and other celebrities, but participants had previously described a desire for the stories of past winners. The SCT would suggest that a past winner would be the best spokesperson for PMH. A past winner possesses the attributes required of an effective model. For example, they would appear to be closely matched to the PMH audience and clearly possess an outcome (winning the PMH) desirable to the audience. Again, self-efficacy is the belief or confidence in one's self to achieve an outcome or task. As described in the literature review, self-efficacy is important in the role of learning. In this case, hunters may feel that they have more control over winning, or that it is possible for them to win because they see someone, like them, that has won the drawing.

The celebrity research, however, suggests that celebrities are much more powerful forces because they possess cultural meaning that are associated with their own personal brand. For

PMH, however, it seems that a celebrity would possess the cultural meaning as a past winner. In regards to the fourth research question, I believe that a past winner will be more effective for increasing brand awareness and promoting PMH than a local celebrity. This suggestion is based on the prior research and themes found across groups.

DISCUSSION

This qualitative, in-depth study of hunters offers a snapshot profile of hunters and their perceptions of the meaning of hunting to them. The MEC interview patterns coupled with the focus group findings suggest that many hunters are emotionally sensitive and seeking deeper meaning from their hunting experiences than simply ‘the thrill of the harvest.’ Their stories of family and bonding suggest that hunting is an activity that is connected to deeply embedded values that have yet to be fully explored in research. They also shared a deep sense or desire for equality in their world.

The big game trophy hunter MECs did not manifest the big game references that were expected. The values that were expressed reflected little need or value of the big game, but a value for the collectivity of the clan that hunted together. The handing down of tradition to children, and closeness with nature and the land that sustains them was clearly more valued than a big trophy. Notwithstanding, big game offered new experiences and was attractive as a novelty more so than as an accomplishment. This finding may be a function of the fact that actually harvesting big game, bear or elk, is very unlikely. So the experience of that trophy might not have been on top of the mind for the hunters in the interviews.

It is notable that although the MEC interviews started with something very concrete (preferred species to hunt), the concrete representations did not link through to the other dimensions of the interview. For every interview, it quickly became apparent that the values were not related to species hunted. The linkage to the hunted species seemed to cease as hunters reached the consequences of the hunt. It was at this point that conversation became dominated by hunting in general as opposed to the hunt of a specific species. Again, each interview is

displayed within Figures 3-11. It is important to note that an instrumental value may be missing. It is not always possible to capture every aspect of the MEC as the interviewee may jump from one thought to the next, or even offer the value voluntarily without prompt from the interviewer. The result of missing areas of the MEC does not seem to have an effect on the results of the research and it was common that the hunters skipped this value but cited terminal values each time.

Focus groups were conducted to examine the culture and rituals of hunting as well as general attitudes and opinions towards PMH. There are several conclusions to be drawn from the focus groups. First, the differences between those who had purchased and had not purchased a PMH application provided valuable insights for future promotion activities. If future research conducted by the DNR suggests targeting past purchasers to increase the applications per capita, the concerns to be addressed are readily available in the current research; the same is true if the DNR decides to target hunters who had not previously purchased a PMH application. Second, the themes that had emerged have important implications for the development of appeals.

Despite the group hunters were recruited for (trophy or methods), the emotional connection to hunting was observed in each group. An emotional appeal in advertising paired with a message of camaraderie, would appear to be effective themes for any type of hunting promotion. As expected, awareness of PMH was limited, even those who had purchased. Even when participants thought they knew about the opportunity, they were often not aware of all the benefits. For example, hunters were not aware that other people could join them on the hunts, and they were often confused about the pricing of the licenses after they won the drawing. Traditionally, when one wins an application drawing, they must still purchase the license to hunt.

In the case of PMH, the Natural Resources Commission has agreed to pay for the licenses if one wins the drawing; this, however, has not been very well communicated.

Interviews and focus groups led to the examination of current typologies of hunters. Over time, I found that hunters do not fit nicely into any of the previously described typologies. Hunters' interactions and values are different depending on their core motivations for the hunt.

A Preliminary Psychographic Typology of Hunters

To address the first research question, previous typologies are examined and revised. Results of the MEC interviews and the focus groups appear to conflict with present typologies of hunters. A new typology is presented here based on these findings. This newly proposed typology combines the phases of hunting proposed by Norton (2007), and the typologies presented by Decker et al. (1984). In addition, it can be used as a foundation for the development of marketing and advertising strategies.

The model is best understood with explanation by each section. As MEC interviews progressed, I began to see common themes in motivations for hunting. Based on hunter's terminal values that had been reached with laddering, it became clear that hunters were motivated by one of the three motivations presented by Decker et al. (1984). For example, if a hunter's terminal value is close-companionship (with friends, family, or both), their motivation for hunting is affiliation. If the terminal value was inner peace or harmony, the motivation for hunting is appreciative (Figure 14).

As discovered in interviews and by segmentation of focus group participants, it became clear that the specie hunted did not matter when seeking the terminal values associated with

hunting. Additionally, in conversation with hunters about their progression through hunting, or when speaking about their children's progression through hunting, it seemed that hunters do also go through the phases or stages presented by Norton (2008). Just as Norton suggests, hunters do not need to go through these stages in a particular order, and can stop at any point. For example, a young hunter may initially only enjoy shooting a gun and be less interested in the harvest of a species. As they age and become more experienced, they may seek to fill as many tags as is allowed by law (liming out). By the conversations with hunters it seems likely that one of these core motivations presented by Decker et al. (1984) still ground the hunting experience despite where they are in the stages of hunting (Figure 15).

The motivations presented by Decker et al. (1984) that appear to drive hunting for the hunters I spoke to. The motivations for hunting as described, however, are not enough for a psychographic profile of hunters. The MEC interviews extend the motivations and identify the terminal values associated with the motivations for hunting. The new typology segments hunters psychosocially and is presented as Figure 16. It is best to read the typology horizontally, from left to right. The functional and psychological consequences, as well as the instrumental values represent the MEC; how conversation progressed from consequences of the hunt (again, the attributes did not appear to influence the terminal values) to terminal values. Using this current typology, hunters can now be segmented psychosocially by their motivations for hunting.

The hunters I spoke with were overwhelming categorized as appreciative and affiliative hunters. Although the phase of hunting does not matter in seeking the terminal values, the phase of hunting may still be important for consideration of PMH. Hunters interested in the trophy species and those interested in more specialized hunters are still the primary targets for this particular hunt. Although terminal values are the underlying reasons for hunting, the surface

interests in hunting differentiates hunters so that unique marketing and advertising tactics can exist.

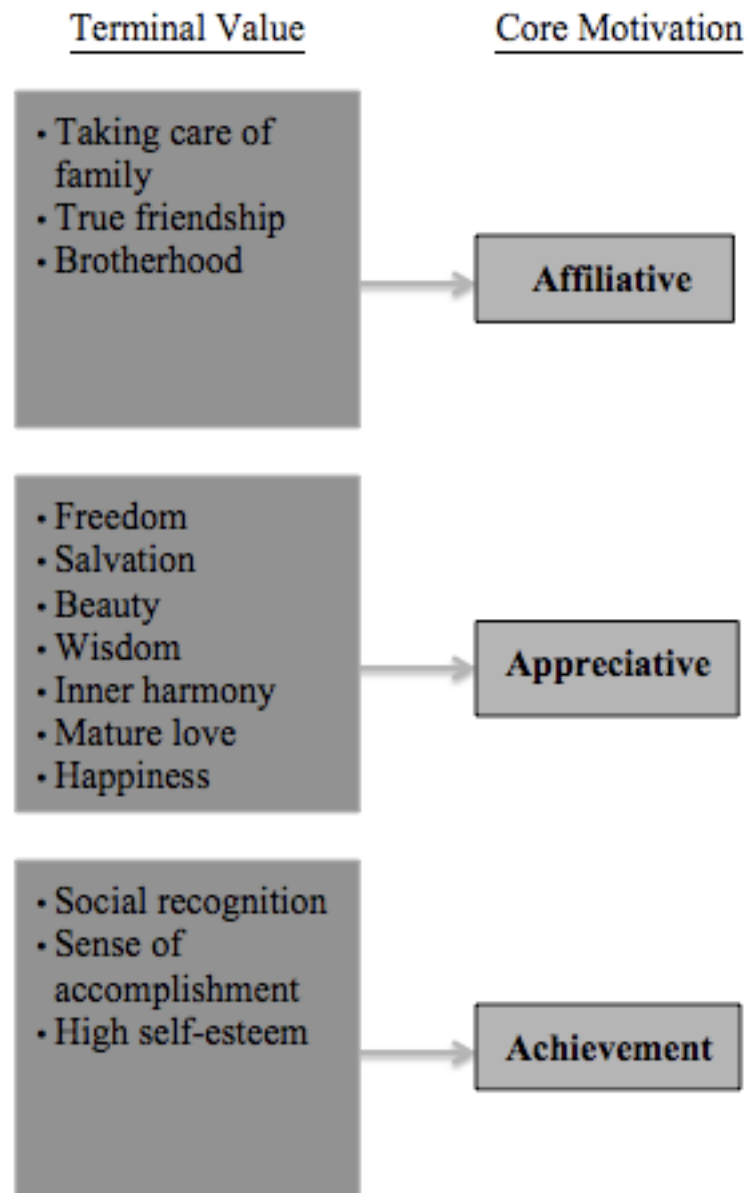
These terminal values discovered in by the MEC interviews address the second and third research questions. The second research question that seeks the meaning of hunting to Michigan hunters is answered by the terminal values. For hunters I spoke with, hunting was about spirituality, close companionship, and achievement. While the goal of hunting is typically the harvest of a species, that goal is a mean to the aforementioned terminal values. The terminal values are also used to for identifying the “hook” for advertising appeals.

The third research question seeks the hook that can be leveraged in advertising. The hook for PMH can include several terminal values that will speak to the hunters I spoke with. A message that portrays spirituality, being outdoors for a sense of peace, or to be with family will speak to both affiliative and appreciative hunters. For achievement hunters, messages of social recognition or high self-esteem will speak for their terminal values. Deeply embedded in the terminal values and motivations for hunting is culture.

The culture of hunting has not been widely studied within an advertising context. Hirschman’s (2003) examination of men, guns and individualism stands out as one study that examines themes in advertising but only scratches the surface of the culture of hunting. Indeed, experts in fisheries and wildlife biology, and not experts in marketing communications, have conducted most studies. Notwithstanding, the economic impact of hunting presented earlier indicates a widespread appeal of hunting suggesting that its culture is salient to a large group of consumers. Understanding hunters and their rituals is likely to be valuable within and outside the context of directly marketing for license application sales.

FIGURE 14

CORE MOTIVATIONS OF HUNTING DERIVED FROM TERMINAL VALUES
DISCOVERED BY MEANS-END CHAIN INTERVIEWS



Guiding Appeals

As is the case with any new product, the Pure Michigan Hunt is not well known or understood. Increasing brand awareness with advertising is recommended. The diffusion of the program and its applications need a campaign that clearly communicates the benefits of the program, but at the same time targets the rituals and values of the hunting community.

Based on the findings of the interviews and focus groups, there are two possible ways to advertise PMH: emotive or cognitive. Based on the evident emotional ties that hunters have to hunting, appeals could focus on the emotional aspects of hunting; for instance, a message of liberation and relaxation by watching nature, being with family, and carrying on the traditions and rituals of hunting. It seems that this emotional appeal would speak to hunters regardless of their past PMH purchase history.

A cognitive approach would address the issue of transparency by describing where the money goes. This appeal could also tie in some emotional aspects of hunting to appeal to the general hunting populations, but would not dominate the appeal. Because of the overwhelming theme of transparency from hunters who had purchased a PMH application previously, I believe this would be a better match for those hunters. Combining the motive and cognitive functions together in marketing and advertising campaigns will address many of the issues that were mentioned by sample hunting populations within research interviews, and would likely result in a heightened program awareness and increased application totals.

FIGURE 15

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CORE MOTIVATIONS AND THE TERMINAL VALUES IS INDEPENDENT FROM THE PHASE OF HUNTING

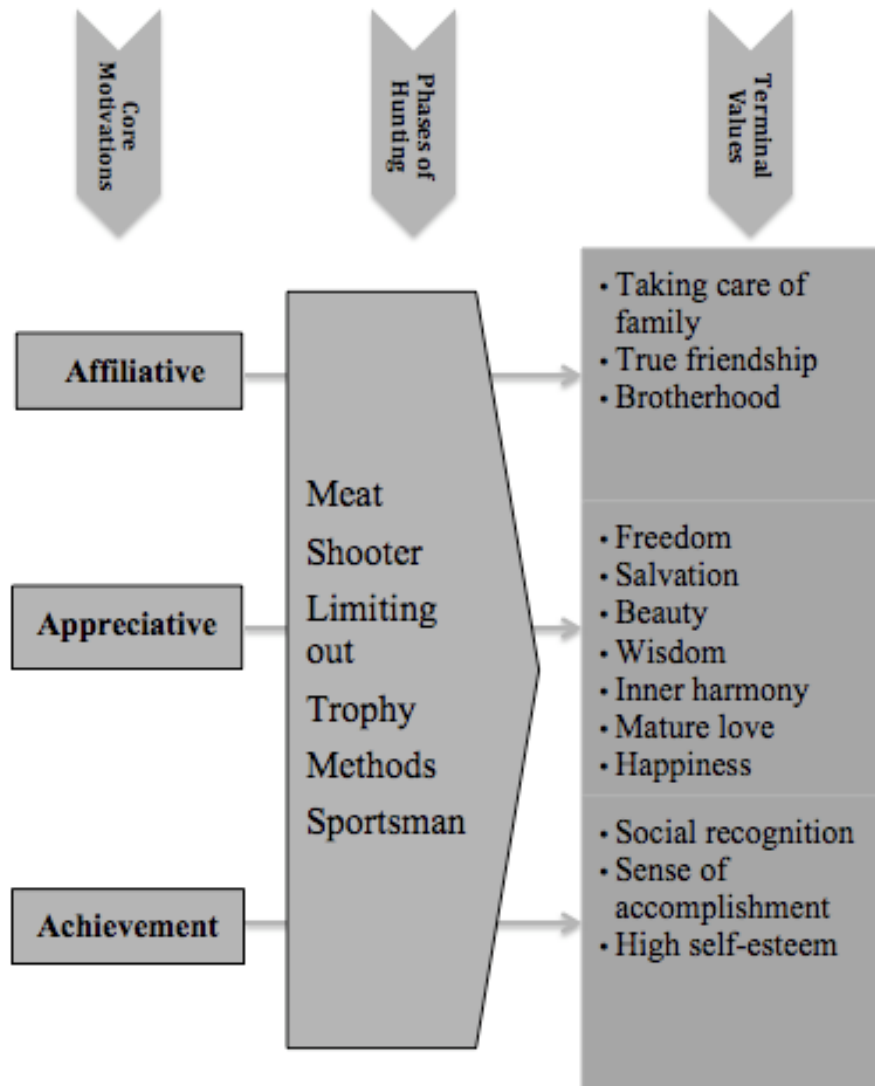
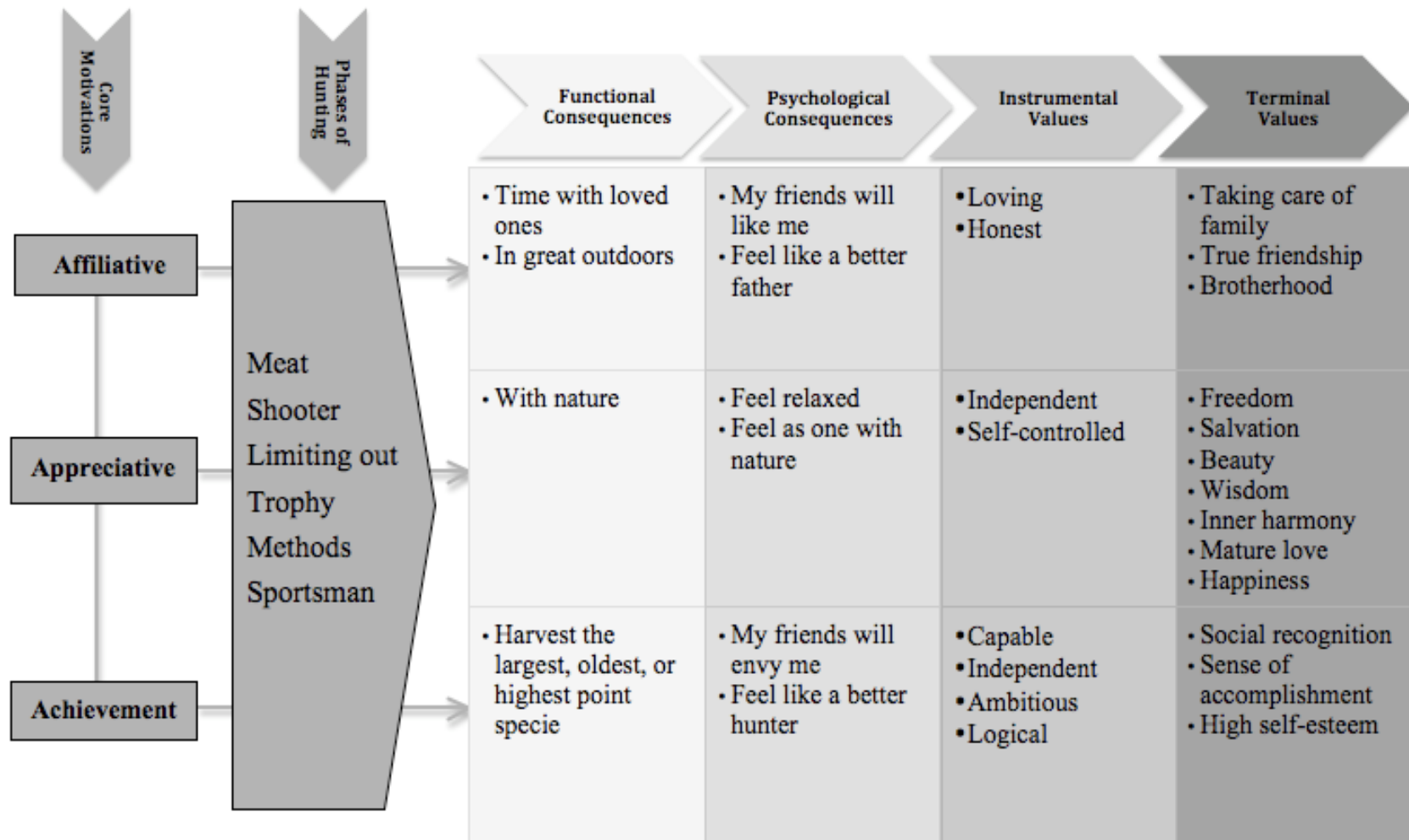


FIGURE 16

PROPOSED TYPOLOGY OF HUNTERS EXTENDING CORE MOTIVATIONS OF A HUNT, THROUGH THE EXPECTED MEANS-END CHAIN, TO TERMINAL VALUES



When hunters in focus groups were asked if there were any celebrities they could envision representing PMH, a common name was Ted Nugent. I believe Ted Nugent was a popular choice because of his Michigan ties, his passion for outdoor sports, and his celebrity appeal. Although Ted Nugent may be considered a national celebrity, he may also be considered a local celebrity for his connection to Michigan. Drawing from these assumptions, there are several other local celebrities with Michigan ties that are also hunting enthusiasts. One example is Former Lieutenant Governor of Michigan John Cherry. Cherry is highly regarded for his conservation efforts and was even named as Conservationist of the Year in 2005 by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs.

There was, however, also evidence that modeling would also be impactful as suggested by the SCT. One group in particular (Group 3; methods hunters who had purchased a PMH application) had mentioned the desire to know more about the winners and their “stories.” This may suggest that hunters view past winners as reaching an outcome that they themselves find quite desirable, even though they were non-purchasers of PMH. The SCT theory suggests that a past winner would be an effective spokesperson for advertising PMH. A past winner would appear to hold the appropriate values and desirable attributes that many hunters applying for PMH would seek to have.

Just as presented earlier, there appears to be two paths that could be taken in regards to spokesperson selection: a model, or a celebrity. There is no clear evidence from the focus groups that sets one selection above another. Perhaps the spokesperson’s effect would be dependent on the message appeal that is chosen. On this end, more research is needed to identify an appropriate appeal and spokesperson for PMH.

CONCLUSION

Identifying hunters by core values associated with hunting may seem like a daunting task for the DNR and other marketing professionals. In reality, the typology presented in the current research is relatively straightforward to apply. Using the proposed typology of hunters shown in Figure 16, wildlife professionals would need to identify the core motivation likely for the type of hunt being promoted. The current research indicates that hunters most likely to hunt would likely agree that this opportunity would be more targeted towards “achievement” oriented hunters. Following the typology across, to the terminal values, or the “hooks” for advertising, we suggest that appeals include messages of social recognition or achievement. Research for advertising appeals, however, should not be limited to the typology. Pinpointing weaknesses or less favorable views associated with the hunt will also play a key role in message development. I do believe messaging could also reflect other themes that emerged. For example, spirituality and camaraderie were themes heavily tied to hunting. Those themes also evident as terminal values associated with affiliative and appreciative hunters. Other themes, such as fairness and more success can also be implemented into an advertising campaign.

To start the program and create more initial interest in the coming years, the DNR could allow more winners, but also follow the consumer feedback they’ve received so far by only allowing a single entry per person. Positive word of mouth spreads quickly, and could be a great additive to brand identity and PMH program awareness. While the price of the application is legislated, a ‘pay what you think this is worth’ system – similar to what many bands, concerts, and other applications are doing now – may also be profitable. Those with more money might find the cause worthwhile and it would give them the opportunity to give beyond a capped cost.

Those with less could determine what they had – and a fixed cost wouldn't prevent them from participating. These systems have proved successful in other venues and end up matching the cost a program expected to charge from the beginning.

As previously described, the hunters I interviewed and the focus group participants were overwhelmingly affiliative and appreciative hunters. More research could be used to identify exactly which type (based on their core motivation) of hunter is most likely to purchase a PMH application.

In addition, it is clear that some hunters are driven by values of family and shared experience, while others are driven by the experience of nature. Thus, the consequences of hunting provide a foundation for creating ads that appeal to these two different types of hunters. Tourist boards, and other tourism industry businesses to attract hunters to their communities can also use the findings of this study. For the state of Michigan's Pure Michigan Hunt campaign, two ad executions were developed appealing to these different values. The results of the campaign are pending.

The findings may have implications for those studying families and adolescent behaviors. The hunting experience serves a socialization function. Researchers in the area of consumer socialization and public policy may find that the hunting experience can be studied and used for its role in the development or avoidance of potentially dangerous adolescent behaviors. This insight comes from the overwhelming mention by fathers wishing both to instill values in their children and to pass down family traditions through hunting. Some of the core values associated with hunting; such as close companionship with friends or family (Figures 7 & 10) are the most evident examples. While this study did not examine risky behaviors as part of the hunting experience, it may be a valuable domain for the study of the child socialization.

Going forward, the DNR will need to address the issues that hinder participation in hunting. While regions within America and Michigan are becoming more urban, Marketing for future hunting opportunities should address urbanites and find ways to get them involved in outdoor activities. Women and ethnicities other than Caucasian are going to play a key role in the future of hunting as well. Future research should investigate the terminal values that reside in different demographics and adjust advertising campaigns accordingly.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PURE MICHIGAN HUNT FAQ

PURE MICHIGAN HUNT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Pure Michigan Hunt?

The Pure Michigan Hunt (PMH) is a unique multi-species hunting opportunity. Individuals apply as many times as they like and the winner may purchase licenses for the following species: one any elk, one bear, one spring turkey, one fall turkey, and one antlerless deer. All these licenses must be purchased in the same year. In addition, the winner may pick a first selection at a managed waterfowl area during the reserved hunt period.

How do I apply?

Individuals must pay a \$4 application fee to be entered in the PMH and may apply as many times as they wish. Applications can be submitted at all license agent locations or purchased on the DNR's website under E-license. The Drawing is open to individuals only; there will not be any party applications. Application fees are non-refundable.

Who can apply?

You must be at least 12-years-old, have completed hunter safety training, and cannot be under a court-ordered license revocation. Non-residents may apply, but only Michigan residents are eligible to purchase an elk license. Individuals who are ineligible for an elk license because of previous drawing success are eligible for the PMH.

When can I apply and when will the winners be announced?

Applications are available March 1 until December 31 with lucky participants announced in January 2011. Three individuals will be chosen at random. Drawing success is not transferable.

May I still apply for other hunts?

Yes. Applying for the PMH does not affect your eligibility to apply for or purchase other hunting licenses. Winning the PMH drawing does not cause an individual to forfeit any preference points or weighted advantage for any other limited hunt.

If I win, what seasons can I hunt?

Licenses are good for any and all areas of the state open for that species during any and all of the appropriate hunting periods, except for bear hunting on Drummond Island. The PMH license can be used in the open seasons and a PMH license holder can hunt every season until their tag is filled, e.g. if you hunted in the first period for an elk but were not successful, you can now move to the second period, ect.

APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR GUIDE

FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR GUIDE

Introduction - ROBERT KOLT: The purpose of this group discussion, or focus group research discussion TODAY, is to have a conversation and FOCUS on just one topic.

Our topic is hunting in Michigan and more specifically the PURE MICHIGAN Big Game HUNT.

Our discussion is part of an effort to learn more about your opinions on hunting, why you hunt, who you might hunt with, and maybe some of the decisions you make that go along with the hunting experience.

This is a free-flowing discussion of thoughts and ideas.

There are no right or wrong answers.

We want everyone to express his opinion and talk.

I will be leading this focused discussion.

Really, for research purposes, it's best to talk to me one at a time and let me ask questions. I do want you to consider some the things that other people actually say – but rather than talk directly to others at the table – please talk to me, because it helps us organize the conversation as research.

This discussion will last a little over an hour and will be recorded for research purposes only. The recording will NOT be broadcast.

There are camera's mounted on the ceiling and you can see the microphones on the table.

To get started, let's introduce ourselves.

My name is Robert Kolt, I own Kolt Communications, a Public Relations/Advertising and research company in nearby Okemos, I've been in business for nearly 20 years, and I also teach and do research in the department of Advertising, Public Relations and Retailing here at Michigan State University.

QUESTIONS:

WHO THEY ARE - Section 1

Let's begin by going around the table, and I would ask you to please introduce yourself - tell me a little bit about yourself, and tell me where, and why, and maybe what you hunt?

WHAT, WHERE AND WHEN THEY HUNT – Section 2

I asked you what, where and why you hunt. Now tell me a little MORE about the decisions you have to make when go hunting? The location, time, family, and work considerations?

WHY THEY HUNT – Section 3

Let's talk even more about WHY YOU hunt?

(warm up) People hunt for different reasons and view the experience in different ways. Can you tell me more about your typical hunting trip?

Do you eat the meat, or donate they meat if you don't eat it?

Do you want a trophy for the wall?

What do you tell other people about hunting, and maybe the personal characteristics about you and other hunters?

THE MEANING OF HUNTING – Section 4

What does hunting mean to you?

Why is hunting important to you?

Why is hunting important to other people in Michigan?

Do you think you are like most other hunters, how or why?

What common things do you always do or actions do you usually always take to prepare to go hunting?

How do you select who will go with you on a hunting experience?

What things do you always do during the hunt?

What do you usually always do after hunting?

Some people say that hunting can transform them, helps them bond with those they hunt, and some might say that hunting offers a rite of passage experience.

What things do you "pass down" and teach to younger hunters?

What do you think younger hunters really learn when hunting, not just techniques of hunting, but what things might apply to life in general?

Do you think hunting brings people closer together, in kind of bonding experience? How or why?

HOW THEY HUNT – Section 5

How do you buy your hunting license(s)?

Do you buy multiple licenses?

Do you buy a hunting license using the Internet and buy on-line?

Do you buy your license in-person, or maybe by mail?

Is there a better way to buy a hunting license?

In a perfect world, let's consider something really easy ... maybe you could buy a hunting license when you buy a lottery ticket at a convenience store?

Or maybe your hunting license could be so easy to buy, it's delivered to you right at your door, like a pizza?

What would be the easiest, most convenient way for YOU to buy a hunting license, or multiple hunting licenses?

Do you hunt alone, or with others and would you CONSIDER changing your habits?

Do you hunt with family or friends?

Do you hunt with other experienced hunters?

Do you share your hunting experience with others?

What do you tell other people NOT in Michigan, about hunting in Michigan?

Any ideas about how we keep Michigan hunters – hunting here in Michigan rather than in other places?

TESTING PURE MICHIGAN HUNT - Section 7

How many people here are familiar with the Pure Michigan Hunt lottery?

For an explanation, look at the definition on the paper in front of you along with some frequently asked questions.

What do you think of the Pure Michigan Hunt?

Do you think you will participate in the PURE MICHIGAN HUNT Lottery, maybe again?

Is this really attractive to you, why or why not?

How many times, and how much money would you spend?

How could Michigan promote and attract other hunters to the PURE MICHIGAN HUNT?

Thinking back on all of the things and messages you have heard about the PURE MICHIGAN HUNT, complete this sentence, "I think the most effective way to get more hunters to participate in the PURE MICHIGAN HUNT IS"

POLL THE GROUP and record votes – Section 8

Let's poll the group now, for the record, and count votes:

How many people like the PURE MICHIGAN HUNT experience?

How many do not?

For the record, how many people will participate in the PURE MICHIGAN HUNT, maybe again?

How many will not?

CLOSING THOUGHTS – Section 9

We are going to conclude our discussion with some closing thoughts from you.

If you could tell the people with the State of Michigan anything about the PURE MICHIGAN HUNT, how to make it better ... what would you tell them?

What do they need to know?

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUPS

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUPS

Specifically related to Pure Michigan Hunt

This issue of “fairness”

In more than one focus group, participants brought up that the “rich” are able to buy more applications than the “little guy.” They stated that this could be resolved by increasing the price for the application, but putting a cap on how many can be purchased (most said that one application per person was fair). Additionally, hunters want more winners; they think this would make it fairer.

The need for more “transparency”

People want to know that the money gained from Pure Michigan Hunt does not go back into administration, but back into wildlife programs. There is much concern that this program is a money-grab and just another way for the DNR to take hunters’ money.

A lack of education

Hunters are not totally familiar with Pure Michigan Hunt. Even the groups that had applied for the applications were not completely sure of all the benefits. They were not sure if they could bring others with them, how long they had to harvest the animals, how many winners were selected each year, and what exactly was included with a “win.”

Who won?

People that apply want to know who won the lottery and if they were successful in their hunt. They want someone follow the winners and provide updates on their progress. There some perception of risk without knowing if anyone actually won.

Specifically related to hunting

It’s not always about the “kill”

The hunters a part of these focus groups were typically more involved in the process of hunting and simply enjoying the outdoors. Many told stories about watching nature wake-up, and spending time with family and friends. To harvest specie is really “the icing on the cake.” Some hunters find peace and relaxation by sitting in a blind for hours to clear their head.

Carry on the tradition

For most, hunting began at a young age with their grandfather or father. Hunters want to bring their children and grandchildren hunting with them so they can see nature and experience the great outdoors.

Hunters take great pride in the traditions that have developed over their years of hunting. They typically partake in some sort of deer camp and enjoy the food and drinking that comes with the experience. Most importantly, they enjoy the company and camaraderie that comes along with hunting. They hunt with each other and as a team. For some hunters, hunting season brings the

family together from all parts of the state (or even country). There is deep heritage in hunting, and a strong sense of accomplishment when hunting season is over.

I'm an emotional being

Not only are hunters traditional, but also very emotional. During the focus groups (and interviews as well) there were non-verbal watering eyes, and passion despite lacking overall verbal skills. There appears to be a hunters' protective heritage in hunting itself as many said they are concerned for the future of hunting and that there is threat to hunting for future generations.

Guiding Appeals

The research suggests that appeals should be more emotive than cognitive – meaning it's not just about "the trophy," but about the sunrise, watching the woods come alive, sharing a special moment with your kids (or friends) and protecting proud traditions for future generations to continue to enjoy. We believe that more applications would be sold if advertising touched their heart, and made them proud. "Where the money goes" is a key issue that also needs to be addressed. However, this may be better accomplished on the website when they seek more information; it should be stated clearly.

Finally, there is a need for more education about Pure Michigan Hunt. More information at licensing agents, and people available to answer questions will help. This has been attempted in the past, but it is possible that clerks were just not familiar with the opportunity being offered and had the same concerns as those in our focus groups.

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