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THE EXAMINATION OF FACTORS THAT AFFECT MALES' PURCHASE DECISIONS

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ABSTRACT

As technologies within the golf industry continue to evolve so too do apparel and equipment, resulting in a never ending supply of new products. Thus, it is vital for PGA Golf Professionals and golf retailers to understand what influences consumers, especially males, to purchase golf-related products. In this study I examined the factors that influence males' decision to purchase one type of golf product—golf shirts. A random sample of male students enrolled in the Pennsylvania State University's PGA Golf Management Program participated in a series of focus groups to determine which factors influence their decision to purchase golf shirts. Results indicated that “brand” was the most important factor, especially when reviewed in combination with other factors such as fit, color, fabric, price and trends. In addition, when asked specifically about the importance of fabrics, colors, and brands, respondents indicated that they also influence purchase decisions and will continue to do so in the future.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The study of consumer buying behavior is very complex, and one that is continuously changing as a result of the introduction of new technologies (Underhill, 1999). “Without a doubt, advances in technology have had the most profound and far-reaching impact on innovations and new product introductions in the consumer marketplace” (Cohen, 2006, p. 9). One area that has been heavily impacted by the introduction of new technologies is the golf industry. Each day it seems that golf manufacturers, whether specializing in golf clubs, apparel, golf balls, or golf shoes, introduce new or modified technologies to consumers. As a result, it has become very difficult for researchers, especially within the golf industry, to understand what consumers know about new products, why they purchase the goods that they do, and how retailers can better prepare to meet the future needs of consumers. Moreover, given the current economic situation, particularly as it affects the golf industry, it is paramount to understand the factors that influence golfers’ buying behavior.

While the golf industry has a heterogeneous consumer market, it is evident that it continues to be heavily influenced by the male consumer. For example, 78% of the total golf population in the United States consists of male consumers (Finkel, 1999). As a result, many retail golf stores throughout the country target male consumers only. Consequently, it is essential for retailers to understand the importance of males’ buying behaviors (e.g., what is important to them). To understand buying behavior, researchers must address characteristics such as a consumer’s societal roles and norms (Business Dictionary, 2009). In a golf context this would include recognizing that, “golfers who spend money on products and services are more engaged

in the media, play more frequently, have higher incomes and are more likely to be private club members” (NGF: National Golf Foundation, 2009, p. 4). Despite this knowledge, little is known about males’ golf apparel buying behavior. Organizations such as the NGF and the Association of Golf Merchandisers (AGM) have examined buying behavior within the golf industry, but their research is proprietary. There are few, if any, non-proprietary studies focused on male golfers’ buying behavior associated with golf shirts, such as preference for a specific brand, style, fabric, design, or color. In addition, these studies have not accounted for brand loyalty which, according to Michaelidou and Dibb (2009), affects buying behavior.

Study Purpose

As new technology in golf apparel, which impacts fabrics, textures, and designs, continues to evolve within the golf industry, it will be increasingly important to understand factors that influence male golfers’ buying decisions. I will examine factors that affect one type of decision male golfers’ make—the decision to purchase a golf shirt. I chose to focus on golf shirt apparel as it is a lucrative asset to many golf shop retailers. In addition, according to the National Golf Foundation (NGF), males spend the most dollars on men’s golf shirt when purchasing in a golf retail environment (NGF 2009).

I do not have the opportunity to sample all male golfers across the United States; thus, I will focus on a sub-sample of the population—males studying to become Head Golf Professionals for the Professional Golfers’ Association of America (PGA) (i.e., PGA Golf Management students). In response to the study purpose, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. What factors do male PGA Golf Management students consider when deciding whether to purchase a golf shirt?
2. Is brand loyalty important in the purchase decision? Why or why not?
3. What factors do PGA Golf Management students believe will influence males' decision to purchase a golf shirt in the future?

Definitions

Brand loyalty: "A deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, *despite* situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior" (Oliver, 1999, p. 34). Brand loyalty is important to examine in this study because it relates specifically to why males make specific purchase decisions.

Buying behavior: "A purchase decision making process that is a complex amalgam of needs and desires, and is influenced by factors such as a consumer's 1) societal role, 2) social environment and norms, and 3) aspirations and inhibitions "(Business Dictionary, 2009).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following is a compilation of literature pertaining to this study. The information provided is presented in the subsequent sections: a) buying behavior b) factors influencing males' purchase decisions, and c) relevance to the golf industry.

Buying Behavior

The science of consumer buying behaviors and decisions is a living and breathing field of study (Underhill, 1999). According to Cohen, a well-respected author in the field of retail and marketing, there have been "...more changes in consumer purchasing behavior in the last two years than [he has seen] in the last two decades" (2006, p. 7). This may be a result of consumers discovering new products and features at a highly accelerated rate, or the continuous changes in product design, which have allowed the lifestyles of consumers to become "multidimensional and multifaceted" (Cohen, 2006, p. 7). For example, in a golf context, this would mean that consumers have the opportunity to purchase a variety of golf shirt apparel items based on specific facets, such as fabric, brand, and color. Furthermore, when referencing consumer buying behaviors, Underhill (1999) suggested that as consumers discover new products in the market, they often have to stop and think about what it is they have seen, especially in terms of product features and design. Consequently, the definition of buying behavior is ever changing as a result of the continuous modifications in consumer preference. In order to accurately generate reliable data within the proposed study an established definition of buying behavior must be established. For the purposes of this study "buying behavior" will be defined as follows: "A purchase

decision making process that is a complex amalgam of needs and desires, and is influenced by factors such as a consumer's 1) societal role, 2) social environment and norms, and 3) aspirations and inhibitions" (Business Dictionary, 2009).

Today, individuals are greatly influenced by the suggestions and decisions of others. For example, an author on *Emergence Marketing*, a popular marketing science website, stated: "we buy things based on the behavior of the people who bought the same product, and more importantly based on the behavior of others who are observing the original buyers" ("Buying Behavior," 2009). As a result, the buying behaviors of individuals are greatly influenced by the buying behaviors of their peers. In addition, individuals do not make buying decisions for the sole purpose of satisfying functional or instrumental desires and needs. Instead, consumers make buying decisions in order to gain a sense of belonging to a specific social environment ("Buying Behavior," 2009). For example, Lee and Sontag (2010) examined the proximity of clothing to self scale for older persons. They found that "as a person ages, clothing in relation to self as structure and process appears to become more integrated in one's perceptions" (p. 446). That is, clothing that individuals choose to purchase and wear communicates identity, values, attitudes, moods and self-regard to those around them, which helps to facilitate societal roles. Earlier, in 2004, Lee and Sontag found that "adolescents are very sensitive to how their peers judge them on the basis of appearance, perhaps more so than older persons" (cited in Lee & Sontag, 2010, p. 446). As a result, some individuals may be influenced by those around them to purchase certain apparel in order to feel a sense of identity and belonging.

Factors Influencing Males' Purchase Decisions

There are various principles that retailers utilize in order to be successful (Underhill, 1999). One of the most important and simplest principles is that “there are certain physical and anatomical abilities, tendencies, limitations and needs common to all people, and the retail environment must be tailored to these characteristics” (Underhill, 1999, p. 43). For example, individuals' income and gender are demographic factors that retailers should consider when creating a retail environment. These factors are especially important to golf professionals. They modify their retail environments, carry certain product lines, and develop pricing strategies based on these factors. Golf professionals also attempt to respond to these factors by creating a “boutique” experience for the consumer. The Business Dictionary (2010) defines a boutique as a “relatively small firm that provides a limited range of (usually) very specialized goods or services often at premium prices.” In addition, “these outlets are becoming destinations for loyal consumers to more easily find their favorite products...” (Sherwood, 2007, p. 35). Another important factor that influences buying behavior in males is brand loyalty. Michaelidou and Dibb (2009) found that consumers who are interested in clothing and are highly involved have a high brand switching propensity. “Brand switching is driven by variety seeking and is affected by product category-level characteristics including involvement, perceived risk, loyalty, [and] brand similarity perceptions...” (Michaelidou, & Dibb, 2009, p. 332). Their findings, however, contradict previous research showing that involvement leads to brand commitment.

Age is also an important factor that may influence males' buying behaviors. For example, Harvé and Mullet (2009) hypothesized that older consumers (adult and elderly) would place more importance on the suitability and durability of a product, whereas price would be of greater importance for young people because of limited finances. They also found that middle aged

adults (35-50) put greater weight on suitability while elderly people (65-90) focused on durability. They also concluded that younger participants “gave more weight on price than to the other factors” as well as suitability (p. 306).

Moreover, a common belief is that males do not enjoy shopping and, as a result, many store designs and fixtures are geared toward the female shopper (Underhill, 1999). In addition, men tend to keep to themselves when making purchase decisions; they rarely ask questions, spend little time looking at merchandise, appear to rush throughout the store, and often purchase apparel they initially try on in stores, if they even choose to do so (Underhill, 1999). For example, in a study by Underhill, “65 percent of male shoppers who tried something on bought it, as opposed to 25 percent of female shoppers” (Underhill, 1999, p. 99). In the same study Underhill found that 72% of men look at price tags compared to 86% of women. He also observed: “while the man may not love the experience of shopping, he gets a definite thrill from the experience of paying” (p. 101). This observation may relate to the reason why a majority of men do not look at the price tag before making a purchase decision; the overall sense of power and control can sometimes become more important to the male shopper when interacting with retail consultants, spouses, children, and more (Underhill, 1999).

While the previous data imply that some males do not enjoy shopping, it is evident in other studies that males do make purchase decisions within retail and specialty stores. For example, in a study conducted by Mintel Reports in 2007, 75% of men had purchased men’s clothing within the past 12 months (cited in "Men's Clothing-US-August 2007," 2009). Agency representatives also asked males for the purpose of their purchases. Nearly nine out of ten males said they purchase apparel for every day wear, while only five out of ten bought apparel for work ("Men's Clothing-US-August 2007," 2009). These data provide evidence that men do make

purchase decisions even if they do not enjoy searching for apparel. In a similar study, 83% of men who bought apparel did not return their purchase to the local retailer (“Men’s Clothing-US-August 2007,” 2009). Furthermore, in a study conducted by the Association of Golf Merchandisers (AGM), 25% of the total sales in golf shops throughout the country were linked to men’s apparel (2009). This percentage proved to be significantly larger compared to other categories, such as women’s apparel (AGM, 2009, p.18).

Relevance to the Golf Industry

Although it may be difficult for retailers to discover ways to entice males to purchase products, it is evident that males are able and willing to shop. In addition, males also have a great influence on the markets in which they choose to make purchase decisions (“Men’s Clothing-US-August 2007,” 2009). One of the greatest of these influences can be found within the golf industry. For example, in a magazine article composed by Rebecca Finkel, an established journalist for *Media Life Magazine*, she stated: “there are approximately 5.7 million women golfers, which is only 22 percent of all golfers” (Finkel, 1999). This statistic demonstrates the dramatic influence that males have within the golf industry, as they account for the remaining 78% of the golfing population within the United States. In addition, the National Golf Foundation (NGF, 2007) found that golf shirt buyers play twice as many rounds as the average golfer, suggesting that males should greatly impact retailer’s decisions when selecting golf merchandise. While many retail stores seem to tailor their displays to catch the attention of females, the golf industry continues to be targeted towards the needs of males. Moreover, the NGF (2007) discovered that when developing a profile of individuals who purchase premium shirts, 77% were male. Furthermore, in another study conducted by the NGF (2007), researchers

found that core golfers (those who play more than eight rounds of golf per year) are more likely to purchase any golf product than the occasional golfer (those who play between one to seven rounds per year). In another study conducted by the NGF (2009), 80% of core golfers were found to be male. The NGF went on to examine individual profiles of core golfers as they relate to different golf categories. The results showed that throughout a given year, males spent 79% of all dollars on men's golf shirts. That is, out of all of the dollars spent in a given golf shop, males spent the largest percentage on a golf shirt.

Studying buying behavior in industries that are predominately influenced by males, such as golf, is essential for continued growth and development. In many golf shops, whether private, public, or resort, a large portion of the displays and products are designed to appeal to males. Yet, little non-proprietary research has been conducted with males making purchase decisions in a golf context. Hence, I will conduct research on factors that influence males' (i.e., PGA Golf Management students) apparel buying decisions within the golf industry. I will focus on men's shirts, as this product changes yearly with innovative fabrics, designs, and colors, and represents the largest expenditure/purchase category within the retail golf industry.

CHAPTER 3

STUDY METHODOLOGY

The following is a review of the sample, the study instrument, data collection procedures, and the data analysis used in this study.

Study Sample

The population for the proposed study was core golfers, described as those who play golf more than eight times per year (NGF, 2007). This decision was based on the fact that “golfers who spend money on products and services... play more frequently...” (NGF, 2007, p. 4). The sample drawn from this population was male students enrolled in the Pennsylvania State University’s PGA Golf Management Program. They were considered to be an appropriate sample because (a) they are aware of the trends in golf apparel, and (b) have interacted with males of all ages while interning at golf destinations throughout the United States. Male PGA Golf Management students were selected through stratified (i.e., freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior) sampling.

Study Instrument and Data Collection

Prior to conducting the study, approval (IRB# 35657) was obtained from Penn State’s Office for Research Protections. After obtaining approval, a total of 144 male PGA Golf Management students were invited to participate in a focus group discussion. Through a series of emails, members of the sample were: a) invited to participate in the study, b) reminded about the day and time of the focus group interview, and c) thanked for their participation. During the

focus group discussion, students were first asked to complete a consent form (Appendix A) and then were asked a series of questions. The questions focused on the golf retail environment, factors affecting males' golf shirt purchase behavior, age differences apparent in male golfers' golf shirt purchase behavior, and future trends associated with golf shirt apparel. The first section focused on important factors related to the retail environment. Students were asked the following questions: "When consumers walk into a golf shop or retail golf store environment with the intention of purchasing men's golf shirt apparel what is the first thing they look for?" and "Why are the factors you mentioned important or not important?" These questions were included in an effort to answer research question 1. Next, students were asked to think about the differences between younger males and older males in terms of the factors that affect their decision to purchase a golf shirt. I felt that it was important to differentiate between older males and younger males because through my experiences, there are different factors that lead to each age group's purchase decision. For example, the type of fabric, the price of a golf shirt, the fabric from which a golf shirt is made, the color of a golf shirt, as well as various other factors, all differ between older males and younger males. They were asked:

- Do you think these factors differ when comparing older males to younger males?
- As a younger consumer, would you continue to purchase cotton fabric golf shirts? Why or why not? I chose to focus on cotton fabric-related questions because it is evident that the introduction of synthetic fabrics has attracted the younger consumer, as this fabric is much lighter and is made for a more athletic-like performance.
- Do you choose what you wear based upon the trends seen on the PGA and other professional tours?
- Do you feel that fit of a men's golf shirt is more important to younger males? Why or

why not?

- Do you think that brand selection for younger males is less important than the fit of a men's golf shirt? Why or why not?

Finally, students were asked to consider factors that may affect males' purchase behaviors in the future. The future of males' decisions to purchase was examined so that this study may help current and future professionals in creating a successful golf retail environment. These questions included:

- What trends do you think are becoming more important in men's golf shirt apparel?
- Do you think the golf industry will see a move towards cotton trends in the future?
Why or why not?
- Will the industry remain tech fabric driven? Why or why not?
- Do you feel that size specifics are trending to be smaller? Why or why not?

Data Analysis

After transcribing the results of the focus group interviews, the data were open coded. I began by reviewing and then coding the data. Coding was conducted by assigning codes to each type of response. My thesis advisor completed the same process and compared her codes to mine. Agreement on all codes was reached prior to grouping the data and answering the three research questions. The actual statements and codes can be reviewed in Appendix B.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

A total of 23 male PGA Golf Management students participated in 4 focus group discussions. These discussions consisted of nine Seniors, five Juniors, five Sophomores, and four Freshman. As mentioned, these individuals are studying to become PGA certified professionals, and have completed internships at various facilities throughout the United States including private, resort, and public settings.

The results of the open-coding process revealed six overarching categories: fit, color, fabric, price, brand, and trends. Descriptions of the first five categories follow in an effort to answer Research Question 1: “What factors do male PGA Golf Management students consider when deciding whether to purchase a golf shirt?”

Fit

Many participants said that fit was important, but did not function as an independent factor. For example, when responding to the issue of “fit,” respondents were most likely to reference body size or shape, especially in light of age groups. One individual said, “...The younger crowd ...[is] wearing tighter stuff now, like they're buying the tight shirt and maybe even go a size down...” Another suggested, “[The] younger crowd might want something a bit more slimming and may be trying to show off that they don't have a little gut, but the older crowd wants to make sure it fits properly so their gut doesn't stick out or something.” A third referenced his experience working in a golf shop: “I mean whether it's an extremely skinny guy, or an extremely large guy, they go, ‘what do you have that fits me’.”

Focus group participants also linked fit with particular brands. One male responded that brand and fit are intertwined in the sense that, “a lot of brands are known for how they fit.” For example, one respondent referenced Nike®, highlighting “...how [the brand has] a lot of stretch around the shoulder areas...” Others highlighted the fit quality of Fairways and Green® or Adidas®: “...Like everyone knows Fairways and Greens® fits a little bigger” and “Adidas® had a completely new cut, completely new line. It was called, Adi Pure®.”

Color

Color for one respondent was the first thing he looks for, as he is “not afraid to wear different color palates in [his] wardrobe.” Others agreed that color was an important factor, but like “Fit,” was correlated with other factors. For example, when noting color, respondents linked it to tradition. One said that traditional colors included “Just the old, boring colors, the navy, the green...” Another said, “Very traditional. Solids. Rather than compared to Rhode Island, where you want the Nantucket brands, you want the yellow, the light blues, pinks...” A third responded to, “...easy colors, kind of like whites, navy blues, kind a nothing outlandish, more traditional.”

Focus group participants also linked color to a specific brand. For example, one stated, “whatever your personal brand is the color that you’re going to go for, and that’s what’s going to attract you to whichever brand or table that the shirts are located...” Another said that two specific brands, Peter Millar® and Polo® “are worth putting an investment in” when searching for traditional colors mixed with cotton fabrics.

In addition, study participants linked color to those that are worn by professionals on the PGA Tour. As one noted, “It seems like the golfers are trying to dress in all solid colors like Rickie Fowler with his orange, all orange and all blue.” Another stated,

... If someone sees a PGA tour player wearing a certain type of shirt they are probably more inclined to buy that kind. For example, was it two years ago, or three years ago, it was the masters and everyone was wearing orange and you saw in golf shops and it was based off of what the pros were wearing on tour at that time.

Other respondents agreed. They suggested that many individuals are likely to purchase shirts based off of those seen on the PGA Tour, and are attempting to dress in either brighter solid colors or coordinated color schemes.

Furthermore, focus group participants correlated color with specific fabrics. For example, one individual suggested that the industry is going to see “a lot more color, a lot better fabric coming into the business.” Another mentioned shirts “that are colorful, have better fabrics... [may] drive up the price but, you get what you pay for, I guess.”

Fabric

When examining fabric, there were several overarching themes. For example, one theme was the relationship between fabric and technology: “All these new brands are making moisture wicking material shirts, which helps get the sweat away from your body, which makes you feel cool.” Additional comments included, “I think going for the fabrics, I think it’s just technology is just going to get so good that they are going to have a shirt that wicks your sweat, feels like 100% cotton, and looks awesome,” and “I think you’re seeing a lot more tech material look, and feel like cotton, while also wicking sweat, and being very breathable...”

Fabric in relation to age was also a theme raised in the focus group discussions. In general, respondents felt that younger males look for non-traditional materials, such as sweat-wicking synthetic fabrics and “tech” fabrics, while older males search for traditional cotton

fabrics. More specifically, one male mentioned that "...younger males are looking [for] more techy stuff, while older males are more towards the Peter Millar®, Fairway and Greene®..."

Another said, "...you'd have the older guests, visitors coming in and they'd be like, 'do you have any cotton shirts?' And that's when you have to spin it into why they should be going towards the tech shirts." Continuing with the notion that PGA professionals have to educate male consumers— "you can almost trick the older generation into thinking that it is cotton, but it's a lot better material."

Many participants also linked fabric to a specific brand. For example, one individual said, "there are a few guys that are only going to buy a Polo® and are only going to buy Peter Millar® because that's what they have gotten used to and that's what they like." Others suggested, "All these new brands are making moisture wicking material shirts" and, "They might know that its Adidas®, but, it's always do you have that climate cool stuff or that climate cool material."

Price

When study participants referenced price, the majority said that it was not an important consideration when purchasing golf shirt apparel. For example, one individual stated, "Price is not that big of a factor at least where I have been. If they like the shirt or the apparel that they are looking at, they are probably going to buy it, it is not really a price fact." Another agreed when he said, "... If you're at a private club, I don't think it's a bigger factor." Notably, some respondents related price to age and type of facility. For example, one said, "I think price is a big deal; price doesn't really matter for older people, but price definitely for younger people." In addition, a second student mentioned that when "[he thinks] of public and resort [golf clubs]; [he feels] the price is the second most determining factor."

Brand

For many participants, brand was the most important factor in golf shirt purchase decisions. In fact, one respondent stated: “I’d say branding is probably one of the highest if not the highest factor.” Others suggested, “...there’s only two when it comes down to it and they are Peter Millar® and Polo®, that are worth putting an investment in” or “I know what companies I like so if I’m loyal to the company, I’m going to buy that shirt still.”

In addition, brand and age was a substantial sub-theme. For example, when discussing specific brands, one individual indicated, “the older generation rotates more towards Peter Millar®, Fairway Greene® and the younger crowd, goes towards Polo® and RLX®.” Another mentioned that, “older guys will be branded...” while there will be others “who want to check out whatever’s new...” A third respondent related a specific brand (Fairway and Greene®) to the older population when he noted that,

Their slogan is respect for the game. I feel like that appeals better to the older generation. And I guess the young factor, they appeal, like RLX® is kind of, I mean, you’re not going see many old people wearing that, but a lot of young guys want to fall into that trend.

Brand Loyalty and the Purchase Decision

The second research question focused on the importance of brand loyalty in the purchase decision. Based on the results presented earlier, brand loyalty is a factor for males when making their purchase decisions. For example, one study participant said that, “[he knows] what companies [he likes] so if [he is] loyal to the company, [he is] going to buy that shirt.” His view was supported by another respondent who suggested that brand “is probably one of the highest if

not the highest factor.” A third noted, “[When] [they] have a good experience with a certain brand, they are going to go back to it and try it again.” The level of loyalty to brands, however, is not necessarily consistent across all males. One participant suggested that, “...the older guys... have more experience and more time to actually be tied to one brand...” He also argued, “There’s guys who will and who won’t stick with one brand. And there’s always going to be people who want to check out whatever’s new, if they’ve never seen it before and there’s always guys that won’t even try something new on.”

The Future and Males’ Purchase Decision

The third research question, “What factors do PGA Golf Management students believe will influence males decision to purchase a golf shirt in the future?” was answered by reviewing the “trends” category identified through the open-coding process.

Overall, respondents felt that the golf industry will return to older styles of golf apparel and the use of older materials. For example, one male stated, “I see it going back to classic again. I think it’s going to be a cycle kind of thing.” Another said, “... it would surprise me personally, to see people go back to, like, the older brands, the older material, but it just kind of seems like everything in the world goes in cycles. So, I can see like that older material and that older style coming back into focus.” A third suggested, “I think, somewhere they’ll come to it, but I think they’ll revert back to their standard cotton fabrics their standard color shirts, their standard one-color pieces. They’re non-conforming stripes and such.”

Additionally, some respondents believe that the colors seen on the PGA and other professional tours will continue to influence golf shirt apparel. They also feel that colors will continue to be brighter and more expressive. Moreover, respondents recognized the impact of the

physical fitness movement and how it directly affects the way a shirt is made. With younger males concerned about physical health, golf shirts have a better fit to meet the standards and desire of younger males. In addition, for older males, fit may not be as important as finding something that is comfortable to wear.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this study I examined the factors that affect males' decisions to purchase a golf shirt. Results indicated that fit, color, fabric, price, and brand are critical factors in their decision making. Moreover, these findings demonstrate that many of these variables co-exist with each other. For example, for many males specific brands are associated with fit.

Brand was mentioned alone and in concert with other factors when males were asked what factors influence the decision to purchase men's golf shirt apparel. Notably, the number of brands mentioned varied by age, i.e. respondents mentioned more brands when discussing the purchase decision of younger male golfers. This may be because consumers who are interested in clothing and are highly involved have a high propensity to switch brands. According to Michaelidou and Dibb (2009), those who are highly involved with their clothing are likely to switch brands. When accounting for age, the findings support Lee and Sontag's (2004) contention that younger people more than older people allow peer influence to impact their purchase decisions.

Linked to branding is brand loyalty. The results of this study are not conclusive regarding this link. However, some participants felt that there is a segment of the male population that is loyal to and buys based on brand. Others, however, echoed the following sentiment: "There's guys who will and who won't stick with one brand. And there's always going to be people who want to check out whatever's new, if they've never seen it before and there's always guys that won't even try something new on." This relates to findings of Michaelidou and Dibb (2009) who discovered that, "Brand switching is driven by variety seeking and is affected by product

category-level characteristics including involvement, perceived risk, loyalty, [and] brand similarity perceptions...” (p. 332).

In addition, and as mentioned previously, branding is linked to age. This finding corresponds with the research conducted by Hervé and Mullet (2009) and Lee and Sontag (2010) who found that as people age the meaning attached to clothing changes. For example, Hervé and Mullet found that suitability and durability became more important with age while Lee and Sontag documented that “as a person ages, clothing in relation to self as structure and process appears to become more integrated in one’s perceptions” (p. 446). While these authors did not speak directly to branding, their results suggest that the link between brands and age may also extend to characteristics of the brand such as durability or what the brand of clothes says about the person.

Furthermore, the decision to purchase men’s golf shirt apparel is dependent upon several sub-factors. For example, the types of apparel worn by professionals on the PGA and other professional tours appears to influence males’ purchase behavior. This relates to what an author from *Emergence Marketing* found when the author said, “we buy things based on the behavior of the people who bought the same product, and more importantly based on the behavior of others who are observing the original buyers” (cited in “Buying Behavior,” 2009). In addition, the types of fabric, whether cotton or technologically advanced materials will also affect men’s purchase decisions.

When asked to consider what factors may influence males’ purchase decisions in the future, respondents focused on apparel companies returning to traditional fabrics and styles. For example, one person suggested that, “...everything goes in cycles, and in future years, it wouldn’t surprise [him] personally, to see people go back to like the older brands, the older

material...” Another agreed when he said, “I see it going back to classic again. I think it’s going to be a cycle kind of thing.” These results lend support to the statement, “we buy things based on the behavior of the people who bought the same product, and more importantly based on the behavior of others who are observing the original buyers” (“Buying Behavior,” 2009).

The results of this study have implications for the apparel industry, specifically as it relates to golf. For example, while the results may show that price may not matter for brand loyal consumers, it cannot be validated without further research. Furthermore, future research will have to account for differences between the various types of golf settings, such as public, resort and private facilities, as consumers may have different price thresholds.

It is vital that current and future PGA Professionals listen to the comments made by consumers about the clothes being worn by players on various professional tours. As evident in this study, the PGA and other professional tours heavily influence the purchase decisions of male golfers. As a result, taking into consideration the opinions of consumers may assist PGA Professionals in creating successful and contemporary retail environments.

Moreover, I felt that the respondents’ belief that more traditional styles will return to the golf consumer market is realistic; however, I feel that these traditional styles will be presented through modern fabrics and designs. In addition, I feel that professional tour players will act as a catalyst to whether or not the traditional style will return to the golf apparel market.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Admittedly, this study was conducted with a younger male population, only; however, I feel that the results provide an accurate description of the factors that influence males to purchase men’s golf shirt apparel for a number of reasons. First, the study participants were

aware of the trends in golf apparel given the fact that they are completing a program focused on golf management, which requires that they work in the industry for a minimum of 16 months prior to graduation. Second, through their experiences in the industry they have interacted with males of all ages. However, to verify the study findings, additional research should focus on a larger, more diverse population of male golfers.

In addition, I felt that the focus group discussions were very effective, as students were able to relate to their own and their cohort's experiences with males' purchasing behavior. I recognize, however, that it was very difficult for me to recruit students to participate through random sampling. If I were to conduct this study again in the future, I would expand the sample to those outside of the PGA Golf Management Program. I would also expand the age group to make sure I have captured all males' opinions about golf shirt purchase behavior. In addition, I would introduce actual samples of men's golf shirt apparel to focus group participants to touch and feel in order to make the focus group more interactive for participants. Moreover, I am confident that this would allow students to give more in depth information in regards to the questions being asked throughout the study.

Furthermore, this study methodology could extend to almost any facet of the golf consumer market. For example, in the future, researchers may want to examine factors affecting males' decisions to purchase golf clubs, shoes, and golf balls. In addition, the PGA and other professional tours influence consumers' purchase behavior. Thus, PGA players' behavior and choice of apparel should be monitored over time to document trends. Doing this will help the PGA professional to better meet the needs of the male golfer market.

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APPENDIX A
CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research
The Pennsylvania State University

Title of Project: Factors Affecting Male Golfers' Decision to Purchase Golf Apparel

Principal Investigator: Chris Balogh
801 Ford Building
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(814) 865-1851 or cfb5033@psu.edu

Other Investigator: Dr. Deborah Kerstetter
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(814) 865-1851 or debk@psu.edu

- 1. Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study is to document the factors that affect male golfers' decision to purchase golf apparel.
- 2. Procedures to be Followed:** You will be asked to respond to a series of questions related to male golfers' decision to purchase golf apparel. At the end of this focus group session you will have completed your involvement in this study.
- 3. Recording of Data:** The interview will be recorded with a digital recording device and transcribed at a later date. No names will be attached to the interview to ensure confidentiality.
- 4. Duration:** It will take about one hour to complete this focus group discussion.
- 5. Statement of Confidentiality:** Your participation in this research is confidential. Only Chris Balogh, Dr. Kerstetter, and the individual who will transcribe the interviews will have access to the recordings. No names will be used in the transcription of the interviews. The data will be stored and secured in Dr. Kerstetter's office in 801 Ford Building. All the recorded interviews and resulting transcripts will be destroyed within three years of the completion of the study. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared. To ensure confidentiality it is expected that you will not share what fellow focus group participants said with individuals outside the group.
- 6. Right to Ask Questions:** Please contact Chris Balogh or Deb Kerstetter with questions, complaints or concerns about this research.
- 7. Voluntary Participation:** Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise.

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study. If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

Participant Signature

Date

Person Obtaining Consent

Date

APPENDIX B

OPEN CODING OF THE RESPONSES TO THE FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

Fit Appendix A	
1.	I like it closer to my body, okay. Sometimes it is hard, because the shirt is not long enough when it falls out, it is always un-tucking itself, it's kind of, in between. Closer to body
2.	I'd rather have more of a sports fit, I don't really like the traditional shirts, so, more tech type. I am a tech guy. Fit and tech
3.	Yeah, true, but, if something fits you terribly, it could be the nicest shirt in the world, yeah, no, I am not saying that they are going to be a XXL, but, if it's one size away, well they could settle for it, if per say, they don't have their size. Size
4.	I don't know if it will necessarily go to a fit shirt, because, especially in the United States where you know we're dealing with obesity, I guess, in Europe, obesity is not that bad, their wearing those tight fit shirts, and what not, where here were dealing with that's so that's going to play a part in slowing down the trend, of the fit shirts. I think too with this new thing of the traditional golf look now you can go play golf and go out to a restaurant with that type of clothing. Fit and body size/shape, Fit and all around use
5.	I don't know, I always look at size first because I'm small. Look at size
6.	The only time I look at size is like if I really want to buy that shirt and then I'm just like okay if they don't have it then obviously I'm not getting it. Look at size
7.	The fit is important but not as important as price. Brand and look Fit and price, fit and brand, fit and look
8.	Yea like Nike brands how they have a lot of stretch around the shoulder areas and stuff where the older generation where the shirts are large, so it fits me. I'll just buy it and not really worry about it too much. Fit and brand, fit and age
9.	I think a lot has to do with the physical fitness as well. The older crowd tends to be a little heavier. Um, so, they may not be as interested in as much horizontal stripes, or different types of patterns as the younger generation. That's why I think some of the Peter Millar material would be designated as older. I think they are trying to get back to the younger crowd a little bit. And, um, you see everyone wearing Peter Millar now regardless of age. Fit and body shape, fit and age, fit and brand
10.	Fit is more important for the younger crowd. Fit and age
11.	I feel like the younger crowd wants to look better, and the way like they aren't going I feel like they're wearing tighter stuff now, like they're going in buying the tight shirt and maybe even go a size down compared to an older guy is trying to get a nice comfortable shirt. Fit and age
12.	Yea. I think fits probably equally important among both. It's just a different type of fit. Like younger crowd might want something a bit more slimming and maybe trying to

<p>show off that they don't have a little gut, but the older crowd wants to make sure it fits properly so that their gut doesn't stick out or something. But you know, give you some parallels with that but they are both equally fit for different reasons. The older crowd is trying to hide something and the younger crowd is trying to show off. Fit and age</p>
<p>13. I think fitting would be the biggest aspect of it. I wouldn't be surprised if way down the road, you see something more than just small, medium, or larges. I mean just I feel that shirts are going to get so customized, or so unique between companies that shirts might have shirts that fit better for people who might be a little stronger upper body than some, like more than small and large. I think they are going to start marketing the fitting aspect of the shirt more than um they currently do. Maybe a small regular fit, and a small slim fit. Exactly. Or wide large fit. Yea definitely. I wouldn't be the least bit surprised if like tags start having more letters on them you know. Fit and brand, fit and body size/shape</p>
<p>14. Well we had a lot of, well our younger members you know thinner guys who are in shape, really want Polo RLX because that's how it fit to a slimmer, to a more slimmer. It's more fit. Fit and age, fit and body shape, fit and brand</p>
<p>15. Yea, brands are a big thing. Because of the fit. A lot of the brands are known for how they fit. Like everyone knows Fairway Greene fits a little bit bigger. Whereas, you know, I can wear an extra small in that, where in PLX I'm almost a large. So a lot of people will look for the fit I think. Fit and brand</p>
<p>16. They'll be looking at price and that's when you really need to know what the benefits of the one those cots \$5 more is. Like maybe it is what Pat was talking about, the brand, the fit, um, you know the different materials that are used. Fit and price, fit and brand</p>
<p>17. I think another thing when you have members coming into a shop. I mean whether its an extremely skinny guy, or an extremely large guy, they go what do you have that fits me. Maybe they are just looking for something that fits me. Fit and body shape</p>
<p>18. More athletic gear. I think the industry is moving towards being more fit, so I think you're going to see a lot more like Under Armour and a lot more fitted, Adidas. Fit and body shape, fit and brand</p>
<p>19. The newer shirts that are coming out are starting to fit a lot slimmer and for broader shoulders. Adidas this summer, I didn't see it, I wasn't on the east coast all summer, so I didn't really see what came out east coast, but I know on the west coast, Adidas had a new a completely new cut, completely new line, it was called like Adi Pure. Fit and brand</p>
<p>20. Just I feel like the industry is going, a lot of golf pros are for the first time working out and getting in shape. Fit and body shape</p>
<p>21. I think, yeah. I think that the tucks are going to be different, the older guys will be looking for more of a roomier tuck shirt, yeah, and the younger guys are going to be looking for more of a fit of a shirt, like a tour fit, I guess, like Peter Millar, ugh, just like the old school, PMR. Everything's big. But, that's because they cater to the 40-50,</p>

middle aged, males on the weekends. You know what I mean? Yeah, who are not small or who are thinking about their shape. Fit and brand, fit and body shape
22. The Nike, Adidas kind of crowd, you never, I don't see a 65 year old, overweight male wearing a Nike tech shirt. Fit and brand, fit and age
23. But, yeah, man, the past ten years, everyone keeps on getting fatter, the sizes and runs, keep getting larger and hopefully, these people start getting more fit, and move with it. Fit and body shape

Color
1. I am kind of like ugh, like easy colors, kind of like whites, navy blues, kind a nothing outlandish, more traditional. Yeah, so more solid colors instead of, are you more of a padded guy, like the style of the shirt. I can do stripes and solids as well; I guess it's more of the base color. Okay, like neutral, no reds, yellow, yeah. Traditional colors
2. Because, size, I am a smaller guy, color, that's just mainly, is it me or not, so, that's my factor when I go look for a shirt. It is either color or size; if you don't have meaning then, and another thing you can add to that is, I don't know what exactly you call it, but if someone sees a PGA tour player wearing a certain type of shirt their probably more inclined to buy that kind, for example, was it two years ago, or three years ago, it was the masters and everyone was wearing orange and you saw in golf shops and it was based off of what the pros were wearing on tour at that time. Color and size, color and PGA tour
3. Well, I think in just terms of traditional colors mixed with cotton fabrics, (fades)...there's only two when it comes down to it and they are Peter Millar and Polo, that are worth putting an investment in. Traditional colors, color and fabric, color and brand
4. Um, color, well I think it depends what type of club you're at. Color and type of club
5. Well I think like the color and the look for me just because if I walk into a shop, and if I see it from a ways away, and it looks good, then you're going to look at the other stuff. But if it doesn't even catch your eye, then I'm not even going to look at the size, the brand, or the price because it has to look good before I'm going to be interested in it. Color has to catch your eye/look good
6. Like if you see one shirt that's like colorful, you like how it looks, its colorful, then you're going to go check out the other things, but um, I guess like the shop too as a whole, but I was talking about just like one specific item that could like catch your eye. Color has to catch your eye/look good
7. Well normally good looking shirts like that, that are colorful, have better fabrics, like there aren't that many bad, looking, like you don't see a horrible shirt that's got like, lime green, like if it's a nicer shirt, it's going to have nicer materials, that's going to drive up the price but, you get what you pay for I guess. Color and fabric, fabric and price

8. Yea it's like who can create the most like flamboyant outfit, like using the most colors and like being the most different. Like trying to stand out in your group. Expression through color
9. It seems like the golfers are trying to dress in all solid colors like Rickie Fowler with his orange, all orange and all blue. Color and PGA tour
10. Uh Ian Poulter, and his pink. Yea, and plaid plants. But everything matches perfectly, like to a tee. Even their shoes, have that pink on them too, like it's just the solid color throughout their whole outfit. Yea I think it's like the material and all that too, like all the companies use, like the Adidas has the climate cool and all that kind of stuff and it's just like the material makes people want to wear the shirts and it keeps you cool and it feels good I guess. Color and PGA tour, color and brand, color and fabric
11. Yea I guess you have to meet with the younger, uh, Peter Millar thing, I bought that three plaid, like blue purple and green and those, like as soon as I walked in the door I looked and I saw those and I liked them. But the others ones like the black ones, I didn't really look at and I feel like older guys wouldn't really buy the plaid ones. Color and brand, color and age
12. I don't think that would go. You can't have like sweet popping colors; no you could have a white shirt, with like orange pin stripes. Just like a white shirt with the orange little strips. Yea but, well if its like sideways, it wouldn't look that bad. A beige, or white pants. Well white, I don't know, I think that would look good but that's not classic. I think you're going to still see bright colors. But like you can wear cardigans, but they will be in bright colors. . Yea like the cardigan I had on yesterday, that was gray. Yea but it had white pin stripes in it, it was sweet. Color and design, Color and tradition
13. Trends I just think it's like colors right now. Colors. Color and trends
14. I don't know it's just the thing that I'm attracted to, brighter colors, or colors that stand out from the rest I find that, most intriguing. I was looking more ...attire standpoint, I think ... stand out most. Bright colors
15. Well I think the first immediate thing that I see is color. And I like to wear different colors. I'm not afraid to wear different color palates in my wardrobe. So color to me is a big thing when I am choosing out merchandise. Color and decision making
16. Yeah, like you don't want to have the same shirt. Like if I already have a blue and white striped shirt, why would I want another blue and white striped shirt? If I have a solid red, why would I want another solid red? You want a shirt that's different that you don't already have. Expression through color
17. Especially now, younger kids are going in, seeing guys like Rickie Fowler wearing these all one color jumpsuits, and now they're selling at Dicks Sporting Goods. Whatever. So you see all the stuff they are wearing is going into shops. Like I remember I don't know how long ago it was, 5 years ago. When white belts started coming back on tour. It's like, those were like the big thing. Well I want a white belt because that's what the guys

on tour are wearing. Color and age, color and PGA tour
18. I think we're going to see a lot more color, a lot better fabric coming into the business. Uh, in the performance business not being afraid to express themselves through their clothes. I think we're going to see a little bit more uniqueness. Color and fabric, expression through color
19. Very traditional. Solids. Rather than compared to, Rhode Island, where you want the Nantucket brands, you want the yellow, the light blues, pinks... Color and tradition, color and geographic region
20. I will say it depends on the style of club you're form. Dave worked in Boston, for a summer, and members up there at the private clubs there want just plain neutral non-loud. Color and type of club
21. Then in Rhode Island, part of it is preppy; part of it is I want that lime green, new Nike shirt. Color and geographic region, color and brand
22. Or even in the traditions aisle. Because I saw a lot of, um members this summer that would wear cotton, rather than the tech material. The traditional, just the old, boring colors, the navy, the green, exactly. They love it. Rather than the pinks, the lime greens, the yellow, the Nantucket brands. Color and tradition
23. Okay, I think its color, color, whatever their personal style is you know some people, I think would wear bland colors and there's people that wear anything, anything so I think whatever your personal brand is the color that you're going to go for, and that's what's going to attract you to whichever brand or table that the shirts are located at. Color and brand

Fabric
1. More of a sports fit, I'd rather have, I don't really like the traditional shirts, so, more tech type, so, your all tech, yeah, I am a tech guy. Tech
2. I mean, this is just from what I hear without the polyester, everyone always quote's do you have climate cool material? They might know that its Adidas, but, it's always do you have that climate cool stuff or that climate cool material? Climate cool, fabric and brand
3. I think, because there's a lot of different companies emerging through tech that are late comers or that feel that they have a new innovation, I feel as a buyer, like it would be tough to try and take a risk because it's only been popular for like six or seven years now at a country club. Tech
4. if it's a young country club, were talking about it earlier, its kind of getting more away from the traditional younger players as we move forward and when those younger people start becoming members of those clubs and as they start growing its kind of going to be like I think its going to start moving towards that it's kind of like when any trend starts, it starts out maybe with the younger population, but, as the population gets

<p>old I am sure that it happened, with what were talking about traditional. Like the polo shirts and the cotton shirts and what not. You know, at one time, they were buying long sleeve shirts with ties, and that's when all of a sudden the traditional and the cotton shirts probably started with the younger generation will eventually have gotten older and then the shirt and tie left and I think that that's what's going to happen and then the techs will start to move in and will start taking off. Fabric and age, fabric and tradition</p>
<p>5. Texture, if it's cool I don't like anything real heavy. Fabric and texture</p>
<p>6. I think the fabric is to like stay warm, or cool, during whatever season it is here, because like, it will be like late fall and you'll want to wear like under armor, with like a heavy cotton shirt, while in the summer you'll wear like a lighter under armor kind of shirt so you don't sweat as much. Fabric and season</p>
<p>7. Well normally good looking shirts like that, that are colorful, have better fabrics, like there aren't that many bad, looking, like you don't see a horrible shirt that's got like, lime green, like if it's a nicer shirt, it's going to have nicer materials, that's going to drive up the price but, you get what you pay for I guess. Fabric and color</p>
<p>8. Yea, and you never see like uh, normally if you see an older golfer out there it's like I don't know, shorts, with like thick shorts with like really odd thick black shirt. And it's like that guys going to be dying you know it's like a 90 degree day, and it's like he's going to be dying. But like if you compare that to like aides where it's really thin and breathable, like I think, I'm saying aides a lot of those sales come from an under 40, I don't think older golfers are going to be buying that kind of stuff. Fabric and age, fabric and body shape</p>
<p>9. Yes. I think especially now a days. The younger males are looking more techy stuff, while older males are more towards the Peter Millar, Fairway and Greene, that kind of stuff. They are probably wearing sweaters over it, maybe a sweater vest. Depending on the climate. Fabric and age, fabric and brand, fabric and season</p>
<p>10. I think we're going to see a lot more color, a lot better fabric coming into the business. Uh, in the performance business not being afraid to express themselves through their clothes. I think we're going to see a little bit more uniqueness. Fabric and color, fabric and technology</p>
<p>11. I think, somewhere they'll come to it, but I think he'll revert back to their standard cotton fabrics their standard color shirts, their standard one-color pieces. Their non-conforming stripes and such. Fabric and tradition</p>
<p>12. All these new brands are making moisture whacking material shirts. Which helps get the sweat away from your body, which makes you feel cool. Fabric and technology</p>
<p>13. I think each brand has some sort of athletic, more moisture wicking material. Fabric and brand, fabric and technology</p>
<p>14. Another thing that I don't think any of us have uh, touched upon is, the ease of wearing a moisture wicking shirt. And how, no creases come out of it in the dryer, don't have to</p>

<p>iron, and I think being presentable is a huge thing in going to a country club. Fabric and comfort, fabric and look</p>
<p>15. Yea. One thing I noticed is that the Pebble Beach Company, loves tech shirts. Just loves them. Whatever they brought in was all tech shirts. And you'd have the older guests, visitors coming in and they'd be like, do you have any cotton shirts. And that's when you have to spin it into why they should be going towards the tech shirts. I mean what the benefits of them are. Tech, fabric and age</p>
<p>16. We well some of them said that the shirts cling to them. When they're wearing them. Like you have to mention, well look it's the material and when it starts getting warm, and you start sweating, its not going to stick to you, which is very unlikely in California. It didn't get above 75 degrees. Fabric and comfort</p>
<p>17. Well, there's like the hybrids they have the tech cotton hybrids which are the first stops of trying to pitch the tech shirts to the older market. Tech, fabric and age</p>
<p>18. I think more than anything else, ugh, at least last year, I definitely had most members come in asking for a certain material. They would come in and say, what's that really like? Material, I mean, the tech material and point them towards that, because it was a really hot summer. So they would be sweating through the cottons, so, it was like most of the time they would come and immediately go for tech material or if they like cotton, it would be cotton, they wouldn't care about color until they kind of got the type of shirt that they wanted first. That's like 100% right, like they are going for the feel of the shirt, some guys no matter what are going to wear cotton, some guys no matter what are going to wear tech, so, they want something that feels good. Tech, fabric and comfort</p>
<p>19. I don't think it's the most important, there are a few guys that are only going to buy a Polo and are only going to buy Peter Millar because that's what they have gotten used to and that's what they like. I don't think that it's the most important thing. Fabric and brand</p>
<p>20. The older material that they are used to, because they have worn cotton and the other materials that were around in their prime, or younger years, they may not switch to the newer materials. So, they are kind of style of tradition, in a way. Cottons, there are a lot of them that quit polyester in the 70's and refuse to go back yeah, laugh. ugh, basically, just agree with that the older generation are going to go with more of a traditional look. What do the guys in your club wear? Cause that is the older generation. Yeah, I mean, we do a lot of Fairway and Green and Bobby Jones?? And a fair amount of Peter Millar ugh, but, I mean Adidas is really the only tech piece that we get into for the most part, ugh, mostly older guys, there are some older guys that come in for the hard collared shirts still and they just, I mean, some of those older guys can be set, in I only wear cotton, and I wear hard collar and the younger guys are a little more flexible. Fabric and tradition, fabric and age, fabric and brand</p>
<p>21. I think going for the fabrics, I think it's just technology is just going to get so good that the, they are going to have a shirt that wicks your sweat, feels like 100% cotton, and</p>

looks awesome. Eventually, it's going happen, because the tech shirts just keep getting better and better. Like, you know, we have Peter Millar Summer Comfort, Adidas is getting better, you know Polo RLX is almost a cotton shirt, as far as I am concerned.

Fabric and technology, fabric and brand

22. I think you're seeing a lot more tech material look, and feel like cotton, while also wicking sweat, and being very breathable without having to iron it. It's kind of, almost you can almost trick the older generation into thinking that it is cotton, but, it's a lot better material. **Tech, fabric and age**

Price

1. Price is not that big of a factor at least where I have been. If they like the shirt or the apparel that they are looking at, they are probably going to buy it, it is not really a price fact. **Not a big factor**
2. I think price is a big deal; price doesn't really matter for older people, but price definitely for younger people. I know for me, brand, do kind of too, because I like to have random all Nike outfits. I just like that. I like Nike basically for everything. **Price and age, price and brand**
3. Because we're limited with money right now; don't have a whole lot of discretionary income. **Price and age**
4. It doesn't where you are. If you're at a private club, I don't think it's a bigger factor. **Not a big factor**
5. I think public and resort; I feel the price is the second most determining factor. **Price and type of club**
6. They'll be looking at price and that's when you really need to know what the benefits of the one those cots \$5 more is. **Price and benefits**
7. I mean the only way to get members at our, the Penn state golf course, to actually look at something, to think about buying it, maybe buying it, is the word sale. **Price and sales**
8. Yea. I think the older the product gets, and the longer its stayed in your shop, the more you got to increase the, I mean if you can get it for at least what you paid for it cost, that'd be great. But even if, you sell it and loose \$5 off of it, just getting it out and making something off of it. That helps. **Price and merchandising**
9. Price does not matter. I think that the courses that we've worked at between all of us, I think the price hasn't mattered where we've worked. New York and Boston are completely different though. **Not a big factor, price and region**
10. I'm just saying the wealthier members are just you know, they don't I don't think they give a crap about how much it costs. Like I think you said that earlier too. A lot of them don't care how much it costs. **Not a big factor**

Brand
1. Well, I think in just terms of traditional colors mixed with cotton fabrics, there's only two when it comes down to it and they are Peter Millar and Polo, that are worth putting an investment in. Brand and tradition
2. I mean, this is just from what I hear without the polyester, everyone always quote's do you have climate cool material? They might know that it's Adidas, but, it's always do you have that climate cool stuff or that climate cool material? Brand and fabric
3. Brand. I'd say unique because I like to stand out, price, that's a big deal. Brand and uniqueness
4. The brand logo doesn't matter to me at all. Brand and logo
5. I'd say branding is probably one of the highest if not the highest factor. Uniqueness. Brand and uniqueness
6. Well when I go into a shop, I know what I want. I know what companies I like so if I'm loyal to the company, I'm going to buy that shirt still. Clearly it had all the other stuff, if it's good, if I'm wearing it, then it had the color, fabric, uniqueness and price. Brand and loyalty
7. I just want a shirt with the logo. Where other members of our courses, more like, well you know I definitely want Peter Millar, or I definitely want Polar RLX, because that's you know, that's one of the big carriers that we had. Brand and logo
8. Nike is probably leading the younger crowd. Where Peter Millar is older crowd. Just the actual logo suites the older crowd more. Brand and age, brand and logo
9. Well we had a lot of, well our younger members you know thinner guys who are in shape, really want Polo RLX because that's how it fit to a slimmer, to a more slimmer fit. Brand and body shape
10. Yea, brands are a big thing. Because of the fit. A lot of the brands are known for how they fit. Like everyone knows Fairway and Greene. It fits a little bit bigger. Whereas, you know, I can wear an extra small in that, where in RLX I'm almost a large. So a lot of people will look for the fit I think. Brand and fit
11. I think each brand has some sort of athletic, more moisture wicking material. Brand and fabric
12. Brand. Fit comes with the brand. I think a lot of people, there are top brands that are fit differently like I mean, Fairway Greene would be considered a top brand for most golf shops. I mean you'll see a lot of the top golf shops on the east coast carrying them. And you'll see a lot of them carrying Peter Millar. And although some people may view Peter Millar or Fairway Green a little bit better than the other. They are two completely different fits. So maybe a guy who is more husky, might be like I like Fairway and Greene, it fits well, and it's still an extremely good product. Where as someone who is a

<p>little bit slimmer might be like I like RLX or I like Peter Millar, because that's also a really good product but it fits me a little bit better. Brand and fit, brand and body shape</p>
<p>13. I think, I think, I going back just a little bit, the brand I think that it could be based off of what other people are wearing at the facility. They might just ask, oh that shirts sweet, what is it? And like, I know a bunch of guys that come up and are like oh look it's that new moisture liken material. They feel it and are like oh, I want that. That's awesome. So they come into the shop asking for that, try it and then maybe come back and maybe are a returning customer for that product. Brand and status, brand and fabric</p>
<p>14. I look for a nice looking shirt; a good brand polo, so brand, RLX. Brand and look</p>
<p>15. I think customers look for same thing, either very nice brand that they know or just a nice looking shirt a striped shirt. Brand and look</p>
<p>16. Ugh, I don't have an opinion on that, I mean I guess it's the same, I think, I don't know, yeah, people always want to, they are always branded one way. They have a good experience with a certain brand, they are going to go back to it and try it again. Brand and loyalty</p>
<p>17. Ugh, an example, or I guess, a good example, Fairway and Greene. Their slogan is respect for the game, I feel like that appeals better to the older generation, ugh, and then, I guess, kind of like, ugh, the young factor, they appeal, like RLX is kind of, I mean, you're not going see many old people wearing that, but, a lot of young guys want to fall into that trend. Brand and age</p>
<p>18. I think the older generation rotates more towards the Peter Millar, Fairway Greene and the younger crowd, goes towards the Polo and RLX. Brand and age</p>
<p>19. I think it will be definitely more likely that the older guys will be branded because they have more experience and more time to actually be tied to one brand, but, I definitely think that the younger crowd will. There's guys who will and who won't stick with one brand. And there's always going to be people who want to check out whatever's new, if they've never seen it before and there's always guys that won't even try something new on. Brand and age, brand and product adoption</p>

Trends
<p>1. Well I'm saying like exotic outfits, like barely wearing anything. When I say exotic I mean bright like loud mouth stuff, no way. I see it going back to classic again. I think it's going to be a cycle kind of thing. I think it could, that would be sweet. Because Tiger is pulling it off, he's wearing more classic gear, like purple, well more plum, not actually like purple. Back to the classics</p>
<p>2. Especially now, younger kids are going in, seeing guys like Rickie Fowler wearing these all one color jumpsuits, and now they're selling at Dicks Sporting Goods. Whatever. So you see all the stuff they are wearing is going into shops. PGA Tour</p>

<p>3. I think one of the biggest trends that have started now is that people have started to realize how much physical health comes into play. You got physical limitations like wave learned in lessons and nobody really cared about that stuff, but now you kind of got to know what's wrong with the person and how can they change to make them better within their physical limitations. Then you have stuff like club fitting that's all new, and it will just get better and better. Health and golf</p>
<p>4. I think they will make it more like how Peter Millar has their E4 line now; they have it for all different types of weather. There are not many companies that will do that, it's like people trying to keep up with each other. Multiseason product lines</p>
<p>5. I think fitting would be the biggest aspect of it. I wouldn't be surprised if way down the road, you see something more than just small, medium, or large. I mean just I feel that shirts are going to get so customized, or so unique between companies that shirts might have shirts that fit better for people who might be a little stronger upper body than some, like more than small and large. I think they are going to start marketing the fitting aspect of the shirt more than um they currently do. Maybe a small regular fit, and a small slim fit. Exactly. Or wide large fit. Yea definitely. I wouldn't be the least bit surprised if like tags start having more letters on them you know. Customized fit</p>
<p>6. I think, somewhere they'll come to it, but I think they'll revert back to their standard cotton fabrics their standard color shirts, their standard one-color pieces. Their non-conforming stripes and such. Back to the classics</p>
<p>7. This really isn't an answer but, it just seems like everything goes in cycles, and in future years, it wouldn't surprise me personally, to see people go back to like the older brands, the older material, but, it just kind of seems like everything in the world goes in cycles. So, I can see like that older material and that older style coming back into focus. Back to the classics</p>

Schreyer Honors College

Academic Vita of Christopher F. Balogh

E-Mail Id: cfb5033

EDUCATION



Major: **Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management**

Emphasis: **PGA Golf Management**

Minor: **Business Administration**

Honors: **Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management**

Thesis Title: **The Examination of Factors that Affect Males' Purchase Decisions**

Supervisor's Name: **Dr. Deborah Kerstetter**

Acquired Research Grants: **Honors Thesis Research Grant**

WORK EXPERIENCE



Shinnecock Hills Golf Club

Golf Shop Assistant

May 14, 2011- Present
Southampton, NY

Golf Shop Responsibilities

- Monitoring inventory levels of golf shop items, including apparel and accessories
- Enhancing the golf shop by creating displays, improving organization, and maintaining cleanliness
- Performing and completing basic club repair for the membership and their guests
- Placing special orders for the membership through various vendors
- Assisting the Professional Staff with weekly golf club demonstration days

Tournament Experiences

- Ensuring that members and their guests are successfully registered for scheduled tournaments and events
- Completing tournament preparation procedures including handicap verification for major tournaments and events

Outside Operations Responsibilities

- Assisting with daily set up, including the practice range and short game areas
- Picking and maintaining proper cleanliness of the practice facility when necessary



Oakmont Country Club

Outside Operations Assistant: Level 3 Internship

May 2010- August 2010
Oakmont, PA

Outside Operations Responsibilities

- Maintained proper cleanliness of the practice facility and golf car fleet
- Assisted in managing Caddie Operations during daily play

Golf Shop Responsibilities

- Repaired golf clubs for the members and their guests
- Hosted unaccompanied guest play

- Managed daily operations at the Oakmont East Course

Tournament Experiences

- Assisted the Professional Staff with proper execution and successful completion of tournaments and events

Golf Instruction

- Instructed twenty (20) junior golfers on the basic fundamentals of the golf swing and course management four (4) times a week



Crooked Stick Golf Club

May 2009- August 2009
Carmel, IN

Golf Shop Assistant: Level 2 Internship

Golf Shop Responsibilities

- Tracked and maintained inventory of golf clubs and gloves
- Managed and filed all invoices in the Golf Shop
- Placed special orders for the membership
- Enhanced the Golf Shop by maintaining cleanliness and creating displays
- Repaired golf clubs for the membership
- Hosted unaccompanied guest play

Outside Operations Responsibilities

- Assisted in managing the outside operations for staff and caddies
- Helped maintain cleanliness of the golf car fleet

Tournament Experiences

- Assisted tournament operations for eleven (11) member tournaments and five (5) United States Senior Open Corporate tournaments
- Served as a play coordinator in the Junior Club Championship

Teaching Experience

- Instructed seventy-five (75) junior players about proper short game and full swing practices during Junior Golf clinics
- Provided private lessons for members and guests



Deepdale Golf Club

May 2008-August 2008
Manhasset, NY

Outside Operations and Golf Shop Assistant: Level 1 Internship

Golf Shop Responsibilities

- Assisted with golf shop merchandising and sales operations by keeping inventory and creating displays
- Performed golf club repair procedures
- Arranged daily lesson sessions for the instructors
- Established excellent professional relationships with the Deepdale staff and membership

Outside Operations Responsibilities

- Ensured the cleanliness and proper setup of the golf car fleet for tournaments and daily play
- Maintained proper cleanliness of the practice and short game facilities
- Implemented new bag drop procedures for the outside operations staff

VOLUNTEER AND ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCES



United States Women's Open

July 5- July 11, 2010

Practice Tee Supervisor

Oakmont, PA

- Assisted in the management of the 2010 United States Women's Open Practice Tee
- Worked directly under Oakmont's Professional Staff and Practice Tee Committee



The Masters Tournament

April 2010: April 2011

Practice Tee Supervisor

Augusta, GA

- Assisted in the management of the 2010 and 2011 Masters Tournament Practice Tee operations
- Worked directly under the Professional Staff and Practice Tee Activities Committee comprised of six (6) Augusta National Golf Club members
- Assisted players, coaches, and caddies with any of their needs in a professional manner
- Managed a staff of eight (8) high school volunteers throughout the tournament week



United States Senior Open

July 27- August 2, 2009

Merchandise Manager

Carmel, IN

- Oversaw inventory management of all merchandise for the 2009 United States Senior Open
- Managed a 1,500 square foot Satellite Merchandise Pavilion throughout the tournament week
- Supervised and instructed over twenty (20) volunteers
- Assisted in managing vendors during the duration of the tournament
- Displayed merchandise in the Merchandise Pavilion (8,000 square feet) and Satellite Merchandise Pavilion (1,500 square feet)



Penn State PGA Golf Management Student Society

Vice President

May 2010- April 2011

- Assisted the PGA Golf Management Student Society by inviting monthly guest speakers to visit and to discuss their ideas with aspiring professionals
- Advised the President and the Executive Board in making appropriate decisions to further enhance the experience for all students enrolled in the Program

Treasurer

May 2009- April 2010

- Tracked and approved all income and expenses of the PGA Golf Management Student Society with a budget in excess of \$10,000
- Served as supervisor for various chair positions on the Executive Board
- Provided critical input during Executive Board meetings
- Helped raise \$16,800 for Penn State's THON event to help find a cure for pediatric cancer

Silent Auction Chair

August 2008- May 2009

- Raised over \$7,500 for the PGA Golf Management Student Society (most ever raised in society's history)
- Assessed the value of all donated products and organize them for the auction
- Solicited donations from various local business and major golf corporations such as Titleist, TaylorMade, and Peter Millar

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Member of the Dean's Honor List: Fall 2007-Present
- Recipient of the 2010 Mason and Juliet Champion Scholarship for Creative Thought
- Recipient of the Frank B. Guadagnolo "Pride of Lions" Student Award
- Recipient of the 2010 Pamela Nicholson-Dadey and Kevin Ryan Dadey Memorial Student Scholarship
- Recipient of the 2011 Alumni Recognition of Student Excellence Award within the College of Health and Human Development