THE NEXT EVOLUTIONARY STEP FOR REGIONAL SHOPPING MALLS:

A Measure of Acceptance of New Retail Concepts as Identified by Different Age Groups of Shoppers

Cynthia E. Anderson, Ed.D.*
Vice President for Student Affairs, Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio

David J. Burns, DBA
Professor of Marketing, Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio

Jane S. Reid, Ph.D.
Professor of Marketing, Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio

Overview

Clearly, the crown jewel of the consumer society is the suburban regional shopping mall. In a single, climate-controlled, almost magical environment filled with unsurpassed arrays of merchandise, consumers are able to shop at a large number of stores, often over a hundred, sheltered from the trials of real life—no traffic, no weather problems, etc. While considered an invincible force in retailing only a few decades ago, changes in consumers and in the shopping environment appear to be raising a number of issues which are jeopardizing the continuing success of this institution. The purpose of this study is to identify new retail concepts which appear to possess the potential for success within the setting of a suburban regional shopping mall and to gauge the degree to

*ceanderson@ysu.edu

which each is attractive to individuals from the generational age groups. The attractiveness of each of the potential new retail concepts will be evaluated by individuals from each of the generational groups. The attractiveness of the concepts will be further examined to identify whether differences exist among individuals in the different generational groups.

■ Introduction

Suburban Regional Shopping Malls

Although the suburban regional suburban shopping mall is not quite 50 years old, several clouds are forming on the horizon. Specifically, the attractiveness of suburban regional shopping malls as a primary shopping destination for many consumers in the United States seems to be waning (Labich, 1995; Reynolds, Ganesh and Luckett, 2002). Consumers are visiting suburban regional shopping malls less frequently, visiting fewer stores when they do visit and are also spending less time at the mall during each visit (Cavanaugh, 1996; Laing, 1992). Indeed, between 1987 and 1994, there was a decline in the percent of individuals who stated that they shop at suburban regional shopping malls "very often," and the percentage who claimed that they do not shop at suburban regional shopping malls doubled from 12 to 24% (Cavanaugh, 1996). Evidence appears to indicate that these trends are continuing (McDonald, 1999). Suburban regional shopping malls are losing their dominant position in the marketplace as increasingly larger percentages of consumers' discretionary income are being spent elsewhere (Barrett, 1997; Brotman, 1996; Gallun, 1996; Miller, 1997).

The decline of the attractiveness of suburban regional shopping malls appears to be caused in part by changes in consumers and in their wants and needs. Since the first suburban regional shopping malls opened, the lifestyles of many consumers have changed significantly (Marks, 1998). These changes have resulted in changes in their buying habits and preferences. Increasing time pressures and increasing price sensitivity, for instance, are affecting the shopping strategies employed by consumers. An increased selection of shopping alternatives from which to choose, many of which are better attuned to the changing wants and needs of consumers, has also given them additional shopping choices (Hazel, 2002; Reynolds, Ganesh and Luckett, 2002). Many of these newer retail alternatives, however, are not located in suburban regional shopping malls, but in free-standing sites or in open-air centers, such as new lifestyle centers (Mander, 2001).

The results of the changing customer preferences and increasing competition can be easily observed. Relatively few new suburban regional shopping malls, for instance, are being constructed today. Simultaneously, a number of existing centers are being "decommissioned"—converted into alternative uses such as office space or telemarketing call centers, or being torn down to be replaced by other forms of retail centers (Reynolds, Ganesh and Luckett, 2002). Indeed, over 300 malls have been decommissioned since the mid 1990s (Greene, 2001). Michael Beyard, senior resident fellow for retail and entertainment development at the Urban Land Institute, expects another 300-500 to be closing soon (Greene, 2001). Furthermore, Scott Hardy, a managing director with KPMG Consulting, states "We're going to see mall closings accelerate" (Greene, 2001) if no changes are made in this industry.

Department Stores and the Suburban Regional Shopping Mall

A key to the success of suburban regional shopping malls is the department store (Johnson, 2002). Department stores act as their primary traffic generators—the majority of shoppers who visit suburban regional shopping malls do so to shop at the centers' department stores. To take further advantage of the traffic-generating abilities of department stores, these stores are usually located at each end of a suburban regional shopping mall to drive shopper traffic throughout the center. If a suburban regional shopping mall should lose its department-store anchors, it typically cannot survive. There is no longer a reason for consumers to visit the mall.

The department store, however, is a retail concept that has been encountering an extended period of difficulty and decline. Over the past two decades, department stores have not only lost half of their share of the marketplace to discounters and specialty stores (Johnson, 2002), they have also suffered a significant actual sales decline. The decline in department stores has directly affected suburban regional shopping malls since the centers' primary traffic draw is no longer as effective. "Department stores have rapidly lost their role as the primary driver of shopper traffic" (Johnson, 2002). The direct result is that the attraction of suburban regional shopping malls is diminished in the eyes of consumers—there is less of a reason to include a visit to suburban regional shopping malls as a part of one's shopping activities.

In the face of this less-than-bright outlook for the suburban regional shopping mall industry, the time may have come to rethink the basics of this form of shopping outlet. Suburban regional shopping malls need to develop new strategies to generate traffic and increase productivity (Le-Hew and Fairhurst, 2000). Two strategies have been suggested to address the problems faced by suburban regional shopping malls. One alternative deals with the way that they are configured. The other alternative concerns changing the nature of the shopping experience, namely, adding entertainment.

Zonal Merchandising

An alternative configuration that has been suggested as a possible way for suburban regional shopping malls to address some of the changes observed in consumers and their shopping preferences and activities is zonal merchandising. The layout traditionally employed in regional suburban shopping malls caters to the leisure-oriented market of the 1950s and 1960s (Marks, 1998). In this layout, similar stores are located in different wings of the center in order to encourage consumers to travel through the entire center (and be exposed to as many stores as possible) in their quest to locate and compare products (LeHew and Fairhurst, 2000). Traditional layouts are not designed to maximize consumer convenience but to maximize customer interchange. "A customer who wants to comparison shop for shoes has to walk from one end of the mall to the other, so she'll have every chance to make an impulse purchase in between" (Coleman, 2000).

Zonal merchandising represents a revolutionary new approach to layout in suburban regional shopping malls. Zonal merchandising attempts to adapt suburban regional shopping malls in such a way as to make them a more attractive shopping alternative for today's time-pressured shoppers. In zonal merchandising, similar tenants, with the similarity based on either product or consumer lifestyle, are not located in opposite wings of the center but are instead located within close proximity of each other. In a suburban regional mall employing zonal merchandising, one can visit the mall with a single product or need in mind and compare the offerings of all of the stores carrying that item without the need to travel throughout the entire mall, allowing for a much more efficient shopping experience for the consumer.

Several limited attempts have been made to implement zonal merchandising to selected product categories. Zonal merchandising has been used most commonly in the category of fast food, namely, the food court (Shoulberg, 1998). The food court has proven to be a success, resulting in food tenants experiencing higher levels of sales than those experienced under traditional layouts. In fact, the clustering of the food offerings in a food court has led to increased traffic-generating abilities that today rival those of some traditional anchor stores.

More recently, there have been several attempts to implement zonal merchandising on a wider scale. Beginning at Bridgewater Commons in New Jersey (Mander, 2000), several new projects have incorporated some zonal merchandising principles, including Rivertown Crossings in Grand Rapids, Michigan, which has grouped some categories of stores by product line carried, and Park Meadows in Denver, Colorado and Galleria Mall in New Haven, Connecticut, which have grouped stores by customer lifestyle. The results of these endeavors have been promising, so much so that General Growth, developer of Rivertown Crossings, plans to implement some form of clustering at all of its future projects (Mander, 2000). Attempts at reconfiguring existing centers around zonal merchandising ideas, such as the changes at Glendale Galleria in Glendale, California, seem to be successful as well.

Recent research has been conducted supporting the use of zonal merchandising. It was observed in one study (Anderson et al., 1999) that zonal merchandising may have the potential to improve the mall shopping experience for consumers. Although the results in a subsequent study (Burns, Anderson and Reid, 2001) differed from those of the initial study, the results also support the use of zonal merchandising.

Entertainment

The incorporation of entertainment into the offerings of a suburban regional shopping mall has also been forwarded as a way to revive the centers (Labich, 1995) and to provide a means to compete with Internet retailers (Hendershott, Hendershott and Hendershott, 2002). B. Joseph Pine, for instance, states, "experience means to spend time and, increasingly, to spend money to spend time. If retailers just provide a completely mundane experience, people won't come" (Ginsburg and Morris, 1999). The idea is to provide individuals with additional reasons to visit the malls as opposed to alternative venues. Initially, entertainment in this sense consisted of adding activities and opportunities for entertainment, such as carousels, into the centers. As can be expected, however, such singular actions have had limited effects on the traffic experienced at the affected centers. Consumers quickly became accustomed to, and tired of, such limited entertainment alternatives.

The next step in the incorporation of entertainment into the offerings of suburban regional shopping malls was the incorporation of larger, more broad-reaching entertainment opportunities. Although these offerings were better capable of attracting shoppers to the affected centers, it is questionable whether the centers' retailing activities prospered as a result. Talpade and Haynes (1997), for instance, observed that the incorporation of large entertainment centers into the offerings of a suburban regional shopping center does not increase the center's trading area nor induce consumers to spend more money or time. The large entertainment centers tend to attract people with social goals instead of shopping goals, which does not necessarily benefit a center's retail offerings.

Instead of attempting to add entertainment to the suburban regional shopping mall, what is the possible advantage of making the shopping experience itself more attractive? At the Mall of America, with a primary feature of a large entertainment center, the major draw is not the entertainment center, but the entertainment provided by the shopping alternatives—the ability to find stores and products which cannot be found elsewhere in the region (Gerlach and Janke, 2001). The ability of a center to offer a unique, ever-changing shopping experience, a critical issue in the early days of suburban regional shopping centers, has somehow been lost. Suburban regional shopping malls as a group provide a relatively nondescript homogeneous shopping experience (Brotman, 1996). Many of the centers look alike and possess the same stores and the same products. What is forgotten is that entertainment, in a mall sense, is not necessarily what activities can be added to the center, but what entertainment from shopping is provided by the center. Today's shoppers have lost interest in shopping at suburban regional shopping malls and are instead searching for shopping experiences that are fresh, different and fun (Lisanti, 1997)—experiences which are more commonly found in places other than the mall today.

New Retail Concepts

It would seem that the addition of entertainment in the form of different shopping alternatives/experiences may hold promise as a means to give consumers another reason to visit the suburban regional shopping mall. An ever-changing selection of stores can provide consumers with a reason to visit the center multiple times without growing tired or accustomed to the experience. The recent addition of the Build-a-Bear Workshop to the offerings of several suburban regional shopping malls is one such example. The Build-a-Bear Workshop was a new, novel retail concept that was different from existing retailers and which provided "a playful environment where creativity and ideas are encouraged" (Lorek, 2001). The problem lies in the fact that not a large number of similar, exciting new concepts like Build-a-Bear Workshop have been identified.

The addition of new, exciting retail concepts, however, does not necessarily guarantee continuing success nor a continuing generation of traffic. Niketown and Planet Hollywood are two such examples—although they initially represented exciting new retail concepts, after one visits them several times, there is not much else left to do (Ginsburg and

Morris, 1999). What is needed is a continuing stream of new retail concepts. Identifying new, exciting retail concepts then, becomes a constant quest for mall managers (Hazel, 2002). Indeed, "malls sorely need fresh retail concepts" (*Shopping Centers Today Xtra,* 2002).

In conclusion, consumers are increasingly demanding enjoyable experiences in their consumption activities (Kim, 2001). Although they are faced with increasing time pressures, consumers willingly spend extensive amounts of time in shopping activities, but the activities must be viewed as entertaining and enjoyable. "Instead of hewing to the time-honored formula of building a mall around a big department store anchor, developers have started searching for fresher, more offbeat stores that offer better opportunities for adding entertainment" (Ginsburg and Morris, 1999). This concept will be the key to the revitalization of the suburban regional shopping mall industry. Mark J. Rivers, executive VP and chief strategic officer at Mills, states, "the long-term players in our business should be in the 'out-of-home-entertainment' business" (Ginsburg and Morris, 1999).

■ Differences among Three Generations

The shopping preferences and shopping activities of individuals from different generations have been found to vary significantly. Indeed the preferences and activities of individuals who comprise Generation Y, Generation X and the Baby Boomers pose various challenges for today's marketers.

Baby Boomers

The Baby Boomers, the generation of children born between 1946 and 1964, have been characterized as the "inheritance generation," the "we want to have it all now" generation and the generation that "lacks frugality" (Urban Institute, 1995). Against the tide of popular perceptions of this generation, researchers at the Urban Institute found that "Baby Boomers on average have accumulated more wealth relative to income at this point in their lives than their parents had at the same stage of life 30 years ago" (Urban Institute, 1995). The Urban Institute (1995) found that the measured consumption of Baby Boomers has risen more slowly than that of other age groups, and possible explanations include "(1) changes over time in the tax code; (2) the differences between measured and actual expenditures on housing and medical care; and (3) increased saving by Baby Boomers relative to their parents" (Urban Institute, 1995). The participation of Boomers in the work force and ultimately then, their earnings, have made them an important consumer market. At present, Baby Boomers account for approximately 56 to 58% of the purchases in most consumer product and service categories (Urban Institute, 1995). Boomers are concerned with the future of their children, their own health, their retirement—thus, companies seeking their support as consumers need to position products to respond to these interests (Urban Institute, 1995).

Generation X

Generation X, the 15% of the U.S. population born between 1965 and 1976, became known as the generation that is very difficult to define. Generation X has been described as a generation of consumers who are "self-reliant, entrepreneurial, supportive of racial and sexual diversity and better educated than any previous generation. They are not prone to extravagance—rather they plan for their retirement and take advantage of 401(k) plans" ("Marketing to Generation X," 2000).

> *Generation Xers have grown up with computers. They are comfortable with the internet, e-mail, and with new technologies. So it stands to reason that one of the best and most consistent ways to market to them is via the internet. Both genders of GenXers love to shop over the internet. Maybe it's the simplicity of using the internet, or the speed with which items can be purchased. Maybe it's the excitement and discovery which comes with using e-commerce or computer-based business-to-business. Or maybe it's a combination of all of the above. Whatever the reasons, the internet is now an integral component of the business world, and web sites are one of the first lines of marketing to Generation X.*
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> ("Marketing to Generation X," 2000).

Generation Y

Generation Y, individuals born after 1976, has exerted influence on music, sports, computers and video-game purchases, to name a few product areas thus far. At 60 million strong, this group is the largest demographic group to hit the retail scene since the 72 million Baby Boomers, and as a result, poses a significant opportunity for marketers (Neuborne and Kerwin, 1999). Generation Y is already challenging the Boomer brands, and they are large enough in number to threaten the status quo. For example, although Nike is still popular among teens, the brand has lost its grip on the market in recent years. Nike's slick national ad campaigns, with their emphasis on image and celebrity, helped build the brand among Boomers, but they have not been as successful reaching Generation Y. Celebrity endorsements do not seem to hold great promise as a way to reach

Generation Y. As Nike is discovering, success with this generation requires a new kind of advertising as well as a new kind of product. Generation Y responds to humor, irony and the (apparently) unvarnished truth. Sprite has scored with ads that parody celebrity endorsers and carry the tagline "Image is nothing. Obey your thirst." Another example is the JCPenney ad campaign for Arizona Jeans where the tagline is simply "Just show me the Jeans" (Neuborne and Kerwin, 1999).

The Internet is the medium of choice for Generation Y, and the Internet's power to reach young consumers has not been lost on marketers. Generation Y relies heavily for product information either from their friends or from the Internet. Although some of Generation Y hangs out in the malls, they do not make their purchases at large anchor stores. Thus, well-designed Web sites are crucial for any company interested in reaching the Generation Y consumer. Generation Y often determine the stores from which they will make their purchases based on previous Internet searches (Deutsch, 1999).

■ Research Questions

The focus of this study is to identify new retail concepts which appear to possess the potential for success within the setting of a suburban regional shopping mall and to gauge the degree to which each is attractive to individuals from different generational age groups. The attractiveness of the concepts is further examined to identify whether differences exist among individuals in the different generational groups. The following hypotheses have been generated to measure the differences among the age categories.

H1: Individuals in different age groups possess differing attitudes toward mall shopping activities as they exist now.

H2: Individuals in different age groups possess differing attitudes toward the impact that the Internet has had on their mall shopping activities.

H3: Individuals in different age groups possess differing attitudes toward the impact of category killers on their mall shopping activities

H4: Individuals in different age groups possess differing attitudes toward what they would like to see as changes in the mall to make their shopping activities more meaningful for them.

■ Methodology

Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted with members of Generation Y, Generation X and the Baby Boomer generation to determine their current attitudes about shopping in a suburban regional shopping mall, the impact that the Internet has had on their mall shopping behavior, the impact that category killers have had on their mall shopping behavior and how they would like retailers and malls to change to meet their needs better. Participants in the focus groups were probed on their shopping and entertainment needs, unmet shopping needs, shortcomings of present shopping alternatives and suggestions for improvements on identified shortcomings. Eight focus groups were conducted with the groups segmented by gender within each age category in order to make the groups more homogeneous. Generation Y was split into college-age and high-school-age groups.

The Generation X and Baby Boomer focus group participants were recruited by buying 100 names from a list broker of individuals belonging to these demographic groups and residing in a mid-size, metropolitan area located in the Midwest. Potential focus group participants were sent letters requesting that they participate in a focus group. They were offered a $50 incentive to participate.

The high-school-age Generation Y focus group participants were recruited from a large high school in the same area that possessed a diverse population base. Approximately 50 parents of the potential focus group participants received an informed consent form asking them to allow their sons or daughters to participate in a focus group. They were also offered a $50 incentive to participate. The Generation Y college-age focus groups were recruited by offering students in college extra credit to participate in lieu of a monetary incentive.

All of the focus groups, except the college student focus groups, were conducted at a location close to the suburban regional mall about which they were questioned. The mall is a typical, four-anchor center with approximately one million gross square feet. Each focus group had a note-taker present in the focus group to record the responses of the participants as the moderator asked questions. All of the focus groups had at least 12 participants except for the Male Generation X Group and the Male Baby Boomer Group.

National Survey

New retail concepts garnered from the focus groups were included in a mail survey. A list broker was contacted to provide a national list of 3,000 individuals who fit into one of the three age groups (1,000 names for each age group). By returning the survey with their names and addresses attached to the survey by a specified date, they would be eligible to win a $500 prize. The goal was to generate at least a 30% response rate in each demographic group.

The resulting sample was 294 completed questionnaires, which represents approximately a 10% response rate. Of the 294 respondents, one did not provide an age category, 88 were Generation Y, 90 were in Generation X age, and 109 were in the Baby Boomer generation. Six respondents were older than Baby Boomers. Responses to the attitude statements were compared by age category to determine if any differences existed about changes in shopping behavior on the basis of the demographic age group to which they belong. The data were analyzed by performing one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA's) and Chi-Square tests.

■ Focus Group Results

High School Generation Y Male Focus Group

The male high school students seemed to enjoy shopping at the mall, especially when they had money to spend. They had no problem walking throughout the mall and visited the mall to buy clothes. They enjoyed having the one-stop experience. They visited the mall about once a month and admitted that they now visit the mall less frequently than they did when in seventh and eighth grades. They do not like the crowds, and parking is sometimes difficult for them. They also have a problem with mean mall walkers and find that they cannot gather in groups of more than six people before mall security will approach them.

The male Generation Y focus group participants do not care for some stores at the mall including Hollister, Abercrombie & Fitch, Remo and Vitamin World. They thought that there were too many jewelry stores and too many Footlockers and Champs (the center has two Footlockers and two Champs locations). They go to the mall when they have nothing else to do. They do hang out at the mall, but they are not mall rats. They like to go to Jillian's, an eating and entertainment establishment. They perceive the mall as convenient, and that "it's all there." Some concerns that they have when they go to the mall include paying too much, running into "troubled" kids, the turnover of the stores, a perceived cold and detached atmosphere, activities for young teens and survey people.

They were asked what would make them go to the mall more often, and they all felt that the mall lacked entertainment. They want a place for bands to play, a record store, a water park, a Virgin Mega store, an Expo Center, a Sharper Image and unique restaurants. Entertainment appeared to be a primary concern for this group.

They were also asked the impact of specific stores on their mall-shopping behavior. Surprisingly, they were, in general, very loyal to the suburban regional shopping mall. As for Kohl's, most of them did not shop there. If anything, they would stop there for basics like underwear, jeans and things for around the house. Half of them hated WalMart. They felt that there were too many people; it was cluttered, and it was only good for a few items that were cheap. Target was perceived as being better than WalMart—cheap with class. As for Old Navy, they used to shop there and felt that it had fair quality at a low price. Barnes & Noble was perceived as a great store with selection. They also felt good there and did not get bothered by salespeople.

They did not think that the Internet had much impact on their shopping at the malls. They would only buy things that they could not find at the mall on the Internet. They would buy things on the Internet if they were cheaper, and they liked not having to deal with people.

They were then asked what their ideal mall would be. They wanted a water park, an amusement park, artwork, a gym and less repetition of stores. They gave Easton Town Center (a lifestyle center located in Columbus, Ohio) with its mix of restaurants and amusements, as an example. They wanted a bank and ATM, an IMAX theater and outside lighting. They thought a restaurant on the roof would be nice if it had a view of anything. They wanted trams or people movers. They wanted a place for bands to play and a café with couches as a gathering place in a secluded area. They wanted a more carefree atmosphere.

When asked about a totally new store or a new experience, they mentioned a classic movie theater, a Putt-Putt course, go carts, record stores, more fun stuff, a Walgreen's for convenience, an ice cream store where one could design flavors, a design-your-own clothing store, an Internet café, a larger-size clothing store, virtual reality salespeople, a small nightclub, an outdoor mall, fountains and a Beatles store. Overall, the group wanted the mall to provide more entertainment options.

High School Generation Y Female Focus Group

Participants in this focus group like to have fun at the mall and are most interested in having a selection of outfits and the sizes necessary. They do not like crowds or pushy salespeople. They want to be able to find the items that they want and do not like disorganized stores. They like to go to the anchors with their mothers and boyfriends because they can all find things there and do not have to walk all over the mall, but they also like to go to stores like Kohl's and Old Navy because of convenient parking.

Regarding store selection, they do not think that nail and hairstyle stores are necessary in the mall. They do not like stores like Kirkland's, a mattress store and Bombay in the mall. They do not care for Hollister's or American Eagle, and they also felt that there were too many Footlockers and Champs Sports in the mall. They go to the mall to buy clothing, gifts, shoes, make-up and perfume. They are frequent shoppers, visiting the mall once a week or once a month.

They go to the mall to take care of many needs at one time because of the variety and the ability for one-stop shopping. They do not like being inside all of the time; however, they do not like the parking, the mall walkers and the teenagers who hang out at the mall. They think that the mall closes too early. They are influenced by the salespeople and whether or not they have had a positive experience in finding what they want in a store. They are concerned about safety and usually shop with someone else. A more upscale mall, a fancier environment, better stores and more up-to-date fashions would make them go to the mall more often. When asked what should be in the mall that is not there now, they said entertainment, different clothing stores (not all Abercrombie & Fitch styles) and stores that would cater to their moms that were not old-lady stores.

When asked about the impact that other stores have on their mall shopping, they said that they loved Kohl's, and if they can find what they want there, they may not go to the mall. At WalMart and Target, they buy CDs, DVDs and videos. At Old Navy, they will buy T-shirts or basic jeans if they are on sale. They like the atmosphere at Barnes & Noble but like Borders better—they could spend all day at Borders.

As for the Internet, it does not seem to be affecting their purchase patterns at the mall. They will look on the Internet but do not buy there. The only time that they would consider making a purchase on the Internet was if they found an incomplete outfit in a store and could find the completer piece on the Internet. They will buy computer supplies on the Internet, but they will not buy clothes, swimsuits, shoes, appliances or computers on the Internet.

When asked to design the perfect mall, they wanted very contemporary architecture, three or four levels and well-lighted. They want a wide variety of apparel stores from designer stores to low end. They are always in a hurry and would like to have similar stores selling similar merchandise clustered together. They would also have a lounge area in the mall. They would like better directories in the mall, and they thought that people movers would be a good idea if the aisles were wide enough.

College Generation Y Male Focus Group.

The attitudes and behavior of college males were surprisingly different from their high school counterparts. When they go to the mall, they like to get in, get what they want and get out. They do not like going to the mall with their significant others or for holiday shopping. They do not like nagging salespeople or dealing with people and crowds in general. They will only buy shoes and clothes at the mall.

They like to shop at specialty boutiques, Dick's Sporting Goods, Circuit City, Best Buy, Old Navy, WalMart, Kohl's and a JCPenney that is in a shopping plaza, and they do not go to the mall very often (two, three, or four times a year). They prefer those stores located outside of the mall because they have other items that the mall does not have—convenience and quality clothes at cheaper prices. They would shop at Footlocker and American Eagle more often if they were not in the mall. The department stores are not at all important to them. They do not shop them and only go into them to get away from the crowds.

When asked what stores they would like to see eliminated from the mall, they said a photo store because no one goes there, the anchors, a dog-food pastry shop (pointless), a mattress store and the one music store left in the mall, because CDs are cheaper at Best Buy.

They feel out of place when they go to the mall—the other people there are either too old or too young. They used to have fun at the mall when they were young. They like the fact that one can comparison shop under one roof at the mall. They felt it was good for the holidays since they could do all of their shopping in one trip. They also thought that the mall is a good place to shop in inclement weather. They hate fighting traffic to get to the mall. They do not like the kiosks in the mall during the holidays. They do not like parents who cannot control their kids, and they do not like older people—they want separate shopping from both groups.

They are loyal to specific stores in the mall and do not go into the other stores. They will go to the mall to eat and to meet women. They would go more often if they had more money, if the mall had a theme, if it had a nicer atmosphere and if there was entertainment. They think that the mall should have a movie theater, a pet store, waterfalls, a Best Buy, its roof removed, couches and stores with lounges in them.

As far as other stores taking them away from the mall, Kohl's was a place that they went to for socks, shirts and "stuff" for the house. They loved WalMart. It is a one-stop shop where they can get everything that they need. It is cheaper, especially the toiletries. WalMart will have what they are looking for. Target was perceived to be as good as WalMart, but it costs. Old Navy has a variety of clothes for all ages with cheaper prices, and they are right on top of the fashion trend. They liked Barnes & Noble too. They could listen to the music before buying it. The coffee shop was a plus. There were no kids (in their own section) and it was quiet. They could sit and read a magazine and not have to buy it. They felt very comfortable there.

The Internet does not seem to have an impact on their purchase behavior. They do not buy clothes on the Internet because they like to try them on first. They also do not trust the security and do not want to wait for the merchandise. They do buy CDs, DVDs, tickets and items that are rare on the Internet. They choose the Internet for shopping because of its convenience, cost and availability.

If they could create their own mall, it would have a WalMart in it. They would make category killers the anchors. They would make the mall more than one floor and be able to look up and down from the floors. They talked about scenery while they shopped and mentioned Barefoot Landing in Myrtle Beach. They want it to have more entertainment, and they want a good sporting-goods store in the mall. They talked about having a paintball court, an Internet café, Putt-Putt, water slides, an arcade, go-cart track, people mover and couches by dressing rooms. They thought of a NASCAR track around the mall, a party mall, TVs and couches in all of the stores and moving stores together that sell similar merchandise.

College Generation Y Female Focus Group

Similar to males, Generation Y females attending college responded very differently from their high school counterparts. They like fun, trendy products. They like matching an outfit at one store. They do not like crowds and being bothered by salespeople. They also do not like finding a product that they purchased at the mall cheaper somewhere else. They do not like products jumbled and unorganized as they are at WalMart. They also do not like it when salespeople are busy talking to their friends. They really like shopping at the mall because they can shop at a number of stores, although they might go to TJ Maxx for the price or Fashion Bug and Old Navy for better parking and prices.

As for the anchors, they consider them to be the starting point for shopping. They also think they are the only place they can shop with their spouses or boyfriends. They are also the only place with good shoes. As for stores they would like to eliminate from the mall, they said American Eagle because it has the same look as other stores but is more expensive. They felt that there were too many Footlockers. The food court could go. They also thought that Hollister's was a knock-off of Abercrombie & Fitch. They thought that JCPenney was out of date and dark, and they cannot find products there. Kirkland, Bombay, other home furnishing stores, the mattress store and the cell-phone kiosks could all go.

They shop at the mall because of boredom, sales, to acquire a gift and if they have money. They buy clothes, accessories, shoes, perfume, make-up and gifts at the mall. They go once a month, but some of them go once or twice a week. When they go, they are annoyed by the environment. They feel it is more fun at the larger, newer malls. They like the mall because it is one-stop, has variety, attracts many kinds of people and they can shop for multiple needs (e.g., Christmas gifts). They do not like the mall because they are stuck inside, and it closes too early. They do not like the parking, the mall walkers, the teenagers hanging out, the games for kids and the survey people.

They choose the stores that they shop at by image, quality, coupons, salespeople, products and nice-smelling stores. They do not have many concerns about shopping at the mall—just strange people, kids, bad service and whether or not they are getting the best bargain. They do go to the mall to meet friends and go to the restaurants. What would make them shop at the mall more included more money, longer hours that the mall is open, a nicer environment, higher fashion stores, less traffic, day care, no mall walkers, skylights to make it brighter, improved landscaping, stores grouped by lifestyle, all food in the food court, something to see, variety, and giving people a reason to stay—like restaurants and music stores. They would like to see entertainment, clothing in an array of styles with alterations, a Williams-Sonoma store, different clothing stores from other cultures, a spa, cheaper versions of high fashion, restaurants and culture.

As for other stores taking them away from the mall, they did not have much interest in Kohl's. They liked WalMart because it was cheap. They bought CDs there and very little else. They liked Target because it was organized and clean. It had some fashion-oriented apparel and was open later than the mall. They liked Old Navy because it was cheap, but it had the same basic stuff. They liked Barnes & Noble's atmosphere.

The Internet had virtually no impact on their shopping. They would buy gifts, books, CDs, household items, items from IKEA and make-up and perfume on the Internet. They buy via the Internet because it is easy, available or sold out at local stores, and they can avoid the crowds. They would never buy pants, swimsuits, shoes and large appliances on the Internet.

When asked to create their ideal mall, they focused on the environment and having better stores than those currently available in the mall. They want designer apparel and different products. They suggested personal shoppers, virtual tours of stores, people movers, an attached hotel and a tram to other areas.

Generation X Male Focus Group

The perfect shopping experience for individuals in the Generation X male focus group would be finding everything that they wanted at a good price. They want to find what they want and get out quickly. They said that they are more willing to spend time shopping when they are out of town but usually are very purpose-driven. They will stop at the food court, look at the tools at Sears and then visit JCPenney's to look at shoes. Their worst shopping experience is December 24. Lack of selection and an indecisive wife also make for a bad experience.

They said that they were more apt to go anywhere but the mall for shopping. If Sears, Razor's Edge, Sunglass Hut, Champs and Gap were not in the mall, they would shop at them more often. They did not consider the anchors important except for Sears and its tools. They will buy gifts at the mall. They thought that Dillard's was expensive and more of a women's store. They would eliminate Dillard's, Disney, Afterthoughts, Limited Too, Express, Lerner, Rue 21, Modern Maternity, Ritz Camera and maybe others.

They go to the mall to buy gifts or when a specific product is desired. They do not go to the mall very often. If they are there, it is because they are going to BW-3 (eating/drinking establishment). They like to go to the mall because it is air-conditioned; they can watch people and it is convenient. They do not like the way that people walk at the mall and suggested a fast track. They also do not like the teens hanging out at the mall. They go to the stores that they do because of familiarity, store-front appeal and if the store carries different and interesting products. One participant was concerned about safety at the mall. They would shop more often at the mall if there were more special events, more male-oriented stores, or a movie theater. When asked what they would want in the mall that is not there now, they wanted more tool stores, more male-oriented stores, outdoor stores, Kohl's, activities for little kids, music, indoor playground and day care.

Kohl's seems to be the first place that they will shop, and it has had a major impact on their mall shopping. They were split on their views of WalMart. Some really liked it for the convenience and price while others did not. They liked Target somewhat. They felt it was a nice store with a nice assortment. They like Old Navy because it was easy in and out. Barnes & Noble was nice and relaxing. The Internet had no impact on their mall shopping behavior.

Their perfect mall would have a roller coaster, be built like Tampa Airport with a hub and spokes, have a lifestyle, zonal merchandising layout and have more greenery, fountains, decorations, outdoor lighting and food. They would have a police station, a pet store, a home and garden store, a tool store and male toy stores in their mall. They would also like personal services, like a doctor's office in the mall. They even suggested an Ikea for the mall. They wanted more male-oriented stores and TVs in all the stores with couches by the fitting rooms.

Generation X Female Focus Group

The perfect shopping experience for individuals in the Generation X female focus group include sales, coupons, customer-friendly return policies and credit-card incentives. They also like knowledgeable and available salespeople who only approach them when needed. They also want babysitting services that would allow for ample shopping time. The worst shopping experience for them is having to take children to the mall during holiday shopping. They also dislike a lack of size and selection. They get miffed at advertisements that entice them to the store, but when they get there, they are disappointed in the merchandise (quality, availability).

Some of the group said that they started at the mall with their shopping while others started at their favorite stores and then ended up at the mall if they could not find what they wanted. The ones who started with the mall had their children with them and they thought that everything that they would need would be at the mall. Conversely, the other group felt that the other stores were more convenient; they knew where to find the goods that they were seeking, which made for a more efficient shopping trip.

The stores that they would more likely shop if they were not in the mall included home-furnishing stores such as Bombay, a mattress store, etc. The items were too heavy to carry in the mall and would need to be delivered. The hair salons would also be used more frequently outside of the mall. They did not like the idea that they were on display for people in the mall to look at them getting their hair done.

Anchor stores are very important to these women. They thought that everyone has their favorite anchor. As for eliminating stores, they wanted to get rid of 5-7-9. They would also get rid of DJ's which carries hip-hop clothes and the home-furnishing stores for reasons cited above.

They go to the mall to browse. They also do their holiday shopping there. They like the quantity and choice at the mall, and they do a lot of clothes shopping for themselves. They also buy gifts for others when at the mall. This group goes to the mall at least once every two weeks. They like to go to the mall when they are in the mood to shop. If they go when they are not in the mood, they will not find what they want. They like malls that are contemporary, have natural lighting and are decorated in beautiful colors. They do not like parking, the crowds and the inconsiderate teens.

Store choice is based on past experience, price, brand names, level of customer service, style of clothing and the choice of music being played. Concerns that they have are safety, especially when they were with their children. Parking and lighting were also a concern. The restroom areas being placed in darker hallways also concerned them. The ATM machines in the open areas bothered them. They also go to the mall to eat, drink, socialize and take kids to see Santa. They would shop more often at the mall if there were more events in the mall like the Health Fairs. They would also go there more if they were given more incentives like coupons, free gifts, samples, etc. They want free, independent child care within each store. They were also angry that the drug stores were taken out of the mall. They want a bank in the mall and would like a one-hour dry cleaner. A full-service post office would be a plus for them.

They love Kohl's. They felt it was very convenient with good prices and brand names. They also thought that it was family-oriented. WalMart had overall favorable reactions, but they went for different reasons. It was affordable, had variety, had food and it was convenient. Quality was not a reason for them to go to WalMart. They loved Target with the children's clothes. They felt it had higher quality than WalMart and it had unique items. The wide aisles were appealing and it was well organized. For Old Navy, they also loved it because of variety and selection of sizes. They felt good shopping in Old Navy because it made them feel young. With Barnes & Noble, they felt it was a relaxing atmosphere, but the children prevent them from enjoying it completely.

As for the Internet, they do a lot of browsing on the Internet and purchase toys, CDs, books or items not available locally. After browsing, they go to stores to make the purchase. They would purchase on the Internet if it happened to be cheaper and if they could wait for the item. They would not buy clothes, furniture, jewelry, or other high-priced items on the Internet.

Their perfect mall would have free child care at least in the anchor stores. They also wanted the food courts and restrooms within close proximity to the anchors. They also wanted sit-down restaurants to relax. They thought it would be nice if the anchors had small coffee shops. They would like a play area for their children at the mall. They want a huge shoe store, a personal shopper to help coordinate outfits and give personal attention, a concierge to direct them to where they want to go and knowledgeable salespeople who were truly helpful. They felt that the level of customer service needs to be heightened. They wanted salespeople who were in career positions rather than just part-time jobs.

Baby Boomer Male Focus Group

The perfect shopping experience of individuals in the male Baby Boomer focus group would be finding whatever they wanted. If it was on sale, and they were able to park close, it would be perfect. They dislike not being able to find what they want, the crowds, the high prices, the poor selection, the parking and the bad attitudes of the salespeople or lack of salespeople. They said that the mall has to be running a sale for them to go there. The stores that they would more likely shop if they were not in the mall included the restaurants, Sears and JCPenney. The anchors are very important to them; they would not go to the mall if it were not for them.

They usually go to the mall to buy gifts, to get a haircut, or to buy work clothes. They buy suits, work clothes, gifts, music, tools, electronics and gift certificates at the mall. They are not frequent mall shoppers with most going three or four times a year. They like events, such as the Health-A-Rama, held at the mall. They feel that the mall is geared too much to the younger crowd, that it has a lack of selection and that it is too generic. Their choice of stores in the mall often depends on whom they are shopping with. Their concerns about going to the mall are the crowds and the parking. They are very concerned about their wives going to the mall after dark.

They would shop more at the mall if there were lower prices, comfortable chairs to sit in while waiting for their wives, better selection of clothes in different sizes, more specialty stores and more products geared towards men. They would like to see more restaurants, taverns and bars in the mall. They want live entertainment and more comfortable sitting areas. They would like fountains and scenery.

When asked about Kohl's, they felt that it was an easy store to shop and less hassle than the mall. They had mixed opinions about WalMart. They did say that it was hard to get around in it. Their wives like Target, and they felt that Barnes & Noble is a great store.

The Internet has not impacted on their shopping habits. They said that it helped them in making buying decisions. They buy books, computers, special-size clothes and electronics on the Internet. They buy from the Internet because of the larger selection and because they can get out-of-date products there.

Their perfect mall would have lots of registers and salespeople so they could get out quickly. They would have movie theaters in the mall and also an entertainment wing. They would like the mall to be multistory. They would also like some kind of computers that would provide a list of places in the mall that carried what they wanted. They would also like to see a wider selection of stores, and they wanted people movers. They suggested clustering not only the stores but also the anchors. They want TVs by fitting rooms, a hobby shop, a hardware store with service, a shoemaker, a fitness center, healthcare and sporting-goods stores.

Baby Boomer Female Focus Group

The perfect shopping experience for participants in the Baby Boomer female focus group included close parking, sales, cash same as credit, not being penalized for using a general credit card rather than a store card, valet parking, more and visible security, finding a salesperson who wanted to provide good service, personalized attention and not having clothes displayed out of reach. Their worst shopping experience included an insufficient number of cash registers, having their car damaged, property theft, shopping with young children, heavy bags, not enough seating, merchandise crammed on racks, sidewalk sales, overcrowding by teens and prices not on items. They said that the mall is considered a free babysitter and it is not clean. They go elsewhere to shop because of prices, parking and convenience. They would shop more often at Bath and Body Works, JCPenney, Kaufmann's and Gap if they were not in the mall.

They felt that the department stores were needed because they drew customers to the mall and are family-oriented. All of the other stores in the mall are for the youth. They would like to get rid of the trendy stores for the kids and stores like Abercrombie & Fitch because the prices are too high. They also mentioned Rave, 5-7-9, Spencer's and Charlotte Russe.

They go to the mall for their children, to shop for special occasions, out of boredom, for gifts and the registry, to buy items (cosmetics) only available at the mall, to buy gift certificates and sometimes to socialize. They go to the mall from once a month to five times a year. Their concerns when they are there are their own safety and the teens. They go to the mall to walk in the morning, to waste time, to socialize, to patronize the food courts for the children and to go to the restaurants. They'd like to see a drug store put back in the mall.

They like Kohl's because it has good prices, new merchandise, sales during the week and not just on the weekend, accessibility for handicapped and elderly and a good return policy. They need shopping carts because they end up using the baby carriers for that purpose. They do not like WalMart. One person felt it was dangerous. The aisles are too small and crowded, and they would dead end. They mentioned that different WalMart stores had different layouts, and that their prices varied from store to store. They liked Target because of its variety, affordability, the open aisles, less crowds, uniformity and lighting. They liked the commercials and felt that it had nice housewares for young people just starting out. They pronounced it Targét. They felt that Old Navy had poor quality. Their clothes do not wear well and fall apart. They did like their fleece. Barnes & Noble was nice and neat. They liked the café and find the store relaxing. The seating is nice, and they can read books without buying them. Barnes & Noble had good customer service, an extensive variety and carried gifts, stationery and chocolates.

Interestingly, they were the only group that said that the Internet has greatly influenced their shopping and buying activities. They like the convenience, cost savings, doorstep delivery, discounts, free shipping, ease of browsing and comparison shopping, speed, safety (compared to mall) and registries on the Internet.

Their perfect mall would be like Easton Town Center in Columbus. They would want nice restaurants in and around the mall. They also talked about an outdoor mall. They would want the mall decorated nicely for each season. They want better security. They also want a better mix of stores for all ages and better accessibility for the handicapped, with more parking and entrances for handicapped people.

They talked about a store that no longer existed that would actually wrap what was purchased as a present. They want smaller anchors that cater to their age group. They want salespeople who would help them complete an outfit. They also want appealing window displays in the stores. They do not want to buy clothes that are wrinkled from being crammed on the racks, and they want salespeople available when needed. They want the hanger included with purchase. They want a lounge area with a television for entertainment (husbands). They want a delivery service (charge and send) or a pick-up area for all of their purchases. They want a spa, a shoulder/foot massage, entertainment, sit-down dining and dinner theater.

■ Summary

Even with extensive probing, it was difficult to get the focus group participants to suggest new retail concepts. The concepts that they did suggest are included in the survey. The survey will also contain a section on new mall services and concepts, since participants provided numerous examples of what they would like to see differently in the mall. While not expected, a list of concerns about the malls was derived from the focus groups. That list was also tested in the survey to determine if the concerns about malls raised by the individuals in the focus group are valid.

■ National Survey Results

Attitudes towards Existing Mall Shopping Activities

Respondents were asked how often they visit their local mall. Table 1 presents how often the respondents go to the mall by age category, and the data were analyzed using a Chi-Square test which looks at the observed values compared to the expected values with nominal data. The Chi-Square value was 19.069, and the level of significance was .087.

Generation Y seemed to visit the mall slightly more frequently than the other two generations.

TABLE 1. MALL VISIT FREQUENCY BY AGE CATEGORY

Mall Visit Frequency	Generation Y% by Age Category	Generation X% by Age Category	Baby Boomer % by Age Category
At least 1× per week	22.7	13.3	20.2
Every 2 weeks	19.3	26.7	20.2
Every month	37.5	30.0	23.9
6× per year	15.9	12.2	13.8
4× per year	2.3	7.8	12.8
2× per year	2.3	5.6	4.6
1× per year	0.0	4.4	4.6

Respondents were also asked where they do their primary shopping for clothes and shoes. Table 2 presents the results of where they do their shopping by their age category. The Chi-Square value was 27.943, and the level of significance was .002. The different generations had different preferences for where they buy their clothes and shoes. While the majority of each generation preferred the shopping malls, Generation X and the Baby Boomers were also going to other venues for clothing and shoes. The "other" category included responses such as thrift and consignment shops, Kohl's, Target, somewhere not crowded, neighborhood stores, boutiques, Fashion Bug, Lazarus, specialty stores in strip-malls and regional off-price stores. It would seem that Generation X and the Baby Boomers shopped wherever the price was right and the style was available.

TABLE 2. PRIMARY SHOPPING PLACE FOR CLOTHING AND SHOES BY GENERATION

Primary Shopping	Generation Y % by Age	Generation X % by Age	Baby Boomers % by Age
Shopping Mall	77.3%	46.7%	55.0%
Discount Store	15.9%	28.9%	25.7%
Catalog	0.0%	2.2%	5.5%
Internet	2.3%	2.2%	4.6%
Outlet Stores	3.4%	12.2%	5.5%
Other	1.1%	7.8%	3.7%

Respondents were then asked if they always, sometimes, or never visit the anchor stores when they visit the mall. Table 3 presents how often they visit the anchor stores in the mall by age category. The Chi-Square value was 14.089, and the level of significance was .007. Generation Y respondents were not as frequent visitors to the anchor stores as even the other two generations. The Baby Boomers seemed to be the most loyal group to the anchor stores.

TABLE 3. FREQUENCY OF ANCHOR STORE VISITS BY GENERATION

Frequency of Visit	Generation Y % by Age	Generation X % by Age	Baby Boomer % by Age
Always	25.0%	46.7%	49.5%
Sometimes	64.8%	45.6%	45.0%
Never	10.2%	7.8%	5.5%

Respondents were then asked if they always, sometimes, or never visit the in-line stores when they visit the mall. Table 4 presents how often they visit the in-line stores in the mall by age category. The Chi-Square value was 22.593, and the level of significance was .000. The Baby Boomer respondents were not as frequent visitors to the in-line stores as the other two generations were. As might be expected, while Generation Y respondents did not like the anchor stores, they did like the in-line stores since the majority of them seem to appeal to their demographic group.

TABLE 4. FREQUENCY OF IN-LINE STORE VISITS BY GENERATION

Frequency of Visit	Generation Y % by Age	Generation X % by Age	Baby Boomer % by Age
Always	48.9%	35.6%	19.3%
Sometimes	46.6%	58.9%	67.0%
Never	4.5%	5.6%	13.8%

Since all of the Chi-Square values were found to be statistically significant, the results of the survey suggest support for Hypothesis 1, that individuals in different age groups possess differing attitudes toward mall shopping activities as they exist now.

■ Impact of Internet and Category Killers on Mall Shopping Activities

Respondents were then asked to rate on a seven point scale, with one having no effect and seven causing them to shop elsewhere, the impact that different modes of shopping (Internet/catalogs) and different kinds of stores (category killers) had on their mall shopping behavior. Table 5 presents the results of the one-way ANOVA analyses of the impact by age category. Significant results at the .05 level are in bold type. Very few of the means were above the mid-point of 4.00; however, it appears that the regional shopping malls have lost the younger generations with their purchases of CDs and electronics. It also seems that mall stores selling home improvement/home furnishings have lost ground to the category killers among the Generation X respondents and, to some degree, the Baby Boomers.

TABLE 5. RATINGS OF IMPACT ON MALL SHOPPING BEHAVIOR BY GENERATION

Alternatives to Mall	Gen. Y Mean	Gen. X Mean	Boomer Mean	F	Level of Sig.
Internet Shopping	3.20	3.53	2.98	1.648	.194
Internet Buying	2.78	3.13	2.73	1.110	.331
Catalogs	2.92	3.06	3.21	.570	.566
WalMart	3.75	4.04	3.65	.795	.453
Kohl's	2.67	2.98	2.64	.722	.487
Best Buy/Circuit City	**4.13**	**3.78**	**2.15**	**3.506**	**.031**
Barnes & Noble/Borders	3.44	3.48	3.45	.006	.994
Home Depot/Lowe's	**3.47**	**4.33**	**3.83**	**3.330**	**.037**
Bed, Bath & Beyond	3.03	3.30	3.97	.677	.509
Outlet stores	3.76	4.01	3.46	1.662	.192

Given the low ratings across the generations for Internet shopping and buying, no support was shown for Hypothesis 2, that individuals in different age groups possess differing attitudes toward the impact that the Internet has had on their mall shopping activities. Results supporting Hypothesis 3 were shown for only two types of category killers, electronics stores and home centers.

■ Attitudes Towards Concerns Raised by Focus Group Participants

Respondents were also asked whether or not they have concerns given different characteristics of the shopping mall by rating them on a seven-point scale with one being no concern and seven being a major concern. Table 6 presents the results of the one-way ANOVA analyses. Significant results at the .05 level are in bold type. In this analysis, several of the means are above the mid-point of four, notably, all three generations rated the prices of merchandise a concern. Significant differences occurred on the generations' ratings of the sales clerks. Generation Y felt that the number of sales clerks was not a concern compared to the other two generations while the Baby Boomers did not consider the sales clerks as aggressive as did the two younger generations. As might be expected, the distance needed to walk in the mall increased as a concern as the age increased.

TABLE 6. RATINGS OF CONCERNS OF MALL CHARACTERISTICS BY GENERATION

Characteristic	Gen Y Mean	Gen X Mean	Boomer Mean	F	Level of sig.
Parking at mall	3.91	4.34	4.09	.927	.397
Security at mall	3.55	4.01	4.01	1.352	.261
Clothing available at mall	4.24	4.52	4.35	.383	.682
Shoes available at mall	4.22	4.40	4.17	.303	.739
Price of merchandise	5.03	5.26	5.06	.384	.682
Type of people at mall	3.43	3.89	3.33	1.843	.160
Clothing racks in stores	3.23	3.79	3.75	2.313	.101
Number of sales clerks	**3.50**	**4.13**	**4.14**	**3.382**	**.035**
Aggressive sales clerks	**4.75**	**4.87**	**4.20**	**3.009**	**.051**
Helpfulness of sales clerks	4.35	4.46	4.56	.266	.767
Number of cash registers	3.98	4.12	4.29	.641	.528
Cleanliness of mall	4.34	4.88	4.26	2.264	.106
Distance needed to walk	**2.72**	**3.30**	**3.44**	**3.160**	**.044**
Return policies	4.06	4.20	3.96	.284	.753
Time it takes to stop	3.36	3.99	3.82	2.074	.128
Amount of seating	2.33	2.49	2.54	.418	.659
Helpfulness of signage	3.02	3.27	2.97	.606	.546
Level of lighting	3.05	3.41	3.27	.688	.503

■ Attitudes Toward Mall Features

Respondents were then asked to rate how important a number of features at the mall were to them on a seven-point scale, with one being not at all important and seven being very important. Table 7 presents the results of the one-way ANOVA analyses by generation of each new mall concept. Significant results at the .05 level are in bold type. Some of the features brought up in the focus groups were rated above the mid-point of four across the generations, such as visible security, comfortable seating in the mall and easier access to the mall stores from the parking lot. Generational differences did exist, with the Baby Boomers being more concerned about visible security, helpful salespeople and moving sidewalks than the younger generations. The younger people rated amusement rides and attractions higher than did the Baby Boomers, but their means were not above the mid-point of four.

TABLE 7. RATINGS OF NEW MALL CONCEPTS BY GENERATION

New Concept	Gen Y Mean	Gen X Mean	Boomer Mean	F	Level of Sig.
Valet parking	2.41	2.54	2.39	.167	.847
Visible security	**4.20**	**4.63**	**4.91**	**3.267**	**.040**
Helpful salespeople	**3.65**	**3.43**	**4.13**	**3.143**	**.045**
Centralized pick-up	3.82	4.04	4.32	1.336	.265
Lounge areas in stores	3.06	2.90	2.67	.905	.406
Stores segregated	2.80	2.53	3.09	1.916	.149
People mover sidewalks	**2.80**	**2.53**	**3.09**	**5.303**	**.003**
Better decor in mall	4.07	3.58	3.44	2.551	.080
Amusement rides in mall	**2.47**	**2.69**	**1.91**	**6.120**	**.002**
Attractions in mall	**2.92**	**3.11**	**2.44**	**3.196**	**.042**
Entertainment in mall	3.38	3.27	3.07	.663	.516
Comfortable seating in mall	4.11	4.19	4.29	.223	.800
Information centers at entrance	3.89	4.27	4.50	2.422	.091
Easier access to all stores from lot	**4.05**	**4.80**	**4.94**	**6.875**	**.001**
Child/elder care at mall	2.75	3.00	2.97	.383	.682

■ Attitudes Toward New Retail Concepts in the Mall

Respondents were then asked to rate new retail concepts in malls on a scale from one to seven, with one being not at all important and seven being very important to them. Table 8 presents the results of the one-way ANOVA analyses of the ratings of new retail concepts by generation. Significant results at the .05 level are in bold type. Agreement existed across generations that they wanted better selection of restaurants and outdoor/sporting goods stores in the mall, and they all wanted gadget stores where they could "play." The younger generations wanted movie theaters in the malls. They also wanted shoulder/foot massages, spas, taverns/night clubs and design-your-own-flavor ice cream stores more so than the older generation. The Baby Boomers wanted home and garden stores in the mall more so than the younger generations.

TABLE 8. RATINGS OF NEW RETAIL CONCEPTS IN MALL BY GENERATION

Retail Concept	Gen Y Mean	Gen X Mean	Boomer Mean	F	Level of Sig.
Better selection of restaurants	4.99	4.97	4.69	.876	.417
Movie theaters/IMAX theater	**4.72**	**4.44**	**3.89**	**4.455**	**.012**
Internet café	3.44	3.12	2.79	2.883	.058
Store that caters to male interests	3.44	3.87	3.84	1.179	.309
Hobby shop	3.65	3.88	3.97	.701	.497
Dinner theater	3.38	3.54	3.15	.936	.394
Shoulder/foot massage	**3.64**	**3.39**	**2.90**	**3.327**	**.037**
Tavern/night club	**3.80**	**3.02**	**2.83**	**5.677**	**.004**
Home & garden store	**3.47**	**3.99**	**4.49**	**6.641**	**.002**
Gadget stores with trial	4.38	4.30	4.51	.324	.724
Design own ice cream flavor	**4.06**	**3.57**	**2.94**	**7.892**	**.000**
Doctor's office in mall	2.38	2.68	2.79	1.189	.306
Outdoor/sporting goods	4.27	4.04	4.04	.382	.683
Spa	**3.80**	**3.28**	**2.73**	**6.476**	**.002**
Physical fitness center	3.23	3.13	2.77	1.454	.235

■ Attitudes Toward New Apparel Stores in Mall

Lastly, respondents were asked to rate new kinds of apparel stores in the mall using the same seven-point scale. Table 9 presents the results of the one-way ANOVA analyses of the ratings of new apparel stores by generation. Significant results at the .05 level are in bold type. Agreement existed across the generations that they wanted extensive alterations for a custom fit in their clothes and that they wanted salespeople to help them complete outfits. Generation Y seemed to be in favor of designing their own shoes and clothes, more so than the other generations.

Some support was shown for Hypothesis 4, given the analyses presented above, that individuals in different age groups possess differing attitudes toward what they would like to see as changes in the mall to make their shopping activities more meaningful.

TABLE 9. RATINGS OF NEW APPAREL STORES BY GENERATION

Type of Apparel Stores	Gen Y Mean	Gen X Mean	Boomer Mean	F	Level of Sig.
Clothing from other countries	3.90	3.17	3.42	2.772	.064
Extensive alterations/custom fit	4.27	4.11	4.09	.214	.808
Design own clothes	**4.01**	**3.34**	**2.94**	**6.935**	**.001**
Design own shoes	**4.00**	**3.40**	**2.89**	**7.041**	**.001**
Cater to own age group only	3.82	3.30	3.47	1.533	.216
Cater to own size only	3.74	3.53	3.61	.215	.807
Help completing outfits	4.20	4.19	4.33	.133	.875

■ Discussion

Existing Mall Shopping Activities and Generation Differences

Generation Y's visits to the mall were slightly more frequent than the other two generations. They were also more likely to shop for clothes and shoes at the mall than the other two generations. However, Generation X and Baby Boomers visited the anchor stores more frequently than Generation Y, and as may be expected, Generation Y visited the in-line stores more frequently than the other two generations, especially the Baby Boomers. The female Baby Boomer group did complain that most of the stores in the mall are geared to young people, and the female Generation Y group said that there was not a place for their mothers to shop in the mall. The data from the survey supported their contentions.

Impact of Internet on Mall Shopping Activities and Generation Differences

When asked to rate the impact of shopping and buying on the Internet, all three generations rated it low. While the number of purchases on the Internet climbs every year, most people are not buying apparel and other items available at the mall on the Internet.

Impact of Category Killers on Mall Shopping Activities and Generation Differences

Electronic stores and home-improvement category killers had significant impact on mall shopping activities across the generations. The electronics stores were taking Generation Y away from the mall while the home–improvement stores were taking Generation X away from the mall.

Changes in the Mall and Generation Differences

Mall Features.

Differences did exist across the generations for mall features conceived by the focus-group participants. The Baby Boomers wanted visible security, helpful salespeople, people movers and easier access to all stores from the parking lot. Generation X wanted amusement rides in the mall and attractions like ice-skating rinks, roller rinks, or a swimming pool. It's possible that they were thinking of their children while they are shopping. Providing free child care in the mall was a popular concept with both the male and female Generation X focus groups.

New Retail Concepts.

Differences did occur when the generations were asked to rate the new retail concepts that the focus group participants suggested. Generation Y wants movie theaters and IMAX theaters, shoulder and foot massages, taverns and night clubs, a design-your-own ice cream flavor store and a spa, while Baby Boomers want a home and garden store in the mall. The younger generation, given what was heard in the focus groups and the results presented in the national survey, want the items that they buy to reflect their own individuality. They want unique possessions that not everyone else has. Generation Y also wants entertainment from their malls. They want movie theaters, taverns and night clubs, a better selection of restaurants, a spa and an outdoor/sporting-goods store in the mall. On the other hand, Baby Boomers want to be pampered. They want a salesperson to work with them to put an outfit together. They also rated places to play (gadget stores with trial and hobby shops) the highest. Generation X did not stand out in the ratings. They did rate stores catering to male interests and dinner theater the highest. From the focus group results and from their survey responses, Generation X is not having a lot of fun. Money and family pressures have taken their toll. If malls were to at least provide them with safe child care, their shopping experiences would improve tremendously.

Concerns and Generational Differences

While not part of the original hypotheses, the number of concerns about the mall raised in the focus groups made it necessary to determine if the concerns had any veracity. The number of salesclerks, the aggressiveness of sales clerks and the distance needed to walk had significant generational differences. Concerns that were rated above the mid-point four by the three generations included the type of clothing available at the mall, the type of shoes available at the mall, the price of merchandise at the mall, the helpfulness of sales clerks at the mall and the cleanliness of the mall. Mall developers may want to survey their visitors to determine if these perceptions persist at their malls.

■ Limitations

The intent was to get a sample of at least 300 within each age category, and 1,000 surveys per generational group were sent in the mail. Even with a $500 incentive, the resulting sample with each age group barely made 100. The mailing was sent out bulk so the number of undeliverable questionnaires is not known.

The reliance on the focus groups to generate new retail concepts did not produce many genuine, break-through ideas. While a sufficient number of new ideas were generated and tested, the results may not lead mall developers to guaranteed retail hits. Many ideas that were presented in the focus groups were re-introductions of what used to be in malls, such as drug stores, personalized service and movie theaters, or suggestions of how they could manage their current operations better.

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